

Comprehensive Plan: The City of Wausau has completed its comprehensive plan. This document was prepared as a collaborative effort between the City, Marathon County, and the Minneapolis-based consulting firm, URS. The plan is intended to serve as a guide for the City Plan Commission, Common Council, and other City officials as they make decisions about the long term growth and improvement of the community. Most of the plan is focused on the physical development of Wausau, with land use, transportation facilities, and park and recreation improvements being major areas of focus. Other important elements of the plan include intergovernmental cooperation, housing, cultural facilities, and natural resources. The Common Council adopted the Plan in February, 2006. This *Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions* volume (Volume II of II) recommends that the community take over 160 actions which are intended to maintain Wausau's stature as a truly great city. These actions also address many of the concerns and issues identified in Volume I of the Plan.

Anyone wishing to comment on this report plan may send an email to: planning@mail.ci.wausau.wi.us. Please note that Volume I of the Plan, *Conditions and Issues*, is also available for review and comment on the City website.

City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan:

Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions

(Volume II of II)

February, 2006

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Introduction

The comprehensive planning process can be viewed as an organized way of identifying community problems, coming to some level of agreement on community needs, and setting goals and objectives to address these needs and solve the problems. It is a forward-thinking process; it bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to go. Comprehensive planning helps move a community from today's reality to tomorrow's possibilities.

Therefore, before the development of a plan proceeds too far, it is extremely important that the desired results of the planning process be carefully identified. These results are stated in terms of goals and objectives, which are the cornerstone of the planning process since they help form the framework for public and private decision-making.

A **goal** can be defined as a broad statement of a future condition which is considered desirable for the community. A goal is an end or direction toward which actions are aimed. Goals are formulated in light of identified issues, problems, community desires, and development principles. To a great extent, goals represent common ideals which a community wants to attain. Once goals are established, objectives and recommendations are developed.

Objectives can be viewed as specific statements of desired results. Accomplishing several objectives contributes to the fulfillment of a goal. Strategies or actions are usually specific activities which should be undertaken in the pursuit of specific objectives.

Policies are guiding principles intended to influence decisions and actions about the long-term growth and improvement of Wausau. The policies help to establish a decision-making framework that is

closely related to the stated goals.

Strategies or actions are the most definitive elements of the plan. These are the activities, programs and projects that should be undertaken, continued or modified to help achieve the established objectives and contribute to the fulfillment of the goals. These actions suggest how Wausau should manage its growth, redevelopment, and other improvement activities to help achieve the goals and objectives.

Many of the goals and objectives listed on the following pages have been taken from previous City plans such as the park, land use, sewer service area, housing, strategic development, economic development, historic preservation, and tax increment district project plans. Although some of these goals and objectives were developed 10 to 15 years ago, they are still a valid indication of a future, desirable condition in the community since many collective community values have not changed dramatically during this time period. Other goals and objectives have been developed for this comprehensive plan from the citizen participation process and the *Conditions and Issues* element (Volume I) of this comprehensive plan report. The citizen participation process for the plan included activities that took place over a several-year period and involved the use of focus groups, community-wide surveys, eight neighborhood meetings held throughout the City, written comments from local residents, and input from various city committees and commissions and other venues.

All of the elements of this plan are intended to serve as a general guide for the Plan Commission, Common Council, and other commissions and boards as their members evaluate land use, community development plans and other proposals related to the

physical development and enhancement of Wausau. Many of the recommendations in the plan address an existing problem or set of problems in the community, such as street lighting, sidewalk, or potential land use conflicts; others are more future-oriented and address needs that are likely to surface in 10 to 20 years, such as another bridge across the Wisconsin River.

Since problems, whether within a neighborhood or community-wide, are constantly changing, goals, objectives, and community priorities will likewise change. Such change must be recognized by the governing and administrative officials and should be reflected in their decisions and actions. These changes must also be reflected in the comprehensive plan recommendations as well as in the means by which the plan is implemented, such as the zoning and subdivision ordinance, official map, and annexation policies. Without a review and update of this plan in light of changing values, this document will gradually become unworkable and will no longer provide the guidance needed for the City's development and improvement. Generally, the time span between updates of the plan will be contingent upon how effectively the plan expresses the development desires of the community. However, State Statutes (s.66.1001(2)(i)) require that a comprehensive plan, ". . . be updated no less than once every 10 years."

State Comprehensive Planning Goals:

Wausau's Comprehensive Plan was developed in accordance with and is intended to meet the requirements identified in Section 66.1001 of Wisconsin Statutes. This law basically requires that a municipal comprehensive plan contain a compilation of the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the local governmental unit for each of the required plan elements. These statements are

intended to guide future development and redevelopment of the local community over a 20-year planning period. To provide some overall direction to local planning efforts the State has directed its agencies to balance their programs with the following local comprehensive planning goals. Local comprehensive plans should also be consistent with the fourteen State planning goals listed below. Wisconsin Statute 1.13(2) provides:

Each state agency, where applicable and consistent with other laws, is encouraged to design its programs, policies, infrastructure and investments of the agency to reflect a balance between the mission of the agency and the following local comprehensive planning goals:

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

(b) Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.

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

(d) Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

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

(f) *Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.*

(g) *Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.*

(h) *Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.*

(i) *Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels throughout each community.*

(j) *Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.*

(k) *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.*

(l) *Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.*

(m) *Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.*

(n) *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.*

State law (s. 227.113) further provides that:

Each (State) agency, where applicable and consistent with the laws that it administers, is encouraged to design the rules promulgated by the agency to reflect a balance between the mission of the agency and the goals specified in s. 1.13(2).

Goals, Objectives, Policies, Strategies or Actions

The goals, objectives, policies, strategies or actions developed for the City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan have been categorized under the following plan elements:

- **Demographics;**
- **Natural Resources;**
- **Land Use (Community Growth, Residential Development, Commercial Development, Industrial Development, Central Business District);**
- **Transportation Systems;**
- **Utilities;**
- **Housing;**
- **Cultural Resources;**
- **Community Facilities and Services;**
- **Parks;**
- **Economic Development; and**
- **Intergovernmental Cooperation.**

These goal and objective statements and policies, strategies or actions are intended to help guide the City's physical growth and development and assist the City Plan Commission, Common Council, and other governmental entities in formulating recommendations and making decisions about the City's future.

A brief introduction to each of these plan elements provides an

overview of the challenges facing Wausau and summarizes the City's intended efforts to address these challenges and capitalize on the community's strengths and opportunities in these subject areas.

A detailed discussion of improvements anticipated for the City's arterial street system is included in the *Transportation Systems* element of the plan. Similarly, at the end of the *Parks* element is a detailed discussion on the need for neighborhood and community parks within the long-term City growth planning area.

The final element of the plan, *Implementation*, reviews various regulations and procedures that are intended to carry out the recommendations of the comprehensive plan and make Wausau a better place to live, work, visit and enjoy leisure time. The final section of this element is an action plan which attempts to establish priorities and responsibilities for pursuing the 168 strategies or actions listed in this comprehensive plan.

Demographics

Historically, Wausau has been a progressive, pro-growth community that has welcomed and supported a diversified population as well as the needy and less fortunate. The city will continue to expand in this fashion while encouraging neighboring communities to enhance their programs for helping the less fortunate.

Goal: 1. To lower the concentration of special needs groups within the City of Wausau.

Objectives:

1. Continue to implement the programs and land use policies that have encouraged the dispersal of various types of community based residential facilities throughout the City.
2. Develop a cooperative program with Marathon County and other local units of government to help them increase the level of support and assistance provided to various socially and financially disadvantaged groups.

Policies:

1. The City encourages a balanced distribution of facilities for persons with special needs throughout Marathon County.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Work with Marathon County and other municipalities to evaluate the need for new facilities that serve minority and disadvantaged populations, including seniors, and identify

potential locations for such facilities.

2. Continue to evaluate proposals for new community based residential facilities in Wausau in accordance with the *Policy regarding location and distribution of community living arrangements (CLA)* adopted by the Common Council on April 9, 1996.
3. Continue to encourage State and Federal agencies to provide financial incentives for Marathon County and other communities in the Wausau Urban Area to expand their programs for helping minority populations and the economically disadvantaged.

Goal: 2. To continue to expand the population base and socio-economic diversity of the community.

Objectives:

1. Continue to implement programs and policies that contribute to the physical growth of the community through annexation and consolidation with neighboring communities.
2. Continue to promote Wausau as a diversified, cosmopolitan center whose people are generally friendly and very accepting of diverse groups and individuals.

Policies:

1. The City will support and encourage the continued growth and increasing diversity of the City's population base.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Work with the Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop, maintain, and distribute up-to-date information pertinent to the City's work, play, and living environments.
2. Wausau will continue to work with property owners, residents, and businesses located within the Long-Term (2050) City Growth Planning Area to annex into the City.

Natural Resources

In Wausau, high density urban development can still be compatible with the protection of our natural environment. While it is recognized that land development activities will consume and possibly destroy certain natural areas, this will be balanced by the preservation of certain high quality open spaces, through conservation and rehabilitation efforts and the use of best management practices to minimize development impacts on our natural resources.

Goal: To protect and enhance the quality of significant natural resources.

Objectives:

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. Continue efforts to reduce soil erosion.
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. Update the *River Edge Master Plan*, which contains many recommendations for improving the City's most important natural resource - the Wisconsin River.

Policies:

1. The City places a high value on its significant natural resources and strongly supports efforts to protect and enhance them.

Strategies/Actions:

1. 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. Consideration should also be given to establishing buffer areas between urban development and environmentally sensitive lands.
2. Continue to require the use of sediment and erosion control best management practices for all new development and redevelopment projects.
3. Develop and encourage the use of flexible or conservation design techniques as an option to standard development requirements. These might include:
 - (a) Reduction in the required parking to minimize impervious surface area.
 - (b) Use of vegetated swales rather than curb, gutter, and detention ponds.
 - (c) Use of porous pavements.
 - (d) Use of native plant species for site landscaping.

4. Consider adopting a tree preservation ordinance to restrict removal of mature trees and woodlands in the City.
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. Monitor wetlands on City-owned property for the presence of invasive plant species and develop a plan to control and/or eliminate them.
7. Continue to fund and implement recommendations in the *River Edge Master Plan*.
8. Engage in public education campaigns that will increase awareness of environmental issues and good stewardship practices (i.e., use of phosphorus-free lawn fertilizers). Techniques might include informational inserts in water billings, public service announcements, special articles in newsletters, displays on the City's web site, and programs on the cable access channels.
9. Continue to promote and participate in annual spring roadside litter clean-up efforts.
10. Combine the educational efforts for encouraging ground water protection with an educational program for protecting surface water quality and participate in the Groundwater Guardian Program.
11. Update, as necessary, and continue to enforce the shore land and floodplain zoning ordinances.
12. Consider enacting ordinances to eliminate the crushed granite and gravel parking lots and material storage areas that contribute to windblown dust and waterborne silt.
13. 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. In addition, efforts taken to enforce the construction site and erosion control ordinance should be evaluated and enhanced to maximize compliance.
14. Continue the street tree and park tree planting programs that have earned the City numerous "Tree City" awards.
15. Consider developing a program for restoring damaged or filled wetlands.
16. Provide a household hazardous waste disposal program for City residents that is cost effective in keeping these materials out of the sanitary sewer system, the storm water system and from being land spread.
17. Continue to provide recyclable solid waste collection service for City residents.
18. 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.
19. 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 and, where appropriate, to delineate the extent of floodplains adjacent to these waterways.

Land-Use Plan

The purpose of the land-use plan is to guide public and private actions related to the pattern and type of land use and development in Wausau. Guidance for managing existing land use activities and providing direction for community growth and change in existing activities is also covered in this section. The land use element of the comprehensive plan is regarded as the most critical link in the comprehensive plan since many of the other elements of the plan are formulated based upon future land use.

Long-Term City Growth

As noted elsewhere, Wausau has historically been a pro-growth community and its citizens and officials expect to continue this focus well into the 21st Century. An important element of the community's extended growth involves the delineation of a Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary to the year 2050. This boundary was established within the City's three-mile extraterritorial zoning and subdivision plat approval area based upon the assumption that all City growth to the year 2050 would be contained within this area. The growth boundary represents the best available forecast for the location of the City limits to the year 2050. It was drafted by City staff and ultimately reviewed, revised and adopted by the City Plan Commission. This planning boundary was established with the understanding that it would be evaluated and possibly modified at least every ten years.

As of September, 2005, the City of Wausau encompassed a total of approximately 12,350 acres. This included water features as well as wetlands and other types of area that cannot be developed. The (2050) Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary adds

approximately 14,260 total acres to the current City limits. Again, this includes many undeveloped acres located in floodplains and wetlands and on extremely steep slopes. This boundary basically identifies land that may be incorporated into the City of Wausau by the year 2050. This land, however, can only be added to the City through one of several State-authorized annexation processes. Almost all of these annexation processes require that a majority of the property owners within a particular area support any proposed annexation. **Thus, the exact territory that will become part of Wausau cannot be identified at this time. However, it is extremely likely that all City growth during the next 45-year period will occur at various locations within this boundary.** This long-term view of Wausau's probable growth is important for several reasons:

1. The boundary establishes an initial limit for the City's land use planning activities. Without such a boundary, the City's land use, transportation, park, sewer main, and other infrastructure planning would be done in a spatial vacuum. Further, this boundary will be evaluated when the comprehensive plan is updated and can be evaluated at any time before then.
2. The planning boundary establishes realistic limits for the City to complete more detailed sanitary sewer and water utility plans and for the development of stormwater management and water quality improvement activities as well as park land reservation and acquisition.
3. The boundary identifies an area within which 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.

4. The boundary provides subdividers, realtors, and other private sector interests involved in land development activities with a good understanding of where the City expects to grow over the next 45 years.
5. The boundary sets a framework for notifying property owners or prospective buyers within this area that, at some time within the next 40 to 45 years, they could reasonably expect their property to be located within the Wausau city limits. Thus, home buyers seeking a more permanent rural setting should search for a home site beyond this boundary.
6. The planning area provides a framework for elected officials in the neighboring Towns of Stettin, Maine, Texas, Wausau, and Weston to complete some of their comprehensive land use planning activities and to cooperate with Wausau on infrastructure extensions and facility improvements. These Town officials can assume that, over the long run, the City limits and urban infrastructure will be further extended into their communities.
7. 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.
8. The boundary identifies the adjacent rural areas that are likely to be annexed to the City by 2050.

Figure I shows the location of the city limits in September, 2005, and the limits of the Long-Term (2050) City Growth Planning Boundary. This planning growth boundary includes the following areas from unincorporated communities adjacent to the City of Wausau:

Municipality	Acres In Growth Planning Boundary
Town of Maine	4,590 acres
Town of Marathon	120 acres
Town of Stettin	4,142 acres
Town of Texas	18 acres
Town of Wausau	4,664 acres
Town of Weston	726 acres
TOTAL:	14,260 ACRES

Most of the area within this growth boundary is anticipated to be used for residential purposes with the exception of one large commercial area near the intersection of County Trunk Highways X and Z and several large commercial areas on the west side of the City in the vicinity of USH 51 and also STH 29. The Future Land Use Within The City Of Wausau And Within The Long-Term City Growth Planning Area (2050) is shown as Figure II.

Transition

The land use element also focuses on preventing community decay and enhancing the quality of the urban environment, especially residential areas. Many of the goals and objectives, as well as the following policies, strategies or actions, are intended to enhance the quality of the existing built environment and reduce

the likelihood of neighborhood deterioration. **The future land use map (Figure II) is intended to serve as a guide for future land use within the community and should not be rigidly followed. The goals, objectives, policies and strategies in this plan must also be considered when the City Plan Commission, Common Council, or Board of Appeals is considering action on the various land use issues that come before these bodies on a regular basis.** These other elements that must be considered in their decision making processes cannot necessarily be anticipated nor shown spatially on a two-dimensional land use map. Further guidance on these types of decisions is provided in the *Zoning Ordinance and Map* section of the plan.

Community Growth Goal 1: To plan for the annexation and urban development of land outside of the Wausau city limits but within the City's extraterritorial planning area.

Objectives:

1. Maintain the City's current policy of not extending municipal sewer and water services to properties located outside of the city limits.
2. Cooperate with the unincorporated towns adjacent to the City to develop land use plans and initiate the adoption of extraterritorial zoning within the City's three-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction area.
3. 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. These sites and routes should be identified on the Official City Map.

4. Refine the City's extraterritorial plat review procedures to ensure that new subdivisions within the extraterritorial area conform with improvements identified on the Official City Map or within the *Wausau Comprehensive Plan* and that the platted areas are designed in a manner that allows these areas to be cost-effectively served with municipal utilities and services.
5. Encourage and facilitate in-fill development opportunities in annexed areas, which will increase the efficiency of providing public services and facilities.
6. Facilitate planning for the provision of sewer services and extend the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources-mandated sewer service boundary to include as much of the City's long-term growth planning area as possible.
7. Oppose efforts to incorporate by the Towns of Maine, Stettin, Texas, Wausau, and Weston.

Policies:

1. The City will only extend municipal sewer and water services to properties within the city limits. Requests to extend public utilities beyond the city limits will only be considered in conjunction with annexation or to supply service to another city or village or an existing sanitary district.
2. Annexation will be one of the means used by Wausau to

continue to develop an attractive urban area that is distinct from the nearby rural area. Wausau will encourage annexation petitions by providing high quality public services and infrastructure.

3. The City will not support efforts by adjacent towns to incorporate into a city or a village.
4. The City will not support efforts by adjacent towns to establish sanitary districts for the purpose of providing sanitary sewerage collection and/or treatment service and/or potable water.
5. The City will strive to work cooperatively with adjacent unincorporated towns to manage fringe development within the Long-term (2050) City Growth Planning Boundary to facilitate the extension of service and facilities into this area in the most cost-effective manner.
6. The City respects the rights of farmers to continue their agricultural activities following annexation to Wausau. As long as a farmer is operating in conformance with City ordinances, the City will not take any action to attempt to force farmers to stop farming.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to annex unincorporated areas to provide vacant land for the City's expansion and to mitigate health hazards related to failed private wells and septic systems.
2. 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.

3. The City should continue to work with other communities in Wisconsin to amend the State annexation laws to allow cities to unilaterally annex town territory. Unilateral annexation would enhance the efficiency and cost effectiveness of extending urban services and facilities and allow the City to plan the location and establish a schedule for its growth.
4. As provided in Section 62.23(7a) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the City should initiate extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) within the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary. This will require that the City Plan Commission work with affected towns to develop land use and zoning plans for areas under ETZ. This program will help ensure that the territory within the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary is developed in conformance with the City's land use plan map.
5. Consider refining the City's extraterritorial plat review procedures to eliminate City review of plats located outside of the City Growth Planning Boundary.
6. Work with adjacent towns to identify locations where new public infrastructure and facilities will likely be needed in the future.
7. Utilize extraterritorial plat review authority (Chapter 21.13 of the *Wausau Municipal Code*) 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. This strategy could involve requiring subdividers to plat lots that are large enough to split into two parcels following the extension of municipal sewer and water services. One portion of each of the split lots would contain the existing residence and the other portion of the lot could be sold by the owner as the site of another single family residence. Thus, the initial builders on these lots will be required to construct their home near one of the side lot lines in order to maintain sufficient distance from a new home that would be constructed on the other half of their lot following the installation of municipal sewer and water services. This strategy will greatly enhance the ability of property owners to pay for and utilize sewer and water services as these utilities are extended into the rural areas.

