



OSCAR MAYER  
SPECIAL AREA PLAN

DRAFT | FEBRUARY 26, 2020

PREPARED BY VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES AND  
THE CITY OF MADISON PLANNING DIVISION FOR  
THE CITY OF MADISON



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## WHY PLAN HERE?

*When the Oscar Mayer facility began operation in the early 1900's, its heavy industrial use was appropriate given that it was located on the outskirts of the city. Neighborhoods developed around Oscar Mayer, providing housing stock for a walkable workforce.*

*The facility became a longstanding and integral part of the community, employing over 600 workers at the time of its closing and approximately 4,000 during its peak in the 1970's.*

**Yet after operating on the Northside of Madison for almost 100 years, Oscar Mayer closed its doors for good in 2017.**

*While its closure had a devastating impact to many, it created an opportunity and was the catalyst for reconsidering the future of an entire industrial corridor in close proximity to downtown, equipped with a strong regional transportation network, and significant building infrastructure assets. To make the most of the opportunities, the City embarked in 2018 on a multi-phased Strategic Assessment for the area surrounding the former Oscar Mayer Plant.*

### PLANNING AREA TODAY

- Total tax base is approximately \$74 million
- Less than 150 residents currently live within the 425-acre planning area
- 2,500 estimated jobs

### The impact of Oscar Mayer on the Community

#### JOB

- 1970's - 4,000 jobs
- 2013- 1,300 jobs
- 2017 - 640 final job loss (140 corporate, 500+ production)
  - 73% of production workers were Dane County residents
  - 23% were Northside residents (2015)

#### TAX BASE

- 2017 - \$23.5M
- 2003 - \$34M

#### UTILITIES

- \$232,000 reduction in water utility income
- \$500,000 reduction in annual wastewater treatment income
- \$3 million gas and electric revenues

#### OTHER

Reduction in philanthropic resources to community

Loss of customer base/revenues for nearby retail, restaurants, and service businesses

Sources: City of Madison, Madison Gas & Electric, Madison Water Utility, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin, Wisconsin State Journal

# HOW WILL THIS PLAN BE USED?

The Plan will be used as a guide for subdivisions, zoning, economic development policies, proposed public infrastructure investment and timing, and other considerations relevant to the reuse and redevelopment within and around the planning area. The Plan will be used to guide future development by providing City staff and elected and appointed officials a basis for reviewing private development proposals that may be submitted in the future.

## PHASE 1: Strategic Assessment

Key Issues and Redevelopment Objectives



Public input on issues and objectives



Adopted February 2019



## PHASE 2: Special Area Plan

Evaluate land use, building scale and transportation system changes to implement redevelopment objectives



Public input on development concepts



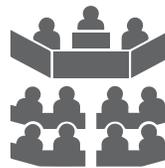
Adopted Plan (Early 2020)



## Implementation



City considers needed infrastructure and amenities  
Developers propose new buildings and uses



Public projects considered for budget by Council  
Development considered by Plan Commission



Improvements and developments built

## PHASE 1: THE OSCAR MAYER AREA STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

*The Oscar Mayer area planning process was completed in two distinct phases.*

*Phase 1 kicked off in mid-2018. The Strategic Assessment took a “big picture” look at the area and explored its role in the regional economy. It established a bold vision and 10 redevelopment objectives to drive the outcomes of the Special Area Plan and other efforts that may not be in the Plan but are necessary to achieving the vision. In February 2019, the City adopted the Report and authorized the development of the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan.*

*This section outlines the vision for the area and redevelopment objectives that resulted from the Phase 1 process.*

# VISION:

*Physically and economically woven into the diverse surrounding neighborhoods, the transit-oriented, employment centered, mixed-use district is now an inclusive gathering hub of the northside.*

*The study area has leveraged its unmatched infrastructure capacity and location between the airport and downtown to rise as a regional economic hub for the local community and its future residents.*



## REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES:

The following ten redevelopment objectives seek to stimulate economic growth in the planning area to benefit all in the Northside community and region and are guiding policies on what the city would like to see in this area in the future.



**OBJECTIVE 1. TARGET A HIGH DENSITY OF LIVING WAGE JOBS:** Leverage the area's powerful infrastructure, location, and adjacent working neighborhood fabric to fuel the addition of a diverse array of living wage quality jobs including middle-skilled occupations in growth industries such as digitally driven manufacturing, biotech and Healthcare, IT and gaming, food aggregation and manufacturing, and service economies.



**OBJECTIVE 2. MAINTAIN HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND MINIMIZE DISPLACEMENT:** Explore and adopt policies, programs, and overall a comprehensive framework to ensure a variety of housing types, values, and particularly affordable housing, serve all family structures and meet the demand of future employees while consciously avoiding racial, cultural, and elderly displacement in surrounding neighborhoods.



**OBJECTIVE 3. LEVERAGE THE AREA'S EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING STOCK:** Capitalize on the area's location along the urbanizing spine from Hilldale to the airport by balancing the low cost of entry for new and expanding businesses while reserving capacity for future large users and employers.



**OBJECTIVE 4. ENSURE ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOOSTS DIVERSITY IN OWNERSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESSES:** Focus equitable development by establishing DBE/MBE/WBE preferences and goals, promoting and prioritizing the needs of local businesses to prevent displacement, and actively involving diverse leadership in high-impact decision making.



**OBJECTIVE 5. INTEGRATE A WELCOMING DISTRICT THAT SERVES ALL AGES AND DIVERSE CULTURES:** Prioritize the community's desire to create inclusive gathering spaces and places through uses and activities (entertainment venues, youth activities, sports, etc.) that serve and celebrate the Northside's culture and diversity.

**OBJECTIVE 6. EQUIP THE NORTH/EAST SIDE'S NEXT GENERATION WITH SKILLS TO MEET EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES:** Encourage partnerships between the numerous nearby workforce development organizations and educational institutions to proactively prepare and connect the North/East side community with future corridor employers.



**OBJECTIVE 7. CREATE AN INTEGRATED AND CONNECTED MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM:** Develop a robust multimodal transportation system including: improved bicycle, pedestrian, auto and localized transit that provides equitable access and connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and the larger region while also leveraging regional transportation assets and continuing to plan for BRT and potential local and intercity rail.



**OBJECTIVE 8. DEPLOY SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES, IMPROVE STORMWATER, AND PRESERVE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS:** Enhance water quality and quantity through best management practices for stormwater (BMP's) and enhance the wetland to boost it as a key area asset. Encourage renewable energy technology deployment and green building techniques on reuse and redevelopment projects.



**OBJECTIVE 9. FORM AN IDENTIFIABLE AND AUTHENTIC MIXED-USE DISTRICT:** Build a walkable high-density district that is seamlessly integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods and serves as a focal point of economic activity for the Northside. Strengthen the connection between downtown and the airport by serving as community gateway.



**OBJECTIVE 10. PROACTIVELY UTILIZE CITY FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND STATUTORY POWERS TO OPTIMIZE TAX BASE GROWTH AND ACHIEVE THE VISION:** Leverage and deploy redevelopment tools such as: tax increment financing, opportunity zones, public/private partnerships, grants, land use/zoning, neighborhood plans, developer and business recruitment, targeted land acquisition and land banking, to achieve the vision, densify the area, and significantly increase its tax base.

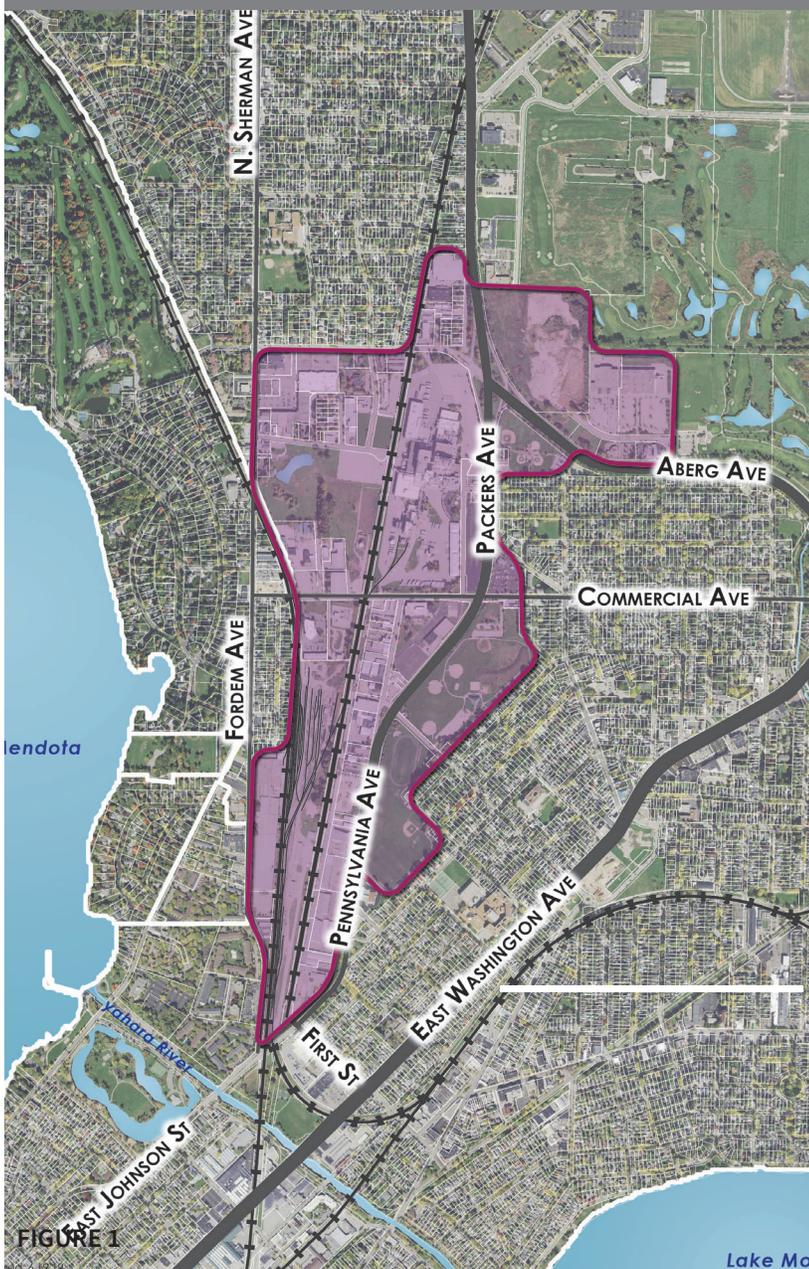


## PHASE 2: THE OSCAR MAYER SPECIAL AREA PLAN

*Phase 2 puts the vision and redevelopment objectives into motion by evaluating future land use; by providing site-specific guidance for future development, building scale and design, new streets and paths, and public open spaces; and by developing an implementation strategy.*

The Plan supplements the recently adopted 2018 Comprehensive Plan with more detailed planning recommendations for this specific geographic area adding an additional layer of analysis and evaluation needed to establish more precise land use and design recommendations that effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan.

### OSCAR MAYER SPECIAL AREA PLAN BOUNDARY



The Plan Area is roughly bounded by Packers/ Pennsylvania Avenue on the east, Aberg Avenue on the north, and Fordem and N. Sherman Avenue to the west. The boundary was established by the Oscar Mayer Strategic Assessment Committee to focus primarily on the non-residential areas of the corridor.

## A GROWING CITY ENSURING OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Madison has become increasingly attractive to younger and more diverse populations. Madison is expected to add 70,000 new residents and 40,000 new households by 2040 and part of that growth is coming from our more diverse populations. As we look to the future of this area, the Northside's population is a very real reflection of that diversity. During the Phase 1 Strategic Assessment, the study found that the racial-make-up of Madison's East High School student body, adjacent to the planning area, is significantly more diverse than the Northside as whole. These young and diverse populations of Madison are the future of the city and in order to become a strong thriving city, policies and plans put forth need to respond to the needs of a more diverse community.

In addition, one of the main issues identified in Imagine Madison was the need for housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income households with access to transportation options and near neighborhood resources and amenities. Due to the City's geography, where and how the City grows has to be strategic and thoughtful. The vast acreage of land within the planning area offers an opportunity to direct some of the coming changes while actively working to maintain housing affordability and minimize displacement for both residents and businesses alike. **Given those factors, the Plan outlines a series of recommendations and strategies to not only accommodate the future growth of diverse populations, but also to proactively create a place and economic environment that enables populations facing historic barriers to reach their full potential.** This will not happen without intentionally trying new things, prioritizing investments and empowering new collaboratives.

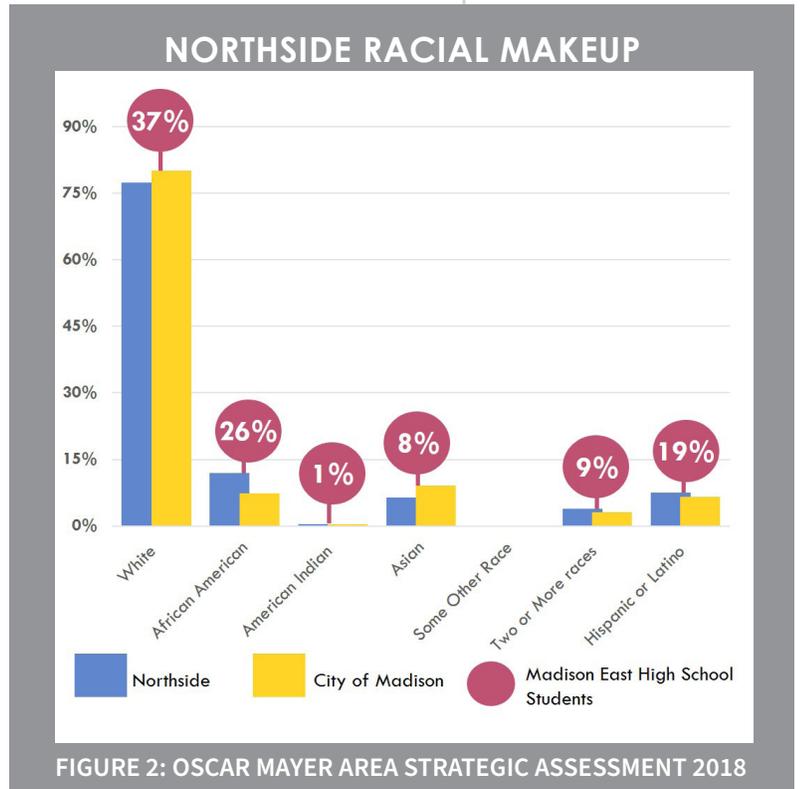


FIGURE 2: OSCAR MAYER AREA STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2018

## CHANGING DYNAMICS

The Plan focuses on the potential development or redevelopment of almost 425 acres of land within close proximity to the Capitol East District and downtown. A significant amount of the land is owned by eight major property owners. The changes taking place in this area needed to be evaluated as part of the planning process.

The largest property owner is **910 Mayer LLC**, a joint partnership between Reich Brothers Holdings and Rabin Worldwide, who own the former Oscar Mayer property. The 72-acre site has almost 30 acres of developable land that surrounds the facility and with almost 1.7 million square feet of industrial and office space. Given the site's tremendous opportunity, the current owners are improving and re-tenanting viable spaces and repositioning the remainder for longterm success, while actively working to separate the facility's infrastructure to prepare the site for reuse. A variety of tenants have located in the facilities to date, including the Bodgery, a non-profit makerspace and TASC, a financial services company. More recently, Metro Transit began discussions to add a satellite facility on the northern end of the Oscar Mayer site. In 2019, the owners began to update the main office building's lobby area, main entrance and are completing façade improvements to be competitive within the office market space.

**Hartmeyer Estate Trust** is an approximate 35-acre area west of the former Oscar Mayer facility. Before the 1930's, the area was historically farmed or housed industrial uses (predominantly on the southern end of the property). Today, the industrial use of the property continues, while a small portion of the northwest area has been transitioning to a wetland. Preserving and incorporating the wetland into a larger neighborhood park has been a desired goal throughout this process. The area remains zoned IL and IG Industrial and could be developed for those purposes and occupied by any permitted use within those districts without a public process or notification.

More recently, Hooper Corporation, a major property owner that's been headquartered in Madison since the 1950's announced it was relocating its operations to the Village of DeForest within 2-3 years, vacating approximately 10-acres along Pennsylvania Avenue. The site's limited expansion constraints became a challenge that forced them to look elsewhere. The existing building stock has been maintained in good condition and has the potential to be reused for future light industrial uses in the near-term.

**Madison Gas & Electric (MGE)** recently purchased the approximately 30-acre former wastewater treatment site northeast of the Aberg and Packers Avenue interchange between Shopko Drive and Pankratz Street. They plan to relocate their operational center and related offices to the site in the future, which is consistent with the property's generalized land use in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. Adjacent to the future MGE property is Pick 'N Save, grocery store on approximately six acres. The former Shopko store next to Pick 'N Save, a 16-acre site, was recently converted into self-storage units and the current owners have an interest in redeveloping the parking lots. However, this northeast area has historically been difficult for retail businesses due to its isolated location and lack of accessibility.

**Madison College**, located on the southwest corner of Commercial and Packers Avenues, houses its apprenticeship and construction programs at this location, and recently relocated its arts programs to the Commercial Avenue location. Given the growing creative trades synergies in the area, part of the College's long-term plan includes potentially improving and expanding its campus offerings in this area.

