

City of Ramsey 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update

Natural Resources Plan

Background on this Document

This document is a draft of the narrative to be used in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update. This is not a final version or actual layout. This document will be reviewed and revised multiple times. The City will try to add additional maps and figures to better tell the story of this vision.

Our Mission

It is our mission to work together to responsibly grow our community, and to provide quality, cost-effective, and efficient government services.

Our Vision

Ramsey will evolve through citizen-driven, collaborative processes that respect the balance and connectivity between its unique urban, rural, and natural environment for current and future generations.

Core Values

- 1) Encourage new pedestrian friendly neighborhoods and balanced transportation.
- 2) Maintain landowner rights.
- 3) Employ careful foresight that involves all citizens in decisions that affect their lives, property, and neighborhoods through collaborative public engagement.
- 4) Nurture neighborhood and community interactions with flexibility to meet future needs without compromising the needs and interests of current residents.
- 5) Develop and maintain a well-connected park and public space system for all ages.
- 6) Attract and retain businesses that support the whole community.

2030 Plan Accomplishments

The last plan was adopted in 2010. While a number of factors changed since the adoption of the last plan, the City can celebrate a number of successes as it relates to our management of natural resources. Subsequent chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan will celebrate their own successes.

- Relied on the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) to inform recommendations on subdivision design and areas of focused protection/preservation where feasible.
- Purchased two (2) Weed Wrenches to assist property owners with managing and eradicating certain invasive species, specifically Buckthorn.
- Protected Ramsey's rural character in many areas of the community, representing the largest land area category in the community.
- Mitigated City's financial risks associated by new developments by encouraging new development to focus near existing infrastructure.
- Ensured new development protected natural resources, made trail connections, and blended in with surrounding development.
- Employed conservation subdivision practices aimed to protect existing neighborhoods and natural resources.
- Struck a balance between land use planning, policy development, natural resource protection, and private property rights.
- Refined the Tree Preservation Ordinance to establish a reforestation standard and proactively began working with developers to establish street trees rather than just front yard trees.
- Encouraged stormwater management systems/plans that incorporating rain harvesting techniques (reducing the demand on and use of groundwater for irrigation) and rain gardens (to promote infiltration and groundwater recharge).
- Employed new strategies to help residents recycle additional materials and divert more materials from landfills.
- Implemented an organics recycling program for residents.

Goals and Strategies

The following represents goals and strategies for future **land uses**. Subsequent chapters will include their own goals and strategies that integrate with the above. Resources above and beyond current budget approvals are indicated in the ‘Additional Resources’ column.

Strategic Imperatives (4 key themes from Phase I of update)

1. Rural Character and Urban Growth Balance
2. An Active Community (Parks, Recreation, and Open Space)
3. A Connected Community (Transportation)
4. A positive learning environment

