



## STAFF REPORT

DATE: 04/25/2022

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS – DISCUSSION ITEM**

**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Molly Just, Planning Director  
Ben Hetzel, City Planner  
**AGENDA ITEM:** Comprehensive Plan Implementation in the Village Planning Area – Pedestrian Access, Design Standards, Draft Code Review

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#### **GENERAL BACKGROUND:**

The City of Lake Elmo 2040 Comprehensive Plan recommends the adoption of Overlay Districts in the Village Planning Area, generally following three sub-areas – the Old Village District, the Elmo Station District, and the Civic District. The Overlay Districts should focus on what makes the areas unique and provide specific standards to promote the uniqueness and implement the area specific recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff have created a map (Attachment 1) to assist in the evaluation of the area as it relates to pedestrian access and building placement.

#### **PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**

The Comprehensive Plan places a strong focus on improving pedestrian connections and access between all three districts in the Village Planning Area. Vitality of the Old Village is dependent upon the increased residential density in the adjacent districts. Providing a more walkable and pedestrian friendly experience will bring an important concentration of people to the Old Village, needed for the success of the businesses and growing its economic presence. Capitalizing on existing pedestrian access and expanding pedestrian access to and in the area was a focus of discussion at the April 11 Planning Commission meeting. Chapter 6: Parks, Trails & Open Space provides guidance for future pedestrian access. The guidance is as follows and depicted in the plan:

1. Regional Trail Search Corridor along Stillwater Blvd.
  - a. Identified as a Road Separated Trail
2. Regional Trail Search Corridor along Lake Elmo Ave N
  - a. Identified as a Sidewalk
3. Local Trail Search Corridor along Future Parkway
  - a. Identified as an off-road trail or sidewalk
  - b. Potential area of connection identified at north end of Parkway and Stillwater Blvd
4. Local Trail Search Corridor along 39<sup>th</sup> St N
5. Greenway identified along Lake Elmo Ave N

#### **DESIGN STANDARDS**

The majority of the Old Village District and a portion of the Civic District is designated as Village-Mixed Use according to the Comprehensive Plan. Village-Mixed Use provides a mix of commercial/business and residential uses that benefit from proximity to each other. Future development should be designed in a manner to enhance and preserve the historic character of Lake Elmo Avenue in the Old Village. There is opportunity to fill existing gaps with similarly scaled buildings that are consistent with the key features of existing buildings. Attached is Chapter 5 of City of Lake Elmo Design Guidelines and Standards Manual.

This chapter applies to new development in this area. Staff would like the Planning Commission to markup what is liked about the guidelines and provide it to staff.

**DRAFT CODE REVIEW**

Also provided is a draft revision to the current Article XII Village Mixed-Use District with the addition of the Village Medium Density Residential (VMDR) and Village High Density Residential (VHDR). Currently, there is no VMDR or VHDR district. VMDR and VHDR are required in order to develop the Elmo Station District. Staff asks the Planning Commission to provide a markup of this attachment. Focus should be on the use table in order to enable the vitality that is desired in the area.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Village Planning Area Map
2. Future Trail Map 6-8 of Comprehensive Plan
3. Proposed Green Network Map 6-9 of Comprehensive Plan
4. Future Land Use Map 3-5- Village Planning Area
5. Chapter 5 of City of Lake Elmo Design Guidelines and Standards Manual
6. Draft of current Village Mixed-Use District code with Village Medium Density Residential and Village High Density Residential Districts