



NOTICE OF AGENDA

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

[City of Forest Lake - Link to Meeting Livestream](#)

Forest Lake City Center – Council Chambers
Forest Lake, Minnesota

March 11, 2026 – 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approve the Agenda (Action)
5. Open Forum - Citizen Petitions, Requests and Concerns: Please sign in at the front table. *The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.*
6. Consent Agenda Considerations (Action Items)*
 - a. Approve Minutes from Regular Meeting of February 25, 2026

**Planning Commission may remove any item from the consent agenda for specific consideration.*
7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)
 - a. Public Hearing: Hidden Creek South (*tabled at 2/25 PC*)
 - i. Preliminary Plat
 - ii. PUD Preliminary Plan
8. Discussion
 - a. 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update Discussion
9. Updates
10. Adjourn



Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

6:00 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Paul Girard	Commission Chair	Present	
Susan Young	Commission Vice-Chair	Present	
Andy Aplikowski	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Don Stehler	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Cory Goodwin	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Jesse Wagner	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Tim Stender	Planning Commissioner	Present	

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approve the Agenda

No comments on the Agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Stender made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as presented.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Wagner. Motion carried 6-0-1 (Aplikowski abstained).

5. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

*The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business.
Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.*

None.

6. Consent Agenda Considerations (Action Items)*

a. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from February 11, 2026

No comments on the Consent Agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Wagner made a Motion to Approve Consent Agenda Item 5.a.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Stender. Motion carried 6-0-1 (Aplikowski Abstained).



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7. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a. Public Hearing: Hidden Creek South

i. Preliminary Plat

ii. PUD Preliminary Plat

Assistant Community Development Director Gilmore reviewed the Preliminary Plat and Planned Unit Development Amendment for Hidden Creek South. He summarized the project overview and requests. He discussed the street collector expectations and the local street network requirements. He explained the parkway cost participation since Headwaters Parkway was a required major collector extension. He reviewed the stormwater and drainage coordination and noted the ongoing coordination. He discussed the park dedication and neighborhood park and noted that 3.17 acres were previously dedicated.

Commissioner Young asked what roadways had been constructed. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the fourth phase of Hidden Creek South had not been constructed, but the third phase had been completed.

Commissioner Young said that the lots would not have significant parking in driveways. She expressed concerns with the 30-foot-wide streets, especially in the winter. Assistant Community Development Director Gilmore answered that there would just be parking on one side of the lot for D2. He said that the road widths were due to connecting it to the existing development.

Community Development Director Wittman responded that they understood the concern and worked with the developer to increase the roadway width in all remaining portions of the development that would extend within all different areas of the development.

Commissioner Young said she understood the benefit to the developer for the smaller lots, but she did not understand the benefits to the larger community. She expressed concerns about the increased density that would be placed on City services. She asked about the public benefits of the smaller lot sizes. Assistant Community Development Director Gilmore answered that the extension of Headwaters Parkway was a significant development. He said that the lot sizes were the least dense that you could get according to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. He said that the development of a park would be beneficial.

Commissioner Young asked about the total acreage of Outlot A and the section to the North. Assistant Community Development Director answered that they would have 1.92 acres in Outlot A and they would receive cash-in-lieu. The two parcels would be just over five acres.



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Community Development Director Wittman said that the additional dedication amount would allow for a park to be built out, rather than getting raw land and waiting for the City to be ready to build out a park.

Assistant Community Development Director Gilmore said that the Parks and Recreation Commission would prefer cash-in-lieu so the City could develop the park as they see fit.

Community Development Director Wittman said that the cash-in-lieu was at a minimum of \$2500 per lot, but they did not have the specific dollar amount finalized yet.

Commissioner Aplikowski asked about the number of lots below the 7000 square foot requirement. Assistant Community Development Director Gilmore answered that it was less than half.

Commissioner Aplikowski expressed concerns with allowing such a large number of lots be below the 7000 square foot requirement.

Commissioner Stender said that the lot size and house size would create a small side lot.

Chair Girard stated that he empathized with the City trying to honor the Comprehensive Plan requiring three units per acre. He encouraged trying to eliminate smaller lots in the future.

John Dobbs, developer, said he had some small issues he needed to work through on his end, so he was hoping to table the item. He discussed the issue of affordability for house costs. He said he could provide additional facts.

Community Development Director Wittman said that 55-foot lots were not uncommon in this specific area.

Mr. Dobbs stated this site was complex because of the road, soil types, judicial ditch number four, and stormwater. He stated he would be ready to return to the Planning Commission with additional information in two weeks.

Commissioner Young asked about the difference in the affordability of the houses on smaller lots. Mr. Dobbs answered that he would like to come back with specific information at the future meeting. He said it would likely be twenty-five percent cheaper than other houses built by the developer.

Community Development Director Wittman said that more housing would bring down housing prices because of the housing shortage.



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Commissioner Aplikowski expressed concerns with the smaller lot sizes, especially for parents who do not have enough yard space for their children to play.

Commissioner Young stated that if Forest Lake would like to attract families, they need to provide the full package, so families have space.

Public Hearing was opened at 6:47 p.m.

Katie Cerney, 4625 195th Street, noted appreciation for the changes since the last plat. She expressed concerns about stormwater and potential stormwater impacts. She discussed concerns with the road access on 195th Street since it was a privately maintained road.

Chair Girard asked how far south 195th Street was located. Ms. Cerney explained the location and noted that it was a little offset.

Paul Schmid, 18070 July Avenue, said that affordability would create community. He stated that more homes would create more affordability for the community. He expressed the benefit of having parks close by for children.

Public Hearing was closed at 6:54 p.m.

Community Development Director Wittman clarified that if there were major changes, they would have missed the notification process for the March 11th meeting for a public hearing.

Commissioner Young asked if this lot was tiled, which would result in drainage challenges. Community Development Director Wittman responded that the engineering team would look into this question. She clarified that Fenway Park had recreational facilities.

Commissioner Aplikowski asked if there was an overflow of water. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the water that would be in the stormwater pond would hook into a stormwater system.

Motion: Chair Girard made a Motion to Table the Hidden Creek South Preliminary Plat and Planned Unit Development Amendment.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Young. Motion carried 7-0.

b. Public Hearing: Variance for Driveway Setback Reduction at 23375 Itasca Ave N

City Planner Birchland reviewed the proposal to extend the driveway towards the north property line to access the rear garage. He noted the proposed retaining wall along the north side of the proposed property line. He summarized the analysis completed by the staff.



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Andy Aplikowski, 23375 Itasca Avenue, noted that the retaining wall was intended to create the slope going toward the back.

Public Hearing was opened at 7:08 p.m.

No comments.

Public Hearing was closed at 7:09 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Young made a Motion to recommend Approval of Resolution 02-25-26-01, approving a three (3) foot driveway side setback variance for the property located at 23375 Itasca Avenue North (PID 02-032-21-42-0005), subject to the conditions listed in the staff report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Wagner. Motion carried 5-1-1 (Stehler opposed; Aplikowski abstained).

Chair Girard noted that this item will go before the City Council for final action.

8. Discussion

None.

9. Updates

Councilmember Larson welcomed Commissioner Goodwin to the Planning Commission. He noted that the City parted ways with City Administrator Statz, and the Assistant City Administrator Chaika would serve as interim City Administrator.

Community Development Director Wittman said that Community Thread was seeking volunteer drivers to help with the senior ride offering service.

Assistant Community Development Director Gilmore said that Chestnut Creek Phase Two requested to change its name to Havenwood. He said that the Timm's Marina would be decided by City Council on March 9th if they need to go to an EIS for the proposal. There will be a public meeting for the development on March 11th.

Commissioner Aplikowski expressed appreciation for the City staff for their help with the variance application.

Commissioner Young said that they only had eleven drivers for Thrive and encouraged others to get involved. She said that the Rotary Plunge would happen on February 28th.



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10. Adjourn

Motion: Commissioner Stender made a Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Stehler. Motion carried 7-0.

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE: March 11, 2026

TO: Chair Paul Girard and Planning Commissioners

STAFF ORIGINATOR: Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director
Steven Gilmore, Assistant CD Director

AGENDA ITEM: Hidden Creek South Preliminary PUD and Plat

INTRODUCTION:

At the last regular meeting, the Planning Commission held a public hearing regarding the Hidden Creek South Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Plat. After the hearing, at the developer's request, the Planning Commission tabled consideration of the Preliminary PUD and Plat. The motion was to "table this to our March 11 meeting, based on it only being minor changes, or to a later date if major changes occur requiring another Public Hearing." As of the date of this memo, the developer is requesting the Planning Commission not consider the application. Thus, the Commission is being asked to table consideration with no date certain; staff will place the item on an upcoming Commission agenda when the developer is ready to proceed.

ANALYSIS:

The City has 60 days to review the Preliminary PUD and 120 days to review the Preliminary Plat. As of right now, the review deadline is April 21, 2026. The City has sufficient time to pause the review while remaining compliant with statutory deadlines.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission **motion to table the Hidden Creek South Preliminary Planned Unit Development and Plat consideration.**

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE: March 11, 2026

TO: Chair Paul Girard and Planning Commissioners

STAFF ORIGINATOR: Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director

AGENDA ITEM: Imagine 2050 and City of Forest Lake Comprehensive Plan Update

INTRODUCTION:

Every ten years, the Metropolitan Council (MC) kicks off its decennial planning process with the release of Census data. With this information, the MC creates a Regional Development Guide; the current guide, *Imagine 2050*, and its Regional System Plans (i.e. land use, transportation, housing, water, and parks) serve as a framework for how the regional will grow and develop over the next ten years. From this regional planning process, the City's *System Statement* was developed. As we update our Comprehensive Plan, this will serve as our reference guide, indicating how the City's Plan needs to align with the Met Council's regional planning policies. A copy of the City's System Statement is enclosed for City Council review.



While the City does not have to have its Comprehensive Plan updated and approved by the Met Council until December 31, 2028, staff is starting to put together a scope of work for the project. This is in anticipation of seeking consulting assistance to help guide the City through the City's Comprehensive Plan process. Prior to drafting the Scope of Work and begin to seek proposals from planning firms able to assist the City, City staff is recommending the Planning Commission provide early input on this important future project. Specifically, staff is seeking the Commission's input on the current 2040 Plan development process thoughts (if known), review 2040 Plan Goals and Objectives (enclosed for Commission review), and Commission desires for early public engagement.

ANALYSIS:*2040 Plan Development Process*

Enclosed is a memo from the City's consulting planners and the City Engineer. Requested by City staff last year, it outlines our consultant's thoughts on the 2040 Plan Update process. Commissioners should read this memo and discuss potential lessons learned.

Review 2040 Plan Goals and Objectives

Enclosed are all the Goals and Objectives of the 2040 Plan. The Commission should review these goals and objectives and be prepared to discuss them. Specifically, staff will be seeking input on which goals the Commission believes are still relevant and which objectives the Commission believes the City has achieved.

Early Public Engagement

It is the goal of staff to start public engagement on the Comprehensive Plan yet this year. This public engagement will not only engage with residents and business owners, it will aim to help establish community vision for the next ten years and, subsequently, the updated Comprehensive Plan. The Commission should be prepared to discuss their thoughts on what kinds of public engagement the Commission would hope to see in this process.

RECOMMENDATION:

City staff is recommending the Planning Commission discuss and provide feedback to City staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

City of Forest Lake Imagine 2050 System Statement
2040 Comp Plan Goals and Objectives
Bolton and Menk 2040 Plan Process Recap Memo



CITY OF FOREST LAKE

2025 SYSTEM STATEMENT



IMAGINE²⁰₅₀



2025 SYSTEMS STATEMENT CITY OF FOREST LAKE

Regional Development Plan Adoption

On February 12, 2025, the Met Council adopted Imagine 2050 as a comprehensive development guide for the Twin Cities metro region. Imagine 2050 includes regional systems plans, including the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan, the 2050 Water Policy Plan, the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, and the 2050 Housing Policy Plan. The development guide also outlines land use policies and community designations important for local comprehensive planning updates.

The Metropolitan Council is now issuing systems statements pursuant to [State statute](#).

Systems Statements

Metropolitan systems plans are long-range comprehensive plans for the regional systems – transit, highways, and airports; wastewater services; and parks and open space – along with the capital budgets for those systems. Systems statements explain the implications of metropolitan system plans for each community in the region. They are intended to help communities prepare or update their comprehensive plan, as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act:

Within nine months after receiving a system statement for an amendment to a metropolitan system plan, and within three years after receiving a system statement issued in conjunction with the decennial review required under [section 473.864, subdivision 2](#), each affected local governmental unit shall review its comprehensive plan to determine if an amendment is necessary to ensure continued conformity with metropolitan system plans. If an amendment is necessary, the governmental unit shall prepare the amendment and submit it to the council for review.

The system statement includes information specific to a community, including:

- community designation or designation(s)
- forecasted population, households, and employment through the year 2050
- guidance on appropriate densities to ensure that regional services and costly regional infrastructure can be provided as efficiently as possible
- affordable housing need allocation.

In the following sections, this systems statement contains an overview of key changes and updates to the policies and plans from the previous 2040 regional development guide and specific system changes that affect your community:

- Transportation, including metropolitan highways, aviation, and transit
- Water Resources, including wastewater, surface water, and water supply planning

- Regional parks and trails

Regional Development Guide

The development guide adopted in February 2025 reflects the vision and plans adopted by communities for a prosperous, equitable, and resilient region with abundant opportunities for all to live, work, play, and thrive.

Regional values are shared core beliefs or principles that guide the work of developing and implementing Imagine 2050. The values build on those identified in Thrive MSP 2040 and incorporate what we've learned over the last ten years as well as the common values expressed by local governments and partners across the region. These values guide the Met Council in building partnerships and developing policies and programs to support Imagine 2050.

The Met Council has endorsed the following goals for our region to achieve through our policies, practices, programs, and partnerships:

- Our region is equitable and inclusive.
- Our communities are healthy and safe.
- Our region is dynamic and resilient.
- We lead on addressing climate change.
- We protect and restore natural systems.

Dispute Process

If your community disagrees with elements of this systems statement or has any questions about the process, please contact your Sector Representative, Emma Dvorak, at 651-602-1399, to review and discuss potential issues or concerns. The Council and local government units and districts have usually resolved issues relating to the system statement through discussion.

Request for Hearing

If a local governmental unit and the Met Council are unable to resolve disagreements over the content of a system statement, the unit or district may, by resolution, request that a hearing be conducted by the Met Council's Land Use Advisory Committee or by the State Office of Administrative Hearings to consider amendments to the system statement. According to Minnesota Statutes [section 473.857](#), the request shall be made by the local governmental unit or school district within 60 days after receiving the system statement. If the Met Council does not receive a hearing request within 60 days, the statement becomes final.

Next Steps in the Regional Planning Cycle

Receipt of this system statement and the metropolitan system plans triggers a community's obligation to review and amend its comprehensive plan by December 2028. Local comprehensive plans and amendments will be reviewed by the Met Council for conformance to

metropolitan system plans, consistency with Met Council policies, and compatibility with adjacent and affected governmental units. Updated local comprehensive plans are due to the Met Council for review by Dec. 31, 2028.

Forecasts

The Met Council uses the forecasts developed as part of Imagine 2050 to plan for regional systems. Communities should base their planning work on these forecasts. Given the nature of long-range forecasts and the planning timeline undertaken by most communities, the Met Council will maintain on-going dialogue with communities to consider any changes in growth that may have an impact on regional systems.

Imagine Forecasts for the City of Forest Lake

	2020 (actual)	2030	2040	2050
Population	20,611	23,000	26,000	28,400
Households	8,131	9,300	10,800	11,900
Employment	6,096	8,700	9,500	10,700

Housing Policy

The purpose of the Housing Policy Plan, adopted by the Metropolitan Council in February 2025, is to provide leadership and guidance on regional housing needs and challenges and to support Imagine 2050. The Housing Policy Plan provides an integrated policy framework that unifies our existing roles in housing and identifies opportunities to expand our role in supporting safe, affordable and dignified housing in the region.

Consistent with state statute (Minn. Stat. 473.859, subd. 2(c) and subd. 4), cities and townships must include a housing element and implementation program in their local comprehensive plans that address existing and projected housing needs.

The Met Council has determined the regional need for low-income housing for the decade of 2031-2040 (see Appendix B in the Housing Policy Plan).

Based on regional forecasts, the regional need for future affordable housing units is 39,700. Forest Lake's share of the region's future need for low-income housing is 600 new units of affordable housing. Of these new units, the need is for 327 affordable to households earning at or below 30% of AMI, 240 affordable to households earning 31% to 50% of AMI, and 33 affordable to households earning 51% to 60% of AMI.

Affordable Housing Need Allocation for the City of Forest Lake

	Units
At or below 30% AMI	327
31 to 50% AMI	240
51 to 60% AMI	33
Total Units	600

Future Affordable Housing Need allocations may be updated throughout the decade if local projected sewerage growth changes.

Forest Lake should consult the complete Housing Policy Plan when preparing its local comprehensive plan. In addition, Forest Lake should consult Imagine 2050 and the Local Planning Handbook for specific requirements necessary for the housing element and housing implementation programs of local comprehensive plans.

Climate Policy

In 2023, the State legislature amended the Metropolitan Land Planning Act ([Minn Stat. § 473.859, subd. 2 and 7](#)) to include new requirements that comprehensive plans address climate mitigation and adaptation. In climate policy, mitigation strategies focus on minimizing contributions to climate change through efficiency measures and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Adaptation strategies focus on how to change policies and practices to adjust to ongoing and future impacts of climate change.

The Met Council will assist communities in addressing climate mitigation and adaptation elements by providing communities with greenhouse gas inventories and technical assistance for identifying appropriate strategies.

