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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2009 the Village of Holmen contracted with SAA to prepare a master plan for the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District. This master plan will provide a road map and vision for future development. The area is currently a combination of agricultural and open space with some pockets of residential and small commercial businesses.

The vision for the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District is to create a distinctive signature entrance into the Village of Holmen as one approaches the community from the north and west. Land uses will consist of residential, multi family, mixed uses, office, light industrial and green space.

BACKGROUND

In 2009 the Village annexed the land for the Tax Incremental District and prepared a land use plan. A TIF district was also established for the area. Utility construction along STH 35 is also being provided to the southern area of the development to provide water and sewer to the development.

PLANNING AREA

The Tax Incremental District planning area lies between the bluffs along the Hwy 53 corridor on the east, west and north between Amsterdam Prairie Road and Hwy 35, the area surrounding the intersection of Highways 35 & 53, and south along Hwy 35 from Amsterdam Prairie Road to Hwy 53 (Figure 1). The area is characterized by the steep bluffs on the east and the Black River on the west. There are a few farms and several areas of single family housing located within and surrounding the planning area. The total area encompasses approximately 985 acres.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District Master Plan is to provide the Village of Holmen a planning tool that can be used to guide short-term and long-term improvements to the Tax Incremental District. This plan builds on Holmen’s many strengths: historic character, diversity of retail and service businesses, strong neighborhoods, the Black River, beautiful parks and recreational facilities.
PROJECT GOALS

The following goals were established for the development of Seven Bridges based on input received from Village staff, Village officials, and the public.

Key goals include:
- Comprehensive, market-feasible vision.
- Create development of a strategy and standards that will guide the implementation of the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District Master Plan.
- Create a visual identity for the Tax Incremental District.
- Community-supporting mixed use destination and activity center.
- Attractive front door and entrance to the Village of Holmen from STH 35 & 53.
- Improved tax base and economic opportunity for the Village of Holmen.
- Improved quality of life for Village residents.
- Position Holmen for short-term and long-term growth opportunities in the region.
- Community employment center, service center, and residential center.
- Family-friendly, small town atmosphere.
- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly use mix and street design.
- Environmental preservation and sustainable design.
- Minimize the impact on neighborhoods to the north and south.
- Community connections.
- Coordinated design theme and identity.
- Coordinate with the Village of Holmen growth plans.
- Recommend policy, procedures, and amendments to current zoning ordinances that will assist in the implementation of the Master Plan.

- Create a land use and design plan for the proposed Tax Incremental District that:
  - Provides a gateway entryway to the village
  - Provides a unified design theme
  - Reflects a mix of uses

CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

The following are constraints for the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District:
- Scenic easements located along Highway 35 and 53 vary between parcels. The WisDOT should be consulted regarding individual parcels and the scenic easement guidelines and applicable regulations.
- Future Xcel Transmission Lines and Sub-Station are currently being planned for the area.
- Flat topography and sandy soils in the area allow for quick stormwater absorption and limits the type of plantings for the area.
- Views to the dramatic bluffs that define the eastern edge should be preserved.
- The Black River Basin defines the area to the west and includes the Vanloon Wildlife Area and McGilvary Road where pedestrian access to the historic Seven Bridges exists. A parking lot for this area is located just off Amsterdam Prairie Road. (See Figure 2)
- Opportunity to connect a pedestrian and bicycle system to local and regional trail systems
- A number of property owners
- The area is isolated from the rest of the community.

Figure 2 - Project Area
A ‘NATURAL’ THEME

Throughout the design process, lengthy and in depth conversations took place between the design team to flush out the vision and potential themes for "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District Consensus from these meetings resulted in a sustainable “naturalistic” look being the preferred theme for “Seven Bridges”. The use of natural materials such as native stone, dimensional or reclaimed lumber and wood and weathered metal will be combined to achieve the desired aesthetic. Architectural detailing, building composition and scale of objects will emphasize the natural feel of this place. Exterior composition of native plantings, pervious paving, soft lighting and amenities will compliment the architectural character creating the ambiance that expresses the natural theme.
DESIGN PROCESS

Guiding Principles for the design of the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District

The following are guiding principles developed for the design of Seven Bridges. These principles underpin the design of some of the most popular and economically successful mixed use centers in the nation. Pedestrian-friendly streets, human-scaled architecture, unique public spaces, landscaping, street furnishings, parks and open spaces, and environmentally-friendly and sustainable design practices are common features that make these places attractive locations for shopping, working, visiting, and living.

1. Attractive Spaces: Seven Bridges will be a thoughtfully designed development center with attractive public and private spaces.

2. Mix of Uses: Seven Bridges will be designed to support a full range of community and neighborhood uses.

3. People-Focused Design: Sites and streets will be easily accessible for cars, but more importantly, designed to be enjoyed as safe, welcoming, and inviting for people.

4. Interconnection: Seven Bridges will provide thoughtful, accessible, convenient, and attractive system of public streets, connecting pedestrian walkways and bike paths to interconnect all land use areas.

5. Sense of Place: Seven Bridges architecture and landscape design will provide unique character and definition to the neighborhood streets and create an attraction for the frontage along the STH 35 & 53 corridors.

6. Human-Scaled Architecture: Although many architectural styles may be appropriate, all buildings will be designed and proportioned to provide interest and enliven the street by avoiding monotonous blank walls and large uninteresting masses.

7. Eco-Friendly Development: Earth friendly and sustainable applications should be encouraged to be incorporated into both the building and site designs.

8. A comprehensive stormwater management system should interconnect all land use areas to improve water quality, promote infiltration, and reduce run-off.

9. A native landscape approach that includes a combination of trees, shrubs, and groundcovers that complement the wooded areas, wetlands, Black River Basin environmental corridor, and other natural features on the site.

Figure 5 - Inventory Plan
CONCEPT PLANS

Pulling from the discussions and information expressed in earlier planning initiatives and combining them with more recent design visioning sessions, the team was able to develop concept land use plans. The plans illustrated different approaches to land use organization. The “Seven Bridges” theme was incorporated into each concept.

