

Population Growth

Staff recommends updating the population forecast on page 3. The actual forecast is a bit unclear, but a population increase of 100,000 has been recently used by the City. At the April 24 Plan Commission meeting, the methodology was explained: the projection was based on growth over the last 20 years and on estimates done with the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission and the Greater Madison MPO.

- Connect Greater Madison 2050 Regional Transportation Plan Chapter 2, May 2022, projects a 2020-2050 population growth of 92,673 for Madison.
- The Capital Area Regional Planning Commission's 2050 Regional Development Framework, June 2022 projects a 2020-2050 population growth of 88,089 for Madison.
 - The Framework used "Woods & Poole projections for Dane County and its adjacent seven counties (Columbia, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock, and Sauk) as a control total. Woods & Poole and Moodys are among a small number of nationally recognized firms that provide forecasts."
 - CARPC's own calculations had projected county population growth of 158,061 versus 183,827 for W&P.
 - "CARPC worked closely with the Greater Madison MPO to align the Framework with the MPO's Connect Greater Madison Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for 2050." <https://rdf-carpc.hub.arcgis.com/>
 - "...City staff put in many hours to build out the Framework's 2050 growth scenario within Madison." (See the Framework's acknowledgement page)

Should the growth be 88,000?

Appendix F of the Comprehensive Plan explains the methodology used to determine population growth. That footnote should be updated.

Household Growth

The page 3 population forecast also has a forecast for the number of new households, which should also be updated.

- The Comp Plan has growth of 70,000 people and 40,000 new households, or 1.75 people per household.
- CARPC has growth of 88,089 people and 44,359 new households, or 1.98 people per household.
- The tables created by the City for the redistricting, 2020 data, had 2.14 people per household.
- Depending upon the average number of people living in a household, at a population increase of 88,000, the number of needed households can range from 41,000-50,000 (or 47,000 to 57,000 with a population increase of 100,000).
- As a side note, from January 2021 through April 2023, building permits were issued for 6,072 housing units.

Vacancy Rate

The vacancy rate, page 50, should be updated. The vacancy rate is from 2015 and, per the footnote, reflects the MG&E Multifamily Rental Vacancy Rates. (MG&E, for some non-public reason, no longer provides the vacancy rates.) Recently, the vacancy rate often used (whether by the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission or by staff) is a “blended” rate. This blended rate blends the rental vacancy and owner vacancy rates. The 2050 Regional Development Framework, page C-3, bases the amount of new housing needed on a blended vacancy rate of 3% (blend of 5% rental and 1.5% owner vacancy). A blended rate can be misleading for two reasons. First, a blended rate does not make clear whether rental units or ownership units are needed. For 2021, the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey Table DP04 estimated that the homeowner vacancy rate for Madison was .6% while the rental vacancy rate was 4.9%. A blended rate would be about a 2.7% vacancy rate. The ACS data would suggest what is needed is more homes, while the blended rate would suggest an overall housing crisis. Second, comparisons cannot be directly drawn over years using a blended rate since a blended rate is affected by the proportion of rental versus ownership units.

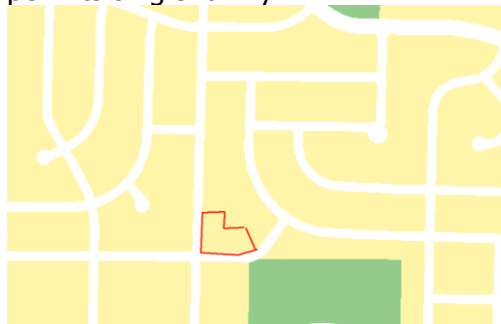
Special Institutions

The project on Linden (former Zion Church) was mentioned at the April 24 Plan Commission meeting as an example of what could be seen in the future. The Linden project is in a Low Residential land use area, thus the neighborhood plan was amended to allow for a use that fit near the top of the Medium Residential land use (and even hit the lowest density for a High Residential land use).

When the Linden neighborhood plan was changed, the draft amendment originally included broad language about what to do special institution land. In part:

“Redevelopment sites entirely surrounded by residential areas of the neighborhood designated for Low Residential (LR) on the Comprehensive Plan Generalized Future Land Use Map (GFLU) may be considered to be recommended for Low Medium Residential (LMR). LMR areas may include small-lot single-family development, two-unit buildings, three-unit buildings, rowhouses, and small multifamily buildings. LMR areas should help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living and buildings should generally be one to three stories tall at densities up to 30 dwelling units per acre.”

