

Update of Historic Randall Park



Neighborhood Plan

City of Eau Claire
September, 2014



RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE UPDATE OF THE HISTORIC RANDALL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AS PART OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

WHEREAS, the Eau Claire City Plan Commission has studied and considered the update of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission recommended adoption of the update of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan on September 2, 2014, and made a finding that said plan is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to Wis. Statutes; Section 66.1001, the City Council, as an aid to the Plan Commission and the City Council in the performance of their duties, does hereby adopt the update of the Randall Park Neighborhood Plan, a copy of which is on file in the office of the City Clerk and open to public inspection during normal business hours, as part of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Eau Claire and is incorporated into this plan by reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in adopting this update of the neighborhood plan that the City Council finds said plan to be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, specifically Land Use Chapter Objective 4 (Residential Neighborhoods), Policy 4 (Neighborhood Planning).

Adopted,
September 9, 2014

(SEAL) 
President Kerry J. S. Kincaid

(SEAL) 
City Manager Russell Van Gompel

(ATTESTED) 
City Clerk Donna A. Austad

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE
UPDATE OF THE HISTORIC RANDALL PARK
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Association requested the Eau Claire City Plan Commission to update the neighborhood plan for the Randall Park Neighborhood which was last updated in 1995; and

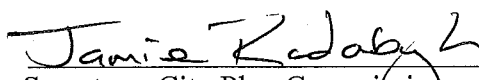
WHEREAS, the Plan Commission has directed the Department of Community Development to work with the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Association in the update of the neighborhood plan; and

WHEREAS, the Randall Park Neighborhood Association and Department of Community Development have drafted an update for the neighborhood that includes: a neighborhood profile, identification of issues, development of vision and goal statements, and development of recommendations to address issues and problems that have been identified; and

WHEREAS, the City of Eau Claire adopted a Comprehensive Plan on September 27, 2005, in accordance with the provisions of Wis. Statutes, Section 66.1001; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission finds the update of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan to be consistent with said Comprehensive Plan, specifically Land Use Chapter Objective 4 (Residential Neighborhoods), Policy 4 (Neighborhood Planning).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Eau Claire City Plan Commission recommends to the City Council that the update of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan be adopted as part of the City of Eau Claire's Comprehensive Plan.


Secretary, City Plan Commission

Adopted,

September 2, 2014

Acknowledgements

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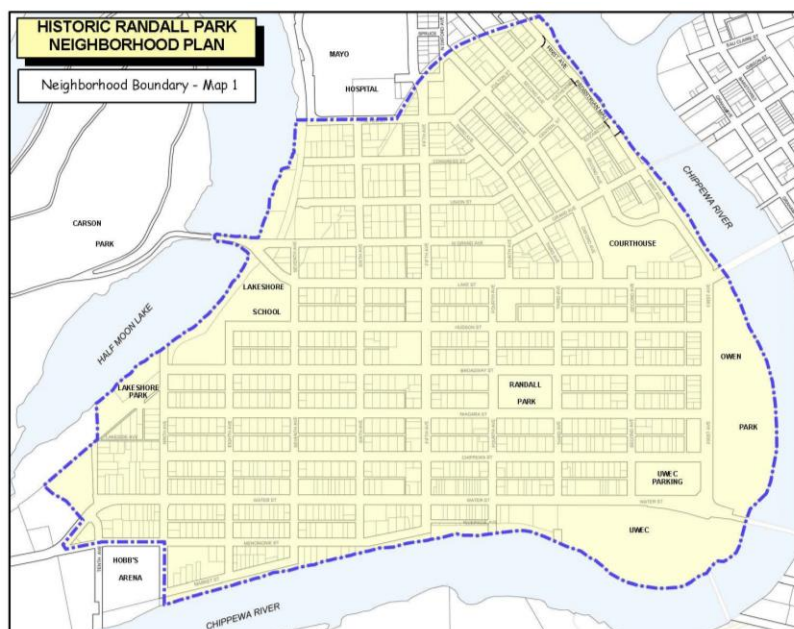
INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This plan is an update of the 1995 neighborhood plan and policies for the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood which at that time was referred to as the West Side Neighborhood. This plan has been developed as a mutual effort between the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Association and the City of Eau Claire.

The original plan for the neighborhood was prepared in 1978 and later revised in 1982. The plan was then updated again in 1995. This plan, like the previous neighborhood plans, provides the framework for the identification of issues present within the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood and sets forth recommendations to guide policy and public and private investments for the next 10 to 15 years. Map 1 shows the boundary of the neighborhood.

This plan is an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan and is based on policies contained within that document. This plan also was prepared in conjunction with related City plans such as the City's Waterways Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and Water Street Commercial District Plan.



BACKGROUND

The Historic Randall Park Neighborhood is one of the oldest inner-city residential areas in Eau Claire. Many of the homes were built when the City was first settled between 1870 and the early 1900s. At about the same time period, the Water Street Commercial District was getting its start with the aid of commerce from the steamboats traveling up the Chippewa River from the south and the construction of the first Water Street Bridge in 1885.

Prior to the 1950s, the area was a stable neighborhood with predominately single-family homes conveniently located across the river from what is now the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus to the south and the Downtown to the east.

Beginning in the 1960s, the neighborhood began to experience a gradual transition with the conversion of many single-family homes to rental units for University students. The conversion of homes to multiple rental units was stimulated in part by the R-3 and R-4 zoning that was put

into place in 1952. The rapid increase in enrollment at the University during the 1960s led to an increase in demand for student housing in the area. As the student population grew within the neighborhood, families moved out resulting in declines in enrollment at Randall School, which was the neighborhood elementary school at that time.

Residents of the neighborhood started to notice a general decline in the appearance and upkeep of the area as homes were converted into rentals. This was the result of deferred maintenance on many properties and from insensitive remodeling to older homes. The neighborhood also experienced increased pressures within the area resulting from the added population density which occurred from the conversion of the homes into rentals. Problems such as congested street parking, higher traffic volumes on some streets, vandalism, late night noise complaints, and increased problems with trash and litter were some examples.

At this same time, the neighborhood experienced some new construction of apartments in response to the demand for additional student housing. The scale, design, and density characteristic of these buildings were not compatible with the older houses in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood residents felt that if this transition was left unchecked, further deterioration of the neighborhood and tax base would result. This in turn would result in a further exodus of families from the area. In response, residents organized to form a neighborhood association in 1978 and asked for assistance from the City in the preparation of a plan aimed at addressing problems related to zoning, conversion of homes to student rentals, housing conditions, density, inappropriate rehabilitation, and other related issues facing the neighborhood.

OVERVIEW OF ORIGINAL AND UPDATED PLANS

The plan for the neighborhood was adopted by the City in 1978 with some format changes incorporated into the plan in 1982. The overall objective of the plan was to stabilize and preserve the character of the neighborhood in order to encourage the remaining families in the neighborhood to stay. In addition, through improvements to the area, to encourage additional families to move into the neighborhood that would also have a stake in the neighborhood. This was to be accomplished through recommendations related to: stabilizing the density within the neighborhood, encouraging more sensitive rehabilitation and remodeling of the existing homes, and improving building and property upkeep and maintenance through more active code enforcement.

Between 1978 and 1995 much was accomplished to improve the stability of the neighborhood and eliminate or reduce problems which were identified at that time. An example of some of the improvements which occurred during this timeframe include:

- **Zoning Regulations.** The City adopted conservancy zoning regulations and down-zoned the neighborhood to R-2 (1 and 2 Family Residential) and RM (Mixed Residential) zoning classifications. This helped address the issues of excessive densities on the smaller lots, conversion of homes to duplexes and rooming houses, and the removal of existing homes for the construction of apartments.
- **Intensified Housing Program.** The City/County Health Department developed the Intensified Housing Enforcement Program to address blighted housing conditions within

the neighborhood. The City also utilized its Community Development Block Grant dollars to fund the Intensified Housing Enforcement Program and provide below-market rate loans for housing rehabilitation.

- **Architectural Building Survey.** A survey was completed by the City to identify properties of local and state architectural or historical significance. With assistance from the State Historical Society, a historic district was created with Randall Park as the focal point. Design guidelines for exterior renovations were incorporated as part of the district.
- **Riverfront Improvements.** The City initiated several riverfront beautification projects and trail extensions along the Chippewa River.
- **Randall Park.** Randall Park received a major face-lift and upgrade.
- **County Courthouse.** Two courthouse expansions occurred during this timeframe with additional parking provided for these expansions.



Although many improvements and changes were accomplished during this timeframe, not all problems were resolved and there was a need to update the plan and re-evaluate the problems and issues existing in the neighborhood. This occurred in 1995, when the neighborhood association and City updated the original plan.

In updating the original plan, the neighborhood residents and City reviewed and updated the goals, policies, and improvement strategies. The issues and problems facing the neighborhood were also reviewed and updated. The focus of the improvement strategies continued to be related to housing and property condition, conversion of owner-occupied dwellings to rental units, lack of off-street parking, retaining the neighborhood elementary school, and encouraging a more family-oriented atmosphere along Water Street. However, there were new issues that developed between 1978 and 1995 that were addressed in

the plan update. Some of these newer issues included: defining the campus boundaries of the Mayo Hospital and the County Courthouse, constructing a new elementary school, making a decision on the reuse of Randall School, establishing a neighborhood playground, completing the recreational trail system, and more effectively dealing with issues related to excessive alcohol consumption.

Since 1995, continued progress has been made in many areas, but some setbacks have also occurred. In addition, a number of new issues were identified, which necessitated the need to update the neighborhood plan once again. As the neighborhood association and City has embarked on this most recent update of the plan, the neighborhood association formed a Planning Committee to assist the City in the update process.

One of the initial steps in the update of the plan was to reflect on the changes made within the neighborhood since the 1995 plan. The following is a listing of most of these accomplishments:

- **Lakeshore Elementary School.**

Acquisition of land and construction of the new elementary school on the east side of Half Moon Lake in 1997.

- **Randall School.** Closing of Randall School and its conversion into apartments.

- **Lakeshore Playground.** Acquisition of land and construction of Lakeshore Playground to the south of the elementary school.



- **Recreational Trail.** Construction of the recreational trail along the east side of Half Moon Lake and along the former railroad right-of-way to the north by Mayo Hospital, St. Patrick’s Church, etc.
- **Water Street Realignment.** Realignment of Water Street and Menomonie Street at 10th Avenue.
- **Bellinger Street Realignment.** Realignment of Bellinger Street and Fifth Avenue at Randall Street.
- **First Avenue Trail.** Reconstruction and widening of the recreational trail along First Avenue from Owen Park north to Grand Avenue.
- **Menomonie Street Trail.** Eliminating the one-block gap in the recreational trail within the 600 block of Menomonie with the construction of an 8-foot wide trail on the south side of the street.
- **The Grand Theatre.** Reuse of the Salvation Army building at the northwest corner of West Grand and First Avenue into the “The Grand Theatre.”
- **Courthouse/Government Center.** Expansion of the County Courthouse/Government Center to the east of the existing building, along with associated street changes on First Avenue and Second Avenue.
- **Neighborhood Name Change.** Renaming the neighborhood and neighborhood association from the Westside Neighborhood to the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood.
- **Floodplain Acquisition.** Acquisition of floodplain properties at the northwest corner of First Avenue and Chippewa Street to the west of Owen Park.
- **Water Street Reconstruction.** Reconstruction of Water Street including decorative lighting, pedestrian crossings, curb bump-outs and bicycle lanes.
- **Water Street Marketing.** Water Street BID joining membership with the Downtown Eau Claire, Inc., organization to better market the businesses along Water Street.
- **Collaboration with UWEC.** Collaboration with the University, Eau Claire Police Department, and Water Street businesses to address issues of “binge drinking” and problems associated with excessive alcohol consumption.

- **Collaboration with Health Department.** Collaboration with the City/County Health Department in the reuse and disposal of materials resulting from the spring student move out.
- **Boulevard Trees.** Working with the City Forester in replanting boulevard trees on selected boulevards within the neighborhood.
- **Mayo Hospital.** Construction of the Mayo Hospital bed tower and parking ramp.
- **Water Street Plan.** Update of the Water Street Commercial District Plan in 2009 and the amendment to the neighborhood plan.
- **Neighborhood Boundaries.** The change in the boundaries of the neighborhood association to include the Oxbow Apartments along 10th Avenue.
- **Skate Board Facility.** A skate board facility was installed at Lakeshore Park.
- **Community Garden.** The neighborhood association helped sponsor a community garden at Lakeshore Park.

Planning Process

In the spring of 2012, the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Association requested the City Plan Commission to work with the neighborhood in updating the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood Plan. To assist in the update of the plan, the neighborhood association appointed a 12-member subcommittee whose responsibility was to work with the City on updating the 1995 Plan and offering feedback on plan alternatives. Membership on the committee included residents of the neighborhood, a landlord, a person representing the Water Street Business Improvement District and a representative from the University. Work began on the plan in the fall of 2012.

In order to assist the Planning Committee in providing feedback regarding neighborhood issues, it was decided to conduct a survey of the neighborhood residents. The survey was conducted as an on-line questionnaire that was posted on the neighborhood website. Letters were mailed out to each household within the neighborhood. A letter was also sent to all the landlords within the neighborhood encouraging them to complete the survey and asking their tenants to participate.

A total of 131 persons responded to the survey. These respondents appeared to be a mix of residents both owning and renting their dwelling. It should be noted that this survey was not a statistically scientific survey, but the Planning Committee felt that the survey responses provided a good perspective on conditions and opinions in the neighborhood. The Planning Committee utilized input from this survey to assist in the identification of issues and concerns, and the responses were also utilized to help formulate the recommendations contained in the plan.

This was the second time such an on-line survey had been conducted in the preparation of a neighborhood plan. A similar on-line survey was conducted for the update of the Water Street Commercial District Plan in 2009.

The group then met with representatives from various City and County Departments as well as other organizations. These meetings included discussions with the City/County Health

Department, Eau Claire Police Department, University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, the City Code Enforcement Division, Mayo Hospital, and Eau Claire County.

Based on these discussions and input from the survey, the Planning Committee identified specific issues and concerns that should be addressed in the plan, developed a vision statement, and updated the plan’s goals and policies. From this new vision statement and updated goals and policies, specific action strategies were developed for the plan.

The full neighborhood steering committee then reviewed the draft in February of 2014 and made additional changes. The draft was then posted on the neighborhood association’s website and City website for comment. The draft plan was presented to the Water Street BID and Plan Commission in April. Upon the initial discussion of the draft plan, the Plan Commission directed staff to schedule public hearings to consider adoption of the plan.

BACKGROUND

LAND USE AND ZONING

Current land use within the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood is depicted on Map 2. In general, land use patterns within the neighborhood are similar to that dating back to 1978 when the original neighborhood plan was prepared.

Residential. The residential portion of the neighborhood is primarily a low-density area of two-story, one-and two family structures, many of which have been converted to rental units. The average lot is 66" x 126" in size with a density of 5.0 dwellings per acre.

