



April 29, 2018

TO: Residents of the Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Yahara Neighborhood

FROM: From Brad Hinkfuss – President, SASY Neighborhood Association

RE: City of Madison Future Land Use Plan for our neighborhood

This is an important document that is going to affect all of us who live and work in the SASY area, but first, a little bit of background for context. Please don't skip the next few paragraphs.

For the past two years the City of Madison has been engaged in a planning effort called the Future Land Use Plan (FLU), which is part of the comprehensive plan update. The public interface of this project was termed, Imagine Madison (<https://www.imaginemadisonwi.com/>). It was intended as a public listening initiative to gather the opinions of all residents in planning the future of Madison. The State of Wisconsin requires that such updates be done every 10 years. This is not zoning, but it is closely related to zoning in that the plan ascribes general types of land use, densities and building types across all of the city. The FLU is currently in draft form, with additional work to refine it until a targeted adoption in July of this year.

For most people this is all very dry, I know. Our point in bringing it to your attention is that such plans are also the fulcrum for change; change that will occur all over the city, and change in our neighborhood.

When we talk about change we're talking about growth. Growth that has already arrived and that which is on its way. We have seen a rich influx of new residents who really want to live here. They patronize the businesses, they fill the new jobs and they buy homes or rent apartments. In short order, they become us and we're all better for it. In most cases, the SASY Council has embraced this new development; we strive only to engage other residents and to help tailor it.

But you can't talk about growth without also talking about density and building form, and this is where the conversation turn back to the FLU plan. Madison is forecast to add 70,000 residents by 2040. Given the prevailing sentiment that higher density is better than suburban sprawl, the question becomes one of *where* those new residents will live and what the buildings will look like that they live in. The FLU plan has a great deal to say about that.

Those of us involved in SASY have reviewed the changes proposed for our neighborhood through the FLU. If you look at the draft future land use map (<https://www.imaginemadisonwi.com/workbook-comparison-map>), not much looks different under a cursory review. Most areas currently labeled *Low Density Residential or Neighborhood*

*Mixed Use*, for example, stay labeled the same way in the proposed plan. Only a few limited areas actually shift proposed uses.

However, what is not so evident is how the definitions of those categories have changed. For example, consider the changes in the following categories between the 2006 version (current) and the proposed 2018 version:

	2006	2018
Community Mixed Use (CMU)	60 units/acre	130 units/acre 2-6 stories tall
Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU)	40 units/acre	70 units/acre, 2-4 stories tall
Medium Density Residential	16-40 units/acre	20-90 units/acre 2-5 stories tall

Now consider that in the context of our neighborhood. For example, all of the Schenk's Corners area is categorized as Community Mixed Use (CMU). There have been several new 4-story developments that have been built in this area over the past ten years that stretched the limits of the 2006 definitions and required conditional use applications to proceed. These include apartment buildings like Cornerstone (kitty-corner to the Harmony Bar) or the Hudson (across from Monona Bank). Under the proposed 2018 guidelines, buildings could be built up to 6 stories tall and at significantly higher densities than anything permitted previously. Further, there would be far less regulation in the proposed new FLU plan on larger-scaled developments than exists today.

Those of us actively involved in SASY find the proposed scale of changes alarming. We feel that it will quickly lead to dramatic changes in some areas of the neighborhood – areas that are central to our neighborhood's identity. The consensus of the SASY board is that some of these proposed land use changes should be dialed back. Why? Because when a higher development potential is assigned to a property or an area, it virtually guarantees that that area will be developed much more intensely. Under the proposed new densities, consider how much a developer might be willing to pay for a few historic single family homes, or older affordable office space, knowing that those same lots can now hold an apartment building 6 stories tall with up to 130 units per acre.

The critical concern is not only with what will be built, but also what will be lost in an effort to assemble larger parcels of land. We are convinced that many of the older homes and affordable commercial properties here in our neighborhood will be threatened or razed under the proposed plan for higher-density development. Our buildings and infrastructure define an important part of our neighborhood identity. They present opportunities for affordable housing and start up business ventures. These buildings anchor our local history, and in many cases they are unique to our neighborhood.

All this being said, we must also acknowledge the need for increased density and ongoing development in our neighborhood. While we welcome all the residents in the new buildings we've seen recently, as well as those yet to come, our response to the city's proposal is to

reduce or modify the proposed land use changes and densities in 13 specific areas, as detailed in the attached Exhibits 1, 2 and 3.

SASY is an organization that strives to be representative of the neighborhood, and to engage neighbors in topics of common interest. Members of the SASY Preservation & Development Committee have met several times to analyze and discuss the City's proposed changes to the land use classifications that apply to our neighborhood, and consider modifications where necessary. From those discussions we drafted the set of recommendations that you now have before you. The SASY board recognizes that our positions must be open and encouraging to all neighborhood input. This is the call for your thoughts, your input, on the topic. Change is inevitable in any dynamic city. We invite you to be part of that change! Please write me ([bradhinkfuss@gmail.com](mailto:bradhinkfuss@gmail.com)) with your feedback no later than May 15<sup>th</sup>. Based on the amount of feedback, the SASY Board also plans to hold a public listening session on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Details on exact time and location will be forthcoming soon.

