

CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2010



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North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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Public Participation Plan & Resolution

Plan Commission Resolution Recommending Adoption

City Council Ordinance Adopting Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 1: Issues & Opportunities

CHAPTER 1: Issues & Opportunities

1.1 Background

This is the first of nine chapters that make up the City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan. This plan replaces the previous plan adopted in 1981. The City of Wisconsin Rapids is located in southern Wood County. Wisconsin Rapids is the county seat and has an estimated population of 18,500, which is about 24 percent of the total county population. There are several smaller incorporated communities in the area, including Biron, Nekoosa, and Port Edwards. A locational reference map displays the City and surrounding communities. See Map1-1.

A. Planning Context

Planning and zoning has been a function of local units of government for over 50 years in Wisconsin. Over the years almost every city, village, and county has developed various plans, from land use plans to master plans to development plans. Existing authority for planning is provided in state statutes, including ss. 59, 60, 61, and 62. Recently, however, at the national level, there has been concern over the effects of extensive development patterns (“sprawl”) that have become prevalent in both urban and rural areas. Many causes ranging from government policies, such as the construction of the interstate highway system, to trends within the economy, such as increased reliance on trucks for the transportation of goods, and consumer preference for suburban housing, have been blamed for this phenomenon. Whatever the causes, many of the effects – traffic congestion, loss of open space, abandonment of central cities, degradation of air and water quality, and increased reliance on the automobile as the only viable transportation alternative – have become increasingly troubling. These issues have led to a discussion on land use planning.

At the state level, as early as the 1960s and early 1970s, several study committees and commissions were created to examine the need for land use reform. Of particular importance were the Tarr Task Force, the Knowles Commission, and the Wallace Commission.

The Tarr Task Force was the first to look at the state’s planning laws in-depth. It reviewed state statutes and problems related to municipal boundary changes, regional planning, and area wide service provision. They developed several recommendations in the area of boundary review and annexation.

The Knowles Commission found the state's land use laws to be complex and outdated. The report summarized that "a steady rise in population, a pattern of urbanization and sprawling subdivisions, an increased appetite for the outdoors, and economic expansion continue to consume our land resources." It went on to conclude that "land use regulation is basically a local matter, and that only certain resources and uses were of wider significance. The model proposed was that state and regional planning would set the framework within which local decision-making would take place.

The Wallace Commission was a broad study that reviewed many issues, including education and health care. It also touched on some planning issues. This report recommended changes in the area of incorporation, annexation, and consolidation. It concluded that a flexible system was needed to deal with local issues.

Although these efforts and their recommendations were never incorporated at the time, they were not forgotten and would influence later changes.

Years later, another major statewide discussion occurred again. In the early 1990s, the issues of urban sprawl, redevelopment, and "smart growth" were being discussed at the national level. During this same period, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources each developed independent Task Forces to study land use issues. The reports of both agencies identified strategies and policies for future decision-making at the state level in relation to land use.

These reports and all the previous study efforts, as well as the national discussion related to planning, spurred then Governor Thompson to create the State Interagency Land Use Council and the Wisconsin Strategic Growth Task Force in 1994. The Land Use Council was to set guidelines for state involvement in land use issues, while the Task Force was to recommend ways for coordinating state agencies, local governments, and local private groups when deciding land use issues. The Task Force presented their findings in 1995 to the Interagency Land Use Council with a report entitled "Land Use Issues Facing Wisconsin." The report identified trends, intergovernmental relationships, public attitudes, and the strengths and weaknesses of Wisconsin's land use policies. Wisconsin was compared to other states, and a number of recommendations were given to address the land use issues at hand. The most important issue to be identified in the report was the need for a revision of the state's planning enabling legislation.

The Interagency Land Use Council delivered its report “Planning Wisconsin: Report of the State Interagency Land Use Council” to the Governor in 1996. The report offered land use goals, ways to improve local land use planning efforts, what should be included in a comprehensive plan, and how citizen participation in land use planning could be enhanced. It is these studies and reports and the comments and criticisms that followed, that laid the foundation for the State’s Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

Across the nation over this same period, under the banner of “Smart Growth” a number of state and local governments have undertaken a unified approach to addressing these same issues. Oregon is generally acknowledged to be the leader in this area. Beginning in 1973, the State required that all cities and counties in the state adopt comprehensive land-use plans. Washington State enacted legislation in the early 1990s and later amended it, requiring certain jurisdictions, based on size and growth rate, to enact comprehensive plans.

At about the same time, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) studied land-use practices from the perspective of their effect on environmental quality. Acknowledging that many agencies were responsible for land-use decisions, the DNR Land Use Task Force addressed many of the same questions brought up in the WisDOT report, including the lack of consistency and enforcement mechanisms in land-use decision-making. The report issued in June of 1994 advocated a more “holistic” approach to land-use questions by DNR and the need to adjust certain aspects of its internal policies, and to increase the amount and availability of data. It also strongly recommended a coordinated interagency approach to the problem, “...there is no statewide land use policy or vision. Inconsistent interagency coordination...can lead to decisions that harm both the economy and the environment.”

In order to address just this problem, Governor Thompson appointed the State Interagency Land Use Council in 1995. In its 1996 report, the Council acknowledged, “the structure of Wisconsin’s current land use system...can best be characterized as a fragmented process with each level of government responsible for specific goals.” Among its recommendations, the report proposed the creation of a permanent interagency Land Use Council as a means of coordinating policy on the state level, and a statewide Land Information System. In the section headed “How can county and municipal planning be improved?” the report recommends requiring counties to adopt comprehensive plans, voluntary adoption of comprehensive plans by municipalities, and a requirement that land use ordinances “be consistent with adopted land use plans. Land uses that conflict with adopted county and/or

municipal plans could not be approved unless the plan is amended.” The report also recommends steps to foster cooperation among local governments, a review of the role of regional planning commissions, and the requirement for public hearings as part of any land-use planning process.

In the spring of 1999, a definition of a comprehensive plan was included in the Governor’s Budget Bill. Several groups developed the definition by working together, including the Wisconsin Realtors Association, the Wisconsin Builders Association, the 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin, the League of Municipalities, the Wisconsin Towns Association, and the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association. The University of Wisconsin-Madison facilitated the effort.

In October of 1999, the Governor signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. A grant program was established as well. The law has been revised by the signing of two additional bills into law. The first is AB 872, containing “technical revisions,” which was signed May 10, 2000. The second bill, signed April 13, 2004, is AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three; these are official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances (both general and shoreland). Taken together, these bills represent the most sweeping revision of the State’s planning enabling laws in half a century.

The law (ss. 66.1001) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required elements of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use. The statute outlines the requirements that must be satisfied, specifically for those that utilize the State grant program to develop their plan. In addition, fourteen state planning goals are suggested. These goals, however, are not mandates for specific provisions that must be included in the comprehensive plan, but criteria on which the planning grant applications will be judged.

Also included in the law is the creation of a Smart Growth Dividend Aid Program, which provides credits to jurisdictions that have adopted a comprehensive plan and have in effect zoning and subdivision ordinances. Applications will be judged based on the number of new housing units built at a density of at least four to the acre, and the number of housing units sold at 80 percent or less of the median price within the county, thus furthering the goals of compactness and

affordability. As of yet, there has been no funding established for this program.

The new comprehensive planning law is significant in many ways. The law creates for the first time a definition of a comprehensive plan; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan and it requires public participation. Most importantly, the law maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future.

B. Previous Plans

This planning effort examines the relevant previous plans completed for the city and the surrounding area. These plans are discussed below:

1. Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan, 1981

Although this plan is titled a comprehensive plan, it was adopted prior to the 1999 Comprehensive Planning Law, and does not discuss many of the now required components. The plan includes four basic sections covering some general goals, objective and polices, land use, transportation, and implementation. This plan is referenced in some of the later chapters.

In addition, several plans have been developed for the City, such as the Outdoor Recreation Plan, Tax Incremental Finance District Plans, and the Sewer Service Areas. Each Chapter will provide more details on these plans as they relate to that topic.

2. Wood County Comprehensive Plan

The county planning department has been tasked with the development of the county comprehensive plan. The plan is currently in draft form, and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. In addition, the county is providing assistance to several towns throughout the county, including the Town of Grand Rapids, to complete town plans.

Further, several plans have been developed at the county level and those that relate will be discussed in later chapters, such as the Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Land & Water Conservation Plan and the All Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Town of Saratoga has recently completed a comprehensive plan with a consultant, and the Town of Sigel is working on a comprehensive plan with the NCWRPC. Currently, none of the other surrounding communities are working on a comprehensive plan.

3. Regional Comprehensive Plan, 2002-2020

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

The RCP covers things from a regional perspective, and includes information on all ten counties in the North Central Region. It examines general trends within the region, and provides a variety of background information for local planning efforts. Some of the background information is taken from this document.

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

1.2 Demographics

The review of the demographic and economic trends in the city, in comparison with the surrounding communities and the county, is important to understanding what has occurred and what is likely to occur in the future. Below we review total population, age distribution, households, educational levels, employment, and income levels. All of these will be examined in some detail using U.S. Census information.

A. Population

In 2000, 18,435 people lived in the City of Wisconsin Rapids, which is about a 1.1 percent increase since 1990. Both the county and the state outpaced the city over that same timeframe, posting growth rates of 2.7 percent and 9.8 percent, respectively. Overall, the city added over 190 new residents over that ten-year period.

Table 1 displays total population for the city, each local unit of government (minor civil division) surrounding the city, the county, and the state. Although the city has grown, that growth is not evenly distributed to the local units. The Town of Grand Rapids had over a ten percent population increase, while the Town of Sigel lost population.

Table 1: Population

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	18,245	18,435	1.1%	190
Town of Grand Rapids	7,071	7,801	10.4%	730
Town of Rudolph	1,180	1,161	1.7%	-19
Town of Seneca	1,133	1,202	6.1%	69
Town of Sigel	1,192	1,130	-5.2%	-62
Village of Biron	794	915	15.3%	121
Village of Port Edwards	1,848	1,944	5.2%	96
Wood County	73,605	75,555	2.7%	1,950
State of Wisconsin	4,891,769	5,363,675	9.7%	471,906

Source: U.S. Census

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the 2007 population estimate for the city was 18,500, while the county estimate was 76,839. The Land Use Chapter further examines population, including population projections.

B. Age Distribution

Population distribution is important to the planning process. In particular, two groups are examined, the 17 years of age and younger group, and the 65 and older population group. These are often referred to as dependent populations, and both have very different needs. The younger group requires schools and playgrounds, while the older group requires health care and related needs. Comparing these groups over time to both the county, and the state, demographic changes in the city and surrounding towns are identified.

During the last decade, the percentage of 17 and younger persons declined in all of the area communities and the County, except Biron and Port Edwards. Overall, the city had a loss of 34 persons in this category, while at the county level; the decrease was over 1,100 persons. Statewide, there was an increase in this population group. Table 2 displays the changes in this group for all of the area communities.

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	4,593	4,559	-0.8%	-34
Town of Grand Rapids	2,235	2,229	-0.3%	-6
Town of Rudolph	355	303	-14.7%	-52
Town of Seneca	349	346	-0.9%	-3
Town of Sigel	364	273	-25.0%	-91
Village of Biron	180	198	10.0%	18
Village of Port Edwards	446	519	16.4%	73
Wood County	20,532	19,385	-5.6%	-1,147
State of Wisconsin	1,288,982	1,368,756	6.2%	79,774

Source: U.S. Census

During the same ten-year period, the 65 and older group increased in every community and the county, as well as the State. Over 172 persons were added in this category in the city, while over 1,100 were added in the county, which is roughly equal to the decrease in the younger group. Table 3 displays the changes in this group for all of the area communities.

Table 3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	3,404	3,576	5.1%	172
Town of Grand Rapids	470	666	41.7%	196
Town of Rudolph	122	159	30.4%	37
Town of Seneca	109	134	23.0%	25
Town of Sigel	135	163	20.8%	28
Village of Biron	123	219	78.1%	96
Village of Port Edwards	368	425	15.5%	57
Wood County	10,438	11,596	11.1%	1,158
State of Wisconsin	651,221	702,553	7.9%	51,332

Source: U.S. Census

Taken together, with the identified decrease in the 17 and under group and the increase in the 65 and older group, there is a clear trend of aging of the area population. This is confirmed by the increase in median age, from 34.6 in 1990 to 37.6 in 2000. Both the county and state experienced an increase over that same period, from 33.3 to 38, and from 32.9 to 36, respectfully.

C. Households

A household is defined as all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. The household trend in the city reflects the national trend of fewer people living within the same household, and fewer persons per household. As more people decide to live alone and more couples are having fewer children or no children at all, the number of households has increased faster than the population as a whole. All towns, the city, the county, and the state gained population, but the average household size for all have decreased over the last decade.

Table 4 displays household information for the area. The number of households within the city has grown by 421 units over the last decade, about a 6 percent increase. That rate of change is smaller than compared to the surrounding towns with increases of 18, 15, and 11 percent.

Table 4: Total Households

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	7,549	7,970	5.6%	421
Town of Grand Rapids	2,348	2,788	18.8%	440
Town of Rudolph	381	423	11.1%	42
Town of Seneca	369	408	10.6%	39
Town of Sigel	376	410	9.1%	34
Village of Biron	333	384	15.4%	51
Village of Port Edwards	660	706	7.0%	46
Wood County	27,473	30,135	9.7%	2,662
State of Wisconsin	1,822,118	2,084,544	14.4%	262,426

Source: U.S. Census

Decreasing average household size will continue to be a trend that is likely to continue over the next twenty years. Overall, the average household size has decreased from 2.38 in 1990 to 2.26 in 2000. Both the county and state have decreased as well, from 2.65 to 2.47, and from 2.61 to 2.5, respectfully. The Housing and Land Use elements further examine how these population and household trends will affect the number of housing units, and how the units may be placed on the land.

D. Educational Levels

High school educational attainment improved between 1990 and 2000. Table 5 displays education attainment. Over the last decade, the number of high school graduates of those over 25, increased in the city from 9,466 in 1990 to 10,160 in 2000, over a 7 percent increase. All of the surrounding towns had increases as well.

In terms of percentage, in 2000, about 82.5 percent of the population in the city had a high school degree or higher, compared to 84.8 percent at the county level, and 85.1 percent at the state level. For comparison, in 1990, about 78.4 percent of the city population had a high school degree or higher, 78.3 percent at the county level, and 78.6 percent at the state level.

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

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	9,466	10,160	7.4%	694
Town of Grand Rapids	3,814	4,899	28.5%	1,085
Town of Rudolph	546	673	23.3%	127
Town of Seneca	554	679	22.6%	125
Town of Sigel	566	660	16.6%	94
Village of Biron	467	505	8.2%	38
Village of Port Edwards	1,026	1,164	13.5%	138
Wood County	36,639	42,597	16.3%	5,958
State of Wisconsin	2,432,154	2,957,461	21.6%	525,307

Source: U.S. Census

College educational attainment improved in all communities, except the Town of Sigel. See Table 6. Over the decade, the number of college graduates 25 or older increased in the city from 1,500 in 1990 to 1,851 in 2000, over a 23 percent increase. Most of the surrounding communities had increases as well. In percentage terms, in 2000, about 15 percent of the population in the city had a college degree or higher, compared to 16.9 percent at the county level, and 22.4 percent at the state level. For comparison, in 1990 about 12.4 percent of the city population had a college degree or more, 13.5 percent at the county level, and 17.7 percent at the state level.

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

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	1,500	1,851	23.4%	351
Town of Grand Rapids	834	1,428	71.3%	594
Town of Rudolph	45	90	100.0%	45
Town of Seneca	65	76	17.0%	11
Town of Sigel	60	49	-18.4%	-11
Village of Biron	65	103	58.5%	38
Village of Port Edwards	213	303	42.3%	90
Wood County	6,315	8,486	34.4%	2,171
State of Wisconsin	548,970	779,273	42.0%	230,303

Source: U.S. Census

Taken together, these two education indicators show a city with an improving overall education level, but with a gap with the college or higher group. As the economy changes, it is critical to capture more college graduates.

E. Employment

In 2000, 8,225 city residents were employed. This reflected a 7.5 percent increase in the city’s employed population since 1990. Over that same period, the county increased by about 9 percent and the state by about 15 percent. Table 7 displays employment information for the area. Note that these Census statistics are based on a person’s place of residence rather than the location of the actual job. Therefore, these jobs could be located anywhere.

Table 7: Total Employed Persons (16 and over)

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	7,655	8,225	7.5%	570
Town of Grand Rapids	3,571	4,299	20.4%	728
Town of Rudolph	533	601	12.8%	68
Town of Seneca	528	604	14.4%	76
Town of Sigel	588	553	-6.0%	-35
Village of Biron	381	366	-4.0%	-15
Village of Port Edwards	756	729	-3.6%	-27
Wood County	34,173	37,345	9.3%	3,172
State of Wisconsin	2,386,439	2,734,925	14.6%	348,486

Source: U.S. Census

The Economic Development and Land Use Chapters further examine employment, including employment projections. In those chapters, data is used from the State’s Department of Workforce Development, which is more current and keeps information based on the county location of the job. The only drawback is that this information is only aggregated at the county level.

F. Income levels

Median Household Income and Per Capita Income are two major indicators of income. The city median household income increased about 36 percent over the ten-year period, compared to about 40 percent at the county level, and almost 49 percent at the state level. See Table 8.

Table 8: Median Household Income

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	\$25,759	\$34,956	35.7%	\$9,197
Town of Grand Rapids	\$41,811	\$62,515	49.6%	\$20,704
Town of Rudolph	\$36,630	\$50,852	38.9%	\$14,222
Town of Seneca	\$35,812	\$54,118	51.2%	\$18,306
Town of Sigel	\$35,441	\$49,226	38.9%	\$13,785
Village of Biron	\$36,923	\$42,557	15.3%	\$5,634
Village of Port Edwards	\$35,590	\$48,850	37.3%	\$13,260
Wood County	\$29,735	\$41,595	39.9%	\$11,860
State of Wisconsin	\$29,442	\$43,791	48.7%	\$14,349

Source: U.S. Census

Meanwhile, over the same decade, the city per capita income increased by approximately 35 percent, compared to the county at 54 percent, and the state increase of 60 percent. See Table 9.

Table 9: Per Capita Income

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	\$13,106	\$17,723	35.3%	\$4,617
Town of Grand Rapids	\$15,091	\$25,331	67.9%	\$10,240
Town of Rudolph	\$12,353	\$20,284	64.2%	\$7,931
Town of Seneca	\$14,060	\$21,833	55.3%	\$7,773
Town of Sigel	\$12,451	\$19,676	58.1%	\$7,225
Village of Biron	\$17,629	\$19,293	9.5%	\$1,664
Village of Port Edwards	\$15,579	\$20,750	33.2%	\$5,141
Wood County	\$13,130	\$20,203	53.9%	\$7,073
State of Wisconsin	\$13,276	\$21,271	60.2%	\$7,995

Source: U.S. Census

Although there has been growth in both of these indicators, that increase has lagged behind the surrounding communities and the county, as well as the state. This is a critical area to address for the long-term health of the community. (Note that this information has not been adjusted for inflation since it is being used for comparison purposes).

G. Race

In 2000, nearly 95 percent of the city residents were categorized as White. The largest minority group identified was “Asian,” with 3.6 percent, followed by “American Indian” with 1.3 percent. Hispanic origin is not considered a separate race, but it is identified in the U.S. Census. About 1.3 percent of the population lists a Hispanic background.

Overall, there has been little change in the population make-up over the 1990 to 2000 time period. In 1990, about 97 percent of the residents were categorized as White.

1.3 Issues & Opportunities

A variety of issues and opportunities were identified throughout the planning process. Many of these were taken from existing documents, some were taken from public meetings, and others were identified from the county level survey of the cities.

A. Issues

A variety of issues were identified during the planning process, and taken from other plans, as well as the Open House and Public Hearing. Some are listed below, in no particular order, and others are identified in the following chapters.

- ✓ Connect with the riverfront, especially in the downtown area
- ✓ Minimize the sprawl along 8th Street and E. Grand
- ✓ Reuse of some empty retail buildings
- ✓ A “By-Pass” for Highway 54 with limited access
- ✓ Need to address housing needs for rental and elderly
- ✓ Recreational areas need to be developed

B. Public Meetings

Below is a list of the public meetings and discussion topics held over the planning process. All meetings were held at city hall unless otherwise stated.

Meeting 1: May 19, 2008

- Overview planning process and role of committee
- Public participation plan
- Present draft Issues & Opportunity chapter
- Identification of major planning related issues
- Review schedule

Meeting 2: July 21, 2008

- Follow up from last meeting
- Present draft Natural Resources chapter
- Present draft Housing chapter
- Identify and discuss issues

Meeting 3: September 15, 2008

- Follow up from last meeting
- Present draft Utilities and Community Facilities chapter
- Present draft Transportation chapter
- Identify and discuss issues

Meeting 4: November 17, 2008

- Follow up from last meeting
- Present draft Economic Development chapter
- Review community planning survey

Meeting 5: January 19, 2009

- Follow up from last meeting
- Present draft Land Use chapter
- Develop draft Future Land Use Plan Map
- Survey update

Meeting 6: March 16, 2009

- Follow up from last meeting
- Present community planning survey results
- Review FLUP Map
- Review revised draft Land Use chapter
- Present Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter

Meeting 7: May 18, 2009

- Follow up from last meeting
- Review all revised draft chapters 1 to 8
- Present Implementation chapter and recommendations
- Set schedule for final meetings and adoption

Meeting 8: June 22, 2009

- Future Land Use Plan changes
- Review of chapter goals, objectives, and policies

An Open House was held on August 10, 2009

A community meeting to get input on the draft plans goals, text, and maps. This event was held at the McMillan Memorial Library and about 20 persons attended the event.

Meeting 9: August 10, 2009

- Follow up from comments from the Open House
- Review Future Land Use Map
- Set dates for plan adoption process

Meeting 10: September 24, 2009

- Final plan review
- Plan Commission passes resolution to recommend adoption

The City Council held both the Public Hearing and adopted the plan by Ordinance on January 5, 2010.

C. Public Participation

The city adopted a Public Participation Plan for the planning process. A copy of the plan can be found as an attachment at the end of the plan. The complete survey instrument and full results can be viewed in the Planning & Development Department at City Hall.

A cornerstone of this plan was a community survey that was conducted over the winter of 2008-09. Survey responses were collected in a variety of ways, including direct mail, online, and from various community locations. In all, about 315 responses were received; about 70 percent were via mail. Over 86% of respondents were city residents, and of those, over 90 percent owned their own home. The majority (68%) have lived in the city ten years or more, and about 70 percent of respondents were 50 years of age or older.

In all, there were about 30 questions asked along with some open-ended questions. A summary of some of those is provided below:

One question asked, “Why do you live here?” The responses were “Near family and friends” (30%), followed by “Low crime” (16%), and “Housing” (14%).

When asked, “Do you work in the city?” The respondents were split about 50/50. A related question was, “Are there good jobs in town?” Only 13% responded yes; the rest (87%) said no. Responses were more positive to the question, “Do you see good jobs in the future?” Over 38% identified as, while 61% said no. The types of employment needed were industrial (37%), commercial (24%), and office (19%). Over 81% support the use of tax dollars to attract business to the city, and about 63% support the use for retention of local business.

Two questions were asked related to growth, one about the geographic size and the other about the population size. About 50% of respondents want the city to grow larger physically, and about the same want it to grow in population (49%). Respondents identified growth and expansion areas all around the city, including the Woodlands area (19%), West area (19%), and Rapids East area (18%).

The survey indicated that the majority of respondents (nearly 70%) agree or strongly agree that there should be more biking and walking trails throughout the city. Only 13% of respondents stated that there was a need for more parks.

1.4 Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Each of the following comprehensive plan chapters will conclude with a set of goals, objectives and policies, which will be used to guide the future development of the community.

For purposes of this planning process, goals, objectives, and policies are defined as follows:

Goals: Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the community should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community.

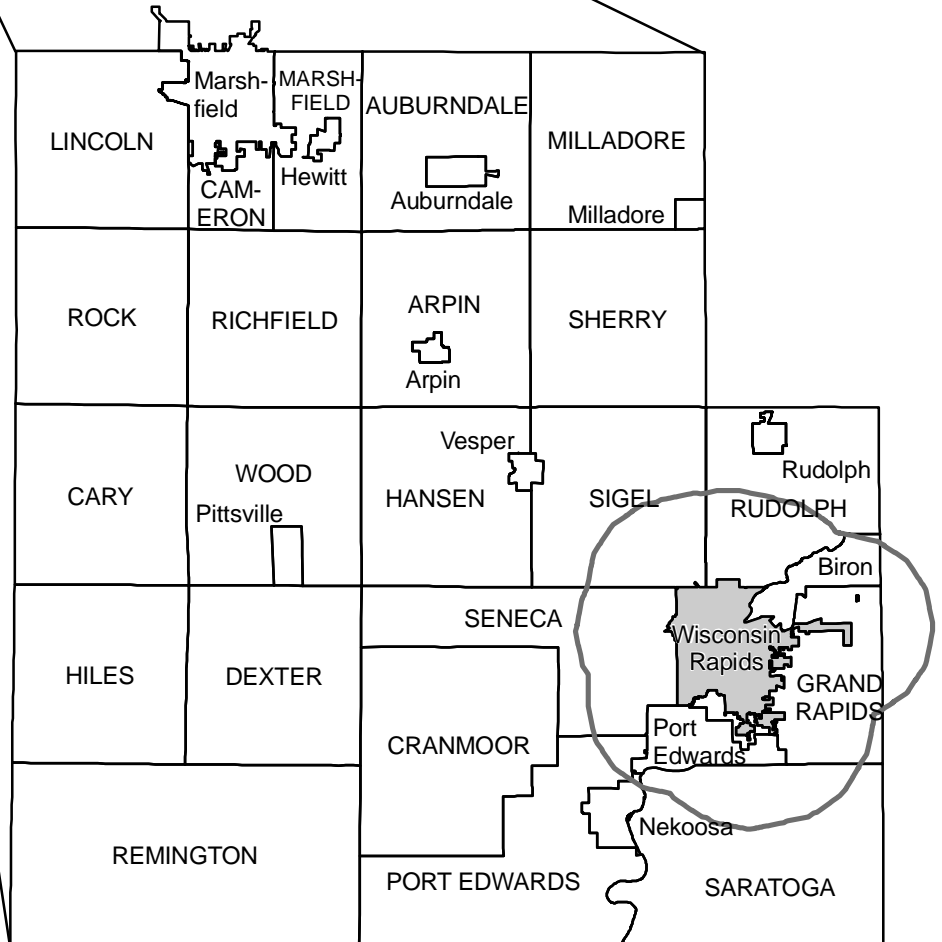
Objectives: More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies: Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.