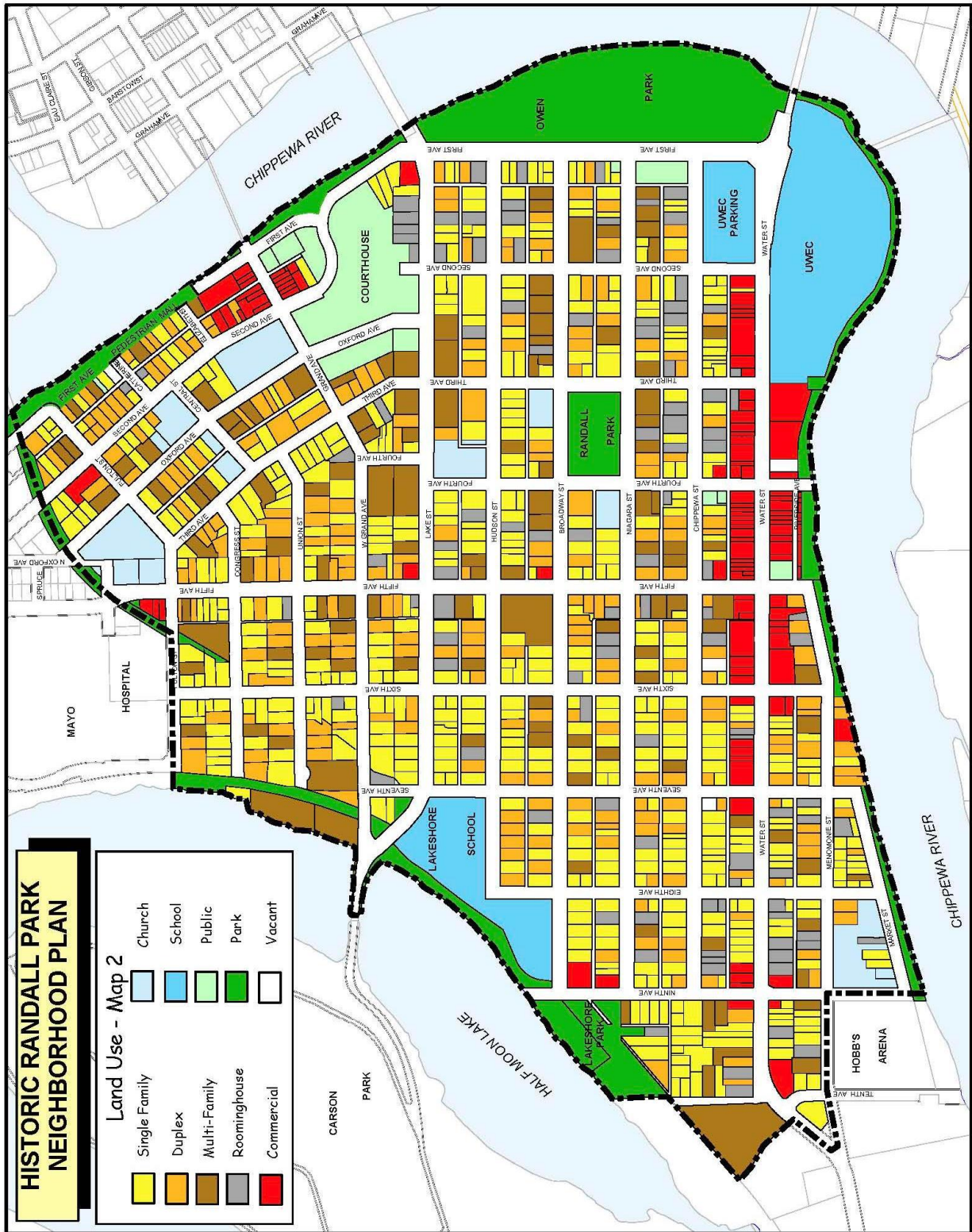
The land use map also shows numerous lots classified as multi-family throughout the neighborhood, but with a higher concentration in closer proximity to the University and Water Street Commercial area. The majority of these properties are homes originally built for single-family use which were converted into three to five dwelling unit structures in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The remainder of these multi-family parcels are apartment buildings, the majority of which were built since 1960 and consist of eight or more units. The original plan indicated that the designs of these apartment buildings were not compatible with the older housing in the neighborhood.

Approximately 128 licensed rooming houses are also located in the neighborhood. Almost all of these rooming houses have been converted from single-family homes. The majority are concentrated in the south portion of the neighborhood.

Community Facilities. As illustrated on the land use map, the neighborhood has a large number of community facilities located within the neighborhood which provide various services to residents of the area and city. This includes seven churches, Lakeshore Elementary School, the Eau Claire County Courthouse and jail, the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, and Mayo Hospital.

Since the adoption of the 1995 Plan, there have been significant changes to both Mayo Hospital and County Courthouse facilities. Mayo Hospital completed several major expansions and upgrades including a new bed tower along the east side of Whipple Street, a 4-level parking ramp north of Fulton Street, a new power plant, new critical care unit, cath lab, new emergency department, additional parking lots on the north and west ends of the campus, and campus entry landscaping. Conversations with officials from the hospital indicate that they do not anticipate any visible construction or expansion in the foreseeable future (10 to 20 years). Any future construction would not be to the south or southeast. The hospital also noted that they do not anticipate any significant increases in the number employees in the foreseeable future.

The County completed a major addition of the Courthouse/Government Center to the east of the existing building along with the addition of parking. Conversations with County officials indicate that the County currently has vacant office space within the Courthouse on both the second (possible space for a 6th Circuit Court) and third floors, has one undeveloped "pod" in



the northwest corner of the new jail, and the jail was constructed to accommodate one additional level. In addition, they have provided additional parking with the recent expansion of the jail, and a parking ramp for law enforcement vehicles, bringing the total number of parking spaces to 562 in comparison to 481 spaces prior to the expansion. Finally, the County does not intend to acquire additional property within the 10 to 15 year timeframe of this plan; however, the Planning Committee was also informed that the County would not want to rule it out completely

Commercial. Two commercial areas are located within the neighborhood. The Water Street Commercial District, which developed in the 1860s, continues to be a busy and vital commercial area in close proximity to the University. The buildings are generally in good condition, and many have been restored to display their original historic character. Although many of the retail stores and shops cater to the students of the University, local businesses have worked to create a 'Historic Water Street' atmosphere which successfully draws people from throughout the neighborhood and city because of its diverse mixture of establishments and its unique and colorful atmosphere.

A plan for the Water Street Commercial District was adopted in 1982 and later updated in 2009 which addresses goals, objectives, and implementation strategies for the improvement of the area. This commercial district plan is to be utilized in conjunction with this neighborhood plan. In conjunction with the update of the Water Street Plan, two amendments were made to the Randall Park Neighborhood Plan. One change was to support redevelopment of the existing housing located along Water Street to the west of Sixth Avenue to commercial/mixed use development. This would involve first floor commercial with residential on the second or third floors. The second change is to support redevelopment of the existing housing south of Water Street to the west of Fifth Avenue for residential development at densities higher than provided with the current RM zoning. The redevelopment should capitalize on the proximity and views of the Chippewa River.

The second commercial area is located northeast of the courthouse along West Grand Avenue and First Avenue. This commercial district is smaller in scale to the Water Street area but provides a mix of retail, office, service, and restaurants. Many of the buildings which date back to the 19th century have been renovated and the streetscape improvements provide an inviting atmosphere.

Both commercial districts abut the Chippewa River and the City's recreational trail system which is both a local and regional trail that is widely used year round.

In addition to the two primary commercial districts within the neighborhood, there is a small grouping of service and retail establishments located in the vicinity of Ninth Avenue and Water Street. Although physically separated from the Water Street Commercial District, this area is included within the Water Street Commercial District Plan.

Industrial. Located to the south of Lakeshore Elementary School are three commercial/industrial buildings that once were part of a larger industrial area within the neighborhood. The other industrial buildings were once part of the lumbering industry that was located along the eastern shore of Half Moon Lake, but have been removed and converted

into public open space along the lake. The remaining commercial/industrial buildings are nonconforming with the zoning of the area.

Parks and Open Space. The Randall Park Neighborhood has a number of distinctive park and open space facilities within the neighborhood, which add to the quality of life and image of the West Side. Randall Park is a focal point of the neighborhood and is one of the City's finest neighborhood parks. The park includes a statue of Adin Randall, gardens, benches, and a small playground area.

Owen Park is a 12-acre facility which is located along the east side of the neighborhood along the Chippewa River. The park is one of the City's most visible community parks as it is utilized for many community-wide festivities throughout the summer and fall as well as concerts held at the historic Donald "Sarge" Boyd Bandshell.

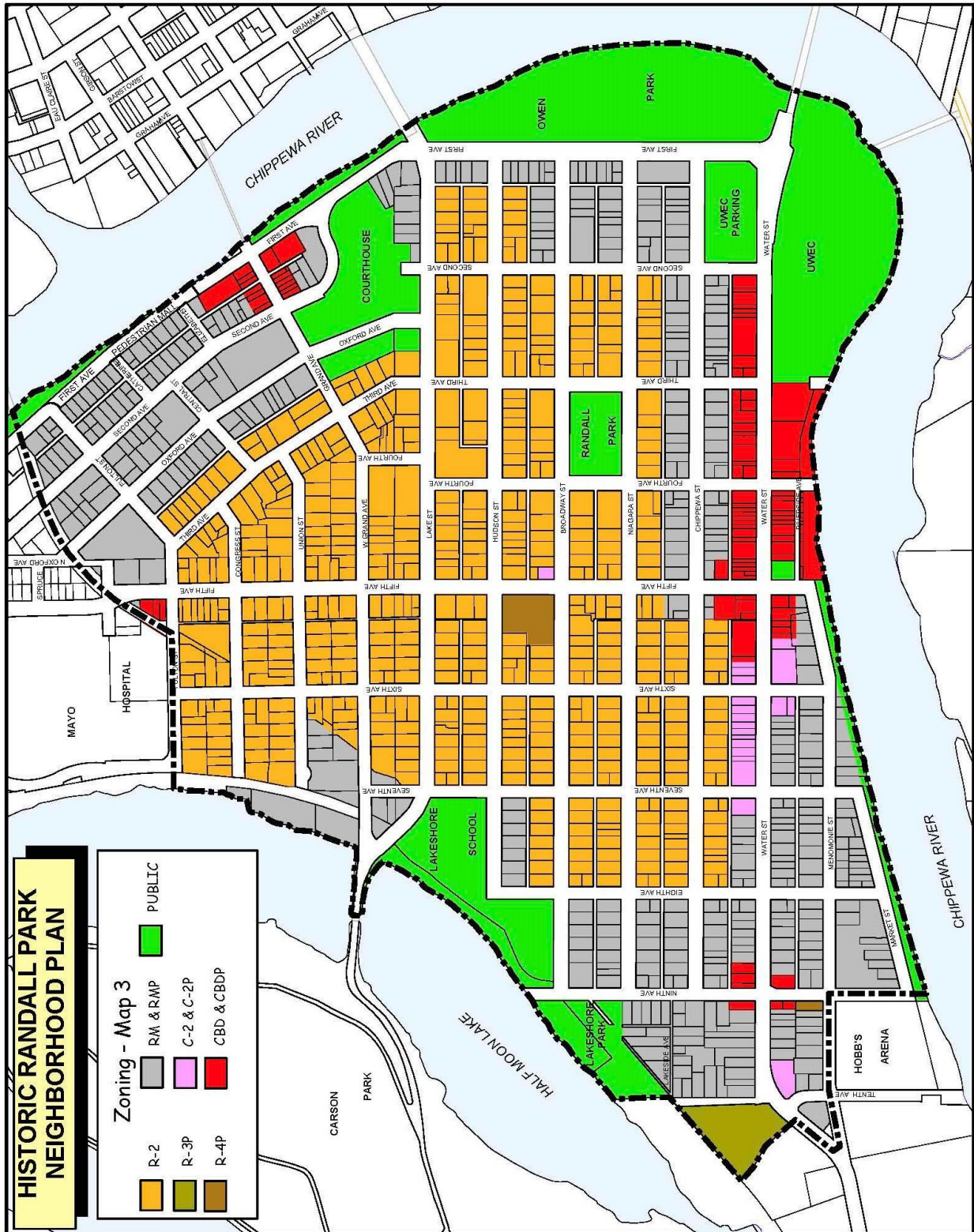
There is also a new neighborhood park on the west side along Half Moon Lake that was developed in 1997. Lakeshore Park is approximately 2.8 acres in size and includes a shelter building with restrooms and a skateboard park. Winter skating was offered at the park until 2003 and the summer playground program was discontinued in 2007.

The City has also completed extensive riverfront improvements along the Chippewa River within the neighborhood including the recreational trail system. The trail completely circles the neighborhood and connects with other trails on a City-wide and regional basis.

Finally, although not within the neighborhood boundaries, Carson Park borders the neighborhood to the west. This 125-acre park provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities for the entire city. The neighborhood's close proximity to the park and Half Moon Lake is an asset to the neighborhood.

Zoning. Map 3 depicts the current zoning within the neighborhood that was approved in 1978 as part of the Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) regulations which were later combined into the city-wide zoning regulations in 1990. The R-2 and RM classifications replaced the traditional R-3 (Low-rise Multiple Family Residential) and R-4 (High-rise Multiple Family Residential) classifications which allowed much higher densities and apartment complexes. The RM district was created to address the unique situations existing in the neighborhood.

The NCD regulations, which were adopted in 1978, represent a dramatic change in the zoning which existed prior to 1978 limiting the conversion of single-family homes to duplexes and rooming houses. Under the NCD zoning, the central core of the neighborhood was designated for one-and two-family housing. This area contains the highest concentration of owner-occupied houses that are well maintained. It also affords the best opportunity to attract families with children because of the proximity to the elementary school and park facilities. The peripheral areas of the neighborhood are zoned RM which allows a slightly greater density in accordance with a number of standards contained in the ordinance. These areas tend to be closer to the commercial districts and the University and generally had a higher number of conversions to multi-family and rooming houses at the time the ordinance was adopted.



The commercial areas are zoned C-2 (Neighborhood Commercial), CBD (Central Business District), and CBDP (Central Business District-Planned). The CBDP district has special provisions which were developed from the Water Street Commercial District Plan to encourage a concentration of urban scale retail activities along Water Street which emphasis a pedestrian-oriented shopping atmosphere.

Floodplain. The location of the 100-year floodplain is also shown on Map 4. As indicated, large portions of the east side of the neighborhood bordering the Chippewa River are within the floodplain.

However, prior to 1993, a much larger portion of the neighborhood was located within the floodplain. In 1993, the City amended the floodplain boundaries based on revised hydrological data from the DNR. This change allowed for a major portion of the neighborhood to be removed from the floodplain as well as some properties between First and Second Avenues.

Removal of these properties from the floodplain now enables property owners to make renovations and changes to these properties. Whereas those properties within the floodplain have severe limitations placed upon them regarding improvements and remodeling.