A number of on site constraints drove the concept design process. The site is extremely flat and characterized by high steep bluffs on the east and the low Black River Basin on the west. The lack of topography creates difficulty in distributing storm water. The plans investigated the delicate balance of creating critical views into the site from the STH 35 & 53 corridors while softening and buffering other uses along the corridor. Views to the existing bluffs to the east need to be preserved. The existing highway 35/53 exchange ramp at the southwest corner enters the site from the southwest and creates an entrance to the village. This corner is the location for a new Gunderson Clinic and the surrounding out lots should support this land use. The concept designs carefully wrapped this exchange into the development. Each concept plan maintained connections to existing roads surrounding the site.

The concept plans looked at a variety of combinations of site elements that created a unique look for each concept. Figure 6, Concept A investigated maximizing light industrial while balancing the site with the proper mix of residential, mixed use, retail and office. The residential and multi-family districts took on more organic form to accommodate storm water. Figure 7, Concept B expanded the office district and reorganized the circulation patterns through the district. Residential is expanded to surround the multi use district which has been substantially reduced. The concept plans were presented to the Village President, EDC members and the City Engineer. At the conclusion of the meeting, Concept A was selected as the preferred plan. The plan was further refined with direction from the traffic analysis, engineering requirements, storm water constraints and the layout of districts based on information from the report. The culmination of input from steering committee members and critical decision from the design team through a three month design process is represented in the Final Master Plan (Figure 8).

CONCEPT MASTER PLAN OPTIONS

Based on an analysis of the planning area and project site and a review of background information provided by the Village, SAA prepared two concept options for the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District (Figures 6 and 7) Each concept illustrates potential options for the mix and locations of uses and the alignment of primary street patterns including a primary boulevard street, collector streets, and local streets. The land use mix was divided into several categories including mixed use commercial, office/business, light industrial, mixed use residential, residential, greenways, pedestrian circulation, and a community park.

PREFERRED CONCEPT MASTER PLAN
Figure 7 - Concept Master Plan B
The two concept options were presented to Village staff and Village Trustees, at the September 16, 2009 planning meetings. The Village Trustees selected Concept Option A as the preferred Concept Master Plan to be used as the basis for preparing a detailed master plan for the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District. The preferred concept plan includes the following features:

• A primary boulevard street that connects the southern entrance to the Seven Bridges development area with the northern and southern entrances to the development proposed along STH 35.
• A collector street system that provides access to business/office uses and the mixed use commercial district west and east of the primary boulevard street.
• A recreational trail system that provides pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to all land uses within the Seven Bridges development area.
• A business/office district that comprises the majority of the perimeter of the Seven Bridges development area along the east and west sides of the development. The business/office area south of the boulevard street can be mixed with some residential uses.
• A large office/commercial district located on the west side of the Seven Bridges development area including a town square located at the center;
• A mixed use commercial and residential districts located on the northern and southern areas of the proposed Seven Bridges development area.
• Planned commercial development including a medical clinic proposed for the SE quadrant of the STH 53/35 interchange.
• A planned commercial and residential development located along Old 93 west of STH 53 Road adjoining the Black River environmental corridor.
• A new public park located at the center of the Seven Bridges development area.
• Primary and secondary entrance features and focal points located along STH 53 and at main intersections within the development.

• To the greatest extent possible preservation and enhancement of existing wooded areas, wetlands, and drainage ways to establish a strong natural resources character and identity for the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District.
• A natural stormwater collection/conveyance system that utilizes overland flow as opposed to typical storm sewer and maximizes opportunities for infiltration.
Figure 8 - Preferred Master Plan
LAND USE PLAN

The master plan indicates land use distribution throughout the site and includes residential, multi-family residential, mixed-use commercial, corporate/office, light industrial, green space and open space.

A summary of possible uses for each category includes:

**Mixed Use Commercial: 210 ac (21% of site)**
- Large and small retail uses
- Service businesses
- Hospitality
- Restaurants and entertainment uses
- Pedestrian friendly uses
- Live-work residential
- Civic and cultural uses

**Office/Business: 239 ac (24% of site)**
- Eco-business Park
- Professional and corporate offices
- Business incubator
- Medical facilities
- Business supported uses - retail, daycare, health club, etc.
- Institutional - government, churches, etc.

**Light Industrial: 149 ac (15% of site)**
- Eco-Business Park
- Light manufacturing/High-Tech use

**Multi Family Residential: 118 ac (12% of site)**
- Multi-family residential
- Live-work residential
- Assisted living, managed care facilities
- Neighborhood-serving retail/business uses

**Residential: 48 ac (5% of site)**
- Mix of housing types
- Workforce housing
- Small and large lot single family residential
- Assisted living and managed care facilities
- Live-work residential

**Circulation/Open Space: 23 ac**
- Street and Roadways
- Pedestrian Trails
- Greenways/Buffers
TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Discussions with representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation identified several current and future issues associated with STH's 35 and 53 and are summarized below.

STH 35
- Restrictions on scenic easement vary by parcel. Allowed land uses vary
- WDOT will be flexible on restrictions on a case by case basis
- Local access on a quarter section basis is reasonable, however the existing access closest to USH 53 is not safe

USH 53
- The WDOT does not have plans to convert the remaining section of USH 53 to a freeway section. This upgrade would not be done for 20 or 30 years in the future.
- The WDOT has no plans in the near future to buy additional right of way
- The WDOT could require an additional 50 feet setback under Trans 233 if a subdivision were submitted for this development.
- The current access study will freeze existing access points, but will not necessarily dictate where new access points will be allowed
- A companion corridor study will be done by WDOT in 2010 which will target future access points on the corridor.
- The WDOT minimum separation between access points is 2000 feet
- The WDOT wants offset “T” intersections
- The distance between offsets is dictated by the FDM bypass lane recommendations.
- There should be a minimum of 2000 feet between intersections on USH 53
- The existing road pattern from the 2008 plan allowing three additional access points north of Old 93 is not acceptable
- The addition of one additional access point between Old 93 and Amsterdam Road is in keeping with WDOT requirements
- At this time the WDOT would not look favorably at a roundabout at the end of a freeway section at Old 93
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Comprising hundreds of acers, the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District sits on a very flat site. Soils throughout the site are very sandy which allows quick infiltration. The majority of the site flows to the west towards the Black River basin.

