



**POWELL-HOOD-HAMILTON/  
GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER**  
JOINT NEIGHBORHOOD AND CAMPUS PLAN

# WITH THIS FRAMEWORK IN PLACE, OVER TIME, BOTH THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN CAN EVOLVE TOGETHER TOWARDS A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: A “HEALTH CAMPUS” AT THE HEART OF A HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

## STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

### City of La Crosse

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Director of Planning and Development

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Planning & Economic Development Administrator

**Tim Acklin**

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**Jerry Every**

Park Board Commissioner

### La Crosse Common Council

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Director, Department of Community and Preventive Care Services

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# PREFACE: ABOUT THIS REPORT

Planning documents often play a dual role. They must propose visionary thinking at the highest level while clarifying specific steps towards implementation.

The following report attempts to do both. This “Joint Plan” articulates, for the first time, a shared vision and action plan for the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton Neighborhood and the Gundersen Lutheran Campus. Neither a theoretical document nor an exhaustive set of guidelines, this “planning framework” outlines a tangible link between our actions today and desired outcomes tomorrow. It is the first and most fundamental step toward a comprehensive, long-term plan that will serve as a roadmap for all future decisions.

At the heart of this vision is community consensus. Through charrettes and public meetings with diverse stakeholders, the planning team listened for recurring themes, aspirations, and demands. But beyond identifying agreed-upon goals, this Joint Plan highlights fundamental planning and operational

concepts required to fulfill the vision. For example, where would a new mixed-use development be located to serve both area residents, visitors and employees? What would it take, exactly, to attract healthcare workers to relocate to the neighborhood? How can we leverage the area’s best kept secret, its expansive waterfront? This document explores the potential opportunities and poses specific strategies that would make the vision a reality.

With broad public participation forming the “common ground” for successful development and redevelopment in the area, the resulting plan presents a compelling vision that supports the long-term goals of the community, Gundersen Lutheran, and developer interests. With this framework in place, over time, both the neighborhood and Gundersen Lutheran can grow together towards a more sustainable future.

# PLANNING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

## A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN A MEDICAL CENTER AND A HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD



How do we envision the future of our communities that are host to healthcare institutions?

Around the country, the traditional model of planning focuses independently on either the community or the health system, each focusing on their own needs and priorities. The planning for any medical campus is centered on the mission to deliver the best healthcare services to patients: the needs of visitors and staff are often secondary and the needs of neighborhood residents are often not considered. The planning for a community is focused on the needs of residents to increase livability through preservation and development of housing and amenities. The needs of Medical Center patients, visitors and staff are seen in opposition to this paradigm. Completed without the benefit of the others' participation and perspective, the resulting plans often fail to acknowledge the interdependence of medical campuses and the neighborhoods that are located in or adjacent to them.

Joint planning exercises, such as the one documented in this report, are the only means through which the needs of

the *entire* community —residents, staff, patients and visitors — are voiced, negotiated and addressed. A Joint Plan also has the critical benefit of highlighting synergies between the needs and resources, and unique opportunities to create a healthier community.

### BUILT ENVIRONMENT + HEALTH

The City of La Crosse and Gundersen Lutheran Health System have joined forces to initiate a public planning process to envision the future of a study area that contains the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood. This pioneering Joint Plan comes at a time when changing ideas about health and healthcare delivery are transforming the ways health facilities function in communities.

In many ways, that future—a healthier future—is here today. People all around the U.S. are now walking to medical centers to access an optician's store, an affordable health foods cafeteria or even a weekly farmer's market. Hospitals are inviting the community in with wellness programs, healing gardens or recreational campus trails, while

The design of the built environment is proving to be key for health systems achieving desired health and wellness outcomes in their communities.

providing incentives to their employees to live in nearby neighborhoods. Hospitals, cities and neighborhoods around the country are joining together to take action promoting the health of individuals, communities and the local economy.

As concepts of health and wellness evolve, researchers in public health are pointing to the built environment as a major contributor to negative health outcomes, especially for populations considered to be most vulnerable such as children and the elderly. Environments that discourage walking or make it inconvenient or unsafe to walk between homes, schools, shops and workplaces, are seen as contributors to the obesity epidemic and related preventable diseases that burden our health systems. Designing Healthy Communities, a nationwide research initiative led by Dr. Richard Jackson MD, former Director at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shows that the built environment holds tremendous potential for addressing many of the nation's current public health concerns, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, asthma, depression, violence and social inequities. (Designing Healthy Communities, 2012).

A parallel body of new research, called Evidence-Based Design (EBD), is increasingly applied in healthcare architecture and medical planning to improve patient health outcomes and staff well-being by making changes to the built environment that are proven to have a positive impact. Health facilities built based on this model often include visual and physical access to landscape for patients, staff and visitors that are shown to reduce stress and advance healing.

Health systems, therefore, have an inherent interest in the design of the built environment at large and the location and layout of their facilities and campuses, in particular, as key factors that can help achieve desired health and wellness outcomes in communities.

## THE HEART OF A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Medical Centers are dynamic entities within the built environment: they change incrementally as well as radically in response to changes in demographics, medicine, healthcare technologies, the economy and regulatory environments in order to provide the best care to their patients.

With constant change comes opportunity for strengthening the ties between health systems and communities. Additionally, there is opportunity for alignment of the goals which lead to a healthy built environment that serves the needs of everyone.

The community is also a changing entity and recent trends show people returning to city centers from the suburbs. A general increased awareness around personal health has encouraged a broad range of generations to reinhabit places that provide daily necessities and amenities within a short distance and with easy access. Alternative forms of transportation such as bike or public transit systems allow for a more economically and environmentally sustainable lifestyle. Additionally, this movement encourages a more socially sustainable lifestyle that comes from frequency of interaction with others and a more close-knit community.

For most of the twentieth century, hospitals have focused their resources internally to give the patient the best chance for recovery. Communities have been focused on the individual with the desire for more space and distance, typically in the suburbs. Today, health systems are shifting their focus from reactionary care to preventative measures and channeling resources to the community to promote health in walkable, sustainable neighborhoods. The urban "health campus" is becoming the heart of a healthy community.

# THE JOINT PLAN

## POWELL-HOOD-HAMILTON NEIGHBORHOOD AND GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER IN LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

The Joint Plan is a historic opportunity to envision the joint future of one of La Crosse's oldest neighborhoods and its largest employer.

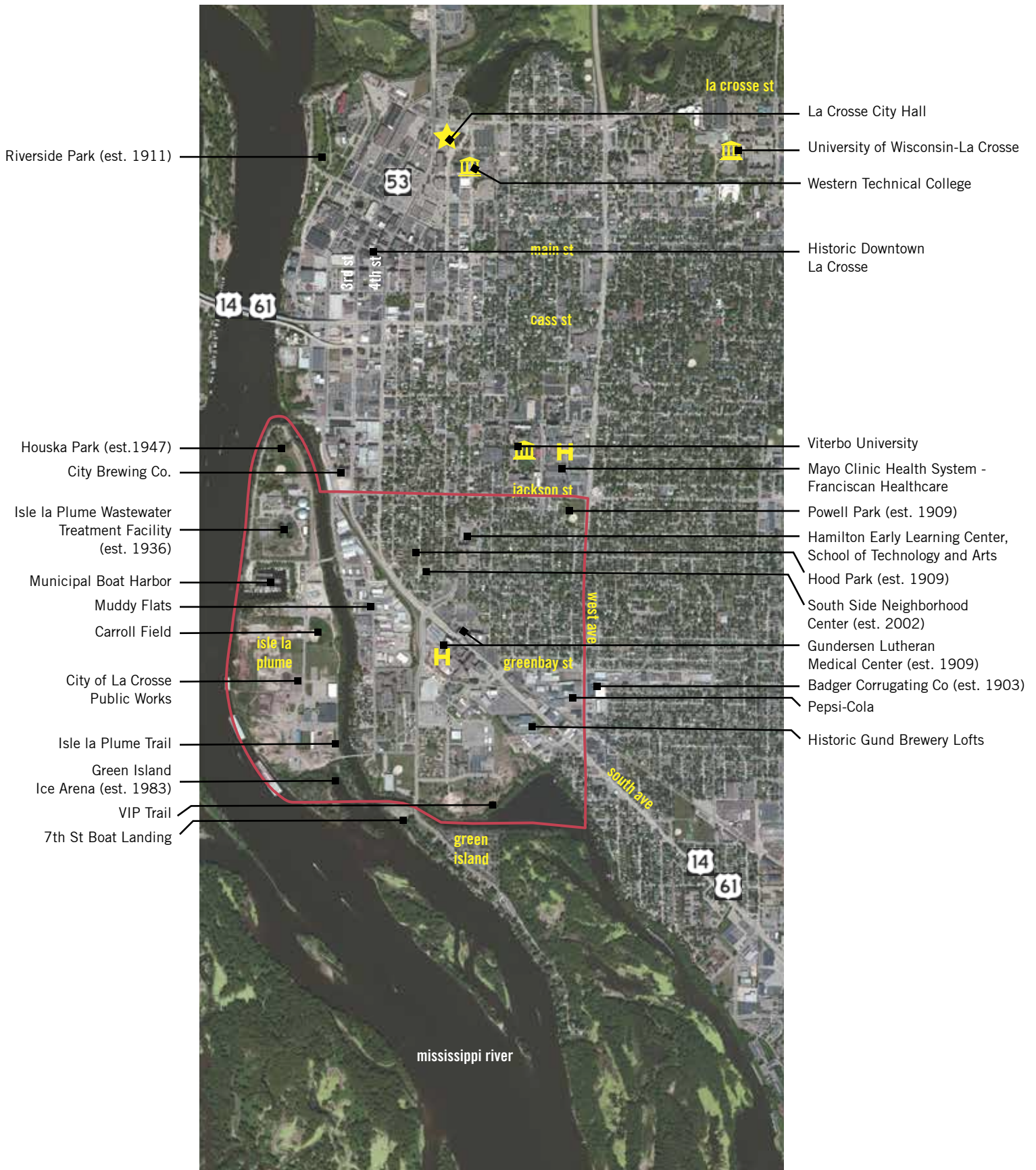
### THE STUDY AREA

The study area of the Joint Plan lies along a key segment of the southside La Crosse riverfront. The Plan considers the joint future of one of La Crosse's oldest neighborhoods, Powell-Hood-Hamilton, and the city's largest employer, Gundersen Lutheran Health System. While these entities have successfully partnered in the past, this plan represents the first shared comprehensive vision for the study area. The area includes Isle La Plume, a 120-acre island along the Mississippi River and lowlying areas along the backwaters of La Plume Slough and Swift Creek. The study area builds off of the City's Tax Increment District (TID) #14 and further considers how to blend the neighborhood, the riverfront, and the Gundersen Lutheran campus, in order to benefit all.

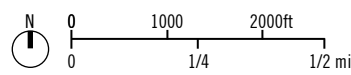
### LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

The largest city on Wisconsin's western border, La Crosse grew as a lumber town on the Mississippi River and flourished as a regional hub of transportation and industry during the railroad era. Today, as home to the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Viterbo University, and Western Technical College, La Crosse mixes the charm of a college town with its industrial past. With renowned medical institutions that are over a hundred years old, the city is also known as a growing regional hub for healthcare and healthcare research.

La Crosse draws its identity from its scenic river location, and prides itself on neighborhoods with leafy, tree-lined streets forming a compact grid pattern. An urban destination on Wisconsin's only National Scenic Byway "The Great River Road," it is a unique place where city living includes ice fishing in the winter, bald-eagle sightings in the spring, kayaking in the summer, and biking year round. For these reasons and more, in the last decade La Crosse has ranked among the nation's "Best Places to Live" (U.S. News), "Best Green City" (Country Home), "Smartest Places to Live" (Kiplinger's Personal Finance), and "Most Secure Places to Live" (Farmers Insurance Group).



Major Landmarks at and near the Study Area





**Bird's Eye View of La Crosse, WI (1887).** The Study area, outlined in white, is partially shown in this image as an emerging neighborhood

Yet the city is not without challenges. Many of its older urban neighborhoods have declined with the growth of suburbs in the late 1960s and 70s. Working class neighborhoods, in particular, have suffered from a lack of investment even as the City's anchor institutions thrived. La Crosse has struggled to retain college students after they graduate and to attract the talented workforce that, instead, commute from outlying suburbs. This decline of La Crosse's once vibrant older neighborhoods is evident in the study area, which combines the residential and institutional forces that epitomize a city seeking balanced growth.

## POWELL-HOOD-HAMILTON

Laid out beginning in the 1880s, Powell-Hood-Hamilton is one of the "southside" neighborhoods that grew as industrial areas were built along the railroad tracks adjacent to the river marshes.

The high-volume corridors of South Avenue, Jackson Street, Green Bay Street and West Avenue form the physical boundaries of Powell-Hood-Hamilton, roughly 50 blocks in size. This neighborhood, named for the parks and school that anchor the community, is one of La Crosse's oldest and most racially diverse. Among the 3,500 people who live in the neighborhood are new and long-time residents of Czech, German, Irish, Polish and African descent as well as Asian refugees, primarily those from the Hmong ethnic group, who arrived in La Crosse beginning in the 1970s.

The housing stock is typically small, wooden, single story homes, a significant number of which were

built before 1900 and are showing the signs of age. While the entire city has experienced a drop in owner-occupied housing, it has been more significant in this neighborhood. Rental units account for 71% of the study area, compared to 53% of the City overall, with no higher quality rental options. Powell-Hood-Hamilton also has a higher concentration of lower income households. At \$27,660, the median household income of the study area is \$10,000 less than the city median.

Twenty-six of the blocks in Powell-Hood-Hamilton are recognized as the Sanford Archaeological District, an area that contains remains of a portion of a 450-650 year old Oneota village. The Sanford Archaeological District is a catalogued burial site. Excavations within the District were made possible during the construction of Gundersen Lutheran facilities (1991) and the Seventh Avenue intersection in 2004. Any future work in the area is subject to review by the State Historical Society's Burial Preservation Board and the City's Archaeological Overlay District.

## GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER

Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center emerged from the 1995 merger of two La Crosse institutions: Lutheran Hospital and Gundersen Clinic. The history of these neighboring institutions overlapped early on through the leadership of renowned Norwegian doctor Adolph Gundersen, and continued by members of the Gundersen family.



↑

..... The original Hamilton School erected in 1885 on Eighth Street and Johnson Street.

..... Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railroad built along the base of the Mississippi River bluffs, leading to growth of industries and new neighborhoods along the southside waterfront.

**1890**

..... In 1902, Lutheran Hospital incorporated at 1922 South Front Street.

**1900**

..... Lutheran Hospital locates to current location on South Avenue.

..... Powell and Hood Parks are dedicated in 1909. ....

..... Renowned landscape architect John Nolen plans La Crosse Park System in 1909, envisions Isle La Plume as large park.

**1910**

..... Salzer Seed Company buildings erected in 1917.

..... Neighborhood breweries struggle during Prohibition, from 1920 to 1933.

**1920**

..... Isle la Plume Wastewater Treatment Facility is established in 1936.

**1930**

..... The first commencement exercises are held in 1940 at Viterbo College, now Viterbo University.

**1940**

..... Houska Park is opens in 1947.

**1950**

..... The current Hamilton Elementary School ..... Fire destroys the original Lutheran Hospital building.

**1960**

..... New hospital building opens in 1965, replacing facilities destroyed by fire.

..... Swift Creek is re-routed, making land available for clinical expansion, parking lots and 24 units of housing for resident interns.

**1970**

..... Initial wave of Hmong immigrants begin relocating to the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton area.

..... Salzer Seed Co building repurposed as senior housing.

**1980**

..... In 1995, Gundersen Clinic and Lutheran Hospital-La Crosse join forces to form Gundersen Lutheran, Inc.

**1990**

..... The City of La Crosse completes the 1998 Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton Neighborhood Plan.

**2000**

..... South Side Community Center is built in 2002.






..... A 2006 agreement between the City and Gundersen Lutheran establishes Tax Incremental Financing District (TID) #14, which includes neighborhood development among its goals.

**2010**

..... TID#14 development agreement is updated in 2012.

..... Gundersen Lutheran builds new hospital bedtower, scheduled to open in 2013.

↓



**Bird's Eye View of the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center (2012)** showing the new hospital building under construction.

The 1902 Lutheran Hospital, which was built at the idyllic edge of a growing town, has grown into a 100-acre Medical Center hosting the 325-bed flagship hospital and regional inpatient behavioral health facility of a health system with presence in three states.

The major transformation of the campus occurred beginning in the 1960s, the automobile era. The 1965 addition, which replaced the original hospital destroyed four years earlier in a fire, had a fundamentally different relationship to South Avenue and the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood. The front door on South Avenue became the back door as the campus turned its face toward the river where infill land made expansion possible. Swift Creek, which ran roughly parallel to South Avenue was re-routed to its current course to accommodate new buildings, including an intern housing complex and special needs housing. Since then, the Medical Center has grown with new additions and two medical office buildings located in the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood that connect across South Avenue by bridge and tunnel.

Gundersen Lutheran Health System has about 6,300 employees and has approximately one million patient visits each year system wide. The daily influx of Medical Center workers, patients, and visitors creates a mini-economy on the southside. This generates an opportunity for a new type of development that re-connects the Medical Center to South Avenue and to the neighborhood.

## ISLE LA PLUME

The name “Isle La Plume,” belies the history of the Mississippi River island as a former landfill and its current predominant use as municipal service center that includes city parks, yard waste recycling, transit offices, public works operations center, police impound, storage, fire training, and wastewater treatment facility.

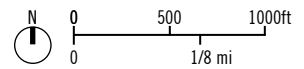
In 1911, John Nolen envisioned Isle La Plume, then a marshy lowlands owned by a lumber company, as the designated park grounds for southside neighborhoods, much like Pettibone Park to the north. A century later, the industrial utility of the island has proven to be as enduring as Nolen’s vision of a waterfront park on the Isle. The popularity of Houska Park and the recreational trails, in spite of their proximity to the wastewater treatment plant, is a testament of residents’ desire for more open, waterfront space for active and passive recreation.

## A TALE OF TWO WORLDS

A quick glance at the map at the right illustrates the vast dissimilarity in the shape of the built environment on either side of South Avenue within the study area. The area to the east reflects the walkable urban grid typical of La Crosse neighborhoods. The area to the west, on the other hand, reflects a more car-oriented, suburban type of development with cul-de-sacs and large areas of surface parking. The challenge for the Joint Plan moving forward is not only to improve connections between synergistic uses but to also re-knit urban zones with inconsistent approaches to development.



BASE MAP OF STREETS, STRUCTURES, PAVED AREAS AND OPEN SPACES



## PLANNING GOALS

The following goals were identified by the Steering Committee to guide the Joint Plan process.