Community Designation

Community designations group jurisdictions with similar characteristics for the application of regional policies. The Council uses community designations to guide regional growth and development; establish land use expectations including overall development densities and patterns; and outline the respective roles of the Council and individual communities, along with strategies for planning for forecasted growth. If there are discrepancies between the Imagine 2050 Community Designations Map and the Community Designation map contained within this systems statement, communities should follow the specific guidance contained in this document. Imagine identifies the City of Forest Lake with the community designations of Diversified Rural and Suburban Edge on the Community Designation map.

Diversified Rural cities and townships include some prime agricultural land and farms, as well as large-lot residential development and clustered housing. Most of these areas were developed just prior to 2000 with lower residential densities. This pattern of development is most conducive for future expansion of urban infrastructure, as some of these areas are within the Met Council's Long-Term Service Area. Considering the long-term plans for orderly growth of these areas, urbanized levels of residential development is discouraged to avoid premature demand for wastewater expansion, as are subdivisions that would preclude future urbanized development. Diversified Rural cities and townships may have more than one community designation based on forecasted growth and current or planned development patterns.

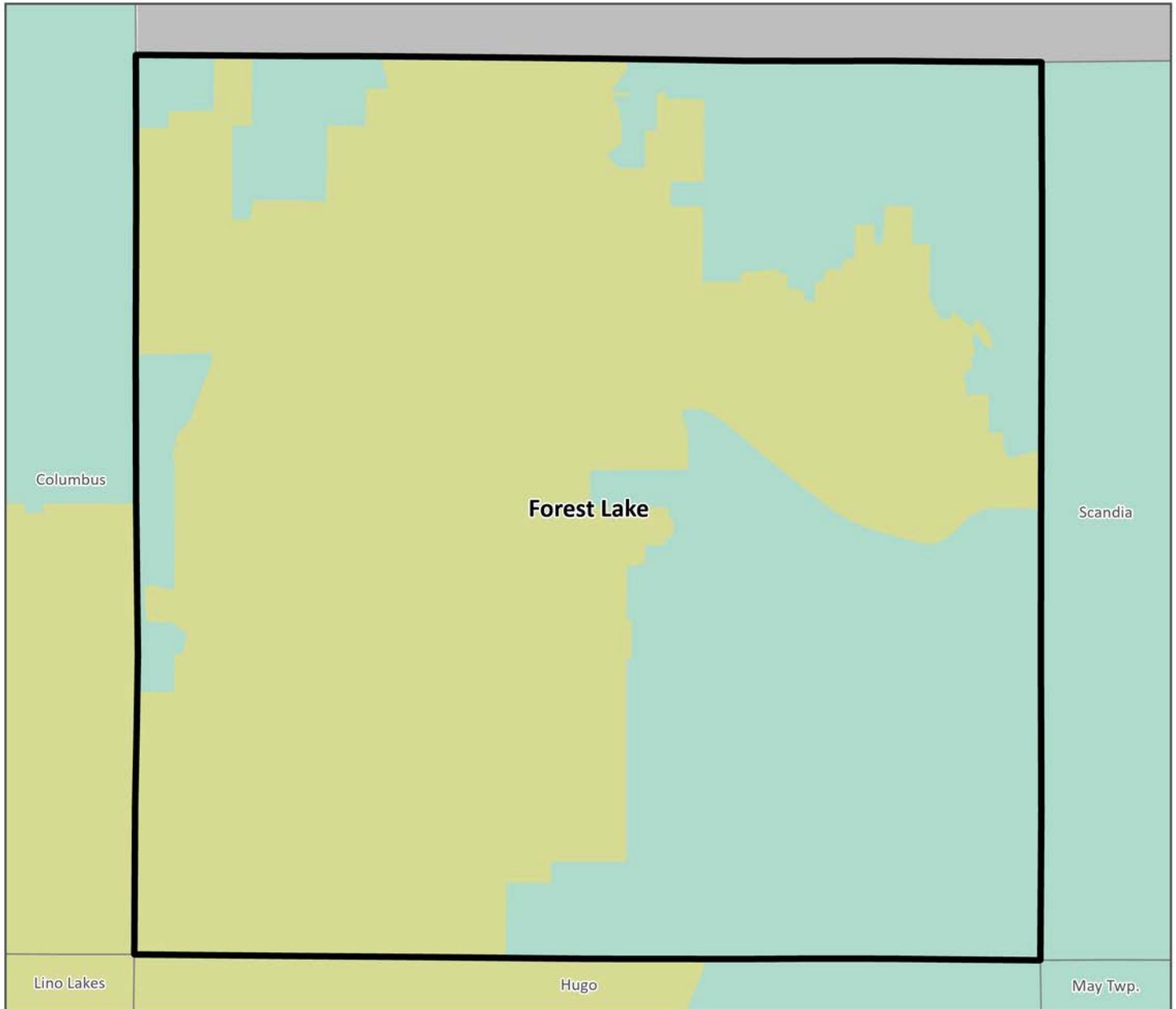
Suburban Edge municipalities are on the edge of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and primarily developed after the 1990s. While denser downtown or core areas are often present, the predominate development pattern is low or medium density residential subdivisions characterized by cul-de-sacs and limited access to major thoroughfares for traffic

movement. These areas also feature extensive undeveloped land planned for low to medium residential densities along with some areas guided for industrial and commercial uses, often near highway intersections. The planning challenge in Suburban Edge areas is to improve street connectivity and integrate sustainable development practices, ensuring that growth and conservation effectively coexist. Suburban Edge cities may have more than one community designation based on forecasted growth and current or planned development patterns. This happens generally when areas in a municipality either have an historic development pattern more appropriate for a different designation or portions of the municipality are not currently planned for future development and are still considered rural or agricultural in nature.

Specific strategies for Forest Lake can be found on your [Community Page](#) in the [Local Planning Handbook](#).

City of Forest Lake Community Designations

Suburban Edge, Diversified Rural



Urban Service Areas

- Urban
- Urban Edge
- Suburban
- Suburban Edge

Rural Service Areas

- Rural Center
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Residential
- Agricultural
- Non-Council Community

2050 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM STATEMENT CITY OF FOREST LAKE

Transportation Policy Plan Overview

The 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) is the metropolitan system plan for transportation—including highways, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, aviation, and travel demand management—to which local comprehensive plans must conform. It also includes regional transportation objectives, supporting policies and actions, and regional performance measures. The full TPP can be found at the following url:

<https://imagine2050.metrocouncil.org/chapters/transportation>.

This system statement summarizes the regional systems and any significant changes to them, other important regional transportation considerations, and changes made to the 2050 TPP since the 2040 TPP was adopted in 2015. Additionally, this system statement highlights those elements of the system plan that apply to your community. The TPP incorporates the policy direction and the new 2050 socioeconomic forecasts adopted by the Met Council in the regional development guide, Imagine 2050, and extends the planning horizon from 2040 to 2050.

Federal and State Requirements

The TPP meets both state requirements outlined in statute for a metropolitan system plan, and federal requirements as a fiscally constrained long-range investment plan for surface transportation. As the region has recently received a significant number of new and increased sources of transportation revenue, the 2050 TPP does not include an increased revenue scenario, but it does include additional opportunities for investment. The plan also continues to assume competitive transportation funding (e.g., state and federal discretionary programs like INFRA and Corridors of Commerce) will be sought and amended into the plan as awarded.

Under the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, local comprehensive plans are expected to conform to the projects currently identified as funded in the fiscally constrained plan, which is the official metropolitan system plan. The additional opportunities for investment may be identified separately in local plans as unfunded proposals.

Federal requirements also call for metropolitan transportation plans to be performance based, so the TPP includes objectives, policies, and actions for the regional transportation system. These objectives, policies, and actions guide the Met Council and regional partners in planning and investment in the surface transportation system.

In addition to reviewing this system statement, consult the TPP to ensure that your community's local comprehensive plan and plan amendments conform to the metropolitan transportation system plan. Communities should also review the Imagine 2050 Land Use Policy for land use considerations near certain transportation infrastructure. The format of this plan is different than past TPPs. The plan is no longer separated by chapter, rather each modal plan is distinguished from each other as individual investment or system plans. If the Met Council has a role in the funding of a regional system, the plan is identified as an

investment plan. If not, then it is identified as a system plan. There is no appendix in the 2050 TPP, supporting documentation is combined directly with the specific investment or system plan and identified as support documentation.

2050 Transportation Policy Plan Regional Systems

Adopted by the Met Council in February 2025, the TPP identifies the regional transportation systems, regional transportation objectives and policies, and other regional transportation issues communities should consider when producing their own comprehensive plans. This section will cover descriptions of each system and key changes made to these systems.

Regional Transportation Policies and Actions

In addition to identifying regional systems and investment needs, the TPP includes a set of policies and related actions to guide investments, planning and priorities for the regional transportation system. The policies and actions cover many topics including safety, highway planning priorities, complete streets, non-motorized transportation, equity, climate and natural systems. Communities are encouraged to incorporate regional policies in their local plans.

Regional Highway System

The Metropolitan Highway System is made up of principal arterials, shown in Figure 1 of the Highway Investment Plan and included with this system statement. This system is federally known as the National Highway System. The Metropolitan Highway System is a vital element of the regional transportation system; while minor arterials are lower order roadways that provide connectivity and relieve congestion in the principal arterial system. Principal and minor arterials combined represent the Regional Highway System.

Key Changes from the 2040 TPP

- A major shift from the previous TPP is that potential new revenues are no longer considered a means to resolve unmet needs on the system. The 2050 TPP does not have a current and increased revenue scenario as a result. Instead, it identifies funded projects in the fiscally constrained plan and additional opportunities beyond what is funded. Multiple studies completed since the 2040 TPP identified additional opportunities for investment, shown in figures 8 and 10.
- The 2050 TPP identifies highway investments in five major categories:
 - Safety: Figure 7 in the Highway Investment Plan shows regionally significant safety investments.
 - Spot mobility: Figure 8 in the Highway Investment Plan shows funded regionally significant spot mobility projects alongside identified additional opportunities for investment.
 - Interchanges: Figure 9 in the Highway Investment Plan shows funded and planned regionally significant interchange investments.
 - Managed lanes: Figure 10 in the Highway Investment Plan shows the existing, under construction and planned E-ZPass system. It also includes managed lane corridors which are identified as additional opportunities for investment.

- Targeted regional capacity: Figure 11 in the Highway Investment Plan shows funded and planned regionally significant highway capacity investments. It also includes potential future capacity enhancements identified in studies.
- Modifications were made to the 2050 TPP that removed appendix naming found in previous plans and reworks previous chapters. Support documents for the Highway Investment Plan include Functional Classification, Preliminary Interchange Approval Process, and Congestion Management Process. The project list appendix item is now a separate section of the TPP, titled Long Range Highway and Transit Capital Project List. This updated list identifies projects from 2025 to 2050.

Regional Transit System

The regional transit system comprises the region's transitways, regular route bus services, demand response services, transit centers and park and rides, and transit advantages. This system is operated by six different service providers in the region. The COVID-19 pandemic upended transit, and some services vary dramatically from pre-pandemic levels. Many routes were suspended in the region and are still in the process of restructuring.

Key Changes from the 2040 TPP

- A major shift from the previous TPP is from new revenues raised to fill budget gaps in the system. A new source of revenue for transit was created in 2023 to fund operations and maintenance for the region. Similar to highways, the Transit Investment Plan no longer contains a current and increased revenue scenario. The projects shown in the 2050 TPP are those in the fiscally constrained plan. Additional opportunities for investment are also identified in the plan and these may be incorporated into local comprehensive plans.
- Several transitways have been implemented and opened and additional transitways have been identified in the region. Multiple arterial bus rapid transit (BRT) routes are completed and operational, while more alignments have been identified in studies for future implementation. The Transit Investment Plan identifies investments planned to be implemented in the 2050 TPP:
 - Two light rail extensions (Green Line Extension, Blue Line Extension)
 - Two dedicated BRT routes (Gold Line, Purple Line)
 - Five arterial BRT routes (B Line, E Line, F Line, G Line, H Line)
- Modifications were made to the 2050 TPP that removed appendix naming found in previous plans and reworks previous chapters. Support documents for the Transit Investment Plan include Transit Design and Performance Guidelines.

Regional Aviation System

The regional aviation system includes Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, eight publicly owned regional airports, and two privately owned seaplane bases. These regional airports are owned and operated by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) and local communities.

Key Changes from the 2040 TPP

- The MAC completed an update to the Long-Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport in 2024. This update moves the planning horizon to 2040 with new operation forecasts, anticipated noise impacts and capital project needs.
- The Aviation System Plan now identifies all facilities beyond regional airports with aviation activity. These facilities may be incorporated into and considered in local planning. Aviation appendix items of the TPP are now included as a single support document titled Aviation Supporting Information.

Regional Bicycle System

The regional bicycle system is identified through the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN). It is made up of alignments and corridors. Corridors are shown where more specific alignments within those corridors have not yet been designated. The process used to develop the RBTN, the general principles and analysis factors used in its development, and studies done to analyze and update the network can be found in the Bicycle Investment Plan. The RBTN was established in the 2040 TPP to achieve the following goals:

- Establish an integrated and seamless network of on-street bikeways and off-road trails.
- Provide the vision for a “backbone” arterial network to serve daily bicycle trips by connecting regional destinations and local bicycle networks.
- Encourage cities, counties, park agencies, and the state to plan and implement future bikeways in support of the network vision.

The RBTN also incorporates regional bicycle barriers which are established in the TPP as the region’s most significant physical barriers to everyday bicycle travel. These barriers include freeways and expressways, railroad corridors, and secondary rivers and streams. They were developed and analyzed through the [Regional Bicycle Barrier Study](#). The barriers are included on the [Regional Bicycle Barriers Map](#).

Key Changes from 2040 TPP

- The RBTN has been refined and expanded since it was first implemented in the 2040 TPP. Requests from local governments to add and revise RBTN corridors and alignments prompted the [Regional Bicycle Guidelines and Measures Study](#), which developed specific measures to review updates and requests from local agencies.
- The RBTN undergoes a formal update of alignments and corridors about every two years. The next formal update will take place in 2025 prior to the 2026 Regional Solicitation.

Regional Freight System

The regional freight system includes interconnecting transportation modes, some of which are unique to freight and some which overlap with passenger travel modes. There are five distinct modes of freight transportation: highway trucks, railroads, river barges, air freight, and pipelines. Combined with intermodal or warehouse/distribution terminals and supporting

infrastructure, these modes of transportation comprise the regional freight system, known as the Metropolitan Freight System.

Key Changes from 2040 TPP

- E-commerce has become an increasingly important segment of freight movements and deliveries of goods to homes. The [Urban Freight Distribution Study](#) focused on e-commerce trends and impacts or opportunities of last-mile parcel deliveries in regional communities. The study notes that as urban deliveries become more common, local communities are encouraged to create curb management policies, consider delivery needs in their complete streets planning and identify microhubs for last-mile parcel distribution.

Pedestrian System

The Met Council coordinates with local partners on pedestrian issues and trends, and aids in funding for pedestrian needs.

Key Changes from 2040 TPP

- In the previous TPP pedestrian and bicycle travel were combined into one chapter and discussed together. The pedestrian system is now discussed and considered as an independent investment section.
- To address rising pedestrian danger on our streets, the Met Council developed the [Pedestrian Safety Action Plan](#) in 2022. It includes analysis of crash trends in the region, recommended actions to increase pedestrian safety, and a weighted crash score on every road to aid in future safety planning and project prioritization. Communities are encouraged to incorporate the plan's findings into the pedestrian elements of their comprehensive plans.

Travel Demand Management

Travel demand management (TDM) is the application of strategies, programs, and policies to increase the efficiency of transportation systems by reducing travel demand, or redistributing this demand in space or in time. These initiatives are intended to inspire new travel habits to support infrastructure investments while reducing the demand for personal vehicle trips.

Key Changes from 2040 TPP

- TDM has its own dedicated investment plan and discussion in the 2050 TPP. The section identifies key regional partners in TDM as well as their roles and responsibilities. Local communities are being asked to discuss how they include travel demand management strategies in their local plans, since some of them have relationships to land use controls and ordinances.
- The Met Council conducted the Regional Travel Demand Management Study in 2023. It concluded with the [Regional Travel Demand Management Action Plan](#). The action plan outlines structure for a regional TDM program to implement strategies, programs, and incentives to change travel behaviors and reduce single-occupant vehicle trips, vehicle-miles traveled, and greenhouse gas emissions. The action plan is summarized in the 2050 TPP Travel Demand Management Investment Plan.

System Plan Considerations Affecting Your Community

Your community should consult the complete TPP in preparing your local comprehensive plan. In addition, your community should consult Imagine 2050 and the current version of the Met Council's Local Planning Handbook (LPH) for specific comprehensive plan requirements. Specific system plan considerations affecting your community are detailed below.

Regional Highway System

There are principal arterials located within your community: Interstate 35 and US Highway 8.

The TPP includes programmed safety investments in your community, these investments can be seen on this system statement and in Figure 7. Communities should incorporate these investments in your local plans and consider local planning to support these investments on your local system.

Regional Transit System

Your community is located within the following Transit Market Area: TMA 3, TMA 4, and TMA 5.

- TMA 3: Mainly lower density Urban Edge and Suburban communities. It is characterized by lower density and less transit-supportive street networks and land use but with some pockets of denser development. Transit service in this market area includes suburban local routes, express and commuter service, and non-regular route transit services, usually dial-a-ride, providing basic transportation access.
- TMA 4: Mostly Suburban Edge communities along with portions of Suburban communities. It is characterized by low population and job densities that do not support frequent local transit service and a spread out, often circuitous, street network that hinders efficient routing. Transit service in Market Area IV is mainly peak-period express and commuter service at park-and-rides which can effectively gather the lower density transit demand into one spot. There are some suburban local routes, including suburb-to-suburb connectors, although service is typically very infrequent. Non-regular route transit, usually dial-a-ride, is generally available.
- TMA 5: Generally Rural communities including rural centers but also some suburban edge communities as well as freestanding town centers characterized by very low-density development or undeveloped land not well suited for regular-route transit service outside of limited peak-period express and commuter service.

