



City of Eau Claire's Comprehensive Plan Sustainable Development Policies

Comprehensive Plan

Outside of the sustainability chapter, the following is a list of the Plan's other chapters containing sustainability strategies. The chapters' goal, set objectives and underlining policies are noted. Refer to the Comprehensive Plan document for complete text of each policy statement.

❖ Land Use Chapter

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

- **Objective: Sustainable Growth:** Grow by investing in established areas, carefully planning new neighborhoods, providing attractive public amenities, and protecting environmental resources.

Policies:

- *Compact and Contiguous Growth.*
- *Complete New Neighborhoods.*
- *Infill and Reinvestment.*
- *Maintain Older Neighborhoods.*
- *Intensify Activity Centers.*
- *Annexation.*

- **Objective: Perimeter and Regional Growth:** Achieve compact and cost-effective perimeter growth for the long-term future.

Policies:

- *Growth Management.*
- *Limit Non-sewered Development.*
- *Environmental Protection.*
- *Protection of Prime Farmland.*
- *Encouraging Smart Growth.*
- *Infrastructure Investments.*

- **Objective: Residential Neighborhoods:** Reinforce or create neighborhoods with a diversity of housing, attractive public spaces, compatible land uses, and a sense of identity.

Policies:

- *Compact Growth.*
- *Variety within Each New Neighborhood.*
- *Context-sensitive Redevelopment and Infill.*
- *Multiple Land Uses in Neighborhoods.*
- *Mixed- and Multiple-use Development.*

- **Objective: Riverfronts and Stream Corridors:** Guide waterfront land use to parks, open spaces, housing, offices, and similar land uses that are compatible with the rivers. The pattern and design of land development or open space along



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waterfronts is an important objective in Eau Claire because of the great number of miles of river or creek edge in the community.

- **Objective: Major Roadway Corridors:** Plan land use along the major road corridors in a manner supportive of the functional classification of the road.

Policies:

- *Road Corridor more intensive Land Use Planning.*

- **Objective: Environmental Resources:** Safeguard and improve environmental features as a means of promoting sustainable urban development, revitalization, and quality of life.

Policies:

- *Protect Wetlands.*
- *Protect Flood Plains.*
- *Steep or and extend greenways.*
- *Parks.*
- *Non-metallic Mineral Resources.*
- *Wooded Slope regulation.*
- *Minimize the loss of Prime Agricultural Lands.*

- **Objective: Redevelopment:** Restore underutilized urban and waterfront properties to viable commercial, residential, or recreational opportunities.

- **Objective: Public Infrastructure Investments Redevelopment:** Encourage state and local investments in public facilities and infrastructure that are consistent with the principles of Smart Growth and the objectives of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

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

Policies:

- *Shared Metropolitan Vision of Smart Growth.*
- *Sustainable Development.*

❖ **Natural Resources Chapter**

Goal: Protect or improve steep slopes, wetlands, and streams in Eau Claire to promote sustainable development, ecological responsibility, quality of life, and economic development.

- **Objective: Water Resources:** Protect and improve the quality of surface water and ground water in and near Eau Claire.

Policies:

- *Storm Water Plan Implementation.*



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- *Storm Water Plan Updates.*
- *Regional Surface Water Management Plan.*
- *River and Stream Shoreline Protection.*
- *Greenway Design.*
- *Wetland Restoration.*
- *River Flood Plain Management.*
- *River Flood Plain Property Acquisition.*
- *Reduce Groundwater Contamination.*
- *Infiltration Standards.*
- *Lawn Fertilizers.*

- **Objective: Wildlife Habitat:** Protect the key remaining small tracts of wildlife habitat and restore or improve the quality of other locations. Wildlife habitat is limited in this urban area, but key locations, such as around Half Moon Lake and along river and stream corridors, can be protected.

Policies:

- *Native Species of Vegetation.*
- *Greenways.*
- *Urban Forest.*

- **Objective: Soil Resources:** Safeguard soils by reducing soil erosion, especially near streams and wetlands, and by promoting compact urban growth. Reducing soil erosion supports the objective of protecting water quality.

