

City of St. Francis
Worksession Agenda
October 13th, 2020
5:30 p.m. via Zoom

- 1) Call Meeting to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) John Letourneau
- 4) Broadband
- 5) East Shop Site
- 6) Adjourn

**WORKSESSION
AGENDA REPORT**

Agenda Item #

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TO: Joe Kohlmann, City Administrator
FROM: Kate Thunstrom, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Broadband
DATE: October 13, 2020

OVERVIEW

At the September 21st Council meeting we heard from several residents and Beth Giese – Dist. 15 Superintendent on the concerns and issues surrounding internet connections. At that meeting the idea of using CARES Act funds was discussed for a short-term solution as well as gathering more information for a long-term solution.

As of this meeting:

- CARES Act funds were unable to be used due to the deadlines of the dollars and the response from CenturyLink.
- The discussion for the City to support residents with “hot spots” was countered by residents with the concern it would draw from the services they have. Additionally, there would be a long-term service component that the City does not have the funds to support.
- CenturyLink: Contact was made with a representative and we continue attempts to gather more information. Need to continue to gather information.
- Midco: They continue to review the east side to determine if it supports an expansion of services without municipal involvement. Staff will continue to provide information for them to complete the assessment.

Next Steps:

- Continue to work with ALL broadband providers in the area and document as a requirement of any grant requests
- Monitor and identify grant opportunities to be prepared for in 2021
- Identify the cost of increasing services by each provider and each area of the city
- Identify a budget, which may include grants and property assessments in areas of need
- Continue to communicate with residents on meeting updates and information as available.

A this point a short-term solution has not been identified. Staff will continue to work with the providers on the concerns and push for faster solutions.

TO: Joe Kohlmann, City Administrator
FROM: Kate Thunstrom, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: City Owned Property – 3518 Bridge Street
DATE: October 13, 2020

OVERVIEW

The City completed the St. Francis Forward plan and identified Bridge Street as the “downtown” area. Following that, the City also completed designated design standards and guided the property through the Comprehensive plan and Zoning to also meet the downtown vision.

The City has been approached by a developer to build a senior living facility upon the 3518 Bridge St parcel. This would deviate the property from the commercial use and eliminate the restaurant and retail possibilities.

To move forward with Senior housing the Council would need to support and follow through with the following steps:

- Comprehensive Plan amendment – this property was guided in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan as commercial. Changing the use would require an Amendment to the plan.
- Re-zoning – Parcel is currently zoned B1 Central Business District. This District is zoned for uses that support the downtown use.

ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED:

Determine if Council would like a senior housing facility or continue redevelopment efforts as identified in the St. Francis Forward plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Pro's and Con's of individual use table

Excerpts from the St. Francis Forward Plan and Marketing mock-ups of a restaurant for the East shop site

EAST SHOP SITE/3518 BRIDGE STREET – Senior Housing vs. Commercial Use

SENIOR HOUSING USE CONCEPT

PRO	CON
100 unit building <u>estimates</u> 66 WAC/SAC units (\$484,704)	Does not provide destination as identified in St. Francis Forward as the desired use of property. This plan was based heavily on resident feedback from multiple open houses.
Ready to begin concept step in development process	TIF eligible – reduces tax gain of future development for up to 20 years. Will not add value to the “tax base” for 20 years.
	Prime real estate for City not gaining commercial sites
	Likely to request City for reduced sale price on the land.
	Would require a rezoning. When cities rezone single parcels, the question in the future becomes, “you rezoned a parcel for them?”
	Limited use for various demographics in the community (only those that require assisted living or senior housing)
	Utilizes the City’s best site for a potential “destination” use on Bridge Street.
	Requires a Comprehensive Plan Amendment
	Other sites in the City have been looked at for building similar facilities

RESTAURANT/RETAIL/COMMERCIAL USE CONCEPT

PRO	CON
20,000 square foot building, mixed use with 1,500 sq. ft. patio <u>estimates</u> 27 WAC/SAC units (\$198,288)	Could take several years to identify a project that meets the desired use.
Tax benefit for commercial property	Likely to request City for reduced sale price for the land.
Use identified in St. Francis Forward as desire to provide destination in city and use of River front property- based on resident feedback.	
Broad use for various demographics in the community. Most anyone could utilize the site if a restaurant use.	
Creates traffic on Bridge Street – could help support the goal to add additional “retail” type uses with walking/vehicle traffic	
Could be a regional draw. The City’s market area is about 20,000 people. So people outside of St. Francis could be drawn into the community.	
Could attract other “like” businesses to Bridge Street.	

What are Guiding Principles?

If the Vision statement is all about the destination, the Guiding Principles are about how we get there.

Guiding Principles help define the character, values, and priorities identified by the community.

Guiding Principles are also a tool for future decision making. As new projects arise, the City can use the Guiding Principles as a measuring stick to decide if a particular project moves the city closer to the Vision.

