DRAFT

City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan 2016

City of Wausau

Mayor

Robert Mielke

City Council

Lisa Rasmussen, President

Pat Peckham

Romey Wagner

David E. Nutting

Tom Neal

Gary Gisselman

Becky McElhaney

Karen Kellbach

Joe Gehin

Sherry Abitz

Dennis Smith

Plan Commission

Robert B. Mielke, Chair

Eric Lindman

Pat Peckham

Gary Gisselman

Ron Zahrt

Andrew Brueggeman

Bruce Bohlken

City Planner

Brad Lenz, AICP

Prepared with the assistance of:

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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Chapter One
Background and Demographics

Background

This is the first of nine chapters that makeup the City of Wausau's Comprehensive Plan. This plan replaces the previous plan adopted in 2005.

The City of Wausau is located in the middle of Marathon County. Wausau is the county seat and has a population of 39,106, which is about 30 percent of the total county population. Wausau is one of six cities and 15 villages in the county, see **Map 1**.

The City is located at the crossroads of two major highways in Central Wisconsin, HWY 51 which runs north-south and HWY 29 which runs east-west. Wausau is the largest city in north-central Wisconsin and is the 17th largest city in the state by 2010 population. A detailed community history can be found in the Cultural Resources chapter.

Natural Setting

The City of Wausau is located on the Wisconsin River, which runs into Lake Wisconsin and Lake Wausau to the south of the city. The Wisconsin River dominates the surface hydrology of the area with numerous streams flowing into it. Wetlands are scattered throughout the city mostly surrounding streams.

The Wisconsin River divides the city into two distinct areas, the westside of the Wisconsin River and the eastside of the Wisconsin River. The city encompasses roughly 12,825 acres or 20.04 square miles.

Wausau's climate is classified as halfway between temperate and subarctic (boreal and hemi boreal). The area has four distinct seasons. Summers have warm but not excessively hot days and cool nights. Winters are long, cold, and snowy. The average annual precipitation is roughly 31.6 inches. Snow cover on the ground and ice cover on the lakes lasts from December to April. The growing season generally extends from late May to early September, for an average frost-free growing season of 135 days. Prevailing winds come out of the northwest from late fall through spring and from the south during the remainder of the year. Wind speed generally ranges from 4 to 15 miles per hour.

Natural resources are described and mapped in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this plan.

Planning Context

Planning and zoning has been a function of local units of government for over 50 years in Wisconsin. Existing authority for planning is provided in state statutes, including §. 59, 60, 61 and 62.

Over the years almost every city, village and county has developed various plans, from land use plans, to master plans to development plans. The comprehensive planning law (§.66.1001) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required elements of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use. The statute outlines the requirements that must be satisfied, specifically for those that utilize the State grant program to develop their plan.

Fourteen state planning goals are suggested. These goals, however, are not mandates for specific provisions that must be included in the comprehensive plan, but criteria on which the grant applications will be judged. The goals are:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.

2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.

3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.

4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.

6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.

7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.

8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.

9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.

10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.

12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit–dependent and disabled citizens.

Previous Plans

All planning efforts need to examine relevant previous plans about the community and the surrounding county and region. Those plans are discussed below:

The City of Wausau

A variety of plans have been developed for the City, such as the Central Business District Master Plan, Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Industrial Development Plan, the Near West Side Master Plan, Tax Increment Financing and Districts, and the East Riverfront District. Each Chapter will provide more details on these plans as they relate to that topic.

Comprehensive Plan, 2006

The City of Wausau completed an extensive review of its draft comprehensive plan in 2006. The adopted Comprehensive Plan contains recommendations about future land use, street improvement projects and new parks and also identifies a 45-year growth boundary for the City. The plan is broken into two sections, volume one titled Conditions and Issues and volume two titled Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Actions.

The Wausau Plan: A View to the Future, 1995

The Wausau Plan was completed in February, 1995 by the Mayor's Office, with input from various City department heads. The plan highlights some general priorities and goals for the community and is designed to improve the use of resources, help measure effectiveness, and provide the City with a clear direction for the future. The plan contains an overall theme which is intended to be followed as the City faces issues - "That goals are to be set and decisions are to be made only in the best interest of the residents and businesses of Wausau." Seven goals are established in the plan for different topical areas and include:

- Goal 1. Maintain Wausau's financial strength and stable tax rates.
- Goal 2. Promote economic growth and job creation.
- Goal 3. Enhance police, fire and ambulance services.
- Goal 4. Foster housing development.
- Goal 5. Maintain and improve our public infrastructure.
- Goal 6. Prepare for and meet changing needs for recreational facilities and programs.
- Goal 7. Examine and, where prudent, institute cooperation and consolidation with our neighbors.

The City of Wausau Land Use Plan, 1983

In October, 1983, the Wausau Common Council adopted a City Plan Commission resolution recommending approval of the City of Wausau Land Use Plan. This was the first large scale planning effort for the City of Wausau since 1965 when the Comprehensive Plan for the Wausau Area was completed. The land use plan was prepared by a 13-member Citizen Advisory Committee who worked with staff of the Marathon County Planning Department. While the plan addressed land use issues and goals on a city-wide basis, it primarily focused on land use trends, issues and recommendations for each of nine neighborhoods in the City. The level of citizen participation for this planning effort included neighborhood meetings in each of these neighborhoods as well as open meetings held by the Citizen Advisory Committee and a public hearing before the City Plan Commission. Most of the planning effort focused on the territory within the existing City limits, with only a cursory

analysis of potential growth areas outside the City limits.

Marathon County

A variety of plans have been developed at the county level and those that relate will be discussed in later Chapters, such as the Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Land and Water Conservation Plan, and the Disaster Mitigation Plan.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2016 to guide County decision makers on a wide array of issues over the next twenty years in creating a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business. This policy plan focuses on a county-level perspective and planning direction that complements and strengthens local planning efforts. The goal of the plan is to make Marathon County the healthiest, safest, most prosperous county in Wisconsin.

The Region

The city is included in the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) area. The NCWRPC is one of nine regional planning commissions in the State of Wisconsin. The North central region includes ten counties, loosely following the upper Wisconsin River Valley. The NCWRPC is a voluntary association of governments tasked with the mission of providing planning assistance to the communities throughout the Region.

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

The Regional Livability Plan (RLP), adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015, is an update and expansion to the Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002-2020. The RLP is an advisory document focusing on four specific elements; housing, economic development, transportation, and land use.

The RLP includes individual stand-alone documents for each of the four elements, and a regional demographics assessment, bringing attention to key livability issues. The RLP incorporates the HUD livability principles, which include more transportation choices, promoting equitable & affordable housing, enhance economic competitiveness, support existing communities; coordinate polices & leverage investment, and value communities & neighborhoods. The RLP introduces goals that can create a more livable and sustainable region addressing regional, state, and national trends.

Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002-2020

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled "A Framework for the Future", adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2003, and is an update and expansion of a plan adopted by the NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP is an advisory document developed to provide suggestions for growth in the Region.

The RCP looks at the nine elements as outlined in the new planning law. It covers things from Regional Perspective and includes information on all ten counties in the North Central Region. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local governments an address issues.

Demographics

The review of the socio-economic trends throughout the city is important to understanding what has occurred and what is likely to occur in the future. The analysis of statistical data used in conjunction with public participation and input, can help communities identify the issues and opportunities they must address to improve their communities and reach their goals over the next 20 years. In 2010, Marathon County hired Next Generation Consulting to complete a footprint study titled "A Next Generation Talent Magnet." In the footprint, La Crosse, WI and Eau Claire, WI were identified as comparative cities to Wausau. The 2015 City of Wausau comprehensive plan will continue to compare key indicators with those municipalities. Below we look at total population, age distribution, households, educational levels, employment, and income levels.

Population

Wausau Region

The City of Wausau is the central city in Marathon County and the Metropolitan Planning Area. The Metropolitan Planning Area consists of 14 different towns, villages, and cities and also defines the greater Wausau region (see table 1). In 2010, 91,234 people lived in the Wausau region. Over 40 percent of the population lived in the City of Wausau. The next largest community, the Village of Weston, borders the City of Wausau directly to the Southeast and has a population of 14,868 people. The Wausau region population increased from 78,545 people in 1990 to 91,234 people in 2010, a 16.1 percent increase. The population increased 6.3 percent between 2000 and 2010. Both the 10 year and 20 year population increases in the region are on pace with the County and State rates of growth. However, the growth in the region appears to be taking place in the communities surrounding Wausau as the City's 10 year and 20 year population growth rates are well below the growth rate in the Wausau Region, Marathon County and the State.

City of Wausau

In 2010, the city of Wausau had a population of 39,106 people, a 5.5 percent increase since 1990. The most populated city in the north central region, Wausau experienced limited growth over the past 10 years in comparison to Marathon County and the State. The population in the city of Wausau increased just 680 persons between 2000 and 2010. The 1.8 percent increase is well below the State's 6.0 percent and County's 6.5 percent growth rates. The city of Wausau

increased its population 2,046 persons over the 20 year period, accounting for just 11 percent of the population growth in the county. The county (16.2%) and state (16.3%) both experienced greater increases in population during the same time period.

Table 1 displays the total population for the city of Wausau, the City of Eau Claire, the City of La Crosse, the Wausau Region, Marathon County, and the State. The city of Eau Claire increased their population at a similar rate to the State (16.3%), 15.9 percent over the past 20 years and 6.8 percent in the past 10 years. The city of La Crosse is the only municipality that decreased population, decreasing 1 percent over the past 10 years, or 498 persons. Over the past 20 years, La Crosse increased their population just 317 persons.

The 2015 population estimate for the city from the Wisconsin Department of Administration is 39,440 persons. The Land Use Chapter further examines population, including population projections.

Age Distribution

Population distribution is important to the planning process. In particular, two groups are examined here. They are the 17 years of age and younger, and the 65 years of age and older population groups. These are often referred to as dependent populations as they are typically not in the workforce. In 2010, 39 percent of the population in the City of Wausau was "dependent". The population under 17 years of age is in school and requires education services, safe bicycle and pedestrian options, and other public services. The population over 65 years of age is typically entering retirement and requires services like accessibility to healthcare, senior facilities, universal housing, and a variety of transportation options to access services and programs.

17 Years and Under

The City of Wausau's 17 and under population is in line with State and County trends, see **Table 2**. During the last decade, the percentage of 17 and younger persons within the population for the City of Wausau decreased 1.9 percent. In 2010, 23.5 percent of the population in Wausau was under the age of 17, down from 25.4 percent in 2000. Over the past 20 years, the 17 and under population has been flat, decreasing at a -0.5 percent rate of growth or 46 people. In comparison, the percentage of population under the age of 17 in Marathon County decreased 2.3 percent. In 2010, 24.5 percent of the County's population was under 17 years of age, down from 26.8 percent in 2000. The Wausau region experienced a similar reduction in population aged 17 and younger, decreasing 2.2 percent between 2000 and 2010. Roughly 24.1 percent of the Wausau region's population was under 17 years of age in 2010, compared to 26.3 percent in 2000. During the same time period, the 17 and under population in the State decreased 2 percent from 25.5 percent in 2000 to 23.5 percent in 2010.

The decrease in population aged 17 and under can partially be explained by echo boomers. Echo Boomers are the children of Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) born in the 1980's and 1990's. Many of these children turned 18 years of age between 2000 and 2010, reducing the number people under 17during that time period. The City, Region, County,

Table 1: Demographic Change

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*% change 1990-2010*	*% change 2000 to 2010*
Wausau	37,060	38,426	39,106	5.5%	1.8%
Eau Claire	56,856	61,704	65,883	15.9%	6.8%
La Crosse	51,003	51,818	51,320	0.6%	-1.0%
Wausau Region	78,545	85,862	91,234	16.2%	6.3%
County	115,400	125,834	134,063	16.2%	6.5%
State	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	16.3%	6.0%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2: Persons 17 Years of Age and Younger

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*2000 % Pop*	*2010 % Pop*
Wausau	9,248	9,756	9,202	25.4%	23.5%
Eau Claire	13,077	13,358	12,728	21.6%	19.3%
La Crosse	8,756	9,762	8,325	18.8%	16.2%
Wausau Region	21,007	22,555	21,967	26.3%	24.1%
County	32,453	33,716	32,869	26.8%	24.5%
State	1,288,982	1,368,756	1,339,492	25.5%	23.6%

Source: U.S. Census

and State all experienced a growth in this cohort between 1990 and 2000 before reducing the number of people under 17 between 2000 and 2010. The children of baby boomers are also in the beginning of their careers and are not yet interested in starting a family. In addition, families are choosing to have fewer children and/or are choosing to have children later in life, if at all, resulting in fewer people aged 17 and under.

65 Years and Older

The City of Wausau decreased the percentage of population aged 65 and over during the last 10 years 1.4 percent, **Table 3**. In 2010, 15.7 percent of the population was over the age of 65, compared to 17.1 percent in 2000. Over the past 20 years, the 65 and older population decreased at a 4.2 percent rate of growth. The City of Wausau has experienced a decrease in population aged 65 and older over the past 20 years while the Wausau region, County and State have increased population in this cohort significantly. Regionally, the percentage of the population over 65 years of age increased 0.9 percent from 13.5 percent of the total population in 2000 to 14.4 percent in 2010. Marathon County increased population in this cohort 30 percent over the past 20 years. The percentage of population over 65 increased from 13 percent of the total population in 2000 to 14.2 percent in 2010. The State experienced a similar trend increasing the population over 65 almost 20 percent over the past 20 years and 10.6 percent in the past decade. Although the City of Wausau does not match the County and State trends in terms of growth in this cohort, they have a higher percentage of population over 65 years of age and are trending towards regional, county and State percentages. In 2000, the percentage of population over 65 was 4.1 percent higher in the City than it was in the County. In 2010, that percentage reduced 2.6 percent to a difference of just 1.5 percent.

The population aged 65 and over is likely to increase over the next 15 years. In 2011, the first of the baby boomers reached what used to be known as the retirement age of 65. It is estimated that there are over 77 million baby boomers in the United States comprising 20 percent of the nation's population. And for the next 18 years, boomers will be turning 65 at a rate of about 10,000 a day. As a result, over 20 percent of the nation's population will be over the age of 65 in 2029. As this unique cohort grows older, it will likely transform the institutions of aging — just as it has done to other aspects of American life.

Households

A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. The city trend of households reflects the national trend of fewer people living within the same household. The City of Wausau, the Wausau Region, Marathon County, and the State all gained population between 2000 and 2010, but the average household size for all four decreased over the past decade as the increase in total households outpaced the increase in population. This is partially due to fewer people living within the same household.

The number of households within the city has grown by 809 households over the last decade, see **Table 4**. A 10 year rate of growth of 5 percent is much slower than the County's 12 percent rate. The Wausau Region experienced similar growth to the County, increasing the number of households 11 percent over the 10 year period. The gap in the rate of growth over the last 20 years is even higher. The City of Wausau increased the number of households 12 percent, compared to the Wausau Region's 26 percent rate of growth, the County's 28 percent rate of growth and the State's 25 percent rate of growth. The difference between the City and Region's growth rates indicates that the majority of growth the County is experiencing in both population and households is taking place outside of the central city of Wausau in the surrounding communities with direct access to the City's amenities.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration projects a 10 percent increase in households between 2010 and 2040 in the City of Wausau. The Wausau Region and Marathon County are expected to increase households twice as fast over the same time period. Projections show that the City of Wausau will have a total of 18,143 households in 2040, 1,656 more households than in 2010. WIDOA projections indicate the City's population will only increase 1,964

Table 3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*2000 % Pop*	*2010 % Pop*
Wausau	6,418	6,582	6,150	17.1%	15.7%
Eau Claire	7,221	7,368	7,680	11.9%	11.7%
La Crosse	8,007	7,701	6,744	14.9%	13.1%
Wausau Region	10,289	11,589	13,148	13.5%	14.4%
County	14,611	16,321	18,988	13.0%	14.2%
State	651,221	702,553	777,314	13.1%	13.7%

Source: U.S. Census

people over the same time period, a 5 percent growth. These projections support the trend of a decrease in average household sizes due to fewer people living within the same household. All municipalities, the County, and the State project a larger increase in households than population over the next 30 years.

The decrease in population aged 17 and under in Wausau, partially due to the transition to the 18 and over cohort during the decade, has a direct impact on the increase in households. Research shows the decrease in household sizes and increase in households is due to the children of the baby boomer generation (born 1980's to 1990's) reaching the age of 18 and moving out. As these children leave their parent's home, a new household is created. What was once a household of 4 people is now split into 2 or 3 households with one to two people living in each unit. The echo boom generation is estimated to be over 80 million people, many of which entered adulthood between 2000 and 2010, thus creating new households in need of affordable housing.

Educational Levels

Educational attainment improved in all areas in the City of Wausau between 2000 and 2010. The percentage of population with at least a high school degree increased 6.9 percent over the 10 year period, but is still lower than the Wausau Region (89.0%), the County (90%), the State (90.4%), and the Cities of Eau Claire (94.9%) and La Crosse (92%), see **Table 5**. Although the City of Wausau and Marathon County has a lower percentage of population who have completed four or more years of college, they are increasing the percentage at a faster rate than the Region, County, State and comparable cities.

Over 24 percent of the population in Wausau has a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 23.7 percent for the Wausau Region and 22.2 percent for Marathon County in 2010, see **Table 6**. The Cities of Eau Claire (33%) and La Crosse (29.6%) both have four year Universities and as a result have considerably higher percentages of population with at least a bachelor's. Overall, the City of Wausau increased the percentage of population with at least a bachelor's degree 2.6 percent over the 10 year period. Marathon County and the State experienced larger increases in the percentage of people with four more years of college, 3.1 percent and 4.4 percent respectively. The Wausau Region increased the percentage of population with at least a bachelor's degree 2.5 percent.

In 2010, 24.4 percent of the City of Wausau had completed for or more years of college, a 2.9 percent increase from 2010. Marathon County increased the percentage of population with at least 4 years of college by 3.1 percent, 0.2 percent more than the City of Wausau and the Wausau Region increased its population with at least 4 years of college 2.5 percent, 0.4 percent less than the City of Wausau. The percentage of population who have completed four or more years of college in the City of Wausau, the Wausau Region, and Marathon County are all lower than State levels.

Overall, the education indicators show a city with an

Table 4: Total Households

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*% Change 1990-2010*	*% Change 2000-2010*
Wausau	14,718	15,678	16,487	12%	5%
Eau Claire	21,118	24,016	26,803	27%	12%
La Crosse	19,970	21,110	21,428	7%	2%
Wausau Region	29,288	33,390	36,973	26%	11%
County	41,534	47,402	53,176	28%	12%
State	1,822,118	2,084,544	2,279,768	25%	9%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 5: Persons 25 and Over Who Have Completed Four or More Years of High School

	2000	*2010*	*"2000-2010 Net Change"*
Wausau	80.80%	87.70%	6.90%
Eau Claire	90.30%	94.90%	4.60%
La Crosse	87.80%	92.00%	4.20%
Wausau Region	84.60%	89.00%	4.40%
County	83.80%	90.00%	6.20%
State	85.10%	90.40%	5.30%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 6: Persons 25 and Over Who Have Completed Four or More Years of College

	2000	*2010*	*"2000-2010 Net Change"*
Wausau	21.50%	24.40%	2.90%
Eau Claire	28.90%	33.00%	4.10%
La Crosse	24.10%	29.60%	5.50%
Wausau Region	21.20%	23.70%	2.50%
County	19.10%	22.20%	3.10%
State	22.40%	26.80%	4.40%

Source: U.S. Census

improving education level, but with a gap in higher education. An increase in high school graduates ensures a base workforce able to support the kind of manufacturing industry which has been the mainstay for the city economy for many years. However, while a high school diploma used to be enough to work in the manufacturing production field, today, most manufacturing production jobs require at least a technical degree or certificate from a local technical college. In 2010, 32.8 percent had just a high school diploma and 30.4 percent of the population over 25 had some college or an associate's degree. The gap in education will weaken the city's ability to support the manufacturing industry and its ability to attract and support knowledge based higher paying occupations.

Employment

In 2010, there were 18,821 residents employed in the City of Wausau, **Table 7**. Between 1990 and 2010, employment in the city increased 8.2 percent, compared to18.9 percent growth for the region, a 19.9 percent growth at the county, and a 19 percent growth at the state level. The past decade had even slower employment growth for the City of Wausau. Between 2000 and 2010, employment in Wausau increased 1.8 percent, 3.1 percent slower than the region, 2.2 percent slower than the county, and two percent slower than the state. The City of Eau Claire led all areas in employment growth increasing 35.7 percent over the 20 year period and 9.4 percent over the 10 year period.

The Economic Development Chapter further examines employment, including employment projections.

Income Levels

Median Household Income and Per Capita Income are the two major indicators of income. The city median household income rose roughly 13 percent between 2000 and 2010 from $36,831 in 2000 to $41,564 in 2010, see **Table 8**. In 2010, the City's median household income was roughly $19,000 per year below the Wausau Region's median income, $12,000 per year below the County median income and roughly $11,000 below the state. The Region, County, and State incomes are also increasing at a faster rate, increasing 20.4 percent, 18.2 percent and 19.7 percent respectively. Note that these changes have not been adjusted for inflation.

Per Capita Income in the City increased 20.4 percent from $20,227 in 2000 to $24,346 in 2010, see **Table 9**. The per capita income in Wausau is roughly $4,000 lower than the Region and $3,000 lower than the County and State per capita incomes. Marathon County ($27,607) and the Wausau Region ($28,361) both have higher per capita incomes than the State($27,271). Note that these changes have not been adjusted for inflation.

Race

In 2010, nearly 84 percent of the city residents were White. The largest minority group, 11 percent of the population, identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, see **Table 10**. Over the past 20 years, the White demographic has decreased in the city 9.3 percentage points while all other race demographics have increased. In 1990, 93 percent listed their race as White and only 6 percent listed their race as Asian/Pacific Islander.

Table 7: Total Employed Persons Age 16 and Older

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*1990-2010 % Change*	*2000-2010 % Change*
Wausau	17,387	18,489	18,821	8.2%	1.8%
Eau Claire	26,961	33,423	36,579	35.7%	9.4%
La Crosse	24,796	26,761	27,525	11.0%	2.9%
Wausau Region	39,722	45,005	47,215	18.9%	4.9%
County	57,719	66,550	69,232	19.9%	4.0%
State	2,386,439	2,734,925	2,839,636	19.0%	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 8: Median Household Income

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*1990-2010 % Change*	*2000-2010 % Change*
Wausau	$25,505	$36,831	$41,564	63.0%	12.9%
Eau Claire	$24,735	$36,399	$43,090	74.2%	18.4%
La Crosse	$21,947	$31,103	$40,457	84.3%	30.1%
Wausau Region	$33,762	$50,030	$60,256	78.5%	20.4%
County	$30,143	$45,165	$53,363	77.0%	18.2%
State	$29,442	$43,791	$52,413	78.0%	19.7%

Source: U.S. Census

Over 97 percent of Marathon County residents were White in 1990. That percentage decreased 5.9 percentage points over the past 20 years to 91.3 percent. The largest minority group in 2010, 5.3 percent of the population, was Asian/ Pacific Islander. The Asian/ Pacific Islander demographic increased 3.1 percentage points over the 20 year period. All other races experienced minimal growth.

Table 9: Per Capita Income

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*1990-2010 % Change*	*2000-2010 % Change*
Wausau	17,387	18,489	18,821	8.2%	1.8%
Eau Claire	26,961	33,423	36,579	35.7%	9.4%
La Crosse	24,796	26,761	27,525	11.0%	2.9%
Wausau Region	39,722	45,005	47,215	18.9%	4.9%
County	57,719	66,550	69,232	19.9%	4.0%
State	2,386,439	2,734,925	2,839,636	19.0%	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 10: Racial Composition

		White	*Black*	*American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut*	*Asian, Pacific Islander*	*Other Races*
City of Wausau	***1990***	34,485	47	261	2,216	51
	% of City 1990	93.0%	0.13%	0.70%	5.98%	0.14%
	2000	33,010	208	228	4,398	582
	% of City 2000	85.9%	0.54%	0.59%	11.45%	1.51%
	2010	32,717	533	304	4,333	1,219
	% of City 2010	83.7%	1.4%	0.8%	11.1%	3.2%
	Percentage Point Difference 1990-2010	-9.3%	1.3%	0.1%	5.1%	3.1%
Marathon County	***1990***	112,189	89	490	2,499	133
	% of County 1990	97.2%	0.08%	0.42%	2.17%	0.12%
	2000	118,079	347	435	5,741	1,232
	% of County 2000	93.8%	0.28%	0.35%	4.56%	0.98%
	2010	122,446	841	634	7,178	2,964
	% of County 2010	91.3%	0.6%	0.5%	5.3%	2.2%
	Percentage Point Difference 1990-2010	-5.9%	0.5%	0.1%	3.1%	2.1%

Source: U.S. Census

Chapter Two
Natural Resources

Sustainable land use patterns and the protection of natural resources are necessary to balance for the environmental health of the City. The conservation and sustainable use of natural resources are fundamental to maintaining the quality of the environment, achieving strong and stable physical and economic development, promoting health of residents, and preserving community identity. Implementation of this chapter will maintain the quality of the environment and preserve the City's natural beauty.

This chapter presents basic inventory information regarding existing natural resources, grouped by land, water, and biological, current issues, and numerous policies.

Previous Plans

It is important to understand that natural resource features do not follow community boundaries; therefore it is important to consider their patterns and inter-relationships on a broader scale. Further, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the County, State or Federal level.

These plans were prepared specifically to address the protection and management of natural resources

Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan - 2010

The Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of soil and water conservation in Marathon County from 2010 to 2020. The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee identified the following long-term program outcomes for the natural resource protection efforts in Marathon County:

- Land Use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts, maximize infrastructure investments, and protect rural character.
- Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.
- Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.

The plan was developed with the assistance of partner agencies, including the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Farm Services Agency; Natural Resources Conservation Service; and the Wisconsin Cooperative Extension.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan - 2013

The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage growth and development in a manner that will preserve the rural character; protect the agricultural base and natural resources; and contribute to the County's goal of promoting public safety, health and prosperity within the County. This plan is the primary policy document promoting preservation of agricultural production capacity, farmland preservation, soil and water protection, and future land development, while respecting private property rights and individual units of government. Many of the towns surrounding the City have identified preservation areas, which limit development.

Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide - 2001

This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the Marathon County Groundwater Plan in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.

Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan - 2006

The Marathon County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan is a management guide for the Marathon County Forests and is updated every fifteen years. The mission of the plan is to manage and protect natural resources on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. The report includes a number of recommendations for: Multi-Use Trail Management, Wildlife Habitat and Game Management, Public Information and Education, Land Acquisition and Forest Boundary Management, Biodiversity Management, Watershed Management, and Tourism.

City of Wausau Wellhead Protection Plan - 1997

The wellhead protection plan encourages environmentally safe land uses near well recharge areas. Currently, there are 4 wells located on the north side of the city west of the Wisconsin River and a fifth well is located on the east side of the river. The well head protection area is divided into a Zone A nearest the well and a Zone B where contamination would take more than 5 years to reach the wells. The Wausau City Wellhead Protection Ordinance provides restrictions for commercial development in the wellhead protection area to discourage businesses that are likely to cause groundwater contamination from locating there.

City of Wausau Sewer Service Area Plan- 1992

The purpose of the SSA plan was to establish a sewer service boundary for the Wausau Urban Area. This boundary sets the 20-year maximum limit for the extension of sanitary sewer services in a cost effective, environmentally sound manner. Property located within the sewer service boundary line is eligible to receive sanitary sewer service during the 20-year planning period; any property lying outside this sewer service area boundary would not be eligible to receive this utility service unless the boundary were amended. Thus, the sewer service boundary also functions as a community growth boundary for Wausau since all development in the City must have sanitary sewer service. Several other communities were included in this planning process. There are current discussions to update this plan.

Steep hill on 28th Ave.

Land Resources

The City land area is about 13,000 acres. Much of that is devoted to uses, such as residential, roadways, water, commercial and industrial areas. However, there are substantial areas that are open or wooded within the City. See Natural Resources Map.

The topography in the City of Wausau varies from nearly level to quite steep. Much of the area immediately adjacent to the Wisconsin River is extremely flat. This flat topography has helped support high-density residential and commercial development on relatively small parcels of land. On the east side of the river, a hill and valley topography becomes evident several thousand feet east of the river. The valleys tend to be oriented in an east-west direction and are defined by small streams that originate only a few miles east of the City limits in the Town of Wausau. On either side of these intermittent streams are relatively steep-sloped hills that terminate in fairly flat, high plateau areas. Several of the arterial streets that carry traffic east of the City, including Town Line Road, McIntosh Street, Franklin Street and Wausau Avenue, are constructed on top of these plateau areas.

On the west side of the Wisconsin River, the general topographic conditions are quite different than on the east side. While the area adjacent to the Wisconsin River is quite flat for a considerable distance west of the river, the streams and steep hill and valley topography are not nearly as pronounced. The principal topographic feature on the west side of Wausau is a large, steep hill located between Bridge Street and Stewart Avenue that rises in elevation west of Fourth Avenue. Much of the topography near the Big Rib and Little Rib Rivers is also relatively flat. Farther from these rivers, hilly topography is encountered and the prospect of finding bedrock near the surface increases.

Steep Slopes

As shown on **Map 2** there are several steep, hilly areas within and adjacent to the City that are likely to remain undeveloped for a considerable period of time due to the high costs of constructing public and private improvements in these areas. Elevations range from 1,160 feet above sea level on the shores of Lake Wausau to approximately 1,500 feet above sea level near the intersection of West Wausau Avenue and 28th Avenue. High construction costs can be encountered when developing in these steep slope areas. Development in such areas increases stormwater runoff and erosion.

Building Constraints

Buildings constructed on steep slopes must be designed to conform to the terrain. Constructing a basement in rock or leveling a site for a large building can dramatically increase construction costs. In addition, the density of development must often be lower in steep areas because of the cost of making large areas level enough to support parking facilities and building sites. Retaining walls, which are also costly to build and maintain, are often needed to support high-density building development. Often, retaining walls are needed to prevent one parcel of land from falling onto the adjacent parcel. Development limitations resulting from steep slopes are particularly apparent on the east side of Wausau due to the physical constraints in this area, however, several large tracts of land have been annexed to the City and subdivided in this area.

Stormwater Management

Topography also influences the rate of stormwater runoff. Care must be taken to ensure that development in steep areas does not result in downstream flooding. This is especially true on the east side of Wausau where most of the downstream property close to the Wisconsin River has been completely developed. As construction activities have proceeded upstream and onto the adjacent hillsides, existing storm sewers in some portions of the City have reached their capacity and are no longer capable of accommodating additional runoff. Thus, the frequency of flooding in certain drainage basins has increased dramatically.

Where down slope storm water drainage is a concern, keeping development relatively low density and/or maintaining a natural conservancy area will maximize runoff infiltration and help protect other property in the watershed from flooding. The utilization of green infrastructure could also alleviate these concerns. Regardless of the existing conditions in the watershed, stormwater management practices need to be incorporated into all development in order to reduce runoff and help improve water quality. Stormwater management is further discussed in the Utilities Chapter.

Road Construction Constraints

Special consideration must be given to the design of streets so that the grade follows the contours as closely as possible. Where the grade does not follow contours, streets must be shaped by cutting and filling, a costly construction method. Snow removal and salting must also be given a higher priority on roads with steeper grades, especially those with a north-facing exposure.

The relatively steep hill-and-valley topography in the Wausau area has limited the development of a north-south arterial street that would extend from Town Line Road (CTH N) north to Evergreen Road. A planning and engineering study completed for a Grand Avenue alternative route concluded that, due the topographic conditions, the 41st Street/Camp Phillips Road (CTH X) corridor is the nearest opportunity for an arterial street in this area which would connect Town Line Road to Evergreen Road.

Utility Constraints

Installation of public services in areas of steep slopes is usually more costly than in flatter terrain. Depending upon the direction of slope and the elevation, sanitary sewer lift stations and water reservoirs or booster stations may be required. In addition, more manholes in the sanitary sewer system are generally required on steep slopes.

Soil Types

As shown on **Map 3**, there are generally two types of soils in the Wausau area that were formed as a result of the last glacial period. These include upland soils that are dominantly stratified drift (Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon soil association) and upland soils over bedrock (Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville soil association). The stratified drift is a result of layering of water-carried glaciated materials in outwash plains as the glacier melted. These outwash plains are the nearly level to level areas where the soils range from moderately coarse, medium, and fine sandy loam to silt loam over sand and gravel. The upland soils over the bedrock are a result of glaciation before the Wisconsin glacier and erosion of igneous and metamorphic rocks. These soils are found in upland areas and range from medium and moderately fine subsurface loamy soils with loam to silty clay loam subsoil over granitic and gneissic bedrock.

Within these two general soil associations are several types of soils with differing physical characteristics in regards to depth to groundwater, flooding, depth to bedrock, slope and stoniness. These physical characteristics affect the suitability of the soil for certain types of urban development.

Several soils in the Wausau area are characterized by large stones and rock outcrops, which can present problems when developing the land. Large stones can be removed by bulldozing, but rock outcrops must be either designed around or removed by blasting which will increase development costs significantly.

Prime Farm Soils

Areas of prime farm soils extend into the City on the east and northwest. There are also some prime farm soils along the Wisconsin River. These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. These soils have been identified as prime farm soils according to the Marathon County Cropland Evaluation System (CES). This system establishes a basis from which one parcel of land can be compared to another. It rates soils on their ability to produce food, feed, forage, and fiber

crops. It is based upon the knowledge that soil properties affect yields.

Both Class 1 and Class 2 soils are found in the area. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils; however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The "prime farm soils" designation simply indicates that these soils are good productive farmland.

Soils with Shallow Depth to Groundwater

Soils with a shallow depth to groundwater create several problems if they are developed. Oftentimes, depth to groundwater is directly related to landscape position, with low-lying areas having a shallow depth to groundwater. Generally, soils with a depth to water table of zero to one foot are found adjacent to rivers and streams and are in the floodplain. These areas are poorly suited to any type of urban development because of a seasonally high water table and the possibility of flooding.

Those soils with a depth to groundwater of one to three feet and three to six feet may also have problems with wetness and flooding if they are developed. The problems may be overcome by filling the area or draining the soil by utilizing some type of subsurface drainage system. Oftentimes, installation of these systems is cost prohibitive and problems may still occur in the future with settling and cracking of foundations and seasonal flooding of basements.

Soils with a shallow depth to groundwater are also poorly suited for roads because of wetness and frost-heave action. Frost heave tends to break up the pavement and increase maintenance costs. Filling the road bed or constructing a subsurface drainage system may mitigate the frost heave problem. Both measures can increase the cost of roadway construction. Shallow depths to groundwater can also increase the cost of installing sewer and water and can lead to the infiltration of water into the sewer system.

Perched water tables can be found in some of the soils in the Wausau area. A perched water table occurs where a layer of clay or other tight material restricts the downward movement of water and creates a saturated area above the normal water table. Seasonally, this may create wetness problems if that particular soil is developed. In addition, in areas of steep slopes, a perched water table can be exposed to create a seepage (an area where water continually flows from the surface, similar to a spring).

Soils with Shallow Depths to Bedrock

Soils will also vary according to depth to bedrock. A depth to bedrock of 60 inches or more has only slight limitations to urban development. Soils with a depth to bedrock of less than 60 inches do pose problems in terms of development, especially in areas of steep slopes. Shallow depths to bedrock are common in the upland soils in Wausau, particularly along the eastern City limits and north of the Wausau Insurance complex. Generally, the majority of these soils average a depth to bedrock between 42 and 48 inches. The bedrock is typically fractured igneous and metamorphic rock. Map X illustrates depth to bedrock.

Soils that are shallow to bedrock are unsuitable for septic systems because the soil depth is inadequate for absorption fields. Although Wausau is served by public sewer and water, there may be older residences built over shallow bedrock with failing septic systems in areas contiguous to the City. Failing septic systems pose both a water quality and health hazard. It is important to identify such areas because they may require sewer extensions in the future. Roads constructed on soils that are shallow to bedrock are susceptible to frost heave during spring thaw. Frost heave increases maintenance costs and will decrease the life of the roadway.

Cost is a major consideration when developing on soils with shallow depths to bedrock. Constructing dwellings with basements and installation of public services such as sewer and water usually require removal of the rock, which can increase development costs significantly. Some building sites may also require filling or constructing dwellings with partially exposed basements in areas with high bedrock.

Soils shallow to bedrock are commonly found on steep slopes in the Wausau area. Development on steep slopes poses many challenges and usually requires more extensive earth moving than in level areas. Removal of vegetation on steep slopes increases stormwater runoff and creates

Lake Wausau

erosion problems. The soil removed by erosion can cause property damage down slope, clog and overburden storm sewers, and adversely affect surface water quality. Dwellings constructed on steep slopes that are shallow to bedrock are subject to slippage. Utilizing a retaining wall may mitigate the slippage problem.

Water Resources

The City of Wausau and Marathon County contain abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others are in need of focused efforts to improve water quality. Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) designations are derived from an amendment to the U.S. Clean Water Act, which directed states to identify waters that were largely unaffected by pollution and should remain that way. States were required to develop "anti-degradation" policies to protect these waters from pollution. As a result, wastewater entering an ORW must be as clean as the water in the "outstanding" water body. The anti-degradation policies only apply to point sources of pollution, such as an industrial discharge pipe. However, Wisconsin has other programs in place to control non-point source pollution, such as animal waste and pesticides in farm runoff, urban runoff, and failing septic systems.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board also wanted to extend higher levels of protection to top trout waters. As such, the WDNR established a second category of waterways to be protected under the anti-degradation policy; these are the ERW. Wastewater entering ERW must meet minimum clean water standards, although higher standards are encouraged where feasible. There are no designated ORW or ERW in the City of Wausau.

Streams/Rivers

The Wisconsin River is the most significant natural resource in the City of Wausau. It bisects the City, resulting in a large amount of riverfront property in both public and private ownership. Between the confluence of the Wisconsin and Big Rib Rivers and the dam in Rothschild, the river widens to form Lake Wausau. The Big Rib River flows along the southern edge of the City's western "panhandle" and enters the Wisconsin River at the north end of Lake Wausau, which forms the southern boundary of the City. The Little Rib River flows through the "panhandle" area before entering the Big Rib River. On the north end of the City, Moore Creek flows through the American Legion Golf Course before entering the Wisconsin River. Streams and rivers in the City are shown on Map X.

Floodplain

Floodplains consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during the regional (100-year) flood. Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe.

Areas within the 100-year floodplain are located immediately adjacent to the rivers and streams flowing through the City. In the last ten to fifteen years, there have been mounting concerns by City officials over the effects of changing land use patterns on flood flows and flood hazards in the City. Managing the water that runs off during a rainstorm or when the snow melts is becoming a more difficult issue for the City, especially as growth extends farther upstream into relatively undeveloped areas. The Wisconsin River, Big Rib River, Little Rib River, Eau Claire River, and the tributaries that drain into these rivers are all impacted by urban development. It is important to note that a number of the smaller tributaries "disappear" as they enter the City limits. These streams actually enter the City's storm sewer system and are conveyed to the receiving water in large storm sewer pipes.

General flooding has been a particular problem where many of the smaller tributary streams are enclosed in storm sewers yet development continues in the adjacent, natural areas. Development increases the amount of impervious surface, which then increases the probability of flooding downstream.

The City of Wausau initiated a stormwater management program to provide some assurance that additional development does not overload the existing storm sewer system and cause downstream flooding. The City's stormwater management program includes a review of impacts of new development projects and requirements for the construction of retention basins and other infrastructure necessary to manage stormwater runoff. However, these stormwater management regulations only apply within the City and not the adjacent communities where runoff from development can flow into the City's storm sewer system or the natural streams entering the City, thus increasing the overall amount of runoff.

Wetlands

Wetlands in Wisconsin were defined by the State Legislature in 1978 as: "an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions."

Programs at three levels of government - local, State and Federal - regulate activities in wetlands. There are dozens of wetland types in Wisconsin, characterized by vegetation, soil type, and degree of saturation or water cover. Some of the more prominent wetland types are:

- Aquatic Bed wetlands contain plants growing entirely

on or in a water body no deeper than 6 feet. Plants may include pond-weed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies.

- Marshes are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges and/or giant bur-reed
- Sedge or "Wet" Meadows wetlands may have saturated soils, more often than standing water. Sedges, grasses and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze-weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- Scrub/Shrub wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow and dogwood.
- Forested wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

Many wetland areas in Wausau, especially along the Wisconsin River, were drained and filled as the City developed. Most existing wetlands in the Wausau area are located near surface water drainage ways such as the Big Rib River or Little Rib River. Due to springs, seeps and unusual soil conditions, however, some wetlands are located on relatively steep slopes and even in depressions on hilltops.

Most known and suspected wetlands in the City have been mapped, but a site specific study is often necessary to determine with a higher degree of certainty whether a "green field" development project will have a negative impact on wetlands. There is also strong public interest in preserving wetlands since these areas have important natural functions, such as stormwater management and wildlife habitat, which make them particularly valuable natural resources.

Groundwater

Depth to groundwater varies throughout the City. Sand and gravel aquifers adjacent to the Wisconsin River provide an abundant and easily accessible drinking water supply. The shallow depth to water and permeable soils also make the water supply susceptible to contamination and necessitate the responsible use of potential contaminates. The City adopted a Wellhead Protection Ordinance in 1997 to protect its groundwater resources. The wellhead protection area is generally located between USH 51 and the Wisconsin River, north of Randolph Street.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

Wausau is mostly developed, so the predominant vegetation consists of urban landscaping such as trees, shrubs and private gardens. More natural wooded areas and wetlands occur in parks, along the rivers, or in undeveloped areas. The City's extensive tree planting program, in parks and along streets, has been nationally recognized. For many years, Wausau has been identified as a "Tree City USA". Trees located in urban areas are essential. They clean the air, provide natural flood defenses, mask noise, calm traffic and promote a general sense of wellbeing. This makes trees an important part of the City.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, bear, coyotes, wild turkeys, raccoons, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the County. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. Natural areas within the City serve as wildlife corridors connecting larger habitats, and also add value as recreational areas. Habitats along the Wisconsin River are a good example of a corridor. In addition to area parks and other natural areas, major wildlife habitat areas include Rib Mountain State Park.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Both aquatic and terrestrial endangered, threatened, or special concern species are present within the City. These include:

Flora:

- Snowy Campion (Silene nivea)
- Vasey's Pondweed (Potamogeton vaseyi)

Fauna:

- Black Redhorse (Moxostoma duquesnei)
- Cyrano Darner (Nasiaeschna pentacantha)
- Elktoe (Alasmidonta marginata)
- Osprey (Pandion haliaetus)
- Pygmy Snaketail (Ophiogomphus howei)
- Skillet Clubtail (Gomphurus ventricosus)
- Stygian Shadowfly (Neurocordulia yamaskanensis)

Natural Resource Issues

Development Constraints – In some parts of the City, natural features such as shallow bedrock, steep slopes, and wetlands pose constraints that limit urban-type development. The higher cost of construction on steep slopes or in areas with high bedrock often reduces the development feasibility of these areas. As a result, these areas are often left undisturbed while land with fewer constraints around it is developed, which can result in inefficient land use patterns. As land prices increase, developers become more willing to take on the added expense of developing these more challenging sites.