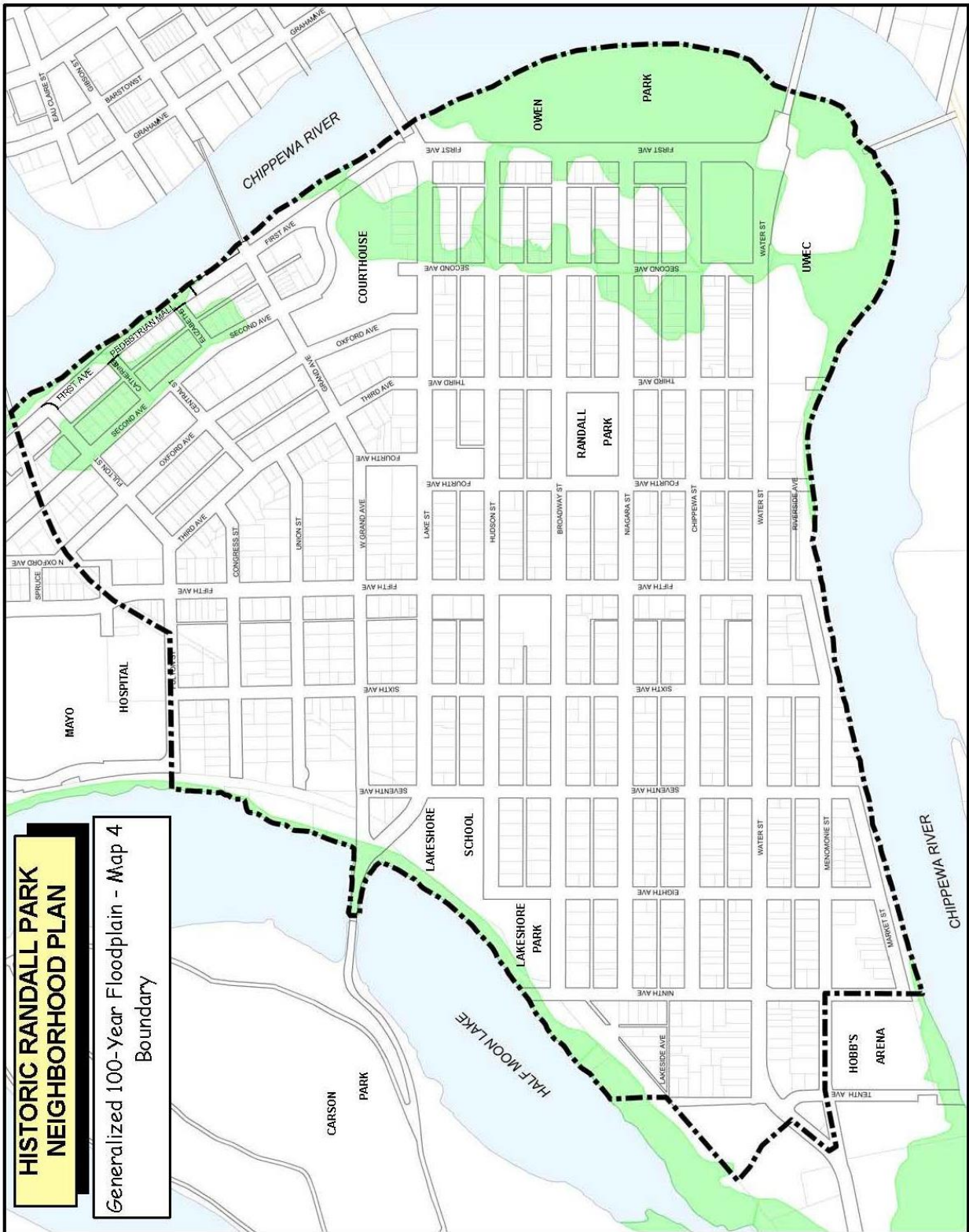
The City did purchase several floodplain properties using FEMA funds and removed the dwellings on these parcels. The parcels are west of Owen Park along First Avenue and south of Niagara Street. FEMA places very restrictive covenants on these acquired properties, making them available primarily only for open space use.

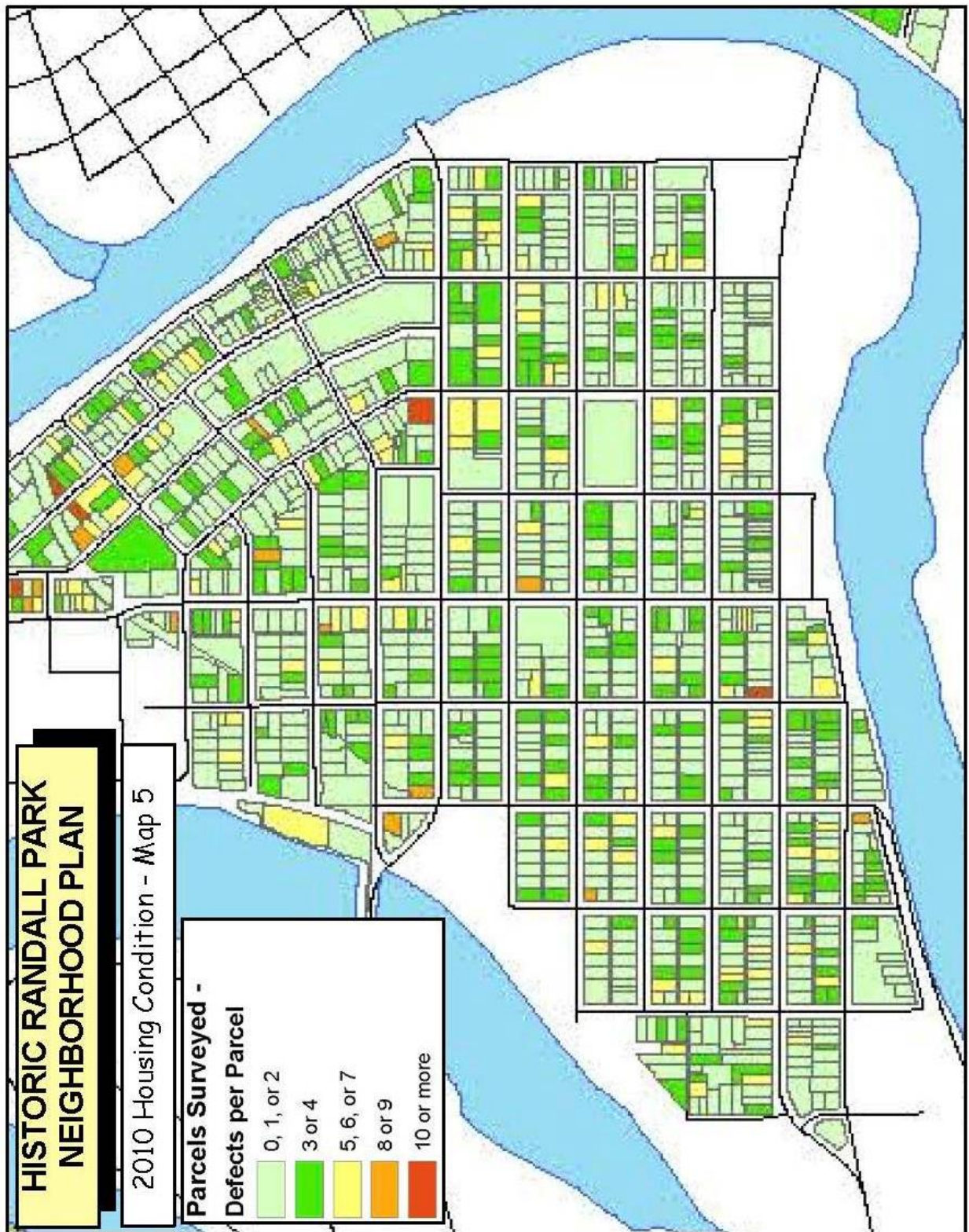
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Housing Age. The Historic Randall Park Neighborhood is one of the oldest residential neighborhoods in the City of Eau Claire as it was platted in the 1850s by Adin Randall. Its characteristic features include a large number of two-story frame houses with gabled roofs and open or screened front porches which were built in the 1870s and 1880s. Smaller bungalow style homes gained popularity between 1900 and the 1920s. More detailed housing information is available from the City Planning Division.

Housing Condition. The structural condition and physical appearance of the housing stock is widely varied. Many of the late 19th century homes have been carefully maintained which enhance the quality and image of the neighborhood. Other housing units are in need of varying degrees of rehabilitation ranging from minor repairs to extensive rehabilitation involving major building components.

Map 5 provides a summary of housing condition by parcel within the neighborhood. This information was obtained from a 2010 survey taken by the City/County Health Department. Those housing units rated in a less than fair condition generally are the renter-occupied housing units. Statistics from the City/County Health Department indicate that the exterior housing conditions have improved within the neighborhood since the early 1980s. A major reason for this improvement has been the adoption of the Intensified Housing Enforcement program which is administered by the City/County Health Department and the availability of low-interest rehabilitation loans available through the city.





Another issue related to the condition and appearance of the housing stock raised in the original neighborhood plan pertains to rehabilitation work which has not been sensitive or consistent with the architectural characteristics of the 19th century housing units. Examples include: removal of porches and windows, downsizing windows, removal of cornices and other decorative elements, and the use of building materials for railings, columns and platforms which are not consistent with the materials used for the house.

Over time, this type of remodeling activity has had a negative effect on the neighborhood. It has resulted in a general decline in the character and image of portions of the neighborhood which has in turn accelerated the exodus of families from the neighborhood and has made it more difficult to attract new families to the West Side.

Other problems are associated with the deterioration of rental housing within the neighborhood. These include the lack of yard maintenance, trash removal, and lack of yards or open space on the parcels in order to provide off-street parking. Parking on unimproved surfaces has also contributed to the problem; however, an ordinance was adopted in 1984 to address this problem.

Housing Composition and Tenure. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the composition of the housing stock within the neighborhood. This table illustrates the transition that has occurred within the neighborhood from an area which was at one time primarily a single-family neighborhood. As shown, only 494 (25%) of the dwellings within the neighborhood are now single-family dwellings.

Table 1
Housing Units by Units in Structure

Dwelling Type	# of Units
Single-family	494
Duplex	498
3+ Unit Buildings	333
Apartments	386
Rooming House	128
With Commercial Building	96
Total	1,935

Source: City Assessment Records

Since the first neighborhood plan was prepared, the conversion of properties to rentals has been an issue within the neighborhood. Table 2 illustrates this trend in ownership change comparing Census data from 1990, 2000, and 2010. As shown, the number of owner-occupied dwellings has continued to decline, particularly between 2000 and 2010. Based on this information, only 15% of the dwellings within the neighborhood were owner-occupied in 2010. A review of City assessment information supports this trend indicating that slightly more than 200 dwelling units within the neighborhood are owner-occupied. Map 6 illustrates the owner-occupied, single-family dwellings and duplexes in the neighborhood.

This trend was somewhat surprising to the Planning Committee as they felt a number of changes such as the construction of the new elementary school would have helped stabilize the number of owner-occupied dwellings and perhaps reversed the trend.

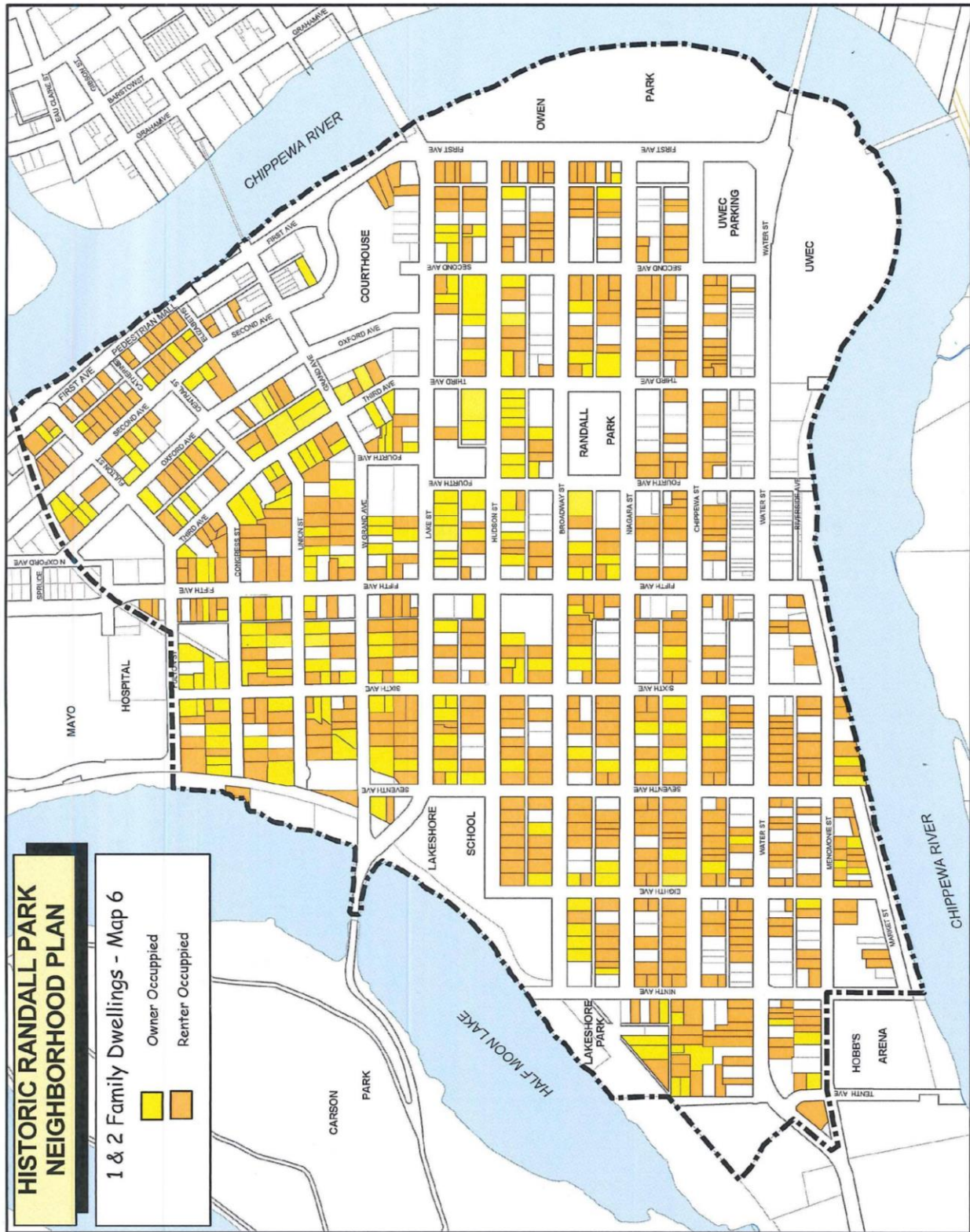


Table 2
Housing Units by Tenure

# of Units		
Year	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied
1990	430 (23%)	1,440 (77%)
2000	340 (18.9%)	1,455 (81.1%)
2010	275 (15.2%)	1,529 (84.8%)

Source: US Census

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Age and Number of Persons. Tables 3 and 4 provide a summary of the neighborhood population change between 1975 and 2010 and a breakdown of the population by age group for 1990, 2000, and 2010. As shown, the population of the neighborhood peaked in 1990 and seems to have stabilized at a figure around 4,800 persons. Part of this is due to the stabilized enrollment numbers at the University and the zoning put into place that limits the number of rooming houses and conversion of single-family dwellings to two or more units.

The table showing the population by age shows a trend of fewer persons in the younger age groups and older age groups. This is consistent with the statistics that indicate fewer owner-occupied homes are in the neighborhood and fewer families are living in the neighborhood.

Table 3
Population Change

Year	# of Person
1975	4,567
1980	4,739
1990	5,206
2000	4,880
2010	4,837

Table 4
Population by Age

	1990	2000	2010
4 & under	227	109	77
5-14	301	195	121
15-19	299	287	291
20-24	2,595	2,847	3,135
25-59	1,167	1,014	881
60 & older	617	428	332
Total	5,206	4,880	4,837

University Enrollments. Table 5 shows the historical enrollment figures for the University. As shown, the University experienced significant growth between 1960 and 1980. The enrollment leveled off after this time, with enrollment limitations at the University. Based on current assumptions, enrollment is projected to remain relatively constant in the foreseeable future.

