



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

December 13, 2021

To: Plan Commission
From: Jeff Greger, Angela Puerta
Re: South Madison Plan (SMP)

At the October 4, 2021 Plan Commission meeting staff provided an informational presentation on the [draft South Madison Plan](#). This memo outlines the revisions made to the Plan based on the feedback received on 10/4/2021. The Plan was introduced to the Common Council for adoption on November 2, 2021 and referred to seven boards, committees, and commissions (BCCs). This memo also provides a synopsis of the recommendations from those bodies to the Plan Commission.

Changes to the Plan since the October 4 informational presentation

Future Street Connection Map

Commissioners recommended changing the proposed Perry Street overpass designation from secondary street connection to primary street connection. Staff incorporated that suggestion on the Future Street Network map (see p. 49.)

Underrepresented Communities Survey

Based on community feedback received at the informational meeting and the recommendation of the Plan Commission, staff added a Historic Preservation section to the Past, Present and Future chapter along with a map locating potentially historic significant sites in the planning area.

Text added to the Plan document on page 18:

Historic Preservation

The [Underrepresented Communities Historic Resource Survey \(UCHRS\) Report](#) accepted by the Common Council in 2020 as a supplement to the Historic Preservation Plan, recommends the evaluation of 12 potential historically significant sites within the South Madison Plan area (see Map 4, which displays 11 of the 12 sites. One site was redacted to maintain privacy). Please refer to the UCHRS report for additional information about these sites. The UCHRS report documented the community's values around historic preservation with the intent to promote and preserve the historic significance of the sites. Redevelopment at these properties should conduct an analysis of historic significance before any physical changes occur to these sites.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Map

A recommendation was made by a Commissioner to add a proposed pedestrian/bicycle connection from the intersection of Olin Avenue and John Nolen Drive to the Wingra Creek Path. Staff incorporated this suggestion on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements map (see p. 50.)

Height Map

Plan Commissioners asked staff to re-evaluate the height map recommendations near the intersection of Ann Street and Fish Hatchery Road and at Capitol View Terrace. Staff adjusted the height recommendation at Ann Street and Fish Hatchery Road from 3 stories to 5 stories. Staff did not adjust the maximum height recommendation at Capitol View Terrace. Staff's opinion is that the recommendation of 3 stories is a good transition to the adjacent single-family neighborhood to the west from the recommended 5 stories along the Beltline (see p. 40.)

BCC Feedback

Staff received feedback at the BCC meetings on three main topics:

- Level of Stress Bike Facilities – S Park & Badger Rd intersection
- Concern about the view shed from Olin – Turville Park
- Thorstad Focus Area recommendation

Additional detail for each BCC meeting can be found in the **Board, Committee, Commission Recommendations** section of the memo.

Level of Stress Bike Facilities – S Park & Badger Rd intersection

The Transportation Policy and Planning Board (TPPB) recommended re-examining the Level of Stress map recommendations for the LTS 3 and LTS 4 segments at the S Park and Badger Road intersection for additional opportunities to make that area low stress.

Staff Comments:

Staff is not opposed to improving that segment of the on-street bicycle network. However, staff feels it may be premature to make a specific recommendation for this area at this time given the uncertainty of the future of the Metro Transfer Point and how this area may redevelop.

Staff suggests the following recommendation be added to the *South Madison Plan*:

Planning Division and Transportation Engineering staff will work together to develop and implement recommendations to improve the Level of Stress for on-street bicycle facilities at the intersection of South Park Street and West Badger Road at such time a development proposal is brought forth for an adjacent property to this intersection.

Concern about the view shed from Olin – Turville Park

A member of the public spoke at the Urban Design Committee and Board of Park Commissioners about their concern over the height recommendation of a maximum of 12 stories adjacent to Turville Conservation Park.

Staff Comments:

Staff prepared a number of cross sections to evaluate the impact of the height recommendation (see Plan Commission presentation slides in [Legistar](#)). Staff feels that John Nolen Drive is an appropriate corridor to recommend building heights up to 12 stories. John Nolen Drive is an arterial into the City of Madison and is a transit corridor. It is good planning practice to locate density along such corridors. The City of Madison does not have policies related to avoiding or mitigating views of buildings from parks, the viewshed analysis also indicates minimal visual impact on the park.

