

City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall 400 La Crosse Street La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Agenda

Neighborhood Revitalization Commission

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

6:00 PM

Council Chambers - City Hall - 400 La Crosse St.

Members of the public will be able to attend the meeting in person in the Council Chambers at City Hall located at 400 La Crosse St in La Crosse or online via video conferencing with the links below.

Join Zoom Meeting:

https://cityoflacrosseorg.zoom.us/j/82155464093pwd=aGw1NWRRUE4xM1RxajJxaTM0QkNUQT09

Meeting ID: 821 5546 4093

Passcode: 543969

Participate by phone: 1-312-626-6799

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the September 4, 2024 meeting minutes.

Agenda Items:

24-1090 Accessory Dwelling Unit Design Competition kick-off.

Attachments: ADU Design Competition

- Discussion of 2024 Housing Study with Local Housing Developer.
- 24-1312 Public hearing on NRC recommendation to deregulate off-street parking requirements in order to promote more housing.

Attachments: Deregulating Off-street Parking Requirements Presentation 10.2.2024

Amended Draft Ordinance to Deregulate Off-Street Parking

Draft Ordinance to Deregulate Off-street Parking

2024 NRC Visualizing Effects of Parking

2024 Off street parking

2020 NRC Statement to Eliminate Off Street Parking Requirements

2021 NRC Statement to Eliminate all Off-Street Parking Requirements

Memorandum to NRC-Feedback 4-30-21

NRC Narrative- Elimination of Off-Street Parking Req

Sam Deetz Cities Parking Comparison

Minneapolis Land Use Reforms Offer a Blueprint for Housing Affordability - Pew

The Benefits of Parking Reform in a Small University City

Enabling Better Places League of Wisconsin Municipalities

Reimagining Parking - NLC

LWM WI Zoning Guide.pdf

2024 Parking Deregulation Options

2024 Parking Deregulation Options 5-1-2024

Crook Email 9.3.2024

Brown Email 9.29.2024

Adjournment

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.

Neighborhood Revitalization Commission Members:

CM Jennifer Trost, CM Larry Sleznikow, Jessica Stanton, Jim Bagniewski, Greg Clark, Ralph Geary, Robert McDonnell, Sean Hurtubise, Will Kratt, Karl Green



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall 400 La Crosse Street La Crosse, WI 54601

Text File

File Number: 24-1090

Agenda Date: Version: 1 Status: Agenda Ready

In Control: Neighborhood Revitalization Commission File Type: Resolution

Agenda Number: 1.



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall 400 La Crosse Street La Crosse, WI 54601

Text File

File Number: 24-1312

Agenda Date: Version: 1 Status: Agenda Ready

In Control: Neighborhood Revitalization Commission File Type: General Item

Agenda Number: 3.

DEREGULATING OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

WHY CITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY ARE RECONSIDERING THEIR OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS



Impacts to housing affordability



Encourages automobile dependency

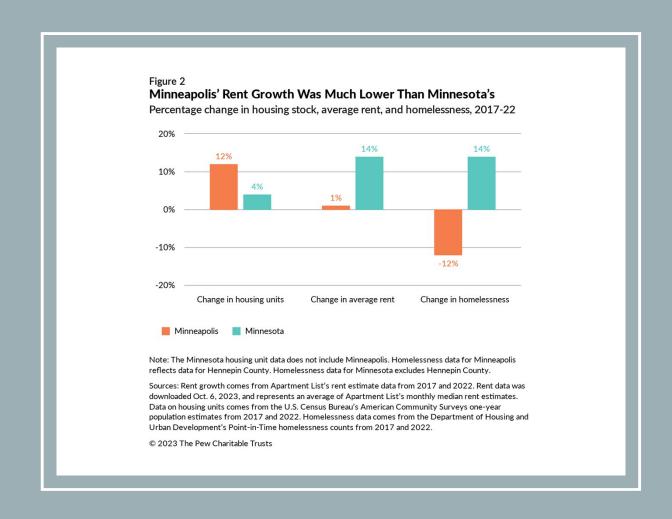


Environmental costs

IMPACTS TO HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

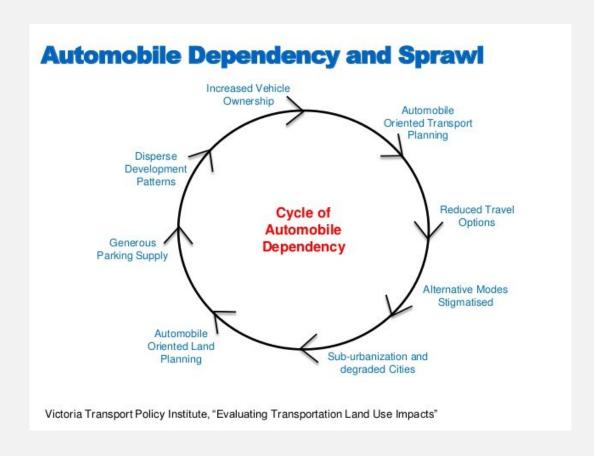
- Legislated parking minimums can increase the cost of housing, even for those who don't own a vehicle
 - According to the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, one surface parking space costs an estimated \$4,000 and multilevel garages cost upwards of \$20,000 a parking space

MINNEAPOLIS HOUSING POLICY REFORM



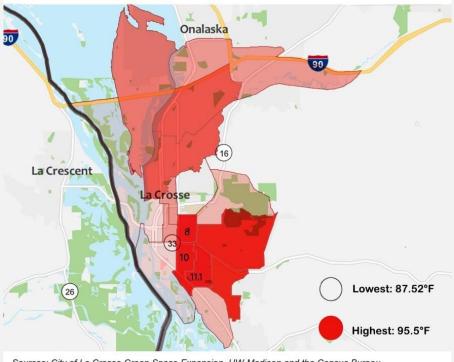
AUTOMOBILE DEPENDENCY

- U.S. has between <u>800 million</u> and 2 billion parking spaces
 - Equates to about eight parking spots for every car
- Off-street parking requirements can accelerate urban sprawl



La Crosse Heat Island Map

Areas of the city with the least green space were reported to have temperatures up to 8 degrees warmer than other areas.

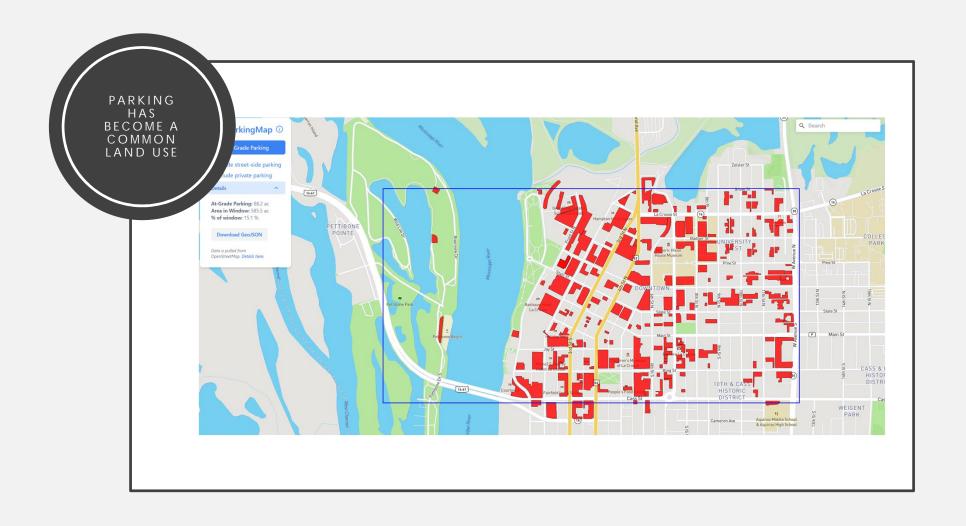


Sources: City of La Crosse Green Space Expansion, UW-Madison and the Census Bureau

Saskia Hatvany graphic, River Valley Media Group

ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS

 Impervious surfaces contribute to heat islands and negatively impact stormwater management

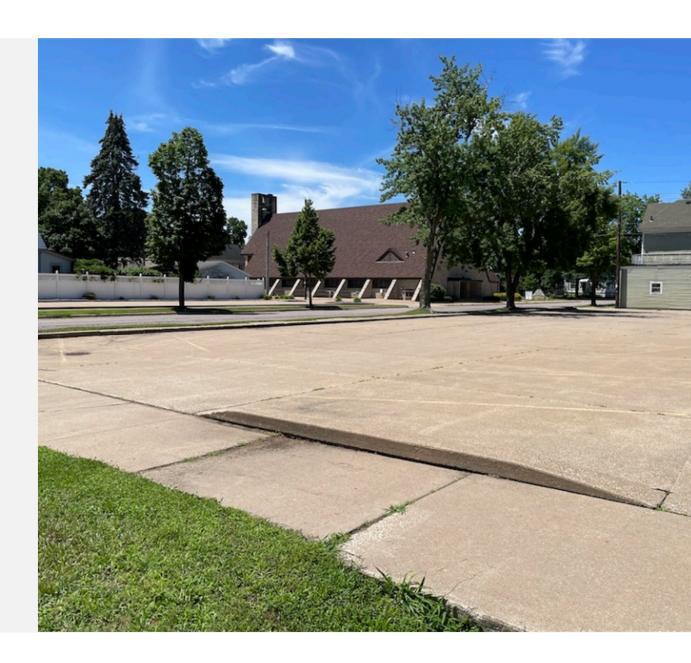


VISUAL EFFECTS OF PARKING POLICY



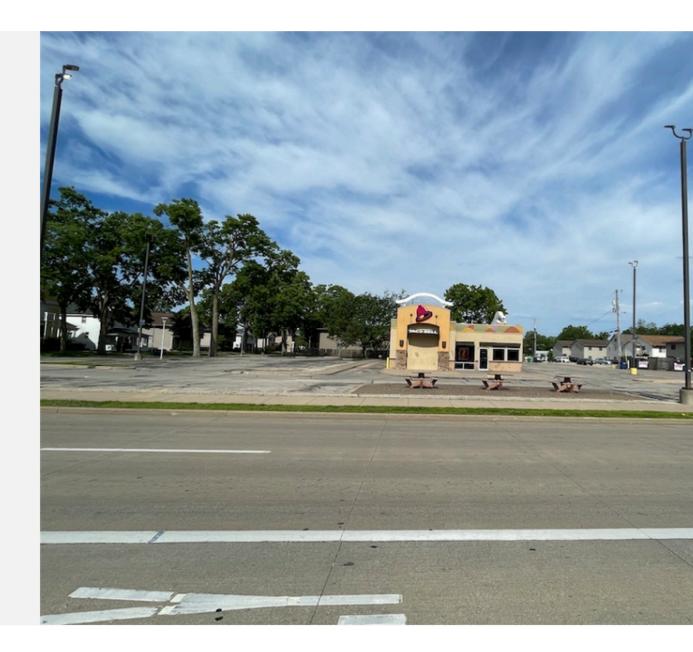
SILL/KANE

 Two houses are now 24 offstreet parking spaces, fully occupied a few times a week



WEST AVENUE

- Fast food drive thru
- 50 off-street parking spaces



ORDINANCE NO.:	
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AN ORDINANCE to repeal and recreate Section 115-393 and amend Section 115-512 regarding the removal of all off-street parking requirements.

THE COMMON COUNCIL of the City of La Crosse do ordain as follows:

SECTION I: Section 115-393 is hereby repealed and recreated as follows:

- (a) There are no minimum off-street parking requirements in any zoning districts. The following requirements in this section still apply:
 - (1) Adequate access to a public street shall be provided for each parking space.
 - (2) Size of each parking space shall not be less than 8.5 feet in width and 17 feet in length exclusive of access drives or aisles. The design of the off-street parking area in which more than four spaces are required shall be approved by the City Engineering Department in order to ensure that it meets City design specifications. In reviewing the design of the parking area, which shall be drawn to scale by the applicant, the City Engineering Department shall utilize the parking area design standards set forth in Section 115-112 and 115-550 of this chapter. Failure to provide the off-street parking area according to the plans approved by the City Engineer shall be considered a violation of this chapter. All off-street parking areas provided shall be maintained in usable condition at all times.
 - (3) Except as to those properties that receive an exception from the Common Council, after due notice and public hearing, and property used exclusively as one- and two-family dwellings for areas bounded by the Mississippi River, 7th Street, Cameron Avenue and the La Crosse River, all off-street parking, loading, storage, waste receptacle and recycling container storage areas, and driveway areas shall be graded and surfaced with asphalt, decorative paver brick, concrete or other impervious or pervious pavement material and properly drained in accordance with plans approved by the City Engineering Department by June 1, 2007. Any parking area for five or more vehicles shall also be cleared of any accumulation of snow or ice. All off-street parking areas shall be graded and surfaced so as to be dust-free and properly drained. Any parking area for five or more vehicles shall also be cleared of any accumulation of snow or ice.
 - (4) Any parking area for more than five vehicles shall have the aisles and spaces clearly marked.
 - (5) Curbs or barriers shall be installed on any parking area for more than five vehicles so as to prevent vehicles from extending over any lot line.
 - (6) Off-street parking spaces for uses in the Single Family Residence, Special Residence, Low Density Multiple Dwelling, Multiple Dwelling and Special Multiple Dwelling zones shall not be located between the front building line and the street line. On corner lots, this restriction also shall apply to the space between the side street line and the side building line. Off-street

parking space provided, including access drives and aisles, shall not cover more than 75 percent of the lost area in which such off-street parking space is permitted. No parking is permitted in the front setback area of any commercially zoned property (C-1, C-2 or C-3) if the principal use is for residential dwelling purposes

(7) All off-street parking required to meet ADA accessibility must still be met offstreet.

SECTION II: Subsection 115-512(j) is hereby amended as follows:

(j) There are no minimum off-street parking requirements.

SECTION III: Should any portion of this ordinance be declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this division shall not be affected.

SECTION IV: This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and publication.

	Mitch Reynolds, Mayor
	Nikki Elsen, City Clerk
Passed:	
Approved: Published:	

ORDINANCE NO.:	
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 - (3) Except as to those properties that receive an exception from the Common Council, after due notice and public hearing, and property used exclusively as one- and two-family dwellings for areas bounded by the Mississippi River, 7th Street, Cameron Avenue and the La Crosse River, all off-street parking, loading, storage, waste receptacle and recycling container storage areas, and driveway areas shall be graded and surfaced with asphalt, decorative paver brick, concrete or other impervious or pervious pavement material and properly drained in accordance with plans approved by the City Engineering Department by June 1, 2007. Any parking area for five or more vehicles shall also be cleared of any accumulation of snow or ice. All off-street parking areas shall be graded and surfaced so as to be dust-free and properly drained. Any parking area for five or more vehicles shall also be cleared of any accumulation of snow or ice.
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street parking space, including access drives and aisles, shall not cover more than 75 percent of the lost area in which such off-street parking space is permitted. No parking is permitted in the front setback area of any commercially zoned property (C-1, C-2 or C-3) if the principle use is for residential dwelling purposes

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	Mitch Reynolds, Mayor
Dagged	Nikki Elsen, City Clerk
Passed:	
Approved:	
Published:	

Visualizing the Effects of Parking Policies and Priorities on Housing and Land Use

Neighborhood Revitalization Commission July 10, 2024

A note about the following images:

None of these images are meant as criticisms of these particular properties, or as proposals to change these locations. Council and this committee do not have that power at any rate. Instead, these images are examples of the outcomes of our current or former zoning policies and parking priorities. These outcomes are what we have. If we want different outcomes, we'll need to change the policies that have produced these outcomes.

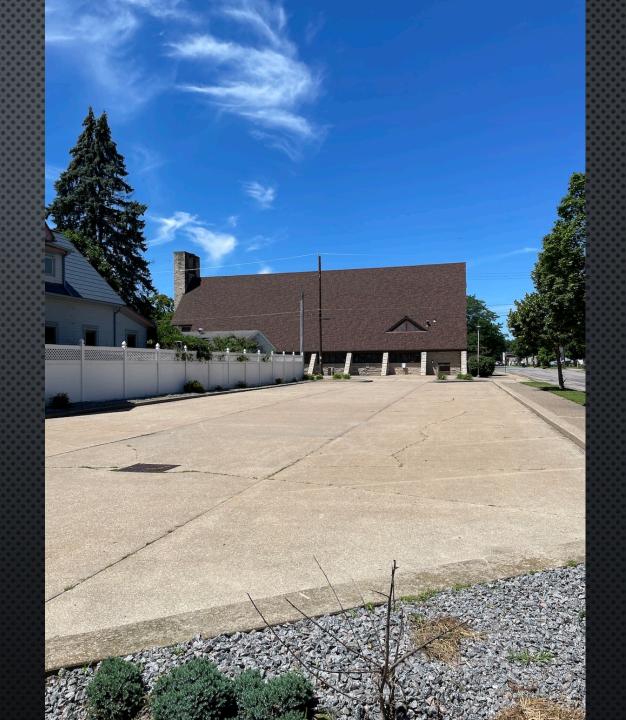
Each of these images show examples of missed housing or commercial opportunities; things that could be there, but are not, because of current parking requirements.

HOUSING LOST TO OFF-STREET PARKING FOR PRIVATE OR COMMERCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Sill/Kane Church – 48 spaces from 3 houses Healthcare Provider Local Business 7th/Division Church

SILL/KANE

One house is now 24 off-street parking spaces, fully occupied a few times a week



SILL/KANE

Two houses are now 24 off-street parking spaces, fully occupied a few times a week



JACKSON/10TH

Former small (6-8 unit) apartment building is now off-street parking for healthcare provider



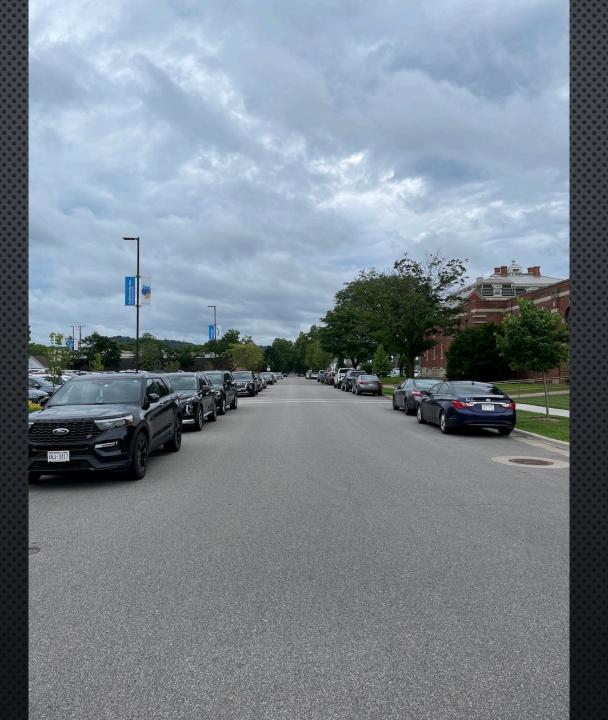
Former houses are healthcare provider offstreet parking, but on-street parking is also used



More
healthcare
provider
parking, both
surface and
stacked.



More
healthcare
provider
on-street
parking



JACKSON/4TH

Former houses are now parking for local business



DIVISION/7TH

Former houses are off-street parking for church, fully occupied a few times a week



EXCESS OFF-STREET PARKING

Business Development Organization Commercial Office Space Bridgeview Plaza Fast Food Drive Thru Monitor St.— 25 spaces Fast Food Drive Thru West Ave. — 50 spaces Financial Institution LA CROSSE ST.

Business development organization



LA CROSSE ST.

Commercial office space



BRIDGEVIEW PLAZA



MONITOR ST.

Fast food Drive Thru

25 off-street spaces for largely drivethru business



WEST AVE.

Fast food drive thru

50 off-street spaces



KING ST.

Financial institution

Entire city block offstreet parking



KING ST.

Financial Institution

Entire city block offstreet parking



MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL OFF-STREET PARKING

West/Vine Apartment Buildings
East Ave. Apartment Complex
Wall/Copeland Building— ½ housing and ½ parking on the parcel
7th/Adams Building— ½ housing and ½ parking on the parcel

11th/Main House–32 spaces, 1 space per bedroom 8th/Cass Building–34 spaces, before 1:1 policy

WEST/VINE APARTMENTS



WEST/VINE APARTMENTS

Very large offstreet parking lot



APARTMENT COMPLEX

Parcel is about half parking and half residences



APARTMENT COMPLEX

Residences surround the central parking



WALL/ COPELAND

Parcel is half off-street parking and half residences



7TH/ADAMS

Parcel is about half residences over covered parking, and half surface parking.



11TH/MAIN

32 spaces, in compliance with 1 space per bedroom. Contrast with . . .



