

City of Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan Sustainability Chapter



City of Eau Claire

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Sustainability Chapter

2005 – 2025

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Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan

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Sustainability

“Sustainability takes forever and that’s the point.”
~William McDonough, Architect



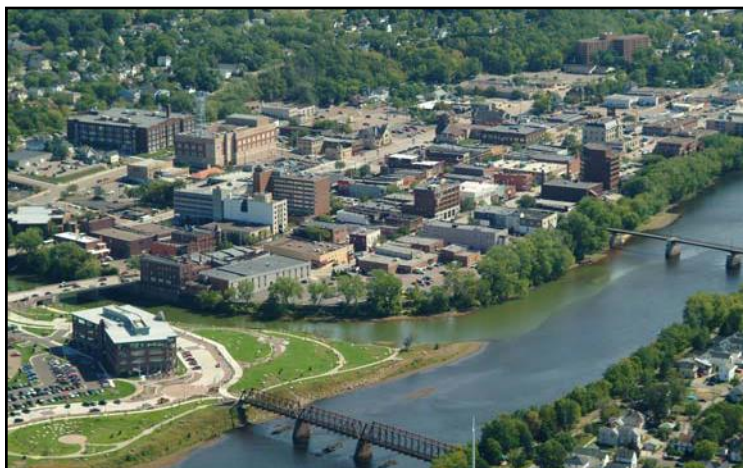
Sustainability has been defined most commonly as, "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Commission, 1987). The goal of this chapter is to “make certain that principles of sustainability in the Eau Claire area are followed to improve our quality of life by meeting present environmental, economic, and social needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same”. This concept of sustainability not only speaks to meeting these needs locally but how our actions also affect the greater world. It is not difficult today to see how individual actions that are held collectively are affecting the earth in different ways. Take for instance the developing world; as more nations undergo urbanization, industrialization and improvements in infrastructure, these highly energy intensive phases emit tremendous amounts of greenhouse gases. In combination with the emissions already produced from developed nations, the planet’s average temperature continues to warm gradually. The effects of this global warming can be experienced at varying places in forms of biome alteration, loss of glaciers, drought, heat waves, wild fires, floods, ocean acidification, or dangerous storms.

Human civilization is at a crossroads and Climate Change is only one converging factor driving the sustainability movement. This chapter will address sustainability factors as they relate to how Eau Claire sees its responsibility in protecting the environment, improving the human condition and continuing to enhance economic prosperity. It will advance local awareness of the interdependence between humans and nature and will serve us better to help end heedless behaviors that undermine Eau Claire reaching its goal.

In September of 2008 the City Council determined a supplement chapter on sustainability should be added to the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*. Notification of the amendment was provided to media outlets and to various interest groups including all City commissions. A series of public workshops were held which drove the community input process. The Plan Commission reviewed this chapter as it was being developed and held public hearings once the workshops concluded. The City Council adopted the chapter on April 14, 2009. This chapter is unique because it also offers some educational background on key concepts that may be unfamiliar. The information contained herein builds upon and coincides with State Smart Growth Planning legislation, the *Plan’s* overall Future Growth Strategy (Page 1-6, refer to the 2005 *Plan*) and other sustainable development approaches listed in earlier chapters of the *Plan*. Objectives and policies were developed from the major issues identified by the public participation process and form the greater part of this chapter. During the 10-year update of the Comprehensive Plan in 2015, this chapter was amended with several new considerations. In 2014, the City created an Advisory Commission on Sustainability which carries out many of the goals and policies of this chapter. At the end of the chapter, a Plan Implementation Work Program, similar to the 2005 *Plan*, is provided in order to guide the ongoing realization of sustainability in Eau Claire for the next decade.

Key Issues

1. **Energy:** What should the City do to foster local energy production, conservation, and efficiency, while increasing the use of renewable power?
2. **Local Food:** What should the City do to promote area food production, sales, and consumption while reducing food related waste?
3. **Environmental Conservation:** What should the City do to safeguard our ecosystems, trees, soil, and water resources?
4. **Atmosphere:** What should the City do to reduce our contribution to global warming and minimize air pollution?
5. **Managing Waste:** What should the City do to promote consumer product awareness, increase recycling rates, and reduce the amount of substances entering into landfills?
6. **Strong and Healthy Community:** How should the City continue to protect its citizens from disease, promote healthy living, civic engagement, cultural and ethnic diversity, while partnering with others to provide these activities?
7. **Sustainable Development:** How should the City guide and promote development so that buildings and neighborhoods incorporate sustainable features?
8. **Balanced Transportation:** How should the City increase mobility choices by enhancing other forms of transportation besides that for automobiles? How can transportation infrastructure be designed efficiently, safely, with the environment in mind, and be connected to other local and regional networks?
9. **Greener Economy:** How should the City bolster the local economy by attracting Green-collar jobs and encouraging businesses to become more sustainable?
10. **Sustainable Government:** What should the City do to provide good government and cost-effective services, meet the needs of our citizens, protect the environment, and cooperate with other governments?



Goal and Objectives

Goal: Make certain that principles of sustainability in the Eau Claire area are followed to improve our quality of life by meeting present environmental, economic, and social needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.

Objective 1 – Energy: Foster local energy production, conservation, and efficiency, while increasing the use of renewable power.

Objective 2 – Local Food: Promote area food production, sales, and consumption while reducing food related waste.

Objective 3 – Environmental Conservation: Safeguard our eco-systems, trees, soil, and water resources.

Objective 4 – Atmosphere: Reduce our contribution to global warming and minimize air pollution.

Objective 5 – Managing Waste: Promote consumer product awareness, increase recycling rates, and reduce the amount of substances entering into landfills.

Objective 6 – Strong and Healthy Community: Continue to protect citizens from disease, promote healthy living, civic engagement, cultural and ethnic diversity, while partnering with others to provide these activities.

Objective 7 – Sustainable Development: Guide and promote development so that buildings and neighborhoods incorporate sustainable features.

Objective 8 – Balanced Transportation: Increase mobility choices by enhancing other forms of transportation besides that for automobiles. Design transportation infrastructure efficiently, safely, with the environment in mind, and connect to other local and regional networks.

Objective 9 – Greener Economy: Bolster the local economy by attracting Green-collar jobs and encouraging businesses to become more sustainable.

Objective 10 – Sustainable Government: Provide good government and cost-effective services, meet the needs of our citizens, protect the environment, and cooperate with other governments.

Sustainability Policies

Objective 1 – Energy

Foster local energy production, conservation, and efficiency, while increasing the use of renewable power.

Energy comes in various forms from freely-given sources such as the wind or sun to forms such as fossil fuels that need to be extracted from the earth. Every day the citizens of this community rely on energy for lighting, heating and cooling, travel, entertainment, and so on. As demand continues to rise due to an ever growing world consumption rate so does the price of energy and associated environmental issues. Air pollution is just one environmental distress linked with power plants burning fuel to make energy. Thus, with these and other factors, greater emphasis has developed around conservation and the use of alternative forms of energy.

Policies:

- 1. Energy Conservation:** Partner with other organizations to offer conservation education so the community can learn how to reduce energy use in the most immediate and cost effective way. Demonstrations and tours of projects will help residents and businesses learn about successful strategies.
- 2. Energy Efficiency:** Encourage the wider use of Energy Star labeled building envelope improvements, appliances and electronics. Products such as programmable thermostats, lighting fixtures, low-emittance glazed windows, heating and cooling equipment, computers, and printers are all good examples.

Encourage, coordinate, and collaborate with the business community about energy savings via guaranteed performance contracts, life-cycle payback options, and other programs which lead to greater efficient use of energy.

Consider enacting a property assessed clean energy (PACE) program in conjunction with stakeholders. PACE can make energy improvements more financially feasible for commercial, industrial, multifamily, and non-profit building owners. Upfront project costs can be spread over a longer term by utilizing the property assessment collection process.