8. Where a new extraterritorial subdivision is likely to be annexed within the foreseeable future, require that the subdivider install some or all of the infrastructure normally required for plats located within the City limits. The infrastructure improvements in these extraterritorial subdivisions should be implemented through a development agreement process and according to the City's design standards.
9. Work with State legislators and Marathon County officials to amend the laws, policies and practices that contribute to low density, sprawl-type development.
10. Pre-plan the routes for arterial and collector streets; the location and extent of neighborhood and community parks; and the location of storm water management facilities, booster station facilities, lift stations, water reservoirs, interceptor

sewers, force mains and water mains in the most active, developing areas within the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary.

11. Use the Official City Map process (State Statute 62.23 (6)) to reserve the most cost effective locations for the improvements and facilities listed above.

Community Growth Goal 2: To expand Wausau's tax base, employment opportunities, and industrial mix.

Objectives:

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. Continue to reduce the scope and extent of blighting influences in the community.
4. Provide for the future expansion of Wausau West Business and Industrial Park by acquiring additional vacant property located south of Stettin Drive and west of the Eastbay warehouse/distribution facility.

Policies:

1. The City supports and encourages redevelopment and reinvestment in underutilized properties to strengthen the City's tax base, enhance its environmental quality, and foster

opportunities for new jobs and housing.

2. The City will give priority to redevelopment of property located on the Wisconsin Riverfront, in distressed neighborhoods, and in key activity centers such as the STH 29/USH 51 interchange area.
3. The City will continue to encourage environmental remediation efforts throughout the community.
4. Reinvestment needs within the older parts of the City will be given equal priority with new development and growth along the fringe of the City.

Strategies/Actions:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Continue to fund the housing and commercial site rehabilitation programs of the Community Development Department and the code enforcement program of the Inspections Department.
4. Acquire vacant property adjacent to the Wausau West

Business and Industrial Park and establish or extend a tax increment finance district to help pay for the infrastructure needed to make this area suitable for private sector use.

5. Utilize funding programs and incentives, such as matching grants, Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, and tax-increment financing (TIF), to facilitate redevelopment.
6. 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.

Residential Development Goal 1: To support the development of a range of housing types, styles, densities, and costs, both owner and renter occupied, to meet a variety of housing needs and desires.

Objectives:

1. Designate and zone appropriate areas for single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential developments.
2. Encourage the utilization of Unified Development District zoning for locating condominiums, cluster-type housing developments, and zero lot line structures in or adjacent to single-family residence areas.
3. Provide the public infrastructure necessary to meet the health, safety, circulation, and recreational needs of residents.

Policies:

1. The City will encourage and assist the private sector in efforts to provide a variety of housing choices to meet the needs of persons at all income levels and ages and persons with special needs.
2. The City will promote a balanced mix of housing and discourage the concentration of renter-occupied housing in any single neighborhood.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to fund and implement the City's existing housing programs aimed at improving housing conditions for low-income households.
2. The City should continue to foster public/private partnerships which provide incentives to encourage home ownership, such as down payment assistance, low-interest loans for first-time homebuyers, and housing rehabilitation loans.
3. Continue to identify opportunities to rehabilitate vacant commercial, industrial, or institutional structures into housing.
4. Develop and maintain a list of vacant parcels within residential neighborhoods that could be used for in-fill housing. Work with area builders and real estate professionals to market and develop these properties.

Residential Development Goal 2: To facilitate the expansion of existing residential neighborhoods and the creation of new neighborhoods in a healthy, safe, convenient, and attractive environment.

Objectives:

1. Locate residential development in close proximity to existing or planned community facilities and services, recreation areas, and transit service.
2. Protect single-family residential areas from incompatible land uses, such as commercial and industrial activities.
3. Identify residential areas that are threatened or currently subjected to incompatible land use activities and implement policies that mitigate or eliminate these disruptive activities.
4. Provide for the safety of pedestrians by connecting existing and developing residential areas with adequate sidewalk or other pedestrian facilities.

Policies:

1. The City will consider the location of employment centers, major arterial streets, bus routes, schools, commercial areas, and parks when reviewing zoning requests for multi-family dwellings.
2. The City will not support zone change requests that would allow the development of large traffic generators or incompatible land use activities within residential neighborhoods.
3. The City will encourage development of new neighborhoods that provide for a variety of housing types, good access and through-street connections, and convenient access to services

and employment centers.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Zone sites that are near existing or planned transit services to encourage development of elderly and low-and-moderate income housing in these locations.
2. Buffer single-family residential areas from adjacent industrial and commercial development through:
 - (a) Establishment and enforcement of more stringent landscaping and screening requirements;
 - (b) Requirements for increased building and parking lot setbacks;
 - (c) Adoption of higher transitional yard standards for parking lot lighting, signs, and landscaping;
 - (d) Use of step-down zoning such as duplex zoning between commercial/industrial and single-family residential areas.
3. Maintain and upgrade public facilities and services in all neighborhoods but especially in the City's older neighborhoods.
4. Support and foster existing and new neighborhood organizations and encourage their participation in the preparation of neighborhood redevelopment/improvement plans.

Commercial Development Goal: To reserve areas for commercial use which have safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian access and good visibility and will minimize land use conflict with areas of

residential development.

Objectives:

1. Improve the City of Wausau's role as a regional retail trade center by facilitating the expansion of retail trade activities.
2. Reserve large-scale future commercial sites in the USH 51 corridor and interchange areas, eastern arterial corridor, and along Westwood Drive north of Bridge Street.
3. Direct commercial development to locations that can be reached in a safe and efficient manner with minimal impact on residential land uses and the arterial street system.

Policies:

1. The City discourages the creation or expansion of strip commercial areas along arterial streets where this type of activity is likely to contribute to traffic safety and service problems or the encroachment of incompatible business uses into residential areas.
2. The City encourages the clustering or nodal development of future commercial activities on sites that have adequate off-street parking and safe and convenient access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.
3. The City will consider traffic safety and congestion issues when reviewing commercial zoning requests and will not support requests that may create safety hazards or generate

traffic that will overburden the existing street network.

4. The City discourages rezoning or other efforts that would perpetuate nonconforming businesses that are out of character with the surrounding neighborhood.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Amend the commercial zoning district requirements to mitigate land use conflicts between commercial and residential land uses by requiring vegetated buffer areas, fences, low-level lighting, screened parking areas, and greater setback distances between residences and commercial sites.
2. Use Unified Development District zoning on large or unusual commercial development projects where site use and design factors should be carefully reviewed and controlled.
3. Control access from businesses near highway interchanges and arterial streets to enhance safety and minimize traffic congestion.
4. To ensure the integrity of the Grand Avenue corridor and the Thomas Street corridor, a complete moratorium on rezoning any Grand Avenue property or Thomas Street property to commercial use should be established. Further, certain areas presently zoned for commercial use should be considered for rezoning to residential use (for apartments or duplexes) to improve traffic flow and safety along these congested arterial streets.
5. The City should develop and consider adoption of more stringent site design standards for those commercial zoning

districts that are located:

- (a) Close to residential areas;
- (b) Adjacent to arterial streets; or
- (c) In community visitor gateway areas, such as the USH 51 and STH 29 interchange, where high quality commercial development will further enhance the visual image of Wausau.

Central Business District Goal: To strengthen the Central Business District as the heart of the City and surrounding region.

Objectives:

1. 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.
2. Center the economic future of the Central Business District (CBD) around the Wisconsin River by expanding the CBD to encompass development sites on the east and west sides of the river.
3. Encourage private development in the CBD that can be used to support public investment in transit, parking, street improvements, pedestrian improvements, and public space development.
4. Expand civic uses and activities in the CBD to establish the downtown as a cultural destination for the community and the region.

5. Improve public access to the CBD, including improvements in traffic circulation, mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, commuter and excursion rail, parking, and community way-finding.
6. Strengthen the historic downtown core as a pedestrian-oriented retail, entertainment, and cultural district.
7. Preserve the historic character of downtown buildings while accommodating new urban infill development.
8. Establish a new theme and identity for the Wausau CBD related to the Wisconsin River and its unique historic, recreational, and scenic character.
9. 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 CBD economic opportunities.
10. Build partnerships between the State, County and private sector to accomplish comprehensive redevelopment projects.
11. Support the Main Street programs and Business Improvement District efforts to enhance the vitality of the Central Business District.
12. Help relocate industrial uses from the Central Business District and River Edge Corridor.

Policies:

1. The City supports efforts to maintain and enhance downtown Wausau as the heart of the City and surrounding region.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to implement the recommendations of the *Central Business District Master Plan*.
2. 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.
3. Continue to provide financial assistance and incentives to encourage private investment in revitalization of downtown and riverfront properties.
4. Continue to enhance the existing wayfinding signs around the City to direct people to downtown, the riverfront, and the City's cultural attractions.
5. Continue to emphasize downtown redevelopment projects that contribute to "round-the-clock" activity in the CBD. This might include housing, restaurants, cultural facilities, and entertainment uses.
6. Work with downtown businesses, the Main Street organization, and arts groups to program activities in the City Center Park.
7. Support efforts of the Wausau Historic Landmarks Commission to maintain, enhance, and formally recognize

historically significant properties in the CDB.

Industrial Development Goal: To create industrial areas that contribute to the social and economic stability of the City without degrading its natural or residential living environment.

Objectives:

1. Provide an adequate number of sites that are suitable for industrial development to meet both the short and long term needs of the City.
2. Segregate industrial areas from other activities to reduce the extent of possible land use conflicts.
3. Evaluate the compatibility of all existing General Industrial (M-2) zoning districts with nearby residential areas.

Policies:

1. The City will support zone change requests for the expansion of existing industries where the expansion will not create conflicts with adjacent land uses.
2. The City discourages the encroachment of residential activities into areas designated for long term industrial use.
3. The City encourages clustering of industrial activity in planned industrial parks or in areas adjacent to existing industrial uses.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Identify and zone areas appropriate for industrial development that are readily accessible from residential areas but are visually and functionally separated from them.
2. To minimize noise and safety hazards, route industrial truck traffic around residential areas.
3. Identify areas where existing General Industrial (M-2) zoning is negatively impacting nearby residential areas and consider possible mitigation measures, such as installing buffering or down zoning to foster redevelopment.
4. Evaluate the suitability of continuing the industrial areas along the Canadian National Railroad tracks from Townline Road north to Bridge Street. These sites may be more appropriate for medium to high density residential uses or possibly mixed office/residential uses. Redeveloping these sites for residential use will contribute to Central Business District activity and reduce current land use conflicts in these neighborhoods.
5. Through the zoning ordinance, buffer residential land uses from nearby industrial areas through:
 - (a) Establishment and enforcement of more stringent landscaping and screening requirements;
 - (b) Requirements for increased building and parking lot setbacks; and
 - (c) Adoption of higher transitional yard standards for lighting, signs, storage, etc.

Future Land Use

The future land use within the City Of Wausau and within the long-term City growth planning area (2050) is shown in Figure II. This map illustrates the anticipated future pattern of land uses. It identifies twelve land use types to guide where new residential and non-residential development should be encouraged to locate or where development should be discouraged, such as the new park sites. Descriptions of each land use category and the number of acres within each category for the land encompassed by the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary are provided in Table A. Figure III shows areas with development constraints due to environmental conditions such as wetlands, floodplains, lakes, rivers and ponds. Most of the floodplain information for this map has been derived from data supplied by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Of the 26,610 total acres encompassed by the long-term City growth planning area (2050), 12,350 acres of this area are currently within the City. The remainder (14,260 acres) is within the adjacent towns.

The City has not identified any agricultural areas on Figure II nor in Table A. This is based upon the assumption and past history that shortly after agricultural land is annexed to the City it will be developed for higher density uses. This development decision, however, will be left to the property owner. Thus, if a farm is annexed to the City, the owner will be allowed to continue farming. The City will not force farmers out of business. As long as a farmer is operating in conformance with City ordinances, the City will not take any action to attempt to force farmers to stop farming.

Table A: Future Land Use, 2050

Land Use Category	General Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Single Family	One family structures, farm residences,	15,797	59.4

Residential	mobile homes. (Note: Based upon the application of some of the residential development guidelines described in the preceding goals, objectives, policies and strategies, some duplex and apartment structures are likely to be constructed in certain areas designated for single family use.)		
Multi-Family Residential	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments.	486	1.8
Commercial Services	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, convenience stores, gas stations, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company.	2,070	7.8
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers.	1,367	5.1
Quarries	Mining operations.	17	0.1
Probable Redevelopment Area	Areas that are currently developed but are likely to experience a large-scale change in land use involving multiple property owners.	252	0.9
Public/ Quasi-Public	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities (e.g., electric sub-stations, water reservoirs, municipal wells)	805	3.0
Recreational	Public and private parks, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, camp grounds, shooting ranges, etc.	1511	5.7
Water	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	1,085	4.1
Transportation	Airports, highways, road rights-of-way, railroads, logging roads	3,220	12.1
Total Land Area		26,610	100%

Source: Future Land Use map (acreage corresponds to map dated 8/18/2005)

Appendix A contains additional acreage information about future, anticipated land uses within the current (2005) City Limits and within the growth area. This table shows that most of the land in the growth area (78 %) is forecast to be used for single family residential purposes.

Forecasted Minimum Land Needs – Projections of future population and employment growth in the City of Wausau are provided in the *Issues and Conditions* report and are based on projections compiled by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. These were used to estimate the amount of land needed to accommodate future residential and non-residential development over the next 30 years, to 2030. Acreage projections were based on assumptions about density of houses per acre and employees per acre on industrial and commercial development.

It is estimated that between the years 2000 and 2030, 1,129 acres will be consumed by future residential development, 199 acres by future industrial development, and 895 acres by future commercial development — a total of about 2,223 acres. A more detailed explanation of the projections for future land needs is contained in the *Issues and Conditions* volume of the Comprehensive Plan in the sections entitled, “Residential, Industrial and Commercial Land Use Projections” and “Land Demand”. The 2,223 acres projected can easily be accommodated within the 14,260 acres presently outside the City limits but included in the long-term (2050) City growth planning area.

Another significant factor affecting the amount of land available for development is annexation. Based on historical annexation trends, the City annexes an average of about 1,400 acres per decade. If historic trends continue the City would annex about 3,500 acres through 2030. If annexation would not occur, the City would not grow and would probably lose population in the long run like other land-locked central cities such as Milwaukee.

These estimates are based on extremely high development density with no consideration for the nationwide trends toward lower development densities or for market factors.

Given the existing supply of developable land within the City and additional land expected to be annexed into the City over the next 25 years, it appears there is sufficient acreage to meet estimated demand for new development.

Consistency between Land Use and Zoning – Land use and zoning designations are related but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general, whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation.

Achieving consistency between land use and zoning will be required by State Statutes in 2010. This generally will occur 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 strategies, and the future land use map. Generally, if a requested zoning is consistent with these elements 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 Element*.

Transportation Systems

This element of the plan is intended to guide public decisions related to the overall transportation system. While the private sector takes the lead role in developing land, most elements of the community's transportation system are within the public realm. Those portions of the system which Wausau is responsible for include streets, sidewalks, parkways, public parking lots and structures, and WATS (the Wausau Area Transit bus system) are constructed and maintained by the City through its capital and operating budgets. The transportation element provides general guidance for maintaining and improving the overall transportation system. The *Local Arterial Street System Plan: 2005-2035* contains more detailed recommendations about the City's most frequently used transportation element, its arterial streets.

Goal: 1. To provide a safe and efficient transportation network that will facilitate the movement of people and goods at a fair and reasonably acceptable cost to the community.

Objectives:

1. Assure that existing and future land uses are adequately served by the various modes of transportation, including bicycle, walking, and transit.
2. Design and improve the transportation system to facilitate the interaction of various land use activities while working to protect those land use activities from many of the adverse effects associated with the transportation system (noise, air pollution, safety, congestion, speeding, energy consumption, etc).
3. Continue to seek funding for transportation facility improvements from the Federal, State, and County levels of government.
4. Improve public access to the CBD, including improvements in traffic circulation, mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, commuter and excursion rail, parking, and community way-finding.
5. 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.
6. Develop a street lighting plan for the City to address some of the issues raised by the community regarding areas of the City that have too much lighting or too little lighting.
7. Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Marathon County, and the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization to maintain and expand an arterial street system that ensures:
 - Safe and efficient movement of people and goods in motor vehicles, on bicycles, and on foot;
 - A cost-effective use of public resources; and
 - Minimal negative impacts to adjacent land uses and the community.
8. Improve and enhance the pedestrian environment to create a more walkable community.
9. Continue to build a network of various types of bicycle

facilities that are useful for transportation, recreation, and fitness purposes.

10. As a long-term objective, work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Amtrak, and other agencies to bring passenger rail service to Wausau.
11. Continue to work with representatives of the Canadian National and Wisconsin Central Railroad 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.
12. Continue to work to minimize the negative impacts of truck traffic on Wausau neighborhoods.

Policies:

1. The City will continue to use the Official City Map to reserve new street corridors and identify land needed for widening and realigning existing streets.
2. The City supports the creation of a balanced and efficient transportation system that offers viable alternatives to driving.
3. The City supports in-fill and redevelopment projects that will make more efficient use of the existing transportation system.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to conduct annual evaluations to identify areas of the existing street system that warrant maintenance and upgrades to handle existing and projected traffic.
2. Route major traffic flows, especially truck traffic, around residential neighborhoods through designation of appropriate truck routes.
3. Consider implementing traffic calming measures in residential areas where cut-through traffic and speeding are negatively impacting neighborhood safety and livability.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Formally designate and implement a system of connected bike routes to encourage bicycling within the City. Implementation measures may include route signage, on-road striping of bike lanes, or installation of off-road paths.
7. 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.
8. Require the installation of sidewalks in conformance with an

adopted sidewalk plan and policy for areas of new development and in developed areas that currently lack sidewalk.

9. Develop a City street lighting plan and install new lighting in conjunction with road reconstruction.
10. 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 rural hinterland (Franklin Street/CTH Z, 6th Street/CTH W, Townline Road/CTH N, Thomas Street/CTH N, Merrill Avenue/CTH U and 28th Avenue/CTH R).
11. Maintain close contact with elected officials and State and Federal agency representatives to provide Wausau with financial assistance for specific transportation improvements.
12. 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.
13. 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.

Goal: 2. To support transit-oriented development and the operations of the Wausau Area Transit System (WATS).

Objectives:

1. Promote the role of public transit in the overall community transportation system.
2. Maintain a fiscally sound public transit system.
3. Serve the public transportation needs in an efficient, safe, comfortable, and reliable manner.
4. Carefully consider the operations of the Wausau Area Transit System and other travel modes during community planning and development activities.
5. Continue to offer the opportunity for adjacent communities to purchase transit service from the Wausau Area Transit System.
6. Enhance the availability of long-distance and metropolitan area bus service within the City and improve its connections to WATS routes.