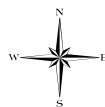
In addition, some of the following chapters will have a listing of various programs that are available from county, regional, state, and federal sources.

City of Wisconsin Rapids
Wood County, Wisconsin

Map 1-1
Locational Map



This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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Chapter 2: Natural Resources

CHAPTER 2: Natural Resources

2.1 Background

This second chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a "compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources."

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, three relate directly to this chapter. These goals are:

- 1) Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- 2) Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- 3) Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

Two other planning goals relate to community design, which is part of this element and the Land Use element. These goals are encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices; and building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.

A. Previous Studies

Several plans are reviewed as they relate to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. These plans provide a starting point for the planning process.

City Plans:

1. Sewer Service Area Plan, 1985

The purpose of this plan is to develop a twenty-year sanitary sewer service boundary for the Wisconsin Rapids urban area. The urban

sanitary sewer service area boundary identifies the geographic land area within which sanitary sewer service could be made available by the year 2005 through a cost-effective, environmentally acceptable manner. In addition to delineating an urban sewer service boundary, the Sewer Service Area Plan provides a framework for future planning at each individual municipal level. This plan needs to be updated and made current.

The goals and policies developed throughout this planning process will also be applicable and useful in the development of local policy direction with respect to land use.

Thus, the Sewer Service Area Plan will serve the following overall purposes:

- 1) It establishes the geographic boundaries for possible sanitary sewer service to the year 2025.
- 2) It provides a technical basis to anticipate future needs for wastewater collection and centralized treatment facilities for the palling area;
- 3) It establishes an institutional structure for reviewing boundary and plan amendments and for approving sewer extensions and expansions of sewage treatment plants;
- 4) It serves as a guide for community officials as they make land development decisions within their respective communities;
- 5) It identifies areas to be protected from development by designating them as environmentally sensitive areas. Such areas will control and direct the growth of communities in order to protect environmental, social, and economic concerns; and
- 6) The plan will become a component of the Wisconsin River Basin Water Quality Management Plan.

2. City of Wisconsin Rapids Parks & Recreation Plan, 2000

The purpose of the outdoor recreation plan is to develop a 5-year plan to meet the current and future recreational needs of residents. The plan inventories the City's numerous parks and other recreational facilities, examines population growth and patterns, and proposes additional recreational needs.

Adoption of this plan allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), the Stewardship Fund, and many other federal and state funding programs.

This plan expired in 2005, and is currently being updated by the NCWRPC.

3. Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan, 1981

The city's planning department developed this plan. At that time, the city had a population of 17,995 and a land area of 11.4 square miles. The plan set forth many policy guidelines, including five major goals. These goals are to provide a safe, healthy, and pleasant living environment; encourage the economic development of the city and the region; provide a safe, adequate traffic system; provide aesthetic, cultural and recreation opportunities; and prevent the creation of incompatible land use association, urban sprawl, and other problems resulting from improperly-directed developments.

County Plans:

1. Wood County Land & Water Resource Management Plan, 2007

The current Land & Water Resource Management Plan is a compilation of some significant legislative changes and planning efforts that have occurred at both the state and county level since the original plan was approved in 1999.

Six priority concerns were identified in this plan. They are: Land spreading issues, animal, human, fertilizer, municipal; Monitoring of surface water quality, municipal discharge, cooperation between agencies affecting quality; Declining grassland habitat (prairie chicken) fragmentation; Loss of wetlands; Loss of agricultural land; and Soil erosion, agricultural, highway, and construction.

The plan also developed seven goals to address these priorities:

- Reduce sediment delivery to surface waters of Wood County
- Reduce animal waste and nutrient delivery to surface waters
- Reduce crop damage caused by wildlife
- Protect and develop wetland and uplands for wildlife habitat
- Increase efforts to inventory the water resources
- Minimize the adverse effects of urban sprawl and land fragmentation in rural Wood County
- Improve air quality

2. Wood County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2007

This fifteen-year plan was developed by the county to manage the vast county forest. The plan strives to balance the local needs with broader state and national concerns through the integration of sound forestry, wildlife, fisheries, endangered resources, water quality, soil, and recreational practices.

The county manages about 37,500 acres of forestland throughout the county.

B. Natural Resource Issues

Several issues were identified, listed below in no particular order:

- ✓ Maintain environmental standards while continuing growth in the community.
- ✓ Plan to update the Sewer Service Area Plan upon completion of the wastewater treatment facility expansion.
- ✓ Maintain and protect the community's riverfront and utilize the natural resource as a community asset to be enjoyed by all.
- ✓ Assess stabilizing the riverbank in the downtown area to prevent further deterioration of the existing retention wall.
- ✓ Identify ownership of islands in the Wisconsin River within the community and develop a land use plan specific to the islands.
- ✓ Identify wetlands in the community and ensure that land uses adjacent to delineated wetlands are appropriate.

2.2 Inventory & Trends

A. Physical Landscape

All plans must consider the natural environment in which a community exists. Understanding the physical landscape is critical to the growth of a community. Natural restraints and environmental issues need to be identified to plan properly. This section of the plan overviews the local climate, area topography, and soil types.

1. Climate

Winters are very cold, and summers are short and warm. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year, reaching a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground during much of the period from late fall through early spring. Annual precipitation is about 31 inches.

The soils occasionally freeze to a depth of several feet when very cold temperatures occur before the ground is appreciably covered with snow. The soils usually freeze to a depth ranging from the top few inches to about one foot.

2. Topography

Wood County is in two ecological regions of Wisconsin. South Wood County and Wisconsin Rapids are in the Central Sands Plains. The landscape is relatively flat, and slopes are mostly long and smooth.

3. Soils

Area soils are related to the physical geography, climate, and vegetation. Most of the soils in the area are formed in glacial till, residuum, or glacial outwash. See the 1977 Natural Resource Conservation Service Soil Survey of Wood County for more information. Generally, the soils in the city have few limitations for buildings with basements.

Human activity also affects soil formation by altering and accelerating natural soil processes. Clearing, burning, cultivating, and urbanization thereby affecting soil structure, porosity, and content of nutrients have altered many soils.

4. Contaminated Sites

According to the DNR Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS), there are 158 listed sites in the city. This is typical of most cities where commercial and industrial development has existed over

long periods of time. These types of land uses, especially historically, have the potential for air emissions, groundwater contamination, soil spills, and surface water contamination. Many of these sites include old gasoline station tanks.

There is one closed Abandoned Container (AC) site, 106 closed Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites, 10 open Leaking Underground Storage Tank sites, 30 closed Environmental Repair (ERP) sites, 10 open Environmental Repair sites, and one conditionally closed Environmental Repair site.

B. Water Resources

A major component of the natural environment is water, including surface water, wetlands, floodplains, and groundwater. See the Natural Resources Map.

1. Surface Water

Wisconsin Rapids is split by the Wisconsin River. The east side of city is located in the Fourmile and Fivemile Creek Watersheds, while the west side is located in the Wisconsin Rapids watershed. Both watersheds drain into the Wisconsin River.

2. Wetlands

Wetlands perform indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle and local ecological systems. In terms of hazard mitigation, they act as water storage devices in times of high water. Like sponges, wetlands are able to absorb excess water and release it back into the watershed slowly, preventing flooding and minimizing flood damage. As more impermeable surfaces are developed, this excess capacity for water runoff storage becomes increasingly important.

Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Calm wetland waters, with their flat surface and flow characteristics, allow particles of toxins and nutrients to settle out of the water column. Plants take up certain nutrients from the water. Other substances can be stored or transformed to a less toxic state within wetlands. As a result, our lakes, rivers, and streams are cleaner, and our drinking water is safer.

Wetlands that filter or store sediments or nutrients for extended periods may undergo fundamental changes. Sediments will eventually fill in wetlands, and nutrients will eventually modify the vegetation. Such changes may result in the loss of this function over time. Eradication of

wetlands can occur using fill material. This can destroy the hydrological function of the site and open the area to improper development. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has promulgated minimum standards for managing wetlands.

3. Floodplains

A floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year (also known as the 100-year floodplain). The primary value of floodplains is their role in natural flood control. Floodplains represent areas where excess water can be accommodated, whether through drainage by streams or through storage by wetlands and other natural detention/retention areas. Specific areas that will be inundated will depend upon the amount of water, the distance and speed that water travels, and the topography of the area. If uninterrupted by development, the areas shown on a map as floodplains should be able to handle the severest regional flood, i.e. those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years.

There is a value in preserving and protecting these natural flood control areas from encroachment. First, by preventing development in the floodplain, the cost of building dikes, levies, or other man-made flood control devices will be saved. Second, for each structure that is constructed in a flood-prone area, that flood-prone area expands, potentially subjecting other structures originally built outside the delineated flood hazard area to the risk of flooding. Each new structure, or modification to an existing structure, placed in the floodplain, puts more life and property in danger.

Counties, cities, and villages are required to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances. Floodplain zoning is designed to protect individuals, private property, and public investments from flood damage. These regulations prohibit development in the floodway, the most dangerous flood area. In order to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program, the county and city have completed a Flood Insurance Study and a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) that encompasses Wood County. This FIRM delineates the "A" Zones including the floodway and flood fringe which are those areas inundated by the 100-year flood within the county.

Floodplains occur along the Wisconsin River where levees are in poor condition. Flooding has occurred during periods of exceptionally heavy rainfall. Currently, there are no repetitive loss structures, meaning those with multiple flood insurance claims, in Wood County.

4. Groundwater

The groundwater in the Wisconsin Rapids area meets municipal and industrial needs. Well water is available at various depths, depending on the general topography, the distance above permanent stream levels, and the character of the underlying aquifer. All of the wells are relatively shallow, gravel packed, and screened, and terminate in the glacial drift. The productive areas of the drift consist of sand and gravel underlain by granite bedrock. This productive layer varies significantly in thickness from place to place in the city. The municipal wells are located over ancient valleys in the granite bedrock, therefore the sand and gravel deposited by glaciers in these valleys is the source of the well's supply.

Overall, groundwater quality is good. Local differences in quality are the result of the composition, solubility, and surface area of the soil and rock through which the water moves and the length of time that the water is in contact with these materials. Some of the surrounding area is susceptible to groundwater contamination. This is most likely to occur where fractured bedrock is near ground surface, or where only a thin layer of soil separates the ground surface from the water table.

C. Woodlands

Significant tracts of woodland exist within the planning area. These forested areas are primarily associated with streams, and wetlands. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Regulation of the removal of woodland plant material is desirable to protect scenic beauty, to control erosion, and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface waters.

Tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses. Woodland cover is further addressed in the land use chapter of the plan.

D. Rare Species & Natural Communities

The City of Wisconsin Rapids and nearby towns have five sections with occurrences of aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, and/or natural communities of endangered status as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory. One section has aquatic occurrences, one section has terrestrial occurrences, and three sections have both. Each section identified may have several different species or just one species. See Map 2-2.

Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect, and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities from the very common to critically endangered for present and future generations. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to society. The latest inventory of potential and existing natural spaces that complement biodiversity goals are in the Land Legacy Report prepared by the DNR in 2006.

E. Agriculture

Wisconsin Rapids does not have any active farms or agricultural lands within the city. The surrounding towns have areas that are devoted to agricultural uses.

F. Recreational Resources

The Wisconsin Rapids area park and recreation system consists of several parks and a zoo. Information that is more detailed will be included in the updated Outdoor Recreation Plan. Park facilities are also discussed in more detail in the Utilities & Community Facilities chapter of this plan.

G. History & Cultural Assets

1. History

Wood County was established in 1856 and is named after Joseph Wood, a state legislator and judge. The area had originally been part of Portage County. The nationality of original settlers is diverse and includes Norwegians, Danish, Swedish, German, Polish, and Irish.

The following is a historical summary provided by the local historical society:

River City: Extractive 1800s

In the early 19th Century, Grand Rapids, predecessor of Wisconsin Rapids, was well positioned. Here, canoe travel on the Wisconsin River was interrupted for a walk-around, or "portage," making it a good place for commerce to begin.

With the organization of Wisconsin Territory in 1836, lumbermen built water-powered sawmills and sent rafts of boards and shingles downstream to market.

Hardwoods and the less-marketable of conifers replaced the depleted white pine as a raw material, enabling pulp mills and wood products manufacturers to supplant sawmills. Flour mills and a brewery also took their place along the Wisconsin River.

The villages of Grand Rapids, on the east bank, and Centralia on the west, closely imitated the homes from which their founders came, notably upstate New York. Immigrants who followed, some directly from Europe, established full or part-time dairy farms, especially north of the river. In the southwest bogs, commercial growing of cranberries burned out and was reestablished late in the 19th century.

Paper City: Industrial 1900s

In 1900, Grand Rapids and Centralia merged as “Grand Rapids,” a name to be changed in 1920 to “Wisconsin Rapids.” It was still all about the river as sawmills and relatively-new pulp mills were replaced by paper mills. Located in downtown Rapids, was the first and only headquarters of locally-owned and operated Consolidated Water Power & Paper Co., for several decades the world’s leading producer of enamel-coated printing paper.

Just to the south, also on the Wisconsin River, was Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Co., headquartered at its Port Edwards mill, with a similar mill at Nekoosa. For the most part, Nepco was, like Consolidated, locally owned and operated.

Numerous smaller manufacturers were not dependent on a riverside location. “Consoweld” combined paper and resin in countertop laminate and “Preway” made and marketed stoves and other appliances. At the east end of the Consolidated dam, Sampson’s canning company occupied the old Lutz brewery.

Largely because of its industrial base, Wisconsin Rapids became a hub for four railroads and two major trucking firms, Central Wisconsin Transport and Gross Brothers.

Shoppers supported a busy downtown on West Grand Avenue and on the East Bank. The local department store, Johnson Hills, expanded into similar locations in other cities. Entertainment was provided at three movie theaters in town and an “outdoor” on south Highway 13. Headlining a long list of taverns and restaurants were Wilbern’s on 8th Street South and Hotel Mead on Grand Avenue. Sports, entertainment, and education thrived as, in mid-century; the 1931 Lincoln field house was second only to that at the University of Wisconsin, and the 1970 McMillan Memorial Library stood as monument to culture.

A full complement of Protestant and Catholic churches was established and, for a short time, a Jewish synagogue.

The Grand Mall: Post-Industrial New Millennium

Being “River City” wasn’t what it used to be. No longer a transportation hub, the area has been bypassed by several major highways. In the 1980s, Preway, Consoweld, and both trucking companies closed. As Consolidated and Nepco were absorbed into multi-national companies, main offices were eliminated, employment was reduced, and the Port Edwards mill was shut down.

Meanwhile, commerce moved from the “old downtown” along the river to the nearby enclosed Rapids Mall and further, to the “8th Street” strip, both competing with more robust developments at Plover and Stevens Point, 15 miles to the east.

Despite the economic setbacks, Wisconsin Rapids, seat of Wood County, continues to be above average in its school system, cultural centers, historical societies, civic organizations, and city government, and is the unofficial world headquarters of cranberries.

In step with the times are Renaissance Learning, an educational software developer, and Solarus, the local telephone company become digital provider. NewPage and Domtar continue to employ large labor forces at their local paper mills.

2. Cultural Assets

Currently, over 250 structures in the City of Wisconsin Rapids are listed on the Wisconsin Architectural History Inventory (WAHI). The WAHI documents a wide range of historic properties that create Wisconsin’s cultural landscape. The National Register is the official national list of historic properties in American worthy of preservation, maintained by the National Park Service. The State Register is Wisconsin’s official listing of state properties determined to be significant to Wisconsin’s heritage and is maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society Division of Historic Preservation.

Only one site is currently listed on the National Register of Historical Places. That is the Elizabeth Daly House (641) Baker Street.

2.3 Goals, Objectives, & Policies

The following Goals, Objectives, and Policies will help guide the City of Wisconsin Rapids to better protect and utilize its natural, agricultural, and cultural resources.

A. Natural Resources

Goals:

1. Provide a safe, clean, and enduring natural environment for residents.
2. Ensure future non-metallic mining sites will not negatively impact the planning area or its residents.
3. Maintain the area's diverse wildlife habitat.

Objectives:

1. Require enforcement of existing regulations, especially in environmentally sensitive areas.
2. Conserve and enhance the city's distinctive natural amenities.
3. Carefully plan development adjacent to rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands need to be carefully planned in order to maintain these areas.
4. Promote development to minimize activities that harm life-sustaining ecosystems.
5. Reduce the amount of storm water and pollutants that flow into surface waters.
6. Protect and enhance the aesthetic beauty of Wisconsin Rapids' water resources for all to enjoy.
7. Identify and map all existing and possible mining sites.
8. Promote the idea that incompatible uses with mining will not develop adjacent to one another.
9. Ensure the natural environment and rural characteristics will not be harmed by mining operations.

10. Protect the city's areas of threatened and endangered species.
11. Maintain connections among wildlife habitat areas.

Policies:

1. Identify key natural resources.
2. Encourage the city to communicate with residents regarding regulations.
3. Work with the county on informational programs and brochures regarding natural resources to educate and inform the public.
4. Encourage a buffer area around delineated wetlands, with no permanent buildings.
5. Work to ensure enforcement of floodplain zoning, conservancy zoning, and shoreland zoning ordinances to protect water quality.
6. Consider establishing a groundwater protection plan.
7. Update the 1982 Sewer Service Area (SSA) Plan.
8. Identify and promote development plans that facilitate reduced unfavorable impacts on the environment as a whole, to include, but not limited to, mixed use and cluster developments and developments tending to minimize motor vehicle traffic.
9. Promote the use of water saving devices, such as low-flow showerheads and toilets, encourage the use of rain gardens and barrels, and offer incentives for their use in order to assure adequate quantities of safe water for the future.
10. Encourage the city to acquire the county mining location maps and use them when deciding land use issues.
11. Encourage the city to steer incompatible uses away from identified mining sites.
12. Support the preservation of key habit areas and large undeveloped contiguous natural areas.
13. Support neighboring jurisdiction's wildlife preservation plans.

14. Incorporate natural resource areas in plans for parks and open spaces.
15. Promote native species landscaping.
16. Encourage the city to work with federal, state, and county agencies to seek funding for habitat protection.

B. Agricultural Resources

Goal:

1. Provide for the future viability of the agricultural resources within the planning area, unless circumstances indicate another optimal use, which will not unduly damage the overall ecosystem.

Objectives:

1. Encourage efforts to keep agricultural uses in and adjacent to the city until a time that these lands need to be converted to another and higher best use.
2. Provide for an orderly changeover of agricultural land to other uses, with due consideration to preserving ecosystems that will meet future human needs.
3. Buffer non-farming uses from agricultural lands in order to lower the number of possible nuisance complaints (by city residents) regarding these agricultural lands, while considering and fostering compatible agricultural and non-farming uses.
4. Cooperate with the surrounding communities on all land development within the planning area to limit locating incompatible land uses adjacent to one another.
5. Expand and improve on events like the Wisconsin Rapids' Farmers Market.

Policies:

1. Maintain and regularly update an Official Map detailing future plats within the city and its planning area (Extraterritorial Plat Authority area). These areas adjacent to farmlands should be planned with adequate buffers, and with consideration of future needs for farmlands.

2. Coordinate with the surrounding towns in the future planning of agricultural lands adjacent to the city. Areas that are to remain in agricultural production should be buffered from existing and future developments of the city, and/or planned for compatible, sustainable use.
3. The City Council and City Plan Commission should meet/consult with the surrounding towns, and the state to ensure cooperation in land use planning especially with those lands on the periphery of the city and within the extraterritorial planning area.
4. Continue to inform and work with its neighbors on future land use plans/changes according to s 66.1001.

C. Cultural Resources

Goal:

1. Preserve the city's historic, archeological, and cultural locations and structures will remain preserved for the city residents.

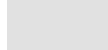




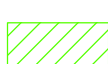


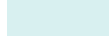
Objectives:

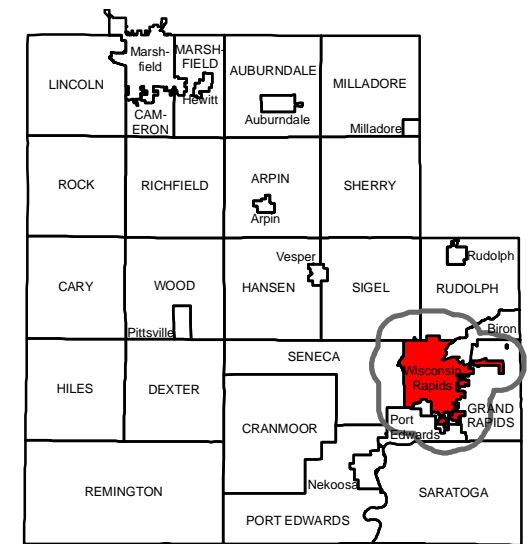
1. Preserve buildings (churches, historic homes, and buildings), structures (out buildings, bridges, etc.), and other landscape features (cemeteries, fence lines, etc.) that are the city's cultural history.
2. Identify these resources to the city residents for their information and possible use.

Policies:

1. Work to identify and preserve the locations of these historic sites.
2. Discourage the destruction of these sites and will not allow incompatible uses around them that would have negative impacts on the resource.
3. Work to recognize historic figures or events.
4. Work with federal, state, and county agencies to ensure all sites are identified and properly protected.

Map 2-1 Natural Resources

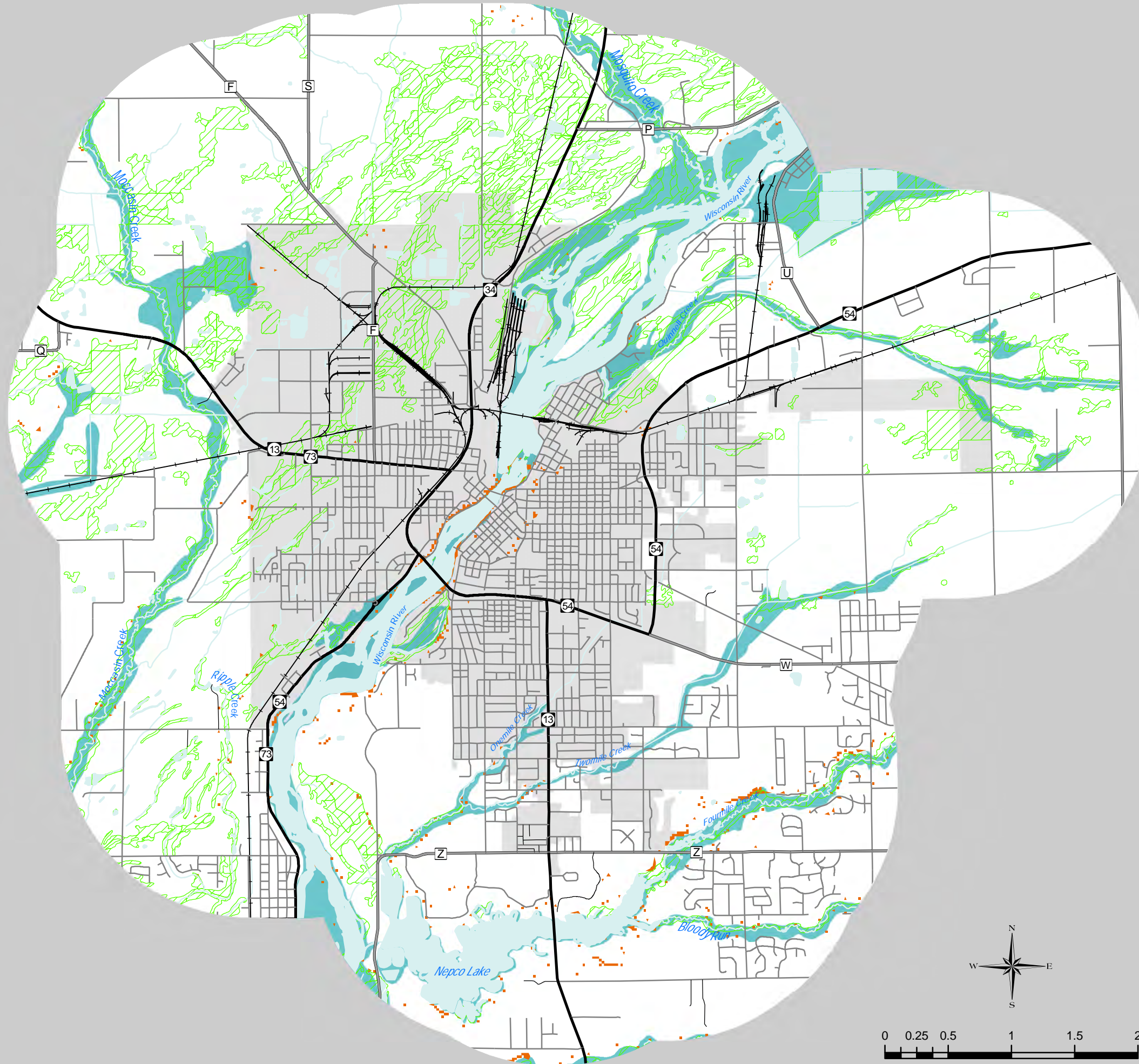
-  City of Wisconsin Rapids
-  US & State Highways
-  County Highways
-  Local Roads
-  Railroad
-  DNR Wetlands
-  Steep Slopes
-  Floodway
-  Water



