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# CITY OF ONALASKA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DECEMBER 2015





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The individuals above, along with many other City of Onalaska staff, community leaders, and City residents and business owners were instrumental in the creation of this Plan.

Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH) was retained by the City to assist in developing this Comprehensive Plan. SEH is a multidisciplined, professional services firm comprised of 650 engineers, architects, planners and scientists in a full range of transportation, civil, environmental and structural engineering services; urban design, community planning and architectural design; and technology and GIS services.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to State of Wisconsin Statutes communities are required to have a Comprehensive Plan in order to regulate land use and land use decisions must be consistent with Comprehensive Plans. The City of Onalaska began the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan in the spring of 2014 with a community survey distributed to citizens. Nearly 1,100 surveys were returned and the feedback was built into each of the subsequent chapters. The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) acted as the “steering committee” to update the Comprehensive Plan through monthly meetings and took feedback from the Plan Commission, City Committees, City staff, and the general public throughout the review process. A two-day place-making event in June 2014 was held to gather input on what makes Onalaska an exceptional community and where the city is heading over the next 20 years. The output of these meeting was a Vision Statement for community for the next twenty years:



Photo E-1. Participants were divided into small groups. Each participant was asked to generate ideas and discuss them with their table.

***“The City of Onalaska provides a safe, family-friendly community. Our residents are engaged and proud to call Onalaska “home”. Our businesses and employers are financially strong; our education system is excellent. Onalaska plays a critical role in the Coulee Region of Wisconsin and is well-connected and accessible with quality infrastructure. Our natural environment is robust with opportunities, including our coulees, bluffs and water resources – providing unique activities for people of all ages and interests, leading to a vibrant and active community.”***

The City of Onalaska is projected to have a population of nearly 24,000 by 2040 - a 32% increase from the 2015 population of 18,259. Onalaska’s median age is 37.4 years, which is slightly older than both the state and La Crosse County and a median household income of nearly \$60,000 dollars. Onalaska’s top industries are education, health and social services, manufacturing and retail trade. Currently, 28% of the city’s residents work in Onalaska and 90% within La Crosse County.

Ninety-five percent of the City’s population has a high school diploma and 35% have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher education. The Onalaska School District’s enrollment ranks 73rd out of the state’s 449 school districts and 700 students either attend private schools or are home-schooled.

Between 2010 and 2015 161 new homes have been constructed. In these six years, a total of 515 new housing units were constructed in Onalaska and it is estimated that nearly an additional 3,300 housing units will be needed by 2040 to accommodate the projected population increase. Overall, the City’s housing stock is generally newer than those in La Crosse County as 56% of the homes have been constructed since 1980. The current median household value is slightly less than \$165,000, and the City has a vacancy rate of 3.6% (3% is optical).



Photo E-2. House on a high slope in the Coulees. Photo Credit: Tiffany Weiss.

Onalaska and the region have made strides in transportation. In 2013, the City of Onalaska received a Bicycle Friendly Community Award in 2013 for its efforts in engineering, education, encouragement and enforcement for bicycling. The City is served by the La

Crosse Municipal Transit Utility and has a desire for better service in terms of route timing, additional routes and infrastructure. The La Crosse Regional Airport is scheduled to receive \$28 million in improvements from 2014 to 2019. In terms of freight, an estimated 60 trains pass through Onalaska daily with increases to be seen in years ahead.

Considering the City's Utilities and Community Facilities, Onalaska's water rates are amongst the lowest in the region and Well No. 9, which produces much of the City's water, is being reconstructed. There are 27 parks covering more than 290 acres in the City and nearly all homes are within a 10 minute walk from a park or open space area. The City's Aquatic Center and Omni Center, and the YMCA North, which is putting on a multi-million dollar addition, are great assets to serve Onalaska.

The City has little active agricultural acreage; however, community gardens and farmers markets are becoming more popular as a means to bring local agriculturally produced food to consumers. Onalaska has a rich archaeological background with areas along State Trunk Highway 35 corridor contain two uncatalogued burial sites. In 2015, the City of Onalaska was awarded "Tree City, U.S.A." status for the 15th consecutive year and



Photo E-4. Bluff.

costs, topographic restrictions, and limited available development space (greenfields).

The City actively cooperates with other local units of government on a region-wide basis and is currently working on boundary agreements with the Town of Onalaska, the Town of Medary, the Town of Hamilton, and the City of La Crosse. In 2015, Onalaska and the Village of Holmen adopted a boundary agreement with a specified "grow-to" line to assist in future annexations.

In the last ten years, the City of Onalaska has seen significant growth in new residential and commercial development. There are commercial redevelopment opportunities along the STH 16 and STH 35 corridors as well as along Sand Lake Road and infill development for new residences throughout the City. The Future Land Use Map has a variety of categories including Environmentally Sensitive Residential, Mixed Density Residential, Mixed Use, Commercial, Residential, Downtown Mixed Use, Commercial, Industrial, Medical Facility, Institutional, Parks and Open Space, and Environmental Corridors.

The City specified a number of action steps for major goals listed in various chapters which include having a variety of housing styles in multiple price ranges, improving multimodal transportation, maintaining a sound infrastructure system, encouraging environmentally-friendly development, maintaining community-wide park and recreation resources, creating a strategy and master plan to guide public and private investment, establishing a downtown redevelopment plan, improving key corridor and entranceways, and attracting high-quality development within the niche medical market.



Photo E-3. Community Garden. Photo Credit: Tiffany Weiss.

continues to receive Growth Awards for efforts in the City's urban forest.

Onalaska is primed for economic growth due to access to infrastructure (highways, railroad, and the airport). Other strengths include Onalaska's environment; specifically, the coulees and the bluffs education and training opportunities, a strong customer base, transportation facilities, significant disposable incomes, strong infrastructure, specialized area businesses (niche markets), a high-tech medical field, and several redevelopment opportunities. Some areas for improvement include limited financial resources for development assistance, employer difficulty locating entry level and skilled workers, higher taxes and land

# CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4.2 RELATIONSHIP TO STATE &amp; REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS</b>	<b>73</b>
INTRODUCTION	7	<b>4.3 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>1.1 SCOPE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>1.2 THE CITY OF ONALASKA PLANNING EFFORT</b>	<b>9</b>		
<b>1.3 THE CITY OF ONALASKA PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>	<b>81</b>
		INTRODUCTION	81
<b>ISSUES &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>82</b>
INTRODUCTION	11	<b>5.2 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>2.1 KEY ISSUES</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5.3 UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES &amp; POLICIES</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>2.2 PLACEMAKING EVENT</b>	<b>30</b>		
<b>2.3 VISION STATEMENT</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>2.4 STUDENT LISTENING SESSIONS</b>	<b>34</b>	INTRODUCTION	107
		<b>6.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>6.2 EXISTING AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS</b>	<b>121</b>
INTRODUCTION	37	<b>6.3 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>6.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>3.2 HOUSING PROGRAMS</b>	<b>48</b>		
<b>3.3 GOALS, OBJECTIVES &amp; POLICIES</b>	<b>50</b>		
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>55</b>		
INTRODUCTION	55		
<b>4.1 BACKGROUND DATA/EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>56</b>		

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>159</b>
INTRODUCTION	127	INTRODUCTION	159
7.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS	128	10.1 ACTION PLAN	160
7.2 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE CONDITIONS	131	10.2 PLAN INTEGRATION AND CONSISTENCY	160
7.3 LOCAL PLANS AND PROGRAMS	132	10.3 PLAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION	161
7.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES	134	10.4 PLAN AMENDMENTS AND UPDATES	174
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>177</b>
INTRODUCTION	133	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN	177
8.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS	134	 	
8.2 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE CONDITIONS	138	<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>198</b>
8.3 GROWTH TRENDS AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES IN ADJACENT COMMUNITIES	139	2014 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS	198
8.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES	139	 	
 		<b>APPENDIX C</b>	<b>274</b>
 		MAPS	274
<b>LAND USE</b>	<b>143</b>		
INTRODUCTION	143		
9.1 LAND USE SUMMARY	144		
9.2 LAND USE AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS	155		
9.3 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES	155		

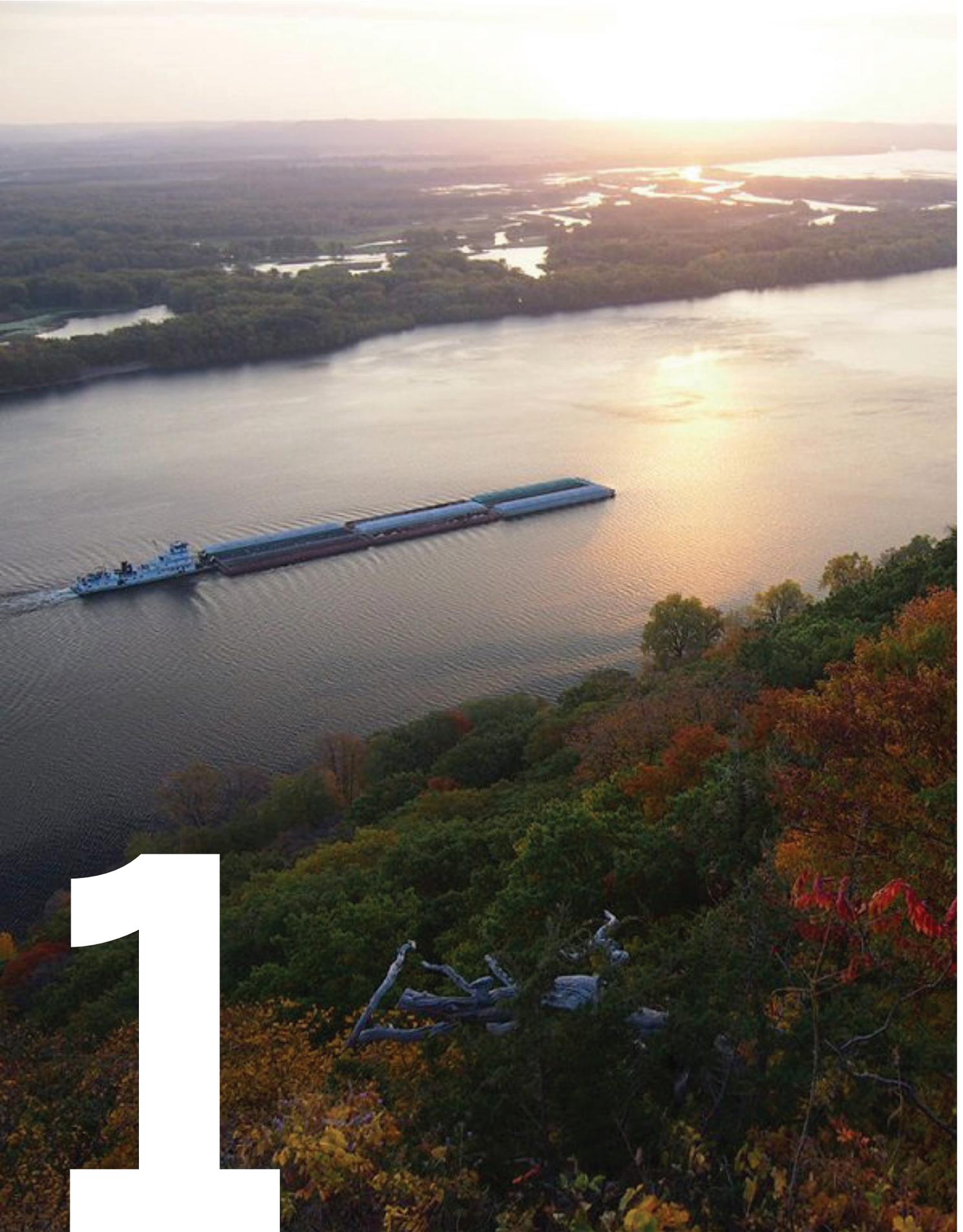


Photo 1-1. Barge from Great River Bluffs State Park.

# INTRODUCTION

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 1.1** *SCOPE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN*
- 1.2** *THE CITY OF ONALASKA PLANNING EFFORT*
- 1.3** *THE CITY OF ONALASKA PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT*

## Comprehensive Planning Answers

### Three Questions:

- 1) Where has the community been?
- 2) Where do we want to be in 20 years?
- 3) What will it take to get there?

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Onalaska is a growing community that plays a central role in the economics of the La Crosse County and West Central Wisconsin economy. The City is nestled along the Black River and has both scenic beauty with nearby blufflands and waterbodies, along with functionality and regional impacts.

Onalaska was platted and founded by Thomas G. Rowe and John C. Laird, who had come to the area from New York in the mid 1800's. The area was instrumental in the

logging industry, as the river was used to transport logs headed to nearby mills.

The City has experienced rapid growth since the 1950's and 60's, and is expected to continue growing exponentially. The City's location with regard to transportation access, good-paying jobs, and natural amenities make Onalaska a desired destination for people of all ages.



Figure 1-1. Onalaska Location Map.

Assessed land use in the City of Onalaska is primarily residential in terms of acres. However, there is a significant amount of acreage throughout the City that is commercial and professional in nature. The rapid growth has resulted in some areas of the City becoming congested from traffic impacts. The City, along with neighboring incorporated communities, has been able to expand their corporate limits numerous times to allow for continued growth. This trend is expected to continue as the City continues to plan for growth outside of existing corporate limits.

Interstate 90, U.S. Highway 53, and State Highways 157, 35, and 16 all run through Onalaska. These routes connect Onalaska to the remainder of Wisconsin and neighboring states.

## 1.1 SCOPE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 1999 Wisconsin Legislative Act 9 created a framework in the State of Wisconsin for community planning. There are nine elements of a Comprehensive Plan that must be addressed under the current planning legislation. These nine elements include the following:

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities and Community Facilities
5. Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

According to Wisconsin Statute, the Comprehensive Plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the community. In accordance with existing and future needs, the Comprehensive Plan will promote public health, safety, and general welfare of the entire community. The Planning Law requires zoning, official mapping, and subdivision regulations be consistent with a Comprehensive Plan.

## 1.2 THE CITY OF ONALASKA PLANNING EFFORT

Onalaska's current Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2005 and is being updated in accordance with the State Statute. The plan update process began in the spring of 2014. Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH) was retained to assist the City of Onalaska in the planning process and the update of their Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is being prepared through the guidance of the City's Long Range Planning Committee and the Plan Commission, along with significant assistance from the City's Planning Department. These bodies represent a wide range of interests to ensure that the entire community's values and interests are expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

## 1.3 THE CITY OF ONALASKA PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The City of Onalaska is committed to an open public involvement/outreach program that invites participation in the decision-making process from all City residents. The City engaged the community in the development of planning related items and tasks that are discussed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Meeting notices for all Long Range Planning Committee meetings were advertised and open to the public. The City conducted a survey asking for public input in the spring of 2014. Over 1,100 survey responses were received and tabulated. Full survey results are in Appendix B.

The City also conducted two days of visioning sessions where residents and business owners were asked to participate and identify what would make Onalaska a better place in the future. Students from the Onalaska High School participated in a day long listening session, where they were able to voice their opinions on key features of Onalaska that they utilize, and key features they would like to see in the City at some point.

Input from the survey and the visioning sessions were used to aid in the formulation of goals and a Vision Statement to guide the update of the Comprehensive Plan.



Photo 2-1. Sunshine on Lake Onalaska

# ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 2.1** *KEY ISSUES*
- 2.2** *PLACEMAKING EVENT*
- 2.3** *VISION STATEMENT*
- 2.4** *STUDENT LISTENING SESSIONS*

## INTRODUCTION

The Issues and Opportunities Element is designed to be the primary source of background information for the Comprehensive Plan. This element will be referred to in other elements, and much of the information contained in the Issues and Opportunities Element will be utilized when considering goals, objectives, and policies for the plan.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(a)  
 (a) Issues and opportunities element. Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit uses in developing its Comprehensive Plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.

## 2.1 KEY ISSUES

### POPULATION

Analyzing population size, growth, density, characteristics and distribution trends reveals important facts about the most important component of growth and development in the City of Onalaska.

Historically, the City of Onalaska’s population has been increasing rapidly throughout the past several decades

(see Figure 2-1 and Table 2-1). The 1970’s saw over an 88 percent increase; the 1980’s nearly a 24 percent increase; in the 1990’s there was a 30 percent population increase; and from 2000–2013 a 22 percent increase in population was realized with an estimated current population of 18,259 (2015).

Onalaska’s growth rate has generally been well above the County growth rate. In general, Onalaska has grown faster than many nearby incorporated communities, with the exception of Holmen, neighbor to the north.

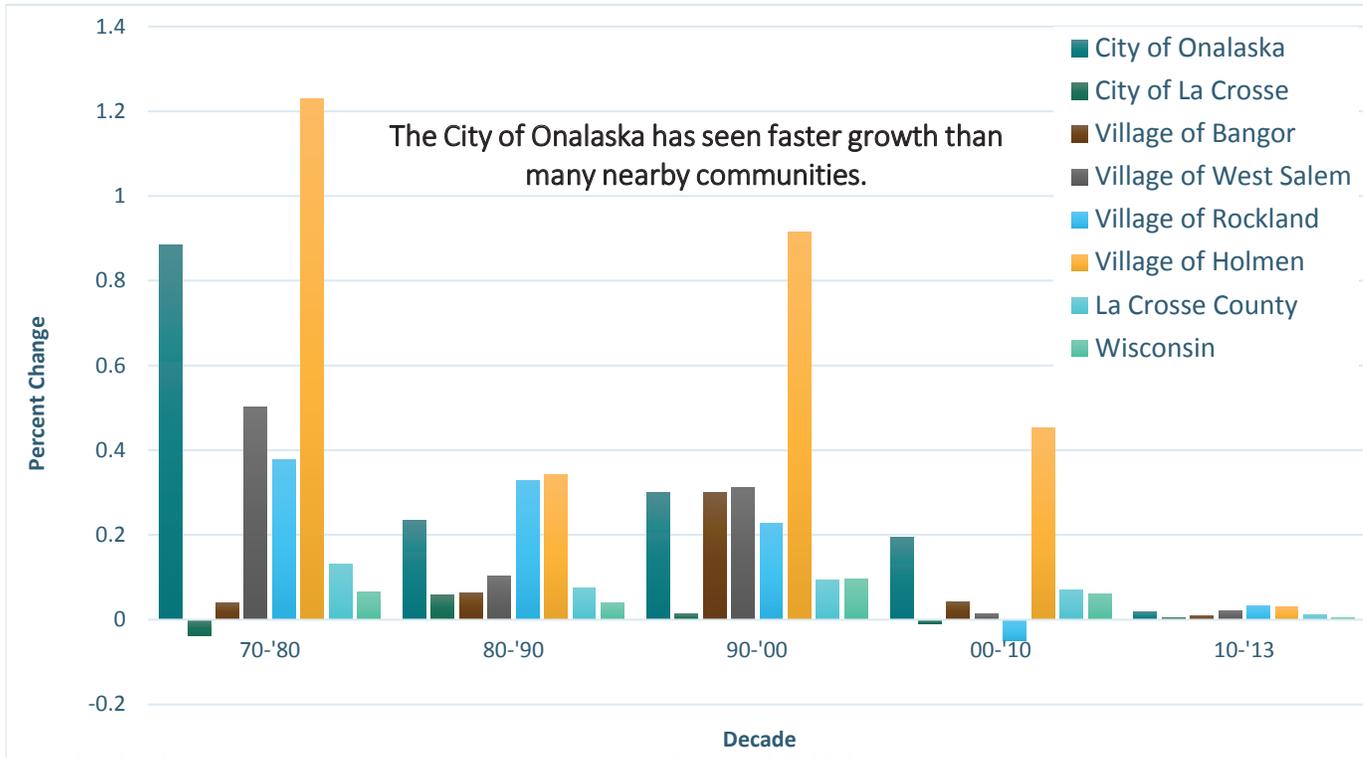


Figure 2-1. Bar Graph showing Historical Population and Population Change, 1970-2013

Historical Population and Population Change - 1970 to 2013											
Unit of Government	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013 (Est.)	Percentage Change				
							70-'80	80-'90	90-'00	00-'10	10-'13
City of Onalaska	4,909	9,249	11,414	14,839	17,736	18,066	88.4%	23.4%	30.0%	19.5%	1.9%
City of La Crosse	50,286	48,347	51,140	51,818	51,320	51,600	-3.9%	5.8%	1.3%	-1.0%	0.5%
Village of West Salem	2,180	3,276	3,611	4,738	4,799	4,897	50.3%	10.2%	31.2%	1.3%	2.0%
Village of Rockland	278	383	509	625	594	613	37.8%	32.9%	22.8%	-5.0%	3.2%
Village of Holmen	1,081	2,411	3,236	6,200	9,005	9,288	123.0%	34.2%	91.6%	45.2%	3.1%
Village of Bangor	974	1,012	1,076	1,400	1,459	1,472	3.9%	6.3%	30.1%	4.2%	0.9%
La Crosse County	80,468	91,056	97,904	107,120	114,638	115,928	13.2%	7.5%	9.4%	7.0%	1.1%
Wisconsin	4,417,821	4,705,642	4,891,796	5,363,715	5,686,986	5,717,110	6.5%	4.0%	9.6%	6.0%	0.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-1. Historical Population and Population Change, 1970-2013

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections are used to assess development prospects and community facility needs created by population growth. Small area population forecasts can be used to evaluate potential residential development, economic conditions, and the level of demand for public facilities and services. This estimate of future growth is also valuable information for establishing management techniques to provide for orderly growth and development.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) population projections are, by state statute, the official population projections for Wisconsin. Over the next 20 years, the DOA projections predict nearly a 33 percent increase in the City of Onalaska’s population, which amounts to 5,834 additional residents (Table 2-2 and Figure 2-2). This projected percentage increase is similar to the expected increases of La Crosse County villages (36.2 percent), but much higher than the City of La Crosse (one percent) and La Crosse County as a whole (14 percent increase expected).

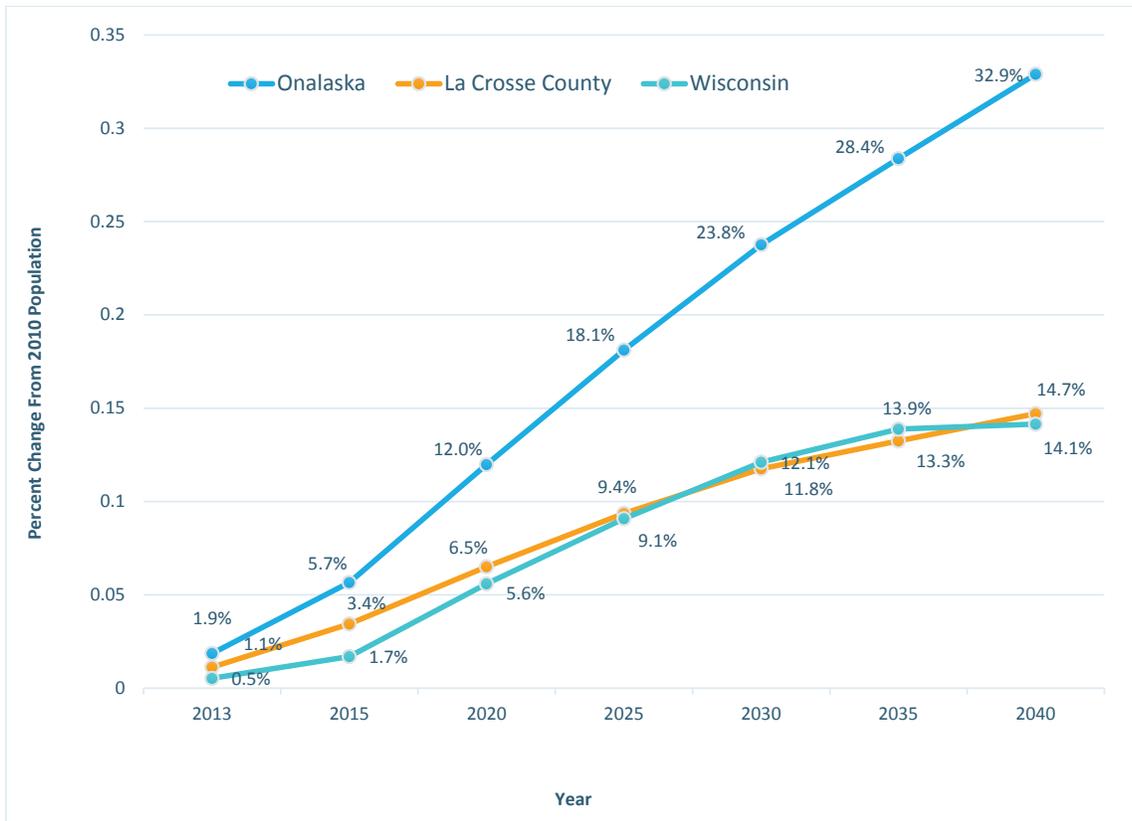


Figure 2-2. Line Graph showing La Crosse County Population Projections

Population Projections - 2010 to 2040 - La Crosse County by Minor Civil Division										
Municipality	Census 2010	Estimate 2013	Projection						Change 2010-2040	
			2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Number	Percent
<b>Onalaska</b>	17,736	18,066	18,740	19,860	20,950	21,950	22,770	23,570	5,834	32.9%
Holmen	9,005	9,288	9,745	10,560	11,370	12,120	12,770	13,400	4,395	48.8%
West Salem	4,799	4,897	5,035	5,225	5,400	5,565	5,675	5,790	991	20.7%
La Crosse	51,320	51,600	52,200	52,550	52,750	52,700	52,300	51,850	530	1.0%
La Crosse County Villages	15,857	16,270	16,915	17,990	19,045	20,015	20,815	21,600	5,743	36.2%
<b>La Crosse County</b>	114,638	115,928	118,585	122,100	125,370	128,120	129,830	131,500	16,862	14.7%
Wisconsin	5,686,986	5,717,110	5,783,015	6,005,080	6,203,850	6,375,910	6,476,270	6,491,635	804,649	14.1%

Source: U.S. Census & Wisconsin Department of Administration

Table 2-2. Population Projections, 2010-2040, La Crosse County by Municipality

Any projection is, at its current state, a best guess. While the Wisconsin DOA projections are by state statute the official population projections, there are several factors that may lead to the City growing faster than other nearby communities. One factor supporting the continued growth of Onalaska is the availability of land suitable for development, and the City of historically being willing to expand its jurisdictional boundaries via annexation efforts.

### HOUSEHOLD AND HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS

Housing projections are helpful to estimate how much land will be consumed by future development. As households and housing units increase, there is an increased demand for public facilities and services.

The Wisconsin DOA provides household projections. Onalaska is projected to see a 2,929 household increase, or 40.0 percent from the year 2010 to 2040 as shown in Table 2-3. La Crosse County is expected to see a 19.1 percent increase. This again indicates that the City of Onalaska is expected to grow at a much faster rate than La Crosse County as a whole.

Housing unit projections are intended to provide an estimate of the number of housing units that will be developed through the year 2040. Based on the existing conditions and building permit data, it is projected that from 2010 to 2040, Onalaska will see an increase of 3,300 housing units, or 43.4 percent (Table 2-4).

Wisconsin DOA Housing Unit Projections - 2000 to 2040										
Unit of Government	Census 2000	Census 2010	Projections						Change 2010-2040	
			2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Number	Percent
Onalaska	5,893	7,331	7,895	8,432	8,963	9,449	9,868	10,260	2,929	40.0%
La Crosse County	41,599	46,137	48,658	50,388	51,968	53,262	54,158	54,930	8,793	19.1%

Source: DOA Household Projections, 2010-2040

Table 2-3. Wisconsin DOA Household Projections, 2010-2040

Housing Unit Projections - 2000 to 2040											
Municipality	Census 2000	Census 2010	Projections							Change 2010-2040	
			2012	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Number	Percent
Onalaska	6,070	7,608		8,158	8,708	9,258	9,808	10,358	10,908	3,300	43.4%

Source: U.S. Census and SEH

Table 2-4. Housing Unit Projections, 2010-2040

City of Onalaska and La Crosse County Age Distribution										
Age Groups	Onalaska					La Crosse County				
	2000		2008-2012 Est.		Proportional Change	2000		2008-2012 Est.		Proportional Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 5	1,015	6.8%	1,471	8.3%	1.5%	6,361	5.9%	6,673	5.8%	-0.1%
5 to 9	1,095	7.4%	1,130	6.4%	-1.0%	7,061	6.6%	6,930	6.0%	-0.6%
10 to 19	2,132	14.4%	2,095	11.8%	-2.6%	16,823	15.7%	16,022	14.0%	-1.7%
20 to 24	949	6.4%	1,130	6.4%	0.0%	11,696	10.9%	12,645	11.0%	0.1%
25 to 34	2,115	14.3%	2,323	13.1%	-1.2%	13,690	12.8%	14,574	12.7%	-0.1%
35 to 44	2,317	15.6%	2,231	12.6%	-3.0%	15,764	14.7%	13,277	11.6%	-3.1%
45 to 54	2,305	15.5%	2,466	13.9%	-1.6%	14,044	13.1%	15,727	13.7%	0.6%
55 to 64	1,241	8.4%	2,249	12.7%	4.3%	8,241	7.7%	13,472	11.7%	4.0%
65 to 74	923	6.2%	1,381	7.8%	1.6%	6,621	6.2%	7,643	6.7%	0.5%
75 to 84	579	3.9%	732	4.1%	0.2%	4,905	4.6%	5,179	4.5%	-0.1%
85 and over	168	1.1%	532	3.0%	1.9%	1,914	1.8%	2,576	2.2%	0.4%
Under 18	3,883	26.2%	4,415	24.9%	-1.3%	25,261	23.6%	24,315	21.2%	-2.4%
Over 65	1,670	11.3%	2,645	14.9%	3.7%	13,440	12.5%	15,398	13.4%	0.9%
Total	14,839		17,740		2,901	107,120		114,718		7,598
Median Age	35.5		37.4		1.9	33.5		35.3		1.8

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Table 2-5. City of Onalaska and La Crosse County Age Distribution

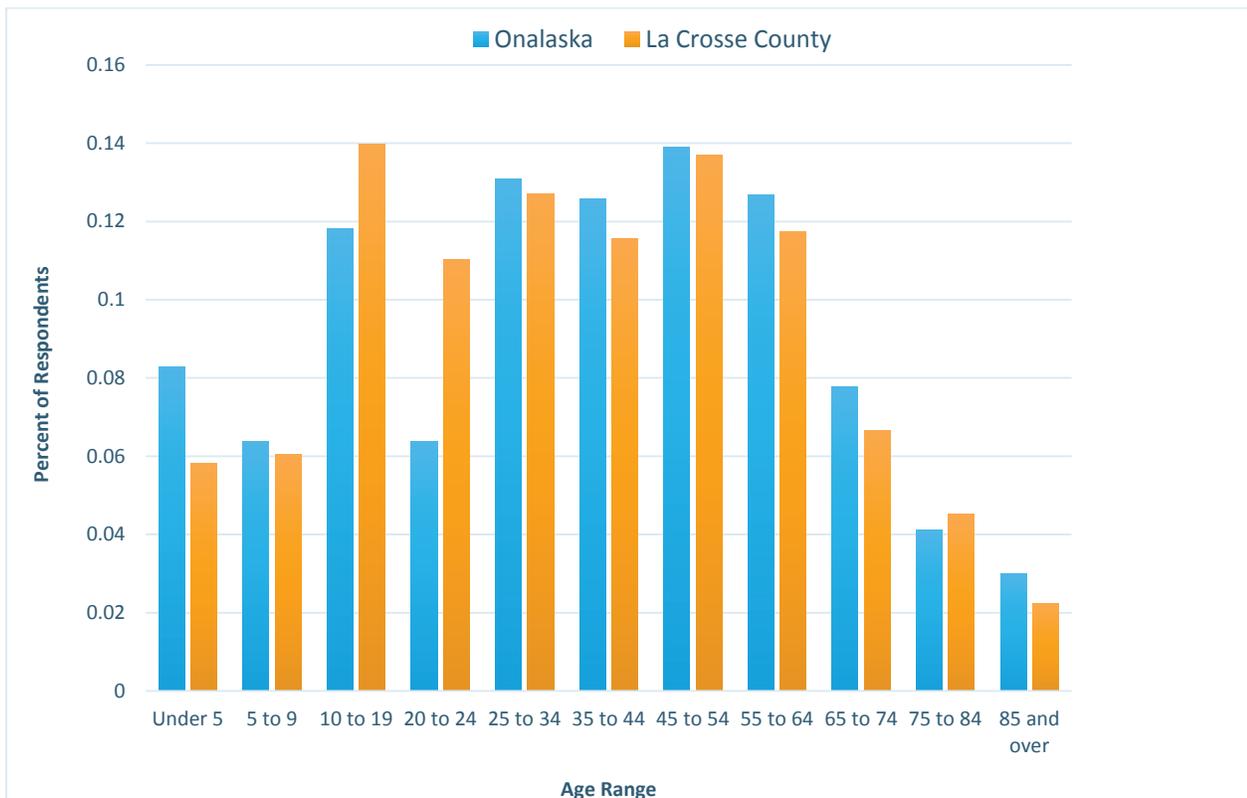


Figure 2-3. Bar Graph showing Age Distribution in City of Onalaska and La Crosse County

## AGE

The age of residents in a community is important in identifying the needs of the community. Table 2-5 and Figure 2-3 (previous page) show Onalaska and La Crosse County age distributions. Onalaska’s median age (37.4) is older than La Crosse County’s (35.3), however both are younger than Wisconsin’s median age of 38.5. The City of Onalaska has a higher percentage of individuals in the age categories over 65 (14.9 percent) and also in the Under 18 (24.9 percent) categories. This results in additional services being desired and needed to accommodate for significant populations in these age categories.



Photo 2-2. Pedestrians.

## LABOR FORCE

As shown in Table 2-6, the labor force participation rate in Onalaska has decreased by over four percent since 2000. This coincides with the age demographic of the community, with higher proportions in the retirement life segment, as well as the pre-employment life segments. La Crosse County’s labor force has remained very stable during this time period.

The percentage of labor force participants who were unemployed has remained very constant in Onalaska from 2000 until current, while unemployment has risen overall throughout the County.

Onalaska and La Crosse County Labor Force		
City of Onalaska	2000	2008-2012 Est.
Persons Age 16 and over	11,491	13,892
In Labor Force	8,673	9,917
Percent in Labor Force	75.5%	71.4%
Employed	8,389	9,440
Unemployed	284	467
Percent Unemployed	3.3%	3.4%
La Crosse County	2000	2008-2012 Est.
Persons Age 16 and over	84,831	93,453
In Labor Force	59,556	65,529
Percent in Labor Force	70.2%	70.1%
Employed	57,073	61,689
Unemployed	2,443	3,739
Percent Unemployed	2.9%	4.0%
Percent Unemployed - May 2014		4.2%
Wisconsin Unemployed - May 2014		5.5%
U.S. Unemployed - May 2014		6.1%

Source: U.S. Census, ACS and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2-6. Onalaska and La Crosse County Labor Force

## EMPLOYMENT

The area's economy is a major contributor to the employment opportunities available to residents of Onalaska and La Crosse County. The principal economic factors that influence an individual's quality of life and provide a choice of residential options are employment opportunities and income.

The average commute time for Onalaska residents is 18.6 minutes. La Crosse County's average commute time is over 18.5 minutes (Table 2-7). Individuals working at home and not commuting on a daily basis also increased. This is important in part because it is one indicator of the use of existing transportation infrastructure and provides an important economic factor. As people experience longer commutes, they are driving more, resulting in higher fuel consumption and costs.

*{Over 28 percent of Onalaska residents work in Onalaska.}*

Commuting Characteristics - 2000 to 2012 - City of Onalaska				
Commuting Options	Onalaska		La Crosse County	
	2000	2012	2000	2012
Car, truck, or van - drove alone	87.6%	83.4%	81.0%	79.0%
Car, truck, or van - carpooled	9.5%	10.0%	8.8%	8.7%
Public Transportation	0.2%	0.5%	1.3%	1.1%
Walked	0.5%	1.3%	4.9%	4.7%
Other Means	0.7%	1.0%	1.0%	2.2%
Worked at Home	1.5%	3.8%	2.9%	4.3%
Mean Travel Time	16.6	18.6	17.3	18.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and ACS

Table 2-7. Commuting Characteristics in the City of Onalaska

From viewing the 2000 Census and the 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS), it can be seen in Table 2-8 that Onalaska residents working within the City of Onalaska increased by nearly 9 percentage points, and nearly 90 percent of residents work in La Crosse County. This suggests that is likely discretionary money is being spent locally. Over 28 percent of Onalaska residents work in Onalaska. This suggests that local residents have shorter commutes, and that discretionary income is being spent locally. The percentage of individuals working within La Crosse County also grew by nearly ten percent.

Place of Work - 2000 to 2012 - Onalaska				
Place of Work	2000		2012	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
City of Onalaska	1,830	19.7%	2,626	28.3%
La Crosse County	7,367	79.4%	8,266	89.1%
Other Wisconsin County	527	5.7%	802	8.6%
Outside Wisconsin (Except Mn)	333	3.6%	209	2.3%
TOTAL WORKERS 16+	8,227	100.0%	9,277	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census and ACS

Table 2-8. City of Onalaska Place of Work

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Census provides information on the educational attainment levels, which are summarized in Table 2-9 below. Onalaska residents, on average, have a slightly higher level of education compared to residents of La Crosse County and the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has 90.2 percent of residents 25 years and over with a high school diploma or higher. Comparatively, Onalaska (95.4 percent) and La Crosse County (93.7 percent) are both above the state average.

Onalaska and La Crosse County are also both well ahead of the state average in terms of Bachelor’s Degree or higher educations as well. Wisconsin has approximately 26.4 percent or higher of residents having earned a Bachelor’s Degree, while Onalaska has 35 percent and La Crosse County has 29.3 percent of residents with a Bachelor’s Degree or graduate professional degree.

## SCHOOLS

Onalaska residents are served by two school districts – the Onalaska School District and Holmen School District attended by a small portion of the City. Table 2-10 and Figure 2-4 show enrollment counts for each school in these districts.

From discussions with community residents, it appears that more students from Holmen attend the Onalaska School District via open enrollment due to convenience for parents that are working in or around the Onalaska area.

There are also several private schools that serve City residents whose children would otherwise attend Onalaska or Holmen public schools, as shown in Table 2-11.

Education Level - Persons 25 years and over - Onalaska and La Crosse County - 2000 and 2012								
Highest Education	Onalaska				La Crosse County			
	2000		2008-2012		2000		2008-2012	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Less than high school diploma	577	6.0%	548	4.6%	6,749	10.3%	4,564	6.3%
High school Graduate	2,934	30.5%	2,923	24.5%	20,823	31.9%	21,372	29.5%
Some college, no degree	1,934	20.1%	2,405	20.2%	14,176	21.7%	15,142	20.9%
Associate Degree	1,167	12.1%	1,873	15.7%	6,945	10.6%	10,143	14.0%
Bachelor's Degree	1,936	20.1%	2,623	22.0%	10,642	16.3%	13,258	18.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1,071	11.1%	1,542	12.9%	5,928	9.1%	7,969	11.0%
High School Graduate or higher	9,042	94.0%	11,366	95.4%	58,514	89.7%	67,884	93.7%
Bachelor's Degree or higher	3,007	31.3%	4,165	35.0%	16,570	25.4%	21,227	29.3%

Source: U.S. Census and ACS

Table 2-9. Educational Attainment, City of Onalaska and La Crosse County



Photo 2-3. Onalaska High School Hilltopper Marching Band, photo by Rochelle Hartman via Flickr

City of Onalaska School District Enrollment						
District	State Rank in Size (District) (Out of 449)	County Name	School	Grades		2014 Enrollment
Onalaska	73	La Crosse	Onalaska Kindergarten Center	K4	KG	255
		La Crosse	Northern Hills Elementary	K4	5	477
		La Crosse	Pertzsch Elementary	K4	5	365
		La Crosse	Eagle Bluff Elementary	1	5	431
		La Crosse	Onalaska Middle	6	8	639
		La Crosse	Onalaska High	9	12	879
		<b>TOTAL</b>				
Holmen	49	La Crosse	Holmen Public Preschool	K4	PK	250
		La Crosse	Viking Elementary	K4	5	431
		La Crosse	Prairie View Elementary	K4	5	401
		La Crosse	Evergreen Elementary	KG	5	390
		La Crosse	Sand Lake Elementary	KG	5	468
		La Crosse	Holmen Middle	6	8	846
		La Crosse	Holmen High	9	12	1,112
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>3,898</b>	

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Table 2-10. Onalaska School District Enrollment

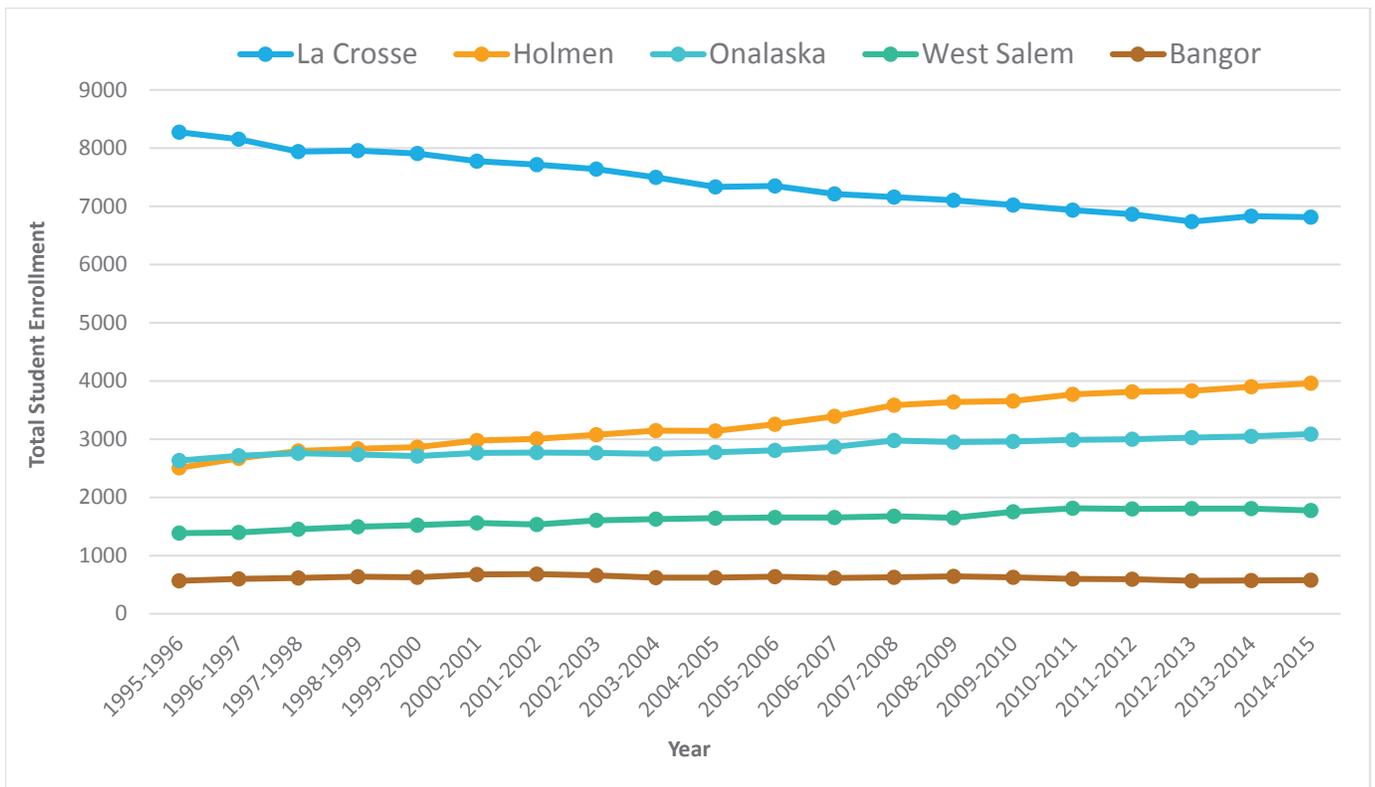


Figure 2-4. La Crosse County School Districts Total Enrollment (1995 - 2015) - Department of Public Instruction.

