

City of La Crosse, WI

# Model Climate Ordinance Review

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## 1. Introduction

The City of La Crosse is currently reviewing and updating its zoning ordinances through its Forward La Crosse effort, building on direction set by its recent 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The city's Climate Action Plan, released in 2023, also identified several city climate actions that directly relate to development and zoning. It identified land use, transportation, and buildings as key drivers of community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate resilience. This presents an opportunity to build recommendations directly into the zoning ordinance update.

The objective of this review is to identify climate-informed ordinance updates that the city can either (1) integrate into its current zoning ordinance update or (2) recommend for additional ordinance or programmatic updates in the future. The goal is to identify La Crosse-appropriate ordinances that align with Wisconsin law, local development patterns, and city staffing capacity.

We reviewed climate- and sustainability- related ordinances adopted by peer communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa, combined with direct interviews with local officials who have developed or implemented similar policies. The work focused on six priority topic areas identified by the City and Climate Action Committee:

- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Multimodal Corridors
- Electric Vehicle (EV) Readiness
- Sustainable and Efficient Buildings
- Tree Preservation and Urban Forestry
- Native Plantings and Community Gardens
- Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs) and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

This report identifies one or two base model ordinances per topic area, explains why those models are a fit for La Crosse, and translates recommendations into clear ordinance direction to guide staff and consultants during the zoning code update process.

Supplemental references are also included to provide variety in local approaches to achieving sustainability goals.

## 2. Project Approach

### Local and Peer Community Context

The City of La Crosse has demonstrated leadership in sustainability planning, making it important to examine both progressive peer cities and communities with similar size, geography, and administrative capacity when identifying model ordinances.

This review was grounded in an understanding of La Crosse’s local context and peer community characteristics. La Crosse is a mid-sized city in the Midwest with a downtown core, riverfront setting, strong presence of higher education institutions, and a mix of residential neighborhoods and employment centers. These factors shape development pressures, transportation patterns, and the city’s capacity to implement and enforce zoning and sustainability policies.

As a result, the review prioritized peer communities that share one or more of the following characteristics:

- university or college-town setting,
- proximity to a major river or other environmental feature,
- mid-sized city or similar demographics,
- recent experience with sustainable development through zoning.

We identified several peer cities early in the research process with guidance from the Climate Action Plan Steering Committee and city staff, with an emphasis on communities whose regulatory frameworks and implementation experiences would be transferable to La Crosse.

Examples include:

- **Eau Claire, WI**, a peer university city that recently adopted a new land development ordinance.
- **La Crescent, MN**, a neighboring river community with sustainability designations such as Charging Smart Gold.
- **Madison, WI**, the state capital with high sustainability standards and complex environmental constraints.
- **Milwaukee, WI**, which has implemented large-scale building and TOD strategies.

The City of La Crosse has established professional relationships with its neighboring municipalities. In addition to those networks, state resources like the DNR and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities further informed ordinance and interview selection.

## Ordinance Review

Within this context, the project team evaluated more than 40 ordinances across peer communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Ordinances were identified through a combination of:

- municipal code and ordinance databases,
- publicly available planning documents and policy guides,
- recommendations from city staff and Climate Action Committee,
- professional networks and peer community referrals,
- model ordinance frameworks from organizations such as the Wisconsin DNR, the Great Plains Institute, and the American Planning Association.

The initial review included a wide range of zoning-based regulations and policy-based tools implemented through development review, incentives, or public investment requirements. Ordinances were then evaluated using a multi-step screening process to distinguish broadly informative examples from those most applicable to La Crosse. The review selected ordinances that:

- address one or more of the six topic priorities,
- have been adopted or amended within the last 5-7 years,
- demonstrate feasible or successful implementation in practice, and
- operate within statutory frameworks like Wisconsin's zoning and building authority.

Ordinances were further reviewed for:

- consistency with Wisconsin statutory authority,
- clarity of applicability, thresholds, and administrative responsibility,
- reliance on zoning or referenced policy rather than construction mandates, and
- anticipated staff time and enforcement capacity required for implementation.

Ordinances that were highly technical, dependent on unique local conditions, or administratively burdensome were documented as reference materials but not recommended as base models. This approach ensures that final recommendations reflect both policy direction and long-term legal defensibility and administrative feasibility for a mid-sized city like La Crosse.

A complete inventory of ordinances reviewed is provided in Appendix 2.

## Community Interviews

To supplement ordinance review, the project team conducted interviews with a subset of peer communities (Table 1) to better understand how these ordinances function in practice. Interviews focused on ordinance development, administration, enforcement challenges, and lessons learned.

Table 1. Community Interviews

Community	State	Topics
Hopkins	MN	Sustainable Buildings
La Crescent	MN	EV-Ready
Rochester	MN	TOD
Fitchburg	WI	Tree Preservation, Community Gardens
Madison	WI	EV-Ready, Sustainable Buildings, TOD
Mequon	WI	Tree Preservation
Onalaska	WI	Tree Preservation
Stevens Point	WI	ACU & ADU

These interviews provided practical insights related to ordinance development and implementation, including how requirements can be applied, common sources of public or developer opposition, and how policies have evolved since adoption.

Interviews were semi-structured, using a prepared script (Appendix 1), with follow-up questions tailored to each community's experiences and topic areas. Participants included city planners, sustainability specialists and directors, zoning administrators, and city foresters.

Local knowledge from interviews was supplemented by regional and national guidance relevant to specific topics, including resources from the Great Plains Institute, the American Planning Association, the International City/County Management Association, and other related organizations. A complete list of sources is included in Appendix 3.

### 3. Key Findings, Model Ordinance Recommendations, and Integrated Direction

The model ordinance review synthesized findings from a broad portfolio of climate- and sustainability- related ordinances adopted by peer communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Rather than evaluating ordinances in isolation, the review focused on how different communities have operationalized climate goals through zoning and development regulations with comparable local contexts.

Across topic areas, the review prioritized ordinances that:

- advance one or more adopted Climate Action Plan goals,
- reflect contemporary practice through recent adoption or amendment,
- have been implemented by peer communities with comparable size, geography, and institutional capacity, and
- align with established model ordinance frameworks or guidance from subject-matter experts (e.g., Wisconsin DNR, APA).

The findings reflect a wide range of regulatory approaches, from zoning-based development standards to policy-driven programs implemented through development review, incentives, or public investment requirements. The findings highlight recurring themes in how communities balance clarity and flexibility, manage administrative workload, and phase implementation over time. These insights inform the topic-specific recommendations, which translate peer community experiences into ordinance direction for La Crosse.

#### Key Findings

##### ***Tie to Zoning & Land Use Authority***

Local ordinances that tie climate goals into common zoning code standards, such as overlays, site design standards, parking regulations, subdivision review, and application requirements, are more consistently enforceable and less vulnerable to statutory conflict.