Policies:

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

Strategies/Actions:

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

2. Work with the private sector providers of inter-city bus service to coordinate connections with WATS to improve service to local transit-dependent travelers.
3. Explore the feasibility of expanding WATS service to include additional evenings and weekend days.
4. Encourage higher density housing development in close proximity to transit routes and stations through implementation of appropriate zoning.
5. Work with private landowners to encourage joint use of commercial parking lots for transit users.
6. Identify suitable Park 'n' Ride sites and evaluate the feasibility of developing these facilities.

Local Arterial Street System Plan: 2005 - 2035

Introduction

In April, 2000, the City of Wausau prepared a local arterial street system plan that was incorporated into the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization's plan for a larger urban area arterial street system. The City's plan consisted of a series of recommendations for completing various studies and for the construction and reconstruction of many street segments in the community. The type of improvements included minor intersection work, pavement replacement projects, street capacity expansions (where additional

lanes were proposed), and establishment of new streets. Some of the recommendations contained in that report were relatively short term in nature, while others had the year 2035 as a planning horizon.

This local arterial street plan is intended to update that earlier document by briefly describing the projects which have been completed and then discussing in more detail those projects that should be undertaken during the 2005 to 2035 time period.

Completed Projects from 2000 Plan

Below is a brief summary of the recommendations contained in the 2000 plan which were accomplished during the last five years or have been programmed for construction:

A. Bridge Street, from 3rd Avenue west to 17th Avenue, has been widened from a narrow four lane facility in a 60 foot right-of-way to a wider, four lane street with a boulevard and turning lanes in a 105 foot right-of-way. This project has greatly enhanced safety, reduced snow removal costs, and widened the outside lanes shared by motor vehicles and bicyclists from 10.5 feet to 16 feet.

B. Realigning the Thomas Street Bridge across the Wisconsin River, from McCleary Street to Townline Road instead of Thomas Street, was evaluated and ruled out due to the high cost of this project, its impact on the physical environment, and the disruption of certain travel patterns, such as travel time from Wausau Central Fire Station to the west side of the Wisconsin River. It was anticipated that this new alignment would help reduce traffic congestion at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Thomas Street and on the segment of Grand Avenue between Thomas Street and Townline Road. The evaluation completed for this realignment

determined that it was not a feasible alternative. Instead, the existing river bridge will remain on its current alignment and be widened slightly in 2005/2006 and replaced on-alignment between 2025 and 2030. In addition, to improve operating efficiency at the intersection of Thomas Street and Grand Avenue, the Thomas Street bridge over the Canadian National/Wisconsin Central Ltd. railroad tracks will be replaced in 2005-2006 with a new five-lane bridge.

C. A study of the Thomas Street corridor, from 17th Avenue to Grand Avenue, has been completed and was presented to the Common Council in early 2004. By the end of 2005, no final decision on the report had been made. The study identified five alternatives for improving travel in this corridor including: establishing a one-way pair of streets; reconstructing Thomas Street to an urban two-lane street; reconstruction to an urban three-lane street; reconstruction to an urban four-lane street, and reconstruction, using community sensitive design standards, to a three-lane street. Considerable public review and input was provided throughout this planning process. The two alternatives that are still being evaluated are establishing a one-way pair of streets—Thomas Street carrying east-bound traffic and Sherman Street carrying west-bound traffic—and widening Thomas to a four-lane street with turn lanes. It is anticipated that a decision on which of these two alternatives should be pursued for design and construction will be made before the end of 2006.

D. Marathon County, in cooperation with the City of Wausau and the Towns of Maine and Stettin, has completed a study and the County Board has officially established a four-lane corridor for the west side arterial (CTH R/28th Avenue), from Westhill Drive north to County Trunk Highway K. In 2005, the County began purchasing right-of-way within the corridor. The current 66-foot

wide right-of-way will increase in width to an average of about 115 feet and a segment of the street will be re-aligned to avoid extremely steep grades. As part of this plan, a corridor for widening CTH U to four-lanes, from Arthur Avenue west to 36th Avenue, was also formally established by the County Board. The CTH U element of this project is intended to improve the arterial street connection from 28th Avenue to USH 51 and provide a four-lane to two-lane transition segment on CTH U west of 28th Avenue.

E. Although the City recommended that this be a long term project, 28th Avenue/CTH R has been extended south of Sherman Street to County Trunk Highway NN in the Town of Rib Mountain and should be open to traffic in late 2005.

F. The intersection of 28th Avenue and Sherman Street has been redesigned and signalized to accommodate the high volume of traffic movements through this intersection.

G. An asphalt overlay was completed on that portion of Packer Drive currently located within the Town of Stettin. Overlaying this street was an important project since Packer Drive is one of the arterial streets serving Wausau West Business and Industrial Park.

H. Plans are being prepared to upgrade the intersection of 48th Avenue and Stewart Avenue. This project is programmed for construction in 2007 or 2008.

I. The intersection of Stewart Avenue and Stettin Drive will be realigned in order to intersect at 90 degrees. This project has been programmed for construction in either 2007 or 2008 depending upon the amount and complexity of the real estate acquisition

needed for the improvement. The reason for this re-alignment is for operation and safety. This intersection will be improved as part of the Stewart Avenue reconstruction and widening to four lanes, from 48th Avenue to 32nd Avenue.

J. As part of the USH 51/STH 29 reconstruction project, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation made an evaluation of the feasibility of constructing a full diamond interchange at USH 51 and Sherman Street. Due to the development constraints within the area, the study determined that a full diamond interchange is not feasible at Sherman Street.

K. As part of the USH 51/STH 29 interchange reconstruction project, it was determined that a full diamond interchange should be maintained at the STH 52/Stewart Avenue interchange. This access will be upgraded during reconstruction of the USH 51 main line in 2007 and 2008.

L. As part of the USH 51 design process, improved access to the Wausau Insurance Companies/Wausau Hospital campus from STH 52 is planned. This improved access will be constructed in 2006.

M. As part of the 2005 Merrill Avenue reconstruction project, the intersection of CTH U and USH Business 51 will be realigned and a new major entrance to Northcentral Technical College will be established at this location.

N. Westwood Drive was extended from Pine Ridge Boulevard north to County Trunk Highway U as a four-lane urban street. This project was intended to provide access to a large, inaccessible part of the City/Town of Maine and thus facilitate its development. In addition, this route was needed to complete the

future reconstruction of the USH 51 and Bridge Street interchange and serve as an alternative incident management route during periods of construction on US Highway 51 or during accidents on the freeway. Construction of this route also helped secure the location of WPS Health Insurance jobs at the Westwood Conference Center.

O. 68th Avenue was extended north from Stewart Avenue to serve as a residential collector street parallel to 72nd Avenue. This street was constructed to provide access into a developing residential area and as an alternative to using 72nd Avenue.

Projects for 2005 - 2035

The following projects represent studies and improvements that should be undertaken to help satisfy the long term, 30-year arterial street system needs in the City. Many of these projects are a carryover from the year 2000 arterial street system plan, while others are new projects related to the continued growth of the City of Wausau and its neighboring communities and to the related transportation needs. The following projects are intended to span a period of approximately 30 years and are based upon current deficiencies and the best estimates of anticipated needs, past trends, projections, and input and comments received over the last several years from elected officials, business representatives, and individuals. Most of the currently programmed projects such as USH 51/STH 29 improvements are not noted below. However, some programmed projects that are still the subject of additional planning or engineering design study are described.

As planning and engineering design activities for these projects proceed, modifications must be considered to respond to changing trends and unanticipated needs. For example, on the west side of

Wausau, the conceptual and final design for improvements to USH 51 will have a significant impact upon the local street system. These local streets should be carefully integrated into the freeway system to ensure that local traffic and visitors to Wausau have safe and efficient access to the freeway system while maintaining the integrity of the freeway for primarily thru-traffic. Improvements to the local street system in this area and the freeway cannot be made in a vacuum; as the freeway improvements are better defined, local plans for the intersecting arterials need to be reevaluated and modified accordingly.

Also, no cost estimates have been prepared for most of these projects. However, many of the improvements will need to be financed on a multi-jurisdictional basis and involve Wausau, Marathon County, Wisconsin DOT and the Federal Government, since the traffic utilizing these arterial streets is generated from a much larger area than merely the City of Wausau. The following projects are not identified by priority nor by anticipated time of need and are located primarily on the City's local arterial street system. The paragraph numbers are generally keyed to Figure IV, Local Arterial Street System Projects: 2005 -2035. These projects represent the 2005-2035 City of Wausau Arterial Street System Plan:

1. As indicated in the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Wausau Metropolitan Area (1996), a corridor for a fourth bridge crossing the Wisconsin River north of Bridge Street should be identified through a comprehensive planning and engineering study. Evergreen Road/Decator Drive may be too far north to carry a significant number of trips from the east side to the west side. A bridge crossing farther south is more likely to attract a higher volume of trips generated between these two sides of the river. Consideration should be given to directing STH 52 thru-

traffic across the bridge to a connection with USH 51. This bridge study should be undertaken by Marathon County to locate the best crossing and secure the needed right-of-way at least a decade before the bridge is programmed for construction. The study area identified in the 1996 transportation plan extended from Bridge Street to Evergreen Road.

In addition to a bridge corridor, the bridge approaches on both the east and west sides of the river should be laid out as part of this corridor identification process. These approaches will probably consist of a combination of new right-of-way and existing streets that will need to be upgraded and/or widened to safely carry the volume of traffic that the new bridge would attract. These approaches will need to be extended from the river and integrated into other key elements of the City's arterial street system.

2. The Wausau Common Council and Marathon County Board of Supervisors have gone on record in support of a plan for reconstruction of the interchange of US Highway 51/CTH U/CTH K that would establish a full diamond interchange at CTH K and a half diamond interchange at CTH U. Both of these county trunk highways provide access to the rural hinterland and smaller communities in the northern and western portions of Marathon County. In addition, many businesses rely on freeway access to provide safe and efficient routes for their customers. The access at these locations needs to be maintained to provide for continued growth in the northwest quadrant of Marathon County and to continue to serve existing businesses in the U/K interchange area as well as new businesses that are planned to locate in the large commercial areas in the vicinity of the CTH U and 28th Avenue intersection area. The State DOT is planning for the reconstruction of this interchange sometime after 2012. State officials have indicated they expect the local communities (City of Wausau,

Marathon County, and Town of Maine) to contribute financially to this interchange reconstruction project but DOT has not yet identified where this financial policy has been implemented elsewhere in Wisconsin. Design plans for this project should be completed by 2007 or 2008 so the City can place on its Official City Map any corridors or additional freeway areas that need to be reserved for construction of the project.

3. Sixth Street (County Trunk Highway W) north of Horseshoe Spring Road should be reconstructed to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and turning lanes at high volume intersections. Sidewalk and curb and gutter should be installed.

4. Wausau should continue participation in the development of the eastern arterial corridor (CTH X) to Evergreen Road and improve the connections from this corridor into the City's arterial and collector system: McIntosh Street, CTH Z, CTH N, STH 52, Evergreen Road, and Northwestern Avenue.

5. Stewart Avenue, from 24th Avenue through the 28th Avenue intersection, should be widened and upgraded as part of the US Highway 51 reconstruction project. Left turn lanes or a center turn lane should be constructed to serve the high volume of traffic generated by some of the commercial development in this area. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations should be incorporated into the project since this street is the primary transportation link crossing the freeway.

6. A capacity increase on Stewart Avenue, from 48th Avenue west through the 72nd Avenue intersection, will most likely be needed. This will probably involve reconstructing the street to four lanes, with turn lanes at certain high volume intersections. This reconstruction project may need to be phased in, with the

initial phase extending four lanes from 48th Avenue to 56th Avenue and a future phase extending the project farther west as traffic volume warrants. Sidewalks as well as bicycle accommodations need to be incorporated into this reconstruction project since this street serves as the principal connection between Wausau West Business and Industrial Park, the residential development in this immediate area, and neighborhoods in the eastern, older portion of the City. As the existing pavement on Stewart Avenue continues to deteriorate, the need for making this project a higher priority will escalate. Furthermore, Stewart Avenue serves as a parallel arterial to State Trunk Highway 29, and improving Stewart Avenue will continue to keep local traffic off of State Trunk Highway 29.

7. To improve access and circulation in Wausau West Business and Industrial Park, the intersection of 72nd Avenue and Stewart Avenue should be upgraded by constructing turn lanes and thru-traffic lanes in all quadrants of the intersection and by increasing the queue distance in these lanes. This can be done at the time Stewart Avenue is reconstructed unless traffic circulation and accident issues warrant earlier improvement or a particular Industrial Park project requires this intersection improvement.

8. Stettin Drive will need to be reconstructed during the 30-year planning period and probably improved with sidewalk and bicycle accommodations to serve the developing areas to the northeast and southwest of Stettin Drive and also to provide improved access to the new Stettin School. In addition, Stettin Drive serves as a secondary route to the Industrial Park and as a primary route to the rural and developing hinterland farther to the west. Capacity expansion may not be necessary on this street; however, an urban section should probably be considered to accommodate the pedestrian and bicycle facilities that are currently lacking in this

area. During the design phases for both Stewart Avenue and Stettin Drive, consideration should be made for the extension of bus service into this area.

Similar to Stewart Avenue, reconstruction of this street may be best accomplished in phases, with the first phase extending from Stewart Avenue north to the new elementary school and a later phase extending farther to the west.

The existing Stettin Drive bridge over the Little Rib River may not be wide enough to accommodate sidewalks when this street is reconstructed. A separate pedestrian bridge may be necessary over this river or it may be possible to widen the existing bridge to safely accommodate pedestrians. If the existing bridge needs to be re-decked before Stettin Drive is upgraded, consideration should be given to widening the bridge for pedestrians at the time of the re-decking.

9. Sherman Street, from 17th Avenue to 28th Avenue, will be reconstructed before 2010 with additional capacity and turn lanes to accommodate increasing traffic generated in this corridor and to provide facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians. This street section will be entirely five lanes or a combination of three to five lanes.

10. Sherman Street, from 17th Avenue east to 1st Avenue, will also be reconstructed. Capacity expansion is not anticipated. However, the street may become the westbound leg of the Thomas Street/Sherman Street one-way pair. If it is used as a west-bound one-way street, no widening of the road is anticipated; it will carry two lanes of traffic within the existing 60-foot right-of-way.

11. Right-of-way for extending 28th Avenue north from Westhill Drive to County Trunk Highway K should continue to be acquired

by Marathon County to ensure the integrity of this street. The segment from Westhill Drive north to Apple Lane should be constructed by 2020 rather than reconstructing 28th Avenue on the existing alignment as that pavement continues to deteriorate.

During the planning period, it is anticipated that the County will continue with land acquisition for adding capacity to the CTH U segment from USH 51 west to 36th Avenue and that this construction project will move forward.

12. The intersection of Grand Avenue and Thomas Street should be reconstructed to improve traffic flow primarily for northbound vehicles turning westbound onto Thomas Street. The conceptual plan for this improvement suggests that real estate on the west side of the road be acquired and that a dual left turn lane from northbound Grand Avenue to westbound Thomas Street be constructed in the 2012 to 2014 period. At the same time, the pavement on Grand Avenue will be sufficiently deteriorated to warrant reconstruction. Several years before the pavement deteriorates, an evaluation should be made on the type of street section warranted in this corridor. Capacity improvements may be possible at certain critical intersections in a corridor; however, widening the street from Kent Street to Forest Street is extremely unlikely due to the proximity of developed property. Real estate costs for widespread capacity expansion are probably cost prohibitive. In addition, traffic volume on Grand Avenue has not increased in the last ten years and may not increase a great deal in the future as urban growth occurs outside this corridor and alternative routes such as CTH X are upgraded. In 1991, the average daily traffic on Grand Avenue, as determined by the Wisconsin DOT, was 26,200 vehicles per day a short distance north of Townline Road. In 2001, DOT determined that the traffic volume at the same location was 26,210 vehicles per day.

To ensure the integrity of the corridor, however, a complete moratorium on rezoning any Grand Avenue property to commercial use should be established and certain areas presently zoned for commercial use should be considered for rezoning to residential use (for apartments) to improve traffic flow and safety along this busy arterial street.

An access management plan should be developed and implemented during reconstruction to consolidate the sites where vehicles are permitted to enter or leave Grand Avenue. This type of program was successfully carried out along the segment of Grand Avenue from Kent Street south to the Eau Claire River bridge when that street was reconstructed in the mid-1990s.

Although reconstruction of this street should be programmed for sometime during the 2012 to 2014 period, planning and engineering work should begin in 2007 or 2008 to ensure that adequate funding can be budgeted for the alternative selected for construction and that real estate can be secured in a timely manner. Engineering work for this street improvement project will probably also involve reconstruction or upgrading of the storm sewer system, sanitary sewer system, water mains, and street lighting.

13. The segment of Merrill Avenue from North 12th Avenue westerly to US Highway 51 should be reconstructed to an urban section with sidewalk and bicycle accommodations. Some capacity expansion may be needed depending upon adjacent land uses in this corridor and the selected design for the CTH U/USH 51 interchange reconstruction project. It may be possible to complete reconstruction of this segment of Merrill Avenue at the time the State upgrades the ramps at USH 51 and CTH U, now

tentatively programmed for 2012 (see Paragraph 2 above).

14. The City should encourage Marathon County to assume jurisdiction of:

- County Trunk Highway W, from the north city limits to State Trunk Highway 52 (East Wausau Avenue).
- County Trunk Highway U, from USH Business 51 west to the current County jurisdictional limits.
- County Trunk Highway Z (Franklin Street), from the County's current jurisdictional limits westerly to USH Business 51 (Sixth Street).
- County Trunk Highway N through the City of Wausau, which would include Townline Road, from County Trunk Highway X, and Thomas Street, from Grand Avenue to 17th Avenue.

If Marathon County accepts ownership of these arterial streets, the County would be responsible for their maintenance and reconstruction. This is quite similar to Marathon County assuming jurisdiction of arterial streets in the Town of Rib Mountain, such as County Trunk Highway R and County Trunk Highway N between CTH R and CTH KK, as well as arterial streets in the Villages of Weston, Kronenwetter, and Rothschild, and in the Towns of Weston and Wausau. These roads include County Trunk Highways X, XX, J and Z.

15. The Thomas Street corridor, from Grand Avenue to 17th Avenue, should be upgraded to improve traffic capacity and

reduce congestion. A study completed in 2004 identified five alternatives for meeting these objectives. After a decision is made on the type of street section to construct, design, funding, and real estate acquisition as well as the condition of the street will probably push reconstruction to the 2015 to 2020 period. Similar to the Grand Avenue project (Paragraph 13 above), the City should place a moratorium on the creation of additional commercial zones in this corridor and consider rezoning some existing commercial districts to residential land use. Access control should also be an important element of the plans for improving circulation in the corridor. Regardless of Marathon County's position on accepting jurisdictional responsibility for the street, the County should be asked to contribute to the project since a high percentage of the traffic using this street is generated outside of the City of Wausau.

16. After the Thomas Street bridge over the Wisconsin River has completed its useful life (2025-2030), a new four-lane structure should be constructed.

17. As development increases in the Industrial Park and in the far western part of the City, it may be necessary to upgrade 72nd Avenue to an urban street section with curb, gutter, sidewalk, and bicycle accommodations. Depending upon the traffic volume in the Industrial Park, a four-lane street may be needed throughout a portion of this improvement area. North of Stettin Drive, it may be desirable to reserve sufficient right-of-way to extend 72nd Avenue as an arterial street to County Trunk Highway U since 72nd Avenue is the only north-south arterial corridor west of 28th Avenue and 72nd Avenue also has a full diamond interchange at STH 29.