Your community is located within the Transit Capital Levy District.

Regional Aviation System

All communities must include an aviation element in the transportation sections of their comprehensive plans. The degree of aviation planning and development considerations that need to be included in the comprehensive plan varies by community. Even those communities not impacted directly by an airport have a responsibility to include airspace protection in their comprehensive plan. The protection element should include potential hazards to air navigation

including electronic interference. Local comprehensive plans can also begin to consider other aviation uses which do not take place at airports, like drones.

Your community is within the influence area of Forest Lake Airport. The LTCP for this airport is shown in the Aviation Supporting Information document of the TPP. The full Forest Lake Airport LTCP is found in the 2040 Forest Lake Comprehensive Plan. An update to the Forest Lake LTCP should be included in the Forest Lake 2050 Comprehensive Plan. The update should incorporate any airport master plans, environmental review documents or other airport planning activities that have taken place since the 2040 Comprehensive Plan was completed. See the [Aviation System Plan Supporting Information](#) document for more details.

Communities influenced by airports should review the LTCP(s) to ensure that the updated comprehensive plan developed by the community remains consistent with the airport plans. Consult the LPH for specific comprehensive planning requirements and considerations such as airport zoning, noise and other environmental mitigation, airport development and economic impacts, ground access needs, infrastructure requirements, and general land use compatibility.

Local communities should also consider other facilities which may generate aviation activity, such as heliports or private air facilities. To see all aviation facilities in the region including those that are not defined as a part of the regional aviation system, refer to Figure 6 of the Aviation System Plan.

Regional Bicycle Planning

The RBTN is depicted on Figure 2 of the Bicycle Investment Plan. The network consists of Tier 1 and Tier 2 corridors and alignments. These are not intended to be the only bicycle facilities in the region. Local units should also include local network plans in their communities.

In your community there is 1 RBTN alignment. Your community should incorporate the RBTN map within your local bicycle plan maps and use your comprehensive planning process to identify suitable alignments within and along the RBTN corridors for future incorporation into the TPP. In addition, agencies should plan their local on and off-road bikeway networks to connect to the designated Tier 1 and Tier 2 alignments, as well as any new network alignments within RBTN corridors to be proposed in local comprehensive plans. Bikeway projects that complete segments of, or connect to, the RBTN are given priority for federal transportation funds through the Transportation Advisory Board's biannual regional solicitation.

In your community there are one or more identified bicycle barrier crossings. Please review the [Regional Bicycle Barriers Online Map](#) to determine which regional bicycle barriers and prioritized barrier crossing improvement locations are in your community. The tiered crossing improvement locations are used as one alternative criterion in the Regional Solicitation to distribute federal transportation funds. Communities are encouraged to analyze and address the need for new bicycle barrier crossings or improved bicycle facilities at existing barrier crossings.

Regional Freight Planning

The Met Council encourages all local governments to plan for freight movement in their communities. Trucks are the major mode of freight movement in the region and across the nation to distribute consumer goods as well as move manufactured goods and commodities, and they operate in every community.

The Metropolitan Freight System and the National Highway Freight Network are shown in Figures 1 and 5 of the Freight Investment Plan, respectively. The following regional freight facilities are in your community: Interstate 35. These networks and facilities should be incorporated into your local comprehensive plan. The local plan should also plan for compatible adjacent land uses, consider last-mile freight delivery needs and curb management strategies for local deliveries, if applicable. Refer to the *Urban Freight Distribution Study* for specific guidance on how to consider e-commerce and local deliveries on the local transportation system.

Other Transportation Policy Plan Considerations

Pedestrian Planning

The Met Council encourages local governments to address pedestrian needs for transportation in their local comprehensive plans. An adopted pedestrian, active transportation, or multimodal plan can be included as an addendum to or in addition to the comprehensive plan. This planning should also include ensuring your local community has a current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) self-evaluation that covers the public rights-of-way for transportation. Agencies with 50 or more employees must also have an adopted ADA transition plan, not just a self-evaluation.

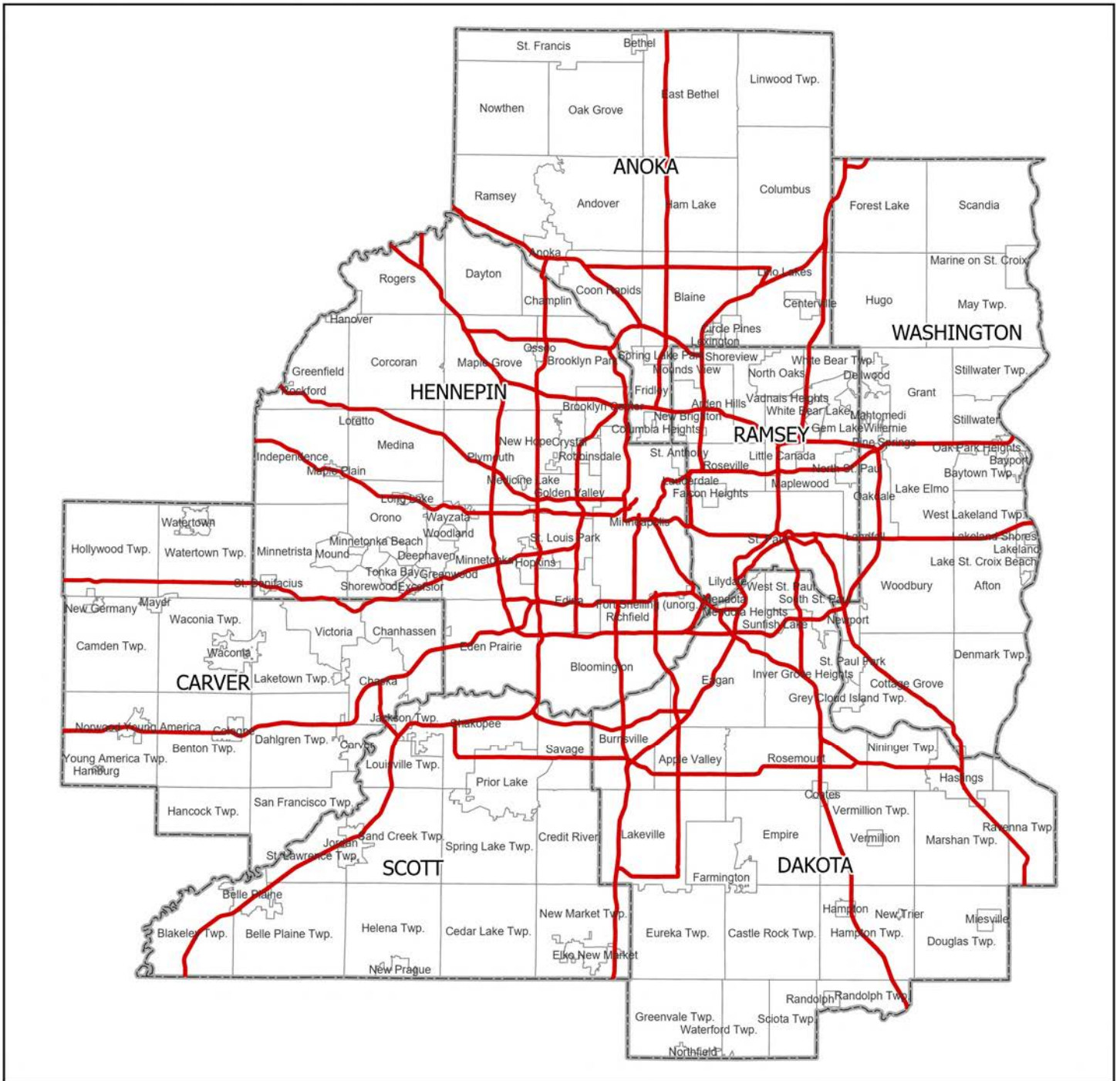
Travel Demand Management

The Met Council encourages local governments to address travel demand management needs for areas which experience traffic congestion. Your community is served by: Metro Transit Commuter Programs. Local governments should identify the transportation management organization which serves their community and describe any policies, ordinances, practices or programs in place which would aid in regional TDM work in their local comprehensive plans.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

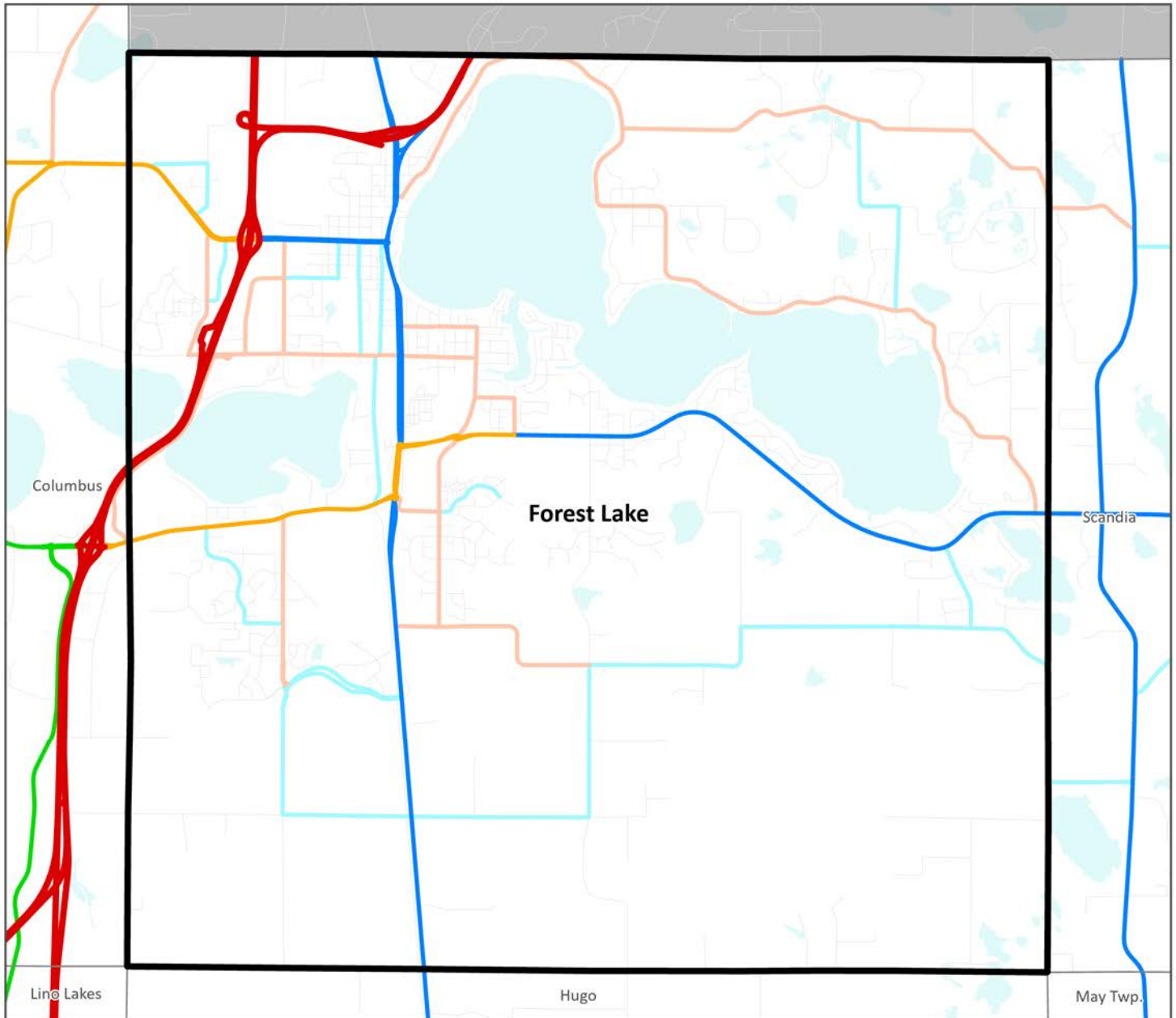
State law directs the Minnesota Department of Transportation to establish targets to meet greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction for the seven-county metro region to reach net-zero emissions in the transportation sector by 2050. Your community must include plans or strategies to limit GHG emissions on the surface transportation system in your comprehensive plan to meet the designated regional targets.

Principal Arterial Highways



 Principal Arterial Roads

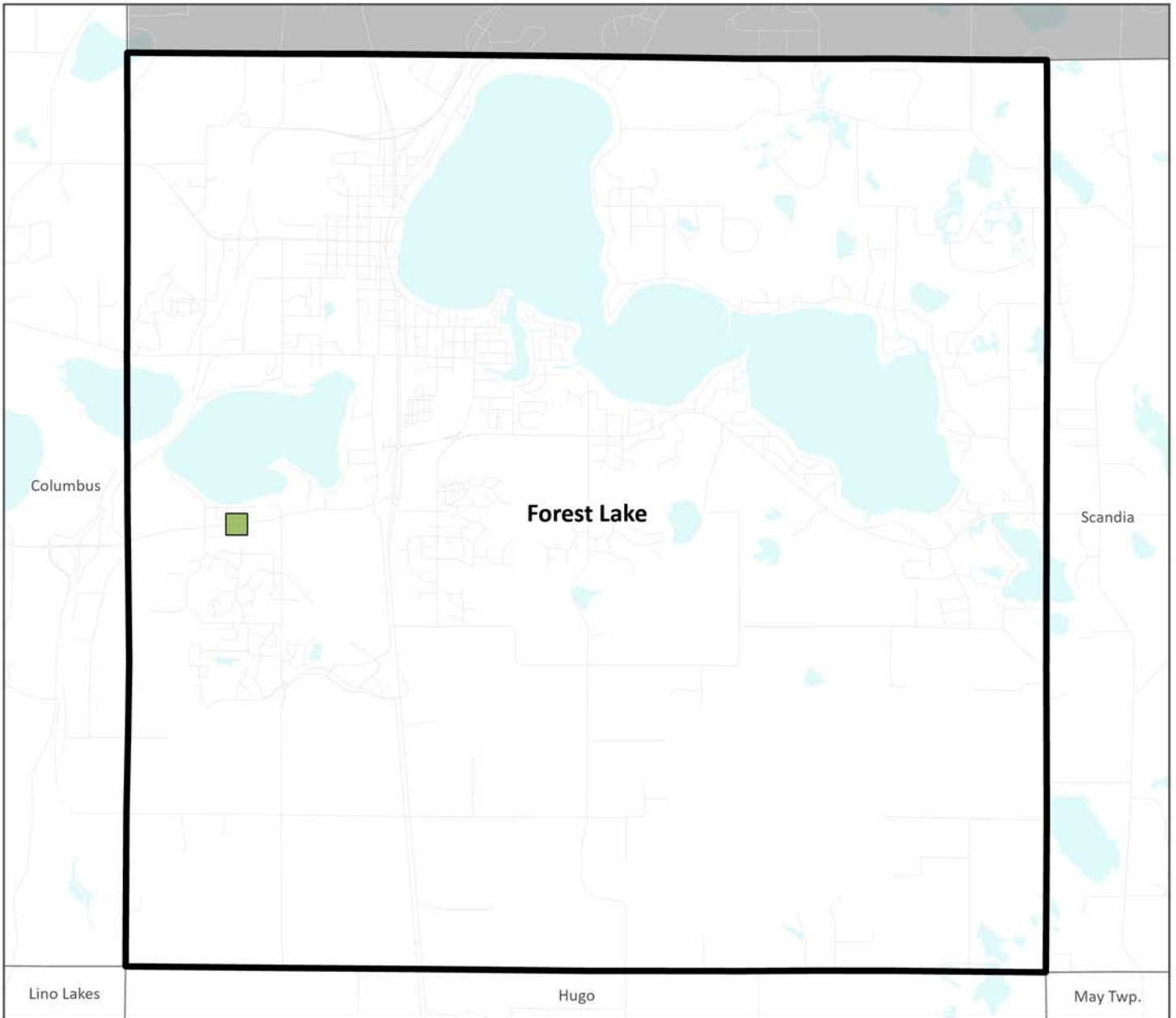
City of Forest Lake Functional Class - All Roads












