



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6700
Facsimile: 651-228-3220

DATE: March 25, 2016
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Donna Drummond, Director of Planning
RE: District 1 Community Plan: Public Hearing Materials

The public hearing on the draft District 1 Community Plan is scheduled for your next meeting on April 1. Attached is the Feb. 10, 2016 memo from the Neighborhood Planning Committee and the proposed District 1 Community Plan amendments and analysis. You received these previously when the Planning Commission released the draft plan and scheduled the public hearing. We have not included another paper copy of the draft plan itself. If you wish to refer to it during the public hearing please bring the copy from the Feb. 18th meeting packet or view the plan on-line at:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/D1%20Plan-%20draft%20for%20public%20hearing.pdf>.

Please let me or Bill Dermody (651-266-6617, bill.dermody@ci.stpaul.mn.us) know if you have any questions prior to the meeting on April 1st.



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DATE: February 10, 2016
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Neighborhood Planning Committee
RE: District 1 Community Plan

BACKGROUND

In 2011, the District 1 Community Council began the update of its 2004 Community Plan by focusing on transportation, resulting in a District 1 Transportation Plan that was adopted by the Mayor and City Council in early 2013. Over the next couple years, they expanded their public outreach to identify issues and priorities on all topics addressed in the Community Plan. A draft District 1 Community Plan update was prepared and presented to City staff in September 2015. Upon receipt of comments generated via review by City and Port Authority staff, District 1 made revisions and presented the revised document to City staff in January 2016.

The draft District 1 Community Plan contains numerous notable strategies, including:

- LU1 Use the Gateway Corridor project as an opportunity to leverage transit-oriented, high-density, mixed-use development and improve connectivity of the existing transportation network.
- LU1.4 Support major redevelopment and reutilization of the Sun Ray site, incorporating both commercial and high-density residential uses, including introducing the traditional street grid.
- LU4.4 Should the current use of Boys Totem Town be discontinued, institute a development moratorium for the site and establish a robust community planning process to determine current community values and priorities for the site.
- LU6: Support establishing new, mixed-use corridors beyond the Gateway Corridor as future development and market conditions present such opportunities.
- LU7.5 Explore creating a River-Dependent Industrial zoning district or overlay district to require future uses of riverfront industrial parcels be those where access to and use of a surface water feature is an integral part of normal business operations.
- LU8.7 Establish and implement a neighborhood improvement and maintenance strategy which will rehabilitate dilapidated residential and commercial buildings, assist building owners with maintenance activities, and remove blighting elements from neighborhoods.
- LU9.1 Promote the redevelopment of outmoded and non-productive sites and buildings so they can sustain existing industries and attract emerging industries to the district; focus on issues that include, but are not limited to, energy efficiency, water conservation, and broadband capability.

- H2 Target areas of the housing market identified as “weak” by CURA’s Housing Market Index for City and neighborhood development corporation support.
- H2.1 Perform an inventory of housing conditions and update it periodically.
- H2.2 Realistically weigh the market viability, maintenance needs, and neighborhood context of houses before providing public rehabilitation funds to them.
- H3.6 Explore the potential for accessory dwelling units in all single-family residential zoning districts, including what impacts this would have on both the zoning districts and the community.
- H3.12 Encourage larger housing developments to contain a mix of affordable and market-rate units.
- CD2.1 Identify businesses that can be used as informal gathering spaces in order to promote opportunities for local democracy and community vitality.
- CD7.2 Support improving and expanding ordinances promoting community gardens and urban agriculture. Examples include policies allowing gardens to be operated as an interim use on both publicly and privately owned vacant land, tax-forfeited property, and City right-of-ways.
- ENV3.4 Support efforts to improve and consolidate waste management service throughout the neighborhood and the city.
- ENV7.2 Develop comprehensive, consistent, citywide policies for managing deer, geese, and other animals that create livability issues for Saint Paul.
- ENV9 Support Chapter 6.4 (The Floodplain Reach chapter) of the Great River Passage Master Plan to provide better access to, and along, the Mississippi River for recreation.
- CC1 Define District 1 as an eastern gateway to Saint Paul; use this concept to provide a brand for the district that will help define the area within Saint Paul and with neighboring communities.
- CC2.3 Support tree and slope preservation in Highwood.
- T2 Complete the sidewalk network, emphasizing accessibility and safety for all community members.
- T7.1 Fully implement the District 1 portion of the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan.
- T11.1 Consider improving Old Hudson Road to create a more pedestrian-oriented street that will serve the new uses along it and prevent its use as a freeway frontage road. Old Hudson should be considered for changes as a Complete Street, including in conjunction with planning for the Gateway Corridor Project.
- T11.3 Redesign and reconstruct the I-94 interchange at Ruth Street to add in missing traffic movements and to provide safe facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing over I-94 on Ruth Street.
- T13.1 Examine traffic management at Old Hudson Road, Ruth Street and the freeway ramps on either side of the Ruth Street bridge, and similar locations on White Bear Avenue. Determine whether there are better ways to channel traffic and/or provide access to businesses on Old Hudson Road.

