



DATE: July 23, 2009

TO: City Council and Port Authority

FROM: Larry Lee, Director of Community Development
Jill Hutmacher, Acting Port Authority Administrator

RE: Airport South District Plan

I. Issues

- A. Does the City Council and Port Authority Board regard the extension of Lindau Lane and/or realignment of 24th Avenue as key projects necessary to achieve the overall objectives for the Airport South District Plan?
- B. Are there feasible ways to fund these place-making improvements?
- C. Are there other uses of these same funds that would accomplish equal or better results in accomplishing the City's or District Plan's objectives?

II. Recommendation

Based on analysis and an internal discussion of goal achievement and cost/benefit, staff concludes that the Lindau Lane greenway is important for achieving the District Plan's place-making and traffic circulation objectives. The 24th Avenue realignment would not be an efficient use of public funds.

Some of the benefits of realigning 24th Avenue, such as an enhanced transit station, can be achieved in alternate ways by adding a small increment of new right-of-way and leaving the street and utilities in the current locations. Other benefits, such as taking advantage of the potential for shared parking in the east Mall ramp, are outside the City's control. Staff concludes that the cost-benefit ratio of realigning 24th Avenue is difficult to justify. There are other ways of using the approximately \$9 million construction cost and undetermined additional right-of-way acquisition cost that would better meet the City's objectives and deliver more benefit to the City and District.

Staff recommends that the City Council:

- A. Direct staff and the consultant to proceed with a development framework that includes a Lindau Lane greenway, but retains the existing alignment for 24th Avenue;
- B. Direct staff to begin parcel acquisition negotiations with Duke Realty Company;
- C. Direct staff to consider use of Fund 435 (liquor and lodging tax revenues) for all or part of the acquisition and construction costs of the Lindau Lane greenway.
- D. Direct staff and the consultant to continue to work with transit providers and the Mall of America Company (MOAC) to design service and capacity improvements for the Mall of America hub.

III. Recap of Development Framework Decision Options

- A. Proceed only with the Lindau Lane extension
- B. Proceed only with 24th Avenue realignment
- C. Proceed with both the Lindau Lane extension and 24th Avenue realignment. A potential sub-option to proceed with the 24th Avenue realignment only if the Mall of America and owner of the Adjoining Lands petition the City to relocate 24th Avenue and agree to dedicate the required rights-of-way.
- D. Proceed with neither the Lindau Lane extension nor the 24th Avenue realignment
- E. Delay decision pending receipt of additional information

IV. Additional Information

Utilities in 24th Avenue Right-of-Way

The Council asked for additional detail showing the location of utilities in the 24th Avenue right-of-way. The attached illustration shows the size, depth and location of these utilities and how they diminish the ability to reuse the existing 24th Avenue right-of-way without relocating these utilities.

Stakeholder Input

The Planning Commission and Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission held a joint meeting on July 16 to hear an update on the ASDP and the key concepts being considered for the draft plan. Staff presented material similar to what has been presented to the Port Authority and City Council. Commissioners engaged staff in a discussion of the benefits and challenges of the concepts. Discussion points included more detail on the proposed cross-section of the Lindau Lane Greenway (to be illustrated later in the plan process), questioning land uses allowed in the district, discussing airport noise and its impact on the plan, and bike and pedestrian connectivity to locations outside of the district. The meeting concluded with the commissions making a joint motion recommending the Lindau Lane Greenway, but not the 24th Avenue rerouting. The motion was approved (copy of meeting minutes attached).

A number of public and private entities are interested in the outcome of these plan alternatives. Staff met with the Metropolitan Airports Commission, MOAC, Duke Realty Company, McGough Development, and Metro Transit during June and July. In addition, background information has been posted on the City's Airport South web site to inform interested parties so that they can be aware of the issues being considered by the Council and Port Authority. A notice of the July 28 joint meeting was mailed to stake holders, including property owners in the vicinity of the Lindau Lane greenway and relocated 24th Avenue. Staff recommends that the Council and Port Board provide an opportunity for stakeholder comment during the joint meeting.

