



Image: A. C. Johnson

Building Sensible Communities

Lower costs, more choices, less pollution

PROTECTING MINNESOTA'S FUTURE

Building Sensible Communities will protect our Great Outdoors and quality of life by giving Minnesotans more options about where they live and how they get around.

CONCERNS and GOALS

Minnesota's quality of life is threatened by a lack of convenient transportation choices and spread out development patterns that force Minnesotans to drive much more today than they would like. Unless Minnesotans have more opportunities to live closer to their destinations, the need to drive will continue to increase along with personal costs, congestion, and pollution.

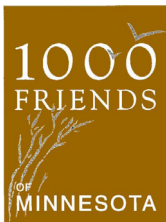
Building Sensible Communities – where jobs and services are closer together – will give residents more options to walk, bike, take transit, and drive shorter distances than in communities where development is spread out. Sensible Communities reduce air and global warming pollution, help protect water quality, and preserve more farmland and open space. Sensible Communities also substantially

reduce sewer, road, and other infrastructure costs, allowing state and local governments to use funds more efficiently and save money for Minnesotans.

PROPOSAL

Building Sensible Communities provides cost-effective and realistic steps that we can take now:

- Create incentives for metro and greater Minnesota communities to implement land use planning practices that would achieve global warming reduction goals.
- Make Minnesota's adopted global warming pollution reduction targets a goal of the Metropolitan Council's comprehensive planning process.
- Require MnDOT to plan for a multi-modal transportation system that can achieve a reduction in per capita vehicle miles driven.
- Eliminate the minimum acreage requirements for new schools.
- Require analysis of energy use and global warming pollution as part of the environmental review process.



BROAD BENEFITS

- **More choices.** Sensible Communities give Minnesotans more choices about where they live and how they get around.
- **Reduced global warming and air pollution.** Sensible Communities protect Minnesota's Great Outdoors for future generations by reducing global warming and air pollution.
- **Lower household transportation costs.** Sensible Communities allow residents to drive less—saving money on gas, parking, and automobile purchases and repairs.
- **Lower public infrastructure costs.** Sensible Communities can achieve tremendous cost savings over time for state and local governments from more efficient use of infrastructure. The Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group report states that more compact development could save \$3 billion in infrastructure costs over 20 years in the Twin Cities region alone.
- **Maintain schools as community centers.** Sensible Communities are built around our schools, and do not force schools to move from Main Street to the edge of town.
- **Increased economic development opportunities.** Sensible Communities help Minnesota maintain and expand homegrown business and also attract companies, which increasingly seek communities that offer accessible transit options.
- **Enhanced protection of farmland, open space, and natural resources.** Sensible Communities preserve more farmland and open space by reducing the amount of land needed for urban development, protecting water quality and natural resources as well.
- **Expanded health benefits.** Sensible Communities support walking and biking in daily life, which reduces obesity and has many other health benefits.
- **Expanded housing options.** Sensible Communities support a wide range of housing options for all income levels and people at all stages of life.

SUPPORTING REPORTS

- *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources and Institute on the Environment, University of Minnesota.* This report affirms that we must “change how we develop and use land across the state” to ensure that we protect our natural resources and quality of life. It also recommends that we “reduce per capita vehicle miles travelled through compact mixed-use development and multi- and intermodal transportation systems.”
- *Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group Final Report.* MCCAG unanimously recommends “improved land use planning and development strategies” as an essential step for reaching the state’s global warming pollution reduction goals, estimating that such strategies could reduce Minnesota’s global warming emissions by 14.9 million metric tons by 2025.
- *Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Transportation Sources in Minnesota, Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota.* This study shows that we cannot meet the state’s global warming pollution reduction targets in the transportation sector without changes in land use that reduce the need to drive.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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