

Pacific Highway South Corridor (240th Node)

*Council Finance and Economic Development Committee Meeting
October 9, 2014*

Summary of Community Input from October 1st Public Workshop

Overview

The purpose of the workshop was to provide an overview of the subarea planning process and to introduce three land use concepts that reflected input from the March 26th Open House and the June 12th Council Finance and Economic Development Committee meeting. Staff provided an overview of the planning work completed to date, shared input from the March 26th open house, and solicited feedback on the three land use concepts. There were 15 members of the public that participated in the workshop.

Summary of Small Group Discussion

The community members were divided up into three working groups. The focus of their discussion was to evaluate the three land use concepts and determine if one emerged as a preferred concept. The questions posed to each group were:

- What is your vision for the 240th Street corridor? Housing? Commercial? Streetscape?
- What amenities/services would you like to see in this area?
- What type of jobs would you like to see in this area?
- Would you like to see more open space in the area?
- Would you like to see this area take on a specific identity?
- Should the location of the LLR station be a determining factor in the development of this area?
- What housing types are missing in this area?
- What housing types are appropriate for this area?
- What transportation system improvements are needed along 240th Street or other roads?
- What pedestrian connections are missing in this area?

Connectivity for pedestrians and vehicles within to Pacific Highway from the neighborhood was a reoccurring topic among all the groups. The discussion of connectivity pointed towards the lack of access to Pacific Highway South without taking S 240th Street. In addition, all of the groups felt that S 240th Street was not a pedestrian friendly environment which is a key to having a lively community. The proposed location of the Link Light Rail was considered by all groups to be very important and a catalyst for change. However, each group also pointed out that Highline College was an important destination and could serve as a catalyst for redevelopment and growth in and of itself.

There were general observations about the need for attractive pedestrian environments that supports a community atmosphere where people can sit, rest and talk. It is also important to create a student friendly place to encourage Highline College students to remain in the area in-between classes and purchase goods and services as well.

There was general consensus among the groups that increased density is good along S 240th Street and closer to Pacific Highway. However, they would like to limit the increased density further west by

transitioning from high to medium to low density housing types. All three groups felt very strongly that design was fundamental in ensuring that higher density housing is compatible when placed in/adjacent to an existing single family neighborhood.

Last, each group embraced the idea of a “shopfront street” along S 240th Street and 26th Avenue South. They each had recommendations and questions, but overall felt that the concept was positive for the neighborhood.

The bulleted summary from each small group discussion follows:

Group 1

- A combination of all concepts was favored but were drawn towards land use concept 1 and 3, with the addition of the “shopfront street” idea.
- Want to consider if the “shopfront street” will complete with downtown Des Moines stores?
- Highline College would benefit from more amenities in walking distance, specifically for its international students who currently need to own a car or bus to purchase their goods.
- Design standards are VERY important when increasing density.
- Really liked the “shopfront street” idea, however, perhaps scale it back to just the one block on S 240th Street and keep it the same on 26th Avenue S.
- Questioned where will those who drive to the stores on 26th Avenue S park?
- Need to consider safety with the increased pedestrian activity and density.
- Like the idea of having more access points to Pacific Highway for cars, bikes, and pedestrians.

Group 2

- Focus lighter uses (such as a coffee shop) on S 240th Street and heavier uses on Pacific Hwy S.
- Safer pedestrian/auto infrastructure on S 240th Street – student crossing:
 - Install lighted crosswalks across S. 240th Street
 - Street lighting
 - Walkways
- Ensure adequate parking for light rail and development.
- Preferred - Land Use Concept 2:
 - Opens up transportation connections for adjacent residences, instead of only S 240th Street
 - Ensure the TC-T development is compatible with existing housing and has adequate off street parking
 - Transition from townhouse > duplex > single family
 - Ensure that LLR station location has reasonable pedestrian access to campus
 - Design is important

Group 3

- The location of the LLR station is critical:
 - Highline College is a destination that brings students, employees and visitors to the area
 - LLR part of infrastructure and key element – creates access to college
- Highline College can be a catalyst for redevelopment with or without LLR station:
 - Need to capture students and employees that are spending money in Kent
 - Having an activity node west of Pac Hwy allows for neighborhood placemaking and cohesion with Highline College
- Potential for higher density and commercial on S. 240th Street but unsure if market could support commercial on 26th Avenue S.

- No cars on 26th Avenue S – creates a pedestrian only space for people to gather, shop and play.
- Supportive of pedestrian friendly/complete streets.
- Lighted crosswalks needed across S 240th Street to provide safe access into neighborhood.
- Like the buffer to single family with Parkside Park in Land Use Concept 3.
- Keep areas safe and pleasant
- Priority: Residents > Employees > Students

Next steps:

- Staff will look to combine all of the feedback from the community into a modified land use concept.
- Staff will seek concurrence from the Committee and Council.
- Staff will prepare land use designations for incorporation into the update of the Comprehensive Plan.