

# Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan 2015

## Community Facilities Assessment



City of Eau Claire Wisconsin

## Community Facilities Assessment

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## Community Facilities Assessment

This chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan* describes the community facilities that the City or other government agencies operate in Eau Claire and identifies issues that might affect community development.

The municipal sewer and water systems are described in the Public Utilities Analysis chapter. Conditions and issues pertaining to parks are described in the Parks, Trails and Greenways Analysis chapter.

### Major Issues in Community Facilities

The following are the community facilities issues that were identified during the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*. Each of these issues has been resolved to some extent since then, so the outcome of each issue is noted. Two new issues are also described below.

**New Public Safety Facility:** Where should a new public safety facility be located to best serve the growth and development of the community?

*The expansion of the County Courthouse and remodeling of its existing interior space has provided for the facility needs of City Police, County Sheriff, County jail and other public safety offices. The shared work space and functions between Police and Sheriff provide efficiencies and coordination of services for the community.*

**School-Park Concept:** Should the community continue to support a combined elementary school plus neighborhood park concept?

*The 2005 Comprehensive Plan continued support of this concept. Providing park space and activities at or adjacent school sites allows service which promotes efficiencies, promotes collaboration between the City and the School District and creates a neighborhood focal point for outdoor activities.*

**Growth Relative to School Capacity:** Should the City direct growth into areas where school attendance capacity is available?

*The City's ability to direct growth into school attendance area is limited. School attendance changes over time, and the School District open enrollment policy allows attendance outside of specified areas based on a set of standards.*

**Future School Sites:** To what extent should the City and the School District attempt to coordinate future school site location needs based on growth management goals?

*The Comprehensive Plan encourages future school sites to be within the Sewer Service Area of the City so that utilities can be provided to the site. The Comprehensive Plan designates areas that are anticipated to need future school sites based on population and land use projections. The City coordinates with the School District on future school sites.*

**Retired Schools:** How should schools that are closed be re-used within a neighborhood?

*Former Randall School and Boyd School have been re-used for rental or ownership apartment development. Former Washington School was removed to build new housing. .*

**Community Recreation and Meeting Center:** Should the City build a community center that includes an indoor aquatic center, gymnasiums, meeting rooms, etc.? If so, where should it be built?

*The 2005 Comprehensive Plan identified a site at Carson Park Drive and Menomonie Street as a possible location for a community center and encouraged collaboration with other organizations to build it. The City subsequently sold the site to the YMCA for that purpose. The Y recently announced a partnership with UWEC to build its facility and others on a site along the south side of Menomonie Street. Those facilities are described as an event center to replace Zorn arena, a student recreation center that would serve as the YMCA for the community and an indoor pool. Does this facility answer the need posed in this issue?*

**Convention Center:** Should the City and/or the County build a major conference or convention center, and where?

*As noted above, the recent announcement by the UWEC for an event center to replace Zorn arena along Menomonie Street may address this issue. Once again, is this issue settled?*

