Transportation System Plan

The purpose of the Eau Claire Transportation System Plan is to guide public policy in regard to the evolution of the overall transportation system, and specifically recommend objectives and actions that are consistent with the land use and urban design components of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

While private interests take the lead role in the development of land, most of the transportation system is in the public realm. Those portions of the system for which the City of Eau Claire is responsible, including local streets, sidewalks, local trails and public parking lots, are maintained and constructed by the City through its capital and operating budgets.

The Transportation System Plan identifies major issues that arose from the earlier citizen input and analysis process. These issues were evaluated in light of other planning issues, and from this process were prepared objectives, policies and recommended actions to address each issue. The Transportation System Plan presents this information.

Please note that the **Transportation Assessment of Conditions and Issues** chapter contains background material that supports this plan.

Summary of Issues

The following questions summarize the major transportation issues as identified in the Assessment of Transportation Conditions and Issues that should be addressed by the Transportation System Plan.

1. **Affordable Movement for All:** What should the City do to help all members of the community, particularly those without cars, travel to jobs and other destinations?
2. **Movement across I-94:** What should be done to provide access over I-94 to growth areas presently in the Towns of Union and Washington?
3. **Galloway Street Improvements:** Should a bridge be built on Galloway Street over the railroad track so that traffic may be reduced on Birch Street?
4. **Golf Road Interchange:** What should be done to relieve the growing traffic congestion at the interchange of Golf Road and US 53?
5. **Railroad "Quiet Zones":** Should the City invest in railroad crossing improvements at selected locations so that trains do not sound their whistles?
6. **Transit Alternatives:** Should the City adopt the changes recommended in the 2014 *Transit Development Plan*? Should the City continue support for passenger rail service?
7. **Cameron Street Interchange:** Should the City continue to request that WisDOT build a new interchange along I-94 at Cameron Street? Should the City pay part of the cost?
8. **Sidewalk Requirements:** Should the City continue to require sidewalks on both sides of new streets or should amendments to this requirement be made?

Goal and Objectives

Goal

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

Objective 1 – Balanced and Efficient Transportation System

Provide a balanced and efficient transportation network that offers viable alternatives to driving and maximizes use of existing investments.

Objective 2 – Transportation Smart Growth and Land Use

Coordinate the provision and improvement of transportation infrastructure with revitalization projects and compact, directed growth as defined in the Land Use Plan.

Objective 3 – Thoroughfare System

Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties, and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to maintain a thoroughfare system that ensures:

- Safe and efficient movement of people and goods
- Efficient and cost-effective use of public resources
- Minimal negative impacts to adjacent land uses and the community
- Consistent, predictable and comfortable driving environments

Objective 4 – Traffic Forecasting and Management

Mitigate traffic congestion when and where necessary to maintain traffic flow and minimize travel delays with a balanced approach that respects community values.

Objective 5 – Neighborhood Streets

Design neighborhood streets with features for automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian travel while limiting the impacts of traffic.

Objective 6 – Walking

Improve pedestrian connections to create a continuous and seamless pedestrian system, and enhance the pedestrian environment to create a more walkable community.

Objective 7 – Bicycling

Continue to build a connected bicycle route and trail network that is viable, convenient, and safe, and which will encourage both utilitarian and recreational bicycling.

Objective 8 – Transit and Paratransit

Sustain and improve the local bus system so that it not only serves the transit-dependent population but also attracts riders who have a choice of travel modes.

Objective 9 – Parking Management

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

Objective 10 – Passenger Rail

Help bring high-speed passenger rail service to Eau Claire.

Objective 11 – Freight Railroads

Work with private railroads to ensure safe crossings and mitigate impacts to neighborhoods.

Objective 12 – Truck Traffic

Provide for the safe and efficient movement of truck traffic through Eau Claire while minimizing negative impacts to neighborhoods.

Objective 13 – Regional Airport

Coordinate efforts with the management of the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in their effort to maintain and improve passenger and freight services while minimizing impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The Transportation Plan seeks to provide efficient and safe movement for motor vehicles while fully accommodating walking, bicycling and riding the bus.

A Complete and Balanced System

Eau Claire's transportation system is comprised of all the infrastructure and services in the city devoted to moving people and goods. The transportation system includes:

- Roads
- Bus services including local and intra-city routes
- Sidewalks
- Bicycle lanes and paths
- The regional airport
- Freight or passenger railroad lines including, potentially, high-speed rail

Issues specific to each of these transportation system components will be addressed under individual subheadings. However, transportation frequently depends on connections between the modes in the system. Therefore, the policies begin with system-wide policies.

Objective 1 - Balanced and Efficient Transportation System

Provide a balanced and efficient transportation network that offers viable alternatives to driving and maximizes use of existing investments.

Policies

1. Accommodate Walking, Bicycling and Riding the Bus

With each road improvement, proactively seek to accommodate walking, bicycling and riding the bus so as to create a system that supports alternatives to the drive-alone automobile trip. Ensure that all members of the community can affordably and safely get to essential or frequent destinations such as jobs or shops.

Consistently ask questions such as: Are sidewalks included on both sides of all local, collector and minor arterial streets? Can pedestrians cross the street safely? Can space be reserved for a pair of striped bicycling lanes? Is the street system as interconnected as feasible? If the road is a bus route, is space reserved for bus pull-outs and passenger waiting areas? Is there space for trees in the public right-of-way? Are people with restrictions to sight, hearing or mobility safely accommodated?

In some cities, this approach is known as **"Complete Streets."** The term implies that the entire public right-of-way will be designed for safe movement by all users regardless of age, ability or means of travel. There is no single design for a "complete street," as each is unique and should be designed in context with its role in the system and the district. For instance, not every street must or should have bicycling lanes but bicyclists ought to be considered in some way.

2. Mode Connectivity

Work to bridge gaps that exist in the transportation system for some modes, particularly for the transit, pedestrian and bicycling networks. The City will:

- Maintain an inventory of maps indicating road, pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes
- Identify gaps in the system for each mode and problems with connectivity
- Develop criteria for ranking system connectivity issues and determining costs from which to assess the cost versus benefit tradeoff for improving the connection.

Transportation and Land Use

Because land use and transportation are intricately linked, land use decisions can have a dramatic impact on travel behaviors and traffic volumes. By implementing the land use plan's policies, the City will be creating a city with:

- More viable transportation choices
- Higher percentages of transit, walking, and bicycle trips and a lower percentage of drive-alone automobile trips
- Shorter average travel distances
- Lower vehicle-miles traveled per person.

The land use plan should be viewed as integral to the transportation plan. By increasing transportation choices and reducing the need for more and longer trips through the land use plan recommendations.

Objective 2 – Transportation, Smart Growth and Land Use

Coordinate transportation with revitalization projects and compact, directed growth as defined in the Land Use Plan.

Policies

1. Compact and Contiguous Growth

The City will maximize the efficiency of its transportation network by seeking compact development patterns, which also make walking, bicycling or riding the bus a viable choice and reduce costs for individuals and the public.

2. New Neighborhoods

The City will work with developers to create new neighborhoods organized on a network of local streets interconnected to the maximum extent possible. A mix of land uses should be planned, including commercial nodes, to promote walking, bicycling and riding the bus.

3. Infill and Redevelopment

The City will promote infill and redevelopment in major transportation corridors and along transit routes. Example locations include downtown, Hastings Way, Clairemont Avenue, Menomonie Street, Water Street, Madison Street, Oxford Avenue, London Road and the vicinity of Oakwood Mall.

4. Older Neighborhoods

The City will help revitalize older neighborhoods near downtown and other employment sites, which will encourage employees to live close to their jobs and thereby reduce the amount of driving and promote walking, bicycling and riding the bus.

5. Activity Centers

The City will require major activity centers to include sidewalks, bicycle parking and bus amenities such as pull-outs and shelters.

6. Transit-Supportive Development

Promote development in corridors and districts that encourage transit ridership. Appropriate development near bus stops and along bus lines can increase system ridership, help create interesting, sustainable neighborhoods or districts, help guide regional growth and broaden the range of choices in travel, residence and shopping.

Guidelines for Transit-Supportive Development

The Land Use Plan recommends the evolution of locations that are more intense and mixed in order to create higher-density development, particularly employment, shopping, and multi-family housing that is supportive of walking and served by transit, major roads and bicycles facilities. These guidelines will help create environments that make walking, bicycling and transit use more viable alternatives while still accommodating auto traffic.

- Orient buildings toward the street with short setbacks and parking behind or on the side of buildings
- Cluster buildings along the street within convenient walking distance of one another
- Design buildings that encourage walking by ensuring that ground floor space faces the street, street-level retail is included in appropriate areas, structures are built to lot lines, and building fronts have windows and doors
- Encourage a mixture of activities among and within buildings
- Eliminate minimum parking requirements that result in dedicating large areas of surface parking. Promote shared parking agreements between uses that require parking at different times of the day and days of the week, such as office and entertainment.
- Provide streets with wider sidewalks (8 to 12 feet), street trees, pedestrian-scale lights and signs, planters and benches.
- Buffer sidewalks from parking lots with landscaping or fencing.
- Create transit bays in street rights-of-way with passenger shelters placed in high activity locations.

Transit-supportive development locates housing and jobs near bus lines to build ridership, lessen auto dependence and create attractive urban places.

Road System

The private automobile is by far the primary transportation mode in Eau Claire. Therefore, actions recommended in regard to the road system are the most prominent and influential components of the overall transportation plan.

Objective 3 -- Thoroughfare System

Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties, and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to maintain a thoroughfare system that ensures:

- Safe and efficient movement of people and goods
- Efficient and cost-effective use of public resources
- Minimal negative impacts to adjacent land uses
- Consistent and predictable driving environments.

Policies

1. Update the Functional Classification System

Reserve land and build roads that follow an orderly pattern with appropriate spacing, access controls, traffic capacity and speeds to accommodate planned land uses as well as space for walking and bicycling.

Table 3-1 describes the various road functional classes and their characteristics.

Figure 3-1 illustrates the proposed functional classification plan including five locations for new road segments.

Table 3-2 lists the changes to the existing functional classification.

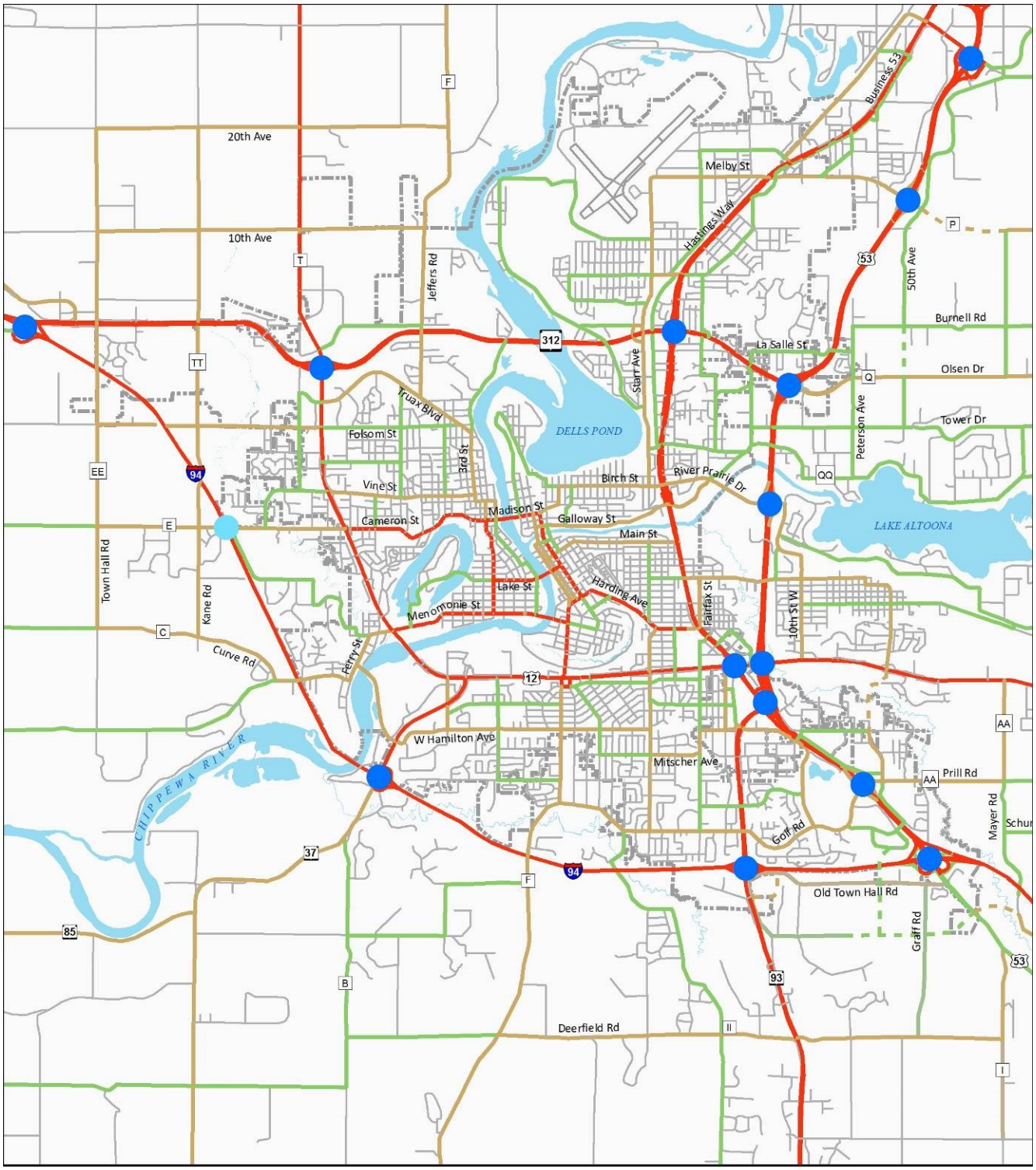
Eau Claire will work with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (the West Central Regional Plan Commission), adjacent jurisdictions, the Counties of Eau Claire and Chippewa, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to implement the functional class plan shown in Figure 3-1.

