



MEMORANDUM

To: City of Aurora Planning and Development Committee

From: Lindsay Bayley, CMAP staff

Date: 11/06/2017

Re: Adjustments to the Downtown Master Plan

After discussions at the September 28th Planning and Development Committee meeting, it was made clear that the Committee wanted to see the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk featured more prominently in the Master Plan. There was also discussion of the role of the City's fiber optic system and location of new residential buildings. Additions and changes were made to the draft Downtown Master Plan as outlined in the Memo to the Planning and Development Committee dated October 25, 2017. After further discussions at the November 2nd Planning and Development Committee meeting the following changes and additions were made to the draft Downtown Master Plan to be considered at the November 7, 2017 Committee of the Whole meeting. A PDF of the revised plan and the 1/25/2017 memo is included with this memo.

Section 3: The Downtown Experience

Page 23

- Under Recommendation 1 c: *"Develop stronger visual and physical links to the river front"*, changed "Aurora is unique in that it has several small islands in the middle of the river, including Stolp Island with many attractions and government offices." to "Aurora is unique in that it has several large and small islands in the middle of the river, including Stolp Island with many attractions, government offices, and scenic sections of the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk." And added mention of the Riverwalk: "As a gateway, aesthetic improvements can be added to the trail and FoxWalk/ Riverwalk, including more prominently highlighted access points, and directions to downtown businesses.

Section 6: The Heart of Downtown: The Fox River

Page 47

- **Added recommendation:** *Complete the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk improvements in keeping with the goals and recommendations of this plan, with the following text:*

"As outlined in the FoxWalk Overlay District Design Guidelines, the 'open space between walkway and building face should be developed as a publicly accessible extension of the walkway/landscaping system which will parallel the river.' The City

shall hold new developments responsible for providing public access to the river. In accordance with the vision and recommendations outlined in this downtown Master plan, placemaking and community building are intertwined with the need to connect the downtown to the riverfront. Preservation and re-activation of existing structures is a cost-effective way to breathe life—and tax revenue—into the downtown area. Riverwalk construction can utilize creative means to preserve existing structures while connecting sections of the FoxWalk/Riverwalk. The FoxWalk/Riverwalk Master Plan set forth guiding principles for streetscape, public access and public spaces; established a goal to create barrier-free pedestrian access along the river, including access to the water's edge, lush, garden-like plantings, shoreline stabilization and erosion prevention; and a continued expansion of the network of walkways linking the public spaces, businesses, and attractions of downtown Aurora to the river's edge.

As a major capital enhancement to the downtown, the FoxWalk/Riverwalk can be funded in many creative ways. The City can pursue a variety of financing options to augment the gaming and TIF funds used in the past, including local and federal grants, wayfinding and smart cities programs, programing, non-profit organizations, and private fundraising campaigns.”