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## Twenty-Five Years of Planning for Low- and Moderate-Income Housing in the Twin Cities: The Legacy of the 1976 Land Use Planning Act

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The Minnesota Land Use Planning Act (LUPA) of 1976 provides the basis for mandatory land-use planning policy in the seven-county Minneapolis–St. Paul metropolitan region. The statute requires that the comprehensive plans adopted by communities “include a housing element containing standards, plans and programs for providing adequate housing opportunities to meet existing and projected local and regional housing needs, including but not limited to the use of official controls and land use planning to promote the availability of land for the development of low and moderate income housing” (Minn. Statute § 473.859, Subdivision 2). The act designates the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities as the agency responsible for reviewing comprehensive plans for their conformance with LUPA requirements. Subdivision 4 of the same statute, which addresses the implementation of the comprehensive plans, requires a housing program (including official controls) that “will provide sufficient existing and new housing to meet the local unit’s share of the metro area need for low and moderate income housing” (emphasis added).

This statutory language establishes LUPA as the basis for a “fair-share” housing program in which local communities are obligated to meet the demand for low-cost housing derived from a regional analysis of needs. However, the current lack of affordable housing in the Twin Cities metro area suggests that LUPA

has not had the intended impact of meeting regional low- and moderate-income housing needs. In the summer of 2000, we examined the implementation

of LUPA’s housing elements during the 25 years since the law was enacted to determine why. Our research team consisted of 3 faculty members from the University of



PHOTO BY EDWARD G. GOETZ

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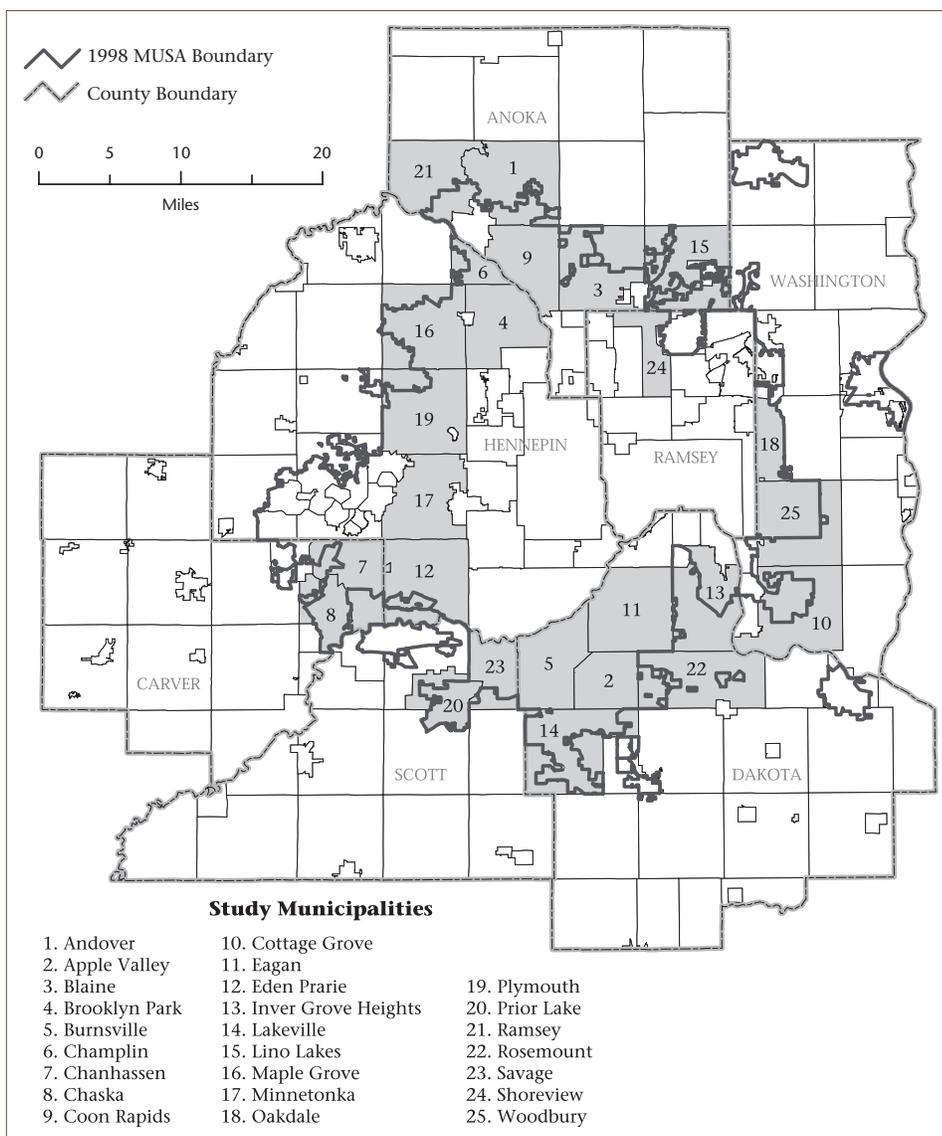
Minnesota, 12 graduate students taking part in a course at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, and several undergraduate students enrolled in an urban studies course at Macalester College. The study was funded by the Family Housing Fund with additional support from CURA, the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, and the Urban Studies Program at Macalester College.