Thorstad Focus Area recommendation

There has been much discussion at the BCC meetings regarding the Thorstad Focus Area Concept and density recommendation. Many who spoke at the BCC meetings desired to see additional density within the focus area, given the adjacency to a future BRT corridor.

Staff Comments:

Staff feels the Thorstad Focus Area Concept plan and associated recommendations reflect the needs of the South Madison community as they have been relayed to Planning staff at multiple community engagement sessions during the planning process. Below is a recap of the reasoning behind the Thorstad recommendation.

Addressing displacement, gentrification, community wealth building

Residents in South Madison are experiencing displacement and gentrification in their neighborhoods today and there are few opportunities for generational wealth building.

South Madison has some of the most affordable rents in Madison, but it also saw rapidly increasing rents between 2010 and 2017. The neighborhood's housing stock consists of approximately 67.5% multifamily units and renters make up 79.2% of the South Madison population. An objective of this Plan is to encourage and provide a framework for more owner-occupied units where financially feasible.

Throughout the planning process, residents voiced the need to combat gentrification and displacement in addition to increasing homeownership. In the 1930s, racist redlining practices and other discriminatory housing practices caused long-term effects like segregation and racial inequality across Madison and the South Madison area in particular (this is described in more detail in the Past, Present, and Future chapter).

This Plan aims to address some of these historical wrongs by focusing on creating opportunities for community wealth building through homeownership for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) residents and addressing displacement (see p. 44, Thorstad Focus Area Concept in the Land Use, Transportation, & Parks chapter).

November 2 Draft Plan Recommendation

The initial set of concepts developed for the *South Madison Plan* skewed heavily toward multifamily as the predominant form of housing (initial concepts: 3% single-family, 97% multifamily, revised concepts: 11% single-family, 89% multifamily). The community strongly advised staff to revise the concepts to show more owner-occupied housing with the predominant form being single-family detached.

Staff evaluated a number of locations where additional owner-occupied housing could be developed, making it a priority to minimize displacement of residents to achieve the goal of additional housing. Through the analysis of multiple sites, it became clear that there would need to be a significant amount of City investment (TIF) required.

The Thorstad Focus Area was chosen for a number of reasons; minimal displacement of business and no displacement of residents, adjacent to a park and a school, and estimated City investment could be recouped over 10 years.

The concept plans are starting points and will require additional detail to be worked out once there is a development proposal for this area of South Madison. The Thorstad Focus Area Concept offers a mix of housing types. The ratio/mix of those housing types is flexible.

Alternate Plan Recommendation

Given the feedback at several BCC meetings, staff has developed an alternative plan recommendation for the Thorstad Focus Area that still provides a mix of housing types associated with owner-occupancy while increasing the overall density of the site. The alternative recommendation adds townhome units, reduces the size of the single-family lot from 4,000 square feet to 3,000 square feet, and proposes increasing the height of the mixed-use buildings along South Park Street to a maximum of 8 stories (this would require a change to the height map). This alternative concept represents an increase in the overall net density from 16 dwelling units/acre to 26 dwelling units/acre.

Leading up to the creation of this alternate concept, staff analyzed the net residential density of comparable areas with a mix of housing types along South Park Street, East Washington Avenue, and other areas, in order to provide context for the Plan Commission and Council to consider. Further, staff provided a comparison of the density of the small single-family lots shown in the concept with a few other areas across the City in order to demonstrate the relatively efficient use of land in the concept, despite the incorporation of some single-family lots (presentation slides 24 – 33).

BOARD, COMMITTEE, COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Community Development Authority – November 11, 2021

Discussion:

Board asked questions about Alliant Energy Center plans, and about the involvement of Town residents in the planning process. Various individual members provided the following input:

- Concerns about the proposed low density development at the Thorstad site;
- Advocacy for single family/owner-occupied housing;
- Suggestion that the CDA should have a stake in the Thorstad area
- Question regarding how proposed development would be financed?

