# Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan 2015

## Land Use and Growth Management Plan

City of Eau Claire Wisconsin

# Land Use and Growth Management Plan

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# Land Use and Growth Management Plan

The Land Use and Growth Management Plan provides **guidance** for public and private decisions about the future use of land and the structures built upon the land. The chapter addresses all land within or presently outside of the City but that which may be annexed into the City in the foreseeable future or which may influence growth.

The **purpose** of the chapter is to encourage the orderly development of Eau Claire, create an attractive and efficient urban environment for the benefit of the larger urban area, and protect the City's capacity for the future expansion of its tax base.

The chapter includes both a **map** of the preferred land use pattern, and the set of related objectives and **policies** needed to achieve the desirable long-term future for the Eau Claire community. The key provisions of the other chapters of the *Comprehensive Plan* critical to the physical development of Eau Claire are integrated into the Land Use policies.

The Land Use and Growth Management plan translates the community vision for growth into a recommended **physical pattern** of neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas, roads, and public facilities.

Land use **policies** seek to influence the location, type, amount, and timing of growth through real estate development, public investment in infrastructure and facilities, and protection of natural areas.

In addition, the chapter policies are intended to ensure that the **environment** and other long-term public interests are given adequate consideration, and to prevent or mitigate the negative effects of incremental, ad hoc, and laissez-faire market decisions.

This chapter will be used by the City in making **decisions** about annexations, private development proposals, and the location, size, and timing of public improvements. The chapter will also be the basis for preparing more specific sub-area or neighborhood plans for smaller subsections of the community, such as residential neighborhoods, business districts or key perimeter future growth areas.

The objectives and policies of this plan will be **implemented** through the City's zoning and subdivision ordinances and through intergovernmental agreements with adjacent government jurisdictions. However, the Land Use Plan should not be construed as a final blueprint for specific site development nor a prospective zoning map. Identifying preferred land uses does not imply that rezoning a specific area is immediately appropriate. While the zoning and subdivision ordinances must be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*, the rezoning process is separate from the planning process and must consider the timing of zoning decisions, availability of similar land and the impact of the rezoning decision on other City objectives or policies.

## Major Land Use and Growth Management Issues

These are the major land use and growth management issues identified through the Assessment of Conditions and Issues. Issues are questions to be discussed, debated and resolved during the planning process in light of the other issues. Please refer to the Assessment for further explanation of each issue.

1. **Neighborhoods:** What land use changes, if any, should be pursued in order to promote continued investment and residency in the older neighborhoods of Eau Claire?
2. **Downtown:** What should be the next major step forward for Downtown? Should the City participate financially in redevelopment east of North Barstow Street or other areas?
3. **Riverfronts:** How should the remaining major potential changes be handled, such as the Oxford Avenue corridor, the Menomonie Street corridor and the vicinity of American Boulevard and Short Street? Should the City acquire additional floodplain housing on the western bank of the Chippewa River along First Avenue for a linear park and trail?
4. **Economic Development, Jobs and Income:** What land use, zoning and development policy changes should be made to help promote economic development in Eau Claire?
5. **New Neighborhood Design:** Should the City require that new residential areas be designed with many of the features of the older neighborhoods such as sidewalks, street trees, a mixture of housing types, narrow streets, short front setbacks and garages located to the rear?
6. **Commercial Growth:** How much land should be planned and zoned for retail business development? Should multiple-family housing be allowed in certain commercially-zoned locations? .
7. **General Redevelopment:** How proactive should the City be in encouraging redevelopment?
8. **Oakwood Mall and Vicinity:** Should the City promote more intensive development around the shopping mall that may eventually include multi-story office buildings, multiple-family housing, mixed-use development and structured parking?
9. **Jurisdictional Boundary with the City of Altoona:** Where should the future municipal border be located between Eau Claire and Altoona east of US 53 and south of US 12.
10. **Annexation of Town Peninsulas:** Should the City act to encourage annexation of properties in the peninsulas of the various Towns?

## Goal and Objectives

### Goal

**Establish and maintain a land use pattern that achieves a desirable balance among quality of life, economic growth, protection of natural resources, and efficient delivery of public services.**

#### Objective 1 – Sustainable Growth

Grow by investing in established areas, carefully planning new neighborhoods, providing attractive public amenities, and protecting environmental resources.

#### Objective 2 – Planned Land Use Map

Regulate land use to ensure consistency with the Planned Land Use Map and the objectives and policies of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

#### Objective 3 – Perimeter and Regional Growth

Achieve compact, contiguous and cost-effective perimeter growth for the long-term future.

#### Objective 4 – Residential Neighborhoods

Reinforce or create neighborhoods with a diversity of housing, attractive public spaces, compatible land uses and a sense of identity.

#### Objective 5 – Commercial and Mixed Use Development

Create “activity centers” that are successful, attractive and functional

#### Objective 6 – Riverfronts and Stream Corridors

Guide waterfront land use to parks, open space, housing, offices, and similar land uses that are compatible with the rivers.

#### Objective 7 – Major Road Corridors

Plan land use along the major road corridors in a manner supportive of the functional classification of the road.

#### Objective 8 – Environmental Resources

Safeguard and improve environmental features as a means of promoting sustainable urban development, revitalization and quality of life.

#### Objective 9 – Redevelopment and Land Use Compatibility

Restore underused, obsolescent or incompatible properties to viable commercial, residential or recreational opportunities.

### Objective 10 – Economic Development

Provide an adequate and balanced inventory of planned and zoned locations for future growth needs for industrial, office, and retail.

### Objective 11 – Municipal Expansion

Seek to maintain a well-planned and fiscally sound community by continuing to expand municipal boundaries to include areas identified for future urban development.

### Objective 12 – Public Infrastructure Investments

Encourage state and local investments in public facilities and infrastructure that are consistent with the principles of Smart Growth and the objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

### Objective 13 – Regional Planning

Build land use planning relationships in the metropolitan area that support the principles of Smart Growth and that help accomplish the *Comprehensive Plan*.

# Land Use Policies

## Objective 1 – Sustainable Growth

### Grow by investing in established neighborhoods, carefully planning new districts, providing attractive public amenities and protecting environmental resources.

A central idea in this *Comprehensive Plan* is that existing neighborhoods and established business areas should be maintained or renewed as new investments occur in perimeter locations. Growth on the edge of the City should be compact and adjacent to prior development, and some new housing or business should occur as redevelopment. During the coming years, the community will face many opportunities to reshape or intensify certain locations that have emerged as "activity centers." Whether employment nodes or shopping centers, they are locations that need a new purpose.

### Policies

#### 1. Compact and Contiguous Growth

Guide growth in Eau Claire to locations either contiguous to or within presently urbanized areas. Land use should be either urban and compact or rural and very low density to preserve options for future development. This would serve to:

- Promote efficient use of serviced land
- Promote continued investment in older areas
- Limit public and private expenses
- Protect sensitive environmental resources
- Preserve rural character and prime farmland
- Conserve nearby fringe areas for future urbanization when public sewer and water service become available
- Reduce driving and enable increased use of transit and bicycling
- Preserve the distinction between urban and rural areas
- Create a stronger sense of neighborhood and community.

#### 2. New Neighborhoods

Include in new neighborhoods a variety of types of housing (both detached and attached), local streets sized to encourage appropriately slow traffic speeds, street trees and sidewalks, parks and greenways within walking distance, and small commercial areas that accommodate not just cars but also bicyclists, pedestrians and possible transit service. (Refer to the Urban Design Plan chapter for further policy direction.)

#### 3. Infill and Reinvestment

Provide various incentives for the re-use or more intensive use of locations that were not previously developed, locations that have been built upon but cleared, and locations that are underused or highly deteriorated. Some part of the future growth in jobs and housing will be captured in the older parts of the City to keep those areas vital and to use prior public investments.

Incentives may include planning and zoning, buying, preparing and reselling property, and improving roads, utilities, and parks. Prime locations for infill and redevelopment activity

include the riverfronts, the Downtown and its edges, portions of the older residential neighborhoods, and portions of the major road corridors such as Hastings Way, Clairemont Avenue, or Hendrickson Drive.

### 4. Older Neighborhoods

Keep existing neighborhoods, including residential and commercial areas, attractive and economically vital by providing quality streets, parks, street trees, fire, police and other public services, by enforcing local ordinances related to maintenance and upkeep, by assisting redevelopment, and by ensuring that redevelopment is compatible with the existing neighborhood.

### 5. Activity Centers

Work to intensify the pattern of land use in those parts of the City identified as "Activity Centers." In those areas, apply zoning, infrastructure improvements and development incentives to create higher density development, particularly employment, shopping and multiple-family housing that are served by transit, major roads, sidewalks and bicycle routes.