Purposes of the functional class system include providing consistent design and ensuring that enough land is reserved for various types of roads, including sidewalks, bike lanes and trees.

Table 3-1
Definitions of Road Functional Classes

	Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector	Local
Examples	Interstate 94 US 53 Wisconsin 312 Clairemont Ave. Lake Street	Truax Boulevard Hamilton Avenue Golf Road Galloway Street	7th Street Margaret Street Skeels Avenue	Emery Street Monte Carlo Drive Many others
Definition and Purpose	Connect rural and urban networks. Carry trips entering and exiting the urban area, trips bypassing the central city, and trips destined for downtown. Serve: downtown, regional shopping, university, medical center, industrial area, regional park.	Augments and feeds the primary arterial system and intended for moderate-volume, moderate-speed traffic movement. Access to abutting property is partially controlled.	Collects and distributes traffic between arterial streets and local streets. Intended for short trips wile providing access to abutting properties. *The design may vary depending on the character and intensity of traffic generated by land development.*	Provides direct access to abutting property. Intended for low-speed, low-volume movement and shot trips. *The design may vary depending on the character and intensity of traffic generated by land development.*
Traffic Flow and Access Priority	Varies by location and adjacent land use	Flow : Access 45 : 55 210′ spacing for accesses. Safety is higher priority than traffic flow in determining signal spacing.	Flow : Access 30 : 70 160′ spacing for non-residential driveways	Flow : Access 10:90 No restrictions. 40′ between access
Spacing	¼ to 3 miles	½ to 1 mile	¼ to ½ mile	As required
Trip Length	Between cities, across metro, and across cities	Between and within activity centers	Local street to arterial street (1/2 to 2 miles)	Access to individual property; less than ½ mile
Traffic Volume	Greater than 7,000	6,000 to 20,000 vpd	1,500 to 8,000 vpd	Typically under 1,000 vehicles per day
Traffic Speed	Varies by location	Under 40 miles per hour	Under 35 mph	Under 30 mph
Pedestrian Provisions	Varies by location	Sidewalks on both sides	Sidewalks on both sides	Sidewalks on both sides
Bicycle Provisions	Varies by location	Shared outside lanes, striped lanes, paved shoulders or separate paths	Shared outside lanes or striped lanes	Interconnected street system. Cars and bicycles share the road.
Bus Provisions	Varies by location	Scheduled buses, taxis and dial-a-ride service	Scheduled buses, taxis and dial-a-ride service	Rare scheduled buses. Taxis and dial-a-ride

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 2014



1 Square Mile — 160 Acres — 0 — 5,280 ft.

Principal Arterial
Minor Arterial — Proposed
Collector — Proposed
Local
Interchanges — Proposed

Figure 3-1
Future Functional Classification System of Roads

Table 3-2
Proposed Changes in the Functional Classification System

Road	Origin	Destination	City Presently	WCWRPC	Proposed
Galloway Street	Farwell	Birch Street	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
Hastings Way western ramp	Hastings Way	Galloway Street	Local	Local	Minor Arterial
Hastings Way eastern ramp	Hastings Way	Galloway Street	Local and Unbuilt	Local and Unbuilt	Minor Arterial
Oakwood Hills Parkway	Golf Road	Old Town Hall Road	Local and unbuilt	Local	Collector (bridge over I-94)
Town of Washington Sewer Service Area					
US 53	I-94	Continues southeast	Collector	Collector	Principal Arterial
Owen Ayres Court	Owen Ayres Court	Old Town Hall Road	Local and Unbuilt	Unbuilt	Collector – bridge over I-94
Gateway Drive	Hamilton Avenue	US 12	Unbuilt	Unbuilt	Minor Arterial
Old Town Hall Road	State 93	Graff Road	Minor Arterial	Local	Minor Arterial
Gunnes Road	Gunnes Road eastern end	US 53 and County I	Unbuilt or Collector	Unbuilt	Collector
County I	State 93	Mayer Road extended	Unbuilt	Unbuilt	Minor Arterial – vacate parallel leg
County I	Mayer Rd.	Continues east	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County I	State 93	County II	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County II	County F	County I	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County F	County F	Continues south	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
Graff Road	Town Hall Rd.	County II	Minor Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector
Mayer Road	Prill Road	Schumacher	Minor Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector
Mayer Road	Schumacher	County I	Unbuilt	Unbuilt	Collector
Schumacher Rd	Mayer Rd.	Continues east	Minor Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector
County AA / Prill Road	State 93	Mayer Road	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County AA	Prill Road	US 12	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
Town of Seymour Sewer Service Area					
Melby / County P	US 53	Continues east	Unbuilt or Collector	Unbuilt or Collector	Minor Arterial
Burnell Drive	Peterson Avenue	Continues east	Local	Local	Collector
Olsen Drive	50th Avenue	Continues east	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
Tower Drive	Peterson Ave.	Continues east	Local	Local	Collector
Peterson Ave.	Burnell Drive	LaSalle Street	Local	Collector	Collector

Road	Origin	Destination	City Presently	WCWRPC	Proposed
Peterson Ave.	Tower Drive	County QQ	Local	Local	Collector
50th Avenue	County QQ	Olsen Drive	Local	Local	Collector
50th Avenue	Olsen	Burnell Drive	Collector and Unbuilt	Unbuilt	Collector
50th Avenue	Burnell Drive	Continues north	Local	Local	Collector
Town of Wheaton Sewer Service Area					
County T	State 312	State 29	Minor Arterial	Minor Arterial	Principal Arterial. Study class, design and owner with DOT. Transfer to state system?
County F / Jeffers Road	State 312	State 29	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
Town of Union Sewer Service Area					
20th Avenue	Town Hall Road	County F / Jeffers Road	Local	Local	Minor Arterial
10th Avenue	Town Hall Road	County F / Jeffers Road	Local and Collector	Local and Collector	Minor Arterial
Folsom Street	Town Hall Road	US 12 / Clairemont Avenue	Collector and Local	Collector and Local	Minor Arterial (under I-94)
County E / Cameron St.	Town Hall Road	US 12 / Clairemont Avenue	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County C / Curve Road	County TT	I-94	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County EE / Town Hall Road	State 312	County C	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial
County TT / Kane Road	State 312	County C	Collector	Collector	Minor Arterial

The majority of the proposed changes in the future functional classification are the result of the City's planned expansion into the Urban Sewer Service Areas presently located in the adjacent Towns. These facilities should be actively managed in the interim for their planned future functional classification. The subject road improvements would occur in stages as the nearby land develops more intensely and generates more traffic.

It is vitally important to reserve sufficient public road right-of-way in these alignments so that there is space for the road lanes, bicycle lanes or side paths, sidewalks and trees. The needed right-of-way widths are listed in Table 3-3. The road right-of-way land should be reserved through the Official Map process and dedicated to the City or County during land subdivision. Purchases through the eminent domain process will be used only if necessary.

Likewise, it is vitally important to properly manage the access to each classification of road.

2. New Minor Arterial or Collector Roads

Plan for new Minor Arterial or Collector Roads to serve future land development as illustrated by Figure 3-1 and listed below. As with existing alignments, these rights-of-way should be reserved through the Official Map process and dedicated to the City or County during land subdivision. Purchases through the eminent domain process will be used only if necessary. See also Policy 3-4, below.

Planned new Minor Arterial Road segments are:

- The extension of **County Highway P** between 50th Avenue and 60th Avenue in the Town of Seymour
- The extension of **Gateway Drive** between US 12 and Hamilton Avenue in the town of Washington
- The realignment of **County Highway I** to intersect with State Highway 53 at Gunnes Road in the Town of Washington
- The realignment of a portion of **Old Town Hall Road** near State Highway 93 for the sake of traffic safety and flow.
- The Extension of **Folsom Stree**t west across Interstate 94.

Planned new Collector Road segments are:

- **50th Street** between Burnell Drive and Olsen Drive in the Town of Seymour
- The extension of a road in the vicinity of **Owen Ayres Court** over I-94. Additional crossings of I-94 are essential for perimeter growth. This crossing point is still a possibility as Owen Ayres Court touches the I-94 ROW.
- The extension of **Gunnes Road** from its eastern terminus to State Highway 53 in the Town of Washington
- The extension of **Mayer Road** from Schumacher Road to County Highway I in the Town of Washington.

3. Major Road Improvement Projects or Studies

Prepare feasibility studies for the following major road improvement projects, list them in the multi-year capital improvements program and include them in annual City budgets. Base the traffic studies on the regional travel model that was being prepared in 2015 by the West Central Regional Planning Commission.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Galloway Street Railroad Overpass

Construct a bridge on Galloway Street over the Union-Pacific Railroad track near Banbury Place. Relocate the Chippewa River State Bike Trail onto the overpass.

Northbound Hastings Way Off-Ramp to Galloway Street

Study the cost and benefit of constructing an off-ramp from northbound Hastings Way to intersect Hastings Place as a better means of linking Hastings Way to Galloway Street and increasing the use of Galloway Street as a route to downtown. Study the use of a roundabout for this intersection. This project would complement the existing western ramp from southbound Hastings Way. An origin-destination study is advised.

Melby Street

Improve Melby Street to provide a better connection among US 53, Hastings Way and the Chippewa Valley Industrial Park.

State Street

Improve State Street through the Third Ward and Putnam Heights neighborhoods. This project may include reconstructing the failing retaining walls, improving the intersection at Lexington Avenue (possibly with a roundabout), improving the intersection at Graham and Washington, and partnering with the University and the Third Ward Neighborhood Association to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Menomonie Street between Clairemont Avenue and 10th Ave

Partner with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to increase the traffic capacity of Menomonie Street to accommodate planned land development including the University's event and recreation center. Also, improve the intersection at Clairemont Avenue.

TRAFFIC STUDIES

Clairemont Avenue and Hendrickson Drive Area

Study the vicinity of Clairemont Avenue and Hendrickson Road including Craig Road and Stein Boulevard. Seek creative ways to accommodate auto traffic, improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, and enhance appearances. In particular, accommodate better bicyclist and pedestrian movement among the university, the technical college, the hospital, the medical clinics and the commercial area.