8TH/CASS

34 parking spaces serve eight story apartment complex with 103 units, some multibedroom built before 1:1 policy



NRC Agendas With Actions to Eliminate Requirements for Off-Street Parking

Agenda Date Agenda Item

. / /	Transport
4/30/2018	18-0633
2/3/2020	20-0201
3/2/2020	20-0337
9/28/2020	20-1389
11/2/2020	20-1567
1/4/2021	20-1795
2/1/2021	
3/29/2021	21-0456
5/3/2021	21-0456
6/28/2021	
8/30/2021	21-1267
1/5/2022	22-0031
2/2/2022	22-0031; 21-0456

NRC Agendas With Actions to Eliminate Requirements for Off-Street Parking

Agenda Topic

Discuss parking reform

Discussion on eliminating parking minimums from the municipal code

Proposed Municipal Code Revision to Eliminate off-street parking minimums for multifamily dwellings

Review and Discussion of the Downtown Parking Study and Analysis of Expanded Areas

Discussion and possible action on parking minimums and maximums and NRC Statement to eliminate Off-Street Parking Requirements

Review, discussion and possible action on the draft ordinances/statement to eliminate Off-Street Parking Requirements

Update on the Ordinance to eliminate Off-Street Parking

Update/Discussion of the Ordinance to Eliminate Off-Street Parking Requirements

Draft Ordinanance to Eliminate Off-Street Parking Requirements

Update on Off-Street Parking Requirements Elimination Ordinance

Review of draft ordinances for the elimination of off-street parking requirements

Review of Draft Ordinance regarding the elimination of off-street parking requirements in the commercial zoning districts; update on Multi-family park

Review of Draft Ordinance commercial zoning districts; Review of Draft Ordinance Multi-family parking

NRC Agendas With Actions to Eliminate Requirements for Off-Street Parking

Agenda Attachments

La Crosse Municipal Code Parking Minimums; NRC Parking Examples: Infill Development; Parking Benefit Districts; Unbundling Fees, Maximums

La Crosse Municipal Code Parking Minimums

2020 NRC Proposed Parking Code Revision

Final Report.pdf

2020 NRC Statement to Eliminate Off Street Parking Requirements

2021 NRC Statement to Eliminate Off-Street Parking Requirements; Draft 115-393 Off-street Parking Minimums 12-31-20

Memorandum to NRC-Feedback; Draft 115-393 Off-street Parking Elimination 3-1-21; Draft NRC Narrative-Elmination of Off-Street Parking Requirements Memorandum to NRC 4-30-21; Memorandum to NRC 3-26-21; Draft 115-393 3-1-21; Draft NRC Narrative

Draft 115-0393 Off-street Commercial Parking Elimination; 2Draft 115-393 Off-street multi-family Parking Elimination 8-26-21

115-393a Off-street Commercial Parking Elimination 1-4-22

Draft 115-393 Off-street Commercial Parking Elimination 2-2-22; Draft TDM Ordinance 2-1-22; Draft 9-21-22, 3-1-21, Memo 4-30-21, Draft NRC Narrative

Neighborhood Revitalization Commission

Proposed Elimination of Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements for Multifamily Residential Dwellings and Revision to Municipal Code November 2, 2020

Proposal: Eliminate subsection (j) of section 115-512 of Division 3.

Sec. 115-512. – Parking lot design and parking standards.

(j) The minimum off-street parking requirement for all multifamily housing is one space per bedroom.

The 2020 La Crosse parking management report shows that, on a "typical" weekday, no place under study ever reached parking occupancy capacity, even at peak demand. The four city areas studied had ample parking at all times.

Based on the final report of the "Downtown Parking Study Update & Analysis of Expanded Areas" completed by Rich & Associates Parking Consultants in July 2020, the NRC recommends eliminating off-street parking requirements from Municipal Code, beginning with off-street parking requirements for multifamily dwellings. Because current Municipal Code clearly results in mandated off-street parking that is significantly greater than needed, that code unnecessarily allocates urban space for parking that would find a better and higher use as a part of residential structures. Eliminating minimum requirements for off-street parking for multifamily housing would allow future developers and property owners to better allocate space for residential needs. They would be able to choose for themselves how much parking is needed to attract and accommodate residents, thus allowing for increased numbers, density, availability, and affordability of housing units.

The four areas studied in the report had parking availability far in excess of demand:

Downtown

Total parking occupancy peak was 45 percent of capacity. (Section A, p. 7, 9, 11, 12, 14)

Universities

On-street parking occupancy peak was 40 percent of capacity. (Section B, p.12) Non-university, off-street parking occupancy peak was 53 percent of capacity. (Section B, p. 19) Non-residential private parking occupancy peak was 51 percent of capacity. (Section B, p. 20) Residential building parking occupancy peak was 66 percent of capacity. (Section B, p. 20)

Gundersen-Mayo

On-street parking occupancy peak was 36 percent of capacity. (Section C, p. 9) Non-medical/university off-street parking occupancy peak was 37 percent. (Section C, p. 15) Residential building parking peak was 51 percent of capacity. (Section C, p. 16)

Northside

On-street parking occupancy peak was 26 percent of capacity. (Section D, p. 5)

Study Methodology

Rich & Associates Parking Consultants analyzed parking supply and demand in the Downtown District, the University District, the Gundersen-Mayo District and the Northside District. The consultants did a block-by-block inventory of the number of parking spaces and used counts of on-street and off-street occupancy of those spaces in two-hour increments from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The occupancy counts happened in October 2019 and early March 2020 and combined into a "composite" weekday for the Downtown, University, and Northside districts. Counts for Gundersen-Mayo happened only in October 2019.

Neighborhood Revitalization Commission

Proposed Elimination of Off-Street Minimum Parking Requirements for Dwellings, Commercial Establishments, Non-profit Entities, and Service Providers and Revision to Municipal Code January 4, 2021

The 2020 La Crosse parking management report shows that, on a "typical" weekday, no place under study ever reached parking occupancy capacity, even at peak demand. The four areas studied, the densest in the city, had ample parking at all times.

Based on the final report of the "Downtown Parking Study Update & Analysis of Expanded Areas" completed by Rich & Associates Parking Consultants in July 2020, the NRC recommends eliminating all off-street minimum parking requirements from Municipal Code for dwellings, commercial or retail establishments, non-profit entities, or service providers. Because current Municipal Code clearly mandates off-street parking significantly greater than the need, the code unnecessarily allocates urban space for parking that would find a better and higher use as additional dwellings, businesses, or service providers. Eliminating minimum requirements for off-street parking would allow developers, businesses, and property owners to better allocate space for dwellings, commerce, or services rather than cars. They would be able to choose for themselves how much parking is needed to attract and accommodate residents, customers, clients, or other users thus allowing for increased numbers, density, availability, and affordability of housing, businesses and service providers.

Section 115-343-Residential uses

The following residential and quasi-residential uses shall be conditional uses and may be authorized as provided herein:

(9) Notwithstanding the residence requirements of article III of this chapter, a dwelling unit in the Single Family Residence District (R-1) or the Residence District (R-2), may provide family day care home services by a person other than a resident provided, no other dwelling unit on the same parcel is licensed as a family day care home. All other requirements or conditions, however, as defined in <u>section 115-1</u> shall apply along with the following: Proposed Elimination: e. <u>Minimum parking</u> shall be one space per staff person, one space minimum.

Section 115-343-Off-street parking

Proposed Elimination: (k) The number of parking spaces required as shown in the following list:

1. Uses, minimum parking requirements, units of measurement:

One-family Dwellings and Mobile Homes, two parking spaces for each dwelling unit. Two-family Dwellings, two parking spaces for

each dwelling unit; provided, however, should any dwelling unit contain three or more bedrooms there shall be provided one additional parking space for each additional bedroom or enclosed room which may be utilized for sleeping purposes, whichever number is larger. Multifamily Dwellings, 1.5 parking spaces for each dwelling unit; provided, however, should any dwelling unit contain three or more bedrooms there shall be provided one additional parking space for each additional bedroom or enclosed room which may be utilized for sleeping purposes, whichever number is larger; provided, however, the maximum number of parking spaces required for Multifamily Dwellings shall not exceed four per dwelling unit.

Hotels, motels and tourist homes, one parking space for each dwelling unit or guest room, plus one parking space for each three employees.

Boardinghouses, one parking space for each two beds plus one parking space for each three employees.

Private clubs and lodges (without sleeping facilities), one parking space for each 150 square feet of floor area.

Private clubs and lodges (with sleeping facilities), one parking space for each guestroom, plus one parking space for each three employees.

Fraternities, sororities and dormitories, one parking space for each three beds (exclusive of those beds occupied by persons enrolled in an institution of learning, prohibited by administrative order of that institution from bringing motor vehicles onto such premises).

Hospitals, one parking space for each two beds, plus one parking space for each three employees.

Sanitariums, rest and nursing homes, one parking space for each five beds, plus one parking space for each three employees.

Medical and dental clinics, three parking spaces for each doctor.

Funeral Homes, six *parking* spaces for each chapel or parlor, plus one *parking* space for each funeral vehicle kept on the premises.

Places of assembly and recreation, including stadiums, arenas, auditoriums, (other than church, college or institutional school) convention halls, theaters, places of worship, and other similar places of assembly, one parking space for each five seats.

Schools (including nursery, elementary and junior high), one *parking* space for each two employees.

High schools, one parking space for each two employees, plus one parking space for each student authorized by school officials to drive private automobiles to school to attend regularly scheduled classes.

Colleges and universities, one parking space for each two employees, plus one parking space for each three full-time students allowed private automobiles and who are not residing in school approved dormitories or fraternities and sororities.

Business, professional and trade schools, one parking space for each two employees plus one parking space for each three students based on the maximum number of students attending classes on the premises at any one time during any 24-hour period.

Financial institutions, business, government and professional offices, one parking space for each 300 square feet of floor area.

Retail stores or personal service establishments (except those listed separately), restaurants, bars, places of entertainment and similar establishments, one parking space for each 150 square feet of floor area.

Drive in banks, self-service automobile laundries, or similar drive in establishments, three stacking places per teller or customer window. Automobile Laundry (excluding self-service automobile laundries), 20 stacking spaces for each wash rack, plus one parking space for each three employees.

Bowling alleys, five *parking* spaces for each alley, plus such additional spaces as are required for affiliated uses - bars, restaurants, and the like.

Manufacturing and processing plants, laboratories, wholesale houses, one parking space for each two employees and one parking space for each vehicle used in the conduct of the enterprise.

Day care centers licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families which for compensation provide care and supervision for four or more children under the age of seven for less than 24 hours a day shall provide off-street parking at the rate of two parking sites for the first ten children and one additional site for each ten additional children or part thereof. One parking space shall also be provided in addition for each two employees.

2. Uses not listed.

In the case of structures or uses not mentioned, the provisions for a use which is similar shall apply.

For the above uses, parking spaces required on an employee basis shall be based on the maximum number of employees on duty or residing, or both, on the premises at any one time.







400 La Crosse Street | La Crosse, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512

Memorandum

To: Neighborhood Revitalization Commission

From: Tim Acklin, AICP

CC:

Date: April 30, 2021

Re: Update on the Ordinance to eliminate off-street parking requirements.

To date I have feedback from eight Neighborhood Associations, the Apartment Association of the La Crosse Area, and have conducted multiple interviews with individuals who are local developers or landlords. I have one remaining neighborhood association scheduled to talk to.

To date I have heard the following:

Apartment Association of the La Crosse Area

"We are in favor of keeping the requirement of one parking stall per bedroom for many reasons."

- Safety of our tenants.
- Tenants want off street parking. It makes rental properties with off street parking more desirable.
- On street parking in front of the premises should be kept for guests of the tenants within the buildings.
- The paid commuter parking areas around UW-L and WTC are not being used and those people
 are parking within the neighborhoods and walking further to campus, thus creating more parking
 congestion.
- Those that have off street parking lots are spending time having illegally parked cars towed, which is creating frustration for all involved.
- We don't want to see taxpayer money (TIF and other) being spent to subsidize a development or parking ramp or lot for a development.
- The parking study that was done looked at parking in the Goosetown neighborhood on a
 weekday afternoon when students have typically taken their cars to school or work or are not
 home. This was a really poor time to analyze the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Associations

- Have the cities of similar size cited in the study been contacted to find out how it is going with them? What is happening to their trends in public transportation? Has it been better utilized? Is the investment paying off?
- Are there specific counts for each neighborhood or just the study areas?
- Effort may stop students from bringing their cars. Would need better public transportation.

ANDREA TRANE, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT TIM ACKLIN, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER
LEWIS KUHLMAN, AICP, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER
JACK ZABROWSKI, ASSOCIATE PLANNER
ERIN DUFFER, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

VACANT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR

DAWN REINHART, NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

TARA FITZGERALD, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

KEVIN CLEMENTS, HOUSING SPECIALIST

KEVIN CONROY, HOUSING REHABILITATION SPECIALIST

400 La Crosse Street | La Crosse, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512 | F: (608) 789-7318

- Would like to see a check in 5 years to see what impact this ordinance had. Should include a sunset clause and re-evaluation.
- Why do we need a change?
- Will this make it easier to convert homes to multi-family.
- Change Ordinance to also eliminate the ability to pave over your back yard for parking
- This seems like it would be a convenience to homeowners and an inconvenience to students.
- Provide secure outdoor bike storage could be a reduction in the existing requirement.
- Worried about building cheaply and putting the burden on the city streets and surrounding property owners.
- Needs to be in sync with the on-street parking programs and the Parking Utility. Needs to be partnered with the Parking Utility, MTU, and others to be successful.
- Could lead to less car dependency.
- Will existing buildings be allowed to eliminate parking?
- Existing owner-occupied homes on small lots with no off-street parking worried about being able to park near home.
- Instead of city-wide, keep requirements in single family zoning. Eliminate in areas with higher density zoning and development. Keep in Traditional Neighborhood Developments.
- Why the 5,000sqft threshold for TDM plans?
- · Concerned about capacity of the streets.
- Won't bring visitors or shoppers to La Crosse if no parking.
- Will this require metering and/or time restrictions on other streets if people now have to park further away.
- Worried about the market dictating it correctly. Current properties removing parking. Needs to be a threshold that requires parking review.
- Whole city not the same. Different needs in different parts of the City
- Surrounding citizens should have a say if a development is proposing no parking. Notify like rezonings.
- What about the required handicapped spaces for new developments.
- Winter parking concern and alternate side parking. How does this affect that policy?
- No sidewalks in our neighborhood now. Have to walk in the street and would have to walk around a car.
- People should be required to do something.
- Should be required to provide a place to plug in a car. Electric cars.
- Would be hard to see to turn with more cars on the streets.
- Would love to have a "no-car" city. Very forward looking. It is a big step. Should be gradual. Also need to have good public transportation.
- Would be hard with alternate side parking.
- Should be evaluated on a project by project basis.
- Would increase the competition for off-street parking.
- All are paying for the streets. Should not compete for them.
- Provide an opportunity for difference in land use.
- Drastic move. Will clog the streets. Can we meet in the middle and only require half the requirements?
- Currently an outdated requirement. May not be so drastic.
- Do we let our problem areas guide this policy?

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- This does not eliminate parking. Would allow opportunities to develop more tax base.
- Could support eliminating requirements, but would need an increase in alternate forms of transportation.
- Provide opportunities for an increase in green space and better density.
- More cars on the streets does not make a good neighborhood.
- Better for cars to be parked on the street than making a tooth for a surface lot.
- Will drive all the cars to the streets and make it difficult for bikes.
- This will crowd the streets. Hard to find on-street parking as it is.
- Will be a step back for parking.
- Bad timing of survey to not be done during peak time of students.
- Non-student tenants. What will be the impact to them? Will it exasperate their existing struggles?
- Needs to be a harder look at how the study was broken down.
- How does this policy impact neighborhoods?
- The pay to park program will impact car usage. Parking to cheap now.
- 8-story buildings on Cass Street already do not have enough parking. People parking blocks away now. Policy would push them farther away.
- Hard to park on streets now. Not sure why there is a perception that there is a lot on available on-street parking.
- Require an electric plug in for cars as part of developments.
- Policy to be used in conjunction with Accessory Dwelling Units to convert surface parking to tax base.
- On-street parking opportunities near Aquinas High School, Lincoln Middle, and Elliot Arms not a reality. Any new building would make this area even more swamped with cars.
- More cars parked on the street would make it undesirable to come to La Crosse if visitors for tenants can't find a place to park.
- Need to coordinate this policy with the Police Department and other parking policies.
- Agree with the goal for the City to be greener and create healthier neighborhoods.

Individual Interview comments

- Land is valuable. Concept to allow for more tax base instead of parking is great.
- More likely to work for developments near parking ramps.
- Would not develop without parking
- No parking at all would be difficult. Could still work with a .5-.8 to 1 ratio.
- · Could work depending on walkability of area
- Quality of Mass Transit important. Opportunity to MTU to be profitable and have greater use.
 Maybe require those developments who want little to no parking to buy bus passes for their tenants.
- Could work if close proximity to jobs.
- Would need more electric charging stations and planning for autonomous vehicles to encourage less dependency on cars.
- Should be looked at on a development by development basis for less or no parking.
- Would there still be an assessment for the properties in the DT Parking District?
- Landlords would start charging for parking.
- Underground parking even more that the 17-20% cited in the narrative.

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- Should start out as pilot program. Willing to be the first.
- No one will likely build with no parking.
- 1 to 1 is hard to make work on some redevelopment sites, especially with building costs going up.
- Incentivize other forms of transportation.
- Current requirements have made several potential developments not possible. I look forward to doing multiple larger scale developments in the multi-family area if this new agenda is to pass through. The positives are updated housing, increasing the city's tax base, and very possibly encouraging students/members of the city to use various other modes of transportation that would be beneficial to the city as well as to the environment (i.e. busing, bicycles, on foot). I also think this new proposal would uplift the overall look of the city, specifically the student housing areas that I am more personally involved in. It could open up the possibility of developers to use smaller spaces more effectively, develop areas currently not looked at heavily, and maybe increase business interest into new areas. I also understand the down side to this possible change. Alternate-Side parking may be a problematic area. Snow removal may also see some issues. Over the past 20 years of being involved in the student housing area; however, I have not noticed a big issue with street parking availability but that would be something to consider as a potential negative.
- Good rationale in the narrative.
- Having some guidelines would be better. Use the TDM plan to justify having less or none. Have some ability to require some parking.
- Who in town can do a TDM Plan?
- Define "substantial renovation" in (C2)
- Concerned about some landlords only caring about themselves and developing no parking and pushing it all to the streets making a terrible situation for others.
- More worried about smaller developments than larger ones. Like 6-8plexes. Easier to not provide parking.
- .8 to 1 ratio rather than a 1 to 1 for student developments. Less than that requires a TDM. Becomes a negotiation then. Don't need 1 to 1.
- I can give you my take on the subject, although it is just my opinion based on what I have seen over a 20 + year career. It is a balancing act. If you have too few spots your tenants will look elsewhere. The people who don't get a spot become unhappy. The fewer spots you have the more turnover. I would bet that 90 plus percent of people between the ages of 18 and 70 need and want their car. I understand the idea of how a large metro area would want to head that way. The concept of density shooting through the roof at the core and the tax base expanding with it. The biggest obstacle is the reality of what the tenants want. Twenty years ago, I built buildings with an 80% parking ratio. Then I built buildings with 100% ratio. I can say without a doubt that the need and desire for parking has grown over the years. I would not invest my money into a building with less than 85 to 90% parking. To serve my customers I need to provide what they want and our looking for. The progression is for each building to be better than the last and provide more amenities. Taking the parking spot away (not providing) would be going the other way in a big way. I do see the strong pull to do so as it would in theory increase your density and really give the appearance of a great investment for both the city and

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the landlord. Yet I believe that in reality it would lose in the long run. I just don't see the trend reversing itself.

Staff Takeaways/themes

- 1) Overall people are on board with opportunities to reduce the number of single occupancy trips of vehicles and dependency on the car.
- 2) Concerns have been expressed over the data and findings from the Parking Study. Issues raised have been with the hours where parking counts were conducted. They were done during student peak times in the evening and early morning hours. Also, looking at the study boundaries it was felt that some areas with high volumes of on street parking were not factored into its findings.
 - a. Staff spoke with the consultants who prepared the parking study about these concerns. Scope of the plan was to analyze parking during daytime hours in order to evaluate daytime parking programs. The findings in the study that suggest that there is an overabundance of parking is not a general statement about the city as a whole, only for certain areas.
- 3) Policy change may work/be supported with other policy implementation and an improved/efficient public transportation system.
- 4) Developers/landlords saw the benefit of being able to provide more units instead of parking. However, they were either opposed to reducing the one-to-one ratio or only in favor of reducing it, not eliminating it.
- 5) All developers/landlords indicated that they would still provide off-street parking as part of their development.
- 6) Neighborhood Associations geographically located in the higher density, central core of the city were strongly opposed to the elimination of off-street parking requirements. They felt there was already a parking congestion problem on the streets. The neighborhood associations around the periphery of the city limits, or with little to no large multi-family or commercial developments, were supportive of the vision but overly cautious of how it would affect other areas of the city.

