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Silicon Prairie Transportation Demand Management Plan

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Developer: NEW WEI, LLC a division of Welton Enterprises, Inc.
Project Site: Silicon Prairie™ Community Plat
Location: Mineral Point Road, Pioneer Neighborhood, Madison WI
Consultant: Sonya Newenhouse, Madison Environmental Group, Inc.

Introduction

In 2008, NEW WEI, LLC purchased what is now known as the Silicon Prairie™ Community Plat (hereinafter Silicon Prairie™). It consists of 26.88 acres bounded by Mineral Point Road to the north, Silicon Prairie Parkway to the south, South Point Road to the west and the Theis farm to the east. With approximately 24 acres of this land available for development of a Class A LEED certified office and mixed use community, NEW WEI, LLC. looks forward to providing opportunities for business owners to grow their companies, as well as balance the growing needs and demands occurring on the west side of Madison, WI. The purpose of this Transportation Demand Management Plan is to aid in this growth while being mindful of its effects on the surrounding developments. The development will take place over approximately a 10 year time frame. When the development is complete there will be between 500,000 to 600,000 square feet of office buildings, in approximately 8 to 10 buildings. Ancillary retail uses may comprise no more than 25% of some buildings and will house businesses that compliment the office needs, such as coffee shops, copy centers, salons etc.

In 2008 NEW WEI, LLC hired Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP to conduct a Drive Time and Radius Demographic Analysis for the future Silicon Prairie™ development. For this study, Virchow Krause and Company, LLP conducted a detailed demographic analysis for 5, 10, and 20 minute drives times and a 2, 5, and 10 mile radius from the proposed site (the intersection of Mineral Point Road and South Point Road.)

The proposed Silicon Prairie™ development anticipates providing approximately 4 parking stalls per every 1,000 square feet of space. This equals approximately 1,250 - 2,000 parking stalls. Each building will have underground parking and access to a shared structured parking lot. The structured parking lot will include vegetated islands and trees to curb the urban heat island affect and beautify the neighborhood.

This Transportation Demand Management Plan provides strategies and incentives to encourage future tenants and occupants of Silicon Prairie™ to drive less and carpool, bus and bicycle ride more, thereby providing the following benefits to the surrounding neighborhoods and Silicon Prairie™ program participants:

- Decreased traffic congestion
- Decreased air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions
- Decreased transportation cost for Silicon Prairie™ program participants
- Increased health benefits for Silicon Prairie™ program participants
- Increased transportation options for neighborhood residents

Future tenants will most likely fall into two main demographic groups: people who are moving from an office space somewhere else in Madison, and people who have not worked in the Madison region before and are moving here. For each of these groups there will be opportunities to inspire people to change their driving behavior and most likely there will be avid carpoolers or bicycle commuters among them to inspire and mentor other new building occupants to drive less.

Welton Enterprises, on behalf of NEW WEI, LLC, hired Madison Environmental Group, Inc. to help develop this Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan to reduce the impact of the automobile on the Silicon Prairie™ site and its surrounding neighborhoods. Madison Environmental Group, Inc. has extensive experience in motivating people to drive less and try transportation options. For example, Madison Environmental Group, Inc. has managed TDM programs for area developers, launched Community Car -- a carsharing business, and hosts an annual Car Free Challenge week of events on and around World Car Free Day (September 22). This plan provides a toolkit of transportation program options to help Silicon Prairie™ businesses, their customers, and neighbors meet their transportation needs.

All recommendations presented in this plan are preliminary and may be implemented after future evaluation is completed. This future evaluation is detailed in the final section of this TDM Plan.

This TDM Plan is organized into three parts.