18. First Avenue, from Thomas Street north to Stewart Avenue,

will probably need to be reconstructed near the end of this planning period. Its intersection with Thomas Street will probably be reconstructed sooner as part of the Thomas Street reconstruction project.

19. There will be several currently unidentified spot improvements along the City's arterial streets that will be undertaken to enhance safety at certain street intersections and access drives to existing or new residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial land uses and redevelopment areas. Historically, these spot improvements are relatively inexpensive and often contribute significantly to public safety and circulation system enhancement.

20. Gated railroad crossings at most of the City's arterial streets should be considered as traffic volume on these streets continues to grow. These streets include:

- First Avenue.
- Third Avenue.
- Third Street.
- Fifth Street.
- Sixth Street.
- Franklin Street.
- Townline Road.

21. Winton Street, between Sixth Street and Third Street, and Third Street, from Winton Street south to Bridge Street, will need to be reconstructed during the planning period. It is not anticipated that traffic capacity will need to be increased on either of these streets.

22. Fifth Street, from Washington Street to Forest Street, will

need to be reconstructed early in the planning period to mitigate the deteriorating concrete in this two-block street segment. As part of this reconstruction project, the decorative street lighting installed along many of the other downtown arterial streets should be considered for this two-block segment.

23. Prospect Avenue, between Townline Road and Forest Street, may also need to be reconstructed during the planning period. As part of the planning and design process for this street, consideration should be given to measures that would improve traffic flow and safety since Prospect Avenue serves as a parallel relief route to Grand Avenue and carries a significant volume of traffic during the daily peak travel times, often at higher speeds than posted. Eliminating parking on one side of the street during the morning and evening commute is an immediate option for improving the service level of this street. The trade-off with this concept is drivers traveling even faster.

24. Stewart Avenue, from 17th Avenue east to First Avenue, may require either a major asphalt overlay or complete reconstruction during the planning period. Similar to Grand Avenue, the responsibility for improving this street rests with the State of Wisconsin. As such, their evaluation of the street will weigh heavily in the type of improvement selected for this arterial street.

25. A road from the new Wausau East High School extending north to either 25th Street or 33rd Street should be developed within the planning period. Presently, Sixth Street and Horseshoe Spring Road are the only connections across the Jim Moore Creek valley west of 41st Street. The proposed connection would shorten the travel distance from the high school to the developing area north of Jim Moore Creek.

26. Stewart Avenue should be extended west, approximately parallel to State Trunk Highway 29, and intersect with County Trunk Highway O. This would enhance access to Wausau West Business and Industrial Park from the west via CTH O and reduce the volume of local traffic on Highway 29 between CTH O, 72nd Avenue, and 32nd Avenue.

27. A collector or possibly an arterial street should be extended from the extension of Stewart Avenue described above north to Stettin Drive (approximately parallel to CTH O). This new route would carry local traffic in the vicinity of CTH O but at a slower speed than on the county trunk system.

28. A collector street system should be laid out in the large undeveloped area bounded by CTH U, 28th Avenue, West Wausau Avenue, and Sunnyvale Lane (72nd Avenue). This area is expected to develop for primarily residential purposes during the long term and options for river and stream crossings should be investigated early in the development process to ensure that opportunities are not lost due to scattered residential development within this area.

29. North 25th Street should be extended from Townline Road (CTH N) to Franklin Street to provide another north-south arterial between 10th Street and 41st Street, a distance of two miles.

30. Westwood Drive should be extended from its intersection with Merrill Avenue, north and east to align with 20th Avenue at the CTH K intersection. The existing intersecting street, Cassidy Drive, should be terminated in a cul de sac or vacated. A traffic signal should be considered for the intersection at the time this

extension is being designed. In addition, the segment of Westwood Drive immediately north of CTH U (currently named Overlook Drive in the Town of Maine) should be reconstructed to an urban section with curb and gutter and sidewalks.

31. Widening and upgrading the existing segments of 25th Street between Townline Road and East Wausau Avenue should be considered as additional residential development occurs within this corridor. This street will need to carry much of the north-south traffic that is generated between 10th Street and 41st Street.

32. Traffic signal management in several of the arterial street corridors should be undertaken to improve the operational efficiency of the streets. This effort should employ the most cost-effective technology available. If hard-wiring of intersections is necessary, buried conduit should be considered for installation at the time most of the above-described street improvement projects are undertaken.

33. As part of the US Highway 51 reconstruction project, Bridge Street will be realigned and reconstructed as a four-lane street through the intersection with Westwood Drive. During the 2005-2035 planning period, Bridge Street should be reconstructed from the terminus of this project westerly to intersect with Pine Ridge Boulevard, the primary street serving Aspirus Wausau Hospital and Wausau Insurance Companies. This segment of Bridge Street should be reconstructed as a four-lane street with bicycle accommodation and sidewalk for pedestrians.

34. During the planning period, the segment of Westwood Drive from Bridge Street south to the intersection with Pine Ridge Boulevard will need to be reconstructed. Since this is presently a four-lane street, capacity expansion is not anticipated. However, at

the time the street is reconstructed, consideration should be given to bicycle accommodation and sidewalk in this area.

35. West Wausau Avenue, from its intersection with Westwood Drive westerly through its future relocated intersection with 28th Avenue, will need to be reconstructed during the planning period. This street reconstruction project will probably involve curb, gutter, sidewalk, and bicycle accommodation. A two-lane street section is anticipated. Reconstruction will probably be undertaken at the time 28th Avenue is realigned.

36. As part of the US Highway 51/STH 29 reconstruction project, Pine Ridge Boulevard will be extended south to intersect with relocated Highway 52. The segment of Pine Ridge Boulevard from this new intersection with Highway 52 north to Bridge Street should be reconstructed during the planning period. Consideration should be given to bicycle accommodation as well as pedestrian facilities when this street segment is improved. Capacity expansion is not anticipated since this is a four-lane street.

37. Hilltop Avenue, from 28th Avenue west to 41st Avenue, is a deteriorated rural street section. During the planning period it will need to be reconstructed, probably to a wide two-lane road with curb and gutter that will provide bicycle accommodation to the developing residential area and also sidewalks for pedestrians.

38. The City should place on the Official City Map the exterior lines of the planned new arterial streets listed above, several local and collector streets, and the outside limits of those streets that will be widened or realigned to improve safety or reduce congestion. These should be mapped as soon as sufficient engineering and survey work has been completed to adequately identify the exact location of the right-of-way needed for the

streets. Completing this work in a timely fashion will prevent construction of homes and other improvements within the future road bed and thus reduce the future cost of these street projects.

Utilities

It is probably safe to say that most of us take for granted the street lights that brighten our neighborhoods at night, the streets we drive on, the bridges we cross, the lots and ramps we park on, and the water system and storm and sanitary sewers that run beneath our community. This is the public works network, the infrastructure of the City of Wausau. Our infrastructure is maintained every day, 24 hours a day, evidenced by street sweeping and snow plowing, new construction and repair, and waste disposal. Our infrastructure and its maintenance are provided to support our way of life, ranging from our reliance on clean water to our ability to move about the city in a safe, orderly way.

As population and land area grow, increased demands will be placed on our street system. Increased traffic will mean more maintenance. Additional streets must be built as neighborhoods expand.

Wausau's infrastructure is the system upon which our city has been built and upon which it will continue to grow. To meet future demands on public utilities, Wausau will continue to focus on providing effective and safe systems for its citizens.

Goal: To expand and improve the City's sewer and water utility systems in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Objectives:

1. Continue to only provide utility services to vacant land and

developed property after it is annexed to the City.

2. Update the State-mandated sewer service area plan to include all land within the City's long-term (2050) growth area.
3. 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.
4. Continue to implement the State and Federal mandated storm water management programs that are intended to reduce flooding and improve surface water quality.
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.

Policies:

1. The City of Wausau will only extend municipal sewer and water services to serve properties located within the city limits. Requests to extend public utilities beyond the city limits will only be considered in conjunction with annexation unless the request is to provide wholesale service to an existing city, village, or sanitary district.
2. The City supports the consolidation of utility services in the Wausau metropolitan area to increase the cost-efficiency of services.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to coordinate utility improvement projects with street reconstruction projects.
2. Conduct annual inspections and evaluations of the existing sewer and water systems to assess and prioritize needed maintenance and improvements.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Continue to communicate with other Wausau area municipalities regarding consolidation of area water and sewer utilities.
6. 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*).
7. Consider creating a stormwater utility to generate the revenue needed to construct, administer and manage the surface water run-off facilities and programs required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
8. 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.
9. To support cost-effective development, encourage the preparation and submittal to the City of master site plans for all public and private schools, churches, and area utilities (natural gas, electric, telephone).

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. New regulations are on the horizon, and payments for institutional and medical related housing will probably occur over the next ten to fifteen years. 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.

Goal: To offer equal access to quality, affordable housing.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and improve the existing housing stock by supporting and encouraging both public and private rehabilitation efforts.
2. Continue to aggressively pursue Federal, State, and private sources of funding for upgrading the City's existing owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing stock.
3. Continue to promote home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income households within the City of Wausau.
4. Continue efforts to expand the housing opportunities available within the Central Business District.
5. 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.
6. Facilitate the construction of more public assisted living units

for the elderly.

- 7. Encourage a variety of housing types throughout the City without concentrating any particular type of housing within one neighborhood.
- 8. Coordinate public infrastructure improvements with high intensity neighborhood code enforcement programs to accelerate housing code compliance and rehabilitation efforts in selected neighborhoods.
- 9. 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.

Policies:

- 1. The City supports and encourages proactive efforts to maintain housing quality, eliminate blight, and enhance neighborhood character.
- 2. The City supports the provision of high quality public housing.

Strategies/Actions:

- 1. Target the enforcement of the City’s existing housing maintenance codes in those areas that have not yet experienced stepped-up enforcement activities.
- 2. Periodically review and update the housing maintenance code to reflect the changing needs of the City.

- 3. 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.
- 4. The Community Development Department will continue to:
 - (a) Administer the homeowner rehabilitation program to enable low, very low, and extremely low income families to stay in their own homes;
 - (b) Administer public housing programs;
 - (c) Seek grants and additional funding for housing programs; and
 - (d) Keep the public informed of their basic rights under the Federal Fair Housing Act.
- 5. Work with other area agencies and organizations to improve coordination and communication regarding programs and facilities serving the homeless population.
- 6. 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.
- 7. 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.

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

Cultural Resources

The purpose of the cultural resources plan is simply to enhance the quality of life in Wausau by ensuring that the City's most significant architectural and historic buildings and other important sites are recognized and preserved to the extent feasible. The plan identifies strategies or actions that will foster the preservation of the City's historic resources and actions that the Historic Landmarks Commission should initiate and help implement. The plan covers a wide spectrum of activities in addition to preservation that includes increasing public awareness, educating and informing property owners, and enhancing the experience of visitors to our community.

The plan recognizes that not every old building is a candidate for preservation and that the preservation activities of the Landmarks Commission will be focused on the most significant individual structures in the community as well as on establishing districts where clusters of architecturally or historically significant buildings are located. Most of the recommendations in this chapter have been developed, reviewed, and adopted by the Historic Landmarks Commission as part of its comprehensive plan participation process.

Goal 1: To protect, enhance, perpetuate and preserve sites of special character or special architectural or historic interest or value that represent the City's cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history.

Objectives:

1. Designate as local landmarks the architecturally or historically significant structures found within the Downtown Historic District.
2. Designate the Andrew Warren Historic District and the East Hill Residential Historic District, which are on the National Register of Historic Places, as local historic districts.
3. Identify and consider designating as local historic districts other areas with a concentration of architecturally or historically significant structures.
4. Designate as local landmarks the 14 properties within the City that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
5. Consider for designation as local landmarks all properties within the City that are listed as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
6. Consider for designation as local landmarks all properties within the City that were listed as local landmarks under Chapter 2.82 of the *Wausau Municipal Code* prior to September 15, 1993.
7. Encourage new construction and improvements to non-contributing structures within all historic districts to be architecturally compatible with significant, older buildings located within the general area of the new construction and/or improvements.

Policies:

1. The City encourages the conservation of its historic resources

to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Develop a neighborhood association to serve as an advocacy group with a focus on historic preservation and enhancement. Property owners in the Andrew Warren District and East Hill Residential Historic District could form the nucleus of this association. The City could assist organizers by preparing maps and lists of property owners. The Friends of Wausau Historic Landmarks may be able to serve as this advocacy group.
2. Prepare a guidebook on historic preservation that could be used by property owners to remodel or expand buildings or construct new buildings in a style that is sympathetic to the other structures in the area. Particular emphasis should be placed on the use and misuse of vinyl siding. A video produced locally or by some other organization, could also be programmed for the cable access channel.
3. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a local grant and/or loan program to assist in the rehabilitation of landmark properties. This program could be focused in target areas where the need to rehabilitate certain buildings is the greatest. The program could be closely patterned after the Historic Boston Incorporated (HBI) effort.
4. Develop a landmark lighting program for the Central Business District. This program will help establish standards for installing night lighting for viewing many of the publicly owned landmark-quality buildings such as City Hall, the Public Library, and Courthouse. Owners of many of the private landmark-quality buildings such as the Grand Theater, prominent churches, and the Wausau Club should also be encouraged to participate in this effort.
5. Prepare Central Business District transition area land use guidelines for the City Plan Commission.
6. Investigate the need for updating the 1984 *Intensive Survey of Wausau*.
7. Develop design review guidelines for evaluating proposed changes to existing landmarks.
8. Develop and maintain a photo-log of landmarks, historic sites, and historic districts that have been designated by the Common Council.
9. Develop a decorative street light program for the City's historic districts. The program should identify streets that should have decorative street lights installed when each street is reconstructed. It should also identify a priority list of locations where existing, "modern" street lights should be replaced with more decorative fixtures.
10. Investigate the use of U.S. Department of Transportation - Transportation Enhancement funds and other State and Federal programs for implementing certain historic preservation strategies.
11. Develop streetscape design recommendations for the Downtown Historic District, Andrew Warren District and East Hill Residential Historic District. These streetscape elements

would include:

- Street light design and location;
- Directional and information signs;
- Street trees, landscaping and planters;
- Public telephones;
- Benches;
- Directories;
- Waste receptacles;
- Newspaper sales boxes;
- Mailboxes;
- Monuments, memorials, statues and works.

Goal 2: To help inform and educate residents and visitors to the community about Wausau’s unique history.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Help to promote the Downtown Historic District as a unique, vibrant, viable commercial area that has visual, cultural, social and economic appeal for all ages. This could be done through the City’s newsletter, *Wausau Works*, and through continued feature stories in the *Wausau Daily Herald*.
2. Develop and continue to enhance walking-tour brochures for the City’s Historic Districts, including the Downtown Historic District and the Andrew Warren District. The City’s computer-assisted mapping program could be used for upgrading maps. Brochures should be mailed with information requests received by the Wausau Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

3. Develop a program for attaching bronze informational plaques to contributing buildings within the Downtown Historic District.

Goal 3: To educate and inform the owners of historic and architecturally significant properties about building preservation methods and techniques and financial incentives available on the National, State, and local levels.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Work with the Historic Preservation Society of Wisconsin to develop an informational program on the availability of tax credits and other financial incentives related to historic preservation.
2. Notify property owners within the Downtown Historic District of the existence and availability of the downtown *Design Guidelines for Building Facades and New Construction* which was adopted by the Common Council.

Goal 4: To cultivate a heightened public awareness of the importance of historic preservation to the overall wellbeing of the community.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Develop a short video program for the City’s cable access channel that documents some of the efforts of the Historic Landmarks Commission, including:

- Establishment of the Downtown Historic District; and
 - Designation of local landmarks.
2. Work with merchant associations and other downtown organizations to encourage their assistance and participation in efforts to enhance the Downtown Historic District in such areas as advertising and publicity, streetscape improvements, building facade improvements, and new building construction.
 3. Help to develop a program for publicly recognizing outstanding historic preservation efforts. Awards could be presented at Common Council meetings and newsletter articles could be placed in *Wausau Works*. A video that highlights these preservation efforts could also be produced for airing on the cable access channel.
 4. Develop a variety of local historic preservation information for posting on the City of Wausau's worldwide web site:
www.ci.wausau.wi.us/.

Community Facilities and Services

The safety and security of every resident is paramount as we look toward Wausau's future. Few services are as essential to the wellbeing of a community as the delivery of full-time police, fire and ambulance protection. The Wausau Fire and Police Departments are deeply committed to the safety of all residents.

Outside of basic living necessities, every citizen wants to feel safe at home and on neighborhood streets. Of the 22 cities in Wisconsin with a population of 25,000 or more, Wausau is among the lowest with respect to violent crime rates. Our goal is to make Wausau an even safer place to live.

Goal: To locate and maintain public facilities and services that improve the quality of life in Wausau.

Objectives:

1. Continue to provide a high level of police, fire, and ambulance services.
2. Provide quality solid waste management services to residents of Wausau at a reasonable cost.
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.

Policies:

1. The City will strive to provide high quality community services and facilities in a cost-effective and cost-efficient manner.
2. The City will continue to work cooperatively with other agencies involved in the provision of community facilities and services.
3. The City supports consolidation and/or sharing of community services and facilities if they result in more cost-effective services without decreasing the level of service.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Engage the Wausau School District and D.C. Everest School District Boards of Education in discussions about revising their common school district boundaries.
2. Encourage other school districts within the Wausau Urban Area to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) as part of their educational curriculum.

3. Identify and evaluate locations for a possible public community center.
4. Continue to support “Community Policing”.
5. 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.
6. Routinely evaluate the City’s transportation network to identify where access impediments such as at-grade rail crossings and long dead-end streets should be eliminated to ensure acceptable emergency response times are maintained.

WAUSAU FIRE DEPARTMENT FUTURE FACILITIES RESTRUCTURE AND UPGRADE PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION:

This report, in conjunction with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, is intend to serve as a conceptual guide to address the long term fire department facility needs resulting from community growth and the obsolescence of existing fire fighting operations facilities. The report is also intended to stimulate discussion of the long term facility needs of the Fire Department before these facility needs become critical problems.

Historically, Wausau has been a pro-growth community and the comprehensive plan anticipates that this attitude will prevail in the coming decades. But growth can also strain community resources. New construction, increasing population, and expanding economic activity place demands on a wide variety of municipal services — including fire protection. If the need to enlarge and improve the fire service is not recognized, a growing community faces an increasing risk of property loss and injuries

Over the past 35 years, the type and scope of responsibilities within the Wausau Fire Department have increased. So too have the size of the population served and the City’s geographic area. Since 1970 Wausau has pushed its boundaries farther to the west, northwest, north and northeast. Very recently, there has been great interest by the development community in moving the municipal boundaries farther to the east. In addition, the City population continues to grow and the number of commercial, industrial and institutional structures in Wausau is also on the rise. Wausau remains the employment center of Marathon County and every day, thousands of people from the surrounding communities commute to the City for work and often require the services provided by the Fire Department. Finally, as the elderly population in the City expands, the unique service demands of that segment of society will also increase the number of service calls made by the Wausau Fire Department.