- 1 Create a feasible, developable and economically and environmentally sustainable plan
- 2 Revitalize the neighborhood
- 3 Make the neighborhood a place where people want to live and feel safe
- 4 Create a long-term vision for a more healthy community
- 5 Build community consensus and support

A long-term vision for a more healthy community builds a framework that guides decisions that shape our children's' future



1916 - West Avenue Ice Rink at Powell Park, Powell-Hood-Hamilton Neighborhood



2013 - Ice Rink at Hood Park, Powell-Hood-Hamilton Neighborhood

## HEALTHY COMMUNITY IDEAL

In addition to the planning goals that must be met, the Joint Plan's success will also be measured against an ideal that represents the utmost benefit that can be realized through the collaboration of a Health System and the neighborhood where its flagship campus is located. Synergistic opportunities can be envisioned by matching needs to resources that are uniquely available within the neighborhood, the City and the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center.

Synergistic opportunities are organized below under five keywords —balance, health-focus, accessibility, vitality and resilience— that define the qualities of a healthy community within the Joint Plan study area.



### Balance

- Balancing the Medical Center's need for change with the neighborhood's need for stability through a unified public realm that serves the needs of both
- Achieving jobs-to-housing balance by providing new, diverse housing options for employees of nearby institutions within the neighborhood and creating new job opportunities for current residents in potential new development
- Placing the health system's retail and service components along public rights of way for increased business and improved access by residents

### Health-focus

- Partnering with Health Systems and Universities to create "Health Impact Assessments" for planned or proposed projects that impact the neighborhood
- Creating a plan for the provision of healthy foods in the form of a grocery store, farmer's market and/or community gardens in the Wellness or Gateway District to serve the neighborhood and the larger "food desert"

### Accessibility

- Improving neighborhood access to the recreational and natural resources within the Wellness District to improve community health and make PHH a more desirable place to live
- Improved transit service and safe access to transit lines to reduce parking demand and vehicular traffic in the study area
- Redeveloping South Avenue corridor with amenities accessible by foot from the neighborhood and the medical center campus

### Vitality

- Promoting sustainable growth of the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center as a regional employment center for continued economic benefit to the La Crosse region and surrounding neighborhoods
- Promoting the establishment and ensuring the continuation of a fiscal agents, such as a Community Development Corporation and/or a Joint Development Corporation, that can lead neighborhood revitalization

### Resilience

- Ensuring community resilience against natural disasters through joint disaster scenario planning
- Planting a resilient urban forest to replace the elm and ash trees removed to prevent damage due to invasive species and disease.



Above: Word diagram illustrating themes heard at the Public Meetings

## COMMUNITY INPUT

The process for the Joint Neighborhood Plan was inclusive of neighboring residents, supporting government institutions, business owners, Gundersen Lutheran employees and employees from other businesses and nearby institutions. Ultimately a planning process which includes the thoughts, ideas and passion from all participants and stakeholders will lead to a successful outcome.

For two days in early December, 2012, the planning and design team met with various stakeholders to gather existing information and feedback on initial assessment ideas. With topics ranging from area economic conditions, to physical infrastructure, and from safety and security to access to fresh food, the team and community shared in an understanding of what the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood was all about and looked forward to envision a new future.

The planning and design team returned with a fresh look and a revitalized approach to community planning in late January 2013 for a neighborhood workshop. The workshop had remarkable attendance. Animated discussions, and great thoughts for what issues are most important and ideas for how to fix them came from this workshop. The great love and support for the success of this neighborhood was incredibly apparent as neighbors came together to share ideas.

Throughout the planning process, the neighborhood and community have shown great support, pride and a positive attitude towards future opportunities. Several consistent names and faces participated in each community meeting and will continue to be a part of the effort to make the Joint Neighborhood Plan a true success.



“I think the block I live on is a terrific block and all the neighbors I have are wonderful people.”

- Powell-Hood-Hamilton Resident, Andrew Londre

**STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPANTS (by meeting category)**

**Local Businesses**

Warren Loveland - Horizon Management  
Denise Loveland - Horizon Management

**Government Stakeholders**

Bob Seaquist - City Council #8  
Fran Formanek - City Council #13  
Dick Swantz - City Council #17  
Gar Amunson - City Parks and Recreation  
Jill Billings - State of WI Assembly  
Andrew Londre - La Crosse County #9  
Carrie J Olson - WI DNR (separate phone call)  
Don Smith, City of La Crosse Art Board (by e-mail)

**Planning and Development Stakeholders**

Jerry Every - Park Board  
Mark Schlafer - City Assessor  
Sara Westbrook - LADCO  
James Hill - LADCO  
Randy Turtenwald - City Engineer  
Karl Green - UW Extension  
Brian Fukuda - La Crosse County  
Tim Kabat - Downtown Mainstreet Inc.  
Sara Sullivan - Neighborhood Revitalization Commission, City Council #12

**Transportation Stakeholders**

Dick Granchalek - La Crosse Chamber of Commerce

Jackie Eastwood - LAPC  
Paul Wyden - WisDOT  
Andrew Winga - WisDOT  
Steve Flotmeyer - WisDOT  
Keith Carlson - La Crosse MTU

**City Engineering, Public Works and Emergency Services**

Pat Hogan - La Crosse Police Department  
Fran Formanek - City Council #13  
Randy Turtenwald - City Engineer  
Dale Hexom - City Public Works

**Religious and Educational Institutions**

Steve Michaels - Hamilton Early Learning Center, School of Technology and Arts Principal  
Pat Kerrigan - Viterbo University  
Chris Crye - Neighborhood City Church  
Mark Jolivette - Our Saviors Lutheran Church

**Community Groups**

Tom Claflin - Habitat for Humanity - La Crosse Area  
Denise Loveland - Horizon Management  
Todd Mandel - CouleeCAP/LCHDO

**Real Estate Stakeholders**

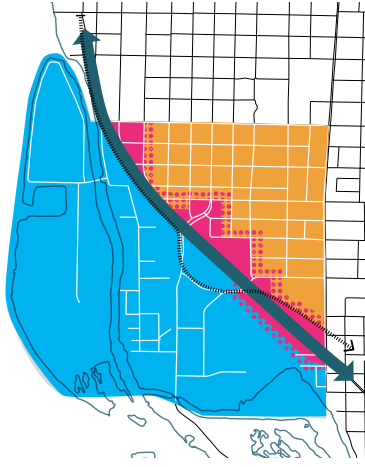
Marvin Wanders - 360 Realty  
Ted Matkom - Gorman & Company

**Public Forums, Planning Charrettes and Presentations**

Public meetings were held at the Southside Community Center in December 2012, January and March 2013. Attendance and participation from community members was outstanding, on average 50-60 people in attendance. A special thanks to all of those in attendance, your participation in the planning process and continued implementation will make this plan a true success.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## ASSESSING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE



Map of Study Area Districts

### STUDY AREA DISTRICTS

The Joint Plan is based on a comprehensive analysis of the built environment and community health within the study area that has identified three distinct “districts” with unique needs, challenges and opportunities. These districts are:

- Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood
- Southern Gateway
- Wellness District

The identity of the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood is well established, while the “Southern Gateway” and “Wellness Districts” are previously undefined areas that will benefit from a cohesive identity.

The following section summarizes the analysis findings first by category and then by district, to identify key drivers of change in each area in the near and long-term future.

### AMENITIES AND SERVICES

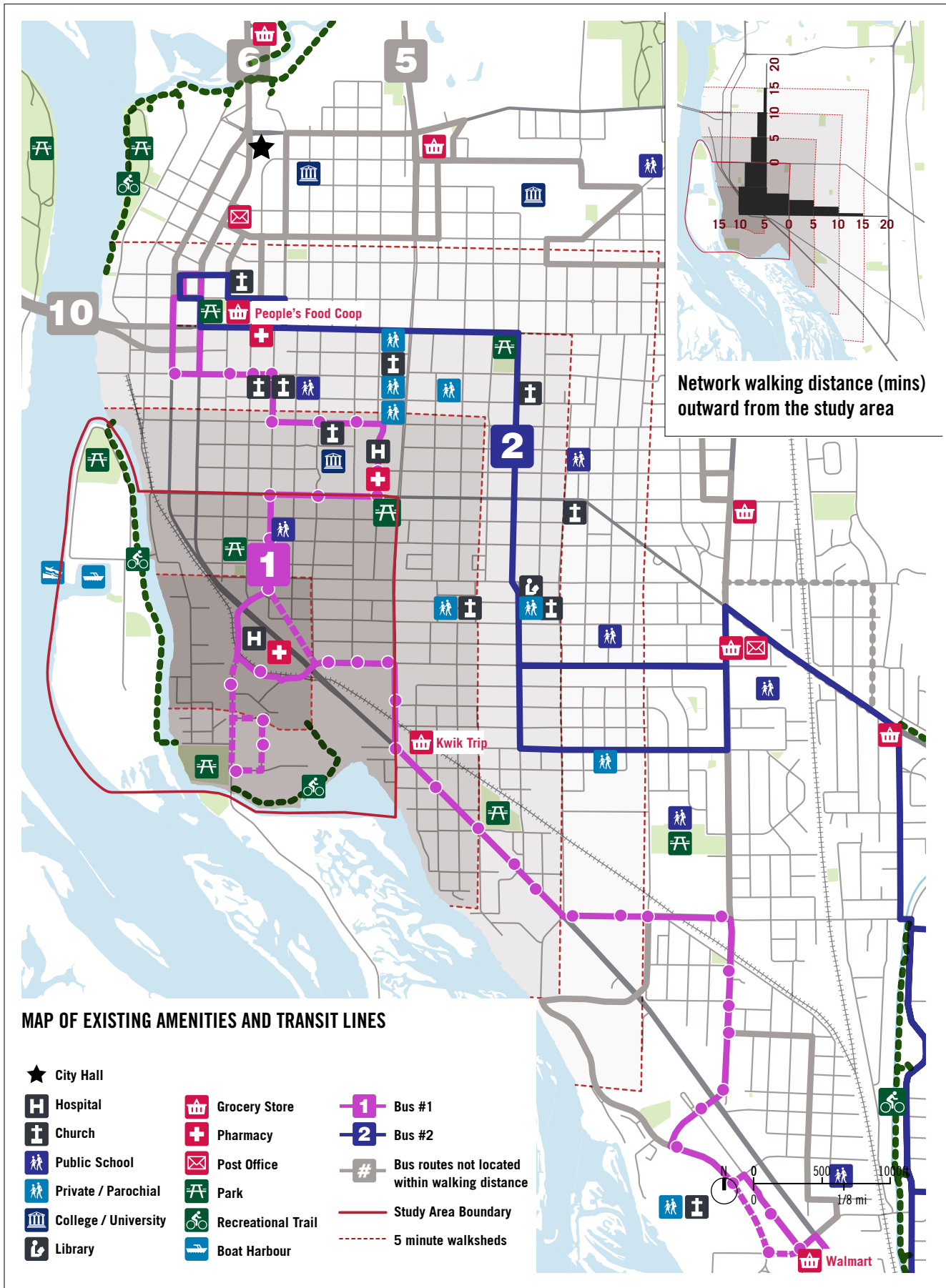
Amenities are defined as things that provide comfort, convenience, or enjoyment. For a community, amenities might include retail establishments, restaurants, other businesses and institutions. The study area is amenity-poor, and has limited access to amenities and services that are located outside walking distance range of the residential areas.

Fresh and healthy foods is the one amenity that is most critically lacking in the study area. The United States Department of Agriculture has identified the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood and residential areas of Muddy Flats and Green Island as a “food desert”: Among the 1755 households in this area, 18% of them lack access to a car that would take them to a supermarket that carries fresh fruits and vegetables. There is limited access by public transportation Bus #1 (South Ave-Downtown) whose route includes two grocery stores (People’s Food Coop and Walmart) outside of the study area. (See Map of Existing Amenities and Transit Lines, p.15)

### TRANSPORTATION

The Study Area is bordered by two regional thoroughfares—Jackson Street (WI-33) and West Avenue (WI-35)—and bisected by South Avenue, which carries US Highway 14/61 through southside La Crosse. Along with Losey Boulevard located about a mile to the west, South and West Avenues are the only major thoroughfares that carry traffic north-south through La Crosse due to topographical constraints. (See Map of Average Daily Traffic, p.21). The La Crosse Area Planning Committee is in the process of creating the CouleeVision 2050 Plan (see [www.couleevision2050.com](http://www.couleevision2050.com)) which is scheduled to be finalized in May 2013. This plan may identify upgrades and project opportunities regarding transportation options in, through, and around the study area.





**MAP OF EXISTING AMENITIES AND TRANSIT LINES**

- ★ City Hall
- H Hospital
- ⊕ Church
- ⚎ Public School
- ⚎ Private / Parochial
- ⚎ College / University
- ⚎ Library
- 🏪 Grocery Store
- ⊕ Pharmacy
- ✉ Post Office
- ⚎ Park
- 🚲 Recreational Trail
- ⚎ Boat Harbour
- 1 Bus #1
- 2 Bus #2
- # Bus routes not located within walking distance
- Study Area Boundary
- - - 5 minute walksheds

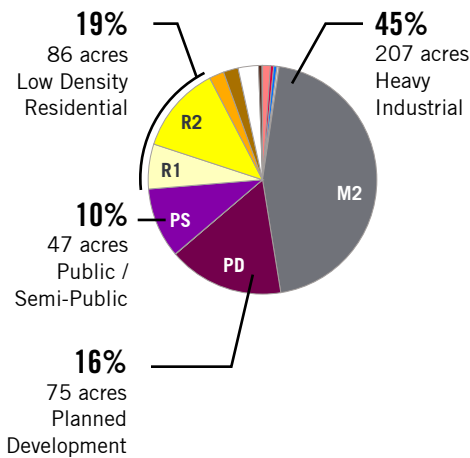
**Network walking distance (mins) outward from the study area**



A 2000 study has shown child pedestrian injury rates to be 2.5 times higher on one-way than on two-way streets. This statistic must be considered in relation to the location of Hamilton Early Education Center in any proposed modifications to surrounding streets. These and other concerns for health, safety and welfare can be verified and qualified through the use of Health Impact Assessments (HIAs), a powerful new tool that allows evaluation of built environment changes through the public health lens.

## LAND USE AND ZONING

The Study area has a wide variety of land uses, ranging from residential, institutional to industrial. (See Map of Existing Zoning Categories, p.17).



Almost half of the study area is zoned Heavy Industrial (M2), including most of Isle La Plume and Muddy Flats. It is not untypical for a post-industrial city such as La Crosse to have an industrial waterfront: areas like these, however, are increasingly reclaimed as public parks and promenades. The 2011 Port of La Crosse Harbor Waterfront Plan, similarly, has called for the relocation of those industrial uses not dependent on water use or river transport in order to achieve a natural, publicly accessible and continuous riverfront.

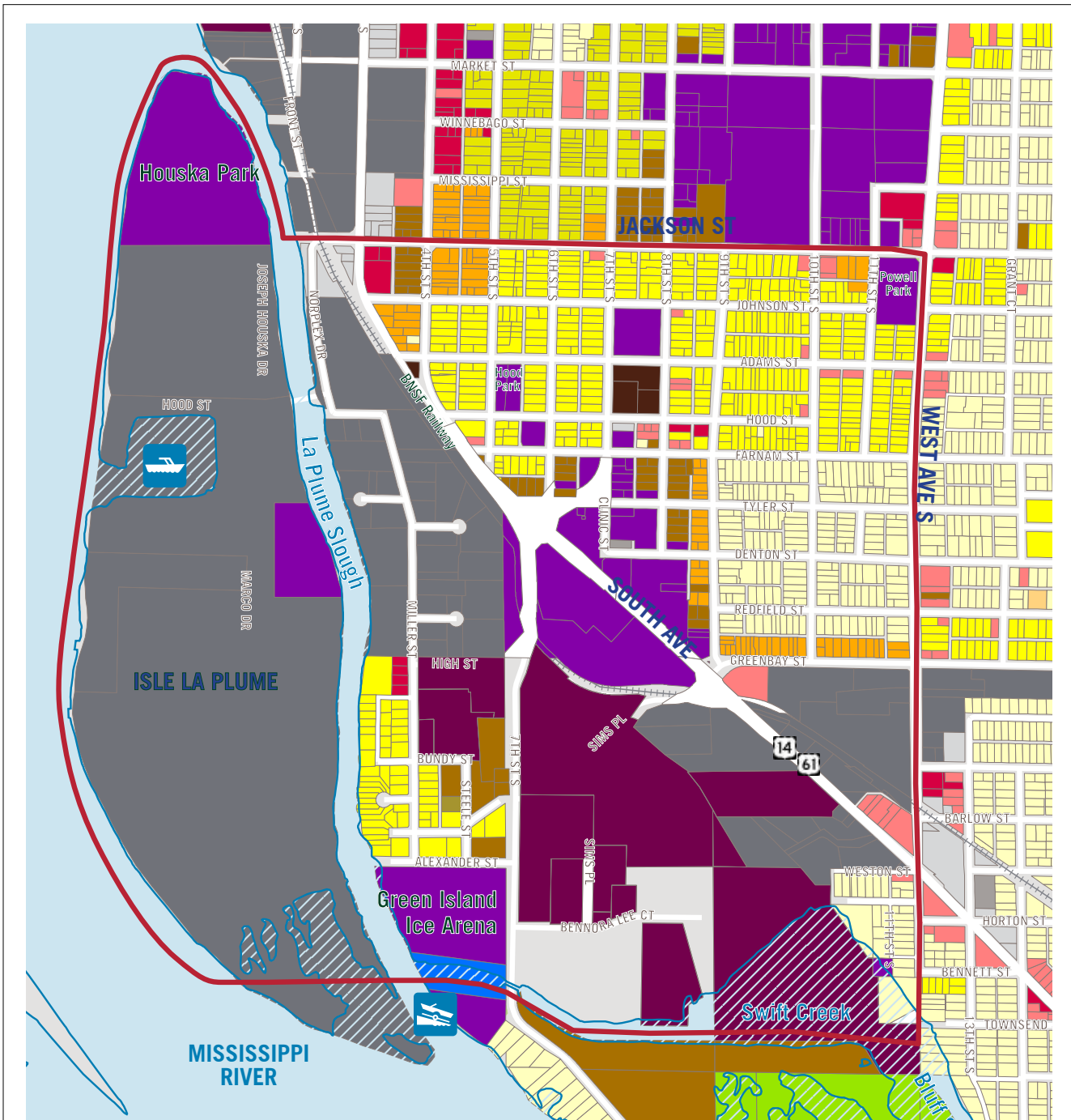
Residential uses are largely concentrated in the historic Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood, which is contiguous with residential areas of similar time period to its north and east. A stable cluster of single-family homes also exists between La Plume Slough and Seventh Street on Green Island. A majority of the residential uses in the study area are zoned low density residential (R1 and R2). This is a recent change: Powell-Hood-Hamilton was zoned for multi-family for almost half a century until the 1997 Comprehensive Southside Rezoning.

Another large category of use in the study area is Public / Semi-Public, which includes parks and institutions including the core Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center.

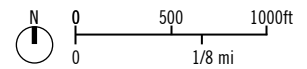
Only seven acres or 1.5 percent of the study area is zoned specifically for commercial use. Powell-Hood-Hamilton once hosted a number of corner stores and other small businesses: this is no longer the case. Today, commercial uses are largely concentrated on South Avenue, which has a number of auto sale and repair businesses that extend north to downtown.

## OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The two namesake parks of the neighborhood, Powell and Hood Parks, have recently passed their centennial. Waterfront parks include Green Island Park, which hosts the ice arena, and Houska Park, which occupies the northern top of Isle La Plume. The completion of the VIP trail and the Isle La Plume trail and bridges have created greater connectivity between the waterfront parks although connections to the neighborhood, to downtown and to residential areas further south can still be provided. The study area is also home to the Municipal Harbor (Isle La Plume) and Seventh Street boat landing on Green Island.



**EXISTING ZONING CATEGORIES**



**ZONING CATEGORIES IN THE STUDY AREA**

**RESIDENTIAL**

- R1 - Single Family Residence
- R2 - Residence
- R4 - Low Density Multiple Dwelling
- R5 - Multiple Dwelling
- TND - Traditional Neighborhood Development

**COMMERCIAL**

- C1 - Local Business District
- C2 - Commercial District
- PS - PUBLIC / SEMI-PUBLIC
- PD - PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

**INDUSTRIAL / UTILITY**

- M1 - Light Industrial
- M2 - Heavy Industrial
- PL - Parking Lot
- UT - Public Utility
- FW - FLOODWAY
- ROW - RIGHT-OF-WAY

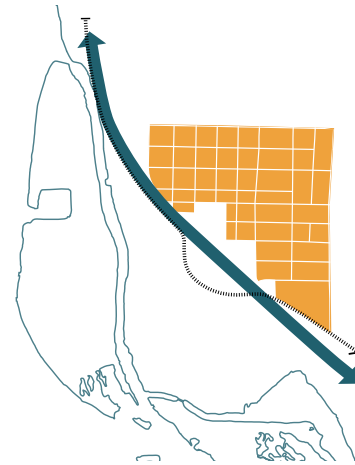
**OUTSIDE STUDY AREA**

- CON - Conservancy
- C3 - Community Business
- R3 - Special Residential
- R6 - Special Multiple Dwelling
- WR - Washburn Residential
- WATER - n/a
- EA - Exclusive Agricultural
- A1 - Agricultural

## POWELL-HOOD-HAMILTON NEIGHBORHOOD A CALL FOR NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION

Powell-Hood-Hamilton (PHH) is a historic residential neighborhood in the southside of La Crosse composed primarily of single family homes built on small lots. The neighborhood character is strongly tied to the compact street grid with its alleys and street trees, which creates a well-connected, walkable environment. This is a community that benefits from many life-long and passionate residents. The parks and school that give the neighborhood its name are still a large part of the community identity although, in some ways, Powell-Hood-Hamilton can be seen as part of the larger southside and not a distinct neighborhood.

Safety, quality and diverse housing options and neighborhood commercial (especially fresh foods) are among the neighborhood's priority needs. Although it is adjacent to major institutions (Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, Viterbo University and Mayo Health System), Powell-Hood-Hamilton struggles to maintain its sense of stability and community. As such, the priority task at Powell-Hood-Hamilton is neighborhood stabilization.



Critical to the process of stabilization is the adoption of a broader application of the R1 zoning category. (See Zoning Map, p.17). This will protect the single-family nature of the core neighborhood areas, and provide assurance to current and future residents that PHH will not lose its fundamental character. In order to facilitate this, a specific study of proposed boundaries is necessary to ensure appropriate location of the expanded R1 category, and to support legislation moving through the City Council.



Single-family homes



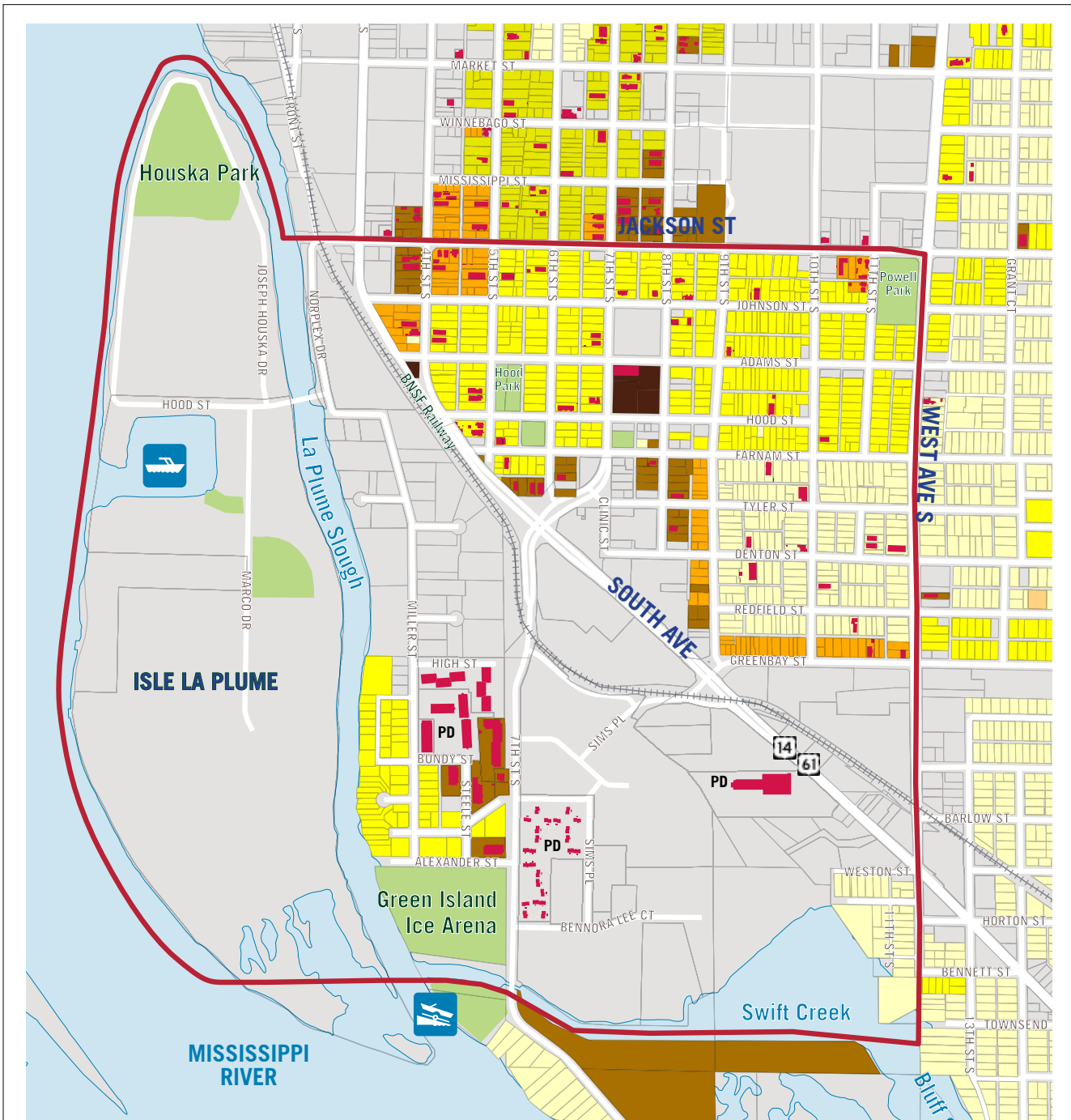
Senior apartments at the former Salzer Seed-Co building



Store with residence above, West Avenue

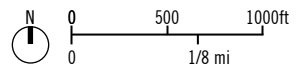


Home under construction by Western Technical College students



**RESIDENTIAL ZONES vs LOCATION OF MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING**

**MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING** is perceived as a threat to the stability of single family residential neighborhoods nationwide and La Crosse is no different. Negative attributes associated with multi-family can be addressed through design (as in the City’s Multi-Family Housing Design Standards) and code enforcement. Location also becomes important. The map above shows multi-family housing located throughout the neighborhood, largely on parcels currently zoned at a lower density. As the city’s vision for neighborhood restoration moves forward, a strategy will be needed to meet the demand for affordable quality rental housing in the neighborhood.



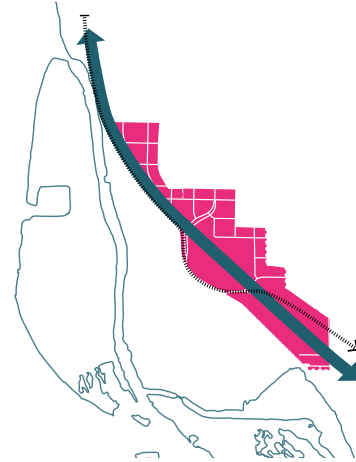
- R1 - Single Family Residence
- R2 - Residence
- R4 - Low Density Multiple Dwelling
- R5 - Multiple Dwelling
- TND - Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Multi-family Housing, Existing

## SOUTHERN GATEWAY AN OPPORTUNITY TO RE-INVENT THE SOUTHSIDE

The Gateway District is a mixed-use corridor that is utilized to move traffic through and to access commercial establishments lining the corridor. It holds opportunity for redevelopment and enhancement as a southern gateway to La Crosse and Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center.

Currently, the image of the District is one of large expanses of asphalt, speeding vehicles and, with the exception of the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and the Gund Brewery Lofts, lack of identity and character.

With visibility towards 20,000 cars, development within the Gateway District can project a brand new image for the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood and provide an appropriate transition between residential and non-residential uses. (See Map of Average Daily Traffic, p.21). Priority needs of the District include redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties and improved pedestrian and bike safety.



South Avenue



7th Street



7th Street



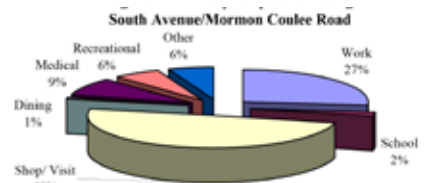
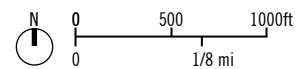
Former Bakalars Sausage Building



**AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC ON THOROUGHFARES**

**TRAFFIC ON SOUTH AVENUE** creates a challenge *and* an opportunity for the Southern Gateway District and surrounding areas. The 20,000 cars that pass through the area can be a resource to tap into for redevelopment in the area. Design of the corridor to accommodate ease of access *and* movement is critical for the success of future land uses along South Avenue. Ensuring safe pedestrian and bike access to destinations on South Avenue will be a goal of the Joint Plan.

(At right: User survey results for primary purpose using South Avenue / Mormon Coulee Rd , 2005 South La Crosse Transportation Study)

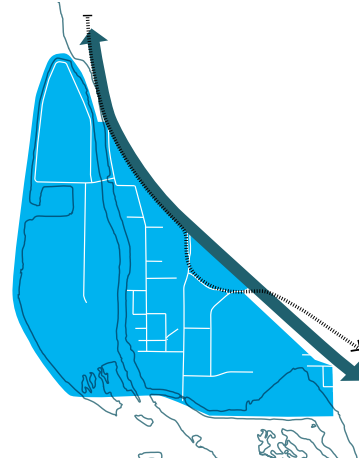


- AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (2008), N-S STREETS
- AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (2008), E-W STREETS

## WELLNESS DISTRICT A MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN THE REGION

The Wellness District is anchored by Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center campus and extends from South Avenue to the backwaters of La Plume Slough and Swift Creek, and to the Mississippi along Isle La Plume. Largely built in the mid to late 20th century on infilled land, the District features a suburban development pattern with cul-de-sacs giving access to industrial and residential parcels. (See Map of Existing Barriers to Waterfront Access, p.23).

Unlike the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood with its robust walkable grid, the Wellness District lacks a connected network of streets and paths that can foster future redevelopment of industrial waterfront land and provide greater access to the waterfront. The introduction of parks and connected pathways, restoration of the slough banks, and promotion of active recreation in the Wellness District will be supportive of Gundersen Lutheran's health mission and sustainable development efforts.



La Plume Slough



Isle La Plume Trail



Muddy Flats, looking towards Gundersen Lutheran campus



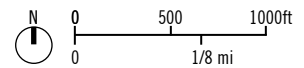
Gundersen Lutheran campus open space





**EXISTING BARRIERS TO WATERFRONT ACCESS**

**PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE WATERFRONT** for the benefit of residents, patients and visitors can become one of the driving planning goals for the Wellness District. The railroad and topographical barriers limit the number of routes that link the residential neighborhoods to the public waterfront. The small number of vehicular connections between Isle La Plume, Muddy Flats, Green Island and South Avenue also create a potential safety hazard, particularly for events such as ice hockey gatherings at the Green Island arena.



## MARKET ASSESSMENT

### INTRODUCTION

As a key component of the planning team, HR&A Advisors conducted a high-level demographic, economic, and real estate market scan. By collecting and analyzing additional data from publicly available data sources, as well as private data tools such as ESRI Business Analyst Online, LoopNet, and REIS, the assessment was able to identify the economic advantages and constraints of the Study Area.

### SUMMARY

- **MULTI-FAMILY:** There is no evidence of market support for market-rate multi-family residential development. However, affordable and mixed-income multi-family rental residential development is feasible when supported by State of Wisconsin incentive programs.
- **OFFICE:** There is little to no market support for new commercial office space. In addition, the city will continue to emphasize downtown as its urban office park.
- **RETAIL:** The local market could support limited retail development with certain offerings including food sales and restaurants. (Demand based on resident demographics only. See page 25 for potential contribution of area institutions).
- **HOTEL:** In a conventional market analysis, excluding the impact of Gundersen Lutheran, there appears to be minimal support for a hotel in this area. A new boutique hotel is planned for downtown La Crosse and there have been recent overtures for another hotel to support the La Crosse Center. However, with large medical campuses, conventional market analytics may not drive the decision-making process. In this case, a smaller hotel, working in collaboration with Gundersen Lutheran, may very well be viable.

There is limited market support for new development in the study area but potential exists for generating additional demand by serving the needs of patients, visitors and employees of Gundersen Lutheran and area institutions.

## ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER AND AREA INSTITUTIONS

The understanding of a Health System's impact on the local economy is well-established. The American Hospital Association estimates that each hospital job supports about two more jobs in the community and every dollar spent by a hospital supports roughly \$2.30 of additional business activity. (The Economic Contribution of Hospitals, 2010). This contribution is expected to grow in the future as demand for services increase due to aging demographics and rising consumer expectations. In addition to being a growth sector, the healthcare industry is also a source of stability for the regional economy. Regional health systems like Gundersen Lutheran, in particular, bring in insurance dollars from beyond city and state lines to the local economy, providing an additional level of economic stability in cities with modest population growth.

The impact of a Medical Center on a neighborhood economy, on the other hand, is difficult to measure and predict. A series of factors, including the availability of services within the hospital campus, proximity of neighborhood destinations, lunch duration and walkability, among other factors, come into play. While opportunity exists, a more refined understanding of patient / employee / student purchasing and service needs is required to determine the role that area institutions can play in enhancing retail demand in the study area. This will need to be completed in a separate study.

### Study Area

3500 residents

### Gundersen Lutheran La Crosse Campus

700,000+ patient visits/yr

4400 employees

### Mayo Clinic-Franciscan Healthcare

103,000+ patient visits/yr

3400 employees

### Viterbo University

3,192 students

413 employees

## RESIDENTIAL MARKET

The regional La Crosse market offers an array of cost-effective home ownership opportunities and products that are affordable to a majority of area residents. As a result, the regional market for multi-family product is soft. This is especially true within the Study Area.

At one end of the development spectrum, quality multi-family residential product cannot compete with for-sale product. At the other end, lower-quality, poorly tended rental products in converted properties drive down the overall neighborhood character and discourage investment in new market rate multi-family product.

There is an opportunity, however, for affordable, or mixed-income multi-family residential development within the Study Area when incentivized through Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) or New Market Tax Credits (for mixed-use development). Both programs are explained in greater detail in Section 5-Next Steps.

The economics of home ownership suggest that rental will be attractive only to niche market segments such as third-party certified sustainable housing.



VS



OWNERSHIP OPTION  
2 bed/ 3 bath, 1,450 SF house  
Monthly Ownership Costs: **\$1,150\***

RENTAL OPTION  
2 bed/ 2 bath, 1,100 SF  
Monthly Rent: **\$1,200**

Market dynamics and financing availability mean virtually all new multi-family development will be affordable.

**MARKET RATE RENT**  
**\$1.00 / SF / Month**

Project income does not cover development costs + required returns.

**NO MARKET FEASIBILITY**

VS

**AFFORDABLE RENTS**  
**\$0.75 / SF / Month**

Federal / State incentives fill the gap:

Low Income Housing Tax Credits for projects with tenants at 60% AMI. 25% of 2012 proposed projects in WI received credits.  
New Market Tax Credits for projects with at least 20% commercial space.

\*Assumes 3% down and an FSA Loan to meet 20% minimum down payment, and \$3,800 in annual property taxes.

## RETAIL MARKET

The Joint Plan Study Area is greatly lacking in retail offerings.

Residents of the study area have an annual retail spending potential (demand) of \$23.7 million, while retailers in the same Study Area only produced \$3.1 million in annual sales. As a result, there is a \$20.6 million annual leakage of potential sales to other areas.

The following retail categories have a high level of unmet demand, in square footage of retail space:

- 5,000 to 7,000 square feet of food and beverage sales area
- 10,000 to 20,000 square feet of general merchandise sales area, and
- 6,000 to 8,000 square feet of restaurants, pubs and taverns.

The demand for sales space in the food and beverage and general merchandise categories is competitively challenged by the domination of those categories by larger-scale big-box operators that have the economies of scale to offer goods at low prices. Multiple restaurants and taverns, on the other hand, can easily operate within the supportable scale of 6,000 to 8,000 square feet. Attracting the spending potential of local medical and educational institutions' employees as well as consumers who commute through the Study Area would further support retail operations.

The study area is under-retailed although the region is not.

	Demand	Supply	Sales Gap	Gap as % of Demand	
Study Area	\$23.7m	\$3.1m	20.7m	87%	under-retailed
City of La Crosse	\$424.9m	\$615.1m	-\$190.2m	-45%	over-retailed
La Crosse Region*	\$1,217m	\$1,200m	\$17m	1%	balanced

There is retail demand in several categories based on current resident demographics. Partnership with institutions, increasing density on commercial corridors and ability to capture the spending power of motorists on area thoroughfares will increase retail capacity in the Joint Plan study area.

	Demand	Supported SF	Feasibility
Food and Beverage Stores (e.g. green grocer)	\$3.2m	5,000-7,000	Challenging operational scale for most operators
Food Services and Drinking Places (e.g. sandwich shop)	\$2.9m	6,000-8,000	FEASIBLE (local, regional or national)
General Merchandise Stores (e.g. hardware store)	\$4.2m	10,000-20,000	Contemporary operators seek massive scale or downtown site

\* La Crosse MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) demographics are used to calculate regional retail supply and demand.

# PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## TO MEET SHORT-TERM NEEDS AND BUILD THE GROUNDWORK FOR LONG-TERM CHANGE

### A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT CONNECTIONS

Cities change, and with this change comes opportunity. But as we know from experience, these opportunities are presented to us in many forms. In order to take full advantage of the opportunities presented, it is critical that any planning effort has at its foundation a clear framework that can accommodate the varied opportunities that arise, and it must do this while not sacrificing key principles upon which the plan is based.

