

1 The Special Meeting of the Plan Commission of the City of Onalaska was called to order at 2:00  
2 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29, 2019. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a  
3 notice posted at City Hall.

4  
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Ald. Tom Smith,  
6 City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Jan Brock, Paul Gleason, Craig Breitsprecher, Steven Nott

7  
8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Planning Manager Katie Aspenson, City  
9 Legal Counsel Amanda Jackson, Ald. Diane Wulf, Ald. Kim Smith, Ald. Dan Stevens, Ald.  
10 Boondi Iyer, Rita Trapp and Jeff Miller of HKGi

11  
12 Excused Absence: Skip Temte

13  
14 **Item 2 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per individual)**

15  
16 Mayor Chilsen called for anyone wishing to provide public input

17  
18 **Dennis Aspenson**  
19 **1735 Pine Ridge Drive**  
20 **Onalaska**

21  
22 “I appreciate what you’re all doing going through and taking a look at everything. I understand  
23 what you’re looking at today is pretty general. I want to know if the firm that’s helping us right  
24 now is going to continue into the detail, because the detail is going to be the tough part of this  
25 whole thing. I don’t know what kind of contract the city has, but I hope we can call on their  
26 expertise to use it because on the development side we need as much latitude as we can, and to  
27 understand where you guys are at. The housing industry is changing, and so isn’t trying to  
28 control costs. Hopefully they’re going to be part of the detail.”

29  
30 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

31  
32 **Item 3 – Discussion & Consideration of the Onalaska Unified Development Code**  
33 **(UDC)/Zoning Rewrite Project**

34  
35 A. Summary of May 6<sup>th</sup> Public Open House

36  
37 Jeff shared the following:

- 38  
39
  - Nineteen people signed in, and several members of the Plan Commission and the  
40 Common Council had attended the open house.
  - Concerns were raised regarding new housing types not being designed to fit in with the  
41 character of existing single-family neighborhoods. Is there a need for design standards?  
42

- 43 • Which types of middle-density housing are appropriate and/or realistic for the City of  
44 Onalaska in the new R-3 Zoning District?
- 45 • Concerns were raised regarding religious institutions being zoned Residential. Should  
46 zoning for all such institutions be uniform?
- 47 • There was support for accessory dwelling units, urban agriculture, home occupations, and  
48 accessory structures. Perhaps standards should be established for accessory dwelling  
49 units and urban agriculture. Concerns were raised about possible traffic issues associated  
50 with home occupations. A suggestion was made to increase the height maximum for  
51 accessory structures.
- 52 • Regarding business and manufacturing zoning districts, a suggestion was made to require  
53 sufficient screening between business uses and residential uses.
- 54 • Regarding future mixed-use areas, someone suggested allowing a greater mix of housing  
55 types along State Trunk Highway 35, north of the downtown core. Questions were raised  
56 pertaining to whether or not to allow Commercial zoning in that area.

- 57
- 58 B. Proposed Restructuring of Zoning Districts
- 59 1. Approach
- 60 2. District Purpose Statements
- 61 3. Draft Principal Uses Tables – Permitted, Permitted with Standards, Conditional
- 62

63 Rita said she and Jeff are seeking feedback from the Plan Commission regarding whether  
64 HKGi’s recommended approach relative to rezoning seems logical, and also whether the purpose  
65 statements capture the intention of each district.

66

67 **Residential**

68

69 **Approach:** In an effort to provide a transition between the R-2 and R-4 district, it is proposed  
70 that a new R-3 district be created. In addition, given that the R-160 district only serves one  
71 neighborhood and is not intended to be applied to other areas, it is recommended that the district  
72 be eliminated and those properties rezoned to the most appropriate district.

73

74 **Proposed District Purpose Statements**

75

- 76 • **R-1:** The purpose of the R-1 Low Density Residential District is to encourage the  
77 establishment and preservation of neighborhoods with single-household detached  
78 dwellings.
- 79 • **R-2:** The purpose of the R-2 Low-Medium Density Residential District is to  
80 accommodate single-household detached dwellings, two-household dwellings, and zero  
81 lot line dwellings.
- 82 • **R-3:** The purpose of the R-3 Medium Residential District is to accommodate a mixture of  
83 single-household housing types, including single-household dwellings, two-household

- 84 dwellings, zero lot line dwellings, and attached townhouses and rowhouses.
- 85 • **R-4:** The purpose of the R-4 High Density Residential District is to accommodate a range
  - 86 of medium density and high-density housing types, including rowhouses, townhouses,
  - 87 and apartments.
  - 88 • **R-MMH:** The purpose of the R-MMH Manufactured and Mobile Home District is to
  - 89 establish and preserve neighborhoods comprised of manufactured homes or mobile
  - 90 homes.

91

92 Craig said he believes the mixed-density approach to housing benefits the City of Onalaska as it

93 allows for a lot of flexibility, and it also avoids the pockets that can occur when there is too much

94 segregation of housing types. Craig said he believes the city has done well in ensuring that that

95 does not occur, and he also told Rita, “I understand the need for these. I agree with what you

96 have up there.”

97

98 Paul said the primary difference with the R-160 zoning is it allowed narrower lots, and he also

99 said he believes either the front and/or rear yard requirements were somewhat lessened. Paul

100 asked, “If those fall into R-1 under the same standards, does it make all of them nonconforming

101 uses?”

102

103 Rita told Paul she does not know how R-160 was originally established, or if it had a Planned

104 Unit Development or straight-up zoning. Rita said that while it will be necessary to determine an

105 approach to that, it is illogical to keep a zoning district for one small neighborhood.