Activity Centers are high-priority locations where the City will seek to encourage infill growth, use infrastructure efficiently, reduce auto trips, and create diverse, interesting urbanism. Primary Activity Centers include:

- County Courthouse District
- South Barstow District
- North Barstow District
- Mayo Clinic Health System - Luther Campus Medical Center District
- The Clairemont Avenue Educational and Medical District consisting of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire upper campus, the Chippewa Valley Technical College, Sacred Heart Hospital, Marshfield Clinic, nearby medical offices and commercial buildings
- Oakwood Mall vicinity
- South Point Shopping Center area
- Gateway Business Park
- Water Street
- The Menomonie Street corridor
- North Clairemont Commercial Area
- Clairemont/Hastings Way Area

### 6. Guiding Growth with Public Infrastructure

Use public investments to support new growth and encourage continuous reinvestment in established areas.

In the growth neighborhoods, existing roads such as Cameron Street, Jeffers Road and Prill Road will be improved for access and identity.

Cooperative agreements with the Towns will be used as needed to coordinate public and private spending on arterial roads and utilities that are needed to leverage private investments in land development and local or collector roads and utilities.

Across the City, the greenways, parks and street improvements will be used to help keep neighborhoods attractive and sustain property values. (Refer also to the Parks System and the Utilities Chapters for further policy direction.)

### 7. Maintaining Growth Forecasts

Work with Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties and the Eau Claire Area School District to update the City's forecast of population, households, and jobs for the sake of planning roads, utilities, parks and schools. The City should also periodically update its projections for housing and land use needs based on actual population growth and building construction.

### 8. Urban Sewer Service Areas

Continue to monitor the amount of developable land available in the Urban Sewer Service Areas on the perimeter of the City. Land availability will be compared with the demand for urban land as based on the forecast of households and jobs. The Department of Natural Resources will be petitioned for adjustments to the boundary lines periodically as warranted. The City will coordinate its forecasts and requests with those of the Cities of Altoona and Chippewa Falls for metropolitan accuracy.

### 9. Leadership on Regional Land Use

Participate in and initiate discussions with community groups and regional jurisdictions about sensible land use planning consistent with Smart Growth principles. The City will encourage local jurisdictions in the Eau Claire-Chippewa Falls metropolitan area to develop a consistent regional perspective on the future. The City will also convene meetings of community and government leaders to discuss growth issues and to jointly adopt principles that guide growth in the metropolitan area. (See also Objective 2, Growth Cooperation, in the Intergovernmental Coordination Chapter).

### 10. Jurisdictional Changes

Use boundary agreements and annexation to help create a compact, attractive, and sustainable urban area distinct from the rural areas of adjacent Towns.

Continue to approve annexation petitions for property within the Urban Sewer Service Area in accordance with State law.

Work to achieve intergovernmental boundary agreements as allowed by State law that will accomplish transferring property to City jurisdiction from the current Town peninsulas within the ring of I-94, Wisconsin 312, US 53, and a line to be determined with the City of Altoona.

The long-term boundary line between the Cities of Eau Claire and Altoona will be negotiated and could include these or other alignments:

- The current shared demarcation of the Cities' Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction, shown on Figure 2-1, Planned Land Use, as the 3-Mile Plat Review Boundary
- Otter Creek
- Prill Road

See also Perimeter and Regional Growth, and Municipal Expansion, in this chapter and Boundary Change in the Intergovernmental Cooperation Plan chapter.

## Objective 2 – Planned Land Use Map

### Regulate land use to ensure consistency with the Planned Land Use Map and the objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

A community's future land use map is intended to identify sufficient areas for future land development to accommodate at least twenty years of forecast growth.

Figure 2-1, Planned Land Use, provides sufficient land both within the current City limits and within the Urban Sewer Service Area to meet the growth needs of the community through 2030. Development decisions regarding specific tracts and parcels will be initiated through the workings of the development market and driven primarily by private investors. As shown in Table 2-1, Forecast of Residential Land Needs, the City projects a need for approximately **318 acres** within the current City limits and **1,485 acres** outside the year 2014 City limits during the 2014 to 2030 period.

**Additional** land will also be needed for **commercial and industrial** development, most of which may occur within the 2014 City limits.

**Table 2-1**
**Forecast of Residential Land Needs, 2014 to 2030, City of Eau Claire**

| City of Eau Claire | 2010 | End of 2013 | 2030 | Change 2013 to 2030 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Housing Units | 27,507 | 28,301 | 33,605 | 5,304 | | |
| Detached Housing Units | 15,702 | 16,176 | 19,183 | 3,007 | | |
| Attached Housing Units | 11,805 | 12,125 | 14,422 | 2,297 | | |
| Total City Housing Units Growth | | | | | 5,304 | |
| Within 2012 City Border | | | | | 1,591 | 30% |
| In Towns' Sewer Service Areas | | | | | 3,713 | |
| **Forecast Acreage Needed for Housing Growth, 2014-2030** | | | | | | |
| Forecast Number of Additional Housing Units **inside** 2014 City Limits | | | | | 1,591 | |
| Assumed Units per Gross Acre | | | | | 5.0 | |
| Estimated Housing Acreage | | | | | **318** | |
| Forecast Number of Housing Units **outside** 2014 City Limits | | | | | 3,713 | |
| Assumed Units per Gross Acre | | | | | 2.50 | |
| Estimated Housing Acreage | | | | | **1,485** | |
| Total Residential Acreage Needed | | | | | **1,803** | |

Updated December 13, 2014
2013 housing units count from City building permit records

An analysis in 2014 by the City indicated that there were 833 residentially-zoned parcels in the City that are privately owned, undeveloped and between 5,000 square feet and 1.5 acres in size. It is assumed that many of these lots will not be developed because of natural limitations, insufficient market demand and property owners' decisions. In addition, there are 179 private parcels zoned

residentially that have an area greater than 1.5 acres. It is assumed that some of this land will be further divided into additional residential lots. Thus, there may not be sufficient land to accommodate the 1,591 additional housings units forecast to be located within the City as indicated by Table 2-11 above without successful annexation petitions from owners in the adjacent Towns.

**Policies**

### 1. Planned Land Use Map and Categories

Use the Planned Land Use Map shown by Figure 2-1 and the land use categories further defined in Table 2-2 as the general pattern of future continued physical development for the City of Eau Claire. Table 2-2 provides a more detailed description of each category, along with criteria to evaluate the appropriateness of specific uses relative to each land use category.

The land use patterns shown on Figure 1-1 are generalized and do not represent precise demarcations on the ground or specific sites. For areas within existing developed neighborhoods, the Planned Land Use Map shows areas based on streets, blocks or existing use. For areas that are vacant land, the Planned Use Map shows transitions from one land use category to another and is not based on defined boundaries. Likewise, locations shown for future parks, or other public facilities are approximations or search areas.

Consequently, the City will use the Figure 2-1, Planned Land Use, in conjunction with related objectives and policies in the *Comprehensive Plan* in reviewing rezoning and development proposals, plats, site plans, annexation petitions and other requests regarding future land use.

However, major departures from the Planned Land Use map will be considered only in the context of an amendment to the *Comprehensive Plan.* The City will generally allow rezonings to more intensive land uses consistent with the Planned Land Use map provided that adequate safeguards are made to ensure that the more intense development will not adversely affect the use and enjoyment of nearby land uses as a result of excessive traffic, noise or light, inappropriate site planning or excessive or unwarranted impact on the natural environment.

