



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

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To: Plan Commission

From: Odana Area Plan (OAP) Staff

Re: OAP Update

Staff will provide an update on the Odana Area Plan (OAP) at the June 7th Plan Commission meeting. OAP project staff has coordinated with Engineering staff (stormwater and streets), Parks staff, Economic Development staff, and Transportation staff through the planning process. Draft recommendations and maps were sent to staff in those departments/divisions on May 7th for review and comment, with a deadline of May 18th for feedback. Feedback was integrated into the materials posted to the project web page and the draft for this meeting. OAP staff also met with sustainability staff (Christie Baumel and Stacie Reece) to discuss recommendations in the “Green and Resilient” chapter. Updates were also provided to Alders Cole, Conklin, and Furman. If you are interested in reviewing summaries of public engagement (which were linked in the March update to the Commission), they are available on the [project web page](#) and [Legistar](#). In addition to the summarized public engagement, staff has met with major property owners in the area (Oakwood Village, University Research Park, CUNA, CBL). Postcards were mailed to property owners to notify them that the Commission may be discussing proactive rezoning with regard to the Odana Area.

Draft maps for the Odana Area Plan are included with the Plan. The maps were updated after the March Plan Commission meeting in response to public feedback, comments from the Plan Commission, and comments from other boards/committees/commissions, and include:

1. **Future Land Use.** This map uses the 2018 Comprehensive Plan future land use categories, rather than more detailed categories, to maintain flexibility. Some areas are outlined in yellow as “residential or employment only mixed use areas.” These areas were previously employment; the goal is to allow residential in the future, but not substantial retail/restaurant uses off of the main Odana/Mineral Point/Gammon frontages. “Commercial Core” areas have been designated as well – these areas would require ground floor commercial uses. Other mixed-use areas could have single-use buildings, including fully residential buildings.
2. **Future Land Use Changes From Comprehensive Plan.**
3. Map 3 will be reserved for proactive rezoning. Right now, three scenarios have been created for discussion – see the following section.
4. **Draft Street Network.** The goal is to officially map major street connections after adoption of the OAP. Those are shown in dark blue on the map. Other important connections are shown in the plan, but would not be officially mapped. Official mapping would avoid building footprints,

which would allow reinvestment in existing buildings, but prohibit new buildings/expansions into officially mapped future rights-of-way. Official mapping is discussed further in the proactive rezoning section below.

5. **Path, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Network Improvements.**
6. **Maximum Building Height.** Similar to Future Land Use, maximum building heights were kept fairly generalized, with thresholds at five, eight, and 12 stories. The tallest potential heights are concentrated at the Odana/Whitney intersection and along the Mineral Point Road BRT corridor.

Staff presented the draft maps included in the Plan, along with information on official mapping, proactive rezoning, and recommendation highlights, at public meetings on May 27th (recording available on the project website) and June 1st. There were some questions about the “general future park area” and what it means for properties it overlaps. Staff emphasized that the plan draft advocates for purchasing property as it is available or acquiring park land through dedication. Some additional questions were asked about proposed street connectivity, building heights, and other topics.

The draft document in your packet contains a few placeholders for future pictures, plus placeholders for proactive rezoning text and a proactive rezoning map (which will be finalized based on Commission feedback), and a placeholder for street cross-section examples (again, based on Commission feedback). The content of the maps is the same as the maps linked in Heather Stouder’s email of May 26th. Other than a few minor typo corrections and moving the design standards from the “Culture & Character” section to an appendix, the recommendations remain the same as well.

Proactive Rezoning & Official Mapping

Following up on feedback during the Oscar Mayer proactive rezoning discussions, staff on the OAP team has created rezoning scenarios during this planning process. While proactive rezoning is still new, with little formalized policy, staff has some guidance from past discussions with the Plan Commission. In general, proactive rezonings should:

- Prevent new or expanded land uses that are inconsistent with and detrimental to the character envisioned in and recommended by the plan;
- Avoid creating non-conforming uses; and
- Focus on primary redevelopment sites, but include others that may be likely to change in the near future.

Unlike Oscar Mayer or Milwaukee Street, the much of the existing zoning in the Odana Area could allow future development that would be consistent with plan recommendations. Commercial Center (CC) and Suburban Employment (SE) are the primary existing zoning districts, occupying nearly 800 acres - about 75% of the plan area.

The CC district purpose states “The CC District is established to recognize the existing large-format retail and office sites within the City that remain largely auto-oriented, and to encourage their transformation into mixed-use centers that are equally conducive to pedestrian, bicycle, transit and motor vehicle activity.” It does permit a wide variety of uses that would be expected in redevelopment projects, including retail, employment, and residential, with building heights up to five stories (and taller by conditional use). Similarly, SE can permit a mixture of uses, including residential with heights to four or five stories, and taller by conditional use.