Staff Recommendations

- 1) The parking study should not be used as supporting evidence for this policy decision. The scope was not designed to provide the data. A large timeframe of the day that is considered high/peak volume of on-street parking (10pm-3am) was not included. This study was design for daytime parking hours only and its findings of an overabundance of parking should not be considered as a general statement across the whole city.
- 2) There was a considerable amount of opposition, particularly for the elimination of the (1:1) ratio for multi-family development, from the neighborhood residents and the Apartment Association of the La Crosse Area. Should the NRC still want to pursue this change perhaps the ratio is reduced from (1:1) to a range of (.6-.8:1).
- 3) The NRC may also consider this policy on a geographic basis. A boundary could be established in parts of the city where the ratio is reduced for multi-family rather than a complete elimination.
- 4) Should the ordinance be submitted to the Council in its current form staff feels that there was enough opposition to prevent any form of this effort from moving forward. A compromise of some sort is encouraged, whether it includes a ratio reduction, property owner notification if a development is only providing a certain percent of parking, all off-street parking requirements are mandatory if development is a certain size, establishment of zones where complete elimination is permitted, or a combination of any of the above.

NRC Rationale for Elimination from City Code of Mandated/Legislated Numbers of Parking Spaces

Best use of limited land

The City of La Crosse is obligated to make the highest and best use of the limited land between the river and the bluffs. While we know that many people have concerns about the availability of parking, automatic or pre-determined parking requirements in the municipal code, regardless of the actual need, unnecessarily constrain housing and economic development, and therefore directly limits the city tax base. Removing these constraints creates the opportunity to build more capitally efficient buildings such as additional dwellings, businesses, or service providers. The true costs of parking are often hidden because of the indirect ways that most of us pay for them such as lower wages, higher taxes, and prices of goods, services or rent. For instance, the cost of parking makes up about 17-20 percent of a housing unit's rent. More parking for cars means fewer places for people.

Choice to provide parking still remains

This ordinance does not eliminate existing parking nor does it prevent new parking. Instead, it removes specific numbers of mandated requirements put into place a decade ago. It gives landowners and neighborhoods the flexibility to make their own determinations for parking spaces rather than forcing investors, developers or lenders to choose between scaling down or abandoning a project, spending more, or taking the time to seek variances. Other more appropriate or sensitive market factors will be able to determine parking needs such as bank loan conditions, anticipated user demand, fuel and energy prices, declining car ownership, or growth of ride-share services.

Flexibility for the future

We can't change the past, but we don't want to be bound by policies that no longer serve the interests of the city. Minimum parking requirements came into widespread use in the 1970s and we now see how this outdated policy holds cities back rather than allowing growth.³ The old requirements were top-down decisions that replaced independent decisions by residents, neighborhoods, developers, lenders, and buyers. This new ordinance aligns with the goals of the city's many plans for the future including the Strategic Plan for Sustainability, Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Vision Memo, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Multi-Family Housing Design Standards, Commercial Design Standards, and Overlay Districts. COVID has also shown that behaviors can change and that we need to examine our assumptions about the necessities of individual car use.

¹ Research Institute for Housing America, "Quantified Parking: Comprehensive Parking Inventories for Five US Cities," May 2018.

 ² C.J. Gabbe and Gregory Pierce, "Hidden Costs and Deadweight Losses: Bundled Parking and Residential Rents in the Metropolitan United States," *Housing Policy Debate*, 2017; Todd Litman, "Socially Optimal Transport Prices and Markets," Victoria Transport Policy Institute, October 2020.
 ³ Erik Ferguson, "Zoning for Parking as Policy Process: A Historical Review," *Transport Reviews* 24.2 (2004): 177–194

Part of a trend in policy

By removing required parking minimums, La Crosse is part of a state-wide and national trend. Currently in downtown La Crosse, off-street parking requirements are already waived for private development. In Wisconsin and nearby, Ashland, Winona, Stevens Point, and Fitchburg have partially or entirely eliminated parking minimums in the last 5 years. Since 2016, Minneapolis, Hartford, CT, Buffalo, NY, San Francisco, Portland, OR and also mid-sized cities like South Bend, Indiana have eliminated all required off-street parking spaces.

No shortage of parking, transportation preferences are changing

While we can't change the restrictions that developers or landlords had to meet in the past, we can do better in the future. The future points to a decline in car culture as a life-style preference for both young and old. We have no evidence of inadequate parking in La Crosse but plenty of evidence of excess parking availability and increasing preferences for multimodal lifestyles. Over 160,000 Wisconsin households do not have a personal car.⁶ Ownership of a car is prohibitively expensive for many families with low incomes. Many young adults from Wisconsin say they prefer to live in areas with good public transportation and a growing number of people are forgoing car ownership.⁷ Nationwide, the number of 16-year-olds holding a driver's license has fallen from 43 percent in 1987 to just 26 percent in 2017.⁸ The timing of this new ordinance reflects the downward trend in the desirability of cars among millennials and the projected aging of the regional population.⁹

The final report of the "Downtown Parking Study Update & Analysis of Expanded Areas" completed by Rich & Associates Parking Consultants in July 2020 shows that, on a "typical" weekday, no place under study ever reached parking occupancy capacity, even at peak demand. The four areas studied, the densest in the city, had ample parking at all times. We have no evidence of parking shortages in the evenings or at night.

https://lacrosse.extension.wisc.edu/files/2019/08/Econowatch-Fall-2019-August_2_2019.pdf

⁴ "More Cities Than Ever are Eliminating Parking Minimums," Strong Towns, November 23, 2018. https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2018/11/23/a-map-of-cities-that-got-rid-of-parking-minimums-updated?rq=parking%20minimums

⁵ "San Francisco Eliminates Parking Minimums," *Streetsblog* USA, 17 December 2018; "In South Bend, Pete Buttigieg challenged a decades-old assumption that streets are for cars above all else," *Washington Post*, 16 January 2021.

⁶ "U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates - Table DP04." Data.census.gov, United States Census Bureau, data.census.gov/cedsci/ table?g=0400000US55; "Blueprint 2050: A 21st Century Transportation System for Wisconsin," 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, December 8, 2020, p.15

⁷ Fisher, Emma, and Peter Skopec. "Millennials on the Move: A Survey of Changing Transportation Trends and How They Can Help Wisconsin Thrive." WISPIRG, Feb. 2019, https://wispirg.org/reports/wip/millennials-move

⁸ Kane, Joseph. "Banning Cars Won't Solve America's Bigger Transportation Problem: Long Trips." Brookings Institute, 6 Jan. 2020, www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/01/06/ banning-cars-wont-solve-americas-bigger-transportation-problem-long-trips/?utm_ campaign=Brookings Brief.

⁹ La Crosse County *ECONOWATCH*, Fall 2019.

		Madison	Milwaukee	Oshkosh	Platteville	Superior	Whitewater	Faribault
	Single-family mins	1/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du
	Two-family mins	1/du	Exempt	2/du	same as multi-family	1/du	2/du	2/du
	Mobile homes	1/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	1/du	0.67/du or 1/du	1/du	1/du	1/du	0.65-0.8/bedroom	1/du
	1 bedroom	1/du	0.67/du or 1/du	1/du	1/du	1/du	0.65-0.8/bedroom	1/du
	2 bedrooms	1/du	0.67/du or 1/du	1/du	1.5/du	1/du	0.65-0.8/bedroom	2/du
	3 bedrooms+	1/du	0.67/du or 1/du	1 + 0.5/bedroom over	0.75/bedroom	1/du	0.65-0.8/bedroom	2/du
	Parking maximums	All uses	No	Most uses	No	None	Total impervious surfa	No
	Exempted areas	Downtown/TOD/Mixe	Downtown	Downtown	No	Commercial/Industria	University/Downtown	None
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
	Existing buildings ex	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
	Count on-street park	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

		Rochester	Champaign	Urbana	Des Moines	Iowa City		
	Single-family mins	1/du	2/du	2/du	1/du	1/du or 2/du		
	Two-family mins	1/du	2/du	2/du	1/du	1/du or 2/du		
	Mobile homes	1/du	2/du	2/du	1/du	1/du or 2/du		
Multi-family mins	Studios	0.5/du	0.25/br or 0.5/br	0.7/bedroom	1/du	1/du		
	1 bedroom	0.5/du	0.25/br or 0.5/br	0.7/bedroom	1/du	1/du		
	2 bedrooms	0.5/du	0.25/br or 0.5/br	0.5/bedroom	1/du	2/du		
	3 bedrooms+	0.5/du	0.25/br or 0.5/br	0.5/bedroom	1/du	3+/du		
	Parking maximums	Most uses	No	No	District based	District based		
	Exempted areas	Medical campus/othe	University/Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown		
	Links	<u>UDC</u>	PRN Info	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code		
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No		
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	No		
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No	No	No		
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No		
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No		
	Existing buildings exe	No	No	No	No	No		
	Count on-street parki	No	No	No	Yes	No		
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No		
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	Yes	No		
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No		
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	Yes	No		
	Carshare	No	No	No	Yes	No		
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No		
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No		
						*See variations by zo	ne	

		Ap	opleton	Barnevald	DeForest	Eau Claire	Gilman	Green Bay
	Single-family mins	2/0	du or 3/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du
	Two-family mins	2/0	du or 3/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du
	Mobile homes	2/0	du or 3/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	1/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	1.5	5/du	1.5/du	Exempt	1/du	Exempt	1.25/du
	1 bedroom	1.5	5/du	1.5/du	2/du	1/du	Exempt	1.25/du
	2 bedrooms	1.5	5/du	1.5/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	1.25/du
	3 bedrooms+	2.5	5/du	1.5/du	2/du	1/bedroom	Exempt	1.25/du
	Parking maximums	No	0	No	Residential	Nonresidential uses	No	No
	Exempted areas	Do	owntown	Housing for the elder	None	None	Citywide	Downtown
	Links	Mu	unicipal Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	0	No	No	Yes	No	No
	Bike parking reductio	No	0	No	No	Yes	No	No
	Tree Preservation rec	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings exe	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	0	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	0	No	No	No	No	No

		Highland	Kenosha	La Crosse	Menomonie	Monona	Ridgeway	River Falls
	Single-family mins	2/du	1/du or 2/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du
	Two-family mins	2/du	1/du or 2/du	2/du + 1/bedroom ov	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du
	Mobile homes	2/du	1/du or 2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du	2/du	2/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	2/du	2/du	1.5/du	2/du	1/du	2/du	2/du
	1 bedroom	2/du	2/du	1.5/du	2/du	1.5/du	2/du	2/du
	2 bedrooms	2/du	2/du	1.5/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du
	3 bedrooms+	2/du	2/du	1.5/du + 1/bedroom 0	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du
	Parking maximums	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Exempted areas	Housing for the elder	Downtown	Downtown/Commerc	None	None	Housing for the elder	None
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings exe	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

		Stevens Point	Waukesha	Wausau	West Allis	Brainerd	Crookston	Duluth
	Single-family mins	2/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du	Exempt
	Two-family mins	1/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	same as multi-family	2/du	Exempt
	Mobile homes	2/du	2/du	2/du	Exempt	same as multi-family	2/du	Exempt
/ulti-family mins	Studios	1.25/du	1.1/du	1.5/du	Exempt	1/du	1.5/du	Exempt
	1 bedroom	1.5/du	1.6/du	1.5/du	Exempt	1.5/du	1.5/du	Exempt
	2 bedrooms	1.75/du	2.1/du	1.5/du	Exempt	2/du	1.5/du	Exempt
	3 bedrooms+	2/du	2.1/du	2/du	Exempt	2.5/du + 0.5/bedroom	1.5/du	Exempt
	Parking maximums	All uses	No	All uses	All uses	Nonresidential uses	No	Some uses
	Exempted areas	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	Citywide	Most nonresidential	None	Citywide
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Municipal Code	PRN info
	Transit reductions	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
	Tree Preservation re	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings ex	e No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street park	i No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

		Glencoe	Mankato	Marshall	Minneapolis	Moorhead	Morris	Northfield
	Single-family mins	Exempt	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	1/du	2/du
	Two-family mins	Exempt	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	1/du	2/du
	Mobile homes	Exempt	2/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	1/du	2/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	2.5/du	2/du	1.25/du	Exempt	1.5/du	1.5/du	2/du
	1 bedroom	2.5/du	2/du	1.25/du	Exempt	2/du	1.5/du	2/du
	2 bedrooms	2.5/du	2/du	2.25/du	Exempt	2/du	1.5/du	2/du
	3 bedrooms+	2.5/du	2/du	2.25/du	Exempt	2.5/du	1.5/du	2/du
	Parking maximums	No	No	No	Surface parking	No	No	Most uses
	Exempted areas	All non multi-family	Downtown	Downtown	Citywide	Downtown	None	None
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Municipal Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
	Existing buildings exe	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
						*University housing I	nas reduced requirem	ents

		Roseau	St. Cloud	St. Paul	Willmar	Winona	Ames	Cedar Falls
	Single-family mins	2/du	2/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	1/du or 2/du	2/du
	Two-family mins	2/du	2/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	1/du or 2/du	2/du
	Mobile homes	2/du	2/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	2.25/du	2/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	1.5/du	2/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	varies	2.2/du
	1 bedroom	1.5/du	2/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	varies	2.2/du
	2 bedrooms	2/du	2/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	varies	2.2/du
	3 bedrooms+	2/du	2/du or 3/du	Exempt	No specific min	2/du	varies	2.2/du + 1/bedroom (
	Parking maximums	No	No	Surface parking	No	No	No	No
	Exempted areas	Commercial uses	Downtown	Citywide	None	Downtown	Downtown/University	Downtown
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	PRN Info	UDC	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
	Tree Preservation re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings ex	€ No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street park	i No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
			*University housing h	*A TDM plan may be	required	*University housing h	*University housing h	as reduced requireme

		Cedar Rapids	Davenport	Decorah	Dubuque	Grinnell	Indianola	Lamoni
	Single-family mins	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du
	Two-family mins	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du
	Mobile homes	2/du	2/du	2.1/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	1/du	1.5/du	1/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1/du	1/du
	1 bedroom	1/du or 1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1/du	1/du
	2 bedrooms	1.25/du or 2/du	1.5/du	2/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	2/du	1/du
	3 bedrooms+	1.5/du or 2.5/du	1.5/du	2/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1/bedroom	1/du
	Parking maximums	District based	No	No	Downtown surface	pa No	No	No
	Exempted areas	Downtown	Downtown/other	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	College/commercial
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Municipal Code
	Transit reductions	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation re-	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings ex	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street park	i No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
		nts						

		Marcus	Mason City	Mt. Vernon	Orange City	Oskaloosa	Sioux Center	Storm Lake
	Single-family mins	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/dı	2/du	1/du	2/du	2/du	2/du
	Two-family mins	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/du	2/du	1.5/du	2/du	2/du	2/du
	Mobile homes	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/du	2/du	1/du	2/du	2/du	2/du
fulti-family mins	Studios	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1/du	1.5/du
	1 bedroom	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1/du	1.5/du
	2 bedrooms	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/du	2/du	1.5/du	2/du	2/du	2/du
	3 bedrooms+	Exempt	1/du or 1.5/du or 2/du	2.5/du	1.5/du	2.5/du	1/bedroom	2/du
	Parking maximums	No	Retail/office uses	No	No	No	No	No
	Exempted areas	Downtown, residentia	All retail/office	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown
	Links	PRN Info	PRN Info	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings exe	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

		Waverly	Bloomington	Carbondale	Charleston	Chicago Heights	DeKalb	Ford Heights
	Single-family mins	2/du	1/du	2/du or 3/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du
	Two-family mins	2/du	same as multi-family	2/du or 3/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du
	Mobile homes	2/du	2/du	2/du or 3/du	2/du	2/du	2/du	1/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	1/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.33/du	0.75/du	1.33/du	0.5/du
	1 bedroom	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.33/du	1/du	1.33/du	1/du
	2 bedrooms	2/du	2/du	2/du	2.66/du	1.5/du	2.33/du	1/du
	3 bedrooms+	2/du	2/du	3+/du	1.33/bedroom	2/du	0.33 + 1/bedroom	1/du
	Parking maximums	No	No	No	No	Residential	No	Residential
	Exempted areas	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown	None	Downtown	Commercial
	Links	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings exe	e No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	i No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

		Normal	Peoria	Polo	Albion	Ann Arbor	East Lansing	Jackson
	Single-family mins	1/du	2/du	1/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du
	Two-family mins	1/du	2/du	1/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2/du
	Mobile homes	1/du	2/du	1/du	2/du	Exempt	2/du	2.33/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	1.5/du	1.5/du	0.75/du	1/du	Exempt	0.75/du	1.5/du
	1 bedroom	1.5/du	1.5/du	1/du	1/du	Exempt	1/du	1.5/du
	2 bedrooms	2/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	Exempt	1.5/du	1.5/du
	3 bedrooms+	2/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	1.5/du	Exempt	2.5+/du	1.5/du
	Parking maximums	Single-family/two-far	r No	No	No	All uses	Most uses	All uses
	Exempted areas	Downtown	Nonresidential	None	None	Citywide	Downtown	Downtown
	Links	Zoning Code	<u>UDC</u>	Zoning Code	Zoning Code	PRN Info	Zoning Code	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bike parking reduction	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Existing buildings exe	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Carpool spaces	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	EV Chargers	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

		Kalamazoo	Mt. Pleasant	Ypsilanti
	Single-family mins	Exempt	Exempt	Exempt
	Two-family mins	Exempt	Exempt	Exempt
	Mobile homes	Exempt	Exempt	1.6/du
Multi-family mins	Studios	Exempt	Exempt	1.6/du
	1 bedroom	Exempt	Exempt	1.6/du
	2 bedrooms	Exempt	Exempt	1.6/du
	3 bedrooms+	Exempt	Exempt	1.6/du
	Parking maximums	All uses	No	Nonresidential
	Exempted areas	Citywide	Citywide	Downtown
	Links	Zoning Code	PRN Info	Zoning Code
	Transit reductions	No	No	Yes
	Bike parking reductio	No	No	Yes
	Tree Preservation red	No	No	No
	Structured parking re	No	No	No
	Fee in lieu	No	No	Yes
	Existing buildings exe	No	No	No
	Count on-street parki	No	No	No
	Count public parking	No	No	No
	Motorcycle parking	No	No	No
	Proximity to bike trail	No	No	No
	Bikeshare	No	No	No
	Carshare	No	No	Yes
	Carpool spaces	No	No	Yes
	EV Chargers	No	No	Yes



ENABLING BETTER PLACES:

A USER'S GUIDE TO WISCONSIN NEIGHBORHOOD AFFORDABILITY







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BACKGROUND

Introduction

Across the country, many people are finding that they can no longer afford to live in the communities that they prefer. This is true in big cities and small communities: the availability and price of housing is not meeting the needs of those working in jobs that are vital to the success of our communities, such as: teachers, firefighters, small business owners, and service industry workers.

Reforming state and local policies that inadvertently restrict the housing market has been a focus of numerous efforts. This guide has the same goal, adding clarity to which reforms are appropriate where. Too often reform is conceived of very broadly, but places and the regulations that shape them are diverse. The regulatory landscape of our building, zoning, and other land use codes needs to better consider existing physical conditions. Regulatory reform efforts that attempt to increase infill opportunities can do so in a more targeted and strategic manner, while maintaining community compatibility.

What is the "biggest little change" you can make to improve housing access and affordability in your community?

In Wisconsin, cities, communities, and villages need a wider range of housing options. Fewer than 20% of all households nationwide are families with children, and nearly 50% of all households are made up of one or two people. Much of the existing housing stock consists of large, single-family homes which may not be affordable-or practical-for the makeup of modern households. It is critical to make the process of adapting existing housing stock and building smaller and more varied housing easier.

The opposition between housing needs and housing stock is exacerbated by zoning regulations that inadvertently increase housing prices. Current regulations in Wisconsin often require large lots, deep setbacks, low densities, limited housing options, restrictions on re-purposing existing buildings, and excessive parking requirements. Such regulations can restrict opportunities for housing, increase costs for individuals and communities, perpetuate sprawling, auto-oriented development, and negatively affect Wisconsin's natural beauty.

CODE REFORM IN WISCONSIN

Code Reform in Wisconsin

The recommendations in this guide may be integrated into an existing use-based code, allowing more housing types to be attainable, or may be a way of trying out form-based coding. The recommendations are intended to be calibrated locally by looking at the most successful and desirable historic neighborhoods.

Prior to developing this guide, the CNU team met with five communities in Wisconsin, which served as case studies for this project: Eau Claire, Horicon, Ripon, Waukesha, and Waunakee. All five communities identified the following as desired outcomes in their communities and key areas of focus for this guide:

Increase Housing Availability

The five case study communities, along with other Wisconsin municipalities, are experiencing housing availability challenges. Some challenges are created by annexation constraints, others by growth strategies, and most by regulatory limitations. Eau Claire, Horicon, Ripon, Waukesha and Waunakee expressed an interest in finding solutions for augmenting housing supply, both in the market rate and the attainable and affordable sectors.

Encourage Aging in Place

Aging in place, whether it be by moving to smaller, more appropriate housing, or by making changes to their own residence, is a concern within the case study communities. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are a primary tool that can enable aging in place by allowing downsizing to occur, increase income for the retiree, and create an additional rental unit which may be more affordable than fee-simple housing.

Provide Better Housing Options

The case study communities also expressed a desire to provide better housing options that would respond to market demands. Across the millennial and baby boomer cohorts, there is an increased interest in missing middle housing–duplexes, smaller multi-family, cottage courts, and other ways of integrating smaller or more flexible housing options. Wisconsin has two primary means of permitting developers to create this type of housing (the Traditional Neighborhood Development and Planned Development District ordinances), but could be better served by adjusting the underlying zoning. Communities that do not have zoning to deliver these preferences are missing an economic development opportunity.