Wetlands – Some relatively small, poor quality wetland areas in the City have limited or significantly delayed the type and scope of several proposed developments. The delays have been costly to both the developer and the City as significant time and other resources devoted to wetland issues have, nonetheless, resulted in the elimination of the wetland area.

Conservancy Areas – There are three large, very significant environmentally sensitive areas in Wausau that have not received the type of public protection from development that may be warranted. The wetland/floodplain complex of the Big Rib River, Little Rib River, and the Eau Claire River provides relatively undisturbed habitat for many species of wildlife in a near-urban environment. However, there are not any local programs established to protect these environmental corridors, and high density, urban-type development is continuing to encroach into these areas.

Brownfields – Cleaning up soil and groundwater contamination and other types of environmental hazards in the City of Wausau will foster redevelopment of certain properties and expand the City's tax base as well as increase the utilization of otherwise underdeveloped properties. Reuse of the former industrial lands in the downtown along the river is a priority. Development in these areas also maximizes use of existing infrastructure and services, and reduces new development in natural areas.

Wisconsin River – The Wisconsin River is a major asset to Wausau. Continuing to improve the natural resources qualities of the Wisconsin River and the public's access to this water way is a major community issue. Through the planning and implementation activities of the Wausau River Edge Commission, much has been accomplished but there is still work to be done.

Phosphorous Loading - Currently there are new EPA rules being developed related to total maximum daily loads or TMDLs. These rules are intended to reduce pollutants in all navigable waterways; however some restrictions may be placed on those that discharge into the Wisconsin River.

Goal, Objectives and Action Steps

Natural Resources Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to protect and enhance the quality of significant natural resources

Objective A: Protect vulnerable natural resources.

1. Establish buffer areas between urban development and environmentally sensitive lands.

2. Engage in public education campaigns that will increase awareness of environmental issues and good stewardship practices .

1. Continue to require the use of sediment and erosion control best management practices for all new development and redevelopment projects.

2. Continue efforts to reduce soil erosion.

3. Work with Marathon County, adjacent communities, local conservation groups and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to identify opportunities to acquire land or easements for park and public open space purposes in environmentally sensitive areas.

4. Consider adopting a tree preservation ordinance to restrict removal of mature trees and woodlands in the City.

5. Continue the street tree and park tree planting programs that have earned the City numerous "Tree City" awards.

6. Monitor, update and revise the construction site and erosion control ordinance to ensure that the latest best management practices have been included in the protection requirements.

Objective B: Protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources.

1. Protect the quality of groundwater from all sources of pollution.

2. Improve the quality of water in streams and in the storm sewer system that flows through Wausau and into the Wisconsin River.

3. Update stormwater management requirements with current Best Management Practices (BMP).

4. Develop and implement programs that will preserve and protect the wetland and floodplain complexes of the Big Rib River, Little Rib River, and Eau Claire River near their confluence with the Wisconsin River.

5. Continue to implement elements of the City's Wellhead Protection Plan including the Wellhead Protection Overlay zoning ordinance (Section 24.54 of the Wausau Municipal Code).

6. Update, as necessary, and continue to enforce the shore land and floodplain zoning ordinances.

7. Consider developing a program for restoring damaged or filled wetlands.

8. Investigate the establishment of a wetland mitigation bank as a means of replacing wetlands that are impacted by public works, industrial development, or redevelopment projects.

9. Monitor wetlands on City-owned property for the presence of invasive plant species and develop a plan to control and/or eliminate them.

10. Work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to identify all navigable waters within the Long-Term (2050) City Growth Planning Boundary.

Objective C: Manage solid waste and contaminants to limit their negative impacts.

1. Continue to promote and participate in annual spring roadside litter clean-up efforts.

2. Continue to provide recyclable solid waste collection service for City residents.

3. Provide a household hazardous waste disposal program for City residents that are cost effective in keeping these materials out of the sanitary sewer system, the storm water system and from being land spread.

Chapter Three
Housing

Our homes are one of the most important elements in our day-to-day lives. They provide shelter as a basic need, socially link us to neighborhoods, are a significant asset in our local economy and, for the most part, are the single largest investment any of us will make. For many of us, our homes are also a source of comfort, satisfaction, and pride which, together with the neighborhoods in which we live, we will rigorously defend against what we believe to be adverse developments. For these reasons, housing conditions, residential development, and neighborhoods are important considerations for local governments.

The overwhelming majority of homes in Wausau are provided by the private sector and involve the construction, financing, and real estate industries. Government functions only in a supporting role — namely planning, zoning administration, building code enforcement, and the provision of public infrastructure and essential services. Both the city and private sector are taking steps to solve current housing issues. It is anticipated that continued changes in the family structure, an increase in aging households, fluctuations in household incomes, a changing pattern of owners and renters, and increases in housing construction costs will continue as challenges. As new trends take shape, demand will shift and the City and Community Development Authority will continue to direct available resources to the areas of greatest need.

Preparing to meet long-range housing issues is a necessity. Changes, including new forms of housing, will be driven by the private sector. Different styles of congregate living, new housing services, and private management of public housing developments are expected. New building materials, improved construction methods, and new financing structures are likely in the future. The City of Wausau will continue its focus on maintaining the overall good quality, condition, and desirability of our homes with the goal of being able to offer every family equal access to quality affordable housing.

An older residential street.

Previous Plans

City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan - 2006

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Wausau does have an housing element. The housing element reviews several key housing variables and identifies specific housing issues. Housing issues include: a Lack of Available Land, Concentration of Low and Middle Income (LMI) Families/ Individuals, Neighborhood Deterioration, Deteriorating Rental Housing Stock, Downtown Housing, Public Infrastructure, Home Improvement Disincentives, Building Reuse, and Homeless Accommodations. One goal, nine objectives, two policies, and 10 action items/strategies are introduced to address the key issues. The plan also includes a Future Land Use Map identifying future residential growth opportunities.

North Downtown Area Master Plan - 2005

The 2005 North Downtown Area Master Plan includes housing in the overall assessment of the downtown area.

Some of the recommendations of the plan are to encourage multiple housing options in the downtown area, to support financing alternatives to property owners for revitalization, and to transition riverfront industrial into alternative commercial and/or residential.

Community Development Block Grant 5-Year Consolidated Plan – 2015

This is an annual action plan for the City of Wausau's housing assistance efforts, and establishes plans for the use of State and Federal housing assistance monies. Funds are used for a variety of efforts including homeowner rehabilitiation, rental assistance, blight elimination, brownfield remediation, and neighborhood revitalization, among others.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan - 2016

Marathon County's Comprehensive Plan was enacted in 2016, and contains a Housing section in the Community Character chapter. Several of the issues identified around housing in the County are also relevant to housing in Wausau. An aging population will lead to a greater need for senior and supportive housing; housing costs are rising, increasing the need for more affordable housing options for the population; a growing number of families are homeless or are facing the threat of being homeless; and the large percentage of older housing stock may need to be rehabilitated to remain viable. The primary housing related objective in the plan is to "promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members." Eight action steps are proposed in the plan to achieve this objective.

Regional Livability Plan (RLP) and Housing Assessment - 2015

The Regional Livability plan was adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in April of 2015. The RLP looks at housing in all ten counties, including Marathon. The livability plan focuses on housing affordability, housing stock, and introduces housing goals, objectives, and strategies addressing housing and its impact on livability. The housing goal for the Regional Livability Plan is: Promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members. The housing goal includes 3 objectives and 20 recommendations.

As a part of the RLP, a housing assessment was also created focusing on specific housing indicators identifying the trends and issues discussed in the RLP. The Housing Assessment of the Regional Livability Plan was one of the four key assessments identifying issues and opportunities for livability in North Central Wisconsin. Housing is a crucial component of livability. The type of housing and the costs of various housing options were researched and analyzed. The assessment studied the availability and affordability of housing and introduced the impact higher density housing developments can have on traffic levels. Housing options in close proximity to employment opportunities has a significant impact on the workforce's ability to get to and from work efficiently and effectively. Proximity also expands the workforce shed allowing more citizens access to more employment opportunities.

A newer residential street.

Understanding the type of housing units, their age and value, and the tenure of the housing stock can provide valuable insight into a community and the demands that will face the community in the future. The assessment introduces the need to build smaller housing units to attract a younger demographic to the region while accommodating an aging populations need and desire for small housing units with less maintenance such as; condos, townhomes, and units incorporating universal design standards. Connecting people's homes to their places of work, schools, and shopping opportunities is a primary function of a transportation system. This report looks at the existing housing stock, factors that affect current residents and trends that are likely to determine the future of housing in the Region.

Overall, 12 indicators were introduced ranging from total housing units to persons per household to percentage of owners/ renters paying greater than 30 percent of their income on housing. This data was compiled and used to create the main section of the livability report and the goals, objectives, and policies of the Regional Livability Plan.

Inventory and Trends

Housing Inventory

In 2013, the City of Wausau contained a total of 18,249 housing units, compared to 15,318 in 1990, see **Table 11**. The City added 2,931 units between 1990 and 2013, an increase of about 19 percent. During that same time period, the Wausau Region increased the number of units by 10,075, an increase of 33.2 percent, and the County increased the

number of housing units by 14,135 units, an increase of 32.3 percent. The higher percent increase in housing units in the Wausau Region and County indicates that a majority of growth is taking place outside of the City. Of the 14,135 units added in Marathon County between 1990 and 2013, 11,204 of the units were built outside of the City of Wausau, 7,144 of which were built in the Wausau Region.

Only 12.8 percent of the 18,249 units in the City of Wausau were built after 2000. A majority of the housing stock within the City was built prior to 1960, roughly 53.3 percent of all housing units, see **Table 12**. The highest percentage of homes, 26.7 percent, was built before 1940.

In comparison, housing in Marathon County has been built more evenly over the decades. Roughly 17 percent of housing units were built after 2000. Only 18.7 percent of the housing stock was built before 1940 and only 34.9 percent of the housing stock in the County was built prior to 1960. An older housing stock, with a low percentage of homes built after 2000, will make it difficult for the City of Wausau to retain empty nesters and attract young professionals. Nation trends show that young professional and empty nesters are more interested in "move-in ready" housing units that require minimal maintenance and few repairs.

Houses come in a variety of different types and sizes. One way to distinguish the different types of houses is to consider the number of units in the housing structure. A stand-alone, single family house is called 1-unit detached. A structure with 2 units is likely to be a duplex, which is one structure with two separate housing units. A structure with 20 apartments in it would fall into the 10 or more units category. One-unit detached structures are the most common type of housing unit in Wausau, making up 62% of all housing units in 2013, see **Table 13**. Structures with 2 to 4 units and with 10 or more units make up the second and third largest groups with 15.4% and 13.4% of total units, respectively. Since 2000, Wausau has seen a decreasing percentage of the number of structures with 2 to 4 units and an increase in structures with 10 or more units.

Seasonal housing is a special piece of the housing puzzle. Seasonal housing units are those intended for occupancy only during certain season of the year and are found primarily in resort areas. Northern Wisconsin, due to the natural resources and recreation amenities, has many seasonal houses. As an urban area, Wausau has only a small percentage of the total seasonal units in Marathon County, approximately 10%. **Table 14** shows that in 2010, Wausau had 87 seasonal units, which is an increase of 45% from 2000.

Housing Occupants

When discussing the people who live in these housing units, the usual term is household. A household is all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence.

Table 11: Total Housing Units

	1990	*2000*	*2010*	*2013*	*1990-2013 % Change*	*1990-2013 Net Change*
City of Wausau	15,318	16,668	18,154	18,249	19.1%	2,931
City of La Crosse	20,897	22,233	22,785	22,366	7.0%	1,469
City of Eau Claire	21,316	24,895	28,009	28,573	34.0%	7,257
Wausau Region	30,389	35,085	39,795	40,464	33.2%	10,075
Marathon County	43,774	50,360	57,734	57,909	32.3%	14,135
State of Wisconsin	2,055,774	2,321,144	2,624,358	2,626,142	27.7%	570,368

Source: U.S. Census

Table 12: Year Structure Built

Year	*Wausau*	*Wausau %*	*Marathon Co. %*	*Wisconsin %*
2010 or later	161	0.8%	0.6%	0.4%
2000 to 2009	2,187	12.0%	16.4%	12.9%
1990 to 1999	1,237	6.8%	13.8%	14.0%
1980 to 1989	1,165	6.4%	9.7%	9.8%
1970 to 1979	1,875	10.3%	15.3%	14.9%
1960 to 1969	1,911	10.5%	9.3%	9.8%
1950 to 1959	2,984	16.4%	10.0%	11.3%
1940 to 1949	1,853	10.2%	6.2%	6.0%
1939 or earlier	4,876	26.7%	18.7%	20.9%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 13: Type of Structure

	City of Wausau		City of Wausau Percentages		Marathon County Percentages	Wisconsin Percentages
	2000	2013	2000	2013	2013	2013
1-unit detached	10,411	11,312	62.4%	62.0%	74.4%	66.5%
1-unit attached	384	518	2.3%	2.8%	2.8%	4.4%
2 to 4 units	3,370	2,802	20.2%	15.4%	7.8%	10.4%
5 to 9 units	695	1,007	4.2%	5.5%	4.5%	4.9%
10 or more units	1570	2,440	9.3%	13.4%	7.0%	10.0%
Mobile home, trailer, or other	257	170	1.5%	0.9%	3.4%	3.7%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 14: Seasonal Housing Units

	1990	2000	2010	1990-2010 % Change	1990-2010 Net Change
Wausau	56	60	87	55.4%	31
Eau Claire	80	114	103	28.8%	23
La Crosse	44	83	121	175.0%	77
Wausau Region	125	125	198	58.4%	73
County	725	554	840	15.9%	115
State	150,601	142,313	193,046	28.2%	42,445

Source: U.S. Census

In 2013, Wausau had 16,440 households, a slight decrease from 2010, but a 5% increase from 2000. See Chapter 1 for a further breakdown of household change over the past two decades.

Another aspect of housing occupants is the figure of average household size. The national trend currently is toward fewer people living within the same household, or a smaller average household size. In 2013, the average household size in Wausau was 2.31 persons, a figure lower than the region, County, and State averages, see **Table 15**. Fewer persons per household usually translates to a greater number of households and, in turn, a greater number of housing units needed.

Due to the nature of the housing market being constantly in flux with people moving, new houses being built, and other circumstances, not all housing units are occupied at any given time. In 2013, 16,440 of the 18,249 housing units in Wausau were occupied or 90%. Additionally, occupied housing units can be further separated into owner occupied units and renter occupied units. In 2013, the occupied housing units in Wausau were 60.3% owner occupied and 39.7% renter occupied, see **Table 16** and **Table 17**. In the past two decades, while there has been an increase in both categories, the number of renter occupied units has increased by a greater percentage.

Housing Costs

Another important factor in the discussion of housing is the value of housing units and the costs of living in them. Housing costs are often the largest regular expense a household has and they greatly impact decisions about where people live. Providing a range of housing values is important to meet the housing needs of people of different income levels and at different times in their lives. To get a clear picture of housing costs, owner occupied and renter occupied units must be distinguished.

For owner occupied housing units, the most common figure is median housing value. In 2013, the median housing value in Wausau was $115,000, up from $85,000 in 2000, see **Table 18**. This is a lower median value than the comparison cities and the region, because median values in those other communities saw greater increase in value over the past 13 years than Wausau did.

For renter occupied housing units, the primary means of detailing housing costs is median gross rent. Median gross rent takes into account the monthly amount of rent plus the estimated average monthly costs of utilities (such as electricity, gas, water, and sewer) and fuel (such as oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.). The median gross rent for Wausau in 2013 as $651, up from $473 in 2000, see **Table 19**. Wausau has the lowest median gross rent of the comparison communities and the region.

Housing affordability is an important element which takes into account factors such as rent or mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities. Household size and income are also key factors that contribute to what housing options are available to

Table 15: Average Household Size

	1990	2000	2010	2013	1990-2013 Net Change
Wausau	2.45	2.37	2.31	2.31	-0.14
Eau Claire	2.34	2.23	2.18	2.25	-0.09
La Crosse	2.48	2.38	2.29	3.3	0.82
Wausau Region	2.84	2.62	2.48	2.47	-0.37
County	2.75	2.60	2.49	2.5	-0.25
State	2.61	2.50	2.43	2.55	-0.06

Source: U.S. Census

Table 16: Owner Occupied Units

	1990	2000	2010	2013	1990-2013 % Change	1990-2013 Net Change
City of Wausau	9,272	9,676	10,106	9,921	7.0%	649
City of La Crosse	9,897	10,746	10,906	10,564	6.7%	667
City of Eau Claire	11,760	13,759	15,056	14,864	26.4%	3,104
Wausau Region	20,721	22035	25936	25328	22.2%	4,607
Marathon County	31,054	36,091	39,797	39,287	26.5%	8233
State of Wisconsin	1,215,350	1,426,361	1,551,558	1,558,846	28.3%	343,496

Source: U.S. Census

A newer residential street.

Table 17: Renter Occupied Units

	1990	2000	2010	2013	1990-2013 % Change	1990-2013 Net Change
City of Wausau	5,446	6,002	6,885	6,519	19.7%	1,073
City of La Crosse	10,073	10,364	10,977	10,219	1.4%	146
City of Eau Claire	8,801	10,257	12,024	12,159	38.2%	3,358
Wausau Region	8,617	9471	11,743	11,656	35.3%	3,039
Marathon County	10,493	11,611	14,086	13,792	31.4%	3,299
State of Wisconsin	606,768	658,183	728,210	729,486	20.2%	122,718

Source: U.S. Census

Table 18: Median Value for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units

	1990	2000	2013	1990-2013 % Change	1990-2013 Net Change
Wausau	$51,000	$85,000	$115,000	125.5%	$64,000
Eau Claire	$53,500	$85,100	$127,800	138.9%	$74,300
La Crosse	$52,900	$92,800	$138,600	162.0%	$85,700
Wausau Region	$58,008	$102,614	$156,593	170.0%	$98,585
County	$48,927	$95,800	$142,300	190.8%	$93,373
State	$62,100	$112,200	$167,100	169.1%	$105,000

Source: U.S. Census

Table 19: Median Gross Rent

	1990	2000	2013	1990-2013 % Change	1990-2013 Net Change
Wausau	$360	$473	$651	80.8%	$291
Eau Claire	$344	$449	$696	102.3%	$352
La Crosse	$351	$485	$704	100.6%	$353
Wausau Region	$390	$507	$776	99.0%	$386
County	$328	$484	$692	111.0%	$364
State	$331	$540	$759	129.3%	$428

Source: U.S. Census

residents. Due to these different factors, housing affordability is relative. One common measure of affordability is the percentage of total household income which is spent on housing costs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recommends that rental-housing costs not exceed 30% of monthly income. In 2013, 23.2% of owners and 50.1% of renters spent more than 30 percent of total household income on housing costs, see **Table 20**.

Household Projections

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide the City of Wausau during the next 20 years's change and growth. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) publishes projections for population, households, and average household size, all of which can be used to get an idea of what the City's housing needs will be in the future.

The DOA projects an 8.1% increase in households between 2015 and 2040 for the City of Wausau. The Wausau Region and Marathon County are expected to increase in households twice as fast over the same time period. Projections show that the City will have a total of 18,143 households in 2040, which is 1,503 more households than in 2013, see **Table 21**. The DOA also projects that by 2040, the average household size in Wausau will be 2.17 persons, see **Table 22**. All of the comparison communities and regions are projected to see a similar decrease in their average household size.

Table 20: Percent of Households That Spent 30% or More of Income on Housing Costs, 2013

	Owners	Renters
Wausau	23.2%	50.1%
Eau Claire	23.4%	56.0%
La Crosse	19.3%	54.4%
Wausau Region	23.1%	37.6%
County	21.8%	44.8%
State	32.2%	48.4%

Source: U.S. Census

Public Housing

Public housing provides decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Public housing comes in all sizes and types, from scattered single family houses to high-rise apartments. Federal aid for public housing is administered through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD works with local agencies to provide this assistance. The local Housing and Redevelopment Authority in Wausau is the Community Development Authority (CDA). The CDA manages various programs that offer subsidized housing options in the City of Wausau as well as throughout Marathon County.

The types of housing assistance provided in Wausau through CDA include Public Housing, Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, and low interest loans for downpayments and rehabilitation programs. The CDA operates elderly and disabled public housing at Riverview Towers; scattered public housing for families; and Section 8 rental assistance vouchers for individuals and families. Riverview Towers has 149 one-bedroom apartments for individuals or couples

Table 21: Household Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change 2015-2040
City of Wausau	16,790	17,371	17,774	18,064	18,198	18,143	8.1%
City of La Crosse	22,265	22,538	22,683	22,676	22,519	22,298	0.1%
City of Eau Claire	27,136	28,142	29,037	29,788	30,321	30,635	12.9%
Wausau Region	38,018	39,919	41,449	42,762	43,745	44,262	16.4%
Marathon County	53,176	54,657	57,394	59,611	61,524	62,958	18.4%
State of Wisconsin	2,371,815	2,491,982	2,600,538	2,697,884	2,764,498	2,790,322	17.6%

Source: WI DOA

Table 22: Average Household Size Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
City of Wausau	2.28	2.26	2.24	2.22	2.19	2.17
City of La Crosse	2.14	2.12	2.10	2.09	2.07	2.06
City of Eau Claire	2.25	2.22	2.21	2.19	2.18	2.18
Wausau Region	2.46	2.44	2.42	2.39	2.37	2.34
Marathon County	2.47	2.45	2.43	2.40	2.38	2.36
State of Wisconsin	2.38	2.35	2.32	2.30	2.28	2.26

Source: WI DOA

who meet the income requirements and are at least 55 years of age or are disabled. The Scattered Sites program offers 46 duplexes and single family homes scattered throughout Wausau. The Section 8 program provides assistance for 375 low income families in the private rental market through the Housing Assistance Payments Program. The CDA also runs a 36 unit Residential Care Apartment Complex, Riverview Terrace, which provides affordable housing and services to low income elderly residents through Community Health Care's Visiting Nurses Association.

Homelessness

People are classified as homeless, according to HUD, if they meet one of a series of factors which include lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, having a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for regular sleeping accommodations (such as a car, a park, or a bus station), and residing in a shelter designed to provide temporary living arrangements. Two tools are used to measure homelessness in a community, a Point-in-Time (PIT) count and a Housing Inventory Count (HIC). A PIT is an annual count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. A HIC is a point-in-time inventory of provider programs that provide beds and units dedicated to serve persons who are homeless. PITs are conducted twice a year in Wausau, once in winter and once in summer. The January 2016 Wausau PIT found 10 people staying outside without a home.

Riverview Terrace.

Several organizations in and around Wausau are committed to reducing homelessness in the community. The United Way of Marathon County has a Housing and Homeless Coalition whose mission is "working together to raise community awareness to end homelessness by maximizing and strengthening existing resources, developing new, relevant solutions, and creating a seamless delivery of services to end homelessness in Marathon County. Shelters and service providers to the local homeless population include The Salvation Army, the Warming Center, and The Women's Community, Inc.

Livability

Livability is often defined as the sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life—including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment, and recreation possibilities. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities, a joint effort of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency, has established six livability principles. The six principles are 1) provide more transportation choices, 2) promote equitable, affordable housing, 3) enhance economic competitiveness, 4) support existing communities, 5) coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment, and 6) value communities and neighborhoods.

Location of Housing

One aspect of a livable community is that housing is situated in close proximity to the locations people frequent on a regular basis such as jobs, grocery stores, and medical facilities.

Preservation and Rehabilitation of Older Housing Stock

Older housing is often located in traditional neighborhoods and has great character that adds to the identity of the community. Preserving and rehabilitating older housing units is important to the character of the community and

the diversity of housing options.

Diversity of Housing Options

Having a diversity of housing options available in a community provides many benefits. Housing of different sizes and styles accommodates the diverse households within the community. Different sizes and styles also provide a variety of housing costs, allowing housing to be affordable to everyone.

Higher Density Housing

Housing in higher density neighborhoods allows for a larger percentage of people to locate near desirable amenities like schools, parks, and shopping areas. Dense housing also minimizes the costs to the municipality to provide services to the community.

Neighborhood Groups

The City of Wausau has many neighborhoods which are formed and delineated by natural boundaries or transportation corridors. Most are informal areas, but some have self-identified and organized to form neighborhood groups. The overall goal of the neighborhood groups is to improve the quality of life in Wausau and their neighborhoods. Most groups meet regularly, giving citizens the opportunity to speak with their neighbors, elected officials, Wausau Police Officers, and city employees.

In 2016, the City had nine established neighborhood groups which meet in neighborhood locations each month. The Neighborhood Groups map on the next page identifies the locations of the groups.

- Longfellow Neighborhood Group
- S.W. Jones Neighborhood Group
- Werle Park Neighborhood Group
- Westies Neighborhood Group
- East Towne Neighborhood Group
- Forest park Neighborhood
- SouthEast Area Neighborhood Group
- Athletic Park Neighborhood Group
- Riverview Neighborhood Association

These local, organized citizen groups provide great benefit to neighborhoods and to the City as a whole. Citizens can share their concerns, voice grievances, or ask questions. The neighborhood groups has the ability to have a unified voice to the Police Department and City Government. Neighborhood groups support the vision for Wausau where every neighborhood is clean, safe, and connected. The Mayor's N2N (Neighbor to Neighbor) Committee, established in 2004, is in place to help empower citizen neighborhood associations. Not all residential areas within the City are yet covered by local neighborhood groups.

A residential street and sidewalk.

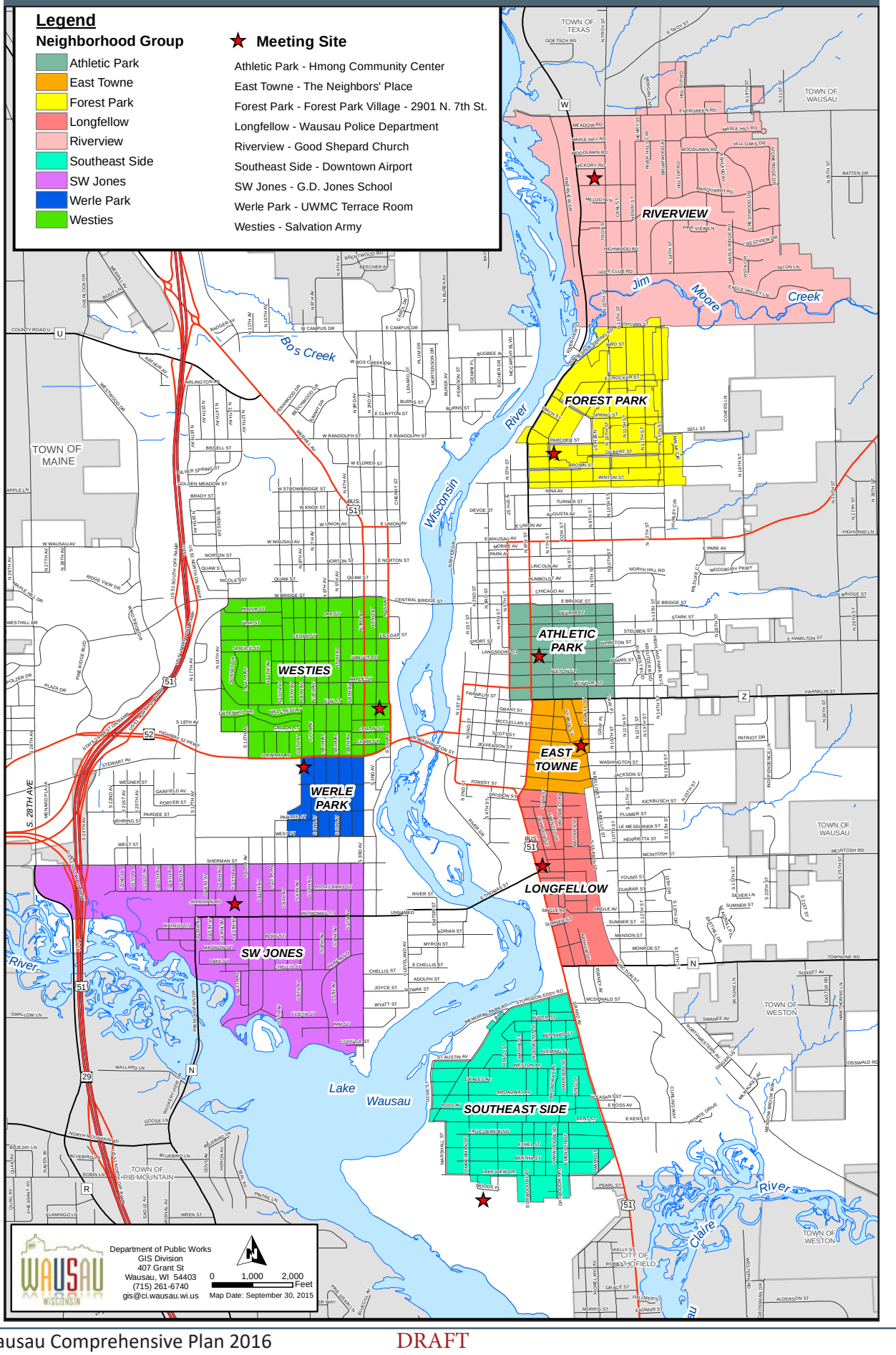
Neighborhood-scale multifamily housing.

Housing Assistance Programs

Direct governmental involvement in housing began with the Federal Housing Act of 1934, when home construction was a method of eliminating blighted slums while creating jobs during the Depression. Today, Federal, State, and local governments operate numerous housing programs focused on providing quality affordable housing for those persons who have the greatest need.

The overwhelming majority of housing in Wausau is provided by the private sector, through the construction, banking, and real estate industries. The degree of direct governmental involvement in local housing varies with the changing needs of the community. In Wausau, government functions primarily in a supporting role — namely, planning, zoning administration, building code enforcement and the provision of public works infrastructure and essential services. The City has developed housing rehabilitation programs and offers down payment assistance to new home buyers. The City has also provided support for emergency shelters and the development of handicapped housing units. Most of these services are provided through the City's Community Development Authority and Community Development Department

Figure 1: Neighborhood Groups



There are a variety of State and Federal housing programs geared to addressing a variety of housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners. The following housing resources are available to participants as specified by program.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Entitlement Program – The City of Wausau annually receives Federal CDBG funds to assist with the housing and job needs of low- and moderate-income people and to help eliminate blight in the community. In 2015, the City received $578,155 in CDBG funds. With substantial community input, the Common Council annually approves a very specific program for the expenditure of these funds.

Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)

- Rental Rehabilitation Program
- Home Owner and Accessibility Rehabilitation Program
- Home Ownership Program
- Wisconsin Fresh Start Initiative provides at-risk young people with education, skills, and career direction leading to economic self-sufficiency.

Homeless Programs (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA] and Private)

- HUD Emergency Shelter Grants
- State Shelter Subsidy Grants
- Transitional Housing
- Salvation Army
- Local Churches

Local Housing Organization Grant (LHOG)

State grants are available to enable community-based organizations, tribes, and housing authorities to increase their capacity to provide affordable housing opportunities and services.

HOME Loans and Home Improvement Loans (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority [WHEDA])

The HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.

Housing-Related Consumer Protection Services (Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection [DATCP])

The Bureau of Consumer Protection is responsible for the investigation of unfair and deceptive business practices and handles individual consumer complaints involving landlord/tenant complaints, and home improvement transactions.

Housing Issues

Lack of Housing Options: The City of Wausau may not have adequate housing of all types and affordability levels to meet the needs of the community. This includes not only housing cost and size, but also location. Public housing is in very high demand, as are housing vouchers. A greater number of affordable housing units for individuals and families is needed in the community, as well as smaller, more dense units and mixed-use units, particularly near downtown.

Blighted Properties: Some neighborhoods in the City have multiple blighted properties which lower local property values and safety. Properties become blighted for different reasons; some have been foreclosed and are in disrepair, others have been damaged by fire or weather, among other reasons. Other homes are old and may need upgrades to meet current housing standards or have lead or asbestos issues. These properties are often expensive to rehabilitate or raze for new construction.

Perception of Higher Taxes: The City of Wausau has a public reputation, earned or not, for having higher taxes than surrounding communities. This negative perception can make the City less competitive than other area communities for home buyer and home builders. This perception plays a role in the lower investment in housing in the City.

Homelessness: Community residents can become homeless for a variety of reasons. There is need for support at multiple points of intervention to reduce homelessness and support persons on the road to stable housing. Some interventions can include support of area homeless shelters, supportive housing for special needs, rental assistance programs, and public service activities.

Goal, Objectives, and Action Steps

Housing Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to offer equal access to quality, affordable housing.

Objectives and Action Steps:

Objective A: Maintain and improve the existing housing stock by supporting and encouraging both public and private rehabilitation efforts.

1. Coordinate public infrastructure improvements with high intensity neighborhood code enforcement programs to accelerate housing code compliance and rehabilitation efforts in selected neighborhoods.

2. Target the enforcement of the City's existing housing maintenance codes in those areas that have not yet experienced stepped-up enforcement activities.

3. Periodically review and update the housing maintenance code to reflect the changing needs of the City.

4. Identify, assess, and prioritize underutilized commercial and industrial properties in the City that have potential to be redeveloped for residential uses. Priority properties should be promoted for redevelopment. The City may also need to develop incentives, including technical and financial assistance to foster redevelopment of these properties.

5. Consider developing a program that would provide the private sector with financial and technical assistance for rehabilitating and reusing certain commercial/industrial buildings in the City for housing purposes, such as the former Wausau Ironworks on West Street.

6. Continue to aggressively pursue Federal, State, and private sources of funding for upgrading the City's existing owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing stock.

Objective B: Promote programs and policies that provide housing opportunities for all residents.

1. Continue to promote home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income households within the City of Wausau.

2. Increase the availability of affordable housing on a City-wide basis through the acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing units and, where possible, the construction of new units.

3. Facilitate the construction of more public assisted living units for the elderly.

4. Consider the development of a City-initiated program for acquiring large, vacant tracts of property within the City's extraterritorial area and either develop the property or partner with private sector interests to develop this property for residential use.

5. Support the work of the Community Development Department as it continues to:

- Administer the homeowner rehabilitation program to enable low, very low, and extremely low income families to stay in their own homes;
- Administer public housing programs;
- Seek grants and additional funding for housing programs; and

6. Keep the public informed of their basic rights under the Federal Fair Housing Act.

7. Work with other area agencies and organizations to improve coordination and communication regarding programs and facilities serving the homeless population.

8. Work with governmental agencies in other communities within the Wausau Urban Area and Marathon County to help them develop low and moderate income housing programs.

9. Improve coordination and communication between the various public and private agencies and organizations involved in providing shelter and services for the homeless.

10. Support established neighborhood groups and encourage the creation of new groups until all residential areas are represented.

Objective 3: Encourage a variety of housing types throughout the City without concentrating any particular type of housing within one neighborhood.

1. Continue efforts to expand the housing opportunities available within the Central Business District.

2. Work with interested citizens to develop a network of grass roots neighborhood organizations that would eventually encompass all neighborhoods in the City. Among other functions, these neighborhood organizations should serve as a mechanism to assist in voluntary compliance with City housing codes and foster clean-up and fix-up activities to improve the quality and character of neighborhoods.

3. Develop a list of vacant, underutilized, or blighted properties in residential neighborhoods that should be targeted for in-fill or redevelopment with new housing. Work with area real estate professionals to market these properties.

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Chapter Four
Transportation

Transportation infrastructure is necessary for the effective movement of people and goods within a community, as well as regionally and nationally. At the same time, car crashes are one of the leading causes of death in the United States, highlighting one of the negative effects of the transportation network and one of the greatest challenges. The transportation system includes the road network, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, railroads, airports, public transit and freight. This chapter includes an inventory of the existing transportation facilities and services within the City of Wausau.

Previous Plans

Following is a brief description of the major recent plans and studies that focused on aspects of the transportation system in the Wausau area. Much of the transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between the Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); the body designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO.

Long Range Transportation Plan for the Wausau Metropolitan Area (LRTP)

The LRTP is prepared every five years by the MPO, the County, and WisDOT. The current LRTP was adopted in 2011 and identifies the current conditions in the area to recommend solutions to the issues regarding the deficiencies of the roadways in the area. A focus of this plan was on maintaining existing transportation infrastructure.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP is updated by the Wausau MPO, annually. The TIP is developed by the MPO in cooperation with the State, affected transit operators, and local communities within the MPO boundary. The plan identifies transit and highway projects to be funded over the next four year period.

Local Arterial Circulation Plan

This 2000 vintage plan was produced by the Wausau MPO in conjunction with the Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning, and Development and the Highway Department. The purpose of this plan is to guide public and private sector decisions concerning the infrastructure, right-of-way, land use compatibility, and safety needs of the local arterial transportation system over the next 20 to 30 years.

Central Business District Parking Analysis and Long-Term Plan

This report provides a long-term operating for managing public resources in a way that supports community well-being, community connection, and growing a sense of place. This document addresses public parking in the context of the larger vision for downtown Wausau. The study identified over 7,700 parking spaces in the downtown. At present, most of the study area has adequate parking supply, on- and off-street, to support the economic vitality of downtown. Final draft was presented in 2014.

City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan – 2006

The plan references to transportation generally relate to the relationship between transportation and land use. Transportation is also addressed throughout the plan's discussion of land use planning principles.

Marathon County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

This 2014 plan analyzes service gaps and needs in public transit and human services transportation then proposes strategies to address the gaps and needs. A five-year work plan was written to cover 2014 through 2018.

River Edge Master Plan

This plan laid the foundation for future bike route and trail development within the City. In June, 1995 the Wausau

Common Council adopted the River Edge Master Plan as a component of the City master plan. The report identifies long- and short-term strategies for improving public access to the City's most important natural resource – the Wisconsin River. Emphasis was placed on establishing trail connections to existing points of interest within the City and to adjacent communities and trail systems.

The parkway is intended to physically link the parks located along the river by improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the community. Most of the recommendations focus on the continued development of the River Edge Parkway along both banks of the Wisconsin River, which would be completed over the course of 20 to 30 years. The corridor includes portions of the City bordering both banks of the Wisconsin River up to three city blocks deep in some cases. Central to the parkway's concept is a web of walkways, a network that reaches from City limit to City limit through the corridor and along the river wherever physically possible, including across bridges and islands. The walkway network is a transportation alternative allowing bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-motorized modes of travel access to and from residential and commercial segments throughout the corridor and connecting existing parks along the river edge.

Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

This 2015 20-year comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan evaluates the existing conditions for bicycle and pedestrian transportation and proposes recommendations and infrastructure improvements to improve the safety and connectivity of the system in the greater Wausau area. This plan also measured demand for bicycle and pedestrian travel and analyzed the traffic stress of the road network for the metro region. There were key routes and priority improvements identified. The plan also identifies the estimated cost of many improvements and various funding opportunities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

Barriers identified include the Wisconsin River, steep topography, and some areas that do not have a connected street grid. High stress roadways identified were Grand Avenue, sections of STH 52, Bridge Street, North 41st Street, 6th Street, and smaller sections of many other roads.

Metro Ride – Transit Development Plan

This plan, completed in 2012 by AECOM, evaluated the Metro Ride transit system in the Wausau Metropolitan Area compared to peer systems in regions across the state and nation, and created a plan for the near future of the transit system. The plan found that the financial efficiency of the system was about average, while the per capita service was above average, but the span of service was lower than almost all peer systems. It also found that ridership has grown faster than Wisconsin peer systems but slower than national peer systems. More than half of riders were dependent upon the service to complete their trips, and over 85% stated no vehicle was available for their trip.

Regional Livability Plan

The 2015 Regional Livability Plan (RLP), prepared by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, addresses issues of livability in the areas of housing, transportation, economic development, and land use. The RLP identifies three major transportation issues.

- Modes of Transportation to Work – The region's workforce is extremely dependent on the automobile. In 2012, over 80 percent of the region's workforce drove alone to work on a daily basis. Another 10 percent carpooled, leaving less than 10 percent for the non-automobile methods such as walking, biking, and using transit. The average commute time in the central sub-region, which includes Marathon County, was 18.7 minutes.

- Age of Drivers in the Region – The region is seeing a change in the number of licensed drivers by age groups. Between 2004 and 2013, the region saw a 20 percent decrease in the number of drivers age 17 and age 19. During the same years, the region had a 20 percent increase in drivers over age 65. These changes mean communities increasingly need multimodal options for those who are unable or choose not to drive.

- Transportation Costs – It is expensive to maintain the transportation infrastructure in the region. The current reliance on fuel tax and registration fees is inadequate, unstable, and may soon be outmoded. The inability to fund improvements and maintenance on transportation infrastructure will impact the ability to transport goods and provide safe, reliable, and efficient roads. Additionally, transportation accounts for a large portion of the average household's budget, and is greatly affected by housing location. Many low income

Reconstruction of 2nd Ave.

and fixed income families are unable to afford the cost of owning and maintaining vehicles, thereby limiting employment opportunities.

Connections 2030

This is Wisconsin DOT's latest long-range, statewide, multimodal transportation plan. It identifies a series of system-level priority corridors that are critical to Wisconsin's travel patterns and the state economy.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The City utilizes a five-year CIP which consists of an infrastructure plan component and another significant capital projects component. The infrastructure plan is developed by the City's Public Works/Engineering Department and presented to the Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee (CISM) for review and recommendation.

The City's Finance Committee evaluates the Capital Budget and Plan and recommendations are presented to the Common Council for consideration and approval. Annually, the Common Council also reviews and approves department requests to carry forward project budgets to the next year. The CIP emphasizes the preservation and maintenance of existing assets.

Transportation System

The transportation system is Wausau consists of the local, county and state road networks, as well as transit, bike & pedestrian facilities, air transportation, among others, see **Map 4**

Street Network

Functional classification

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. See WDOT Facilities Development Manual for more information.