Explore collaborative arrangements which may provide mutual opportunities to use energy in more efficient ways. District heating and cooling plants, fuel bulk-buying, and industries that can reuse an energy by-product such as steam produced by another industry, are all examples of shared approaches.

- 3. Outdoor Lighting:** To reduce energy consumption, consider an outdoor lighting efficiency ordinance for all new construction and existing building lighting retrofits. Consider requiring all new and existing streetlights to use cut-off fixtures to preserve the dark night sky. Consider a pilot project to convert a portion of lights on a street to light emitting diodes. See Objective 11 in the Physical Character Chapter which addresses outdoor lighting regulations.

4. **Renewable Energy:** Develop a plan to use renewable energy sources which could supplement non-renewable sources. The City is an Energy Independent Community and has adopted the State's goal of 25% renewable energy by the year 2025. The Office of Energy Independence is the state office committed to supporting Wisconsin's goal of generating 25% of its electric power and transportation fuels from renewable resources by 2025, capturing 10% of the emerging bioindustry and renewable energy market by 2030, and leading the nation in groundbreaking research that will make clean energy more affordable and will create good paying Wisconsin jobs. A combination of hydro-electric, biogas from waste, biomass, corned-based ethanol with transition to 'second-generation'/ non-edible cellulosic blends, geothermal, photovoltaics (solar), and wind energy conversion systems may all serve in this local capacity to meet or exceed the targeted goal. As of 2014, the City was at 24% renewable electricity and 2% renewable liquid fuels.
5. **Clean Energy:** Provide website materials that inform residents and businesses about carbon-neutral energy types. Provide information on example payback times, location assessment, installation and related regulations. Power generated from wind and solar is emission-free. Biomass fuels such as wood pellets though not emission-free are cleaner than burning fossil fuels.

As a community partner in the Midwest Renewable Association's (MREA) Federal SunShot award, obtain technical assistance on solar training for electrical inspectors, property assessed clean energy programming, and education on affordable solar solutions such as group-buys and community solar. Both electric power companies in Eau Claire are developing community solar programs and the City can support these efforts. Further, through MREA's guidance, consider developing a clean energy access ordinance to address factors such as site orientation, setbacks, height, and public water stipulations.

6. **Pilot Projects:** Conduct a feasibility study for a solar, wind, geothermal or hybrid vehicle pilot project. A project of this magnitude will not only serve the City in reducing its own dependence on non-renewable power but also serve as an educational piece for students and the general public. The City is one of the largest consumers of power in the community. Therefore, it should take the lead and encourage businesses to implement renewable energy projects.



Solar hot water heating at Badger State Inc.

7. **Incentives:** Provide a list of energy tax credits or other forms of assistance available from the Federal, State, local government, power companies and non-profits. This will help the community be aware of and leverage these incentives to offset initial purchase and start-up costs.

8. **Explore other Opportunities:** Work with area power companies to encourage more renewable energy options such as consumers being able to purchase ‘wind-kilowatt-blocks’, community solar offerings, and work with citizens and businesses who are able to put power back onto the electrical grid. Partner for educational purposes with the Chippewa Valley Technical College’s Energy Educational Center, the UWEC Office of Sustainability, groups such as Focus on Energy, RENEW Wisconsin, Energy Center of Wisconsin, and others.



Chippewa Valley Technical College’s Energy Education Center Photos

Objective 2 – Local Food

Promote area food production, sales, and consumption while reducing food related waste.

A meal travels an average of 1,500 miles in order to reach the American consumer. Shipping adds to the price of food and expends more energy and emissions. This section deals with the growing and selling of food in and around the Eau Claire area.

Policies:

- 1. Agricultural Preservation:** Minimize the loss of prime farmland from premature conversion to non-agricultural uses. Preserving prime agricultural lands around the City of Eau Claire is a central theme in many of the previous chapters of the *Plan*. The goal translates into many policies, from those that deal with infill and compact urban growth to limiting via regulation and cooperative agreements large lot non-sewered subdivisions. Refer to the Land Use, Natural Resources, Public Utilities, and Intergovernmental Cooperation chapters for more specific policies and background.
- 2. Farmer's Markets:** Continue to support the Farmer's Market at Phoenix Park and at other locations. Farmer's markets not only give the community a venue to purchase area food, but offer valuable social opportunities from meeting farmers to learning about how the food was grown.
- 3. Temporary Food Stands:** Continue to allow agricultural food stands per State Statute, City/County Health Department code and zoning provisions. They provide similar opportunities as Farmer Markets.
- 4. Increase Community Food Development:** Work with citizens to convert vacant City-owned lots to community food plots and gardens. Not only does this beautify an unused or blighted property, but it provides a place for neighbors to interact and take ownership of their neighborhood. Advertising a pilot project may be a good way to get started.



Encourage more private gardens and food plots on residential, business, and institutional properties. Prepare brochures in partnership with the UW-Extension, local food experts, community organizations and schools, to provide proper education. Discuss how to set up an urban food plot, the array of food options in keeping with our climate and soil, cultivation techniques, food care, harvesting and canning information, along with any applicable City/County regulations.

Businesses and institutions such as schools could directly benefit by lowering their food costs by providing their own garden food to their employees or

students. It may also be advantageous for them to buy local food in bulk partnership at wholesale grower auctions which support area farmers.

The City and schools could make minimally used areas available for food and flower gardens. McDonough and North Riverfront parks already have neighborhood gardens and other parks could provide future spots. One example worth studying is Forest Street Park. Since the 16 acre park is undeveloped and underused by virtue of being located in the Chippewa River Floodplain, it may be a good location for a larger type community garden. The park is also adjacent to the Downtown Farmer's Market, so transporting produce to market would be convenient.

Greenhouses and Botanical Gardens are another option. City Zoning Code provides for greenhouses mostly as accessory uses in residential districts. In commercial and industrial districts there are more zoning opportunities to develop larger for-profit operations. These climate controlled structures provide the ability to grow food year-round.

5. Central Grocery:

Continue to support efforts to attract a grocery store to the core area. As part of the recent North Barstow Street redevelopment, the City sought aggressively to attract a grocery store to the downtown. A grocery near the Farmer's Market would give local food producers another venue to sell their food. Other potential sites such as the West Bank Redevelopment District or along Water Street could also be suitable locations for a grocer.

6. Local Food as Identity: Encourage community promotion of local food. It provides a healthy alternative to processed food, deepens appreciation for food in particular, and creates a natural tie to the land and environment. Dairy products and other notable foods from our area should be sold/promoted more in local retailing to leverage tourism and economic return for the Chippewa Valley.

7. Reduce Food Waste: Consider projects that could decrease the amount of waste associated with the food industry. Locally grown food substantially reduces the food industry's processing, storing, shipping, and retailing requirements. This translates to a reduction in water and pesticides use, shipping material and packaging waste, fuel usage, emissions, and a strengthening of the local economy.

One option would be to educate the public on how unused food can easily and naturally biodegrade in compost bins. Composting is discussed further in Objective – 5 Managing Waste section.

8. Food Education: Provide more opportunities for citizens to learn about the importance of growing, preserving and buying local and organic food. Consider research that has been conducted by institutions such as the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire and the UW-Extension to promote more local food opportunities and programs.

Objective 3 – Environmental Conservation

Safeguard our ecosystems, trees, soil and water resources.

The natural environment is inheritably sustainable and provides insight on how humanity can become more sustainable. Thanks to the awareness, foresight, and previous efforts of this community, Eau Claire’s ‘green infrastructure’ remains a valuable asset. The community’s ecological components perform a variety of necessary functions. Forests, open spaces and parks provide places for ground water recharge and purification of non-point pollutants such as leaked vehicle fluids and chemical lawn fertilizers. Eau Claire’s trees remove by absorption other pollutants such as carbon and sulfur dioxide, ozone, nitrogen oxides, and fine particulates from the burning of fossil fuels in buildings and vehicles. These are just two examples of the life-sustaining benefits environmental forces have on cities and why it is important to safeguard these resources. Additional policies concerning the environment in this *Plan* can be found in the Land Use, Natural Resources (refer to Figure 3-1 for the major resource protection map), Parks System, and Economic Development chapters.