BACKGROUND

THE PROCESS

The Process

To develop this guide, the team:

- 1. Identified Local Partners: CNU and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities assembled a group of interested parties to be the local experts on this project. They included representatives from the Wisconsin Builders' Association, AARP Wisconsin, NAIOP-Wisconsin, state and local planning officials, and housing advocates. This group helped the code reform team understand common obstacles to creating more housing choice and the walkable neighborhoods that support housing choice.
- 2. Conducted a Regulatory Assessment: CNU asked the project's stakeholder group to fill out an assessment framework tool for their municipality, region, or communities they were familiar with, identifying common zoning barriers to housing and neighborhood walkability, and the specific regulations that determine these barriers. Not all questions within the framework applied to all communities.
- 3. Engaged with the Wisconsin Context: CNU conducted workshops with five Wisconsin communities to learn more about their specific planning and regulatory challenges and opportunities. The five case study communities were: Eau Claire, Horicon, Ripon, Waukesha, and Waunakee.
- 4. Learned from the Municipalities: The team identified seven core recommendations to address the most common issues that create obstacles to more affordable housing in Wisconsin.

Over the course of this project it became clear that community engagement and public buy-in is crucial to the success of code reform changes and acceptance of affordable housing. Often proposed changes to zoning regulations are met with considerable opposition. As a result, an education section was included to examine ways to increase public and resident buy-in to proposed zoning changes.

Wisconsin Development Patterns

The form of streets, buildings, open spaces, and the overall assembly of communities has changed over time; it is a simple fact that exists in Wisconsin much as it does elsewhere in the United States and around the world. Most American cities were built during and after 1850, including most Wisconsin municipalities. During this period - from 1850 to present - changes in technology, social structure, and law have influenced the form of cities.

Today's regulatory constructs - zoning codes, subdivision ordinances, and engineering standards - rarely recognize the physical and operational differences between older and newer areas. However, these areas are defined by different structures of streets and blocks, which affects mobility, different types of housing, and sizes of properties. These issues are further affected by zoning and subdivision, and different norms concerning issues like pedestrian activity, gardening and landscaping, and animal husbandry, found in the municipal code.

Patterns Pre-1950s

Most development prior to 1950 was zoned with a set of very different goals than post-1950 or was not regulated by zoning at all. Proximity to downtown drove demand, which is reflected in properties that are considered small by recent standards and a mix of housing type and tenure, including single family homes, multi-family, duplexes, boarding houses, and accessory dwellings within close proximity to jobs and services. Townhomes were also built in this period, however they were usually found in larger cities.

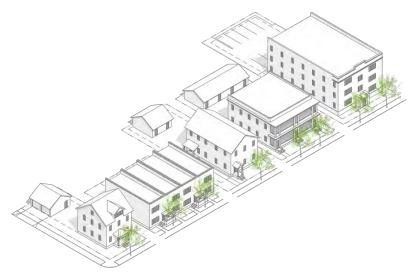
Buildings are generally located near the streets and near to neighbors. Garages, common only to single and two-household dwellings, are located behind the home and accessed by an alley or a driveway next to the home. Because many daily trips occurred on foot, the home's front door was oriented towards and directly accessed from the sidewalk.

This pattern continued to evolve. Many larger single-family homes were converted to 2, 3, and 4-family homes by internal divisions, retaining the overall building form and site plan elements. The conversions retained the area character while increasing housing supply. Additional modifications often included accessory dwellings combined with the garage, replacing the garage, or in a separate building within the rear yard.

Critical aspects of this era that should continue to be respected are:

- Buildings located close to sidewalks and to side property lines.
- Garages located in the rear, behind the home relative to the sidewalk.
- Driveways minimized, both in size and location, preserving the front of the property for the home and yard.
- Rectilinear block shapes of a consistent size.
- Highly connected street network of narrow streets.
- Accessory commercial uses in primarily residential neighborhoods.

BACKGROUND



Building Types

Residential buildings of this era were the most diverse, used the least land area, and delivered the greatest number of dwellings. These factors combined to preclude the highest level of affordability while creating beautiful, walkable neighborhoods that have held their value over the decades.





Ripon, image credit: Google



Horicon, image credit: Google



Waukesha, image credit: Google

Patterns 1950-1980

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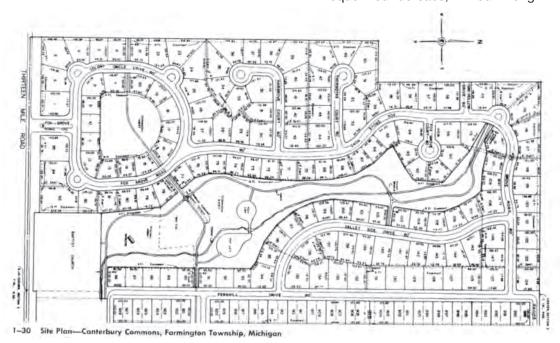
The development period between 1950 and 1980 was influenced by increasing national standards promoted by the federal government through financing programs and by trade organizations like the Urban Land Institute. This resulted in a reduction of the types of housing built and changes in the predominant pattern of streets, blocks, and lots. Housing provided during this period was largely single family and aimed at the burgeoning federally-backed mortgage products. These homes ranged from modest to the beginning of the "McMansion," and developments had relatively little variety. Multi-family developments during the mid-century were physically separated from single-family areas. Uniquely observed in Wisconsin is a prevalence of duplex houses during this and later periods. Townhouses were not a common building type during this period.

Vehicular access to homes and parking areas was provided adjacent to the street. Driveways are a dominant feature of the streetscape. Locating the garage inline with the front of the house resulted in wider homes that were sited on larger lots than prior periods. Because the driveway and garage are both in the front, vehicles are commonly parked between building facades and the street.

The pattern of streets and blocks shifted during this period from a purely rectilinear, gridded structure to incorporate angled streets, curvilinear streets, and cul-de-sacs. Street networks generally retained a high degree of connectivity and block sizes were similar to or only somewhat larger than the typical pre-1950 block until the 1970s. Cul-de-sacs began to emerge in this period but were limited in their application and in the length of the street segment. Typically, cul-de-sacs were used to add extra lots where geometries created by angled streets or odd property boundaries occurred. This pattern is clearly illustrated in the 1968 version of the Urban Land Institute's Community Builders' Handbook.

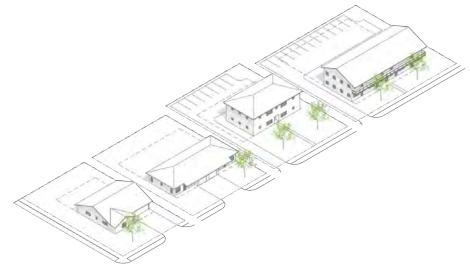
Critical aspects of this pattern that should continue to be respected are:

- Buildings located 20-to-30 feet from sidewalks.
- Garages located close to or aligned with the front facade, but not occupying more than 40% of the width of the facade.
- Driveways minimized in width, preserving the front property area for the home and for yard space.
- Infrequent cul-de-sacs, limited in length.



Plan of Canterbury Commons, MI, image credit: ULI Community Builders' Handbook, 1968

BACKGROUND



Building Types

Residential buildings of this era were the least diverse, used a much larger land area, and delivered fewer dwellings than the prior era. Automobiles began to dominate the landscape, and the beauty and function of the neighborhood became less important than that of the individual building.



Horicon, image Credit: Google



Waukesha, image credit: Google



Ripon, image credit: Google



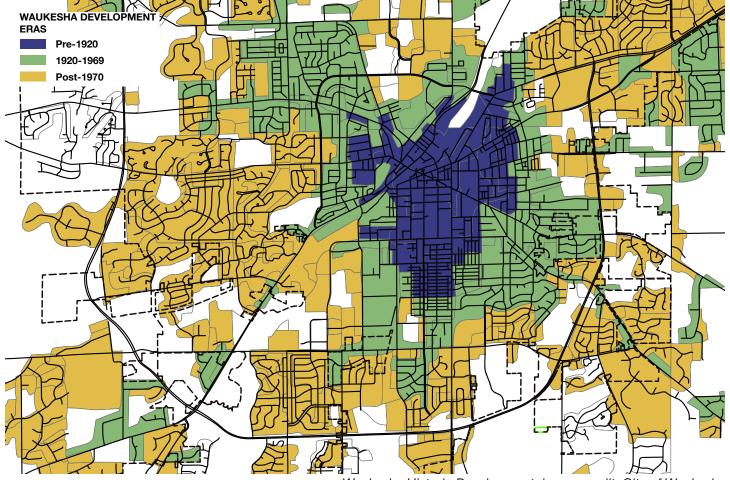
Waunekee, image credit: Google

Patterns 1980-Present

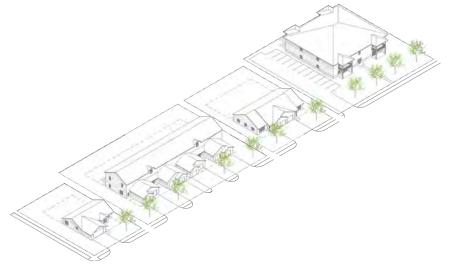
The present period and recent past have seen a divergence in development patterns, influenced by the emergence of Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs). Some portions of development in this period resemble an extension of the principles of the 1950-1980 period, while others follow the TND system, which is markedly different.

Traditional Neighborhood Development patterns exhibit similarity to both the pre-1950 and 1950-1980 patterns of growth. TNDs include a connected street network which defines principally rectilinear blocks, with some variation for angular and curvilinear streets. This pattern includes alleys in some or most of the development, in particular in areas with multi-family, townhomes, duplexes, and small single family homes. TNDs typically develop housing at a higher density than development between 1950-1980, but not higher than that prior to 1950.

In some Wisconsin municipalities, development between 1980 and 1990 follows this more universally common condition, while growth in others reflects the pattern of 1950 to 1980, occupied by housing matching the common aspects of the 1980 to 1990 period. This condition is illustrated on the following page in Eau Claire where blocks are more regular in shape with a small degree of angularity or curvature of streets, yet the housing stock demonstrates common aspects of the 1980-1990 period. Waunakee, on the other hand, illustrates street and block layouts more universally common.



Waukesha Historic Development, image credit: City of Waukesha



Building Types

Townhouses have regained popularity in the last decades, but the development of small apartment buildings has declined, except in areas governed by TND ordinances. In many areas parking quota have increased, with a corresponding loss of affordability due to the increased land area needed.





Waukesha, image credit: Google



Ripon, image credit: Google



Waunekee, image credit: Google

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Implementing Reform: Laying the Groundwork

In order to successfully reform the regulatory environment, municipal officials and planning professionals need to lay the groundwork for change by understanding and examining the misalignment between what zoning they have and the zoning they want. This process can include demonstrating how the misapplication of zoning has led to the creation of nonconformities between existing buildings and uses, how zoning can shape new development in ways that are incompatible with existing places, and how in many instances zoning is preventing new places from being built that match the most-loved existing places.

Step 1. Demonstrate the Need

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To make the case for a zoning adjustment process, communities need to demonstrate that misalignments exist, and the extent of misalignment with current conditions. Pre-1950's development is typically the easiest place to start because these areas predate zoning, and they tend to include beloved neighborhoods where it is easy to make the case that they should not be illegal, nonconforming, or irreproducible. Identify a block of pre-1950's development near to downtown or the primary main street, but generally residential.



image credit: Google Earth

The above example demonstrates a condition in a Wisconsin municipality. This historic block falls within a zoning district that does not align with existing housing. As demonstrated, every property or building on this block is nonconforming by today's standards. In this sample block, every property violates the zone's minimum required setbacks. In addition, the corner properties were subdivided at a point, which now violates the minimum lot size standards as well as maximum lot coverage. The conditions on neighboring blocks are similar. These zoning standards require revision. Wisconsin has established statewide standards permitting occupation and expansion of nonconforming buildings, lots, and uses. However, historic buildings, patterns of lots, and well established uses are key to a community's character and should be legal, not an exception.

BACKGROUND

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK



Pattern Survey Hertfordshire, image credit: DPZ

Step 2. Survey Existing Patterns

The next step in successful reform is to survey the existing patterns and gather the common elements that produced the development that is most valued and desired. Common methods for evaluation include:

- Utilizing existing data to determine the predominant age of structures in different parts of the municipality.
- Utilizing plat data to determine the process and age of subdivisions across the municipality.
- Utilizing mapping, aerial photography, and visual surveying to determine significant differences in the pattern of streets and blocks and bulk and character of buildings.

The goal of pattern evaluation is to define the boundaries between areas of differing blocks and building character in order to accurately align new zoning standards.

Once accurate pattern boundaries have been established, the types and intensities of buildings should be identified. The purpose of identifying different types and intensities is to establish sub-boundaries within the patterns, which may differ by era.

Examples from the Case Study Communities:

In Eau Claire and Waukesha, historic neighborhoods often mix historic single family, duplex, multi-family, and townhomes together, along with small scale neighborhood commercial uses. But in Waunakee and Ripon, historic neighborhoods are exclusively single family, differentiated from nearby main street development. For Waunakee and Ripon, this would suggest one sub-boundary for the main street and another for the pre-1950's neighborhoods. For Eau Claire and Waukesha, this would suggest a subboundary for the downtown, another for the highly mixed pre-1950's neighborhoods, and a third for other pre-1950's neighborhoods that are predominantly single family. See the previous explanation of pattern differences for cues concerning the degree of separation that is common in each era of development. More recent development patterns have more separation between uses and types of buildings, and as a result should include sub-boundaries reflecting that separation. In older areas, however, avoid the temptation to separate buildings by type or use when that separation does not exist historically.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK



Incursion Example, Waukesha, image credit: Google Street View

Step 3. Adjust Zones to Match Common

Building and Site Details

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Once the existing patterns and sub-boundaries have been identified, survey existing buildings within those areas to determine common conditions. The range of typical existing conditions should be analyzed as a means of deriving zoning standards from what has already been established. Common building and site details include: lot size, building height, building setbacks, encroachments, entry locations, lot coverage by buildings, the number of units per property, and building types (detached single unit dwellings, attached single unit dwellings, duplexes, multiple dwelling buildings, and accessory buildings and structures). Some areas may have a variety of conditions, while other areas may have very little variety. Aligning zoning in this way is the first step to ensuring the character of future development aligns with existing area character.

A character survey sheet is included in the appendix as a resource.

Recognizing Past Incursions

In many situations, non-compatible development has been permitted in the past, which should not be confused with a common pattern to retain through the zoning update process. Historically these incursions may have created resistance to new housing throughout the jurisdiction rather than recognizing them as incompatible with the surrounding context. While the goal of re-aligning zoning is to enable and support what has already been established, incursions that differ significantly from the predominant pattern should remain non-conforming.

An example of such an incursion is pictured here, a large multi-family building in Waukesha which is significantly out of scale with surrounding buildings. The larger building was built in a much more recent era than the surroundings and violates the existing pattern by the building's height and total square footage. However other examples of smaller, compatible multi-family buildings are found nearby. Often such incursions create an anti- multi-family reaction rather than more appropriately identifying the bulk of the building as incompatible. In addition to building bulk, the location and size of parking areas is a common incursion which should be corrected within a zoning update.

BACKGROUND



RECOMMENDATIONS

With the understanding of how existing zoning is restricting housing in Wisconsin communities, the following general changes are recommended to enable more housing choice. Doing any of them will put Wisconsin places in a better position to allow housing choice for all of the state's residents. In that way, this serves as a menu of recommendations.

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Common Code Issues

CODE ISSUE: Adjust lot and yard standards



Most Wisconsin municipalities require minimum lot sizes that are not conducive to smaller single-family homes, townhomes, and other historically common housing types. In historic neighborhoods, this creates issues with nonconforming lots. In newly developed areas, this results in a very limited range of new housing, both in size and cost. Twentieth century zoning was drafted to reflect suburban goals and best practices of the time, which do not reflect the character of

historic communities nor current goals for providing housing type, tenure, and price point diversity. The result is many parcels have challenges with any changes to the buildings, the parking or the number of dwellings because of lack of conformity.

Area and width – Most zoning codes have exemptions for lack of conformity, but there is a lost opportunity for context-sensitive densification. If zones are adjusted to reflect the historic parcels, the cost of the variance process could be avoided, additional dwellings could possibly be added, and non-conforming complications with insurance and mortgages could be avoided.

Setbacks – Most case study communities have very little variation throughout their residential zoning districts, and they are all distinctly 20th century suburban standards. Both front and rear setbacks are quite large. In neighborhoods with historic alleys, the rear yard requirement makes existing garages non-conforming and prevents the location of additional parking off the alley.

Lot coverage – Like the other lot metrics, most case study communities have a 35% lot coverage that is standard across most zoning districts. This standard is the single greatest barrier to densification since many lots are nonconforming in their current state of development and there is no opportunity for any enlargement of the building footprint to accommodate additional dwellings.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Lot widths and areas should be realigned to match historic patterns favoring narrower lots.
- Setbacks should be reduced to historic distances to allow greater use of the existing lots.
- Increase permitted lot coverages to match historic patterns.

CODE ISSUE: Historic Multi-Family

Historic Multi-Family. Many historic neighborhood uses were outlawed in the 20th century, separating housing types that were not only compatible but complementary.



Housing types that were historically inserted into neighborhood fabric with very low impact on traffic, impervious surface, and quality of life include three-family, four-family, and six-family units. Current zoning practices have restricted their construction by dividing housing into single-family, two-family, townhouses, and multi-family zones, eliminating medium density housing. Duplexes, three-family, and some four-family types are no larger than a large single-family residence.

Because these dwelling types fit easily into the scale of many neighborhoods, permitting conversions (as well as allowing for construction of new buildings) is a logical choice for adding housing to a community.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

 Allow multi-unit housing as permitted uses in single-family zoning districts which have historically included two-family and multi-family. Ensure multi-unit housing is held to the height and frontage dimensions of existing single household dwellings or historic multi-unit housing. The number of units is determined by the size of the building, not by density calculations.

CODE ISSUE: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



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Permitting ADUs within neighborhoods is a good first step toward adding housing with minimal impact on existing development. ADUs occur organically throughout Wisconsin cities, and villages. They were often the upper level of carriage houses or garages, as well as in attics and basements. This use is one of the most significant tools to gently increase density at a scale that is virtually invisible within a neighborhood. It allows the homeowner to reduce the cost of housing with additional income, enables aging in place by downsizing on the same parcel, and assists with elder care.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Accessory dwellings should be allowed by right for all single-family zoning districts.
- Additional parking spaces should not be required for an accessory dwelling.

RECOMMENDATIONS 95

CODE ISSUE: Remove Unnecessary Regulations and Restrictions

Jurisdictions should consider adjusting rules that commonly create barriers to providing housing. Many cities have a list of commonly sought variances which can point to problems



with unnecessary or incompatible rules. Density metrics such as 'unit per acre' are often a barrier. In most instances bulk standards such as height, setbacks, lot coverage, and parking standards limit potential density.

Density. Bulk standards, as discussed above, create more predictable outcomes than density standards. Additionally, density standards are not well analyzed, are easily politicized, and unreasonably restrict

housing. The density of most historic neighborhoods is much higher than most residents, officials, and regulators realize. If density is retained as a development restriction, existing per-property densities should be surveyed along with the other building and site details noted above, and on the Character Survey Form in the Appendix.

Use. Use categorization is the next most common requirement in need of adjustment. Most jurisdictions apply a list of permitted uses to any given zone. If the proposed use does not exactly match a permitted use, the proposal must be denied, no matter how benign or desirable it may be. This issue is most common in downtowns and main streets, but it can carry over into principally residential areas also. Typical use categories detrimental to housing include the restriction of single-family, two-family, or multi-family. This restricts the very appropriate middle density that has been eliminated from contemporary zoning ordinances.

Commercial use. Disallowing housing in downtowns, main streets, and other generally commercial areas is also problematic. In an effort to increase street activity in a mixed-use zone, jurisdictions sometimes prohibit housing on the ground floor, or altogether. While this is effective if the need for retail fills those spaces, in situations where the need is not there this approach is unnecessary and counterproductive to producing more housing. These and similar unnecessary rules should be simplified or removed.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Permit residential uses within downtown and Main Street zoning districts.
- Permit residential uses, including multi-family, in commercial districts.
- Manage residential density with building types not units per acre in each district. Consider using three to five residential zones, depending on locations:
 - Post-1950's era: Single-family, Two-family, Townhouses, Three to Six-family, and Multi-family districts.
 - Pre-1950's era: Single-family, two-family and townhouses, Three to Six-family, and multi-family districts. These are best implemented with intensity levels of low intensity, medium intensity, and high intensity. Permit neighborhood-scaled commercial uses within the medium and high intensity residential districts.

CODE ISSUE: Adjust Parking Requirements

Smaller multi-family dwellings can be nearly impossible to build if two paved, off-street parking spots are required per unit. Minimum on-site parking requirements for housing



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should seldom be more than one per unit. If street parking or other shared parking spaces are available then even less parking can be required. Allowing on-street or shared parking to count toward the minimum required parking spaces will provide some flexibility for landowners. On-street parking is shared among many users and has the additional benefit of separating pedestrians from moving vehicles.

