



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

Heather Stouder, Director

215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Ste 017
P.O. Box 2985
Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2985
Phone: (608) 266-4635
Fax (608) 266-6377
www.cityofmadison.com

To: City of Madison Board of Park Commissioners

From: West Area Plan Project Team (Ben Zellers, Linda Horvath, Urvashi Martin, Colin Punt, Breana Collins)

Date: December 13, 2023

Subject: West Area Plan Update

Project Background

Planning staff started working on the [West Area Plan](#) in November 2022, with the first public meetings following in February 2023. The plan area is approximately 5,583 acres (8.72 square miles), and is generally bounded by the West Beltline Highway to the south and west, the City of Middleton boundary and Lake Mendota to the north, and Midvale Boulevard to the east. There are approximately 30,000 residents and 15,000 housing units within the planning area. Of the 30,000 residents approximately 27.5 percent are people of color.

The West Area and Northeast Area Plans are the first two area plans being created under the City's new [Area Planning](#) effort, which was adopted by the Common Council on August 2, 2022.

This plan and process is not starting from scratch - staff is using recently adopted plans and studies, such as the Comprehensive Plan, Complete Green Streets, watershed studies, park development plans and other adopted plans and studies to provide guidance for this planning process. Staff also reviewed [underlying plans](#) (Spring Harbor, adopted in 2006, Midvale Heights/Westmorland – 2009, University Hill Farms – 2016, and Odana Area – 2021) for actions and strategies that should be absorbed into the West Area Plan.

Staff is currently working on drafting initial plan recommendations and providing an update to various Boards, Committees and Commissions. After meeting with the Plan Commission, Transportation Commission, and Board of Park Commissioners, staff will make edits to the draft recommendations and draft the plan document before a final round of public engagement. The plan is expected to begin the City review and approval process in February or March of 2024.

Public Engagement

There have been many public outreach activities throughout the planning process. Three initial public meetings (two virtual and one in-person) were held to kick off the planning process. Approximately 75-80 people attended each virtual meeting, with about 15 attending the in-person meeting. A West Area Open House was held at the Lussier Community Education Center to discuss the variety of projects other City departments (including Parks, with Parks Development Planning) are working on in the West Area and answer resident questions. Approximately 150 people attended the Open House. People who could

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not attend any of the meetings could still provide feedback via an interactive commenting map and an online survey.

The initial public meetings had a high representation from single-family homeowners and retirees, with involvement from residents in neighborhood associations across the planning area. Public meeting participation from renters had been lagging, to address this deficit Community Partners were hired to assist with outreach. Community Partners engaged over 275 residents and also conducted several focus group meetings to gather input.

The initial public meetings were followed by staff updates to the Plan Commission and Board of Park Commissioners in May and additional public meetings (two virtual and one in-person meeting) in July and August.

Additional outreach, such as meetings with UW PEOPLE Program students at Memorial, meeting with youth summer interns at Lussier Community Center, meetings with school principals in the area, and neighborhood meetings with Spring Harbor, Sauk Creek, and University Hill Farms Neighborhood Associations have also been part of the planning process thus far.

A summary of the public engagement in the planning process can be [reviewed here](#) (see the Project Materials sidebar).

Staff is seeking feedback on the park-related actions below (note that the [Park Development Plan process](#) is addressing mini and neighborhood park recommendations, so the actions below focus on other parks related actions).

Park Related Actions

The overall feedback received during the planning process relating to the Parks has been appreciation for the variety of parks and greenspaces scattered throughout the planning area. Some feedback was received on neighborhood and mini parks, and was forwarded to Parks staff for use with the Parks Development Plan process within the West Area.

