



Tosa Tomorrow

2045 Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT | October 2, 2024

DRAFT
FOR REVIEW WITH
STEERING COMMITTEE
10/02/24



Table of Contents

About the Plan.....	2
Community Profile.....	6
Vision and Goals.....	18
Land Use and Development.....	22
Housing and Neighborhoods.....	28
Economic Development.....	40
Transportation.....	52
Utilities, Infrastructure, and Community Facilities.....	68
Parks, Open Space, and Natural Areas.....	76
Corridor Plans.....	84



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01



ABOUT THE PLAN

*The City of Wauwatosa underwent the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. The **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** will serve as a foundation for decision making and help guide the City as it works to implement the community's vision and goals. This chapter is intended to describe what a comprehensive plan is, its purpose, and how it is designed to be used.*





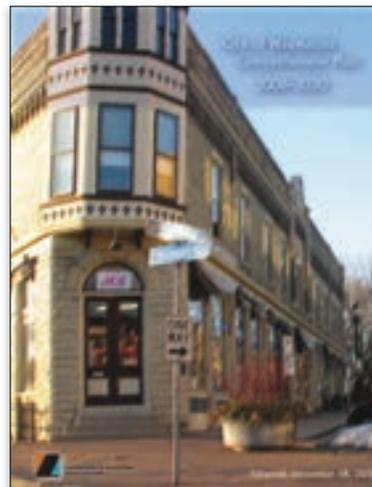
Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan represents the City's official vision for the future and acts as a guide for decisions related to development regulations, capital improvements, and other local policies and actions over the next 20 years. It is designed to serve as a foundation for decision making for the City, developers, residents, and other stakeholders.

The Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001 defines a comprehensive plan as, "a guide to the physical, social, and economic development of a local government unit". All cities within Wisconsin are granted the authority to prepare a comprehensive plan, but it must include public engagement and feedback and contain the following elements, either as a standalone chapter or incorporated within chapters.

- Issues and opportunities
- Land use
- Housing
- Economic development
- Transportation
- Utilities and community facilities
- Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Implementation

Wauwatosa's previous comprehensive plan was adopted in 2008 and several additional area plans, studies, and analyses were conducted since then. As such, this new **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** will accommodate new conditions, issues, and opportunities to provide the community with an up-to-date document to better inform development and guide the City into the future.



Overview of the Planning Process

To adequately guide the City for the next 20 years, the **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** is the product of a community-driven planning process that includes engagement with residents, business owners, local officials, City staff, service providers, and other community stakeholders.

To ensure the comprehensive planning process achieves what is required by the state of Wisconsin and what is desired by the Wauwatosa community, a nine-step process was created to guide the development of the **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan**. The planning process included the following steps:

Step 1: Project Initiation

The planning process began with meetings with City staff, the Plan Commission, and the City of Wauwatosa Common Council. These meetings allowed staff and officials the opportunity to discuss their roles and involvement with the plan and identify community issues and opportunities at the project's onset.

Step 2: Community Engagement

Community outreach and citizen participation are important parts of the planning process. Residents, business owners, and other stakeholders participated in the planning process through workshops, online questionnaires, an interactive project website, and key person interviews.

Step 3: Existing Conditions Analysis

A comprehensive understanding of Wauwatosa's existing conditions is vital to orient the Plan in the right direction. An Existing Conditions Memorandum was prepared, which provided an inventory and summary of the project team's analysis of existing conditions. The memo is based on existing data, field reconnaissance, questionnaires, past planning efforts and initiatives, market and demographic information, and community engagement. The memo served as the initial foundation for the Plan's development.

Step 4: Vision, Goals, and Preliminary Land Use Element

The **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** establishes an overall vision for the City of Wauwatosa that provides focus and direction for all future land use, development, and planning decisions. This vision is supported by a set of established goals based on analysis and themes identified during community outreach. In addition to a vision and goals, the preliminary land use element provides recommendations and policies for land use decisions within the next 20 years. All three of these elements combined to form a "cornerstone" of the consensus-building process and provided direction for all subsequent planning activities.

Step 5: Preliminary Elements

The preliminary elements of the plan include housing, economic development, transportation, utilities, infrastructure, community service facilities, parks, open space, and natural resources. The focus of these elements was established through feedback from the community, City staff, and stakeholders. Additionally these topics align with the state statute required comprehensive planning elements.

Step 6: Subarea Planning

Certain areas of Wauwatosa were recognized as more susceptible to change or impacts from new development. North Avenue, from the western City limits to the Menomonee River and Blue Mound Road, from the western City limits to Interstate 41 were identified as two such areas needing a detailed set of plans. As with the core themes of the Comprehensive Plan, the visions for the two subareas were established through community feedback.

Step 7: Draft Comprehensive Plan

Based on the previous steps and tasks in the planning process, the draft version of the Comprehensive Plan was prepared and presented for review by City staff and the community. Feedback from the Plan Commission, City staff, and community will be used to revise the document for a final presentation with the Common Council for consideration and adoption.

Step 8: Diagnostics Memo

Upon the completion of the **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan**, a thorough review of the City's existing Zoning Code was conducted to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the existing regulations. These were compiled into a Diagnostics Memo for consideration by the Plan Commission.

Step 9: Preliminary Zoning Recommendations Memo

After receiving feedback on the Diagnostics Memo, a Preliminary Zoning Recommendations Memo was developed for City staff to consider changes to Wauwatosa's Zoning Code.



Using the Plan

The **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** will not achieve any of its established goals if it is not actively utilized in any succeeding community plans, studies, or developments. As such, it is important to know that the Plan serves the following key functions:

Communicating the City's Vision

The Plan is a powerful statement of the community's vision for how it grows and changes over the coming years. The Plan identifies the City's priorities and charts a path for long-term growth.

Inform Development Proposals

The Plan is a long-term guide to measure and evaluate public and private proposals that affect the community's physical, social, and economic environment. The Plan guides and assists in the evaluation of public and private development proposals and helps ensure that proposed development supports the City's long-term objectives.

Coordinate Initiatives

The Plan informs and coordinates planning initiatives that affect the City at the local, county, and regional levels. The Plan may aid and inform efforts related to housing, transportation, trails, natural resources, economic development, tourism, and recreation.

CIP and Budgeting

The Plan informs and coordinates planning initiatives that affect the City at the local, county, and regional levels. The Plan may aid and inform efforts related to housing, transportation, trails, natural resources, economic development, tourism, and recreation.

Future Studies

The Plan establishes a path forward but cannot address every issue faced by the City in sufficient detail. It identifies additional studies and future action steps to address specific needs.

Inform and Educate

The Plan is a valuable source of information for the Common Council, the Plan Commission, staff, and local organizations, businesses, and residents. This broad spectrum of interests should use the Plan to inform the community and provide valuable information that can assist with future initiatives. The Plan is also an effective marketing tool that can be used to promote the community and highlight opportunities for investment.

Relationship to the Zoning Ordinance

A pivotal component of implementation involves exercising land use regulation authorities. According to Wisconsin Statutes section 66.1001, any incorporated community enacting or amending an official mapping, subdivision, or zoning ordinance must align with its comprehensive plan. (Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration)

02



COMMUNITY PROFILE

This chapter provides a snapshot of the community's current conditions as it plans for the next 20 years. This understanding of the City's needs and existing opportunities supported the foundation of Wauwatosa's vision and goals. The following section provides an overview of the City's regional context, past planning efforts, demographic snapshot, existing land use, and current zoning.





Regional Context

Wauwatosa is in southeastern Wisconsin, along the western edge of Milwaukee County. It shares a border with the City of Milwaukee, which grants residents easy access to several urban amenities, including popular attractions like the Milwaukee County Zoo, Fiserv Forum, and American Family Field. Running through the community is Interstate 41, which provides regional connectivity and convenient travel to Wauwatosa's neighbors and to major cities throughout the region. The City also benefits from Interstate 94 just south of its borders, enabling easy travel to Downtown Milwaukee and other parts of Western Wisconsin. General Mitchell International Airport is a convenient 20-minute drive to the south, giving City residents easy access to domestic and international flights. These transportation options make Wauwatosa and well-connected a desirable location.

In addition to Milwaukee, Wauwatosa shares boundaries with the City of Brookfield and the villages of Butler and Elm Grove to the west, as well as the City of West Allis to the south. Wisconsin State Legislature Statutes Chapter 236.02(5) dictates that a municipality's planning area, or extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction extends to three miles of corporate limits. All of Wauwatosa's planning area extends into its neighbors, making the City a landlocked community restricted from outward growth. Therefore, any future development will be focused within the City's existing boundaries. The Comprehensive Plan will provide recommendations ensuring that this form of development occurs successfully.

Community Engagement

The **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** is founded on an inclusive and engaging community outreach process designed to gather input from a wide range of community members including residents, business owners, City officials and staff, and other key stakeholders. The outreach process helped identify Wauwatosa’s issues, opportunities, potential projects, strengths and assets, and overall public opinion of what the Plan should address. The outreach process has reached over 1,100 people across all engagement formats, from facilitated outreach to online touchpoints. This section summarizes virtual and in-person outreach along with a tally of engagement numbers.

In-Person Engagement

Several in-person meetings, workshops, and events gave City staff and community members the opportunity to engage with and give feedback on all aspects of the Plan. These ranged from introductory meetings to introduce the community to the Plan and determine proper goals to full-fledged charrettes with real time mapping and feedback on proposed recommendations. Over the course of the project, a total of nine public meetings and twelve key stakeholder interviews were held. In addition, three DIY Workshops were held without the facilitation of the project team.

City Department Meeting

The City department meeting brought together several department heads and other identified members of the City of Wauwatosa staff, who could give insight into the daily operations and concerns of City employees. A total of 12 participants took part in this meeting.

Business Community Workshop

The business community workshop introduced the planning process to Wauwatosa’s business community. They provided issues and opportunities for the City’s business community. A total of 29 participants took part in this workshop.

Community Kickoff Workshop

The community kickoff workshop introduced the community to the Plan and established the desired vision of the City. This workshop utilized interactive polling to show participants how their collective feedback appeared in word clouds. A total of 35 participants took part in this workshop.

Key Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Key individuals with unique perspectives or experiences within Wauwatosa were gathered for special interviews during the planning process. These interviews were conducted one-on-one or in groups. Focus groups were organized to discuss specific topics, such as housing. In total, 26 participants took part in an interview or focus group.

Do-It-Yourself Kits

Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Kits were made available so that City staff or other community members could lead public engagement meetings without the presence of project staff. Leaders of these meetings could print copies of the kits and follow predetermined instructions to garner useful feedback. 26 participants engaged with DIY kits over the project.

Steering Committee Meetings

The steering committee was the primary sounding board for the **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan**. The members of this committee provided a diverse range of opinions and interests and ensured the Plan was reflective of community. Five meetings and workshops were held to give the steering committee a chance to comment on all aspects of the Plan.



Outreach summaries and workshop packets



Visioning Workshop

Community visioning workshops gave residents and stakeholders the chance to tell the Project Team what they think before policies and recommendations are crafted. Two workshops were held at different times to give more residents a chance to engage with the project. A total of 17 participants attended the two workshops.

Youth Library Visioning Workshop (Staff Led)

City staff held a visioning workshop mapping exercise with local school children to determine what that age group may want from the Comprehensive Plan. Around 20 participants attended this workshop.

Community Subarea Charrette

The community subarea charrette was open to the entire community and gave residents and stakeholders the chance to discuss what they wanted to see in the Blue Mound Road and North Avenue subareas. Participants worked in groups to draw their proposed changes on large subarea maps. A total of 40 participants attended the charrette.



Completed Visioning Maps



Virtual and Online Engagement

To ensure the project could be seen by as many community members as possible, several virtual engagement opportunities were made available. Self-guided online outreach allowed stakeholders to participate by filling out a questionnaire, or by mapping issues, opportunities, and assets using map.social, an online mapping tool. A project webpage linked to the City of Wauwatosa homepage was designed to support the planning process. The webpage remained active through the adoption of the **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan**.

Community Questionnaire

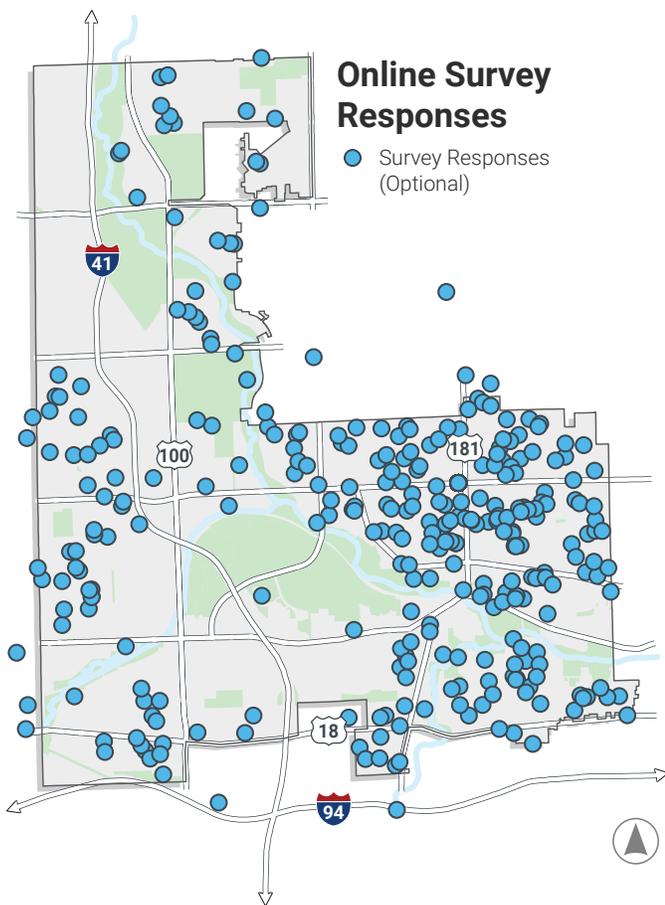
The online questionnaire featured multiple-choice and long answer questions across nine different sections including housing, land use, community facilities, transportation, parks and recreation, image and identity, and top strengths and weaknesses. Over the course of the project, 726 unique participants engaged with the community questionnaire.

Community Facilities Questionnaire

The community facilities questionnaire featured multiple-choice and long answer questions covering the range of different community and utility services in Wauwatosa. This questionnaire was directed towards employees of the various services to gain insight into the general operation and needs of the City's various services. Over the course of the project, 21 unique participants responded to the community facilities questionnaire.

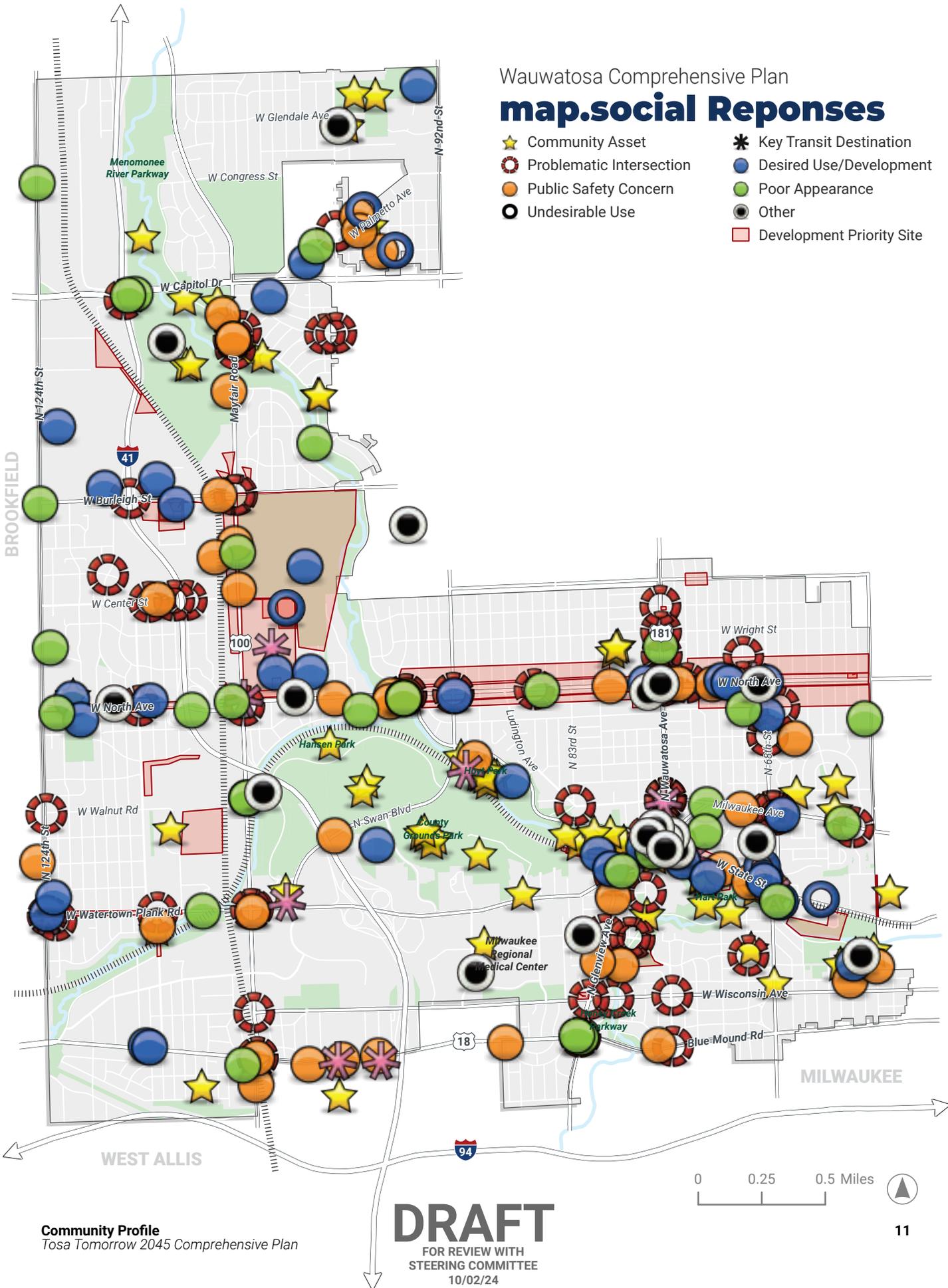
Map.social

Map.social is an online mapping tool that allowed participants to pinpoint issues and opportunities within Wauwatosa on their own personalized map. Points can be used to identify Wauwatosa's assets and opportunities, priority development sites, ideas for new bikeways and paths, and desired uses and developments. Points can also identify issues in Wauwatosa, such as problematic intersections, poor building appearance, and public safety concerns. Over the course of the project, 363 unique features were mapped.



Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan map.social Reponses

- ★ Community Asset
- ⊗ Problematic Intersection
- Public Safety Concern
- ⦿ Undesirable Use
- ✳ Key Transit Destination
- Desired Use/Development
- Poor Appearance
- ⦿ Other
- Development Priority Site





Past Plans and Studies

This section examines past plans and studies that helped shape policy, planning, and development guidelines in Wauwatosa. Reviewing past plans and studies helps evaluate their continued relevance to establish a proper foundation of understanding of the policies, plans, and development that made the City into the community it is today. The **Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan** should incorporate relevant goals and policies from these earlier documents to integrate older, but relevant community priorities into the updated vision and Plan.

City of Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan 2008-2030 (2008)

The City of Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2008, was the City's first comprehensive plan since the 1970s. Including sections on land use, transportation, utilities and community facilities, housing and neighborhood development, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and natural and cultural resources, the plan primarily focused preserving neighborhoods and maintaining community character. With recent efforts to improve the City's housing situation, the new Comprehensive Plan can examine ways to preserve what makes the community special, while ensuring it is prepared for growth.

The Village of Wauwatosa, Strategic Development Plan (2011)

The Village of Wauwatosa Strategic Development plan is an area plan that outlines enhancements to the Village through a mix of projects ranging in scale. It aims to build on past ideas to incrementally improve the area's character, business climate, transportation, and other facets through specific projects balanced with larger efforts. The new Comprehensive Plan can examine the recommended enhancements and incorporate them into future land use development.

East Tosa Avenue Plan (2011)

The East Tosa Avenue Plan is a corridor plan for North Avenue from 60th Street to Wauwatosa Avenue. The goal of the plan was to spur redevelopment in the area. Design elements from this plan were successfully incorporated into the zoning code and used in the 69th Street Plaza and streetscaping. The new Comprehensive Plan can utilize this plan's successful streetscape elements in future corridor recommendations.

City of Wauwatosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan (2014)

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan proposed a complete and safe bicycle and pedestrian network throughout Wauwatosa. The was developed with the goals of developing bicycle facilities that support safe year-round use, increasing connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians, and reducing the use and speed of automobiles. The new Comprehensive Plan can build off and utilize the previous plan's recommendations.

Burleigh Triangle and Mayfair Road Corridor North Redevelopment Vision and Plan (2015)

The Burleigh Triangle and Mayfair Road Corridor North Redevelopment Vision and Plan is a corridor plan that sought to develop new mixed-use and residential communities along the two corridors. Some recommendations were successfully developed, but others were not. The new Comprehensive Plan should reexamine portions of the plan that have not been implemented and provide new recommendations to help them get implemented.



Redevelopment District No. 1 Plan (2015)

The Redevelopment District No. 1 Plan is a district redevelopment plan focusing on parcels along Highway 100/ North Mayfair Road. The development area contains the Wauwatosa Police Department, Wauwatosa Public Works Drop Off Center, and a landfill. The goal of the plan was to eliminate blight in the area and create a new mixed-use development to spur economic development on the west side of the City. None of the recommendations in the plan have been implemented, but the new Comprehensive Plan should review and incorporate applicable goals.

Active Tosa: Park, Trail, Open-Space, and Recreational Facilities Master Plan (2017)

Active Tosa is a joint plan with the Wauwatosa School District to assess existing offerings and outline potential improvements to open space and recreation. The goals of this plan were to improve or incorporate bicycle and pedestrian trails, indoor facilities, passive open spaces, pocket parks, and active adult spaces. Moreover, the City is updating its Park and Open Space Plan for 2025-2030 to supplement the Active Tosa Plan.

Wauwatosa Midtown North Avenue Plan (2018)

The Midtown North Avenue plan is a corridor plan for North Avenue between Wauwatosa Avenue and Menomonee River Parkway. The plan focuses on improving safety in public spaces and for all modes of transportation, maintaining established neighborhood fabric, and marketing the district in the western portion of the corridor. The new Comprehensive Plan should incorporate applicable goals from the plan when determining development along the North Avenue corridor.

Wauwatosa Life Sciences District Plan (2018)

The Wauwatosa Life Sciences District plan is an area plan for the County Grounds, MRMC, and Mayfair Road south of North Avenue adopted in 2018 looking towards 2038. The goals of this plan are to improve circulation and traffic, increase mutual trust and benefit, protect environmental areas, design integrated streets and buildings, provide housing and mixed-uses, and create and enhance public spaces. The new Comprehensive Plan should review the recommendations for the district and bring forward applicable goals.

Housing Study and Needs Assessment (2023)

The Housing Study and Needs Assessment is an analysis of current housing conditions in Wauwatosa. It determined that a combination of a growing municipal population, growing home prices and rents, and lack of diverse housing options is fueling housing unaffordability in the City. The assessment recommended more and more diverse housing construction and the involvement of the City in maintaining affordability. The new Comprehensive Plan should review the findings of the assessment and incorporate its applicable goals into the updated housing recommendations.



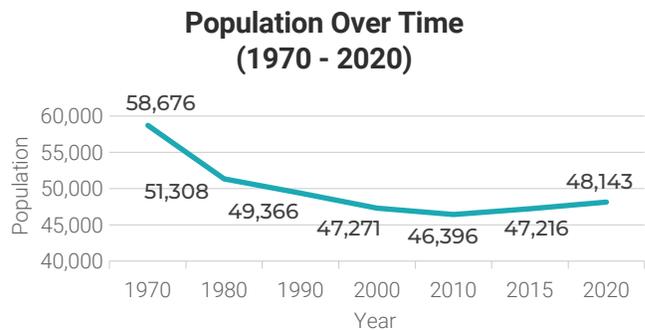
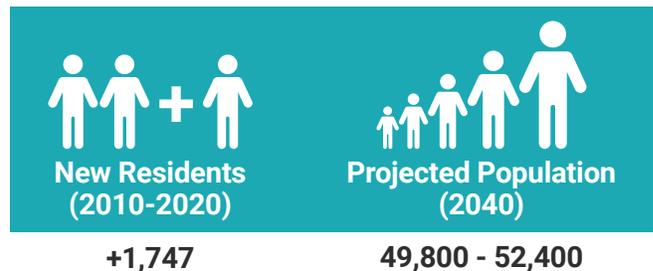
Demographic Snapshot

An analysis of Wauwatosa's existing demographics was conducted to provide a snapshot in time of the City's population. This analysis provided an understanding of current socioeconomic conditions and served as a solid baseline for developing Plan recommendations. This understanding is necessary to ensure the Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan utilizes accurate demographic data and only provides recommendations for current trends, issues, and opportunities identified during analysis. This demographic snapshot is just a summary of a more detailed demographic and market analysis conducted earlier in the planning process and can be found in the Existing Conditions Memorandum.



Population

Wauwatosa's total population fluctuated over the past 50 years. From a high of 58,676 in 1970, the population declined to 46,179 in 2010. As of 2021, however, the City's population rose to 48,072. This population recovery is on par with similar communities in the region and projections found in the Housing Study and Needs Assessment indicate that it could grow above 50,000 by 2040. This sustained growth indicates a demand to live in Wauwatosa and the Comprehensive Plan should provide recommendations on developing housing and amenities for these new arrivals.



Source: Housing Study and Needs Assessment



Housing

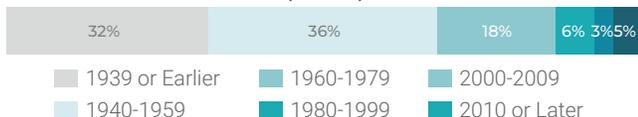
Like other communities in the Milwaukee metro area, Wauwatosa’s housing stock predominantly consists of owner-occupied single-family homes. 57.9% of all homes consist of this housing type. 39.6% of the City’s population lives in multifamily structures with two or more units. 63.4% of households own their homes and 36.6% of households are renters. This aligns with the metro’s housing tenure distribution, but greatly differs from that of West Allis and Brookfield, where over 90% of their households own their homes. Although most of the City’s population owns a single-family home, the large percentage of renters and multifamily residents indicates the Comprehensive Plan should provide recommendations for a diverse housing stock that satisfies all Wauwatosa residents.