In recent years, municipalities across the country have begun to accept that parking minimums have been a poor planning tool, both in accurately predicting parking needs and successfully producing great

places. In most cases, lenders and tenants will demand a minimum number of parking spaces, which will be provided regardless of municipal regulations. Municipalities should focus on where that parking is located, rather than in how much parking is required. Within historic neighborhoods, minimum parking requirements can be eliminated entirely, or at a minimum, reduced substantially.

The effects of excessive parking requirements on housing affordability are often underestimated. In areas that are walkable to school, jobs, and other daily needs, the cost of each unneeded parking space inflates the cost of housing (The average cost of a paved parking space is estimated at about \$4,000 and structured parking can be five times that). Overly high parking requirements can block new housing options that fit seamlessly into existing neighborhoods, such as accessory dwellings, small infill buildings, and conversions of large houses into more than one residence.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Reduce or eliminate parking minimums.
- Allow shared parking to count toward parking minimums.
- Allow on-street parking and allow it to count toward parking minimums.

RECOMMENDATIONS 97

CODE ISSUE: Evaluate Processes

Most of the case study communities contributing to this guide reported having Planned Development District (PDD) ordinances. PDDs are used to circumvent mis-aligned zoning standards, resulting in a broken process. Zoning principally by PDD is evidence of a failing zoning code. Revising a code to reflect the local market and community vision is the best practice.

Each individual PDD adds to future administrative complexity, and creates a zoning system that neither neighbors nor developers can predict. Standards and processes should be evaluated to ensure that zoning creates predictable outcomes, is easy to understand, and is easy to navigate. Applicants should be provided with the most expedient approvals path, particularly for smaller infill conditions, recognizing where and to what extent community oversight is necessary.

Greenfield development typically requires some degree of master planning such as is provided by the subdivision and site plan process. Here too, though, the processes should be clear and predictable, which is rarely true.

The long-term implication of overusing PDD ordinances is a very complex set of overlapping rules, individually negotiated, and a severe lack of predictability. This has not yet become evident in most places because most homes built under these ordinances have not been redeveloped and are unlikely to be redeveloped in the near future. However, this practice should be minimized, and new zoning and subdivision standards established to direct growth in alignment with market demands. The state of Wisconsin requires municipalities larger than 12,500 residents to adopt Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinances. It also encourages smaller municipalities to adopt such ordinances. In all cases common TND zones should be established, similar to historic districts, that address issues of building bulk, placement, and window percentage, leaving only the more specific stylistic and site design standards to regulation by homeowner covenants.

The development community has signaled a desire for a development format that follows market trends. As this format also aligns with other state and regional goals, a clear and predictable process should be provided to achieve these new neighborhoods in Wisconsin's smaller municipalities as well as the larger ones.

Jurisdictions that wish to adopt a TND ordinance will do well to begin by taking a close look at the model ordinance created by the Wisconsin extension service. It is intended to be used with minor adjustments for local conditions and should make the adoption process much more straightforward. Wisconsin Model TND ordinance.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance.
- Consider replacing existing PDDs with TND standards.
- Assess and streamline the subdivision process including standards that direct development outcomes and a time limit on municipal response.
- Assure workforce housing applications will be prioritized and response time limited to 90 days, max.

Community Education

As of June 2021, Wisconsin is estimated to need approximately 120,000 rental units across a spectrum of incomes, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. In addition to less expensive housing, adding market rate housing improves housing choice for everyone, up and down the income ladder. In order to combat community resistance to additional or different housing, an investment in community education around the benefits of housing choice should be undertaken. The following are recommended topics for a community education campaign to increase public support for code reforms that will increase housing choice.

Fear and lack of knowledge are the two largest hurdles to combat community resistance. A critical first step is to assure your code reform reflects the character of the neighborhoods it will apply to. ADUs should fit in anywhere, and a garden apartment complex fits in a limited number of places. If the standards reflect the context, and it is adequately illustrated, it goes a long way toward providing knowledge and assuaging the fear.

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Who is at the table?

The most important thing is that everyone who has a stake in the success of the city should be a part of the conversation. A robust community engagement process begins with getting the most diverse group of perspectives involved at an early stage. A focus should be placed on engaging renters, young people, people who work in the area but cannot afford to live there, in addition to current homeowners. Many people care deeply about their neighborhoods, but are not likely to attend community meetings. Social media pages or neighborhood listservs can be a valuable resource for public engagement.

Additional tools to be considered in public engagement include:

- Allow public comment at times other than during a public meeting through a website dedicated to housing issues.
- Hold pop-up events at libraries, grocery stores, liquor stores, bars, parks, playgrounds, farmers' markets, street festivals, church events.
- Hang posters with leading questions and space for responding in public places such as bus stops, laundromats, bars, churches, parks, playgrounds.
- Encourage people to bring their children to public meetings.
- Make sure that meetings are held in non-intimidating, accessible public spaces.
- Hold online conversations as well as in-person meetings.
- Convene meetings at different times and on different days.
- Follow local pages on social media and engage directly with active users of those pages.
- Provide online engagement opportunities such as visual preference surveys, housing issue surveys, leading questions, etc.

Ensure planning commissioners and elected officials are at the table so they understand the needs within the community. Elected officials are frequently pressured by the vocal minority and do not hear from code reform advocates. They need sufficient data to be able to withstand pressure from the NIMBY ("not in my back yard") community that tends to fear additional housing.

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Who can't afford to live here?

Area Median Income (AMI) is the income right in the middle of the income range for a particular place. Half of those working earn less, half earn more. It's not an average, so it isn't skewed by a handful of high earners, but reflects the full range of wages. When housing advocates talk about workforce housing they are referencing housing affordable at between 60 and 100 percent of AMI. Low-income housing is affordable for those making less than 60 percent of AMI.

According to the 2020 census, state-wide AMI for Wisconsin is \$64,168, which translates to \$1600 monthly for housing and utilities. Teachers, police officers, librarians, nurses make approximately 80% of statewide AMI. Childcare workers, service workers of all kinds, and bus drivers make less than 50% of statewide AMI. These numbers will differ in every locality but should be considered during a conversation about housing needs.

People who have to commute long distances can't be full citizens of the place where they work or the place where they live – too much time is spent traveling. These individuals are also paying the financial costs of commuting: maintaining a car is estimated to cost \$10K annually. Reliable transportation is crucial in order to keep a job.

In addition to the costs to individuals when we have inadequate housing choices, there is also a cost to the community. Maintaining streets, water and sewer lines, and other infrastructure in neighborhoods with historic building patterns is significantly less expensive than maintaining that infrastructure in neighborhoods with large lots. If the only place we allow more housing to be built easily, by right, is large-lot subdivisions we are committing ourselves to higher costs now and in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS 101

What will it look like?

When asking residents to permit more housing choices, neighbors are typically curious as to what it will look like. Abstract discussion about adding more density or changing the Floor Area Ratio do not translate into a general public understanding of what to expect.

When municipalities propose allowing up to three units on a single lot, a common step up from single family zoning, it is important to create standards that will ensure that these new buildings will be about the same size and impact as the existing single family houses. These are known as 'bulk standards' because they regulate the size of the building, not the number of units in the buildings. To create effective bulk standards, begin by measuring the biggest houses in the neighborhood to determine the largest reasonable size.

Craft illustrations that show clearly what adding these buildings will mean. Choose a vacant lot and have renderings made that show how a new building will fit. In addition to drawings, show photographs of existing buildings that match what is being proposed.

When proposing Accessory Dwelling Units, provide illustrations that show garage apartments and backyard cottages. In the same way, if front and side setbacks need to be adjusted to allow adding ADUs or adding another building, create illustrations to show what this will look like on existing lots. Without illustrations community members might not understand what increasing density entails. An instinctive response by residents is that an increase in density implies buildings bigger than what that is currently permitted, which is why illustrations are a key component to the community education process.

The other issue that commonly arises around increasing housing choice is that many of these new units will be rentals. There is a myth that renters don't care about their neighborhoods, are bad neighbors, or create chaos and noise. One way to approach this topic with residents is to ask what their first living arrangement was after leaving home, or school. Common responses are:

- I lived in my parent's basement.
- I rented with friends.
- I rented alone.
- I bought a house or condo.

Then ask the same question about their children. This allows residents to see that they weren't born homeowners and serves as a tool to humanize renters. If there is concern about short-term rentals, they can be limited to the extent allowed by Wisconsin Statute 66.1014. If there is concern about bad behavior then address the behavior with noise ordinances or similar rules. Be sure that your public outreach reaches renters: if you are mailing fliers to the building owners, renters who live in that neighborhood won't know about the proposed changes. Renters understand the issues of lack of rental units and the associated high prices. They are the voices needed to counteract opposition.

Who benefits from adding housing choice?

Many people in Wisconsin and nationwide cannot afford to live within a reasonable distance of their jobs due to lack of housing and are forced to bear the time and the financial burden of lengthy commutes. Who else is affected by lack of housing choice?

- Young people. If we want to retain a lively economy we need young people, and, as noted above, younger people are more likely to be renters.
- Single people who don't want the burden of a house and yard. According to statistics
 compiled by the American Association of Retired People, 28% of all households are
 single people living alone. Couples without children comprise another 25%.
- Older people whose big, single family house no longer meets their needs. Most people prefer to stay in their current neighborhood as they age and allowing more housing choice can meet this need. Allowing large single family houses to be reconfigured with more units also works for this demographic: if two or three apartments can be created out of a residence then the homeowner has income to help maintain the building and can create an apartment with accommodations such as one-floor living and a walk-in shower which make aging in place simpler and safer.
- Families with children only represent 20% of the population but they need housing choices also. Allowing more housing within walking distance of shops and libraries and restaurants makes family life easier. Perhaps only one car is necessary, reducing both carbon footprints and costs. Older children and teens can walk or use public transportation, lifting some of the transportation burden from parents.

It is important to be willing to engage directly with residents who are opposing any change to allow more housing choice but not allow them to drive the conversation. Neighborhood associations, because they are vocal and organized, can have an out-sized effect on the public conversation. Elected officials and municipal employees often defer to these voices because they are assumed to speak for entire neighborhoods when in fact they only speak for some of the residents. This is where careful observation of social media can provide other voices which need to be invited into the conversation as a counterbalance.

People are afraid of change. We have to make the possibility of change palatable, quantifying what that change might look like, and who these new neighbors might be.

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Building a coalition

If a jurisdiction is going to be successful in implementing code changes to allow more housing choice it is crucial that a coalition of advocates are mobilized to advocate for those changes in the public process. It's important to involve housing advocates and builders along with the people we identified above who want to live somewhere and cannot. Those are the voices that the process needs to amplify.

When you are ready to propose a code change to allow, for example, four-plexes, talk immediately to organizations and people who are concerned with housing shortages. Get out in front and line up supporters so that the first thing that people hear is not objections from people opposed to change. Have the conversations early and often, and in all the places listed above, not just in the planning office or at planning meetings.

Make sure to build champions within your governing body. Without strong advocates among the elected officials, a contentious hearing can have unexpected and unfortunate results. However, if there are coalition members on the board, they can articulate the need for the code edit.

This guide is primarily focused on creating incremental change in the regulatory environment and changes in zoning code that will allow more housing choice. But these ideas about who gets heard and who is at the table also apply once the code is changed. It is not enough to allow four-plexes if the process to build them is too complicated. Jurisdictions need to actively encourage the kind of housing that is wanted and the coalition is important for that, too.



RESOURCES

Resources

The appendix is comprised of a group of tools to assist in common areas of code reform. Some are means to craft reform, such as the character survey, and others are models of language that can be used as a template for specific code issues like ADUs and parking minimums. Each tool must be locally adjusted to respond to the context.

CHARACTER SURVEY

Character Survey

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A character survey is the first step in understanding the existing context of a place, determining which reforms are needed, and selecting the content of new regulations such as common dimensional standards. To build a coalition as discussed in the Community Education section, a good practice is to convene a group of advocates and opponents, and collectively identify the most loved areas within the community. The group then collectively photographs, measures, and counts the physical metrics that make up the area. A sample survey follows.

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CHARACTER SURVEY

Step 1: Define your districts and pick examples

First decide which areas need regulatory reform. Next, pick example blocks to measure in each of the districts you intend to revise. One way to pick blocks is to choose those that people respond positively to the most. This is an aspirational approach, and the new metrics in your code will be set to guide development to match those best-loved blocks. Another approach is to pick blocks that show the full range of variation in existing dimensions. This approach will help you put new dimensional standards in your code that make as many existing conditions as possible conforming under the new regulations.

Step 2: Measure example blocks using the character survey form

Print one copy of the character survey form to take into the field for each area or condition being analyzed. Take a walking tour and measure the elements shown on the form. Lot widths, building heights, setbacks, uses, parking location, and percent window glazing are all important elements to measure. Photograph the street section and views of building facades. For a street photo, it is usually best to stand on the sidewalk approximately where a planting strip would be, and shoot at an angle to include some of the buildings and all of the sidewalk, and catch a bit of buildings on the far side of the street. For the facade, in the same area showing the same building(s), stand in the street and shoot the entire front yard including the facade. Include the entire lot width if possible; building height is less important.

Step 3: Measure less visible elements using online maps or aerial photography

In addition to measuring the elements you can access during a walking tour, use online maps or other aerial photography to measure elements over the whole area, such as lot coverage, lot depth, the number and setback of outbuildings, and parking location.

Step 4: Analyze results and set new dimensional standards

Once you have measured the selected blocks, sit down with (1) the completed character survey forms, (2) maps or aerial photos of the area, and (3) a new blank character survey form for each district you are adjusting. Consider the metrics for your measured blocks and the conditions in the rest of the area and decide what dimensions to set for your revised zone(s). Fill in the metrics on the blank character survey form (one for each district you are revising), and these metrics will be the basis for your zoning amendment.

CHARACTER SURVEY SAMPLE

Historic Neighborhood



STREET NAME @ STREET NAME

670 x 340	Average Block Dimension
8 - 12	Units per Acre
24 x 90	Average Lot Size

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STREET DIMENSIONS

49'	ROW Width
2	Moving Lanes
1	Parking Lanes
25'	Pavement Width
raised 6"	Curb Type
18"	Curb Radius
12'	Sidewalk
tree well	Planter Type
2' x 2'	Planter Width
episodic	Planting Pattern



BUILDING STANDARDS

Stoop, Shopfront	Private Frontage Type
4 stories max	Building height
18" resid. O shop	First floor above grade
18' - 36' wide	Lot size
80% max.	Lot coverage
80% min.	Buildout percent- age @ sidewalk
0 min, 12' max	Front Setback
0 min	Side Setback
3' min.	Rear Setback
3' min.	Outbuilding Set- back
res, retail, office	Ground Level Function

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ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwellings could add thousands of more attainable housing units with little strain on infrastructure or additional maintenance expense to local municipalities. Additionally, ADUs have little impact on the character of neighborhoods and can help subsidize mortgages for property owners. However, it is not uncommon for ADU's to face resistance from the community. One common concern is noise and maintenance; a solution is to require owner-occupancy in one of the two units. Each community will likely face different fears from residents, but clear and objective standards will help alleviate many, if not all concerns. A sample ordinance is included here for local revisions.

Sample Accessory Dwelling Unit Code Amendment

It is the policy of a MUNICIPALITY to permit accessory dwelling units in a manner that enhances residential neighborhoods and helps residents meet their housing needs. The following standards apply:

- Accessory dwelling units are a permitted use in any zoning district that permits single-family dwellings.
- 2. The property owner must occupy either the primary dwelling or accessory dwelling unit as their principal residence.
- 3. A maximum of one accessory dwelling unit is permitted per residential lot.
- 4. An accessory dwelling unit may be incorporated within an existing dwelling, an existing accessory building, or a new accessory building.
- 5. When proposed as a new structure separate from the existing dwelling unit, an accessory dwelling unit must comply with the following standards:
 - a. The facade of the accessory dwelling must be at least 20 feet further from the street than the facade of the principal dwelling.
 - b. The width of the accessory dwelling unit parallel to the street may not exceed 60% of the width of the single-family dwelling.
 - c. The height to the eave of the accessory dwelling may not exceed 80% of the height to the eave of the principal dwelling.
 - d. These requirements do not apply to preexisting buildings converted to accessory dwelling units.
- 6. Accessory dwelling units may not exceed 50 percent of the total area of the principal dwelling.
- 7. No additional parking is required for accessory dwelling units.
- 8. Applicants must provide the ZONING ADMINISTRATOR with certification from the municipal health department that the water supply and sewage disposal facilities are adequate for the projected number of residents.

MINIMUM PARKING STANDARDS

Minimum Parking Standards

Parking minimums can significantly increase the cost of housing, and can result in negative environmental impacts. Most parking standards are generic, not based upon local parking studies or usage norms. Reduced parking minimums are becoming more common across the country; even large retailers like Walmart have reduced parking minimums in the last decade. However, parking is frequently a point of contention and must be carefully negotiated locally. Emerging best practice is to allow the market demand and financing criteria to control parking minimums, and for municipalities to regulate parking location, access, and loading. The suggested text amendment below provides a default historic neighborhood condition and an alternative which requires parking for more suburban conditions. One thing of note in this sample is that parking location is more important than parking minimums. Suburban parking locations have scarred historic neighborhoods, reduced walkability, and created points of conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.

Sample On-Site Parking and Loading Amendment

- On-site parking spaces are not required. [Alternative for suburban condition: "On-site parking spaces must be provided in accordance with Table 1. Each on-street parking space directly adjoining the site will replace two parking spaces otherwise required by Table 1."]
- Parking spaces constructed on-site must be located behind buildings relative to the front property line. Where site configurations make this impossible, parking spaces may be placed on the side of buildings provided they are set back at least 30 feet from the street.
- 3. Access to on-site parking and loading areas is limited as follows:
 - a. Access must be from a rear alley where available.
 - b. Access may be from a street adjoining the rear or side property line if a rear alley is not available.
 - c. If access is not possible from a rear alley or rear or side street, access may be provided from a driveway along the front property line.

Table 1. On-Site Parking Spaces (suburban condition alternative)		
Uses	Minimum parking spaces required	
All Residential Units	1 space per dwelling unit	
All Lodging Units	1 space per room	
All Assembly Uses	1 space per 4 installed seats	
All Retail and Service Uses	1 space per 300 sq. ft. of display floor area	
Medical Office	1 space per 400 sq. ft. of gross floor area	
All Other Office	1 space per 500 sq. ft. of gross floor area	
Food and Beverage	1 space per 4 indoor seats	

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HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS

Historic Neighborhood Standards

Within our five case study communities, the areas in those municipalities that are most misaligned with zoning standards are the historic neighborhoods. To permit infill and densification, the following adjustments should be considered. The metrics are based upon measurements from the participating municipalities and should be adjusted locally though the development of a character survey.

[N] - Neighborhood District

1. Intent

- a. The Neighborhood District encompasses the blended density residential areas adjacent to village and city centers. Neighborhood Districts are intended to permit one, two, three, and four household residences as well as neighborhood commercial uses while complementing and connecting to the adjacent centers.
- b. Additionally these regulations seek to increase the availability of attainable housing by reducing barriers that may disadvantage individuals unfamiliar with the complexities of development, land use regulations, and the myriad requirements, agencies, and goals involved in maintaining a stable village, city, region, and state.

2. Dimensional Standards for Structures and Lots

a. All structures and lots must meet the dimensional standards listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Dimensional Standards for	or Structures and Lots
Lot Width	40' min. and 100' max.
Setbacks	
Front	8' min. and 16' max.; 2' min. for neighborhood commercial uses
Side	4' min.
Rear: Principal Building	2' min. with rear lanes or 12' min.
Rear: Outbuildings	0' min. with rear lanes or 2' min.
Parking Setback from Building Front	20' min.
Maximum Building Height	2.5 stories
Maximum Building Width	50' per building
Maximum Building Coverage	60% per site

[Numbers above must reflect the character of the local context. See the description of the character survey above.]

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS

3. Height of Structures

- a. Structure height is limited by stories above sidewalk grade.
- b. Ground floor stories exceeding 20 feet are considered two stories.
- c. Mezzanines exceeding 30% of the ground floor area are counted as an additional story.

4. Building Standards

 Building facades within 20 feet of sidewalks must have a minimum of 15% glazing.

5. Allowable Uses

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- a. Table 3 indicates allowable uses in the Neighborhood zoning districts.
- b. The uses and groups of uses listed in the first column of Table 3 are defined in section [insert section].
- c. Standards and procedures for conditional uses are described in section [insert section].
- d. Multiple permitted uses within a single building, and multiple buildings and permitted uses on a single site, are allowable provided that the dimensional standards in Table 2 and other zoning regulations are met.
- e. Conditional uses may be permitted only upon approval by the ZONING BOARD using the standards in section [insert section]. Site plan review will be performed simultaneously by the ZONING BOARD while considering the conditional use application.
- f. Temporary uses are regulated by section [insert section], not by the allowable uses listed in Table 3.