106

107 Paul said he does not disagree with that and told Rita he wants to ensure that no one is penalized

108 in the future because they have been moved into a zone that makes their lot or house placement

109 nonconforming by the new standards.

110

111 Rita said HKGi needs to answer questions related to potential impacts and if there is something

112 that needs to be done to help alleviate the impact on that particular neighborhood.

113

114 Ald. T. Smith asked if everything would have to fall under R-1, R-2, R-3, or R-4.

115

116 Rita said everything would fit into those categories.

117

118 Amanda noted there are some mixed-use categories that encompass residential.

119

120 **Business**

121

122 **Approach:** To more clearly distinguish between the various business areas and to address the

123 issue of many commercial business being zoned M-1, three business districts are proposed – B-1,

124 B-2, and B-3. The districts are intended to be distinguished by the scale of the uses and the

125 intended customer base. It is anticipated that a majority of the commercial businesses zoned M-1

126 will be rezoned B-3.

127

128 **Proposed District Purpose Statements**

129

- 130 • **B-1:** The purpose of the B-1 Neighborhood Business District is to accommodate small-  
131 scale commercial uses that are primarily intended to serve adjacent neighborhoods.
- 132 • **B-2:** The purpose of the B-2 Community Business District is to provide shopping areas  
133 along major community roadways with moderately scaled commercial uses that are  
134 primarily intended to serve the local community. This could be applied along State  
135 Trunk Highway 35.
- 136 • **B-3:** The purpose of the B-3 Regional Business District is to accommodate large-scale  
137 commercial uses that benefit from access and visibility to major regional highways and  
138 are primarily intended to serve the regional market area. This would be applied along the  
139 State Trunk Highway 16 corridor.

140

141 Steven said an area of potential confusion is defining small, moderate, and large-scale.

142

143 Craig said, “I think when we define what kind of businesses are allowed within those zones, that  
144 will pretty well identify everything,” adding he believes B-3 zoning would have been helpful in  
145 the discussions held at the Tuesday evening Plan Commission meeting regarding a proposed  
146 Honda dealership.

147

148 Paul told Rita he is having a difficult time thinking of an area he would put into the B-1  
149 classification based on the definitions before the Plan Commission, and he asked her if she has  
150 any in mind.

151

152 Jeff told Paul he and Rita will show the Plan Commission a map later in the meeting, and he said  
153 they are seeing that the B-1 District likely is currently being overapplied.

154

155 Paul said he cannot think of an area in the city he would define as B-1 based on looking at areas  
156 within the city and the definitions before the Plan Commission. Paul said he would place all  
157 those areas either in B-2 or B-3.

158

159 Jeff cited the example of the STH 35 corridor and said he believes a majority of it is zoned B-1  
160 when it should be zoned B-2.

161

162 Paul said he believes Center 90 and the surrounding businesses in the area should be zoned B-2,  
163 and he suggested that perhaps B-1 is unnecessary.

164

165 Jeff said perhaps B-1 could be applied to Sand Lake Road, which is identified as a mixed-use  
166 area in the future. Jeff asked if it should go toward B-1 Neighborhood, or instead go toward a  
167 mixed-use district, and he said, “We may find that there isn’t a lot of use for some districts.”

168  
169 Paul said he believes HKGi is defining districts based on trade area and told Jeff, “If I look for  
170 any place that primarily has a local neighborhood trade area, I can’t think of one.”  
171

172 Jarrod said, “I think you’re going to look at the old Transitional Commercial where you’re trying  
173 to really allow a use in, but you’re really apprehensive of allowing a use. That would be more of  
174 a B-1. You’re always hoping for a business to get people from outside the area and not just  
175 people three blocks away.”  
176

177 Paul asked if a size of the business delineation or a trade area delineation is being utilized,  
178 “because I read these and it’s mostly trade area. That’s the thing that jumps out to me. Maybe  
179 size of the business is more relevant.”  
180

181 Jeff said that while the purpose statements could be more specific, they also will be supported by  
182 what the actual permitted uses are. Jeff said if there are areas in which the city wants to allow  
183 commercial but not drive-ins or automobile-related businesses, they likely are ideal areas for B-1  
184 zoning. Jeff also said he believes B-2 would be a better fit along the STH 35 corridor.  
185

## 186 **Manufacturing**

187  
188 **Approach:** Two manufacturing districts are proposed – one which is for light industrial, and one  
189 which would be for heavy industrial. In general, most industrial businesses that are currently  
190 zoned M-1 or M-2 would be zoned M-1, and those that are currently zoned M-3 would be  
191 rezoned to M-2.  
192

## 193 **Proposed District Purpose Statements**

- 194  
195
- 196 • **M-1:** The purpose of the M-1 Light Industrial District is to provide areas for light  
197 industrial uses such as the assembly, fabrication, and processing of goods and materials,  
198 provided that industrial activities are conducted entirely within buildings and where the  
199 byproducts of industrial activities such as noise, odors, smoke, and storage are confined  
200 entirely within the buildings and ordinarily do not have nuisance impacts on surrounding  
201 properties.
  - 202 • **M-2:** The purpose of the M-2 Heavy Industrial District is to provide areas for heavy  
203 industrial uses, including the manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, processing,  
204 warehousing, distribution, and related operations that generally require larger land areas,  
205 significant exterior operation or storage of equipment and materials, and/or where the  
206 byproducts of industrial activities such as noise, odors, smoke and storage may have  
207 nuisance impacts on surrounding properties.

208 Rita said HKGi is suggesting that the city switch to I-1 and I-2 designations from M-1 and M-2  
209 because it implies a broader definition.