Functional Class

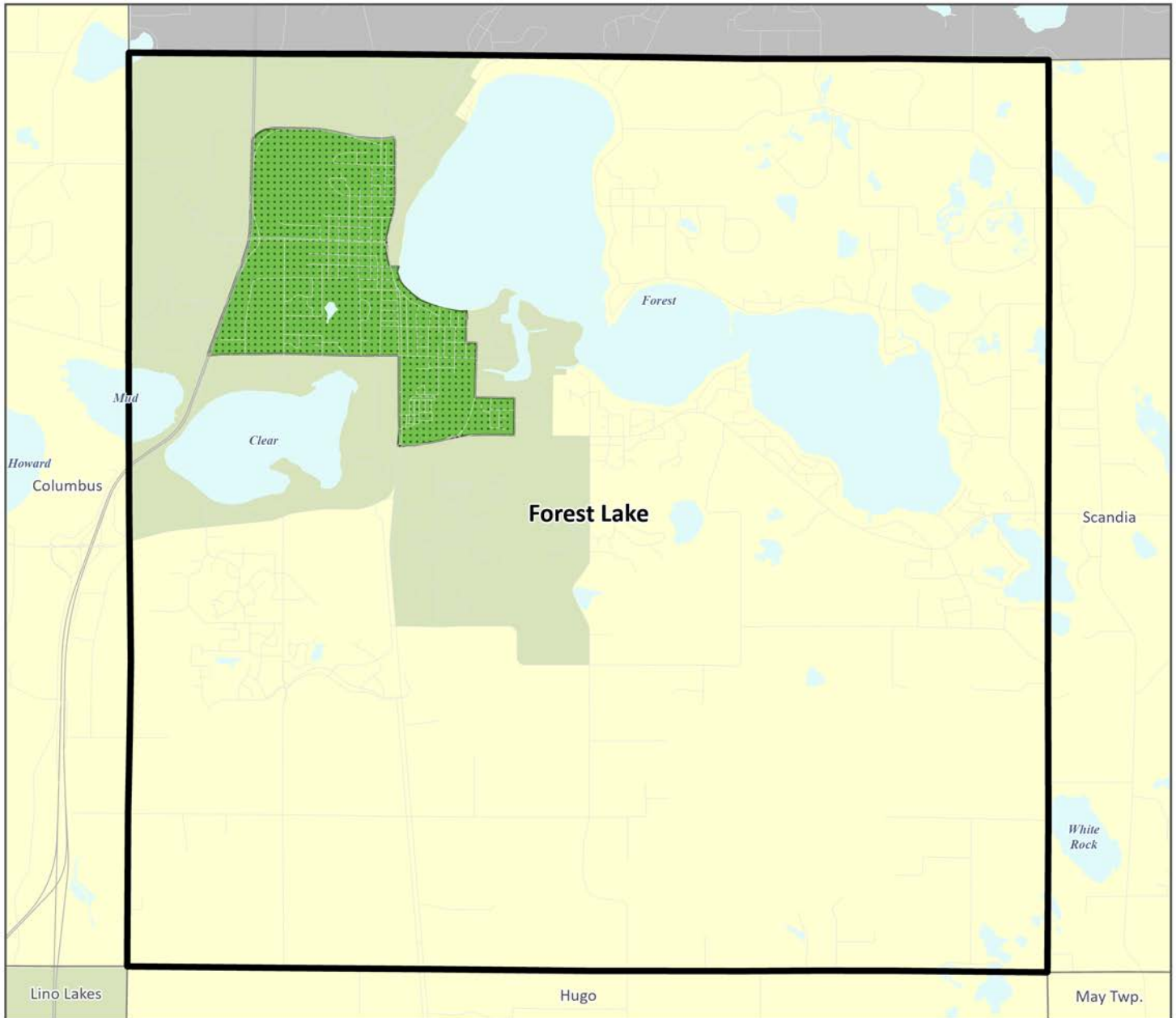
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial Augmentor
- Minor Arterial Reliever
- Minor Arterial Expander
- Minor Arterial Connector
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local Roads

City of Forest Lake Long Range Highway Projects



-  Interchanges
 -  Targeted Regional Capacity
 -  Safety
 -  Spot Mobility
- E-ZPass System**
-  Existing E-ZPass System
 -  Under Construction E-ZPass
 -  Planned Managed Lanes
 -  Under Study Managed Lanes
 -  Vision Managed Lanes

City of Forest Lake Transit Market Areas

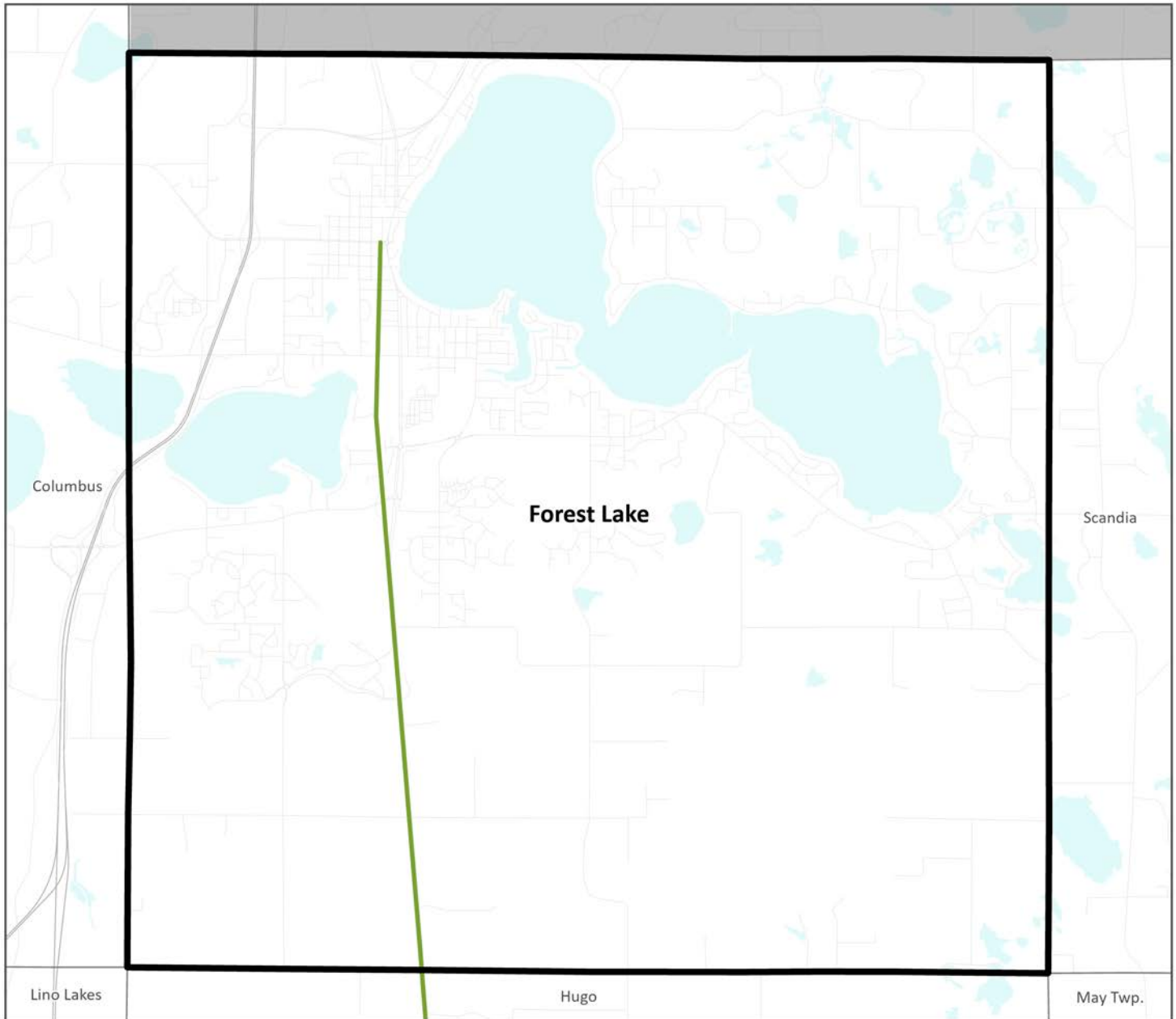


Transit Market Areas

- TMA 1
- TMA 2
- Emerging TMA 2
- TMA 3
- Emerging TMA 3
- TMA 4
- TMA 5

Freestanding Town Center

City of Forest Lake Regional Bicycle Transportation Network



Alignments

- Tier 1
- Tier 2

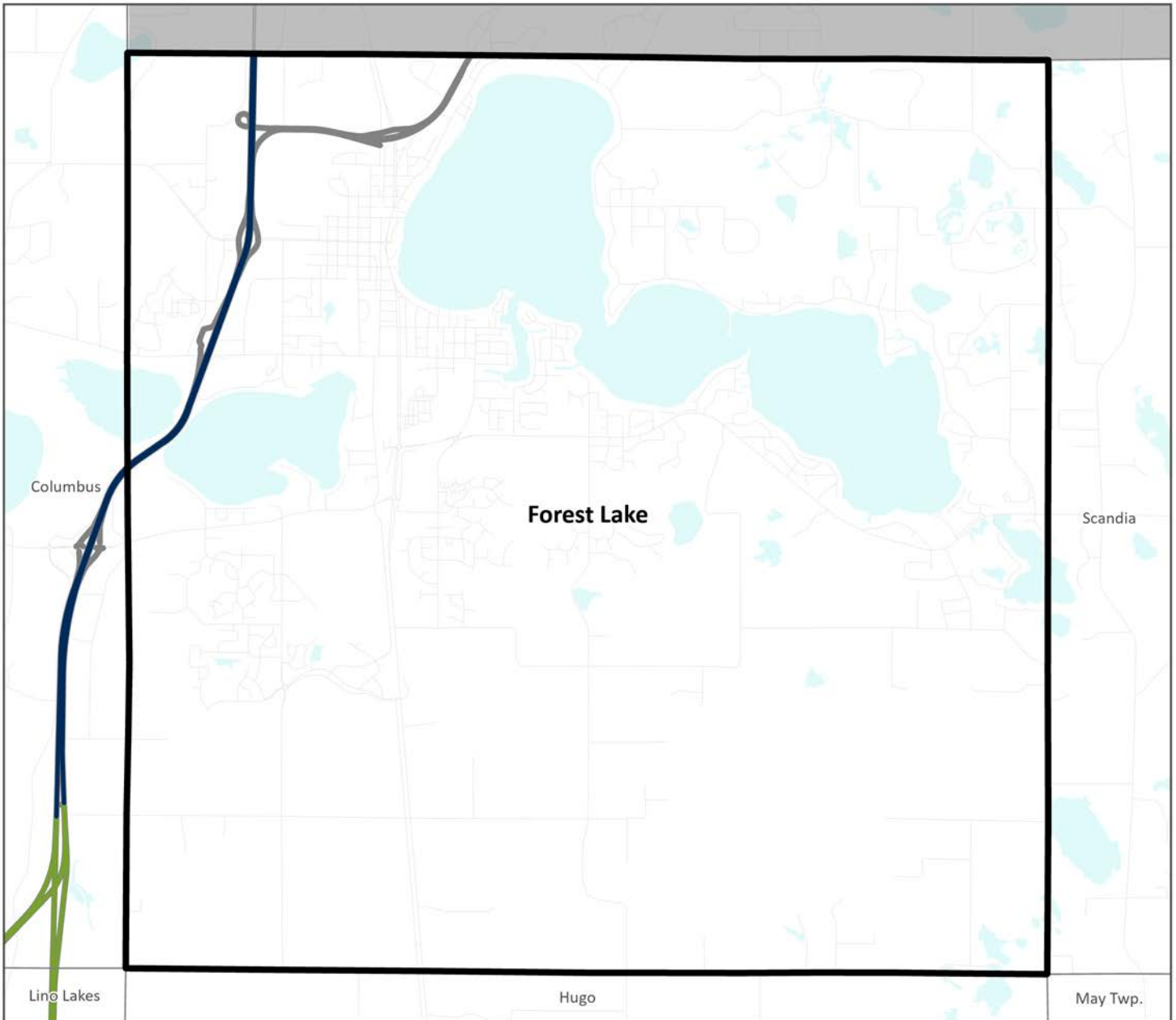
Corridors

- Tier 1
- Tier 2

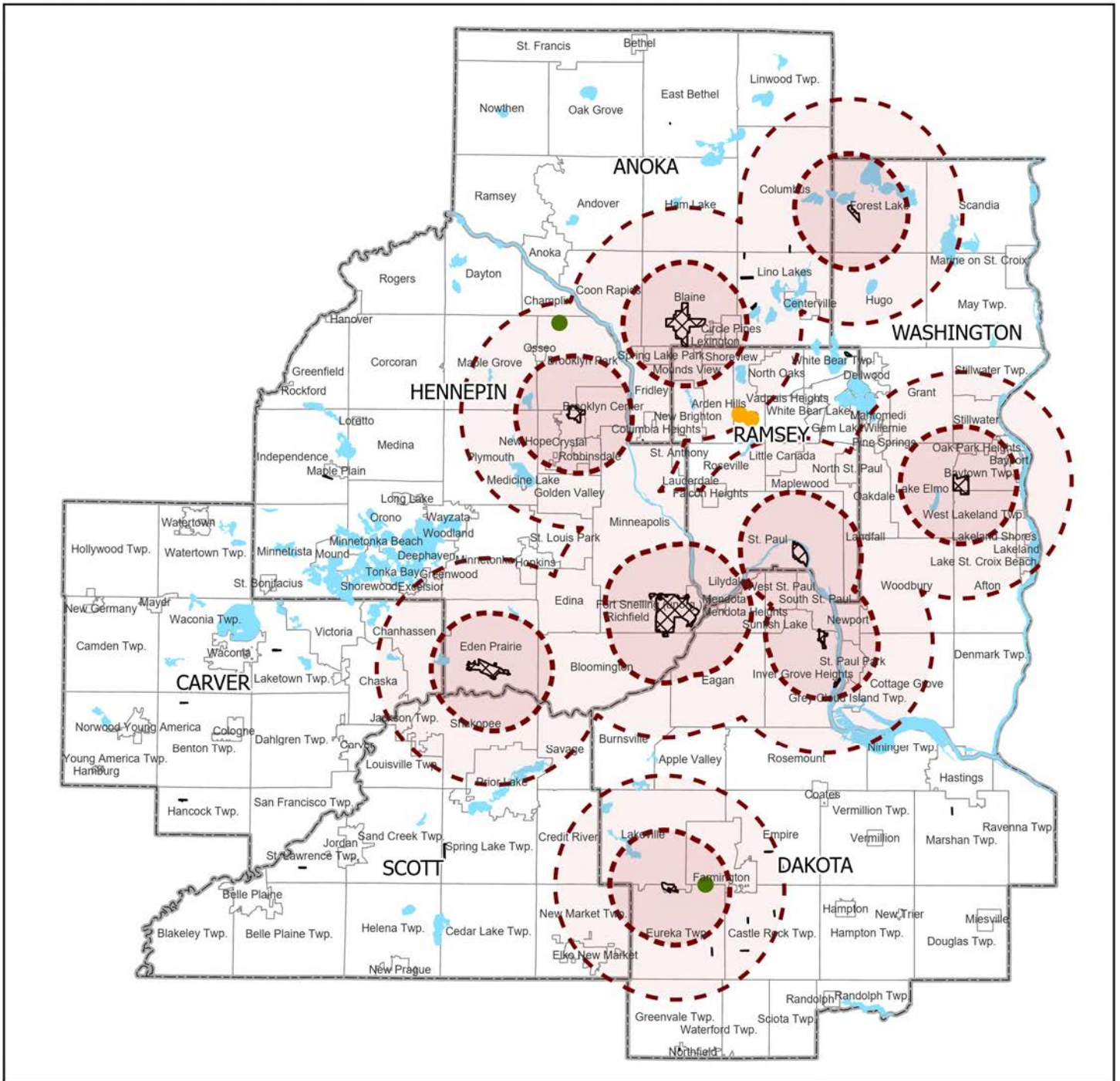
Regional Destination Subgroup

- Metropolitan Job Centers (> 50,000 Jobs)
- Regional Job Centers (15,000 - 50,000 Jobs)
- Subregional Job Centers (7,000 - 15,000 jobs)
- ◆ Colleges & Universities (>2,000 Students)
- ◆ Large High Schools (> 2,000 Students)
- Major Sports & Entertainment Centers
- ▲ Regional Parks (> 400,000 visits/year)

City of Forest Lake Metropolitan Freight System



Regional Aviation System and Airport Influence Areas



- Tall Tower
- VOR
- ⊞ 3 Mile Airport Influence Area - Noise, Zoning, Infrastructure
- ⊞ 6 Mile Airport Influence Area - Landfills, Wind Towers
- ⊞ Airport Land Area
- Aircraft Permitted Water

2025 WATER RESOURCES SYSTEM STATEMENT CITY OF FOREST LAKE

Water Policy Plan Overview

The 2050 Water Policy Plan includes policies and strategies to achieve four objectives that support our regional goals:

- **CLIMATE:** The region's waters and water services are protected from and made resilient to the ongoing and future effects of climate change.
- **INVESTMENTS:** Water protection, planning, management, and infrastructure investments are optimized to ensure public and ecosystem health are fully protected now and for future generations.
- **HEALTH:** Natural waters, source waters, water services, and infrastructure are managed, restored, and enhanced to protect public and ecosystem health that ensures a high quality of life in the region.
- **EQUITY:** The benefits of clean and abundant water and water services are defined by local needs and environmental context, accessible, and justly shared by all residents and communities.

These objectives help to protect our region's groundwater and surface water, ensure the sustainability of water sources and utility service providers, support public and ecosystem health, and promote a thriving economy, sound development decisions, and a high quality of life for all who call this region home.

The Water Policy Plan strives to generate innovative actions, including water reuse, resource recovery, and nature-based approaches, that have multiple benefits at both the local and regional scales. Additionally, the plan includes policies and strategies to address the impacts of climate change, equitable access to water benefits, and water sector workforce concerns. The region has a strong history of water planning and management, and the 2050 Water Policy Plan continues this tradition. It progresses our organization and the region to ensure clean and abundant water for current and future generations.

Key Concepts

Adopted by the Metropolitan Council in February 2025, the 2050 Water Policy Plan - including the regional water policies, Wastewater System Plan, and the Metro Area Water Supply Plan - outline the conditions for regional wastewater service, surface water management, and water supply planning. Local comprehensive plans shall conform to these conditions. The Policy Plan incorporates the following changes:

Integrated Planning (next steps)

The Water Policy Plan is a guide for managing wastewater, water supply, surface waters, and groundwater. It takes an integrated approach to water planning and management from local to federal and Tribal levels, which helps to ensure a clean and plentiful water future. Water planning organizations need to work together to address issues that transcend political boundaries to achieve holistic water management.

Subregional Approach to Planning

The Met Council is committed to continuing and broadening the subregional approach to integrated water planning. Subregional groups will be expanded to include stakeholders from Tribal Nations, state agencies, county planning staff, municipal public works and planning staff, watershed organizations, non-governmental organizations, and others who want to participate in discussions about localized, integrated water concerns.

Water Equity

The Water Policy Plan prioritizes equitable access to clean water and water services, especially for historically marginalized communities. Reaching these outcomes requires initiatives such as prioritizing investments in overburdened communities, addressing historical harms, creating accessible information and communications, and including diverse perspectives of community members in water planning and management decisions.