Policies:

- *Regulate Steep Slopes.*
- *Prevent Erodible Slopes.*
- *Enforce Other Erodible Sites.*
- *Minimizing the loss of Prime Farmlands.*

❖ Transportation Chapter

Goal: Improve the City transportation system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, and provide a variety of mode choices, while enhancing neighborhood livability and resident quality of life.

- **Objective: Balanced and Efficient Transportation System:** Provide a balanced and efficient transportation network that offers viable alternatives to driving and maximizes use of existing investments.

Policies:

- *Evaluate Projects for Multi-Modal Needs.*
- *Mode Connectivity.*
- *Alternative Mode Choices.*



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- **Objective: Transportation Smart Growth and Land Use:** Coordinate the provision and improvement of transportation infrastructure with revitalization projects and compact, directed growth.

Policies:

- *Compact and Contiguous Growth.*
- *New Neighborhoods with mix of land uses.*
- *Infill and Redevelopment.*
- *Invest in Older Neighborhoods.*
- *Activity Centers.*

- **Objective: Transit-oriented Development:** Promote development in corridors and districts that encourage transit ridership

Policies:

- *Transit-oriented Development (TOD) Site Plan Guidelines.*

- **Objective: Neighborhood Streets:** Design neighborhood streets with features for automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian travel while limiting the impacts of traffic.

Policies:

- *Local Street Design.*
- *ADA-compliant Streets.*
- *Traffic Calming.*

- **Objective: Pedestrian Environment:** Improve pedestrian connections to create a continuous and seamless pedestrian system, and enhance the pedestrian environment to create a more walkable community.

Policies:

- *Build Sidewalks.*
- *Pedestrian System Plan.*
- *Pedestrian Crossings.*
- *Multi-jurisdictional Cooperation.*
- *Urban Design.*
- *Traffic Calming.*
- *Downtown Pedestrian Connections.*

- **Objective: Local Bus Transit System:** Sustain and improve the local bus transit system to serve both transit dependent and discretionary riders.

Policies:

- *Capital Investments (The Eau Claire Transit Station and new buses).*
- *Ensure High Quality Paratransit Service.*
- *Transportation Demand Management (carpooling/flexible/work times/telecommute).*

- **Objective: Intercity Bus Service:** Coordinate local and intercity transit service.



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Policies:

- *Encourage Greyhound to relocate its present inter-city stop to the transit station.*

- **Objective: Bicycle Network:** Continue to build a connected bicycle route and trail network that is viable, convenient, safe, and secure and which will encourage both utilitarian and recreational riding.

Policies:

- *Bicycle Plan Implementation.*
- *Trails Network.*
- *Bike Route System.*
- *On-road Striped Bicycle Lanes.*
- *Future Local and Collector Streets.*
- *Accessibility and Parking.*

- **Objective: Parking Management:** Require only the amount of parking necessary to avoid problems and maintain viable businesses, considering transit and on-street spaces.

Policies:

- *Downtown Parking Management Plan.*
- *Balanced Neighborhood Parking.*
- *Minimum Parking Requirements.*

- **Objective: Passenger Rail:** Work with the Midwest Rail Initiative, WisDOT, and other agencies to link Eau Claire to the proposed high-speed passenger rail service.

Policies:

- *Midwest Regional Rail Initiative.*

❖ **Parks System Chapter**

Goal: Expand the park system into new neighborhoods while improving the conditions in the older parks.

- **Objective: Role of Parks in Urban Design:** Locate and design parks, greenways, and parkways to enhance the quality of residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, reflect Eau Claire's cultural heritage, and honor civic life.

Policies:

- *A Network of Green Spaces.*
- *A System of Civic Spaces.*
- *Neighborhood Quality.*
- *Waterfront Public Open Space.*
- *Quiet Spaces.*
- *Civic Pride and Local Heritage.*
- *Park Buildings follow a consistent architectural theme.*



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- *Development of Adjacent Park and Greenway Areas.*

- **Objective: Ecology and Environment:** Plan and design parks and greenways to protect environmentally sensitive features, reduce negative environmental effects and serve as models of land stewardship.