One of the fundamental components of a successful planning strategy is the creation of connections. Connections are the direct result of a network that has many intersections, resulting in conditions that facilitate pedestrian activity and better local vehicle movement. Connections, whether pedestrian, vehicular, or both, are the cornerstone of a physical environment in which people can navigate easily and efficiently. In addition, more connections result in a more comfortable and walkable environment,

which encourages activity and movement. Many neighborhoods and districts within cities suffer from a lack of connectivity, and this situation causes difficulty of movement through the network of streets and paths that make up our physical environment.

Connections allow people to get from place-to-place easily and safely, and a high number of connections results in smaller, more flexible blocks, or other development areas, that can accommodate a variety of future uses, increasing the ability of the district to take full advantage of opportunities as they arise, without compromising the principles of the plan.

The paths and intersections that make up the network, and produce connections, are all part of the basic framework that highly functioning cities, districts and neighborhoods that are successful, vibrant and great places to live and work.

The Framework Plan for Connections, which illustrates the network of streets and paths recommended for the future of the study area, is shown on the opposite page (p.29).

A framework for future development is the key to a plan that accommodates change, while maintaining the core principles of the plan.



EXISTING  
**90**



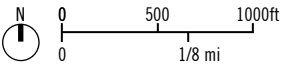
FUTURE POTENTIAL  
**185**



**FRAMEWORK PLAN FOR CONNECTIONS**

The plan above represents the projection of a series of connections that results in more highly connected areas within the districts. The proposed connections will facilitate neighbors’ access to the slough, movement from the north to the south, through the medical campus, connections for everyone to the local trail system, and out into the larger regional trail system. These connections bind the various residents, businesses, institutions and others together to form a cohesive community.

- Existing streets
- - - Proposed future connections
- Existing trail
- - - Proposed future trail
- · · Existing railroad



## A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

### LANDSCAPE

Among the various elements of a successful planning framework, the landscape is unique. It is comprised of the occupiable elements of the public realm, from natural trails and preserves to plazas and other constructed open spaces. It is critical that all parts of the landscape work together to foster a clear relationship between the private realm (institutional, commercial and residential development, etc) and the public realm (parks, plazas, trails, streets, etc). Each landscape element should clearly reinforce this relationship and provide discrete spaces, places and systems within which the citizens of the city and districts meet, play, exercise, and generally come together, creating the vibrancy inherent in great, highly interactive and successful cities and neighborhoods.

This vibrancy is the result of a combination of planned interdependence and connectivity that works to facilitate and promote planned and unplanned interaction alike. The landscape framework identifies

and describes the nature of the various types of public spaces, and provides direction for the programming and design of each. These spaces can take on many forms—highly programmed or passive, natural or constructed, facilitating movement or providing respite—all working together to provide a variety of experiences for the members of the community.

A robust and clear landscape framework is critical in the creation of a series of public place and connections that all work together, building on each other to provide a system that is complete but also varied, offering a rich fabric and series of experiences while maintaining the basic character of the area. Powell-Hood-Hamilton and the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center are located in a unique area and the landscape framework should address this, while also reinforcing the connection to the rest of La Crosse and the region.

The Framework Plan for Landscape, which illustrates the network of parks, open spaces, natural elements, trails and educational elements recommended for the future of the study area, is shown on the opposite page (p.31).

**PARKS AND OPEN SPACES** are the core elements of a robust public landscape framework. They are the backdrop to social interaction and recreation.

**NATURAL ELEMENTS** offer a counterpoint to the development of the city. They give residents and others in the city a way to understand the larger ecosystem in which the city sits.

**PEDESTRIAN + BIKE CONNECTIONS** and paths offer a way for people to move through the various parts of neighborhoods and cities without the use of the automobile. They remind us that there are other, healthier methods of moving from place-to-place.

**EDUCATIONAL ELEMENTS** teach us about our environment. They tell us about our history, how the city came to be, and also our pre-history, what the place was like before we arrived. Arts and cultural programming contribute to the fabric and interweaving of a neighborhood.



La Plume Slough



Isle la Plume Bike Trail



Sacred Ground / Healing Garden

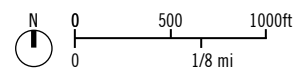




**FRAMEWORK PLAN FOR LANDSCAPE**

The plan above illustrates the landscape framework—a network of parks, open spaces and natural areas that are highly inter-connected with streets, paths, and trails. The framework includes restored backwaters, a linear park along La Plume Slough, an extended VIP trail, and bike improvements that provide greater connectivity between residential neighborhoods and the riverfront.

- Existing parks
- Existing multi-use trail
- Existing boat harbour
- Existing boat launch
- Proposed park / natural area
- Proposed trail extension / on-street connection
- Bike improvements
- Slope stabilization / native grasses
- Proposed new connections



## PRIORITY NEEDS ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY

Ensuring safety and security of residents is critical to the success of Powell-Hood-Hamilton (PHH) neighborhood revitalization. Real and perceived threats to safety and property prevent PHH residents and medical center employees from enjoying neighborhood amenities such as parks and sidewalks, reducing use of the public realm to the limited daytime hours. The negative reputation associated with crime is an impediment to redevelopment. As such, crime can be seen as damaging to the physical and mental health of individuals and the community. Addressing safety and security is a key priority of the Joint Plan.

The following section provides recommendations related to the built environment that can impact the safety and security of the Joint Plan study area. These are general strategies that are based on research linking crime prevalence with environmental conditions and can be implemented through zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and capital improvement programs among other planning mechanisms. Crime reduction efforts should be targeted based on the nature of the crime and strategic based on the location(s) where crime is most frequently reported.

A successful approach to crime reduction will require multiple, coordinated efforts between the residents, the City, institutions and businesses, with implementation actions ranging from community policing programs to the types of environmental changes which are discussed here under three headings: (1) Reduce opportunity for and fear of crime; (2) Reduce gaps in development along major thoroughfares; (3) Cultivate neighborhood stability.

Ensuring safety and security of residents is critical to the success of Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood revitalization, and a key component of a healthy community.

**CRIME DATA FOR STUDY AREA, 2011 and 2012** (below) shows that property crimes are the most common among the more serious (Class A) crimes categorized below. Crimes related to drugs, narcotics, and weapon law violations have almost doubled between 2011 and 2012 in the study area. While crime occurs all around La Crosse, the “Southside” including Powell-Hood-Hamilton is more readily associated with crime due to, as residents claim, an unwarranted stigma of dangerous crime in the neighborhood.

### Crimes Against Society

Drug and Narcotic Offenses and Weapon Law Violations



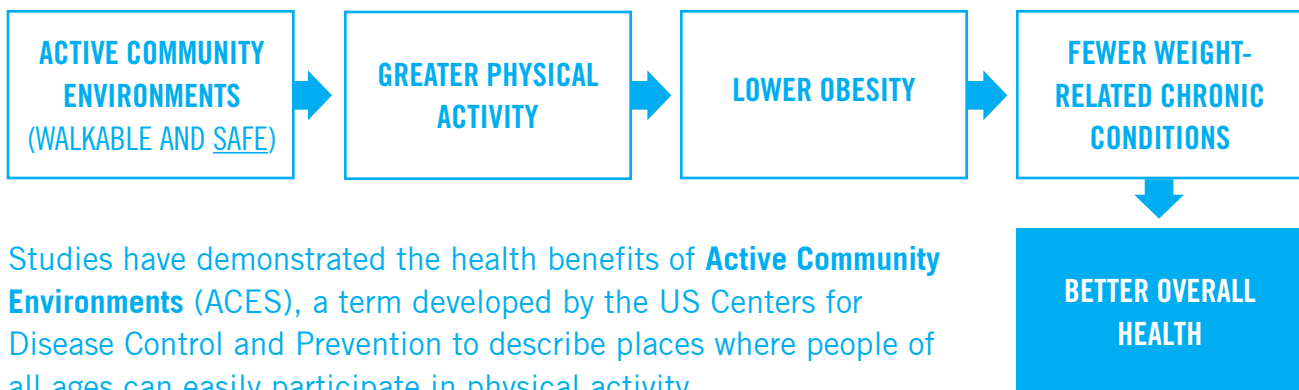
### Crimes Against Property

Theft, Larceny, Breaking and Entering, Vandalism, Robbery, Forgery



### Crimes Against Persons

Assault, Kidnapping / Abduction and Sexual Offenses



Studies have demonstrated the health benefits of **Active Community Environments** (ACES), a term developed by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to describe places where people of all ages can easily participate in physical activity.



**JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR Addressing SAFETY AND SECURITY**

**STRATEGY 1. Reduce Opportunity for and Fear of Crime**

“Opportunity” for crime has been found to be greater in areas that are easy to access, include a large number of potential “victims” or “criminals,” and provide criminals a lesser chance of being recognized or caught. The latter is often associated with physical environments that show signs of distress or abandonment—such as vandalism or deserted property—and areas with poor visibility.

Reducing perception or fear of crime is as important in community revitalization as reducing the actual incidence and opportunity for crime. Strategies that are recommended to reduce opportunity and fear of crime are as follows:

- Prioritize night-time lighting implementation efforts. Consider fixtures that are smart, energy-efficient and meet pedestrian visibility best practices
- Streamline code enforcement
- Engage citizen groups such as a CDC or neighborhood watch group in upkeep of neighborhood assets and public realm, building capacity for quick response to vandalism or disrepair of public property
- Work with neighborhood schools to educate children and youth on the community impacts of vandalism

**LIGHTING**

Lighting, which increases visibility, is great “low hanging fruit” when considering investments that are proven to make a difference. Streets and alleys that are dark at night make residents vulnerable to and fearful of crime.

Financial benefits of street lighting, based on crime reduction, have been shown to greatly outweigh



**City of Chattanooga, TN** was able to almost eliminate night-time crime and achieve a 73% reduction in electricity consumption by installing remote-controlled LED lighting in its popular Coolidge Park. The city is now replacing 25,000 street lamps with the high-tech system.

**Financial benefits of street lighting based on crime reduction greatly outweigh the capital costs.**

the capital costs. The return on investment is even greater with new remote-controlled LED lighting systems which vastly out-perform conventional street lights with their efficiency, predictability, longevity, color rendering, and brightness. Continuous and uniform street lighting is recommended, at a minimum, at the following priority locations:

- Known crime hotspots and corridors
- Areas within a few blocks of major thoroughfares
- Areas within a few blocks of bus routes
- Established “safe routes” or areas with greater pedestrian activity



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR Addressing SAFETY AND SECURITY

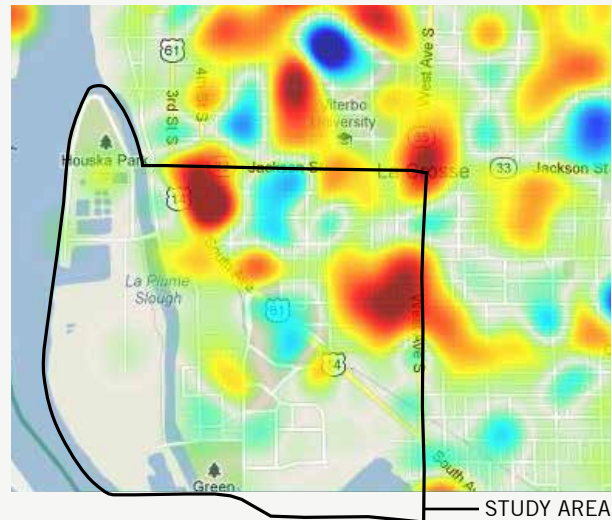
### STRATEGY 2. Reduce Gaps in Development along Major Thoroughfares

Research shows that high-crime neighborhoods are more likely to have greater gaps in development—major thoroughfares as boundaries, blocks with high percentage of commercial use, and unregulated parking lots—than lower crime neighborhoods. South Avenue, which presents all of these conditions, should be considered a primary target for physical changes that may lead to reduced crime in the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood.

Strategies to reduce permeability include:

- Create a consistent edge along South Ave
- Preserve structure of small neighborhood streets along South Avenue\*
- Use landscape buffers to shield view of surface parking lots from South Avenue
- Develop vacant or underutilized blocks
- Promote mixed-use development with a residential component
- Avoid large-scale, open surface lots
- Evaluate potential impact of new development on neighborhood safety and security, advocating for inclusion of elements and programs that deter criminals
- Require the inclusion of Health Impact Assessments (HIA) as part of the decision-making process on transportation improvements that increase ease of vehicular access. HIAs can illustrate health impacts of potential increase in crime due to increased permeability

\* Street closings are not recommended from a fire safety and walkability perspective



**CRIME HOT SPOTS MAP** (above) provided by the City of La Crosse Police Department shows the crime is concentrated at or near the intersection of major thoroughfares in the area: (1) South Ave / 4th St and Jackson St, (2) Jackson St and West Ave, and (3) West Ave and Greenbay St.



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR Addressing SAFETY AND SECURITY

### STRATEGY 3. Cultivate Neighborhood Stability

Residential stability, which has been correlated with home ownership rates and number of years residents have been living in a given neighborhood, is an important factor differentiating high-crime neighborhoods from low-crime ones.

The City of La Crosse has spearheaded housing development efforts in Powell-Hood-Hamilton to date. Fourteen homes were built and sold by the City and partners to date, and six more homes will be added to that list in the short-term.

Strategies to cultivate stability include:

- Continue ongoing efforts (City, CouleeCAP, Habitat for Humanity) to increase home ownership and intensify the quality of housing
- Establish programs to ensure that existing homeowners can remain in the neighborhood as the area is revitalized
- Consider broader application of the R1 zoning category within the core neighborhood
- Revamp neighborhood parks, and in particular Powell and Hood Parks in ways that strengthen the community sense of ownership and identity
- Evaluate Gundersen Lutheran benefit for employee neighborhood home purchase, including incentive amount, restrictions, commitments and geography
- Provide higher-quality rentals targeted to employees of Gundersen Lutheran, Viterbo University and Mayo Clinic, in order to:
  - Build PHH image as a stable neighborhood where employees live
  - Bring younger employees in who may buy their first home after renting in the area
- Enable aging-in-place of long-term residents by providing senior housing and other senior services
- Encourage police officers, firefighters, city engineers, planners and other city employees to live in the PHH neighborhood, allowing them to get to know the community and its problems and to help develop strategies for addressing them

## PRIORITY NEEDS

### IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS

The presence and visibility of distressed areas is a serious threat to community image and stability. For the purposes of this report, distressed areas are generally defined as:

- Vacant or abandoned buildings and properties that are not secured or maintained
- Occupied buildings that are damaged, or in visible disrepair
- Areas with a large number of closed businesses and for-sale properties
- Properties that have outstanding code violations
- Properties that project an unsightly and unkempt image in the public realm
- Areas where the public realm is in disrepair, including broken potholes, broken sidewalks, vandalized public furniture, unkempt utility lines, unhealthy street trees, etc.

The wide range and diversity of elements that are included in the list above makes it a challenge to address urban distress as a general category. A key goal of the Joint Plan is to identify a consistent strategy for addressing distressed areas in the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood that creates visible change in the short-term.

#### Current Strategies

The City's Replacement Housing program is a house-by-house strategy for combatting urban distress in the Powell-Hood-Hamilton and Washburn neighborhoods.

The Tax-Increment District (TID#14) created as a partnership between the City of La Crosse and Gundersen Lutheran Health System has employed two distinct strategies to revitalize the neighborhood (1) funding public works projects and (2) funding building individual projects (such as a ramp or a hotel).

The current strategies favor targeted, incremental change addressing current issues, and are expected to be continued into the future.

A key goal is to identify a consistent strategy for addressing distressed areas in the neighborhood that creates visible change in the short-term.

#### Consistency and Predictability

Consistency and predictability is critical to the public perception of change, especially when improvements being made are incremental in nature. Regulations and standards that are qualified with metrics and supported by code enforcement are a necessary element for all strategies to combat urban distress.

#### Strategies for Future Consideration

The following section presents three additional and diverse strategies that can make a great impact in a short period of time:

- Strategy 1: Block-by-block Redevelopment
- Strategy 2: Infrastructure Investments
- Strategy 3: Arts and the Creative Workforce



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING DISTRESSED AREAS

### STRATEGY 1. Block-by-Block Redevelopment

Successful Block by Block programs, especially as guided by Community Redevelopment Agencies, start with a strong set of guiding principles to ensure that the development process that occurs is true to what the neighborhood had been—that is a strategy that based on the principles that made the neighborhood great in the past. Included in those guiding principles one should find a strong statement regarding non-displacement of existing residents, the preservation of the neighborhood’s historic character, and redevelopment that would restore the neighborhood as mixed-income. This is true of many of the very successful neighborhood transitions, and it should be true for Powell-Hood-Hamilton as well.

Specifically a block-by-block development strategy is the building of new homes on vacant lots on the same streets where it rehabbed existing dilapidated structures. But it is done in a concerted effort, so the street is transformed through one project with multiple new constructions and renovations. The benefit to this is the transformational aspect of each of the block projects. People from both inside and outside the neighborhood can walk down the transformed street and get a clear sense of the potential embedded in the area.

In many cases it may seem as if this process is longer and more arduous than simply identifying specific houses or lots to either renovate or build, but the block-by-block process is, in the long run, generally more productive and creates a faster turnaround for the neighborhood. It also facilitates a more measured and manageable rehabilitation process, and allows the CDC to set expectations for development and for market shifts.



*Example:* Old Fourth Ward (Atlanta, GA) where the HDDC, a nonprofit community development corporation, has pursued a block-by-block rebuilding strategy since the 1990s to revitalize distressed areas in the historic district.

As the blocks of residential housing are transformed, typically the CDC, through partnerships, will begin developing larger multifamily and mixed-use developments in strategic locations to spark redevelopment throughout the neighborhood. However, it is also possible for the CDC to initiate multi-family or mixed-use projects prior to the single-family projects, if there is an appropriate partner and if the project can facilitate significant benefit to the neighborhood, especially based on the underlying redevelopment principles.

The Block-by-Block strategy has been used successfully in many areas across the United States. It has much to offer the Powell-Hood-Hamilton community. With the strong partnership of the City and Gundersen Lutheran, along with a well-managed CDC, the strategy should be a successful foundation for the neighborhood transformation.



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING DISTRESSED AREAS

### STRATEGY 2. Large-scale Infrastructure Investments

Leverage new investments in infrastructure and repurpose existing infrastructure assets strategically to add value and improve developer interest and business development in nearby properties. Opportunities include:

- Large-scale
- Holistic / comprehensive
- Accessible to all
- Community benefit
- Enhances real estate value

**1. New streets and greenway connections** can be designed to encourage better access to adjacent sites for economic redevelopment. Street trees for shade, good lighting, adequate width, benches, and street parking all contribute to making a street into an economic development tool.

**2. The BNSF Railway** that passes through the Gundersen Lutheran campus runs a single train per day to the City Brewery. Even while maintaining that service it could be reimagined as a greenway that provides bike-able connections between downtown and the Medical Center and to recreational opportunities on Isle La Plume. Examples of railroad corridors transformed into new links with bikeways and transit include the 33rd St Trail in La Crosse, Atlanta BeltLine, the Dequindre Cut Greenway in Detroit, the

Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis, and the future Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago.