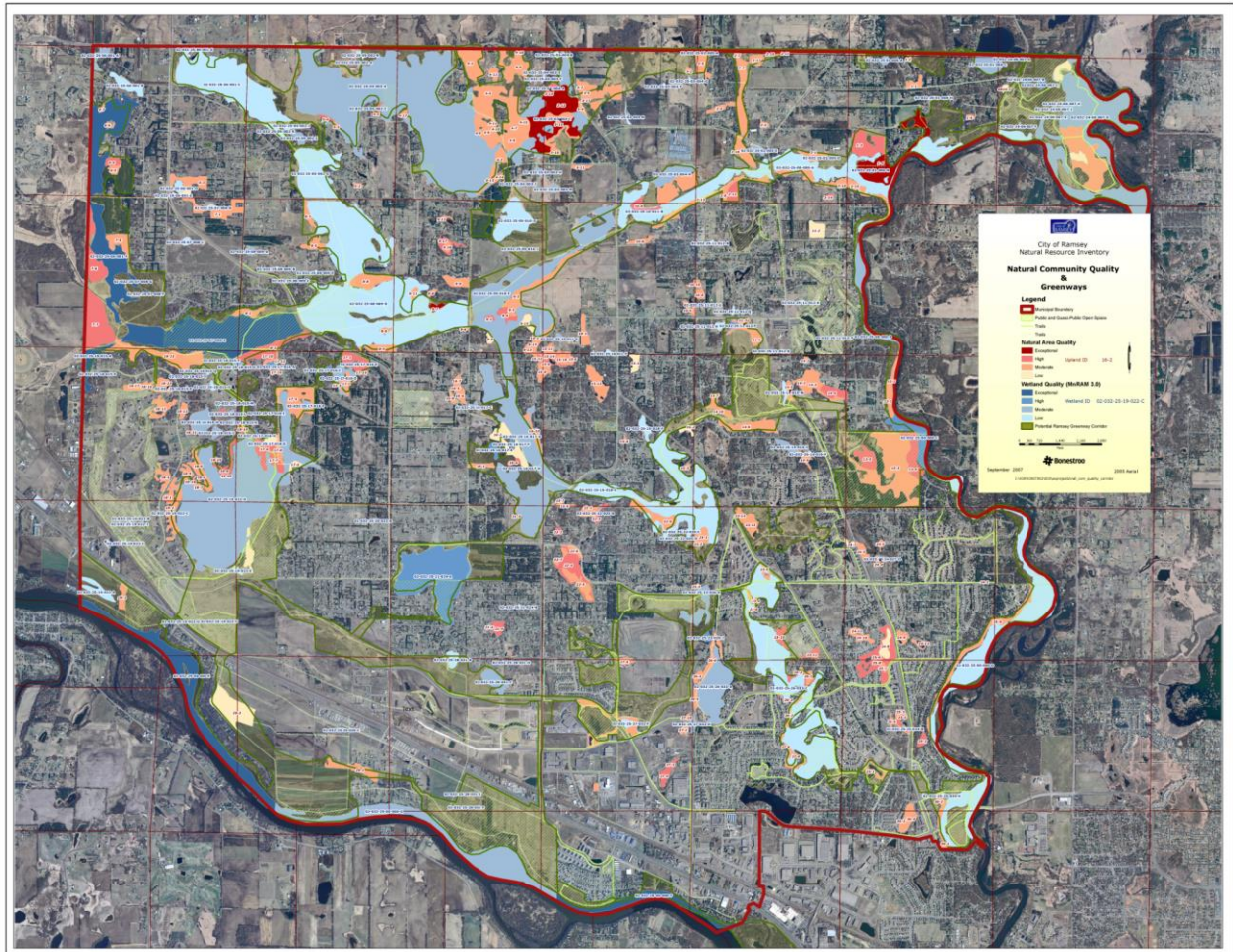
Goal/Initiative	Tactic	Timeframe	Key Outcomes	Additional Resources
Enhance Protection of Natural Resources				
	Ensure sustainability of food supply and food web by promoting pollinator friendly practices and initiatives.	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create polices to maintain and expand pollinator friendly landscapes on public lands through collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Commission • Improve communications and resources regarding pollinators to residents and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.25 FTE
	Protect water quality of Mississippi River from additional sediment loading due to shoreline erosion.	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify impacted properties owners interested in participating in bank stabilization projects • Identify applicable grant programs as source of funding for projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.25 FTE
	Extend the longevity of drinking water supply by reducing demand on groundwater.	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop incentives and or programs to promote water conservation throughout community • Develop resources and establish means to distribute the information to the general public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.25 FTE
	Reduce amount of material entering waste stream and explore more reuse options.	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an organics recycling pilot program to divert largest component of trash (organics) to reusable product (compost) • Improve communications and resources regarding 	0.25 FTE

			composting to residents and businesses	
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Natural Resources Inventory