This brief report focuses on the location of several future fire stations and on options for relocating existing stations. Staffing and equipment needs are also important considerations as the community grows and changes but are not addressed as part of this report.

Currently, Wausau has enough well placed fire-fighting facilities overseeing the southern portions of the City. Central Fire Station can handle responses to the City's southern boundaries. If the City eventually consolidates with its neighboring communities it will most likely be with communities to the south of its borders. Schofield, Weston and Rib Mountain all have fire stations that can handle responses into the southern, southeast, and southwest parts of the City. The fire fighting and emergency medical services challenges lie in the long-term City expansion areas to the west, northwest, north, northeast, and east.

Following is a discussion of the existing fire stations and proposed relocations and additions to these facilities. The various facilities described below are shown as the numbered facilities on Figure VII.

CENTRAL FIRE STATION -- #1

If fire service consolidation is accomplished with the communities south of Wausau, the Schofield Fire Department is in a good location to provide service to the southern and southeastern portions of Wausau. Within the next fifteen to twenty years Central Fire Station at Grand Avenue and Thomas Street (#1A, on Figure VII) should be considered for closing and relocating these activities to a new station (#1 B) to the north, somewhere in the vicinity of the intersection of Franklin Street and Sixth Street. This would improve response to calls received from the City expansion areas to the east and northeast near the new East High School as well as the anticipated commercial development at the intersection of County Highways Z and X. An alternative for relocating Central Fire Station is a site in the vicinity of the intersection of 10th Street and McIntosh Street. This location would maintain most of the current response times and also permit

faster access to the east. This new location would be approximately equal distance between the Bridge Street Bridge and the Scott Street Bridge and compared to the facility at Grand Avenue, have much improved access to the eastern fringes of the community.

Relocating Central Fire Station to the north would also eliminate the need for Station #3 (Bridge Street) in its present location and allow this facility to be sited in a more efficient place. Due to the condition of the Central Fire Station building, the Fire Department would also realize reduced costs from operating a new facility. Should the decision be made to keep Central Fire Station at its present location, renovation of the building, which is already needed, should include a training room, offices, kitchen, windows, and improvements to the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems and bunkrooms.

FIRE STATION #2

Completion of the USH 51/STH 29 interchange on the west side of Wausau will severely land lock Fire Station #2, located at Seymour Street and 32nd Avenue. As a result, emergency crews will have difficulty responding to calls either in the Industrial Park or east of the fire station, along Stewart Avenue. Fire Department staff has expressed concerns (in writing) to the Department of Transportation about the planned interchange but the State has been unable to completely mitigate the access problems the freeway project will create. Therefore, it is recommended that within the next five years consideration should be given to relocate Fire Station #2, to a site fronting on Stewart Avenue which is as close to the Highway 29 and Stewart Avenue interchange as possible. This location would improve the response time to calls from the east via STH 52 and Stewart Avenue, to the

west via STH 29 and Stewart Avenue and also to the north and south via USH 51. The Wisconsin DOT should assist the City in securing a new site.

Regardless of the location of Fire Station #2 station, training rooms and physical fitness accommodations need to be added to the facility.

FIRE STATION #3

If Central Fire Station (#1A) is relocated to the Franklin Street vicinity, then within the next ten years Fire Station #3, located at Bridge and 8th Street should be closed and a replacement station constructed much further north and northeast. Ideally, this new station would be located as close as possible to the east touch-down of any new bridge that is constructed or planned for construction across the Wisconsin River, north of Bridge Street. In no case should the new fire station be any farther south than E. Crocker Street. This new station also needs to be larger than the existing Bridge Street Station to include training rooms and a physical fitness center. If Central Fire Station is not moved, Fire Station #3 should remain in its present location and a fifth fire station should be considered for construction within the next twenty to thirty years near the intersection of Evergreen Road and Hilltop Road (location #5 on Figure VII). This is further discussed below.

If Fire Station #3 remains in its present location, renovation is needed to include a training room, offices, kitchen, windows, and improvements to the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems and bunkrooms.

FIRE STATION #4

A fourth fire station has been needed in this City for some time. With the expansion of the City to the northwest it is important that a fourth station be considered for construction within the next five to ten years in the northwest part of the City. A location near the intersection of County Highway U and 28th Avenue would be ideal. A station here would be able to serve the expected growth in this part of the City and also have access to both the Bridge Street Bridge and the planned river bridge to the north (when constructed) for travel to both sides of the river. This fire station should, in any case, be located no farther south than W. Campus Drive.

FIRE STATION #5

If Central Fire Station is not moved northward to a Franklin Street location and Fire Station #3 is not moved or closed, a fifth fire station, located in the vicinity of Evergreen Road and Hilltop Road, on the northeast side of the Wisconsin River, will eventually become necessary to serve growth and development in this area. The addition of this east-side fire station would be in anticipation of serving the maximum City growth encompassed by the 2050 growth planning boundary. This station would primarily cover the area north of East Wausau Avenue and would need to be constructed when development in the service area reaches a critical threshold.

TRAINING FACILITY (TF):

A Fire Department Training Facility should be developed in the industrial park away from a large number of residents and businesses. The facility should include a splash tower, burn

facility, with ventilation and rescue capability, and water and ice rescue access.

REASONING FOR FACILITY PLACEMENT:

Over the last thirty-five years the Wausau Fire Department has been maintaining the status quo. Its obligations, responsibilities, and coverage areas have all increased and yet it continues to perform its duties out of the same facilities that existed in the late nineteen seventies. All of the Department's areas of responsibilities have increased. The service coverage area has grown from 10 square miles in 1965 to its current 19.2 square miles in 2005. Maximum anticipated growth within the long-term city growth planning boundary will eventually bring it to 41.3 square miles. Any future WFD facilities should include training classrooms, physical fitness areas, and room for expansion. This should be kept in mind when purchasing property for these facilities. Growing service areas in Wausau and neighboring communities will speed the need for additional facilities. If Fire Department facilities are not improved, the City may jeopardize its current Insurance Services Office insurance rating. That rating depends in large part on, among other things, the location of fire fighting facilities and response distances. A lower rating for the City could substantially increase the cost of fire insurance for all property owners in the community. Increasing the response times for medical personnel can be fatal in many cases.

SUMMARY:

The Wausau Fire Department's current response time to incidents within the city limits is under 5 minutes. As the City grows and the Department's area of responsibility grows that response time will likely increase. In 1998 the response time was under 4

minutes and with the current rate of City growth, the response time will likely increase to 6 minutes by 2008. If no action is taken, the response time is forecast to further increase to 7 minutes within the next four to five years.

Facility placement is critical to keeping response times within acceptable standards. In 1977 an independent task force was appointed by Mayor John Kannenberg to study the Wausau Fire Department and to make recommendations for improvements and expansion. That study, (*Fire Service Task Force Final Report*, January 11, 1977), although primarily focused on staffing issues acknowledged that present facilities were barely meeting the demands of the day. Yet it did not make specific recommendations for improving those facilities because "the future of the ambulance service is a key factor in determining levels of personnel and facilities. That issue needs further review and study...."

It has been twenty-nine years since that report was written and those years have provided insight into the "future" of ambulance service, as well as its parent fire service. Those responsibilities continue to evolve today. **It must be stressed that the new facilities and facility relocations discussed in this Comprehensive Plan are critical to the continued growth and development of the City and to the efficient operation of the Wausau Fire Department. Now is certainly the time to determine how these needs can best be accommodated for the continued safety of the community.**

WAUSAU POLICE DEPARTMENT FUTURE FACILITIES NEEDS

The Wausau Police Department anticipates the follow facility needs during the planning period. These facility needs are very basic and include:

- 1) Should the Wausau Fire Department expand the facilities discussed above, the Police Department would request a small part of the facility be dedicated for official police use as a substation.

A substation would allow officers to remain close to their neighborhood sector while performing normal tasks such as report writing, interviewing, and follow up investigations. Allowing officers to remain closer to their sector would improve response time and efficiency. This would align itself with the community based policing philosophy of decentralizing officers.

The area of Wausau that would be the first priority for a substation would be the west side of the City. The second priority would be the northeast side of Wausau.

A substation should include an office and restroom and all the furnishings that would normally be provided in these rooms.

- 2) Another future facility expansion that should be considered is the existing parking lot serving the Wausau Police Department. This parking lot is not large enough to accommodate employee vehicles on a

normal day. The City should purchase the property adjacent to the north parking lot, 506 Seymour Street, as soon as it becomes available.

The current shortage of parking for police operations would be eliminated if the Central Fire Station operations are moved to another location. However, if it is determined that the Central Fire Station operations will not be moved, additional off-street parking for police (and fire) operations will be needed at the Grand Avenue location.

Parks and Recreation

Park and recreation facilities and programs are the hallmarks of a healthy, active, and attractive community, and the responsibility of providing them is shared by both the public and the private sectors. Wausau has an essential role in planning and managing park resources to meet the challenges of changing demands and growth. City officials are committed to plan, acquire, develop, and provide public leisure infrastructure and programs to serve the community now and in the future.

Wausau is following national demographic trends of significant increases in elderly residents, dual income families, single parent families, and a secondary baby boom. Overall, these trends show a need for both elderly recreation and facilities and programs for more children as consumers of services.

Goal: 1. To provide a diversified park and recreation area system that will meet the needs of present and future City residents.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that areas for active recreational uses are located in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and that these areas are readily accessible to neighborhood residents by way of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
2. Acquire land for park purposes in areas identified as having a deficiency of recreational facilities and in the growth areas of Wausau where new park and recreation facilities will be needed as the community expands.

3. Emphasize water-based recreation facilities to accommodate the constantly growing demand for water-accessible activities.
4. Update the City's *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* at least every five years and consider annual amendments, as needed.
5. Identify opportunities to utilize or reuse land, such as the former Holtz-Krause Landfill site, for park and recreational purposes.
6. Cooperate with the Wausau School District, where appropriate, for joint acquisition, development, maintenance, and use of recreational facilities at school sites and park sites.
7. Create a bicycle and pedestrian network of trails throughout the City and align this system with similar facilities in adjacent communities.

Policies:

1. The City will strive to provide park and recreation facilities and programs that meet the needs of the current and future population.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to enforce the park dedication (land and/or cash) requirements of the subdivision ordinance (Title 21 of the *Wausau Municipal Code*).
2. Conduct a feasibility study and prepare a master plan and cost

estimates for conversion of the Holtz-Krause Landfill site into a park and recreation facility.

3. Explore opportunities to convert vacant, blighted, or underutilized properties into neighborhood parks, open space, or community gardens. Priority should be given to areas with identified deficiencies of parks.
4. Continue to seek State and Federal funding to assist in development of park and recreation facilities, particularly bicycle/pedestrian trails.
5. Identify and prioritize opportunities to develop new trail corridors and/or trail extensions. These might include: abandoned rail lines, utility rights-of-way, and road rights-of-way.

Goal: 2. To design and develop recreational facilities to provide a quality recreational experience for the citizens of Wausau.

Objectives:

1. Maintain park facilities in a safe, healthful, clean, and aesthetically pleasing condition.
2. Provide handicapped accessible, barrier-free recreation facilities where feasible.
3. Provide adequate and sanitary restroom facilities where extended use of particular park facilities is expected.
4. Work with Marathon County and the Marathon County

Agricultural Society on the management and development decisions related to Marathon Park.

5. Expand the City’s ability to hold large-scale festivals and other events in the vicinity of White Water Park and Fern Island/Oak Island Park.
6. Continue to implement the recommendations contained in the *River Edge Master Plan Update*.

Policies:

1. The City is committed to providing park and recreation facilities that are safe, clean, attractive, and accessible.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Explore opportunities to improve access to the Wisconsin River, consistent with the recommendations identified in the *River Edge Master Plan*, through purchase of property or public easements.
2. Pursue opportunities to acquire (through purchase or dedication) excess property in the vicinity of the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation’s dam facility downtown (Wausau Hydro Plant).
3. Work with private property owners, downtown businesses, the Main Street staff, and Marathon County to coordinate and enhance events programming of White Water Park, Fern Island/Oak Island Park, and the City Center 400 Block.
4. Continue to seek funding from a variety of sources to help

ensure park and recreation facilities are well maintained, attractive, and safe.

5. Work with Marathon County and the Agricultural Society to improve communication and establish more inclusive procedures for making decisions regarding management and development of Marathon Park.

Goal: 3. To preserve and enhance important natural, historic, scenic, and cultural features in the City by incorporating these features into the park system.

Objectives:

1. Protect, through public purchase, regulation and/or enforcement, environmentally sensitive areas from development and degradation that could contribute to groundwater or surface water contamination. Some of the larger environmentally sensitive areas include the floodplain/wetland complexes adjacent to the Big Rib River, Little Rib River, and Eau Claire Reservoir and areas with highly erodible soils on steep slopes.
2. Manage passive outdoor recreation areas and large open space sites owned by the City, conservancy areas, and undeveloped park lands for wildlife habitat.
3. Focus open space preservation in the Central Business District on river bank and shoreland access, trail development, and scenic enhancement.
4. Provide interpretive information to the public on natural, scenic, historical, and cultural features.

Policies:

1. The City will continue to strive to be a positive and effective role model of land stewardship.
2. The City places a high value on its natural resources and supports efforts to sustain and enhance the environmental integrity of its natural environment.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Identify environmentally sensitive areas within City parks and consider restricting physical access to these areas and also consider establishing buffer strips adjacent to these sites to provide further protection.
2. Identify drainage swales and creeks that should be maintained in their natural state to provide wildlife habitat and visual amenities and help to manage the quality and quantity of storm water run-off.
3. Utilize sustainable design techniques in development of park and recreation facilities. For example, this might include use of native plantings and reducing the amount of park area devoted to mowed turf.
4. Inventory lakes and wetlands on City-owned property for the presence of invasive plant species and develop a plan to control and/or eliminate them.
5. Work cooperatively with area environmental groups to coordinate efforts and leverage resources aimed at managing,

protecting, and enhancing environmentally sensitive areas.

6. Develop a system of interpretive signage for parks with significant natural, historical, or cultural features.
7. Work with the Wausau Landmarks Commission to identify significant historic structures or sites located on City parkland.

Goal: 4. To maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of providing parks and recreation areas, thereby reducing overall costs.

Objectives:

1. Acquire new park sites in developing neighborhoods well in advance of the residential development that these new parks will serve.
2. Prepare detailed master site plans for all parks.
3. Phase the development of new parks to the growth of the neighborhoods they serve.
4. Maintain user fees at levels that are competitive with comparable Wisconsin communities and include appropriately higher fees for non-residents.
5. Continue efforts to use stormwater detention basins as open space areas.

Policies:

1. The City will strive to provide high quality park and recreation

opportunities in the most cost-efficient manner possible.

Strategies/Actions:

1. Identify and propose for purchase sites for new parks and connecting trails/pedestrian facilities that are currently outside of the City borders. Where purchase is not an immediate option, work with town officials to discourage the type of development on these sites that would preclude or significantly impact future park use.
2. Explore the feasibility of increasing user fees, particularly for non-residents.
3. Complete and update, as necessary, detailed master site plans and related cost estimates for all parks.
4. Develop design standards for stormwater detention basins that support and enhance use of these basins as community open spaces.
5. To ensure the City's eligibility for various forms of State and Federal park and recreation area financial assistance, maintain an updated version of the *City of Wausau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* that meets State requirements.

Neighborhood and Community Park Land Needs in City Expansion Area

Introduction

As part of the City comprehensive plan process, a long-term city growth planning boundary was delineated. This boundary basically identifies land that is quite likely to be incorporated into the City of Wausau by the year 2050. This land can only be added to the City through one of several State-authorized annexation processes. Almost all of these annexation processes rely on a majority of the property owners within a particular area to support any proposed annexation. Thus, the exact territory that will become part of Wausau cannot be identified at this time. However, it is extremely likely that all City growth during this 45-year planning period will occur at various locations within this boundary.

City Park and Planning staff reviewed the territory included within this long-term growth area and identified where neighborhood parks and possibly community parks might be needed as additional residential development occurs within the long-term growth area. On the east side of the Wisconsin River, four new neighborhood parks, an expansion of an existing neighborhood park (River Highlands Park), and one community park were identified as needed to accommodate future residential development. On the west side of the Wisconsin River, nine new neighborhood park sites were identified.

All the neighborhood parks described below will be established and developed as the park and recreation needs in the immediate areas increase as a result of residential development in the vicinity

of each planned park. The exact location of these proposed parks will be refined as future residential subdivisions and plans for a local street system to serve the development help to further define the park’s location. In addition, future subdivision plats may provide some of the land needed for these planned parks and some of the funds to acquire the park land which is not dedicated.

All of the planned neighborhood parks are intended to encompass between five and ten acres and serve a population of 500 to 2,500 people. These planned parks are intended to provide both active and passive short-term recreation activities. The primary user ranges from five to fifteen years of age. However, informal recreation opportunities will be available for groups of all ages. Generally, the service area of a neighborhood park will be a radius of one-quarter to one-half mile, depending upon the density of residential development in the immediate area and ease of access to the park.

Residential Development Activity

The need for additional neighborhood parks has increased recently as more subdivisions have been platted, primarily near the city limits. From 2002 through the first half of 2005 over 900 residential building lots have been planned for development. Table B provides more detailed information on these projects. The letters adjacent to the names of the subdivisions are keyed to the approximate location of these subdivisions as shown on Figure V:

Table B: Subdivisions from 2002 through the first half of 2005.

Location on Map	Subdivision Name/Side of Wisconsin River (year of plat)	Total No. of Lots

A	Windtree Oaks First Addition/West Side (2002)	21
B	Eagle Valley/East Side (2002)	58
C	Indian Springs/West Side (2002)	32
D	McIntosh Ridge/East Side (2002)	20
E	Franklin Heights Subdivision/East Side (2003)	67
F	Morgan Creek/West Side (2003)	102
G	Hidden Trail/East Side (2003)	6
H	Emerald Pines First Addition/West Side (2003)	29
I	West Hill Subdivision /West Side (2004)	99
J	Vistas at Greenwood Hills with condos /East Side (2005)	141
K	Fountain Hills /East Side (2005)	179
L	Liberty Ridge /West Side (2005)	70

M	Timberline Trail /West Side (2005)	30
N	Hidden Valley Estates /West Side (2005)	54
O	Heiser's Scenic Heights Estates /West Side (2005)	10

TOTAL FOR 3.5 YEARS: 918 LOTS

East side total: 471 West side total: 447

Most of the subdivisions identified in this table are in the early stages of development. However, there is a long term commitment by the development community to establish new single family residences in all of these areas. Based upon the formula used in the City's subdivision ordinance, the plats created during this 3.5-year period will generate a need for over 28 additional acres of parkland in the community (918 lots times 3.4 persons per lot times 0.009 acres of parkland per person).

It should be pointed out that this subdivision activity does not include several large apartment complexes that are in various stages of development. Several of these apartment projects are near the city limits where the demand for additional neighborhood park space will be the greatest. The largest, recent apartment projects initiated during the 3.5 years reviewed include:

- Wausau East High School—53 units
- Grand Avenue Apartments—96 units
- Bos Creek Estates—116 units

- Strawberry Fields—240 units

TOTAL: 505 units

All of these residential developments contribute to the need to plan for and expand neighborhood park facilities in the City.