Staff met with transit providers on July 14 to discuss the Lindau Lane greenway and 24th Avenue options. The discussion focused on 24th Avenue and the MOA transit station. Benefits of the 24th Avenue realignment pertaining to transit include: less travel time (some routes would stop without going through the MOA security gate), better transit visibility, and more space to operate and layover. In the concept for realigning 24th Avenue, the old-24th right-of-way would become a transit mall. An alternate approach of using part of 24th Avenue for bus transfers and adding a transit station in the existing west boulevard of 24th Avenue was also discussed. Improving the pedestrian environment between 24th Avenue and the LRT platforms and MOA entrance is considered to be crucial. The bus transfer area

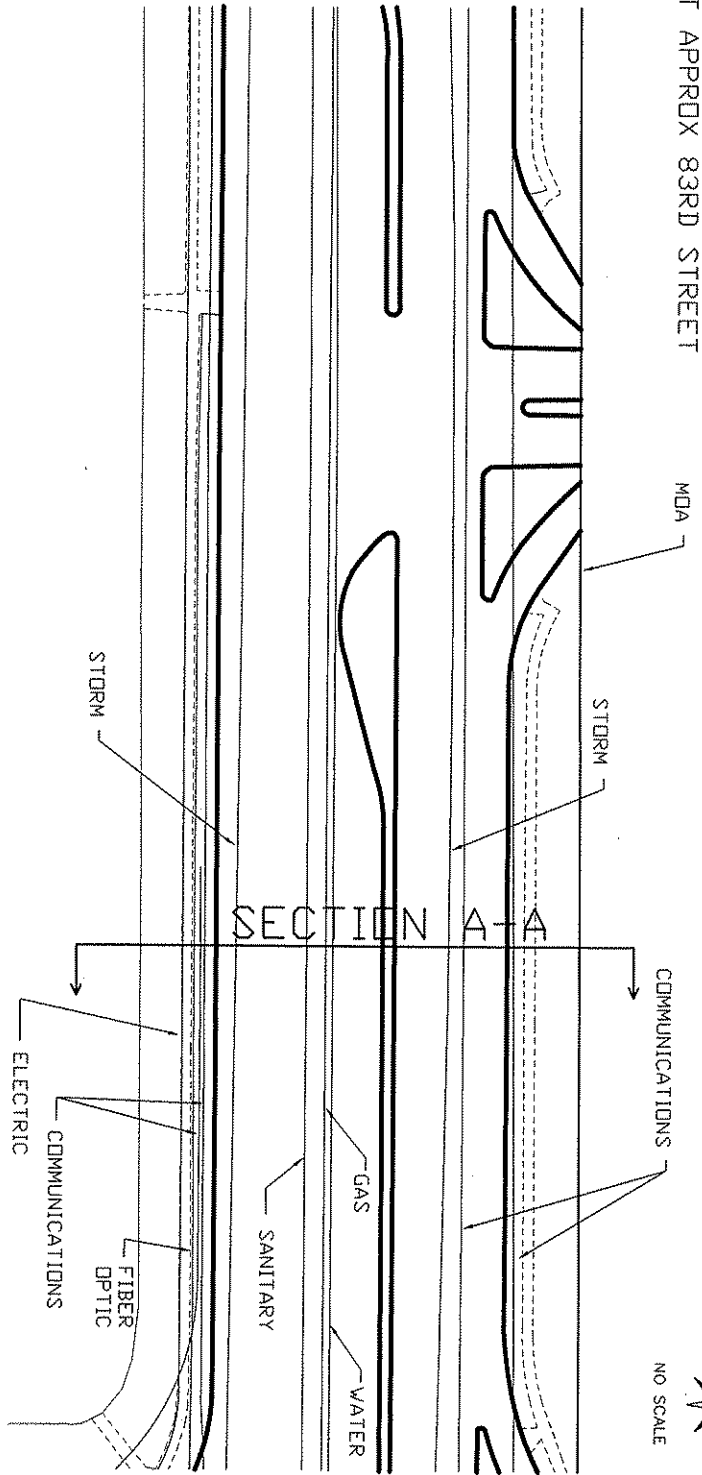
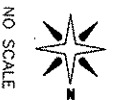
could be built without additional ROW in 24th Avenue or with a slight shift of 24th Avenue to the East to make room. All of the provider representatives agreed that many of the transit service goals of the 24th Avenue realignment could be accomplished without the realignment.

