



# Neighborhood Plan

Adopted 1/23/2024



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Adopted 1/23/2024**





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Shawtown Neighborhood is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Eau Claire. The area fronts the scenic west bank of the Chippewa River and began from the outgrowth of the Daniel Shaw Lumber Corporation in 1856. At one point in time, the small settlement included a medium sized lumber sawmill, planing mill, lumber yard, grist mill, private fire department, and boarding house. Over time the neighborhood was incorporated into the City of Eau Claire and grew into the adjacent hills with new housing.

Promoting livability and reinvestment in older neighborhoods is a major goal of the City's 2015/2022 *Comprehensive Plan*. Like any other well-established place, Shawtown has its opportunities and challenges, and neighborhood planning is one way to address possible solutions. This is Shawtown's first Neighborhood Plan.

This plan was developed in partnership with representatives of Shawtown through a Steering Committee, the Neighborhood Association, and with input from a neighborhood survey and at public meetings. The shared vision has eight major objectives, listed in the right-hand box. The overview recommendations map on page 4 displays improvement strategies related back to the plan's major objectives, goals and identified issues.

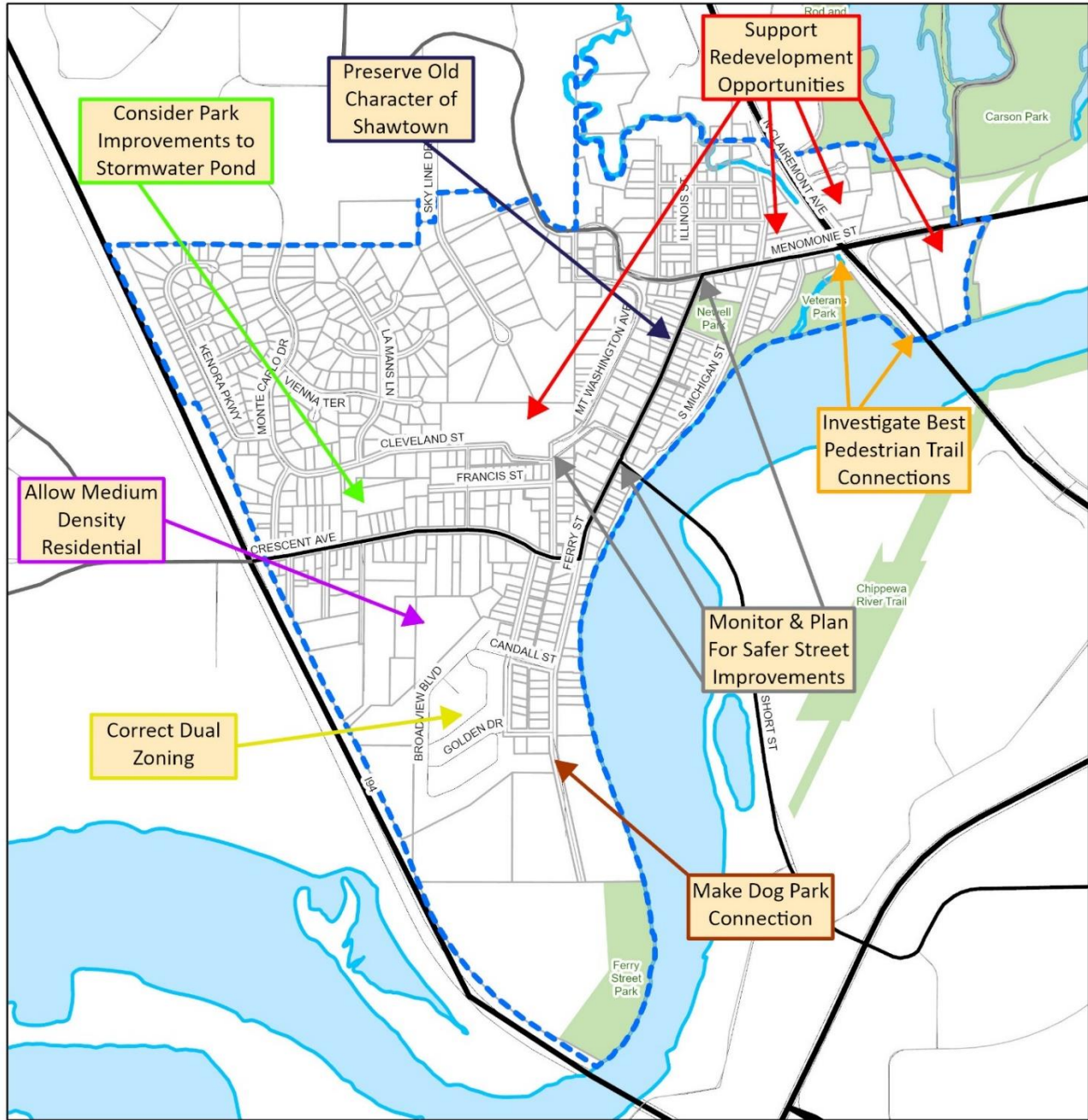
Shawtown representatives believe strongly that by continually addressing the quality of housing stock, though a variety of means, such as promoting financial assistance and enforcement programs, the neighborhood will strengthen. Good property upkeep, quality parks, engaged residents, and a low crime rate are also seen as contributors to success. Redevelopment options are possible near Menomonie Street and Clairemont Avenue. Future Ferry and Short Street projects are opportunities to better accommodate safety and address mobility options for more users.

This neighborhood plan is organized into three main chapters: Neighborhood Profile, Planning Issues, and Improvement Strategies. The plan will guide the neighborhood so that reinvestment will continue to improve Shawtown. This plan's timeframe covers 10-15 years. Many decisions made during this period will impact the neighborhood well beyond this timeline. The policies and content that follow should be consulted upon in decision-making, whether in official City business or of the Shawtown Neighborhood Association. The plan also provides background and direction to the private sector on development expectations.

### Major Objectives

- 1) Provide Quality Housing for All
- 2) Encourage Revitalization & Redevelopment
- 3) Preserve History
- 4) Promote Safe Transportation for All Users
- 5) Enhance Parks
- 6) Preserve Nature
- 7) Proactive Code Enforcement
- 8) Engage Residents





## Recommendations Overview





## Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

### Section 1.01 Purpose & Need

Due to a number of opportunities and issues facing the Shawtown Neighborhood, its Neighborhood Association requested that the City's Plan Commission authorize the creation of a plan.

Neighborhood plans are created to plan for existing and future land uses in an orderly and harmonious manner so as to promote sound urban development, public health, safety and general welfare. Plans are focused on a place's physical components but social and economic factors are also important. These plans have traditionally focused on maintaining and improving the city's older residential neighborhoods where the need is more evident. Shawtown is unique in that it has older and newer housing and is located on the edge of the city.

A neighborhood plan has a twofold purpose:

- Advance the goals and aims of a neighborhood
- Advance the goals and aims of the city as a whole

This second purpose speaks to the fact that a neighborhood plan should be consistent with the City's other plans, mainly the *Comprehensive Plan*. If the plan deviates in some particular matter, amendments should be made to the City's master plan to reconcile differences.

In the 2015/2022 *Comprehensive Plan*, Eau Claire's central neighborhoods received special attention with a separate chapter<sup>1</sup>. It recognized that these older places are great assets and should be improved while leveraging their strategic location. A subsequent stakeholder public planning effort produced the *Eau Claire Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force Report*.<sup>2</sup> This neighborhood plan incorporates some of those recommendations and policies.

### Section 1.02 Plan Authority

Approved neighborhood plans become part of the City's *Comprehensive Plan*, as an adopted part of the Neighborhood and Districts Chapter. Thus, the plan has authority as an official guide for decision-making. These plans are regularly consulted upon by the Planning Division, various City departments, the Plan Commission, and City Council to help determine imminent and long-term land use and infrastructure decisions. Neighborhood associations use it as their guide for building a better quality of life and for steering responses to development proposals.

The City and Neighborhood Association are leading actors in fulfilling the plan's objectives while working with stakeholders. This plan is meant to guide the neighborhood for the next 10 to 15 years, with the expectation that changes will last well beyond that timeframe.

### Section 1.03 Neighborhood Planning

Starting in the late 1970's, Eau Claire residents began organizing to form neighborhood associations to address common needs like deteriorated housing and lack of investment. The City had been experiencing

<sup>1</sup> Eau Claire *Comprehensive Plan – Neighborhood & Districts*. Retrieved November 2023 at <http://eauclairewi.gov/home/showdocument?id=10521>

<sup>2</sup> Eau Claire *Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force Report*. Retrieved November 2023 at <http://eauclairewi.gov/home/showdocument?id=14808>





strong growth in jobs, housing, and university enrollment. Added campus facilities and off-campus student housing expansion sometimes created conflicts within older neighborhoods. Preservation of home ownership and of historic architectural and culturally significant buildings became more important. These and other issues led to cooperative efforts starting in 1978 with the City to address problems and make improvements. One of the most effective tools has been the neighborhood plan. The City of Eau Claire’s Community Development Department – Planning Division provides this planning service working closely with neighborhood associations.

## Section 1.04 Neighborhood Association

Shawtown’s first association was formed in the late 1970s. It was called the Mt. Washington Neighborhood Association, recognizing the prominent hilltop in the community. It then ceased activities but was reorganized in 1999. After several years being active this group also ceased until the late 2010s when it was rebranded into the Shawtown Neighborhood Association. The vision of the current association is to:

- Respect the rights and dignity of all neighborhood residents and businesses.
- Protect and maintain the unique, natural, and historic qualities of our neighborhood.
- Consider and act on issues that affect the livability and quality of the neighborhood.
- Provide an open process by which all members of the neighborhood may involve themselves in the affairs of the neighborhood.
- Establish and maintain open lines of communication with other Neighborhood Associations, and city, county, regional, and state government.



## Section 1.05 Process

A plan request was first filed by the Shawtown Neighborhood Association in 2020. The City’s Plan Commission concurred that a Neighborhood Plan should be created. A Steering Committee was formed by the association to provide input and City Planning staff met with the committee for over a year. The planning process kicked-off in Fall 2022. The first meeting involved learning about neighborhood demographics, issue background, and developing engagement strategies to capture resident input. The following meeting involved analyzing the strengths and weakness of the neighborhood and undertaking a land use mapping exercise. A public engagement online survey was conducted and additional feedback was gathered during in-person meetings, at a quarterly neighborhood meeting and at the Do Dodge Inn. The Steering Committee then met in early 2023 to develop plan goals and improvement strategies. These goals and strategies were formalized and reviewed by the Plan Commission in the summer and then by the neighborhood association in late Fall. The neighborhood association voted on the proposed plan recommending approval in December. Subsequently, the City Plan Commission and City Council held public hearings in early 2024 and then passed the plan.





## Chapter 2. NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

### Section 2.01 Boundaries

The Shawtown Neighborhood boundaries are as follows and can be best seen on the map on page 9.