While these districts could implement the plan, other districts might be more appropriate to encourage the type of redevelopment envisioned by the plan. For example, Regional Mixed Use (RMX) is better suited for larger scale mixed-use redevelopment, such as in the mall areas. It requires a minimum of two stories, prevents future single-story outlot development, and, unlike the CC district, doesn't allow the mall ring road to be used as a front lot line.

Attached are three different proactive rezoning scenarios. The lightest touch version (Scenario 1) focuses on the mall area, rezoning the pad sites to RMX to prevent single story development and the balance of the mall area to CC-T to remove the ability to use the ring road as a front lot line. The only other site considered for rezoning is the former Pick-n-Save and outlots at Whitney and Tokay by the West Transfer Point, which is also shown as RMX.

Scenario 2 includes the entire mall area in RMX, and an expanded RMX area by the West Transfer Point, and brings RMX into the Research Park. It also shifts land close to BRT stations on Mineral Point Road out of employment districts and into districts that better handle mixed use development (CC-T, TE and TSS).

The Third scenario is the most aggressive and uses RMX in the mall area, future BRT station areas, and near the West Transfer Point. It also explores some minor changes along Odana Road and Grand Canyon Drive (CC to CC-T) to more easily allow mixed-use redevelopment. One topic which came up frequently in meetings with the Black, Hmong and Latino chambers of commerce was the need for affordable commercial space, and there have been discussions debating if it's more appropriate to keep the existing zoning in an effort to better maintain commercial affordability in certain areas.

With a few possible exceptions, the three scenarios don't create non-conforming uses.



Along with potential proactive rezoning, staff evaluated the planned street network to determine which streets might be appropriate for official mapping. Past feedback from Plan Commission indicated primary street connections should be officially mapped, while minor streets should not. However, the complex ownership pattern and block depth in mall area may make a different approach appropriate. The zoning code allows official mapped streets to be considered front lot lines, and staff feels a more aggressive approach in the mall area may be appropriate facilitate redevelopment in desired locations and preserve future street connections. In this draft, the officially mapped streets do not extend through the mall itself, since building permits cannot be issued in officially mapped areas without a variance-type approval. This approach lets the mall operate normally until it is redeveloped and simplifies permit administration, while preventing any new building or expansion into future street corridors.

Questions for Plan Commission Consideration/Discussion

In addition to any general questions and comments the Commission may have, staff is seeking feedback on the following topics prior to finalizing a draft for introduction at Council:

1. With state limitations on affordable housing regulations and building codes, there aren't mechanisms for *mandating* affordable housing or "green" building. However, there are a few strategies for the OAP to *encourage* affordable housing and green building. The recommendations currently include allowing bonus stories for affordable housing and green building to reach the maximum 12 floor height. This recommendation could be beneficial in achieving City goals in those areas, but may also create complexity for redevelopment along the BRT corridor. Should this recommendation be maintained, or eliminated?
2. Staff has created two alternative cross sections for the potential long-term extension of Odana Road from Gammon Road west. We are looking for the Commission's preference before integrating a diagram into the final draft. See diagrams and descriptions below. The intent is not to necessarily

decide upon a final design, but rather ensure that enough ROW is reserved to accomplish the general design features that are desired. The chart in the draft plan currently lists 100' of ROW (Option B).

	
<p>Option A: Sidewalks, 10' terraces, on-street parking, bike lanes, and a travel lane in each direction. ~82' of ROW required.</p>	<p>Option B: Sidewalks, 10' terraces, buffered bike lanes, on-street parking, and a travel lane in each direction. ~100' of ROW required.</p>

3. We are interested in feedback on the approaches to proactive rezoning and official mapping, particularly related to what level of proactive rezoning should occur in the mall area, BRT station areas, and on the balance between preserving commercial affordability and promoting redevelopment.
4. The Plan currently does not recommend officially mapping streets through existing buildings, as doing so may prohibit owners from acquiring building permits for certain remodeling projects. Nevertheless, the City could consider officially mapping the network shown on Map 4 concurrent with any future land use approval requests to redevelop areas containing existing buildings. Is that a recommendation the Commission would like to include in the Plan?

Anticipated OAP Schedule

If there are no major issues raised during the Commission’s discussion, staff aims to proceed with OAP approvals under the following schedule:

Date	Task
6/7	Plan Commission update
7/6	Introduce OAP at Council, referrals
July-August-September	BCC reviews (BPC, TPPB, EDC, PC anticipated)
9/21	Council considers adoption

Attachments: Proactive rezoning scenarios #1-#3