Housing cost burden is defined as a household paying more than 30% of its income towards housing. Greater than 35% indicates a severe burden. In Wauwatosa almost 5,000 households are considered cost burdened, including 39.9% of all homeowners and 60.1% of all renters. With more than half of all renters being cost burdened, the Comprehensive Plan should offer potential solutions to give renters access to more affordable housing options within the City.

Housing Stock (2020)



Age of Housing Stock (2020)



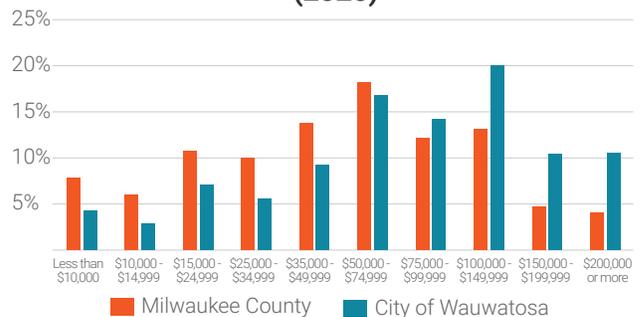
Income

In 2021, Wauwatosa recorded a median household income of \$90,420, a 40% increase from the 2010 figure of \$64,154. In contrast, the wider metropolitan area experienced slower growth, with a 27.13% increase. This local increase in median household income can be attributed to a rise in households earning over \$150,000 and a simultaneous decrease in households earning between \$25,000 to \$49,999 and less than \$25,000. This rapid increase in high-earning households put pressure on remaining lower income residents and the Comprehensive Plan should provide recommendations on accommodating new residents while ensuring existing residents remain in place.



City of Wauwatosa
\$82,392
Milwaukee County
\$50,606

Median Household Income (2020)



Existing Land Use

An inventory of the existing land use and development patterns was conducted to inform the planning process and gain a better understanding of Wauwatosa. The information from this review has been used to inform issues, opportunities, and recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan. Any locations of specific neighborhoods noted in the classifications were based off the Wauwatosa Neighborhood Associations map from 2022.

Single-Family Detached

Single-family detached refers to individual residences situated on separate parcels. Single-family detached housing can vary in relative size and architectural style throughout Wauwatosa.

Single-Family Attached

Single-family attached includes residential units that share an exterior wall while maintaining distinct separate entrances. Single-family attached may be connected horizontally or vertically and are often called duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes.

Multifamily

Multifamily includes multiple dwelling units integrated into a single building with a designated main entrance. Multifamily residential units are typically found along major corridors following a similar typology of two to three story buildings setback from the street.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-use refers to an individual building or development that includes a variety of uses. Uses are typically stacked vertically with commercial at ground level with residential and/or offices on the upper floors.

Commercial

Commercial uses include retail and other service-based businesses such as shops, restaurants, gas stations, and automobile service stations.

Office

Office land uses refer to buildings or developments dedicated to professional, service, and administrative activities. Office land uses are generally located near commercial or alongside other commercial uses supporting economic development throughout Wauwatosa.

Light Industrial

Light industrial includes warehouses, workshops, distribution centers, light manufacturing, and storage facilities. Operations within this land use typically have minimal noise and waste issues that require mitigation. Light industrial uses are typically buffered from incompatible uses such as residential, parks and open space.

Heavy Industrial

Heavy industrial uses refer to more intensive industrial activities including fabrication, processing, and production. This classification is typically characterized by its environmental impacts and need for robust energy, water, wastewater, and stormwater management.

Public/Semi-Public

Public/Semi-Public are designated areas utilized for public and/or non-profit purposes including schools, government facilities, medical buildings, and places of worship.

Open Space

Open space includes undeveloped or minimally developed land that provides natural landscapes that are not designated for recreational activities.

Parks

Parks include many of the outdoor recreational areas and parkways throughout the City. The Menomonee River Parkway running through Wauwatosa offers access to the regional multi-use Oak Leaf Trail network. Parks provide opportunities for residents to engage in physical activities, social interactions, and leisure.

Utilities and Transportation

Utilities and transportation encompass essential services and right-of-way infrastructure including water, electricity, and transportation networks. Most parcels on the Existing Land Use map labeled as Utilities and Transportation are roadways including Interstate 41 and the railroads bisecting the City.

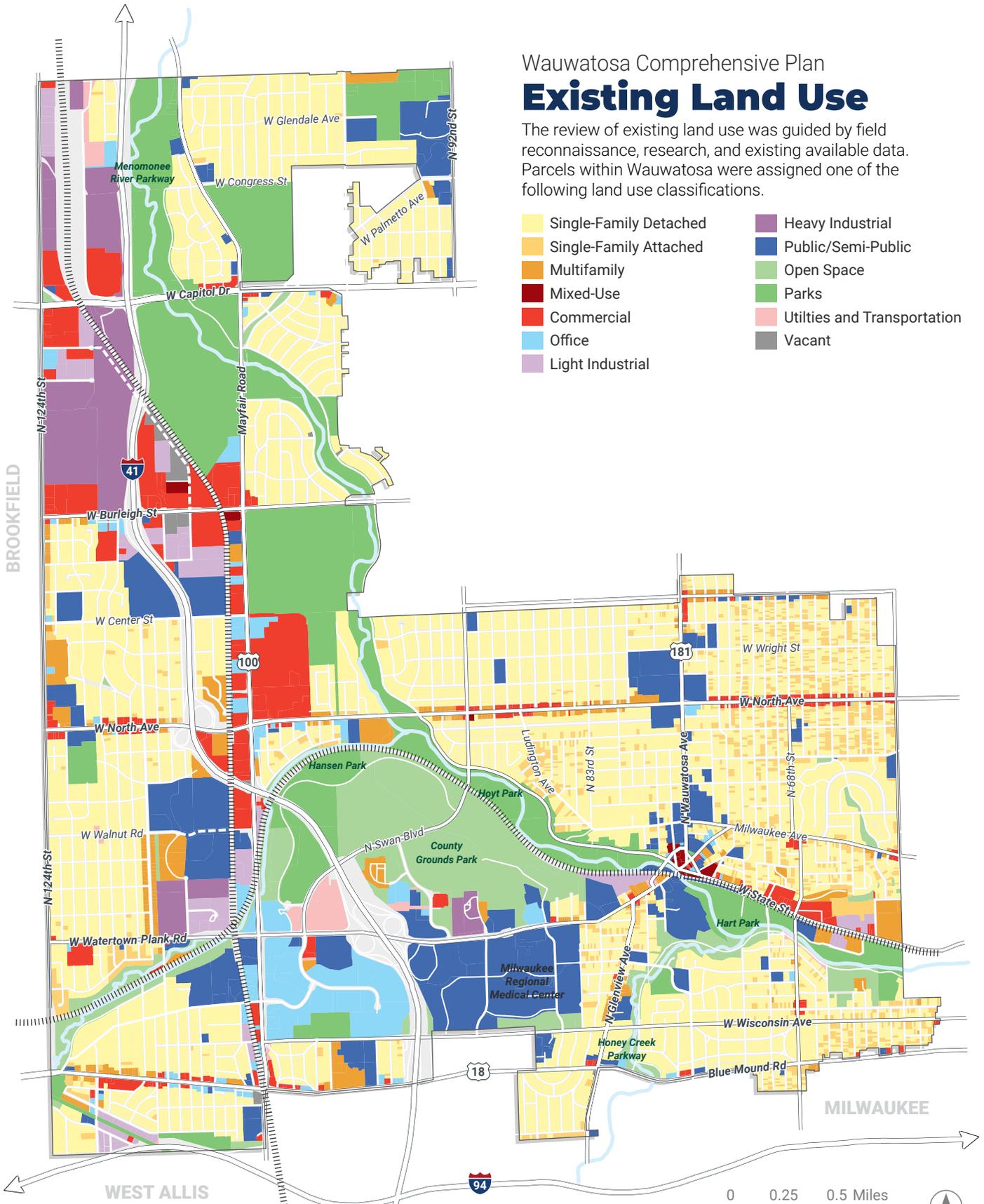
Vacant

Vacant land refers to parcels that are not actively used for any purpose and present opportunities for new development or redevelopment. While Wauwatosa is generally built out, these vacant parcels present development opportunities that can spur economic growth in key parts of the City.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Existing Land Use

The review of existing land use was guided by field reconnaissance, research, and existing available data. Parcels within Wauwatosa were assigned one of the following land use classifications.

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Single-Family Detached |  Heavy Industrial |
|  Single-Family Attached |  Public/Semi-Public |
|  Multifamily |  Open Space |
|  Mixed-Use |  Parks |
|  Commercial |  Utilities and Transportation |
|  Office |  Vacant |
|  Light Industrial | |



03



VISION AND GOALS

The Vision Statement and Goals are an aspirational narrative for the City rooted in public outreach and reflect the community's ideal future for Wauwatosa. The statement is meant to serve as a foundation upon which to base the City's future decision-making and affirm the community's strengths, desires, and abilities. This chapter will illustrate the central themes of the Plan that are reflected throughout the core goals and recommendations.

VISION STATEMENT

In 2045... Wauwatosa will be known as one of the most welcoming and prosperous places in the metropolitan area. The City will celebrate its community, promoting an identity built around unique, strong, and historic neighborhoods filled with a variety of housing styles. The commercial districts in Wauwatosa will grow as regionally recognized activity centers, known for all-week activity, public art, commercial offerings, and cultural events. Wauwatosa's variety of housing, vibrant commercial areas, abundance of parks, and intellectual capital will continue to position the City as a unique and desirable destination in Wisconsin.

Due to its landlocked location, the City will support residential developments that promote density and integrate into existing neighborhoods. New developments will contribute diverse housing options to serve various demographics including working professionals, young families, first-time homebuyers, those looking for luxury style housing, and seniors. Residents will be proud of where they live, promoting their neighborhood associations, civility between neighbors, and diversity of land uses.

The City will continue to reinvest in its neighborhoods and local businesses through strategic redevelopment, infill development, and adaptive reuse opportunities. Historic homes and structures will be preserved and maintained in a way that respects the nature, character, and history of Wauwatosa. The City will continue to support the development of its local businesses. Mayfair Mall and all of Wauwatosa's business districts will promote regional commercial attractions with countless experiences for shopping, dining, brew pubs, and urban life. Major employers including the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) and the Milwaukee County Research Park and Innovation Campus businesses will be instrumental partners in attracting and developing a skilled local workforce.

Roadways in Wauwatosa will support an efficient transportation system across the East/West and North/South communities that emphasizes safety for all users. A comprehensive and widely accessible network of multi-use paths will serve to connect each neighborhood in the City. Coordinating with Milwaukee County Transit System, the City will encourage an active and reliable public transportation service.

Wauwatosa will achieve its goals toward financial stability and be able to prioritize key improvements, maintenance and services that ensure the future growth and functioning of the City. Wauwatosa will partner with the MRMC, Milwaukee County, Wauwatosa School District, and neighborhood associations, to ensure the needs of residents and community stakeholders are fulfilled. The City will be known for its green spaces. It will actively work to preserve and protect its parks, open spaces, and natural resources. The City will partner with key organizations and service providers, such as Milwaukee County Parks and the Wauwatosa School District, to promote environmental sustainability and climate resilience through a comprehensive, regionally connected parks and trails system. Wauwatosa will continue to be a forward-thinking community, working towards its environmental goals and promoting sustainable practices. Known as a place where residents share pride for the City they affectionately call "Tosa," the City will continue to thrive with culturally rich neighborhoods, a reputation for inclusive, friendly neighbors, and world-class amenities.



Goals

Goals are broad and long-range desired outcomes of what the City aims to achieve in the future. They are ambitious and will require the culmination of many incremental actions to be fully realized. The planning efforts across the City should work to support these goals and realize the community's vision.

Land Use, Growth, and Development

Goal I: Under the guidance of the Future Land Use Map and conditions of being landlocked, approach land use decisions in a way that preserves the welcoming identity of Wauwatosa, fosters mindful growth, and promotes attractive development.

Housing

Goal I: Provide a variety of housing styles and densities that acknowledge the existing character of neighborhoods and supports the community's residents through all stages of life, maintaining and expanding the City's reputation as an attractive place to live.

Goal II: Ensure Wauwatosa fosters access to safe, stable, and attainable housing opportunities that meet diverse needs.

Economic Development

Goal I: Support local businesses, commercial centers, major employers, and innovative industries to strengthen the City's diverse tax base.

Goal II: Support development, improvement, and reinvestments in local commercial areas to promote a dynamic, vibrant, and accessible character and appearance as well as a mix of businesses.

Transportation

Goal I: Provide a seamless, efficient transportation system that offers good connectivity, supports mobility for people using all modes (walking, biking, transit, and driving), and enhances the character of the City.

Utilities, Infrastructure, and Community Service Facilities

Goal I: Ensure the effective and efficient maintenance and improvement of infrastructure and utilities, and delivery of essential community services to continue a resilient, sustainable, and high quality of life for the whole community.

Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources

Goal I: Offer a complete system of active recreation and passive green spaces within walking distance of the City's neighborhoods to meet the recreational and environmental needs of Wauwatosa's residents and visitors.

Goal II: Encourage the acquisition and preservation of natural resources and conservation areas such as the County Grounds Park and Forest Exploration Center for current and future generations.



Plan Structure

Each chapter element (Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, etc.) is structured to provide clarity and guidance. Each chapter begins with a short introduction that previews the content of the section followed by recommendations and policies. Throughout the chapters, there are various callouts organized into three categories that provide more context to the recommendations in the Plan.

Planning Considerations

Planning Concepts

Provide more in-depth explanations of key planning concepts, principles, and ideas.

Case Study

Example Projects

Feature real-world examples of how certain recommendations and planning strategies have been implemented in other communities.

Community Statistic

Relevant Data Points

Highlight a specific and relevant data point within the region and/or the City.

04

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The Land Use and Development chapter establishes the definitions and guidance for land use and promotes strategies for improving Wauwatosa’s neighborhoods. This chapter is specific enough to guide land use decisions while also allowing the City to be flexible and creative in individual approaches to new development. The Land Use and Development chapter also includes a section on the nature of being landlocked and its presence in other elements throughout the Plan.





Land Use Influences

Wauwatosa's land use and development patterns are influenced by a variety of factors. As a landlocked community, the City has limited available land for new development, making it necessary for strategic redevelopment and infill projects. Because Wauwatosa lacks opportunities to grow outwards, infill projects and adaptive reuse will likely play a significant role in accommodating future growth in the City. The City's landlocked status impacts the cost of development and represents a significant challenge to new housing (particularly affordable housing) and commercial development. Any new development should be compatible with surrounding neighborhood aesthetics and functionality.

Additionally, as the City's infrastructure ages, redevelopment will become increasingly critical to Wauwatosa's plans for long-term growth and sustainability. Various road, utility, and building infrastructure will need to be identified and upgraded to support redevelopment in certain areas. Ensuring adequate resources and funding for infrastructure upgrades and improvements will be necessary to provide not only a functional City but create a more resilient, future-ready community.

Outreach Key Takeaways

Throughout community engagement, community members and residents determined that future land use and development should center around balancing future growth, redevelopment, and the preservation of park and open spaces with the existing character of the City's neighborhoods. Given that Wauwatosa is completely built out, community members emphasized the need for denser development with a diversity of uses within easy access to other amenities and infrastructure. To support these aspirations, stakeholders proposed changes to zoning, such as relaxing parking requirements, allowing taller or mixed-use buildings by right, or improving flexibility for commercial properties to allow developers more freedom when conducting infill projects.

Development Patterns

Wauwatosa generally developed in two distinct patterns: an urban gridded network and curvilinear suburban streets. The traditional gridded network promotes a compact, mixed-use neighborhood that features single-family homes, duplexes, small apartments, commercial and retail areas, workspaces, and other pedestrian-scale uses. In comparison, the curvilinear street design, popular in the planning efforts from the 1950s, prioritizes car access and more sprawling landscaping often creating more separated land uses.

The East side of Wauwatosa follows a more traditional gridded pattern of development and illustrates a greater mix of uses and residential housing types. The West side of Wauwatosa displays the more curvilinear and car-oriented development pattern. During engagement opportunities, residents expressed a desire to see the West side redevelop to incorporate elements found on the East side, such as improved pedestrian walkability, more commercial and retail areas, as well as multi-use trails to better connect residents to recreational open spaces. As the City plans for future development, efforts should be made to incorporate these improvements.

Zone Tosa for All

Recently, the City has taken steps to promote more equitable zoning and development through planning projects such as "Zone Tosa for All." This project aimed to:

- Encourage local business growth
- Create policies to allow for a range of housing options and ensure non-discrimination
- Ensure equal access to housing, parks, and transportation
- Increase accessibility for people with disabilities
- Establish an equity framework for reviewing zoning and land use decisions

The City should continue to carry forward the policies and initiatives put forth by Zone Tosa for All to ensure that future development is inclusive, sustainable, and meets the needs of all residents.



Future Land Use Plan

The categories listed below should be used to formulate general policy and desired land uses within Wauwatosa. More detailed recommendations and actions to support the City's residential, commercial, employment, community facilities, and open space areas will be contained in subsequent plan chapters. Parcels within the City have been assigned 11 general land use categories to serve as the basis for development review and approval as well as future zoning amendments, which may be needed to realize the full implementation of the Plan's recommendations. While these categories provide a basis for typical land use in Wauwatosa, they are intended to be flexible to allow supporting and compatible uses.

Note: The land use categories correspond to the Future Land Use Map.

Neighborhood Residential

Neighborhood Residential areas consist of single-family homes occupying individual lots as well as some single-family attached homes such as duplexes and triplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units. Although each of these uses have distinct qualities, they are grouped because they function in a comparable manner and can seamlessly blend to create cohesive lower-density residential areas. Neighborhood residential areas are one of the most common uses in Wauwatosa and are found throughout the City, especially in older areas such as Washington Highlands, as well as other areas such as those north along Capitol Drive and 124th Street. The neighborhood residential classification is intended to highlight areas that exhibit a lower density residential scale and character. These areas should be open to gentle density infill development where the changes are sensitive and reflect the surrounding community.

Mixed Residential

Mixed Residential areas consist of multiple housing types including those listed in neighborhood residential areas as well as smaller four-to-six-unit apartments and condominiums and live-work units in a traditional neighborhood context. Mixed residential areas can already be found throughout Wauwatosa – most notably along the east side of the community where Wauwatosa initially began development as a municipality. The mixed residential land use type is intended to expand on this traditional neighborhood framework and promote pedestrian urbanism where homes are located near amenities. These areas should encourage greater variety of infill development within Wauwatosa's housing stock. Mixed residential areas should allow for more flexibility to build denser residential development in proximity to the City's major roadways encouraging opportunities to develop missing middle housing (as defined below) within the context of Wauwatosa's established neighborhood patterns. Areas designated for mixed residential should also easily accommodate a variety of denser dwelling types, including senior, workforce, and attainable/affordable housing.

Planning Considerations

Missing Middle Housing

Missing middle housing refers to housing types that range between a single-family home and small-scale apartments such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and mid density multiplexes. The lower end of the missing middle housing spectrum is already part of the established Wauwatosa mixed-residential neighborhood fabric as duplexes and single-family attached buildings. Missing middle housing types provide opportunities for the City to increase the diversity of its housing stock through moderate increases in density, while maintaining the neighborhood character. The range of housing can be integrated into the City's existing housing mix by using single-family lots to accommodate two- to three units in a context-sensitive manner.



Multifamily

Multifamily residential structures contain multiple dwelling units stacked vertically with shared entrances and hallways into the structure. This housing type includes apartment buildings and condominiums and can be configured for senior living. New multifamily development should include amenities such as common open space and private recreation facilities.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-Use areas primarily consist of commercial/retail uses on the ground floor with residential and/or office uses located on the upper floors. Mixed-use areas can also refer to whole development areas that include a combination of uses across multiple buildings. The primary objective is to provide an appropriate mix of uses by locating retail and restaurant uses on the ground floor to create a more interesting and engaging pedestrian experience, while accommodating multifamily residential and service-oriented uses on the upper floors. These areas should be characterized by uses and development patterns that provide a vibrant, safe, attractive, and “walkable” pedestrian environment.

The Village

The Village functions as the “downtown” of Wauwatosa and includes mixed-use and single use buildings that support commercial, institutional, and residential uses in Wauwatosa’s core. There are a diverse variety of land use types within this area including retail restaurants, services, offices, banks, and mixed-use buildings. The Village land uses provide a strong urban presence to the City’s local commercial core and promote an economically stable and productive environment.

Community Commercial

Community Commercial areas provide surrounding residents with daily goods and services including food stores, daycares, or restaurants. Community commercial uses should tie into the fabric of neighborhoods and complement these areas with appropriately scaled development that emphasizes neighborhood connections. Community commercial areas should be of a scale and intensity that is compatible with adjacent and nearby residential uses and can be arranged in nodes, along neighborhood corridors, or as small districts. The built-in flexibility of community commercial areas should allow for a range of uses depending on the needs of surrounding residents including multifamily and mixed-use development.

Regional and Corridor Commercial

Regional and Corridor Commercial includes large-scale retail and service establishments with a regional customer draw. Regional Commercial businesses appeal to residents while drawing on a customer base that extends beyond City limits. Mayfair Mall is Wauwatosa’s primary regional commercial node with major retailers including Macy’s, Nordstrom, and Barnes & Noble. The City should continue to recognize the importance of Mayfair Mall and surrounding regional and corridor commercial development, working with national retailers to ensure that the location remains viable in the long term. Regional and corridor commercial areas are meant to be flexible, providing a variety of uses that compliments the needs of residents as well as establish a vibrant and attractive destination. Along Mayfair Road and Burleigh Street, multifamily and mixed-use developments should be considered.



Office and Medical

Office and medical land uses include large-scale office buildings and complexes, office parks, small individual offices, medical facilities, and healthcare related uses. Office and medical areas should provide professional employment as well as support programs and organizations providing healthcare. The MRMC is the most significant example of this land use. Office and medical uses can be compatible with adjacent residential uses given appropriate buffering and screening. Multifamily development may also occur in these areas as an additional use to promote workforce housing, live-work housing and/or hotel and lodging buildings. Additional small-scale commercial uses are also allowed to support the predominant office uses.

Manufacturing and Production

Manufacturing and production land uses include properties and structures dedicated to industrial businesses and commercial distribution operations. Land uses may include warehousing and logistics involved in the storage and movement of goods from one place to another.

Public/Semi-Public

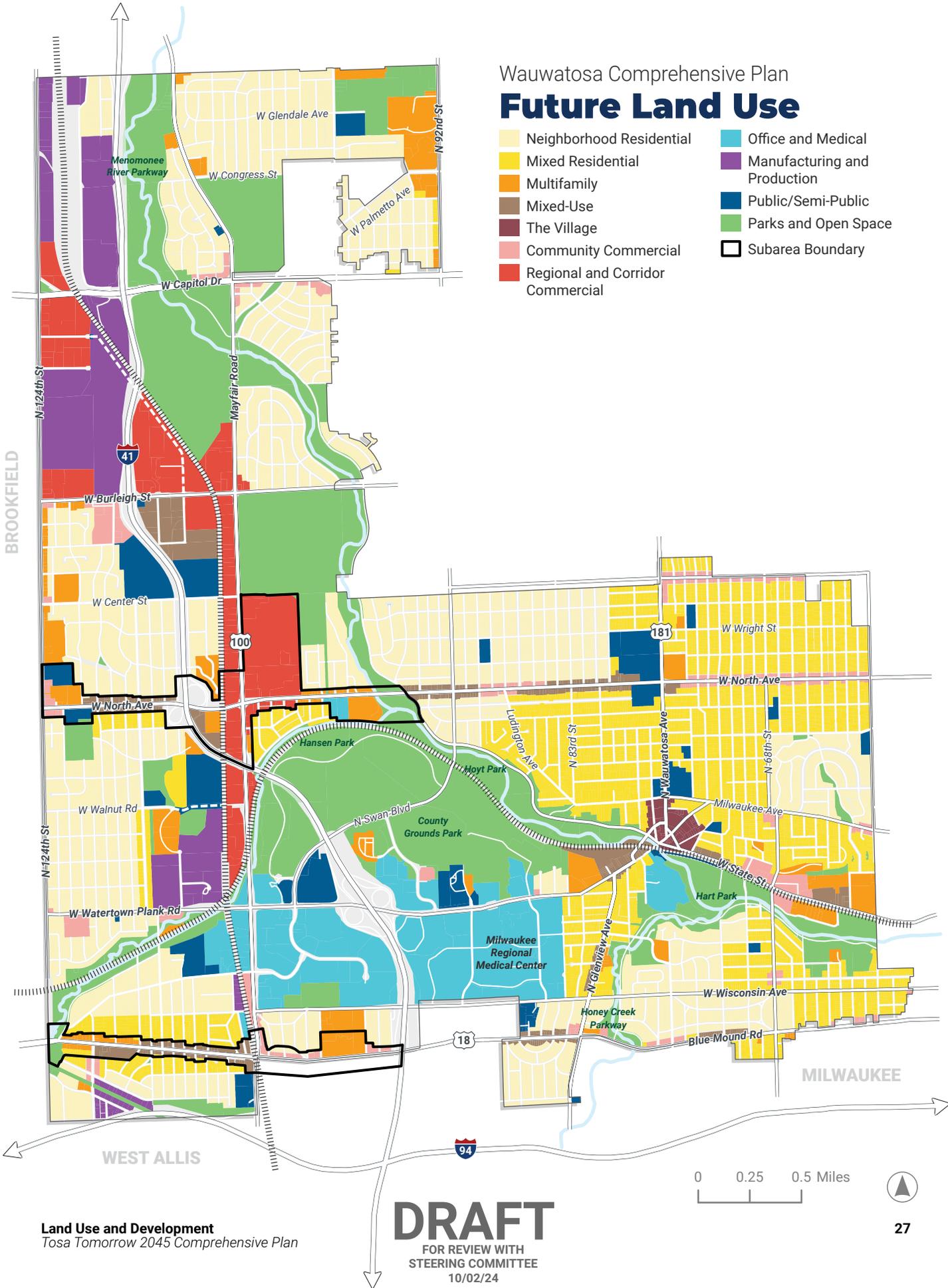
Public/semi-public land uses include local government uses, municipal facilities, community service providers, and larger neighborhood scale schools. Utility land uses and facilities are included as dedicated areas for the provision of services including water, sewer, electricity, and transportation. Wauwatosa City Hall, Wauwatosa Public Works, police stations, fire stations, libraries, churches, and public schools are established public/semi-public land uses. These land uses provide essential facilities and services to the community and are dispersed throughout the City. Public/semi-public uses are compatible with residential areas, but some areas may provide an opportunity to redevelop with adjacent commercial, mixed-use, or industrial uses.