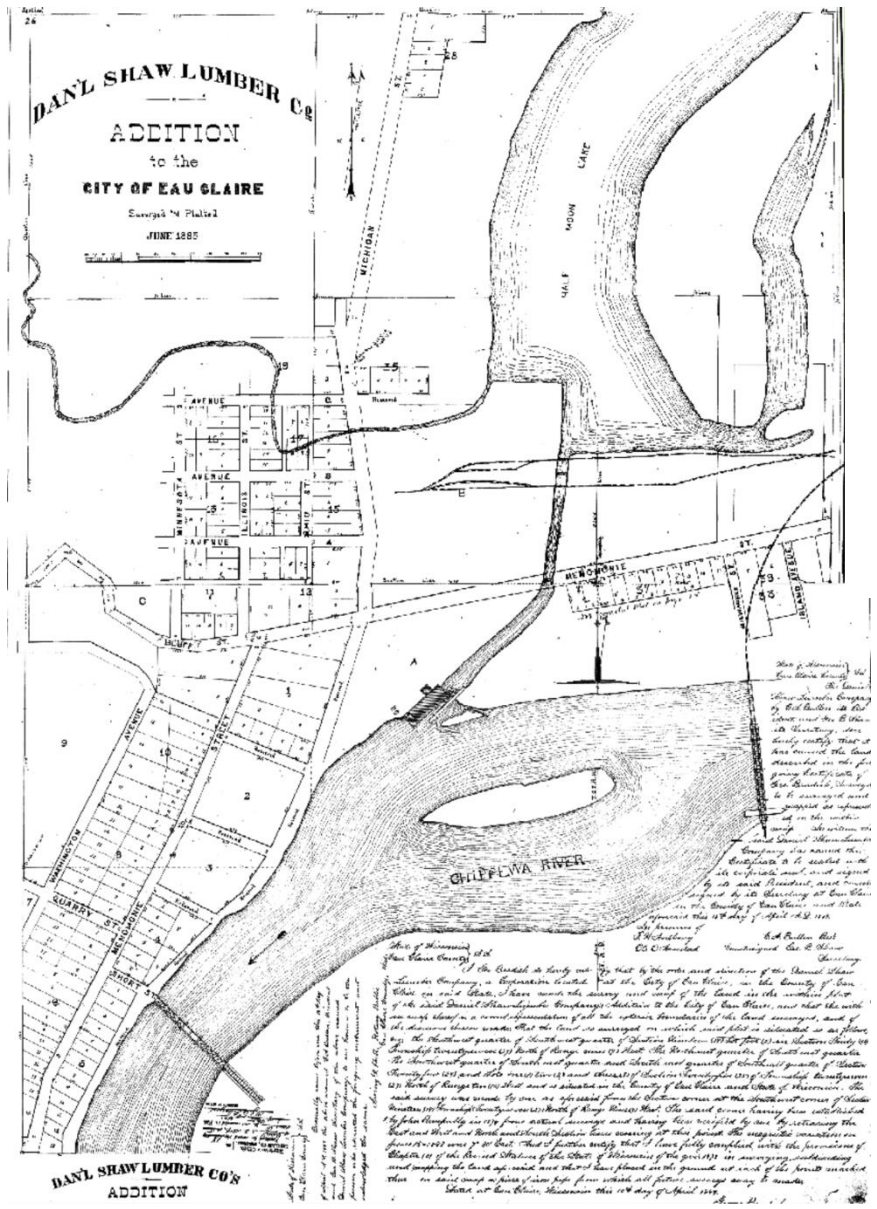
- To the North - The north end of North Michigan Street, Sherman Creek and city limits
- To the East - The Chippewa River and the eastern boundary with the City bike trail
- To the West - Interstate 94
- To the South - The south end of Ferry Street/Eau Claire Wastewater Treatment Plant

### Section 2.02 History

In the following excerpt, historian Mary Taylor describes Shawtown's beginnings in the City of Eau Claire's Final Report Intensive Historic / Architectural Survey (March 1983).

*Daniel Shaw, born in Maine, settled in Eau Claire in 1856 and immediately entered the lumber business. Like others who arrived at that time, he had previous experience in the industry and was looking for the opportunity which the newly opened pinery represented. In the next year Shaw opened a sawmill at the outlet of Half Moon Lake, a former oxbow of the Chippewa River which would be transformed into an exceptional log storage area, and with his brother-in-law, Charles Bullen, established Daniel Shaw and Company*

*A small but steady produce of lumber, the firm was incorporated in 1874 as the Daniel Shaw Lumber Company. Reflective of the frontier conditions in Eau Claire, the Shaw company owned a 900 acre farm at confluence of the Flambeau River which provided food for their workers. In the city they operated a store, a flour mill (the Crescent mill) and a boarding house. So pervasive was the company's name that the area immediately surrounding the mill was (and continues to be) called Shawtown. The company remained in*





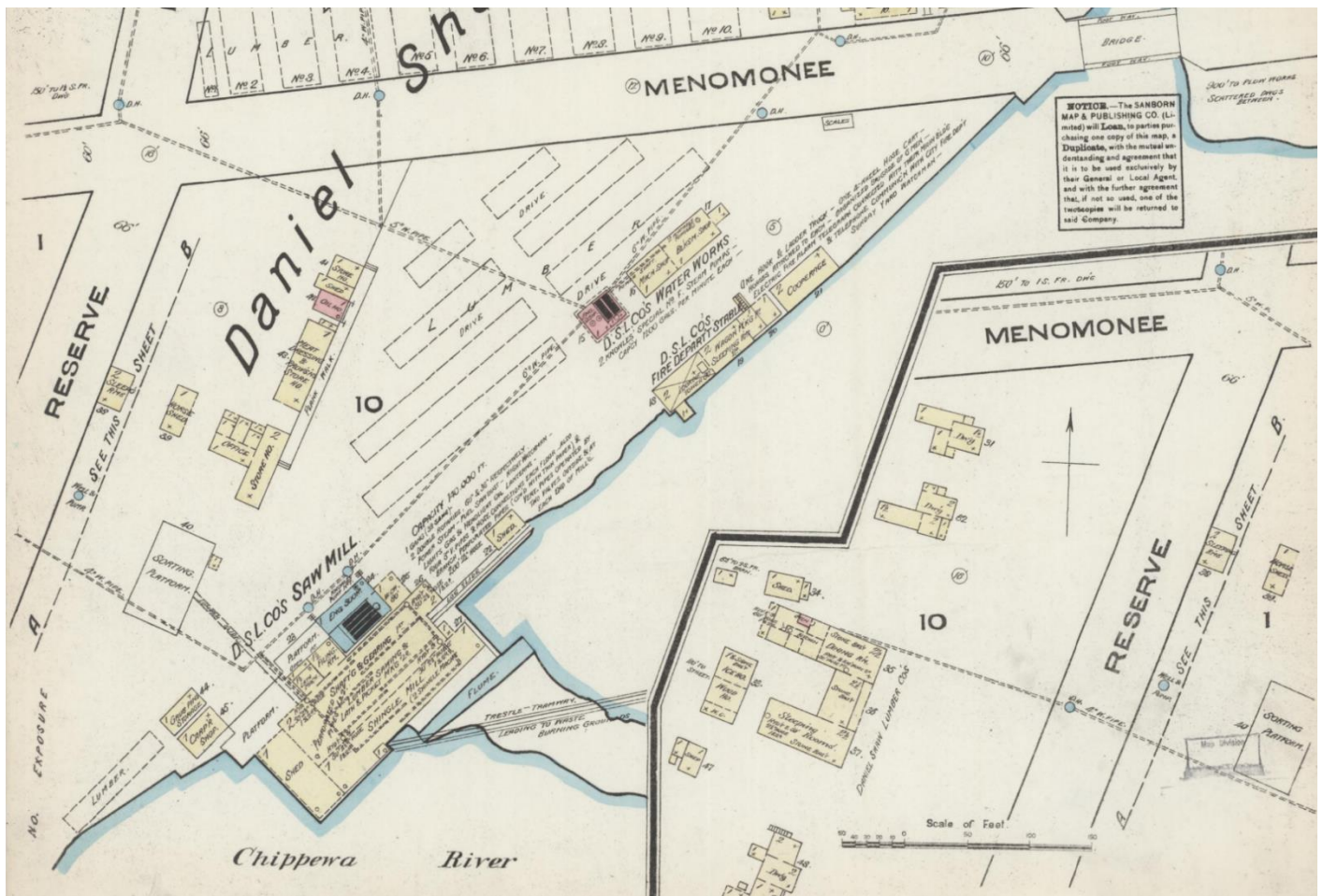
# Neighborhood Plan



operation until 1912, being one of the last in the city to close. Following Shaw's death in 1881, his sons George and particularly Eugene managed the firm.

The Shaw residence was destroyed by fire in the early twentieth century. The office of the lumber company remains, 109 S. Michigan Street, but it has been significantly altered.

The picture shows the old office building now a 4-unit residential structure. The following map shows the Daniel Shaw and Co. sawmill where the office can be seen just north of the mill.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin. Sanborn Map Company, Oct. 1883. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C. 20540-4650 USA. Retrieved November 2023 at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/gmd/g4124em.g095381883>





## Aerial Map

-  Shawtown Eau Claire Boundary
-  Shawtown Boundary
-  City Limits



The Shawtown Neighborhood Association boundaries extend outside of the current Eau Claire City boundary. The extended boundaries represent the historic Shawtown boundaries. The Shawtown Neighborhood Plan is focused on areas within Eau Claire's City boundaries and jurisdiction.

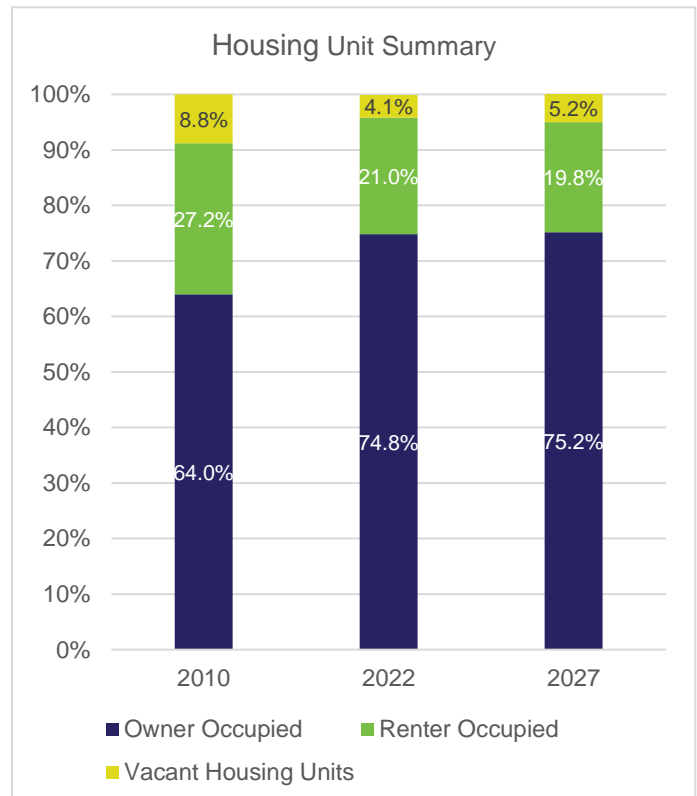
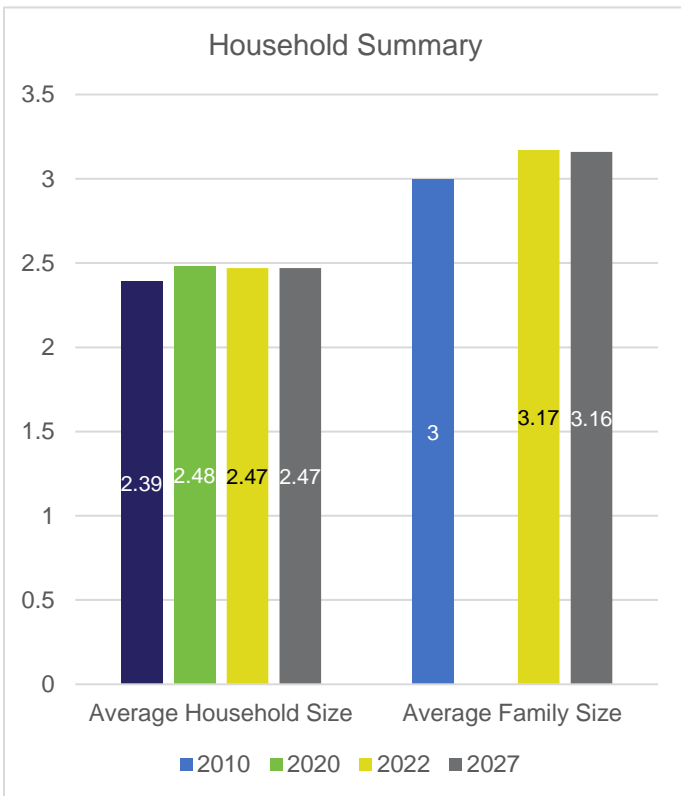
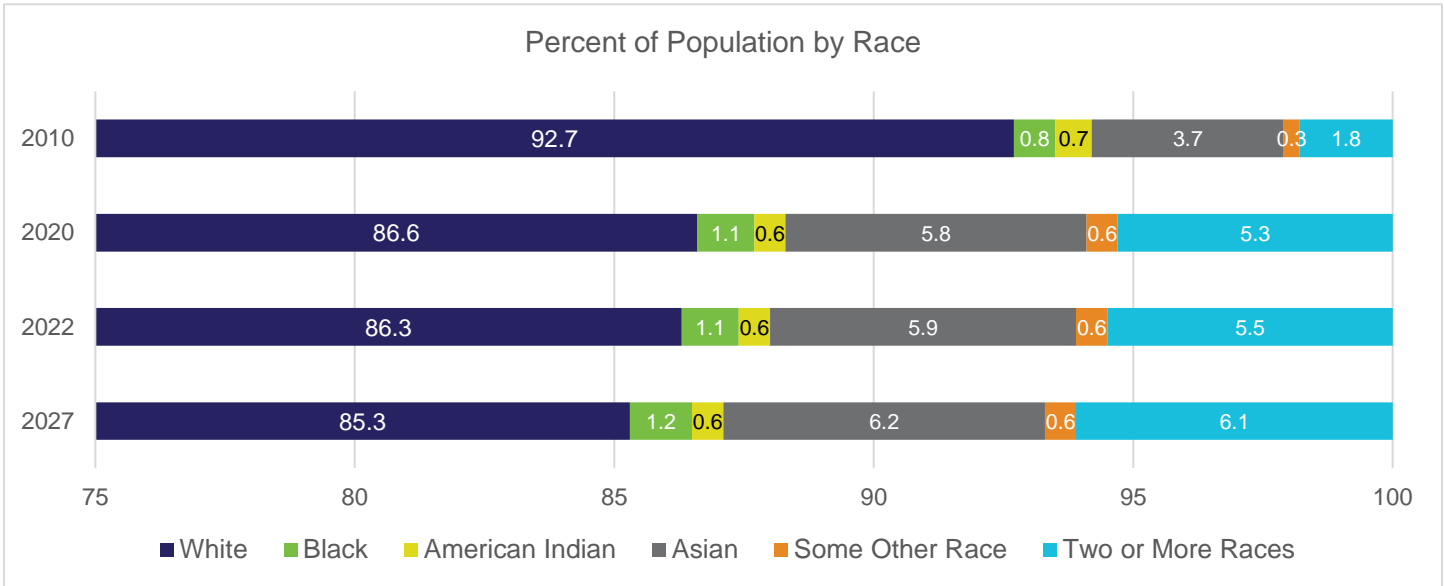