A final large scale site evaluated for change was the **Northgate Shopping Center** area of approximately nine acres. The shopping center was built in the 1960's. Its setback from major roadways and limited visibility has made it a challenging retail space today but it is currently leased with service-based and retail uses. FEED Kitchen's, a food business incubator located in this area and built in 2013, has been a unique asset to the community and will likely continue functioning as an incubator space for years to come. The Dane County Job Center is also located near the shopping center. It's an important asset to the Northside and the broader community that should be leveraged and integrated with future activities in the area.

Past plans identified this western area for change with additional employment, community-mixed use, and residential that's better integrated with a proposed north/south street connection through the area from Aberg to Commercial Avenue. Long-term, the Northgate Shopping Center has the potential to transform into a higher-density mixed-use district with new street connections linking the Hartmeyer property and the former Oscar Mayer site. The changing forces prompted the need for a comprehensive framework to guide future development and ensure it's well integrated with the surrounding development.

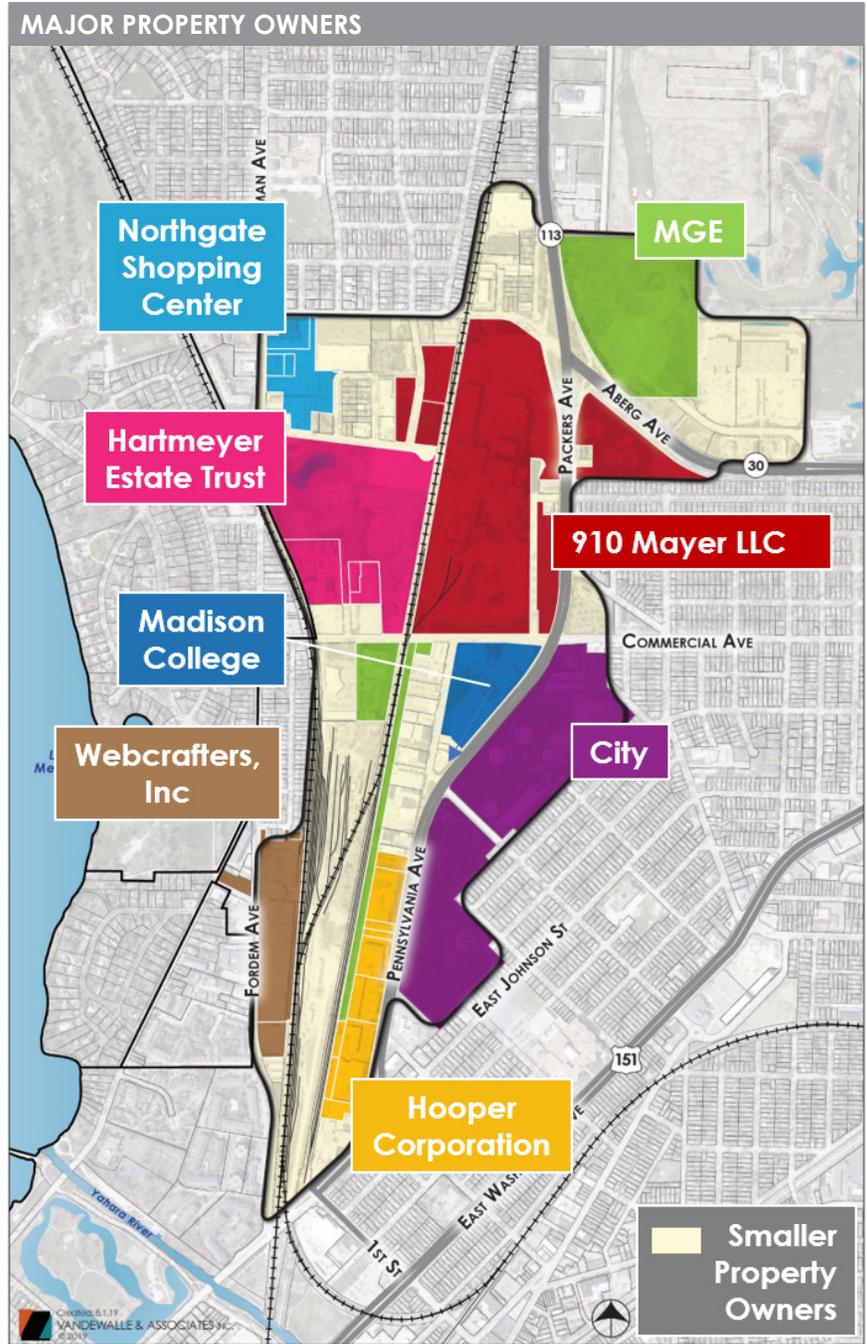


FIGURE 3



## ADVANCING PAST PLANS

### IMAGINE MADISON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2018

In 2018, the City of Madison adopted its updated Comprehensive Plan. Through the course of 18-months the City reached over 15,000 individuals. The data, analysis, and public input was translated into the 2018 City of Madison Comprehensive Plan. The long-range plan looks 20-years into the future and provides guidance on policies and actions that affect City budgets and growth.

The Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan builds off the goals, strategies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan and establishes a framework for implementing the City-wide plan in this particular location. It addresses all six elements using its own unique structure. In the spirit of Imagine Madison, the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan seeks to advance the following strategies:

#### LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION (OMSAP ADVANCES 7 OF 9)

1. Improve transit service, especially to peripheral employment and residential locations, with a focus on reducing the travel time for transit dependent populations.
2. Implement bus rapid transit (BRT) to improve travel times, enhance reliability, and increase ridership.
3. Ensure all populations benefit from the City's transportation investment.
4. Improve access to transit service to nearby cities, such as Milwaukee, Chicago, and Minneapolis.
5. Concentrate the highest intensity development along transit corridors, downtown, and at Activity Centers.
6. Facilitate compact growth to reduce the development of farmland.
8. Expand and improve the city's pedestrian and bicycle networks to enable safe and convenient active transportation.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD & HOUSING (OMSAP ADVANCES 8 OF 8)

1. Create complete neighborhoods across the city where residents have access to transportation options and resources needed for daily living.
2. Support development of a wider mix of housing types, sizes, and costs throughout the city.
3. Increase the amount of available housing.
4. Integrate lower priced housing, including subsidized housing, into complete neighborhoods.
5. Provide housing options with health and social services for residents who need it most, including residents experiencing homelessness.
6. Support the rehabilitation of existing housing stock, particularly for first-time homebuyers and people living with lower incomes.
7. Support neighborhood-scaled schools that offer amenities and services to the surrounding area.
8. Ensure access to food that is affordable, nutritious, and culturally specific.

#### ECONOMIC & OPPORTUNITY (OMSAP ADVANCES 6 OF 8)

1. Retain existing employers and attract new employers to ensure residents have access to jobs.
2. Ensure an adequate supply of sites for a wide variety of employers to operate and grow.
3. Support more jobs that pay a family-supporting living wage.
4. Close the educational opportunity gap.
6. Support small businesses and cultivate entrepreneurship, especially businesses owned by underrepresented groups.
7. Support efforts for businesses and consumers to produce and buy local food, products, and services.

#### CULTURE & CHARACTER (OMSAP ADVANCES 7 OF 7)

1. Create vibrant and inviting places through creative architecture and urban design.
2. Preserve historic and special places that tell the story of Madison and reflect racially and ethnically diverse cultures and histories.
3. Create safe and affirming community spaces that bring people together and provide social outlets for underrepresented groups.
4. Balance the concentration of cultural and entertainment venues between the downtown and other areas of the city.
5. Preserve defining views of the lakes, downtown skyline, and Capitol from publicly accessible locations.
6. Integrate public art throughout the city.
7. Provide opportunities to learn about, create, collaborate, and enjoy the arts.

#### GREEN & RESILIENT: (OMSAP ADVANCES 3 OF 9)

1. Acquire parkland and upgrade park facilities to accommodate more diverse activities and gatherings.
2. Improve lake and stream water quality.
3. Improve and preserve biodiversity through an interconnected greenway and habitat system.

#### EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT (OMSAP ADVANCES 5 OF 9)

1. Pursue regional solutions to regional issues.
2. Collaborate with State and local officials to create a regional transit authority to enhance public transit in the Madison area.
3. Locate community facilities to provide a high-level of service to all neighborhoods.
5. Ensure new development occurs in locations that can be efficiently served to minimize costs to the community as a whole.
9. Ensure all neighborhoods are clean and safe through the provision of quality non-emergency services.

## **NORTHPORT-WARNER PARK-SHERMAN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN:**

The 2009 neighborhood plan was an effort to update the earlier plans and was developed prior to the announcement of the Oscar Mayer facility closing. The plan identified strategies to address priority issues in the neighborhood for the course of the next ten years. It included alternative concepts and key redevelopment recommendations for the Hartmeyer Estate Trust and Northgate Shopping Center area. The goal of both concepts included transforming the area into a transit-oriented mixed-use place with a well-linked and well-designed system of streets and paths that connect with existing streets. Other recommendations include improving the overall building and site aesthetics, preserving and enhancing the existing wetland area, relocating the North Transfer Point, and supporting the development of the Sherman Flyer bike path.

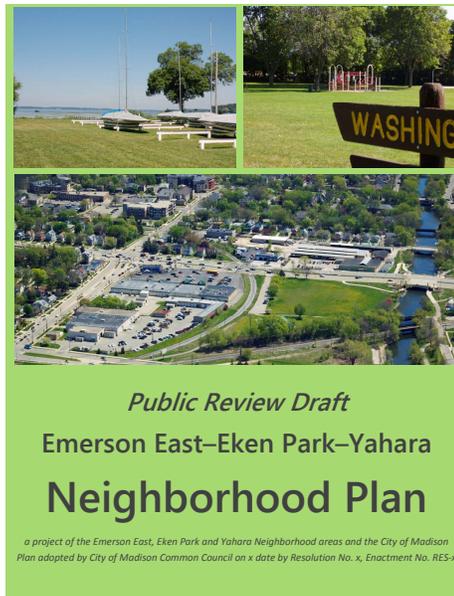


## **Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan**

*City of Madison, Wisconsin*  
Adopted by the Common Council on November 3, 2009 Enactment No: Res-09-00906 Legislative File ID: 15282

## **EMERSON EAST-EKEN PARK-YAHARA NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN:**

This 2016 neighborhood plan took a broad look at the 658-acre area that is made up of four different neighborhoods. It analyzed and provided goals and recommendations on land use, housing, transportation, economic development, park and open space, and community health and wellness to guide the area's future for the next 10-15 years. Key recommendations relevant to the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan include: significantly enhancing the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor to be an attractive major gateway to the city; building the Oscar Mayer Path; continue to build out the "Sherman Flyer Path"; and creation of an additional east-west road and pedestrian/bike connections on 6th and 3rd Streets across Pennsylvania Avenue.



*Public Review Draft*

## **Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara Neighborhood Plan**

a project of the Emerson East, Eken Park and Yahara Neighborhood areas and the City of Madison  
Plan adopted by City of Madison Common Council on x date by Resolution No. x, Enactment No. RES-x

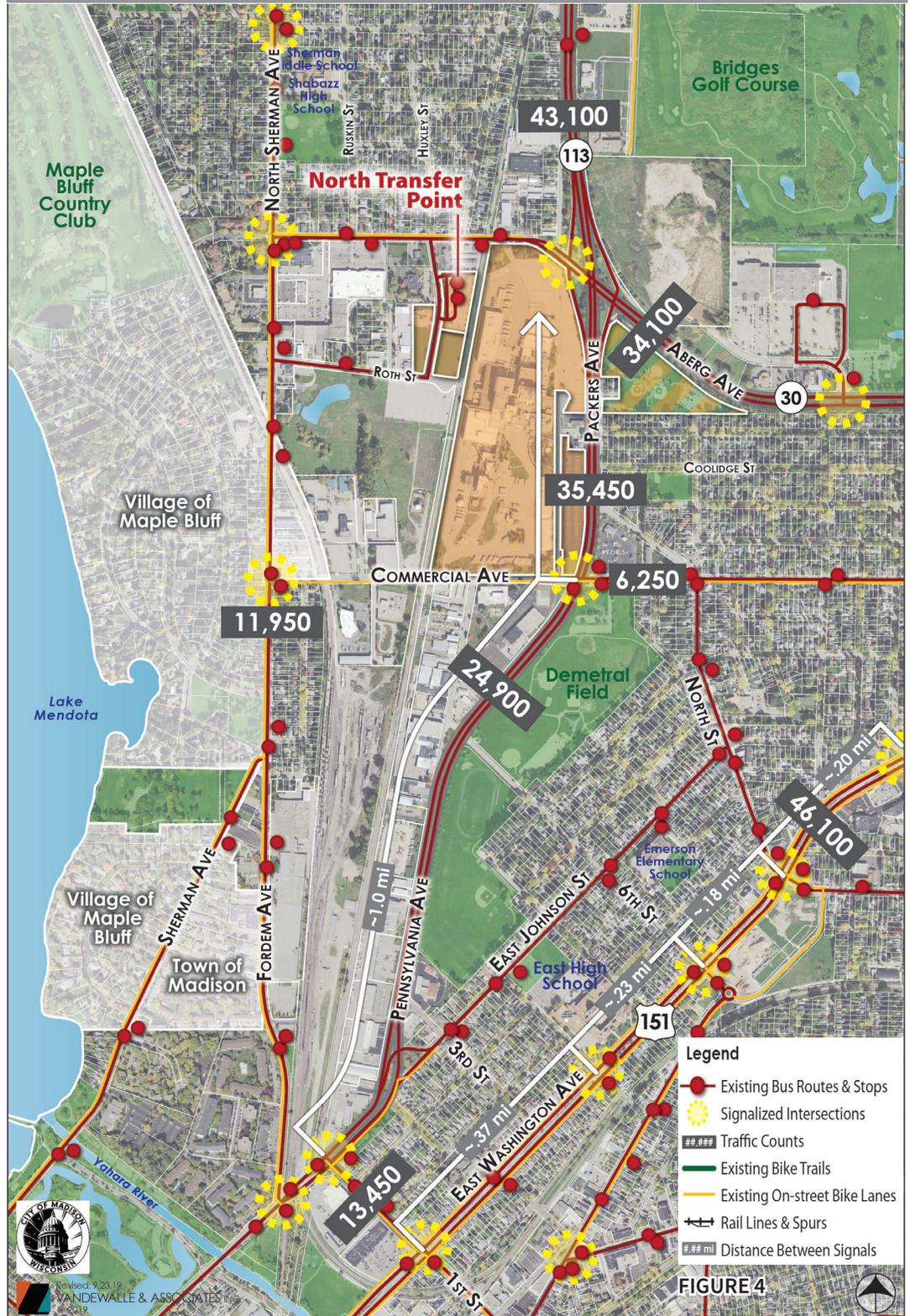
# EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CONTEXT

## 2.

### TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The planning area is bisected by a major transportation corridor, and a number of barriers, such as the 72-acre former Oscar Mayer site and the railyard, hinder connectivity in the transportation network. Limited street connections and a lack of bike and pedestrian linkages have created mobility and safety issues to get around the planning area.

### EXISTING TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS



## PACKERS/PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Prior to the City of Madison's 1955 Master Plan of Highways, Eken Park directly abutted Oscar Mayer and connected to old Packers Avenue directly in front of the buildings (recently renamed Oscar Avenue). The Oscar facility was integrated into community and served as a walkable employment center for many. Post 1955, Packers Avenue was constructed as part of the first segment of highways planned through the Isthmus, effectively cutting off Eken Park from Oscar Mayer and creating a division of the north and east sides. Today, Packers Avenue serves as a principal arterial and a major transportation corridor into the Northside. However, it's also viewed as barrier to safe and efficient movement for pedestrians and bicyclists. The lack of signalized intersections and crosswalks for almost a one-mile stretch from First Street to Commercial, have also contributed to difficult and less safe bike and pedestrian movement in the planning area. Compared to East Washington Avenue, Packers Avenue carries lower traffic volumes but its physical form, limited access and far greater signal spacing prevent economic and neighborhood development from occurring along its length.



FIGURE 5: Street Grid Pre-Packers Avenue Construction

## ABERG AVENUE

Aberg Avenue serves as a principal arterial. The roadway turns into State Trunk Highway 30 heading eastbound and into a localized street westbound after the Packers Avenue interchange. Historically, Aberg carried larger volumes of traffic than it does today due to the once active Oscar Mayer facility. While it doesn't carry the same levels of traffic, there was desire from the community to further evaluate traffic impacts on Aberg Avenue as the area redevelops into higher intensity uses.

## COMMERCIAL AVENUE

One of the corridors that will see significant transformation in the future is Commercial Avenue. This corridor is envisioned to become a mixed-use transit-oriented place. To fully realize its potential as an active and vibrant neighborhood main street this area will require lighting, safe and comfortable bike facilities, narrowed drive and parking lanes, and more consistent planting of street trees. The east/west collector street has the potential to become an activated neighborhood main street that is part of the larger neighborhood node's network.