Table 5
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Enrollment

Year	Enrollment
1950	879
1955	1,209
1960	1,818
1965	4,517
1970	8,288
1975	9,920
1980	10,629
1985	10,932
1990	10,644
2013-14	10,902

Source: University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

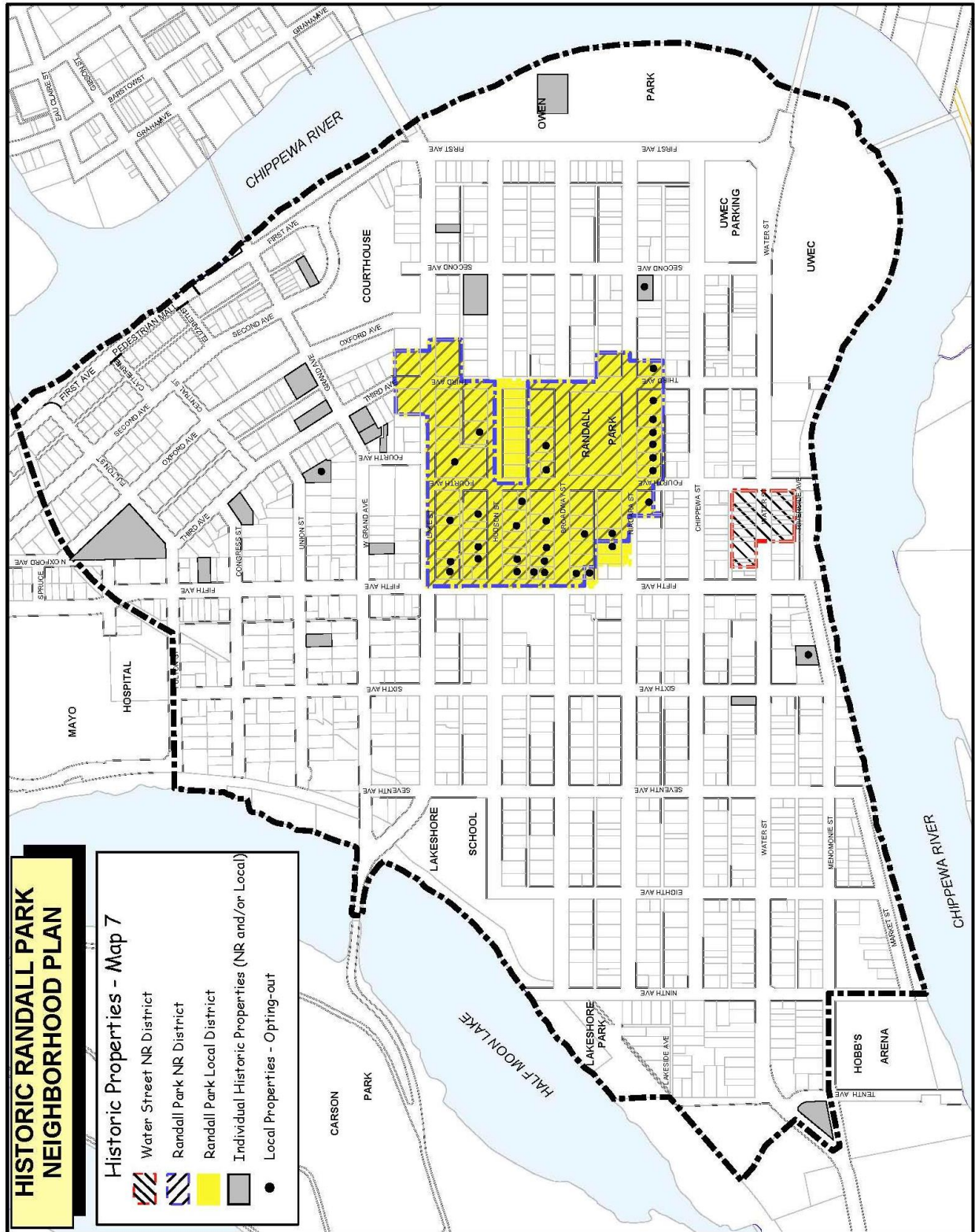
Buildings of Architectural or Historic Value. A historic intensive survey was conducted by the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) in 1981 and updated in 1987 to identify individual structures and groups of structures which would be eligible for nomination to the local, state, or National Register. The survey identified a number of individual properties and one district that would be eligible for nomination to all three registers.

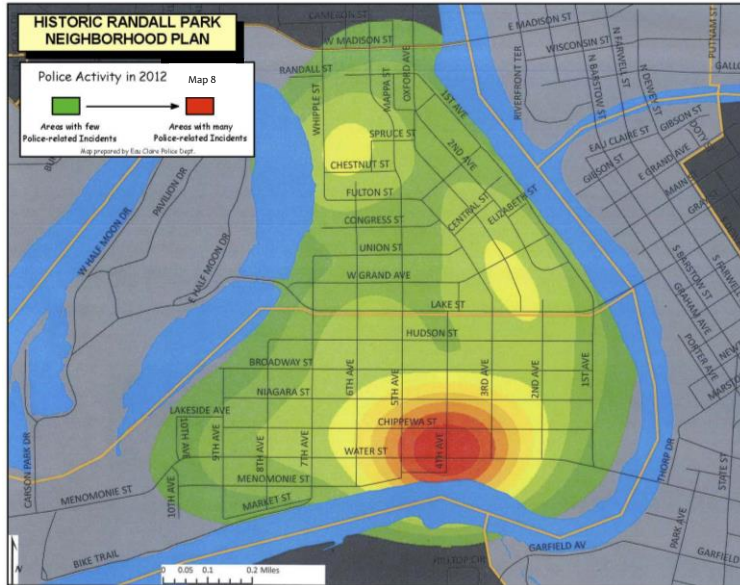
The area known as the Randall Park District was listed on the local, state, and national registers in the mid-1980s. Several of the individual properties were also listed. In 1992, property owners were given the opportunity to remove their property from the local designation and approximately half chose to do so.

The City worked with the WHS in 2000 and identified several other properties that would be eligible for the National Register. This included the bandshell in Owen Park and a portion of the 400 block of Water Street. The Water Street Commercial District and the bandshell were added to the National Register in 2007. Map 7 illustrates location of the historic properties in the neighborhood.

POLICE RELATED ACTIVITIES

Issues related to late night parties, vandalism, and alcohol-related concerns have been chronic problems within the neighborhood since the original neighborhood plan was prepared. Such behaviors have been an aggravation for those living in the neighborhood and have also been negative impacts on the image of the neighborhood. These issues also made it more difficult to attract and retain people desiring to own their own home in the neighborhood.



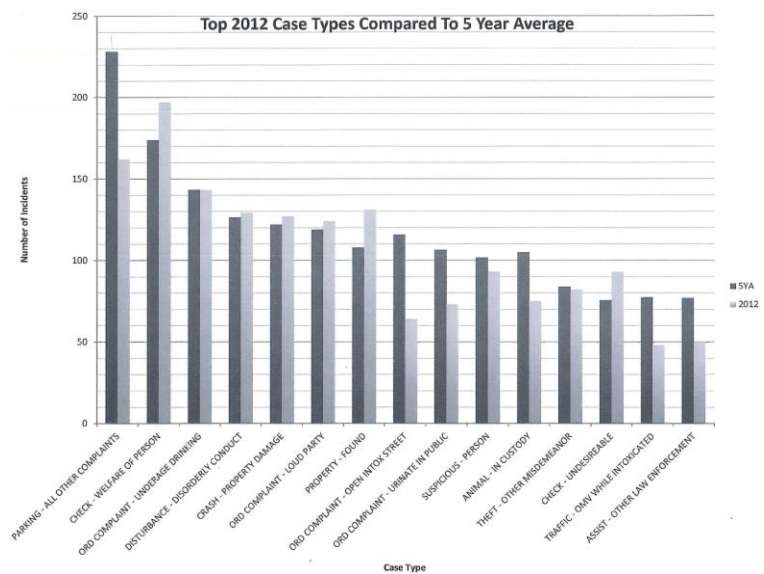


The neighborhood has worked with numerous agencies and organizations to address these issues and the Planning Committee and Neighborhood Steering Committee feel that there have been significant improvements in recent years. In particular, the Eau Claire Police Department has been involved with numerous programs and enforcement activities to address these issues. Map 8 was prepared by the Police Department to illustrate the general areas of the neighborhood where the concentration of incidents involving the police department have

occurred. Not surprisingly, the Water Street areas between Third Avenue and Fifth Avenue have the highest concentration of police-related incidents.

A review of statistics from the Police Department comparing police-related activities in the neighborhood for 2012 are compared to the 5-year average for the neighborhood in Figure 1. Generally, the 2012 statistics show a reduction in police activity within the neighborhood.

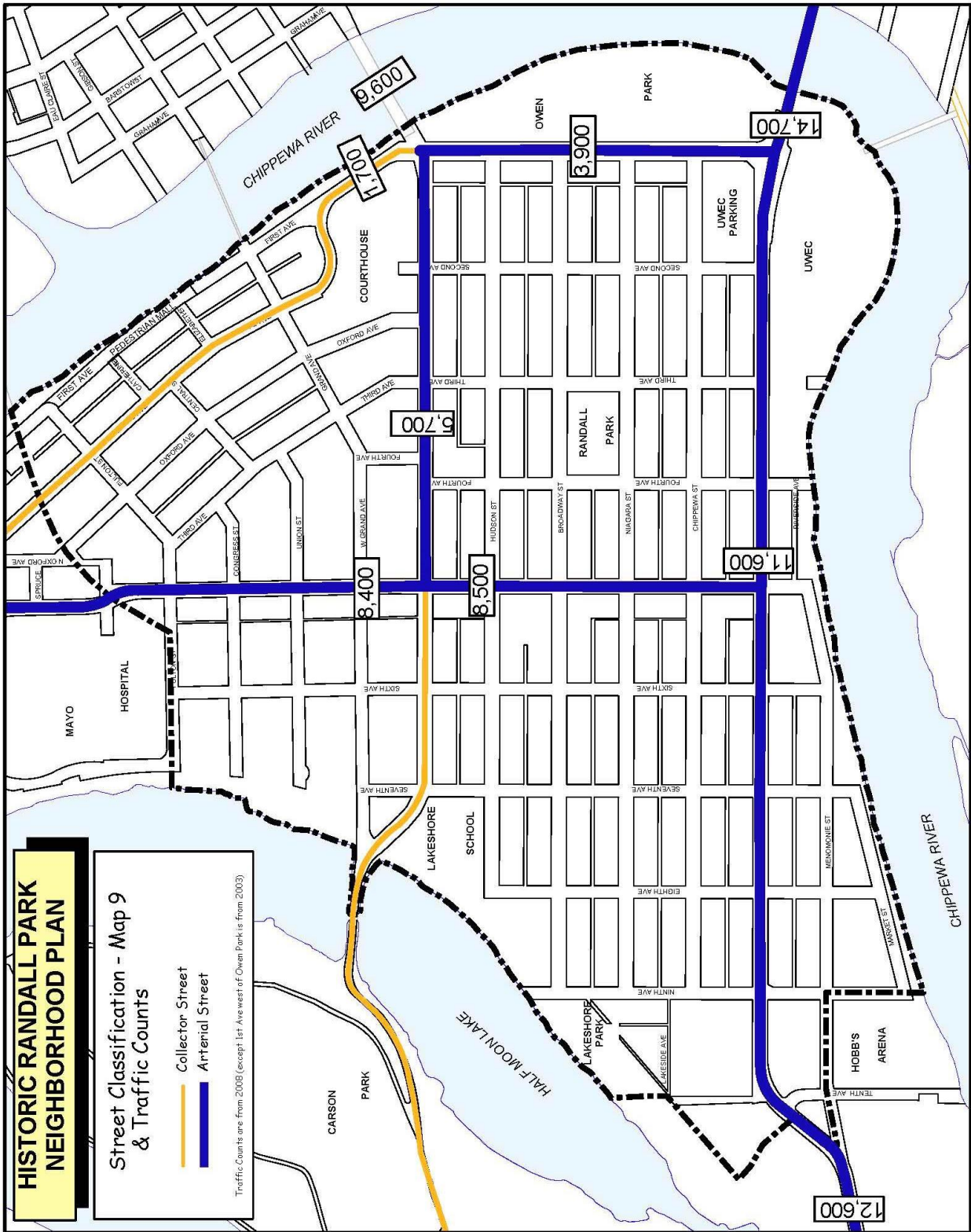
Figure 1



TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Vehicular Circulation. The arterial and collector street system is illustrated on Map 9. Much of the traffic on these streets is the result of the traffic generated by the University, courthouse, and Water Street Commercial District, as well as the proximity of the neighborhood to downtown, Mayo Hospital, Carson Park, and Hobbs Arena.

Since the completion of the original neighborhood plan, several street changes have occurred in the neighborhood which has affected vehicular circulation. Lake Street was re-routed to provide the direct access to Carson Park. This change resulted in classifying Lake Street as the



collector rather than West Grand Avenue which used to be the primary access to the park from the east.

First Avenue, north of West Grand Avenue, was closed to construct the riverfront trail and pedestrian mall. In addition, First Avenue, north of Lake Street, was reconfigured to connect with Second Avenue as part of the County Courthouse expansion. This resulted in the classification of First Avenue and Second Avenue north of Lake Street as a collector street and resulted in an increase in traffic volumes on Second Avenue, north of Grand Avenue.

Another change occurred with the vacation of Sixth Avenue between Fulton Avenue and Chestnut Street which was requested by Mayo Hospital in order to construct a day care center.

Prior to the vacation of this portion of Sixth Avenue, this street was used as a convenient route to access Luther Hospital from the south.

Finally, Water Street was connected with Menomonie Street to the west of Tenth Avenue. This eliminated a connection to the two streets that involved using a portion of Ninth Avenue.

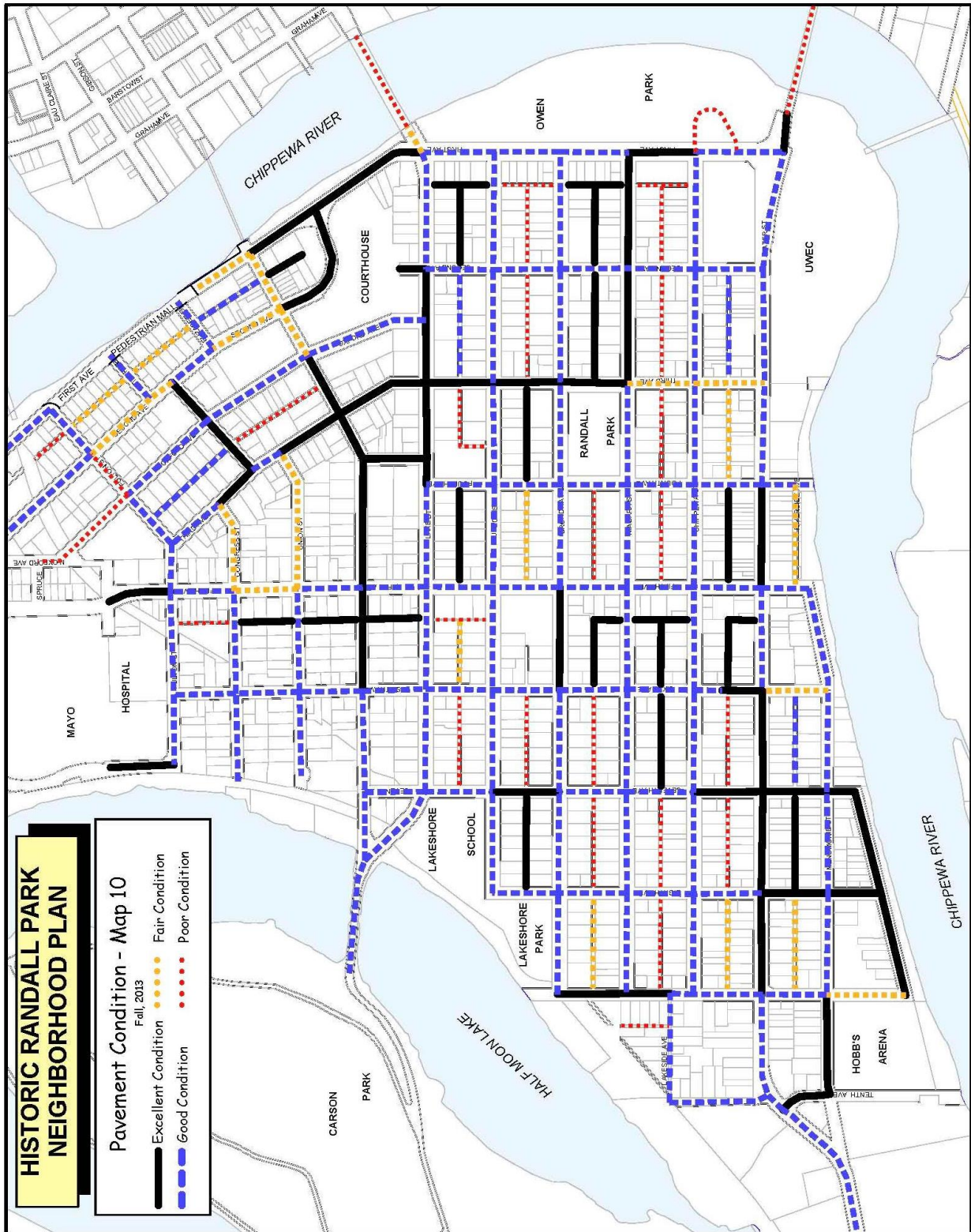
Overall, traffic volumes within the neighborhood are similar to those back in 1995 or somewhat lower, which is somewhat surprising. The only streets showing traffic increases were Second Avenue to the north of West Grand Avenue and Water Street to the far west of the neighborhood (where it connects with Menomonie Street). As noted above, this connection of Water Street and Menomonie Street did not exist in 1995.