210

211 **Mixed Use**

212

213 **Approach:** It is suggested that the city have two mixed use districts to accommodate different  
214 scale needs. While both districts would seek to encourage a mix of uses and pedestrian scale  
215 design, the more intense district would have higher density housing and taller buildings. While  
216 components of the existing districts (T-C, TND, etc.) will be considered, it is recommended that  
217 new districts be created for clarity.

218

219 **Proposed District Purpose Statements**

220

- 221 • **MU-N:** The purpose of the MU-N Mixed Use Neighborhood District is to provide areas  
222 for the development and redevelopment of land based on the design principles of  
223 traditional neighborhoods, including a mix of complementary uses consisting of  
224 residential, commercial, civic, institutional, and open space uses in close proximity to  
225 each other; a mix of housing styles, types and sizes to accommodate households of all  
226 ages, sizes and incomes; compact and human scale design; an interconnected street  
227 system with sidewalks, bikeways, and transit access; retains existing buildings with  
228 historical or architectural features that enhance the community’s visual character; and  
229 preserves and incorporates significant environmental features.
- 230 • **MU-C:** The purpose of the MU-C Mixed Use Community District is to provide areas for  
231 the development and redevelopment of land based on the design principles of pedestrian-  
232 oriented mixed-use districts that integrate retail, services, entertainment, civic,  
233 institutional, residential, and small parks/plazas. This district is characterized by  
234 multistory buildings, higher development densities, buildings located close to streets and  
235 sidewalks, and site and building design that create vibrant and unique places within the  
236 community.

237

238 Craig said that while he finds this “a little more abstract and a little harder to grasp, I think you  
239 have to start somewhere, and this probably does that.”

240

241 Rita said, “I think as we move through here and as we apply these, it will flesh it out more and  
242 hopefully it becomes a little bit clearer.”

243

244 Rita summarized for the Plan Commission what had just been discussed:

245

- 246 • **Residential:** R-160 would be eliminated, and R-3 would be added.
- 247 • **Business:** T-C would be eliminated, and the properties within T-C would be rezoned  
248 appropriately. A new B-3 District would address regional business needs.
- 249 • **Industrial:** M-1 would be converted to B-3 for businesses, and the M-2 and M-3  
250 districts would be consolidated. This would lead to the I-1 and I-2 districts.

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- 251           • **Mixed Use:** The TMD and TND districts would be eliminated. The successful elements  
252           of those districts would be incorporated in the MU-N and MU-C districts.

253

254 Rita noted the city's MCD District will continue and will be a base district. Rita said the  
255 Agricultural and P districts are not shown because minimal changes will be made to them.

256

257 Rita next addressed the Principal Use Tables, telling commission members they will have  
258 multiple opportunities throughout the rewriting process to make adjustments. Rita said HKGi is  
259 moving away from identifying anything that is a Conditional Use as State of Wisconsin Statutes  
260 prevent the city from doing anything significant with them. Therefore, HKGi is generally  
261 suggesting that most things either be Permitted or Permitted with Standards, and HKGi also is  
262 not suggesting Conditional Uses. Rita said the table is currently structured so that what generally  
263 is identified as Permitted with Standards previously were identified either as a Conditional Use  
264 or there already were standards. Rita said the table does not reflect whether or not HKGi  
265 believes something still should be Permitted with Standards. Rather, it reflects the city's existing  
266 conditions. Rita said standards include having to increase the setback for particular uses.  
267 However, there are no standards in some instances, and standards will have to be created. HKGi  
268 will be looking at identifying, what is the potential impact from a use on adjacent uses, and what  
269 standard would be needed to prevent that impact. Rita said, "We may find that some of the  
270 things we have identified as Permitted with Standards, when we try to sit down and actually  
271 identify what the potential impact is and how we can mitigate it through standards, we either  
272 can't identify anything or we really don't think there is as much of an impact as previously felt."

273

274 Jarrod referred to page 3 of the table and noted that while printing is permitted in both B-2 and  
275 B-3, storage and sale of machinery and equipment is permitted, with standards almost all the way  
276 across. Jarrod asked, "If you have one that is permitted and then you have one that is permitted  
277 with standards, you're still going to have stipulations on a printing operation, just as you would  
278 on a storage and sale of machinery under B-3. I'm just trying to follow how you're going to  
279 describe what it means [to be permitted with standards]."

280

281 Rita told Jarrod there will be a standards section in the code, and they will be organized by the  
282 type of use. One would look up storage and sale of machinery and equipment, and it would state  
283 the standard is, for example, the establishment must be set back 50 feet from any adjacent  
284 residential. It also would only apply to that particular use.

285

286 Jeff said there typically are standards in the current code, or something is addressed as a  
287 Conditional Use. Jeff said because Conditional Uses are in theory being removed, the city might  
288 want to have standards to convert from conditional to permitted. Jeff also said the table currently  
289 shows more permitted, with standards than what the city ultimately will have, adding, "We have  
290 to start somewhere with, where should you start looking for where standards might be needed."

291

292 Jarrod said anything that is permitted still will have standards.

Reviewed 6/4/19 by Katie Aspenson

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293

294 Katie said there are different setbacks and different heights for districts. Katie referred to the  
295 current B-1 District and said that while a wide range of uses (e.g. bar, clinic, bank) are allowed,  
296 there are no set standards for those uses.

297

298 Rita cited a drive-through as an example of something upon which additional standards –  
299 volume, for example – are placed. Rita said she assumes the examples Jarrod had cited will not  
300 have as many permitted, with standards in the M-1 and M-2 districts as are shown on the table  
301 because the goal is to have fewer standards in the aforementioned districts. Rita said, “This one  
302 is overdoing it because you already have this in your code, and we need to refine it back now to  
303 what is really realistic or what you really need to have in your code.”