## RAIL TRANSIT & NORTH TRANSFER POINT

The Canadian Pacific Rail line cuts through the planning area creating both barriers and opportunities. As part of an early 2000's study by the Federal Railroad Administration, the rail corridor was designated for intercity passenger rail creating an opportunity for a multimodal facility that integrates rail, bus rapid transit, bus, and bikes into a single facility.

The Northside Transfer Point is located on Huxley, adjacent to railroad tracks. It includes a 167-space surface park and ride lot where motorists can park for free and take the bus. While the transfer point is well used, it is in an isolated location surrounded by light-industrial uses, making it feel unsafe and unaccessible for bike and pedestrian users alike. The plan envisions a relocated transit center as part of the multimodal transportation facility concept.

## BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Yahara River Bike Path and trails extend through Demetral Park allowing bicyclist and pedestrians to travel north along the east side of Packers Avenue. However, the bike infrastructure isn't continuous and doesn't properly connect with other bike paths in the planning area such as to the Starkweather Creek Path. The plan addresses the missing links in the bike infrastructure and looks at features to address safety.

# EXISTING ZONING

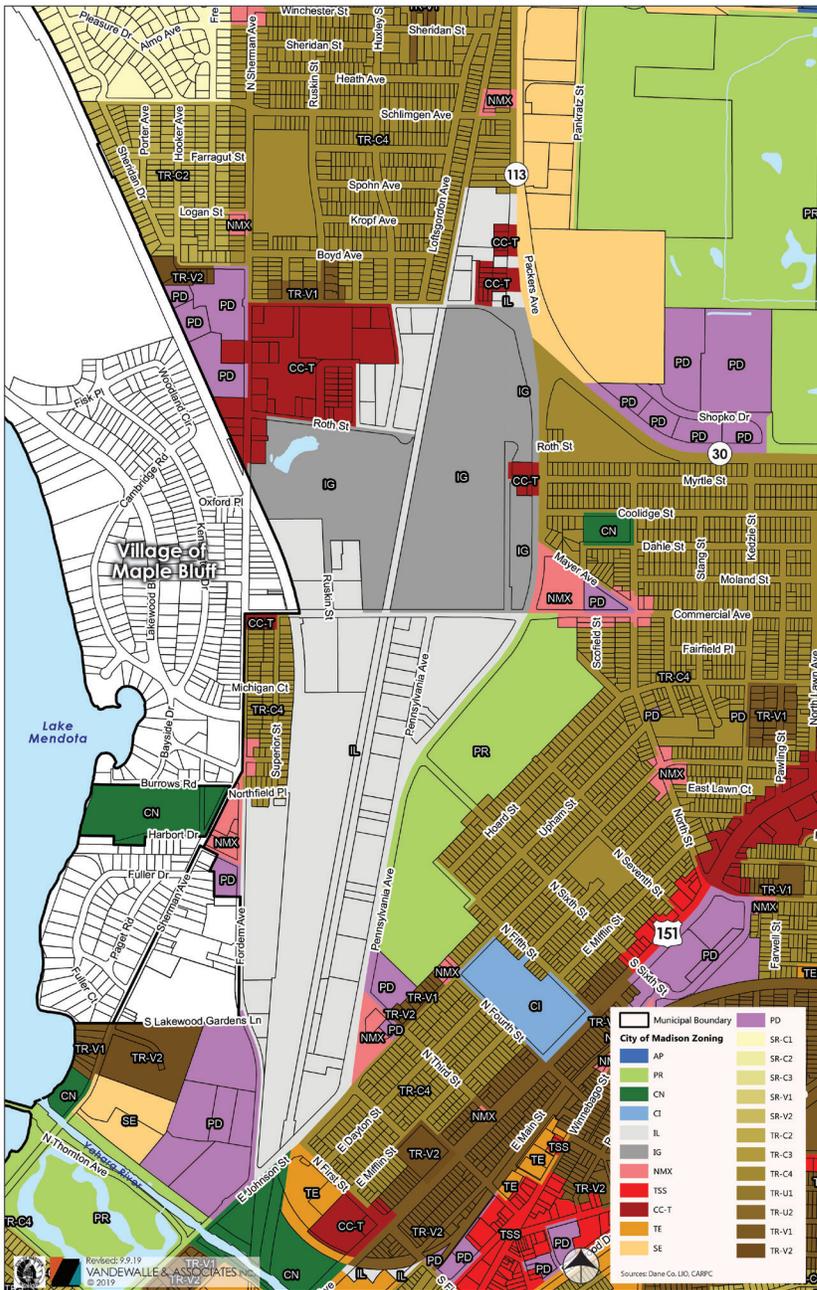


FIGURE 6

# LAND USE & ZONING

The area has historically functioned as the industrial corridor of the City. This was mainly due to Oscar Mayer’s presence in the Northside for over 100 years and rail switching yard to the south of Commercial Avenue. In addition, Hooper Corporation established along Pennsylvania Avenue in the 50’s, Webcrafters along Fordem Avenue, and other smaller industrial and manufacturing businesses scattered throughout the planning area contributing to its industrial character. Eventually commercial and service uses began establishing to support the employment in the area. Many of the light industrial and manufacturing uses continue to dominate the landscape of the planning area today. Consequently, the majority of the planning area remains zoned IL (Industrial – Limited District) and IG (Industrial – General District). While, the majority of the Northgate Shopping Center area is zoned CC-T (Commercial Corridor - Transitional).

The recently adopted 2018 Comprehensive Plan assigned general land use categories to all areas of the city to create a framework for future growth and development. Due to the area’s current use and historically industrial past, the updated Future Land Use map designated most of the property within planning area as Industrial, while designating most of the Northgate Shopping Center area as Community Mixed-Use. During the Strategic Assessment and the Special Area plan process there was a desire to see the planning area transition from heavy industrial to uses more fitting with its surroundings. As a result, many of the land uses in this plan deviate from the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The planning area was once predominantly marsh land that was later filled and the industrial uses we know of today began establishing in the following years. The areas former natural state coincides with its high groundwater issues, impacting the ability to build below ground. The areas historical contamination can be associated with the various industrial uses that operated and continue to operate in the area today along with the rail switch yard and railroad lines that cut through the planning area. The management of contaminated soils is a factor that can potentially impact the financial viability of redevelopment and will need to be addressed prior to any redevelopment projects. In 2018, the city experienced an unprecedented amount of rainfall over a short period causing significant flooding of homes and streets. Figure 7 to the right shows properties that are at risk of aerial flooding resulting from storm sewers back up out of the Yahara River, while several other areas not shown on the map experienced urban flash flooding from limited storm sewer capacities. Due to these compounding factors, future development are subject to the City's updated stormwater regulations.

Lastly, as mentioned in the earlier chapters, a wetland exists on the Hartmeyer private property that's been of great desire by neighborhood residents to maintain as a conservation area. The areas existing environmental conditions and neighborhood desires were all carefully considered throughout the planning process.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Demetral Park, a 49-acre park located in the planning area, serves a significant number of citizens in this part of the city. The park was built on an actively managed landfill. Current uses include a basketball court, dog on and off-leash area, softball fields, volleyball court, ultimate frisbee field, playground, reservable shelter, and open field. The southern 20 acres of the park is maintained and programmed by the Madison Metropolitan School District. While the park serves a great number of residents and students, it lacks presence on the corridor to make it feel inviting and approachable. Lastly, the 2018 Parks and Open Space Plan identified the area around the Hartmeyer property as deficient in access to a neighborhood park. As redevelopment occurs and density increases, more parkland will be needed to meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents.

The East Madison Little League Fields are located on the southeast corner of Packers and Aberg Avenue. They are owned by Reich/Rabin and operated by Madison Little League. There's a strong community desire for the Madison Little League Fields to continue functioning as community baseball fields.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

The likelihood that a site will develop and how it may develop is dependent upon the availability of public water and sewer infrastructure. Fortunately, the once active Oscar Mayer facility left the area well-equipped with the infrastructure necessary to maximize the area's redevelopment.



FIGURE 7

# ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## 3.

***The Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan builds from the engagement process established through the Strategic Assessment. The process was intentionally designed to reflect the voices of the community’s diverse constituency and property and business owners alike. The engagement process connected with Phase 1 participants and included both traditional and focused, inclusive, and diverse outreach.***

Prior to beginning the two-phased planning process, OSCAR, a grassroots community group made up of Northside residents formed in late 2016 as a response to Oscar Mayer’s closure announcement. The group conducted a robust outreach that included two public forums and an online survey to discuss the communities hope and concerns for the area after the facilities closure. The input and community insights gathered by this group was carried forward in both the Strategic Assessment and the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan processes.

The public engagement process conducted during the Strategic Assessment built from the input gathered prior and sought to continue the community dialogue. As part of Phase 1 process, the Oscar Mayer Strategic Assessment Committee was formed in November 2017 and held monthly meetings that were open to the public. One public event was held that focused on collecting input on various critical topics such as economic development, transportation, environment, and others that influenced the planning process that would occur in Phase 2. In addition to the public event, focus group engagement sessions were held to gather input from the diverse constituency of Madison and diverse voices specific to the Northside of Madison.

Phase 1 engagement efforts provided the planning team a comprehensive understanding of community’s desire for this area and was the foundation to develop initial concept plans during Phase 2. The concepts were then presented to the community for more detailed input and insights. Beyond the two traditional public events that were held during the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan process, a series of focus group sessions were held as a response from Phase 1 to reach out to communities who aren’t typically engaged in the process. Given that, there was a heavy focus during the Plan process to engage diverse voices through focus group sessions conducted by EQT by Design. The focus group engagement strategy was called the “Key Constituent Advisory Group”. Detailed outcomes of the sessions are included in the Appendix II. The following pages provide a more detailed overview of the overall engagement conducted for the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan.



**FIGURE 8: OSCAR Group Engagement 2017**

Utilizing multiple tools and formats of engagement was a critical component of the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan. At the beginning of the planning process, the City established an Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan project website. The website was a tool utilized to keep the public informed about upcoming meetings and previous presentation material from the planning process. In addition to the website, project update newsletters were emailed and posted on the website regularly. City staff made themselves available to provide presentations about the Plan and hear the community’s perspectives at the request of any public member interested. The engagement process occurred in two stages. The first round of engagement focused on creating awareness and hearing from the public. The second round of engagement focused on gaining feedback on the preliminary development concepts. The Key Constituent Advisory Group engagement mentioned earlier was held throughout both rounds of engagement. Table below outlines the engagement conducted during the planning process.

## OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

FIRST ROUND	June 18	Guest speaker East Madison Rotary Lunch (appx 10 ppl)
	June 19	Walk & Talk Event (appx 40-50 ppl)
	June 19	Key Constituent Advisory Group Pre-session
	July 30	Brentwood Village Block Party (appx 10-20 ppl)
	August 15	Key Constituent Advisory Group Engagement by EQT by Design
	September 10	Interview with Northside News
	September 10	Key Constituent Advisory Group Engagement by EQT by Design
	September 18	Meeting with Emerson East Neighborhood Association (appx 10 ppl)
	September 24	OMSAP/Metro Transit Meeting at Warner Park (appx 40-50 ppl)
	October 14	Meeting with Northside Economic Development Coalition (NEDC) (appx 20-30 ppl)
SECOND ROUND	October 16	Warner Park Open House (appx 45 ppl in person, 10 via Facebook live) - Interview with Channel 27
	November 4	Sherman Neighborhood Association
	November 4	Transportation Policy & Planning Board, included Online Poll - Interview with Channel 3
	November 5	Interview with Wisconsin State Journal
	November 6	Friends of Hartmeyer - Lakeview Library (appx 20-30 ppl)
	November 8	Family Fun Night at Warner Park (appx 10-20 ppl)
	November 11	Plan Commission Meeting
	November 12	Dane Buy Local Breakfast (appx 60 ppl)
	November 12	Key Constituent Advisory Group Engagement by EQT by Design
	November 18	Meeting with NPC/NEDC at FEED Kitchens (appx 5 ppl)
	November 20	Meeting with Emerson East Neighborhood Association (appx 10 ppl)
	December 4	Attend Northside Planning Council Meeting (appx 40 ppl)
	December 5	Meeting with Eken Park Neighborhood Association (appx 10 ppl)
	December 17	Meeting with The Bodgery (appx 20-30 ppl)
	January 16	Town Hall Session Hosted by Alder Abbas (appx 100 ppl)



**FIGURE 9: Walk & Talk Event 2019**

## WALK & TALK EVENT

The plan kicked-off in June 2019 with an informal walking tour of the planning area. The purpose of the walking tour was to create awareness of the plan process, hear from the public about issues and opportunities for the 425-acre planning area and provide context for the tremendous scale of the study area. Approximately 40-50 people attended the walking tour. A few themes that emerged from the event included improved multimodal connections, housing affordability, support of businesses that provide jobs at all skill levels, and wetland preservation. Following this event, City staff attended and participated in four events to continue hearing from the public. Over 130 people were reached during the first round of engagement.

## KEY CONSTITUENT ADVISORY GROUP

The Key Constituent Advisory Group was an engagement strategy conducted by EQT by Design to gain guidance and input necessary to understand and connect with populations that are often underrepresented. The group participants was made up of diverse group members representing the Northside, participants from Strategic Assessment input sessions, NPC, individuals from the OSCAR group, and others. Participants were invited to attend with the primary focus of the discussion topics on transportation, inclusive and welcoming place and space making, equity and inclusion tools and practices to grow the workforce, entrepreneurial, and economic corridor of the Oscar Mayer area. Furthermore, the groups design and strategy was also actively engaged to ensure equitable development practices are embedded and their input is reflected in the final recommendations and overall plan.

The strategy was key given the overall makeup of who lives, works, and calls the Northside home. The intention was to ensure that planned reinvestment in the corridor has significant positive impact for all and lastly to build and embed a foundational strategy of inclusive and racial justice and social equity design practices for the long-term viability and sustainability of the redevelopment process.

**Session 1:** The first group session held, targeted and invited back to the table those individuals that shared their perspectives in Phase 1. Moreover, to get stakeholder groups engaged early in the process to obtain the community’s authentic voice embedded in the planning and implementation process.

**Session 2-4:** The remaining sessions focused on key topics to uncover challenges and opportunities within the subareas of the Special Area Plan and ultimately get guidance on the type of activity and development desired for the area. Input from these various groups was designed to capture specific ingredients and components necessary to help shape the future of a truly inclusive and welcoming, economic corridor that reflects the real and authentic vibe of what it means to be a Northside gathering hub.

The group sessions were conducted at key junctures of the planning process from June through December. Key findings from the sessions can be found in Appendix II.

## PROPERTY OWNER INTERVIEWS

As part of the engagement process, several property owners were interviewed to understand their visions, plans, and ensure alignment with community needs and desires. 13 interviews were conducted from June through December. A few of the property owner interviews included Reich/Rabin, Hooper Corporation, Madison College, Hartmeyer Estate family, MGE, Shopko Drive, and Alexander Company.

“Ensuring that at least 25% of the construction and development dollars in general are focused towards minority and women owned businesses”

- Focus group participant

“Transportation is missing as a focus for leveraging workforce and commerce”

- Focus group participant

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #1

Building from the robust input gathered during the Strategic Assessment engagement process, the walk and talk event, focus group sessions and other outreach efforts, the public input and technical analysis was synthesized to develop preliminary land use, transportation and development concepts for more detailed input. A public open house was held on October 16th to gather feedback on the preliminary concepts. The meeting format included a series of keypad polling questions and a Q&A session. The meeting was live streamed, and meeting video and survey questions were available on the project website.

In addition, City staff met with several groups throughout the months of October 2019 and January 2020 to get their perspectives on the draft concepts, including the City of Madison Plan Commission, Transportation Policy & Planning Board, Sherman, Emerson, Eken Park Neighborhood Associations, Friends of the Hartmeyer Natural Area, Northside Planning Council, and Northside Business Association, and attended Warner Family Fun Night. Some of the key concerns that came out of the meetings included a desire by some for the acquisition of the Hartmeyer property for a conservation park, Metro Transit's exploration of a satellite facility on the northern portion of the Oscar Mayer property, and the potential impacts related to a reestablished full-access intersection at Coolidge Street and Packers Avenue. Over 300 people were reached during the second round of engagement. Comments collected throughout both rounds of engagement can be found in Appendix I.

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #2

The Oscar Mayer Public Open House #2 was held January 30, 2020 to gather feedback from the public about the updated land use and transportation concepts and draft plan. The meeting format included a short presentation followed by information tables related to the plan recommendations. Over 90 people attended the open house and provided over 130 comments. The meeting was recorded through the City's channel and meeting video and material were available on the project website.

Common likes about the overall plan included the improved bike and pedestrian network, the mixed-use approach to energize the area, and using the redevelopment to draw employment to this area. Some reoccurring concerns included the desire to maintain a larger greenspace area and a full access intersection at Coolidge Street and Packers Avenue.