Half Moon Lake—a natural sanctuary amidst the city

Policies:

- 1. Ecosystems:** Review and consider strengthening existing development codes. In addition the City should provide educational materials to help engineers, architects and other design professionals plan with more nature in mind. See Objective 7 – Sustainable Development for more information. In designing any project—whether a redevelopment or new site—a greater value should be placed on working with the natural environment (soil, water, vegetation, solar radiation, wind current, climate, etc.).
- 2. Water Conservation:** Update current policies for Grading and Erosion Control or Stormwater Pollution Plans for sites over one acre as per the State of Wisconsin’s stormwater and erosion control NR 151 requirements. Continue to enforce

requirements in Floodplain and Shoreland overlay districts and add more private lands that contain unique natural functions into the Conservancy Zoning District. Continue programs that clean up water quality (i.e. Half Moon Lake). Refer to the Natural Resources Chapter for additional policies.

Offer education on how to reduce water usage by installing low-flow shower heads, toilets, faucets, and appliances. Explain how to capture rain, shower and sink water for reuse as gray water.

3. **Rain Gardens/Barrels:** Work with the County's Land Conservation Commission, Master Gardeners, and UW-Extension, to promote water conservation practices in the City. Rain gardens are swales or low depressions planted with native vegetation. They are designed to absorb rainwater runoff from impervious urban roofs, driveways, walkways, streets and compacted areas. Help start a program that encourages rain barrels or cisterns to capture water for use in watering lawns and plants.
4. **Impervious Surfaces:** The City has maximum impervious surface thresholds for residential zoning districts based on total building coverage and total hard surface coverage on lots. Consideration should be given to expanding a requirement to all zoning districts. Develop a program that offers City stormwater utility rebates/credits to those businesses that exceed requirements by providing exceptional on-site stormwater management. Promote the use of permeable pavers, pervious pavement, subsurface drainage chambers and green roofs. Pervious surfaces in cities are important because they reduce urban heat island effect and allow water to pass through soil. They provide aquifer recharge, nutrients, surface vegetation growth, filter pollutants, and lessen the need for City stormwater infrastructure/maintenance.
5. **Pollutants:** Consider adopting a municipal ordinance which restricts the use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers containing phosphates or other harmful chemicals which pollute water sources. Require natural versions instead.
6. **Native Landscaping:** Restore and encourage the use of more native and drought tolerant plantings on sites to reduce irrigation, protect shorelines, and provide natural beautification. Work with State departments and others to plant more native species and remove invasive species in right of ways, parks and other open spaces. Phoenix Park is a prime example of how a busy urban park can incorporate native plants in an effective manner.
7. **Trees as an Asset:** The City should consider passing a tree preservation ordinance for new development. Continue City ordinances that require developers to plant street trees and provide rebate programs for homeowners who plant a tree on their lot. Consider the adoption of an ordinance requiring approval prior to the clear-cutting of major wooded areas (refer to the Public Utilities Chapter). Trees provide numerous

A 1998 study indicated trees added \$9,500, or more than 18 percent, to the average sale price of a home in a suburb of Rochester, New York.

Nowak, David J., "Benefits of Community Trees", (Brooklyn Trees, USDA Forest Service General Technical Report)

benefits that far outweigh their initial purchase and life-cycle costs. Trees absorb greenhouse gases and pollutants. Trees provide shade relief for people, buildings and parking lots reducing energy consumption and extending infrastructure life. They decrease dehydration and the potential of heat stroke by soaking up urban heat given off from the built environment, vehicles, and construction operations. Trees clean water and reduce the flow of stormwater. They have sociological benefits like beautification, relaxation and noise buffering. Economic benefits also result from trees increasing real estate values. Trees result in an increase in worker productivity and a reduction in absenteeism. Plus, a green city is often an attractive place tourists want to visit. Thus, trees are an intrinsic natural component of a successful community. Eau Claire values this resource and has demonstrated so by obtaining Tree City USA® status for the last 30 years.

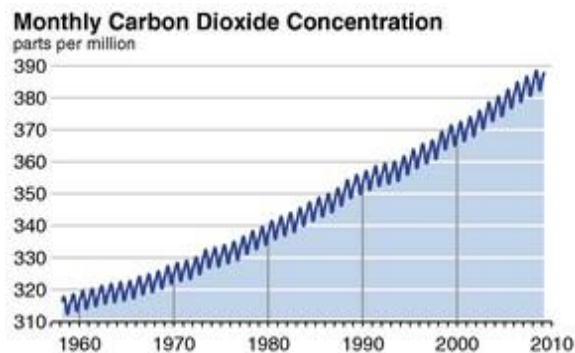
8. **Grading Permit:** Consider an ordinance that requires developers to obtain a grading permit before disturbing site soil. Continue enforcement of erosion control of topsoil at construction sites. Refer to the Natural Resources Chapter Objective 3 for more information about soil protective measures.
9. **Steep Slopes:** Consider strengthening provisions of on-site disturbance or removal of terrain that contains over 20% slope. Eau Claire's ridges and hills are a valuable scenic amenity.

Objective 4 – Atmosphere

Reduce our contribution to global warming causing climate change and minimize air pollution.

Global warming is an issue at home and abroad. The earth's various ecosystems are so precisely balanced with each other and the atmosphere that an increase in air temperature by only a few degrees can result in significant changes to the way these systems function. One of the most noticeable changes is the melting of glaciers. From the poles to mid-latitudes, major coastal cities stand to face flooding with sea levels rising.

People who depend on mountain top glaciers to supply their fresh water needs will face water shortages. While the Green House Effect is natural and necessary for life, the planet has experienced a dramatic increase in the effect. Carbon dioxide—the most prevalent greenhouse heat trapping gas—can remain in the atmosphere for as long as 200 years. Since the atmosphere warms more quickly than the earth's surface, the full effect has not been experienced. Before the Industrial Revolution the level of carbon dioxide was rarely above 300 parts per million. As human population and industrialization have rapidly increased so have greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Keeling Curve above indicates this marked rise



(c) 2008 Scripts CO2 Program

since the late 1950s. The burning of fossil fuels in power plants, buildings, transportation systems, industrial facilities and construction operations are the main contributors.

Policies:

1. Towards Carbon Neutral: The ultimate goal of reducing emissions is to become carbon neutral (those who have a carbon footprint equal to zero). Consider setting time targets for greenhouse gas reductions. In order to achieve this, the City would first have to measure the community's greenhouse gas index and then set realistic targets. Targets have been set and are continually being researched by climatologists, governments, and other organizations so they can be used as trustworthy benchmarks. In Wisconsin, most large cities have already signed onto the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which is a commitment to reduce city emissions to 7% below 1990 levels by 2012 (equivalent of meeting the Kyoto Protocol). However, reaching this level may prove difficult because of time constraints. A more comprehensive approach could be adopting the Governor's Global Warming Task Force 2008 policy recommendations, which says the State should return to 2005 emission levels by 2014, reduce the 2005 level by 22% by 2022 (approximately equaling the 1990 level), and reduce 2005 level by 75% by 2050. Future United Nations or Federal legislation may also require that cities adopt standards. The City's Health Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan states a Climate Action Plan should be developed and these factors could be considered therein.

2. Mitigation Measures: If goals and time targets are set, the City should develop a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and include possible adaptation recommendations. Policies that work towards mitigation include:

- Purchase and invest in cleaner and renewable forms of energy
- Enhance energy efficiencies in buildings such as envelope improvements, high performance heating, ventilation, and cooling systems, and lighting retrofits
- Build more green buildings and remodel existing structures per green building standards
- Salvage construction debris like concrete, steel, and old buildings materials for new uses
- Develop land using Smart Growth principles which promote compact urban form, mixed-uses, and transportation choices
- Increase use of fuel efficient vehicles and alternative transportation forms (e.g. bus routes and bicycle lanes)
- Reduce the amount of vehicle idling within the City
- Buy more Energy Star labeled consumer products
- Grow and buy more local food to reduce food transportation miles
- Educate corporations and others toward implementing sustainability within their businesses operations
- Attract green-collar jobs, research and development, and cutting edge technology focused on lowering emissions and
- Offset carbon emissions by increasing 'carbon-sinks' (e.g. planting more trees, preserving forests, and rural lands).