304

305 Paul said he is in agreement with Jarrod in that everything has standards, citing a single-family  
306 home as an example of having a side yard setback as a standard.

307

308 Jeff said setbacks are at a district level and not by use, noting that setbacks for all housing types  
309 may be the same.

310

311 Paul noted HKGi is segregating district standards from specific use standards.

312

313 Rita said HKGi will have a table that will have lot or site dimensional standards, and she told  
314 Paul everything will be the same, for example, in the B-1 District if someone wants to construct  
315 a bank or a café. If a café has a drive-through, the standards will be found in a different section.  
316 However, the actual structure would follow the district standards.

317

318 Paul asked if the standards could be determined on a case-by-case basis.

319

320 Rita said they are predetermined in the Zoning Code.

321

322 Amanda cited daycare facilities as an example of the city likely wanting expanded green space,  
323 and also perhaps different parking and drop-off standards. Those standards would be very  
324 specific to the use of a daycare facility.

325

326 Paul said that when a rezoning occurs, city staff and the public may seek specific conditions on a  
327 use, and he asked if the city is, in effect, placing increasing the number of standards in that  
328 instance.

329

330 Amanda told Paul yes and also said she believes that will occur less frequently. Amanda said,  
331 “To a certain degree, you’re using rezoning to do some of the things you used to be able to do  
332 under our Conditional Use Permits.”

333

334 Paul said the city has general landscaping requirements and noted the Plan Commission on

Reviewed 6/4/19 by Katie Aspenson

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335 Tuesday had placed additional landscaping requirements on Jansen Dahl's request to rezone a  
336 parcel from B-1 to M-1. Paul said, "I'm just trying to understand how, when we did that  
337 [Tuesday] night, we're not putting on case-specific, additional standards beyond the permitted,  
338 with standards that are in the code. You've said we can't do that, but we did it [Tuesday] night."  
339

340 Katie referred to the rezoning request that went before the Plan Commission Tuesday evening  
341 and said the city's code specifically states that when there are two uses, such as Light Industrial  
342 to Residential, they are two uses that typically do not go side-by-side. Katie said the city's code  
343 specifically states if there are two uses, such as Light Industrial up against Residential, a buffer is  
344 necessary. Katie told Paul that was not a new standard and said the condition she had written  
345 had come straight from the code: a 10-foot buffer, and 80-percent opaqueness. Katie said the  
346 ordinance further states if the Plan Commission believes it is necessary based on the uses, it is  
347 possible to exceed that.  
348

349 Paul asked if permitted, with standards will have a set of base standards written, and if the Plan  
350 Commission will have the ability to apply more standards in certain cases.  
351

352 Katie told Paul yes and said the point of permitted, with standards is to eliminate the CUP  
353 because the Plan Commission cannot deny such a request. Katie cited the example of home  
354 occupations, which can elicit a response from concerned neighbors, and said, "What about those  
355 things that scare us can we make as standards that whenever you do a home occupation, you  
356 have to follow these special rules. Then those are applied 100 percent across the board. It  
357 doesn't matter if it's a little home occupation or a bigger home occupation. As long as you do  
358 that in this district, you have to follow these rules. It's a way of essentially removing the  
359 arbitrary and case-by-case basis."  
360

361 Paul cited examples of conditions such as no more than one employee in addition to the owner  
362 and no more than one delivery per week.  
363

364 Katie said an individual with a home occupation would be required to rezone or relocate his/her  
365 business if the rules are not followed as he/she is exceeding what the city has deemed as  
366 appropriate to protect the integrity of the neighborhood.  
367

368 Craig said that while he understands the need for standards in permitted with standards  
369 situations, he had initially agreed with both Jarrod and Paul in that, "it's basically your  
370 interpretation of standards and how those are to be applied. But I like the idea of landowners  
371 having a lot of flexibility with what they do. I don't think the standards will necessarily interfere  
372 with that, but it almost seems to me like we're going to see more permitted with standards  
373 situations than maybe we think we're going to see."  
374

375 Rita said she believes it depends on "what is the underlying reason why we originally put  
376 something as conditional. I think all of us originally, without what happened with the

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377 limitations, used that as our safety net. Now we have to talk about whether there really is  
378 something we're concerned about or not."

379  
380 Craig asked if the city would tend to gravitate to listing things as permitted with standards so that  
381 there is a so-called safety valve.

382  
383 Rita said it is possible, but she also told Craig it is necessary to identify standards for every use.  
384

385 Craig said it appears as though a use that might be allowed in a couple of different districts also  
386 would carry with them different standards based on which district in which they are located.  
387

388 Ald. T. Smith asked if the standards have the ability to evolve, and asked if they may be  
389 modified over time.

390  
391 Katie told Ald. T. Smith yes.

392  
393 Ald. T. Smith cited the example of an establishment zoned as a restaurant that wishes to add a  
394 drive-through, asking if the use thus changes and necessitates different standards being applied.  
395 Ald. T. Smith asked, "That zone would change from whatever it was to the new one based on the  
396 standards? Or can it change?"

397  
398 Katie said it would not necessarily change the zone. Rather, the standards would apply to it that  
399 did not before, Katie also said if there are no standards and no drive-throughs are desired in a  
400 particular district, it is possible to rezone to a new district, at which time the new standards  
401 would apply.

402  
403 Rita referred to the table and asked if there is anything of concern to the Plan Commission.

404  
405 Paul asked if there is a definition for "dwelling – zero-lot line."

406  
407 Rita said yes.

408  
409 Jarrod inquired about the uses highlighted in yellow.