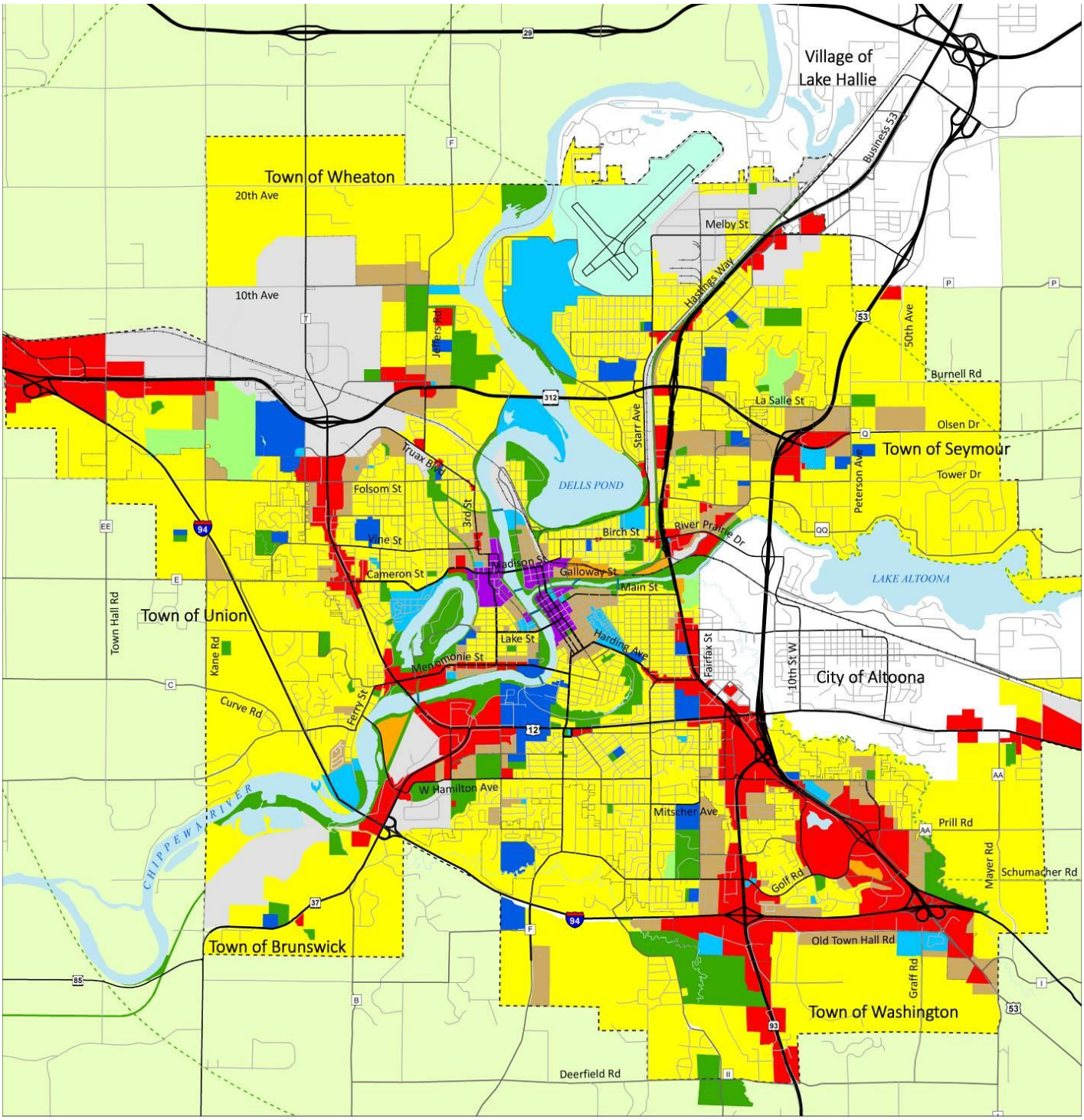
In areas designated as Commercial on the Planned Land Use Map, the city will consider residential zoning based on the following:

- An attractive urban residential environment is created.
- A comprehensive and holistic approach is key to planning the vicinity that may result over time in additional retail, office or residential investments.
- The commercial and residential components of the area are designed to appear and function as an integrated whole through building location, size, orientation and materials, access, parking, sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting.
- Negative effects on nearby existing housing are mitigated.
- Nearby roads and intersections can accommodate the increased traffic while maintaining an acceptable level of service.
- Surface water is managed according to the requirements of the City.

*Policy 2-1 is continued on page 2-12.*

**Table 2-2**
**Planned Land Use Map Categories and Proposed Zoning Map Categories**

| Plan Map Categories | Land Uses | Potential Zoning Districts |
|---|---|---|
| Low Density Housing | The Low Density Housing category includes single-family housing, two-family housing plus low-density attached housing. Allowable densities range from approximately 2.5 to 6 housing units per gross acre, with lot sizes in the range of 6,000 square feet and up. Includes places of worship. | R-1, One-Family District<br>R-2, One- and Two-Family District |
| Medium and High Density Housing | Small-lot detached houses, duplexes, townhouses, 4-, 6- and 8-unit buildings with individual exterior entrances, and all forms of apartment buildings are included in this category. The housing is located where there is good traffic access, between Low-Density Housing and non-residential land uses, and at high-amenity locations such as the greenways or parkways. The density is expected to be greater than 6 housing units per gross acre. Includes places of worship. | RM, Mixed Residential District<br>R-3, Low-Rise Multiple-Family District<br>R-4, High-Rise Multiple-Family District |
| Traditional Neighborhood Development | Locations for traditional neighborhood development are not shown on the Land Use Plan map but are allowed in all locations planned for housing. A zoning district for traditional neighborhoods exists in the zoning ordinance. | Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) |
| Mixed Use Development<br>Medium Intensity Retail, Office or Housing | This mixed-use category indicates that a variety of commercial and/or mid- or high-density housing may be appropriate on this site.<br>Since these land uses may have differing impacts on adjacent low-density housing and on traffic generation, the site planning guidelines of this plan and the regulations of the zoning ordinance must be observed during the site planning process.<br>Consistent with the plan policy of generally increasing the compactness of urban development, housing may be combined in the same building or closely integrated on the same site with retail or office. | Mixed-Use Overlay District |
| Commercial | Businesses providing retail trade or services for individuals or businesses. Includes hospitals.<br>May include attached housing under a Conditional Use Permit in the C-1A, C-1 or C-2 Districts. May include mid- or high-density housing in certain "activity centers" under the Mixed Use District with C-3 zoning. | C-1A<br>C-1<br>C-2<br>C-3<br>MX-Mixed Use |
| Downtown | This land use category allows and promotes high-intensity office, retail, housing, hospitality, conference and public land uses, preferably in mixed-use buildings with strong pedestrian orientations. | CBD District |




Low Density Housing
Medium & High Density Housing
Commercial
Downtown
Industry
Mixed Use
School
Public Facility
Airport
Park
Golf Course
Agriculture or Rural Housing
3 Mile Plat Review Boundary
Sewer Service Area Boundary
Eau Claire City Limits

1 Square Mile
40 Acres
0
5,280 ft.

*Figure 2-1*
***Planned Land Use***

**Table 2-2 continued**

| Plan Map Categories | Land Uses | Potential Zoning Districts |
|---|---|---|
| Light Industry, General Industry, Offices, Transportation, Utilities, Supportive Commercial Uses | Under the I-1 zoning, includes office buildings, office-showroom, light industrial buildings and manufacturing-related warehousing in landscaped "campus" settings with hidden truck docks and limited outdoor storage are allowed in this category.<br>Under the I-2 zoning, includes industry that involves railroad service, heavy truck traffic, extensive outdoor storage, noise or odors, and the handling of raw materials. Allow supportive businesses by rezoning to the C-3 District. | I-1, Light Industrial<br>I-2, Heavy Industrial |
| Schools | Includes public and private schools and colleges. Locations of future public schools shown on Figure 2-1, Planned Land Use, are conceptual. Future schools must be in locations accessible by municipal sewer and water lines. | P, Public Properties District |
| Public Facility | This category includes public buildings and public facilities other than schools and cemeteries. | P, Public Properties District |
| Park | Public parks. Locations of future parks shown on Figure 1-1, Planned Land Use, are only conceptual. | P, Public Properties District |
| Airport | May include private cargo operations and non-aeronautical uses by Conditional Use Permit. | Create a new zoning district for the airport |
| Golf Course | Private golf courses. | R-1 District |

### Policy 2-1, Planned Land Use Map and Categories, Continued

In areas designated as **Housing** on the Planned Land Use Map, consider rezonings to C-1A or C-1 for existing non-residential buildings such as a church that is no longer intended to be used as such. The City may also consider rezonings to C-1A or C-1 in residential areas for lots at collector or arterial street intersections. The following criteria will be reviewed with these situations:

- Negative effects on nearby housing are mitigated.
- Nearby roads and intersections can accommodate the increased traffic and maintain an acceptable level of service.
- The design and function of the commercial use is integrated with the area through site design, building materials, access, parking, sidewalks, landscaping and lighting.

Criteria for rezoning portions of **Industrial** areas to C-3 could be:

- The site is on the perimeter of the industrial area, at a major street intersection and sized for a single user
- Commercial enterprises would be those used frequently by employees in the industrial area such as banks, convenience stores, child day care, restaurants or fitness centers.

## Objective 3 – Perimeter and Regional Growth

### Achieve compact and cost-effective perimeter growth for the long-term future.

A critical planning challenge for Eau Claire has been ensuring that the City's urban extension is compact, cost-efficient and not blocked by non-sewered semi-rural development.

The 2005 *Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan* included policies that led to a growth management agreement with each of the five adjacent Towns. The provisions of those agreements were described on pages 4-8 through 4-13 of the Land Use and Growth Management Assessment chapter of this plan and also stated below. The agreements set minimum standards for non-sewered development and provided planning incentives for desirable growth patterns.

This statement from the Intergovernmental Agreement captured the reason for and purpose of extra-territorial growth management:

> "The Parties recognize and acknowledge that the City has a legitimate role in ensuring that areas within the SSA[1] are carefully planned and developed. It is anticipated that at some point in the future, these lands will be annexed and attached to the City's public utility systems.
>
> It is reasonable that the City require that residential areas within the SSA be developed in general accordance with the City's comprehensive plan, municipal ordinances, and design standards. The Parties recognize that haphazard or premature development in these areas could prevent efficient use of the land resource and inhibit efficient and cost-effective delivery of urban services."