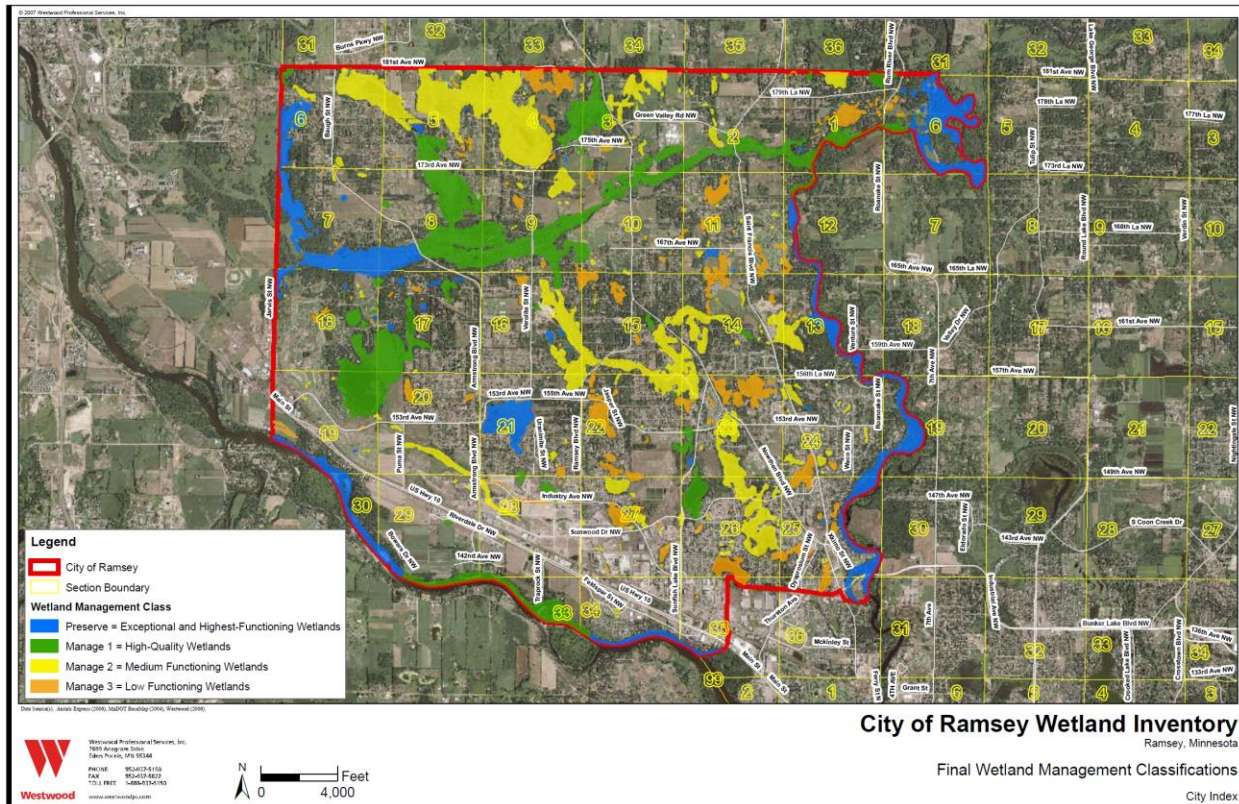
Figure 1: Natural Resources Inventory



Continued on next page.

Wetland Inventory

Figure 2: Wetland Inventory



Buildable Area Standards

In 2016, the City adopted new standards related to lot depth as well as instituted a wetland setback. The purpose of both of these standards was to ensure that newly created lots would actually have sufficient buildable and usable area to accommodate typical homeowner additions, such as a deck, small shed, a yard to play in, etc. Too often, homeowners attempting to make improvements to their property were discovering that there was not sufficient space to accommodate a new deck, a detached accessory building, or even to establish what they viewed as a usable backyard. This was creating a lot of frustration on their part and was also resulting in code violations as well. By implementing these new standards, it not only assured that each newly created lot would have buildable and/or usable space beyond the footprint of their home, but also helped to protect wetlands both from being filled in as well as from a water quality stand point (more filtration of runoff before entering the wetland).

Figure 3: Buildable Area and Wetland Setback Example

Put a drawing illustrating the narrative above.

Pollinator Friendly Habitat

The City desires to encourage more pollinator friendly habitat for a multitude of reasons. First and foremost, Ramsey desires to ensure the sustainability of food supply and the food web, which relies heavily on pollinators. By promoting pollinator friendly practices and initiatives, the City not only helps foster the concept of local food through opportunities such as the local farmer's market, but also encourages the

protection, restoration, and/or establishment of pollinator habitat. Broadly speaking, pollinator habitat generally consists of native plants, shrubs and trees. Native species are generally more drought tolerant and require fewer inputs, such as water (irrigation) and chemicals (fertilizers and herbicides). Thus, by establishing more pollinator friendly habitat, the demand on groundwater for irrigation purposes should decrease. Furthermore, the reduced need for chemical application should lower the potential of groundwater and/or surface water contamination from inappropriate application of these products on the landscape.