##### ***Streamline Code Requirements***

Many effective ordinances avoid highly technical or performance-based standards within zoning text. Instead, they establish applicability, triggers, and authority in code while referencing separate plans, policies, manuals, or guidelines for

implementation. This approach is especially evident in sustainable building policies, tree protection standards, and EV-ready provisions, where flexibility is needed to account for shifts in industries, state or federal policy, and a changing climate.

### ***Learn from Peer Communities***

The portfolio includes multiple Wisconsin and Minnesota communities with comparable regulatory authority, development pressures, and administrative capacity. Ordinances from cities such as Eau Claire and Fitchburg, WI, Rochester, Hopkins, and Roseville, MN, are a few examples of how climate-aligned strategies can be implemented incrementally through zoning updates.

### ***Consider Long-Term Enforcement Capacity***

Several community interview participants mentioned staff time required for ordinance enforcement. Before an ordinance is implemented, the city should consider staffing capacity and budgets for enforcement.

***Appendix 2 contains the complete research table.***

## **A. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Multimodal Corridors**

Transit-oriented development (TOD) was prioritized for model ordinance review because it directly supports the City of La Crosse’s adopted climate, transportation, housing, land use, and equity goals by shaping *where and how* development occurs. Land use patterns strongly influence traffic outcomes, energy use, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Transportation is a major source of local emissions in La Crosse, accounting for approximately one-third of community-wide GHG emissions, making strategies that reduce auto dependence critical to achieving the city’s climate goals (La Crosse Climate Action Plan, 2022-2023).

In addition to the Climate Action Plan, TOD aligns with the city’s adopted Comprehensive Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update, and the Safe Routes to School Plan, which include goals to reduce VMT and traffic congestion, support higher transit ridership, and increase the daily options for walking and biking.

While the City of La Crosse has already made significant efforts to reform parking mandates and allow flexibility in certain districts, the TOD-related recommendations in this report are intended to expand and reinforce these efforts by further aligning parking, site

design, and development standards with transit- and pedestrian-oriented land use patterns.

### Recommended Ordinances

For each topic area, recommendations include one or two base model ordinances with supplemental reference ordinances for comparison of alternative approaches.

Table 2. TOD Ordinances Reviewed

Community	State	Approach	Key Attributes	Recommendation	Source
<b>Madison</b>	WI	Implements a TOD overlay district emphasizing building form, pedestrian orientation, and parking reform for bus corridors.	Purpose/intent and overlay standards: Sec. 28.104(1), 28.104(6) (incl. setback/build-to and entrance orientation: 28.104(6)(a)(1), 28.104(6)(b)).	Base model	<a href="#">Madison Zoning Ordinance (amended 2025)</a>
<b>Cedar Rapids</b>	IA	Uses subdivision and site design standards to require pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, internal walkways, and multimodal infrastructure.	Bicycle/ped connectivity + internal walkways: Sec. 32.04.03(4)(a)–(d); materials/standards/maintenance: 32.04.03(4)(e)–(g).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Cedar Rapids Zoning Ordinance (2024)</a>
<b>Bloomington</b>	MN	Links TOD standards to redevelopment and corridor planning; integrated pedestrian-oriented design and parking flexibility.	HX-R district intent + development standards near transit: § 19.29(a), (f)–(g) (min. 30 du/ac; min. FAR 1.5 w/ bonus options). POD: § 19.29(h)–(j) (no front setback; entrance/ window standards). Parking cap/location: § 19.29(i).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Bloomington Zoning Ordinance (amended 2019)</a>

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<b>Eden Prairie</b>	MN	Establishes TOD districts with building, frontage, and connectivity standards tied to mapped transit areas.	District purposes/ standards tied to 10-minute walkshed: Sec. 11.26 Subd. 1–3; POD + parking/ bike standards: Sec. 11.26 Subd. 6–8.	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Eden Prairie (amended 2023)</a>
<b>Rochester</b>	MN	Applies TOD/POD standards through incentives (density bonuses, parking reductions) in exchange for public benefits.	Incentives framework for mobility/ sustainability/ public benefits: Sec. 60.400.120(A)–(F) (incl. mobility improvements at (E)(2)(b)(1); renewable/ green buildings (E)(3)).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Rochester Development Ordinance (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>Milwaukee</b>	WI	Creates mixed-use base zoning district with higher design and frontage.	POD corridor district (LB3) purpose + dimensional/ design standards: Sec. 295-601, 295-605-2.	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Milwaukee Zoning Ordinance (amended 2025)</a>

### Why These Models Fit La Crosse

Madison’s TOD overlay is the best primary model for La Crosse because it is designed for bus-based transit, not rail, and uses an overlay approach which allows flexibility within existing zoning districts. The ordinance emphasizes building form, pedestrian orientation, and parking reform, including parking maximums. This approach is consistent with contemporary TOD best practice and supports La Crosse’s adopted climate, transportation, and land use goals by reinforcing compact development patterns, reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and improving walkability along key corridors.

Eden Prairie’s TOD districts provide useful reference points for detailed building form, frontage, and intensity standards. Their applicability is closely tied to fixed-guideway transit corridors, making them less flexible and directly transferable to La Crosse’s bus transit context.

Rochester’s TOD regulations are paired with incentives in exchange for public benefits, including affordable housing, pedestrian improvements, multimodal connectivity, and

other site- or corridor-specific amenities. The city utilizes density bonuses and parking reductions as tools to focus growth along key transit and pedestrian corridors.

## Interview Findings

- Peer communities found TOD zoning most effective when adopted before transit investments, allowing redevelopment to align with planned bus rapid transit and corridor upgrades.
- Parking reductions, increased FAR, and height flexibility were the TOD incentives most consistently used by developers.
- Participants reported that predictable, permitted-by-right approvals (particularly for multifamily housing) were more influential than discretionary incentives.
- Madison favored overlay districts over new base districts because they can be adjusted as transit routes and corridor priorities change.
- Successful TOD implementation required close coordination between planning and public works, especially during street reconstruction and sidewalk improvements.
- Participants noted that TOD standards focused on building form and pedestrian orientation were more defensible and easier to administer than density-only requirements.

## Ordinance Considerations for La Crosse

Use a TOD or pedestrian-oriented development (POD) overlay rather than creating a new base zoning district.

Align overlay applicability with:

- Urban Residential (URD),
- Neighborhood Residential (NRD),
- Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU),
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND),
- Select commercial districts along transit corridors.

Apply TOD provisions to:

- Major arterials and collectors with frequent bus service,
- Downtown and key commercial nodes,
- Areas identified in adopted plans or corridor studies.

Consider TOD standards that prioritize:

- Increased residential density and mixed-use development,

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- Pedestrian-oriented design (building placement, entrances, transparency at ground level),
- Bicycle facilities and multimodal connectivity.

Pair TOD provisions with Travel Demand Management (TDM) requirements for larger developments, allowing flexibility in how projects reduce vehicle trips.

Develop parking maximums for TOD overlay districts.

