# MEMORANDUM

**To:** **Twin Cities Metro Area Healthy Community Planning Project Team**

**From:** **Doug Benton, Research Assistant**
**Public Health Law Center**

**Re:** **Indicator Analysis: Mixed-Use Development for Metropolitan Communities**
**Healthy Community Planning Project**

**Date:** **October 1, 2021**

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## Indicator: Mixed Use

The following discussion includes key findings and analysis of the reviewed comprehensive plans regarding the mixed-use development health indicator. The Project Team defines mixed-use development as residential land uses integrated with commercial uses.[1] When properly implemented mixed-use development produces a greater number of housing options and types, increases affordability, more efficiently uses land and infrastructure, and helps meet population thresholds for transit and supportive services that improve walkability and active living.

## Overall Takeaways

In total, 41 of the studied communities have mixed-use land use designation or development as part of their comprehensive plan. When taken as a whole, these communities approach mixed-use development through improving walkability; zoning specific districts as destinations or corridors to connect walkable spaces with residential, commercial and other uses that promote active living; and focusing on using mixed-use designations to create housing. Although the specifics of mixed-use zones varies from city to city, the basic tenets of mixed use (density, vibrancy, resiliency, etc.) underpin mostly all mixed use. Below are some common examples of approaches plans use to promote mixed-use development, along with the number of communities who mention each approach.

### *Equity*

Though not using the word 'equity' explicitly, a few communities used increasing affordability and diversity among their justifications for mixed-use housing development in their plans. For instance, **Belle Plaine** wants to use mixed-use housing developments "as a means of integrating neighborhoods and addressing the very real need for a complete housing stock" (Belle Plaine, 84), while **Eden Prairie** wants to explicitly support "mixed use and residential projects that achieve diversity in the resident population by offering a variety of housing types and price points (affordability levels) within individual development projects" (Eden Prairie, 38). While not specifically relating mixed-use housing development to equity, **Inver Grove Heights** and **New Hope** both discuss senior housing in new mixed-use housing development in their plans (Inver Grove Heights, 36; New Hope, 208).

### *Walkability*

Walkability is an important benefit of mixed-use development in most communities. Many communities, like **Brooklyn Park**, acknowledge that they have "moved past the vision that its core is limited to only retail opportunities" and plan on refocusing community efforts toward "creating a walkable, transit connected, experience-based place that brings the City forward and offers new opportunities to existing and future residents" (Brooklyn Center, 21). As reflected in **Roger**'s plan, other plans reviewed talk about mixed use in downtown areas as a strategy that "supports economic activity and helps create a walkable

downtown environment by maximizing the square footage of commercial space that is directly accessible from the street" (Rogers, 40).

Several communities also included mixed-use zoning changes and redevelopment within specified goals related to multimodal transportation and active living. For example, the City of Columbia Heights has a goal to "promote active lifestyles through land use and redevelopment opportunities, [p]rovide convenient access to mixed use land use developments to optimize mobility of non-motorized modes of travel and decrease dependency on the automobile," and "place mixed use land uses adjacent to transit with convenient pedestrian and bicycle access" (Columbia Heights, 38).

### *Destinations/Corridors*

Several communities incorporated mixed use into their plans as strategies for targeted redevelopment along specific corridors or destination points. For instance, **Corcoran** plans to, "[u]se the Mixed Use land use designation to develop a Town Center similar to that envisioned in the Corcoran Southeast District Plan and Design Guidelines adopted in 2016" (Corcoran, 45). **Mahtomedi**, like other communities' land use plans, "[guide] two areas for redevelopment as Mixed Residential/Commercial" (Mahtomedi, 51) while **Columbia Heights** plans for the "development of a mixed-use downtown/civic core… to provide a focal point for the community" (Columbia Heights, 33).

