



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

To: Members of the Transportation Policy and Planning Board

From: Greater East Towne Area Planning Team (Rebecca Chare, Linda Horvath, Kirstie Laatsch, Ryan Jonely, Chris Wells, Bill Fruhling)

Date: September 17, 2021

Subject: Greater East Towne Area Plan Project Update

The City of Madison has been concurrently planning for the futures of both the Odana Area and the Greater East Towne Area. As shown in Map A, attached, the Greater East Towne Planning Area (GETAP) is roughly bounded by the railroad tracks on the south, East Washington Avenue on the north, Interstate 39/90 on the east and Mendota Street on the west. Attachment #1 provides draft maps, and Attachment #2 provides a summary of public engagement.

Guiding Principles

The following principles have guided development of concepts, and will continue to guide development of final recommendations as the plan is completed:

- A. Creating a place
 - a. A new complete neighborhood and activity center which has a mix of housing types, retail, service, employment, civic, institutional, and parks or public space.
 - b. Making spaces more welcoming from a design aspect - Art that reflects cultural diversity, welcoming signage, and other aspects of physical design.
- B. Focus on mobility
 - a. Having equitable access to transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and increased street connections will improve mobility for residents. Mobility increases access to job options, services, and healthy modes of transportation.
- C. Community wealth building
 - a. Economic development should:
 - i. Generate wealth for residents.
 - ii. Provide opportunities for community ownership and control, ownership of housing and businesses, and wealth building for members of Madison's traditionally underrepresented communities.
 - iii. Create partnerships with local leaders, nonprofits, and philanthropy organizations.
 - iv. Activate existing local assets in the community for the benefit of local residents.
 - b. Development should create quality living wage jobs and opportunities

- i. Look for partnerships with the future Reindahl Imagination Center and Madison College.
 - ii. Affordability of housing and commercial spaces.
- D. Center Nature and Sustainability
 - a. Incorporate trees and open space in developed areas.
 - b. Embrace natural areas like Starkweather Creek, etc.
- E. Resiliency
 - a. Ensure all systems and features are adaptable to change in uncertain economic conditions.

Questions for the Transportation Policy and Planning Board

Regional growth projections show that over the next 15-25 years, the planning area could easily support an additional 2,500+ units. A full build out of the area could accommodate an additional 16,000 people, 9,500 new dwelling units and 27,000 new employees for a total of 18,000 people, 10,000+ dwelling units and potentially up to 28,000 employees.

This plan promotes a variety of new development that could help the Greater East Towne Mall area thrive, as it will encourage thousands of new residents and commercial uses in underutilized areas within the planning boundary. In addition, the proposed street, bicycle and pedestrian networks will make it easier for more people to get to the mall from multiple locations. Across the country, malls have taken advantage of new retail trends and adjacent developments to re-imagine themselves by redeveloping parts or all of the existing mall structure. This plan allows the mall to be flexible to respond to those trends over time.

In addition to general comments and feedback on the draft concept maps, Planning Division staff request that Board members provide specific comments on the following topics:

1. ***Draft Transportation Recommendations*** – Please refer to Maps B, C, and D

- A. Map B proposes scaling down the area into smaller, human-scale blocks along a revised street network where existing and new development could locate. New connector streets would bring people to the area from adjacent neighborhoods and beyond, and local streets would provide circulation within the area along smaller blocks with shorter distances for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel between uses, and multiple ways to get around the neighborhood.

Map B generally shows Phase 1 streets over existing parking lots and along internal driveways. These streets could occur with little to no redevelopment, while construction of Phase 2 streets would require that some existing structures be reconfigured and/or demolished.

- 1. Do you have any ideas for changes to the street network to help support transformation of this area into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood?
- 2. Do you have any suggested changes to the street cross-sections to help facilitate more efficient, safe and enjoyable movement of pedestrians, bicyclists and Metro riders?
- 3. BRT will be up and running along E. Washington Ave. in 2024. The BRT stations are shown on Map D. How can this plan support BRT?

- B. Maps C and D show the existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian network.
 - 1. Do have any suggested changes to this network for safer and more efficient movement of pedestrians and bicyclists?

2. Extended Independence Lane

- A. Urban plaza space along a newly extended Independence lane as an organizing neighborhood feature:
 - 1. Do you have and ideas for changes to this proposed new street extension with urban plaza space so that it is an enjoyable place to gather, safe and easy to access, and vehicles can still navigate the area effectively?
 - 2. What other transportation-related ideas do you have to help facilitate creation of a central gathering place that attracts people to the area?