Area Plans will follow the seven chapters established in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Parks-related actions will be part of the "Green & Resilient" chapter. Draft actions related to Parks are below, and were developed using feedback from the public and review of underlying plans, in consultation with Parks staff:

1. Garner Park:
 - a. Explore additional trails in Garner Park as part of any future improvements for the park.
2. Rennebohm Park:
 - a. Require dedication of additional parkland as part of any redevelopment of land adjoining the park that increases the number of residential dwelling units.
 - b. Consider the following elements as part of future upgrades to the park: addition of a water play feature, improvements to the shelter, additional seating near the shelter/tennis courts/paths, and path lighting. (adapted from University Hill Farms Neighborhood Plan)

- c. Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the park from Sheboygan Avenue, potentially as part of additional north-south and east-west streets (see planned future streets in the Land Use and Transportation chapter). (adapted from the University Hill Farms Neighborhood Plan)
3. Marshall Park: Increase access to the park from the south by constructing a pedestrian/bicycle connection to the park from Lake Mendota Drive/Camelot Drive. A secondary connection from Overlook Pass (in the City of Middleton) should also be considered. Note: the connection shown on the Parks and Open Space map represents the connection, but likely will not be the actual route.
4. Implement changes in Odana Hills Golf Course and adjacent park land to:
 - a. Reinvest in the Course in a manner that is aligned with the Task Force on Municipal Golf's recommendations to provide an environmentally and financially sustainable, high-quality 18 hole course (see the Task Force's 2021 report in [Legistar #61936](#)).
 - b. Work to integrate stormwater management into the Course to protect neighboring properties, enhance the natural environment, and build off volunteer-driven efforts to promote a more biodiverse and environmentally sustainable landscape.
 - c. Replace existing clubhouse facility with a year-round fully accessible facility that is intended to serve a broader public purpose beyond golf.
 - d. Take a holistic approach to managing Odana Hills Park (west), Odana Hills Park (east), and Odana Hills Golf Course to expand the variety of recreational opportunities available throughout the combined properties.
5. Within the next 10 years initiate Park Master Plans for community parks in the planning area (Garner, Marshall, Rennebohm, Walnut Grove, Wexford).
6. Implement adopted Park Development Plans for neighborhood and mini parks.
7. Improve public lake access at lake access courts and parks north of Lake Mendota Drive.
 - a. Construct a handicap accessible path to create lake access at the most appropriate location to comply with ADA guidelines.
 - b. Add signage (in addition to the existing standard green street signs) to indicate public lake access.
 - c. Work with the Ho-Chunk Nation to place educational plaques at courts and/or along Lake Mendota Drive to describe and illustrate the history of the Ho-Chunk Nation in the area.
8. Create a small neighborhood park with a tot lot to the south and west of University Avenue to serve this part of the neighborhood, which is underserved by existing parks. (note: from Spring Harbor Neighborhood Plan – need to discuss with Parks)
9. Acquire additional park space south of Mineral Point Road, as described in the Odana Area Plan.

10. Look for opportunities to install recreational biking facilities in the planning area, such as skill tracks, pump tracks, and single track biking facilities.

Note: the action below is from the Odana Area Plan, which was adopted in September 2021. Staff will be discussing whether/how to integrate actions from that recently-adopted plan in the West Area Plan with the Plan Commission at its December 7th meeting.

11. Create three new parks that are a minimum of five acres each to serve future residents within the Odana Area (see Map 7). The General Future Park Area overlay shown on the map designates the generalized area within which a smaller portion of the land will be sited for a park or open space in the future. The large generalized overlay is necessary because at this point it is not known where the park and open space will be sited.
 - a. One park should be as centrally located as possible amongst any future redevelopment of West Towne Mall and the big boxes to the west of the mall. While the block containing the Von Maur site would be ideal if the mall were redeveloped all at once, it is the most recent investment in the area and therefore likely to remain over the mid- or long-term. Alternative locations are shown within the overall western green hatched “general future park area” on Map 7. This park may need to be two smaller parcels connected by a green corridor.
 - b. An urban feel should be considered for the western park, due to its location amidst more intensive planned mixed-use development and the possibility of serving residents, patrons of nearby businesses, and visitors to the area. A design that can accommodate special events and programming, such as farmers’ markets, festivals, and concerts is encouraged.
 - c. Two other parks should be created between the stormwater ponds and Oakwood Village. See the eastern green hatched area on Map 7 for a generally acceptable location for these parks. The Parks Division may opt to proceed with one larger park, if that is found to be preferable based on future property availability.
 - d. Park space should be acquired through purchase of property from willing sellers and through parkland dedication.
 - e. The eastern park(s) may be developed with a more traditional neighborhood orientation, and would ideally include park space adjacent to the major stormwater facility south of Mineral Point Road and west of Gammon Place.
 - f. Future design and amenities for new park land will be determined via park development planning processes undertaken by the Parks Division. Such a planning process will proactively engage a diverse group of residents, including students from nearby Jefferson and Memorial schools. The park planning process will consider amenities and park names that are welcoming to BIPOC residents.