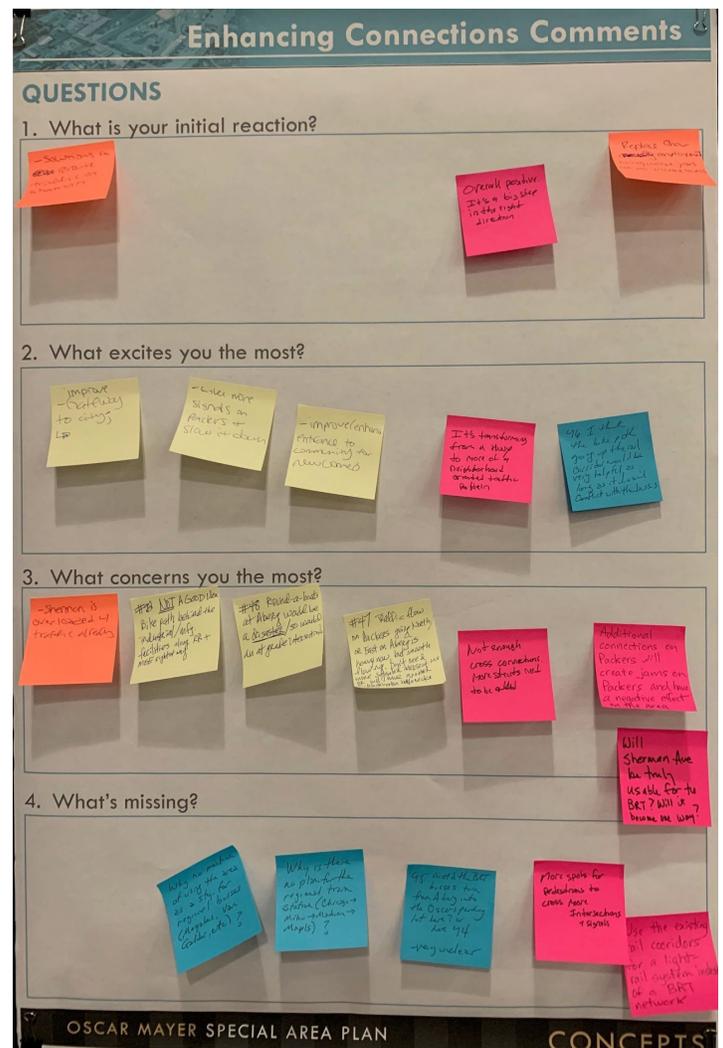


FIGURE 10: Open House 2019

**“Housing for people with limited mobility near bus stations is very important. Different income levels need to be provided for”**  
- Public Event participant



## WHAT IS THE BIG PICTURE CONCEPT?

*The big picture opportunity concept is made up of the elements below which begin to translate the vision and redevelopment objectives onto the geography of the corridor. It's the foundation on which the detailed plans are built and shape the plan recommendations. The forward-looking concept illustrates the desired future state of the planning area.*

*The graphic on the following page illustrates the Big Picture Concept for the area.*

**1. WEAVE TOGETHER THE NORTH & EAST SIDES.** The heavy industrial rail corridor, highways as well as natural barriers have long separated the City's north and east sides. The enhanced street network with safe and comfortable facilities for bikes and pedestrians, integrated land use, and unifying placemaking features have cohesively weaved the area together.

**2. MAINTAIN AS MAJOR EMPLOYMENT CORRIDOR.** The Packers and Pennsylvania Avenue corridor is a major regional employment center with a diverse range of businesses with a full spectrum of jobs at all skill levels.

**3. CREATE AN INCLUSIVE MIXED-USE HUB.** Centered on the north side of Commercial Avenue is a high-density, mixed-use activity hub welcoming to and representative of the entire Northside community. It's a place with a diversity of housing options, local and minority owned business, and major employers all knit into the adjacent neighborhoods. Uses, urban open spaces, and placemaking strategies have formed an inclusive central hub at the core of the planning area.

**4. TRANSFORM COMMERCIAL AVE INTO A WALKABLE DISTRICT.** Commercial Avenue has redeveloped into a walkable district that functions as the main hub for culture, employment, training, and daily services, that shaped the areas identity and is linked to other commercial oriented nodes as a walkable neighborhood network.

**5. ADD STREET CONNECTION FROM NORTH SHERMAN TO PACKERS.** A new east-west roadway connection has integrated the massive 72-acre former Oscar Mayer and Hartmeyer properties, improving access to the most active areas.

**6. BUILD A TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT CENTERED ON A MULTIMODAL HUB.** A regional multimodal transit hub integrated with bus, bikes, future intercity and local rail is the center point to a transit-oriented neighborhood and employment center. The TOD is characterized as a compact, walkable, mixed-use development with higher development intensity in close proximity to high-capacity transit.

**7. INCORPORATE WETLAND INTO NEIGHBORHOOD PARK.** The wetland has been preserved and incorporated into a larger neighborhood park providing both nature-based recreation opportunities and active recreation facilities to serve existing and future residents.

**8. ENHANCE CITY ENTRY CORRIDOR & ACCESS.** Packers Avenue is a major transportation and community gateway to the city from the airport and the north. Additional signalized intersections or other intersection improvements, enhanced streetscaping, street trees, and wayfinding signage transformed the corridor into a quality gateway that carries significant traffic and is safe for residents and employees to cross.

# BIG PICTURE CONCEPT

**FIGURE 11**

**THE OSCAR MAYER SPECIAL AREA PLAN BIG PICTURE CONCEPT** translates the vision and redevelopment objectives onto the area's geography.



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## FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Plan express the City’s intent for how future development should occur in the planning area and provides guidance to property owners and developers alike. It demonstrates the City’s long-range view of how particular properties should be configured and developed overtime and identifies each areas function and character in more detail, based on the Big Picture Concept. It ensures that adjacent properties develop in a cohesive manner and future uses strengthen the quality and character of development while balancing redevelopment with the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Plan builds on the vision established by the Strategic Assessment by capitalizing on the areas existing transportation infrastructure and recommending a transit-oriented high-density mixed-use district integrated with a multimodal facility along Commercial Avenue. The mixed-use uses along the corridor promote a pedestrian-oriented urban street with activated ground floor uses and residential or other uses above, ensuring there’s an opportunity for local restaurants, arts and entertainment, sports and wellness, and other service-related uses and businesses to be part of the redevelopment. The plan recommends a mix of housing densities on a gridded street network west of the railroad tracks and organized around a significant preserved wetland and neighborhood park, while N. Sherman and Aberg Avenue frontages are designated as mixed-use to capitalize on greater visibility.

The Oscar Mayer site is completely transformed from the vacant buildings and sea of asphalt it is today into a high-density mixed-use employment centered area with activated street corners to complement employment uses with daily amenities for existing and future employees. It recommends pockets of urban open spaces throughout the site that welcome the general public into the area and serve residents and employees.

As part of advancing the Strategic Assessment vision, the plan maintains a large employment area along the Packers and Pennsylvania corridor and north of Aberg Avenue to leverage its immediate highway access and proximity to downtown.

# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

FIGURE 12

FUTURE LAND USE  
PLAN-Oscar Mayer  
Special Area Plan



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- EMPLOYMENT
- COMMUNITY MIXED USE
- NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE
- SPECIAL INSTITUTIONAL
- LOW-MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH RESIDENTIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
- URBAN PUBLIC SPACE
- ACTIVATED GROUND FLOOR
- BRT POTENTIAL FUTURE BRT STOPS
- T MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITY

# FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

**The following land use categories provide general descriptions of the character and type of uses that can occur in each land use category. They are based on the Comprehensive Plan future land uses. Please consult the City’s Comprehensive Plan (2018) for further description of the districts. The sections that follow provide more site-specific urban design and height recommendations.**

## LOW-MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL

Low-medium residential (LMR) areas are characterized as what’s considered “missing middle” housing. This category includes a mix of building types such as small lot single family development, two-unit buildings, three-unit buildings, rowhouses, and small multi-family buildings. LMR development is well-connected by street network and is seamlessly integrated with surrounding development.



## MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL

This category includes generally larger multifamily buildings and sometimes interspersed with other smaller housing types. This is characterized as the more intense end of “missing middle” housing. Medium residential housing types are appropriate close to major corridors, mixed-use areas, and or commercial/employment areas. When adjoining less intense uses, future development should stepdown and be scaled to transition with less intense adjacent development.



## HIGH RESIDENTIAL

High Residential includes larger and taller multi-family buildings. This housing type is appropriate along major streets and should be transit-oriented and well-connected with surrounding development as a complete neighborhood. High Residential was designated mainly along the rail corridor and adjacent to the potential multimodal facility to take advantage of the transit access.



## NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE

This category includes uses that mainly serve nearby residents, however some buildings may also include specialty businesses, services, or civic uses that attract customers from a wider area. Uses include residential uses well integrated with retail, restaurant, service, and institutional. Commercial spaces should be constructed in a range of sizes to add variety and encourage a mix of different commercial uses.



## COMMUNITY MIXED USE

Community Mixed Use is generally a high-intensity Activity Center that integrates residential, retail, office, institutional, and civic uses such as transit facilities, serving residents and visitors from the surrounding area and the community as a whole. Community Mixed Use District should create a walkable node or corridor and be located adjacent to existing or planned transit.



## WHAT IS AN “ACTIVITY CENTER”

An Activity Center is an area that is more intensely developed than its surroundings and serves as the visual and/or functional center of a neighborhood, multiple neighborhoods, or a district. Activity centers are typically mixed-use areas that contain some or all of the following uses: residential, retail, service, employment, civic, institutional, and parks or public space. The mix of uses in close proximity and the intensity of development, when paired with robust transit service, can combine to lessen car traffic and increase walking, bicycling, and transit use when compared to lower-intensity and/or single-use development.

*Source: City of Madison Comprehensive Plan.*

## INDUSTRIAL

This category is comprised of heavier industrial uses not are not typically within close proximity to residential and mixed use. It can accommodate manufacturing, wholesale, storage, distribution, transportation, repair/maintenance, and utility uses. Buildings and site improvements may be more simple and vehicle oriented than in other land use categories.



## EMPLOYMENT

This category includes predominantly office, low-impact manufacturing, specialized employment, research and development, and medical. They do not generally include retail and customer service uses for the wider community but may include limited retail, and service establishments that primarily serve employees and users of the area. All uses should be compatible with the density and scale of surrounding development.



## ACTIVATED GROUND FLOOR

This is recommended in strategic areas that should have ground floor retail and services regardless of its land use designation. This includes uses that appeal to the future employees of the employment center and to the adjoining current and future neighborhood residents. It's intended to generate pedestrian activity along certain street corridors and within the Oscar Mayer site.

## URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

This category is intended to create multifunctional gathering places and spaces for that serve the future and existing community. The urban public space can take the form of plaza space and outdoor dining areas.

## SPECIAL INSTITUTIONAL

This category includes college campuses, schools, and larger places of assembly and worship. Building scale and design standards should be consistent with the Special Institutional category in the Comprehensive Plan.

## LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Goal 1: Create a mixed density neighborhood west of the Oscar Mayer site.**

1. Redevelop the southeast corner of N. Sherman and Aberg with ground floor commercial uses serving neighborhood and community needs and upper-floor residential units and offices.
2. Seek new businesses that are complementary to and could benefit from co-locating with the existing FEED Kitchens.
3. Explore the opportunity to build on existing uses such as the Hartmeyer Ice Arena and expand uses to more diverse offerings related to sports, wellness, and entertainment in the activity node.

### **Goal 2: Create a mixed-use, transit-oriented development centered on a new multimodal transit facility located on the south end of the Oscar Mayer site/or Hartmeyer property.**

1. Develop a mix of high density residential, employment and commercial uses around the multimodal facility.
2. Integrate the development with the employment uses to the north and the new mixed density neighborhood to the west.
3. Incorporate community civic spaces and gathering areas as part of the development.
4. Work with the Oscar Mayer property owners to repurpose and reuse the existing buildings for office, manufacturing, and/or food related uses.

### **Goal 3: Create a walkable, urban street along Commercial Avenue from N. Sherman to Packers Avenue.**

1. Incorporate community open spaces and gathering areas along the north side of Commercial Avenue as part of the transit-oriented development.
2. Redevelop the south side of Commercial Avenue to fully activate the street and serve as a transition to the employment uses to the south and Madison College to the east.

### **Goal 4: Concentrate employment uses around the Packers and Aberg Avenue interchange.**

1. Carefully select and design uses at the intersection of Coolidge and Packers to serve as a highly visible entry to the mixed-use employment center.
2. Infill the area between Oscar and Packers Avenues with offices and employment-supporting commercial uses.
3. Proactively plan for continued grocery store access in the plan area, but prepare for long-term conversion/redevelopment of the site to employment uses and consider a grocery store integrated into a multi-story mixed use project west of Packers Avenue in the planning area.
4. Prepare for redevelopment of the northwest quadrant of the Packers/Aberg interchange to employment uses and identify improved connections linking this site to the employment on the Oscar Mayer site.
5. Maintain the north end of the Oscar Mayer site as predominately employment uses potentially including a new Metro Transit satellite facility.
6. Work to facilitate the development of the northeast quadrant of the interchange.

**Goal 5: Work with Madison College to continue investing in their facilities at the corner of Commercial and Packers Avenue.**

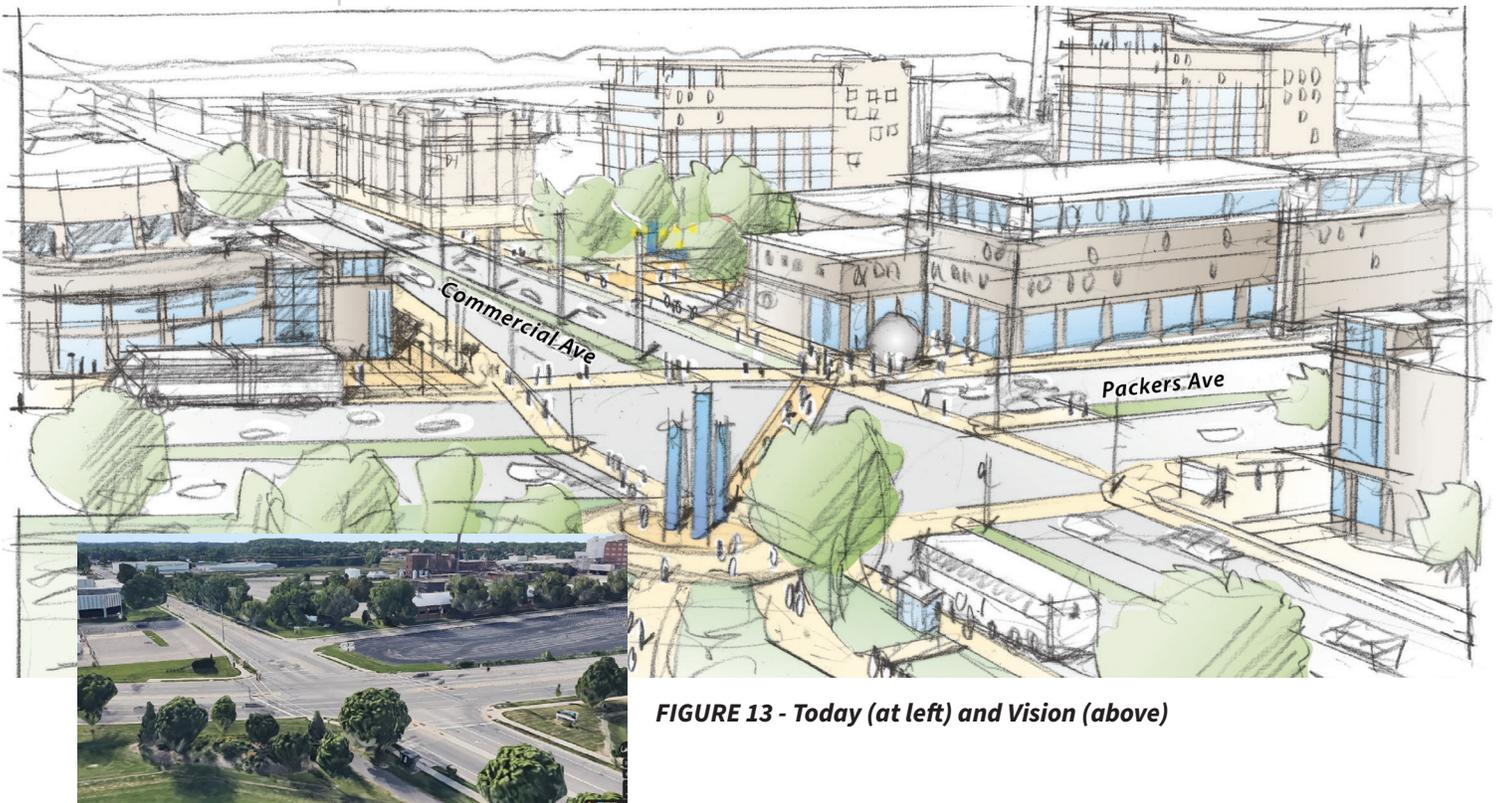
1. Encourage Madison College to continue investing in their facilities for their building trades and arts programs, including the construction of a signature building at the corner.
2. Work with Madison College to utilize the multimodal transit facility for parking and make the south end of the College's land available for higher density residential development serving students and others.
3. Redevelop the Packers/Sixth St./Pennsylvania corner into a mixed-use development serving students, and area workers.

**Goal 6: Work with property owners and existing and prospective business to maintain and redevelop predominately employment uses in the southern end of the planning area.**

1. Continue discussions with existing property owners and businesses as to their long-range plans; work to retain them where feasible and to facilitate transfer to new businesses where necessary.
2. Create a mixed-use node at the far end of the planning area to create a transition from the public market and residential uses to the south and a "gateway" to the area from Johnson and First Streets.

## DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT ILLUSTRATIONS

*To help provide more detail about the physical scale, density, building orientation and layout, and the overall character of development, the planning process included completing development concepts for several key area in the study area. The following development concept illustrations convey the desired type of development and reflect how the land use designations and recommendations could be interpreted on the ground. They can be used as a tool by City staff, property owners, developers and policymakers to guide redevelopment in the planning area.*



**FIGURE 13 - Today (at left) and Vision (above)**



### COMMERCIAL AVENUE & PACKERS INTERSECTION

The concept shows a more attractive pedestrian-oriented corridor, with street-facing buildings and high-visibility bike and pedestrian connections that together Demetral Park, future mixed-use, Madison College and transit. This will become an identifiable place and shape the identity of the area.

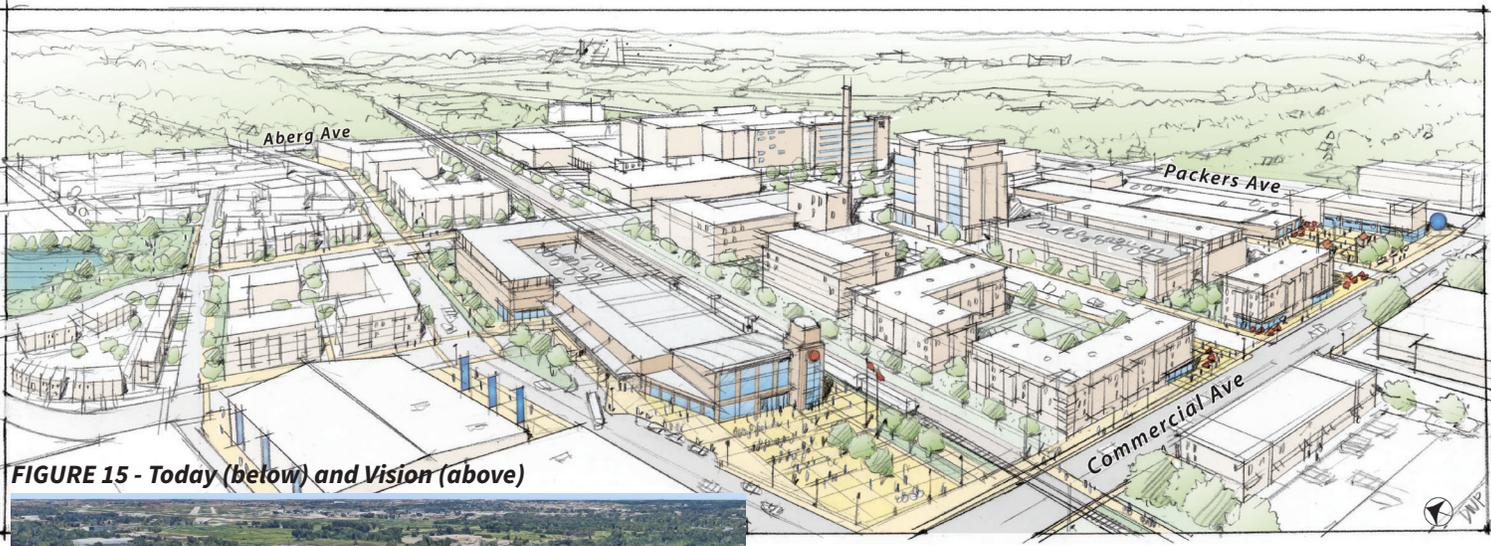


**FIGURE 14 - Today (at left) and Vision (above)**



## GATHERING PLACE ON COMMERCIAL

Moving closer to the ground level, this illustration is intended to convey the activities and character of a multifunctional community gathering place along Commercial Avenue. The idea is to create a plaza space with daily activities such as music, entertainment, and food trucks, knit into new employment and housing development around it. The gathering place is intended to reflect and Northside “vibe”.

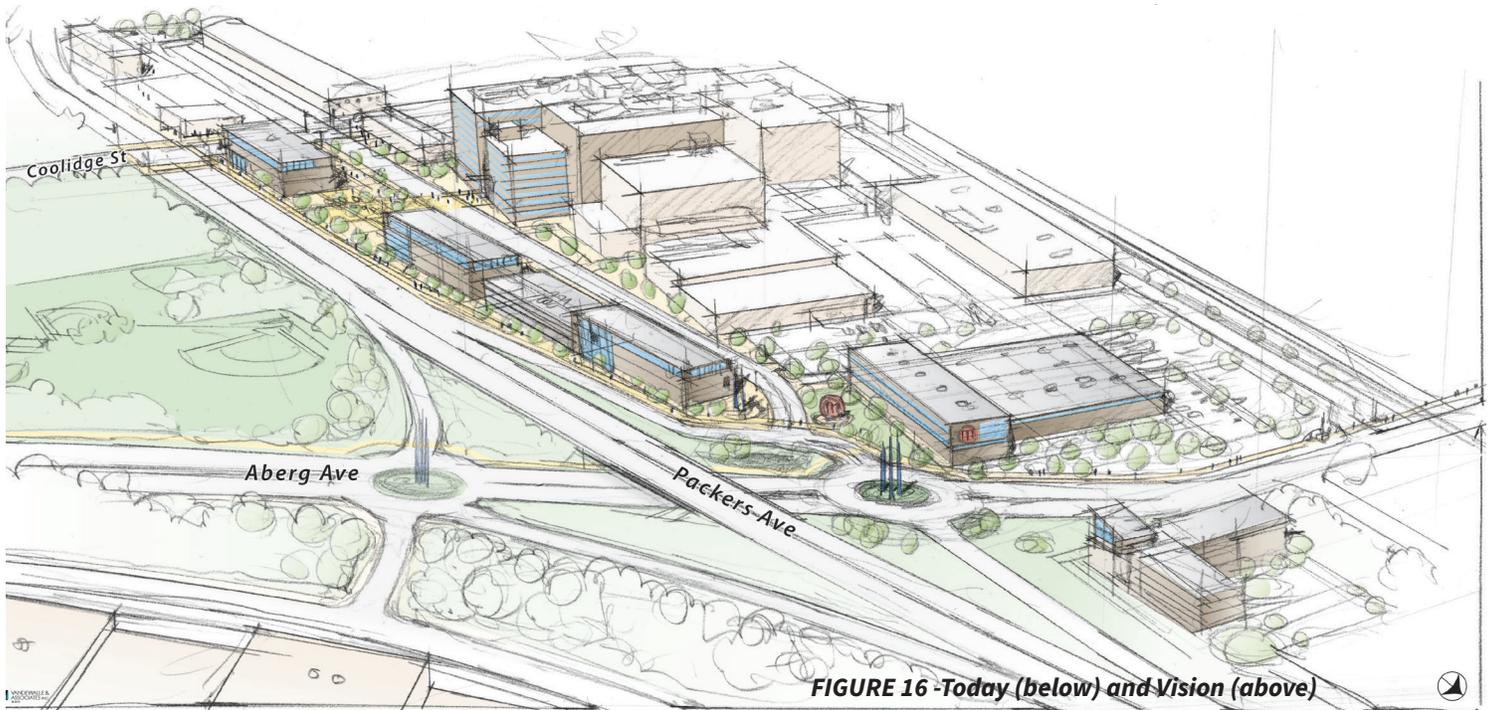


**FIGURE 15 - Today (below) and Vision (above)**



**MIXED USE DISTRICT (VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST)**

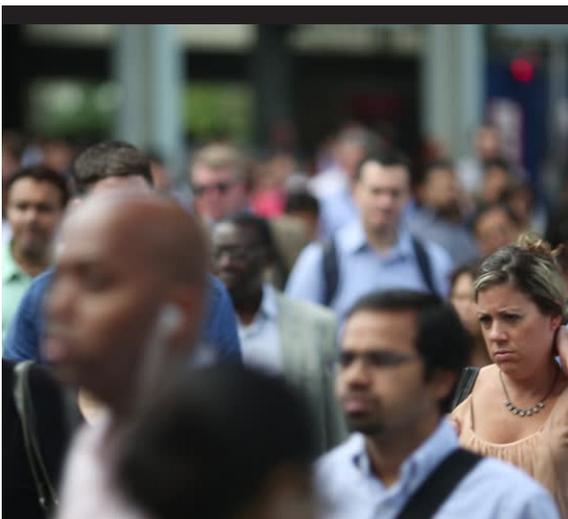
The Mixed-Use District concept takes broader view of the area and conveys how the Plan’s recommended land uses for the vacant or underutilized former Oscar Mayer site and Hartmeyer properties can be redeveloped. The concept shows a new mix of high-activity uses such as housing, employment, sports entertainment, and services within the central area of this TOD, adjacent to a multimodal facility and public space. In the background, the repurposed Oscar Mayer office building is adjacent to a potential new “landmark” employment building that gives a signal of contemporary rebirth of new businesses in this area.



**FIGURE 16 - Today (below) and Vision (above)**

**ABERG GATEWAY EMPLOYMENT AREA (VIEW LOOKING SOUTHWEST)**

This final concept conveys an enhanced gateway to the neighborhood from Highway 30 and an increased amount of employment development along the Packers Avenue corridor. On the north end of the Oscar Mayer site, a Metro Transit satellite facility and new employment uses are shown. The sketch also shows potential interchange configurations and the conversion of Packers Avenue from its highway standards to a more localized city street with enhanced sidewalks, new crossings, terraced landscaping, and buildings oriented to the street.



# TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

## TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS



FIGURE 17

## ENHANCING CONNECTIONS

The plan seeks to create and significantly improve the transportation infrastructure and options in the Northside by recommending new streets integrated with the surrounding street network. A key street connection is from Packers to N. Sherman Avenue. This will require a new signalized intersection at Packers Avenue and Coolidge Street which will need to be further analyzed by Traffic Engineering and neighborhood traffic management strategies will need to be implemented to ensure Eken Park residents are not significantly negatively impacted by the potential intersection. The future signalized intersection will require significant intersection geometric improvements to provide Northbound and Southbound left-turning pockets. In addition, a connection to North Sherman Avenue will most likely be needed before signalization consideration. The existing permitted rail crossing at Roth Street will need to be shifted south to allow for this future street connection to extend to North Sherman Avenue.

Throughout the engagement process a reoccurring theme was the need to enhance the connectivity of the Northside with the rest of the community. The north and south sides of Madison have higher concentrations of transit dependent populations than many other areas of the community. Implementing the North-South BRT route is important to the vital success of the Northside community knitting into the larger community and being part of the growth and upward trajectory of the city.

## MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITY

The Strategic Assessment redevelopment objectives call for creating an integrated and connected multimodal transportation system. To advance the objective, the plan recommends exploring a multimodal transportation facility at the core of the mixed-use transit-oriented district. The North Transfer Point is currently located in an isolated area not conducive to biking or walking. The transfer point would be relocated and integrated with the multimodal

facility that would house bike, car, shuttle, bus, potentially BRT, and in the long-term, intercity and local rail. The City is evaluating the north side Bus Rapid Transit route on either North Sherman or Packers Avenue. As that advances, the multimodal facility should be considered as part of the route evaluation. It is recommended the facility integrates structured parking to continue functioning as a transfer point and could potentially be shared parking with the surrounding mixed-use activities. It should also offer a variety of amenities for users such as bicycle racks, restrooms, vending machines, and possibly a café or food services on the ground floor with residential or office above.

The multimodal facility will help facilitate a higher level of transit service, allowing for a higher density of development to occur. The higher level of transit service will promote transit use as a primary mode

and reduce reliance on personal vehicles. Other benefits of a multimodal facility in this location include safe and secure covered waiting areas, additional foot traffic to support surrounding businesses, and reduced traffic volumes.

## BICYCLE CONNECTIVITY

The plan recommends improving overall bike connectivity throughout the planning area with new or improved on and off-street bike facilities along Aberg Avenue, Commercial Avenue, and within the proposed gridded street network west of the Oscar Mayer site. A key recommendation is a north/south shared-use bike path along the eastern side of the railroad corridor on an MGE owned utility corridor. This low-stress option will improve connections between Northside neighborhoods, the Capital City Trail, and the downtown area. The City will need to further investigate the opportunity with MGE and adjacent businesses.

## PACKERS/PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE INTERCHANGE

Before Packers Avenue was constructed, the Oscar Mayer facility was knit in with the neighborhoods but after its construction, it essentially became a contributing factor to dividing the north and east sides. As it exists today, it's a prominent entryway to Madison from the airport that needs to be significantly improved as a walkable and attractive urban corridor. The intersection is also the end of Highway 30 that connects the area to the Milwaukee and the interstate system. The plan puts forth a series of recommendations that begin to break down the corridor into a pedestrian-oriented localized street, including reconfiguring the Aberg Avenue and State Trunk Highway 113 (Packers Avenue) interchange. Long term, replacing the grade-separated interchange with an at-grade intersection would significantly improve the pedestrian and bike usability and character, while helping to maintain vehicular speeds closer to the posted speed limit. The current and projected traffic counts could be accommodated by an at-grade intersection that would better connect the surrounding areas and would cost significantly less than replacing the existing bridge.

In the shorter term, the plan recommends changes to the ramp configuration to better connect local streets, neighborhoods and employment centers, including those at Oscar Mayer and on Pankratz St./Shopko Dr. Both near term and long term improvements could take different forms, including signalized intersections or roundabouts, and would require future collaborative work with WISDOT.



FIGURE 18

# TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



**FIGURE 19**

**THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK GRAPHIC TO THE LEFT demonstrates how all the recommended improvements function as a system with the goal of better connecting and integrating the planning area with it's surrounding transportation network.**

## TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Goal 1: Create a multimodal transit facility on the northern end of Commercial Avenue and on either side of the Canadian Pacific railroad tracks.**

1. Relocate North Transfer Point to a more visible and accessible location integrated with the multimodal transit facility.
2. Seek public-private partnerships with developers to co-locate and integrate higher density mixed-use development with the facility.
3. Work with corresponding property owners to construct a multimodal facility for bikes, buses, BRT, park and ride, and reserve space for a potential intercity and local rail terminal.
4. Encourage appropriately located structured parking to serve commuters, area employers, and Madison College.
5. Work with private national and regional transportation operators (such as Greyhound, Badger Bus and VanGalder) to make the facility a Madison terminal.
6. Investigate options for improved service to connect various employment centers and daily services on the Northside. Metro Transit should evaluate this option as part of the larger route restructure anticipated with Bus Rapid Transit implementation.
7. Reserve the potential for a future intercity passenger rail terminal and local rail transit stop.
8. Work with car sharing and bike sharing services to create major hubs within the facility.
9. Work with MGE to incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the facility to help facilitate the transition to an electrified transportation system.

### **Goal 2: Improve connectivity to/from and within the planning area and incorporate Complete Streets principals in roadway designs.**

1. Enhance the grade separated intersection of Packers and Aberg with improved ramp configurations, or other treatments (such as using roundabouts) to calm traffic, improve connectivity, and create more appealing gateways to the planning area. More study will be needed to determine feasibility of interchange improvement and configuration. Pursue future conversion of grade separated interchange with an at-grade intersection.
2. Connect Roth and Coolidge Streets across the Oscar Mayer site and create a signalized intersection at Packers Avenue. Explore design alternatives to minimize impacts from non-local traffic.
3. Work with the appropriate State agencies to move the rail crossing with the proposed Coolidge Street alignment from Packers Avenue to Roth Street.
4. Create access to Pennsylvania Avenue properties and the multi-use path by extending Third & Sixth Streets west across Packers and create a signalized intersection or other intersection improvements.
5. Extend existing Ruskin Street from Commercial Avenue north to Roth Street with an intersection at Roth and continued to Aberg Avenue.
6. Develop a gridded street network through the proposed mixed-density neighborhood west of the Oscar Mayer site.
7. Work with MGE to connect Shopko Drive with Pankratz Street as part of the relocation of its operations facilities.
8. In the event of a major redevelopment north of Aberg Avenue between the rail corridor and Packers Avenue, identify appropriate locations for connectivity and access, including Everett Street.
9. When reconstructed, Commercial Avenue should include design elements appropriate for a mixed use main street such as street parking, street trees, bike/pedestrian facilities, and well designed crossings.
10. Assess right-of-way needs on the southside Aberg Avenue that could be accommodated over time as the corridor redevelops.

“Signs seen in different languages...makes you feel comfortable that there may be diverse groups of people in the area”

- Focus group participant

“The improved bike routes also excited me because I will be able to safely access downtown and the east side.”

- Online participant

“It’s transforming from a highway to more of a neighborhood oriented traffic pattern.”