## Section 2.03 Demographics

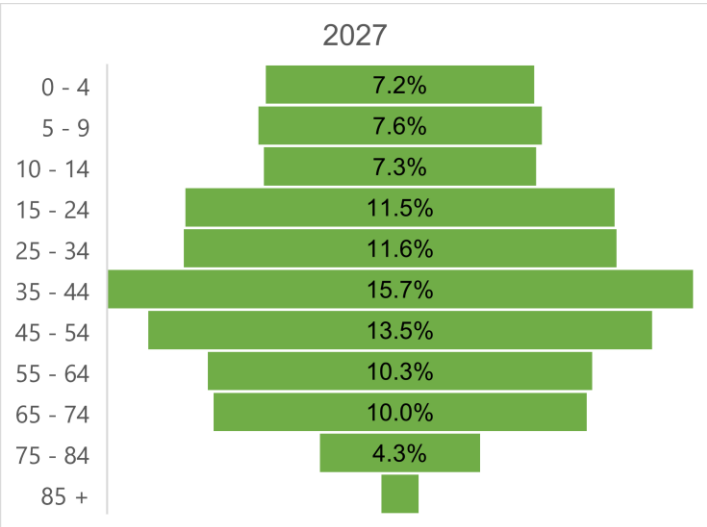
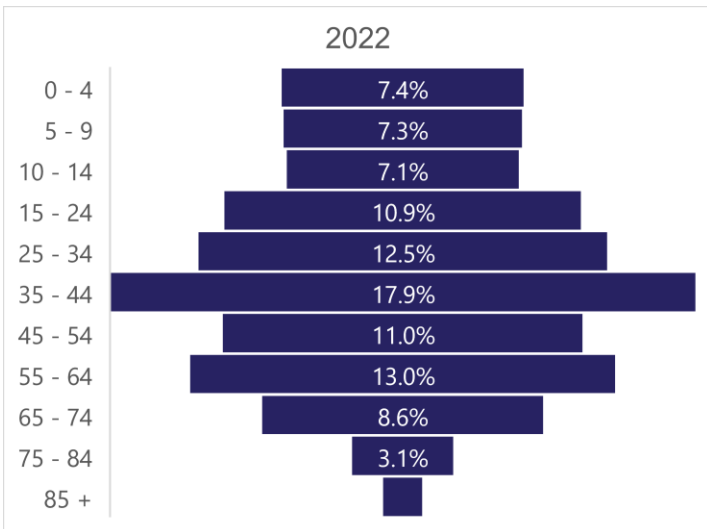
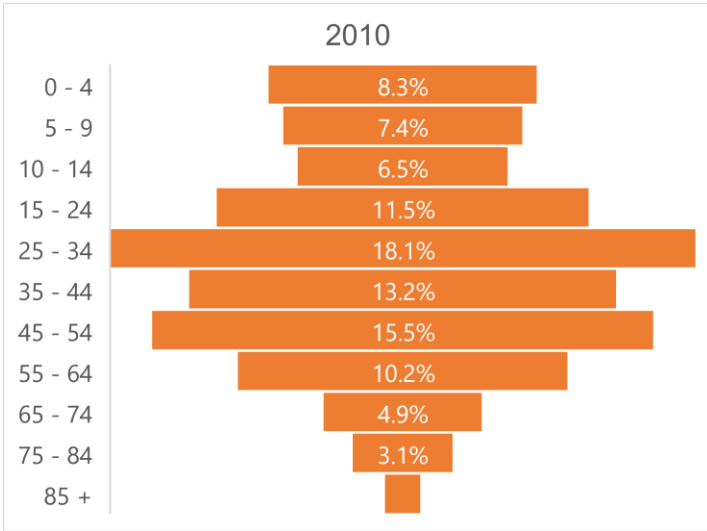
The following is a snapshot of Shawtown’s social, economic, and housing data with 2027 as a projection.

Year	2010	2020	2022	2027
Population	1739	1752	1737	1716

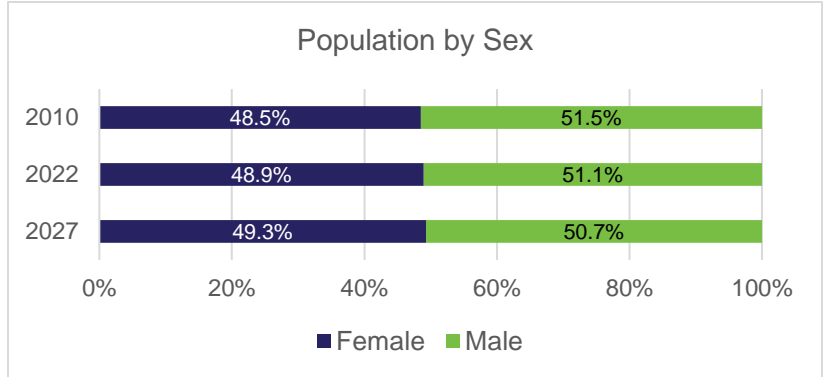




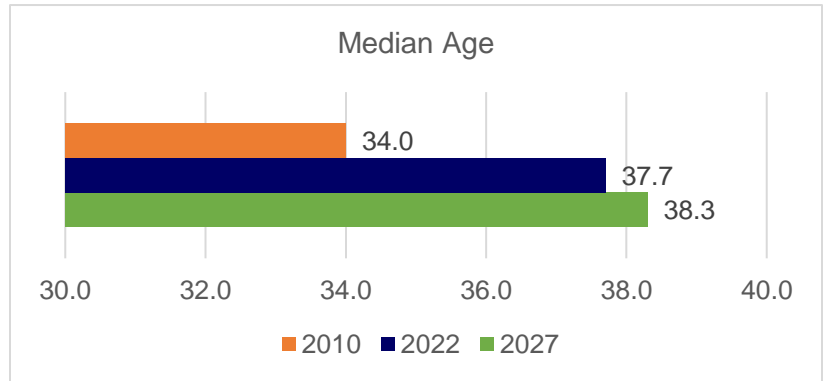
## Population by Age



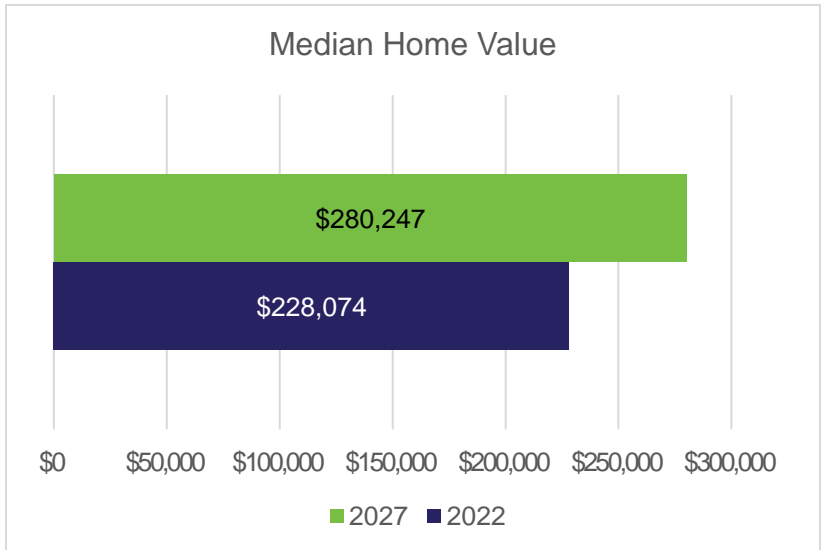
## Population by Sex

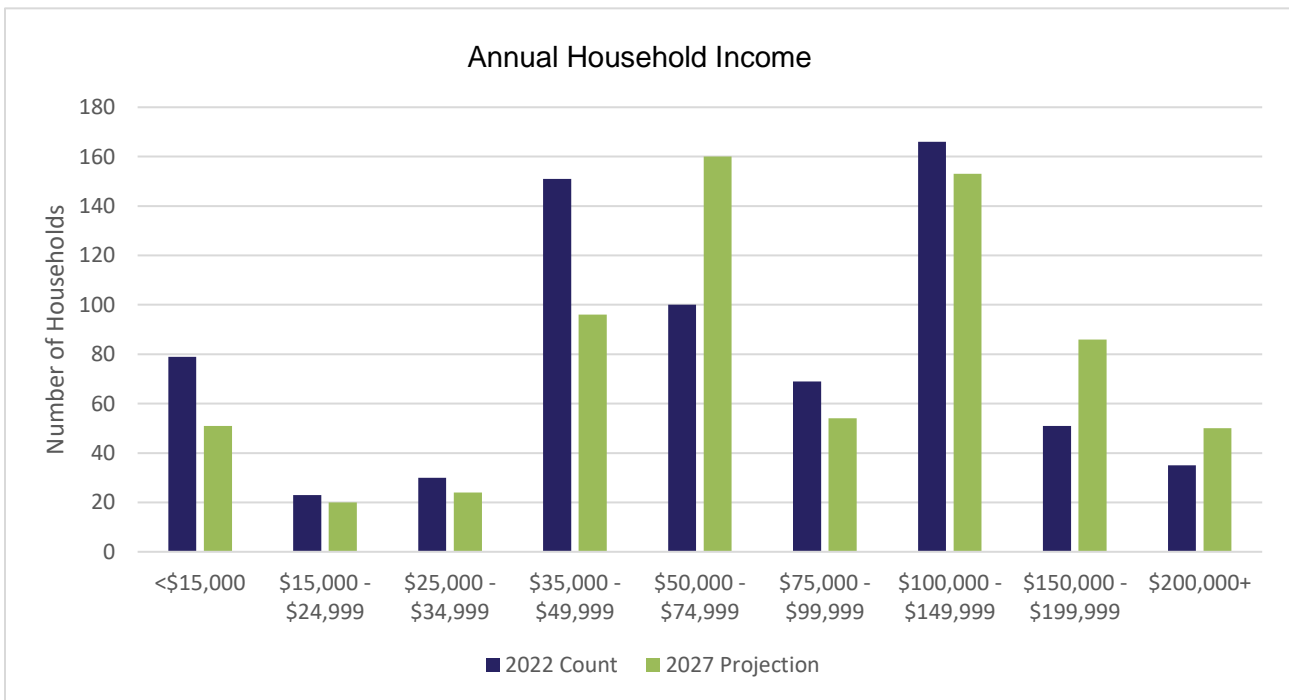
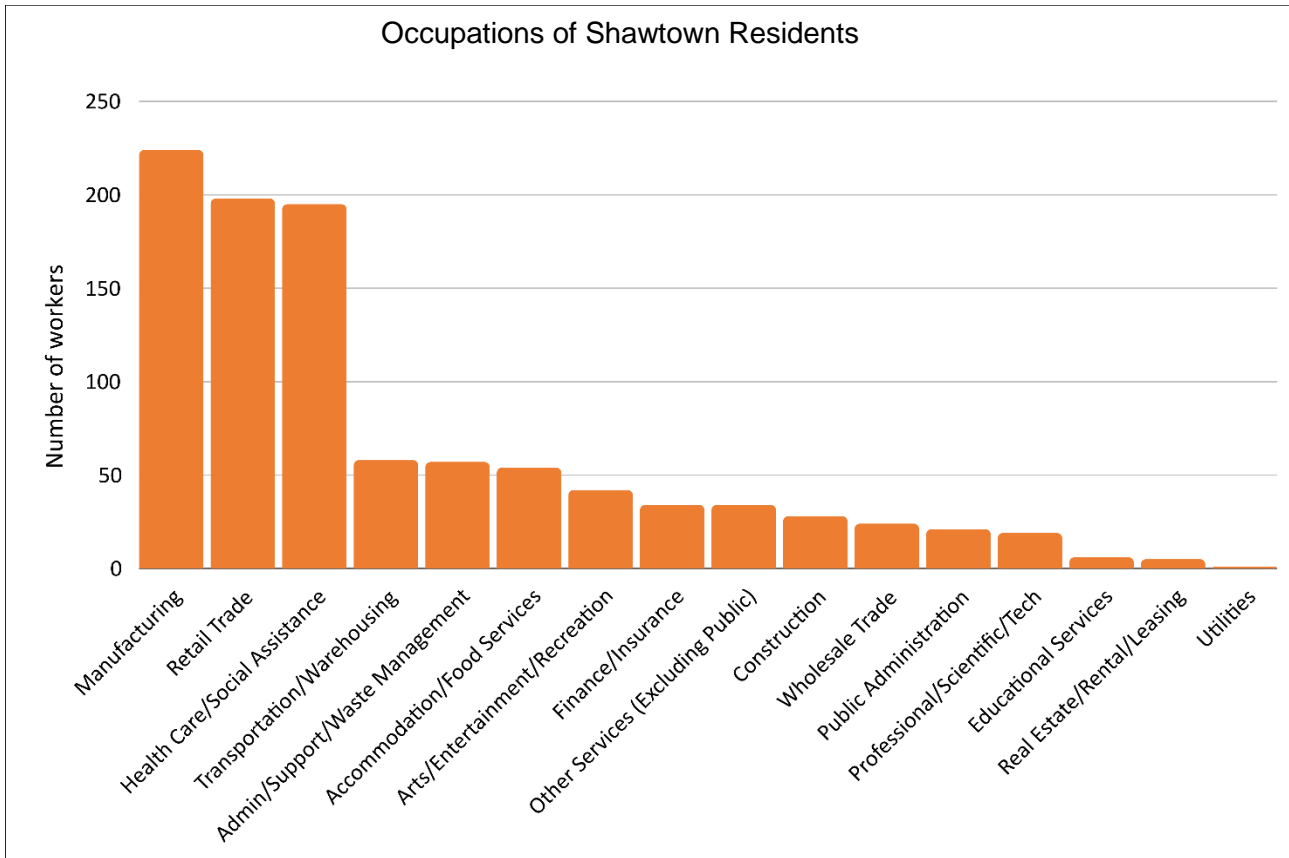