At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example), are those roads that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel) such as USH 51, whereas at the lower limits are those local roads and streets that emphasize access, such as most residential area roads.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

- Principal Arterials serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas with populations greater than 5,000 or connect major centers of activity. They carry the highest traffic volumes and are designed to accommodate longer trips.
- Minor Arterials, like principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-community continuity and service for trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.
- Collectors provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from the arterials through the area to the local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from the local streets and channel it onto the arterial system.
- Local Streets comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility, and high volume through-traffic movement on these streets is usually discouraged.

Road Jurisdiction

Roads are commonly classified in one of two ways: by ownership or by purpose. Jurisdictional responsibility refers to ownership of a particular road, while functional classification, as described above, identifies the road by the level of service (LOS) it provides.

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some State-owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Ownership is divided among the Federal, State, and local governments. States own over 20 percent of the national road network. The Federal Government has responsibility for about five percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Native American reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on State and Federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the State generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation.

USH 51 and STH 29 are the primary routes through the metro area and are owned and operated by WisDOT. Marathon County performs most maintenance on these facilities, under a contract with WisDOT. Most other State and U.S. signed roads in the urban area are owned and maintained by the community where the street is located. In Wausau, the City owns and maintains most of Business 51 and STH 52. These are classified by WisDOT as connecting

highways. As such, the City receives additional State Transportation Aid funds to maintain these types of streets and, when reconstruction is needed, the State pays for most of the cost, with the City making a relatively minor financial contribution.

County roads that enter Wausau include CTH U, CTH W, CTH Z, and CTH N. Only CTH N is signed through the City. The other County trunks end inside the City limits. Ownership of most of these signed County roads within Wausau is currently the responsibility of the City. As such, Wausau taxpayers are financially responsible for maintenance and improvement of these streets that serve City residents and many residents from the rural areas. However, in the rural areas, maintenance and improvement of these County trunks is the financial responsibility of all County taxpayers, including the City. Thus, Wausau property owners pay the full cost of maintaining their major streets and also pay a portion of the costs to maintain county highways throughout the County.

Major Street Facilities

A brief description of the major road facilities located in the City is provided below. Functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available, are summarized for all major roads.

USH 51/STH 29: The City has convenient access to USH 51/STH 29 which provides interstate access to the south (I-39) and northern access to Merrill via USH 51 expressway. STH 29 provides convenient expressway access to the east to Green Bay and west to Eau Claire and the Twin Cities. All of these roads that make up the freeway system through the Wausau area are classified as principal arterials. USH 51/I-39 is designed as a freeway through Marathon County. STH 29 is designed as a freeway through the metro area and an expressway with at-grade intersections in the rural areas of Marathon County. The combined USH 51/STH 29 freeway section is the most heavily traveled section of highway in the County. The highest 2010 AADT volume on USH 51/STH 29 was between the CTH N and the USH 51/STH 29 east interchanges, which had about 54,900 vehicles per day, a slight decline from the 2000 AADT of 58,000.

Business 51: Business 51 is also a principal arterial providing north and south access through Wausau. Before the construction of the new USH 51, Business 51 was the main highway through the metropolitan area. Business 51 still serves as a major north-south route. In the southern part of Wausau, Business 51 (Grand Avenue) is a four-lane undivided arterial that also provides property access to many homes, apartments, and businesses south of the downtown. The large number of business driveway/access points and the limited number of dedicated left-turn lanes create safety hazards as well as traffic congestion and related delays. Because right-of-way is limited and the corridor is lined with homes and viable businesses, acquiring the right-of-way along the corridor to widen the street with turn lanes would likely be difficult and costly. As one of the only through north-south routes on the east side of the Wisconsin River, it is also a significant barrier for bicyclists and pedestrians due to the volume and speed of traffic and the width of the road for pedestrian crossings. Traffic counts of approximately 20,000 vpd on Business 51 are near the upper recommendations of 25,000 vpd for successful road diets, so a corridor analysis would need to be performed to determine the viability of reducing travel lanes to add a left turn lane and bicycle lanes, however there have been successful road diets on roads with over 26,000 vpd.

STH 52: STH 52 is a principal arterial. From west to east, STH 52 starts at the USH 51/STH 29 interchange, follows Stewart Avenue across the river via the one-way pair of Washington Street (eastbound) or Scott Street (westbound). One-way roads make a loop through downtown Wausau, consisting of Scott Street, 6th Street, Forests Street, and 5th Street. STH 52 continues as the 5th Street/6th Street one-way pair to Wausau Avenue, where it continues as a minor arterial along Wausau Avenue to the eastern limits of the city. Parts of Highway 52, particularly Stewart Avenue, present barriers for pedestrians due to the volume and speed of traffic, width of the road, and limited signalized intersections. Additional pedestrian crossing signals would likely improve the safety of this road. The most recent AADT counts from 2010-2013 range from 6,000 vpd to 21,000 vpd on various portions of STH 52, indicating many portions of this road are candidates for successful road diets.

CTH N: CTH N is a principal arterial from west to east via S. 17th Avenue, Thomas Street to Grand Avenue to Town Line Road, and eastward out of Wausau. As previously discussed, although the road is signed as a County trunk, it is a City street and the City receives no financial assistance from the County to maintain or improve this facility.

Connectivity

Connectivity of the transportation network is important for all modes of transportation, motor vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians. A well connected grid style road network provides alternative routes when an arterial or collector road becomes congested, increasing the capacity of the road network, reducing travel times and providing alternative routes for emergency vehicles. A well connected grid also makes transit, bicycling and walking more efficient and more attractive. The majority of Wausau that was developed prior to the 1970s is on a well-connected, grid-style road network. There are some sections of Wausau that have a curvilinear road network, which can be more difficult to navigate even if they are well connected.

Without a connected network, even very short trips that

could be easily made by walking become long and circuitous and exceed the distance that most people are comfortable walking. In some cases connectivity is difficult to achieve due to topography such as steep slopes or rivers. However, in many cases it is the result of fragmented development, as can be seen in the Stewart Avenue/Highway 51 commercial corridor. Much of the developed area west of Highway 51 exhibits a disconnected street pattern. An example is that someone living on the end of Wegner Street, despite living an easy walking distance of 200-400 feet from numerous commercial services, must walk over 1/3 of a mile or drive 1.25 miles to reach those services. This puts unnecessary traffic on the arterial road network, increasing trip distances, emissions, and road maintenance costs.

Road Improvement Needs

Due to uncertain and constrained funding for transportation infrastructure, the City's first priorities and greatest needs will be in maintaining and improving its existing infrastructure and on travel demand management. Future road expansions will only exacerbate these costs and reduce the funding available for maintenance and safety improvements. As stated in the 2011 Long Range Transportation Plan, road expansions should be considered only after alternative capacity improvements and travel demand techniques have been analyzed and considered. New roads should enhance the connectivity of the existing street network and provide alternative routes to congested streets.

The 2011 LRTP identified few segments of road that are expected to be capacity deficient by 2035, but the surface condition of numerous roads were identified as poor or worse. Additionally, unnecessary road expansions often have the undesired side effect of increased motor vehicle speeds and reduced safety and comfort for bicycling and walking. This causes many people to drive, who would otherwise choose to bicycle or walk, thereby increasing traffic and reducing the effectiveness of the expansion.

CTH Z: CTH Z (Franklin Street) is a major connecting road to CTH X (Camp Phillips Road). However, this road has an exceptionally steep grade near the east City border. As a result, speeding traffic coming down the hill into the City is a common complaint of residents in the area. Also, trucks using this route sometimes use engine or "Jake" breaks coming down the hill, which has generated many noise complaints. Traffic calming strategies may be helpful for addressing these issues.

28th Avenue: 28th Avenue is another road with an exceptionally steep gradient (approximately 22-24 percent grade). A plan for reducing the slope of 28th Street may be warranted. Reducing the slope could require more right-of-way in which case it would be advantageous to address the grade issue before adjacent lands are developed.

Crosswalks and islands for pedestrian safety.

Pedestrian Transportation

Everyone is a pedestrian at some point in their trip, whether they are walking to their car, bus stop, or make the entire journey on foot. Pedestrian facilities are designed to improve the safety of pedestrians and reduce conflicts between the various road users. These include sidewalks, crosswalks, paved shoulders, traffic signals, street lighting, median islands, terraces, multi-use paths, and other treatments. These types of facilities are especially important for at-risk populations, including children, the elderly, and those with physical disabilities. Without designing the transportation network to accommodate these individuals, the network is incomplete.

Existing Sidewalks: The older sections of the City have sidewalks, generally on both sides of the street. However, many of the newer areas that have been developed since 1960 do not have sidewalks. Currently, 50 percent of the cost of constructing new sidewalks or replacing sidewalks is assessed to property owners.

City Sidewalk Plan: The City's Sidewalk Plan includes a sidewalk inventory and establishes criteria for adding sidewalks. New sidewalks are also added according to requests of property owners or when properties are annexed. Construction of sidewalks is often a contentious issue since many property owners do not want to pay the 50 percent assessment cost, experience the inconvenience that accompanies construction, or maintain them in winter. Given that a connected sidewalk system provides numerous public benefits, it may be beneficial to reevaluate current sidewalk financing and construction policies.

River Edge Parkway: The planned parkway identified in the River Edge Master Plan generally focuses on recreational uses and economic development opportunities. However, it is also intended to serve as a transportation corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists. Given the proximity to

downtown and residential areas, the potential for use of the parkway for utilitarian trips, as well as recreational trips, is significant. Much of the east side trail has been constructed. An extension north to Bridge Street will occur as part of the redevelopment efforts along the river. There is planning underway for the trail on the west side of the river. See the Transportation Map.

Street Crossings: Street crossings are an important component of the pedestrian transportation system. Because Wausau already has a fairly robust network of sidewalks, most pedestrian-vehicle conflicts are likely to occur when crossing streets. Higher volume and higher speed roads are both more difficult and more dangerous for pedestrians to cross. Research has shown that pedestrians are at much more risk of severe injuries as vehicle speeds increase, with about 10% severe injury rate at 16 mph, 25% at 23mph, 50% at 31 mph, 75% at 39 mph, and 90% at 46 mph. These risks are much higher for elderly pedestrians. Crossing infrastructure is very important to improve the safety of pedestrian crossings, particularly on high speed and high volume roads. This includes medians and curb extensions to reduce crossing distance, adequate lighting at crossings, crosswalks that are painted, colored, raised, or a different paving material, pedestrian crossing signals that are activated automatically or by push button, audible crossing signals for the visually impaired, and signal timing that allows adequate crossing times for elderly, children, and disabled pedestrians.

Bicycle Transportation

Bicycle facilities consist of a wide range of infrastructure ranging from low traffic neighborhood streets to separate multi-use paths, from bicycle specific traffic signals to traffic lights that simply detect stopped bicyclists. Facilities also include destination amenities such as secure bicycle parking, showers and lockers. There is a wide range of bicycle facilities in part because there is a lot of variation in those who ride bicycles. Children, commuters, recreational cyclists, the elderly, low income, and high income people all use bicycles. Different riders have different preferences and comfort levels. An individual who prioritizes speed and efficiency is likely to prefer riding on a road with relatively few stops, while a family that prioritizes low stress riding is likely to prefer a separated path. Generally, those who prefer lower stress facilities are also the most likely to choose another mode of transportation if low stress facilities do not exist or connect to their destinations, so designing primarily for this population is likely to yield the greatest benefits for all users. Gaps in the system are identified in the recently created Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian plan, which should be implemented by the City of Wausau.

Bicycle lanes and route signs.

Bike Routes and Lanes

Since the last comprehensive plan there have been numerous improvements to the bicycle routes and lanes in the City of Wausau. Part of this is due to an interconnected bicycle route system that traverses the entire metropolitan region. Other important streets such as Fifth Street, First Avenue and Third Avenue have seen the addition of bicycle lanes, and streets such as Grand Avenue, Sixth Street and First Avenue have had shared lane markings, or “sharrows” added. Stewart Avenue is to be resurfaced with buffered bicycle lanes in 2016 and one of the designs for Thomas Street is to receive bicycle lanes with a reconstruction in the near future, improving two major east-west routes through Wausau. Other communities surrounding Wausau, such as Rib Mountain have also been making improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network, with a extensive network of off-street paths throughout the Town. Connecting routes across these communities will create a network across the metro region that will open up more destinations for bicycling.

The MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian plan includes numerous recommendations for continuing to make improvements in the connectivity and safety of the bicycle and pedestrian network in the Wausau area. The Wausau MPO also recently received the Bronze Bicycle Friendly Rating from the League of American Bicyclists, which provides recommendations for continuing to enhance the safety of bicycling in the area. A visit and bicycle audit by the League of American Bicyclists suggested that there are many four lane streets in Wausau that have excess capacity and could be reduced to three lanes with bicycle lanes. Other observations include: that existing improvements have been a great step in the right direction, and continuing to add infrastructure to connect the bicycle network will greatly enhance the utility of existing infrastructure; and that some treatments, such as sharrows on higher volume roads can improve safety of

more experienced cyclists, they are unlikely to encourage bicycling by the majority of people that are interested in bicycling but are uncomfortable sharing the lane with motor vehicles.

Trails

The City's River Edge Master Plan calls for the creation of a multi-use trail system along the Wisconsin River. The City would like to see a future trail network that connects the parkway with trails in other communities (e.g., Villages of Weston and Rothschild). Even though these trails are generally designed as recreational facilities, they serve utilitarian and commuter bicycle trips if appropriate connections are made to major trip destinations. Extending the parkway north to Merrill could also help attract tourists and greatly expand the availability of bicycle facilities for City residents. Connecting multi use paths with other communities, such as Rib Mountain and Weston is a priority to create a regional bicycle and pedestrian network.

Transit

The Metro Ride system provides fixed route transit and on-demand paratransit service in the City of Wausau. Metro Ride is owned by the City of Wausau and operates on a "hub and spoke" pattern within the City limits, with the centralized transfer station located in downtown Wausau. The service operates 7 routes with 30 minute headways during weekday hours and has an express service that operates during the school year to alleviate congestion on the regular routes. See **Map 5**.

There is no nighttime or weekend service at this time. All fixed route buses have wheelchair lifts or ramps to serve people with mobility challenges. The buses are also equipped with bicycle racks to support multi-modal transportation and effectively increase the reach of the transit system. The Metro Ride system provides an important service for people that cannot or choose not to drive a vehicle, offering access to services, employment, and recreation. This provides a benefit of reducing congestion and improving the economic and physical mobility of Wausau residents. However, key gaps in the system exist due to the lack of service to regional destination in other municipalities and declining funding for transit. The service also does not extend to the Wausau Business Campus, which is a major employment center in the area. Ridership fell between 2009 and 2013 from 794,121 to 675,612 annually.

The most recent plan for Metro Ride was prepared in 2012. This plan found that there is demand for service to Rib Mountain, but the Town of Rib Mountain has been unwilling to financially support a route. At the time the plan was prepared there were some fixed routes to Weston and Rothschild, however those routes have been since discontinued, and they were viewed as very

A bus shelter near the hospital.

valuable at the time of the plan. The plan states the most significant opportunities were implementing new services to Rib Mountain Drive and maintaining services to Weston, considering the need for evening services to improve access to employment and shopping, and that these expansions would have a positive impact on ridership even on the least productive routes.

With continuous challenges related to federal and state funding for public transportation, it is vitally important for the City of Wausau to provide funding support for transit service to reduce further service reductions and fare increases. The City also needs to consider transit whenever it is making decisions related to transportation and land use, as the efficiency and effectiveness of a transit system is directly affected by land use patterns and transportation investments. Improving land use decisions will reduce the costs to operate the transit system as well as encourage more people to use the system, which reduces the need for additional funding.

Transit and Land Use

Land use decisions are critical if transit is to play a viable role in providing transportation choices in the community. Development patterns that have occurred since the middle of the 20th century are generally oriented toward the automobile, while older areas of Wausau were designed for multiple modes, including bicycles, pedestrians and transit. Wausau historically had transit service, with a streetcar system that ran from the early 20th century until about 1940.

Downtown Wausau provides a pedestrian-friendly, and thus transit-friendly, environment that greatly enhances transit's ability to attract choice riders (i.e. non-transit dependents). Wausau, like many other downtown areas, also contains a large supply of relatively inexpensive parking. This can make driving downtown for employees and visitors more

attractive and thus reduce incentives to use transit services. Lower density commercial development, excessive parking and disconnected street networks seen in much of the newer development in Wausau makes transit less effective and less efficient.

Promoting a better mix of uses and increasing density, especially for destinations (commercial and industrial areas) can reduce the stops and travel time needed for the transit system. Concentrating major employment centers into a few select districts would cluster destinations together. Increasing the allowable density could be achieved by reducing surface parking requirements and allowing buildings to take up a larger proportion of the lot area, which will concentrate more destinations within a smaller area of land, reducing the travel distance for transit. These land use patterns will also encourage bicycle and pedestrian transportation, reduce trip distances for motorists, and better utilize parking.

Express Service

Metro Ride provides express route service during the school year to alleviate crowding on regular routes. Most of these routes are designed to get passengers to their destinations by eliminating the need to transfer downtown. All express routes are open to the public.

Paratransit Service

Metro Ride provides a door-to-door van service for persons who, because of a disability, are unable to use Metro Ride's accessible bus service. Paratransit users must be certified by Metro Ride and reservations are required at least one day prior to the trip. The paratransit service area includes any area that is within 3/4 of a mile from a regular bus route, leaving a gap in service for the far west side of Wausau, including the Wausau business campus. The paratransit service ridership increased significantly between 2004 and 2007.

Regional Service

Privately operated intercity bus service is available from the Metro Ride Transit Center in downtown Wausau. Lamers currently operates two regional routes 7 days a week, one to Madison and one to Milwaukee. Jefferson Lines currently operates two regional routes, one to Minneapolis and one to Green Bay/Milwaukee.

Airports

Two airports provide service to the City of Wausau, the Central Wisconsin Airport and the Wausau Downtown Airport. Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) in Mosinee or about a 10 to 15 minute drive from Wausau, has scheduled passenger air service. Three airlines – American, Delta and United – provide daily flights to Minneapolis, Chicago, and Detroit. The Wausau Downtown Airport is located within

The Wausau Downtown Airport.

the City of Wausau along the southern boundary shared with the City of Schofield. Business 51/Grand Avenue is the primary access route to the airport.

The Wausau Downtown Airport provides general aviation services to Wausau and the surrounding area and is fully equipped to receive large corporate jets, charters, and privately owned aircraft. The airport is entirely owned and managed by the City. Air charter, flight instruction, aircraft rental, scenic rides, as well as aviation line services such as refueling, transportation, lodging, and catering, are some of the services available. Recent investment has included the construction of new hangers.

In many communities, airports create noise and safety conflicts with neighboring land uses. This does not appear to be an immediate problem for the Wausau Downtown Airport. Neighborhood meetings held at the airport have not generated any concerns about land use conflicts between the airport and nearby residents. In the past there have been plans to move the Wausau airport or consolidate general aviation services at the CWA in order to utilize the valuable riverfront property that is the current home of the airport. There are building height limitations near the Wausau airport. This facility also hosts various community events, such as the Balloon Glow.

Freight

Truck Routes

The City of Wausau has designated truck routes to discourage heavy vehicle traffic on neighborhood streets and other roads where they may present conflicts. Generally, the truck routes include state and county trunk highways that pass through the City, and local streets in industrial districts or business parks.

The design of designated truck routes generally accommodates larger vehicles with longer wheelbases that need a larger turning radius to make a turn. This road design also has the undesirable side effect of increasing straight

line and turning speeds of smaller vehicles and increasing crossing distances and decreasing safety for pedestrians. These tradeoffs need to be weighed when designing roads and intersections on truck routes, and traffic calming and bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements should be made to reduce the negative impacts of truck routes.

Rail

Maintaining freight rail access and service is important to reduce the volume of heavy truck traffic on the roads and maintain an efficient mode of bulk freight transportation. Rail service is provided by the Canadian National. The mainline of the railroad is located on the east side of the Wisconsin River and extends from near Gilbert Park on the north to the abandoned Holtz-Krause Landfill on the south. Some switching and rail car storage occurs near Townline Road and Northwestern Avenue. The rail corridor cuts through several residential neighborhoods which creates motor vehicle and pedestrian access issues, as well as noise concerns. The alignment of the tracks relative to the street create special concerns for bicycles and wheelchairs at crossings, often needing special alignment or track treatments to reduce the risk of getting stuck or crashing due to the tracks.

Rail spurs provide rail access to the Wausau West Industrial Park and several other industrial areas around the City. Noise and traffic are a lesser concern on these spurs since rail traffic moves more slowly and is less frequent than on the mainline.

Transportation Issues

Aging Local Streets: The City of Wausau has over 200 miles of streets within its municipal boundaries. The cost of construction, repair, and ongoing maintenance is extremely high and the City's capital budget has not always provided sufficient funds to complete needed improvements and maintenance in a timely manner. Much of the cost for maintenance and improvement of the local street system is paid for with property taxes.

Street Extensions/Reserving Street Corridors: Identifying the location of streets and the need for widening existing street corridors is a sensitive issue in the community since it often involves purchasing private property for these purposes and possibly changing the land use and traffic circulation in the immediate area.

High Traffic Speeds: Speeding traffic on many of the City's arterial and residential collector streets is a major concern of residents in these areas. Residents frequently complain about speeding traffic and reckless drivers and express concerns about the hazards these motorists represent to bicyclists, pedestrians, and small children in the residential neighborhoods.

Rail llines in the Industrial Park.

Truck Traffic in Residential Neighborhoods: Semi-truck traffic in residential areas has been a concern expressed at many of the neighborhood meetings held by City officials over the last ten years. While the City has been responsive to these concerns and has taken steps to reduce the conflicts between large trucks and residential land uses, changes in land use in the City's commercial and industrial areas create new places where conflicts occur between residences and semi-truck traffic.

Railroad Traffic: Railroad traffic through the community and trains at railroad spurs present several concerns. First, due to freight car switching, Town Line Road and Thomas Street are often blocked for extended periods of time, causing extensive traffic delays. Second, noise from train whistles and freight trains traveling through certain residential neighborhoods are a concern of nearby residents. Residents are also concerned about the potential for a train derailment and possible toxic emissions, which might result from various types of spills.

Street Lights: Street lighting has been a concern of residents in certain parts of the City. In some places the issue is an insufficient amount of light provided in the area while in other areas residents express concerns about too much light in the neighborhood. A street lighting plan for dealing with these issues that provides information on the type of light fixtures available, costs to operate, and alternatives for entire night lighting has not been prepared. Dark sky ordinances and motion sensors on street lights can help alleviate these issues.

Bicycle Facilities: The City should work with Marathon County, surrounding communities, and local bike interests to develop a network of connected routes and trails throughout the area. The City should adopt and implement the Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and updates.

Sidewalks: Pedestrian safety is particularly a concern in areas around schools when students are arriving and leaving. Sidewalks are of significant importance to transit

users who must traverse between their origin or destination and a bus stop location. The lack of sidewalks presents a significant safety hazard for transit patrons who are forced to navigate and wait in the street in order to access the transit service. This is a particularly critical safety issue for school-aged children and the disabled who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs.

Limited Transit Service: The limited transit service provided by Metro Ride is a mobility impediment for some transit system customers and discourages others from using transit service. Metro Ride service is not provided in the evenings, on weekends, or on holidays. Service frequencies are 30 minutes, depending upon the time of day, which can inconvenience some customers and limit choice riders. Due to the lack of participation by surrounding communities, there are many destinations within the larger metro region that are not accessible by transit, further impairing the mobility of transit dependent citizens. This problem may be exacerbated by larger demographic shifts showing an aging population and fewer young people getting driver's licenses, leading to more dependence on transit services.

Goal, Objectives and Action Steps

Transportation Goal: The City of Wausau will provide a safe and efficient transportation network that will facilitate the movement of people and goods throughout the community.

Objectives and Action Steps:

Objective A: Improve the safety and efficiency for all modes of transportation through street design and land use.

1. Continuously monitor crash data and complaints to identify problem areas and work to correct problems.

2. Continue to use the Official City Map to reserve new street corridors and identify land needed for widening and realigning existing streets.

3. Require new development to reserve future street connections.

4. Eliminate the use of cul-de-sacs and dead end streets, except when necessary due to topography or natural features.

5. Continue to enhance the regulatory and warning signs used on the City's arterial street system to reduce congestion and improve safety on these streets.

6. Continue to conduct annual evaluations to identify areas of the existing street system that warrant maintenance, upgrades or safety improvements to handle existing and projected traffic.

7. Continue to develop and implement access management strategies along the City's major arterial streets to maintain the level of service provided and reduce the potential for accidents.

8. Encourage Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin to continue with planning and design of the Eastern Arterial (CTH X) and a northern bridge crossing the Wisconsin River.

Objective B: Create an environment that is safe and conducive to walking and bicycling throughout the entire city.

1. Assure that existing and future land uses are adequately served by the various modes of transportation, including bicycle, walking, and transit.

2. Improve and enhance the pedestrian environment to create a more walkable community.

3. Continue to build a network of various types of bicycle facilities that are utilized by a wide range of people for transportation, recreation, and fitness purposes.

4. Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects that enhance connectivity between important destination within the community, and to regional bicycle and pedestrian networks.

5. Plan and design for bicycle and pedestrian use in all street resurfacing and reconstruction projects.

6. Adopt and implement the Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

7. Create and maintain bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on all arterial streets.

8. Maintain existing sidewalks.

9. Plan and install new sidewalks in targeted areas where they do not exist.

10. Evaluate and revise current sidewalk requirements for new developments and annexations to prioritize safe pedestrian movement.

11. Create bicycle and pedestrian connections between dead end streets, cul de sacs, and disconnected street networks.

12. Consider reducing commercial parking area requirements to better utilize urban land and create a denser network of destinations to facilitate transit, walking, and bicycling.

13. Develop a sidewalk construction plan and policy that focuses on improving pedestrian access to high traffic sites (e.g., schools, shopping centers, parks) and on enhancing safety along the City's arterial and collector streets.

14. Develop a City street lighting plan and install new lighting in conjunction with road reconstruction.

15. Prioritize the safety of vulnerable users over motor vehicle speed.

16. Incorporate bicycle parking requirements for commercial uses into the zoning code.

17. Evaluate all street projects for opportunities to improve the safety of vulnerable users.

18. Implement road diets on city streets that have excess capacity. Consider and evaluate road diets on any street that carries less than 20,000 vehicles per day.

Objective C: Design and improve the transportation system to facilitate the interaction of various land use activities while protecting those land use activities from many of the adverse effects associated with the transportation system (noise, air pollution, safety, congestion, speeding, energy consumption, etc.).

1. Continue to work with representatives of Canadian National to:

- Reduce the time that freight cars block the City's arterial streets;
- Minimize the noise created by railroad traffic, especially train whistles; and
- Reduce the risk of toxic emissions from train derailments.

2. Improve public access to the downtown, including improvements in traffic circulation, mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, commuter and excursion rail, parking, and community way-finding.

3. Route major traffic flows, especially truck traffic, around residential neighborhoods through designation of appropriate truck routes.

4. Continue to work to minimize the negative impacts of truck traffic on Wausau neighborhoods.

5. Implement traffic calming measures in residential areas where cut-through traffic and speeding are negatively impacting neighborhood safety and livability.

6. Implement traffic calming measures in walkable commercial districts

7. Consider reducing commercial parking requirements in all commercial zoning districts to facilitate redevelopment in older sections of the City and increase the attractiveness of land in Wausau.

8. Due to smaller lot sizes in higher densities in older areas of the City, consider relaxing restrictions on street parking in residential areas to facilitate redevelopment and increase the attractiveness of land.

9. Work with Federal, State, and railroad officials to develop a program for installing automatic gates where railroad tracks cross arterial streets. This program should focus on hazard mitigation, collision prevention, and train whistle noise reduction.

10. Require information regarding projected traffic volume of proposed uses when examining requests for zone changes or new development that would result in more intensive land uses.

Objective D: Support transit-oriented development and the operations of public transit services in the metropolitan area.

1. Evaluate and revise the zoning code to support transit oriented development.

2. Promote the role of public transit in the overall community transportation system.

3. Support a sound public transit system.

4. Serve the public transportation needs in an efficient, safe, comfortable, and reliable manner.

5. Carefully consider the operations of the Metro Ride and other travel modes during community planning and development activities.

6. Continue to offer the opportunity for adjacent communities to purchase transit service from Metro Ride.

7. Enhance the availability of long-distance and metropolitan area bus service within the City and improve its connections to Metro Ride routes.

8. The City supports and encourages the use of transit to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and the need for parking spaces and to conserve energy.

9. Encourage private developers to incorporate transit and pedestrian-friendly features into new residential, commercial, and industrial projects.

10. Explore the feasibility of expanding transit service to include evenings and weekend days.

11. Encourage higher density housing development in close proximity to transit routes and stations through implementation of appropriate zoning.

12. Work with private landowners to encourage joint use of commercial parking lots for transit users.

13. Identify suitable Park 'n' Ride sites and evaluate the feasibility of developing these facilities.

14. As a long-term objective, work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and other agencies to bring passenger rail service to Wausau.

Objective E: Fairly and equitable fund the maintenance and improvement of the transportation system.

1. Request that Marathon County assume some

level of financial responsibility for maintaining and improving many of the City's local arterial streets, especially those providing direct access to the surrounding areas.

2. Maintain close contact with elected officials and State and Federal agency representatives to provide Wausau with financial assistance for specific transportation improvements.

3. Consider amending assessment policies to reduce the assessment burden on individual property owners, possibly through reduced assessment proportions or an extension of the payment period of the assessment.

4. Use borrowing to fund transportation projects to fairly distribute the costs of the project over current and future users.

5. Continue to seek funding for transportation facility improvements from the Federal, State, and County levels of government.

Chapter Five
Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include electrical service, natural gas, and telephone service and cable communications, among others. Community facilities include educational institutions, libraries, services like police, fire, and emergency medical services, and health care facilities. Many of the utilities and community facilities in Wausau are designated on **Map 6**.

Previous Plans and Studies

2025 Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Plan

The Sewer Service Area Plan helps communities look at wastewater collection systems to adequately accommodate growth, to protect the communities' water supply through sound planning, and to assure that growth occurs in a cost-effective manner. The plan was written in 2007, and includes the City of Wausau as well as six other area municipalities.

Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan

The Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan is intended to improve area water quality by preventing harmful pollutants from being carried by stormwater runoff into local water bodies, and proposes specific solutions for areas of the City.

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The City of Wausau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is intended to provide guidance to City staff and officials in the acquisition, development, and programming of parks, playgrounds, and special recreation areas throughout the City. The Plan focuses on the adequacy of existing facilities and the opportunities for future recreational facilities.

Utilities

Sewer and water services in the City of Wausau are provided by City-owned utilities. The utilities operate as a financially self-supporting enterprise fund with user charges paying for operation and maintenance costs and part of the capital improvement costs. As an enterprise operation, the utilities do not rely upon property taxes to support any of their activities. The utilities are governed by a five-member commission that includes three citizens, a Wausau Common Council member, and the Mayor. The water utility and the sewerage utility are maintained as two separate entities, although the same five individuals serve on each of the two utility commissions.

Wausau Water Works, the local sewer and water utility, has two divisions — a drinking water division and a wastewater division. The mission of the drinking water division is to provide clean, safe drinking water for the residents of Wausau. The mission of the wastewater division is to return clean water to the environment in compliance with all discharge requirements. Wausau Water Works also strives to provide these essential services in the most efficient manner possible.

Sanitary Sewer Service

Wastewater generated by the City of Wausau, the City of Schofield, and a small portion of the Town of Stettin is conveyed to the Wausau wastewater treatment plant via approximately 200 miles of sanitary sewers. Although Wausau treats the wastewater generated in Schofield, it is not responsible for the wastewater collection system. The City of Schofield operates its own sewerage utility for this purpose. The Schofield utility also operates an independent water utility, which supplies water throughout the community. All wastewater from the Schofield system enters Wausau in a pipe near the Downtown Wausau Airport. Schofield's wastewater is monitored and a single bill is sent to the Schofield utility according to the amount

of wastewater it generates.

Wausau has operated the entire Stettin wastewater system since 1986, when most of the Stettin Sanitary District was annexed to the City. Each of the remaining Stettin sewer customers have their own private wells, which prevents the City from monitoring the amount of water used by these customers. As a result, Stettin customers are billed for sewer service on a flat fee basis, while bills for City of Wausau customers are based upon the amount of wastewater produced.

Sewer Service Area

The City of Wausau has been part of local sewer service area planning, in conjunction with several other local communities, since the early 1980s. Having a current Sewer Service Area Plan is a requirement of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to receive wastewater treatment facilities' grants and administrative approval of sewer extensions.

The primary purpose of the plan was to establish a sewer service boundary for the Wausau Urban Area. The area encompassed by the City's sewer service boundary in 2004 is shown on Figure 6-1. The boundary sets the 20-year maximum limit for the extension of sanitary sewer services in a cost effective, environmentally sound manner. The sewer service boundary also functions as a community growth boundary for Wausau since all development in the City must have sanitary sewer service.

It should also be noted that the WDNR must approve all engineering plans for extending City sanitary sewers. Furthermore, the area these sewers will serve must be located within the City's sewer service or growth boundary, or the WDNR will not approve the engineering plans and, hence, the City will not be allowed to extend sanitary sewers into that area. In addition, the WDNR does not allow sewer extensions into wetlands, floodplains, or certain other environmentally sensitive areas unless there are no other cost effective alternatives and the WDNR is assured that there will not be any development within environmentally sensitive areas served by the sewer extensions. Thus, through the sewer service planning process, environmentally sensitive areas are protected and utilities are extended in a planned, cost effective manner.

Sewage Treatment and Collection Facilities

The Wausau Wastewater Treatment Plant is located on Adrian Street, on the west bank of the Wisconsin River. Prior to 1940, wastewater was discharged, untreated, into the Wisconsin River. The primary treatment plant was built in 1940, with additions and upgrades over the years to improve the water treatment capabilities and improve the quality of water discharged into the Wisconsin River.

The current treatment plant is designed to accommodate an average annual daily flow of 8.2 million gallons. It operates at approximately 60 percent capacity, which is adequate to serve anticipated future development within the service area.

The wastewater collection system (pipe network and lift stations) is generally in good condition. Sewer pipes and mains are replaced and upgraded in conjunction with road reconstruction or in response to known problems. Generally, when the City extends its water distribution lines, sewer mains are also installed at the same time. The utility currently has 24 lift stations. Additional lift stations will be necessary to serve new annexations or developments that do not naturally drain to the waste water treatment facility.

Public Water Service

The Wausau Water Works has been providing safe, clean drinking water to City residents since 1885.

Service Areas and Supply

The utility serves only City of Wausau customers; water is not currently sold to any of the communities adjacent to Wausau. The City is working with the Town of Rib Mountain to provide them with an emergency back-up water supply. The City has also considered selling water wholesale to the Town of Weston. Nearly every year the utility extends service into new territory that was recently annexed to the City from the adjacent towns.

The water supply system consists of six wells and a central water treatment plant. All of the wells are located near the Wisconsin River. These wells range in depth from 95 feet to 160 feet and pump anywhere from 900 to 3,000 gallons per minute. The treatment plant helps ensure uniform water quality and is used to remove iron and manganese from the water. The plant also provides corrosion control, disinfection, and fluoridation. Air stripping towers remove any volatile organic compounds that might be present in the groundwater.

Currently, the water system is capable of delivering up to 10 million gallons of drinking water daily with peak hourly loading to 12 million gallons. In 2016, the utility served approximately 16,000 households and the utility pumped, on an average day, 5 million gallons of treated water through over 200 miles of water mains.

In the long run, Wausau Water Works hopes to extend the municipal well recharge area zoning district into portions of the adjoining Town of Maine, which is presently not regulated by this City zoning ordinance.

Water Storage Facilities

Water storage facilities consist of one elevated water tower, three ground reservoirs, and one clear well. There is one water reservoir on the east side of the Wisconsin River on

Brown Street and three on the west side: at 12th Avenue and Elm Street, at 28th Avenue and West Wausau Avenue, and in the 6400 block of Highland Drive in the Industrial Park. A second elevated water tower with the capacity of 250,000 gallons is located at 28th Avenue and West Wausau Avenue to meet the water service needs of this area of the City.

Water Distribution Systems

Water distribution is accomplished through a network of mains and water storage units that continuously supply water to all users. This distribution system consists of about 200 miles of various-sized water mains as well as valves, fire hydrants, reservoirs, and related appurtenances. The distribution system is in good working condition. Old mains are replaced in conjunction with road reconstruction where the service history of the main indicates replacement is warranted. The City has a capital improvement program to schedule funding for replacement of older water mains and other worn out system components.

Adequate water pressure is maintained throughout the distribution system by the water storage facilities and booster stations. Booster pumps are needed as the City expands to the east to provide water pressure in areas where the surface elevation approaches or exceeds 1400 feet above sea level.

Wausau Public Works

Wausau Public Works

Stormwater Management

The storm sewer system in the City of Wausau collects storm water from streets and carries it, untreated, into local waterways. Stormwater management practices are put in place to do two things: 1) reduce the rate and/or volume of water and 2) remove pollutants from runoff. Reducing the rate and/or volume of water helps to prevent flooding when large volumes of water enter the storm sewer system at one time. Removing pollutants is essential to protect our natural waters, because runoff water picks up pollutants such as cigarette butts, trash, used oil, fertilizers, and garden clippings from streets and yards and carries them into the lakes and rivers.

To enforcing the Clean Water Act, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources developed the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Storm Water Discharge Permit Program (WPDES). This program regulates discharge of stormwater from construction sites, industrial facilities, and some municipalities, including Wausau. Under this program, Wausau has a Phase II stormwater discharge permit, which requires the City to implement several different measures to educate residents and control pollution, among other things.

In 2009, the City adopted a Storm Water Management ordinance, which is Chapter 15.56 in the Wausau Municipal Code. The purpose of the ordinance is to "establish runoff management requirements that will diminish the threats to public health, safety, welfare, and the aquatic environment." Additionally, the City has a Stormwater Management Plan.

In April 2015, Wausau residents voted down a referendum asking "May the City of Wausau institute a fee for stormwater management, while removing the cost for this service from the tax levy?". The fee based approach would fund the conveyance, management, and pollution treatment of stormwater runoff by charging properties according to the amount of runoff they have. The referendum did not pass, and the system of funding the stormwater management program under the general revenue budget remains unchanged.

Wausau is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition (NCWSC), along with Marathon County, the Cities of Baraboo, Marshfield, Merrill, Mosinee, Schofield, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids; the Villages of Kronenwetter, Rothschild, and Weston; and the Town of Rib Mountain. The Coalition works to address stormwater issues in these areas, coordinate and collaborate on education and outreach activities, and recommend policy and operational changes for cooperating local governments.

The Clean Water Act's Section 303(d) established the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program. The TMDL program

identifies and restores polluted waters by detailing in a quantitative assessment the water quality problems and contributing sources of pollution. The TMDL determines how much a pollutant needs to be reduced to meet water quality standards, and provides the foundation for taking actions locally to restore a waterbody to fishable and swimmable standards. The Upper Wisconsin River TMDL is scheduled for completion in 2017. This plan specifies pollutant allocation limits for all dischargers in the watershed to achieve statewide water quality goals. Complying with the TMDL will require a reduction in stormwater runoff pollutants.

Natural Gas and Electric Utilities

Natural gas and electric service in the City of Wausau is provided by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). WPS is based in Green Bay, WI and operates four power plants (Weston 1, 2, 3, and 4) located in the Villages of Kronenwetter and Rothschild. These plants provide up to 896 megawatts of coal-fired capacity. Weston 4, which began operating in 2008 uses clean coal technology, and is one of the cleanest power plants of its kind in the county.

Telecommunication Facilities and Services

Telecommunications services in the City of Wausau are provided by private companies such as T-Mobile, Verizon, AT&T, Cellcom, and TDS. Charter Communications is the largest provider of cable television in the area. There are three FCC Registered cell phone towers located in the City of Wausau and several cell phone antennae located on other towers, buildings, steeples, etc. around the City.

[Insert info here re: wifi, broadband infrastructure, fiber optic cables, etc.]

Solid Waste Management

The City of Wausau contracts with Harter's Fox Valley Disposal for garbage waste pick-up service. Garbage service is weekly and is coordinated with the bi-weekly recycling pick-up. Commercial and industrial properties contract for their own private waste management. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. It consists of the 575-acre landfill, recycling programs, composting, and waste-to-energy. The Marathon County Hazardous Waste Collection Site is the landfill in Ringle, where most County residents can drop off hazardous waste free of charge. Since 2005, Wausau residents must pay $75 per visit to this facility because the City no longer has its domestic solid waste taken to the County Landfill.

The City operates a yard waste drop-off site for City residents. The yard waste site is a gated facility and is open from April 1 through mid-November. Materials accepted at the site include leaves, pine needles, grass, garden debris, tree branches, and brush. The City also has an annual Fall Leaf Pick-Up Program, usually from mid to late October depending on weather conditions.

Residential waste carts along the street.

Recycling

Recycling pick-up for residential property is provided by a private contractor (also Harter's) on a bi-weekly basis. Commercial and industrial property owners contract for their own private recycling services.

Community Facilities

Community facilities include an array of services and their associated facilities, associated with schools, libraries, public protection, and health care. This section describes the existing community facilities and services located in or used by the City of Wausau.

Primary and Secondary Schools

The vast majority of the City of Wausau is served by the Wausau School District. The remainder (a small portion of the southeast side of the City) is within the D.C. Everest School District. In 2015, the Wausau School District had 8,443 students, 184 fewer than in 2014. In 2015, the D.C. Everest School District had 5,926 students, 69 more than in 2014.

The Wausau School District has a pre-school center, 14 elementary schools (grades K-5), 2 middle schools (grades 6-8), 2 high schools (grades 9-12), and three charter schools. The district reports that most students attend the middle and high school on the side of the Wisconsin River where they reside. Residents who live on the west side of the river attend John Muir Middle School at 1400 Stewart Avenue and Wausau West High School at 1200 West Wausau Avenue, while residents who live on the east side of the river attend Horace Mann Middle School at 3101 North 13th Street, and Wausau East High School at 2607 N.18th Street.

In addition to the public school districts, there are several private schools located in the City of Wausau. Private schools include religious schools such as Faith Christian Academy, Hillside Christian School, Newman Catholic Schools, Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Grade School, and Trinity Lutheran Grade School. Private schools also include charter schools and other institutions such as Mountain View Montessori School. These schools had a combined enrollment of 916 students in 2014.

