

FORWARD LA CROSSE

NDC Future Land Use & Form-Based Code 101

Steering Committee Presentation

October 31, 2022



Photo Credit: Dylan O.

Goals

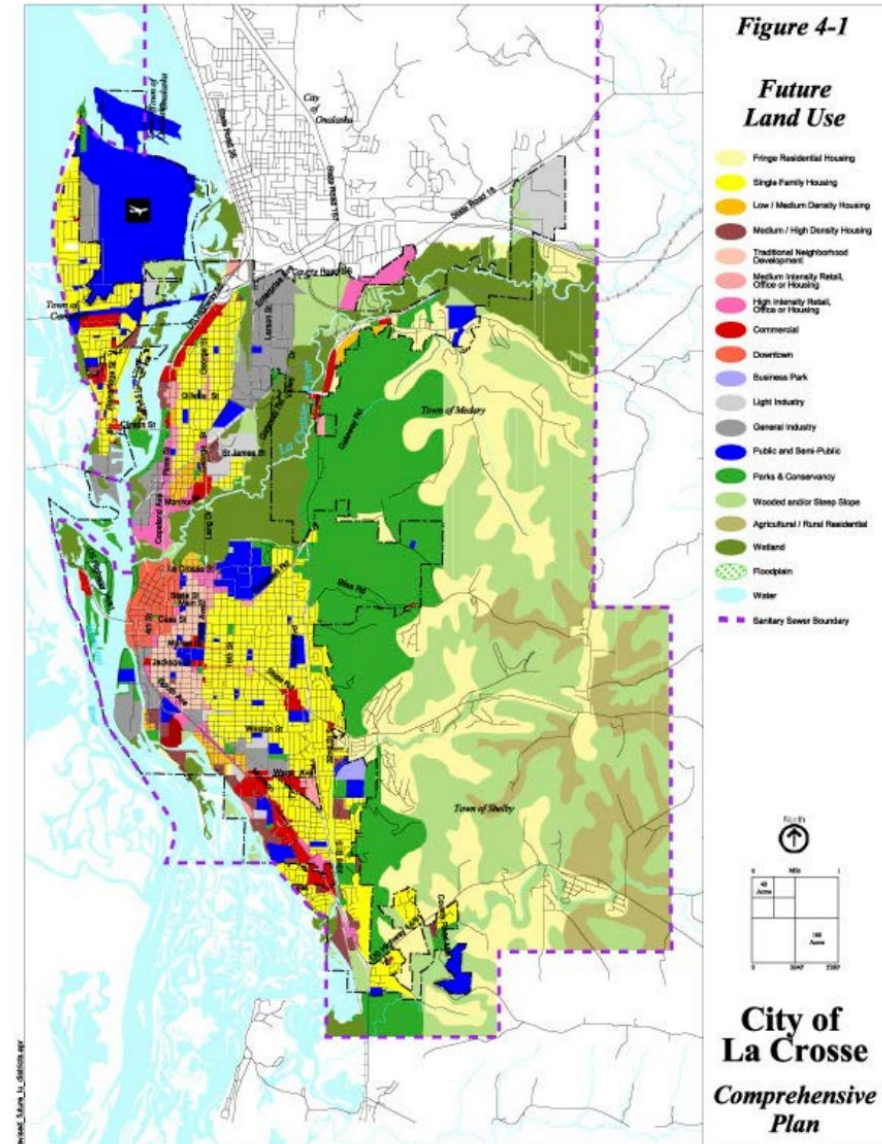
1. **Provide two examples of the Neighborhoods-Districts-Corridors Model for La Crosse**
 - Downtown District
 - Highway 53 Corridor
2. **Provide an overview of Form-Based Codes**
 - Determine relationship to goals/recommendations of Comprehensive Plan

Existing FLU Map

The Future Land Use Map provides a vision for the community's future.

Currently, La Crosse's FLU Map delineates individual parcels according to 16 residential, commercial, industrial, and environmental categories.

- Does not consider the broader block or neighborhood
- Creates strict parcel by parcel delineation of land uses
- Limited flexibility



NDC in La Crosse: Definitions



Neighborhoods: La Crosse neighborhoods were defined based on their distinct identities, housing characteristics, geographic features, and status within an existing neighborhood association. They are typically compact, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use. Predominant use is typically residential although they may contain a number of supporting uses and activities that serve residents.