Vicinity of Oakwood Mall

Coordinate with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to study traffic volume and capacity on all roads in the vicinity of Oakwood Mall, particularly the intersection of Golf Road and US 53 at peak hours. Simultaneously seek to improve access by bicyclists and pedestrians to the retail destinations and across US 53.

Study Cameron and Madison Streets

Study the Cameron–Madison Street corridor from Town Hall Road in the Town of Union to the Chippewa River. Establish the width of road right-of-way needed to accommodate autos, bicyclists, pedestrians, buses, utilities and trees. Assume an interchange at I-94, growth in all quadrants of downtown, and more housing between Town Hall Road (County EE) and Clairemont Avenue. Prepare a schematic drawing of the facility and an access management plan in conjunction with Eau Claire County.

Study Harding Avenue Hill

Study closing the intersections along Harding Avenue at Jefferson Street and Lee Street then removing the third lane on Harding Avenue to create two bicycling lanes. Connect the bicycling lanes to a "bicycle boulevard" on Valmont Avenue. A "bicycle boulevard" is a street enhanced for bicycling with striped lanes or painted "share-road" emblems, corner curb bump-outs, parking bays and a narrowed space for autos.

Study Birch Street

Model traffic flow on Birch Street after the proposed railroad bridge on Galloway Street and eastern Hastings Way ramp have been built. Study the advisability of removing the Stop signs on Omaha Street at Putnam, Balcom, Spring and Churchill Streets.

4. Land and Design for Future Roads and Road Improvements.

Adopt and follow an Official Map of road rights-of-way (land) based on the functional classification plan and detailed traffic studies.

Guided by those sources, acquire sufficient land in advance of or at the time of land subdivision for the expected road needs. Acquire land through dedication by the subdividers and, in some cases, purchase by the City, County or State. Use the City's powers of Extraterritorial Plat Approval to reserve and require dedication of road rights-of-way in the three-mile-wide band outside its borders. Conduct corridor preservation activities in cooperation with the County or Town. Carefully manage access throughout the life of the road.

The City's road right-of-way width standards should include sufficient land for the needs of the road, utilities, landscaping, lateral clearance and, in most instances, sidewalks. Space for bicycle paths or on-street lanes may increase right-of-way needs.

Eau Claire will use the guidelines presented in Table 3-3 when reviewing proposed plats or Certified Survey Maps in its three-mile Extraterritorial Plat Approval Area Jurisdiction to ensure that sufficient right-of-way is dedicated for future roads, trails, utility and drainage.

Table 3-3
Design Guidelines by Functional Class of Roads

Type of Street	Street Width *	Right-of-Way Width	Parking	Boulevard / Planting Strip	Sidewalk	Utilities
Local	28 to 32	60	One or both sides	6 to 9 with trees	2 @ 5	ROW and easement behind the sidewalk for electricity, telephone, cable TV. Sewer and water under the street.
Collector (Minor)	32	66 to 76	Both sides	6 to 9 with trees	2 @ 5	
Collector (Major) **	36 to 46**	Up to 80	Both sides	6 to 9 with trees	2 @ 6	
Minor Arterial **	36 to 60	Up to 90	Both sides	6 to 9 with trees	Varies	
Principal Arterial	4 to 6 lanes	Up to 90	None	Varies	Varies	
Cul de Sac (< 8 houses)	26	60	One side only	6 minimum with trees	2 @ 5	
Cul de Sac (8+ houses)	28	60	Both sides	6 minimum with trees	2 @ 5	

* All dimensions are in feet. Street width is measured to the back of the curb.

** May include a pair of striped bicycling lanes at 5 feet wide each.

5. Cameron Street Interchange

A "folded diamond" interchange is proposed at I-94 and Cameron Street, as shown by Figure 3-1. This improvement is desired by the City to provide an alternate route to downtown from I-94 and to improve local circulation in the City's future growth area.

There is currently a six-mile distance between the interchange at State Highway 312 (the North Crossing) and State Highway 37 (Hendrickson Drive). Although it is unlikely that the proposed interchange at Cameron Street will be justified until growth in this area occurs, the City and the Town of Union should continue to acquire or reserve land for the interchange to avoid encroaching development and incompatible land uses. The City presently owns the land needed in the northeastern quadrant for the interchange.

6. Jurisdictional Transfer of County Highway T

Study and monitor County Highway T for possible improvements and possible transfer to the State. Collaborate with Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties, the West Central Regional Planning Commission and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Consider level of service, safety and the factors listed below.

County Highway T will likely serve an ever-increasing role in access between Eau Claire and US 29 or Chippewa Falls. Additionally, the combination of County Highway T (possibly designated as US 12), Clairemont Avenue (US 12) and Hendrickson Drive (State 37) could serve as a parallel reliever for I-94 in the metropolitan area.

Increased traffic on this route might eventually require a bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad track near Alpine Road.

In general, roads that serve local transportation needs should be under the jurisdiction of the City. Roads that serve regional or statewide transportation needs should be the jurisdiction of either the County or State. Jurisdictional assignments should be based on several factors including:

- Functional classification
- Route continuity and connectivity
- Type of trips using route
- Level of access
- Traffic volume
- Special facilities served.

Objective 4 -- Traffic Forecasting and Management

Mitigate traffic congestion when and where necessary to maintain traffic flow and minimize travel delays with a balanced approach that respects community values.

Eau Claire will work with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (the Metropolitan Planning Organization for this metropolitan area) to update the computerized regional travel forecast model during 2015.

When traffic congestion is identified, either by observation or by a forecast, there are several ways to address this problem, some of which do not involve adding lanes. Transportation system management (TSM) and access management alternatives should also be considered when evaluating future capacity solutions. These policies are presented below.

Policies

1. Future Capacity Analysis

Use the regional travel model to prepare the more detailed sub-area studies described above.

The year 2035 regional travel model for the Eau Claire–Chippewa Falls Metropolitan Area was being prepared in 2015 by the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Once the model is completed, future traffic volumes, roadway capacities, deficiencies and possible system improvements can be identified with greater certainty. The model is based on the pattern of planned land use from each local unit of government in the area served by the Regional Planning Commission.

Figure 3-2 illustrates the forecast level of service, year 2045, no-build and build scenarios.

2. Travel Model Maintenance

Help the Metropolitan Planning Organization maintain or improve the accuracy of the regional travel model by periodically providing updated maps of existing and planned land use in a geographic information system format.

3. Capacity

Capacity expansion is only one mitigation measure available to the City and will be used only after consideration of alternatives. Increasing capacity by building more lanes or widening roads may be counter-productive to other City objectives such as encouraging neighborhood revitalization or creating districts more friendly to walking, bicycling or riding the bus.

Figure 3-2: Forecast Level of Service, Year 2045, No-Build and Build Scenarios

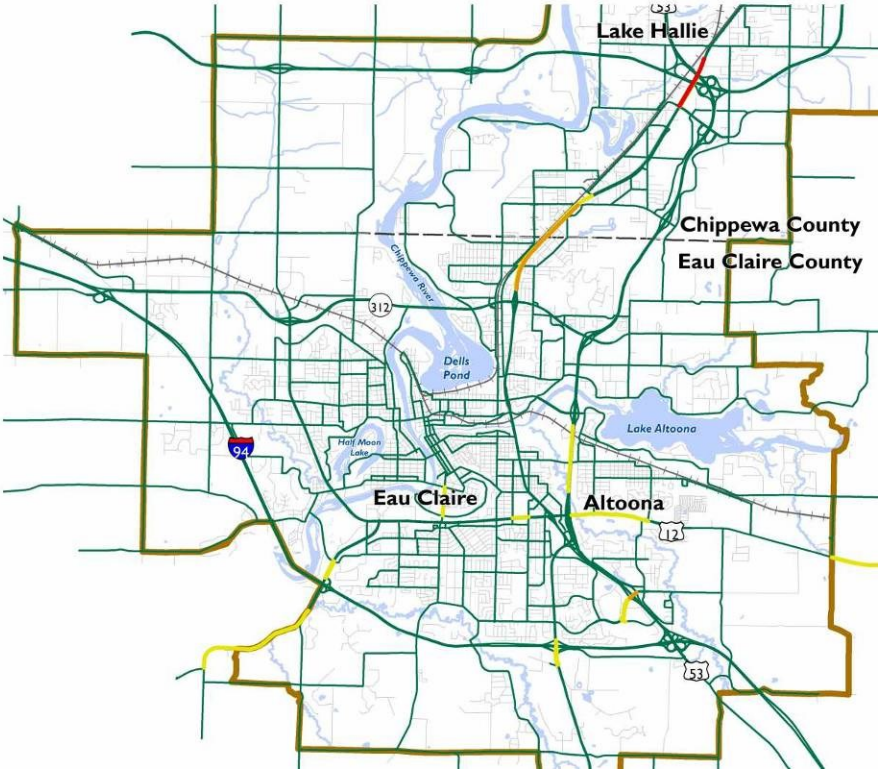
Chippewa - Eau Claire Travel Demand Model: Future 2045 No-Build* Level of Service (LOS)

* includes committed projects

Future 2045 No-Build LOS

- ABC
- D
- E
- F

No-Build Scenario

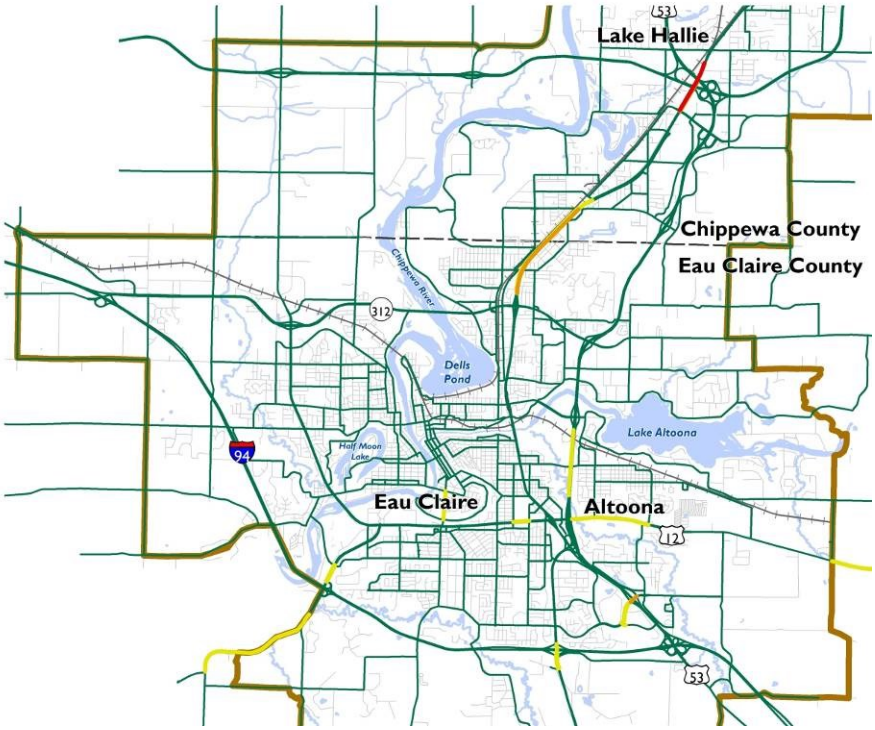


Chippewa - Eau Claire Travel Demand Model: Future 2045 Build* Level of Service (LOS)

* includes committed + planned projects

Future 2045 Build LOS

- ABC
- D
- E
- F



Build Scenario

4. Transportation System Management

Use transportation system management strategies on arterial roads to improve traffic flow, maximize capacity and increase overall system efficiency and safety. Transportation system management strategies include:

- **Advanced traffic signal control systems:** Traffic signal upgrades and timing adjustments are a cost-effective means of improving and optimizing traffic flow. Traffic signal timing should be a routine, ongoing activity involving a regular review of timing plans in light of actual traffic volumes and patterns.
- **Intelligent transportation systems:** WisDOT is promoting the use of technologies such as electronic message boards for cost-effectively mitigating transportation problems.
- **Intersection improvements:** Intersection improvements such as roundabouts increase capacity and safety when used at appropriate locations. There are several roundabouts in Eau Claire with more planned.

5. Access Management

Adopt and follow the roadway access guidelines presented on Table 3-4 and Figure 3-3.