Planned Parks

Below is a brief description of each of the planned neighborhood parks. The need and location for many of these neighborhood parks was identified in the City of Wausau Comprehensive Park and Recreation Area Plan which was adopted by the Common Council in 1990. The numbered paragraphs below are keyed to the numbers shown on the park plan map, Figure VI:

1) This proposed eastside neighborhood park should be located west of 41st Street (CTH X) between Town Line Road and McIntosh Street. In addition to serving the immediate area, this park should also serve the low-density residential development located south of Town Line Road adjacent to Greenwood Hills Golf Course. The Greenwood Hills area should be linked to this neighborhood park by a series of walking and bicycling trails that will allow individuals and families to access this park from residential development in the vicinity of the Greenwood Hills Golf Course. These trails will also link this neighborhood park to trails and passive recreational facilities in the Eau Claire River environmental corridor.

2) This neighborhood park is anticipated to be developed in conjunction with a 30-acre to 40-acre community park north of McIntosh Street and south of Franklin Street. It is intended that

this neighborhood/community park be linked to Hawthorn Hills School and the Pfaff Preserve Park by a series of bicycle and pedestrian trails meandering through the valley and residential subdivisions to the west. This park should also be linked to the neighborhood park to the south (see Paragraph 1 above). The community park will be focused on a forest preserve but will also provide several sports fields for a larger service population engaging in organized sports such as soccer, baseball, and softball. This community park will complement the facilities presently located at the Wausau East High School site and other east side sports fields. To provide more direct non-motorized access to this community park, the bicycle and pedestrian facilities planned by Marathon County along County Trunk Highway X should be linked to this park.

3)&4) As the City grows into the area generally bounded by Franklin Street, 41st Street, and State Trunk Highway 52, there may be sufficient residential development to warrant two neighborhood parks in this area. One would be located south of the Stenchfield drainage way and the other would be located to the north. One or both of these parks could be integrated into part of the Stenchfield Creek drainage and wetland area to provide a more environmentally diverse setting for these neighborhood facilities.

5) To satisfy the need for future recreational facilities in this immediate growth area, it is recommended that the existing River Highlands Park should be expanded by two to four acres as the land immediately east of the park is platted for residential development. Since meeting the future park needs in this area is limited to expansion of the existing park, it is recommended that the Park Department take the necessary action to place this expansion area on the Official City Map. This action will provide some assurance that when the property immediately east of River

Highlands Park is subdivided the appropriate area will have been reserved for expansion of the park.

6)&7) As the vacant and sparsely developed area north of Campus Drive and west of the Wisconsin River is developed for higher density residential use, parks in these locations will be needed. The nearest recreational facilities to these two planned parks are at Scholfield Park and the Jefferson Elementary School/Schulenburg Park.

8) The neighborhood to be served by this park is being developed for relatively high density residential use. One relatively large apartment complex (116 dwelling units) was under construction in 2005 and another 80-unit apartment project immediately south of Cassidy Drive has been approved. As the other vacant tracts of land in this immediate neighborhood are developed, the need for establishing and opening this park will increase.

9) It is anticipated that the vacant area bounded by 28th Avenue, US Highway 51, County Trunk Highway U and West Wausau Avenue will experience considerable residential development during the next eight to ten years. As a result, the need for locating a neighborhood park in this part of the City will greatly increase. There are no recreational facilities, including school grounds, within this general part of the City and a neighborhood park will be needed shortly after residential subdivision plats are approved. Development projects initiated in this area in 2005 include the Liberty Ridge, Timberline Trail and Heiser's Scenic Heights Estates subdivisions which collective will create 110 single-family residential building lots. This same general area has seen several large annexations in the last ten years and is expected to be a growth node of the City as jobs are added at new medical facilities and the WPS offices in the immediate area.

10), 11)

& 12) These three parks are located in the far northwestern part of the planning area. Depending upon the pace of subdivision development in these largely vacant areas, the need for neighborhood parks here may be 30 to 40 years in the future.

13) This neighborhood park is bounded by Stewart Avenue, 72nd Avenue, and Stettin Drive. The residential area that it will serve has seen a considerable amount of recent development and a neighborhood park site needs to be acquired soon, before all of the suitable properties are put to other uses. This need represents the highest priority for neighborhood park land acquisition within the City and should be pursued before the most suitable neighborhood park sites in this area are consumed by residential development.

14) This park will serve the far western portion of the City's planned growth area bounded by Wausau West Business and Industrial Park, State Trunk Highway 29 on the south, and County Trunk Highway O on the west. Much of this area is presently undeveloped farmland; however, there is a good deal of growth potential in this area as there are a number of large, vacant tracts of land owned by only a few individuals. Further, there are no neighborhood parks anywhere within this vicinity and the need for establishing a park will develop shortly after the first residential subdivisions are platted.

Reserving and Acquiring Parkland

The primary methods used by the City to acquire land for new parks and expansion of existing parks are 1) outright purchase of land for parks and 2) exercising the parkland dedication

requirements contained in the City Plats and Subdivisions ordinance of the *Wausau Municipal Code* (Title 21).

Funds for purchasing parkland are available from the fees collected under the Plats and Subdivisions ordinance, the City's capital budget, Federal and State grant programs, and donations from various civic and philanthropic organizations. The fee rate charged by the City for parkland dedication should be considered for adjustment by the Park and Recreation Committee and Common Council at least every two years to insure that these fees adequately reflect recent trends in residential real estate values.

In anticipation of the community's growth, the City has the authority to purchase parkland in the adjacent unincorporated towns before new subdivisions are platted in these areas and before the cost of real estate in these areas increases substantially. The City can also place the location of future park and park expansion areas within the City on its official map as a means of reserving sites for park use. However, outside the City limits, out-right purchase of land is the surest means of reserving the best sites. Identifying these same areas in the comprehensive plan provides some degree of reservation for future park use but at a lower level of protection than purchase. To a large extent, the attached map can be used to reserve proposed park sites outside the City limits as long as the sites are within future subdivisions. Identifying these park sites in the comprehensive plan does not, however, protect them from scattered residential or commercial development in the adjacent towns. People could develop these proposed park sites as single, large building sites that do not need a subdivision plat for development. Regardless of the method the City uses for establishing new parks, additional community design work needs to be completed before the exact location of these park facilities can be established. That is, the park locations shown

on the attached map are primarily conceptual at this point and need to be further refined as part of the ongoing park site planning process.

Historically, most land that has been dedicated for park purposes is given by subdividers who are required to do so according to the procedures identified in Title 21. However, generous individuals and corporations have also given the community land for public use. For example, the Paff Preserve nature area was a gift from a member of a prominent, old-Wausau family.

Priority Actions

As suggested above, the top priority actions for meeting the neighborhood and community park land needs in the City are as follows:

- A. Acquire sufficient park land in the area bounded by Stewart Avenue, 72nd Avenue, 56th Avenue, and Stettin Drive to meet the park needs of this growing residential area (See Paragraph 13 above).
- B. Acquire sufficient land in the area bounded by Franklin Street, 41st Street (County Trunk Highway X) and McIntosh Street to meet the neighborhood park needs of this growing residential area (See Paragraph 2 above).
- C. In the Comprehensive Plan, show the exact location of the boundaries of the area needed to expand River Highland Park to satisfy future residential growth in the immediate area (See Paragraph 5 above). This area could also be shown on the Official City Map.

D. Acquire sufficient park land in the area west of 41st Street (CTH X) between Townline Road and McIntosh Street to meet the long term park needs of this growing residential area (See Paragraph 1 above).

E. Acquire sufficient land in the area bounded by 28th Avenue, US Highway 51, County Trunk Highway U, and West Wausau Avenue to establish the neighborhood park described in Paragraph 9 above. The park will serve this growing residential area which is lacking in City, school and even private recreational facilities. Approximately five acres of land for this park should be acquired soon before the better park sites in the area are developed for residential use and before property values in this area escalate.

F. Acquire sufficient land in the area bounded by State Trunk Highway 52 (East Wausau Avenue), 41st Street (CTH X), and Franklin Street (CTH Z) to establish one of the two parks (No. 3 or No. 4) described in Paragraphs 3 and 4 above. The decision on which of these parks to establish first should be driven by the location and amount of new residential development in the immediate area.

G. Establish one of the neighborhood parks identified as No. 9 and No. 11 in Figure VI and discussed above. These parks will serve the growing residential area on the northwest side of Wausau which presently has very limited park facilities.

In addition to the priority items listed above, the following actions should also be taken in the short term to help meet the park and open space needs of the community:

H. The City should become more active in requiring the dedication of land for park purposes rather than accepting money as part of the plat approval process.

I. The City should work with the owners of the Laab estate to establish a 30-acre to 40-acre community park on their property located south of Franklin Street and east of County Trunk Highway X (See Paragraph 2 above).

J. The City should work with Marathon County and several of the other communities in the Wausau Urban Area to develop an open space and conservancy plan for the environmentally sensitive areas within the floodplain/wetland areas adjacent to the Eau Claire River, Big Rib River, and Little Rib River. Since these environmental resources cross multiple jurisdictions, the County should be the lead agency with the several towns, cities, and villages participating in the County's efforts to preserve and enhance these environmental resource areas. Recreational activities here would be focused on low impact activities such as hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, canoeing, fishing, bird watching, and nature study.

Economic Development

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 our central location and long-standing tradition of being North Central Wisconsin's economic hub. Over the past twenty years, the population, labor force, and number of jobs have grown. Forecasts of additional growth show that the future holds promise for continued economic stability.

As we move through the 21st century, changes will continue to take place at the local level. Wausau's economy is increasingly more regional and national with a glimpse into global. This presents both promise and compromise: the hope for growing and expanding local companies, but business increasingly subject to, and dependent upon, shifts in large scale economics.

Goal: To improve the economic well-being of Wausau through efforts that involve job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements, and other quality of life initiatives.

Objectives:

1. Initiate a program with Marathon County to prepare a Countywide economic development plan.
2. Create tax increment finance districts to provide some of the financial assistance needed to pursue the City's economic development goal.
3. 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.
4. Work to reduce the City's property tax rate to ensure it is not a barrier to new development, business activities, or property ownership.
5. 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.
6. Provide an environment that encourages expansion and retention of existing businesses through networking and making resources available to foster growth. Economic development staff should remain as networked in the community as possible, making personal visits to local businesses on a regular basis.
7. Promote the City of Wausau as an ideal location for establishing new residential, commercial, and industrial development projects because of its low cost of living, extensive infrastructure and services, and high quality of life for employees and business owners. Marketing tools, including the City's economic development web site, trade publications, newsletters to real estate site selectors, and

attendance at trade shows should be utilized.

- 8. Maintain existing and create new private/public partnerships to demonstrate the community’s commitment to, and support for, economic expansion.
- 9. 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.
- 10. Identify issues and opportunities facing key industry groups and take actions to enable them to continue operation and to expand in the City of Wausau
- 11. Encourage the incubation of new local firms and support entrepreneurs with technical, collaborative, and administrative services through the Wausau Business Development Center.

Policies:

- 1. The City will continue to invest in efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of life in the community, which is a critical element to marketing Wausau as a great place to live, work, and play.
- 2. The City will continue to make revitalization and redevelopment of downtown Wausau, the Wisconsin River waterfront, and the Stewart Avenue/US Highway 51 corridor a high priority.
- 3. The City supports and encourages efforts to stimulate private

investment and reinvestment in Wausau and the creation of jobs for an expanding work force.

- 4. The City will continue to work cooperatively with Marathon County and other area municipalities to coordinate regional marketing efforts and encourage economic development that benefits the entire Wausau urban area.

Strategies/Actions:

- 1. Work with Marathon County to prepare a countywide economic development plan.
- 2. Identify and prioritize areas where tax increment financing (TIF) can be used to facilitate economic development.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Consider developing revitalization plans for select commercial corridors, such as Grand Avenue, First Avenue, Third Avenue, Sixth Street, Thomas Street, and Merrill Avenue.
- 5. Identify barriers and competitive disadvantages affecting the City and develop a plan to mitigate these issues.
- 6. As part of a business retention program, economic development staff will continue to make regular, personal visits to local businesses.
- 7. Evaluate and routinely update the City’s marketing tools to

make sure they remain current.

8. Routinely evaluate and modify, if necessary, the City's list of target markets.
9. Continue to use Unified Development District zoning in the Central Business District and other commercial areas to encourage and facilitate high quality, mixed use development that is acceptable to neighboring property owners.
10. Coordinate development regulations and provision of infrastructure needed to establish downtown Wausau as an important center for retail, office, government, high-tech business, residential, cultural, entertainment, and recreational uses.
11. 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.
12. Continue to market vacant land and buildings in Wausau West Business and Industrial Park

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Comprehensive planning for our future requires that we study cooperation and consolidation with our neighbors. Wausau does not stand alone. Rib Mountain, Rothschild, Schofield, Weston, and Wausau form an interdependent metropolitan area in which political boundaries have little effect upon where people live, work, attend school, shop or play. Residents of this metropolitan area have common needs, including housing, jobs, schools, police and fire protection, water and sewer service, roads, public transportation, stores, and parks. Municipalities, in order to address the issue of duplication of services, must continue to explore the options of cooperation, consolidation, or other means of providing basic common services to their residents.

The prospect of greater efficiency and resulting cost savings has attracted increased attention to the feasibility of establishing metropolitan services such as metro police, fire and ambulance, metro inspection, and metro assessment. With a single provider, duplication of equipment and staff can be avoided while the overall level of service is improved. Wausau residents, for instance, enjoy the security of full-time police, fire, and ambulance protection, while some communities do not.

We must carefully examine how such services could be implemented. Prior to any implementation, however, we must be satisfied that such cooperation with our neighbors would be in the best interests of the citizens of Wausau. **Specifically, two conditions must be met: the services currently provided to citizens of Wausau must remain the same or improve, and the services provided must be at the same cost or less cost.**

If cooperation with our neighbors in providing certain services may hold the promise of cost savings and improved services for all, consolidation – political merger with our neighbors – may substantially increase that promise by substituting a single provider in all areas of local government for five separate political bureaucracies. To maintain the integrity of our comprehensive planning effort, we must not only examine cooperation in sharing services but also consolidation with our neighbors.

Goal: To improve the provision of public services and facilities, Wausau will continue to strengthen and expand its cooperative activities with all levels of government.

Objectives:

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. Encourage the adoption of land use plans by the adjacent towns that are consistent with the City's plans for its extraterritorial area.
3. Through initiation of an annual leaders meeting, maintain strong lines of communication with representatives of adjacent communities to help mitigate an anti-Wausau attitude.
4. Continue to work with Marathon County officials to increase the level of services that County government provides to Wausau residents and property owners.

5. Enhance the level of cooperation among urban area communities when recruiting new businesses and industries to the urban area.
6. Continue to offer the opportunity for adjacent communities to purchase transit service from the Wausau Area Transit System.
7. Continue efforts to share or consolidate governmental services such as ambulance and fire protection while exploring the long-term possibility of merging with the City of Schofield.
8. Discourage the State of Wisconsin from reducing the level of State aid provided to Wausau.
9. Cooperate with other units of government to support or oppose various State and Federal legislation that would be harmful to Wausau.

Policies:

1. The City will work cooperatively with adjacent unincorporated municipalities to mitigate intergovernmental conflicts.
2. The City will continue to maintain open communication and a spirit of cooperation with other units of government in the Wausau metropolitan area and Marathon County.

Strategies/Actions:

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. Continue to explore the feasibility of expanding the Wausau Area Transit Service (WATS) to additional areas outside the City boundaries, such as the Village of Weston and the Town of Rib Mountain.
4. Continue to oppose efforts to reduce the level of State financial aid provided to Wausau.
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. Explore the long-term feasibility and benefits of the City of Wausau merging 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.

Implementation Element

Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law designates the city plan commission as the local body responsible for developing the city comprehensive plan. The value of a comprehensive plan, however, lies not in its preparation or adoption. The real measure of a comprehensive plan's value is whether the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of a community actually improves as a result of implementing the plan. Thus, the plan must be viewed as a means to an end and not an end onto itself.

To be effective, this plan should be used to guide decisions concerning:

- The development, administration and enforcement of regulatory ordinances based on the goals and objectives identified in this plan.
- The development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.
- The preparation of specific studies and completion of community improvement projects as identified in the comprehensive plan.
- The establishment and support of a continued planning process which provides for periodic review and updates to this plan and other land use control measures.

Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are the City's official controls or regulatory codes. In particular, the zoning ordinance and map, subdivision

regulations, and official map comprise the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; these generally involve decisions about how the community will spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements and staffing.

The State planning law requires that by January 1, 2010, certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. To meet this deadline, the City should update related ordinances on or before the year 2010. Those elements of the existing zoning ordinance related to the follow topics should be carefully reviewed and amended, where appropriate, before 2010:

- Procedures and criteria for considering an amendment to the zoning district map;
- Procedures and criteria for amending the zoning ordinance text; and
- Procedures and criteria for granting a conditional use.

Zoning Ordinance and Map: The City Zoning Ordinance is an extremely detailed, comprehensive, locally-adopted law that is used to regulate and control how land is used and developed. The zoning ordinance contains rules for building setbacks, the density of development, the height and size of building and other structures, and the types of land uses that are allowed on each and every piece of land in the City. The zoning ordinance consists of a written text and a map. **The general purpose of zoning is to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.** This is accomplished by minimizing the undesirable effects resulting from high-density urban development. Some methods for this

include segregating and/or buffering incompatible land 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 indicate where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan and the future land use map (Figure II). 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, the goal and objective statements in the comprehensive plan, as well as the policies and strategies, need to be considered in guiding future land use in the community.

Indiscriminate zone changes may result in weakening the comprehensive plan since, on a cumulative basis, they are likely to move the community away from its vision and stated goals and objectives. There will, however, be situations where changing the zoning district boundaries is in the best interest of the community. When changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the comprehensive plan, the plan should also be amended.

The Wausau Common Council makes the final decisions regarding changes to the content of the zoning ordinance text and the zoning district assigned to each parcel of property in the community. These decisions are preceded by public hearings held by the City Plan Commission. The Plan Commission also makes recommendations to the Common Council on all proposed zoning ordinance text changes and zoning district map amendments. Generally, zoning ordinance text changes have a much broader impact on land use than map amendments. Text changes will often

apply to literally hundreds or even thousands of properties in the community, while a map change generally involves one property. For example, if the rear yard setback distance in an R-1, Single Family Residence District, is changed in the zoning ordinance text, this change would apply to all of the thousands of lots in the community that are zoned R-1 on the City Zoning Map.

While zoning map amendments generally have a narrow geographic impact, the extent of the impact on certain properties can still be very significant. For example, zoning a vacant tract of land in the middle of a residential neighborhood from R-1, Single Family Residence District, to a commercial zoning district may not have City-wide implications but it would certainly have a huge impact on the homes located close to the new commercial zone.

Subdivision Ordinance: The subdivision ordinance establishes regulations on how large tracts of vacant land are split into smaller home building sites. These regulations address design issues such as road access, street standards, public utility installation, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that a new residential area will be an asset to the community and a safe and desirable place for the people living in the neighborhood. The Common Council makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance text and also approves all subdivision plats with input from City staff, the Plan Commission, and the Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee. Wausau's subdivision ordinance, Title 21 of the *Wausau Municipal Code*, was repealed and re-created in December, 2003.