3. What are we missing?

Next Steps/Timeline

Staff anticipates moving forward with the GETAP process according to the following approximate timeline, which is subject to adjustment based on feedback received from the other boards, commissions, committees (BCCs), business and property owners, and members of the public.

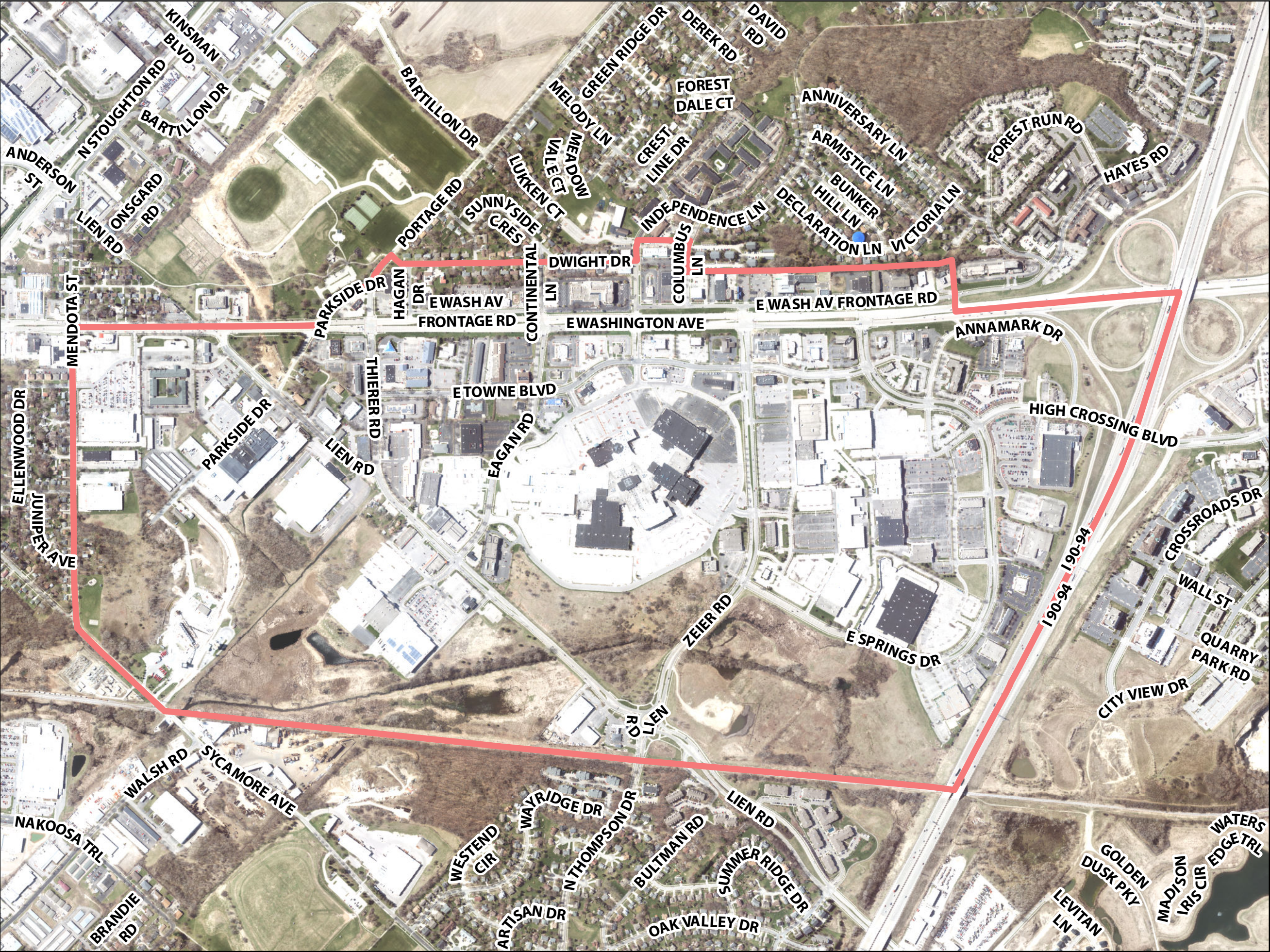
Estimated Timeframe	Activity
September - October 2021	Continued visits to BCCs for topic-specific GETAP review/discussions
October 2021	Revise concepts based on feedback from the public, Plan Commission, and other BCCs; draft plan text
November 2021	Present draft plan to public for feedback; make any revisions to the plan and create Final Draft Plan
December 2021	Introduce Final Draft GETAP at Common Council; referral to BCCs for review
February 2022	Common Council – adoption