Districts: Districts were selected as areas where the City, property owners, and investors should concentrate business activity and expansion over the next twenty years. They may emphasize a special single use or purpose but may contain a variety of other uses and activities.



Corridors: Corridors are linear edges and provide connectivity between the neighborhoods and districts and can accommodate a variety of land uses, including natural, recreational and cultural uses. They can range from boulevards and rail lines to rivers and parkways.

NDC in La Crosse: Land Use Categories and Definitions

Existing Uses	Uses that currently exist and deemed appropriate even if they no longer fall within the preferred category of uses within a particular Neighborhood, District or Corridor. No property has to change to comply, instead if zoning change is sought it isn't automatically "allowable."
Low Density Residential	Predominantly made up of single-family structures. Two- and three-unit dwellings are permitted, and may have been converted from single-family structures, and typically one-two story. Larger densities, townhomes or rowhomes may be compatible especially if developed to fit a single-family mold. Low-density should be walkable with an interconnected street and sidewalk system. Low-density areas should be developed with varying degrees of styles to accommodate a range of socio-economic factors.
Medium Density Residential	Medium density may include more variety of housing types than low-density, such as rowhouses, small multi-family buildings, and large multi-family buildings. They are typically two-four stories. Medium density are located as interconnected with surrounding neighborhoods as part of a complete neighborhood providing access to a variety of uses and amenities through enhanced walkability and connectivity. Both owner-occupied and rental units may exist in this category.
High Density Residential	High density typically includes multi-family, owner-occupied and rental units in structures taller than three stories. Similar to medium density, high density is located in areas with major streets, employment/commercial areas, and a mix of uses to provide convenient access to residents and amenities.
Neighborhood Mixed Use: Residential/Commercial	May include relatively small existing and planned activity centers that include a variety of uses such as residential, retail, restaurant, service, institutional, and civic uses primarily serving existing neighborhoods and their residents. Design and layout is typically compact and walkable and nearby transit. Development should be transit-oriented, even if transit doesn't currently exist.
Downtown Mixed-Use	Used to delineate areas of higher-intensity mix of uses, which can be located within the core of the downtown as well as outside the core but still appropriate for a higher intensity of mix of uses. These areas could include government and large employment centers along with more traditional mix of uses: residential, retail, commercial/office, restaurant. Transit-orientated development is a priority.

NDC in La Crosse: Land Use Categories and Definitions (con't)

Neighborhood Retail/Commercial	Neighborhood retail, walkable, small-business, small format, independent businesses with walk-up customers. Can include office and larger commercial spaces, focus is on walkability.
Commercial	Commercial and office uses: can include corporate, retail, services and other commercial/consumer-based land uses providing consumer and employment opportunities. Includes businesses considered big box, drive-up with expansive parking, suburban in design, car dealerships. May not generally include a residential component like mixed-use categories. But could include residential in lighter industrial uses such as maker spaces, art lofts, and dual purpose live-work uses.
Industrial	Includes manufacturing, wholesale, storage, distribution, transportation, repair/maintenance and utility uses. Can also include "nuisance" uses that should not be located in proximity to residential, neighborhood mixed-use, and other non-residential uses due to noise, odor, appearance, traffic or other impacts.
Institutional	Includes government buildings, structures, and campuses, as well as public community facilities and civic buildings where residents and visitors gather. The category also reflects the major university, healthcare, and other large employment centers. (Including but not restricted to: UW-LaCrosse, Western, Viterbo, Gunderson and Mayo), including public schools.
Parks	Includes public parks, recreation areas, private recreation uses (such as golf courses), cemeteries, stormwater management, public trails and other natural features that create a park-like setting.
Conservancy, Wetland, Agricultural	Represents marsh, greenways, and other natural areas represented as preservation corridors and natural areas and may function as natural drainage or expansion of the Mississippi River corridor. Includes also wooded and steep slope areas. Can also include areas of cultural and historic significance. Also represents any land or parcel used for agricultural purposes. Agricultural uses typically located at the periphery of the city and not adjacent to higher intensity uses.