- Site Design
- Transportation Demand Management Program Offerings
- Program Evaluation

SITE DESIGN

NEW WEI, LLC. has extensively reviewed the Pioneer Neighborhood development plan, adopted in April of 2004, and the neighboring development plans including the Blackhawk Neighborhood Development Plan adopted in March 1994 (and amended in August 2006) and the Elderberry Neighborhood Development Plan adopted in March 2002. The considerations of these plans were taken into account. For example, the developers plans have evolved from the former industrial focus to become a more upscale mixed use development including LEED certified Class A office space with some ancillary retail. The first section of this TDM Plan is to review the design of the site with two aims:

- Encourage a “traveler friendly” site design that shows visible support of alternative transportation
- Encourage efficient use of existing and proposed parking spaces and make recommendations for ways to reduce parking needs where possible

A. Traveler Friendly Site Design

The physical structure of the site and facilities can create an atmosphere that encourages the use of alternative transportation. Recommendations for Silicon Prairie™ include the following:

Connectivity Between Buildings and Neighborhood

- Silicon Prairie™ structured parking shall include means for users to walk safely into the buildings. This can be accomplished with a pedestrian strip (designated with paint) through the parking areas. For example, this could be placed next to the handicap parking stall so it can serve two purposes -- one for pedestrians and the other for providing additional room for people to enter and exit their handicap stall.
- Silicon Prairie™ will provide shared bicycles (a Green Bike Program) that are stored in bicycle racks in the underground and structured parking lots. These green bicycles will be available for people to move between buildings, or between locations in the Pioneer neighborhood.
- Without knowledge of the future development plans of surrounding sites, Madison Environmental Group, Inc. initially recommends that the bicycle path be located along the proposed road through the Silicon Prairie™ Community Plat connecting Mineral Point Road with Silicon Prairie Parkway.

Accessibility of Transit Stops

- Currently, the Metro Transit does not provide bus service to this area of Mineral Point Road. A future bus route is planned to travel west on Mineral Point road and provide service to the future street adjacent (to the east) of the Silicon Prairie site. The Silicon Prairie™ master plan provides easy access to this future bus stop between buildings F and G west of South Point Road.
- Madison Environmental Group, Inc. recommends that walkways to the bus stop are well-lit, include marked crosswalks where necessary, and incorporate welcoming features such as benches and signs.
- The developers of Silicon Prairie™ will provide a propane powered vehicle shuttle for access to the nearest bus stop until such time that the city provides routes to Silicon Prairie™.

Bicycle Facilities

- Silicon Prairie™ is building shower facilities within each building in the development to encourage bicycle commuting.
- Silicon Prairie™ will provide separate racks for guests and employee bicycle parking for each building. The employee bicycle parking will be in the underground parking area. The bicycle parking may be U Racks or Hitch post Racks to accommodate a variety of bicycle types in a secure manner. Silicon Prairie™ may also include a few sculpture oriented bicycle racks to both build awareness and add to the aesthetic flavor of the development.

Streetscapes

The Silicon Prairie™ Master Plan will be reviewed to assess whether the appearance of the development is welcoming for bicyclists and pedestrians walking from the future bus stop.

Signage

Madison Environmental Group, Inc. recommends simple signage for the visitor surface parking and the structured and underground parking lots to designate stalls for carpoolers, high gas mileage vehicles (40 MPG plus) and visitors. The best spaces should be reserved for these users and handicap parking. An Eco-Parking green and white sign will also demonstrate to all parking lot users that eco-friendly means of travel is important and comes with benefits.

Transportation Option Welcome Center

Silicon Prairie™ will host a Transportation Option Welcome Center in the Silicon Prairie™ development office to share transportation program option information with tenants and occupants.

B. Potential Parking Options

Shared Parking

Silicon Prairie's™ Master Plan provides shared structured parking for the buildings rather than individual surface parking for each building. Sharing space provides Silicon Prairie™ occupants greater flexibility. For example, a building tenant may host an evening gathering and otherwise be limited in the number of available stalls for their guests. If the structured parking is shared, they can accommodate guest parking more easily.

Compact Parking Stalls

Standard parking stalls are approximately 9 feet by 19 feet, while compact stalls are 8 feet by 16 feet, producing a space savings of 43 square feet per compact stall built. Numerous compact stalls will be offered to increase green space in the neighborhood. The eco-parking high MGP stalls could be compact stalls. Madison is the best-selling Midwest market per capita for the compact Toyota Prius Hybrid, so it is likely that numerous Silicon Prairie™ occupants will be hybrid owners.

