

CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE ZONING CODE UPDATE DESIGN & DIRECTIONS ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

OVERALL PROJECT PURPOSE

In September 2023, the City of White Bear Lake launched an 18-month process to review and update its zoning regulations. This project is necessary because state law requires all metropolitan area cities to update their zoning regulations so they are consistent with the community's long range planning document - the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan was last updated in 2021 and sets the future vision and development goals for White Bear Lake. The zoning regulations are the legal tool to implement the vision and development goals found in the comprehensive plan.

DESIGN & DIRECTIONS PHASE OVERVIEW

The project began with the Design and Directions phase, lasting from September 2023 to April 2024. This phase involved the evaluation of existing land use policy and zoning regulations to both determine a typology for land use to serve as the basis for zoning districts, and to evaluate what other changes to the zoning code were needed. This phase culminated in the production of a draft Directions Report, which will provide direction for all subsequent work on the zoning code update.

PHASE ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of public engagement during this phase was to make people aware of the zoning code update process and to provide an opportunity for input on the land use typology, identifying and prioritizing code update needs, and future direction for development in the city.

PHASE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Engagement activities for this phase included the following:

- Three meetings with a work group, representing a diversity of community perspectives, in September 2023, December 2023, and February 2024
- Two developer and real estate professional focus groups in September 2023
- Two public open houses in April 2024: one during the lunch hour at the White Bear Lake Library in Downtown, and one in the evening at the White Bear Area Senior Center on the south side of town
- An online survey hosted on the city's website and promoted via city email and social media in April 2024

The following report summarizes feedback received during Spring 2024 public engagement.



City of White Bear Lake
Zoning Code Update

CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE ZONING CODE UPDATE DESIGN & DIRECTIONS ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

OVERALL ENGAGEMENT THEMES

Though limited in turnout, participants were engaged and provided substantive feedback. Common themes included supporting and strengthening existing neighborhoods and districts, ensuring new development is compable with existing uses, and maintaining a livable community to attract and retain long term residents.

SURVEY RESPONSES

For the two open houses in April 2024, approximately eight members of the public attended the one at the Library and approximately six attended the one at the Senior Center. The open houses included informational boards and handouts, as well as refreshments for attendees. City and consultant staff were on hand to answer questions. Attendees were handed a questionnaire with three questions. Identical questionnaires (as well as the **Directions Report**) were provided online for individuals to complete. Four surveys were completed online. Compiled answers to the survey questions included the following:

QUESTION: What kind of places and uses would you like to see more of in the city?

Businesses:

- Coffee shops
- Grocery/bodegas
- Smaller groceries
- Retail within multi-tenant properties
- Small family owned businesses
- Restrict land use to prevent additional commercial business

Residential:

- Additional dwelling unit permitting
- More single family
- More single family homes
- Restrict land use to prevent additional high density housing

Recreational:

- Off leash dog park in the south half of the City
- Green spaces and parks
- Places for youth activities
- Skate/bike parks and splash pads
- Trails, hiking and biking

Other:

- Parking in downtown and increased walkability
- Educational opportunities other than public schools, including private schools
- Restrict land use to prevent any additional mass transit lanes, trains, and buses



CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE ZONING CODE UPDATE DESIGN & DIRECTIONS ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

QUESTION: What questions and thoughts do you have about the current code?

Compatibility and Protection of Uses:

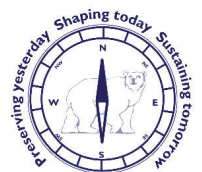
- Develop standards regarding proximity of commercial development to schools, churches and pre-schools
- Develop standards regarding VRBOs and other commercial rentals in established neighborhoods
- Why were single family homes allowed to be removed and replaced with huge apartment buildings?
- Can zoning prevent rental housing?
- Can zoning laws reduce single family houses being used as rentals, such as only 1 rental house per 10 city blocks?
- How can the city preserve the single family homes and prevent rental housing?
- How can the city preserve the green space from being further developed and preserve the current park space?
- How can zoning prevent high density housing structures?
- How can zoning prevent mass transit expansion (lanes, trains, and buses)?
- Can zoning prevent part of a city block full of homes from being demolished to build high density housing?
- When there are changes to zoning laws from commercial business to low density or high density homes, what is the notification radius in the neighborhood?