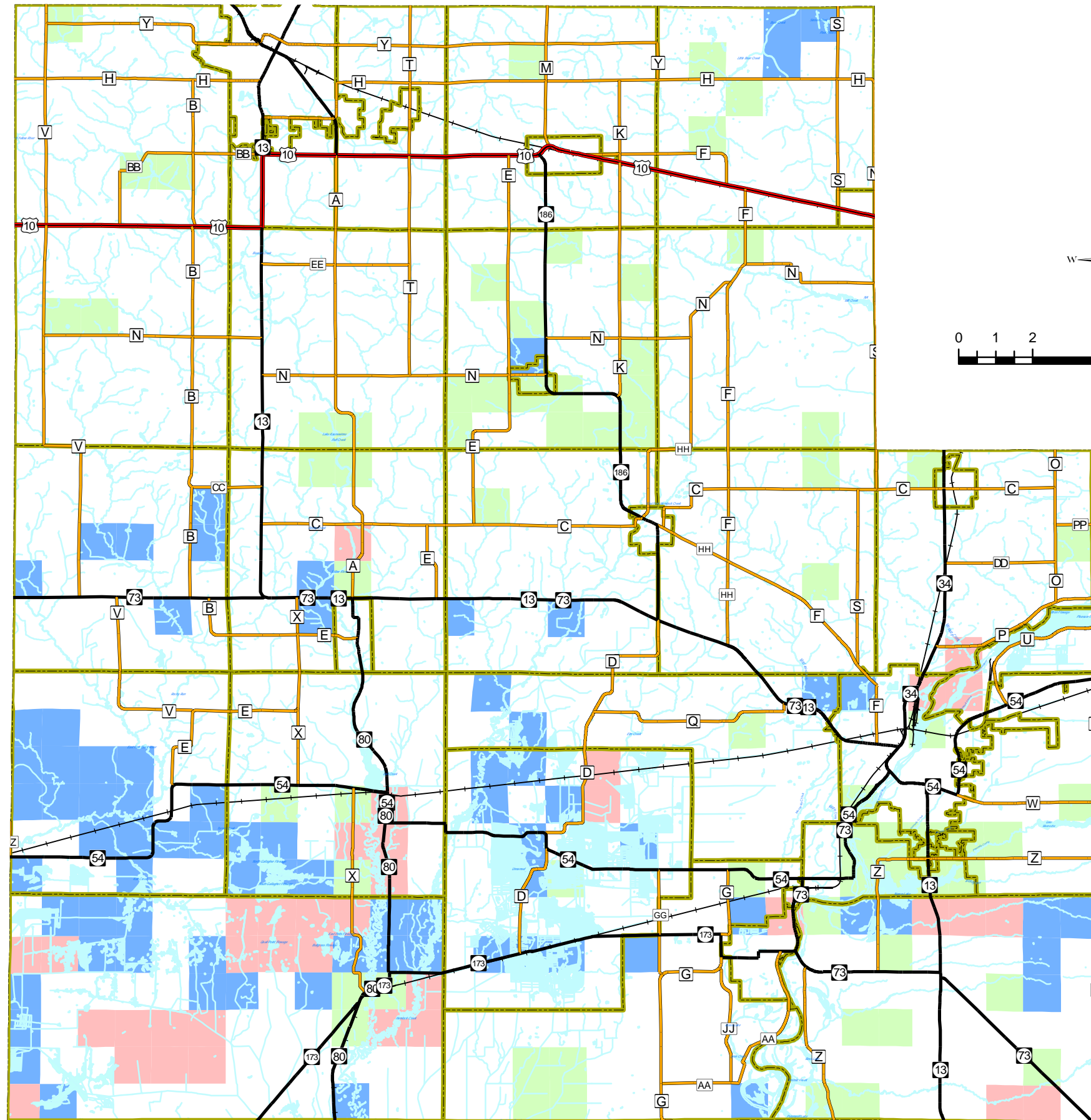
Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, FEMA, Wood Co

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

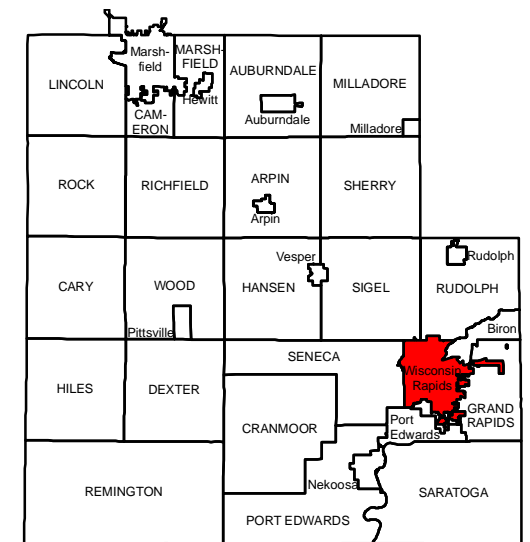
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Map 2-2
 Rare Species Map
 Wood County, Wisconsin



-  Civil Division Boundaries
-  US Highways
-  State Highways
-  County Highways
-  Railroad
-  Aquatic Species
-  Both
-  Terrestrial Species
-  Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, WI Nat. Heritage Inventory
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Chapter 3: Housing

CHAPTER 3: Housing

3.1 Background

This third chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local government unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The chapter shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit’s housing stock. The element shall identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit’s existing housing stock.”

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation also establishes 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, one relates directly to this chapter, it reads: Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.

Three other planning goals are indirectly related to providing an adequate supply of affordable housing. These goals are: Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures; Providing an adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses; and, Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied, and unique urban and rural communities.

The chapter is organized into three basic sections: Background, Inventory & Trends, and Goals, Objectives and Policies. There is also an overview of programs available to help local communities meet their housing needs.

A. Previous Studies

No local in-depth housing study was identified. Two plans were reviewed as they relate to housing.

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

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) titled “A Framework for the Future,” adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in December of 2003, is an update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP looks at housing in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Wood County. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address their housing issues.

Subsidized housing units were a focus of the RCP in 2000. Of the 5,389 such units in the Region, 430 are in Wood County. Over 56 percent (242 units) of these are housing for the elderly, and 36 percent (155 units) are for families, with 7 percent (33 units) designed for the disabled. This translates into one subsidized housing unit per 85.5 persons in Wood County. This is a marked contrast to Marathon County where there is one unit per 104.5 persons.

Affordability is a primary consideration in housing policy, but as the RCP points out:

“Affordable housing in the context of Smart Growth can mean different things in different areas. An ‘adequate supply’ for ‘all income levels’ means that affordability is more than subsidized housing units for low-income families, the disabled, or elderly. It means that working families, single people, retirees, and the more well-to-do should all be able to find housing that meets their needs in a suitable location.”

The housing-related government programs described in the RCP provides a basis for determining how Wisconsin Rapids will meet future housing needs of their residents. These government programs are also described later in this chapter.

2. Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships,

Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS. “The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources, and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs.” This is how HUD describes the Consolidated Plan, which consists of a 5-year strategic plan, annual action plans, and annual performance reports. The Plan must be updated annually.

The Consolidated Plan has five parts: (1) an overview of the process; (2) a description of public participation; (3) a housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs assessment; (4) long-term strategies to meet priority needs; and (5) an action plan. The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) prepares the Consolidated Housing Plan, and is focused on low-income and special needs populations.

In assessing housing needs, the Consolidated Plan, looks at a number of different factors that are significant components of the housing picture. Housing affordability is a primary consideration. According to federal guidelines, a family should not have to spend more than thirty percent of its income on housing. Using this standard “...households in the low-income range have great difficulty finding adequate housing within their means and that accommodates their needs...an individual in Wisconsin would need to earn \$10.44 per hour to afford the fair market rent unit at 30% of income.”

Factors other than the construction of new housing units affect the quality and availability of housing, as well. While the difficulty of providing affordable housing to low-income families can be stated in terms of an hourly wage, there is more involved in a well-housed community than the number of housing units.

The State Consolidated Housing Plan is primarily focused on how government action can address special needs, not on the workings of the private housing market. “The focus of activities and strategies described in the Plan primarily address meeting the evolving needs of low and moderate-income persons, including persons of special needs requiring targeted assistance.”

B. Housing Issues

A variety of housing related issues were identified throughout the planning process. They are listed below in to particular order.

- ✓ Affordability is a concern within the community.
- ✓ The aging population needs housing and services to accommodate them.
- ✓ Several neighborhoods are aging, and aesthetics needs to be addressed to maintain these areas.
- ✓ The high number of housing vacancies in the community at this time.
- ✓ Wisconsin Rapids Housing Authority maintains ownership of 436 properties, including various single-family residences, which is perceived by some as competition with the city's private-sector rental market.
- ✓ Recent increase in the number of multi-family residential units has saturated the community's rental market, and driven down rents.
- ✓ Identifying mechanisms through which the community can tie new residential development to population growth without stifling private-sector housing development.
- ✓ Community home values have been relatively stagnant or in decline, and property owners have not experienced appreciation in home values through the 1990s and into the current decade.
- ✓ Landlord/tenant relationships are challenged by various factors associated with market saturation, leading to a desire for a tenant education program amongst the rental community.
- ✓ Both single-family and multi-family homes are beginning to exhibit blighted conditions in various neighborhoods.
- ✓ Lack of data such as a citywide housing supply and demand analysis, and recent data on housing prices, average rents, and other key housing issues, present a challenge for the community to develop appropriate policies relating to housing.
- ✓ There is a perceived oversupply of elderly housing in the community, including assisted living and senior apartments.

3.2 Inventory & Trends

A. Existing Housing Stock

In 2000, the City of Wisconsin Rapids had 8,439 housing units, compared to 7,833 in 1990. Over the ten-year period, the city added 606 housing units, which represents an increase of about 8 percent. Meanwhile the county's housing units grew by about 10 percent and the state by almost 13 percent. Other area communities added units over the decade. The most were added in Grand Rapids. See the residential areas identified on the Existing Land Use Map (Map 7-1).

Table 1: Total Housing Units

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	7,833	8,439	7.8%	606
Town of Grand Rapids	2,417	2,833	17.3%	416
Town of Rudolph	404	446	10.4%	42
Town of Seneca	383	420	9.7%	37
Town of Sigel	400	417	4.3%	17
Village of Biron	353	398	12.8%	45
Village of Port Edwards	689	740	7.4%	51
Wood County	28,839	31,691	9.9%	2,852
State of Wisconsin	2,055,774	2,321,144	12.9%	265,370

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2 indicates that about 9.5 percent of total housing units in the City were built between 1990 and 2000. The majority of the City's housing units were constructed prior to 1960. Since 1970, only about a third of the housing stock was built.

Table 2: Year Structure Built, 2000

Year	Wisconsin Rapids	Wisconsin Rapids %	Wood Co. %	Wisconsin %
1990 to 2000	802	9.5%	14.1%	16.8%
1980 to 1989	744	8.8%	12.5%	10.8%
1970 to 1979	1,357	16.1%	19.5%	16.9%
1960 to 1969	1,275	15.1%	12.9%	11.9%
1940 to 1959	2,471	29.3%	20.3%	20.3%
1939 or earlier	1,790	21.2%	20.8%	23.4%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3 provides an overview of the housing types in the area. Single-family detached units dominate with about two-thirds of all housing units. Duplexes and 3-4-unit multi-family structures represent about 12 percent of all housing in the city as of 2000. Units with 10 or more units, account for about 9 percent of the total units.

Table 3: Type of Structure

	City of Wisconsin Rapids 2000	City of Wisconsin Rapids % 2000	Wood County % 2000	Wisconsin % 2000
1-unit detached	5,805	68.8%	74.9%	66.0%
1-unit attached	195	2.3%	1.7%	3.4%
2 to 4 units	1,001	11.9%	8.5%	12.1%
5 to 9 units	329	3.9%	2.3%	4.6%
10 or more units	747	8.8%	6.8%	9.5%
Mobile home, trailer, or other	362	4.3%	5.8%	4.5%

Source: U.S. Census

B. Value Characteristics

Median values of owner occupied housing units in the City of Wisconsin Rapids were about \$68,700 in 2000 as displayed in Table 4. Values increased about 55 percent between 1990 and 2000. Two surrounding towns had median housing values in 2000 over \$100,000. Meanwhile the county and state median household values were \$81,400 and \$112,200, respectively.

Table 4: Median Value for specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	\$44,500	\$68,700	54.4%	\$24,200
Town of Grand Rapids	\$63,100	\$108,800	72.5%	\$45,700
Town of Rudolph	\$50,400	\$84,300	67.3%	\$33,900
Town of Seneca	\$58,900	\$100,000	69.8%	\$41,100
Town of Sigel	\$49,100	\$81,400	65.8%	\$32,300
Village of Biron	\$54,500	\$78,700	44.4%	\$24,200
Village of Port Edwards	\$52,600	\$83,500	58.8%	\$30,900
Wood County	\$50,500	\$81,400	61.2%	\$30,900
State of Wisconsin	\$62,100	\$112,200	80.7%	\$50,100

Source: U.S. Census

Specified Owner Occupied Housing Units: Total number of owner occupied housing units described as either a one family home detached from any other house or a one family house attached to one or more houses on less than 10 acres with no business on the property.

In both 1990 and 2000, median rents in the city and county were lower than the state. Median rents in the City of Wisconsin Rapids rose almost 65 percent over that period.

Table 5: Median Gross Rent*

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	\$283	\$466	64.7%	\$183
Town of Grand Rapids	\$308	\$565	83.5%	\$257
Town of Rudolph	\$285	\$477	67.4%	\$192
Town of Seneca	\$247	\$488	97.6%	\$241
Town of Sigel	\$306	\$375	22.6%	\$69
Village of Biron	\$244	\$455	86.5%	\$211
Village of Port Edwards	\$306	\$512	67.4%	\$206
Wood County	\$272	\$442	62.5%	\$170
State of Wisconsin	\$399	\$540	35.3%	\$141

Source: U.S. Census

***Gross Rent:** This is contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid for by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else). Gross rent is intended to eliminate differentials which result from varying practices with respect to the inclusion of utilities and fuels as part of the rental payment.

The most commonly applied standard for determining housing affordability is to look at the spending of less than thirty percent of income on housing. Table 6 shows that in the year 2000 within the City of Wisconsin Rapids about 12 percent of owners and 37 percent of renters spent at least 30 percent of their household income on housing. This indicates that housing in general is affordable in the city.

At the county level, about 11 percent of owner-occupied households countywide spent over 30 percent for housing, while about 28 percent of renters did. At the state level, about 18 percent of owners did, while about 32 percent of renters.

Table 6: Percent of Total Households that spent 30% or more of Household Income on Housing

	Owners in 2000	Renters in 2000
City of Wisconsin Rapids	12.1% (Owners = 64.4% of occupied housing)	32.3% (Renters = 35.6% of occupied housing)
Wood County	10.8% (Owners = 74.3% of occupied housing)	28.1% (Renters = 25.7% of occupied housing)
State of Wisconsin	17.8% (Owners = 68.4% of occupied housing)	32.3% (Renters = 31.6% of occupied housing)

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC

C. Occupancy Characteristics

Table 7 shows that owner-occupied housing is the norm in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. In 2000, about 60 percent of total units were owner occupied. There was a 5 percent increase in the city’s owner occupied (239 units) and a 7 percent increase in renter occupied (182 units) housing units between 1990 and 2000. During the 1990s, Grand Rapids increased the amount of owner occupied housing by 22 percent (464 additional units).

Both the county and state percentages of owners occupying their own home increased 50 and 17 percent, respectively, from 1990 to 2000. Occupied rental units also increased for both the county and state, 5.5 percent and 8.5 percent, respectively.

Table 7: Owner Occupied Units

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	4,896	5,135	4.9%	239
Town of Grand Rapids	2,143	2,607	21.7%	464
Town of Rudolph	349	371	6.3%	22
Town of Seneca	326	375	15.1%	49
Town of Sigel	332	379	14.2%	47
Village of Biron	273	295	8.1%	22
Village of Port Edwards	562	599	6.6%	37
Wood County	20,127	30,135	49.8%	10,008
State of Wisconsin	1,215,350	1,426,361	17.4%	211,011

Source: U.S. Census

Table 8: Renter Occupied Units

Minor Civil Division	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change	1990-2000 Net Change
City of Wisconsin Rapids	2,653	2,835	6.9%	182
Town of Grand Rapids	205	181	-11.7%	-24
Town of Rudolph	32	52	62.5%	20
Town of Seneca	43	33	-23.3%	-10
Town of Sigel	44	31	29.6%	-13
Village of Biron	60	89	48.4%	29
Village of Port Edwards	98	107	9.2%	9
Wood County	7,346	7,750	5.5%	404
State of Wisconsin	606,768	658,183	8.5%	51,415

Source: U.S. Census

D. Housing Programs:

There are a number of programs available to local governments to aid with their housing needs. Below is a listing of some of the programs available to localities:

1. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The first step in securing a significant portion of federal housing aid is the preparation of a State Consolidated Housing Plan. “The Consolidated

Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homeless, community and economic development needs and resources and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs.” This is how the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) website (www.HUD.gov) describes the Consolidated Plan. Consisting of a 3 to 5-year strategic plan, annual action plans, and annual performance reports, the Plan must be updated annually. Eligibility for certain federal programs (CBDG, HOME, ESG) requires the preparation of a Plan, which consists of three parts: (1) a housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs assessment; (2) a housing market analysis; and (3) long-term strategies to meet priority needs. In order for a state to receive funding from the above, or a number of other programs, they must conform to the provisions of the Consolidated Plan. The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) prepares the Wisconsin Consolidated Housing Plan, and is focused on low-income and special needs populations.

There are a number of programs available through HUD that can assist local communities in addressing their housing problems, but the two most prominent are Section 8 and HOME, both are directed at low-income residents and provide aid to states and local governments to satisfy their housing needs.

Since it was first authorized by Congress in 1974, the Housing Choice Voucher Program, commonly known as Section 8, has been a major federal program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled afford housing in the private market. Administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs), eligible families are issued vouchers that they can use to secure housing in the private market. Once a suitable housing unit is found, meeting minimum health and safety standards, and once the owner has agreed to rent under the program, the eligible family uses a voucher to cover the part of the rent beyond the portion it pays, usually 30 to 39 percent of its income. The landlord receives a subsidy directly from the PHA for the portion of the Fair Market Rent not paid by the tenant. The voucher-holder signs a lease for a term of at least one year, and the landlord signs a contract with the PHA, running concurrently with the lease. Eligibility for the program is generally limited to families with incomes below 50 percent of the median for the county or metropolitan area in which they reside. The program is open to any housing unit where the owner agrees to participate and where the unit satisfies the standards set by the local PHA.

Section 8

Although Section 8 subsidies can be applied to any housing unit that meets the standards and where the owner agrees to participate in the program (tenant-based), there are also project-based programs. Generally, these project-based programs involve financial aids to new construction, renovation projects, or some form of federal mortgage guarantee, and carry with them a contract requiring that a certain number of units be set-aside for very low-income families for a set period of years, usually twenty. This program was largely discontinued in 1983. In recent years, many contracts from the period when project-based subsidies were granted have expired, causing substantial restructuring of the program. Procedures have been developed for the renewal and renegotiation of contracts securing a certain number of housing units for voucher-holding families.

Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

The other major housing program for low-income families in the open market is the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), the largest federal block-grant program to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. HOME is designed to be flexible. Participating Jurisdictions are required to match twenty-five percent of the grant total, and can use HOME funds for four types of affordable housing activities: rental housing development (acquisition, rehabilitation, and new construction); rehabilitation of owner-occupied properties; homeowner assistance; and tenant-based rental assistance. Rental housing development funds are available in exchange for agreement to provide a set number of affordable units within the project, according to a formula based on the number and kind of units created with the funds, and the amount of funding. Units are committed to low-income housing for a fixed number of years. Income restrictions apply to eligibility requirements for HOME funded housing units. The Participating Jurisdiction is required to award a certain amount of HOME funding to Community Housing Development Organizations, local non-profits that develop affordable housing within the community.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) also can be used to provide affordable housing. Larger cities and counties receive CDBG funding directly from HUD, but cities with fewer than 50,000 residents and non-urban counties can receive grants through DHIR if their requests conform to the State Consolidated Housing Plan. States set their own standards for awarding CDBG funding, but are required to

award at least 70 percent of these funds for activities that will benefit low-and-moderate-income persons. Communities are allowed great latitude in how CDBG funds can be used, including land acquisition, housing rehabilitation, and in certain circumstances, new construction, direct assistance to homeowners such as down-payment assistance or revolving loan funds for first-time buyers, concentrated building code enforcement, and planning and administrative expenses.

A number of other programs are available that foster affordable housing through providing mortgage insurance for qualified projects. By insuring lenders against loss, these programs seek to increase the supply of housing for low and moderate-income families. Among the most prominent of these programs is the Section 203(b), which is directed at single-family homes, and currently insures seven million loans. This program also allows aid for low to moderate-income homebuyers to reduce down-payment requirements, closing costs, and fees paid. Another program, Section 203(k), covers renovation costs along with acquisition. Section 207 is directed at multi-family housing consisting of five or more units, and Section 231 provides mortgage insurance for elderly and disabled housing. Both of these programs have been eclipsed in recent years by Section 221(d)(3) (non-profit) and Section (d)(4) (for-profit) that provide mortgage insurance for multi-family housing at more favorable terms. Section 241(a) provides mortgage insurance for repairs and additions, including health care facilities, and Section 251 insures adjustable rate mortgages.

There are also programs to provide aid to special-needs populations. Section 202 and Section 811 provide funding assistance for supportive housing for the elderly and the disabled. The SHP program provides funding for supportive housing for the homeless, and ESG supports emergency housing. The SRO program provides Section 8 rental assistance for single-room-occupancy housing. Title V provides that surplus federal property must be made available wherever possible to serve the needs of the homeless. The Shelter Plus Care program creates housing for the disabled homeless, including other social services tailored to their needs.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit

This program was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, and has been one of the major sources of financial aid for low-income housing. Projects that meet the program standards can receive a tax credit for up to nine percent of the cost of providing affordable housing for 15 years. Since 1987, over 19,000 units of rental housing have been developed in Wisconsin for seniors, families, and persons with special needs under this program. To foster multi-family development targeting low-income

residents, incentives are provided for development in rural counties and with fewer than 24 units. In 2007, the Wisconsin Rapids Housing Authority redeveloped 24 units of affordable housing under the Section 42 tax credit program.

2. U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), acting through its Rural Development program, operates the Rural Housing Service that distributes more than \$4 billion in loans and grants annually, generally in communities with population under 10,000. USDA-RD offers a number of programs including loan guarantees, grants, and direct loans to foster single-family and multi-family housing affordable to low-income residents. Funding is available for site acquisition, renovations, technical assistance, housing preservation, and rental assistance. Also available is aid for community facilities, housing for farm labor, and technical assistance for what is known as mutual self-help projects where residents provide “sweat equity” on affordable housing projects. Most programs are limited to low-income persons. USDA-RD is also involved in a number of economic development efforts.

Section 515

The single most prominent program administered under USDA-RD is the Section 515 program that supports the construction of multi-family housing for low-income residents. Under the program, which has been in operation in Wisconsin since 1969, USDA underwrites fifty-year mortgages at a one percent interest rate in exchange for an agreement to provide housing for low and very, low-income residents. Unlike Section 8, the commitment to provide low-income housing runs for the life of the mortgage, and although owners can buy out the mortgage, they can do so only if they meet certain conditions, including ensuring that no tenants are displaced as a result. Also available through this program is rental assistance similar to project-based Section 8 for tenants in Section 515 financed buildings.

Section 502

Another prominent program of USDA-RD is the Section 502 Direct Loans. Under this program, qualified applicants may obtain 100 percent financing to purchase an existing dwelling, purchase a site and construct a dwelling, or purchase newly constructed dwellings located in rural areas. Section 502 loans are primarily used to help low-income individuals or households purchase homes in rural areas and to provide financing at reasonable rates and terms with no down payment. Families must be without adequate housing, but be able to afford the

mortgage payments, including taxes and insurance. These payments are typically within 22 to 26 percent of an applicant’s income. In addition, applicants must be unable to obtain credit elsewhere, yet have reasonable credit histories.

3. Wisconsin Department of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR)

The Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) and its Bureau of Housing act as the State’s housing authority. It administers the State portion of federal programs including CDBG – Small City Housing, HOME, SHP, ESG, Transitional Housing, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). DHIR also is responsible for State programs such as State Shelter Subsidy Grants. The Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI) offers grants to local housing entities (governmental, tribal, or nonprofit) for activities including rental aid, down payment assistance, homelessness prevention, and related housing initiatives.

4. Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

According to its mission statement, “The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business, and agribusiness.” WHEDA holds over \$2 billion in assets and has made more than \$52 million in multi-family housing loans. In addition to housing programs, WHEDA administers programs to foster agriculture and small business.

5. Wisconsin Rapids Housing Authority

The local housing authority is funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and serves the city and surrounding area. The eleven-person organization is located 2525 10th Street and operates both a low-income program and a Section 8 program. The low-income program includes three elderly complexes and 37 scattered units in the city. The elderly buildings are the Huntington House (65 units), Park Avenue (68 units), and Tenth Avenue (25 units). Both the elderly and other units have a waiting list. Two hundred and thirty families are subsidized through the Section 8 program.

3.3 Goals, Objective & Policies

The following is a listing of the goals, objectives, and policies identified for the housing chapter of the comprehensive plan.

Goals:

1. Provide an adequate supply of safe, energy efficient housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.
2. Maintain and rehabilitate the existing housing stock.
3. Expand educational opportunities for both landlords and tenants in the community.
4. Identify appropriate locations in the community for future housing developments and encourage the use of sub-area planning in identified areas.
5. Evaluate the opportunity to incorporate alternative energy and sustainable development strategies, and encourage citizens to incorporate alternative energy and sustainability into new and redevelopment residential projects.

Objective:

1. Adopt housing development policies and regulations that promote a variety of housing types and cost ranges, and that do not restrict housing choices.

Policies:

1. Review and modify local ordinances and building codes, as warranted, to ensure that they accommodate the various housing needs of a diversified population.
2. Identify an adequate amount of land for future residential development to ensure the availability of land for various types of housing development to meet future needs in a cost-effective manner.
3. Coordinate new residential development with the availability of such services as sanitary sewer, water and storm water facilities, police and fire protection, recreation facilities, schools, transportation facilities, and solid waste disposal.

4. Locate multi-family units for the elderly and handicapped within easy and safe access to medical care, shopping, transportation facilities, and other necessary services. Situate multi-family housing units for lower-income families with proximity to employment opportunities and transportation facilities.
5. Work with Federal and state agencies, and area housing authorities to secure financial assistance for local housing efforts.
6. Explore developing a strategic plan for the Wisconsin Rapids Housing Authority with community input.
7. Consider the development of a comprehensive housing plan for the city.
8. Locate residential and other developments to optimize the use of alternative energy.

Chapter 4: Utilities & Community Facilities

CHAPTER 4: Utilities & Community Facilities

4.1 Background

This fourth chapter follows the same three-section format as previous chapters, starting with a background, followed by an inventory & trends, and finally, the goals, objectives, and policies section.