The Agreements required, in essence, that land divisions for residential purposes shall be permitted based on an overall base density standard of one single family lot per 10 acres in the Sewer Service Areas unless the plat is designed for efficient conversion to city-sized lots with municipal streets and utilities. Some exceptions are allowed. Similar standards were set for commercial or industrial development. Housing proposed outside the Sewer Service Area but within the City's three-mile Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction is required to be on parcels either 2 or 5 acres in size or larger.

Soon after the Intergovernmental Agreements were signed, each of the five Towns amended its comprehensive land use plan to be consistent with the Agreements, Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties amended their comprehensive land use plans accordingly, and the two Counties amended their zoning regulations to support those plans. These steps were accomplished by the end of 2011.

In 2012, the City prepared plans for land use, roads and utilities for the Sewer Service Area. Those plans would apply only to properties that successfully petition the City for annexation. These plans have been incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan.

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[1] The Urban Sewer Service Area. Please refer to the definition on the next page.

**Policies:**

### 1. Growth Management Areas

Manage growth in and around Eau Claire using the following growth management areas:

- Existing Urban Area
- Urban Sewer Service Area
- Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction.

Follow a pattern for future land use that is consistent with the objectives of this plan and with the Intergovernmental Agreements.

Apply the terms of the Intergovernmental Agreements and the Sewer Service Area Plans that have been incorporated into this *Comprehensive Plan*.

The **Existing Urban Area** represents the actual area contained within the corporate boundaries of the City of Eau Claire.

The boundaries of the **Urban Sewer Service Area** are approved by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and designate the area beyond the Eau Claire corporate limits that the City anticipates eventually could be served by the City's wastewater treatment facility.

The **Extraterritorial Review Area** is the area within three miles of the City's corporate boundaries in which the City exercises subdivision review authority under State law to regulate the creation of new parcels through platting or certified survey map and ensure uses of land compatible with the *Comprehensive Plan.*

The **Rural Area** includes unincorporated areas beyond the Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction three- mile boundary and generally maintained for very low rural residential or agriculture uses.

The City has prepared long-range plans for land use, roads and municipal utilities in the Existing Urban Area and the Urban Sewer Service Area, and these have been incorporated into this *Comprehensive Plan*. The City has gained cooperation of the five Towns and the two Counties to accomplish mutually beneficial growth management objectives consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* and the Intergovernmental Agreements.

### 2. Existing Urban Area

Seek to maximize infill development in the Existing Urban Area. The City will encourage infill development and redevelopment in existing urban locations because those sites are already fully serviced by public facilities, are generally within one mile of an existing neighborhood park, and are within the City's developable area as designated in the *Comprehensive Plan.*

### 3. Allowable Housing Density in the Sewer Service Area

The City of Eau Claire will continue to monitor the Intergovernmental Agreements between the Towns and the City to ensure that land in the Towns that is within the Sewer Service Area will be regulated for use at a "rural" density so that it may later be platted and developed to "urban" density in an economical and efficient manner. To maintain

rural densities prior to annexation, the Intergovernmental Agreement requires that land divisions for residential purposes shall be permitted based on an overall base density standard of one single family lot per 10 acres in the Sewer Service Area of the Town. Exceptions to this policy are listed below.

### Exceptions to the Base Residential Density

Exceptions to the overall base density standard of one single family lot per 10 acres may be considered based on these criteria:

(1) Infill Lots: The proposed lots are infill lots that meet the following criteria:

a. The proposed lots are in areas that have been previously divided into smaller lots.

b. The proposed lots cannot be reasonably served with city utilities due to natural barriers, i.e., creeks or hills, man-made barriers, major highways, or significant existing development.

c. It would be cost prohibitive to serve the proposed lots with City utilities.

d. Creating the proposed lots is a means of lessening development pressure on larger tracts of land outside the SSA.

e. The proposed lots must be created by a Certified Survey Map (4 lots or fewer).

f. The proposed lots must be reasonably consistent in size with the existing adjacent lots.

(2) Shared Private Utilities: The proposed lots will be served by a sewer connected to a common wastewater treatment system approved under COMM 83, Wisconsin Administrative Code. All sewer mains, trunk, and lateral lines must meet City of Eau Claire standards for such facilities. If the proposed lots will be served by a community water supply system approved under NR 811, all water lines and mains must meet City of Eau Claire standards for such facilities. The lots must meet the access and lot design standards of the City of Eau Claire and the respective Town. The proposed lot layout for the overall parcel must provide for efficient re-subdividing for urban densities and cost-effective and orderly extension of public streets and utilities at the time that public utilities are available to the site. In addition, the property must be part of a cooperative boundary agreement approved pursuant to § 66.0307 Wis. Stats., requiring the current owner and any future owner of the divided lots to annex to the City of Eau Claire at the time that any adjoining contiguous parcel is annexed or petitions to annex and public sanitary sewer service and public water supply are available from the City of Eau Claire.

(3) Cooperative Boundary Agreement: The proposed lots are in an area subject to a Cooperative Boundary Agreement between the Towns and the City of Eau Claire that expressly permits land divisions at overall densities greater than the 1 single-family lot per 10 acres.

### Interim Land Platting and Development

In order to allow efficient and economical future urban growth which is consistent with the Intergovernmental Agreement, the Town must consider the following criteria in its review of proposed residential land divisions for properties in the Sewer Service Area that are still under its jurisdiction:

(1) The proposed lot layout for the overall parcel shall provide for the future efficient resubdividing for higher urban densities.

(2) Each lot shall meet health code requirements for on - site sewage treatment and private water wells.

(3) The proposed lot layout for the overall parcel shall locate houses and other structures on building sites that have the least impact on environmentally sensitive areas and are less well suited for farming and agricultural uses.

(4) The remainder of the overall parcel not developed with lots and roads shall require a conservation easement or other form of protection precluding further development until such time as urban services can be provided.

### 4. Possible Additional Agreements with the Towns

Additional intergovernmental agreements with one or more of the adjacent Towns may be negotiated to help extend or improve public roads or utilities in response to private land development and annexation applications. Such agreements are allowed by state law under these Wisconsin Statutes:

- Section 66.0301, Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Section 66.0305, Political Subdivision Revenue Sharing and
- Section 66.0307, Boundary Change Pursuant to an Approved Cooperative Plan.

### 5. Environmental Protection

On land annexed to the City, protect or restore sensitive or unique natural resources such as flood plains, steep slopes, major wooded areas, streams, wetlands, water quality, shorelines, and riverbanks through regulation and/or City investment. Guidance is provided by this *Comprehensive Plan* and the *Sewer Service Area Plans*; land use regulation is provided by the City of Eau Claire zoning and subdivision ordinances.

### 6. Prime Farmland

Minimize the loss of prime farmland from premature conversion to non-agricultural uses. The City of Eau Claire will seek to protect those areas identified by appropriate federal or state agencies as prime farmland by promoting compact urban development and discouraging large-lot sprawl outside its borders. Accomplish this by applying the provisions of the Intergovernmental Agreements and the Sewer Service Area Plans.

## Objective 4 – Residential Neighborhoods

### Reinforce or create new neighborhoods with a diversity of housing, attractive public spaces, compatible land uses, and a sense of identity.

Creating attractive new neighborhoods and maintaining the better qualities of the older neighborhoods are aims that support the objective of sustainable growth. In addition, properly accommodating some townhouses and apartments in each district or neighborhood can help support these housing options avoiding the deleterious effects of inappropriate design.

**Policies**

### 1. Compact Growth

Encourage new neighborhood development that is generally more compact and dense than recent past patterns. Design each new neighborhood to include both detached and attached forms of housing.

### 2. Variety within Each New Neighborhood

Encourage in each major neighborhood a range of housing types, densities, and building configurations, including single- family detached, townhouses, apartments, and more specialized types, such as senior housing or live-work units. (A major neighborhood is defined as approximately one square mile in size or as demarcated by major geographic features, such as a highway or river.) During the review of planned developments, give favorable consideration to applications that include two or more types of housing without overlooking other legitimate concerns.

It is expected that the development industry will continue to respond with proposals that include more than one type of housing in the larger projects, resulting in neighborhood variety.

Locate attached and multi-family housing in transitional spaces between commercial and single-family areas, and at high-amenity locations near streams, parks, parkways and greenways. When combining housing types, it is preferable for the transition between types to occur at the rear rather than the front (i.e., across a courtyard or parking area rather than across the street).

To assist in implementing this policy, the City should prepare preliminary neighborhood sub-area plans which identify a general street layout, pedestrian connections, desirable parks and open spaces, utility needs, land uses, and potential zoning categories.

### 3. Links to Previously Established Neighborhoods

Link new neighborhoods visually and functionally to the established portions of Eau Claire via street connections, bicycle facilities, pedestrian connections and, where possible, the greenway and parkway systems.

### 4. Neighborhood Planning

Continue to implement the recommendations of adopted neighborhood plans consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. The City will continue to prepare and update specific plans for residential neighborhoods and commercial districts where a need for additional guidance is identified.

