

Bottineau Advisory Services - 2017 Work Plan Progress

1. On October 4th and 14th 2017, ULI MN organized and facilitated transit-oriented development tours where Bottineau policy leaders and staff had an opportunity to see LRT projects, talk with developers and hear from city staff on challenges and opportunities in the planning, land use and implementation of four specific TOD areas in the region.
 - The tours included stops at four suburban and urban TOD projects and focused on density and economics, short and long-term market potential at LRT stations and the important collaboration and partnership between the city, county, metro transit and the private sector.
 - A summary of each project was provided (**see attached**) and a representative from the City and the developer were available to provide information on the site and answer questions.
 - Approximately forty people attended the tours and included policy leaders and staff from each of the Bottineau cities. (**see attached attendee list**)
 - From a follow-up survey, participants appreciated having an opportunity to see projects completed and envisioned. They also felt it was important to hear from both the City and developers related to the process, challenges, and future plans for the sites and how the present and future LRT impacted the development's success. Some of the feedback included the following (**full survey summary attached**).
 - Having both staff and developers present at the projects was important; it allowed the Bottineau policy makers to see "both sides" of each project.
 - Developers are willing to invest years before a transit line opens and before there is a guarantee that the line will be funded.
 - The City must be a partner for these projects to get done.
 - These developments either built on an existing dense area or created a new one (Eden Prairie). Cities also funded land acquisition to create sites attractive enough to developers to get what they wanted.
 - Need partnerships and incentives
 - Developers and cities working cooperatively to overcome obstacles was a surprise. I was also impressed with the non-profit participation and their ability to get things done.

2. On July 12, 2017 ULI MN organized a 1/2-day density workshop for Bottineau policy leaders and city staff. The workshop was facilitated by national expert, Julie Campoli, who engage leaders in visualizing density as an economic driver and a land use mechanism for supporting community goals. The workshop was held at the North Hennepin Community College from 4:45 – 9:00 p.m. and was attended by 33 representatives from the cities of Golden Valley, Crystal, Robbinsdale and Brooklyn Park along with staff from Metro Transit and Hennepin County. **(See attached sign in sheet).**

The session included two presentations **(attached)** entitled:

- a. Putting People First: How suburban towns can use transit, urban design, and density to build a better future
- b. It is Solved by Walking: The design principles and planning practices at the heart of humane, prosperous places

In addition, the session includes a hands-on exercise focused around how design affects the perception of density. **(see attached exercise worksheet)**

The key outcomes of the workshop were better understanding of the value of density, the importance of design when development is denser than surrounding land uses, how local decision regarding street networks, connectivity, mixing of uses, green spaces and building patterns impact how density is perceived and the opportunities that transit provide in ensuring the success of density and walkability. In addition, the following ideas were discussed.

- How parking shapes the built environment and how in the suburbs there is an expectation of free parking. How can we shift that expectation where a fee for parking is second nature similar to fees for water and other basic services?
- The future of self-driving cars will change the parking culture and cities should be prepared to repurpose parking spaces into buildable areas.
- Light rail can be a strong stimulus for development
- For walkable places to be inviting you need more than a sidewalk – rather be sure to create an inviting environment where you want people to walk from one place to another.
- The form of density is more important than the amount of density – there is no such thing as optimal density.
- Create a platform for community engagement to shift NIMBYism to YIMBYism. Talk about what people are for rather than focus on what they are against when starting the conversation about density.
- The exercise identified the following principles or what is important to people.
 - o Connection
 - o Hide parking
 - o Access
 - o Sharing of Spaces
 - o Incorporate green spaces into the streetscape to break up density

- Create a tree canopy
- Create a diversity of housing types and designs
- Mix of uses with variety of designs
- Locate housing near transit stops
- Build walkability into daily life – make it easy to walk and hard to park
- Small blocks to create human scale buildings with no blank walls
- Make sure the building face is well designed
- Create areas of density transition
- Make sure parking a shared resource
- To make sure you get good design focus on the following: Define what you want, explain what you want over and over, regulate it (with pictures), meet early and often with community, be patient.
- What makes places desirable: good schools, safety, bars and restaurants, easy connection to nature, mobility

WHAT CAN I DO? WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER?

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