Policies:

- *Natural Preservation and Stewardship.*
- *Half Moon Lake Watershed.*
- *Otter Creek.*
- *Manage Drainageways Naturally.*
- *Use Sustainable Plantings.*
- *Link Open Spaces.*
- *Retain Unmanaged Places.*
- *Stewardship Example.*
- *Provide Educational Opportunities.*
- *Work with Other Organizations.*

❖ Physical Character Chapter

Goal: Improve the aesthetics and enhance the identity of the City as a whole, and its neighborhoods, major road corridors, and waterfronts by building on its traditional urban character, natural amenities, and history.

- **Objective: Overall Urban Character:** Design Eau Claire to incorporate the best aspects of both a small town and a major city.

Policies:

- *Nodes of Urbanity in a Small Town.*
- *Promote Downtown and the River.*
- *Greening the City.*
- *Improve the appearance of the Major Commercial Corridors.*
- *De-emphasize the Automobile.*
- *Preserve and accentuate Urban vs. Rural Distinctions.*

- **Objective: Regional Setting:** Use public improvements, public art, and land development regulations to preserve, highlight, and interpret the major elements and special places that evoke the regional environmental and cultural history of Eau Claire.

Policies:

- *Paper Milling and Logging Economies.*
- *Early Ethnic and Religious Heritage.*
- *Special Places.*
- *Entrance Corridors and Major Intersections.*
- *Views and Landmarks.*
- *Wayfinding Sign System.*



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- **Objective: New Neighborhoods:** Design new neighborhoods to reflect the best qualities of the traditional neighborhoods of Eau Claire.

Policies:

- *Minor Residential Streets.*
- *Continue to allow Alleys.*
- *Collector Streets with subarea plans.*
- *Require Sidewalks on both sides of each new local and collector street.*
- *Street Trees.*
- *Garage Setbacks.*

- **Objective: Established Neighborhoods:** Maintain or revive the traditional urban character of the older neighborhoods so that they remain attractive places to live.

Policies:

- *Neighborhood Protection.*
- *Context-sensitive Redevelopment and Infill.*
- *Mixed Use in Neighborhoods.*
- *Historic Preservation.*

- **Objective: Mixed- and Multi-use Development:** Encourage a mix of compatible land uses in a variety of locations and scales in order to create more vital and walkable activity centers.

Policies:

- *Neighborhood Center Scale.*
- *Commercial District Scale.*
- *Downtown Scale.*
- *New Neighborhoods and Centers.*

- **Objective: Site Design:** Improve standards for site planning and design, including building and parking placement, pedestrian connections, signage, and landscaping.

Policies:

- *Connections.*
- *Efficiency in shared uses.*
- *Landscaping.*
- *Sensitivity to Context.*
- *Parking Design.*
- *Environmental Protection.*
- *Open Space.*
- *Coordinated Signage.*
- *Transit-oriented Design.*
- *Incentives.*

- **Objective: Waterfronts:** Improve the visual quality and connections to the Chippewa and Eau Claire Rivers to support appropriate development and enhance the community's quality of life.



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Policies:

- *Public Open Space and Walkways.*
- *Relationships of Buildings to the Open Space Edge.*
- *Edge Treatments to stabilize shorelines.*

- **Objective: Major Road Corridors:** Improve the appearance of the major road corridors in Eau Claire through landscaping, site planning, sign regulation, and access management.

Policies:

- *Commercial Site Landscaping.*
- *Corridor Landscaping and Lighting Improvements.*
- *Housing Abutting High-volume Roads.*
- *Street Trees.*

- **Objective: Parkways:** Build an interconnected parkway system to help improve community appearances, property values, and quality of life.

Policies:

- *Parkways System Plan.*

- **Objective: Outdoor Lighting:** Regulate outdoor lighting so as to reduce off-site glare and nuisances.