Street and Alley Condition. The condition of each street and alley within the neighborhood as of 2013 is shown on Map 10. The map displays the condition rating (pavement condition index) for each street and alley which is derived from an analysis of the age, construction, and condition of the pavement surface. The higher the index, the better the condition of the street.

Overall, the streets within the neighborhood are in quite good condition. As shown in Table 6, approximately 89% of the streets are in good to excellent condition. This compares to 53% of the streets back in 1994. The condition of the alleys is not as good, as approximately 41% of the alleys have been rated as poor and another 14% rated as only fair.

Table 6
Street and Alley Conditions

Condition	# of Street Sections	# of Alley Sections
Poor	5 (3%)	23 (41%)
Fair	15 (8%)	8 (14%)
Good	113 (64%)	5 (9%)
Excellent	44 (25%)	20 (36%)
Total	177	56



Pedestrians and Bicyclists. Pedestrian circulation within the neighborhood is complemented by an extensive sidewalk system throughout the neighborhood. In addition, the construction of the Chippewa River Trail and Half Moon Lake Trail loop are utilized by both pedestrians and bicyclists for access to activity areas such as the University, Water Street area, West Grand Avenue area, and Downtown.

The original plan referred to difficulties that existed for pedestrians attempting to cross Water Street. These issues have been corrected in part with intersection design changes at the intersection of First Avenue and Water Street and the installation of more defined crosswalks in the 300 and 400 blocks of Water Street. In addition, “Yield to Pedestrian” signs have been placed in the middle of Water Street at the intersection of Fourth Avenue.

Finally, the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan designates Lake Street, Fifth Avenue, and Water Street as primary on-street bicycle corridors, and First Avenue as a local bicycle route. With these designations, appropriate signing and lane markings are planned.

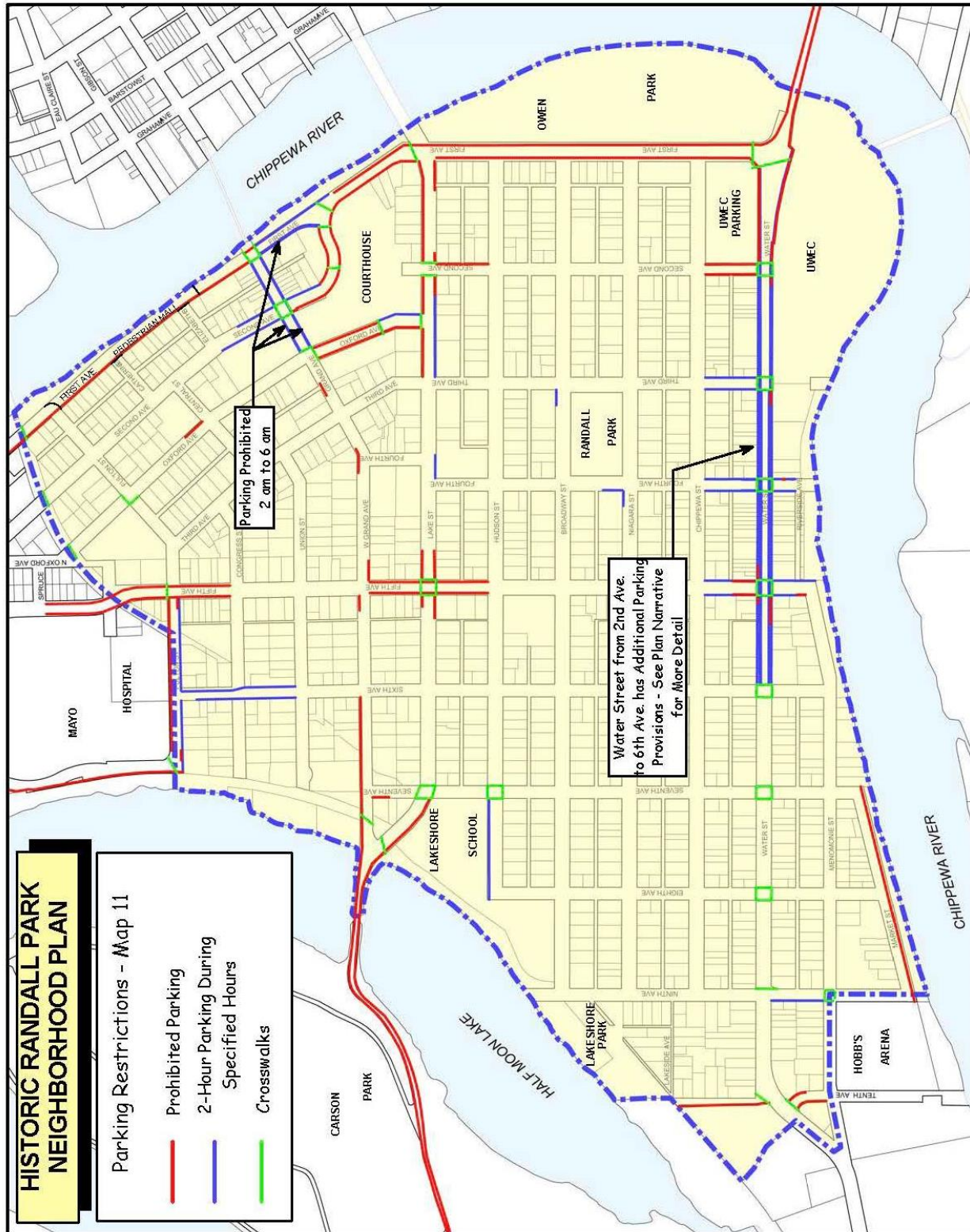
Parking. The responses from the neighborhood survey indicated strong concerns about the difficulty in the congested streets near their homes due to the heavy on-street parking demand primarily in the vicinity of Mayo Hospital, the University, and the Water Street Commercial District; and secondly in the vicinity of the Courthouse. The on-street parking is attributable to daytime employees at Mayo Hospital, daytime commuter students, evening Water Street customers, and the shortage of off-street parking for rental properties near Water Street.

The 1978 neighborhood plan proposed to develop a parking lot within the 400 block of Chippewa Street to provide parking for the commercial district. Two properties were acquired in 1994 to construct the first phase of this parking, but no additional parking has been provided.

In 1976, an ordinance was passed which established more stringent residential off-street parking regulations. However, properties having insufficient parking prior to the adoption of the ordinance are grandfathered in and, therefore, exempt from these regulations.

Finally, alternate side street parking from November 1 to May 1 has caused some shortage of parking in the evening. However, as a result of these parking restrictions, this provides the City with a better opportunity to plow the snow from the streets.

Within the neighborhood, the streets have a variety of parking restrictions ranging from prohibited parking, 2-hour parking during specified hours, to “no parking” restrictions. Map 11 summarizes the parking regulations within the neighborhood.



STRENGTHS AND RESOURCES

In updating the 1995 Plan, the neighborhood survey asked residents about what they felt were the strengths and resources of the neighborhood. Based on these responses, residents feel that a number of positive factors benefit the neighborhood and make it unique, and which provide opportunities for the neighborhood to grow and improve in the future. The strengths and resources that were identified include:

- Proximity to several parks which include: Lakeshore Playground, Randall Park, Owen Park, and riverfront greenways, and proximity to the Chippewa River and Half Moon Lake.
- Proximity to the recreational trail.
- Unique variety and historic character/architecture of much of the housing within the neighborhood.
- Proximity to public services such as the library, health department, police, social services, and government offices.
- Proximity to schools and churches.
- Proximity to Downtown, and the Water Street and West Grand Avenue business districts.
- The diversity of the residents of the neighborhood.
- Benefits from proximity to the University including events and activities available to the general public and neighborhood.
- General feeling of safety and security within the neighborhood.
- The affordability of the single-family homes within the neighborhood.
- Having an elementary school within the neighborhood.
- Existence of ordinances such as winter parking regulations and property maintenance to assist in neighborhood upkeep.
- Accessibility of health care from hospitals and clinics.
- The work of the neighborhood association and its volunteers.
- The positive interaction between the neighborhood association and the City.
- The increased efforts of the University and City to address alcohol consumption related issues.
- Pedestrian orientation of the neighborhood.
- Bus service within the neighborhood.
- Established boulevard trees.



SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES

The issues facing the neighborhood were identified and discussed as part of the update process for the neighborhood plan. This included a review of issues identified in 1995 as well as identifying issues that currently exist within the neighborhood. The Planning Committee utilized the findings of the neighborhood survey to assist in identifying these current issues. Although it is the consensus of the Planning Committee that the neighborhood has continued to improve since the original Plan in 1978 and the update in 1995, many of the same problems identified in the past still exist to varying degrees today. Problems or issues identified by the Committee are listed below:

Conversion of Owner-occupied Dwellings. *What programs or incentives can be implemented to address the continued decline of owner-occupancy within the neighborhood?* Although the overall population within the neighborhood has somewhat stabilized since 1995, the neighborhood experienced a dramatic reduction in the number of owner-occupied dwellings over this period. Based on estimates from the 2010 Census and using records from the City Assessor's office, approximately 150 dwellings were converted to rentals since 1995, leaving only approximately 275 dwellings (15%) as owner-occupied. This has occurred despite efforts of the neighborhood association and the City to reverse this trend in order to possibly increase the number of owner-occupied dwellings in the neighborhood.

These efforts have included the construction of the new elementary school and maintaining the zoning changes implemented from the original plan which have restricted the number of rooming houses and number of non-related residents within the dwellings. It was noted in the 1995 Plan that the conversions of the owner-occupied homes to rentals was also a major issue at that time.

When reviewing this issue, the Planning Committee discussed the need for the City to attempt to develop and provide more programs and incentives that would encourage owner-occupancy and also better promote any programs that may already exist.

Composition of Neighborhood Residents. *Are the demographics of the neighborhood changing?* The Planning Committee and neighborhood association have concerns regarding some of the "marginal" quality student rental properties located in the neighborhood as newer student housing is being constructed both within the neighborhood and in other areas of the City. Neighborhood residents are noticing that some of these older dwellings that traditionally have been occupied by UWEC or CVTC students are now being rented by non-students. These non-student residents tend to be more transient and have fewer ties to the neighborhood and the police are concerned that some may be more likely to be involved with drug and criminal related behaviors. The committee also noted that these non-students are not subject to the rules of conduct and sanctions that can be imposed by the University for inappropriate behavior. This issue is a growing concern as more and more new student housing is constructed in such areas as along Water Street, to the south of Shopko Plaza, and Downtown.

Housing and Yard Upkeep. *What more can be done to improve the upkeep of the housing and properties within the neighborhood?* The upkeep of properties within the neighborhood was also identified as a concern. Upkeep relates to the general exterior condition of the structures and general property maintenance relating to such things as trash removal, unmowed grass, unkept lawns, snow removal from sidewalks, stuffed furniture on porches, garbage and recycling containers left out at the curb, etc. These problems tend to be associated with the rental properties and relate back to resident concerns about the stability and image of the Randall Park Neighborhood.



Alley Condition. *What can be done to address the poor condition of the alleys?* An analysis of the condition of the streets within the neighborhood indicates that overall the streets are in relatively good condition and that the City has been aggressively working to improve the streets in the neighborhood. However, the condition of the alleys was a major concern noted in the survey. This concern relates to the poor pavement condition, lack of snow plowing in the winter, lighting, and overgrown brush and trees.

Street Parking - Congested Streets. *Is there a need to address issues related to congested streets due to vehicles parked on the street?* A large number of residents expressed concern about a number of streets within the neighborhood that are quite congested with vehicle parking. The areas most frequently mentioned by residents include the area to the south of Mayo Hospital, in the vicinity of the County Courthouse, and closer to the UWEC campus and Water Street area.

The majority of vehicles parked on the streets are attributable to:

- Employees of Mayo Hospital not using parking provided by the hospital;
- Employees of the County Courthouse;
- Students from the University;
- Residents of housing close to the Water Street Commercial District where insufficient off-street parking is provided; in addition, there is a shortage of off-street parking for many apartments and homes that have been converted to rental properties;
- Parking generated from the Water Street Commercial District.

The Planning Committee met with representatives from the hospital and courthouse who both noted that both of their respective organizations had provided additional off-street parking since 1995. However, the Committee still feels that on-street parking continues to be an issue south of the hospital; whereas, they noted that street congestion and parking on the streets in the vicinity of the County Courthouse has improved since 1995. However, as County services grow in the future and depending on the location and convenience of the off-street parking provided, increased on-street parking could again become an issue for residents around the courthouse.

Responses from the surveys noted that the congested streets created two major problems; one relating to the lack of availability of parking for residents, and the other related to visibility concerns at many intersections and driveways.

Housing Condition. *Should redevelopment of certain housing in the west portion of the neighborhood be considered?* The housing stock located in the western portion of the neighborhood to the north of Hobb's Ice Arena and in the vicinity of Ninth Avenue and Chippewa Streets is quite old and in varied stages of obsolescence. Should redevelopment of these areas for new housing be considered?

Courthouse and Mayo Campus Boundaries. *Are the campus boundaries for Mayo Hospital and the Courthouse as delineated in the 1995 plan still appropriate for the neighborhood and hospital/courthouse?* As part of the 1995 Plan, the boundaries for the two campuses were delineated in an effort to establish a clear line between these facilities and surrounding



residential and commercial areas. The goal was to minimize the impact of these major facilities on surrounding areas and to enhance their presence within the neighborhood. Recognizing that demand for County and medical services may continue to grow, it is important that the plan allows for some options for the County and hospital, provided such options are not disruptive to the neighborhood,

provide stability for these neighborhood areas, and encourage continued improvements and reinvestment in these properties.