### *Focus on Housing*

Another overall theme in comprehensive plans' incorporation of mixed use is a focus on producing housing, particularly the opportunity for higher-density housing. **Belle Plaine** anticipates portioning a higher share of uses within mixed-use designations for residential uses to reflect its "desire to increase residential density within the Downtown including second and third story residential with first floor commercial" (Belle Plaine, 71). Similarly, **Inver Grove Heights** intends to limit residential uses to "higher density apartment or condominium buildings for either general occupancy or for specific segments of the population such as senior housing," in addition to also designating a larger share of residential uses within mixed-use areas (Inver Grove Heights, 36). **Maplewood**'s plan recognizes the need for "three Mixed Use land use categories [that] will support residential land uses of various densities" in developed areas of the City where most of the 2040 population growth is anticipated (Maplewood, 45).

### *Focus on Design Standards*

Several communities' discussion of mixed-use land use categories in their plans focuses on specific design standards. For instance, many urban communities use a similar approach to **Roseville**'s land use strategies which aim to "create design standards for both vertical and horizontal mixed-use developments, not only so that the uses are compatible, but so that the scale, mass, and feel of new development enhances the desired community character" (Roseville, 365). Similarly, suburban communities like **Woodbury** and **Plymouth** both want their mixed-use categories to "demonstrate a higher standard of site and building design" (Plymouth, 58) and for design standards to "ensure compatibility between Places to Live, Places to Work and Places to Shop" (Woodbury, 53).

## Interesting and Innovative Approaches

The most interesting approach communities take in addressing mixed-use development is the use of mixed-use overlay districts.

### Mixed-Use Overlay Districts

Several urban communities use mixed-use overlay districts to promote mixed-use development. For example, the City of **Osseo** "will consider developing a new zoning district or overlay that better addresses and implements Mixed Use guidance and applying that zoning district to properties guided Mixed Use (Osseo, 194). **Brooklyn Center**'s plan "incorporates the 'Brooklyn Boulevard Corridor Overlay' which … is meant to alert land owners, residents, developers and policy makers that this Corridor deserves and warrants additional study as development and redevelopment progresses" (Brooklyn Park, 76).

## Ranking Analysis

Each community received a score of 1 to 4 on the mixed-use indicator, which ranks it on how much it incorporated mixed use into its comprehensive plan. If a community scored a 1, that means there was no mention of mixed use or furthering mixed-use development in the plan. A score of 2 would demonstrate that the community mentions mixed use in the body of the plan but does not include goals and policies to this end. Level 3 plans include goals and/or policies to promote mixed use. Communities with the highest score of 4 must include goals and policies in their plans, notably through land use policies that promote mixed-use development AND dedicate resources to implementation. The number of communities to receive each score was:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Level 1** | 8 communities |
| **Level 2** | 14 communities |
| **Level 3** | 20 communities |
| **Level 4** | 7 communities |

### Level 1

Of the eight communities that have a score of 1, six of these communities discuss land use designations or multiple land uses without any connection to mixed-use development. The other two do not discuss mixed use at all in their plans.

### Level 2

The 14 communities that received a score of 2 on this indicator **mention mixed use in the body of the plan**, **but do not include goals and policies to this end**. Communities that scored a 2 discuss mixed use

in their plans in relation to identifying specific areas for redevelopment; increasing employment; and preferring vertical, higher density development.

<u>Identification of Areas for Potential Redevelopment</u>

In level 2 communities, places like **Falcon Heights, Lilydale** and **New Hope** identify specific areas that are ideal for "mixed use redevelopment," "additional housing and business development," and the establishment of a "central mixed use area" given the location, age, condition, and availability of developable land (Falcon Heights, 41; Lilydale, 21; New Hope, 183). **Golden Valley** identifies "a number of sites" as "potential locations for redevelopment" while also recognizing that "financing and market challenges may make uses mixed side-by-side (horizontal) more feasible than uses within buildings (vertical)" (Golden Valley, 114).

<u>Employment Opportunities</u>

Some level 2 communities discuss mixed-use land uses with regards to its connection to increased employment opportunities.  In its "Mixed Use Action Steps" **Minneapolis** plans "to ensure employment opportunities are provided in areas well-served by transit and mixed-use development," and "allow production and processing uses in Commercial Mixed Use areas while controlling for potential negative externalities through building and site design" (Minneapolis, 112). Similarly, **Stillwater** plans to "support mixed use development along the Highway 36 corridor that attracts well-paying jobs to the community" (Stillwater, 309).