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HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS

Table 3. Allowable Uses	
Residential Uses	
Six units or fewer	Permitted Use
Over six units	Conditional Use
Lodging Uses	
Bed and breakfast inn	Permitted Use
Hotel, motel, and other lodging uses	Not Permitted
Institutional Uses	
School or daycare with <12 pupils	Permitted Use
School or daycare with 13+ pupils	Conditional Use
Place of worship with <10 parking spaces	Permitted Use
Place of worship with 11+ parking spaces	Conditional Use
Other institutional uses	Not Permitted
Commercial Uses	
Home occupation	Permitted Use
Offices/shops in converted house	Conditional Use
Food and beverage service in converted house	Permitted Use
Industrial Uses	
All industrial uses	Not Permitted

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Further Resources for Code Reform

The following resources offer a broader context to the topic of code reform. A variety of model ordinances and guidance tools for reforming development regulations are available from various sources. These examples suggest a range of possible expanded code reform efforts and may be useful in envisioning future initiatives.

- The Project for Lean Urbanism has developed a Lean Code Tool that provides suggestions for intentionally lightening the red tape created by excessive controls, redundancies, contradictions, delays, and unintended consequences found in many zoning codes. These suggestions are meant as general guidelines for quick fixes, rather than the locally appropriate recommendations in this guide.
- The Center for Applied Transect Studies supports the SmartCode, a model transect-based planning and zoning ordinance based on the analysis of the built environment. It is intended to directly encourage walkable, mixed used neighborhoods, combat sprawl, preserve open lands, and reduce energy consumption. As a general guide it the Smart Code will need to be calibrated for local conditions.
- The American Planning Association has a number of resources focused on understanding land development regulation, including 21 model codes. The guidebook Smart Codes: Model Land-Development Regulations (PAS 556), while published in 2009, still offers a good overview of regulation and offers guidance on developing model smart growth ordinances.
- The <u>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's</u> Smart Growth program has developed an extensive <u>website</u> for a range of coding tools, audits, model codes, and other helpful publications. Many of these tools and codes suggest modest to complete regulatory overhauls, and would therefore require larger initiatives than that outlined in this guide.
- The <u>AARP</u> has created a series of valuable workbooks dealing with issues of livability for all ages. Each workbook provides planning tools to help complete a livability project, as well as implementation funding recommendations.
- The Form-Based Codes Institute provides a resource page for those interested in form-based codes, a specific urban coding approach which represents the most holistic version of land development regulation reform. Their Resources offer a variety of ways to increase understanding of form-based code terminology and usage, review a library of best practice sample codes, connect with supporting organization and technical assistance, and access additional information.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Accessory Dwelling Units

The following resources show ways of both implementing code reform to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units and programs to encourage their construction. Since ADUs are most often built by homeowners, not developers, jurisdictions need to include homeowner-focused programs and homeowner-friendly policies.

- The article from the <u>Sightline Institute</u> focuses on Vancouver BC ADUs, but the information is widely applicable. The Sightline Institute has many resources on housing topics, all well-researched and accessible.
- The website <u>Accessory Dwellings</u> was founded, and is edited, by 3 volunteers in Portland, Oregon. Kol Peterson and Eli Spevak, along with now-retired Martin Brown, have amassed a wealth of information about ADUS, particularly from the homeowner's perspective.
- The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, a non-profit focusing on creating housing, has written several clear and accessible <u>ADU guides</u> for municipalities and homeowners. They are excellent models for similar guides in Wisconsin.
- The AARP has produced <u>ADU guides</u> as part of their livable communities effort. They are well-illustrated and very informative for both individuals and jurisdictions.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Parking Reform

This set of resources offer helpful information on reducing or eliminating parking requirements from a variety of sources.

- This article from the American Planning Association is a good overview of the issues around parking and why parking reform is a crucial piece of housing reform.
- NAOIP, a major commercial real estate organization, has weighed in extensively on parking from the perspective of commercial developers.
- The Environmental and Energy Study Institute, a bi-partisan legislative advisory group working to combat climate change and energy efficiency, has produced this article about the necessity for parking reform from the climate change perspective.
- <u>Does Parking Matter?</u> a website which collects information about parking reform and advocates for parking reform has extensive resources including a list of <u>Cities that</u> <u>have eliminated</u> or reduced parking requirements.
- <u>Parking Reform Network</u> is a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the damage done by excessive parking requirements.

Public Engagement

- NAR Realtor magazine has produced an entire issue on the housing shortage, including the article linked directly here, which addresses the question of how to talk effectively about increasing housing stock.
- <u>Desegregate Connecticut</u> is a coalition of housing supporters, environmental groups, professional planners, and elected officials which has organized to lobby for zoning regulation changes to allow more affordable housing and more housing choice. They are an excellent example of the kind of coalition needed to enact incremental zoning reform.
- Sightline Institute, a non-profit organization in the Pacific Northwest, has posted an
 excellent analysis on how the <u>residential infill project</u> in Portland was successfully
 implemented, in spite of vigorous opposition.
- <u>Legalizing affordable housing</u> is a series of articles from the Sightline Institute about coalition efforts to enable more housing choice.
- <u>Complete Communities Delaware</u> is another excellent example of successful coalition building for more housing choice with many resources and examples available on their website.

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CONTRIBUTORS

This Guide was made possible through generous contributions from the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, the Wisconsin Builders' Association, AARP Wisconsin, NAIOP-Wisconsin the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, the Wisconsin REALTORS® Association, WHEDA, state and local planning officials, and housing advocates. This group helped the code reform team understand common obstacles to creating more housing choice and the walkable neighborhoods that support housing choice. The people who wrote, reviewed, and otherwise contributed to this guide wish to thank them for the funding, support, and knowledge. The errors are ours and the insights and inspirations are theirs.

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- Eau Claire
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- Ripon
- Waukesha
- Waunakee

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New Urbanism

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ENABLING BETTER PLACES:

A USER'S GUIDE TO WISCONSIN NEIGHBORHOOD AFFORDABILITY







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BACKGROUND

Introduction

Across the country, many people are finding that they can no longer afford to live in the communities that they prefer. This is true in big cities and small communities: the availability and price of housing is not meeting the needs of those working in jobs that are vital to the success of our communities, such as: teachers, firefighters, small business owners, and service industry workers.

Reforming state and local policies that inadvertently restrict the housing market has been a focus of numerous efforts. This guide has the same goal, adding clarity to which reforms are appropriate where. Too often reform is conceived of very broadly, but places and the regulations that shape them are diverse. The regulatory landscape of our building, zoning, and other land use codes needs to better consider existing physical conditions. Regulatory reform efforts that attempt to increase infill opportunities can do so in a more targeted and strategic manner, while maintaining community compatibility.

What is the "biggest little change" you can make to improve housing access and affordability in your community?

In Wisconsin, cities, communities, and villages need a wider range of housing options. Fewer than 20% of all households nationwide are families with children, and nearly 50% of all households are made up of one or two people. Much of the existing housing stock consists of large, single-family homes which may not be affordable-or practical-for the makeup of modern households. It is critical to make the process of adapting existing housing stock and building smaller and more varied housing easier.

The opposition between housing needs and housing stock is exacerbated by zoning regulations that inadvertently increase housing prices. Current regulations in Wisconsin often require large lots, deep setbacks, low densities, limited housing options, restrictions on re-purposing existing buildings, and excessive parking requirements. Such regulations can restrict opportunities for housing, increase costs for individuals and communities, perpetuate sprawling, auto-oriented development, and negatively affect Wisconsin's natural beauty.

CODE REFORM IN WISCONSIN

Code Reform in Wisconsin

The recommendations in this guide may be integrated into an existing use-based code, allowing more housing types to be attainable, or may be a way of trying out form-based coding. The recommendations are intended to be calibrated locally by looking at the most successful and desirable historic neighborhoods.

Prior to developing this guide, the CNU team met with five communities in Wisconsin, which served as case studies for this project: Eau Claire, Horicon, Ripon, Waukesha, and Waunakee. All five communities identified the following as desired outcomes in their communities and key areas of focus for this guide:

Increase Housing Availability

The five case study communities, along with other Wisconsin municipalities, are experiencing housing availability challenges. Some challenges are created by annexation constraints, others by growth strategies, and most by regulatory limitations. Eau Claire, Horicon, Ripon, Waukesha and Waunakee expressed an interest in finding solutions for augmenting housing supply, both in the market rate and the attainable and affordable sectors.

Encourage Aging in Place

Aging in place, whether it be by moving to smaller, more appropriate housing, or by making changes to their own residence, is a concern within the case study communities. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are a primary tool that can enable aging in place by allowing downsizing to occur, increase income for the retiree, and create an additional rental unit which may be more affordable than fee-simple housing.

Provide Better Housing Options

The case study communities also expressed a desire to provide better housing options that would respond to market demands. Across the millennial and baby boomer cohorts, there is an increased interest in missing middle housing–duplexes, smaller multi-family, cottage courts, and other ways of integrating smaller or more flexible housing options. Wisconsin has two primary means of permitting developers to create this type of housing (the Traditional Neighborhood Development and Planned Development District ordinances), but could be better served by adjusting the underlying zoning. Communities that do not have zoning to deliver these preferences are missing an economic development opportunity.

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THE PROCESS

The Process

To develop this guide, the team:

- 1. Identified Local Partners: CNU and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities assembled a group of interested parties to be the local experts on this project. They included representatives from the Wisconsin Builders' Association, AARP Wisconsin, NAIOP-Wisconsin, state and local planning officials, and housing advocates. This group helped the code reform team understand common obstacles to creating more housing choice and the walkable neighborhoods that support housing choice.
- Conducted a Regulatory Assessment: CNU asked the project's stakeholder group to fill out an assessment framework tool for their municipality, region, or communities they were familiar with, identifying common zoning barriers to housing and neighborhood walkability, and the specific regulations that determine these barriers. Not all questions within the framework applied to all communities.
- 3. **Engaged with the Wisconsin Context:** CNU conducted workshops with five Wisconsin communities to learn more about their specific planning and regulatory challenges and opportunities. The five case study communities were: Eau Claire, Horicon, Ripon, Waukesha, and Waunakee.
- 4. **Learned from the Municipalities:** The team identified seven core recommendations to address the most common issues that create obstacles to more affordable housing in Wisconsin.

Over the course of this project it became clear that community engagement and public buy-in is crucial to the success of code reform changes and acceptance of affordable housing. Often proposed changes to zoning regulations are met with considerable opposition. As a result, an education section was included to examine ways to increase public and resident buy-in to proposed zoning changes.

Wisconsin Development Patterns

The form of streets, buildings, open spaces, and the overall assembly of communities has changed over time; it is a simple fact that exists in Wisconsin much as it does elsewhere in the United States and around the world. Most American cities were built during and after 1850, including most Wisconsin municipalities. During this period - from 1850 to present - changes in technology, social structure, and law have influenced the form of cities.

Today's regulatory constructs - zoning codes, subdivision ordinances, and engineering standards - rarely recognize the physical and operational differences between older and newer areas. However, these areas are defined by different structures of streets and blocks, which affects mobility, different types of housing, and sizes of properties. These issues are further affected by zoning and subdivision, and different norms concerning issues like pedestrian activity, gardening and landscaping, and animal husbandry, found in the municipal code.

Patterns Pre-1950s

Most development prior to 1950 was zoned with a set of very different goals than post-1950 or was not regulated by zoning at all. Proximity to downtown drove demand, which is reflected in properties that are considered small by recent standards and a mix of housing type and tenure, including single family homes, multi-family, duplexes, boarding houses, and accessory dwellings within close proximity to jobs and services. Townhomes were also built in this period, however they were usually found in larger cities.

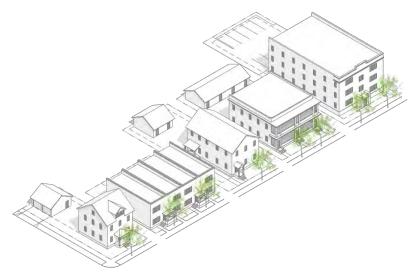
Buildings are generally located near the streets and near to neighbors. Garages, common only to single and two-household dwellings, are located behind the home and accessed by an alley or a driveway next to the home. Because many daily trips occurred on foot, the home's front door was oriented towards and directly accessed from the sidewalk.

This pattern continued to evolve. Many larger single-family homes were converted to 2, 3, and 4-family homes by internal divisions, retaining the overall building form and site plan elements. The conversions retained the area character while increasing housing supply. Additional modifications often included accessory dwellings combined with the garage, replacing the garage, or in a separate building within the rear yard.

Critical aspects of this era that should continue to be respected are:

- Buildings located close to sidewalks and to side property lines.
- Garages located in the rear, behind the home relative to the sidewalk.
- Driveways minimized, both in size and location, preserving the front of the property for the home and yard.
- Rectilinear block shapes of a consistent size.
- Highly connected street network of narrow streets.
- Accessory commercial uses in primarily residential neighborhoods.

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Building Types

Residential buildings of this era were the most diverse, used the least land area, and delivered the greatest number of dwellings. These factors combined to preclude the highest level of affordability while creating beautiful, walkable neighborhoods that have held their value over the decades.





Ripon, image credit: Google



Horicon, image credit: Google



Waukesha, image credit: Google

Patterns 1950-1980

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The development period between 1950 and 1980 was influenced by increasing national standards promoted by the federal government through financing programs and by trade organizations like the Urban Land Institute. This resulted in a reduction of the types of housing built and changes in the predominant pattern of streets, blocks, and lots. Housing provided during this period was largely single family and aimed at the burgeoning federally-backed mortgage products. These homes ranged from modest to the beginning of the "McMansion," and developments had relatively little variety. Multi-family developments during the mid-century were physically separated from single-family areas. Uniquely observed in Wisconsin is a prevalence of duplex houses during this and later periods. Townhouses were not a common building type during this period.

Vehicular access to homes and parking areas was provided adjacent to the street. Driveways are a dominant feature of the streetscape. Locating the garage inline with the front of the house resulted in wider homes that were sited on larger lots than prior periods. Because the driveway and garage are both in the front, vehicles are commonly parked between building facades and the street.

The pattern of streets and blocks shifted during this period from a purely rectilinear, gridded structure to incorporate angled streets, curvilinear streets, and cul-de-sacs. Street networks generally retained a high degree of connectivity and block sizes were similar to or only somewhat larger than the typical pre-1950 block until the 1970s. Cul-de-sacs began to emerge in this period but were limited in their application and in the length of the street segment. Typically, cul-de-sacs were used to add extra lots where geometries created by angled streets or odd property boundaries occurred. This pattern is clearly illustrated in the 1968 version of the Urban Land Institute's Community Builders' Handbook.

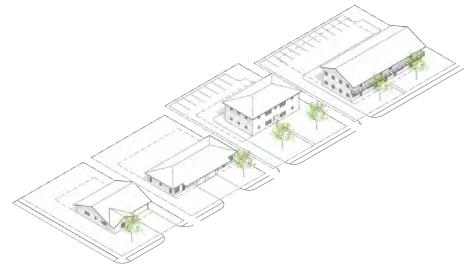
Critical aspects of this pattern that should continue to be respected are:

- Buildings located 20-to-30 feet from sidewalks.
- Garages located close to or aligned with the front facade, but not occupying more than 40% of the width of the facade.
- Driveways minimized in width, preserving the front property area for the home and for yard space.
- Infrequent cul-de-sacs, limited in length.



Plan of Canterbury Commons, MI, image credit: ULI Community Builders' Handbook, 1968

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Building Types

Residential buildings of this era were the least diverse, used a much larger land area, and delivered fewer dwellings than the prior era. Automobiles began to dominate the landscape, and the beauty and function of the neighborhood became less important than that of the individual building.





Waukesha, image credit: Google



Ripon, image credit: Google



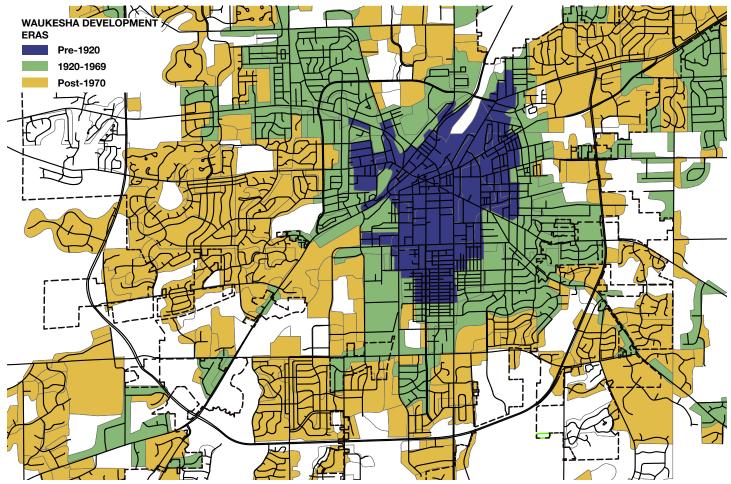
Waunekee, image credit: Google

Patterns 1980-Present

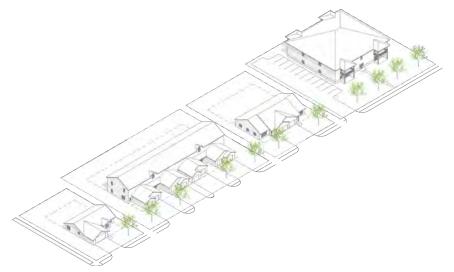
The present period and recent past have seen a divergence in development patterns, influenced by the emergence of Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs). Some portions of development in this period resemble an extension of the principles of the 1950-1980 period, while others follow the TND system, which is markedly different.

Traditional Neighborhood Development patterns exhibit similarity to both the pre-1950 and 1950-1980 patterns of growth. TNDs include a connected street network which defines principally rectilinear blocks, with some variation for angular and curvilinear streets. This pattern includes alleys in some or most of the development, in particular in areas with multi-family, townhomes, duplexes, and small single family homes. TNDs typically develop housing at a higher density than development between 1950-1980, but not higher than that prior to 1950.

In some Wisconsin municipalities, development between 1980 and 1990 follows this more universally common condition, while growth in others reflects the pattern of 1950 to 1980, occupied by housing matching the common aspects of the 1980 to 1990 period. This condition is illustrated on the following page in Eau Claire where blocks are more regular in shape with a small degree of angularity or curvature of streets, yet the housing stock demonstrates common aspects of the 1980-1990 period. Waunakee, on the other hand, illustrates street and block layouts more universally common.



Waukesha Historic Development, image credit: City of Waukesha



Building Types

Townhouses have regained popularity in the last decades, but the development of small apartment buildings has declined, except in areas governed by TND ordinances. In many areas parking quota have increased, with a corresponding loss of affordability due to the increased land area needed.





Waukesha, image credit: Google



Ripon, image credit: Google



Waunekee, image credit: Google

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Implementing Reform: Laying the Groundwork

In order to successfully reform the regulatory environment, municipal officials and planning professionals need to lay the groundwork for change by understanding and examining the misalignment between what zoning they have and the zoning they want. This process can include demonstrating how the misapplication of zoning has led to the creation of nonconformities between existing buildings and uses, how zoning can shape new development in ways that are incompatible with existing places, and how in many instances zoning is preventing new places from being built that match the most-loved existing places.

Step 1. Demonstrate the Need

To make the case for a zoning adjustment process, communities need to demonstrate that misalignments exist, and the extent of misalignment with current conditions. Pre-1950's development is typically the easiest place to start because these areas predate zoning, and they tend to include beloved neighborhoods where it is easy to make the case that they should not be illegal, nonconforming, or irreproducible. Identify a block of pre-1950's development near to downtown or the primary main street, but generally residential.



image credit: Google Earth

The above example demonstrates a condition in a Wisconsin municipality. This historic block falls within a zoning district that does not align with existing housing. As demonstrated, every property or building on this block is nonconforming by today's standards. In this sample block, every property violates the zone's minimum required setbacks. In addition, the corner properties were subdivided at a point, which now violates the minimum lot size standards as well as maximum lot coverage. The conditions on neighboring blocks are similar. These zoning standards require revision. Wisconsin has established statewide standards permitting occupation and expansion of nonconforming buildings, lots, and uses. However, historic buildings, patterns of lots, and well established uses are key to a community's character and should be legal, not an exception.

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LAYING THE GROUNDWORK



Pattern Survey Hertfordshire, image credit: DPZ

Step 2. Survey Existing Patterns

The next step in successful reform is to survey the existing patterns and gather the common elements that produced the development that is most valued and desired. Common methods for evaluation include:

- Utilizing existing data to determine the predominant age of structures in different parts of the municipality.
- Utilizing plat data to determine the process and age of subdivisions across the municipality.
- Utilizing mapping, aerial photography, and visual surveying to determine significant differences in the pattern of streets and blocks and bulk and character of buildings.

The goal of pattern evaluation is to define the boundaries between areas of differing blocks and building character in order to accurately align new zoning standards.

Once accurate pattern boundaries have been established, the types and intensities of buildings should be identified. The purpose of identifying different types and intensities is to establish sub-boundaries within the patterns, which may differ by era.