Private Schools for Onalaska and Holmen Public School Districts			
Public School District Area	Private Schools	Grades Served	2009 Enrollment
Onalaska	St. Patrick's Elementary	PK through 6th	193
	Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran School	PK through 8th	209
	Luther High	9 to 12	272
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>674</b>
Holmen	N/A	N/A	0
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>0</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
 Table 2-11. Private Schools in Onalaska and Holmen School Districts

Some children throughout La Crosse County and the City of Onalaska are also home-schooled. There are 28 children that are home-schooled, who would qualify for enrollment in the Onalaska School District. This is equivalent to 0.9 percent of the current public school enrollment, as indicated in Table 2-12. Approximately 90 children who would otherwise attend the Holmen School District are home-schooled, equivalent to 2.3 percent of the Holmen School District enrollment.

Onalaska and Holmen average ACT scores are presented in Table 2-13. Both school districts have average ACT scores that are slightly above the average scores of all public school districts throughout Wisconsin.

Several adult education centers that offer higher education and continuing education classes and programs are located in close proximity to Onalaska. There is a branch of Globe University located in Onalaska and other nearby colleges in La Crosse including Western Wisconsin Technical College, as well as the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and Viterbo University.

The education facilities not only provide children and adults a place to learn, but also provide recreational opportunities with playgrounds, opportunities for cultural arts for children and adults, and a source of employment for many La Crosse County adults.

Onalaska and Holmen School District Homeschooling		
School District	Number Homeschooled	Percent of District Enrollment
Onalaska	28	0.9%
Holmen	90	2.3%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
 Table 2-12. Homeschooling in Onalaska and Holmen School Districts

2012-2013 ACT Scores by School District						
District	English	Math	Reading	Science	Writing	Composite
Onalaska	21.6	23.2	21.9	22.8	7.2	22.5
Holmen	22.2	23.3	22.2	22.7	7.5	22.7
Wisconsin Average	21.3	21.9	22.1	22.2	7.3	22.0

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Table 2-13. ACT Scores by School District



Photo 2-4. Onalaska High School

## INCOME

Personal income is derived primarily from employment wages. An individual’s occupation determines the range of that wage scale which influences their personal standard of living. A comparison of the occupations of those employed in the labor force helps to determine the economic affect of the employment opportunities available to area residents and the ability to increase their standard of living.

As shown in Table 2-14 and Figure 2-5, Onalaska has a higher percentage of families earning between \$75,000 and \$200,000 annually, compared to La Crosse County.

The City of Onalaska’s median family income is over \$8,000 higher than La Crosse County’s. Per capita income is nearly \$6,000 higher for the City of Onalaska compared to La Crosse County (Table 2-14).

Household median incomes in Onalaska rose significantly from 1999 to 2012. Onalaska’s median household income has remained well above La Crosse County’s and Wisconsin’s. From 1999 to 2012, Onalaska’s median household income rose 24 percent, which is lower than La Crosse County’s increase, but higher than Wisconsin’s (Table 2-15 and Figure 2-6).

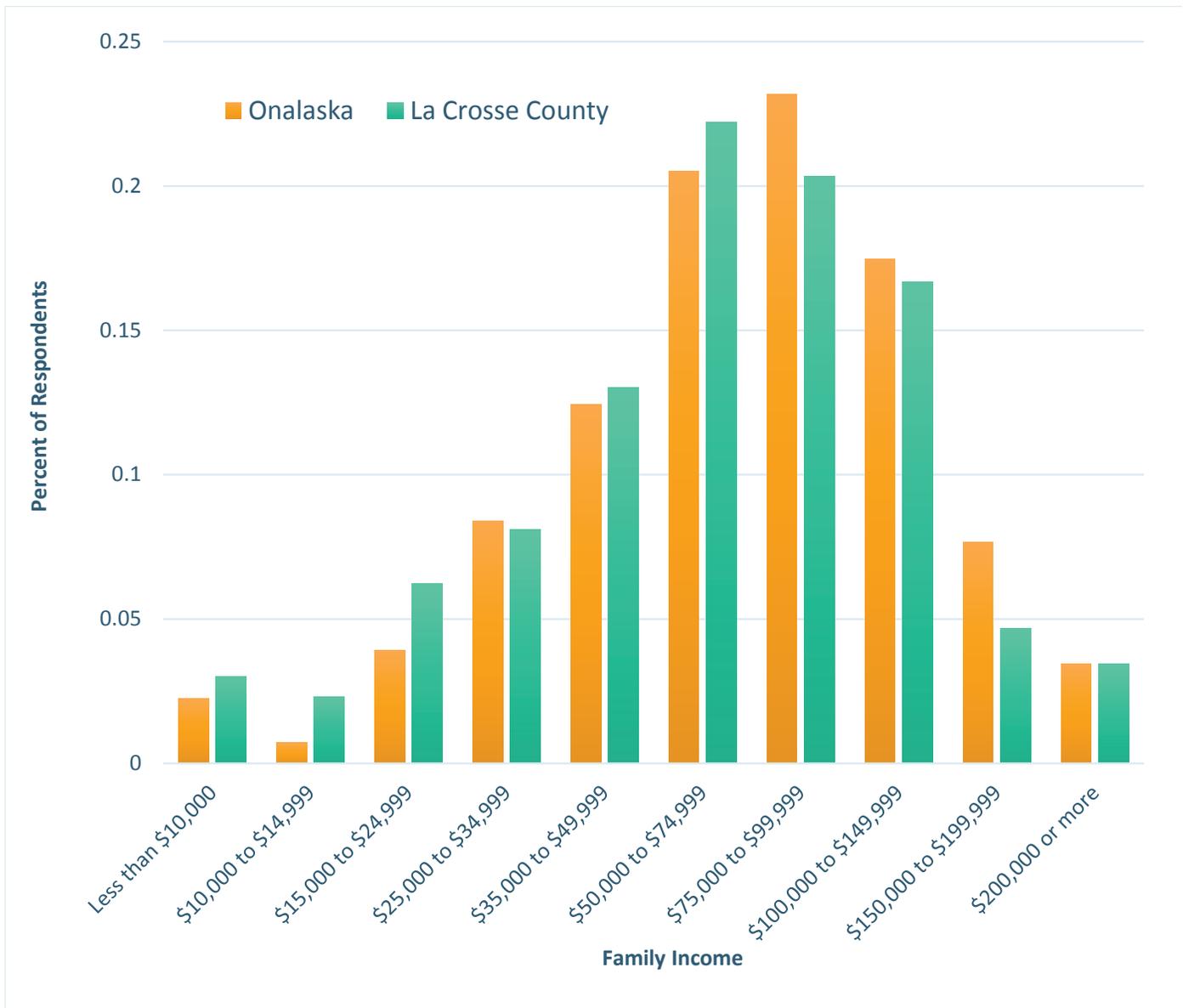


Figure 2-5. Bar Graph showing Family Income in City of Onalaska and La Crosse County

Family Income - 2008-2012				
Earnings	City of Onalaska		La Crosse County	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Less than \$10,000	111	2.2%	837	3.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	36	0.7%	641	2.3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	194	3.9%	1,729	6.2%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	416	8.4%	2,247	8.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	617	12.4%	3,617	13.0%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1017	20.5%	6,174	22.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1149	23.2%	5,652	20.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	866	17.5%	4,630	16.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	380	7.7%	1,299	4.7%
\$200,000 or more	171	3.4%	955	3.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,957</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>27,781</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Median Family Income (dollars)	\$76,854		\$68,728	
Per Capita Income (dollars)	\$31,391		\$25,978	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-14. Family Income, 2008-2012

Personal income includes net earnings by place of residence; dividends, interest, and rent; and personal current transfer receipts received.

Per capita personal income is the amount of income each individual in that geographic unit would receive if all of the income were divided equally amongst the entire population.

Median Household Income - 1999 and 2008-2012 - La Crosse County				
Municipality	1999	2012	Change	
			No.	Percent
Onalaska	\$47,800	\$59,186	\$11,386	23.8%
La Crosse County	\$39,472	\$50,771	\$11,299	28.6%
State of Wisconsin	\$43,791	\$52,627	\$8,836	20.2%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-15. Change in Median Household Income

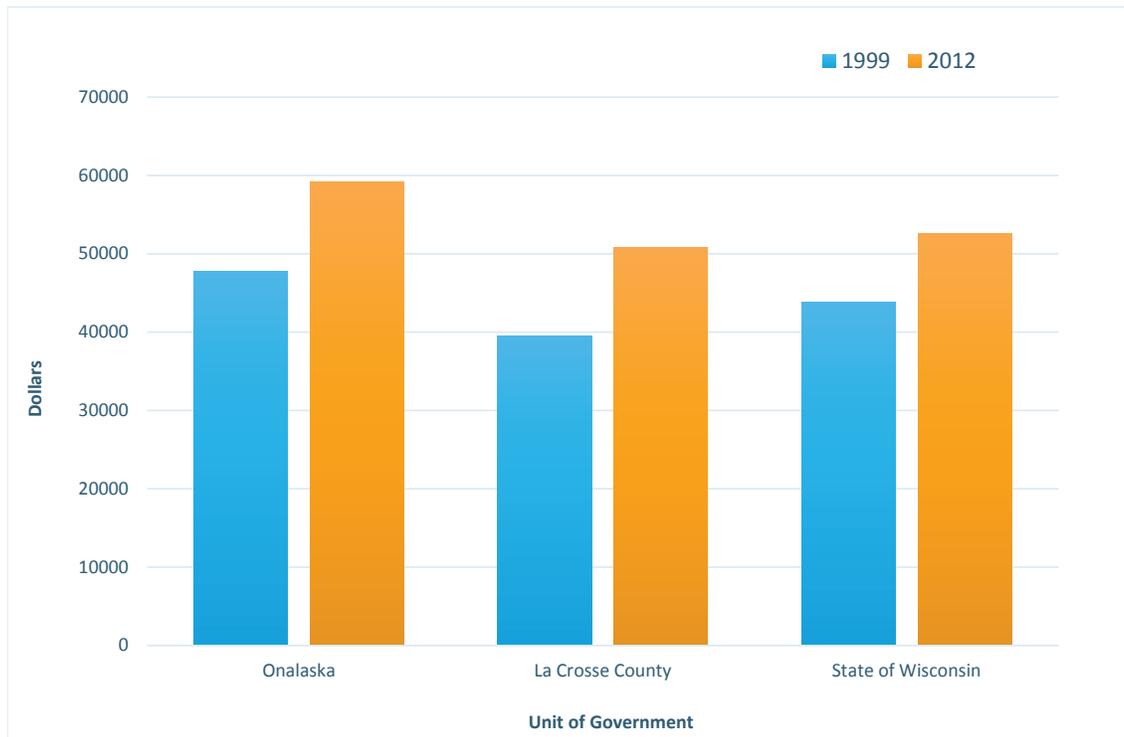


Figure 2-6. Bar Graph showing Change in Median Household Income

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

Table 2-16 shows Onalaska’s employment by industry sector. About 32 percent of Onalaska’s employed population works in the Education, Health and Social Services industry, and another 18 percent are employed in the Manufacturing industry. The other prominent industry is Retail Trade, which provides 12 percent of Onalaska’s employment.

Table 2-17, below, shows the occupations City of Onalaska residents hold. Over 40 percent of Onalaska residents are employed in management, business, and science and arts occupations. Nearly 26 percent of residents are employed in sales and office occupations.

The average annual wage of \$51,908 in the information industry, as shown in Table 2-18, is the highest in the County, but well below the average wage earned by information workers in Wisconsin.

Onalaska Employment by Industry - 2012		
Employment by Industry	Number	Percent
Educational, health and social services	2,969	31.5%
Manufacturing	1,689	17.9%
Retail Trade	1,148	12.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental & leasing	662	7.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accomodation and food services	645	6.8%
Professional, scientific, management, administration and waste management services	602	6.4%
Other services, except public administration	386	4.1%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	357	3.8%
Public Administration	284	3.0%
Wholesale Trade	258	2.7%
Construction	210	2.2%
Information	128	1.4%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining	102	1.1%
Total Employment (16 years and over)	9,440	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-16. Onalaska Employment by Industry

La Crosse County Employment by Occupation		
Occupation	Number	Percent
Management, business, science and arts	21,001	34.0%
Sales and Office	15,439	25.0%
Service	11,114	18.0%
Production, transportation and material moving	10,013	16.2%
Natural Resources, construction and maintenance	4,122	6.7%
Total Employment (16 years and over)	61,689	100.0%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2-17. La Crosse County Employment by Occupation

Average Annual Wages by Industry					
Industry	La Crosse County				State of Wisconsin
	Year			Percent Change	
	2011	2012	2013	2011-2013	2013
Natural Resources	\$22,761	\$24,008	\$27,742	21.9%	\$34,056
Construction	\$46,423	\$47,436	\$49,470	6.6%	\$53,398
Manufacturing	\$44,018	\$45,057	\$45,666	3.7%	\$53,099
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	\$30,725	\$31,772	\$32,517	5.8%	\$36,532
Financial Activities	\$48,640	\$45,298	\$45,768	-5.9%	\$59,735
Education & Health	\$45,397	\$45,499	\$46,240	1.9%	\$44,460
Information	suppressed	suppressed	\$51,908	n/a	\$58,360
Leisure and Hospitality	\$11,610	\$11,821	\$12,150	4.7%	\$15,538
Professional & Business Services	\$39,707	\$40,454	\$41,378	4.2%	\$50,725
Other Services	\$20,028	\$19,908	\$21,093	5.3%	\$24,649
Public Administration	\$39,312	\$40,075	\$41,143	4.7%	\$43,393

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2-18. Average Annual Wages by Industry

Table 2-19 indicates the number of establishments for industries in La Crosse County, of which the Retail Trade industry has the most (425). The forestry, fishing, hunting and agricultural support industry has seen the largest increase from 2004 to 2012 in establishments in terms of percentage growth (40% increase), while

the health care and social assistance industry saw the largest increase in number of establishments (47). The educational services industry had the largest increase in employees from 2004 to 2012, while the information industry had the largest increase in annual payroll during this time period.

La Crosse County Establishments by Industry - 2004 to 2012									
Industry Code	2004			2012			2004-2012 Percent Change		
	Establishments	Employees	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)	Establishments	Employees	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)	Establishments	Employees	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)
Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agri. support	5	0-19	suppressed	7	20-99	suppressed	0.4	n/a	n/a
Mining	1	100-249	suppressed	2	100-249	suppressed	n/a	n/a	n/a
Utilities	7	447	27,808	5	250-499	suppressed	-0.3	n/a	n/a
Construction	362	2,414	111,946	298	2,451	142,134	-0.2	0.0	0.3
Manufacturing	157	8,710	359,545	157	6,981	278,980	0.0	-0.2	-0.2
Wholesale Trade	144	2,788	108,887	139	2,627	118,171	0.0	-0.1	0.1
Retail Trade	490	8,958	171,690	425	8,525	177,496	-0.1	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	121	1,985	64,426	105	1,750	72,562	-0.1	-0.1	0.1
Information	45	1,408	61,024	61	2,035	902,148	0.4	0.4	13.8
Finance and Insurance	205	2,263	94,044	219	2,063	100,778	0.1	-0.1	0.1
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	111	626	17,123	118	760	19,426	0.1	0.2	0.1
Professional, scientific & technical services	241	1,746	60,475	250	1,862	85,496	0.0	0.1	0.4
Management of companies & enterprises	24	2,182	71,396	32	2,128	115,674	0.3	0.0	0.6
Admin., support, waste mgmt., remediation	134	3,527	91,166	125	3,308	80,233	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Educational services	35	1,265	24,740	39	2,066	58,387	0.1	0.6	1.4
Health care and social assistance	236	9,958	409,679	283	10,972	497,354	0.2	0.1	0.2
Arts, entertainment & recreation	57	1,000-2,499	suppressed	63	1,745	18,261	0.1	n/a	n/a
Accommodation & food services	291	5,986	55,546	334	6,496	75,704	0.1	0.1	0.4
Other services (except public administration)	327	2,645	50,019	339	2,594	60,690	0.0	0.0	0.2
Unclassified/Auxillary establishments	14	0-19	suppressed	1	0-19	suppressed	-0.9	n/a	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,007</b>	<b>58,118</b>	<b>\$1,797,382</b>	<b>3,002</b>	<b>58,894</b>	<b>\$2,031,910</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2-19. La Crosse County Establishments by Industry

Table 2-20 identifies the largest employers in La Crosse County as the two major hospitals, a manufacturing company and education, while Table 2-21 shows the most prominent industries throughout the County.

Top 10 Employers in La Crosse County - September 2013		
Establishment	Product or Service	Size (Sept. 2013)
Gundersen Lutheran Administrative	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	1,000 or more employees
Mayo Clinic Health System - Franciscan	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	1,000 or more employees
The Trane Co - TCS	AC, Refrigeration, and Forced Air Heating	1,000 or more employees
University of Wisconsin - La Crosse	Colleges and Universities	1,000 or more employees
CenturyLink Service Group LLC	Managing Offices	500-999 employees
City of La Crosse	Executive and Legislative Offices	500-999 employees
Logistics Health Inc.	Third Party Administration of Insurance Funds	500-999 employees
Western Technical College	Junior Colleges	500-999 employees
APAC Customer Services Inc.	Telemarketing Bureaus	500-999 employees
Chart Energy & Chemicals Inc.	Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturer	500-999 employees

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2-20. La Crosse County Top 10 Employers

La Crosse County Prominent Industries							
Industry Sub-Sector	Average Employment			Average Monthly Wages			
	Average La Crosse County Employees	5-Year Percent Change		2012 Average		5-Year Percent Change	
		La Crosse County	State of Wisconsin	La Crosse County	Wisconsin	La Crosse County	Wisconsin
Educational Services	6,119	24.7%	7.1%	\$3,757	\$3,873	17.3%	13.0%
Food Services and Drinking Places	5,251	4.7%	-3.5%	\$1,077	\$1,056	16.2%	6.5%
Administrative and Support Services	2,671	-6.4%	-3.0%	\$1,955	\$2,270	0.4%	4.7%
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,344	16.2%	9.1%	\$2,276	\$2,168	6.1%	3.5%
Social Assistance	2,276	9.2%	9.1%	\$2,000	\$1,813	10.4%	8.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,062	-1.1%	8.5%	\$4,761	\$7,142	1.1%	30.2%
General Merchandise Stores	1,848	-10.2%	-0.3%	\$1,840	\$1,682	4.4%	0.4%
Machinery Manufacturing	1,817	-25.8%	-4.5%	\$4,834	\$5,285	17.3%	18.7%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	1,797	15.1%	9.4%	\$3,314	\$4,877	0.9%	1.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,724	3.8%	0.5%	\$3,697	\$5,005	-4.2%	4.1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2-21. La Crosse County Prominent Industries

## EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) released a publication in 2013 that projects future employment. The long range projections cover the years to 2020; however, this data is only available on a regional basis. La Crosse County is included in the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Area (WDA). Along with La Crosse County, this area also includes Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties.

The Western Wisconsin WDA employment by industry projections are shown in Table 2-22. The industry in this region expected to have the highest growth rate is Natural Resources and Mining/Construction, with an expected increase of over 26 percent. Other industries projected to have high growth are Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation (26 percent), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (25.4 percent).

Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Area Industry Projections				
Industry	2010 Estimated Employment	2020 Projected Employment	Change	
			Number	Percent
<b>Total, All Nonfarm Industries</b>	<b>144,884</b>	<b>161,906</b>	<b>17,022</b>	<b>11.7%</b>
<i>Goods Producing</i>	25,959	28,552	2,593	10.0%
Natural Resources and Mining / Construction	4,398	5,572	1,174	26.7%
Manufacturing	21,561	22,980	1,419	6.6%
<i>Services-Providing</i>	110,019	123,999	13,980	12.7%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	29,518	32,360	2,842	9.6%
Wholesale Trade	5,083	5,519	436	8.6%
Retail Trade	15,736	16,568	832	5.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	7,882	9,486	1,604	20.4%
Utilities	817	787	-30	-3.7%
Information	1,502	1,567	65	4.3%
Financial Activities	5,781	6,611	830	14.4%
Finance and Insurance	4,798	5,489	691	14.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	983	1,122	139	14.1%
Professional and Business Services	8,792	10,850	2,058	23.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,772	3,477	705	25.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,683	1,905	222	13.2%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation	4,337	5,468	1,131	26.1%
Education and Health Services (Including State and Local Government)	32,306	37,297	4,991	15.4%
Educational Services (Including State and Local Government)	10,695	11,343	648	6.1%
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	21,611	25,954	4,343	20.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	12,703	15,384	2,681	21.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,271	1,409	138	10.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	11,432	13,975	2,543	22.2%
Other Services (Except Government)	5,888	6,539	651	11.1%
Government	13,529	13,391	-138	-1.0%
<i>Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers</i>	8,906	9,355	449	5.0%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development  
Table 2-22. Employment Projections by Industry

Occupation Employment Projections for Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Area - 2010 to 2020								
Occupational Title	Estimated Employment				Estimated Average Annual Openings			Average Annual Salary
	2010	2020	Change	Percent Change	New Jobs	Replacements	Total	
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	2,054	2,488	434	21.1%	44	39	83	\$59,040
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	10,230	12,205	1,975	19.3%	198	204	402	\$52,623
Healthcare Support Occupations	5,635	6,716	1,081	19.2%	109	80	189	\$26,839
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	12,963	15,316	2,353	18.2%	235	463	698	\$18,292
Construction and Extraction Occupations	4,557	5,326	769	16.9%	77	95	172	\$38,221
Personal Care and Service Occupations	4,826	5,588	762	15.8%	76	100	176	\$20,672
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	13,631	15,663	2,032	14.9%	204	324	528	\$32,666
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	5,118	5,873	755	14.8%	76	103	179	\$50,987
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	5,833	6,529	696	11.9%	71	132	203	\$37,165
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	5,428	6,034	606	11.2%	61	97	158	\$23,047
Community and Social Services Occupations	2,120	2,349	229	10.8%	23	47	70	\$40,473
Legal Occupations	547	598	51	9.3%	5	10	15	\$51,784
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	19,500	21,233	1,733	8.9%	195	445	640	\$28,646
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	867	938	71	8.2%	8	25	33	\$50,621
Sales and Related Occupations	14,453	15,490	1,037	7.2%	104	461	565	\$21,904
Production Occupations	15,735	16,809	1,074	6.8%	120	319	439	\$30,460
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	8,272	8,828	556	6.7%	56	186	242	\$43,308
Management Occupations	5,584	5,952	368	6.6%	39	123	162	\$75,057
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	2,581	2,746	165	6.4%	19	68	87	\$32,518
Protective Service Occupations	3,012	3,196	184	6.1%	19	96	115	\$35,013
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	265	279	14	5.3%	1	8	9	\$25,657
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	1,673	1,750	77	4.6%	10	37	47	\$62,561
Total, All Occupations	143,211	160,156	16,945	11.8%	1,750	3,460	5,210	\$31,007

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 2-23. Employment Projections by Occupation



Photo 2-5. Onalaska Overlook.

Table 2-23 goes a step further and looks at the occupation employment projections for the Western Wisconsin WDA. The occupation expected to make the largest increase is computer and mathematical occupations (21.1 percent increase anticipated), followed closely by healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (19.3 percent growth anticipated) and healthcare support occupations (19.2 percent growth anticipated). This reflects the needs of an aging population. It can also be seen in this table, that food preparation and serving related, office and administrative support and sales related occupations have the most average annual openings. As seen, these are relatively low paying occupations that do not typically require a lot of training, so persons filling these positions tend to be very mobile when better opportunities present themselves.

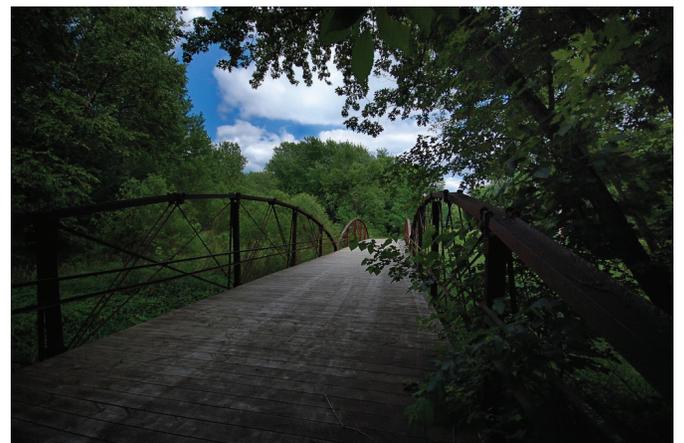


Photo 2-6. Onalaska Bridge, photo by Dave via Flickr.

## 2.2 PLACEMAKING EVENT

On June 18 and 19, 2014, residents, business owners, and landowners were invited to participate in community workshops to identify issues facing the City of Onalaska, as well as to identify things the City is doing particularly well. The meetings were held at the Onalaska OMNI Center.

The focal point of these meetings were to identify what the City of Onalaska needs to do to become known as a “Great Place.” Great Places are where community celebrations are held, social and economic exchanges take place, information interactions happen, and cultures mix. When combined on a variety of scales, in a variety of areas, they result in Great Communities.



Figure 2-7. Placemaking Chart created during June’s community workshops

## EVENT SUMMARY

The purpose of the Placemaking activity is to identify the common themes/issues that can be used as starting points for discussions on goals and objectives for the City. While individual votes and issues are important, the ultimate objective is to paint the big picture for the City to use as the basis for updating their Comprehensive Plan.

When evaluating the Placemaking analysis, the results can be summarized into emerging themes for each quadrant, which are detailed in Figure 2-7 on the previous page and as follows.



Photo 2-7. Bob Kost, SEH welcomes the participants, describes the planning progress and explains the meetings.



Photo 2-8. Participants wrote their ideas on large post-it notes, and placed them within the appropriate placemaking quadrants. Ideas were then prioritized by the tables.

## SOCIABILITY

Sociability has many definitions – in Onalaska it was expressed through three major themes:

***Creating Gathering Places for Activities and Events*** – including having places for residents to socialize, breaking down socio-economic barriers, cross-culture/intergenerational activities, closing down streets for events and nightlife, creating a feature park location for community gathering, and improve access to events via trails, walkways and bike paths.

***Waterfront Development with Public Space*** – this particular item received several directly similar comments to above category.

***Organize/host and Promote Socialization Programs and Community Events*** - similar to Sunfish Days, establish a new community-wide celebration/event that also helps brand Onalaska, establish programs that welcomes new residents and businesses, plan several family-friendly events over the year, promote block parties and/or neighborhood–night out, promote “help your neighbor” type events for seasonal maintenance and fixing up distressed residential properties.

Elements of these themes were seen amongst all four Placemaking quadrants.



Photo 2-9. Participants were divided into small groups. Each participant was asked to generate ideas and discuss them with their table.

**USES AND ACTIVITIES**

Placemaking participant input focused around four primary themes in determining what uses and activities would make Onalaska a better place:

**Downtown Redevelopment/Enhancement** – desire for specific types of businesses catering to creative types (crafts, music, art), creating a “Downtown Identity,” and having a more interesting mix of multi-story buildings.

**Cultural Activities** – including music and arts, having outdoor activities such as small and large music concerts, parades, water events and art in the park, provide for informal/impromptu and formally planned activities.

**Sustainable Development that Preserves Natural Resources** – including preserving views of the bluffs, mature trees and green space, being “Green and Sustainable” and utilizing more renewable energy opportunities.

**Mixed-Use Development areas including a range of Quality Housing Choices** – including infill parks, reinvesting in exiting housing stock to reduce low-value/low-income housing, better balance of single-family and multi-family housing products (rental and owner), having mixed-density housing, encouraging more mixed-use development of homes and businesses together in same building, more and varied types of rental/condo areas.



Photo 2-10. Each table reported their results to the entire group in attendance.

**COMFORT AND IMAGE**

Onalaska is seen as a well-maintained place by participants of the Placemaking activities, and this is evident throughout the themes that emerged from this quadrant:

**Key Corridor Revitalization and Beautification** – improve visual appearance of Highway 35, appreciate the natural beauty while improving the built environment, enhance Exit 3 area with design improvements, streetscape and waterfront beautification, and beautify entrances and primary transportation corridors with more trees, native plantings, standardized gateway-entry monument signs and streetscape that ties mall and older business district together as same community.

**Maintain and Improve Aesthetics, Area Cleanliness, and Public Safety** – including streetscapes, upkeep and clean businesses and residences, continued cleanliness and home care, clean and safe environment, neighborhood help-out upkeep program similar to “Renew LaCrosse” program, beautification and maintenance of the waterfront area, landscaping, design on buildings, continued tree planting, and continued efforts to fight drug abuse.

**Quiet, Active, Family-Friendly Community Image** – continue to leverage the education system, using trails for walking, and having pedestrian-friendly intersections to get to the trail systems.

## **ACCESS AND LINKAGES**

Four primary themes emerged from the Access and Linkages placemaking discussions:

***Continued Improvement of Non-Motorized Transportation Options*** – including completing the build-out of the greenway plan and connecting “missing links,” trail connectivity, pedestrian-friendly intersections, multi-use trail and water trail links to all neighborhoods, develop trail/boardwalk along Black River in Great River Landing project, access to bike trail system, balance bike/walk/car use, sidewalk/trail connectivity, pedestrian access consideration in site design, education and enforcement of speed limits, continue to install bike lanes, and yielding to pedestrians.

***Ensure Traffic Safety*** – particularly in several dangerous or difficult areas within Onalaska – including access into retail areas becoming tight and only getting worse, Main Street merge issues by St. Patrick’s, 2nd Avenue North/ Highway 35 merge issue, Greens Coulee intersection and second access out of the coulees, Riders Club Road/ Highway 35, and traffic flow considerations into/out of parking lots.

***Develop Water Access*** – several direct mentions of developing access to Lake Onalaska from Onalaska were made, as well as developing a reason for people to stop and stay at the waterfront, waterfront access for both boats and people, and potentially developing a water taxi system.

***Improve/Expand Public Transit Access and Effectiveness*** – establish more realistic measures of effectiveness such as ability to commute to and from work and school in a reasonable amount of time using the bus system (make competitive with car), hours of service, bus routes, location and number of bus stops, and access to major destinations in and outside Onalaska.

## 2.3 VISION STATEMENT

Based on the public input received through the survey responses, as well as the Placemaking exercises, the following *Vision Statement* was developed to guide the City in its decision-making for the next 20-years.

***The City of Onalaska provides a safe, family-friendly community. Our residents are engaged and proud to call Onalaska “home.” Our businesses and employers are financially strong; our education system is excellent. Onalaska plays a critical role in the Coulee Region of Wisconsin, and is well-connected and accessible with quality infrastructure. Our natural environment is robust with opportunities, including our coulees, bluffs and water resources – providing unique activities for people of all ages and interests, leading to a vibrant and active community.***

## 2.4 STUDENT LISTENING SESSIONS

On March 20, 2015 the City of Onalaska Planning Department spent a day with Onalaska High School students gathering feedback in four subject areas that pertain to the 2015 Onalaska Comprehensive Plan Update that focused on housing, transportation, community facilities/parks, and land use. Approximately 300 students including freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors were able to ask questions and provide comments on their vision for Onalaska in the future.

### HOUSING

The vast majority of students lived in single-family housing, with a small amount residing in twindos or multi-family apartments. Nearly all students wished to either duplicate their existing housing style or move to a single-family residence in the future. An interesting divide appeared when polled about neighbor proximity. A number of freshman students preferred current distances between houses, as closer neighbors provided a heightened sense of security and safety, while others (sophomores, juniors, seniors) wanted more defined

property lines and larger lots to provide more privacy. The desire was made clear by all students, whether wanting to live in a bigger city or Onalaska that they prefer to reside within close proximity of parks and environmental landscapes. Nearly all students wanted to live in strictly residential neighborhoods, and some wanted the ability to construct their own residences.

### TRANSPORTATION

Three areas of transportations discussed included personal vehicles, bicycling/walking, and mass transit. The majority of students drive or are driven to destinations and of those who were of driving age, nearly everyone had a driver’s license. Very few students owned their own vehicles, but nearly all students expressed interest in ownership in the future. Approximately one-quarter of students polled carpooled to events, school, etc., but little interest was expressed in a formalized carpool area in the City.

Students mentioned a few areas that are avoided due to traffic congestion and “unsafe” intersections including Pralle Center Drive / State Road 16, County Road OS / State Road 16, County Road PH / Theater Road, Greens Coulee intersection, and State Road 35 north of Main Street.

The majority of all students polled own a bicycle and nearly half of the students use their bicycles for distances less than two (2) miles. Other modes of transportation utilized were long-boarding (skate-boarding) and rollerblading. Freshman and sophomores commented that they felt relatively safe and confident when bicycling in the streets, while juniors and seniors expressed apprehension with sharing the road with bicycles due to narrow streets. All students who bicycled called for more designated bicycle lanes and noted areas for improvement including Theater Road / State Road 16 intersection, Main Street, Crossing Meadows, East Avenue, and Thomas Court. All students appreciated the off-road path along Sand Lake Road for safe bicycle and pedestrian access. In general, few students walk to desired locations due to lack of interconnected sidewalks and overall distance. Students commented the following roadways were in need of sidewalks or paths including Grand View Boulevard, State Road 16, Mason Street and Holiday Heights subdivision.

A select group of students utilize the Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) and included were students

with disabilities. Issues arose concerning the number of transfers, travel time, and cost to arrive to desired destinations including Onalaska High School, Valley View Mall, and miscellaneous locations in La Crosse and Onalaska. Both transit users and non-users expressed the need for increased bus shelters/benches and bus stop locations in Onalaska.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES (PARKS)

Nearly all students affirmed that they had visited a City park within the past month [March 2015] to walk pets, play basketball and tennis, and/or using the playgrounds. Students selected the top four frequented Onalaska parks as Elmwood Hills Park for the paved trails, Pierce Park, the waterfront for linkage to the spillway, and Holiday Heights Park. All students commented that they lived within 10 minutes walking distance from a park. Students noted general improvements to be made at City parks included more outside drinking fountains (for people and their pets), more shelters/open seating, barbeque pits, work-out stations near children's play areas, additional trees, public art, community gardens, and updates to playgrounds and equipment. Further, students repeatedly asked for additional soccer nets, volleyball and tennis courts, updated basketball hoops and asked for a second skate-park. Students also requested specifically soccer nets at Holiday Heights and a disc golf course at Sandalwood Park.

## LAND USE

Within the City of Onalaska students and their families typically shop or participate in recreation at the YMCA, Woodman's, Festival Foods, and the majority of businesses and restaurants along State Road 16 and in Crossing Meadows. Although students often shop at Valley View Mall, they expressed dissatisfaction with store and food options. Students wanted more well-known store brands such as Forever 21, Disney Store, Trader Joe's and full service restaurants to fast food. The majority requested an increase in activity-driven businesses in the area, such as skate parks, Tempest Freerunning Academy, Sky Zone, A Teen Center (Boys & Girls Club), and a movie theater. When polled for ways that Onalaska could improve its image, students suggested encompassing public art around the City, especially in the form of sculptures and responded positively to the Great River Landing project as a method to draw people downtown.

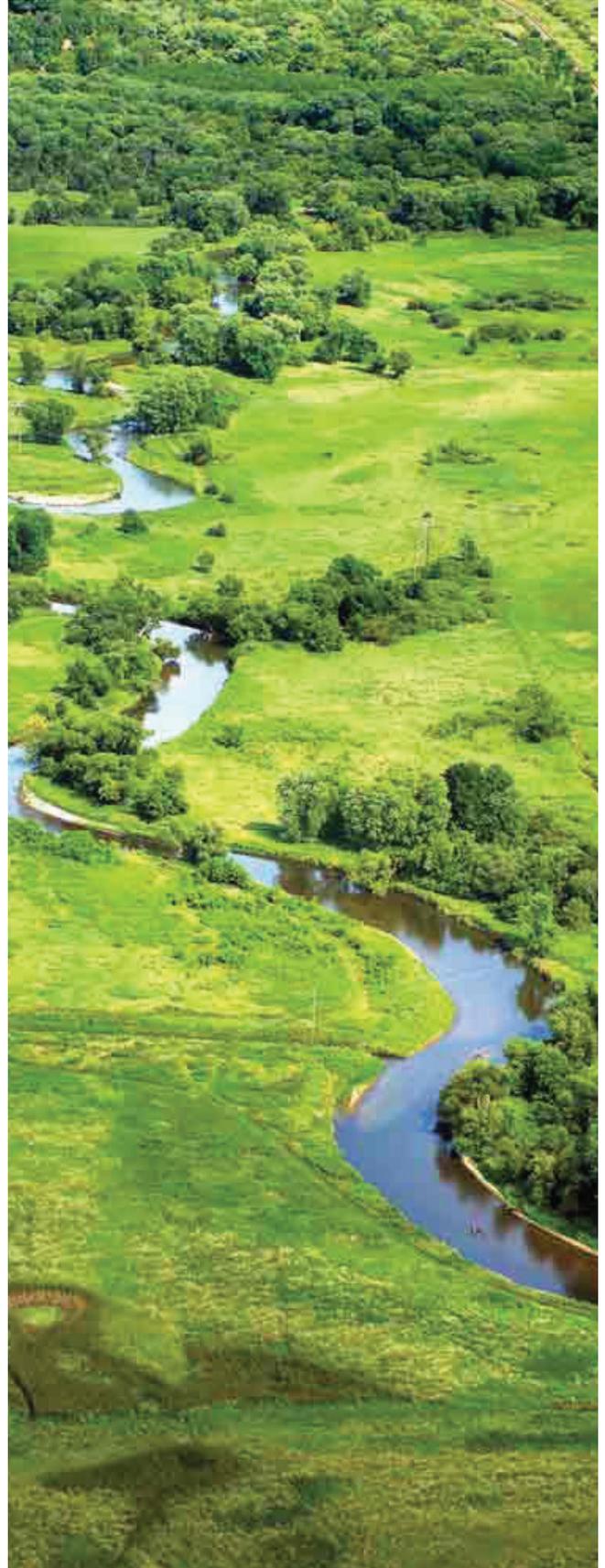


Photo 2-11. La Crosse River Conservancy Site, photo by Bob Hurt



Photo 3-1. Onalaska neighborhood

# HOUSING

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 3.1** *EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 3.2** *HOUSING PROGRAMS*
- 3.3** *GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES*

## INTRODUCTION

Housing is an essential component to healthy and vibrant communities, and striving to provide safe and affordable housing is a common community goal. An analysis of housing conditions will help the City gain a better understanding of the changes that have occurred over the past 20-25 years. It will also provide insight into future changes that can be anticipated. This information will create a foundation from which decisions regarding future housing development can be based. Demographic information presented in the Issues and Opportunities Element is not repeated here. Following is a summary of the existing housing conditions in the City of Onalaska and La Crosse County.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(b)  
 (b) Housing element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit's housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.

### 3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

When change and development take place, it will be important for the City to manage this growth and maintain the character of the community. Many individuals and families that choose to live in Onalaska do so because of its community character.

#### HOUSING UNITS

According to the U.S. Census, in the year 2010 the City of Onalaska had 7,608 residential housing units – a 25.3 percent increase from 2000. La Crosse County as a whole also experienced an increase in housing units, with a 11.3 percent increase between 2000 and 2010, as shown in Table 3-1. Onalaska has been growing at a faster rate than the County average.

“There are social and economic benefits from housing. Socially, “studies have shown that in addition to being a place to sleep, relax, and keep possessions, decent shelter is important for one’s self-respect; people who take responsibility and pride in their homes are more likely to also participate in community and civic activities.” Housing also affects economies significantly as well, through the generation of taxes for governments, and providing many jobs. (Ohm, Brian, et al. Housing Wisconsin, June 2003.)

Housing Units - 1990-2010				
Municipality	1990	2000	2010	2000-2010 Percent Change
Onalaska	4,419	6,070	7,608	25.3%
La Crosse County	38,227	43,479	48,402	11.3%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-1. Housing Units, 1990-2010

#### SEASONAL UNITS

Seasonal units are housing units used or intended for use only in certain seasons, or for weekend or occasional use during the year. They typically demand fewer public services than housing units that are occupied throughout the year. Included in the seasonal unit calculations are units used for summer or winter sports or recreation, such as beach cottages or hunting cabins. Seasonal units may also include quarters used for seasonal workers. As shown in Table 3-2, in 2010 the City of Onalaska contained 46 seasonal units. La Crosse County has a similar percent of its housing stock that is defined as seasonal units.

Seasonal Units - 2010			
Municipality	Total Housing Units	Seasonal Housing Units	
		Units	Percent of Total
Onalaska	7,608	46	0.6%
La Crosse County	48,402	381	0.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-2. Seasonal Housing Units, 2010

Year Structure Built - 2012								
	1939 or earlier	1940 to 1959	1960 to 1969	1970 to 1979	1980 to 1989	1990 to 1999	2000 to 2009	2010 or Later
Onalaska	5.1%	9.3%	9.1%	20.4%	16.5%	20.5%	18.5%	0.5%
La Crosse County	19.4%	15.6%	9.4%	15.5%	11.3%	15.1%	13.4%	0.3%

Table 3-3. Year Structure Built

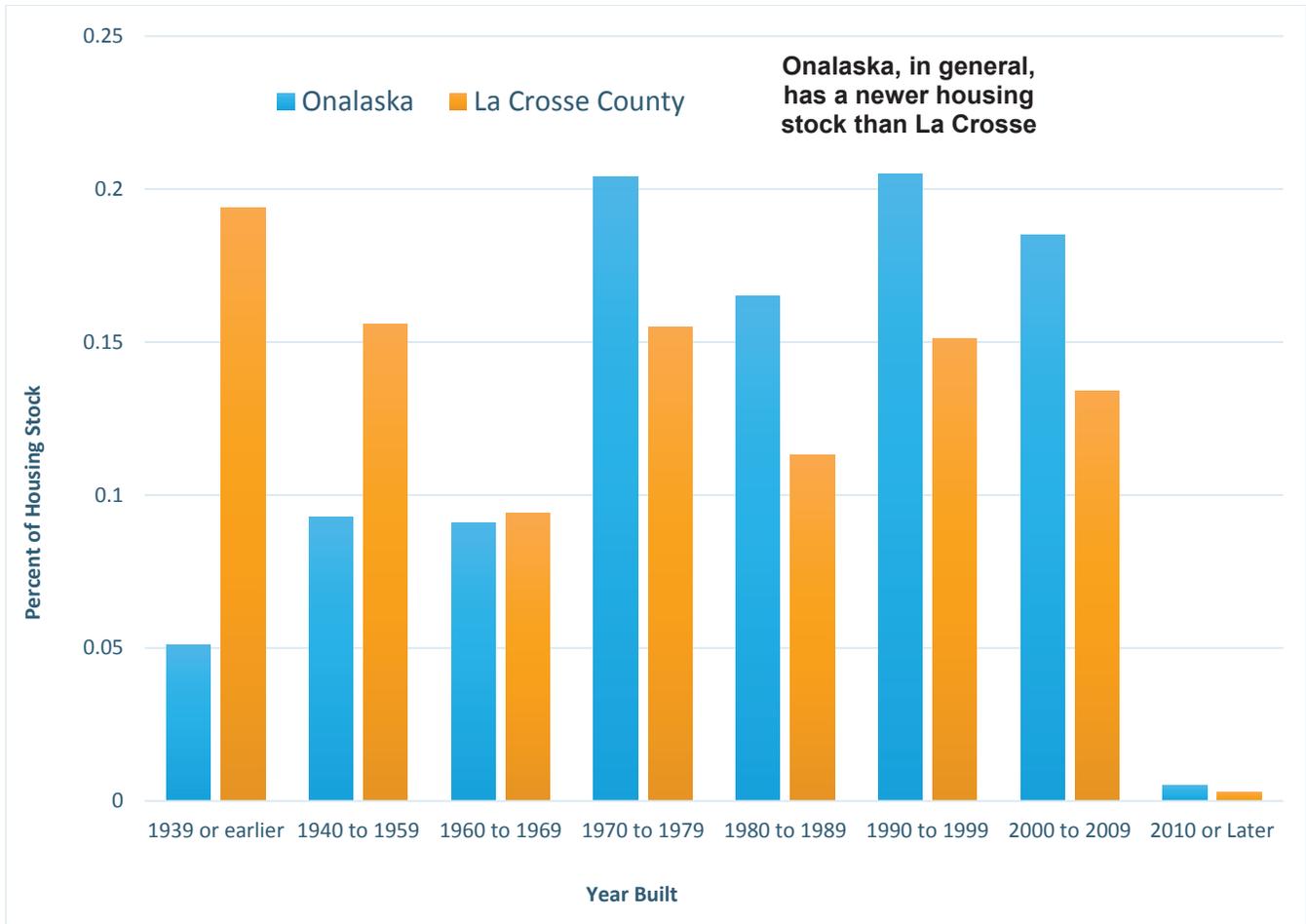


Figure 3-1. Year Structure Built - 2012

### AGE CHARACTERISTICS

The age of the local housing stock is an important element to view when preparing for the future. If there is a significant amount of older housing units among the housing supply, they will most likely need to be replaced, rehabilitated, or abandoned for new development within the planning period. Allowing for a new housing supply also requires planning regarding infrastructure, land availability, community utilities, transportation routes, and a variety of other public services to address community needs that are affected by new development.

