



## PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE HOUSING STUDY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

City of La Crosse  
July 18, 2023



**WE BELIEVE:**

Diverse housing options are essential to healthy, thriving neighborhoods, and we believe that local government plays an important role in planning for and guiding investment.

**WE CAN:**

Help you understand your market, offer realistic options for local action to meet change in demand, and facilitate discussions on policy and implementation options in your community.



Proposal to Provide:  
**City of La Crosse -  
Housing Study and  
Needs Assessment**

**July 18, 2023**

**Diane McGinnis  
Casey, Community  
Development  
Manager**

City of La Crosse  
400 La Crosse Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

**Emily Soderberg  
Project Manager  
Lead Planner**

MSA Professional  
Services, Inc.  
1702 Pankratz Street  
Madison, WI 53704  
(608) 242-7779

**Dear Diane and Selection Committee:**

We understand that the City of La Crosse is looking to complete a housing study and needs assessment to inform community housing actions. You're looking for a team that understands how housing markets are connected to all aspects of life in a community, and has experience with the strategies needed to address gaps and needs. MSA is that team.

Through our work with the La Crosse Comprehensive Plan update, we know the City faces a variety of challenges related to housing: a deficit of affordable units, an aging housing stock in need of repairs and investment, market competition from regional neighbors, and a lack of 'missing middle' housing units that provide a greater variety of housing formats to meet every stage of a person's life cycle. From our perspective, the recommendations and goals laid out in the Comprehensive Plan provide the foundation for this study. We will use our existing knowledge and relationships with the community to dive deeper into the dynamics at play in the City's housing market.

At MSA, we know that housing markets are complex and strategies and best practices to address gaps are never a one-size-fits-all. Our team is deeply experienced in housing planning – we have helped communities of all sizes answer questions on the needs of their market. Our proven process evaluates market conditions to quantify unit demand, setting you up to address gaps that the market isn't filling on its own – and our process will prepare you to move forward confidently in building consensus around measurable solutions.

MSA can find and clearly explain market complexities to help you answer the following questions:

- What unmet housing demand exists in the region today, by housing type, household type, and income level?
- How will current market demand evolve over the next 5-15 years?
- What policies and programs are viable here to make a meaningful impact on the market?

As committed partners, we work with you to solicit a full range of local perspectives. We use this first-hand knowledge to complement our data expertise, taking to heart that those who use the housing market are the ones that know it best. And, as planners, we do more than just identify gaps. We identify options. We believe in community, and are skilled in communicating needs to decision makers who take the steps to move communities forward. Whether looking at unique funding options or building capacity toward local program implementation, we're ready to address future options and how you can accomplish them. In submitting this proposal, we affirm our ability to complete the required work within the schedule outlined in our proposal.

We'd be happy to answer any questions or provide more information on our professional capacities and are ready to start a conversation at any time. We're looking forward to it.

Sincerely,  
MSA Professional Services, Inc.



**Emily Soderberg | Project Manager, Housing Planner**

(608) 579-9909  
esoderberg@msa-ps.com



**Jason Valerius, AICP | Principal in Charge**

(608) 242-6629  
jvalerius@msa-ps.com

## **MSA PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INC.**

1702 PANKRATZ STREET, MADISON, WI 53704

Contact: Emily Soderberg  
Phone: (608) 579-9909  
Email: [esoderberg@msa-ps.com](mailto:esoderberg@msa-ps.com)  
Website: [www.msa-ps.com](http://www.msa-ps.com)





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### COVER LETTER

An introduction to our team and qualifications

### PROJECT TEAM

Resumes for the project team

2

### CONSULTANT FIRM

An overview of our firm and background

5

### PROJECT UNDERSTANDING AND APPROACH

Our plan to complete your project

15

### PROJECT TIMELINE

Key milestones to complete your project

18

### PROJECT BUDGET

A breakdown of anticipated costs

18

### REFERENCES

Similar projects we've completed with their contacts, and link to a work sample

19



## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The team we have organized below includes experienced planners who bring an efficient blend of skills that will assist La Crosse with the upcoming project. What you may not see, however, is that this team is backed by more than 400 planners, engineers, architects, technical service leads, funding experts, surveyors, GIS experts and environmental scientists. **Rest assured, you will always have the support necessary to achieve a successful project.** MSA does not anticipate using any subcontractors to deliver this project.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** At MSA, our client service approach is simple: we strive to be our clients' trusted partner. We proactively communicate opportunities and identify potential issues early on so small concerns do not grow into big problems. To do this, you need a trusted planner who is well versed in managing a full range of projects and can effectively communicate back to all vested stakeholders. Emily Soderberg is just that. She believes that effective, efficient communication is critical to project success. Emily will work with you to establish a custom communication plan, tailored to the areas of opportunity and concern you find most important. **She will serve as the City's main point of contact throughout the project.**

**AVAILABILITY:** Based on our honest commitment to our clients, we immediately establish accountability of all personnel involved in a project's completion. When our team starts a project, we analyze the proposed schedule and compare it to each team member's potential workload. We then obtain commitments from all individuals on the project team to complete the work as identified within the proposed schedule. This approach helps to foster a team mentality and results in personal accountability of all team members involved.



