



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** City of Aurora Planning and Development Committee

**From:** Lindsay Bayley, CMAP staff

**Date:** 10/25/17

**Re:** Adjustments to the Downtown Master Plan

---

---

After discussions at the September 28<sup>th</sup> 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. The following changes and additions were made to the draft Downtown Master Plan. A PDF of the revised plan is included with this memo.

### Cover

- A new cover is in the process of being designed by Bruce Bondy, placeholder on cover for now but the plan will not be published until the new cover is completed.

### Section 1: A Vision for Downtown

Page 9

- Vision overview: Added restaurants "overlooking the picturesque FoxWalk/ Riverwalk"

Page 10

- A Vibrant Fox River intro sentence changed from: "By orienting more aspects of the riverfront community toward the Fox River, Aurora has been able to attract more visitors and riverfront activity." To "By orienting more aspects of the riverfront community toward the Fox River, Aurora has been able to attract more visitors to stroll along the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk and engage with the river."

### Section 2: Project Overview

Page 17

- Added the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk and Fox River trail to the Study Area map

### Section 3: The Downtown Experience

Page 19

- In Key Findings, made specific mention of the importance of walkability "and the Riverwalk."

Page 20

- Under Recommendation 1: *Enhance the built environment to create a sense of place*, changed “The aesthetics of downtown would also be enhanced with roadway improvements to make walking more comfortable, which is covered in more detail in the Transportation section.” To “The aesthetics of downtown would also benefit from improvements to the Foxwalk/ Riverwalk and roadways to make walking more comfortable, which is covered in more detail in the Transportation section.”
- Under recommendation 1a: *Identify and prioritize major and minor gateway entrances into, and prominent corridors within downtown*, changed “Traffic counts should be used to assist in the prioritization of locations” to “Traffic counts on roadways as well as the Foxwalk/ Riverwalk can be used to assist in the prioritization of locations.”

Page 21

- Updated the Downtown attractions and icons map to include the biking facilities and the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk.

Page 22

- Under recommendation 1b: *Target infrastructural and aesthetic improvements to enhance the sense of place*, changed “In addition, markers should be installed along the regional bike trail system to inform cyclists that they are entering Downtown Aurora, and alert them to amenities” to “In addition, markers should be installed along the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk and the regional bike trail system to inform cyclists that they are entering Downtown Aurora, and alert them to amenities.”

Page 23

- Changed recommendation 1c: *“Develop stronger visual and physical links to the river front”* to *“Develop stronger visual and physical links to the river front and continue the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk”*
- Under Recommendation 1 c, 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 Riverwalk.”
- Under recommendation 1d: *Develop stronger visual and physical links to the river front*, added:

“The improvements outlined in the FoxWalk/Riverwalk Master Plan would bring people closer to the river’s edge. The 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 gateway, aesthetic improvements can be added to the trail and FoxWalk/ Riverwalk, including more prominently highlighted access points, and directions to downtown businesses.”

Page 25

- Under recommendation 2a: in description of key routes between destination and gateways, added mention of the Riverwalk.
- Under recommendation 2b: for coordinating with other riverfront communities for wayfinding, made specific mention of the FoxWalk amenities.

Page 26

- Under recommendation 3b: added more prominence to paragraph about the city's fiber optic network as a way to appeal to the tech sector.

## **Section 6: The Heart of Downtown: The Fox River**

Page 44

- Added specific mention of the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk in the intro paragraph: "Further integration of the Fox River into downtown life will be enhanced through increased recreational use and access along the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk, activation of the riverfront, and additional management and restoration of this important ecological resource."

Page 46

- In the intro to the recommendations, added mention of the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk: "Increasing the recreational use of the river, enhancing overall enjoyment for residents and visitors, and improving the quality of the environment are high priorities for many, as evidenced by the recently completed RiverEdge Park, the dedication to developing the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk, and the use of best management practices."
- In the Intro to Recommendation 1: *Activate the Fox River Corridor*, added mention of the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk: "Past plans have focused on the importance of building upon the assets and opportunities provided by the riverfront environment. City-driven changes along the river have already greatly improved the multi-use trail, FoxWalk/ Riverwalk views and aesthetics, recreational activities, and available space for community events."

Page 47

- Added recommendation: *Ensure that new development on the river provide public access to the river.* "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 the recommendation "Create passive recreational attractions," changed reference to river front trail to FoxWalk/ Riverwalk.

Page 48

- In Recommendation 2b: Implement improvements that enhance connectivity, added reference to the Riverwalk: "Better connectivity should be promoted for all modes of transportation along the river and to downtown by connecting the FoxWalk/ Riverwalk and the Fox River Trail to other local and regional trails, open space, and the street and sidewalk network."