UW-Eau Claire's Coal-fired Power Plant

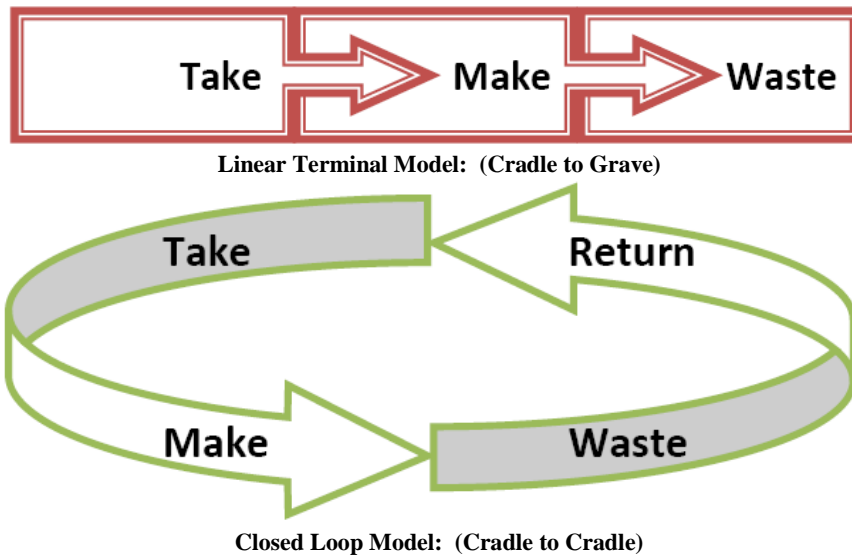
All of these options are feasible near-term possibilities and many are addressed in other sections of this Chapter. These policies not only reduce greenhouse gases directly but they also reduce local air pollution.

3. Raise Public Awareness: Inform the community more about global warming, its effects, and what can be done to reduce it. Partner with other organizations or corporations committed to reducing their own greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire has pledged to reach carbon neutrality by adopting The American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment).

Objective 5 – Managing Waste

Promote consumer product awareness, increase recycling rates, and reduce the amount of substances entering into landfills.

The traditional method for waste management has been to dump unwanted materials someplace away from people and then cover them over with earth. Landfills eventually become contaminated places because of toxic materials. The resultant polluted soil, ground water, and air have the greatest effect on those who live nearby the landfill. These factors along with ever growing consumption rates make it difficult to zone for new landfills as older ones become obsolete. Recycling has helped but other strategies must be advocated to reduce the amount of waste going into landfills. One solution is to design a product to biodegrade naturally or be recycled at the end of its useful life. This means ideally there could be zero waste by ‘closing the loop’. This change in thinking contrasts with the traditional model which does not complete the loop.



When thinking about significant waste reduction strategies, there needs to be new market and technological advances in the manufacturing and recycling industry’s ability to make use of recovered materials. Thus, in order to achieve waste reductions in Eau Claire this section lays out several policy approaches which are achievable within present day realities. It is also important to partner and work with Eau Claire County and others since recycling and waste management programs fall under their administration.

Policies:

- 1. Education:** Partner and work with the community, Eau Claire County Recycling Program, and the Department of Natural Resources West Central Region Waste and Materials Management Program to achieve better citizen and business waste reduction rates. Educate and promote on how to reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover waste materials. Provide information to increase consumer product awareness and environmentally preferable purchasing. Identify how cutting waste not only helps the environment but also saves on associated costs (e.g. lower disposal costs, lower waste treatment costs, lower energy costs, lower storage costs, savings on materials and supplies; reduction in regulatory compliance costs, and cost recovery through the sale of recyclable materials).
- 2. Towards Zero Waste:** Partner with Eau Claire County Recycling Program to achieve a greater rate of waste reduction within City Limits with a vision towards the ultimate goal of zero waste (closing the loop). Consider percentage goals over specified time periods in the elimination of waste the community produces. This will result in significant reduction totals. The Department of Natural Resources Waste and Materials Management Program has a State 2015 goal of increasing waste material reuse, recycling, and maximizing the environmental and economic benefits of waste as raw materials by 30%.
- 3. Waste Reduction:** Evaluate if a ‘Pay-As-You-Throw’ ordinance (which requires garbage haulers to charge individuals based on the weight of their garbage instead of the size of their container) could work in the community. This type of ordinance is a better reflection of the actual waste generated by the individual and reduces costs for those who are acting more sustainably.
- 4. Recycling:** Work with area garbage haulers and recycling companies to determine if the City should switch to ‘Single-Stream’ recycling. Single-Stream supposedly increases recycling rates because separation of recyclables is not required. However, the composition of new products produced from the recycling industry can be of lesser quality because of other recyclable materials found in the product.



Recycling at Boyd Park

Promote better institutional and business waste reduction and recycling programs. The Wisconsin DNR reports; office buildings can generate almost three pounds of trash per person per day and 75% of this is paper. Implementing programs will achieve significant waste reductions for a community. Businesses are required by Wisconsin law to recycle paper, magazines, cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, plastic bottles (#1, #2), major appliances, tires, lead acid batteries, yard wastes, and used motor oil.

- 5. Composting:** Work with Eau Claire County Recycling Program to educate on how to set up/maintain compost bins at home and the workplace for organic waste (e.g. proper food left-overs and yard wastes). Work with Eau Claire County to develop a site for community composting of leaves and other organic materials.

The City's Management of Waste and Recyclables code 8.32.050 allows for the hauling of compostable materials as part of regular curbside refuse and recycling service. Alternatively, by obtaining an Eau Claire City-County Health Department special collection permit, these materials may be collected on a non-regular basis (e.g., during special events) and transported to appropriate composting operations. Both options must not compromise the health, safety and wellness of the community.

The EPA estimates yard trimmings and food residuals constitute 24 percent of the U.S. municipal solid waste stream. By keeping these materials out of landfills it reduces greenhouse gas emissions, the need for expansion and treating more leachate. Among other uses, finished compost can be a useful soil amendment in landscaping, garden beds and farm fields. Thus, encourage residents, businesses, special event organizers, haulers, landfill operators, farmers and others to further composting efforts whereby their combined efforts will create a local system that better recovers this waste stream.

6. **Construction Waste:** Consider an ordinance that requires mandatory recovery, reuse, and recycling of demolition debris and building scraps at construction sites. Materials such as recovered steel can be reused for new buildings and recovered concrete aggregate can be reused for a new parking lot base. See the Sustainable Development section for more information.
7. **Non-biodegradables:** Consider passing an ordinance that bans plastic bags and styro-foam community wide or in certain circumstances (e.g. restaurants, groceries, and retail stores, etc.). China has banned free plastic bags. Materials or substances that have chemical properties that do not break down in nature, cause human and wildlife harm, and pollute ecosystems, should be phased out.

In 2013, the City Council created the Sustainable Bag Committee, which offered recommendations on how to reduce, reuse and recycle point-of-sale disposable paper and plastic shopping bags. As of 2015, the Advisory Commission on Sustainability is working on a sustainable community bag educational campaign with area businesses and retailers. One of their goals is to create a reusable bag that contains educational facts about the impact non-biodegradables bags have on the environment.

Continue to support efforts by Eau Claire County to recycle plastic shopping bags and film going into landfills. A larger percentage of plastic film (e.g., pallet wrap) ends up in landfills compared to plastic bags. This material is recyclable and valuable for new products such as composite lumber.