Our research took several approaches. Team members conducted interviews with current and former Metropolitan Council staff members to determine how the agency interpreted and implemented LUPA. We also conducted a case study of 25 municipal governments in the seven-county Twin Cities region to examine both their commitments and their actual practices with respect to affordable housing development. First, we reviewed their comprehensive plans to determine the degree to which the plans embodied LUPA requirements concerning affordable housing. Next we examined the degree to which the standards, plans, and programs identified in the comprehensive plans had actually been implemented by conducting interviews with housing and community development officials, planning officials, and housing developers in each of the sample communities. Finally, we examined the degree to which land set aside for high-density housing actually resulted in the creation of affordable housing. The results of our research are presented below.

### Metropolitan Council Administration

When LUPA was created, the Metropolitan Council was given the task of overseeing implementation. At the time, it was understood that because this was the first round of comprehensive planning for many communities in the metro area, it would take several years for all of the plans to be completed. The council did not give communities a deadline. Among the 25 communities we sampled, the first round of planning produced council-approved plans as early as 1979 and as late as 1982. Initial guidelines for compliance with the statute also did not indicate how frequently the plans had to be updated. The Minnesota legislature addressed this issue in 1996 by requiring a second round of comprehensive plans to be completed by the end of 1998, with another round of updates every 10 years thereafter. Many communities did not meet the legislature's 1998 deadline. Although the Met Council encourages timely submissions, council staff members we interviewed indicated that

Figure 1. LUPA Compliance Study Area, Twin Cities Seven-County Metropolitan Region



there was not much they could do to force compliance with the deadline. By the end of 1998, the Met Council had received and assessed plans for only 6 of the 25 communities we sampled; plans for 8 communities were assessed in 1999 and 2000. Another 11 communities still had plan assessments pending or had not yet submitted plans as of November 2001.

At the time LUPA was enacted, the Met Council was active in calculating the regional housing shares of low- and moderate-income housing to be built in communities across the metro area. The council created an allocation plan that provided specific numerical goals for all communities within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) based on the number and projected growth of households and jobs, and the number of unsubsidized low- and moderate-income housing units for each community. These allocation figures were then routinely

incorporated into the community's comprehensive plan. Most of the comprehensive plans adopted prior to 1983 that we analyzed make direct reference to the fair-share allocations for "low- and moderate-income housing" made by the Met Council. The council then judged the adequacy of local housing plans based on the amount of land set aside for high-density residential development, working under the assumption that high-density development was the most likely to produce affordable units. In addition, the Met Council adopted a set of zoning and land-use guidelines aimed at producing more affordable housing opportunities. The guidelines included suggestions related to lot size, garages, square footage of living area, and other items that have a direct impact on housing prices. Finally, the Met Council's power of review gave it input into the grant-making decisions of the federal government and thus some leverage over local housing efforts.

While this system was in place and functioning, the region's affordable housing profile changed significantly. From 1975 to 1983, the central cities' share of the region's total of subsidized units fell from 82 to 59%. This impact made it one of the highest performing regional programs in the entire nation. However, the Met Council has changed its orientation to LUPA significantly during the 25 years the law has been operational. Since the early 1980s, the council no longer calculates fair-share allocations, and no longer provides communities with information about their share of regional needs. For the 25 communities we studied, comprehensive plans completed after the mid-1980s typically make no reference to regional low- and moderate-income housing needs and make no attempt to document the local share.