As shown in Table 3-3 and Figure 3-1 above, approximately 56 percent of all housing units in the City of Onalaska were built since 1980. Only 40 percent of all La Crosse County houses were built after 1980. This is an indicator that the average housing stock for the City of Onalaska is newer than that of the County as a whole. This could indicate that Onalaska residents may have generally lower costs associated with the maintenance and rehabilitation of their homes in the near future compared to homeowners in other areas of the County.



Photo 3-2. Single family home.



Photo 3-3. Onalaska neighborhood.

Building permits issued can provide a great deal of information on the amount of new construction occurring within a community. This not only reflects market demand for new housing, but is also an indicator of economic conditions.

As seen by Table 3-4 and Figure 3-2, construction costs and building permits issued for new, privately-owned residential units in the City of Onalaska saw a significant decline from 2005 through 2010, but numbers have slowly been rebounding since then. The housing boom started in 2001, much sooner than what occurred in many other housing markets. It also appears that Onalaska has been somewhat insulated from the housing market collapse. While the City has seen a significant decrease in new housing, they have still been seeing construction, while many other communities throughout

Wisconsin and the entire country were completely stagnant from 2008 through 2010 or later, with much slower rebounds than Onalaska has seen.

### OCCUPANCY & STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Housing occupancy is a measure to determine whether the housing supply is adequate to meet demand. A stable housing market is one where the availability of new and existing housing units roughly matches the needs of the population. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an overall vacancy rate of three percent is considered to be optimal. Vacancy rates under the three percent standard may imply a tight housing market where demand exceeds supply, causing housing prices to rise.

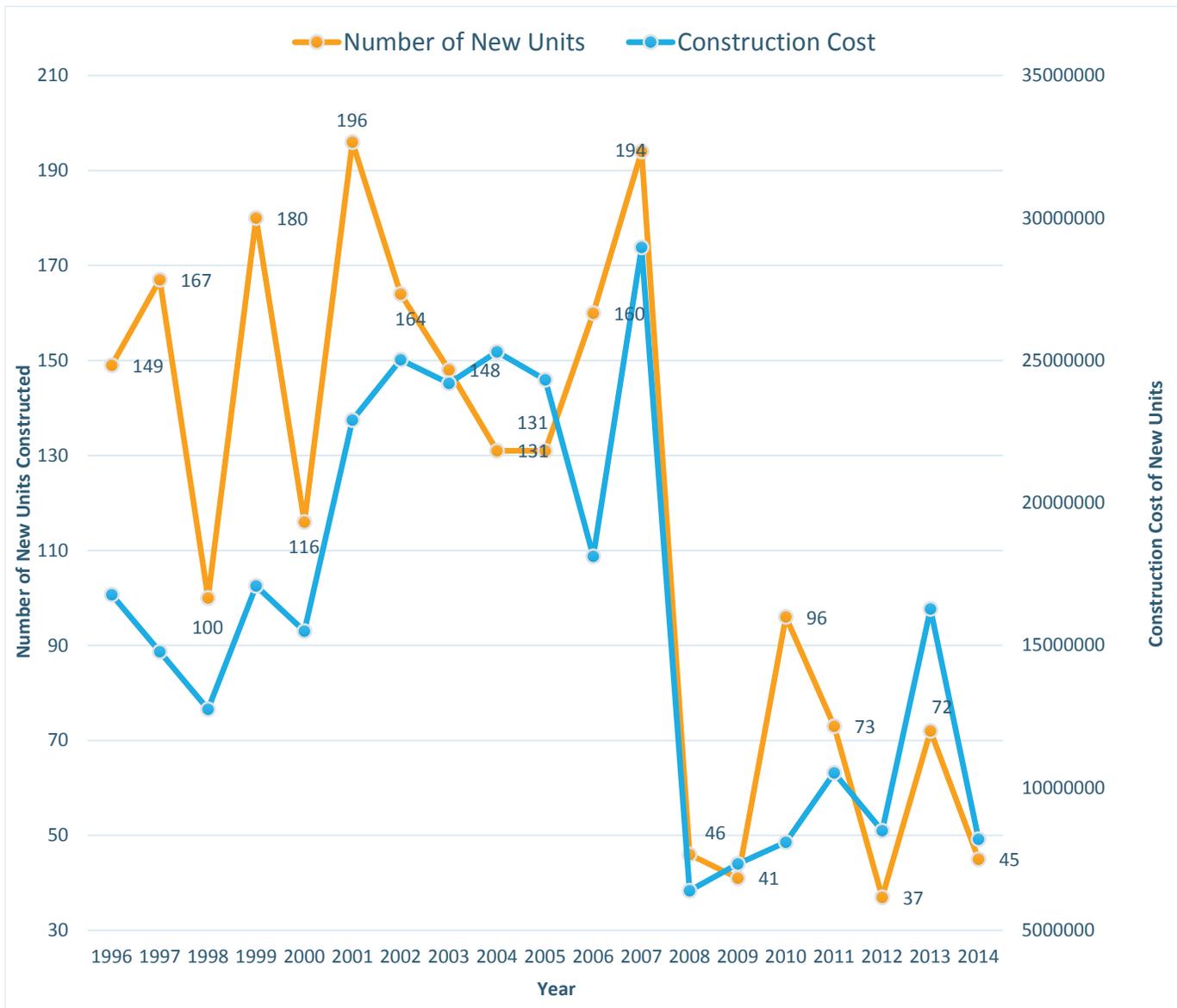


Figure 3-2. Graph - Building Permits Issued, 1996-2013

Building Permits Issued for New, Privately Owned Residential Units - City of Onalaska - 1996-2013							
Year	Single Family	Two Family	Three and Four Family	Five or More Units	Total Permits	Total Units	Construction Cost
1996	88	24 (48 units)		2 (13 units)	114	149	\$16,784,250
1997	68	20 (40 units)		2 (59 units)	90	167	\$14,779,700
1998	64	9 (18 units)		1 (18 units)	74	100	\$12,765,000
1999	73	29 (58 units)		1 (49 units)	103	180	\$17,092,590
2000	76	17 (34 units)		1 (6 units)	94	116	\$15,501,500
2001	121	10 (20 units)			131	141	\$19,851,325
2002	128	5 (10 units)			133	138	\$24,028,150
2003	90	13 (26 units)		4 (32 units)	107	148	\$24,199,959
2004	119	3 (6 units)			122	125	\$23,954,606
2005	117		2 (7 units)	1 (7 units)	120	131	\$24,327,222
2006	71	4 (8 units)	1 (4 units)	3 (77 units)	79	160	\$18,132,000
2007	59	1 (2 units)	1 (3 units)		61	64	\$16,442,401
2008	31	1 (2 units)	1 (3 units)	1 (10 units)	34	46	\$6,396,000
2009	41				41	41	\$7,334,151
2010	36			1 (60 units)	37	96	\$8,097,168
2011	65	4 (8 units)			69	73	\$10,321,000
2012	37	1 (2 units)			38	39	\$8,500,574
2013	70	1 (2 units)			71	72	\$16,284,894

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-4. Building Permits Issued, 1996-2013



Photo 3-4. Example of multi-family housing in Onalaska.



Photo 3-5. Onalaska neighborhood.

Conversely, a vacancy rate greater than three percent may indicate an over-supply of housing units, causing stagnation in housing prices.

The vacancy rate in Onalaska has increased slightly over the last decade. In 2000, approximately 2.4 percent of the housing units in Onalaska were vacant (see Table 3-5). In 2010, 3.6 percent of the housing units in the City were vacant. This is hovering right around the optimal three percent standard set by HUD. La Crosse County had vacancy rates of 4.3 percent in 2000, and 4.7 percent in 2010, slightly above the optimal three percent rate.

Also shown in Table 3-5, is that of the occupied housing units, 65.6 percent were owner-occupied in 2010. This is slightly lower than the 2000 number (67.7 percent). La Crosse County housing is approximately 64 percent owner-occupied.

Housing Characteristics - 2000 to 2010		
Onalaska	2000	2010
Total Housing Units	6,076	7,608
Total Seasonal	24	46
Total Vacant	147	277
Total Occupied Units	5,929	7,331
Owner Occupied Units	4,015	4,806
Renter Occupied Units	1,878	2,525
Occupancy Rate	97.6%	96.4%
Single Family Units	3,799	5,196
Multi-Family Units	1,816	2,111
Mobile Homes	461	301

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-5. Housing Characteristics, 2000-2010

Units in Structure - 2012																
Municipality	1-Unit Detached		1-Unit Attached		2 Units		3-4 Units		5-9 Units		10-19 Units		20+ Units		Mobile Homes	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Onalaska	4,262	56.4%	934	12.4%	496	6.6%	188	2.5%	339	4.5%	322	4.3%	713	9.4%	301	4.0%
La Crosse County	29,721	61.4%	2,877	5.9%	3,639	7.5%	1,898	3.9%	2,264	4.7%	1,852	3.8%	3,850	8.0%	2,280	4.7%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-6. Units in Structure, 2012

Housing Value of Specified Owner Occupied Units - 2012																
Municipality	Less than \$50,000		\$50,000 to \$99,999		\$100,000 to \$149,999		\$150,000 to \$199,999		\$200,000 to \$299,999		\$300,000 to \$499,999		\$1,000,000 or more		Median Value	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.		
Onalaska	342	7.3%	119	2.5%	1,374	29.4%	1,402	30.0%	971	20.8%	431	9.2%	35	0.7%	\$164,900	
La Crosse County	2,262	7.6%	3,541	11.9%	8,612	29.0%	7,367	24.8%	5,702	19.2%	2,049	6.9%	117	0.4%	\$153,600	

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-7. Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2012

Table 3-6 displays the number of units per structure for the City of Onalaska and La Crosse County in 2012. The majority of housing units in Onalaska (56 percent) are one-unit detached structures, commonly referred to as single family homes. Detached housing units are one-unit structures that are detached from any other house, with open space on all four sides. Structures are considered detached even if they have an attached garage or contain a business unit. Attached housing units are one or more unit structures that have one or more walls extending from ground to roof departing them from adjoining structures. La Crosse County also has a majority of single-family homes, but has a significantly smaller ratio of structures with two or more units.



Photo 3-6. Onalaska neighborhood

### HOUSING VALUE CHARACTERISTICS

Providing affordable housing which meets the needs of current and future City residents is an important element in planning for the future. A lack of quality affordable housing has impacts on population migration patterns, economic development, and the tax base.

An owner-occupied housing unit is a unit where the owner or co-owner lives, even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. The U.S. Bureau of the Census determines value by the respondent's estimates of how much the property (house and lot, mobile home and lot, or condominium unit) would sell for if it were for sale. The figures presented may differ from assessed housing values as calculated by an assessor (See Figure 3-6 on page 49).

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in 2012 was \$164,900 for the City of Onalaska and \$153,600 for La Crosse County, as shown in Table 3-7. As shown on the following page, Figure 3-3 graphically illustrates the housing value differences between Onalaska and La Crosse County. It can be seen that Onalaska has a much smaller percentage (9.8 percent) of its houses valued under \$100,000 compared to La Crosse County (19.5 percent). This could be, in part, due to Onalaska having a newer housing stock than La Crosse County as a whole.

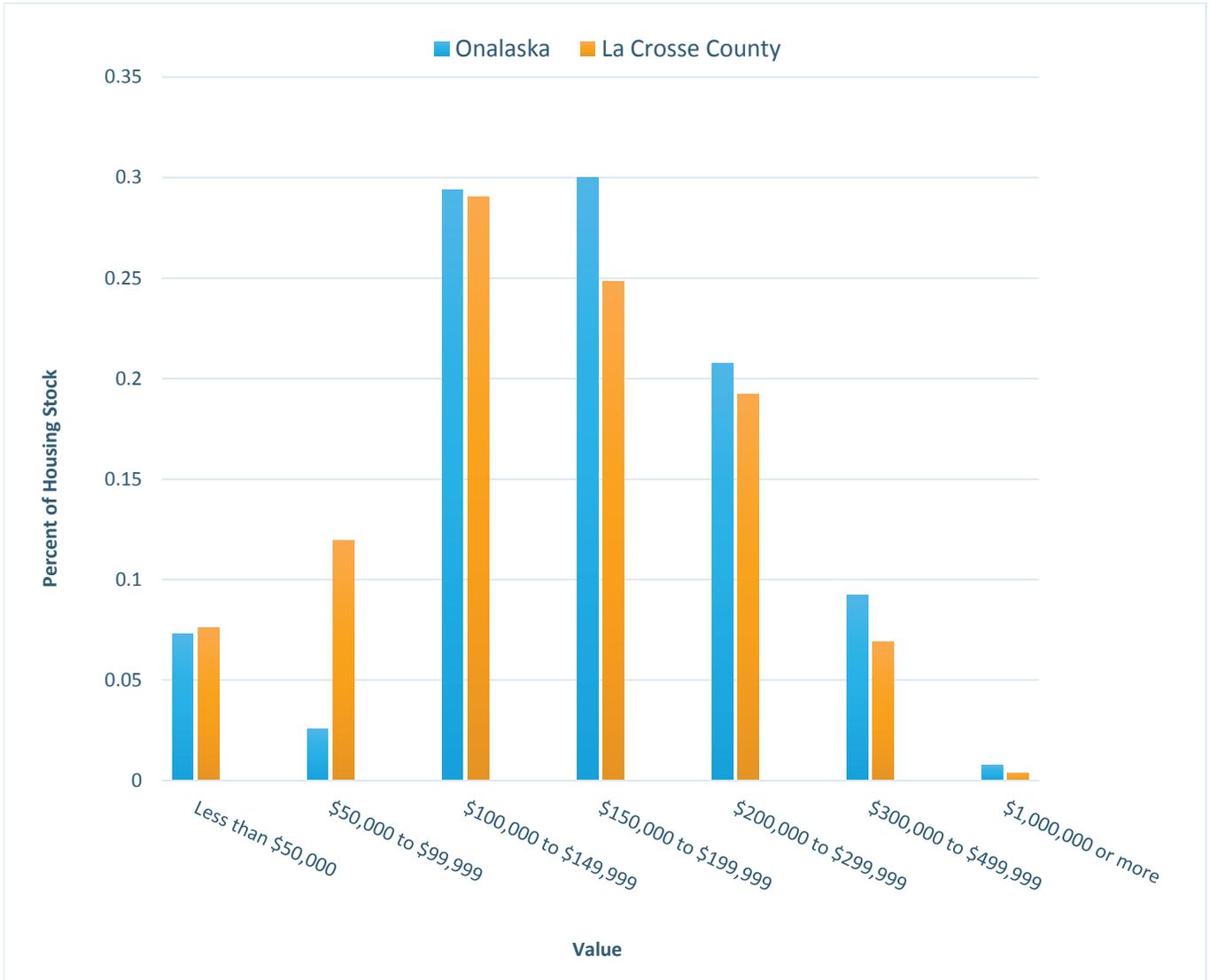


Figure 3-3. Housing Stock Valuation - Onalaska and La Crosse County, 2012

**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as that housing which does not cost a household more than 30 percent of their monthly or annual income. This affordability benchmark is not an underwriting standard; it does not address the ability to pay for housing. Households may choose to pay more to get the housing they need or want. However, according to HUD standards, people should have the choice of having decent and safe housing for not more than 30 percent of their household income.

As shown in Table 3-8 and Figure 3-4, a majority (83.8 percent) of owner-occupied households in Onalaska pay less than 30 percent of their household income towards housing costs. La Crosse County also has most owner-occupied households paying less than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs (77.5 percent).

“Over time, policy analysts have come to use ‘30 percent’ as a standard to assess the affordability of housing. The belief is that households who have to pay more than 30 percent of their incomes for housing may be forced to forego other important needs.”

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

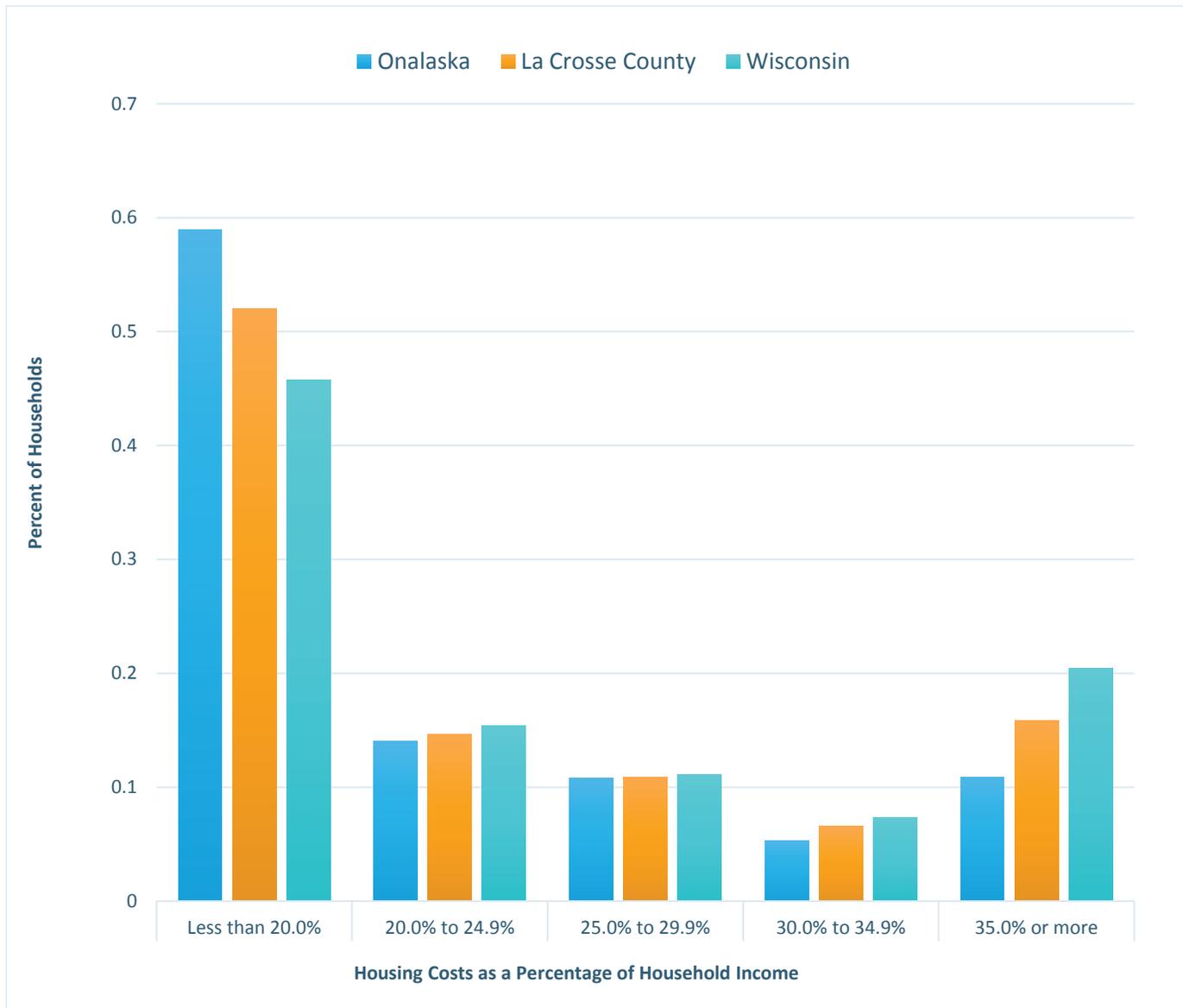


Figure 3-4. Owner-Occupied Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2012

Owner Occupied Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income - 2012										
Municipality	Monthly Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income									
	Less than 20.0%		20.0% to 24.9%		25.0% to 29.9%		30.0% to 34.9%		35.0% or more	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Onalaska	2,796	58.9%	667	14.1%	512	10.8%	253	5.3%	517	10.9%
La Crosse County	15,598	52.0%	4,390	14.6%	3,269	10.9%	1,965	6.6%	4,752	15.9%
State of Wisconsin	714,221	45.8%	239,844	15.4%	172,844	11.1%	114,672	7.3%	319,348	20.5%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-8. Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2012

A much higher percentage of rental housing is experiencing housing cost burdens. As shown in Table 3-9 and Figure 3-5, 35.5 percent of Onalaska rental households are paying 30 percent or more of their

monthly income for housing costs. Over 49 percent of La Crosse County rental households are paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing costs (Table 3-9).



Figure 3-5. Renter-Occupied Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2012

Renter Occupied Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income - 2012												
Municipality	Monthly Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income											
	Less than 15.0%		15.0% to 19.9%		20.0% to 24.9%		25.0% to 29.9%		30.0% to 34.9%		35.0% or more	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Onalaska	417	17.6%	493	20.8%	428	18.1%	186	7.9%	188	7.9%	654	27.6%
La Crosse County	1,985	13.2%	2,304	15.3%	1,950	12.9%	1,437	9.5%	1,441	9.6%	5,966	39.6%
Wisconsin	87,872	13.0%	93,453	13.8%	89,974	13.3%	79,421	11.7%	57,971	8.6%	267,754	39.6%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-9. Housing Value of Renter-Occupied Units, 2012

### SENIOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

There are several independent senior facilities in Onalaska. Assisted living facilities are addressed further in the Community Facilities Element.

### HOUSING PROJECTIONS

Persons per household in both La Crosse County and Onalaska has been very slowly declining. The average household size has decreased from 2.5 to 2.4 since 2000 (Table 3-10). La Crosse County has experienced a similar decline. This is important to consider when determining demand, as this impacts housing requirements and infrastructure needs.

In the Issues and Opportunities Element, we discussed housing unit projections. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) provides household projections. Onalaska is projected to see a 2,929 household increase, or 40.0 percent from the year 2010 to 2040 as shown in Table 3-11. La Crosse County is expected to see a 19.1 percent increase. This again indicates that the City of Onalaska is expected to grow at a much faster rate than La Crosse County as a whole.

Housing unit projections are intended to provide an estimate of the number of housing units that will be developed through the year 2040.

Based on the existing conditions and building permit data, it is projected that from 2010 to 2040, Onalaska will see an increase of 3,300 housing units, or 43.4 percent (Table 3-12).

Based on this information, assuming that the occupancy rate of 96.4% remains consistent, this would result in 10,515 occupied units and 393 vacant units.



Photo 3-7. Eagle Crest - Example of Senior Living Facility in Onalaska.



Photo 3-8. OnaMain - Example of Senior Living Facility in Onalaska.



Photo 3-9. New Residential Construction.

Average Household Size, 2000 to 2010						
	2000			2010		
	Owner	Renter	Average	Owner	Renter	Average
Onalaska	2.69	2.09	2.5	2.59	2.05	2.4
La Crosse County	2.63	2.1	2.45	2.53	2.08	2.37

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3-10. Average Household Size, 2000-2012

Wisconsin DOA Housing Unit Projections - 2000 to 2040										
Unit of Government	Census 2000	Census 2010	Projections						Change 2010-2040	
			2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Number	Percent
Onalaska	5,893	7,331	7,895	8,432	8,963	9,449	9,868	10,260	2,929	40.0%
La Crosse County	41,599	46,137	48,658	50,388	51,968	53,262	54,158	54,930	8,793	19.1%

Source: DOA Household Projections, 2010-2040

Table 3-11. DOA Household Projections, 2010-2040

Housing Unit Projections - 2010 to 2040										
Municipality	2000	2010	Projections						Change 2010-2040	
			2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Number	Percent
Onalaska	6,070	7,608	8,158	8,708	9,258	9,808	10,358	10,908	3,300	43.4%

Source: U.S. Census and SEH

Table 3-12. Census Housing Unit Projections, 2010-2040

Figure 3-6 below shows the geographic location of various residential assessed properties, indicating that the highest valued residential properties are currently on elevated land in more recent developments.

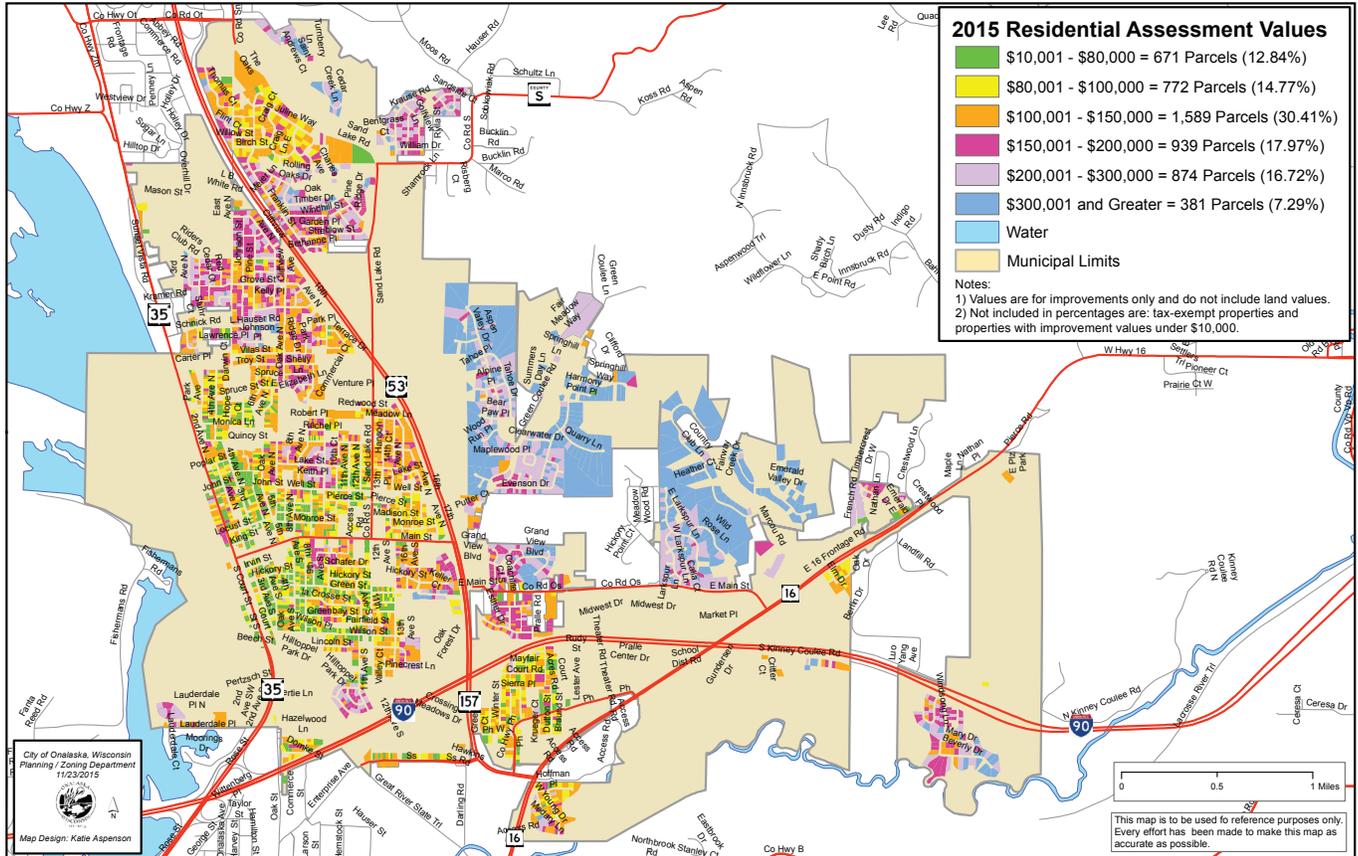


Figure 3-6. Residential Assessments 2015.

## 3.2 HOUSING PROGRAMS

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning legislation requires governments completing plans to compile a list of programs available to help provide an adequate supply of housing that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in their jurisdiction. Below is a partial listing of programs that are available.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) HOUSING REHABILITATION

Housing rehabilitation funds are made available through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CDBG program provides grants to local governments for housing rehabilitation initiatives that benefit low-to-moderate income households.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – SMALL CITIES HOUSING

Funds may be used for housing revitalization efforts to Wisconsin communities with a population under 50,000 and not eligible for a direct federal CDBG grant.

### HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (HOME)

Funds in this federal program are used for down payment assistance for home buyers, rental rehabilitation, weatherization, accessibility improvements, and rental housing development.

### SECTION 8 PROGRAM

This federal program provides rent assistance to eligible low-income households based on family size, household income, and fair market rents. Typically, a tenant's share of the total rent payment does not exceed 30 percent of his/her annual income.

### PROPERTY TAX DEFERRED LOAN PROGRAM (PTDL)

This state program offers loans to low-to-moderate income elderly homeowners (65 years old with a spouse at least 60 years old, unless one is disabled) to help pay local property taxes so the elderly can afford to stay in their homes.

### LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT

This program was created in 1986 by the Tax Reform Act. Federal housing tax credits are awarded to developers of qualified projects. Developers then sell these credits to investors to raise capital for their projects, which reduces the debt the developer would otherwise have to borrow. A tax credit property can then offer more affordable rents because the debt is lower.

### WISCONSIN HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (WHEDA)

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business, and agribusiness.

### USDA-RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural Development administers federal funds to help secure loan options to assist low-to-moderate income families with home purchase and rehabilitation. Rural Development generally funds individuals who cannot obtain conventional financing.

### COMMUNITY OPTIONS PROGRAM (COP)

Community Options programming is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services through the health and social services departments of each county. This program helps people stay in their homes by providing cost-effective alternatives to expensive health care institutions and nursing homes. Elderly and long-term disabled individuals receive funds and assistance to find services they are not going to be able to receive through other programs.

## COULEECAP

Couleecap is a regional nonprofit organization serving low-income people and families in Crawford, La Crosse, Monroe and Vernon counties. Housing programs and assistance Couleecap offers includes:

- Housing Assistance – limited term affordable housing to homeless individuals and families needing assistance in returning to independent living.
- New Hope and Housing First Permanent Supportive Housing – permanent housing to individuals and families with disabilities who are homeless.
- Home-ownership Assistance and Programs – assists income-eligible home buyers with first-time purchases, including down payment and closing cost assistance.
- Home-buyer Counseling – counseling to individual planning to purchase a home; no income restrictions.
- Community Land Trust Home-ownership – provides home buyers the ability to purchase permanently affordable housing in select communities, typically at 50%-60% of market prices for participation in a shared-appreciation agreement.
- Owner-Occupied Home Rehabilitation – low and moderate income homeowner assistance in rehabilitating homes to make them safe, sanitary and energy efficient.
- CDBG Home Rehabilitation - housing rehabilitation funds are made available through (HUD). The CDBG program provides grants to local governments for housing rehabilitation initiatives that benefit low-to-moderate income households.
- Home Weatherization Assistance – homeowner and renter assistance to improve energy efficiency of their residences.

## SALVATION ARMY

Salvation Army offers emergency shelter to people in need, as well as rent and utility assistance throughout La Crosse County.

## LA CROSSE COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

The La Crosse County Housing Authority provides rental units and rental assistance to low-income families, elderly or the disabled. There are units available in Holmen, Onalaska, West Salem, Bangor, Mindoro and French Island.



Photo 3-10. Civic design element

### 3.3 GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The City encourages proper placement of housing to limit potential land-use conflicts. Housing developments in the City should be constructed and maintained in a fashion that is consistent with the surrounding atmosphere.

The private sector is encouraged to address the needs of all income levels, age groups, and persons with special needs (e.g. assisted-living) in the development of safe, affordable, and quality housing in the City of Onalaska. While it is unlikely that the City will develop residential units itself, it encourages the private sector to make available an amount of residential housing needed to satisfy housing needs. Affordable housing development, including low- to-moderate income, should be considered to ensure all ranges of family incomes have an opportunity to live, work, and raise families in the City.

The City of Onalaska shall continue to enforce applicable state and local building regulations (building codes) to encourage safe and high quality housing developments.

**GOAL 1: THE QUALITY, QUANTITY, LOCATION, AND TIMING OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CAREFULLY PLANNED, MANAGED AND COORDINATED WITH THE PROVISION OF CITY SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. By encouraging the use of mixed-use, traditional neighborhood design concepts, and conservation/ cluster subdivisions in new developments and redevelopments where appropriate and compatible with existing land uses.
2. By creating developments and redevelopment in areas that will be efficiently and economically served by existing or planned City streets, emergency services, sanitary sewers, water mains, and stormwater management facilities.
3. By developing large ownership parcels as complete planned developments.
4. By identifying a sufficient supply of developable land within and immediately surrounding the City limits to meet projected housing unit needs while also exploring redevelopment opportunities to help meet those needs.

**GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT EXISTING ONALASKA NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By enhancing the character of existing adjacent residential neighborhoods and making new developments compatible.
2. By protecting neighborhoods from incompatible land uses through effective land use and design controls.
3. By improving transportation connections, particularly bicycle paths/routes and pedestrian facilities, between and within existing neighborhoods and other parts of the City and region.
4. By preserving historic homes and culturally important community features - both built and natural - in existing neighborhoods.
5. By encouraging and supporting the maintenance and rehabilitation of older housing stock.
6. By reviewing and updating if necessary the City's Form-Based Overlay District.

**GOAL 3: ONALASKA'S NEW RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS WILL BE ATTRACTIVELY DESIGNED THROUGH BOTH SITE AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By encouraging quality architectural design with attention to detail and building materials in new neighborhoods.
2. By promoting neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices, including pedestrian and bicycle paths that connect residential areas, parks and regional trails in and around the City.
3. By encouraging new housing developments to follow the City's Complete Streets Policy.
4. By creating new neighborhoods that are identifiable and distinct places.
5. By maintaining and respecting (not dominating) natural and environmental features, including the bluffs, Black River, Lake Onalaska, and significant trees or vegetation.
6. By encouraging tree plantings on all new development, and tree preservation where appropriate on existing development and redevelopments.
7. By encouraging appropriate boulevard plantings be placed in such a manner to minimize property damage during tree and root maturation.
8. By promoting alternate residential development patterns such as cluster development conservation subdivisions, and neo-traditional neighborhoods.
9. By allowing for a mix of dwellings, work places, shops, civic spaces or buildings and parks if the market demand exists for such developments.
10. By creating short residential blocks to better serve pedestrians and calm neighborhood traffic.

**GOAL 4: A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES, STYLES AND PRICE RANGES WILL EXIST IN THE CITY FOR PEOPLE OF ALL INCOME LEVELS AND AGES. PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE WILL BE PAID TO ENCOURAGING THAT HOUSING CHOICES ARE AVAILABLE.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By encouraging the expansion of the supply of middle income family housing in the community, particularly moderately priced single-family housing.
2. By encouraging affordable senior housing so that long-term residents and retirees may continue to live in the City.
3. By ensuring that senior, special needs, and multi-family residential developments are well integrated into the community through safe and convenient connections to public amenities (e.g. parks), a variety of transportation options (e.g. sidewalks, bicycle routes), and accessible to places to shop, work, and go to school.
4. By informing residents about housing ownership programs to allow for increased and continued owner-occupancy for all Onalaska residents.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER**

1. Future residential development in the City shall continue to contribute to the development of neighborhoods. The characteristics of future neighborhoods should be unique to each and should be identified in the Land Use Element. Features to consider include future parks, neighborhood organizations, neighborhood naming and signage, streetscaping, allowable uses, densities and intensities, open spaces, streetscape features and amenities.
2. New development and redevelopment proposals for residential projects shall be evaluated through/by a master plan form the area.

### **HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION**

1. Incorporate transit planning into the site design and street system planning for high-density residential projects so that residents who do not drive have cost effective transit options.
2. Encourage public access easements for walking and biking trails in new developments to link housing and park developments, and work with property owners to obtain such easements for existing neighborhoods where appropriate.
3. Encourage major residential developments to provide safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

### **HOUSING AND INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

1. Infill development providing housing opportunities shall be encouraged in Onalaska. Infill sites, especially in the central portion of the City, should be considered for uses including senior housing, low/moderate income housing, and condominium housing when deemed compatible with the Plan.

### **HOUSING REHABILITATION**

The City of Onalaska should pursue programs aimed at housing rehabilitation. Current programs include:

- WHEDA (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Administration) Home Improvement Loans
  - WHEDA Paint and Fix-Up Grant
1. Promote neighborhood beautification programs within the City.
  2. Provide educational materials and forums promoting historic preservation and unique architectural styles to interested homeowners and residents.
  3. Protect existing housing stock through effective enforcement of codes, policies and programs. The existing housing stock is also usually more affordable than new housing.

### **VARIETY OF HOUSING OPTIONS**

1. Identify and promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of a variety of housing types, including but not limited to low-income and moderate-income housing.

***HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT***

1. Encourage the use of natural vegetation where appropriate in new residential areas. For instance, require natural vegetation at entrances to subdivisions/neighborhoods, etc.
2. Facilitate the use of trails and connections from housing areas to the City's important natural resource areas, including the bluffs, Black River, the Great River Landing and Lake Onalaska by improving such connections.
3. Continue to prohibit housing development on slopes greater than 30 percent.
4. Prohibit ridgeline development or home siting at or above ridgelines which damages the scenic character of the Coulee Region.



Photo 3-11. Autumn overlook on the river, photo courtesy of John Staut.



Photo 4-1. Bridge.

# TRANSPORTATION

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 4.1** *BACKGROUND DATA/EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 4.2** *RELATIONSHIP TO STATE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS*
- 4.3** *ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS*
- 4.4** *GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES*

## INTRODUCTION

Transportation planning can be used as a tool to help guide and accommodate the growth a community envisions. Like the other elements in this Plan, transportation is interconnected, especially with land use. Transportation decisions such as construction of new roadways or upgrading existing roads can impact accessibility, land values, and land use development.

The City of Onalaska's transportation system is largely focused on vehicular travel. However, there are options available for alternative transportation methods, such as walking and bicycling. Mass transit and freight rail access is also available in the City.

## 4.1 BACKGROUND DATA/EXISTING CONDITIONS

### HIGHWAYS

Roads can be generally classified into three categories – arterials, collectors, and local roads. Road classification is determined by the type of service it provides. Typically arterials provide the least amount of access and highest level of mobility, while local streets provide the most access and lowest level of mobility. Collector roads provide a combination of access and mobility. A demonstration of the function of these roadways is shown in Figure 4-1.

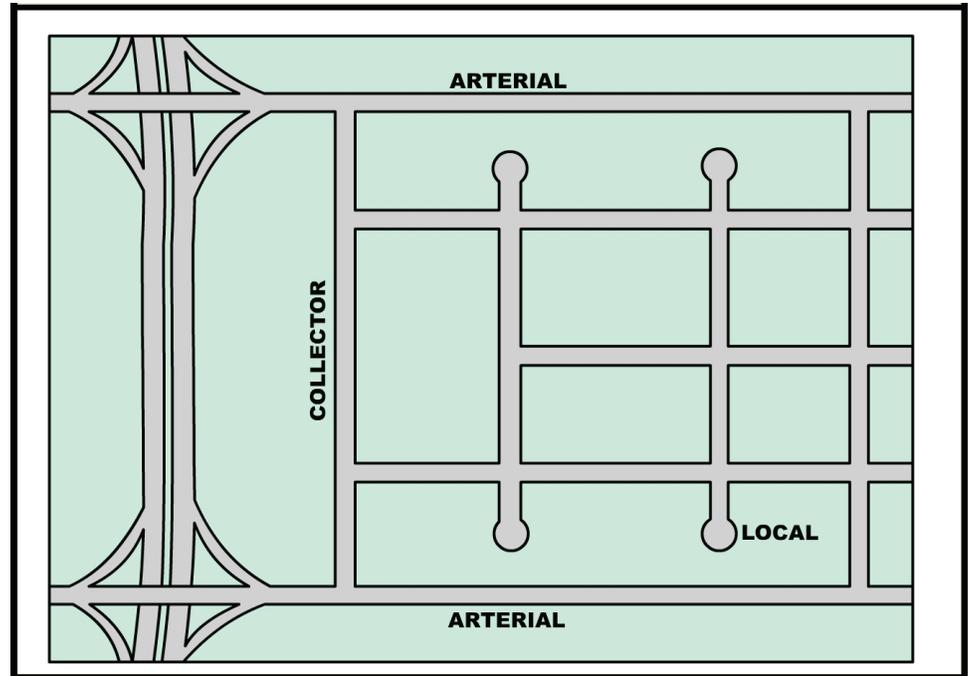


Figure 4-1. Roadway Functionality. Source: SEH, Inc.

Onalaska is served by approximately 90 miles of roads under county and local jurisdiction (see Table 4-1). There are also several miles of roads under state and federal jurisdiction. Onalaska is served by several major highway facilities, including Interstate 90, US 53, and State Highways 16, 35 and 157 (see Figure 4-2 following). I-90 is classified as a Backbone route in the Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s (WisDOT) Corridors 2020 Plan. The backbone system is a collection of multilane highways, including the interstate system and much of the state trunk highway system that serve as longer, interregional trips within and beyond the State of Wisconsin.

Figure 4-2 illustrating Interstate 90, US 53, and State Highways 16, 35 and 157/ Main Street are all classified as principal arterial routes, designed to provide a high level of mobility between communities. WIS 35, County Roads OS, S/Sand Lake Road, SS, SN and OT, and Theater Road and Quincy Streets are classified as minor arterials. Several major collector routes are scattered throughout Onalaska. These routes act as a funnel for traffic to get to the arterial routes for inter-community travel.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(c)  
(c) Transportation element.  
A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.



Photo 4-2. Highway Signage.

Municipal Jurisdiction and Roadway Classification									
Municipality	Gross Road	County	Municipal	County Jurisdiction			Municipal Jurisdiction		
	Miles	Miles	Miles	Arterial	Collector	Local	Arterial	Collector	Local
Onalaska	89.5	2.71	86.79	2.51	0.2	0	6.45	13.59	66.75

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Table 4-1. Municipal Jurisdiction and Roadway Classification. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

WIS 35 is known as “The Great River Road” and is Wisconsin’s only National Scenic Byway. This road was designated as a National Scenic Byway by the Federal Highway Administration and extends from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. In Wisconsin, this route parallels the Mississippi River for 250 miles along the western border. These roads are known for their scenic qualities and are promoted as driving vacation destinations.

Electric vehicles are becoming increasingly more popular on roadways. The City of Onalaska has one of the first Tesla supercharging stations for electric vehicles in Wisconsin. These stations allow cars to be recharged in 20 to 40 minutes and allow owners to travel for free between major cities with these charging stations. This is located off of Midwest Drive near the I-90/WIS 16 interchange.