**Emily Soderberg**  
Project Manager | Housing Planner



**Jason Valerius, AICP**  
Principal in Charge



**Sarah L. C. Runkel, AICP**  
Housing Planner



**Sarah Morrison**  
GIS Specialist - Mapping



**Casey Peterson**  
GIS Specialist - Mapping  
City of La Crosse Resident



## Emily Soderberg

Project Manager | Housing Planner

Emily is an experience project manager with a background in multiple areas of community planning. From housing studies to neighborhood plans to comprehensive outdoor recreation plans, Emily helps communities holistically address their planning needs. Emily has roughly six years of experience throughout the sustainability sector, with experience ranging from industrial compost management and rooftop farming to food systems research and solar energy system design. Emily is a recent graduate of the University of Michigan's Urban and Regional Planning Master's program where she concentrated in land use and environmental planning.

### Education

M.S., Urban and Regional Planning, University of Michigan

B.S., Sustainable Built Environments, University of Arizona Honors College

### Memberships

American Society of Adaptation Professionals (ASAP)

American Planning Association - WI

### Selected Project Experience

- Housing Study Update (Supervisor), Monticello, MN
- East Side Neighborhood Economic Development and Land Use Plan, McFarland WI
- Elevate Rapid City and Black Hills Area Housing Study, Rapid City, SD
- HUD 2023-2027 CDBG Consolidated Plan, 2023 Action Plan and Analysis of Impediment, Rapid City, SD
- **Comprehensive Plan, La Crosse, WI**
- San Damino Community Vision and Master Plan Process, Monona, WI
- CORP Update, Wausau, WI
- CORP Update, Wisconsin Dells, WI
- CORP/Bike-Ped Update, Waunakee & Westport, WI
- CORP, Wisconsin Dells, WI
- CORP Update, Beaver Dam, WI
- CORP 2023-2028 (Project Manager), Fort Atkinson, WI
- Memorial Park Master Plan and CORP Update (Project Manager), Hillsboro, WI



## Jason Valerius, AICP

Principal in Charge

Jason has more than 20 years of community planning and design experience across the Midwest. He has led the development of housing plans and studies, comprehensive plans, neighborhood plans, redevelopment plans, and zoning ordinances. As team leader for the Madison-based Planning and Design team, Jason manages a talented staff with expertise ranging from comprehensive planning and transportation planning to park and recreation plans, landscape architecture, and urban design. With his housing planning expertise, he has been invited to speak on the topic at conferences across the Midwest.

### Education

M.S., Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

B.A., Government/Psychology, Lawrence University

### Certifications

American Institute of Certified Planners

### Selected Project Experience

#### Housing Study and Plan, Rapid City, SD

Principal in Charge for a study of the housing market in Rapid City and the surrounding region.

#### Housing Study, Shawano County, WI

Principal in Charge for a study of the housing market across the County and in specific communities.

#### Other Housing Plans and Studies

Managed or provided project oversight and strategic guidance for studies of communities of various sizes and their wider, regional housing markets.

- Sheboygan, WI
- Manitowoc, WI
- Lake Delton, WI
- Marshfield, WI
- Stevens Point, WI
- Monticello, MN
- Green Bay, WI
- Fitchburg, WI
- Menominee, MI
- McFarland, WI





## Sarah L. C. Runkel, AICP

Housing Planner

Sarah is passionate about creating healthy, accessible, sustainable communities through people-centered planning. Sarah has eight years of experience in community planning and transportation - focused on community engagement and accessibility. Sarah's background provides her proficiency in community involvement, document design and grant writing. She also has ample experience in land use and zoning law and ADA compliance.

### Education

MCRP, Community & Regional Planning, Iowa State University  
B.A., Communication Studies, Iowa State University

### Selected Project Experience

- Comprehensive Plan (Project Manager, Supervisor), Oelwein, IA
- Webster County Comprehensive Plan, Corridor Plan, and Zoning Updates (Supervisor), Fort Dodge, IA
- 2040 Comprehensive Plan, David City, NE
- Comprehensive Plan Update, Ely, IA
- 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Norwalk, IA
- Comprehensive, Bike and Ped, Parks Plans, Waverly, IA
- Annexation Study, (Project Manager), David City, NE
- Warren County Comprehensive Plan (Project Manager), Indianola, IA
- Warren County Zoning Revisions 2023 (Supervisor), Indianola, IA
- Comprehensive Plan Update, Norwalk, IA
- Lincoln, Ellsworth, and Clay County Comprehensive Plans, KS



## Sarah Morrison

GIS Specialist - Mapping

Sarah is a GIS analyst whose work expands to many disciplines at MSA. Sarah has more than six years of GIS experience varying from corridor studies, to housing studies, to stormwater modeling, to producing applications in ArcGIS Online. She is familiar with creating maps and exhibits for both internal and external clients, and has experience coordinating with utilities and municipalities, assisting with public involvement meetings, and discussing projects with project staff, officials, and members of the public. Sarah also is proficient in creating online maps for field surveys with Survey123 and ArcGIS Field Maps, and using completed field collected data and translating it for use in ArcGIS and AutoCAD.