Protecting, restoring, and/or establishing pollinator habitat also creates habitat for a variety of wildlife. Where feasible, conglomerations of pollinator friendly landscapes can become the basis for wildlife corridors and potentially even a greenway corridor.

Mayors for Monarchs

The City has taken the Mayors for Monarchs Pledge to affirm its support not only for the iconic monarch butterfly, but also for pollinators in general, whose habitat continues to be fragmented and/or destroyed.

Figure 4: Mayors for Monarchs Background

Mayors for Monarchs

Many people may not realize that Monarch butterflies play an important role in pollinating various plants, including many of our food crops. But their population has declined by more than 90% in the last two decades. That is why it is important to create special habitats for these pollinators in our yards and gardens. Recently, the City of Ramsey adopted a resolution to support pollinator initiatives throughout our community.

Ramsey Mayor, Sarah Strommen, launched the initiative by signing the Mayors for Monarchs Pledge to support Monarch butterflies in our community by implementing efforts to create, restore, and protect pollinator habitat and encouraging our citizens to do the same in their own backyards. The Mayors for Monarchs Pledge Signing event took place on June 6, 2017 at the Lake Itasca Trailhead in Ramsey.

At the pledge signing event Mayor Strommen designated a new “Monarch Trail” along the Lake Itasca Trail corridor. Together with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the City of Ramsey will be restoring six and a half acres of land along this trail to a natural habitat designed to support Monarch butterflies and other important pollinators.

Students from Youth First Community of Promise were there to jump-start the project by planting a small section of native plant plugs at this event, which was representative of the larger-scale planting that will happen this fall.

Fourth grade students from Ramsey Elementary also contributed to the event by creating 150 colorful butterflies, which served as the backdrop for this event and will also be on display in the Ramsey City Hall in honor of National Pollinator Week, June 19 - 25, 2017.

If you are interested in learning more about the Monarch butterfly, be sure to check out Ramsey Parks & Recreation’s Monarch Lab on July 25. Visit www.cityoframsey.com/ParkEvents for more information on how to register.

City of RAMSEY

Lake Itasca Monarch Trail
Description will be added later.

Figure 5: Lake Itasca Monarch Trail

Figure 1



Brookfield Trail Connection

Project area map goes here.

Background on this demonstration project.

Shoreline Protection

The Mississippi River and Rum River experience significant erosion that poses a threat to individual properties and water quality as well. The Anoka Conservation District completed an inventory of the Mississippi River shoreline in December of 2015 to assess the severity of erosion. While a formal shoreline erosion inventory has not been completed on the Rum River, the Lower Rum River Watershed Management Organization (LRRWMO), along with City Staff, do conduct annual inspections to identify potential erosion concerns (as well as potential violations of the Wild and Scenic River Overlay District).

One of the primary impetuses for the formal inventory of the Mississippi River shoreline was to identify the most problematic properties and to use that data to solicit funding assistance.

Figure 6: Mississippi River Shoreline Inventory

To be added later.

Figure 7: Rum River Shoreline Inventory

To be added later.

Figure 8: Park and Trail Planning Map

To be added later.

Acceptable Shoreline Stabilization Techniques

This section will be completed at a later date. Potential acceptable techniques.

- Vegetation
- Natural Barriers
- Rip Rap
- Wing Dams
- Other

Groundwater Supply Preservation

Ramsey desires to protect the quantity and quality of our groundwater supply and aquifers. The City will accomplish this goal with two (2) broad strategies.

1. Programs, Incentives, and Rebates
2. Educational Initiatives

The remainder of this section will be updated with subsequent drafts providing more detail.

Solid Waste Management

This section will be completed later. Ramsey has a recycling program that all residential properties must participate in.