### Relationship with Other Ordinance Sections

TOD provisions should be coordinated with:

- Parking regulations
- Accessory Commercial Unit (ACU) allowances
- Sustainable building and development policies
- Tree preservation and street improvement standards

TOD can help integrate multiple climate action strategies—housing, transportation, economic development, and sustainability—into a cohesive approach rather than a series of code amendments.

### Future Discussion Questions

Depending on the answer, the following questions may impact implementation or ordinance updates:

- How are future transit corridors or key bus routes expected to be referenced in code (map vs. plan reference)?
- Are there any anticipated new overlays beyond the current floodplain and historic districts, or should TOD be integrated as a new overlay district?
- Would the city implement parking maximums in the TOD overlay or in specific base zoning districts?

The review to date has found that TOD is one of the most effective zoning-based tools available to local governments to most broadly advance goals for housing, employment, and essential services in areas that are safer, more walkable, and transit-accessible. TOD can also integrate with other priorities such as EV-ready infrastructure, neighborhood-scale accessory uses, and tree preservation.

## B. Electric Vehicle (EV) Readiness and Charging Infrastructure

The City’s progress in achieving lower GHG emissions community-wide is heavily tied to its transportation policies and zoning. EV readiness was selected as a priority topic early in the process. Preparing new developments for vehicle electrification is a practical, incremental way to support long-term emissions reductions. In addition, creating and refining regulatory preferences for charging infrastructure has advantages before more widespread adoption is realized. EV readiness was extensively studied in this review. With more than seven peer ordinances analyzed, a variety of regulatory approaches and best practices are understood.

Although Wisconsin state building codes limit the extent to which municipalities can regulate building systems and the cost of charger installation presents a barrier to mandatory charger requirements, EV-ready standards focused on site design and panel construction are generally compatible with zoning authority and easier to integrate into development review. Additionally, the City of La Crosse may set a sustainability standard by investing in EV charging infrastructure on public property across the community. The recommended approach balances flexibility and scalability, allowing the city to support future EV adoption as transportation systems and technology continue to evolve.

### Recommended Ordinances

Table 3. EV-Ready Ordinances Reviewed

Community	State	Approach	Key Attributes	Recommendation	Source
<b>Madison</b>	WI	Phased EV-ready parking standards	Definitions: Sec. 28.211. EV-ready phased requirements: Sec. 28.141(8)(e) (incl. accessible stations: 28.141(8)(e)(4)).	Base model	<a href="#">Madison Zoning Ordinance (amended 2021)</a>
<b>Roseville</b>	MN	EV-ready standards paired with sustainability policy and incentives	Applicability to new/ expanded/ improved parking: Sec. 1013.04(d)(2)(a). EVSE/Level 2-ready capacity (10%): Sec. 1013.04(d)(2)(d)(1). Cost cap reduction: 1013.04(d)(3).	Base model	<a href="#">Roseville Zoning Ordinance (adopted 2023)</a>

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<b>Golden Valley</b>	MN	EV-ready requirements tied to parking and site design standards	Definitions: Sec. 113-151(f)(1). EVCS requirements (multifamily/nonres.): Sec. 113-151(f)(2)c–d; reductions: 113-151(f)(3); safety/signage: 113-151(f)(4), (7).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Golden Valley Zoning Ordinance (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>La Crescent</b>	MN	EV-ready ordinance supporting SolSmart designation and public investment	Accessory use + standards (Level 2 outlets by bldg. type; cord safety; ADA; incentives): Sec. 154-12.10, Subd. 19(A)–(Q) (Ord. 563).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">La Crescent Ordinance 563 (adopted 2022)</a>
<b>Eau Claire</b>	WI	EV-ready standards focused on conduit and capacity	Definitions: Sec. 17.14.08(E). Accessory use citywide: Sec. 17.03. Performance/maintenance: Sec. 17.03(6)(a)–(c).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Eau Claire Land Development Ordinance (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>Hopkins</b>	MN	EV-readiness incorporated into Sustainable Building Policy	EV-ready requirement as part of Sustainable Building Policy: Sec. 8-323(c) (policy applicability at 8-321).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Hopkins Sustainable Building Policy (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>Bloomington</b>	MN	EV-ready requirements linked to redevelopment and parking expansion	Sidewalk clearance: Sec. 21.301.04(e)(3). Charger location/ protection: 21.301.06(c)(4)(A)–(B). EVC use standards: 21.302.14(b)–(c).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Bloomington Zoning Ordinance (amended 2019)</a>

### Why These Models Fit La Crosse

Madison’s ordinance is the strongest base model because it was developed within a Wisconsin zoning authority framework, with certain provisions adopted prior to recent state statutory changes that may require refinement to ensure full consistency with current

law. The ordinance clearly distinguishes between EV-ready infrastructure and charger installation, and uses phased, parking-based requirements.

Eau Claire provides a recent Wisconsin example with clear technical language, while Stevens Point offers a strong policy model for linking EV infrastructure to public investment.

Roseville was identified as a model ordinance by the Great Plains Institute for its phased, policy-driven approach to EV readiness that integrates zoning standards with incentives and public investment.

## Interview Findings

- Participants emphasized the need to clearly distinguish EV-ready infrastructure from charger installation, noting this was the primary source of confusion during adoption.
- EV-ready standards were most defensible when limited to conduit, electrical capacity, and panel space, rather than requiring chargers.
- Phased, parking-based requirements helped align expectations with gradual EV adoption and reduced developer pushback.
- Participants found that cost comparisons (low upfront cost during construction versus high retrofit cost) were more persuasive than climate messaging.
- EV-ready requirements were viewed as especially important for multifamily developments, where residents lack control over future charging installation.
- Broad, citywide application was favored, as participants found it difficult to predict future charging demand by location.
- State building code preemption constrained enforcement, reinforcing the value of zoning-based standards paired with public investment and municipal leadership.

## Ordinance Considerations for La Crosse

Limit mandatory requirements to EV-ready infrastructure, not charger installation.

Apply EV-ready requirements to:

- New development,
- Major redevelopment or parking expansions above a defined threshold.

Integrate EV readiness within parking standards, not as a standalone ordinance.

Establish tiered requirements by land use, with modest baseline percentages (e.g., 5–10%).

For projects receiving public financial assistance and discretionary approvals, require a higher level of EV readiness or installed chargers.

Allow parking reductions or incentives for projects that exceed minimum EV-ready requirements.

## Relationship with Other Ordinance Sections

EV-ready standards should be coordinated with:

- Parking regulations
- TOD provisions
- Design and performance standards
- Sustainable building and development policies
- Public investment and capital improvement planning
  - Public property
  - City-owned facilities

Integrating EV-ready standards with these related ordinance sections allows La Crosse to incrementally expand charging capacity and EV adoption across the community and respond to future advances in vehicle technology and transportation.

## C. Sustainable and Efficient Buildings

Sustainable and energy-efficient buildings were selected as a priority because building energy use is the largest contributor to community-wide GHG emissions in the City of La Crosse. The CAP identifies improved building performance as a key strategy for emissions reduction. At the same time, Wisconsin’s uniform state building code limits the extent to which municipalities can regulate building systems or mandate energy performance standards through zoning.