Neighborhood Image. *What can be done to improve the image of the neighborhood?* The image or perception of others in the community is a concern of the neighborhood when attempting to attract families to the neighborhood. Many of the problems identified contribute to portraying the neighborhood as an area not conducive for families.

The neighborhood association has taken a number of proactive steps to address this concern, but work is still needed. Examples of some of the proactive actions taken by the neighborhood include: changing the name of the neighborhood to the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood, creating an informative website, working with the Water Street BID to encourage a more diverse business district, and working with the University on student-related issues within the neighborhood.

Poor Municipal Snow Removal. *What actions can be taken to improve snow removal on streets and public sidewalks?* A number of people responding to the survey were critical of the City's efforts to plow snow from the streets and alleys. Snow removal from the sidewalks within Randall Park and on the Water Street and Lake Street bridges was also mentioned.

Loud Parties and Nuisance Activities. *Are the existing enforcement and educational efforts adequate to address issues related to student parties and nuisance activities?* The neighborhood has seen significant improvement (reduction) in the number and scale of parties being held in the neighborhood. This improvement is in large part due to programs and involvement of the University and increased enforcement by the Police Department. However, these parties and nuisance activities such as vandalism, disorderly conduct, and public intoxication are still concerns among many residents.

A more recent concern of residents is the increasing popularity of having campfires in the residential areas of the neighborhood. The smoke resulting from these fires has become both a nuisance and a health issue.

Floodplain. *How should the City address the remaining floodplain areas within the neighborhood?* Several areas within the neighborhood remain within the 100-year floodplain. This includes the FEMA-acquired property along First Avenue west of Owen Park.

Water Street Commercial District. *What is the role of the neighborhood in relation to the implementation of the Water Street Commercial District Plan?* Residents feel that continuing to promote a more diverse business atmosphere in the Water Street Commercial District is important to the image and stability of the neighborhood. However, there are concerns about increasing the potential dwelling unit density of redevelopment that may occur in areas south of Water Street and allowing too much first floor commercial development along Water Street to the west of Seventh Avenue.

West Grand Avenue Commercial District. *What is the role of the neighborhood in promoting a vibrant commercial district in the West Grand Avenue Commercial District?* The West Grand Avenue Business Improvement District (BID) organization works with businesses in the commercial district to promote their area. The neighborhood sees this area as an important component of the neighborhood and would like to support the policies of the BID.



Pedestrian Character of Neighborhood. *What can the neighborhood do to preserve or enhance the pedestrian character of the area?* Residents feel that it is important to maintain the pedestrian character of the neighborhood and the ability to walk to many services and activities.

Street Lighting. *Can lighting improvements be considered in the residential areas near the University campus?* The Planning Committee feels that certain streets and areas within the neighborhood should be better lighted. This would help to improve the safety of those

returning from the Water Street area late at night and curb vandalism occurring in these areas.

Under Utilization of Properties Along the Riverfront. *Can the utilization of the riverfront properties be improved?* The Planning Committee noted that several of the waterfront

areas within the neighborhood are underutilized and not taking advantage of their location along the riverfront. This primarily includes properties along Market and Menomonie Streets in the south portion of neighborhood and along First Avenue to the north of West Grand Avenue.



Nonconforming Commercial/Industrial Buildings. *Should the three commercial/industrial buildings south of Lakeshore School be redeveloped for housing?* The 1995 Plan noted that several nonconforming industrial buildings are located to the south of Lakeshore School. The plan also noted that where renovation was not feasible or appropriate, redevelopment of these buildings should be a consideration.

Insensitive Exterior Rehabilitation. *Should guidelines be considered to address inappropriate exterior changes that affect the character of a building?* Based on narratives from the 1995 Plan, there is still an issue related to exterior changes being made to some of the older houses in the neighborhood which change their character and appearance. This includes the use of incompatible materials, removal of original architectural details, and other related exterior work which has not been sensitive to or consistent with the architecture of the 19th century houses.

Pedestrian/Bicyclist Safety. *What improvements are necessary to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety?* Pedestrian and bicycle safety is a concern of the neighborhood, particularly in the Water Street area. Concerns along Water Street relate to bicycling on the commercial sidewalks and vehicles yielding to pedestrians crossing Water Street.

Another specific pedestrian-related safety concern noted by the Planning Committee is along a portion of Lake Street between Oxford Avenue and Second Avenue. At this location, pedestrians are not readily visible to eastbound traffic due to vehicle speed and poor sight distances.

City Budget for City Code Enforcement. *What measures can be taken to increase code enforcement?* In 2010, the City reduced the code enforcement officer position from a full-time position to a 2-day a week position. In addition, when this occurred, some of the code enforcement duties were spread around to other departments. This change has made it

more difficult to provide a proactive code enforcement program for the City and to respond to complaints in a timely manner.

Closing of Grocery Store. *Can a grocery store be recruited to serve the neighborhood?* One of the most frequent resident comments relates to the disappointment of not having a grocery store in the neighborhood. Kerm's Grocery, which was located in the 300 block of Water Street, closed around 2005 leaving the neighborhood without a grocery store in the vicinity.

Status of Randall Park Historic District. *Should properties opting out of the Randall Park Historic Landmark District in 1992 be reinstated?* An area in the vicinity of Randall Park was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 and locally landmarked in 1984. Property owners were given the opportunity to opt-out of the locally designated district in 1992. This issue pertains to whether the district still functions as a tool to preserve this historic portion of the neighborhood.

Boulevard Trees. *Are programs in place to assist in the replacement of boulevard trees and deal with the possible loss of ash trees?* Portions of the neighborhood are still impacted from the removal of the elm trees from the boulevards in the 1980s. In addition, the neighborhood has a large percentage of trees that will be susceptible to the Emerald Ash Borer Disease. In 2011, the City initiated a voluntary program to remove some of these ash trees.

Playground Program. *What can be undertaken to increase the utilization of Lakeshore Park?* Lakeshore Park was constructed in 1999 and is located to the southwest of Lakeshore School, along the eastern shoreline of Half Moon Lake. At the time the playground was constructed, the City operated a summer playground program at the park and maintained a skating rink. The skating rink use was discontinued in 2003 and the summer playground program was eliminated in 2007.

PLAN VISION AND GOALS

VISION STATEMENT

The Historic Randall Park Neighborhood is a vibrant, diverse, and inviting neighborhood. It is convenient and close to schools, the University, medical facilities, churches, parks and trails, the Chippewa River and increasingly active Downtown, West Grand Avenue, and Water Street commercial areas, while providing a unique and pleasing lifestyle in a safe, walkable, and historic setting. The neighborhood provides a good mix of quality owner and renter housing opportunities and well maintained public facilities and infrastructure.

Guiding Principles and Policies

Land Use and Redevelopment. *Provide a neighborhood that is stable, sustainable, and attractive and that is an affordable place to live having a variety of housing choices that encourage a mix of owner and renter occupied homes. This should be accomplished through:*

- Reversing the trend of the continued decline in the number of owner-occupied homes.
- Promoting the rehabilitation of existing housing in the neighborhood as the most desirable form of improving the housing.
- Minimizing the potential impacts on the neighborhood created from facilities such as Mayo Hospital, the County Courthouse, and adjoining commercial districts.
- Maintaining the character of the existing housing stock and encourage rehabilitation which is consistent with the character of the structure while attempting to preserve historically and architecturally significant structures within the neighborhood.
- Encouraging redevelopment, where appropriate, that is compatible with the character of the neighborhood.
- Promoting the use of sustainable building and revitalization practices and techniques.

Public Facilities. *Provide public facilities, improvements, and services within the neighborhood to encourage neighborhood stability and a high quality of life. This should be accomplished through:*

- Continuing to monitor neighborhood and community needs for parks, open space, the waterways, and related recreational facilities.
- Providing healthy, tree-lined boulevards throughout the neighborhood.
- Providing timely delivery of city services and the repair and reconstruction of streets and alleys and other infrastructure within the neighborhood.
- Providing a safe, secure environment for the residents and visitors.

Transportation and Parking. Provide multi-modal accommodations for the residents and visitors in a manner that encourages safe, efficient, and convenient movement within the neighborhood and which is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. This should be accomplished through:

- Minimizing non-neighborhood traffic on residential streets.
- Offering facilities and services to enhance a walkable environment.
- Preserving the neighborhood character along collector and arterial streets within the neighborhood.
- Encouraging traffic calming measures and enhanced enforcement to slow vehicular traffic.
- Providing convenient bus transit service and other mobility choices to meet the varying needs of the neighborhood residents.
- Providing safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle linkages within and outside the neighborhood.
- Addressing on-street parking issues near major activity centers.

Quality of Life. Provide a high quality of life in the neighborhood by effectively addressing property upkeep and nuisance-related issues and fostering a sense of community and cooperation among residents and organizations within the neighborhood. This should be accomplished through:

- Promoting the neighborhood association as a positive and active entity working towards the improvement of the neighborhood and as an organization which instills cooperation and involvement of the residents.
- Effectively dealing with City Code enforcement issues and nuisance behavior activities.
- Encouraging the cooperation of area residents, landlords, and businesses and institutions such as the business districts, churches, the School District, the University, Mayo Hospital, City, and County to work cooperatively and support one another to improve the neighborhood.
- Instilling a positive image of the neighborhood as a safe and inviting place to live, work, and shop.
- Capitalizing on the diversity of the neighborhood in promoting the unique identity and character of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIES

In order to work towards the vision and guiding principles identified in this plan and direct future efforts and activities within the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood, the following strategies or recommendation have been developed. These strategies are listed under one of the four general categories identified in the preceding section. Several of these strategies have been carried over from the previous plan as some are ongoing, while others are still relevant, but not completed.

LAND USE AND REDEVELOPMENT

Guiding Principle. Provide a neighborhood that is stable, sustainable, and attractive, and that is an affordable place to live having a variety of housing choices that encourage a mix of owner and renter occupied homes.

1. Utilize appropriate building design and site plan guidelines for new residential

construction. The 1978 plan and 1995 update outlined a series of guidelines to be used by the Plan Commission for new duplex and multiple-family residential buildings built in the neighborhood to be compatible with the general design features and character of the existing buildings within the neighborhood. This is important in order to maintain the unique character of the neighborhood. These general guidelines relate to: height, mass, form, building materials, and scale and are outlined in the Randall Park Historic Landmark District Plan. The City Plan Commission should continue to utilize these guidelines for new duplex and multiple-family development and encourage their use for any single-family homes.

In addition, the City should encourage that sustainable and “green” building practices and techniques be considered in the construction of such new buildings as outlined in the City’s Sustainability Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is also important that site improvements including off-street parking lots be designed to retain the residential character of the area and not detract from surrounding properties. Therefore, site plans for any duplex or multiple-family development must be evaluated to ensure that site improvements such as off-street parking lots, garbage dumpsters, etc. are located inconspicuously, do not occupy excessive portions of yards, provide proper landscaping, and are compatible with surrounding uses. In addition, the City must ensure that these required improvements are completed as required by the Plan Commission.

Responsibility: Eau Claire Plan Commission, Department of Community Development

Timeframe: Ongoing

2. Encourage the utilization of rehabilitation guidelines for remodeling work. The 1978 plan and 1995 update included a recommendation that encouraged building owners to undertake exterior changes to the residential structures in a manner that would be compatible with the design and architecture of the structure. This was included in these plans because many neighborhood dwellings experienced exterior changes that were not

sensitive with the architecture of the 19th century houses, where inappropriate materials were used, and original architectural details were removed. These changes have resulted in a general decline in the appearance and upkeep of certain areas and can create a disincentive for neighboring property owners to properly maintain their properties.

Therefore, the City and neighborhood association should continue to encourage that the utilization of the Secretary of Interior Guidelines for Rehabilitation be followed within the neighborhood for such remodeling work.



Since adoption of the original neighborhood plan in 1978 and 1995 update, these guidelines have not been consistently followed by property owners within the neighborhood, particularly those properties used as rentals. Therefore, the feasibility of applying these guidelines throughout the neighborhood as an overlay district should be studied.

Responsibility: Department of Community Development

Timeframe: Ongoing

3. Create a Task Force to study the continuing trend of the conversion of owner-occupied homes to rentals and issues related to housing condition. A task force should be created to study the continuing trend of the conversion of owner-occupied homes to rental properties and develop recommendations to address the problem. The trend of fewer owner-occupied homes was evident in the neighborhood between 1978 and 1995 and has continued since that time. It was anticipated that the construction of the new neighborhood elementary school, new neighborhood park, increased police enforcement, and a revitalized Downtown would have reversed this trend, but this has not been the case.

This task force should include persons from other neighborhoods surrounding Downtown and their recommendations should be applicable to the central part of the City. One idea that should be studied is the feasibility of creating a nonprofit development organization that could be directly involved with rehabilitation, construction, purchase, or sale of family housing within older neighborhoods near Downtown. Organizations such as this have been successful in revitalizing and stabilizing neighborhoods across the country. Some of the best examples of neighborhood development organizations can be found in several St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee neighborhoods. Another concept would be

to develop partnerships with neighborhood-related organizations to improve neighborhoods. “Renew LaCrosse” is an example of such a partnership. Finally, another alternative is to consider the feasibility and benefits of creating a neighborhood improvement district as set forth in the State code.

The task force should also look at property upkeep issues discussed under the “Quality of Life” section to develop ideas to encourage improved upkeep of rental properties in the neighborhood.

Finally, to address some of the most deteriorated and obsolescent housing within the neighborhood on smaller parcels, the task force in conjunction with the neighborhood association should study the appropriateness of drafting an amendment to the zoning provisions for the Randall Park Neighborhood that would provide an opportunity for the Plan Commission to consider a conditional use permit to allow for the construction of a duplex on parcels that are less than 10,000 square feet in size. Such amendment would include review criteria to consider the condition of the existing dwelling, compatibility of a proposed duplex in relation to the adjacent land uses, and ensure that the building appearance and character as well as site design would be compatible with design standards for the Randall Park Neighborhood. This would be a tool that could assist in the removal of deteriorated and obsolescent dwellings on smaller lots where repairs or renovations are not practical

Responsibility: Department of Community Development
Timeframe: 2015

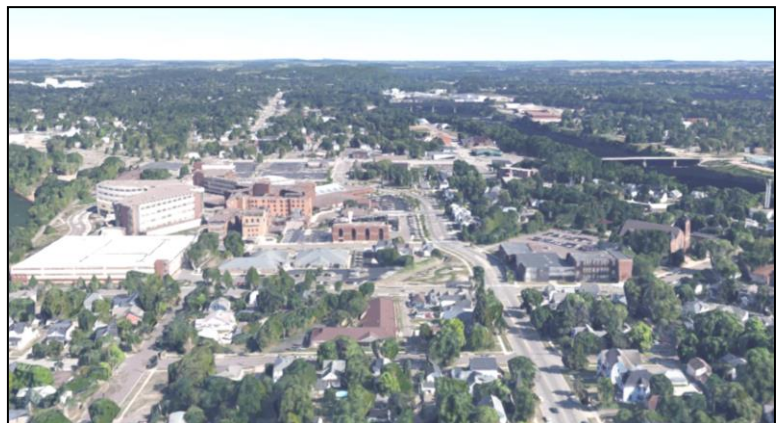
4. Encourage the revitalization of the riverfront area along the First Avenue Pedestrian Mall.

There are a number of dwellings along the First Avenue pedestrian mall and to the west along Second Avenue that are in substandard condition and some of which are in the floodplain. The City should consider alternatives to encourage the owners of these properties to capitalize on their location along the water to renovate or redevelop these structures. Any such redevelopment should be consistent with the current RM zoning of the area.