<u>Preference for Vertical Development</u>

These communities discuss mixed use with a preference for vertical development patterns that place multiple uses within the same building, usually in pursuit of greater resiliency and efficiency of land uses. **Brooklyn Center** states that, "[s]hifting away from the traditional office campus or big-box strip-mall concept, these designations encourage co-location and integration of users to find ways to create a more sustainable and resilient development pattern" (Brooklyn Center, 76). **Arden Hills** attaches the preference to a specific location: "[t]he Town Center is intended for vertical mixed-use buildings" (Arden Hills, 43).

### *Level 3*

A ranking of 3 on this indicator means that the **plan includes goals and/or policies to promote mixed-use development.** Communities scoring a 3 often implement multiple types of mixed-use zoning districts, discuss how market forces guide their development, leverage mixed use to strengthen their community's character, and connect mixed use to multimodal transportation, especially transit.

<u>Zoning - Multiple Mixed-Use Types</u>

Communities that scored a level 3 discuss creating multiple mixed-use zoning designations in their plans. **Lake Elmo** plans to "create two new zoning designations that support the Mixed-Use Business Park and Mixed-Use Commercial land use designations" (Lake Elmo, 282-3), and **Rogers**' "Mixed-Use Districts

provide three land uses that provide for a range of land uses within the same development type" (Rogers, 39). **Maplewood** also plans to use three mixed-use categories to "support residential land uses of various densities" (Maplewood, 45). **North St. Paul** includes three new or updated mixed-use zoning districts with varying flexibility and density requirements: Downtown Mixed-use, Transitional Mixed-use, and Corridor Mixed Use (North St. Paul, 50-51).

### How Market Forces Guide Development

Reliance on market forces to produce and guide mixed-use development is another common theme among Level 3 communities. **Crystal**'s land use plan and development recommendations "support allowing additional mixed-use development, increased building coverage and heights, and reduced setbacks - in the event that the market supports such development" (Crystal, 117). Similarly, **Rogers**' flexible, mixed-use "neighborhood" category intends to "accommodate residential or a node of service commercial where market forces might present such an opportunity" (Rogers, 144). Rather than specifically identifying parcels for mixed-use redevelopment, **White Bear Township** relies "on market place factors and plan policies supporting mixed use and multi-unit housing development" (White Bear Twp., 144).

### Strengthening Community Character

Many communities discuss mixed use as a tool for strengthening community and community character. **Columbia Heights** wants to "continue to support the development of a mixed-use downtown/civic core along Central Avenue to provide a focal point for the community" (Columbia Heights, 33). **Lauderdale** wants to use mixed-use development on specific corridors to "explore ways to integrate users into the community identity" (Lauderdale, 29). **Maplewood**'s Downtown Mixed-Use designation was established "to reflect and enhance the small-town and pedestrian friendly atmosphere while encouraging development and redevelopment consistent with the historic character" (Maplewood, 52).

### Connecting to Multi-Modal Transportation

Level 3 communities prioritize and acknowledge the benefits of mixed uses near transit. **Eden Prairie**'s plan recognizes that "after the completion of the SW LRT Green Line Extension, transit-oriented development around the SouthWest, Golden Triangle, Town Center, and City West stations has led to an influx of new mixed use buildings, allowing residents to live and work within walking distance from restaurants, shopping, and night life" (Eden Prairie, 28). **Shakopee** plans to "rezone areas adjacent to existing park-and-ride facilities and potential bus rapid transit (BRT) stations to mixed use" (Shakopee, 289). **Columbia Heights** "allows a mix of commercial, office, and high density residential near transit" (Columbia Heights, 54).

#### *Level 4*

To score a 4 for this indicator, communities must **include goals and/or policies to promote mixed-use development and dedicates resources toward achieving these goals.** These communities discuss how mixed use can cater to pedestrian oriented economics, express a desire for high design standards within

mixed-use areas, connect these areas to multimodal transportation, specify mixed-use districts names and locations, and leverage mixed use to promote sustainability goals.