410  
411 Rita said they are uses HKGi knew to be "slightly problematic" and thus needed to be discussed  
412 with city staff. Rita noted city staff has begun examining them, and some changes have been  
413 made.

414  
415 Ald. T. Smith cited the example of a current mixed use that will be moved to mixed use, with  
416 standards, asking if there is an impact on current developers, owners and/or residents that would  
417 make something change for them.

418  
Reviewed 6/4/19 by Katie Aspenson

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419 Rita said it somewhat depends on how they were originally approved, such as through a Planned  
420 Unit Development, and the standards were established separately. This might be different than if  
421 they were approved through their current district. Rita told Ald. T. Smith this will have to be  
422 discussed as HKGi and the city examine rezoning every property and said, “We’re going to have  
423 to think about whether there is an impact as a result of the rezoning.” Rita added she and Jeff  
424 understand that this is a potential challenge.

425

426 Craig asked if establishments such as churches and schools would be in an institutional zone?

427

428 Rita told Craig an element that is being discussed is placing them in a public district and an  
429 institutional district. Rita also said she and Jeff want to focus on the four main base areas today  
430 and work through those first “because they impact the rest of them.”

431

432 C. 2016 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Guidance & Potential Rezoning Approaches

433

1. Residential

434

2. Business

435

3. Manufacturing

436

4. Mixed Use – Downtown & Smart Growth Areas

437

438 Jeff referred to the Land Use Map and said the primary category he wants to discuss is the Mixed  
439 Use category. Jeff noted the Comprehensive Plan includes Downtown Mixed Use and Mixed  
440 Use Smart Growth Areas. These areas are outlined in commission members’ packets. Jeff noted  
441 the Common Council had approved redevelopment plans both for Downtown Onalaska and the  
442 State Road 16 corridor in April, and he said the map shows the concept of the downtown study  
443 area being looked at as a Downtown Core Area, Mixed Residential Area, and the Great River  
444 Road Business Corridor. Jeff said the map breaks up the downtown area that is in the  
445 Comprehensive Plan into smaller areas. Jeff said the discussion will begin with the Downtown  
446 Core Area versus north of downtown, which on the map goes up to Quincy Street and then south  
447 of the Downtown Core. Jeff said the Downtown Core area currently is zoned B-1, B-2, and  
448 Public. The areas north of downtown are primarily zoned Residential, and Jeff said the  
449 Comprehensive Plan encourages going toward Mixed uUse. The other Mixed Use category in  
450 the Comprehensive Plan begins at Quincy Street and goes north. The area south of Irvin Street is  
451 zoned for B-1 along STH 35. The area along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is zoned for R-2. Jeff asked Plan  
452 Commission members how much they believe should go to Mixed Use and said he believes it is  
453 logical to make the Downtown Core a Mixed Use District – likely away from B-1.

454

455 Craig said he believes it is prudent to go with larger Mixed Use areas and stated he believes it  
456 both currently accommodates everyone and provides future opportunities.

457

458 Ald. T. Smith said he agrees with Craig, noting the city is attempting to draw more people  
459 downtown.

460

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461 Paul said he agrees and stated it opens up more opportunities for future redevelopment.

462

463 Craig said, “If we’re going to keep the core of downtown vital, I think we have to go that way. I  
464 don’t think there’s any alternative.”

465

466 Mayor Chilsen said he believes flexibility is the key to keeping developers interested in the city.

467

468 Jeff noted the Comprehensive Plan identifies the following areas as Mixed Use Smart Growth  
469 areas: 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue/STH 35 north of Quincy Street, Main Street east of U.S. Highway 53, and  
470 Sand Lake Road. Jeff noted the map shows the area north of Quincy Street being Mixed Use.  
471 Jeff noted Mixed Use Downtown in the Comprehensive Plan targets only higher-density  
472 residential, and Mixed Use Smart Growth Area targets all residential. Jeff said one of the  
473 challenges of the corridor north of Quincy Street is that a significant portion of it is not located in  
474 the City of Onalaska.

475

476 Katie said “a good portion” of it is not located within the city and told Jeff she believes one of  
477 the reasons it was designated a Mixed Use Smart Growth Area is the uses within the city are  
478 varied. Katie said the area is a mix of parks, single-family homes, apartments, and businesses.  
479 There also are a number of homes and businesses not located within the city, and Katie said the  
480 city wanted to make sure anyone annexed in would be compatible with the use of the Mixed Use.  
481 Katie said there was no clear answer as to what a future land use should be, and now the  
482 challenge is to determine how to put it in the form of a district.

483

484 Craig asked Katie if the same philosophy holds true even with the other areas he believes  
485 eventually will be part of the City of Onalaska.

486

487 Katie said it must be determined if the areas north of Quincy Street will be Mixed Use, one of the  
488 city’s Mixed Use District, or if perhaps it is more suited to be zoned Business. Katie said, “It  
489 may jump a little bit and it may not be just one big paintbrush of all Mixed Use. That’s  
490 something that I think as we continue on and go through the actual uses of the table, it will tell us  
491 based on what we see there today and what we think might happen what’s going to be the best  
492 district.”

493

494 Craig said he believes it is important to keep opportunities open in that district, telling Katie he  
495 does not see it as a long-term residential district as much as he sees it really evolving.

496

497 Jeff said the Comprehensive Plan is oriented to talk about Mixed Use areas, and he told  
498 commission members he and Rita have discovered the Zoning Code does not necessarily have  
499 the ideal zoning district to implement it. Jeff noted the Traditional Neighborhood District is a  
500 Mixed Use Zoning District and said it is the city’s only one. Jeff said he and Rita are talking  
501 about, “Does it work well? Do we not change that zoning district very much? I think we’re  
502 looking at that one pretty hard, and right now on the table we’re showing that maybe TND

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503 becomes a Mixed Use Neighborhood District. There is another district that is more  
504 downtown/urban focused, and that's Mixed Use Community. We need to do that to figure out do  
505 you want to apply Mixed Use Districts to these, and then what are they? Right now, there is just  
506 the TND, which hasn't been used as much."