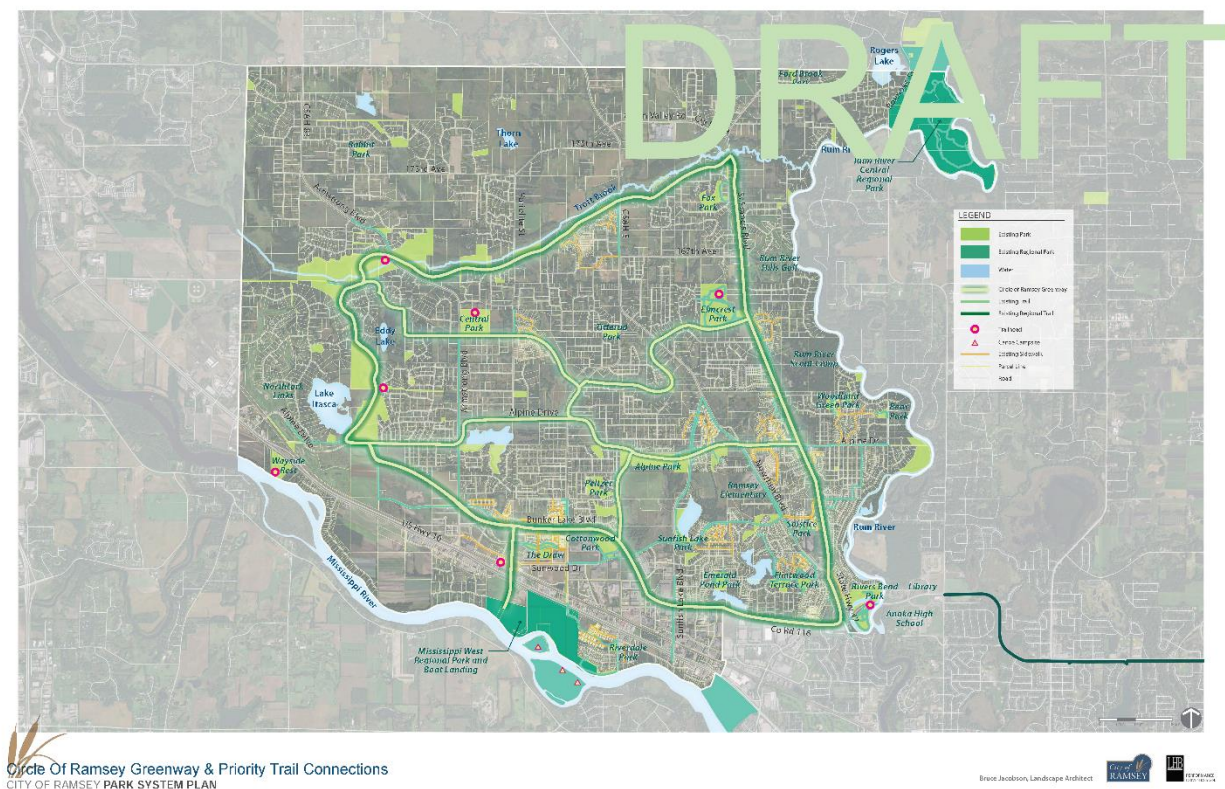
Access to Solar

This section will be completed at a later date. This is a required section. Subtopics include, but are not limited to the following.

- Existing solar ordinances
- Updated solar ordinances
- Connexus Energy Solar Farms (x2 in Ramsey)

Priority Greenway Corridors

Ramsey has developed a robust system of parks and trails. Trail connectivity is a key metric of success for our community. Ramsey desires to continue our tradition of prudent trail planning, connecting important recreational and ecological resources. In order to prioritize limited resources to accomplish this goal, Ramsey has prioritized important trail connections around the 'Circle of Ramsey' connecting our system of Community Parks.



University of Minnesota Resilient Communities Project

During the 2017-2018 Academic School Year, Ramsey partnered with the University of Minnesota's Resilient Communities Project (RCP) to advance resilience planning and goals. A summary of the projects evaluated during the academic year is found below. Project reports are available upon requests. Many of the recommendations from the RCP partnership are integrated into this document's goals and implementation strategies.



RESILIENT COMMUNITIES PROJECT

What is the Resilient Communities Project?