**3. Isle La Plume** could be transformed into a regional park, offering water access and greenspace to the communities of La Crosse as well as to the employees and patients at the Medical Center. The island is already connected into the city's trail network, but additional connections could make it more accessible. By working around existing municipal operations and creatively reusing the former industrial land, the park can embrace the city's history and its future. Examples of destination parks built on former industrial sites include the Gas Works Park in Seattle, the Fresh Kills Park being developed in New York and the Landschaftspark in Duisburg Nord, Germany.



**Atlanta BeltLine** (Atlanta, GA) is a 22-mile long linear park and transit project that, with the completion of its first 2.5 mile trail segment, has already transformed the daily lives of many intown Atlantans. The project, which repurposes abandoned industrial rail right of ways, has spurred redevelopment of underutilized industrial properties that sat vacant for decades at the heart of many Atlanta neighborhoods.



**Gas Works Park** (Seattle, WA) is a 19-acre waterfront park that was repurposed from an old gas works plant that operated from 1906 to 1956. It has been one of Seattle's most popular recreational spaces since it opened in 1975. Features include an artificial kite-flying hill and picnic lawns. The park, which has been the site for countless weddings, is easily accessible by bike trail from nearby neighborhoods.





## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING DISTRESSED AREAS

### STRATEGY 3. Arts and the Creative Workforce

Incentivizing arts activity in and around distressed areas not only has the effect of improving quality of life for current residents, it can be a powerful strategy for economic development. When artists and arts organizations repurpose underutilized and forgotten urban settings for creative uses, the resulting studios, galleries, educational and public art venues cast overlooked areas in a positive new light, with an impact on crime, aesthetic appeal, perceived values, and neighborhood identity. Encouraging an arts community can counteract blight by bringing new activity into vacant spaces, as well as new stakeholders into the neighborhood. This activity can be leveraged for additional, high-density development in the form of retail, restaurants, and offices.

Michigan governor Jennifer Granholm’s “Cool Cities” initiative is one example of this concept translated into urban policy. But even on a neighborhood scale, thoughtfully commissioned

- Low cost
- Youth engagement
- Job training
- Cultural expression
- Community development

murals, pop up galleries, or a grassroots artists market can have a catalytic effect to revive struggling neighborhoods in need of both fresh energy and positive publicity.

La Crosse has already invested considerably in the arts. The City’s active Arts Board has been instrumental in the development of the burgeoning Arts District and continues to promote the arts as a means of economic development. Within the study area, the School of Arts and Technology I (SOTA I), a charter school, serves 126 K5 students at the Hamilton School building. Future work to build on the arts for economic development can build on this existing foundation.



**Artists for Humanity Epicenter** (Boston, MA) hosts the headquarters and studios of a non-profit organization that brings teenagers together and offers art instruction entrepreneurial training, and job opportunities. The first LEED-Platinum certified building in Boston, the 23,000 SF, \$4.3M building (2007) hosts programs and can be rented out for events such as weddings.



**Living Walls** (Atlanta, GA) is a non-profit organization that seeks to promote, educate, and change perspectives toward public space in our communities via street art. Each year, artists invited by Living Walls transform abandoned or derelict elements of the urban landscape—buildings, walls, storefronts—into public art.

## PRIORITY NEEDS

### DEVELOP MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT

The economic analysis for the Joint Plan study area has shown that there is feasibility and demand for real estate development within the Study Area. This development should provide affordable housing and a small-scale restaurant/cafe (see pages 24-26). In walkable urban environments, such uses are often combined into multi-story mixed-use residential developments that include apartments or condominiums above retail stores or other active uses such as offices at the street level. The co-location of housing with retail increases the value and viability of both components.

A mixed-use project that combines affordable / workforce housing and retail storefronts can catalyze neighborhood revitalization.

The vision for the study area includes the development, in the short-term, of a mixed-use residential project that:

- Provides housing for new residents, including workforce housing for Gundersen Lutheran employees
- Provides space for street-level neighborhood retail and services, including a cafe/restaurant that benefits residents as well as employees, patients and visitors to the medical campus
- Becomes a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization by increasing neighborhood livability and changing neighborhood image
- Becomes a model for struggling neighborhoods throughout the city

Funding for such a project will be challenging. However, the project profile defined above will score highly in the evaluation criteria for the competitive Low-Income Housing Tax Credit:

- The study area is located in La Crosse County Census Tract 9, which is a “Qualified Census Tract” (QCT) for the purposes of LIHTC
- Gundersen Lutheran is a leader in energy efficiency in the healthcare sector and has become a regional advocate of sustainability initiatives. The City of La Crosse promotes sustainability of the overall community in its 2009 Strategic Sustainability Plan
- The project will contribute to the revitalization and stability of the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood
- The project will be located within walking distance of one or more major employers in the region.
- The project has been identified as a priority by community participants in the Joint Plan.
- The remaining selection criteria represent best practices in housing development and are easily attainable by a well-conceived project.

#### ELIGIBILITY FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT (LIHTC)

The LIHTC is a federal incentive to increase the feasibility and availability of low-income rental housing. The tax credit is awarded through a competitive selection process in each state. The selection criteria put forth by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Agency (WHEDA), shown below, favors the type of catalytic development project envisioned by the Joint Plan.

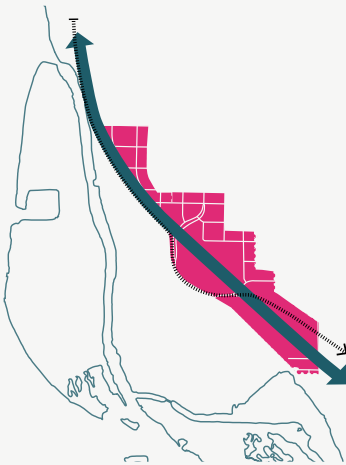
#### WHEDA LIHTC Application Scoring Categories Listed by Priority (number of pts)

<b>80</b>	<b>Serves Lowest Income Residents</b>
50	DEVELOPMENT TEAM
<b>48</b>	<b>Energy Efficiency And Sustainability</b>
40	CREDIT USAGE
<b>30</b>	<b>Rehab/Neighborhood Stabilization</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Employment Centers / High Needs Areas</b>
25	SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
25	FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION
<b>23</b>	<b>Universal Design</b>
18	SERVES LARGE FAMILIES
18	ELDERLY ASSISTED LIVING - RCACS
<b>15</b>	<b>Mixed Income Incentive</b>
15	READINESS TO PROCEED
<b>8</b>	<b>Community Notification And Support</b>
6	OWNERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS
5	LOWER INCOME AREAS
6	DEBT COVERAGE RATIO
3	EVENTUAL RESIDENT OWNERSHIP



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT

### STRATEGY 1. Locate mixed-use development where it can make the most difference



The transformative potential of the new development can be maximized through strategic location:

- Locate project within walking distance of Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center to encourage employees to live there
- Locate project within walking distance of the Gundersen Lutheran campus main entrance to encourage employees, visitors and patients to utilize the retail store(s)
- Project should replace the most visible instance(s) of distressed properties in the study area
- Ensure visibility from major thoroughfares to raise awareness of positive change to a regional audience
- Allow ease of vehicular access from major thoroughfares to provide additional support to retail component
- Locate project within walking distance of transit line and along a bike-friendly route.

The Southern Gateway District (defined on page 16 and shown at left) is the preferred location for a mixed-use catalyst development.

### STRATEGY 2. Partner to provide affordable workforce housing

A high quality rental option within walking distance of the Medical Center, Muddy Flats, City Brewery, Mayo Healthcare, Viterbo, and other local businesses will be attractive to healthcare and other institutional employees who are qualified to live in subsidized units at the new development (see below). Partnering with area employers early in the process can ensure that the development will be appealing to staff at different income levels. For example, area employers may offer incentives to employees to rent in the area. This example is similar to the current program Gundersen Lutheran provides to its employees for home-ownership assistance, and the partnership program with Gund Brewery Lofts.

2013 Maximum Incomes for Low Income Housing Tax Credits, La Crosse County, WI

Household size	60% Average Median Income
One person	\$29,100
Two persons	\$33,240
Three persons	\$37,380
Four persons	\$41,520
Five persons	\$44,880
Six persons	\$48,180

Source: <http://www.danter.com/TAXCREDIT/getrents.HTML>

Healthcare employees who may be qualified to rent affordable housing units, based on American Medical Association data:

Occupation	Starting salary	Average salary
Emergency medical technician	\$19,360	\$30,000
Pharmacy technician	\$19,480	\$28,070
Medical assistant	\$20,750	\$28,650
Cardiovascular technologist	\$25,940	\$48,300
Surgical technologist	\$27,910	\$39,400
Health Information Technician	\$30,000	\$39,100

Source: <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/careers-health-care/health-care-income.page>



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT

### STRATEGY 3. Foster Community Diversity

A successful mixed-use project has a balanced housing and commercial program that includes a diversity of housing units, retail spaces and community amenities. Researchers have found that previously disadvantaged neighborhoods that gain mixed-income developments experience lower criminal activity and increased property values.

Strategies for fostering community diversity include:

- Target rental customers with a range of incomes
- Provide a diversity of unit sizes and types, from studios to large family units
- Provide a flexible ground floor that can accommodate community, office or retail space
- Work with agencies and non-profit organizations to accommodate and potentially to house community services and service providers
- Provide space for retail incubator program
- Create arts and cultural programming that addresses diversity in the neighborhood / community

Mix of Ages and Incomes  
 Range of housing units  
 Community services  
 Flexible commercial space  
 Retail incubator space



**The Wellstone** (Minneapolis, MN, 2007, \$13M) Part of the South Quarter redevelopment transforming the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis, the Wellstone includes 49 rental apartments and 6,000 SF of commercial retail space. Rental units at the Wellstone range in size from studios to three-bedrooms, and twenty-five percent of the units are leased at market rate.



**LINC Business Incubator Program** (Grand Rapids, MI) provides rental space at below market rates for existing or start-up businesses that participate in its three-year business management training program. Thinking holistically, LINC—a non-profit organization focused on community revitalization—has used the program to transform a visible corner of the community and to create 40 new jobs.



## JOINT PLAN STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT

### STRATEGY 4. Create Value Through Quality and Performance

Good Design  
 Durable / Low Maintenance  
 Energy / Water Efficient  
 Engages Public Realm  
 Conceals Parking

The mixed-use catalyst project must be built to last and to perform well in order to truly become a long-term community asset. Strategies for creating value through quality and performance include:

- Engage partners, stakeholders and community members to ensure responsive, lean design
- Engage a design team that can develop creative solutions with budgetary constraints
- Prioritize durability over short-term savings in initial costs when making material selections
- Use sustainability practices to promote occupant health and to achieve cost savings
- Seek third-party sustainability certification
- Utilize best practices in universal design
- Engage the public realm through site planning and active ground floor uses
- Reduce impact of parking on the public realm by using alleys for access and concealing ramps with liner buildings, among other strategies.

“Beyond the obvious benefits—no commute, reduced gas costs, flexibility—living close to work has changed the way I feel. Gundersen is not just my employer; they're my neighbor and an organization I feel invested in.”

A Gundersen Lutheran employee talking about life at the Gund Brewery Lofts, a local LIHTC project partially funded by the Gundersen Lutheran Health System.  
 From PR Newswire, April 17, 2008



**West Seattle Community Resource Center** (Seattle, WA, 2007, \$8.1M) combines 34 apartments for homeless and low income families, and offices for agencies / non-profits serving low income residents including the West Seattle Food Bank. The LEED® Silver certified, 50,000 SF project was built on a brownfield site on a major urban corridor. It has a central courtyard with children’s play space. The building is owned by the Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association and the West Seattle Food Bank.



**Gund Brewery Lofts** (La Crosse, WI, 2007). The 123,000 SF, 86-unit apartment complex is located adjacent to the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center. It contains a mix of unit types, as well as a mix of market-rate and subsidized rental units. The project has revitalized the 1903 bottling plant that is located on South Avenue. Beyond the adaptive reuse, sustainable features of the project include a solar hot-water system, low-e windows, above-code insulation and the use of native landscaping.

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

### IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK

Swift Creek near the study area has identified issues relating to sedimentation and a culvert dangerous to boaters in the riverway. There is already a dredging project scheduled for this year. A recent study completed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison has modeled the effectiveness of three alternatives, including the replacement of the existing culvert with a bridge. The ongoing problem of stagnation and sedimentation in the backwaters will need to be considered comprehensively, from a green infrastructure perspective, to create a long-term solution.



### BUILD CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT

A consistent theme heard throughout the planning process was that the Mississippi waterfront in this part of La Crosse is truly a hidden gem. Use of the waterfront for kayaking, fishing, boating, and swimming is done on a regular basis in La Crosse. Improving access to the waterfront would provide a great benefit for the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood. Trails, sidewalks, and on-street connections for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians would create a unique opportunity to improve these connections. These connections could become a short term priority project if additional funding becomes available.



### HOOD AND POWELL PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Built in 1909, Hood and Powell Park have given their names to the neighborhoods that they are located in. The Powell-Hood-Hamilton Neighborhood Association, working with the Parks Department, recently proposed to change the name of Hood Park to Poage Park to commemorate City of La Crosse resident George Coleman Poage who became the first African-American athlete to win a medal at the Olympic Games in St. Louis, 1904.

The neighborhood has changed so much over time that the two parks as currently programmed may not be best suited to serve the population. More passive uses such as walkways, picnic pavilions, playgrounds and play fields have been discussed as possibilities. Community gardens at the Southside Neighborhood Center are being planned and are a great opportunity to bring neighbors, students from the school, and Gundersen employees together to build community and heritage.



## ADD OPEN / GREEN SPACE ON ISLE LA PLUME

Much like the Mississippi River itself, Isle La Plume is considered by many to be an underutilized resource for the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood. With the existing municipal uses on the Isle, it is difficult to fully utilize the area for park/open space use as originally intended by the John Nolen Parks Plan. With some modifications at the southeastern edge and improved connections within, the Isle can be a greatly improved amenity for residents. The City has made some of these improvements and will continue to find additional improvement opportunities. To accommodate additional improvements, moving a portion of the existing municipal facilities within Isle La Plume would only take place if/when there is a feasible opportunity in the future.



## PROMOTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS AND AMENITIES

The Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood has a great history and heritage. Promoting this heritage within the neighborhood and to those outside creates a unique opportunity to create a “new brand” for the neighborhood, one that gets past both the real and perceived safety and crime issues. This hidden character and heritage is not readily apparent to outsiders, and can be better promoted to encourage existing residents to stay, and for new ones to arrive and capitalize on the unique experience of nice homes, parks, walkways, community gardens, a community center, and future retail improvements. Such a promotional campaign may be best spearheaded by the PHH Neighborhood Association or a Community Development Corporation.



## PROMOTE ARTS AND CREATIVITY

Features such as shared gardens, public art and creative spaces within neighborhoods create strong bonds and build community. Neighborhoods that share the creative work of residents and that use public art as a way to build community are ones that last. Resources exist within the neighborhood with the existing community center and the School of Arts and Technology I (SOTA I) to build up an arts initiative. Creating opportunities for public art, and promoting local artists to create art and sculpture is a good first step in building community within the neighborhood.



# NEXT STEPS

## A PLAN FOR ACTION

The planning team was tasked by the Steering Committee “to create a feasible, developable, and economically and environmentally sustainable plan.”

The Framework Plan (pages 28-31) addresses the sustainability imperative by creating a long-term vision for a more connected and healthy urban environment. The Recommended Strategies (pages 32-45) ensure feasibility of the Plan by responding directly to the

priorities identified in the community and stakeholder engagement process.

The current section distills these two elements—The Framework Plan and the Recommended Strategies—into a broad-based and detailed Action Plan that identifies community actions, list of projects, cost estimates and funding resources to guide timely implementation of the recommendations.

### A. COMMUNITY ACTION LIST: RESEARCH, POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

The actions listed below are directly aimed at addressing the priority needs identified in the public planning process. They are intended to be implemented through individual actions and partnerships of all stakeholders and community members, including Powell-Hood-Hamilton residents, Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and City of La Crosse.

ADDRESS SAFETY & SECURITY	Responsible Party
Identify particularly dark locations in the neighborhood that should be targeted for lighting improvements	Neighborhood Revitalization Committee, (NRC), Powell-Hood-Hamilton Neighborhood Association (PHHNA) & Residents
Identify garages that need motion-detected lighting	NRC, PHHNA & Residents
Identify homes that need front porch lighting	NRC, PHHNA & Residents
Start a campaign to inform neighbors of the benefits of leaving front porch lights on at night	NRC, PHHNA & Residents
IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS	Responsible Party
Advocate for improvements on South Avenue to increase safety of bikes and pedestrians	City of La Crosse, NRC, PHHNA, Gundersen Lutheran
Plant landscape buffers at edges of surface parking lots	City of La Crosse, NRC, PHHNA, Gundersen Lutheran
Create a system for cataloging visible code violations to share with city inspectors	City of La Crosse, NRC, PHHNA & Residents
Develop a home improvement grant program	Community Development Corporation, (CDC) Joint Development Corporation (JDC)
Identify garages that need identification addresses posted on them	NRC, PHHNA
Continue to monitor and enforce employee parking policies	Gundersen Lutheran
Engage neighborhood groups in periodic park clean-up programs	NRC, PHHNA & Residents
Educate youth about the impacts of vandalism	City of La Crosse, NRC, PHHNA



Actively encourage police officers and other public safety employees to live in the neighborhood	City of La Crosse
Establish an annual community gathering event to encourage neighbor socialization	NRC, PHHNA & Residents
Build a community garden	City of La Crosse, Gundersen Lutheran, PHHNA & Residents
Seek artistic partners to engage the neighborhood in a community arts project	City of La Crosse Arts Board, CDC, JDC, NRC
reNEW PHH: Landscape improvements projects within neighborhood	Gundersen Lutheran, with CouleeCAP, and Habitat for Humanity
<b>DEVELOPING A MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Evaluate Gundersen Lutheran benefit for employee neighborhood home purchase, including incentive amount, restrictions, commitments and geography	Gundersen Lutheran
Analyze opportunities for green space between Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood, including seating areas and plantings.	NRC, PHHNA, Gundersen Lutheran
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Support neighborhood associations, advocate for neighborhood association funding mechanisms, assist & incentivize the formation of neighborhood associations, advocate for the adoption of neighborhood plans	NRC
Engage a consultant to study the potential for a bike and/or pedestrian bridge across South Avenue connecting the neighborhood more directly to the waterfront	City of La Crosse
Engage the Park Board in planning for Poage and Powell Park programming and renovations	City of La Crosse, Park Board, NRC, PHHNA & Residents
Engage a consultant to study options for relocating public works facilities currently located on Isle La Plume	City of La Crosse
Investigate enhanced collaboration with Hamilton Early Learning Center/SOTA 1 – Possible programming includes Farm-to-School, health and wellness activities, Gundersen campus tours and concerts, Chef in Schools	Gundersen Lutheran
Continue efforts to educate and communicate with Gundersen Lutheran staff regarding parking policies within the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood	Gundersen Lutheran
Develop a brand and story for the neighborhood that promotes its unique characteristics and qualities	PHHNA & Residents