Community Car

By hosting a Community Car, NEW WEI, LLC may be able to further reduce parking demand as some occupants would be more inclined to carpool, bus, or bike to the site and if they had a Community Car available for their daytime meetings or errands. This car would need initial sponsorship as the lack of a robust Metro Service in this area would limit the potential for the Community Car to be financially sustainable for the first few years. The residents of the Pioneer neighborhood would also benefit from having access to a Community Car during the evening and weekend hours.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM OPTIONS

A. Carpooling

The most likely transportation option for Silicon Prairie™ occupants in the initial stages of development will be carpooling, as the area does not yet have safe bicycle routes leading to the development from the terminus of existing bike routes. There are three types of carpooling that will be promoted by Silicon Prairie™.

Rideshare Etc.

Silicon Prairie™ will participate in the region's Rideshare Etc. program administered by the Madison Area Transportation Planning office. This service matches up potential commuters that live in the same zip code with people who are commuting to a similar destination.

State Van Pool

Silicon Prairie™ will participate in the State Van Pool service. Only one passenger of a State Van Pool needs to work for the State of Wisconsin in order to sign up to use this service. Participants pay a fee to cover gas and van expenses and can save hundreds of dollars per year using this reliable service.

Silicon Prairie Carpooling

Silicon Prairie™ will encourage occupants of Silicon Prairie™ to find carpooling companions. For example there is a high likelihood that many people driving to work at Silicon Prairie™ will be commuting from the same town or even neighborhood. Something as simple as a Carpool Match Up dry erase board near the elevator of the underground parking garage could be a good way for some to find a carpooling companion.

B. Bicycling

Bicycle Sharing Program

Silicon Prairie™ will offer a Green Bike program for the development. Each building will have at least one green bicycle for use during the day to use in the neighborhood free of charge. The bicycles will be outfitted with baskets and lights for the convenience and safety of users. Helmets will be available at the designated Transportation Option Welcome Center or another central location, such as in a locker next to the bicycle rack in the parking garage. Offering bicycles may encourage people to carpool if they know they have a way to travel to lunch in the neighborhood or use the bicycle for a recreational ride during the noon hour. Currently the Mineral Point area is not bicycle friendly. This program is geared for the future when the area will become more bicycle friendly as bicycle paths and lanes are connected to the greater Madison bike routes.

Bike to Work Week Promotions

Silicon Prairie™ will host a Bike to Work Week event every May to promote bicycle commuting once at least one safe bike route is connected through to the development. This event may include many different activities including, but not limited to: free bicycle tune-ups, lunch workshops by avid bicycle commuters who work in Silicon Prairie™, bike buddy match up

services during Bike To Work Week for people who may want someone to show them the best route to bicycle into work from a designated neighborhood, explanations of the Bicycle Sharing and Green Bike programs, Metro Bus Bicycle Rack demos, and other activities.

C. Bus Riding

Metro Transit Passes

Bus passes will be available for purchase for Silicon Prairie™ occupants at the Transportation Option Welcome Center as well as free bus maps. This makes it convenient for occupants to purchase bus tickets not only for commuting to work, but also for their personal needs outside of Silicon Prairie™.

Bicycle Rack Demo

Once per year, during Bike to Work Week or World Car Free Day (September 22) Metro Transit will offer to bring their bicycle rack demo to show people how to use the bicycle racks on the front of the busses. Before service extends to Silicon Prairie™, occupants of Silicon Prairie™ will be encouraged to ride the bus to the nearest stop and then ride their bicycle for the remainder of her or his route to work. Some people don't try to combine modes of bicycle and bus travel because they are unfamiliar with how to load the bicycle onto the racks. Sharing this information in a demonstration format reduces this barrier.

D. Transportation Option Incentives

Emergency Ride Home Vouchers

Silicon Prairie™ will provide an emergency ride home for every occupant who uses alternative transportation. An emergency taxi ride home is useful to encourage people to try transportation alternatives as many feel a sense of being stranded at work if they commute by carpool, bus or bicycle and then need to get home to attend to a sick child.

Commuter Club

Silicon Prairie™ will offer an incentive program similar to an airline frequent flyer club, where occupants receive points for using alternative transportation. Each time a person avoids driving alone to work, they would have their Community Club Card electronically or manually "punched" at the Transportation Option Welcome Center. When the card is full they would be eligible for a small gift or entered into the drawing for the larger gift, such as a bicycle. This program will rely on the Transportation Option Welcome Center which will be located in the future office of Welton Enterprises, Inc. within Silicon Prairie™.