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include things such as electrical service, natural gas, telephone, and cable communications. Community facilities include local governmental buildings, libraries, educational institutions, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police and fire protection, medical, municipal water, and wastewater.

A. Previous Studies

Several plans were reviewed as they relate to utilities and community facilities. These plans provide a starting point for the planning process.

1. City of Wisconsin Rapids Sewer Service Area Plan, 1985

The purpose of this plan is to develop a twenty-year sanitary sewer service boundary for the Wisconsin Rapids urban area. All communities over 10,000 in population are required to have a plan in place.

The urban sanitary sewer service area boundary identifies the geographic land area within which sanitary sewer service could be made available by the year 2005 through a cost-effective, environmentally acceptable manner. In addition to delineating an urban sewer service boundary, the Sewer Service Area Plan provides a framework for future planning at each individual municipal level.

A Sewer Service Area Plan serves the following overall purposes:

- 1) It establishes the geographic boundaries for possible sanitary sewer service;
- 2) It provides a technical basis to anticipate future needs for wastewater collection and centralized treatment facilities for the palling area;

- 3) It establishes an institutional structure for reviewing boundary and plan amendments, and for approving sewer extensions and expansions of sewage treatment plants;
- 4) It serves as a guide for community officials as they make land development decisions within their respective communities; and
- 5) It identifies areas to be protected from development by designating them as environmentally sensitive areas. Such areas will control and direct the growth of communities in order to protect environmental, social, and economic concerns.

2. Sewer Facility Plan, 2007

The existing wastewater treatment facility was designed for a flow rate of 5.16 million gallons per day and organic loading of 8,927 pounds of BOD₅. Ocean Spray expanded their operation by adding a second juice production line in 2005. The BOD₅ loading at the city wastewater treatment plant exceeded 11,000 pounds. Treatment capacity and sludge handling capacity were stressed by the increased loading. A facilities planning study was completed in 2007 to address the increased production at Ocean Spray and the addition of Urban Cranberry to the sewer service area.

The wastewater treatment plant is currently being upgraded with completion scheduled for the end of 2010. The capacity of the wastewater treatment plant will be 5.27 million gallons per day with a BOD₅ loading of 17,826 pounds. The modified wastewater treatment plant flow capacity is near the existing plant flow capacity but the ability to treat organic loads and sludge will increase by nearly 100%. This project will provide the City with capacity for the existing food producing industries and to allow future expansion if additional treatment capacity is needed.

3. Wood County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, 2005

This plan's primary purpose is to identify how to prevent injury and property damage from natural hazards. Understanding how the natural environment works is a first step in mitigating natural disasters. The Pre-Disaster plan shows how the natural environment and the built environment are in conflict, and how to mitigate that conflict (e.g. development in a floodplain is at risk of damage caused by flooding). While the probability of dam breaks is low, there is a high damage potential, and so are listed in the Mitigation Plan, along with floodplain damage possibilities in Wisconsin Rapids.

4.2 Inventory & Trends

Utilities and community facilities provided by the City of Wisconsin Rapids or by other public or private entities, are inventoried and evaluated as to their present condition and adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the City. Many of the major facilities are identified on either the Utilities or Community Facilities Map.

A. Water

1. Drinking Water

The City's water system consists of wells, storage, treatment, and distribution facilities.

a. Water Supply

The water is supplied by five ground water wells. On average, water from these wells pump at about 3,500 gallons per minute (gpm).

b. Storage

The city has three water towers that provide about 2.8 million gallons of storage. They are located at 14th and Alton, 10th and Franklin, and County Highway W and 24th Street.

c. Treatment & Distribution System

Chemicals are added into the distribution system at each well. Hydrated lime is added for pH control, Hydrofluosilicic acid is Fluoride, and polymer is added to sequester iron and control concentrations of manganese, lead, and copper.

The City's water distribution system serves most of the City. The distribution system is made-up of about 828,765 feet of pipe. The Wisconsin Rapids Water Utility policy is to upgrade water mains in conjunction with street construction projects.

2. Waste Water

The City of Wisconsin Rapids Wastewater Treatment Plant is located near the airport and is currently being upgraded. The capacity of the wastewater treatment plant will be 5.27 million gallons per day with a BODs loading of 17,826 pounds. The modified wastewater treatment plant flow capacity is near the existing plant flow capacity, but the ability

to treat organic loads and sludge will increase by nearly 100 percent. The total cost for the facility upgrade is about \$20 million dollars.

Much of the city is currently served by a sanitary sewer collection system comprised of older clay pipes and newer PVC pipes.

3. Storm Water

The majority of Wisconsin Rapids is currently served by the city's concrete pipe storm sewer system. The city is under Phase II regulation of EPA.

B. Public Works

1. Street Department

The City's street department garage is located at 1411 Chase Street. The department is responsible for the maintenance of the local road system, storm sewers, and waste and recycling removal.

The local road network is discussed in the transportation chapter.

2. Solid Waste and Recycling Facility

The City of Wisconsin Rapids Garage contracts a weekly curbside pick-up of solid waste, recycling, and yard-waste for both business and residents. Unlimited amounts of recyclables are accepted from all households and businesses. Private waste haulers are also available for larger waste disposal needs.

C. Public Safety

Three agencies provide various levels of police protection in and around the City. The Wisconsin Rapids Police Department, located in City Hall, provides full-time service to the city. The police department's jurisdiction is the City of Wisconsin Rapids, and it participates in a mutual aid agreement with the surrounding communities.

The Wood County Sheriff's Department, located in Wisconsin Rapids, provides service to all the towns, villages, and cities in Wood County for law enforcement. Wisconsin Rapids, along with the rest of the county, is served by enhanced 911 emergency response system that is operated by the County.

The Wisconsin State Patrol has statewide jurisdiction on all public roads, but operates mainly on State and U.S. highways, as a matter of general

practice to enforce traffic and criminal laws, and to help motorists in need. They also help local law enforcement by reconstructing traffic accidents; inspecting trucks, school buses and ambulances; and helping local agencies with natural disasters and civil disturbances.

The Wisconsin Rapids Fire Department fire department provides fire protection throughout the city. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided to the City of Wisconsin Rapids and the Village of Biron (by contract) at level of EMT-Paramedic. The City maintains two fire stations. Fire Station 1 is located at 1511 12th Street South, and Fire Station 2 is located at 1641 West Grand Ave.

Currently, the city has a rating of four (4) for its fire protection service, as established by the Insurance Services Office (ISO). ISO's fire protection insurance is rated on a scale of one to ten, with one representing the best protection and 10 representing an essentially unprotected community. Volunteer fire departments exist in the surrounding communities. The Department has mutual aid agreements with most adjoining towns and the WDNR.

D. Medical Facilities

Riverview Hospital, located at 410 Dewey Street, is a 99-bed facility that provides full medical services. Marshfield Clinic is located in the Woodlands Business Center. In addition, St. Joseph's Hospital is located less than one hour away in Marshfield.

E. Nursing Homes

There are two facilities located in the city. One is the Wisconsin Rapids Care Center. It is located at 1350 River Run Drive and has 88 beds. The other facility is Strawberry Lane Medical and Rehabilitation Center. It is located at 130 Strawberry Lane and has 130 beds.

F. Day Care Facilities

Wisconsin Rapids has approximately 35 regulated childcare providers: 1 YMCA camp, 16 family childcare centers, and 18 group childcare centers.

G. Educational Facilities

There are several educational facilities located in the city.

Public Schools

The City and surrounding areas are served by the Wisconsin Rapids Area School District. Total enrollment in 2007 was about 5,300. Eleven schools are located throughout the area. These are:

- Lincoln High School, 1801 16th Street South
- River Cities High School, 2390 48th Street South
- East Junior High School, 311 Lincoln Street
- West Junior High, 1921 27th Street South
- Grant Elementary School, 8511 County Road WW
- Grove Elementary School, 471 Grove Avenue
- Howe Elementary School, 221 8th Street North
- Mead Elementary School, 241 17th Avenue South
- Pitsch Elementary School, 501 17th Street South
- Washington Elementary School, 2911 Washington Street
- Woodside Elementary School, 611 Two Mile Avenue

Parochial Schools

Several parochial schools serve the area as well, including:

- Assumption High School, 445 Chestnut Street
- Assumption Middle School, 440 Mead Street
- Community Christian Academy, 550 Center Street
- Immanuel Lutheran School, 111 11th Street North
- Our Lady Queen of Heaven, 750 10th Avenue South
- St. Lawrence Early Childhood Center, 551 10th Avenue North
- St. Paul's Lutheran School, 311 14th Avenue South
- St. Vincent De Paul School, 831 12th Street South

Higher Education

Mid-State Technical College is located in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. MSTC provides a variety of one and two year educational programs. The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is about 15 miles to the northeast. UWSP provides a variety of four year and master's programs.

H. Parks and Trails

The Wisconsin Rapids area park and recreation system consists of several parks and a zoo. The parks system includes a full range of developed facilities including community parks, neighborhood parks, mini-parks, and special use areas located throughout the City. The City is currently in the process of updating an outdoor recreation plan.

The city's recreational trail system is named the Ahdawgam Trails. It is a combination of dedicated, paved, off-street trails, and city streets with designated bike lanes. There are six named trails: Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple, and Orange that transect the city.

I. Energy & Telecommunications

The electrical service in the City of Wisconsin Rapids is provided by the Waterworks & Lighting Commission. Natural gas service in the City of Wisconsin Rapids is provided by WE Energies.

Telephone service in the city is provided by Wood County Telephone, now called Solarus. Cable and Internet service is provided by Solarus as well, although there are several new providers available as technology changes. Various cellular telecommunication service providers have coverage in the city and outlying area. Roaming agreements between antenna owners, and cellular and PCS providers, make creating a comprehensive list of providers very difficult.

J. Dams & Levees

There are two dams and one levee located in Wisconsin Rapids on the Wisconsin River. No dam breaks have been identified within Wood County. Therefore, there is no historic frequency upon which to base a future probability of a dam break, other than to say that the probability of a dam failure is very low. The Wood County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, 2005, provides greater detail about all natural hazards and dam failures.

Flood events in Wood County have caused substantial property and infrastructure damage in the past and have the potential to cause future damage since a significant number of structures still exist in the floodplain.

K. Other Government Facilities

City Hall – The Wisconsin Rapids City Hall is located at 444 West Grand Avenue.

Library - The McMillan Memorial Library is located at 490 East Grand Avenue.

County Courthouse - The Wood County Courthouse is located at 400 Market Street.

Post Office – The U.S. Post Office is located at 320 E. Grand Avenue.

4.3 Goal, Objectives, & Policies

Goal:

Promote an effective and efficient supply of utilities, facilities, and services that meet the needs and expectations of residents, and contribute to the sustainability of the community.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate community facilities and utility systems development and use with land use, transportation, and natural resource planning.
2. Direct intensive, sustainable land development to areas where a full array of utilities, community facilities, and public services are available.
3. Provide the appropriate level of community services and administrative facilities and practices, while striving for a low tax levy.
4. Protect public and environmental health through proper waste disposal.
5. Provide quality, accessible parks and recreational facilities, areas, and services for all residents, including persons with disabilities and the elderly.
6. Protect the lives, property, and rights of all residents through law enforcement and fire services.
7. Support high quality educational opportunities for all residents.

Policies:

1. Encourage compact and well-planned urban development areas so that community facilities and services (e.g., school bus routes, snow removal, police patrol) can be provided in a cost-effective, energy efficient manner.
2. Promote and continue joint service agreements as a means to consolidate and coordinate services between and among the county, other cities, villages, and towns, to achieve better services and/or cost savings, and an overall sustainable community.

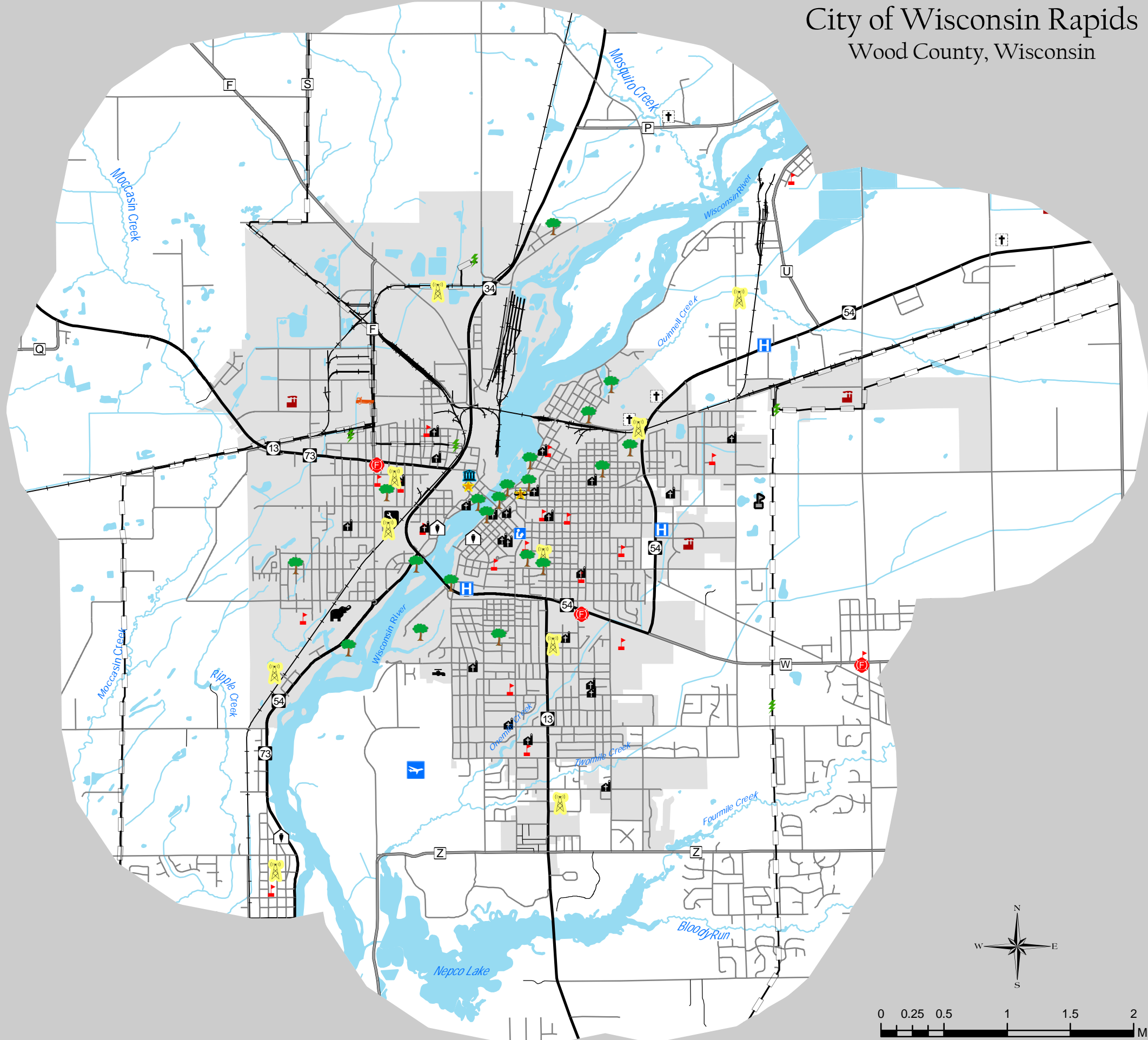
3. Update long-range sewer service area plan to accommodate projected growth and development.
4. Assure a high-quality and abundant supply of water.
5. Update the City's Outdoor Recreation Plan.
6. Help coordinate and support local emergency services and facilities (e.g., police, fire, rescue/EMS) through adequate funding, training, facilities, and equipment.
7. Study long-term space needs for City administrative and departmental functions (e.g. EMS, human services, jail), and address facility needs based on further discussions.
8. Support strategies for enhancing telecommunication capabilities.
9. Support recycling by residents to reduce solid waste disposal.
10. Encourage the provision of new and improved services and facilities geared to the elderly.
11. Provide for programs and services that protect the future overall health and viability of the community, with attention to preservation of future resource needs.
12. Provide services in the most cost-effective and energy efficient methods possible.

City of Wisconsin Rapids

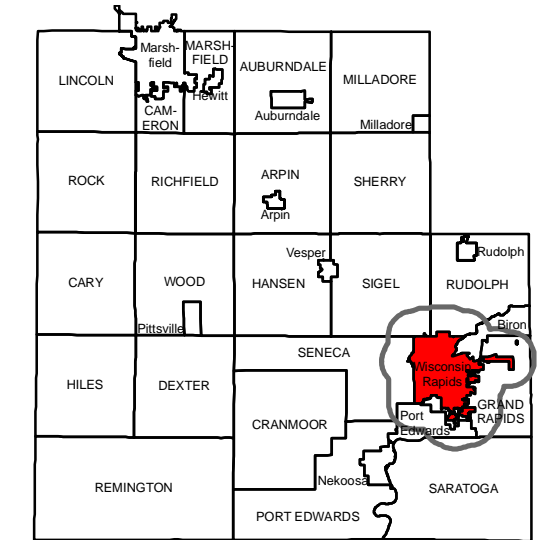
Wood County, Wisconsin

Map 4-1

Utilities & Community Facilities Map

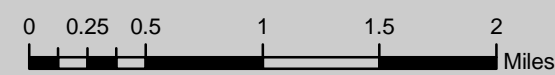
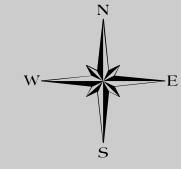


- City of Wisconsin Rapids
- US & State Highway
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- City Garage
- City Hall
- City Zoo
- County Courthouse
- County Garage
- Fire Station
- Police / Sheriff Department
- Sewage Treatment Plant
- Business / Industrial Parks
- Churches
- Parks
- Communication Towers
- Cemeteries
- Hospital / Clinic
- Library
- Museums
- Mid-State Technical College
- Schools
- Airport
- High Voltage Powerline
- Sub-Stations
- Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Wood Co, ATC

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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Chapter 5: Transportation

CHAPTER 5: Transportation

5.1 Background

This is the fifth of nine chapters that comprise the City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan. The transportation system includes all modes of travel. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as for the growth and development of the city.

This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a “compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking, and water transportation. The element shall compare the local unit's objectives, policies, goals, and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The chapter shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.”

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation establishes 14 state comprehensive planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to transportation planning: Encouraging neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices; and 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.

A. Previous Studies

Several plans were reviewed as they relate to transportation in the Wisconsin Rapids area.

1. City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan, 1981

This plan consisted of four basic sections, Economics, Public Services and Transportation, and Recreation. Much of the data and other information is dated; however, there are some recommendations that still appear to be relevant. One of the recommendations was to expand and

upgrade the city's street system. Some of the recommendations from this plan are included in this chapter.

2. 2025 South Wood County Area Transportation Study

This plan was prepared as a long-range transportation plan for the South Wood County Urban Area, similar to what is required by larger urban areas that are designated as Metropolitan Planning Organizations or MPO's. The plan provides local governments a guide to make appropriate transportation decisions. The plan includes a variety of information, including:

- Issues, and goals and objectives;
- Recommended street and highway improvements;
- Transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, and air mode overviews; and
- Recommendations for all transportation modes.

Some of the information from this plan is used later in the chapter.

3. North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) created this plan in 2004 to guide the development of bicycle facilities in north central Wisconsin. The vision of this plan is to increase the mobility of people within the Region by making bicycling a more viable and attractive transportation choice. The plan will strengthen the rural character of the county by connecting natural and cultural resource destinations, and by connecting communities, which also will have positive economic development from tourism. This plan focuses on connecting major communities within Wood County, so detailed connections within Wisconsin Rapids are not listed.

The plan contains route selections from a variety of past plans provided by both Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield. One of the routes identified is a direct line between Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield. Ownership is now beginning to fragment, so action taken soon may still secure the entire corridor.

4. Corridors 2020

Corridors 2020 was designed to enhance economic development and meet Wisconsin's mobility needs well into the future. The 3,200-mile state highway network is comprised of two main elements: a multi-lane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. All communities with over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone

system via the connector network. State Trunk Highways 34 & 54 leading north and east out of Wisconsin Rapids are both listed as Connectors.

This focus on highways was altered in 1991 with the passage of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which mandated that states take a multi-modal approach to transportation planning. Now bicycle, transit, rail, air, and other modes of travel would make up the multi-modal plan. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) response to ISTEA was the two-year planning process began in 1994 that created TransLinks 21.

5. TransLinks 21

WisDOT incorporated Corridors 2020 into TransLinks 21, and discussed the impacts of transportation policy decisions on land use. TransLinks 21 is a 25-year statewide multi-modal transportation plan that WisDOT completed in 1994. Within this needs-based plan are the following modal plans:

- State Highways Plan 2020
- Airport System Plan 2020
- Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
- Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report
- No plans exist for transit or local roads.

6. Connections 2030

Connections 2030 will be a 25-year statewide multi-modal transportation plan that is policy-based. The policies will be tied to "tiers" of potential financing levels. One set of policy recommendations will focus on priorities that can be accomplished under current funding levels. Another will identify policy priorities that can be achieved if funding levels increase. Finally, WisDOT may also identify critical priorities that must be maintained if funding were to decrease over the planning horizon of the plan. This plan will not conflict with the Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan because the policies are based upon the transportation needs outlined in TransLinks 21.

7. State Trails Network Plan

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created this plan in 2001 to identify a statewide network of trails, and to provide guidance to the DNR for land acquisition and development. Many existing trails

are developed and operated in partnership with counties. By agreement, the DNR acquires the corridor and the county government(s) develop, operate, and maintain the trail. The recommendations in this plan are presented in multi-modal transportation corridors, and the City is part of the Marshfield Rapids Corridor. Two segments from that plan involve the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

Segment 4 begins in Marshland, across the Mississippi River from Winona, MN. This potential trail corridor is on rail line that parallels the Trempealeau River east to Merrillan. The rail line continues east through the north end of the Black River State Forest to City Point. From City Point to Wisconsin Rapids, the option of remaining on the rail corridor or using roadways should be considered.

Segment 18 links with potential corridors in the Northern and South Central regions to create a continuous trail route from Ashland, on Lake Superior, to the Wisconsin/Illinois state line. This segment connects Stevens Point with Wisconsin Rapids and Adams County along the Wisconsin River.

B. Transportation Issues

Several issues related to transportation are listed below:

- ✓ Need for better coordination between transportation service providers in south Wood County.
- ✓ Need for better connection between cities/villages and towns, as well as along the river on both sides.
- ✓ Need to coordinate bicycle and walking facilities with routine construction projects.
- ✓ Take advantage of rail abandonment for trail development.
- ✓ Maintain rail accessibility throughout the city for economic development.
- ✓ Improve air transportation facility at Alexander Field.
- ✓ Additional issues relate to aging infrastructure and the cost to improve, congestion areas, overall flow of traffic or network, funding transit system, lack of intra-city bus service, and the need for an integrated pedestrian/bike plan.

5.2. Inventory & Trends

This section of the plan reviews local roads, bike and pedestrian trails, the airport, rail service, and transit. There is no water transportation service. Together these form the transportation system within the city, and connect the city to the larger state transportation system.

A. Local Roads

Local roads (streets) create the primary transportation system in the city. These roads allow people and goods to move within the city, and provide connections to the county, state, and federal road networks.

Jurisdictional Classification:

Public highways and roads are generally classified by two different systems, the jurisdictional, and the functional. Jurisdictional class refers to the entity, which owns the facility and holds responsibility for its operations and maintenance. The functional class refers to the role the particular highway/road segment plays in moving traffic within the overall roadway system.

The jurisdictional breakdown is shown in the display below. In addition to these main classifications, a road or segment of road may hold a variety of other designations including county forest road, rustic road, emergency route, truck route, etc. There are no rustic roads within Wood County. Truck routes are discussed at the end of this chapter under Trucking.

**Table 1:
Road Mileage
By Jurisdiction And Functional Class**

Jurisdiction	Functional Classification			Totals
	Arterial	Collector	Local	
State	15.5	0	0	15.5
County	2.3	0	0	2.3
City	19.2	15.2	112.2	146.6
TOTALS	37.0	15.2	112.2	164.4

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC.

Functional Classification:

The City of Wisconsin Rapids’ principal arterials include State Highways 73, 54 34, and 13, and Baker Street and sections of 8th Street. These roads are the major through roads in the city. All principal arterials, minor arterials, and collectors are displayed on the Transportation Map.

The City of Wisconsin Rapids road network consists of roughly 15.5 miles of state highways, 2.3 miles of county highways, and about 146.6 miles of city roads.

WisDOT requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and WISLR are tools local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. Cities can use this information to develop better road budgets and keep track of roads that are in need of repair.

<p><u>Functional Classifications</u></p> <p>Principal Arterials – carry high traffic volumes and provide links to major activity centers, they include Interstate Highways and freeways.</p> <p>Minor Arterials – provide trips of shorter lengths and provides more land access. The minor arterial system interconnects with the urban arterial system and provides system connections to the rural collectors.</p> <p>Collectors – provide both land access and traffic circulation within residential, commercial and industrial areas. These facilities collect traffic from local streets and channel it into the arterial system.</p> <p>Local Streets – provide direct access to residential, commercial, and industrial developments. Local streets provide the lowest level of mobility.</p> <p>Source: WISDOT Facilities Manual</p>

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Counts:

Annual average daily traffic counts (AADT) depending on volume, are measured every three or ten years by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), for over 70 sites are located in the city. Monitoring these counts provides a way to gauge how traffic volume is changing in Wisconsin Rapids. Congestion levels, pavement quality, bridge conditions, and safety are some considerations used by WisDOT to determine what state highways need improvements within existing funding levels. In 2011, counts will be conducted on all classified segments.

The interrelationships between land use and the road system make it necessary for the development of each to be balanced with the other. Types and intensities of land uses have a direct relationship to the traffic on roadways that serve those land uses. Intensely developed land often

generates high volumes of traffic. If this traffic is not planned for, safety can be seriously impaired for both local and through traffic flows.

Traffic generated and attracted by any new land use can increase congestion on the roadway system. Even without creating new access points, changes in land uses can alter the capacity of the roadway. The new business may generate more vehicle traffic. An uncontrolled number of driveways tends to affect highways by increasing the amount of turning traffic into and out from these attached driveways, thereby impairing safety and impeding traffic movements.