Staff learned that the MOA station is being considered as a hub connecting LRT with four Bus Rapid Transit lines: Cedar Avenue, Riverview (to St Paul), American Boulevard, and Chicago Avenue. Cedar BRT is being developed now. The other three BRT lines are in Metro Transit's early planning process. The increased hub status of the MOA station led to a discussion that the new transit storefront and transfer area could become a level-loading BRT station. In any case, the MOA transit station is at capacity today, so additional space is needed.

The transit providers were asked to explore future agency or federal funding to enhance or expand the MOA transit station. The meeting concluded with a general consensus that the Lindau Lane Greenway would have valuable benefits, including benefits for transit, and that the goals of the 24th Avenue realignment could be accomplished without the cost and uncertainty of the full realignment option.

24TH AVENUE

CROSS SECTION AT APPROX 83RD STREET

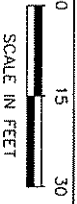


MDA
PARKING
RAMP

SOUTHBOUND
24TH AVENUE

NORTHBOUND
24TH AVENUE

SECTION A-A



12-4" PIPES
CONCRETE CAPPED
COMMUNICATIONS

66' CONCRETE
STORM SEWER

COMMUNICATIONS

12" CAST IRON
WATERMAIN

21" CONCRETE
SANITARY SEWER

4" GAS

900 PAIR
COMMUNICATIONS

72" CONCRETE
STORM SEWER

COMMUNICATIONS

FIBER
OPTIC

ELECTRIC
POWER

COMMUNICATIONS

—25—
—20—
—15—
—10—
—5—
0—
5—
10—
15—
20—



PLANNING COMMISSION SYNOPSIS

CALL TO ORDER

TTAC Chairperson Svensson called the joint Planning Commission/TTAC Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on July 16, 2009 in the Haeg Conference Room of the Bloomington Civic Plaza.

TTAC COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Svensson, Nordstrom, Rindels, Willette, Hazen, Fricke, Marsh

TTAC COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Klassen, Lucas, Catania, Saccoman, Oleson, Felkner

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Baloga

STAFF PRESENT: Lee, Hawbaker, Sharlin, Schindler, Hutmacher, Farnham, Rudlang, Grams

ITEM 1

6:00 p.m.

APPLICANT: City of Bloomington

REQUEST: Joint Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission/Planning Commission study meeting regarding the Airport South District Plan (ASDP)

DISCUSSION BY THE COMMISSION:

Sharlin described the boundaries of the Airport South District and stated the plan has five major goals and 21 main objectives. He explained consulting group WRT has been hired to help develop the plan. He stated the vision statement is to transform the existing suburban area into an area that is more urban in nature. He stated a summary of the main goals of the district plan are to transform the area into a high-density, mass transit oriented district with connectivity to the MPLS/St. Paul Airport and to accelerate or facilitate development within the district.

Sharlin stated the development framework is based on three concepts that were presented to City Council last fall. The three concepts are: building on existing assets, integrating an expanded Mall of America (MOA), and provide a connection from the MOA to Bloomington Central Station (BCS). He stated the two key areas the commissions are to focus on are (1) the development projecting/phasing and (2) the realignment of 24th Avenue/Lindau Lane extension.

Sharlin stated development phasing was originally set for year 2030, but is changed to year 2050. He broke down the phasing into ten year increments. Some highlights of a full build-out situation: over a 200 percent increase in office development from today through year 2050, an increase of 75 percent in retail, a 110 percent increase in hotel, and a 250 percent increase in residential. Projected residential development is seen to be in the eastern portion of the district. Two development catalyst projects in the district are Bloomington Central Station and MOA Phase II. The projections in the phasing are used as a planning tool for infrastructure and development improvements.

Rudlang presented the two major street improvement concepts including (1) the Lindau Lane extension concept and (2) a 24th Avenue concept and asked for comments and recommendations from the commissions. He demonstrated the Lindau Lane extension concept shows an extension to 30th Avenue or 31st Avenue (the Lindau Greenway) as well as the concept of bowing 24th Avenue away from the MOA. He stressed they feel one or both of these street improvements are critical to aid in future development. The Lindau Lane extension is intended as a place-making opportunity. The proposed improvements bring traffic in a more direct way to the area and may decrease congestion on American Boulevard. Rudlang stated the proposed street improvements are expensive, but a key landowner is motivated to sell so acting in a timely manner is important.