September 17, 2021


Page 4

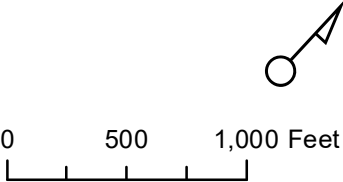
Attachment #1: Map Packet

- Map A: Planning Area Boundary
- Map B: Draft Street Network
- Map C: Draft Bike Facilities
- Map D: Draft Sidewalk Network



Map A

 Planning Area



Draft

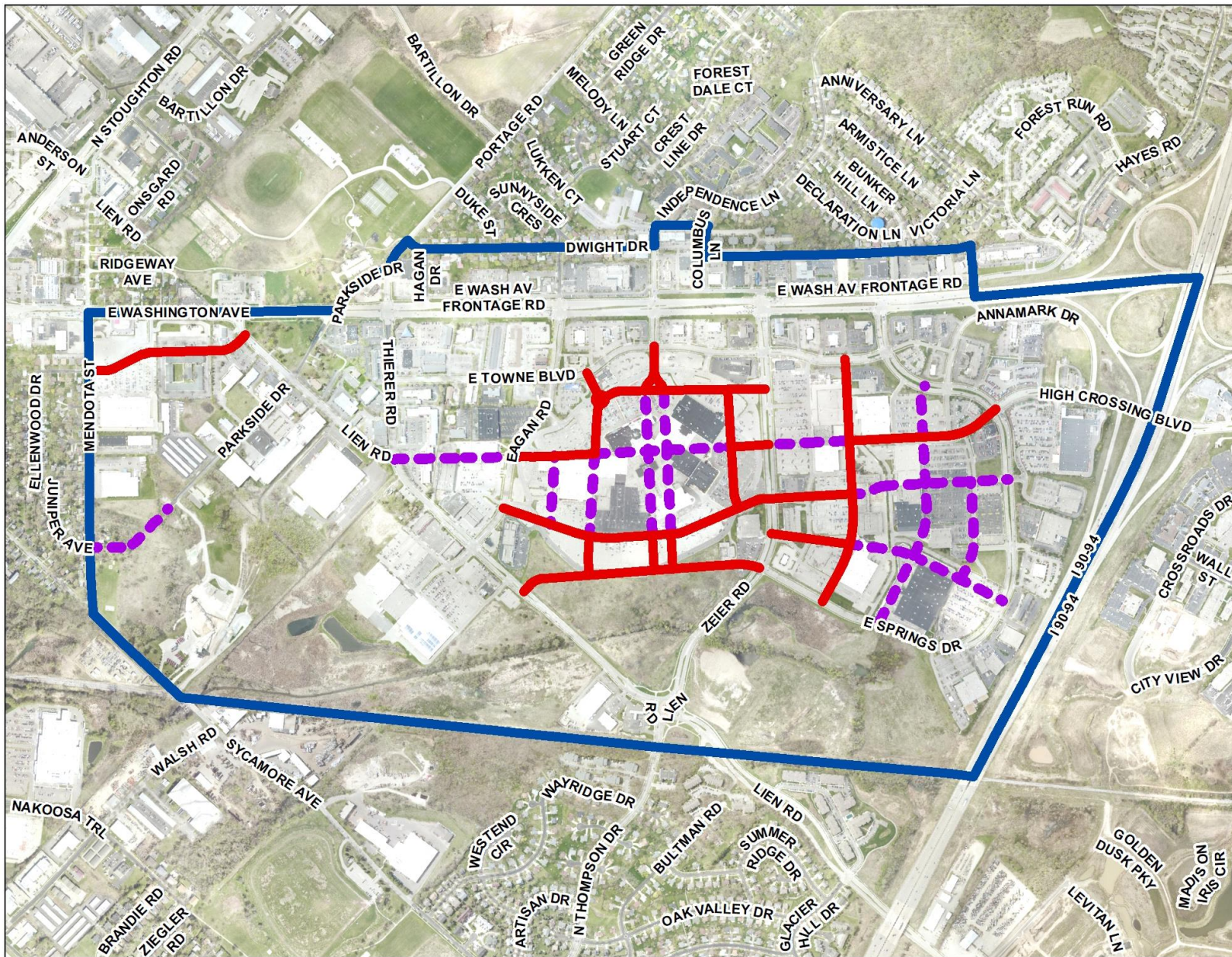