A variety of traffic counts are listed in Table 2. Some possible scenarios for changing volumes are described below:

1. Traffic from the northwest entrance of STH 54 (Site 1) was nearly the same in 1980 & 1989 (9,600+), and in 2002 & 2005 (12,000+). As of the 2002 count, the STH 54 bypass was complete which may account for additional traffic using STH 54, rather than CTH W to access Stevens Point, and I-39.
2. STH 54 bypass was constructed on the east side of Wisconsin Rapids between 1989 and 2002. This new road (Sites 11 & 12) replaced Baker Dr. (Site 5) and 16th St. (Sites 6 & 7), and 16th St. did lose traffic in 2002.
3. 8th St. and STH 13 are the same north-south road. 8th St. (Sites 8 & 9) is north of Riverview Expy., and STH 13 (Site 10) is a divided highway to the south of Riverview Expy. 8th St. lost about 28% of its traffic once the STH 54 bypass opened.
4. 32nd St. counts (Sites 2, 3, & 4) have gradually increased from 1980-2002, and then declined slightly in 2005. 32nd St. parallels, and lies east of, the STH 54 bypass. If declining counts are related to the new bypass, then a decline should also have occurred in 2002, since the bypass was already open.
5. County Trunk Highway (CTH) W (Site 14) originally led west into Chestnut St., and Riverview Expy.'s eastern terminus was at 8th St. By 1989, Riverview Expy. extended east to 16th St., and Chestnut St. (Site 13) started to lose traffic to this new road. As of 2002, Riverview Expy extended east to become the new CTH W. Chestnut St. (Site 13) lost about 50% of its traffic from 1980-2005 to the new CTH W road alignment. CTH W (Site 14) lost traffic between 2002-2005, possibly because through traffic chose STH 54 over CTH W to access Stevens Point and I-39, when STH 54's speed limit was raised to 65 miles per hour.

**Table 2: Annual Average Daily Traffic at Recorded Sites,
City of Wisconsin Rapids 1979-2005**

Site Location	Site ID	1980	1989	2002	2005
STH 54, W of 32 nd St.	Site 1	9,660	9,680	12,800	12,100
32 nd St., S of STH 54	Site 2	1,000	1,280	1,700	1,700
32 nd St., S of Washington St.	Site 3	1,340	1,860	2,400	2,200
32 nd St., S of Chestnut St.	Site 4	1,200	1,740	2,700	2,200
Baker Dr., W or 16 th St.	Site 5	11,940	11,840	9,000	8,100
16 th St., S of Baker Dr.	Site 6	4,620	4,420	2,600	---
16 th St., N of Riverview Expy	Site 7	3,100	7,920	3,200	---
8 th St., S of Baker Dr.	Site 8	9,000	8,880	6,400	5,800
8 th St., N of Riverview Expy.	Site 9	16,790	17,620	16,900	12,700
STH 13, S of Pepper Ave.	Site 10	18,820	25,120	23,200	23,100
STH 54 Bypass, N of Chestnut St.	Site 11	---	---	8,300	9,000
STH 54 Bypass, N of Riverview Expy.	Site 12	---	---	7,600	9,400
Chestnut St., W of 16 th St.	Site 13	6,260	5,860	2,700	3,300
CTH W, W of 32 nd St.	Site 14	6,160	6,660	10,000	7,600
Riverview Expy., E of 8 th St.	Site 15	---	6,360	14,200	13,800
Riverview Expy., W of STH 13	Site 16	6,330	17,720	19,500	19,500
Riverview Expy. bridge over WI River	Site 17	---	22,560	25,400	23,400
2 nd Ave., S of Riverview Expy.	Site 18	11,790	14,280	12,500	10,200
Riverview Expy., W of 2 nd Ave.	Site 19	---	14,520	17,700	18,200
Grand Ave., W of 17 th Ave.	Site 20	9,960	12,800	12,000	10,600
Grand Ave., W of 25 th Ave.	Site 21	10,490	8,560	8,100	8,400
CTH F, W of 17 th Ave.	Site 22	2,730	3,480	3,300	---

Source: Wisconsin Highway Traffic Volume, Department of Transportation, and NCWRPC

--- = No count available

The letters: "N, S, E, & W" uses above represent the cardinal directions of north, south, east, and west.

- Riverview Expressway has existed from STHs 13 & 73 on the west to 8th St. on the east since 1980, and has been the main Wisconsin River crossing ever since. 2nd Ave. (Site 18) is the main road into Wisconsin Rapids from Port Edwards and Nekoosa. 2nd Ave. traffic increased from 1980 to 1989, but then declined in 2002 and again in 2005. Two possible explanations may prove of such a decline on 2nd Ave: 1) major employers in Port Edwards and Nekoosa may have lost employment that would draw Wisconsin Rapids residents, and 2) major retail has developed along STH 13 south of Airport Ave., and residents from Port Edwards and Nekoosa may use the STH 73 bridge over the Wisconsin River instead of Riverview Expy. to access this shopping area.

Road Improvements:

The City road network is maintained by the Garage & Street Department. Each year the department undertakes projects to maintain and enhance the system. One planning tool utilized is the Road Improvement Plan, which outlines projects over a five-year or more period. See Tables 3 to 7. Table 8 displays projects identified even further out 2014 to 2018.

Table 3: City Roadway Improvements, 2009

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Type of improvement
2009	W. Grand Ave.	1 st Ave. to W. Jackson St.	Revitalization design
2009	Strawberry Ln.	1 st St. to cul-du-sac	Street reconstruction
2009	Rosecrans St.	11 th Ave. to 17 th Ave. S.	Street reconstruction
2009	NB W. Riverview Expy.	Chase St. to 2 nd Ave.	Concrete pavement repair
2009	WB E. Riverview Expy.	3 rd St. S. to Lincoln St.	Concrete pavement repair
2009	Apple St.	23 rd St. to 28 th St.	Woodlands Business Center
2009	28 th St.	Apple St. to Peach St.	Woodlands Business Center
2009	Oak St.	24 th St. to Peach St.	Woodlands Business Center street lights
2009		Two Mile Ave. 14 th St.	Retention pond
2009		21 st Ave. and Industrial St.	Retention pond

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2008

Table 4: City Roadway Improvements, 2010

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Type of improvement
2010	Amundson St.	26 th St. to 28 th St.	Sewer extension
2010	21 st Pl.	Saratoga St. to Oak St.	Sewer extension
2010	22 nd St. N.	Baker St. to Washington St.	Sewer extension
2010	Goggins St.	77 th St. S. to 10 th Ave. S.	Street reconstruction
2010	Hagen St.	18 th Ave. S. to 19 th Ave. S.	Street reconstruction
2010		East G cul-du-sac	Street reconstruction
2010	NB W. Riverview Expy.	Chase St. to 2 nd Ave.	Concrete pavement repair
2010	WB E. Riverview Expy.	3 rd St. S. to Lincoln St.	Concrete pavement repair
2010	27 th St.	Apple to Chestnut St.	Woodlands Business Center
2010	Apple St.	23 rd St. S. to 27 th St. S.	Woodlands Business Center (street lighting)
2010	30 th St. N.	Amundson St. to Kingston Rd.	Rapids East Commerce Center TIF #6
2010	29 th St. N.	Amundson St. to Kingston Rd.	Rapids East Commerce Center TIF #6
2010	Jefferson St.	25 th Ave. N. to RR	West Side Industrial Park
2010	W. Grand Ave.	1 st Ave to 4 th Ave.	Downtown construction

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2008

Table 5: City Roadway Improvements, 2011

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Type of improvement
2011	Sampson St.	Two Mile Ave. to Whitrock Ave.	Sewer extension
2011	Whitrock Ave.	Sampson St. to Crestwood Ct.	Sewer extension
2011	Whitrock Ave.	8 th St. to 16 th St.	Sewer extension
2011	High St.	17 th Ave. N. to 21 st Ave. N.	Street reconstruction
2011	20 th St. S	Oak St. to Chestnut St.	Street reconstruction
2011	3 rd Ave. S.	Bole Creek to 400s of May St.	Street reconstruction
2011	Apple St.	28 th St. to 30 th St.	Woodlands Business Center
2011	27 th St.	S. Apple St. to Chestnut St. (street lighting)	Woodlands Business Center street lighting
2011	29 th Ave. N.	Jefferson St. to Engel Rd.	West Side Industrial Park
2011	W. Grand Ave.	4 th Ave. to W. Riverview Expy.	Downtown construction
2011	Engel Rd.	25 th Ave. N. to 29 th Ave. N.	West Side Industrial Park
2011	EB E. Riverview Expy.	3 rd St. S. to Lincoln St.	Concrete pavement repair
2011	WB E. Riverview Expy.	Lincoln St. to 8 th St. S.	Concrete pavement repair

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2008

Table 6: City Roadway Improvements, 2012

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Type of improvement
2012	Carey St.	27 th Ave. S to 29 th Ave. S.	Sewer extension
2012	29 th Ave. S.	Boles St. to Carety St.	Sewer extension
2012	Russell St.	20 th Ave. S. to 25 th Ave. S.	Sewer extension
2012	25 th Ave. S.	Gaynor Ave. to south end	Street reconstruction
2012	High St.	12 th Ave. N. to 17 th Ave. N.	Street reconstruction
2012	E. Grand Ave.	Grand Ave. bridge to 4 th St.	Downtown revitalization
2012	3 rd St.	E. Grand Ave. to Oak St.	Downtown revitalization
2012	3 rd Ave.	Johnson St. to W. Jackson St.	Downtown revitalization
2012	EB E. Riverview Expy.	8 th St. S. to 12 th St. S.	Concrete pavement repair
2012	EB E. Riverview Expy.	Lincoln St. to 8 th St. S.	Concrete pavement repair
2012	30 th St.	Apple St. to Peach St.	Woodlands Business Center
2012	Apple St.	27 th St. S. to 30 th St. S.	Woodlands Business Center street lighting
2012	Engel Rd.	29 th Ave. N. to 33 rd Ave. N.	West Side Industrial Park

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2008

Table 7: City Roadway Improvements, 2013

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Type of improvement
2013	Greenwood Ln.	Cliff St. to Sampson St.	Sewer extension
2013	Chase St.	25 th Ave. S. to 29 th Ave. S.	Sewer extension
2013	North St.	23 rd St. N. to 26 th St. N.	Sewer extension
2013	WB E. Riverview Expy.	8 th St. S. to 12 th St. S.	Concrete pavement repair
2013	EB E. Riverview Expy.	12 th St. S. to 16 th St. S.	Concrete pavement repair
2013	28 th St.	Oak St. to Saratoga St.	Woodlands Business Center
2013	28 th St.	Apple St. to Peach St.	Woodlands Business Center street lighting
2013	48 th St. N.	Commerce Dr. to Kingston Rd.	Rapids East Commerce Center
2013	Wood Ave.	Cliff St. to Sampson St.	Street reconstruction
2013	11 th St. S.	Grove Ave. to north end	Street reconstruction
2013	17 th Ave. N.	W. Grand Ave. to RR tracks	Street reconstruction
2013	2 nd Ave.	W. Jackson St. to Johnson St.	Downtown revitalization
2013	Oak St.	3 rd St. to 4 th St.	Downtown revitalization
2013	2 nd St. S.	E. Grand Ave. to Birch St.	Downtown revitalization

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2008

Table 8: City Roadway Improvements, 2014-2019

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Type of improvement
2014	1 st St. N.	E. Jackson St. to Market Baker St.	Concrete pavement repair
2014	28 th St.	Oak St. to Saratoga St.	Woodlands Business Center street lighting
2014	E. Grand Ave.	Grand Ave. Bridge to 4 th St.	Woodlands Business Center
2015	E. Jackson St.	3 rd St. N. to E. Grand Ave.	Concrete pavement repair
2015	W. Jackson St.	4 th Ave. N. to Riverview Expy.	Concrete pavement repair
2015	E. Jackson St.	Bridge to 3 rd St. N.	Downtown revitalization
2015	E. Grand Ave.	4 th St. to Lincoln St.	Downtown revitalization
2016	W. Grand Ave.	25 th Ave. to RR viaduct	Concrete pavement repair
2016	25 th Ave. N.	W. Grand Ave. to RR tracks	Concrete pavement repair
2016	W. Jackson St.	Bridge to 4 th Ave. N.	Downtown revitalization
2016		Intersection of E. Grand/E. Jackson/Lincoln St.	Downtown revitalization
2017	8 th St. S.	E. Grand Ave. to Chestnut St.	Concrete pavement repair
2017	8 th St. S.	Chestnut St. to Pepper Ave.	Concrete pavement repair
2017		Intersection of W. Jackson St. and 4 th Ave.	Downtown revitalization
2018	8 th St. S.	Pepper Ave. to Two Mile Ave.	Concrete pavement repair
2018	8 th St.	Two Mile Ave. to Lake Ave.	Concrete pavement repair
2018	E. Grand Ave.	Lincoln St. to 8 th St.	Downtown revitalization
2019	STH 34	W. Grand Ave. to north city limits	Concrete pavement repair
2019	STH 54	Expy. To Washington St.	Concrete pavement repair

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2008

The Wood County Highway Department prepares its own roadway management plan that identifies projects on county highways. Annual road improvement plans are created and submitted to the County Board for approval. Table 9 shows the current 5-year Improvement Plan for county trunk highways.

Table 9: County Roadway Improvements, 2008-2013

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Mileage of project	Type of improvement
2008	DD	STH 34 to CTH B	3.00	Bituminous overlay
2009	F	Lonely Road – CTH N	3.00	Bituminous overlay
2009	Q	Matthies Road – Searles Lane		Bituminous overlay
2011	Z	STH 73 to County Line	4.50	Bituminous overlay
2011	U	STH 54 to Short Street	1.25	Bituminous overlay
2013	Q	STH 13 to CTH D	5.50	Bituminous overlay
2013	Z	CTH U to STH 13	4.50	Bituminous overlay
2013	U	STH 54 to CTH W	3.25	Bituminous overlay
2013	G	STH 54 to STH 173	1.75	Bituminous overlay

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, April 2008

The WisDOT prepares six-year highway improvement programs by region that identify projects for interstate highways, U.S. highways, and state highways. Roadway maintenance projects, in and in close proximity to the City of Wisconsin Rapids are listed in Table 10.

Table 10: State Roadway Improvements, 2008–2013

Year	Rd/Hwy	Location	Mileage of project	Type of improvement
2010-2013	13	WI River Bridge B-71-33	0.29	Bridge deck overlay
2010-2013	13	WI Rapids to Friendship	5.77	Pavement replacement
2010-2013	13	Yellow River Bridge B-71-0755	0.60	Bridge replacement
2010-2013	34	WI Rapids to Junction City	0.90	Roadway maintenance
2010-2013	66	Mosquito Creek Bridge B-71-0755	0.00	Bridge replacement
2010-2013	73	Plainfield to WI Rapids	5.82	Roadway maintenance

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, April 2008

B. Trucking

The truck operator map identifies the Wisconsin highways for operation of vehicles, and combinations of vehicles, the overall lengths of which cannot be limited. Trans. 276 clarifies other statutory provisions or federal rules affecting the weight, width, and length of vehicles and combinations of vehicles and the number of vehicles in combination.

State trunk highways 13, 34, 54, and part of 73 are designated as long truck routes within Wisconsin Rapids.

In spring, county trunk highways limit semi-truck travel when they are posted with weight limits. When county trunk highways do not have posted weight limits, then basic semi-trucks are allowed.

Local truck routes often branch out from these highways to link local industry with the official designated state highways, as well as to distribute commodities with the local area. Mapping these local truck routes is beyond the scope of this plan, and local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

C. Bike & Pedestrian Facilities

Both bike and pedestrian facilities are important for the residents of the city. Often these are multi-use trails used for recreational activity, but if planned correctly, they can provide an alternative to driving for short trips.

WisDOT has determined bicycling conditions are on all county and state highways. STH 34 entering Wisconsin Rapids from the north, STH 13, 34, and 73, and CTHs W and Z are currently ranked as poor for bicycle travel because of the lack of on-street bicycling accommodations. No city roads were rated either good or bad for bicycle suitability by WisDOT. All roads in Wisconsin Rapids are available for bicycle travel.

A multi-use asphalt paved trail exists on the west side of the Wisconsin River from STH 73 south through the city. This is part of the Ahdawagam Trail System in the city. See Map 5-1.

Sidewalks create the primary pedestrian network. Sidewalks exist in most residential areas and throughout the downtown. Issues of most concern to pedestrians are missing sidewalk sections, broken or uneven sections, and intersections without curb ramps. Roads that do not have sidewalks may not provide areas to walk outside of the traffic lanes. These are less desirable pedestrian facilities, since there is no separation between moving vehicles and the pedestrian. All roads in Wisconsin Rapids are available for pedestrian travel.

D. Airport

The City of Wisconsin Rapids, the City of Nekoosa, the Village of Port Edwards, and the Town of Grand Rapids operate the Alexander Field - South Wood County Airport. The airport is located on the south side of the city.

Alexander Field - South Wood County Airport (ISW) has two asphalt runways (3,640, and 5,500 feet long), and one turf runway that is 2,100 feet long. As of August 2006, there were 46 single engine airplanes, 3 multi-engine airplanes, and 15 ultralights based at the airport. Of the approximately 44 aviation operations (takeoffs and landings) per day, 50% were for transient general aviation, 41% were local aviation, and 9% were air taxi service. The airport is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes (piston or turboprop) used in commuter air service. These aircraft generally have a gross takeoff weight of less than 60,000 pounds, with approach speeds below 141 knots, and wingspans of less than 118 feet. There is also a heliport at the airport. This is used by Riverview Hospital.

The nearest commercial air service airport is the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) in Mosinee. There are two private airports near Wisconsin Rapids: Winch Field (6WI1) has turf runways; and Jennie's Field Airport (WI13) also has turf runways.

E. Rail

According to the 2008 DOT Rail Map, Canadian National owns all rail tracks through the city; however, Union Pacific does operate through the city as well. Switching service is available seven days a week. Currently, about six trains travel through the city daily.

F. Bus/Transit

The City of Wisconsin Rapids contracts with River City Cab to provide shared-ride, reduced-rate taxi service for the elderly and handicapped. The program is subsidized by federal and state mass transit funds. While regular adult fares are \$3.25, the fare for the elderly and handicapped is \$1.75. In addition, in cooperation with the Wood County Division on Aging, River City Cab provides reduced fare passes for low-income persons, the elderly, and the handicapped. The fare assistance passes, which are submitted to the county by River City Cab for reimbursement, pay \$.50 of the \$1.75 rate, leaving \$1.25 to be paid by the passenger. The taxi operates from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday; and from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.

No intercity bus routes exist within Wood County.

G. Transportation Facilities for Disabled

Transportation services help older and disabled adults access the services and programs they need to remain independent. Para-transit is a specialized transit service to serve elderly and handicapped persons who require more accessible vehicles and flexible routing. Providers of this service are usually existing municipal transit operators, taxi companies, and private companies with buses and vans.

Wood County Division on Aging provides reduced fare passes for the elderly and handicapped to use River City Cab; see additional description of this service in "E. Bus/Transit" above.

Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Central Wisconsin operates two types of transportation programs for the elderly in Wisconsin Rapids—a bus service, and volunteer drivers. Buses operate door-to-door service in Wisconsin Rapids from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Monday through Friday. Rural areas in Wood County may ride the bus every 3rd Friday to Wisconsin Rapids for a fee. A 24-hour advance notice is requested for all bus transportation. The volunteer driver program offers an affordable means of transportation by using volunteers who use their own vehicles. Door to door, service to medical facilities in Wisconsin is

provided with 5 days of advanced notice to allow adequate time for scheduling. Eligibility for the volunteer driver program requires one to be 60 years old or older, have a need for the ride for medical or nutrition site access, must be able to enter and exit a personal vehicle, and must be a Wood County resident.

H. Transportation Programs

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is the primary provider of programs to assist local transportation systems. Several programs are available, such as:

- General Transportation Aids
- Flood Damage Aids
- Local Bridge Improvement Assistance
- Local Transportation Enhancements
- Traffic Signing & Marking Enhancement Grant

Additionally, the State's new complete streets law requires pedestrian and on-street bicycle accommodations for all state and federally funded highway/roadway reconstruction and new construction projects. More information on these programs can be obtained by contacting the WisDOT region office in Wisconsin Rapids.

5.3. Goal, Objectives & Policies

Goal:

To provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, energy-efficiency, and safety, and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

Objectives:

1. Maintain the efficiency, safety, and functionality of the City's existing transportation system, which links the urban center with outlying towns, adjacent communities, and the region.
2. Encourage a balanced transportation network that provides a choice in the type of mode (i.e. car, bus, bike, walking, etc.), easy transfer between modes, and transportation opportunities for those without use of an automobile.
3. Achieve close coordination between transportation facilities and land use planning and development.
4. Minimize the negative impacts of proposed transportation facility expansions.

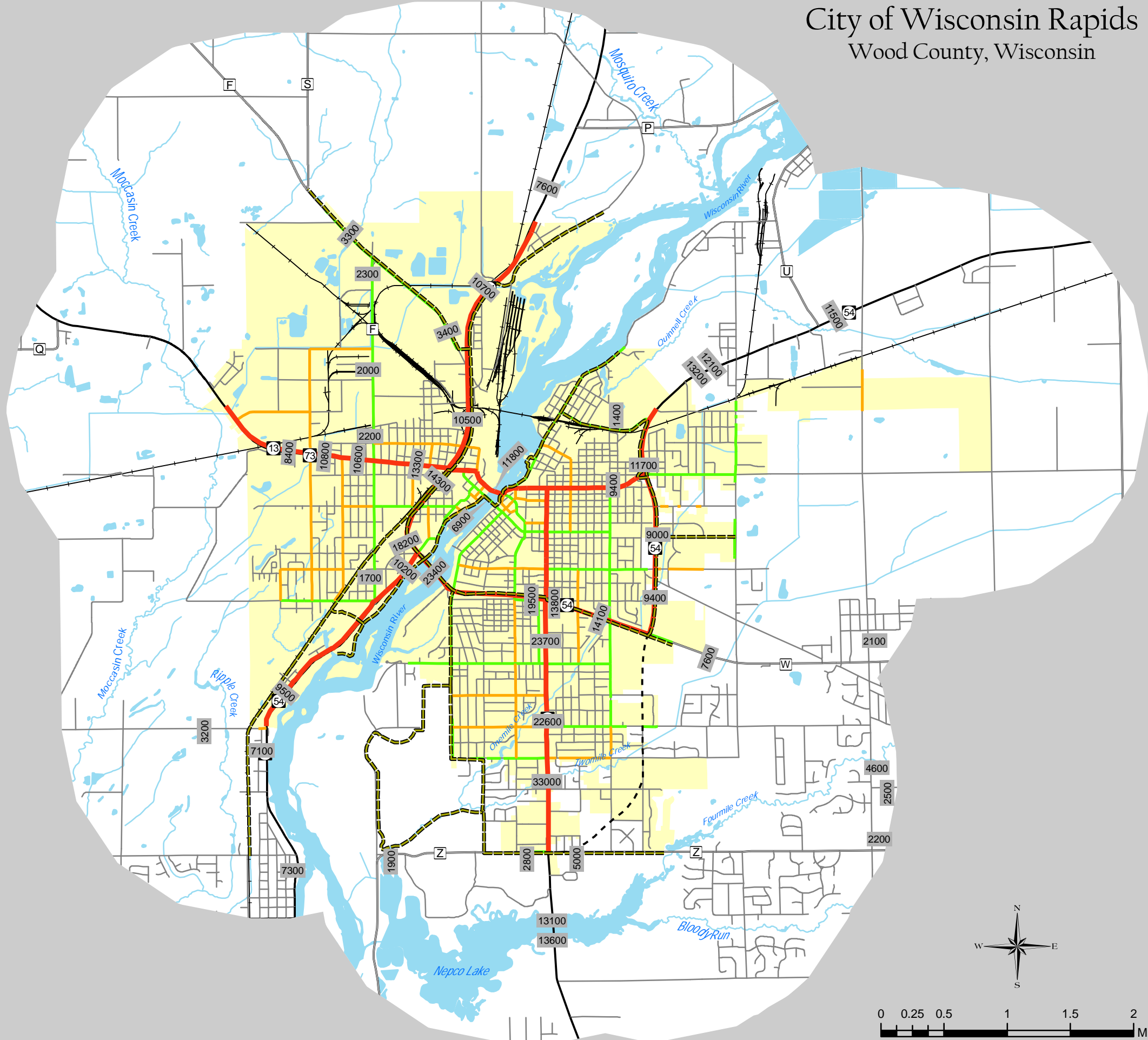
Policies:

1. Work with WisDOT to control access onto highways to preserve capacity and movement of traffic, including the development of access control plans for these facilities. Encourage WisDOT to commission/fund highway corridor plans for these highways to address corridor development, intersection deficiencies, sight distances, and turning movements.
2. Plan for extension of major arterials and other roads as necessary to complete connections, provide for appropriate routes for trucks and emergency vehicles, and serve planned development areas.
3. Consider future road locations, extensions, connections, and/or accesses when reviewing development plans and proposals.
4. Work with County and towns to plan for a network of interconnected new roads in planned development areas to control highway access and improve access to these areas.

5. Space roadway access according to minimum standards to increase safety and preserve capacity.
6. Avoid land uses that generate heavy traffic on roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
7. Plan for new developments to minimize excessive road construction and energy use, and avoid burden on the City for maintenance.
8. Encourage traditional neighborhood designs (TND) and cluster development as a means to support a range of transportation choices and control traffic and energy-use impacts.
9. Support additional transportation options, including sidewalks and on and off street bicycle facilities, for all segments of the population (e.g. the disabled, seniors, low-income individuals, and people seeking an alternative means of transportation), including those without access to an automobile.
10. Develop Airport Land Use Ordinance under Wisconsin Statutes sections 114.135 and 114.136 to protect the public investment in the South Wood County Airport.
11. Work with rail service providers and users to address facility or service issues in order to maintain safe and efficient rail operations in the City.
12. Evaluate areas where speeding is a concern, and identify measures to address safety concerns.
13. Ensure continued energy efficiency of traffic signal systems, while ensuring efficient, safe traffic flow.
14. Incorporate pedestrian and on-street bicycle accommodations into all reconstruction and new construction projects, particularly for classified roadways and highways. Any state and/or federally funded projects along city streets and state connecting highways by law will require these accommodations.
15. Work with WisDOT, Wood County, and surrounding communities to establish park-and-ride lots in the area for long distance commuters. WisDOT has identified in Connection 2030 the desire for future lots near the STH 34/STH 66 and STH 54/CTH U intersections.