### Education

B.S., Geography, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse



## Casey Peterson

GIS Specialist - Mapping

Recently graduating in 2023, Casey is a dedicated GIS professional with more than two years of intern experience in spatial analysis, creative cartography, and programming in JavaScript and Python. He has experience using Esri products, including ArcGIS Online, ArcGIS Pro, Experience Builder, and Survey123. Casey has also developed custom datasets, conducted geospatial analysis, and created data visualizations. He has a strong background in web development, digital cartography, and data management. Expert in leveraging Python and the ArcPy package for spatial data analysis and automating geoprocesses.

### Education

B.S., Geographic Information Systems Technology, University of Arizona



## PLANNING + DESIGN STUDIO

At MSA, we know that every project starts with a plan – a clear and consensus-driven vision for the future that can be realistically implemented. Our Planning and Design Studio is 29 strong consisting of:

- 12 American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
- 3 Professional Landscape Architects (PLA)
- 2 Landscape Designers
- 2 Housing Specialists
- 10 Planning & Economic Development Specialists

Members of our studio regularly give presentations on various planning topics at state and national conferences. The professional planners that comprise the Studio have helped hundreds of communities and private organizations define their vision, obtain funding, and implement the improvements they seek. And, because our planners are part of a multi-disciplinary firm, they are able to engage our professional engineers and architects in the planning processes to aid our clients in developing sustainable, implementable plans.

### CORE SERVICES

Below is a sample of the services that MSA's Planning and Design Studio can offer.

- Capital Improvement and Strategic Plans
- Comprehensive Plans
- Zoning: Ordinance Creation, Code Rewrites, Development Regulations and Zoning Administration
- Community Blight Studies
- Cooperative Boundary Agreements
- Economic Development: Market Analysis, Tax Increment Financing, Feasibility Studies
- Funding: Grant Writing, Grant Administration, Fundraising
- Housing Studies: Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Market Analysis
- Impact Fee Studies
- Landscape Architecture
- Park and Recreation Planning: Park Master Plans, Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans, ADA Studies
- Public Engagement
- Redevelopment Studies: Downtown, Neighborhood, Corridor, and Site Planning
- Transportation Planning: Bicycle + Pedestrian Plans, Safe Routes to Schools Plans, Access Management Studies
- Urban Design: Wayfinding, Streetscaping, and Design Standards





## **OUR PURPOSE:**

ENABLING PEOPLE TO POSITIVELY IMPACT THE LIVES OF OTHERS.  
IN EVERY PROJECT. IN EVERY PLAN.



## WHO WE ARE

MSA Professional Services, Inc. (MSA) specializes in the sustainable development of communities. We achieve this by building honest, open relationships that go beyond the project to become a trusted source of expertise and support for immediate challenges and long-term goals. Big or small, we do whatever it takes to meet each need, working to make communities stronger in the process. **It's more than a project. It's a commitment.**

## HISTORY

MSA's roots reach back to 1919. Incorporated in 1962, our firm now consists of 400+ engineers, architects, planners, funding experts, surveyors, GIS experts and environmental scientists. MSA excels at helping clients identify grant and funding sources and then delivering high-quality, cost-effective solutions.

## OWNERSHIP

Our professionals think like owners because they are owners. When you partner with MSA, your team will be comprised of individuals who are invested in your success and committed to a high standard of performance. We're proud to be 100% employee owned.

## TEAM

Our 400+ planners, landscape architects, engineers, architects, surveyors, funding specialists, and environmental professionals are dedicated to your success. While you know the faces behind your projects, we are a team that works as one to support our clients. When you work with MSA, you're not just working with individuals—you're working with all of us.

## RECOGNITION

Since 2017, we've been recognized throughout the Midwest with more than 33 industry awards. And, we're just getting started. When you partner with MSA you know you're in good hands.

## POSITIVE IMPACT

Finding funding for projects is what we do. We know projects and plans are no good to you if they don't work toward implementation. We get creative. And, it's led to securing over \$625+ million in grants and low-interest loans to offset costs for our partner communities.

## CLIENT EXPERIENCE

The pillar of our success is seeing our clients succeed. The graphic below shows the percentage of clients who say MSA met or exceeded their expectations based on the following categories.