8. **Electronics:** Consider passing an ordinance that mandates businesses which sell consumer electronics must take-back a certain percentage amount for recycling, material recovery, and remanufacturing purposes.
9. **Prescription Drugs:** Consider an ordinance that encourages or facilitates the collection and disposal of unwanted/excess prescription drugs.

- 10. Waste Transport:** Work with haulers to evaluate if passing an ordinance that geographically assigns garbage haulers to 'pickup zones' for greater transportation efficiency, less wasted fuel, and fewer emissions, would make sense in the community.
- 11. Special Events:** Consider a pilot project to make special community event(s) zero-waste by using products that are bio-based or recyclable (replacing plastic cups, plates, and cutlery instead with glass, bio-plastics and paper products).
- 12. Littering:** Continue to enforce littering laws. Encourage citizens/volunteers to pick up litter in public places, parks, along waterways, during special events, and in the general community.
- 13. Urban Wood Reuse:** Support efforts with reusing local urban wood waste. The City's Forestry Division has been developing a program to assist wood workers and artisans with the reutilization of City owned trees after they have been cut down, either due to disease, pre-emption practice, or other reason. This cost avoidance strategy saves the City money on grinding services and helps the private sector reuse a valuable, local, and renewable resource for higher purposes than mulch or fuel.

Objective 6 – Strong and Healthy Community

Continue to protect citizens from disease, promote healthy living, civic engagement, cultural and ethnic diversity, while partnering with others to provide these activities.

Human society, like the environment and economy, is a component of sustainability. A strong and healthy community is a place where physical and psychological needs are met. Manfred Max-Neef, an economist and environmentalist, won the Alternative Nobel Prize based on his work identifying these fundamental human needs; which are:

- Subsistence: to survive, to have food, water, and shelter
- Protection: to feel safe and secure
- Affection: to experience emotion and human relationships
- Understanding: to encourage curiosity and acquire knowledge
- Participation: to assemble, take action and express opinions
- Leisure: to relax, reflect, play, and enjoy life
- Creation: to imagine, invent, design, and work
- Identity: to belong, have self-esteem, share values, and culture and
- Freedom: to have open-mindedness, equal rights, and autonomy.

A community that promotes and strives to meet these basic human needs, both collectively and individually, will undoubtedly be successful.

Eau Claire has a history of being successful. The Eau Claire Metropolitan area, which includes Eau Claire and Chippewa counties, consistently ranks high nationally as a safe community having a low crime rate. The low cost of living compared to other midwestern peer and larger cities, attracts economic development to the area. Eau Claire County is one of the healthiest counties in the State (*The 2008 Wisconsin Health Rankings*). Eau Claire has two large medical centers and a free clinic. The Chippewa Valley Free Clinic, a volunteer organization which provides medical services to low income individuals without insurance, has served over 21,000 patient visits since opening in July 1997. Eau Claire Area School District and higher learning institutions have strong reputations. All of these factors reassure citizens that Eau Claire will continue to strive to meet basic human needs well into the future. See the Parks Systems, Physical Character, and Housing chapters for more information.



Parents teaching their children to swim at Fairfax Pool

Policies:

1. **Existing Programs:** Continue Police, Fire, Ambulance, and National Incident Management System public safety programs. Continue human services programs provided by the City. The City/County of Eau Claire Health Department, City Housing Department, and the Parks and Recreation Department administer multiple programs, from health care access, to housing for low-income individuals, to youth/adult recreational sports.

Continue providing support to organizations such as the Eau Claire Public Access Center, the L.E. Phillips Senior Center, the Community Beautification Association, local museums, economic development and tourism groups, the arts, and others.

2. **Health Plan:** Continue to support efforts for a local Health Improvement Plan to improve the health of Eau Claire citizens. The next State Health Plan, Healthiest Wisconsin 2020, will focus on the social and economic determinants of health. The list of determinants include equity, social justice, societal resources, standard

of living, culture and history, social institutions, built environments, political structures, economic systems, technology, and the natural environment.

3. Health and Urban Land Use

Consider the direct and indirect impacts on human health for existing situations or new developments. The built environment can positively or negatively affect public health. The location, size, layout, and density of new housing, can hamper active living if residents have to drive to accomplish their daily routines. Additionally, if new and existing neighborhoods do not include a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, polarization of communities can result. An example of this is when older neighborhoods are left to decay. Property values drop and the concentration of lower incomes rise making it difficult for the neighborhood to experience renewal. Research confirms the polarization of communities can have profound human physical and mental effects, from commuting problems to pockets of poverty.

4. Active Lifestyles: Continue to support and participate in programs that promote active lifestyles. The relationship between physical activity and health status is abundantly clear. Programs like Energize Eau Claire County improve our community's well-being by promoting and supporting regular physical activity, good nutrition, and healthier weights for people of all ages.

5. Safe Routes to School: Continue to build safe route infrastructure for Kindergarten through 8th grade students to bike or walk more to school. Apply for more State grant funding if new funds become available. Work with Eau Claire Area School District and Safe STEPS to connect all middle schools as well as high schools with safe routes.

6. Festivals and Attractions: Support Downtown Eau Claire Inc. and other entities which put on community festivals. Events such as Taste of Eau Claire, Open Air Festival of the Arts, Summer Fest, Festival in the Pines, bring people together from within and outside our community. Additionally, support should continue for places like Phoenix Park, Barstow Street, Water Street, L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library, Eau Claire Regional Art Center, State Theater, the Children's Museum, etc.



Live Music in the Park

Objective 7 – Sustainable Development

Guide and promote development so that buildings and neighborhoods incorporate sustainable features.

“Nature is more than a bank of resources to draw on: it is the best model we have for all the design problems we face”. Sim Van der Ryn and Stuart Cowan wrote so in their landmark book entitled, *Ecological Design*. The book, which details ecological architecture, buildings, city and regional planning, puts forth the concept that sustainable development should keep with these five principles:

- Solutions Grow from Place: or that a development takes cues from its unique surrounding physical, natural, and cultural characteristics
- Ecological Accounting: or that a development accounts for its full environmental and social impacts
- Design with Nature: or that a development uses nature as design metaphor, model, and measure
- Everyone is a Designer: or that a development design process collaborates with all stakeholders (e.g. including the eventual building users, neighbors, and general community) and
- Make Nature Visible: or that a development features nature for adults and young to learn and experience natural living systems.

An example of how to build with nature in mind is the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design or LEED Green Building Rating System™. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. LEED programs are transforming the U.S. built environment and have proved to be a reliable benchmarking tool to standardize the language and realization of ‘green buildings’. This section addresses not only the micro view of sustainable sites and buildings, but a macro view of planning for whole neighborhoods. Many of these larger urban context policies however have already been noted in the Land Use Chapter. Refer there for more information on sustainable neighborhood, city, and regional planning.



First Certified LEED Green Building in Eau Claire

Policies:

1. **Life-Cycle Cost Analysis:** Promote life-cycle assessing as a necessary component of designing a sustainable development. Provide educational materials to help developers and builders know how to assess the full range of social and environmental impacts of their project so better choices can be made.

Life-Cycle Costs are those which take into account the full life of a building product or development. In other words, from its raw material production, manufacture, transport, actual use, to its disposal. Approaches like the LEED Green Building Rating System™ or the International Organization for Standardization 14000 Environmental Management Standards are already proven methods to account for Life-Cycle Cost Analysis.

2. **Green Buildings:** Consider offering incentives for green buildings or requiring green buildings in City Tax Increment Financing Districts. Consider also requiring green building for all new City buildings and remodeling projects. The principles in LEED can be adopted or used to create similar standards. Other programs exist also such as the International Code Council’s 2008 National Green Building Standard. LEED has rating systems developed for new construction, major renovations, existing buildings and operation/maintenance, commercial interiors, core and shell construction, schools, retail, healthcare, and homes. The table on the right identifies how green buildings’ initial per square footage investment can return significant savings over a twenty year period. Studies have also shown that green buildings have a greater market ability to attract willing buyers and renters because of the direct emphasis placed on meeting fundamental social and environmental issues.