### Pedestrian Oriented Economics

Level 4 communities focus on the economic benefits of mixed-use walkability in their goals and policies. As **Burnsville's** population ages and diversifies, "new opportunities for investment in neighborhood oriented business will occur. By encouraging future redevelopment to be pedestrian- and transit-oriented and to cater to the needs of residents living in close proximity (1/4 mile), existing neighborhoods may be revitalized by the resulting local gathering places" (Burnsville, 198). Similarly, **Osseo's** "Downtown Core Mixed Use" designation intends "to accommodate central business type uses that include joint-use parking areas and business uses primarily oriented to the walking public" (Osseo, 104).

### Design Standards

Level 4 communities have policies and strategies that discuss mixed-use design standards. **Roseville**'s land use strategies aim to "create design standards for both vertical and horizontal mixed-use developments, not only so that the uses are compatible, but so that the scale, mass, and feel of new development enhances the desired community character" (Roseville, 365). **Maplewood** wants to ensure the use of "appropriate design principles to enhance the character and attractiveness" at mixed-use nodes and corridors (Maplewood, 58). **Vadnais Heights** allows flexibility for development that "incorporates a variety of uses featuring innovative, high-quality design" (Vadnais Heights, 28).

### Connecting to Multi-Modal Transportation

Connecting mixed-use development goals to multi-modal transportation is a common feature of level 4 communities. **Osseo** encourages mixed use that "situate[s] residents within a short walk of commercial destinations" with constructed sidewalks and trails (Osseo, 104) and **Woodbury** wants mixed use that is "in close proximity to major transportation corridors and could support transit facilities, such as a park and ride lot, or a transit station" (Woodbury, 54). **Corcoran**'s plan states that the "[t]he scale of this district [mixed use] requires intra-district connectivity and multi-modal access" (Corcoran, 108). **Roseville**'s neighborhood mixed-use designation explicitly states: "[c]ommercial uses should be oriented toward pedestrians and the sidewalk. Commercial uses should be designed to minimize negative impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods while maintaining connections with sidewalks or trails" (Roseville, 4-10).

### Use Specific Mixed-Use Districts with Names and Identities

Level 4 communities not only create multiple mixed-use types and identify priority locations, but also give those nodes or corridors names and describe the identity and character they envision. **Corcoran** wants to use mixed-use designation "to develop a Town Center similar to that envisioned in the Corcoran Southeast District Plan and Design Guidelines adopted in 2016" (Corcoran, 45). Similarly, **St. Louis Park** has a goal to "enhance the Park Commons area as St. Louis Park's 'town center'" (St. Louis Park, 243). **Burnsville**'s plan "expands mixed-use development opportunities by utilizing successful elements

from the Heart of the City 'HOC' area as a template to incorporate mixed-use and transit-oriented development (TOD) at a smaller scale within neighborhood commercial areas" (Burnsville, 2-51).

<u>Sustainability</u>

Finally, some level 4 communities are interested in mixed use as a strategy for improving sustainability. **Woodbury**'s mixed-use goals and policies "[p]romote a walkable, sustainable development pattern that supports alternative forms of transportation" (Woodbury, 54). Under **Burnsville**'s "Sustainability Area – Energy Reduction" policy goals' section, the city wants to "[i]ncrease density and incorporate mixed use zoning and design" as part of its land use sustainability approaches (Burnsville, 122). **Osseo** discusses adding green amenities to mixed-use districts by "[considering] the redesign of downtown edge streets as 'complete streets' with green amenities" (Osseo, 178).

## Community Designation Analysis

All 51 plans, representing 54 communities, reviewed in the project were sorted into three main designations: urban, suburban, or rural. The research team analyzed these types of communities separately to see if they approach the task of promoting mixed-use development in different ways that are more specific to community type. As indicated, below, these larger categories are combinations of the more narrowly defined categories the Metropolitan Council (Met Council) uses to distinguish communities. The urban category is made up of urban center and urban communities, while the suburban category is made up of towns that the Met Council defines as suburban, suburban edge, and emerging suburban edge communities. The rural category is a combination of rural center, diversified rural, rural residential, and agricultural communities.

Although the specifics of mixed-use zones vary from city to city, the basic tenets of mixed use (density, vibrancy, resiliency, etc.) underpins mostly all mixed use, making it difficult to stratify themes by community type (urban, rural, suburban).

