



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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DATE: June 3, 2015

TO: Neighborhood Planning Committee

FROM: Bill Dermody, City Planner

RE: Gold Line (Gateway) Station Area Plans, associated plan amendments, and zoning study

BACKGROUND

In April 2014, the Planning Commission initiated a planning and zoning study for up to five (5) station areas along the proposed Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line. The appointed 10-member task force has provided its recommendations in the attached Gold Line Station Area Plans document. Highlighted recommendations from the document include:

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan to designate the Earl and Etna Station Areas as Neighborhood Centers. The White Bear and Sun Ray Station Areas would remain Neighborhood Centers and Mixed Use Corridors, and the Mounds Station Area would maintain its Residential Corridor and Established Neighborhood designations.
- Provide High-Intensity Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) at the cores of the Etna, White Bear, and Sun Ray Station Areas, Medium-Intensity TOD at the Earl Station Area's core, and Low-Intensity TOD at the Mounds Station Area's core. This TOD typology is defined by the document and correlates closely to T3/T4, T2, and T1 zoning regulations.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections across Interstate 94 throughout the study area, including through new/improved bridges and consideration of interchange realignments.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to the stations, including new sidewalks and lighting.
- Provide an urban street grid at the Sun Ray site as the shopping center redevelops.
- Create a new direct pedestrian and bicycle connection from the Sun Ray BRT station north to the library/park prior to the commencement of BRT service.
- Rezone approximately 246 parcels as summarized below:

Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	# of Parcels
R4	RT1	88
R4	RM1	23
R3, RT1, RT2, RM1, VP	RM2	33
RM2	RM3	7
RT1, RT2, B2, VP	T1	13
RT1, OS, B1, B2, B3	T2	68
RM2, B2, B3	T3	13
B2	T4	1

The document also provides recommendations regarding preferred BRT station locations and guideway alignments, though those decisions are ultimately made by government bodies other than the City of Saint Paul.

TASK FORCE DEBATE

The task force debated many of the issues discussed in the plan over the course of their 16 meetings, and they generally reached a consensus. However, the preferred White Bear station location in the document reflects a majority opinion where full consensus could not be reached. The majority felt that a location east of Van Dyke Street is preferred for a combination of its “eyes on the street” and its accessibility to the dense population cluster in the apartments just to its northeast. Meanwhile, economic development advice from City staff and the HR&A market study was that any BRT station north of I-94 would not have a significant effect on redevelopment south of I-94. The minority, however, felt that a station right at the White Bear Avenue bridge (at I-94 elevation) would have a significant economic development impact on both sides of the freeway, which makes it a preferable location.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the NPC forward the Gold Line Station Area Plans, including the proposed rezonings therein, to the Planning Commission and recommend that the Planning Commission release the document for public review and set a public hearing for July 24, 2015.

Attachment

1. Draft Gold Line Station Area Plans