Financial Benefits of Green Buildings (per ft ²)	
Category	20-year Net Present Value
Energy Savings	\$5.80
Emissions Savings	\$1.20
Water Savings	\$0.50
Operations and Maintenance Savings	\$8.50
Productivity and Health Benefits	\$36.90 to \$55.30
Subtotal	\$52.90 to \$71.30
Average Extra Cost of Building Green	(\$-3.00 to \$5.00)
Total 20-year Net Benefit	\$50 to \$65

Source: Capital E Analysis

3. **Buildings and Energy:** Partner with utility companies to offer energy efficiency education programs or incentives for residents and businesses to improve energy use in buildings. Buildings consume 40% of the energy consumed in the U.S. Several strategies to reduce energy consumption are listed below:
- Conserve, turnoff, and eliminate power that is being wasted. (e.g. left on room lights, computers, non-essential peripheral electronics such as printers, monitors, and cell-phone chargers)
 - Conduct home and business energy audits
 - Design Net-Zero Energy buildings to take advantage of natural free forms of energy (e.g. wind can be used to cool the inside of buildings during the summer, sunlight can heat a building with southern window exposure during the winter, or the thermal energy stored inside the ground can be tapped by geothermal wells, coils or loops to heat or cool the building year-round)
 - Weatherize buildings to retain and prevent energy loss (e.g. install proper insulation, caulk windows, eliminate air drafts)
 - Commission Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning equipment to operate more optimally during the course of a day
 - Automate electrical systems with integrated computer management programs. (i.e. software that enables a control operator to remotely

manage all of the building's security, lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation systems

- Replace inefficient building lighting with high performance T8 blubs, compact fluorescence lights or light emitting diodes. Install occupancy/photo sensors to further eliminate wasted artificial lighting
- Install a raised in-floor ventilation system for personal heating and cooling control
- Enter into energy performance contracts which guarantee dollar and energy savings within a given period and
- Harness renewable energy when appropriate (e.g. install photovoltaic's, geothermal and wind conversion systems).



Eau Claire home utilizing both passive and active solar energy

- 4. Cool Roofs:** Consider a green roof pilot project on a City building to promote conservation. Green Roofs or Living Roofs are rooftops which typically have native grasses, flowers, shrubs and vegetation planted into a layer of soil, over a waterproof membrane. Other common features include gravel paths, patios, irrigation systems and photovoltaic arrays. Another option is white roofs, or those which have a white rooftop membrane that reflects solar radiation off the roof thereby reducing the building's thermal load.
- 5. Material Recovery:** Consider passing an ordinance which requires all recyclable building materials be recovered. This could mean not only construction waste from the new building project but also what exists on site. A significant amount of waste comes from the razing of sites and construction of buildings and most of this material gets land-filled. In demolition there may be salvageable materials that could be reused. Intact structures or portions of buildings could be preserved. Many older buildings were made out of stone and brick which are long-lasting, have a good fire rating, and thermal retention properties. If the building's shell cannot be reused and these types of materials exist in good condition, they should be recovered. Refer to the Waste Managing section for additional examples. Structures and materials recovered reduce environmental impacts such as emissions from the manufacture and transportation of new products. The City values older properties and

neighborhoods and encourages their reuse and renovation. See the Historic Preservation Chapter for more policies on preservation practices.



Recovered Gypsum Board at an Eau Claire construction site

6. **Local Materials:** Promote the use of building materials and products that can be found in the immediate area and surrounding region (i.e. sandstone). Buying and using quality area building materials strengthens the area economy, creates local identity, and decreases out of the region transportation costs.
7. **Sustainable Neighborhoods:** Consider strengthening existing ordinances or adopting a similar ordinance to LEED's Neighborhood Design Rating System to encourage more sustainable development. LEED-ND will be the first national program for sustainable neighborhood design and will integrate principles of Smart Growth, New Urbanism and green building into its rating system. Green buildings are just one piece to the sustainable development puzzle; also needed are sustainable neighborhoods and automobile alternative travel options.
8. **Smart Growth Zoning:** Continue to encourage developers to use the City's Planned Development Zoning Ordinance to achieve the objectives of Smart Growth. The City's Traditional Neighborhood District Zoning Ordinance also provides Smart Growth zoning standards. The Smart Growth's overall vision is to make metropolitan settlement patterns denser on the average while providing mixed-uses, open space and transportation choice. It is considered the antithesis to sprawl (scattered, separated, and excessive land use consumption on the fringe of cities). Smart Growth is sustainable development because it fosters development patterns that are economically sound, environmentally responsible and socially just. For a fuller discussion on Smart Growth refer to the Introduction Chapter on pages 1-2 and 1-3 and the many policies found in the Land Use Chapter.
9. **Mixed-Use Corridors:** Consider a more defined mixed-use ordinance for commercial districts especially along Community Commercial and Highway Overlay Districts. There is potential in some areas to transform land along Eau Claire's major thoroughfares to be of higher use. Significant infrastructure investments such as highways are capable of serving a lot of automobile and bus traffic as well as bike and pedestrian traffic if there are safe sidewalks and trails available. Underutilized commercial buildings, strip centers, and parking lots could be redeveloped to take advantage of these traffic volumes. Attractive

transit-oriented, mixed-income housing could be built over new or alongside existing retail and office developments to reduce travel to work and shopping trip lengths. Transportation corridors are good locations for denser developments because most often they represent a boundary between two lower density neighborhoods. Transitions up to higher densities are more easily made on the edges instead of in the middle of a single family detached home neighborhood. See the Physical Character Chapter Objective 5 – Mixed- and Multi-use Development for more information.



Mixed use building along Phoenix Park

Objective 8 – Balanced Transportation

Increase mobility choices by enhancing other forms of transportation besides that for automobiles. Design transportation infrastructure efficiently, safely, with the environment in mind, and connect to other local and regional networks.

Transportation is the second largest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Much of these emissions come from the use of gasoline-powered automobiles. These vehicles have made Americans heavily dependent on foreign oil. James Flink, who wrote the book, *The Automobile Age*, notes the impact of the car and the road on American society and that the car culture will never be as great as it was in the last half century. Personal automobile travel will remain the dominant mode of transportation for some time to come, but greater emphasis is being placed on cities to upgrade and diversify their transportation infrastructure. Multi-modal land based transportation systems (e.g. intercity and commuter rail lines, light rail transit, dedicated bus rapid transit lanes, commuter bike ways and improved pedestrian connections) are quickly being developed around the country with the support of increased Federal and State funding. Simultaneously, improvements in vehicle fuel-economy, electric hybrid technologies and alternative fuels are changing the face of the auto-maker's industry. Transportation will remain an important issue for growing cities/regions and the City of Eau Claire recognizes its role in facilitating more efficient forms of travel. The Transportation Chapter covers the following policies more in depth and should be referred to for more information.

Policies:

- 1. Midwest Regional Rail System:** Continue to support the efforts of the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition so an intercity passenger rail line travels through Eau Claire. On the current proposed Midwest Regional Rail System, Eau Claire is listed as a ‘Feeder Bus Route’ down to Tomah to connect with the rail system. The designated route from St. Paul to Chicago is through La Crosse. An ‘Eau Claire plus’ route has been put forth in the past as a possible option to serve both La Crosse and Eau Claire. See Objective 12 – Passenger Rail in the Transportation Chapter for more information.

Work with Wisconsin Department of Transportation in 2009 to include an Eau Claire route in their *Draft Connections 2030 Plan*, the State’s transportation plan. Promote that the final plan should initiate feasibility, environmental studies, and preliminary engineering sooner than currently proposed.

