

City of Madison Planning Division 2020 Annual Report



Mural artists: Top left - Kenechi Unachukwa; top right - Monique Karlen, with LaFollette and Middleton High School students; bottom - Tony Catteruccia and Lincoln Rust

As is the case across the U.S. and around the world, 2020 was a year like no other for the Planning Division, our colleagues across the City, and our entire Madison community. As the COVID-19 pandemic approached, we held our last in-person full staff meeting on Friday, March 13, to discuss the likelihood of the need to work from home “for a few weeks”, thinking quickly and carefully through the immediate needs for such a transition and the potential impacts on on-going projects. Little did we realize that it would be the last day of the year we would all be together.

As nearly everyone can attest, 2020 has since been dominated by constant shifts informed by science, the broad, lasting, and uneven impacts of the virus, and also by the uprisings here and across the country for racial justice. With a great deal of support from the City’s Information Technology Department last spring, Planning Division staff and others have successfully pivoted to longer-term teleworking and virtual meetings. City staff and policy-makers have tried our best to find new ways to reach Madison residents during this time, while also shifting resources toward emergency operations and recovery efforts.

Despite significant challenges, budget limitations, and constant change, the Planning Division has managed to maintain momentum on planning efforts, sustain the pace of development review, and to creatively support the arts. With a continued, but more emphatic, focus on racial equity, we push forward core elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including the need for more housing, an improved public transportation system, and the equitable distribution of resources throughout our growing city, all of which hold true as high priorities for the years ahead. As staff, we are grateful for the dedication of the many committee and commission members continuing to guide and support our work, and feel very fortunate to be part of “Team City” as we strive to “build back better” in the years ahead.

This report showcases the pace and reach of the work of the Planning Division – both anticipated and unexpected – during 2020. We know that these efforts could not have been completed or furthered without the support of the many Madison residents who give their time and energy to participate in projects, planning processes, and policy-making. While we recognize that things will never be the same as they were before 2020, our team is excited about working towards recovery, and we all hope for more stability in 2021 and the years ahead!


Heather Stouder, AICP
Director, City of Madison Planning Division



Meetings:

Planning processes: 17

Development proposal neighborhood meetings: 46

Commission meetings: 90
(PC, UDC, Landmarks, etc.)



Project email lists: 29 messages; 809 total recipients



1,573 social media followers
180,155 web page views



9,491 postcards sent

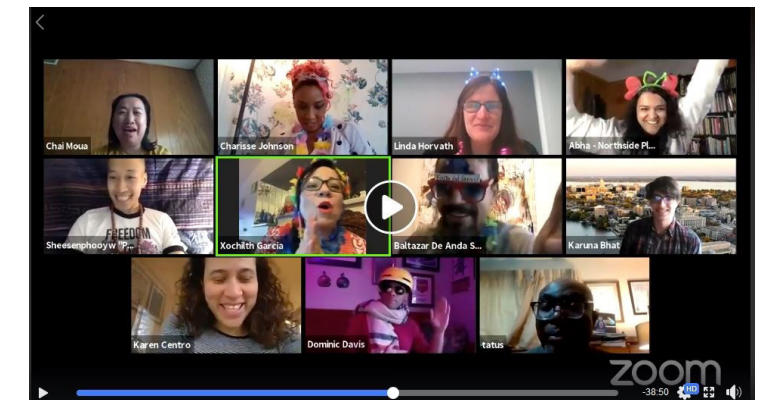
The Planning Division has continually strived to find new and improved ways to listen to residents and stakeholders in City decision-making. This year proved no different. While the pandemic put strains on many aspects of our work, public participation was one facet that brought both challenges and opportunities.

All of the Planning Division’s public participation moved virtual beginning in March. Staff held the first virtual public meetings via Zoom beginning in May for the Odana Area and East Towne Area Plans. Those eight virtual events included options to attend during the lunch hour or in the evening and featured live music at the top of the events.