The City's neighborhood planning process engages the residents and strives to protect neighborhoods from such factors as: excessive traffic, blighted properties or land use incompatibilities. The neighborhood plans outline strategies to address those issues and capitalize on opportunities to enhance the neighborhoods.

Neighborhood plans, as well as all public improvements, shall be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. (See also Neighborhood Chapter.)

### 5. Context-Sensitive Redevelopment and Infill

Encourage infill development in older traditional neighborhoods that respects the characteristics of those neighborhoods, as described under Established Neighborhoods in the Urban Design chapter and in keeping with the prevalent housing styles in each neighborhood.

This principle does not imply that all housing will be of the same type (i.e., detached or duplex) but that older and newer housing will share many design elements. Redevelopment and infill are keys to strengthening older neighborhoods and will always be done in a manner that responds to and builds on the strengths of those neighborhoods.

Continue to review zoning regulations that apply to the older neighborhoods so as to accommodate the nonconforming status of dwellings that were caused by setback or area requirements. Current zoning regulations sometimes create difficulties for property owners to properly maintain or upgrade houses.

### 6. Multiple Land Uses in Neighborhoods

Identify locations for mixed-use in established neighborhoods that already have some diversity of uses, proximity to transit or major traffic corridors. Apply the policies of the Urban Design chapter regarding mixed-use in the neighborhood context.

### 7. Mixed- and Multiple-Use Development

Seek to combine housing with retail or office uses in mixed- and multiple-use developments. In multi-level buildings, the City should seek to combine housing on the second or higher levels with commercial uses on the ground level. The City should also seek to integrate housing with retail or office uses in larger developments with several buildings, particularly in the Downtown and other designated mixed-use locations.

The City will promote the development of well-designed, moderate-density housing near shopping, recreational or cultural facilities as well as employment centers. To encourage

this, the City will use its Planned-Unit Development zoning district and the new Mixed-Use Overlay District.

The City will also take a lead role in advancing the understanding and acceptance of urban density and traditional urban patterns among businesses and designers, and promote traditional mixed-use urban patterns as a means of improving business, enhancing neighborhoods, and reducing traffic congestion.

When working with mixed- and multiple-use developments and projects, the City will encourage designs with windows and doors fronting public sidewalks, interesting facade materials, multiple-story buildings, higher densities, attractive and useable public spaces, parking in secondary locations or within structures, links to green spaces and bicycle routes, and access to transit service.

### 8. Review of Medium- and High-Density Housing Applications

Consider the following factors when reviewing development proposals for medium- and high-density housing:

- Adequate utility and street capacity
- The ability of a given area or neighborhood to absorb additional density
- Adequate access
- Transit service
- Proximity to services and employment opportunities
- Proximity to schools and natural amenities
- Compatibility with adjacent development
- Suitability of the site for construction
- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity

### 9. Land Use Incompatibilities

Use improved Code enforcement, buffering, and screening to reduce or eliminate problems caused by incompatible land uses. Many of Eau Claire's older neighborhoods have long been affected by incompatible land uses, such as industrial plants, materials or equipment storage, freight lines or truck routes in close proximity to residential uses.

## Objective 5 – Commercial and Mixed-Use Development

**Create "activity centers" that are successful, attractive and functional**

The design of commercial sites in Eau Claire has evolved over the decades, as it has in all cities. The appearance and traffic function of these properties have improved during the past 25 years as a result of improved zoning regulations and development proposals. Commercial development is strongly skewed toward the southeastern part of the City, following the major road patterns and housing development; a substantial amount of land zoned for business stands undeveloped in the northwestern quadrant of the community.

Eau Claire has the potential to make better use of some of its commercially-zoned property, and land developers are adopting new approaches to design. Thus, new combinations of land use open possibilities to create more interesting and sustainable urban places.

**Policies**

### 1. Design Standards or Guidelines

Improve the appearance and function of future commercial development by preparing and adopting design standards. Determine whether these statements and graphics will be mandatory or advisory. Prepare a set for perimeter sites and another for the Downtown. Address features such as:

- Access management for autos
- Pedestrian access
- Bicyclist access
- Relationship of buildings to the street
- Landscaping and screening
- Lighting
- Signs
- Parking
- Exterior treatments
- Transitions to other sites

### 2. Mixed-Use Activity Centers

Enhance and broaden certain commercial districts using the Mixed-Use zoning district to allow multiple-family housing on commercially-zoned land and consider the following policies:

- Create an attractive, diverse and walkable urban environment
- Take a comprehensive and holistic approach to planning the vicinity that may result over time in additional retail, office or residential investments
- Design the elements to appear and function as an integrated whole through building location, size, orientation and materials, access, parking, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting and, optionally, vertical mixtures of land uses
- Celebrate higher urban density as a means of making a more interesting and sustainable community
- Mitigate any perceived negative effects on nearby existing housing
- Accommodate the increased traffic on nearby roads and intersections while maintaining an acceptable level of service
- Manage surface water according to the requirements of the City.

## Objective 6 – Riverfronts and Stream Corridors

### Guide waterfront land use to parks, open spaces, housing, offices, and similar land uses that are compatible with the rivers.

The pattern and design of land development or open space along the rivers and the lake is an important objective in Eau Claire because of the great number of miles of waterfront in the community. Since the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*, the City updated its 1988 *Waterways Plan*, addressing land use, urban design, environmental protection, parks, trails and cultural resources along the rivers, creeks and lake. That detailed plan is adopted by reference into this *Comprehensive Plan*. A few of its major recommendations are summarized here.

**Policies**

#### 1. Chippewa River Land Uses

Guide land use along the Chippewa River to take advantage of the dual benefits of the river aesthetics and water. Thus, the pattern of land use and zoning will emphasize land uses that take advantage of the river views such as mid- and high-density housing, offices, parks and trails, and hospitality businesses, such as restaurants or hotels, and industries that need water for manufacturing, such as the Cascades Group paper mill, and, above the dam, marinas. New industrial locations along the Chippewa River are not expected at this time.

Guide riverfront improvements in the South Barstow District with the *Downtown Action Agenda 2001* and the 2012 *Downtown Strategy and Vision Plan.*

In the northwestern quadrant of Downtown follow the lead of the *West Riverside Neighborhood Plan*, 2012, which encourages a linear riverfront park and redevelopment of blighted industry along Oxford Street into housing. Link the neighborhood to the river with sidewalks, paths and views.

#### 2. Eau Claire River Land Uses

Continue to change the Eau Claire River frontage from industries and parking to a more compatible mixture of linear park, offices, housing and some industry.

Extend a riverfront path along the entire northern side of the river within the City.

#### 3. Riverfront Design

Site and design new buildings along the rivers to take advantage of views while respecting the natural character of the setting. Follow the setbacks established by the Waterways Plan to provide appropriate spacing between the development and the waterways.

#### 4. Redevelopment Opportunities

Continue to pursue beneficial redevelopment opportunities such as The Confluence on the Haymarket site and the joint event and recreation center at the County Materials site.

#### 5. Sherman Creek

Seek a mixture of urban development along Sherman Creek that includes single-family housing along most of its length, occasional parks, the Chippewa Valley Technical

College, and industry (near U.S. 12). Although the edges of Sherman Creek may be subdivided for housing, the City will require setbacks and easements for flood plain protection as indicated by the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Map. The City will protect steep slopes from erosion and preserve wooded locations along the creek.

### 6. Otter Creek

Allow Otter Creek to wind through low-density residential neighborhoods and create Southeast Community Park along its western edge, south of Prill Road. Encourage the development of a public greenway system along Otter Creek consistent with the Parks System chapter.

### 7. Lowes Creek

Protect the edges of Lowes Creek from erosion and deforestation as housing is built nearby. A large stretch of the Lowes Creek edge abuts Lowes Creek County Park. Continue to follow the land use and surface water practices advocated in the *Nonpoint Source Control Plan for the Lowes Creek Priority Watershed Project*

## Objective 7 – Major Road Corridors

### Plan land use along the major road corridors in a manner supportive of the functional classification of the road.

Every community struggles with the challenge of land use and urban design in the narrow band on either side of a major road. These corridors are highly visible to all the community and contribute strongly to the image and appearance of the City.

Businesses covet the access and visibility the road provides, but the community has an interest in protecting the function of the road while avoiding the unattractive design, which sometimes characterizes linear commercial development.

Important changes are occurring along Hastings Way, the former route of US 53. Now a City street, the road has been narrowed to four lanes, land access directed to public street intersections and edge landscaping added. The private sector is responding with new investment.

### Policies:

#### 1. Road Corridor Land Use Planning

Plan the edges of arterial roads for an appropriate and acceptable variety of land uses, ranging from single-family housing to shopping centers, as long as the roadway access guidelines presented in the Transportation Plan chapter are followed. Generally, the City should seek to provide for access efficiency and visibility by locating more intensive land uses to the edge of major roads and guide land uses that generate less traffic to minor roads.

