

Planning Commission Comment & Response Matrix
Village Planning Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment
February 25, 2013



	Planning Commission Comment/Question	Response/Action
1	Clarify the density numbers in the Comp Plan Amendment. Why is a range being used for residential densities; how is this integrated into the plan?	<p>The Comprehensive Plan for the entire City establishes various land use categories that guide land for specific types of development on the Future Land Use Map (Map 3-3). The residential land uses are broken down between Low, Medium, and High density areas. A residential density range is the tool that is typically used to differentiate between different residential categories.</p> <p>The Village plan includes the general LDR, MDR, and HDR categories used elsewhere in the plan; however based on feedback from the Planning Commission, these will be further refined to clarify that the density range used to guide development in the Village will be different than those used in the I-94 Corridor (these land uses will now be V-LDR and V-MDR). The Village Plan also includes a target number of 934 for overall residential units, which will be used by the City to track compliance with the intent of the plan as development occurs in the future.</p> <p>A range is necessary because it is impossible to know the true development potential or market preferences for any given site without more detailed information on a piece of property (topography, wetlands, soil suitability, environmental issues, existing easements, etc.)</p> <p>The City does have discretion in setting up its residential use categories be as general or specific as it wants to be; however, Staff believes that the current classifications will allow the City to generally establish future guidance for residential land without creating an overly complex system that places an arbitrary cap on development units.</p>
2	What impact will the plan have on property owners with working septic systems and/or systems that have recently been updated?	<p>The plan amendment identifies the areas that will be served by sanitary sewer service in the future, but does not establish a specific time frame for extending this service into existing residential neighborhoods. Beyond the main trunk line that will follow Lake Elmo Avenue (or parallel to Lake Elmo Avenue), the priority</p>

		level for construction of future lateral lines will need to be decided in the future. All future utility extensions will follow the natural development progression in the Village.
3	Will the City require property owners within the Village MUSA area to hook up to sanitary sewer service?	City must abide by State Statutes that require individual properties to hook-up to sanitary sewer service once these services are available (meaning there is a service connection provided to the site) within two years.
4	The Met Council mandates should be discussed in the plan.	The plan amendment for the I-94 corridor includes a section concerning the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with revised housing, population, and employment projections to account for the flexibility allowed under the revised MOU. This section will be a part of the overall land use plan that will also include the Village Area Planning update.
5	Water quality and concerns with depletion of ground water supplies.	<p>The City's 2008 Comprehensive Plan amendment includes sections on Water Resources and Water Supply. The purpose statement for the water resources chapter reads as follows: the purpose of [this plan] is to serve as a comprehensive planning document to guide the City in conserving, protecting, and maintaining the quality of its natural resources, surface waters, and ground water resources.</p> <p>The City will continue to work with the Met Council, DNR, Department of Health and Washington County on regional planning issues that impact the City's ground water supply. The City has also adopted a Surface Water Ordinance that addresses the goals and objectives from the plan.</p>
6	Request from James McLeod regarding property at 11580 30 th Street North.	Change the McLeod property and properties to the west to a Rural Single Family classification.
7	The plan needs to differentiate between the Village LDR and MDR classifications and the I-94 LDR and MDR classifications.	Create separate land use classifications for the Village LDR and MDR categories; revise the land use map to use distinct color coding for these areas. See comments in item 1.
8	There are significant issues with parking in the Village, especially along Lake Elmo Avenue and around the elementary school.	The village plan indicates that the City will continue to work with property owners within the Village Center to address parking issues. The construction of a village green, ball fields and other public uses will provide opportunities to expand upon the current amount of public parking. Parking will be given special consideration as part of any future streetscape modifications to Lake Elmo Avenue and other Village streets.

9	Trail connections should be a priority, and the plans should encourage future connections to destination points like the Gateway Trail.	The City adopted a trail plan in 2006 that identifies a series of destination points and plans for future connections to these areas. The Park Commission will be discussing implementation of the trail plan, and will be looking to make modifications to the plan as necessary.
10	Why was a 100 foot buffer used in the I-94 Corridor, but a 250 foot buffer is being proposed in the Village? Should the City be concerned with the potential for a takings case with a buffer of this size?	The buffer for the I-94 corridor was drafted as a mechanism to provide separation and buffering between two different types of residential uses. This was done through a required green belt and a reduction in the densities planned next to existing residential areas. The Village Plan calls for a green belt rather than a buffer, which is intended to mark a distinction between the rural and urban areas within the community. This “edge” needs to be established somewhere, and the green belt is the mechanism that was chosen to define the change in land uses and to help maintain a distinct center to the Village.
11	The plan often uses words that are permissive rather than mandatory; should the plan use stronger wording to ensure that the City’s intent is followed?	Staff has drafted the plan to provide flexibility where it may be needed in the future or where additional work must be done in order to support a specific goal or objective from the plan.
12	There is a precedent for smaller homes in the Village; does the plan allow for these to continue?	The Planning Commission recommended adoption of revisions to the LDR and MDR districts that would allow for slightly smaller lots than as previously as written under the ordinance. The Comprehensive Plan encourages the clustering of housing on smaller lots as a mechanism to preserve open space in new developments.
13	The plan should include language to state the City’s intention to have the City square connect the Old Village with new construction.	The proposed Village Plan includes several statements that encourage the construction of trails and other pathways to connect new development with the center of the Village.
14	The community park areas (ball fields) should be combined into one larger area which would also help avoid splitting the park areas across the railroad right-of-way.	The plan has been drafted to identify the potential location for a community park, but would allow for some flexibility regarding the exact location for any new parks at the time development proposals are considered by the City. The proposed park areas should provide sufficient space to accommodate common activities in one area, even if other park elements are located across the railroad tracks.
15	The City should establish a historic preservation district to help ensure the preservation of existing historic buildings in the Village.	The plan states that the City should consider establishing a historic preservation district. There is additional research and analysis that needs to be done in order to determine the designation that might be appropriate for the City (or if the Village would even meet historic district standards).

16	Storm water issues should be listed as one of the existing barriers or challenges to development in the Village.	The plan has been revised to include an additional statement in the section concerning challenges to development specific to storm water issues.
17	The existing ball fields should be preserved or a suitable replacement must be constructed in order to consider relocation of either existing facility.	The plan does not call for the elimination of the existing ball fields, and leaves these areas guided for public use. The future location of the Village Green location is not specifically identified on the plan, but it would allow for the reuse of n existing ball field as part of a community gathering space.
18	Why have transfer of development rights (TDR) and tax increment financing (TIF) not been included in the plan?	The Village Work Group after an extensive review of open space preservation options decided not to pursue TDR as a viable option for the Village Plans. The plan does include references to the use of TIF financing to help implement the vision for the planning area. These are two examples of tools that could be used to help implement the plan.
19	The Lake Elmo Regional Arts Center should be documented as a public use in the plan.	The Future Land Use Map has been amended to show the Regional Arts Center as a public use.