Some of our projects needed to hit pause on public participation, but moving to virtual meetings actually increased accessibility to our processes for many residents and stakeholders. Post-meeting surveys from Zoom meetings for the initial mall-area planning processes showed that approximately 25% of participants had never attended a similar in-person City meeting. While access improved for many through virtual methods, unfortunately those without Internet service or an electronic device were left behind. Planning continues to seek solutions and potential hybrid options for future meetings, once conditions are safe.

Planning staff also led 2020 Census outreach. The pandemic produced many challenges to census work, but in part due to outstanding partnerships with local nonprofits, outreach was ultimately quite successful.

One major highlight included our partners coming together to host several Facebook Live “Census Couch Parties” with games, music, and portions of the events given in three languages.



City of Madison Planning @PlanningMadison · Jul 8, 2020
Interested in the future of the East Towne and Odana Areas? We launched an interactive mapping tool & survey where you can share your ideas. Check them out below along with a summary feedback so far.

East Towne Area: ow.ly/eP9E50AsNbk

Odana Area: ow.ly/nsMe50AsNbl



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Election Support

The City of Madison Clerk's Office was facing an unprecedented spring election during a COVID-19 stay at home order. Madison normally has over 90 polling places open on Election Day, but only essential businesses were open to the public, and many of our usual polling places, like schools, community centers, libraries, nursing homes and churches were closed to the public. A small team of Planning, Clerk's Office, and Engineering Staff separated into two groups – one focused on poll locations, and the other on safety materials and procedures.

Planning Staff used its geographic information systems and city knowledge to help combine nearby polling precincts and locate potential new ones. Planning Staff talked with all polling place locations to determine whether or not they would be open, negotiated with the Madison Metropolitan School District to keep the schools open for polling, and found alternate facilities where needed. All of that information was plugged into the MyVote website through the Clerk's Office so that people could easily check to see whether or not their polling locations would be open, and if not, where their new polling place would be.

Engineering Staff designed and built Plexiglas table shields, including delivery and installation at every polling site. In the end, the City managed to open 62 different polling locations on Election Day. Because of all of the safety precautions, physical distancing, and an unprecedented amount of absentee ballots requested and fulfilled by city staff, there was no apparent bump of COVID cases due to the election taking place.

Ballot Boxes

The City of Madison Clerk's Office purchased 14 secure ballot drop boxes that were placed at 13 Madison Fire stations throughout the city and near the Elver Park shelter. Planning Division and DPCED Staff designed the box wraps and led a multi-disciplinary team of City Staff from the Clerk's Office, Engineering, Traffic Engineering, and the Madison Fire Department to coordinate site preparation, ballot box delivery, ballot box wrapping, and installation during the last week in October.

While the enormous demand for presidential election absentee ballots due to COVID-19 spurred the installation of the boxes, they will remain in place all year and be used for future elections. They will only be open for ballot collection during election cycles. During an election ballots are picked by sworn election officials daily. The design of the boxes highlights the City of Madison Flag, encourages everyone to vote, and provides basic information for voters. The City anticipates that these collection boxes will be a popular option for City of Madison absentee voters in the future.



Social Distancing Stencils

"Social Distancing" and "Physical Distancing" were new phrases that entered our collective lexicon in 2020. Essential workers relying on transit, bicycles, and other non-auto modes of transportation needed to keep working and keep themselves safe by physical distancing. With the support of the Department of Transportation and the Parks Division, the City's Planning Division created a placemaking exercise to increase awareness and support distancing efforts. The Planning Division worked with three artists whose State Street murals were widely admired: Mike Lroy, Daniella Echeverria and Bree Bregman. The artists were asked to create several stencil designs that express the best of Madison, both in who we are and who we want to be in the future.

The stencil designs were painted at several parks, multi-use pedestrian and bicycle paths, Metro Transfer Points, busy bus stops and other locations around the city. The stencils were paired with a message encouraging Madisonians and visitors to "Stay Safe Madison" by staying six feet apart. Messaging was stenciled in Spanish, Hmong, and English. Be on the lookout and continue to help the City publicize the message to Manténgase a Salvo, Ceev faj 6 taw deb and Stay Safe Madison!