Map B

Street Network

Early Phases



Later Phases



Map C
Bicycle Network

Off Street Facilities

- Existing
- Planned

On-Street Facilities

- Existing
- Planned

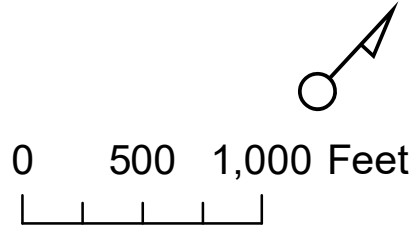
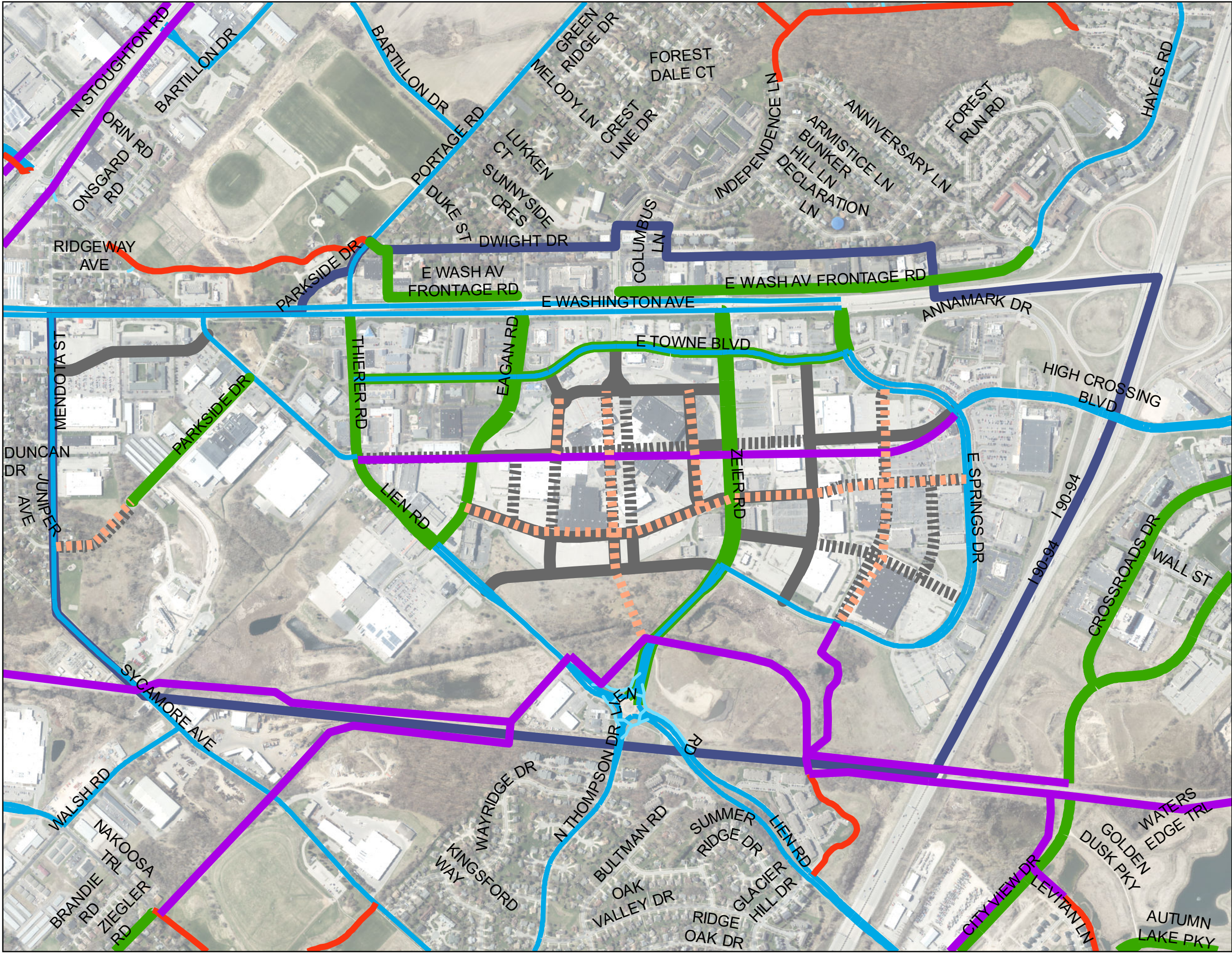
Greater East Towne Area
Planning Concepts