Capital Improvement Budget (CIB): In addition to providing quality public services to Wausau residents, maintaining public infrastructure ranks as a high priority. This is evidenced by the

capital plan adopted and budgeted annually. The capital budget is developed by city management for review and recommendation by the Capital Improvements Committee with final review and adoption by the Common Council. The purpose of the Capital Improvement Budget is to maintain and improve the City's infrastructure, facilities, and equipment in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

This element of the City Budget provides the financial resources for capital improvements, which are defined as major projects requiring the expenditure of over \$25,000 for the purchase, construction, or replacement of physical assets and infrastructure of the City. Revenues to support these expenditures are provided by special assessments, property taxes, grant income, and debt proceeds.

In 2005 the objectives and initiatives of the CIB included the following:

- To continue the commitment to infrastructure maintenance and replacement;
- To comply with the debt and capital management policy adopted by the Common Council and manage the debt service and capital levy accordingly; and
- To continue to enhance the capital improvement plan.

This ongoing financial plan helps the City to program capital expenditures in advance and to minimize unplanned expenses. A capital improvement plan (CIP) consists of a list of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over a four- to six-year period. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, and identifies financing methods and sources. Public

improvements or expenditures typically considered in the CIP include:

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)
- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Utility system construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.
- Fire and police protection equipment

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of limited public funds. Each year the CIP is reviewed as part of the budget process and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet changing needs.

Since 2000, the City has budgeted annually from a high of \$10.3 million (2000) to a low of \$6.2 million (2005) for capital improvements.

Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments

There are very specific comprehensive plan adoption and amendment procedures identified in the State Comprehensive Planning Law.

Plan Adoption: The formal adoption process involves plan review by the City Plan Commission who must adopt the plan by resolution of majority vote. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Common Council who must

adopt the plan by ordinance. A public hearing is required to be held by the Common Council to allow public comment on the ordinance prior to final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years or more. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives related to Wausau's growth and development.

Plan Use, Monitoring, and Evaluation: The Comprehensive Plan will be used by City staff, the Common Council, and its various committees, boards, and commissions to guide the physical development of Wausau. Decisions concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions should be assessed for consistency with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations established in this plan. These goals, objectives, and policies should also be monitored on a regular basis to determine how well they are guiding the community in light of the changing conditions that impact Wausau's growth and the quality of life in the community.

At a minimum, this plan should be evaluated at least every five years and, by law, updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Common Council, Plan Commission, and other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the strategies and actions should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate. The evaluation should also include an updated timetable of actions to clarify priorities. **The first update of this comprehensive plan**

should be programmed for completion prior to January 1, 2010, which is the State Statutory date that certain Common Council actions must be consistent with this Comprehensive Plan.

Plan Amendments: The plan may be amended at any time by the Common Council following the same statutory process described above for initial plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan will lose integrity. A list of general criteria to consider when reviewing proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan is included in Table C.

As noted above, proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to public hearing and adoption by the Common Council. The public should be notified of proposed plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, it may be desirable to solicit public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the public hearing.

Plan Updates: According to the State's comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates will probably involve re-writing entire elements of the plan document. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives, based upon an analysis of current growth trends and major

changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Thus, the *Conditions and Issues* section of the plan should also be reviewed and revised as needed. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

Table C: Some General Criteria to Consider When Reviewing Comprehensive Plan Amendments

1. The amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Wausau Comprehensive Plan.
2. The amendment does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
3. Development resulting from the amendment should not have a negative impact on nearby properties. The new development should be compatible with the existing land uses and physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve the neighborhood’s viability.
4. The change allows a more appropriate transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
5. The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including surface water quality and groundwater, or the impact can be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.
6. There is a significant change in the neighborhood’s characteristics that would justify a plan amendment.
7. The plan amendment corrects an error made in the original plan.

8. The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration or dedication.

Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Element describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since the City completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap occurs between the twelve plan elements. Where deemed appropriate, certain goals, objectives, and actions have been repeated under several applicable elements of the plan to ensure they do not get “lost”.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts (such as the metropolitan area long range transportation plan and the urban area sewer service plan) to ensure they are considered in the community’s planning and development decisions. Summary descriptions of recent and concurrent planning efforts are provided in the *Conditions and Issues Report*. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan, as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans. Some related plans, such as the *River Edge Master Plan*, *Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan*, and the *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, are incorporated by reference in this plan and are essentially considered appendices of this plan even though they are separate documents.

Action Plan, Responsibilities and Priorities

The final component of this comprehensive plan attempts to identify who will take a leadership role in implementing each of the 168 strategies and actions listed throughout this report. Table D provides a detailed list of the major actions, by plan element, that should be taken in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short-, mid-, and long-term priorities described in each of the eleven plan elements. This table also identifies the parties who will play key roles in implementing at least one of the actions listed and includes:

- Mayor's Office;
- Community Development Department;
- Plan Commission;
- Engineering Department;
- Planning Office;
- Wausau Water Works;
- Park and Recreation Committee;
- Park Department;
- Inspections Department;
- Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee;
- Public Works Department;
- River Edge Commission;
- Finance Committee;
- City Attorney;
- Legislative Committee;
- Town officials from adjacent communities;
- Marathon County officials;
- Community Development Authority;
- Economic Development Committee;
- City Assessment Office;
- City GIS Office; Main Street Office;
- Historic Landmarks Commission;
- Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization;
- Police Department;
- Public Health and Safety Committee;
- Salvation Army;
- Electrical Department;
- Marathon County Historical Society;
- Cable Access Channel staff;
- Wausau Area Transit System Commission;
- City-County Data Center;
- Wausau School District;
- Fire Department;
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources;
- Finance Department.

The 168 strategies and actions are certainly not intended to all be addressed within the planning period. Some may never be addressed. However, at this point in the City's development it is important not to lose sight of these strategies and to certainly act on others. Table D may also prove useful in setting priorities for capital budgeting and in annual staffing allocation and work program development. It is anticipated that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial and staff limitations, new laws and regulations, and other unforeseen events. Many of the actions will require considerable cooperation among a large, diverse group of participants.

All of these actions are intended to improve the quality of life for Wausau residents and visitors to the community.

The 168 actions listed in Table D have been segregated by plan element. Below is a list of the number of actions identified for each of the plan elements:

- **Demographics—5 actions;**
- **Natural Resources—19 actions;**
- **Land Use (Community Growth, Residential Development, Commercial Development, Industrial Development, Central Business District) —41 actions;**
- **Transportation Systems—19 actions;**
- **Utilities—7 actions;**
- **Housing—10 actions;**
- **Cultural Resources—20 actions;**
- **Community Facilities and Services—6 actions;**
- **Parks—22 actions;**
- **Economic Development—12 actions; and**
- **Intergovernmental Cooperation—7 actions.**

Priority ranking for the actions listed in Table D is defined as follows:

- As needed
- Immediate = As soon as possible.
- Short-term = 1 to 5 years.
- Mid-term = 5 to 10 years.
- Long-term = More than 10 years.
- On-going = Current activities that should continue indefinitely.

Table D: Action Plan, Responsibilities and Priorities

Action	Who is responsible?	Priority
Demographics		
1. Work with Marathon County and other municipalities to evaluate the need for new facilities that serve minority and disadvantaged populations, including seniors, and identify potential locations for such facilities.	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department.	Mid-term.
2. Continue to evaluate proposals for new community based residential facilities in Wausau in accordance with the, <i>Policy regarding location and distribution of community living arrangements (CLA)</i> adopted by the Common Council on April 9, 1996.	Plan Commission.	As needed.
3. Continue to encourage State and Federal agencies to provide financial incentives for Marathon County and other communities in the Wausau Urban Area to expand their programs for helping minority populations and the economically disadvantaged	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department.	On-going.
4. Work with the Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop, maintain, and distribute up-to-date information pertinent to the City’s work, play, and living environments.	Mayor’s Office.	On-going.
5. Wausau will continue to work with property owners, residents and businesses located within the Long-Term (2050) City Growth Planning area to annex into the City.	Engineering Department; Planning Office; Wausau Water Works.	On-going.
Natural Resources		
1. Work with Marathon County, adjacent communities, local conservation groups and the WDNR to identify opportunities to acquire land or easements for park and public open space purposes in environmentally sensitive areas. Consideration should also be given to establishing buffer areas between urban development and environmentally sensitive lands.	Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department.	Long-term.
2. Continue to require the use of sediment and erosion control best management practices for all new development and redevelopment projects.	Public Works Department; Inspections Department.	On-going.
3. Develop and encourage the use of flexible or conservation design techniques as an option to standard development requirements. These might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce required parking to minimize impervious surface area. • Use vegetated swales rather than curb, gutter, and detention ponds. • Use porous pavements. 	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Public Works Department; Engineering Department.	Short-term.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use native plant species for site landscaping. 		
<p>4. Consider adopting a tree preservation ordinance to restrict removal of mature trees and woodlands in the City.</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Park Department.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>5. Continue to implement elements of the City’s Wellhead Protection Plan including the Wellhead Protection Overlay zoning ordinance (Section 24.54 of the <i>Wausau Municipal Code</i>).</p>	<p>Planning Office; Wausau Water Works.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>6. Monitor wetlands on City-owned property for the presence of invasive plant species and develop a plan to control and/or eliminate them.</p>	<p>Park Department; Engineering Department; Wausau Water Works.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>7. Continue to fund and implement recommendations in the <i>River Edge Master Plan</i>.</p>	<p>River Edge Commission; Park Department; Public Works Department.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>8. Engage in public education campaigns that will increase awareness of environmental issues and good stewardship practices (i.e., use of phosphorus-free lawn fertilizers). Techniques might include informational inserts in water billings, public service announcements, special articles in newsletters, displays on the City’s web site, and programs on the cable access channels.</p>	<p>Wausau Water Works; Mayor’s Office.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>9. Continue to promote and participate in annual spring roadside litter clean-up efforts.</p>	<p>Mayor’s Office.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>10. Combine the educational efforts for encouraging ground water protection with an educational program for protecting surface water quality and participate in the Groundwater Guardian Program.</p>	<p>Wausau Water Works.</p>	<p>Short-term.</p>
<p>11. Update, as necessary, and continue to enforce the shore land and floodplain zoning ordinances.</p>	<p>Plan Commission; Inspections Department; Planning Office.</p>	<p>Short-term.</p>
<p>12. Consider enacting ordinances to eliminate the rotten granite parking lots and material storage areas that contribute to windblown dust and waterborne silt.</p>	<p>Plan Commission; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee.</p>	<p>Short-term.</p>
<p>13. 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. In addition, efforts taken to enforce the construction site and erosion control ordinance should be evaluated and enhanced to maximize compliance.</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department.</p>	<p>Short-term.</p>
<p>14. Continue the street tree and park tree planting programs that have earned the City numerous “Tree City” awards.</p>	<p>Park Department.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>15. Consider developing a program for restoring damaged or filled wetlands.</p>	<p>Engineering Department; Park Department.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>16. Provide a household hazardous waste disposal program for City residents that is</p>	<p>Wausau Water Works; Public Works</p>	<p>Immediate.</p>

cost effective in keeping these materials out of the sanitary sewer system and the storm water system and from being land spread	Department.	
17. Continue to provide recyclable and solid waste collection service for City residents.	Public Works Department	On-going.
18. Investigate the establishment of a wetland mitigation bank as a means of replacing wetlands that are impacted by public works, industrial park development or redevelopment projects.	Wausau Water Works; Public Works Department.	Mid-term.
19. Work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Wisconsin DNR to identify all navigable waters within the Long-Term (2050) City Growth Planning Boundary and, where appropriate, to delineate the extent of floodplains adjacent to these.	Inspections Department; Engineering Department; Marathon County.	Mid-term.
Land Use	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Continue to annex unincorporated areas to provide vacant land for the City's expansion and to mitigate health hazards related to failed private wells and septic systems.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office; Wausau Water Works.	On-going
2. 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.	Finance Committee; Wausau Water Works; City Attorney.	Short-term.
3. The City should continue to work with other communities in Wisconsin to amend the State annexation laws to allow cities to unilaterally annex town territory. Unilateral annexation would enhance the efficiency and cost effectiveness of extending urban services and facilities and allow the City to plan the location and establish a schedule for its growth.	Legislative Committee; Mayor's Office.	Short-term.
4. As provided in Section 62.23(7a) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the City should initiate extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) within the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary. This will require that the City Plan Commission work with affected towns to develop land use and zoning plans for areas under ETZ. This program will help ensure that the territory within the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary is developed in conformance with the City's land use plan map.	Plan Commission; Planning Office; Town Officials from adjacent communities.	Mid-term.
5. Consider refining the City's extraterritorial plat review procedures to eliminate City review of plats located outside of the City Growth Planning Boundary.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department;	Short-term.

	Planning Office.	
6. Work with adjacent towns to identify locations where new public infrastructure and facilities will likely be needed in the future.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office; Town Officials from adjacent communities.	Short-term.
7. Utilize extraterritorial plat review authority (Chapter 21.13 of the <i>Wausau Municipal Code</i>) 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.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office; Wausau Water Works; Town Officials from adjacent communities.	Short-term/ On-going
8. Where a new extraterritorial subdivision is likely to be annexed within the foreseeable future, require that the subdivider install some or all of the infrastructure normally required for plats located within the City limits. The infrastructure improvements in these extraterritorial subdivisions should be implemented through a development agreement process and according to the City's design standards.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office; Wausau Water Works; Town Officials from adjacent communities.	Short-term/ On-going.
9. Work with State legislators and Marathon County officials to amend the laws, policies and practices that contribute to low density, sprawl-type development.	Legislative Committee; Mayor's Office; Marathon County Officials.	On-going.
10. Pre-plan the routes for arterial and collector streets; the location and extent of neighborhood and community parks; and the location of storm water management facilities, booster station facilities, lift stations, water reservoirs, interceptor sewers, force mains and water mains in the most active, developing areas within the Long-Term City Growth Planning Boundary.	Park and Recreation Committee; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office; Wausau Water Works; Park Department; Town Officials from adjacent communities.	Short-term.
11. Use the Official City Map process (State Statute 62.23 (6)) to reserve the most cost effective locations for the improvements and facilities listed above.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission.	Short-term.
12. 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.	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority.	Short-term/On-going.
13. 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	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority Planning Office; Plan Commission.	Short-term/On-going.

the fiscal and manpower resources available.		
14. Continue to fund the housing and commercial site rehabilitation programs of the Community Development Department and the code enforcement program of the Inspections Department.	Finance Committee; Community Development Department; Inspections Department.	On-going.
15. Acquire vacant property adjacent to the Wausau West Business and Industrial Park and establish or extend a tax increment finance district to help pay for the infrastructure needed to make this area suitable for private sector use.	Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee; Plan Commission.	Mid-term.
16. Utilize funding programs and incentives, such as matching grants, Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, and tax-increment financing (TIF) to facilitate redevelopment.	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority; Economic Development Committee; Finance Committee.	On-going.
17. 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.	Community Development Department.	On-going.
18. Continue to fund and implement the City’s existing housing programs aimed at improving housing conditions for low-income households.	Community Development Department.	On-going.
19. The City should continue to foster public/private partnerships which provide incentives to encourage home ownership, such as down payment assistance, low-interest loans for first-time home buyers, and housing rehabilitation loans.	Community Development Department.	On-going.
20. Continue to identify opportunities to rehabilitate vacant commercial, industrial, or institutional structures into housing.	Community Development Department.	On-going.
21. Develop and maintain a list of vacant parcels within residential neighborhoods that could be used for in-fill housing. Work with area builders and real estate professionals to market and develop these properties.	City Assessor Office, City GIS Office.	Short-term.
22. Zone sites that are near existing or planned transit services to encourage development of elderly and low- and moderate-income housing in these locations.	Planning Office; Plan Commission; Wausau Area Transit System Commission.	Mid-term/ On-going.
23. Buffer single-family residential areas from adjacent industrial and commercial development through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment and enforcement of more stringent landscaping and screening requirements; • Requirements for increased building and parking lot setbacks; • Adoption of higher transitional yard standards for parking lot lighting, signs, and landscaping. • Use of step-down zoning such as duplex zoning between commercial/industrial and single-family residential areas. 	Planning Office; Plan Commission; Inspections Department.	Immediate/ On-going.
24. Maintain and upgrade public facilities and services in all neighborhoods and	Community Development Department;	On-going.

especially in the City’s older neighborhoods.	Public Works Department; Parks Department.	
25. Support and foster existing and new neighborhood organizations and encourage their participation in the preparation of neighborhood redevelopment/improvement plans.	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department.	On-going.
26. Amend the commercial zoning district requirements to mitigate land use conflicts between commercial and residential land uses by requiring vegetated buffer areas, fences, low-level lighting, screened parking areas, and greater setback distances between residences and commercial sites.	Planning Office; Plan Commission; Inspections Department.	Immediate.
27. Use Unified Development District zoning on large or unusual commercial development projects where site use and design factors should be carefully reviewed and controlled.	Planning Office; Plan Commission.	As needed.
28. Control access from businesses near highway interchanges and arterial streets to enhance safety and minimize traffic congestion.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office.	Immediate/On-going.
29. To ensure the integrity of the Grand Avenue corridor and the Thomas Street corridor, a complete moratorium on rezoning any Grand Avenue property or Thomas Street property to commercial use should be established. Further, certain areas presently zoned for commercial use should be considered for rezoning to residential use (for apartments or duplexes) to improve traffic flow and safety along these congested arterial street.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office.	Immediate.
30. The City should develop and adopt site design standards for commercial districts that are located: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to residential areas; • Adjacent to arterial streets; or • In community visitor gateway areas, such as the USH 51 and STH 29 interchange, where high quality commercial development will further enhance the visual image of Wausau. 	Plan Commission; Engineering Department; Planning Office; Inspections Department.	Immediate.
31. Continue to implement the recommendations of the <i>Central Business District Master Plan</i> .	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department.	On-going.
32. Continue to implement the recommendations in the <i>River Edge Master Plan</i> , particularly regarding the creation of pedestrian connections between the downtown business district and the riverfront.	River Edge Commission; Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department.	On-going/Short-term.
33. Continue to provide financial assistance and incentives to encourage private	Community Development Department;	On-going.