As a result, peer communities have increasingly shifted toward policy-based approaches that influence building performance through development review, public investment, and discretionary approvals rather than prescriptive construction standards. These approaches allow cities to advance energy efficiency and sustainability goals while remaining compliant with Wisconsin statutory authority and building codes.

## Recommended Ordinances

Table 4. Sustainable Buildings Ordinances Reviewed

Community	State	Approach	Key Attributes	Recommendation	Source
Hopkins	MN	Policy-based sustainable building	Applicability/thresholds: Sec. 8-321.	Base model	<a href="#">Hopkins Sustainable</a>

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		requirements triggered by discretionary approvals and public financial assistance; allows multiple third-party certification pathways.	Certification options: 8-322. Core requirements (GHG calc; renewables/ roof feasibility; EV-ready; low-salt checklist): 8-323.		<a href="#">Building Policy (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>Dubuque</b>	IA	Applies sustainability criteria through development agreements and public investment policies rather than zoning standards.	Sustainable subdivision tools/ point system trigger: Sec. 16-11-10 (incl. point list at 16-11-10(C)).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Dubuque Subdivision Ordinance (adopted 2009)</a>
<b>Eau Claire</b>	WI	Incorporates sustainability considerations through development review and incentives within a recent land development ordinance update.	PD objective must include sustainability/ affordability/ accessibility: Sec. 17.02.04(A)(3)(b) (sustainability detail at (b)(i)).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Eau Claire Land Development Ordinance (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>Madison</b>	WI	Building energy benchmarking and performance programs focused on reporting and long-term efficiency improvements.	Benchmarking + tune-ups requirements (standalone building energy savings code): Sec. 29.40.	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Madison Zoning Ordinance (amended 2025)</a>
<b>Milwaukee</b>	WI	Uses sustainability requirements tied to large developments and public investment tools rather than building mandates.	Energy benchmarking ordinance framework (definitions, applicability, deadlines): Sec. 200-62(1)-(2).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Milwaukee Zoning Ordinance (amended 2024)</a>

## Why These Models Fits La Crosse

Hopkins' 2025 Sustainable Building Policy is the strongest base model for La Crosse because it advances sustainability goals without directly regulating building construction methods or systems, which are preempted by state building codes. Instead, the policy is triggered only when the City has greater discretion—specifically through public financial assistance and discretionary land use approvals—making it legally defensible and adaptable within a Wisconsin statutory framework.

The policy establishes clear sustainability expectations while allowing developers to choose among recognized third-party certification systems, reducing prescriptiveness and administrative burden. This structure is particularly well suited for a mid-sized city like La Crosse, as it does not require dedicated energy or benchmarking staff and allows standards to evolve over time without frequent zoning code amendments. Madison's building energy benchmarking and tune-ups program provides useful context for long-term building performance strategies, but its scope, staffing needs, and enforcement structure exceed what could be reasonably integrated into a zoning code update.

## Interview Findings

- Participants emphasized the value of policy-based triggers (public funding and discretionary approvals) over zoning-embedded technical standards to reduce legal and enforcement risk.
- Hopkins' approach was designed to evolve outside the zoning code, allowing sustainability standards to be updated without formal code amendments.
- Participants noted that allowing multiple third-party compliance pathways improved developer acceptance and reduced negotiation during project review.
- The policy's limited applicability meant few projects were triggered, which aligned with local development patterns and staffing capacity.
- Madison's benchmarking and tune-ups program was viewed as a more comprehensive but resource-intensive model, requiring dedicated staff and a standalone ordinance outside zoning.

## Ordinance Considerations for La Crosse

Adopt a sustainable building policy referenced by zoning, with a supplemental policy guide as applicable.

Apply the policy only to projects that:

- Receive discretionary land use approvals, or

- Receive public financial assistance, and
- Exceed defined size thresholds.

Allow compliance through recognized third-party rating systems (e.g., LEED, B3, Enterprise Green Communities).

Include requirements to:

- Evaluate and report predicted greenhouse gas emissions,
- Assess feasibility of on-site renewables or green/cool roofs,
- Meet EV-ready parking standards,
- Evaluate low-salt or sustainable site design practices.

### Relationship with Other Ordinance Sections

Sustainable building policies should be coordinated with:

- Land use approvals, such as planned developments where the City has higher levels of discretion
- Public financial assistance and incentives, such as TIF districts
- Electric vehicle (EV) readiness standards
- Stormwater, site design, and landscaping standards

Sustainable building policies integrated with development review and public investment can advance the City's climate action goals while preserving flexibility to update standards as technology, markets, and staffing evolve.

### Future Discussion Questions

Depending on the answer, the following questions may impact implementation or ordinance updates:

- Does the City of La Crosse view EV-readiness as a community-wide effort, or a targeted approach focused on specific locations?
- Is there a desire to provide a higher level of staffing to support more focused building and energy reporting requirements?

## D. Tree Preservation and Urban Forestry

Tree preservation was selected as a priority topic because the City of La Crosse is currently developing a Public Tree Preservation Plan and has identified a need to better align its zoning code with adopted climate, sustainability, and natural resource goals. While the city has made significant investments in maintaining and expanding its public urban canopy

coverage, most tree loss associated with development occurs on private property, particularly through subdivisions, redevelopment, and site grading activities.

The city’s Climate Action Plan and Comprehensive Plan both recognize the role of trees in reducing urban heat island effects, improving air and water quality, managing stormwater, and restoring ecosystem services. These goals can be difficult to implement consistently across private property without clear zoning authority and standards tied to development review.

## Recommended Ordinances

Table 5. Tree Preservation Ordinances Reviewed

Community / Agency	State	Approach	Key Attributes	Recommendation	Source
<b>Onalaska</b>	WI	Tree protection and restoration requirements triggered by plats and large developments, with defined exemptions and documentation-based enforcement. Establishes a Tree Mitigation Fund.	TPP applicability/exemptions/specimen trees: Sec. 13.03.61(A)–(C). TPP submittal: 13.03.62(A)–(D). Removal limits: 13.03.64(A)–(E). Tree Mitigation Fund: 13.03.64(K)–(L). Replacement: 13.03.65(A)–(B).	Base model	<a href="#">Onalaska Ordinance No. 1830-2025</a>
<b>DNR</b>	WI	Model ordinance guidance emphasizing development-related triggers, measurable thresholds, and separation of zoning authority from forestry standards.	Best-practice guidance (non-code): see WI DNR Tree Ordinance Guidance.	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Model Ordinance Guidance</a>
<b>Fitchburg</b>	WI	Requires Tree Preservation Plans tied to subdivision and site plan review, emphasizing process, documentation, and	Tree preservation plan (desirable trees + required plan contents/TPG	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Fitchburg Zoning Ordinance (amended 2023)</a>