### *Urban*

Urban communities are more likely to discuss the form and design of mixed-use spaces, attach specific purposes and intents to mixed-use designated areas and connect mixed uses to multimodal and active living goals.

<u>Aesthetics / Priority of Appearance</u>

While cities take multiple approaches, across most urban communities one common approach is a focus on the appearance and design around mixed-use development. The city of **New Brighton** has goals that "[r]equire a high-level of aesthetic quality in design [... promote] the application of Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) principles, such as on street parking in planned communities, pedestrian friendly streetscapes, or multi-story mixed-use developments" (New Brighton, 33-34). **Maplewood** wants to "[i]mprove the economic condition and appearance of the Maplewood Mall area and ensure

community-wide needs are met" (Maplewood, 57). Similarly, **Roseville** sets goals and strategies that prioritize design standards for mixed use:

> "Goal - Create an attractive, vibrant, and effective city with a high quality of life by implementing placemaking principles in the design and management of the public realm.

> "Strategy: Create design standards for both vertical and horizontal mixed-use developments, not only so that the uses are compatible, but so that the scale, mass, and feel of new development enhances the desired community character" (Roseville, 365).

## Form-based Code – Relationship Between Districts and Public Space

Form-based code, which fosters predictable, higher density development through municipal regulations that place more emphasis on physical built form than land uses, is a common theme among urban communities' discussion of mixed-use development in their plans. While few plans actually suggest form-based code, many emulate form-based code's focus on the exterior of buildings rather than buildings' specific uses. **Roseville** has a goal to "[c]reate an attractive, vibrant, and effective city with a high quality of life by implementing placemaking principles in the design and management of the public realm" (Roseville, 365). **Osseo** plans to "[c]reate a downtown area that provides a healthy and compatible mix of uses, including retail services, institutional, residential, office, and open space" (Osseo, 25).

## Explicitly Naming the Purpose or Intent of Mixed-Use Districts

Urban communities explicitly attach purpose and intent to mixed-use districts in their plans. For instance, **Brooklyn Center** states, "[t]he purpose of creating the mixed-use designations is to encourage a more diverse, integrated and interesting land use pattern in the community in all areas" (Brooklyn Center, 58). **Osseo** focuses more on pedestrian commerce stating that, "[t]he intent of this district is to accommodate central business type uses that include joint-use parking areas and business uses primarily oriented to the walking public" (Osseo, 104), while **North St. Paul's** intents for mixed use include "tying the district to the historic character of the area" (North St Paul, 50).

## Sites of Expected Development

Another common theme for urban communities is discussing mixed-use development for specific, prioritized areas in which they expect new development to occur. **Falcon Heights** says that, "11.3 acres of Mixed Use Residential area is expected to develop between 2021 and 2040 which is 24.1% of the overall Mixed Use Residential areas" (Falcon Heights, 42). **Golden Valley** identifies certain areas that "are not the only possible areas of change, but due to circumstances such as proximity to major roadways, the age of existing structures, or shifting market forces, these are logical places to focus attention" (Golden Valley, 113). **Lauderdale** acknowledges that:

> "Though redevelopment in the City has been slow to take hold, the recovery in the real estate and development market over the past five years indicates that it is likely that the City will begin to experience an increase in interest and demand for redevelopment given the desirable location of the community within the metropolitan area […] The City acknowledges that is possible that not

all areas identified as an opportunity will redevelop over the next 20-years, but the City is confident that certain parcels will redevelop with either mixed use or high density residential uses and all redevelopment will include the addition of new households in the community" (Lauderdale, 37-38).

