



**Date:** August 1, 2005  
**To:** Minnesota Environmental Quality Board  
**From:** Steve Russell, Community Development Director,  
City of Stillwater  
**Subject:** **Update of Stillwater Annexation Area AUAR**

### **Summary**

This report is the second update of the Stillwater Annexation Area AUAR completed in 1997. The City of Stillwater, the RGU for the AUAR, certifies the following:

- The development within the area to date is generally consistent with the scenario used in the AUAR and in the City's Comprehensive Plan. While the types of units developed have varied somewhat from the scenario based on market conditions, the overall numbers of units and acres developed are within the scenario proposed in the AUAR.
- No environmental impacts beyond those analyzed in the AUAR have been identified.
- The City has completed a number of special studies in the area related to planning/land use, traffic, and natural resource management issues. The findings of these studies have been consistent with the AUAR, and assisted in implementing the Mitigation Plan.
- Development within the AUAR area has followed the recommendations of the Mitigation Plan.

### **Background**

The Stillwater Annexation Area AUAR was completed in 1997. In 1999 the City completed an Audit of the AUAR and Mitigation Plan, which updated the AUAR and identified the progress of the City and others in completing the Mitigation Plan. The Audit indicated the following:

- Development in the Annexation Area was proceeding within the scenario analyzed in the AUAR and adopted in the City's Comprehensive Plan
- The City and developers were implementing the Mitigation Plan elements as adopted in the AUAR.

It is now time for the City to complete another update of the Stillwater Annexation Area AUAR to comply with State rules. This memo provides that update by summarizing development in the area to date in comparison with the scenario proposed in the AUAR,

identifying the additional planning studies and analysis of environmental issues completed in the area since the AUAR, and identifying the progress in implementing the AUAR Mitigation Plan through June, 2005.

**Development in the AUAR Area since 1997**

The Stillwater Annexation Area AUAR analyzed one development scenario: the Proposed Land Use Plan adopted by the City for the Annexation Area in its 1995 Comprehensive Plan.

The table below compares the numbers of units proposed for the Annexation Area in the AUAR scenario with the numbers of building permits issued in the Area to date:

<b>Unit/Land Use Type</b>	<b>Number of Units/Acres Proposed in AUAR</b>	<b>Number of Units/Acres Completed by January, 2005</b>
Single Family Residential		
• Large Lot	475 units	198 units
• Small Lot	605 units	429 units
• Attached	190 units	398 units
Multifamily Residential	0	60 units
<b>Total Residential</b>	1,270 units	1,085 units
Commercial	6 acres	3 acres
Business Park	65 acres	0 acres
Elementary School	7 acres	15 acres

The table indicates that the total number of units developed in the Annexation Area has been less overall than the total anticipated for the area. A larger number of attached units have been developed than anticipated, and few large lot units. This reflects the current housing market in the area.

The Business Park area development is expected to occur in the future. No development is currently proposed, and the area has not yet been annexed to the City. The additional acreage developed with the Elementary School includes athletic fields and green space, so no additional impacts to storm water, traffic or other issues beyond those analyzed in the AUAR resulted from this development.

The City currently estimates that at full development, the total number of units and acres developed will be similar to or less than the total predicted by the AUAR scenario.

**Additional Analysis on Environmental Issues Completed in the AUAR Area**

Since completion of the AUAR, the City has completed the following studies of planning and environmental issues related to the AUAR:

- Feasibility Study: Trout Stream Mitigation System (1997)
- Special Area Plan: North 62<sup>nd</sup> Street Area (1998-99)

- McKusick Lake Studies (1999 and 2005)
- Brown's Creek Park and Nature Area Management Plan (2000)
- Boutwell Area Plan (2002)
- Long Lake Management Study (2003)
- Boutwell Area Transportation Study (2003)
- Brown's Creek/Boutwell Area Open Space and Parks Plans (2005)

Each of these studies has focused on a portion of the Annexation Area, or an issue within the Annexation Area. The studies have used the AUAR and Mitigation Plan as a starting point, and have analyzed additional information or provided more detailed recommendations for a particular area, issue or natural resource.

The recommendations of each of the studies has been consistent with the AUAR and implemented recommendations of the Mitigation Plan.

### **Mitigation Plan**

The cornerstone of the Mitigation Plan for the Stillwater Annexation Area was the Trout Stream Mitigation Project. This project diverts storm water from the Annexation Area away from Brown's Creek, a state-designated trout stream, to avoid impacts from development of the Annexation Area. The project also included restoration of a portion of Brown's Creek to its historic channel, to allow migration of trout to habitat areas in the upper watershed.

- The City of Stillwater completed design and construction of the Trout Stream Mitigation Project between 1997 and 2003, at a cost of over \$4 million. The system is now fully operational, and working as planned. The City completed the Long Lake portion of the improvements and replacement of the lake outlet in 2004.
- DNR Fisheries staff monitoring of the creek restoration area indicated that Brown trout are using the restored channel and have access to upstream habitat areas.

Other key elements of the Mitigation Plan that have been completed to date include the following:

- Implementation of the Stormwater Management Study for the Annexation Area by requiring developers to provide ponding, infiltration, and related BMP's to manage the quality of storm water runoff
- Requiring practices to reduce storm water runoff, such as reduced street widths to minimize impervious surfaces
- Implemented vegetated buffers around all wetlands, and 100 feet vegetated buffers along Brown's Creek and its tributaries
- Updated the City's Shoreland Ordinance
- Implemented a water quality monitoring program with the DNR, Brown's Creek Watershed District, and Washington SWCD

- Participated in and provided data to Brown's Creek Watershed District for development of its Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study for Brown's Creek
- Located new municipal well outside the area of potential impacts to groundwater flows to Brown's Creek
- Implemented and expanded the City's Parks and Trails plans for the area
- Protected permanent park and open space areas near Brown's Creek, including Brown's Creek Nature Area, Brown's Creek Park, a new neighborhood park (unnamed), and Boutwell Cemetery Park
- Implemented the City's Shoreland/Bluffs Ordinance and Tree Protection Ordinance in the Annexation Area.
- Encouraged use of native landscaping through implementation of a DNR Neighborhood Wilds grant in a neighborhood adjacent to Brown's Creek Nature Area

The City will continue to implement the Mitigation Plan as the remaining portions of the Annexation Area are developed.