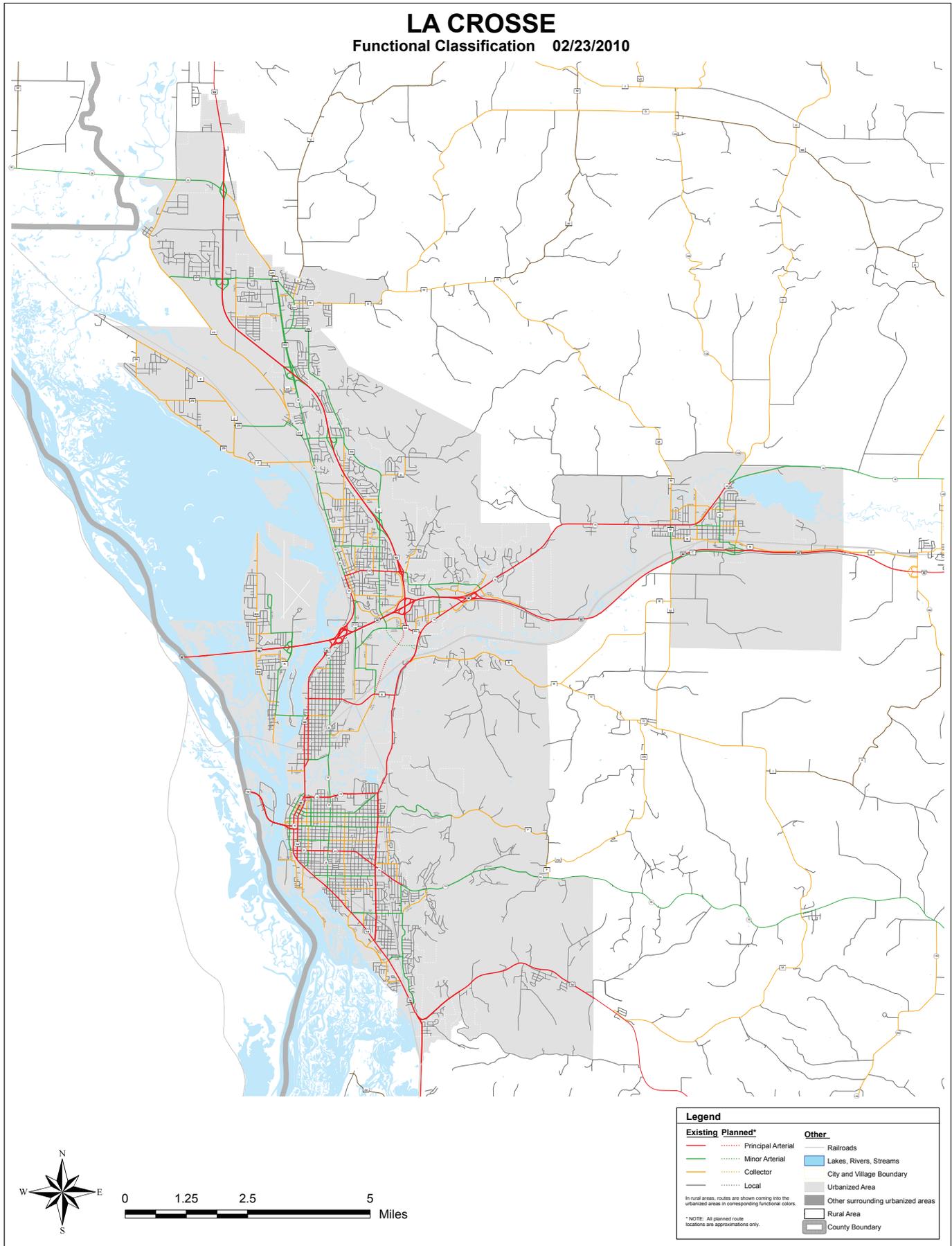


Figure 4-2. La Crosse County Roadway Functional Classification. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.



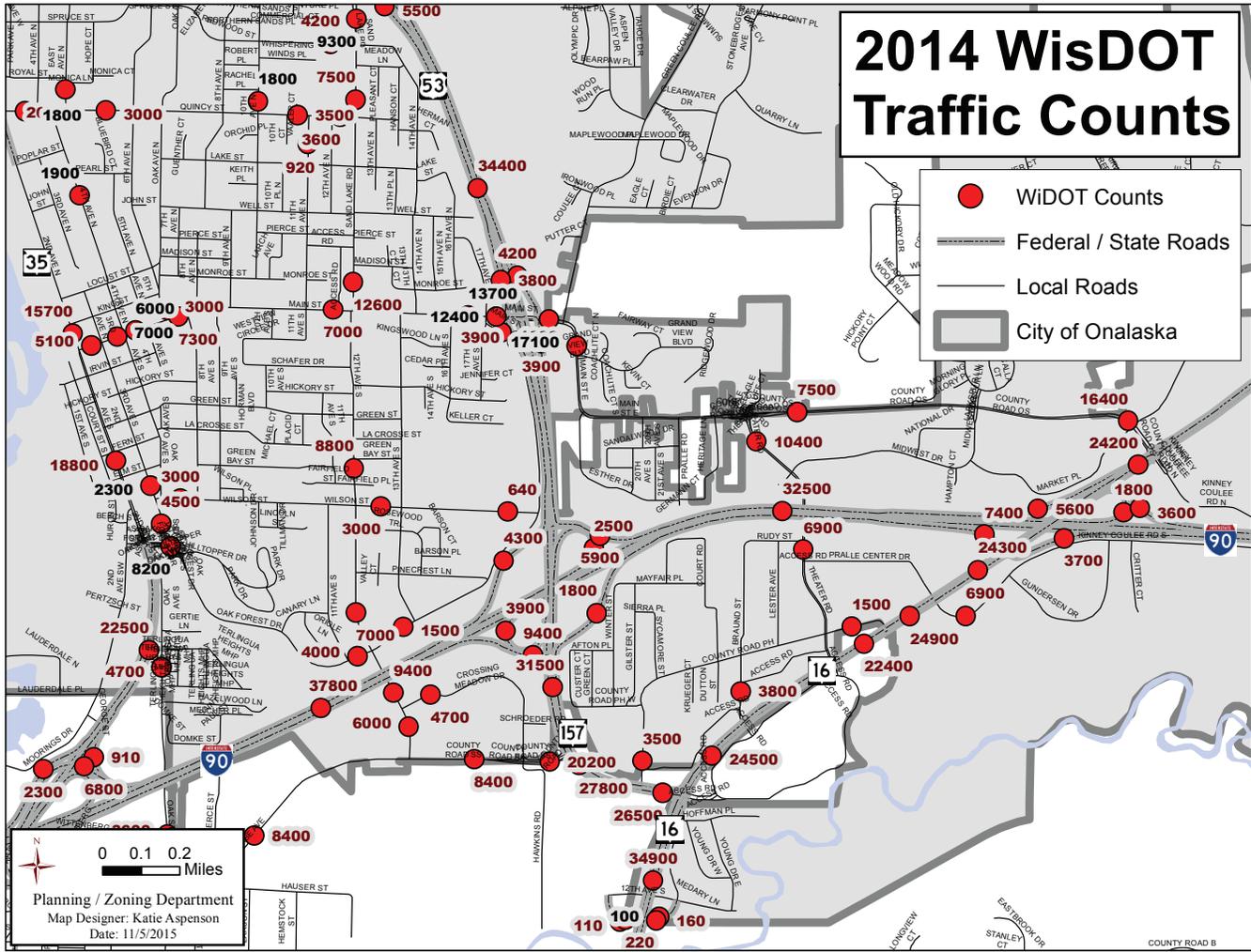


Figure 4-4. Traffic Counts. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

## TRANSIT

### Bus

Bus service is available in portions of the City, as well as shared-ride taxi service. La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility provides transportation throughout the City of La Crosse, to points within Onalaska, French Island, and La Crescent, Minnesota (see Figure 4-5). As found in the 2014 Community Survey, City of Onalaska residents have generally expressed some concern about the convenience of the bus service, and the limited times it offers service to Onalaska making it difficult for people who may work in La Crosse, or wish to travel to La Crosse in the evening to use this service.

### TAXI

The Onalaska Public Transit taxi service has been operated by Running, Inc. since 1999. There are 12 vehicles serving the Onalaska, Holmen and West Salem communities year-round. However, this service is deemed by users (as expressed in the 2014 Community Survey) to need improvements as well, focusing on reliability, timeliness when connecting to transit stops, scheduling conflicts, expense, and concerns over the transfers from shared ride to bus service not working cohesively.

## BRIDGES

There are a total of 18 bridges in Onalaska. Of these bridges, 17 are owned by the State of Wisconsin. The City of Onalaska is responsible for the bridge on Marcou Road.

State and local bridges are inspected at least once every two years. WisDOT is responsible for all inspections of bridges along the state highway system. Municipalities complete the inspections for bridges along the local roadway.

Bridges are rated and categorized in terms of their functional and structural condition. A functionally obsolete bridge is typically older and no longer meets geometric standards, such as having narrow lanes or shoulders. However, this classification does not mean the bridge is unsafe. A structurally deficient bridge generally has an element that needs attention, such as potholes or rust. Once again, however, this does not mean that the bridge is unsafe to travel on.

There are no bridges in Onalaska that have been identified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.



Photo 4-3. MTU La Crosse Municipal Transit Information Sign.

## PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES

Park and Ride facilities can be an efficient method of commuting, whereby several individuals meet and carpool from a convenient location to locations near their workplaces. Currently, the City does not have any officially established park and ride facilities. There is demand, however, as existing businesses have been noticing people using their private or shared parking lots for informal park and ride facilities, in particular, the existing lot next to the Texas Roadhouse restaurant. The City is open to discussions with WisDOT and La Crosse County regarding the establishment of a formal park and ride network in the near future.

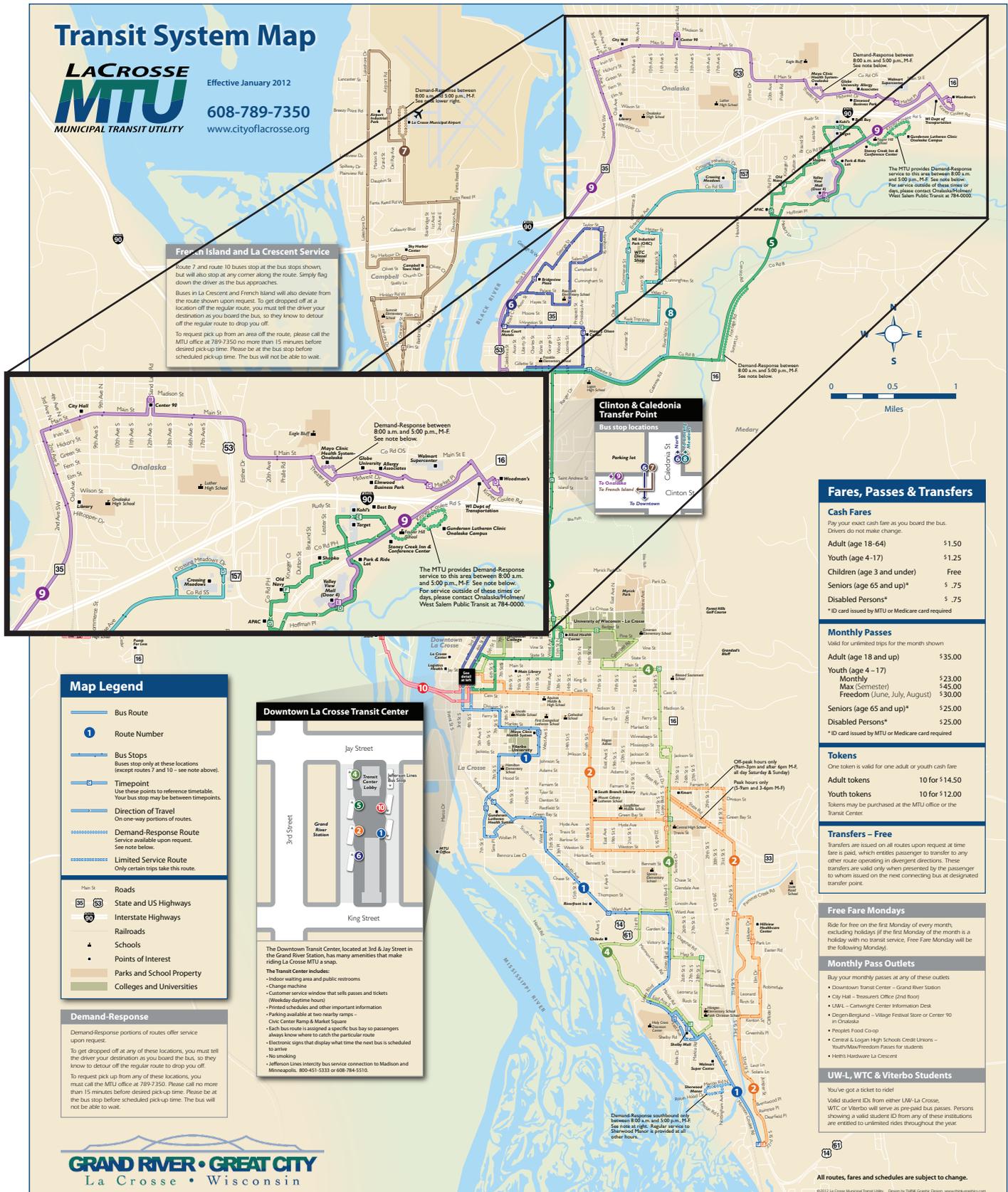


Figure 4-5. La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility System Map.

## BICYCLE FACILITIES

The City of Onalaska is fast-becoming known as a biking community. In 2013, the City was awarded a Bronze Level as a Bike Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. This makes Onalaska just the 12th community in Wisconsin to be classified as a “Bike-Friendly” Community.

The City also works closely with the Bike Federation of Wisconsin. This group is the largest statewide bicycle organization and they work with people statewide to make bicycling convenient, safe, accessible and fun. This group provides various public education pieces that are used in presentations and bicycling promotions.

Bicycle routes throughout the City of Onalaska connect into regional, statewide and national trail systems. OnaBike Association is a local active organization in promoting the bicycling amenities throughout the region.

The La Crosse River State Trail is a 22-mile trail developed along the abandoned Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Local trails connect to this, as does the Great River State Trail along State Highway 35 near the western edge of the City.

The Great River State Trail travels for approximately 24 miles along the abandoned Chicago-Northwestern Railroad. This is a part of the Mississippi River Trail which is a designated bicycle route that travels from the headwaters of the Mississippi River in Itasca, Minnesota all the way to the Delta of the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana, an over 3,000 mile trek. In 2013, the WDNR estimated that 69,000 individuals utilized the Great River State Trail, with a high percentage utilizing the Onalaska portion of the trail. It was also estimated that the economic impact to the trail’s gateway communities - Trempealeau and Onalaska, was nearly \$1.8 million.

Many local streets have been constructed wide enough to accommodate bicyclists. The City is continuing to develop roads that can accommodate bicycles and add lanes or off-road trails when allowable. These have also been mapped as bicycle-friendly routes. The OnaBike Association and the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin assisted with evaluating these local streets and have identified routes that are safe and accessible for people of all ages (Figures 4-6 and 4-7). Bicycle improvements were noted as a priority for future improvements frequently throughout the 2014 Community Survey.



Photo 4-4. Great River State Trail - Trail Head Sign.



Photo 4-5. Bike trail.

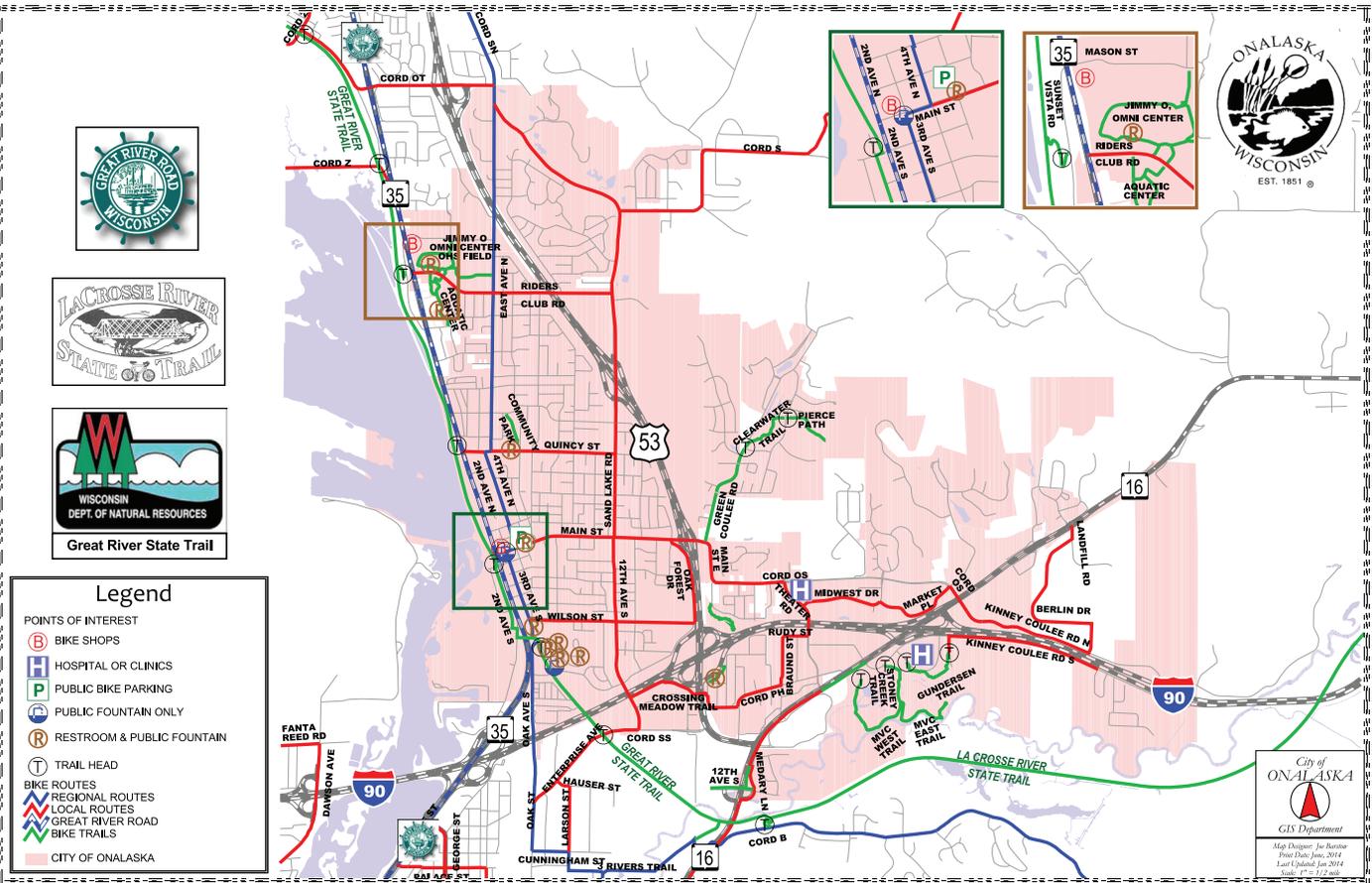


Figure 4-6. Onalaska Bicycle Routes. Source: City of Onalaska.

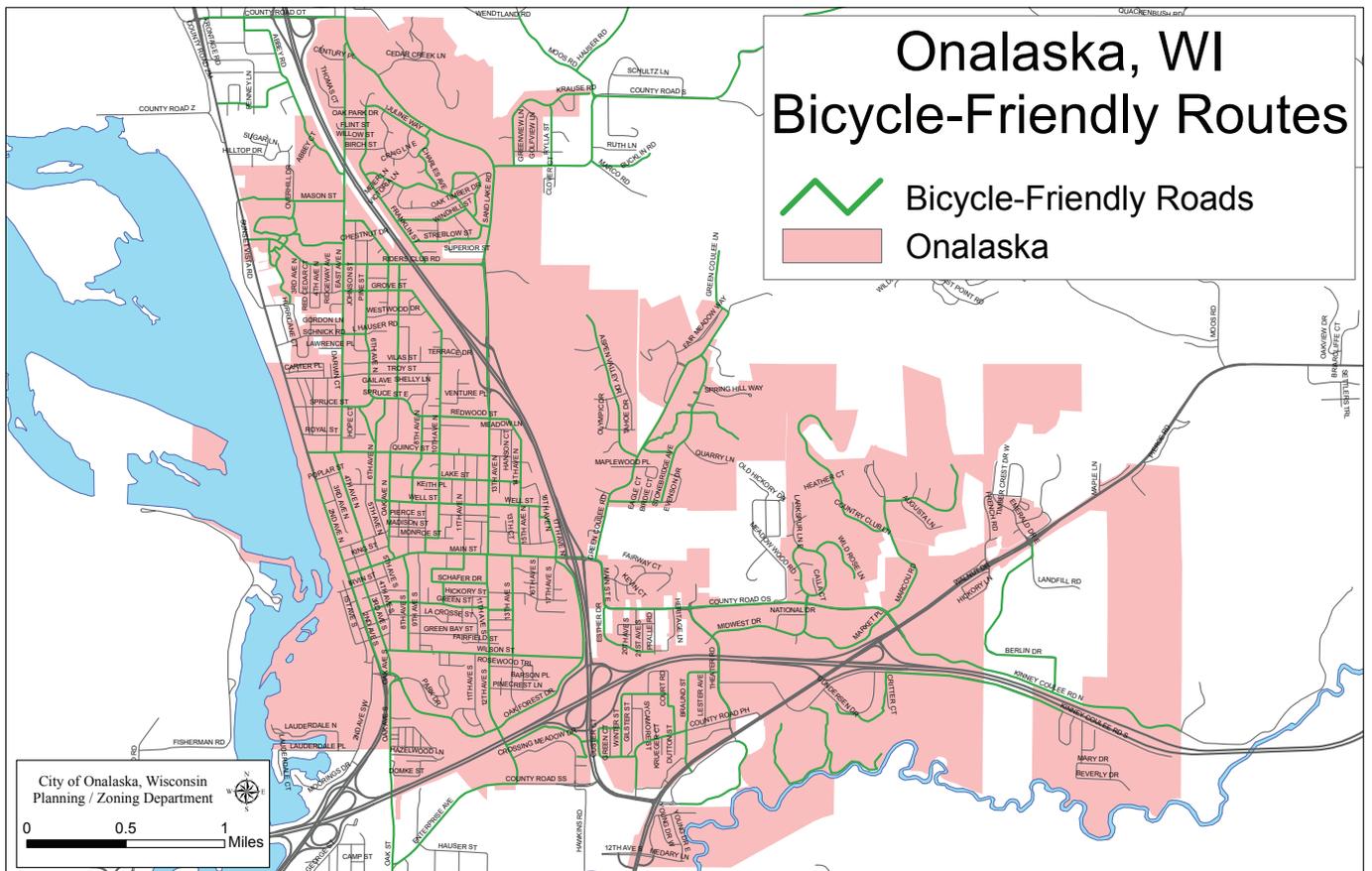


Figure 4-7. Onalaska Bicycle-Friendly Routes. Source: City of Onalaska.

## PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Some of the areas in the City lack complete sidewalk networks, but for the most part, the major residential and commercial areas are connected to accommodate pedestrian movements. However, there is a lack of integrated land uses that allow for walkable multi-purpose trips. The City should continue to install sidewalks in new and existing developments to create a connected sidewalk system.

The City and the Onalaska School District worked together on writing and implementing a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan through an SRTS grant. Several elementary schools use a “Walking School Bus” on a regular basis where adults walk with children along a designated safe route and lead children to school safely. New sidewalks and signage has been installed as a result of this effort.

Sidewalk connectivity was noted as a priority for future improvements frequently throughout the 2014 Community Survey.

## RAILROADS

The Burlington Northern Railroad runs north/south along the shore of Lake Onalaska. This track is heavily utilized for freight traffic travelling between Chicago and the Twin Cities. Passenger rail service via Amtrak is available in La Crosse. Figure 4-8 (following page) shows Wisconsin’s railroads. In 2014 it was estimated that 60 trains travel through Onalaska daily.

In 2014, a Quiet Zone Study was completed for the City, and implementation efforts are ongoing. There are known safety concerns along 2nd Avenue SW and along Irvin Street, at the Great River Landing that are being evaluated for improvements. It is estimated that up to 60 trains per day currently travel through the City of Onalaska.

## AIR TRANSPORTATION

Commercial air passenger service and light freight service is available at the La Crosse Regional Airport located approximately three (3) miles from Onalaska. The airport was originally constructed in 1944 and was reconstructed in 1989. The airport has three asphalt runways and generally sees 10 flights per day.

In the five-year Wisconsin Airport Program (2014-2019) the La Crosse Regional Airport is slated for \$28 million of improvements, including terminal improvements (completed in 2015), fueling area improvements, parking rehab, land acquisition, airfield lighting rehab, and hangar taxiway reconstruction.

The La Crosse Regional Airport requires unique development restrictions. The City adopted an Airport Overlay Zoning area (3-mile buffer from airport) that encompasses much of the City of Onalaska (see Figures 4-9 and 4-10). Restrictions include industries creating dust or steam, tall objects, nighttime light pollution, noise sensitive environments, wildlife hazards and plantings that attract certain wildlife, and large concentrations of people in potentially hazardous areas. Development within these airport overlay zones may



Photo 4-6. Pedestrian Crossing Sign.



Photo 4-7. Railroad.

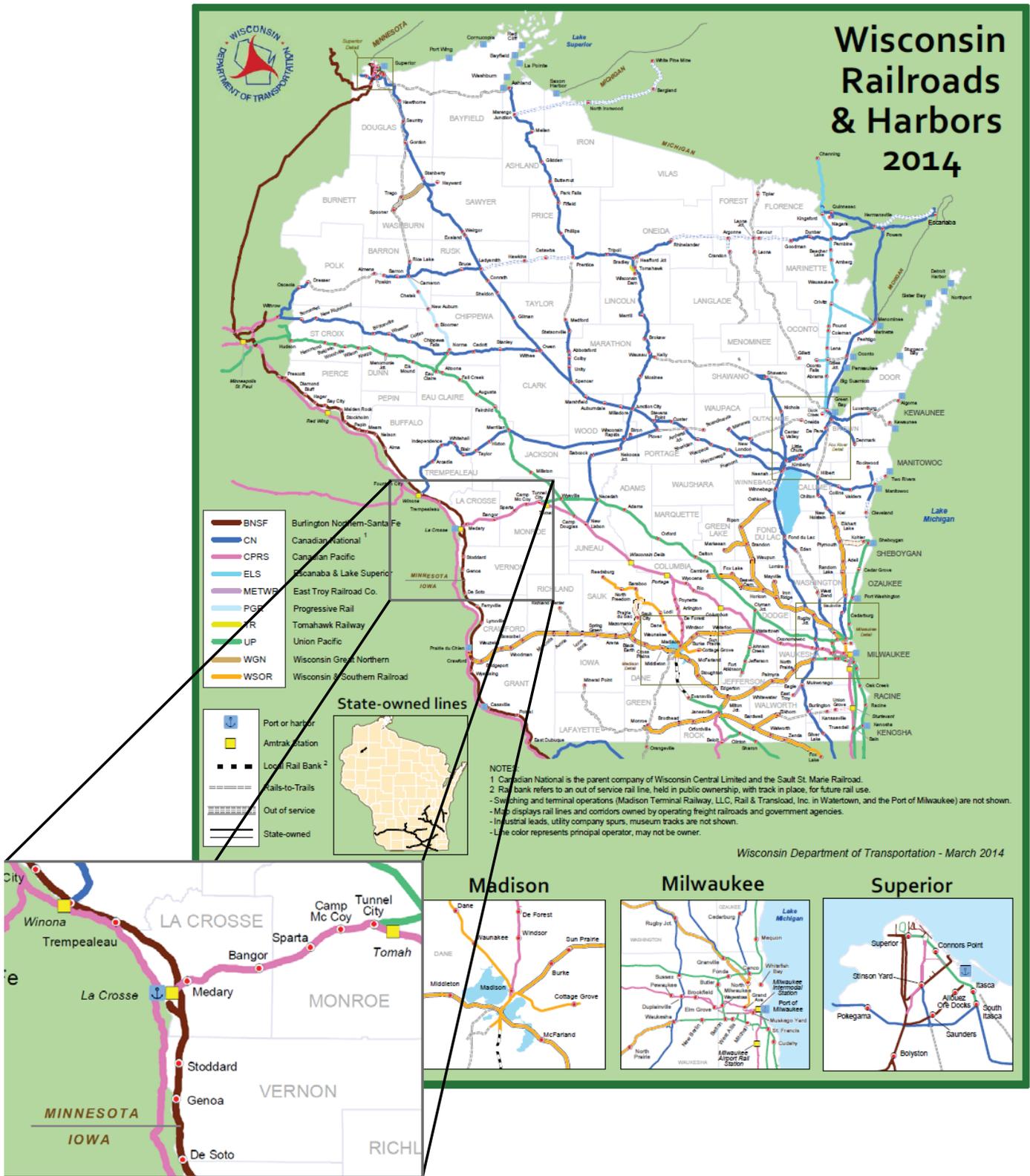


Figure 4-8. Onalaska Railroads. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

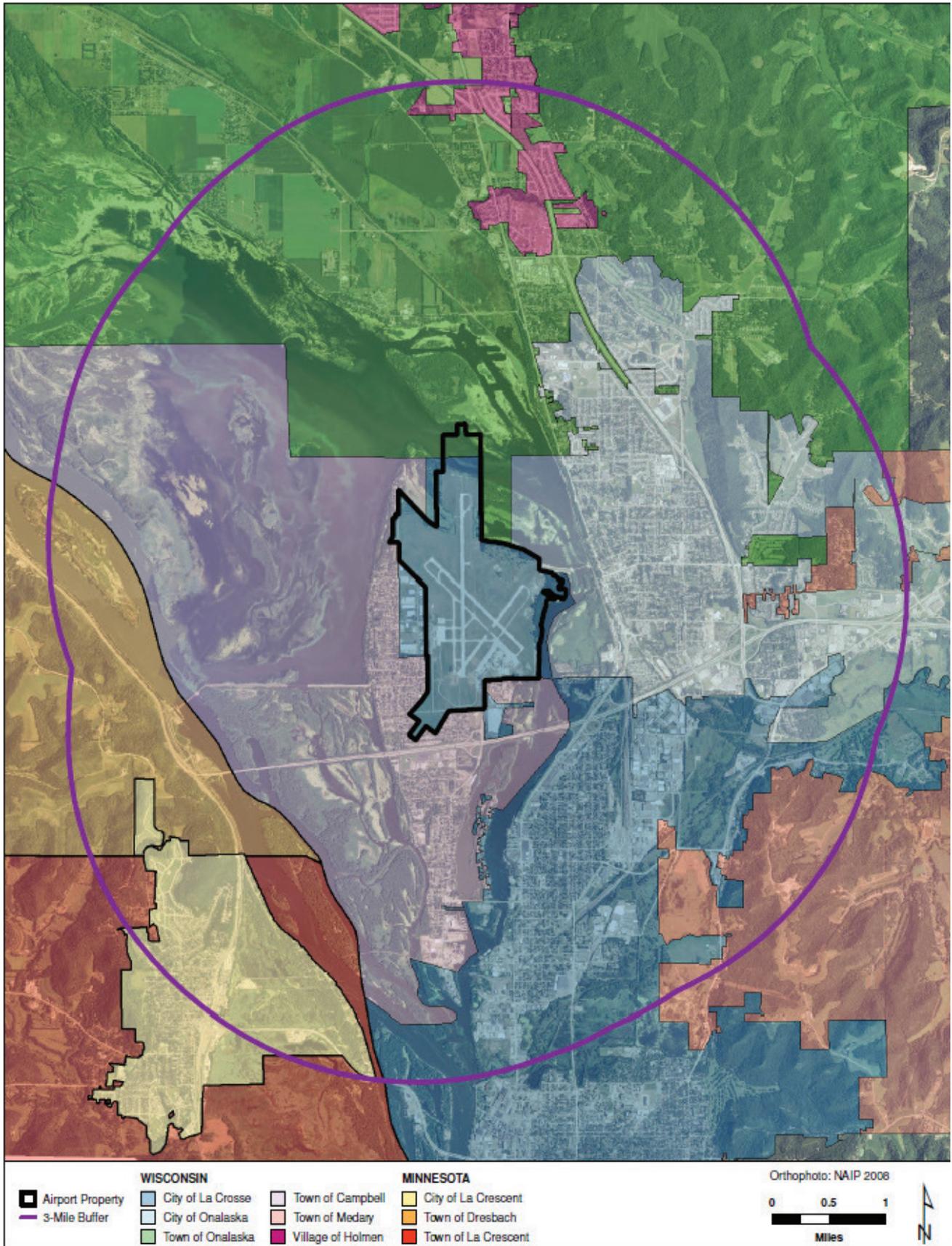


Figure 4-9. La Crosse Regional Airport Zoing Overlay. Source: City of La Crosse GIS adapted by Mead & Hunt, Inc.

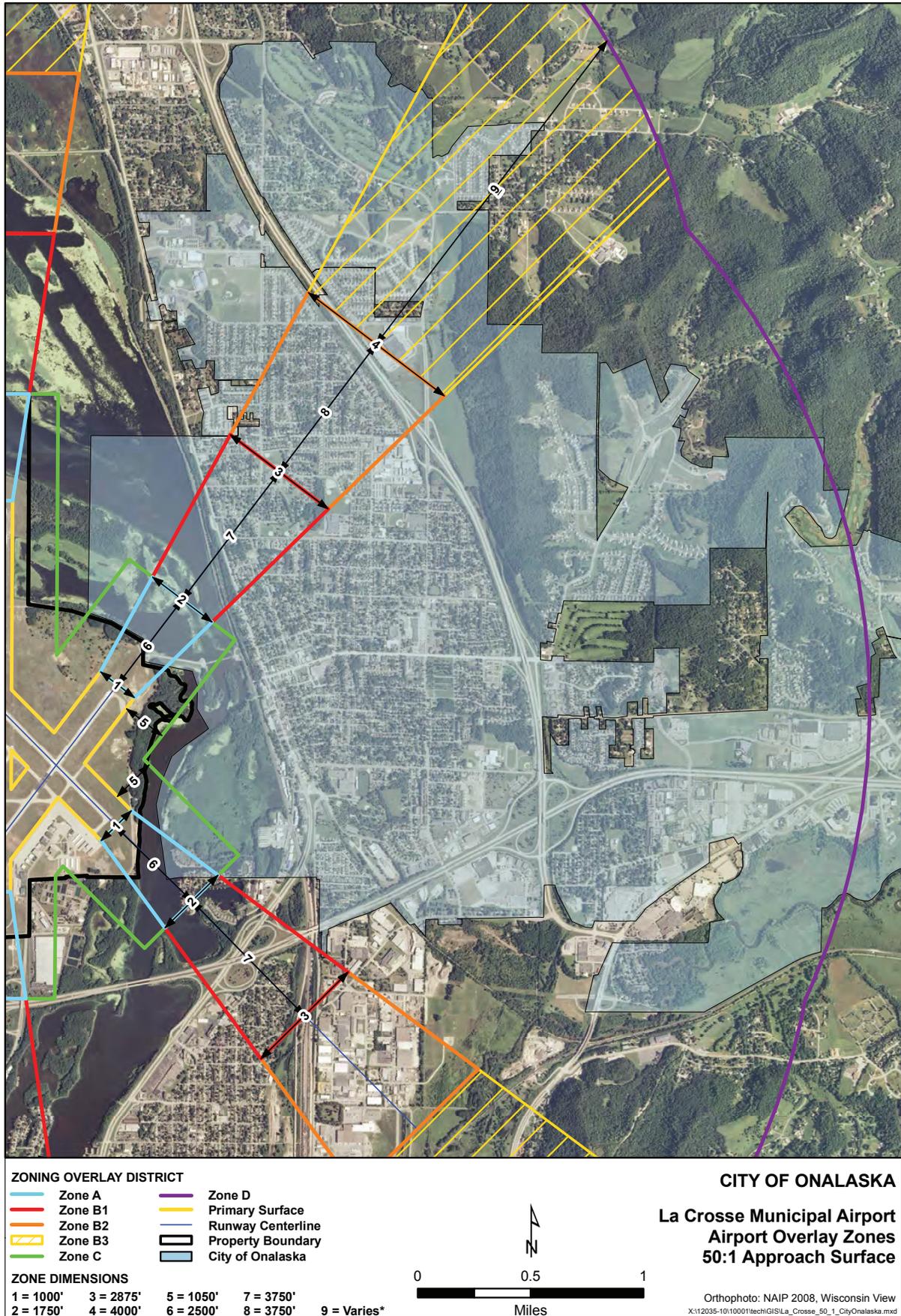


Figure 4-10. Onalaska Overlay Impacts. Source: City of La Crosse GIS adapted by Mead & Hunt, Inc.



Photo 4-8. No Trucks Sign in Residential Neighborhood.

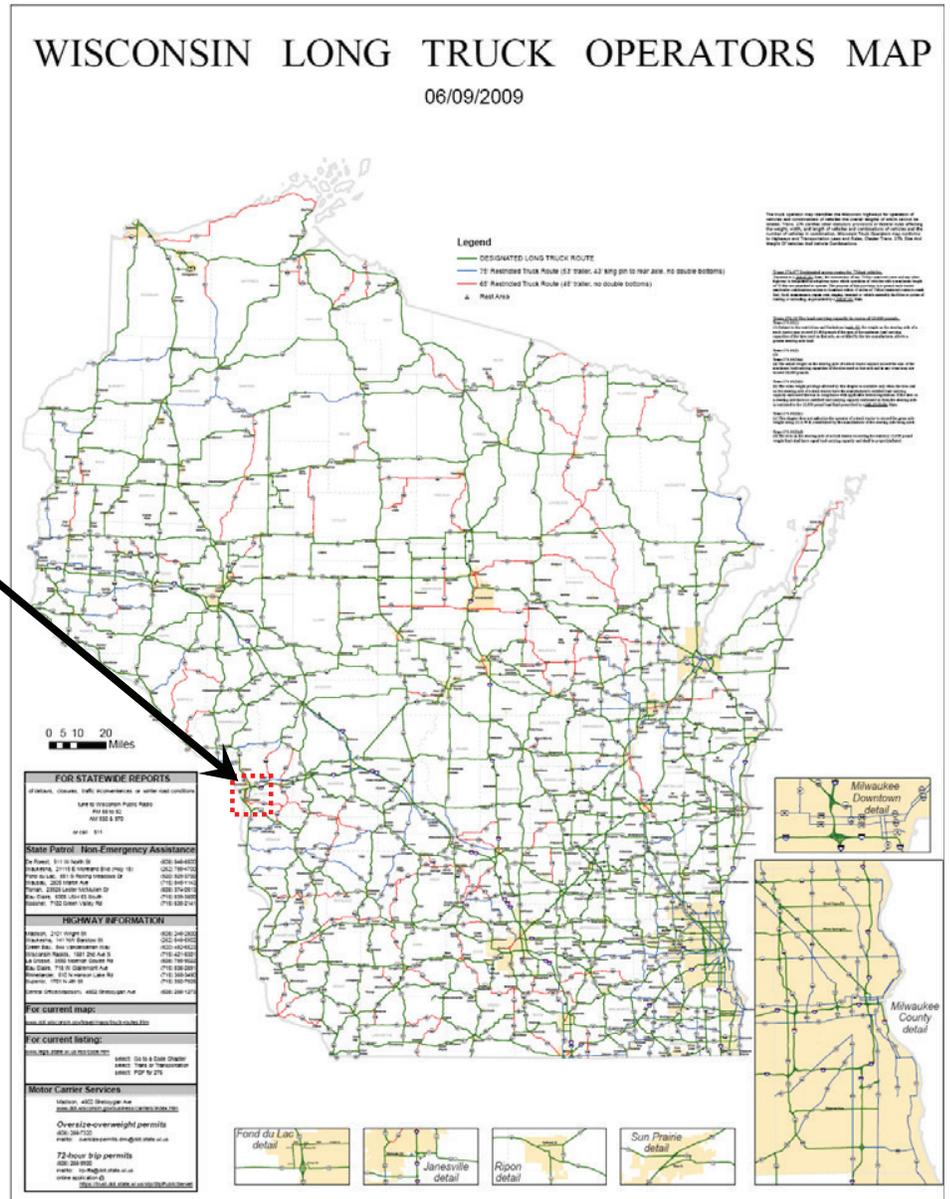


Figure 4-11. Long Truck Operators Map. Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

## TRUCKING

According to the WisDOT Wisconsin Long Truck Operator’s Map, created in June 2009, Interstate 90 and US 53 are designated long truck routes. These are routes that are safe to operate vehicles and combinations of vehicles with overall lengths that cannot be limited. State Highways 16 and 157 are classified as 75 foot Restricted Truck Routes, meaning trucks may have a maximum of a 53 foot long trailer. WIS 35 is classified as a 65 foot Restricted Truck Route, meaning trucks may have a maximum of a 48 foot long trailer without double

bottoms. The above Figure 4-11 visually represents Wisconsin’s long truck routes.

Locally, designated truck routes include all major highways, as well as East Avenue, Riders Club Road, Quincy Street, Sand Lake Road, Main Street, County Road OS, Wilson Street, 12th Avenue South, portions of Oak Avenue, Oak Forest Drive, Theater Road, County Road PH, County Road SS, and Crossing Meadow Drive.



Photo 4-9. Spillway.



Photo 4-10. Great River State Trail.

## WATER TRANSPORTATION

The Port of La Crosse is three (3) miles south of Onalaska and services incoming and outgoing barge traffic on the Mississippi River. This is a large shipping facility that connects commodities internationally.

Boat traffic, motorized and non-motorized, including canoeing and kayaking, is found on Lake Onalaska, the Black River, the La Crosse River, the Mississippi River, and other area rivers and streams.

## TRAILS

There are several miles of snowmobile, ATV and cross-country ski trails throughout Onalaska. Figure 4-12 shows the La Crosse County snowmobile trail parallel to State Highway 16 on the City's east end. On Onalaska's west end, the snowmobile trail runs along Oak Avenue then crosses WIS 35 and heads north to connect with the Great River State Trail. In fact, Lake Onalaska is connected to Lake Superior through a series of snowmobile trails. The Great River State Trail

accommodates cross country skiing and snowshoeing for those interested.

The 2014 Community Survey identified community safety concerns associated with the WIS 35 crossing.



Figure 4-12. Onalaska Area Snowmobile Corridors. Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

## 4.2 RELATIONSHIP TO STATE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Several state, regional and La Crosse County organizations and agencies have developed plans and programs for the management and systematic update of transportation facilities in the area. Based on a review of these plans and programs, no land use conflicts or policy differences were identified.

“The planning, design, and construction of road and highways as well as other transportation modes affect existing land uses and plans and proposals for future development. Safe and efficient travel, whether by walking, taking a car, an airplane or a bike, is also influenced by the types and patterns of land use” (Wisconsin Department of Transportation).

### WISCONSIN STATE HIGHWAY PLAN 2020

The Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020 prioritizes highway construction and improvement needs and investments. It was adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in February 2000. Wisconsin’s State Trunk Highway system, consisting of approximately 11,800 miles of roads, is aging and deteriorating at the same time traffic congestion is increasing. In response to this critical issue, WisDOT, in partnership with its stakeholders, has developed the State Highway Plan 2020, a 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system’s current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin’s preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. Several routes through the Onalaska and La Crosse areas are projected to experience moderate or severe congestion by 2020, including State Highways 35, 16, and US 53. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin. This will eventually be phased out and be contained within the Connections 2030 Plan (and subsequent versions).

### WISCONSIN STATE AIRPORT SYSTEM PLAN 2020 AND 2030 (DRAFT)

Airports, aviation and aviation-related industries play a significant role in the economic success of Wisconsin communities. The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020 provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet current and future aviation needs of the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin also has a five-year airport improvement program. The La Crosse Regional Airport is scheduled to receive approximately \$28 million of improvements from 2014 to 2019.

### WISCONSIN STATEWIDE PEDESTRIAN POLICY PLAN 2020

WisDOT developed the Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 to provide a long-range vision addressing Wisconsin pedestrian needs. The Pedestrian Plan is one of several plans recommended in Translinks 21, WisDOT’s comprehensive transportation plan released in 1994.

The Pedestrian Plan provides a basic description of existing and emerging pedestrian needs over the next 20 years, with a set of recommendations to meet those needs. WisDOT’s efforts ensure that this plan complements both existing and future long-range transportation plans.

## WISCONSIN BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2020

WisDOT encourages planning for bicyclists at the local level and is responsible for developing long-range, statewide bicycle plans. Guidelines for accommodating travel by bicycles when roadways are reconstructed, or new roads are built, are available and their use is encouraged.

The development of WisDOT's statewide long-range bicycle plan, Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020, involved many people, including an advisory committee. This bicycle planning document is intended to help both communities and individuals in developing bicycle-friendly facilities throughout Wisconsin.

## WISCONSIN RAIL PLAN 2030

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 identifies rail issues statewide and is meant to serve as a guide for decision-makers through 2030, with updates occurring every five-years.

The BNSF route travelling through Onalaska is the busiest freight rail line in the state, transporting over 60 million tons of freight per year. Statewide, there is a projection that freight rail commodities will grow by over 16 percent by 2030. Trains on this route carry a variety of goods, including intermodal shipments from the ports of Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon to the Chicago area, and crude oil and coal from Montana and Wyoming.

Concerning passenger rail, the La Crosse region would see 110 mile per hour trains for passenger travel from Minneapolis/St. Paul to Chicago and other routes among the Midwest.

Specific projects noted in the 2030 plan include infrastructure improvements include adding additional round trips on the Empire Builder corridor between Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul and improvements to accommodate 6 to 8 daily intercity passenger trains between Minneapolis/St. Paul and Milwaukee using the existing Empire Builder Amtrak route.

## MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL INITIATIVE

Nine Midwestern states, including Wisconsin, are working with Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration on proposals for high-speed passenger rail service. The plan, published in 2000, is intended to develop and improve the 3,000-mile Midwest Regional Rail System. Long-term, the La Crosse area would see 110 mile per hour trains from Minneapolis/St. Paul to Chicago and other routes among the Midwest for passenger travel.