<p style="text-align:center;">Explicit Goals Around Multimodal Transportation and Active Living</p>

Urban communities also create explicit goals connecting mixed use with multimodal transportation, including active transport such as walking or bicycling. For example, **Columbia Heights** wants to "[p]rovide convenient access to mixed use land use developments to optimize mobility of non-motorized modes of travel and decrease dependency on the automobile" and "[p]lace mixed use land uses adjacent to transit with convenient pedestrian and bicycle access" (Columbia Heights, 38). **Roseville** says that "Corridor Mixed-Use areas should have a strong orientation to pedestrian, transit, and bicycle access to the area, and movement within the area" (Roseville, 108). **St. Louis Park** wants the Park Commons town center to "[e]ncourage integrating community travel routes within the area in order to improve overall multimodal safety, access and circulation around and through the area" (St. Louis Park, 143). **Falcon Heights** states that they will, "[o]n transit routes, where appropriate, allow the redevelopment of multi-family and commercial properties for mixed use or higher density housing, incorporating best practices for conserving green space and promoting active living" particularly in the Larpenteur Corridor (Falcon Heights, 41-42).

### *Suburban*

Overall, suburban communities that address mixed-use development in their plans do so in a variety of ways, from emphasizing its importance for economic development, redevelopment, preserving and connecting open spaces, to incorporating mixed use into planned unit development ordinances and processes.

<p style="text-align:center;">Mixed Use Provides Civic Use</p>

Several of the Metro's suburban communities address mixed use in their plans by recognizing it as a tool for promoting civic uses in addition to residential and commercial uses. For instance, **Arden Hills** says that "[e]very building in the Town Center will have residential uses at a minimum of 21 units per acre within the building. An individual building may also have commercial or civic uses" (Arden Hills, 43). **Mahtomedi's** plan acknowledges that the "the majority of existing uses in the shared downtown of Mahtomedi and Willernie involved commercial with a limited amount of civic uses" (Mahtomedi, 53). As a result, its plan "guides Mahtomedi's portion of the downtown area for village mixed use, which includes commercial, residential, and civic uses" (Mahtomedi, 53).

<p style="text-align:center;">Design Standards</p>

Higher quality design standards are also a common feature of suburban communities' discussion of mixed use in their plans. **Plymouth** says that "[d]evelopment within the Mixed Use (MXD) classification is expected to demonstrate a higher standard of site and building design" (Plymouth, 58). Other

communities like **Spring Lake Park** focus on design standards for mixed use that promote livability saying that, "[s]ite design should focus on walkability, preservation of open space, and access to commercial uses" (Spring Lake Park, 18). Similarly, **Woodbury** plans to "[d]emand high quality design to ensure compatibility between Places to Live, Places to Work and Places to Shop" (Woodbury, 53).

<u>Economic Development / A Reason to Create Employment Centers</u>

Mixed use is also discussed as a tool for economic development. **Stillwater** wants to "[s]upport mixed use development along the Highway 36 corridor that attracts well-paying jobs to the community" (Stillwater, 309). **Shakopee**'s plan "sets the stage to the west for a mixed-use employment center providing space for advanced manufacturing, office, and potential satellite campus development. Additionally, closest to the bluff, higher density residential development will provide housing options for existing and future Shakopee residents in proximity to workplaces" (Shakopee, 30).

Other suburban communities focus their discussion of mixed-use development on the creation of specific employment centers and hubs. **Vadnais Heights** has a goal to "continue the development and enhancement of City Center as the attractive, multiple-use economic and civic hub of the community" (Vadnais Heights, 46). **Burnsville** states that, "[m]ixed use guided areas, such as the Heart of the City, will continue to provide housing, jobs, retail, amenities and access to transit, all in one convenient location" (Burnsville, vii). **Newport** plans to "[s]upport redevelopment and improvement of commercial properties on Hastings Avenue, including residential, commercial, business, and office uses that add employment and tax base and improve the appearance of the community" (Newport, 58).

<u>Prioritizing Open Space to Connect Parks & Trails</u>

Many suburban communities prioritize using mixed-use site design to preserve open space and connect existing and future parks and trails. **Spring Lake Park's** plan clearly outlines this connection, stating that "[a]reas designated 'Mixed Use' are intended to provide flexibility to allow complementary uses within a district […] Site design should focus on walkability, preservation of open space, and access to commercial uses" (Spring Lake Park, 18). **Woodbury** also wants to "[p]rovide trail linkages between Mixed Use areas and public facilities, major employment and shopping centers, residential neighborhoods and green space" (Woodbury, 53-4).