Street+ Eatery = Streatery

Around the world, restaurants spilled out into the streets in response to data showing dining outdoors is a safer option for restaurant patrons when it comes to preventing the spread of COVID-19. Madison responded in its own unique way with a "Streatery" program designed by the City's Economic Development and Planning staff.

Planning staff and Economic Development staff led #TeamCity to come together in two weeks to remake outdoor dining rules when COVID turned the City's restaurant and hospitality economy upside down. When it became clear that the pandemic was going to last beyond a few weeks or a month, restaurants



started getting worried that take out, curbside and unsustainable third party delivery apps weren't going to be enough for many of them to survive. As the weather warmed, outdoor dining became a lifeline.

Over 130 restaurants and taverns impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic took advantage of the Streatery Program. Streatery allowed expanded outdoor dining onto public sidewalks, on-street parking areas, or in privately-owned parking lots through a streamlined administrative approval process. The program enabled establishments to expand their capacity while adhering to physical distancing guidelines.

The Downtown had several unique outdoor dining areas that popped up as a part of the program. Merchant, Lucille, Ancora Coffee, Settle Down Tavern and Johnny Delmonico's Steakhouse combined efforts to create a large, well lit patio garden atmosphere on South Pinckney Street as part of a café zone. They were joined by other large combined café zones on many of the other spoke streets around the Capitol Square.

Taiwan Little Eats on State Street said in a Facebook Post: "Thanks to the Streatery Program we've been able to expand our outdoor seating to almost what we had in-store." The Streatery program will be extended into 2021, and City staff will be looking at ways to make it a permanent, sustainable program, with streamlined approvals, review fees structures, and equitable public policy for semi-privatization of public space.

State Street Murals

The May 25th murder of George Floyd sparked peaceful demonstrations in support of Black Lives. Peaceful protests were followed by several nights of civil unrest - almost every business along the six block stretch of State Street experienced some damage. As storefronts were being covered with plywood, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and Common Council President Sheri Carter authorized Madison Arts Program Administrator Karin Wolf to develop a response.

Funded by Arts in Public Places Looking Forward, the Downtown Street Art and Mural Project was part of an artist relief initiative that was established to support artists who lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program set out to amplify the voices of people who have been directly impacted by racial injustice. Artists created 70 City-commissioned murals that inspired community dialog by conveying urgent demands for change.

The City's Arts Administrator also partnered with downtown business and property owners, Madison's Central Business Improvement District and MMOCA/Overture over the course of the project to find store owners willing to pair up with City-commissioned artists while not knowing what the art or message would ultimately look like.



Mural artist wishes to remain anonymous



Mural artist: Ava Stevenson



Mural artists: Danielle Mielke and Amira Caire

Look Forward

Look Forward is a project championed by a group of employees across City of Madison departments and coordinated by Madison Public Library and the Madison Arts Commission. It sought to promote a sense of connectedness spanning all neighborhoods and communities within the City of Madison during the pandemic stay at home order and physical distancing restrictions.

Using social media hashtags, printable coloring pages, and other virtual engagement, the program encouraged people to create and display art in their communities. It asked people to consider "What does it mean to connect with each other? How can we 'look forward' to a time that feels different than the present? What do YOU look forward to?"

The City of Madison invited residents to share how residents, neighbors, coworkers, friends, and family have been supporting and uplifting each other in ways big and small.

Utility Boxes

The Utility Box Project has been covering Madison's traffic light utility boxes with professional artists' work for the last 3 years. In 2020, eleven Artists from BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and other historically underrepresented communities were selected to showcase their work on 13 different utility boxes. Box locations were chosen throughout the City, with a focus on locations near the



Artist: Felipe Gacharna

City's 5 main high schools. The COVID pandemic severely impacted the ability of many artists to promote, sell, and showcase their work through the normal means of art festivals, community events and gallery walks. Artists impacted by COVID were asked to sign up for a special registry from which they could be selected for different public art projects throughout the year. It was this registry that allowed for the quick selection and installation of the 2020 Utility Box Art Program.



