



(and sometimes suburban) land use contexts typical in transportation planning and design. Report 855 is a key resource; it will be implemented in The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO's) forthcoming 7<sup>th</sup> edition of its 'Green Book.' The U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is also considering ways to incorporate the guidance in Report 855 into its policies and practices. MnDOT is using Report 855 as it further develops and refines its context guidance.

This Technical Memorandum describes a set of common MnDOT land use context types and guidance to identify the land use context types. More detailed guidance is being developed regarding the application of land use context types in MnDOT's planning, scoping, and design development and decision-making; this is expected to be issued in 2018 and 2019.

In addition, MnDOT has begun the process of updating its Road Design Manual and will do so using these classifications as appropriate and useful.

The MnDOT land use context types are MnDOT's interpretation of land uses as they exist or are planned by others (typically townships, counties, cities, and regional and metropolitan planning organizations). Land use context types are not zoning and do not reflect or interpret zoning as established by an entity with zoning authority.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Technical Memorandum is to provide MnDOT staff and users with an improved common land use context type guidance that serves as a robust framework for planning, scoping, and preliminary and final design at MnDOT.

## Guidelines

### Definitions

**Context** is a physical, economic, and social setting, which includes the community, ecological, aesthetic, and transportation conditions as well as the political and policy environment and environmental justice considerations.

**Land Use Context Types** are areas of land with a unique combination of characteristics that reflect the place and the activities that occur there.

### Procedures

#### Demonstrate comprehensive understanding of context and Land Use Context Types

Transportation systems and facilities are part of the places where people live, work, learn, play and access services. It is important for MnDOT staff to understand the often multiple contexts along a typical road within a project limits and the scope of their work. A road's context includes how it fits into the broader transportation system as well as past, present and future communities, cultures, ecosystems and economies of the areas it serves and passes through. MnDOT staff should reference MnDOT's land use context types, as well as road (functional classification) types for consistency. A given transportation

project may have many different land use contexts along the length of the project. MnDOT staff should familiarize themselves with MnDOT's land use context types.

### Identify and use Land Use Context Types

Planners, project managers, designers, and traffic engineers should work with stakeholders to identify future and existing land use contexts. Identify land use contexts by comparing the similarity of places to the photographs and text MnDOT uses to describe land use context types. Staff should consider and include land use context types in project documentation and use them to structure and inform planning and design thought processes and decisions. As a practical first step, divide plans, corridor studies, and project limits/areas into segments matching MnDOT's land use context types.

Review and analyze, as appropriate:

- Future (planned) and existing land uses in a regional, county or local comprehensive plan
- Existing zoning districts in a county or local zoning ordinance, and related zoning district changes
- Land use context characteristics (using photographs, field visits and data, information and discussion with county and local staff and decision-makers), and future (planned) land use changes, for example,
  - Land uses (including their scale and intensity)
  - Density (existence of buildings/structures, and their size and type)
  - Building setbacks (distance of buildings/structures from adjacent roads/sidewalks) and frontage (relationship of building entrance[s] to the street and/or sidewalk or shared-use path)
- Special and/or mode-oriented land uses, zoning districts (future and existing), and nodes, for example,
  - mode-oriented developments (e.g. transit-oriented development)
  - transportation, emergency management facilities (e.g. safety rest area, weigh-scale, police/fire-station)
  - historic/potentially historic places and cultural sites and structures
  - park and recreation areas (local, regional, state, national)
  - trails and waterways and accesses (local, regional, state, national)
  - forests (local, regional, state, national)
  - areas of note, refuge, concern or significance (e.g. floodplain, erosion-sensitive, wildlife, rare-threatened-endangered [RTE] specie, wetland, farmland, woodland, bluffland, navigable/public and impaired waters)
  - scenic and visual quality areas and corridors (e.g. scenic byways)
  - equity/environmental justice populations and areas
  - areas/concentrations of specific users and populations (e.g. senior, limited ability and disabled, and children)

- large, concentrated public, semi-public or institutional uses (e.g. school, college/university, city government/civic center, hospital/medical campus, sports stadium/arena, power plant, utility facility/corridor, etc)
- large, district scale retail/business centers such as a regional shopping center, corporate campus
- other special districts, uses, and activity centers

## Questions

Any questions regarding the technical provisions of this Technical Memorandum can be addressed to either:

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Any questions regarding publication of this Technical Memorandum should be referred to the Design Standards Unit, [DesignStandards.DOT@state.mn.us](mailto:DesignStandards.DOT@state.mn.us). A link to all active and historical Technical Memoranda can be found at <http://techmemos.dot.state.mn.us/techmemo.aspx>.

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## Attachment:

MnDOT Land Use Context Types, 180614