Parks and Open Space

Parks and open spaces include public and private open spaces, active and passive parks, recreational facilities, and important environmental features, such as woodlands, rivers, creeks, and prairies. As the City is landlocked, the creation of significant new parks and open spaces will depend on the conversion of private land to public space. As land is available, the City should work to strategically increase parks and open spaces, particularly in neighborhoods where bike and pedestrian access to such spaces can be improved.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use

- Neighborhood Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Multifamily
- Mixed-Use
- The Village
- Community Commercial
- Regional and Corridor Commercial
- Office and Medical
- Manufacturing and Production
- Public/Semi-Public
- Parks and Open Space
- Subarea Boundary



05



HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Wauwatosa offers a diverse housing stock in terms of age, architecture, and density. The City's strong neighborhoods are one of the most influential contributors to its character and identity. The Housing and Neighborhoods chapter builds on the residential land use categories established in the Land Use and Development chapter to provide guidance on key issues impacting neighborhoods throughout the City. This chapter provides more detailed and specific recommendations to maintain and enhance Wauwatosa's neighborhoods, diversify housing options for various stages of life, and guide future residential development in a way that facilitates growth while maintaining existing neighborhoods.





Residential Growth Context

Due to its landlocked context, future residential development will need to be mindful and strategic. While some strategies can be employed City-wide, certain housing options that increase density are only contextually applicable in specific neighborhoods. Within some neighborhoods, vacant lots or older properties that may be reaching the end of their lifespan should be considered opportunities to accommodate higher-density residential redevelopment. Infill development should complement the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood utilizing design strategies to strongly relate single-family attached and small-scale apartments to adjacent single-family homes. Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City should reevaluate its zoning districts to consider where additional by-right context-sensitive higher-density residential development can be accommodated and explore potential design guidelines, particularly in the Village area.

Housing Study and Needs Assessment

The population and household projections presented in the Housing Study and Needs Assessment indicate that Wauwatosa is positioned to grow through 2030. The demographic shifts in key age cohorts will affect the demand for housing types. Millennials (born 1981-1997) will grow into the peak home-buying age, ranging between 26-41 years old, while Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) will likely see less demand for single-family homes, opting to either remain in their current homes or seek out smaller units such as age targeted communities or multifamily senior housing. The projected demand for new housing, which would include 1,500-2,200 new housing units, is expected to mainly consist of multifamily buildings, including both rentals and condominiums.

In Wauwatosa, recent data indicates that a majority of new multifamily units are occupied by residents that did not previously live in Wauwatosa. The larger regional growth within Milwaukee County may also influence additional demand for housing.

Outreach Key Takeaways

Throughout outreach and engagement opportunities, residents and community stakeholders made it clear that a main draw for new residents is the City's mature and well-maintained neighborhoods. Due to the demand for these quality residential areas, residents highlighted the issue of preserving housing affordability. Some community members noted that a mix of housing options, including mixed-use development in commercial nodes and missing middle housing in residential neighborhoods, could help boost Wauwatosa's housing affordability and attainability. However, straightforward density increases were not preferred solution; rather, residents advocated for a balance between maintaining the current neighborhood character and future infill growth. Ultimately, outreach and engagement efforts established that the community desires denser neighborhoods that are thoughtfully integrated and maintain the existing charm of Wauwatosa.

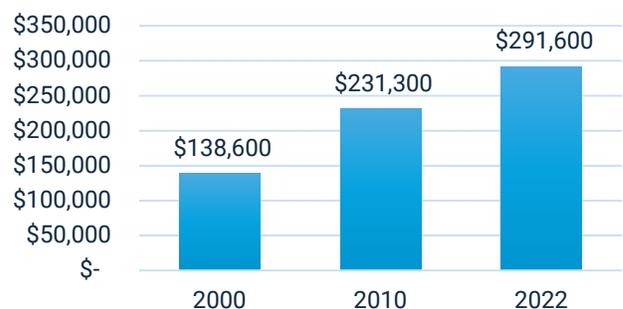
Total Housing Occupancy



Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Note: Occupancy includes all housing units that were moved into.

Median Housing Values



Source: 2010 and 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing Framework

The housing framework is based on the collected community outreach and specific characteristics of each neighborhood. The following categories provide general recommendations and applications on how to achieve the residential goals and objectives outlined in the Vision and Goals section of the Plan. The areas affected by these recommendations are displayed on a map on the following page.

Established Residential Areas

Established residential areas are neighborhoods that mainly consist of single-family detached homes that are in good condition and for which the existing character is not anticipated to change long-term. The City should encourage homeowners in these areas to maintain and improve their properties over time. Additionally, through programs like the Housing Rehabilitation Program, which supports necessary upgrades for LMI households, the City can further assist residents in preserving the quality of their homes. While these areas will likely remain as-is, the City can consider ways to provide minor infrastructure improvements to sidewalks, street lighting, and other placemaking enhancements.

Areas for Increased Density

Areas for increased density refer to neighborhoods that are able to incorporate a mix of residential options and other land uses within a compact street grid. These areas tend to already include denser housing and are well-connected by sidewalks. In line with the Future Land Use plan, the City should not only continue to promote mixed-use development to maintain vibrant and diverse land use but also encourage gentle density infill development that is sensitive to the existing community's scale and character. Incentives should be used to promote adaptive reuse and preservation of historically-significant buildings. Additionally, the City should coordinate with Milwaukee County Transit System and other organizations to improve public transit and multi-modal connections in these areas.

The Village

The Village includes residential development that is increasingly attractive due to its notably walkable environment, pedestrian scale, urban aesthetic, and high-quality amenities. While the area has seen new housing development on the eastern edges, there are some industrial and commercial sites that should be considered for transition to residential redevelopment over time. For example, the Hart Park Square and River Parkways senior housing off State Street. The City should continue to promote redevelopment opportunities within the Village, updating potential sites and integrating a desirable mix of owner- and renter-occupied housing that complements the Village character.

Areas of Reinvestment

Areas of reinvestment include properties that may have deteriorated due to age, and underutilized locations like vacant lots or commercial and industrial buildings that may benefit from reinvestment. The City should encourage revitalization efforts where appropriate, such as property enhancements, parcel consolidation for redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of vacant commercial and office buildings. These areas may also include employment centers, transportation connections, and cultural or community facilities.

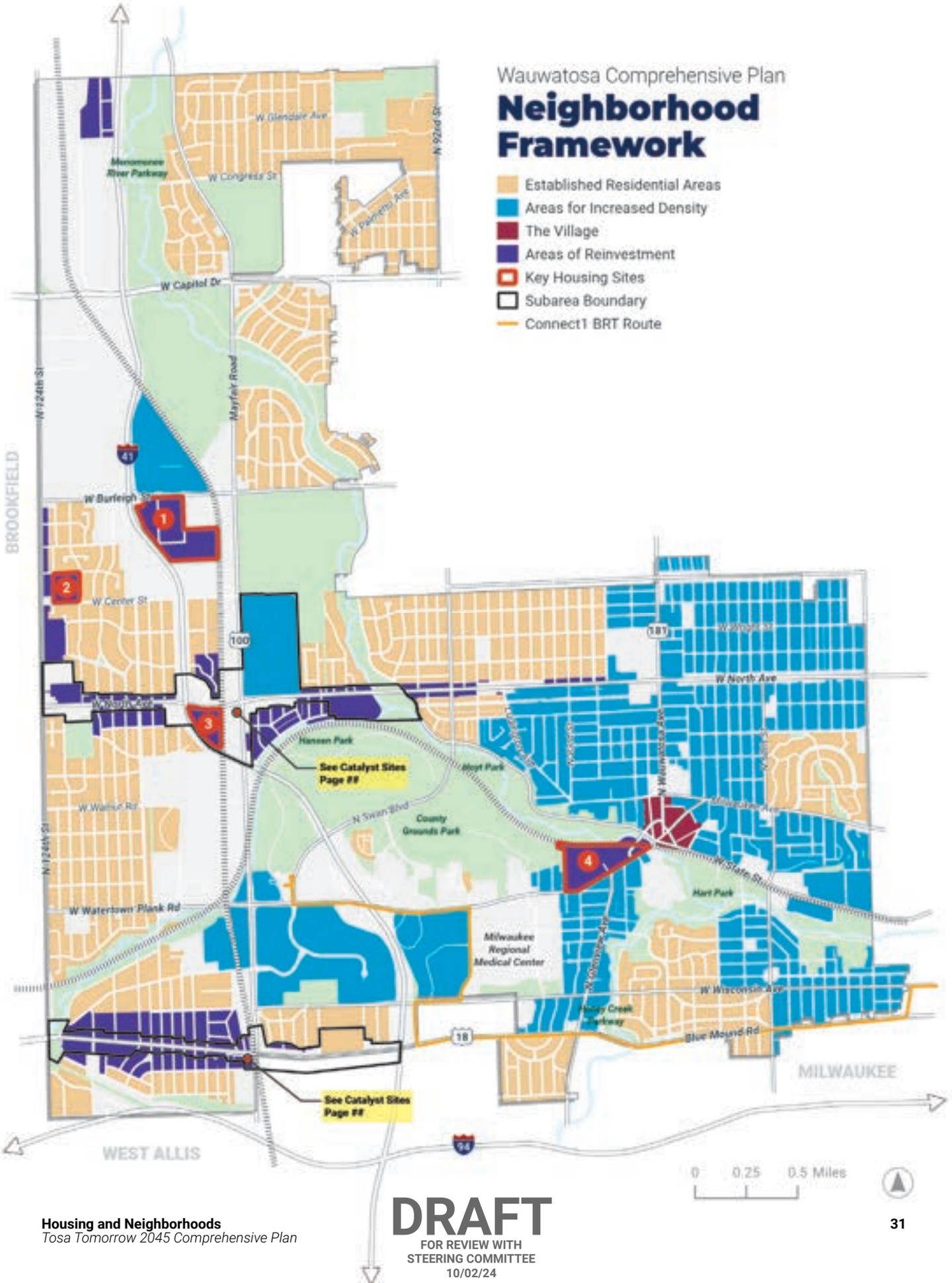
Key Housing Sites

The key housing sites identified are intended to provide strategic opportunities throughout the City for targeted residential improvements and development. The goal of these sites is to increase the housing stock and support prioritizing reinvestment in Wauwatosa. These sites leverage their location along major corridors and intersections, repurpose vacant and underutilized properties, enhance surrounding developments, and consider zoning regulations to increase density.

- 1 With its proximity to the Mayfair Collection, this site is an opportunity to provide additional housing options and contribute to the redevelopment projects along Burleigh Street. While the site is within the M1 Light Industrial zoning district, the former vehicle dealership properties adjacent to Burleigh Street are within a Planned Unit Development (PUD) overlay. Rezoning this area may be necessary to facilitate redevelopment and create new housing opportunities.
- 2 The existing St Joseph's Catholic Church and School site is an example of a potential redevelopment opportunity. Schools and religious properties are often located in residential areas. When they become available they can be repurposed for additional housing. Featuring distinct architecture, large windows, multiple entrances, and access to common areas, these sites contain multiple assets valuable for residential conversions.
- 3 Currently the site of the Mayfair Reserve apartment complex, the existing restaurant and hotels are redevelopment opportunities for complementary mixed-use and multifamily residential uses. While this property is zoned M1 Light Industrial, the existing PUD overlay could be leveraged to redevelop the aging hotel and restaurant buildings.
- 4 Zoning in this area includes C1 Neighborhood/Village Trade, C2 General Commercial, R2 Two-Unit Residential, and a PUD overlay over the M1 Light Industrial and SP-INS Institutions districts. Utilizing the PUD overlay could allow for redevelopment of existing industrial buildings and adjacent aging commercial buildings into a walkable environment with high-quality amenities and a unique urban aesthetic that complements the Village.

Neighborhood Framework

- Established Residential Areas
- Areas for Increased Density
- The Village
- Areas of Reinvestment
- Key Housing Sites
- Subarea Boundary
- Connect1 BRT Route





Neighborhood Character

Neighborhood character plays a vital role in fostering attractive, desirable, and sustainable neighborhoods. These qualities are essential for building strong communities. Preserving and enhancing these unique elements and identities is a critical component to the Comprehensive Plan.

Neighborhood Associations

Work with neighborhood associations to accomplish identified housing needs. Wauwatosa is comprised of 32 organized and active neighborhood associations that help organize the distinct characteristics between neighborhoods throughout the City. Wauwatosa’s neighborhoods are well-established and exhibit a mix of architectural styles, development patterns, housing styles, and land uses. The neighborhood character serves an important function. Maintaining and enhancing these unique elements and identities is a critical component to the Comprehensive Plan.

The City should consider incremental beautification projects in coordination with neighborhood associations. Additionally, the City should continue to maintain its neighborhoods implementing different grants, loans, or tax credits to improve existing housing stock, address maintenance issues, and support the needs of residents.

Integrate Mixed-Use

Promote mixed-use development to minimize the negative impacts of physically separated uses and encourage active transportation and transit. While some areas within Wauwatosa exhibit successful mixed-use development, such as the Village and the Mayfair Collection, other areas throughout the City lack these districts. Many areas in the City have developed as large and separated commercial, office, and residential areas, leading to a dependence on vehicles to get to work, school, and other entertainment and services.



State Street Station Apartments in the Village

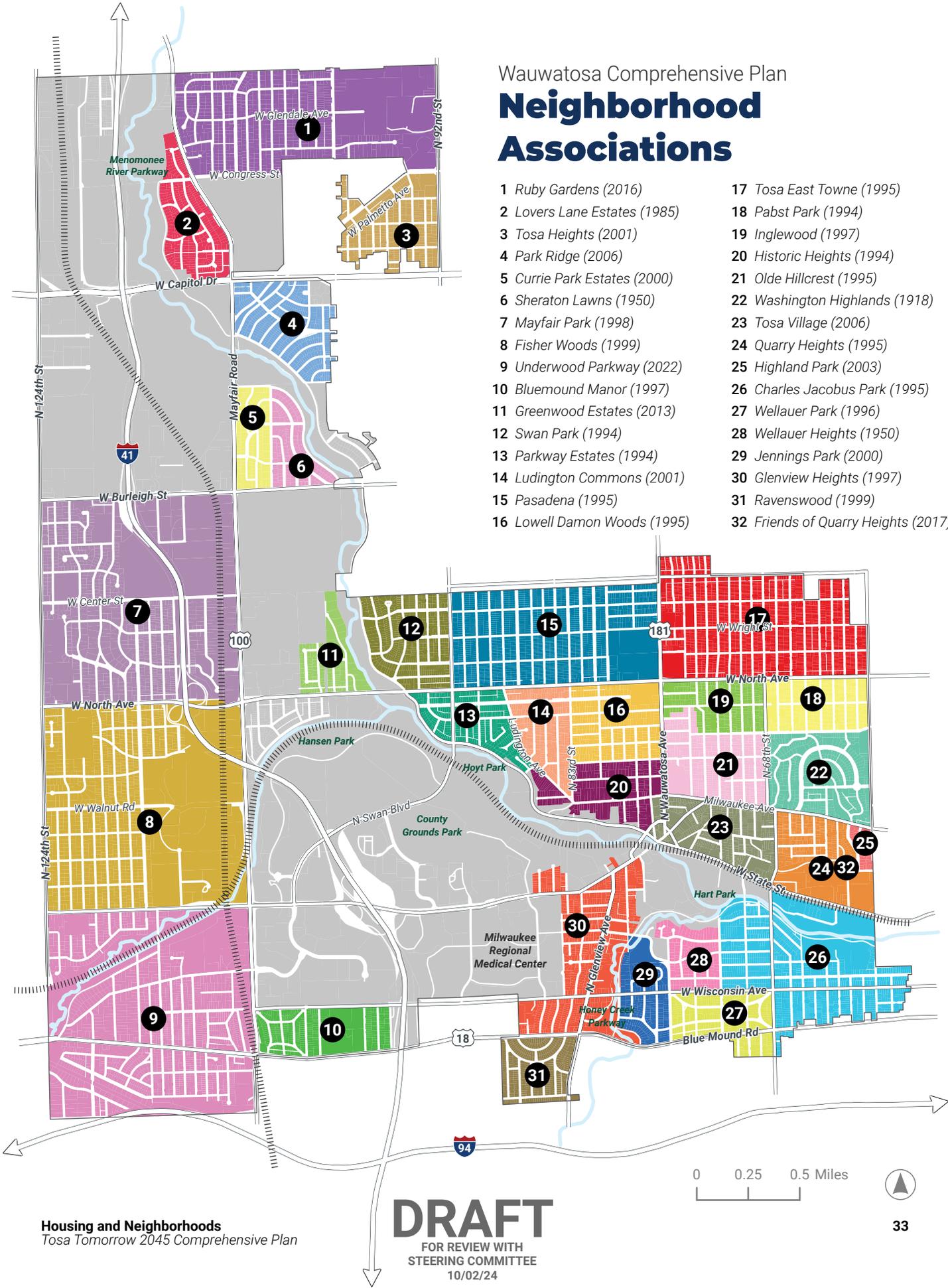
Promoting mixed-use development with housing conveniently located near employment centers, shopping areas, restaurants, parks, and other day-to-day activities can better connect residents with necessary services and amenities. Residents living in mixed-use districts would benefit from increased accessibility and walkability. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) investments, like those along Blue Mound Road, can be leveraged to promote future mixed-use development. The City should promote highly-accessible mixed-use districts and transit-oriented housing development along existing and future potential BRT routes, such as Blue Mound Road and Mayfair Road, in coordination with the County and State.

As part of the development of mixed-use districts, reduced parking minimums should be considered for new residential developments to minimize adverse impacts like excess pavement and to lower development costs. Additional considerations should include allowing overnight on-street parking for more efficient use of existing on street space, supplementing off-street parking options for residents, and supporting higher-density residential developments.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan

Neighborhood Associations

- 1 Ruby Gardens (2016)
- 2 Lovers Lane Estates (1985)
- 3 Tosa Heights (2001)
- 4 Park Ridge (2006)
- 5 Currie Park Estates (2000)
- 6 Sheraton Lawns (1950)
- 7 Mayfair Park (1998)
- 8 Fisher Woods (1999)
- 9 Underwood Parkway (2022)
- 10 Bluemound Manor (1997)
- 11 Greenwood Estates (2013)
- 12 Swan Park (1994)
- 13 Parkway Estates (1994)
- 14 Ludington Commons (2001)
- 15 Pasadena (1995)
- 16 Lowell Damon Woods (1995)
- 17 Tosa East Towne (1995)
- 18 Pabst Park (1994)
- 19 Inglewood (1997)
- 20 Historic Heights (1994)
- 21 Olde Hillcrest (1995)
- 22 Washington Highlands (1918)
- 23 Tosa Village (2006)
- 24 Quarry Heights (1995)
- 25 Highland Park (2003)
- 26 Charles Jacobus Park (1995)
- 27 Wellauer Park (1996)
- 28 Wellauer Heights (1950)
- 29 Jennings Park (2000)
- 30 Glenview Heights (1997)
- 31 Ravenswood (1999)
- 32 Friends of Quarry Heights (2017)





Design Standards

Improve the community's image through enhanced design-specific standards. New development and poorly designed renovations and additions can place the City's established character at risk. The City should consider using a broad spectrum of policies and regulations, from design-oriented development controls to educational resources, to require, encourage, and create awareness for context-sensitive development. These may include form-based regulations, development guidelines or pattern books, "how to" guides, a pre-approved list of knowledgeable architects, and other resources that can provide property owners, developers, and designers with the information necessary to articulate and implement the community's vision.

Historic Neighborhoods

Encourage a greater variety of housing types while maintaining existing neighborhood character. In 1995, the City established the Historic Preservation Commission to promote the preservation of historic places in Wauwatosa. The Commission is responsible for designating historic sites, serving as the design review board for locally designated properties, providing historic preservation education, and recognizing improvements to historical properties with the annual Preservation of Properties Awards.

Many historic sites are listed on the National Register and State Register of Historic Places, or are designated by the City's Historic Preservation Commission. Approximately 441 buildings in Wauwatosa are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the United States federal government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, and structures considered worthwhile of preservation for their historical significance. The City has a well established framework for regulating historic properties utilizing a historic overlay district in its zoning code to support the preservation of significant architectural, historical, and cultural sites. While the National Register supports broad scope of preservation in the United States, local law is typically more effective at supporting the historical character of a community.

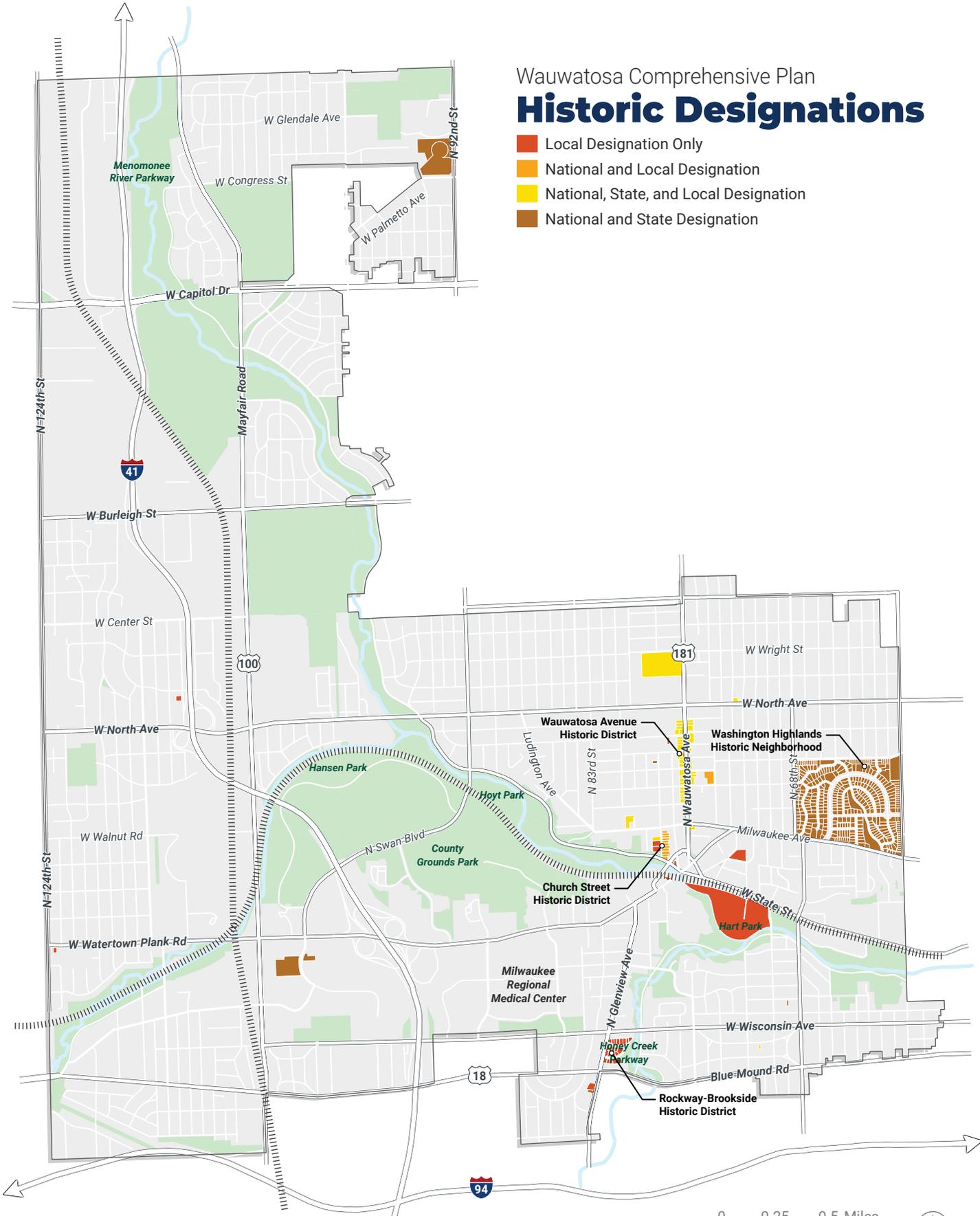
The Wauwatosa Historical Society also supports the mission of historical preservation and education in the community, maintaining multiple properties and highlighting the City's history through events and tours throughout the year. Historic preservation has played a key role in the heritage and cultural significance in some neighborhoods throughout Wauwatosa; however, preservation efforts should be balanced with critical improvements to properties and ensuring the community's need for future growth and development. The City should consider potential partnerships with regional, state, and federal organizations, as well as neighborhood associations, to envision innovative future housing development and improvements within historically designated areas and sites.

Community Statistic Historic Buildings

There are 441 historically-significant properties in Wauwatosa that include a mix of single-family residential homes, places of worship, commercial buildings, and districts. The architectural styles range between Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Craftsman, Mission, Bungalow and Ranch. Of the total 470 properties, only 84 have a local designation.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Historic Designations

- Local Designation Only
- National and Local Designation
- National, State, and Local Designation
- National and State Designation





Housing for All

The City's housing stock is largely composed of single-family homes. Existing multifamily uses that provide rental housing options are dispersed throughout the community and are not well integrated into the fabric of their surrounding neighborhoods. While the demand for single-family homes in Wauwatosa may continue, it is important to provide a mix of housing options that complement the existing neighborhood character, support the market, meet the needs of residents, and encourage an equitable community. The City should build on the recent Housing Study's recommendations to consider ways to address and implement policies to remove barriers to housing utilizing resources such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Fair Housing Planning Toolkit and housing assessment tools.

Planning Consideration

Community Land Trusts

A community land trust (CLT) is typically a nonprofit organization that purchases and develops land on behalf of a place-based community while acting as the long-term steward for affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces, and other community assets. CLTs for residential development utilize shared equity model which preserves affordable homeownership opportunities by allowing borrowers to purchase homes at below-market prices. In exchange, borrowers agree to sell the property only to other income-qualified buyers and at a restricted sales price.

Land banks are another tool in the affordable housing toolbox and an important partner of CLTs. Land banks are public authorities charged with returning vacant or abandoned property to productive use. Collaboration between land banks and CLTs can support neighborhood resiliency and equitable recovery.

Affordability

Promote a diverse range of housing options for residents of all income levels. Available data shows a decline in owner-occupied homeownership tenure since 2017, according to the Housing Study and Needs Assessment this could be due to the increased rental units constructed in the City over the recent years. The number of owner-occupied homes affordable only to households earning over 120% of the area median income exceeds the actual supply, indicating a shortage of options for middle-income families.

To alleviate pressure on median-value homes, the City should continue supporting the development of housing at attainable prices for middle and upper-middle income populations, and affordable housing including very low income and various unit sizes including two and three bedroom units.