Climate and Natural Systems

The Water Policy Plan includes climate and natural systems objectives, policies, and actions, which guide the Met Council and communities to employ approaches that lead to sustainable water and water services. This includes building water resiliency, limiting risks, and benefiting a growing and a thriving economy through convening partners, new tools and technologies, water conservation and protection efforts, and water planning and technical assistance.

Considerations Affecting Your Community

Regional Sewer Service

The treatment of wastewater is foundational to ensure public health and protect the region's natural environments. Reclamation of water and byproducts from the wastewater treatment process can help our region meet sustainability and climate goals. To operate and steward the regional wastewater system, it is essential for the Met Council to understand local conditions, identify current and future needs, and take innovative approaches to address the region's water sustainability challenges.

Local governments are required to submit both a wastewater plan element to their comprehensive plan and a comprehensive sewer plan describing service needs from the Met Council (Minnesota Statutes 473.513). A complete list of requirements for the comprehensive sewer plan, depending on wastewater service methods in your community, can be found in the Water Resources section of the [Local Planning Handbook](#).

Forecasts

The forecasts of population, households, employment, and wastewater flows for Forest Lake can be found on your Community Page in the Local Planning Handbook. These forecasts are for sewer development. The sewer forecasts were estimated using Met Council's census block forecast data, individual and communal sewage treatment system data, Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) data, annual city reports, current trends, existing and future local wastewater service areas and other municipal information. The wastewater flows are based on historical wastewater flow data, future wastewater generation rates, and the sewer population and employment forecast data.

The Met Council will use these growth and wastewater flow forecasts to plan future regional wastewater conveyance and treatment system improvements needed to serve your community.

Forest Lake, through its comprehensive planning process, must decide the location and staging of development, and then plan and design its local wastewater collection system to serve this development.

Wastewater Service

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (Environmental Services) designs, constructs, and operates the regional wastewater system (Metropolitan Disposal System): a publicly owned system of regional sanitary sewers and water resource recovery facilities (wastewater treatment plants), for the conveyance, treatment and disposal of domestic waste, industrial waste and other waste from residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial users in the metropolitan area. The regional wastewater system currently serves 111 communities and through its work it protects public health, protects the environment, and fosters the economic growth of the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

A Regional Sanitary Sewer System map is provided to assist in the completion of your community's comprehensive sewer plan. The map shows Environmental Services' wastewater infrastructure located within your community's boundaries, if your community is provided regional wastewater service.

A complete list of items required for inclusion in your community's comprehensive sewer plan, depending on wastewater service methods in your community, can be found in the Local Planning Handbook. A comprehensive plan will be found incomplete for review if all submittal requirements are not met.

If your community has multiple methods of wastewater service (including regional service, local (municipal) wastewater treatment system, private communal systems, and/or subsurface sewage treatment systems), review the information in each corresponding section and refer to the Local Planning Handbook for a complete list of requirements that must be included in the comprehensive sewer plan for these systems. We strongly encourage you to include this information in a water chapter of your comprehensive plan.

Areas Served by the Regional System

Current wastewater treatment services are provided to the City by Environmental Services. All wastewater generated within the City is conveyed through Met Council Interceptors 7029 and 7029A. All flow is treated at the Metropolitan Water Resource Recovery Facility in St. Paul.

Regional Inflow and Infiltration Program

The Met Council is continuing implementation of its inflow and infiltration (I/I) reduction program and will continue to establish I/I goals for all communities discharging wastewater to the regional wastewater system. Communities that have excessive I/I in their sanitary sewer systems will be required to eliminate the excessive I/I. Those communities will be required to submit a work plan that details work activities to identify and eliminate I/I sources from both municipal and private sources. The Met Council will not design future regional sanitary sewer improvements or water resource recovery facilities to handle peak hourly flows in excess of the allowable rate for your community. Increases in service may be limited in communities that do not demonstrate progress in reducing excess I/I.

Two grant programs are currently available for communities with excessive I/I in their sanitary sewer systems: The Municipal Inflow and Infiltration Grant Program and the Private Property Inflow and Infiltration Grant Program. It is recommended that communities review these programs and determine if participation fits into their I/I work plan. The Municipal Inflow and Infiltration Grant Program is based on annual legislative action and funding amount and availability may vary year to year.

Areas Served by Local Wastewater Treatment System

The requirements of this element do not apply because Forest Lake does not have a local wastewater treatment system.

Areas Served by Private Communal Treatment Systems and/or Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems

The Met Council's position is that private communal wastewater treatment systems should only be permitted in areas not programmed for regional sewer service in the foreseeable future and they are provided for in a community's comprehensive plan. The community is responsible for permitting all private communal or cluster wastewater treatment systems consistent with current Minnesota Pollution Control Agency standards (Minnesota Rules Chapter 7080-7083). The Met Council will not provide financial support to assist communities if these systems fail.

Communities with individual subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS), commonly known as septic systems, must adopt a management program consistent with current Minnesota Pollution Control Agency regulations (Minnesota Rules Chapter 7080-7083). A description of the management plan and current SSTS ordinance must be included in the community's comprehensive sewer plan.

Surface Water Management

The metro region consists of hundreds of miles of rivers, streams, thousands of acres of wetlands, and nearly a thousand lakes. These surface waters define our region. They are where we play, exercise, find peace, and celebrate with friends and family. They support the region's ecosystems and biodiversity. They provide drinking water for the region's residents and energy for industry. They are critical transportation corridors and places to recreate, fueling local economies. Yet these waters are threatened by complex issues like ongoing pollution stress, climate change, and unsustainable development pressures. Comprehensive community planning includes surface water planning to ensure the region's residents, businesses, and ecosystems can benefit from clean and abundant water.

In 1995, Minnesota Statutes Section 473.859, subd. 2 was amended to make the local water plan (often referred to as local surface water management plans) required by Section 103B.235 a part of the land use plan of the local comprehensive plan. Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410, updated in July of 2015, includes the requirements for local water management plans. All communities in the metro region must update their local water plan between Jan. 1, 2027 and Dec. 31, 2028. This means that Forest Lake must update its local water plan as part of the comprehensive plan update. The community's updated local water plan should be submitted to the Met Council for its review concurrent with the review by the local watershed management organizations.

The Surface Water Features map shows the watershed management organizations, Comfort Lake Forest Lake WD and Rice Creek WD, that have jurisdiction in Forest Lake.

Failure to have an updated local water plan approved by your watershed management organizations will result in the comprehensive plan being incomplete for review. Local water plans shall be submitted to the Met Council for review in the timeframe described above, comments are sent from the Met Council to the appropriate watersheds for inclusion in their review and approval of the plan, and finally the plan is approved by the appropriate watersheds.

Local water plans must meet the requirements for local water plans in Minnesota Statutes, section 103B.235 and Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410. In general, local water plans need to include a summary of the priorities and problems in the community; structural, nonstructural and programmatic actions to take to address the priorities and problems; and clearly identified funding mechanisms to fix the problems.

More detailed guidance for the local water plans can be found in Appendix A of the [2050 Water Policy Plan](#) and in the Met Council's current Local Planning Handbook.

Priority Waters List

The Met Council updated its Priority Waters List (formerly Priority Lakes List) in July 2022. This new version includes rivers, lakes, and streams. With more than 950 lakes and hundreds of miles of rivers and streams in the region, waterbodies needed to be prioritized to adequately dedicate staff and financial resources. The Met Council uses the Priority Waters List to focus

its limited resources. The list is also used in the environmental review process. The Surface Water Features map and Priority Waters List table show the priority waters for Forest Lake.

When using this Priority Waters List, for projects near a specific waterbody, we recommend you connect with local residents to understand how they value and interact with the waterbody. The Twin Cities region is home to many diverse communities with different cultural and personal relationships to water, so it's important to incorporate those perspectives in addition to the Priority Waters List when working on local-scale projects. Communities should identify the Priority Waters and the projects and/or programs that will protect or restore these waters.

The Water Contamination and Impaired Waters map includes any water bodies that are on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's 303d Impaired Waters List.

Table of Priority Waters for the City of Forest Lake

Waterbody Type	Name	DNR Lake ID	DNR Kittle Number
Lake	Clear	82016300	---
Lake	Forest	82015900	---
Lake	Mud	82016800	---
River/stream	Rice Creek	---	M-059

Water Supply

Water supply is not a regional system. However, water supply information is required for local comprehensive plan updates to meet statutory requirements and for consistency with regional policy.

To ensure that there is a safe and plentiful supply of water—for a wide range of residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, recreational, and other purposes—it is important to make sure local water supply sources, infrastructure, and planned investments are aligned with planned land use changes.

The Met Council recognizes the local responsibility and authority for water supply planning. However, a regional perspective is also valuable, because the effects of local water supply decisions do not stop at community boundaries. The Met Council provides regional planning, guidance, and resources to support communities and help safeguard our shared water resources.

Water supply plan-related requirements generally include:

- Clearly identifying the locations of water sources and amount of water that is currently used and is planned to be used for things like agriculture, homes, businesses, industries, and other public and private purposes. This includes areas that affect those water sources, such as source water protection areas.
- Creating a program for how to implement local rules and regulations about water supply, including when and how these rules will be developed, adopted, and administered.

Communities served by a municipal community public water supply system must fulfill part of these requirements by attaching a local water supply plan approved by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as an appendix to the comprehensive plan.

The Water Supply Considerations map illustrates some key content for your community, including Drinking Water Supply Management Areas, Special Well and Boring Construction Areas, and Priority Waters qualifying as drinking water sources.

We strongly encourage you to include any required information that isn't in the local water supply plan—such as source water protection and privately-owned wells—in a water chapter of your comprehensive plan.

A customized checklist of minimum requirements for your community is included in the Local Planning Handbook, along with resources to help you meet and go beyond minimum requirements.

Source Water Protection

Your comprehensive plan should consider water use (including water supply sources) as part of land use planning, to promote land use practices and development decisions that protect public health for your community and the region. Include information about the location of both groundwater and surface water source water protection areas and their vulnerability for all community public drinking water source(s) within your community's borders and associated contaminant threats. Also include a commitment to collaborate with neighbors on source water protection, when applicable.

Privately-Owned Wells and Nonmunicipal Public Water Supply Systems

Your comprehensive plan should include information about the current and planned use and management strategies for privately-owned wells and nonmunicipal public water supply systems, because people, institutions, and businesses in your community use those sources for a wide range of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and/or other nonmunicipal purposes.

If a new municipal community public water supply system is planned by 2050, a water chapter of the updated comprehensive plan should include details about the planned system.

Municipal Community Public Water Supply Systems

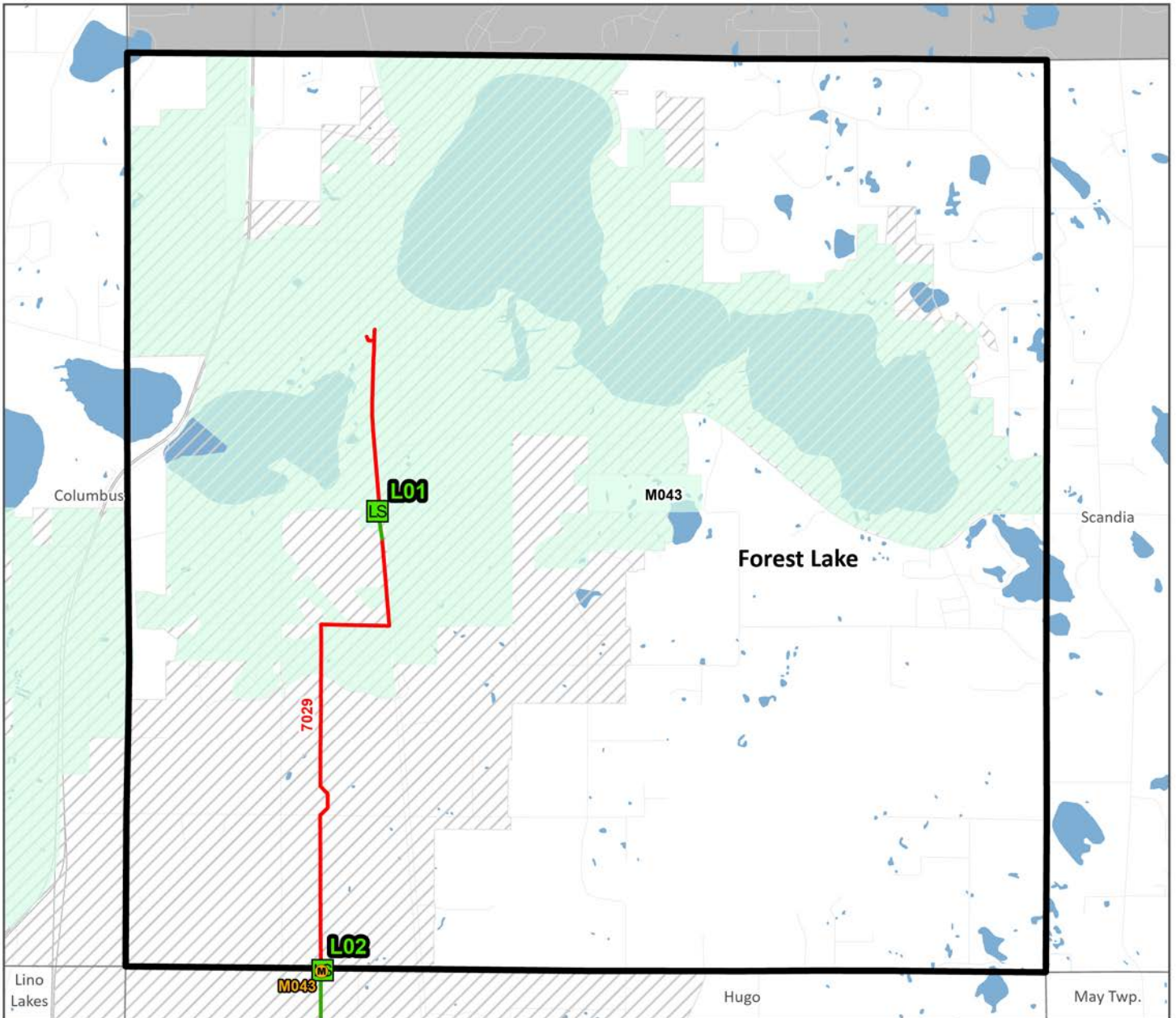
Water Supply System Information

Because people, institutions, and businesses in your community get water through a municipal community public water supply system, you must include information about that system and an implementation program in your comprehensive plans, to demonstrate the availability of clean, safe drinking water to meet projected water demand consistent with the Met Council's forecasts.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)-approved local water supply plan for the municipal public water supplier providing service to your community must be attached as an appendix to the comprehensive plan. To ensure that the DNR-approved local water supply plan is consistent with regional policies and is compatible with adjacent and affected governmental units, you should provide the Met Council and adjacent and affected jurisdictions with the opportunity to review and comment on your draft local water supply plan update.

Failure to include an updated local water supply plan approved by the DNR will result in the comprehensive plan being incomplete for review until the required plan is submitted to the Met Council.

City of Forest Lake Regional Sanitary Sewer System



- Meters
- Lift Station

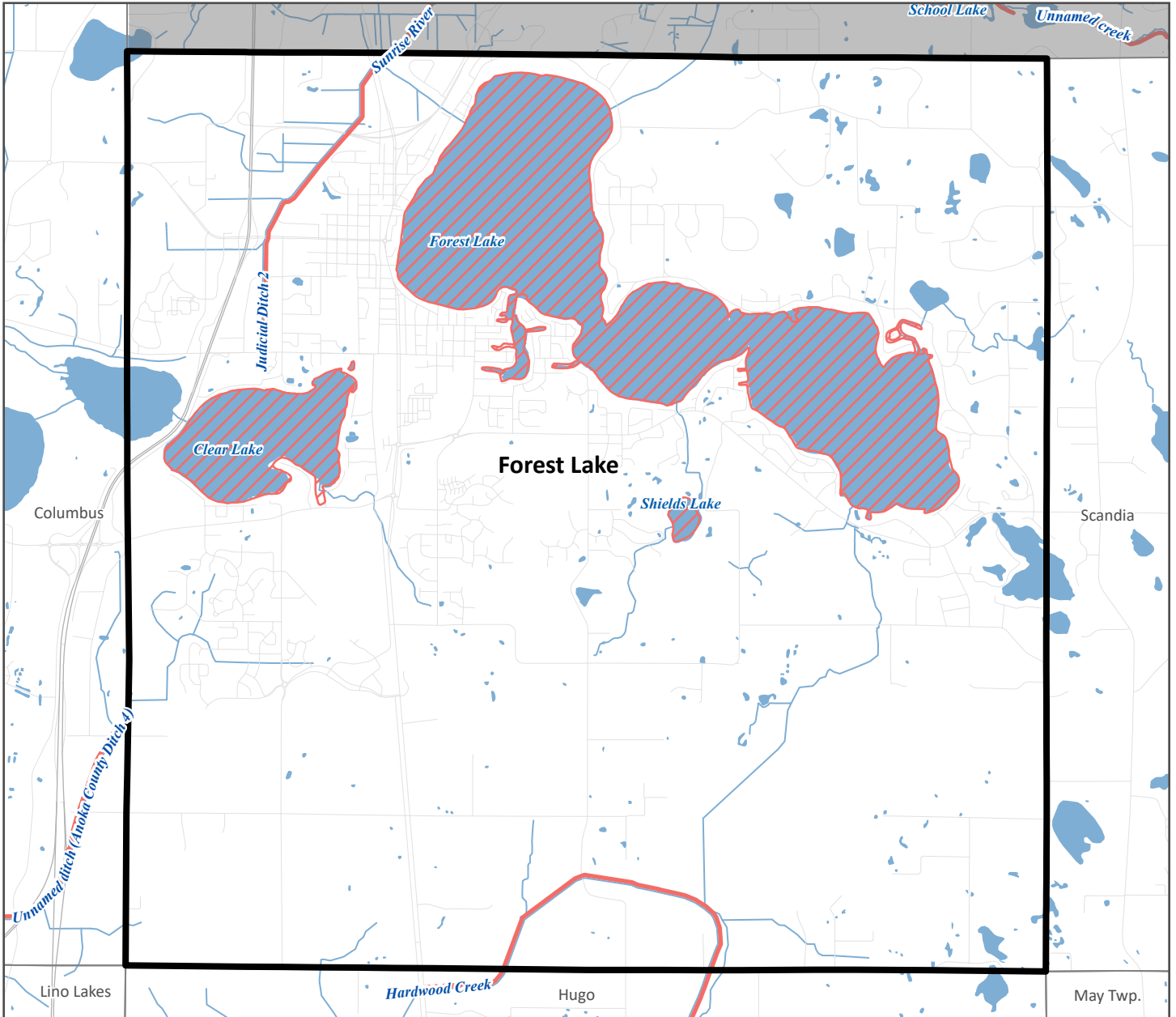
- Regional Sewer**
- Gravity
- Forcemain