While housing developers may not view the edge of an arterial road as the most desirable environment, it is not necessary to line every stretch of arterial frontage with commercial or multiple-family development. In fact, allowing some low- density neighborhoods along arterial roads is both necessary and desirable. However, if housing is located along an arterial road, its access must conform to the spacing guidelines in the Transportation Plan chapter, which requires that intersections be widely spaced and that little or no direct driveway access is allowed.

#### 2. Site Design

Improve the appearance of the major road corridors within the City by requiring better private landscaping, installing better public landscaping, reducing the size and number of signs, limiting the number of additional billboards, locating some parking lots beside or behind buildings, encouraging better building design, providing pedestrian and bicycle circulation to and within the site, and providing other site planning and building design improvements.(See also the Urban Design Plan chapter.)

#### 3. Redevelopment Techniques

Pursue long-term redevelopment of existing inappropriate land use and vehicle access along arterial roads. The City will give priority to addressing inappropriate land uses through the following strategies:

**Rezoning**

Rezone areas with inappropriate land use or access to allow alternative uses such as office, multi-family housing, small shopping centers, or similar uses that offer greater flexibility for improved spacing and control. While this option has little direct cost to the City, it also depends on a willing and aggressive private sector for implementation. Small office buildings for professionals or corporations have often succeeded in these settings and can be compatible neighbors with an adjacent residential neighborhood.

**Physical Improvements**

Make or require physical site improvements that reduce the conflict between housing and a major road. For example, housing may be protected from the deleterious effects of traffic, parking lots, and commercial buildings by landscaping, setback, building orientation and size. The City could protect the road function by combining or closing access points and/or changing the access design.

**Development Assistance**

Assist private developers in acquiring property, relocating residents and/or clearing buildings in order to stimulate new development under municipal powers granted by Wisconsin Statutes. Potential financial tools available include Tax Increment Financing, special benefit district, Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, and general obligation bonds.

**Acquisition**

Acquire and clear inappropriate land development along one side of roadway and add it to the public right-of-way. Working either alone or in conjunction with the County or Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the City could seek to obtain land along a roadway, and then devote the area to landscaped open space or pedestrian and bicycle pathways to benefit the corridor travelers and adjacent residents.

## Objective 8 – Environmental Resources

### Safeguard and improve environmental features as a means of promoting sustainable urban development, revitalization, and quality of life.

The Natural Resources Chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan* contains recommendations for the management of surface water, ground water, soil, and wildlife habitat. Some of those recommendations are included both in this chapter, as well as the Parks System Chapter.

**Policies**

### 1. Wetlands

Continue to protect wetlands by following the regulations of the City Zoning Ordinance and the guidelines of the City's *Surface Water Management Plan*.

### 2. Flood Plains

Protect flood plains and floodways by applying and enforcing the City flood plain regulations.

### 3. Steep or Wooded Slopes

Continue to regulate development on steep slopes and allow a reasonable degree of use while protecting appearances and surface water. The appearance of ridgelines and hilltops will be of special importance.

### 4. Prime Agricultural Lands

Seek to minimize the loss of prime agricultural lands to development by promoting compact, contiguous and sewered urban development, and reducing incentives for semi-rural sprawl on multiple-acre residential lots.

Avoiding premature development on prime farmland is an important consideration in planning for future land use and development on the City's urban fringe. The City will consider the following criteria in seeking the appropriate balance between encouraging orderly and cost-effective development and protecting prime agricultural areas:

- Maintaining a compact and regular pattern of growth and boundaries;
- Minimizing infrastructure and service costs;
- Designing neighborhoods with connecting streets and pedestrian walkways;
- Responding to market demands for development.

The City recognizes that compact urban development on farmland close to presently built-up and sewered areas can help avoid the loss of productive farmland elsewhere.

### 5. Greenways

Enlarge and extend greenways, as described in the Parks System Plan chapter, for recreation, non-motorized transportation and environmental protection. The greenways, being linear public open space along creeks or rivers, provide natural vegetation, flood storage and runoff filtration.

### 6. Parks

Seek to manage portions of City parks in a more natural manner, allowing some grass to grow wild, removing invasive plant species and reintroducing lost plant species.

### 7. Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

Protect through plans and regulations the limited locations where the natural mineral resource of gravel (sometimes called aggregate) can be found. Gravel is an essential component of concrete and asphalt, two fundamental construction materials important for future urban growth and development. Transporting the mined gravel and sand is a major portion of its cost. Consequently, providing for the well-managed extraction of the resource from available local sources serves to reduce overall construction costs. The City should also work with the private owners of these facilities to plan for their re-use as housing, park and public open space, industry and business or other activities.

## Objective 9 – Redevelopment and Land Use Compatibility

### Restore underused, obsolescent or incompatible properties to viable commercial, residential or recreational opportunities.

Continuous redevelopment is essential to sustaining the vitality of the community. This major task should be led by the private sector, but the City can provide incentives and guidance such as the land use plan, zoning ordinance, roads and trunk utilities. A major question over the coming years is: "How much City financial help can be provided to key sites?"

Reducing land use incompatibilities is one benefit of selective redevelopment. Some residential neighborhoods in Eau Claire have experienced physical decline and disinvestment because of conflicts among land uses or developments that are incompatible in terms of activities, size or appearance. For example, poorly maintained or deteriorating non-residential buildings and properties adjacent to residential use often results in a long-term pattern of declining investment in the residential properties.

**Policies**

### 1. Redevelopment Program

Engage in a continuous process of assisting the redevelopment of key blighted or highly incompatible properties or districts.

Eau Claire will support redevelopment by planning and zoning identified target areas for more intensive or different land uses than their present use. In special circumstances, the City will use tools, such as tax increment financing, to support redevelopment when it can be demonstrated that the monetary and other benefits to the City strongly justify the investment decisions. Other benefits may include leveraging subsequent significant private investment nearby, stemming the tide of neighborhood disinvestment or remediating a major environmental concern.

The City will use its zoning regulations and site plan review process to help ensure that neighborhood appearances are protected as new buildings are introduced.

### 2. Target Areas

Emphasize redevelopment in select and specific locations within the following priority areas:

- Oxford Avenue corridor north of Madison Street
- The eastern half of the North Barstow District
- Certain areas of the South Barstow District (see the Downtown Chapter)
- Certain sites in older neighborhoods near the downtown (see Neighborhood Chapter)
- Portions of the Water Street corridor (see Water Street Plan)
- The Menomonie Street corridor between Clairemont Avenue and Hobbs Ice Arena.

District and neighborhood plans provide further guidance on the preferred location and nature of change. These include the Downtown Plan chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan*, the *Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan* and the *Water Street Commercial District Plan*.

### 3. Planning Process

Prepare and maintain an updated redevelopment project plan or preliminary sub-area sketch plan for each of the areas listed in Policy 2 above. The plans should address market forces, land use patterns, building conditions, traffic circulation, property acquisition, relocation and clearance, public finance, urban design, and public participation.

### 4. Redevelopment Techniques

Determine the preferred financial and other implementation techniques that the City may use to assist redevelopment by a study for each area. Current implementation strategies include: zoning, private investment, tax increment financing, street or utility improvements, general obligation bonds, state or federal roadway improvement funds, state redevelopment grants (not presently available), and state or federal brownfields remediation funds.

### 5. Zoning Regulations

Seek to prevent the formation of new land use incompatibilities and to lessen existing incompatibilities through administration of zoning and site plan regulations. Where appropriate, and through amendment of the Zoning Ordinance if necessary, the City should seek to:

- Provide performance-based criteria to measure and determine appropriate land use intensity. Such criteria might include: traffic generation, hours of operation, building design and buffering.
- Provide landscaping and screening standards to buffer different uses and parking areas from public sidewalks and streets.
- Provide building design guidelines regarding appropriate scale and materials for new infill developments and building expansions. The Urban Design Plan chapter provides guidelines regarding site and building design.

### 6. Property Acquisition

Consider acquisition of private property, on a case-specific basis, to eliminate land use incompatibilities or deteriorated properties, and encourage redevelopment consistent with the planned land use for the area.

In many situations, land use incompatibilities result from incremental changes that have occurred over time as economic trends and development standards have changed. In those cases, the City may need to purchase certain properties to eliminate land use incompatibilities. This should be done on a case-specific basis and will require careful scrutiny of the costs and benefits involved in such action. Financial tools the City might use for property acquisition and relocation include tax-increment financing and Federal Community Development Block Grant funds.

### 7. Neighborhood Planning

Continue to prepare and adopt neighborhood and sub-area plans that encourage eliminating inappropriate land uses, reducing land use conflicts and seeking alternatives to resolve such issues.

## Objective 10 – Economic Development

### Provide an adequate and balanced inventory of planned and zoned locations for future growth needs for industry, office, and retail businesses.

