CHAPTER 4

Transportation & Land Use Planning

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Overview / Summary

Jurisdictions in Olmsted County that adopt comprehensive land use plans and system level transportation plans include Olmsted County, the city of Rochester and the small cities outside of Rochester. In the case of Olmsted County and Rochester, the system level transportation plan they rely on is this ROCOG Long Range Transportation Plan. This Chapter summarizes the land use plans for Olmsted County and Rochester and contains the small city Thoroughfare and Land Use Plans which have been prepared at the municipal level to guide investment in each of the seven communities outside the Rochester area. Most of the small city plans have been updated in the last 3-5 years under contracts with private planning consultants.

Changes in land use and future development affect transportation needs. A key feature of these plans is the designated urban service boundaries and orderly annexation area boundaries that have been identified. Growth in these urban service areas exert a strong influence on road improvement needs, as corridors previously serving rural or suburban land use need upgrading to serve urban density development as these areas undergo the transition from rural to urban. The Long Range Plan also reflects consideration of a larger “Urban Influence Area (UIA)” for Rochester, reflecting watershed topography where the extension of Rochester’s gravity flow sewer service system could easily be extended into areas outside currently designated urban service area. The UIA, though not anticipated to be an area of urban growth within the 20 to 25 year horizon of this plan, could see long term (50+ years) growth that would influence the roadway network within the currently defined urban service boundary.

The recent development planning efforts focused on downtown Rochester are highlighted. These are the 2011 Rochester Downtown Master Plan and the Destination Medical Center Development Plan that was submitted to the City of Rochester in February of 2015. Both of these plans highlight the need for aggressive efforts to reduce single occupant commuter travel into Downtown Rochester in the future, with a goal to reduce the SOV share of downtown commuting from 70-75% currently to under 50% in twenty years.
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ROCOG Area Future Land Use Plans

Olmsted County and the cities in Olmsted County each prepare land use plans or conduct land use studies to identify future urban expansion areas and the pattern of growth that will be encouraged within their respective urban growth boundaries through the adoption of jurisdictional zoning or land development ordinances. These plans are key elements in transportation infrastructure and program planning, as they help to define travel needs and the travel demand that can be expected.

The Olmsted County Land Use Plan is primarily a policy plan, establishing broadly the land use character in rural areas and, in conjunction with the local municipalities, establishing the expected urban growth areas of each municipality. The county land use plan process plays an important role in mediating the discussion between each city and adjacent townships in terms of defining future urban service areas, and facilitating the development of orderly annexation agreements to provide for the orderly expansion of municipal services into new development areas. Each city in turn has prepared plans or studies that more specifically identify the pattern of land use expected within their respective urban growth areas. Establishment of urban growth area boundaries take into consideration both projected population and employment growth as well as land characteristics such as watershed boundaries that influence planning where sanitary sewer and stormwater management systems can be cost-effectively provided. Additional detail on the factors considered and public involvement process for preparing and adopting the Olmsted County Land Use Plan are found in Appendix G.

Generally speaking, the urban growth areas or existing municipal boundary areas that have been established encompass adequate area to handle growth needs over a 30 to 50 year time period. For the purposes of transportation planning, this is a useful planning horizon in that future corridor preservation needs can be assessed for long term growth areas and efforts made to establish corridor protection prior to the earliest intensification of land use. Figure 4-1 on the next page illustrates the current Olmsted County Land Use Plan map.
Olmsted County Future Land Use Map

Legend
- Major Roads
- Public Waters

Land Use Designation
- Potential Suburban
- Suburban Development
- Resource Protection
- Rural Mixed Use
- Suburban Mixed Use
- Urban Service Area

Prepared by the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department
Long Range Division March 9, 2011
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ROCHESTER Land Use Plans

The Olmsted County and Rochester Land Use Plans recognize a 50-year Rochester Urban Service Area (RUSA) for planning purposes. Within the RUSA boundary the City has adopted a Future Land Use Plan as a guide to community development by providing a consistent set of policies applied to general geographic areas to guide future land use decisions. The primary purpose of the Land Use Plan is to inform the review and approval of proposals affecting land use and land development and assist in planning for future capital improvement needs. In relation to development of the transportation plan, the land use plan assists in identifying the intensity and character of travel demand, the types of design or program features to be considered in different areas of the community, and the timing of future improvement.

Figure 4-2 on page 4-5 illustrates the current Rochester Area Land Use Plan. The City of Rochester initiated a Comprehensive Plan update in 2014 that will likely result in modifications to this plan that will be used to inform the next update of the ROCOG Transportation Plan.