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

Opportunities for post-secondary education in the Wausau area are provided by two state schools, the University of Wisconsin-Marathon County and Northcentral Technical College, and two private schools, Globe University and Rasmussen College. The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is the nearest four-year university, located about 40 minutes from Wausau, and offers a full range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

The University of Wisconsin-Marathon County (UW-MC) is located on Wausau's west side just off Stewart Ave and offers lower level (freshman and sophomore) college classes, leading to a baccalaureate degree. Associate Degrees are offered in Arts and Sciences, and Bachelor's Degrees (through collaborative degree programs with UW Oshkosh and UW Stevens Point) are offered in Business Administration, General Studies, and Nursing. Enrollment in 2010-2011 was approximately 1,300 students.

Northcentral Technical College, (NTC), located on the northwest side of Wausau, has over 170 program offerings including two-year associate degrees that combine technical skills with general education, one- and two-year technical diplomas that provide hands-on-learning, and short-term certificates to improve jobs kills. Programs focus on business, technical, health, and industrial fields. Approximately 2,300 full- and part-time students attend classes, although more than 16,000 people take at least one class annually.

Libraries

Libraries promote lifelong learning, supporting populations not reached by traditional education including very young children and older adults. Libraries also increase access to computers and technology. The Marathon County Public Library (MCPL) system offers service to residents throughout the County. The MCPL is a member of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service. The MCPL main library is located in downtown Wausau.

The City of Wausau is served by the Marathon County Public Library system. The Wausau Headquarters Library, located on First Street in downtown Wausau, completed an expansion to 82,000 square feet in 1995. This new main Wausau Library is open seven days a week and offers over 555,800 volumes, including books, magazines and other materials, as well as internet access.

Wausau West High School.

UW-MC's Center for Civic Engagement

Marathon County Public Library

Public Protection

Police

The Wausau Police Department consists of three major components: patrol service, investigations bureau, and administrative services. The patrol service is responsible

for responding to calls for service; in an average year the Department receives over 30,000 calls for service. The City is divided into six patrol sectors, which are covered 24 hours a day. Priority response time is within three minutes. The investigations bureau conducts crime scene and evidence management, criminal identification, intelligence, crime analysis, undercover operations, and follow up investigations. Administrative services establishes policy, manages expenses, holds public presentations, and fosters a positive public relations effort.

To improve communications between police and residents, the City utilizes a "Community Policing" philosophy. Under community policing, one officer is assigned a specific neighborhood as his or her regular beat. By working in one neighborhood, the officer gets to know the homeowners, families, and shopkeepers, and vice versa. Engaging the community and networking with citizens can help build mutual trust and cooperation.

The Department has a number of community programs that improve the quality of life for people in Wausau. These include child seat safety checks, the Citizen's Academy, CodeRED Alert notifications, school education programs including Safety City, and school safety zones.

In addition, the Police Department has an Emergency Police Unit which assists the department with traffic and crowd control. This all volunteer unit puts in over 3,000 hours of service each year assisting with parades, races, the Wisconsin Valley Fair, and other events as needed.

Fire and Emergency Response

The Wausau Fire Department responds to both fire and emergency medical calls, as all fire department members are cross-trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and some have Paramedic or Critical Care Paramedic certifications. In 2014 the Department responded to 4,491 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) requests and 2,117 responses with fire apparatus.

The Fire Department operates 24 vehicles, including the regional hazardous materials response vehicles. These vehicles are distributed in three strategically located fire stations across Wausau, making the average response time to in-City calls only four minutes. The City of Wausau maintains a Class 3 fire insurance rating.

In addition to the fire suppression, EMS, and hazardous materials services, the Department also has fire prevention services including fire safety education in the Wausau Public School System and an evacuation and fire safety speaker program for local groups and organizations. The Department has an Inspection Bureau which conducts fire inspections twice a year on all public buildings and places of employment and at special events and large gatherings. In 2015, this Bureau conducted 4,138 inspections.

Wausau Police vehicles and station.

Wausau Fire Department vehicles and station.

E-911 Dispatch Service

The Marathon County Sheriff's Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and EMS agencies in Marathon County, including the City of Wausau. The Communications Division services 84 user agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiner's Office.

The communications system consists of 20 towers, 19 of which are linked by microwave and one by fiber optic cable. The towers provide radio service as well as high speed connectivity to the county's computer and phone network. The communications center is also responsible for activating public warning systems.

Health Care Providers

Wausau is served by two major hospitals and a number of other excellent clinics and medical facilities. The Aspirus Wausau Hospital is located in Wausau just west of Highway 51. The Ministry St. Clare's Hospital is located in nearby Weston. Marshfield Clinic has a large facility in Wausau, located near the Aspirus Wausau Hospital. In addition,

primary care clinics and specialty clinics are located through the area.

Residents who are uninsured or underinsured have access to health, dental, and behavioral health services through a federally qualified health clinic, Bridge Community Health Clinic, in Wausau. Eligible veterans can receive medical care and treatment through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare system which includes an outpatient clinic in Wausau.

Wausau is also home to North Central Health Care (NCHC), which provides outpatient, day hospital, community support, and inpatient services for mental/emotional problems; vocational, life skill training, early intervention, housing and care management services for the developmentally disabled; and assessment, individual and outpatient group counseling, intensive programming, day hospital, referral for residential and inpatient treatment, and education for alcohol and other drug problems. Services for detoxification and for persons suffering from problems with gambling addiction are also offered.

Aspirus Wausau Hospital

North Central Health Care

Parks

The City of Wausau has an extensive park system with mature parks as well as new park projects under development. The City park system is managed by the Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department. Under the terms of this partnership between the City and County, the City of Wausau owns and pays for the costs of maintaining parks in Wausau, while the parks staff is organized as a Marathon County department. In addition, the City of Wausau has developed a policy of partnership with the Wausau School District on the use and maintenance of school recreational facilities. Parks in Wausau have one of two aims, to serve primarily the local neighborhood or to serve the entire City.

Marathon Park splash pad

The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department maintains a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, which is updated every five years. This Plan makes Wausau eligible for resources and grants to implement park improvement programs. For detailed information on the 33 parks located in Wausau, as well as recreational facilities needs, parks issues, and action items, see the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

A neighborhood park

Utilities and Community Facilities Issues

Utility Service Extensions: Because current City policy only allows provision of public utility services after annexation, a schedule for utility extensions can only be developed on a short-term basis after a majority of residents and property owners in an area commit to annexing their land to the City. The locations of most of the anticipated 15- to 20-year utility extensions have been identified based upon the staff's

knowledge of the area adjacent to the City and long-term growth trends. In most cases, however, the improvements will not be constructed unless those areas are annexed to the City. As discussed in the Land Use section, the City has very little control over the timing of annexations since the process relies entirely upon the desires of a majority of the residents and property owners in a particular area. The City cannot, by State law, initiate an annexation.

Groundwater Quality Protection: Potential contamination of the City's municipal water supply at its source remains a concern of Wausau Water Works. Through broadening its public education and awareness programs, as well as expanding the City's regulatory land use controls beyond the current municipal limits, the probability of groundwater contamination should be mitigated.

Aging Infrastructure Replacement: Many of the sewer collection and water distribution facilities in the City are quite old and replacing these facilities is a constant, costly endeavor for Wausau Water Works. Not only are older infrastructure facilities more likely to fail, they can also pose health risks, such as the lead lateral water lines to many older homes throughout Wausau. In addition, water main breaks require unscheduled improvements to the water main as well as unanticipated street repairs.

Sewer Service Area Plan Update: As part of the comprehensive planning process, the City's WDNR-approved sewer service area plan should be updated to incorporate elements of the comprehensive plan and to also provide guidance for the City's development into the adjacent rural communities. The most recent update of the plan was approved by the WDNR in June, 1993, and many changes in the City's growth pattern, transportation facilities, industrial park development, and high school and middle school construction have contributed to the need to update this important growth area plan. In the update, there will be a projection or forecast of the additional territory that is likely to be annexed and sewered during the 20-year planning period, to 2025. Due to the overall uncertainty as to which parts of the adjacent towns are likely to be taken into the City, an expanded area within the sewer service boundary should be considered for adoption by the City and approval by the WDNR.

Limited English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs: The Wausau School District and DC Everest School District both provide ESL programs. Given the increase in residents (and students) whose first language is not English, other districts in the County should provide ESL in their curriculum.

Goal, Objectives, and Actions Steps

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: The City of Wausau will provide high quality utilities and community facilities to all residents in a cost-effective and cost-efficient manner.

Objective A: Expand and improve the City's sewer and water utility systems in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

1. Update the State-mandated sewer service area plan to include all land within the City's long-term (2050) growth area.

2. Continue to implement the State and Federal mandated storm water management programs that are intended to reduce flooding and improve surface water quality.

3. Continue efforts to establish a stand-alone stormwater utility.

4. Implement policies and programs to meet the Wisconsin River TMDL requirements.

5. Continue to develop and implement a variety of programs that will help to protect the City's municipal groundwater supplies from contamination.

6. Continue to repair and replace elements of the sewer and water utility systems rather than responding strictly to emergency and crisis situations.

7. Reduce health risks related to water and sewer infrastructure.

8. Continue to coordinate utility improvement projects with street reconstruction projects.

9. Explore opportunities to provide water booster systems and/or elevated storage facilities to serve areas of the City that cannot be served by the current public water system.

10. Provide quality solid waste management services to residents of Wausau at a reasonable cost.

11. Identify the need for new sewer lift systems to serve developing areas of the City and budget for associated costs to construct and maintain these facilities.

12. Conduct annual inspections and evaluations of the existing sewer and water systems to assess and prioritize needed maintenance and improvements.

13. Develop and implement an asset management system to help insure the integrity and reliability of the City's public sanitary sewer, potable water and storm water management utility systems.

14. Reduce the cost to customers by working with other sewer and water service providers in the urban area to consolidate services or various elements of utility services.

15. Continue to only provide utility services to vacant land and developed property after it is annexed to the City.

Objective B: Locate and maintain public utility infrastructure, community facilities, and public services that improve the quality of life in Wausau.

1. Continue to provide a high level of police, fire, and ambulance services.

2. Consider the costs of providing police and fire protection when evaluating annexation requests, including potential negative impacts on the existing level of service to areas within the City's current boundaries.

3. Explore the feasibility of developing a public community center that can be used by many different groups for a variety of recreation, education, entertainment, meeting and other activities.

4. Support the Wausau School District and D.C. Everest School District in their efforts to provide educational services in a cost-effective manner, including the redefining of school district boundaries.

5. Participate in the Wausau School District and D.C. Everest School District long range planning activities for the development of facilities to meet changes in the student population.

6. Encourage other school districts within the Wausau Urban Area to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) as part of their educational curriculum.

7. Identify and evaluate locations for a possible public community center.

8. Provide park and recreation facilities that are safe, clean, attractive, and accessible.

9. Provide handicapped accessible, barrier-free recreation facilities where feasible.

10. Continue to implement the recommendations contained in the River Edge Master Plan Update.

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Chapter Six
Economic Development

This is the sixth of nine chapters that comprise the Wausau Comprehensive Plan. This element is based on the statutory requirement for a "compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities."

The use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial and industrial re-development is evaluated and promoted. Local, county, regional, and state economic development programs that apply to Wausau are identified. Economic development issues, recommendations, and implementation strategies will also be discussed.

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation established 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to economic development while three more are related to economic development. The two economic development goals are:

1. Promoting the expansion and stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.

2. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

The three related goals are: Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests; Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards; and Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial sites.

Previous Studies

Wausau Comprehensive Plan, 2006

In February of 2006, the common council adopted ordinance number 61-5283, thereby adopting the City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan includes an economic development element discussing the various economic issues and opportunities in the City of Wausau. Key opportunities included development on the riverfront, new development at Wausau Iron Works, and the potential of an "east bypass" on CTH X/ Camp Phillips Road. Key Economic Development Issues included a lack of east side industrial park, high tax rates, reduced shared revenue, higher health care costs, construction constraints like steep sopes and high bedrock, regional competition in the urban area, limited tax incremental financing (TIF) capacity, tax rate disparity between the City and the surrounding cities/ villages, and county leadership. The economic development element also examined key indicators such as: Top 10 Industry Groups, Labor Force, Major Employers, Incomes, and Employment trends and projections. The economic development element included one goal: To improve the economic wellbeing of Wausau through efforts that involve job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements, and other quality of life initiatives.

Central Business District (CBD) Master Plan, 2000

In January of 2000, the Common Council adopted the Central Business District Master Plan as an element of the City's Master Plan. The plan focuses primarily on the part of the community generally bounded by Third Avenue, Sixth Street, Bridge Street, and Thomas Street. The plan contains a vision statement, general goals for the CBD, and many specific recommendations focused on land use, redevelopment activities, transportation, streetscape, and urban design.

Industrial Development Plan, 1999

In January of 2001, the City Economic Development Committee completed its work on an industrial development plan for Wausau. This document serves as a general guide to the City's industrial development activities by identifying an overall economic development goal, several industrial development objectives, and general strategies for helping to implement these objectives.

Near West Master Plan, 2008

In June of 2008, the Common Council adopted the Near West Side Master Plan. The Near West area is defined by Elm Street on the north, 4th Avenue on the west, Stewart Avenue on the south, and the Wisconsin River on the east. The Near West Side Neighborhood is an important part of the Wausau CBD. The City and Wausau Main Street have focused their efforts on the redevelopment and revitalization of the historic Downtown on the east side of the river. The City also adopted a North Downtown Area Master Plan. The West Side Master Plan is the remaining CBD area to be planned and provides comprehensive recommendations to guide public and private improvements over the next 15-20 years that will ensure the long-term economic vitality of the Central Business District.

North Downtown Area, 2005

The North Downtown Area Master Plan was adopted by Common Council in 2005. The North Downtown Area is bordered by Bridge Street on the north, N. 3rd Avenue on the west, N 6th Street on the east, and McIndoe Street (east side of the river), and Maple Street (west side of the river) on the south. The purpose of the plan is to provide recommendations that will update the adopted Wausau Central Business District Master Plan and provide direction to Main Street Wausau and the City of Wausau on project goals and priorities for the North Downtown Area.

River Edge Master Plan, 1995

In June of 1995 the Common Council adopted the River Edge Master Plan as a component of the City master plan. The plan identifies long and short term strategies for improving public access to the City's most important natural resource-the Wisconsin River. This master plan provides a framework for protecting and enhancing the scenic beauty of the river corridor and outlines activities, programs, and projects that improve the public's ability to enjoy this resource. The master plan addresses many management and use issues related to the Wisconsin River, with a focus on continuing development of the River Edge Parkway. Completion of the River Edge Parkway was identified as the central focus for public and private expenditures within the river corridor. It is generally felt that the parkway will stimulate other development within the river edge corridor.

Wausau Fire Department vehicles and station.

Wausau West Business and Industrial Park, 2001

Two separate reports represent concept development plans for expansion of the City's industrial park. The plans focus on extending municipal utilities and streets into two areas owned by the City of Wausau. One site is 200 acres located north of Highland Drive and west of 72nd Avenue, the second site is located on the north bank of the Big Rib River, immediately west of 48th Avenue extended an is approximately 30 acres of developable industrial land.

East Riverfront District Plan, 2015

The East Riverfront District Plan is the most recent plan developed for the City focusing on riverfront development. The East Riverfront Plan is the result of the purchase of 16 acres of land on the east bank of the Wisconsin River south of Bridge Street as recommended in the North Downtown Area Master Plan. The plan includes recommendations that link the area to the downtown and general guidelines for building design and land use. Brownfield cleanup is nearing completion allowing for full plan implementation. The plan includes a variety of public and private uses ranging from park space (kayaking, boat wharf, public trail), multiuse space, and residential.

Thomas Street Corridor Master Plan, 2014

After a decade-long standstill created by perpetual difficulties, the City of Wausau contracted with GRAEF to find solutions for: street and right-of-way sizing and design, adding value to properties along the corridor and surrounding neighborhood, traffic concerns, urban design, and quality of life factors for residents and business owners. GRAEF created a corridor master plan by evaluating market scenarios for retail goods and services, and by discussing development options with property development professionals to assess the market for commercial and residential uses. GRAEF then prepared optional property development scenarios for key sites along the corridor. This included a variety of flexible options to use as discussion

tools between the City and multiple owners and investors. GRAEF prepared an economic development plan that depicts phased development of the corridor and analyzes the potential build-out value of property taxes. GRAEF also devised an implementation process, tailored to the City's interest in an advanced schedule for this development.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, 2006

Marathon County's comprehensive planning process includes the development of 51 individual comprehensive plans and a County Development Plan. The County Plan includes the future land use maps of the individual municipal plans, but also addresses regional issues such as transportation, environment, housing, and economic development. The County Plan addresses factors that cross municipal boundaries and affect the county as a whole. The plan includes and economic development section. This section focuses on issues and trends at the County level specifically on labor force, industry sectors, commuting patterns, educational attainment, key industries (agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare), and development and redevelopment areas. The plan includes a list of goals, objectives, and strategies focused on improving the county's economy.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), 2014

Marathon County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As a part of maintain that designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a CEDS report. The report serves to summarize and assess economic development activities of the past year and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year.

Much like the County Comprehensive Plan, the CEDS report focuses on issues and opportunities on a regional level. The plan discusses regional trends in labor force, income, education attainment, and employment by industry sector.

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's Regional Livability Plan (RLP) was adopted in 2015 as an update to their Regional Comprehensive Plan. The RLP includes an Economic Development Assessment identifying the issues and opportunities in the region. The RLP focuses on specific economic development issues affecting the region's livability. The plan discusses the projected shortage in labor force, the need for employment opportunities providing living wages, and broadband issues. The plan also comprehensively discusses how transportation, housing, economic development, and land use affect livability in the region. The RLP provides a variety of goals, objectives, and strategies to increase livability in the region that are to be used by counties and municipalities while updating their long term strategies. Many of the goals and objectives are specifically applicable to the city of Wausau as they are they are the metro area in the region and have a central business district.

Inventory & Trends

The City of Wausau comprises a major portion of the Marathon County economy. In fact, the Wausau Metropolitan Statistical Area as define by the U.S. Census includes all of Marathon County. This section includes statistical information for the City of Wausau and Marathon County.

Employment by Sector

The economy is made up of 20 basic economic sectors. They are: Crop and Animal Production; Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; Utilities; Construction; Manufacturing; Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade; Transportation and Warehousing; Information; Finance and Insurance; Real Estate and Rental Leasing; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Management of Companies and Enterprises; Administrative and Support of Waste Management Remediation Services; Educational Services; Health Care and Social Assistance; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Accommodation and Food Services; Other Services; and Government.

Total employment represents the number of jobs filled in the Wausau Area. Employment data is gathered by zip code, not municipal boundary, so the following tables cover data for the Wausau Area which is defined as the zip codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Employment includes residents of Wausau Area who are employed in the area and employees who live outside of the area and commute into the area for work. Employment by sector for all employed Wausau residents, both those who work in the area and those who work outside of the area, is discussed in the Issues and Opportunities section.

Over the past 5 years, total employment in the Wausau Area increased 5 percent from 41,052 in 2010 to 43,168 in 2015, see **Table 23**. The largest percent increases in employment were in Management of Companies and Enterprises (90%), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (51%), and Health Care and Social Assistance (18%) occupations. The top three employment sectors in the Wausau Area were Retail Trade (6976), Manufacturing (6,975), and Health Care and Social Assistance (6,695). Employment in Manufacturing decreased by 29 jobs while Retail Trade and Health Care Social Services both increased employment by 791 jobs and 1,041 jobs respectively. The top three employment sectors represent roughly 48 percent of the total employment in the area.

Overall, 12 of the 20 sectors experienced positive growth over the 5 year period. The largest decreases in employment were in Other Services (-9% or 120 jobs), Government (-6%, 228 jobs) and Information (-20%, 103 jobs).

In comparison, employment over the past 5 years in Marathon County increased 7 percent from 71,544 in 2010 to 76,511 in 2015. In most sectors, growth in the Wausau Area was comparable with sector growth in Marathon County. Manufacturing (15,951 jobs), Health Care and Social Services (9,705) and Retail Trade (9,537 jobs) are the three largest sectors. Together, the three sectors account for roughly 46 percent of all employment. Health Care and Social Services and Manufacturing experienced the largest employment growth over the 5 year period, increasing by 1,555 jobs and 1,331 jobs respectively. Overall, 13 of the 20 sectors experienced positive growth over the 5 year period.

NAICS 11: Crop and Animal Production:

Between 2010 and 2015 this sector decreased 3 percent in the Wausau Area. In comparison, County employment in this sector decreased 5 percent over the 5 year period. Just fewer than 700 people are employed in this sector in the City and 2,069 people are employed in the county. The Crop and Animal Production sector accounts for just two percent of total employment in the area.

NAICS 21: Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction:

Employment in this sector is minimal in both the area and county. Only 24 people were employed in this sector in 2015, a net increase of 10 people over the past five years. A total of 106 people were employed in this sector in 2015 in the county, an increase of 75 people over the past five years. Total employment in this sector accounts for 0.1 percent of total employment in both the area and county.

NAICS 22: Utilities

Employment in this sector decreased 34 percent in the area while increasing 61 percent in the county over the past 5 years. Only 21 people were employed in this sector in the area in 2015, an 11 person decrease from 2010. Total employment in this sector in the county was 335 in 2015, accounting for 0.4 percent of all employment. This sector accounts for less than 0.1 percent of all employment in the area.

NAICS 23: Construction

Between 2010 and 2015, employment in this sector increased 13 percent in the Wausau Area from 1,263 in 2010 to 1,433 in 2015. The 13 percent increase in the city exceeded the county's 10 percent increase over the same 5 year period. Employment in this sector accounts for 3 percent of all employment in the area and 4 percent of all employment in the county.

NAICS 31: Manufacturing

Manufacturing is the second largest sector in the area and the largest sector in the county. In 2015, manufacturing employed 6,975 people in the area, a decrease of 25 people from 2010. Employment in this sector increased 9 percent in the county from 14,620 in 2010 to 15,951 in 2015. Employment in this sector accounts for 16 percent of all employment in the area and 21 percent of all employment in the county.

NAICS 42: Wholesale Trade

Between 2010 and 2015 this sector increased 9 percent in the area and 6 percent in the county. Total employment in this sector in 2015 was 1,682 people in the area and 4,401 people in the county accounting for 4 percent of all employment in the area and 6 percent of all employment in the county.

NAICS 44: Retail Trade

Retail Trade is the largest sector in the area and the third largest sector in the county. Between 2010 and 2015, this sector increased 13 percent in the area and 12 percent in the county. In 2015, almost 7,000 people were employed in this sector in the area and roughly 9,500 in the county. Employment in this sector accounts for 16 percent of all employment in the Wausau Area and 13 percent of all employment in the county.

NAICS 48: Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in this sector increased 7 percent in the area and 1 percent in the county between 2010 and 2015. In 2015, employment in this sector accounted for 3 percent of total employment in both the area and county.

NAICS 51: Information

Employment in this sector decreased significantly over the past 5 years in the area and county, roughly 20 percent and 18 percent respectively. Employment in this sector accounts for just 0.9 percent of total employment in the area and 0.6 percent in the county. The information sector is one of the lowest employment sectors in both the area and county.

NAICS 52: Finance and Insurance

The 4th largest sector in the area, employment in this sector decreased 9 percent over the past 5 years. County employment in this sector experienced a similar decrease in employment, 8 percent over the five year period. In 2015, employment in this sector was 4,176 people accounting for 10 percent of all employment in the area. In comparison, this sector accounted for 6 percent of all employment in the county with 4,768 people employed.

NAICS 53: Real Estate and Rental Leasing

Employment in this sector decreased 11 percent from 234 in 2010 to 207 in 2015. One of the area's smallest employment sectors, Real Estate and Leasing accounts for 0.5 percent of total employment in the area. In comparison, county employment in this sector decreased 1 percent and accounts for 0.6 percent of total employment in the county.

NAICS 54: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

Table 23: Employment by Sector

NAICS	Industry	Wausau Area*			Marathon County		
		2010	2015	% Change	2010	2015	% Change
11	Crop and Animal Production	721	699	-3%	2170	2069	-5%
21	Mining, Quarrying,and Oil and Gas Extraction	14	24	69%	31	106	242%
22	Utilities	32	21	-34%	208	335	61%
23	Construction	1263	1433	13%	2935	3217	10%
31	Manufacturing	7004	6975	0%	14620	15951	9%
42	Wholesale Trade	1539	1682	9%	4165	4401	6%
44	Retail Trade	6185	6976	13%	8478	9537	12%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	1168	1248	7%	2490	2515	1%
51	Information	508	405	-20%	553	453	-18%
52	Finance and Insurance	4572	4176	-9%	5199	4768	-8%
53	Real Estate and Rental Leasing	234	207	-11%	487	483	-1%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1330	1348	1%	2271	2228	-2%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	376	714	90%	667	1249	87%
56	Administrative and Support of Waste Management and Remediation Services	1188	1278	8%	1964	2005	2%
61	Educational Services	403	410	2%	536	542	1%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	5654	6695	18%	8150	9705	19%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	417	631	51%	691	1086	57%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	2917	3119	7%	4759	5074	7%
81	Other Services	1832	1662	-9%	3141	2917	-7%
90	Government	3693	3465	-6%	8025	7868	-2%
	Total	41,052	43168	5%	71,544	76511	7%

**Wausau Area = Zip Codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Source: EMSI*

Employment in this sector increased just 1 percent in the area over the past 5 years while decreasing 2 percent in the county. In 2015, 1,348 people were employed in this sector in the Wausau Area accounting for 3 percent of the city's employment. Similar to the area, this sector accounts for 3 percent of the county's employment with 2,228 people employed.

NAICS 55: Management of Companies and Enterprises

This sector experienced significant growth in both the area and county over the past 5 years, 90 percent and 87 percent respectively. Employment in the area increased by 338 people and by 582 people in the county. This sector accounted for roughly 2 percent of all employment in both the area and county in 2015.

NAICS 56: Administrative and Support of Waste Management and Remediation Services

Employment in this sector increased 8 percent in the area and 2 percent in the county over the past 5 years. In 2015, area employment was 1,278 people accounting for 3 percent of the total employment. Employment in the county in this sector was just over 2,000 in 2015 accounting for 3 percent of the total employment.

NAICS 61: Educational Services

Employment in this sector increased slightly in both the area and county over the past 5 years, 2 percent and 1 percent respectively. Total employment equaled 410 people in the area and 542 people in the county in 2015 accounting for just 1 percent of the total employment in both locations.

NAICS 62: Health Care and Social Assistance

This sector is the third largest sector in the area and second largest sector in the county employing 6,695 people in the area and 9,705 people in the county in 2015. One of the fastest growing sectors, employment increased 18 percent in the area and 19 percent in the county between 2010 and 2015. The area and county experienced their largest net increases in employment in this sector between 2010 and 2015, increasing employment by 1,041 people in the area and 1,555 people in the county. This sector accounts for 16

percent of the total employment in the area and 13 percent of the total employment in the county.

NAICS 71: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation

This sector experienced significant growth in both the area and county over the past 5 years increasing 51 percent and 57 percent respectively. Between 2010 and 2015, employment increased by 214 people in the area and 395 people in the county. In 2015, employment in this sector accounted for 1.5 percent of all employment in the area and 1.4 percent of all employment in the county.

NAICS 72: Accommodation and Food Services

This sector was the 6th largest sector in the area and 5th largest sector in the county accounting for roughly 7 percent of the total employment in each in 2015. Between 2010 and 2015, employment increased 7 percent in both the area and county. In 2015, area employment in this sector was 3,119 people while county employment in this sector was 5,074 people.

NAICS 81: Other Services

This sector decreased employment by 9 percent in the area and 7 percent in the county between 2010 and 2015. Total employment in this sector equaled 1,662 people in 2015 for the area and 2,917 people in the county. Overall, roughly 4 percent of total employment was in this sector for both the area and county in 2015.

NAICS 90: Government

This sector was the 5th largest sector in the area and 4th largest sector in the county in 2015. However, between 2010 and 2015, employment in this sector decreased 6 percent in the area and 2 percent in the county. In 2015, employment in this sector equaled 3,465 in the area and 7,868 in the county accounting for 8 percent of the area's total employment and 10 percent of the county's total employment.

Employment by Occupation

The economy is made up of 23 different occupations. They are: Management Occupations; Business and Financial Operations Occupations; Computer and Mathematical Occupations; Architecture and Engineering Occupations; Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations; Community and Social Service Occupations; Legal Occupations; Education, Training, and Library Occupations; Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations; Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations; Healthcare Support Occupations; Protective Service Occupations; Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations; Building and Grounds Cleaning and Management Occupations; Personal Care and Service Occupations; Sales and Related Occupations; Office and Administrative Support Occupations; Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations; Construction and Extraction Occupations; Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations; Production Occupations; Transportation and Material Moving Occupations; and Military Occupations.

Liberty Mutual Insurance.

Between 2010 and 2015, 19 of the 23 occupations experienced positive employment growth in the Wausau Area, see **Table 24**. Only Legal Occupations, Education Training and Library Occupations, Arts Design Entertainment Sports and Media Occupations, and Protective Service Occupations decreased employment. Protective Service Occupations experienced the largest decrease in employment decreasing 61 people, or 8 percent. Combined, these occupations account for just 6 percent of total employment in the Wausau Area.

Office and Administrative Support Occupations account for the largest percentage of the city's employment, accounting for 18 percent of all employment. Almost 7,900 people are employed in this occupation, increasing employment by 245 people or 3 percent over the past 5 years. Sales Related Occupations accounts for the second largest percentage of employment in the city, accounting for 11 percent of all employment. Between 2010 and 2015, employment in this occupation increased 104 people, or 11 percent. Production Occupations accounts for the third largest percentage of employment, 10 percent. Over 4,300 people in the area are employed in this occupation. Combined, the top three occupations account for 39 percent of all employment. Over the 5 year period, Personal Care and Service Occupations experienced a 24 percent growth in employment, the largest in the city. Personal Care and Service Occupations also experienced the largest net increase in employment, increasing employment by 294 people, one more person than Transportation and Material Moving Occupations.

Occupational employment in Marathon County is similar to the Wausau area. The top three occupations in the county are Production Occupations, Office and Administrative Support Occupations, and Sales and Related Occupations. These three occupations account for 37 percent of all employment in the county. Personal Care and Service Occupations experienced the largest growth over the 5 year

Table 24: Employment by Occupation

SOC	Occupation	Wausau Area*			Marathon County		
		2010	2015	% Change	2010	2015	% Change
11-0000	Management Occupations	2,065	2,088	1%	4,085	4,091	0%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	2,231	2,250	1%	3,269	3,379	3%
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1,030	1,129	10%	1,421	1,586	12%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	611	673	10%	1,224	1,400	14%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	133	156	17%	281	320	14%
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	526	619	18%	860	991	15%
23-0000	Legal Occupations	377	362	-4%	413	399	-3%
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	858	815	-5%	3,222	3,275	2%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	575	549	-4%	867	832	-4%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	2,530	2,815	11%	3,523	4,005	14%
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	1,351	1,516	12%	2,012	2,254	12%
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	728	667	-8%	1,031	932	-10%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	2,991	3,194	7%	4,915	5,253	7%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	1,033	1,069	4%	2,161	2,254	4%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	1,207	1,501	24%	2,035	2,427	19%
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	4,548	4,652	2%	6,968	7,270	4%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	7,624	7,869	3%	11,315	11,845	5%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	274	294	7%	813	890	9%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	1,549	1,687	9%	3,129	3,444	10%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	1,243	1,339	8%	2,652	2,935	11%
51-0000	Production Occupations	4,270	4,332	1%	8,643	9,472	10%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	3,077	3,370	10%	6,324	6,877	9%
55-0000	Military occupations	222	223	0%	381	382	0%
	Total	41,052	43,168	5%	71,544	76,511	7%

**Wausau Area = Zip Codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Source: EMSI 2015.2*

period, increasing 19 percent. Production Occupations experienced the largest net increase in employment, increasing employment by 829 people.

Location Quotient

Location quotient (LQ) is a valuable way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a particular region "unique" in comparison to the national average. An industry with an LQ over 1.00, is considered to be an export industry, which is important because they bring money into the region, rather than simply circulating money that is already in the region.

LQ=(e_i/e_t)/ (E_(i/) E_t)

Where:

- e_i = regional (county or city) employment in an industry in a specific year
- e_t = total regional (county or city) employment in a specific year
- E_i = national employment in an industry in a specific year
- E_t = total national employment in a specific year

Table 25 displays the LQ's for all of the economic sectors in 2015. Compared to the nation, the Wausau Area has 6 export industries; Crop and Animal Production, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Finance and Insurance, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Healthcare and Social Assistance. The Finance and Insurance industry and Manufacturing industry have the highest concentration of employment compared to the nation. Employment in the Finance and Insurance industry is 2.4 times more concentrated in the city than it is nationally and employment in the Manufacturing industry is 2.01 times more concentrated than it is nationally.

Marathon County has 7 export industries in comparison to the nation, they are: Crop and Animal Production, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Finance and Insurance, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Healthcare and Social Assistance. With an LQ of 2.71, Manufacturing has the highest concentration of employment in the county compared to the nation, followed by Crop and Animal Production with an LQ of 2.22.

Location Quotient Analysis

Location Quotients are augmented by two other pieces of information: size of an industry in terms of jobs, and percent change in LQ over a given time period. A high LQ industry with a small number of jobs may be an export-oriented industry, but is not vital to the region's economy. A large high-LQ industry with a declining LQ over time, however, may endanger the regional economy. Location Quotient Analysis analyzes a regions location quotient, the change in location quotient over a period of time, and total

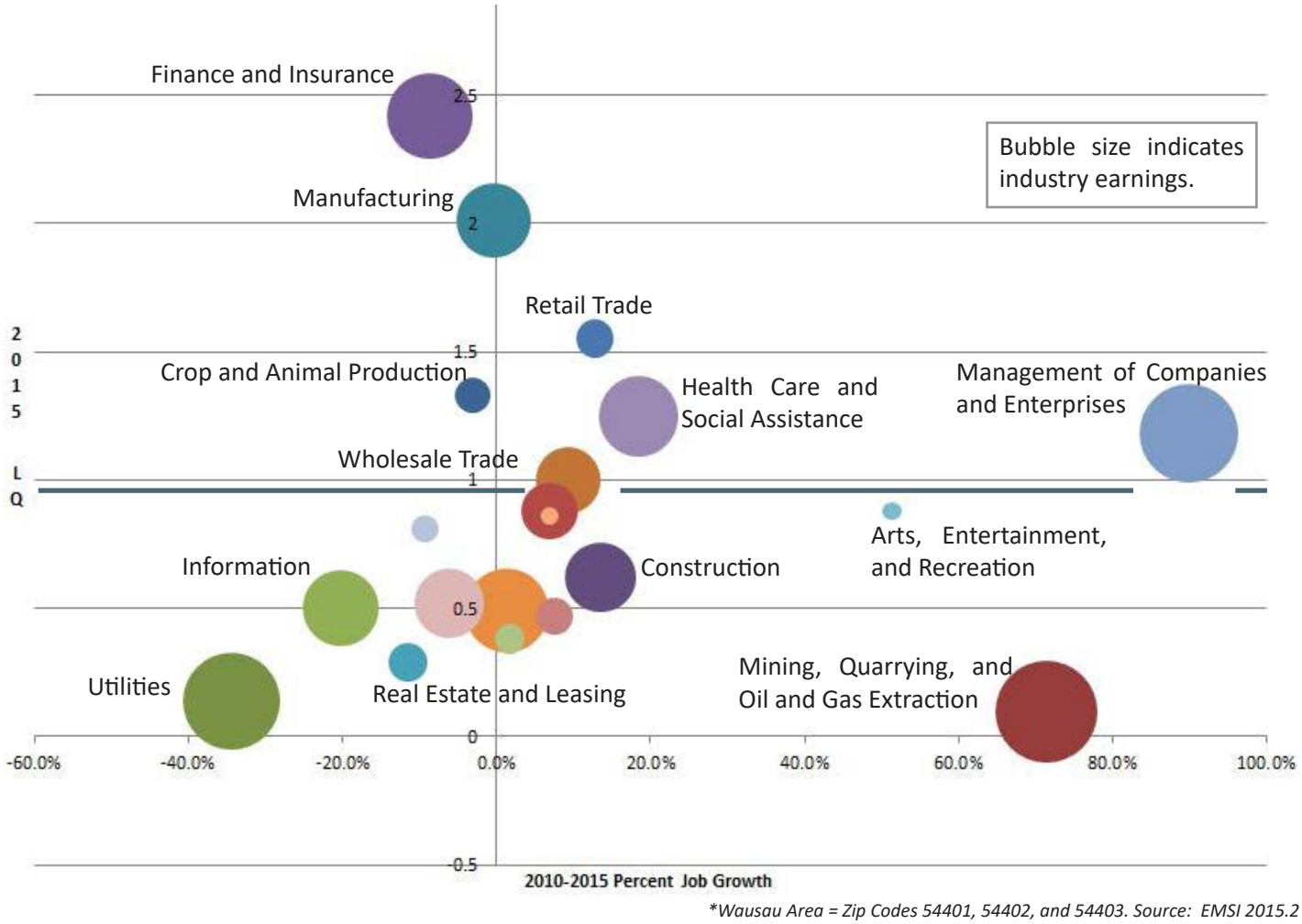
A facility in the Industrial Park.

Table 25: Wausau Area Location Quotient, 2015

NAICS	*Economic Sector*	*Wausau Area**	*Marathon County*
11	***Crop and Animal Production***	***1.33***	***2.22***
21	***Mining, Quarrying,and Oil and Gas Extraction***	0.1	0.33
22	***Utilities***	0.14	0.89
23	***Construction***	0.62	0.79
31	***Manufacturing***	2.01	2.71
42	***Wholesale Trade***	1	1.39
44	***Retail Trade***	1.55	1.19
48	***Transportation and Warehousing***	0.88	0.91
51	***Information***	0.5	0.22
52	***Finance and Insurance***	2.42	1.57
53	***Real Estate and Rental Leasing***	0.29	0.39
54	***Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services***	0.49	0.46
55	***Management of Companies and Enterprises***	1.18	1.32
56	***Administrative and Support of Waste Management and Remediation Services***	0.47	0.43
61	***Educational Services***	0.38	0.31
62	***Health Care and Social Assistance***	1.25	1.14
71	***Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation***	0.88	0.82
72	***Accomomodation and Food Services***	0.86	0.83
81	***Other Services***	0.81	0.75
90	***Government***	0.52	0.66

**Wausau Area = Zip Codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Source: EMSI 2015.2*

Chart 1: Wausau Area* Location Quotient Analysis



**Wausau Area = Zip Codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Source: EMSI 2015.2*

employment in each industry identifying the region's driver, emerging, mature, and troubled economies. Total annual earnings are also considered ensuring that the focus on job attraction and creation is in the industries that provide the best salary opportunities. See **Chart 1** where the size of the bubble illustrates the relative earnings for the industry. The average total earnings in 2015 in the Wausau Area were $49,107 and $49,288 in Marathon County.

An industry in the upper right quadrant is more concentrated in the Wausau Area than average, and also is increasing their employment over the time period. These industries are "standouts" or drivers that distinguish the City economy and are doing so more every year—and they are especially important if they employ a high number of people. Driver industries are those that play a key role in the economic vitality of a region by supply quality, often high paying jobs while also supporting job growth in other industries. These industries function as the primary engines for economic growth and stability because they export products and services and import vital dollars. Those dollars than circulate in the economy and support other local industries and jobs.

The lower right quadrant contains industries which are not yet as concentrated in the area as they are at the national level, but are increasing their employment over the time period. If they continue this trend, they will eventually move across the horizontal axis into the upper right-hand quadrant. We might call them "pre-emergent" industries, having the potential to contribute more to the area's economic base.

The upper left quadrant contains industries that are maturing, that is are more concentrated in the area than average, but decreased employment over the time period. If a mid-size or large industry is in this quadrant, it is an important warning that the City is losing a major part of its export base and should form planning and investment priorities accordingly. If the City does not bolster these industries or replace them with other export industries, it will likely enter a general recession.

The lower left quadrant contains industries that are considered troubled industries. These industries have low employment, are less concentrated in the area than average, and experienced a decline in employment over the time period. Industries here could be warning signs that the City needs to attract more businesses in those industries in

order to maintain an economy that is sufficiently diversified and resilient in comparison to the national economy.

Driver Economies

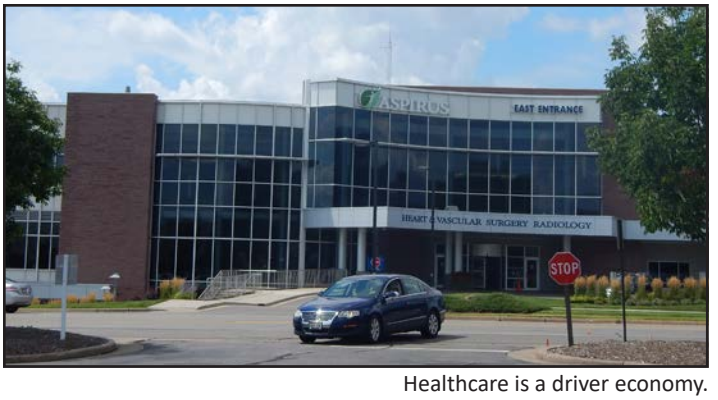
The Wausau Area has three driver economies based on the location quotient analysis; Retail Trade, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Healthcare and Social Assistance. These industries all have an LQ greater than 1.00, experienced an increase in employment between 2010 and 2015, and employ a high number of people. Combine, these industries account for 33.4 percent of all employment in the area. The Management of Companies and Enterprises Industry and the Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry both offer significant annual earnings, $79,698 a year and $64,537 respectively. Earnings in the Retail Trade Industry were $30,905 in 2015, well below the area average.

The driver economies in Marathon County include: Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Healthcare and Social Assistance. All five of these industries employ a high number of workers The Management of Companies and Enterprises has the highest annual earnings of the four industries at $79,777, followed by Healthcare and Social Services ($61,648), Manufacturing ($59,364), Wholesale Trade ($51,986), and Retail Trade ($29,978).