## Median Age



## Median Home Value





Sources: Esri forecasts 2022 & 2027. U.S. Census Bureau 2000 & 2010 decennial Census data converted by Esri into 2020 geography.





## Chapter 3. PLANNING ISSUES

This plan demonstrates that there are long standing issues but also some great strengths and opportunities. Aging housing is among the most apparent issue, but other issues identified by the neighborhood Steering Committee are addressed in this chapter. The box on the right lists the issues briefly. Taken together, issues can evoke a certain image to the public. While there are many positive attributes, the Steering Committee felt work needs to be done to overcome some of the more detrimental issues, such as traffic and quality housing. This was also evident in the 113 responses gathered from the neighborhood survey.

The issues are not unique to Shawtown, as other neighborhoods face many of the same problems with older housing. The community recognized this situation by the addition of a special chapter in the City's 2015/2022 *Comprehensive Plan* on older neighborhoods which prompted the formation of a Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force. Stakeholders produced a report outlining several recommendations and as noted in the introduction many of these ideas are incorporated into this plan.

Some of the neighborhood strengths to continue to capitalize on are its history and scenic hilly terrain along the Chippewa River. The relatively quiet neighborhood is in a good location to recreational, medical and shopping/dining areas. There are many homeowners and the neighborhood association is active as a booster of socialization and pride.

### Issues Identified

- Aging & blighted housing
- Housing improvements
- Property maintenance
- Lack of reinvestment
- Ferry Street traffic and safety
- Enforcement of speed limits
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Pedestrian street crossings
- Bicycle connections
- Dual zoning conflicts
- Negative perception
- Odor from waste water treatment plant

### Section 3.01 Land Use

The existing land use of Shawtown is illustrated on the map on page 15. It generally shows a large mixture of residential uses to the west, commercial to the east and public facilities to the south. The bulk of properties are residential comprising single family, two-unit, 3- and 4-unit multi-family buildings and small apartment buildings. A few vacant parcels exist throughout the neighborhood. There are some remnant light industrial properties to the east within commercial areas where the old Daniel Shaw lumbering enterprise was located. The City's wastewater treatment plant occupies the southern end along with the Southwest Community Dog Park (a.k.a Ferry Street Park), and boat launch.

### Section 3.02 Zoning

The majority of the neighborhood is zoned either R-1 (One Family Residential) or R-2 (One and Two-Family Residential), illustrated on the map on page 16. These zoning districts provide for the development of single family and two-family homes, respectively. The neighborhood contains a significant level of owner-occupied residences, or approximately 74% of the units. An issue with current zoning is that there are multiple parcels that have dual zoning causing land use and title conflicts. The City is updating its 1990 zoning code in 2023-25 and this should help make development more predictable. Possible outcomes could entail one zoning district per parcel, improved code reader user-friendliness, enhanced compatibility, design standards, and more flexibility for infill housing styles and lot/setback dimensional standards. Floodplain zoning is fortunately not a





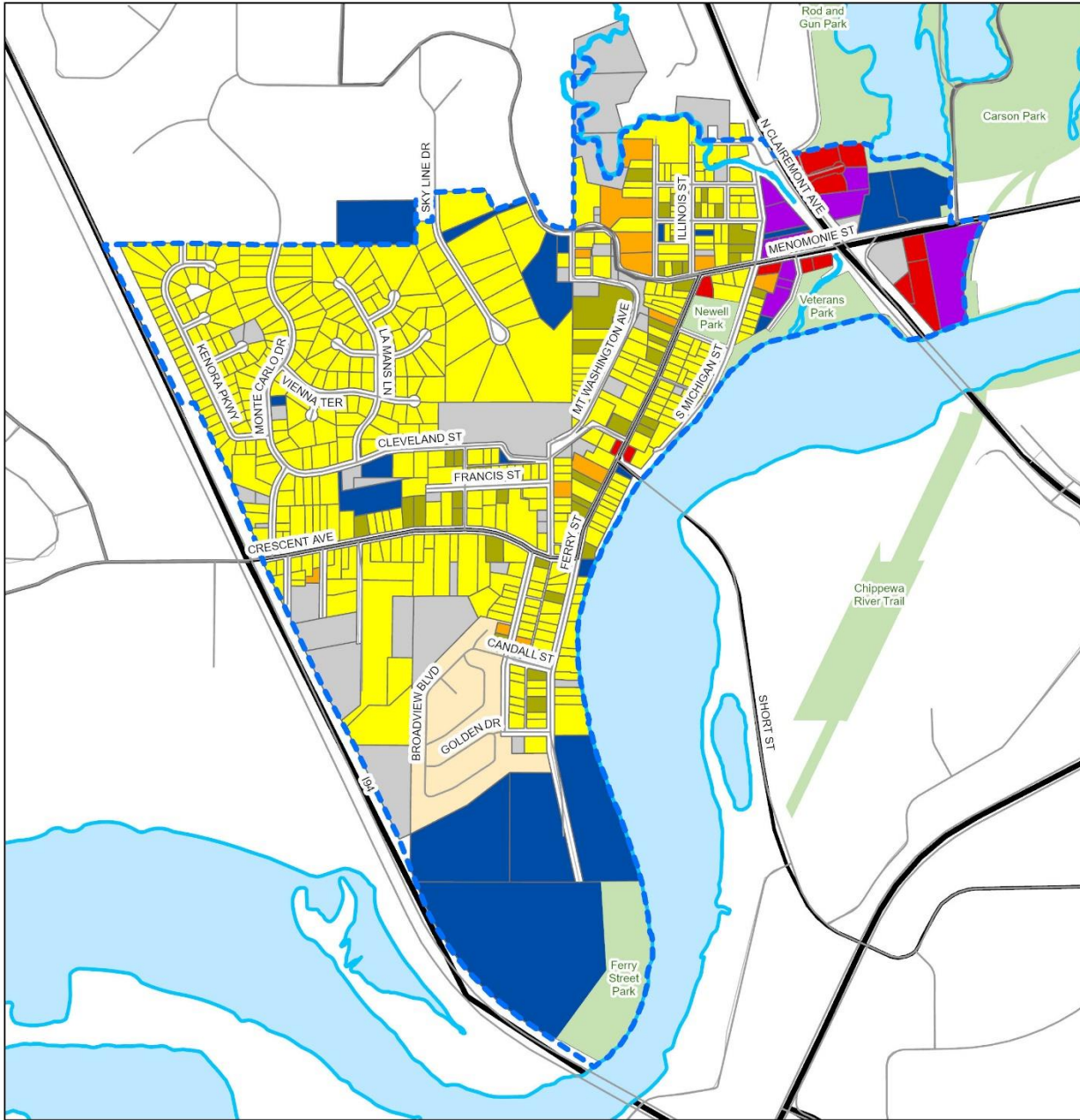
major concern as most of the parcels are out of the 100-year floodplain. The major vulnerabilities are on public lands being the Southwest Community Dog Park, the floodway diversion north of the Wastewater treatment plant and Veterans Park.

### Section 3.03 Planned Land Use









On page 17, the Comprehensive Plan Planned Land Use Map designates Shawtown as predominately low density housing with a commercial core at the center of N. Clairemont Avenue and Menomonie Street. This area will continue to attract redevelopment interests when the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Foundation's Sonnentag Complex is completed. The growth should provide more opportunities for the neighborhood. The old Mt. Washington sanatorium land use was recently amended from high density residential to mixed use commercial. A project is slated to include two new apartment buildings and redevelopment/reuse of the old main sanatorium building with apartments, a small grocery and community space. The area west of Oak Ridge mobile home park, south of Crescent Ave., and east of I-94 is a difficult area to develop with road and utility access. The Steering Committee thought it could include medium density housing in order to make development more feasible.

Future annexations to the west of the neighborhood are shown currently for low-density residential. City water already extends past I-94. However, there are very few larger tracks of land available for efficient subdivision and there is hilly terrain and some floodplain challenges in and around the former Country Jam location. No other major future land changes are contemplated in this plan but the City's Comprehensive Plan will be updated again in 2025-2026 and there will be a reexamination of future planned land use at that time.



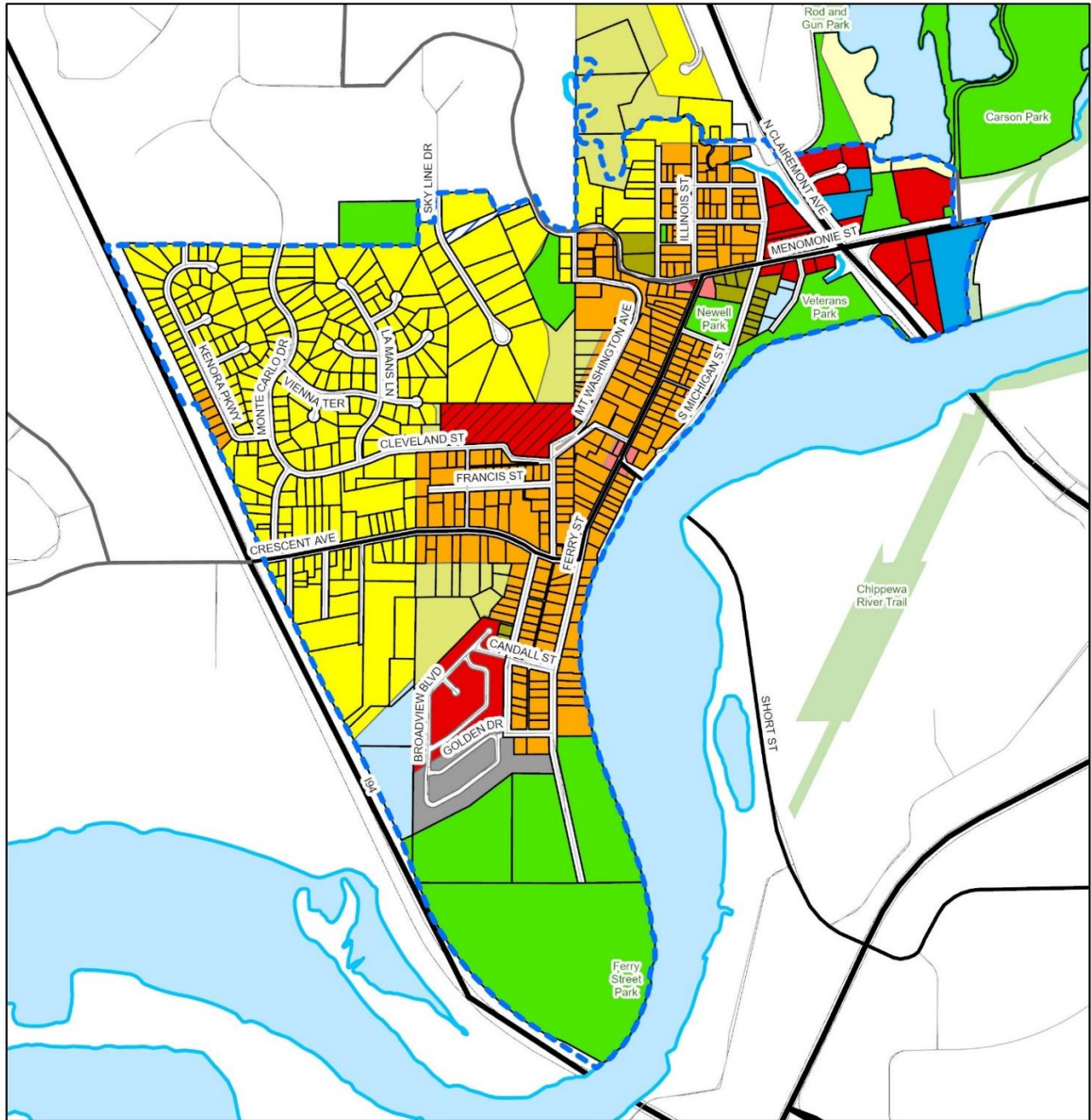


## Land Use

- |                                                                                     |               |                                                                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
|  | Single Family |  | Industrial             |
|  | Two Family    |  | Institutional          |
|  | Multi-Family  |  | Manufactured Home Park |
|  | Commercial    |  | Vacant                 |