Examples from the Case Study Communities:

In Eau Claire and Waukesha, historic neighborhoods often mix historic single family, duplex, multi-family, and townhomes together, along with small scale neighborhood commercial uses. But in Waunakee and Ripon, historic neighborhoods are exclusively single family, differentiated from nearby main street development. For Waunakee and Ripon, this would suggest one sub-boundary for the main street and another for the pre-1950's neighborhoods. For Eau Claire and Waukesha, this would suggest a subboundary for the downtown, another for the highly mixed pre-1950's neighborhoods, and a third for other pre-1950's neighborhoods that are predominantly single family. See the previous explanation of pattern differences for cues concerning the degree of separation that is common in each era of development. More recent development patterns have more separation between uses and types of buildings, and as a result should include sub-boundaries reflecting that separation. In older areas, however, avoid the temptation to separate buildings by type or use when that separation does not exist historically.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK



Incursion Example, Waukesha, image credit: Google Street View

Step 3. Adjust Zones to Match Common

Building and Site Details

Once the existing patterns and sub-boundaries have been identified, survey existing buildings within those areas to determine common conditions. The range of typical existing conditions should be analyzed as a means of deriving zoning standards from what has already been established. Common building and site details include: lot size, building height, building setbacks, encroachments, entry locations, lot coverage by buildings, the number of units per property, and building types (detached single unit dwellings, attached single unit dwellings, duplexes, multiple dwelling buildings, and accessory buildings and structures). Some areas may have a variety of conditions, while other areas may have very little variety. Aligning zoning in this way is the first step to ensuring the character of future development aligns with existing area character.

A character survey sheet is included in the appendix as a resource.

Recognizing Past Incursions

In many situations, non-compatible development has been permitted in the past, which should not be confused with a common pattern to retain through the zoning update process. Historically these incursions may have created resistance to new housing throughout the jurisdiction rather than recognizing them as incompatible with the surrounding context. While the goal of re-aligning zoning is to enable and support what has already been established, incursions that differ significantly from the predominant pattern should remain non-conforming.

An example of such an incursion is pictured here, a large multi-family building in Waukesha which is significantly out of scale with surrounding buildings. The larger building was built in a much more recent era than the surroundings and violates the existing pattern by the building's height and total square footage. However other examples of smaller, compatible multi-family buildings are found nearby. Often such incursions create an anti- multi-family reaction rather than more appropriately identifying the bulk of the building as incompatible. In addition to building bulk, the location and size of parking areas is a common incursion which should be corrected within a zoning update.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

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With the understanding of how existing zoning is restricting housing in Wisconsin communities, the following general changes are recommended to enable more housing choice. Doing any of them will put Wisconsin places in a better position to allow housing choice for all of the state's residents. In that way, this serves as a menu of recommendations.

Common Code Issues

CODE ISSUE: Adjust lot and yard standards



Most Wisconsin municipalities require minimum lot sizes that are not conducive to smaller single-family homes, townhomes, and other historically common housing types. In historic neighborhoods, this creates issues with nonconforming lots. In newly developed areas, this results in a very limited range of new housing, both in size and cost. Twentieth century zoning was drafted to reflect suburban goals and best practices of the time, which do not reflect the character of

historic communities nor current goals for providing housing type, tenure, and price point diversity. The result is many parcels have challenges with any changes to the buildings, the parking or the number of dwellings because of lack of conformity.

Area and width – Most zoning codes have exemptions for lack of conformity, but there is a lost opportunity for context-sensitive densification. If zones are adjusted to reflect the historic parcels, the cost of the variance process could be avoided, additional dwellings could possibly be added, and non-conforming complications with insurance and mortgages could be avoided.

Setbacks – Most case study communities have very little variation throughout their residential zoning districts, and they are all distinctly 20th century suburban standards. Both front and rear setbacks are quite large. In neighborhoods with historic alleys, the rear yard requirement makes existing garages non-conforming and prevents the location of additional parking off the alley.

Lot coverage – Like the other lot metrics, most case study communities have a 35% lot coverage that is standard across most zoning districts. This standard is the single greatest barrier to densification since many lots are nonconforming in their current state of development and there is no opportunity for any enlargement of the building footprint to accommodate additional dwellings.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Lot widths and areas should be realigned to match historic patterns favoring narrower lots.
- Setbacks should be reduced to historic distances to allow greater use of the existing lots.
- Increase permitted lot coverages to match historic patterns.

CODE ISSUE: Historic Multi-Family

Historic Multi-Family. Many historic neighborhood uses were outlawed in the 20th century, separating housing types that were not only compatible but complementary.



Housing types that were historically inserted into neighborhood fabric with very low impact on traffic, impervious surface, and quality of life include three-family, four-family, and six-family units. Current zoning practices have restricted their construction by dividing housing into single-family, two-family, townhouses, and multi-family zones, eliminating medium density housing. Duplexes, three-family, and some four-family types are no larger than a large single-family residence.

Because these dwelling types fit easily into the scale of many neighborhoods, permitting conversions (as well as allowing for construction of new buildings) is a logical choice for adding housing to a community.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

 Allow multi-unit housing as permitted uses in single-family zoning districts which have historically included two-family and multi-family. Ensure multi-unit housing is held to the height and frontage dimensions of existing single household dwellings or historic multi-unit housing. The number of units is determined by the size of the building, not by density calculations.

CODE ISSUE: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



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Permitting ADUs within neighborhoods is a good first step toward adding housing with minimal impact on existing development. ADUs occur organically throughout Wisconsin cities, and villages. They were often the upper level of carriage houses or garages, as well as in attics and basements. This use is one of the most significant tools to gently increase density at a scale that is virtually invisible within a neighborhood. It allows the homeowner to reduce the cost of housing with additional income, enables aging in place by downsizing on the same parcel, and assists with elder care.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Accessory dwellings should be allowed by right for all single-family zoning districts.
- Additional parking spaces should not be required for an accessory dwelling.

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CODE ISSUE: Remove Unnecessary Regulations and Restrictions

Jurisdictions should consider adjusting rules that commonly create barriers to providing housing. Many cities have a list of commonly sought variances which can point to problems



with unnecessary or incompatible rules. Density metrics such as 'unit per acre' are often a barrier. In most instances bulk standards such as height, setbacks, lot coverage, and parking standards limit potential density.

Density. Bulk standards, as discussed above, create more predictable outcomes than density standards. Additionally, density standards are not well analyzed, are easily politicized, and unreasonably restrict

housing. The density of most historic neighborhoods is much higher than most residents, officials, and regulators realize. If density is retained as a development restriction, existing per-property densities should be surveyed along with the other building and site details noted above, and on the Character Survey Form in the Appendix.

Use. Use categorization is the next most common requirement in need of adjustment. Most jurisdictions apply a list of permitted uses to any given zone. If the proposed use does not exactly match a permitted use, the proposal must be denied, no matter how benign or desirable it may be. This issue is most common in downtowns and main streets, but it can carry over into principally residential areas also. Typical use categories detrimental to housing include the restriction of single-family, two-family, or multi-family. This restricts the very appropriate middle density that has been eliminated from contemporary zoning ordinances.

Commercial use. Disallowing housing in downtowns, main streets, and other generally commercial areas is also problematic. In an effort to increase street activity in a mixed-use zone, jurisdictions sometimes prohibit housing on the ground floor, or altogether. While this is effective if the need for retail fills those spaces, in situations where the need is not there this approach is unnecessary and counterproductive to producing more housing. These and similar unnecessary rules should be simplified or removed.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Permit residential uses within downtown and Main Street zoning districts.
- Permit residential uses, including multi-family, in commercial districts.
- Manage residential density with building types not units per acre in each district.
 Consider using three to five residential zones, depending on locations:
 - Post-1950's era: Single-family, Two-family, Townhouses, Three to Six-family, and Multi-family districts.
 - Pre-1950's era: Single-family, two-family and townhouses, Three to Six-family, and multi-family districts. These are best implemented with intensity levels of low intensity, medium intensity, and high intensity. Permit neighborhood-scaled commercial uses within the medium and high intensity residential districts.

CODE ISSUE: Adjust Parking Requirements

Smaller multi-family dwellings can be nearly impossible to build if two paved, off-street parking spots are required per unit. Minimum on-site parking requirements for housing



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should seldom be more than one per unit. If street parking or other shared parking spaces are available then even less parking can be required. Allowing on-street or shared parking to count toward the minimum required parking spaces will provide some flexibility for landowners. On-street parking is shared among many users and has the additional benefit of separating pedestrians from moving vehicles.

In recent years, municipalities across the country have begun to accept that parking minimums have been a poor planning tool, both in accurately predicting parking needs and successfully producing great

places. In most cases, lenders and tenants will demand a minimum number of parking spaces, which will be provided regardless of municipal regulations. Municipalities should focus on where that parking is located, rather than in how much parking is required. Within historic neighborhoods, minimum parking requirements can be eliminated entirely, or at a minimum, reduced substantially.

The effects of excessive parking requirements on housing affordability are often underestimated. In areas that are walkable to school, jobs, and other daily needs, the cost of each unneeded parking space inflates the cost of housing (The average cost of a paved parking space is estimated at about \$4,000 and structured parking can be five times that). Overly high parking requirements can block new housing options that fit seamlessly into existing neighborhoods, such as accessory dwellings, small infill buildings, and conversions of large houses into more than one residence.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Reduce or eliminate parking minimums.
- Allow shared parking to count toward parking minimums.
- Allow on-street parking and allow it to count toward parking minimums.

RECOMMENDATIONS 142

CODE ISSUE: Evaluate Processes

Most of the case study communities contributing to this guide reported having Planned Development District (PDD) ordinances. PDDs are used to circumvent mis-aligned zoning standards, resulting in a broken process. Zoning principally by PDD is evidence of a failing zoning code. Revising a code to reflect the local market and community vision is the best practice.

Each individual PDD adds to future administrative complexity, and creates a zoning system that neither neighbors nor developers can predict. Standards and processes should be evaluated to ensure that zoning creates predictable outcomes, is easy to understand, and is easy to navigate. Applicants should be provided with the most expedient approvals path, particularly for smaller infill conditions, recognizing where and to what extent community oversight is necessary.

Greenfield development typically requires some degree of master planning such as is provided by the subdivision and site plan process. Here too, though, the processes should be clear and predictable, which is rarely true.

The long-term implication of overusing PDD ordinances is a very complex set of overlapping rules, individually negotiated, and a severe lack of predictability. This has not yet become evident in most places because most homes built under these ordinances have not been redeveloped and are unlikely to be redeveloped in the near future. However, this practice should be minimized, and new zoning and subdivision standards established to direct growth in alignment with market demands. The state of Wisconsin requires municipalities larger than 12,500 residents to adopt Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinances. It also encourages smaller municipalities to adopt such ordinances. In all cases common TND zones should be established, similar to historic districts, that address issues of building bulk, placement, and window percentage, leaving only the more specific stylistic and site design standards to regulation by homeowner covenants.

The development community has signaled a desire for a development format that follows market trends. As this format also aligns with other state and regional goals, a clear and predictable process should be provided to achieve these new neighborhoods in Wisconsin's smaller municipalities as well as the larger ones.

Jurisdictions that wish to adopt a TND ordinance will do well to begin by taking a close look at the model ordinance created by the Wisconsin extension service. It is intended to be used with minor adjustments for local conditions and should make the adoption process much more straightforward. Wisconsin Model TND ordinance.

RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance.
- Consider replacing existing PDDs with TND standards.
- Assess and streamline the subdivision process including standards that direct development outcomes and a time limit on municipal response.
- Assure workforce housing applications will be prioritized and response time limited to 90 days, max.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Community Education

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As of June 2021, Wisconsin is estimated to need approximately 120,000 rental units across a spectrum of incomes, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. In addition to less expensive housing, adding market rate housing improves housing choice for everyone, up and down the income ladder. In order to combat community resistance to additional or different housing, an investment in community education around the benefits of housing choice should be undertaken. The following are recommended topics for a community education campaign to increase public support for code reforms that will increase housing choice.

Fear and lack of knowledge are the two largest hurdles to combat community resistance. A critical first step is to assure your code reform reflects the character of the neighborhoods it will apply to. ADUs should fit in anywhere, and a garden apartment complex fits in a limited number of places. If the standards reflect the context, and it is adequately illustrated, it goes a long way toward providing knowledge and assuaging the fear.

RECOMMENDATIONS 144

Who is at the table?

The most important thing is that everyone who has a stake in the success of the city should be a part of the conversation. A robust community engagement process begins with getting the most diverse group of perspectives involved at an early stage. A focus should be placed on engaging renters, young people, people who work in the area but cannot afford to live there, in addition to current homeowners. Many people care deeply about their neighborhoods, but are not likely to attend community meetings. Social media pages or neighborhood listservs can be a valuable resource for public engagement.

Additional tools to be considered in public engagement include:

- Allow public comment at times other than during a public meeting through a website dedicated to housing issues.
- Hold pop-up events at libraries, grocery stores, liquor stores, bars, parks, playgrounds, farmers' markets, street festivals, church events.
- Hang posters with leading questions and space for responding in public places such as bus stops, laundromats, bars, churches, parks, playgrounds.
- Encourage people to bring their children to public meetings.
- Make sure that meetings are held in non-intimidating, accessible public spaces.
- Hold online conversations as well as in-person meetings.
- Convene meetings at different times and on different days.
- Follow local pages on social media and engage directly with active users of those pages.
- Provide online engagement opportunities such as visual preference surveys, housing issue surveys, leading questions, etc.

Ensure planning commissioners and elected officials are at the table so they understand the needs within the community. Elected officials are frequently pressured by the vocal minority and do not hear from code reform advocates. They need sufficient data to be able to withstand pressure from the NIMBY ("not in my back yard") community that tends to fear additional housing.

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Who can't afford to live here?

Area Median Income (AMI) is the income right in the middle of the income range for a particular place. Half of those working earn less, half earn more. It's not an average, so it isn't skewed by a handful of high earners, but reflects the full range of wages. When housing advocates talk about workforce housing they are referencing housing affordable at between 60 and 100 percent of AMI. Low-income housing is affordable for those making less than 60 percent of AMI.

According to the 2020 census, state-wide AMI for Wisconsin is \$64,168, which translates to \$1600 monthly for housing and utilities. Teachers, police officers, librarians, nurses make approximately 80% of statewide AMI. Childcare workers, service workers of all kinds, and bus drivers make less than 50% of statewide AMI. These numbers will differ in every locality but should be considered during a conversation about housing needs.

People who have to commute long distances can't be full citizens of the place where they work or the place where they live – too much time is spent traveling. These individuals are also paying the financial costs of commuting: maintaining a car is estimated to cost \$10K annually. Reliable transportation is crucial in order to keep a job.

In addition to the costs to individuals when we have inadequate housing choices, there is also a cost to the community. Maintaining streets, water and sewer lines, and other infrastructure in neighborhoods with historic building patterns is significantly less expensive than maintaining that infrastructure in neighborhoods with large lots. If the only place we allow more housing to be built easily, by right, is large-lot subdivisions we are committing ourselves to higher costs now and in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS 146

What will it look like?

When asking residents to permit more housing choices, neighbors are typically curious as to what it will look like. Abstract discussion about adding more density or changing the Floor Area Ratio do not translate into a general public understanding of what to expect.

When municipalities propose allowing up to three units on a single lot, a common step up from single family zoning, it is important to create standards that will ensure that these new buildings will be about the same size and impact as the existing single family houses. These are known as 'bulk standards' because they regulate the size of the building, not the number of units in the buildings. To create effective bulk standards, begin by measuring the biggest houses in the neighborhood to determine the largest reasonable size.

Craft illustrations that show clearly what adding these buildings will mean. Choose a vacant lot and have renderings made that show how a new building will fit. In addition to drawings, show photographs of existing buildings that match what is being proposed.

When proposing Accessory Dwelling Units, provide illustrations that show garage apartments and backyard cottages. In the same way, if front and side setbacks need to be adjusted to allow adding ADUs or adding another building, create illustrations to show what this will look like on existing lots. Without illustrations community members might not understand what increasing density entails. An instinctive response by residents is that an increase in density implies buildings bigger than what that is currently permitted, which is why illustrations are a key component to the community education process.

The other issue that commonly arises around increasing housing choice is that many of these new units will be rentals. There is a myth that renters don't care about their neighborhoods, are bad neighbors, or create chaos and noise. One way to approach this topic with residents is to ask what their first living arrangement was after leaving home, or school. Common responses are:

- I lived in my parent's basement.
- I rented with friends.
- I rented alone.
- I bought a house or condo.

Then ask the same question about their children. This allows residents to see that they weren't born homeowners and serves as a tool to humanize renters. If there is concern about short-term rentals, they can be limited to the extent allowed by Wisconsin Statute 66.1014. If there is concern about bad behavior then address the behavior with noise ordinances or similar rules. Be sure that your public outreach reaches renters: if you are mailing fliers to the building owners, renters who live in that neighborhood won't know about the proposed changes. Renters understand the issues of lack of rental units and the associated high prices. They are the voices needed to counteract opposition.

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Who benefits from adding housing choice?

Many people in Wisconsin and nationwide cannot afford to live within a reasonable distance of their jobs due to lack of housing and are forced to bear the time and the financial burden of lengthy commutes. Who else is affected by lack of housing choice?

- Young people. If we want to retain a lively economy we need young people, and, as noted above, younger people are more likely to be renters.
- Single people who don't want the burden of a house and yard. According to statistics
 compiled by the American Association of Retired People, 28% of all households are
 single people living alone. Couples without children comprise another 25%.
- Older people whose big, single family house no longer meets their needs. Most people prefer to stay in their current neighborhood as they age and allowing more housing choice can meet this need. Allowing large single family houses to be reconfigured with more units also works for this demographic: if two or three apartments can be created out of a residence then the homeowner has income to help maintain the building and can create an apartment with accommodations such as one-floor living and a walk-in shower which make aging in place simpler and safer.
- Families with children only represent 20% of the population but they need housing choices also. Allowing more housing within walking distance of shops and libraries and restaurants makes family life easier. Perhaps only one car is necessary, reducing both carbon footprints and costs. Older children and teens can walk or use public transportation, lifting some of the transportation burden from parents.

It is important to be willing to engage directly with residents who are opposing any change to allow more housing choice but not allow them to drive the conversation. Neighborhood associations, because they are vocal and organized, can have an out-sized effect on the public conversation. Elected officials and municipal employees often defer to these voices because they are assumed to speak for entire neighborhoods when in fact they only speak for some of the residents. This is where careful observation of social media can provide other voices which need to be invited into the conversation as a counterbalance.

People are afraid of change. We have to make the possibility of change palatable, quantifying what that change might look like, and who these new neighbors might be.

RECOMMENDATIONS 148

Building a coalition

If a jurisdiction is going to be successful in implementing code changes to allow more housing choice it is crucial that a coalition of advocates are mobilized to advocate for those changes in the public process. It's important to involve housing advocates and builders along with the people we identified above who want to live somewhere and cannot. Those are the voices that the process needs to amplify.

When you are ready to propose a code change to allow, for example, four-plexes, talk immediately to organizations and people who are concerned with housing shortages. Get out in front and line up supporters so that the first thing that people hear is not objections from people opposed to change. Have the conversations early and often, and in all the places listed above, not just in the planning office or at planning meetings.

Make sure to build champions within your governing body. Without strong advocates among the elected officials, a contentious hearing can have unexpected and unfortunate results. However, if there are coalition members on the board, they can articulate the need for the code edit.

This guide is primarily focused on creating incremental change in the regulatory environment and changes in zoning code that will allow more housing choice. But these ideas about who gets heard and who is at the table also apply once the code is changed. It is not enough to allow four-plexes if the process to build them is too complicated. Jurisdictions need to actively encourage the kind of housing that is wanted and the coalition is important for that, too.



RESOURCES

Resources

The appendix is comprised of a group of tools to assist in common areas of code reform. Some are means to craft reform, such as the character survey, and others are models of language that can be used as a template for specific code issues like ADUs and parking minimums. Each tool must be locally adjusted to respond to the context.

CHARACTER SURVEY

Character Survey

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A character survey is the first step in understanding the existing context of a place, determining which reforms are needed, and selecting the content of new regulations such as common dimensional standards. To build a coalition as discussed in the Community Education section, a good practice is to convene a group of advocates and opponents, and collectively identify the most loved areas within the community. The group then collectively photographs, measures, and counts the physical metrics that make up the area. A sample survey follows.

CHARACTER SURVEY

Step 1: Define your districts and pick examples

First decide which areas need regulatory reform. Next, pick example blocks to measure in each of the districts you intend to revise. One way to pick blocks is to choose those that people respond positively to the most. This is an aspirational approach, and the new metrics in your code will be set to guide development to match those best-loved blocks. Another approach is to pick blocks that show the full range of variation in existing dimensions. This approach will help you put new dimensional standards in your code that make as many existing conditions as possible conforming under the new regulations.

Step 2: Measure example blocks using the character survey form

Print one copy of the character survey form to take into the field for each area or condition being analyzed. Take a walking tour and measure the elements shown on the form. Lot widths, building heights, setbacks, uses, parking location, and percent window glazing are all important elements to measure. Photograph the street section and views of building facades. For a street photo, it is usually best to stand on the sidewalk approximately where a planting strip would be, and shoot at an angle to include some of the buildings and all of the sidewalk, and catch a bit of buildings on the far side of the street. For the facade, in the same area showing the same building(s), stand in the street and shoot the entire front yard including the facade. Include the entire lot width if possible; building height is less important.