**98%**  
ACCURACY



**96%**  
HELPFULNESS



**99%**  
QUALITY



**98%**  
RESPONSIVENESS



**98%**  
SCHEDULE



**97%**  
SCOPE & FEES





## ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE

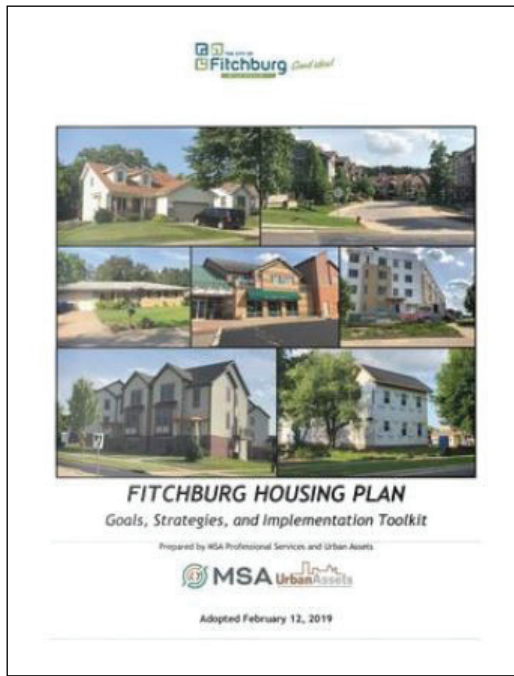
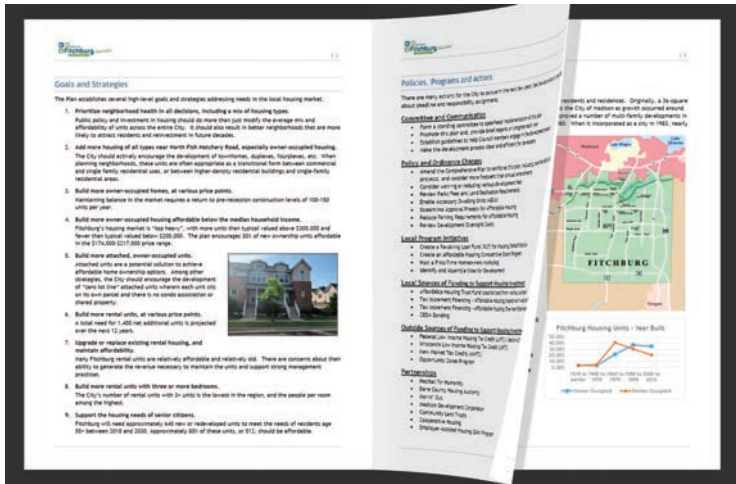
Our planning staff is experienced and currently engaged in a variety of housing planning efforts. In the past five years we have completed or updated 20 housing-focused plans or reports. We offer expertise in housing studies and strategies, as well as in detailed HUD-regulated and equity-focused planning initiatives.

### HOUSING STUDIES & STRATEGIES

Our housing work includes both high-level assessments using secondary data sources and detailed analyses requiring local interviews and research. We have completed basic housing evaluations for more than 80 towns, cities, and villages as part of comprehensive planning efforts, and helped each community identify goals and actions to improve housing options in each community. In the cities of Stevens Point, Fitchburg, Marshfield, Monona, Sheboygan, Green Bay, Shawano County, McFarland, Lake Delton, and Arcadia, Wisconsin, we prepared specialized studies focused on housing market conditions and factors preventing an alignment of supply and demand. In all of our housing work, we have evaluated the success of current local housing programs relative to current conditions.

### HUD-REGULATED PLANNING

MSA is one of only a few consultants in the region regularly hired to assist entitlement communities with the development of Consolidated Plans and Analyses of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice under HUD guidelines. We are very familiar with HUD-regulated planning documents and processes, and we understand the need to balance regulatory requirements with a meaningful planning process.



## HOUSING STUDY FITCHBURG, WI

### KEY STAFF

Jason Valerius, Principal in Charge

### REFERENCE CONTACT

**Michael Zimmerman, Economic Development Director**

5520 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg, WI 53711  
P: (608) 270-4245

E: michael.zimmerman@city.fitchburg.wi.us

See this Housing Study at: [https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/7729031\\_fitchburg\\_housing\\_plan\\_fina](https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/7729031_fitchburg_housing_plan_fina)

In 2017, the City of Fitchburg hired MSA to create a playbook for guiding housing investment in Fitchburg. The City of Fitchburg grew dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s while approving multifamily, rental housing development. In the 1980s, local housing and neighborhood development focused primarily on single-family, owner-occupied detached housing. Today the City's housing market is equally split between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing, and there are unusually large differences between owner households and renter households. Whereas rental units are older and relatively affordable within the Madison-area housing market, the City's average single-family home is more expensive than in most other communities in the region. Related to this, there is a large gap in the difference in household income between rental

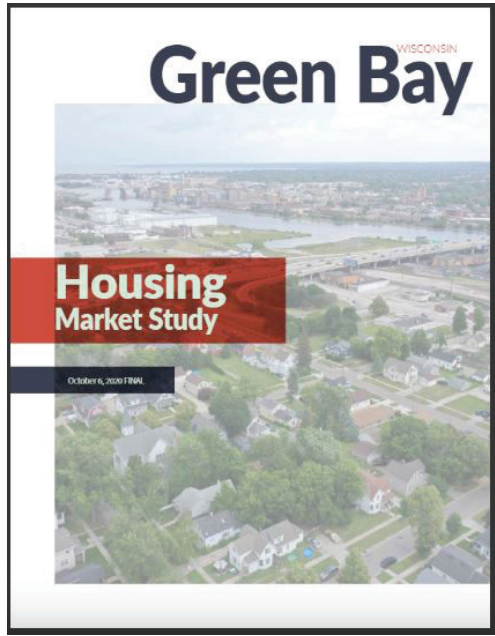
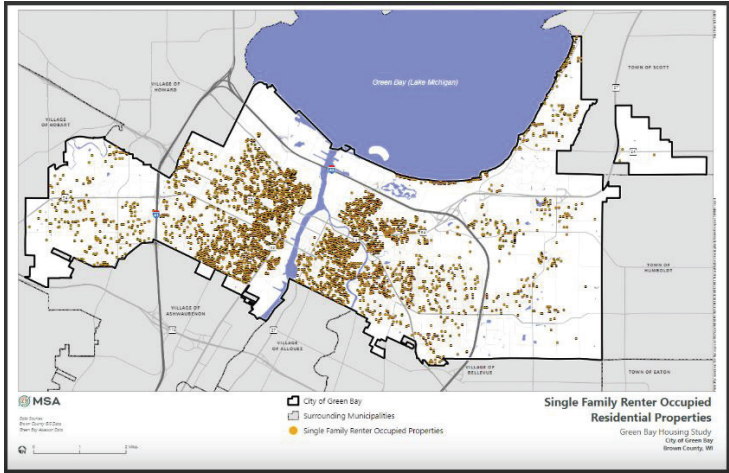
and owner households which reflects gaps in the housing market – there are too few ownership units affordable to households earning less than the median income, and arguably too few rental units desirable to households earning above the median income.