The City should provide an adequate inventory of available and readily serviced land to meet the future growth needs of the community for industrial and business uses. Figure 1-1, Planned Land Use identifies the generalized locations for future land uses. The City should seek through detailed land use planning, capital improvements and infrastructure investments, and zoning to ensure a reasonable balance between community needs for development and the availability of land. See the Economic Development Chapter for objectives and policies specifically related to maintaining a diverse economic base.

**Policies**

### 1. Industry and Offices

Act to provide locations for industrial and office development in both central and fringe locations that have good transportation access.

Central locations may require public assistance with redevelopment and brownfields remediation, but the City recognizes the importance of keeping such locations in productive use, of providing jobs accessible to workers who may not have cars, and of removing blight that threatens housing. The City will encourage corporate offices to locate in Downtown by offering financial assistance, particularly to compensate for the added cost of downtown parking.

Examples of locations where significant employment growth is expected include:

- Downtown (all four quadrants, including the Mayo Clinic Health System – Luther Campus along Bellinger Avenue)
- The institutional campus complex including the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire, the Chippewa Valley Technical College, Sacred Heart Hospital, and nearby medical clinics
- Gateway Industrial Park and vicinity
- Banbury Place and the Galloway Street corridor
- The vicinity of Oakwood Mall
- The Hastings Way corridor
- The Hendrickson Drive corridor

### 2. Downtown

Continue to support the revitalization of the Downtown as a walkable mixed-use district of businesses, housing and cultural attractions. See the Downtown Plan chapter for additional recommendations regarding redevelopment of the four Downtown districts: Courthouse, North Barstow, south Barstow and West Riverside.

### 3. Education and Health Care Campus Area

In 2008, the City led and coordinated the preparation of the *Clairemont Educational and Medical District Plan* for the area north of Clairemont Avenue encompassing the University

of Wisconsin-Eau Claire upper campus, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Marshfield Clinic, Sacred Heart Hospital, nearby medical buildings, state offices, and commercial buildings. That plan is incorporated into this *Comprehensive Plan* by reference.

The area master plan incorporated the plans of the individual institutions and addressed a broad range of issues and opportunities, including: traffic and access management, parking demand and opportunities for shared parking, transit service and amenities, pedestrian and bicycle movement, green space and amenities.

The City will seek to maximize land use efficiency, provide for long-term growth, improve appearances and image, and reduce incompatible relationships.

The University adopted a new master plan in 2011 that will complement some of the recommendations of the district plan. That document was summarized in the Land Use Assessment chapter of this plan.

### 4. Gateway Industrial Park

Continue the growth of manufacturing industries and office space while protecting the Sherman Creek flood plain. The City should emphasize growth toward Sherman Creek and along County Highway T, remaining at least one-quarter mile west of Jeffers Road. The City should also encourage site plans to use land intensively and provide a high level of building finish and landscaping.

### 5. Banbury Place and Vicinity

Continue to add or improve the use of this complex with businesses and housing.

### 6. Oakwood Mall Vicinity

Promote the redevelopment of lower-intensity land uses, especially surface parking, into offices, retail businesses, housing and/or structured parking.

### 7. South Hastings Way

Promote through zoning, site plan review, sign districts, and redevelopment programs, the redevelopment and intensification of the older retail areas along South Hastings Way. Encourage mixed- and multiple-use projects with pedestrian linkages and accommodations. Manage traffic access to the nearby arterial and collector roads by requiring shared access points and joint parking.

### 8. Menomonie Street Corridor

Support the idea of master-planned redevelopment along the Menomonie Street corridor between Clairemont Avenue and the Hobbs Ice Arena that may include businesses and housing centered on the event and recreation center proposed by the University.

### 9. All Commercial Locations

Continue to apply the provisions of the zoning ordinance that enhance the appearance and function of new commercial developments, such as landscaping, sign control, rear buffering, joint parking, appropriate access locations, shared access, sidewalks, facade materials, window and door orientation, and mixed- or multiple-use projects. See also the Urban Design Plan chapter.

## Objective 11 – Municipal Expansion

**Seek to maintain a well-planned and fiscally sound community by continuing to expand municipal boundaries to include areas identified for future urban development.**

Municipal boundaries not only determine who is included within a jurisdiction, but also define local arrangements of service provision and patterns of economic development. The City of Eau Claire expands its municipal boundaries through the annexation process prescribed by Wisconsin State Statutes. Annexations may occur only through means provided by state law. Prior annexations have occurred only through petitions initiated by the individual landowners.

In considering annexation petitions and whether to extend municipal boundaries, it is important for the City to be able to extend boundaries in areas where the City sewer and water lines can be extended to serve growth. It is also important for the City to consider the long-term municipal fiscal impact of annexations.

Well-planned and orderly annexations that are coordinated with the timely extension of utilities and subsequent business or residential development offer significant benefits for the long-term economic health of the larger metropolitan area. Orderly annexations and development will result in less duplication of services and less public spending, which will in turn enhance the economic efficiency of the region.

The fundamental rationale of the *Comprehensive Plan* for approving annexations is that a fiscally sound central city is critical to the economic well-being and sustained quality of life of the entire metropolitan community, and that annexing land for new residential, commercial, and industrial development is key to the City maintaining its long-term fiscal health.

Municipal expansion through annexation allows the City to protect its tax base and pursue continued economic growth. Municipal expansion also helps prevent the fragmentation of public services in the metropolitan area, while achieving a better trade-off between scale economies and service coordination costs. The *Comprehensive Plan* holds, therefore, that municipal services are required for sustainable and cost-effective urbanization, and that the City of Eau Claire is most capable of providing those services.

### Policies

#### 1. Municipal Utility Extensions into the Urban Sewer Service Area

Provide municipal sewer or water service only to property that is annexed to the City of Eau Claire, to property that is subject to a cooperative boundary agreement, or to land that is the subject of another form of intergovernmental cooperation agreement. Follow the alignments and sizing recommended by engineering feasibility studies.

As described under Objective 3, Policy 3 of this chapter, intergovernmental agreements with one or more of the adjacent Towns may be negotiated to help extend or improve public roads or utilities in response to private land development and annexation applications. Such agreements are allowed by state law under these Wisconsin Statutes:

- Section 66.0301, Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Section 66.0305, Political Subdivision Revenue Sharing and
- Section 66.0307, Boundary Change Pursuant to an Approved Cooperative Plan.

These statutes are summarized and presented in whole as appendices to the Land Use and Growth Management Assessment chapter of this plan.

Refer also to Objective 2 of the Public Utilities Plan chapter of this plan.

### 2. Boundary Expansion

Extend the City's corporate boundaries by approving annexations consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* and State law.

In addition, the City will also consider the extent to which the proposed annexation:

- Maintains a compact and regular pattern of growth and boundary expansion
- Provides for the cost-effective extension of public infrastructure
- Provides for the cost-effective delivery of public services
- Fosters neighborhood development patterns with connecting streets and pedestrian walkways consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*
- Addresses a market demand for development.

### 3. Town Peninsulas

Seek to incorporate the peninsulas of the Towns of Washington, Union, Wheaton and Seymour that jut into the City's geographic area through a boundary agreement. If necessary, consider offering financial compensation for these properties, considering the condition of the streets and utilities (or lack of such) in addition to the tax base and condition of the private properties.

## Objective 12 – Public Infrastructure Investments

### Encourage state and local investments in public facilities and infrastructure that are consistent with the principles of Smart Growth and the objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Public spending is a powerful way to influence the pattern of land use and the actions of the private land development industry. Millions of public dollars are spent annually in the Eau Claire metropolitan area on roads, utilities, parks, and other public facilities. These public investments greatly influence the value of adjoining land and shape the nature of subsequent development decisions by the private sector.

An especially important aspect of public spending for capital improvements is the relationship between transportation improvements and land development. Capital expenditures to extend or widen highways or major roads beyond the urban perimeter, or to increase the carrying capacity of existing highway corridors, while essential to our contemporary way of life and economy, may also distort land markets by facilitating development remote from presently urbanized locations and, thereby, also facilitating fragmented and sprawl patterns of development.

By the same token, road improvements in the urban core or transit routes can promote reinvestment in older neighborhoods or intensify development in priority activity areas. Because the *Comprehensive Plan* emphasizes compact and contiguous growth, all proposed road improvements in the City, as well as County and State improvements in the metropolitan area, should be reviewed to determine their impact on key *Plan* objectives for balanced fringe growth, farmland preservation and neighborhood preservation.

**Policies**

#### 1. Consistency with the Plan

Use the *Comprehensive Plan* as a central guiding document for reviewing proposed projects in the City's Capital Improvement Program. As part of its annual review of the proposed Capital Improvement Program, the City Plan Commission will assess the consistency of the proposed improvement program and report its findings to the City Council. Projects included in the Capital Improvement Program approved annually by the City Council should be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. In addition, the City should also review County and State highway projects proposed in the metropolitan area and determine their consistency with general Smart Growth principles as well as the objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*, especially within the City's Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction.

