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To: Plan Commission
From: Dan McAuliffe and Angela Puerta, Northeast Area Plan project managers
Re: Northeast Area Plan Introduction Draft Review and Recommendations, Comprehensive Plan Amendment
Date: August 26, 2024

Overview

Before Plan Commission is the Northeast Area Plan Introduction Draft, which was referred to Plan Commission after introduction at Common Council on July 16, 2024. This draft follows the Northeast Area Plan [Public Review Draft](#), published on May 21, 2024. Several public engagement events were held in the following weeks, along with an online commenting version of the Public Review Draft that allowed members of the public to convey their thoughts and ask questions. Staff prepared a [Community Feedback Summary](#) based on comments received at the events and online.

Changes Since Last Meeting with Plan Commission

The project team last met with Plan Commission on March 14, 2024, to discuss draft recommendations. Comments made by Plan Commission members were incorporated into subsequent drafts including increasing densities east of East Towne Mall and along the East Washington Avenue corridor. As discussed at that meeting, staff notified the owners of properties being considered for proactive rezoning and/or official mapping.

One proactive rezoning recommendation that was added after that meeting is a potential amendment to the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) overlay district boundary along Lien Road. At the March meeting, staff discussed the potential of changing the Generalized Future Land Use (GFLU) Map for the southern 800 ft. of the commercial area that contains the Target retail store from Community Mixed Use to General Commercial, as the location has challenges that make future residential development less appropriate (note: the discussion and recommended land use change did not include the frontage along Lien Road, which remains Community Mixed Use). Given the distance from BRT stations, lack of visibility and the depth of the parcel, certain provisions within the TOD overlay district seem less appropriate. The Introduction Draft recommends a change to the TOD overlay district boundary to remove this portion of the parcel.

Summary of Board/Committee/Commission Recommendations

On July 16, 2024 the Common Council referred the Northeast Area Plan to seven boards/committees/commissions (BCCs), including the Plan Commission (the lead BCC). Referrals and their recommendations are below:

[July 17 – Economic Development Committee](#) - Recommended Adoption

July 31 – Transportation Commission - Recommended Adoption of the Plan as presented in Legistar with the addition of the recommendations of planning staff as shown in the memo to Transportation Commission, including the bike path south of Highway 30 crossing Highway 51 and the grade-separated intersection of Highway 51 at Lexington Avenue and Commercial Avenue.

From [staff memo to Transportation Commission](#):

Because of the timing of WisDOT's North Stoughton Road study, the introduced draft does not include certain bike improvements that are now coming into focus as a result of the study. Most notably, as a result of City of Madison comments, WisDOT is considering an off-street path on the east side of Highway 51 between East Washington Avenue and the planned Hiestand Path south of Highway 30. Of particular concern is the grade separated crossing for pedestrians and cyclists on the south side of the Highway 30 interchange. Safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings are a basic part of interchange design. Based on recent conversations, staff recommends this path and crossing be added to [Shared Use Path and Bicycle Network map](#) and the following text be added in the Highway 51 study discussion on page 35.

"WisDOT's shown path East of Highway 51 south of East Washington Avenue provides an important link to the City's planned Hiestand Path south of Highway 30, as well as the Autumn Ridge and Marsh View paths. It also provides a connection to important retail east of Highway 51. These paths should be linked by an all ages and abilities crossing of Highway 51, preferably grade separated, just south of Highway 30."

Staff supports the recommended addition.

August 1 – Community Development Block Grant Committee - Recommended Adoption

August 5 – Landmarks Commission - Recommended Adoption with text amendment recommended by

Preservation Planner [Heather Bailey's staff report](#) to Landmarks Commission :

*Culture and Character Action 7. Inform property owners who can officially document sites identified during historic resource surveys (see Historic Resources Map) with historical value through the National Register **or Madison Landmark** process.*

Staff supports the recommended addition.

August 14 – Urban Design Commission - Recommended Adoption

There were three public comments in opposition to the Nakoosa Trail Extension at the meeting. Urban Design Commission members clarified that recommendation does not fall into their purview.

August 14 – Board of Park Commissioner – **Recommended** Adoption of the plan with the exception that the proposed "Nakoosa Trail" road extension through Sycamore Park be removed from the Plan.

There were three public comments in opposition to the Nakoosa Trail extension at the meeting, making it the focus of conversation. Several commissioners raised concerns about the potential street extension splitting park land, and the challenges that would create. In general, the Parks Division prefers contiguous parkland and avoids streets splitting parkland. The conceptual street extension shown in the Plan, where Nakoosa Trail would intersect Jana Lane at Kim Lane, would create a 1-acre portion of the park south of the street, with the balance of the 71-acre park to the north.