Much of the landuse layout was driven by the existing on site drainage. The intent of the final landuse plan was to integrate as much of storm water as possible into an overland conveyance system rather than the typical catch basin and pipe type system. A number of benefits come from developing such a storm water system. The most obvious benefit of an overland system is cost.

The stormwater system requires that each lot is to provide oil and grease removal, suspended solids removal, and infiltration. The public system will provide detention, infiltration and reduction of suspended solids. It is also recommended that a property owners association maintain the landscape and stormwater system in the public right-of-way. A more detailed stormwater study is recommended for the area.

By eliminating the need for structures and underground infrastructure, the cost to install and maintain a storm water system are greatly reduced. A secondary benefit is the ability of this overland system to create a green ribbon throughout the development. This green ribbon becomes a strong unifying element that ties districts together and shows the Villages commitment to a new sustainable future.

The overland storm water system can also be a strong educational component for the development. The entire development could be utilized as an outdoor lab to educated students, residents and patrons to the beneficial attributes and function of an overland storm water system. A system of pathways will string along the storm water feature with intermittent interpretive signage strategically located to show off the highlights of the system.

There will however need to be detention and retention ponds throughout the system. These retention/detention basin should be located in high visibility areas of the development to capture their aesthetic attributes. To the greatest extent possible they will be located at major intersections surrounding and acting as a back drop for entrance signage and gateway elements into the development.
STREETSCAPE

The design of the public street system is critical in establishing a unified design theme and identity for the Tax Incremental District at Holmen. There are several street types that make up the circulation network for the Tax Incremental District. ROW widths, lane configurations, intersection configuration and streetscape amenities are more specifically described in future sections of the Master Plan document however as a general guideline proposed street design should be composed of a mix of amenities that create a unifying character for the Tax Incremental District. Amenities and design applications to be incorporated into the streetscape include:

• Thematic pedestrian and roadway lights located to light the road and pedestrian way simultaneously.
• Wide sidewalks and on-street bicycle lanes should be provided to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access to all use areas.
• Central medians that hold generous beds of native grass and forbs massing, mixed with rocks, shrubs, ornamental and shade tree plantings.
• The central median and terraces will be utilized as bio-filtration basins that are part of the recommended storm-water management system for the Tax Incremental District.
• Use of pervious pavements such as unit pavers, porous asphalt and porous concrete.
• Incorporation of benches and trash receptacles at major pedestrian gathering nodes.
• Decorative seasonal banners mounted onto street lights or decorative poles
• Incorporation of thematic wayfinding signage into the development.
• Public art

The following Streetscape Types are indicated on Figure 9:

• Type 1: 4-lane divided Arterial for Light Industrial/Office
• Type 2: Collector Street for Commercial/Office/Mixed-Use and Light Industrial
• Type 3: Local Street for Office/Mixed-Use
• Type 4: Residential Street

STREETSCAPE DESIGN

The Tax Incremental District development has a hierarchy of streets based on the function each street serves. There are four major streetscape types within the development consisting of a major four lane arterial, three lane, two lane, and local streets. Each street type has a specific organization and embellishment of amenities depending on its location and use. Each street will have pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, street lighting, native street trees and plantings. The following is a description of each street type.

Type 1 - Four Lane Arterial

The four lane road segment is developed as the major transportation spine for the development. It will create an aesthetic that highlights the natural and sustainable concept for the various land uses. The four lane segments are divided by a wide naturalistic median and bioswales. Curb cuts will be limited along the four lane segments to allow for fluid vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian movement. There is no on-street parking accommodations included in the four lane segment to limit speeding, short-cutting and to save on construction costs.
The median will be depressed and will serve a significant storm water conveyance function for the development. Storm water will enter the median via curb cuts and flow through the median eventually being distributed to the entire storm water network. The median will be designed to temporarily detain storm water. Plantings in the median will assist in filtering storm water as it passes through the system. The central median will be planted with native grasses, native ornamental plants and deciduous and ornamental trees which emphasize the green initiatives adopted by the Tax Incremental District.

The street will accommodate pedestrians and bicyclist with sidewalks and bike lanes and/or trails. This street will serve as the main pedestrian spine connecting to the multitude of uses through out the development. The space separating the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will be wide and will also be ornamentally planted with native trees and vegetation. Street lights will be located in the terrace to light the roadway and pedestrian and bicycle facilities and assist in developing a uniform photometric for the road. Banners and wayfinding signage can be mounted on the light poles where desired.

Intersections at local streets in the four lane corridor will emphasize safe pedestrian crossings with clearly marked pedestrian zones constructed of accent pavements.

**Type 2 - Three Lane 'TWLTL'**

The three lane segments are located in the office, light industrial and mixed use districts centered in the development. The three lane segments are designed with two through lanes and a central turn lane (TWLTL). There will be many curb cuts in these segments. The central turn lane will allow access into the businesses while allowing traffic to flow. The wider street section will also accommodate larger truck turning movements.

The side of the street will have a minimum 10’ wide bicycle/pedestrian path off-street. This pathway will serve as a strong connection for commuters and pedestrians to the business and offices along the corridors as well as a direct link to the mixed use districts. A wide terrace will separate the bicycle/pedestrian facility from the roadway. The opposite side of the street will have a wide terrace and minimum 6’ wide concrete sidewalk.

The roadways will be lit by pedestrian lights located on both sides of the road. Decorative elements such as banners featuring the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District theme can be mounted to the light poles further emphasizing the theme of the development. Wayfinding signage will be located in the terrace to assist patrons in finding their desired destination.

