



Office of Government Relations

January 27, 2025

City of Wauwatosa Planning Department  
7725 W. North Avenue  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Subject: Comments on the City of Wauwatosa's 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mayor McBride and Members of the Department of Planning and Zoning,

On behalf of the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), we are writing to express our support for the City of Wauwatosa's draft 2045 Comprehensive Plan, specifically, feedback that was incorporated for Office and Medical land uses. We appreciate the city's efforts to create a balanced environment that supports professional and healthcare-related employment.

The long-term planning and partnership between the city, MCW, and key stakeholders has been instrumental in fostering a thriving community. This collaboration has not only enhanced healthcare services but also driven economic growth and innovation in the region. The shared vision and commitment to excellence have resulted in numerous successful projects, benefiting residents and setting a benchmark for future initiatives. MCW envisions a bright future with continued growth across its missions. The 2045 Comprehensive Plan will enable MCW to grow and continue to provide value to the city and its residents.

Housing is a key concern for students and employees. In fact, in surveys conducted by MCW, students and employees have identified a desire to be close to campus and be part of the vibrant city and community. Providing this option is important to MCW as it draws talent from across the country and adds to Wauwatosa's economic growth. We support the addition of multifamily development as an allowed land use within Office and Medical areas. This inclusion will promote workforce and student housing and live-work arrangements, which are essential for attracting and retaining talented professionals.

Additionally, multifamily and student housing options will also support the city's vision of creating vibrant, mixed-use communities that offer convenient living arrangements for those working in office and medical facilities. Furthermore, allowing multifamily and student housing development will help make the community more walkable and reduce the number of vehicles on the road, contributing to a more sustainable and livable environment. This also helps reduce conversion of scarce land to parking lots.

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MCW is a leading institution in medical education and research, and our presence in Wauwatosa has significantly contributed to the community's growth and development. The permitted uses within the Office and Medical land use category align the comprehensive plan with our mission to advance health through education, discovery, and patient care. These modifications will enhance the comprehensive plan by promoting a more integrated and supportive environment for education, research, and professional development. We look forward to collaborating with the City of Wauwatosa to achieve these goals and to continue contributing to the community's prosperity.

Thank you again for your work on this important document and we look forward to continuing to partner with the city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nathan Berken".

Nathan Berken  
*Vice President, Government Relations*  
*Medical College of Wisconsin*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nathan Schwanz".

Nathan Schwanz  
*Director of Government Relations*  
*Medical College of Wisconsin*



Dear City Administrator Archambo, Mayor McBride, and Council President Wilke,

On behalf of Onward Tosa, we are writing to share our position on the draft *Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan*. While we recognize the significant work that has gone into crafting this vision for Wauwatosa's future, we believe there are critical areas that should be addressed to ensure the plan meets the needs of all residents, aligns with best urban planning practices, and reflects our community's values. Below is a list of key requests that we believe are essential for Onward Tosa's endorsement of the new Comprehensive Plan:

**1. Incorporate Clear, Actionable Goals for Affordable Housing**

- Reiterate commitment to increasing affordable housing supply for low-income families, seniors, and first-time homebuyers with measurable benchmarks and strategies addressing affordability and ownership options across income levels.
- Replace "attainable housing" with precise terms like "market-rate" or "luxury housing" to clarify the target economic demographic and housing type.

**2. Adopt Form-Based Codes for Designated Areas**

- Wauwatosa, a landlocked city, must strategically optimize its limited space to accommodate growth and development. Designating future [form-based](#) zoning in key areas such as The Village, East Tosa, and the Mayfair Corridor allows for more efficient land use and fosters vibrant, walkable communities. These designations can be reflected in the new land use map, ensuring cohesive, context-sensitive development that aligns with Wauwatosa's vision for mixed-use neighborhoods while preserving the city's unique character and sense of place.
- Provide public education on form-based codes to demonstrate their benefits for creating vibrant and sustainable neighborhoods.

**3. Strengthen Public Engagement**

- An additional public workshop should be held before the plan's final adoption to ensure robust community input on final revisions.
- Publish video recordings of the plan steering committee meetings to increase transparency.
- Representatives from city committees and commissions, including members beyond the committee chairs, such as those from the Sustainability Committee, Equity and Inclusion, Senior Commission, Persons with Disabilities, Bicycle and Pedestrian, and the Affordable Housing Coalition, should actively participate in the final review process.

**4. Ensure Alignment with the City's Strategic Plan**

- The comprehensive plan should align its goals with the city's mission and vision by emphasizing inclusivity, sustainability, affordability, and quality of life through equitable housing, infrastructure, affordable policies, and enhanced community well-being.
- Establish publicly available documented mechanisms to review and evaluate progress on plan implementation and zoning code updates regularly.



**5. Revise Land Use Designations for Clarity and Equity**

- Refine broad designations such as "Mixed Residential" and "Community Commercial" to align with the American Planning Association's Land-Based Classification Standards (LBCS).
- Preserve neighborhood character by balancing higher-density developments with single-family housing opportunities.
- Provide to the public examples of "Mixed Residential" and "Community Commercial" zoning language to increase transparency and communicate the intention behind these terms.

**6. Expand Transparency and Accountability for the Action Matrix**

- Provide detailed timelines, funding sources, and responsible parties for each action in the matrix to ensure accountability.
- Establish clear metrics to track progress and publicly share updates with residents.