2050 MUSA




Sewer Service Areas

To Meter M###	Not Served
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City of Forest Lake Water Contamination and Impaired Waters



Minnesota Groundwater Contamination Atlas

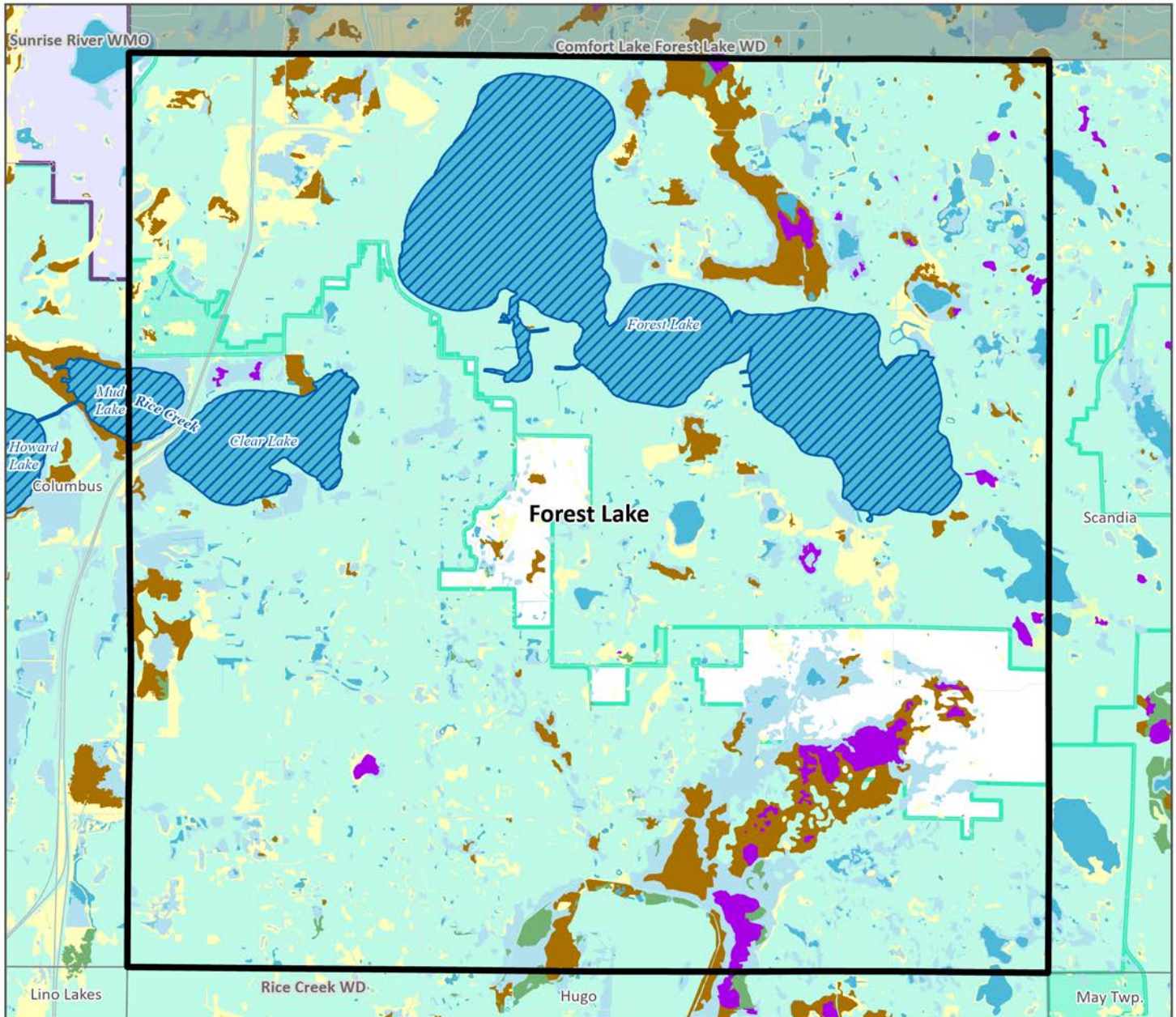
-  High Confidence Boundary
-  Low Confidence Boundary
-  Groundwater area of concern *

Minnesota's 2024 Impaired Waters List

-  Impaired Rivers or Streams
-  Impaired Lake

* darker shades of purple represent multiple overlapping areas of concern

City of Forest Lake Surface Water Features



Watershed Management Type

-  County Administered Planning
-  Watershed District (WD)
-  Watershed Management Organization (WMO)

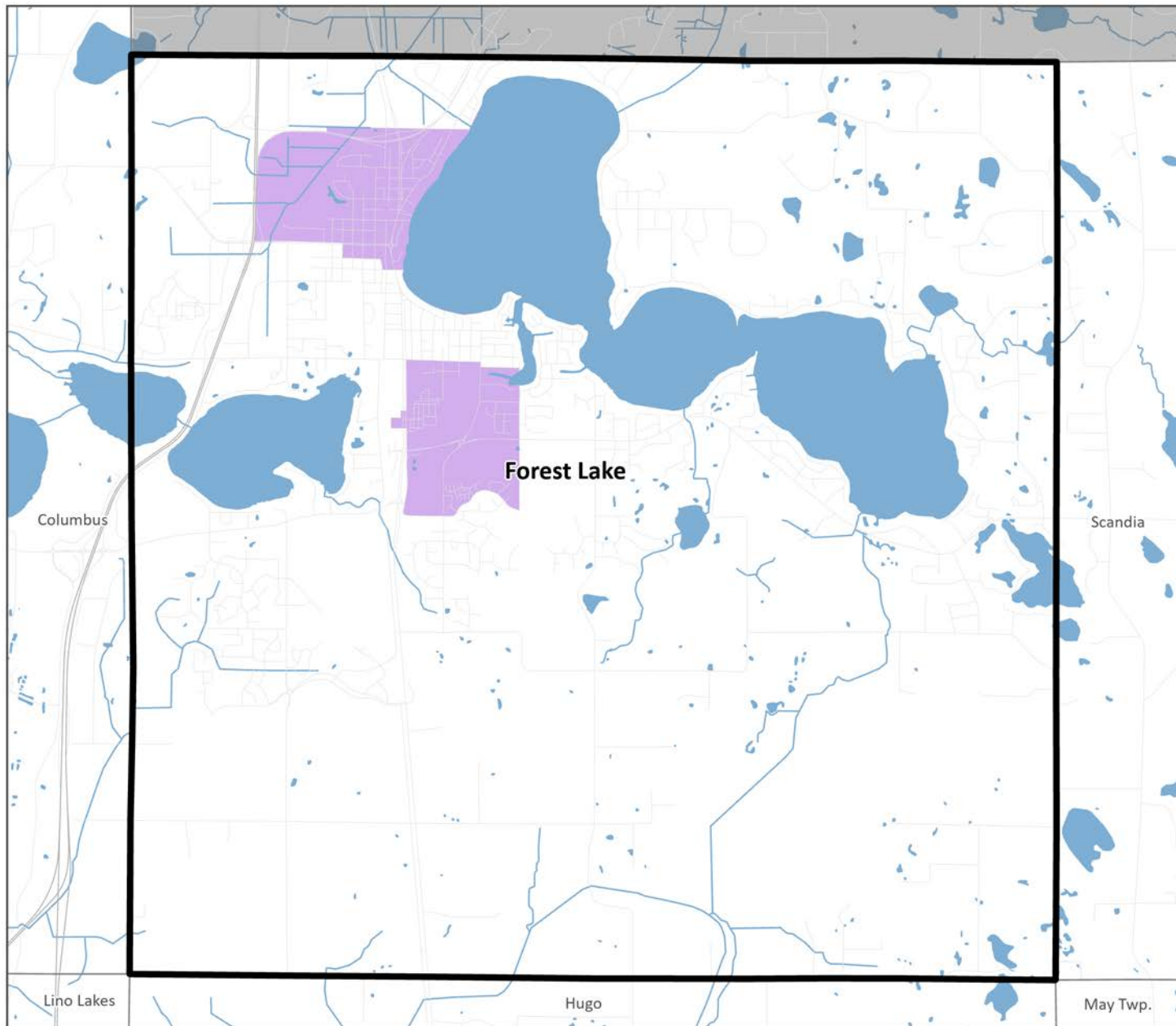
Wetland Type

-  Seasonally Flooded Basin or Flat
-  Wet Meadow
-  Shallow Marsh
-  Deep Marsh
-  Shallow Open Water
-  Shrub Swamp
-  Wooded Swamp
- Bog

Priority Water

-  Priority River or Stream
-  Priority Lake

City of Forest Lake Water Supply Considerations



Drinking Water Supply Management Areas for Groundwater (DWSMA)

- High Vulnerability
- Moderate Vulnerability
- Low Vulnerability

Drinking Water Supply Management Areas for Surface Water (DWSMA)

- Surface Water DWSMA Priority Area A
- Special Well and Boring Construction Area
- Priority river or stream qualifying as a drinking water source
- Priority lake qualifying as a drinking water source

REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS SYSTEM STATEMENT CITY OF FOREST LAKE

Overview of the Regional Parks and Trails System

The Regional Parks and Trails System includes 66 regional parks, park reserves, and special features, plus more than 487 miles of regional trails that showcase the unique landscapes of the region and provide year-round recreation. The Regional Parks and Trails System is well-loved by our region's residents and attracted over 69 million visits in 2023.

The organizational structure of the Regional Parks and Trails System is unique, built upon a strong partnership between the Met Council and the ten regional park implementing agencies that own and operate Regional Parks and Trails System units. The regional park implementing agencies are:

Anoka County	Ramsey County
City of Bloomington	City of Saint Paul
Carver County	Scott County
Dakota County	Three Rivers Park District
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Washington County

The 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan advances the Imagine 2050 regional goals and core values including Equity, Leadership, Accountability, and Stewardship by striving to:

- **Foster equity and belonging:** Connect people with nature, community, and cultural landscapes to better support their physical, mental, and emotional well-being
- **Take care of what we have:** Reinvest in existing regional parks and trails to maintain and enhance visitor experiences
- **Protect and restore:** Protect and restore natural systems to safeguard the well-being of all living things
- **Adapt and mitigate:** Increase the region's resilience to climate change through land stewardship practices that mitigate greenhouse gases and adapt to future climates
- **Meet future needs:** Meet the growing demand for regional parks and trails through strategic and timely land acquisition and development.

Key Concepts in the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan

The 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan includes the following policies, each with specific associated strategies:

- **System Plan policy:** Maintain a robust and current set of data, maps, plans, processes, and applications to support regional parks and trails planning.
- **Natural Systems policy:** Identify lands with high-quality natural features and/or with high restoration potential that are desirable for Regional Parks and Trails System activities and put these lands in a protected status so they will be available for recreational uses and preservation purposes in perpetuity.
- **Climate Resilience policy:** Adapt and enhance the Regional Parks and Trails System to promote resilience to climate change, including the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Planning policy:** Promote long-range planning and help provide integrated resource planning across jurisdictions in order to create a seamless system that connects everyone to the outdoors.
- **System Protection policy:** Protect public investments in acquisition and development by assuring that every component in the system is able to fully carry out its designated role.
- **Recreation, Facilities, and Programming policy:** Foster a sense of belonging by providing a wide spectrum of leisure and play opportunities while connecting people, places, and the natural world.
- **Finance policy:** The Met Council administers, provides financial oversight, and collaborates with a range of partners to fund the ten regional park implementing agencies in support of the Regional Parks and Trails System.

The 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan is the metropolitan system plan for regional recreation open space with which local comprehensive plans must conform. This system statement highlights the elements of the system plan which apply specifically to your community. Find the complete text of the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan at the following url:

<https://imagine2050.metrocouncil.org/chapters/regional-parks-and-trails>.

Key Changes in the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan

Adopted by the Met Council in February 2025, the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan incorporates the following changes:

- Unit name changes
 - Anoka County
 - “Northwest Search Area” changed to “Sugar Hills Search Area”
 - Dakota County
 - “Lebanon Hills-Big Rivers Greenway Trail Search Corridor” changed to “Lebanon Hills-Minnesota River Greenway Trail Search Corridor”
 - “Lebanon Hills-Mendota Greenway Regional Trail, Highway 62 segment” changed to “Lebanon Hills Greenway Regional Trail”
 - Scott County
 - “Scott West Regional Trail” changed to “Big Woods Regional Trail”
 - “Minnesota River Bluffs Extension and Scott County Connection Regional Trail” changed to “Merriam Junction Regional Trail”
 - “Louisville Trail Search Corridor” changed to “Merriam Junction Regional Trail”
 - Portion of “Southern Scott Trail Search Corridor” changed to “Shallow Waters Regional Trail”
- Trail refinements
 - Three Rivers Park District's Dakota Rail Regional Trail Search Corridor Extension moving the trail terminus from Highway 494 to Minnetonka City Hall
 - Three Rivers Park District is transferring a portion of the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail to Carver County
- Future 2028/2029 system additions process candidates
 - Ramsey County's Rice Creek North Regional Trail Boundary Adjustment adding 2,407 acres to the current 792 acres at the former Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant
 - Three Rivers Park District's 5.5-mile West Minnehaha Creek Trail Corridor Study Area
 - Dakota County's 58-acre Thompson County Park Study Area in West St. Paul serving the outdoor recreational needs of the more than 50,000 residents who live in the northern portion of Dakota County

The 2050 Regional Parks and Trails System Plan Map is depicted in Figure 1. Forest Lake should consult the complete 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan in preparing its local comprehensive plan. In addition, your community should consult Imagine 2050 and the current version of the Met Council's Local Planning Handbook for specific comprehensive plan requirements.

2050 Regional Parks and Trails System Units

The Regional Parks and Trails System comprises four main types of units: regional parks, park reserves, special features and regional trails.

- **Regional parks** contain a diversity of natural features, either naturally occurring or restored, and are typically 200-500 acres in size. Regional parks accommodate a variety of outdoor recreation activities. In 2024, a total of 46 regional parks are open to the public.
- **Park reserves**, like regional parks, provide for a diversity of outdoor recreation activities. One major distinguishing feature is that the minimum size for a park reserve is 1,000 acres. Additionally, regional park implementing agencies are required to manage at least 80% of the park reserve as natural lands that protect the ecological functions of the native landscape. As of 2024, a total of 12 park reserves were open to the public.
- **Special features** provide opportunities not generally found in the regional parks, park reserves, or trail corridors. Special features often require a unique managing or programming effort. As of 2024, there are eight special features open to the public.
- **Regional trails:** The Met Council has defined two major types of trails to serve the region: destination or greenway trails and linking trails. Destination or greenway trails typically follow along corridors with high-quality natural features that make the trail itself a destination. Linking trails are predominately intended to provide connections between various Regional Parks and Trails System units. As of 2024, 56 regional trails totaling approximately 487 miles were open for public use.

2050 Regional Parks and Trails System Components

The 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan identifies five components which together comprise the vision for the Regional Parks and Trails System in 2050, as described below.

- **Existing Regional Parks and Trails System facilities** are open for public use and include land that is owned by regional park implementing agencies. They may include inholding parcels within the boundaries of these parks and trail corridors that have not yet been acquired. Existing regional trails may include planned segments that will be developed in the future.
- **Planned Regional Parks and Trails System facilities (not yet open to the public)** have a Council-approved long-range plan and may be in stages of acquisition and development but are not yet open for public use.
- **Regional Parks and Trails System boundary adjustments** include general areas identified as potential additions to existing Regional Parks and Trails System facilities to add recreational opportunities or protect natural resources. Specific adjustments to park or trail corridor boundaries have not yet been planned.
- **Regional Park and Special Feature search areas** include general areas for future regional parks and special features to meet the recreational needs of the region by 2050 where the regional park boundary has not yet been planned.
- **Regional trail search corridors** include proposed regional trails to provide connections between Regional Parks and Trails System facilities where the trail alignment has not yet been planned.

System Plan Considerations Affecting Your Community

The following Regional Parks and Trails System Components within Forest Lake are identified in the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan:

Regional Trails

- **Hardwood Creek Regional Trail:** This is an existing regional trail that is open to the public. The regional trail travels through Hugo and Forest Lake as it connects the Bruce Vento Regional Trail, Glacial Hills Regional Trail Search Corridor and Sunrise Prairie Trail in Chisago County, as well as Bald Eagle-Otter Lake Regional Park. The regional trail alignment as shown in Figure 2 should be acknowledged in the comprehensive plan.

Please contact Washington County for more information regarding Regional Parks and Trails System Components in Forest Lake.