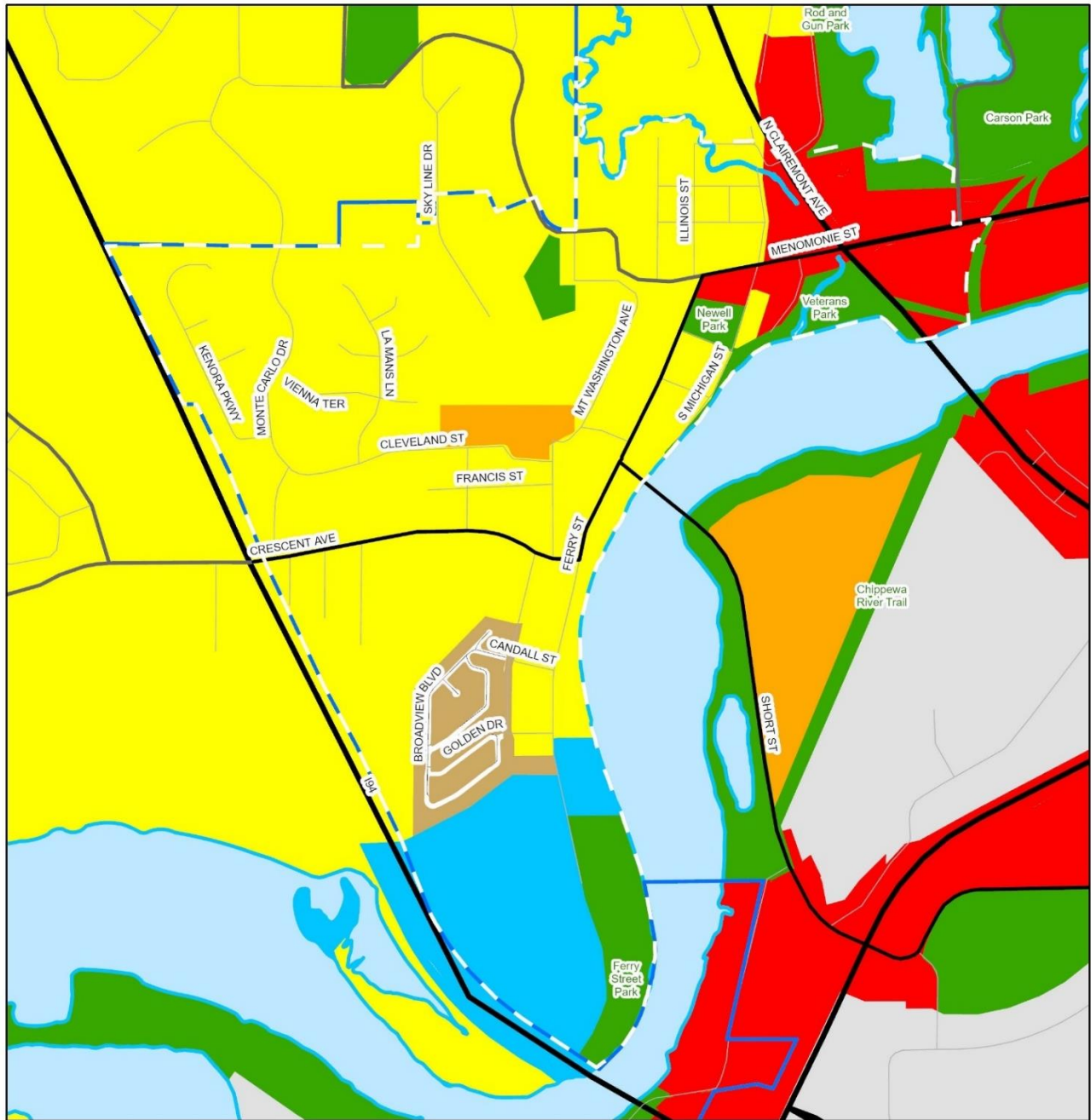


## Zoning Districts



- Shawtown EC Boundary
- TR-1A - Temporary Non-Sewered Residential
- R-1A - Non-Sewered Residential
- R-1 - One Family Residential
- R-2 - One & Two Family Residential
- R-3 - Low-Rise Multiple Family
- R-1B - Mobile Home Park
- C-2 - Neighborhood Shopping
- C-3 - Community Shopping
- C3-MX - Community Shopping with Mixed Use Overlay
- I-1 - Light Industrial
- I-2 - Heavy Industrial
- CV - Conservancy District
- P - Public Properties





## Planned Land Use Map

- Mixed Use
- Low Density Housing
- Medium & High Density Housing
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public Facility
- Park
- Agriculture or Rural Housing
- Shawtown EC Boundary
- City Limits



## Section 3.04 Housing

### Housing Age

As seen on page 20, Shawtown has a mixture of older homes but also many newer homes built after 2000. Housing age is a major issue and will continue to be an impediment to providing quality housing if regular maintenance and repair is not addressed. Mobile home housing in Shawtown is not represented in the table but the lifespan is usually from 30 to 50 years.

Housing Age	Count	%
Pre-1900	78	15%
1900-2000	281	55%
Post 2000	152	30%

### Housing Condition

If a housing unit was built well and properly maintained, the structure may survive for hundreds of years. Replacement of certain components is always needed, perhaps multiple times, such as a new roof or siding to combat elements of weathering. Outward defective conditions like a sagging roof line or porch, curling shingles, broken windows, rotted wood siding, cracked or settled foundations, if not corrected will eventually lead to structural problems. Interior moisture issues can also raise health threats.

The Eau Claire City-County Health Department's City Housing Inspection Program ensures that the city housing supply meets minimum health and safety standards for owner and rental properties. The program utilizes a Residential Environmental Quality Assessment (REQA) exterior survey to provide a method of rapidly assessing the environmental quality of a given neighborhood. The survey is completed city-wide so that every residential dwelling is reviewed at least once every five years. This method provides a systematic approach to identify and upgrade sub-standard housing, eliminate health hazards such as lead paint, reduce accident hazards, and decrease the deterioration of individual homes and neighborhoods. If a property is identified for an inspection, the property owner or manager is notified to schedule an initial inspection of the property. After the initial inspection is completed, follow up actions are determined, if needed.

### Neighborhood Survey Housing

(Minor/major concerns)

- Upkeep of properties (76%)
- Lack of reinvestment in older housing (75%)
- Lack of a variety of housing choices (57%)
- Lack of nearby commercial conveniences (groceries, laundromat, etc.) (61%)
- Vandalism (73%)





The 2022 map on page 21 shows the average defects per block within Shawtown. The older housing stock has more defects, and the newer housing on the north and northwest in the neighborhood has minor defects.

### Housing Tenure

Housing tenure means the type of residential occupant, mainly either owner or renter. Shawtown has a majority of owner-occupied parcels, especially in newer housing areas. The higher rental areas are the older parts of the neighborhood. See the map on page 22 for more.

Housing Tenure	2023
Owner parcels	69.5%
Renter parcels	14.8%
Vacant	15.4%

### Housing Needs

The 2015/2022 *Comprehensive Plan* found the most significant housing problem in Eau Claire is the need for very low cost housing units, especially with two or more bedrooms. This was reiterated by the 2023 Eau Claire Regional Housing Needs Assessment. Inclusion of housing for a variety of house-holder types and incomes is important and remains the case in Shawtown. The neighborhood has a good mix but more senior housing and multi-family buildings could be built. Most affordable housing is located in older existing areas and within the Oak Ridge Village Mobile Home Park. Middle to higher-end housing is located on hillier subdivisions.

The Housing by Century map on page 20 shows how Shawtown experienced a lot of new single family construction during the last two decades. Although located on the edge of the city, there are few areas the neighborhood can grow outward inside the I-94 corridor. In the future some annexed growth extending west of I-94 may open up new supply.

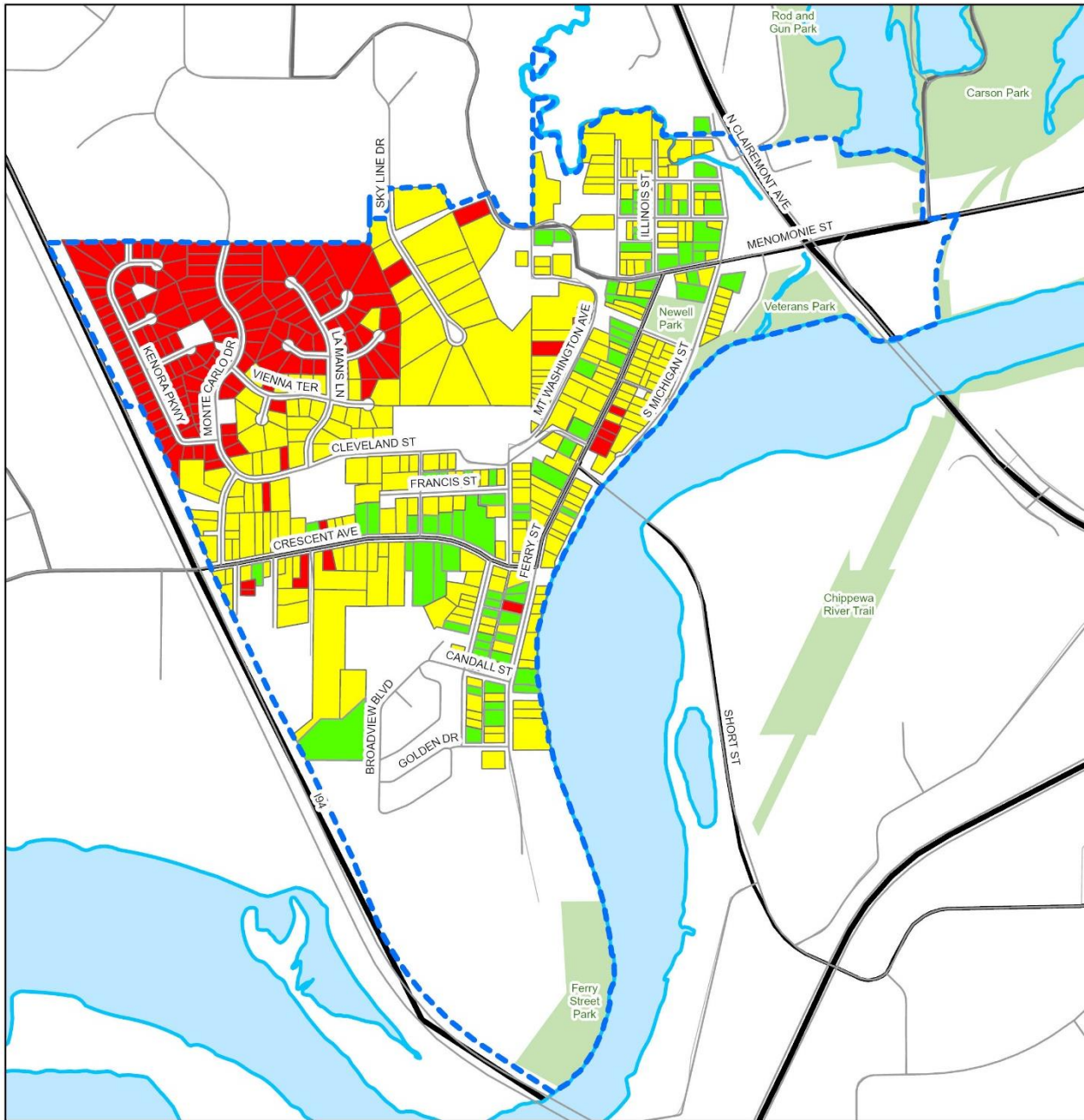
### Housing Burden

Local housing costs have risen since 1980, increasing dramatically up to the 2008 Great Recession. They then went down with stabilization but rose again until the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then increased costs have spiral upward at unstable levels. In 2023, a convergence of higher interest rates, inflation, wage stagnation, supply chain bottlenecks, material price hikes, shortage of labor, investor speculation, and lack of movement in certain market segments (mainly for first time homebuyers) have fueled a perfect storm. Consequently, affordable housing has become even less obtainable.