Two critical ingredients to the success of the project were stakeholder engagement and fact-based discussions about housing. City staff assembled a Housing Advisory Task Force consisting of interested and knowledgeable residents and housing experts from the region with the intention of assembling a group of experts to identify housing gaps and strategies to fill those gaps. A centerpiece activity for this group was a workshop with developers who have experience getting various housing projects approved and constructed in

the City. A second workshop was held with the Task force and featured a group discussion about specific local housing needs and strategies to meet those needs. Experts from nearby communities presented affordable housing initiatives in their respective communities.

The study itself identifies a series of changes that should occur in Fitchburg over the next 10-12 years to achieve a healthier housing market. These changes focus on critical gaps in the market that need to be filled. Implementing the plan will ensure the City has housing that enables people to transition into desirable new housing as life circumstances change without needing to leave the City. More people will be able to live closer to jobs in the City, and resident turnover will be lower.





**LIVABILITY**

Green Bay attracts residents for numerous reasons. When survey respondents were asked what factors attracted them to Green Bay, the factors that were considered to have the most positive impact on their decision to move to Green Bay, the factors that were considered to have the most positive impact were: access to amenities and neighborhood character.

**Amenities**  
Green Bay offers unique amenities that attract visitors, including:

- La Folie High
- College (University/Technical College) (MSA Green Bay, WI - Hartford, Vermont - Wisconsin - Vermont - College)
- Green Bay Park (Green Bay Park)
- Museum & Visitor Center (Museum & Visitor Center)
- Shopping (Green Bay Shopping)
- Dining (Green Bay Dining)
- Recreation (Green Bay Recreation)
- Entertainment (Green Bay Entertainment)
- Arts (Green Bay Arts)

**Transportation**  
The City has a variety of public transit options that serve its residents. The primary mode of public transit is the Green Bay Transit Authority (GBTA). The GBTA provides bus service to Green Bay, WI. The GBTA also provides bus service to other nearby locations, including Appleton, WI. The GBTA also provides bus service to other nearby locations, including Appleton, WI. The GBTA also provides bus service to other nearby locations, including Appleton, WI.

**School District**  
The Green Bay Area Public School District has a total enrollment of 10,000 students for the 2019-2020 school year. The Green Bay Area Public School District has a total enrollment of 10,000 students for the 2019-2020 school year. The Green Bay Area Public School District has a total enrollment of 10,000 students for the 2019-2020 school year.

**HOUSING STUDY**  
GREEN BAY, WI

**KEY STAFF**

Jason Valerius, Principal in Charge

**REFERENCE CONTACT**

**Cheryl Renier-Wigg, Deputy Development Director**

City of Green Bay  
100 North Jefferson Street  
Green Bay, WI 54301  
P: (920) 448-3412  
E: Cheryl.Renier-Wigg@greenbaywi.gov

The City of Green Bay partnered with MSA to identify imbalances in its housing market and craft strategies to bring the market to equilibrium. The City is working with an aging housing stock and the corresponding cost advantages and quality concerns. At the same time, new construction had not yet rebounded to levels seen before the Great Recession. The City was particularly interested in strategies to bring more housing downtown to piggy-back on the momentum and enthusiasm of recent downtown redevelopment. Other issues explored in the plan included the impact of University of Wisconsin-Green Bay students living in off-campus rental housing and the housing needs of the aging population.

The plan identified gaps in the housing market by unit type, price point and location and suggested strategies to fill those gaps in terms of funding, regulations, communication initiatives and partnerships. Using data and the analysis from the plan to demonstrate concrete need, Green Bay is moving forward on implementation. The Common Council has adopted the plan, the topic of housing is a reoccurring agenda item for the City's Redevelopment Authority (RDA), and the RDA is in the process of creating a stand-alone Housing Committee to oversee housing initiatives and guide implementation of the plan.

**See this Housing Study at:**  
[https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/green\\_20bay\\_20housing\\_20market\\_20study\\_2010052020](https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/green_20bay_20housing_20market_20study_2010052020)





## COUNTY WIDE HOUSING STUDY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SHAWANO COUNTY, WI

### KEY STAFF

Jason Valerius, Senior Team Leader - Planning, Planner

### REFERENCE CONTACT

**Peter Thillman, Director**

Shawano County Economic Progress Inc.  
1263 S. Main Street  
Shawano, WI 54166  
P: (715) 526-5839  
E: peter.thillman@scepi.org

Shawano County desired a county-wide housing study with specific focus on a several key cities and villages in the county. The County partnered with the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians to also seek market analysis and housing supply strategies specific to the Tribe and Tribal Lands.