These guidelines specify the minimum spacing between public street intersections or private driveways along a given type of road, limit turning movements, and specify the spacing of traffic signals (such as signals instead of stop signs) on arterial facilities.

The guidelines seek to improve safety and operations by reducing vehicle conflicts, increasing the distance between conflict points and guiding drivers with respect to access locations.

Additional access management strategies that can supplement these guidelines include:

- Protect the functional area of intersections
- Ensure adequate sight distance
- Avoid offset access points
- Avoid skewed intersections that limit the line of sight
- Install left-turn lanes where appropriate
- Consider providing shared access
- Consider consolidating existing access points
- Consider partial access points to limit conflicts

Table 3-4 focuses on the future urban growth areas as defined by the Land Use Plan because developed areas are often difficult to retrofit. In already developed areas, applying an access management program usually must wait for a major reconstruction project along the target corridor. However, major existing corridors can capitalize on the access management strategies listed in the bullet points shown above.

In addition to access management policies, driveway spacing is also important for the design and function of the road. Locating driveways away from major intersections can

greatly improve the function of the intersection and increase safety. Figure 3-3 depicts federally-recommended guidelines for driveway spacing near intersections.

Access management and driveway spacing should be a consideration when redesigning any arterial or collector road.

Table 3-4
Access Management Guidelines for Intersections of Public Streets

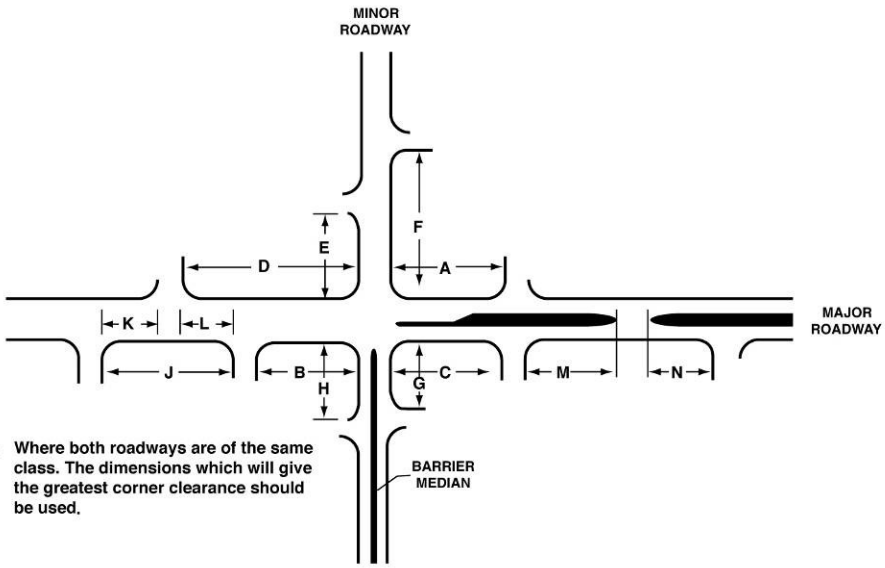
Road	Primary Full Movement Intersection Spacing	Conditional Secondary Intersection Spacing	Signal Spacing
Interstate/Freeway (ex. I-94, US 53)	1 mile	NA	NA
Expressway (ex. Hastings Way)	1 mile	1/2 mile	1 mile
Principal Arterials *	1 mile	1/2 mile	1 mile
Minor Arterials *	1/2 mile	1/4 mile	1/2 mile
Collectors	1/4 mile	1/8 mile	1/4 mile
Locals	600 feet	300 feet	Not applicable

* May be less in central locations.

Figure 3-3
Driveway Location and Spacing Details

Minimum Corner Clearance			
	Class of Major Roadway		
Item	Arterial	Collector	Local
A	115	75	50
B	85	85	50
C	115	75	50
D	115	75	50
E	230	115	50
F	230	175	50
G	50	50	50
H	230	175	50

Minimum Driveway Clearance			
	Class of Major Roadway		
Item	Arterial	Collector	Local
J	75	50	35
K	75	0	0
L	75	50	35
M	75	0	0
N	75	50	35



Note: Where both roadways are of the same class. The dimensions which will give the greatest corner clearance should be used.

Source: Federal Highway Administration.

6. Neighborhood Impacts

Design capacity improvements, when and where they are determined necessary, to minimize negative impacts to neighborhoods. Desirable features may include street trees, designs for appropriate speeds, and traffic calming features as described in Policy 5-3.

7. Traffic Studies

When the regional travel model has been updated, use it as the basis to evaluate the ability of various project options to reduce congestion in a particular sub-area. The model may also be expanded to evaluate the traffic impact of different land uses or the effect of increased transit, bicycling or walking. Such analysis can help decision makers select the appropriate mix of road improvements, land use, and alternative travel features to optimize efficiency, cost and benefit.

A list of needed sub-area traffic studies was presented under Policy 3-3.

Access management standards promote traffic safety and flow by separating intersections or driveways along a road according to the type of road, its traffic volume, traffic speed and adjacent land uses.

Objective 5 - Neighborhood Streets

Design neighborhood streets with features for driving, bicycling, walking and riding the bus while limiting the negative effects on adjacent land use.

Policies:

1. Local Street Design

The design of new local streets should provide for traffic movement while ensuring a safe, attractive, and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly neighborhood environment. The street design presented in Figure 3-4 provides 30-feet between the backs of curbs and allows for two-side parking and two-way traffic. This is the City's current practice.

Table 3-5 lists design options for new residential streets.

Figure 3-5 presents an **alternative** local street design that can be accomplished with only **28 feet** between the back of curbs; however, this design provides for parking on only one side of the street.

While the City's customary local residential street design calls for new local streets to be designed for a 32-foot width with two-side parking, the **City Council may approve narrower designs** in low-traffic situations at the request of the land developer.

Table 3-5 includes a **minor collector street** listed as an alternative to the local street design where proposed neighborhood development is anticipated to produce more than 1,000 vehicles per day on a local street and/or have high on-street parking demand.

Cul-de-sac streets should only be allowed where topography limits access to properties from the interconnected street system.

New local street design may integrate traffic-calming designs, particularly where the demand for on-street parking is light. Using traffic calming designs such as curb bump-outs at intersections and/or mid-block parking bays will help slow traffic, while still providing on-street parking on both sides of the street.

Narrow streets have been shown in other cities to reduce traffic speeds, creating a quieter, safer, and more comfortable pedestrian and bike-friendly environment. They benefit developers by reducing costs and benefit the City by reducing maintenance, snow removal and reconstruction costs.

Figure 3-4
Local Residential Street Design with Parking on Both Sides

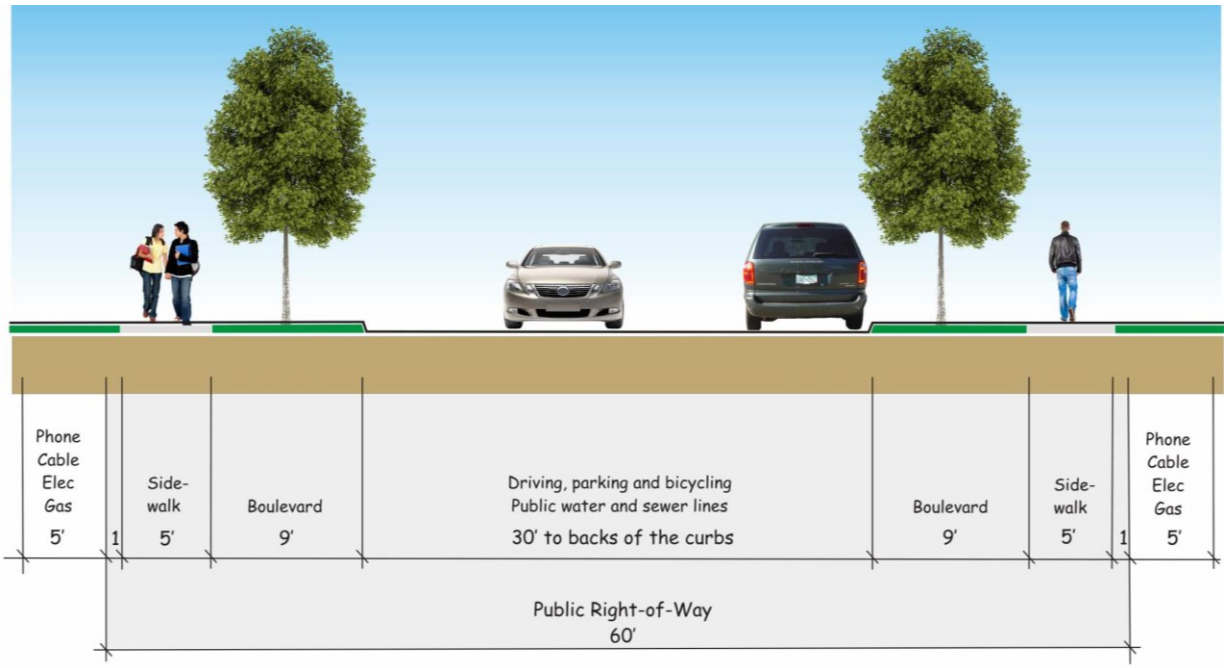


Figure 3-5
Minor Arterial Street Design with Parking and Bicycling Lanes

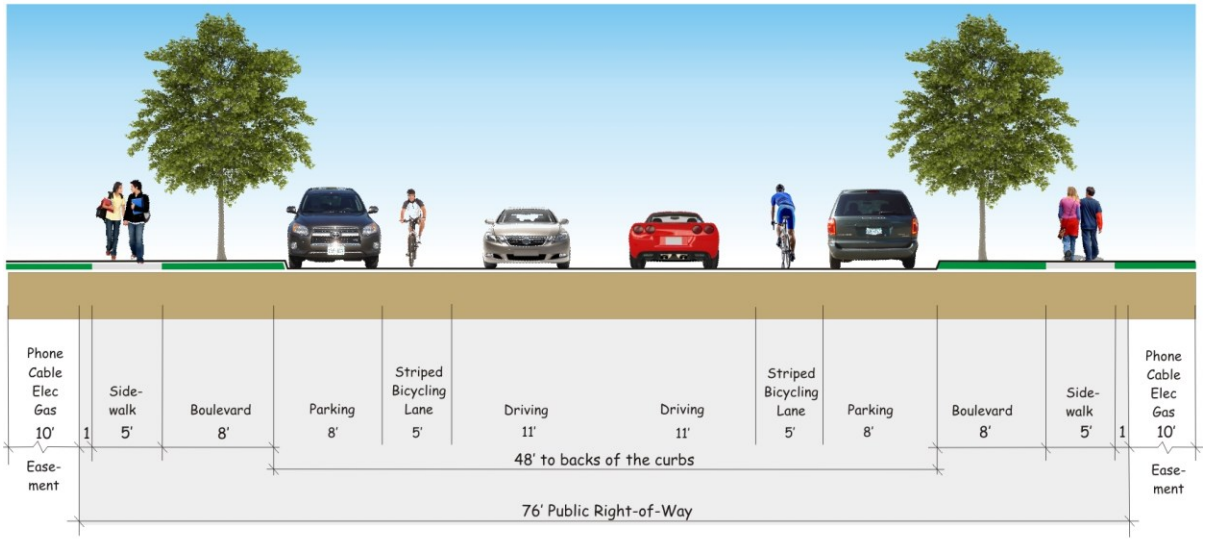


Table 3-5
Design Features of New Residential Streets

Type of Street	Street Width *	Right-of-Way Width	Traffic Direction	Parking	Planting Strip	Sidewalk	Utilities
Local	28 to 32	56 to 60	Two ways	One or both sides	6 to 9 with trees	2 @ 5	ROW and easement behind the sidewalk for electricity, telephone, cable TV. Sewer and water under the street.
Collector (Minor)	32	76	Two ways	Both sides	8 with trees	2 @ 5	
Collector (Major)	36	80	Two ways	Both sides	8 with trees	2 @ 6	
Cul de Sac (< 8 houses)	26	56 to 60	Two ways	One side only	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Cul de Sac (8+ houses)	28	56 to 60	Two ways	Both sides	6 with trees	2 @ 5	