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		mitigation rather than blanket tree removal prohibitions.	reference): Sec. 24-4(g).		
<b>Mequon</b>	WI	Detailed tree preservation standards requiring extensive inventory, review, and oversight by a city forester across development types.	Applicability + forester review/ permit process: Sec. 84-4(a)–(b); inspections/ permit procedure: 84-5; specimen tree protections/ replacement: 84-6.	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Mequon Zoning Ordinance (adopted 2017)</a>
<b>Stevens Point</b>	WI	Public tree preservation requirements and standards for protection during construction.	Public forestry authority + prohibited acts/ permits/ standards: Sec. 11.01–11.08.	Supplemental reference	Forestry (Chapter 11)
<b>Victoria</b>	MN	Comprehensive tree preservation ordinance with private-property applicability and restrictive removal thresholds.	Definitions + permits/ inventory/ CRZ protection/ replacement: Sec. 105-67 to 105-70 (incl. replacement ratios at 105-70).	Supplemental reference	Victoria Zoning Ordinance (amended 2021)

### Why These Models Fit La Crosse

Onalaska’s 2025 Tree Protection and Restoration Ordinance is the strongest base model for La Crosse because it advances tree preservation goals while remaining legally defensible and administratively feasible within a Wisconsin statutory context. The ordinance focuses tree preservation requirements on development activity, rather than routine private tree removal, reducing legal risk while still addressing the primary source of canopy loss.

The ordinance establishes clear applicability thresholds and exemptions, requires Tree Preservation Plans concurrent with land use and subdivision approvals, and provides flexible mitigation options where preservation is not feasible. Importantly, Onalaska’s approach is scalable and enforceable without a city forester, making it well suited for a mid-sized city with limited staffing capacity.

Fitchburg, Mequon, and Victoria, MN provide useful supplemental references illustrating alternative levels of technical rigor, administrative oversight, and private-property regulation, but each exceeds La Crosse's desired balance of flexibility and administrative burden in different ways.

## Interview Findings

- Participants emphasized that tree preservation ordinances are most defensible when tied to development review, rather than applied broadly to routine private property activity.
- Clear applicability thresholds and exemptions were critical to limiting administrative burden and reducing legal risk.
- Participants stressed the importance of focusing on process requirements (plans, documentation, certifications) rather than regulating individual tree removal decisions.
- Shifting responsibility to developer-prepared Tree Preservation Plans and certifications reduced staff workload and liability.
- Mitigation options, including replacement plantings or fee-in-lieu contributions, provided flexibility where preservation was not feasible.
- Onalaska noted that basing mitigation fees on actual city planting costs improved transparency and defensibility.
- Mequon's ordinance was viewed as a strong reference for technical rigor, but participants noted that its reliance on a dedicated city forester and detailed oversight may exceed La Crosse's desired administrative capacity.

## Ordinance Considerations for La Crosse

Create tree preservation requirements for:

- Subdivisions, site plan review, or other new developments requests,
- Redevelopment projects meeting a certain minimum threshold.

Require Tree Preservation or Tree Protection Plans that:

- Clearly define significant or specimen trees,
- Define building activity and land disturbance areas,
- Establish construction protection measures.
  - The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) recommends using the "critical root radius" approach to determine the proper distances for tree protection that is 1.5 feet for every 1 inch of DBH (diameter at breast height).

Allow removal where necessary, with:

- Replacement plantings, or
- Fee-in-lieu contributions to a City forestry or green infrastructure fund.
  - City of Onalaska uses a Tree Mitigation Fund and assigns an annual fee schedule for tree replacement costs. The Tree Mitigation Fund is only for planting trees on public property.

Clearly designate administrative authority (e.g., City Forester or Zoning Administrator).

Reference technical standards in a separate manual or policy, not embedded in zoning text.

## Relationship with Other Ordinance Sections

Tree preservation standards should be coordinated with:

- Subdivision and site plan review requirements
- Land disturbance, grading, and erosion control standards
- Stormwater, landscaping, and ROW standards
- Native planting and property maintenance regulations
- Nuisance definitions and violations

Establishing tree preservation requirements in zoning, development review, and public investment ordinance sections allows the city to advance its climate action goals. Most ordinances can be administered by existing staff, without creating a high administrative burden.

## E. Native Plantings and Community Gardens

Native plantings, community gardens, and urban agriculture were selected as priorities because they collectively support multiple adopted City goals related to climate resilience, food access, neighborhood livability, and ecosystem health. The CAP identifies strategies to support local food systems and community resilience and improve stormwater infiltration and water quality.

Despite these policy goals, existing zoning and property maintenance regulations can unintentionally create barriers to:

- community-scale gardening projects, and
- residents who wish to grow food or native plants on private property.

As a result, these topics are prioritized as part of the zoning update to clarify what is allowed, where it is allowed, and under what conditions, while avoiding over-regulation of everyday residential activities.

## Recommended Ordinances

Table 6. Community Gardens Ordinances Reviewed

Community	State	Approach	Key Attributes	Recommendation	Source
<b>Fitchburg</b>	WI	Community gardens allowed citywide with conditions on crops, third-party management, water supply, structures, and setbacks.	Use allowed citywide: Sec. 22-6. Crop limits: 22-6(d)(1). Coordinator/ water + shed standards: 22-6(d)(2).	Base model	<a href="#">Fitchburg Zoning Ordinance (adopted 2015)</a>
<b>Duluth</b>	MN	Community gardens regulated as a defined land use with standards for fencing, storage, structures, and allowed animals (e.g., bees).	Use table: Sec. 50-19.8. Use standards (screening/ structures/ sales/ events/ animals): Sec. 50-20.3.B(a)–(h).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Duluth Zoning Ordinance (amended 2025)</a>
<b>Onalaska</b>	WI	Does not regulate community gardens as a land use; allows native plantings and natural lawns through Property Maintenance Code with limits on nuisances.	Property maintenance / natural lawn approach (see Ordinance 1830-2025 PDF.	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Onalaska Ordinance No. 1830-2025</a>
<b>Rochester</b>	MN	Community gardens allowed citywide with standards for site design, soil safety, structures, and limited sales.	Definition: Sec. 60.600.030. Permitted use: Sec. 60.300.01-1. Standards (structures/ operations/ soil testing): Sec. 60.300.020(3)(a)–(c).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Rochester Development Code (amended 2026)</a>

## Why These Models Fit La Crosse

Fitchburg provides the strongest base model for community gardens because its zoning ordinance clearly defines community gardens as a distinct land use and allows them citywide without over-regulation. Gardens are permitted or conditional uses in most zoning districts and require third-party management, which simplifies responsibility and enforcement.

The ordinance establishes basic standards for structures, setbacks, operations, and water access while addressing common concerns related to maintenance and compatibility. This approach has supported gradual adoption across the community with minimal administrative burden.

Rochester and Duluth provide a useful supplemental reference for more detailed urban agriculture provisions, but its soil safety, produce sales, and expanded definitions are more technical than La Crosse may need initially.