Ensuring housing affordability is a critical aspect to the future of the community's well-being. Housing affordability impacts public health, education, and overall quality of life.

The City has funds dedicated to affordable housing funds. This fund, managed by the Community Development Authority (CDA), also serves as the City's Housing Authority and provides a dedicated source of financial support to address housing needs in the community and enhance neighborhoods throughout the City. To maximize the impact of this resource, the City should continue to develop a strategy and prioritize how the fund should be utilized to align with community needs and future development patterns.



Aging in Place

Encourage housing options that allow senior residents to remain in the community. While the median age in Wauwatosa has decreased despite statewide trends, residents expressed concerns during community engagement over the lack of senior housing in the City. According to the recent Housing Study and Needs Analysis, the City currently has 347 age-restricted units dedicated to the senior demographic (65 and older) such as Hart Park Square Senior Living and Cedar Glen Apartments. The ability to age in place is important to help long-time residents remain in Wauwatosa as well as attract new residents to the area. The City should consider alternative small-scale housing options integrated into Wauwatosa's neighborhoods to support residents looking to age in place, rather than developing large senior living communities that can be disconnected from parks, commercial centers, and services.

Universal Housing

Encourage universal design elements and assistance programs to increase accessible housing options for residents of all abilities. Ensuring accessible housing options for all of Wauwatosa's existing and future residents, especially those with disabilities and mobility challenges, is critical to promoting an inclusive and equitable community. During community engagement, residents advocated for more housing that accommodated people with accessibility needs. The City should consider ways to incorporate universal design elements in new residential construction to foster housing independence. Universal design elements may include, but are not limited to, no-step entries, wide doorways and hallways, single-floor living with essential rooms on the main floor, and open floor plans for easy navigation. In addition to universal design elements, the City may consider implementing educational and other financial assistance programs to increase homeownership and responsible rental property ownership.

Community Statistic Accessibility

As of 2019, almost 2 in 10 US households include a person with accessibility needs. (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research)

Additionally, according the Urban Land Institute, less than one percent of the houses in the United States are fully wheelchair accessible. (Source: Affordability and Accessibility: From Bad to Worse in a Tight U.S. Housing Market, 2023)



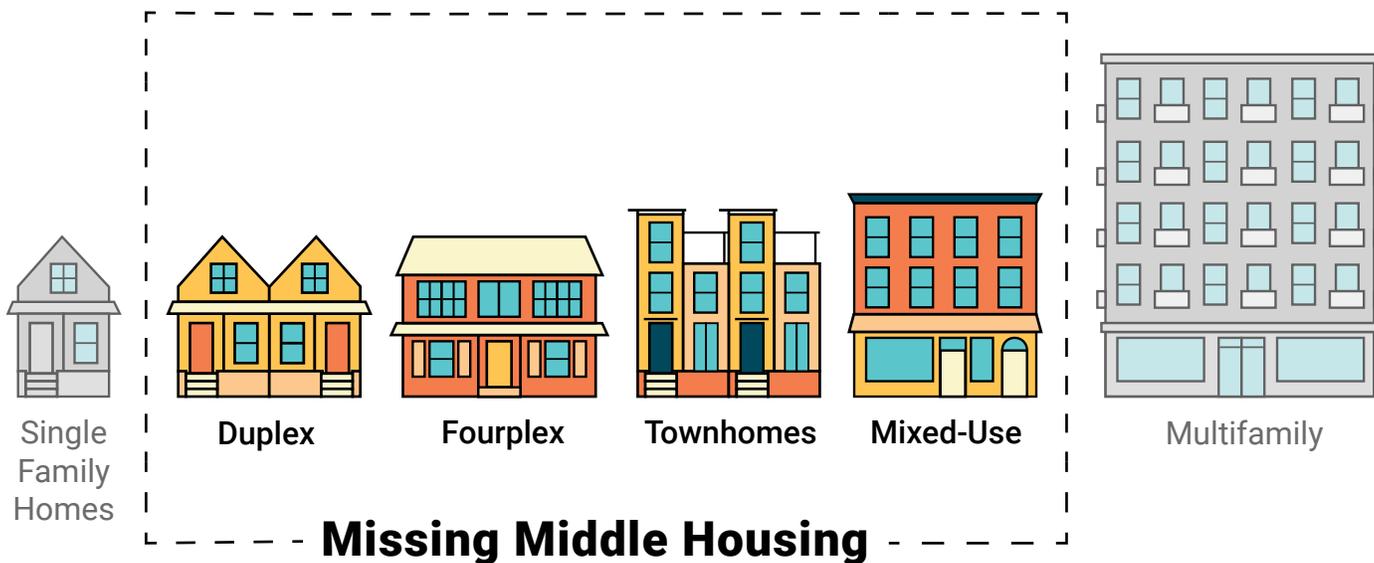
AARP HomeFit Guide 2020



Missing Middle Housing

Encourage additional missing middle housing types to accommodate residents of all abilities and incomes. Missing middle housing types include a range of options between single-family homes and small-scale apartments such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, four-to-six-unit apartments, and mixed-use buildings. Missing middle housing can help address multiple housing issues including affordability, adapting to changing demographics, walkability and transit support, and environmental sustainability. By offering a variety of housing options at different price points, housing in Wauwatosa can provide more flexibility and begin to accommodate young professionals, growing families, and seniors looking to downsize.

Additionally, housing types that support higher density development promote more walkable neighborhoods if the infrastructure is completely developed and makes public transit more viable and efficient. Higher density housing also has a lower environmental impact per capita compared to sprawling single-family subdivisions. While the east side of Wauwatosa features some missing middle housing typologies such as duplexes and four-eight unit buildings, there are ample opportunities to integrate these housing types across the City.





Introducing missing middle housing into some of Wauwatosa's more traditionally single-family residential neighborhoods can diversify the housing stock while maintaining the character and scale of the community. Similar to what was previously outlined in the Residential Growth Context section, the City should evaluate their zoning code to consider ways to facilitate missing middle housing development, including modifications to allow different housing developments by-right. Additionally, the City may consider prioritizing the permitting of redevelopment projects that promote density within neighborhoods. Other incentives such as density bonuses and fee waivers for redevelopment projects can encourage further middle housing growth.

Missing Middle Housing Model Block



- Accessory Dwelling Unit
- Missing Middle Redevelopment
- Single-Family Redevelopment

Planning Consideration Live-Work Buildings

Live-work developments and spaces combine residential and non-residential uses and can include anything from a small home office to a large commercial space that is also used as a residence. Encouraging live-work spaces in key commercial areas can support entrepreneurial endeavors, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and encourage small-business investment.



**Tosa-Specific Diagram
In Development**

Live-Work-Rent Model by Alexandra McRobert (2018)

06

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development chapter discusses strategies and objectives for improving the commercial corridors and business hubs throughout the City. This chapter provides priorities and recommendations to promote Wauwatosa's economy, improving the overall business climate, encouraging reinvestment, and enhancing its unique commercial areas. This chapter should be utilized to support local businesses, commercial centers, major employers, and innovative industries to strengthen the tax base and foster a vibrant, dynamic economy.



TOSA
EAST
TOWNE



Economic Growth Context

Wauwatosa is a major hub for business and employment centers that include the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center and research facilities, the headquarters for multiple large national and international corporations, regional shopping destinations, and mixed-use neighborhoods with uniquely local shops, restaurants, and entertainment. Some areas currently show signs of aging buildings and infrastructure, indicating a need for redevelopment and/or revitalization. The City's regional location in Milwaukee County and existing foundation of businesses provides opportunities for future economic growth, development in entrepreneurship, and collaboration with developers and universities that could promote the region's assets.

Community Statistic

Job Sector Growth

By 2030, Milwaukee County is anticipated to grow 7,700 new jobs in the professional services and healthcare sectors.

Outreach Key Takeaways

During outreach and engagement, the community voiced a preference for future development to remain in established commercial centers to capitalize on existing strengths and develop unique district identities. The Village, North Avenue, Blue Mound Road, and Mayfair Mall areas were mentioned as key commercial areas in need of new development, revitalization of structures, or updates to the streetscape to attract potential customers. Direct and open communication among the City, development community, and neighborhood associations regarding the City's vision for an area was highly encouraged.

Community members also noted that starting new businesses can be a burdensome task, particularly for small businesses. The City currently provides documentation explaining the process of opening or expanding a business. The City can continue to update and promote these documents and policies to support local businesses.

Employment Growth

Employment growth in Wauwatosa is projected to outpace population growth over the next 15 years. The Milwaukee County employment projections, developed by Moody's Analytics and adjusted by SB Friedman, forecast over 9,300 net new jobs through 2030. The highest growth is projected in professional services and healthcare, adding approximately 7,700 total jobs between 2013 and 2030. The retail sector is also anticipated to add approximately 370 jobs based on existing trends in the marketplace and does not reflect any large-scale development that could occur down the line.

Economic Development Framework

Wauwatosa supports a variety of commercial, industrial, office, and medical uses. The Economic Development Framework outlines the vision for these districts, maintaining vibrant commercial centers while prioritizing redevelopment strategies within several key areas. The following categories are organized into general functional uses and recommendations that align with the goals for future economic growth. These categories contain further context and recommendations on the following pages.

Local Commercial Nodes

Local commercial nodes consist of small, neighborhood-scale businesses that include dining, retail, and other essential service needs while promoting walkability.

Major Employment Areas

Major employment areas consist of established large-scale businesses and commercial centers that feature extensive parking and auto-oriented infrastructure.

Traditional Urban Commercial Districts

Traditional urban commercial districts refer to areas that can support pedestrian oriented land uses and streetscaping such as East Tosa and Midtown. These areas typically feature narrower streets and a variety of retail, dining, office, and entertainment uses.

The Village

The Village is Wauwatosa's historic commercial district that features retail, restaurants, entertainment, services, offices, mixed-use buildings, and parks all within an urban, walkable environment.

Innovation District

The Innovation District refers to the Milwaukee County Research Park and Technology Innovation Center. This area serves as a business incubator for entrepreneurs, start-ups, and major other companies.

Mayfair Area

The Mayfair area refers to the traditional shopping mall along Mayfair Road, the mixed-use Mayfair Collection development, and commercial uses between and surrounding the two developments.

Milwaukee Regional Medical Center

The Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) is a consortium of health care institutions that provide a variety of services including patient care, medical education, and life science research.

Priority Reinvestment Areas

Priority reinvestment areas are targeted zones for redevelopment and revitalization. As Wauwatosa is mostly built-out, new commercial and economic growth will need to be strategic, focusing development within existing areas that contain vacant lots, underutilized properties, and aging districts in need of reinvestment.

Several areas have been outlined on the **Economic Development Framework** map:

- 1 This area should be redeveloped in alignment with the rest of the Mayfair corridor utilizing similar design strategies and incorporating safer access improvements across major highways and railroads. Due to the unique location and shape of parcels this area should be allowed more flexibility during any review processes to allow for innovative and adaptive development that maximizes the potential of these challenging sites.
- 2 This area bordering the Connect1 bus-rapid transit corridor should incorporate higher-density, mixed-use transit-oriented development including pedestrian friendly streetscapes and a variety of amenities to build community interaction.
- 3 The Glenview Avenue corridor could include some neighborhood size and scale commercial and mixed-use development as opportunities arise, leveraging the proximity of nearby community facilities to support small, local businesses like cafes, daycares, and small shops to serve the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- 4 This area contains established industrial facilities with easy access to Interstate 94. Given its fundamental issues with freight traffic, noise, and environmental impacts, landscaping and buffering improvements are recommended along 124th Street and Burleigh Street. This area should incorporate new employment uses over time such as business parks, offices, coffee roasters, and breweries to enhance and diversify uses along the northwest corridor of the City.



Local Commercial Nodes

Local commercial nodes consist of small, neighborhood-scale businesses that include dining, retail, and other essential service needs. They are located primarily within residential areas, typically at the corners of intersections, and can foster pedestrian-friendly environments or accommodate more car-centric uses. The City should maintain existing nodes and encourage future local commercial areas that integrate into the surrounding neighborhood, allowing residents to easily access businesses via a short walk or bike ride.

Major Employment Areas

Major employment areas consist of established large-scale businesses and commercial centers that feature extensive parking and auto-oriented infrastructure. These areas are important economic drivers in the community and should be strategically leveraged to drive future employer expansion, attract investors, and foster corporate retention. The City could consider different ways to achieve this by repurposing existing infrastructure, support the marketing of vacant spaces, and offering growth incentives such as grants for signage or façade improvements or tax credits and/or property tax incentives.

The City can also implement other strategies to cultivate these areas such as encouraging mixed-uses and transit-oriented development, integrating new sustainable and smart technology, and enhancing the overall appeal of the environment through urban design improvements. Implementing these strategies can support the development of major employment areas, encouraging long-term economic growth and sustainability.

Traditional Urban Commercial Districts

Traditional urban commercial districts refer to areas that can support pedestrian oriented land uses and streetscaping such as East Tosa and Midtown. Areas with traditional urban development refers to more pedestrian-oriented commercial centers with narrower street grids; a variety of retail, dining, office, and entertainment uses; and attractive streetscaping elements including public art, street trees, outdoor seating, decorative lighting, and public gathering spaces. A common feature of these districts are historic mixed-use and residential structures that support surrounding commercial uses. The City should continue to foster these unique commercial identities, implementing more streetscaping elements where appropriate, encouraging active transportation options, and allowing additional mixed-use and/or residential uses to develop.

Planning Considerations

Experiential Commercial

Experience-focused retail, or experiential retail, refers to the trend of consumers expecting retailers to devote more floor space to the immersive experience that only a brick and mortar store can provide. Memorable customer service and interaction are emphasized over simply selling products, differentiating brick and mortar stores from online shopping.

The Village

The Village is Wauwatosa’s historic commercial district that features retail, restaurants, entertainment, services, offices, mixed-use buildings, and parks all within an urban, walkable environment. While the Village is a stable and thriving commercial area due to its urban destination and design, strong surrounding neighborhoods, and implementation of the Village BID, future investments and recommendations will be incremental to support maintaining the established identity.

The City has utilized the Village of Wauwatosa, Strategic Development Plan to incorporate various improvements to the wayfinding, streetscape, and parking areas in alignment with the area’s character. As Wauwatosa historic commercial core, the City should continue to promote investment and development, supporting residential growth, local businesses, and a vibrant, round-the-clock environment throughout the district.

The City should continue future investments within the Village to incorporate cohesive, well-designed wayfinding throughout the district, improvements to parking access, and integration of more streetscape elements that align with the area’s character. Other areas of investment may involve more long-term strategies, such as connecting the Core Village area and business corridor along State Street into a unified commercial district and increasing the residential population in and around the Village to support local businesses and a vibrant, round-the-clock environment.

Innovation District

The Innovation District refers to the Milwaukee County Research Park and Technology Innovation Center an area that serves as a business incubator for entrepreneurs, start-ups, and major companies such as Zywave and the Medical Technology Management Institute. This area is a unique opportunity for the City to collaborate with businesses and institutions strengthening its reputation for high-quality educational and research opportunities. The City should continue to invest in the Innovation District, making necessary infrastructure improvements including road connections, supporting the growth of startups and entrepreneurs, and leveraging the presence of the multiple educational institutions to attract talent and foster local innovation. The City could also explore the inclusion of housing in the Innovation District to support local businesses.

Adaptive Reuse



7954 Harwood Avenue, Wauwatosa (2015)



Adaptive reuse featuring facade and landscaping improvements, new signage, and expanded outdoor programming
7954 Harwood Avenue, Wauwatosa (2024)

Planning Considerations

Adaptive Reuse

Rather than constructing new buildings, the City should promote adaptive reuse to revitalize older, existing structures, especially those with historical and architectural significance within neighborhoods. Adaptive reuse refers to the process of repurposing existing buildings with new uses, typically different from the original intended use. The new Mayfair Collection along Highway 45 is a local example that includes adaptive reuse of existing industrial buildings.



Mayfair Area

The Mayfair area includes the traditional shopping mall along Mayfair Road, the mixed-use Mayfair Collection development, and commercial uses between and surrounding the two developments. The City should encourage developers and other properties owners to incorporate additional uses beyond retail including housing, hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, and other public amenities. Community feedback specifically called out the Boston Store site as a prime opportunity for redevelopment. The Mayfair area should aim to establish a space where community members can congregate and further activate the Mayfair corridor as a destination commercial area.

Case Study

The Future of Shopping Malls

As some traditional shopping malls have declined in recent years, many are being revitalized to incorporate additional uses that go beyond shopping, like housing, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, and other public amenities and mixed-use spaces. Successful malls such as the Pentagon Centre in Virginia, Southdale in Minnesota, and MainPlace Mall in California utilize mixed-use designs to blend retail, residential, and public spaces creating more vibrant environments and revitalizing retail spaces.

This trend is driven by the decline of physical retail due to e-commerce, the need for housing, and the desire to create more walkable, urban-style communities. Mayfair Mall and other Mayfair properties should consider diversifying their amenities to incorporate new revenue sources, increase foot traffic to stores, and more efficiently utilize the property to support community activities and engagement.



Wauwatosa Common Council Approved Development Proposal for Mayfair Mall by Barrett Lo



Milwaukee Regional Medical Center

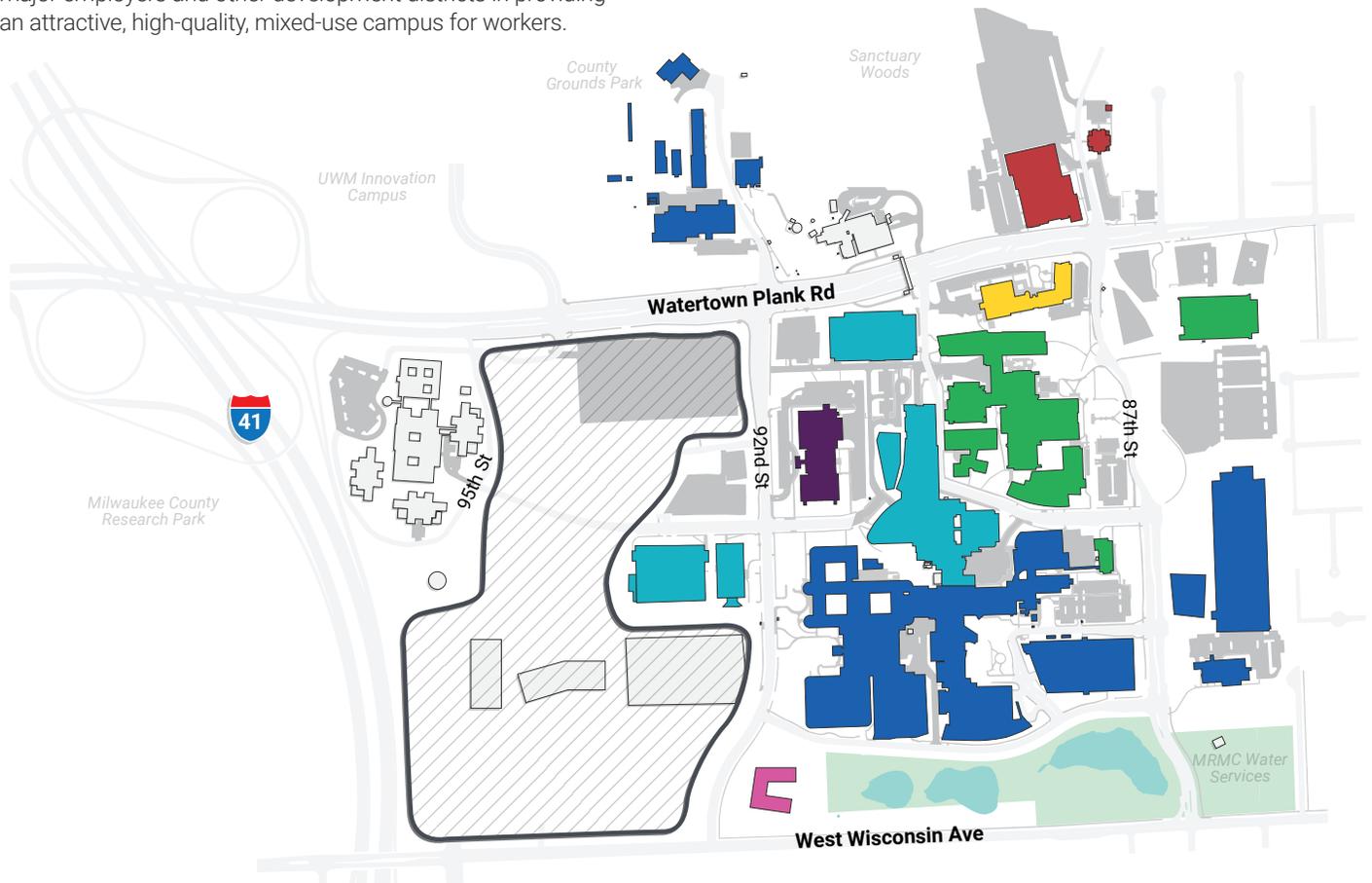
The Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) is a consortium of health care institutions that provide a variety of services including patient care, medical education, and life science research. As the MRMC campus continues to grow, it will be critical for the City to coordinate with the MRMC to ensure site designs align with the City's development standards and to minimize adverse impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods. The City should continue to work with the MRMC on ways to incorporate greater access to its state-of-the-art campus through bus rapid transit stations, protected lanes for different transportation modes, and bike facilities and infrastructure. The MRMC should serve as an example for major employers and other development districts in providing an attractive, high-quality, mixed-use campus for workers.

MRMC Institutions

- Children's Wisconsin
- Froedert Hospital
- Medical College of Wisconsin
- Versiti Blood Research Institute
- MRMC Administrative Offices
- MRMC Expansion - 95th Street West Side Development

Other Organizations on Campus

- Curative Care Network
- Kathy's House



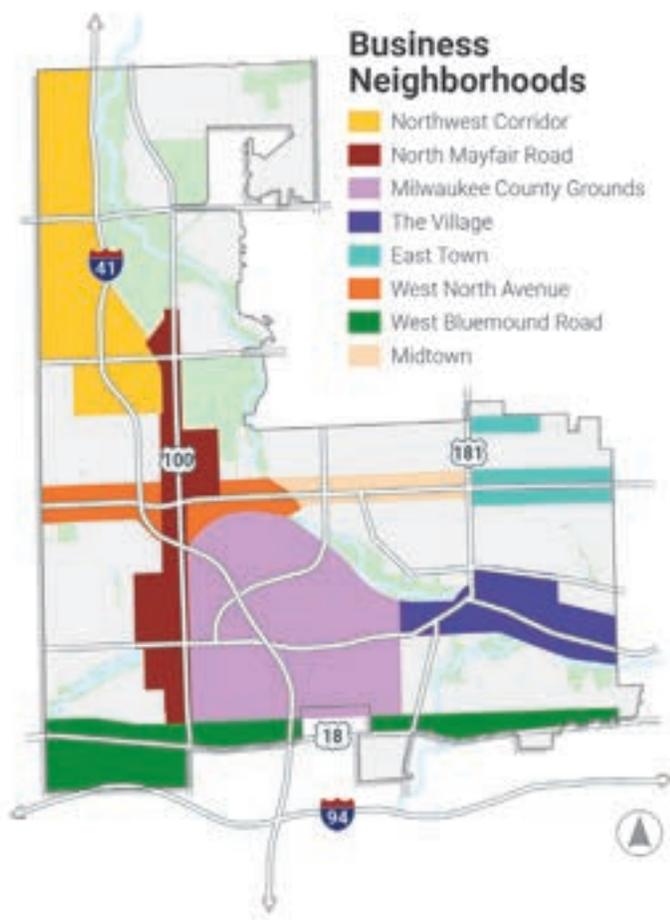


Priority Reinvestment Areas

As Wauwatosa is built-out, new commercial and economic growth will need to target existing areas that contain vacant lots, underutilized properties, and aging districts in need of reinvestment and revitalization. The City should coordinate with property owners and businesses to market available properties for redevelopment, participate in economic development organizations, and retain existing businesses along the corridors.

The City should consider programs and policies to support streamlining development proposals that meet desired development patterns. The criteria for these development patterns could include mixed-use and multifamily housing unit density targets, developments along key corridors and intersections, or projects that incorporate privately owned public amenity spaces.

Development proposals that apply to these programs and policies could be advanced more quickly through the development review and approval process by potentially reducing the number of required meetings or creating a fast-track approval system. Additional programs could include expedited plan reviews, simplified documentation requirements, or priority scheduling for qualifying projects.



Planning Consideration Business Neighborhoods

Wauwatosa has several distinct business neighborhoods, each providing a unique array of multifamily, retail, office, and industrial uses. A business improvement district (BID) is typically a privately-led, publicly authorized organization that provides additional services within a specified areas in a city. BIDs are funded by property owners and businesses within the district to raise money for services and programs such as public spaces, safety measures, marketing promotions, infrastructure improvements, and special events. Wauwatosa has one BID for the Village that promotes and fosters the public image of the area while also connecting businesses with social activities such as TosaFest and Holidays in the Village events.



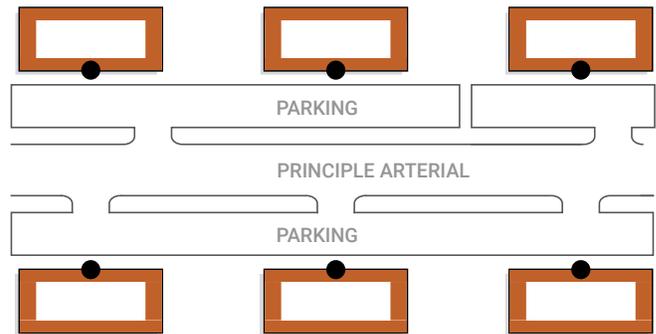
Commercial Centers

Wauwatosa’s commercial centers cater to a range of lifestyles, experiences, and functional uses, each with a unique character and identity. The City should continue to support the growth of major commercial areas and local jobs, working to provide high-quality experiences and employment opportunities that foster environments where employees can easily access essential amenities and services.

