

Agenda Item No. 8

Discussion and Direction: Silver Line Station Areas Plan - Phase 1 Report (Sections 1-3)

Applicant: City of Plano

DESCRIPTION:

Review, discuss, and provide direction on Sections 1-3 of the Silver Line Station Areas Plan - Phase 1 Report.

REMARKS:

Plano's connection to the region's public transit system has provided economic benefits to the city and opportunities for private investment by surrounding property owners. The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) light-rail station in Historic Downtown Plano, in particular, has stimulated robust growth. In 2015, downtown Plano won a "Great Places in America: Neighborhoods" Award from the American Planning Association—partly due to the transit-oriented development that has grown in the downtown core since the light rail station was completed in 2002. This was Plano's first national award for city planning.

More transit opportunities are on the way in Plano. The 26-mile-long Silver Line commuter rail corridor is under construction and will extend between the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) and Shiloh Road in Plano. DART, the operator of the commuter-rail corridor, anticipates service to begin in 2024. DART is actively planning two new stations in Plano to support the Silver Line commuter rail—the 12th Street Station and Shiloh Road Station. In addition, a new 12th Street Red/Orange Line light rail station will be constructed to serve as a transfer point between the Silver Line and the existing light rail corridor. This substantial public investment is expected to be an economic development catalyst for southeast Plano and the greater Downtown core. Significant investment interest is already being experienced around the commuter rail stations.

In the Fall of 2020, the city undertook the [Silver Line Corridor – Market Assessment & Economic Development Strategy](#) as a first step in understanding the impacts of the DART rail on surrounding land use. The study was complicated by the impacts of COVID-19 on the market but was completed and presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council in the first quarter of 2022. On February 21, 2022, the Commission directed staff to initiate an area plan within half-mile of the future Silver Line stations in order to guide development patterns and address redevelopment opportunities presented in the market study.

Staff has initiated Phase 1 of the Silver Line Station Areas Plan, collecting data on existing conditions and preparing an analysis of how current zoning in the station areas aligns with major findings of the market study. This agenda item aims to present Sections 1-3 of the Phase 1 Report, covering

information specific to existing conditions. Sections 4-5, which include an analysis of current zoning and a summary of key takeaways, will be presented at the December 5, 2022, Commission meeting.

Comprehensive Plan Policies

The city's Comprehensive Plan outlines transit priorities, including:

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Policy** – Plano will proactively encourage development within walking distance of existing and planned transit stations to create an integrated mix of uses, including residential, employment, retail, and civic spaces.
- **Transit-Oriented Development Policy | Action 1 (TOD1)** – Develop Criteria for Review of Transit-Oriented Developments, including existing and projected DART ridership, and update as necessary.
- **Transit-Oriented Development Policy | Action 2 (TOD2)** – Prioritize and prepare area plans within half-mile of identified light rail stations and future commuter rail corridors to guide development patterns, address redevelopment of retail and residential sites, and encourage new development. Plans should include an evaluation of market potential resulting from existing and projected transit ridership.
- **Transit-Oriented Development Policy | Action 3 (TOD3)** – Proactively work with property owners to align zoning with adopted area plans for identified light rail stations and future commuter rail corridors.
- **Land Use Policy | Action 6 (LU6)** – Develop locations for special area plans to focus development and redevelopment efforts in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Regional Transportation Policy | Action 1 (RT1)** – Create criteria to evaluate regional transportation projects to determine the impacts upon the city and develop solutions to mitigate negative effects.

Draft Phase 1 Report

The Silver Line Station Areas Plan Phase 1 Report includes a one-half-mile study area around each station. Background data and information necessary to support stakeholders, the public, and city officials were gathered and reported. The report summarizes previous planning initiatives in southeast Plano, best practices for TOD, an inventory of physical infrastructure and the built environment, and an analysis of existing zoning conditions. The study should be used in conjunction with the [Silver Line Corridor – Market Assessment & Economic Development Strategy](#) finalized in February 2022. Analysis for this report includes:

- **Section 1 – Introduction:** Overview of the study areas, history of the Silver Line, and past planning efforts that impact southeast Plano.
- **Section 2 – Transit-Oriented Development:** Best practices and design principles of TOD, and regional TOD examples.

- **Section 3 – Existing Conditions:** An overview of the area and regional context, and key data on zoning, land use, demographics, etc.
- **Section 4 – Zoning Analysis:** A review of the recommendations outlined in the *Silver Line Corridor – Market Assessment & Economic Development Strategy* and an analysis of how current zoning aligns with findings of the market study.
- **Section 5 – Summary:** An overview of key takeaways that are important considerations for future phases of the planning process.

Project Status

The planning process will be conducted in five phases. The Phase 1 Report outlines the findings of the existing conditions analysis. Upcoming phases will focus on design workshops with stakeholders to outline community needs and preferences for TOD around the station areas.

Public outreach and the development of development policies and implementation strategies will be key components of the next phases. The city is currently in the final stages of engaging a consultant to assist with public outreach on this project. Once finalized, staff will work with the consultant to develop a detailed outreach plan and project schedule. Phase 2 is anticipated to begin in early 2023.



Direction Request

Staff is seeking direction from the Commission on the information provided in Sections 1-3 of the Draft Phase 1 report. This report is intended to provide the necessary study area context, highlighting existing conditions, opportunities, and constraints, to inform future phases of the station area planning process. The Commission may request additional information or clarification of the content provided in the Phase 1 report that may be useful to provide additional station area context. Alternatively, if the Commission finds that Sections 1-3 of the Phase 1 report provides an acceptable summary of existing conditions, then staff will consider these sections of the report final to advance to the next phase of the process (pending completion of Sections 4 and 5 on December 5, 2022).

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend that the Commission review Sections 1-3 of the Silver Line Station Areas Plan Phase 1 Report and provide direction on whether additional resources or data should be provided.