1. All dimensions are in feet. Street width is measured to the back of the curb.

2. ADA-Compliant Streets

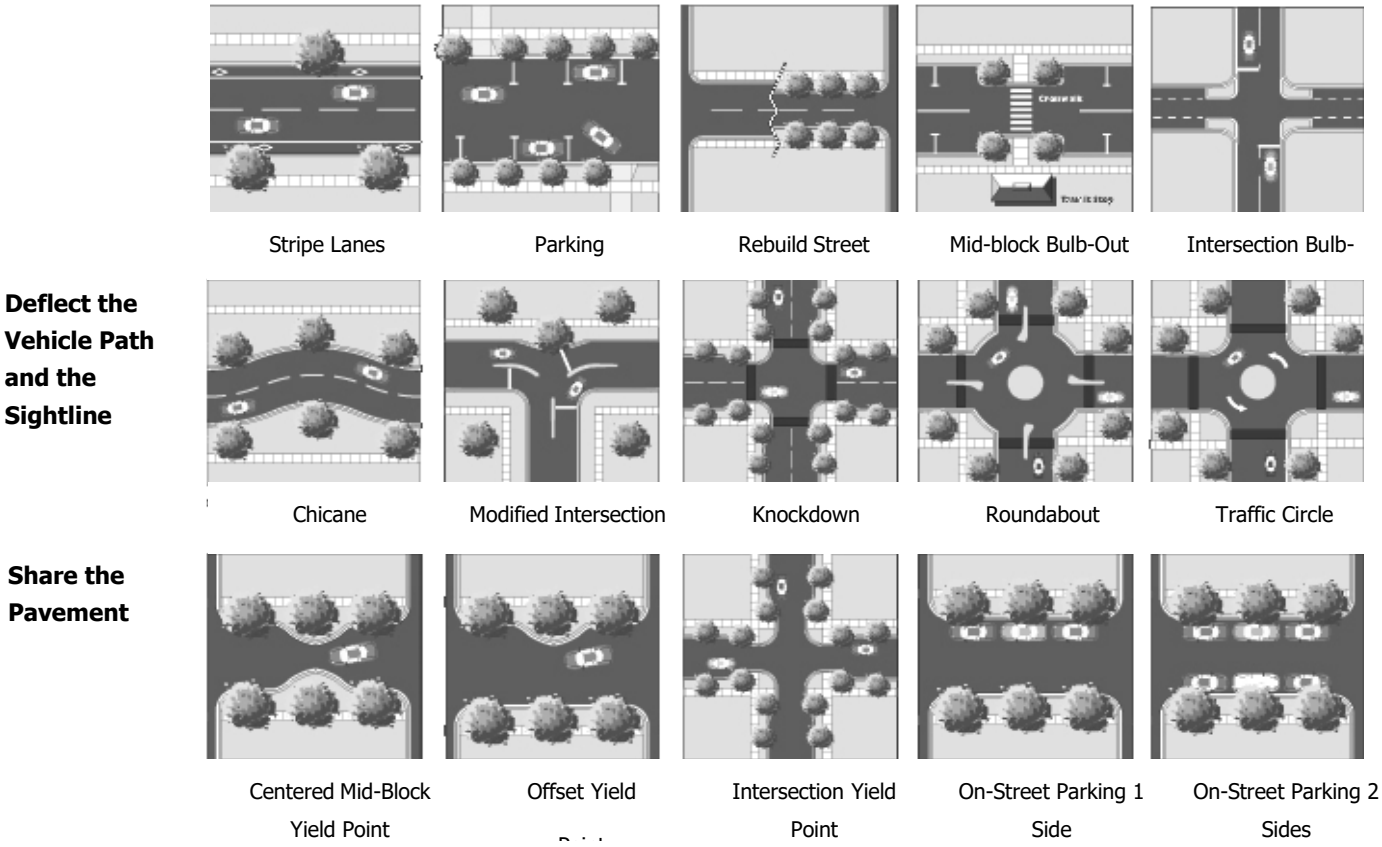
Continue to build and retrofit streets, sidewalks, traffic signals and related features to conform to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Additional costs associated with creating ADA-compliant streets during construction are minimal.

3. Traffic Calming

Use appropriate traffic calming strategies on local and collector streets where deemed appropriate. Measures may need to be taken to calm traffic in areas where excessive speeding is a problem, particularly where pedestrians are especially vulnerable, such as near schools and parks. A wide variety of traffic calming strategies are available as previously discussed and the City should institute a process for addressing traffic calming needs.

A traffic-calming program would provide residents with a process to work with neighbors toward addressing negative traffic impacts in their neighborhoods. Various traffic calming techniques are shown in Figure 3-6.

Figure 3-6
Traffic Calming Techniques



Walking

Walking accounted for 5 percent of Eau Claire's commuter trips in 2012, which was much higher than transit at 1.2 percent or bicycle use at 1.2 percent.[1] The walking data may be skewed upward from the norm by the high number of students in Eau Claire. Virtually all trips begin and end with a walking trip, yet over the last 50 years walking as a form of transportation has generally been ignored.

Pedestrian issues should not be underestimated or undervalued. Similar to the road network, pedestrian facilities need to be viewed as a system providing for seamless and comfortable pedestrian movements throughout the community. For example, neighborhood sidewalk requirements will have only limited value if sidewalks end abruptly at the neighborhood perimeter or first major road.

In addition, sidewalks and paths should be coordinated with adjacent jurisdictions to avoid gaps in the system. It is important that neighborhoods have an interconnected sidewalk system and that major gaps from the past be retro-fitted, at least along collector and arterial streets.

Implementing the policies of the Land Use Plan in conjunction with the Transportation System Plan and urban design recommendations will be essential in creating a more pedestrian-friendly and walkable Eau Claire.

Current City policy and Subdivision Code Section 17.12.280 requires every new street to have a five-foot wide sidewalk on both sides, subject to City Council review. This ordinance dates back to 1974, but there has been inconsistent implementation of the sidewalk ordinance by changing City Councils. The result has been a mixture of streets with sidewalks on both sides, one side, or no sidewalks on either side. This has produced gaps in the pedestrian system.

Please refer to Figure 5-6 in the Transportation Assessment chapter of this plan for a map showing the current network of sidewalks and off-street paths.

One of the outcomes of the prior comprehensive plan was the creation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, a group of citizens that advises the City Council.

The following objective and policies are consistent with and complementary to the vision, goals and objectives identified in the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's *Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020.* The City should continue to work closely with WisDOT to ensure that pedestrian issues, particularly those affecting children, the elderly, and the disabled, are addressed along and across state trunk highways within Eau Claire. Special attention should be made to the unique needs of the disabled including, but not limited to, "slow-walkers", wheelchair users and the use of "scooters".

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[1] Census Transportation Planning Package based on the 2010 to 2012 American Community Survey by the US Census Department.

Objective 6 – Walking

Improve pedestrian connections to create a continuous and seamless pedestrian system, and enhance the pedestrian environment to create a more walkable community.

Policies

1. Sidewalks

Seek to construct sidewalks along both sides of all new local, collector, and arterial streets.

Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide along local and collector streets, possibly wider along arterial streets. Finish sidewalk connections and crosswalks at major intersections in coordination with new development.

When reconstructing streets without sidewalks, study pedestrian deficiencies in the immediate neighborhood and the connectivity of the overall pedestrian system to determine the need for sidewalks. Solicit comments from affected neighborhoods.

Review the City policy for constructing sidewalks along newly-built streets. The City Code currently requires sidewalks as part of a development agreement for major developments or at the time the main building is constructed. An alternative approach is to require all sidewalks to be installed when the street is built.

2. Sidewalk System Plan, 2010

Continue to build new sidewalks and off-street paths according to the recommendations of the *Eau Claire Bicycle and Pedestrian Systems Plan* (2010). Please refer to that plan for recommendations, policies and maps.

Figures 5-12 and 5-13 of the Transportation Assessment chapter of this plan illustrate the existing system of sidewalks and the planned network of off-street paths.

3. Gaps in the Sidewalk System

Work to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk system within the City. Maps 7 and 8 illustrate the location of the most significant gaps in the City's sidewalk system based on Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission and Public Works Department review of the existing infrastructure. Elimination of these gaps is important in order to reduce hazards and safety issues that may exist and encourage greater usage and a more "walkable" community. Areas of high priority include:

- East Hamilton Avenue near Robbins Elementary School
- Golf Road east of Oakwood Hills Parkway
- Fairfax Park area
- London Road (Hamilton Avenue south to Damon Street)
- Marquette Street north to Piedmont Road, west of North High School
- Starr Avenue between Piedmont Road and Marquette Street
- Taft / Kay Street area south of Memorial High School
- Abby Hill Drive / Winsor Drive / Brookline Avenue, north of Northwoods Lane / Brookline Avenue to Las Salle Street

- Deblene Lane north of Vine Street
- Birch Street and Malden Avenue area.

The Public Works Department should periodically evaluate the sidewalk system in order to identify additional gaps that should be corrected.

4. Gaps in the Off-Street Path System

Continue to eliminate major gaps or missing linkages in the multiple-use path system, just as several have been filled since the prior Comprehensive Plan. Existing gaps that are of high priority to eliminate include:

- Truax Boulevard from North Clairemont Avenue to Preston Road
- The trail on the western side of Half Moon Lake
- The two rail-to-trail conversions leading to Roosevelt School
- The river crossing between the Roosevelt School trail and Forest Street
- A route from the planned river crossing to Forest Street Park
- A path along North Clairemont Avenue.

5. Pedestrian Crossings

Continue to design streets and pedestrian crossings to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing appropriately designed pedestrian ramps. Pedestrian crossing design should be a priority in the design and construction or reconstruction of functionally classified roads.

Several principal arterial streets have fast-moving traffic with multiple through-lanes that are difficult for pedestrians to cross (e.g. Clairemont Avenue, Cameron Street or Hastings Way). Pedestrian crossing improvements on major roads near schools, parks and other high pedestrian activity areas should be a high priority. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission should prepare recommendations on safe street crossings. Striping and curb extensions ("bump-outs") are two techniques that could be used to help pedestrians cross streets at intersections.

6. Urban Design

Create pedestrian-oriented environments by implementing this Plan's land use and urban design recommendations.

Sidewalks by themselves will not induce walking. More important are an appropriate mix of land uses and densities, the quality and design of the built environment, pedestrian scale streetscapes, and pedestrian comfort.

Creating pedestrian environments between buildings even in auto-oriented commercial areas can encourage more walking between buildings. At a minimum, sidewalks or pedestrian areas should provide connections between buildings within developments. Providing pedestrian amenities such as trees, planters, street furniture, awnings, building windows, and so on is also helpful.

7. Traffic Calming

Use appropriate traffic calming strategies in high pedestrian activity areas.

Measures may need to be taken to calm traffic in areas where pedestrians are especially vulnerable, such as near schools and parks. A wide variety of traffic calming strategies are available, as previously discussed. The sidewalk system plan should identify these areas and recommend appropriate traffic calming strategies where appropriate.

8. Downtown Pedestrian Connections

Maintain the sidewalk and trail system throughout downtown and ensure that redeveloped areas include sidewalks and street crossings.

The pedestrian environment is particularly important in downtown, where the scale of development and access to a variety of shops, restaurants and businesses make walking an attractive alternative.

9. Sidewalk and Path Maintenance

Proper maintenance of the existing sidewalks, multi-use pathways, and streets designated for bicycle use is critical to ensure high levels of safety and encourage increased use of the system. The following should be undertaken to ensure proper maintenance of these facilities:

- Continue the current City policy of snow removal from City sidewalks and crosswalks within 24 hours of a snowfall
- Ensure that the multi-use pathways and designated streets are maintained to provide safe travel for bicyclists and pedestrians on a year-round basis
- Develop a maintenance program for sidewalks abutting arterial streets and other major road corridors to remove winter accumulations of sand and debris in the spring
- Regularly evaluate the condition of sidewalks throughout the City and complete the necessary improvements
- Periodically evaluate lighting needs along sections of the multi-use pathway based on usage and site location factors in order to ensure the safety of those using the facility and to encourage optimal utilization
- Ensure that trees, bushes and other plantings do not obstruct pathways and sidewalks.