Like most future streets recommended in plans, the exact alignment is not yet determined. Instead, the Plan shows a general location, but future study and engineering work ultimately determines the alignment if and when a street is built. A different alignment that minimizes impacts to the park may be possible and the Parks Division would play an active role in determining any potential alignment.

Staff believes the Nakoosa Trail extension has value and the Parks Division can determine an appropriate alignment in the future. As a result, staff recommends maintaining the street extension as shown in the draft Plan, but adding the following text:

The extension of Nakoosa Trail to Jana Lane will improve connectivity in the Burke Heights Neighborhood and make Sycamore Park more accessible to users. However, future study is needed to determine the exact alignment of Nakoosa Trail in order to avoid splitting the park with the street. A future update of the Sycamore Park Master Plan may be an appropriate process to determine the best alignment.

Staff also sees value in providing additional access to the area, particularly because improving one of the major entrances to the Burke Heights Neighborhood presents some challenges. Residents indicated during the planning process that the intersection of Pulley Drive and Commercial Avenue was dangerous for all users. However, this intersection presents a complex mix of jurisdictions, with portions owned by the City, WisDOT, and Dane County. While the City can implement some physical improvements, these would not fully address the primary concerns, which are safety and connectivity. Given the relatively low crash history—two injury crashes in the past five years, both occurring this year—the likelihood of immediate collaboration from the State and County is low. However, City Transportation is committed to engaging with WisDOT and Dane County to explore opportunities for longer-term improvements in these areas.

Staff-Recommended Edits to the Northeast Area Plan

In addition to the BCC-recommended edits above, staff recommends the following minor edits to the Plan:

- Add captions to the photos on pages 4, 8, and 9.
- Update data citations for charts throughout the document to include more specific information about each source. For example, on page 42 change “Census/American Community Survey” to “American Community Survey 2018-2022 5-Year Estimate.”
- Update image captions throughout the document for consistency regarding references to streets. For example, change Stoughton “Rd.” to Stoughton “Road.”
- Page 7: make the following change: “Given the capacity-building focus, the Community Action Strategy recommendations are not exclusively physical or policy changes, or ~~that are outside within~~ City control.”
- Page 8: make the following change: “It followed a multi-phase approach, with the first meetings focusing on outreach and engagement to ensure community awareness of the process and ~~solicit~~ public feedback.”
- Page 12: update percentage for industrial and institutional to 8% in the paragraph under the land use heading to match the percentage in the land use table.
- Page 16: add * and definition from page 17 to the map on page 16.
- Page 45: clarify what the * refers to for “Jobs within area, by major sector*.”
- Page 48: modify the following sentence: “Concentrate City resources on enhancing the business area along the International Lane corridor south ~~of~~ the airport.”

- Page 51: correct the reference to the Interstate in Partnership C to read “. . . Interstate 39/90/94. . .”
- Page 52: remove duplicative "I-" reference to Interstate and fix the interstate number order in the second paragraph to read “. . . generally from **Interstate 39/90/94** to Sixth Street.”
- Page 53: move image of Missing Middle housing and related caption to page 54, which mentions Missing Middle housing.
- Page 58: move “Park Expansions” sidebar text to page 59 so it is on the same page as the Parks and Open Space map it is related to.
- Page 71: remove quotation marks and correct the name of the map (Neighborhood Resource Teams Map) in Action 1. Also update in Action Matrix appendix.
- Page 78: correct the grammatical error in Capacity Building recommendation 1 to read “. . . build relationships in the community, **such as (e.i., Parks Alive).**” Also update in Action Matrix appendix.
- Page 81: add larger street labels to the graphic showing the Wright Street greenspace and revise the caption to "Greenspace in the Wright Street triangle," to match the text in recommendation 16.
- Page 84: “. . .and building reuse as an environmental sustainability strategy are priori-

ties in **of** the Madison Preservation Plan.”

- Page 86: remove duplicative text “The barn is all that remains of Amund Reindahl's farm,~~which he purchased in 1901.~~ Reindahl bought the farm in 1901, and much of the land is now a City park.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan would update specific maps and text in the Comprehensive Plan to reflect adoption of the Northeast Area Plan. The Plan Commission holds a public hearing on the proposed amendment.

Attachments

- Northeast Area Plan presentation
- Northeast and West Area Plan-Related Comprehensive Plan Amendments