Finally, you should know that some of the surrounding neighborhoods, including Marquette and Tenny-Lapham, have gone through this sort of neighborhood planning process. They have advocated for specific changes, and in many cases, they have achieved what they sought. This is it! This will be our last opportunity to weigh in on this very important plan that will heavily influence future development in our neighborhood. As Malcolm X wisely observed, "The future belongs to those who plan for it today."

# Exhibit 1

## SASY Neighborhood Association Recommended Changes to the Future Land Use Plan (2018 Draft)

<b>Area #1: Schenks Corners</b>
<b>City Recommendation</b> Currently classified as CMU; keep as CMU
<b>SASY Recommendation</b> Reclassify the entire area from CMU to NMU.
<b>Rationale for SASY Recommendation</b> <p>The Schenks Corners intersection and the immediate surrounding area represent one of the most vital intersections in the neighborhood. The architecture, the landmark buildings, the history and the sense of place all merge to create a character-defining feature of the neighborhood. Respect for the visual vistas created by the streets and scale of the buildings is also a key part of this character. The Schenks Corners area has maintained this vitality not only in spite of – but also because of – significant infill development over the past 10 years. However, this development happened at a scale confined by the 2006 definition of the CMU category which limited height and density to an intense but workable level. Most of the marginal properties and vacant lots have now been developed, and the area thrives as juxtaposition of new apartment buildings and classic commercial stores and opportunities. The proposed new guidelines for the CMU classification would irrevocably change this balance. Heights up to six stories and density up to 130 units/acre would drive up the value of all properties in a way that ensures the redevelopment of almost every older building. And those new developments would be dramatically different. Gone would be the sense of scale, gone would be the affordable housing and gone would be the inexpensive opportunities for new business startups. SASY strongly advocates that the entire Schenks Corners area transition to a NMU classification. With the revised definitions of categories, NMU will preserve both the existing character and the opportunities for higher density infill – without fundamentally overwriting the guidelines that have helped maintain this balance for years.</p> <p>On a separate note, SASY recommends that the Trinity Lutheran Church property be classified as SI. This classification shows up elsewhere in the FLU for schools and churches (e.g., St Bernard’s Church on Atwood Ave). The omission here suggests that the city is opening the door for redevelopment of the Trinity Lutheran property.</p>
<b>Area #2: Atwood Ave from Division St to S Fair Oaks Ave</b>
<b>City Recommendation</b> Currently classified as NMU; keep as NMU
<b>SASY Recommendation</b> Agree and keep the current city planning recommendation to maintain the classification as NMU. However, as noted with another church earlier, Plymouth Congregational Church should have the SI classification.
<b>Rationale for SASY Recommendation</b> NMU is the best and most appropriate classification for this mixed-use street. However, we have concerns about the split blocks that have NMU on the Atwood side and LR on the opposite side. With heights in NMU of up to 4 stories, this sets the stage for overly tall

buildings immediately adjacent to small residential homes. Plan language should specify that larger buildings constructed within this zone will transition down to not overwhelm the scale of adjacent homes.

**Area #3: Schoeps area**

**City Recommendation**

Keep current classification of NMU

**SASY Recommendation**

Agree with the current city planning recommendation to classify it as NMU.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

Although this entire area is predominantly an industrial use, the assumption is that the industrial use will eventually leave and the area will redevelop with more of a mixed residential use.

**Area #4: Main St, from First through Fourth St.**

**City Recommendation**

Reclassify from MDR to LMR

**SASY Recommendation**

Our recommendation is to reclassify both sides of Main Street between First Street and Fourth Street from LMR to LR. The East Washington Avenue frontage will remain LMR.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

An LR classification for Main Street will preserve affordable housing opportunities in the neighborhood while allowing more intensive development along East Washington Avenue.

**Area #5: Triangular area bounded by Bashford, Division and Winnebago Streets**

**City Recommendation**

Reclassify from LR to LMR

**SASY Recommendation**

Keep this area as LR.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

This area is predominantly small, single-family residential, with only a few buildings that don't fit that pattern. The current persuasion is very dominantly LR and therefore should keep this classification.

**Area #6: Winnebago St from Linden to Bashford**

**City Recommendation**

Maintain as LR.

**SASY Recommendation**

Divide the block in half between Winnebago and Rusk Streets. The Winnebago-facing side should be LMR; the Rusk-facing side should be LR.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

This division encourages appropriate development over time for the two very different sides of the block. The larger development potential along Winnebago is in keeping with continued higher density development on that street. Slightly larger developments can integrate into the

steep incline of the hill much more effectively than the single-family homes currently in place. The half of the block, facing Rusk St, should remain LR.

