

Grandview Update September 2015

Public Works Site – Redevelopment Planning

This month, the City Council discussed the direction of the former Public Works site at Eden and Arcadia avenues in a work session. This was a follow-up discussion after direction was given in June to continue pursuing a public/private combination of uses for the vacant site. The preferred scenario includes five core elements:

- New, multi-generational, multi-purpose community facility (at least 60,000 square feet);
- New, outdoor public space including public plaza and transportation improvements;
- New parking structure for shared parking, including potential Metro Transit Park-n-Ride;
- Access to railroad right-of-way in case of future transit;
- New multi-family residential on the south portion of the site (approximately 170 units)

Staff presented new materials that begin to bring shape to this scenario and illustrate the scope of a new mixed-use project. While these architectural concepts are simply a starting point and far from complete, they illustrate how a combination of public and private uses could exist on the 3.3-acre site. The presentation materials from the work session are [found HERE](#). Conceptual sketches and drawings are [found HERE](#).

After a lengthy discussion, the City Council appears to generally agree that pursuit of a mixed-use project that contains significant public and private elements should continue. The preferred community facility should be flexible in nature so that it can be used for multiple community purposes. The new facility should be welcoming and inviting for all generations. It would likely replace the existing Edina Art Center and Edina Senior Center facilities. Additional space would be included to provide for future generational programming. Since most community-oriented facilities operate at a loss, a limited operational subsidy is likely but should be minimized.

The City Council also seems to generally agree that a facility of this type will be most successful with strong partners. It was noted that Frauenshuh has effectively completed their collaborative planning efforts and should continue to be considered as the development partner if the project advances. In the months ahead, the potential for philanthropic donors and grants should be explored while traditional and non-traditional financing is studied. Possible restaurant/café operators and other potential tenants to supplement the community facilities should also be explored. If a high degree of new public debt is needed, it is likely that a referendum will be conducted to ensure taxpayer support.

With the potential of the City-owned site better understood, attention will shift to transportation planning for the whole Grandview District. This pause will allow the catalytic nature of the public/private project to be examined in its broader context. In the weeks ahead, a transportation planning team is likely to be selected.

No immediate action will be taken regarding the City-owned site until the district-wide transportation study is completed. Additional information will be presented to the City Council in late-Spring 2016 for additional consideration.

Grandview District-Wide Transportation Study

The City received proposals from four planning & engineering firms in response to the [RFI issued in August](#). The scope of the work is rooted in the 7 Guiding Principles and will further investigate the transportation concepts identified in 2012 Development Framework. The responding firms include:

Kimley Horn Associates
LHB with Nelson Nygaard and Alta Planning
SRF Consulting with Cuningham Group and Community Design Group
WSB & Associates

A review team made up of City staff and representatives from the Planning and Transportation commissions will interview at least three of the respondents and make a recommendation to City Council in October. Work on this 6-month endeavor is anticipated to begin in November and conclude in May 2016.