Next Steps/Timeline

Staff anticipates moving forward with the West Area Plan process according to the following approximate timeline, which is subject to adjustment based on feedback received from the Commission, other BCCs, and members of the public:

Estimated Timeframe	Activity
December 4, 2023	Landmarks Commission Check-In
December 7, 2023	Plan Commission Check-In
December 13, 2023	Transportation Commission Check-In
December 13, 2023	Board Park Commissioners Check-In
Through the end of 2023	Complete the first draft of recommendations
January 10, 2024	Urban Design Commission Check-In
January 2024	Draft Plan Public Engagement
January-February 2024	Final Draft of Plan for Introduction
February-April 2024?	Adoption Process

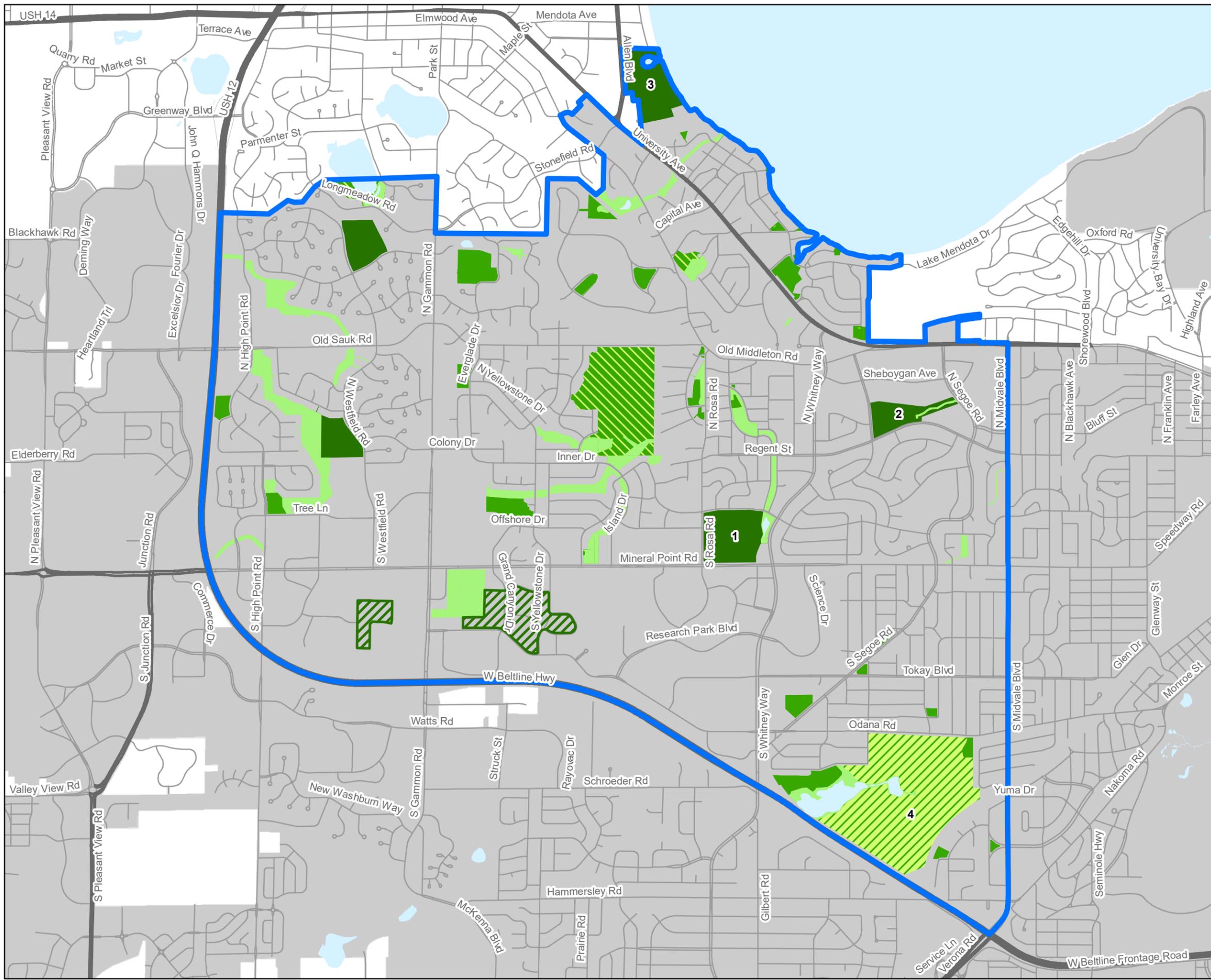
Attachments:

West Area Plan Parks Map

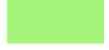
West Area Plan Shared-Use Path and Bicycle Network (with parks)

Presentation Slides

(Also: see linked material throughout the memo for additional information)



West Area Plan Parks and Open Space

-  Area Boundary
-  Greenway
-  Community Park*
-  Neighborhood or Mini Park**
-  Conservation Park
-  Golf Course
-  General Future Park Area***
-  City of Madison Boundary

* See details for numbered parks in the Parks section.
 ** Includes land designated as "Open Space." Follow adopted Parks Development Plans for Neighborhood and Mini Parks.
 *** Acquire minimum of 5 acres in western overlay (out of 13 acres shown). Acquire minimum of ~10 acres in eastern overlay (out of 45 acres shown), in either one or two contiguous areas.



West Area Plan



Project Team: Linda Horvath • Ben Zellers • Breana Collins • Urvashi Martin • Colin Punt • Shea Wegner

Board of Park Commissioners: December 13, 2023

Agenda

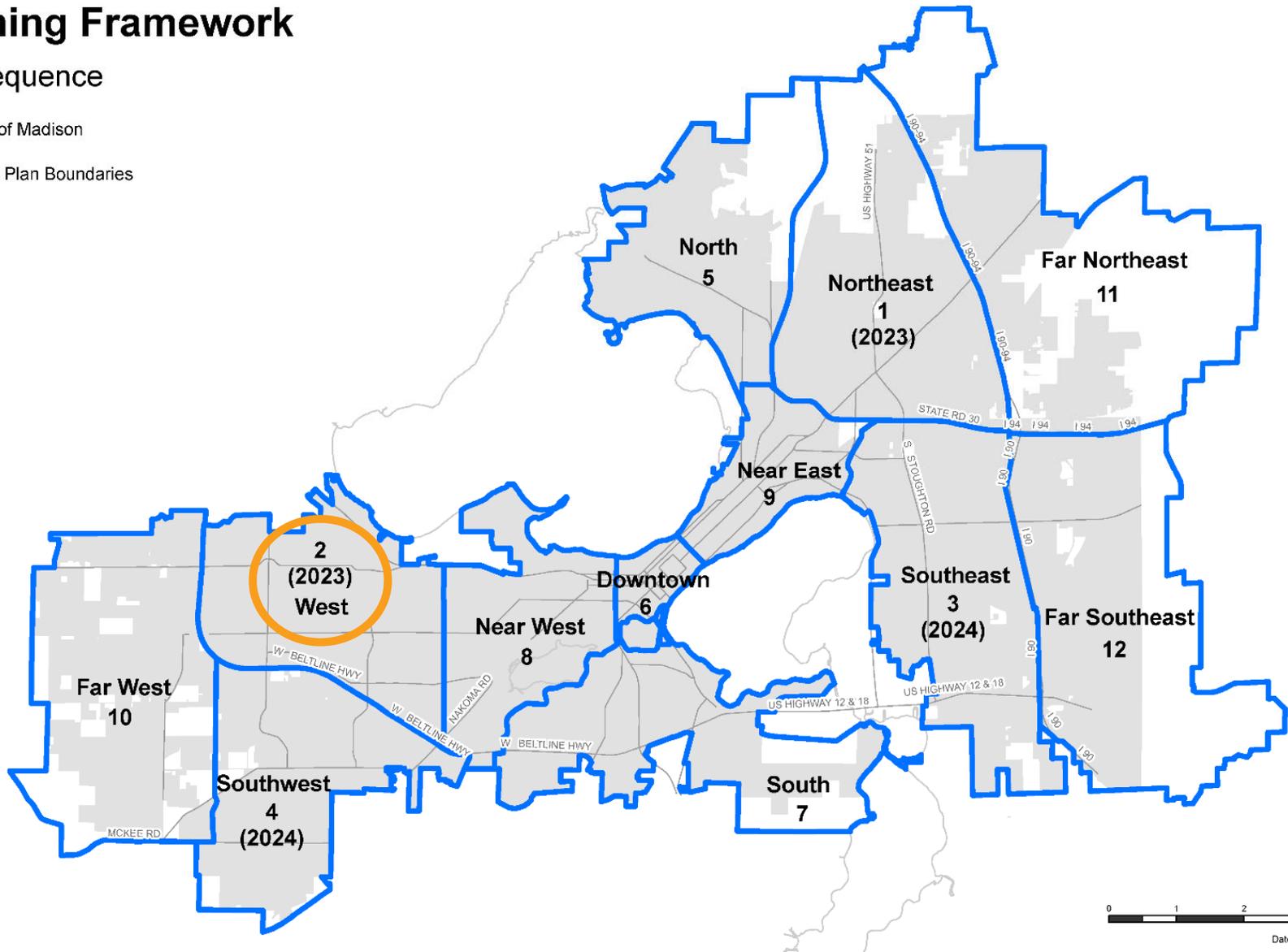


- Area Plans / Planning Framework
- Outreach & Meetings Summary
- Feedback Thus Far
- Planned Green and Resilience Draft
- Estimated Timeline

