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MEMO

DATE: May 15, 2015
TO: Planning and Sustainability Commission
FROM: Troy Doss, Southeast Quadrant Project Manager (3-5857)
CC: Susan Anderson, Joe Zehnder and Sallie Edmunds
SUBJECT: 5/26/2015 Central City 2035 Southeast Quadrant Plan Hearing Packet

The Planning and Sustainability Commission will be holding a public hearing on the Proposed Draft Southeast Quadrant Plan on Tuesday, May 26th. The SE Quadrant Plan examines a comprehensive range of land use, urban design, transportation, environmental and economic development issues for the Central Eastside.

This proposed draft has been endorsed by a majority the project's Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) members following 14 meetings, multiple subcommittee meetings, a charrette, tours and two open house events. Although the plan was endorsed by a majority of the SAC, a limited number of members have submitted the attached minority report recommending changes to the plan that were not endorsed by the rest of the SAC.

Approximately 110-120 people attended each open house, and an online virtual open house was visited 9,000 times. Staff held or attended an additional 90+ meetings with various stakeholders, groups and neighborhood associations during the Inner SE Station Area Concept Plan and SE Quadrant Plan processes. Staff is grateful to all those who participated.

The purpose of this memo is to introduce some of the key areas of emphasis in the plan and to provide context for the hearing. The following materials are attached for consideration by the PSC at the May 26th hearing and June 9th work session:

1. Proposed Draft Southeast Quadrant Plan.
2. Letter from the Southeast Quadrant Stakeholder Advisory Committee Co-Chairs Don Hanson and Debbie Kitchin.
3. Minority report from Southeast Quadrant Stakeholder Advisory Committee members Peter Stark and Debbie Kitchin.



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4. Staff amendments to the Proposed Draft Southeast Quadrant Plan.
5. Requests for zone changes from property owners in the Central Eastside.

The SE Quadrant Plan

Portland’s Central Eastside is a vital part of the Central City. With a combination of large industrial spaces, lower commercial rents than Downtown or South Waterfront, and a soon-to-be unique transportation nexus with the opening of Tilikum Crossing, the district is attracting large and small businesses alike. The area is also becoming a popular place for eating, drinking and recreating.

The Proposed Draft SE Quadrant Plan will preserve the industrial sanctuary while expanding the definition of industrial employment, activate the new station areas around the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Line, and foster an already emerging research and development industry on both sides of the river around OHSU and OMSI. The new plan is designed to help the Central Eastside thrive as a 21st century inner city employment district and transit hub, with cultural attractions and access to natural resources like the Willamette River.

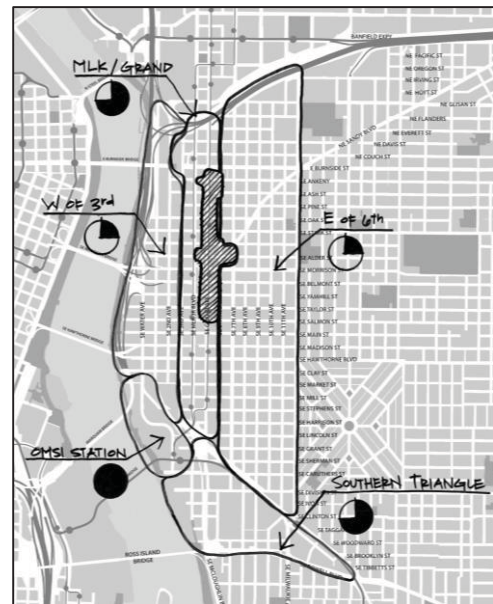
Project Goals

Early in the SE Quadrant Plan process, input from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and other stakeholders allowed staff to identify a small set of goals for the plan to address. These goals guided the planning process and are provided below along with the relevant elements of the plan and the page numbers where the proposals can be found.

Expand Employment Opportunities

Metro projects that by 2035 the Central Eastside will need to accommodate 9,000 new jobs and 3,500 new housing units. The current zoning and developable land are sufficient to build these housing units, but meeting the projected demand for jobs will require a higher density of employment than is found throughout the district today. The plan will achieve this density of employment by expanding the diversity of industrial uses allowed in the Central Eastside and maximizing the potential of mixed-use corridors and emerging station areas, while protecting established industrial sectors. The plan also proposes monitoring and managing potential impacts of increased employment densities. Specific strategies include:

- Maintaining the industrial sanctuary (pg. V-4) and establishing an Industrial Ground Floor bonus that incents the creation of new traditional industrial space in new building projects (pg. V-6).



