



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

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From: Dan McAuliffe, City of Madison Planning Division
To: Board of Park Commissioners
Re: Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan

The Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan builds on the vision and redevelopment objectives established by the [Oscar Mayer Strategic Assessment](#) (adopted by Common Council in February 2019), leveraging existing and future transit for a relatively dense mix of employment, residential and mixed-use development, while preserving environmental assets and incorporating new park space. The plan also implement adopted policies within the [Comprehensive Plan](#), by locating highest intensity development on transit corridors. This strategy will directly reduce future vehicular use by residents, employees and visitors and the associated carbon footprint. The Oscar Mayer area has a very high level of transit service resulting from the North Transfer Point, and the north corridor of the planned Bus Rapid Transit system will ensure the area is well served in the future.

Plan development included an extensive public engagement effort, with more than twenty meetings and events and over 550 participants engaged. Additionally, focus groups were used to better reach under-represented populations and those who often are unable to participate in more traditional public outreach processes.

Within the planning area, two new parks and open spaces are proposed. On the Hartmeyer property, a nearly 14 acre park is proposed, which protects and preserves the existing wetland and high-quality trees. Early drafts of the plan included a smaller 8 acre park, based on the wetland information from the Wisconsin DNR and typical space requirements for a neighborhood park. During concept development, Planning staff reviewed the [Park and Open Space Plan](#), which noted the area was well served by community and regional parks, but lacked smaller neighborhood park access. The initial concept sought to follow that guidance, which was adopted and endorsed by the Board of Park Commission and Common Council.

In response to public comment, the park was enlarged and street network shifted to provide more open space and to provide a larger buffer around the wetland. A wetland delineation provided to the Planning Division in February found the wetland to be larger than what is shown in the WI DNR inventory, however the enlarged park space still fully protects the wetland. Some participants have expressed a desire for the future park to have a more wild character. Planning staff has communicated that the detailed park planning process is led by the Parks Division and occurs once public ownership of the land has occurred.

The second open space is the current East Madison Little League facility in Eken Park. That property is owned by Reich/Rabin (owners of Oscar Mayer), and is zoned for residential. Maintaining this facility is important to preserve a source of active recreation on the near east side.