### **Other Issues**

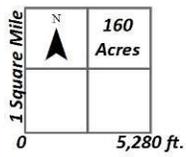
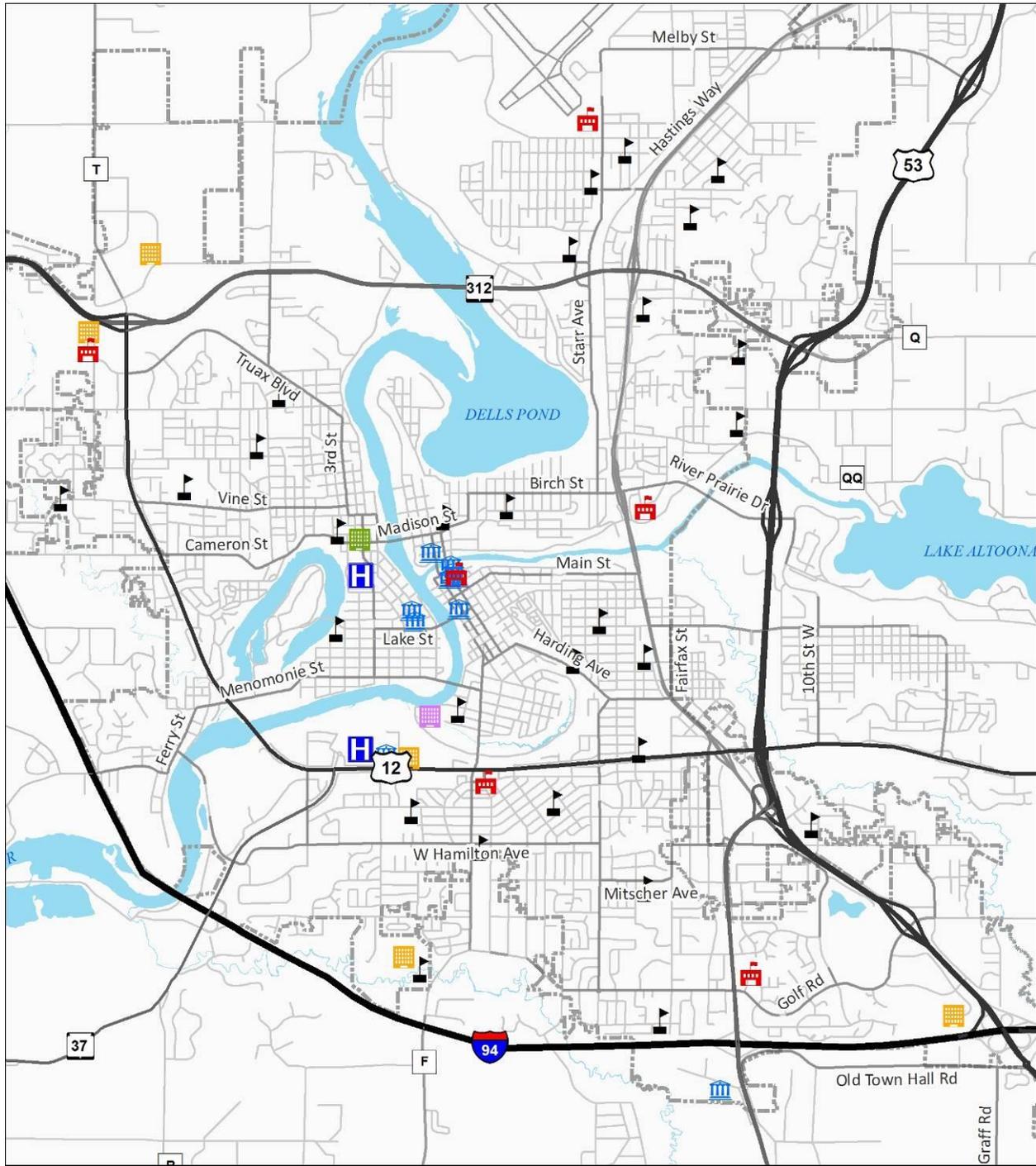
Other issues that may need to be discussed during this *Comprehensive Plan* update are:

**Airport Master Plan:** Should the City incorporate the Airport Master Plan into the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and adjust its zoning ordinance?

*The Airport Commission recently approved an update of the master plan for the airport and has expressed interest in working with the City to incorporate its land use plans into the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Airport Commission has also expressed interest in developing common zoning standards for the airport and City. Please refer to the Transportation Assessment for further description of this issue.*

**University Master Plan:** How should the City incorporate the University's Master Plan into the City's *Comprehensive Plan*?

*The university has also updated its master plan for the campus. How this plan is incorporated into the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan should be discussed. Please refer to the Neighborhood and District Assessment for further description of this issue.*



-  Elementary or Secondary School
-  College
-  UW Eau Claire
-  Government Building
-  Fire Station
-  Hospital
-  L.E. Phillips Senior Center

**Figure 14-1**  
**Major**  
**Community**  
**Facilities**

## Primary Community Facilities

The focus of this section of the *Comprehensive Plan* is on local government services of police, fire, cemeteries and the library. Other municipal and Eau Claire County facilities are noted. The Eau Claire Area School District and higher educational facilities are emphasized along with community assets such as healthcare institutions, the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport, and among others, the solid waste landfill.