10. Safe Routes to Schools

Expand the Safe Routes to School and Safe Steps Programs to all public elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. This includes interested parochial and private schools.

The goal of the Safe Routes program is to provide safe bicycling and walking opportunities to schools and instill values of bicycling and walking as life-long activities.

Some of this work to be completed includes cutting the curb face, installing ramps along the designated route, providing pavement markings at crossings, completing and widening sidewalks, and providing bike parking at each school.

11. Multi-Jurisdictional Cooperation

Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to identify and correct pedestrian barriers created by State highways and encourage sidewalks as part of new highway and bridge design. A recent success story is the upgrading of Hastings Way prior to its turn-back to the City.

Work with and encourage WisDOT to fund stand-alone sidewalk retro-fit projects under the regular 3R program as described in the WisDOT Pedestrian Plan.

Coordinate pedestrian network planning with contiguous jurisdictions to facilitate a seamless pedestrian and trail system.

12. Areas for Further Study

Study these locations, which were identified as having unique needs for walking or bicycling improvements. See Figure 3-8 and 3-9, below, for the locations, and the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* for further descriptions.

- Piedmont Road, Starr Avenue and Western Avenue area
- Starr Avenue, Western Avenue, North Hastings Way and Highway 312 area
- Arbutus Drive vicinity
- Galloway Street and Hastings Way area
- Madison Street between North Farwell and Riverfront Terrace area
- North Farwell Street and Galloway Street area
- Southeast of the River Confluence area
- South Farwell Street and Washington Avenue area
- Harding Street Area
- South Hastings Way (Kirk Street to the Eau Claire River)
- Brackett Avenue and Keith Street area
- State Highway 93 and Brian Street
- Oakwood Mall area
- Lorch Avenue
- State Street
- Thorp Drive and Summit Avenue area
- Sacred Heart Hospital and University area
- Craig Road and West Clairemont Avenue area
- Short Street and Highway 37
- North Clairemont Avenue and Menomonie Street area
- North Clairemont Avenue and Alpine Street area
- Kane Road.

Bicycling

Eau Claire has 4.9 miles of bicycling lanes, 34 miles of off-road multi-use paths, 3.8 miles of sharrows and 0.4 miles of bicycle boulevard. The backbone of Eau Claire's off-street path system is the Chippewa River State Trail, a 37-mile State facility that runs along the Chippewa River with a trail head at Phoenix Park. Figure 3-7 shows the existing and proposed off-street path system.

A "sharrow"

The *Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan* includes many recommendations for public improvements that would benefit bicyclists, plus rider education, bicycle licensing and enforcement.

Objective 7 – Bicycling

Continue to build a connected bicycle route and trail network that is viable, convenient and safe and that encourages both utilitarian and recreational riding.

1. Bicycle Plan Implementation

Continue to implement the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, 2010, to create a city-wide network of striped on-street bicycling lanes and off-street paths. That plan, available on the City's Website, has many recommendations for facility design, bike parking and public education that will help make bicycling more popular and safe. Coordinate route alignment and design with adjacent communities.

Figures 3-8 and 3-9 show the existing and **planned bicycling system** including on-road lanes, off-road paths and areas needing further study. See the list on the previous page of areas needing further study.

Follow a **"complete streets" philosophy** when designing new streets or rebuilding existing streets. A "complete street" is one designed to be safe and convenient for all users including motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians including people with mobility restrictions. This may include various traffic-calming features such as: narrower pavement, on-street parking, chicanes, raised crosswalks, median islands and curb bump-outs.

Apply the zoning regulation that requires consideration of **bicycle parking** for any development that is subject to Site Plan Review.

Build according to these **system categories**: (1) Multiple-Use Off-Street Paths, (2) Primary On-Street Routes, (3) Local Bicycle Routes and (4) Local Streets.

2. Off-Street Paths Network

Continue to expand the system of off-street bicycling facilities as shown by Figure 3-7 and described in the Parks and Greenways System Plan chapter, Objective 4.

3. Primary On-Street Routes

Primary on-street routes may accommodate a variety of improvements depending upon the characteristics of each street. Optimally, they will include bicycle lanes on both sides, signs indicating it is a primary route and bicycle actuation of traffic signals.

Improve the Primary Route streets that currently have no facilities in this sequence:

1. Paint the bicycle lanes, marked edge lines or shared-lane markings on those streets that currently have sufficient width; see as Appendix D of the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*
2. As primary route streets are reconstructed, retro-fit them with striped bicycling lanes as a first priority and shared-lane markings as a second option. Other options such as the off-street path should also be considered in appropriate situations. Space for on-street bicycle lanes may sometimes be created by reconfiguring lane striping.
3. If no bicycle facility can be incorporated into the road because of conditions, install signs to direct bicyclists through the area. Consider using the "sharrow" symbol.

4. Local Bicycle Routes

No lane markings are needed, but each route should be signed to designate the street as part of the system, informing bicyclists that the route connects to a primary route or off-street path.

These routes generally have lower traffic volumes resulting in fewer conflicts between bicyclists motorists. They provide the connections from the neighborhood areas to the primary routes.

5. Local Streets

Continue to require that local and collector residential streets are fully interconnected and linked to the framework of arterial streets. This is the most effective and least costly way to accommodate and encourage bicycling. No special treatments such as street markings or signing would be provided.

These streets are generally low-volume, low-speed local residential streets or streets having direct access to the local or primary routes or off-street pathway network.

6. Future Local and Collector Streets

Require that future local and collector streets be interconnected to the maximum extent possible so that all streets can become part of the bicycling -- and walking -- network. All new collector and minor arterial roads should be built with bicycle lanes or paved shoulders that meet WisDOT guidelines for width, striping and signage. Use bike-safe sewer grates.

7. Wayfinding Signs and Maps

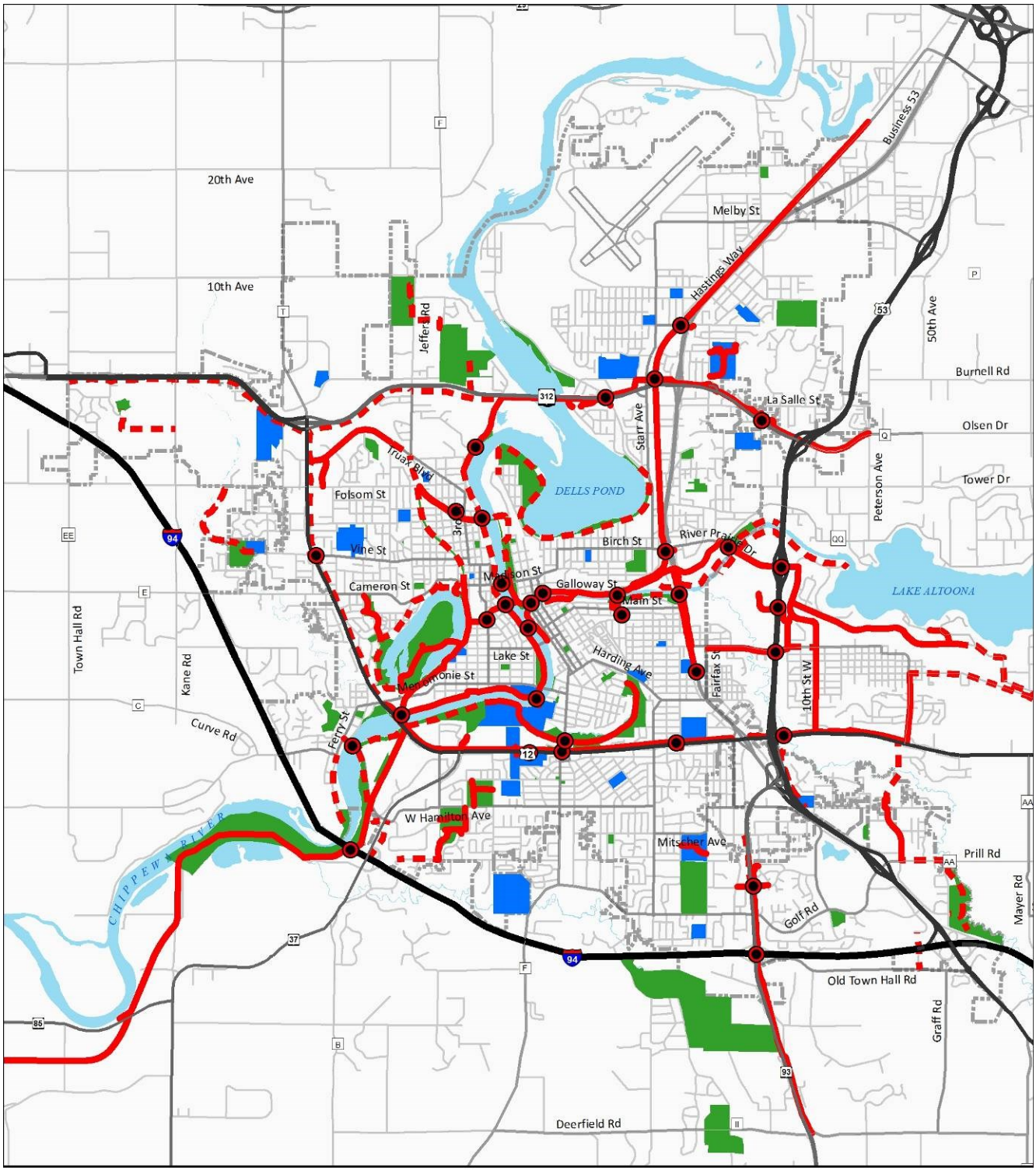
Design and install a city-wide sign and map system that guides bicyclists and pedestrians through the network, across the city and to key destinations. The signs should include a symbol that contributes to the "brand" of Eau Claire. Provide signs for all of the multi-use paths, primary on-street routes, local bicycle routes, and major walking routes. Also, publish system maps on paper and the City Website.

8. Site Design

Require that major commercial developments, tourist attractions, public buildings, campus or downtown buildings include bicycle parking near the main entrance. Use walkways or bicycling lanes to create safe routes between streets and storefronts.

9. National Bicycle Route System

Work with the Wisconsin DOT and DNR to designate the Chippewa Valley State Trail as a segment of US Bicycle Route 30. http://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/us-bicycle-route-system/national-corridor-plan/.