Emerging Economies

The Wausau Area has seven emerging economies: Construction, Wholesale Trade, Transportation and Warehousing; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Enterprises; Administrative and Support of Waste Management and Remediation Services; Educational Services; and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation. These industries all have LQ's below 1.00, but have experienced an increase in employment between 2010 and 2015. Together, the three industries account for roughly 19 percent of the employment. Construction ($56,947), Wholesale Trade ($52,680), Transportation and Warehousing ($45,275), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services ($67,736) all have earnings higher than the city's average. Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation ($15,222) had the second lowest earnings in the area.

Marathon County has eight emerging economies: Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; Utilities; Construction; Transportation and Warehousing; Administrative and Support of Waste Management and Remediation Services; Educational Services; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; and Accommodation and Food Services. Construction is the county's top emerging economy employing over 3,000 people and offering earnings of $55,090 per year. Accommodation and Food Services employ 5,074, but offers the 2nd lowest earnings compared to all other industries, $15,115 per year. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and



Healthcare is a driver economy.

Gas Extraction, Educational Services, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and Utilities (2% combined) all account for a low percentage of employment in the county. However, Utilities ($118,018) has the highest earnings in the county.

Maturing Economies

The Wausau Area has three maturing economies: Crop and Animal Production, Manufacturing, and Finance and Insurance. These industries all have LQ's above 1.00, but have experienced a decrease in employment between 2010 and 2015. Employment in these three industries is significant, accounting for 27.5 percent of all employment in the city. Manufacturing is the second largest employer in the area and offers annual earnings of $60,016. Finance and Insurance accounts for the 4th most employment and offers annual earnings of $69,262. Crop and Animal Production accounts for a lower percentage of employment and offers annual earnings of $28,364, well below the area's average.

Marathon County has two maturing economies: Crop and Animal Production; and Finance and Insurance. Both industries employ a high number of workers, 2,069people and 4,768 people respectively. The Finance and Insurance Industry offers above average wages, $67,870 per year. Crop and Animal Production offers annual earnings of $28,361.

Troubled Economies

The Wausau Area has five trouble economies: Utilities; Information; Real Estate and Rental Leasing; Government; and Other Services These industries have an LQ under 1.00 and have experienced a decrease in employment between 2010 and 2015. These five industries account for 13 percent of the employment in the Wausau Area. Government (8%) and Other Services (4%) account for the most employment. All other industries account for one percent or less of all employment. Only three of the industries, Utilities ($78,937), Information ($61,765), and Government ($55,284) offer annual earnings higher than the area's average.

Marathon County has five trouble economies: Information; Real Estate and Rental Leasing; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Other Services, and Government. These five industries account for roughly 18 percent of all employment in the county. Government (10%) accounts for

the most employment. All other industries account for 4 percent or less of all employment. Three of the industries, Information, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, and Government provide an annual earning wage higher than the county's average.

Labor Force

The labor force is the number of people, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employed in an area. Those persons over sixteen who are students, homemakers, retired, institutionalized, or unable/ unwilling to seek employment are not considered part of the labor force. The number of people in the labor force divided by the total population over 16 years of age makes up the participation rate. In 2013, the total population 16 years and over in the City of Wausau was 31,193 people and the labor force, those actively looking for work, totaled 20,906 people; a participation rate of 67 percent.

An increase in total population, specifically over the age of 17, and a 2.3 percent increase in the participation rate between 2000 and 2013, increased the labor force in Wausau 7.9 percent to 20,906 people. While there were more people in the labor force, the total persons employed only increased 1.8 percent. The unemployment rate increased from 4.2 percent in 2000 to 8.8 percent in 2013. According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the unemployment rate in 2014 decreased to 5.5 percent.

The Wausau Region experienced similar trends. The region's labor force increased 9.9 percent while participation rates decreased 0.2 percent. While the labor force increased 9.9 percent, the number of people employed only increased 5.6 percent.

The labor force in Marathon County increased 7.9 percent while participation rates decreased 1.2 percent. However, the total number of people employed only increased 4 percent. The unemployment rate in 2013 was 6.7 percent. According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the unemployment rate in 2014 decreased to 5.1 percent.

The labor force in the State of Wisconsin increased 7.3 percent while participation rates decreased 1.7 percent. The number of people employed increased 3.8 percent. The unemployment rate in 2013 was 6.7 percent. According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the unemployment rate in 2014 decreased to 5.4 percent.

Overall, the city of Wausau had the lowest participation rate in 2013, the smallest increase in persons employed, and the highest unemployment rate compared to the county, and state.

Educational Levels

Education and training is critical to maintaining productivity in the city of Wausau and Marathon County. The vocational-technical education system and the training available are of particular importance. As business and industry continues to grow and change, the demand for highly trained and skilled labor grows too. State, Regional, County, and Local organizations provide a variety of initiatives to develop the workforce through education, training, and cooperative ventures with business and industry. Worker training programs are very important as the locational mismatch between worker skills and available jobs continues to widen.

Employment and training services for dislocated workers are primarily delivered through "Job centers". There is a job center in the city of Wausau. These centers are one-stop resources for employers to meet their workforce needs and job seekers to get the career planning, job placement, and training services they need to obtain jobs.

Partnerships between local businesses, governments, and educational institutions are very useful in developing the Regional economy. Institutions such as UW-Stevens Point, UW-Marathon County, and Northcentral Technical College (NTC) often direct the programs to the training needs of local workers and businesses. Organizations such as the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board are important to this process as well.

As identified in the Issues and Opportunities section of this plan, about 87.7 percent of persons 25 and older are high school graduates. About 24.4 percent hold a bachelor's degree. However, a high school diploma used to be enough to work in the manufacturing production field, today, most manufacturing production jobs require at the very least a technical degree or certificate from a local technical college. In 2010, 32.8 percent had just a high school diploma and 30.4 percent of the population over 25 had some college or an associate's degree. The gap in education will weaken the city's ability to support the manufacturing industry and its ability to attract and support knowledge based higher paying occupations.

Laborshed

A laborshed is defined as the area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. In 2013, only 8,307 of the 31,516 jobs in the city of Wausau were filled by people who also live in Wausau. On a daily basis, roughly 23,209 people traveled into the city of Wausau for work. In contrast, 8,510 employed city residents leave the city for work on a daily basis. While the city of Wausau may have a talented workforce, it is clear that the laborshed is much larger than the boundaries of the city.

In-migration

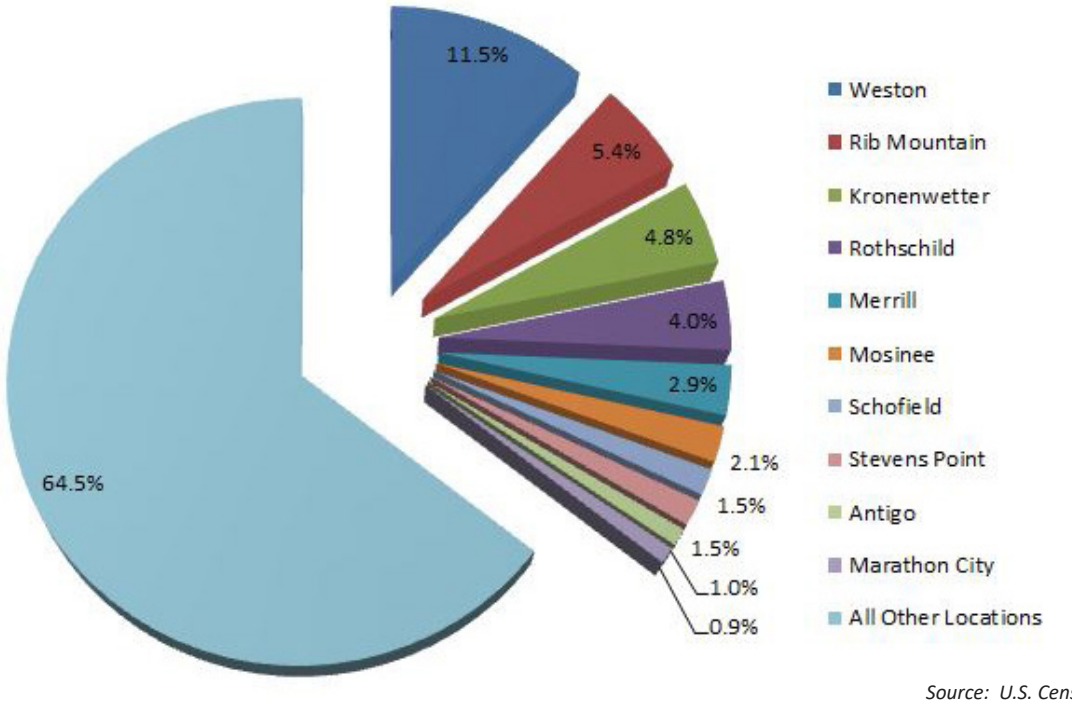
Employees commuting into the city for work come from

all over the state. The largest percentage of workers migrating into the city for work comes from the area directly surrounding Wausau. The surround municipalities of Weston (11.5%), Rib Mountain (5.4%), Kronenwetter (4.8%), Rothschild (4.0%), Mosinee (2.1%), and Schofield (1.5%) account for 25.3 percent of the workers commuting into the city on a daily basis. Of the top ten destinations that workers commute from, 6 of the 10 are located in the Wausau Region, see **Chart 2**.

Out-migration

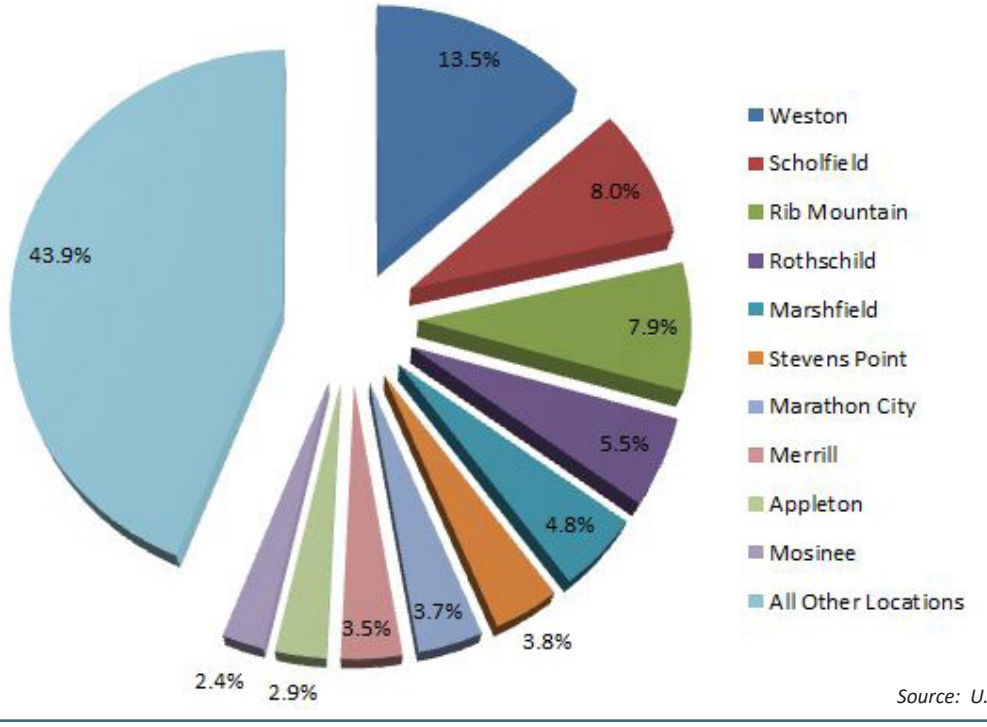
City residents commuting outside of the city for work travel all over the state of Wisconsin for employment opportunities. Over 8,500 people who live in the city of Wausau are employed outside of the city limits. Similar to where workers commute from, most employed residents who work outside the city commute to communities directly surrounding the city. The surrounding municipalities of Weston (13.5%), Schofield (8.0%), Rib Mountain (7.9%),

Chart 2: Worker In-Migration



Source: U.S. Census On The Map

Chart 3: Worker Out-Migration



Source: U.S. Census On The Map

Rothschild (5.5%), and Mosinee (2.4%) account for 37.3 percent of the destinations Wausau residents commute to for work on a daily basis. Of the top ten destinations that Wausau residents commute to for work, half are located in the Wausau Region, see **Chart 3**.

Employment Projections

Industry Projections

According to Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI), the number of jobs in the Wausau Area is expected to increase 9 percent between 2015 and 2025. The total number of jobs in the area is projected to be 47,191 in 2025, see **Table 26**. The Educational Services Industry and Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry are expected to experience the largest increases, 35 percent and 34 percent respectively. The Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry is projected to account for the most jobs in the area, surpassing Manufacturing and Retail Trade. The projected increase in population aged 65 and over, as a result of the baby boomer generation entering this age cohort (as discussed in the Issues and Opportunities Section) would further support the projected increase and need for healthcare positions. Overall, 8 of the 20 industries are projected to decrease the number of job opportunities in the area over the next ten years.

The number of jobs in Marathon County is also projected to increase 9 percent over the next 10 years. The total number of jobs in Marathon County is projected to be 83,473 in 2025. The Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction Industry is projected to increase 60 percent over the ten year period,

Table 26: Employment by Sector Projections

NAICS	Industry	Wausau Area*			Marathon County		
		2015	2025	% Change	2015	2025	% Change
11	Crop and Animal Production	699	644	-8%	2069	1819	-12%
21	Mining, Quarrying,and Oil and Gas Extraction	24	15	-34%	106	170	60%
22	Utilities	21	<10	-	335	229	-32%
23	Construction	1433	1652	15%	3217	3621	13%
31	Manufacturing	6975	6550	-6%	15951	16432	3%
42	Wholesale Trade	1682	1669	-1%	4401	4440	1%
44	Retail Trade	6976	7434	7%	9537	10014	5%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	1248	1201	-4%	2515	2465	-2%
51	Information	405	288	-29%	453	321	-29%
52	Finance and Insurance	4176	4388	5%	4768	5113	7%
53	Real Estate and Rental Leasing	207	202	-3%	483	514	6%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1348	1607	19%	2228	2638	18%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	714	876	23%	1249	1534	23%
56	Administrative and Support of Waste Management and Remediation Services	1278	1639	28%	2005	2399	20%
61	Educational Services	410	553	35%	542	705	30%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	6695	8989	34%	9705	13059	35%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	631	662	5%	1086	1150	6%
72	Accomomodation and Food Services	3119	3646	17%	5074	5923	17%
81	Other Services	1662	1651	-1%	2917	2928	0%
90	Government	3465	3519	2%	7868	7999	2%
	Total	43168	47191	9%	76511	83473	9%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	3,077	3,370	10%	6,324	6,877	9%
55-0000	Military occupations	222	223	0%	381	382	0%
	Total	41,052	43,168	5%	71,544	76,511	7%

**Wausau Area = Zip Codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Source: EMSI*

the largest projected increase. In alignment with the city of Wausau, the Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry and Educational Services Industry are projected to increase significantly, 35 percent and 30 percent respectively. The Manufacturing Industry is projected to continue to account for the most jobs in the County, followed by Retail Trade and the Healthcare and Social Services Industries. Overall, only four of the industries are projected to decrease the number of job opportunities in Marathon County over the next ten years.

Occupational Projections

Job projections in the area by occupation directly reflect industry projections. The Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations and Healthcare Support Occupations are expected to experience the largest percent increases

Table 27: Employment by Occupation Projections

SOC	Occupation	Wausau Area*			Marathon County		
		2015	2025	% Change	2015	2025	% Change
11-0000	Management Occupations	2,088	2,164	4%	4,091	4,053	-1%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	2,250	2,484	10%	3,379	3,762	11%
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1,129	1,241	10%	1,586	1,737	10%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	673	697	4%	1,400	1,456	4%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	156	197	27%	320	372	16%
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	619	746	21%	991	1,173	18%
23-0000	Legal Occupations	362	392	8%	399	432	8%
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	815	934	15%	3,275	3,519	7%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	549	549	0%	832	834	0%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	2,815	3,757	33%	4,005	5,361	34%
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	1,516	1,976	30%	2,254	2,945	31%
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	667	672	1%	932	933	0%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	3,194	3,740	17%	5,253	6,114	16%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	1,069	1,161	9%	2,254	2,442	8%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	1,501	1,718	14%	2,427	2,725	12%
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	4,652	4,907	6%	7,270	7,626	5%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	7,869	8,533	8%	11,845	12,849	8%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	294	325	11%	890	964	8%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	1,687	1,755	4%	3,444	3,651	6%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	1,339	1,426	6%	2,935	3,166	8%
51-0000	Production Occupations	4,332	4,226	-2%	9,472	9,923	5%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	3,370	3,379	0%	6,877	7,077	3%
55-0000	Military occupations	223	210	-6%	382	361	-6%
	Total	43,168	47,191	9%	76,511	83,473	9%

**Wausau Area = Zip Codes 54401, 54402, and 54403. Source: EMSI*

in employment opportunities, 33 percent and 30 percent respectively, see **Table 27**. Office and Administrative Support Occupations (8,533) and Sales and Related Occupations (4,907) are projected to continue to account for the most jobs in the city. Production Occupations are projected to decrease by 2 percent over the 10 year period, but will continue to account for the third most jobs in the area. Overall, Military Occupations (-6%) and Production Occupations (-2%) are the only occupational categories projected to experience a decrease between 2015 and 2025.

Marathon County occupational projections are in alignment with the Wausau Area projections. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations and Healthcare Support Occupations are projected to experience the largest percent increases in employment opportunities, 34 percent and 31 percent respectively. However, Production Occupations, which are projected to decrease in the area, are projected to increase by 5 percent over the 10 year period to 9,923 jobs in 2025. As a result, Office and Administrative Support Occupations and Production Occupations are projected to account for the most jobs in the county. Overall, only Military Occupations (-6%) and Management Occupations (-1%) are projected to experience a decrease over the next 10 years.

Employment Projections v. Labor Projections

As discussed in the Issues and Opportunities Section, the Department of Administration projects the population in Wausau to increase 4.2 percent between 2015 and 2025. During the same timeframe, the number of jobs in the Wausau Area is projected to increase 9 percent. As a result, there will be 47,191 jobs in the area and only 41,100 people in the City of Wausau. Based on 2010 percentages, people under the age of 17 will account for 23.5 percent of the city population. Accounting for those not in the workforce due to age, the actual eligible laborforce will be 31,441 people. The historic participation rate in the city indicates an even lower amount of available workers. Based on the 2013 participation rate of 67 percent, the laborforce will be even smaller, roughly 21,065 people. The participation rate has the potential to be even lower as the 70 plus million baby boomers will all be over the age of 65 by 2025, many of which will be no longer be participating in the labor force. The lack of population growth will create a workforce gap of roughly 20,035 people.

In 2013, 23,209 people commuted into the city for work, but 8,510 people migrated out of the city for work. The city has a net migration positive of 14,699 people. With the net positive of workers migrating to the city, the city will still face a workforce gap of 11,427 people.

The workforce gap is a county, region, and state issue. As the state and communities struggle to attract young professionals (ages 18 to 40), the workforce gap is extended. Industries will be unable to maintain, let alone expand, without access to the necessary amount of workers who have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to meet industry standards.

Income Levels

Both median household income and per capita incomes were discussed in the Issues and Opportunities section. The City's Median Household income in 2010 was $41,564 and the Per Capita Income was $24,346. Both Median income and Per Capita incomes have risen over the last twenty years, by 84.9 percent and 63 percent respectively. However, both Median incomes and Per Capita incomes have lagged considerably behind the county and state growth rates.

The 2014 median hourly salary in the city of Wausau was $19.68. A full time 40 hour a week position works roughly 2,080 hour per year. Based on this number, an average annual salary for a job in the city of Wausau is $41,000 a year. The average hourly salary in the city is slightly above the average for a job in Marathon County. On average, a full time position in the city of Wausau pays roughly $770 a year more than a job outside of the city in Marathon County. The average hourly salaries in both the county and city are lower than the average hourly salary in the state. Not surprising, management occupations, legal occupations, and healthcare practitioners (doctors) and technical occupations have the highest hourly wages, all over $36 per hour. Food preparation and Serving Related Occupations have the lowest hourly salaries ranging from $9.75 in the state to $9.85 in the county. However, food preparation and serving salaries do not take into account tips typically garnered by this occupation.

The lower per capita incomes and median household incomes in the city of Wausau imply that the people living in the city typically work in lower paying occupations, like food preparation, personal care and service, and healthcare and support. While the city provides jobs above the county's median salary, those jobs seem to be filled by people commuting into the city for work more so than people living in the city. This employment trend would help explain the low per capita and median household incomes in the city.

Education is a key to a strong economy.

Table 28: Major Employers - Marathon County

Name	*Product/ Service*
Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Inc.	Healthcare
Eastbay Inc	Mail-order houses
Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork Co Inc	Wood window and door manufacturing
Liberty Mutual Middle Market	Insurance
Marathon Electric Motors	Motors and Generator Manufacturing
North Central Health Care	Healthcare
Northcentral Technical College	Education
Umr	Insurance
Wausau Window & Wall Systems	Metal window and door manufacturing
West Corp	Telemarketing
Wisconsin Physicians Svc	Insurance
Wps Health Insurance	Insurance
Wausau Metals/Milco/Linetec	Metal window and door manufacturing

Source: WI DWD

Major Employers

Table 28 lists the major employers in the city of Wausau, which is primarily made up of healthcare organizations, window manufacturers, and insurance companies.

Economic Development Opportunities

Future opportunities for economic development will likely involve both the redevelopment and revitalization of existing obsolete properties as well as new "green field" development on the City's edge or in areas that may be annexed in the future.

Employment Areas & Existing Facilities

The City has three major employment nodes.

1. Downtown Wausau, which also includes the near westside and east riverfront, has an employment population of over 5,000 employees which had doubled in size in the past decade and include major employers in IT, banking, customer service, insurance, legal, office and services.

2. US51 interchange corridor is the area between the Sherman, Stewart Ave and Bridge Street interchanges. This area houses the areas medical clinics and offices, the main Aspirus Wausau Center and major employers in insurance, finance, IT and retail.

3. Wausau Business Campus was originally known as the Wausau West Industrial Park. The Business Campus area surrounds the WI29 and 72nd Avenue interchange and stretches along Packer Drive. This area has over 1,000 combined acres of industrial development, and the City recently purchased an additional 205 acres leading west of the current Business Campus out to County Hwy O. Major employers in the Business Campus include metal and materials manufacturing/machining, building materials, labeling and packaging, and transportation/logistics. The Business Campus constitutes over 5,000 jobs in the City and some of the highest average wages in the region, the City has directly incentivized over 700 manufacturing jobs with Tax Increment Financing (TIF) tools in the past decade in the Business Campus.

Future Development Areas

- CTH X/Camp Phillips Road – With the proposed improvements to CTH X/Camp Phillips Road to create an "east bypass" arterial, demand for development in this corridor will likely increase, particularly after the Ministry Health Care complex opens in the Village of Weston. While CTH X is currently outside the City limits, future City boundaries will likely extend further east and the City should proactively explore opportunities to tie into and coordinate with future development in this corridor.
- Medical Campus on Bridge Street – As the medical and healthcare sector continues to grow; the existing medical campus will need to expand. There are limited open lots within the existing campus. The City should consider future development to the north of the campus on the west side of Highway 51 to Merrill Avenue.

Redevelopment

Generally, redevelopment areas are those that are underutilized or vacant and there is some existing infrastructure and public services in place. The focus is on the change of use to the highest and best use. Often these might be called blighted or deteriorated areas, or they might be condemned properties. These areas are efficiently redeveloped since they will utilize existing public services and infrastructure; these are referred to as redevelopment areas.

- Riverfront – There are several old industrial uses along the riverfront that may provide opportunities for redevelopment with other uses. The City continually watches for these opportunities. However, redevelopment of the riverfront will be a long-term endeavor given potential property contamination, the need to relocate existing businesses, and consolidation of adequately sized parcels.
- Wausau Iron Works – The area around Wausau Iron Works may present opportunities for new development and/or provide for expansion of Marathon Park.
- Athletic Park – Athletic Park, home of the Wisconsin

Woodchucks, is in a residential setting just north of downtown Wausau. Athletic Park recently completed an extensive renovation that started with Phase I in 2013 with a $3 million grandstand and community park renovation. The entire park is surrounded by a stone-wall structure and is considered to be a historical landmark. Athletic Park was built in 1936 with the stone-wall exterior being constructed just a few years later. Athletic Park features three premium reserved seating areas for group outings. Athletic Park is highly unique to the Central Wisconsin area and the teams who have played here have provided great family fun and entertainment for many decades!

Revitalization and Beautification Areas

Revitalization differs from redevelopment since the focus is not on a reuse, but rather more towards upgrading and appearance. Often, these are older or run down existing commercial areas that need additional investment to modernize and rejuvenate.

- West Side – See Section 6.1: A Previous Plans
- Thomas Street – See Section 6.1: A Previous Plans

Tax Incremental Financing Districts

Nine tax incremental finance (TIF) districts are currently open to help pay for the infrastructure needed to accommodate new enterprises. The City uses tax increment financing to accomplish these major objectives:

1. Expand the economy to create more living wage jobs.
2. Attract and expand new and existing services, developments, and employers.
3. Increase the City's property tax base and maintain diversity.
4. Conduct environmental remediation and provide clean land and sites for uses that achieve the City's redevelopment objectives.
5. Eliminate blight influences.
6. Support neighborhoods, retail services, commercial corridors, and employment hubs.
7. Support redevelopment efforts that enhance and preserve urban features and amenities including: the downtown, riverfront, and historical structures.
8. Maintain and improve the City's public infrastructure.

TIFS 2,4, 5 and 10 are industrial districts located within the City of Wausau's West Business Park off Highway 29. Districts 3 and 8 are redevelopment districts located within the central business district. District 6 is an industrial district located along Interstate I-39 corridor and straddles Stewart Avenue. District 7 along Highway 29 on Stewart Street west of I-39. District 9 is a redevelopment district and geographically the smallest district – located on the city's eastside on Thomas Street.

Economic Development Programs

Local Economic Development Capacity

There are six primary economic development organizations in the community. These are: The Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce, Marathon County, Central Wausau Progress, Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitor Bureau, Wausau River District, Wausau Events, and the City of Wausau.

Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce provides general promotion and information about the community. The focus of the organization is on business to business development and strengthening the business community. The chamber also sponsors several key committees working to improve the community and economy in the Wausau Region. The Workforce HUB is specifically working on the region's ability to retain and attract workers to the region to fill open positions. The Young Professionals Organization (E3YP) focuses primarily on residents aged 20-45. E3YP hosts professional development seminars, social/networking events, and community development discussions; all with the purpose of better attracting and retain this demographic. The chamber also hosts various business to business meetings, leadership seminars and other pro-business events.

Central Wausau Progress

Central Wausau Progress is fully member supported organization that exists to be a forum and facilitator for key community resources focused on the future of our community and to help catalyze the development and vitality of the Central Wausau area. Central Wausau Progress has existed for over forty years in Wausau. During that time the organization has helped with many community projects, such as the Wausau Center Mall, the Wausau Library, the Wausau Gateway Project, and Riverside Place and with the formation of key community organizations such as the Wausau River District and the Wausau Business Improvement District.

Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB)

The CVB actively recruits visitors to the Wausau Region by hosting national and regional sporting events. Specifically, the Badger State games is the largest event hosted by the CVB bringing visitors from all over the state to Wausau to compete in both winter and summer sporting events. The CVB promotes area attractions, restaurants, hotels, and events to outside visitors and advocates for new sports facilities to host major events.

Wausau River District, Inc. (Main Street)

Wausau River District, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the places and businesses that make the River District a vibrant center of commerce and community life for the benefit of the entire Wausau community. The organization works to promote the

businesses located in the downtown riverfront district by promoting sales, hosting events like First Thursday's, and providing maps and promotional materials to help visitors and community members find businesses.

Wausau Events

Wausau Events, Inc. is a 501 © 3 non-profit organization dedicated to the vision of Creating Community through Events by enhancing the quality of life that the Wausau area is known for. Most of the events are offered free of charge. This is made possible by the generous support of many businesses, organizations, individuals, and the Wausau Room Tax Program. Main events hosted by Wausau Events include Winter Brew Fest, Winter Fest, Concerts on the Square (Every Wednesday from June to August), Marketplace Thursday (Farmers Market on the Square), Screen on the Green, Balloon and Rib Fest, Chalkfest, Big Bull Falls Blues Fest and Rock the 400 Block.

City of Wausau

The city of Wausau's Community and Economic Development Department provides a variety of assistance toward economic development. The city has a community development director that is responsible for the management of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The CDBG program provides loans for business projects and housing rehabilitation. The economic development manager is responsible for city assistance on individual projects, TIF spending, and the recruitment and retention of businesses in the community.

The Community and Economic Development Department also administers a revolving loan fund (RLF) program of roughly $550,000. This is a gap financing program to assist businesses to create jobs and tax base for the city. The CDBG program and the HOME program finance a variety of activities for the City of Wausau, including sidewalk and street reconstruction, water service; Homeowner and Rental Rehabilitation, as well as Down-payment assistance, Economic Development. The Department allocates funds to public and private non-profit organizations to serve low and moderate income residents.

The Community Development Department also works in the Central Business District on acquisition, demolition and redevelopment of property to new use. Most recently, the city applied for and was granted several large brownfield grants from the Federal and State government to help clean up and redevelop the east riverfront. The Community Development Department also partnered with the Chamber of Commerce on a competition with Frontier Communication; America's Best Communities. The city was selected as one of the top 50 finalist and was awarded $50,000 in grant money to create a wayfinding system in the Central Business District.

Entrepreneurial & Education Center.

The City of Wausau also has the ability to develop tax incremental finance (TIF) districts throughout the city. Typically TIF districts are used to provide infrastructure in an area to promote development. A TIF district allows local governments to invest in infrastructure and economic development projects and apply the increment of increased property tax revenue realized by those projects in retiring the costs of those improvements. There are seven active TIF Districts in the city. (TIF's 1,2, and 4 are closed)

County Programs

Marathon County Economic Development Corporation (MCDEVCO)

MCDEVCO, in partnership with Marathon County Government and the Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce, provides site selectors, business leaders, employees and residents with key initiatives and resources that help them establish businesses, identify financing resources, expand their opportunities, receive the training and education they need to advance, capitalize on Marathon County's resources and connectivity, and help them establish business partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

Regional Programs

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC)

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is a designated Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Under this designation, the Commission maintains a continuous process of planning assistance that supports the formulation and implementation of economic development programs designed to create or retain full-time permanent jobs and income. The NCWRPC provides services such as: economic research, marketing, financial packaging, evaluation and analysis of public infrastructure needs that support private economic development activity, and works with local units of government to maintain eligibility for certain grants.

North Central Wisconsin Development

Corporation (NCWDC):
The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) is a Regional organization created for the purpose of managing a two Regional revolving loan funds. Currently businesses in the following counties are eligible: Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood. The NCWDC is a non-profit organization and is staffed by NCWRPC. One fund was funded by USDA- Rural Development using the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) and the other was funded by a grant from HUD.

Small Business Development Centers:
The Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers (WSBDCs) The Wisconsin Small Business Development Center Network (WSBDC) includes 12 business assistance centers and three specialty service centers for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Associated with four year campuses of the University of Wisconsin system, the WSBDC assistance centers provide free one-on-one counseling and moderately-priced training programs designed to promote local entrepreneurship and small business growth.

North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (NCWWDB):
North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (NCWWDB) is a public/private partnership between government and business that plans, administers and coordinates Workforce Investment Act (WIA) employment and training programs in the nine counties of Adams, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood. This region is known as Workforce Development Area 6. The NCWWDB purpose is to provide policy, planning, oversight and funding for local workforce development programs and address workforce issues as they emerge within our region.

Centergy Economic Development Organization:
Centergy serves a diverse five county region, with a wide range of progressive, innovative businesses and industries — most notable are advanced manufacturing, emerging sustainable and bio-based technologies, and leading health care. Centergy is a non-profit organization comprising a variety of businesses, Chambers, CVBs, organizations and individuals, working together to improve the region's business climate and civic infrastructure. Collaboration with our partnering entities provides effective synergy.

State Programs

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation:
The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is the state's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purpose is to 1) foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin; 2) foster and promote economic business, export, and community development; and 3) promote the public health, safety, and welfare through effective and efficient regulations, education, and enforcement.

Board of Commissioners of Public Lands- Loan Program (BCPL): The BCPL operates one of the largest public lending programs in the state. The BCPL State Trust Fund Loan Program finances community and school projects across Wisconsin. BCPL has made loans to municipalities and school districts for public purpose projects in icluding economic development, local infrastructure, capital equipment and vehicles, building repairs and improvements, and refinancing existing liabilities to reduce future borrowing costs.

Brownfield Program: Wisconsin's Brownfield Program provides grant funds to assist local governments, businesses and individuals with assessing and remediating the environmental contamination of an abandoned, idle, or underused industrial or commercial facility or site. This program helps convert contaminated sites into productive properties that are attractive and ready for redevelopment.

Brownfield Site Assessment Grant (SAG): Grant funds to Approved projects to assist local governments with conducting initial environment assessment and demolition activities on an eligible abandon, idle, or underutilized industrial or commercial site.

Capacity Building Grants (CB): CB grants are designed to help strengthen Wisconsin's economic development network by assisting local and regional economic development groups with economic competitive assessments and the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

Certified Sites: A certified site designation serves as a pre-qualification, indicating that a property's title is clear; that it possesses sufficient utilities and other infrastructure for industrial use, and that it is properly zoned and has adequate transportation access for such uses, among other criteria.

Historic Preservation Tax Credit: The tax credit applies to certified historic buildings. Under the program, owners of eligible buildings may receive a state income tax credit for 20 percent of the qualified rehabilitated expenditures.

Business Opportunity Loan Fund: Financing options ranging from loans to loan guaranties for businesses making investments to expand in or relocate to Wisconsin.

Workforce Training Grants: Developed to assist businesses in workforce retention and expansion into new markets and technology, training grants provide funds to businesses planning to upgrade or improve the job-related skills of its full-time employees.

Idle Industrial Sites redevelopment Program: Highly competitive program offering grants to Wisconsin

communities for the implementation of redevelopment plans for large industrial sites that have been idle, abandon, or underutilized for at least five years.

The Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program: The IRB program involves an allocation of Federal tax-exempt status on bonds that will be issued by a business to finance an expansion project. By classifying the bonds as tax exempt, the company is able to offer the bonds at a reduced interest rate. Although this program is heavily utilized, its use is limited to small and mid-size manufacturers with strong financial statements.

Enterprise Zone Program: The State of Wisconsin provides tax incentives to new or expanding businesses whose projects will affect distressed areas. The zone is "site specific" and applies to only one business. Projects must affect distressed areas suffering from high unemployment, low incomes, declining population, declining property values, and plant closings and that have high numbers of people on public assistance. Businesses earn credits only by creating new full-time jobs or by conducting environmental remediation on a "Brownfield" site. The Region currently has four designated enterprise zones and all are located in the central sub-Region. They are: Renaissance Learning in Wisconsin Rapids; Award Flooring, and Marathon Electric in Wausau; and Lands' End in Stevens Point.

Capital Catalyst Program: Grants to local organizations that contribute matching dollars to locally-managed seed fund for investments in high-growth, technology based companies.

Qualified New Business Venture (QNBV): Early stage businesses developing innovative products, processes or services may be designated as QNBVs by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). This designation allows eligible angel investors and qualified venture capital funds to receive a tax credit based on their equity investment.

Technology Development Loan Program: Flexible lending program designed to assist high-tech startup and emerging growth companies in financing the development and launch of innovative products and services.

Seed Accelerator Program: Grants to local organizations that operate mentor-driven business modeling training programs to provide funds to participating start-ups.

Export Technical Assistance: Assistance to expand the sale of Wisconsin-made products outside of the United States and to help companies develop an export strategy.

ExporTech: Export acceleration program to help Wisconsin companies expand their global market reach through targeted export strategy development and execution.

Global Business Development Grants: Grant funding to support the growth and expansion of exports by Wisconsin companies.

Community Development Investment (CDI) Grant Program: The Community Development Investment Grant Program will support redevelopment efforts by providing financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with emphasis on, but not limited to, downtown community driven efforts. Successful recipients will demonstrate significant, measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values and/or leveraged investment by local and private partners.

DWD offers programs in vocational rehabilitation, employee training, child care establishment, and adult apprenticeship programs in construction, services, and industrial/ manufacturing activities, among others.

Fast Forward Program : Wisconsin Fast Forward is a $15 million in grant program for employer-led, customized worker training projects. The intent is to provide essential assistance that cannot be met through an existing program. Grants will be awarded to maximize the impact of funds in catalyzing local collaboration and also encouraging the development of sustained pipelines that directly align with employer needs. The jobs of the 21st-century economy depend on these training programs.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment:
The DNR provides a comprehensive and new streamlined program that consolidates state and federal cleanups into one program (e.g., hazardous waste cleanup, underground storage tank investigation & cleanup, spill response, state-funded clean ups, and Brownfield sites). Assistance is also provided to businesses seeking to clean up and re-use existing Brownfield sites for commercial, public or green space uses. The DNR also inventories Brownfield sites through their Tracking System (BRRTS) and Geographic Information (GIS) registry. These databases connect to statewide information about contaminated sites, spills, cleanups and other data.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA):
WHEDA is responsible for a number of housing and economic development functions. WHEDA works with local and state economic development professionals, businesses, and lending institutions to help an individual expand or modernize a farm or business. WHEDA offers guarantee programs, participation lending programs, a venture debt fund, a Wisconsin equity investment fund, Small Business Guarantees (WSBG), direct loans, New Market Tax Credits, and interest rate subsidies are utilized within a financial package to help ensure that the project has the best chance for long term success.

Other state resources include:

Business in the Wausau Business Campus

Impact Seven, Inc., is one of more recognizable statewide organizations that provide micro-loans for small business start-ups and expansions (Source: www.impactseven.org) The Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC) also provides micro-loans to predominately women, people of color, and those with lower incomes (Source: www.wwbic.com). The Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation provides financial assistance and resources to business and lenders throughout the state (Source: www.wbd.org).

Federal Programs

Economic Development Administration (EDA):

The EDA is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce focusing on providing financial assistance to meet the economic development needs of distressed communities. EDA works with states, Regions, and communities to assist in the creation of wealth and minimize poverty using capacity-building and planning techniques as well as research grants and strategic initiatives. All EDA investments must be targeted in areas that demonstrate need or economic distress and, out of those qualifying communities; assistance is directed toward those projects that will generate long-term economic growth.

EDA's programs include:

1. Public Works Program – empowers distressed communities to revitalize, expand, or upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment. Examples of past investments include water and sewer facilities, industrial access roads, rail spurs, port improvements, skill-training facilities, technology related infrastructure, as well as the demolition, renovation, and construction of publicly owned facilities.
2. Economic Adjustment Program – assists state and local interests in the design and implementation of strategies to adjust or bring about a change in economy due to industrial or corporate restructuring, natural disaster, reduction in defense expenditures, depletion of natural resources, or new federal laws or requirements.
3. Technical Assistance Program – often supports feasibility studies on potential economic development projects to help fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent local leaders in distressed areas from making optimal decisions on economic development issues. Often these studies involve evaluations of proposals for industrial parks or business incubators. Sometimes, however, these funds may be used to sponsor conferences, develop revitalization plans, or to establish Geographic Information Systems for local planning and development purposes.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA):

The SBA provides financial, technical, and management assistance to help citizens start, run, and grow their businesses. The SBA has many programs focused primarily on making business loans and providing counseling and training programs for small businesses.

SBA's Certified Development Company (504) Loan Program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. 504 loans can be used to fund land purchases and improvements, grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping, construction of new facilities, or modernization, renovation, or conversion of existing facilities. A Certified Development Company (CDC) is a nonprofit corporation set up to contribute to the economic development of its community. The Region utilizes the statewide Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation to access this program.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development:

USDA Rural Development provides a wide range of programs to assist in community and economic development in farm and rural areas across the US. While the USDA's housing, empowerment, and utility programs are beneficial to the stability of communities, it is their business and cooperative programs that are the most directly applied to economic development.

1. Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program - helps create jobs and stimulates rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses. This program provides guarantees up to 90 percent of a loan made by a commercial lender. Loan proceeds may be used for working capital, machinery and equipment, buildings and real estate, and certain types of debt refinancing. The primary purpose is to create and maintain employment and improve the economic climate in rural communities.
2. Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) – finances business facilities and community development

projects in rural areas. This is achieved through loans made by the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) to intermediaries. Intermediaries re-lend funds to ultimate recipients for business facilities or community development. Intermediaries establish revolving loan funds so collections from loans made to ultimate recipients in excess of necessary operating expenses and debt payments will be used for more loans to ultimate recipients.

3. Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG) – RDBG is a competitive grant designed to support targeted technical assistance, training, and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas that have fewer than 50 employees and less than $1 million in gross revenues. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EOA Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA's Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfields activities. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters.

Economic Development Opportunities

The City of Wausau strives to be a dynamic, successful, diversified, and sustainable community where citizens are proud to be engaged and businesses are proud to invest. One of Wausau's strengths is its diverse economic base, including manufacturing, construction, retailing, banking, insurance and health, legal, accounting, engineering, and other professional services. This diversity is in part due to the central location and long-standing tradition of being North Central Wisconsin's economic hub. The purpose of the economic and community development department is to stimulate Wausau's economy by improving the community image, cultivating a professional lifestyle atmosphere, growing the local workforce, and supporting entrepreneurs and business growth.

The following is a list of economic opportunities identified by city leadership. By addressing the issues identified earlier in this section, and taking advantage of the various opportunities, the city of Wausau can ensure economic growth in the city and region for years to come.

- The city has a well-diversified economy with strong employment in a variety of sectors creating economic resiliency.
- Wausau is the central business district and urban metro area for the northern region. The city can position itself to be a great destination for people interested in higher density living (mixed-use and multi-family housing), an urban lifestyle, and walkable access to city amenities and employment opportunities.
- The city can continue to utilize their TIF districts to help businesses expand and relocate.
- Access to a strong education system (K-12, UW-Marathon County, and Northcentral Technical College) the city can collaborate with the education system to increase the quality of workforce in the city and help develop niche occupational markets.
- There are three large redevelopments taking place (River East, West Side, and Thomas Street) that can reinvigorate the city and encourage additional development. Successful development of these three sites will significantly increase the city's ability to market itself to current and future businesses and residents.
- Continue to redevelop the river front utilizing the best natural resource in the city and maximizing land values.
- Invest in developments that appeal to young professionals and accommodate the large portion of the region's population preparing for retirement.
- Continue to build off the success of the Wausau Education and Incubator Center increasing the entrepreneurial and innovative environment in the city.
- Work with the University of Wisconsin system and local for-profit schools to add 4 year college programs.
- Participate in regional discussions on marketing and recruitment and how the communities surrounding the city can partner on marketing campaigns.
- There are several emerging industries that show great promise in the city.
- Average wages in the city are higher than wages in the county and state. The city has the opportunity to attract the best workers with higher wages. The ability to provide high paying jobs in close proximity to new housing developments will help attract workers to the city and stimulate the local retail and food services economies.
- Regional collaboration with surrounding communities to create a county industrial park.