### Police

The Police Department addressed its facility needs by sharing space with the Eau Claire County Sheriff's Department in an expanded County Courthouse complex. Space was created for this new office when the County jail was moved into a new wing of the building in 2012. Other project elements included upgrading the shared telecommunications dispatch center and building a combined City Police and County Sheriff parking ramp. As stated in the City's 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*, this issue needed to be addressed.

As of 2014, the Eau Claire Police Department needed to upgrade its firing range at Blue Valley Landfill.

### Fire

The Eau Claire Fire Department has six stations, as illustrated by Figure 14-1, Major Community Facilities. A prior service delivery study recommended combining the Airport Station (#8) and the Hastings Way station (#10) at a new location near Highway 312 and Starr Avenue. The most recent station (#9) was built in 1999 in partnership with the Chippewa Valley Technical College at Preston Road and Truax Boulevard.



Fire Station No. 9, located near Truax Boulevard and Preston Road

### Cemeteries

The City presently owns two cemeteries.

Lakeview Cemetery is located on the west side of Eau Claire and has developed and occupied an area of approximately 45 acres. Of this acreage, approximately 200 grave sites remain open and available for sale. A new section containing 4,050 grave sites opened in 2005. These 4,250 sites should provide adequate space for interments until the year 2045. Approximately 20 acres of undeveloped land is available for the future expansion of Lakeview Cemetery.



Lakeview Cemetery

Forest Hill Cemetery is located on the east side of Eau Claire and consists of approximately 40 acres of land and has approximately 1,600 grave sites available for sale. This cemetery has no land for future expansion but 1,600 sites should provide for adequate space past the year 2020 unless the rate of sales changes significantly. However, with the increase in cremations (allows multiple burials on one lot), a service life of at least 15 to 20 years can be expected.

**Library**

The L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library completed a major remodeling project in 2009-2010. A \$1.7 million public-private partnership funded the renovation to provide more space and programming capability for Youth Services and enhanced other spaces such as the research area, circulation desk, book-holds, new materials area and the art gallery. Major energy efficiency work took place over 2010 to 2013 with building envelope improvements, lighting and mechanical system upgrades.

The library, opened in 1976, has maintenance needs because of its age and heavy patronage. Nearly \$2 million in infrastructure priorities have been outlined for the 2015 to 2019 time frame. Some of these improvements include customer parking, bike access, security, programming space, landscaping and water availability, lighting and visibility and signs. These are envisioned to be coordinated with the reconstruction of Eau Claire Street. Further needed work involves installing a new generator and two new boilers, upgrading heating and cooling systems, continuing repairs and upkeep of the lower level concrete retaining wall and parking area, and replacing the upper and lower roofs.



Phillips Memorial Public Library

**Eau Claire Schools**

Schools of the Eau Claire Area School District, an agency independent of the City of Eau Claire, are listed below and their locations are shown on Figure 14-1.

**Elementary Schools**

- Davey
- Flynn
- Lakeshore
- Locust Lane
- Longfellow
- Manz
- Meadowview
- Northwoods
- Putnam Heights

- Robbins
- Roosevelt
- Sherman

**Middle Schools**

- Delong
- Northstar
- South

**High Schools**

- Memorial
- North

**Charter Schools**

- Chippewa Valley
- Montessori
- McKinley – Alternative Learning

**Early Learning**

- Prairie Ridge Early Learning School



Flynn Elementary School, located in the East Side Hill Neighborhood



The former Boyd Elementary School has been re-used as housing

New housing has a direct effect on student enrollment within the attendance boundary of each elementary, middle school or high school. Likewise, new school locations have a direct effect on the long-term growth of an area or the stabilization of existing neighborhoods. The coordination of development activity and school locations provides effective use of school facilities and attractive neighborhoods for new homes.