Housing burden is when 30% or more of household income is spent on housing costs. If more money goes towards housing payments less goes to other essentials like food, transportation and clothes. Housing cost burden disproportionately affects low-income households who start with less each month. The threshold is a useful benchmark in better estimating housing affordability in a neighborhood. About 30% of renters in Shawtown are cost burdened.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Esri Community Analyst: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016-2022 American Community Survey



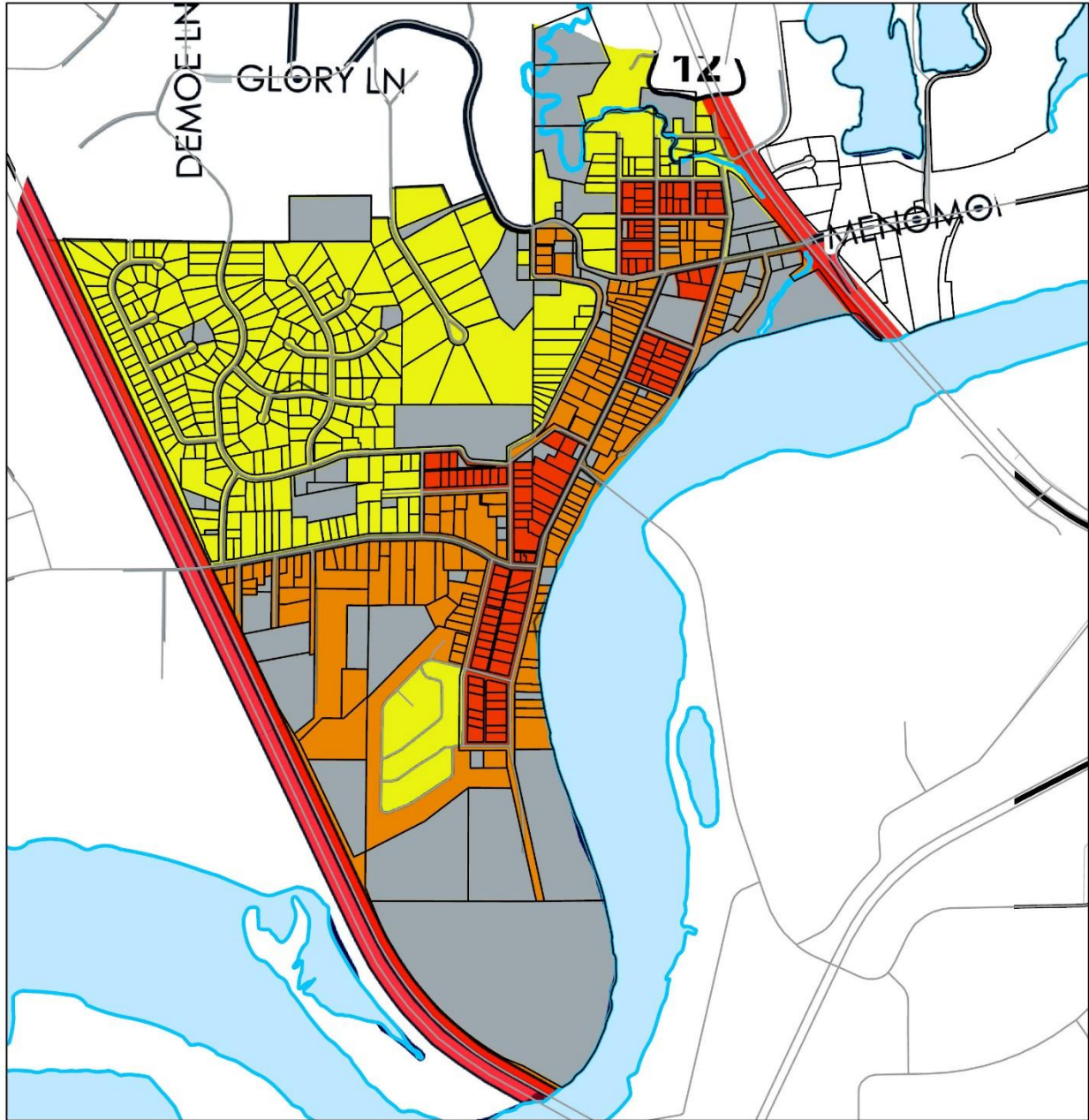


## Housing by Century

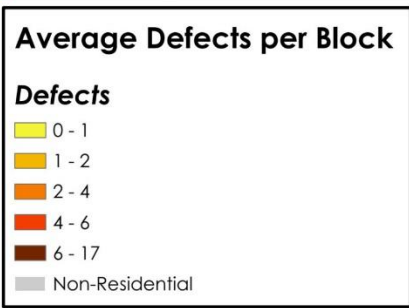


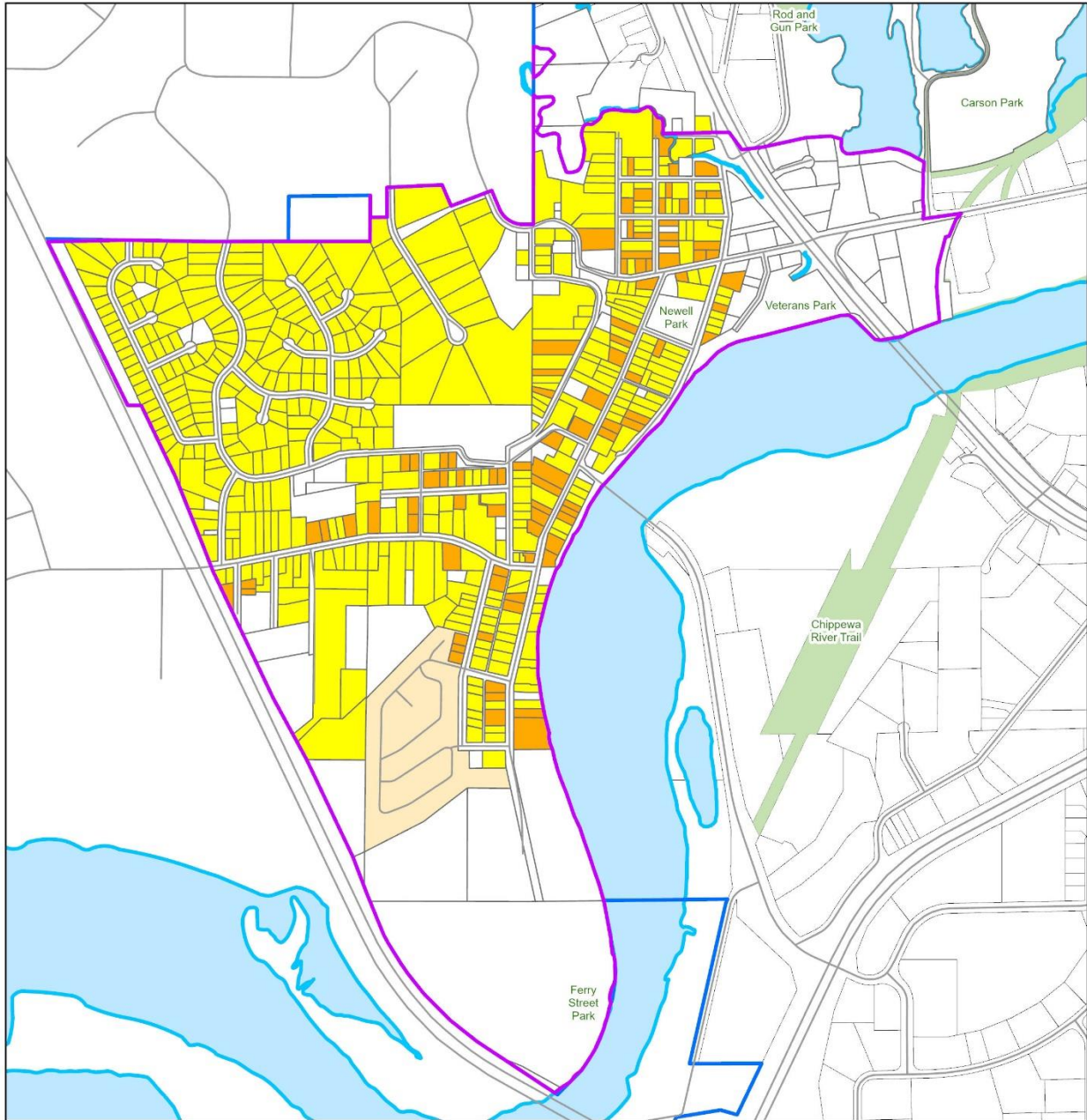
- Pre-1900 (78)
- 1900-2000 (281)
- Post 2000 (152)





## 2022 Housing Defects By Block





## Housing Tenure

- Renter Occupied (91 Parcels)
- Owner Occupied (427 Parcels)
- Non-Residential/Vacant (95 Parcels)
- Mobile Home Park (1 Parcel)



## Section 3.05 Transportation

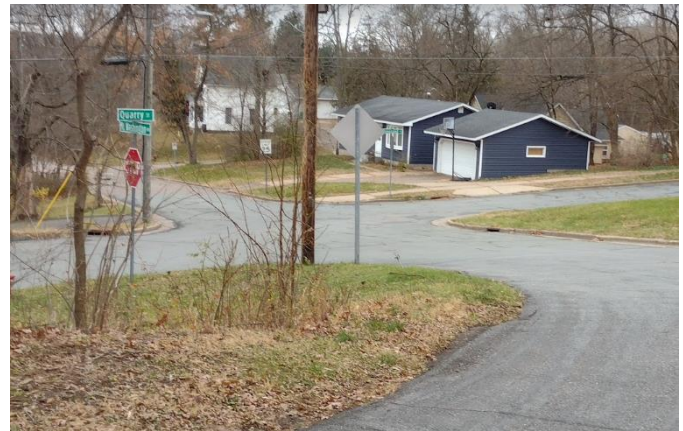
Shawtown is served with adequate minor and major arterial transportation routes with connecting interior local streets. Overall, as streets and infrastructure get improved it will be important to consider all user types and safety. Several transit buses operate on the main corridors and service is currently sufficient. Better bike and pedestrian connections are noted in the Improvement Strategies chapter on page 27.

### *Traffic Control*

One of the most pressing street issues is Ferry Street. This street used to carry electric street cars in the early 1900s and was the main southwest entry into the city using State Highway 85 (Short St. bridge). That changed when major improvements were made with the Claremont Ave./U.S. 12 new river bridge and divided-lane State Hwys. 37/85. Traffic was cited as a major concern along Ferry St. with issues of improving traffic control and reducing speeding. Peak hour weekday traffic uses the route as a shortcut via the Short St. bridge from Hwys. 37/85 on the south to Claremont Ave/Hwy 12 on the north.

Several awkward and potentially dangerous intersections exist along Ferry St. This includes one at Menomonee St. and one at Quarry St. (both pictured below). Problems also exist with the Short St./Ferry St intersection. Nearby, the intersection of Quarry St. with Mt. Washington Ave., Pitt and Cleveland streets is a skewed-legged intersection with tricky sightlines and grade differences making traffic conflicts dangerous.

Rural traffic from County Roads C and ET into Crescent Ave. and Menomonee St. funnel traffic into the neighborhood but levels are low. With Country Jam moving its venue to the north of the city, summer event traffic and parking problems are no longer a concern.







## Street Classifications

- City Limits
- Collector
- Local
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Other
- Private Drive
- Ramp
- US Highway
- XXXX** WisDOT AADT (Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts)





## Section 3.06 Crime

Police coverage includes the neighborhood beat officers and additional response when needed. The district commander is the main point of contact for the neighborhood association. The Police Department runs the Certified Eau Claire Landlord Program which shows how property owners, residents, community advocates, and law enforcement can work together to prevent illegal activity. Current crime levels are relatively low in the neighborhood but there are areas to monitor.