## Interview Findings

- Participants noted that clear separation between community gardens and residential landscaping helped reduce nuisance and enforcement conflicts.
- Requiring a designated responsible party improved long-term maintenance and accountability.
- Attempts to broadly update nuisance codes to allow native plantings on residential properties faced public concern and were not adopted, reflecting political and staffing constraints.
- More detailed urban agriculture standards (e.g., soil testing, produce sales) were viewed as optional enhancements, better suited for later phases if demand increases.

## Ordinance Consideration for La Crosse

Explicitly allow community gardens as permitted or conditional uses in most zoning districts, including:

- General Residential (GRD)
- Neighborhood Residential (NRD)

Define community gardens broadly to include:

- In-ground and raised-bed gardens,
- Pollinator gardens and native plantings,

- Educational or demonstration gardens.

Establish basic standards addressing:

- Maximum size and location of accessory structures (e.g., sheds, hoop houses),
- Water access (hose bibs, rainwater collection where allowed),
- Setbacks from property lines,
- Limits on retail sales (if allowed at all).

Consider requiring a designated responsible party (e.g., neighborhood group, nonprofit, or property owner) for ongoing maintenance.

Encourage the use of:

- Native and pollinator-friendly species,
- Sustainable site practices (composting, reduced chemical inputs).

### Relationship to Other Ordinance Sections

Native planting allowances should be coordinated with:

- Landscaping and screening requirements,
- Stormwater management standards,
- Nuisance definitions and applicability,
- Tree preservation provisions

Community gardens can be identified as an eligible sustainability feature under any adopted sustainable building or development incentive policy.

## F. Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs) and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs) and neighborhood-scale commercial uses were selected as a priority because they support multiple adopted City goals related to economic vitality, infill development, and neighborhood livability. The current zoning code regulates similar uses as home occupations or professional home offices, presenting an opportunity for La Crosse to adopt ACUs standards through code updates as ACUs emerge as critical planning considerations.

The project team also reviewed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinances as part of the analysis of accessory uses and infill strategies. The City of La Crosse currently has adopted standards for these uses. ADUs are increasingly relevant for communities experiencing:

- Affordable housing shortages,

- Lack of housing diversity,
- Urban sprawl or greenfield development.

While ADUs generally require comprehensive and detailed regulations, ACUs present an opportunity for more flexible zoning standards focused on scale, impact, and neighborhood compatibility.

The following recommendations focus on establishing new code language related to ACUs, and refinement of existing ADU standards.

## Recommended Ordinances

Table 7. ACU & ADU Ordinances Reviewed

Community	State	Approach	Key Attributes	Recommendation	Source
<b>Eau Claire</b>	WI	Defines ACUs as a distinct land use with clear limits on size, employees, and intensity. ADUs require separate utility connections.	ADU allowance + standards: Sec. 17.03(2)(a)–(e). ACU allowance + limits (employees/ entrance/ appointments/ parking/ prohibited uses): Sec. 17.03(3)(a)–(h).	Base model	<a href="#">Land Development Ordinance (adopted 2025)</a>
<b>Stevens Point</b>	WI	Regulates ACUs through home occupation and small-scale commercial standards; ADUs subject to CUPs and separate utility connections.	Definitions: Sec. 23-15(a)(1)–(2). District permissions: 23-15(b). Standards (setbacks/ limits/ owner-occupancy/ 1 per lot): 23-15(c)–(j).	Supplemental reference	<a href="#">Stevens Point Zoning Ordinance (amended 2025)</a>

## Why These Models Fit La Crosse

Eau Claire’s 2025 Land Development Ordinance provides the strongest base model for ACUs because it is consistent with Wisconsin zoning authority and clearly defines ACUs as a land use distinct from principal commercial uses. The ordinance allows small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial activity while establishing enforceable limits on size,

employees, intensity, and neighborhood impact, making it transferable to La Crosse’s neighborhood context.

Stevens Point provides a useful supplemental reference for operational standards and implementation lessons, but Eau Claire’s framework is clearer and more directly applicable for initial code drafting.

## Interview Findings

- Participants emphasized that ADUs and ACUs are perceived differently by residents. ADUs raised greater concern related to student housing, short-term rentals, and absentee ownership, particularly in college towns.
- ACUs were generally viewed as an extension of home-based businesses and faced less public opposition when paired with clear performance standards.
- Overly restrictive ADU standards—such as conditional use permits and separate utility connections—significantly limited adoption, resulting in few applications despite housing demand.
- Participants noted that ACUs function best when regulated through performance-based standards (noise, lighting, signage, hours of operation) rather than prescriptive use lists.
- Early and targeted public engagement was identified as critical; limited outreach led to delays and additional staff time during adoption.

## Ordinance Considerations for La Crosse

Establish Accessory Commercial Unit (ACU) as a land use distinct from principal commercial uses.

Eau Claire, WI (2025): “An Accessory Commercial Unit is a commercial use that is subordinate to and customarily incidental to a principal residential use and located on the same lot.”

Allow ACUs as accessory uses in select residential and mixed-use districts, subject to performance standards. The City can use discretionary approvals, through conditional or interim use permits, to place reasonable restrictions on the proposed use.

Regulate ACUs through performance-based standards.

Stevens Point, WI: “Accessory commercial uses shall not create excessive noise, lighting, traffic, or outdoor storage that is incompatible with surrounding residential uses.”

Allow ACUs within principal structures and attached and detached accessory structures, using zoning standards to establish site requirements. Examples include:

- Maximum floor area (sq ft and/or % of principal structure)
- Maximum number of non-resident employees
- Hours of operation
- Parking and deliveries
- Signage
- Fencing
- Lighting
- Noise

Conduct early and targeted engagement to develop ACU standards consistent with City goals and plans. These requirements can vary in flexibility, and their effectiveness and adoption depend on public opinion through conversations with residents, commissions, and businesses.

### Relationship to Other Ordinance Sections

ACUs should be coordinated with:

- TOD and mixed-use zoning districts
- Parking regulations
- Sustainable development goals
  - Support 15-minute neighborhood concepts

ACUs can serve as a gentle density and economic resilience tool, particularly in walkable neighborhoods and near transit corridors. These allow small business owners and home occupation users to benefit from local economic activity while providing flexibility in implementation.

## 4. Phasing and Integration

Successful implementation of the recommended ordinance updates will depend on thoughtful sequencing and coordination across topic areas. Based on peer community experience and La Crosse's ongoing zoning code update, Bolton & Menk recommends the following phased approach.

## Near-Term (Current Zoning Code Update)

The following items are well suited for incorporation directly into the current zoning code update, as they rely primarily on zoning and development review authority and align closely with peer models:

### Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Multimodal Corridors

- Apply a TOD overlay or targeted district approach along key transit corridors and nodes.
- Integrate pedestrian-oriented design standards which target supportive requirements for multimodal connectivity.