The Resilient Communities Project (RCP) is a cross-disciplinary program at the University of Minnesota whose mission is to connect communities in Minnesota with University faculty and students to advance local sustainability and resilience through collaborative, course-based projects. Ultimately, RCP strives to

- build local capacity to address community sustainability and resilience issues
- train students to be future sustainability practitioners in their fields
- produce case studies, tool kits, and other resources that advance sustainability and resilience practice at the community scale

How does RCP work?

Each academic year, RCP selects a partner community (typically a city, county, or tribal government) through a competitive process. RCP collaborates with the selected community to identify between 5 and 30 projects—based on community identified environmental, social, and economic issues and needs—that will advance local sustainability and resilience. Then, RCP serves as a matchmaker, strategically connecting the community's projects with existing U of MN courses that can provide appropriate research or technical assistance.

Staff and stakeholders from our partner communities work closely with faculty and students to provide local knowledge and deeper insight into the issues, ensuring the work students undertake is relevant to the community context. Outcomes from each University course are documented in a final report and presentation at the conclusion of the semester. Project results are shared with the community, and disseminated through RCP's website for use by other communities.

What are the benefits to students of collaborating with RCP?

- Efficient access to high quality and well organized community projects
- Experience applying your knowledge and skills to real-world issues
- Opportunities to build your resume or portfolio for future job interviews
- Potential to meaningfully advance local sustainability and resilience
- Local and regional visibility and recognition for your work
- Opportunities to network with local government and industry professionals



For more information:

Mike Greco
Director
mgreco@umn.edu
612.625.7501

Dan Mazzera
Program Associate
dmazzera@umn.edu
612.625.9397

Resilient Communities Project
University of Minnesota
330 HHHSPA
301 19th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

rrp@umn.edu
www.rcp.umn.edu
@RCPummn
RCPummn

Resilient Communities Project
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RCP-RAMSEY PROJECTS, 2017-2018



For the 2017-2018 academic year, RCP is collaborating with the City of Ramsey on 20 projects that will engage dozens of U of MN courses and hundreds of students to provide information, ideas, and new perspectives on locally identified sustainability and resilience issues.

Community Identity and Engagement

Every Voice Matters
Resident Engagement and Volunteerism Plan

A Gathering Place for Community
Community Center Plan

Sustaining Our Legacy
Historic Town Hall Plan

Creating Community Identity
Branding and Marketing Plan

Land Use and Transportation

Highway 10: A Community and Regional Focal Point
U.S. Highway 10 Corridor Plan

Connecting Ramsey
City-Wide Greenway Plan

A Gathering Within: An Attraction Beyond
The CDR Development Plan Update

Paying for Future Infrastructure Needs
Development Fee Study

Environmental Stewardship

Integrating Resources into Our Future
Natural Resources Management and Outreach Plan

Preventing Flood Damage and Disaster
Floodplain Communications Plan

Reduce Waste, Reuse Resources
Organics Recycling Plan

Clean Water, Clean Soil
Septic System Communications Plan

Will the Faucet Turn On?
Water Conservation Toolkit

Restoring Our Edge
Mississippi Shoreline Plan

Housing and Economic Development

Encouraging Small Business Growth and Expansion
Business Incubator Plan

Creating Housing Opportunities for All Generations
Housing Plan

Creating Destination
Retail Market Analysis

Administration

Protecting Our Investments
Asset Management Plan

Sustaining Our Team
Employee Development Plan

Employee Benefits for the Next Generation
Employee Benefits Plan

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RCP is a program of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA).

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Natural Resources Implementation

The Metropolitan Council's Regional Development Framework, ThriveMSP 2040, outlines roles for the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey for land use policy. Specific to land use policy, the Metropolitan Council has set a goal for the region to achieve Orderly and Efficient Land Use.