Planning Framework

Plan Sequence

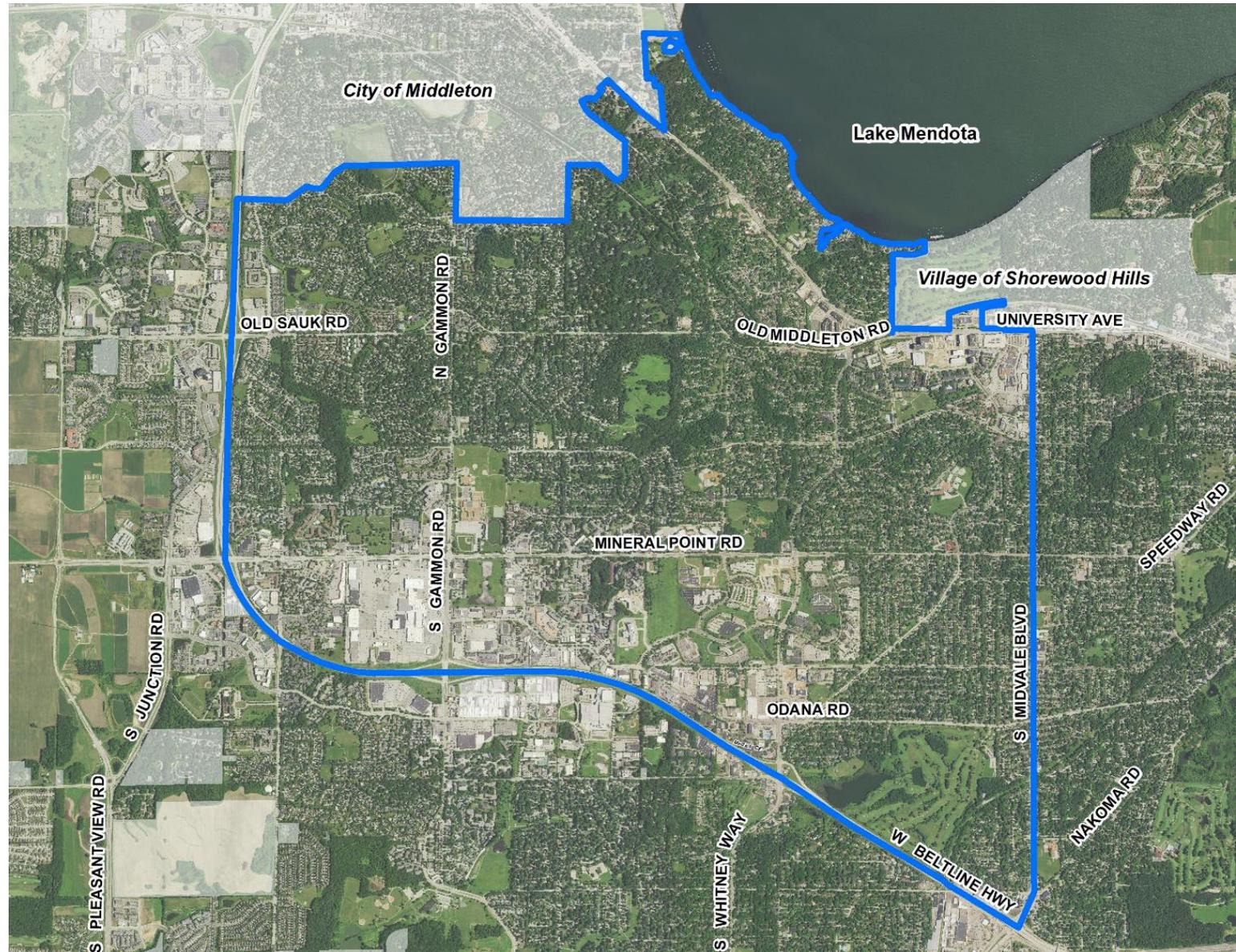
- City of Madison
- Area Plan Boundaries