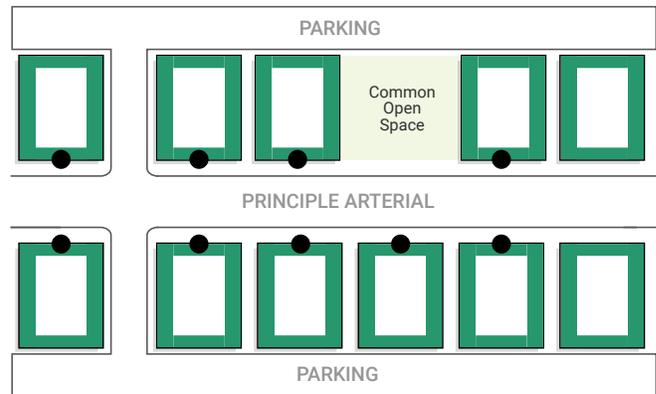
Reinvestment in Commercial Corridors

Continue to work with local businesses to improve the physical appearance and market viability of existing commercial corridors. Many of Wauwatosa’s current corridors, including sections of North Avenue, Blue Mound Road, Mayfair Road, and Glenview Avenue, are characterized by unattractive surface parking lots fronting buildings, extensive curb cuts, lack of greenery, and poor pedestrian access. The City should collaborate with property owners and transportation jurisdictions to improve the aesthetic and economic function of these underdeveloped areas. Encouraging a mix of shops, restaurants, and entertainment uses, repurposing surface parking lots, and considering other mixed-use developments will support the goal of creating vibrant, exciting places for residents. To further support these corridors, the City will need to communicate the vision of the Comprehensive Plan to developers, strategically allocate TIF funding, allow for adaptive reuse and redevelopment that accommodates market trends, and explore the potential for additional Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in appropriate locations. The City may also consider regularly evaluating community needs and desires to prioritize potential projects that fill in gaps for demand.

Current Commercial Corridor



Reinvested Commercial Corridor



Planning Considerations Public Spaces

The greatest amount of public space in a community is provided by the street system, or the public right-of-way. An activated streetscape is a street that is full of activity and life — a place where people want to be and where they can go to socialize, shop, and relax. Activated streetscapes are defined by a mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses, an inviting environment, pedestrian- and bike-friendly design, public art and amenities, and a feeling of safety.



Entrepreneurial Development

Leverage its amenities and work with local partners to boost the development of new, local businesses. The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) is the official areawide planning agency for the southeastern region of the State. SEWRPC serves seven counties including Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha. In 2021, SEWRPC adopted the 2021-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a strategic plan with recommendations for different municipalities to diversify and strengthen the region's economy. The CEDS needs to be updated every five years and maintains eligibility with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding for communities in the region.

As part of Wauwatosa's strategy for economic development, recommendations from the 2021-2025 CEDS should continue to be considered to help establish the City as a regional and statewide center for research and development. One of the key recommendations from the plan was to collaborate with Milwaukee County, Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) and the Milwaukee County Research Park (MCRP), and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) to support the development around the UWM Innovation Campus. Part of the recommendations aims for the City to attract biomedical and other research-intensive technology companies that would benefit from collaborating with UWM and nearby MRMC, and position Wauwatosa as an intellectual capital. To continue attracting businesses and fostering entrepreneurship in Wauwatosa, the City should leverage its unique amenities, assess its regional marketing strategy, and collaborate with local partners to provide more opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses.



SEWRPC Reports and Planning Documents



Balancing Land Uses

Encourage a balanced mix of uses to adequately provide services, conserve natural resources, and disperse amenities. Developing a balanced mix of land uses is important for Wauwatosa's long-term fiscal health and economic viability. Dispersing land uses through the City in appropriate locations allows for efficient provision of services, conservation of natural resources, and equitable distribution of amenities. It also allows the City to identify where gaps exist, further informing planning and investment efforts to support the local and regional economy. The City should continue to encourage development of diverse uses allocated across commercial centers, in targeted nodes and corridors, to support and enhance vibrant, economically-sustainable neighborhoods. Targeted incentives, flexible zoning tailored to specific areas, Public-Private Partnerships, and streamlined review processes may be utilized to ensure that desired, necessary developments occur in the correct locations.

In other areas where certain uses are declining, such as aging industrial lots near the Harley Davidson offices and on 124th Street north of Capitol Drive, the City will need to consider various redevelopment and revitalization opportunities that could benefit the community. These sites may involve exploring mixed-use developments, creating new public spaces, or attracting new industries that align with the Comprehensive Plan's economic development goals. Additionally, potential impacts to traffic patterns, future employment opportunities, and surrounding character should be evaluated to thoughtfully approach redevelopment and enhance Wauwatosa's long-term economic viability.

Collaboration With Developers

Continue to work with local developers to revitalize outdated structures when community preferences change. In order to create livable neighborhoods with easy access to jobs, connected transportation options, and protected natural resources within the community, the City will need to engage with the development community to align future redevelopment with the Comprehensive Plan's vision. The City should evaluate the redevelopment process to identify potential efficiencies that can eliminate barriers to revitalizing aging properties such as shortening the approval process or offering density bonuses. Further collaboration with developers can help identify opportunities to streamline the development process and incorporate design requirements where appropriate.

07



TRANSPORTATION

Wauwatosa's compact historic core is accessible by various transportation options, including walking, biking, and transit. Although driving is currently the City's primary transportation method, there is a desire to boost transit access, walkability, and bikeability of many major corridors and streets across Wauwatosa. This chapter will provide strategies and design considerations to maintain effective and efficient mobility for drivers while further diversifying and enhancing alternative transportation options.





Outreach Key Takeaways

Throughout outreach engagement opportunities, stakeholders and community members emphasized the need for a safe and accessible transportation network for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, outreach participants indicated that public transit should be given more of a priority, especially when determining how to manage traffic to areas with new developments. To complement this support of alternative transportation methods, many respondents expressed the need for safer facilities to encourage and protect users from high-speed corridors and potentially dangerous intersections. Ultimately, discussion of the future of Wauwatosa's transportation network focused on reducing vehicle miles, encouraging active transportation and transit use, and physically improving infrastructure to enhance user safety.

Roadway Network

Most of Wauwatosa's neighborhoods and districts are oriented around dense grids, which provide a high degree of connectivity and accessibility to vehicles. These local streets connect to several major road corridors, such as North Avenue, Blue Mound Road, and Wisconsin Highway 100, that facilitate the efficient movement of vehicles through the City. Given Wauwatosa's proximity to Interstate 41 and Interstate 94, regional travel for private vehicles is easily accessible.

The primary focus of the street network is the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. A heavy reliance on motorized vehicles often produces negative externalities for Wauwatosa residents. Wide roads and high vehicle speeds pose dangerous obstacles for bicyclists and pedestrians, buses regularly fall behind schedule due to roadway congestion, and businesses are hesitant to utilize outdoor spaces due to adjacent noise and air pollution. Therefore, recommendations to the City's road network will balance the needs of all users.

Road Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction over Wauwatosa's road network is split between the City and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). Most local roads are owned and operated by the City, whereas major arterials, such as Blue Mound Road (US Highway 18), Wisconsin Highway 181, Capitol Drive, Wisconsin Highway 100, and Interstate 41 are overseen by WisDOT. This limits the City's ability to make any improvements or changes to these roads as approval from WisDOT is required. Therefore, it is imperative that the City works cooperatively with WisDOT to balance local priorities with regional goals.



Functional Classification

Wauwatosa’s road network follows a functional classification hierarchy based on mobility and access priorities. WisDOT assigns roads into categories including principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local roads. Each classification serves a specific purpose in collecting and distributing traffic towards higher capacity roads. This network of designated streets and highways facilitates traffic flow in and around Wauwatosa.

Interstates

Interstates provide regional and national mobility. They accommodate large volumes of high-speed traffic with grade separated intersections, controlled entrances and exits, a dividing strip or median between traffic in opposite directions, and two or more lanes of travel. Interstate 41 runs north/south through Wauwatosa from Green Bay, Wisconsin to the Illinois Border. Interstate 94 runs east/west just south of the City from Port Huron, Michigan to Billings, Montana.

Principal Arterials

Principal arterials are at the highest level of the roadway functional classification system. They provide a high level of mobility, have high speed limits, carry high traffic volumes, and allow for long-distance, uninterrupted travel. In Wauwatosa, principal arterials include U.S. Highway 18, U.S. Highway 100, Capitol Drive, and North Avenue. These high-speed roadways provide regional mobility and connect to major centers in the metro Milwaukee area.

Minor Arterials

Minor arterials connect and support the system of principal arterials, serving trips of moderate length. In urban areas, minor arterials often support other transportation modes, such as bus travel, and typically have lower speeds than principal arterials. All minor arterials provide opportunities for direct access to adjacent land uses. Notable minor arterials in Wauwatosa include Burleigh Street, State Street, Swan Boulevard, Watertown Plank Road, and 124th Street.

Collectors

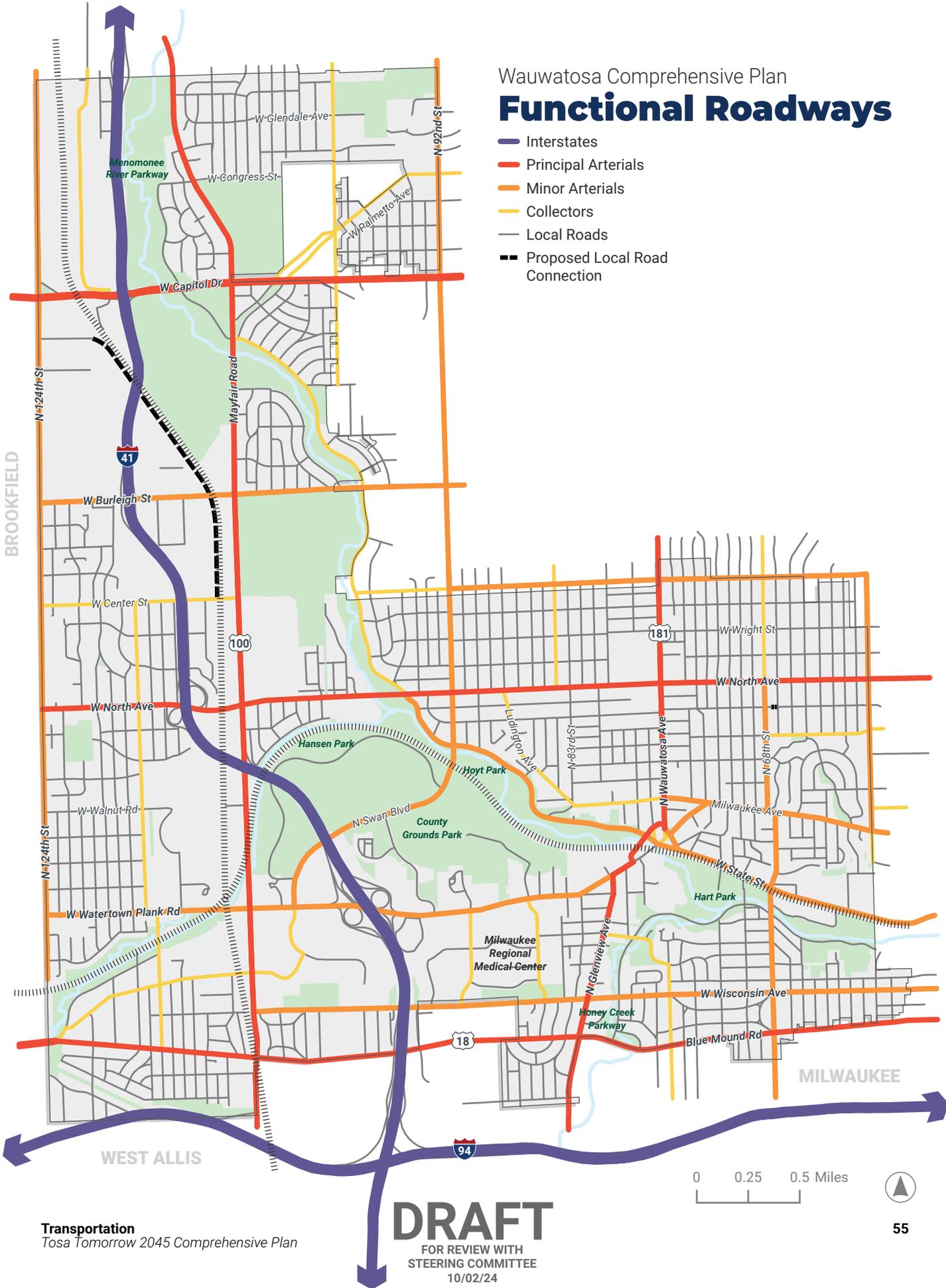
The primary role of collectors is to gather and distribute traffic from local roads to arterials. Collectors provide circulation in residential, commercial, civic, and industrial areas. Additionally, collectors carry more traffic and support longer trips than local roads, and provide more access to adjacent homes and businesses than arterials. Examples of collector roadways include Grantosa Drive, parts of the Menomonee River Parkway, and Innovation Drive.

Local

Local Roads are at the bottom of the functional classification hierarchy, although they comprise the largest percentage of all roadways in the state. Their role is to provide access to homes and businesses. They have low speed limits and offer limited mobility for through traffic.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan
Functional Roadways

- Interstates
- Principal Arterials
- Minor Arterials
- Collectors
- Local Roads
- - - Proposed Local Road Connection



BROOKFIELD

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 FOR REVIEW WITH
 STEERING COMMITTEE
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Roadway Safety and Traffic Calming

Although most of Wauwatosa's streets are local streets, arterials such as Interstate 41, North Avenue, Blue Mound Road, Capitol Drive, Wisconsin Highway 100, and parts of North Avenue physically divide the City. Pedestrians and cyclists must contend with these arterials while travelling from one part of the City to another. Because these streets are designed for large volumes of traffic and relatively high speeds, there is little infrastructure in place for the comfort of non-drivers. Community members routinely voiced anxiousness around crossing these large streets and worry that they will only become more dangerous over time. To provide comfort and safety to all roadway users, the City should explore physical infrastructure improvements to reduce vehicle speeds and enhance safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Traffic Management

Explore options to reduce vehicle speeds and crashes to improve safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. WisDOT reported increases in traffic-related fatalities in Milwaukee County, from 74 in 2019 to 91 in 2023. Many factors contribute to the severity of a crash, but a common variable is vehicle speed. Residents of Wauwatosa noted that streets such as West North Avenue or Blue Mound Road feel unsafe due to high vehicle speed. These high-speed vehicles quickly conflict with other vehicles entering and exiting access points along the corridor. The City should consider developing a traffic study and survey to determine how residents travel through Wauwatosa and consider utilizing speed enforcement by the Wauwatosa Police Department to encourage drivers to travel at safe speeds. In addition, the city should analyze current crash locations and severity to conduct a ranking of problematic intersections and corridors to determine improvement priorities. While the City has complete determination on how traffic is managed on local streets, main arterials are under the jurisdiction of WisDOT and/or other jurisdictions. The City should work with regional partners to develop a comprehensive traffic management plan balance the throughput needs of regional corridors with the safety needs of local residents.

Complete Streets

Implement complete street polices on all streets throughout the community.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to be safe for all types of road users, not just drivers. Pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street. Complete Streets incorporate physical infrastructure, such as raised crossings, protected bike lanes, medians, and similar treatments, to reduce hazards from automobiles and protect and make pedestrians and cyclists more visible. In addition to their safety benefits, Complete Streets often ease congestion, support economic growth, encourage walking and biking, improve air quality, and enhance mobility options for children and elderly residents.

The 2017 "Tosa Streets" Ordinance (O-17-06) requires the implementation of Complete Street infrastructure and principles for newly constructed streets and those undergoing reconstruction or extensive maintenance in the manner specified in the City of Wauwatosa Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Plan (2014). The City should review and update the streets listed in the 2014 plan to ensure Complete Streets updates are applied to the most applicable corridors. Accommodating new bicycle and pedestrian facilities may require a road diet. Road diets reduce the number or width of vehicle travel lanes to free up space for other transportation modes. Road diets can successfully occur without causing additional congestions, but some instances may result in congestion. Ultimately, points of congestion do reduce speeds and increase safety for roads users, but the City should determine the pros and cons of implementing roadway changes. The City should also develop an updated Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan to specify specific routes for pedestrians and cyclists to use.

The City should identify high-injury corridors and intersections to prioritize projects that improve multimodal safety. Perceptions of safety are a primary factor in determining whether to utilize bicycling or walking for trips, especially those that include major streets. The City should identify points of potential conflict where existing bicycle routes or pedestrian-heavy streets intersect with high-speed corridors. The City should also analyze crash location and severity data to identify street segments and intersections where injury risk to people walking and bicycling is most acute. By prioritizing infrastructure projects at locations with observed safety issues and targeting street safety projects based on crash data analysis and risk factors, Wauwatosa can improve pedestrian safety outcomes and perceived comfort for active users.

Wisconsin Ave.
Existing Configuration



Wisconsin Ave.
Proposed Road Diet





Better Street Design

Incorporate new infrastructure in their streets to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, reduce automobile crashes, and achieve Vision Zero policies. Achieving safety on Wauwatosa's streets requires physical infrastructure to protect pedestrians and cyclists and reduce vehicle speeds. A Complete Street is only considered such when it has elements that allow for safe travel for all users. This is pertinent given that the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's (SEWRPC) 2024 update to its Vision 2050 Plan found that fatal crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists within its 7-county region are at their highest levels in 20 years.

The Village is consistently cited as one part of the City with a comfortable walking and biking environment, primarily due to a redesigning of the district's streetscape to enhance the walking and biking experience. Such improvements do not need to be limited to Wauwatosa's historic areas but should be spread across the entire city.

The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) is considered the premier resource for safe street design, and its guides contain several examples of physical elements that could be implemented on Wauwatosa's streets. The following is a list of physical elements that should be implemented into Wauwatosa's streets where appropriate to improve comfort and safety:

- Separate sidewalks or multi-use paths adjacent to streets with street trees, lamp posts, bollards, or other physical barriers to provide a visual separation of uses and reduce the speed of traveling vehicles.
- Install bump outs or curb extensions on street corners to reduce the speeds of turning vehicles and reduce the distance pedestrians must cross.
- Utilize pinch points, raised crosswalks, speed tables, and/or speed humps on residential streets to slow traffic and provide a clear visual identifier for pedestrian crossings.
- Install raised medians and refuge islands on arterial streets to provide physical barriers for pedestrians crossing busy streets.
- Utilize physical barriers, such as bollards, to separate cyclists from vehicles.
- Install wayfinding signage to help cyclists and pedestrians identify safe routes to destinations.
- Improve signalized intersections with dedicated signals for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Consider bicycle signals across the City's bike network to better organize bike traffic and improve system safety.

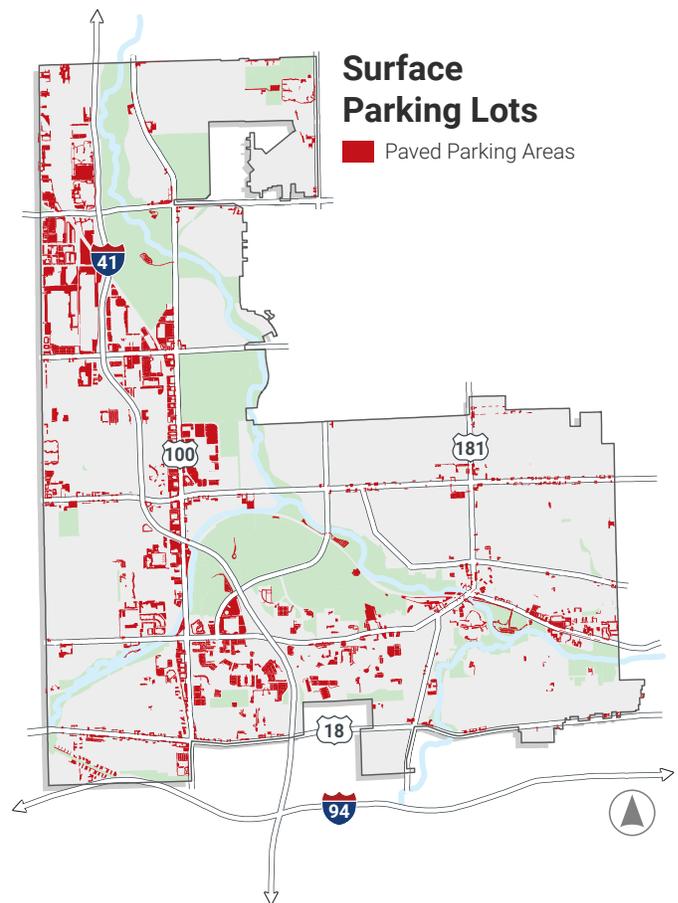
Land Use Influences on Transportation Choice

Encourage land uses that increase the mixture of uses around the community and enable active transportation and transit as a viable method of transportation. Land use is an influential condition for transportation mode choice. The dense nature of the Village encourages walking and biking as many commercial, community, and residential uses are clustered. However, much of the City's regional commercial and industrial uses are located along principal arterials, such as Wisconsin Highway 100. An employee or customer must utilize a vehicle along arterial corridors as any other method of transportation would be unsafe or inefficient. Because Wauwatosa cannot accommodate additional greenfield development, it is in a prime position to densify development and reduce the number trips that require a private vehicle.

The City should encourage denser forms of development to collocate appropriate uses and consider mixed-use developments along existing arterials to shift the emphasis of the corridors from vehicle movement to commercial destinations. Land use and transit should be planned together, as denser or more intense land uses can support transit and vice versa. As such, the City should Encourage denser forms of development near existing transit routes and work with Milwaukee County Transit Service (MCTS) to develop more robust bus infrastructure near major job centers and commercial clusters to encourage the use of public transit throughout the City.

Parking is necessary for commerce given that most of the City's residents utilize a vehicle for work and shopping. However, poor management of parking resources can negatively impact a City's character as potentially useful parcels are dedicated to the temporary storage of cars. An abundance of free available parking encourages people to drive and further congests the City's streets. The City should balance the demand for parking with other solutions to develop better places to live, work, and play.

The City maintains inventories of current parking facilities and should use them to inform future decisions on parking management. The City should update parking requirements, where necessary, to maximize on-street parking usage and reduce the amount of space needed for off-street parking. If off-street parking is needed, the City should encourage businesses to consolidate their parking needs into shared parking facilities and encourage the placement of parking facilities behind structures or shielded from adjacent streets by landscaping to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment.



Public Transportation

Historically, transit to Wauwatosa was provided by Milwaukee Road trains and streetcar lines running to downtown Milwaukee. Amtrak currently utilizes the CN track through Wauwatosa for its Empire Builder and Borealis trains, which run between Chicago and Seattle/Portland and Chicago and Minneapolis, respectively. Amtrak does not stop in Wauwatosa and residents have to board trains at the Milwaukee Intermodal Station. Wauwatosa is currently served by MCTS, which provides bus services to Milwaukee County and portions of Ozaukee and Waukesha Counties. According to the 2022 American Community Survey, only 0.7% of Wauwatosa residents utilize public transit to commute to work.

Milwaukee County Transit System

MCTS operates 12 bus routes, including the Connect 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line, throughout Wauwatosa. MCTS also provides the Transit Plus paratransit service. Transit Plus paratransit service provides door-to-door, shared ride public transportation to people who can't use the fixed route bus system all or some of the time due to temporary or permanent disability. Transit Plus is available year-round with comparable operating hours to MCTS buses and has a service area that covers all of Milwaukee County. Most MCTS routes pass north/south or east/west through the City, but Routes 21, 22, and 66 have a terminus at Mayfair Mall. Most bus stops feature updated signage for their specific routes but lack arrival information or bus shelters. The Connect 1 BRT line runs east/west along Wisconsin Avenue and passes through the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center to its western terminus at the Watertown Plank Park and Ride. Community members expressed appreciation for the presence of MCTS buses but noted the lack of shelters and the need for increased frequencies.

Improve Transit Access, Options, and Services

Coordinate with MCTS to promote accessible transit infrastructure and services. Many MCTS shelters are not fully accessible to riders with disabilities. In some locations, the condition of pavement on sidewalks and/or bus stop pads is insufficient for mobility equipment. Therefore, disabled riders without access to regular bus routes must schedule paratransit services. Traveling north to south is especially difficult due to fewer direct routes compared to those going east/west. To help improve transit accessibility, the City should ensure all current sidewalks and multi-use paths are fully maintained and accessible to users of all abilities. The City should also work with MCTS to ensure all bus stops are ADA accessible and identify north/south streets that could accommodate additional buses or bus routes. For MCTS users that are unable to access standard services, the City should ensure Transit Plus paratransit services are available, reliable, and easy for users.

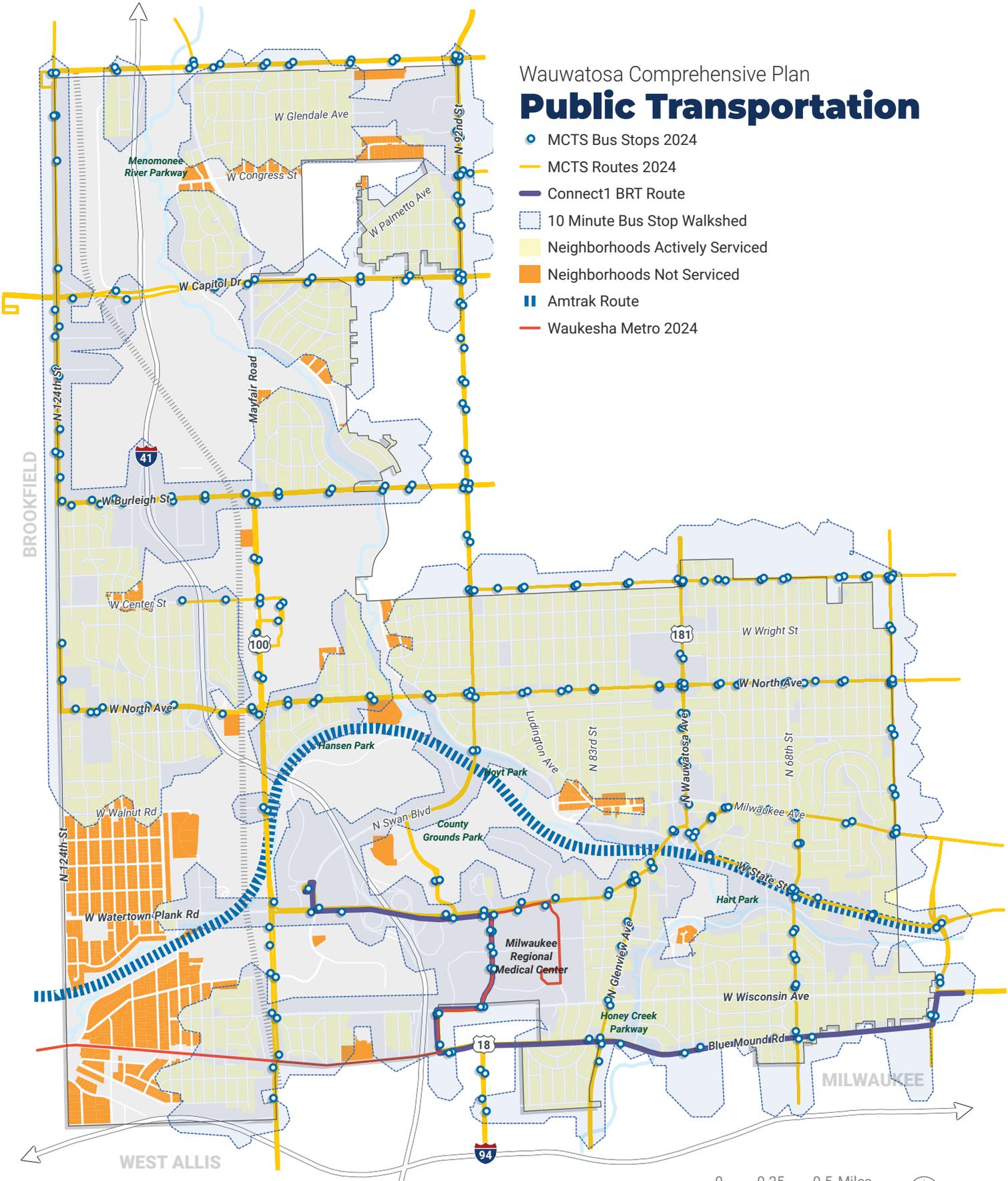
Align Transit Options with Employment

Advocate for current and future transit offerings align with major employment centers. Many of the City's employment locations are along principal arterials such as North Avenue and Blue Mound Road. Portions of North Avenue have bus stops for Bus Routes 21 and 22, and Blue Mound Road has facilities for the Connect 1 BRT and the Waukesha Metro Route 1. However, the potential of the bus routes is not fully realized, and a lack of shelters or real-time bus signage at shelters reduces the chances of employees using the system. Feedback garnered through public engagement revealed that the bus lines should be extended along the corridor as several major destinations, such as the Milwaukee County Zoo, and employers are not currently accessible via MCTS. Future commercial development along the City's major corridors may exacerbate traffic, so transit infrastructure should be installed ahead of future demand. The City should work with MCTS to increase bus frequencies on current routes through Wauwatosa and provide rider information and shelter infrastructure to all stops within the City. In addition, the City should work with MCTS to plan extensions to current routes or future routes along its major commercial corridors to provide transit options to future developments.