Artist: Melana Bass



Artist: Anwar Floyd-Pruitt

The pace of development proposals did not slow down in 2020 - if anything, it increased. With approximately 4,600 multifamily dwelling units (DU) approved, the City may see a record number of new multifamily units come on the market over the next few years if all of the approved projects are constructed. The following section summarizes major Development Review ordinance revisions, statistics, and profiles major projects that were reviewed by staff prior to consideration by the Plan Commission and Urban Design Commission.

RMX Zoning District

The Planning Division led the process to create a new Regional Mixed Use zoning district, collaborating with the City Attorney's Office and Zoning. The district is intended to fill a gap not covered by other mixed-use and commercial districts. It will provide opportunities for high-intensity mixed-use development that supports a variety of multifamily housing options and commercial activities. It was created, in part, to help implement the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations for regional mixed-use, which are planned to be the most intensively developed areas in the city outside of Downtown. Mapping of the district is anticipated to occur at the request of property owners wishing to develop new buildings consistent with adopted plans, and in some cases following the adoption of plans specifically recommending rezoning to this district. The draft ordinance was introduced in late 2020, with formal consideration and adoption in early 2021.

Bird Glass Ordinance

In concert with the Attorney's Office and City Zoning, the Planning Division developed bird-safe glass regulations. The purpose was to reduce the heightened risk of collision with glass that some building designs and configurations present to birds. Applying to all new buildings and additions over 10,000 sq. ft., the regulations require bird-safe vision glass treatment in certain areas of buildings - such as in the first 60 feet above grade, within 15 feet of a corner, and on glass railings, breezeways, and elevated skyways. The ordinance was adopted on August 4th and took effect in October.

Residential Approvals

77 single family lots
4,600 multifamily units (gross)*

Commercial/Retail Approvals

842,000 sf total*
150 hotel rooms*

Proposals before PC

103 conditional uses or alterations
40 zoning changes
22 plats and CSMs
58 demolitions

Proposals before UDC: 96

Proposals before Landmarks: 40

* Approximate

Select Project Profiles



119 N. Pinckney St.
Nine story office building with 22,000 square feet of commercial space, 305,000 square feet of office space, and 844 underground vehicle parking spaces.



502 W. Washington Ave.
Six story mixed-use building with 2,300 square feet of commercial space and 103 apartments.



109-209 Cottage Grove Rd.
Two four-story mixed use buildings with a total of 2,500 square feet of commercial space and 188 dwelling units.



Tokay Blvd. & Whitney Way - Westgate Mall
Redevelopment of Westgate Mall into 464 dwelling units in five buildings and an up-to-8-story office building.



920 E. Main St.
Archipelago Apartments - a 10-story building with 75 dwelling units.



133 E. Lakeside St.
Redevelopment into a four-story building with 66 dwelling units and 1,240 square feet of commercial space.



2524 Winnebago St.
Nexus, the final phase of the Union Corners project, contains 105 dwelling units and ground floor commercial.



Comprehensive Plan Implementation

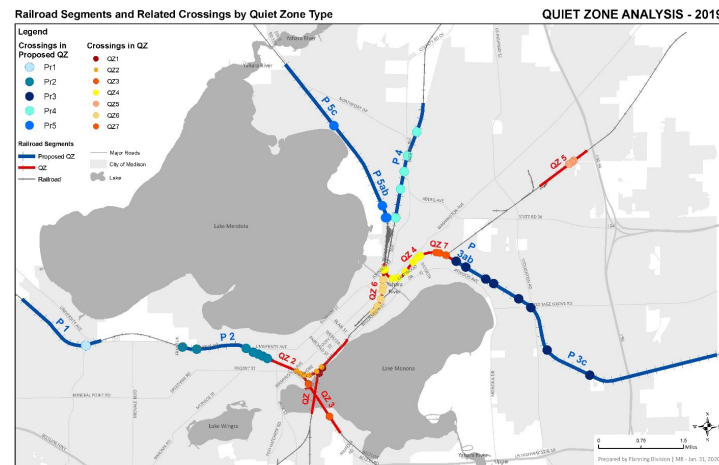
City departments continue to align budget priorities and requests to the Comprehensive Plan. The first annual Plan Progress Update was released in 2020 to track implementation since the Plan's 2018 adoption and to report back to the community about implementation progress. 2020 Plan implementation highlights include:

- "Democracy in the Park," which occurred over two weekends leading up to the 2020 Fall Election. Sworn election officials were positioned in every city park to register voters, answer questions about the voting process, and accept absentee ballots. This addresses Effective Government Strategy 6 (improving accessibility of government agencies and services).
- Metro Transit began a comprehensive route analysis and restructure to complement forthcoming Bus Rapid Transit service. The redesign aims to provide improved, equitable service to all areas of the City. This addresses Land Use and Transportation Strategy 1 (improve transit service with a focus on reducing travel time for transit dependent populations).
- The City launched the Small Business Equity and Recovery Program and the Commercial Ownership Assistance Program. Both programs provide support to small businesses, with a priority given to businesses owned by people of color. This addresses Economy and Opportunity Strategy 6 (support small businesses, especially those owned by underrepresented groups).



Railroad Quiet Zones

Many of the Planning Division's Data and Mapping efforts focus on increasing equity in Madison. An example is the Railroad Quiet Zones Analysis the Division developed in partnership with the City's Engineering Division. The term "quiet zone" refers to at-grade rail crossings that have been equipped with an expanded set of traffic signals and gates. For these crossings, train engineers are no longer obligated to sound their horn except in specific situations. Reducing noise from trains benefits nearby residents, but the increased infrastructure carries a significant cost. To ensure City resources are equitably distributed, the Division compared the number of trains that travel through a specific crossing with the number and composition (e.g. race, ethnicity, income) of nearby residents. The results of the Analysis guided the Engineering Division's request for quiet zones in the 2021 Capital Budget.



Blooming Grove Attachment

A series of scheduled attachments to the City of Madison from the Town of Blooming Grove are taking place due to a Cooperative Plan adopted in April 2006. This cooperative plan includes three phases: the "North Phased Attachment," which occurred in 2015; the "South Phased Attachment," which took place on December 28th of 2020, and the "Final Attachment," which will occur in 2027. With the South Phased Attachment, the City of Madison added approximately 27 housing units, 50 residents, 8.4 miles of streets, and 63 parcels comprising 1,183 acres of land.

The Landmarks Commission began the year with two regular meetings and one special meeting to consider the Madison Preservation Plan, but then all March and April meetings were canceled due to the pandemic. Beginning on May 4, the Commission transitioned to all virtual meetings with electronic submittals. Throughout the summer, the Commission shifted to holding only one meeting a month, but returned to its regular meeting schedule beginning in September.

The Historic Preservation Plan was the largest accomplishment, with the Common Council adopting the plan and accepting the Underrepresented Communities Historic Resources Survey as a living document at its May 19 meeting (see the "Adopted Plans" section in this report for further information). Staff is beginning the process of implementing the strategies recommended in the plan to help diversity and thereby strengthen the preservation program. As part of promoting the recently adopted preservation plan, the preservation planner co-authored, with Amy Scanlon, architect in City Engineering, a blog post for the National Trust for Historic Preservation entitled: "Building an Inclusive Preservation Plan in Madison, Wisconsin."

The other large process underway is the Landmarks Ordinance Review Committee - a committee of five alders tasked with updating the historic district portion of the historic preservation ordinance. The Committee had four meetings at the beginning of the year, then paused due to the pandemic. The committee shifted to virtual meetings in November, and completed the year with eight meetings. The work continues in 2021, with anticipated adoption of the updated ordinance by the middle of 2021.

The City's Preservation Planner continued with administrative project reviews and outreach activities during the pandemic, and gave two virtual presentations to the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation. Additional virtual presentations were undertaken at the Wisconsin Local History Conference, the American Planning Association's Upper Midwest Conference, and the Wisconsin Historical Society's preservation consultant training, as well as serving as a judge for the local and state National History Day competitions for students. Finally, the Preservation Planner joined Alder Arvina Martin in presenting to the

Wisconsin Inter-Tribal Repatriation Committee on the initial discussions for improving our process for better inclusion of tribal voices in undertakings that impact tribal cultural resources within the city.