MSA implemented surveys of residents across the County and within Tribal membership to better understand residents' housing wants and needs. Each of the participating jurisdictions was profiled in data analyses and received individual projections of unit demand by tenure and affordability. Implementation recommendations include capacity-building and communication strategies, development initiatives, regulatory adjustments, funding methods, and partnerships.







## HOUSING STUDY

SHEBOYGAN, WI

### KEY STAFF

Jason Valerius, Principal in Charge

### REFERENCE CONTACT

**Bernard Rammer, Purchasing Agent**

City of Sheboygan

828 Center Avenue, Suite 205,

Sheboygan, WI 53081

P: (920) 459-1342

E: [bernard.rammer@sheboyganwi.gov](mailto:bernard.rammer@sheboyganwi.gov)

Sheboygan views affordable housing as a priority, not only to meet the needs of current residents, but also the needs of employers who are looking to attract talent to the area. The community's livability plays a critical role in a household's decision about where to live in terms of quality of school districts, options for entertainment and dining, park and recreation amenities, and of course, housing. If Sheboygan can strike the right balance between affordability and desirability in its housing market and provide amenities residents are looking for, it has a much higher likelihood of retaining residents and attracting new ones.

To fully understand the need for affordable renter- and owner-occupied housing (defined by HUD as housing that a household can obtain for 30% or less of its income) in Sheboygan, the City partnered with MSA to model the region to understand what affordable housing already exists and any deficiencies in the housing stock. Our study primarily analyzed the City, yet also looked at comparative data from surrounding communities and Sheboygan County.

The final study was delivered in traditional report form, and MSA also prepared a companion PowerPoint presentation summarizing the study findings for City staff, Common Council and the public.

Next steps for Sheboygan include assessing existing plots as areas of opportunity, to allow for multi-family buildings to be permitted in all districts, to form working groups and initiatives with the area's major employers and to facilitate funding through workforce housing funds, TIF extensions and neighborhood revitalization funds.

*See this Housing Study at:*

[https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/sheboygan\\_housing\\_market\\_study](https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/sheboygan_housing_market_study)





## HOUSING STUDY

MARSHFIELD, WI

The City of Marshfield is a jobs importer, drawing a large daily working population from the surrounding rural region. While employment has been growing, the City population has not, and limited new housing is being built. The City hired MSA to evaluate the housing market, identify gaps between supply and demand, and propose strategies to close those gaps.

MSA examined the community from demographic, socioeconomic, physical, and economic perspectives. Data from a variety of sources describing the housing stock and market were supplemented with interviews of key individuals familiar with the market and a community survey to assess opinions about the City's housing options. Gaps in the supply of housing were identified, and strategies to close those gaps proposed.

This project included the compilation and production of a variety of maps depicting such items as age of residential structure, number of commercial (rental) units by structure, property value per square foot of living area, single-family residential structures by number of stories, and more. MSA utilized the City's CAD base parcels in the creation of this project in conjunction with property description files created by MSA to create these unique "snapshots" of the community's residential fabric. MSA updated this study in 2019.

*See this Housing Study at:*  
[https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/584072\\_marshfield\\_housing\\_study\\_fin](https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/584072_marshfield_housing_study_fin)

## ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE

MADISON, SUPERIOR, LA CROSSE, BELOIT AND OSHKOSH, WI

Entitlement communities under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program are required to complete the Analysis of Impediments (AIs) to Fair Housing Choice report as part of their eligibility certification process. MSA proposed a scope of services in accordance with HUD's Fair Housing Guide that included an extensive review of the local housing stock. These cities selected MSA to complete their study. The AIs involved:

- A comprehensive review of the City's laws, regulations and administrative policies, procedures and practices.
- An assessment of how those laws, etc. affect the location, availability and accessibility of housing.
- An assessment of the housing stock conditions and housing market and the effect of those conditions on fair housing choice for all protected classes.
- An assessment of the availability of affordable, accessible housing in a range of unit sizes.

MSA utilized a variety of techniques, including focus groups and stakeholder interviews, surveys, and the review of secondary data sources to collect and process contextual information. The results are a robust framework of data, conveyed in tables, graphs and maps, to identify and explain local conditions. The resulting AIs identified impediments to fair housing choice and proposed actions to resolve those impediments. Impediment categories included administrative, regulatory, financial/ affordability, discriminatory, quality and spatial. Each city is implementing these recommendations through its housing and equal opportunities programs.



## PROJECT OVERVIEW AND UNDERSTANDING

The City of La Crosse is seeking consultant assistance to evaluate housing market conditions and recommend strategies to enhance housing opportunity for households of all types, ages and income levels in the La Crosse Region. The recent comprehensive planning process started this process, with community survey results indicating that 85% of residents see the need for additional housing in the City, especially single family and affordable units. This study should build upon that work with a deeper dive into data analysis and expert interviews to craft actionable steps for market intervention.