#### 2. Priorities

Give high priority to maintenance of and reinvestment in existing streets, parks, utilities and other City and County facilities so as to maximize the use of existing public or private investments. Secondarily, use public expenditures to provide municipal trunk utilities and arterial roads to annexed property in urban growth locations identified in the *Sewer Service Area Plans*.

### 3. The Role of the Public Sector

Provide major infrastructure in an orderly and timely manner so as to promote investment and redevelopment in target areas and neighborhoods within or near the presently urbanized area. Locate and design public buildings to foster community or neighborhood identity and raise the quality of nearby private development.

Use major infrastructure investments to support investments by the private sector. However, all new local and collector streets and most new public utility lines will be privately financed and built. Trunk sewer or water lines, such as those shown in the S*ewer Service Area Plans* (2012), will be financed and built by the City with the cost assessed to benefiting property owners within the City and not in a Town, consistent with the City Code and State law. Assessments for benefiting lots outside the City would be deferred until annexation.

To select the timing and alignment of any trunk utility extension, a future feasibility study will consider costs, land development benefits and landowner participation interest.

### 4. Land Use and Transportation Relationship

Plan and regulate land development to make relatively intensive use of sites served by minor arterial, collector and local streets. Plan and reserve adequate future road rights-of-way in advance of development for the sake of economy and good design. The City should give strong consideration to making improvements to parks and parkways and other public amenities that will be used to attract private investment.

### 5. Capital Improvement Programming

Continue to refer to the *Comprehensive Plan* when annually updating the Capital Improvements Program. The City should consider using the *Plan's* objectives as a starting point for assessing proposed projects, and then consider legislative mandates, prior commitments, project interrelationships and cost effectiveness. While complete convergence between the *Plan* and the Capital Improvement Program is unlikely to emerge, a higher degree of consistency will result than if the *Comprehensive Plan* were not formally considered at all. In addition, this annual, disciplined process will encourage a greater recognition of the importance of the *Plan* in the minds of all staff and local public officials and lead to more thoughtful plan implementation.

## Objective 13 – Regional Planning

### Build land use planning relationships in the greater Chippewa Valley region that support the principles of Smart Growth and that help accomplish the *Comprehensive Plan*.

The City of Eau Claire has a genuine interest in seeing that sound land use planning takes place in and around its neighboring communities and among the different government jurisdictions in the metropolitan area. Eau Claire also has a stake in the success of broader multi-county efforts in the Chippewa Valley regarding land use, economic development, transportation and public safety.

Effective planning relationships among government jurisdictions do not require unanimity on every topic of interest. However, effective working relationships do require a sufficient level of mutual trust and respect, and a shared belief that the relationship will result in mutual benefit. Sound land use planning by communities in the metro area must incorporate and support cooperative intergovernmental relationships, which, in turn, require that each jurisdiction can readily answer the "what's in it for us?" question that has to be answered before productive cooperative work can begin. Recommendations on building more effective working relationships among jurisdictions are addressed in the Intergovernmental Cooperation Plan chapter. The answer to "what's in it for us?" is provided by the six key smart growth outcomes identified in the Introduction Chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan:*

- Neighborhood livability
- Better access, less traffic
- Thriving cities, suburbs, and towns
- Shared benefits
- Lower costs, lower taxes
- Keeping open space open.

**Policies**

### 1. Shared Metropolitan Vision

Encourage local jurisdictions in the metropolitan area to develop a consistent regional perspective on future growth consistent with the principles of Smart Growth. The City should convene initial meetings of local officials from area jurisdictions, as well as a broad range of stakeholders in the metropolitan area, to discuss Smart Growth issues and to begin to develop a statement of Smart Growth principles to guide future growth in the Eau Claire- Chippewa Falls metropolitan area.

### 2. Sustainable Development

Encourage growth in the City of Eau Claire and the broader metropolitan area consistent with the concept of sustainable development that emphasizes the interdependent relationship between economic vitality and environmental quality. The City should lead by example in promoting the concept of a sustainable metropolitan region that can support a diverse and vibrant economy, while still protecting the integrity of the natural air, water, and land systems that support life.

### 3. Area-Wide Planning Meetings

Host an initial meeting of planning leaders and officials to discuss metropolitan planning and growth and to consider implementing regular schedule of meetings among interested jurisdictions. Such meetings could include an annual all-day meeting of public and private sector leaders from the Eau Claire-Chippewa Falls metropolitan area to discuss planning, service delivery, economic development, and quality of life issues.

### 4. County Comprehensive Plans

Support the efforts of Eau Claire County and Chippewa County to adopt and implement county comprehensive plans encompassing the principles of Smart Growth.

### 5. Other Municipality Comprehensive Plans

Support the efforts of neighboring cities, villages, and towns to adopt and implement comprehensive plans encompassing the principles of Smart Growth.

### 6. Area-Wide Planning

Support and participate in area-wide or regional planning efforts related to the goals and objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The City will encourage area jurisdictions to participate in ongoing efforts to address transportation system and surface water management issues. The City will continue to participate as a member of the Metropolitan Planning Organization and work with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in addressing issues of a broader regional impact in western Wisconsin. The City will also continue to coordinate with the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation, the Governor's office and other state agencies regarding local planning issues.

The City should actively support or initiate joint planning collaborations with the appropriate county agency and other local jurisdictions to prepare detailed sub-area land use plans for major interchanges, highway corridors or other growth areas in the City's Extra-Territorial Plat approval Jurisdiction. Such sub-area plans should include future land use recommendations, proposed utility extensions, street networks and significant public facilities.

### 7. Adjustments to the Extra-Territorial Plat Review Jurisdictions

Negotiate the boundary of the Eau Claire Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction where it overlaps with that of the Village of Lake Hallie and the City of Altoona.

The Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction (ETJ) is all of the land within three miles of the border of the City of Eau Claire except that in the City of Altoona and the Village of Lake Hallie and these jurisdictions ETJ's areas.

The ETJs of the City of Altoona and the Village of Lake Hallie overlap with part of the ETJ of Eau Claire in the Town of Seymour.

Under State law, when overlap exists with two jurisdictions' ETJ, a line is drawn to split the difference. This line is on the maps in the Utilities System Plan chapter of this plan. .

The ETJ consists of two general classes of land:

- The Sewer Service Area (SSA)
- The balance of the ETJ

Parts of the SSA for the City of Eau Claire in the Town of Seymour lie outside the ETJ because of the overlap with the ETJ boundaries between the City and Village of Lake Hallie. The City should work with the Village and the Town of Seymour to resolve this issue. The City resolved a similar issue between the City's ETJ and Altoona's ETJ a number of years ago.

## Plan Action Steps

The City will take the following steps to implement the recommendations of the Land Use and Growth Management Plan.

**Table 2-3**
**Land Use and Growth Management Plan Actions**

| Action | Timing |
|---|---|
| Use the *Comprehensive Plan* when reviewing land development or zoning **applications**. | Continuous |
| Consider **annexation** applications that are consistent with the Land Use Plan Map and Policy 11-2. | Continuous |
| Create a new zoning district for the regional **airport.** | 2016 |
| **Monitor development** and adjust forecasts of land needs, traffic generation and sewer or water flow accordingly. | Continuous |
| Seek to incorporate the **peninsulas** of the Towns of Washington, Union, Wheaton and Seymour that jut into the City's geographic area through boundary agreements. | 2015 – 2025 |
| Negotiate with the City of **Altoona** a long-term mutual boundary line. | 2016 |
| Continue to review applications for land division throughout the **Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction**; enforce the regulations for minimum parcel size; protect planned rights-of-way. | Continuous |
| Use intergovernmental agreements or cooperative boundary plans to aid construction of public **utilities** in the Urban Sewer Service Area. | Continuous |
| Continue to provide municipal **utilities** only to properties in the City or subject to a cooperative boundary plan. | Continuous |
| Refer to the **design guidance** of this chapter and the Urban Design Plan chapter when reviewing plats and site plans. | Continuous |
| Prepare commercial development **design guidelines** for downtown and another set for perimeter locations. | 2016 |
| Promote the creation of mixed-use **activity centers** in present commercial areas. | Continuous |
| Follow the recommendations of the **Waterways Plan.** | Continuous |
| Prepare a plan for the eastern half of the **North Barstow** District. | 2015 - 2020 |

| Action | Timing |
|---|---|
| Promote redevelopment of the **Oxford Avenue** corridor by creating a linear riverfront park and continued land assembly and clearance. | 2015 – 2025 |
| Negotiate the mutual **boundaries** of the Extra-Territorial Plat Approval Jurisdiction with the Village of Lake Hallie. | 2015 - 2020 |
| Continue to prepare **plans** for developed neighborhoods and for future urban areas on the perimeter of the community. | Continuous |
| Continue to convene **meetings** of community and government leaders to discuss regional growth issues. | Continuous |
| Seek to enhance the **Code Enforcement** activities of the city. | 2015 |
| Continue to review **zoning regulations** to accommodate the non-conforming status of dwellings in older neighborhoods. | Continuous |