Subareas of the Central Eastside with pie charts showing the degree of change expected by 2035. The plan calls for dense employment along corridors and transit rich areas.



- Increasing employment densities by expanding the Employment Opportunity Subarea (EOS) which allows for more industrial office along corridors, near transit and in other areas of the district. The plan also proposes better defining the Industrial Office use category in the Zoning Code (pg. V-6).
- Converting the new MAX light rail station areas to Commercial Employment (EXd) zoning to encourage redevelopment of large sites to include employment opportunities such as industrial office, headquarters and creative office opportunities (pg. V-6).

Protect Industrial Businesses from Incompatible Uses

The plan includes strategies to manage conflicts between uses that could otherwise negatively impact the ability for district businesses to thrive. The plan will:

- Establish an industrial disclosure statement so that residents and businesses moving into the district are made aware of the nature of the industrial operations they may experience and that, where these activities are legal, complaints will not receive a response from the City (pg. V-7).
- Create building design standards for transition areas between industrial and mixed-use zones (pg. V-15). The district’s land use pattern often results in mixed-use zoning being located directly across the street from industrially zoned blocks. New design standards will reduce the likelihood that retail or commercial operations will occur along the edges of zones, especially where it impacts freight access and loading.

Foster Safe and Vibrant Station Areas

Support the creation of safe, attractive, and vibrant station areas with higher density development that includes new employment opportunities and uses that serve employees and visitors of the district. This goal is addressed in the following ways:

- As described above, a key proposal in the plan is the conversion of the new MAX light rail station areas to mixed-use zoning (pg. V-6).
- Activity at station areas is a function of design and land uses. The creation of Central Citywide ground floor design guidelines (pg. V-6) and updating the Central Eastside Design Zone Guidelines with guidance for the new MAX light rail station areas (pg. V-19) will allow for buildings that activate the station areas and accessways to and from the station with vibrant ground floor uses. Urban Design policies and actions (pg. V-17) call for publicly accessible parks, open space and recreation opportunities to be key features of the station areas.



The Colorado Convention Center shows how existing attractions such as OMSI and the Oregon Rail Heritage Center could orient to the station to increase activity and safety.



Create a Regional Waterfront Destination

Create a vibrant riverfront destination that includes improved habitat as well as attractors for people such as parks, beaches, retail, river transportation, and visitor-serving amenities. The plan proposes:

- Amending the Zoning Code to allow desired riverfront uses including a mix of fish and wildlife habitat, boating, swimming, and educational opportunities (pg. V-19), as well as economic activity such as riverfront retail and recreation (pg. V-7 and V-23).
- Working with OMSI and other riverfront property owners to facilitate parks, open space, recreation opportunities and habitat improvement plans (pg. V-22).
- Better utilizing existing docks and waterfront facilities with year round events and activities (pg. V-21).
- Transportation system improvements that support east-west connectivity to the river for bicycles and pedestrians (pg. V-15). The plan also calls for the creation of design standards or guidance to create passageways or other design elements to improve public access, reinforce physical connections to the river and orient riverfront buildings towards the river, including entries and windows, and outdoor gathering spaces and amenities (III-24).
- Continuing to enhance the riverfront greenway trail and open space system in the Central Eastside by providing amenities such as light water craft storage, bicycle parking, and public restrooms (pg. V-21).



The plan calls for achieving a unique balance of river enhancements and new activities along the Central Eastside riverfront.

Stakeholder Priorities

In addition to the goals that guided the plan's development, the Proposed Draft Southeast Quadrant Plan includes proposals to:

1. **Maintain Parking Supply and Management.** Parking is a big topic of discussion in the Central Eastside due to a limited supply today and fears that new development will not provide its own parking. The plan proposes better management of the limited supply of on- and off-street parking in the district. Strategies focus on meeting customer and employee parking needs, while encouraging residential development to provide its own parking or facilitate increased access to non-auto modes of transportation. One strategy involves amending the Parking Code to allow businesses to share off-street parking, opening up 3,000-4,000 currently underused parking spaces (Action T1, pg. V-13). The plan proposes that the City continue to work with the Central Eastside Industrial Council Transportation and Parking Advisory Council (TPAC)



on managing the parking permit system for the district. Finally, the plan calls for exploring new tools to fund the building of a parking structure (Action T2, pg. V-13).