NDC in La Crosse: Downtown District

Places		Preferred General Character	Future Land Uses											
Neighborhood/District/Corridor	Place Name	Description	Existing Uses	Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	High Density Residential	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Downtown Mixed-Use	Neighborhood Retail/Commercial	Commercial	Industrial	Institutional	Parks and Open Space	Conservancy, Wetland, Agricultural
Neighborhood	Downtown	The Downtown neighborhood is the primary commercial and cultural hub for the City of La Crosse. It is adjacent to the Mississippi River, and includes numerous parks and two historic districts. Future uses should focus on a vertical and horizontal mix of uses, such as ground floor retail with office, service and residential above, at higher densities.	A	U	A	D	U	D	A	D	A	A	D	U

D	Desirable -- These uses should be encouraged to support the character and goals for the area.
A	Allowable -- These uses are appropriate for the area, but may require additional consideration to fit the vision for the area.
U	Undesirable -- Generally, these uses should not be encouraged, but may still be acceptable under special circumstances.

**Table design is in draft mode, to be refined for final plan*

NDC in La Crosse: Highway 53 Corridor

Places		Preferred General Character	Future Land Uses												
Neighborhood/District/Corridor	Place Name	Description	Existing Uses	Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	High Density Residential	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Downtown Mixed-Use	Neighborhood Retail/Commercial	Commercial	Industrial	Institutional	Parks and Open Space	Conservancy, Wetland, Agricultural	
Corridor	HWY 53	The Highway Route 53 corridor extends from I-90 on the north to the La Crosse River on the south. It has a similar boundary as the 2018 Highway 53 Corridor Plan and includes one block on either side of the corridor. Future land uses are to focus on a mix of uses and provide for multi-modes of transportation.	A	U	D	D	A	D	D	D	U	A	U	U	

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Questions & Feedback

Please provide feedback by November 14, 2022 to:

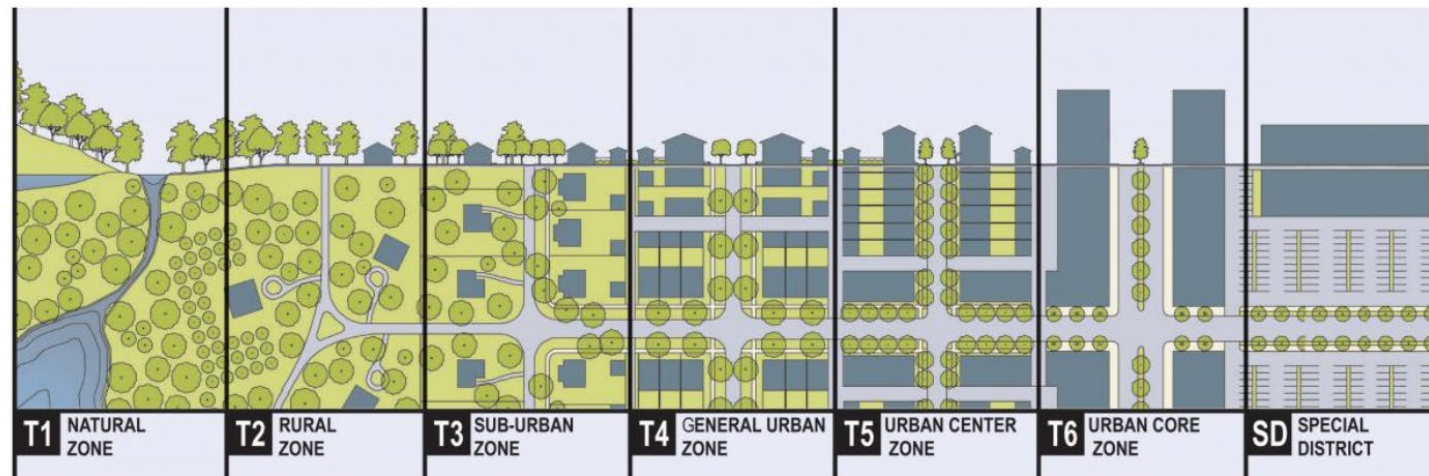
Mary Kramer, mary.kramer@graef-usa.com

Brianna Fiorillo, brianna.fiorillo@graef-usa.com

Or, Tim Acklin, acklint@cityoflacrosse.org

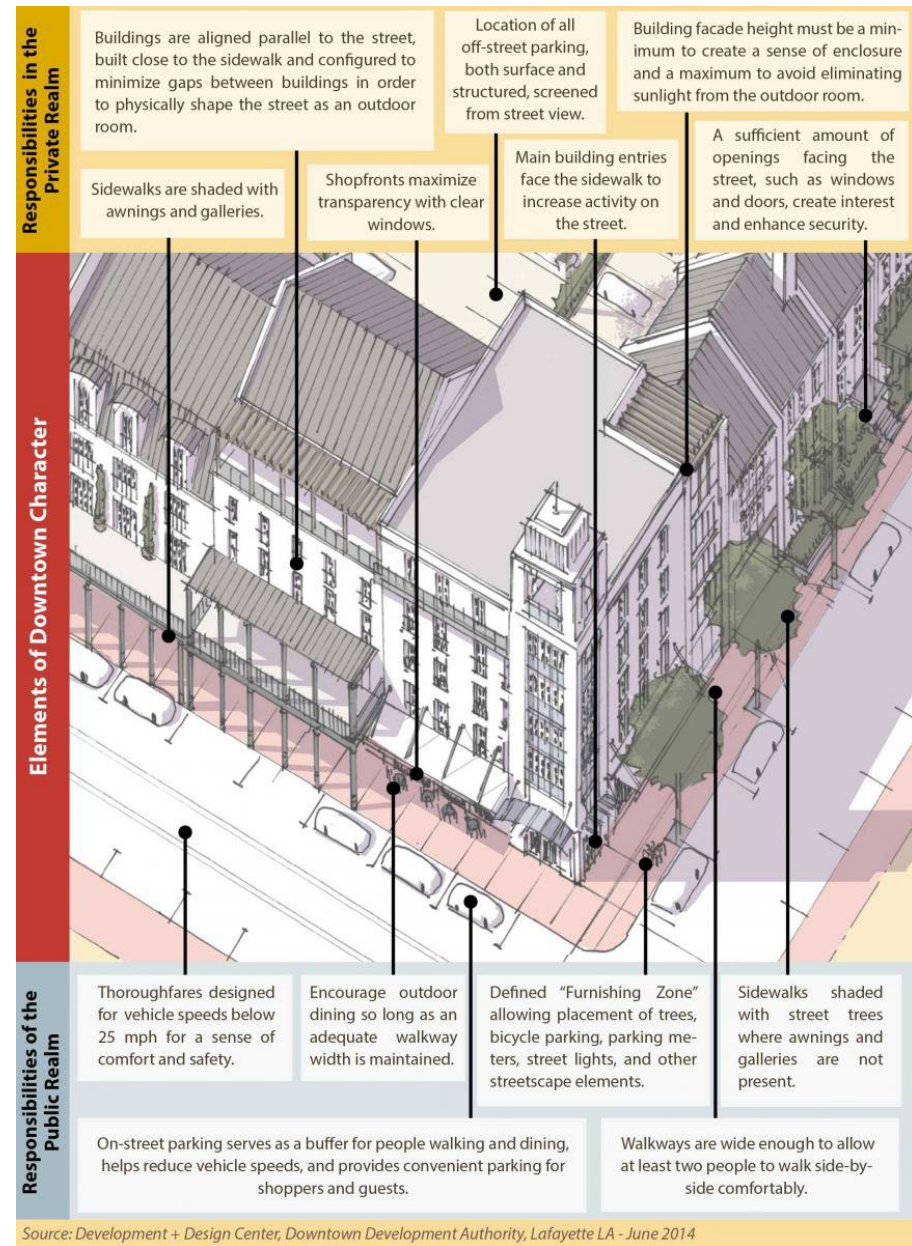
What are Form-Based Codes?

- A form-based code (FBC) is organized around the type of place you're trying to create (physical design) rather than land usage
- A FBC is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code
- A FBC is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city law
- A FBC offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation



What are Form-Based Codes?

