Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

Meagan E. Tuttle, AICP, Director
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
P.O. Box 2985
Madison, WI 53701-2985
Phone: (608) 266-4635
planning@cityofmadison.com

To: Plan Commission
From: Ben Zellers, Urvashi Martin - Southwest Area Plan Project Managers
Date: June 15, 2026
Subject: Southwest Area Plan – Recommendation of Approval, Comprehensive Plan Amendment

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Background

The Southwest Area Plan Final Draft was referred to Plan Commission after it was introduced at Common Council on May 5, 2026. This final draft follows the public review of the draft actions and maps published in October 2025. Staff provided an update on the Southwest Area Plan to the Plan Commission on December 15, 2025, where public engagement efforts and draft actions and maps were shared for review.

Highlights of Changes Since the Last Meeting with Plan Commission

Since the December 15th Plan Commission check-in, staff have made further revisions based on feedback, including:

- Changing the Industrial land use recommendation for the Sub-Zero property and properties to the south to Employment.
- Adding actions 1-3 from the Land Use chapter as map notes on the Generalized Future Land Use (GFLU) map.
- Changing the land use from Low Residential) (LR) to Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU) along Raymond Road west of Freeport Road.
- Creating 3D illustrations for three key sites: the Meadowood Shopping Center, east of the Mid Town Road-Raymond Road intersection, and the Maple Grove Drive-McKee Road intersection to provide additional details for these sites.
- Adding details on the Beltline study and WisDOT partnerships.
- Adding a Verona Road area map and narrative on potential improvements.
- Removing the action for studying a one-way conversion of Woodington Way;
- Adding a map of on-street bicycle lanes recommended for upgrading to All Ages and Abilities specifications;

- Adding a Community Action Strategy project to improve park amenities at either Britta Park or De Volis Park.
- Adding a partnership with Dane County to improve the safety of McKee Rd/CTH PD (in the Health and Safety chapter).

As a reminder: based on feedback and discussion at the August 25, 2025 Plan Commission meeting the Generalized Future Land Use (GFLU) Map includes these changes:

- The Low-Medium Residential "select conditions" footnote (also referred to as 'Escalator Clause') in the Comprehensive Plan would no longer apply to the Southwest Area. This change will start with the adoption of the Southeast and Southwest Area Plans. As the Southwest GFLU Map was developed, areas were explicitly mapped as either Low-Medium Residential or Medium Residential 1.
- As the Southwest GFLU Map was developed, areas previously recommended for General Commercial and/ Employment on the GFLU Map were evaluated for appropriateness for residential development. Areas that are suitable for residential development are now mapped as a Mixed-Use or Residential land use category. Areas that remain mapped as General Commercial or/ Employment are not considered appropriate for residential uses.

Public Comments regarding Hampshire Place

Staff received several public comments opposing the Hampshire Place connection shown on the planned street network map on page 30. There was no public testimony on Hampshire Place at the Transportation Commission meeting on June 3, 2026 and no questions or discussion by the Commission members on this topic. Though there were many previous comments in opposition to the connection, staff recommends maintaining the planned connection to provide vehicular access and a utility corridor to allow for land to be served if landowners pursue additional development on the large parcels that abut the mapped, but unbuilt, street. The Southwest Area Plan maintains the planned street connection, which has been officially mapped since 1966.

Summary of Board/Committee/Commission Recommendations

On May 5, 2026, the Common Council referred the Southwest Area Plan to the following boards/committees/commissions (BCCs), including the Plan Commission (the lead BCC). The Referrals and the recommendations are below:

- **Board of Park Commissioners – May 13, 2026**: *Recommended adoption*
- **Urban Design Commission – May 20, 2026**: *Recommended adoption*
- **Transportation Commission – June 3, 2026**: *Recommended adoption*
- **Community Development Block Grant Committee – June 4, 2026**: *Recommended adoption*
- **Landmarks Commission – June 8, 2026**: *Recommend adoption with the addition of the following wording:* add "a historic district" to Action 4 in Culture and Character chapter. As edited, the action would read: *"Inform owners of properties of historic interest identified in this Plan of potential eligibility to have their property listed in the National Register of Historic Places**, ~~and/or~~** as a Madison Landmark, and**/or a local historic district, and** the benefits of those designations. See the Properties of Historic Interest table in the Appendix."* The motion passed unanimously. **Staff supports the recommended change**.

Staff- Recommended Edits to the Southwest Area Plan

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

- Page 7: Delete "and Implementation" from Phase 4.
- Page 8: Add missing months (Jun-Oct) for Phase 0 on the Public Engagement Process graphic.
- Page 20: Correct the building height labels for NMU (2-4) and CMU (2-6) on the Recommended Building Height map legend.
- Page 20: Change the height label in GC to "#" to indicate that GC maximum heights are shown on the map.
- Page 43: Replace Toki photo and caption with a different planning area school photo and caption (the Toki photo was mistakenly used twice in the document).
- Page 50: Correct chart for City of Madison % with 4+ years of college to 59%.
- Page 96: Delete word "Actions" from "CAS Actions" in chart.
- Page 103: Correct Data ~~Axel~~ Axle citation.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The companion amendment to the Comprehensive Plan would update specific maps and text in the Comprehensive Plan to reflect adoption of the Southwest Area Plan. Under state law, Plan Commission approval of Comprehensive Plan amendments must happen by resolution. Consequently, the Commission will be voting on two items:

- Approving the resolution which recommends adoption of an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan; and
- Recommending Common Council approve the ordinance that adopts both the Southwest Area Plan and the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. Staff requests any motion to recommend approval of the ordinance include reference to integrating the recommended edits listed above.

Attachments

- Southwest Area Plan Final Draft
- Southwest Area Plan presentation
- Southwest and Southeast Area Plan-Related Comprehensive Plan Amendment