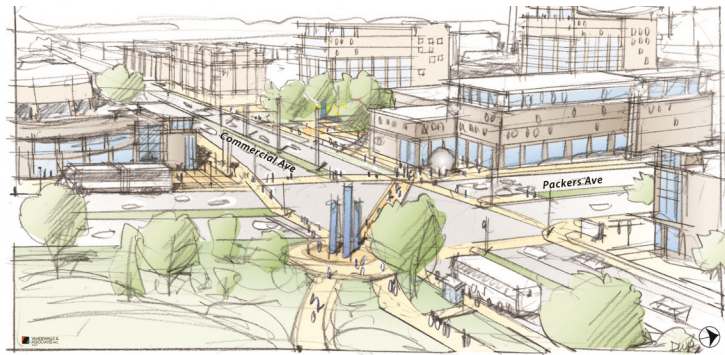
Project Profile



909-915 Jenifer Street renovated two homes in the Third Lake Ridge Local Historic District to convert them from traditional rental properties to a housing co-op with 13 bedrooms. The Landmarks Commission granted a Certificate of Appropriateness to the project on August 20th. The project serves as an example of the adaptability of historic properties, and will provide a new, affordable, housing option.

Oscar Mayer

The Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan was adopted in July to guide the redevelopment of the former plant and surrounding properties. The Plan envisions a compact employment center and neighborhood that links the north and east sides together and takes advantage of adjacent transit service. It recommends relocating the existing North Transfer Point and including amenities that encourage transit use. A future transit center could link planned bus rapid transit with local service, and possibly rail transit long term.



The area provides opportunities for a wide array of jobs, seeking to support employment opportunities for all Madison's residents, not just those with a college degree, and builds off educational assets like Madison College. Commercial Avenue is re-imagined from its current industrial character to a future main street with an engaging and active streetscape. Overall, the area could accommodate more than 2,000 new housing units, with new affordable units a major priority. The plan also protects the wetland on the Hartmeyer property, incorporating it into a 16 acre planned park.

During the planning process, the City's consultant team facilitated focus groups that reached out to persons of color, low income residents, and other traditionally underrepresented populations. This work ensured the plan incorporated their perspectives, and proved to be of critical importance during the approval process.

Staff will continue to work toward implementation of this plan in 2021. Major efforts include coordination with the Wisconsin DOT related to changes to Packers Avenue and Highway 30, relocation of the rail crossing, official mapping of primary street connections, and proactive rezoning of property to better ensure development follows the vision established by the Plan.

Historic Preservation Plan

The City of Madison adopted its first citywide preservation plan in May. The preservation plan included a purposeful refocus on the stories and voices that had not been represented in our preservation activities. The City undertook the Underrepresented Communities Historic Resources Survey, which documented the stories and places associated with the following communities: African American, First Nations, Hmong, Latino/a, LGBTQ, and Women. This study then served as the foundation for the planning process.

Working with a consultant team, staff focused on ensuring that a diversity of people were involved in the creation and focus of the plan. All members of the project team, including the consultants, were required to complete the City's Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) training and the plan's Community & Public Engagement Process was evaluated and revised using the RESJI Equity Analysis Tool.

Over the course of the process, there were 22 public meetings, which included 11 meetings of the Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee. The project also included a number of outreach pieces such as media interviews, short videos, a selfie contest, and a community survey with 755 responses. The draft plan was vetted by a diverse group of stakeholders and the strategies developed in collaboration with a wide range of community partners.



With more than 60 recommended strategies, there are a number of opportunities for evolving our preservation program to help tell Madison's full story and provide support for our diverse heritage. The preservation plan received a Planning Excellence Award from the American Planning Association Wisconsin Chapter on October 15.