The green theme will be expressed along the corridor with plantings of native grasses, native ornamental plants and deciduous and ornamental trees in the terraces on both sides of the roadway. Where possible, the terraces will also serve as a conveyance for storm water.
Local Streets

The minority of the proposed streets traversing the site are classified as local or residential. These road types are traditionally designed within a narrower right-of-way with narrower cross-sections. The local roads take on a variety of aesthetic embellishments depending on the land use in which it is located. Depending on the land use that the roads travel through, parking may or may not be associated with the design. On-street parking will be typical in residential areas.

Office/Professional and Light Industrial Districts

The streets throughout this land use will not accommodate on street parking. Parking will be provided within the private developments. The street will be constructed of two lanes with 6’ sidewalk flanking either side of the road. A wide terrace will separate the road from the sidewalk. The terrace will hold the pedestrian scale lighting that will uniformly light the roadway. Wayfinding signage will be located in the terrace to assist patrons in finding their desired destination. The terrace will also have shade and ornamental trees to soften the hard street environment. Where possible, the terraces will also serve as a conveyance for storm water. Pedestrian crossings zones will have clearly designated striped pedestrian crosswalks.

Residential District

Parking will be allowed in the residential land use area. The road will be constructed of two lanes with 6’ sidewalk flanking either side of the road. A minimum 5’ wide terrace will separate the road from the sidewalk. The terrace will hold the pedestrian scale lighting that will uniformly light the roadway. The terrace will also have shade and ornamental trees to compliment the residential environment. Due to the narrow terrace storm water conveyance will not be designed into the typical cross section. Pedestrian crossings zones will feature bump-outs to slow traffic and have clearly designated striped pedestrian crosswalks.

Site Lighting

From major thoroughfares to residential streets, all roads need to be fitted with lighting. Lighting is one of the most dominant visible elements in a development. Light selection creates an opportunity to express and strengthen the theme of a development. Carefully orchestrated architectural composition, height, spacing frequency and light quality will provide a strong unifying element for the Tax Incremental District.

The Tax Incremental District should consider lighting its road system with a pedestrian scale light (12’-15’ height) wherever possible. There will be some situations where pedestrian lights alone will not be able to provide enough illumination to light a wider road or intersections. In these circumstances, a taller roadway light will be incorporated to provide the appropriate light levels. Solar-powered/LED fixtures should be considered for pedestrian and bicycle trails.
Signage and Wayfinding

Wayfinding is a method of directing people into and around the community through the use of readable and easily identifiable sign graphics. Simply put it is ‘finding your way’. A consideration in wayfinding is to locate signs in a logical consistent manner along travel routes used by autos, buses, bikes, or pedestrians.

Wayfinding signs offer a repetitive, recognizable element in the streetscape by employing a system of distinctive logos, graphics, shapes, materials and color, to communicate different messages.

Wayfinding is important to the visitor because of the clear welcome, direction and convenience it provides the visitor. It also affords an opportunity to communicate to the visitor, Holmen’s history, unique characteristics that make up the “Seven Bridges” District, as well as unique retail and community destinations.

Types of wayfinding signage include:

**Directional Signs**
Direct people to specific public destinations throughout the community (i.e. special districts, civic buildings, parks, parking, etc.). These signs will be placed along major arterial streets prior to key intersections. An option to this sign type is to add the name of the approaching cross street.

**Entrance Signs**
Entrance Signs announce the entry into a special place or district through the use of entry signs, arches or gates, banners, flags, landscaping displays, etc. These signs will be located at key entry points into the community. The design incorporates the community or special district logo, familiar shape, durable materials, and mounting posts.

**Informational Kiosks**
Kiosks are provided at key locations to provide community and visitor information, maps, and community events; they are typically aimed at pedestrian traffic.

**Street Signs**
Street signs designate streets and can the Seven Bridges or community logo as well as unique and thematic mounting application.

**Banners**
Banners can feature the Seven Bridges or community logo, provide color, have seasonal change and in general can act as a strong thematic unification element for the development.

**District Markers**
District markers identify the unique character of a specific district with the use of materials composition and color.

**Event Boards**
A Community event board announces special community events along with dates, place and time. These can be electronically controlled or manually changed reader boards. These are typically located along primary travel corridors where visitors and residents will notice them. It is a good idea to have an ordinance that requires the message(s) updated on a weekly basis.
WAYFINDING DESIGN PARAMETERS

Logo and Place Name
A key component of the wayfinding signage system is a logo that creates an identifiable image for the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District. The logo should be used on all sign types. The logo could simply be the community logo, or, a special logo could be designed exclusively for the Tax Incremental District.

Shape
A unique sign shape is beneficial in that the shape becomes familiar and obvious to the observer. The shape can be drawn from elements in local architecture or other patterns that reflect thematic character.

Colors
Another identifiable element in signage is the color palette. Light colors on dark backgrounds or dark colors on light backgrounds can greatly improve readability. Reflective white and colors should be used to enhance nighttime visibility. Trendy colors should be avoided, as they will become outdated. Classic color combinations should be used to make the signs more timeless.

Materials
Many different materials can be used for signage including aluminum, wood, styrofoam, steel, brass, cast bronze, and iron. Recommended materials for pole mounted, directional and street signs should be sheet aluminum with die-cut graphics on diamond grade reflective vinyl. Sandblasted wood or styrofoam could also be used.

Lettering
Letters should be sized for readability from a distance (1” letter height per every 40’ of viewing distance). Stroke width and height should be taken into consideration in the design of the signs.

Mounting
Signs should be mounted utilizing methods best suited for their use. For example, aluminum sheet signs (trailblazer, directional) should be mounted to poles using extruded aluminum channels and stainless steel buckle brackets. This type of mounting allows the signs to be adjusted to keep them from protruding into roadways where they could be hit. Mounting heights should be 7’ from grade to the bottom of the sign. Vandal-proof fasteners should be used. Ornamental brackets should be used to mount street signs to poles. Entrance signs, directional kiosks, parking lot entrance signs, etc. should be mounted according to their use with regards to wind loads, base requirements (i.e. concrete, steel, aluminum, iron, etc.), public safety, etc.
Figure 10 - Typical Streetscape Sections
Figure 11 - Typical Streetscape Sections
Site Amenities

Site amenities will be incorporated throughout the entire "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District development. Amenities can support and strengthen the overall design theme and desired character of the area. Because of the dominant presence of amenities, it is critical to select amenities constructed of long lasting and sustainable materials, sturdy construction methods and availability to be easily replaced in the future if damaged. Amenities to be included in the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District development include benches, trash receptacles, recycling receptacles, bike racks, newspaper and magazine vending stands, planters, picnic tables, café tables, drinking fountains, clocks, tree grates and bollards. Additional consideration to be given site amenities include:

• Select finishes and colors that stand the test of time and are not the trend of the period. Consider use of natural finishes and bare metals, such as corten steel.