Rudlang presented the proposed 24th Avenue concept with benefits including shielding the east ramp from view, creating building pads for development, doubling the development street frontage, increasing vehicular access to the adjoining lands and decreasing congestion on 24th Avenue by taking busses off 24th Avenue as they enter the MOA security gate, and maximizing the east parking ramp which is currently underutilized. The challenges are the costs and cooperation of the anchors for shared parking. Rudlang stated comments and recommendations from the commission will be relayed to the City Council and Port Authority who will be having a joint meeting on July 28, 2009 to discuss these concepts and to make commitments for the direction of the Airport South District Plan.

Felkner asked staff to comment on where Phase II of the MOA fits into the street concepts presented this evening. Sharlin stated Phase II of the MOA is located adjacent to the IKEA building to the east and north of the current MOA. Rudlang added negotiations with the remaining parcel of Phase II are ongoing and are being looked at in phases, rather than an all at once project.

Rindels asked for comments from staff regarding the apparent lack of bike/pedestrian friendly amenities with the street concepts. Sharlin stated the bike/pedestrian connectivity concept applies within the ASDP area and the focus has been on connectivity within the district. Sharlin stated the current infrastructure limits connectivity from outside the district at this time, but will be considered when improvements are made. Rudlang stated the intersection designs for the concepts have not yet been determined and the specifics will come later after the general direction is determined. Farnham ensured the commissioners green streets and streetscaping will be included in detailed plans that will follow.

Fricke asked staff to clarify the benefits of bowing 24th Avenue to the east and expressed concern the costs of doing so may outweigh the benefits and stated many of the benefits can be realized without realignment. Sharlin stated the main benefit would be the double sided street frontage for development and potential for shared parking for the new development with the east ramp of the MOA which could shield the view of the ramp.

Catania asked staff to comment on the land owner's position regarding the 24th Avenue realignment concept. Rudlang stated the land owner currently is the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), but the MOA has an option on the land. The current belief is that MOA will likely be the owner of the land in the future and they have mixed feelings about the realignment. He stated the MOA is aware of the potential benefits and challenges and may want financial compensation.

Klassen asked about the status of lowering Lindau Lane in the Phase II plan of the MOA. Sharlin stated the concept is still being considered, but it would be in a much later phase of the plan. Rudlang stated the character of Lindau Lane changes as you move eastward from 22nd Avenue.

Oleson asked staff to comment on developer interest in the ASDP with the current economic climate we are experiencing. Larry Lee, Community Development Director, explained he recently read a ULI (Urban Land Institute) article on this very subject and offered to have copies distributed to all the commissioners. He stated the gist of the article was that in the past the vision was an office with a park, while the new vision is an office in a place. Lee explained ULI is very good at identifying trends and the City relies on them for their insight.

Rindels asked staff to comment regarding protecting industrial uses as it was a big issue during the Target discussions and asked why industries like Polar Fab are not protected for industrial use. Sharlin stated different areas were designated in previous plans as industrial parks; western Bloomington (Target area) and central Bloomington (James area). In Airport South industrial properties developed in the late 1960's on smaller parcels. The area was not shown as an industrial park and has changed in the last 10-20 years with the development of the MOA and BCS. Industrial uses are not compatible with the character of the area. The study team is including the possibility of flex-tech development in the district which could include medical and

medical research facilities as part of the office mixed use land use designation. Hawbaker stated it has become a question of economics. Hawbaker stated your typical industrial development is looking for land that has a lower per square foot value than what is available in the ASDP area. Klassen voiced concern regarding potentially zoning out tech/industrial uses if the comprehensive plan guides the land use as something other than commercial/office. He stated tech/industrial developments like to co-locate near one another and if eventually only one remains they will leave. Farnham stated there is a provision called flex tech that would allow a business such as Polar Fab to exist in the district.

Oleson asked staff to comment on why the Lindau Lane extension is not being considered to connect to the Bloomington Central Station (BCS) and ultimately to 84th Avenue. Rudlang stated the City has asked a traffic consultant to look into the possibility of extending Lindau Lane to 34th, but the consultant stated the intersection would not work. Rudlang stated BCS was initially not keen on the idea of the extension being connected to their site, but has recently warmed slightly to the idea.