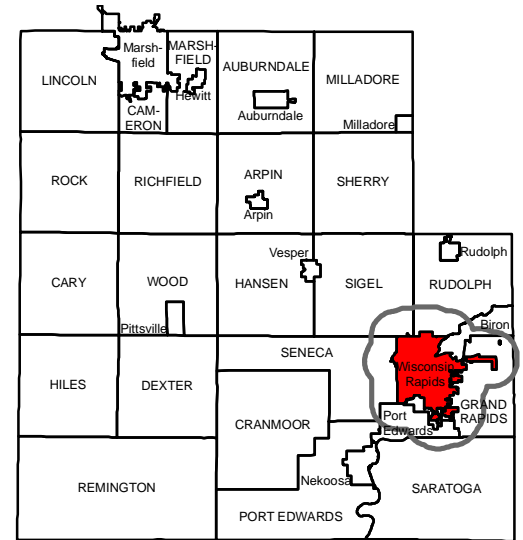
City of Wisconsin Rapids Wood County, Wisconsin

Map 5-1 Transportation Map



- City of Wisconsin Rapids
- US & State Highway
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Proposed HWY 54 By-Pass
- 500 Annual Average Daily Traffic Count, 2005
- Water
- Ahdawagam Bike Trails

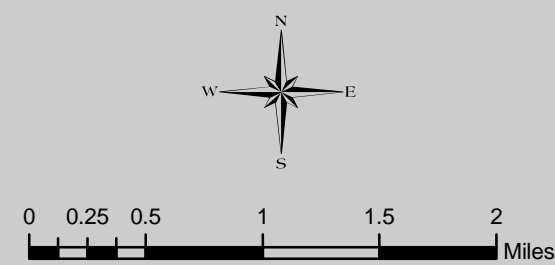
- ### Urban Functional Classification System
- Principal Arterial
 - Principal Arterial
 - Minor Arterial
 - Collector
- City of Wisconsin Rapids Only



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, WI DOT, Wood Co

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

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Chapter 6: Economic Development

CHAPTER 6: Economic Development

6.1 Background

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

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation established 14 state planning goals. Of these 14 goals, two relate directly to economic development, while three more are related to economic development. The two economic development goals are: promoting the expansion and stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels; and promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

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

Local, county, regional, and state economic development programs that apply to Wisconsin Rapids are identified, as are economic development related issues, and overall goals, objectives and policies.

A. Previous Studies

1. Ahead of the Current: A Downtown Revitalization Plan for the City of Wisconsin Rapids, 2007

This plan focuses directly on the downtown. The first part of the plan is an inventory and assessment of the downtown; the second part was an implementation plan. Four themes were identified in this process:

- Coordination & Cooperation
- Economic Positioning

- Design & Infrastructure
- Publicity & Promotion

The downtown study identified additional public infrastructure and support of both the business and general public necessary for the effort to be successful.

2. Downtown Waterfront Plan, 2009

A Waterfront Grant was received by the city, and builds on some of the finding of the 2007 downtown planning process. The Waterfront Plan provides a planning tool, for both the short and long terms, to guide improvements in the downtown area. The overall goal of the plan is to enhance pedestrian connectivity, diversity, visual appeal, and other elements to enable the city to retain existing businesses and attract new ones, provide interesting places to live and visit, and create the activity necessary to allow the downtown to thrive.

3. Wood County Comprehensive Plan

The county is currently working toward the completion of a county comprehensive plan. The Economic Development Chapter is still in draft form.

4. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

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

Key findings from this regional level plan involve an inventory of the physical geography of the Region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are covered with analysis of the economic status of the region. Construction, wholesale trade, retail, transportation, and manufacturing all have grown rapidly since 1980. Finance, insurance, real estate, and services have lagged behind national averages.

B. Economic Development Issues

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

✓ Change of the Downtown

Over the last several years, the downtown has lost numerous businesses to other areas. There is an organized effort to revitalize the downtown. A study was done related to this in 2007.

✓ Loss of High Paying Manufacturing Jobs

Over the last decade, the general economy has changed. Manufacturing jobs, especially those in the paper sector, have been lost, and the pay scales of the jobs that have been created recently are not at the same pay level. In general, there has been a change toward more service or retail jobs. Unfortunately, manufacturing is on the decline at both the state and national levels.

✓ Income Levels

Although city residents have made progress toward closing the gap over the last twenty years, income levels still are below county, state, and national levels.

✓ Commuting Patterns

Wood County is a “net commuter” county, meaning more people come into the county than leave the county for employment opportunities. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 5,000 persons come into the county daily, about half from Marathon County, followed by Clark and Adams.

✓ Labor Force Skills

An issue identified by existing manufacturing and other entry-level employers is the issue of workforce skills. The existing skill set worker training is a priority. Local firms are spending time and money to train their labor force to minimal levels. That takes funds away from other functions of the business. This also creates difficulty in the attraction of new employers. The local Community Foundation recently received a federal grant to further identify the needs of the area workforce and develop strategies for future training.

6.2 Inventory and Trends

The City of Wisconsin Rapids comprises a major portion of the Wood County economy; therefore, this chapter begins with a review of county level data. The county level is also the primary data level for economic data.

A. Wood County

The following section reviews the twelve major Industry Sectors, as categorized by the U.S. Census Bureau. Unfortunately, this data is only collected and released on a ten-year cycle; therefore, the data is often several years old. The Census has developed a new survey called the American Community Survey to release data more frequently; however, the city is too small to qualify.

1. Industry Sectors

The twelve sectors are: public administration; agriculture, forestry and fishing; mining; construction; manufacturing; transportation and communications; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance and real estate; education, health and social services; business, personal and entertainment services; and other.

In 2000, there were over 37,000 persons employed in the county. The largest sector was manufacturing, followed by education, health, and social services, and retail trade. In terms of percent of total employment, manufacturing has declined from over 27 percent of total employment to about 24 percent. Table 1 displays 1990 and 2000 employment by industry sector.

Between 1990 and 2000, the three fastest growing sectors, in terms of percentages, were business, personal, and entertainment services, construction, and public administration. However, public administration accounts for less than three percent of total county employment. Four industry sectors actually experienced declines in total employment.

**Table 1:
Employment by Industry, Wood County**

Sector	1990	2000	1990 to 2000 % Change
Public Administration	725	980	35.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	1,655	1,321	-20.0%
Mining	31	0	NA
Construction	1,560	2,333	49.6%
Manufacturing	9,284	9,144	-1.5%
Transportation and Communications	1,844	2,266	22.9%
Wholesale Trade	1,115	929	-16.7%
Retail Trade	6,282	5,150	-18.0%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1,225	1,471	20.1%
Education, Health and Social Services	6,984	8,558	22.5%
Business, Personal and Entertainment Services	1,954	3,825	96.0%
Other	1,514	1,368	-10.0%
County Totals:	34,173	37,345	9.0%

Source: Fact Finder 1990 & US Census 2000

Public Administration:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector grew by over 35 percent. Less than 1,000 persons were employed in this sector, making this the 10th largest sector in the county.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector declined by about 20 percent. About 1,300 persons are employed in this sector, which makes it the ninth largest sector.

Mining:

Although the data shows no employment in 2000, that does not mean there is no employment in this sector. Since this is such a small sector, data for it is often excluded to protect proprietary information if only one or two firms are involved in this activity.

Construction:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector grew by almost 50 percent. About 2,300 persons are employed in this sector, making it the fifth largest in the county.

Manufacturing:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector declined by 1.5 percent. Over 9,100 persons are employed in this sector, making it the largest in the county.

Transportation and Communication:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector increased by almost 23 percent. Over 2,200 persons are employed in this sector, making it the sixth largest in the county.

Wholesale Trade:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector declined by over 16 percent. Less than 1,000 people were employed in this sector, making it the eleventh largest of twelve sectors in the county.

Retail Trade:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector declined by about 18 percent. However, some of this decline is attributed to the way the data has been categorized by the Census Bureau between 1990 and 2000. Over 5,100 people are employed in this sector, making it the third largest in the county.

Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector increased by over 20 percent. About 1,400 persons were employed in this sector, making it the seventh largest in the county.

Education, Health & Social Services:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector had growth exceeding 22 percent. Over 8,500 people are employed in this sector, making it the second largest in the county.

Business, Personal & Entertainment Services:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector grew by 96 percent. Over 3,800 persons are employed in this sector, making it the fourth largest sector in the county.

Other:

Between 1990 and 2000, this sector declined by 10 percent. About 1,300 people are employed in this sector, making it the eighth largest sector.

2. Labor Force

Labor force is closely related to the total population. In 2000, the county population was 75,555, and the labor force was 39,339, a participation rate of about 67 percent. The labor force is simply the number of people, age 16 and over, employed or looking to be employed in an area. Those persons over sixteen who are students, homemakers, retired, institutionalized, or unable/unwilling to seek employment are not considered part of the labor force.

Some of the growth in the county's labor force has been due to the increase in the participation rate, as shown in Table 2. In 1990, only 65.9 percent of the population over 16 was in the labor force. By 2000, that rate increased to almost 67.1 percent. The national participation rate in 2000 was 48 percent, and the state rate was 69 percent.

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. In 1990, the county had 6.1 percent unemployment, which was the same as the state rate of 6.6 percent. In 2000, the county had a 5.0 percent unemployment rate, compared to the state rate of 4.7 percent.

Table 2:
Labor Force Indicators, Wood County

Indicator	1990	2000	Change
Labor Force	36,447	39,339	8%
Employed	34,173	37,345	9%
Unemployed	2,224	1,976	-11%
Unemployment Rate	6.1%	5.0%	-1.1
Participation Rate	65.9%	67.1%	+1.2

Source: U.S. Census

The most recent employment data available is from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development for 2008. The labor force had grown to 41,550, and the unemployment rate was 5.4 percent.

3. Educational Levels

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

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

4. Income Levels

There are two measures of income: median household income and per capita income. Median household income provides an indication of the economic ability of the typical family or household unit, while per capita income provides a measure of relative earning power on a per person level.

As identified in the Issues and Opportunities chapter of this plan, the county Median Household income in 2000 was \$41,595 and the Per Capita income was \$20,203. Both Median and Per Capita Incomes have risen over the last twenty years, but still lag behind the state median income of \$43,791 and Per Capita Income of \$21,271.

B. City of Wisconsin Rapids

The previous information has provided the county context for this topic. Below are a variety of local level data related to economic development.

1. Economic Profile

Labor Force:

The city's local labor force represents about 22 percent of the total county labor force. In 2000, Table 3 shows that there were almost 8,800 people in the labor force, which represents a participation rate of 61 percent. Both the labor force and the number employed increased over the last ten-year period, although at a slower rate than the county.

Table 3:
Labor Force Indicators, City of Wisconsin Rapids, 1990–2000

Indicator	1990	2000	Change
Labor Force	8,249	8,732	6%
Employed	7,655	8,225	7%
Unemployed	582	507	-13%
Unemployment Rate	7.0%	5.8%	-1.2
Participation Rate	58.0%	61.0%	+3.0

Source: U.S. Census

Occupations:

Occupation data from the U.S. Census in Table 5 indicates that the majority of the persons residing in the city work in occupations of production and transportation, followed by sales and office, and management and professional. These are also the same three primary occupations identified in the county.

Table 4:
Residents by Occupation, 2000

Occupation	City of Wisconsin Rapids	
Management/professional	1,911	23.2%
Service	1,439	17.5%
Farming/forestry	87	1.1%
Sales/office	2,154	26.2%
Construction	732	8.9%
Production/transportation	1,902	23.1%

Source: U.S. Census

Incomes:

Both median income and per capita incomes were discussed in the Issues and Opportunities chapter. The city’s median household income in 2000 was \$34,956, and the Per Capita income was \$17,723. Although both Median and Per Capita Incomes have risen over the last twenty years, they still lag behind the county and state growth rates.

2. Major Employers

Table 6 lists the major employers in the Wisconsin Rapids area, which represent a variety of different economic sectors, including manufacturing, insurance, and government.

**Table 5:
Major Area Employers**

Name:	Product/Service	Employed
Wisconsin Rapids School District	K – 12 School District	500-999
Riverview Hospital	Hospital	500-999
Domtar	Paper Industry	1000+
Ocean Spray	Food Processing	100-249
Advanced Fiberglass Technologies	Manufacturing	100-249
NewPage	Paper Industry	1000+
Renaissance Learning	Software	100-249
Wood County	Government	500-999

Source: City of Wisconsin Rapids, Heart of Wisconsin, WiDWD

3. Employment Areas and Existing Facilities

The city has a variety of infrastructure amenities for business development, including:

- Three fully serviced business and industrial parks.
- Transportation access to County Highways F, W & Z, and State Highways 13, 34, 54, and 73, as well as four-lane access to Highway 39/51.
- A public-use airport with a 6,000-foot runway suitable for commercial and freight service. It is classified as a Basic Utility – B Airport.

- Rail service is available from both Canadian National and Union Pacific Railroads.
- Telephone, cable, internet, and fiber optics.
- Water, sanitary sewer, and local roads throughout the city.

These types of resources enhance the city's ability to maintain and expand its economic base. Business and industrial parks are critical economic development infrastructure for a city. The creation of business and industrial parks enables the city to compete with other communities to attract new businesses, or to relocate existing businesses for expansions. An industrial park is a parcel of land that has been developed according to a plan that provides sites for potential business and industrial firms. The park should be designed in such a way that it ensures compatibility among industrial operations and the existing activities of the area in which the park is located.

The three city industrial parks are the Wisconsin Rapids Westside Industrial Park with about 540 acres, of which 30 acres are available; Rapids East Commerce Center with about 210 acres of which about 10 acres are available; and Woodlands Business Center with about 150 acres of which about 30 are available.

4. Strengths and Weaknesses

The following section lists the community strengths and weaknesses. Strengths are the things that are positives for economic growth, while weaknesses are negatives toward economic development. Each of these should be further examined and actions taken to maximize and minimize the impacts on the community.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS:

ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- Reasonable cost of living
- Excellent health care services
- Existing economic clusters in forest products, food processing, and distribution
- Lower wage rates
- Adequate utilities
- Wide range of Prices on land and buildings

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Available business and industrial space
- Rail service by two providers
- Capacity of infrastructure for growth
- Necessary utilities, services, and telecommunications
- State highway network
- Proximity to highway 51/39

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Available labor
- Quality schools /commitment to education
- Strong work ethic of labor force
- High level of interest in economic development
- Safe community
- Good business & education partnerships

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Abundant area natural resources, such as water, soils, and wood fibers
- Four season climate
- Excellent recreation opportunities
- Good water and air quality

OTHER

- Overall good quality of life
- Central location in state and close proximity to Marshfield, Stevens Point – Plover, and Wausau

COMMUNITY WEAKNESSES:

ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- Shortage of angel and venture financing for business growth
- Need for better coordination and cooperation
- High property taxes
- Location to major markets
- Lack of promotion and marketing for the area
- Lack of marketing programs for the region
- Improving community preparedness
- Decline of manufacturing sector
- Slow decision making by state and local governments

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Transportation limitation imposed by interstate system access

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Difficulty retaining young workers
- Lack of specialized training programs for technology related jobs
- Aging workforce
- Limited partnerships between business and education

OTHER

- Proximity to Marshfield, Stevens Point – Plover, and Wausau

5. Local Economic Development Capacity

There are four primary economic development organizations in the community. These are: the Wisconsin Rapids Area Development Corporation, the Heart of Wisconsin Business Alliance, the City of Wisconsin Rapids, and the Wood County Economic Development Corporation.

Heart of Wisconsin Business Alliance

The Heart of Wisconsin Business and Economic Alliance, or HOW, receives financial support from annual membership dues, local government funding, public and private grants, sponsorships, program revenues and more. HOW serves as a first contact for business resource assistance, maintains the Wisconsin Rapids revolving loan fund, provides entrepreneurial training, and either sponsors or participates in several economic development workshops each year. The Wood County Board of Supervisors, through their Conservation, Education, and Economic Development Committee, provides financial support to HOW and County supervisors and staff members participate on various HOW-sponsored committees and events.

City of Wisconsin Rapids

The City of Wisconsin Rapids has a revolving loan fund that was established by the Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. These funds are soon to be co-mingled with similar funds from Marathon, Portage, and Wood County.

The City of Wisconsin Rapids has utilized tax incremental finance (TIF) districts throughout the city. Typically, TIF districts are used to provide infrastructure in an area to promote development. A TIF district allows local governments to invest in infrastructure and economic development projects and apply the increment of increased property tax revenue realized by those projects in retiring the costs of those improvements. There are several Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts in the city

6. Economic Development Programs

The following is a brief listing of county, regional, state, and federal resources and programs to assist economic development efforts in the region. This list is only a summary of some of the programs available, and provides the most current program information. The reader should seek current information on any of the programs listed.

C. County

The county does not have a countywide economic development corporation, but rather a Marshfield area organization and a Wisconsin Rapids area organization. Both groups were formed to provide assistance to economic development in their respective areas. The county also operates a county revolving loan fund. These funds have recently been merged with a new multi-county fund.

D. Regional

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

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) is a regional organization created for the purpose of managing a regional revolving loan fund. The Corporation is comprised of the following counties: Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Wood, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, and Wood.

E. State

1. Wisconsin Department of Commerce

Wisconsin Department of Commerce is the state's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purposes include to: foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin; foster and promote economic business, export, and community development; and promote the public health, safety, and welfare through effective and efficient regulations, education, and enforcement.

Below is a listing of the programs available from the Department of Commerce:

- **Community Development Block Grant for Public Facilities & Economic Development:** This federally funded program helps underwrite the cost of necessary infrastructure for business development to retain or create employment opportunities. Funds may be used for improvements to public facilities, such as water systems, sewage systems, and roads to meet business retention or creation needs.
- **Community Development Block Grant for Public Facilities:** This federally funded program provides funds to help finance facilities that principally serve low and moderate-income persons, which often have a secondary economic development benefit. Using these CDBG funds, local governments can improve publicly owned utility systems, streets, sidewalks, facilities for the disabled, community centers, libraries, fire stations, and medical facilities.
- **Community Development Block Grant for Emergency Grant:** This federally funded emergency response program helps restore or replace critical infrastructure that has been damaged or destroyed because of a natural or man-made catastrophe. Local governments may use these funds to restore or replace publicly owned utility systems, streets, sidewalks, community centers and other community facilities. Any rural Wisconsin county, city, village, or town with 50,000 or less population is eligible to apply for grant funding.
- **Community Based Economic Development Program (CBED):** The state's CBED program provides funding assistance to local governments and community-based organizations that undertake planning, development, and technical assistance projects supporting business development. For example, CBED program funds may be used to finance economic development plans, small business and technology-based incubator grants, revolving loan programs, and entrepreneur training programs for at-risk youth.
- **Main Street Program:** This program helps communities organize to revitalize their downtowns. The Main Street program promotes a four-pronged approach of organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. State assistance includes training for community-based program managers, workshops, on-site visits, and ongoing technical support.
- **The Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program:** The IRB program involves an allocation of Federal tax-exempt status on bonds that

will be issued by a business to finance an expansion project. By classifying the bonds as tax exempt, the company is able to offer the bonds at a reduced interest rate. Although this program is heavily utilized, its use is limited to small and mid-size manufacturers with strong financial statements.

- Customized Labor Training (CLT): The CLT program can provide grants to help cover a portion of the costs associated with training employees on new technologies, industrial skills, or manufacturing processes. Eligibility is typically limited to those companies that are making capital investments in new technologies that subsequently necessitate the training of existing or new employees.

2. Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Workforce Development offers several programs in the area of workforce investment, including adult apprenticeship programs in construction, services, and industrial/manufacturing activities, vocational rehabilitation, employee training, and child care, to name a few.

3. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The DNR Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment provides a comprehensive, streamlined program that consolidates state and federal cleanups into one program (e.g., hazardous waste cleanup, underground storage tank investigation and cleanup, spill response, state-funded clean ups, and brownfield sites). Assistance is also provided to businesses seeking to clean up and re-use existing brownfield sites for commercial, public, or green space uses.

The DNR also inventories brownfield sites through their Tracking System (BRRTS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) registry. These databases connect to statewide information about contaminated sites, spills, cleanups, and other data.

F. Federal

Economic Development Administration (EDA): The EDA is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Its programs target areas that demonstrate need or economic distress. The Public Works program strives to revitalize, expand, or upgrade the area's physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment. Examples of past investments include water and sewer facilities, industrial access roads, rail spurs, port improvements, skill-

training facilities, technology related infrastructure, as well as the demolition, renovation, and construction of publicly owned facilities.

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

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

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

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

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

The Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program – available to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and federally-recognized Indian tribal groups to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises, located in areas outside the boundary of a city or unincorporated areas of 50,000 or more, and its immediately adjacent urbanized or urbanizing area.

The Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) – RBOG promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. This is accomplished by making grants to pay costs of providing economic planning for rural communities, technical assistance for rural businesses, or training for rural entrepreneurs or economic development officials.

G. Economic Development Strategy

There are many reasons to pursue economic development; however, most revolve around the general goals of expanding the employment base, the tax base, and encouraging diversification. Each of these are briefly discussed below:

- **Expanding the Employment Base:** Job retention efforts are the basic strategy of holding on to the employment that you have, followed by assisting employers to grow and expand. Additional job growth is usually fueled by local efforts to recruit new business into the community. Recruiting should be focused on those businesses that match the assets of the community.
- **Expanding the Tax Base:** Increasing the tax base allows for the continuation and expansion of municipal services. While job-creation efforts promote a search for labor-intensive activities, the effect of a tax-base creation goal depends upon the tax revenue source is most valuable to a community. Here, both recruitment of new businesses and expansion of existing ones are common implementation for this strategy.
- **Economic Diversification:** This goal is important, as major employment dislocations can occur even when the economy is growing. Having only a few large employers can be catastrophic for a local economy, as proven by the reliance of the paper industry. Unemployment can skyrocket if even one of those large employers fails in the market. It is important to have a diverse range of small businesses to stabilize the economy. Periodic busts in the market can devastate certain sectors of the

local economy, especially with respect to small businesses. In practice, a small business needs about six years of successful operation before it reaches a stable plateau where it can resist the bust part of the cycle. Economic stability is obtained by selling to a broad spectrum of markets. Using an economic stability strategy for economic development requires an understanding of markets and linkages.

There are four basic types of economic development strategies that could be used to promote economic development activity. Any comprehensive strategy would address all four of the four strategies in some way. An overview of each is provided:

Retention

Retention means keeping the local firms that already exist in the area. The goal is to assist these firms as needed to stay profitable. All economic development efforts should view retention as the first and most important goal.

Expansion

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

Creation

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

Attraction

The basic premise behind attraction is to bring, or recruit, an existing business to locate within the community. This may be achieved through a combination of economic incentives, marketing, and local amenities. Larger communities find this type of economic development to be successful more so than smaller communities.

6.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goals:

1. Maintain, diversify, and expand the economy.
2. Preserve and enhance the quality of life of the community.
3. Continue to develop the city in a cost-efficient manner.
4. Encourage the coordination of economic development efforts throughout the county and region.

Objectives:

1. Promote the retention and expansion of the current economic base.
2. Encourage the creation of new businesses.
3. Promote and assist the relocation of new businesses to the city.
4. Develop a well-trained workforce.
5. Maintain and enhance public facilities and services.
6. Pursue development and assistance for sustainable economic ventures from both public and private sources.
7. Promote compatibility between economic development and quality of life.

Policies:

1. Conduct a business retention survey from time to time.
2. Establish a Business Retention Committee to address business needs and recognize local businesses.
3. Sponsor a Business Education Program for area businesses.
4. Sponsor, at least annually, a “How to Start a Business” Program.
5. Establish an inventors club for the creation of new firms.
6. Market available sites and buildings to targeted firms.

7. Maintain a website presence for economic development information.
8. Determine employment characteristics and identify needs.
9. Encourage educational institutions to develop training programs needed by the area's businesses, today and in the future.
10. Support and work with local school officials on expanding the school to work program.
11. Evaluate infrastructure and maintain as necessary industrial parks, available sites, and other employment areas of the city.
12. Plan for an adequate supply of land for commercial and industrial needs.
13. Promote telecommunications infrastructure and other technology development and expansion.
14. Direct industrial development to areas with the infrastructure and services to support the development.
15. Work closely with Heart of Wisconsin on all aspects of economic development.
16. Continue to utilize local and regional revolving loan funds and seek recapitalization for these funds.
17. Pursue Wisconsin Department of Commerce and Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority funds, among others.
18. Pursue U.S. Economic Development Administration and USDA - Rural Development funds, among others.
19. Secure additional venture capital for firms in the city.
20. Encourage and promote the tourism industry, with area locations such as the Mead Wildlife Area.
21. Promote development that does not degrade the natural environment or quality of life issues, such as odor, noise, and dust.

22. Update zoning regulations to provide appropriate commercial and industrial zoning districts.
23. Encourage the development of a bike-pedestrian trail along the river throughout the area.
24. Consider all costs of economic development, including those to the environment and quality of life, before deciding on or approving a course of action.
25. Undertake a thorough review of all zoning and other ordinances to make energy and land conservation a conscious part of the ordinance implementation process.

Chapter 7: Land Use

CHAPTER 7: Land Use

7.1 Background

This is the seventh of nine chapters that comprise the City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan. The land use section brings together all of the previous sections of the plan to create a future land use plan.

A. Previous Plans and Studies

Several plan related to land use have been adopted over the years, from comprehensive plans to sewer service plans. These previous plans were reviewed as the starting point for this chapter.

1. Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Master Plan, 1981

This plan focused on land use, economics, public services, and transportation. Although dated, some of the recommendations identified in that plan are still worth reviewing, including: create green space buffers to separate incompatible land uses; expand commercial development in a reasonable and orderly manner; continue to expand and upgrade the city's street system; encourage industrial development in a reasonable and orderly manner; improve and expand the city's single and multi-family housing stock; and continue to improve and upgrade Alexander Field Airport.

The 1981 plan will be replaced by this comprehensive plan when adopted by the City.

2. Sewer Service Area Plan, 1985

The purpose of this plan was to develop a twenty-year sanitary sewer service boundary for the Wisconsin Rapids urban area. The urban sanitary sewer service area boundary identifies the geographic land area for possible sanitary sewer service to the year 2005.