• Incorporate logo or "Seven Bridges " Tax Incremental District theme into the construction of amenities.

• Family of amenities need to be coordinated so that color materials style and composition all relate to one another, compliment the surrounding architecture and site design.
Landscape and Open Space Guidelines

Emphasis should be placed on a natural, informal design approach incorporating the use of native trees, shrubs, grasses, wildflowers and natural materials such as local stone already present within the site and the surrounding area. A natural “sand prairie” landscape theme should be a unifying design element for “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District.

The overall intent of the landscape design for each lot is to provide an organized planting scheme adjacent to the building envelope with transition to a more naturalized and informal planting scheme for the perimeter of the site. This allows for integration into the areas overall natural theme. Mowed lawn areas may provide the transition to more naturalized landscape areas where native grasses, wildflowers, and informal Massing of native plants define the site perimeter.

Landscape design should be coordinated to create a unified design character along the public streets, STH 35 and 53 corridors, the environmental corridor, common lot lines, and transition areas between zoning districts. Existing trees should remain whenever possible.

Whenever possible, plant materials shall be selected from the attached plant palette. Additional plant materials may be introduced, but must be disease resistant and withstand urban conditions and drought. Indigenous species of plants or cultivars of native species should be used whenever possible.

STREETSCAPE PLANTING

Street tree spacing should be spaced in a random, but organized, naturalistic pattern whenever possible, but locations must be coordinated with light locations, driveway entrances and intersections. Street trees should be planted directly in the terrace and tree grates should be avoided. Street terraces and boulevards will be planted with lawn unless bio-swale features are appropriate. See Bio-swales and Stormwater areas for plant types.
SEVEN BRIDGES PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Landscape schemes that are natural in appearance and of an informal character are encouraged. Groupings of trees should be largely placed around the perimeter of the park area in order to maintain large areas of open lawn. The perimeter of the park area may be planted with a mix of low to medium shrubs, perennials and grasses to provide enclosure while maintaining views into the space and out to the bluffs.

ENTRY AREAS

Providing boundaries, including vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian arrival points, is important to the perception of a strong identity. Developing and enhancing these boundaries will help define the village limits, navigate through it with a level of comfort, and recall it through its character. Entry areas shall include a combination of signage and planting to create a focal point and create a sense of arrival. Low to medium shrubs, perennials and ornamental grasses should be the dominant plant types.

LANDSCAPE EDGE

The landscape edge treatment shall create a low semi-transparent vegetative buffer along State Highways 35 & 53. Low to medium shrubs, perennials and ornamental grasses shall create a meandering edge, but should not completely obscure sight lines from the roadway. Scenic easements will be negotiated with the Wisconsin DOT on a case by case basis.

BUFFER AREAS

Landscape plantings used to provide natural screening should be made up of indigenous species, able to withstand drought and salt. Selections should be disease resistant and should be varied to avoid monoculture plantings. Plants with a variety of height, color and structure should be used to provide a layered planting. A mix of tall and medium shrubs with multi-season interest should be the dominant component of the planting. Smaller shrubs with a mix of grasses and perennials should be added to the planting mix to provide diversity, color and texture to the buffer area.

BIO-SWALEs AND STORMWATER AREAS

Storm water treatment throughout the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District will be a major design element. Stormwater conveyance features will be strategically placed to slow the flow of water in rain events and increase infiltration levels. In some scenarios, the street will contain a widened boulevard with a bio-swale in order to create larger areas within the right-of-way to allow stormwater infiltration. In other scenarios, particularly where the narrowed right-of-way does not allow for a boulevard, widened sections of street terrace will accommodate bio-swales. In addition to beautifying the streets, these stormwater features will serve in the filtration and detention of storm water.
Bio-swales and stormwater areas, including detention and retention basins, should be planted with vegetation that can handle the fluctuating water levels. Decorative gravel flow-ways centered in the planting areas will help increase infiltration. Accent boulders should be placed throughout the plantings to compliment the gravel and maintain a natural aesthetic. Plantings should have multi-season interest and low maintenance needs.

Greenways, parks and open space within the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District will also be utilized for storm water infiltration and as detention areas. Educational signage describing the storm water treatment of the site will be woven throughout the "Seven Bridges' Tax Incremental District.

**PLANT LIST**

**Trees**
- Autumn Blaze Freeman Maple
- Accolade Hybrid Elm
- Sterling Silver Linden
- Heritage Hybrid Oak
- Ivory Silk Japanese Tree Lilac
- Regal Prince Hybrid Oak
- Redspire Callery Pear
- Forest Prince Serviceberry
- Adirondack Flowering Crab

**Shrubs**
- Low Bush Honeysuckle
- Iroquois Beauty Black Chokeberry
- Golden Glory Corneliancherry Dogwood
- Happy Centennial Forsythia
- Red Sprite Winterberry
- Summer Wine Ninebark
- Blue Muffin Viburnum
- Onandaga Viburnum

**Perennial Grasses**
- Shenandoah Switchgrass
- Northwind Switchgrass
- Blue Oat Grass
- Feather Reed Grass
- Big Bluestem
- Little Bluestem
- Side Oats Grama

**Perennials**
- Walkers Low Catmint
- Purple Smoke Baptisia
- Little Spire Russian Sage
- Purple Coneflower
- Pasque Flower
- Bird's Foot Violet
- Leadplant
- Prairie Clover
- Coreopsis
- Silky Aster
- Cylindric Blazing Star
- Gray Goldenrod
- Fireworks Goldenrod
PUBLIC SPACES

Public gathering spaces and open space are an essential component in creating the desired aesthetic for new development. These spaces many times are the heart of a development and support the need for community events and informal gatherings. They are valuable community gathering areas that create an opportunity to completely express the development theme in many forms and applications. They provide space to people to pause and relax. The areas provide valuable green space needed to create a softening and "green" relief to the built environment. Designed into the Tax Incremental District Master Plan are two different approaches to people gathering, recreational trails and Seven Bridges Park.