- FBC can also regulate things like setbacks, building height, and signage, which conventional zoning also does
- FBC are not necessarily unrelated to conventional zoning, but they are fundamental to effectively implement mixed-use places
- FBC offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation



Source: Development + Design Center, Downtown Development Authority, Lafayette LA - June 2014

Form-Based Codes

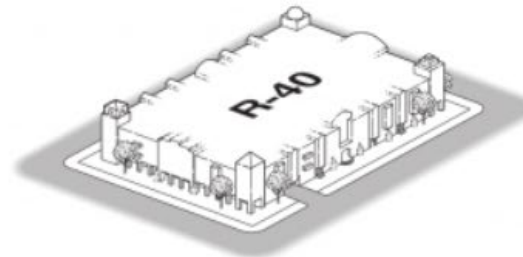
Conventional Zoning

Density use, FAR (floor area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, maximum building heights specified



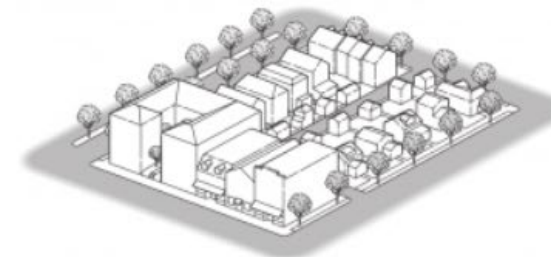
Zoning Design Guidelines

Conventional zoning requirements, plus frequency of openings and surface articulation specified



Form-Based Codes

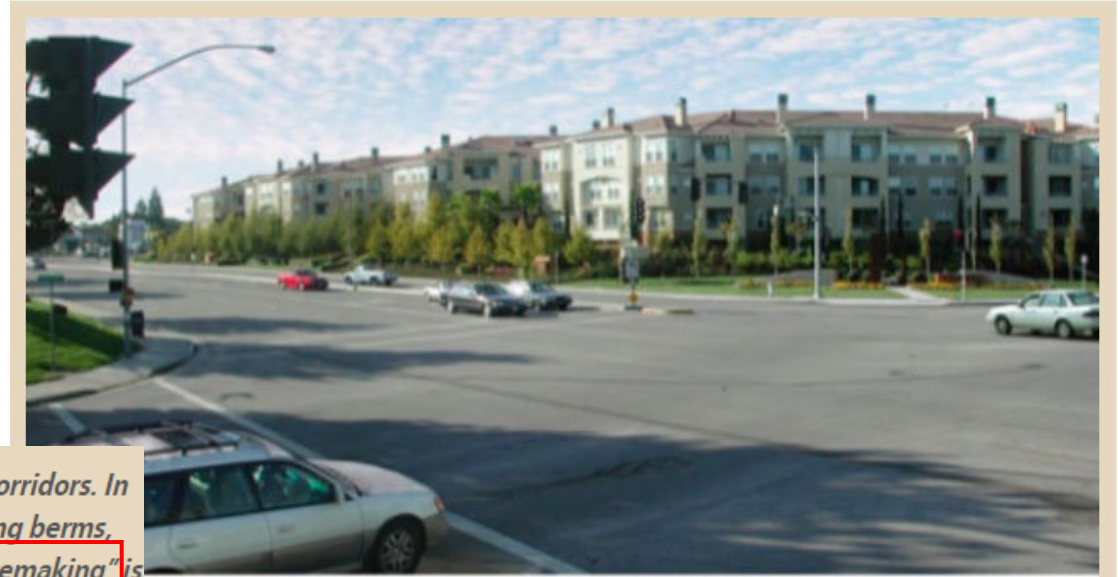
Street and building types (or mix of types), build-to lines, number of floors, and percentage of built site frontage specified.



Communities with Form-Based Codes: Buffalo, NY; Lafayette, KY; Miami, FL; Denver, CO

Form-Based Codes

Same goal—very different outcome: Build affordable multi-family housing near transportation corridors. In the first image, all of the technical requirements regarding density, building setbacks, landscaping berms, travel and turn lanes, and curb radii came first ... with disappointing results. In the second, "placemaking" is given priority, with the technical specialists contributing to, rather than controlling, the result to produce a more complete human environment and public realm. Illustrations by Steve Price, Urban Advantage.



Form-Based Codes



Regulations such as “dwelling units per acre” are blunt instruments. The townhouses above were built in the same community by different developers, both at 20 units per acre, following the same zoning regulations. (Note that both pictures show building fronts.) credit: Mary Madden/Ferrell Madden.

Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

- A FBC could be identified as a goal or recommendation to complement the Future Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan
 - Sample language could include: *“It is recommended the City of La Crosse develop and adopt a form-based code to create a high-quality public realm using physical building design guidelines”*
 - A goal or recommendation could be to create a FBC for a specific Neighborhood, District, or Corridor, or for the entire City
- A complete FBC would NOT be created/included in the Comprehensive Plan itself



Questions & Feedback