In addition to delineating an urban sewer service boundary, the Sewer Service Area Plan provided a framework for future planning at each individual municipal level. The goals and policies developed throughout this planning process were to also be applicable and useful in the development of local policy direction with respect to land use decisions within these communities. This plan needs to be updated for the next twenty years.

3. Wood County Comprehensive Plan

Wood County is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan. The effort is staffed by the County Planning and Zoning Department. Several of the chapters are in draft form, but the document is not available at this time. Some of the surrounding towns have initiated local planning processes. The Towns of Grand Rapids and Sigel are still working to complete their plans, while the Town of Saratoga completed its comprehensive plan in 2007. Neither of the surrounding villages has begun work on a plan.

B. Land Use Issues

The following are issues that have been identified during the planning process. They all have varying impacts on the future land use development in the area.

✓ Sewer Service Area Plan

The city has a sewer service area plan in place that establishes a boundary where new urban (higher-density) growth can occur. The goal of the plan is to guide growth in areas where growth can be efficiently served by sanitary sewer. The City desires an orderly, compact development pattern within the Sanitary Sewer Service Area and will not extend sanitary sewer lines outside its corporate boundaries, nor outside the Sanitary Sewer Service Area.

The boundary of the Wisconsin Rapids Sanitary Sewer Service Area was intended to be large enough in size to easily accommodate projected urban growth in the Wisconsin Rapids area over the next 20-year period and provide enough excess acreage to ensure efficient operation of the urban land market.

✓ Annexation

Annexation is an on-going issue. As the city expands its corporate limit, the surrounding towns contract. Therefore, well-planned annexation needs to occur that will not adversely impact either governmental unit.

Currently, much of the annexation has been along the eastern boundary of the city with the Town of Grand Rapids. The existing boundary is very jagged and creates service provision concerns. Future annexations to straighten these boundaries would minimize future problems.

✓ Downtown Revitalization and Redevelopment

This is a major area of concern. There are several neighborhoods that are beginning to show signs of age and disrepair, and the traditional commercial areas have also seen some decline. Many of these areas may need some assistance to revitalize. A major planning process was conducted for the downtown in 2007, and another was just recently completed. This is more fully discussed in the Economic Development Chapter of the Plan.

✓ Future Land Uses in the Planning Area

All non-agricultural development on lands located within the adopted Wisconsin Rapids Sanitary Sewer Service Area should be served with the full array of municipal services. Unsewered urban development is strongly discouraged within the Wisconsin Rapids Sanitary Sewer Service Area because large unsewered lots cannot be efficiently served with essential public services including sanitary sewer and water, storm sewer, sidewalks, high levels of police and fire service, street maintenance, parks and schools/bus routes. Further, septic systems are generally environmentally inferior to municipal systems.

C. Existing Land Use Tools

To implement the recommendations of the comprehensive plan there are some basic tools that are available to the city. These are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.

1. Zoning

Zoning is the major tool used to regulate land uses and to implement a comprehensive plan. The zoning ordinance regulates the use of property to advance the public health, safety, and welfare. It has been used throughout the United States and in Wisconsin since the 1920s.

A zoning ordinance creates different use zones or districts within a community. Each district has a list of permitted uses, which are uses that are desirable in a district. Each district may also contain a list of special uses, sometimes called special exceptions or conditional uses, which are allowed under certain circumstances, and require review by a local body in order to be allowed. All other uses are prohibited.

Zoning regulations are adopted by local ordinance and consist of two basic things, a map, and related text. The zoning map displays the

zoning district boundaries, and the text describes what can be done in each type of district. The Future Land Use Plan and zoning are similar, but they are not the same. Land use categories are more general, while zoning is much more detailed. Zoning is the legal tool to regulate specific land uses. Since the land use categories are generalized, it is possible that more than one zoning district would correspond to each of the categories.

Zoning should be derived from, and be consistent with, the policy recommendations adopted in the comprehensive plan. The desired land uses should drive the development of specific zoning ordinance provisions including district descriptions, permitted uses, conditional uses, and the zoning map. This consistency has been important in upholding legal challenges in the courts.

Following the planning process, the zoning ordinance should be updated to incorporate the findings of the plan.

2. Land Division

Subdivision regulation relates to the way in which land is divided and made ready for development. A community can control the subdivision of land by requiring a developer to meet certain conditions in exchange for the privilege of recording a plat. While imposing conditions restricts the use of private property, the cumulative effect of land subdivision on the health, safety, and welfare of a community is so great as to justify public control of the process.

Of all the land use control devices available, subdivision regulation has probably the greatest potential. When compared with zoning, a well-administered subdivision control is more useful in achieving planning goals, and its influence is far more lasting. Once land is divided into lots and streets are laid out, development patterns are set. Subdivision regulations can ensure that those development patterns are consistent with community standards. Subdivision regulations can also ensure the adequacy of existing and planned public facilities such as schools, wastewater treatment systems, and water supply, to handle new growth. Finally, subdivision regulation can help ensure the creation and preservation of adequate land records.

There is some overlap between zoning and subdivision codes in terms of standards. Both ordinances, for example, can set lot sizes. Both can deal with the suitability of land for development. Implementing important plan techniques such as rural cluster development often requires use of the zoning ordinance and the subdivision ordinance.

Under Wisconsin law, the city has authority to provide extraterritorial review of subdivision requests in the surrounding towns within one and one-half mile of its corporate limits.

3. Official Mapping

Cities may adopt official maps. These maps, adopted by ordinance or resolution, may show existing and planned streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, parks, playgrounds, railroad rights of way, waterways, and public transit facilities. The map may include a waterway only if it is included in a comprehensive surface water drainage plan. No building permit may be issued to construct or enlarge any building within the limits of these mapped areas except pursuant to conditions identified in the law.

Official maps are not used frequently because few communities plan anything but major thoroughfares and parks in detail, in advance of the imminent development of a neighborhood.

4. Extra-territorial Zoning Jurisdiction

Wisconsin Statute, 66.23(7a), allows a first, second or third class city to adopt zoning in Town territory, 3 miles beyond a city's corporate limits. Extra-territorial zoning is a tool that might be worth considering.

To do this, however, it requires a lengthy three-step process, including the creation of a joint committee consisting of representatives from the city and the town(s). This joint committee prepares a proposed plan and regulations for the extraterritorial area, and submits it to the city, which may adopt it as proposed, or resubmit the proposal to the joint committee for changes. In either case, the proposed regulations must receive a favorable majority vote from the joint committee before the city can adopt them.

5. Extra-territorial Plat Review

Under Wisconsin Statute, 236.10, cities and villages are allowed to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority in the same geographic area as defined within the extraterritorial zoning statute. However, extraterritorial zoning requires town approval of the zoning ordinance, while extraterritorial plat approval applies automatically if the city or village adopts a subdivision ordinance or official map. The town does not approve the subdivision ordinance for the city or village. Currently, the city does exercise extra-territorial plat review.

The purpose of both extraterritorial plat review and zoning is to help cities and villages influence the development pattern of areas outside their boundaries that will likely be annexed in the future. This helps cities and villages protect land use near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits.

7.2 Inventory & Trends

This section describes the general existing land uses in the city, identifies future demands for land, reviews land values, and outlines a future land use plan for the city and the surrounding area. It also establishes basis goals, objectives, and policies for the city related to land use and the other previous chapters.

A. Existing Land Use

The City of Wisconsin Rapids is the largest city in Wood County, and serves as the government center of the county. The city is located on the banks of the Wisconsin River, and is surrounded by the Towns of Grand Rapids, Rudolph, Saratoga, Seneca, and Sigel, as well as the Villages of Biron and Port Edwards.

The city is roughly three miles east to west and about five miles north to south. The city is surrounded by agricultural uses, scattered residential, woodlands, and open space. Within the city, commercial development is concentrated along 8th Street and Grand Avenue. Industrial uses are found in the city's industrial parks in the northeast and northwest areas of the city. Residential development with scattered open space is a dominant land use found throughout the city.

The planning process requires that the existing land use information be inventoried and categorized by general use. In this case, ten basic uses were identified. They are: agriculture (which includes cranberry bogs), commercial, governmental, industrial, open lands, outdoor recreation, residential, transportation, woodlands, and water. To collect this information, the process began by interpreting 2006 air photos to create an existing land use map. Members of the Plan Commission and city staff verified and corrected it with review of the initial maps. See the Existing Land Use Map.

Once the map was finalized, total acres for each of the generalized land use categories was calculated using GIS software. Woodlands make up about 30 percent of the community, followed closely by residential uses with 28 percent. These uses were followed by open lands (9.5%), industrial (8.6%), and water (6.6%). See the Existing Land Use Table.

**Table 1:
Existing Land Use, 2008**

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	213	2.2%
Commercial	580	6.2%
Governmental	475	5.0%
Industrial	808	8.6%
Open Lands	898	9.6%
Outdoor Recreation	105	1.1%
Residential	2,607	27.7%
Transportation	301	3.2%
Woodlands	2,808	29.8%
Water	619	6.6%
Total Acres*	9,415	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

(* These calculations are derived from generalized planning maps)

B. Land Use Supply

There are about 9,400 acres of land within the city. Beyond woodlands and open lands, most of the land area is currently developed or utilized in some fashion. However, much of these areas are not suitable or desirable for development. Some are dedicated for parks and recreational uses, while some are sensitive environmental areas, such as wetlands and along the river.

Land areas immediately adjoining the city are areas for future development. As discussed earlier, annexation is likely to occur as new land areas are added to the city. Recent annexations have been along the eastern edge of the city.

C. Land Values

Overall equalized values, which include both land and improvements, in the city have increased about 25 percent over the last eight years; however, not all categories of land increased equally. Residential property values increased by 29 percent and commercial values increased by 45 percent, however, manufacturing decreased by 13 percent. See the Equalized Value Table.

**Table 2:
Equalized Values**

Type of Property	2000	2008	% Change
Residential	\$427,023,000	\$553,873,300	29.7%
Commercial	\$223,435,800	\$324,067,300	45.0%
Manufacturing	\$118,909,200	\$103,421,900	-13.0%
Agricultural	\$32,700	\$2,600	-92.0%
Undeveloped	0	\$3,000	NA
Forest	0	\$885,000	NA
Other	\$10,600	\$138,700	1,280%
Total Value:	\$769,411,300	\$962,391,800	25.1%

Source: WI DOR, Statement of Equalized Values, 2000 & 2008, & Wood County

Over that same period, Wood County had an overall increase in value of 46 percent. County wide, residential growth was 49.5 percent, commercial growth was 68.5 percent, and manufacturing decreased 6 percent.

D. Land Use Demand

Population and employment projections were completed in an effort to identify the demand for land in the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

1. Population Projections

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), Demographic Services Center, prepared population projections for each county and community in the state. DOA projections estimate that the city will increase in population by about 400 persons by 2030. Meanwhile, the NCWRPC prepared straight-line projections based on the 1980 to 2000 trend. The result is an increase of 687 persons over the same period. With either method, the growth is expected to be relatively flat, being somewhere between 2.4 and 3.7 percent respectfully. A summary of the projections are displayed:

**Wisconsin Rapids
Population Projections**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change
DOA	18,532	18,652	18,799	18,913	18,947	18,872	437
NCWRPC	18,548	18,661	18,775	18,890	119,005	119,122	687

Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA, & NCWRPC

2. Housing Projections

As a result of the population growth, there will be a need for additional housing units within the city. Using existing persons per housing unit (2.26) and the projected population, we can project housing units. If the population increases by an additional 687 persons, it is projected that at least 193 new housing units will be added to the housing stock, which is about a 2.3 percent increase in total units. A summary of the projections are displayed below:

**Wisconsin Rapids
Housing Unit Projections**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change
Units	8,482	8,535	8,600	8,651	8,666	8,632	193

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC

3. Employment Projections

In Chapter 6: Economic Development, we display a variety of Census information. Using that information as the base, projections for future employment are made. A series of interim steps were completed in this process. The first step was to project the trend over the planning period. Between 1980 and 2000, total county employment grew by almost 12,000, a 31 percent increase. Considering the local economy and the national economy, that rate of growth was considered optimistic, so a more conservative projection was developed using 1990 to 2000 growth rates, which were lower and extended to 2030. The next step was to

estimate the proportion of county employment that is in the city. It is estimated to be about 30 percent. A final assumption is that the employment breakdown in the county is the same in the city and will hold constant for the planning period. Using this information, projections were made.

By 2030, about 3,000 additional jobs are expected to be created within the city, which is about a 30 percent increase over the thirty-year projection period, which represents approximately 115 new jobs per year. A summary of the employment projections are displayed below:

**Wisconsin Rapids
Employment Projections**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Change
Total	11,723	12,267	12,837	13,432	14,055	14,708	2,985

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC

4. Demand

Translating these various projections into acres indicates land use demand for the planning period. The following table summarizes the average land needs for residential, commercial, and industrial land in five-year increments to the year 2030.

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Residential	20	20	20	10	0
Commercial	30	30	30	30	30
Industrial	35	40	40	40	45

E. Redevelopment and Infill Opportunities

The downtown retail areas and some of the older residential districts in the city are beginning to show some signs of deterioration. As new development occurs on the fringes of the community, it is important that

the city focus its efforts to maintain the vitality of the existing commercial and residential areas of the community.

Recently, the city had an in-depth economic development study completed for the downtown. That effort is now being followed up with a Waterfront Planning effort. The downtown is seen as an area for redevelopment, especially as it relates to the waterfront.

F. Future Land Use

A future land use plan displays the desired patterns of development and establishes the future intent of growth in the community. These areas are not intended as zoning, but indicate the type of zoning that should prevail.

Land use and zoning are similar, but they are not the same. Land use categories are more general, while zoning is much more detailed. Zoning is the legal tool to regulate specific land uses. Since the land use categories are generalized, it is possible that more than one zoning district would correspond to each of the categories. The city has a zoning code and related map that details the current zoning and requirements.

1. Land Use Classification

Thirteen basic future land use-planning categories were established for the future land use plan map. These are based on the 2007 Future Land Use Plan map the city prepared.

A general description of each classification follows:

1. Residential

Identifies areas recommended for typical single-family residential development, consisting of smaller lot sizes served by municipal services.

2. Multi-Family Residential

Identifies areas recommended for high-density multi-family residential development, to include duplexes, condominiums, and apartments.

3. Rural Residential

Identifies areas recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the other residential categories, and may not have municipal sewer and water. These areas also provide a transition from more dense development to the rural countryside.

4. Mixed Residential

Identifies areas recommended for mixed residential development, containing single family, two-family, and/or multi-family residential units. This area provides a general transition from lower to higher density residential development.

5. General Mixed Use

It identifies areas recommended for mixed-use development, where a variety of consistent land uses are located within the same general area. These uses either provide for a proper transition between other uses, or create a campus-like setting. It also identifies areas where commercial is the dominant use, but residential is a common second floor-type use.

6. Commercial

Identifies areas recommended for commercial development. This would include retail sales, personal and professional services, and offices.

7. Industrial

Identifies areas recommended for industrial development. This would include manufacturing, processing, and assembly facilities. This category also includes the industrial parks in the city.

8. Exclusive Office

Identifies areas recommended for office and related type development. This would include medical clinics, office buildings, and other related activities.

9. Governmental / Public / Institutional

Identifies areas recommended for governmental and institutional facilities. This includes the airport.

10. Parks and Open Space

Identifies areas recommended for open space and recreation. This would include parks and other recreational facilities. It also identifies areas recommended for preservation and protection, such as floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, DNR wetlands, steep slopes, and open water. This could include endangered species habitat or other significant features.

11. Agricultural / Forest

Identifies area recommended for agricultural uses such as crop farming or wooded areas.

12. Transportation Corridors

Identifies the existing road networks and rail facilities.

13. Water

Identifies existing water bodies.

2. Future Land Use Plan Map

Using the existing land use map, the 2007 Future Land Use Plan map, and the above general categories developed, the Plan Commission participated in a mapping exercise with NCWRPC staff to identify the desired future land uses in the city.

The city is expected to change over the coming years. Some existing areas will be redeveloped, and other areas will be annexed as the city grows. The Future Land Use Plan map displays where the city anticipates growth in the coming years.

Building upon the existing land use information, the 2007 Land Use Plan Map, and discussions with the Plan Commission, the Future Land Use Plan Map was developed. This map identifies land currently in the city, as well as the surrounding areas where growth is anticipated. Over the

planning period, about 2,900 additional acres could be added to the city. See the Future Land Use Plan Map.

Once the map was finalized, the areas were calculated for each of the future land use categories using GIS software. Residential related uses are identified as the major use, with about 29 percent of the area, followed by industrial with about 28 percent, and agricultural/woodlands with about 12 percent. See the Future Land Use Table.

Table 3:

Future Land Use

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Residential - Neighborhood	3,053	24.8%
Residential Multi-Family	217	1.8%
Residential - Mixed	136	1.1%
Rural Residential	129	1.0%
Mixed Use	459	3.7%
Commercial	844	6.9%
Industrial General	3,385	27.4%
Exclusive Office District	437	3.6%
Gov/Public/Institutional	753	6.1%
Parks and Open Space	426	3.5%
Agricultural / Woodlands	1,409	11.5%
Transportation Corridors	461	3.8%
Water	593	4.8%
Total Acres*	12,302	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

(* These calculations are derived from generalized planning maps)

7.3 Goals, Objectives & Policies

As in the previous chapters of this plan, a series of goals, objectives, and policies are identified. These all relate to the previous chapters, since this chapter attempts to bring them all together. Therefore, many of the following goals and objectives are re-stated, and some are also taken from the previous comprehensive plan.

Goals:

1. Create an economically efficient and environmentally sustainable land use development pattern.
2. Provide a cost-effective system of public utilities in the City.
3. Provide for safe, affordable housing for all residents.
4. Enhance and maintain the City's neighborhoods.
5. Provide a safe, efficient transportation system that meets the special needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and others.
6. Encourage collaboration between the City and neighboring jurisdictions with regard to planning initiatives, development policies, and sustainable activities.
7. Maintain parks, recreational facilities, open space, streetscapes, and waterways for the benefit, enjoyment, health, and well-being of Wisconsin Rapids' residents.
8. Create a downtown that is the residential, economic, cultural, entertainment, and recreational heart of the city, and create the central city in a pattern that is sustainable, diverse, and accessible.
9. Establish an urban agricultural community (e.g. strategically placed, active community garden plots) in Wisconsin Rapids.
10. Strive to become more energy sustainable by replacing 25 percent of the city's energy sources with renewable resources by 2025.

Objectives:

1. Encourage compact, mixed-use development patterns to minimize reliance on the automobile for day-to-day activities.
2. Develop and maintain a comprehensive system of pedestrian and bicycle trail facilities in the area that connects industrial, commercial, and residential sections of the City. The system should advance safe and efficient transportation for cyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized transportation.
3. Utilize existing public facilities to serve new development whenever possible.
4. Ensure a range of safe and affordable housing sites in the city.
5. Preserve the historically and architecturally significant residences.
6. Develop a multi-modal user transportation system that provides access throughout the City.
7. Provide safe and convenient access between neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, service centers, and recreational centers.
8. Utilize river corridors for multi-use trail development.
9. Ensure that schools, parks, playgrounds, and similar activity centers are well served by sidewalks and bicycle routes.
10. Encourage pedestrian-oriented neighborhood designs, as new developments are platted and existing neighborhoods are revitalized.
11. Direct development to areas designated on the Future Land Use Plan Map for those uses.
12. Work to ensure that land uses do not harm water resources.

Policies:

1. Use the City's zoning, subdivision, and official mapping powers to protect waterways, shorelines, wetlands, and floodplain areas.

2. Maintain and update, as needed, the wellhead protection ordinance to protect the municipal water supply.
3. Encourage the clean up of contaminated sites that threaten public health, safety and welfare.
4. Require all new development within the Wisconsin Rapids Sewer Service Area to be designed so that it can be served with municipal services, such as sanitary sewer, storm sewer, municipal water, police, and fire.
5. Require natural resource features to be depicted on all site plans and preliminary plats in order to facilitate preservation of natural resources.
6. Update the Sewer Service Area Plan to incorporate the Comprehensive Plan.
7. Discourage low density, unsewered urban development in the identified growth areas adjacent to the city.
8. Design mixed housing neighborhoods that provide a range of housing types, densities, and costs.
9. Design neighborhoods that are well served by sidewalks, bicycle routes, and other non-motorized transportation facilities.
10. Require new neighborhoods to provide green space and have access to community facilities such as parks, schools, libraries, churches, and similar amenities.
11. Create and enforce property maintenance codes to maintain neighborhood quality and tax base stability.
12. Prohibit incompatible land uses (e.g. high traffic generators, noisy or unaesthetic uses) from locating next to residential neighborhoods.
13. Discourage high traffic volumes in residential neighborhoods.
14. Utilize the City's official mapping authority within the City limits and the extraterritorial planning area. Identify and protect, through official mapping, a road system that serves the long-term transportation needs of the community.

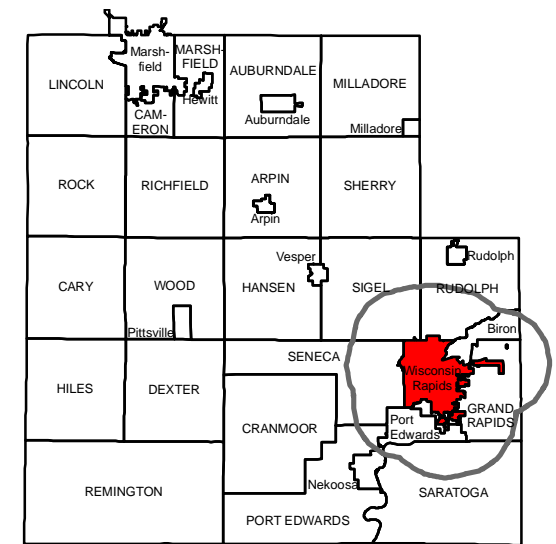
15. Officially map future transportation routes throughout the planning area, including a comprehensive network of sidewalk and bicycle routes.
16. Create plans for maintenance and retrofitting of all city owned property and parks using sustainable methods.
17. Revise ordinances to permit yard landscaping and gardens that do not require mowing.
18. Reduce or eliminate synthetic fertilizer use and pesticide applications on city owned property.
19. Officially map public access to the riverfront and waterways.
20. Wherever possible, adhere to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System of the U.S. Green Building Council for the remodeling of existing and building of new public and private buildings.
21. Work with WisDOT to determine appropriate locations for access to new developments along, and in the vicinity of, STHs 13, 34, 54, and 73 to ensure safe and mobile facilities.
22. Work with WisDOT to prevent future conflicts between the State's short and long range plans for the STHs 13, 34, 54, and 73 routes, and the City's short and long range plan for land use along, and in the vicinity of, these routes.