In recent years, the Met Council has also encouraged communities to use their Livable Communities Act (LCA) housing goals to fulfill the LUPA requirement that they calculate their communities' low- and moderate-income housing need. Created by the legislature in 1995, the LCA involves affordable housing goals that are negotiated by the Met Council and individual communities. The housing benchmarks for LCA are not based on need, but rather on the existing level of affordability in subsectors of the region. Even these benchmarks, however, are routinely ignored by communities and by the Met Council in cases where they call for an increase in affordable housing. Consequently, LCA goals are inadequate with respect to the LUPA requirement for calculating need.

The Met Council also discontinued until very recently the practice of reviewing local housing performance and has backed off from its practice of providing development guidelines to local communities. The guidelines were never binding on communities and no sanctions ever existed for deviating from the guidelines. However, they did provide guidance for local communities, as well as a standard against which local actions could be judged.

Finally, the Met Council has not established any type of monitoring system to determine whether the objectives contained in comprehensive plans were ever met, whether land set aside for high-density development was ever used for that purpose, or whether the rate of low- and moderate-income housing development approached the need for such housing as stated in the plans.

### Quality of the Comprehensive Plans

We selected for analysis a sample of 25 of the 144 municipal governments in the seven-county Twin Cities region (see Figure 1). The communities chosen for analysis were the fastest growing suburbs in the region between 1970 and 1990 and were among the communities projected for the greatest growth between 2000 and 2020.<sup>1</sup> For each community in the sample, we reviewed both the first comprehensive plan adopted after passage of LUPA in 1976 and the most recently approved comprehensive plan. Teams of researchers were assigned to each community and asked to summarize the comprehensive plans using a standardized protocol that focused on four issues. First, did communities calculate the existing and projected need for low- and moderate-income housing and their share of the regional need for such housing? Second, how does the plan define income levels and land allocated to different housing densities, and does the plan explicitly or implicitly link high-density housing to the objectives related to low- and moderate-income housing? Third, does the plan lay out a series of steps to be taken by the community to achieve the low- and moderate-income housing goals established? Finally, does the plan explicitly state how many acres of high-density, developable land have been set aside, and can this amount accommodate enough low- and moderate-income housing to meet the stated goals?

In our analysis, we distinguished between three waves of plans: the first between 1979 and 1982, the second between 1983 and 1995, and the last from 1995 to the present. Table 1 shows the dates of the plans we reviewed for each of the 25 communities in our sample. We found that the typical first-wave plan makes direct reference to the fair-share allocation made by the Met Council for low- and moderate-income housing. Although it was standard practice for communities to adopt the low end of the range provided to them by the council, the plans nevertheless indicated an acceptance of the fair-share methodology. The Apple Valley, Inver Grove Heights, and Eagan plans even indicated that community housing needs are best established on a regional basis.

<sup>1</sup> Our sample includes at least one community from each of the seven counties in the metropolitan area. To arrive at our sample, we selected the 15 communities that added the most population between 1970 and 1990. The final 10 communities were chosen based on both past growth and projected future growth. In general, first-ring suburbs and the more outlying areas of the region are excluded from the sample.

**Table 1. Dates of Comprehensive Plans of Sample Communities**

Community	Dates of review and approval by Met Council
Andover	1991
Apple Valley	1979, 1999
Blaine	1980
Brooklyn Park	1981
Burnsville	1981, 1990, 1999
Champlin	1981, 1986
Chanhassen	1981, 1991, 1999
Chaska	1981, 1991
Coon Rapids	1982
Cottage Grove	1981, 1999
Eagan	1981
Eden Prairie	1980
Inver Grove Heights	1981, 1998
Lakeville	1981, 1988, 1998
Lino Lakes	1981, 1998
Maple Grove	1980, 1998
Minnetonka	1980, 1998
Oakdale	1983, 2000
Plymouth	1980, 2000
Prior Lake	1981, 2000
Ramsey	1982
Rosemount	1981, 2000
Savage	1981, 2000
Shoreview	1982, 2000
Woodbury	1979, 2000

Although we reviewed only five plans from the second wave (Andover, Burnsville, Champlin, Chanhassen, and Chaska), it is notable that all references to fair share and regional needs for low- and moderate-income housing are gone. When the Met Council abandoned in the early 1980s its practice of calculating fair-share allocations, communities moved away from the practice of viewing their needs in the context of regional patterns. In fact, there are virtually no references to low- and moderate-income housing at all in these second-wave plans, and there are no calculations of regional need or of local shares of regional need.