**Area #7: Goodman Community Center area, and the area immediately across Waubesa St.**

**City Recommendation**

Maintain MDR classification

**SASY Recommendation**

Classify the Goodman site (including the former Brassworks Building kitty-corner across Waubesa) as SI. The area directly across the street be LR or LMR.

Also, Wirth Court Park should be classified as Parkland, not LR or MR the way it currently displays.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

The MR classification makes no sense. The Goodman site is newly developed and highly successful; it will be an enduring feature of the neighborhood. A single industrial-style pole barn building comprises most of the area across the street. Even if it were to be redeveloped, a higher-density residential use doesn't fit within this dominantly LR part of the neighborhood.

**Area #8: Milwaukee St, the small 2-block area immediately across from Operation Fresh Start**

**City Recommendation**

Keep CMU classification

**SASY Recommendation**

Reclassify to NMU.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

The CMU designation here is out of keeping with everything else along Milwaukee St, including all the LR single-family homes immediately surrounding it. It should be reclassified to NMU to avoid the pretense that any larger-scale development will happen there.

**Area #9: Southeast side of Winnebago St within Union Corners**

**City Recommendation**

CMU classification

**SASY Recommendation**

Reclassify to NMU

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

This area is currently being built up with new construction that does not have or require the intensive CMU designation. The more intensive CMU designation may be appropriate for the northwest side of Winnebago, just across the street. For southeast side, the less intensive NMU classification will help maintain the transition to the bordering LR neighborhood.

**Area #10: Milwaukee St to St Paul Ave, the McCormick Lumber area**

**City Recommendation**

NMU

**SASY Recommendation**

Consider reclassifying to LR or LMR

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

The NMU classification fits the current mixed commercial use of the property. However, it is also an odd fit given the way this rail corridor has developed over time. It is unlikely that any redevelopment of the property would need the NMU classification. Rather, an LR or LMR designation is more appropriate for this area bounding almost entirely by LR.

**Area #11: East Washington Ave from Milwaukee St to Starkweather Creek****City Recommendation**

CMU

**SASY Recommendation**

Keep CMU classification, with plan notes for scaling down to meet the LR areas behind.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

Some transition is needed from the intensive CMU class along E Washington to the LR immediately behind it along this entire stretch.

**Area #12: Garver****City Recommendation**

Parks and Open Space

**SASY Recommendation**

For the Garver and micro-lodge areas, reclassify to something more appropriate for the actual development occurring there.

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

The area is currently being developed for a long-term use that would fit better within a different designation. A better choice would be Employment.

**Area #13: S Fair Oaks Ave, former Kessinich's and Fair Oaks Nursery sites****City Recommendation**

Employment

**SASY Recommendation**

CMU

**Rationale for SASY Recommendation**

Why designated as E (Employment)? Newly approved developments of intensive residential with first floor commercial suggests that the CMU classification is more appropriate.

# Exhibit 2

## SASY Neighborhood Association Recommended Changes to the Future Land Use Plan - Map



# Exhibit 3

## 2006 and 2018 Land Use Keys

### 2017 DRAFT FUTURE LAND USE MAP MAP LEGEND

#### RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

-  LR - Low Residential  
Density: up to 15 units/acre | Stories: 1-2
-  LMR - Low-Medium Residential  
Density: 7-30 units/acre | Stories: 1-3
-  MR - Medium Residential  
Density: 20-90 units/acre | Stories: 2-5
-  HR - High Residential  
Density: 70+ units/acre | Stories: 4-12

#### MIXED USE DISTRICTS

-  NMU - Neighborhood Mixed Use  
Density: up to 70 units/acre | Stories: 2-4
-  CMU - Community Mixed Use  
Density: up to 130 units/acre | Stories: 2-6
-  RMU - Regional Mixed Use  
Stories: 4-12
-  DMU - Downtown Mixed Use (see Downtown Plan)
-  DC - Downtown Core (see Downtown Plan)

#### COMMERCIAL/EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS

-  GC - General Commercial
-  E - Employment
-  I - Industrial

#### OTHER DISTRICTS

-  P - Park and Open Space
-  SI - Special Institutional
-  A - Airport
-  NPA - Neighborhood Planning Area

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### 2006 FUTURE LAND USE MAP MAP LEGEND

#### RESIDENTIAL CATEGORIES

-  LDR - Low Density Residential (0-15 units/acre)
-  MDR - Medium Density Residential (16-40 units/acre)
-  HDR - High Density Residential (41- 60 units/acre)

#### MIXED USE CATEGORIES

-  NMU Neighborhood Mixed Use (up to 40 units/acre)
-  CMU - Community Mixed Use (up to 60 units/acre)
-  RMU - Regional Mixed Use (60+ units/acre)

#### COMMERCIAL/EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

-  GC - General Commercial
-  RC - Regional Commercial
-  E - Employment
-  I - Industrial

#### OTHER CATEGORIES

-  P - Park and Open Space
-  C - Campus
-  D - Downtown
-  SI - Special Institutional
-  AP - Airport
-  NPA - Neighborhood Planning Area