SEVEN BRIDGES PARK

Seven Bridges Park is designed to create a softer and more naturalized gathering space for the development. It is also a space that can accommodate a variety of neighborhood functions and community events. The park should have a small shelter/restroom building surrounded by an accessible hard surface. The building will be designed to function for a multitude of uses such as music in the park, wedding receptions, family picnics and reunions. The hard space surrounding the building will be constructed of concrete and accent with bands of brick pavers. The park will be embellished with donated benches, planters, bike parking racks, an informational kiosk, water fountains and native accent plantings. A spray park should also be considered. Informal play structures and natural play elements should be include such as rock climbing and rope climbing elements. A series of informal paths will pass through the park and connect to the pedestrian path system. The paths will also connect to an interpretive path system surrounding the neighborhood. The interpretive path will have educational and informational interpretive signage stations explaining the Seven Bridges setting, history, natural features, river ecology, etc. The main path system will be lit with pedestrian scale lighting and accented with swaths of native plantings. The roadways surrounding the park will be planted with native trees, shrubs, grasses and perennials creating a buffer to the surrounding urban environment. These native plantings will also accommodate the storm water initiatives developed throughout the development and tie into the overall storm water network. The central portion of the park will be mowed lawn spotted with shade trees. This open lawn area is designed to accommodate more active recreation activities and larger gathering needs for the development.
DESIGN STANDARDS

Design Standards establishes rules that can govern building materials, window and door placement, building scale and proportionality, architectural details, and other important design criteria. It is not meant to deter prospective buyers with additional building and landscaping costs, but to safeguard property values, protect public and private investments, and promote high quality commercial, residential and industrial development consistent with the Seven Bridges Master Plan design themes. Clear standards will help the Village achieve a more consistent and successful urban form, and it will make the development approval process more predictable for developers.

The Standards are bound as a separate document in a handbook format for use by property owners to design improvements to their parcels and by staff and Plan Commission to evaluate proposals. The standards address a broad range of site and building design issues and include a mix of required items (“standards”) and items that are encouraged, sometimes strongly encouraged, but are not required (“recommendations”). See Appendix N for the Design Standards Handbook.

This Plan recommends establishing an overlay district containing all the parcels within the Seven Bridges TIF District. The Standards should be adopted as an amendment to the zoning ordinance and the zoning map should be changed. Property owners or leaseholders that modify property must ensure that such modifications conform to these standards.
ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW

The existing zoning code has a designation for a downtown commercial district (B-1) and a highway business district (B-2). The downtown business district has no building setback requirements. The highway business district has a 25 foot front yard setback. Both districts have a limit on building heights of 45 feet (two floors). Residential uses are a conditional use under B-1 and B-2.

The Light Industrial District (LI) has limited permitted uses and requires a 15 foot setback. This district also has a building height restriction of 50 feet. The Manufacturing District (M) has similar restrictions but allows more uses.

Office does not have a specific zoning category but it is allowed in the B-1 district and in B-2 by reference.

The PUD zoning only applies to residential and does not appear to allow mixed uses. Residential is a conditional use in the B-1 and B-2 district.

Parking requirements are addressed by the City’s zoning districts except for the downtown B-1 district, which allows for less parking based on the nearby public parking lots and on-street parking. Additionally the B-2 and M zoning districts require off street loading areas.

Land Division Ordinance

The major impact of the land division ordinance on this development is the street design requirements. The village’s current design standards for streets include the following right of way and street width requirements: arterial street 80 feet of right of way and 38 feet of street width (e/e); collector/industrial streets 66 feet of right of way and 36 feet of street width (e/e).

Stormwater Ordinance

Stormwater requirements are based on the detaining the difference in the pre and post development conditions for the 2 and 10 year storm, but the 100 year storm event must be safely passed to a body of water. The ordinance also has requirements for the removal of suspended solids (80%) for new construction and a requirement for oil and grease removal for commercial and industrial developments. Infiltration is encouraged, but there is no specific requirement on the amount of area to be infiltrated. Finally, there is a requirement for thermal control for development in cold water watersheds.
RECOMMENDED ORDINANCE REVISIONS

Zoning

We would recommend revising the PUD zoning to include a mix of land uses in addition to residential. In particular, this would allow a mix of commercial, office, and residential area in the development to be rezoned as a PUD. Another option would be to revise the PUD ordinance to take place in two phases with a preliminary and final phase (similar to a preliminary and final plat). This could allow the entire district to be rezoned as a PUD with the proposed master concept plan and then each property owner and developer could submit for final approval on a phased basis.

Other suggested changes to the code are to provide for a new commercial zone (B-3) that is not downtown or auto oriented and allows for more flexibility in both building heights, permitted uses, setbacks, and parking.

Parking requirements should be revised to allow more flexibility with mixed use developments and promote the use of shared parking.

Street and Right of Way

The recommended street right of way width on the arterial and collector streets is 80 feet. This larger right of way can accommodate roadway pavement, bike lanes, sidewalk/multi use trails, and stormwater treatment. The recommended roadway sections range from 28 feet to 38 feet with no on street parking depending on whether or not bike lanes are accommodated on or off street. We are also recommending a four lane boulevard roadway facility that connects USH 53 with USH 35 as the arterial connector.

Stormwater

Stormwater will be accommodated through a series of swales within the right of way that transport the water to major detention basins at the intersections. Both the stormwater detention and suspended solids requirements can be addressed by the storage in public right of way. Each property owner will be required to address oil/grease and infiltration on their particular lot.