Third-wave plans typically place their discussions of low- and moderate-income housing in the context of the Livable Communities Act. Although the Livable Communities Act does not supercede LUPA, the Met Council has substituted LCA standards for those set in LUPA, and communities have followed this lead. With the exception of two communities (Eden Prairie and Plymouth), there is no effort in the third wave of planning to estimate a community's share of regional needs. Almost none of the third-wave plans estimate local need for low- and moderate-income housing. In fact, the phrase *low- and moderate-income housing* is rarely, if ever, used. In its place is the LCA

phrase *affordable housing*. By extension, LCA definitions for *affordable* are adopted by communities in the most recent wave of comprehensive plans. The inflated affordability guidelines of LCA—which include income standards of 80% of area median income for a family of four for homeownership, and 50% of area median income for a family of four for rental housing—mean that when communities use LCA figures they are, in effect, planning for higher income housing than was targeted under the LUPA fair-share allocation process.

The city of Apple Valley illustrates the changed orientation of comprehensive plans during the 25-year period since LUPA was implemented. The first-wave (1979) plan for this community stated:

The need for low and moderate income housing within Apple Valley must be identified on a regional basis because Apple Valley is a suburb within the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Area and there is nothing of particular significance within the community that would cause it to stand apart from regional considerations. As such, the statistics and “fair share goals” developed by the Met Council are the best and probably only source of determining the future needs for low and moderate income housing.

The same community’s third-wave (1999) plan, however, contains a significantly different statement:

The City is in the best position to determine the most responsible option for meeting the future needs of Apple Valley rather than the Metropolitan Council, especially as it relates to residential densities.

Given that the Metropolitan Council judges the adequacy of affordable housing plans in part by how much land is set aside for high-density development, this statement essentially denies the legitimacy of the council in helping to set low- and moderate-income housing goals.

In addition to requiring that comprehensive plans make reference to regional needs or local share of regional needs, LUPA also calls for the plans to include an implementation section that outlines the programs and practices to be used to promote low- and moderate-income housing. The quality of the comprehensive plans we analyzed, as measured by the number and variety of specific

implementation steps for promoting low- and moderate-income housing, also diminished significantly over time. Plans from the first wave typically list possible subsidized housing programs from all three levels of government—local, state, and federal. During the third wave of plans, most communities fail to mention programs from more than a single level of government.

An even greater decline in the quality of plans can be seen when one examines the local nonsubsidy initiatives offered by communities as means of promoting low- and moderate-income housing. Table 2 lists the number of times each of 11 different local regulatory steps was mentioned in first- and third-wave plans. The City of Burnsville listed seven of these techniques in its 1978 plan, but only one of them in the 1998 plan. Apple Valley listed four in 1979 and one in 1999. Lino Lakes listed five in 1981 but none in 1998. Shoreview went from five to one and Rosemount from six to one. Lakeville, Savage, and Prior Lake actually increased the number of specific local regulatory actions listed in their plans. Overall, however, specific regulatory actions to promote low- and moderate-income housing were twice as likely to appear in first-wave plans than in third-wave plans.

In addition, the third-wave plans rarely include strategies that address the

specific obstacles to low- and moderate-income housing identified by local housing and planning officials in those same communities. Inver Grove Heights provides an example of the changes over time in this area. This community’s first-wave plan indicates the need to review the zoning ordinance and to “consider a reduction in the more rigid Zoning Ordinance in order to promote the development of [low- and moderate-income] housing.” The plan also calls for an ongoing housing subcommittee to review subsidized housing proposals and to revise the city’s housing plan when necessary. The third-wave plan for Inver Grove Heights does little more than suggest that the City will try not to make the affordable housing situation worse than it already is: “To the degree possible, the City will work to ensure that local actions do not unduly increase the cost of raw land.” Similarly, the third-wave plan for Lino Lakes lists 3 different “residential goals,” 16 different “residential policies,” and 3 different “residential strategies,” but only 1 of these 22 policy statements mentions affordability and not a single one mentions low- and moderate-income housing.