The Demographic Trends and Facility Planning Advisory Committee, was formed in 2008 and includes several community representatives. As its name implies, the committee is charged with advising the School Board on the topics such as population growth, school attendance boundaries and school capacities. Its aim is to make long-term decisions and investments in attendance areas, facilities and equitable programming.

In May of 2002, the Elementary Enrollment Management Committee provided a report to the Board of Education that included these goals:

1. Better balance the enrollments at our elementary schools.
2. Maintain the “neighborhood school” concept.
3. Efficiently use teachers and support staff.
4. Minimize transportation needs and length of bus rides for students.

Its key assumptions were:

- Neighborhood school concept should be retained as much as possible.
- Children from families should attend the same school whenever possible.
- A school should be located centrally in its attendance area.
- Elementary school enrollments should be better balanced.
- Middle schools will continue to serve elementary students as follows:
  - Delong: Putnam Heights, Lakeshore, Roosevelt, Longfellow, Sherman
  - South: Robbins, Meadowview, Manz
  - Northstar: Davey, Locust Lane, Northwoods
- High schools will serve elementary students as follows:
  - Memorial: Robbins, Meadowview, Manz, Putnam Heights, Lakeshore, Sherman (Sherman and Lakeshore students attend both Memorial and North)

North: Roosevelt, Longfellow, Davey, Locust Lane, Northwoods, Lakeshore and Sherman (Sherman and Lakeshore students attend both Memorial and North)

- These current programs should be considered for elementary schools: ESL, SAGE, Class Size Reduction, early childhood, special education and Title I.

In addition, future space considerations include the possibility of a Montessori school and/or other charter school opportunities and four-year old kindergarten. (These alternatives have been implemented since the last update to the *Comprehensive Plan*.)

- As attendance areas are studied, the following factors should be considered: enrollment projections, future community growth, current space availability, district budget, transportation time, and costs.

### University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

In 2011, the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire updated its campus master plan, which was a guide to capital improvements over the next 20 years. A summary of that plan can be found in the Neighborhoods and Districts Assessment.

Major projects completed on campus since 2005 are a student union center and a classroom building. The campus mall area was also redesigned and re-landscaped to feature Little Niagara Creek.

UW-EC also has agreements with City-owned sports facilities such as Hobbs Ice Arena, Carson Park stadiums and Bollinger Fields.



UWEC campus

### Chippewa Valley Technical College

In 2014, the Chippewa Valley Technical College built an Energy Education Center on its west campus near Highway 312, and a Fire Safety Center was constructed there in 2013. The Business Education Center was extensively remodeled during the 2010 through 2014 period, creating a new student commons, café, learning resource center, conference center, barber-cosmetology labs, science labs and staff office space. At the Gateway campus, a new welding facility was built in 2011, and a data center was added in 2012.

The College maintains a ten-year facility assessment plan and updates a three-year facilities plan annually. Its long-range facilities plan is modified as circumstances and situations change in the District. A further description of CVTC is presented in the Neighborhoods and Districts Assessment chapter of this plan.



Chippewa Valley Technical College – East Campus

## Other Community Facilities

### Health Care Facilities

The City currently has three major medical providers:

- Marshfield Clinic
- Mayo Clinic Health System – Eau Claire
- Sacred Heart Hospital.

Oakleaf Surgical Hospital relocated to Altoona in the summer of 2014.

Mayo Clinic undertook significant expansion projects of its Luther Campus during the 2007 to 2010 period, adding a new emergency center, two bed-towers and a parking ramp. Immediate plans are to focus on remodeling existing space. Sacred Heart Hospital has focused on major upgrades to their existing medical building on Clairemont Avenue.

The Neighborhoods and Districts Assessment also describes hospital capital plans. Included there are *The West Riverside District Plan* (2010), which focuses on the Mayo Clinic–Luther Campus location, and the *2009 Clairemont Avenue Educational and Medical District Plan*, which encompassed Marshfield Clinic, Sacred Heart Hospital, Mayo Clinic–Urgent Care and the smaller UW-Health Clinic at Chippewa Valley Technical College and the Chippewa Valley Free Clinic, located near Stein Boulevard.