This is not necessarily what is appropriate for special institutions embedded in single-family neighborhoods. For example, a church at 4301 Mandrake Road is zoned SR-C1 which only permits single family.



If this church land was rezoned to SR-C3, subdivided, and redeveloped at its most intense land use, two-family twin housing units (4,000 sq.ft. per dwelling unit, 14 dwelling units), that would result in a density of 11 units/acre, a number still within the Low Residential land use. Since

the surrounding land use is one-story single family, with lots of about 9-11,000 sq.ft., such a rezoning would double the intensity of development while retaining the land use.

In contrast, allowing this site to be redeveloped at Low-Medium Residential (e.g., SR-V1) would allow for 30 units/acre, and heights of 3 stories. SR-V1 could result in 3 three-story apartment buildings, each with 12 units (28 units/acre). Three-story apartment buildings, set amongst one-story single family buildings, does not result in context-sensitive design. See Comp Plan page 50, strategy 3, *Increase the amount of available housing*: "... the importance of ensuring redevelopment can integrate well with its surroundings through context-sensitive design and scale."

Special institution sites could be used for missing middle housing. When these sites can be used to build the type of rental housing that can be built in the TSS district (e.g., Linden), land becomes more expensive and it removes opportunities for people to have a chance of building intergenerational wealth.

"House-like"

One of the items proposed for consideration is two changes to map note #4, a map note in effect since at least the 2006 Comprehensive Plan:

The "house-like" residential character of this Low Medium Residential (LMR) area should be retained, and any limited redevelopment should generally maintain the current single-family/two-flat/three-flat development rhythm.

Character

The first change for consideration is changing the word "character" due to its potential exclusionary connotation. Perhaps a change to the location of the quotation marks and removal of the word 'residential' could help clarify that it is the character of the building structure that matters:

The "house-like character" of this Low Medium Residential ..." or,
The "house-like" architectural character of this Low Medium Residential ..."

For District 6, this map note is not about preserving the single-family character of LMR areas. The zoning districts protected by map note #4 consist of TR-V2, TR-V1 and TR-C4, with by-right development at a minimum of 4 units. (There are also NMX properties on the south side of E Johnson within the LMU land use area, about half of that acreage has been redeveloped in recent years.)

Single-family accounts for about 57% of the buildings in the residentially zoned areas (both LR and LMR), 2-3 units account for about 33% of the buildings, and 4-10 units account for about 8% of the buildings. The housing options available in the isthmus residential areas are one of the most diverse in the City, with single-family intermixed with, primarily, 2-3 unit buildings. (Unlike development on former farmland where the 2-units are segregated into pockets, or elsewhere where LMR consists of clusters of 4-8 unit apartment buildings.) In terms of housing units, about 29% are single-family, about 38% are 2-3 units, and about 21% are 4-10 units.

If "character" is removed from this relatively obscure map note, it may be good to examine and potentially change the word "character" where it is used in the actual text of the Comp Plan. For just a few examples:

- Many of Madison’s established neighborhoods have unique character and design elements essential to their identity. (page 50)
- One of the six Comp Plan elements is “Culture and Character.” The introduction for the element says: “This chapter focuses on some of the culture and character attributes that make Madison, Madison. (page 74)
- Providing opportunities that reflect each neighborhood’s culture and history helps to articulate, foster, and promote a neighborhood’s unique character. (page 81)

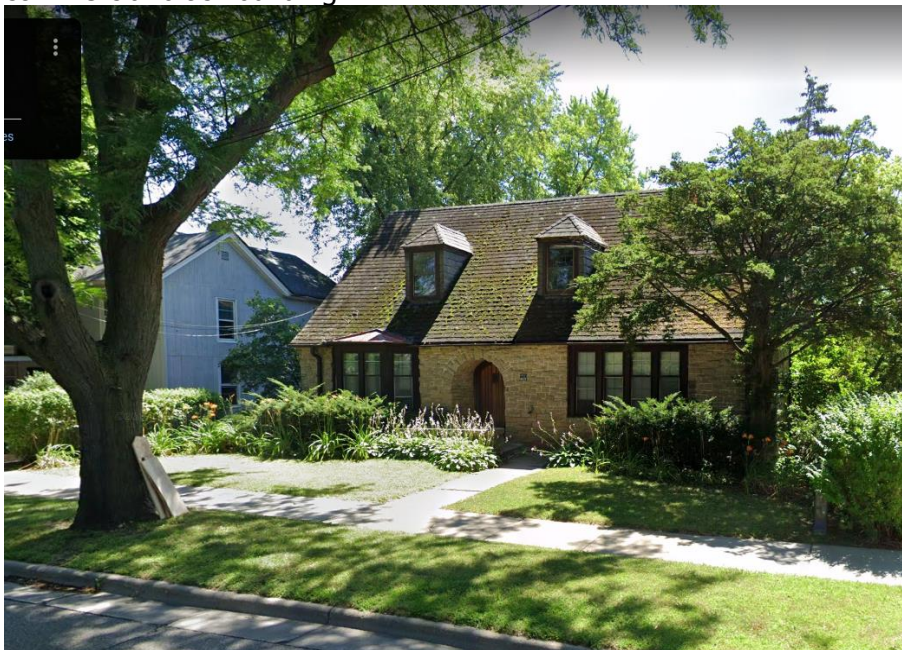
“Character” is often used in City documents. For example, the South Madison Plan which was adopted January 2022:

- Residents voiced the need to build neighborhood’s identity and character upon South Madison’s cultural richness while improving the general perception of the area. (page 31)
- The Plan preserves the residential character in the interior of the neighborhoods ... (page 36)
- Otherwise, the low-density residential character of the area north of MMHP and Nygard Street should largely remain unchanged ... (page 47)

Missing-middle

The point of “house-like” is to retain characteristic features of homes, features such as sloped roof lines, dormers, well defined entrances, and articulation, such as bays, on larger buildings. “Missing-middle” does not have any such features associated with it. And, as noted above, the District 6 LMR areas are already missing-middle housing. Replacing “house-like” with “missing-middle” could result in redevelopment that is not context-sensitive. The Comprehensive Plan uses “context sensitive design,” or an analogous phrase, 38 times. For example, page 50: “This also underscores the importance of ensuring redevelopment can integrate well with its surroundings through context-sensitive design and scale.”

As an example, 645 E Gorham is zoned TR-V2 and has 7 units. It could be replaced with a commercial block building.



Google street view, 645 E Gorham, across the street from James Madison Park



2229 Atwood, a nice commercial block building zoned TSS. But does this building really belong in a residential area?

Even new large buildings in the TR-P district are being built with a house-like character.



City Assessor, 1725 City View Dr, 35 units, zoned TR-P.

The "fake" traditional neighborhoods are protected while the "real" traditional neighborhoods are not, or have minimal protections such as "house-like" character. The TR-P (traditional residential planned) district was "established to encourage the development of new traditional neighborhoods in close-in or outlying parts of the City that incorporate the characteristics of existing traditional neighborhoods." MGO 28.053. Those protections include:

- A master planning process and creation of a master plan for developments (1) 10 acres or larger or (2) containing 50 dwelling units or more.
- Non-residential land uses need to be designed in a compact fashion and "reflect the design of other uses within the master-planned development."
- The master plan needs to include the number of dwelling units on each lot, and the range for the number of floors.
- The master plan must include "building design standards for the proposed development recorded in the covenants, conditions and restrictions for the subdivision", including:
 - Massing and composition of structures, orientation of windows and entries; doors and other elements of the facade, and primary facade materials and colors.
 - A process for the application of such building design standards, through an architectural review committee or similar review body.
- Plan Commission approval is required for any changes, except for minor alterations.

Owners and potential buyers of these TR-P properties know: (1) the height of neighboring properties; (2) that there is a cohesive design, including and commercial properties and schools; (3) the number of dwelling units their neighbors can have; and, (4) that there are building design standards including massing, orientation of doors and windows, and color. Not only that, but these design standards have to be recorded in the development's restrictive covenants, covenants that generally continue into perpetuity unless a majority of homeowners vote to make a change or to terminate the restrictive covenants.

As an example, Acacia Ridge was recently before the Plan Commission. Prior to that meeting, there were about 160 TR-P lots, all single family except for 6 twin lots (clustered together and consisting of townhouse duplexes) and 2 multi-family (apartments buildings at the far NW corner). The restrictive covenants restrict the lots to "one detached single family dwelling" (no ADUs), not to exceed 2½ stories in height. The architectural control committee must approve any new house, and houses are limited to 10 architectural styles (so that there is an "overall cohesion of styles). Ornamental design elements are regulated, as is the roof form and pitch, and the type of shingle is specified. The number of windows facing the street is regulated as is the exterior color. (These are just a few of the restrictions.)

Please retain "house-like" character.

Respectfully Submitted,
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