Policies:

- *Control exterior lighting so it is not a nuisance.*

❖ **Economic Development Chapter**

Goal: Seek to maintain a diverse economic base, high-quality workforce, and key quality of life assets necessary for attracting business investment and creating a sustainable tax base.

- **Objective: Dynamic Global Economy:** Periodically review and update economic development strategies, policies, investments, and programs to respond to changing economic conditions and opportunities.

Policies:

- *Development Areas.*
- *Incentive Programs.*
- *Organization.*

- **Objective: Sustainable Development:** Foster development that balances the benefits and burdens of economic growth by seeking to meet current community economic needs without reducing the capacity to meet the needs of the future.

Policies:

- *Conserve Land and Natural Resources.*
- *Leverage Previous Infrastructure Investments.*
- *Connectivity.*



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- *Infrastructure Systems.*
- *Infrastructure Design.*
- *Preservation of Natural Systems.*
- *Infill.*
- *Diverse Neighborhoods.*
- *Building Footprint.*
- *Building Design.*

- **Objective: Redevelopment:** Support redevelopment of contaminated, blighted, and underused properties with strong potential for reuse as business and industrial development sites.
- **Objective: Revitalization Efforts:** Foster economic revitalization of Downtown, the riverfront and other commercial areas by encouraging diverse economic activity, including public and private offices, retail, services, medical, hospitality businesses, higher density housing, and civic, cultural, and entertainment uses.

Policies:

- *Retain and attract major employers Downtown.*
- *Work to retain and attract Entertainment, Civic, Recreational and Cultural Resources.*
- *Seek to attract higher density housing in and around Downtown*
- *Improve Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).*
- *Riverfront Redevelopment.*
- *Water Street: Support continued revitalization.*
- *Hastings Way: improve aesthetics and business investment.*
- *Oakwood Mall Area.*

- **Objective: Workforce:** Foster the competitive workforce needed for a high technology economy by working with community organizations and institutions to update existing workforce skills and to invest in the outdoor, recreational, lifestyle, entertainment and neighborhood amenities.

Policies:

- *Retain Students.*
- *Link Employers and Workforce Development Resources.*
- *Support Quality of Life.*

- **Objective: Transportation and Telecommunications Infrastructure:** Support and facilitate strong telecommunications and transportation infrastructure to all local business, industrial and office centers of economic activity, as well as to regional economic/transportation hubs such as Minneapolis, Chicago, Milwaukee and Duluth/Superior.

Policies:

- *Telecommunications Lines, Antennae, and Wireless Devices.*
- *High Speed Rail.*
- *Chippewa Valley Regional Airport.*



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- **Objective: Organization and Coordination:** Work with public and private economic development partners to efficiently and effectively address economic development issues and opportunities and minimize duplication of effort.

Policies:

- Provide water, sewer, and storm utilities to industrial parks.

- **Objective: Tourism:** Support regional strategies to attract visitors to the area in ways that balance the economic benefits from tourism with the economic costs of expanded traffic and use of public facilities and services.

❖ Public Utilities Chapter

Goal: Maintain the existing public utility system and extend urban services to fringe areas in a planned, staged manner, while minimizing the impacts to the natural environment.

- **Objective: New Public Water and Sewer System Infrastructure:** Ensure that water and sewer systems are extended to annexed properties in a planned and staged manner with minimal disruption to the natural environment.

Policies:

- *Utilities Staging Plan: approve and extend according to priority.*

- **Objective: Natural Environment:** Maintain the existing public utility system and construct new utility infrastructure in a manner that minimizes harm to the natural environment. Sewer and water services allow and promote intensive urban growth in undisturbed locations. Eau Claire is committed to regulating such growth so that it respects sensitive natural features.