Because of the lack of documentation of regional need and of the local share of that need in all plans since the first wave, and because of the lack of specific

**Table 2. Potential Regulatory Relief Mentioned in Comprehensive Plans**

Local steps to facilitate low- and moderate-income housing	First wave*	Pct.	Third wave†	Pct.
Rezoning	4	16	3	18
Increased densities	14	58	3	19
PUD	18	75	9	56
Decreased square footage requirements	14	58	2	12
Streamlined permit approval	2	8	0	0
Reduction in fees	4	16	1	6
Reduced setbacks	6	25	1	6
Manufactured housing	7	29	1	6
Nondiscrimination	4	16	1	6
TIF	2	8	4	25
Other	10	42	3	18
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.54</b>		<b>1.75</b>	

\* First-wave plans were reviewed for 24 communities.

† Third-wave plans were reviewed for 16 communities.

implementation steps to promote low- and moderate-income housing in most plans, we conclude that there is not a single second-wave or third-wave plan submitted by the 25 communities we reviewed that meets the housing standards implied by LUPA.

### Plan Implementation

In addition to evaluating what their comprehensive plans say, we also examined the degree to which individual communities carried out the comprehensive plans they submitted pursuant to LUPA. We interviewed housing and community development officials, planning officials, and residential builders in each of the communities to solicit information about the efforts the sample communities have made to promote low- and moderate-income housing, and to provide a means of checking on the implementation of standards, plans, and programs identified in earlier comprehensive plans.

Our analysis of the implementation of comprehensive plans is necessarily limited. Given the passage of time and staff turnover, it was impossible to reconstruct or provide a full accounting of all of the steps taken or not taken during the last 25 years by the 25 communities we sampled. Instead, we focused on several specific efforts made by these communities: Do they monitor the need for and the existence of low- and moderate-income housing in their community? Do their comprehensive plans identify regulatory steps that could be taken to promote low- and moderate-income housing?

The Land Use Planning Act envisions a system in which local governments plan for low- and moderate-income housing within a regional context. For the system to be meaningful, however, there must be a means of tracking the efforts made by individual communities. We have seen that the Met Council established no such monitoring system. One might expect that individual communities would have tracked their progress toward meeting low- and moderate-income housing needs. Indeed, this seems like a minimum requirement for a community to achieve its program goals. However, few of the communities we studied monitor the low- and moderate-income housing situation within their city limits. More than two-thirds of the communities in our sample do not have an inventory or database of the amount of low- and moderate-income housing that exists in the community. Of those

**Table 3. Reported Use of Regulatory Mechanisms to Promote Low- and Moderate-Income Housing among Sample Communities**

Techniques to promote low- and moderate-income housing	Number of communities	Pct. of communities
Planned unit development (PUD) ordinance allowing smaller lots, density bonuses, etc.	17	71
Zoning variances	5	21
Density bonuses	3	12
Expedited approval for low- and moderate-income housing projects	0	0
Reduced fees	5	21
Reduced lot sizes allowed	10	42
Allowance of accessory apartments	12	50
Set-asides for low- and moderate-income housing	7	29

that do keep track, only one indicated that its list went back as far as the mid-1970s when LUPA was created.

Similarly, creation of regulatory procedures to promote low- and moderate-income housing also has been quite limited. Our city interviewees were asked a series of questions about what techniques were in place in their communities for enhancing the production of such housing. As Table 3 illustrates, the most common form of regulatory mechanism identified was some form of a planned unit development (PUD) ordinance allowing smaller lots and higher densities to be negotiated between developers and city staff. The only other technique used by even half of the communities was an allowance for accessory apartments. Chanhassen, Eden Prairie, and Oakdale each reported using five of these eight techniques, the most among the 25 communities studied. Rosemount, Chaska, and Apple Valley reported using four. On the other end of the spectrum, Andover and Brooklyn Park reported using none of these techniques, while Inver Grove Heights and Ramsey reported using only one. The mean across all communities we studied was slightly less than 2.5.