Environmental Action Teams (EnAct)

Madison Environmental Group, Inc. will facilitate EnAct teams at Silicon Prairie™ to increase awareness about the benefits of driving less. EnAct is a free sustainable living program (paid for by sponsors such as the City of Madison and Dane County) that provides individuals resources and action ideas to conserve resources, save money, and live healthier lifestyles. EnAct covers six topic areas: solid waste, transportation, energy, water conservation, and food choices. The program also builds community within and between neighborhoods, places of work, and places of worship.

E. Communication of Transportation Options

Transportation Options Information

Silicon Prairie™ will provide Transportation Options information that summarizes the transportation amenities, promotions, and incentives offered. Hard copies of this information will be distributed to all Silicon Prairie™ companies at least once per year. As programs are changed or expanded they will be posted online for the convenience of all.

Transportation Option Welcome Center

As noted earlier, there will be a Transportation Option Welcome Center (most likely hosted by Welton Enterprises, Inc.). This center is simply a place to go where Silicon Prairie™ businesses and individuals can go to gather information, bicycle helmets for the Green Bike program, Bus Route maps, get your Community Club Card punched, arrange carpooling and/or Community Car Share rides, and participate or find out about other activities. The reception area of the hosting tenant will have a sign that identifies the Welcome Center and a toolkit of information to share with people when they inquire about transportation options. Items to include in the toolkit include:

- Metro Transit ride bus passes, guides and maps
- Metro bikes on buses information
- Bicycle maps and riders guides, from the Bicycle Federation
- Bicycle safety guides, from the Bicycle Federation
- Rideshare Etc. and Vanpool information
- Community Car information
- Green Bike program helmets and information
- and more.

Posters

Silicon Prairie™ will promote transportation options via eye catching posters in the elevator area of the parking garages and in building break rooms and shower facilities. The posters will always identify the location of the Transportation Option Welcome Center and its website address.

Welcome Packet

Silicon Prairie™ will provide each tenant office manager with a welcome packet when they move into the development. This will include similar information that is provided at the Transportation Option Welcome Center. This information will be updated once per year and distributed to the office managers or transportation champions. This contact list is essential for communicating transportation amenities and announcing upcoming events.

Transportation Option Events

As noted in the carpooling, bicycling, and busing sections, events will be used to reach people in person to describe the transportation options. These events may occur in conjunction with the grand opening of a new building or during annual Silicon Prairie™ gatherings and events.

Transportation Options Web Page

Silicon Prairie™ will maintain a website for tenants as well as a website geared toward sustainability issues (beyondgreen.us.com). These websites will be user friendly means to communicate all of the transportation program options outlined above. They will also be a venue to share inspiring stories of carpoolers, bicycle and bus commuters. The web pages may also include a list of eating establishments and services within bicycling or walking distance from Silicon Prairie™.

PROGRAM EVALUATION – PRE and POST

A. Informal Market Research Survey

NEW WEI, LLC. will survey future Silicon Prairie™ tenants and prospects about the Transportation Program Options available in the park. The survey will both be used as a communication tool to describe the offerings and it will investigate respondents' likelihood to use the physical amenities and program offerings such as:

- Bicycle racks
- Showers
- Metro Transit passes
- Compact car parking spaces
- Eco-Parking stalls
- Flex-scheduling
- On-site carpooling match-up service
- Emergency ride home vouchers
- Community Car
- and more.

B. Focus Group

Madison Environmental Group, Inc. recommends testing the ideas of this TDM plan with a focus group of people who work at an office park nearby, a few residential neighbors, and a representative of Black Hawk Church on the north side of Mineral Point Road. The results of this informal focus group will further aid in the development of the transportation program offerings.

C. Transportation Program Evaluation

A transportation behavior survey will be conducted of the occupants of each building as Silicon Prairie™ develops. After the baseline data is collected, to measure the percentage of people trying transportation options and their awareness of the program offerings, a follow up survey will be conducted every 3-5 years. This evaluation is key to improving the program over time.