Step 3: Measure less visible elements using online maps or aerial photography

In addition to measuring the elements you can access during a walking tour, use online maps or other aerial photography to measure elements over the whole area, such as lot coverage, lot depth, the number and setback of outbuildings, and parking location.

Step 4: Analyze results and set new dimensional standards

Once you have measured the selected blocks, sit down with (1) the completed character survey forms, (2) maps or aerial photos of the area, and (3) a new blank character survey form for each district you are adjusting. Consider the metrics for your measured blocks and the conditions in the rest of the area and decide what dimensions to set for your revised zone(s). Fill in the metrics on the blank character survey form (one for each district you are revising), and these metrics will be the basis for your zoning amendment.

CHARACTER SURVEY SAMPLE

Historic Neighborhood



STREET NAME @ STREET NAME

670 x 340	Average Block Dimension
8 - 12	Units per Acre
24 x 90	Average Lot Size

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STREET DIMENSIONS

49'	ROW Width
2	Moving Lanes
1	Parking Lanes
25'	Pavement Width
raised 6"	Curb Type
18"	Curb Radius
12'	Sidewalk
tree well	Planter Type
2' x 2'	Planter Width
episodic	Planting Pattern



BUILDING STANDARDS

Stoop, Shopfront	Private Frontage Type
4 stories max	Building height
18" resid. 0 shop	First floor above grade
18' - 36' wide	Lot size
80% max.	Lot coverage
80% min.	Buildout percent- age @ sidewalk
0 min, 12' max	Front Setback
0 min	Side Setback
3' min.	Rear Setback
3' min.	Outbuilding Set- back
res, retail, office	Ground Level Function

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwellings could add thousands of more attainable housing units with little strain on infrastructure or additional maintenance expense to local municipalities. Additionally, ADUs have little impact on the character of neighborhoods and can help subsidize mortgages for property owners. However, it is not uncommon for ADU's to face resistance from the community. One common concern is noise and maintenance; a solution is to require owner-occupancy in one of the two units. Each community will likely face different fears from residents, but clear and objective standards will help alleviate many, if not all concerns. A sample ordinance is included here for local revisions.

Sample Accessory Dwelling Unit Code Amendment

It is the policy of a MUNICIPALITY to permit accessory dwelling units in a manner that enhances residential neighborhoods and helps residents meet their housing needs. The following standards apply:

- Accessory dwelling units are a permitted use in any zoning district that permits single-family dwellings.
- 2. The property owner must occupy either the primary dwelling or accessory dwelling unit as their principal residence.
- 3. A maximum of one accessory dwelling unit is permitted per residential lot.
- 4. An accessory dwelling unit may be incorporated within an existing dwelling, an existing accessory building, or a new accessory building.
- 5. When proposed as a new structure separate from the existing dwelling unit, an accessory dwelling unit must comply with the following standards:
 - a. The facade of the accessory dwelling must be at least 20 feet further from the street than the facade of the principal dwelling.
 - b. The width of the accessory dwelling unit parallel to the street may not exceed 60% of the width of the single-family dwelling.
 - c. The height to the eave of the accessory dwelling may not exceed 80% of the height to the eave of the principal dwelling.
 - d. These requirements do not apply to preexisting buildings converted to accessory dwelling units.
- 6. Accessory dwelling units may not exceed 50 percent of the total area of the principal dwelling.
- 7. No additional parking is required for accessory dwelling units.
- 8. Applicants must provide the **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR** with certification from the municipal health department that the water supply and sewage disposal facilities are adequate for the projected number of residents.

MINIMUM PARKING STANDARDS

Minimum Parking Standards

Parking minimums can significantly increase the cost of housing, and can result in negative environmental impacts. Most parking standards are generic, not based upon local parking studies or usage norms. Reduced parking minimums are becoming more common across the country; even large retailers like Walmart have reduced parking minimums in the last decade. However, parking is frequently a point of contention and must be carefully negotiated locally. Emerging best practice is to allow the market demand and financing criteria to control parking minimums, and for municipalities to regulate parking location, access, and loading. The suggested text amendment below provides a default historic neighborhood condition and an alternative which requires parking for more suburban conditions. One thing of note in this sample is that parking location is more important than parking minimums. Suburban parking locations have scarred historic neighborhoods, reduced walkability, and created points of conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.

Sample On-Site Parking and Loading Amendment

- On-site parking spaces are not required. [Alternative for suburban condition: "On-site parking spaces must be provided in accordance with Table 1. Each on-street parking space directly adjoining the site will replace two parking spaces otherwise required by Table 1."]
- 2. Parking spaces constructed on-site must be located behind buildings relative to the front property line. Where site configurations make this impossible, parking spaces may be placed on the side of buildings provided they are set back at least 30 feet from the street.
- 3. Access to on-site parking and loading areas is limited as follows:
 - a. Access must be from a rear alley where available.
 - b. Access may be from a street adjoining the rear or side property line if a rear alley is not available.
 - c. If access is not possible from a rear alley or rear or side street, access may be provided from a driveway along the front property line.

Table 1. On-Site Parking Spaces (suburban condition alternative)		
Uses	Minimum parking spaces required	
All Residential Units	1 space per dwelling unit	
All Lodging Units	1 space per room	
All Assembly Uses	1 space per 4 installed seats	
All Retail and Service Uses	1 space per 300 sq. ft. of display floor area	
Medical Office	1 space per 400 sq. ft. of gross floor area	
All Other Office	1 space per 500 sq. ft. of gross floor area	
Food and Beverage	1 space per 4 indoor seats	

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS

Historic Neighborhood Standards

Within our five case study communities, the areas in those municipalities that are most misaligned with zoning standards are the historic neighborhoods. To permit infill and densification, the following adjustments should be considered. The metrics are based upon measurements from the participating municipalities and should be adjusted locally though the development of a character survey.

[N] - Neighborhood District

1. Intent

- a. The Neighborhood District encompasses the blended density residential areas adjacent to village and city centers. Neighborhood Districts are intended to permit one, two, three, and four household residences as well as neighborhood commercial uses while complementing and connecting to the adjacent centers.
- b. Additionally these regulations seek to increase the availability of attainable housing by reducing barriers that may disadvantage individuals unfamiliar with the complexities of development, land use regulations, and the myriad requirements, agencies, and goals involved in maintaining a stable village, city, region, and state.

2. Dimensional Standards for Structures and Lots

a. All structures and lots must meet the dimensional standards listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Dimensional Standards for Structures and Lots		
Lot Width	40' min. and 100' max.	
Setbacks		
Front	8' min. and 16' max.; 2' min. for neighborhood commercial uses	
Side	4' min.	
Rear: Principal Building	2' min. with rear lanes or 12' min.	
Rear: Outbuildings	0' min. with rear lanes or 2' min.	
Parking Setback from Building Front	20' min.	
Maximum Building Height	2.5 stories	
Maximum Building Width	50' per building	
Maximum Building Coverage	60% per site	

[Numbers above must reflect the character of the local context. See the description of the character survey above.]

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS

3. Height of Structures

- a. Structure height is limited by stories above sidewalk grade.
- b. Ground floor stories exceeding 20 feet are considered two stories.
- c. Mezzanines exceeding 30% of the ground floor area are counted as an additional story.

4. Building Standards

a. Building facades within 20 feet of sidewalks must have a minimum of 15% glazing.

5. Allowable Uses

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- a. Table 3 indicates allowable uses in the Neighborhood zoning districts.
- b. The uses and groups of uses listed in the first column of Table 3 are defined in section [insert section].
- c. Standards and procedures for conditional uses are described in section [insert section].
- d. Multiple permitted uses within a single building, and multiple buildings and permitted uses on a single site, are allowable provided that the dimensional standards in Table 2 and other zoning regulations are met.
- e. Conditional uses may be permitted only upon approval by the ZONING BOARD using the standards in section [insert section]. Site plan review will be performed simultaneously by the ZONING BOARD while considering the conditional use application.
- f. Temporary uses are regulated by section [insert section], not by the allowable uses listed in Table 3.

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS

Table 3. Allowable Uses		
Residential Uses		
Six units or fewer	Permitted Use	
Over six units	Conditional Use	
Lodging Uses		
Bed and breakfast inn	Permitted Use	
Hotel, motel, and other lodging uses	Not Permitted	
Institutional Uses		
School or daycare with <12 pupils	Permitted Use	
School or daycare with 13+ pupils	Conditional Use	
Place of worship with <10 parking spaces	Permitted Use	
Place of worship with 11+ parking spaces	Conditional Use	
Other institutional uses	Not Permitted	
Commercial Uses		
Home occupation	Permitted Use	
Offices/shops in converted house	Conditional Use	
Food and beverage service in converted house	Permitted Use	
Industrial Uses		
All industrial uses	Not Permitted	

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Further Resources for Code Reform

The following resources offer a broader context to the topic of code reform. A variety of model ordinances and guidance tools for reforming development regulations are available from various sources. These examples suggest a range of possible expanded code reform efforts and may be useful in envisioning future initiatives.

- The Project for Lean Urbanism has developed a Lean Code Tool that provides suggestions for intentionally lightening the red tape created by excessive controls, redundancies, contradictions, delays, and unintended consequences found in many zoning codes. These suggestions are meant as general guidelines for quick fixes, rather than the locally appropriate recommendations in this guide.
- The Center for Applied Transect Studies supports the SmartCode, a model transect-based planning and zoning ordinance based on the analysis of the built environment. It is intended to directly encourage walkable, mixed used neighborhoods, combat sprawl, preserve open lands, and reduce energy consumption. As a general guide it the Smart Code will need to be calibrated for local conditions.
- The American Planning Association has a number of resources focused on understanding land development regulation, including 21 model codes. The guidebook Smart Codes: Model Land-Development Regulations (PAS 556), while published in 2009, still offers a good overview of regulation and offers guidance on developing model smart growth ordinances.
- The <u>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's</u> Smart Growth program has developed an extensive <u>website</u> for a range of coding tools, audits, model codes, and other helpful publications. Many of these tools and codes suggest modest to complete regulatory overhauls, and would therefore require larger initiatives than that outlined in this guide.
- The <u>AARP</u> has created a series of valuable workbooks dealing with issues of livability for all ages. Each workbook provides planning tools to help complete a livability project, as well as implementation funding recommendations.
- The Form-Based Codes Institute provides a resource page for those interested in form-based codes, a specific urban coding approach which represents the most holistic version of land development regulation reform. Their Resources offer a variety of ways to increase understanding of form-based code terminology and usage, review a library of best practice sample codes, connect with supporting organization and technical assistance, and access additional information.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Accessory Dwelling Units

The following resources show ways of both implementing code reform to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units and programs to encourage their construction. Since ADUs are most often built by homeowners, not developers, jurisdictions need to include homeowner-focused programs and homeowner-friendly policies.

- The article from the <u>Sightline Institute</u> focuses on Vancouver BC ADUs, but the information is widely applicable. The Sightline Institute has many resources on housing topics, all well-researched and accessible.
- The website <u>Accessory Dwellings</u> was founded, and is edited, by 3 volunteers in Portland, Oregon. Kol Peterson and Eli Spevak, along with now-retired Martin Brown, have amassed a wealth of information about ADUS, particularly from the homeowner's perspective.
- The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, a non-profit focusing on creating housing, has written several clear and accessible <u>ADU guides</u> for municipalities and homeowners. They are excellent models for similar guides in Wisconsin.
- The AARP has produced <u>ADU guides</u> as part of their livable communities effort. They are well-illustrated and very informative for both individuals and jurisdictions.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Parking Reform

This set of resources offer helpful information on reducing or eliminating parking requirements from a variety of sources.

- This article from the American Planning Association is a good overview of the issues around parking and why parking reform is a crucial piece of housing reform.
- NAOIP, a major commercial real estate organization, has weighed in extensively on parking from the perspective of commercial developers.
- The Environmental and Energy Study Institute, a bi-partisan legislative advisory group working to combat climate change and energy efficiency, has produced this article about the necessity for parking reform from the climate change perspective.
- <u>Does Parking Matter?</u> a website which collects information about parking reform and advocates for parking reform has extensive resources including a list of <u>Cities that</u> <u>have eliminated</u> or reduced parking requirements.
- <u>Parking Reform Network</u> is a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the damage done by excessive parking requirements.

Public Engagement

- NAR Realtor magazine has produced an entire issue on the housing shortage, including the article linked directly here, which addresses the question of how to talk effectively about increasing housing stock.
- <u>Desegregate Connecticut</u> is a coalition of housing supporters, environmental groups, professional planners, and elected officials which has organized to lobby for zoning regulation changes to allow more affordable housing and more housing choice. They are an excellent example of the kind of coalition needed to enact incremental zoning reform.
- Sightline Institute, a non-profit organization in the Pacific Northwest, has posted an
 excellent analysis on how the <u>residential infill project</u> in Portland was successfully
 implemented, in spite of vigorous opposition.
- <u>Legalizing affordable housing</u> is a series of articles from the Sightline Institute about coalition efforts to enable more housing choice.
- <u>Complete Communities Delaware</u> is another excellent example of successful coalition building for more housing choice with many resources and examples available on their website.

CONTRIBUTORS

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- Eau Claire
- Horicon
- Ripon
- Waukesha
- Waunakee

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- Joshua Clements, Planning Director, City of Sun Prairie
- Christopher McCahill, Managing Director, State Smart Transportation Initiative
- B. Aaron Parker, President, B. Aaron Parker & Associates | Metropeligo Architecture + Urban Design
- Members of the American Planning Association Wisconsin chapter
- Members of the Congress for the New Urbanism Wisconsin Chapter





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New Urbanism

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Proposals for the deregulation of Off-street Parking Requirements

Option 1:

Eliminate all off-street parking requirements for residential uses/zoning.

Option 2:

Reduce all off-street parking requirements for residential uses/zoning based off of criteria met.

- Would need to determine the following:
 - O What criteria that would need to be met to reduce the parking ratio?
 - o How much does it get reduced by?

Example.

If project is located within one block of a bus stop the ratio is reduced by .2. So now the requirement would be reduced from 1 parking pace per bedroom to .8.

Option 3:

Eliminate all off-street parking requirements for residential uses/zoning except for the area bounded by 7th Street, the marsh, East Ave, and Main Street.

- This is based off of feedback that was originally gathered stating that this area has the most issues concerning parking.
- This option could also include a provision to reduce parking within this boundary similarly as described in option 2.

Option 4:

Eliminate all off-street parking requirements for residential developments that are 8 units or less in density. Anything above that would have to meet the 1 to 1 ratio.

- This option could also include a provision to reduce parking for developments over 8 units as described in option 2.
- Number of units or bedrooms is up for debate.

2024 Neighborhood Revitalization Commission Proposals for the deregulation of Off-street Parking Requirements

Option 1:

Eliminate all off-street parking requirements for residential uses/zoning.

Option 2:

Reduce all off-street parking requirements for residential uses/zoning.

Examples:

One parking space per unit.

.75 or .50 parking spaces per bedroom.

Option 3:

Eliminate all off-street parking requirements for residential uses/zoning **except** for the area bounded by 7th Street, the marsh, East Ave, and Main Street.

- This is based off of feedback that was originally gathered stating that this area has the most issues concerning parking.
- This option could also include a provision to reduce parking within this boundary similarly as described in option 2.

Option 4:

Eliminate all off-street parking requirements for residential developments that are 8 units or less in density. Anything above that would have to meet the reductions in option 2.

From: melissa crook < crook6@att.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2024 10:54 AM

To: Sleznikow, Larry <<u>sleznikowl@cityoflacrosse.org</u>>

Cc: Acklin, Tim < Acklint@cityoflacrosse.org>

Subject: Fwd: NRC Legislated Parking

*** CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. ***

Hello Larry,

I'm writing to you regarding the NRC meeting scheduled for tomorrow. While I was unable to attend the last two meetings (and videos aren't available on Legistar), I have been following closely the discussion regarding the removal of legislated parking requirements for residential dwellings. To date, the analysis has been completely one sided. There has been little, if any, thoughtful discourse on the unfavorable impacts of such an ordinance. I reached out to Jennifer Trost in May (see the forwarded email below) to voice my concerns, but I didn't receive a response. In order to fully vet this idea, it is necessary to analyze potential negative consequences. While a reduction in parking requirements may be warranted, the outcomes of removing all parking mandates could be a nightmare to residents in your district and other centrally located areas.

While I appreciate the dedication of the Commission to encourage more eco-friendly modes of transportation, some important points have been overlooked. Take for example the following:

•Several blocks of State Street and Main Street near West Avenue are congested on both sides with parked cars narrowing the road width so it is nearly impassible by two way traffic. I once thought that was due to students driving to campus for class, but it is not. Many of these vehicles are parked there day and night. They are likely residents of the multi-family dwellings that were not required to provide parking for tenants (either due to lack of code requirements when they were converted from single family properties or apt complexes that were granted code exceptions.) The newly completed Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identifies these streets (HIN maps 3.1 and 3.2) as dangerous problem areas. The conditions created by parked vehicles are unsafe not only for drivers but for bikers and pedestrians as well. If given the choice, cyclists avoid streets like these over safety concerns. It is contradictory to say that removing parking requirements should encourage more cycling while at the same time enacting policy that creates more unsafe streets for those cyclists.

•Many Commissioners on the NRC are avid cyclists and choose that as a primary mode of transportation. Has this prompted anyone to get rid of their vehicles? If you have

not done so, then why would you assume that others would get rid of their cars because they can get around by bike or bus?

- •Affordable housing developments will be disproportionately affected by removing mandated parking requirements. As developers look to cut costs, parking is one of the first things to go. Is it equitable to assume that those in lower income housing shouldn't be provided parking?
- •As there is a push towards EVs, where will individuals without parking charge their vehicles overnight? Should multiple people be expected to jockey over a few spaces that provide this amenity?

These are just a few of the drawbacks that could come from removing all legislated parking requirements. More balanced discussion is required to draft an ordinance to benefit all citizens. This may be better if postponed and included in the upcoming zoning code update. It makes more sense to complete a comprehensive overhaul rather than breaking this piece out separately and then possibly having to revisit what was done. Additionally, this will save the Planning Department time and resources by not having to conduct individual public information sessions related to only one topic. After all, parking is just a small part of the affordable housing dilemma. Developing the most effective zoning code can only be done if it is approached holistically.

Best Regards,

Melissa Crook

Begin forwarded message:

From: melissa crook < crook6@att.net>
Date: May 3, 2024 at 10:38:31 AM CDT

To: Jennifer Trost < trost trost <a href="mailto:tro

Sleznikowl@cityoflacrosse.org, goggine@cityoflacrosse.org,

woodardc@cityoflacrosse.org

Subject: NRC Legislated Parking

Hi Jennifer,

Thank you for arranging for Tony Jordan to speak at the NRC meeting. It was interesting to hear his perspective. While he made some valid points, I'm still not sold on the idea that removing all legislated parking

requirements is the right decision for LaCrosse.

As CM Woodard mentioned, it would be valuable to hear from the other mid-sized cities in Wisconsin that have embraced this idea. I also think it's important to present a balanced array of information to the Commission so that they can make the most informed decision. This can be done by inviting the following individuals (among others) to speak at future NRC meetings.

- •Developers in our city who are against removing mandates. Understanding their professional opinions will help write an ordinance that best serves LaCrosse's specific needs.
- •The Apartment Association of LaCrosse who has expressed substantial opposition to removing parking mandates as they don't believe it serves the tenants they represent.
- •Residents of Elliot Arms or State St who may have parking challenges due to the multi-family buildings that were not required to comply with parking minimums in their areas.
- •Bikers who have been injured while riding in congested areas or who have to avoid certain streets over safety concerns posed by parked cars.
- •Former Council members such as Dave Morrison or Bill Harnden who were involved in the decisions to add legislated parking minimums to the municipal code. It's likely they had very valid reasons for the 1:1 parking ratio for multi-family dwellings and that they were not "arbitrary" as suggested by Tony Jordan.
- •The City traffic engineer. I would like to hear an explanation of the opinion that car lined streets are as safe to drive as those that are not. Despite that individuals reduce speed in congested areas, there is a lack of visibility for pedestrians, bikers and drivers. In some areas, the road width is significantly narrowed by parked vehicles making them impassible by two-way traffic.
- •An explanation from the Planning department of what has changed between 2021 when they stated "There was a considerable amount of opposition, particularly for the elimination of the (1:1) ratio for multi-family development" and "should the ordinance be submitted to the Council in its current form staff feels that there was enough opposition to prevent any form of this effort from moving forward" to now in 2024. Again, I don't believe that the political will of the current Council is a compelling argument to rush a vote on this issue.

I sincerely appreciate your passion and commitment to the environment. It's admirable that you have raised awareness and are encouraging others to choose more eco-friendly modes of transportation. However, the general public will be much more likely to embrace this initiative if they see that the NRC was encouraged to weigh both sides of the argument. As it stands now, solicited community feedback from 2021 is being completely

ignored. That is undemocratic and will eventually lead citizens to be distrustful of the process by which this ordinance was developed.

Sincerely,

Melissa Crook