507  
508 Craig said he believes the city will have a better roadmap once when the specific uses for those  
509 areas are defined.

510  
511 Jeff next addressed the Sand Lake Road corridor, noting the Comprehensive Plan shows the area  
512 from Main Street north to Redwood Street as a future Mixed Use area. Jeff asked if this area  
513 could become a Mixed Use District.

514  
515 Craig said he likes what is there now and asked that the city keep the same perspective.

516  
517 For clarification, Jeff asked Craig if he supports going to Mixed Use zoning along the Sand Lake  
518 Road corridor.

519  
520 Craig said he does.

521  
522 Amanda referred to an office building she said is almost between two districts, and she asked  
523 how that section of Sand Lake Road and Main Street would be connected with the downtown  
524 district, or if it would be kept separate with space in between the two of them.

525  
526 Jeff said the area to which Amanda had referred could be zoned B-1.

527  
528 Paul asked if B-1 is determined by the size of the business or the trade area, and he said he  
529 believes The Wharf and the dental office, both of which are located along Main Street, are in a  
530 B-2 area.

531  
532 Mayor Chilsen said he thinks of B-1 zoning as residing in New York City, not owning a car, and  
533 walking to his intended destination. Mayor Chilsen said that really does not occur in the City of  
534 Onalaska.

535  
536 Jeff said the term pedestrian-oriented is more of a residential, walkable area, and thus the goal is  
537 to design buildings in scale and build them in locations that they may be accessed via foot. Jeff  
538 said that is less important of Sand Lake Road as it is a higher-traffic street.

539  
540 Paul addressed Amanda's question of connecting The Wharf and the dental office located along  
541 Main Street as a mixed use to part of the Mixed Use area along Sand Lake Road, saying, "Taking  
542 a bigger picture look at it, couldn't the whole Main Street corridor from the river east to the  
543 Coachlite area ... isn't that really a Mixed Use area? There are a mixture of businesses and  
544 residences."

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545

546 Jarrod said that when T-C was created in the mid-1990s, the plans were just as Paul had  
547 proposed. However, the Plan Commission stated its opposition to the proposal, and Jarrod said  
548 former Mayor Shirleigh Van Riper did not believe it was appropriate based on the feedback he  
549 received from citizens. Jarrod said, “The Land Use Plan shows it, but it was never zoned way.  
550 But that came up during rezoning.”

551

552 Paul said he believes either it inevitably will move in that direction, or it is prevented from  
553 moving in that direction.

554

555 Jarrod referred to the map on the screen and noted Lake Street is located in the middle of four  
556 yellow rectangles. Jarrod said that while he favors Mixed Use zoning along Sand Lake Road, “if  
557 we go through with this and no one from Lake Street or 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue shows up for the public  
558 hearing, which most likely they may not, and we change this and a year from now we have a  
559 developer who comes into the office and says, ‘Mixed Use. I just bought three houses and I’m  
560 going to put up what meets your permitted uses or permitted, with standards, I’m going to tear  
561 down those three houses and put it up.’ Then the neighborhood goes nuts, [but] it’s in the code  
562 and they’re allowed to do it. I think it’s a useful use here, and I love the connecting things  
563 [concept]. I just want to make sure as we go along we understand there are going to be a few  
564 hiccups along the way – how much do you change? Do you stop and leave a block out because  
565 it’s all residential around it? I don’t know what the right answer is, but those are things we have  
566 to be cognizant of when we’re doing this. Personally, I like it myself.”

567

568 Paul said that problem arises whenever someone purchases a house located along a busy street  
569 and either wants to convert it to a small office use or raze it and construct a small office. Paul  
570 said, “That same conflict is played out because the house behind it doesn’t want it. The house  
571 next to it on the other side doesn’t want it. The office building on this side is OK with it because  
572 it’s another office. But the person who owns that house can’t get fair dollar for it because of all  
573 the other factors.”

574

575 Craig said he believes the opposition originates from 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and not Sand Lake Road.

576

577 Jarrod told Craig there always will be pockets and said he appreciates the discussion as it will  
578 dictate land use in the city for the next 25 to 50 years. Jarrod suggested having outreach to  
579 different areas.

580

581 Paul said the natural course is uses change in certain areas of slowly growing communities, and  
582 he stated, “Either we accommodate it or have a knee-jerk reaction and permit one but tell the  
583 other one no. ... We’re going to be facing those decisions no matter what.”

584

585 Jeff said both he and Rita and city staff recognize the fact rezoning is crucial. Jeff told the  
586 commission there is nothing saying the city has to rezone all the Mixed Use areas as part of this

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15

587 project, and he said perhaps there are areas the Plan Commission will want to prioritize for  
588 Mixed Use. Those areas would be rezoned, and other areas would be rezoned at a later date  
589 because now is not the right time.

590

591 Craig said he believes the area on Sand Lake Road from Main Street to Redwood Street should  
592 be Mixed Use.

593

594 Jeff next addressed the Mixed Use area of Main Street that is just east of U.S. Highway 53 and  
595 north of Interstate 90, and he asked if this is a potential Mixed Use area.