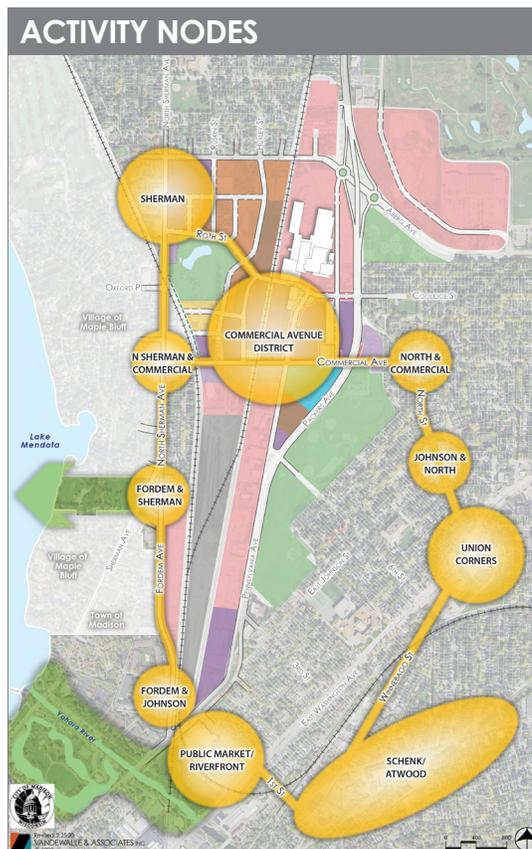
- Public Event participant

**Goal 3: Use traffic calming mechanisms to minimize non-local traffic impacts on Eastside neighborhoods while improving neighborhood accessibility.**

1. Work with the Eken Park Neighborhood Association on designs for new intersections at Coolidge Street and Packers Avenue. In the event future traffic volumes on Coolidge Street exceed those appropriate for a local neighborhood street, implement traffic calming and/or reduction strategies such as reducing turning movements into Eken Park, installation of diverters or other steps.
2. Work with the Emerson East Neighborhood Association on designs for new intersections at Sixth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.
3. Investigate changing primary access to East Madison Little League Fields from North Street to Aberg Avenue to reduce non-local traffic on local streets in Eken Park.

**Goal 4: Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections to/from and within the planning area.**

1. Work with MGE to construct a low-stress shared-use path along its existing service corridor east of the rail corridor from Johnson Street to Commercial Avenue and with the Oscar Mayer property owners to extend the path across the Oscar Mayer site from the Commercial Avenue to Aberg Avenue.
2. Create a multiuse path along Roth Street from Sherman to the proposed multimodal transit facility and along the new Coolidge Street/Packers street.
3. Create a shared-use path along the eastern edge of the DOT-owned railroad tracks between Sherman and Commercial Avenue.
4. At the time Commercial Avenue is reconstructed, create a new on or off-street bike path, on the north side of Commercial Avenue between the Canadian Pacific railroad tracks and the Demetral Park Path east of Packers Avenue.
5. Vacate the Service Road on the east side of Packers Avenue in Eken Park and install a shared-use path connecting the Little League Field to Demetral Park, with street trees and other landscaping along its length to improve the neighborhood edge and buffer existing residences from Packers Avenue.



*Linking pedestrian districts through pedestrian improvements, activated uses, and good urban design will expand and build a stronger east/north side pedestrian culture.*

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## URBAN DESIGN & HEIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS

Special attention to urban design will be important to ensuring the vision and objectives area realized. The following urban design recommendations and height standards provide the vision and regulatory framework to achieve the look, feel and function of a walkable and identifiable employment centered neighborhood.

As a way of organizing the urban design recommendations, the planning area has been broken down into corridors and areas. Given the planning area's geography, the Figure 20 indicates recommendations for the northern portion of the planning area (north of Commercial Avenue), while Figure 21 indicates recommendations for the southern portion of the planning area (south of Commercial Avenue).

### URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS - NORTHERN PLANNING AREA

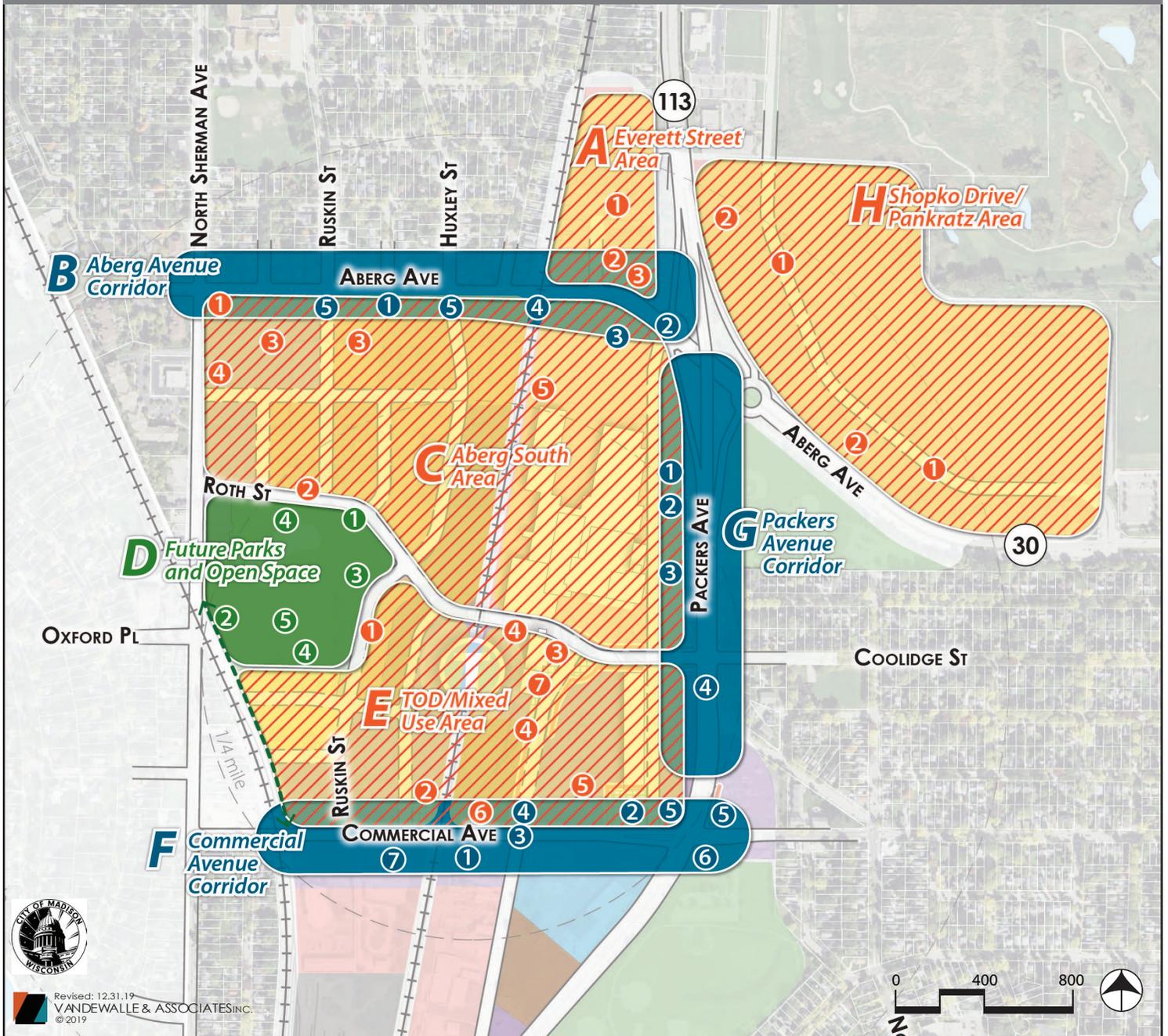


FIGURE 20

# URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS - NORTHERN PLANNING AREA

## A. Everett Street Area

- 1 Internal circulation will need to be addressed if/when redevelopment occurs
- 2 Orient new development on Everett Street and toward Packers Avenue Interchange
- 3 Include architectural element at corner

## B. Aberg Avenue Corridor

- 1 Orient redevelopment to Aberg with modest setbacks to create a more pedestrian oriented corridor
- 2 Update and enhance the district gateway (i.e., feature, enhanced landscaping) at intersection of Packers Avenue on and off ramps with Aberg Avenue
- 3 Encourage employment-oriented redevelopment on gateway sites oriented to interchange
- 4 Enhance pedestrian crossing comfort and safety at railroad crossing
- 5 Align two new streets to the south of Aberg with existing Ruskin and Huxley Streets

## C. Aberg South Area

- 1 Include a district-themed feature or signage at the northwest corner of this area (southeast corner of Aberg and Sherman Avenues) to communicate the neighborhood's identity at time of redevelopment
- 2 Include crosswalk connections across Roth Street from residential areas to new future park area
- 3 Scale development on the north to create a more pedestrian-oriented scale (south side of Aberg Avenue) and ensure compatibility with single-story single-family and two-story multifamily on the northside of Aberg Avenue with the use of stepbacks
- 4 Orient new development on Sherman Avenue frontage toward the street with building frontage, facade transparency, minimized parking, and incorporate stepbacks to reduce appearance of mass and maintain a sense of pedestrian scale
- 5 Construct an alley or shared access drive from Aberg Avenue to the Coolidge/Roth Street crossing

## D. Future Park and Open Space

- 1 Preserve mature oaks
- 2 Provide trail access through park from Sherman to Ruskin, extended with view to wetland
- 3 Provide trail access from Roth Street to south end of future park
- 4 Maintain natural feel and passive use on north end of future park and more active uses on south and east side
- 5 Provide/maintain woodland buffer on southern edge of wetland area between passive and active use area if beneficial to the wetland and the park

## E. TOD/Mixed Use Area

- 1 Include crosswalk connections across Ruskin Street from residential areas to new future park
- 2 Create an urban plaza as a forecourt to the transit hub facility
- 3 Create pedestrian-oriented urban spaces near the powerhouse and at the intersection of Roth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue extension
- 4 Connect pedestrian activity of this area to transit facility
- 5 Maximize building street facade coverage and transparency of new development on Commercial Avenue
- 6 Include street-level commercial and other activities in new development on Commercial Avenue frontage, especially at corner of Pennsylvania Avenue extension
- 7 Strive to maintain the historic character of the area by preserving the landmark chimney as a feature if feasible and/or including facade elements that tie in with the historic Oscar campus

## F. Commercial Avenue Corridor

- 1 Orient development to Commercial Avenue with entries, active retail and service uses on the ground floor to create a pedestrian scale and incorporate stepbacks to reduce building mass
- 2 Create a signature multi-use urban gathering place that fronts Commercial Avenue and activates building 20, supports daily activities and events
- 3 Enhance pedestrian and bike crosswalks by strengthening pavement markings, improving pedestrian and bike signals, adding pedestrian refuge areas at key mid-crossing
- 4 Extend Pennsylvania Avenue across Commercial Avenue
- 5 Ensure all development fronting the Packers/Commercial intersection addresses the corner with active entries, architectural features, urban space and ample pedestrian amenities to redefine the intersection identity and improve pedestrian safety
- 6 Remove vegetation and berming on Demetral Park corner and design as an urban park pedestrian and bike gateway and incorporate public art feature
- 7 Improve substation frontage appearance with structural and/or landscaping enhancements

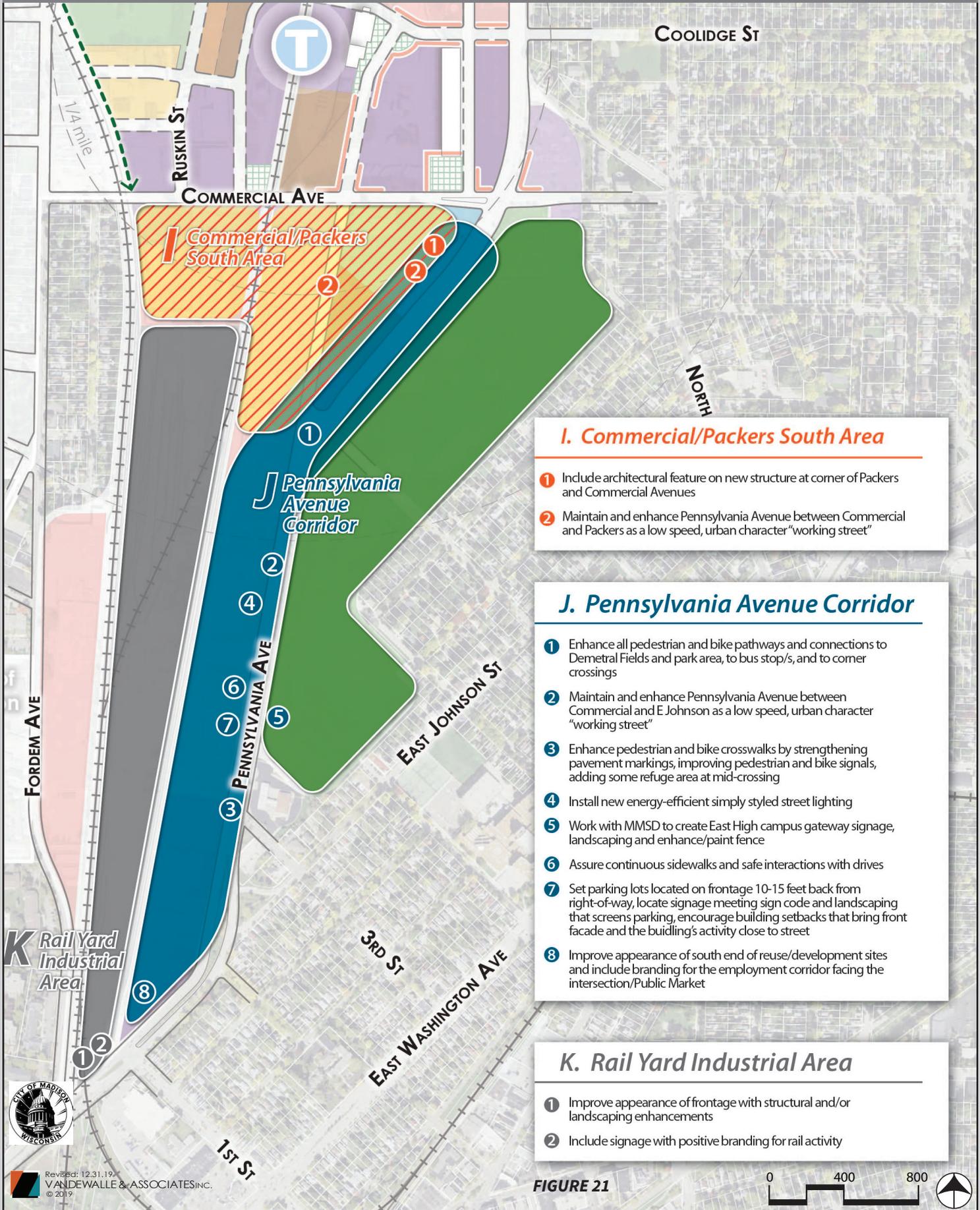
## G. Packers Avenue Corridor

- 1 Locate new mid-sized employment buildings along Packers Avenue frontage with small to modest setbacks and site to allow for structured parking to optimize development potential
- 2 Consider including red brick facade elements to tie in with historic Oscar campus
- 3 Site buildings to maintain a view corridor from Packers Avenue to entry of 910 historic office building
- 4 Enhance pedestrian and bike crosswalks by strengthening pavement markings, improving pedestrian and bike signals, added some refuge area at mid-crossing

## H. Shopko Drive/Pankratz Area

- 1 Connect Shopko Drive to Pankratz Street
- 2 New development should provide quality facades on Aberg and Packers corridor frontage

# URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS - SOUTHERN PLANNING AREA



### I. Commercial/Packers South Area

- 1 Include architectural feature on new structure at corner of Packers and Commercial Avenues
- 2 Maintain and enhance Pennsylvania Avenue between Commercial and Packers as a low speed, urban character "working street"

### J. Pennsylvania Avenue Corridor

- 1 Enhance all pedestrian and bike pathways and connections to Demetral Fields and park area, to bus stop/s, and to corner crossings
- 2 Maintain and enhance Pennsylvania Avenue between Commercial and E Johnson as a low speed, urban character "working street"
- 3 Enhance pedestrian and bike crosswalks by strengthening pavement markings, improving pedestrian and bike signals, adding some refuge area at mid-crossing
- 4 Install new energy-efficient simply styled street lighting
- 5 Work with MMSD to create East High campus gateway signage, landscaping and enhance/paint fence
- 6 Assure continuous sidewalks and safe interactions with drives
- 7 Set parking lots located on frontage 10-15 feet back from right-of-way, locate signage meeting sign code and landscaping that screens parking, encourage building setbacks that bring front facade and the building's activity close to street
- 8 Improve appearance of south end of reuse/development sites and include branding for the employment corridor facing the intersection/Public Market

### K. Rail Yard Industrial Area

- 1 Improve appearance of frontage with structural and/or landscaping enhancements
- 2 Include signage with positive branding for rail activity

