



CHAPTER 2: PLANNING PROCESS



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The City of Sun Prairie contracted with Vierbicher to assist in creating a plan for the Central Main Street Corridor. The plan is intended to create a feasible vision for the study area that will guide growth and development for the foreseeable future. The planning process was split into four phases: Engagement, Assessment, Strategy, and Implementation. The final document was assembled following the resolution of all four phases. Additional details for each phase are described in the following sections.

2.1: Engagement

This component involved the incorporation of public input through stakeholder interviews, steering committee meetings, open public meetings, and public surveys. A synopsis of each component is included below, and more detailed explanations of each component, including results from the public survey and the redevelopment concept survey, are shown in Appendix B.

Community Development Authority

The Sun Prairie Community Development Authority (CDA) served as the project Steering Committee. Duties of the CDA include providing direction throughout the planning process and reviewing work products prepared throughout the planning process. The project team held five CDA meetings throughout the planning process in which work could be presented and reviewed, and discussion regarding the nature and direction of the project could occur. The first meeting introduced the project team and allowed a platform for discussion regarding the engagement process. The CDA completed worksheets to identify major issues facing the planning area and reviewed initial plans for the first public meeting. The second meeting reviewed the results from Public Meeting No. 1 and previewed materials for Public Meeting No. 2. The CDA also reviewed the first draft of the Existing Conditions section

of the Plan. The third meeting reviewed results from Public Meeting No. 2 and reviewed the first draft of the redevelopment plan. The fourth meeting reviewed the revised draft of the redevelopment plan with final edits and previewed materials for Public Meeting No. 3. The fifth and final CDA meeting reviewed the results from Public Meeting No. 3 and voted to recommend the Central Main Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan to the Plan Commission and City Council.

Public Meeting No. 1

The first public meeting presented the proposed planning process, including a scope and timeline for the project, project goals, and steps in the process. The project team also informed the approximately 20 attendees of the role of public in the formulation of the redevelopment plan and the completion of interviews with principle stakeholders. The project team reviewed initial findings in terms of existing documents, the Corridor's existing land use and zoning, urban form, and property and site conditions. Finally, the project team led attendees through exercises on issues and opportunities, pedestrian constraints and barriers, bicycle constraints and barriers, quality of life, the public survey, desired business mix for the planning area, and a SWOT Analysis.

Public Meeting No. 2

The second public meeting provided a forum for attendees to deliberate over initial drafts of the redevelopment concept plans. Attendees looked at concept maps and provided feedback on desired building architecture, site design, placemaking features, and desired public amenities. Feedback from this meeting was combined with feedback from the redevelopment concept survey to create a final redevelopment plan for the site located at the intersection of W. Main Street and Bird Street.

Public Meeting No. 3

The third and final public meeting focused on reviewing the three conceptual site plan renderings for the most popular Phase One redevelopment site. The meeting was held in an open house format for citizens to view the draft plan strategies and recommendations, and served as a final presentation of the project on the part of City Staff, the Steering Committee, and Vierbicher. Approximately 15 members of the public attended to voice their concerns for the project. Final comments from this meeting were integrated into the final draft of the redevelopment plan presented at the final Steering Committee meeting.

2.2: Assessment

The assessment portion of the planning process involved reviewing, updating, and enhancing information to build on understanding of the distinct challenges and opportunities in Sun Prairie. We conducted a thorough assessment of local conditions, linkages, and market position. The goal of the assessment phase was to understand the current issues and opportunities related to the Central Main Street Corridor project and analyze changes since the 2006 West Main Street Corridor Plan. The project team reviewed the following plans, studies, and other development tools:

- West Main Street Corridor Plan;
- Westside Neighborhood and Transportation Plan;
- City of Sun Prairie Comprehensive Plan;
- Downtown Revitalization Plan;
- Tax Increment District No. 11 Project Plan;
- 2015 Dane County Bicycle Transportation Plan;
- Past traffic studies;
- Recent/planned capital improvements;
- Existing zoning patterns;
- Existing zoning standards;
- Main Street Overlay standards;
- Sun Prairie Area School District long range plans; and
- Other documents deemed appropriate by the City;

- Population trends and projections;
- Income trends and projections;
- Housing trends and projections.