General Development Strategies

There are five basic areas of economic development strategies that should be used to promote economic development activity in the city of Wausau. The comprehensive strategy should address all five of the areas in some way.

Retention

Retention means keeping the local firms that already exist

in the area. The goal is to assist these firms as needed to stay profitable. All economic development efforts should view retention as the first and most important goal.

Expansion
Working with local businesses to promote expansions can lead to a stronger economy. Expansion leads to the creation of new employment and more profits, therefore expansion is a boon to local economies.

Creation
The creation of new businesses in a community has obvious benefits. Rather than luring the businesses into the community, the businesses are "home-grown". These types of businesses are usually small in the beginning, but have the potential to grow into larger businesses.

Attraction
The basic premise behind attraction is to bring, or recruit, an existing business to locate their headquarters or a branch within the community. The may be achieved through a combination of economic incentives, marketing, and local amenities.

Workforce
Supplying a workforce with the knowledge, skills, and abilities is key to economic growth. The ability to attract and retain workers is instrumental in attracting and retaining businesses and allowing them to expand their services. Companies are drawn to locations that have access to the best workforce.

Economic Development Issues

A variety of issues have been identified during the planning process. Some of those issues are listed below:

Vision: The city's current vision and goals needs stronger cohesion and buy in from decision makers. Leadership has a variety of ideas, but the ideas lack the necessary analysis and strategy for implementation. Current efforts focus on all sectors, not specific sectors that have the best potential in the city.

3M Industrial Facility

Plan Utilization: The 2006 comprehensive plan is greatly underutilized by the economic development committeeand city council.

Economic Drivers: Two historically strong sectors, Manufacturing and Finance and Insurance, lost employment over the past five years and are projected to continue to lose employment opportunities.

Limited Industrial Space : There is a lack of available land to expand and attract large manufacturing and other industrial businesses. The west side industrial park is close to capacity and the city lacks the land for a second industrial park.

Tax Rates: Businesses located in the city, or looking to locate in the city, have the perception that the taxes in Wausau are higher than surrounding communities.

Entertainment and Food Accommodations: The city currently lacks the necessary number of businesses that offer entertainment and food options to help attract and retain young professionals.

Labor Force: Projections indicate that the city and Wausau region will lack a sufficient supply of labor force to meet the projected job growth. They city and region must do a better job attracting people to the area or risk the loss of area businesses.

Short Commutes: Short commutes and little to no congestion allows workers to easily commute into the city for work. These workers earn good salaries, but spend their money in the surrounding communities where they live, not in Wausau.

Riverfront Utilization: The city currently underutilizes its best natural resource, the river-front. However, proposals have been received to redevelop a key section of riverfront on the east side which includes roughly 300 housing units and a mixed use of business and retail.

Business Retention and Expansion: The city and county do not have business retention and expansion programs. As a result, proactive efforts to help businesses expand and stay in the city are complicated.

Regional Collaboration: Regional communication is poor. Currently, communities compete against each other for businesses and market themselves individually rather than as an entire region.

Marketing: The city currently has an underfunded marketing plan and does not have a clear marketing strategy. The city is unaware of who their market is and how to reach them.

Regional Leadership: The County currently lacks an economic development strategy that identifies the role the city of Wausau plays in growing the regional economy.

University System: The city and Wausau area does not have a four year university.

The Wausau Center: The downtown mall has lost a number of tenants and is in need of support and revitalization. Closure of this mall could drastically affect the downtown retail environment.

Goal, Objectives, and Action Steps

Economic Development Goal: The City of Wausau has a diverse economy that is a place of opportunities where people and businesses can grow and be successful.

Objectives and Action Steps

Objective 1: Stimulate community and economic growth and development, supporting business expansion and retention in competitive sectors.

1. Encourage business expansion, retention and vertical integration, especially in our competitive sectors such as manufacturing, information technology, insurance, healthcare, and construction.

2. Work to reduce the City's property tax rate to ensure it is not a barrier to new development, business activities, or property ownerships.

3. Provide an environment that encourages expansion and retention of existing businesses through networking and making resources available to foster growth.

4. Identify and prioritize areas where tax increment financing (TIF) can be used to facilitate economic development.

5. Develop and maintain an up-to-date database of vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial land and buildings. The database should include in-depth information on properties that are available for private development.

6. Consider developing revitalization plans for select commercial corridors, such as Grand Avenue, First Avenue, Third Avenue, Sixth Street, Thomas Street, and Merrill Avenue.

7. Identify barriers and competitive disadvantages affecting the City and develop a plan to mitigate these issues.

8. Continue to use Unified Development District zoning in commercial areas to encourage and facilitate high quality, mixed use development that is acceptable to neighboring property owners.

Northcentral Technical College

Objective 2: Cultivate a professional lifestyle environment that attracts and retains professionals and business, developing quality public infrastructure and municipal services which support business expansion and diversification and improves quality of life.

1. Build on a knowledge-based economy which values both professional skill development and personal intellectual growth

2. Promote urban amenities and density that encourages infill development of existing neighborhoods, values historic properties, encourages walkability and complete streets

3. Enhance our built and natural environments, especially those that can engage the Wisconsin River and Downtown

4. Continue to promote and encourage the state to invest in technology infrastructure allowing the city to compete for technology businesses and industry.

Objective 3: Collaborate with our regional municipalities, corporate partners, and local nonprofits and foundations to develop and commit to a shared economic vision of our region.

1. Encourage Marathon County government leaders to partner with the City on some of Wausau's economic development activities that have broad, regional impacts. An area suitable for development as an industrial park should be identified, if possible, within the long-term growth area on the City's east side. An industrial park in the vicinity of the Eastern Arterial (CTH X) would have good transportation linkages.

2. Coordinate economic development activities between the City of Wausau, Marathon County, and other communities within the urban area to assure there is not a duplication of economic development services and to minimize the creation of competing publicly-funded economic development activities.

3. Maintain existing and create new private/public partnerships to demonstrate the community's commitment to, and support for, economic expansion.

4. Continue to seek outside sources of revenue to fund many of the facilities and services that reach a larger population base than just Wausau residents.

5. Work with municipal partners and educational institutions to create a knowledge-based economy that provides a variety of educational options to increase professional skill development and personal intellectual growth.

Objective 4: Develop an entrepreneur environment that supports and encourages entrepreneurs and business growth

1. Embrace economic and social diversity which promotes local resiliency and opens opportunities for entrepreneurship.

2. Encourage the incubation of new local firms and support entrepreneurs with technical, collaborative, and administrative services through the Wausau Business Development Center.

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Chapter Seven
Downtown

This is the seventh of ten chapters that comprise the Wausau Comprehensive Plan. This element is not based on the statutory requirement, but on the understanding that downtown Wausau is the central business district for the community. A thriving and successful downtown attracts new people, stimulates additional investment into the community, and ensures employment opportunities in key employment sectors. As goes the downtown, goes the city.

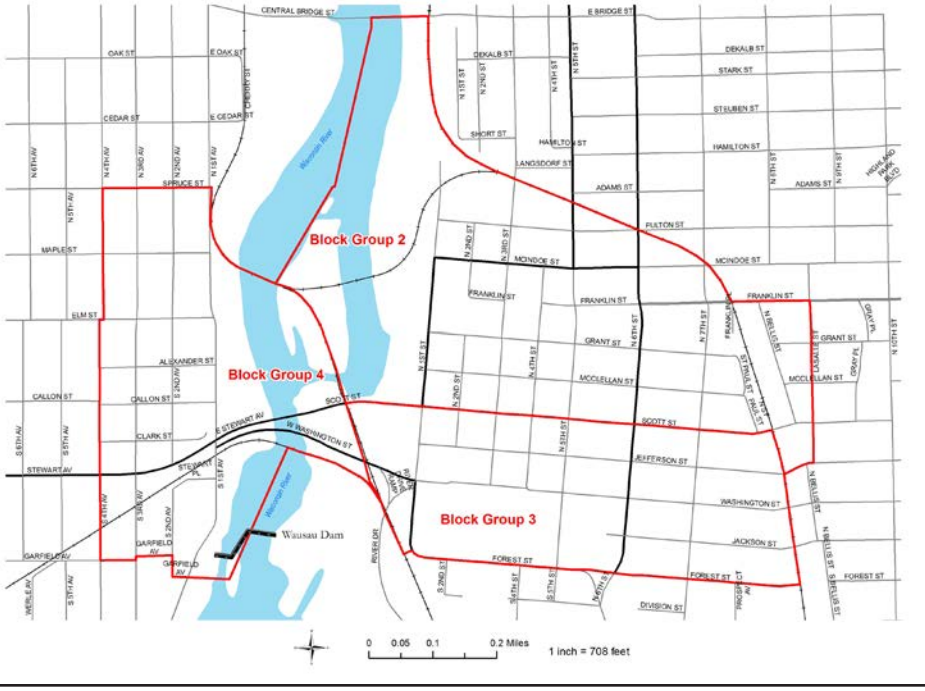
Geographic Location

The geographic boundaries of the downtown are vague and vary from organization to organization. The Riverfront District defines the downtown area by the Business Improvement District. The BID encompasses all businesses from 3rd Avenue to 6th Street and from Elm Street to Stewart Avenue on the west side of the river and Grant Street to Washington Street on the east side of the river.

The Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce recently identified different boundaries in their application to become one of America's Best Communities". In this application, the downtown area extended from 3rd Avenue to 6th Street and from Forest Street to Wausau Avenue on the east side of the river and Elm Street to Stewart Avenue on the west side of the river.

For this section of the comprehensive plan, the geographical boundary of the downtown area will be defined by the US Census. The downtown area will be tract 1, block groups 2, 3, and 4 of the US Census. see **Figure 2**. These block groups include all properties south to north from Forest to Fulton on the east side of the river, Garfield Avenue to

Figure 2: Downtown Block Groups



Spruce Street on the west side of the river, and west to east from 4th Avenue to La Salle Street. Properties north of the railroad tracks on the east side are not included in the downtown area.

Previous Studies

Wausau Comprehensive Plan, 2006

In February of 2006, the common council adopted ordinance number 61-5283, thereby adopting the City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan includes an economic development element discussing the various economic issues and opportunities in the City of Wausau. Key opportunities included development on the riverfront and the need to invest in the downtown.

Central Business District (CBD) Master Plan, 2000

In January of 2000, the Common Council adopted the Central Business District Master Plan as an element of the City's Master Plan. The plan focuses primarily on the part of the community generally bounded by Third Avenue, Sixth Street, Bridge Street, and Thomas Street. The plan contains a vision statement, general goals for the CBD, and many specific recommendations focused on land use, redevelopment activities, transportation, streetscape, and urban design. Central Business District (CBD) Master Plan (2000) - As one of its first orders of business in the new millennium, the Wausau Common Council adopted a CBD Master Plan on January 11, 2000, as an element of the City's Master Plan. The CBD Master Plan was prepared by the City's Comprehensive Planning Committee with the assistance of a Madison, Wisconsin consulting firm, CityVision Associates. Work on the plan began in March, 1999, and focused on that part of the community generally bounded by Third Avenue, Sixth Street, Bridge Street, and Thomas Street. The planning process, which involved considerable citizen input and meetings with elected and appointed officials, resulted in a 50-page document intended to guide the future development of the CBD. The plan contains a vision statement, general goals for the CBD, and many specific recommendations focused on land use, redevelopment activities, transportation, streetscape, and urban design. The document also details an implementation strategy for carrying out many of the plan's recommendations.

The community's vision for downtown as articulated in the plan is: "*Downtown Wausau is the heart of the City and surrounding region. It is the nerve center of retail trade, financial transactions and governmental activities in the region. Downtown Wausau gives our community and those who identify with Wausau a strong sense of place. More than any other part of the City, downtown defines Wausau as a community. City officials, business leaders and residents from throughout the Wausau Urban Area recognize the importance of downtown to our heritage and to our future. They are vitally interested in strengthening the social, cultural and economic position of downtown for the betterment of everyone.*"

For downtown Wausau, the next 20 years will not simply be a continuation of the past. There will be dramatic changes in many of the elements that help define our downtown. Redevelopment of the riverfront for open space and public purpose and connecting this area to the commercial core will enhance the area's appeal to all visitors. Expansion of civic, cultural and entertainment spaces and programs will help create renewed business and visitor interest in downtown.

Downtown Wausau's unique architectural and physical character will have renewed vibrancy. People from throughout the region will recognize downtown's uniqueness and gather here to work, shop and enjoy the many available social, cultural and entertainment options. The physical improvements made to the downtown and the heightened activity in the central area will help generate new employment opportunities and stimulate interest in living downtown.

Since its adoption, many of the recommendations contained in the Master Plan have been further tested, evaluated, rejected, modified, or implemented.

Near West Master Plan, 2008

In June of 2008, the Common Council adopted the Near West Side Master Plan. The Near West area is defined by Elm Street on the north, 4th Avenue on the west, Stewart Avenue on the south, and the Wisconsin River on the east. The Near West Side Neighborhood is an important part of the Wausau CBD. The City and Wausau Main Street have focused their efforts on the redevelopment and revitalization of the historic Downtown on the east side of the river. The City also adopted a North Downtown Area Master Plan. The West Side Master Plan is the remaining CBD area to be planned and provides comprehensive recommendations to guide public and private improvements over the next 15-20 years that will ensure the long-term economic vitality of the Central Business District.

North Downtown Area, 2005

The North Downtown Area Master Plan was adopted by Common Council in 2005. The North Downtown Area is bordered by Bridge Street on the north, N. 3rd Avenue on the west, N 6th Street on the east, and McIndoe Street (east side of the river), and Maple Street (west side of the river) on the south. The purpose of the plan is to provide recommendations that will update the adopted Wausau Central Business District Master Plan and provide direction to Main Street Wausau and the City of Wausau on project goals and priorities for the North Downtown Area.

River Edge Master Plan, 1995

In June of 1995 the Common Council adopted the River Edge Master Plan as a component of the City master plan. The plan identifies long and short term strategies for improving public access to the City's most important natural resource- the Wisconsin River. This master plan provides a framework for protecting and enhancing the scenic beauty of the river corridor and outlines activities, programs, and projects that improve the public's ability to enjoy this resource. The master plan addresses many management and use issues related to the Wisconsin River, with a focus on continuing development of the River Edge Parkway. Completion of the River Edge Parkway was identified as the central focus for public and private expenditures within the river corridor. It is generally felt that the parkway will stimulate other development within the river edge corridor.

East Riverfront District Plan, 2015

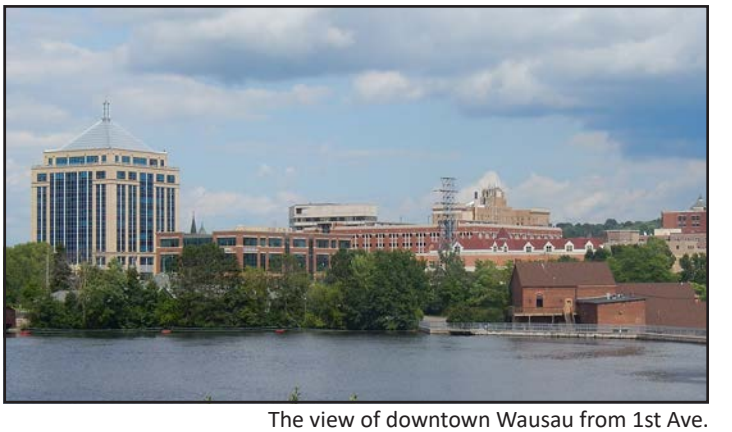
The East Riverfront District Plan is the most recent plan developed for the City focusing on riverfront development. The East Riverfront Plan is the result of the purchase of 16 acres of land on the east bank of the Wisconsin River south of Bridge Street as recommended in the North Downtown Area Master Plan. The plan includes recommendations that link the area to the downtown and general guidelines for building design and land use. Brownfield cleanup is nearing completion allowing for full plan implementation. The plan includes a variety of public and private uses ranging from park space (kayaking, boat wharf, public trail), multiuse space, and residential.

Downtown Wayfinding Plan, 2015

In May of 2015, the City of Wausau was recognized by Frontier Communications as one of the 50 finalist for the America's Best Community contest. The application submitted by the Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of the City of Wausau, was to design and implement a wayfinding system in the downtown area. Corbin Design was awarded the project and developed a complete wayfinding plan including: sign content, sign design, sign location, artistic opportunities, and a staged implementation plan based on the various levels of potential awards in the contest. The plan was completed in November of 2015 and submitted to the 2nd round of America's Best Community competition to complete for one of ten $100,000 awards. The $100,000 award will go towards to first stage of implementation which includes the downtown area, riverfront, and west side districts. The plan also includes a full city wayfinding strategy should the city be selected as a top 3 community; awards for the top three winners range from $1 million for 3rd place to $3 million for 1st place.

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's Regional Livability Plan (RLP) was adopted in 2015 as an update to their Regional Comprehensive Plan. The plan comprehensively discusses how transportation, housing, economic development, and land use affect livability in the region. The RLP provides a variety of goals, objectives, and strategies to increase livability specifically emphasizing the downtown community. The plan recommends higher density developments providing residents with quick and easy access to a variety of amenities.



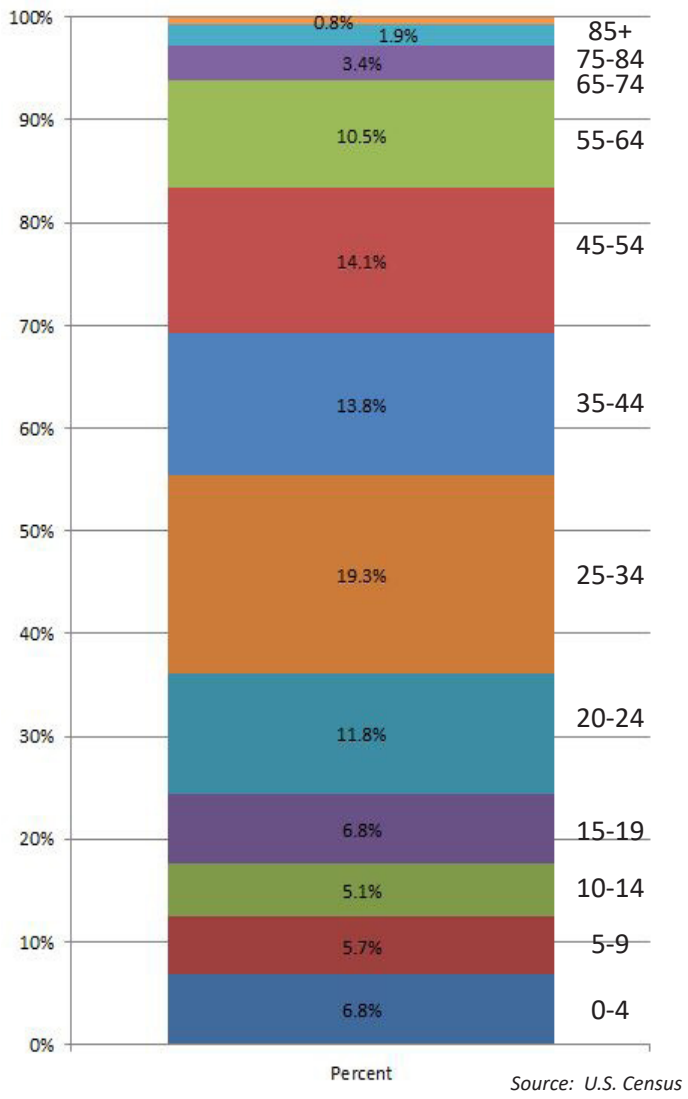
The view of downtown Wausau from 1st Ave.

Inventory & Trends

The data comprised for this section includes all properties in tract 1, block groups 2, 3, and 4 according to the US Census. This data can help identify current trends and issues in the downtown economy and housing sectors. This information can be used to create benchmarks for downtown goals and objectives and should be monitored over the period of the plan to measure progress in the downtown area.

A highly concentrated population in the downtown district is vital to the success of the city of Wausau. Housing and businesses in the downtown area utilize existing infrastructure and provide better access to employment opportunities, entertainment, restaurants, and retail which strengthens the downtown community and the city as a whole. Living and working in a closer proximity to key amenities provided in the downtown also reduces the reliance on automobiles ensuring that all residents living and working in the downtown area have convenient access to the various amenities of the downtown. Less vehicle traffic also provides a safer experience for pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging more active modes of transportation. The downtown district is the heart of the city of Wausau and the ability for people to access the programs, services, and amenities is crucial to future population attraction and retention and the economy. A strong downtown improves the economy by adding employment opportunities, utilizes existing infrastructure, improves the environment by eliminating the need for vehicle transportation, protects the surrounding open land in the city, and ensures that all people living in Wausau have easy and reliable access to key services and amenities.

Chart 4: Downtown Population by Age



Source: U.S. Census

Population

In 2013, the population in the city of Wausau was 39,207 people. Roughly 5 percent of the city's population lived in the downtown area accounting for 2,120 people. Total population in the city increased two percent between 2000 and 2013, but the population in the downtown area decreased 11.7 percent during that same time period. While most of the city's existing infrastructure is located in the downtown area, only a small percentage of the population is utilizing that infrastructure by living in the downtown. More residents are choosing to live outside of the downtown area where more costly infrastructure is required due to lower density developments.

The median age of residents in the downtown area is 31.5 years of age. Roughly 70 percent of the residents are between the ages of 20 and 65, see **Chart 4**, considered prime working ages. Residents aged 25-34 make up roughly 20 percent of the downtown population, the highest single cohort. Research shows that younger generations are more interested in living in fun, vibrant downtown communities that offer a variety of modes of transportation. The city must continue to provide different services, programs, and amenities in the downtown area to attract the millennial generation and increase the percentage of population in the downtown area between the ages of 20 and 35. The attraction of this cohort is essential to meet the employment needs of area businesses who are struggling to fill open positions.

As noted in the issues and opportunities section, the city and region is experiencing a significant increase in the percentage of population over 65 years of age. Studies show that this age cohort is also interested in a thriving downtown with various amenities and services and is interested in living in more walkable and dense communities. The city of Wausau has the opportunity to grow the city's population and increase downtown property values by developing the downtown area into a higher density community with direct access to employment, residential, amenities, and service options.

The population in the downtown area is slightly more diverse than the total population of the city. In 2013, just over 75 percent of the downtown population was white, compared to 81.5 percent of the city's population. Similar to the city population, the second highest representation of one race is Asian. Almost 11 percent of the population in the downtown area identifies as Asian, compared to 12.5 percent of the total population in the city.

The ability to attract a variety of people with different physical, cultural, and socio-economic characteristics will ensure that the downtown area continues to be the community center for activity while enhancing the community's social and cultural environment.

Housing

The availability of housing in the downtown area that is of high quality and offers a variety of styles helps attract full time residents. Increasing the population after 5:00pm in the core downtown area allows businesses to remain open providing a central entertainment area for the entire population. An increase in full time residents in the downtown also encourages businesses to stay open on the weekend as they have access to more customers. Currently, many businesses are closed after 6:00pm and few are open on Sunday. This results in limited options in the downtown in the evenings and on the weekends for visitors and residents. To encourage more people to live in the downtown area, the downtown neighborhoods need to include newer homes that fit the lifestyle of millennials and empty nester baby boomers who are interested in living in an area with easy walkable access to a variety of amenities and services.

Total housing units in the downtown area decreased 19 percent between 2000 and 2013 while total units in the city increased by 1,581 units. The downtown area's 845 housing units in 2013 accounted for just 5 percent of the city's housing stock. The city is increasing its overall population and housing units, but newer residents are choosing to live outside of the downtown area where newer housing options exist.

The variety of housing styles in the downtown area is somewhat limited. A majority of the housing units in the area are single family, roughly 35 percent of all units, see **Table 30**. Duplexes, or two unit structures, account for the second highest percentage at 25 percent of all housing units. Over 60 percent of the entire downtown housing stock is either one or two unit structures. The lack of multifamily housing options provides limited rent options for low and moderate income people. The downtown area does include 132 units that are in structures between 5 and 9 units.

However, a majority of those units are single family homes converted into multifamily housing units. These homes are older and are not specifically set up for multifamily accommodations. More recently, the city of Wausau has assisted in the building of two larger apartments or condos specifically targeting low to moderate incomes; Trolley Quarter Flats and the Federal Building. These developments account for almost all of the 10 to 49 multifamily units. The landmark building, located on 3rd Street and Scott is the only structure in Wausau that has 50 or more units. The creation of more multifamily housing options will not only increase property values in the downtown area, but will provide housing opportunities for more people growing the downtown population. This increase in population will have direct access to downtown businesses resulting in an increase in customers for businesses after normal working hours (8am to 5pm).

Roughly three quarters (73.5%) of the downtown housing units were built before 1939, see **Table 31**. The downtown area has not had a new housing unit built since 1999. Over 92 percent of the housing stock was built prior to 1970. The lack of new and renovated housing in the downtown area is not attractive to potential residents. A limited percentage of the population is interested and capable of purchasing and rehabilitating an older home. Furthermore, investment into an older home and rehabilitating it is only financially viable if other housing units in the area are also being rehabilitated; increasing their home value. This currently is not happening in the downtown area enough to encourage investment in the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock.

The decrease in total housing units between 2000 and 2013 accounted for the large decrease in occupied units. The number of occupied units decreased 22.5 percent over the time period, see **Chart 5**. While the downtown area decreased total units by 199 units, an additional 7 units went vacant. As a result, 16 percent of the 845 units were vacant in 2013, a four percent net increase from 2000. Although the number of vacant units increased over the time period, the number of available units did not.

Table 30: Downtown Type of Structure, 2013

	Number	*Percent*
1 Unit	293	35%
2 Unit	215	25%
3 or 4 units	73	9%
5 to 9 Units	132	16%
10 to 19 Units	40	5%
20 to 49 Units	8	1%
50 or More Units	84	10%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 31: Downtown Age of Housing Unit

	Total	*% of Total*
2010 or later	0	0.00%
2000-2009	0	0.00%
1990-1999	15	1.80%
1980-1989	48	5.70%
1970-1979	0	0.00%
1960-1969	52	6.20%
1950-1959	79	9.30%
1940-1949	30	3.60%
1939 or earlier	621	73.50%

Source: U.S. Census

In 2013, the downtown area had 136 vacant units. Of those 136 units, only 20 were available for rent, see **Table 32**. That is a reduction of 65 rental units between 2000 and 2013. The biggest increase in the number of vacant units is accounted for in housing units used for seasonal and recreational use. Roughly 35 percent of all vacant housing units in the downtown area were seasonal or recreational use in 2013, a 380 percent increase from 2000.The increase in seasonal housing units is most likely the construction of the Jefferson Street Inn, where individual rooms are privately owned and rented as hotel rooms. While there are more vacant housing units than in 2000, there are less available for rent and none are for sale, further exacerbating the population trend of living outside of the downtown area.

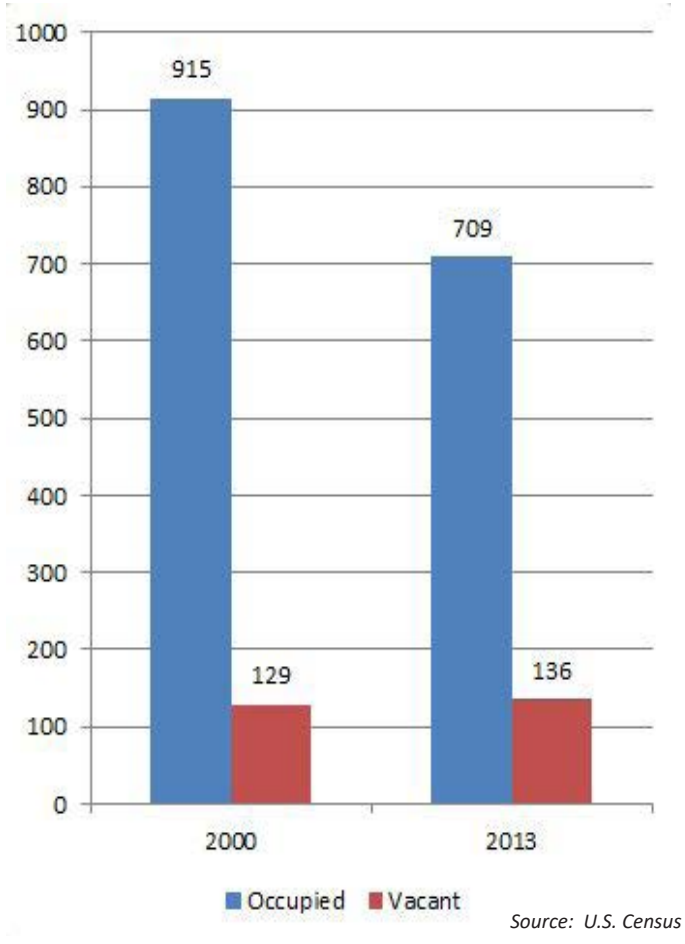
Of the 709 occupied housing units in the downtown area, 496 of them, or 70 percent, were rentals in 2013. The total percentage of households occupied by renters experienced a net percentage decreased of 8 percent over the 13 year period. Owner occupied housing units increased 7 percent over the time period from 200 in 2000 to 213 in 2013. The decrease in the number of rental households over the 13 year period indicates that the 19 percent decrease in total housing units was primarily, if not entirely, rental units.

Roughly 1,400 people lived in the 496 rental units in the downtown area in 2013. The decrease in rental units over the 13 year period resulted in a decrease in population living in rental units. However, more people on average lived in a single rental unit. The average person per rental household was 2.8 people in 2013, compared to 2.11 per household in 2000. The average number of people living in an owner occupied housing unit was roughly 2.0 people per household. A total of 432 people lived in the 213 owner occupied housing units. The average household size in 2000 was 2.74 people per household. While owner occupied households are getting smaller, the average size of rental households are getting larger. The increase in the average household size of rentals could be the result of the reduction in total rental units, which has led to an increase in demand and therefore monthly rents, requiring cohabitation to afford the increase in rent.

The increase in the average number of renters per housing unit has directly impacted the household type. The percentage of households that are nonfamily households increased 4 percent between 2000 and 2013, see **Table 33**. Nonfamily households are typically single family housing units divided into multifamily housing units, or have more than one person paying a share of the rent. The increase in nonfamily households further supports the idea that an increase in rental prices has led to the need for cohabitation to afford the increase in rent.

The number of one person households in the downtown area was the preferred household size in 2013 accounting for 351 households. Although the number of one person households decreased 23.4 percent between 2000 and

Chart 5: Downtown Occupancy Status



Source: U.S. Census

Table 32: Downtown Housing Vacancy, 2013

	2000	*2013*	*% Change*
For rent	85	20	-76.5%
For sale only	9	0	-100.0%
Rented or sold, not occupied	7	0	-100.0%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	10	48	380.0%
For migrant workers	0	0	0.0%
Other vacant	18	68	277.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 33: Downtown Household Type

		Family Household	*Nonfamily Household*
2000	Number	374	519
	Percent	41.9%	58.1%
2013	Number	247	462
	Percent	34.8%	65.2%

Source: U.S. Census

2013, the percentage of total households that were one person remained the same at 50 percent of all households. The biggest shift in household size occurred in six and seven person households, see **Table 34**. Between 2000 and 2013, both six person and seven person households decreased 100 percent resulting in zero households of that size in 2013.The only household size that experienced an increase was 3 person households, increasing 33 percent from 88 households to 117 households.

Between 2000 and 2013, the average rent in the downtown area increased $103 per month. On average, rent in the downtown area in 2013 was $527 a month. Housing values also increased over the same time period. Home values increase roughly $14,000 from $79,433 per unit in 2000 to $93,667 per unit in 2013. The reduction in total housing units and available rentals contribute to the increase in housing value and monthly rents. The increase in housing values may have also reached a price that eliminates a portion of the population from being able to afford to purchase a home in the downtown area, thus forcing them to rent. Typically, those living in the downtown area have lower incomes and must live closer to walkable amenities and transit services to satisfy their daily needs like commuting to work and shopping at grocery stores.

Median household income in the downtown area decreased 6.7 percent over the 13 year time period from $23,485 in 2000 to $21,905 in 2013. While rents and home values increased, median incomes dropped $1,580 per year. Roughly 40 percent of the population in the downtown area earns less than $14,999 per year. The median household income in the city of Wausau in 2013 was $41,564 per year. Only 23 percent of the population in the downtown area meets or exceeds the city's median income. Over 75 percent of the downtown population makes less than the average resident in Wausau. The lower household income, combined with an increase in rent prices, creates a situation where people need to live together to pay the monthly rent or mortgage. This phenomenon would help explain the change in the household size, type, and tenure by population.

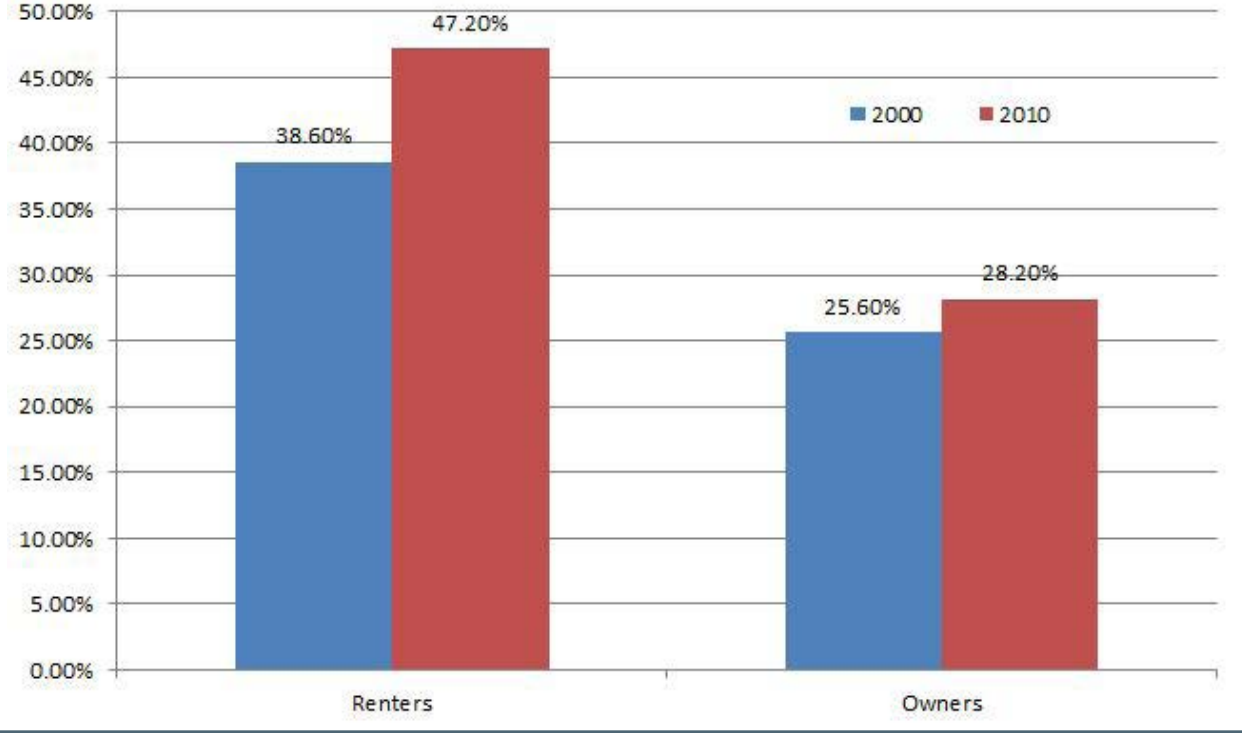
Table 34: Downtown Households by Size

	2000	*2013*	*% Change*
1 person	458	351	-23.4%
2 person	210	157	-25.2%
3 person	88	117	33.0%
4 person	62	57	-8.1%
5 person	29	27	-6.9%
6 person	22	0	-100.0%
7 or more person	46	0	-100.0%
Total	915	709	-22.5%

Source: U.S. Census

The lower median household income combined with an increase in rents also means residents are spending a larger percentage of their income on housing costs. In 2010, see **Chart 6**, over 47 percent of all renters in the downtown area reported spending more than 30 percent of their income

Chart 6: Percent of Downtown Population Spending Greater than 30% of Income on Housing, 2013



on housing. With the increase in rents and the decrease in median incomes, renters spending greater than 30 percent of their income on housing increased 8.6 percent. A lower percentage of homeowners reported spending greater than 30 percent of their income on house. Roughly 28 percent of the homeowners in 2010 reported spending greater than 30 percent of their income on housing, a 2.6 percent increase from 2000. Homeowners appear to make enough money to afford a monthly mortgage, whereas renters do not make enough money to afford the monthly rent.

To improve the housing situation in the downtown area, the city of Wausau must supply more housing options to accommodate the lower median incomes. Providing multifamily housing units will help renters struggling to afford rents in a single family home. A one bedroom apartment would be considerably less expensive per month compared to a single family home. The city must also facilitate the creation of housing developments that attract a higher earning population. Housing developments close to the river with views of the downtown, river, and Rib Mountain can help increase the disposable income in the downtown area and stimulate the downtown economy. Increasing activity in the downtown area will attract additional population and begin to create a downtown culture that is attractive to existing residents and visitors. A diverse downtown that includes a mixture of incomes, races, and ethnicities will jumpstart the redevelopment of downtown properties and transform the downtown into the region's central place of business and activity.

Economy

A healthy mix of retail, food, and professional establishments provides a variety of employment opportunities in the downtown area. With a healthy day time population the downtown area is able to attract and sustain different restaurant and retail establishments. A large majority of all businesses in the downtown area is accounted for in the Main Street Program Area, managed by the Wausau River District. The River District boundary includes almost all of U.S. Census tract 1 block groups 2, 3, and 4 with the exception of the Wausau Center.

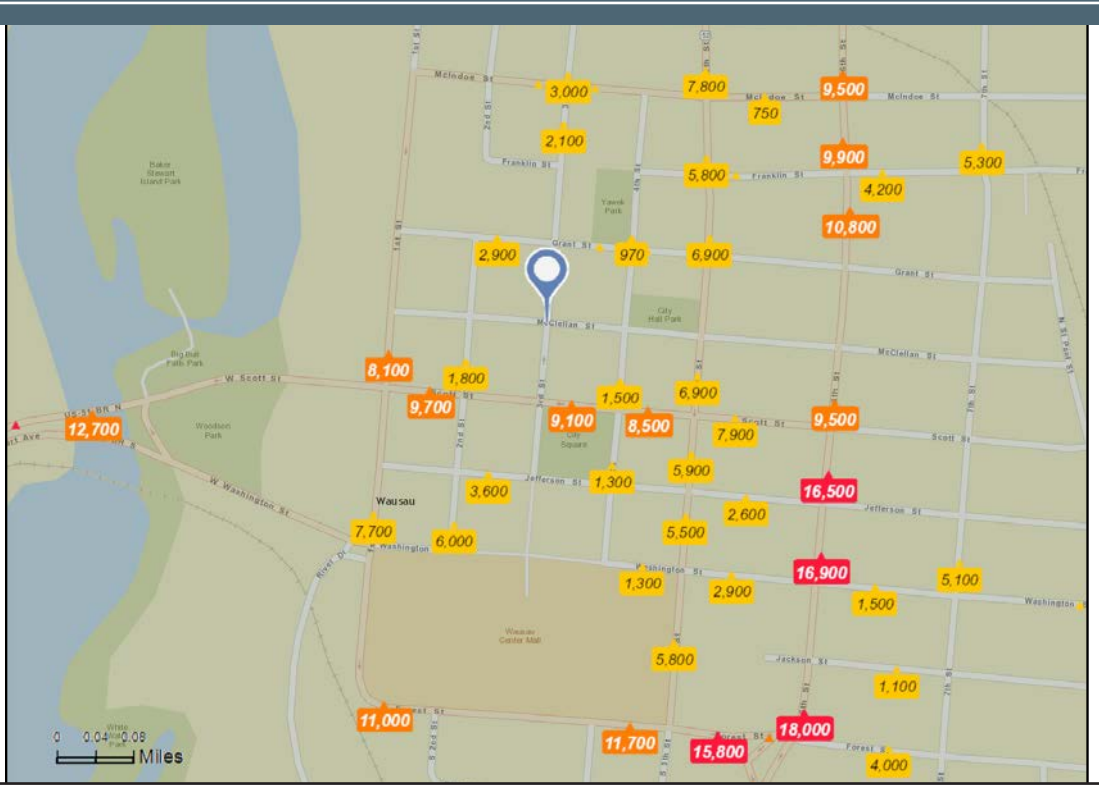
The community has identified the downtown area as a key economic driver for the community. Significant investment, both public and private, has occurred in the area over the past 15 years. Since 2000, roughly 235 buildings have been rehabbed resulting in over $100 million in public private investment. Between 2003 and 2015, total private investment in the downtown River District was $88 million and total public investment was $24 million. The average annual reinvestment into the downtown was roughly $6.3 million per year. The reinvestment into the downtown area has created an increase in businesses moving to the central business district and a renewed interest by visitors and the community in the downtown area.

According to the Wausau River District the downtown area has 520 businesses and a total employment of 4,748 people. Between 2003 and 2013, the River District area increased by 92 businesses and 1,003 jobs. Downtown employment accounts for roughly 16 percent of the total employment in the City. Shopping and restaurant businesses account for the largest percentage of businesses in the downtown, 35 percent and 19 percent respectively. Professional businesses account for 16 percent of all businesses, followed by Services (11%) and Entertainment (8%). With such a high percentage of businesses in the retail and restaurant industries, the downtown area is dependent on visitors coming to the area as there are not enough daytime employees and full time residents to sufficiently sustain such a high percentage of businesses in the food and retail industries. ESRI Business Analyst indicates that the total population within a 5 minute drive of downtown in 2015 was 16,666 people with a median disposable income of $29,307.