**FIGURE 21** 0 400 800

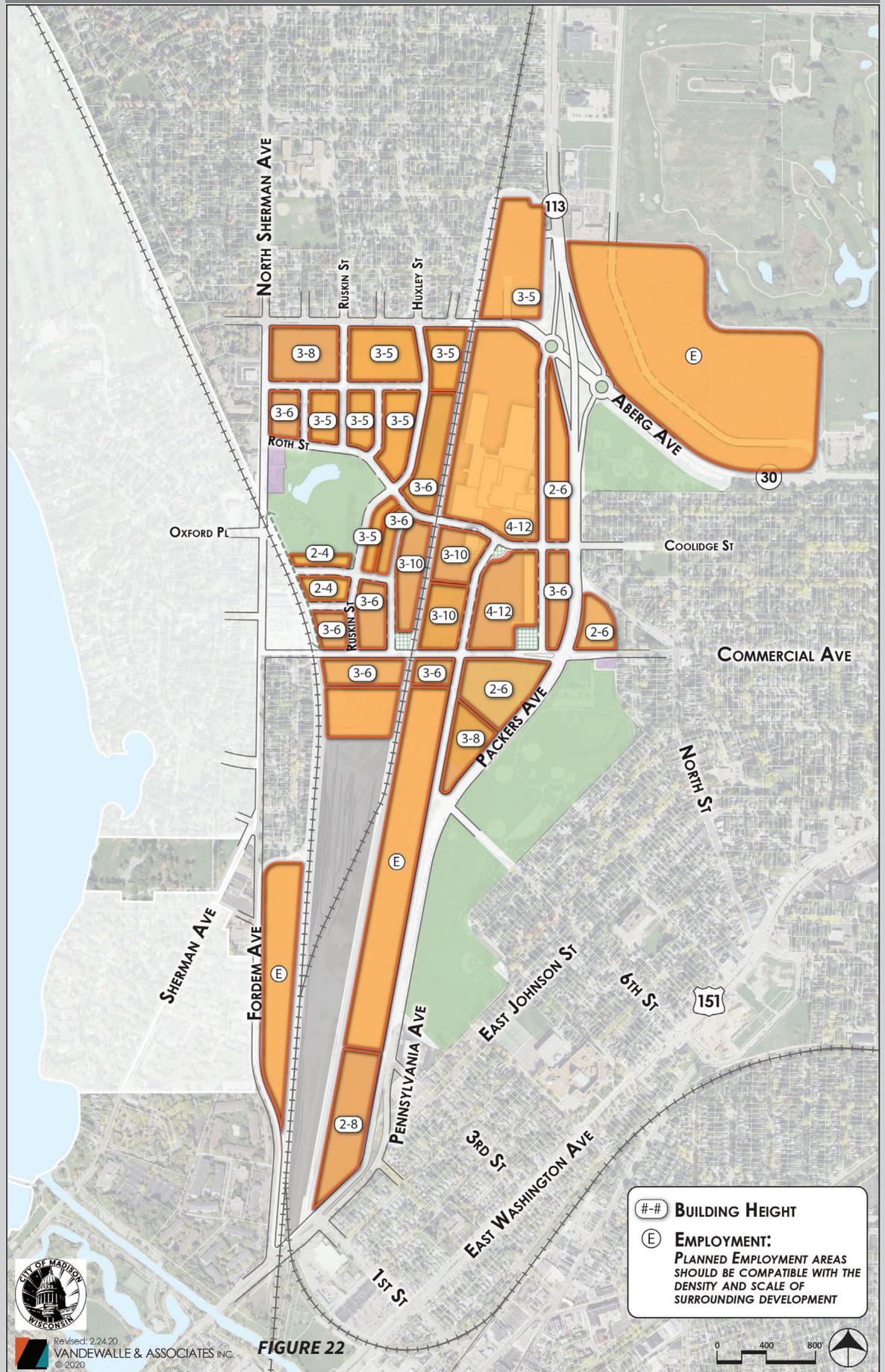


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# HEIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS

## RECOMMENDED HEIGHTS

As shown in Figure 22, each block was designated a building height range based on the proposed use and desired type of development character. The ranges represent the minimum and maximum building heights for each block and should be further defined at the time Urban Design District #4 is updated. Stepbacks can be used in key areas to establish compatibility with surrounding development and maintain a pedestrian-oriented scale.





***Very little housing exists in the planning area today. The City of Madison is projected to add over 70,000 new residents by 2040. This area offers a unique opportunity to increase the amount of available housing, helping accommodate the projected growth walkable to an employment center. The plan includes a balanced mix of land uses that can accommodate mix of dwelling sizes and types, while seeking to provide services and amenities to meet the daily needs of existing and future residents.***

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Gentrification and displacement in the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods is a Northside and city concern. The area has seen an increase in property values and that trend is not likely to change. While this concern is not unique to the Northside, there needs to be strategies in place to minimize impacts and preserve the culture and character of the Northside as the area redevelops. In 2019, the City of Madison completed the Equitable Assessment Report to analyze factors that contribute to gentrification and displacement. In some instances, such as the Tenney Lapham neighborhood, the report found that increasing a diverse array of housing options stabilized housing costs of other older units, helping maintain the areas affordability. Other factors that contribute to gentrification and displacement, are the lack of affordable housing, access to transportation, and housing costs that don't match wages, which tend to impact lower income residents the most.

Based on the land use plan, the planning area has the potential of accommodating over 2,500 new housing units, equating to almost 4,000 additional residents in an area, walkable to services, parks, jobs and transit. The size of this infill and redevelopment area offers a unique opportunity to create a full range of housing that meets diverse needs of our culturally diverse community and align with the current and future workforce housing needs. Increasing the housing density at various price points in the planning area can be a strategy to maintain affordability in the area. Overall, a combination of multiple factors such as increased equitable housing options, prioritized transportation infrastructure improvements in this area such as the North-South BRT route, and economically diverse employment options, can contribute to this area's success and while ensuring current and future residents can afford to benefit from the coming changes.

# NEIGHBORHOOD & HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

## Goal 1: Create a neighborhood that offers housing opportunities for all.

1. Encourage the development of “missing-middle housing” including townhomes, duplexes, fourplexes, apartments, and live-work units that can be both owner or renter-occupied.
2. Encourage high-density housing or larger multifamily buildings in proximity to existing or planned transit and adjacent amenities.
3. Expand ownership opportunities for the broader community through different housing types from townhomes, garden style units, and co-housing.
4. Encourage a mix of affordable and market rate housing that meets the needs of a wide variety of citizens at different stages of life and at different price points.
5. Encourage active senior-oriented development in the area that provides age in place living options for neighborhood residents, walkable to services and transit.

“Housing for people with limited mobility near bus stations is very important. Different income levels need to be provided for.”  
- Public Event participant

“Very concerned about gentrification. Need affordable housing for people at different stages of life. People with kids, people without them, places where older people can/will want to stay and retire in place.”  
- Phase 1 Public Event participant

## ADDING DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS



Housing for all      Meeting an array of housing needs      Affordable & Market Rate      Transit oriented      Woven with existing neighborhoods      Walkable





*At its peak, this powerhouse manufacturing corridor was home to thousands of jobs that drove the growth of the north Madison metro area. As Oscar Mayer and other major employers closed or retooled, the corridors workforce helped grow other businesses and institutions throughout the region. A major focus of this plan is to retool the area to foster the rebuilding of a major economic hub that serves the Northside and beyond. Ensuring the next wave of economic opportunity is shared by a diverse range of existing and future residents is an equally important focus. Proactive steps are recommended to intentionally welcome and facilitate communities of color to be actively involved in helping drive the next round of business growth.*

The former Oscar Mayer campus, Hooper corporation and other sites leave significant physical assets in place such as their building stock and utility and rail infrastructure, creating an opportunity to repurpose some of what's there at a lower cost. The corridors location between the downtown, thriving Capitol East District and the airport, offers the market opportunity to target a diverse range of employers with a full spectrum of jobs from skilled and creative trades to office, technology, service, food production and manufacturing. The cluster of adjacent educational, entrepreneurial and job centers should be leveraged and networked to ensure the north and east sides emerging generation is equipped with the skills to meet the 1,000's of new jobs that will come to the neighborhood. The new economic growth of the corridor will create a new wave of energy and add customers and revenue opportunities for existing Northside businesses.

The recommendations below reflect how many of the redevelopment objectives can be advanced on the ground.

**Accommodating over 4,000 additional jobs**

*\*Estimate based upon general land use and building assets*



## FULL SPECTRUM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ILLUSTRATION

**Service/Technical/Trade**

**Food/Manufacturing**

**Office/Service**

**Mixed Use**

- Small Business
- Retail
- Office/Tech
- Hospitality
- Sports/Entertainment

**Job Training & Education**

**Manufacturing**

**Service**

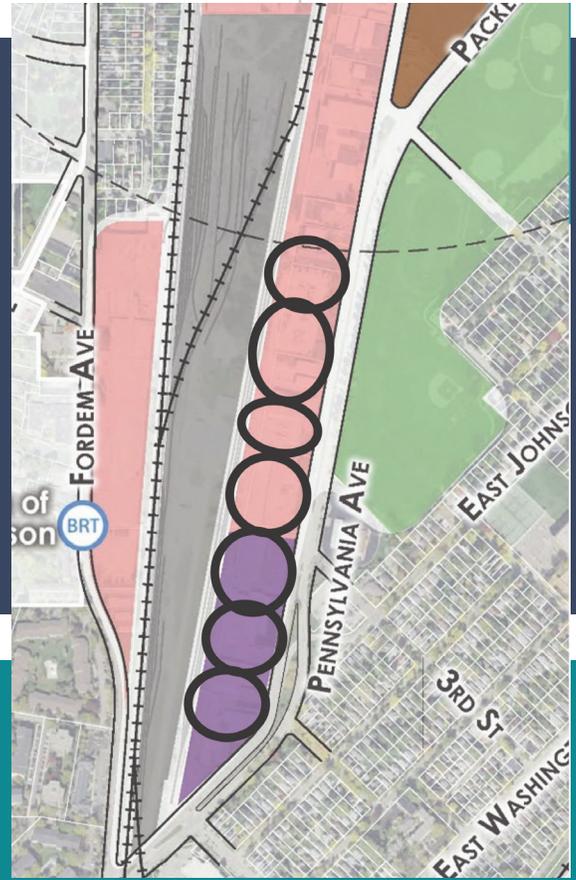
**Small Emerging Business**

- Tech
- Food
- Service

# OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE

## SCALE-UP BUSINESS DISTRICT

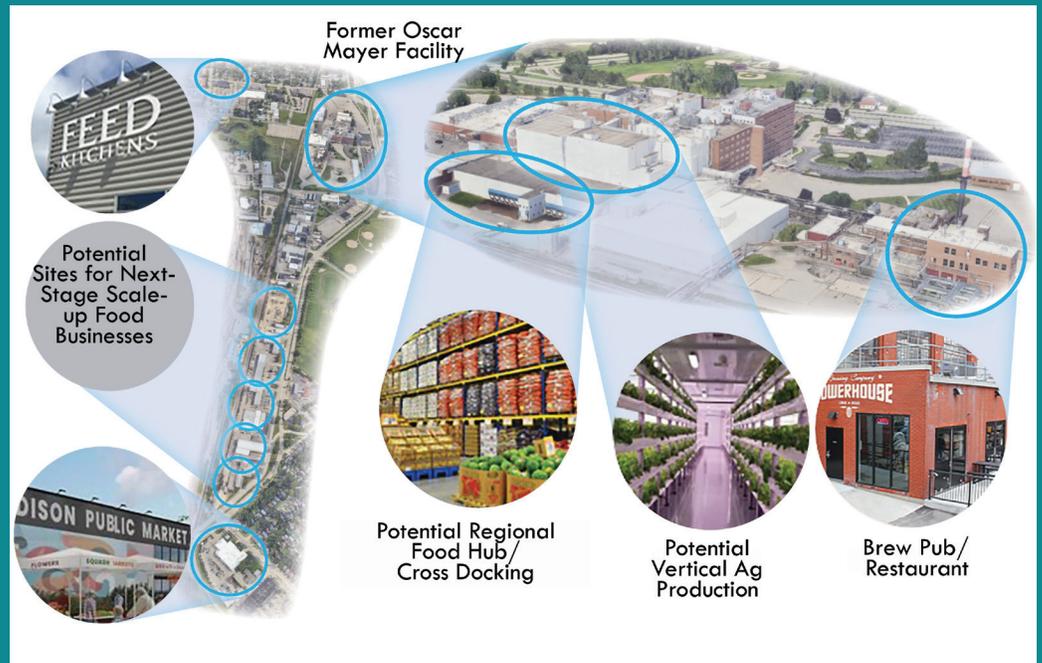
Hooper Corporation recently announced they are relocating outside of Madison. The sites create an opportunity to potentially reuse the buildings for next stage scale-up food businesses or other businesses or public facilities that need ground level space, near the downtown with a potential lower cost to entry than new construction.



## FOOD INNOVATION CORRIDOR

From the future Public Market on the south-end of the corridor to the historic food production facility, Oscar Mayer, and FEED Kitchens, all have created a food-centric energy that can be leveraged and expanded along the corridor.

As small businesses continue to grow, this area offers an opportunity to utilize existing building infrastructure to expand. The loading docks and cross docking facilities have the infrastructure in place for a regional food hub and/or wholesale warehousing to locate here. Vertical agriculture production and reuse of the powerhouse as a brewpub or locally sourced restaurant can be targeted in this location, contributing to the local food economy.



## ECONOMY & OPPORTUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

“Want to create multi-use space with light manufacturing, job opportunities, interactive activities for folks of all ages - we want to create life!”

- Focus group participant

“Hiring people who are from the neighborhood and building a renewed pipeline and workforce of people from that area”

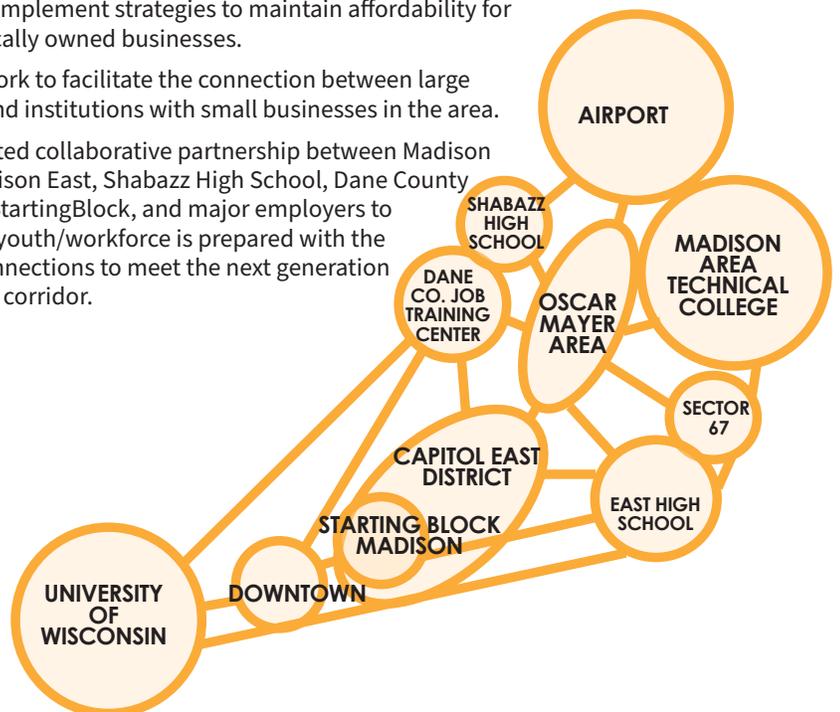
- Focus group participant

“Job creation is most important aspect of this project. Should be green jobs with a future. Need family supporting, long term living wage jobs. Should employ, develop a future for working class people who already live here.”

- Phase 1 Public Event participant

**Goal 1: Reestablish the corridor as a major economic center offering a full-spectrum of jobs and help ensure equal opportunity to prosper and be part of the redevelopment process regardless of age, race, ethnicity, and income.**

1. Create a work team or task force consisting of entrepreneurs, creatives, economic development experts, nonprofit organizations, and businesses and people of color to help shape an inclusive employment and activity district working with the city and major site developers. Work groups with expanded involvement should include cultural arts, economic development, transportation and mobility, etc.
2. Support the investigation of creating an incubation space and business support center for businesses of color and leverage financial tools to build a pipeline working with Northside Planning Council, Latino Workforce Academy, Centro Hispano, Urban League of Greater Madison, Northport /Packers Community Learning Center, Kennedy Heights Community Center, and area faith-based organizations.
3. Conduct an analysis of the economic infrastructure needs and opportunities to position the corridor for growing industry clusters including digital-driven manufacturing and IoT, creative trades and building trades, business services, health and biotech cluster, IT and gaming, and food and beverage.
4. Partner with local community and economic development organizations such as the Black Chamber, Latino Chamber, Northside Business Association and Northside Planning Council to create an outreach and awareness effort of the business and development opportunities in the planning area, targeted to businesses of color and local businesses.
5. Incorporate a Market Ready Program in the employment hub area.
6. Prioritize the expansion of existing local businesses in the planning area before other out of city/state businesses.
7. Explore innovative options to repurpose manufacturing spaces, including structured parking, urban agriculture, makerspace, artist studios, etc.
8. Assess the affordability of retail/commercial space in the area and identify and implement strategies to maintain affordability for small and locally owned businesses.
9. Over time, work to facilitate the connection between large employers and institutions with small businesses in the area.
10. Grow a targeted collaborative partnership between Madison College, Madison East, Shabazz High School, Dane County Job Center, StartingBlock, and major employers to ensure local youth/workforce is prepared with the skills and connections to meet the next generation of jobs in the corridor.