596

597 Katie told commission members the area in question includes AutoZone, Pet Me Scratch Me,  
598 and Eagle Bluff Elementary School, and she noted the area on the northern side at the curb cutoff  
599 is primarily residential. Katie told commission members she had spoken to an individual earlier  
600 in May who believed constructing a rowhouse of three units would be a good use of a large  
601 unused lot. Katie said it is debatable as to whether this area would be Mixed Use.

602

603 Jarrod noted this area has some of the highest traffic volumes in the city (15,000 automobiles a  
604 day), and he said likely no one will purchase a single-family residential home in this area. Jarrod  
605 said the current traffic volumes spur significant commercial development.

606

607 Craig the traffic hinders his thinking regarding that area.

608

609 Jeff referred to the map and noted it shows the locations of the mobile home parks as being  
610 Mixed Use. Altra Federal Credit Union also is shown as a future Mixed Use area, as well as a  
611 small area along County Highway PH, areas east of Gundersen, and areas north of Interstate 90.

612

613 Steven said he has concerns regarding the approach to this, noting the Plan Commission is taking  
614 this “parcel-by-parcel.” Steven said, “The big question is, what do we think Onalaska should  
615 look like in 50 years? That would guide us quite a bit. My concern is I think we’re turning  
616 toward too much Mixed Use. I think where Mixed Use is of potential benefit is areas where  
617 districts are already encroaching on each other – intermingling, if you will – right up against the  
618 boundaries. I’m not so enamored with it in some of these more well-defined residential areas  
619 because if we overuse this, what I think Onalaska looks like in 50 years is downtown La Crosse.  
620 Is that what we want Onalaska to look like in 50 years?”

621

622 Craig said he believes the areas HKGi has pointed out already exist as a Mixed Use and told  
623 Steven, “It’s just formally designating those areas as a Mixed Use. I agree with you, though.  
624 When I look at 12<sup>th</sup> [Avenue] as you cross Main Street from Sand Lake, I have difficulty saying,  
625 ‘Let’s continue that Mixed Use all the way down’ because it’s highly residential in there. I agree  
626 with you on one hand, but I think the areas we’ve primarily addressed kind of already are Mixed  
627 Use, so I don’t think it hurts us formally designating those and allowing that. But I respect what  
628 you’re saying, and I think we have to be careful with that, too.”

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629  
630 Jeff said not everything on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map needs to be rezoned, but  
631 perhaps some of the Mixed Use areas do not stay in the Comprehensive Plan.

632  
633 Ald. T. Smith said there are residential areas in which “affordable homes” are located, and he  
634 told commission members he has been told it is very difficult for younger families to find  
635 affordable housing in the City of Onalaska. Ald. T. Smith noted that was not the case when he  
636 moved to the city 30 years ago, and he said, “If we want to attract new people at all different  
637 levels, we have to have affordable homes. [Some of] the areas he targeted, and some of those  
638 that would become Commercial are those older, affordable homes for young families. I do think  
639 we have to keep that in mind. Yes, [do it] where it makes sense to do it, but not just say this  
640 whole area is multi. Maybe do it in phases.”

641  
642 Craig said that while it seems everyone agrees that no one has the goal of eliminating housing,  
643 “Be careful – selectively. (use mixed use)”

644  
645 Jeff next addressed Residential zoning, noting the Comprehensive Plan has Mixed Density  
646 Residential for only residential areas. Jeff said the city currently has mixed residential, and he  
647 asked where R-3 zoning possibly could go. Jeff also asked if there are possible locations where  
648 the city could add R-4 zoning. Jeff said housing that is popular to different sectors of the  
649 population (duplexes, triplexes, small-scale courtyard apartments, townhouses) are not currently  
650 present in many cities, and he told commission members the R-3 District would target those  
651 housing options. Jeff referred to a map showing where the current zoning districts are and said  
652 the goal for the city would be to utilize the R-3 District and apply it somewhere. Jeff said he and  
653 Rita have discussed options with city staff, including having housing above single-family,  
654 finding locations with a mix of existing housing types, and having newer types of housing near  
655 commercial areas, schools, and green space.

656  
657 Amanda suggested that city staff members prepare an overlay showing where they believe R-3  
658 zoning should be applied based on the aforementioned criteria.

659  
660 Craig said seeing an overlay would be beneficial as he is unsure where R-3 zoning could be  
661 applied.

662  
663 Jeff referred to the map and noted Transitional Commercial zoning is applied along Main Street,  
664 west of the downtown district; County Highway PH and State Trunk Highway 157; the STH 16  
665 east frontage road. Most of the downtown corridor along Main Street is zoned B-1, as is 2<sup>nd</sup>  
666 Avenue/STH 35 North, Sand Lake Road, and scattered locations throughout the city. The city  
667 has applied B-2 zoning to larger properties, including the Main Street/Theater Road area east of  
668 U.S. Highway 53 and north of Interstate 90, Altra Federal Credit Union, and the mobile home  
669 parks along STH 35, and in the STH 35/I-90 pocket. Jeff said M-1 zoning is applied near Valley  
670 View Mall, Mason Street, and small office areas, which could fall into a B district after rezoning

671 is complete. LB White is zoned M-2, as is the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North Industrial Park, the rail river  
672 area in the southwest, and the city's self-storage uses. The transport refrigeration business  
673 located south of Interstate 90 and a self-storage property located north of Interstate 90 are both  
674 zoned M-3.

675  
676 D. Proposed Accessory Uses

677  
678 Rita said an Accessory Use is similar to a Principal Use, but is incidental to the Primary Use, and  
679 she cited the example of a garage or a shed on a single-family property. Rita told commission  
680 members they were sent one page of draft Accessory Uses in table form, and she said most  
681 Accessory Uses are identified as permitted, with standards. Rita said community input was  
682 generally supportive of Accessory Uses, with a majority of concern relative to standards. The  
683 table covers a wide range of Accessory Uses, and Rita said a few of the uses that, because of the  
684 way the Medical Campus District was created and described, the goal was to ensure that a mix of  
685 uses was allowable.