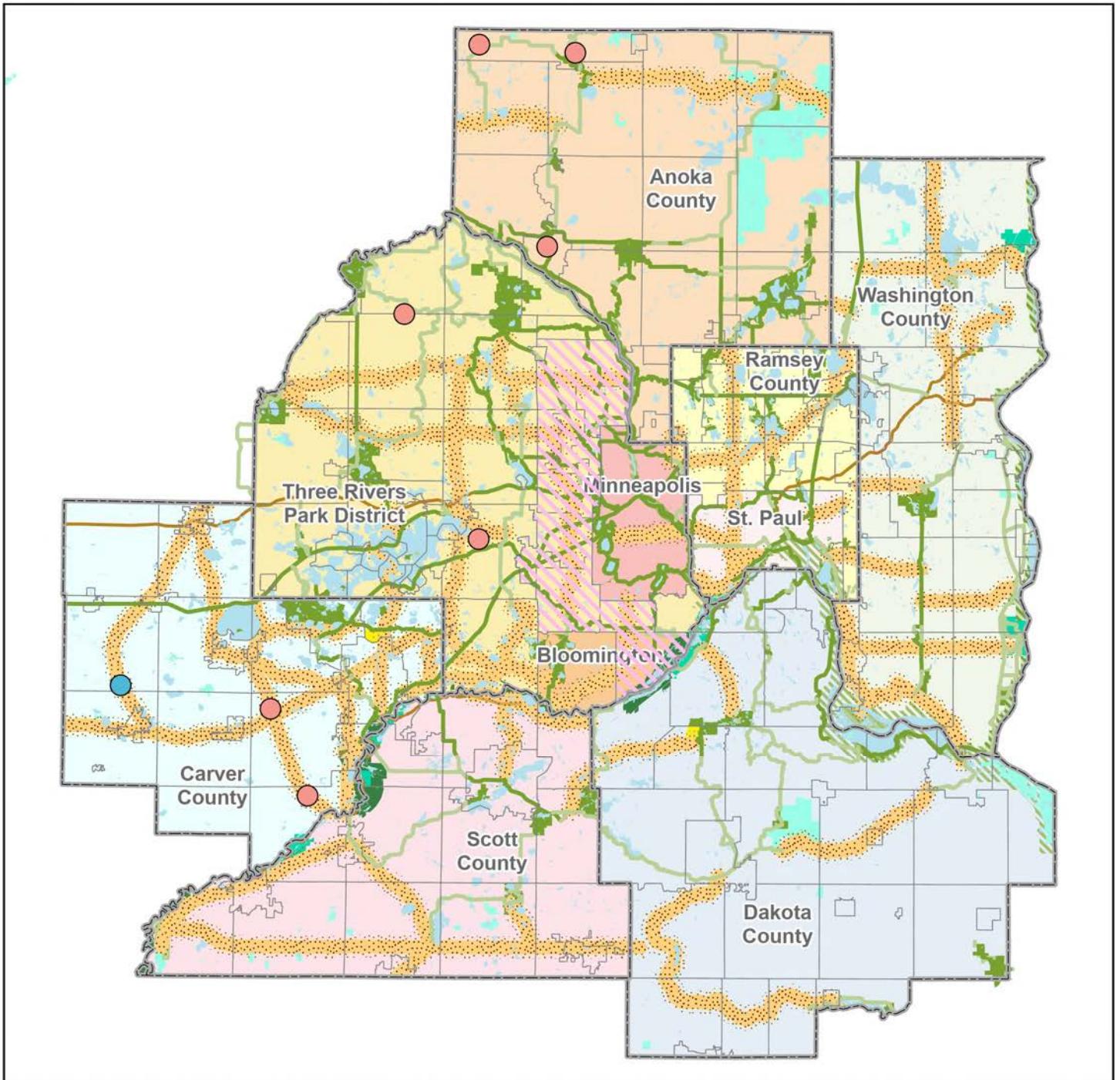
State or Federal Lands in Your Community

State and federal park and open space units that provide outdoor recreation opportunities and natural resource conservation for the public complement the Regional Parks and Trails System and are recognized in the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan. The following state or federal lands as shown in Figure 2 are within Forest Lake and should be acknowledged in its comprehensive plan.

- Hardwood Creek Wildlife Management Area—Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Lamprey Pass Wildlife Management Area—Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Please contact the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for more information about State lands

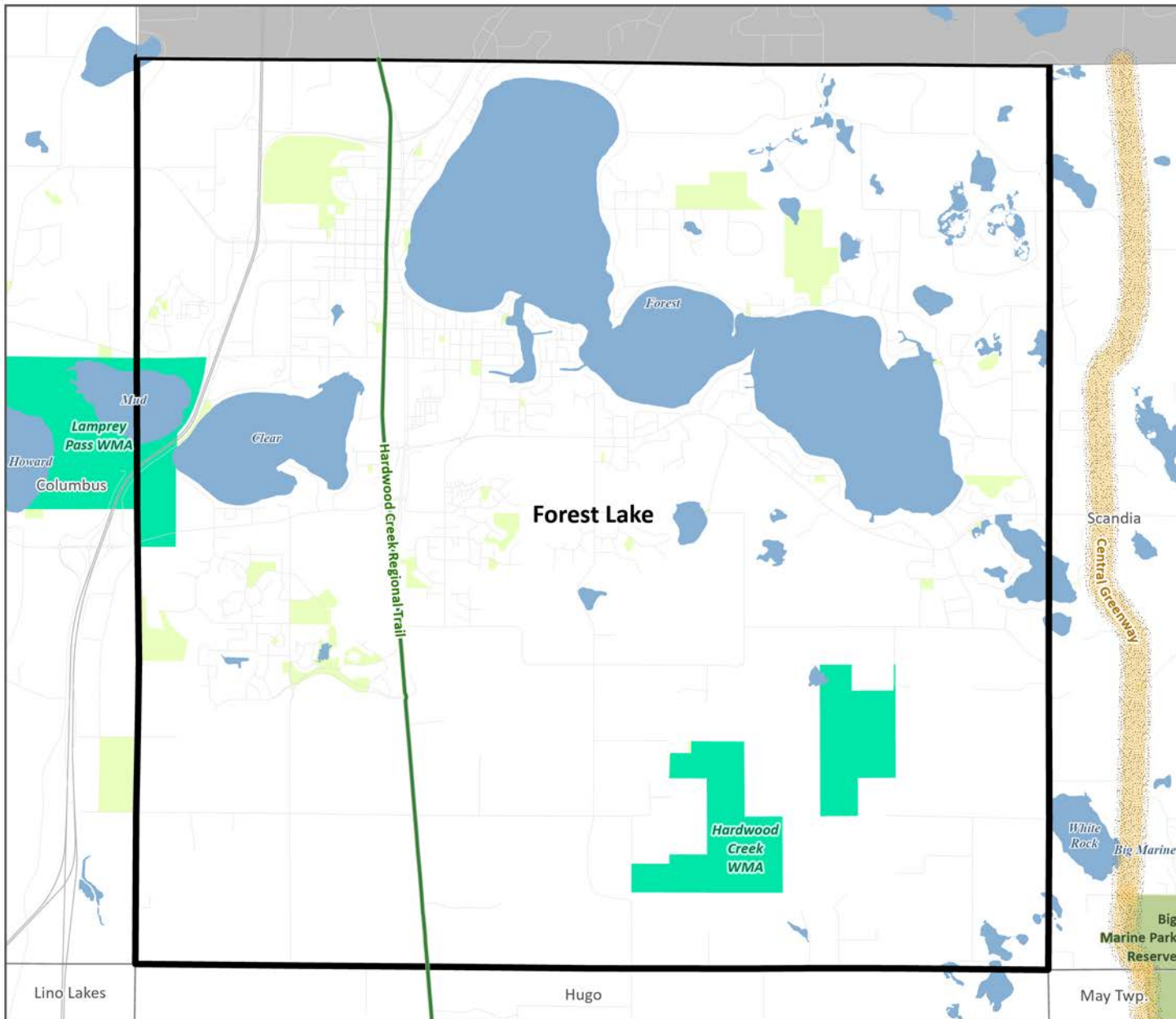
Regional Parks and Trails System



Long-Range Plan Boundary Adjustments and Search Areas

- Boundary Adjustment
- Park Search Area
- Special Feature Search Area
- Regional Trail Search Corridor
- Regional Trail (Open to the Public)
- Planned Regional Trail (Not Open to the Public)
- State Trails
- Regional Park (Open to the Public)
- Planned Regional Park (Not Open to the Public)
- Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- Mississippi National River & Recreation Area
- State Wildlife Management Areas
- State Parks and Recreation Areas
- MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- Special State Recreation Features

City of Forest Lake Regional Parks and Trails System



Regional Parks and Trails Systems

- Boundary Adjustment
- Search Area
- Special Feature Search Area
- Regional Trail Search Corridor
- Regional Trail (Open to the Public)
- Planned Regional Trail (Not Open to the Public)
- Regional Park (Open to the Public)
- Planned Regional Park (Not Open to the Public)

Other State and National Features

- State Trails
- State Parks and Recreation Areas
- State Wildlife Management Areas
- Scientific and Natural Areas
- Special State Recreation Features
- Other Parks, Preserves, Refuges and Natural Areas
- Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- Mississippi National River & Recreation Area
- MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge

2040 Comp Plan Goals & Objectives

LAND USE

Goal: Retain identified agricultural and rural areas and accommodate new residential, commercial/industrial development and redevelopment opportunities in the community that are compatible with surrounding uses, meet public needs, and support the other goals addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

Objectives:

For developing land areas, the City will:

- Encourage innovative development concepts in either new or developing areas that:
 - Promote a variety of transportation options, such as transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and automobile.
 - Link life cycle housing with employment, shopping, and recreation areas.
- Protect the environment and minimize impacts from development.
- Encourage cluster developments as a means of obtaining larger open space areas using infrastructure investments efficiently and providing for traditional neighborhood oriented interaction.
- Create a staging plan to support infrastructure expansion and land use growth plans.
- Prepare long-range transportation and infrastructure plans that will direct and support future growth and allow the City to financially plan for such growth.
- Expand the level of community functions and services to keep pace with orderly development.

Goal: Ensure the City's aesthetic character is enhanced through the beautification of its infrastructure and property.

Objectives:

- Establish design requirements for all commercial, mixed use, Business Park, and industrial districts.
- Establish design requirements for all public facilities including buildings, streetscape, landscaping, and park facilities.
- Enhance the City's gateways by developing plans to install signage, features, and landscaping at City entrances.
- Work with properties that detract from or are contrary to the established image goals.

- Encourage infill development that demonstrates compatibility with existing neighborhood characteristics in terms of quality, density, building height, placement scale, and architectural character.

Goal: Preserve rural, agricultural, and conservancy uses, including community and hobby farms.

Objectives:

- Allow residential lot divisions only when adequate public or private utilities are immediately available.
- Review current development regulations to allow compatible secondary uses such as commercial recreation, event centers, and agriculture-related commercial uses in areas where agriculture is the predominant use.

Goal: Allow for the safe and orderly extraction of aggregate resources now and in the future while protecting sensitive resources on or near those properties and providing for transitions to other uses when resource extraction is complete.

Objectives:

- Implement performance standards for the management of existing mining operations in order to minimize or prevent negative impacts to resources and nearby land uses.

Goal: Maintain or improve the ecological quality, environmental function, and aesthetics of environmental systems within the City.

Objectives:

- Maintain a balance between the expanding urban area and the rural nature of the community.
- Require new development to be designed so as to preserve and be compatible with the important natural features of the site.
- Use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) where appropriate to enhance unique design opportunities in creating neighborhoods and to protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- Promote the use of a diversity of plant species in landscape plans to minimize impacts from and spread of plant diseases and pests.
- Develop plans to promote reforestation, prairie management, wetland restoration and preservation, wildlife management, and other natural area and resource management.

Goal: Protect natural resources and sensitive areas throughout the community, including soils, woodlands, wetlands, natural water courses, open spaces and steep slopes.

Objectives:

- Restrict development in highly sensitive natural resource areas.
 - Work with the MNDNR, MDA, Washington County, watershed districts, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders to identify ecologically and agriculturally significant resources.
 - Educate developers and landowners of the location and value of open space in Forest Lake.
 - Encourage the use of incentive-based tools such as conservation easements, purchased development rights, transferred development rights, and acquisition to conserve significant natural resources.
 - Preserve environmentally sensitive areas as open space with reasonable utilization of land and in accordance to applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Where preservation is not feasible, minimize impacts.
 - Identify greenways or green corridors to facilitate wildlife corridors.
-

ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Economic Competitiveness Goals and Objectives

Goal: Enhance the image of Forest Lake as a good place to conduct business.

Objectives:

- Cooperate with the Chamber of Commerce, Community Development and other merchant and civic organizations to stimulate and maintain commercial interest in the downtown and the community.
- Preserve and promote Forest Lake's traditional small town center, natural environment, and outdoor recreation activities.
- Participate in programs and activities to attract visitors to Forest Lake such as historic preservation, recreation development, natural resource preservation, community festivals, and transportation enhancements.
- Allow home businesses, provided that they are accessory to the residential use, adhere to the Zoning Ordinance, and do not impact nearby properties.

Goal: Delineate and improve the function and appearance of all business districts.

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate, or where necessary, redevelop substandard and/or functionally obsolete commercial development through private means or, if necessary, public assistance.
- Develop design requirements for all commercial and industrial districts within the Zoning Ordinance.
- Develop a redevelopment plan for the Hwy 61 corridor incorporating the mixed use land use designation and Zoning Ordinance.
- Encourage business owners to remodel, rehabilitate, and enhance building exteriors when feasible.
- Establish design requirements for the transitional use of existing detached dwellings in the downtown and along the Broadway corridor.
- Cultivate an identity and overall vision for Downtown Forest Lake.
- Increase the vitality of the individual businesses and commercial areas to improve the appearance of business sites.
- Encourage planned mixed-use residential/commercial developments in the downtown area.
- Develop a downtown master parking and implementation plan, allowing joint utilization to conserve land.

Goal: Develop a marketing plan and strategy aimed at promoting a variety of business opportunities and the identity of Forest Lake.

Objectives:

- Provide an adequate amount of land planned and zoned for commercial and industrial.
- Leverage educational institutions, industries, and business organizations to promote new businesses and expansion of existing.
- Attract and encourage new light industrial, office-industrial, high-tech, and professional services while maintaining and expanding existing businesses.
- Promote the development of the Business Park for corporate campus, office, technology, or medical related services.
- Solicit businesses that fill voids in the current range of retail and business services offered in Forest Lake.
- Invest in public improvement projects and actively enforce development controls within the older commercial/industrial areas to the City.

HOUSING

Housing Goals and Objectives

Goal: Improve and maintain existing housing units.

Objectives:

- Develop a housing maintenance code
- Consider City-funded activities aimed at rehabilitation or acquisition of existing properties for maintenance.
- Budget City improvements to streets, sidewalks, trails, parks, street lighting, and other projects to improve neighborhood aesthetics and maintain property values.

Goal: Increase availability of new affordable housing.

Objectives:

- Allow the conversion of existing public and commercial buildings to affordable housing units through zoning regulations.
- Zone for high-density and mixed-use housing opportunities across all areas of the City where municipal services are available.
- Encourage participation by the HRA and/or EDA to be active in supporting new affordable housing opportunities and development programs.

Goal: Provide for and allow a variety of housing types and styles to fit the needs of residents.

Objectives:

- Allow creative use of site planning, building design, and flexible development of infill lots to increase density and provide greater housing opportunities.
- Allow development of separate accessory units and conversion of existing single-family to multi-family structures (duplex or more) where appropriate
- Encourage residential buildings to be designed for accessibility in order to meet the needs of current and future residents.
- Expand owner-occupied senior housing options.

Parks and Trails

Goals and Policies

The City of Forest Lake City Council developed four goals for the Parks and Trails system within the City. These goals were developed from and are in support of the overarching goals of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the goals, policies, and strategies identified in the 2014 Parks, Trails & Open Space Master Plan and the 2016 Parks, Trails, and Lakes Commission workshop visioning sessions.

Goal: Provide access opportunities to parks, trails, and open spaces for all residents of Forest Lake.

Objectives:

- Consider amenities that allow for extending park use beyond daylight hours.
- Consider facilities that allow for year-round use.
- Develop park and trail facilities that provide opportunities for all ages and user groups.
- Provide spaces that allow all citizens to be physically active.
- To be a premier recreational destination for parks, trails, and lakes

Goal: Develop parks, trails, and open spaces with consideration of preservation of and education about natural habitats.

Objectives:

- Promote an understanding of the value of open space and natural habitats.
- Preserve and protect diverse and unique ecosystems.
- Encourage biodiversity of native plants and animals.
- Provide opportunities for education in the community's parks, trails, and open spaces.
- Encourage policies for the integration of best management practices to manage storm water quality.
- Establish levels of maintenance/management for different areas.
- Promote efficiencies in design and construction.

Goal: Develop an effective planning approach identifying improvements and maintaining parks, trails and open spaces.

Objectives:

- Develop partnerships and teaming opportunities with other agencies to enhance the community's parks, trails, and open spaces.
- Design for maintenance by City equipment.

- Provide for periodic evaluation of existing park, trail, and open space land against community need.

Goal: Support the establishment of a network of public parks and trails to provide outdoor recreation amenities and community-wide connections to serve the health and welfare of the City's residents.

Objectives:

- Emphasize the importance of making connections to regional trails, including the Hardwood Trail.
 - Promote trail and sidewalk connections between local and regional parks to create a linear system.
-

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Goals and Objectives

Goal: Encourage and maintain a safe, efficient and convenient multi-modal transportation system.

Objectives:

- Comprehensively coordinate all transportation-related facilities as one system.
- Encourage the integration of transit systems to meet the mobility needs of all individuals.
- Continue support for transit
- As a Transit Capital Levy Community, help ensure permanent transit service and local commuter service for people who need local mobility assistance.
- Incorporate elements in development and design standards related to bicycle and pedestrian uses.
- Provide facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists in conjunction with street improvement projects, when financially feasible.
- Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to all recreation and school facilities within the community, when financially feasible.
- Explore the potential for using drainage and utility easements and road right-of-ways for trail development.