Responsibility: Eau Claire City Plan Commission
Timeframe: Ongoing

5. Continue to utilize Fulton Street as the southern boundary for the Mayo Hospital campus.

Fulton Street was established as the southern boundary of the Mayo Hospital campus in the 1995 plan. Conversations with hospital officials indicate that they also view Fulton Street as the southern boundary of their campus. The one exception is the possible acquisition of the parcel on the southwest



corner of Fifth Avenue and Fulton Street to improve visibility issues that exist at that intersection. The hospital currently leases parking spaces from St. Patrick’s Church for its employees and they should be encouraged to continue this arrangement in order to keep these vehicles from being parked on the street.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: Ongoing

6. Review boundaries for the Eau Claire County Courthouse/Government Center facility. The Neighborhood Steering Committee stressed the importance of having the plan continue to provide a building and facility boundary for the Courthouse and ancillary facilities to recognize that County services may need to grow in the future, yet provide some protections for the neighborhood to ensure that such growth is not disruptive to the neighborhood or the West Grand Avenue Business District. The 2005 Comprehensive Plan sets forth this boundary that extends to the west side of the parking west of Oxford Avenue, south of the West Grand Avenue Business district, and the north property lines of the dwellings along Lake Street as the south line.

The Planning Committee and neighborhood association have indicated that they concur with the boundaries established in the Comprehensive Plan with one change that should be considered with the update of the Comprehensive Plan in that the three remaining dwellings along First Avenue to the north of Lake Street should also be retained for as long as feasible as these dwellings are still in good condition. The Committee and neighborhood association noted that the Lake Street Bridge serves as a major entrance to the neighborhood and the existing housing along First Avenue and north of Lake Street enhances the residential character of the area and “softens” the mass and appearance of the jail and parking lots as people enter the neighborhood from the bridge. Map 12



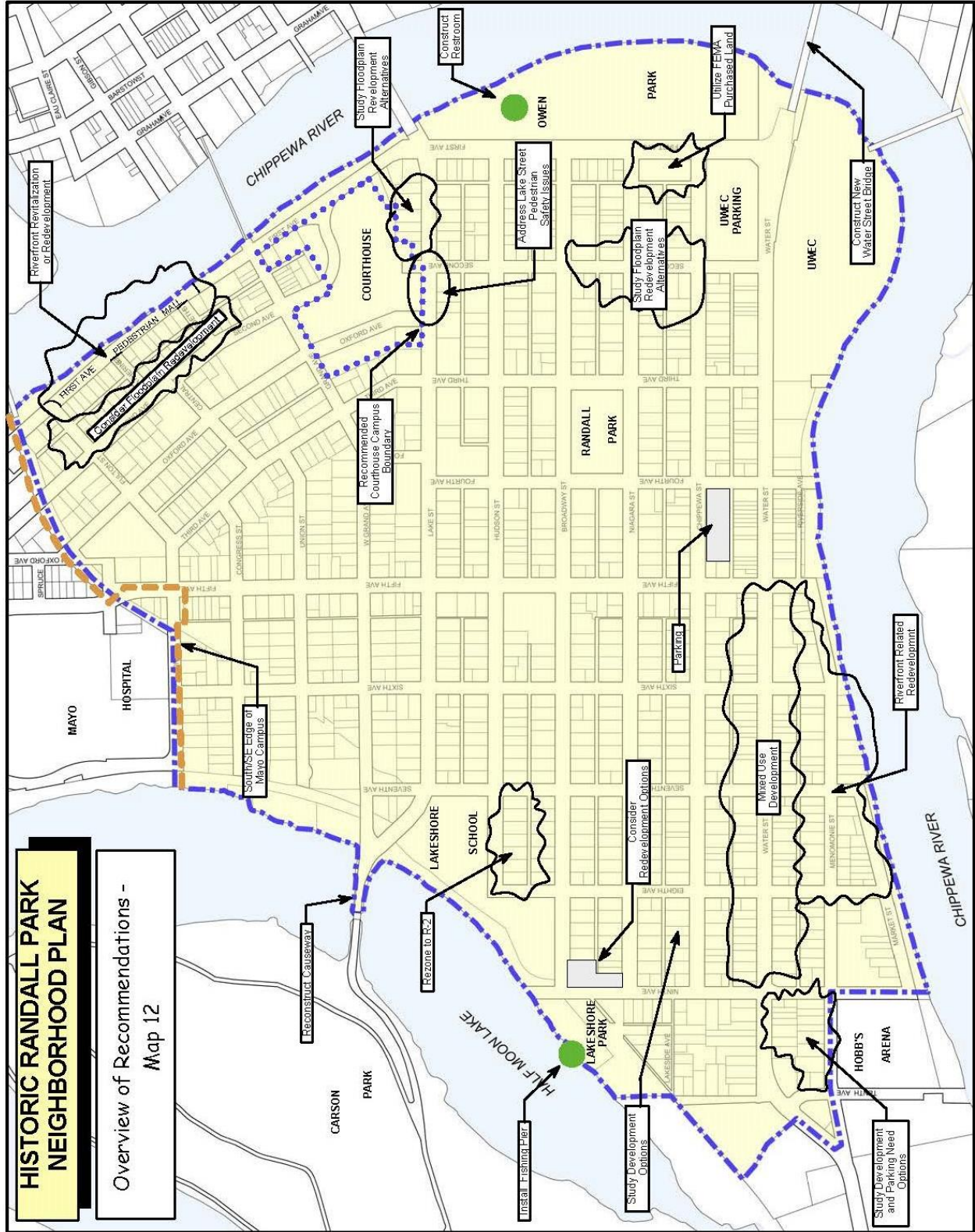
illustrates the recommended boundary.

If in the long-term future, dwellings along Lake Street or First Avenue were to be removed, the neighborhood noted that new housing should be considered in this area if the land can

be removed from the floodplain. A secondary option would be to provide an area for stormwater “best management practices” (BMPs) facilities to improve stormwater drainage issues in this area, which in turn, would provide somewhat of a buffer from the existing parking lots and jail building.

Responsibility: Eau Claire City Plan Commission

Timeframe: 2015



7. Study zoning and redevelopment options for the commercial/industrial buildings east of Lakeshore Park. There are three commercial/industrial buildings located to the east of Lakeshore Park and south of Lakeshore Elementary School that are zoned RM. These buildings date back to the 1950s when this area, which is adjacent to Half Moon Lake, was a larger mix of industrial uses. These buildings have been kept in fair condition, but are now nonconforming uses in the neighborhood and surrounded by housing, the school, and City parks.

The City should discuss options to acquire and redevelop these nonconforming properties into housing that would capitalize on their location near the school, park, recreational trail, and Half Moon Lake. Housing options that would encourage owner-occupied dwellings should be a priority.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire](#)

Timeframe: 2016

8. Rezone the half block south of the Lakeshore School site on Hudson Street. With the completion of Lakeshore Elementary School, the houses directly to the south of the school on Hudson Street should be rezoned from RM to R-2. The houses within this half block are all one- or two-family structures and the zoning to the south and east is presently R-2.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire](#)

Timeframe: 2015

9. Encourage the redevelopment of the areas north of Hobb's Ice Arena. The City should encourage the redevelopment of the obsolescent and substandard housing located north of the Hobb's Ice Center, and to the south and southeast of Lakeshore Park in the vicinity of Ninth Avenue and Chippewa Streets. Family housing should be a priority with its proximity to Lakeshore School, Half Moon Lake, and the parks and trails. If not feasible, housing should be consistent with the current RM zoning of the area. The City should also evaluate the need for additional ice center parking to the north of the facility.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire](#)

Timeframe: [Ongoing](#)

10. Maintain the existing boundaries of the RM and R-2 zoning districts throughout the neighborhood. The original plan established the R-2 zoning in the central portion of the neighborhood to maintain lower dwelling unit densities and encourage family housing. It also established the RM zoning along the periphery where higher concentrations of rooming houses and apartments were present. The strategy should be continued with the exceptions of the proposed rezoning the one half block south of Lakeshore School from RM to R-2 (see #8) and the extension of mixed-use commercial/residential redevelopment along Water Street west of Fifth Avenue consistent with the Water Street Plan.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire](#)

Timeframe: [Ongoing](#)

- 11. Consider an amendment to the Water Street Commercial District Plan relating to the dwelling unit density south of Water Street and west of Sixth Avenue.** The update of the Water Street Commercial District Plan in 2009 included a provision to allow for the redevelopment of the residential properties north of the Chippewa River and south of the alley and alley extended east that is located to the south of Water Street to densities comparable to R-3P and R-4P zoning districts. The neighborhood approved of this change in 2009, but in the process of updating this plan, the neighborhood now feels that the density and height standards for the R-3P and R-4P districts for the areas west of Sixth Avenue are not appropriate for this riverfront area, noting that the RM provides for sufficient densities for the redevelopment of these properties.



The Planning Committee and neighborhood association indicated that buildings similar in mass, size, and height of the apartment buildings recently constructed in the North Barstow area to the east of Phoenix Park would not be appropriate in this area. The Committee feels that two-story dwellings similar in design to the 4-plex recently constructed in the 600 block of Menomonie Street would be more appropriate in this area.

The Committee also recommends that the dwelling height for any redevelopment in the 500 block of Menomonie Street should not exceed 3 stories in height and should incorporate the design principles contained in the City’s Waterways Plan. It was noted that the historic Adin Randall House is located within the 500 block of Water Street and efforts should be pursued to preserve the house on site or at a different location.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire](#)

Timeframe: [Immediate](#)

- 12. Encourage redevelopment along Water Street to the west of Seventh Avenue.** The update of the Water Street Commercial District Plan indicated that commercial mixed-use development incorporating dwellings should be encouraged along Water Street to the west of Sixth Avenue. The general concept at the time of the adoption of the Water Street Plan was for first floor commercial/office with one or two floors of apartments. The Planning Committee and neighborhood association have concerns that this redevelopment has to be exclusively first floor commercial/office noting that the market may not support this amount of commercial/office space along the full length of Water Street. Therefore, it is recommended that first floor dwelling units be an option that the

City would consider when such redevelopment occurs west of Seventh Avenue along Water Street.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: Ongoing

13. Encourage the redevelopment of areas within the floodplain. Since 1995, the City has purchased several parcels of land west of Owen Park that are in the floodplain. However, there are still additional properties within the neighborhood that are in the floodplain and subject to the City's floodplain ordinance which restricts improvements. The City should work with the owners of these remaining floodplain properties to discuss redevelopment alternatives for this land.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: Long-term

14. Evaluate the current status of the Randall Park Historic Landmark District and encourage use of rehabilitation tax credit program. In 1992, property owners were given the opportunity to opt-out of the Randall Park Historic Landmark District. Approximately one half of the properties were removed leaving the district with very irregular boundaries. The district in this current configuration is not functioning in the manner originally intended when a more cohesive district was first designated in 1984. Therefore, the status of the district in its current configuration should be evaluated with the possibility of reinstating the properties that had opted-out.

The City Landmarks Commission should also regularly contact owners of properties listed on the National Register or within National Register Historic Districts to encourage them to utilize the federal and state rehabilitation tax credit programs.

Responsibility: Eau Claire Landmarks Commission

Timeframe: 2015

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Guiding Principle. Provide public facilities, improvements, and services within the neighborhood to encourage neighborhood stability and a high quality of life.

1. Ensure timely delivery of City services which are consistent with other neighborhoods within the City. A common complaint noted in many of the survey responses related to City services such as snow removal, street sweeping, alley maintenance, etc. being inadequate. The Planning Committee noted that it is important that these types of services must be provided at a high level in order to provide an attractive and quality environment for families to live. Complaints about snow removal included such areas as: snow removal from streets, sidewalks in front of public properties, bridges, and the sidewalks within Randall Park.

The Committee also discussed the issue of snow removal from the alleys. It has been the City's policy not to plow alleys in the City unless the alley provides direct access to a

residence. With the heavy snows and prolonged snow cover in 2012-13 and 2013-14, a number of the alleys in the neighborhood became nearly impassible and very dangerous.

The neighborhood association should meet with representatives of the City to address these issues and determine if the alley snow plowing policy can be changed.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire, HRPNA

Timeframe: Immediate

2. Evaluate the need for additional street lighting within the neighborhood. The need for additional street lighting should be considered in certain areas of the neighborhood due to the unique pedestrian nature of the Randall Park area, proximity of the University, and its higher population density. Areas which should be carefully evaluated are those areas in closer proximity to the University and Water Street, and other areas of higher incidents of vandalism and police activity. This may require the need to make exceptions or changes to the City's policies for providing street lighting.

Responsibility: Neighborhood residents, HRPNA, City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: 2015

3. Develop a plan for the FEMA-acquired open space located to the west of Owen Park. The

City acquired a parcel in the floodplain located west of First Avenue and south of Niagara Street. Use of this property is severely restricted due to conditions placed on the property by FEMA. The neighborhood and City and possibly the University should discuss options to utilize this property to make it an asset to the neighborhood.



Responsibility: City of Eau Claire, HRPNA, UWEC

Timeframe: 2015

4. Work with the City Forester to continue to implement a tree replacement program along the residential streets. The presence of boulevard trees along the neighborhood streets is important to defining the character of a neighborhood. The City has utilized CDBG and City funds to replace trees along some streets in the past and tree replacement has recently become part of all street reconstruction projects. In addition, the City Forestry Division recently undertook a voluntary preemptive program to remove some of the ash trees in the neighborhood, which will be susceptible to the Emerald Ash Borer Disease. The neighborhood should continue to work with the City Forester to identify boulevard locations that lack trees, assist the City Forester in sponsoring programs directed at the removal and replacement of the ash trees, and help to seek funding for these programs.

In addition, watering of newly planted boulevard trees by property owners and tenants has been very inconsistent. To address this, the City and neighborhood association

should attempt to better educate homeowners, landlords, and occupants of rentals to water and care for these new trees.

Responsibility: HRPNA, City Forestry Division

Timeframe: On-going

5. Construct a new restroom facility at Owen Park.



Xcel Energy and the City of Eau Claire recently completed the remediation of contaminated soils within Owen Park in an area located to the north of the bandshell. With the restoration work completed, the City plans to construct a new restroom facility in this area replacing the outdated facility located to the south of the bandshell. Construction will occur when funds are allocated to the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Responsibility: Department of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry

Timeframe: 2018

6. Install a fishing pier on Half Moon Lake near Lakeshore Park. Fishing access for persons with disabilities and the elderly is lacking along the east shoreline of Half Moon Lake. A fishing pier similar to that constructed on the west side of the lake near Braun's Bay should be constructed. The pier should be located in the vicinity of Lakeshore Park, possibly just to the south.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: 2015

7. Evaluate and update playground and park facilities. Three parks are located within the neighborhood including: Lakeshore Park, Randall Park, and Owen Park. The City should periodically evaluate the facilities at each of these parks and update and improve them as needed.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: On-going

8. Develop overlooks and improved access to the waterways. The Water Street Commercial District Plan, City Waterways Plan, and Water Street BID recommend that an overlook should be constructed near the south terminus of Fifth Avenue along the Chippewa River. The plan also calls for improving access down to the water for "tubers" in order to more safely exit the water.

In addition, the Waterways Plan recommends additional overlooks within the neighborhood, including one near the proposed fishing pier on Half Moon Lake and in conjunction with the reconstruction of the causeway.

Continuing to maintain visual and physical access to the Chippewa River at Owen Park, along Menomonie and Market Streets, and along the First Avenue Pedestrian Mall should also continue to be a priority of the City and as outlined in the City's Waterways Plan.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: 2015 and ongoing

9. Incorporate streetscape improvements along neighborhood arterial streets. The City's Comprehensive Plan and Waterways Plan state that arterial streets within the neighborhood should be considered part of the public open space system and should include streetscape improvements in order to give emphasis and character to these



streets and make them more walkable. Theme lighting, trees and landscaping, benches, banners, etc. all add to the character of the street and better define these routes through the neighborhood.