As the economic seat for Marathon County, Wausau is known as a destination for dining, shopping, and entertainment, drawing visitors and customers from a 60 plus mile radius. According to the department of Tourism, in 2013 the average daily traffic into the downtown area was 20,700 vehicles. A majority of the daily traffic enters the downtown via Washington Street from the West, Grand Avenue from the South, and 5th Street from the North, see **Figure 3**. In addition to the services and amenities in the downtown area, Wausau Events and the River District produce roughly 65 events. Downtown events and tourism generated 180,200 visitors in 2014. Visitor spending in 2014 exceeded $16 million, 50 percent of which was spent on logging (25%) and food and beverage (25%). Other major destinations in the downtown area include: Marathon County Library (245,000 annual visitors), Jefferson Street Inn (23,270 annual visitors), Grand Theater (130,000 annual visitors), and the Eye Clinic (45,000 annual visitors).

The retail, food, and entertainment marketplace in the downtown area is essential in attracting and retaining population. A strong retail marketplace provides an exciting atmosphere for people to eat, shop, and play. According to the International Conference on Shopping Centers, in 2011 annual retail sales in the downtown area equaled $184.5 million and annual restaurant sales equaled $8.2 million. ESRI Retail Marketplace Analysis identifies that 209 retail and restaurant businesses within a 5 minute drive of downtown (McClellan and 3rd Street) had total sales greater than $500 million in 2015, see **Table 35**. The $500 million in sales was roughly $367 million more than the area's population within 5 minutes spent on food ($13.2 million) and retail ($121.7 million), indicating that consumers come into the downtown area to eat and shop. Visitors to the downtown

Figure 3: Downtown Traffic



area spent roughly $357.4 million on retail and $10.2 million on food and drink in 2015.

The area within 5 minutes of downtown has a surplus (business sales are higher in the area than the total money spent by residents in the area) in all but 4 major industries. The downtown area has a leakage (money spent by residents in the area is higher than reported sales in area) of money in Motor Vehicle and Parks Dealers, Electronics and Appliance Stores, Building Materials/Garden Equipment/ Supply Stores, and Gasoline Stations, see **Table 36**. The downtown area does have additional leakage in Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores, Other General Merchandise Stores, and Full-Service Restaurants. Industries with leakage indicate potential businesses that could be recruited to the downtown area.

Table 35: Downtown Retail Trade and Food & Drink Gap

Industry	*Demand*	*Supply*	*Retail Gap*	*Number of Businesses*
Retail Trade	$121,740,203	$479,134,955	-$357,394,752	159
Food and Drink	$13,228,408	$23,481,140	-$10,252,732	50
Total	$134,968,611	$502,616,095	-$367,647,484	209

Source: ESRI

Table 36: Downtown Business Leakage

Industry	*Demand*	*Supply*	*Retail Gap*	*Number of Businesses*
Motor Vehicle and Parts	$25,156,164	6,980,074	$18,176,090	7
Electronics and Appliance Store	$3,958,616	$2,518,616	$1,440,000	2
Building Materials, Garden Equipment, and Supply Stores	$3,979,406	$3,310,905	$668,501	7
Gasoline Stations	$14,956,453	$11,516,675	$3,439,778	4
Beer, Wine, Liquor Stores	$927,420	$0	$927,420	0
Other General Merchandise Stores	$9,834,063	$0	$9,834,063	0
Full-Service Restaurants	$4,777,232	$3,331,471	$1,445,761	11

Source: ESRI

Economic Development Organizations

Local Economic Development Capacity

There are five organizations in the community that focus on downtown developments and activities. These are: Central Wausau Progress, Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitor Bureau, Wausau River District, and Wausau Events.

Central Wausau Progress

Central Wausau Progress is fully member supported organization that exists to be a forum and facilitator for key community resources focused on the future of our community and to help catalyze the development and vitality of the Central Wausau area. Central Wausau Progress has existed for over forty years in Wausau. During that time the organization has helped with many downtown community projects, such as the Wausau Center Mall, the Wausau Library, the Wausau Gateway Project, and Riverside Place and with the formation of key community organizations such as the Wausau River District and the Wausau Business Improvement District.

Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB)

The CVB actively recruits visitors to the Wausau Region by hosting national and regional sporting events. Specifically, the Badger State games is the largest event hosted by the CVB bringing visitors from all over the state to Wausau to compete in both winter and summer sporting events. The CVB promotes downtown attractions, restaurants, hotels, and events to outside visitors.

Wausau River District, Inc. (Main Street)

Wausau River District, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the places and businesses that make the River District a vibrant center of commerce and community life for the benefit of the entire Wausau community. The organization works to promote the businesses located in the downtown riverfront district by promoting sales, hosting events like First Thursday's, and providing maps and promotional materials to help visitors and community members find businesses.

Wausau Events

Wausau Events, Inc. is a 501 © 3 non-profit organization dedicated to the vision of Creating Community through Events by enhancing the quality of life that the Wausau area is known for. Most of the events are offered free of charge. This is made possible by the generous support of many businesses, organizations, and individuals. Main downtown events hosted by Wausau Events include Winter Fest, Concerts on the Square (Every Wednesday from June to August), Marketplace Thursday (Farmers Market on the Square), Screen on the Green, Chalkfest, Big Bull Falls Blues Fest and Rock the 400 Block.

City of Wausau Community & Economic Development

The City of Wausau is committed to be both strategic and tactical in the goal of continually improving Downtown Wausau. The City continues to promote downtown as a visitor destination, a neighborhood of urban residents and a center of commercial activity. The City is developing infrastructure which enlivens the streetscape, improves safety and walkability, and expands parking availability. The City is committed to increase and diversify residential housing options, build employment base through business development, and leverage economic and community development tools including planning, tax increment financing, homesteading incentives and small business assistance programs to accomplish this goal.

Downtown Wausau

Downtown Issues

In November of 2015, members of the community gathered to discuss downtown Wausau and future opportunities. Attendees represented a wide range of organizations and districts sharing their viewpoint on the issues affecting the growth and success of the downtown over the next 20 years. Below is a list of the issues identified during the community meeting:

- There are a lot of surface parking lots which discourages walking to new locations.
- Perceived lack of parking in downtown
- Lack of wayfinding to help visitors and residents identify parking and amenities
- Downtown needs a better mix of retail and restaurant throughout the district, not just on 3rd street. Downtown needs to expand beyond 1-2 blocks.
- Hours of operation; most businesses are closed after 6pm.
- Existing building stock in downtown limits potential uses and growth.
- District needs to have a good balance of new buildings/ homes and the restoration historical buildings/ homes.
- Downtown needs to increase its destination appeal; increase entertainment options (theater, family recreation)
- Downtown needs to increase in density.
- City has to find a way to maximize its riverfront property;

both east and west side and provide access.

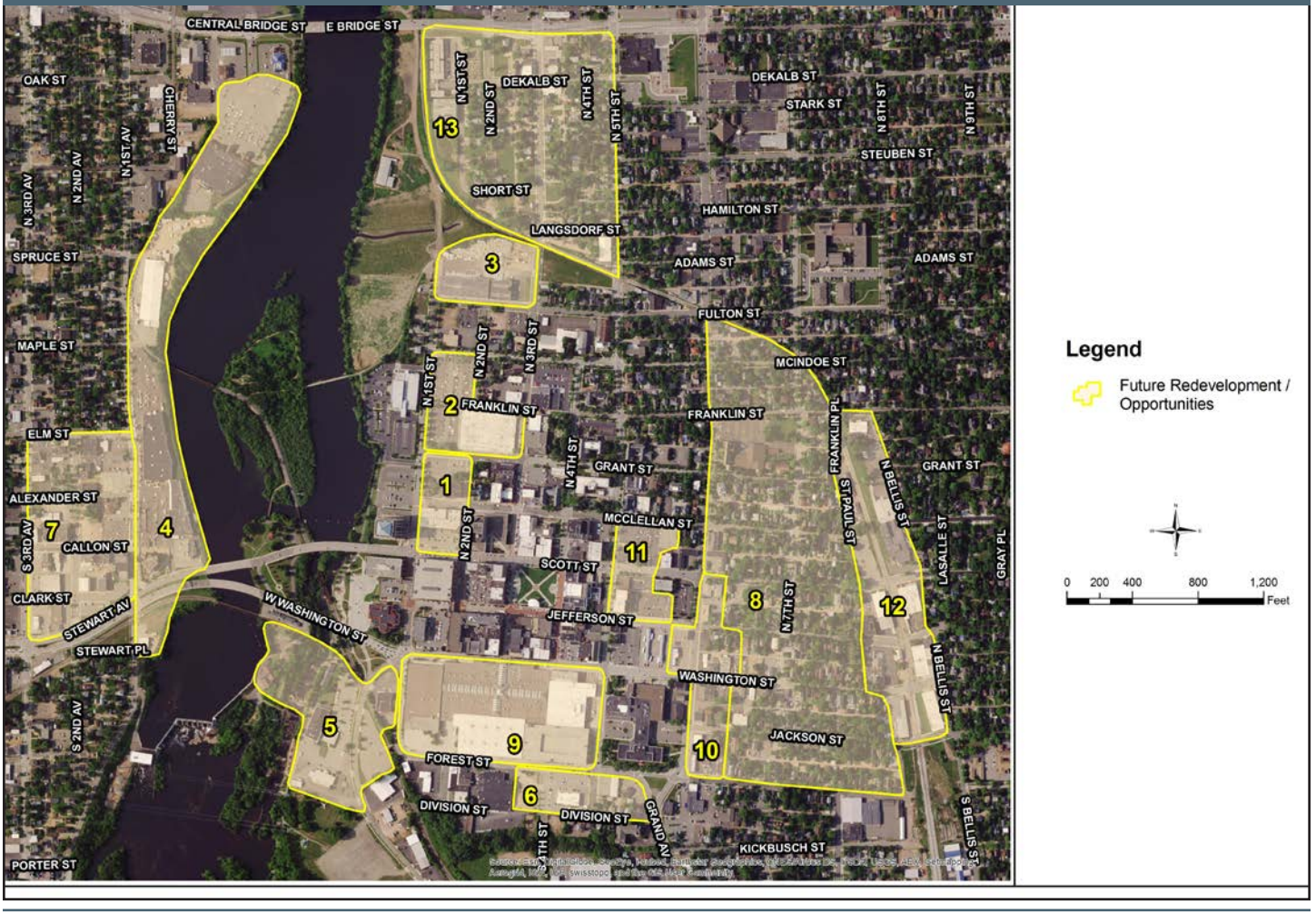
- Develop year round attractions to the downtown taking advantage of winter season.
- Improve and create an identity in the downtown through better branding.
- Continue building a bike friendly community.
- There is a lack of good, professional housing stock. Downtown needs more multifamily options like condos, lofts, etc.
- The downtown lacks experience opportunities. Nothing unique, artistic, cutting edge to make people want to visit.
- Traffic flow is confusing. One way streets are not helpful in the attraction of retail and are difficult to navigate.
- There are confusing, non-friendly pedestrian intersection, e.g. forest/grand and riverside/1st Street.
- Many of the buildings and homes are blighted discouraging investment and future residents.
- Downtown district needs a grocery store.
- Activities and the district should include workforce housing and activities that attract young professionals.
- The 7th street housing needs major improvement.
- More dockage on the river; marina style development.
- City should focus on maximizing Clark Island.
- The Westside of downtown would benefit from student housing for UW-Marathon County.
- Downtown area needs a pharmacy.

Potential Redevelopment Sites

During the same community meeting, members identified key redevelopment opportunities and underutilized sites in the downtown area, see **Figure 4**. Participants identified these various sites as parcels the city should focus on over the next 20 years as they have the best potential to improve the downtown area and spur additional developments. The following is a list of the sites and their current use:

Site 1: The current use of site 1 is a parking lot, both structure and surface lot. The north side of site one incudes the old resurrection school and a surface parking lot, the south side of the site includes a surface lot and the McClellan parking structure. The site has the potential to be utilized for mixed use housing and office space to compliment the Dudley

Figure 4: Downtown Redevelopment Sites



Tower and is scheduled for a new parking structure. This site is positioned at the gateway for the Riverfront Development and currently the surface parking lots do not encourage pedestrian traffic.

Site 2: Site 2 includes an office building and parking lot. The building has the potential to be used for housing and/ or retail. Grant Street has been identified as an access point between the riverfront development and downtown. Remodeling the building to be more attractive will encourage visitors to walk from the downtown to the riverfront. Much like site 1, the surface parking lot deters pedestrian traffic.

Site 3: Site 3 is currently the former Fox 55 news station and is occupied by ABC Supply. This site is directly east of the riverfront and has the opportunity to become market rate housing and office/ retail space. This site will be instrumental in the riverfront development and the connection of that project and the existing downtown.

Site 4: Site 4 includes the entire riverfront on the west side from Pic N Save to the former LS Printing on the south side of Stewart. This site is currently occupied by Eastbay and a number of light manufacturing companies. The Pic n Save also includes a large parking lot that has the possibility of being redeveloped into a better use. During past public meetings on the west side residents have identified the potential for multifamily riverfront housing and mixed use opportunities.

Site 5: Site 5 is located by the whitewater kayak course on the east side of the river. Currently, this site houses UW-Extension offices and the County planning offices. The site also includes the old Masonic building that is currently vacant. The site has the potential to enhance and/or increase recreational opportunities.

Site 6: Site 6 is a combination of a vacant empty lot and a corner lot that includes a vacant restaurant/ bar and a title company on the corner of Forest and Grand. Grand Avenue is one of the gateways into the downtown and this site has an opportunity to become a better, more welcoming representation of the downtown community.

Site 7: Site 7 is located on the west side of the river between 2nd avenue and 3rd avenue. This neighborhood currently has several empty buildings, dilapidated housing units and buildings, and has great potential to be redeveloped into a walkable community which includes improved market rate housing and retail options.

Site 8: Site 8 primarily includes housing east of 6th street. The downtown area currently has a housing deficiency with an aging housing stock and a lack of multifamily options. This neighborhood has the potential to become a higher density residential neighborhood with housing options that appeal to both young professionals and retirees who value access and close proximity to the downtown district and its amenities.

Site 9: The Wausau Mall was identified as a key piece to the downtown area. The mall has seen a number of stores leave in the past year and is in need of revitalization. While many ideas have been discussed, like extending 3rd street to Forest, the city must work with the center's ownership on a long term solution and plan to ensure the mall continues to be an economic driver for the city and the downtown.

Site 10: Site 10 is located on 6th street between Washington Street and Jefferson Street. Roughly 18,000 cars pass by this site every day. Current uses include a fast food restaurant, surface parking lot, and small business (law firms) mainly serving the County Courthouse. Many of the buildings are old and in need of a façade improvement. As a gateway into the downtown for a large majority of visitors, this site must be improved to better represent the downtown community.

Site 11: Site 11 is located between McClellan Street and Jefferson Street west of 6th street. While this site is currently occupied by two banks, Midwest Communications, and Randlin Family Care Homes, the site includes large surface parking lots. Surface parking lots not only discourage pedestrian traffic, but have the potential for a better, higher property value use.

Site 12: Site 12 is located on the railroad on the east side off St Paul Street. Historically, this area was utilized by industrial businesses needing access to rail. While several companies are located within this site, few, if any, currently utilize the rail access. The site still has an industrial feel and is located in the middle of a neighborhood. The businesses in the site also create a visual barrier for residents on the east side of the tracks discouraging them from walking to the downtown area.

Site 13: Site 13 is a neighborhood district located north of downtown east of the river. Currently, the site has a number of older homes, many of which are in need of rehabilitation. This community is within walking distance to the city center and the riverfront development. Revitalization of the residences and the redevelopment of the area would attract new ownership and new investment in the community providing a population base with disposable income in close proximity to downtown businesses and restaurants.

Goal, Objectives, and Action Steps

Downtown Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to strengthen downtown Wausau as the heart of the City and surrounding region.

Objectives and Actions:

Objective 1: Support development and redevelopment to ensure that Downtown Wausau is a livable, accessible environment for all people.

1. Encourage private development in the Downtown that can be used to support public investment in transit, parking, street improvements, pedestrian improvements, and public space development.

2. Improve public access to Downtown, including improvements in traffic circulation, mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, commuter and excursion rail, parking, and community way-finding.

3. Continue to enhance the existing wayfinding signs around the City to direct people to downtown, the riverfront, and the City's cultural attractions.

4. Improve the connections to surrounding neighborhoods and community destinations such as the Marathon County Library, the YMCA and YWCA, the Wausau Center Mall, the Grand Theater, and the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum to strengthen economic opportunities.

5. Continue to implement the recommendations in the River Edge Master Plan, particularly regarding the creation of pedestrian connections between the downtown business district and the riverfront.

Objective 2: Invest in Downtown Wausau as an economic engine for the City and a major place of employment.

1. Support economic revitalization of downtown by encouraging diverse economic activity, including government and professional offices; insurance and financial services; convention, lodging, food/beverage, and entertainment; education and training; retail trade; and high-density residential uses.

2. Support the Main Street programs and Business Improvement District efforts to enhance the vitality of the Central Business District.

3. Help relocate industrial uses from the Central Business District and River Edge Corridor.

4. Build partnerships between the State, County and private sector to accomplish comprehensive redevelopment projects.

5. Continue to provide financial assistance and incentives to encourage private investment in revitalization of downtown and riverfront properties.

Objective 3: Expand civic uses and activities that make Downtown Wausau a cultural destination for the community and the region.

1. Continue to emphasize downtown redevelopment projects that contribute to "round-the-clock" activity in the CBD.

2. Maintain downtown Wausau as an important multi-use activity center for the community and the region including recreational, cultural, residential, retail, entertainment, office, high-tech business, and government land uses.

3. Support efforts of the Wausau Historic Landmarks Commission to maintain, enhance, and formally recognize historically significant properties in the CDB.

4. Preserve the historic character of downtown buildings while accommodating new urban infill development.

5. Strengthen the historic downtown core as a pedestrian-oriented retail, entertainment, and cultural district.

Chapter Nine
Cultural Resources

"Cultural resources" is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of our heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to Native Americans or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements around us that signify our heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings, sites and landscapes that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society.

Community History

The Wausau area was occupied for thousands of years by succeeding cultures of indigenous peoples. The historic Ojibwe (also known in the United States as the Chippewa) occupied it in the period of European encounter. They had a lucrative fur trade for decades with French colonists and French Canadians, followed by British Canadians and American trappers.

The Wisconsin River first drew European-American settlers to the area during the mid-19th century as they migrated west into the Great Lakes region following construction of the Erie Canal in New York State. This provided a route for products from the region to the large New York and other eastern markets. The area had been called "Big Bull Flats" or "Big Bull Falls" by French explorers, who were the first Europeans here. They named it for the long rapids in the river, which created many bubbles, called bulle in French. Wausau means "a faraway place" or "a place which can be seen from far away" in the Ojibwe language.

An 1836 treaty transferring land along the Wisconsin River from the Indians to federal ownership sent George Stevens' lumbermen up the river two years later to find suitable places for turning the pine forests into lumber. "It is decidedly the best Mill Site I ever saw or heard of in the Union" wrote George Stevens after reaching Big Bull Falls in the summer of 1839. Nonetheless he was very excited when he wrote his partner George Morton in St. Louis about the site and its possibilities. By 1840, the Stevens sawmill was processing the pine forests into lumber. It was not long before other mills began springing up along the riverbanks of central Wisconsin. This was the coming of the Lumbermen. The death of the forests became the birth of a town. "The Pinery", magical words 150 years ago, is a legend today.

Historic Wausau

Among the first men who took the lead in business and in the growth of the community was Walter McIndoe. He arrived in 1846 and due to his efforts, Marathon County was organized in 1850. About the same time, Big Bull Falls began to be called Wausau and became the county seat.

Decade by decade, Wausau began to grow and mature. Wausau had been platted and organized as a town in 1852 and incorporated as a village April, 1861. Heavy German immigration brought more media people into the area, churches and social organizations began to flourish. 1872 was an end and a beginning; it ended the days as a village and began its days as a city. The State of Wisconsin granted a city charter in 1872 with its first election the first Tuesday in April under the charter. The citizenry elected German-

born August Kickbusch as its first mayor. In 1874, the arrival of the railroad made it easier for people to get to Wausau. By the 1890's, the city grew to 9,150 persons, compared to 2,820 in 1874.

Turn-of-the-century technology and fortunes based on that technology, continued to change Wausau. The city and the county were on the edge of economic disaster. As trees vanished, mills closed, towns vanished as well. It did not happen to Wausau. Some of the reasons for Wausau's good fortune were its location, one of the best water powers on the Wisconsin River and an exceptional group of people who reformed the economy of the city in the early part of the 20th century. They came to be known as the Wausau Group. They did much to build the town and more to preserve it. Papermaking followed lumbering as the pinery began to disappear and industry flourished. To meet those industrial needs, Employers Mutual Liability Insurance Co., of Wisconsin started selling insurance at the corner of Third and Scott Street in 1911.

The arrival of automobiles in the county helped to improve roads and by the early 1920's there were over 2,200 miles of hard-surfaced roads in the county and also concrete road construction. Air travel also came to Wausau in the mid-1920's, Ben and Judd Alexander decided to build an airport on the southeast side of Wausau with the understanding that the city would take it over after five years and maintain it. This airport is now known as Wausau Downtown Airport.

Wausau's cultural isolation began to fade in the early part of the 20th century. The Grand Opera House built in 1899 was replaced by the newer and more technological Grand Theater in 1927. The theater, restored in 1986 / 1987 at a cost of nearly two million dollars, is owned by the Grand Theater Foundation and leased to the Performing Arts Foundation. The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum opened in 1976. It is Wausau's most distinguished cultural institution. These and other organizations have helped to promote the arts in Central Wisconsin and make Wausau a premier arts community.

The depression years after the stock market crash in 1929 hit Wausau hard. Industries were forced to cut back, laying off or dismissing workers. The financial disaster which continued into the 1930's was a shock to Wausau after decades of progress. Ironically, the federal programs under the New Deal measures taken did more than anything else to modernize the area and bring it into the mainstream of American life. Wausau has continued to grow since then, not so much in population, but in industry, education, recreation, and its retail center downtown. The building of an eight block enclosed shopping mall in downtown Wausau, which opened in August 1983, made this the largest economic gamble in the city's history thus far. The Wausau Center Mall is still a successful shopping center that draws shoppers from the region.

Historic Wausau

Historic Wausau

In the late 90's the economy prospered, Wausau saw the need to purchase and development more land for the West Industrial Park to meet the needs of expanding companies. There was also an increase in commercial development on the west side of town along Stewart Avenue. In 1998, the city acquired through gifts and purchases, the 400 Block in downtown Wausau. The 400 Block is a public open square that was developed for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of our great community as part of a Redevelopment Plan. The 400 Block currently holds summer concerts, farmers markets, summer and winter festivals, ice skating, and other signature events.

In 2002, the Performing Arts Foundation completed an ambitious $13 million dollar expansion project. The project integrated three historic structures including the Center for Visual Arts and the 1927 Grand Theater as the centerpiece. This project provided additional amenities for patrons and performers which will serve the Grand Theater for many years to come. In June 2002, Governor McCallum announced Wausau's acceptance into the Main Street Program. Main Street is a state-administered program that brings expert advice to cities to help merchants and politicians work together to focus on preserving and rehabilitating historical buildings; attracting more people to the downtown

businesses; developing underutilized property; and maintaining the retail function in the downtown area. The downtown district, known as the River District, also represents the City's first business improvement district. The BID district assesses special assessments to each property within its boundaries to fund the salaries and operating costs of the main street program. The City of Wausau supplements these contributions with an annual allocation of room tax dollars for the main street program.

In recent years, the city has entered into several highly successful private-public partnerships. These partnerships have transformed the skyline and vistas of the downtown rivers edge. In addition, these projects have increased tax base and employment in the community.

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation benefits are far-reaching and include economic, aesthetic, civic and cultural rewards. Well-preserved structures are a sign of economic stability and reflect a community's long term concern for its resources. In commercial areas, the rehabilitation and maintenance of significant structures can result in busy, enticing districts that are alluring to shoppers, prospective merchants, and other businesses. A city with a well-preserved historic fabric also attracts tourists. Moreover, an active and comprehensive preservation program encourages a community to be aware of its architectural and historical legacy; this fosters civic pride, appreciation, cultural development, and environmental concern. The cultivation of respect for the built environment is a value to an entire community and reinforces the distinctiveness that has is Wausau's heritage.

The City of Wausau is recognized by the State of Wisconsin as a Certified Local Government, a designation that carries certain responsibilities for review of historic resources within the City. Wausau has adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance and formed a Historic Preservation Commission whose responsibility it is to protect and enhance sires of special character or special architectural, archeological, or historic interest or value. Wausau is also a Preserve America Community, as designated by the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. This designation recognizes communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs.

Local Districts

The City of Wausau has three designated historic districts. The three districts are the Downtown Historic District, and two residential districts, the Andrew Warren Historic District and the East Hill District, see **Map 7**.

Historic Wausau

Historic Wausau

The Downtown Historic District is comprised of more than 100 properties. The majority of the properties in the Downtown Historic District are primarily commercial in nature.

The Andrew Warren Historic District is located just northeast of downtown Wausau and is named after a sawmill owner who once owned most of the land comprising the district. This 10-block district includes 59 buildings, most of which are houses. The houses were built between 1868 and 1934 and include a diverse mix of late 19th century and early 20th century homes.

The East Hill District is located to the east of the Andrew Warren Historic District and is named for the hill on which it is located. This 30-block district includes more than 160 houses, all built between 1874 and 1930. The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum is located in the East Hill District, and is the only building which is currently not residential.

Historic Landmarks

The City of Wausau has recognized 24 historic landmarks. The majority of the local historic landmarks are located in and around downtown, but several are also spread across a wider area, such as a few buildings in Marathon Park and Athletic Park. The acknowledged landmarks include several churches, a few homes, several buildings in downtown Wausau, and several buildings and shelters in local parks.

A few of these local historic landmarks are also on the National Register of Historic Places.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is a list of sites, buildings, objects, districts and structures significant in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture. Significance may be determined at the local, state, or national level. Owners of an NRHP property may qualify for Federal tax credits if they renovate a property for income-producing purposes, such as an office, retail business, or bed and breakfast. Changes to NRHP properties are only reviewed when Federal funding is involved in a project; otherwise, NRHP properties can be altered or demolished without regulatory review. The NRHP process is administered through the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Table 37 shows all the properties in Wausau that are on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Arts

Arts and art-related events are key cultural resources to Wausau. The City, as the largest city in Central Wisconsin, is a hub for arts activities. Wausau offers many opportunities for people to enjoy and participate in the arts.

Performing Arts

A variety of performing arts take place in Wausau each year. The Grand Theater in downtown Wausau is the location for many performing arts shows. Touring shows from Broadway to music, comedy, and dance come to this venue each year. The Grand is also the venue for many local performing arts groups, including the Wausau Dance Theatre, Allegro Regional Dance Theater, Wausau Community Theater, Central Wisconsin Children's Theatre, Wausau Concert Band, Wausau Conservatory of Music, and the Wausau Lyric Choir.

Historic Wausau

Galleries and Museums

A number of galleries and museums are found in Wausau. Wausau has two fine art centers, the Woodson Art Museum and the Center for the Visual Arts. The Woodson Art Museum is a free museum that is known for its annual Birds in Art exhibition and sculpture garden, while also bringing in other traveling exhibitions. The Center for the Visual Arts has rotating exhibits that showcase the works of local and

Table 37: National Register of Historic Places

Resource Name	*Address*	*Comments*
Andrew Warren Historic District	Roughly bounded by Fulton, Grant, 4th and 7th Sts.	
Bird, C. B., House	522 McIndoe St.	ETR; WHD
Dunbar, C. F., House	929 McIndoe St.	ETR
East Hill Residential Historic District	Roughly bounded by North 7th, Adams, 10th, Scott, and Bellis Sts.	
Everest, D. C., House	1206 Highland Park Blvd.	ETR
First Universalist Church	504 Grant St.	ETR; WHD
Jones, Granville D., House	915 Grant St.	
Marathon County Fairgrounds	Stewart Ave.	ETR
Marchetti, Louis, House	921 Grand Ave.	
Miller, Henry, House	1314 Grand Ave.	
Schuetz, E. K., House	930 Franklin St.	ETR
Stewart, Hiram C., House	521 Grant St.	WHD
Wausau Club	309 McClellan St.	
Wegner, C. H., House	906 Grant St.	ETR
Wright, Duey and Julia, House	904 Grand Ave.	
Wright, Ely, House	901 6th St.	WHD
Yawkey, Cyrus C., House	403 McIndoe St.	WHD

ETR = Eschweiler Thematic Resources. WHD = Warren Historic District. Source: National Register of Historic Places

Cultural Wausau

Cultural Wausau

regional artists.

The Marathon County Historical Society is located in two historic buildings in Wausau, the Yawkey House Museum and the Woodson History Center. The Historical Society provides educational information and exhibits about the history of the area and tours of the historical buildings.

Public Art

Wausau is the home to many great pieces of public art. Some notable examples include a whitewater kayaker located near Whitewater Park on the way into downtown and the birds in the median of Stewart Ave between HWY 51 and 17th Ave. The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum has an outdoor sculpture garden with many notable works of art.

These sculptures and other art pieces add cultural interest to the City, but there is as of yet no formal oversight of public art throughout Wausau. Formalization of the process of installing new works of art and an ongoing inventory of existing art installations would raise awareness of these great features.

Community Events

Wausau is a center for community events in Central Wisconsin. Many annual events in music, art, food take place in Wausau, benefiting both the local community and the broader region.

One of the largest and most notable community events is the Wisconsin Valley Fair, which takes place at Marathon Park in Wausau. This is a six-day event, with an average attendance of approximately 150,000 people, making it one of the largest county fairs in Wisconsin.

The 400 Block in downtown Wausau is a key location for public events. This open public space hosts weekly Concerts on the Square on Wednesday evenings in the summer with free music, drawing approximately 3,000 people to each concert. Marketplace Thursdays include a downtown farmers market and family friendly activities. Chalk Fest, Harvest Fest, Winter Fest, and the Artrageous Weekend are a few other annual events that utilize the 400 Block.

Events also take place in other locations around Wausau. Balloon and Rib Fest takes place over a summer weekend at the Wausau Downtown Airport. The Big Bull Falls Blues Fest takes place over two days each supper at Fern Island Park and is Wisconsin's longest running Blues festival.

Wausau is also home to several annual sporting events. Some of the events for both the Summer and Winter Badger State Games take place in Wausau. Examples of other community sporting events include Leinenkugel's Classic Adult Pond Hockey Tournament which takes place at Sunnyvale Park and several different whitewater events which have including the Midwest Freestyle Championships and the the ACA Open Canoe Slalom Nationals.

Cultural Resource Issues

Need for Public Education: City residents, the business community, and some public officials are not always informed about the value or benefits of local designation and have been suspicious of the regulatory aspects. As a result, there have been a limited number of designations in the last several years. Without support, neighborhoods and the City as a whole have not been able to fully include historic resources in planning neighborhood and downtown revitalization. In addition, Wausau's historic character could contribute to greater efforts at cultural tourism, marketing the City's historic character to visitors, with additional designation and City support.

Public Space: Spaces for the public to meet and hold events are important to the culture of Wausau. Current public spaces include the 400 Block downtown, local parks, and the Marathon County Public Library. There is a need for more public space for both outdoor and indoor gatherings year round.

Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program: The Wisconsin State Legislature has been debating the continuation of

the historic preservation tax credit program. This program is instrumental to the historic preservation work done throughout the City. The continuation of this program is important, and the City may have an advocacy role to place in seeing it continue.

Resource Allocation: In older neighborhoods, the City is not putting forth a sufficient effort to improve or prevent additional deterioration. Activities that need to be enhanced for this effort are building code enforcement, public education, housing grant/loan improvement programs, upgrading public infrastructure, and other means.

Need for Current Information: Although the 1984 Intensive Survey of Wausau provided much information and has been the basis of most designation since that time, a new Wausau survey is needed. Many properties identified at that time may be gone, while other properties not previously surveyed should now be evaluated in a new context. It is necessary for the City to have updated information about cultural resources in order to improve its ability to plan for the preservation and protection of important cultural resources.

Goal, Objectives, Action Steps

Cultural Resources Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to preserve historic sites and support cultural opportunities for community residents.

Objective 1: Continue and expand efforts to preserve, restore, and interpret important features (including structures, landscapes, roadways, public spaces, etc.) of Wausau's rich history.

1. Preserve Wausau's historic resources through the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance and the actions of the Historic Preservation Commission.

2. Develop a formal procedure for vetting and designating historical properties.

3. Identify historic sites and utilize the local landmark designation to recognize them.

4. Designate as local landmarks the properties within the City that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

5. Encourage context-sensitive new development and restorations within all historic districts and to recognized historic properties.

6. Consider preparation of a historic preservation guidebook to aid owners of historic properties.

7. Develop streetscape design recommendations for the local historic districts.

8. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a local grant and/or loan program to assist in the rehabilitation of landmark properties.

9. Update the 1984 Intensive Survey of Wausau.

10. Develop and maintain a photo-log of landmarks, historic sites, and historic districts that have been designated by the Common Council.

11. Work with owners of historic and architecturally significant properties to ensure they are informed about building preservation methods and techniques and financial incentives available at the national, state, and local levels.

12. Work with the Marathon County Historic Society, the Wisconsin Historic Society, and the State Preservation Office to develop an informational program on the availability of tax credits and other financial incentives related to historic preservation.

Objective 2: Support efforts to educate residents and visitors about Wausau's unique history and the need to preserve Wausau's historic resources, and to increase public awareness of the importance of historic preservation to Wausau's identity.

1. Consider utilizing the City website, the City newsletter, Wausau Works, and other media to highlight the City's history, opportunities to learn about and engage with that history, and the positive impact of historic preservation.

2. Develop and continue to enhance public programs, such as walking tours and building visits, in the City's Historic Districts.

3. Improve on-site markings and interpretive signage for historic landmarks and districts.

4. Develop a program for publically recognizing outstanding historic preservation efforts.

Objective 3: Foster an organic and creative arts culture across multiple art platforms.

1. Designate a commission with arts as a top priority.

2. Ensure that regulations within the City are artist-friendly.

3. Establish an "Arts Collaborative" which brings all forms of art within the City together including performing spaces, the Musician's Guild, museums, etc.

4. Develop an inventory of public art within the City.

5. Organize a strategy for increasing the amount of public art.

Chapter Nine
Land Use

Wausau lies along the banks of the Wisconsin River and at the crossroads of Highways 29 and 51. Wausau is the largest City in Marathon County with about 39,000 persons. It is also the hub of government, employment, and cultural activities in North Central Wisconsin. Wausau is bordered by the City of Schofield, the Villages of Weston and Maine and the Towns of Rib Mountain, Stettin, Texas, and Wausau. The City covers over 12,000 acres in total with a variety of land uses.

Previous Plans

Comprehensive Plan, 2006

The plan was developed following the 1999 Comprehensive Plan law. It was completed as part of a county-wide multi-jurisdictional planning effort. Nearly all of the communities within the county prepared a plan. Those plans, including Wausau's addressed the nine core elements outlined in the law. As such, land use was addressed including various land use demand projections, as well as goals, objectives, and policies. The plan also included both an existing land use and future land use map. Some of that information has been used in this plan.

City of Wausau Land Use Plan, 1983

The 1983 land use plan contains a number of community goals, objectives, and policies that are still pertinent today and are incorporated into this comprehensive plan. It also describes several land use planning principles, which have been updated and included in this comprehensive plan as well. While this plan addressed land use issues and goals on a Citywide basis, it primarily focused on land use trends, issues, and recommendations for each of nine neighborhoods in the City. Most of the planning effort focused on the territory within the existing City limits, with only a cursory analysis of potential growth areas outside the City limits.

A Comprehensive Plan for the Wausau Area, Wisconsin, 1965

The plan was regional in scope and contained recommendations that also covered the cities of Schofield and Wausau, the Village of Rothschild, and parts of the Towns of Stettin, Maine, Rib Mountain, Texas, Wausau and Weston. A number of the recommendations from the land use section of this plan that deal with Wausau's general growth are of interest today and may still be relevant as the City continues its efforts to plan for orderly growth well into the next century. This was the City's first comprehensive plan. It assessed existing conditions and provided recommendations regarding a number of community development and public facility issues for the Wausau Urban Area.

River Edge Master Plan, 1995

This plan focuses on improving public access to the Wisconsin River. The plan focuses on development of the River Edge Parkway, which is intended to physically link the parks located along the river; improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation facilities; and enhance recreational opportunities. This plan's recommendation of a trail system along the river is still being implemented.

Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Wausau Metropolitan Area, 2011

This plan focuses on the regional transportation system and is currently being updated. The plan serves as one of the requirements of the MPO by the federal legislation is the development of a LRTP for the urbanized area. The Plan identifies the current conditions in the area and recommends solutions to the issues regarding the deficiencies of the roadways in the metro area. The LRTP recommendations are based on the relationship between land use policy and transportation facilities and services, including roadways, transit, bikeways, pedestrian ways, air, inter-City bus, and the movement of goods by air, rail, and truck. The LRTP is

currently being updated.

Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Area Plan & Major Amendment, 1981 & 1992

This plan and subsequent amendment is an analysis of the area with the delineation of the sewer service area. The plan and amendment identify the City's anticipated growth boundary. This plan is in the process of being updated.

The City of Wausau Comprehensive Park and Recreation Area Plan, 2014

This plan identifies the general location, character, and extent of existing and needed parks, playgrounds, and special recreation areas to guide future park and recreation area land acquisition, development, and maintenance activities. The plan maintains the City's eligibility for certain types of grants.

Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan , 1986

This document identified the most cost effective means of mitigating or preventing flooding in five developing watersheds that are in and adjacent to the City of Wausau. Three of these watersheds are located on the east side of the Wisconsin River and two are on the west side of the Wisconsin River. The study recommended that the City construct a series of stormwater detention facilities that would temporarily store stormwater runoff and gradually allow this water to enter the receiving stream over an extended period of time. These improvements were recommended along with increasing the capacity of some storm sewers and developing certain administrative practices, all of which were intended to reduce or prevent flooding in the community.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2009

The Farmland Preservation Plan identifies areas for long-term agricultural preservation. Although there are no preservation areas in the City, there are lands in surrounding towns that have been identified, particularly in the Town of Wausau. In planning for the City's expansion, it is important to be aware of the potential conflicts that can develop between urban land uses and farms. Constructing homes near farm operations can yield complaints from new residents about odors, noise and dust and concerns about manure and pesticide spreading. In planning for new residential development near the City limits, active farm operations in the abutting towns must be taken into consideration in order to ensure that new residential development is established in environmentally compatible locations.

Inventory & Trends

Background

From its founding in the 1840s through the 1950s, most development within the City of Wausau took place on the relatively flat, sandy terrain located near the banks of the Wisconsin River. The soils and topography allowed for easy, cost-effective construction of building foundations, municipal sewer and water services, storm drainage facilities, and streets. Early in the City's history, railroads were used much more heavily than today for shipping raw materials and finished products and for intercity passenger travel. Locally, streetcars provided the primary motorized means of moving people within the City. Both of these transportation modes require extremely flat routes to function properly. While originally located entirely on the east side of the Wisconsin River, the City now straddles the river valley.

Today, the most suitable land in the City for higher-density urban land uses has been developed. The undeveloped sites within the older parts of the City and large sections of territory annexed by the City have various development limitations. Many of these same limitations are prevalent in the areas adjacent to the present City limits where annexation and future City growth are likely to occur. It is important, therefore, to recognize and understand these limitations since they often impact the type and intensity of land uses that can be developed and the public and private cost of constructing buildings and utilities as well as maintaining municipal services and facilities in these areas.

Existing Land Use

Today the City extends about seven miles from Camp Phillips Road on the east to 88th Avenue to the west and about five miles from Evergreen Road on the north to Lakeview Drive and the Airport to the south. In total the City compromises nearly 12,700 acres, with about 780 being water, see **Table 38**.

Downtown Wausau is located near the east bank of the Wisconsin River. Stewart Avenue and Grand Avenue (Business 51) are the primary commercial corridors leading in and out of downtown. Generally, residential neighborhoods developed adjacent to downtown and the major commercial corridors. Smaller, neighborhood-oriented commercial nodes are located throughout the City and typically developed at road intersections. Development to the east has been generally constrained by a major rock ridge that effectively defined the eastern edge of the City. Commercial land uses are concentrated at key access points into the City such as the major intersection with USH 51/ STH 29 (e.g., Stewart Avenue and CTH K) and the Business 51 corridor, which was historically the primary north-south route through the City. Industrial uses were originally located along the Wisconsin River and near rail lines.

A facility in the Industrial Park.

However, since the late 1960s and 1970s, most industrial development has located on the western edge of the City, along STH 29.

A comprehensive planning process requires that existing land use information be inventoried. To categorize land use starts with the examination of 2015 airphotos and on the ground review of that information. Ten basic land use classifications were used to categorize information. They are: Agriculture, Commercial, Governmental, Industrial, Open Lands, Residential, Multi-Family, Transportation, Outdoor Recreation and Woodlands. Water is also reflected on the map. See **Map 8**.

Using that map the various land uses are incorporated into a geographic information system (GIS) to prepare calculations. These calculations provide a snapshot as to how land is currently being used in the City, see Table 38. Note these totals are for the year 2015. Annexations that occurred during the end of that year or in 2016 are not included.

Residential uses dominate the City followed by transportation uses for roads and the airport. Woodlands are the next most common land use followed by Commercial. Combined these four land uses total about 70 percent of all land in the City.

Table 38: Existing Land Use, 2015

Land Use Type	*Acres*	*Percent*
Agriculture	228	1.8%
Commercial	1,295	10.2%
Governmental	706	5.6%
Industrial	525	4.1%
Multi-Family	181	1.4%
Open Lands	624	4.9%
Outdoor Recreation	600	4.8%
Residential	3,445	27.1%
Transportation	2,436	19.2%
Water	784	6.1%
Woodlands	1,867	14.7%
Total Acres	12,695	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC GIS (derived from airphotos)

Land Use Supply

Most of the land area within the City of Wausau is already developed. Thus, land for new development is obtained through annexation of adjacent unincorporated territory or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites. Annexation has been the primary factor contributing to Wausau's growth in the past several decades. However, with area incorporations there are fewer areas where the City can expand. Redevelopment has occurred from time to time, but overall has not been a substantial route to growth. Within the existing City boundaries, land for new redevelopment primarily consists of underutilized properties and/or brownfields as well as individual vacant parcels that can support infill development or can be combined with adjacent parcels to create larger redevelopment sites.

Much of the land categorized as agricultural, open space, and woodlands could be considered "available" for future development, but much of this has limitations, such as environmental restraints or is publically owned. Combined these three categories make up about 2,300 acres.