Grade Separated Facility
Existing Multi-Purpose Path
Proposed Multi-Purpose Path
Schools
Parks

1 Square Mile
N
160 Acres
0
5,280 ft.

Figure 3-7

Existing and Proposed Multi-Use Paths

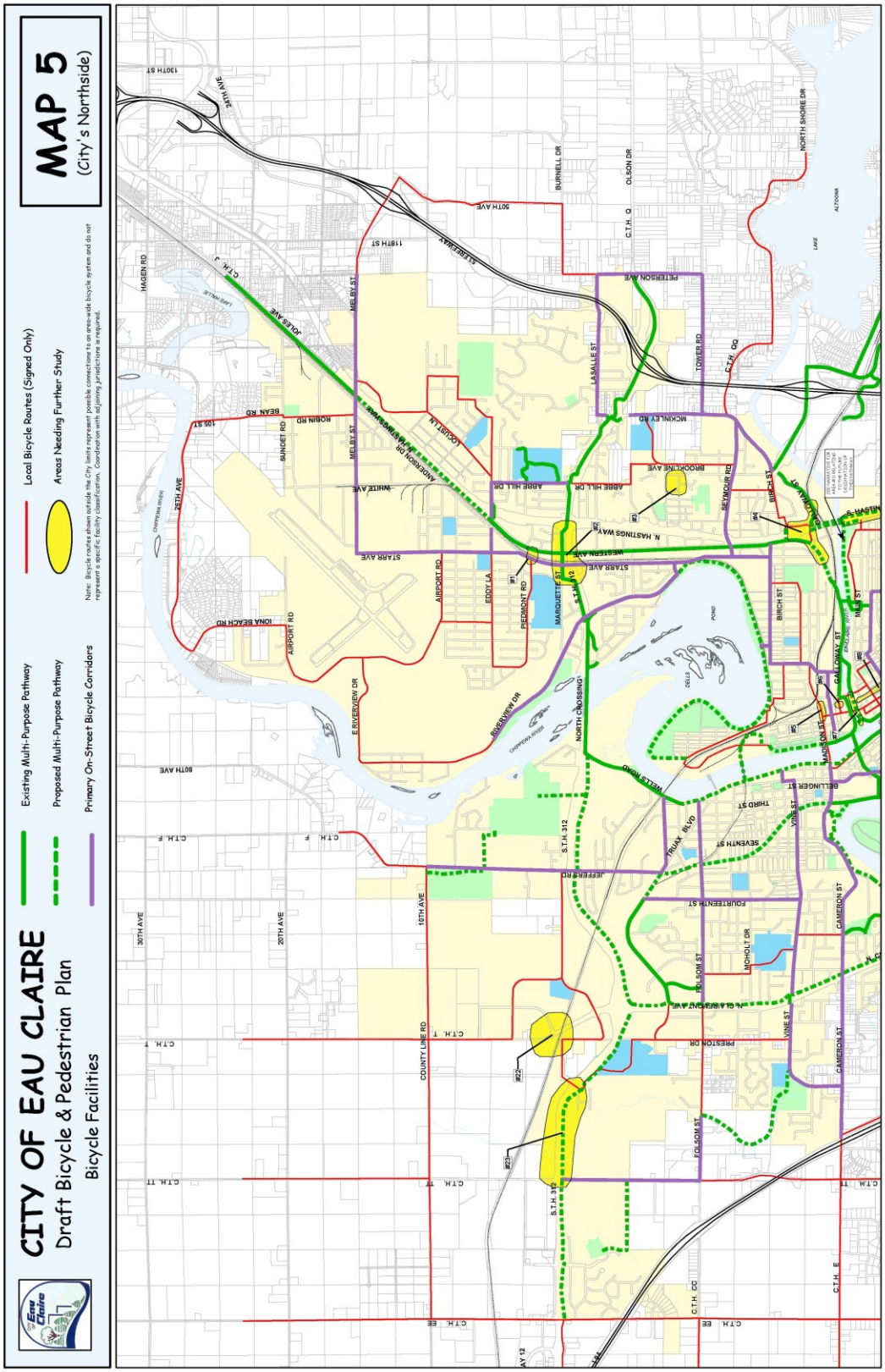


Figure 3-8: Existing and Planned Bicycling Routes – North

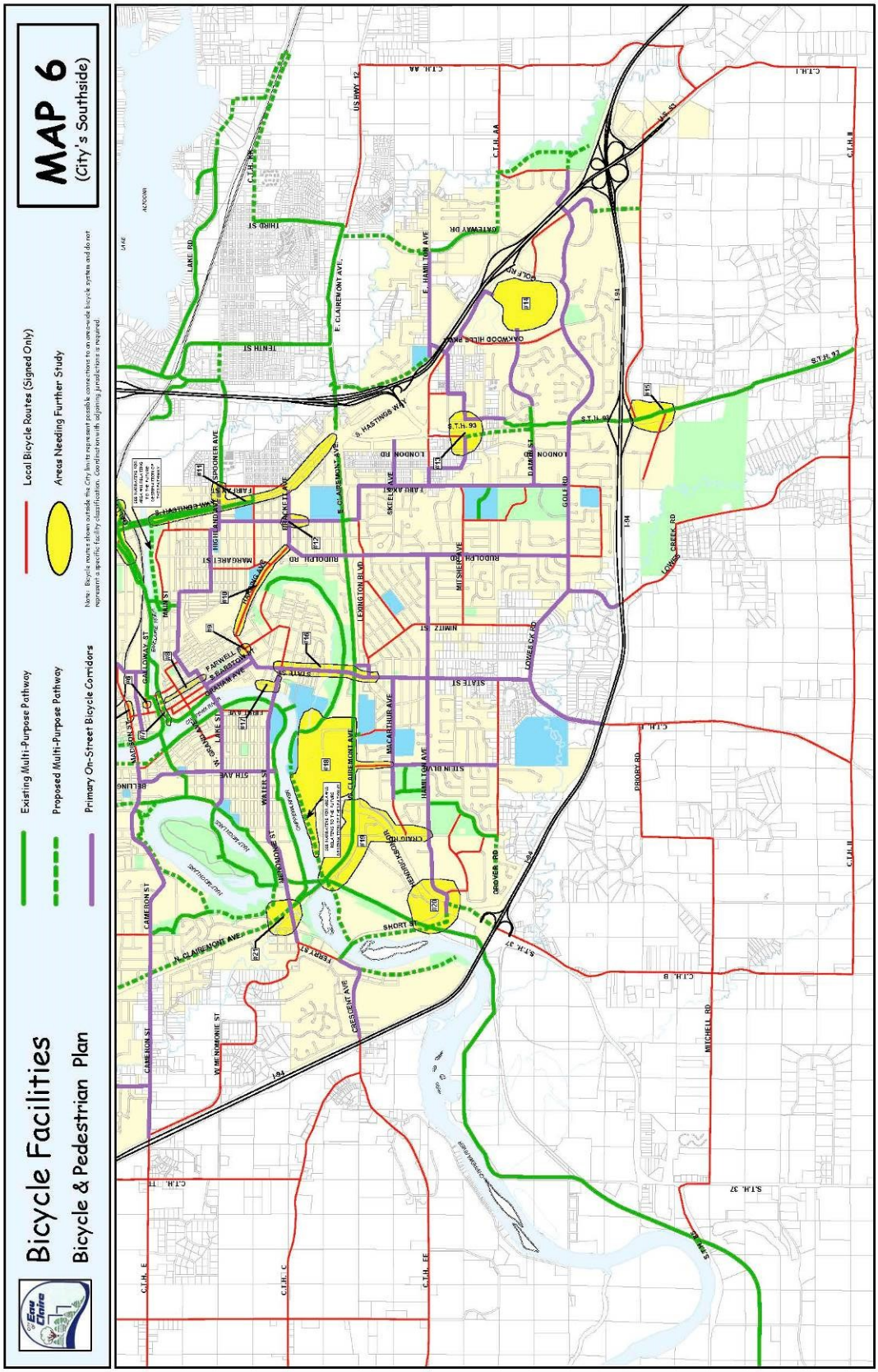


Figure 3-9: Existing and Planned Bicycling Routes – South

Bus Transit

Objective 8 – Transit and Paratransit

Sustain and improve the local bus system so that it not only serves the transit-dependent population but also attracts riders who have a choice of travel modes.

The Eau Claire transit system is an essential public service that provides mobility for those who cannot drive, cannot afford to drive or choose not to drive.

An efficient transit system provides numerous benefits to the community. Several studies have documented the cost savings resulting from public transportation. A report prepared by WisDOT, *The Socio-Economic Benefits of Transit in Wisconsin,* found that transit benefits can be realized through savings in healthcare, employment, education, overall costs associated with discretionary trips (entertainment, recreation, shopping, etc.) and congestion management. Some of the benefits in Wisconsin were:

- Health care accounts for over 10 million public transit trips annually resulting in a total savings of $193 million.
- Employment trips account for 47.9 million transit trips per year in Wisconsin for a savings of $333 million.
- Wisconsin transit riders save $91.3 million each year for educational trips.
- Wisconsin transit systems provide 18 million trips annually for purposes of entertainment, recreation, shopping or tourism purposes.

To sustain the system, Eau Claire must be appropriately dense and walkable. Several of the policies of the Land Use Plan promote nodes and corridors of moderately dense development and a pattern of streets, sidewalks and site design that allow walking to and from the bus stops. Excessive parking requirements and subsidized parking create a disincentive for transit use.

Eau Claire Transit (ECT) maintains the *Transit Development Plan and Long-Range Plan Element* (TDP) that identifies the major priorities for the transit system. The most significant items related to transit are short-term reductions in service as a result of fiscal operating constraints and constructing the new downtown Eau Claire transit station. In addition, the TDP has classified data regarding service modifications by short-, mid- and long-term changes. The TDP also presents a financial plan for implementing specific capital, service and operational improvements. Finally, the TDP recommended ECT become more involved in site plan review. Additional information regarding the current transit system is discussed below.

Policies

1. Transit Development Plan

Continue to follow the recommendations laid forth in the *Transit Development Plan and Long-Range Plan Element (TDP)*. Update those plans according to the schedule mandated by the Federal Transit Administration. The major recommendations of the TDP are:

First Priority: Neutral Cost Improvements

Because they can be accomplished using existing resources, the neutral-cost improvements are the top priority for projects that can be implemented in the five-year time frame. There are numerous options for route adjustments and consolidation of routes to offer higher frequency service and improve efficiency at negligible cost to the City, and there is quite a

bit of flexibility as to how Eau Claire Transit can go about implementing these improvements. The changes to Route 6, Route 8, and Route 20 present the least impact to current users, as would the changes to parking lot deviations. The best course of action would be to conduct further public outreach on each option and let that guide the re-routing decisions.

Second Priority: Targeted Frequency Investments

After the neutral-cost strategies have been implemented, Eau Claire Transit can address system growth by adding frequency to selected routes.

The routes with the highest potential for growth are the Route 7 and Route 5, Route 2 and Route 12, and Route 17 and Route 20. Also, the UWEC routes (Route 9's) have a high potential for growth. Routes that serve the core of the city and areas near the UWEC campus should be given priority during this phase. However, the shortcoming with implementing these strategies is that they will require additional buses, so not all could be implemented at once.

Even if sufficient capital funding for vehicle replacement became available, the transfer facility and bus storage facility do not have capacity for additional vehicles.

Thus, the route selected for frequency investment should be based on additional stakeholder input, operational feasibility (transfer center capacity during peak times) and the availability of funding to support expanded service.

Third Priority: Capital Investment

Very little transit service expansion can occur without first investing in new buses and buildings. New service will require additions to the fleet, so vehicle replacement is the highest priority. Additional service will require more space at the transfer facility and more space to store vehicles.

A new transit center is being studied.

A replacement **downtown transit center** was in the early planning phases in 2015 and should be constructed to accommodate future growth of the system.

Also, sheltered cold storage for any additional vehicles should be provided, either by expanding the garage or by constructing an auxiliary bus barn.

Fourth Priority: Full System Development

After the above needs are met, the long term strategy should be to better serve existing markets and serve new markets by strategically deploying new service as money become available. These services should be deployed in the following order of priority:

1. Expanded UWEC service
2. Saturday service expansion
3. The Third Ward circulator
4. Carson Park shuttle
5. Regional service
6. Sunday service.

2. Site Plan Application Review

Continue the practice of involving a representative of Eau Claire Transit in the process of reviewing applications for land development.

This collaboration has led to better site development and increased transit ridership, walking and bicycling.

Paratransit

As required by federal law, Eau Claire Transit also provides paratransit service to people in Eau Claire and Altoona who cannot use fixed-route bus service. Paratransit service includes a fleet of wheelchair-accessible vans that provide door-to-door service upon request. Ridership has increased, and the cost per trip, which is heavily subsidized, has decreased. This trend is expected to continue to increase as the Baby Boomer generation ages.

The Transit Commission regularly examines the cost of paratransit and implements policy changes to keep costs as efficient. Examples of cost-effective policy changes include receiving funds to implement an In-Person Certification contract with a local senior center to ensure that only those persons eligible for paratransit receive service. In addition, the Transit Commission instructed staff to work closely with the Eau Claire County Department of Health Services. This partnership resulted in thousands of dollars in savings annually because of these joint programs with the County.

Another way of reducing paratransit cost is to encourage some riders to use the fixed route system if they are able. The Transit Commission is continuously analyzing the fixed-route system to assure that routes are within a reasonable walking distance of the such populations so that they can use the fixed route at a lower, more efficient per ride cost.

Under current City ordinance, providers of paratransit and private transit services must be licensed. Upgraded standards and a regular inspection program should be considered to assure the public has safe and reliable service.

Policies

1. Ensure High Quality Paratransit Service

Continue to maintain a high quality paratransit service including the vehicles, employees and service that is offered.