### Electric Vehicle (EV) Readiness

- Incorporate EV-ready requirements within parking standards for new development and major redevelopment.
- Align requirements with Wisconsin statutory authority by focusing on design standards and electrical capacity and conduit rather than requiring charger installation.

### Tree Preservation and Urban Forestry

- Strengthen tree preservation requirements tied to subdivision, site plan, and redevelopment review.
- Require Tree Preservation or Tree Protection Plans modeled after Fitchburg and Onalaska.

### Native Plantings and Community Gardens

- Explicitly define and allow community gardens, pollinator gardens, and native planting areas as permitted or conditional uses in most zoning districts.
- Establish basic use standards and management responsibility without over-regulation.

### Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs)

- Introduce an ACU category to allow small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial uses in select residential and mixed-use districts.
- Apply clear performance standards to manage scale, intensity, and neighborhood compatibility.

## Parallel or Subsequent Adoption (Policy-Based Tools)

Some climate-aligned strategies are best implemented through adopted policies referenced by zoning, rather than embedded directly in zoning text:

### Sustainable Building Policy

- Adopt a sustainable building policy triggered by discretionary approvals or public financial assistance.
- Reference the policy within the zoning code to establish applicability while allowing flexibility to update standards over time.

### Native Planting & Landscaping Guidance

- Develop or update companion guidance (e.g., landscaping or green infrastructure manuals) to support native planting and pollinator goals without hardcoding technical standards into zoning.

## Ongoing Implementation and Refinement

Following adoption, staff should plan for iterative refinement and coordination across departments:

Monitor development outcomes and administrative workload related to:

- TOD overlays,
- EV-ready parking standards,
- Tree preservation and landscape review.

Adjust thresholds, incentives, and administrative guidance as needed based on:

- Market response,
- Staff capacity,
- Evolving Climate Action Plan priorities.

Coordinate implementation across planning, public works, forestry, sustainability, and economic development functions to ensure consistent application.

## Summary

The City of La Crosse has an opportunity to add significantly to its zoning code update in areas that would move forward many goals from its Climate Action Plan. While adding all policies would be most beneficial, staffing capacity could be a concern.

Phasing these ordinance updates allows La Crosse to:

- Achieve near-term climate and resilience gains through zoning,
- Pilot policy-based tools before scaling them citywide,
- Maintain flexibility while building institutional capacity over time.

This phased approach reflects lessons learned from peer communities and supports a robust, implementable zoning code update.

## 5. Closing

This memorandum identifies specific, recommended model ordinances for each priority topic and translates them into ordinance considerations tailored to the City of La Crosse's legal authority, development context, and administrative capacity. The intent is to provide staff and consultants with a clear starting point for drafting while leaving flexibility to refine details through the zoning update process.

## Appendix 1. Peer Community Interview Script

The City of La Crosse is currently in the process of updating its zoning code and is interested in incorporating recommendations from its Climate Action Plan into this update. The city has identified six topic areas of interest and wishes to identify model ordinances that can be applied to its code update. Your community was selected as a model for the following topic(s): (pick the ones that apply):

1. EV charging and sustainable parking lots
2. Sustainability incentives for large buildings
3. Tree preservation on private property
4. Multi-modal transportation-oriented development
5. Accessory commercial units
6. Community gardens and use of private property for food/native plantings

The purpose of this interview is to understand how your local government has implemented this/these ordinances to support climate action goals and sustainability planning efforts within your community.

### Introduction

- 1) What is the name of the community you work for?
- 2) What is your name and role/job title?
- 3) How long have you worked in this community?

### General Questions

#### *Ordinance development questions*

- 4) What prompted the development of this ordinance/these ordinances?
- 5) What examples, frameworks, or experts did you consult in developing this ordinance/these ordinances?
- 6) How were other city departments and/or commissions involved in the ordinance development/update?
- 7) What enabling conditions made it possible to pass this ordinance/update (e.g., strong support from a commission, technical support, grant funding)?
- 8) What sort of objections did, if any, have you responded to when trying to pass the ordinance?

### *Ordinance implementation questions*

- 9) How long has this ordinance/updated ordinance been in effect?
- 10) Please describe specific examples of how this ordinance has furthered sustainability goals in your community.
- 11) Have you found success in applying the ordinance to new development, re-development, or city initiatives? If yes, please describe how you implemented the ordinance.
- 12) How long did it take to see a return / positive impact from the ordinance(s) implementation (e.g., financial benefits, emissions reductions, community feedback).
- 13) What challenges have you faced in implementing and/or enforcing this ordinance/these ordinances?

### *Lessons learned*

- 14) What would you recommend to other communities looking to develop and implement a similar ordinance?
- 15) If you had to do this all over again, what would you do differently?
- 16) Anything else you'd like to share?

### *Other questions*

Additional questions may be addressed regarding details of specific ordinances as needed.

## Appendix 2. Model Ordinance Review Portfolio

Appendix 2 documents all ordinances reviewed and analyzed during this process, including those determined infeasible under Wisconsin law or inconsistent with the City of La Crosse's administrative capacity (see separate file).

## Appendix 3. Resources

### Local Ordinances

#### **Bloomington, Minnesota.**

City of Bloomington Zoning Code – Transit-Oriented Development and Corridor Standards (amended 2023).

<https://www.bloomingtonmn.gov/departments/community-development/zoning>

#### **Cedar Rapids, Iowa.**

City of Cedar Rapids Zoning Ordinance – Pedestrian Connectivity and Multimodal Site Design Standards (amended 2024).

[https://www.cedar-rapids.org/local\\_government/departments\\_g\\_v/community\\_development/zoning.php](https://www.cedar-rapids.org/local_government/departments_g_v/community_development/zoning.php)

#### **Dubuque, Iowa.**

City of Dubuque Sustainable Development Policy (adopted 2022).

<https://www.cityofdubuque.org/129/Sustainable-Dubuque>

#### **Duluth, Minnesota.**

City of Duluth Zoning Ordinance – Community Garden Regulations (amended 2022).

<https://duluthmn.gov/planning-development/zoning-regulations/>

#### **Eau Claire, Wisconsin.**

City of Eau Claire Land Development Ordinance (adopted 2025).

<https://www.eauclairewi.gov/government/departments/plan-development/land-development-ordinance>

#### **Eden Prairie, Minnesota.**

City of Eden Prairie Code of Ordinances – Transit-Oriented Development Zoning Districts (amended 2023).

[https://library.municode.com/mn/eden\\_prairie/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CH11L\\_AUSREZO\\_S11.03ESDI](https://library.municode.com/mn/eden_prairie/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH11L_AUSREZO_S11.03ESDI)

#### **Fitchburg, Wisconsin.**

City of Fitchburg Zoning Ordinance – Tree Preservation and Community Garden Regulations (amended 2015).

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/195/Zoning-Code>

#### **Golden Valley, Minnesota.**

City of Golden Valley Zoning Code – Electric Vehicle Readiness and Parking Standards

(amended 2022).