- 2. Regional Transit Authorities:** Continue support and campaign for the State to authorize transit agencies to create their own funding authorities to improve mass transit options. RTA Legislation is expected to pass in 2009 and the City’s future/updated Transit Development Plan (expected to be completed in 2010) will include a blueprint on how to create a regional transit authority for the Chippewa Valley.
- 3. Bus Transit:** The City should continue to provide and support bus transit service looking at ways to improve and grow this benefit. From 1997 to 2007 Eau Claire Transit had over 9,900,000 riders. In the same period, ridership doubled from 557,676 in 1997 to 1,067,303 in 2007. With the price of gasoline continuing to rise, city bus transportation is being used more and more. See Objective 8 – Local Bus Transit System in the Transportation Chapter for specific policies promoting bus transit.

The Eau Claire Bus Station downtown is due for replacement. Federal funds are still lacking but when they are made available, sustainable features should be incorporated into the station design. The Transit Commission is already committed to investigating green technology options for the station. The actual site and design of the station may need future study. The study should include the feasibility of incorporating renewable energy systems in the facility. Eau Claire Transit is studying the replacement of eight old Flyer Buses in 2010. Electric-hybrid or alternative burning fuel bus options are currently being considered.



Eau Claire Bus Station located downtown

4. **Complete Streets:** Continue to promote and build infrastructure that accommodates a variety of travel options including bus, automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian. Address pedestrian and bike safety concerns such as at street crossings. Complete the draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in 2009. The plan will lay out various options to ‘complete streets’ for all transportation options or provide safe off-street dedicated routes for certain modes of travel such as a bicycle trail. See Objectives 6, 7, 10 in the Transportation Chapter.
5. **Transit Oriented Development:** Development projects should include transit-ready options for the site and building. Denser mixed-use developments support mass transit and may provide bicycle racks as another modal choice. See Objective 3 in the Transportation Chapter for more information and principles on transit oriented development.

Objective 9 – Greener Economy

Bolster the local economy by attracting Green-collar jobs and encouraging businesses to become more sustainable.

Eau Claire’s economy continues to adapt. Originally founded upon the logging industry, then manufacturing, Eau Claire now has a diverse economy which includes retail, health care and educational professions. The Economic Development Chapter already covers a number of policies from providing incentives to creating jobs in specific industries. This section targets the objective to attract more green-collar jobs to Eau Claire and to promote corporate responsibility to society and the environment.

Policies:

1. **Green-Collar Jobs:** Promote, expand, and offer business incentives to attract green-collar companies. While many jobs either directly or indirectly contribute to sustainability, green-collar jobs are defined as those that work with the environment or involve products and services that are environmental friendly. There are many job opportunities that fit into this category; such as for ecologists, environmentalists, sustainable farmers, renewable energy manufacturers, recyclers, green builders, researchers, paleoclimatologists (scientists who deal with past climate records), and biomimetic engineers (designers who produce products from observation of natural or living things). In 2006 energy efficiency technologies and renewable energy alone created 8.5 million new jobs, and nearly \$970 billion in revenue, with more than \$100 billion in company profits. The 2007 Green Jobs Act, authorized \$125 million to help train workers for Green-collar fields. It is expected that additional Federal Government funding will be authorized in the years to come to continue the momentum in the green-collar job sector. As this industry grows larger, sustainability will continue to advance by their new innovations.
2. **Green Job Education:** Work with higher learning institutions such as Chippewa Valley Technical College and University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, to ramp up education and training for fields in sustainability.

3. **Buy Local:** Promote the buying of local and regional products to help strengthen our economy. Studies have shown successful locally owned businesses significantly recirculate money back into their base economies. This fact is found to be true in spent laborer wages, business net profits, procurement of local goods and services, and charitable giving.
4. **Travel Green Wisconsin:** Help the Chippewa Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau to increase more eco-tourism businesses. Examples of such businesses include local attractions, lodging, convention centers, restaurants, and golf courses.
5. **Triple Bottom Line:** Promote and educate institutions and businesses to measure their success not only by financial profit, but by environmental and social performance as well. For years European corporations, and now an increasing number of American corporations, have been keeping records of how they are being sustainable or meeting their Triple Bottom Line (i.e. the Planet or Natural Capital, People or Social Capital, and Profit or Economic Capital). This holistic accounting approach has been ratified by the United Nations and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives- Local Governments for Sustainability, as a bona fide technique to measure corporate and governmental sustainability.

In Wisconsin, one program that helps companies to run their operations in a more sustainable manner is the DNR's Green Tier. This program gives environmentally innovative companies—who go beyond compliance with minimum regulatory standards—support for their efforts while improving their bottom line. The goals of the program include environmental improvement beyond that which is achieved through mere compliance, community development and economic gain. The Phillips Plastics Multi-Shot facility in Eau Claire is a Green Tier participant. The company focuses on the education of their people, reduction of emissions and waste, recycling and energy use. For example, an energy efficient lighting upgrade led to a 448,000 kilowatt per year reduction in electrical power consumption. Phillips Plastics staff is also strongly encouraged to be environmental stewards outside the work place.



**Phillips Plastics Corporation Multi-Shot—
Eau Claire's first Green Tier business**

Objective 10 – Sustainable Government

Provide good government and cost-effective services, meet the needs of our citizens, protect the environment, and cooperate with other governments.

The City should work in partnership with other governmental entities when practical to provide shared vision, operations, and planning, while delivering cost-effective services at a level the community deems appropriate. The Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter should be referred to for a more complete picture of how the City should follow policies which promote sustainable government.

Policies:

- 1. Municipal Sustainability:** The City of Eau Claire should continue its efforts to engage in more sustainable practices. The City's internal Green Team's mission is to help promote more environmental and social gains in the workplace. For example, in September 2008 the City entered into an energy performance contract with Honeywell International to eventually recoup a \$500,000 investment. The investment will go towards energy efficient upgrades such as traffic signal and building lighting retrofits, building envelopment improvements, ventilation control, and other repairs for a guaranteed annual savings of approximately \$75,500 in utility and operational expense over the next 10 years. It is estimated that 500,000 Kilowatts per hour and 20,000 Gas Therms will be saved per year by these energy efficient improvements. The City should continue to build upon these efforts such as conducting annual sustainability audits, purchasing a greater amount of environmentally preferable supplies, applying for renewable energy grants, implementing renewable energy projects, and other initiatives.



City Council of Eau Claire

The City should take a lead role in promoting sustainability within the metropolitan region. It can do so by working together with others, providing direction, educating, giving presentations, and creating a website so that governments, businesses, and citizens can have a common understanding of sustainable practices. See also the Sustainable Development Policy in Objective 2 – Smart Growth Cooperation, Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter.

2. **Shared Services and Facilities:** See the Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter Objective 3 – Shared Services and the Community Facilities Chapter Objective 1 – Cost Effective and High Quality Facilities for information.
3. **Chippewa Valley Environmental Defense:** The City should continue to implement the policies of the Natural Resources Chapter and other applicable local laws that pertain to Eau Claire proper. However, because natural resources are often found traveling through, under or beyond a given jurisdiction, it will remain important to work with adjacent municipalities, counties, and other agencies to protect the environment. Resources such as clean air and fresh water are shared by all in this metropolitan region. See again Objective 2 – Smart Growth Cooperation in the Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter (Sustainable Development, Protection of Rural Lands, Premature Development, and Area-wide Planning policies) for more information.
4. **Joint Committee on Sustainability:** Consider initiating the creation of an area-wide or metropolitan task force charged with bringing governments, businesses, special interest groups, citizens, and others together to promote sustainability. A joint committee would provide improved stakeholder representation, communication, information and the shared visions of a sustainable Chippewa Valley. The joint committee could also prepare annual reports, keep annual accountability measures, and facilitate guest lecturer appearances, all the while helping to transform sustainability in this area.

Chapter Implementation Plan

The goal statement “**make certain that principles of sustainability in the Eau Claire area are followed to improve our quality of life by meeting present environmental, economic, and social needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same**”, is only mere words without any action. A work program provides a schedule for implementing the various policies the community identified as priorities. This chapter’s Plan Implementation Work Program is an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan’s Work Program found on pages 14-5 through 14-9. Taken together, the City will address each proposed policy while being cognizant of our ability, financial capacity, and commitment to carry out existing services. The Work Program table on the next page has been organized around the following categories of implementation actions:

- Public Information
- Continuous Planning Program
- Plans and Studies
- Codes and Ordinances
- Joint Efforts
- Capital Improvements

The Work Program covers a five year period. When the City’s Comprehensive Plan is completely updated again in 2015, the concept of sustainability will be incorporated seamlessly into its future chapters. Since this chapter was completed in 2009, it is an official supplement chapter to the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*.