Policies:

- *Minimize Disturbance to Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESAs).*
- *Improve protection of Steep Slopes.*
- *Regulating clear cutting of Major Wooded areas.*
- *Discourage Private On-site Wastewater Treatment.*

- **Objective: Surface Water Management.**

Policies:

- *Continue to refer to the recommendations of Storm Water Plan Implementation.*
- *Update Storm Water Plan.*
- *Continue to safeguard and improve Water Quality Protection.*
- *Expand the City's present requirements for erosion control.*
- *Regional Surface Water Management Plan.*



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❖ Community Facilities Chapter

Goal: Locate and maintain public facilities and services so as to support the goals of compact growth, neighborhood revitalization, and sustainable new neighborhood design.

- **Objective: Cost-effective and High-quality Facilities:** Provide public facilities in a cost-effective manner and build them to a high standard of quality.
- **Objective: Continue a high level of police and fire services.**
- **Objective: Coordinate urban growth, particularly new parks, with Schools.**
- **Objective: Other Facilities and Services.**

Policies:

- *Solid Waste Recycling collection and Disposal.*
- *Power Generation and Transmission.*

❖ Housing Chapter

Goal: Stabilize and improve established neighborhoods, while promoting affordable and decent housing for all residents of Eau Claire.

- **Objective: Housing Affordability:** Use regulations and assistance programs to help make housing affordable for all.

Policies:

- *Rent Assistance.*
- *Homeownership Assistance for First-time Buyers.*
- *Homeownership Assistance for Low-income Families*
- *Maintain Public Housing.*
- *Housing for the Homeless.*
- *Habitat for Humanity.*
- *State Housing Assistance.*
- *Local Housing Assistance.*
- *Promote Private Housing.*

- **Objective: Housing Rehabilitation, Maintenance, and Infill Development:** Continue to support and require maintenance of all types of housing.

Policies:

- *Housing Code Enforcement.*
- *Housing Rehabilitation Loans.*
- *Lead Paint Reduction Program.*
- *Weatherization Program.*
- *Infill Lots.*
- *Adaptive Reuse.*



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- **Objective: Housing Diversity:** Promote, through plans and regulations, a broad range of housing types and price levels in each major district or neighborhood.

Policies:

- *Variety of Housing Types.*
- *Reduce the cost of Housing for the most needy in the community.*
- *Address the needs of the Homeless.*

- **Objective: Multiple-Family Housing Design:** Improve the appearance of multiple-family housing so that it becomes a more acceptable and compatible alternative.

Policies:

- *Strengthened Design Requirements.*
- *Integration with Single-family Housing.*

❖ Historic Preservation Chapter

Goal: Identify, protect, and preserve Eau Claire's resources, which reflect distinctive elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, historical, and architectural heritage in order to enhance the quality of life and foster pride and knowledge about Eau Claire's past.

- **Objective: Evaluation and Designation:** Continue to survey and evaluate historic and potentially historic resources for designation, recognition and protection.

Policies:

- *Intensive Historic and Architectural Resource Survey.*
- *Certified Local Government Program.*
- *National Register Nominations.*
- *Local Historic Designation.*

- **Objective: Role of Eau Claire Landmarks Commission:** Work to expand the role of the ECLC to utilize its expertise in assisting in the implementation of other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Policies:

- *Neighborhood and Area Planning.*
- *Design Standards and Guidelines.*
- *Conservation Districts.*
- *Heritage Recognition.*

- **Objective: Education:** Continue to provide and expand upon programs and activities that will instill an appreciation and pride in Eau Claire's past.



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❖ Downtown Chapter

Goal: Re-establish the Downtown as a regional mixed-use activity center integrating civic and government uses, professional and corporate offices, health care, meeting and entertainment facilities, arts and culture, housing, and specialty retail.

- **Objective: *Downtown Action Agenda*:** Ensure an effective and ongoing public-private partnership to continue implementation of the *Downtown Action Agenda 2001*.
- **Objective: Business Development and Marketing:** Provide business development and marketing support to encourage diverse economic activity in the Downtown.

Policies:

- *Work to retain and attract Downtown Employers.*
- *Retain and attract Entertainment, Civic, Recreational & Cultural Resources.*
- *Incentives & Downtown Loan Funds.*
- *Retail Support.*
- *Increase Pedestrian Activity.*
- *Create large Community Spaces.*

- **Objective: Redevelopment:** Support redevelopment of blighted, vacant, or underutilized properties and sites in the Downtown.