Property Rights and Flexibility of Use:

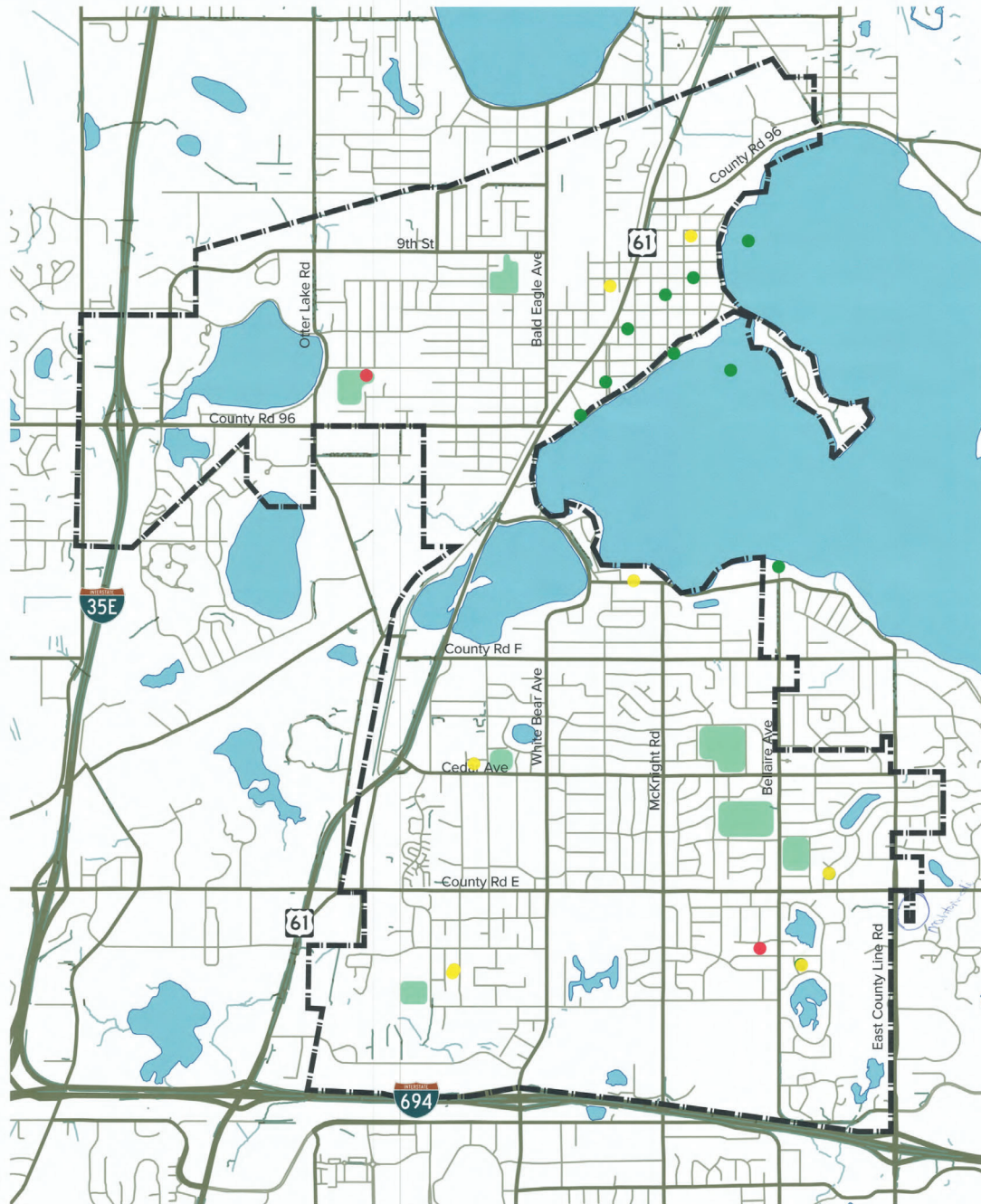
- Make it easier to obtain a variance to extend garage or add a shed.
- Can eminent domain with changes in zoning be used to force individuals off of their private property?

QUESTION: Is there anything else regarding the land use and zoning that you would like to share?

- I prefer height to be limited to three stories
- White Bear Lake should focus on walkability and preserving neighborhoods
- As you approach changes to zoning, consider the impact to the current communities and neighborhoods within our city. White Bear Lake has had strong neighborhoods with families that have been invested in the community. In my neighborhood, I have seen multiple young families move out of our city and state due to declines in education standards and enforcement of laws leading to increased crime. Furthermore, I am concerned that changes to zoning laws will cause more young families to leave our city. Also consider that transitioning away from single family homes to allowing renters of high density homes increases the number of people who do not take the same level of ownership and care of their property. Please preserve the White Bear Lake community and neighborhoods with single family homes that are owned by the family occupying the home and not rental properties. Therefore please restrict the number of rental properties and high density housing options allowed in White Bear Lake.



CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE: ZONING CODE UPDATE DESIGN & DIRECTIONS ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



Where do you **WORK**?



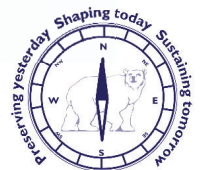
Where do you **LIVE**?



Where do you **VISIT**?



Attendees at the two open houses were asked to put stickers on a city map of locations where they work, live, and/or visit. The results are shown above.



City of White Bear Lake
Zoning Code Update