Guiding Principles:

CHARACTER/FORM

We will create buildings and public spaces that contribute to a high quality small town character and the sense that St. Francis is an important local destination.

- » Promote a vibrant and bustling downtown in St. Francis
- » Utilize the river for identity and as a destination for activities
- » Coordinate with the school district to strengthen St. Francis' identity and welcoming nature
- » Create new landmarks/gateways to welcome people to St. Francis
- » Enhance the image of St. Francis
- » Strengthen and establish community locations (including parks, community centers, and privately owned "3rd places")
- » Maintain the small town feel that many residents appreciate
- » Improve wayfinding to help people navigate St. Francis

BUSINESS

We will support and help expand the business community in St. Francis. We recognize the role that businesses play in building our jobs base and improving quality of life. We will support and pursue businesses that make St. Francis a better community, by providing employment, or goods or services desired by residents and visitors.

- » Pursue new businesses that enhance quality of life, by providing jobs or desired goods or services



- » Create a business-friendly environment, balancing taxes and fees and making it attractive to establish and sustain businesses in St. Francis
- » Expand the community's tax base and support new development
- » Help redevelop underutilized locations and those in need of revitalization
- » Emphasize and support "home grown" businesses and create a culture of entrepreneurship
- » Pursue opportunities to provide desired goods and services for residents and visitors to St. Francis

INFRASTRUCTURE

We will strategically invest in infrastructure, in order to provide the greatest returns on this investment in supporting the viability and long term sustainability of businesses and the overall quality of life in St. Francis.

- » Improve all modes of connectivity, including roads but also trails and sidewalks
- » Connect Bridge Street to Highway 47 (through street connection, trails, and signage and wayfinding)
- » Provide infrastructure to serve existing and new development (water, sewer, etc.) efficiently as possible
- » Manage traffic to provide for the safety of people driving, bicycling, and walking
- » Decrease the speed of traffic flowing through St. Francis, to enhance the viability of retail shops and restaurants along the main arterials
- » Provide sufficient access to development parcels (new, or existing)

EXAMPLE IMAGERY:

1: Develop buildings that enhance a downtown feel with a good relationship to the street, high quality materials, and appropriate scale to the surrounding neighborhood.

2: Create and promote destinations within St. Francis, especially along the Rum River. Projects should draw residents and visitors to the City.

3: Create additional housing to grow the city, and facilitate other positive outcomes for businesses and the schools. Provide a mix of housing options including single family, townhomes, apartments, and senior housing. Allow people to live in St. Francis at all life points, including rentals, starter homes, move-up housing, and senior housing.

4: Facilitate new jobs by supporting the growth of new and existing businesses





The Master Plan envisions:

- » A Civic Campus on the south side of Bridge Street
- » Office Redevelopment on the north side of Bridge Street
- » A restaurant/entertainment anchor on the east side of the Rum River
- » Housing redevelopment between Bridge Street and Rum River North County Park
- » Housing redevelopment south of the High School
- » Industrial growth along Highway 47
- » Residential infill along Ambassador Boulevard
- » Residential infill off Highway 47
- » Redevelopment of Office/Commercial along Highway 47

EXAMPLE IMAGERY:

Top Left: Provide a dining/entertainment destination

Top Right: Capitalize on outdoor setting and develop outdoor seating, music/entertainment, and views to the river

Bottom Left: Incorporate outfitter/retail component into development

Bottom Right: Develop river access to support the outfitter concept

River Entertainment District

The City-owned property adjacent to the Rum River is envisioned as a restaurant with entertainment space. This development would complement the Rum River Inn to help develop more of a dining and entertainment destination in St. Francis along the Rum River. In addition to gaining business from St. Francis residents, it would also benefit from proximity to the High School and Middle School with athletic tournaments, concerts, and other events bringing people into the community. Based on resident feedback at public meetings and through online surveys, there is a desire for additional dining options, as well as "third places" (the spots other than work and home where people can gather, spend time, and find entertainment).

In coordination with the restaurant, an outfitter could benefit from the location, as a starting or ending point for kayak, canoe, or float trips on the Rum River. The area of slower current on the east side of the river, just south of the bridge, provides a safe launching spot for these excursions. As an interim step, the outfitter could utilize the North Rum River County Park as a starting point.





Development Summary

Uses	Restaurant/Entertainment Outfitter/Outdoor Retail
Square Footage (As shown)	Commercial: +/- 7,500 SF
City Actions	-Prepare marketing materials for the City-owned property on the south side of Bridge Street, using the language and message conveyed in this master plan document. -Prepare a package of incentives or tools the City is prepared to offer a prospective developer of the City-owned parcel. -Prepare and issue a City-led RFP for the property, communicating the expectations of the City for potential development concepts and outlining anticipated incentives available from St. Francis. -Formalize development agreements with the entity selected from the RFP process, for the City owned property.