Goal: Design and develop a vehicular transportation system to accommodate the various classifications of roads and to safely regulate access, traffic volumes, traveling speeds and access throughout the community.

Objectives:

- Identify long-term planning for transportation corridors to manage access and capital improvements as development occurs.
- Develop access management standards and look towards alternative service road design to separate traffic on city streets.
- Minimize and limit vehicular access onto arterial roadways by utilizing appropriate traffic control devices.
- Discourage through traffic from penetrating residential areas on local roads.
- Incorporate the use of innovative traffic management options and technologies.

Goal: Ensure planned transportation infrastructure, capacity, and access will accommodate proposed land uses and development.

Objectives:

- Preserve right-of-way for identified transportation needs.
- Develop all additional elements of the street system (sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, biking accommodations, etc.) harmoniously with adjacent land uses and transportation objectives.
- Explore concepts and support transportation infrastructure connections to regional transportation networks that will support economic development and improve safety.
- Incorporate land uses and access spacing guidelines compatible with the functional classification of the regional highway system.
- Fund a Capital Improvements Program to ensure long-term street maintenance and reconstruction programs.
- Plan and design transportation facilities that preserve natural resources and existing infrastructure, where applicable.
- Consider flexibility and equity in implementing appropriate assessment procedures, such as variable terms and deferments.

Goal: Coordinate transportation planning and system improvements with other government jurisdictions.

Objectives:

- Work cooperatively with MnDOT and the County in studies and plans for commuter services, particularly along or feeding into the Rush Line corridor
- Explore possibilities with MnDOT, the County, and adjacent jurisdictions for a new I-35 W/E Interchange serving the southern portion of Forest Lake and surrounding areas.
- Coordinate transit service and park-and-ride improvements with County and regional jurisdictions.
- Cooperate with MnDOT, the County, and neighboring jurisdictions to provide connective pedestrian and bicycle networks

Goal: Maintain existing service, continue improvements, and support development of the Forest Lake Airport in accordance with the Airport Layout Plan and Airport Alternative Urban Areawide Review.

Objectives:

- Continue to pursue funding opportunities for the maintenance and expansion of the Forest Lake Airport.

Goal: Preserve the safety of regional air traffic.

Objectives:

- Notify MNDOT Aeronautics of any structure of a height of 200 feet above the ground
- Address Federal and State safety standards when planning the design of any object related to or affecting navigable airspace.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Facilities Goals and Objectives

Goal: Provide all core municipal services and infrastructure efficiently and cost effectively.

Objectives:

- Encourage all governmental units to maintain their buildings and facilities at the highest standards to serve as examples for private development.
- Evaluate the level of public service provided and the associated costs of services; to ensure that the highest levels of safety, accessibility and services are provided in the community.
- Compare the level of administrative maintenance and emergency response services to community- wide needs and objectives to provide efficient and responsive services to residents and businesses.
- Require that all new developments pay representative costs for capacity within and connection to the public utility system.
- Approve extensions to local utilities only when based on an adopted subdivision plan that contains development staging consistent with city trunk utility plans.
- Maintain standards to minimize inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system, including identification of illegal sump pump connections.
- Ensure adequate and cost-effective maintenance and expansion of public utilities and facilities to serve existing development and accommodate new development.
- Ensure safe neighborhoods and crime prevention measures in the community.

Goal: Encourage cooperation and joint service initiatives with other community, city, county and school district officials and organizations.

Objectives:

- Increase the City's level of participation with other governmental jurisdictions and explore potential joint initiatives concerning planning and development of public infrastructure.
- • Work with other city, county and local community organizations to provide and enhance special area events and attractions.
- Encourage and support education availability and excellence in the City.



Real People. Real Solutions.

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 22, 2025

To: Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director
City of Forest Lake

From: Jane Kansier, AICP, Senior Planner
Nathan Fuerst, AICP, Senior Planner
Ryan Goodman, PE, City Engineer

Subject: 2040 Comprehensive Plan Process Recap
City of Forest Lake, MN

Bolton & Menk staff recently completed a review of the Forest Lake 2040 Comprehensive Plan process at your request. The goal of this review is twofold:

1. Provide an understanding of the history of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the process involved in creating this plan.
2. Provide a basis for development of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan update, including what exists, what needs to be updated, prior to the 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update.

To accomplish these goals, we reviewed the planning process for the 2040 Plan, focusing on the public engagement process, the roles of Bolton & Menk staff, City staff, and the Comprehensive Plan Task Force. Our analysis includes a discussion on our perspective of what worked well and where there were issues. We also reviewed the technical appendices to the plan and have identified which may need major updates. Finally, we have provided some recommendations about additional studies or data to inform the 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

Consulting Contract

The City of Forest Lake requested an estimate for the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. Bolton & Menk provided a letter proposal in October, 2016. Following discussion with the City, this proposal was revised in January, 2019 (see attached). The City authorized Bolton & Menk to proceed with the work. There was no separate contract outside of the letter proposal.

Planning Process

Community Engagement

One of the goals of the planning process was to gather as much input from a broad spectrum of the community as possible. In order to do so, Bolton & Menk and City staff developed a public engagement plan. To manage costs, City staff agreed to lead the more informal portions of the engagement efforts,

such as community events. City staff were also responsible for providing updates to the Planning Commission and City Council during their regular meetings. Bolton & Menk staff were responsible for leading the open houses and task force meetings, managing the community survey, and for providing information to City staff as needed. Bolton & Menk staff also attended City meetings (EDA, Planning Commission, City Council) as requested.

The Public Engagement Plan included the following:

- Community-wide open house on April 19, 2017 to kick-off the Comprehensive Plan. This was led by Bolton & Menk with staff assistance. Approximately 20-30 members of the public attended the open house, including members of the city council and planning commission. The open house provided general information about the purpose of a comprehensive plan and the process. The open house was intended to develop awareness and interest. There were some attendees who ultimately joined the Comprehensive Plan Task Force.
- Following the initial open house, a 12-member Task Force was convened to inform the overall comprehensive planning process and guide policy goals and recommendations. The committee included representatives of the Parks Committee, Planning Commission, EDA, public safety, school district, business owners, youth, and citizens at large. Members of the committee submitted an application and were appointed by the City Council. The role of the Task Force was to act as a sounding board for discussion about community issues, land use policies and goals, and to provide guidance and recommendations to the Planning Commission on the vision, goals, and objectives. The Task Force met four times between May and November of 2017. Bolton & Menk was responsible for coordinating and managing the Task Force.
- A survey questionnaire was released online in the summer of 2017 (see attached). Questions in the survey asked for basic demographic data of the respondent, community assets and weaknesses, visions for the future, and investment priorities. The City also received a SHIP grant, which required additional questions about healthy foods, etc. Approximately 271 responses were collected. Bolton & Menk developed the survey with input from staff and the Task Force and collected responses. Some paper copies of the survey were available at City Hall.
- Information and meeting materials were posted on the City's website to provide updated information about the Comprehensive Plan. Materials were provided to City Staff by Bolton & Menk.
- During the summer of 2017, City staff attended community events, including Arts in the Park and the Bluegrass Festival, to raise awareness about the Comprehensive Plan process. Bolton & Menk provided postcards with links to the survey and website.
- City staff conducted four Community Conversation sessions in January and February 2018. The four sessions focused on elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including land use and transportation (1/30/18), housing, community facilities and water resources (2/13/18), parks and trails (2/20/18) and economic development (2/27/18).
- City staff were also responsible for providing regular updates to the Planning Commission and City Council. City staff managed the official public hearings at the Planning Commission (June and July, 2018) and the City Council meetings (July, 2018). City staff provided updates to the City Council in February and March, 2019, and the Council officially adopted the plan in April, 2019. Bolton & Menk provided the necessary resolutions for Council action.

Data Gathering and Plan Writing

Bolton & Menk staff gathered descriptive data about the City of Forest Lake from a variety of sources, including previous City plans, the US Census, Metropolitan Council data, the 2017 community survey, and Task Force, City Council, and Planning Commission discussions.

Bolton & Menk staff were responsible for developing the content of the plan, including text, tables, GIS maps, and graphics. Draft chapters were provided to City staff for review beginning in March, 2018. The final, public hearing draft was provided to City staff in June, 2018.

Following the public hearings, some members of the City Council and EDA created an independent subcommittee of sorts to develop new ideas for the comprehensive plan, especially the southwest corner of the city. This resulted in several additional meetings with this group, staff, and other agencies, and required several revisions to the plan, maps, and tables. This ultimately delayed the submittal of the comprehensive plan to the Metropolitan Council by nearly nine months.

The City Council authorized submittal of the Comprehensive Plan to the Metropolitan Council in April, 2019. Bolton & Menk was responsible for submitting the comprehensive plan to the Metropolitan Council for review. Bolton & Menk worked directly with the Metropolitan Council staff to finalize the plan, providing updates to City staff and obtaining input when needed.

Once the plan was approved by both the Metropolitan Council and the City of Forest Lake, Bolton & Menk compiled the final plan document and provided City staff and the Metropolitan Council with both a hard copy and an electronic copy.

Process Recap (What Worked and Suggestions for Improvement)

As with any project, some portions of the Forest Lake 2040 Comprehensive Plan project went very smoothly. However, there were frustrations, areas where there is room for improvement, and things that could have been done differently and better. What follows are our observations and recommendations.

Schedule		
What Worked	Issues	Recommendations
✓ We were initially able to stay pretty well on schedule and submitted the plan to the City for public hearings just a month or 2 behind our original proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some delay in chapter review and responses from City staff • Submittal of the plan was delayed several months as a result of an unplanned group bringing forth new ideas at the 11th hour • Process got hung up at adjacent community review, especially Watershed Districts and School Districts • Process got hung up on Met Council review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all interested groups and city committees are represented to eliminate extraneous groups • Plan for preliminary review by Met Council, if possible • Create list of adjacent community and jurisdiction contacts and strengthen or create relationships. • Build in time for chapter review.

Community Survey		
What Worked	Issues	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Online format worked well ✓ Link on City website ✓ Regular reminders on social media ✓ The survey provided decent demographic data that could be compared with other data ✓ Survey provided good information on priorities and respondents' impressions of Forest Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about low response rate • Concerns about access for those who are not computer savvy • Concerns about statistical reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the limitations of an online survey and modify expectations • Survey got very long; limit number of questions • Limit choices in some of the questions
General Community Engagement		
What Worked	Issues	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Traditional engagement (open houses) went smoothly, with some participation ✓ Community events (Arts in the Park, etc.) offered opportunities for a broader audience ✓ Community Conversations were led by City staff to discuss specific chapters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure how effective community events and community conversations were <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g., staff mentioned they just stood on sidewalk to hand out postcards ○ Did not get any feedback about attendance or comments at community conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider what type of engagement works best in Forest Lake • What do we hope to get from the specific engagement (raise awareness, feedback, etc.) • Be realistic about the costs and time involved
Task Force		
What Worked	Issues	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The process to solicit task force members was inclusive ✓ Real attempt was made to get a broad representation ✓ Meetings were easily scheduled ✓ Task Force members were generally engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance dropped off after the first meeting (not unusual) • Conversation was sometimes dominated by one or two members • Task Force, Planning Commission, and City Council ideas were not always aligned; this required redoing maps, text, etc., on more than one occasion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the Visioning process early • Identify overarching goals and direction • Planning Commission and City Council can/should review goals, policies, etc., so they are in place before specific work begins • Review areas of controversy or concern early (e.g., Hwy 61 corridor, Headwaters)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual members of task force, council and others brought ideas after the plan was essentially complete, requiring additional time, work, and significantly delaying submittal of plan • The work of the Task Force was too high level; we should have focused on more specifics 	<p>123, southwest corner) to provide specific direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identify role, responsibility, timeline, and commitment of Task Force before convening
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City Staff Role

What Worked	Issues	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Planning staff were engaged and generally excited about the process ✓ Staff were willing to do the work needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning staff were overwhelmed by their daily work and the comp plan, making it difficult to meet deadlines • Other members of staff (outside of planning) did not seem very engaged or interested • Staff did not always effectively communicate Planning Commission and City Council feedback, which resulted in redoing work multiple times • It is unclear what information was provided to Planning Commission and City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a true City staff champion to lead this process • Consultant should conduct frequent and regular check-ins with City staff during entire process • Consultant should look for ways to engage staff outside of planning in their areas of expertise • Consultants can assist City staff by providing written updates on a regular schedule for staff to present to Planning Commission, City Council • Be realistic about what staff can and cannot do, based on their daily workload

Plan Preparation

What Worked	Issues	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Basic components of the plan followed Metropolitan Council requirements ✓ Previous work (Parks Master Plan, Water System Plan, etc.) was used as a basis for much of the information in the updated plan, and saved time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was initially intended to be an update to the early plan turned into a much greater undertaking, partially due to Met Council requirements and partially due to City issues • Unexpected changes in direction resulted in redoing work and additional costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be realistic about what needs to be included in the plan and the time it takes to complete this • Be realistic about the budget required for this project • Track Met Council updates to be prepared for plan

Appendices

There are twelve appendices included with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. These were intended to provide more detailed information about the contents of the plan. In some cases, the appendices are the technical plans required as part of the planning process. The following table identifies the existing appendices, notes whether an update will be required as part of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan update, and the minimum requirements. Note the minimum requirements are based on the current version of the Metropolitan Council Local Planning Handbook. The Metropolitan Council will likely be updating this handbook by the end of 2025.

Appendix No.	Name	Required Element	Minimum Requirements	Update Needed
Appendix A	Community Survey Results	Optional	NA	Informational only
Appendix B	Task Force Meeting Minutes	Optional	NA	Informational only
Appendix C	Parks and Trails Master Plan	Yes.	Mapping local and regional parks and trails, and federal and state recreational land.	Parks and trails information in parks chapter will need to be updated. Updating the entire parks master plan is optional.
Appendix D	Access Management Guidelines	Yes.		This information will be reviewed and updated as part of transportation plan.
Appendix E	Trails Implementation Plan	Yes	Mapping local and regional trail system. CIP is included as part of implementation plan.	Trail information is generally included in parks chapter but can be part of transportation chapter. Updating the trail implementation plan is optional.
Appendix F	Water System Plan	Maybe	NA	City Engineer recommends plan be updated since it is more than 10 years old.
Appendix G	Local Water Supply Plan	Yes.	All information in the DNR & Metropolitan Council water supply plan template. Also include extended water demand projections for 2030, 2040, 2050 and ultimate buildout.	Yes May require additional conversation about extension of water supply to serve new development
Appendix H	Local Water Management Plan	Yes	Water resource management agreements, physical environment and	Yes.

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			land use, existing and potential water resource issues, local implementation plan/program.	
Appendix I	City Code, § 52.23: Draining Rain Or Surface Waters Into Sewer System Prohibited.	This information is required as part of wastewater plan.	Existing city ordinances pertaining to I/I.	This information will be reviewed and updated as part of the wastewater plan.
Appendix J	Intercommunity Service Agreements	This information is required as part of wastewater plan.	Existing agreements. Likely to be some additional work regarding additional water supply to City of Columbus.	This information will be reviewed and updated as part of the wastewater plan.
Appendix K	Comments and Responses to Draft Comprehensive Plan	Yes	NA	This information will be updated as part of planning process.
Appendix L	Minutes and Resolutions	Yes	Planning Commission and City Council minutes where official action is taken; copies of adopted resolutions.	This information will be updated as part of planning process.
Not Listed	Wastewater Plan	Yes	Tables detailing forecasts, capacity, and design flows; maps of existing system and location of ISTS; city goals, policies, and strategies and implementation plan for preventing and reducing excessive inflow and infiltration (I/I)	<p>City Engineer recommends an update to the 2008 Sewer Plan but believes this should be relatively simple since the system and tables have been pretty well laid out. This may change depending on the requirements of the Met Council.</p> <p>This is often done as a separate plan due to the length and technical components and then summarized in the comp plan document. It can be a chapter in the plan itself.</p>

Potential Studies

The planning period for the 2050 Comprehensive Plan update does not officially begin until the Metropolitan Council releases the community system statements (September, 2025), with the final plan due by December 31, 2028. There are some studies or actions the City might consider doing prior to that, which will inform and facilitate the 2050 planning process.

1. **Visioning.** The City can and should start the broader visioning for the City. Establishing a vision and high level goals now will inform the direction of the comprehensive plan and allow a future task force or steering committee to focus on more specific details.
2. **MUSA Boundary.** Identify the desirable 2050 MUSA boundary and begin those conversations with the Met Council. Phasing of the MUSA boundary is an important part of this work. This action will inform the water and sewer plans for the City.
3. **Future Land Use.** Begin review of the Future Land Use Map to identify potential changes. This map is an essential piece of the overall plan and the technical plans.
4. **Housing Study.** This would be a deeper dive into existing conditions, and what is lacking or needed in the City, including housing types and potential price points.
5. **Small Area Plans.** Consider developing small area plans for some of the more difficult areas, such as the Highway 61 corridor and the southwest corner of the City. These plans can provide a better picture of land use patterns, transportation needs, and utility needs for the smaller areas. The plans then become part of the Comprehensive Plan.
6. **Downtown Plan.** Review and potentially expand on the existing downtown plan to provide more specific guidance.
7. **Climate and Resilience.** The Metropolitan Council will require additional detail on these subjects. The City should discuss whether they want to delve further than the minimum requirements.
8. **Budget.** Have some honest discussions about the budget and what the preparation of the comprehensive plan involves. Budgeting for the plan can be done over 1-2 year period.

Attachments

1. Letter Proposal Dated October 13, 2016
2. Final Cost Estimate Dated January 19, 2017
3. Forest Lake 2040 Comprehensive Plan Survey