

Introduction

In 2018, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted Act 243 requiring municipalities in Wisconsin to complete a Housing Affordability Report no later than January 1, 2020. This requirement was created within Wisconsin Statute 66.10013. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) requires a municipality with a population of 10,000 or more. Since the DOA estimates, Eau Claire 2020 population at 68,957, Eau Claire is required to comply with this provision.

66.10013 Housing affordability report.

(1) In this section, "municipality" means a city or village with a population of 10,000 or more.

(2) Not later than January 1, 2020, a municipality shall prepare a report of the municipality's implementation of the housing element of the municipality's comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001. The municipality shall update the report annually, not later than January 31. The report shall contain all of the following:

- (a) The number of subdivision plats, certified survey maps, condominium plats, and building permit applications approved in the prior year.
- (b) The total number of new residential dwelling units proposed in all subdivision plats, certified survey maps, condominium plats, and building permit applications that were approved by the municipality in the prior year.
- (c) A list and map of undeveloped parcels in the municipality that are zoned for residential development.
- (d) A list of all undeveloped parcels in the municipality that are suitable for, but not zoned for, residential development, including vacant sites and sites that have potential for redevelopment, and a description of the zoning requirements and availability of public facilities and services for each property.
- (e) An analysis of the municipality's residential development regulations, such as land use controls, site improvement requirements, fees and land dedication requirements, and permit procedures. The analysis shall calculate the financial impact that each regulation has on the cost of each new subdivision. The analysis shall identify ways in which the municipality can modify its construction and development regulations, lot sizes, approval processes, and related fees to do each of the following:
 - 1. Meet existing and forecasted housing demand.
 - 2. Reduce the time and cost necessary to approve and develop a new residential subdivision in the municipality by 20 percent.

(3) A municipality shall post the report under sub. (2) on the municipality's Internet site on a web page dedicated solely to the report and titled "Housing Affordability Analysis."

The City of Eau Claire has undertaken significant efforts to plan for and develop affordable housing in recent years. In 2018, the City of Eau Claire engaged Cedar Corporation to provide housing affordability data. In the report, looks at a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources to identify factors that may affect housing affordability within the City. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2015 and included a detailed summary of issues and noted housing goals and objectives moving forward. The section of Housing within the Comprehensive Plan ([Chapter 10](#)) is to guide public spending on housing assistance programs and to guide public regulation of private housing development.

Specific Provisions of Section 66.10013 of the Wisconsin Statutes

Section 66.10013 requires the City of Eau Claire to prepare a report of the municipality's implementation of the housing element of the comprehensive plan, it specifically requires this report to contain five specific elements. These required elements for residential land use only are listed below from 2019:

Subdivision Plat: the City of Eau Claire approved 6 residential subdivision plats

File	Name	Area Subdivided (acres)	# of Lots	# of Dwellings	Zoning
S-1	Replat Mill Run	17.6	15	15	R-2
S-2	Replat Camden Place	5.9	34	34	R-2P
S-3	Princeton Ridge	1	4	4	R-1

S-4	Jeffers Ridge Twin Homes Phase I	21.3	48	48	R-2P
S-5	Tucker Trail I	6.1	20	20	R-1
S-6	Woodland Hills Estates	20.9	20	20	R-1P

Certified Survey Map (CSM) – the City of Eau Claire approved 3 CSM’s

File	Name	Area Subdivided (acres)	# of Lots	# of Dwellings	Zoning
CSM-1	Galloway Street	1.9	3	3	R-3P
CSM-2	Comet Court	1.4	4	4	R-1
CSM-3	Lorch Avenue	42.1	4	4	C-3P & R-3P