Potential Passenger Rail Service

Explore possibilities for returning passenger rail service to Wauwatosa. Amtrak's Borealis and Empire Builder trains pass by Wauwatosa on the CN tracks adjacent to the Village center. In 1998, Amtrak's Hiawatha Service was extended west to Waterton, WI with an intermediate stop in Wauwatosa, but this service ended in the same year due to a lack of funding. Several studies have been conducted by both the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and WisDOT to determine the feasibility of new rail service between Wisconsin and Minnesota involving stops in Wauwatosa, but all prior conclusions did not include Wauwatosa as a viable stop. The unprecedented level of funding given to Amtrak by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) resulted in a concerted effort to explore new Amtrak services across Wisconsin and the Midwest region. Given the City's location along an existing rail corridor with substantial passenger service and the presence of infrastructure that accommodated the 1998 station, it would not be impossible for future rail services to return. The City should work with Amtrak and WisDOT to determine the feasibility of returning rail service to Wauwatosa and identify potential locations for a train station with considerations for accessible facilities, bicycle and pedestrian connections, and potential transit-oriented development.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Public Transportation





Active Transportation

Active transportation focuses on biking and walking to reach a destination. Active transportation provides health benefits for the individual as well as environmental benefits for the whole community. According to the 2022 American Community Survey, 2.3% of Wauwatosa residents walked to work and 0.6% used a bicycle. However, this statistic does not include non-work-related trips. Wauwatosa residents have complex daily travel patterns that include trips to school, parks, shopping areas, and visits to friends and family. Many of these trips require a travel distance of three miles or less. As such, many can be encouraged to use active transportation to replace vehicle trips if safe and comfortable walking and biking infrastructure is provided. The 2014 Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Plan recommended the City of Wauwatosa should seek to shift many of these short trips to active modes to reduce vehicle traffic and emissions and improve neighborhood livability.

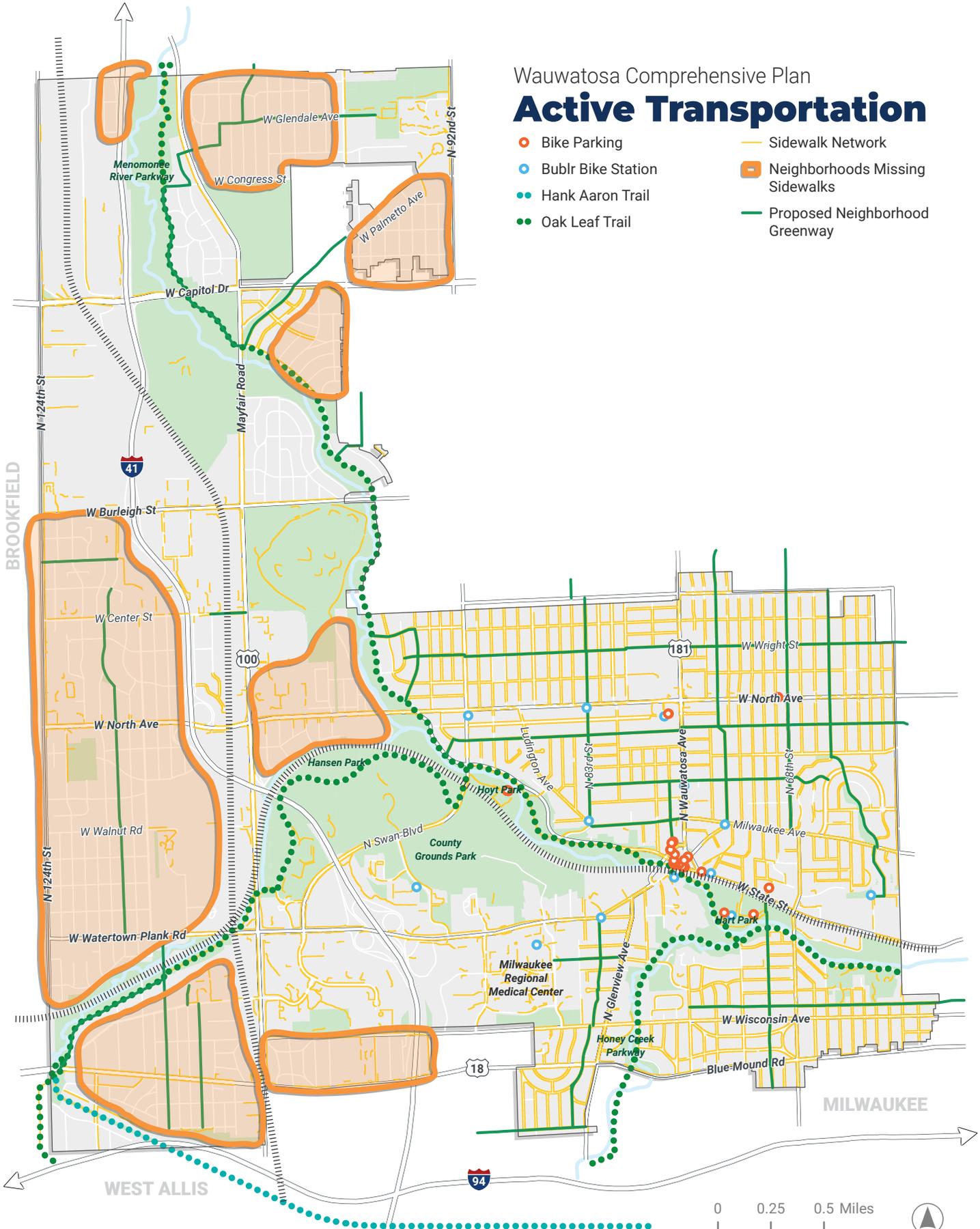
Sidewalks and Trails

Encourage travel by walking by improving the current sidewalk and trail network. Much of Wauwatosa's development occurred during the first half of the 20th century. As such, the neighborhoods around the Village core exhibit elements of the time, such as a tight grid and sidewalks on both sides of the street. The City's newer neighborhoods, most of them west of Highway 100 were built during the rising popularity of the car and many do not have sidewalks. Highway 100, and the major arterials that connect to it, such as North Avenue or Blue Mound Road, are major thoroughfares for automobile traffic with wide rights-of-way and high vehicle speeds. Feedback from public outreach indicated that these streets are dangerous for pedestrians due to high vehicle speeds and wide pedestrian crossings. To improve pedestrian safety and comfort, the City should identify streets that could benefit from new sidewalks and improve major corridors with wider sidewalks or buffers between the street and sidewalk. Providing safe and comfortable pedestrian infrastructure will help encourage residents to choose walking for short trips, instead of driving.

The Oak Leaf Trail and Hank Aaron Trail are two multi-use trails that pass-through Wauwatosa. In addition to their recreational benefits, the trails provide additional options for pedestrians to get around the City. To boost travel by these trails, the City should increase the number of connections between the trail and residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. In addition, the City should explore opportunities for expanding the trail system, where feasible.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Active Transportation

- Bike Parking
- Bublr Bike Station
- Hank Aaron Trail
- Oak Leaf Trail
- Sidewalk Network
- Neighborhoods Missing Sidewalks
- Proposed Neighborhood Greenway



Bikeways

A Tiered Approach to New Bikeways

The City can use this tiered approach to select the most appropriate bikeway type for specific streets. These tiers offer a range of options, from comfortable and easily implementable Neighborhood Greenways to high-investment, high-safety Tier 3 Bikeways. This analysis and framework does not require a one-size-fits-all approach. The City can prioritize improvements based on existing conditions, traffic volumes, and community needs. This framework lays the groundwork for a more detailed bike master plan that can guide future investments in biking infrastructure.

Current and planned bike routes were analyzed using the City's 2014 Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Plan and the SEWRPC's Vision 2050 Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan. The result is an updated bikeway framework centered on designated bike lanes, factoring in edge-of-pavement widths, existing infrastructure, and roadway jurisdictions. Shared-lane bike lanes, or otherwise known as "sharrows", were not included in this analysis as on-street routes due to the safety risk they pose for bicyclists and not included in any of the following recommendations. In addition to these on-street routes, several off-road trails such as the Oak Leaf Trail and Hank Aaron Trail provide regional connections through Wauwatosa. Several routes were also included due to community feedback and making necessary connections to fill in gaps throughout the bikeway network. This analysis categorized recommended bike lanes as follows:

- **Conventional Bike Lane:** Exclusive space on the side of the road for bicyclists designated by pavement markings and signage.
- **Buffered Bike Lane:** Exclusive space for bicyclists with additional buffer space between bicyclists and drivers typically designated by diagonal hatch or solid lines.
- **Protected Bike Lane:** Dedicated space for bicyclists with physical separation from vehicles typically using concrete barriers or bollards.

Based on the analysis of the framework, this study recommends specific locations for each type of category of bike lane.

Neighborhood Greenways

Neighborhood Greenways are characterized by their low traffic volumes and speeds, featuring an edge-of-pavement between 24' to 30'. While this cannot support a conventional bike lane, other strategies should be implemented such as intersection and mid-block bump outs, speed humps, and comprehensive wayfinding signage to enhance the safety and experience for bicyclists.

Tier 1 Bikeway

Tier 1 Bikeways are characterized by low to medium traffic volumes and speeds, featuring an edge-of-pavement between 36' to 45'. With this width, a roadway can begin to support a conventional bike lane and, in some cases, a parking aisle. This tier represents the lowest level of effort for establishing on-street bike accommodations, easily implementable with paint or thermoplastic markings to delineate space between cars and bicyclists.

Tier 2 Bikeway

Tier 2 bikeways are characterized by higher levels of traffic and speeds, featuring an edge-of-pavement between 52' to 65'. This tier can accommodate a buffered bike lane, or protected bike lane on higher traffic streets, to provide necessary safety for bicyclists.

Tier 3 Bikeway

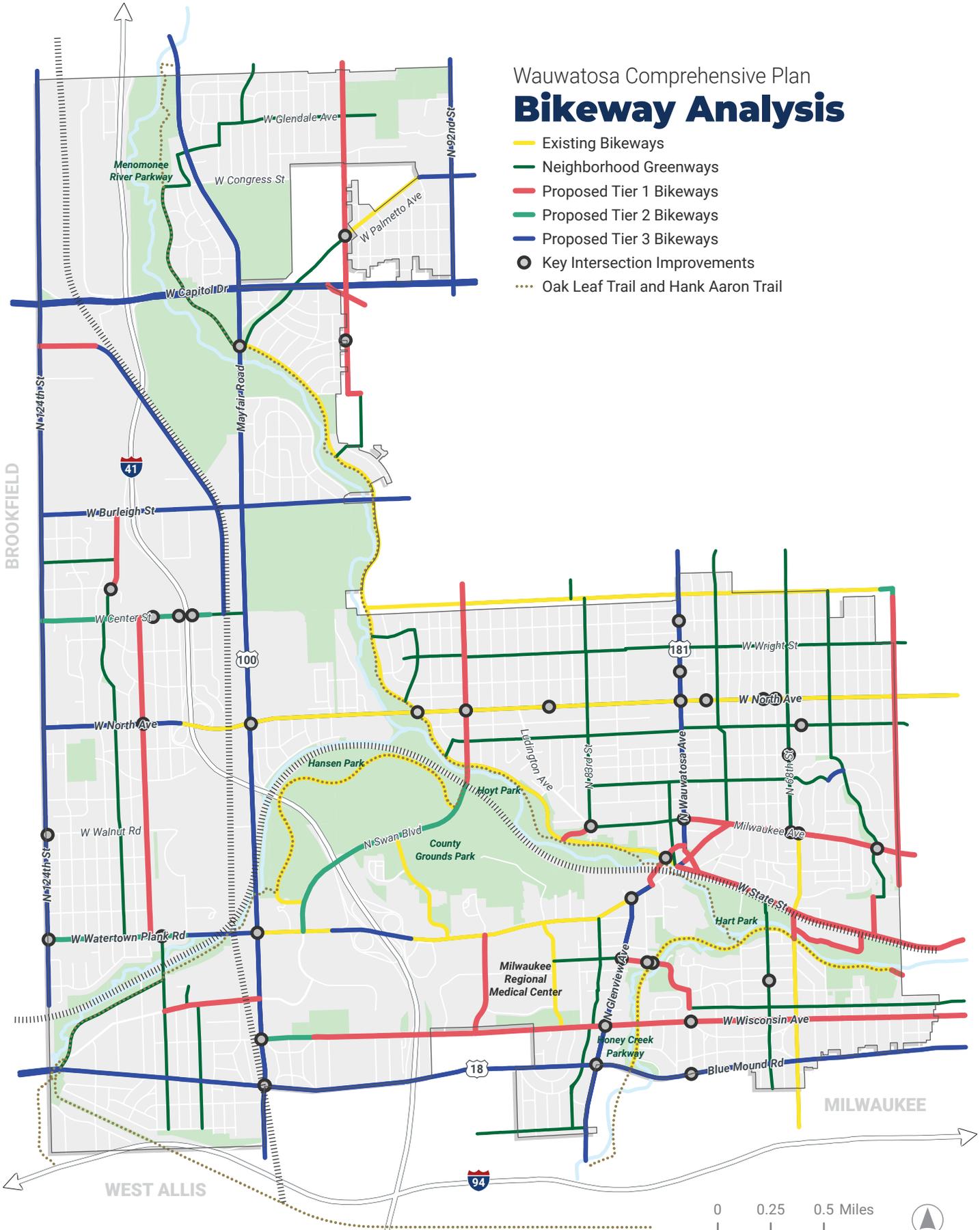
Tier 3 bikeways are characterized by high volumes of traffic and speeds that pose a substantial risk for bicyclists. Tier 3 bikeways typically have an edge of pavement between 80' to 100' but in some cases may extend beyond these bounds. While more difficult to implement, protected bike lanes are solely recommended for this tier. It is important to note that several routes identified with this tier are maintained by other jurisdictions such as Milwaukee County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and will require additional coordination and approvals.

Jurisdiction

Several roadways within this analysis lie outside of the City's jurisdiction and would require the City to coordinate and advocate for the community's desires with County and State officials to make necessary bikeway infrastructure improvements. Due to the nature of these routes and their inclination to support higher volumes of traffic, these bikeways should feature protected bike lanes ideally with some grade separation between drivers and bicyclists.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Bikeway Analysis

- Existing Bikeways
- Neighborhood Greenways
- Proposed Tier 1 Bikeways
- Proposed Tier 2 Bikeways
- Proposed Tier 3 Bikeways
- Key Intersection Improvements
- ⋯ Oak Leaf Trail and Hank Aaron Trail

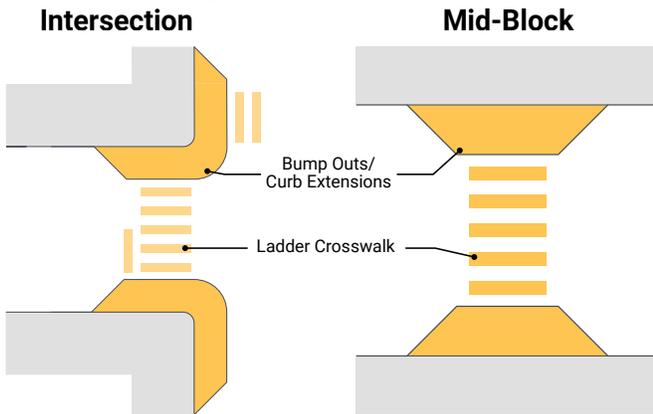


Bikeway Design Strategies

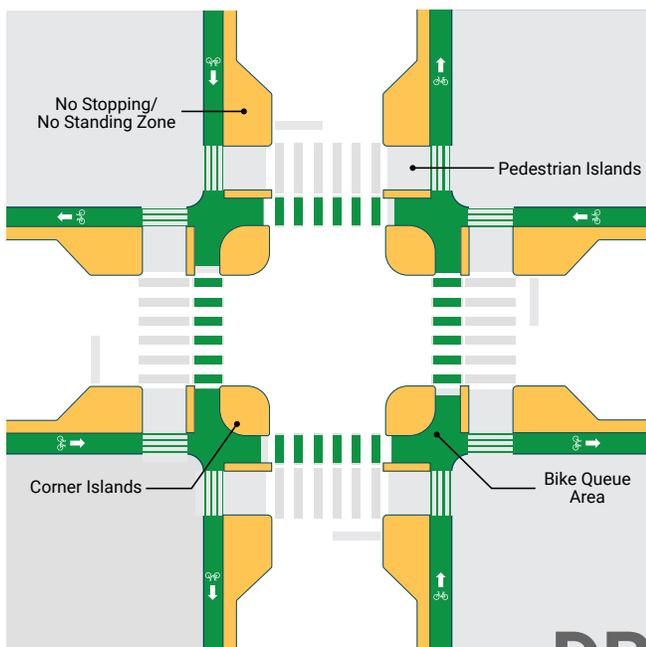
Intersections and turning vehicles present a specific risk to people on bikes. The City should design safer intersections and crossings to reduce the risk of collisions and provide more comfort to the overall bike network. Design considerations such as corner speed bump wedges and centerline curb elements can reduce the speed of turning vehicles and shorten the bicyclist and driver conflict zone. Overall, ensuring a clear approach sightline and increasing bicyclist visibility is essential to creating a safer bicyclist and pedestrian environment.

Note: the exhibits shown on this page are conceptual and serve as examples only. Actual intersection and bikeway designs may deviate from the exhibits based on site conditions.

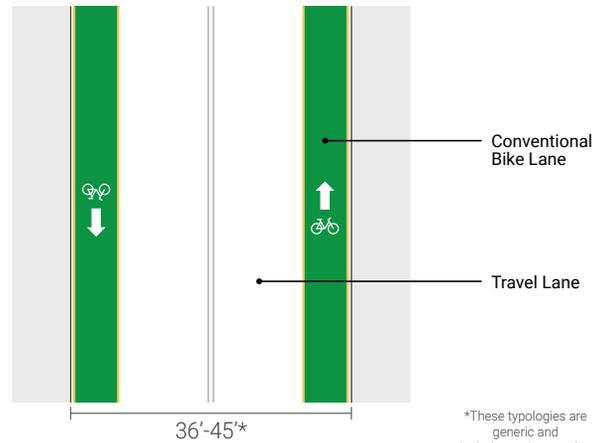
Typical Bump Outs



Protected Intersection

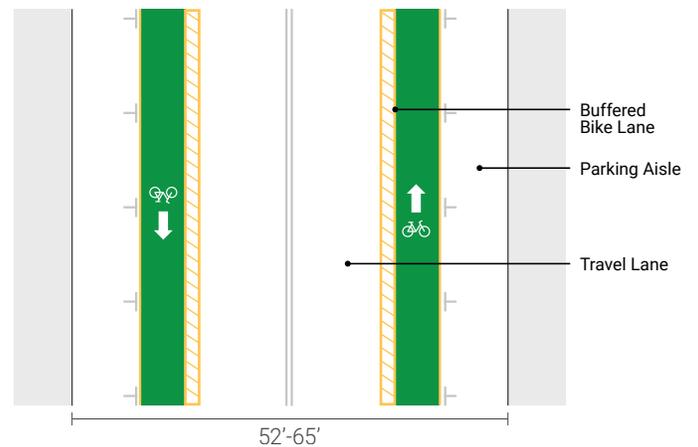


Tier 1 Bikeway

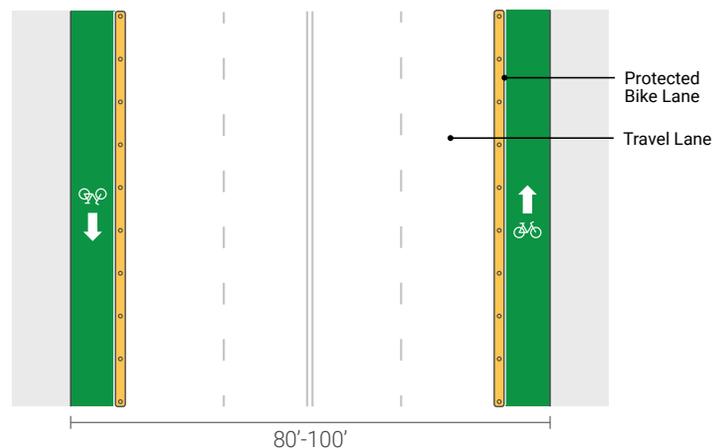


*These typologies are generic and include maximum edge of pavement widths.

Tier 2 Bikeway



Tier 3 Bikeway

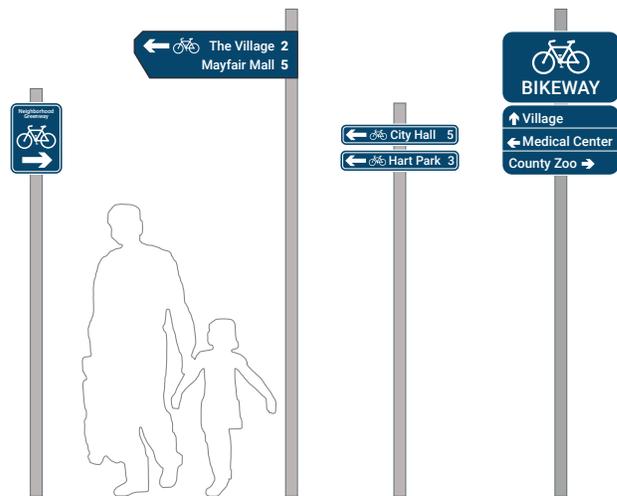




Signage

Consider creating and implementing a bicycle wayfinding system with clear, consistent signage and pavement markings to help guide bicyclists across the City. The wayfinding system can support directing bicyclists to key commercial areas, schools, and other community facilities and gathering spaces. The signage would also visually indicate to drivers that bicyclists are traveling along a specific route. The City currently provides signage for its greenways and it could utilize such signage for all future bicycle facility projects.

Bicycle wayfinding signage should be located near intersections and other key locations, familiarizing bicyclists with their surrounding area and efficiently guiding them through the network. A successfully implemented wayfinding system would promote cycling in Wauwatosa through unique and consistent designs throughout the City.



Signaling

Consider implementing bike-specific signaling and explore changing signal timings to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. On high speed and/or high traffic streets, organizing the progression of cars, pedestrians, and bicycles through an intersection is essential for safety and efficiency. Most intersections contain hanging traffic lights for vehicles and bicyclists and crosswalk signals for pedestrians. The sequence of these signals is often determined by a set timer or impacted by the push of a button or a detection coil. Ultimately, almost all the traffic signals in Wauwatosa are designed to emphasize the movement of cars leading to dangerous interactions between vehicles and cyclists.

Consideration should be given to installing dedicated bicycle signals, where appropriate, that work in conjunction with the other signals of the intersection. This signal can be worked into the light sequence of the intersections to ensure cyclists are given adequate time and space to travel. Several options are available, such as leading bike intervals (LBIs), bike scrambles, or fully protected bike signals. The City could also consider installing fully smart signalization that detects the volume of different traffic modes and changes signals accordingly or identify bike corridors that could utilize "green wave" signalization that gives cyclists a constant wave of green lights if cyclists maintain a constant, safe speed.



08



UTILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Utilities, infrastructure, and community facilities provide the backbone for all development within a City. Community facilities come in many forms serving various purposes. Some, like city services, focus on daily government operations – permitting, water distribution, wastewater treatment, and public safety to name a few. Others, like libraries, schools and hospitals, promote education and community health.

This chapter summarizes the main issues and opportunities identified during outreach and engagement efforts, provides an inventory of the governmental and community facilities serving the City, and includes recommendations for improvements to buildings, infrastructure, services, and programs. As the chapter does not replace the plans of other agencies, or the more detailed planning done by the City and its service providers, intergovernmental cooperation and communication will be key components to some of the recommendations.



Outreach Takeaways

Outreach feedback received during the planning process revealed key issues and projects from resident, government, and community service provider perspectives. Maintaining cooperation and effective partnerships with the School District were emphasized to ensure service coordination and to attract new residents. Another concern that arose from outreach efforts related to infrastructure capacity. Specifically, respondents expressed the need to ensure adequate water and sanitary sewer systems support future demand.

Community services, particularly those targeted toward youth and seniors, were highlighted as important for maintaining an accessible and diverse community. Expanding youth and senior centers, exploring the possibility of creating a central community center, upgrading existing senior facilities, and extending the hours of community facilities like the library were supported priorities for enhancing social engagement. Additionally, there was broad support for improving health and wellness programs and expanding public safety resources and facilities to improve services to residents.