Ramsey Role - Natural Resource Protection	Metropolitan Council Role – Natural Resource Protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include goals, priorities, and natural resource conservation strategies in the local comprehensive plan to protect and enhance natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories. • Conserve, protect, and interconnect open space to enhance livability, recreational opportunities and habitats. • Adopt and implement ordinances for the conservation and restoration of natural resources within the community. • Work with regional partners and regional park implementing agencies to identify, plan for, and acquire natural areas and resources prime for preservation and protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate natural resource protection strategies into metropolitan system plans for infrastructure investments. • Collaborate with local, regional, and state partners to expand the Regional Parks System, as appropriate, to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as of high quality or of regional importance, consistent with the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. • Collaborate and convene with state, regional, and local partners to protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources protection. • Maintain an up-to-date regional Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment in

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for aggregate resource extraction where viable deposits remain accessible, as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. • Complete local natural resources inventories, prioritize areas to protect, and integrate natural resources conservation into local ordinances. • Conserve natural resources and protect vital natural areas when designing and constructing local infrastructure and planning land use patterns. • Encourage site planning that incorporates natural areas as part of site development and redevelopment. 	<p>partnership with the Department of Natural Resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance and tools for natural resources protection, conservation, and restoration. • Promote the implementation of best management practices for habitat restoration and natural resource conservation.
<p>Ramsey Role – Water Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate best management practices for stormwater management in planning processes and implement best management practices with development and redevelopment to control and treat stormwater. • Integrate water sustainability and protection of groundwater recharge areas into local plans. Consider how development, irrigation, reductions in infiltration and inflow, and increased surface runoff impact groundwater recharge and consider conservation strategies and best management practices to mitigate these impacts. • Adopt and implement best management practices for protection of natural resources, the quality and quantity of our water resources, and the preservation of water supply. • Explore alternative water supply sources to ensure adequate water resources beyond 2040. • Collaborate and convene with state, regional, and local partners to protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources protection and the protection of the quality and quantity of the region’s water resources and water supply. • Prepare and implement local water supply plans and source water (wellhead) protection ordinances, consistent with 	<p>Metropolitan Council Role – Water Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate and convene with state, regional, and local partners to protect, maintain, and enhance natural resources protection and the protection of the quality and quantity of the region’s water resources and water supply. • Work to maintain and improve the quality and availability of the region’s water resources to support habitat and ecosystem health while providing for recreational opportunities, all of which are critical elements of our region’s quality of life. • Update regional plans for water supply and pursue environmentally sound and cooperative water reuse practices, conservation initiatives, joint planning, and implementation efforts to maximize surface water infiltration to recharge groundwater supplies. • Support economic growth and development by promoting the wise use of water through a sustainable balance of surface and groundwater use, conservation, reuse, aquifer recharge and other practices. • Provide efficient and high-quality regional wastewater infrastructure and services. • Pursue wastewater reuse where economically feasible as a means to promote sustainable water resources. • Reduce the excess flow of clear water into the regional wastewater collection system (inflow and infiltration) to protect capacity for future growth.