## B. PROJECT DATABASE: PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATIONS

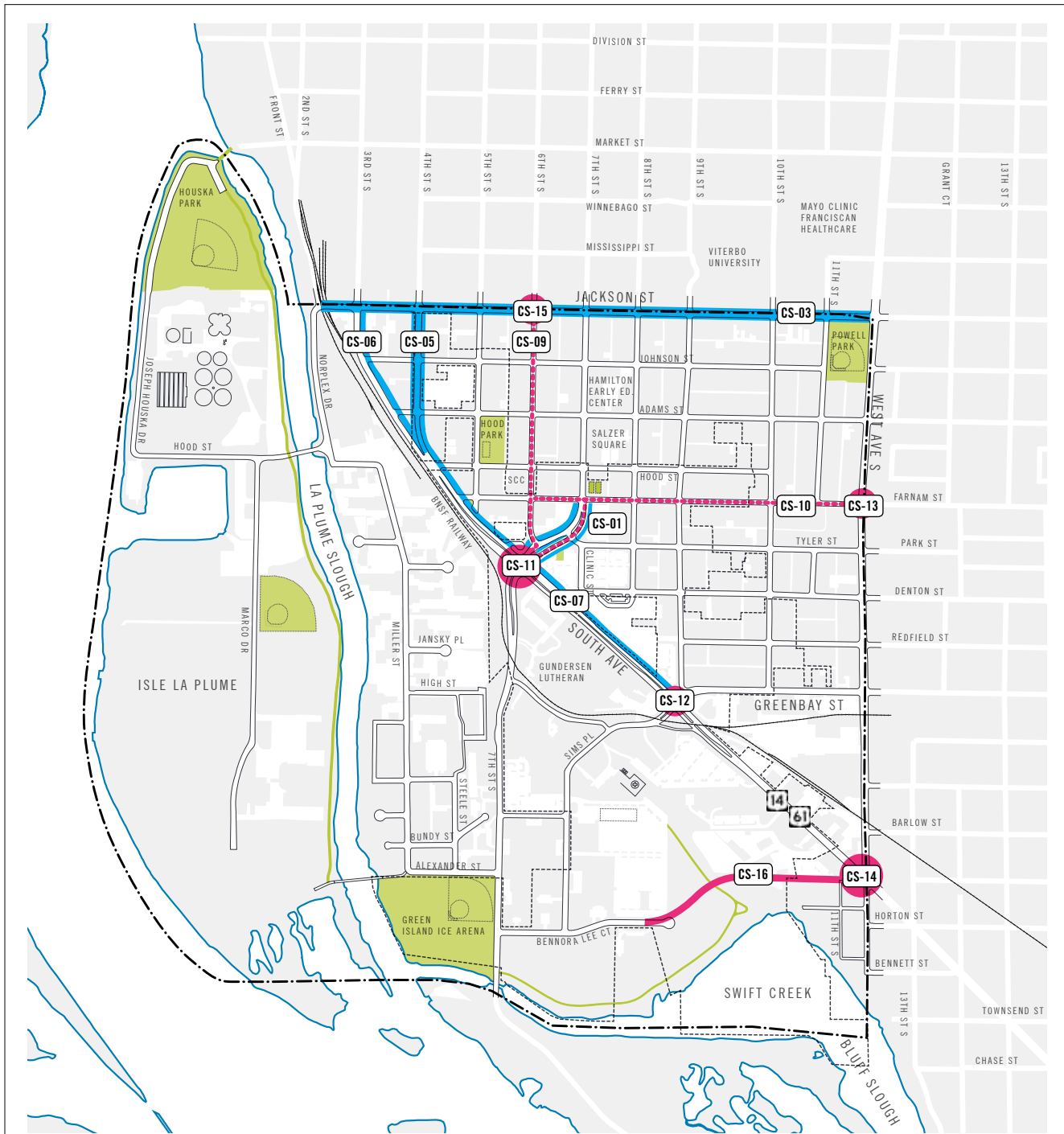
Equipped with reporting functions, the database is a working tool that allows the Joint Plan partners to conduct scenario planning to determine project funding and phasing. The database, which is provided to the Joint Plan sponsors in excel format will evolve as project information is refined and updated based on future conditions. [The following pages summarize the projects currently listed in the database.](#) Additional information, including cost, are included in the Appendix to this report.

# RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

## COMPLETE STREETS

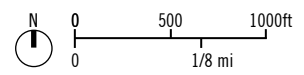
Community Priorities:  
 1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY  
 2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE AND SECURITY  
 3. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS  
 4. IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK  
 5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT

PROJECT	1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY	2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE AND SECURITY	3. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS	4. IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK	5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT	COMMUNITY BENEFITS
<b>CS-01</b> Seventh Street: Streetscaping	●	●	●	●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved connection and walkability between the neighborhood and Medical Center campus</li> <li>- Public realm investment fosters private development</li> </ul>
<b>CS-02</b> Jackson Street: Boulevard Design Study	●	●	●	●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved walkability along Jackson Street</li> <li>- Improved pedestrian and bicyclist safety</li> <li>- Increased viability for existing / new businesses</li> <li>- Improved circulation for Viterbo University, Mayo Clinic</li> <li>- Improved image of southside neighborhoods</li> <li>- Safer pedestrian and bike connection to Houska Park and Isle La Plume trail (accessed via bridge located at the western end of Jackson Street)</li> <li>- Public realm investment fosters private development</li> </ul>
<b>CS-03</b> Jackson Street: Boulevard Conversion	●	●	●	●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Impact Study (HIA) can qualify community health benefits of proposed infrastructure improvements, proving eligibility for related state and federal grants</li> </ul>
<b>CS-04</b> US 14/61: Streetscaping Feasibility and Health Impact Study	●	●	●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Impact Study (HIA) can qualify community health benefits of proposed infrastructure improvements, proving eligibility for related state and federal grants</li> </ul>
<b>CS-05</b> US 14/61/Fourth St Streetscaping	●	●	●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian safety along US 14/61</li> <li>- Improved image for Powell-Hood-Hamilton along the neighborhood edge</li> </ul>
<b>CS-06</b> US 14/61/South Ave Streetscaping between Jackson and Hood Streets	●	●	●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential to reduce crime through:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced permeability at neighborhood edge</li> <li>- Public realm investment fostering private development</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Increased pedestrian activity / more eyes on the street</li> </ul>
<b>CS-07</b> US 14/61/South Ave Streetscaping between Hood and Green Bay Streets	●	●				
<b>CS-08</b> North-South Bike Corridor: Design Study	●			●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safer bike connection between Downtown and Southside neighborhoods / employment centers</li> <li>- Alternative transportation option for Gundersen Lutheran employees who live in the area</li> </ul>
<b>CS-09</b> North-South Bike Corridor: Implementation				●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safer bike connection between the neighborhoods and the waterfront areas</li> </ul>

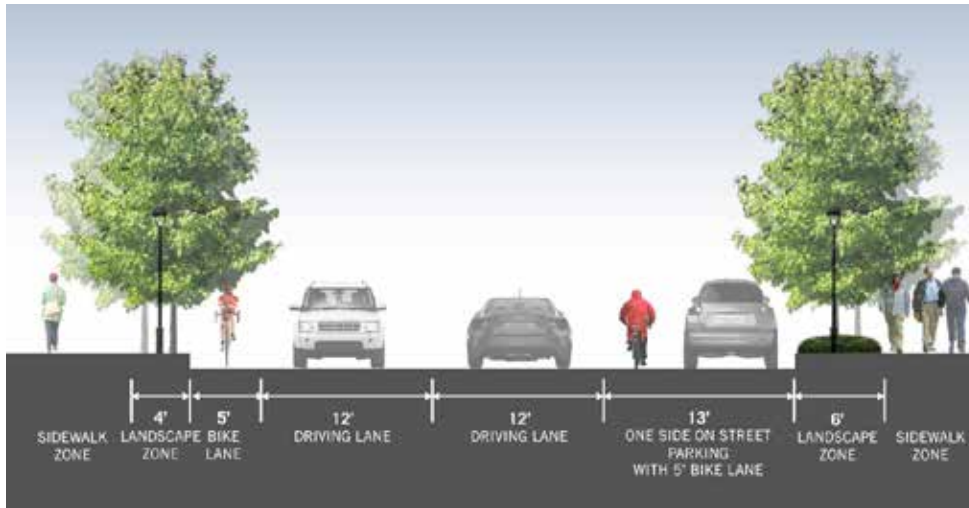


**MAP SHOWING RECOMMENDED PROJECTS: COMPLETE STREETS & OPEN SPACE**

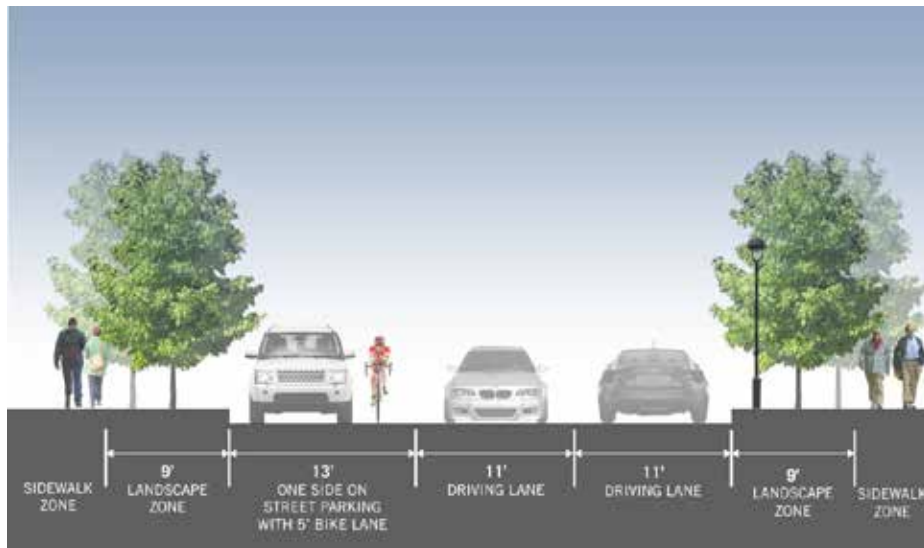
- Streetscape Improvements
- New Complete Street
- Crossing Improvements
- - - Bike Improvements
- TID#14 Boundary
- Joint Plan Study Area



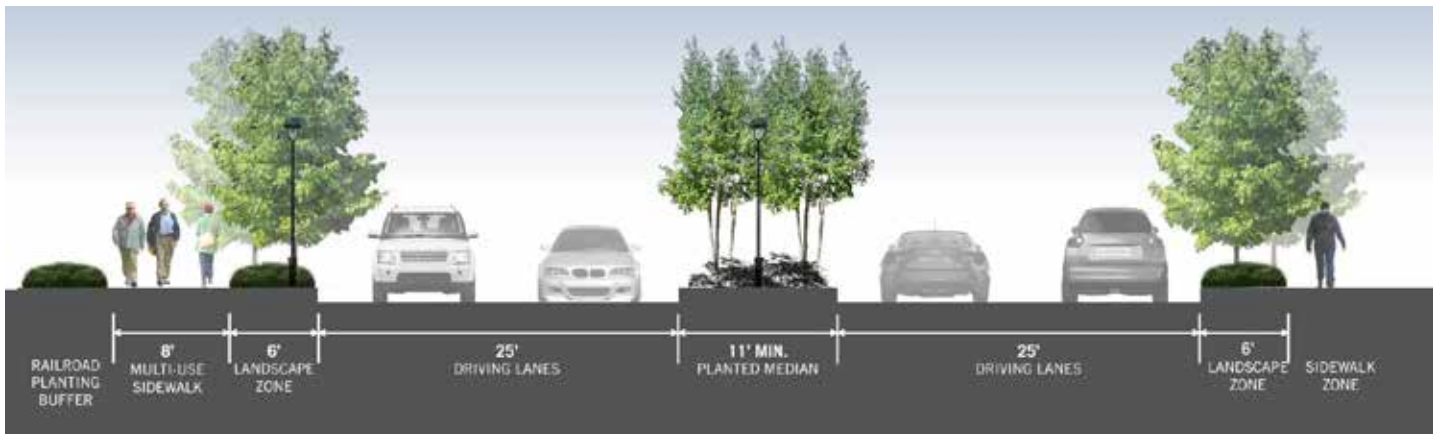
PROJECT	Community Priorities:					COMMUNITY BENEFITS
	1. ADDRESS SAFETY	2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE AND SECURITY	3. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS	4. IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK	5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT	
<b>CS-10</b> Farnam Street Bike Improvements	●				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alternative transportation option for Gundersen Lutheran employees who live in the area</li> <li>- Safer bike connection between the neighborhoods and the waterfront areas</li> </ul>
<b>CS-11</b> Crossing Improvements: South Ave at Seventh Street	●	●		●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian safety</li> <li>- Improved connection between neighborhood, Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and the waterfront</li> <li>- Opportunity to create a gateway for the neighborhood</li> </ul>
<b>CS-12</b> Crossing Improvements: South Ave at Greenbay Street	●	●		●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian safety</li> <li>- Improved connection between neighborhood, Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and the waterfront</li> </ul>
<b>CS-13</b> Crossing Improvements: West Ave at Farnam Street	●					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian safety</li> <li>- Improved pedestrian / bike connection between Powell-Hood-Hamilton and neighborhoods to its east</li> </ul>
<b>CS-14</b> Crossing Improvements: West Ave at South Avenue	●	●	●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved vehicular intersection (WisDOT project)</li> <li>- Improved pedestrian safety</li> <li>- Improved connection between neighborhood, Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center and the waterfront</li> </ul>
<b>CS-15</b> Crossing Improvements: Jackson Street at Sixth St	●				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian safety</li> <li>- Improved pedestrian / bike connection between Powell-Hood-Hamilton and Washburn neighborhood</li> </ul>
<b>CS-16</b> Bennora Lee Ct Extension to South Avenue	●				●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critical alternative access route for waterfront residential areas (Muddy Flats, Green Island), Ice Arena and Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center</li> <li>- Neighborhood connection to VIP trail</li> </ul>



JACKSON STREET: PROPOSED SECTION



JACKSON STREET: PROPOSED SECTION



SEVENTH STREET AT SOUTH AVENUE: PROPOSED SECTION

### INTERSECTION OF WEST AND SOUTH AVENUES AND PROPOSED BENNORA LEE CT EXTENSION (CS-14 and CS-16)

These sketches illustrate three potential alternatives for improving the intersection of two regional thoroughfares in the study area, West and South Avenue, by creating a right-angle intersection. West Avenue is extended to Bennora Lee Ct on the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center campus in order to provide an alternative access route to South Avenue for the medical campus, Green Island Ice Arena and residential areas along the waterfront. Challenges include existing right-of-way locations and the topography of land south of South Avenue. The Bennora Lee Ct extension will also include a multi-use pedestrian and bike trail that links West and South Avenues with the VIP trail.

These alternatives are only preliminary representations of a concept for a re-aligned alternative. They are not fully designed, engineered, or approved plans for construction.





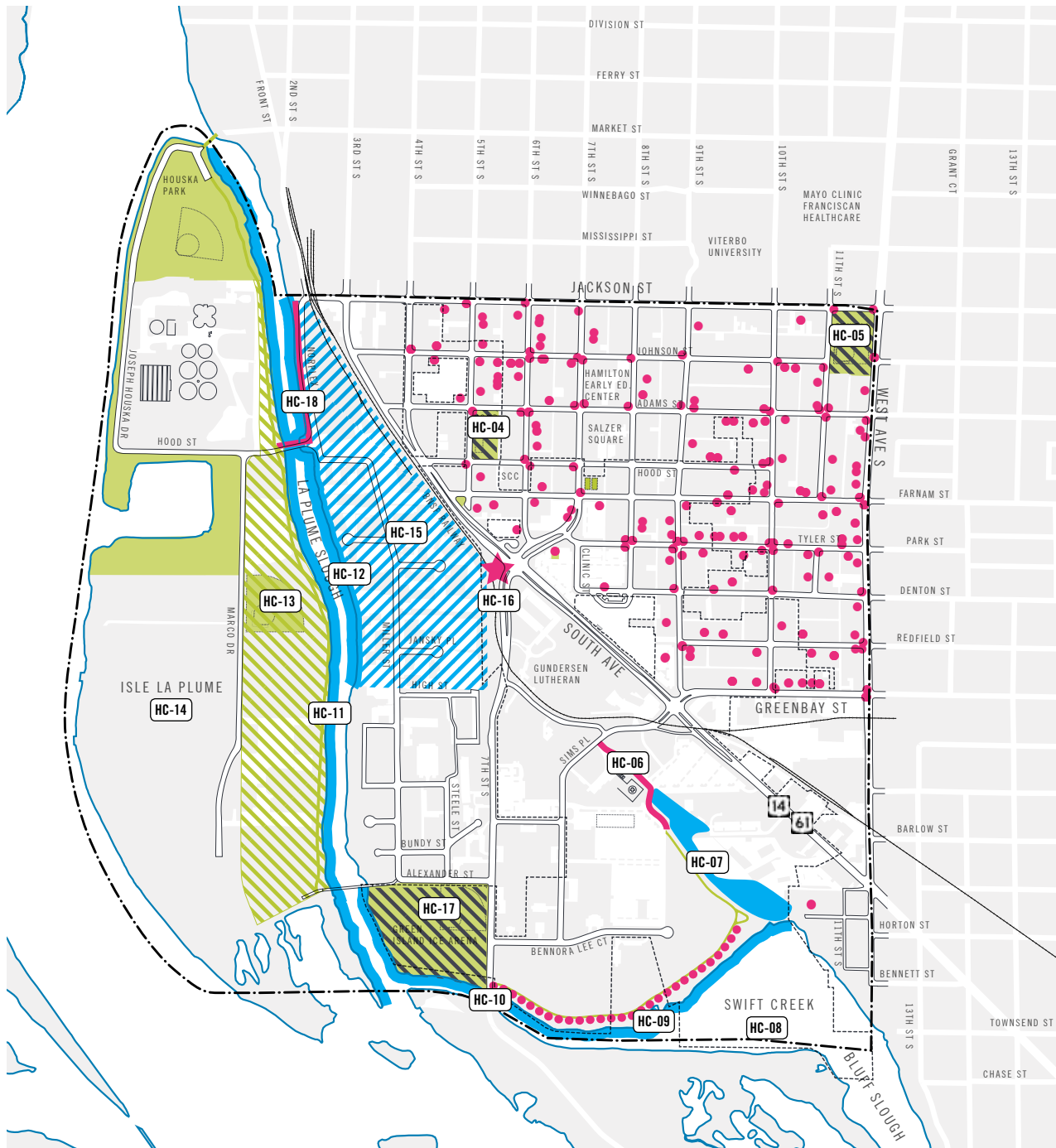
# RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

## HEALTH AND CULTURE

Community Priorities:  
 1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY  
 2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT  
 3. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS  
 4. IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK  
 5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT

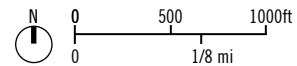
PROJECT	1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY	2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT	3. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS	4. IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK	5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT	COMMUNITY BENEFITS
<b>HC-01</b> Ash Tree Replacement	●		●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restores urban forest as ash trees are being removed</li> <li>- Opportunity to create a new neighborhood theme (single tree type) or an urban arboretum (diverse types)</li> <li>- Neighborhood-wide investment / image of change</li> </ul>
<b>HC-02</b> Public Furniture Addition			●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benches increase walkability, especially for seniors</li> <li>- Encourages use of the public realm and socializing</li> <li>- Builds neighborhood character: opportunity to create unique identity</li> </ul>
<b>HC-03</b> Trail and Open Space Maintenance	●			●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enables year round use of the trails and open spaces</li> <li>- Adds to the attractiveness and usability of public places</li> </ul>
<b>HC-04</b> Hood (Poage) Park Improvements	●		●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity for community-based redesign of park</li> <li>- Opportunity to boost community ownership / image</li> <li>- Potential to greatly increase usability and use of park</li> <li>- Potential increase of property values around park</li> </ul>
<b>HC-05</b> Powell Park Improvements	●		●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential to greatly increase usability and use of park</li> <li>- Opportunity to knit PHH with other neighborhoods and institutions (Viterbo University and Mayo Clinic)</li> <li>- Positive “image” at the edge of community</li> </ul>
<b>HC-06</b> VIP Trail Extension		●		●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New, direct connection between Medical Center facilities and the VIP trail</li> <li>- Connection between Gund Brewery Lofts and VIP Trail</li> <li>- Improved neighborhood access to the trail system</li> </ul>
<b>HC-07</b> Former Swift Creek Embankment -- Native Plantings			●	●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attractive natural way of reducing bank erosion</li> <li>- Attractive surroundings for the VIP Trail extension</li> <li>- Showcase of sustainable stormwater management</li> <li>- Potential to foster development along South Ave</li> </ul>
<b>HC-08</b> Bluff Slough / Swift Creek Dredging				●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced stagnation in slough</li> <li>- Better fishing and boating environment</li> <li>- Improved wildlife habitat</li> </ul>
<b>HC-09</b> Swift Creek Landscaping				●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attractive natural way of reducing bank erosion</li> <li>- Potential to create sitting / gathering places along creek</li> <li>- Improved visibility of creek and slough from trail</li> <li>- Regional showcase of sustainable coastal management</li> </ul>





**MAP SHOWING RECOMMENDED PROJECTS: HEALTH AND CULTURE CATEGORY**

- Street Master Plan
- Slope / Bluff Restoration with Native Plantings
- Park Upgrades
- New Park / Open Space / Recreation Area
- Trail Extension
- Trail Improvements
- Ash Tree Replacements **HC-01**
- Monuments
- TID#14 Boundary
- Joint Plan Study Area



Community Priorities:  
 1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY  
 2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT  
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PROJECT	1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY	2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT	3. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS	4. IMPROVE SWIFT CREEK	5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT	COMMUNITY BENEFITS
<b>HC-10</b> Swift Creek Bridge				●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased water flow into Bluff Slough has potential to reduce stagnation and sedimentation</li> <li>- Improved and safer water access for residents and recreational boaters, kayakers, fishers</li> <li>- Potential to increase ped / bike space on bridge</li> </ul>
<b>HC-11</b> La Plume Slough Bank Restoration on Isle La Plume			●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attractive natural way of reducing bank erosion</li> <li>- Improved visibility of slough from trail</li> <li>- Opportunity to create points of water access</li> <li>- Regional showcase of sustainable coastal management</li> </ul>
<b>HC-12</b> La Plume Slough Bank Restoration on Muddy Flats			●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attractive natural way of reducing bank erosion</li> <li>- Improved visibility of slough from trail</li> <li>- Opportunity to create points of water access</li> <li>- Potential to foster redevelopment of Muddy Flats</li> </ul>
<b>HC-13</b> Isle La Plume Park - Phase I		●	●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape buffer between public works and fleeting operations and the residential areas across the slough</li> <li>- Landscape setting for the Isle La Plume Trail</li> <li>- Potential to foster redevelopment of Muddy Flats</li> </ul>
<b>HC-14</b> Isle La Plume Park - Phase II		●	●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large riverfront park for southside neighborhoods</li> <li>- Positive impact on southside revitalization</li> <li>- Potential for recreational and educational programs</li> <li>- New destination along regional bike trail network</li> </ul>
<b>HC-15</b> Muddy Flats Street Master Plan		●	●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creates framework for future redevelopment</li> <li>- Fosters private development by defining blocks</li> <li>- Increased connectivity / walkability of waterfront areas</li> <li>- Potential to create improved access to the slough</li> </ul>
<b>HC-16</b> Repatriation Monument						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appropriate recognition of the repatriation area</li> <li>- Raises awareness of Indian heritage of the region and the Sanford Archaeological District, in particular</li> <li>- Recognizes sacred ground for the Ho Chunk nation</li> </ul>
<b>HC-17</b> Green Island Ice Arena Improvements		●			●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential to increase use of ice arena and ballpark</li> <li>- Addition of new sports (curling) to arena</li> <li>- Connection between VIP Trail and Isle La Plume Trail</li> <li>- Improved night-time safety and security</li> </ul>
<b>HC-18</b> Bike / Ped Trail along Norplex Dr		●	●		●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New bike access route to Isle La Plume Trail</li> <li>- New access point to waterfront and slough views for pedestrians and bicyclists</li> </ul>



AN ENHANCED WATERFRONT EXPERIENCE

# RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

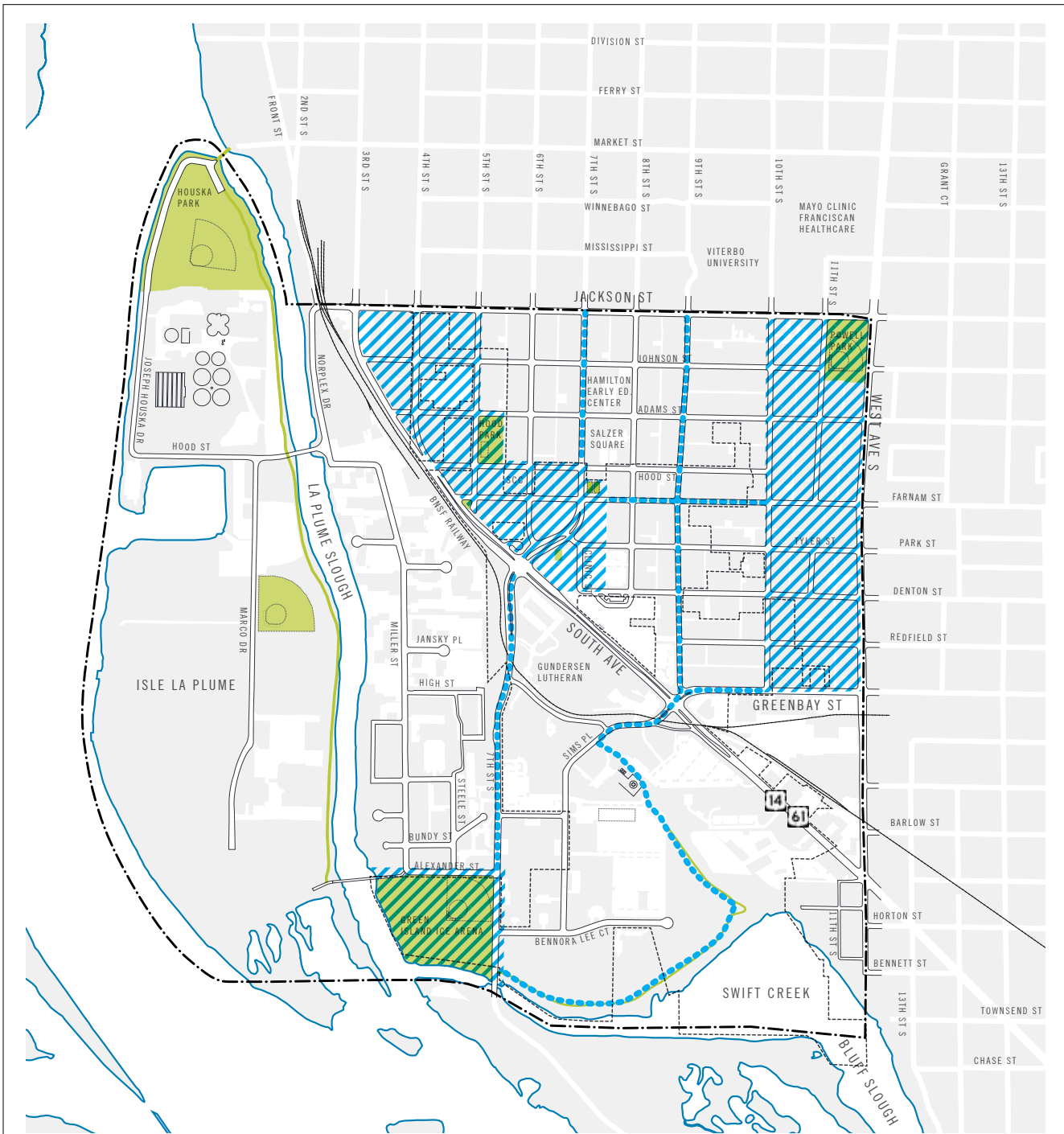
## PUBLIC SAFETY

The following section provides built environment projects that can impact the safety and security of the Joint Plan study area.





Other projects, such as the streetscape improvements listed under the Complete Streets category, also have the potential to directly impact real and perceived safety of the neighborhood by reducing gaps in development at the neighborhood edge. (See page 32 for further information on Public Safety Strategies).

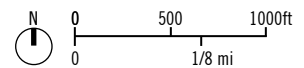
A successful approach to crime reduction will require multiple, coordinated efforts between the residents, the City, institutions and businesses, with implementation actions ranging from environmental changes, which are listed below, to policy and operational changes which are beyond the scope of this planning document.

PROJECT	Community Priorities: 1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY 2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE AND SECURITY 3. IMPROVE MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT 4. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS 5. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT	COMMUNITY BENEFITS
<b>PS-01</b> Street and Alley Lighting: Priority Zone		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian night time safety and security</li> <li>- Potential to reduce crime at known hot spots</li> <li>- Opportunity to create long-term savings by adopting new technologies such as LED lighting</li> <li>- Visible change along neighborhood edges</li> <li>- Pilot area for testing new technologies in lighting in the City of La Crosse</li> <li>- Potential to foster private redevelopment</li> </ul>
<b>PS-02</b> Street Lighting: Priority Corridors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian night time safety and security</li> <li>- Connected “safe corridors” for high-volume pedestrian traffic within a few blocks of each home</li> <li>- Pilot area for testing new technologies in lighting in the City of La Crosse</li> <li>- Potential to foster private redevelopment</li> </ul>
<b>PS-03</b> Street and Alley Lighting: All Other Areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved pedestrian night time safety and security</li> <li>- Changed perception of safety and security</li> <li>- Supports neighborhood revitalization</li> </ul>



**MAP SHOWING RECOMMENDED PROJECTS: PUBLIC SAFETY CATEGORY**

-  Lighting Priority Zones **PS-01**
-  Lighting Priority Corridors **PS-02**
-  TID#14 Boundary
-  Joint Plan Study Area



# RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

## REVITALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The market study has identified great potential for the development of affordable housing and small neighborhood commercial, which can facilitate the revitalization of Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood. While many of these projects will be realized by private entities, Joint Plan sponsors and stakeholders can influence new development in the study area through financial incentives and regulatory






changes. This section outlines steps that the City of La Crosse, Gundersen Lutheran and Joint Plan stakeholders can take to facilitate revitalization and development. Projects listed in the previous categories will also create positive impacts that contribute to neighborhood stability and foster new development.

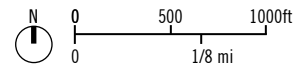
Community Priorities:  
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PROJECT	1. ADDRESS SAFETY AND SECURITY	2. DEVELOP MIXED-USE AND SECURITY	3. IMPROVE MIXED-USE CATALYST PROJECT	4. IMPROVE DISTRESSED AREAS	5. PROVIDE SWIFT CREEK	6. PROVIDE CONNECTIONS TO THE WATERFRONT	COMMUNITY BENEFITS
<b>RD-01</b> Community Development Corporation (CDC) Formation	●	●	●				Organized funding entity that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advocates for neighborhood needs and priorities</li> <li>- Seeks funding for and implements neighborhood revitalization projects, services and programs</li> <li>- Builds community solidarity and identity</li> </ul>
<b>RD-02</b> Joint Development Corporation (JDC) Formation							Organized funding entity that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brings together the resources of the City of La Crosse and Gundersen Health System to improve area</li> <li>- Implements TID#14 projects that benefit the neighborhood and Gundersen Lutheran Health System</li> </ul>
<b>RD-03</b> Mixed-Use Zoning Ordinance Creation and Approval	●	●	●				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotes community livability and walkability</li> <li>- Enables housing proximity to jobs and amenities</li> <li>- Flexible alternative to Planned Unit Developments</li> <li>- Facilitates district-wide sustainability implementation such as shared parking and district-wide energy</li> </ul>
<b>RD-04*</b> Rezoning of Industrial Properties to Mixed-Use	●	●	●	●			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotes community livability and walkability</li> <li>- Fosters redevelopment of vacant or underutilized industrial properties</li> </ul> * Recommended for implementation along with HC-15
<b>RD-05</b> Powell-Hood-Hamilton Downzoning	●		●				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protects the single-family nature of the core neighborhood areas</li> <li>- Promotes home ownership and neighborhood stability</li> <li>- Provides assurance to current and future residents that PHH will not lose its fundamental character</li> </ul>
<b>RD-06</b> Little Houska Gateway Park			●				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to create a new landmark at neighborhood edge, promoting a new image for Powell-Hood-Hamilton</li> <li>- Opportunity for a design competition that brings positive media attention to the neighborhood</li> </ul>



**MAP SHOWING RECOMMENDED PROJECTS: REVITALIZATION & DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY**

-  Mixed-use rezoning **RD-04**
-  Single family (R1) downzoning
-  Gateway Art
-  TID#14 Boundary
-  Joint Plan Study Area



# DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

## MIXED-USE ZONING DISTRICT

### INTRODUCTION

Historically uses were much more highly integrated into the fabric of cities and towns. Through use-based zoning and comprehensive planning, however, these uses have become isolated from each other. This trend is starting to change dramatically, and the idea of creating zoning districts where there is a great deal of flexibility in use, both within the district as well on individual parcels, is becoming much more common throughout the country. In mixed-use zoning districts, the intent of the regulations is to promote the mix of uses, not simply allow them. Incentives for this are critical to the successful development of mixed-use projects and should be included in the regulations.

In addition to the intent to support mixed-use development, most mixed-use zoning districts are written to allow for a much higher level of flexibility in development program (types of uses) than might be allowed in other, less flexible districts. As such, uses should be described through proscribed uses, which should be limited to those that cause real nuisances. Requirements within the regulations should be minimized to those that are critical to the successful development of individual projects. Examples of critical elements are; the building's relationship to the street, ground floor transparency, rear access and service, and building massing compatibility. There are others, and each regulation should be customized to best facilitate appropriate development for its specific area. But in every case, the regulations should be simple and clear, limiting unintended consequences.

Zoning and other land-use regulations should be

### USES

The following uses are recommended for a mixed-use zoning district that is contiguous with the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center:

- Commercial: Office uses including medical offices, hotel, retail, restaurants;
- Residential: Multi-family housing including apartment / condominium buildings and townhomes;
- Civic: Institutional uses including healthcare facilities, municipal and recreational uses

predicated on the following ideas:

**Simple Language** – everyone, not just land-use experts, should be able to clearly understand the intent and operation of the regulations.

**Simple Maps** – elements of the regulations that can be mapped should be. Mapping significantly reduces unknowns and unintended consequences that arise from complex and conflicting language. Maps also reduce problems that can arise from multiple interpretations of complex language and calculations.

**Simple Charts** – charts should be created that organize the information in clear, easy-to-find tables that are specific and concise.

**Simple Diagrams** – clearly describing the intent and operation of the regulations through diagrams that show outcomes reduces problems resulting from differences in interpretation.

As the regulations are created, it is critical that they are tested on the areas upon which they will have application. Untested regulations can lead to unintended consequences.

A well-crafted mixed-use zoning category, adopted into the broader city regulations, can facilitate bringing creative and vibrant development to the district in which the regulations are adopted. While mixed-use zoning will not guarantee development, it has the potential to make the area much more attractive to this type of development.

Typological standards for key uses that are recommended for a mixed-use district in the study area are illustrated in the following pages.



## COMMERCIAL, OFFICE

Executive Offices  
 Professional Offices  
 Medical Offices  
 Dental Offices

Commercial buildings can contribute greatly to the walkability and vibrancy of a neighborhood when built in ways that support the pedestrian environment. Office buildings, in particular, can help support retail options such as restaurants by bringing a steady flow of employees and visitors to the area during the daytime. Where transit options are limited, decisions made on the location and design of parking become critical determinants of whether, and to what extent the development can support a walkable environment.



**Charles River Plaza** (Boston, MA) is a private development that supports the nearby Mass General Hospital (MGH). Built as a suburban strip center along a major urban thoroughfare in the 1960s, Charles River Plaza was upgraded in the 2000s with two midrise medical office buildings along the street. The new buildings have a cafe, pharmacy and boutique on the ground floor. Parking is accommodated in a ramp behind the retail stores. The development also includes a hotel and a supermarket.



**Oregon Clinic Medical Office Building** (Portland, OR) is a three-story, LEED-certified medical office building that creates a walkable environment with its ground-floor elements and landscaping.

**FRONTAGE** Locate building front along sidewalk to help define and activate the public realm. A minimum of 70% of the building frontage is recommended to be located on the build-to-line, or equivalent.

50% or more of the length of the ground floor should have clear glazing to create walk appeal and enhance safety

**ACCESS** Locate front entrance on a principal street

Activate the public realm with multiple entry points on the ground floor

Promote walk-in ground floor uses such as a dental office, retail pharmacy or a cafe

**PARKING & SERVICE** Reduce parking footprint by building ramps below or above ground

Locate surface parking lots in the rear or interior side of the building

Locate parking access to a secondary street or alley to minimize sidewalk interruption

Locate service area on secondary street, or alley and shield view of such areas from bypassers

**DESIGN & LANDSCAPE** Promote design that respects the pedestrian scale of surrounding historic neighborhoods

Provide appropriate transition between low, medium and high intensity uses

Provide shade trees between road and sidewalk along public right-of-ways

Provide shade trees in surface parking lots

## COMMERCIAL, RETAIL

- Grocery Store
- Restaurant
- Hardware Store
- Gas Station

As urban neighborhoods are revitalized throughout the country, the neighborhood “corner store” is making a come back. Supermarkets are moving into cities with smaller format stores to cater to walk-in customers. These trends in retail enable the construction of pedestrian-friendly stores that mitigate the visual impact of parking through good design.



**New Seasons Market** (Portland, OR) is a local supermarket chain founded by three Portland families. The stores, which carry a mix of conventional and organic produce, are about half the size of a conventional supermarket. The Seven Corners store (2004) was built to include a 25,000 market with pharmacy and a 12,000-square-foot office and storage space for the company’s headquarters. With parking located in the back, the design of the store contributes to the walkability of the community.