## Section 3.07 Nuisances

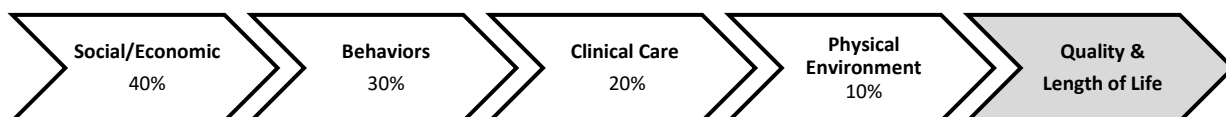
Property violations causing health, safety, and image concerns have been identified by the Steering Committee. Persistent problems are noise, litter, improper outdoor storage of items such as garbage receptacles, trash, and junked materials. The Health, Community Development, and Police Departments all work with property owners and renters to correct violations. The City's Code Enforcement position works with the neighborhood association to better address problems. For example, upon request they can tour areas with the association's leadership to identify code issues.

## Section 3.08 Healthy Neighborhood

Growing evidence shows that the built environment where one lives, works and plays is a major factor towards positive or negative human health. Industrial pollution, over-crowding, deficient housing and improper sanitation are well established legal reasons for why zoning exists to protect the public health. Urban systems can help facilitate healthier lifestyles. More recently evidence-based research suggests that walkable mixed-use neighborhoods with quality housing choice and access to transit, jobs, open space, fresh air, and healthy food outlets are healthier places. For example, chronic disease risk for obesity and respiratory ailments can be reduced. Other dimensions of social and mental health may be improved as well. Adding a new Half Moon Lake boardwalk trail and an upgraded playground in Newell Park are some recent examples in the neighborhood that may enable more outdoor recreation.

The graphic below shows the percentage of various social determinants of health that lead to quality of life and length of life outcomes. Developed by *The County Health Rankings* at UW-Madison's Population Health Institute, it serves as a national benchmark for counties. Although lacking specificity on the neighborhood level, it can be seen as a useful method to consider health outcomes and evaluate places. The largest percent, socio-economic factors, include education, employment, income, family and social support, and community safety/crime. Behaviors factors include diet, exercise, sexual activity, alcohol, tobacco and drug use. Clinic Care represents access to and quality of healthcare. Physical environment factors include housing, transit, air and water quality.

A full health assessment has not been done for Shawtown, but the neighborhood does have a health marketing advantage. Trails, parks, and rivers are all within walking distance. This can help attract newcomers to the area such as baby boomers, families, and young professionals who are attracted to healthier living opportunities.





## Section 3.09 Neighborhood Association

The Shawtown Neighborhood Association is very active and effective in engaging their residents. It is formed as a charitable organization to support all neighbors by encouraging neighbors to meet neighbors through social activities, to watch out for the safety and well-being of each other, and to help maintain neighborhood parks and public areas. The Neighborhood Association does not benefit from private interests and will not attempt to influence legislation or participate in political campaigns. They maintain a website, Facebook and Instagram site for online communication. Going forward it will important to continue the positive momentum created by its leadership so as to build community and assist in implementing this plan.

## Section 3.10 Community Facilities

Shawtown is a smaller neighborhood, and there are not many community facilities located within its boundaries. Indoor year-round public gathering places are not present. There are no schools, large churches nor other places typical of social gathering opportunities. The former Mt. Washington School off 1710 Menomonee St. was demolished and redeveloped into two 4-unit residences in the early 2000s.

The Neighborhood Association often holds meetings at local businesses or at Newell Park pavilion when the weather is good.

As for outdoor spaces in the *2018 – 2022 Park, Open Space and Recreation Facilities Plan*, the 3-acre Newell Park is designated as a neighborhood park and a new Special Area Park called Southwest Dog Park allows boat access to the Chippewa River. The Steering Committee identified more parkland possible at the drainage basin off Cleveland St. The Flying Eagles Ski Club has taken over the Mt. Washington Nordic Ski Center along Menomonee Street.





## Chapter 4. IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

### Section 4.01 Goals

Goals were developed from the direction provided by the Plan Steering Committee after considering existing issues, input from the neighborhood survey, meetings with residents, opportunities, and various improvements strategies. Goals are tied to the strengths, weaknesses, unresolved issues and new opportunities. The plan's goals can be broken down into five main areas listed in the graphic below. The rest of the chapter containing individual improvement policies will follow this framework.





## Section 4.02 Housing

### Guiding Principle

*Improve and preserve housing while providing for a range of choices, densities, price points, owner and rental options.*

### **POLICY #1 Support the rental registration program and work with landlords and building owners to improve housing**

The Plan Steering Committee supports the City’s Housing Inspection Program to improve housing within Shawtown. In 2018, the Eau Claire City-County Health Department launched this program, which replaced the Intensified Housing Code Compliance Program. The goal is to improve housing that has fallen behind on basic building, health, and safety codes as well as maintain a property registration database for landlords. A rental registration program was recommended in the City’s Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force Report as the city’s top priority and also listed in the City’s 2015/2022 Comprehensive Plan.

The Housing Inspection Program surveys the exterior of all housing at least once every five years to identify homes with the highest health and safety concerns. Issues can also be filed by complainants. Problematic properties are inspected for possible corrective action. If violations are corrected before inspection or re-inspection dates, fees may be waived.

Action Steps:	Support the housing inspection and rental registration program.
Responsibility:	City-County Eau Claire Health Department
Timeframe:	Ongoing & West side survey completed 2022

### **POLICY #2 Provide a Residential Matching Improvement Grant**

To upgrade housing or associated property maintenance (landscaping, driveway, etc.), the Plan Steering Committee thought a small residential matching grant program would be beneficial. Small improvements can sometimes have a big impact on properties.

Action Steps:	Funding for program needs to be identified and secured along with developing the implementation process.
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association
Timeframe:	Short-term

### **POLICY #3 Support Oak Ridge Village Mobile Home Park**

Continue to engage and support the property owner, on-site operations manager, and residents within this part of Shawtown for ongoing inclusion and housing improvements. Rezone the commercial section of the village for consistency. Reconsider zoning changes in the R-1B Mobile Home Park District allowing detached structures over 100 square feet if there is sufficient spacing.



Action Steps:	Support and include the mobile home village in neighborhood activities. Rezone C-3 property and revise R-1B Mobile Home Park District standards in zoning code update
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association, City
Timeframe:	Ongoing, Short-term



## POLICY #4 Support housing choices for all

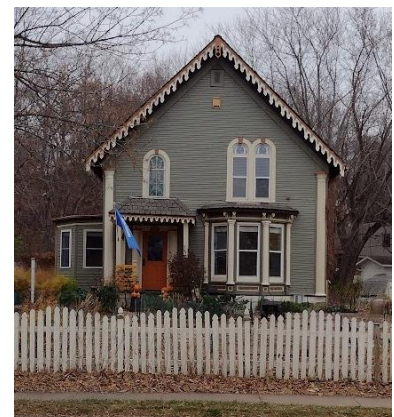
The Plan Steering Committee values the mix of residential options within the neighborhood and will support efforts to grow these options and make people aware of the housing resources available. Lifestyle and householder compositions have evolved so that housing choices need to be more accommodating such as with allowing accessory dwelling units or live-work opportunities.

Action Steps:	Support increased diverse housing opportunities
Responsibilities:	City with zoning code overhaul project, Neighborhood Association support
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #5 Buildings of architectural or historic value

Continue to preserve existing older homes and properties that add charm, character, or historical significance, such as the former Shawtown sawmill office house. It is recognized that the neighborhood has an age mix of homes, but newer subdivisions should not be forced into an historic design scheme unless it is voluntary.

Action Steps:	Support preservation opportunities
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association, City Landmarks Commission
Timeframe:	Ongoing



## Section 4.03 Revitalization

### Guiding Principle

Allow neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment where guided by the Comprehensive Plan to provide a mix in commercial services, housing densities, rental, ownership, and price options.

### POLICY #1 Correct Dual-Zoning

The City will be updating its zoning ordinances in 2023-2025. This is a chance to correct dual-zoned properties so there are no associated property title problems or land use incompatibilities.

Action Steps:	Rezone properties with dual zoning to what is most appropriate
Responsibilities:	City Planning
Timeframe:	Short-term

### POLICY #2 Allow middle housing

As depicted in the graphic, there are many middle housing types in the housing spectrum. Shawtown is somewhat illustrative. The neighborhood has a variety of co-existing housing types. Investigate possible zoning modifications to allow for middle housing types that are sensitive to context and adjacent land uses. For example, the Plan Steering Committee was supportive of allowing medium density infill housing in the vacant lands south of Crescent Ave., east of I-94, west of the Oak Ridge Village mobile home park and recommends the future planned land use map in the Comprehensive Plan be amended.



Action Steps:	Consider zoning modifications that allow missing middle or medium density housing in appropriate areas. Amend the Comprehensive Plan land use map during the next update.
Responsibilities:	City
Timeframe:	Short-term



## POLICY #3 Use established site and building design criteria so development fits the neighborhood

Using well-established and sound site planning principles for development can produce superior outcomes for residents, adjacent business uses, and visitors. For example, buffering multi-family or commercial land uses and parking with landscaping and using distance setbacks and building design massing can improve the appearance and livability of neighborhoods. The Mt. Washington



apartment complex that was approved in 2023 (under construction in photo) is a good example that considered landscape buffering and concealing resident parking below and behind apartments. The project is a redevelopment of the former sanatorium that has been an eyesore in the neighborhood for years.

Action Steps:	Consider building design and site planning zoning improvements during the update to the City-wide code.
Responsibilities:	City
Timeframe:	Short-term, ongoing

## POLICY #4 Menomonie St. and Clairemont Ave. Redevelopment area

The City's Comprehensive Plan guides this major intersection and larger area for commercial redevelopment. The Sonnentag Event Center to the east, but just outside the neighborhood, will become a major destination center that will drive much ancillary development. This community resource will offer new recreational/entertainment opportunities and medical rehabilitation services with Mayo Clinic Health System that will make Shawtown more desirable and will benefit existing residents. While this general area is mainly slated for commercial (hotels, restaurants, retail, etc.) there could be apartments creating more of an activity center. Change may extend west of Clairemont Ave. opening up more redevelopment opportunities. A new restaurant is planned to open at the former Mobile gas station. New growth was seen as beneficial by the Plan Steering Committee, but added traffic problems and safe pedestrian and bicycle travel were seen as important issues that will need to be addressed. The neighborhood should be consulted on plans for projects within its boundaries.



Action Steps:	Allow redevelopment and more intense mixed-use development near the Sonnentag Event Center as per the Comprehensive Plan. Allow neighborhood input on projects that have impacts on Shawtown.
Responsibilities:	City, Neighborhood Association
Timeframe:	Ongoing







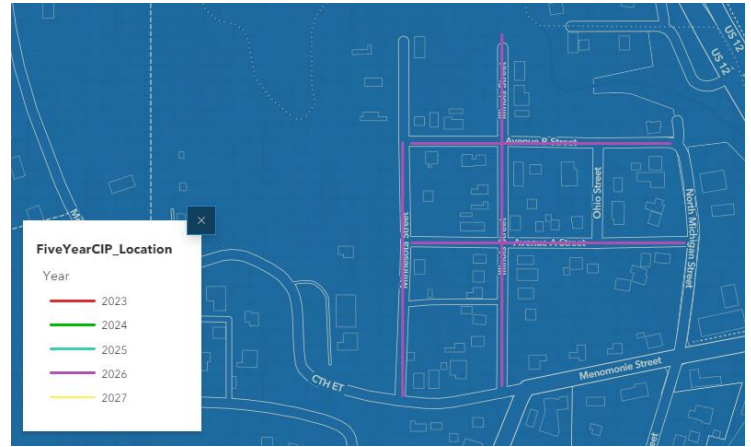
## Section 4.04 Transportation

### Guiding Principle

Improve transportation safety and options to promote utilization of different modes of travel, while mitigating traffic congestion.

### POLICY #1 Improve transportation infrastructure via Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funding

The City Engineering Department plans Capital Improvement projects within a 5-year funding timeframe<sup>4</sup>. Only a few projects are slated for construction within 2023-2027. This includes reconstructs in 2026 for Minnesota St., Illinois St., Avenue A and Avenue B. The City prioritizes projects based on several different factors, such as age and condition of utilities, pavement conditions, and crash history. Prioritized projects can include segments that may contain lead service line replacements but this is not a main concern within the neighborhood.



