

Alternative Urban Areawide Reviews



Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) Process

Relevant Terms and Definitions

- EQB: Environmental Quality Board
- AUAR: Alternative Urban Areawide Review
- EAW: Environmental Assessment Worksheet
- EIS: Environmental Impact Statement
- RGU: Responsible Government Unit (City of Farmington)
- Significant: cannot be undone and/or addressed through a formal review or permitting process.

Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) Process

What is an AUAR

- State environmental review document
- Hybrid of an EAW and EIS
- Studies the effects different development scenarios may have on the environment and community infrastructure
- Updated every 5 years

Purpose

- Used as a planning tool
- Identify the potential for cumulative impacts of anticipated development within an area
- Identify mitigation measures for potential impacts
- Informs future permitting, planning, and zoning decisions
- Does not approve or deny a project

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When is a review required?

- State statute (MN Rule 4410) requires environmental review for various types of development types and densities.
 - e.g., residential development exceeding 250 unattached units or 375 attached units; light industrial exceeding 300,000 square feet; industrial, commercial, or institutional exceeding 200,000 square feet
- AUARs are an allowable type of environmental review for certain development types.
- Eligible development types include:
 - Residential, commercial, warehousing, and light industrial
- Who manages the AUAR?
 - City is RGU and is the owner of the document.
 - Future mitigation measures identified may be responsibility of developer or city – determined at time of plan review

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Topics covered in an AUAR

- Land Use and Cover Types
- Required Permits/Approvals
- Geology and Grading
- Water Resources
- Wildlife and Habitat
- Contamination
- Greenhouse Gas/Climate Impacts
- Water and Sewer Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Historic Properties
- Visual
- Air and Noise
- Cumulative Potential Effects
- Mitigation Plan

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AUAR Action

RGU Adopts Order to Prepare AUAR

RGU develops AUAR

(note: document preparation is typically started prior to Order)

RGU reviews and distributes Draft AUAR and Mitigation Plan for public and agency review

Draft AUAR and Mitigation Plan available for 30-day public and agency review

RGU revises Draft AUAR and Mitigation Plan based on comments from public and agencies

RGU distributes Final AUAR and Mitigation to agencies and Met Council for final 10-day review and objection

If no objections, RGU Adopts Final AUAR and Mitigation Plan

RGU updates AUAR every 5 years until development build-out is complete

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What happens following adoption?

- AUAR remains valid for the studied development scenarios for 5 years.
 - All development that occurs within the limits of the studied development scenarios is covered and does not require additional environmental review.
 - Developers will review and implement mitigation measures outlined in the AUAR as development progresses.
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- When to update the AUAR
 - The AUAR must be updated every 5 years.
 - The AUAR must be updated if a proposed development scenario is more dense/impactful than what was studied under the AUAR.

Questions

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