Oleson asked staff to comment regarding potentially adding more congestion to Lindau Lane by extending it. Rudlang stated one of the main concepts of the plan is called the fine grain network which disperses traffic by creating many options for drivers.

Lucas commented he concurs with Commissioner Fricke that the 24th Avenue realignment does not make economic sense to pursue at this time. He expressed concern that perhaps we are not thinking big enough or bold enough over extending Lindau Lane to the east. He encouraged staff and consultants to dream and create a vision so everyone can get excited about the concept. Lee stated there is six months left to the completion of the study and by that timeframe a clearer vision should be available. Lee pointed out that if done correctly, pedestrians/bikers/joggers will use green space near an airport runway like near Lake Hiawatha and Cedar Lake in Minneapolis as well as numerous places all over the Country like Mt. Vernon Trail in Washington D.C. by Reagan National Airport.

Rindels asked if there were bicyclists on the greenway, where would they be going as there is no inter-district connection. Sharlin stated there is a regional bike trail being planned in the southwest metro that intends to connect the airport region with Edina and Eden Prairie. He stated the Minneapolis park system also has trails connecting to Fort Snelling. The idea of inter-district connectivity will need to be addressed in the plan.

Klassen stated the greenway should connect to BCS Park at a minimum and if that is not possible, create a north/south greenway on 28th Avenue. He asked if Long Meadow Lake can be used for recreational purposes. Larry Lee stated the lake is too shallow for boating recreational use, but wildlife is abundant. Sharlin stated the study team has been working with USFWS coordinating this project.

Marsh stated she does not support the 24th Avenue realignment. She has concern if a green area under a runway is a good idea. She stated there is a lot of vacancies in the Metro Area for retail, office and residential. She questioned whether more retail is needed near the MOA as it so large already. She expressed caution about spending so much money when there is talk of issuing bonds. Sharlin stated they are trying to create a 24-hour place with a mix of uses. He stated there is a need to capitalize on the assets located in the district. The plan creates a "roadmap" for development in the area. Lee stated the commercial development potential in the district represents 65 percent of the City growth potential and this development will keep taxes lower for residential properties.

Klassen asked staff to comment regarding the fact that the district has been zoned for high-density for some time, but new development has not chosen to locate here. He noted that two new developments have recently been approved in the Normandale Lake District. Lee stated the office market for Normandale Lake already exists with close proximity to employees in Edina, Eden Prairie and Minnetonka. Sharlin stated Ceridian is an example of a significant office development built within the last ten years in the district. He stated future development opportunities could take advantage of the assets in the district.

Svensson stated she would support extending the greenway as far east as possible to create a sense of place. She supports integrating the MOA phases into the planning of the area and agreed that 28th Avenue could also be a possible north/south green corridor connection to the area. She suggested looking at an 86th Street connection to create continuity from Bloomington west of Cedar Avenue to the ASD now and in the future.

Rindels stated we need to leverage LRT. He asked where would it go 40 years from today. He stated we are currently putting BRT on Cedar Avenue and asked what is the future of LRT. Rudlang stated BRT is an extension of LRT. Sharlin stated there is a transit corridor on the ring route along American Boulevard running parallel to I-494 that could become an LRT route in the future if funding becomes available. He stated it is important to consider how it can be tied into LRT now and in the future.

Fricke stated he is in favor of the Lindau Lane extension concept. He stated it would break up the large blocks creating developable parcels and with the parcels on the market now it is an opportune time to purchase the land.

Oleson asked staff to comment on the possibility of an international conference center on the Kelly farm site and whether it is the City's role in attracting business/development. Lee stated it works best when the City works in conjunction with a developer who owns the land.

Felkner stated he agrees with Fricke stating we have nothing to lose by extending Lindau to the east.

Nordstrom stated he agrees the Lindau Lane extension becomes the east/west anchor for the district. He supported the idea of using 28th Avenue as a north/south greenway and felt the two greenways need to be tied together.

ACTIONS OF THE COMMISSION:

A motion was made and seconded to recommend moving forward with the Lindau Lane extension and to not move forward with the 24th Avenue realignment. Motion carried 12-0-1. (Catania abstaining)

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Prepared By: MH **Reviewed By:** BS

Approved By Planning Commission: _____

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