Official Map

The village currently has an official map denoting the location and right of way width for its major street network. This map should be revised to incorporate the recommended main roadway spine for this development as well as the suggested right of way.
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Implementation is the logical step following the adoption of the "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District Master Plan. Implementation requires several key components to be successful. Implementation must be done with commitment – that is, the community must undertake implementation with the full understanding of its complexity, the time required, and the relationship and sequence of the plan’s various elements. Implementation must be funded - the community must allocate adequate resources for staff, professional assistance, project funding, and financial leverage. Implementation requires partnerships - public and private sector individuals and organizations must come together as an implementation team. Finally, implementation must be dynamic - unanticipated redevelopment opportunities will present themselves throughout the process of planned implementation and the implementation team must be able to assess and reprioritize on a continuous basis to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

The following implementation strategy includes several components that will be necessary for the successful implementation of "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District:

• Implementation Team
• Developer Recruitment Strategy
• Business Recruitment Strategy
• Key Implementation Activities
• Phasing
• Funding

DEVELOPER RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

The Village of Holmen does not own the majority of the land that comprises Tax Incremental District. Land owners will be in a position to recruit qualified developers for the private development areas recommended in the master plan. Key steps in the developer recruitment process include:

• Identify development priorities and phasing
• Establish a working relationship with property owners of key development sites that are not owned by the Village
• Acquire key sites for development
• Establish parameters for TIF subsidies for development
• Prepare database of qualified developers
• Develop strategies to market key sites to developers
• Prepare marketing materials (i.e. Poster Plan)
• Establish Request for Proposal (RFP) process, submission requirement process, and developer selection process
• Establish design review process
• Interview and select preferred developers
• Negotiate development agreements
• Development coordination

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Attracting the right businesses to Tax Incremental District is critical to achieving a vibrant, mixed development and creating jobs for the community and the region. The Village and the developer will share the responsibility for business recruitment. Key steps in the business recruitment process include:

• Prepare or update market analysis and consumer survey
• Target key businesses and anchor uses that will attract other businesses
• Establish and maintain a database of key businesses by category
• Prepare marketing materials
• Establish an advertising/promotion program
• Make contacts with key businesses
• Prepare a business retention plan

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Implementation Team for "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District should include the following:

• Village staff
• Village Board, CDA, Planning and Zoning Commission
• Consultant Team (Schreiber/Anderson Associates and others)
FUNDING

The Village of Holmen has established a TIF as a primary funding tool for the implementation of public infrastructure improvements for Tax Incremental District. The Village should identify a variety of local, state, federal, and private funding sources that can supplement the TIF in order to achieve short-term and long-term success. The Village should also establish eligibility requirements for TIF funding. Some of these funding sources include:

Local Funding
- Special assessments
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Room tax
- Business Improvement District (BID)
- Private donations
- Local utilities

State Funding
- WisDOT Local Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)
- WDNR Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)
- WDNR Urban Green Space Program (UGS)
- WDNR Recreational Trails Act (RTA)
- Wisconsin Small Business Administration
- Wisconsin Department of Commerce

Federal Funding
- Recovery and Reinvestment Funding
- Transportation Appropriation Bill
- Legislative Initiatives

TIF Funding
- Public infrastructure
- Storm water
- "Green initiatives"
- Joint Marketing
- Site identification (signage)

PHASING PLAN

Figure 12 includes a general phasing schedule for the entire Tax Incremental District project.

Figure 13 identifies the phasing plan established in TIF No. 1 for a portion of the Tax Incremental District. In the future, the Village may elect to amend the TIF to include the remaining portion of "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District depending on development interest associated with the future construction of STH 53. Table 2 shows both the current TIF budget and the recommended budget.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

The following implementation activities should be accomplished over the next year to position Tax Incremental District for successful implementation. In addition to these steps we recommend that the Village prepare a Critical Path Schedule (CPS) for 2009-2012 which are critical years for the financial success of this project.

The Critical Path Schedule should include a breakdown of critical implementation activities, a timeframe for completing each activity, and the party responsible for each implementation activity. Key implementation activities for 2009/2010 include:

- Completion of the Master Plan and Market Study-SAA
- Adoption of The "Seven Bridges" Tax Incremental District Master Plan - Village
- Establish a TIF Project Management Team (PMT) - Village
- Develop Recruitment Program (Developers and Business) - TBD
- Seven Bridges Marketing/Branding and Logo Design - TBD
- Prepare Promotional Material and Media Relations - TBD
- Review TIF Policy and Develop Strategy for Public Financing - Village
- Revise TIF Plan and Phasing - Village
- Revise Existing Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances - TBD
• Revise Property (PUD/GIP) - Village and Property Owners
• Revise Master Plan - Village
• Prepare Comprehensive Funding Strategy - Village
• Officially Map Streets - Village
• WisDOT/Utility Coordination - STH 35/53 - Village
• Coordination with Gunderson Clinic Short Term plans - TBD
• Complete Phase 1 Infrastructure Construction - Village
• Detailed Stormwater Study - TBD
• Phase 2 Infrastructure Design - TBD

CURRENT TIF PLAN BUDGET

2009/2010
Phase 1-$2,075,000 for sewer and water extension to Brueske, Thorud and Burrows Master Plan and Marketing Study.
The scale of the project has been reduced and the estimated cost is now just over $1,000,000 to complete to extend sewer and water to the Brueske and Thorud properties.

2011
Phase 2-$2,215,000 for sewer expansion

2012
Phase 3-$3,195,000 sewer and water expansion

2014
Phase 4-$3,600,000 water expansion

2016
Phase 5-$890,000 Chalsma Utility extension

2019
Phase 6-$2,070,000 improvements

PROPOSED TIF PLAN BUDGET

2009/2010
Phase 1-$2,075,000 for sewer and water extension to Brueske, Thorud and Burrows.
The scale of the project has been reduced and the estimated cost is now just over $1,000,000 to complete.
• Master Plan -$50,000
• Market Study-$20,000
• Stormwater Study-$25,000
• Ordinance Revisions-$10,000
• Revise TIF Plan-$7,500
• Marketing and Promotion-$25,000
• Administration-$15,000

2011
Phase 2-$2,500,000 for road, signage and utility extension from USH 35 4200 feet north for the central roadway and utility corridor.