## CONNECTIONS 2030

WisDOT developed a long-range transportation plan for the state, called Connections 2030. This plan addresses all forms of transportation: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. The overall goal of the planning process is to identify a series of policies to aid transportation decision-makers when evaluating programs and projects.

Several corridors include the Onalaska area, including the Coulee Country Corridor (La Crosse to Tomah), Frank Lloyd Wright Corridor (La Crosse to Madison), La Crosse Metropolitan Planning Area, Mississippi River Corridor (Dubuque to La Crosse to Twin Cities), and the Trempealeau River Corridor (La Crosse to Eau Claire) are identified.

Plans in these corridors generally include intercity bus and rail connections and increased bicycle accommodations.

## LA CROSSE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE COULEE VISIONS 2050

Coulee Vision 2050 creates a long-range vision for transportation and land use in the La Crosse-La Crescent region. Communities in this area are projected to grow quickly, and this plan looks to encourage more infill development that is less reliant on automobile traffic. Guiding principles of transportation and land use have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

## LA CROSSE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE – 2035 LA CROSSE AND LA CRESCENT METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP)

The vision of this plan is “To provide a safe and efficient transportation system for all users that encourages economic prosperity, and protects and enhances the area’s unique natural and cultural resources.”

Several projects underway are included in the plan, including Sand Lake Road and Theater Road. Other improvements include I-90 Auxiliary Lanes exist between WIS 35 (US 53 South) and WIS 157, WIS 16 expansion to 4 lanes from Landfill Road to Veteran’s Park in West Salem, US 53/12th Avenue extension, and WIS 35 reconstruction.

## I-90 CORRIDOR BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS COORDINATION REPORT

Several state, regional and local planning agencies coordinated and have developed broad support for planning bicycle/pedestrian accommodations on the I-90 corridor as it is being redeveloped and reconstructed.

## WISCONSIN DOT: I-90 RECONSTRUCTION

Currently underway, this project is anticipated to be completed in 2018 and includes the reconditioning of 2.2 miles of pavement, reconstructing two miles of I-90, reconstructing the I-90/US 53/WIS 35 interchange, and re-decking and overlay of WIS 157 structures over I-90.

## WISCONSIN DOT: SIX YEAR HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

This plan identifies construction projects scheduled on the Wisconsin state trunk highway system for the next six years. The projects change frequently, and updates are made frequently. Several highway improvements are scheduled in or near Onalaska, include:

- USH 53 – Livingston to 2nd Avenue South reconstruction;
- WIS 35 – Poplar Street to County OT – Reconstruction;
- I-90 - French Slough to Theater Road – Reconstruct roadway and interchanges for safety improvements and;
- WIS 16 - Landfill Road to Veteran’s Park reconstruction.

## COULEE REGION TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Currently underway, the purpose of the study is to resolve existing and long-term transportation issues between I-90 and US 14/61 by identifying strategies that address safety, congestion, environmental concerns, multi-modal deficiencies, infrastructure deterioration and to support economic development and livability in the Coulee Region.

### 4.3 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS

Generally, the accessibility within the region is favorable for the City of Onalaska. Transportation-related challenges for the future, however, are significant and impact a variety of the transportation options within the City. The 2014 Community Survey indicated that improving and rehabilitating streets is a primary concern for City residents over the next 20 years, particularly near high-accident intersections.

The City has identified a major safety concern at the intersection of Greens Coulee Road and Main Street. The reconstruction of this intersection has been studied, however, due to high costs, storm water infrastructure challenges, and private landowner challenges, a solution to the congestion and safety hazards is difficult. The City has also learned from this intersection that it is imperative that subdivisions have multiple access points. As additional coulee's see development, it is critical to ensure that there are multiple access points that are designed with safety and traffic movements in mind.

The intersection of Riders Club Road and WIS 35 (Second Avenue), as well as the intersection of WIS 35 and Quincy Street, and Theater Road and WIS 16 have been identified as safety issues due to the speed of traffic. These areas are slated for improvements in 2016. The WIS 16 and Theater Road areas are also seeing higher traffic volumes from increased commercial development. This area was reconstructed to help alleviate some of this congestion in 2014.

Transit facility access and convenience is a large issue. While the fact that public transit exists in Onalaska is a benefit, it is also a topic of contention because the times and routes it runs and serves Onalaska are limited, with virtually no evening routes, making it difficult to utilize for evening events or non-traditional work hours.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are currently widely used throughout the City. However, there are some "missing links", and the public identified that a community-wide non-motorized network is desired. Further, it was identified by several planning participants that walkable neighborhoods do not generally exist, leading to Onalaska residents having to rely on automobiles for many activities that might otherwise be able to be completed without a vehicle if it were more convenient.

### 4.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL 1: PROVIDE AN INTEGRATED, SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By designing and building the transportation network to be interconnected both within new developments and with existing streets to the extent possible so that traffic load on residential streets is equitable, car trip distances are minimized, and walking and biking are convenient.
2. By coordinating with regional and state agencies to facilitate efficient and cooperative planning, design, operation, and maintenance of transportation facilities and programs.
3. By ensuring that safety features are incorporated into the design of all transportation facilities, including automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and transit-related facilities, and that dangerous transportation areas are improved through good planning, budgeting and utilizing alternative funding mechanisms.
4. By planning for pedestrian, bicycle and transit-supportive land use patterns and development, including higher intensity developments along major roads; medium-and high-density residential development in close proximity to potential transit stations, major corridors, employment centers, and the downtown; and development and redevelopment in designated areas that are or could be well served by transit.

## GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITY NETWORKS IN ONALASKA AND PROMOTE THESE AS VIABLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.

### OBJECTIVES

1. By increasing opportunities for safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle travel throughout the City by:
  - Expanding and connecting to existing or future routes in new neighborhoods and adjacent communities;
  - Identifying and resolving missing sidewalk and trail links, both on-street and off-street, so that systems are complete;
  - Improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including sidewalks, safe school routes, bike routes, bike lanes, bike parking and signage, particularly near bus stops and other high traffic, destination areas, including shopping centers and restaurant areas; and
  - Not allowing vacating of right-of-way or utility easements where bicycle or pedestrian access might be appropriate in the future, unless otherwise deemed appropriate after staff and committee reviews.
2. By promoting the social, health, environmental and economic benefits of non-motorized transportation and other forms of pedestrian recreation/transportation.
3. By continuing to officially map future bicycle and pedestrian routes.

## GOAL 3: PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVELY DESIGNED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

### OBJECTIVES

1. By maintaining or improving the quality of street design so that streets are attractive and inviting. This may involve using landscaping, colored pavements, attractive lighting, public art and/or site furniture in transportation corridors.
2. By planning, designing and constructing attractively designed gateways and entrances to the City.
3. By encouraging boulevard treatments and street trees on major collectors and arterials.

## GOAL 4: SUPPORT TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES THAT IMPROVE ONALASKA'S ECONOMIC VITALITY.

### OBJECTIVES

1. By creating a transportation system that encourages new businesses to locate in the City and helps existing businesses to succeed.
2. By supporting reasonable, reliable and safe travel ways for freight and goods movement in the City and region.
3. By working closely with the LAPC to ensure a safe, efficient, accessible, reliable, affordable, and multimodal regional transportation system for use by commuters, including the Onalaska/Holmen Shared Ride Taxi and the partnership with the La Crosse Metropolitan Transit Utility for bus services.
4. By considering improvements to public transportation options to aid in increasing age diversity in the City by having options available for those populations that do not have or want vehicles.
5. By maintaining existing transportation facilities and requiring private developers to finance the construction of new transportation infrastructure needed to serve new development.
6. By supporting the Transportation Investment Coalition in funding alternative funding mechanisms for financing transportation-related infrastructure.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **TRANSPORTATION CIRCULATION**

1. Work to ensure that increased growth and development can be accommodated on local streets.
2. Continue to work cooperatively with the City of La Crosse, Village of Holmen, Town of Onalaska, Town of Medary, Town of Hamilton, La Crosse County, State of Wisconsin, and the La Crosse Area Planning Committee on transportation issues by submitting City plans, development plans and consider their plans when creating Onalaska transportation plans. Work with WisDOT on future interchange improvements.
3. Promote “interior” circulation within commercial and industrial areas to reduce the amount of local traffic using major arterials. Additionally, minimize the number of driveways and access points in the vicinity of interchanges and major intersections by using good access management.
4. Ensure that multiple points of ingress/egress are constructed in new developments to avoid congested and dangerous intersections, and to provide for efficient emergency services response times. This is particularly important as additional development continues within coulees.
5. Discourage the use of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets when through-streets are possible.
6. Discourage through traffic on local neighborhood streets by the prohibition of truck traffic, restricted turns at intersections, and enforcing existing residential neighborhood speed limits by ticketing, increasing police patrol and/or using digital speed displays.
7. Continue to promote street trees, which add to neighborhood aesthetics, help slow traffic, and provide a barrier between the pedestrian and the street.
8. Enforce the parking provisions of the traffic chapter of Onalaska’s Zoning Code, including attractive parking lot screening. Consider new parking maximums to reduce parking lot size, which can enhance pedestrian access and contribute to a more attractive look to an area. Consider allowing on-street parking and shared parking to count toward parking requirements.
9. Encourage commercial redevelopments to locate parking in the rear or sides of the building, or the interior of the street face, to the extent possible.

### **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

1. Continue to coordinate paratransit with the Onalaska/Holmen Shared Ride Taxi and the La Crosse Metropolitan Transit Utility. Look for ways to increase ridership by making the service convenient to potential users through altered service times, destinations and well-located bus shelters.
2. Explore opportunities for transit-oriented design, especially during reconstruction of WIS 16 and in other appropriate locations.
3. Evaluate the need and appropriateness for establishing park and ride facilities in coordination with WisDOT.

### **PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION**

1. Strive to develop safe commuter and recreational bikeways in Onalaska that connect residential areas to businesses, schools, commercial areas, the Great River Trail and the La Crosse River Trail, including the incorporation of wayfinding signage.
2. Strive to provide a complete internal bicycle and pedestrian network (i.e. fix the missing links) that continues to connect and develop with regional trail systems.
3. Encourage park-and-rides, ride-sharing initiatives, bike-to-work and bike-to-school week and improved pedestrian/bicycle facilities. Work with major employers and agencies in the area to assist in implementation of these programs, including the provision of safe and accessible bicycle parking and storage.
4. Include the requirements of pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the design and timing of traffic control devices.
5. Follow the City’s Complete Streets Policy.

### **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY**

1. Maintain street trees, landscaping, signage, roads, etc. to ensure adequate visibility and safety.
2. Identify and improve when possible railroad vehicle and pedestrian crossings for safe access to the water resources of Onalaska.

3. Continue to work to complete the trail and sidewalk system. Additional improvements and linkages should be considered for the Great River State Trail connections to the south crossing busy intersections. This will improve circulation and safety for bicyclists, as well as snowmobiles in the winter. Work with WisDOT during the reconstruction of WIS 35 and I-90. Work with the local bicycle and snowmobile organizations for support.
4. Improve traffic safety by implementing transitions between transportation modes, such as; crosswalks, colored pavers, bike crossings, traffic calming measures and/or appropriate signage.
5. Study and designate funding for improving identified intersections with a low level of service in the Capital Improvement Program.
6. Continue to monitor the urban deer problem as it relates to traffic accidents. If the problem worsens, utilize the City's draft Urban Deer Management Report and work with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to find a solution.

#### ***TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT***

1. Whenever possible, avoid constructing transportation facilities that affect environmentally sensitive areas, such as the bluffs and wetlands.
2. Continue to recycle remnants of City street reconstruction projects.

#### ***TRANSPORTATION AND AESTHETICS***

1. Design and build transportation facilities that reflect the scale of the surrounding neighborhood when feasible.
2. Continue to implement recommendations from the Quiet Zone Study along the railroad.
3. Consider traffic calming techniques, including where appropriate allowing narrower streets, which can reduce traffic speeds and add to a "neighborhood" feel, provided streets are wide enough for emergency vehicles and public works access.
4. Consider the adoption of design guidelines to help determine how local transportation corridors should be redeveloped, including design features such as sidewalks, benches, pedestrian scale light fixtures, banners and landscaping.



Photo 5-1. Onalaska Public Library. Photo credit: La Crosse County Library.

# UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 5.1** *EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 5.2** *ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS*
- 5.3** *UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES*

## INTRODUCTION

Utilities and community facilities provide the foundation on which incorporated communities are built and maintained. Utilities may include sanitary sewer, water, and storm water systems, as well as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and solid waste disposal. Community facilities can vary greatly by community, but typically include parks, schools, libraries, cemeteries, and various health and safety providers. Special services such as day care centers may also be considered a community facility.

Utilities and community facilities can be used to guide development and encourage growth, as well as establish a community identity.

Combined with roads, the construction, maintenance, and operation of utilities and community facilities are often the largest portion of a community's budget.

This element contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, actions or policies, and recommended programs to guide the future maintenance and development of utilities and community facilities in the City of Onalaska.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(d)(d)  
 Utilities and community facilities element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities and shall assess future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.

## 5.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City provides a wide range of utilities and community facilities, including police, fire, water, wastewater, stormwater and parks. In addition, there are a number of private provisions of utilities and community facilities, including healthcare and child care.

This plan element takes an inventory of existing community facilities and services, identifies current needs of residents, and studies the need for community facilities and utilities improvements or new facilities over the next 20 years.

### SANITARY SEWER SERVICE

The City of Onalaska contracts with the City of La Crosse for sanitary sewer treatment. The current contract is set to expire in 2016 with negotiations on a new 20-year contract to begin. The City is responsible for maintaining and installing new lift stations, meter pit, sewer mains and manholes. There are currently nine lift stations and over eighty miles of sanitary sewer mains throughout the City (Figure 5-1).

As Onalaska has grown, so has the demand for sanitary sewer service. As future development continues throughout Onalaska, additional coordination between the Cities of Onalaska and La Crosse, and the Village of Holmen, will need to occur to ensure that adequate capacity is maintained for the projected future growth. The Village of Holmen may begin to use Onalaska’s sanitary sewer system in the near future. It will be important to monitor growth to ensure adequate capacity and equitable cost-sharing is being utilized.

### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The City of Onalaska has an extensive system of storm sewers and natural drainage systems (Figure 5-2). Development that has occurred within the coulees has generally required engineered natural drainageways to collect and transport stormwater for flood control purposes. The City developed a stormwater management plan in 2008 and created a Stormwater Utility in 2010 as a method of financing capital improvements for stormwater handling.

There is the potential for the amount (quantity) and rate (velocity) of runoff to increase as a result of additional development. This may adversely affect local water resources as sediment and nutrients are discharged to receiving water bodies. Managing stormwater to reduce or eliminate direct discharge to surface waters is an important step to protect surface water quality in the future. The City has a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit that regulates wastewater discharges. All facilities, including industrial, that discharge pollutants from any point source into waters are required to have a permit which indicate limits and monitoring measures required.

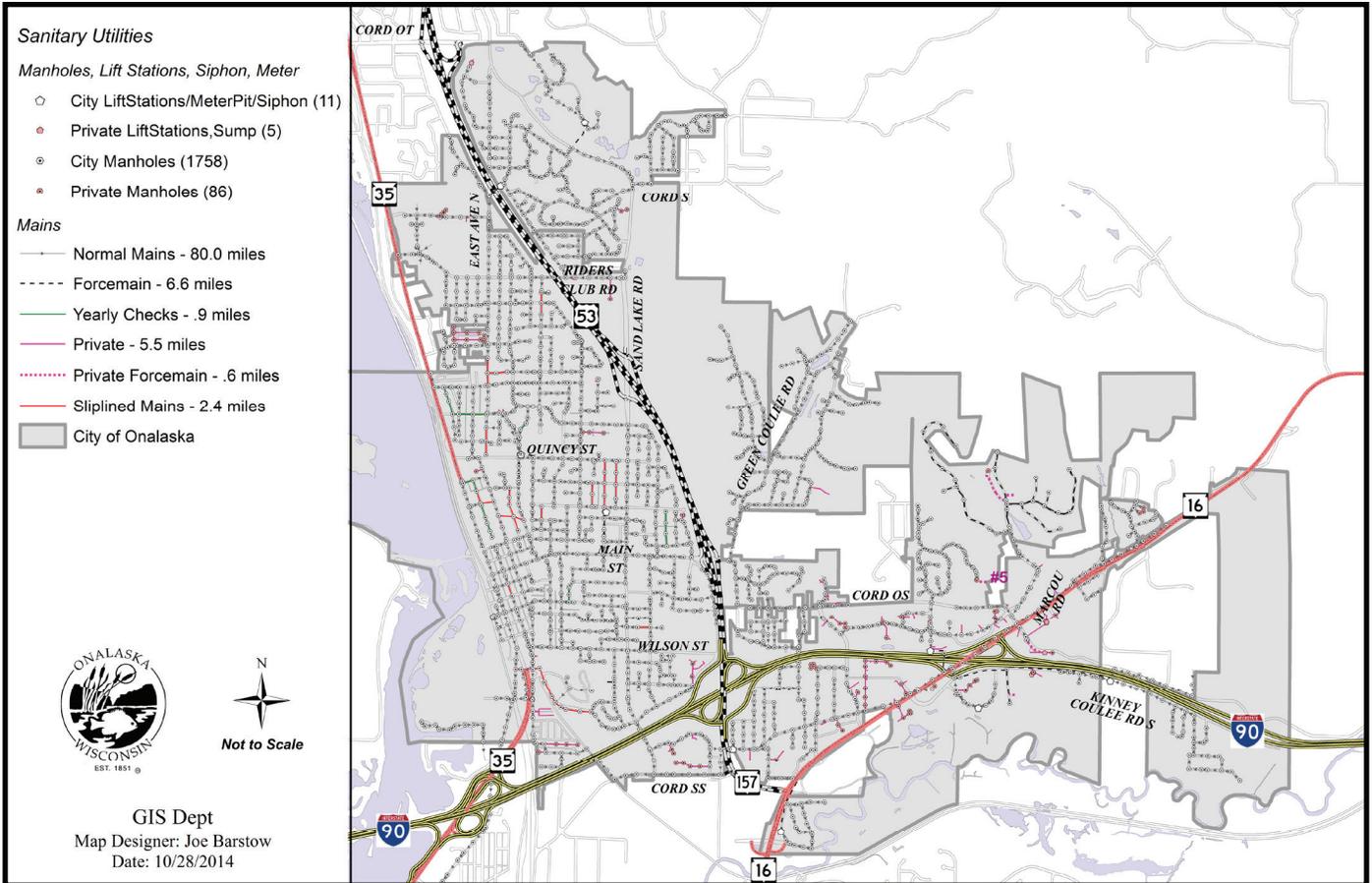


Figure 5-1. City of Onalaska Sanitary Sewer. Source: City of Onalaska.



Photo 5-2. Onalaska, Wisconsin Manhole Cover.

“The provision of community facilities and services, such as public sewer and water, has a significant impact on development patterns.” (Ohm, Brian. Planning for Natural Resources – An Overview. 2002).

Areas that the community wishes to protect from development, should be avoided when considering future placement of utilities and services.



Photo 5-3. Water Reservoir.



Photo 5-4. Main Street Storm Lift Station.

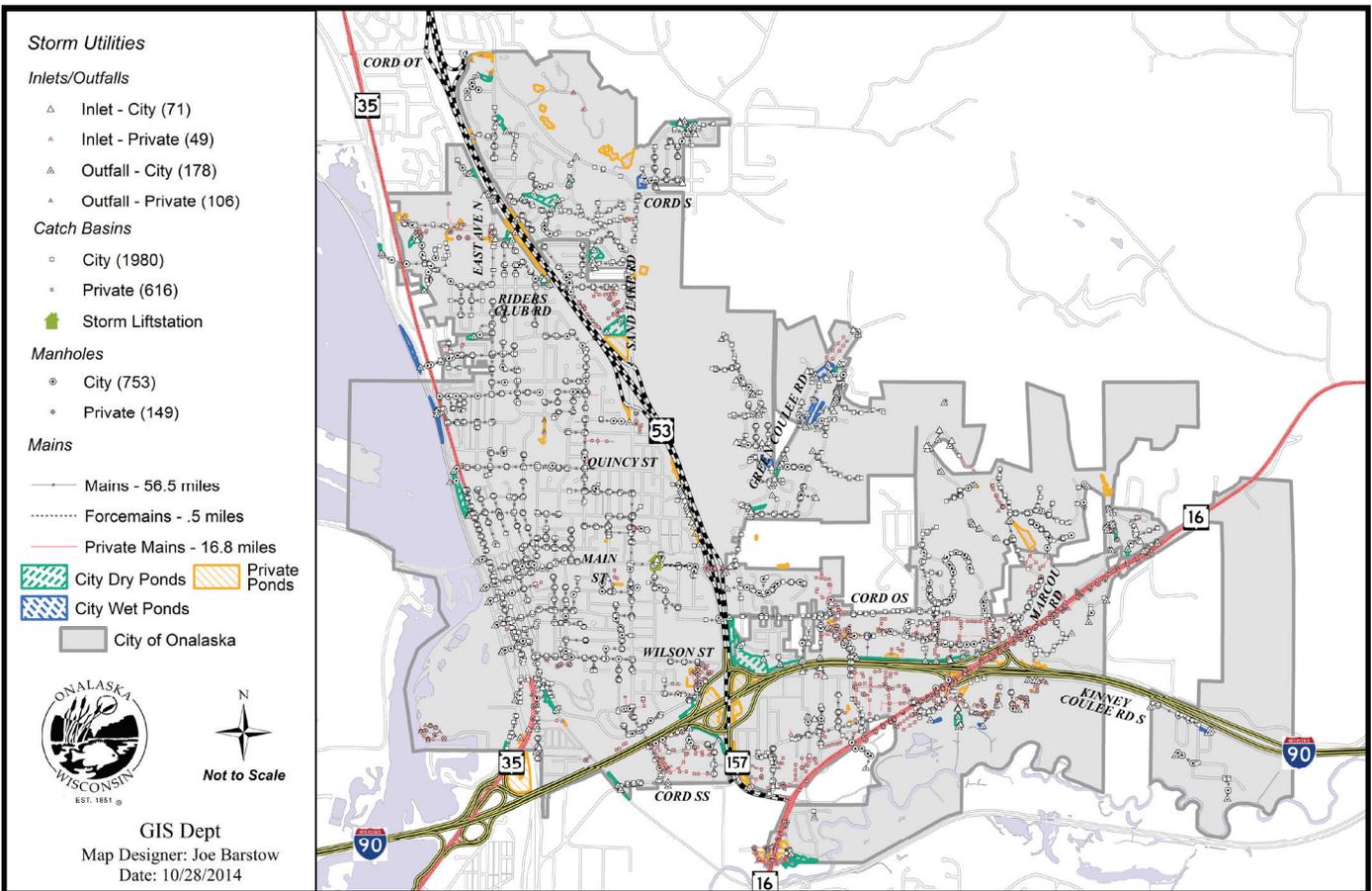


Figure 5-2. City of Onalaska Stormwater System. Source: City of Onalaska.

## WATER SUPPLY

The City of Onalaska provides municipal water to all of the developed areas within the City (Figure 5-3). There are four wells in use with a total rated capacity of nearly 14 million gallons per day. Actual average day pumping use in 2013 was approximately 2.4 million gallons per day. The distribution system consists of over 100 miles of public water mains.

A comprehensive Water System Evaluation was completed in 2013. It was projected that in the year 2030, with a projected population of 23,000 residents, that an average daily demand for water would be nearly 3.1 million gallons of water. The projected capacity of the existing system is nearly sufficient to meet this demand. Only slight increases in production are anticipated to be needed by 2030.

Due to elevation changes throughout Onalaska, the water system is divided into multiple zones, including a Main Level Pressure Zone and High Level Pressure Zones. There are several areas that have been identified that can be served adequately with a minimum pressure of 35 psi under normal operation conditions, as shown in the following Figure 5-4.

The City has five water storage facilities which store approximately 3.3 million gallons of water. This is sufficient and a recommendation was made in the recent water system evaluation to potentially divide an existing reservoir into two smaller reservoirs to avoid over-storage.

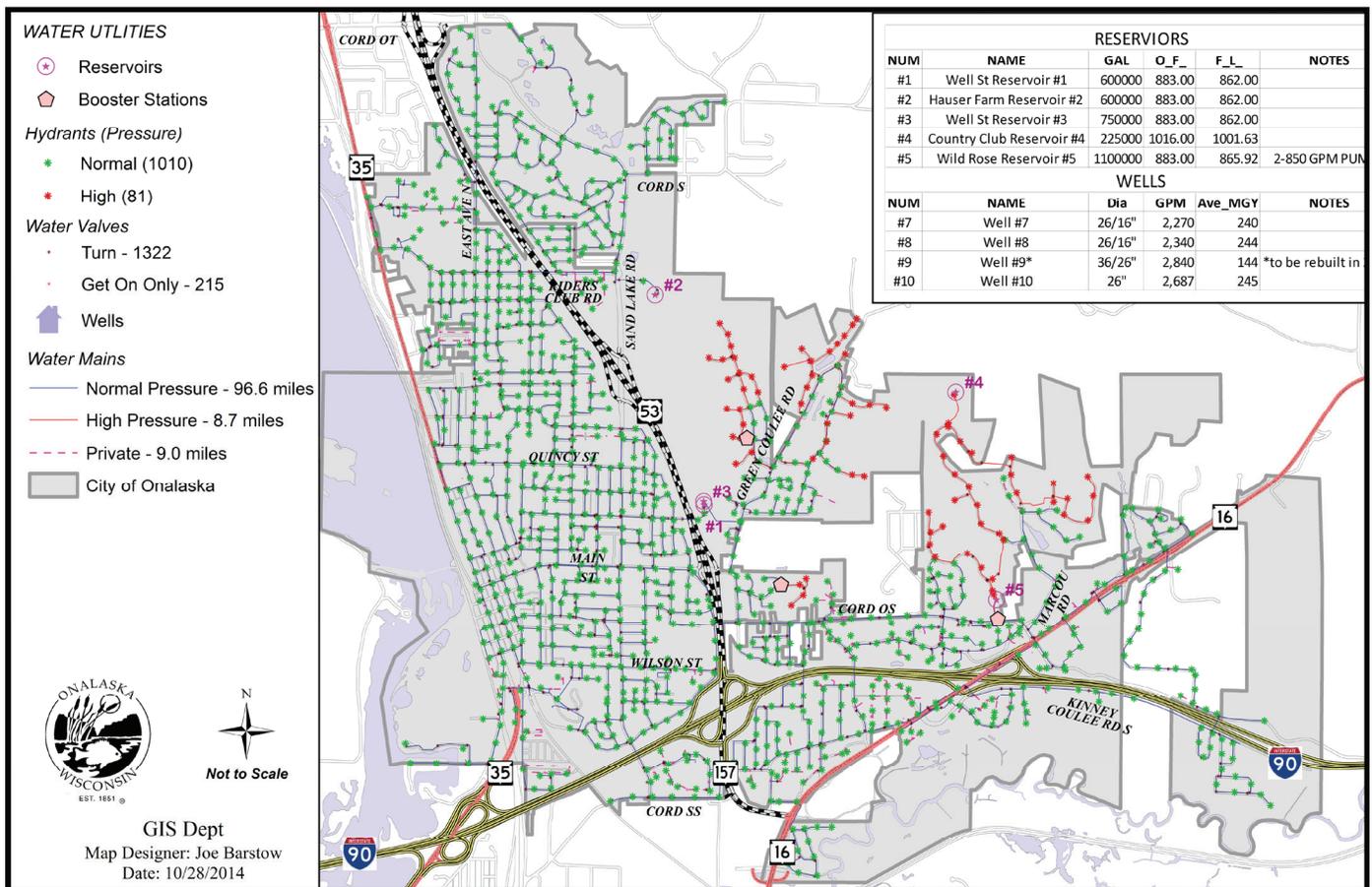


Figure 5-3. City of Onalaska Water System. Source: City of Onalaska.

Increased development will eventually lead to the need to construct an additional well in the near future. Exploratory borings have yielded water with high concentrations in iron and manganese in several areas of the City, which will likely result in the construction of a new well in close proximity to an existing well with proven good water quality.

The City has a wellhead protection program that limits land uses within close proximity to City wells and aquifer recharge areas.

Water pressure is very good, with between 80 to 110 psi in low topographic areas near Lake Onalaska. However, there are areas with low pressure (30 to 50 psi) at the base of reservoirs and in areas in higher elevation developments, particularly near the ridges of coulees. Fire flows are generally very good for fire protection efforts.

Well No. 9 recently underwent a Pilot Study to evaluate methods to improve water quality from this well. Reconstruction of Well No. 9 will occur in 2015-2016. Other items identified for future capital improvements include an upgrade to the Greens Coulee Booster Station, which is currently being evaluated.

Water rates in Onalaska are relatively low for La Crosse County for a quarterly bill of 18,750 gallons, a standard of use selected by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. Onalaska's rate, however, is similar to or lower than neighboring communities served by water (see Figure 5-5).

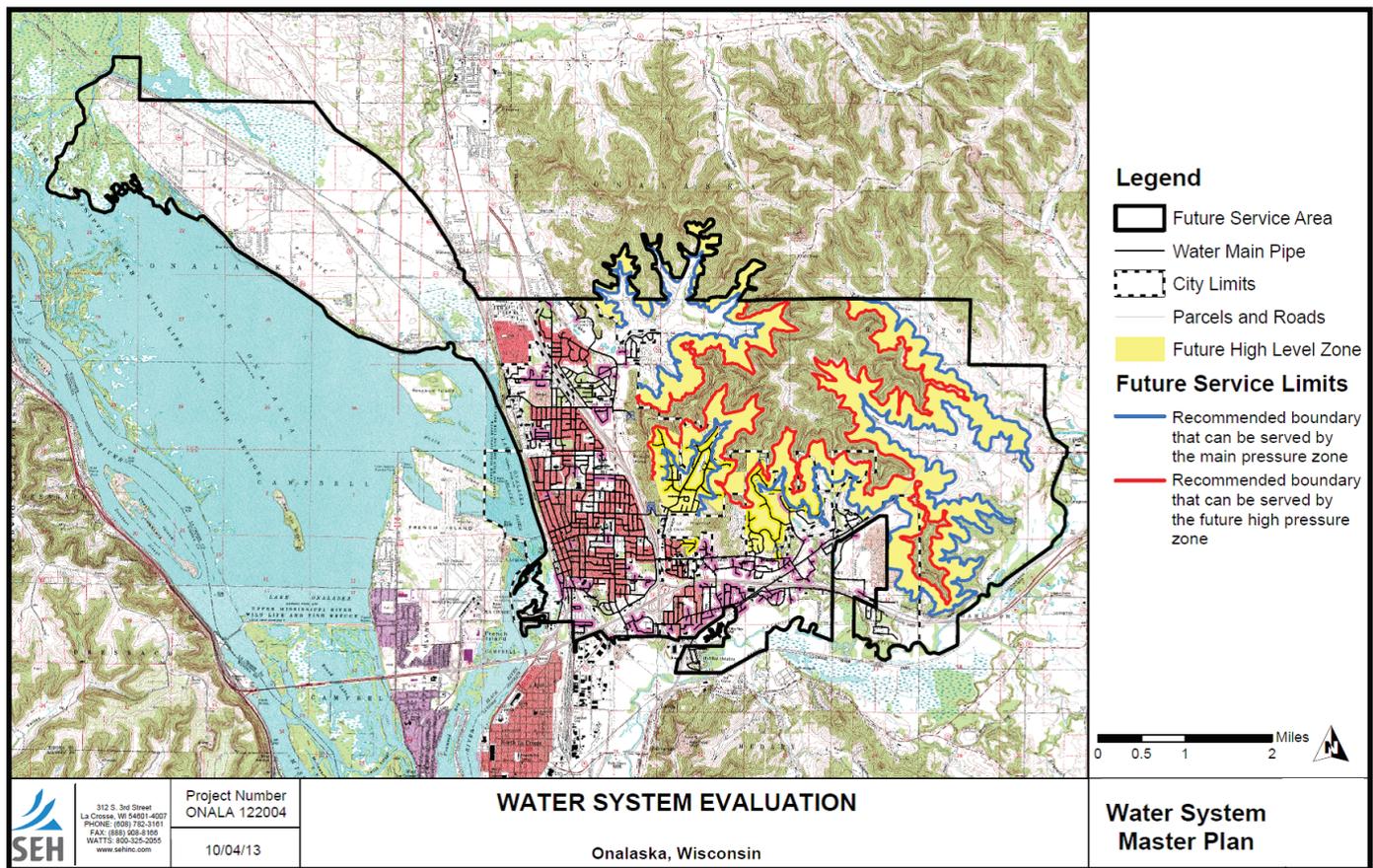


Figure 5-4. City of Onalaska Water Service Evaluation. Source: City of Onalaska and SEH.

# Water Bill Comparison 2014

Each Color Represents 20 Percent of the Utilities



## Quarterly Bill For 18,750 Gallons

▲	\$ 24.65 - \$ 61.13
■	\$ 61.13 - \$ 76.88
◆	\$ 76.89 - \$ 92.44
⬡	\$ 92.45 - \$ 116.96
●	\$ 116.97 - \$ 337.50

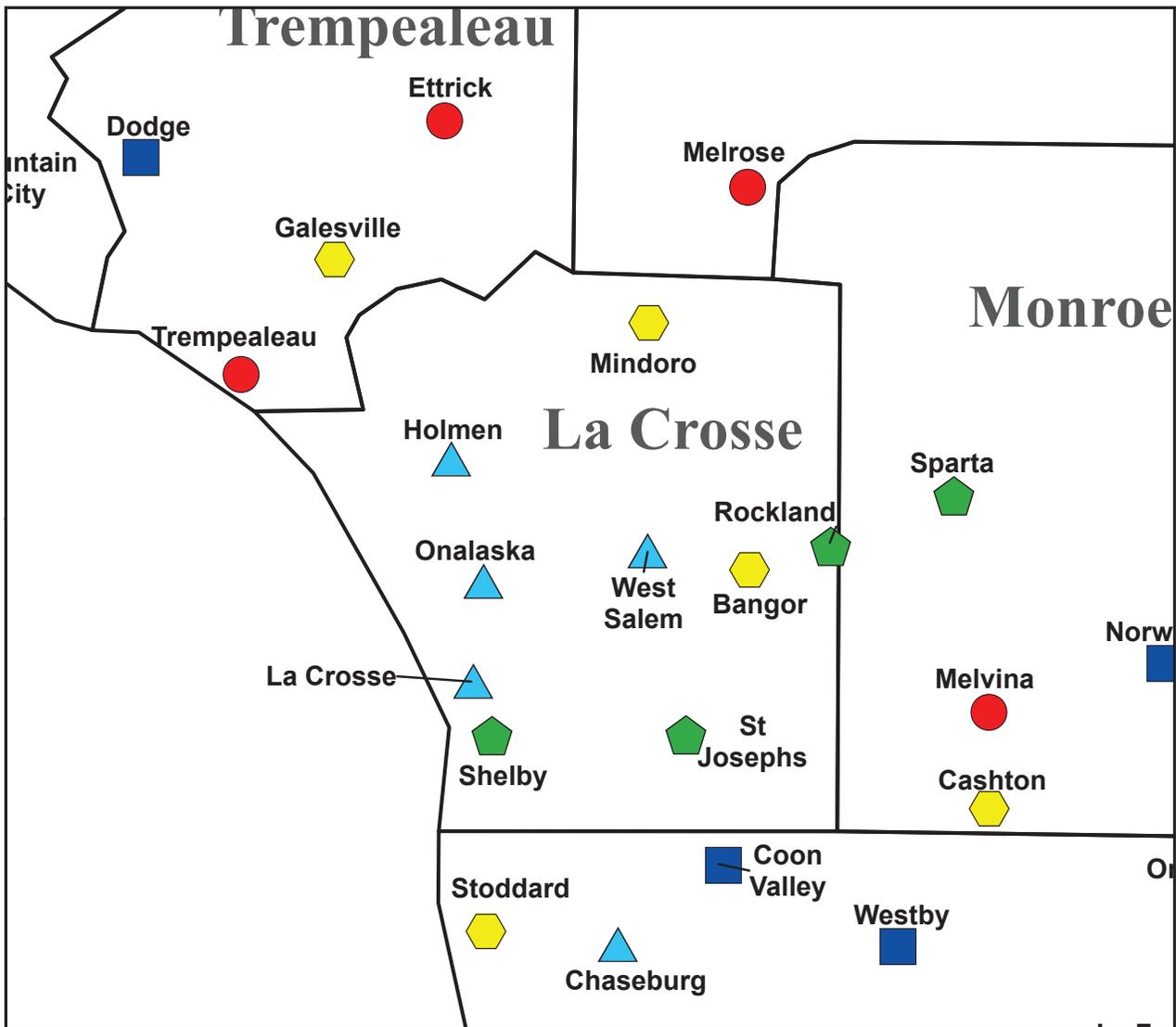
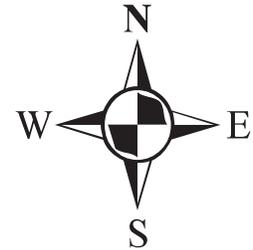


Figure 5-5. La Crosse County Water Provider Rate Comparison. Source: Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.

## SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING

The La Crosse County Landfill is the regional landfill agency that accepts solid waste which is then processed in an energy incinerator. New techniques and technologies are allowing the capacity of this facility to be extended. This is a very environmentally friendly method of disposal.

The French Island Incinerator, operated by Xcel Energy, collects refuse and Harter’s Quick Clean-Up provides waste collection services. In 2014, the City began using automated pickup with carts issued to each household to make pick-ups more efficient. They also offer single-stream recycling that is separated for products to be reused.

## PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

The City has an extensive variety of park and recreational opportunities for area residents to enjoy. In addition to maintaining parkland and equipment, the Parks Department provides programming for youth and adults, aquatic programs, park facilities and reservations, and special events. Promoting public health and an active community was one of the highest priorities for the next 20 years for those residents that participated in the 2014 Community Survey. Recreational improvements, including additional sidewalks that are well connected, more bicycle accommodations and additional parks and open spaces were suggestions for future improvements. There are 27 park sites with over 290 acres that range significantly in size and amenities available (Table 5-1). The parks are generally evenly distributed according to land use patterns. The City has adequate parkland available compared to National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards (10 acres/1,000 residents).



Photo 5-5. Rowe Park.

<b>Onalaska Parks</b>	
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>
<b>Mini Parks</b>	
Coachlite Green Playground	1.4
Elmwood Hills Playground	2.7
Glenn Fox Park	3.8
Hilltopper Heights Playground	2.5
Oak Knoll Playground	0.2
Oakwoods Playground	0.9
Park Avenue Playground	0.3
Parkridge Park	3.4
Schalers Oak Park Playground #1	1.48
Schalers Oak Park Playground #2	0.41
Schalers Oak Park Playground #3	1.78
Schalers Oak Park Playground #4	0.99
Schalers Oak Park Playground #5	0.85
Thomas Farms Playground	1.5
State Highway 35 Waysides	4.5
Valley Vue Park	5.1
Wellington Greens Park	3.9
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	
Community Park	13.3
Holiday Heights Park	16.7
Meier Farm Park	9.5
Pierce Park	5.5
Robinson Park	5.7
Sandalwood Park	11.9
<b>Community Parks</b>	
Greens Coulee Park	72.3
Rowe Park	28.8
Van Riper Park	40.1
Waterfront (Great River Landing)	50.8

Table 5-1. Onalaska Park Table.

Onalaska developed the area’s first outdoor adult fitness area in 2014. This is located in Community Park on Quincy Street adjacent to the Community Center. The adult playground has different exercise stations that give people a different outdoor opportunity to be active in unique ways. This was made possible by a coordinated effort between the City of Onalaska and the La Crosse County Health Department. Partial funding was received from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Transformation Wisconsin project.

The Onalaska Aquatic Center was completed in 2005 and has seen an average attendance of over 30,000 annually. The Aquatic Center offers facilities for swimmers of all ages, including a zero-depth entry, several lap lanes, slides, and a concession stand.

There are several other recreational facilities within the City of Onalaska. The City owns and operates the Onalaska OMNI Center. This 50,000 square foot facility can accommodate large gatherings and meetings. There is a 28,000 square foot arena and an indoor skating and hockey rink that is operated year-round. A second ice rink is added during the winter months.

The Onalaska Community Center, located at 515 Quincy Street, hosts events for various gatherings, including senior citizen events.

There are three golf courses in Onalaska. Coulee Golf and Bowl is a nine hole public course that consists of 80-acres. This facility recently underwent significant renovations. The La Crosse Country Club is located in eastern Onalaska and is an 18-hole private course and the Golf Club at Cedar Creek is an 18-hole private golf club that is open to the public. This is located east of Sand Lake Road north of Riders Club Road.

Onalaska also has a modern YMCA. This facility is part of the overall La Crosse Area Family YMCA, located at 400 Mason Street and abuts Van Riper Park. This facility is open seven days per week. This facility has also made extensive efforts to have fully accessible facilities, including the “Miracle Field,” a hard surface environment, including a baseball field that can accommodate wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility aids. This facility is under construction for at least a \$4 million addition in 2015-2016 that will incorporate additional rehab facilities including a pool, as well as additional programming space for LiveStrong, Diabetes prevention, and other programs and activities.

The City developed a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan in 2010. This is a five-year plan and is scheduled to be updated in 2016-2017. See Figure 5-6 for a map detailing parks, schools, hospitals, etc. for community use.



Photo 5-7. YMCA.



Photo 5-6. Coulee Golf Bowl.



Photo 5-8. Sandalwood Park.

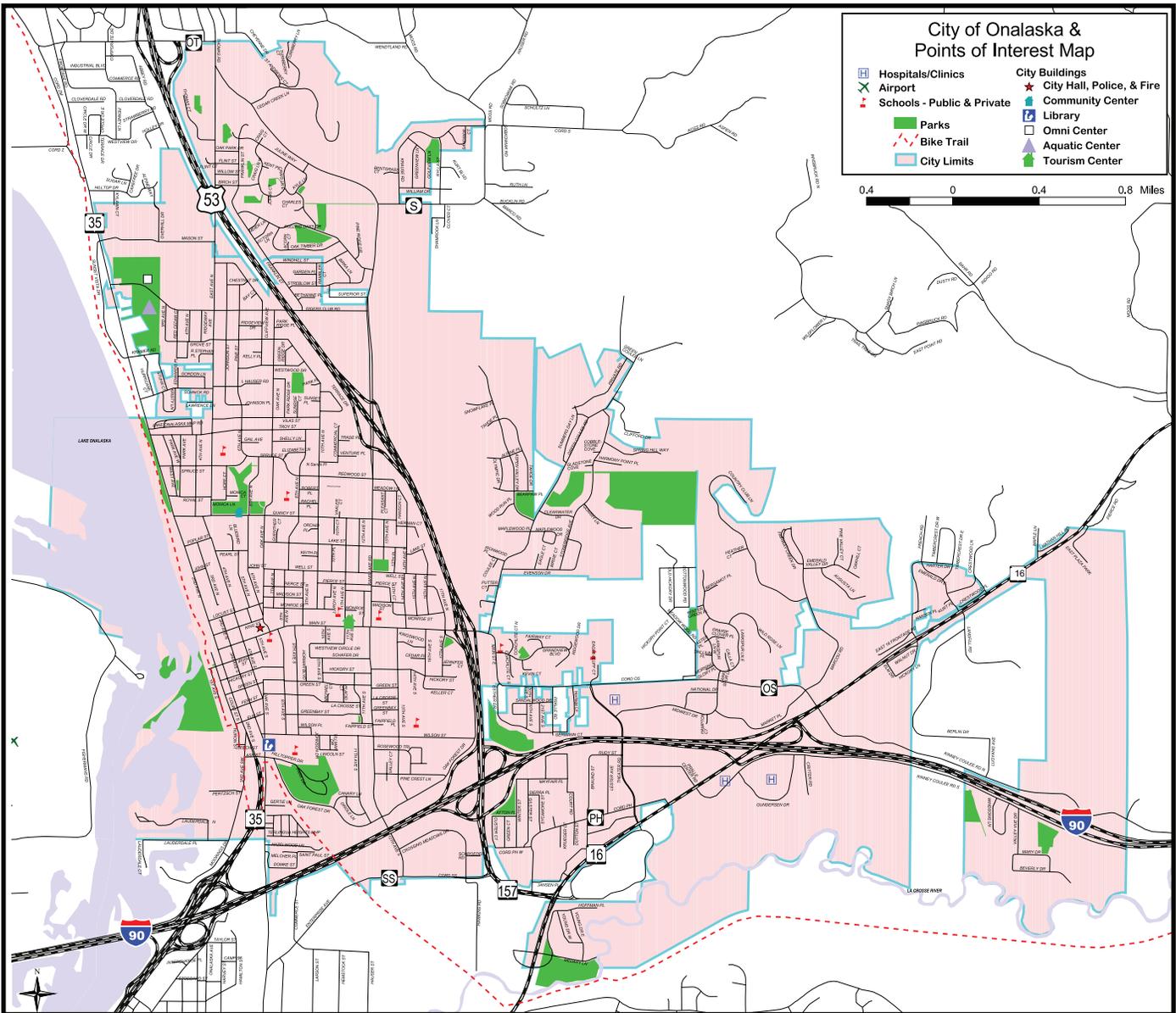


Figure 5-6. City of Onalaska Points of Interest Map. Source: City of Onalaska.

### TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES

CenturyLink and Charter Communications provide Onalaska residents with local telephone service, cable television and high-speed internet access. Several long-distance providers offer service in the Onalaska area.

An extensive fiber optic network exists through the Onalaska area, much of which has been necessitated by the medical facilities in the area. It is important that broadband infrastructure (i.e. Wi-Fi, fiber optic, etc.) remain competitive and be upgraded frequently to ensure the industries located within the region are able to obtain the technology they need to conduct consistent business.

### CELLULAR SERVICE AND TOWERS

There are currently eight cell phone towers in the City of Onalaska. The towers are owned by Alltel (Verizon), US Cellular, AT&T, Airadigm Communications Inc., US Cellular/Sprint, and T-Mobile. Additionally, CenturyTel has a radio tower and the La Crosse Radio Group has a radio broadcast tower. With the growth in popularity of 4G LTE coverage, additional antennas and/or towers are likely to be requested in Onalaska. The City should evaluate their decision-making procedures for permitting these facilities, to balance the growing need for cell phone and data coverage with bluff and neighborhood protections.

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

New technologies are consistently emerging and the City of Onalaska will need to stay informed and be both proactive and reactive to these technologies to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The City should also position itself to support new technologies that will benefit economic development in Onalaska.

For example, the City of Onalaska has demonstrated a history of supporting new technologies, as shown with the installation of a Tesla Super Charging Station (for battery-powered electric vehicles) in the Elmwood Business Park. The City assisted with site selection and expedited development permitting, to position the charging station off I-90 adjacent to restaurants and shopping centers, for vehicles traveling through the Coulee Region.

The City also created a new ordinance allowing Neighborhood Electric Vehicles on City streets. The City should also stay informed regarding future modes of transportation (i.e., motorized skateboards, hoverboards, low-speed electric trikes, etc.) and their impact on the City's transportation infrastructure.

Recently, the use of unmanned aerial devices/drones has increased for recreational and commercial activities. The City should be positioned to educate and respond with relevant agencies to the illegal use of drones. The City may also position itself to use drones for emergency services (i.e., police, fire, utility systems, transportation network safety, etc.)

## POWER PLANTS, TRANSMISSION LINES, AND ELECTRIC UTILITIES

The nearest power plant is the Xcel Energy plant located on French Island, west of Onalaska. Xcel Energy and Riverland Energy provide electric services throughout the City. Dairyland Power also has electrical transmission lines throughout the City of Onalaska. These are identified in Figure 5-7.

The American Transmission Company has in conjunction with Xcel Energy proposed to run a 345-kilovolt transmission line to alleviate electrical system reliability issues throughout the Midwest. There were two lines proposed for this line, which would be run from a substation in Holmen located on Briggs Road, to Dane County. The proposed southern route would have run south along Highway 53 through the City of Onalaska to I-90. The northern route, which avoids Onalaska, has been selected by the Public Service Commission (PSC). While it appears Onalaska will not be directly impacted by this, it is still worthwhile noting that the CapX 2020 Substation at Briggs Road strengthens the regional electrical grid.

## NATURAL GAS

Xcel Energy provides natural gas throughout the City.

A Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) refueling station is immediately south of I-90 in the North La Crosse Industrial Park. A large natural gas pipeline runs through the City of Onalaska.

## CEMETERY

The City of Onalaska owns and operates the Onalaska Cemetery, located on Main Street between Twelfth Avenue South and Thirteenth Avenue South. The cemetery has adequate space for the foreseeable future after recently purchasing additional property for future expansion.

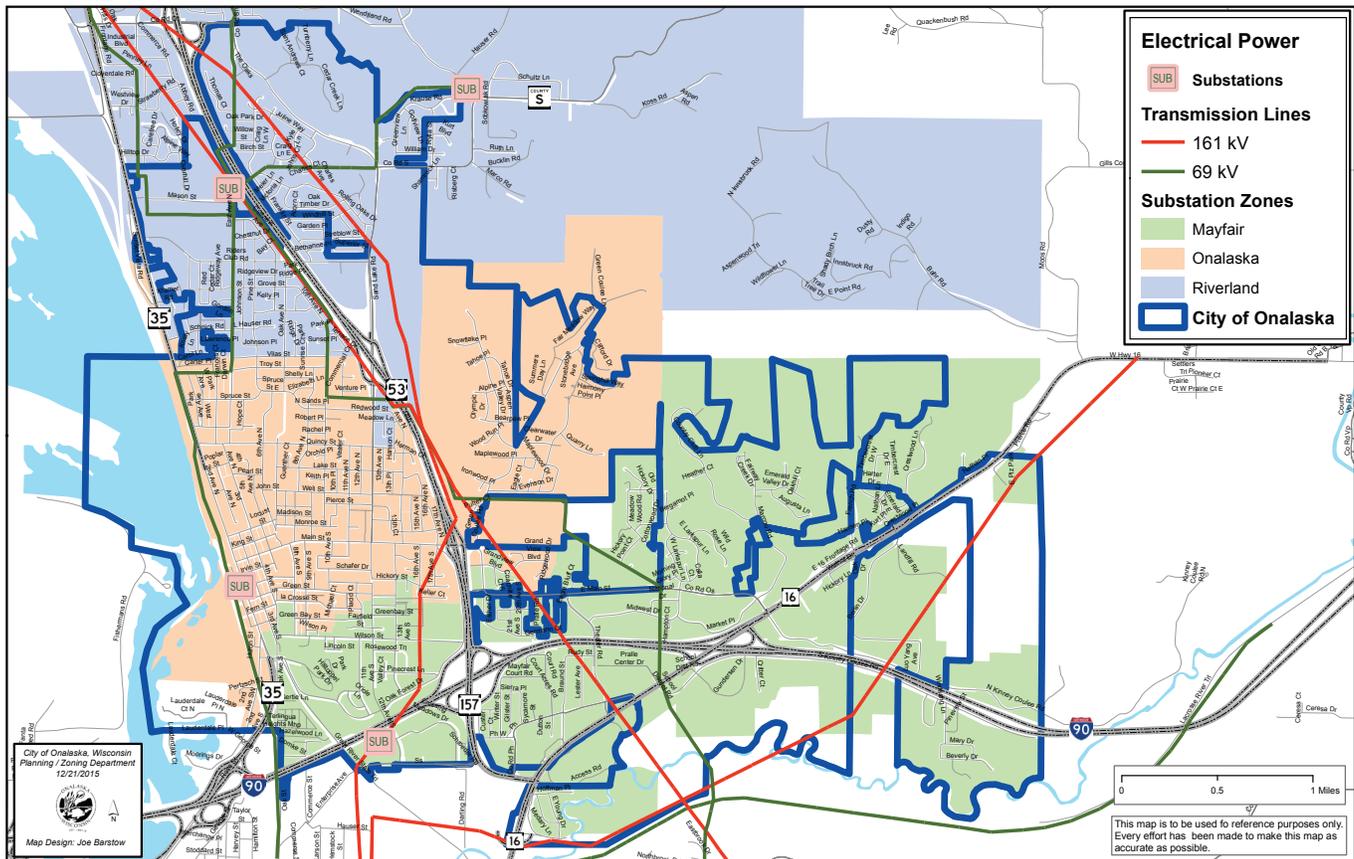


Figure 5-7. City of Onalaska High Voltage Utility Lines. Source: City of Onalaska.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Onalaska Police Department is located in Onalaska City Hall. The Police Department's mission is to "impact lives, change lives, and improve lives by being a good role model and through community partnerships". The Police Department meets that mission through the fine men and women that serve our community with an authorized strength of 27 police officers and 3 full-time and 1 part-time civilian positions. The Police Department provides 24 hours service to the citizens and visitors of Onalaska.

The primary objective of the Police Department is to provide protection to our citizens and visitors. The secondary objective is to collaborate with the community on various programs throughout the years to build community bonds. Many of Onalaska's programs are aimed at being positive adult role models for the youth of our community, some programs include the Citizens Police Academy, National Night Out, K-9 Golf Outing, Coloring with the Chiefs, P.C. the Robotic Police Car, Child I.D. program, Santa's List, and various community events with the schools. Our School Resource Officer and D.A.R.E. officer also provide positive interactions with the students of the Onalaska School District.



Photo 5-9. D.A.R.E. Program. Photo credit: Onalaska Police Department.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Onalaska Fire Department is a combination fire department comprised of career Firefighter EMT's, 19 paid-on-call Firefighter EMT's, one full-time Chief, one full-time Fire Inspector/Assistant Chief and one part-time Administrative Assistant. The department proudly delivers fire and EMS service at the EMT/non-transport level to the residents of Onalaska, from the fire station located at City Hall. The Onalaska Fire Department provides fire protection services at Insurance Services Office (ISO) public protection classification rating of class 3. The lower the number within this insurance rating scale (1-10), the lower insurance rates are for each property owner. The audit conducted in 2010 lowered (improved) the rating by two categories, and identified the need for an additional fire station and personnel.

Additional services provided by the Onalaska Fire Department include conducting in excess of 1,800 fire inspections annually, public safety education programs (2,032 children and 337 adults) in 2014, water and ice rescue, hazardous materials at technical level, rope, and confined space rescue. Growth in the eastern portion of the City may necessitate a new fire substation to serve expanding commercial and residential development.

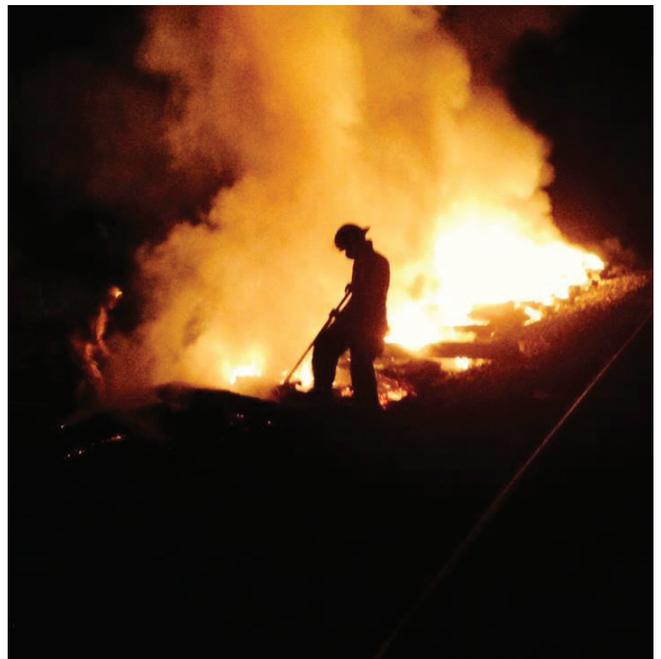


Photo 5-10. Grass fire. Photo credit: Onalaska Fire Department.

## POST OFFICE

The City of Onalaska Post Office is located at 304 11th Avenue North.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: STREETS, STORMWATER, WATER & SANITARY SEWER

The Onalaska Public Works Department is responsible for storm water management, road, alley, sidewalk, lighting, street trees and street sign maintenance, solid waste, water, sanitary sewer and the city cemetery. This department is located at 252 Mason Street.

Gundersen Health System is ranked among Healthgrade America's 50 Best Hospitals – placing it in the top 1 percent in the nation. They also received the 2014 Healthgrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence – 1 of only 260 hospitals to receive this award.

Mayo Clinic Health System extensively collaborates with Mayo Clinic which has been recognized as the best hospital in the US for 2014-2015 by U.S. News and World Report.



Photo 5-11. Public Works Facility.

## CITY HALL

The City Hall is located at 415 Main Street and houses many of the administrative offices for City employees. This 59,000 square foot facility was completed in 2000.

The City operates on a part-time mayoral form of government with a City Administrator. The Mayor is elected every four years. Six alderpersons from three aldermanic districts are elected for two year terms on a staggered basis – one alderman position from each district is elected each year.

## COULEE REGION JOINT MUNICIPAL COURT

The Coulee Region Joint Municipal Court processes ordinance and traffic citations issued by the Police Departments of Onalaska as well as the Villages of Bangor, Holmen, West Salem, and the Towns of Campbell, Holland, Rockland and Shelby. This is operated out of the Onalaska City Hall.

## MEDICAL/HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Two large regional medical centers have facilities in Onalaska – Gundersen Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System – Franciscan Healthcare. Each also has a large hospital and clinic in La Crosse. Gundersen has a 27.5 acre campus on South Kinney Coulee Road including vacant land for future development. Mayo Clinic Health System recently acquired a 187 parcel of land on the east side of Sand Lake Road. While plans have not been made public, hints at expanding their health care practice in Onalaska have been rumored.

Several chiropractors, massage therapists, dental clinics and ophthalmologists have practices in the City as well.

Responders to the 2014 Community Survey indicated overwhelmingly that the City's medical facilities are excellent.



Photo 5-12. City Hall.



Photo 5-13. Onalaska Public Library.

### LIBRARY

The City of Onalaska is served by the Onalaska Public Library. This branch is part of the La Crosse County Library system, which also has facilities in Bangor, Campbell, Holmen and West Salem.

Constructed in 1989 and expanded in 2009, the Onalaska Public Library has approximately 20,000 square feet. It is open six days per week (closed on Sundays). The library offers internet access, books, magazines, newspapers, videos, CD's, DVD's and books on tape. The Onalaska Historical Museum is also located in this facility.



Photo 5-14. Northern Hills Elementary.

### SCHOOLS

The City of Onalaska is served by a wide assortment of educational facilities at the elementary, primary, secondary, vocational and postsecondary levels. In addition, some facilities offer preschool, kindergarten, special education, religious, business, industrial, trade and vocational training. The Onalaska School District has a student population of 3,046 (Table 5-2). This makes the district the 73rd largest in the State in terms of size. The Onalaska High School was nominated and recognized by the national Blue Ribbon School Program in 2015 for academic excellence for progress in improving student achievement. They are one of nine Wisconsin schools to be honored in 2015. The Holmen School District has a student enrollment of 3,898, making the district 49th largest in the State. See Figure 5-8 for school district boundries in Onalaska. School district performance measurements are presented in the Issues and Opportunities Element. Please refer to the Issues and Opportunities Element for this information.

Onalaska and Holman School District Size - 2014			
State Rank (out of 449)	District	County	Enrollment
73	Onalaska	La Crosse	3,046
49	Holmen	La Crosse	3,898

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Table 5-2. Onalaska and Holmen School District Size - 2014. Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

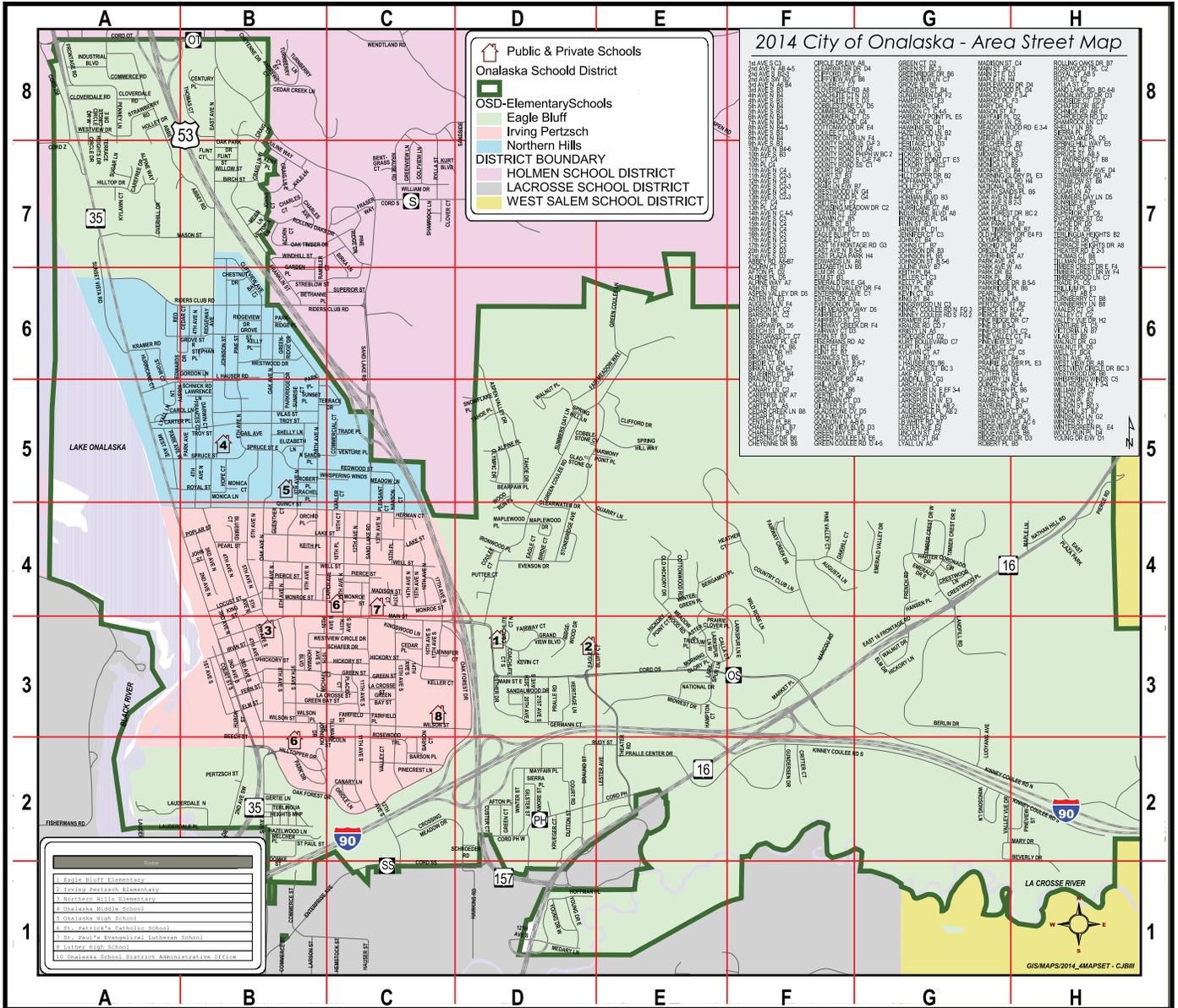


Figure 5-8. City of Onalaska School District Map. Source: City of Onalaska.

Several adult education centers offer higher education and continuing education classes and programs are located in close proximity to Onalaska. A branch of Globe University is also located in Onalaska. Other nearby colleges in La Crosse include the Western Wisconsin Technical College, as well as the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and Viterbo University.

“Smaller communities must scramble to generate the necessary tax revenue from businesses and residents when the population rises, because an increase in households results in congested roadways, crowded public schools, and strained water and sewer infrastructures. Improving all these services - building new roads and schools, laying new pipes, hire more fire and police personnel – requires significant investment. For this reason, cities, villages, towns, and counties must anticipate future population growth and plan accordingly so that the systems don’t all require costly upgrades simultaneously.”

- McKnight Foundation, re: focus: Making Choices for Future Generations.

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

As of 2014, the City has three private schools (St. Patrick’s, St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran, and Luther High School) serving students that would otherwise attend the Onalaska Public School District with a combined student population of 674. Local communities do not get involved with the planning and administration of these schools, other than typically playing a regulatory role.

## SENIOR CARE FACILITIES

The City of Onalaska is served by numerous senior care facilities (see Table 5-3). Community-based residential facilities typically offer room and board and basic nursing care. Adult family home facilities provide similar services to community-based residential facilities, but can only serve up to four adults at one time. A nursing home is a place where five or more unrelated peoples receive care or treatment, and require 24-hour nursing services due to a mental or physical condition. Residential Care Apartment Complexes are independent apartment units where individuals needing up to 28 hours per week of supportive care, personal care or nursing services can reside.

The City has approximately 2,600 residents aged 65 and over, with senior living capacity of approximately 489.



Photo 5-15. Private School - St. Paul's Lutheran School.



Photo 5-16. Eagle Crest Memory Care Center.

Onalaska Licensed Senior Care Facilities - 2014			
Facility Type	Name	Address	Capacity
Community Based Residential Facility	Sterling House of Onalaska	949 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	20
	Meadows at Springbrook	861 Critter Court	39
	Eagle Crest Memory Care	351 Mason Street	20
Adult Family Homes	Cliffview	1422 Cliffview Avenue	4
	REM Wisconsin III Inc - Emerald Drive B	3722 Emerald Drive	4
	Westview Circle	1028 Westview Circle Drive	4
	Aurora Residential Alternatives Inc #107	N4966 Stuhr Court	4
	Tidal Wave	N5005 Hurricane Court	4
	Knapp Birka Lane AFH	1537 Birka Lane	4
	Coulee Care Main Street	1106 Main Street	4
	Chrishaven Onalaska North	737 10th Avenue North	4
	Holtan House Residential Services	2149 Abbey Road	4
	Hurricane	N5009 Hurricane Court	4
	Chrishaven II (South)	1308 10th Avenue	4
	Chrishaven II (North)	1310 10th Avenue	4
	REM - Kristy Lane	1038/1040 Kristy Lane	4
	Creative Community Living Services Inc.	837 Main Street	4
	Chrishaven Onalaska South	735 10th Avenue North	4
	REM Wisconsin III Inc - Emerald Drive A	3724 Emerald Drive	4
Creative Community Living Services Inc.	N5412 Circle Drive W	3	
Aurora Residential Alternatives Inc #104	411 6th Avenue N	4	
Adult Day Care	Coulee Region Adult Day Care Center	1062 Oak Forest Drive	50
Nursing Home	Onalaska Care Center	1600 Main Street	104
Personal Care Agency	Lori Knapp Inc. Onalaska	816 2nd Avenue South	N/A
Residential Care Apartment Complexes	Eagle Crest Senior Living Community	351 Mason Street	70
	Springbrook Community Assisted Living Inc.	861 Critter Court	61
	Laurel Manor	108 17th Avenue South	12
	Eagle Crest Assisted Living	351 Mason Street	42

Source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Table 5-3. Onalaska Licensed Senior Care Facilities - 2014. Source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

## CHILD CARE FACILITIES

There are 35 licensed childcare providers in Onalaska. Group facilities have capacities of over nine children, while family facilities can have up to eight children at a time (Table 5-4).

There is a current child-care capacity of roughly 2,200, while the City has approximately 2,600 children under the age of 9.

Onalaska Licensed Child Care Facilities - 2014			
Facility Type	Name	Address	Capacity
Group	Children's Tree House	1052 Oak Forest Dr	104
	YMCA Child Care Center	400 Mason St	100
	Little Minds Learning Center	2531 E Main St	90
	Christian Chapel Day Care Center	1415 Well St	73
	YMCA School Age - Eagle Bluff	200 Eagle Bluff Ct	72
	Red Balloon Onalaska	573 Braund St	68
	Childfirst - Onalaska	1828 E Main St	65
	YMCA School Age - Northern Hills	511 Spruce St	64
	YMCA School Age - Pertzsch	524 Main St	60
	Wiggles and Giggles Preschool and Childcare	2703 Sand Lake Rd	50
	Gentle Lambs Childcare Center	3340 S Kinney Coulee Rd	50
	Joy's Day Care	1457 Oak Forest Dr	50
	Education Station	903 Riders Club Rd	40
	The Creative Child	310 Main St	40
	First Lutheran Preschool	410 Main St	29
	Midway's Lil Peanuts	W7052 2Nd St	19
Life's Little Blessings	3005 State Road 35	15	
Family	Lil' Loons Childcare	314 6Th Ave N	8
	Julie's Daycare	N4650 Crestwood Ln	8
	Tammy's Day Care	310 2Nd Ave S	8
	Tammy's Tiny Treasures	314 3Rd Ave S	8
	Time to Care Day Care	1036 La Crosse St	8
	Viv's ABC Kind Care	210 5Th Ave S	8
	Old Schoolhouse Child Care	N6051 Filler Ct	8
	Diane Utecht	N6060 Prairie Dr	6
	Wendy Thorson	804 Park Ave	6
	Carrie Marx	2102 Esther Dr	6
	Heather Stapleton	403 7Th Ave N	6
	Jill Wojta	1026 Pierce St	6
	Ju Ju B's	W8315 Homestead Pl	6
	Kelly Rice	W6921 Walden Pl	6
Lacey Baum	1411 Hickory St	6	
Rebecca Rundle	622 Troy St	6	

Source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Table 5-4. Onalaska Licensed Child Care Facilities - 2014. Source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

## PLACES OF WORSHIP

There are several Churches of various denominations within the City of Onalaska. The following is a listing of churches and their addresses (Table 5-5).

Onalaska Places of Worship	
Place of Worship	Address
Connect Church	3340 S. Kinney Coulee Road
Christ is Lord Lutheran Church	1269 CTH PH
Journey Lutheran Church	2703 Sand Lake Road
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	701 Well Street
Christian Science Church	1288 Rudy Street
First Lutheran Church	410 Main Street
First Free Church	123 Mason Street
Hope Christian Reformed Church	754 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North
Coulee Rock Community Church	3059 Medco Court
New Hope Fellowship	420 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue South
Onalaska Christian Chapel, Church of Christ	1415 Well Street
Peace with God Evangelical Lutheran Church	816 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue #800
Onalaska United Methodist Church	212 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North
Sand Lake Wesleyan Church	N5761 Sand Lake Road
Shephard of the Hills Lutheran Church	1215 Redwood Street
St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, CLC	112 9 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North
St. Patrick's Catholic Parish	1031 Main Street
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, WELS	1201 Main Street
River of Life Assembly of God	1214 County Road PH
Rivers Harvest Church	1001 Quincy Street

Source: City of Onalaska

Table 5-5. Onalaska Places of Worship. Source: City of Onalaska.



Photo 5-17. Saint Patrick's Catholic Parish.



Photo 5-18. "Cops Gone Wild" Buffalo Wild Wings event. Photo credit: Onalaska Police Department.

## 5.2 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE NEEDS

Much of the infrastructure and services provided to City residents has adequate capacity. However, with the projected population growth, the water and sanitary systems use will need to expand. Expansion of the water system has been studied in depth and minimal expansion efforts are needed for water production. As more water is being produced, it will be critical to monitor water quality. It will be important to continue to monitor developments and their impact to the pressure zones.

The City will need to work closely with the City of La Crosse and the Village of Holmen wastewater system operators to ensure that adequate capacity for increased development is maintained. The current contract runs through 2016 and will have to be renewed or renegotiated soon. With the projected growth and related increases in stormwater runoff, additional stormwater utility features will be needed such as permeable paving, vegetative green roofs and stormwater recycling and reuse.

In general, the public facilities around the City are in good condition. City Hall houses the administrative offices for the City and is a modern building. The Public Works Department also has a newer maintenance and storage facility that is heavily used.

The City has been proactive in expanding its municipal

boundaries. As the boundaries continue to expand, careful review must be taken to ensure that new development areas can adequately be served by utilities, emergency services and transportation networks. In particular, the Fire Department may need to develop an additional facility closer to the newer developments to ensure the City's ISO rating remains low. Additional population will also likely necessitate an increase to the Police Department, as a greater population will be demanding immediate responses for emergencies.

Working cooperatively with other public and private providers is encouraged to ensure residents' needs and demands are being met in an effective and efficient manner.

Additional private investments in utilities, particularly electric transmission lines and cellular/data related towers will continue to be proposed in Onalaska. It is important that the City continue to evaluate these proposals on strict criteria in terms of placement, impact to residents and environmentally sensitive areas, and general aesthetics. The State of Wisconsin has a State Energy Policy, Wisconsin Statute 1.12, which indicates that siting of new transmission lines should be consistent with economic and engineering considerations, reliability of the electric system, and protection of the environment, the following corridors should be utilized in the order of priority: a) Existing utility corridors; b) highway and railroad corridors; c) recreational trails, to the extent that the facilities may be constructed below ground and that the facilities do not significantly impact environmentally sensitive areas; d) new corridors. This is consistent with the City of Onalaska's preference that new transmission corridors be developed only as a last resort.

The 2014 Community Survey found that maintaining a good school system is a top priority for the City over the next 20 years, and was included as part of the City's long-term Vision Statement, which can be found in Section 2.3 in the Issues and Opportunities Element.

## 5.3 UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

**GOAL 1: COORDINATE THE LOCATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UTILITIES AND FACILITIES WITH PROJECTED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By coordinating community facilities and services planning with land use and transportation planning to efficiently utilize available land.
2. By ensuring that park and recreation facilities are planned on a neighborhood, community and City-wide basis as related parts of a unified, well-balanced system to provide maximum opportunities for all residents.
3. By evaluating the requirements necessary for cell tower siting to prepare for additional requests to construct. And by collaborating with cell providers to balance the growing need for cell phone and data coverage with bluffland and neighborhood protections.
4. By evaluating requests to change existing or install new utility corridors based on such factors including but not limited to: residential impacts, neighboring land uses, bluffland impacts, preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites, protection of natural areas and wildlife, density, lighting, and health and safety impacts.
5. By determining the practical minimum level of development or redevelopment for which utility relocation is financially feasible on a case-by-case basis.
6. By considering amendments as appropriate to the subdivision/zoning ordinance for requiring utility relocation as part of development activities.
7. By encouraging burying existing aerial (overhead) powerlines as appropriate in older neighborhoods through redevelopment efforts or utility upgrades.
8. By enforcing the Airport Overlay Zoning District in conjunction with the City of La Crosse and the La Crosse Airport and updating the ordinance as deemed necessary.

**GOAL 2: PROVIDE EFFICIENT AND/OR COST-EFFECTIVE UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By directing new development to areas that can be efficiently and economically served by existing or planned City streets, sanitary sewers, public water mains, stormwater management facilities, life and safety services.
2. By continuing to require new development to pay the cost of municipal services, so that the existing taxpayers are not burdened with inequitable taxes or service costs.
3. By continuing to work with La Crosse County, the City of La Crosse, the Village of Holmen, the Town of Onalaska and other municipalities to identify joint services and facilities where consolidating, coordinating or sharing services or facilities will result in better services and/or cost savings for Onalaska residents.
4. By encouraging and supporting the availability and expansion of broadband infrastructure to businesses and residents.
5. By working with utility providers to promote energy conservation practices and programs.
6. By continuing to support the strong interrelationship with the Onalaska and Holmen school districts in cooperative use of facilities.
7. By promoting the highest and most efficient levels of police, fire and first responder services for the City.
8. By staying informed regarding emerging technologies and by being proactive about recognizing positive and negative impacts on City infrastructure and economic development potentials.

**GOAL 3: AVOID ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS WHEN EXTENDING AND CONSTRUCTING UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By complying with City's Sanitary Sewer Service Agreement requirements.
2. By installing utilities underground (where and when feasible) to avoid blufflands and environmentally sensitive areas and utilize designs and locations that minimize ridgeline and other environmentally sensitive areas.

**GOAL 4: CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND FACILITIES NECESSARY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ONALASKA’S RESIDENTS, PROPERTY OWNERS, BUSINESSES AND VISITORS.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By educating and maintaining and improving sewer and water system infrastructure through continued identification of deficiencies and planned infrastructure enhancement, maintenance and rehabilitation.
2. By creating and maintaining attractive parks, community facilities (i.e. Omni Center), and open spaces that can be used as public gathering spaces throughout the community.
3. By implementing the Great River Landing planning recommendations.
4. By educating and involving the public in facility and utility expansion decisions, when possible, and asking for public comments and placing citizens on appropriate boards.

**GOAL 5: CONTINUE TO ESTABLISH, ADMINISTER AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNITY-WIDE PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES HIGH QUALITY FACILITIES TO FULFILL THE EXPANDING NEEDS AND EXPRESSED DESIRES OF THE COMMUNITY.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By promoting the multiple use of facilities in design and development, such as developing school/park combinations and community centers/recreation spaces.
2. By using pedestrian and bicycle facilities to connect parks and open spaces.
3. By ensuring that land accepted in dedication either be set aside for preservation or accepted only after size, access, buffering and site design are demonstrated as suitable for development.
4. By establishing acquisition priorities for needed outdoor recreation facilities based on accepted standards, identified existing and future needs, current park distribution throughout the community

and land development patterns.

5. By coordinating with school districts, public agencies, private groups and civic organizations to jointly offer community-wide recreational opportunities.
6. By continuing to devote resources to first maintain and improve existing park and recreation areas and then to develop any new parks and recreation areas.
7. By continuing to partner with the Mississippi Valley Conservancy to implement the City’s Greenway Master Plan.

**POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

1. Continue to collect parkland fees or require parkland dedication or trail rights-of-way for all new developments.
2. Work with park and recreation department to ensure adequate staffing is available for maintenance.
3. Staff should regularly evaluate park and recreation sources (programs, facilities and operations) to ensure that community needs are being met.
4. Parks should be designed with multiple access points from the surrounding neighborhoods and should be accessible by various modes of transportation.
5. To the extent possible, park facilities should be designed to meet the needs of all City residents, including the elderly, disabled, economically disadvantaged and pre-school age children. Because of the City’s unique topography, this may not always be possible. Park facilities can be funded through impact fees, open space grants, subdivision dedications, user fees and general funds.
6. Continue to update and consult the City of Onalaska’s Park and Recreation Plan when making park development and maintenance decisions.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES**

1. Maintain or improve the City’s ISO rating (currently 3).
2. The City staff or committees and the Onalaska and Holmen School Districts’ staff or boards should meet jointly at least annually to plan education

improvements. The City and school districts should work together to encourage siting, renovation and expansion of school facilities in areas that are best equipped to accommodate growth, as identified on the Future Land Use Map.

3. When reviewing subdivision applications, allow the Onalaska and Holmen School Districts to comment on the impacts of the new development on the Districts' capacity to provide education services, facilities and bus routes to those developments.

### **UTILITIES**

1. The City should approve proposals for annexation into the City of Onalaska only when meeting the following utilities and community facilities criteria, or if other important community goals are met:
  - The area proposed for annexation has access to or can be easily connected to areas already served by the City, thereby allowing efficient delivery of services, facilities and utilities.
  - The annexation is in an area designated for growth on the City's Future Land Use Map.
  - All public improvements, both off-site and on-site, necessary to serve the annexation area can be constructed and financed in accordance with City standards and policies, and with goals and objectives within this plan.
  - The annexation area can be developed in a timely manner so the City does not invest in development costs without the timely return of necessary fees and taxes.
  - The increased tax base and overall benefit to the City of approving the annexation outweigh the actual financial impact on the community for providing police, fire, road maintenance and other public improvements and services to the annexation area.
2. Maintain, extend and upgrade public utilities (public water, sanitary and storm sewer) to logical infill areas as an incentive to encourage reinvestment and growth at appropriate locations in compliance with this plan.
3. Onalaska shall not extend its sanitary sewer and municipal water lines to development that is not located within the City boundaries unless appropriate compensation is provided and/or extenuating circumstances exist.

### **EFFICIENCY/COST EFFECTIVENESS**

1. Continue to seek federal, state, private and local funding for parks and greenways and utility and facility improvements, including Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Special Assessments and Impact Fees. Review City policies and update as needed.
2. Continue to require developers to pay all development costs and to install streets and utilities in new developments. The Plan Commission may waive this provision if the developer meets other significant City goals.
3. Adequately maintain existing facilities. The City should budget sufficient funds in its Capital Improvements Projects list to perform major and preventive maintenance of existing facilities. In general, the City should not acquire or construct major new capital facilities unless the appropriation for the maintenance of existing facilities is secured and the City can reasonably expect to maintain both facilities.
4. Require fiscal impact analyses of all major capital projects considered for funding. Such analyses should include, but not be limited to one-time capital costs, life cycle operating and maintenance costs, revenues from the project and costs of not doing the project.



Photo 6-1. Meadow.

# AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 6.1** *EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 6.2** *EXISTING AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS*
- 6.3** *SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 6.4** *GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES*

## INTRODUCTION

Understanding the resource base of a community provides an important context for the development of goals, objectives, and policies for the conservation and management of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources. Within the following element, various components of the community resource base are examined at a broad level, or “planning scale”. The purpose of this examination is to provide the City of Onalaska with the necessary information to make informed decisions and recommendations about future growth and preservation of these resources.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(e)(e) Agricultural, natural and cultural resources element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources consistent with zoning limitations under s. 295.20 (2), parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.



Photo 6-2. Farm. Photo Credit: Travel Wisconsin.

## 6.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Agricultural resources are very important to the social and economic characteristics of the City of Onalaska, surrounding communities, and La Crosse County. Many area jobs are generated by agricultural businesses as well.

Natural resources are significant in the City of Onalaska as they contribute to how the area is developed. Many natural resources that are in close proximity to Onalaska also act as recreational amenities for residents and landowners, which contribute to the quality of life in and around the City.

Cultural resources are important because of the history they hold. These resources are often able to tell stories about past events and residents that have been influential to Onalaska, in addition to shaping current events.

### LOCAL AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY TRENDS

Agriculture is an important element of the social and economic characteristics of Onalaska and La Crosse County. Historically, the Mississippi River has been used to transport goods, including produce, throughout the region and world. In 2014, there were 18 parcels and 288 acres within the City of Onalaska assessed as agricultural. Much of this is on the crest of blufflands and is not readily farmable. Productive agricultural acres most likely is near 50 acres within the City.

Changes in agriculture due to socio-economic conditions and the development pressures to convert agricultural land to other uses can have profound impacts on communities that have historically been tied closely to agricultural production. La Crosse County agriculture is diverse with a wide variety of products being produced. Table 6-1 indicates the agricultural-related commodities that generate the most sales in La Crosse County.

La Crosse County's Top Commodities (sales by dollar value, 2012)	
Top La Crosse County Ag-Related Commodities	2012
Milk	\$29.6 million
Grains	\$15.6 million
Cattle and Calves	\$8.7 million
Hogs and Pigs	\$3.6 million
Other Crops and Hay	\$0.95 million

Source: University of Wisconsin-Extension

Table 6-1. La Crosse County's Top Commodities (sales by dollar value, 2012. Source: University of Wisconsin-Extension.

In 2012, there were 748 farms in La Crosse County, down from 821 in 1987. The average La Crosse County farm size was 235 acres in 1987 (Table 6-2). By 2012, that number had decreased to 212 acres.

The State of Wisconsin saw significant fluctuations as well. In 1987 there were 75,131 farms in Wisconsin. By 1997, this number had dropped to 65,602, a 12.7 percent decrease. However, by 2012, the number of farms had increased to 69,754, a seven percent decrease from 1987.

The average farm size in Wisconsin has been declining. In 1987, the average Wisconsin farm size was 221 acres. As of 2012, the average farm size was down to 209 acres, over a five percent decrease.

Most of the farms in La Crosse County are owned by individuals or families, as shown in Table 6-2 below.

Number of Farms by Farm Ownership – La Crosse County		
Ownership	2007	2012
Individual/Family Farms	740	645
Partnership	81	58
Corporation - Family	12	27
Corporation - Other	4	4
Other (Co-op, Trust, etc.)	8	14
Total	845	748

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

Table 6-2. Number of Farms by Farm Ownership - La Crosse County. Source: United States Department of Agriculture.

Onalaska has seen a decrease of one agriculturally assessed parcel from 2010 to 2014. This is quite stagnant due more likely to the fact the City boundaries have been expanding, and those farming have the best land in the area for agricultural operations.

Assessed Agricultural Parcels and Acreage – La Crosse County - 2010 and 2014							
Unit of Government	Agricultural Parcels			Agricultural Acres			
	2010	2014	Number Change	2010	2014	Number Change	Percent Change
Onalaska	19	18	-1	282	288	6	2.10%
Village of Holmen	55	92	37	912	1,055	143	15.70%
Village of West Salem	20	17	-3	327	322	-5	-1.50%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Table 6-3. Assessed Agricultural Parcels and Acreage - La Crosse County - 2010 and 2014. Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

Table 6-3 shows the number of agricultural parcels and associated acre changes from 2010-2014 in Onalaska, Holmen, and West Salem.

Table 6-4 shows the amount of La Crosse County agricultural land that was sold from 1998 to 2013. For the most part, agricultural land being sold remains in agricultural use. However, a substantial portion of this land is being converted to other uses. Typically, land being converted to other uses is paid a premium, however we see the opposite happening in La Crosse County.

La Crosse County Farmland Sold and Converted to Non-Ag Uses - 1998 to 2013										
Year	All Agricultural Land			Ag. Land Remaining as Ag. Use			Ag. Land Converted to Non-Ag. Uses			Percent of Ag. Land Converted to Non-Ag
	Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	
1998	57	2,958	\$1,931	40	2,265	\$1,794	17	693	\$2,380	23.40%
1999	35	1,391	\$2,487	19	751	\$2,689	16	640	\$2,250	46.00%
2000	29	1,419	\$2,378	21	1,182	\$2,043	8	237	\$4,045	16.70%
2001	33	1,263	\$2,156	17	742	\$1,668	16	521	\$2,851	41.30%
2002	22	572	\$2,389	13	239	\$1,919	9	333	\$2,727	58.20%
2003	33	1,656	\$3,816	7	259	\$2,930	26	1,397	\$3,980	84.40%
2004	25	1,483	\$3,419	11	1,082	\$2,749	14	401	\$5,228	27.00%
2005	23	1,314	\$6,419	9	730	\$3,824	14	584	\$9,663	44.40%
2006	11	841	\$5,670	6	516	\$4,069	5	325	\$8,212	38.60%
2007	8	291	\$3,200	4	190	\$2,944	4	101	\$3,681	34.70%
2008	9	504	\$4,154	8	478	\$4,191	1	26	\$3,460	5.20%
2009	11	846	\$3,980	10	826	\$3,969	1	20	\$4,450	2.40%
2010	18	560	\$5,233	13	441	\$5,558	5	119	\$4,029	21.30%
2011	15	850	\$3,594	15	850	\$3,594	-	-	-	0.00%
2012	18	1,383	\$4,445	17	1,363	\$4,468	1	20	\$2,850	1.40%
2013	18	1,030	\$6,290	16	988	\$6,368	2	42	\$4,450	4.10%

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

Table 6-4. La Crosse County Farmland Sold and Converted to Non-Ag Uses - 1998 to 2013. Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service.

## URBAN AGRICULTURE

Urban agriculture has been discussed at the City-level recently. Currently, there are very few practices in place. No livestock operations (including chickens) are allowed outside of agriculture zoned districts. However, beekeeping is allowed as a Conditional Use. Community gardening has been increasing in popularity. There are two and sometimes three community gardens in the City during the productive seasons.

A Farmers Market is held seasonally on Sundays at the Crossing Meadows parking lot. This event has grown in popularity significantly.

The Clearwater Farm is a community asset that is focused on productive agriculture. Established in 1999, this non-profit preserves parts of a 19th century Onalaska dairy farm for education, recreation and history. The farm was operational until 1998 when it was sold to a developer who opted to work with the City and residents to preserve part of the area's agricultural history. There are animals and gardens on site that need daily attention which volunteers can provide.

## TOPOGRAPHY

Onalaska is in the heart of the Driftless Area, which covers southwestern Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota and northeast Iowa. The most recent glacial advance missed the area; however, the region was dissected by the glacial melt water created 11,000 years ago by the retreating glacier. The area was submerged below the meltwater, emerged and draining the land, transporting silt, sand, clay, and sediments, creating layers of sedimentary rocks. The last glacial period went around the Onalaska area, leaving the Driftless Area intact with the region's scenic ridges and valleys. Early French settlers termed the valleys as "coulees", giving the region the name "Coulee Region". Many of the ridges have bluffs of exposed limestone, sandstone and dolomite outcroppings. Protecting these bluffs and ridgetops from poor development and/or land use practices, including but not limited to cellular tower and utility siting and mining activities is extremely important as the population of the Coulee Region continues to grow.

