

Thank you for the listening session, perhaps some changes could be made to protect West Lakeland Township and Afton from losing their identity like what happened to Lake Elmo. and protect the fragile environmental resources that are left in the area.

MC created by legislature in 1967 to coordinate interdependent local governments in long term development and avoid sprawl. ( coordinate ... not dictate )

In 2003 the MC required the city of Lake Elmo to conform to their Regional Systems Plan and grow with sewer development.  
( **cities are not permitted to be unique , have their own identity or real choices with development patterns .** )

In 1990 I was at the MC and actually saw the long range plan along I 94 that showed a continuation of the Minneapolis /St Paul high density all along the corridor to the St Croix River . I was appalled at that and thought all cities should have the right to self determination and develop as the residents and land indicated.

The MC approach to residential development has been : aim to have relatively uniform high density throughout the metro area, because that type of development appears to utilize fixed costs. **No consideration to what people may want. No acknowledgement that some people may want to live on large lots, even if more expensive. No acknowledgement that the ideal could be a mixture of development densities.**

MC position has always been: build an expensive waste water treatment plant, because some cities want high density development, then they need people to generate the waste water even if nearby cities who do not want or need sewer. **It appears no consideration for the actual source of that waste water is{ the drinking water supply}.**

Many residents moved to Lake Elmo **from the Met Councils planned communities** in the area. Lake Elmo was a refuge and had a reputation for being an affordable city, that put residents first, plus being a leader in environmental protection . That is in the past. Now what has happened and why?

I and others knew trouble was brewing when The City of Lake Elmo staff went to MC in 2019, without the public's knowledge, and requested a huge increase in population over the MC population projections for the new comprehensive plan. Jake Riley and Todd Graham were forecast reviewers at the MC and stated most cities want population decreases, but, Lake Elmo requested an increase in population of well over 5,000 since the developers said they could do it. Lake Elmo is guilty of exasperating the problem. **Right NOW The city of Lake Elmo is close to or above the MC original population forecast for 2030 almost 6 years ahead of the approved plan.**

**It has become apparent that the frequent CompPlan amendments cast another concern. If a new resident moves to the city and are told a parcel would not be developed for 5 or 10 years then, for what ever reason a amendment to the plan**

**changes everything and a use is permitted years before it was scheduled . How can anyone trust any Plan if phases are permitted to be changed on a whim?**

The drinking water pollution issue has been documented. The city **knowingly** exceeded the DNR water allocations for a long time.

The Lake Elmo Environmental Committee was eliminated. They would have been an asset to helping the city with ideas to help conserve water .

Surface water issues have always been challenging and the VBWS is of utmost importance to the city.

Another CONCERN:

Lake Elmo Regional Park Reserve has been a positive asset in the community and a safe haven for people and wildlife for many years plus, is very well run by Washington County.

How many of you know or remember Site G ? also known as a garbage dump for the metro region could have been at the Regional Park? The residents of Lake Elmo voted to increase their taxes to fight this dump in the park. .Recycle and Preserve Parks was organized We were successful in getting that site eliminated. My husband was chair of the WC environmental committee that started the recycling program in Washington County.

Are you aware that the Lake Elmo Regional Park Reserve is planning extensive mountain biking trails all over the park rather than in limited areas? That intense activity will disrupt the eco system and wildlife habitat in the park.

Thank goodness for the DNR rules that prohibited clear cutting within so many feet of a lake, or we would have another scar on the landscape at the south east end of Lake Elmo. The city of Lake Elmo permitted clear cutting of the extensive woodlands in Tartan Park. That action displaced the abundant wildlife and many relocated to the Regional Park Reserve where the expansive new trails are scheduled to be built. The Regional Park Personnel were not aware of the extensive deforestation at Tartan Park.

The Comprehensive Plan states the Regional Park Reserve is primarily for passive uses. A complete review needs to be done to protect this last precious environmental resource in the area.

In Conclusion it is obvious that Lake Elmo has serious concerns.

The Lake Elmo City Council workshop of Tuesday December 12 review proposals for 3 more high density developments of about 1200 units. That could easily be an additional 2000 to 3000 people .

Met Councils Original population projections for Lake Elmo were more realistic than those of the developers and city staff. Please readdress the population numbers in the comp plan.

#### A REMINDER

The Water Use Work group got appropriations ( HF 2304) from the state to study the safe drinking water issue and sustainability of surface and ground water resources.

- 1 Evaluate methods for conserving and recharging groundwater in the area
- 2 Convert water supplies that are groundwater dependent to total or partial supplies from surface water sources.
- 3 Reusing water, including water discharged from contaminated wells
- 4 Projects designed to increase groundwater recharge and
- 5 Other methods for reducing groundwater use.

Let them do the evaluation before proceeding with further developments in the city.

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