City of Wisconsin Rapids Wood County, Wisconsin

Map 7-1 Generalized Existing Land Use Map

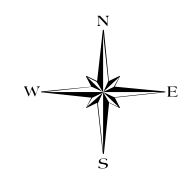
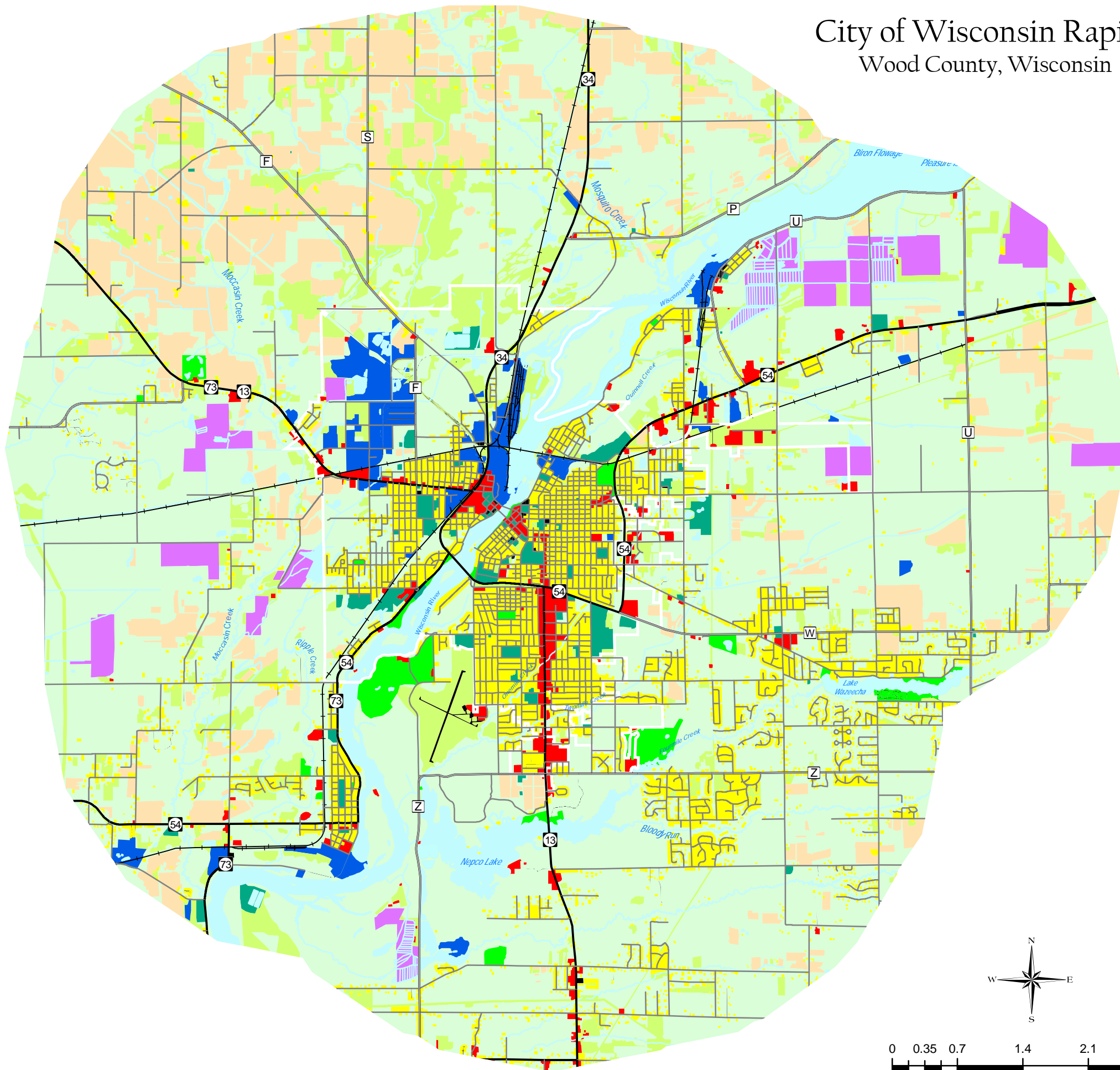
-  City Limits
-  US & State Highway
-  County Highways
-  Local Roads
-  Railroad
-  Agriculture
-  Commercial
-  Cranberry Bog
-  Governmental
-  Industrial
-  Open Lands
-  Outdoor Recreation
-  Residential
-  Transportation
-  Water
-  Woodlands

(Displays City and 3 Mile Planning Area)



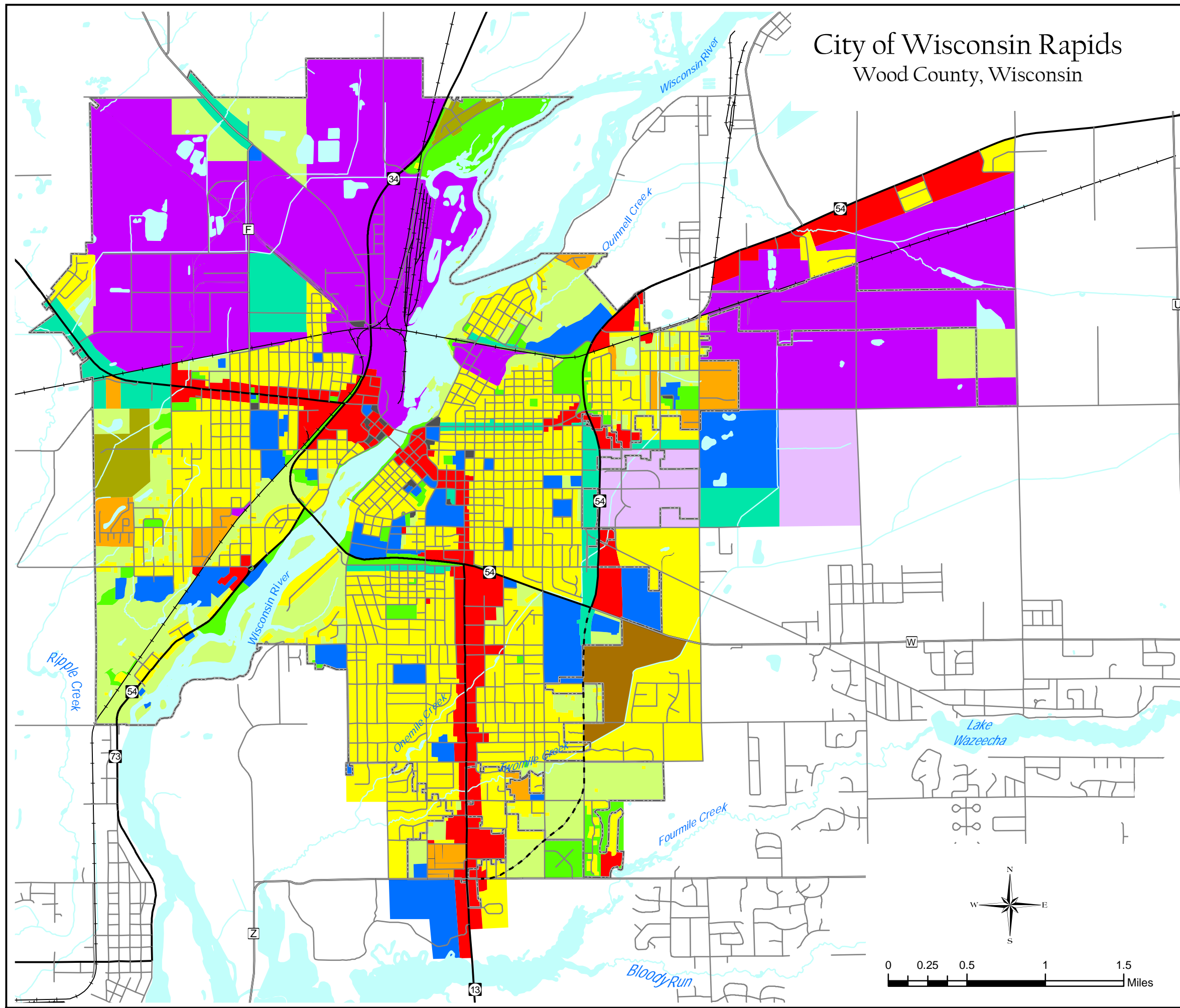
Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Airphoto Interpretation 2008
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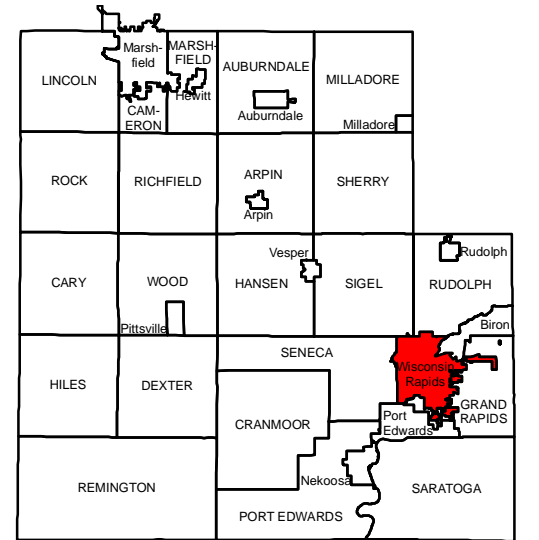
City of Wisconsin Rapids Wood County, Wisconsin

Map 7-2 Future Land Use Map



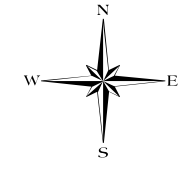
Legend

- City Limits
 - County Highways
 - Local Roads
 - State Highway
 - US Highway
 - Railroad
 - Proposed HWY 54 By-Pass
- Land Use Planning Categories**
- Residential
 - Multi-Family Residential
 - Rural Residential
 - Mixed Residential
 - Mixed Use
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Exclusive Office
 - Governmental / Public / Institutional
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Agricultural / Forest
 - Transportation Corridors
 - Water



Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC

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Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation

CHAPTER 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation

8.1 Background

This is the eighth of nine chapters in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this chapter is to overview intergovernmental cooperation, inventory existing cooperative efforts, identify potential opportunities, and establish goals, objectives, and policies to promote intergovernmental cooperation.

A. Overview

As discussed earlier in the plan, the City of Wisconsin Rapids is surrounded by the Towns of Grand Rapids, Saratoga, Seneca, Sigel, and Rudolph, and the Villages of Biron and Port Edwards, and is part of Wood County. All of these are important intergovernmental relationships for the city. Efforts should be made to maintain good working relationships with the surrounding towns, villages, as well as the county.

The issue of intergovernmental cooperation is increasingly important, since many issues cross over political boundaries, such as watersheds, labor force, commuter patterns, and housing. Communities are not independent of each other, but rather, dependent on each other. The effects from growth and change on one community spill over to all surrounding communities and impact the region as a whole.

Statewide, Wisconsin has over 2,500 units of government and special purpose districts. Having so many governmental units allows for local representation, but also adds more players to the decision-making process. In general terms, intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as communication and information sharing, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements and sharing resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue.

B. Benefits

There are many reasons intergovernmental cooperation makes sense. Some examples include:

- **Trust:** Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. As jurisdictions

communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

- **Cost Savings:** Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.
- **Consistency:** Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.
- **Address Regional Issues:** By communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues that are regional in nature.

The major beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation is the local resident. They may not understand, or even care about the details of a particular intergovernmental issue, but residents can appreciate their benefits, such as costs savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

C. Trends

A variety of factors, some long-standing and others more recent, have brought the issue of governmental cooperation to the forefront. Some of these factors include:

- Local governments financial situation;
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
- Elimination of duplication of services;
- Population settlement patterns and population mobility;
- Economic and environmental interdependence; and

In addition, as more jurisdictions create comprehensive plans and share them with surrounding communities, new opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation will be identified.

D. Tools of Intergovernmental Cooperation

There are two primary tools that can be used in the area of intergovernmental cooperation.

1. Shared Service Agreements

Wisconsin Statute s.66.0301, formerly 66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation" enables local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Typically, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination refers to the management and delivery of public services and facilities. It is also dependent upon a defined geographic area within which cooperation and coordination may be feasible.

Intergovernmental agreements prepared using this statute are the most common form of agreement, and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, to determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement, and boundary changes have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process. Shared service agreements are utilized to allow this type of cooperation.

2. Boundary Agreements

Under Wisconsin Statutes s.66.0307, municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Each city, village, or town that intends to participate in the preparation of a cooperative plan must adopt a resolution authorizing its participation in the planning process.

Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan. It must also include a schedule for changes to the boundary; plans for the delivery of services; an evaluation of environmental features, and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan. It must also address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption.

Once adopted, the plan must be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Administration for state approval. Upon approval, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract. Working with the towns, the city could use this tool to establish boundaries in certain areas where it is logical and in the best interest to do so from a planning and service delivery standpoint.

8.2 Inventory & Trends

Currently there are numerous relationships and several general agreements in place. The following is a summary of existing and potential cooperative efforts.

A. Intergovernmental Relationships

1. Local

Existing areas of cooperation include:

The City of Wisconsin Rapids, the Village of Port Edwards, and the Town of Grand Rapids currently operate the South Wood County Airport. The City of Nekoosa recently joined this group of communities for the joint operation of the airport.

The Fire, Police, and EMS Departments all have mutual aid agreements in place with the surrounding communities.

The city provides the majority of funding to the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce through room tax dollars.

An agreement is in place for street plowing along the borderline streets.

An agreement is in place with the Village of Biron for wastewater treatment.

The city regularly hosts other south Wood County communities elected officials to discuss issues that impact everyone. The city and surrounding communities need to continue to identify and explore potential areas of cooperation.

2. County, School Districts, & Regional

County:

Wood County provides a variety of services to the residents of Wisconsin Rapids, including 911 dispatch and health services. As the county seat, the city is the center of county government. The Courthouse is located in the city.

Wisconsin Rapids School District:

The city is fully within the boundaries of the Wisconsin Rapids Public School District (WRPS). Communication is important, especially when

reviewing new residential subdivision proposals, both in the city and within proximity to the city. Street configuration is an important consideration to the school district as it relates to busing students. Cul de sac streets may create difficulty for busing, as well as other services. In addition, capacity concerns of some schools may need to be considered. Residential subdivision plats should be provided to the school district prior to approval in order to get the district's comments.

Mid-State Technical College (MSTC):

The college lies just outside the City boundary in the Town of Grand Rapids. This is an important relationship for the city, especially as it relates to the planned technology park for new business. Students and staff travel along city roads to access the MSTC campus, as well. Three-way communications and planning between the City, MSTC, and Grand Rapids are necessary for existing and planned campus activities. Moreover, the city provides sewer and water to the campus by agreement.

Regional:

The City as part of Wood County is active in a multi-county economic development organization called Centergy. One current project is a business retention survey. In addition, this group promotes the region and organizes outreach efforts with state elected officials.

The City is a member of the ten-county region of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). The NCWRPC, established in 1973 by state statute, is a voluntary association of governments with the mission to provide local and regional assistance to its member governments. The region includes Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood counties.

The city is currently working with Wood and Portage counties on an educational phase of compliance for EPA, Stormwater Phase II program.

3. State & Federal

As a local unit of government, the city has formal relationships with the state and federal government, and their numerous agencies. The city frequently works with the various state departments, including the Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Revenue. Meanwhile, the federal agencies that the city works with include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency.

8.3 Goal, Objectives & Policies

As in the previous chapters of this plan, a series of goals, objectives, and policies are identified.

Goal:

1. Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.

Objectives:

1. Maintain current agreements and explore additional opportunities with adjacent communities for services.
2. Work cooperatively with neighboring villages and towns to develop and guide compatible development on the city's boundaries.

Policies:

1. Continue to host meetings with surrounding communities and the county to review service agreements and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
2. Maintain a close relationship with the School District related to existing and new facilities.
3. Work with the surrounding townships to develop cooperative boundary agreements.
4. Develop mechanisms to communicate with surrounding communities such as Port Edwards, Nekoosa, Biron, Grand Rapids, Stevens Point, and Marshfield in regards to eco-municipality efforts.
5. Work closely with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) to identify transportation needs and service gaps, and create strategies and actions to address them. The strategies and actions should include environmentally friendly and energy efficient alternatives, such as bicycles, light rail, and bio-diesel or electric buses.
6. Work with WisDOT to ensure that the City's short and long range plans for transportation and land use, particularly along and in

the vicinity of, the state highway routes in the city, are consistent with the state's short and long range transportation plans.

7. Work with WisDOT to help keep the state highway routes through the City safe and operating sufficiently into the future.

Chapter 9: Implementation

CHAPTER 9: Implementation

9.1 Background

This is the final chapter of the City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan. This chapter outlines plan adoption and monitoring procedures, as well as plan amendment and update procedures, and reviews plan implementation tools. This chapter also includes the overall recommendations to implement this plan.

City staff, the Plan Commission, the City Council and its various committees, boards, and commissions will use the Comprehensive Plan to guide the physical development of the City. In addition, developers and landowners will use the document.

A. Plan Adoption

The adoption process requires that the Plan Commission review the Comprehensive Plan and pass a resolution by a majority vote to recommend the adoption of the plan to the City Council. That recommendation is forwarded to the City Council, which must adopt the Comprehensive Plan, by ordinance.

Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, a public hearing is required to be held to solicit public comment. That public hearing must be advertised with at least 30 days notice. 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, goals, and objectives related to the City's growth and development.

B. Plan Monitoring

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and policies were developed. Once implemented, these are intended to provide direction to local leaders and staff, as well as citizens of the city.

To measure progress towards meeting these goals, objectives, and policies, a variety of actions need to take place. Therefore, the task to measure plan progress is as simple as determining if any action was taken on the various goals, objectives, and policies. Many of these

actions would be completed at the department level, and by various committees and agencies.

It should be noted that many of the policies identified in the plan are continuous or on going, and should be monitored to measure the plan's overall success. In addition, many of the objectives and their related actions can be accomplished in the short term, within 1 to 5 years. However, some will take longer to accomplish, perhaps 6 to 10 years or more.

It is recommended that a periodic "Plan Status" report be prepared to summarize the progress toward implementation. This report can be jointly developed by various city departments, as related to their involvement in the implementation of the goals, objectives, and policies developed within the 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 changing conditions that impact Wisconsin Rapids' growth and quality of life.

At a minimum, this plan should be evaluated at least every five years and, by law, updated at least every ten years. Members of the City 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 reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the policies should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks, and identify new approaches if appropriate.

9.2 Plan Amendments and Updates

A. Amendments

The plan may be amended at any time upon the recommendation of the Plan Commission and approval from the City Council, following the same statutory process described for initial plan adoption. The procedures are the same 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 change or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided, or the plan may lose integrity.

General criteria to consider when reviewing proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan include:

- ✓ The plan amendment corrects an error made in the original plan.
- ✓ The amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan.
- ✓ The amendment does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties, unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration, or dedication.
- ✓ The change allows a more appropriate transition or buffer to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
- ✓ The resulting new development should be compatible with the existing land uses and physical character of the surrounding neighborhood, or upgrade and improve the neighborhood.
- ✓ There is a significant change in the neighborhood's characteristics that would justify a plan amendment.

The Plan Commission must review proposed amendments prior to the public hearing and adoption by the City Council. The public should be notified of proposed plan changes and have 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 a public hearing.

B. 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 likely involve re-writing entire chapters of the plan document. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives, through analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

It is important that the public be involved in the update process. To ensure that the public is engaged in plan amendments, the same procedure used for initial plan adoption must be followed. (See Wisconsin Statute s.66.1001). Upon Plan Commission review and a resolution to make recommended changes to the plan, the City Council shall call a public hearing to allow property owners and citizens time to review and comment on recommended plan changes. The public hearing shall be advertised using a Class I notice.

9.3 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; these include the zoning ordinance and map, subdivision regulations, and official map. These regulatory tools are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development. There is also a non-regulatory approach to implementing the comprehensive plan; this generally involves decisions as to how the community will spend its limited financial resources on staffing and various capital improvements.

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 sections of the existing zoning ordinance related to procedures and criteria for considering a zoning district map amendment, procedures and criteria for zoning ordinance text amendments, and procedures and criteria for granting conditional use permits should be carefully reviewed and amended where appropriate before 2010.

A. 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 buildings and other structures, and the types of land uses that are allowed on each 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 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. 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 guide 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 City 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. 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 can often apply to hundred or even thousands of properties in the community, while a map change generally involves one property. While zoning map amendments generally have a narrow geographic impact, the extent of the impact on certain properties can still be very significant.

B. Subdivision Ordinance

The subdivision ordinance establishes regulations on how large tracts of vacant land are to be split into smaller parcels. 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 City Council makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance text, and approves all subdivision plats with input from City staff, the Plan Commission, and other committees.

C. Official Mapping

Cities may adopt official maps. Adopted by ordinance or resolution, these maps may show existing and planned streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, parks, playgrounds, railroad rights of way, waterways, and public transit facilities. The map may include a waterway only if it is included in a comprehensive surface water drainage plan. No building permit may be issued to construct or enlarge any

building within the limits of these mapped areas, except pursuant to the conditions identified in the law.

Official maps are not used frequently because few communities plan anything but major thoroughfares and parks in detail in advance of the imminent development of a neighborhood. Following the planning process, it is important that the Official Map is reviewed, and changes made if needed.

D. Capital Improvement Program

A Capital Improvement Program (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 helps keep the improvement program current, and allows modifications to meet changing needs. Typically, improvements or expenditures considered in the CIP process include:

- Public buildings (such as fire or police stations)
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Utility system construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.
- Long-term equipment
- Park and trail acquisition and development

9.4 Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Element describes how each of the required chapters will be integrated and made consistent with the other chapters of the plan. Since the City completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap occurs between the nine plan chapters. Where deemed appropriate, certain goals, objectives, and policies have been repeated or restated within multiple chapters of the plan.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts to ensure they are considered in the community's planning and development decisions. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan, as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans.

In the future, as plan amendments occur, it is important that city staff and the plan commission conduct consistency reviews. These reviews will ensure that the plan is up to date. It is also critical that if the plan and/or maps are changed, they do not conflict with other sections of the plan or other maps.

9.5 Recommended Actions

This section outlines some recommendations to implement the goals, objectives, and policies that are contained in the comprehensive plan. These recommendations are:

1. The Planning Commission should pass a resolution recommending adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The City Council should adopt the plan by ordinance, and use it as a guide for decision-making.
3. The City should incorporate changes to its Zoning Ordinance and other implementation tools to establish consistency.
4. The Planning Commission should become knowledgeable of the plan and use it to justify recommendations to the City Council on development issues.
5. The City's staff should incorporate the goals, objectives, and policies of the plan into annual work plans and budgets.
6. The City should encourage citizen awareness of the plan. It is also important that developers are aware of the plan. An initial step would be to have the document hosted on the city website.
7. The City should provide copies of the plan to the surrounding communities and Wood County.
8. The Planning Commission should review the Future Land Use Map at least annually, and make necessary amendment recommendations to the City Council.
9. The City should evaluate the plan every five years, and update the plan at least every ten years.

Attachments:

Public Participation Plan

Plan Commission Resolution

City Ordinance

CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS
Comprehensive Plan
Public Participation Plan

I. Background

The City recognizes the need to engage the public in the planning process. This document sets forth the techniques the City will use to meet the goal of public participation. Therefore, this Public Participation Plan forms the basic framework for achieving an interactive dialogue between citizens, local decision makers, staff, and the NCWRPC.

The creation of the Public Participation Plan is a task required in meeting the requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation (66.1001). As the planning process develops, it should be expected that deviations from the plan may occur.

II. Objectives

The following is a list of objectives for the public participation plan:

- That the residents, land owners and other interested parties become fully aware of the importance of participating in the development of the Comprehensive Plan.
- That the public has opportunities to provide their input to the Plan Commission and City Council.
- That the public has access to all written information and all maps created throughout the planning process.
- That there is input from the broadest range of perspectives and interests in the community possible.
- That input is elicited through a variety of means (electronic, printed, and oral) in such a way that it may be carefully considered and incorporated into the process.
- That this process of public involvement strengthens the sense of community.

The goal will be to inform, consult and involve the public and the communities served during each phase of the planning process. Hopefully, this will help balance the issues related to private property rights.

III. Techniques

The public participation plan for the comprehensive planning process will incorporate the following:

1. All meetings for the planning process will be posted and open to the public.
2. Mail out information on comprehensive planning to the media, possibly including a notice to residents, to provide education on the planning process and encourage input.
3. Plan meeting handouts will be maintained by the City and available for review by the public.
4. When the draft plan is prepared it will be available at City Hall, the library and on a website.
5. The draft plan will be distributed to all surrounding communities and the County for comment.
6. The draft plan will be reviewed by department heads and related organizations.
7. All meetings will be taped and aired on Public Access television.
8. A community survey will be completed to solicit input from residents.
9. An Open House and Public Hearing will be held prior to adoption by the City Council.

RESOLUTION #18 (2008)

A RESOLUTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF A
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the City of Wisconsin Rapids is required to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, public participation is critical for the development of a sound plan; and

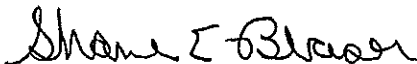
WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Common Council to approve a process to involve the public in the planning process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Wisconsin Rapids Common Council does approve and authorize the Public Participation Plan as attached to this resolution (and on file in the clerk's office).

Adopted: 06-03-2008



Mary Jo Carson, Mayor



Shane E. Blaser, City Clerk



City of Wisconsin Rapids
Plan Commission

Mayor Mary Jo Carson, Chairperson
444 West Grand Avenue
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-2780

PLAN COMMISSION RESOLUTION (#1)

**ADOPTING AND RECOMMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR THE CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS IN WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

WHEREAS, section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes, establishes the required procedure for a local government to adopt a comprehensive plan, and section 66.1001(2) identifies the required elements of a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wisconsin Rapids Plan Commission has the authority to recommend that the City Common Council adopt a "comprehensive plan" under section 66.1001(4)(b); and

WHEREAS, the City has prepared the attached document City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan, containing all maps and other descriptive materials, to be the comprehensive plan for the City under section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Plan Commission of the City of Wisconsin Rapids hereby adopts the attached Comprehensive Plan as the City's comprehensive plan under section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Clerk certifies a copy of the attached Comprehensive Plan to the City Common Council; and

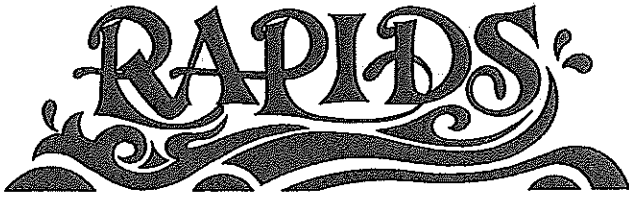
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Plan Commission hereby recommends that, following a public hearing, the City Common Council adopt an ordinance to constitute official approval of the City of Wisconsin Rapids Comprehensive Plan as the City's comprehensive plan under section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

Adopted this 28th day of September 2009.

Plan Commission Chairperson

Attest: Plan Commission Clerk

W I S C O N S I N



City Clerk's Office

444 West Grand Avenue
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-2780
Phone: (715) 421-8200
Fax: (715) 421-8280

CERTIFICATE

State of Wisconsin)
) - ss
County of Wood)

I, Shane E. Blaser, being the duly elected Clerk of the City of Wisconsin Rapids, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the following are true and exact excerpts of minutes of a meeting of the Wisconsin Rapids Common Council held January 5, 2010. Said minutes pertain to the adoption of the "Comprehensive Plan of the City of Wisconsin Rapids".

I further certify that Ordinance #1095, adopting the "Comprehensive Plan of the City of Wisconsin Rapids, a copy of which is attached, was published in the Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune on January 12, 2010, and became effective upon publication.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2010.

[SEAL]



Shane E. Blaser, City Clerk

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WISCONSIN

Tuesday, January 5, 2010

A regular meeting of the Wisconsin Rapids Common Council was called to order by Mayor Mary Jo Carson at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday January 5, 2010.

Roll call showed that all alderpersons were present. Student observers Albert Webster and Ethan Hokamp were also present.

The mayor requested that all present stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent prayer.

It was moved by Kirkpatrick, seconded by Young, to dispense with reading and accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion carried.

The mayor explained that people in the audience may address the council by making their request to do so through an alderperson.

(Here occurred business not pertinent.)

Next, the council held a scheduled public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan for the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

No one spoke against the plan. Speaking in favor were Rayome and Kirkpatrick.

After the public hearing was closed, it was moved by Rayome, seconded by Hokamp, to adopt Ordinance #1095 adopting the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Motion carried with 8 ayes and 0 nays.

(Here occurred business not pertinent.)

There being no further business to come before the council, it was moved, seconded, and carried to adjourn; time 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Shane E. Blaser
Shane E. Blaser, City Clerk

ORDINANCE NO. MC 1095

A GENERAL ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS CREATING CHAPTER 37 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE TO BE ENTITLED "COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS."

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I Chapter 37 of the Wisconsin Rapids Municipal Code is hereby created to read as follows:

CHAPTER 37 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Wisconsin Rapids

37.01 Pursuant to Section 60.22(3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the City of Wisconsin Rapids is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in Section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

37.02 The Common Council of the City of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

37.03 The Planning Commission of the City of Wisconsin Rapids, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Common Council the adoption of the document entitled "Comprehensive Plan of the City of Wisconsin Rapids," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes:

37.04 The City has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

37.05 The Common Council of the City of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Comprehensive Plan of the City of Wisconsin Rapids," pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

37.06 This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Common Council and publication/posting as required by law.

SECTION II All ordinances, or parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION III This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication.

PASSED: 01-05-2010

APPROVED: 01-05-2010

PUBLISHED: 01-12-2010

/s/ Mary Jo Carson
Mary Jo Carson, Mayor

/s/ Shane E. Blaser
Shane E. Blaser, City Clerk