2. Maintain or Improve Cost-Effective Service

Continue efforts to provide cost-effective service. The recent increase in paratransit ridership illustrates the need for this type of service within the Eau Claire area.

3. Vehicle-for-Hire Ordinance

The City's Vehicle-for-Hire ordinance addresses the licensing and operation of paratransit companies, cabs and other transportation companies. Consider amendments regarding stricter enforcement on vehicle cleanliness, reliability, safety conditions, and a regular inspection program to ensure the safe transport of passengers.

Parking

Parking is both a land use issue and a transportation issue. An average parking space including driveways requires about 320 square feet of land. Large surface parking lots can be a barrier to pedestrians and discourage walking and transit trips. Also, the availability and price of parking has been shown to be a significant factor in commuting decisions. Therefore, parking policy should not be thought of in isolation from transportation policy in general.

Downtown parking is generally seen as having the most contentious parking issues. While providing for parking is important in creating an accessible downtown, it is only one component of many. Clearly, parking should be available, but it should not be allowed to overwhelm what makes downtown unique and attractive.

Objective 9 - Parking

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

Policies:

1. Downtown Parking Management Plan

Downtown should not try to provide vast amounts of free parking as suburban areas do. Instead, there should be just enough supply restrictions and a pricing plan that encourages alternatives to single-occupant auto trips.

Implement the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study, 2015,* including:

- Build a three-story parking structure with a capacity of 575 spaces in the North Barstow District; if any of the six variables listed in the report occur, a fourth level might be warranted;
- Upgrade the physical design and user comfort features of the Municipal Ramp;
- Improve the parking enforcement program in terms of technology and staff assignments;
- Dedicate parking fine and enforcement revenues to the parking utility budget;
- Adjust the management and operational coordination of the parking system; and
- Adjust the charges and enforcement of the parking system to encourage more off-street parking and less reliance on the on-street spaces.

2. Downtown Customers and Visitors

The most desirable and convenient parking should be managed to encourage customer and visitor access. Consistently full parking spaces have the same effect as having no parking spaces. A parking lot is considered generally considered full at 90 to 95 percent occupancy. Parking management strategies should be used to maintain these occupancy rates by promoting higher turnover for the highest demand parking spaces. The least convenient parking lots or ramps should be targeted for long term and employee usage. Parking management strategies include:

- Set time limits and pricing to promote higher short-term parking turnover.

- Limit lower level ramp parking (i.e., most convenient parking) to customers by prohibiting parking prior to retail hours.
- Increase on-street parking along low traffic streets (consider angle parking where right-of-way permits). While on-street parking, particularly angle parking has been shown to increase accident rates, the severity of crashes are lower due to the traffic calming effect on-street parking creates.
- Promote shared parking agreements for compatible uses (e.g. office parking with high demand during the weekdays and entertainment uses with high demand during evenings and weekends).

3. Neighborhood Parking

On-street parking in residential areas near employment centers, commercial sites and colleges should strike a balance between providing resident parking and providing overflow commercial and employee parking. Requiring off-street parking may result in less attractive and less pedestrian friendly neighborhoods.

Consider strategies for addressing residential area on-street parking that allow flexibility for neighborhood-specific situations that may include:

- "Resident-only" permit zones.
- "Resident-only" permit zones with other users allowed to purchase parking permits.

Consistent parking policies throughout the community may not be possible because of differing levels of demand and particular issues related to any given neighborhood.

Benefits of allowing or encouraging on-street parking include:

- Traffic calming by narrowing through traffic lanes
- Buffering between moving traffic and pedestrians
- Use of "empty" or unused street space
- Revenue generation.

4. Minimum Parking Requirements

Review and revise as needed the minimum and maximum parking ratios by type of land use as found in the zoning ordinance.

Requiring more parking than reasonably necessary yields lower land use density and greater impervious surface. Off-street parking areas can quickly grow and consume a tremendous amount of land if it is not examined critically. Mitigation measures include:

- Exempt downtown from minimum parking requirements
- Increase flexibility with minimum parking requirements to reflect typical daily demand and allow innovative parking provisions.
- Encourage mixed use developments that share parking.

Passenger Railroad Service

The Midwest High-Speed Rail Association is an initiative that proposes a high-speed passenger rail service which would serve the Midwest region with Chicago serving as the hub.

In a July, 2002, report prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, several alternative passenger rail scenarios for service between Chicago and St. Paul were analyzed. The "Eau Claire plus La Crosse" option would provide direct train service from Eau Claire to St. Paul as well as to La Crosse, Madison and points east. An "Eau Claire West" option would provide frequent train service back and forth between Eau Claire and St. Paul and would retain bus service to the rail route for direct trips east. These two options were forecast to produce similar ridership and financial results. Both would improve the overall financial performance of the base Midwest Regional Rail System.

However, a decision to move forward with service across Wisconsin has been stymied by an order of Governor Walker and was no longer being considered in 2015. Building the system would take many years even after funding was committed, and money does not appear to be forthcoming in the near future. However, the potential for passenger rail to the area should still be considered.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation updated its *Statewide Rail Plan* in 2015 and included an eastern leg of passenger service that would terminate in Eau Claire. The route compared favorably with other routes across Minnesota. A local citizens group, West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition, is promoting this line.

The location of the Eau Claire station for any high-speed train would be important to its convenience and success, and perhaps have some positive effect on nearby land development.

Objective 10 - Passenger Rail

Help bring high-speed passenger rail service to Eau Claire.

Policies

1. High Speed Passenger Rail Options

Work with the states of Wisconsin and Minnesota and citizens advocacy groups to promote Eau Claire as part of a chosen route for the potential high-speed passenger rail service.

2. Station Location

If a high-speed rail route is chosen that includes Eau Claire, work to have the station located in downtown Eau Claire and accessible by Eau Claire Transit, such as near Banbury Place.

Passenger rail service between Eau Claire and the Twin Cities is being studied. Eau Claire is the proper size and distance for that service.

Freight Railroad Service

Overall, Eau Claire is not heavily dependent on rail transportation for the shipment of goods. The Transportation Assessment chapter described the two Union Pacific Railroad lines that cross the northern part of the city, the volume of freight rail traffic and its rate of growth.

There is the potential for conflict between trains and nearby land uses as well as safety concerns at railroad street crossings. Railroads traveling through or near residential neighborhoods can be disruptive and create safety concerns. At-grade railroad crossings can create safety and traffic problems.

Quiet zones have been found effective in mitigating the disruptive effects of locomotive horns through residential and downtown areas, and it has been documented that they improve safety through their federally-required supplemental safety measures.

In 2014, the City of Eau Claire studied the feasibility of establishing one or more railroad "quiet zones." Two possible Quiet Zones were studied:

1. Galloway and Putnam Street Crossings
2. Seven crossings from Centre Street to Hogarth Street.

Figures 5-18 and 5-19 in the Transportation Assessment show the location of the nine proposed Quiet Zones. Associated text described their features and estimated costs.

Since the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*, two abandoned railroad corridors a in the West Riverside Neighborhood and a related Chippewa River bridge have been converted to multiple-use paths.

Policies

Objective 11 - Freight Railroads

Work with private railroads to ensure safe crossings and mitigate impacts to neighborhoods.

Policies:

1. Railroad Quiet Zones

Implement the improvements recommended in the 2014 Quiet Zone Assessment as other improvements to those individual track crossings are required.

In a railroad quiet zone, safety controls are upgraded in exchange for less horn use.

Truck Freight Service

Truck freight movements are essential to the local and regional economy. Most finished consumer goods arrive by truck and therefore need to have access to commercial activity centers. Truck routes should direct truckers to their destinations on the most appropriate roads in order to minimize truck noise and safety impacts in residential areas and reduce wear on roads that are not suited to heavy vehicle traffic.

Objective 12 – Trucking Service

Provide for the safe and efficient movement of truck traffic through Eau Claire while minimizing negative impacts to neighborhoods.

Policies

1. Truck Routes

Continue to designate and sign routes that direct trucks via appropriate roads while discouraging travel through residential areas.

If it is brought to the City's attention that some trucks are diverging from the truck routes, staff will discuss the matter with the appropriate businesses.

2. Roads to Industrial Sites

Design and build truck routes used to access industrial areas to adequately accommodate heavy truck traffic.

Chippewa Valley Regional Airport

A recent plan for the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport forecasts a rising number of enplanements and a slight increase in air cargo service, which has always been a small component of the airport's activity. In 2014, the number of annual enplanements was approximately 22,000; the forecast for year 2031 is 34,000.

As of 2014, there were no regularly scheduled air cargo operations locally because most freight is trucked to or from the Twin Cities. Only 6 to 10 cargo flights occur at the airport in a given year.

In the *Airport Master Plan*, two alternative sites were identified for development of air cargo operations in the long-term future.

Objective 13 – The Regional Airport

Coordinate efforts with the management of the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in their effort to maintain and improve passenger and freight service while minimizing impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Policies

1. Airport Facilities Layout

Eau Claire will coordinate with the administrators of the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in their effort to maintain and improve passenger and freight service. However, the City will insist that airport improvements are designed in a way that minimizes adverse effects on nearby roads, bridges, utilities and existing or future residential neighborhoods.

2. Air Cargo Operations

Amend the Land Use Plan in this *Comprehensive Plan* to allow for air cargo operations. This change is shown in Table 2-2 of the Land Use and Growth Management Plan chapter.

Reflect this proposed Plan modification by amending the airport zoning ordinance from the Public District to a new zone that is specific to the airport, similar to the zone administered by Eau Claire County, the owner of the airport.

3. Airport Access

Cooperate if Airport management or Chippewa County wishes to invest in improvements to Melby Street or to provide wayfinding signs leading from US 53 and Hastings Way to the airport. Improving that corridor is identified as one of the top ten road improvements desired in this Comprehensive Plan. (See Objective 3, Policy 3.)

Plan Action Steps

The City will take the following steps to implement the recommendations of the Transportation Plan.

Table 3-6
Transportation Plan Actions

Action	Timing
Participate in the **review of plats** and site plans and other city planning; recommend design adjustments to private or public facilities for capacity, flow, safety and economy	Continuous
Acquire land and build roads consistent with the **functional class** standards of this plan; coordinate with County and State	Continuous
Design streets, roads and sites to **accommodate walking**, **bicycling** and riding the **bus**	Continuous
Implement the recommendations of the 2015 Downtown **Parking Study**	~~2016~~ C~~C~~ompleted
Conduct a feasibility study for **Galloway Street** bridge and connecting links	~~2015 – 2020~~Moved back for future study areas and consideration
Conduct a feasibility study for **State Street** improvements	~~2015 – 2020~~Completed
Conduct a feasibility study for **Melby Street** improvements	~~2020 – 2025~~In design but construction moved back to a later date 2022-2025 working with the railroad
Conduct **traffic studies**: ▪ Menomonie Street ▪ Clairemont – Hendrickson area ▪ Oakwood Mall area ▪ Cameron-Madison corridor ▪ Birch Street – Galloway corridor ▪ Harding Avenue corridor	~~2015 – 2025~~Ongoing studies; City teamed with County and WisDOT to complete traffic study for Oakwood Mall area in 2020; other traffic studies to occur in the future 2025-2030
Study and monitor **County Highway T** for possible improvements and possible transfer to the State.	~~2020 – 2030~~Conversation and public meeting held in Summer 2021 working with Eau Claire & Chippewa Counties and the State of WI
Implement the recommendations of the ***Transit Development***	~~2015 – 2020~~Transit Plan Completed –

Action	Timing
Plan; site and build a new downtown transit center	2021-2022 Construction for New Transit Center; Continue to work with UWEC and new facility on the campus; Added language within the plan that addresses equity as it relates to transportation ensure access for all individuals; Transit is continue to move towards electric buses and future placement of new bus shelters throughout the community
Implement the recommendations of the **Bicycle and Pedestrian Systems Plan**	~~Continuous~~Completed an update in 2018 and will continue to throughout the years
Monitor the Minnesota **passenger rail** link study	~~Continuous~~Continue to work with partnerships for passenger rail
Update the Zoning Code **parking** requirements	~~2016~~Part of Plan Commission work plan to be reviewed in 2022 to update parking standards