The consultant also conducted a review of local constraints and opportunities for redevelopment. Specifically, the consultant investigated:

- Public open spaces and pedestrian connections;
- Current development patterns, current building utilization, existing building vacancy status, existing land use trends, and current parking restrictions;
- Property value growth/appreciation in an annual average and five-year growth increments;
- Architectural building styles, building materials, building signage, wayfinding features and signage, ROW utilizations, and streetscaping themes;
- Area brownfield sites (10 closed, 1 open); and
- Update the Blight Determination study created for the creation of TID No. 11.

The team then evaluated the local market by mapping the primary retail trade area, identifying the market and commercial gaps, and incorporating this information into future land use strategies in the planning area. More information on the assessment phase tasks can be found in the Chapters 3 and 4 (Issues and Opportunities and Existing Conditions) of this Plan.

Below: Members of the public mark areas of the highest redevelopment need in the Corridor with dots and convey their concerns on post-it notes.



2.3: Strategy

The strategy phase focused on developing specific goals and strategic recommendations to enable Sun Prairie to achieve its objective of creating a useful Corridor Master Plan that emphasizes efficient land use and fiscal resources while creating an area that is safe and accommodates the user experience.

Vision Statement

The consultant crafted a vision statement based on feedback received from public engagement meetings and inspiration from the 2006 West Main Street Corridor Plan.

Land Use

The consultant compiled land use and zoning recommendations, identified catalyst redevelopment and infill sites, and allowed the public to rank sites based on availability, and development feasibility. The consultant also prepared three initial site concepts and initial pro forma summary for the top selected redevelopment site during the Implementation phase. Based on public and steering committee input, the consultant revised the final selected vision. The consultant also articulated strategies for pedestrian corridors and connections, public open spaces, and other public amenities in the Corridor.

Transportation

The consultant developed strategies for integrating pedestrian, bike, and other multi-modal recommendations into the Corridor's transportation network. The consultant developed strategies to improve general traffic flow and pedestrian safety, and also crafted recommendations to improve general transit connections within and around the planning area.

Urban Form and Design

The consultant reviewed and summarized design guidelines from the 2006 West Main Street Corridor Plan. Comments on these guidelines are included in Chapter 8 (Corridor Redevelopment Plan).

Placemaking Strategies

The consultant developed placemaking recommendations that include integrating the West Main Street Corridor Plan's vision into streetscaping, public art, site furniture, and landscaping. Additional strategies were also added based on insight gained throughout other elements of the planning process.

The elements of this phase were included in Chapter 7 (Strategic Recommendations) and Chapter 8 (Corridor Redevelopment Plan) of this document.

BELOW: Members of the public mark areas that present opportunities with green dots, and areas that present challenges with red dots.



2.4: Implementation

The implementation phase summarized all of the goals, objectives, and actions developed throughout the planning process and created a roadmap for staff and city officials to use. The implementation plan also elaborates on potential roles for various stakeholders, timeframe for action, and approximate cost estimates.

Implementation Plan

The goal of this portion was to create a realistic and achievable implementation plan that identifies responsible parties, timeframe, and financing sources for each action. The Implementation Plan also accounts for current efforts and resources available to Sun Prairie. The Implementation Plan was crafted to be implemented within timeframes from 1 to 5+ years with target metrics staff and city officials can use to track progress.

Funding Plan

The consultant drew on extensive experience in creating economic development strategies for local governments to recommend specific funding sources and incentive programs available to Sun Prairie.

TID No. 11 Project Coordination Review

Vierbicher conducted a comprehensive review of TID No. 11's performance and prepared a plan of action for the remaining years of its life span. The review analyzed the annual reported increment and cumulative project plan expenditures incurred based on its most recent audit and recent development agreements. The consultant then identified strategies to maximize the use of tax increment financing for projects related to the Central Main Street Corridor Plan.

2.5: Document Production

The final component of the planning process involved integration of each of the four elements—Engagement, Assessment, Strategy, and Implementation (EASI) into the final planning document. The initial draft of the document was completed in October 2017, with the intent to sharpen the draft into a nimble and complete final document for review and approval by the City Council and Plan Commission no later than December 2017.

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