<p>Minnesota Rules part 4720, in all communities with municipal water supply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan land use patterns that facilitate groundwater recharge and reuse, and reduce per capita water use to protect the region’s water supply. • Plan for sustainable water supply options and groundwater recharge areas to promote development in accordance with natural resources protection and efficient use of land. • Partner with other water supply providers to explore options to reduce dependence on groundwater. • Prepare and implement local surface water plans as required by Minnesota Rules Chapter 8410, the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, and the 2040 Water Resources Policy Plan. • Reduce the excess flow of clear water into the local wastewater collection system (inflow and infiltration). Participate in inflow / infiltration grant programs as available. • Incorporate current MPCA regulations (Minn. Rules Chapters 7080-7083) as part of a program for managing subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) in the comprehensive plan and local ordinances, and implement the standards in issuing permits. Describe the conditions under which the installation of SSTS will be permitted and the areas not suitable for public or private systems. • Adopt and enforce ordinances related to stormwater management and erosion control. • Adopt and implement best management practices for abating, preventing, and reducing point and nonpoint source pollution. • Develop and adopt critical area plans and ordinances consistent with Executive Order 79-19 and Critical Area Program rules in all communities with affected lands in the Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor. • Integrate drinking water source protection into local land use decisions, particularly in Drinking Water Supply Management Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require proper management of subsurface treatment systems, consistent with Minn. Rules Chapters 7080-7083, to minimize impacts on surface water, groundwater, and public health. • Assure adequate and high quality groundwater and surface water supplies to protect public health and support economic growth and development by promoting the wise use of water through a sustainable balance of surface water and groundwater use, conservation, reuse, aquifer recharge, and other practices. • Review watershed management plans in coordination with the Board of Water and Soil Resources. • Review local water plans in partnership with the watershed organizations that approve the local water plans. • Support implementation of volume reduction techniques such as infiltration or filtration for stormwater management. • Promote the implementation of best management practices for stormwater management. • Collaborate with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide technical assistance to local governments in implementing the Mississippi River Critical Area Program, and coordinate with the DNR in review of those plans and ordinances.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programs that encourage stormwater management, treatment, and infiltration. 	
<p>Ramsey Role – Resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify local measures that would result in reductions in water use, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions. • Identify local mitigation and adaptation strategies and infrastructure resiliency plans to protect against potential negative impacts to local economies, local resources, and infrastructure systems that result from more frequent or severe weather events. • Implement compact development patterns and create more connected places to reduce auto-dependency and related generation of greenhouse gas emissions. • Address climate change mitigation and adaptation in locally meaningful ways in the local comprehensive plan. • Identify local measures that would result in reductions in water use, energy consumption, and emission of greenhouse gases. • Ensure that local comprehensive plans and ordinances protect and enable the development of solar resources, as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, and consider the use of other alternative energy sources as part of the planning process. • Consider the development or use of community solar gardens (CSGs) by public and private entities to enable fuller and more economic use of the community’s solar resource, including participating as subscribers, assisting in marketing community solar garden opportunities for economic development, and providing sites for gardens to be developed. • Identify local measures to address impacts to local economies, local resources, and infrastructure systems as a result of more frequent or severe weather events. • Identify local initiatives as cost-saving measures that may, as a result, lower energy consumption, reduce the generation of greenhouse gas emissions, preserve water 	<p>Metropolitan Council Role – Resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantially reduce energy consumption at Council facilities, improve the efficiency of the Council’s vehicle fleets including Metro Transit buses, and provide information to the public and partners to lead by example. • With regional infrastructure, planning, and operations, increase efforts to reduce water use and energy consumption. • Identify and address potential vulnerabilities in regional systems as a result of increased frequency and severity of storms and heat waves. Maintain dikes, emergency generators, and response plans for Council facilities facing extreme weather. • Use the Council’s investments and planning authorities to contribute toward meeting statutory goals for reductions in the generation of regional greenhouse gas emissions. • Convene regional discussions about goals for climate change mitigation and adaptation. • Encourage the preparation of adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency responses to climate change as part of the comprehensive plan update. • Develop, collect, and disseminate information about climate change, including energy and climate data, GreenStep Cities best practices, and the next generation of the Regional Indicators data. • Work with the State of Minnesota on a greenhouse gas emissions inventory that informs regional discussion on emissions reduction. • Provide technical assistance and toolkit resources to communities in integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies as part of local comprehensive plans. • Develop and strengthen partnerships with experts in climate change to better assist and inform local communities on how best

<p>supply, reduce municipal waste, or increase participation in recycling programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in programs that evaluate and share city practices and provide technical support, such as the GreenStep Cities program and the Regional Indicators Initiative. 	<p>to evaluate and develop local climate changes strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage communities to participate in regional programs which support efforts to inform, plan for, mitigate, adapt, and respond to climate change issues of local significance such as water conservation, stormwater infrastructure adaptation, greenhouse gas reduction, use of alternative energy sources, infrastructure planning, and hazard mitigation planning. • Provide technical references and resources for communities seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change in their own facilities and in their communities. Examples of these resources include stormwater, wastewater, and water supply management practices, and transit and land use planning. • Provide, or collaborate with partners to provide, technical references, and resources for communities seeking to mitigate and adapt to climate change, in their own facilities and in their communities, including, but not limited to, stormwater, wastewater, and water supply management practices,
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Action	Priority	Timeframe

This section to be completed at a later date.

Figure 1: Natural Resources Inventory..... 5

Figure 2: Wetland Inventory 6

Figure 3: Buildable Area and Wetland Setback Example 6

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