- New Bicycle Facilities on Potential New Streets

Potential New Streets

- Phase 1
- Phase 2

- Planning Area






DRAFT

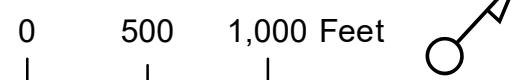
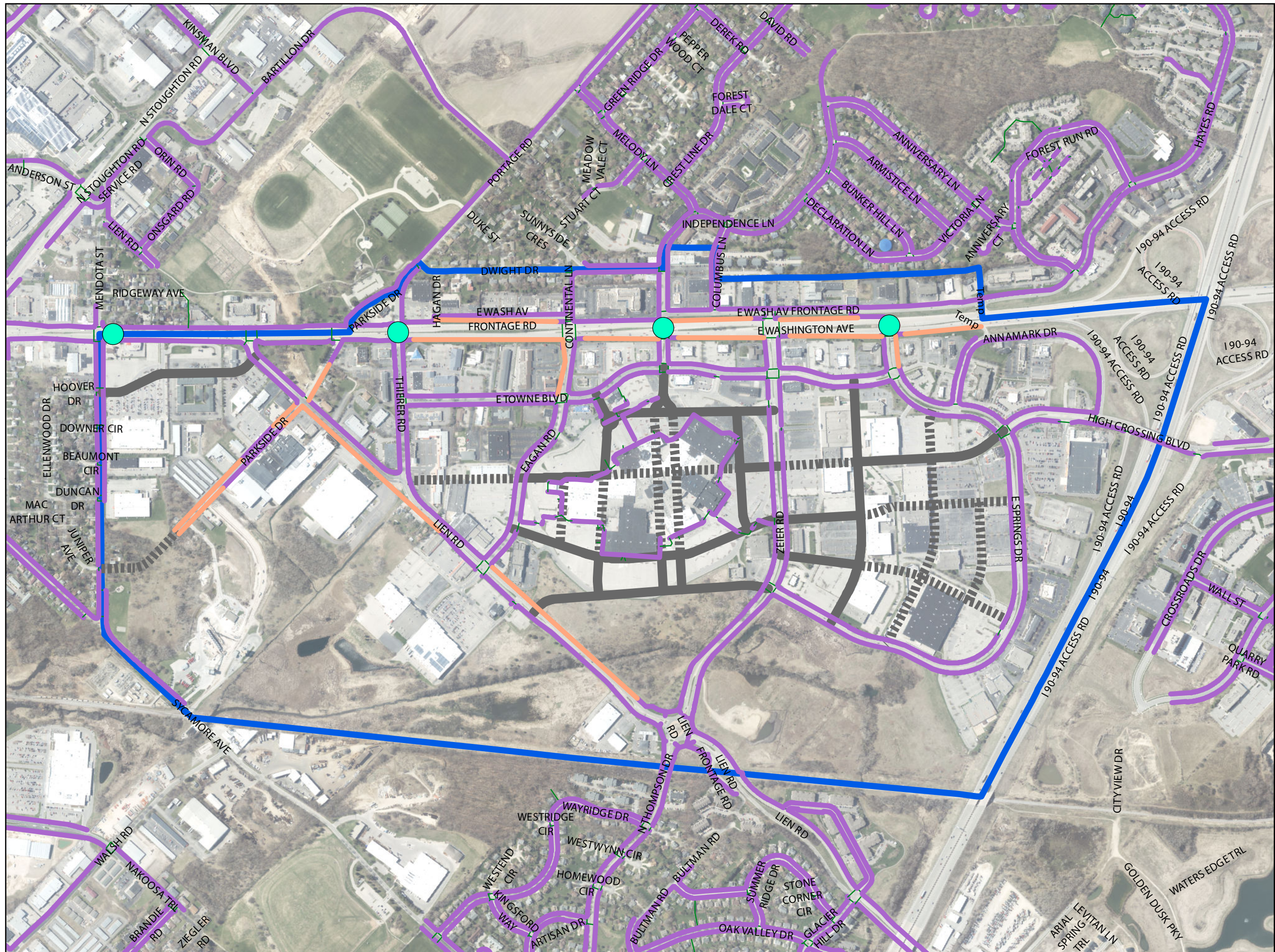
Map D