Action Steps:	Rebuild roads and trails per the City's Capital Improvement Plan
Responsibilities:	City Engineering
Timeframe:	Ongoing

### POLICY #2 Plan for Menomonie St. and Clairemont Ave. (U.S. Hwy. 12) Impacts

The Sonntag Event Center and other future redevelopment will impact traffic volumes and safety at this main intersection of two important street corridors. All four intersection legs will be signalized for pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements. A trail connection in this area needs to be studied in terms of alignment, feasibility, and expenditure. Options may include at-grade considerations or under the WisDOT's bridge to connect with the trail on the east side of U.S. Highway 12. Within the eastern part of Shawtown, nearer to the event center, Menomonie Street is not planned to be enlarged with forecasted service levels. Instead, it will be improved for the time being with a new wear drive surface.

Action Steps:	Monitor traffic impacts of redevelopment. Rebuild roads, sidewalks, and trails per the Capital Improvement Plan.
Responsibilities:	City Engineering
Timeframe:	Ongoing

<sup>4</sup> City of Eau Claire's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan, retrieved November 2023 at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/d9f1697e81dd4371963067a4ee7fd48f>





## POLICY #3 Monitor and improve problematic intersections and roadways

The Plan Steering Committee identified several areas of speeding and traffic concern and the neighborhood public survey reinforced these same concerns. The Menomonie St. and Ferry St. skewed intersection is challenging depending on peak traffic times and sight lines. Vehicles traveling down La Mans Lane can pick up speed down the hill. Kenora Pkwy., Monte Carlo Dr. and Cleveland St. may benefit from a yield sign. Lighting and traffic control could be improved at the western end of Short St. onto Ferry St. The Cleveland St., Mt. Washington Ave., Pitt St. and Quarry St. awkward parallel intersection has been an issue for locals and could be improved.



Traffic on Ferry St., especially using Short St. bridge to Clairemont Ave. during peak travel times, has been a repeated concern. Classified as a Minor Arterial, the average daily traffic is over 6,000 trips. The neighborhood has concerns that more could be done to calm traffic and improve safety. More traffic is expected with growth of the Mt. Washington apartments and from around the Sonnentag Event Center. In particular, the neighborhood steering committee is concerned about pedestrian safety on Ferry Street by the playground. The committee is proposing that the speed limit on Ferry Street be reduced by 5 mph (to 25 mph) for safety by the park and that a flashing crossing light for pedestrians be added by the cross walk on Ferry Street. This route is also an important transit corridor to serve the neighborhood and lanes have already been reduced down to 10.5' to allow the safe passage of the bus while trying to calm traffic speeds.

While no improvements are currently slated for these concerns, the City Engineering Department will continue to monitor Ferry Street and other problematic areas using evidence-based data to inform and prioritize funding decisions. For example, a stop sign is not allowed by the FHWA's (Federal Highway Administration) MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) for traffic calming measures alone.

Action Steps:	Monitor and study traffic impacts to inform and prioritize improvement projects
Responsibilities:	City Engineering
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #4 Sidewalk Gaps

Gaps identified on the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan should be closed or studied for further analysis. A long 450' sidewalk segment from the new Southwest Dog Park to Mary St. could be added to reach the new park destination.

Action Steps:	Close sidewalk gaps to improve connectivity
Responsibilities:	City Engineering and Parks Division
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #5 Support Transit Access

Concerns about transit access and service were minimal in the neighborhood survey. Two bus routes serve Shawtown- Routes #2 and #7. Service frequency could be better from resident opinions.



Action Steps:	Continue to serve the neighborhood with transit access
Responsibilities:	Eau Claire Transit
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## Section 4.05 Public Services

### Guiding Principle

*Continue public investments in city services, parklands, and facilities to sustain and improve Shawtown’s livability.*

### POLICY #1 Improve public parks in Shawtown

#### Newell Park

The City recently reinvested in Shawtown’s main neighborhood park with new and accessible playground equipment and refurbishment of the pavilion. Parking was improved along First Reserve Street. Continue to include the ballfield and basketball/four square courts for fitness and organized play and continue to have an ice rink. The Newell Park area was the site of the bunkhouse for workers for the Daniel Shaw Lumber Company. Daniel Shaw’s mansion was further down the street and the lumber mill was on the river. A historical sign could be placed in Newell Park to share that history.



#### Veterans Park

Since the land is in the floodplain, continue to use as a passive natural place for solitude and natural habitat. The ruins of the Daniel Shaw’s sawmill can be seen here, so a small interpretative sign could be installed. Trails should be left natural. A small bridge over Sherman Creek could be built if allowed by the DNR and if funding is obtained.



#### Southwest Dog Park & Boat Launch

Working with the DNR the City could install/build a wing dam slightly upstream from the launch to slow the fast current.

Temporary restrooms have been vandalized so they have been removed until more funding can be identified.

#### Carson Park and Rod & Gun

Shawtown includes the far southwest corners of these two parks. A concrete sidewalk has recently been installed to link the two parks. With the WI DNR approval, boardwalks have been installed to get closer access to Half Moon Lake. This trail will provide greater access and connection to the larger trail network within the City of Eau Claire. Invasive species should be removed but continue to leave park areas that surround Half Moon Lake more naturalized.



### Future Park off Cleveland St.

Continue to use the City-owned drainage space for informal recreation. Study in the City’s five-year parks and open space plan for long-term development. There are several issues with lack of proper access due to the hillside off Cleveland St., acquisition of some adjacent parcels, water drainage for the area, and funding concerns for any future development.



### Ski Jump

Continue to support the private Flying Eagles Ski Club ski jump off Menomonee St. The structure is part of Shawtown’s identity and the neighborhood wants to support the sport locally. Continue to monitor any potential issues with the ski jump.

Action Steps:	Continue to serve the neighborhood with quality parks and recreational activities.
Responsibilities:	Community Services, Parks & Rec. Divisions, Neighborhood Assoc., Flying Eagles Ski Club
Timeframe:	Ongoing

### POLICY #2 Continue to support Eau Claire Police, Fire, and City-County Health Departments

Continue to assist the ECPD, ECFD, and ECCCHD in networking and sharing information to lead to better neighborhood outcomes. This can range from dealing with crashes and crime to fire safety and basic sanitation concerns.

Action Steps:	Continue to support local government services that improve the neighborhood
Responsibilities:	City services and Neighborhood Association
Timeframe:	Ongoing

### POLICY #3 Continue to operate the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) effectively

Continue to invest in and maintain the WWTP so that it serves the city population. This critical facility is located in the neighborhood. The 2015 \$40 million upgrade improved the treatment process and odor control, but did not completely eliminate it. Smells can be off-putting on certain days of the year.

Action Steps:	Continue to invest and operate the Wastewater Treatment Plant to high standards
Responsibilities:	Community Services, Utility Division
Timeframe:	Ongoing





## Section 4.06 Quality of Life

### Guiding Principle

*Through social, physical, and environmental improvements enhance the well-being of residents while increasing the desirability of living in Shawtown.*

### **POLICY #1 Continue to run and grow an active Neighborhood Association to advocate for the neighborhood and its plan**

The Shawtown Neighborhood Association has a committed group of neighbors who care about their neighborhood. The Culture Statement states: [to be] an association that actively collaborates to foster support, safety, and growth to enhance the Shawtown neighborhood for everyone.

There is strong identity and leadership with regular meetings to deal with business, issues, and planning social events. Increased participation in the association and general neighborhood activities is always needed to sustain what has been built. This capacity will be important when building a sense of community and accomplishing recommendations in this plan. The neighborhood survey for this plan also confirmed these functions are important for the neighborhood to have in an association.

#### What functions do you believe are important for a Neighborhood Association to provide?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Lobby for neighborhood improvement projects within the city		55.8%	63
Ensure City rules are followed		47.8%	54
Create improved sense of community		61.1%	69
Coordinate neighborhood gatherings		46.0%	52
Keep neighbors informed		51.3%	58
Other		7.1%	8

The following is a list of actions that can be used when growing the community within the neighborhood.

- Hold regular association meetings.
- Create community between residents by holding social events that are open to the public such as block parties, picnics/pot-lucks, river floats, neighborhood thrift sales, clean ups, movie-nights, seasonal events.
- Continue website and social media presence to communicate to neighbors and provide resources.
- Continue recruitment and empower residents by using democratic civic engagement strategies like Clear Vision Eau Claire toolkit.
- Provide a communication link between neighborhood residents and the City about housing issues, crime, or street condition issues.
- Continue to recognize those that make Shawtown a special place.
- Operate a neighborhood community garden.
- Assist local government staff to look for and deal with code-related problems.
- Implement the neighborhood plan and work with the City to review private and public development projects that affect the neighborhood.





Action Steps:	Continue to run an active neighborhood association, plan events, implement the neighborhood plan, review development projects and empower new members
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association and residents
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #2 Maintain non-profit status

The association has non-profit status as a 501 (c)(3) and looks out for the welfare, common good, and civic betterment of its residents and neighborhood. This organizational set up works well so they can facilitate operating expenses, collect revenue, grants, and donations. There is an annual filing report to maintain status. Having a neighborhood association with bylaws and a budget allows it to collect the small administrative grant the City provides to active associations.



Action Steps:	Continue to maintain non-profit status
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association and residents
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #3 Build a better sense of place

Shawtown has a strong sense of history going back to before the City of Eau Claire was incorporated. The association has developed a strong branding presence online with social media and a website along with some merchandise options. The Plan Steering Committee believed more could be done however with having an on-site physical presence. This may include entrance signs or street signs telling people that they are in Shawtown. Informational marker signs in parks such as near the ruins of the Danial Shaw lumber mill in Veterans Park could also help convey the history.





Action Steps:	Continue to offer a strong online presence and consider options to improve the neighborhood’s identity with physical signage or educational markers
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association
Timeframe:	Ongoing

**POLICY #4 Continue to support the code enforcement program**

The neighborhood and Plan Steering Committee are supportive of continuing existing programs like the City’s code enforcement staffing and the City-County Health Department’s Housing Rental Code Compliance Program. As similar with Policy #1 under the Housing Goal, the rental registration and inspection program process is useful to be more proactive on troublesome issues or persistent code violations.

Action Steps:	Support and liaison with local government code enforcement staff. Provide residents with contact information and share the City’s “Maintaining Neighborhood Standards” brochure.
Responsibilities:	City with Neighborhood Association assistance
Timeframe:	Ongoing

**POLICY #5 Protect and maintain the unique, natural, and historic qualities of the neighborhood**

Shawtown’s quality of life is rooted to its location along the Chippewa River and the surrounding hilly topography. Mount Washington is a defining feature along with the river and provides scenic beauty and character. Thus, development should respect the natural environment as much as possible. Under the DNR’s environmental sensitive areas (ESAs) trees on steep slopes can be protected. This includes lands inside and outside of city limits that may be annexed in the future.

Historic preservation is also an important quality of life component giving a sense of identity and meaning to the neighborhood. As noted in Policy #5 under Housing Goal, historic properties that are landmarked should continue to follow the ordinances that cover preservation. There are not many eligible properties in the neighborhood although there are older housing and buildings. Regardless of landmarking status, these properties could be featured more online or with signage if it makes sense such as with the Daniel Shaw mill ruins.

Action Steps:	Work with the City to maintain or mitigate damage to environmental sensitive areas required by DNR or future zoning. Continue to preserve landmarked properties and bring to life past history of sites that may not be landmarked.
Responsibilities:	City, Regional Plan Commission, DNR
Timeframe:	Ongoing





## POLICY #6 Continue to support alternative energy and reduce carbon emissions

The City has goals to be carbon neutral by 2050 and operate on 100% renewable energy by the same date. While this is ambitious, the neighborhood can do its part to deal with the climate crisis and reduce pollution by considering many options that work with their own situation. From carpooling and riding bike to installing higher R-value insulation and heat pumps, these actions all add up. If in a position to install solar or ground source heat pumps these projects can contribute to utility bill savings over time and on-site renewable energy.



Action Steps:	Encourage more sustainable actions that improve local and global environmental conditions
Responsibilities:	City along with neighbor businesses and residents voluntarily
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #7 Reduce waste hauling impacts including litter

The Plan Steering Committee expressed concerns over waste collection methods and desired to seek solutions to solve negative impacts. For example, the City/County minimum standard for recyclable collection is a small 18-gallon open container. These recycling bins can lead to litter problems if they are overfilled or if the wind blows items out. The practice is outdated. Many haulers now offer larger 96-gallon carts with lids for single-stream recycling.

Action Steps:	Work with waste haulers to find solutions to problematic waste collection methods that negatively impact the neighborhood.
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association
Timeframe:	Ongoing

## POLICY #8 Plant more trees

Trees can add a sense of place and important quality of life opportunities. Public benefits can range from shading and cooling to stormwater management and pollution mitigation. The neighborhood would like to work with City Forestry to add street trees and trees in other public places that would enhance Shawtown.

Action Steps:	Work with City Forestry to identify good species and locations for more trees.
Responsibilities:	Neighborhood Association & City Forestry
Timeframe:	Ongoing