Greater East Towne Area

The staff team spent 2020 learning to shift to virtual public participation and partnered with the Odana Area Plan staff team on a May-June virtual engagement series. While the virtual series reached people who had never participated in a planning process before, staff still saw a great disparity in the racial and ethnic makeup of participants. Seeing the need to be more deliberate with its outreach, staff partnered with the Madison Black Chamber of Commerce, the Madison Latino Chamber of Commerce, and the Hmong Chamber of Wisconsin on a series of virtual focus groups that provided a different perspective on how the City could encourage, support, and grow Black-, Indigenous-, and People of Color-owned businesses in the East Towne and Odana Planning Areas. Planning staff also met with several City Neighborhood Resource Teams, the Madison Network of Black Professionals, and the Black Student Union/Raza United student groups at East High School. As the plan progresses into 2021, staff will continue to build upon these partnerships and public participation methods to boost input from traditionally under-represented groups.



South Madison

The South Madison Plan is an update to the 2005 South Madison Neighborhood Plan for areas south of Wingra Creek, east of Fish Hatchery Road, north of USH 12 & 18 (Beltline), and west of Lake Monona. Due to the pandemic, the public portion of this planning effort was put on hold for 2020. During the pause of the public phase of this project staff continued to work on the plan. Staff drafted development concepts, strategies, and recommendations, and refocused the plan from the typical neighborhood plan to an action plan. The public portion of the planning process will restart in early 2021.

Odana Area

With the need to pivot to digital engagement, progress on the Odana Area Plan (OAP) was slower than originally anticipated. However, the initial round of engagement in the spring and summer successfully reached many people through a variety of methods: "Madison Mall Madness" attracted 174 participants to prioritize important components of future redevelopment; 93 comments from 29 people were gathered through an interactive mapping exercise, and the May/June Zoom series (which, like Mall Madness, was combined with the East Towne Area Plan) attracted over 450 participants. Many participants in the Zoom series had not previously participated in previous City outreach. Additionally, the project team reached out to business owners through a series of meetings coordinated with the Madison Black Chamber, Madison Latino Chamber, and Hmong Wisconsin Chamber, along with collaborating with SEH on outreach to area businesses. This engagement, combined with discussions and coordination with Transportation, Parks, and Engineering, has led to the development of concepts that will be presented to the public at a second Zoom series in January 2021.



Reiner

The Reiner Neighborhood Development Plan (NDP) process was placed on hold in March 2020 to allow the City's Engineering Division to conduct a detailed watershed study for the planning area, which is approximately 1,500 acres on the northeast side of the city. The watershed study, which will analyze existing stormwater conditions and produce a detailed stormwater management plan to address increasingly large rain events, is scheduled for 2021. The Reiner NDP process is anticipated to resume in the 4th quarter of 2021.

Neighborhood Grants

This year the Planning Division made a number of important changes to the Neighborhood Grant Program in response to a Racial Equity and Social Justice Analysis. Planning promoted the program on social media with videos in Spanish and English, invited groups to apply by video, provided program materials in Spanish and Hmong, and hosted grant workshops in areas of the city that have traditionally received lower amounts of funding. In total, the city awarded \$23,661 to 10 different groups. Several first time applicants received funding for initiatives to benefit diverse populations:

- Truax Resident Advisory Committee will create a Welcome Wagon to build community, reduce violence, and build resident leadership;
- Ujamaa Business Association will increase community awareness of home-based businesses in various neighborhoods through leadership training and a new website and logo; and
- Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, Inc. will improve participation in their Parent Advisory Council events and programming with new message boards at their Allied and Taft Street locations.

The following additional groups received funding for neighborhood improvement projects:

- Crawford-Marlborough-Nakoma Neighborhood put on their masks last summer and added interpretive signage to their pollinator and rain



gardens beneath the Beltline ped/bike bridge at Whenona Drive. They also installed message boards in several neighborhood locations;