The City of Onalaska elevation ranges from 700 feet to approximately 1,200 feet above sea-level. The City recognizes the importance of the bluffs and has in place bluffland protection regulations to protect the blufflands from developments (See Figure 6-1).



Photo 6-3. Community Garden. Photo Credit: Tiffany Weiss.



Photo 6-4. Bluff.



Photo 6-5. Bluff.

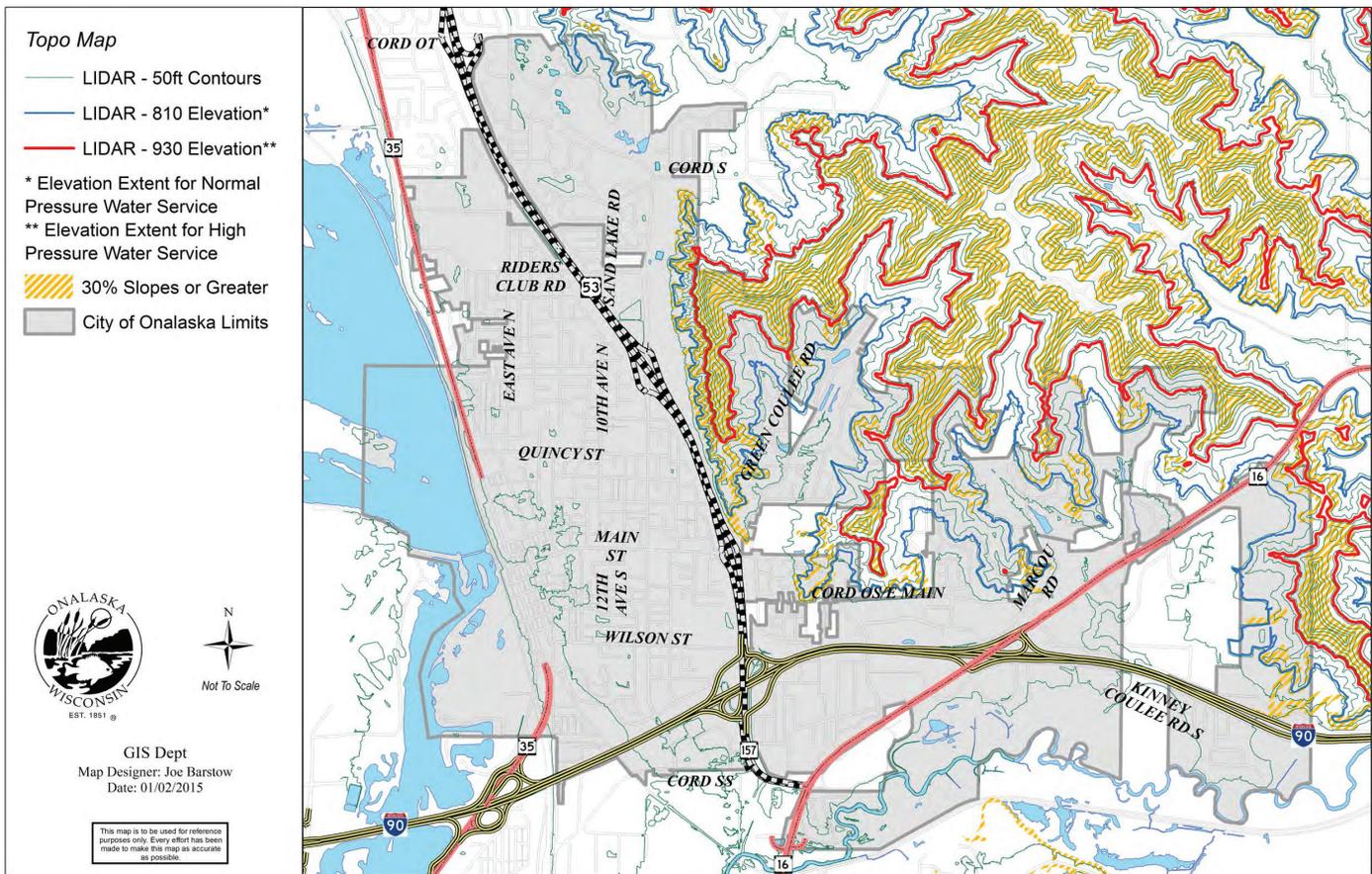


Figure 6-1. Onalaska Elevations. Source: City of Onalaska.

## BEDROCK GEOLOGY

The geology of the area is of the Cambrian System and the Prairie du Chien group of the Ordovician System. The geology is comprised of sandstone with some dolomite and shale. There are distinct terraces of sandy and gravelly materials that were formed during the Late Pleistocene era, some 5-12,000 years ago. Some refer to this as an Onalaska Shelf or Ledge.

## SOILS

A soils map that follows (Figure 6-2) indicates the various soil suitability classes. Because of the steep topography of the City, generalities are difficult to make. Site-specific soil studies need to occur when development is proposed to be certain of the drainage, erosion, and overall suitability it has for development or agricultural practices.

Soils matter significantly when determining the best use of the land. Soils are divided into classes to evaluate farming viability. Soil classes I-III are considered to be the land best suited for farming, while soils classes IV-VIII have features that make farming difficult, if not impossible.

## MINERAL RESOURCES

No mining exists within the City of Onalaska. Areas north of La Crosse County have seen large increases in non-metallic mineral extraction activities. These provide the region many jobs and employment opportunities.

Significant planning must take place to mitigate potential adverse environmental and noise impacts from non-metallic mining. While none of these activities currently exist within the City and there are no current proposals for such activities, the City should ensure that adequate regulations and controls are in place for these matters of concern.

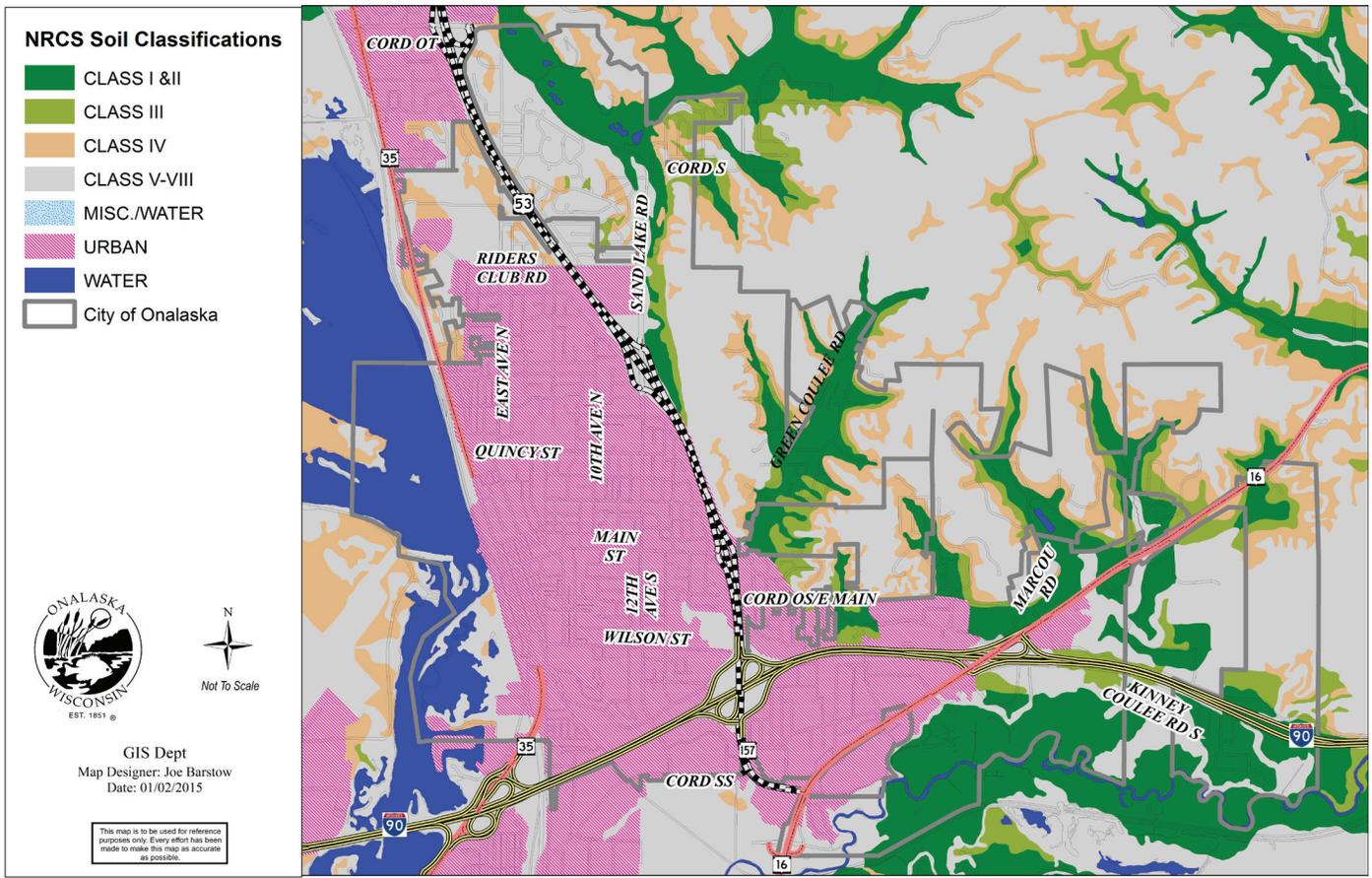


Figure 6-2. Onalaska Soil Associations. Source: City of Onalaska.

### WATERSHEDS AND SURFACE WATER

Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, intermittent waterways, and natural drainage ways make up the surface waters of La Crosse County. These resources are all water bodies, standing still or flowing, navigable and intermittent, including natural drainage ways that collect and channel overland rainwater or snowmelt runoff. Natural drainage ways are characterized by intermittent streams, threads, rills, gullies, and dry washes that periodically contribute water to first-order streams. There are also many artificial drainage ways where the natural drainage ways have been altered by human activity. All of these features have the ability to transport sediment and pollutants and are affected by their watersheds, the land that surrounds them.

Onalaska is located in the Lower La Crosse River Watershed, which is in the northwestern part of the La Crosse-Bad Axe River Basin, which encompasses approximately 126 square miles with approximately 100

miles of streams (Figure 6-3).

The La Crosse River and the Black River are the major river corridors in Onalaska. The La Crosse River flows along the southern limits of the City and empties into the Mississippi River in La Crosse. The Black River runs along the western limits of Onalaska and flows to the Mississippi River after passing the spillway through Lake Onalaska. The City recently developed the “Building the Great River Landing” Project to improve access to the Black River and recreational opportunities.

Lake Onalaska is a heavily utilized community asset. The 7,000 acre lake has depths of up to 40 feet, but the average is eight feet deep. The lake was formed by 1937 when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers finished the Dresbach, Minnesota Lake and Dam 7. Lake Onalaska is used for boating, sailing, fishing, hunting, birdwatching and wildlife viewing.

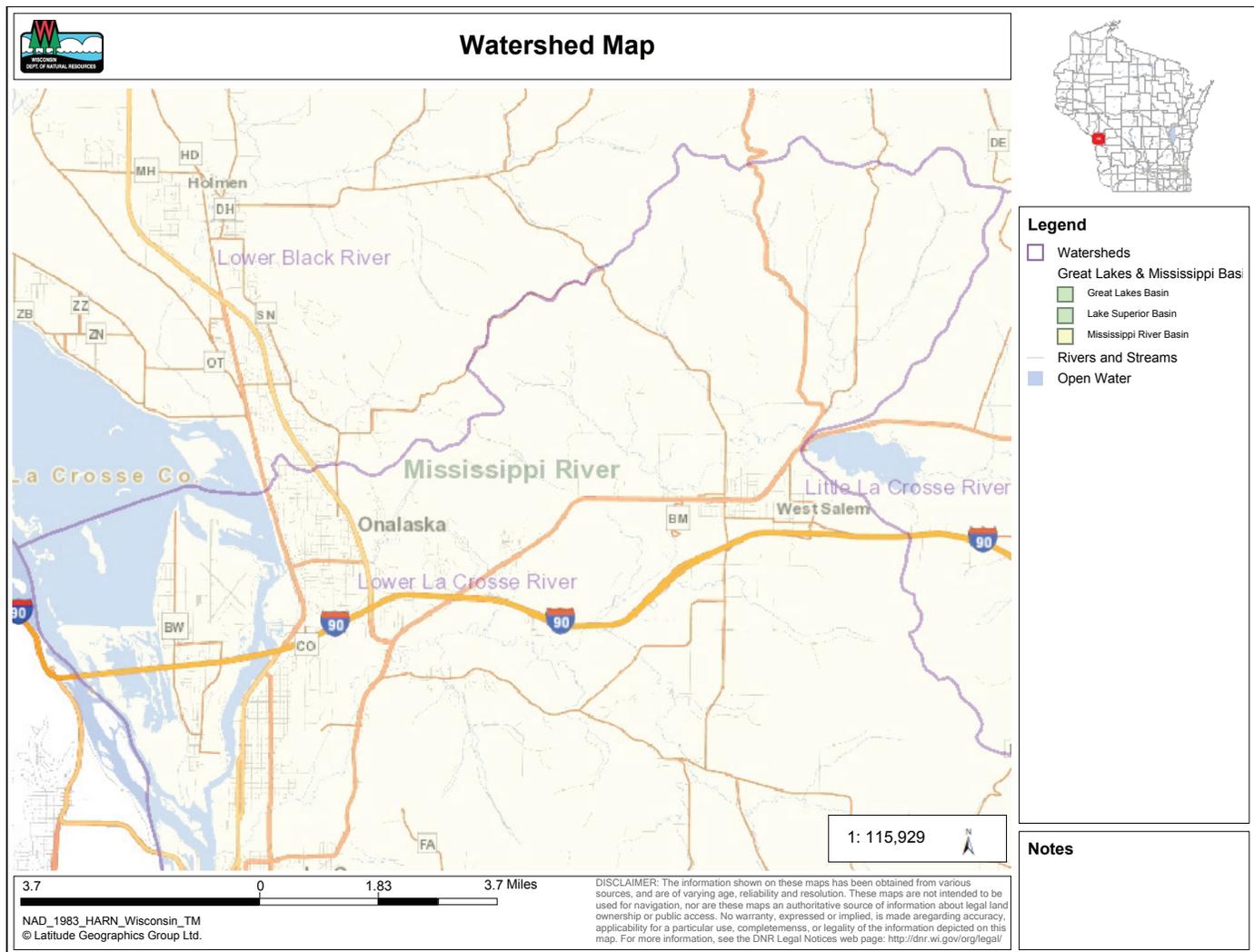


Figure 6-3. Onalaska Watersheds. Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Impaired waters can be added to the 303(d) list for two reasons: 1) when water quality standards are not being met or 2) when designated uses are not being achieved.

### IMPAIRED WATERS

The La Crosse River is on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) 303d impaired waters list for having a high phosphorus sample in 2012; however, available biological data do not indicate impairment. Fish consumption and recreation appear to be unaffected.

These determinations indicate when water bodies are not meeting state or federal water quality standards, and are used to establish a method to protect and restore the quality of Wisconsin's surface waters.

### OUTSTANDING AND EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCE WATERS

Through the Wisconsin's Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters Program, the WDNR is working to maintain the water quality in Wisconsin's cleanest waters. These waters have been classified into outstanding and exceptional waters. Outstanding resource water is defined as a lake or stream which has excellent water quality, high recreational and aesthetic value, and high quality fishing and is free

from point source or non-point source pollution. Exceptional resource water is defined as a stream which exhibits the same high quality resource values as outstanding waters, but which may be impacted by point source pollution or has the potential for future discharge from a small sewer community.

There are no outstanding or exceptional water resources as identified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources within Onalaska's boundaries.

## POINT SOURCE DISCHARGES

The WDNR regulates the discharge of pollutants to waters of the state through the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) program. This limits and sets forth a process to monitor discharges for pollutants. There are no organizations with a WPDES permit in the City. Metallics, Inc., located on CTH Z has an active WPDES permit, as does Bostwick Valley Mobile Home Park, both of which are near, but not in, the City of Onalaska.

## AREA HIGH CAPACITY WELLS

Many western Wisconsin municipalities utilize deeper aquifers for obtaining water supply. There are 16 existing high capacity wells in the City, including several that serve golf courses and other irrigation needs.

## GROUNDWATER

Groundwater from the Mt. Simon Sandstone Formation is the primary source of potable water. The aquifer was created by sandstone and dolomite deposited hundreds of millions of years ago. The City of Onalaska has a Wellhead Protection Plan and ordinance in place to help protect water quality. Well and drinking water information, including plans for the City to reconstruct Well #9 is further described in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.

## SHORELANDS

Shorelands provide valuable habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals and vegetation, and also act as buffers and thus serve to protect water quality. However, shorelands are also considered prime residential building areas because of their scenic beauty.

Recognizing this conflict, and in order to maintain the environmental, recreational, and economical quality of our water resources, the State of Wisconsin requires counties to adopt and enforce a shoreland ordinance.

As required by the State, shorelands are defined as:

- All land within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a lake, pond or flowage; or
- All land within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a river or stream or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever is greater.

Incorporated municipalities are allowed to create and enforce their own

"A high capacity well is any well on a high capacity property. A high capacity property is one property that has or will have one or more wells with a combined capacity of 70 gallons per minute (gpm) or more." Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

"According to the Wisconsin Emergency Management Division, Wisconsin communities experienced significant flooding each year from 1990-2001, except 1994. A Federal Disaster Declaration was granted for nine of those years. Total damages to public and private property (including agricultural damages) during that time period totaled more than one billion dollars." (Ohm, Brian. Planning for Natural Resources. P. 28, 2002.)

shoreland zoning ordinances that differ from the State's regulations. The City of Onalaska defines shorelands in the same regard as the State, and is planning on updating their shoreland and wetland zoning.

### FLOODPLAINS

One sensitive land feature that most residents are aware of is the floodplain, the flood-prone lands adjacent to water bodies. Floodplains can be desirable development areas due to the proximity to lakes, rivers and streams, but pose additional problems by possibly putting residents and property at risk. Development in floodplains can also affect the environmental quality of the waterway.

According to FEMA, floodplains exist along the La Crosse River, locations adjacent to Lake Onalaska and in several spots east of Sand Lake Road; development is strictly prohibited in these areas (Figure 6-4). Development within the floodplain is usually assessed through the use of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

It is important to remember that these maps are no substitute for site specific analysis. Natural and man-made changes in the landscape, and the age and accuracy of flood insurance maps have in some cases limited their reliability for the identification and designation of floodplains. The City also has floodplain development regulations in their Zoning Ordinance which should be consulted prior to any construction activity.

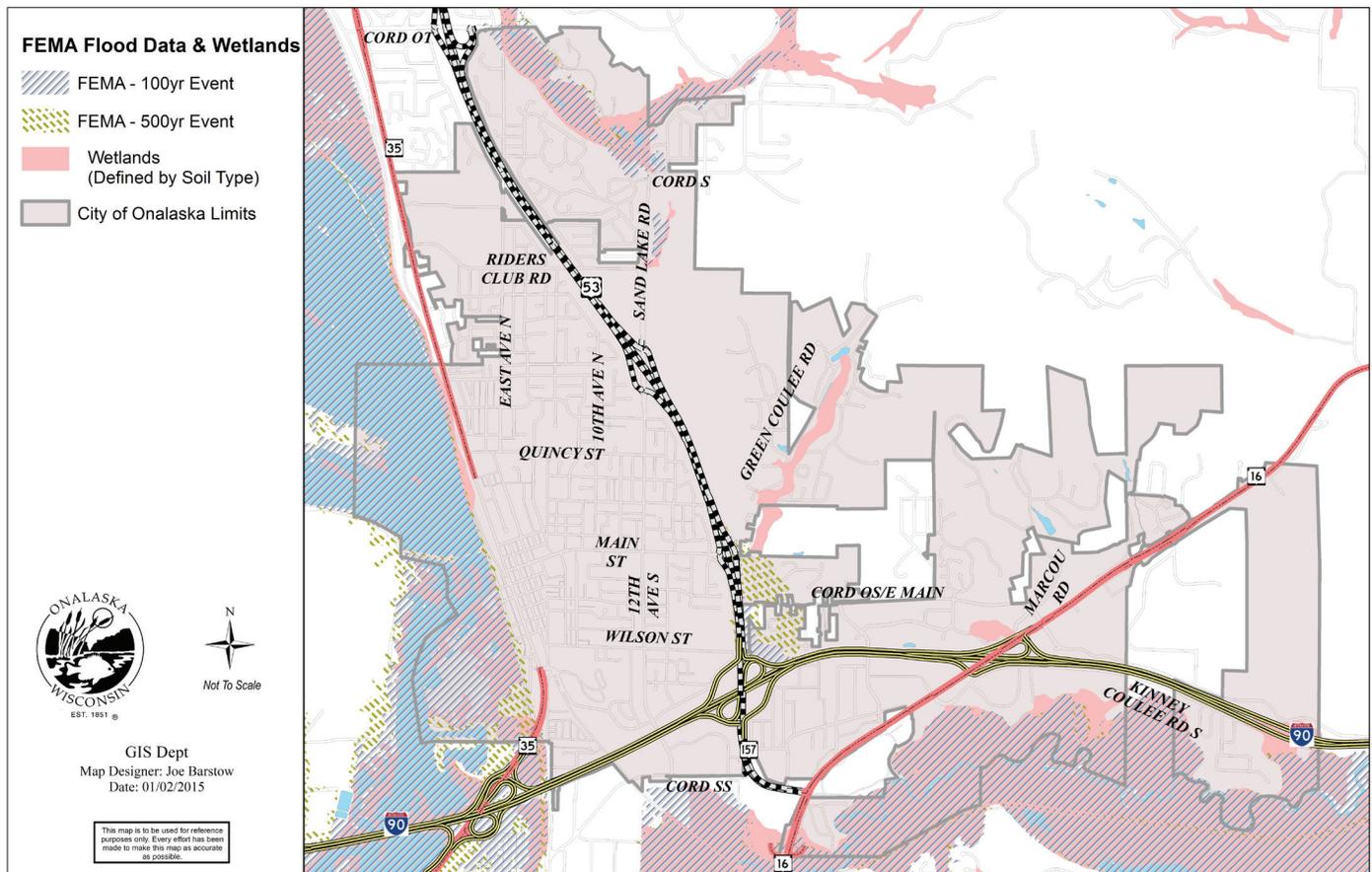


Figure 6-4. Onalaska Flood and Hazard Zones. Source: FEMA and City of Onalaska.

## WETLANDS

There are a number of wetland areas within the watersheds that can affect water levels of rivers and creeks flowing through the City of Onalaska. Wetlands are defined by the state statute as “an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions.” Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, or bogs. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants, replenish groundwater supplies, store floodwaters and maintain stream flows.

Due to the steep topography, isolated wetlands are relatively uncommon in Onalaska. However, there are larger wetland areas adjacent to the Black and La Crosse Rivers and along Lake Onalaska.

The Wittenberg Marsh is a 120 acre marsh located near downtown Onalaska that is subject to flooding and is used as a nesting area for Bald Eagles and is owned by the City of Onalaska.

The La Crosse River Marsh is located east of STH 16 includes approximately 1,600 acres of public and private land between La Crosse and West Salem.

## STEEP SLOPES

It is generally more desirable, both environmentally and economically, to avoid steep slopes and disrupting natural drainage ways with construction and land development. Problems with erosion and runoff pollution can occur with development on steep slopes, and flooding and wet basements can occur with drainage way disruptions.

There are numerous areas with steep slopes in the City of Onalaska, particularly to the north and east in the coulees. Onalaska has an Erosion Control Ordinance that requires an erosion control plan for land disturbance activity and requires approval of the plan before development can occur.

## FOREST AND WOODLANDS

Woodlands are an important feature of Onalaska. The City is located in a region of the country known as the Prairie-Forest Border, which is a transition zone between plains and forests. Vegetation typically consists of oak forest, degraded oak savanna, grassland, dry prairie and bottomland hardwoods as shown on the following page (Figure 6-5).

Urban forestry has been practiced by the City as the importance of trees in providing economic, ecological and environmental benefits are realized.

“...wetlands serve a vital role in nature, are part of the balance of nature and are essential to the purity of the water in our lakes and streams. Swamps and wetlands are a necessary part of the ecological creation and now, even to the uninitiated, possess their own beauty in nature.” (The Wisconsin Supreme Court in *Just v. Marinette County* (1972).



Photo 6-6. House on a high slope in the Coulees.  
Photo Credit: Tiffany Weiss.

Onalaska is a Tree City USA, a designation given by the National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters to communities who promote urban forestry programs. The City has been a member of this program for over 15 years, and received a Growth Award for having higher levels of tree care.

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was confirmed in the City in 2013. An EAB Action Plan was developed to address the impacts this disease will have on city-owned trees (i.e., boulevard, parks, and cemetery trees). There are over 1,700 ash trees in rights-of-way slated for removal in a phased approach over three years. Replanting is recommended and will occur as budgets and funding allows.



**TREE CITY USA®**

Photo 6-7. Tree City USA recipient.

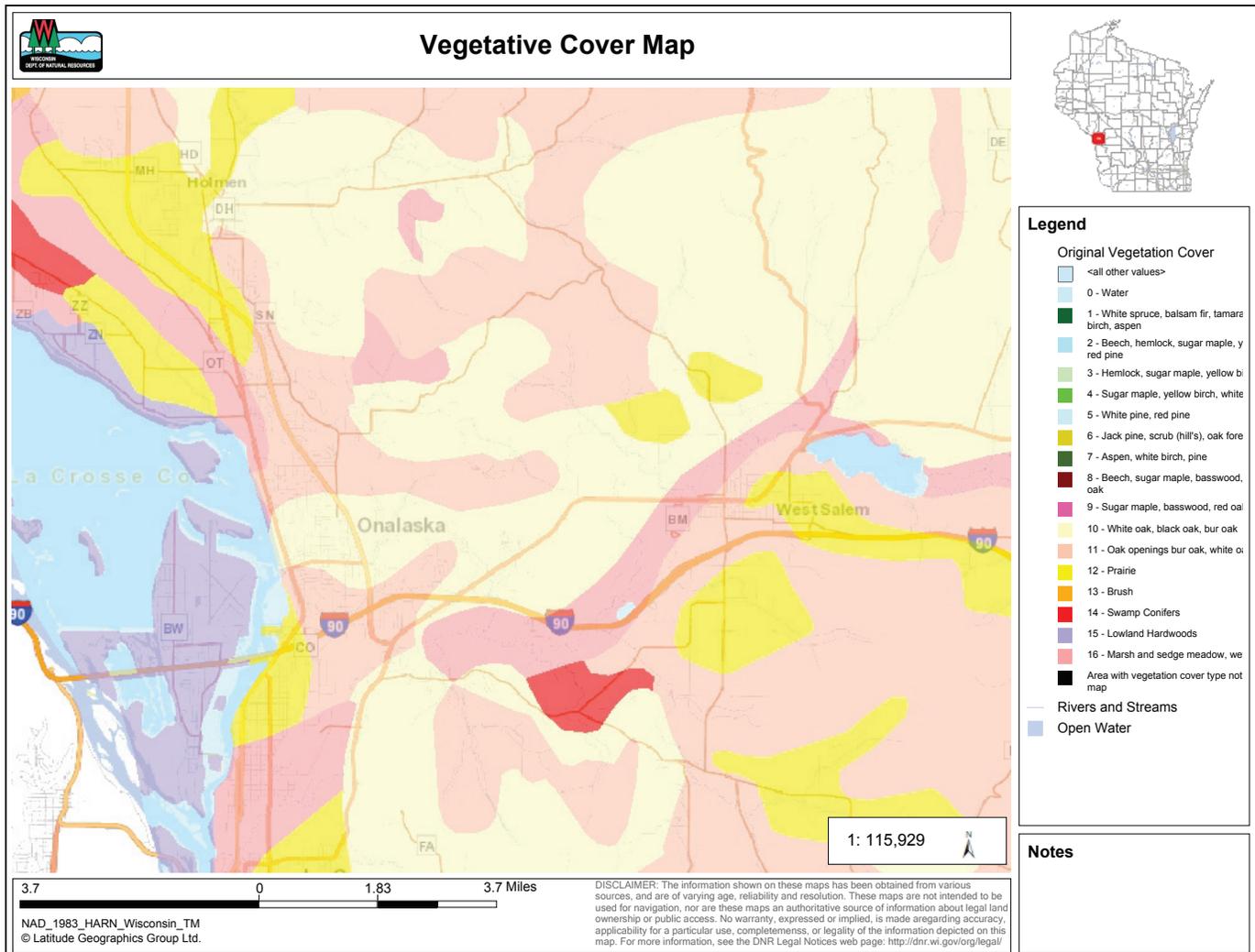


Figure 6-5. Onalaska Vegetative Cover Map. Source: WDNR.

## WILDLIFE, WILDLIFE HABITAT AND OPEN SPACE

Scattered throughout La Crosse County are various federal, state, and local wildlife, fishery, natural and scientific areas, including private conservancy areas. These often encompass one or more of the sensitive land areas discussed previously (e.g., wetlands, forests, shorelands, prairies). These areas are managed as open space to provide important feeding, breeding, nesting, cover, and other habitat values to a wide variety of plant and animal species.

Lake Onalaska is home to and a stop-over for many animal species. Many panfish are harvested from Lake Onalaska, and waterfowl use this area as a migration rest-spot. Onalaska is known as a great bird-watching location as well, particularly near the Van Loon Wildlife Area, Perrot State Park, and Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, all of which are located near the City. Other birding sites include Myrick Marsh, Hixon Forest Nature Center and Goose Island. The City is on the Mississippi Flyway, a major migratory route for millions of North American birds.

The La Crosse River Conservancy Project contains over 1,000 acres of wetlands, floodplain and woodlands for nature-based recreation and education facilities. Access can occur through several existing community parks.

The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, which includes Lake Onalaska, was established in 1924 and sees many visitors annually for fishing, boating, hiking, birdwatching, hunting and general sightseeing.

The Onalaska bluffs contain over 700 acres that provide many scenic views, and have large forests and rock outcroppings.

## RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND NATURAL COMMUNITIES

According to the WDNR Natural History Inventory, La Crosse County is home to many animal and plant species, as well as natural communities that can be considered rare or endangered.

Onalaska lies within two town ranges in La Crosse County. The areas where Onalaska lies have been identified as having many endangered species and natural communities by the WDNR's Natural Heritage

Inventory (NHI) (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/NHI/data.asp>). Due to the fluidity of this list, a comprehensive list is not provided here. References to the weblink above should be made when exploring areas and the potential for rare and endangered species presence.

These species are protected, and as such, are preserved to the extent possible.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL

Onalaska has a rich archeological history as Native Americans inhabited the area as early as 8,000 B.C. The Oneota arrived in the Onalaska area around 1300 A.D. and were noted for their farming methods, as well as fishing and hunting. Ancestors of the HoChunk Nation settled into the area in 1634, but most left between 1848 and 1874 due to treaties with the U.S. Government. However, some descendants still live in the area today.

Onalaska has a special district within the Zoning Ordinance that requires developers to hire an archeologist to conduct an inventory in certain areas before they are developed. The City has identified Sensitive Areas and Highly Sensitive Areas that require careful oversight during construction. In 2003 archeologists discovered pottery that links the Woodland people, who lived in the Onalaska area, with the legendary prehistoric City of Cahokia (in modern-day Collinsville, Illinois), which dates to about 1100 A.D. Cahokia was the largest and only known prehistoric Indian settlement north of Mexico.

Along Onalaska's Highway 35 corridor and adjacent blocks, two large uncatalogued burial sites have been identified. The Onalaska Village and Cemetery site is an Oneota village site that was initially defined based on historic records. During the reconstruction of Highway 35 in 2012 a number of artifacts were uncovered. The Boat Ramp Mound Group is a mound group that included at least one effigy, documented in the late 1800s. Scattered Woodland artifacts have been found in the area.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Onalaska was founded and platted by Thomas G. Rowe and John C. Laird in 1851. The original plat for the City of Onalaska was registered at the State’s Land Office in August 1851. By 1856 three steam sawmills were in operation and two more were under construction. A sash and blind factory, a brewery, a bakery, two blacksmith shops, a cooper shop and eight stores were doing business. By 1875 the population was listed as 680. Because of the wealth of White Pine to the north and the ability to send the pine down the Mississippi River to lumber mills in Onalaska and La Crosse, Onalaska became a flourishing lumber town. Onalaska’s history is detailed in the book “From Sawmills to Sunfish” by John and Joan Dolbier.

The Onalaska Area Historical Society was formed in 1988 for the promotion and preservation of items having historical interest to the Onalaska area and the reinforcement and strengthening of awareness of our local heritage. The community created an Onalaska Historical Museum in 1989, which shares the same building as the La Crosse County Public Library in Onalaska and houses artifacts and documents related to Onalaska’s history.

In 1996, the City of Onalaska adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance with the purpose and intent to protect and enhance sites of special character or architectural or historic interest or value to the public.

In 1997, the City of Onalaska established a Historic Preservation Commission to implement the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

The City of Onalaska was granted Certified Local Government Status for the Historic Preservation Program by the Wisconsin State Historical Society in 2001, which makes the City eligible for grant funding and recognition through the State Historical Society for Historic Preservation Efforts.

The City of Onalaska Common Council and Historic Preservation Commission designated three structures as historic in February 2000 (Table 6-5).

Two structures in Onalaska have been designated as historic structures on the National and State Register (Table 6-6).

The City of Onalaska recently received a grant through the Wisconsin Historical Society to complete its very first historical survey to determine which structures may be eligible for future local, state, and/or national designation, as well as potential districts within City limits that may be eligible based on architecture and local historical knowledge. The City has identified a total of 943 residential and commercial structures within City limits that have a construction date prior to 1964 as well as a number of sites with interesting historical backgrounds. The proposed historical survey would survey residential and commercial structures constructed prior to 1974. As part of the historical survey project, education and outreach with the community will occur.

Locally Designated Historical Structures		
Structure	Address	Year
Onalaska Brewery / Onalaska Pickle & Canning Factory	841 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue SW	1884
F.E. Nichols House (Lumber Baron Inn)	421 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue N	1888
Onalaska State Bank	201 Main Street	1911

Table 6-5. Locally Designated Historical Structures.

National and State Register of Historic Places		
Place	Address	Year
F.E. Nichols House (Lumber Baron Inn) and Carriage House	421 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue N	1888
La Crosse County School of Agriculture & Domestic Economy	700 Wilson Ave	1909

Table 6-6. National and State Register of Historical Places.

## 6.2 EXISTING AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS

Numerous federal, state, regional, local, and private plans and programs exist which contribute to preservation, conservation, or management of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources in La Crosse County. Although no list can be exhaustive, a partial list is shown below.

- ***Farmland Value Use Assessment***  
This program allows farmland to be assessed based on the lands ability to produce income from agricultural uses, rather than its potential market value to developers.
- ***Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program***  
Wisconsin farm owners are eligible to receive a state income tax credit, provided their county has a Farmland Preservation Plan in place.
- ***Forest Land Tax Program***  
These programs are run by the Wisconsin DNR and encourage sustainable forestry on private lands by offering tax incentives to landowners.
- ***Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits (WPDES)***  
This DNR operated program regulates municipal and industrial operations discharging wastewater to surface or groundwater.
- ***Wisconsin Historical Society***  
The Historical Society was founded in 1846 and helps people to connect with the past by maintaining and collecting stories and items. This organization has grant funding available to help local communities identify and preserve historical features.
- ***Wisconsin's Historical Preservation Plan 2006-2015***  
This plan outlines specific goals and objectives to protect and enhance the state's cultural resources.
- ***La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2012-2017***  
Each Wisconsin county is required by state law to develop a County Land and Water Plan. It is meant to serve as a guide for local conservation efforts that are administered by various regulatory organizations.
- ***City of Onalaska Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2010-2015***  
This plan inventoried existing recreational facilities and identified future needs.
- ***City of Onalaska Ordinances***  
Ordinances have been adopted to aid in the effort of conserving resources and protecting landowner rights, land values, and the public health and safety.
- ***Building The Great River Landing Plan***  
This plan discussed appropriate public investments to make Lake Onalaska more accessible and enjoyable.

## 6.3 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

This element provides an important foundation and vision for City land-use planning and decisions. In addition, numerous programs at the state and county level are available to assist the City in their planning efforts and in the protection of local agricultural, natural, and cultural resources. Protection of such resources needs to be balanced with, and can be complementary to, other community goals as discussed in the Issues & Opportunities, Land Use, and Economic Development Elements.

"The effects of natural and man-made systems often resonate beyond any one community's borders."

- McKnight Foundation, re: focus: Making Choices for Future Generations.

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Agriculture is a very important part of Onalaska's history. While not a dominant land class, the region's economy, including Onalaska's to a slightly lesser degree, depends on the agricultural industry for jobs.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

The topography of Onalaska is one of slopes, some severe. Lake Onalaska and the Black and La Crosse Rivers are the primary surface waters and provide many recreational opportunities, but also cause hazards for building due to floodplains and wetlands.

Groundwater quality is generally good and the City has adequate capacity to serve its residents for quite some time. Land supply has been in great demand, and the City has proactively preserved the blufflands from development. These areas are also more difficult, or even impossible, to serve with the municipal water system. Wetlands play an important role in the ecology of the community, and are often viewed as unique natural amenities of the area. Future development should consider environmental features and be built in such a manner that protects them and is consistent with the character of the community.

Additional parks and open spaces, as well as waterfront improvements, were high priorities for future improvements throughout the 2014 Community Survey.

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

The City of Onalaska is rich in history. While many historic resources are present in the City, it is a goal of the City's to continue working with the appropriate committees to continue documenting and preserving these resources. The City currently has two structures/sites on the state and national registers of historic places.

## 6.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL 1: PRESERVE THE BLUFFS, SCENIC VIEWS, WATERFRONT, WETLANDS, WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT WITHIN THE CITY AND ENCOURAGE THE PROTECTION OF THESE RESOURCES ON SURROUNDING LANDS.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By minimizing soil erosion through development regulation.
2. By protecting habitats for federally threatened, endangered or state listed species and natural communities.
3. By requiring natural resource features to be accurately depicted on all site plans, certified survey maps, preliminary plats and final plats.
4. By promoting compact development, especially in the coulee areas and near bluffs.
5. By utilizing purchase or conservation easements on environmentally sensitive lands when possible.
6. By updating shoreland and wetland zoning regulations.

**GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE LAND USE PATTERNS AND PRACTICES THAT ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AND COMPLEMENT THE NATURAL HYDROLOGIC SYSTEM, INCLUDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN GROUND AND SURFACE WATERS.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By requiring proper stormwater management practices to increase groundwater recharge and minimize runoff.
2. By preserving wetlands as essential components of the hydrologic system and as valuable wildlife habitat.
3. By continuing to enforce the City's Wellhead Protection Plan and update the plan as necessary.
4. By discouraging the regrading of large areas that alters natural topography and drainage patterns.
5. By continuing to protect floodplain areas and natural drainageways from being filled or altered in any way that reduces their function.

**GOAL 3: ENHANCE PUBLIC ACCESS, USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By implementing the Building the Great River Landing plan.
2. By establishing and maintaining a safe and efficient and connected system of parks, trails, pedestrian pathways, bicycle routes and greenways to provide access and safe linkage to natural and recreational resources.
3. By promoting the cooperation and coordination of acquisition and development of natural and recreational areas among state and local agencies, individuals, businesses and foundations.

**GOAL 4: IDENTIFY, CONSERVE AND PROTECT ONALASKA'S CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By encouraging the preservation or rehabilitation of historically significant buildings and sites in Onalaska.
2. By working with the Historic Preservation Commission to create a historic inventory as buildings and sites warrant such recognition.
3. Continue to protect important archaeological sites.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Encourage the use of conservation or cluster subdivisions for residential developments in agriculturally and environmentally important areas within and adjacent to Onalaska.
2. Support private landowners who wish to protect their land by using conservation easements and other land protection tools, unless such measures conflict with the efficient, orderly and planned expansion of the City.
3. Work with neighboring jurisdictions to encourage an orderly, efficient development pattern that takes into consideration productive agricultural land and minimizes conflicts between urban and rural uses.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Continue to implement the Tree Preservation Ordinance maintain a more mature urban forest post-development.
2. Implement the EAB Action Plan and work with property owners to encourage diverse tree plantings throughout the community.
3. Promote awareness of natural resources and critical resource issues in the City through public education and volunteer stewardship activities in public parks and through collaboration and partnership with local landowners, conservation groups (such as the Clearwater Farm Foundation and/or the Mississippi Valley Conservancy), public agencies, UW-La Crosse and other stakeholders.
4. Protect the bluffs through continued acquisition of land and/or easements along the bluff, as well as through ordinance development and enforcement.
5. Use the City's zoning, subdivision review and official mapping powers to protect scenic views of the bluffs and Mississippi River Valley, the downtown riverfront area, the bluffs to the east of the City and any other significant natural resources.
6. Maintain the City's status as a Tree City USA.
7. Follow the goals and guidelines in the Street Tree Inventory Report and EAB Action Plan.

8. The City should encourage the preservation of wildlife corridors and open space in new developments through the use of incentives and flexible regulations, such as land trusts, open space and cluster zoning, density bonuses and conservation easements.
9. Continue to consult the Onalaska Central Greenway Master Plan to identify and protect key linkages and provide greenway corridors and connections within Onalaska and surrounding communities.
10. The City should work with the WDNR, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and environmental groups to identify the locations where sensitive species occur within the City of Onalaska and cooperate with these agencies on creating maintenance plans and development guidelines to protect these species.

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Work with Centering Onalaska to continue to promote downtown Onalaska and its beautification.
2. Consider opportunities to develop key themes and identities for the downtown, including but not limited to a public art program.
3. Continue to document and protect important archaeological sites in the City.
4. Consider updating the Historic Preservation Chapter of the Zoning Code to include specific design guidelines for historic districts.
5. Inventory historic properties as identified by the Historic Preservation Commission.
6. Continue to encourage and support property owners who wish to rehabilitate and designate their historic properties. Adaptive reuse of historic buildings should be strongly encouraged.
7. Maintain Certified Local Government Status through the National Park Service.

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Photo 7-1. Gundersen Health System, Onalaska Clinic.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 7.1** *EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 7.2** *ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE CONDITIONS*
- 7.3** *LOCAL PLANS AND PROGRAMS*
- 7.4** *GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES*

## INTRODUCTION

An important factor in economic development is attracting new and retaining current businesses. By providing for its local businesses and the residents who make up the workforce, the City of Onalaska can make efforts to solidify current and future economic successes. The economic development element is a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, maps, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, and expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities for the City.

Through planning, a community can anticipate economic change and guide development to achieve the City's economic vision and objectives. Economic development is about working together to maintain a strong economy, which

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(f)(f) Economic development element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall also identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.

provides a good standard of living and a reliable tax base. An economic development plan should reflect the values of the community and must be carefully linked to the goals, objectives, and policies of the other plan elements.

This element assesses particular types of new businesses and industries desired by the City of Onalaska, assesses strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses, and designates an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. County, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the City of Onalaska are also identified in the element.

## 7.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The labor force is that portion of the population that is 16 years or older who are employed or unemployed but actively seeking employment opportunities. As a business, it is helpful to know information about the population that will be depended on to fill open positions in the future.

As identified in the Issues and Opportunities Element, Onalaska’s population has grown at a rate slightly faster than La Crosse County for the past four decades. According to population projections, the City is projected to grow at a faster pace than La Crosse County through the year 2040. In 2012, Onalaska had a labor force participation rate of 71.4 percent, which was down from 75.5 percent in 2000.

As shown in the Issues and Opportunities Element, in 2012 Onalaska had a median age of 37.4, which is higher than La Crosse County’s, but lower than Wisconsin’s. There is a higher percentage of individuals in the age categories of ‘Over 65’ and ‘Under 18’ than more middle-aged categories.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

A good indicator of the economic potential of an area is the education attainment of its residents. Generally speaking, a population with a higher level of education reflects a more skilled workforce with higher earning potential. A more skilled population can be seen as an attractive quality for businesses relocating as well. Table 2-9 in the Issues and Opportunities Element details the educational attainment in Onalaska and La Crosse County. Nearly 96 percent of Onalaska residents had at least a high-school diploma in 2012. Over 35 percent of Onalaska residents had attained at least a Bachelor’s degree. These numbers are quite high compared to County and State numbers.

## ECONOMIC BASE

Table 2-20 in the Issues and Opportunities Element indicates La Crosse County’s largest employers and Table 2-16 shows that approximately 32 percent of Onalaska residents are employed in the Education, Health and Social Services Industry.