2. **Enhance Freight Mobility.** The Stakeholder Advisory Committee was passionate that the plan improve freight movement to serve district businesses. The plan proposes increasing protections and freight design criteria for the most important freight routes by reclassifying these streets in the Transportation System Plan (Action T21, pg. V-15). The plan also includes proposals to convert key east-west freight routes to one-way streets and provide signals to make it easier to cross MLK and Grand (multiple actions, pg. V-14). A few left turns onto MLK will be removed or relocated to reduce westbound backups at key intersections (Action T22, pg. V-15). Finally, the plan calls for a new protected left turn from Powell Blvd into the district at an intersection between Milwaukie and the Ross Island Bridge (Action T8, pg. V-14).
3. **Balance the Needs of Multi-Modal Transportation.** Both businesses and cyclists shared concerns that truck drivers and forklift operators were at risk of hitting and potentially killing cyclists riding through the district. The plan proposes separating bikes from freight wherever possible. A small number of east-west bike routes on low priority freight routes would be enhanced and the Green Loop will be explored as a way to provide a much needed bicycle and pedestrian friendly north-south route (multiple actions, pg. V-13). New pedestrian and bicycle bridges over I-84, and the rail and MAX rail lines will make it easier for these modes to access the district (multiple actions, pg. V-15). Getting into and through the district is only part of the problem, finding destinations efficiently is equally important. The plan calls for improving signage and wayfinding throughout the district to orient pedestrians, cyclists, autos and freight to the best routes and to specific destinations to reduce conflicts (Action T23, pg. V-15).



The Green Loop and other bicycle and pedestrian enhancements would be designed to reduce conflicts between these modes and industrial operations in the district.

4. **Pursue the Innovation Quadrant.** Many stakeholders were excited about the unique opportunity that exists to build off the growing momentum in South Waterfront associated with OHSU's and PSU's new partnerships and the potential embedded in the \$1 billion Knight Cancer Research Challenge. The plan includes policy language to support redevelopment in the Southern Triangle and promote bioscience and high technology sectors in the Central Eastside (Policy 5, pg. V-4). In addition, the plan proposes rezoning parts of the district to allow for the right land use patterns at the right locations. Specifically, the OMSI station area will be rezoned to mixed use zoning (EXd - no housing; Action RC3, pg. V-6) allowing for every use from traditional office and lodging to industrial office and retail. Expanding the EOS to industrial zoned (IG1) properties in the Southern Triangle (Action RC5, pg. V-6) will allow for higher density



employment (e.g., through new headquarters and business campuses) as the large parcels in this area redevelop.

5. Activate the Mixed-Use Corridors. Staff analysis has shown that considerable existing development potential remains along main street corridors already zoned for high-density, mixed-use development, such as East Burnside, SE Morrison, and SE Belmont. The plan builds on existing efforts to emphasize the MLK/Grand corridor as the premier mixed-use spine of the Central Eastside, with enhancements like increased tree canopy to cultivate a more livable pedestrian environment (multiple actions, pg. V-24). While much of the MLK/Grand, Hawthorne/Madison and Belmont/Morrison corridors have mixed use (EXd) zoning, portions of these corridors are zoned for industrial uses (IG1 zoning). The plan proposes to maintain this zoning, but will apply the EOS to allow higher density uses where transportation access is best (Action RC5, pg. V-6). Finally, there are opportunities to improve historic main streets crossing the MLK/Grand corridor such as Morrison and Hawthorne. Most of the historic buildings along these streets remain intact under the viaducts leading onto the bridges. The plan calls for exploring potential opportunities for these spaces to strengthen the corridors, improve safety and provide event space for the district (Policy 9, pg. V-17).



The plan proposes a number of innovative new strategies for activating mixed use corridors and improving livability such as enhancing areas under the viaducts that cut through the district.

6. Enhance the Livability of the District. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee and general public have expressed a strong desire to improve the quality of life in the district. The plan proposes increasing the variety of public amenities in the Central Eastside to enhance its livability for new and existing businesses, residents, and visitors. This includes pursuing opportunities to provide a variety of open space and recreational experiences for workers, residents, and visitors in the Central Eastside, focusing in high density locations (multiple policies and actions starting on pg. V-17). The plan also seeks to increase the opportunities for active recreation in the district through parks and open spaces, connections to the river and, and the Green Loop (multiple actions, pg. V-19). Where possible, proposals call for increasing the amount of tree canopy and green infrastructure to help alleviate the effects of Heat Island and combined sewer backup risk in the district (multiple actions starting on pg. V-24). Finally, the City will work with property owners to establish publicly accessible parks, open space, and recreation opportunities including activating the space under I-5 (multiple actions, pg. V-19).