2012
Phase 3-$2,400,000 road, sewer and water expansion for remaining 3,200 lineal feet of the central roadway utility corridor from Phase 2 to Old USH 93.

2014
Phase 4-$3,600,000 water expansion

2016
Phase 5-$890,000 Chalsma Utility extension

2019
Phase 6-$2,070,000 improvements
Figure 12 - Phasing Schedule
Figure 13 - Phasing Plan
MARKET STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Village of Holmen commissioned a marketing study to assess probable demand for future real estate development within its boundaries including the Seven Bridges development. The analysis presented here will be used to inform community decisions with regard to land use, economic development, infrastructure, tax incremental financing, and other municipal investments.

At the beginning of 2010 the country was in a severe recession marked by high unemployment and underemployment, shrinking retail demand, declining commercial and residential real estate values, and record-low consumer and small business confidence. Wisconsin has fared about average compared to other states, but the La Crosse region has performed considerably better than other parts of the state and country. Still, the pace of local development activity has dropped to a fraction of the levels seen prior to 2007. Minimal demand for commercial and residential space has been coupled with a growing supply of vacant commercial space and homes. These conditions will suppress the demand for new development for at least the next three to five years.

Demographic forces pose a long-term challenge for continued development. The region’s population is aging and will grow more slowly in coming years. Additionally, incomes within the region have been declining in relation to state and national averages. In dollars adjusted for inflation, the 2008 median household income in La Crosse County is below where it was a decade ago. Aging and income trends will impact market potential, and by extension, the demand for new commercial and residential construction.

The Mississippi River and its floodplains, along with steep hills and narrow valleys that parallel the river, leave few suitable locations in which development may occur. The Interstate 94 corridor and the level farmlands surrounding Onalaska and Holmen are the most easily developed locations within the region. This is where a significant portion of recent growth has been taking place. The Interstate 94 corridor has an advantage over Holmen due to greater visibility, access, and proximity to markets. Although Highway 53 allows for quick and convenient access to most of the village, it does not offer the same visibility.

Holmen is part of the La Crosse metropolitan area, competing chiefly with La Crosse, Onalaska, and West Salem for various types of development. In turn, the La Crosse region competes with comparable nearby metropolitan areas such as Eau Claire and Madison in Wisconsin, and Winona, Minnesota. Smaller cities such as Black River Falls and Sparta help to further define market areas within the region. Within the metropolitan area, Holmen’s greatest competition for development is the City of Onalaska, which has existing business parks and a concentration of regional commercial activity along the interstate.

During the 2000’s, Holmen averaged about 116 new residential units each year. The analysis offered two scenarios for future residential development. The baseline scenarios suggest that residential development will not return to previous levels, and instead reach about 91 units per year through 2015. By 2030, due to declining rate of regional population growth, Holmen may expect to average about 46 new units per year. The alternative scenario assumes that Holmen may take measures to promote residential growth. If this is the case, Holmen may see about 159 units per year, declining to 80 units per year by 2030.

Consumer spending has declined due to the recession, and is not expected to regain its peak before 2014. There is currently a large supply of vacant commercial (retail and service) space available, mostly in La Crosse and Onalaska. Furthermore, Holmen is not centrally located relative to the population base and lacks a significant concentration of retail to draw customers. For these reasons, it is unlikely to attract substantial demand for new commercial space. This will be especially true over the next four to six years, as existing space in the region is absorbed.
Through 2030, it is estimated that the La Crosse region may need to add an additional 592,250 square feet of commercial space due to population growth. Somewhat less than half of the total growth is expected to occur within the village’s trade area, yet the village is likely to capture only about a third of the demand. This results in an expected demand for about 71,000 square feet of new commercial space. At a ratio of one square foot of land area for every square foot of building, the need translates to 8.2 acres in total.

The greater opportunity for development is with office and industrial uses. Although there is a substantial supply of both office (580,900 square feet) and industrial space (813,600 square feet) currently on the market, not all of this space is well suited to the kinds of businesses that have typically been looking in the area. The average business has a small number of employees and may require 5,000 to 20,000 square feet, while several of the available properties are very large industrial buildings. Additionally, many listed properties are older buildings where condition, design, lack of parking, or other issues may make them unsuitable for prospective tenants.

Business development sites in Holmen are competing against the more visible and centrally-located Interstate 94 corridor for these kinds of uses. Its principal advantage is an abundance of flat land to provide large development sites. To bolster its competitive position, Holmen should consider a unified approach to the design of the “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District, as suggested in the Master Plan. A “green” development in this area would be unique within the region and would have an appeal to some businesses, particularly those from outside of the region, who are more likely to serve national or international markets.

Holmen can benefit by making decisions about where it wants development to occur, take actions to encourage and concentrate it in those locations, and take corresponding actions to discourage development in other areas. New development will occur slowly as the economy recovers from the recession, peak, and then decline due to demographic changes. The “Seven Bridges” Tax Incremental District contains approximately 985 acres of land. This is more land than will be required for the amount of development projected to occur over the next two decades. However, it is a much better approach than allowing scattered development that results in higher costs for village services, lower property values, and a longer period in which the village will need to pay back investments it has made in its TIF district.

The complete market study is included under a separate report.
APPENDIX

- Appendix A  Study Area
- Appendix B  Land Use Plan
- Appendix C  Concept Master Plan Options A and B
- Appendix D  Final Master Plan
- Appendix E  Street Types Plan
- Appendix F  Streetscape Sections
- Appendix G  Stormwater Concept Plan
- Appendix H  Site Amenities
- Appendix I  Character Images
- Appendix J  Entry Sign Concepts
- Appendix K  Aerial Perspective
- Appendix L  Phasing Plan
- Appendix M  General Cost Estimates
- Appendix N  TID Design Standards Handbook
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