MSA can identify gaps and project unit demand by type, tenure and price point for each part of the market, and identify intervention strategies within the capacity of the City. We understand that a holistic approach that considers the health of all residents and neighborhoods is central to this work. As community planners we are consistently focused on community vibrancy and health as the fundamental objective of efforts to augment the City's housing stock.





## PROJECT SCOPE

### PROCESS

This study will be comprised of three basic activities.

#### 1. Data Collection, Mapping and Analysis

Data will be collected and analyzed to gain a deeper understanding of the City's housing market. Data sources for this project will include the U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS); U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (CHAS data), United Way (ALICE data), City of La Crosse parcel and assessment records; La Crosse City and County building permit records; and MLS real estate listings and sale records. Data will be analyzed and presented in various formats as appropriate to the topic, including tables, graphs and maps.

See the Study Content section for an overview of the analyses to be completed.

#### 2. Stakeholder Engagement

We will seek guidance from the project team on stakeholder identification. We anticipate and have budgeted for about 15 hours of interviews. Some of the conversations may take place in a group setting. The following list includes individuals/groups/roles with whom we would like to speak:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Landlords
- Realtors
- Developers
- Banks/Lenders
- City Staff

#### 3. Report Preparation

We will prepare the document in Adobe InDesign (unless the City prefers otherwise). All main findings will be presented in an executive summary that describes clear and concise gaps, opportunities, and strategies. At the discretion of City staff, MSA will present a summary of our report and findings at no more than two (2) Common Council, Committee, or Board meetings. We have budgeted one (1) in-person presentation to a City Committee or Commission, and one (1) in-person presentation to the La Crosse Common Council. Relevant Committees and Boards include the City Plan Commission, Economic and Community Development Commission, and Neighborhood Revitalization Commission, and we can complete more presentations if converting one or both of those to remote/virtual format.



## HOUSING STUDY & NEEDS ASSESSMENT CONTENT

The following components will be included in the Housing Study and Needs Assessment.

### Executive Summary

A concise overview of the plan purpose and process, findings, and recommendations.

### Community Demographics Overview

- Population and household characteristics, including household size, median age, student population (k-12 and higher education), elderly, homeless, and special needs households
- Economic indicators, including income by household type and major employers
- Population and household projections over the next 5, 10, and 15 years

### Housing Stock Characteristics

- Housing stock by age, type, value, and tenure
- Rental and owner vacancy rates
- Housing units built and permitted over the past 10-20 years (depending on data availability), and market rate, affordable and special needs units in development
- Housing stock comparisons to similar sized cities in the Midwest (we will work with you to select peer communities; suggestions include Eau Claire, WI; Oshkosh, WI; Dubuque, IA; and Battle Creek, MI)

### Trends Impacting Housing Need and Demand

- Population trends in the state, region and city anticipated over time (including discussion about the City's opportunity to alter those trends through strategic market intervention)
- Exploration of how population changes will influence demand for housing type, cost, location and amenities over time, and also the reverse - how changes in housing availability can influence population changes in the City
- Analysis of the economic impacts of broadband, transportation, and access to jobs and services in relation to housing demand

### Housing Needs Indicators

- Determine gaps/unmet needs in the housing market, including an exploration of land trusts, cooperative housing, condos, and other non-traditional housing opportunities
- Identify underlying themes contributing to housing affordability (and lack of affordability)
- Evaluate what percentage of the housing stock is currently allocated to seniors, adults with children, single-adult households, and other multiple-adult households; identify needs for each population into the future
- Analyze need for transitional and supportive housing, including the needs of the unsheltered population







### Barriers to Housing

- Identification and examination of potential barriers housing posed by zoning ordinances and other policies governing housing development
- Identify up to 10 sites for infill housing of various types in various neighborhoods and corridors, consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and responding to various specific housing needs identified in this study
- Detailed evaluation of why various household types, and especially young families, make housing choices within the La Crosse region, with focus on impediments to choosing La Crosse

### Recommendations

- Comprehensive list of financial and regulatory options to address the identified housing needs and gaps

### Reference Data Set

The RFP notes the desire for a data set whereby City staff can review housing characteristics by address or by neighborhood. We propose that this can be achieved most efficiently by presenting select housing stock and demographic data at the block group level, presented in a series of tables with all block groups in the City. Staff can use the Census Geocoder to identify the block group for an address, and then consult the tables.

### Optional Task - Online Mapping Tool

MSA could prepare, as an extension and improvement upon the “Reference Data Set” described above, an online mapping tool with the same data. This tool could be further enhanced with select parcel data, including a calculation of improvement value ratio to identify sites and areas primed for reinvestment.

## TIMELINE

We recommend the following steps and timing.