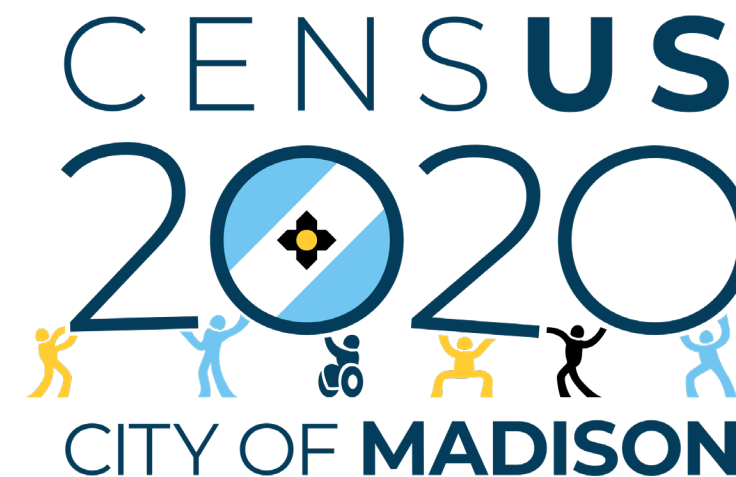
- Emerson East Neighborhood moved the dedication of their new People's Pronouns sculpture online with a Special Edition Newsletter that featured coloring pages of the sculpture recently installed in Emerson East Park. They also created an association membership form and an issues survey;
- Bayview Foundation will enhance its community newsletter with quarterly issues in English, Spanish and Hmong, recipes unique to the cultural backgrounds of residents, and advice and wisdom columns from residents;
- Burr Oaks Neighborhood will strengthen the bond between neighbors and get the word out about neighborhood association meetings and other events;
- Capitol Neighborhoods Inc. – First Settlement District will enhance the community garden and gathering space on the Madison Water Utility platform along E. Wilson Street with new seating, art, and shade features;
- Madison Mainstream Radio, Inc. is expanding neighborhood awareness and participation in the WIDE-LP Radio station that broadcasts in the Midvale Heights Neighborhood; and
- South Metropolitan Planning Council, Inc. will train several south side neighborhoods in organizational and leadership skills.



2020 Census

The 2020 Census started in mid-March in Madison, just as COVID-19 pandemic restrictions began. Census outreach challenges were already significant with the unsuccessful, yet persistent, attempts by the White House to undermine a complete count by belatedly adding a citizenship question to the survey. The pandemic further disrupted 2020 Census plans at the local, state, and national levels. Locally, the City's Complete Count Committee had to shift to virtual meetings, in-person "get out the count" events were canceled, access to public computers to fill out the census at libraries was curtailed, and the City's Community Partners, who had been gearing up for a variety of census-related events, had to shift their efforts to virtual outreach.

The 2019 groundwork laid through the efforts of Planning Division staff, in coordination with the Mayor's Office, the Complete Count Committee, Community Partners, and other governmental entities like the UW and Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD), proved critical in communicating about the census in a post-COVID world. Community Partners shifted to a social media engagement strategy, hosting several successful Facebook Live "Census Couch Parties" that received thousands of views. The City coordinated with the UW and the Census Bureau to ensure that all on-campus and off-campus students were properly counted. MMSD conveyed information on the importance of the census to parents. Planning staff publicized the importance of the census through social media and, working with designCraft Advertising, via digital ads.



Collaboration with other City Departments and Divisions was also critical – almost all City employees added a census signature line to their emails. Metro conveyed information on the census to their riders through a variety of methods. The Clerk's Office included census fliers in absentee ballots. Building Inspection asked landlords to convey census information to tenants. Community Development, Fleet Service, Engineering, Streets, Civil Rights, Fire, Housing, IT, City Channel, Library, Senior Center, Parks, Public Health, Transportation, the Water Utility, and alders all worked to get the word out on the importance of a complete count. All of these efforts created concrete results - adjusting for the fact that off-campus UW students were counted differently this year, the City's 2020 Census self-response rate in the midst of COVID was higher than our 2010 response rate!



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**We thank members of the boards, commissions and
committees staffed by the Planning Division:**

Plan Commission
Urban Design Commission
Landmarks Commission
Madison Arts Commission
Downtown Coordinating Committee
Joint Campus Area Committee
2020 Census Complete Count Committee
Ad Hoc Landmarks Ordinance Review Committee