**7. Provide Transparency in Public Involvement and Vision Statement Development**

- Make publicly available documentation outlining the roles and contributions of city committees in shaping the comprehensive plan.
- Disclose how the vision statement was crafted, including details on who wrote it and how community input was incorporated into its development.
- Clarify and remedy why the Monarch Trail, a site the City of Wauwatosa previously agreed with development partners and Milwaukee County to protect, is not identified as a protected wildlife area in the comprehensive plan.
- The "Collaboration With Developers" section on page 53 emphasizes streamlining processes to encourage redevelopment but fails to address incentives for affordable housing or reducing reliance on Tax Increment Financing. Prioritizing "attainable housing" over genuinely affordable options risks neglecting the needs of fixed-income, lower-income, and young families, undermining equitable redevelopment goals.

These requests reflect our shared commitment to creating an inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven future for Wauwatosa. Please consider these recommendations and incorporate them into the final draft of the *Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan*. Onward Tosa requests this letter be included in all Common Council and Plan Commission agenda packets as public comment related to the comprehensive plan.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. We kindly request a written response sent to [onwardwauwatosa@gmail.com](mailto:onwardwauwatosa@gmail.com) before the February 10th, 2025, Wauwatosa Plan Commission Meeting, detailing how the items presented in this letter are addressed in the comprehensive plan, have been implemented or the specific steps underway to address these requests before adoption by the Wauwatosa Common Council.

Sincerely,

Indy Stluka, Joseph Makhlouf, Mark Peters, Andrew Meindl and the Voting Members of Onward Tosa

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**From:** Ann Heidkamp <heidkama.ah@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 27, 2025 11:36 AM  
**To:** tclerk; Dennis McBride; Margaret Arney; Andrew Meindl; Robin Brannin; James Moldenhauer; Joseph Makhlouf II; Ernst-Ulrich Franzen; David Lewis; Joe Phillips; Aletha Champine; Melissa Dolan; Brad Foley; Amanda Fuerst; Sean Lowe; Rob Gustafson; Mike Morgan; Jason Wilke  
**Cc:** James Archambo; Mark Hammond  
**Subject:** [External] Housing Coalition Comprehensive Plan Comments for Public Hearing

The Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition worked hard to see that the Tosa Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan includes a vision and recommendations that set the stage for increasing affordable, accessible, and sustainable housing in the city over the next twenty years. We are pleased to see that it does.

**Therefore, we encourage you to support the Housing related portions of the Plan.**

However, a Comprehensive Plan is a broad vision only without measurable goals or actions to implement that vision. The city needs more affordable, accessible housing NOW and cannot wait for long-term solutions. We need to find creative solutions that do not rely primarily on creating units in new large-scale market-rate projects.

**The Housing Coalition is therefore urging the Council to take the following implementation actions by the end of 2025:**

- **Complete the Zoning Review as included in the consultant’s contract and direct staff to develop zoning modifications.**
- **Direct staff to develop a measurable "Affordable, Accessible Housing Plan" that increases affordable, accessible rental and home-buyer units equal to 20% of the approved market-rate housing units in 2-year increments over the life of the plan.**
  - Based on the number of market rate units in recently constructed or approved projects this would result in about 134 affordable, accessible units by 2027, an additional 132 units by 2030, and an additional 184 by 2035. As more market-rate projects are developed, this number would grow.
  - The plan should include options for individuals and families from 30 to 80% AMI.
  - Strategies could include a variety of methods such as WHEDA tax credit housing; ADU’s; Habitat for Humanity and land trust homes; landlord incentives in return for affordable rents; subsidies or tax deferments to help keep lower income residents in current housing; small scale affordable projects; subsidies for persons with disabilities to live independently; low-income rental or mortgage programs.
  - Identification of additional city, county, state, federal, or private funds that could help support the plan.
- **Direct staff or CDA to develop guidelines for funding and allocating the city's Affordable Housing Fund that:**

- Allocate a portion of the current money for use immediately to maintain and increase affordable, accessible housing units in current housing stock and to subsidize land trust homes for lower-income home buyers.

Examples: Allow funds to be used for owner-occupied single-family or duplex units up to 120% AMI; Allow funds for owners of duplexes through small-scale apartment buildings to maintain and make units safe, energy efficient and accessible in return for rental at affordable prices.

- Specify how developers, whether requesting city funds or not, will contribute to the growth of this fund.
- Identify additional city, county, state, federal, or private funds that could add to the growth of the fund

- **Immediately allocate any remaining ARPA funds for affordable, accessible housing programs similar to the above suggestions.**

- Given the time limits, using these funds for initial establishment of land-trust homes in Tosa might be the quickest use and one many alders supported in initial distribution of ARPA funds. Adding suburban homes to existing Milwaukee Community Land trust is expected by late Spring, 2025.

As the Housing Coalition, we look forward to working with the Council and City Staff to implement these actions.

Thank you,

For the Wauwatosa Housing Coalition

- Rosemary Fox - Equity and Inclusion Commission - 2020 N. Wauwatosa Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- Roman Jordan –Equity and Inclusion Commission
- Mary Walz-Chojnacki - Commission for Persons with Disabilities, 8007 Portland Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- Dain Maddox - Senior Commission – 105 N 88<sup>th</sup> Street, Wauwatosa, WI 53226
- Kathy Causier - Senior Commission - 8213 Aberdeen Court, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- Mike Arney, Sustainability Committee, 1447 St. Charles St, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- John Horky, Sustainability Committee
- Ann Heidkamp – Tosa Together – 2330 N. Swan Blvd, Wauwatosa, WI 53226
- Ursula Twombly – Tosa Together – 11716 W. Meinecke Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53226