We found there were often discrepancies between what the current comprehensive plans say regarding regulatory initiatives to promote lower cost

housing and what our interview informants told us was being done in the sample communities. In one city, for example, the planner we interviewed was surprised to learn that his community's comprehensive plan called for an affordable housing set-aside in all new residential developments. With respect to allowing decreased square footage and the relaxation of other requirements to cut costs, we found discrepancies between interview responses and comprehensive plans in 8 cases out of 14 (i.e., for 14 cities, either the comprehensive plan or the planner-informant indicated that such techniques were in use, but in 8 of those cases there was not agreement between what the plan said and what the planner indicated). For the rezoning of land to accommodate low- and moderate-income housing, there were discrepancies in 6 out of 16 cases. Even for the use of PUDs, there were differences in 6 out of 15 cases. Although it is difficult to determine the exact reason for the discrepancies found between what the plans indicate on one hand and what city officials say on the other, it is clear that there is some significant disconnect between the comprehensive plans and the practices of communities.

Overall, the 25 study communities had a mixed record of implementing steps for affordable housing that were described in their early plans. We found several

examples of specific steps listed in comprehensive plans that had been carried out in subsequent years. At the same time, there were numerous examples of promised implementation steps that had never been undertaken. The items that were carried out least often were those related to specific zoning changes intended to facilitate lower cost housing and reduce the per-unit cost of land.

Three conclusions from this analysis are noteworthy. First, it is clear that a housing plan adopted in one year is not necessarily embraced by the city council in subsequent years, particularly if there is turnover among council members. Second, follow-through on comprehensive plans is not always a simple yes/no proposition. Compliance on some items requires a continued effort throughout the period of the plan rather than just a single action. Finally, in some cases it became clear that communities were operating under plans that contained language with which officials were not familiar.

## Full Report on LUPA Available from CURA

*The Affordable Housing Legacy of the 1976 Land Use Planning Act.* By Edward G. Goetz, Karen Chapple, and Barbara Lukermann. Minneapolis: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, 2002. CURA 02-1. 118 pp. Free.

This full report, upon which the summary article in this issue of the *Reporter* is based, examines the implementation of the 1976 Land Use Planning Act during the 25-year period from 1976 to 2001. The full report includes an executive summary, an in-depth discussion of how the Metropolitan Council has interpreted and administered LUPA, a detailed analysis of the LUPA-related elements in the comprehensive plans of each of the 25 communities profiled, more detailed discussions of how these communities' plans have been translated into action as well as how successful they have been at producing low- and moderate-income housing, and an appendix that contains the standardized protocol the research team used to analyze communities' comprehensive plans. To order this publication, call CURA at 612-625-1551 or send e-mail to [cura@tc.umn.edu](mailto:cura@tc.umn.edu).



***Reclassification of land was common during the 25-year study period. Although it was initially set aside for high-density residential development, this parcel was rezoned commercial and was developed as a daycare center.***

We asked both city officials and developers about what land-use regulations constitute barriers to low- and moderate-income housing production. Both groups of interviewees agreed that restrictions on high-density development and the availability of developable high-density land were the most important obstacles. Developers also frequently mentioned as an important barrier the resistance of neighbors to affordable housing.

Finally, we examined the attitudes of city officials toward the housing elements of LUPA. Our interviews uncovered a strong sense among them that LUPA was not particularly relevant to affordable housing issues in suburban areas of the region. A number of reasons were cited for this perception, including the current emphasis of the Met Council on the Livable Communities Act, the belief that meeting LCA goals is equivalent to meeting LUPA requirements, and the feeling that the planning requirements of LUPA have little to do with the actual development of low-cost housing.

### Impact of Planning

In order to examine the relationship (if any) between the planning done pursuant to LUPA and the development of low- and moderate-income housing in the region, we conducted two analyses of the correspondence between the comprehensive plans we examined and the existence and location of low- and moderate-income housing. First we followed the fate of more than 7,400 parcels of land set aside for high-density residential development in the first wave of plans from 1979 to 1982. This analysis

determined the extent to which (a) these parcels remained high-density residential during a 20-year period, (b) housing was built on these parcels, and (c) the housing was affordable. In addition, we created a database of existing low- and moderate-income housing in the 25 communities in our sample. For these developments, we looked back to see what those parcels had been designated for during the first wave of plans. Together, these analyses can help determine the extent to which the plans submitted by the communities during the first wave were predictive of future low- and moderate-income housing development practices.

The Met Council has evaluated the adequacy of housing plans, in part, by determining whether communities set aside enough high-density residential land to accommodate low- and moderate-income housing goals. The assumption behind this is that high-density land is more likely than other land to attract low- and moderate-income housing. Our analysis suggests that this is a defensible assumption; roughly 1% of the total land in the 25 sample communities is currently zoned or designated for high-density residential use, yet this land contains almost half of the low- and moderate-income housing we could identify in these communities.