Policies:

- *Redevelopment Authority carry out redevelopment projects in Downtown.*
- *Redevelopment Tools (TIDs, etc.).*
- *Master Planning for Redevelopment:*

- **Objective: Riverfront Development:** Encourage the use of the riverfront and adjacent open spaces as a key organizing feature for the design and orientation of both public facilities and private development.

Policies:

- *Establishing an interconnected Open Space system.*
- *Complete development of Phoenix Park.*
- *Neighborhood Connections.*
- *Create a continuous and connected river pathway system.*
- *Riverfront Access, Overlooks & Vistas.*

- **Objective: Pedestrian Orientation:** Enhance the walkability of the Downtown by ensuring safe, attractive, and pleasant pedestrian routes and connections within the Downtown area and between the Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, public parks, and major activity centers.

Policies:

- *Increase Walkability and Complete key Pedestrian Connections.*



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- **Objective: Downtown Design:** Encourage the consistent use of Downtown design standards and principles for buildings and public spaces to guide all public and private developments in the Downtown.

Policies:

- *Follow Downtown Design Principles.*
- *Downtown Land Use Pattern.*
- *Encourage incorporation of special decorative features and Public Art.*
- *Ensure that street edges in the Downtown are improved.*
- *Special Gateway Entry Features.*
- *Encourage well-designed exterior improvements Buildings.*
- *Wayfinding Sign System.*
- *Encourage improvements to interior building structures*

- **Objective: Circulation:** Provide a safe internal circulation system that is interconnected among districts with pedestrian and vehicular, and multi-modal access from the peripheral highway system.

Policies:

- *Loop System.*
- *Street Design.*
- *Encourage the construction of a new multi-use, multimodal Transportation Center.*
- *Explore the feasibility of implementing a small bus or trolley route.*
- *Traffic Circulation Study.*

- **Objective: Parking:** Provide a well-integrated system of surface and ramp parking consistent with Downtown design principles to meet mixed-use parking needs of Downtown.

Policies:

- *Ensure that bicycle parking loops are provided in key locations.*

- **Objective: Housing:** Encourage a mix of housing styles and opportunities within and surrounding the Downtown to meet the diverse economic needs of the community.

Policies:

- *Historic Homes, Loft Apartments & Empty Nester Housing.*
- *Mixed-use & Adaptive Re-use.*

❖ Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter

Goal: Work jointly with other governments to achieve an orderly, compact, and cost-effective urban development pattern in the Eau Claire-Chippewa Falls metropolitan area.

- **Objective: Smart Growth Cooperation:** Encourage government jurisdictions in the metropolitan area to work together in implementing policies consistent with



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the *Comprehensive Plan* recommendations for the Urban Sewer Service Area and the principles of Smart Growth.

Policies:

- *Encourage multi-jurisdictional alliances to promote Smart Growth principles.*
 - *Update the City's Zoning Ordinance incorporate Smart Growth principles.*
 - *Shared Metropolitan Vision consistent with principles of Smart Growth.*
 - *Sustainable Development, interdependent relationship between economic vitality and environmental quality.*
 - *Protection of Rural Lands.*
 - *Regional Transit.*
 - *Actively prevent Premature Development.*
 - *Encourage design/ location of interim development in Extraterritorial Review Area.*
 - *Support County comprehensive plans encompassing the principles of Smart Growth.*
 - *Support and participate in Area-wide Planning.*
 - *Execute Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding.*
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- **Objective: Shared Services:** Pursue expanded collaboration among government jurisdictions and agencies to share services and facilities more cost-effectively when providing public services in the metropolitan area.

 - **Objective: Consistent Development Standards:** Encourage government agencies in the metropolitan area to adopt and implement consistent land development policies, standards, and review procedures.

 - **Objective: Boundary Change:** Encourage an orderly boundary change process consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* recommendations for the Urban Sewer Service Area.

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