- FRONTAGE** Locate building front along sidewalk to help define and activate the public realm. A minimum of 70% of the building frontage is recommended to be located on the build-to-line, or equivalent.
  - 50% or more of the length of the ground floor should have clear glazing to create walk appeal and enhance safety
- ACCESS** Locate front entrance on a principal street
  - Activate the public realm with multiple entry points on the ground floor
- PARKING & SERVICE** Locate surface parking lots in the rear or interior side of the building
  - Locate parking access to a secondary street or alley to minimize sidewalk interruption
  - Locate service area on secondary street, or alley and shield view of such areas from bypassers
  - Promote design that respects the pedestrian scale of surrounding historic neighborhoods
  - Consider integrating retail into the ground floor(s) of a multi-family residential development to reduce parking footprint through shared parking
- DESIGN & LANDSCAPE** Provide appropriate transition between low, medium and high intensity uses
  - Provide shade trees between road and sidewalk along public right-of-ways
  - Provide shade trees in surface parking lots

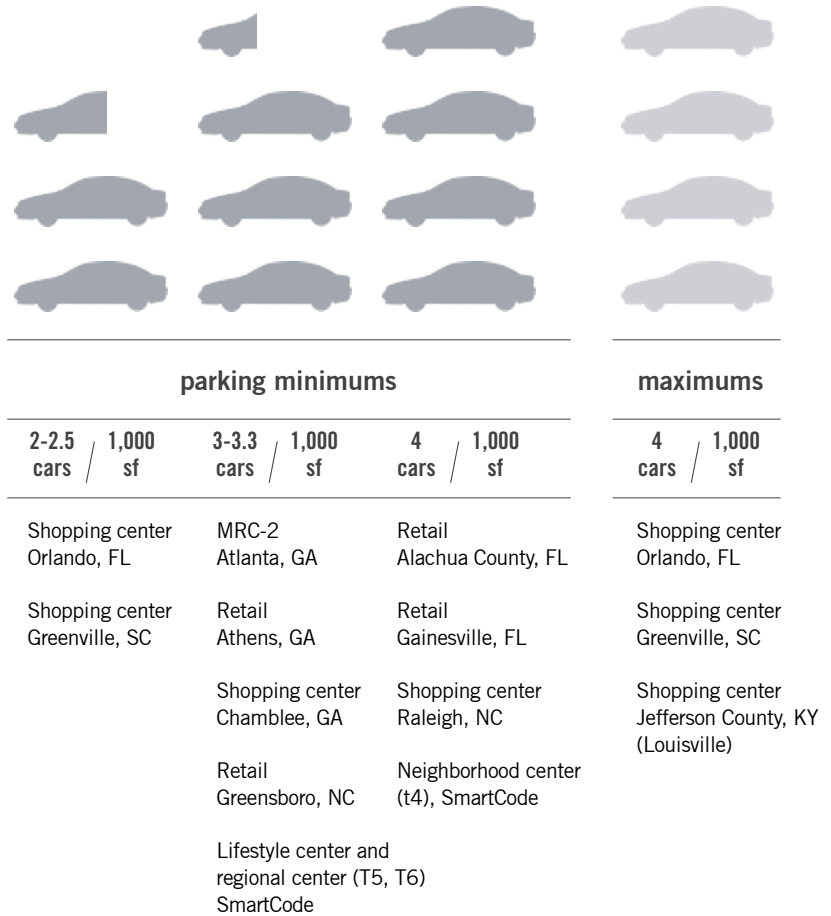
## PARKING FOR COMMERCIAL

**A Comparison of Parking Code Requirements** for commercial developments illustrates that requirements vary widely.

Historically, parking ratios were developed to address the presumed parking needs of commercial centers at peak parking times. Parking capacity was often determined for the needs of only one day a year: Black Friday. The trend has resulted in more land area devoted to parking than to leasable building space. The majority of such properties are over parked and underutilized, negatively impacting the quality of life of the surrounding community. Expansive parking lots often sit vacant during non-peak holiday times, creating unpleasant barriers between the community and the retailers.

Retailers and developers have also sought to reduce the amount of parking within urban conditions allowing for better utilization of the land, reduce wasteful costs, and create better urban form. Along with reduced parking counts, developers are employing structured parking as well as reduced parking space dimensions. The results are better utilization of the land, and a reduction in wasteful impervious surface. Although the development still generates the same amount of users, the visual impact on the surrounding community is reduced.

In reaction to underutilized and often inhospitable land, many jurisdictions have revised their commercial parking requirements to not only reduce the minimum spaces required but to introduce parking maximums to control the unsightly excess. In many urban conditions, where transit is easily accessible, minimum parking requirements have been eliminated.



## MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

The City of La Crosse has established Design Standards in 2010 for multi-family housing that are applicable to newly constructed buildings and major renovations in the Washburn Residential District, R-2 District through R-6 District, Traditional Neighborhood District and Planned Development Districts in La Crosse.

- Duplexes
- Townhouses
- Apartment Buildings
- Condominiums



## MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL

Developments that include multi-family residential units with retail, office and service uses on the ground floor are becoming more common as the real estate market shifts its focus towards livable, walkable environments.

- Multi-family residential above with retail, office or service uses on the ground floor



**Modern townhomes in the 12South Neighborhood** (Nashville, TN). This mixed-use development adds a level of density, new type of housing and a popular corner restaurant to the main commercial street in this revitalizing historic neighborhood near downtown Nashville. Parking for the units is located in a surface lot tucked behind the L-shaped development and accessed through side streets. The development strengthens the pedestrian character of the otherwise auto-oriented 12th Street.

- ACCESS** Activate the public realm with multiple entry points on the ground floor
  - Promote walk-in ground floor uses such as a dental office, retail pharmacy or a cafe
  - Target neighborhood-oriented retail or services for the ground floor
- PARKING & SERVICES** Locate surface parking lots in the rear or interior side of the building
  - Locate parking access to a secondary street or alley to minimize sidewalk interruption
  - Provide on-street parking to shield pedestrians and to serve the commercial components of the project
- DESIGN & LANDSCAPE** Promote design that respects the pedestrian scale of surrounding historic neighborhoods
  - Provide shade trees between road and sidewalk along public right-of-ways

## PARKING, RAMP

Above-Ground Ramp  
 Below-Ground Ramp  
 With Liner Building  
 With Ground-Floor Retail

Structured parking allows for a sizable reduction in parking footprint in building types such as medical office buildings that require high parking ratios. A building typology that is driven by strict size and efficiency requirements, ramps nevertheless can be designed in ways that support pedestrian urban environments.



**Parking Ramp in Longwood Medical Area** (Boston, MA) with active ground floor along a principal street. Visitors access the hospital across the street using pedestrian crosswalks at a signaled intersection that also helps to regulate the flow of vehicles into the ramp. The façade treatment on the main street conceals views of automobiles from the main street, enabling the structure to blend in with its surroundings.

**FRONTAGE** Mask view of the parking ramp from the pedestrian public realm by:

- Locating active uses on the ground floor, such as entrance or retail stores
- Locating ramp behind another building, such as a residential structure
- Providing a landscape strip (recommended width is ten feet) planted with tall shade trees and shrub in areas where the sidewalk-level use is parking

**ACCESS** Locate ramp access to a secondary street or alley to minimize sidewalk interruption on principal streets

Locate ramp access points in areas with minimum potential impact on residential neighborhoods

Create a signaled intersection with dedicated turn to regulate traffic into heavily-used parking structures

**SIZE & MASSING** Ramps should not be located on a residential street without a liner structure that is scale- and use-compatible with the residential structures

Parking ramps that have parking use at the sidewalk level should have a landscape strip of tall shade trees and shrubs between the sidewalk and the structure



# IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

## DEVELOPMENT FUNDING SOURCES

Through a market assessment exercise and interviews of area stakeholders and real estate developers, several sources of funding were identified to increase the feasibility of development projects within the Joint Plan Study Area. These sources include:

### LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) are a federally funded development subsidy program in which federal dollars are indirectly used as equity contributions to support the development of housing aimed at low-income residents within qualified census tracts (The Study Area is located within a qualified census tract). In Wisconsin, the program is administered by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). LIHTC is often the largest portion of a project's capital stock and allows developers to produce affordable housing in an area that has not only great demand for quality, affordable units but also market economics that otherwise do not support the development of new housing. The program is highly competitive (in 2011, roughly 25% of project applicants in Wisconsin received funding), though there is great opportunity for a project in the Study Area to receive LIHTC funding: especially a project that is endorsed by key area stakeholders. For additional support in making the development feasible, the LIHTC program can be coupled with State of Wisconsin Tax Exempt Bond Financing (also administered by WHEDA).

**LIHTC Structure Example:** During the pre-construction phase of an affordable or mixed-income multi-family rental residential development project, a developer applies for and receives from WHEDA a tax credit allocation equal to 9% percent of total applicable development costs each year for a period of 10 years. The developer can then sell those 10 years of tax credits on the open market to investors or tax credit syndicators. The sales proceeds of the entire package of 10-year credits are then used as direct project equity to cover costs during the development process (i.e., the developer does not need to wait each year for the payment of the credits). With a reduced

development basis, upon completion, the project can operate at a profit while leasing units at set affordable rates.

### NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS

Like LIHTC, New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) are federally funded incentives used to spur revitalization efforts of low-income and impoverished communities. Also like LIHTC, NMTC provide tax credit incentives to investors for equity investments in qualified active low-income community businesses. For real estate development projects, these incentives can be used by qualified businesses or organizations (Community Development Entities) to cover development or real estate operation costs. Specific to the Study Area, a development project that includes a retail component or other community service business (ex: medical care, day care, workforce training and job recruitment services) can apply for and utilize NMTC. For real estate development projects, only commercial properties or the qualified, non-residential portion of a mixed-use project are eligible for NMTC.

### TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

The City of La Crosse has established a Tax Increment Financing District (TID #14) that covers a substantial portion of the Study Area. The TIF is designed to finance the public costs associated with a private development project including site improvements, streetscaping and infrastructure. The property tax increases resulting from private development will be targeted to repay the public investment required by a project. Within the Study Area, TIF funds have already supported the development of a new parking facility at Gundersen Lutheran and streetscaping along South Avenue. The boundaries and project list of TID#14 will be updated in 2013 based on the recommendations made in this report.

### GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The following grant sources should be considered when seeking funding opportunities for neighborhood revitalization projects:

- Lutheran Community Foundation (LCF)
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Ho Chunk Nation

## IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

### JOINT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The City of La Crosse and Gundersen Lutheran have revised a 2006 development agreement to provide a partnership platform for a shared goal; the revitalization of the Powell-Hood-Hamilton Neighborhood and the larger study area in this planning document. To date they have shared in the funding of this plan, and the intention is to continue to build on the partnership, with seed money for the creation of a functioning Corporation, and oversight of the implementation of the plan.

The City envisions this effort as the beginning of a trend for La Crosse to facilitate relationships with private partners to help struggling communities. Partnerships of this type take advantage of the robust operations of significant commercial and institutional campuses and projects. These partnerships can bring much needed visibility to under-performing areas, increasing desire to live and work close-by, raising home values and bringing much needed neighborhood services.

The critical component to this effort is the creation of a Tax Incremental Finance District. The District is set up to fund projects that will jump-start the neighborhood as well as projects that assist Gundersen Lutheran with future campus transformation that will support the partnership goals. This relationship sets in motion the potential for significant change in the area, including upgraded streetscapes and corridor enhancements, improvements to Green Island Ice Arena, Little Houska Park, the Seventh Street Boat Landing, the South Side Neighborhood Center, trail connections and various other future improvements within the study area.

The Joint Development Corporation (JDC) is a significant platform for the City and Gundersen Lutheran to work together to ensure the future vitality of both. It should provide a clear working relationship between the two partners, and further, identify projects and a methodology for implementation. One of the key

elements in the implementation process will be the setting of expectations.

Varying levels of support from the partners should be determined based on project type as well as other criteria. Some projects will primarily benefit Powell-Hood-Hamilton and should be structured to reflect this, while others will primarily benefit Gundersen Lutheran. For example, in a new mixed-use development, an outside developer may take advantage of support from the TIF District, while Gundersen Lutheran may assist by promoting the project internally and by incentivizing employees to live close-by. Neighborhood residents may facilitate the development through a supportive land-use change, if needed. This is simply an example of the partnership structure working to facilitate projects that are beneficial to all involved and aligning expectations of participation of all the partners.

The JDC is also a platform to allow the City, Gundersen Lutheran and the community to work cooperatively through issues as they arise in this long-range process. It is the beginning of a truly concerted effort and an anchor for communication among all of the partners.

A CDC that would focus on housing rehabilitation in a concentrated and targeted manner would have the visible impact necessary to entice additional investment within the Study Area.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

A Community Development Corporation (CDC) is a non-profit organization structured to provide economic and real estate services for an otherwise underserved or under-performing defined geographic region. Considering the poor quality of many of the study area's single-family homes, a CDC could be formed to purchase, rehabilitate and resell those homes. This initial investment could catalyze further area investment and general improvement of area conditions.

The City of La Crosse has several established programs that focus on the rehabilitation of the housing stock in several neighborhoods throughout the City. While these programs have proved successful on many individual cases, they have been unable to create the critical mass of localized improvements needed to accelerate additional area investment. For example, the CDC might focus on housing rehabilitation in a concentrated and targeted manner would have the visible impact necessary to entice additional investment within the study area. If the CDC could rehabilitate a cluster of single family homes, investors would be more likely to purchase and rehabilitate additional surrounding homes, and that investment can then lead to a tertiary round of investment, ensuring the stabilization of the residential character of the neighborhood.

In this particular scenario, the CDC would require initial seed money to begin the investment in single-family homes and their rehabilitation. The profits from the sales of those initial homes could then be used to establish a revolving loan fund that would support additional purchases and rehabilitations. The revolving fund could also be used as supportive financing for buyers of the rehabilitated properties. This has proven very successful in other regions.

The CDC would be helpful in bringing appropriate commercial development to the community as well. There are significant opportunities for mixed-use development as well as the creation of commercial services, such as grocery, restaurant, retail, and others. The CDC would be a strong differentiator for the community: along with the partnership of Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, the CDC can facilitate the development of these types of projects.

Key to a CDC's success is strong leadership that has the implicit support of the City and other area stakeholders. A CDC also requires an engaged and empowered staff that can work with local residents and other stakeholders to move forward with a defined agenda of area improvements. In addition to a program of residential rehabilitation, a well-managed and empowered CDC can serve as an advocate for area interests, support further area investment through an active marketing campaign, and help establish other area organizations, such as a business improvement district (BID), that will further advocate for area improvements and investment.

The CDC should start as a local effort, primarily focused within the Powell-Hood-Hamilton neighborhood to help ensure success. The limited area of the CDC will help because it will be much easier to maintain critical, local focus as the corporation gets started, and is successful in its initial pursuits. As the CDC matures, it may expand, especially to the Washburn neighborhood, but expansion beyond that should be studied carefully prior to further growth. CDC's are most successful when they are local, and when those running the CDC are tied directly to the core communities that they serve. In La Crosse, Downtown Mainstreet Inc, an example of such focus and success, might serve as a model for the CDC envisioned for Powell-Hood-Hamilton.



## CRITICAL SUPPORTERS AND PLAN APPROVAL

Both the City of La Crosse and Gundersen Lutheran have established a process for approval of the Joint Plan and steps to move forward with creation of the JDC and plan implementation. The final plan will be presented to the Gundersen Lutheran Board of Governors and Board of Trustees for review and approval. The Draft Plan moved through the City of La Crosse approval process in April 2013. Timeline for Committee consideration of the Plan is listed below:

- Neighborhood Revitalization Commission, Board of Public Works, Plan Commission – April 1
- Judiciary & Administration Committee – April 2
- Draft Plan Presentation and Committee of the Whole – April 9
- Council – April 11

Within the first 6 months of plan approval, setting up the JDC and moving forward with completing components of the community action list will be the critical first steps towards the success of the plan.

Beyond the JDC and the CDC—two new organizations that will bring a renewed focus on funding and implementation of area projects, there are a large number of existing groups and entities whose support will be indispensable for implementation success.

These critical supporters are listed below, per study area district. (See p. 18 for a description of the districts) This list is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive: it is merely a starting point from which partnerships can be formed for transformative change following the Joint Plan.

### LIST OF CRITICAL SUPPORTERS

#### POWELL-HOOD-HAMILTON NEIGHBORHOOD

The primary task in Powell-Hood Hamilton will be neighborhood stabilization, spearheaded by the Community Development Corporation (CDC). Critical supporters of positive change in the neighborhood are:

- Powell-Hood-Hamilton Neighborhood Association
- City of La Crosse Neighborhood Revitalization Commission
- Livable Neighborhoods
- CouleeCAP
- Habitat for Humanity
- Churches
- Hamilton Early Learning Center, School of Technology and Arts
- Major Employers
- City of La Crosse Planning Department
- City of La Crosse Parks Department
- City of La Crosse Board of Park Commissioners
- City of La Crosse Public Works Department
- City of La Crosse Board of Public Works
- City of La Crosse Police Department
- City of La Crosse Building & Inspections Dept
- City of La Crosse Fire Department
- City of La Crosse Municipal Transit (MTU)
- City of La Crosse Assessors Department
- Private Developers
- Local Contractor Community
- Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center
- State Historical Society - Burial Preservation
- City of La Crosse Heritage Preservation Commission
- UW-Lacrosse Extension School
- La Crosse County
- La Crosse County Economic Development Fund
- La Crosse County Health Department

## LIST OF CRITICAL SUPPORTERS, continued

### SOUTHERN GATEWAY DISTRICT

The primary task in Powell-Hood Hamilton will be neighborhood stabilization, spearheaded by the Joint Development Corporation (JDC). Critical supporters of positive change in the gateway district are:

- Area Residents
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Private Developers and Businesses
- Gundersen Lutheran Health System
- City of La Crosse Planning Department
- City of La Crosse Engineering Department
- City of La Crosse Public Works Department
- City of La Crosse Board of Public Works
- City of La Crosse Parks Department
- City of La Crosse Board of Park Commissioners
- City of La Crosse Fire Department
- City of La Crosse Building & Inspections Dept
- City of La Crosse Assessors Dept
- Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center
- State Historical Society - Burial Preservation Board
- La Crosse County
- La Crosse County Economic Development Fund
- La Crosse County Health Department
- The 20,000 who drive by daily on South Avenue

### THE WELLNESS DISTRICT

The primary task in Wellness District will be planning and regulation for future infrastructure and uses, spearheaded by the City of La Crosse (urban planning) and Gundersen Lutheran Health System (campus planning). Critical supporters of positive change in the Wellness District are:

- Area Residents
- City of La Crosse Parks Department
- City of La Crosse Board of Park Commissioners
- City of La Crosse Public Works Department
- City of La Crosse Board of Public Works
- City of La Crosse Fire Department
- City of La Crosse Municipal Transit (MTU)
- Department of Natural Resources
- Private businesses + developers
- La Crosse County
- La Crosse County Economic Development Fund
- La Crosse County Health Department

**WITH THIS FRAMEWORK IN  
PLACE, OVER TIME, BOTH  
THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND  
GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN CAN  
EVOLVE TOGETHER TOWARDS A  
MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE:  
A “HEALTH CAMPUS” AT  
THE HEART OF A HEALTHY  
COMMUNITY.**