In addition, the Waterways Plan recommends making these types of improvements along West Grand Avenue to create a more walkable linkage between the West Grand Avenue Business District and Carson Park and also for the Grand Avenue walk bridge which connects the West Grand Avenue Business District and Downtown.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire, BIDs

Timeframe: Ongoing

10. Provide evening availability of Lakeshore School for youth and adults living within the neighborhood. In order to make the Lakeshore Elementary School a more integral part of the neighborhood, school facilities should be made available for neighborhood use after regular school hours. By opening the facility up to the neighborhood, it better serves as a gathering and activity center for the neighborhood. Implementation of this concept will require coordination with School District officials to allow the school to be opened up for "after hours" use.

Responsibility: HRPNA, Eau Claire School District

Timeframe: Ongoing

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Guiding Principle. Provide multi-modal accommodations for the residents and visitors in a manner that encourages safe, efficient, and convenient movement within the neighborhood and which is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

- 1. Continue to implement an aggressive street and sidewalk improvement program within the neighborhood.** A substantial number of streets and sidewalks within the neighborhood have been reconstructed since the 1995 plan update. The City should continue to identify the problem areas and address the remaining streets and sidewalks that are in poor condition.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: Ongoing

- 2. Continue to improve the condition of alleys in the neighborhood.** One of the most

frequent complaints from the survey and from the Planning Committee pertained to the overall condition and maintenance of the alleys in the neighborhood. The City has worked with the neighborhood in recent years to reconstruct a number of alleys using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The neighborhood should continue to work with the Public Works Department



to identify alleys in need of reconstruction and then encourage the City Council to reconstruct these alleys using CDBG funding for the remaining alleys.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: Ongoing

- 3. Conduct a study of street parking usage in the vicinity of Mayo Hospital, Water Street, and the County Courthouse to develop recommendations that would improve pedestrian, bicycle, and motorist safety and which would provide on-street parking availability to area residents.** Responses to the neighborhood survey indicated substantial concern about congested streets in the neighborhood, primarily in the vicinity of Mayo Hospital,

but also in areas surrounding the courthouse and north of Water Street. The majority of the vehicles parking on the street in the northern and central portions of the neighborhood appear to be related to employees from the hospital and courthouse. In the southern portion of the neighborhood, the cause of the congestion is more complex with on-street parking related to UWEC students, resident parking, and parking related to the Water Street Commercial District.

Issues noted by residents relate to difficulty parking near their homes and visibility issues at street intersections, driveways, and alleys. If the study indicates that on-street parking is an issue in certain sections of the neighborhood, alternatives should be considered to address the problems that were identified. Examples of possible alternatives include: increasing the “no parking” distances along the street curbs from intersections, driveways, and alleys from 4’ to 8’ (this approach was implemented in portions of the Third Ward), reducing the maximum parking time allowed (i.e., all-day parking to two-



hour parking), limiting parking to one side of the street, implementing the odd-even parking year-round, and considering a resident permit parking system.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire, HRPNA, residents](#)

Timeframe: 2016

4. Continue to acquire additional land on the south side of the 400 block of Chippewa Street for parking. The 1978 plan addressed the need for additional parking for the Water Street Commercial District by proposing to acquire the majority of the south side of the 400 block of the Chippewa Street. Acquisition and clearance of this land would also eliminate substandard housing. The City began acquisition of properties within this block in 1994. Acquisition should continue as outlined in the 1978 Plan and the Water Street Commercial District Plan.

Responsibility: [City of Eau Claire, Water Street BID](#)

Timeframe: Ongoing

- 5. Replace the Water Street Bridge and Half Moon Lake Causeway that include improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.** Both the Water Street Bridge and Half Moon Lake Causeway are scheduled for replacement. The Water Street Bridge project will be undertaken by the Wisconsin DOT, while the causeway will be completed by the City. For both projects, it is important to design appropriate facilities for use by pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition, opportunities for added greenspace, overlooks, and access to the water for fisherman should be considered in the design for the causeway.

Responsibility: WI-DOT, City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: 2015/16 - Water Street Bridge, 2017 - Causeway



- 6. Make safety improvements along Lake Street in the vicinity of the Courthouse and in other areas of the neighborhood to address pedestrian safety issues.** The Planning Committee noted a concern about pedestrian safety near the bottom of the hill on Lake Street to the east of Oxford Avenue. At this location, pedestrians cross Lake Street to get to an entrance to the City/County Health Department. These pedestrians are not readily visible to eastbound traffic due to vehicle speed and poor sight distances. The City Traffic Engineer should review this location and make changes to address this safety issue.

The neighborhood also noted storm drainage issues in the vicinity of the intersection of Lake Street and Second Avenue. This issue should be addressed as these streets are reconstructed.

In addition, the City should coordinate with the Water Street Business Improvement District to monitor pedestrian and bicycle safety-related concerns along Water Street.

Responsibility: Department of Public Works

Timeframe: 2014-15

- 7. Implement the City Bicycle Route Plan.** The 2010 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan recommended signing and road striping improvements to designate bicycle routes within the City. Several such routes are shown within the neighborhood and should be implemented.

Responsibility: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, Department of Public Works

Timeframe: 2015

- 8. Encourage the establishment of a Safe Routes to School Program at Lakeshore School.**

Lakeshore Elementary School is one of the few schools in the School District that has not

adopted the Safe Routes to School Program. The program establishes designated routes for neighborhood children to more safely walk and bicycle to school. It is normally sponsored by the parent’s organization of the respective school. Safety features such as crosswalks, sidewalk curb cuts, and other improvements are completed by the City. The neighborhood should encourage parents to establish the program and then work with the City to identify improvements.

Responsibility: Lakeshore School PTO, City of Eau Claire

Timeframe: Ongoing

- 9. Periodically review transit routes to best serve the residents of the neighborhood.** The City Transit Commission should periodically review the City transit routes within the neighborhood to best serve the residents of the neighborhood.

Responsibility: City Transit Commission

Timeframe: Ongoing

QUALITY OF LIFE

Guiding Principle. Provide a high quality of life in the neighborhood by effectively addressing property upkeep and nuisance-related issues and fostering a sense of community and cooperation among residents and organizations within the neighborhood.

- 1. Continue to work to provide programs and services that will reduce or eliminate violations relating to property upkeep and zoning violations within the neighborhood.** Residents of the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood have regularly had to deal with issues related to poor property upkeep such as unshoveled sidewalks, unmowed lawns, stuffed furniture on porches, junked vehicles, garbage totes left at the curbside, poorly maintained exteriors of dwellings, and zoning violations related to too many occupants within dwelling units. These violations have been an aggravation for those living in the neighborhood, have led to a reduction in the quality of life in these areas, and have caused the gradual decline in the general upkeep of the neighborhood.

In recent months, the UWEC Department of Student Affairs and the City/County Health Department have initiated a series of meetings with landlords, neighborhood representatives, and other interested organizations to re-examine these issues and determine if additional programs can be undertaken to address these problems. From the initial meetings, three subcommittees have been formed to address topics related to housing, community living, and resources.

Examples of some of the programs and services that have been undertaken in the past to address these issues and which should continue include:

- The City/County Intensified Housing Program (see below);
- Monthly coordination meetings involving the University, CVTC, Police Department, City Inspections Division, and City/County Health Department;

- The City/County “Donate It – Don’t Dump It” program;
- Periodic attendance of the City’s Code Enforcement Officer at monthly meetings of the neighborhood association;
- Involvement with University student organizations with neighborhood clean-ups;
- Conducting neighborhood “sweeps” to address property upkeep issues in collaboration with the City Inspections Division and City/County Health Department (These “sweeps” can identify problems or problem areas at an early stage in order to speed up compliance as it enables the limited staff resources to direct their work towards obtaining compliance for the violations which have been identified.);
- The voluntary Certified Eau Claire Landlord Program administered by the Eau Claire Police Department that attempts to educate and train landlords to better address issues such as property upkeep, tenant screening, etc. and also encourage landlords to help improve their neighborhoods and relationships with their neighbors.

In addition, it is also important to investigate and explore other programs and options that would address these property upkeep related issues such as:

- Building upon the Certified Landlord Program by developing a rated directory system that would assist prospective renters in providing more background information about landlords that have attained or surpassed certain standards or tests;
- Requiring landlords to be responsible for snow removal, lawn care, and garbage service;
- Having garbage and recycling picked up by haulers in alleys, where available, rather than in front of the residential properties. This would reduce the enforcement problem of having garbage totes left out by the curb;
- Encouraging representatives from the Eau Claire Police Department to periodically attend the monthly meetings of the neighborhood association (The police department used to attend these meetings, but discontinued this practice several years ago.);
- Instituting a landlord licensing program;
- Consider changing the City’s Code Enforcement Officer position from a part-time position to a full-time position. (This would provide improved code enhanced code enforcement for the City’s older neighborhoods. The position was a full-time position until 2010. With the change to a part-time position, enforcement has tended to be more complaint based versus more proactive in nature.);



- Exploring options to contract with private businesses to inspect and resolve code violations relating to unshoveled sidewalks and unmowed lawns (The City of LaCrosse, WI has studied the feasibility of such programs.);
- Encouraging greater involvement of the City/County Health Department to initiate proactive educational or enforcement approaches with landlords;
- Encouraging greater involvement of UWEC or CVTC students to initiate informative resource banks or websites to inform students about exceptional or problem landlords.



Responsibility: [City/County Health Department, UWEC, HRPNA, City Inspections Division](#)
Timeframe: [Ongoing](#)

2. Continue to work to provide programs and services that will address nuisance behaviors within the neighborhood. As noted in the issues chapter of this plan, problems related to late night parties, vandalism, and alcohol-related problems have been chronic problems within the neighborhood since the original neighborhood plan was prepared. These behaviors have been an aggravation for those living in the neighborhood and also negatively reflect on the image of the neighborhood. These issues also make it more difficult to attract and retain people desiring to own their own home in the neighborhood.

The neighborhood association has worked with numerous agencies and organizations to address these issues and has experienced significant success in recent years. Examples of some of the programs and services that have targeted these problems and which should continue include:

- Establishment of the City’s Community Policing Program;
- Enhanced police enforcement along Water Street on weekend evenings and for special events such as UWEC homecoming;
- Increased “party” police patrols and citations for underage drinking and the sale of alcohol;
- Regular attendance by a representative from UWEC at the monthly meetings of the neighborhood association;
- University involvement through the Dean of Students Office, CASE (Center for Alcohol Studies and Education), and the Off-Campus Student Life program with students involved in problem parties and other issues;
- Establishment of the community organization “BRIDGE” to address excessive alcohol use;

- Monthly coordination meetings involving the University, CVTC, Police Department, City Inspections Division, and City/County Health Department;
- Implementation of the police bicycle patrol program.

As mentioned in the recommendation above, other programs and options should continually be investigated and discussed to further minimize the nuisance behaviors in the neighborhood. To assist in these efforts to address these problems, it is recommended that representatives of the Police Department periodically attend the monthly meetings of the neighborhood association.

Finally, the issue of smoke from campfires was mentioned frequently in the neighborhood survey. This problem has developed in recent years as these campfires have become increasingly popular. The neighborhood association should work with the City Fire Department to determine if existing ordinances are adequate and possibly develop an educational program to reduce the problem.

Responsibility: City of Eau Claire, UWEC, Eau Claire Police and Fire Departments, HRPNA
Timeframe: Ongoing

3. Continue to support the Intensified Housing Enforcement Program. The City/County Health Department has administered this CDBG supported program since the early 1980s and it has been a key component in the improvement of housing conditions within the neighborhood. Continued support of the program by the neighborhood association is important in order to maintain and further improve these property conditions. In addition, the City/County Health Department should continue to utilize their housing condition surveys to target their efforts to address the most severe housing condition problems.

Finally, the use of the Housing Authority’s Housing Rehabilitation Program should also be considered as an option to assist property owners in the rehabilitation of these problem properties.

Responsibility: City/County Health Department, City Housing Authority
Timeframe: Ongoing

4. Work to implement applicable neighborhood-related recommendations contained in the City’s Health Chapter. In 2013, the City adopted the Health Chapter as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. This chapter contains a number of recommendations that pertain to the quality of life within Eau Claire’s older neighborhoods. Examples of neighborhood-related topics addressed in the plan include: affordable housing, sustainable development, community gardens, access to foods, walkable neighborhoods, livable streets, complete streets, crime prevention, etc. Many of the recommendations contained in the Health Chapter come from other City plans and documents, but provide a compilation of strategies focusing on “improving human health relative to the built environment”. The neighborhood association should review these recommendations and work to implement those that are applicable to the Historic Randall Park Neighborhood.

Responsibility: HRPNA
Timeframe: Ongoing

5. Support the efforts of Water Street Business Improvement District to promote a diverse business atmosphere in the area. The neighborhood association should strongly support the efforts of the Water Street BID and businesses to promote a diverse business atmosphere along Water Street. These efforts will also help to enhance the character and image of both the commercial area and the neighborhood.

In addition, the neighborhood association should support policies contained with the Water Street Business District Plan that limit the number of taverns within the business district. Additional taverns along Water Street would have additional adverse effects on the immediate neighborhood and contribute to a negative stigma of the neighborhood.



The neighborhood association should also support any efforts of DECI and/or the Water Street BID to attract a grocery store to the area.

Responsibility: HRPNA, Water Street BID

Timeframe: Ongoing

6. Support the efforts of West Grand Avenue Business Improvement District to promote their businesses and area. The neighborhood association should strongly support the efforts of the West Grand Avenue BID and businesses to promote their area. Similar to the Water Street area, efforts of the West Grand Avenue businesses will also help to enhance the character and image of the neighborhood.



Responsibility: HRPNA, West Grand Avenue BID

Timeframe: Ongoing

7. Continue to improve and implement a neighborhood marketing strategy. The neighborhood's image in the community is a powerful determinant of its ability to attract families. The neighborhood association has taken an active role in attempting to capitalize on its strengths and shape the neighborhood's image since 1995. This has been accomplished through: a name change for the neighborhood, developing a web page,

sponsoring neighborhood night-out activities, assisting with the community garden project, etc. The neighborhood association must continue its efforts and look towards additional strategies such as the use of social media sites including Facebook and Twitter, working closer with Mayo Hospital on housing marketing programs, encouraging closer coordination with the Water Street BID and West Grand Avenue BID on promotional events, etc. The City's neighborhood matching grant program should also be considered as a potential funding source to initiate some of these programs or improvements.

Responsibility: HRPNA

Timeframe: Ongoing

8. Continue to distribute the brochure on neighborhood standards. This brochure has been a good educational tool to help inform neighborhood residents and property owners about City ordinances pertaining to property maintenance and upkeep. It should be periodically updated and regularly distributed throughout the neighborhood. A link to the brochure could be provided on the neighborhood's website. In addition, the neighborhood association should work with landlords to have copies of the brochure included with lease agreements.

Responsibility: HRPNA

Timeframe: Ongoing

9. Consider implementing the Neighborhood Watch Program. The neighborhood association should consider implementing a Neighborhood Watch Program to assist in the prevention of vandalism and other crimes within the neighborhood. This program encourages communication and participation among neighborhood residents and projects a feeling that residents of the neighborhood care for the area in which they live.

Responsibility: HRPNA, Eau Claire Police Department

Timeframe: 2015