Sacred Heart Hospital



Mayo Clinic Health System - Eau Claire



Marshfield Clinic

### **Solid Waste Disposal**

Solid waste disposal is provided by private haulers that are licensed by the City. Since 2005, the City changed its waste management ordinance to cap the amount of these solid waste haulers traveling across town.

The landfill is owned and operated by a private company. However, the City is a part owner of that site, and as this private company looks to expand its landfill, the City has a vested interest in its ability to meet current and future disposal needs of the community.

### **Recycling**

Recycling is provided by private companies and required for many recoverable materials by Eau Claire County ordinance. The County is the Responsible Unit on waste and recycling. In 2014, the City piloted with the County, allowing leaf and grass clippings to be deposited at its Jeffers Road municipal brush collection site. The pilot program proved popular but a more sustainable solution is needed for residents.

The City will continue to evaluate how to meet this community need and what effective arrangement can be accomplished between City, County and others who may have an interest.

### **Power Plants**

Power generating plants, pipelines and transmission lines are owned and operated by private utility companies, which are regulated by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. Major petroleum, natural gas, and electric transmission lines run near or bi-sect the city.

Xcel Energy operates a major substation on Dells Pond of the Chippewa River and generates power at the Dells Hydro Plant. The original dam was built in 1878 during the logging boom and replaced in 1924, 100 feet downstream of the original structure, which was at a natural falls. The plant has a capacity of 9.3 megawatts.



The Xcel Hydro-Electric Dam

In 2008, the City became a Wisconsin Energy Independent Community seeking to:

- Generate 25 percent of the City's electricity and transportation fuels from renewable resources by 2025
- Help the State capture 10 percent of the emerging bio-industry and renewable energy market by 2030
- Assist the State to lead the nation in groundbreaking research that will make renewable energy more affordable and will create well-paying jobs.

Since this time, the City has worked diligently on several municipal energy efficiency, conservation and renewable energy projects to lessen demand on imported energy and has tracked its bi-annual greenhouse gas emissions.

## City, County and Federal Buildings

The following are other City, County and Federal facilities with the status of their present planning considerations noted.

### City Hall

City Hall is a locally landmarked 1916 building and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was attached in 1979 to the former Carnegie Library by way of a public atrium and new Council chamber.

The City Center Plan and Eau Claire Downtown Riverfront District Plan call for a “public square” north of the facility extending to L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library along Eau Claire Street and connecting with the Eau Claire River. This concept provides one option for long-term expansion of the City Hall facility. Another option under discussion is to relocate the fire station that is connected to City Hall and expand municipal functions into that space.

### Central Maintenance Facility

The Central Maintenance Facility was built in 1987 and provides a combined location for City transit, shops and parks maintenance. As part of the *North Riverfronts Neighborhood Plan*, Hobart Playground was relocated to North Riverfronts Neighborhood Park. This made way for a new 65 by 75 foot Public Works vehicle storage building in 2014. Other future capital and municipal fleet needs of this facility will be outlined in future long-range planning.



Eau Claire City Hall



Eau Claire Central Maintenance Facility

### Hobbs Ice Arena

In 2009 and 2010, Hobbs Ice Arena underwent a significant remodeling and expansion including a new ice rink and administration area. Major energy efficiency work was done in 2010 and 2011. Future plans are to possibly expand the facility so that the ice resurfacing machine (the Zamboni) does not have to go outside to dump ice shavings.

### **Eau Claire County Courthouse**

As noted in the previous Police section, the County expanded the Sheriff's facility in 2012, adding a new jail; the previous jail was remodeled into administrative offices in 2013 and 2014. Depending on capacity needs, the jail has the ability to outfit a fourth pod with inmate cells and to expand two floors up.

In 2010, a small parking ramp shared by the City Police and the County Sheriff was added near Second Avenue. Second Avenue was realigned from West Grand Avenue to First Avenue to accommodate expansion and new surface parking; Ann Street was vacated. As of 2014, the County did not anticipate any further expansion needs.



