

Unanswered Questions Posed at June 6, 2024 in-person Public Meeting

Q: What's the plan to reduce the impacts to nearby properties of the proposed shared use path?

A: For any shared use paths that are recommended in the final plan, the City would look at possible path routes that would minimize tree impacts by utilizing maintenance access paths and give consideration to the location relative to private property and existing grades.

Q: If the shared use path is in the final plan, are there plans to light it?

A: The city standard is to light all new paths for safety purposes. If the path is included in the final plan, when it is proposed for construction, we are open to ideas and consider all input and environmental concerns to consider reduce lighting or possibly consider not lighting the path.

Q: Previously it was stated that the Sauk Creek maintenance road is only used 1 or 2x per year. Why would we need a hard-surface road?

A: The maintenance roads don't need to be paved, but they need to be able to support the equipment used to complete maintenance. Therefore, a gravel base is needed. There are a variety of options of what could be on top of the gravel (soil and short grass vegetation, paved, or gravel-only). For the Sauk Creek greenway, the city will be sharing more information on the maintenance road purpose, the options, and will be looking for input from the community.

Q: Please tell me what you consider 'reasonable' access? How many feet from the water in the SCG needs to be cleared and is cost the main consideration?

A: The city needs to be able to get equipment that is 10' wide into areas where the creek needs to be stabilized for construction, and in areas where regular tree or channel maintenance needs to occur. The city will be sharing information on maintenance needs and getting community input at an upcoming public meeting.

Q: Can you clarify a comment from staff that the city can "get away with" lower-tier bike infrastructure (painted bike lanes for example) on roads with slower and less frequent traffic? When we know that truly protected bike lanes – with a concrete barrier, grade separation, or curbs, not only lead to greater use, but are also safer. Why not strive for excellence?

A: Protected bike lanes are not generally installed on lower volume, less busy roads in part because these routes tend to be safer for cyclists. In part, this infrastructure is costly and is prioritized where most needed. However, protected bike lanes could also be explored for roads with slower and less frequent traffic such as where more frequent accidents between vehicles and bikes take place, there are destinations people tend to access by bike, including children, and other factors.

Q: When does the City Council actually see the cost of the plan for things like:

- East-west bridge in Sauk Creek Greenway
- Maintenance of the creek stabilization project

A: After the plan is adopted by Common Council, its actions will be considered for an upcoming budget cycle. Many factors are considered in terms of implementation timing such as priority of completing the work. For example, the risk of additional flooding and continued degradation of the environment make creek stabilization a big priority. There may also be competing Engineering projects that are considered priorities as well.

Q: How are archaeological concerns determined?

A: These are areas in the vicinity of previously identified archaeological or human burial sites. Ground-disturbing activities in these areas may need additional review, possibly working with the Wisconsin Office of the State Archaeologist and the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Office.

Q: I see that UDD 6 has requirements for signage and lighting that are applicable to University Avenue but not suitable for residential areas adjacent to Eau Claire and Sheboygan Ave. What is the rationale for including Sheboygan Ave. in UDD 6?

A: The Urban Design District (UDD) 6 guidelines and requirements do not apply to residential buildings with 8 or fewer units. The multi-unit properties along Sheboygan Avenue are shown to potentially be added to the UDD 6 boundary to ensure if redevelopment occurs that it occurs at a scale that is sensitive to the context of the surrounding area and the more recent development that has occurred in the area, and that it incorporates a higher level of design aesthetic. While UDD 6 includes requirements and guidelines that speak to lighting and signage, it primarily speaks to the design characteristics of such elements. The Sign Code (MGO Ch. 31) and the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance (MGO 29.36) outline the permitted signage and lighting, including things like types of signage, the maximum allowed size of signs, and brightness of lighting, etc., for example. Generally, the Sign Code and Lighting Ordinance will set the baseline for what is allowed, and the UDD will provide additional design details/requirements that need to be met, in addition, if signage or lighting were proposed.

Q: How do you measure, equity, density, etc.? What targets do you use for 10, 20, 30 years?

A: Staff is unsure about what this question is asking in relation to equity. For residential development density is most commonly measured in units per acre. Buildings in general can be measured in floor area ratio, which is the ratio of the total usable floor area of a building to the total area of the lot. It should be noted that the City's zoning code does not actually use either of these metrics. Instead, it focuses more on building form, using metrics like building height and setbacks from lot lines, although many districts that allow

residential development do have a maximum number of units that are allowed without needing to request conditional use approval. The city does not have any specific numeric targets for density, though the Comprehensive Plan does have very general strategies, including "facilitate compact growth to reduce the development of farmland."

Q: Why the push for first floor commercial space? All these spaces seem to be empty. Where are the commercial cores?

A: The West Area Plan maps more mixed-use on the Generalized Future Land Use Map than is currently shown, primarily in Research Park. However, the mixed-use designation is for the area, not for individual buildings. An individual building within a mixed-use area could be all employment, all residential, or have a mix of multiple uses. Only limited street frontages in the West Area, denoted as "Commercial Core" frontages, would need to have ground floor commercial uses. These limited Commercial Core areas are designated to maintain activity centers - nodes where more goods and services needed for daily living are concentrated.

Some of the existing vacant first floor commercial space in various relatively new buildings is due to the fact that developers are allowed to construct more residential dwellings in a mixed-use building than in a purely residential building in mixed-use and commercial zoning districts.

Q: What data are you using to determine the High Injury Network?

A: More information on the High Injury Network (HIN) can be found on the City's Vision Zero Projects [web page](#). It should be emphasized that the map is not a high **crash** network map. The map is scheduled to be updated starting later this year in collaboration with the UW's Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory.

Q: Does the city wish to widen bike lanes on High Point and Westfield Roads? How will this impact current sidewalks and street parking?

A: The May Public Review Draft of the West Area Plan removed the bicycle path from the Sauk Creek Greenway. With that removal, planned All Ages and Abilities north-south bicycle connections were shifted to High Point Road and Westfield Road. The May plan draft calls for removing parking from one side of Westfield Road to allow for buffered bicycle lanes, which are necessary to make that route All Ages and Abilities under the City's recently adopted [Complete Green Streets](#) policy (see page 24). Similarly, parking along one or both sides of High Point Road needs to be removed to install an All Ages and Abilities bicycle facility there. A more robust facility, such as protected bike lanes or a side path, is needed for High Point because it has a higher traffic count (note that High Point Road does not currently have bike lanes along its entire length from Mineral Point Road to Old Sauk

Road). Sidewalk changes related to the All Ages and Abilities bicycle actions are not expected on either road.

Q: Given the First Student bus and school start debate, how does the West Area Plan reduce our dependence on bussing?

A: Bussing of Madison Metropolitan School District students is governed by the School Board and School District policy. The City's role related to school bussing is more indirect. For example, the City can make improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle network to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school, which can allow the district to potentially lessen the need for bussing in the future. The City can also allow for more residences in close proximity to schools, which makes it easier for students to walk or bike to school instead of taking the bus (it should be noted, however, that most new market-rate multifamily homes have a very low number of student residents).

Q: Will the planned overpass of the Beltline be considered when considering whether to build the east-west shared use path connection through the SCG?

A: Yes – the shared-use path and bicycle map is an interconnected network that will best serve residents if it is easy and safe to use, which includes providing more routes to cross the Beltline barrier without having to use existing congested, auto-oriented interchanges.