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## CULTURE & CHARACTER

# 7.

*The Northside, like many other parts of the city, has its own unique culture and identity. One of the key objectives from Strategic Assessment was to create a welcoming mixed-use district that serves the broader Northside, meets the daily needs of the existing and new residents, and enlivens and rekindles the employment district. Today's major urban employment corridors need the energy of a thriving walkable district to serve and attract companies and talent. This does not exist in the corridor today. The essence of the mixed-use district is envisioned to have a distinctive vibe and identity that fits with the culture and character of the Northside. It will be successful if it is "owned" and frequented by a diverse range of existing and future Northside residents.*

"Build a space that is for and by the people; it should speak to more than one type of group"

- Focus group participant

"Would love a multi-cultural food/music/art space. A community center with vendors, artists, and maker spaces."

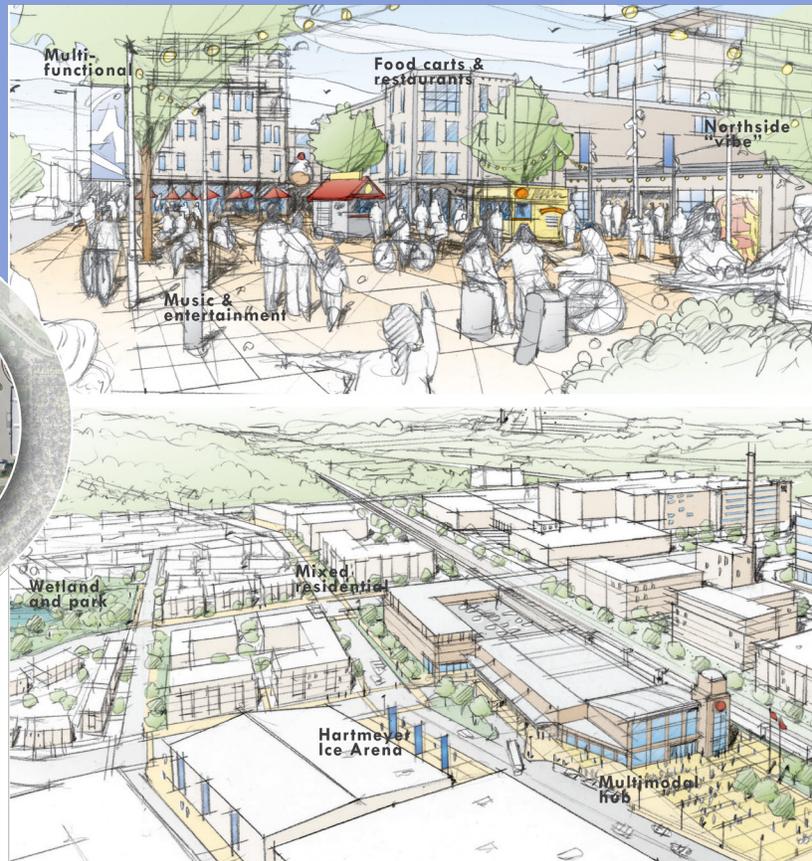
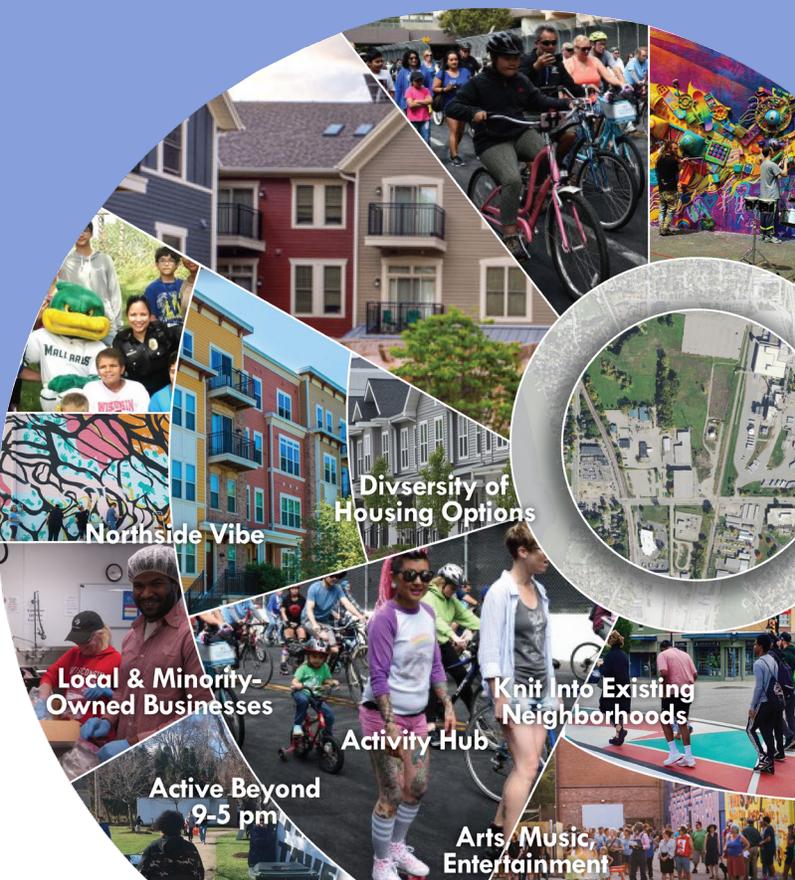
- Phase 1 Public Event participant

# CULTURE & CHARACTER RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal 1: : Create a thriving, approachable, and identifiable Northside place that reflects the community’s authentic character and vibe.**

1. Attract and grow local restaurants, music and performance venues that reflect and cater to the diverse communities of the area.
2. Ensure local arts are woven into the corridor and hub in public and private spaces, and on buildings, that reflect the community’s culture and background to create a sense of community ownership.
3. Target businesses that have a global and inclusive business model and values.
4. Create public spaces and facilities that are welcoming in appearance and through programing for a diversity of community residents.
5. Explore growing a sports and wellness sub-district with new facilities building off the Hartmeyer Ice Area that caters to a diverse array of markets and destination activities.

## MAKING THE NORTHSIDE A MIXED-USE DISTRICT FOR EVERYONE



***Creating a resilient environment that adapts to the changing climate and reducing carbon emissions is important to ensure a sustainable future for the generations to come. Climate change is affecting every community in different ways and solving for it through policy and land use is critical. One of the largest contributors to air pollution and carbon emissions in Dane County is transportation and primarily in the form on single-family occupancy vehicles. Therefore, it is critical to plan for alternative modes of transportation such transit, connected bicycle network, and smaller building blocks conducive to walking, creating a robust transportation system that reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles. The plan seeks to create compact urban environment that's close knit with its surroundings and promotes a mixed-use, walkable and human-scaled neighborhood matching its density with its future transportation system.***

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The City of Madison experienced unprecedented amounts of rain in Fall 2018. Impacts from these rain events included flooding and increased pollutant transport and erosion. Aberg Avenue, Johnson, First Street, Pennsylvania and Packers Avenue were fully or partially underwater due its low elevations or rainfall rates overwhelming the storm sewer system. Following the flooding events, the City's Engineering department began investigating a revised stormwater ordinance with new requirements to reduce volume and speed. This will apply to flood prone watersheds, including this planning area. As redevelopment occurs in the area, it will have to meet the revised stormwater requirements to minimize future rainfall impacts and reduce total suspended soils (TSS). Redevelopment projects, whenever possible, should apply stormwater management practices with the goal of increasing onsite stormwater retention (such green roofs, rain gardens, best management practices).

The Plan process took a closer look at parks and open space that benefit the overall health and livability of the community as the city continues to grow. Throughout the Phase 1 and Phase 2 process, the community expressed great desire to preserve the wetland located on the Hartmeyer property. In an effort to balance the growing housing needs of the city and desire for natural area preservation, a significant portion of the wetland and surrounding area is recommended to be integrated with a neighborhood park serving a growing need from current and future residents. The city's culturally and ethnically diverse populations utilize parks and open spaces in different ways, therefore when the Parks Division begins detailed park planning, they should consider the different programming and amenity needs desired by the City's culturally and diverse populations to create inclusive park spaces for all.

## GREEN & RESILIENT RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Goal 1: Increase parks, urban open spaces, recreational opportunities throughout the planning area.**

1. Designate a portion of the Hartmeyer property around the existing wetland as an integrated passive and active park.
2. During a future park planning process, engage a diverse mix of community members representative of the Northside to consider the layout, amenities, and accessibility features to ensure the future park space serves everyone.
3. Work with the Oscar Mayer property owners, and East Madison Little League to maintain long-term public open space for baseball.
4. Encourage multi-use spaces that serve the needs of a diversity of cultures. New community gathering spaces should be designed as multi-faceted spaces that can be used by a wide variety of residents and function as comfortable social outlets for underrepresented groups

### **Goal 2: Deploy stormwater management practices and green infrastructure techniques in development and redevelopment projects to reduce stormwater runoff into the lakes and stream and minimize impacts from intense rain events.**

1. Consider including key stormwater improvements and green roof/ grey water investments a TIF eligible expense in the area.
2. Integrate vegetation into the built environment, such as terrace plantings, living walls, and green roofs.
3. Utilize suspended pavement systems like Silva Cell or other techniques to provide stormwater control and support the growth of healthy street trees, particularly for trees planted on paved terraces.
4. Encourage practices such as bioswales, rain gardens, rain barrels, vegetation and other green infrastructure techniques in new development and areas of redevelopment.

**“Protect the wetlands and possibly expand them so there can be more useable family play areas – or – put in more green space throughout the residential areas .”**

**- Public Event participant**

**“Greenspace is a must- particularly if one cannot afford one’s own greenspace. Public greenspaces allow for and encourage interaction among community members..”**

**- Phase 1 Public Event participant**

***The recommendations in Chapters 4-8 describe “what to do” in order to advance the Redevelopment Objectives identified in the Phase 1 Strategic Assessment. The matrix in the following pages outlines the initial implementation action steps that set up a structure for “how to do it.” As described throughout this Plan, significant redevelopment is expected and encouraged throughout the entire study area. However, the City currently owns very little of the property involved, and significant City acquisitions outside of land needed for public improvements are not anticipated. As result, the City will need to position itself to constructively partner with property owners, developers, nonprofit organizations, and State and federal agencies to achieve the Plan’s goals. This includes putting teams in place that can proactively engage with the private sector, working in cooperation with State agencies for economic and environmental resources, and strategically deploying the various economic development tools the City has at its disposal to fully and continuously advance the Vision in concert with private investment.***

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Effective government requires collaboration across City agencies and cooperation with various local and State and federal agencies to advance plans. Due to the planning area’s historic and complex past, the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan relies heavily on cooperation, tools, and resources from State agencies to leverage recent grants and effectively implement the Plan. The City was awarded the Idle Sites Redevelopment Grant, and the Community Development Investment Grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) in 2018 and 2019. These grants were critical to support the City’s and developer’s efforts to restore the Oscar Mayer buildings and utility infrastructure in order to reposition the site for redevelopment. Continued State, City and developer partnerships will be critical to achieve many of the recommendations laid out in the Plan.

The historic industrial use of the corridor has left the area with potential environmental issues that will need to be assessed and remediated before redevelopment and reuse. The State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and WEDC have programs in place that can assist with remediation; similar to the earlier grants received, this will require a collaboration between the State, City, and developers to proactively apply for grants and work with the State to resolve environmental issues.

In order to transform Packers Avenue to walkable urban street with a reconfigured interchange and an east/west local street through the Oscar Mayer site from Packers Avenue to N. Sherman Avenue crossing the rail corridor, the project will require cooperation from WisDOT and the Railroad Commission. These two transportation infrastructure improvements are important to begin reestablishing the local street grid and create a walkable and inviting place.

Cooperation with WHEDA will be necessary to create the equitable employment center and residential mixed-income place envisioned in the Plan. WHEDA administers the Housing Tax Credit for the State and has tools that help small- and medium-sized businesses. Housing Tax Credits should be encouraged to be used by developers to create affordable units for low- and moderate-income households in the planning area.

Maximizing and involving State agencies and resources at an early stage will be essential. Likewise, the City has a key role to play in the area's success early on in the process. The first steps will include adopting the Oscar Mayer Special Area plan and zoning the land to implement the Plan. The City will need to utilize its tools such as establishing a Tax Increment Financing district to build the transportation, economic, and place-building infrastructure necessary and to attract the type of development desired by the community. To accomplish the desired character of the area, the Urban Design District #4 will need to be updated to align with the Plan's recommendations.

Successful redevelopment of an industrial corridor into a vibrant and inclusive mixed-use district does not happen by accident. The challenge is even higher when that corridor is at the heart of existing neighborhoods. Visionary planning, strategic public investment, intentional and targeted developer and business recruitment, attention to design and public private partnerships are necessary parts of the proactive implementation necessary to optimize tax base replacement and achieve the Vision.

## WHAT ARE SOME TOOLS AVAILABLE?

- **Opportunity Zones (OZs):** OZs is a new community investment tool that encourages long-term investment in communities nationwide. OZs provide tax incentives for new projects and enterprises within Opportunity Zones. Madison has 11 designated Opportunity Zones, with one that covers almost the entire planning area.
- **New Market Tax Credit (NMTC):** is a federal program created to attract private equity investment in low-income or rural communities, serving as a resource to help fuel job creation and economic development efforts. NMTC can enhance financing for a variety of projects, including community/infrastructure, food services, healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, and retail/commercial.
- **Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC):** is a dollar-for-dollar reduction of federal income taxes owed by owners/investors in qualified projects for tenants whose incomes are at or below 60% of County Median Income. It is an indirect federal subsidy used to finance the construction and rehabilitation of low-income affordable rental housing.
- **Community Development Investment Grant (CDI):** is a program that supports community redevelopment efforts by providing financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with an emphasis on, but not limited to, downtown community-driven efforts. Funded activities should lead to measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values and/or leveraged investment by local and private partners

Source: WEDC, WHEDA

As noted in the matrix, most of the initial action steps of putting the structures and tools in place are expected to take about a year to complete, all the while continuing to engage with private property owners to formulate the initial catalytic projects to set the right tone for future redevelopment of the area. Once these are in hand, it is expected the City will annually prepare detailed work plans that are more project-focused both in terms of specific redevelopment sites and the necessary supporting public improvements as described in the various recommendations.

ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIMEFRAME
1. <b>OMSAP Staff Team:</b> Utilizing the Capitol East District multi-department staff team model, establish a staffed team dedicated to the area that meets regularly to efficiently plan for any improvements and TID creation and coordinate public and private investments to optimize the benefit and alignment with the vision and plans.	Planning Division, Economic Development Division, Other departments as necessary	Short (0-6 months)
2. <b>Inclusive Activity Hub Work Team:</b> Establish an Inclusive Activity/Economy development implementation work team to advance efforts to build an inclusive activity hub and nurture economic opportunities for people of color and the northside community as a whole. The work team should include private sector, property owners and key nonprofit organization members.	Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development	Short (0-6 months)
3. Prepare a long-range public improvements implementation plan including general cost estimates and likely associated development projections to help inform the TID project plan.	OMSAP Staff Team	Short (0-6 months)
4. Work with Reich/ Rabin team to identify and advance a phase one catalyst development project to reposition and activate the hub, including private development and public improvements along the Commercial Avenue corridor.	OMSAP Staff Team	Short (0-6 months)
5. <b>Area wide TID:</b> Concurrent with the first major project in the area, prepare a blight study of the project area, identify potential TID boundary, and prepare a holistic project plan for the area.	Economic Development Division	Medium (6-12 months)
6. <b>Toolkit &amp; Marketing:</b> Develop a toolkit of available sources to assist with projects such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Brownfield grants, New Market Tax Credits, Opportunity Zone benefits, and other state federal grants and work in cooperation with major property owners to prepare appropriate marketing materials to position the project area in the marketplace.	Economic Development Division	Medium (6-12 months)

ACTION STEPS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIMEFRAME
7. Concurrent with the creation of a TID, determine the need for, and potentially prepare, a Statutory Redevelopment Plan for the project area.	Economic Development Division, Planning Division	Medium (6-12 months)
8. Update Urban Design District # 4 to align with the plan.	Planning Division	Medium (6-12 months)
9. Meet with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to share the plan and discuss critical improvements necessary to drive new investment and job growth to this regional employment center.	Engineering Division, Planning Division	Short (0-6 months)
10. Meet with WEDC to share the plan and discuss critical improvements necessary to drive new investment and job growth to this regional employment center.	Economic Development, Planning Division	Medium (6-12 months)
11. Hold an annual northside stakeholders meeting to keep the community apprised of upcoming projects and provide an avenue to incorporate new ideas and concerns.	Planning Division, Economic Development	Annual
12. Actively work with major property owners to help identify potential developers and users interested in the type of development reflected in the plan to activate the area.	Economic Development Division	Ongoing
13. Multimodal Transportation Facility: Work with Reich/Rabin and Hartmeyer Estate Trust to identify a site for multimodal facility and develop a strategy for the development of the facility including the relocation of the North Transfer Point.	Transportation Department - Metro Transit, Economic Development Division – Office of Real Estate Services, and Planning Division	Medium (6-12 months)
14. Hartmeyer wetland: Work with Hartmeyer Estate on the acquisition of the wetland and development of a new neighborhood park.	Parks Division, Economic Development Division - Office of Real Estate Services	Medium (6-12 months)
15. Hooper Property: Work with Hooper Corporation and potential interested purchasers to facilitate the repurposing of the properties consistent with the plan.	Planning Division, Economic Development Division – Office of Real Estate Services	Short (0-6 months)

# APPENDIX