Sidewalk Network

- Existing Sidewalks
- Future Sidewalk Extensions
- BRT Stations

Potential Streets

-  Phase 1
 Phase 2
 Planning Area



Attachment 2: GETAP Project Public Participation Summary

Public participation for the Greater East Towne Area Plan (GETAP) and the associated Odana Area Plan (OAP) was getting underway just as COVID-19 struck in mid-March of 2020 (see the summary of participation later in this memo). COVID-19 led to some delays with the planning effort as staff adjusted to the need to undertake participation remotely, along with refocusing some time on other COVID-19 related issues, such as assisting with the City's COVID-19 response and supporting the extended 2020 Census timeframe.

The Greater East Towne and Odana Area Plans shared a public participation plan. For those interested, there is a full and complete listing of public comments from Zoom meetings, focus groups and other events [at this link](#). Since these two planning efforts included such large commercial areas, staff would like to highlight some economic development specific outreach that the plan processes made central to their efforts.

Business and Property Owner Outreach occurred through a business roundtable facilitated by project consultant Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. Attendance was low – only a handful of businesses/property owners participated out of 2,995 invited by postcard, but we collected a fair amount of feedback. Key takeaways: retail is over-represented; there is a need for more food industry businesses (restaurants/catering/etc.); the poor transportation network is a barrier to economic growth, and the mall areas will not easily support a mixed use, walkable, bikeable character without changes; and the area needs a sense of place, including parks and open spaces.

Black, Latino and Hmong Chambers of Commerce were part of an outreach strategy to ensure business engagement reached a diverse audience. Much of the feedback from the series of eight meetings focused on making sure the future of the area is welcoming to all area residents and businesses. Another focus was the necessity of proactive economic development to help grow businesses owned by people of color. A significant portion of the feedback could be applied to the entire city, and should be reviewed for potential initiatives and collaborative business development efforts beyond just the Odana and East Towne Areas, although redevelopment of the regional mall areas could serve as a place to start new efforts and implement new ideas that could grow to citywide efforts.

A general theme that emerged from the chamber meetings is that the City should not wait for private redevelopment to occur based purely on market conditions. Rather, it should be proactive in trying to diversify the area through assisting in the development of local businesses.

Madison Mall Madness asked people to choose priorities for the planning areas through a bracket style series of head-to-head matchups in four categories: "Things to do," "Places to Live and Work," "Getting Around," and "Design and Character." 174 people participated. Affordable housing and more natural spaces and stormwater management topped the list, with safer pedestrian and bike routes, and more entertainment and dining a close second. A summary of results is [available on the project web page](#).

Issues and Opportunities Zoom Series discussed [issues facing malls and retail](#), [case studies of mall redevelopments](#) and [an evaluation of the Greater East Towne Plan area](#). 450 participants attended. A [summary of comments can be found here](#). An online mapping exercise was used to gather thoughts and feedback for those who were not able to attend.

Traditionally Underrepresented Communities

The public participation plan included a robust outreach effort to reach and connect with members from several of Madison's traditionally underrepresented communities.

Along with the focus group meetings with the ***Black, Latino, and Hmong Chambers of Commerce*** staff also reached out to the ***Madison Network of Black Professionals and the East High School Raza United/Black Student Union*** for in depth discussions of the plan.

CityZine Social Practice Art interviews Social Practice Artist Borealis went into LGBTQ+, Indigenous and other communities for in depth interviews on the future of creating a new community at both East Towne and the Odana Area.

"I'm sitting here asking myself if I have ever seen a bird in some of these west side areas. I mean, I'm being kind of dramatic, but there is just so much pavement and concrete that it's hard to even visualize life in some of these areas. I sometimes fantasize about what it would be like for an alien to fly overhead and look down. What would they think all that concrete is for? Especially in the areas with no cars in them?"

Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT) Outreach included visits with the Brentwood/Northport and Darbo/Worthington NRTs both in the in the fall of 2020, and again in the spring of 2021 to present information on the GETAP and gather thoughts and feedback from these areas.

Concept Presentation Meetings were held on May 24 and 26 ([presentation link](#)) to present and discuss future street and bicycle networks, planned land use, future park space, and planned maximum building heights. About 60 people attended.