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investment in revitalization of downtown and riverfront properties.	Community Development Authority; Economic Development Committee; Finance Committee.	
34. Continue to enhance the existing wayfinding signs around the City to direct people to downtown, the riverfront, and the City’s cultural attractions.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Public Works Department; Engineering Department; Planning Office.	Mid-term.
35. Continue to emphasize downtown redevelopment projects that contribute to “round-the-clock” activity in the CBD. This might include housing, restaurants, cultural facilities and entertainment uses.	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department; Main Street Office; Economic Development Committee.	On-going.
36. Work with downtown businesses, the Main Street organization, and arts groups to program activities in the City Center Park.	Park Department; Public Works Department.	On-going.
37. Support efforts of the Wausau Historic Landmarks Commission to maintain, enhance, and formally recognize historically significant properties in the CBD.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Plan Commission.	On-going.
38. Identify and zone areas appropriate for industrial development that are readily accessible from residential areas but are visually and functionally separated from them.	Plan Commission; Planning Office; Inspections Department.	Mid-term.
39. To minimize noise and safety hazards, route industrial truck traffic around residential areas.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department; Public Works Department.	Mid-term.
40. Identify areas where existing General Industrial (M-2) zoning is negatively impacting nearby residential areas and consider possible mitigation measures, such as installing buffering or down-zoning to foster redevelopment.	Community Development Department; Plan Commission; Planning Office; Inspections Department.	Short-term.
41. Evaluate the suitability of continuing the industrial areas along the Canadian National Railroad tracks from Townline Road north to Bridge Street.	Community Development Department; Plan Commission; Planning Office.	Short-term.
42. Through the zoning ordinance, buffer residential land uses from nearby industrial areas through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment and enforcement of more stringent landscaping and screening requirements; • Requirements for increased building and parking lot setbacks; and • Adoption of higher transitional yard standards for lighting, signs, storage, etc. 	Community Development Department; Plan Commission; Planning Office; Inspections Department.	Immediate.
Transportation	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Continue to conduct annual evaluations to identify areas of the existing street system that warrant maintenance and upgrades to handle existing and projected traffic.	Engineering Department; Public Works Department.	On-going.

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<p>2. Route major traffic flows, especially truck traffic, around residential neighborhoods through designation of appropriate truck routes.</p>	<p>Traffic and Parking Committee; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department; Public Works Department.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>3. Consider implementing traffic calming measures in residential areas where cut-through traffic and speeding are negatively impacting neighborhood safety and livability.</p>	<p>Traffic and Parking Committee; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>4. 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.</p>	<p>Plan Commission; Planning Office; Engineering Department.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>5. 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.</p>	<p>Traffic and Parking Committee; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>6. Formally designate and implement a system of connected bike routes to encourage bicycling within the City. Implementation measures may include route signage, on-road striping of bike lanes, or construction of off-road trails.</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department; Park Department; Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>7. Develop a sidewalk construction plan and policy that focuses on improving pedestrian access to high traffic sites (e.g., schools, shopping centers, parks) and enhancing safety along the City’s arterial and collector streets.</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department; Planning Office.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>8. Require the installation of sidewalks in conformance with an adopted sidewalk plan and policy for areas of new development and in developed areas that currently lack sidewalk.</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department.</p>	<p>Long-term.</p>
<p>9. Develop a City street lighting plan and install new lighting in conjunction with road reconstruction.</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Electrical Department.</p>	<p>Short-term/On-going.</p>
<p>10. Request that Marathon County assume some level of financial responsibility for maintaining and improving many of the City’s local arterial streets, especially those designated as county highways, that provide direct access to the rural hinterland (Franklin Street/CTH Z, 6th Street/CTH W, Town Line Road/CTH N, Thomas Street/CTH N, Merrill Avenue/CTH U and 28th Avenue/CTH R).</p>	<p>Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Mayor’s Office; Engineering Department; Planning Office.</p>	<p>Short-term.</p>
<p>11. Maintain close contact with elected officials and State and Federal agency representatives to provide Wausau with financial assistance for specific transportation improvements.</p>	<p>Mayor’s Office; Planning Office.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>12. 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.</p>	<p>Traffic and Parking Committee; Police Department; Engineering Department.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>

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13. 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.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Traffic and Parking Committee; Engineering Department.	Short-term.
14. Encourage private developers to incorporate transit and pedestrian-friendly features into new residential, commercial, and industrial projects.	Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff.	Short-term.
15. Work with the private sector providers of inter-city bus service to coordinate connections with WATS to improve service to local transit-dependent travelers.	Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff.	Short-term.
16. Explore the feasibility of expanding WATS service to include additional evenings and weekend days.	Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff.	Short-term.
17. Encourage higher density housing development in close proximity to transit routes and stations through implementation of appropriate zoning.	Plan Commission; Planning Office; Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff.	Mid-term.
18. Work with private landowners to encourage joint use of commercial parking lots for transit users.	Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff; Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization.	Mid-term.
19. Identify suitable Park ‘n’ Ride sites and evaluate the feasibility of developing these facilities.	Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff; Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization.	Mid-term.
Utilities	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Continue to coordinate utility improvement projects with street reconstruction projects.	Wausau Water Works; Engineering Department.	On-going.
2. Conduct annual inspections and evaluations of the existing sewer and water systems to assess and prioritize needed maintenance and improvements.	Wausau Water Works; Engineering Department.	On-going.
3. 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.	Wausau Water Works; Engineering Department.	Mid-term.
4. 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.	Wausau Water Works; Engineering Department.	Mid-term.
5. Continue to communicate with other Wausau area municipalities regarding consolidation of area water and sewer utilities.	Wausau Water Works.	On-going.
6. Continue to implement elements of the City’s Wellhead Protection Plan including the Wellhead Protection Overlay zoning ordinance (Section 24.54 of the <i>Wausau Municipal Code</i>).	Wausau Water Works; Plan Commission.	On-going.
7. Consider creating a storm water utility to generate the revenue needed to construct, administer and manage the surface water run-off facilities and	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering	Short-term.

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programs required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the US Environmental Protection Agency..	Department; Finance Committee; Plan Commission.	
8. 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.	Wausau Water Works, Public Works Department..	Mid-term.
9. To support cost-effective development, encourage the preparation and submittal to the City of master site plans for all public and private schools, churches and area utilities (natural gas, electric, telephone).	Wausau Water Works; Private sector.	Mid-term.
Housing	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Target the enforcement of the City’s existing housing maintenance codes in those areas that have not yet experienced stepped-up enforcement activities.	Inspections Department; Public Health and Safety Committee; Mayor’s Office.	Short-term.
2. Periodically review and update the housing maintenance code to reflect the changing needs of the City.	Inspections Department; Community Development Department; Public Health and Safety Committee.	Mid-term.
3. 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.	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department; Public Health and Safety Committee; Inspections Department.	Short-term.
4. The Community Development Department will continue to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Keep the public informed of their basic rights under the Federal Fair Housing Act. 	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority.	On-going.
5. Work with other area agencies and organizations to improve coordination and communication regarding programs and facilities serving the homeless population.	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority.	On-going.
6. 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 marketed for redevelopment. The City may also need to develop incentives, including technical and financial assistance, to foster redevelopment of these properties.	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority; Assessment Department; Inspection Department; Finance Committee.	Short-term.
7. Develop a list of vacant, underutilized, or blighted properties in residential	Community Development Department;	Short-term.

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neighborhoods that should be targeted for in-fill or redevelopment with new housing. Work with area real estate professionals to market these properties.	Assessment Department; Inspection Department.	
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.	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority.	Mid-term.
9. 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.	Community Development Department; Community Development Authority; Assessment Department; Inspection Department; Finance Committee.	Long-term.
10. Improve coordination and communication between the various public and private agencies and organizations involved in providing shelter and services for the homeless.	Community Development Department; Salvation Army.	Long-term.
Cultural Resources	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Develop a neighborhood association to serve as an advocacy group with a focus on historic preservation and enhancement. Property owners in the Andrew Warren District and East Hill Residential Historic District could form the nucleus of this association. The City could assist organizers by preparing maps and lists of property owners. The Friends of Wausau Historic Landmarks may be able to serve as this advocacy group.	Mayor’s Office; Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department.	Mid-term.
2. Prepare a guidebook on historic preservation that could be used by property owners to remodel or expand buildings or construct new buildings in a style that is sympathetic to the other structures in the area. Particular emphasis should be placed on the use and misuse of vinyl siding. A video produced locally or by some other organization could also be programmed for the cable access channel.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Inspections Department; Community Development Department.	Mid-term.
3. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a local grant and/or loan program to assist in the rehabilitation of landmark properties. This program could be focused in target areas where the need to rehabilitate certain buildings is the greatest. The program could be closely patterned after the Historic Boston Incorporated (HBI) effort.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department.	Long-term
4. Develop a landmark lighting program for the Central Business District. This program will help establish standards for installing night lighting for viewing many of the publicly owned landmark-quality buildings such as City Hall, the Public Library, and Courthouse. Owners of many of the private landmark-quality buildings such as the Grand Theater, prominent churches, and the Wausau Club should also be encouraged to participate in this effort.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department; Electrical Department.	Long-term.
5. Prepare Central Business District transition area land use guidelines for the City	Historic Landmarks Commission.	Long-term.

Plan Commission.		
6. Investigate the need for updating the 1984 <i>Intensive Survey of Wausau</i> .	Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department.	Short-term.
7. Develop design review guidelines for evaluating proposed changes to existing landmarks.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department; Inspections Department.	Mid-term.
8. Develop and maintain a photo-log of landmarks, historic sites, and historic districts that have been designated by the Common Council.	GIS Office.	Immediately.
9. Develop a decorative street light program for the City’s historic districts. The program should identify streets that should have decorative street lights installed when each street is reconstructed. It should also identify a priority list of locations where existing, “modern” street lights should be replaced with more decorative fixtures.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department; Electrical Department.	Short-term.
10. Investigate the use of U.S. Department of Transportation -Transportation Enhancement funds and other State and Federal programs for implementing certain historic preservation strategies.	Historic Landmarks Commission; Planning Office.	Short-term.
11. Develop streetscape design recommendations for the Downtown Historic District, Andrew Warren District and East Hill Residential Historic District. These streetscape elements would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street light design and location; • Directional and information signs; • Street trees, landscaping and planters; • Public telephones; • Benches; • Directories; • Waste receptacles; • Newspaper sales boxes; • Mailboxes; • Monuments, memorials, statues and works. 	Historic Landmarks Commission; Community Development Department; Inspections Department; Planning Office	Short-term.
12. Help to promote the Downtown Historic District as a unique, vibrant, viable commercial area that has visual, cultural, social and economic appeal for all ages. This could be done through the City’s newsletter, <i>Wausau Works</i> , and through continued feature stories in the <i>Wausau Daily Herald</i> .	Mayor’s Office; Main Street staff.	Short-term.
13. Develop and continue to enhance walking-tour brochures for the City’s Historic Districts, including the Downtown Historic District and the Andrew Warren District. The City’s computer-assisted mapping program could be used for	Landmarks Commission; Planning Office.	Immediately.

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upgrading maps. Brochures should be mailed with information requests received by the Wausau Area Convention-Visitors Bureau.		
14. Develop a program for attaching bronze informational plaques to contributing buildings within the Downtown Historic District.	Landmarks Commission; Marathon County Historical Society; Main Street staff.	Short-term.
15. Work with the Historic Preservation Society of Wisconsin to develop an informational program on the availability of tax credits and other financial incentives related to historic preservation.	Landmarks Commission; Main Street staff; Mayor's Office.	Mid-term.
16. Notify property owners within the Downtown Historic District of the existence and availability of the downtown <i>Design Guidelines for Building Facades and New Construction</i> which was adopted by the Common Council.	Landmarks Commission; Main Street staff; Mayor's Office.	Short-term.
17. Develop a short video program for the City's cable access channel that documents some of the efforts of the Historic Landmarks Commission, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the Downtown Historic District; and • Designation of local landmarks. 	Landmarks Commission; Cable Access Channel staff.	Mid-term.
18. Work with merchant associations and other downtown organizations to encourage their assistance and participation in efforts to enhance the Downtown Historic District in such areas as advertising and publicity, streetscape improvements, building facade improvements, and new building construction	Landmarks Commission; Main Street staff; Mayor's Office.	Mid-term.
19. Help to develop a program for publicly recognizing outstanding historic preservation efforts. Awards could be presented at Common Council meetings and newsletter articles could be placed in <i>Wausau Works</i> . A video that highlights these preservation efforts could also be produced for airing on the cable access channel.	Landmarks Commission; Cable Access Channel staff; Main Street staff; Mayor's Office.	Mid-term.
20. Develop a variety of local historic preservation information for posting on the City of Wausau's worldwide web site: www.ci.wausau.wi.us/ .	Landmarks Commission; Planning Office; City-County Data Center.	Short-term.
Community Facilities	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Engage the Wausau School District and D.C. Everest School District Boards of Education in discussions about revising their common school district boundaries.	Mayor's Office.	Mid-term.
2. Encourage other school districts within the Wausau Urban Area to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) as part of their educational curriculum.	Mayor's Office; Wausau School District.	Mid-term.
3. Identify and evaluate locations for a possible public community center.	Mayor's Office; Planning Office; Park Department.	Short-term.

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4. Continue to support the “Community Policing” program.	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department; Police Department; Public Health and Safety Committee.	On-going.
5. 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.	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Police Department.	On-going.
6. Routinely evaluate the City’s transportation network to identify where access impediments such as at-grade rail crossings and dead-end streets should be eliminated to ensure acceptable response times are maintained.	Fire Department; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department	Short-term.
Parks and Recreation	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. Continue to enforce the park dedication (land and/or cash) requirements of the subdivision ordinance (Title 21 of the <i>Wausau Municipal Code</i>).	Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Plan Commission; Park and Recreation Committee; Planning Office; Park Department.	On-going.
2. Conduct a feasibility study and prepare a master plan and cost estimates for conversion of the Holtz-Krause Landfill site into a park and recreation facility.	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee; Engineering Department; Wausau Water Works;	Mid-term.
3. Explore opportunities to convert vacant, blighted, or underutilized properties into neighborhood parks, open space, or community gardens. Priority should be given to areas with identified deficiencies of parks.	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee.	Mid-term.
4. Continue to seek State and Federal funding to assist in development of park and recreation facilities, particularly bicycle/pedestrian trails.	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee.	Mid-term.
5. Identify and prioritize opportunities to develop new trail corridors and/or trail extensions. These might include: abandoned rail lines, utility rights-of-way, and road rights-of-way.	River Edge Commission; Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee.	Mid-term.
6. Explore opportunities to improve access to the Wisconsin River, consistent with the recommendations identified in the <i>River Edge Master Plan</i> , through purchase of property or public easements.	River Edge Commission; Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee.	Short-term.
7. Pursue opportunities to acquire (through purchase or dedication) excess property in the vicinity of the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation’s dam facility downtown (Wausau Hydo Plant).	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee; Planning Office.	Mid-term.
8. Work with private property owners, downtown businesses, the Main Street staff, and Marathon County to coordinate and enhance events programming of White Water Park, Fern Island/Oak Island Park, and the City Center (400) Block.	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee; Main Street staff; Marathon County officials;	On-going.

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9. Continue to seek funding from a variety of sources to help ensure park and recreation facilities are well maintained, attractive, and safe.	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee.	On-going.
10. Work with Marathon County and the Agricultural Society to improve communication and establish more inclusive procedures for making decisions regarding management and development of Marathon Park.	Mayor’s Office; Park Department.	Mid-term.
11. Identify environmentally sensitive areas within City parks and consider restricting physical access to these areas and also consider establishing buffer strips adjacent to these sites to provide further protection.	Park Department; Park and Recreation Committee; GIS Office; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.	Mid-term.
12. Identify drainage swales and creeks that should be maintained in their natural state to provide wildlife habitat and visual amenities and help manage the quality and quantity of storm water run-off.	Park Department; Engineering Department; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.	Mid-term.
13. Utilize sustainable design techniques in development of park and recreation facilities. For example, this might include use of native plantings and reducing the amount of park area devoted to mowed turf.	Park Department; Engineering Department; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.	Long-term.
14. Inventory lakes and wetlands on City-owned property for the presence of invasive plant species and develop a plan to control and/or eliminate them.	Park Department; Wausau Water Works.	Long-term.
15. Work cooperatively with area environmental groups to coordinate efforts and leverage resources aimed at managing, protecting, and enhancing environmentally sensitive areas.	Park Department; Engineering Department; ; Wausau Water Works.	Long-term.
16. Develop a system of interpretive signage for parks with significant natural, historical, or cultural features.	Park Department.	Long-term.
17. Work with the Wausau Landmarks Commission to identify significant historic structures or sites located on City park land.	Park Department.	Short-term.
18. Identify and propose for purchase sites for new parks and connecting trails/pedestrian facilities that are currently outside of the City borders. Where purchase is not an immediate option, work with town officials to discourage the type of development on these sites that would preclude or significantly impact future park use.	Park Department; Planning Office; Plan Commission; Park and Recreation Committee.	On-going.
19. Explore the feasibility of increasing user fees, particularly for non-residents.	Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department.	On-going.
20. Complete and update, as necessary, detailed master site plans and related cost estimates for all parks.	Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department.	On-going.
21. Develop design standards for stormwater detention basins that support and enhance use of these basins as community open spaces.	Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department; Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee; Engineering Department.	Mid-term.

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<p>22. To ensure the City’s eligibility for various forms of State and Federal park and recreation area financial assistance, maintain an updated version of the <i>City of Wausau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan</i> that meets State requirements.</p>	<p>Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Who is responsible?</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>1. Work with Marathon County to prepare a countywide economic development plan.</p>	<p>Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>2. Identify and prioritize areas where tax increment financing (TIF) can be used to facilitate economic development.</p>	<p>Mayor’s Office; Finance Committee; Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>3. 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.</p>	<p>Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee; Assessment Department; GIS Office.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>4. Consider developing revitalization plans for select commercial corridors, such as Grand Avenue, First Avenue, Third Avenues, Sixth Street, Thomas Street and Merrill Avenue.</p>	<p>Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee; Community Development Authority; Planning Office.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>5. Identify barriers and competitive disadvantages affecting the City and develop a plan to mitigate these issues.</p>	<p>Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee.</p>	<p>Mid-term.</p>
<p>6. As part of a business retention program, economic development staff will continue to make regular, personal visits to local businesses.</p>	<p>Community Development Department.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>7. Evaluate and routinely update the City’s marketing tools to make sure they remain current.</p>	<p>Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>8. Routinely evaluate and modify, if necessary, the City’s list of target markets.</p>	<p>Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>9. Continue to use Unified Development District zoning in the Central Business District and other commercial areas to encourage and facilitate high quality mixed use development that is acceptable to neighboring property owners.</p>	<p>Plan Commission; Planning Office.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>10. Coordinate development regulations and provision of infrastructure needed to establish downtown Wausau as an important center for retail, office, government, high-tech businesses, residential, cultural, entertainment, and recreational uses.</p>	<p>Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee; Plan Commission.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>

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11. 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.	Mayor’s Office; Community Development Department; Finance Department; Planning Office.	On-going.
12. Continue to market vacant land and buildings in Wausau West Business and Industrial Park.	Community Development Department; Economic Development Committee.	On-going.
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Who is responsible?	Priority
1. 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.	Plan Commission; Planning Office.	Mid-term.
2. 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.	Park and Recreation Committee; Park Department;	Mid-term.
3. Continue to explore the feasibility of expanding the Wausau Area Transit Service (WATS) to additional areas outside the City boundaries such as the Village of Weston and Town of Rib Mountain.	Wausau Area Transit System Commission and staff.	On-going.
4. Continue to oppose efforts to reduce the level of State financial aid provided to Wausau.	Finance Committee; Finance Department; Legislative Committee; Mayor’s Office.	On-going.
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.	Mayor’s Office; Finance Department.	On-going.
6. Explore the long-term feasibility and benefits of the City of Wausau merging with the City of Schofield.	Mayor’s Office; Finance Department.	Long-term
7. Work with other communities in the Wausau metropolitan area to establish a schedule for regular quarterly meetings of community leaders.	Mayor’s Office.	Mid-term.