Date: 1/5/2023

West Area Plan Boundary

- ~30,000 residents
- ~25,000 jobs



Outreach & Meetings Summary



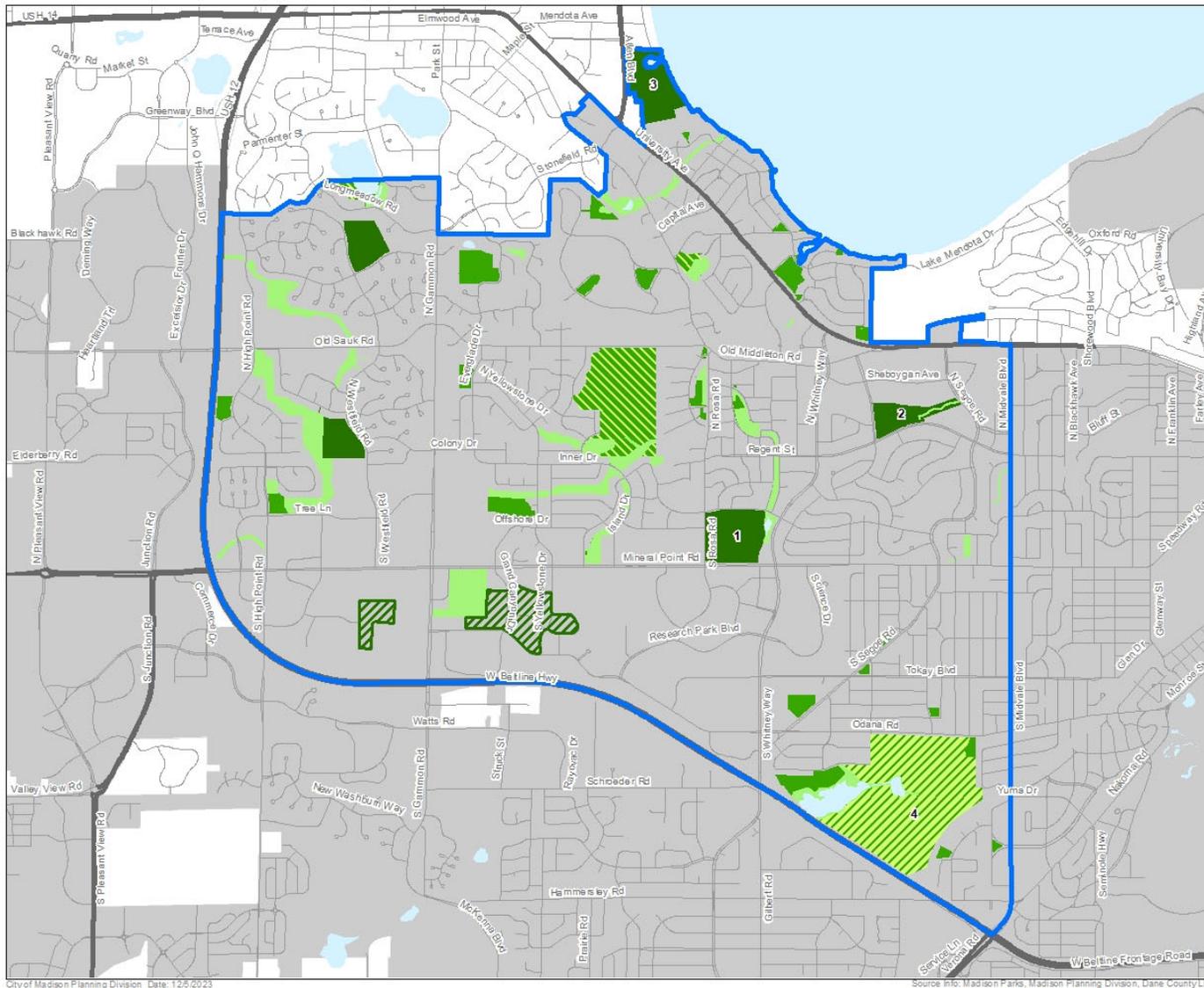
- Virtual & In-Person public meetings (February-March 2023)
- Interactive Commenting Map
- Community Survey
- Open House (May 10)
- BPC and PC check-ins (May)
- Virtual & In-Person public meetings (July-August 2023)
- Interagency staff team meetings
- Business postcard survey
- UW People Program, Lussier summer interns
- School principal meetings
- Community Partner outreach



Summary of Feedback Thus Far



People want to see . . .	People also want to see. . .
Lower density/lower rise buildings	More mixed-use; Higher density development
Expanding bike paths; Improved ped/bike safety; Connected greenways	No paths in greenways
More parking	Prioritizing people - not cars; Decrease car lanes
More affordability	Less subsidized housing
More diverse housing stock; Increased housing development	Less multifamily development
Address stormwater runoff	Maintaining greenway trees



**West Area Plan
Parks and Open Space**

- Area Boundary
- Greenway
- Community Park*
- Neighborhood or Mini Park**
- Conservation Park
- Golf Course
- General Future Park Area***
- City of Madison Boundary

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Draft Recommendation Highlights



- Rennebohm Park
 - Require parkland dedication as part of any redevelopment of land adjoining the park
 - Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the park from Sheboygan Avenue, potentially as part of additional north-south and east-west streets
- Park Recommendations from Odana Area Plan
 - Create three new parks minimum of five acres to serve future residents within the Odana Area
- Marshall Park
 - Increase park access from the south by constructing a pedestrian/bicycle connection to the park from Lake Mendota/Camelot Dr

West Area Plan Estimated Timeline



Action	Timeframe
Landmarks Commission Check-In	December 4, 2023
Plan Commission Check-In	December 7, 2023
Transportation Commission Check-In	December 13, 2023
Board of Park Commissioners Check-In	December 13, 2023
Complete first draft of recommendations, plan	Through end of 2023
Urban Design Commission Check-In	January 10, 2024
Draft Plan Public Engagement	January 2024
Final Draft of Plan for Introduction	January-February 2024
Adoption Process	February-April 2024?

Board of Park Commissioners Discussion



Are any additions/subtractions/edits needed for the draft parks-related actions summarized in the memo?