<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/departments/planning/zoning-code>

**Hopkins, Minnesota.**

City of Hopkins Sustainable Building Policy (adopted 2025).

<https://www.hopkinsmn.com/DocumentCenter/View/1343/Sustainable-Building-Policy>

**La Crescent, Minnesota.**

City of La Crescent Zoning Ordinance – Electric Vehicle Readiness Standards (amended 2022).

<https://www.cityoflacrescent-mn.gov/departments/community-development/zoning>

**Madison, Wisconsin.**

City of Madison Zoning Code – Electric Vehicle-Ready Parking Requirements (Ordinance No. ORD-21-00001) (adopted 2021).

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/ev-charging-station-ordinance/3453/>

**Madison, Wisconsin.**

City of Madison Zoning Code – Transit-Oriented Development Overlay (amended 2021).

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/transit-oriented-development/3449/>

**Mequon, Wisconsin.**

City of Mequon Zoning Code – Tree Preservation Standards (amended 2023).

<https://www.mequonwi.gov/departments/community-development/zoning>

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin.**

City of Milwaukee Sustainable Development and Building Policies (adopted 2022)

<https://city.milwaukee.gov/sustainability>

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin.**

City of Milwaukee Zoning Code – Transit Corridor and Mixed-Use District Standards (amended 2025).

<https://city.milwaukee.gov/DCD/Planning/zoning>

**Onalaska, Wisconsin.**

City of Onalaska Ordinance No. 1830-2025 – Tree Protection and Restoration (adopted 2025).

<https://www.cityofonalaska.com/government/departments/planning>

**Rochester, Minnesota.**

City of Rochester Unified Development Code – Transit-Oriented Development and Public

Benefit Incentives (amended 2022).

<https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/community-development/planning-and-zoning>

**Roseville, Minnesota.**

City of Roseville Sustainability and Electric Vehicle Readiness Policies (adopted 2023).

<https://www.cityofroseville.com/354/Sustainability>

**Stevens Point, Wisconsin.**

City of Stevens Point – EV Infrastructure Economic Development Guide (adopted 2022).

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6037df5f4808c15334a7778d/t/64877643aa1bb959d6ea728b/1686599235979/EV+TIF+Policy+Doc+-+Stevens+Point.pdf>

**Stevens Point, Wisconsin.**

City of Stevens Point Zoning Ordinance – Accessory Dwelling Units and Home Occupation Standards (adopted 2022).

<https://www.stevenspoint.com/DocumentCenter/View/1247/Zoning-Code>

**Victoria, Minnesota.**

City of Victoria Code of Ordinances – Tree Preservation Regulations (amended 2022).

<https://www.victoriamn.gov/departments/community-development/zoning>

**Model Ordinance Frameworks**

**American Planning Association.**

Climate Change Policy Guide (updated 2020).

<https://www.apascd.com/s/Climate-Change-Policy-Guide.pdf>

**Charging Smart.**

Charging Smart – Standard Permitting Process Guidance (n.d.). [https://energy-](https://energy-ready.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Standard-Permitting-Process-Guidance.pdf)

[ready.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Standard-Permitting-Process-Guidance.pdf](https://energy-ready.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Standard-Permitting-Process-Guidance.pdf)

**Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia Law School.**

Model Municipal Green Building Ordinance (updated 2010).

<https://climate.law.columbia.edu/content/municipal-green-building-law-database>

**Community Resources (CR) Planning, Inc.**

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Sustainable Communities Grant – Model Ordinances for Sustainable Development (n.d.). <https://www.crplanning.com/>

Design Standards for TOD, POD, and TDM.

[https://www.crplanning.com/\\_ordinances/tod.pdf](https://www.crplanning.com/_ordinances/tod.pdf) ;

*Model Climate Ordinance Review for the City of La Crosse (2026)*

[https://www.crplanning.com/\\_ordinances/pod.pdf](https://www.crplanning.com/_ordinances/pod.pdf) ;

[https://www.crplanning.com/\\_ordinances/tdm.pdf](https://www.crplanning.com/_ordinances/tdm.pdf) .

Energy Efficiency Ordinance. [https://www.crplanning.com/\\_ordinances/energyeff.pdf](https://www.crplanning.com/_ordinances/energyeff.pdf)

**Georgetown Climate Center (GCC).**

Local Ordinances for Climate Adaptation & Mitigation – Clean Energy, Data Centers, Floodplain Mapping, TOD, and EV-Ready (adopted 2025).

<https://www.georgetownclimate.org/adaptation/toolkits/local-ordinances-for-climate-action/executive-summary.html>

**Great Plains Institute (GPI).**

Climate Ordinance Database. <https://www.apascd.com/tools>

**Great Plains Institute (GPI).**

Summary of Best Practices in Electric Vehicle (EV) Ordinances (updated 2019).

[https://www.betterenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/GPI\\_EV\\_Ordinance\\_Summary\\_web.pdf](https://www.betterenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/GPI_EV_Ordinance_Summary_web.pdf)

**International City/County Management Association (ICMA).**

Sustainability Model Codes and Resources – Transportation, Land Use, Utilities, Renewable Energy (updated 2019). <https://icma.org/sustainability-model-codes-and-resources>

**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).**

Sample Municipal Ordinance Requiring Disclosure of Energy Usage for Residential Rental Properties (2017). <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/media/7>

**U.S. Access Board.**

Technical Assistance Documents – Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (updated 2023). <https://www.access-board.gov/tad/ev/>

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).**

Tree Preservation Ordinance Guidance. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/urbanforestry>

**Wisconsin State Legislature.**

2023 Wisconsin Act 21 – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure and Utility Regulation (effective 2024). <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/related/acts/121>

**City of La Crosse**

**2040 Comprehensive Plan (2023).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/la-crosse-comp-plan-final-revised-8-12-24-compressed.pdf>

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2024).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/la-crosse-bicycle-and-pedestrian-master-plan.pdf>

**Climate Action Plan (2022).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/climate-action-plan-2022.pdf>

**Safe Routes to School Plan (2021).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/safe-routes-to-school-plan-2020.pdf>

**Downtown Parking Study (2020).**

[https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/2020-parking-study\\_optimize.pdf](https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/2020-parking-study_optimize.pdf)

**EV Ready Guide (2023).**

<https://palebluedot.llc/lacrosse-ev-guide#/find/nearest>

**Family Climate Resilience Guide (2022).**

<https://palebluedot.llc/lacrosse-family-climate-resilience-guide>

**Housing Study (2024).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/la-crosse-2024-housing-study.pdf>

**Imagine 2040 Downtown Plan (2021).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/imagine-2040-lacrosse-downtown-plan.pdf>

**Net Zero Energy Building Guide (2023).**

<https://palebluedot.llc/lacrosse-net-zero-energy-guide>

**Solar Energy Guide (2023).**

<https://palebluedot.llc/lacrosse-solar-ready-guide>

**Transportation Demand Management Plan (2018).**

<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/files/assets/city/v/1/planning/plans/transportation-demand-management-plan.pdf>