To analyze the practical impact of the housing requirements of LUPA, we tracked all of the parcels of land that the 25 study communities had set aside for high-density residential development in their first-wave plans. We sought to determine how much of that land originally planned for high-density housing

actually contained low- and moderate-income housing.

Reclassification of land was common during the 25-year study period. Of the estimated 7,463 parcels of land set aside for high-density residential development in first-wave plans, only 19% were zoned for high-density development 20 years later. Instead, much of the land was redesignated, rezoned, or down-zoned to lower densities. In fact, the study communities moved land out of high-density residential categories at a rate of more than one acre each working day from 1980 to 2000. At the same time, some land that was not originally designated for high-density development was moved into that category. Overall, however, there was a 31% reduction in acreage devoted to high-density residential development during the study period.

In addition, we found that PUDs rarely resulted in high-density low- and moderate-income housing production. Only 12% of the acreage in PUD zones was high density and only 19% of those acres held affordable low- and moderate-income housing.

By examining a sample of parcels, we found that 88% of parcels that are currently zoned for high-density housing have housing on them, although only 58% of those acres had high-density housing. Most of that high-density housing (62% of the parcels) had already been built at the time of the first-wave plans. Of the parcels that contained high-density housing, only 35% contained housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households. As a result, during

the 20-year study period, only 6% of the acres set aside for high-density residential use produced new high-density low- and moderate-income housing. This is an extremely low conversion rate, and suggests that the Met Council's practice of looking at high-density set-asides is an insufficient means of evaluating the commitment of local communities to promoting low- and moderate-income housing. Either this standard should be abandoned altogether, or the Met Council should insist on a set-aside that would accommodate many times the number of low- and moderate-income units identified by the community as its goal.<sup>2</sup>

### Conclusion

Our analysis of the implementation of the LUPA housing requirements in 25 high-growth suburban communities of the Twin Cities since 1976 suggests that there are serious deficiencies in the law itself and in the way it is being carried out by both suburban communities and the Metropolitan Council. The lack of monitoring, the retreat from regional allocation of need by the Met Council, and the council's own suggestion that LCA housing plans be used to comply with LUPA requirements all point to the declining relevance of LUPA in planning for low-cost housing. Both the Met Council and individual suburban communities have retreated from the idea of

<sup>2</sup> In this case, given the 6% conversion rate, the cities in our sample would have had to designate almost 16 times the number of acres as high-density in their initial land-use plans to actually develop a given number of acres as high density.

regional planning for low-cost housing. On the books, the region is one of the few national models for the local provision of regional housing needs; in practice, however, those requirements are readily ignored. This is all despite the fact that 25 years ago the fair-share housing element of LUPA was widely accepted in the region and that it initially led to the creation of comprehensive plans that fulfilled both the letter and the spirit of LUPA.

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## New Publications

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***Community Participation and Geographic Information Systems.*** Edited by William J. Craig, Trevor M. Harris, and Daniel Weiner. London and New York: Taylor and Francis, 2002. 383 pp. \$95.00 hardcover. ISBN 0415-23752-1.

Co-edited by CURA's associate director William J. Craig, this volume of essays on geographic information systems (GIS) grew out of the Empowerment, Marginalization, and Public Participation Geographic Information Systems initiative and a workshop sponsored by the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis. The essays in this collection focus on the conceptual and practical issues arising from the intersection of GIS with participant communities and present case studies and models that can be replicated by other communities. The book can be ordered at local bookstores.

***Community and Quality of Life: Data Needs for Informed Decision Making.*** By the Committee on Identifying Data

Needs for Place-Based Decision Making and the Committee on Geography, National Research Council. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2002. 184 pp. \$44.95 hardcover. ISBN 0-309-08260-9.

This volume, which includes a chapter coauthored by CURA associate director William J. Craig, considers the range of data needed by communities to plan and participate in decisions that affect the quality of life in those communities. The book discusses the concept of livability and livability indicators, the importance of place and connectedness, appropriate measurement and analysis of livability, decision-support processes, and data and analysis tools for decision support. Included is an appendix on federal data sources. The book is available online at <http://books.nap.edu/books/0309082609/html/index.html>, and can also be ordered online at <http://www.nap.edu>.