

5.02: Review Comparison Document of The COR Development Plan and Original Ramsey Town Center Master Plan Prepared by the Planning Commission

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the purpose of this case is to review a comparison document between the original Ramsey Town Center Master Plan and the current The COR Development Plan as requested by the City Council and Planning Commission on May 26, 2015. Minutes from this discussion are attached to this case as background of the purpose of this exercise.

At the May 26, 2015 Joint Meeting with the City Council, Staff was directed to prepare a comparison document outlining the differences between the current COR Development Plan and the original Ramsey Town Center Master Plan. Direction was to simply prepare a document outlining the changes and check back with the City Council and its advisory boards for future direction. It is anticipated that the output of this exercise may lead to some changes to the Design Framework for The COR to either better clarify the vision, eliminate any conflicting language, simplify the document, or potential changes to the official vision.

This step is focused on the inventory of the previous plan and the current plan. The intent of this topic report is not to begin developing a new vision for The COR. The Planning Commission met on July 9 and prepared the first draft of this document. The City Council reviewed the first draft of the document at their July 28, 2015 meeting and minutes from said meeting are attached for Commission review. Revisions based on the City Council's discussion include a clearer emphasis the additional steps will be coming after this first step that will discuss market realities and future revisions to the vision. The first step is simply to inventory the current plan elements to ensure all policy makers are on the same page, and then subsequently decide if any changes need to be made to the elements or implementation items.

The documents from the original Ramsey Town Center Master Plan and Development Guidelines (the original vision) as well as the COR Development Plan and Design Framework (current vision). Additionally, the Planning Commission has several policy questions that could be used in future joint meeting or surveys of the City Council, its advisory boards and commissions, or the general public.

Finally, Staff has included a generalized timeline of the COR key milestones. This is a working document that will need to be refined over time. Staff would like to populate the initial planning stages that led to the creation of The COR, starting with the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update (completed in 1998), City ballot advisory question, and design charette process. Staff will utilize the introduction to this case to review the overall history of The COR and its original formation.

Based on direction of the City Council, Staff recommends adoption of the attached Comparison Document for The COR. A reminder that this is a review of current elements and processes. Adopting this document does not create any policy implications.

Mr. Gladhill showed a side-by-side comparison drawing of the current and future plan. There is some conflicting language in the land use plan. It is the goal to have the property developed as soon as possible. The components of the original and current plan were provided for Commission

review. There are several policy questions that need to be asked. The stakeholders will also be contacted for comments. The City Council will adopt the final plan in September.

Mr. Gladhill reviewed the broad goals of the original vision. He is looking for some feedback from the Park and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Trappen asked Mr. Gladhill to indicate some of the changes in the plan. One feature was density and parking. There will be more isolated public parking lots. The NW corner of the development at Bunker Lake Blvd and Armstrong Blvd will have more retail vs housing as originally planned. There would be an anchor retail with smaller retail boutique type shops. A lot of the COR park planning includes Lake Ramsey. There will be less green open area. Mr. Riverblood stated this is an opportunity to call attention to successes by holding the vision. This includes the park and trail piece. Parks are a key part of that success.

Commissioner Barr asked about the area near the lake and Mr. Gladhill reviewed the parties that own the undeveloped land.

Mr. Riverblood reminded the Commission to share with residents about the success of parks. An apartment building is being constructed and the parks are important to that project. This also reflects the diversity of the recreation opportunities within the City.

Mr. Gladhill stated there can still be some changes made to the plan and the effect of the Armstrong Interchange to the plan.

Chair Bennett stated the park element has continually driven people back to Ramsey with the trails and trail connections. He stated to stay true to the vision as it relates to the parks and the municipal plaza is important.

Mr. Gladhill showed the comparison of Ramsey Town Center Master Plan to the COR Development Plan and the Policy Questions for future Discussion and/or Survey (City Council, Advisory Boards and Commissions, Residents). He asked if a community center is an important part of the COR. Chair Bennett stated that needs more discussion.

Commissioner Trappen asked if the amphitheater was part of the original plan and Mr. Riverblood stated it was. Commissioner Trappen stated that is a wonderful amenity that needs to be continued in the new plan.

Chair Bennett stated he would like to see the consistency of green space throughout the COR. The design of it all being part of the same area is necessary. Mr. Riverblood clarified when speaking of green space that includes benches, trees, sidewalks, picnic tables, trails, etc.

Commissioner Trappen stated he would like to continue that green space theme throughout the COR.

Commissioner Barr stated it is very inviting for residents and visitors to have the green space areas.

Chair Bennett asked if parking calculations should be looked at even though it is outside the Park Commission's normal duties, we want to have the right amount of parking but it needs to be balanced with the space and the real need.

Commissioner Mobry suggested there be parking near the trails for trail access. Mr. Riverblood stated they are looking at techniques for shared parking.

Motion by Commissioner Mobry, seconded by Commissioner Fyten to recommend City Council adopt the Comparison Document for The COR as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett, Commissioners Mobry, Fyten, Barr, and Trappen. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Chubb and Troy.