City Services

City services are at the forefront of providing and maintaining a safe, attractive, and desirable place to live and operate a business. The City is responsible for a variety of services such as law enforcement, fire protection, public health, development, and public works services. Although Wauwatosa is landlocked and built out, the City should continue to plan for and invest in maintenance and upgrades to community services and facilities to meet future resident, business, and other community stakeholder or redevelopment needs.

City Governance

Wauwatosa follows a Mayor-Council form of government, where the 17 elected officials of the Common Council make policy decisions and set City-wide priorities. Officials serving on the Common Council currently include two Alderpersons from each of the City's eight districts and the Mayor. However, this composition is set to change in 2026 in response to a voter referendum approving a reduction in the number of Council members to 12, not including the Mayor. Approved term limits as part of the voter referendum will restrict Alderpersons to serving a maximum of two consecutive four-year terms.

Police

The Wauwatosa Police Department consists of 91 sworn officers and 33 civilian staff members, and operates through three main divisions: Patrol, Administrative, and Support Services. The department also offers community programs including Bicycle Safety and Registration, Medicine Collection, Neighborhood Block Watch, Block Parties, and Tosa's Night Out. The Wauwatosa Police Department has improved resource allocation and public safety by utilizing crime data analysis and license plate readers. Additionally, the Department hires and trains part-time Community Service Officers to effectively manage non-emergency needs like traffic and ordinance violations, contributing to a safe and peaceful environment.

Fire

With over 103 staff members in three stations throughout the City, the Wauwatosa Fire Department delivers essential public safety services, including fire protection, emergency medical response, rescue operations, education, and disaster management. In addition to its core responsibilities, the Department actively engages the community through outreach programs, such as smoke detector installations, fire inspections, car seat installations, fire station tours, block parties, and school presentations.



Health and Medical Facilities

Wauwatosa benefits from a top-rated healthcare network supported by the Wauwatosa Health Department and the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center. The Health Department provides programs, services, and education on disease prevention, animal control, healthy living, and social work. Community health assessments are performed by Health Department staff to develop strategic plans to maintain and improve the health of the community.

The Milwaukee Regional Medical Center is a consortium of leading healthcare institutions that have a primary role in providing comprehensive care to the community. This consortium includes prominent institutions such as Children's Wisconsin, Froedtert Hospital, and The Medical College of Wisconsin. Collectively, these institutions serve approximately 56,000 inpatients and 2.7 million outpatients annually, offering a wide range of specialized medical services and advanced treatment options. The Medical Center is not only a key healthcare provider but also a major hub for medical research, education, and innovation, contributing significantly to the overall health and well-being of the region.

Library

The Wauwatosa Public Library, located within City Hall, provides residents with access to books, computers, internet, meeting rooms, and a digital library. It regularly hosts programs for kids and teens, including story time and reading events. The Library also features an art exhibition space and benefits from the support of the Wauwatosa Public Library Foundation, which raises funds to enhance its programs and services.

Schools and Education

The Wauwatosa School District serves approximately 6,900 students across 16 schools, including 11 elementary schools (including a Montessori and a STEM school), two middle schools, two high schools, and the Wauwatosa Virtual Academy.

Wauwatosa is home to several private and parochial schools, and Bryant and Stratton College, which offers a variety of degree programs. Milwaukee Area Technical College and other regional colleges in close proximity to the City offer programs for students to earn associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certifications. These institutions of higher learning and adult education serve both the educational and workforce development needs of the community.

Case Study

Skokie Public Library

The Skokie Public Library in Illinois developed a digital media lab to provide access for community members to create and share their design projects that involve video, music, and photography. Community members have access to the lab's computers with editing software, cameras, camcorders, microphones, and musical keyboards. The Skokie Public Library's digital media lab also includes a green wall for special effects in video projects.



Public Works Department

The Wauwatosa Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the City's infrastructure and public properties. This includes garbage and recycling collection, street and sewer maintenance, water main upkeep, streetlight and traffic signal management, tree planting and pruning, landscaping, and operation of the resident Drop Off Center. The department also provides engineering services to support City projects and infrastructure needs.

Water Services

Wauwatosa's water supply is provided by Milwaukee Water Works, which handles the filtration, treatment, and pumping of water up to the City's municipal boundaries. The Public Works Department operates and maintains four pumping stations, seven water storage reservoirs, and 203 miles of water mains.

Sewer Services

In addition to the operation and maintenance of water infrastructure, the Wauwatosa Public Works Department manages 153 miles of sanitary sewers; 131 miles of storm sewers; and 10,000 storm manholes, inlets, and catch basins. Wastewater treatment is provided by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, the regional government agency providing services to southeastern Wisconsin.

Invest in Aging Infrastructure

Prioritize proactive maintenance and strategic upgrades to its water, sewer, and stormwater systems to provide future developments and redevelopments with reliable infrastructure.

Investing in aging infrastructure can significantly improve Wauwatosa's long-term vitality and resilience. As the City adopts its annual budget for infrastructure and maintenance programs, the Comprehensive Plan and Capital Improvements Program should continue to be used to identify and prioritize water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer network projects, focusing on replacing the oldest and most vulnerable segments first. The City is currently developing a lead lateral replacement program to eliminate any lead piping encountered during water projects.

The City should continue to collaborate with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District on the implementation of the Schoonmaker Creek Flood Management Project to reduce flood risks for several properties and improve resilience. Additionally, the Public Works Department should target new infrastructure investments in areas designated for increased density, such as the North Avenue Corridor and Blue Mound Road Corridor, ensuring that the City can accommodate future development. Innovations in technology, such as remote monitoring devices and software or green infrastructure solutions, should be considered and incorporated where feasible into upgraded or expanded infrastructure projects.

Improving Access to Community Facilities

As the needs of residents, businesses, and community members evolve, work to improve and modernize their public facilities to improve accessibility and support sustainable services. During outreach engagement, participants identified the need for upgrading the civic center, expanding the Library, developing a new community center or sports complex, and upgrading accessibility features. Investments in existing and new community facilities may allow for hiring additional staff, providing more flexible schedules, improving accessibility, and allocating resources to expand programs and services. In response to evolving community needs, the City should continue partnering with organizations like the School District and churches to identify underutilized or disused spaces for potential reuse for community programs or redevelopment opportunities. Some larger-scale potential proposals, such as upgrading the civic center or building a new community center, will require more dedicated planning efforts, financial considerations, and resources.

Extending Healthcare Services

Continue to collaborate with existing medical facilities to enhance access to remote medical consultations and services, particularly in underserved neighborhoods. During outreach efforts, participants identified the City's medical complexes as valuable community assets while highlighting the need for more health programs and wellness initiatives, specifically for mental health, youth, and to address social isolation. While the Health Department may be able to enhance its services to address these concerns within existing constraints, partnerships with Milwaukee County Health and Human Services and the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center can expand resources to address local needs and ensure access to high-quality healthcare services. Addressing social isolation may reach beyond traditional health resources through collaboration with the Library and senior service providers to create or expand programs, such as seniors reading to children or scheduling community events closer to senior living facilities.

Strengthening Communications

Utilize diverse methods to communicate programs, policies, initiatives, and other information to the public and stakeholders in a clear, timely, and equitable manner.

Wauwatosa strives to maintain excellent communication with the public and stakeholders. However, as part of the outreach process, participants identified City communication as an area for improvement. While updating the City's websites and social media should continue to be the standard, it may be necessary to provide alternative or targeted communications to certain demographics. Mailed printed materials may be the preferred way that seniors obtain information, while mobile apps and emerging technologies may be the preferred methods for youth engagement.

The City should identify the most efficient methods of communication to reach the intended audiences, understanding that multiple methods or tools may be required. The Health Department should explore options to expand outreach regarding health and wellness initiatives. Partnerships with neighborhood groups, the Library, other City departments, Milwaukee County, local businesses, religious institutions, the School District, and others can extend resources and provide additional opportunities to reach historically underrepresented or those experiencing social isolation. The City should also work with Granicus to conduct an audit of the City's websites to identify areas for improved functionality and access.

Maintaining Public Safety

Continue to invest resources to ensure a high level of public safety, including fire and police services throughout the City. Providing a safe community was one of the top priorities identified during outreach and engagement. In addition to ensuring sufficient staff levels for the Police Department and Fire Department, the City should evaluate the feasibility of creating satellite or additional stations based on statistical analyses and to accommodate growth areas. Both the Police Department and the Fire Department should continue to expand community outreach and communication efforts, and explore partnerships with the Health Department, neighborhood groups, and others to address identified community needs.



Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Continue enhancing energy efficiency, expanding renewable energy sources, and collaborating with private, governmental, and regional partners to further strengthen its environmental resilience. The City is committed to sustainability and has already adopted several key initiatives setting ambitious energy goals, reducing municipal emissions, and achieving municipal and community carbon neutrality by 2050. The City has incorporated other efforts including the installation of solar panels on public buildings and the ongoing conversion of streetlights to energy-efficient LED fixtures. In addition to these efforts, the City is also focused on enhancing green infrastructure, managing stormwater and reducing flooding risks.

The City should continue to implement and expand programs focused on energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, and sustainability measures. Additionally, the City should continue to collaborate with private, governmental, and regional partners to further strengthen its environmental resilience. In the long term, the City should adopt and integrate the practices and strategies outlined in Milwaukee County's Climate Action Plan 2050 once adopted.

Implement Sustainable Practices

Focus on identifying and prioritizing areas where green infrastructure can be integrated into both existing and future developments to implement sustainable practices effectively.

The City should implement streetscape improvements that incorporate sustainable design elements, such as increased tree canopy coverage, native plantings, permeable pavements, and bioswales to manage stormwater runoff, reduce urban heat island effects, and enhance both air quality and aesthetics.

The City should support the growing demand for electric vehicles (EVs), establishing a network of EV charging stations in high-traffic areas, public parking lots, and new developments. Updating the zoning code to require EV charging stations in new commercial and multifamily developments, and requiring new developments or redevelopments to incorporate green infrastructure and low-impact design, will help to meet the City's sustainability goals and make Wauwatosa more resilient.



Collaboration

Collaborate with neighboring cities and regional organizations to continue and enhance its environmental efforts, leveraging shared resources to address climate challenges more effectively. Partnering with regional government bodies and nearby cities will help drive the development of green infrastructure projects by leveraging shared resources to tackle environmental challenges more effectively. Additionally, the City should consider engaging with non-profit organizations and the private sector to fund and promote sustainability programs and energy efficiency retrofits for low-income housing. Collaborating with Milwaukee County's Office of Sustainability can further the adoption of electric vehicles in the City's fleet where feasible. These collaborative efforts will enable Wauwatosa to implement sustainable practices effectively, positioning the City as a regional leader in environmental stewardship.



Planning Considerations

Intergovernmental Partnerships

Partnering with Milwaukee County's Office of Sustainability can help Wauwatosa enhance environmental stewardship in its operations, infrastructure, and services, thereby improving community equity, health, and resilience. Wauwatosa can use the programs and services of the Milwaukee County Office of Sustainability to explore collaborative opportunities for energy efficiency programs, green infrastructure initiatives, and vehicle electrification strategies. The site offers tools like the Energy Dashboard for monitoring emissions, outlines sustainability practices such as waste reduction, and highlights partnerships for funding and implementing sustainable projects, such as the PACE program for commercial energy improvements.

09



PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND NATURAL AREAS

Throughout Wauwatosa, a system of parks and open spaces provide residents with accessible spaces to gather, socialize, and play. Underwood Creek, Honey Creek, and the Menomonee River provide a continuous network of natural riparian areas that accommodate wildlife and residents alike. The Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resources chapter offers strategies to ensure that these areas remain well utilized and prized assets of the community. This chapter identifies policies and recommendations to support the preservation of green spaces in the community and encourage recreational areas for residents.



City Growth Context

Due to Wauwatosa’s landlocked nature, there is limited space available for the development of new parks or recreational areas. Given that the City’s population is forecasted to reach approximately 52,400 by 2050, the development of any available land will need to be done strategically. Combined, the City of Wauwatosa, Milwaukee County, and the Wauwatosa School District provide 23.62 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is higher than the national average of 10.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, according to the National Recreation and Park Association. However, this ratio will decrease if population growth is not matched by park development. The City should encourage upgrading current and developing new recreational facilities if future growth exceeds the capacity of current facilities.

Outreach Key Takeaways

Throughout outreach and engagement opportunities, residents and community stakeholders consistently listed the City’s current parks, open spaces, and natural areas as a strength. However, due to the current pace of development, many stakeholders were concerned that current facilities would not be able to support future growth. Potential strategies identified by outreach participants for accommodating growth included the reservation of current open space for future parkland, the creation of smaller community or neighborhood parks, and the creation of new recreational facilities and programs for residents of all ages. In addition to more recreational spaces and facilities overall, stakeholders listed access to these parks and natural areas as a top priority. Current bike facilities, trails, and sidewalks are adequate, but could be greatly improved. Many residents expressed a desire to utilize bicycles but are discouraged by the unsafe infrastructure that is currently in place. Ultimately, residents and stakeholders value the City’s parks and natural areas but believe improvements can and should be made to enhance current facilities and ensure their suitability in the future.



Parks and Open Space

The City of Wauwatosa has a vibrant network of parks and open space spanning approximately 1,400 acres. The Department of Public Works operates and maintains the parks under Wauwatosa's jurisdiction while other administrators, including the Wauwatosa School District and Milwaukee County Parks, manage the remaining parks, community facilities, and open spaces. The system encompasses a multitude of options, including neighborhood parks, pocket parks, urban plazas, and multi-use trails with diverse amenities aimed at promoting active outdoor activities and passive recreation for the community.

Ensure Access to Recreation

Ensure all parks and open spaces are fully accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, and other transportation methods. The City of Wauwatosa operates six main parks including Hart Park, Hartung Park (jointly maintained with City of Milwaukee), Pocket Park, Root Common Park, Webster Park, the 69th Street Pedestrian Plaza, one park that is currently under construction. These parks offer a variety of programming including athletic fields and facilities, concert stages, and multi-use trails for bicycling and walking. An analysis of the distribution of City- and County-operated parks shows that approximately 67% of residential parcels within the City limits are within a park service area. The service area is determined by a 10-minute walk from the park entrances. The analysis does not include smaller community parks operated and maintained by the Wauwatosa School District or the physical conditions of bike trails or sidewalks. Increasing the percentage of residential parcels in the 10-minute walk of a park requires improvements to the transportation network and new access points at existing parks and/or the development of new parks or recreational areas amongst residential development.

Micro Parks

Identify potential sites for micro parks, or other small-scale park interventions, to disperse recreational open space throughout residential neighborhoods. Since Wauwatosa is almost fully developed there is little land available for the development of new parks or recreational facilities. To increase the number of residents within a 10-minute walk from a park, the City should develop smaller parks, such as tot lots, pocket parks, or micro parks. These smaller-form parks could fit in underutilized portions of existing parcels or occupy the space of the small parcels commonly found in the City's denser neighborhoods. Such parks are not intended to accommodate many users but provide places of play or relaxation for residents nearby. As such, the usage of the City's parks will be spread across multiple sites instead of concentrating on the current smaller number of parks and recreational facilities.

Case Study

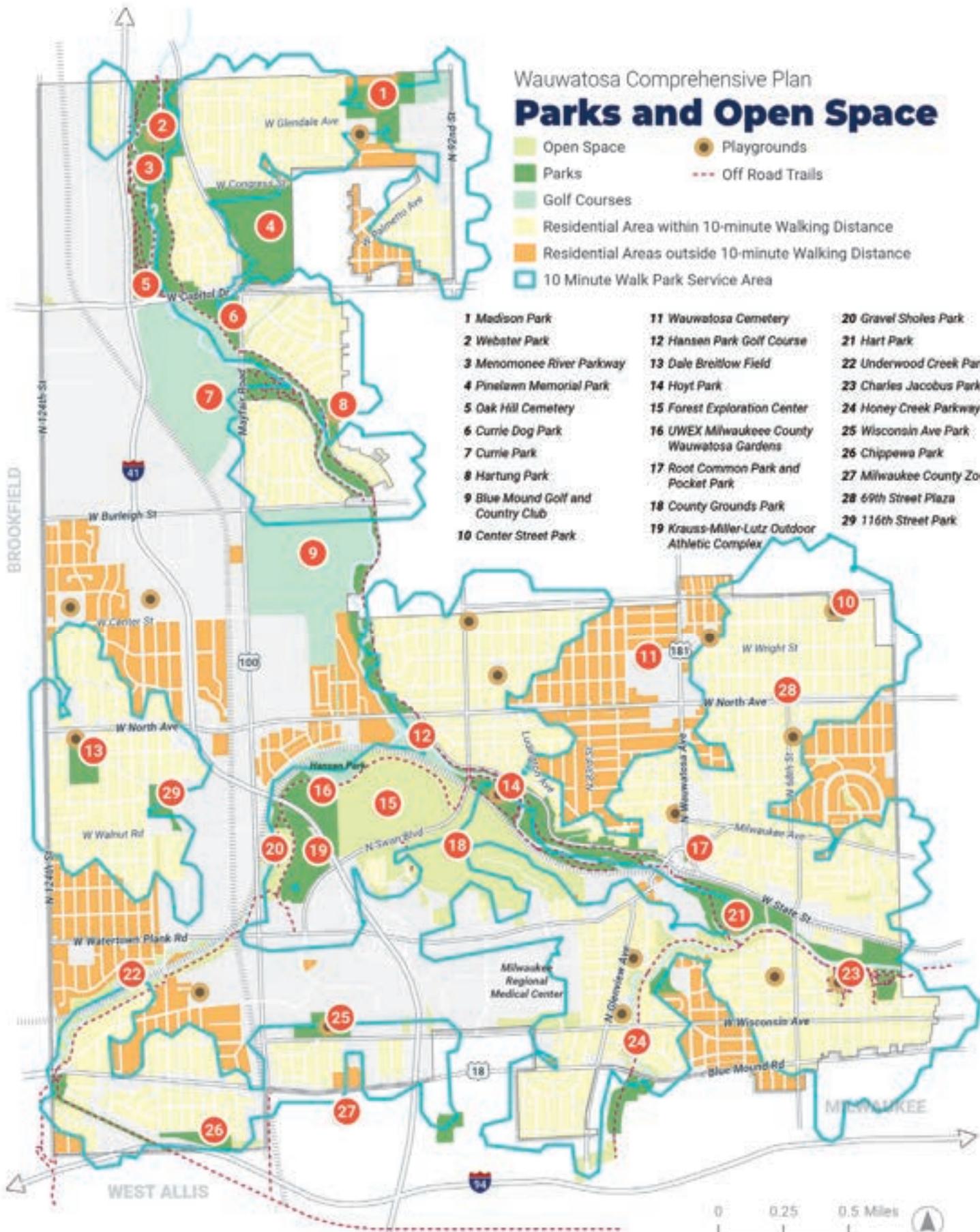
Sunshine Park, Milwaukee

Milwaukee's Sunshine Park is an example of grassroots engagement and planning to coordinate the redevelopment of a vacant lot into a pocket park. The project required a collaborative effort between the City staff, non-profit organizations, and community leaders to orchestrate various funding sources and implement different amenities on site including fruit trees, boulders, a rain garden, and a gathering space. Project such as Sunshine Park required the coordination of multiple parties and resources to effectively revitalize urban spaces.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Parks and Open Space

- Open Space
- Parks
- Golf Courses
- Residential Area within 10-minute Walking Distance
- Residential Areas outside 10-minute Walking Distance
- 10 Minute Walk Park Service Area
- Playgrounds
- Off Road Trails

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1 Madison Park | 11 Wauwatosa Cemetery | 20 Gravel Sholes Park |
| 2 Webster Park | 12 Hansen Park Golf Course | 21 Hart Park |
| 3 Menomonee River Parkway | 13 Dale Breilow Field | 22 Underwood Creek Parkway |
| 4 Pinelawn Memorial Park | 14 Hoyt Park | 23 Charles Jacobus Park |
| 5 Oak Hill Cemetery | 15 Forest Exploration Center | 24 Honey Creek Parkway |
| 6 Currie Dog Park | 16 UWEX Milwaukee County Wauwatosa Gardens | 25 Wisconsin Ave Park |
| 7 Currie Park | 17 Root Common Park and Pocket Park | 26 Chippewa Park |
| 8 Hartung Park | 18 County Grounds Park | 27 Milwaukee County Zoo |
| 9 Blue Mound Golf and Country Club | 19 Krauss-Miller-Lutz Outdoor Athletic Complex | 28 69th Street Plaza |
| 10 Center Street Park | | 29 116th Street Park |





New Playgrounds

Consider establishing new playgrounds to expand access during school hours. Wauwatosa contains a total of 21 playgrounds throughout the City. At the time the plan was adopted, the *2017 Active Tosa Parks and Recreation Plan* only listed an inventory of 18 playgrounds. Approximately 55% of those playgrounds were owned by the Wauwatosa School District. During outreach, residents noted how when schools are in session, those playgrounds become off limits to non-students, limiting the service level of playgrounds. The City should identify potential locations in existing parks and properties that could accommodate new playgrounds.

Planning and Maintaining Parks and Recreational Facilities

Continue implementing and updating the Active Tosa Parks and Recreation Plan and work with local and regional partners to plan and maintain current and future parks.

The 2017 Active Tosa Parks and Recreation Plan is the City's most up-to-date plan for parks and recreational facilities. The Plan provides an inventory of current facilities and detailed recommendations on improvements that could be made in each facility. When determining where a new facility should be or what updates need to be made to existing facilities, the City should rely on the Active Tosa Parks and Recreation Plan. In addition, the Plan should continue to be updated as Wauwatosa grows and the demand for parks and recreation changes.

Milwaukee County Parks owns and operates numerous parks in or around Wauwatosa. These include the Milwaukee County Zoo, Hoyt Park, County Grounds Park, and others. Hoyt Park is also administered by the Friends of Hoyt Park and Pool group. The City should foster relationships with these groups and continuously engage with them to ensure the needs of current and future Wauwatosa residents are met, the maintenance of current park amenities is routinely conducted, and that new parks and/or facilities are properly constructed. Additionally, the City should consider the development of a Friends of Parks and Trails parent organization to oversee the various park groups that currently exist. This would give the City a better understanding of the condition of its parks and recreational facilities and where to focus resources.



Natural Resources

Wauwatosa contains a variety of prized natural areas. A prime example is the Menomonee River Parkway, which offers vital riparian ecosystems and space for recreation and enjoyment. This section offers strategies to ensure that natural assets remain properly maintained and accessible to current and future residents. This section also explores opportunities for enhancing natural recreation options, increasing the City's green infrastructure, and preserving sensitive natural areas.

Menomonee River

Ensure that the Menomonee River and its riparian corridor are preserved, protected, and accessible for recreational uses. As one of the three primary rivers that meet in Milwaukee and empty into Lake Michigan, the Menomonee River and its surrounding watershed have long played an important role in the development of the region. Portions of the river have been heavily channelized and industrialized throughout history, but the section of the river that passes through Wauwatosa gives a glimpse of the river in its more natural setting. Ribbons of trees and grass line the riverbanks, and pockets of wetlands dot the course of the water channel. In addition to providing a home for fish, amphibians, birds, and other creatures, the river and its riparian zone offer a range of recreational activities. Walkers, bikers, and runners utilize trails along the river, while adjacent fields offer spaces for picnickers, sun bathers, and other park users. Due to the important functions the river corridor plays in Wauwatosa, it should be preserved for future use. The City should work with neighboring communities and local interest groups to preserve and improve the natural features and recreational amenities of the Menomonee River recreational corridor.

Floodplains

Continue implementing flood management projects and encourage all development within the floodplain to comply with State and Federal regulations. The City is subject to floodplain regulations that distinguish between the normal floodway and the flood fringe, also known as the 100-year flood plain, which has a 1 percent annual chance of flooding. The floodway, which includes the river channel and adjacent areas, carries fast-moving water and poses significant risks during floods. Conversely, the flood fringe encompasses areas outside the floodway, typically experiencing standing water during floods.

To manage these areas, the City adheres to a Floodplain Ordinance that aligns with FEMA and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Any development within the 100-year floodplain must obtain a Floodplain Development permit to ensure compliance with state and federal guidelines. Furthermore, under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), any building improvements or repairs exceeding 50% of the building's market value (excluding land) must meet current floodplain management standards. This requirement aims to enhance resilience and safety by ensuring that buildings are adequately fortified against flood risks.

Wauwatosa is implementing flood management strategies, along the Menomonee River. An example is the Hart Park expansion to 50 acres as part of a \$48 million initiative by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD). This expansion includes flood levees that temporarily hold floodwaters to protect homes and businesses during storms. Another effort is the Western Milwaukee Flood Management Project, Phase 2B, which extends an earthen levee along State Street and adds a new floodwall and storm sewers, significantly reducing flood risks during heavy rains. Moreover, The Honey Creek Channel project aims to slow flow during rains, naturalize and improve habitats along the creek, and restore 8,660 feet of the waterway with native plantings on Milwaukee County Parks property.



Protect Wildlife Areas

Ensure its wildlife areas are protected from future development and preserved for their natural benefits.

Wauwatosa's riparian zones, wetlands, meadows, and forests support many species of mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, and plant species. Due to the community's highly urbanized setting, the location of truly natural habitats for wildlife is limited. The Forest Exploration Center and County Grounds Park offer the largest unobstructed habitats in the City, while the courses of Underwood Creek and the Menomonee River provide sensitive riparian habitats. The presence of wildlife in these ecosystems is integral to their successful function. As such, these sites can provide spaces of natural beauty and education. The City should identify and protect sensitive natural areas to ensure the natural cycles within their ecosystems can continue unobstructed.

Protect Surface and Groundwater Quality

Continue to protect the surface and groundwater quality from polluted runoff. Wauwatosa is a city surrounded by water. Underwood Creek and the Menomonee River flow through the City to Lake Michigan – a mere six miles away. This water eventually returns to the City as drinking water pumped from Lake Michigan by the Milwaukee Water Works. As such, it is imperative that Wauwatosa protects its open water sources and groundwater from pollution.

Due to historic sources of pollution, Wauwatosa's section of the Menomonee River falls within the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern. Since 1991, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has worked with local communities and partners to remediate polluted sections of the river and manage pollutants. The City should continue to work with the DNR and neighboring communities to preserve the Menomonee River's channel and riparian zone and minimize the amount of polluted runoff entering the river. Reducing the impervious surfaces and planting more native plants and trees will slow the rate at which runoff occurs and increases the chance of rainwater being filtered into the ground. As such, the City should seek to reduce impervious surfaces used on public land and incorporate native plants and street trees into streetscape design and site planning. The City should also encourage developers to incorporate stormwater management and green infrastructure where needed.