OTHER PLANS

The contents of the 2013 District 1 Transportation Plan have been incorporated into the draft District 1 Community Plan. Therefore, the 2013 District 1 Transportation Plan should be formally decertified upon approval of the new plan.

The White Bear Avenue Small Area Plan (WBASAP) addresses a stretch of White Bear Avenue located in both District 1 and District 2. Staff has asked that elements from the WBASAP significant to District 1 that are not already codified in the White Bear Avenue Overlay zoning district be included in the draft District 1 Community Plan. At the time District 2 next updates their community plan, the City can then consider absorbing WBASAP elements into the District 2 Plan update and potentially decertifying the WBASAP. No action on the WBASAP should be taken at this time.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Neighborhood Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- Amend the draft District 1 Community Plan per attached document;
- Release the amended draft District 1 Community Plan for public review;
- Schedule a public hearing regarding the amended District 1 Community Plan for April 1, 2016.

Attachments

1. Proposed District 1 Community Plan amendments and analysis
2. Draft District 1 Community Plan

Proposed Amendments & Analysis

LU1.4 Support major redevelopment and reutilization of the Sun Ray site, as driven by the private sector, incorporating both commercial and high-density residential uses, and including introducing introduction of the traditional street grid.

Analysis: *Revised wording more closely matches adopted policy in the Gold Line Station Area Plans.*

LU4.4 Should the current use of Boys Totem Town be discontinued, institute consider instituting a development moratorium for the site and establish a robust community planning process to determine current community values and priorities for the site.

Analysis: *A moratorium might not be judged necessary and the plan should not presume the specific tool to address the issue. There may be legal issues surrounding a moratorium, as well.*

LU6: ~~Support~~ Consider establishing new, mixed-use corridors beyond the Gateway Corridor as future development and market conditions present such opportunities.

Analysis: *Factors other than market forces should be taken into account in the establishment of new mixed-use corridors.*

LU8.3 Apply existing development standards and consider amending or creating new development standards to address the following concerns:

- Compatibility with existing and adjacent development
- Preservation and protection of trees and other natural features
- Effects on ground and surface water
- Creation or conservation of open green space in new developments
- Coordination of signage in business areas
- Incorporation of public art and/or placemaking
- Preservation of significant viewsheds

Analysis: *Bullets 1-3 and 7 are at least partially addressed by existing site plan review standards. Bullet 4 is at least partially addressed by the parkland dedication ordinance. However, the other two bullets (regarding coordination of business signage and preservation of significant viewsheds) address vague concepts that are difficult to enforce without thoroughly considered language that is adopted in the Zoning Code.*

CD7.1 ~~Establish~~ Consider establishing new community gardens, especially in public spaces.

Analysis: *Clarifies that not every public space is an appropriate location for a community garden.*

CD7.2 ~~Support~~ Explore improving and expanding ordinances promoting community gardens and urban agriculture. Examples include policies allowing gardens to be operated as an interim use on both publicly and privately owned vacant land, tax-forfeited property, and City ~~right-of-ways~~ rights-of-way.

Analysis: *Since the City is the presumed actor, the verb "support" does not make sense in this context. Also, a minor typo needs correction.*

T11.3 ~~Redesign~~ Support the redesign and reconstruction of the I-94 interchange at Ruth Street to add in missing traffic movements and to provide safe facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing over I-94 on Ruth Street.

***Analysis:** Rewording recognizes that such design and reconstruction would be controlled by MnDOT.*