Plan Implementation Work Program

Sustainability Chapter of Eau Claire's Comprehensive Plan Plan Implementation Work Program (2009-2025) Updated 2015			
Public Information			
1.1	Provide information/a webpage that describes carbon-neutral energy types and what forms of financial assistance are available.	Planning	2009
1.2	Partner with energy companies to provide education programs and incentives.	Planning	2010
1.3	Prepare informational brochures to provide proper education on growing local food and institutional bulk-buying at wholesale grower auctions.	Planning	2010
1.4	Provide information to increase consumer product awareness and environmentally preferable purchasing along with education on how to reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover waste materials.	City & County	2010
1.5	Continue to encourage developers to use the Planned Development or Traditional Neighborhood District ordinances to achieve objectives of Smart Growth.	Planning	Ongoing
Continuous Planning Program			
2.1	Continue to support efforts to attract a grocery store to the downtown area.	Economic Development	Ongoing
2.2	Encourage the use and restoration of native species and drought tolerant plantings.	Parks & Recreation	Ongoing
2.3	Continue enforcement of erosion control of topsoil on slopes, at construction sites, and in general.	Public Works	Ongoing
2.4	Continue to support City ordinances that require developers to plant street trees and rebate programs for homeowners who plant a tree on their lot.	Parks & Recreation	Ongoing
2.5	Continue volunteer programs to pick up litter in public places, parks, along waterways, during special events, and in the general community.	Parks & Recreation	Ongoing
2.6	Continue to promote and build infrastructure that accommodates a variety of travel options from bus, automobile, bicycle and pedestrian.	Public Works	Ongoing
2.7	Promote, expand, and offer business incentives to attract Green-collar jobs.	Economic Development	2010
2.8	Implement the Green Team's Report recommendations for City sustainability.	Green Team	Ongoing
Plans and Studies			
3.1	Consider becoming an Energy Independent Community by conducting an energy baseline audit and then develop a plan to increase renewable energy by 25% by the year 2025.	Planning	2009

Sustainability

Plans and Studies			
3.2	Consider developing a strategy to reduce green house gas emissions. See the City's Health Chapter regarding a Climate Action Plan.	Planning	2010
3.3	Consider strengthen existing ordinances or adopt a similar ordinance to LEED's Neighborhood Design Rating System.	Planning	2012
3.4	Complete a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.	Planning/ Public Works	2009
Codes and Ordinances			
4.1	Consider adopting an outdoor lighting ordinance for all new construction and existing lighting retrofits.	Planning	2009
4.2	Consider expanding impervious surface requirements to all zoning districts while promoting the use of innovative pervious technologies.	Planning	2011
4.3	Develop a program that offers stormwater utility rebates/credits to businesses that exceed on-site requirements by providing exceptional stormwater management.	Public Works	2011
4.4	Consider adopting a municipal ordinance which restricts the use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers containing phosphates or other harmful chemicals. Require natural versions instead.	Parks & Recreation	2010
4.5	Consider adopting a tree preservation ordinance that prevents clear-cutting of major wooded areas before development approvals.	Planning	2010
4.6	Update ordinances for Grading and Erosion Control and Stormwater Pollution Plans as per the State of Wisconsin's stormwater permit requirements.	Public Works	2009
4.7	Consider an ordinance that requires developers to obtain a grading permit before disturbance of site soil.	Public Works	2009
4.8	Consider enhancing provisions of on-site land disturbance and removal of terrain that contains over 20% slope.	Public Works	2009
4.9	Consider passing an ordinance that bans plastic bags and styro-foam City wide or in certain circumstances.	Planning	2010
4.10	Consider an ordinance collection and disposal of unwanted/excess prescription drugs.	Health	2010
4.11	Consider adopting an ordinance which requires demolition debris and building materials to be recovered for reuse.	Planning	2010
4.12	Consider requiring/offering incentives for certified green buildings (i.e. Tax Increment Financing Districts).	Planning	2010

Sustainability

Codes and Ordinances			
4.13	Consider requiring green building certification or an equivalent for all new City buildings and major remodeling projects.	Planning / Green Team	2010
4.14	Consider amending commercial zoning districts to allow for mixed-uses.	Planning	2009
4.15	Consider enacting legislation that facilitates a property assessed clean energy program.	Planning	2015-2016
Joint Efforts			
5.1	Work with area power companies so they offer more renewable energy options.	City/Xcel	2010
5.2	Work with citizens to convert vacant City-owned lots to food and garden plots.	Parks & Neighborhood Associations	2011
5.3	Work with State departments and others to plant more native species and remove invasive species in right of ways, parks or other open spaces.	Public Works & Parks	Ongoing
5.4	Start a program that encourages rain barrels or cisterns to capture water for rainwater reuse at homes and businesses.	Public Works & County Planning	2009
5.5	Partner with Eau Claire County Recycling Program to achieve a greater rate of waste reduction within City Limits with a vision towards the ultimate goal of zero waste.	City & County Planning	2010-2013
5.6	Consider percentage goals in the elimination of total waste the community produces to reach significant reduction totals.	City & County Planning	2010
5.7	Work with the County to evaluate if a 'Pay-As-You-Throw' and/or 'Single-Stream' recycling ordinance should be adopted.	City & County Planning	2010
5.8	Work with Eau Claire County to research the feasibility of opening a community wide composting site.	City & County Planning	2011
5.9	Consider passing an ordinance that mandates businesses which sell consumer electronics must take-back electronics for reuse.	City & County Planning	2011
5.10	Work with local garbage haulers to evaluate if an ordinance should be enacted that geographically assigns haulers to pickup zones.	City & County Planning	2012
5.11	Consider a pilot project to run a community festival at zero-waste.	DECI & County	2009
5.12	Continue support of community events and other festivals.	DECI	Ongoing
5.13	Work with Eau Claire Area School District and Safe STEPS to reach with safe routes all middle schools as well as high schools.	Public Works	Ongoing
5.14	Continue to advocate/campaign with West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition, St Croix, and Dunn Counties for intercity passenger rail.	Planning	Ongoing

Sustainability

Joint Efforts			
5.15	Continue to advocate and campaign for the State to authorization regional transit agencies.	Transit	2009
5.16	Consider creating an area-wide or metropolitan task force charged with bringing governments, businesses, special interest groups, citizens, and others together to promote sustainability.	Planning	2009
5.17	Work with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association to receive solar technical assistance under the U.S. Dept. of Energy's SunShot grant.	Planning	2015
5.18	Work with Eau Claire County, waste haulers, and other stakeholders to develop a more efficient means to collect and compost organic materials.	Public Works, Planning & Health Dept.	Ongoing
5.19	Work with area businesses and retailers to create a community reusable bag campaign.	Planning	2015-2016
5.20	Continue to support Eau Claire County to increase plastic bags and film recycling totals.	Planning	Ongoing
5.21	Seek to reuse urban wood waste from City boulevards and other spaces to supply private sector businesses for high-value products.	Parks	Ongoing
Capital Improvements			
6.1	Consider a pilot street project to convert a portion streetlamps to light emitting diodes.	Public Works	2010
6.2	Consider a pilot solar, wind, geothermal, or hybrid vehicle project.	Public Works	2010
6.3	Consider converting Forest Street into a larger community garden site.	Parks & Recreation	2010
6.4	Consider a Green Roof pilot project on a City building.	Public Works	2012
6.5	Incorporate green technologies into the new transit station.	Transit	2011
6.6	Replace the eight old Flyer Buses with electric-hybrids or alternative burning fuel buses.	Transit	2010