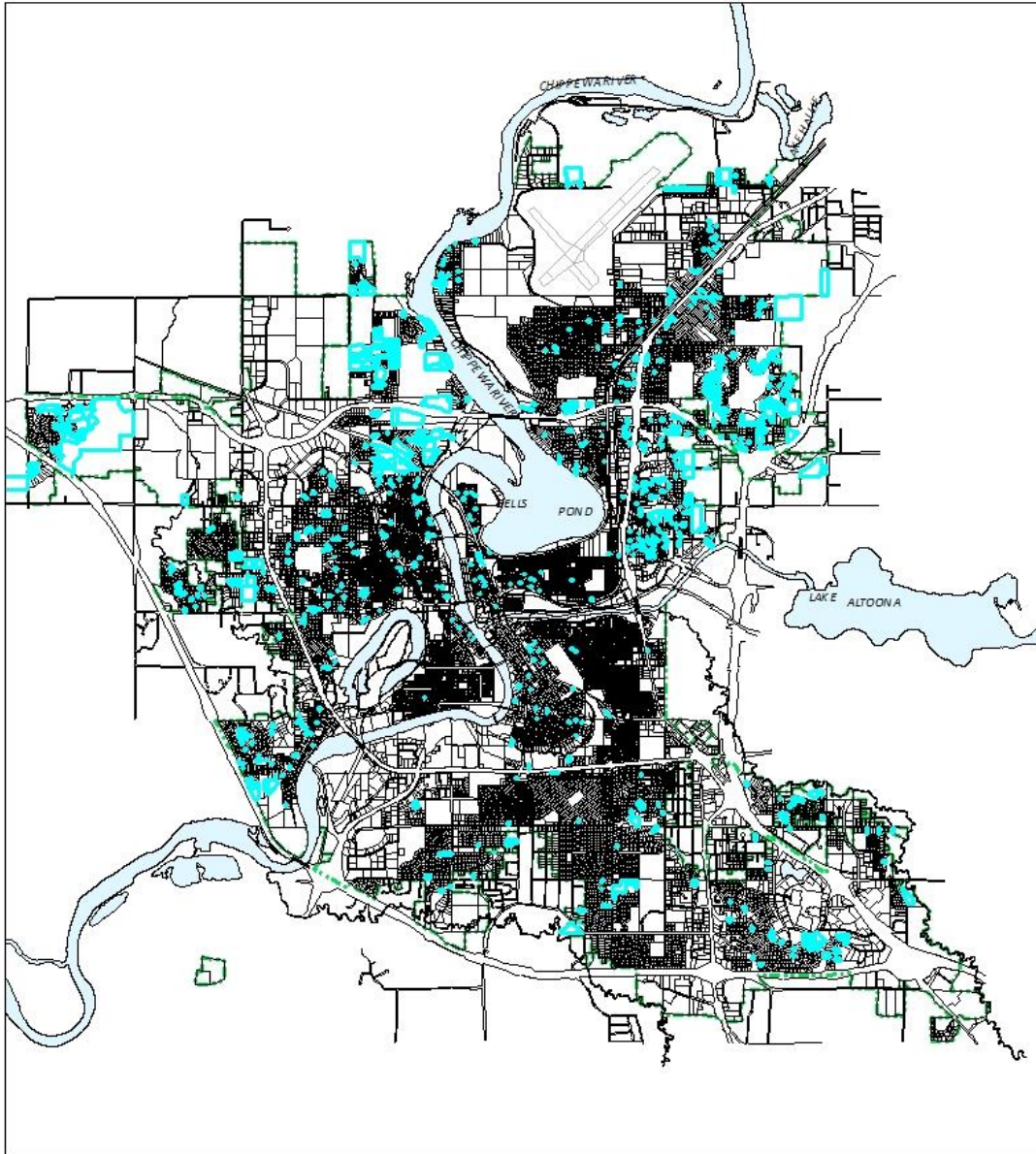
Condominium Plat – the City of Eau Claire approved 0 condominium plats

Residential Permits – In 2019, the City of Eau Claire issued the following residential permits and the total fees collected:

Type	# of Permits	Total Fees Collected
Residential New Single Family	104	\$120,848
Residential New Condominium	58	\$39,918
Residential New Duplex	10	\$8,860
Residential New Multi-Family	205	\$55,394
Residential New Accessory	62	\$2,987
Residential Single-Family Alterations	177	\$17,075
Residential Duplex Alterations	24	\$3,150
Residential Single-Family Additions	25	\$3,906
Subdivision Plats	6	\$1,710
Certified Survey Map	3	\$1,100

List of Undeveloped Parcels in the City of Eau Claire that are zoned for residential development: The City of Eau Claire contains 1,005 parcels that are zoned for residential development and are currently undeveloped. The complete list of these parcels is listed below. It is to be noted that the some of the parcels have been platted in the last two years, and likely contain a dwelling unit (s) or will in the near future.

Below is a map showing the undeveloped parcels in the City of Eau Claire that are zoned for residential development.



Undeveloped Parcels Zoned for Residential
Planning Department
Date: August 2020



0 5,500 11,000
Feet

A list of Undeveloped Parcels in the City of Eau Claire that are suitable for, but not zoned for, residential development, including vacant sites and sites that have potential for redevelopment, and a description of the zoning requirements and availability of public facilities and services for each property.

The City of Eau Claire contains 88 parcels that are suitable for as noted in the comprehensive plan, but currently not zoned for residential development. The parcels noted below would require a rezoning and site plan approval prior to a building permit being issued for new residential development. It is also noted below that each and every undeveloped parcel does have public facilities within 1,000 feet for new residential development.

An analysis of the municipality’s residential development regulations, such as land use controls, site improvements requirements, fees and land dedication requirements, and permit procedures. The analysis shall calculate the financial impact that each regulation has on the cost of each new subdivision. The analysis shall identify ways in which the municipality can modify its construction and development regulations, lot sizes, approval processes, and related fees to do each of the following:

1. *Meet existing and forecasted housing demand.*
2. *Reduce the time and cost necessary to approve and develop a new residential subdivision in the municipality by 20 percent.*

Forecasted Housing Demand

The forecasted housing demand is shown below with the Housing Unit Projections below for Eau Claire from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), the City’s housing units is projected to be 28,909 units in 2020. The DOA projected an 12.7% increase from 2016 to 2040. Also, the DOA notes that from 2016 to 2040 the City’s population will increase by 9.0%.

2016 Estimate	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Increase 2016-2040
27,898	28,909	29,821	30,586	31,128	31,442	12.7%

US Census 2016 5-Year Estimate, Wisconsin DOA Population and Housing Projections

2016 Estimate	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Increase 2016-2040
67,654	69,225	70,895	72,255	73,095	73,770	9.0%

Wisconsin DOA: Population Projections and ACS 2016 ACS 5-Year Estimate

20% Time and Cost Reduction to approve and develop a new Residential Subdivision

The actual time to develop a new residential subdivision varies greatly on numerous reasons, including the size of the project, necessary clearing and grading of the site, the time of the year in which construction takes place in and the construction company availability. Some other factors that could impact the actual time of development is the engineering team on the project. Since these issues are out of the control of the City, this analysis does not account for this time frame.

In order to reduce the regulatory approval time frame by the 20% as noted in the State Statues, approximately one month would need to be eliminated. This would be difficult given that State Statutes require rezoning applications with a Class 2 notification, a

platting process is also reviewed by the state of Wisconsin, and the availability of Plan Commission and Council meetings. Staff does not think the process of 4.5 months is long compared to other cities similar in size to Eau Claire. Staff does encourage a rezoning application and preliminary plat to be submitted together to reduce the process by one month.

Below is a table showing the estimated expenses to develop a 20-lot residential subdivision within the City of Eau Claire. The property is located on the south side of city limits.