According to the DNR, Wauwatosa's water table depth varies from zero feet, beneath the Menomonee River, to greater than 50 feet along the City's northeastern border. Groundwater contamination is much more likely to occur in areas with a shallow water table depth. Contamination is often caused by high concentrations of chemicals entering the water table before natural filtration can remove them. This increases the chance that local wells will pump contaminated groundwater. The City should ensure that sources of hazardous waste or chemicals are properly managed. Public parking facilities and roads should be properly designed to reduce potential pollution from engine oil or other vehicle debris. Lastly, the City should require proper waste storage and collection and ensure that all City facilities practice good pollution prevention and control.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan
Flood Hazard Areas

- Wetlands
- 100-year Floodplain
- Rivers and Creeks



Parks, Open Space, and Natural Areas
 Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan

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10



CORRIDOR PLANS

Building off the core components of the Comprehensive Plan, detailed Corridor Plans have been developed for the western North Avenue and Blue Mound Road gateways into Wauwatosa. These corridor plans highlight key concepts and strategies for land use and priority redevelopment, transportation and mobility, access and connectivity, and other improvements to the overall character for these corridors. The plans provide more specific recommendations for these key areas of the City, building upon the general framework of the Comprehensive Plan to guide improvements, reinvestment, and redevelopment in each area including site-specific application of various planning strategies presented in the Plan.

Wauwatosa Comprehensive Plan Corridor Areas

The two priority corridors within Wauwatosa have been identified by the City as part of the overall Comprehensive Plan process.

-  Subarea Boundary
-  Blue Mound Road Catalyst Sites
-  North Avenue Catalyst Sites





North Avenue Corridor Plan

The North Avenue Corridor is bound by the municipal boundary and the Menomonee River Parkway. This street serves as a major access point for the Mayfair Mall area and promotes various commercial and multifamily residential uses. The City's work for this corridor during 2024 includes reconstruction of sidewalks and pavement as well as utility replacements such as water mains, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, traffic signals and street lighting improvements. Other significant construction includes tree planting restorations and installing a bike lane.

Corridor Considerations

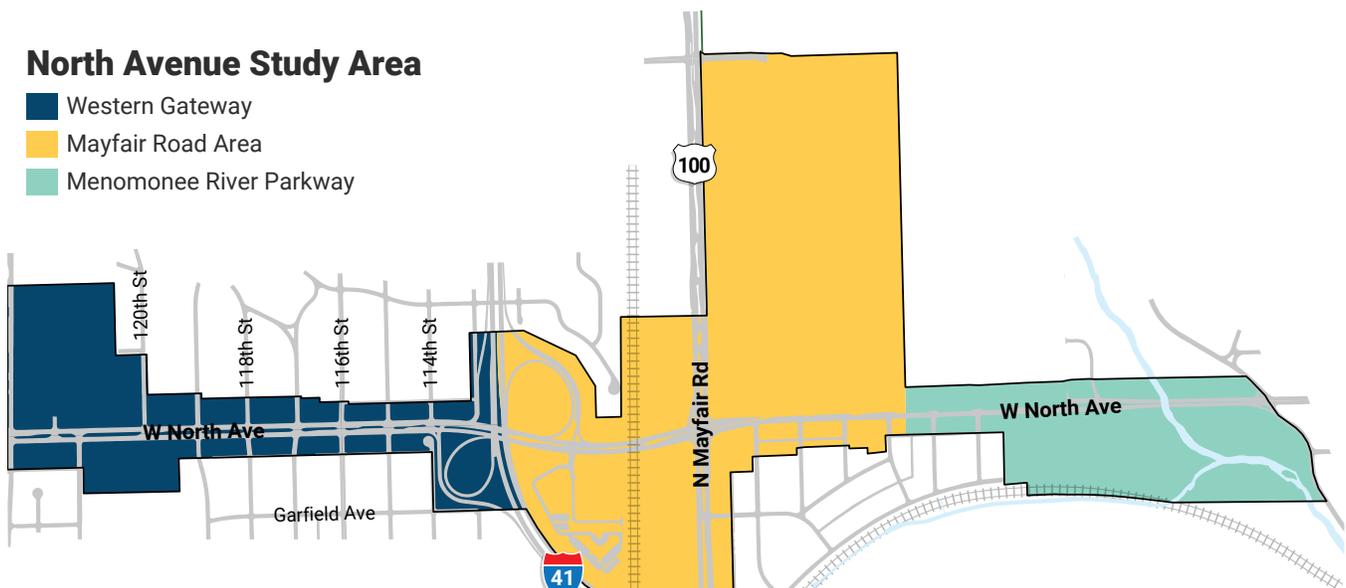
- Encourage taller, mixed-used development with multiple amenities featuring places for people to gather and congregate.
- Facilitate pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements, making necessary north-south connections, bus rapid transit (BRT) connections, and additional multi-use paths that feature adequate transit shelters, benches, proper lighting, and artistic bicycle storage elements.
- Incorporate sustainable elements such as electric vehicle charging stations into new development.
- Encourage redevelopment of aging structures and excessive surface parking lots with a coordinated design guidance for the corridor.
- Establish the Mayfair Mall area as a "Secondary Village Center" that incorporates walkable, mixed-use development and community gathering spaces for people to connect.
- Enhance the overall corridor branding and aesthetic with coordinated lighting, public art such as murals and sculptures, landscaping improvements, and other placemaking elements.

North Avenue Corridor Goal

The goal of the North Avenue Corridor Plan is to promote a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and commercially sustainable development alongside the neighborhood character.

North Avenue Study Area

- Western Gateway
- Mayfair Road Area
- Menomonee River Parkway



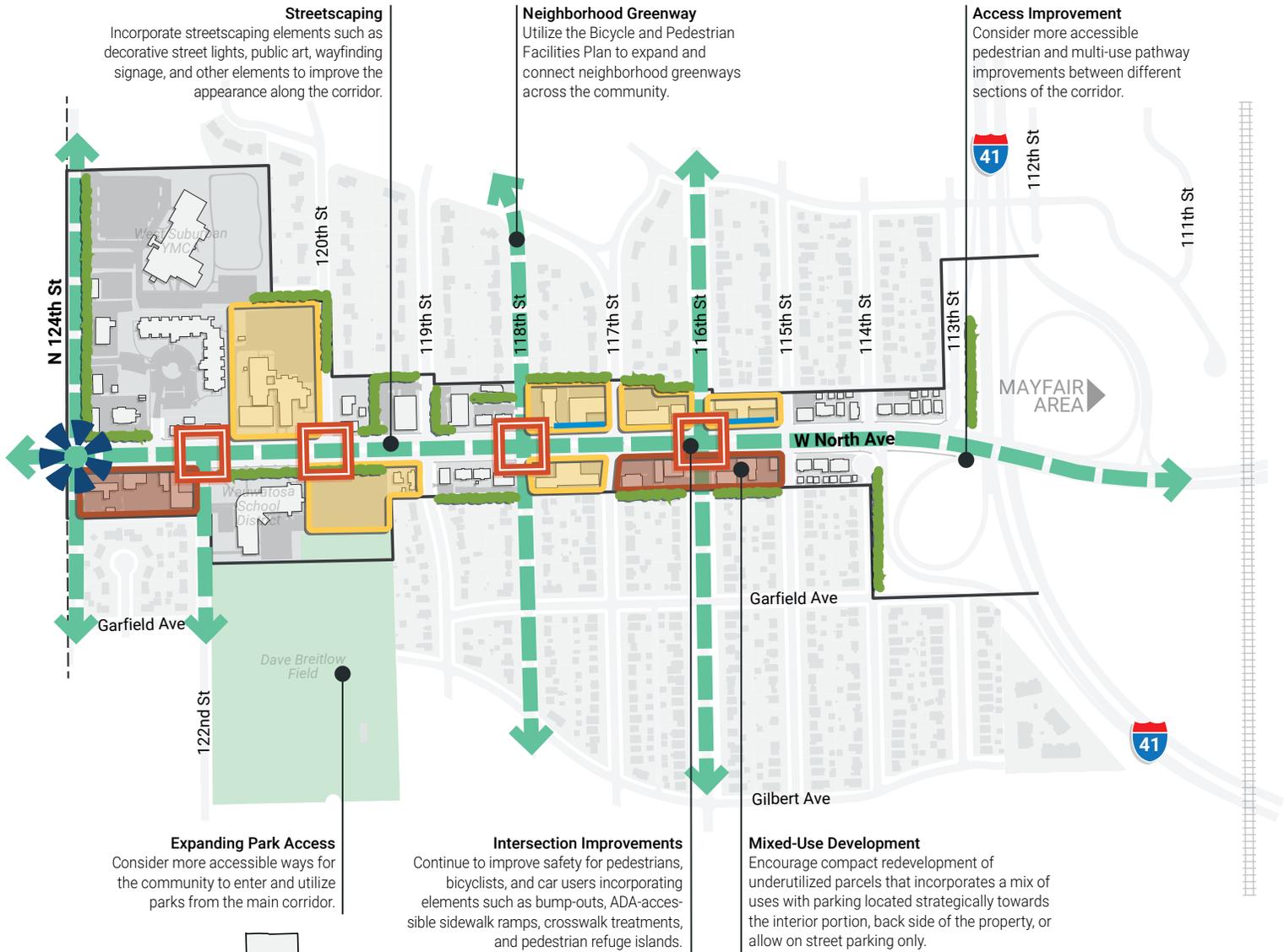
Western Gateway

Improvement Framework

This section of North Avenue serves as the gateway into Wauwatosa coming from Brookfield. The Western Gateway has predominantly developed to car-centric uses, especially along 124th Street where commercial buildings are set back and feature large surface parking lots. This section features a unique neighborhood park with multiple baseball fields attached to the school district building. The primary concern highlighted by community members revolve around access for pedestrians and bicyclists, and a need to redevelop aging and underutilized properties.

Corridor Improvements

-  Catalyst Site
-  Priority Redevelopment Site
-  Multi-Use Route Connection
-  Landscaping Improvement
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Gateway Feature
-  Curb Cut Elimination



Western Gateway



Corridor Plans

Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan

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Mayfair Road Area

Improvement Framework

The Mayfair Road Area serves as a central hub for shopping, retail, entertainment, and a variety of other services. Mayfair Mall serves as an anchoring point for multiple other commercial sites and big-box stores. Recent construction along North Avenue incorporated a protected multi-use route, enhancing accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Mayfair Mall

Mayfair Mall's large setback showcases unattractive surface parking lots. The City should encourage outlot development closer to the property lines to showcase attractive buildings and architecture. Appropriate connections and gathering spaces should be developed between these outlot developments and the original mall area to maintain a pedestrian scale relation. This improvement would provide additional space for retail, dining, entertainment, and other commercial and placemaking amenities, improving the appearance of the corridor.

Corridor Improvements

-  Catalyst Site
-  Priority Redevelopment Site
-  Multi-Use Route Connection
-  Landscaping Improvement
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Gateway Feature
-  Curb Cut Elimination

Potential Multifamily Housing Opportunity
Consider opportunities to incorporate additional housing, placemaking elements, and/or other redevelopment opportunities to activate the space around the mall.

Parking Requirements
Consider reducing parking minimums for new development to avoid excessive surface parking lots.



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Corridor Plans
Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Menomonee River Parkway

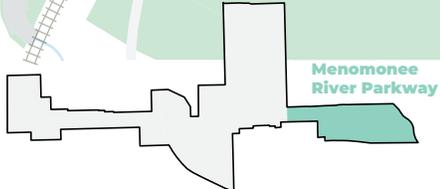
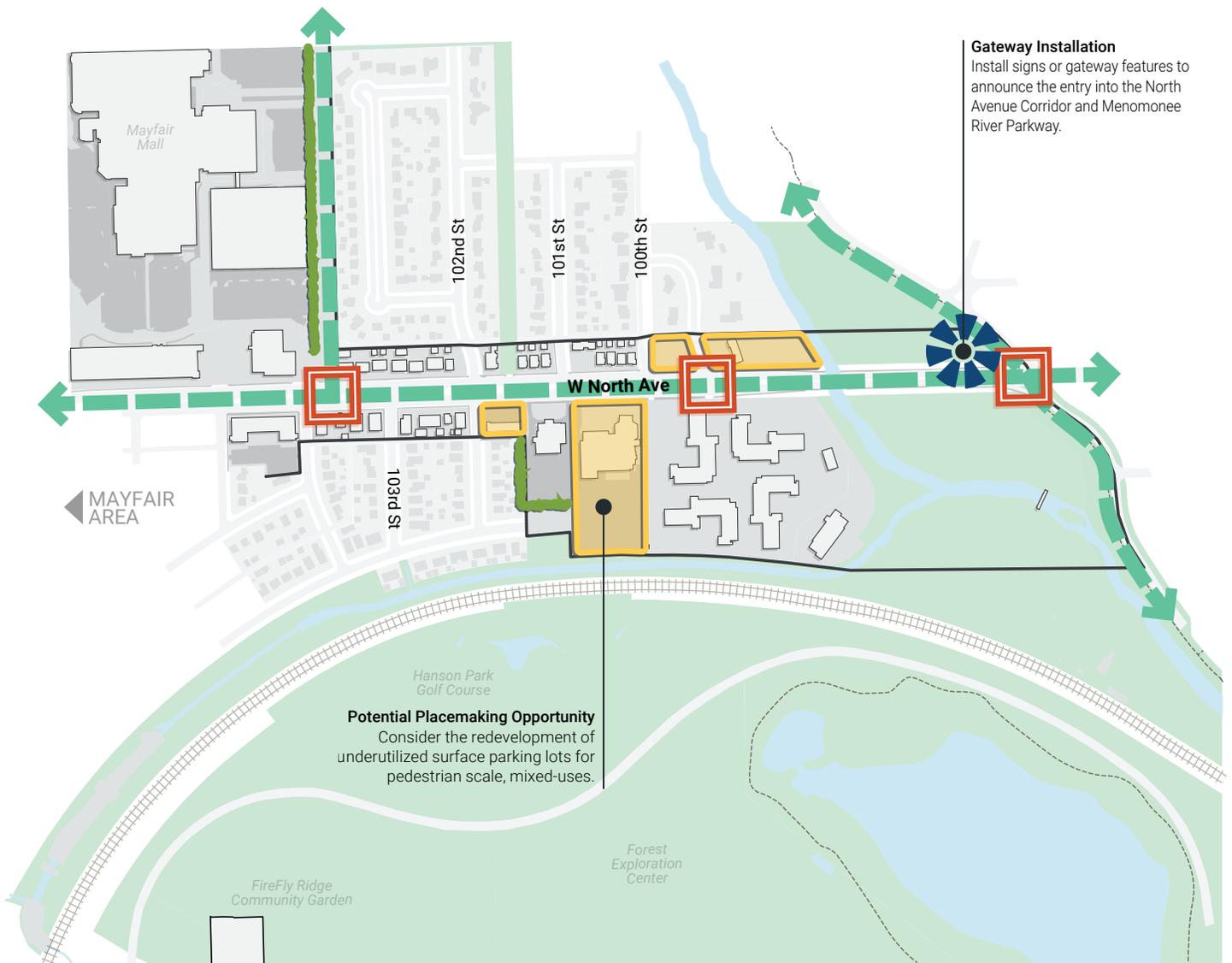
Improvement Framework

The eastern gateway to the North Avenue Corridor encompasses part of the Menomonee River Parkway and Hanson Park Golf Course. This section features a greater mix of residential properties, including single-family detached homes and multifamily apartments. Commercial uses in this section serve as transitional properties between the more intensive commercial uses in the Mayfair Corridor and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Corridor Improvements

-  Catalyst Site
-  Priority Redevelopment Site
-  Multi-Use Route Connection
-  Landscaping Improvement
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Gateway Feature
-  Curb Cut Elimination

Gateway Installation
Install signs or gateway features to announce the entry into the North Avenue Corridor and Menomonee River Parkway.



**Catalyst Sites
Forthcoming**

**Catalyst Sites
Forthcoming**



Blue Mound Road Corridor Plan

The Blue Mound Road corridor is similarly bound by the municipal boundary but only extends to Interstate 41. The corridor promotes a rich history as it was originally used to connect Milwaukee and Dane County. Today, Blue Mound Road offers a variety of commercial, office, and a mix of residential uses. While the Milwaukee County Zoo is located beyond Wauwatosa’s municipal boundary, its presence along the corridor will influence recommendations as objectives and new development along this section will require coordination with both the City and the County.

Corridor Considerations

- Encourage redevelopment that prioritizes pedestrian-friendly environments for people to safely walk and bike along the corridor as well as gather and socialize.
- Incorporate attractive placemaking elements such as a definitive gateway signage, decorative lighting, planters, murals, and other streetscape elements that build on the branding identity of Blue Mound Road.
- Enhance active transportation along the corridor, establishing safe and protected bikeways, improve visibility of regional trails, and considering creative solutions such as a bridge across Highway 100 or a multi-use path along the Milwaukee County Zoo.
- Coordinate with MCTS to improve overall service including building quality bus shelters and benches, implementing better traffic signaling, and establishing dedicated lanes.
- Work with community organizations to host social events similar to TosaFest, Firefly Art Fair, and the Tosa Farmers Market to help activate the corridor.

Blue Mound Road Corridor Goal

Revitalize the corridor into a vibrant destination that encourages a mix of restaurants, small businesses, small-scale multifamily buildings, and other pedestrian oriented uses integrated in a unified aesthetic.

Blue Mound Road Study Area

- Underwood Creek Parkway
- County Zoo Corridor



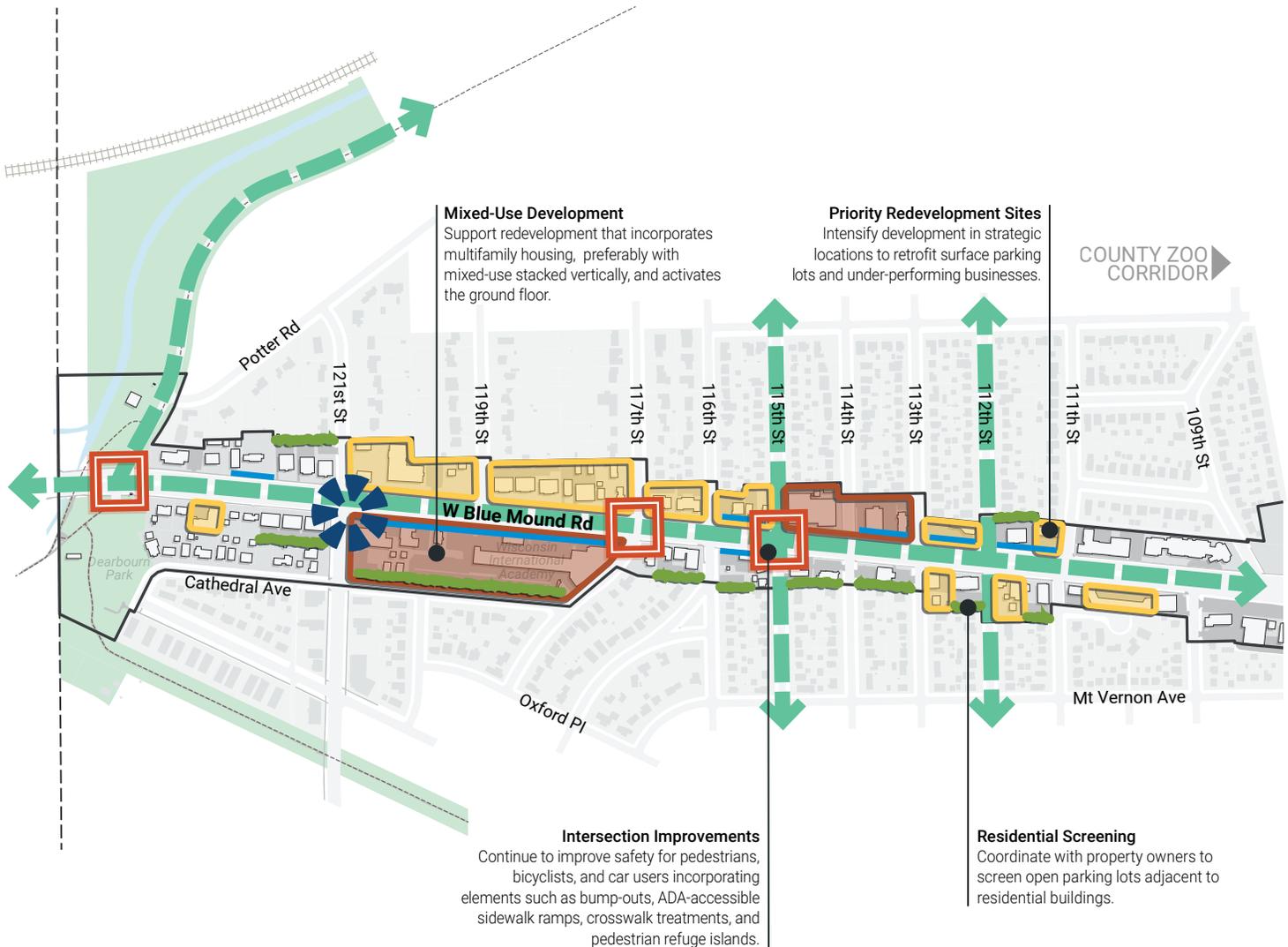
Underwood Creek Parkway

Improvement Framework

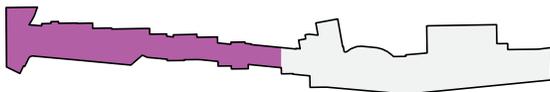
This section also serves as a gateway into Wauwatosa, marked by Underwood Creek Parkway and Dearbourn Park. This section is characterized by its mix of aging multifamily, commercial, and office uses. Residents highlighted multiple sites for redevelopment notably the Wisconsin International Academy as well as specific intersections improved pedestrian access and vehicular safety.

Corridor Improvements

-  Catalyst Site
-  Priority Redevelopment Site
-  Multi-Use Route Connection
-  Landscaping Improvement
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Gateway Feature
-  Curb Cut Elimination



Underwood Creek Parkway



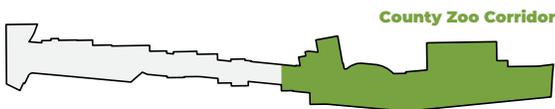
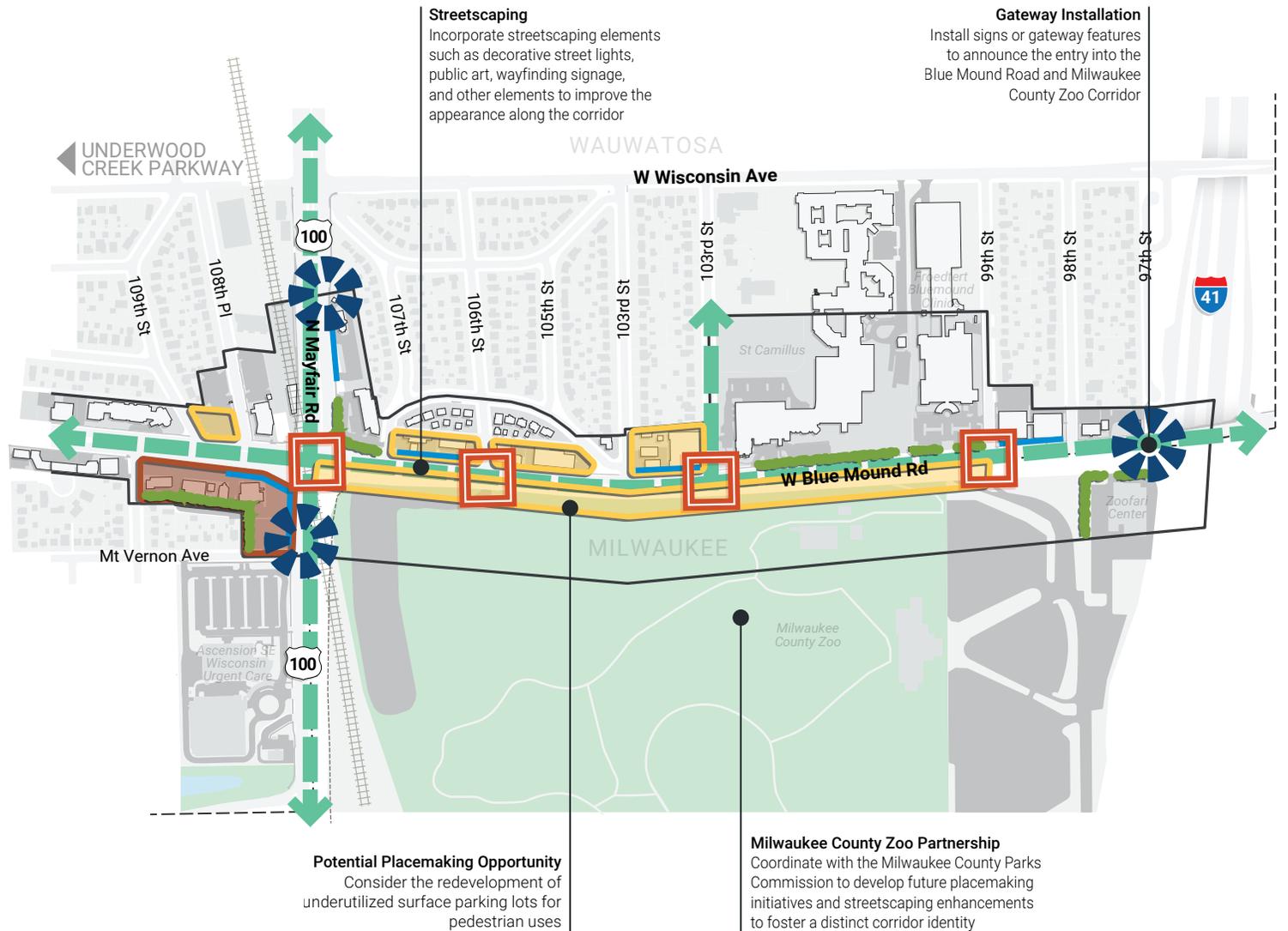
County Zoo Corridor

Improvement Framework

This section is generally enclosed by the Mayfair Road and Blue Mound Road intersection and Interstate 41. While the Milwaukee County Zoo is not directly part of the Study Area, the property presents an opportunity for future intergovernmental cooperation and distinctive characterization of the area. Residents identified multiple sites for revitalization, especially noting the regional draw of the zoo.

Corridor Improvements

-  Catalyst Site
-  Priority Redevelopment Site
-  Multi-Use Route Connection
-  Landscaping Improvement
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Gateway Feature
-  Curb Cut Elimination



**Catalyst Sites
Forthcoming**