



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Planning Division

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To: Plan Commission

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

Re: West Area Plan Introduction Draft Review and Recommendations, Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Date: August 26, 2024

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### **Overview**

The project team last met with the Plan Commission on December 7 and 11, 2023. Since that time the [West Area Plan team](#) presented the draft plan and continued to collect feedback through in-person and virtual public meetings, through community displays, and online. Staff have also continued to meet with other city agencies, including Transportation and Engineering, to discuss plan edits. The [full Introduction Draft of the West Area Plan](#) was introduced at Common Council on July 16, 2024, and was referred to the Economic Development Committee, Transportation Commission, Landmarks Commission, Urban Design Commission, Board of Park Commissioners, and Plan Commission (the lead commission) for review and comment. A summary of the recommendations made by those bodies is included later in the memo.

### **Highlights of Draft Plan Changes since December 2023**

Staff has made several changes since the Plan Commission meetings in December 2023 and since the initial draft of plan maps and actions were released to the general public for review and comment in February 2024. The most significant changes were to the Land Use and Transportation chapters, including:

- 1. Land Use chapter:** Revised Generalized Future Land Use (GFLU) map to change:
  - a. The northwest corner of N. Eau Claire Ave. and Regent St. (Hill Farm Swim Club) from NMU (Neighborhood Mixed Use) to LR (Low Residential),
  - b. The east side of Merrill Crest Dr. from NMU (Neighborhood Mixed Use) to LR (Low Residential),
  - c. The west side of Dearholt Rd. from LMR (Low-Medium Residential) to LR (Low Residential),
  - d. The northwest corner of the Segoe Rd.-Mineral Point Rd. intersection from MR (Medium Residential) to NMU (Neighborhood Mixed Use),
  - e. The west side of Hillcrest Dr. immediately north of Mineral Point Rd. from MR (Medium Residential) to LMR (Low-Medium Residential).

See page 7 on [this public meeting presentation](#) for a map of the above areas (note that Area A is LR (Low Residential) in the July 8, 2024 Introduction Draft, not LMR (Low-Medium Residential) as shown on the map).

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2. **Land Use chapter:** Removed proactive rezoning for the Highlands neighborhood and the block bounded by Whitney-Regent-Merrill Crest-Langlois.
3. **Transportation chapter - Middleton Street:** Many local residents voiced opposition and concern about the action connecting the two segments of Middleton St. Concerns included increased traffic, environmental impacts, and pedestrian safety. In response, staff changed the recommendation from “connect the two segments of Middleton Street along the east border of Stricker’s Pond, in coordination with the City of Middleton” to “preserve the opportunity to connect Middleton Street in the future.”
4. **Transportation chapter - Sauk Creek Greenway North-South Path:** General public feedback early in the process indicated interest in adding more north-south bike connections in the West Area. The Sauk Greenway N-S path was included in the West Area Plan because it was consistently present in previously adopted plans that covered the area. However, staff removed the north-south connection from the July 8, 2024 Introduction Draft due to resident concerns about the ecology and trees in the greenway, among other concerns. Instead, the planned All Ages and Abilities bicycle route improvements have been shifted to Westfield Rd. and High Point Rd. The Transportation Commission had directed staff to undertake an analysis of N-S bike routes at its December 2023 meeting to better understand the various routes. That analysis was attached to the [Transportation Commission memo](#). The Introduction Draft does continue to show an east-west connection crossing the approximately 4,500 foot long greenway to Walnut Grove Park.
5. **Transportation Chapter - Street North of Rennebohm Park:** Staff had included a planned street recommendation from the University-Hill Farms Neighborhood Plan, showing an east-west street connection north of Rennebohm Park, connecting Segoe Rd. to Eau Claire Ave. This was modified to curve to the north to intersect Sheboygan Ave. before reaching Segoe. The change was made because of a small parcel along Segoe that would likely have needed to be completely used for the street connection.