Residential Development Expenses Woodland Hills Estates - 20 Lots			
	Overall Developer Cost	Per Lot Cost	Time Frame
Land Use Controls			
Zoning Change	\$450	\$23	1 Month
Site Improvement Requirements			
Preliminary Plat	\$1,900	\$95	1 Month
Developer's Agreement	\$17,200	\$1,323	1 Month
Final Plat	\$230	\$12	1 Month
Improvement Costs			
Sanitary Sewer System	\$104,000	\$5,200	
Water System	\$92,000	\$4,600	
Storm Sewer System	\$63,000	\$3,150	
Streets & Lighting	\$220,000	\$11,000	
Contingency	\$47,900	\$2,395	
Fees & Dedication Costs			
Impact Fees	\$0		
Permit Procedures			0.5 Month
Building Permit Fee		\$1,133	
State Seal		\$40	
Totals	\$546,680	\$28,970	4.5 Months

The actual cost to develop a new residential subdivision varies greatly for numerous reasons from the what the home owner is purchasing the home for. In order to reduce the regulatory approval cost by the 20% as noted in the State Statues, approximately \$5,794 would need to be eliminated.

Land Use Controls

Residential development within the City of Eau Claire is managed primarily through the building code, subdivision code and zoning code. The Zoning Code for the City of Eau Claire has 5 different residential zoning classifications. The City of Eau Claire also allows planned developments within residential zoning projects which can reduce the lot widths, density standards, setback standards and allow more flexibility within the proposed development.

The City of Eau Claire does not impose a minimum square footage of new residential homes. Also, Eau Claire allows single family homes to be built on any lot size within the community as long as it's zoned properly and setbacks are maintained. In an infill site for residential, the zoning code allows staff to take the average of the front setbacks within 100 feet of the property lines in either distance. This allows the property owner the flexibility to build or rebuild without a variance process, thereby reducing time and costs.

Site Improvement Requirements

The City of Eau Claire requires standard improvements for new subdivisions including paved streets, curb and gutter, lighting, public water and sewer, sidewalks, stormwater management and gas and electric lines. Gas and electric lines are to be underground if possible. The City's off-street parking requirements are reasonable at one parking stall per bedroom. For areas that are for redevelopment, the City allows the developer to calculate the stormwater into the existing facilities.

Fees and Land Dedication Requirements

Unlike many other cities of similar size, Eau Claire does not have any impact fees for new residential development nor land dedication requirements.

Permit Procedures

Any person(s) applying for a residential building permit may submit to our office by mail or in person with the applicable fees and plans to the Building Inspection Department for review. A homeowner or builder may request an inspection by phone or email. The City of Eau Claire is in the process of a new software program to allow person(s) to submit a building permit online and require an inspection online.

Analyze or Identify ways to modify construction and development

The City of Eau Claire and its Community Development Department staff recognize that development and redevelopment activities are important and should be done within a timely manner. To ensure flexibility, the City utilizes a planned development ordinance within the zoning code. This allows for a project flexibility for setbacks, height, density and mixture of dwelling units. The zoning code allows the developer to submit a rezoning request and site plan together through the review process. In addition, the City utilizes a MX – Mixed-Use Development Overlay District within the zoning code for development that mixture of land uses. This allows for more efficient and flexible uses of land by combining both commercial and residential uses within a site or building.

The City of Eau Claire planning staff can administratively approve duplex development as a site plan. This process can speed up the review process significantly, rather than having the site plans be reviewed by the Plan Commission. In addition, all single-family homes are reviewed by staff and can be administratively approved.

Conclusion

At the state level and local level, the supply of new and affordable housing is not keeping up with the demand resulting in housing availability and affordability concerns

throughout the state. This issue not only affects home buyers, but also is affecting businesses and companies within the Eau Claire who need additional employees to continue growth of their business. The City of Eau Claire has limited ability today, or in the future to control construction costs. City staff will continue to guide new residential development within the community and continue to have an adequate housing supply to meet the existing community needs and forecasted housing demand.