DATE	TASKS
<b>September 2023 – Project Kick-Off</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize contract</li> <li>Project Kick-Off Meeting (Virtual)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MSA and City Staff will meet to review the project scope and timeline, discuss data needs from City, and develop a list of stakeholders to reach out to for engagement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>October to December 2023 – Data Collection, Analysis &amp; Stakeholder Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect and analyze data that will inform the bulk of the report content</li> <li>Conduct interviews and/or focus groups with key stakeholders</li> <li>Project Check-In Meetings (Virtual)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>October:</b> Share highlights from demographics overview, housing stock characteristics, and first round of interviews</li> <li><b>November:</b> Share highlights from trends impacting housing demand and housing needs indicators, and second round of interviews</li> <li><b>December:</b> Share highlights from barriers to housing, draft plan recommendations, and of third round of interviews</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>January to March 2024 – Report Creation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile results of data analysis and stakeholder engagement into final report</li> <li>Project Check-In Meetings (Virtual)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>February:</b> Share draft content report (Word) for feedback from City Staff</li> <li><b>March:</b> Share full Draft Report (InDesign) for feedback from City Staff</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>March to April/May 2024 – Committee &amp; Common Council Presentations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>March/April:</b> Present full draft to City Committee/Commission (determined during previous project check-in meetings); this meeting could also be a public hearing.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend report as needed to incorporate feedback</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>April/May:</b> Present final report in-person to Common Council</li> </ul>

## BUDGET

We recommend the following steps and timing.

TASK	FEE
Data Collection, Analysis and Recommendations	\$20,400
Stakeholder Engagement	\$4,000
Report Creation	\$7,500
Committee & Common Council Presentations	\$2,500
Project Check-In Meetings	\$2,100
Project Administration and Quality Control	\$3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,500</b>

*Optional Task - Online Mapping Tool \$5,000 - \$8,000  
(cost depends upon features included)*



# REFERENCES

**Peter Thillman, Director**

Shawano County Economic Progress Inc.  
 1263 S. Main Street  
 Shawano, WI 54166  
 P: (715) 526-5839  
 E: peter.thillman@scepi.org

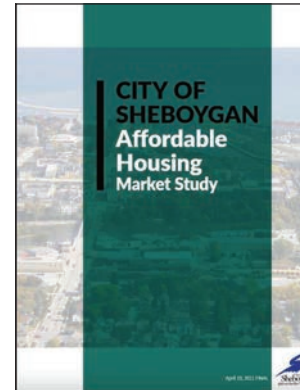
**Bernard Rammer, Purchasing Agent**

City of Sheboygan  
 828 Center Avenue, Suite 205, Sheboygan, WI 53081  
 P: (920) 459-1342  
 E: bernard.rammer@sheboyganwi.gov

**Cheryl Renier-Wigg, Deputy Development Director**

City of Green Bay  
 100 North Jefferson Street  
 Green Bay, WI 54301  
 P: (920) 448-3412  
 E: Cheryl.Renier-Wigg@greenbaywi.gov

# WORK SAMPLE



See this sample of the City of Sheboygan Affordable Housing Market Study at: [https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/sheboygan\\_housing\\_market\\_study](https://issuu.com/msaprofessionalservices/docs/sheboygan_housing_market_study)

### DEFINITIONS

**Figure 1. FY 2020 Income Limits for the Sheboygan Metropolitan Statistical Area**  
Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

FY 2020 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income for Family of 4	FY 2020 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sheboygan, WI MSA (includes Sheboygan County, WI)	\$23,375	Extremely Low Income (0% AMI)	\$15,400	\$11,600	\$21,720	\$26,200	\$30,680	\$35,160	\$39,640	\$44,120
		Very Low Income (50% AMI)	\$7,700	\$5,800	\$10,860	\$13,100	\$15,340	\$17,580	\$19,820	\$22,060
		Low Income (80% AMI)	\$14,100	\$10,800	\$20,250	\$24,700	\$29,150	\$33,600	\$38,050	\$42,500

**Figure 2. Affordability Thresholds for Sheboygan Metropolitan Statistical Area**  
Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

FY 2020 Income Limit Area	Maximum Monthly Housing Cost for Family of 4 (30% Median Income)	FY 2020 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sheboygan, WI MSA (includes Sheboygan County, WI)	\$5,504	Extremely Low Income (0% AMI)	\$365	\$440	\$543	\$655	\$767	\$879	\$991	\$1,103
		Very Low Income (50% AMI)	\$643	\$720	\$876	\$1,031	\$1,187	\$1,343	\$1,499	\$1,655
		Low Income (80% AMI)	\$1,028	\$1,175	\$1,371	\$1,468	\$1,565	\$1,662	\$1,759	\$1,856

### CHAPTER 2 ABOUT SHEBOYGAN

#### CITY OVERVIEW

The City of Sheboygan is in Sheboygan County, located along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Sheboygan is the largest community in the County making up nearly half (46%) of the County's population. It is approximately 60 miles north of Milwaukee and 55 miles southeast of Green Bay.

The City is known for its natural/recreational amenities, historic downtown, strong manufacturing base, and is the Brothware Capital of the World.

#### KEY DATA

- Based on recent trends, the population in the City is projected to decrease by 2.8% between 2020 and 2040. The County's population is projected to increase by 1.4% during this timeframe.
- Those age 65+ could increase by 112% (3,000 people) between 2020 and 2040 in Sheboygan County.
- Employment growth is projected to be 44% in the northeast region of WI between 2018 and 2028.
- The weighted average salary for the most in-demand occupations in the Bay Area region is \$50,000.
- Sheboygan's median household income is lower than surrounding communities at \$48,313.

**IT'S MORE THAN A PROJECT. IT'S A COMMITMENT.**  
HOUSING STUDY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT | CITY OF LA CROSSE | JULY 18, 2023