Annexation

Much of the City's population, housing, and economic growth since 1960 can be attributed to annexation of developed and undeveloped land. Since 1960, the City has annexed over 7,300 acres. That annexation extended the City's western boundary from 12th Avenue, westward to County Highway O. **Table 39** summarizes the City's annexation trends over the last fifty plus years.

Annexation of town territory can result in disputes between the City and either town officials or certain property owners included within an annexation. Town officials sometimes feel that the City is "gobbling up" their community and significantly reducing the town's land area and tax base. That tax base loss has been a concern for some towns, but there is a State law in place to mitigate this issue. The law requires that a City provide a payment to the town, for a five

Table 39: Annexation Trends

Period	*Number of Acres Annexed*
1960 - 1969	1,257 Acres
1970 - 1979	1,894 Acres
1980 - 1989	1,071 Acres
1990 - 1999	1,586 Acres
2000-2009	1,446 Acres
2010 - 2014	144 Acres

Source: City of Wausau Engineering Department & City GIS System

year period after annexation, equal to the tax base lost by the town. Annexation has no impact on Marathon County, North Central Technical College, or local school districts, since the transfer of property from a town to the City has no financial impact on these larger governmental units. **Map 9** displays where annexation has taken place over the years.

Annexations occur upon a petition by a land owner to join the City. Most land owners who annex to receive municipal water and sewerage disposal services. Municipal utility systems are highly desirable since they:

1. Allow for residential, commercial, and industrial development at a higher, more economical density;
2. Remedy existing sewer or water problems experienced by homes and businesses; and/or
3. Meet the requirements for utility services established by nationally franchised commercial operations.

Occasionally, people choose to annex for zoning, street improvements, and other minor reasons. The predominant reason, however, remains the desire to receive municipal sewer and water services. If the annexation trends of the last five decades continue, it is anticipated that the City will annex approximately 1,400 acres during the next decade to accommodate growth.

Redevelopment and Infill Opportunities

The City has a redevelopment authority that has a goal of focusing funding in specific revitalization and redevelopment areas of the City. Currently, there are several parcels within the City that are underutilized and could be ideal locations for redevelopment or infill development. The river has recently become a focus of redevelopment efforts in the City. There are also some downtown retail areas and west-side business districts in the City that need to be addressed as well. As new development occurs on the fringes of the community it is important that the City focus its efforts to maintain the vitality of the existing commercial and residential areas of the community.

Land Values

In 2015, the City had a total value of over 2.5 Billion dollars, which is slightly less than the 2010 total value. It is these values that are assessed for tax purposes in the City.

Overall assessed land values in the City have decreased about 3 percent over the last five years; however, not all categories of land changed equally. Residential property values declined about 6 percent while manufacturing decreased by just over 10 percent. Commercial property experienced a slight 1.2 percent increase over the same period, see **Table 40**.

Within the City there are numerous parcels that are tax-exempt, combined totaling over 5,000 acres or about 40 percent of the land area. Nearly 1,700 acres are owned by the City or County, while over 3,300 acres are owned by non-profit organizations. These sites are scattered throughout the City. See **Map 10**.

Table 40: Projected Five-Year Land Use Demand

Period	*Future Residential Land Used (Acres)*	Future Industrial Land Used (Acres)	Future Commercial Land Used (Acres)
2015-2020	50	20	90
2020-2025	50	20	90
2025-2030	50	20	90
2030-2035	50	20	90
Totals	200	80	360

Source: NCWRPC GIS (derived from airphotos)

Land Use Demand

To estimate the amount of land needed to accommodate future development over the next 20 years a variety of projections are utilized. Acreage projections are based on assumptions about density of housing units per acre and employees per acre for industrial and commercial development.

The estimate of land needs for future residential development was based upon the number of projected new dwelling units needed to accommodate population growth between 2015 and 2035. The current housing density is 5 units per acre in the City. Projections indicate about 2,000 new residents in the city by 2035. Using a 2 person per household estimate, we determine about 1,000 units are needed. Further, using the 3 units per acre we estimate about 200 additional acres or about 10 acres per year are needed for residential uses.

Estimated land needed for non-residential development is based upon projected changes in employment. County level data is the most detailed employment data available. No state or federal agency provides local level employment information. Therefore, to determine employment estimates and projections, economic modeling software is used. EMSI data is provided by zip code so the information provided includes the city as well as some surrounding area. Using existing employment levels and current acres used for industrial and commercial uses we can estimate current employment densities. For each acre of industrial area we find about 16 employees, while for each commercial acre we find about 22 employees. Using EMSI twenty year projections, we expect 300 new industrial jobs and 8,000 new commercial jobs. Based upon the 2015 employee per acre information, it is estimated that 80 acres of additional land will be needed for industrial purposes and 360 additional acres of land will be needed for commercial purposes by 2035. Note that the employment projections

take into account national trends related to the increase in automation for industrial employment and retail and work from home trends related to commercial employment. The resulting land demand projections are conservative and should be viewed as the minimum demand.

Table 41 displays the land area that is anticipated to be needed for growth over the next twenty years. In total at least 640 acres of land is needed for residential, industrial and commercial use. There will be other lands needed during this period for streets, parks, churches and other uses.

Based on these projections there appears to be sufficient land in and surrounding the City to meet future demand. However, if there is a desire to increase population, more residential land area is needed or existing land needs to have more units per acre.

Future Land Use

Determining future land uses are based on the previous chapters of this plan and future growth desires for the City. Using information from demographics, natural resources, housing, economic development and the other chapters along with the goals and objectives helps create a land use vision for Wausau.

Those future uses are reflected in a future land use map. Two maps are presented in this plan. One for the lands within the current corporate limits and another for the area surrounding the City called the planning area. These maps are intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development of the City.

Current City Boundary

Wausau is nearly built out within its existing corporate boundary of about 12,970 acres. Note that this does include recent annexations and acres totals are higher than the 2015 existing land use. Generally, it is expected that most of the current land uses will continue into the future. However, there are some areas where change is desired, including several redevelopment areas and some open space areas, see **Map 11**.

In an effort to categorize desired future land uses six basic categories were created. They are defined below:

City Center
This is an area of dense development and a mix of employment, commercial, and residential uses. It would include civic spaces for community gatherings and events. It would also be an area that is lively and designed for pedestrian access. Growth, development, and increased density would be encouraged.

Legacy Industrial
Smaller scale existing industrial uses, commonly found along rail lines and mixed among urban streets. These older industrial uses are often local hubs of accessible employment but can also be in conflict with neighboring residential uses.

Suburban Commercial and Industrial
These are areas with major employers, knowledge-intensive employers, industrial/business parks, industrial uses, and a range of commercial uses. These areas are generally served by cars not pedestrians, and not well suited for mixed use developments that include residential. Includes both single- and multi-tenant commercial buildings, often located at major intersections and along arterial streets, and serve both neighborhood and regional commercial needs.

Urban Residential
These are areas primarily for residential uses with small lots and a street grid, including single-family and multi-family units. These areas may include some neighborhood-serving commercial, institutional, and public/semi-public uses within the area. Not expected to see significant new growth, other than replacement of existing building with those of a similar density.

Table 41: Land Assessment Values

Type of Property	*2010*	*2015*	*% Change*
Residential	1,568,484,400	1,479,068,000	-6.1%
Commercial	930,236,600	941,301,500	1.2%
Manufacturing	113,245,700	102,907,100	-10.1%
Agricultural	29,400	39,100	24.8%
Undeveloped	0	0	NA
Ag. Forest	131,300	322,700	59.3%
Forest	1,116,900	543,300	-105.6%
Other	771,200	413,100	-86.7%
Total Value:	2,614,015,700	2,524,947,900	-3.5%

Source: WI DOR Statement of Assessment (includes both land and improvements)

Suburban Residential
These areas are primarily for residential uses with mostly single-family houses, with lower density and larger lot sizes, and often a non-traditional street grid. These areas may include some neighborhood-serving commercial, institutional, and public/semi-public uses within the area.

Public/Open Space
These areas include parks and open spaces as well as public and semi-public uses. Examples include schools, recreational facilities, government institutions, and public safety organizations.

These categories are roughly aligned with a "Transect" to provide an indication of expected density and scale appropriate within each of the categories. A Transect is a geographic cross section of a city or region used to identify a range of environments. For example, in a city the cross-section can be used to visualize various uses that vary by their level and intensity of urban character - ranging from rural to urban. See Map 3.

Land use and zoning are similar but they are not the same. Land use categories are more general, while zoning is much more detailed. Zoning is the legal tool to regulate specific land uses. Since the land use categories are generalized it is possible that more than one zoning district would correspond to each of the categories. Timing is also a consideration for zoning. Some of the areas identified on the future land use map may not be appropriate for certain zoning for five or ten years, based on other factors, such as the extension of specific infrastructure.

Planning Area

As Wausau grows it will continue to annex so it is important to monitor the area surrounding the City, called the planning area. Under state statute a city can exercise Extra-territorial plat review in unincorporated areas 3 miles around the city. This is the area defined as the "planning area" in this plan. In total this includes about 42,200 acres. The majority of the lands currently in the planning area are rural in nature, mainly agriculture with some other scattered uses.

Although the planning area is important to monitor, the more critical area for examination is that area contained in the Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Area (SSA) plan. The SSA plan establishes a boundary where new development requiring municipal sewer and water can occur. When it was established in the 1980's, the SSA boundary was large enough in size to easily accommodate projected urban growth in the Wausau area over a 20-year period and also provide enough excess acreage to ensure efficient operation of the urban land market. The current SSA boundary area includes about 9,850 acres. This includes areas outside of other incorporated communities, but does include Rib Mountain which is not incorporated. Note that the SSA plan is in the process of being updated and the boundary is likely to change.

The SSA boundary establishes an initial limit for City expansion, since development that needs municipal sewer and water must be located within that boundary. This is the area where the City should concentrate official map activities related to the likely extension and development of several types of critical infrastructure, including collector and arterial streets, as well as complete more detailed sanitary sewer and water utility plans and for the development of stormwater management and water quality improvement activities. The boundary also establishes an area wherein City officials should more carefully review extraterritorial subdivision plats to ensure that these residential developments do not compromise the City's ability to grow into these areas in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

Both the "planning" and SSA boundaries are important to monitor. Land area closest to the existing corporate limit are the most important to monitor since they are most likely where annexations will take place and where land use conflicts might occur.

Municipal incorporations to both the north and south of the City, will limit annexation opportunities. Expansion to the north is now restricted by the recent incorporation of the Town of Maine, while expansion to the south is restricted by the presence of the City of Schofield and the Village of Weston. Other limits to expansion include the Wisconsin and Big Rib Rivers. Previous chapters and maps identified areas with various environmental restraints, such as wetlands and floodplains, within the area as well. Given these restrictions, future expansion of Wausau will likely occur to the east and/or west through annexation.

Generally, it is expected that the rural land uses throughout the planning area are expected to continue, while most of the change is expected to occur within the Sewer Service area. Using the future land use categories, the map attempts to identify future land use in some of the SSA and planning area. This growth will happen over time, as market conditions are met. See **Map 12**.

Existing Land Use Tools

To implement the recommendations of the comprehensive plan there are some basic tools that are available to the City. These are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.

Zoning

Zoning is the major tool used to regulate land uses and implement a comprehensive plan. The zoning ordinance regulates the use of property to advance the public health, safety, and welfare. It has been used throughout the United

Land Use Wausau

States and in Wisconsin since the 1920's.

Zoning regulations are adopted by local ordinance and consist of two basic things, a map and related text. A zoning ordinance creates different use zones or districts within a community. Each district has a list of permitted uses, which are uses that are desirable in a district. Each district may also contain a list of special uses, sometimes called special exceptions or conditional uses, which are allowed under certain circumstances, and require review by a local body in to be allowed. All other uses are prohibited.

Zoning should be derived from, and be consistent with, the policy recommendations adopted in the comprehensive plan. The desired land uses should "drive" the development of specific zoning ordinance provisions including district descriptions, permitted uses, conditional uses and the zoning map. This consistency has been important in upholding legal challenges in the Courts.

Achieving consistency between land use and zoning is required by State Statutes since 2010. This is important when a community is considering a proposed zoning change. The decision to approve a zoning change must be based on the adopted comprehensive plan, including the goals, objectives, policies, and the future land use map. Generally, if a requested zoning is consistent with these components of the comprehensive plan, it should be approved, unless unique circumstances indicate the rezoning would negatively impact surrounding properties or the community. If a rezoning request is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, it should be denied.

In situations where a rezoning request is not consistent with the plan but the Common Council believes the requested zoning is appropriate in the specific location and would benefit the community, the zoning change should be approved; however, the comprehensive plan should be amended to establish land use and zoning consistency. The process for amending the plan is discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Chapter.

Subdivision

Subdivision regulation relates to the way in which land is divided and made ready for development. A community can control the subdivision of land by requiring a developer to meet certain conditions in exchange for the privilege of recording a plat. While imposing conditions restricts the use of private property, the cumulative effect of land subdivision on the health, safety, and welfare of a community is so great as to justify public control of the process.

Of all the land use control devices available, subdivision regulation has probably the greatest potential. When compared with zoning, a well-administered subdivision control is more useful in achieving planning goals and its influence is far more lasting. Once land is divided into lots and streets are laid out, development patterns are set. Subdivision regulations can ensure that those development patterns are consistent with community standards. Subdivision regulations can also ensure the adequacy of existing and planned public facilities such as schools, wastewater treatment systems, water supply, to handle new growth. Finally, subdivision regulation can help ensure the creation and preservation of adequate land records.

There is some overlap between zoning and subdivision codes in terms of standards. Both ordinances, for example, can set lot sizes. Both can deal with the suitability of land for development. Implementing important plan techniques such as rural cluster development often requires use of the zoning ordinance and the subdivision ordinance.

Under Wisconsin law, the City has authority to provide extraterritorial review of subdivision requests in the surrounding towns within one and one-half mile of its corporate limits.

Official Mapping:

Cities may adopt official maps. These maps, adopted by ordinance or resolution, may show existing and planned streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, parks, playgrounds, railroad rights of way, waterways and public transit facilities. The map may include a waterway only if it is included in a comprehensive surface water drainage plan. No building permit may be issued to construct or enlarge any building within the limits of these mapped areas except pursuant to conditions identified in the law.

Official maps are not used frequently because few communities plan anything but major thoroughfares and parks in detail in advance of the imminent development of a neighborhood.

Other tools

Extraterritorial Plat Review

Extraterritorial plat review allows the City to review, and approve or reject subdivision plats located within the

extraterritorial area as long as the City has a subdivision ordinance or an official map. Statutes define the review area as the unincorporated areas within 3 miles of the City.

The purpose of the extraterritorial plan approval process is to help cities influence the development pattern of areas outside the City that will likely be annexed at some point. It also helps cities protect land uses near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside the City limits.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Zoning

Extra-territorial zoning is tool allowed under Wisconsin Statutes. To do this, however, requires a lengthy three-step process including the creation of a joint committee consisting of representatives from the City and the Towns, which work together to adopt this tool.

This joint committee prepares a proposed plan and regulations for the extraterritorial area and submits it to the City, which may adopt it as proposed or resubmit the proposal to the joint committee for changes. In either case, the proposed regulations must receive a favorable majority vote from the joint committee before the City can adopt them.

Following the planning process it is critical that the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance and other tools be updated to incorporate the findings of the plan.

Land Use Issues

Redevelopment: There are several properties in the City with potential for redevelopment. While redevelopment presents significant opportunities for growth and revitalization in the City, it also poses complex financial and logistical challenges. Property assembly, demolition, and pollution clean-up are costly, which sometimes makes it difficult to find willing developers and financing. Previously developed properties may be too small or oddly shaped and, therefore, must be combined with adjacent parcels to create a "good" redevelopment site. In addition, access to redevelopment sites may need to be enhanced or altered in order to accommodate a new land use. Public assistance (financial and/or technical) is usually needed to address these challenges in order to encourage private sector investment. Therefore, redevelopment priorities must be clear and balanced with City resources carefully dedicated to these needs and opportunities. Costs related with pollution clean-up and other complexities associated with redevelopment often mean these projects take more time to initiate and complete. However, there are numerous benefits, including utilization of existing infrastructure and services.

Downtown Access: Getting in and out of downtown can be difficult due in part to its distance from the freeway, congestion on the major corridors leading into downtown, and confusion about the one-way street system downtown. This discourages some people from shopping downtown as other, outlying shopping centers are perceived to be more accessible. Some of these perceived constraints, however, have been remedied with the reconstruction of the intersection of 1st Street, Washington Street, and River Drive (2004) and converting 1st Street to two-way operation and improving USH 51 access to the central business district. Parking in the downtown is also perceived as an issue, although recent parking studies suggest there is ample parking.

Cost of Community Services: Taxes in the City of Wausau are higher than in other municipalities in the metropolitan area and the rest of Marathon County. This can serve as a "push factor" for some businesses and residents, creating an incentive to move out of the City. It can also diminish the City's attractiveness to prospective developers, business owners, and residents. On the other hand, Wausau is a full service community and provides the highest level of local governmental services in Marathon County, especially in the area of protective services - police, fire, and ambulance. It is also the only community in the County fully serviced by public transit. Although the cost of community services may "push" some people away from Wausau, others are attracted because they place a high value on the services provided by the City.

Limited Land Supply/Annexation: There is limited land within the City to accommodate new development. Over the years, City growth and expansion has been dependent on annexation. Recent municipal incorporations restrict growth opportunities. The City only considers annexations in response to requests initiated by property owners. In some cases the property owner is a developer who wants to create an urban density subdivision or commercial venture that requires public sewer and water service. Individual residential or business property owners typically request annexation to receive municipal sewer and water services, often in response to septic system failures or problems with private wells. As a result, the City expands when and

where opportunities arise. While the City has defined an urban service area boundary within which sewers may be extended, its longstanding policy has been to not extend sewer and water services until land is annexed to the City.

Brownfields/Reuse: Existing environmental contamination on former industrial and commercial sites has discouraged the redevelopment of many otherwise commercially viable properties in the City. The mere possibility of contamination existing on a property frightens potential developers as well as financial institutions from redeveloping these properties for residential or commercial uses. These sites include the former SNE property on Thomas Street, many of the Central Business District Riverfront properties, and many sites adjacent to the rail lines throughout the community. Remnants of old industrial sites still occupy areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods and these sites frequently represent an impediment to improving the adjacent residential area. Apparently, owners of the residences are concerned that their financial investment in housing improvements will not be a wise expenditure if new industrial development on the adjacent industrial sites creates land use conflicts.

Neighborhood Blight: In several of the older neighborhoods of Wausau there are pockets of blighted property. Blighted properties diminish the value and desirability of these areas and often result in the spread of blight to other nearby properties. Blight characteristics may be present on all types of property including residential, commercial and industrial. Generally, residential blight is most prevalent in areas with a high concentration of older, renter-occupied dwelling units, where reinvestment in property is minimal. Commercial and industrial blight is mainly concentrated in areas that are no longer attractive for their intended use due to poor site visibility, poor access, or proximity to arterial streets. Old age and/or poor condition of public infrastructure can also contribute to neighborhood decline.

Retail Activity Changes: Wausau has historically been the economic hub of North Central Wisconsin. Recently, much of the retail growth in the Wausau metropolitan area has shifted to the south and east. There has also a significant amount of retail that takes place via the internet. As a result, the City of Wausau's standing as the regional retail trade center is becoming less clearly defined. The economic viability of the Wausau Center Mall continues to an issue that is reflective of these retail changes.

Goal, Objectives and Action Steps

Land Use Goal: The City of Wausau will balance the land use needs of the community to maximize the land's potential.

Objective 1: Maintain a harmonious balance of existing land uses within the City.

1. Ensure a mix of land uses which promote a livable community.

2. Identify residential areas that are threatened or currently subjected to incompatible land use activities and implement policies that mitigate or eliminate these disruptive activities.

3. Segregate industrial areas from other activities to reduce the extent of possible land use conflicts.

4. Review and update zoning and land division ordinances to reflect the plan.

Objective 2: Encourage full use of land within the City boundaries, including redevelopment and infill development of underutilized areas.

1. Eliminate brownfield sites in the City through clean-up efforts, redevelopment activities, and rehabilitation projects.

2. Avoid the creation of new brownfield sites by encouraging the safe and controlled management of hazardous products and materials.

3. Develop and maintain a list of buildings and properties with potential for development or redevelopment. Work with property owners, area realtors, MCDEVCO, and others to proactively market these properties.

4. Develop and maintain a City-wide blight elimination plan that identifies existing blighted buildings and sites, establishes programs for mitigating blight and preventing its spread, and sets priorities for blight elimination based upon the fiscal and manpower resources available.

5. Continue to fund the housing and commercial site rehabilitation programs of the Community Development Department and the code enforcement program of the Inspections Department.

6. Utilize funding programs and incentives, such as matching grants, Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, and tax-increment financing (TIF), to facilitate redevelopment.

7. Coordinate public actions and investments, such as property consolidation, road reconstruction, and provision of public utilities, to encourage and facilitate private investment in areas targeted for revitalization or new development.

Objective 3: Carefully consider expansion of City boundaries through annexation of land adjacent to the City.

1. Explore the use of incentives to encourage annexation of certain town properties that impede the orderly growth of Wausau or reduce the efficiency or cost-effective provision of urban services. Such

incentives may be useful in eliminating several existing town peninsulas that are nearly surrounded by incorporated area.

2. Utilize the City's extraterritorial zoning review to plan for the annexation and development of land outside of the Wausau City limits within the extraterritorial planning area.

3. Maintain the City's current policy of not extending municipal sewer and water services to properties located outside of the City limits.

4. Cooperate with the unincorporated towns adjacent to the City to develop boundary agreements, land use plans, and initiate the adoption of extraterritorial zoning within the City's three-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction area.

5. Work with adjacent towns to identify locations where new public infrastructure and facilities will likely be needed in the future.

6. Utilize extraterritorial plat review authority to ensure development in areas without public utilities occurs in a manner that allows for efficient extension of utilities in the future and the further subdivision of the individual lots as utilities are extended.

7. Work with adjacent towns to strategically reserve for public use the land needed for new and improved streets and other public infrastructure and facilities, including neighborhood parks, community parks, storm water detention basins, parkways, lift station sites, water reservoirs, and sewer and water main routes.

8. Work with Marathon County and Wisconsin DNR to ensure that updates and amendments to the sewer service area plan includes sufficient areas for the future expansion of the City.

Chapter Ten
Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter describes existing activities that the City of Wausau uses to coordinate with other various units of government including municipalities, school districts, the State of Wisconsin, and the federal government. This chapter will also summarize the major challenges and issues regarding intergovernmental cooperation and identify mechanisms for cooperation and coordination, including intergovernmental agreements, contracts, and regulatory authority. These mechanisms can occur between the City of Wausau and other local, regional, state, or federal entities.

Intergovernmental Tools and Regulations

This section lists the various tools used related to intergovernmental cooperation.

Annexation

Wisconsin law generally places annexation power in the hands of individual property owners, making it difficult for local municipalities (villages, cities, and towns) to control where or when annexation will occur. Wisconsin Statutes (s. 66.021) outlines three procedures for petitioning annexation. The most common involves a petition signed unanimously by all the electors residing in the territory or all owners of property to be annexed. A petition can also be circulated to initiate annexation. This requires signatures of a majority of electors in the territory and owners of one-half of the property either in value or land area. A petition for annexation can also be requested through a referendum election, but this requires signatures of at least 20 percent of the electors in the territory and is not a process that is often used.

Extraterritorial Zoning (ETZ)

Wisconsin Statutes allow cities and villages authority to assert zoning control over an area extending 1 ½ to 3 miles around their border, depending on their size. The City of Wausau is large enough to merit the 3-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. To exercise ETZ, a committee must be formed with members of the affected city/village and town. This committee is charged with determining land uses and zoning in the extraterritorial area and must approve zoning changes. The committee is given two years to complete its work, although a one-year extension is allowed.

Extraterritorial Subdivision Review

Cities and villages have the option of exercising extraterritorial plat review authority, which affects the same area defined by ETZ. If they use this authority, they have the right to review and approve land divisions within this area. The purpose of extraterritorial plat review is to give cities and villages some control over development patterns along their borders. Unlike ETZ, extraterritorial subdivision review does not have a time limit.

Intergovernmental Agreements

Wisconsin Statutes authorize local communities to establish cooperative intergovernmental agreements. These are most commonly used in the context of shared public services such as police, fire, and EMS. Cooperative agreements can also be established regarding revenue sharing and to deal with boundary changes in a coordinated, planned manner.

Local and Regional Level Cooperation

This section provides a brief description of the various functional areas and services that require intergovernmental cooperation at various levels.

Fire and Emergency Response: The City provides mutual aid fire protection for other communities in the Wausau metropolitan area and does not charge for this backup service. Thus, other communities have the backup support and can rely upon Wausau's full-time fire department to provide assistance to their communities for fire protection services.

Water Utilities: Wausau Water Works, the City water

utility, provides drinking water and wastewater treatment services. In addition to providing these services to the City of Wausau, Wausau Water Works also provides drinking water to the Village of Brokaw and wastewater treatment for the City of Schofield and parts of the Village of Weston and the Town of Stettin.

City/County Data Center: The City of Wausau and Marathon County cooperate to jointly operate the City/County Data services office which provides various technical and administrative support to almost all City and County staff.

911 Emergency Dispatch: Wausau receives dispatch service from Marathon County's Sheriff's Department Communication Center. This center handles all 911 calls from EMS, fire, and law enforcement agencies within Marathon County.

Drug Task Force: Wausau Police Department and the Marathon County Sheriff's Department cooperate on the investigation and elimination of illegal drug activity throughout the County. This program is supported by both agencies and is also funded with State and Federal dollars.

City/County Park Department: Marathon County and the City of Wausau jointly operate the Wausau & Marathon County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department that oversees most of the planning, management, and maintenance of both the Marathon County Park System and the local City of Wausau park system.

Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB): The City of Wausau participates with other communities in the urban area to provide funding and executive direction to the operations of the CVB, which is the local agency working to attract visitors and tourists to the urban area. Most of the communities surrounding the City of Wausau participate in this operation by dedicating a portion of their motel/hotel room tax dollars to support the operations of the CVB.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): The City of Wausau is one of the twelve members of the Wausau Urban Area MPO which is responsible for planning, programming, and coordination of federal highway and transit investments for the entire Wausau urban area.

Sewer Service Area Planning: The City of Wausau participates in a cooperative manner with other communities in the Wausau urban area to plan for the long-term growth and urbanization of these communities through the extension of sanitary sewer service.

County Health Department: At one time, the City had its own Health Department but that agency was absorbed into the County Health Department in the late 1970s.

County Library: The City provided about one-half the funds to construct the new Marathon County headquarters library in the early 1990s and continues to provide parking and other services for this County-wide facility.

School Districts: Two different school districts serve the City of Wausau. The majority of the City is served by the Wausau School District, while a small portion of the City on the southeast side is served by the D. C. Everest School District. It is essential to coordinate planning for school facilities with local municipalities because school facilities can significantly impact surrounding development, traffic patterns and volumes, and utility needs.

Regional, State, and Federal Level Cooperation

League of Wisconsin Municipalities and Wisconsin Alliance of Cities: The City is a dues-paying member and an active participant in both of these organizations. The primary mission of these statewide groups is to foster cooperation and communications among the membership for the benefit of Wisconsin's citizens.

Regional Agencies: The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides planning and mapping assistance.

State Agencies: Wausau works closely with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) (roads, bus, airport) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on a variety of programs, activities and facilities related to the City's growth and development.

Federal Agencies: The City has limited contact with Federal agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Highway Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Transit Administration, and Federal Aviation Administration. Funding for a variety of projects comes from the these federal agencies.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues

Expanding, Retaining, and Recruiting Business and Industry: An enhanced level of cooperation among the urban area communities when recruiting new businesses and industries to the urban area needs to be developed and implemented. This approach would ideally mitigate the competition that exists between individual communities vying for the same economic activity, such as expansion of an existing industry or the attraction of a new retail store. Increased cooperation would be beneficial to the entire metro area and allow faster consideration of proposals by potential businesses.

Consolidation of Governmental Services: Consolidation of governmental services and units within the Wausau urban area can potentially provide better and more cost

effective service. The City should be opportunistic when such consolidations are available. Merging services, such as fire, police, water utilities and others, are possibilities. Increasing areas of cooperation with or, if an adjoining municipality is interested, merging with one or more of those municipalities, could also be explored.

Declining State Funding: The State of Wisconsin needs to continue to support the City of Wausau financially and in other ways to ensure that the City is able to provide the services and facilities needed by residents in the community. The principal issues here are State cuts in financial aid to the City of Wausau and State legislation that continues to erode the City's tax base by granting property tax exemptions to a growing number of special interest groups.

Annexation: In Wisconsin, neither incorporated municipalities nor towns can initiate annexation. The process is driven by individual property owners (or developers) who petition for annexation into a city to receive sewer and water service. While towns often view annexation as a means to take their territory, cities and villages view annexations as a means to provide a more logical pattern of development and efficient provision of services.

Transit Service Area Expansion: The lack of transit service to a large portion of the Wausau urban area reduces the mobility of all transit-dependent individuals in the area. It also reduces the accessibility of job opportunities and many community facilities such as healthcare, the headquarters library, and certain shopping and recreation areas. Other communities in the urban area currently do not to provide a level of transit service comparable to that provided in Wausau.

Goal, Objectives, and Action Steps

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to strengthen and expand its cooperative activities with all levels of government to improve the provision of public services and facilities.

Objective A: Continue to maintain open communication and a spirit of cooperation with other units of government and organizations in the Wausau metropolitan area, Marathon County, and the State.

1. Continue to work with Marathon County officials to increase the level of services that County government provides to Wausau residents and property owners.

2. Enhance the level of cooperation among urban area communities when expanding, retaining, and recruiting new businesses and industries to the urban area.

3. Expand MetroRide service to additional areas outside the City boundaries, such as the Village of Weston and the Town of Rib Mountain.

4. Continue to offer the opportunity for adjacent communities to purchase transit service from MetroRide.

5. Work with other communities in the Wausau metropolitan area to explore the costs and benefits of consolidating certain government activities such as protective services.

6. Continue efforts to share or consolidate governmental services such as ambulance and fire protection with the City of Schofield.

7. Work with other communities in the Wausau metropolitan area to establish a schedule for regular quarterly meetings of community leaders.

8. Maintain strong lines of communication with representatives of adjacent communities, possibly through initiation of an annual leaders meeting,

9. Work with the Wausau School District to identify opportunities for shared or joint use of facilities such as City ball fields, school gymnasiums and auditoriums.

10. Cooperate with other units of government to advocate for State and Federal legislation that would be beneficial to Wausau.

Objective B: Continue to work cooperatively with adjacent unincorporated municipalities to mitigate intergovernmental conflicts.

1. Keep officials in adjacent towns informed about annexation petitions received by Wausau and invite their participation in City land use and public facilities planning activities near their community borders.

2. Work with adjacent towns to prepare land use and zoning plans for areas within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction and amend zoning and subdivision ordinances covering the extraterritorial area to implement these plans.

3. Encourage the adoption of land use plans by the adjacent towns that are consistent with the City's plans for its extraterritorial area.

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Chapter Eleven
Implementation

Overview

The implementation chapter is intended to provide a summary of actions necessary to carry out the goals and objectives determined through the planning process. Under Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001, beginning on January 1, 2010, any program or action of a local governmental unit that affects land use is required to be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan, this includes:

- official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23;
- local subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or 236.46;
- zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 62.23;
- zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231;

Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are ordinances. In particular, the zoning ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations are the primary regulatory devices used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; including decisions about how the community will utilize its financial resources.

Zoning Ordinance and Map

Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, the height and bulk of buildings and other structures, and parking requirements. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable side effects resulting from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicates where development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the land use plan and map. While the zoning map and land use map do not need to directly match at the time the land use map is adopted, the intent is that the land use map will serve as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned.

However, there may be situations where changing the zoning district boundary is in the best interest of the community. If changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the future land use map, the land use map should also be changed. However, the future land use map should only be changed if it does not accurately reflect the community's desired land use pattern.

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may set forth reasonable regulations for lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

This is an ongoing financial planning program that allows local communities to plan ahead for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. A CIP prioritizes expenditures in a way that can influence where and when development or redevelopment occurs, and can be a powerful tool in implementing the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Annual Operating Budget

The City prepares a budget each year. It is a statement of the prioritization and allocation of financial resources to achieve certain objectives over a specific time period. The budget is based on the needs of city residents, priorities set by the city council, and the related work plans identified by each department. The budget and the services provided by that budget are instrumental in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

Other Tools

Other tools that can implement the comprehensive plan and influence development in Wausau include: fee simple land acquisition, purchasing or acquiring easements, transfer or purchase of development rights, deed restrictions, land dedication, impact fees, utility districts and fees (such as stormwater) building permits, and other ordinances that include stormwater and erosion control requirements.

Plan Amendments & Updates

The Wausau Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a "living" document. While the plan is intended to provide a long-term framework for the community, it must also be responsive to change. As things change so should the plan. Over time it is expected that numerous things, from the economic climate to social demands will create a need for change. As such, the comprehensive plan should be reviewed periodically.

Amendments

Amendments are minor changes to the plan. Periodically, development proposals or changing circumstances within the City may trigger consideration of an amendment. Examples may include requests to change the zoning of a parcel to a use that is inconsistent with the future land use map in the Comprehensive Plan, changes recommended through a detailed planning effort conducted by the City, or a simple error in the document. The City will address these issues on an as-needed basis, rather than waiting for a scheduled review of the plan.

The following criteria should be considered when reviewing plan amendments:

- The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
- Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve its viability.
- The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
- The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including trees, slopes and groundwater, or the impact could be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.
- There is an annexation of new lands into the city.
- There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.
- The change corrects an error made in the plan.

Upon Plan Commission review and resolution to make recommended changes to the plan, the City Council shall call a public hearing to allow citizens time to review and comment on the recommended plan changes. The public hearing shall be advertised using a Class I notice. Based on public input, staff and plan commission recommendations, as well as other facts, the council will then formally act on the recommended amendment(s).

Updates

Under current law, it is required that an update of the comprehensive plan be undertaken once every ten (10) years. See State Statute 66.1001. Updates will ensure that not only the data and other information is current, but also the plan's goals, objectives, and policies reflect the desires and needs of the city. An update will also include a review of all planning maps. However, it is recommended the plan be reviewed at least once every five years. Some critical parts of the plan, such as the Future Land Use Plan Map, might warrant annual review.

It is important that all segments of the public are involved in the update process. Thus, a Public Participation Plan is required to ensure that the public is engaged in the planning process.

Consistency Review

There are no known inconsistencies among the planning chapters. This Plan, having been prepared as a single unit, is consistent in its parts and there is no inconsistency between them.

In the future, as plan text and map amendments occur, it is important that city staff and the plan commission conduct consistency reviews. These reviews will ensure that changes do not conflict with other sections of the plan.

Comprehensive Plan Goals

Below is a review of the plan goals identified in each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. These serve as an overall policy

guide for the City of Wausau.

Natural Resources Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to protect and enhance the quality of significant natural resources.

Cultural Resources Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to preserve historic sites and support cultural opportunities for community residents.

Housing Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to offer equal access to quality, affordable housing.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: The City of Wausau will provide high quality utilities and community facilities to all residents in a cost-effective and cost-efficient manner.

Transportation Goal: The City of Wausau will provide a safe and efficient transportation network that will facilitate the movement of people and goods throughout the community.

Economic Development Goal: The City of Wausau has a diverse economy that is a place of opportunities where people and businesses can grow and be successful.

Downtown Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to strengthen downtown Wausau as the heart of the City and surrounding region.

Land Use Goal: The City of Wausau will balance the land use needs of the community to maximize the land's potential.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: The City of Wausau will continue to strengthen and expand its cooperative activities with all levels of government to improve the provision of public services and facilities.

Overall Plan Recommendations

Implementation of this plan depends on the willingness of local officials to use it as a guide when making decisions that affect growth and development in the City. This section outlines some overall recommendations to implement the goals, objectives, and policies that are contained in the previous chapters of this plan, as well as some of the major initiatives identified throughout the process.

These overall recommendations are:

1. The City Council should adopt the plan and use it as a guide for decision making.
2. The Plan Commission should become knowledgeable of the plan and use it to justify recommendations to the City Council on development issues.
3. The City should encourage citizen awareness of the Comprehensive Plan. It is also important that area developers are aware of the plan.
4. City staff should incorporate the goals, objectives and policies of the plan into annual work plans and budgets.
5. The City should review its Zoning Ordinance to establish consistency between the two documents and incorporate any needed changes.
6. The City should periodically review the Comprehensive Plan and update the document in ten years.

In addition, there are a variety of specific efforts or initiatives identified within the previous plan chapters to begin to make strides toward reaching the goals and objectives of the Plan. These are intended to provide direction to local leaders and staff, as well as citizens of the City of Wausau for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. It is recommended that these projects be ranked or prioritized. These efforts and tasks should be assigned to standing committees for implementation.

After each project title, a list of the relevant plan chapters is included for reference. Chapter abbreviations are:

NR = Natural Resources,
CR = Cultural Resources,
HO = Housing,
TR = Transportation,
UCF = Utilities and Community Facilities,
ED = Economic Development,
DT = Downtown,
LU = Land Use, and
IG = Intergovernmental Cooperation.

The major initiatives identified are:

Stormwater Management Plan/Water Quality Plan (NR, UCF)
The City should develop a new Stormwater Management Plan or Water Quality Plan that includes a major stormwater management component to address the stormwater management issues within the City and plan to meet the upcoming TMDL standards.

New Historical Survey (CR, DT)
The City still relies on the 1984 Final Report Intensive Historic Survey, City of Wausau, Wisconsin as the most extensive report on the architecturally and historically significant properties within the City. This report needs to be updated.

Redevelopment Property Inventory (HO, ED, LU)
The City should develop and maintain a thorough database or inventory of properties in the City which are underutilized or otherwise ready for potential redevelopment. This includes commercial and industrial properties which could be redeveloped for industrial, commercial, or residential use, as well as vacant, underutilized, or blighted properties in residential neighborhoods which need maintenance or

redevelopment.

Neighborhood/Area Level Plans (HO, TR, ED)
To focus in more detail than is possible in the city-wide Comprehensive Plan, the City should develop neighborhood level plans for areas within the City, addressing housing, transportation, economic development and land use issues at a detailed local level. These plans should set a foundation for new infill housing and establish a pragmatic way to deal with mixed use development including reuse of old commercial and industrial properties.

Community Health Assessment (HO, TF, UCF)
"A community health assessment is a systematic examination of the health status indicators for a given population that is used to identify key problems and assets in a community. The ultimate goal of a community health assessment is to develop strategies to address the community's health needs and identified issues." This tool could be used to improve the health and livability of the City.

Pedestrian Inventory and Action Plan (TR, LU)
A missing component of the transportation plans within the City is a detailed report on pedestrian access and safety. A Pedestrian Inventory and Action Plan would include details such as signal timings and crosswalk distances, walk audits, and policy recommendations to improve issues and address traffic calming. The MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan covers some of these topics on a wider scale, but the need remains for a City specific report. Alternatively, these issues could be folded into Neighborhood Level plans.

Zoning Code Update/Overhaul (HO, TR, LU)
The majority of the City Zoning Ordinance has not been changed since written in 1967. The text and map of the Zoning Ordinance could use a full overhaul to address and accommodate current land use needs and standards.

Bicycle Routes and Trails (NR, TR, UCF)
Wausau currently has several off-street trails for bicyclists and pedestrians, including the River's Edge Trail which is nearing completion along the east side of the Wisconsin River. The River's Edge Trail still needs work to be connected along the west side of the River and could also be expanded south to Memorial Park or north to Brokaw. There is interest in connecting the trail downtown Wausau with the Mountain-Bay State Trail which connects Weston to Green Bay. The City has a strong network of on-road bicycle routes, which could be expanded and connected to other communities. Other additional routes and trails should be considered to develop connections within the City and to other communities.

Commercial Corridor Revitalization Plan (ED)
Several of the commercial corridors within the City would benefit from detailed scrutiny and recommendations for improvement, including Stewart Ave, 3rd Ave, 6th Street, Bridge Street, and Grand Ave. This could be a citywide plan with sections for each corridor and overarching recommendations to improve commercial corridors across the City.

Riverfront Development (ED, DT)
The Wisconsin River is a major amenity within the downtown of the City. With construction taking place currently on the east side of the River south of Bridge Street, the River is being opened up to more people. Additional effort needs to be made to continue to develop the riverfront, on both sides of the River, and to allow for mixed uses, including residential. The south Riverfront, between Stewart Avenue and Oak Island Park, along River Drive, which is currently the site of several Marathon County buildings and the VFW, is an area for potential future redevelopment.

Downtown Area Projects (DT, HO, ED)
Topics to be included: the mall, increase housing, existing vacant lots, redevelopment of parcels to a higher use, parking and additional ramp capacity, underutilized parcels including surface parking, increase density, mixed use, implementation of wayfinding, and include the transition are between the downtown and the new East Riverfront development. Some previous plans which may have relevant recommendations specific to downtown include "City Visions" Plan and the recent Downtown Parking Study.

Wausau Metro Area Economic Development Strategy (ED)
Complete this project in cooperation with the surrounding municipalities to prepare a shared economic development assessment report and ultimately an economic development strategy.

Sustainability Policy Development (HO, DT, LU)
The City needs to develop a series of policies for sustainability within Wausau. This is related to, and should be included in, the zoning code update. Policies should provide a framework for discussions of sustainability within City government and among City regulations.

Measuring Plan Progress

To measure progress towards meeting these goals, objectives, and policies, a variety of actions need to take place. Therefore, the task to measure plan progress, is as simple as determining if any action was taken or not, and if that action was taken according to the timeline. These "targets" will provide guidance to the city when specific actions are to be initiated. Based on the targets, measures of progress in achieving implementation of the comprehensive plan can be examined.

It should be noted that many of the policies identified in the plan are continuous or on-going and should also be monitored to measure the plan's overall success. Objectives can be categorized by the time it may take to accomplish them, generally short-term, or 1 to 5 years, mid-term, or 6

to 10 years, and long-term or 10 years or more.

It is recommended that a periodic "Plan Status" report be prepared to summarize the progress toward implementation. This report might be jointly developed by various city departments, as related to their involvement in the implementation of the goals, objectives, and policies developed within this plan. Ultimately, the success of the planning process will be measured by the future quality of life and prosperity experienced by both residents and visitors to Wausau.

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Appendix A
Public Participation Plan

Appendix B
Resolution and Ordinance

City of Wausau
Comprehensive Plan
2016