

REQUESTING A LOCAL FORECAST CHANGE

LOCAL PLANNING HANDBOOK

Metropolitan Council updates its regional and local forecasts of population, households and employment at least once a decade. The Council's local forecasts reflect real estate market demand in the residential and nonresidential sectors, constrained by local land use controls. Planned land use, planned development intensity and staging constrain what is possible in a local area; however, projected market demand could be less than that maximum possibility. Unused, surplus capacities for growth are found in all types of communities.

Between major updates, local governments can request a forecast change by including their preferred forecasts in the Plan Update or a Plan Amendment (as a table in the Land Use chapter). Requested forecast changes should be related to planned land use, allowable development intensity, specific small-area or site development plans, updated current conditions, or staging.

HOW TO REQUEST A LOCAL FORECAST CHANGE

When a Forecast Change May be Required

Metropolitan Council may **require** a forecast change accompany a comprehensive plan amendment in situations:

- Where a subject development and/or other known developments will cumulatively advance employment, population or households counts to exceed 2040 or 2050 forecast levels;
- Where those forecast levels have already been reached in a recent year; or
- Where capacities for employment, population or households are so substantially changed (increased or decreased) that the approved forecast for a forecast year becomes impossible.

When a Forecast Change May be Recommended

Metropolitan Council may **recommend** a forecast change in additional situations:

- Where expectations or capacities for employment, population or households have changed to a degree that future outcomes are likely altered (but the forecast is not yet exceeded or impossible); or
- Where any of the situations above will cause sub-city, zone-level forecasts (for Transportation Analysis Zones) to be exceeded or impossible in a forecast year.

Review Process

Council staff will evaluate community forecast proposals based on land supply and development-pipeline data, and any other information local governments provide in support of a forecast change. We will also review if the changes to expectations, capacity or forecast cause any system impacts. Provided that system impacts can be resolved or mitigated, Council staff may recommend action on communitywide forecasts. Any needed forecast changes are approved together with Council actions on comprehensive plan updates or amendments.

Minor forecast revisions can be approved through "Administrative Review Approval," an expedited process, so long as the associated comprehensive plan amendment meets all criteria for Administrative Review Approval.

BEST PRACTICE FOR LOCAL PLANNERS

Discuss prospective forecast changes ahead of time.

Communities can discuss forecast revisions with their sector representatives early in the comprehensive plan update or amendment process, before formal submission to the Council for review. Council staff will communicate any concerns back to communities, minimizing the need for revisions or resubmittals later.

Provide information about why your community's forecast should change.

Requested forecast changes should be related to planned land use, allowable development intensity, specific small-area or site development plans, updated current conditions, or staging. Examples of information local governments can provide include:

- A list of upcoming known development projects – or recent, but previously unexpected projects – including location, type of development, and estimates of housing units or nonresidential floorspace
- A discussion of changes in local planned land use or land supply that might change the type or amount of local growth
- Identification of redevelopment areas, and expected impacts on housing units or nonresidential floorspace in these areas
- Maps of land that is permanently preserved or undevelopable, especially for local plans in which residential land guidance is a “holding” categorization for uses not elsewhere classified (e.g. greenspace, schools or cemeteries)
- Discussion of other factors that demonstrate a need for forecast changes.

Local governments can provide this information in discussions with their sector representatives, or in their Update or Amendment's discussion of their preferred forecasts.

SUB-CITY, ZONE-LEVEL FORECASTS

In the 2040 planning cycle, local governments provided Metropolitan Council with allocations of communitywide forecasts to sub-city Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ).

Going forward, Metropolitan Council staff are responsible for maintaining the region's database of TAZ allocations, to ensure currency and consistency with local planned land use changes and any communitywide forecast changes.

During the preparation of Plan Updates, local governments are invited to review Metropolitan Council's TAZ allocations, and to advise or request adjustments. However, this is not a Plan Update requirement.

When zone-level forecast adjustments are needed with a plan amendment, Council staff will describe the adjustment in an advisory comment. In most cases, no additional information will be needed from local governments.

TAZ allocations are published [online](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the Met Council Forecasting webpage [here](#)

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