

Master Plan Options - Blazing Star Center



Blazing Star Center - Option A



Blazing Star Center - Option B

Programming Summary:

- The intent of the Blazing Star Site Master Plan is to create a place that is simultaneously an extension of downtown and an enhancement of the lakefront of Albert Lea Lake.
- Civic uses include the Blazing Star Center, a new Ice Arena, a new City Hall, and space for outdoor recreation including the potential for kayaking/canoeing and ice skating on the Shell Rock River.
- Retail uses include space for a hotel and other retail, including multi-story mixed-use buildings where visibility from East Main Street is high. The central focus of the Option B concept is an open space mall toward which the majority of site development is oriented, open at the western end to the Shell Rock River.
- In Option B, south of the railroad tracks, a separate lakefront district is envisioned where a mix of small retail and residential is strongly oriented toward the water with a continuous lakefront promenade that will enhance public access and activity at the waterfront.
- Blazing Star Trail will connect to the site's eastern edge, wrap along the water front, and exit the site along East Front Street adjacent to the water park.

Conclusion:

Option B is the preferred option based on:

- Distribution of small retail businesses and housing along the lake front to promote public activity / access
- Clearly defined zones of civic / community, retail / hotels, lakeshore development
- Scale of development appropriate for lakeshore and provides views to lake from North & access to Shell Rock River
- Open "civic mall" for multiple functions - markets, fairs, sport events
- Connection of Blazing Star Trail along lakeshore West to pool and recreation areas
- Retail and hotel access / visibility from Main street