Recent Addition to the County Complex

### **Eau Claire County Fairground**

The County Fairground was developed beginning in 1995 and includes the Curling Club Center and livestock barns. Future expansion plans approved with the 1995 plans for this facility include a livestock arena and an exposition center. The County Parks and Forestry Department oversees operation of the Fairground.

### **Chippewa Valley Regional Airport**

The Chippewa Valley Regional Airport (EAU) is located in the City and is jointly operated by Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties. The airport serves both scheduled and non-scheduled commercial passenger airlines as well as private general aviation activities. Currently, there are two commercial arrivals and two departures daily. The total number of take-offs and landings have decreased slightly over the last few years. It is anticipated that number of operations will stay relatively flat or grow at a very slow rate over the next 10 to 20 years. No major spikes in operations are expected at this time.

The *EAU Master Plan* serves as a guidebook for implementing future air-side and land-side improvement projects and addresses areas that have bearing on future management and development of the airport. The improvement plan includes projects necessary for the Airport to meet existing FAA standards as well as expansion projects that can be implemented to provide a high level of service to airport users as circumstances change. For example, during 2008 to 2011, the passenger terminal building was expanded, renovated and reconfigured to better accommodate new security rules and provide an adequate secure passenger holding

area. The project should adequately meet airport passenger needs for the plan’s 20-year planning period.

Finally, Airport officials would like to incorporate recommended master plan changes into the *Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan*. These changes deal primarily with land use, economic development and zoning standards.

Refer to the Transportation Assessment chapter of this plan for an additional description of the airport and its operations.

### **State Office Building**

The Eau Claire State Office Building, located near Chippewa Valley Technical College on Clairemont Avenue, was constructed in 1963. It currently houses regional offices for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Department of Revenue, and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

### **Federal Courthouse**

The Federal Building and US Courthouse in downtown Eau Claire was built in 1907 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. It is designed in Classical Revival architecture style and served historically as a courthouse and as a post office. The building's major tenants include the U.S. District Court, Bankruptcy Court and Probation. Other tenants include the Small Business Administration and U.S. Marshals.



Wisconsin State Office Building



Federal Courthouse

### **Internet Service**

Internet service is provided in Eau Claire by private companies.

The City maintains free, unsecured Internet Wi-Fi “hot spots” in several buildings such as City Hall, the Library among others, for use by the public and its employees. Police, Fire and Public Works employees often make use of this service to conduct their work.

## Possible New Facilities

### Event and Recreation Complex

In a joint partnership, UW-Eau Claire and the YMCA of Eau Claire announced in 2014 that they will construct a new event and recreation complex to be located at 1111 Menomonie Street. The 23.4 acre site is being donated by County Materials Corporation, which plans to relocate its operations. The site is served by public transit and adjacent to Carson Park and the Chippewa River State Trail.

The proposal seeks to create an event center to replace the UW-EC Zorn Arena and includes building an activity center that would serve as a student recreation center and YMCA. Specifically, the university and the YMCA would construct and own separate buildings that would be shared by both organizations.

Fund-raising and construction of the new YMCA building and event center are expected to occur from 2014 through 2019. Mayo Clinic Health System also plans to partner in the project.

### Community Center

Some communities, particularly those with long winters, provide a recreation building with an aquatic center, gymnasium and other attractions. This type of facility has been informally discussed by City officials and was raised as an issue as far back as the 1993 *Comprehensive Plan*.

The 2005 *Plan* identified a site at Carson Park Drive and Menomonie Street as a possible location for a community center and encouraged collaboration with other organizations to build the facility. The City sold that site to the YMCA to build the facility.

As noted above, UW-Eau Claire and YMCA plan to build a new event and recreation complex at a site along Menomonie Street, south of the originally planned location. The issue now is whether the need for this type of facility has been settled or whether the community should continue to discuss it during this planning process and thereafter.



The County Materials site may be redeveloped into an event and recreation complex through a public-private joint venture.