Rochester Downtown Master Plan and Destination Medical Center Development Plan

To assist in applying the principles of the Land Use Plan and refine future plans for development, periodically the City of Rochester or other public agencies will complete major subarea or corridor plans, and private sector developers will prepare master General Development Plans for smaller areas as a first step in the city development approval process. In the last three years two major efforts looking at future downtown development have been undertaken, including 1) the Rochester Downtown Master Plan, a joint effort of the City of Rochester, the Rochester Chamber of Commerce, the Rochester Economic Development Authority and the University of Minnesota-Rochester, and 2) the Destination Medical Center Development Plan, lead by the Destination Medical Center Corporation in cooperation with the City of Rochester. These plans provide both high level visionary guidance to future land use and public space development in the downtown area of Rochester, and as important provide a vision and guidance to needed downtown mobility improvements.

Figure 4-3 and Figure 4-4 provide an illustration of the envisioned future scale of downtown Rochester. It is expected that employment downtown will approximately double from a current level of 35,000 workers to an estimated 66,000 in 20 to 25 years. In addition, downtown housing is expected to grow from approximately 1,000 units currently to as many as 3,500 units over the planning horizon, and the University of Minnesota-Rochester will develop a new campus at the south end of downtown with capacity for 5,000 students, well above the current level of 500 students they are serving in rented space in a downtown mall adjacent to the Mayo Medical Center.
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Figure 4-3: Example of Graphic Guidance from 2010 Downtown Rochester Master Plan
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Figure 4-4: Example of Graphic Guidance from 2015 Destination Medical Center Master Plan
Historically the RUSA boundary has been constrained by political considerations in addition to consideration of physical constraints. As a result, the 50 year area historically has not always matched up well with logical watershed boundaries, which are fundamental to sanitary sewer service and stormwater management planning. This has raised the question of whether any flexibility in terms of the RUSA boundary should be recognized for purposes of transportation network planning, realizing the potential of development to expand beyond the 50 year boundary in some cases and impact future right-of-way protection needs and acquisition. ROCOG has felt it was desirable to preserve flexibility in terms of planning for roadway infrastructure concepts such as extension of an arterial/collector grid should the 50 year boundary be modified or expanded in the future.

To address this challenge, an “Urban Influence Area” (UIA) has been developed for use in transportation network planning for the Rochester growth area. The UIA represents an area including and abutting the RUSA that within a 75 to 100-year time frame could be converted to or could be highly influenced by urban development (Figure 4-5). Definition of this land use area relies heavily on watershed delineations, reflecting where gravity flow sewer service could easily be extended. Consideration of a 100 year UIA has been supported in discussions by the Olmsted County Commissioners and Rochester City Council during expansion of the Rochester Urban Service Area (RUSA) boundary to include the Northwest Territory area and the Kalmar Orderly Annexation area, at which time the need for infrastructure planning that considered a time frame on the order of 100 years was noted. Thus, for the purposes of the ROCOG Plan, both the RUSA as well as the UIA are considered when looking at transportation system development needs based on the following parameters:

- Projected 2040 population and employment will be used to identify residential and non-residential land needs for the next 25 years. Land areas within the RUSA most likely to be converted to urban development to satisfy these needs would be identified, and traffic forecasts prepared as a baseline scenario. Remaining undeveloped areas within the RUSA would be evaluated to determine what roadway infrastructure would be needed in those areas to meet potential capacity and right-of-way needs resulting from future growth if market preferences, ownership patterns, and infrastructure costs shift the direction of growth over time.

- Within the UIA, generalized corridor protection needs will be identified and an assessment will be conducted to evaluate the potential traffic impact that could result from development of lands in the UIA outside of the current RUSA boundary. The purpose of this assessment will be to assess right-of-way protection needs within the RUSA area that could be impacted by development outside the RUSA, but not to identify projects in a fiscally constrained list of projects.

Further analysis of watersheds, sewer service feasibility and other potential development constraints will occur periodically. As noted above, the City of Rochester currently has underway an update to its Comprehensive Plan that will include reassessment of the RUSA boundary, highlighted in Figure 4-5 as the “50 Year Urban Service Area”.