686  
687 Paul noted that refuse and recycling containers are not permitted either in R-1 or R-2, and he said  
688 he assumes HKGi is referring to a large dumpster and not the refuse and recycling containers  
689 citizens utilize.

690  
691 Katie told Paul he is correct and said there are specific standards for screening such containers  
692 both in the Business and Mixed Use districts.

693  
694 Paul asked if the city's definition makes that clear.

695  
696 Katie assured Paul it will.

697  
698 Rita said she and Jeff will examine the table, ensure that all the standards are in place, and  
699 understand which things might need to change. Rita said the following topics had been  
700 discussed at the May 6 open house:

- 701  
702 • **Accessory dwelling units:** These are currently done in the R-2 District from a creative  
703 way of applying the rules. Does the city want to allow them more broadly? Are there  
704 standards that need to be put into place so they may be allowed?

705  
706 Katie told commission members she has not seen many accessory dwelling units in the city, and  
707 she said she believes sample standards would lead to a more fruitful discussion.

708  
709 Rita said the last column in the table has potential standards. Rita said ADUs may be limited to  
710 within one's house or adjacent to the house, and it may not be a separate structure in the  
711 backyard. Rita asked if ADUs would be allowed over garages, and she noted some cities are  
712 concerned that ADUs are not allowed to become too large, and thus limit the size either by

713 square foot or the percentage of the size house one has.

714

715 Amanda asked Rita how the people who had spoken to her at the May 6 open house said they  
716 intended to utilize an ADU.

717

718 Rita said people told her they would utilize them both as a source of income as rentals, and also  
719 for personal use. Rita told Amanda she is unsure how the city would regulate ADUs and say  
720 they only may be utilized for personal use.

721

722 Craig said he does not see the benefits of allowing ADUs as he can see them becoming  
723 problematic over time.

724

725 Rita suggested limiting the size of ADUs to reduce the number of people living in them. Rita  
726 also noted some cities require that the owner must live on site – the principal structure must be  
727 owner-occupied.

728

729 Craig said he can envision a property starting out that way, but it would not last.

730

731 Rita said assessors records make it easy to determine whether or not a property is homesteaded.

732

733 Ald. T. Smith asked if “tiny homes” would be considered ADUs, noting that people residing in  
734 Scottsdale, Arizona, where his son lives, have such homes in their backyard for their in-laws.

735

736 Rita said tiny homes are a bit problematic due to building codes, particularly in states with  
737 stricter building codes.

738

739 Ald. T. Smith suggested perhaps tiny homes could be part of the city’s future.

740

741 Rita asked if they could be allowed if they were attached to a house or over a garage and not on  
742 their own in the backyard.

743

744 Craig said he believes parking concerns are added when something like that is done.

745

746 Paul said that while he likes the concept of ADUs, he also sees “very limited applicability” in  
747 Onalaska. Paul said he believes they are more likely to be utilized in older neighborhoods with  
748 alley access. Paul added those lots tend to be very small and might not accommodate anything.

749

750 Craig said he sees much of the square foot for absorption of ADUs disappearing if the city were  
751 to allow it.

752

753 • **Urban agriculture:** The city currently does not allow chickens, but does allow bees  
754 through licensing. There have been a couple of community gardens, as well as interest in

755 community gardens. Urban agriculture may include all of these.

756

757 Both Ald. T. Smith and Craig said they would not call urban agriculture a priority.

758

759 • **Home occupations:** Rita said it seems as though they are working well for the city;  
760 however, many are done by CUP, and the city needs to move away from this and  
761 establish standards. Rita asked if it is possible to examine tiering or allowing some things  
762 by right because they do not impact the neighbors.

763

764 Paul said he believes home occupations should be permitted unless there are specific reasons not  
765 to do so (e.g. noise, disrupting the neighbors, excessive traffic).

766

767 Katie said home occupations typically come before the Plan Commission as CUPs when there is  
768 an employee or employees from outside the house, and also when there are customers.

769

770 Paul said he would be inclined to permit home occupations if there are employees from outside  
771 the home, some traffic, and occasional customer visits.

772

773 Katie said the Plan Commission could discuss when does the level of comfort disappear and  
774 extra rules then applied.

775

776 • **Accessory structures:** The height of accessory structures will be examined.

777

778 Craig suggested also examining square footage and the percentage of a lot devoted to accessory  
779 structures.

780

781 Steven addressed home occupations, stating he believes they become a business once employees  
782 are brought into a home.

783

784 Craig said he sees a home-based business as being something where the owner brings in any type  
785 of customer. Craig also suggested looking at an employee group versus, for example, a customer  
786 coming to someone's house to have their income taxes done.

787

788 Rita said the next step is the development of an actual draft Zoning Map, either with scenarios or  
789 with what she and Jeff suggest, specific use standards, actual lot and site dimensions for each of  
790 the districts, and general development standards (parking, landscaping, fencing). Rita said more  
791 details will be presented at the next meeting.

792

793 Katie said the next Special Plan Commission meeting is expected to be held in July.

794

795 Ald. T. Smith asked Katie about the timeline to complete the rewrite.

796

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797 Katie said the goal is to complete it by the end of 2019.

798

799 **Adjournment**

800

801 Motion by Craig, second by Ald. T. Smith, to adjourn at 4:02 p.m.

802

803 On voice vote, motion carried.

804

805

806 Recorded by:

807

808 Kirk Bey