

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION 2024-005

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION PROVIDING INITIAL UPDATES AND
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NORTHFIELD CITY COUNCIL RELATED TO THE
PROJECT KNOWN AS THE 5TH AND WASHINGTON STREET REDEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City Northfield, Minnesota (“City”) desires a mixed-use downtown redevelopment project containing certain public improvements included as part of the construction on a site known as the “5th and Washington Street Redevelopment” hereafter referred to as “the Project”; and

WHEREAS, as proposed, the potential redevelopment of the municipal surface parking lot at 5th Street and Washington Street, is more likely than not to come before the City of Northfield Planning Commission (“Commission”) for review for compliance with the city’s adopted Comprehensive Plan, and potential other as-yet unidentified aspects of any development or redevelopment project on the municipally owned property; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has the power and duty:

- A. To make recommendations to the city council regarding the adoption of the official comprehensive plan for Northfield or any amendments thereto;
- B. To review and make recommendations to city council on preliminary plats and conditional use permits;
- C. To initiate and make recommendations to city council regarding proposed amendments, supplements and enactments to this LDC and changes to the zoning map, or changes to the Land Development Code text; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield’s Comprehensive Plan (2008) includes 10 land use principles associated with housing, transportation, infill development, fiscal responsibility, and economic vitality, among others; and

WHEREAS, creating mixed use development on the lot advances adopted policy goals; and

WHEREAS, making housing a priority at this location advances adopted policy goals; and

WHEREAS, implementing low-cost approaches to addressing perceived parking concerns in advance of pursuing structured parking advances adopted policy goals; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Action Plan (2019) identifies:

- “Reduction from baseline Vehicle Miles Traveled” as necessary to meet the city’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal, and
- The Recommended Action of, “adopt a policy for market-based pricing for parking in commercial areas,” and

- Becoming more resilient to prepare for a changing climate.

WHEREAS, adopted Northfield City policy strongly supports improving active and safe transportation including in its Complete Streets Policy, Safe Routes to School Policy, commitment to the Toward Zero Deaths campaign; and

WHEREAS, the successful Riverfront Enhancement Action Plan (2020) implementation and continued health of the downtown retail environment depends upon safe, convenient, and appealing access for people walking, rolling, and biking.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Northfield Planning Commission has determined that a successful, mixed-use development that includes commercial and housing components on city-owned land at Fifth and Washington Streets can and must further the City's adopted policy goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Northfield Planning Commission, under the authority of the City's Legislative Code recommends that the City Council pursue a project that will meet multiple policy goals associated with the adopted comprehensive plan and relevant policy goals in adopted plans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission recommends:

- i. Prioritizing the adopted policy goal of increasing the city's tax capacity and tax base mix in order to maximize the property tax capacity potentially generated from this project; and
- ii. Prioritizing implementation of low- or no-cost parking management strategies to addressing perceived parking concerns before pursuing higher cost approaches.
- iii. Developing a policy to address the best use of available right-of-way in the downtown area including, but not limited to, the area from 2nd Street to 8th Street and from Washington Street to the Cannon River or Highway 3, whichever is farther west; and
- iv. Allocating sufficient available funding resources for staff to ensure that:
 - a. The project is fiscally responsible and sustainable; and
 - b. Relevant, related infrastructure projects are included in the City's capital improvement planning process and plan; and
 - c. Relevant local, county, state, and federal grant or financing applications/opportunities are considered and applied for; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission respectfully requests the City Council delegate the development of a policy or ordinance addressing the use of right-of-way to the Planning Commission and its staff.

PASSED by the Planning Commission of the City of Northfield on this 5th day of September 2024.

B. Buckheit
Chair

R. V.
Vice Chair

VOTE: Y BUCKHEIT Y HEISLER Y KUHLMANN Y MENARD
A NOWAK Y SCHROEER Y STAGER