Reaffirmation of ROCOG 2040 Long Range Plan
Figure 4-5: Rochester 100 Year Urban Influence Area
Small City Land Use and Thoroughfare Plans

Most of the small cities in Olmsted County have prepared and adopted major street plans, which are illustrated in this section. In instances where a city does not have a transportation system plan, an illustrative Major Street Plan has been developed by ROCOG for the purpose of identifying a local major street network consistent with ROCOG’s System Development Guidelines (see Chapter 6) and access management principles (See Chapter 13), taking into consideration the land use plans for the community. It is recommended that those communities without an adopted or recognized plan utilize the illustrative plans included herein as a starting point and eventually develop a major street plan. Beginning on the next page are graphics illustrating the most recent land use and transportation plans that have been prepared and adopted by small municipalities in Olmsted County. The following paragraphs highlight the vintage of each plan and other notes relative to its status.

- Byron (Figures 4-6 & 4-7ii)
  The plan for Byron is adopted as part of Byron’s comprehensive plan and was last updated in 2010.

- Chatfield (Figures 4-8 & 4-9iii)
  The land use plan for Chatfield was adopted as part of a Comprehensive Plan update completed in 2009.

- Dover (Figures 4-10 & 4-11iv)
  The plan for Dover is an illustrative plan reflecting current municipal limits and known development plans. Plan was shown as illustrative in the ROCOG 2040 Plan.

- Eyota (Figures 4-12 & 4-13v)
  The Land Use plan for Eyota was formally adopted in 2008 but had been used as a guide for a number of years prior to that.

- Oronoco (Figures 4-14 & 4-15vi)
  A draft land use plan for Oronoco was prepared as an adjunct to the TH 52 North Corridor Study in 2000/2001 and has been further reviewed by the city since that time through a consultant contract though not formally adopted.

- Pine Island (Figures 4-16 & 4-17vii)
  The city of Pine Island has completed a Comprehensive Plan update funded through a Community Connections grant from 1000 Friends of Minnesota and the McKnight Foundation.

- Stewartville (Figures 4-18 & 4-19viii)
  The city of Stewartville adopted an updated land use plan as part of a Comprehensive Plan updated completed in 2009.
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FIGURE 4-6: BYRON AREA THOROUGHFARE PLAN

FIGURE 4-7: BYRON LAND USE PLAN

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FIGURE 4-8: CHATFIELD AREA THOROUGHFARE PLAN

FIGURE 4-9: CHATFIELD LAND USE PLAN
FIGURE 4-10: ILLUSTRATIVE DOVER AREA THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Dover Long Range Thoroughfare Plan (Preliminary)  
(Developed by staff as part of 2035 Plan)

FIGURE 4-11: Dover Land Use Study

Dover City Limits
DM&E Rail Corridor
Street Classifications
ARTERIAL
COLLECTOR
EXPRESSWAY
FARTERIAL
FCCOLLECTOR
FREEWAY

LEGEND

Vacant Land by Planned Use
PLANUSE
Commercial
Industrial
Institutional
Residential - High Density
Residential - Low Density
Residential - Medium Density
Residential - Rural
Urban Reserve Residential
Reaffirmation of 2040 Long Range Plan
FIGURE 4-14 ILLUSTRATIVE ORONOCO AREA THOROUGHFARE PLAN

FIGURE 4-15: Oronoco Land Use Study

Oronoco Land Use Plan

Legend

Future Roads Not Open
New & Existing Roads Open

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FIGURE 4-16: PINE ISLAND AREA THOROUGHFARE PLAN

FIGURE 4-17: Pine Island Land Use Plan

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FIGURE 4-18: STEWARTVILLE AREA THOROUGHFARE PLAN

FIGURE 4-19: STEWARTVILLE Land Use Plan

Reaffirmation of 2040 Long Range Plan
ENDNOTES

i Olmsted County General Land Use Plan, available online at http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/departments/planning/olmsted_county_general_land_use_plan_update.asp
ii Figure 4-8 courtesy of Byron City Administration
iii Chatfield Comprehensive Plan, Chatfield Planning Department, 2008, available online at http://www.ci.chatfield.mn.us/vertical/Sites/%7B7B7A8298AF-61FA-481A-AC21-C8996E201CE8%7D/uploads/%7B3208EF27-9DA8-4FE0-BE28-D81832EE43FD%7D.PDF
iv Figure 4-10 courtesy of Rochester – Olmsted Planning Department
v City of Eyota, Comprehensive Plan 2009, prepared for City of Eyota by McGhie & Betts, Inc.
viii City of Stewartville Future Land Use Map, 2003, prepared for City of Stewartville by Yaggy-Colby Associates Inc., available online at http://www.stewartvillemn.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={180D1579-3689-4F4C-9B3A-B2280A413F6B}