### **Summary of Board/Committee/Commission Recommendations**

On July 16, the Common Council referred the West Area Plan to six boards/committees/commissions (BCCs), including the Plan Commission (the lead BCC). The list below summarizes BCC motions and staff recommended plan edits to address BCC motions:

- [July 17 – Economic Development Committee](#): *Recommended adoption.*
- [July 31 – Transportation Commission](#): *Recommended adoption with the shift of the cross-Beltline connection to the east, as discussed in the [staff memo](#), and inclusion of the revised connection as a planned on-street bike route on the Shared-Use Path and Bicycle Network map.*
  - Staff recommends editing the Planned Street Network map on page 20, the Complete Green Streets map on page 23, and the Shared-Use Path & Bicycle Network map on page 24 to reflect this recommended change.
- [August 5 – Landmarks Commission](#): *Recommended adoption with deletion of 5117 University Avenue from the Properties of Historic Interest listing in the appendix.*
  - The property was mistakenly included on the list - there is a new building on the site. Staff recommends removal of the property from the list.
- [August 14 – Urban Design Commission](#): *Recommended adoption. The motion includes a recommendation that the Plan recommendations related to Urban Design District (UDD) 3 be updated to “...modify/revise UDD 3, or to include consideration of other areas where a new*

*UDD may be appropriate, including the West Towne Mall area (similar to East Towne Area), and down Mineral Point Road to S High Point Road, to align with the BRT route.”*

- Staff recommends changing Culture and Character Action #1 to read: “Evaluate UDD 3 as part of the citywide UDD review process and ordinance update to consider revising the boundary of the District to include West Towne Mall and all or part of the Mineral Point Rd. BRT corridor.”
- [August 14 – Board of Park Commissioners](#): *Recommended adoption.*

### **Staff-Recommended Edits to the West Area Plan**

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

- Enlarge map text throughout the document.
- Add data citations to charts throughout the document (pages 6, 21, 30, 35).
- Page 2: correct numbering from “five” to “six.”
- Page 4: clarify phrasing and fix duplicate text by making the following edit “Proposals that generally follow plan recommendations are likely to be approved. ~~Those that don’t but~~ **proposals that don’t follow plan recommendations** will face greater scrutiny, and approval ~~is~~ **will be** less likely. Plans also provide a guide for future City projects and programs, and future City budgets will determine the timing of those actions ~~City budgets will determine the timing of those actions.~~
- Page 7: change from five planning phases to six planning phases.
- Page 10: start section with “The Plan Area”
- Page 15: relocate legend on airport height map.
- Page 22: adjust map legend to show all text.
- Page 38: strike the reference to TID #41 and #46 (Economic Development Division staff noted after EDC review that TID funds could not be used for this action)
- Page 41: add 6405 Mineral Point Road to the map as a “Property of Historic Interest” to make the map consistent with Partnership C on page 43.
- Page 52: change action #17 to read “. . . or ~~that~~ have concerns . . .”
- Page 52: delete “both” from action #18.
- Page 54: change final sentence in the second paragraph to read “. . . liquor law **violations**, gambling, weapons **violations**, and . . .”
- Page 55: in action #2 delete “Indian Hills” (it is a park, not a street).
- Appendix: add a list of data sources for maps shown throughout the plan.
- Appendix: add 6405 Mineral Point Road to the “Properties of Historic Interest” list to make the chart consistent with Partnership C on page 43.
- Appendix: delete “Engineering, Traffic Engineering” from Transportation Action #23 in the Plan Implementation Summary (they are included on all the sub-items below)
- Appendix: list Parks, Engineering, Traffic Engineering for Green and Resilient Action #3 in the Plan Implementation Summary.
- Appendix: revise agencies listed for Green and Resilient #4 in the Plan Implementation Summary to delete Parks & Engineering from 4, list Parks for 4a, list Parks & Engineering for 4b, list Parks & Engineering for 4c, list Parks for 4d.
- Appendix: revise agencies listed for Green and Resilient #8 to delete Parks from 8, list Parks for 8a, list Parks for 8b, and list Planning and Parks for 8c.

- Appendix: delete Parks from Green and Resilient #11 (maintain 11a-11f Parks listing)
- Appendix: remove partnerships from the Plan Implementation Summary to be consistent with the Northeast Area Plan and so the summary focuses on City-led actions.

The above list does not include correction of spelling, capitalization, or other grammatical errors.

### **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 West Area Plan. The Plan Commission holds a public hearing on the proposed amendment.

### **Attachments**

- West Area Plan presentation
- West Area Plan-Related Comprehensive Plan Amendment