The Community Development Authority offered the following motion:

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION with the following comment:

Commissioner Evers raised concerns regarding the Thorstad site.

The motion passed unanimously.

Transportation Policy and Planning Board – November 15, 2021

Discussion:

Members of the board expressed concerns about implementing low stress bike future network, specifically at the S Park and W Badger Rd intersection as well as concerns over the density recommended in the Thorstad Focus Area Concept Plan given the adjacency to a future BRT route.

The Transportation Policy and Planning Board offered the following motion:

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION with the following comments:

- Increase density at the Thorstad site in order to take advantage of the BRT.
- Take another look at the Level of Stress map recommendations for the LTS 3 and LTS 4 segments at the S Park and Badger Road intersection for additional opportunities to make that area low stress.

The motion passed unanimously.

Economic Development Committee – November 17, 2021

Discussion:

The committee asked questions about continuation of Food Cart vending program for the upcoming years, height map, public participation in the planning process, hiring local businesses and educational programs to business in the area.

The Economic Development Committee offered the following motion:

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION.

The motion passed unanimously.

Urban Design Commission – November 17, 2021

Discussion:

There was interest from the commission about how the height recommendations were derived and incorporated in to the planning process. A member of the public spoke about their concern over the height recommendation of a maximum of 12 stories adjacent to Turville Conservation Park. There was discussion about the recommendation for low-density housing in the Thorstad Focus Area Concept.

The Urban Design Commission offered the following motion:

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION with the following comment:

- The motion noted that as of October 31, 2022 the rest of the Town of Madison comes into the City of Madison, including the land under the Alliant Energy Center. The plan should be updated to include that AEC component after attachment of the Town.

The motion passed unanimously.

Housing Strategy Committee – November 18, 2021

Discussion:

The committee discussion was primarily focused on the Thorstad Focus Area concept recommendations for owner-occupied single-family residential along South Park Street.

The Housing Strategy Committee offered the following motion:

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION with the following comments:

- Acknowledge the graduate student population in the Plan
- Preserve the single-family focus or duplexes that the planners and community have come up with in the Thorstad Focus Area Concept
- Revisit the portion of the Thorstad Site area immediately along Park Street (near Wingra creek, depicted with two structures) to make it taller and add density and improve transit connections to make the neighborhood strong
- Increase of density while keeping owner-occupied housing front and center, acknowledging that future development is possible, finding a balance between wealth building and maintaining affordability
- Madison Mobile Home Park be improved and preserved

The motion failed by the following roll call vote: 3:3. AYE: Porterfield, Iverson, Neujahr Morrison; ABSTAINED: Currie, Figueroa Cole, Thomas; EXCUSED: Caradine, Logan, Nu'Man

Community Development Block Grant Committee – December 2, 2021

Discussion:

The committee discussed the prioritized CDBG project list and inquired how public feedback was incorporated into the plan.

The Community Development Block Grant Committee offered the following motion:

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION.

The motion passed unanimously.

Board of Park Commissioners – December 8, 2021

Discussion:

There was interest from the commission about how the height recommendations along the John Nolen Drive corridor. A member of the public spoke about their concern over the height recommendation of a maximum of 12 stories adjacent to Turville Conservation Park. There was discussion about the Town of Madison Parks that will be attaching to the City of Madison and Plan recommendations for those properties.

RETURN TO LEAD WITH THE RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL TO THE PLAN COMMISSION with the following comments:

- Concern regarding the single-family residential recommendation in the Thorstad Focus Area Concept Plan.
- A commissioner disagreed with the height recommendation of 12 stories maximum along John Nolen Drive.

The motion passed by the following roll call vote: 3:2. AYE: Abbas, Harrington, Miller Fienen; NO: Figueroa Cole, Leopold

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommendation:

Plan Commission recommend approval of the *South Madison Plan* as written with the following addition to the Land Use, Transportation, and Parks chapter:

Planning Division and Transportation Engineering staff will work together to develop and implement recommendations to improve the Level of Stress for on-street bicycle facilities at the intersection of South Park Street and West Badger Road at such time a development proposal is brought forth for an adjacent property to this intersection.