<u>Redevelopment</u>

Several suburban communities target certain areas for redevelopment with mixed land-use designations. **Mahtomedi's** land-use plan "guides two areas for redevelopment as Mixed Residential/Commercial. The first is a roughly five-acre area along Century Avenue south of Century College [...] The second area is the existing commercial/vacant land along Wedgewood Road east of Century Ave" (Mahtomedi, 54). Similarly, **Lilydale's** plan "identifies one area for mixed use redevelopment - the five (5) acre River Bluff Center redevelopment area located north of Lilydale Road on the west side of Highway 13" (Lilydale, 21).

### Use of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

Many suburban communities want to integrate mixed-use development into the planned unit development process. For instance, **Woodbury** wants to "[r]equire Mixed Use developments to use the Planned Unit Development process" (Woodbury, 54). **Shakopee** wants to "[m]odify the planned unit development (PUD) ordinance to achieve desired development outcomes" which includes "[emphasizing] mixed use, walkable development" (Shakopee, 211). Additionally, **Plymouth** says "[m]ixed use developments will be processed as planned unit developments (PUDs), with the location of specific uses and development criteria determined through that process" (Plymouth, 35).

### *Rural*

Many of the rural communities that discuss mixed-use development and land use designations in their plans do so by focusing on mixed uses' connection to promoting residential density, community character and vitality in downtown areas.

### Residential Density in Mixed Use

Many of those rural communities that include mixed use in their plans focus specifically on the residential density aspect of mixed-use land use designation and development. For instance, **Belle Plaine** says that the "[a]nticipated share of uses is 60% residential and 40% commercial. The share reflects a desire to increase residential density within the Downtown including second and third story residential with first floor commercial" (Belle Plaine, 71). Similarly, **Inver Grove Heights** describes its mixed-use designation as follows: "[r]esidential uses in this category will be principally limited to higher density apartment or condominium buildings for either general occupancy or for specific segments of the population such as senior housing. It is expected that 2/3 of these areas will develop as residential uses" (Inver Grove Heights, 36).

### Enhancing or Maintaining Community Character

Rural communities emphasize mixed use that enhances or maintains 'community character'. For example, **Belle Plaine** wants to "[i]nsist on well-designed and thoughtful mixed-use developments which are fully integrated into the adjacent locale" (Belle Plaine, 85). The Village Mixed Use classification in **Scandia**, which includes commercial, office, retail, public and private institutions, civic buildings, light industrial, and parks and recreation uses, "recognizes the significant contribution of the existing village center to the overall character of the community" (Scandia, 34). The City of **Cologne**, "envisions a community focal point and cultural center remaining in the CBD, expanding with restaurants, offices, and neighborhood retail" (Cologne, 29). **Lake Elmo** wants to "[e]xplore opportunities to integrate design and site planning characteristics of the Old Village District into new developments in the City" (Lake Elmo, 33).

### Revitalizing Downtown Areas

Many rural communities focus on the ability of mixed-use developments to revamp or revitalize downtown areas. **Cologne's** plan acknowledges that its central business district (CBD):

"[o]nce thriving… has lost much of its retail focus within the region and has experienced a transition of uses common with other older, rural cities [...] The CBD is now a mixed-use area with service businesses, offices, and converted residential uses. Cologne wishes to preserve the CBD function and even expand it over time" (Cologne, 28).

**Scandia** will encourage "[n]ew commercial, retail, and residential activity … in order to develop and redevelop areas in the village center while maintaining the historic nature of the village center" (Scandia, 34). Similarly, **Belle Plaine** will "[e]ncourage mixed commercial and residential uses in the urban core so as to enhance Belle Plaine's traditional Downtown canvas while simultaneously serving as a catalyst for redevelopment" (Belle Plaine, 84). The community of **Rogers'** plan states that "[m]ixing uses in downtown supports economic activity and helps create a walkable downtown environment by maximizing the square footage of commercial space that is directly accessible from the street" (Rogers, 40).

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[1] "Healthy Planning: A Review of the Seven County Metropolitan Area Developed Community Comprehensive Plans," MN DEPT OF HEALTH, 12, (2012), available at: https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/places/docs/reportone.pdf.

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