In 2012, there were four percent of Onalaska residents who indicated they worked from home. City of Onalaska businesses employ approximately 28 percent of Onalaska residents, while nearly 90 percent work within the La Crosse County area.



Photo 7-2. Ground Floor Retail - STH 35.

## INCOME

In the Issues and Opportunities Element, the income for Onalaska and La Crosse County residents is identified in Tables 2-14 and 2-15. The median family income in Onalaska is \$76,854, while La Crosse County's is \$65,728. Household incomes are also quite a bit higher for the City of Onalaska when compared to La Crosse County and the State of Wisconsin. Onalaska residents in general have higher education levels, which could contribute to residents in the City having higher incomes than the County and State as a whole.



Photo 7-3. Valley Plaza.

## EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Employment projections for the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Area are presented in Tables 2-22 and 2-23 in the Issues and Opportunities Element. The industry in this region expected to see the largest growth rate through 2020 is Natural Resources and Mining/Construction, with an expected increase in employment of over 26 percent. The occupation expected to see the largest increase through 2020 is computer and mathematical occupations (21.1 percent growth in employment), followed closely by healthcare support occupations (19.3 percent growth projected).



Photo 7-4. Main Street Center.



Photo 7-5. Redevelopment Site former Braund Lumber Site.

## ECONOMIC STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The following are strengths and weaknesses in attracting and retaining businesses and industries to the City of Onalaska. It is important that the community continue to work on strengthening its position to meet future business and industry needs that may arise.

### STRENGTHS

- Unique environmental quality, particularly coulees, bluffs and water.
- Education and Training – Onalaska residents have very high high-school graduation rates and excellent access to secondary education and training facilities in the region.
- Customer base in the La Crosse Metropolitan Statistical Area of just under 135,000.
- Excellent transportation facilities and options – freight rail, commercial airport, located on I-90.
- High (disposable) incomes.
- Excellent Infrastructure – including roads, utilities including a high quality water system, strong regional electrical grid, area CNG fueling station, and broadband/technology.
- Niche area businesses – high-tech, medical fields, food processing.
- Redevelopment opportunities.

### WEAKNESSES

- Lack of financial resources for development assistance.
- Workforce age – An increasing age will lead to individuals dropping out of the workforce into retirement. Entry-level and skilled workers are difficult to find for employers.
- Higher taxes, land costs and wage scale compared to more rural communities.
- Topographic restrictions.
- Minimal mass transit.
- Limited available development space.
- Lack of affordable, private utilities (i.e. phone, internet, etc.).
- Lack of consistent 4G network.

According to the National Governor’s Association, Center for Best Practices, the seven New Economy Development Strategies are:

- 1) Invest in People
- 2) Build state-of-the-art infrastructure
- 3) Treat citizens as customers
- 4) Streamline taxes and regulations
- 5) Nurture entrepreneurs
- 6) Create hi-tech magnets
- 7) Preserve quality of life.



Photo 7-6. New Commercial Infill Development.



Photo 7-7. Menards Site and Future Mayo Health System Site.

## 7.2 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE CONDITIONS

As evidenced throughout the community survey completed in the spring of 2014, responses had a wide variety of businesses desired. There is a general consensus that the City's downtown remain historic, but with a creative buzz that is accentuated by small, niche, local businesses, including small shops and eateries.

Survey respondents were also asked to identify the types of land uses most needed and 52 percent indicated additional industrial or manufacturing would be good for the area. In fact, the Retention and Expansion of Local Employers ranked as the second most prevalent issue throughout the survey. Additional industrial and manufacturing properties may be built in areas with particular good access to major transportation corridors.

Additional private investments are likely to occur in downtown Onalaska, particularly as additional public expenditures are made for the Great River Landing project. Therefore, additional focus on the downtown in terms of desired businesses and the approach to identifying and reserving sites for complementary businesses should occur.

A large tract of land was recently purchased by Mayo Clinic Health System near the Menards' site on Sand Lake Road. This area will be developed in conjunction with the natural environment, and is likely to be an economic driver for the area immediately surrounding this site, as any development Mayo constructs will generate substantial traffic.

### DESIGNATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SITES

Development pressure is anticipated to continue. With good access to the highways, rail, and airport transportation, the City is well-primed for additional economic growth.

Economic development sites and projects should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Of foremost importance is to determine if the proposed project is consistent with the community's vision and Comprehensive Plan. There are 27 buildings and 18 sites within the City that are being actively marketed on LocateInWisconsin, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's marketing website.

Economic development sites which the City is targeting for reinvestment and revitalization are shown in Figure 7-1 and include:

- A. The Business Park along Century Place, South of County Road OT and West of East Avenue North, including 15-acres of vacant land for future commercial and industrial development.
- B. Elmwood site on Sand Lake Road, 80-acres South of County Road S and North of the newly acquired 187-acre Mayo Clinic Health System site, for future commercial and mixed-residential development.
- C. Development and/or redevelopment of land around the Mayo Clinic Health System's recent acquisition along Rider's Club Road, Sand Lake Road, and surrounding areas, primarily for future commercial or medical-related development.
- D. Mayo Clinic Health System's recently acquired 187-acre vacant tract of land on the East side of Sand Lake Road for future development as a medical campus.
- E. TIF #4 area, including properties along State Road 35 from King Street South to the BNSF Railway bridge. This area includes lands around the Great River Landing site, which has been recognized through survey responses and community meetings as Onalaska's downtown area, desired to be vibrant with small, local, niche stores.
- F. Mayo Clinic Health System Campus on Theater Road with 18-acres.
- G. Elmwood Business Park including 33-acres of vacant land on Midwest Drive and Theater Road for commercial development.
- H. Gundersen Health System campus with 28-acres including vacant land for campus expansions.
- I. The I-90 Economic Overlay Areas along North Kinney Coulee Road from State Road 16, East to the City's municipal limits.
- J. Land northeast of the La Crosse County Landfill, including approximately 50-acres owned by Steven Nicolai for future commercial and industrial development.

Other areas where reinvestment and revitalization is targeted include the WIS 35 corridor, the WIS 16 corridor, and the Sand Lake Road corridor.

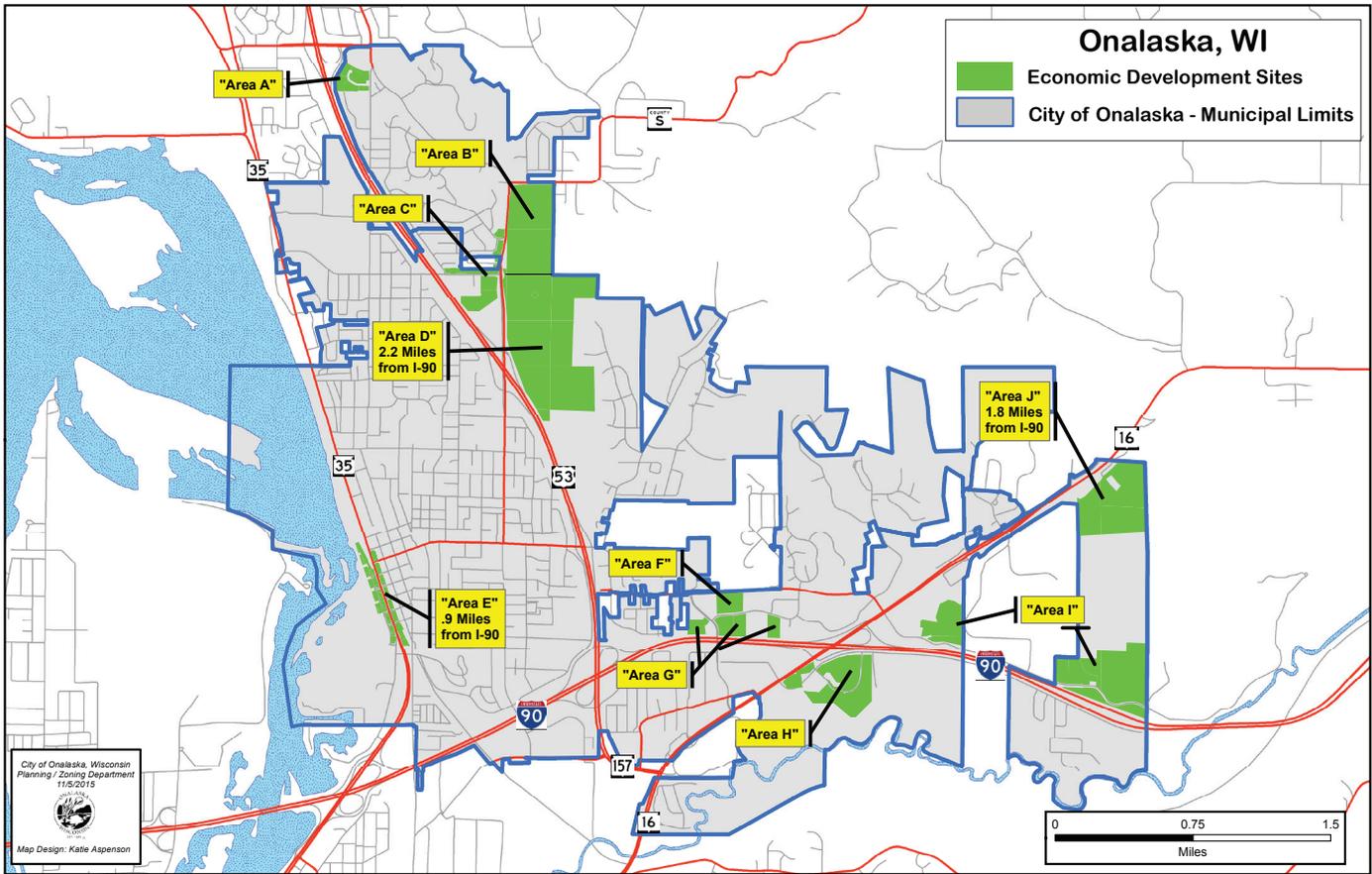


Figure 7-1. Economic Development Sites, City of Onalaska.

### BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT SITES

A search of the Wisconsin DNR BRRTS database revealed that Onalaska has 125 sites that have been contaminated. Sixty-nine of these sites are “Closed,” meaning that the sites have been satisfactorily cleaned according to state standards. There are several “No Action” sites which means that based upon the action or site attributes, no action needs to be taken to clean-up the site. Twenty-one sites are “Historic,” meaning spills were cleaned prior to 1996. There are no “open” contaminated sites in the City.

These sites can often be remediated and reused for commercial or industrial businesses. This would allow the City to reuse these lands and enables the preservation of farmland, as businesses can avoid developing greenfield acreage.

Brownfield Definition:  
“...real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, controlled substances, petroleum or petroleum products, or is mine-scarred land.”

-Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

## 7.3 LOCAL PLANS AND PROGRAMS

“A comprehensive economic development framework is fundamentally about enhancing the factors of productive capacity – land, labor, capital, and technology – of a national, state or local economy.” (“Defining Economic Development,” U.S. Economic Development Administration Information Clearinghouse, [http://www.osec.doc.gov/eda/html/sa1\\_whatised.htm](http://www.osec.doc.gov/eda/html/sa1_whatised.htm)).

There are a variety of local, regional, and statewide economic development plans and tools available to municipalities to assist them with supporting existing businesses and recruiting new businesses. In addition, there are programs available for individual businesses to assist in start-up and expansion. At the state level, economic development took on the form of creating a strategic framework that refines the state’s priorities, renews commitment to existing programs, and presents new programs. Released in 2013, Governor Walker has created new programs aimed to support entrepreneurship and innovation through capital catalyst programs, marketing efforts, funding assistance, tax credits, and tourism.

Economic development tools include tax increment financing (TIF), low-interest business loans, and business incubators. Effectively using these tools requires an investment by the community to provide resources such as staff to organize and manage these tools, foster partnerships, and secure and manage funding. Numerous other economic development plans and programs exist including:

- **WISCONSIN HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (WHEDA)**  
WHEDA offers many financial assistance programs to assist small-businesses with low-interest loans and grants.
- **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION (DOA)**  
DOA offers some financial assistance programs to assist small-businesses with low-interest loans and grants, and communities with grants to build infrastructure necessary to accommodate business development.
- **WISCONSIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (WEDC)**  
WEDC offers programs that help with many areas of business development, including business planning, initial capitalization, site selection, permitting, regulations, employee training programs, economic development tax credits, and expansion programs.
- **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (WisDOT)**  
WisDOT has many programs that provide grants and loans to businesses and local communities for transportation related needs.
- **TRANSPORTATION ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT (TEA-GRANT) PROGRAM**  
This program, operated by WisDOT, offers grant money to communities or private businesses for transportation projects that will attract and retain businesses and jobs in the State of Wisconsin.

- **WISCONSIN PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATION**  
 Wisconsin Public Service Corporation offers programs to companies that are looking to expand, relocate, or start-up in their service area. They also maintain lists of available land and marketing resources for communities in which they provide service.
- **7 RIVERS ALLIANCE**  
 The 7 Rivers Alliance represents the Upper Mississippi Valley region across three states and includes the La Crosse County. The region is focused on growing five business clusters – advanced agriculture, advanced manufacturing, composites, entrepreneurs and inventors, and health care.
- **COMPETITIVE WISCONSIN, INC.**  
 Competitive Wisconsin is a nonpartisan coalition engaging business, higher education, agriculture and labor and provides analysis and recommendations for action on issues affecting Wisconsin’s economy and quality of life.
- **WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE**  
 The Western Technical College offers employee training programs to maintain competitiveness in today’s global business environment.
- **UW-LA CROSSE – SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC)**  
 This organization is part of a statewide network of SBDC’s working with business owners and entrepreneurs to facilitate business growth and improvement.
- **WESTERN WISCONSIN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA**  
 This regional organization is a collaborative, interactive, and coordinated network of training resources and support services that provides and retains a well-skilled labor force for employers of western Wisconsin.
- **MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRRPC)**  
 This organization offers industrial park and site inventories, business park development, loan fund assistance, economic development studies and strategies, and grant writing.
- **LA CROSSE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT – AIRPORT LAND USE PLAN**  
 Nearby access to a regional airport can be a critical location decision factor for companies looking to relocate or expand. This is a large asset for the region, and the City of Onalaska. Project improvements include terminal upgrades, fueling area improvements, parking rehabilitation, land acquisition, airfield lighting improvements, and hangar taxiway reconstruction. It is projected that aircraft operations will continue growing at a rapid pace out of this facility.
- **LA CROSSE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
 The La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce play a large role in the economic development of the City of Onalaska and La Crosse County. This organization generally coordinates economic development programs for the region. Partnerships developed with this group and the communities and businesses assist in business start-ups, workforce development, networking, and professional development.
- **LA CROSSE AREA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (LADCO) AND THE COULEE REGION BUSINESS CENTER (CRBC)**  
 LADCO primarily focuses their efforts on attracting new businesses, retaining existing businesses, and co-managing the Coulee Region Business Center. CRBC provides facilities, resources, mentoring and coaching to small businesses and entrepreneurs in the La Crosse area.

- **CENTERING ONALASKA**

This group's mission is to revitalize and sustain the City's historic downtown area by creating a strong positive identity, enhancing access to Lake Onalaska and the waterfront areas, and to complement a thriving business district with places to be entertained, eat, shop, and enjoy.

- **ONALASKA AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (OABA)**

The Onalaska Area Business Association was organized to promote goodwill and improve communications between the business community, local government, and the people who live in the Onalaska area. Their goals are to improve the quality of life within the community and foster economic growth throughout the Onalaska area.

Effectively using these tools and programs requires an investment by the City to provide resources such as staff to organize and manage these tools, foster partnerships, and secure and manage funding. A limited amount of technical assistance is available to municipalities from the State, County, Regional Planning Commission, and other organizations.

## 7.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL 1: TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESSES THAT FOSTER A STRONG, DIVERSIFIED AND BALANCED ECONOMY.**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. By working with La Crosse County and other area jurisdictions on regional economic development initiatives that benefit the City and region.
2. By creating an economic development plan for the City that addresses the City's overall economic development goals.
3. By taking advantage of and promoting the upkeep of infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, fiber optic and information systems network in the Onalaska area.
4. By designing and maintaining infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, fiber optic and information systems network in the Onalaska area while maintaining the quality of life and environmental integrity of the area.
5. By fostering and supporting continued development of businesses that have a presence and niche in Onalaska, such as medical and high-tech/clean manufacturing.
6. By promoting tourism, eco-tourism and related businesses that capitalize on the City's cultural, environmental and geographic resources.
7. By developing a policy creating tools for economic development (i.e., revolving loan fund).
8. By considering future funding options that are not property tax based (i.e., sales tax).

**GOAL 2: TO FOCUS ON CREATING A HEALTHY CITY THAT PROVIDES FOR A QUALITY OF LIFE THAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS A CREATIVE, SKILLED LABOR FORCE.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By marketing the assets of the region, including transportation and natural amenities, to stimulate high-quality economic growth.
2. By working with local education systems to continue development of vocational programs that address the labor needs of both existing employers and businesses targeted for recruitment.
3. By continuing to implement the Great River Landing plan to encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in WIS 35 and downtown area.
4. By encouraging the development of commercial districts. Home occupations are supported but as growth continues, businesses are encouraged to locate in appropriate locations in the City to support further business development.

**GOAL 3: TO STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE THE EXISTING BUSINESS DISTRICTS.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By directing retail businesses to established commercial corridors and districts through the use of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. By encouraging the clustering of compatible uses; e.g., retail and professional services.
3. By maintaining a balance of industrial, commercial and residential land uses to stabilize and enhance the City's tax base and provide high quality employment opportunities.
4. By communicating with business and industry leaders on a regular basis to ensure their needs are being met.
5. By striving to promote the City of Onalaska as a friendly place to do business.
6. By attracting firms that complement existing industries and increase business for established companies.

**GOAL 4: TO FOSTER HIGH QUALITY, AESTHETICALLY PLEASING DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT THAT STRENGTHENS ONALASKA'S ECONOMY.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By continuing to use programs to assist new and existing businesses, such as Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), Business Improvement Districts (BID), Community Development Authority and the La Crosse County revolving loan program.
2. By encouraging reinvestment, redevelopment and infill development on vacant or underutilized land in the downtown business district and using cluster and node development concepts for infill development along key corridors.
3. By encouraging public/private investments in business district improvements.
4. By promoting long term investment in developing areas by encouraging mixed uses.
5. By continuing to improve on architectural and landscape architectural standards for development and redevelopment by promoting the use of building materials that have greater longevity, design that complements or improves the character of commercial areas and equal, high-quality materials and architectural detailing on all facades.

## POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### ***DOWNTOWN, TOURISM AND RECREATION BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

1. Continue to work cooperatively to promote the Great River State Trail and La Crosse River State Trail as a means of increasing tourism.
2. Encourage uses in the downtown area that create a unique destination for tourists and residents, such as restaurants, art, retail and recreation-oriented businesses.
3. Consider creating and updating an overall Downtown Redevelopment Plan that builds on results of the Great River Landing Plan and includes parking issues and opportunities.

### ***DESIGN STANDARDS***

1. Continue to enhance the aesthetic quality of businesses throughout the City by updating the Zoning Ordinance and subdivision codes as necessary and considering the creation of an overlay design district to provide for improved longevity in improvements, increased stability in property values and to promote long-term investment in the City.
2. Ensure adequate parking and delivery vehicle accommodations for all business areas.
3. Review and update the City's sign code and continue to review and update as sign technology evolves.

### ***COMMERCIAL AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

1. Review required items to be submitted for permitting. New development and/or land uses should be required to quantify their impacts on existing infrastructure.
2. Assist entrepreneurship and new business development, including appropriate home occupations, by partnering with local agencies discussed in Section 7.3 of this Element that offer programs targeted for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

### ***COORDINATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

1. Continue to coordinate local economic development activities with the Onalaska Area Business Association, La Crosse Area Development Corporation, neighboring municipalities, Forward Wisconsin, the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.
2. Evaluate economic development agency memberships based on costs/benefits/outcomes and prioritize membership to these organizations.

### ***PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS***

1. Focus on public/private partnerships that serve growing sectors in the economy, and that bring in both individual and institutional dollars.
2. Develop policies to be used to assess whether a public/private partnerships, including Tax Increment Financing (TIF) should be employed.
3. When making public purchases for goods or services, the City should utilize Onalaska businesses when possible.



Photo 8-1. Onalaska City Hall.

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

## *INTRODUCTION*

- 8.1** *EXISTING CONDITIONS*
- 8.2** *ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE CONDITIONS*
- 8.3** *GROWTH TRENDS AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES IN ADJACENT COMMUNITIES*

## INTRODUCTION

Intergovernmental cooperation is an important tool needed to operate in an efficient and cost effective manner, as well as to control and promote growth in an orderly fashion for the City of Onalaska, as well as adjacent units of government.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(g)

(g) Intergovernmental cooperation element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall consider, to the greatest extent possible, the maps and plans of any military base or installation, with at least 200 assigned military personnel or that contains at least 2,000 acres, with which the local governmental unit shares common territory. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under s. 66.0301, 66.0307 or 66.0309. The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

## 8.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLANS, AGREEMENTS, AND RELATIONSHIPS

The City adopted a cooperative boundary agreement with the Village of Holmen in September of 2015 (as defined under State Statute 66.0307). Additionally, the City and the Town of Medary are discussing a possible cooperative boundary agreement. A regional master plan as defined under State Statute 66.0309 has been completed by the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC). Other indirect relationships exist between neighboring jurisdictions, the Onalaska School District, La Crosse County, the MRRPC, WDNR, WisDOT, and several other State agencies/ departments. Enhancing the relationship of the City with all adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions can and will advance dialogue and actions necessary to ready the City for future changes in land use and growth pressures.

Other existing intergovernmental agreements found in Table 8-1 include:

Agreement List		
Agreement Number	Parties	Title
394-03	Holmen, West Salem, Bangor, Rockland, Town of Campbell, Town of Shelby, Town of Holland	Joint Municipal Court
368-02	Metropolitan Planning Organization	Intermunicipal Agreement
358-01	La Crosse County Aging Unit	Community Center Lease
359-01, 461-05	Villages of Holmen, West Salem	Shared Ride Transit Agreement
360-01, 414-04	Onalaska School District	Rowe Park Maintenance Contract & Parking Lot Addition
345-01	Winona and Houston Counties	Mutual Aid Agreement
322-00	La Crosse County	Emergency Management Documentation Guidelines
235-95	Onalaska School District	Police Liaison Officer
223-94	La Crosse County Land Conservation	Cooperative Agreement for Erosion Control
444-05	La Crosse County	Landfill Siting Agreement
456-05, 454-05	City of La Crosse, Towns of Onalaska, Campbell, Shelby, Holland, Hamilton, Villages of Holmen, West Salem	Cooperative Recycling Agreement & Recycling Brochure
468-08, 510-07	City of La Crosse, Village of Holmen	Emergency Water Supply
474-06	La Crosse County	Bear Cat Vehicle Usage for Emergency Response
492-06	Mississippi Valley Conservancy Partnership	Bluff Land Preservation
533-08, 2015	La Crosse County, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission	Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
546-09		WisWarn Mutual Aid & Assistance Agreement
554-09, 538-11	Trempealeau	Memorandum of Understanding for K-9
561-09	Town of Campbell	Building Inspection Services
570-10		Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Mutual Aid
588-11	La Crosse County Library	Services Agreement
		911 System: Joint Powers Agreement
2012, 2014	Towns of Onalaska and Medary, City of La Crescent, MN	Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement
2014	La Crosse County	Multi-Disciplinary Team Response to Child Maltreatment
	Onalaska School District	Joint Facilities Agreement
	La Crosse County	Emergency Response Team (ERT) Agreement
2015	City of La Crosse	Law Enforcement Mutual Assistance Agreement

Table 8-1. Agreement List.

## ADJACENT JURISDICTIONS

The City of Onalaska is located in La Crosse County and borders the Towns of Onalaska and Medary. The City shares a common boundary with the City of La Crosse to the south. The Village of Holmen abuts the City to the north, while West Salem lies to the east of the City. Surface waters, including the Black River, the Mississippi River and Lake Onalaska, create a natural boundary to the west (see Figure 8-1).

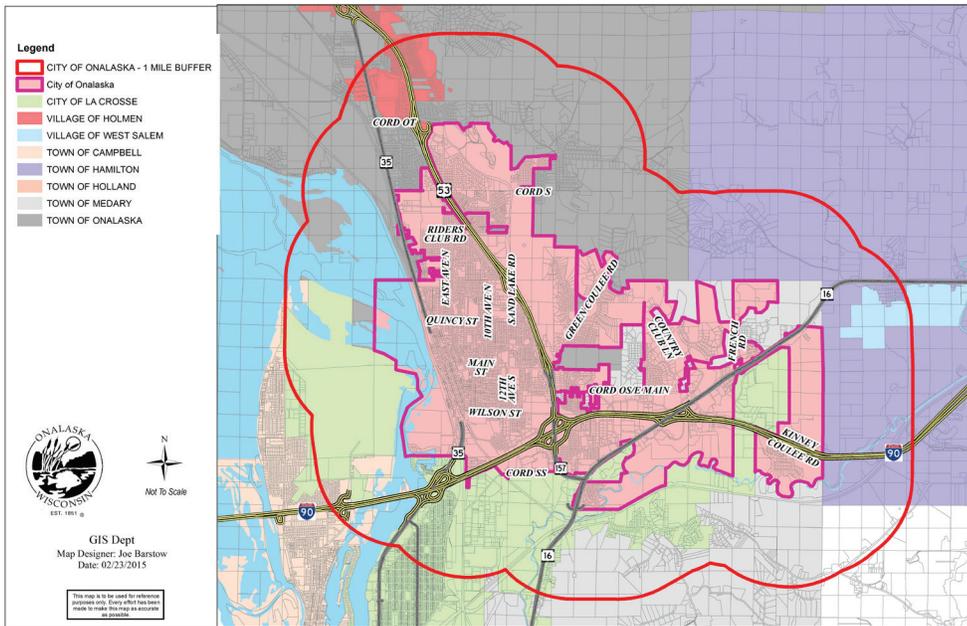


Figure 8-1. Municipal Limits Map.

The City is a party to one cooperative boundary agreement with the Village of Holmen ratified in September 2015. A stipulated boundary agreement between the City of Onalaska and the City of La Crosse was approved in 1997 related to a small portion of the Town of Medary (South Kinney Coulee area) that was involved in annexation litigation between the two Cities.

The City of Onalaska lies entirely within the La Crosse Sewer Service Area, and contracts with the City of La Crosse for all of its wastewater treatment. The Cities also work cooperatively to coordinate the Metropolitan Transit Utility as well.

The City has been in talks with the Town of Medary to consider developing and entering into possible cooperative boundary agreements.

### Why Collaborate?

- Provide a wider network of compatible businesses for clustering.
- Provide a greater array of services available to a larger market.
- Create traffic patterns that capitalize on the contributions of multiple communities, while retaining a greater number of dollars within the region.
- Pool government resources to prevent overlapping or duplicative services.
- Consolidate heavy-cost services.
- Pool government resources to achieve volumes necessary to access deep discounts not available individually.
- Share financial resources to protect natural resources.

Source: Wisconsin Economic Development Institute, Inc.

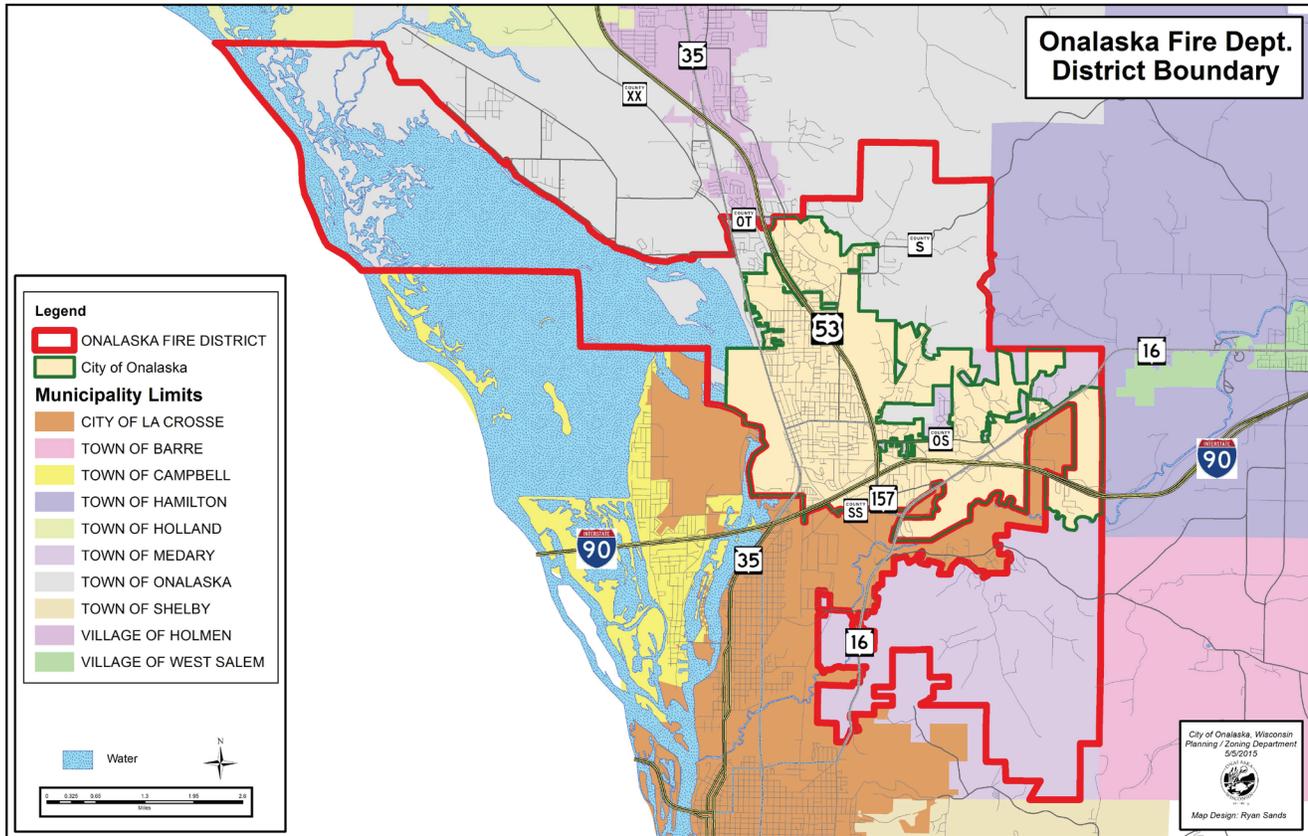


Figure 8-2. Fire Districts Map.

The City of Onalaska currently provides fire service to the Town of Onalaska (see Figure 8-2), however the Town will be cancelling this arrangement in 2016. A portion of the Town is also served by the La Crosse Sewer Service Area. The City of Onalaska remains open to discussion with the Town of Onalaska regarding boundaries and how orderly development should occur. The Village of Holmen and the City have historically had a cooperative relationship and ratified a cooperative boundary agreement in 2015, and in general, have worked cooperatively to provide utilities and services in a cost effective matter – including Shared-Ride Transit and a future sanitary sewer connection.

The Village of West Salem lies to the east of Onalaska, but does not share a border. As the Village continues to grow, as does the City, it is recognized that there is a possibility that they will share a common border at some point in the future.

Although not adjacent, the Town of Campbell and the City of Onalaska continue to work together cooperatively.

## SCHOOLS

Students in the City of Onalaska generally attend public school in the Onalaska School District, with some children attending the Holmen School District. The City's relationship with the School Districts is cooperative. The City has been supportive of the Onalaska School District's expansion needs when they have arisen, and will continue to work with both school districts on future needs as they arise. The City and the Onalaska School District have an active reciprocity agreement that allows both parties to share facilities including fields, parks and the OMNI Center.

## COUNTY AND REGIONAL AGENCIES

The City of Onalaska is located in La Crosse County. The County has limited jurisdiction within the City.

The relationship between the City of Onalaska and La Crosse County can be characterized as one of cooperation. Particular areas of emphasis include economic development, general mutual aid agreements with emergency services, and transportation issues.

La Crosse County and the City of Onalaska are part of the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC). Regional planning commissions provide planning assistance, assist local interests in responding to state and federal programs, serve as a coordinating agency for programs, and provide other technical and advisory assistance to local governments.

The City of Onalaska is becoming a partner in the newly established La Crosse County Convention and Visitors Bureau. This will be a new joint tourism entity to aid in marketing and attracting visitors to the region. The City will no longer have a separate tourism department.

## STATE AGENCIES

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary state agencies the City of Onalaska must coordinate with to achieve the goals and objectives of this Plan.

WDNR has a lead role in wildlife protection and the protection and sustained management of woodlands, wetlands, and other natural wildlife habitat areas. The activities of the WDNR are discussed further in the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element of this Plan. Additional information is also available on-line at [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us).

WisDOT is also a key player in the planning and development of transportation facilities in the City of Onalaska. WisDOT is responsible for the maintenance of Interstate 90, USH 53, and State Roads 16, 35, and 157. The City will continue to coordinate with WisDOT with respect to decisions regarding all roadways under WisDOT jurisdiction. Additional information is also available on-line at [www.dot.state.wi.us](http://www.dot.state.wi.us).

Open communication and participation in land use and transportation decisions, which may impact the City, is an important priority for intergovernmental cooperation in the future.

"Healthy collaborations:

- Are less competitive than traditional decision-making.
- Are based on joint learning and fact finding.
- Feature opportunities for creative and systemic thinking.
- Encourage parties to participate jointly in the decision-making process.
- Can be ongoing processes that accept new players.
- Structure participant interaction to encourage constructive dialogue, discussion and deliberation.
- Accommodate mutual gain negotiation.
- Address matters of procedure and relationships as well as substance.
- Allocate implementation responsibility across as many parties in the process as the situation warrants."

Source: Daniels and Walker, Oregon State University.

## ONALASKA ARMORY

The Onalaska Armory, located at 910 Oak Forest Drive, is home to the Wisconsin National Guard's Company A, 32nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion and U.S. Army Reserve units. The Armory recently completed a \$3 million remodel in 2015.

## UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION OFFICE

The US Fish and Wildlife office runs an office at N5727 County Road Z in the Town of Onalaska. The visitor center provides opportunity to learn about the refuge that they maintain, go through interactive exhibits about the diverse wildlife and habitats. This area also has a river walk, miles of paved and gravel trails traversing through prairie lands.

## UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY – UPPER MIDWEST ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES CENTER (UMESC)

This facility conducts applied research to solve natural resource management problems. Their office is located at 2630 Fanta Reed Road in the Town of Campbell. A primary target of their work includes monitoring the Mississippi River and testing new procedures and applications for research prior to rolling out those strategies agency-wide.



Photo 8-2. Wisconsin Army National Guard. Photo credit: SEH, Inc.

## 8.2 ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE CONDITIONS

In the future, an open and continuous dialogue between the City, La Crosse County, and other governmental jurisdictions will result in cooperative and mutually beneficial efforts. These efforts are critical to the future planning and development of public and shared services and open communications. Without the coordination and cooperation of local governmental jurisdictions, decisions critical to preserving and enhancing local and regional characteristics, activities, and natural resources will be compromised.

As growth and land use changes continue in the area, development in the City of Onalaska may be a contentious topic to neighboring property owners, and surrounding communities. Collaboration with communities in the region to attract new development and retain existing businesses is vital. Continued work with adjacent jurisdictions towards cooperative boundary agreements would also reduce contention and potential conflict.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

The City recognizes the importance of coordinating with neighboring communities. If conflicts arise, initial attempts to resolve such conflicts could involve written or face-to-face communication between elected or appointed community officials. If these efforts do not result in a mutually satisfactory agreement, more formal conflict resolution methods could be explored, such as mediation or arbitration. Additional conflict resolution techniques are available as described in Wisconsin State Statutes 802.12.

## 8.3 GROWTH TRENDS AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES IN ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

The City of Onalaska will continue to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, the county, state agencies, and the school district for mutual benefit. To ensure compatibility with the planning goals and objectives identified in the City of Onalaska's Comprehensive Plan, the City will share their plan with adjacent communities and agencies and would like to participate in future planning efforts with these entities.

## 8.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL 1: CONTINUE TO WORK COOPERATIVELY AND MAINTAIN EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH ALL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS IN AND AROUND THE REGION.**

### OBJECTIVES

1. By frequently communicating with other government officials (staff, elected and appointed officials) both formally (on committees, etc.) and informally (telephone calls, emails, etc.).
2. By participating on regional or joint planning committees.
3. By coordinating on planning efforts (e.g., comprehensive, land use, transportation, and natural resource protection), regulations, and specific land use decisions.
4. By sharing information, equipment, resources, facilities, technology, services and possibly revenue that have cross-jurisdictional use.
5. By evaluating the need for intergovernmental agreements with the City of La Crosse; Village of West Salem; Towns of Onalaska, Medary, and Hamilton.
6. By evaluating existing intergovernmental cooperation efforts and determine the need to maintain, improve, expand or dissolve existing agreements.

**GOAL 2: WORK WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES TO LOWER THE COSTS OF PROVIDING SERVICES.**

### OBJECTIVES

1. By achieving cost efficiencies, combined with excellent public service delivery, through cooperative public service arrangements.
2. By identifying opportunities to jointly provide expanded or new services such as additional recreational programs or parks facilities with neighboring communities.

"Competition has been shown to be useful up to a certain point and no further, but cooperation, which is the thing we strive for today, begins where the competition leave off."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

**GOAL 3: COLLABORATE WITH ALL NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS, LA CROSSE COUNTY, AND ORGANIZATIONS (E.G., MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONSERVANCY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENTITIES, ETC.) TO IMPLEMENT THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By collectively protecting natural resources that are particularly threatened by impending development (bluffs, water resources, etc.).
2. By working to create a coordinated growth and development strategy for the region.

**POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Work with surrounding communities and La Crosse County to develop compatible land use and zoning regulations.
2. Cooperate with surrounding jurisdictions to improve service delivery.
3. Jointly plan transportation and trail (bicycle and pedestrian) improvements and connections.
4. Work cooperatively to implement regional planning efforts.
5. Continue to participate in existing intergovernmental cooperation efforts including emergency services, the Shared Ride Transit Service and the La Crosse Metropolitan Transit Utility.
6. Work with the Village of Holmen, Town of Onalaska, and City of La Crosse to make the Great River Road a signature corridor that provides a sense of pride for residents and a major attraction for tourists through the region.
7. Involve the school districts in long range planning efforts and in reviewing current development proposals.
8. Consider participating in a regional Purchase of Development Rights and similar programs to preserve environmentally sensitive areas, important open spaces for recreational uses or other public purposes, and farmland.

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Photo 9-1. Mayo Clinic Health System, Onalaska.

# LAND USE

## *INTRODUCTION*

### **9.1** *LAND USE SUMMARY*

### **9.2** *LAND USE AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS*

### **9.3** *GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES*

## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element is intended to provide important background data, analyze trends, and define future needs related to land use. This information will serve as the foundation for the development of goals, objectives, policies, and actions. This element must be defined and utilized in conjunction with the other eight planning elements and will serve as a guide to future growth and development in the City of Onalaska.

Defining appropriate land use involves more than making ecological and economical choices. It is also about retaining values, lifestyles, cultural assets, and community character. The planning of future land uses is sometimes perceived as an intrusion on the rights of private property owners. The actual purpose of this activity is to protect rights of the individuals and to give landowners, citizens, and local communities the opportunity to define their own destiny.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(h)  
 (h) Land-use element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element shall contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity and net density of existing uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial and other public and private uses. The element shall analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts. The element shall contain projections, based on the background information specified in par. (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based. The element shall also include a series of maps that shows current land uses and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in par. (d), and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.

Many Wisconsin communities are facing problems due to unplanned growth: pollution, a loss of community character, traffic congestion, and sprawling development. Taxes have reached all-time highs and infrastructure and maintenance costs continue to encumber local units of government. By giving communities the opportunity to define the way they wish to grow and by developing a “vision” to reach that target, the magnitude of these problems can be reduced.

This Element contains a listing of the amount, type, and intensity of existing uses of land and discusses opportunities for redevelopment within the City of Onalaska. This Element also analyzes existing trends in the supply, demand, and price of land and contains a future land use map that identifies the City of Onalaska’s vision for future land uses.

Overall, the intensity and density of all land use activities is somewhat mixed in the City. The center of the City has smaller lot sizes for residential and commercial uses. Towards the outer boundaries, lot sizes are larger. Over the next 20-years, it is anticipated that overall density will increase as more mixed-use developments occur, as well as the boundary continuing to expand due to annexations and cooperative boundary agreements.

## 9.1 LAND USE SUMMARY

Onalaska is located in central La Crosse County. Predominantly residential in land use, the City also has a significant commercial component, as well as a highly treasured natural resource base.

Historically, the City has been impacted by several major issues – being in very close proximity to the City of La Crosse and major regional employers, good access via major transportation corridors, being located off Interstate 90, access to Lake Onalaska, the associated river systems, and the abundance of outdoor recreation in the surrounding area. Because of these unique features and the quality of life Onalaska has to offer, there has been a large demand for residential and commercial lots in the City.

### DEVELOPMENT LIMITATIONS

The City lies in a very unique geographic area of Wisconsin, and because of this, there are significant development challenges related to slopes and bluffs while, smaller challenges are presented by wetlands and floodplains. Development has generally occurred within coulees as many bluffs with steep slopes are not developable. Using the information in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element, as well as working cooperatively with La Crosse County, FEMA, and Wisconsin DNR, development can be guided in a manner that protects Onalaska’s resource base.

2004 to 2014 Land Use - City of Onalaska									
Real Estate Class	2004			2014			2004 - 2014 Change		
	Parcels	Acres	Acres - Percent of Total	Parcels	Acres	Acres - Percent of Total	Parcels	Acres	Acres Percentage Change
Residential	5,051	1,940	50.50%	5,575	2,104	51.70%	524	200	10.30%
Commercial	461	895	23.30%	575	1,040	25.60%	114	145	16.20%
Manufacturing	11	43	1.10%	16	64	1.60%	5	21	48.80%
Agricultural	34	352	9.20%	18	288	7.10%	-16	-64	-18.20%
Undeveloped	35	325	8.50%	39	308	7.60%	4	-17	-5.20%
Agricultural Forest	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%
Forest	21	283	7.40%	18	264	6.50%	-3	-19	-6.70%
Other	4	4	0.10%	1	1	0.00%	-3	-3	-75.00%
<b>Real Estate Totals</b>	<b>5,617</b>	<b>3,842</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>6,242</b>	<b>4,069</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>5.90%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Table 9-1. 2004 to 2014 Land Use - City of Onalaska.

## EXISTING LAND USE

The City of Onalaska is largely residential (Figure 9-1) and commercial. According to 2014 assessment records, 52 percent of the City's acres are residential and 25 percent are commercial. Developed uses (residential, commercial, and manufacturing) make up approximately 80 percent of Onalaska's assessed acreage. There are also approximately 1,800 acres (31 percent overall) of tax-exempt properties in the City.

Between 2004 and 2014, 524 residential parcels were created, a 10 percent increase (Table 9-1). Commercial parcels increased by 114 parcels (16 percent), while manufacturing saw an increase of five parcels and 21 acres (48 percent). The current zoning map is located in the following page spread (Figure 9-2).

While residential and commercial growth has been occurring, the equalized valuation of property (Table 9-2) in the City has been increasing as well. The residential, commercial and manufacturing classes of real estate saw valuation increases from 2004 to 2014, while the undeveloped class more than doubled. The City has seen its equalized value increase by over 40 percent in the last ten years.

2014 Valuation				
Real Estate Class	Land Value	Improvement Value	Total Valuation	Percent Change Since 2004
Residential	\$205,590,900	\$830,070,600	\$1,035,661,500	34.10%
Commercial	\$148,882,600	\$403,129,600	\$552,012,200	53.70%
Manufacturing	\$2,636,300	\$11,030,400	\$13,666,700	88.60%
Agricultural	\$54,800	\$0	\$54,800	-60.40%
Undeveloped	\$1,016,100	\$0	\$1,016,100	179.10%
Ag Forest	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Forest	\$577,500	\$0	\$577,500	11.40%
Other	\$38,300	\$0	\$38,300	-78.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$358,796,500</b>	<b>\$1,244,232,900</b>	<b>\$1,603,029,400</b>	<b>40.60%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessments, Statement of Changes in Equalized Values by Class and Item

Table 9-2. 2014 Valuation.

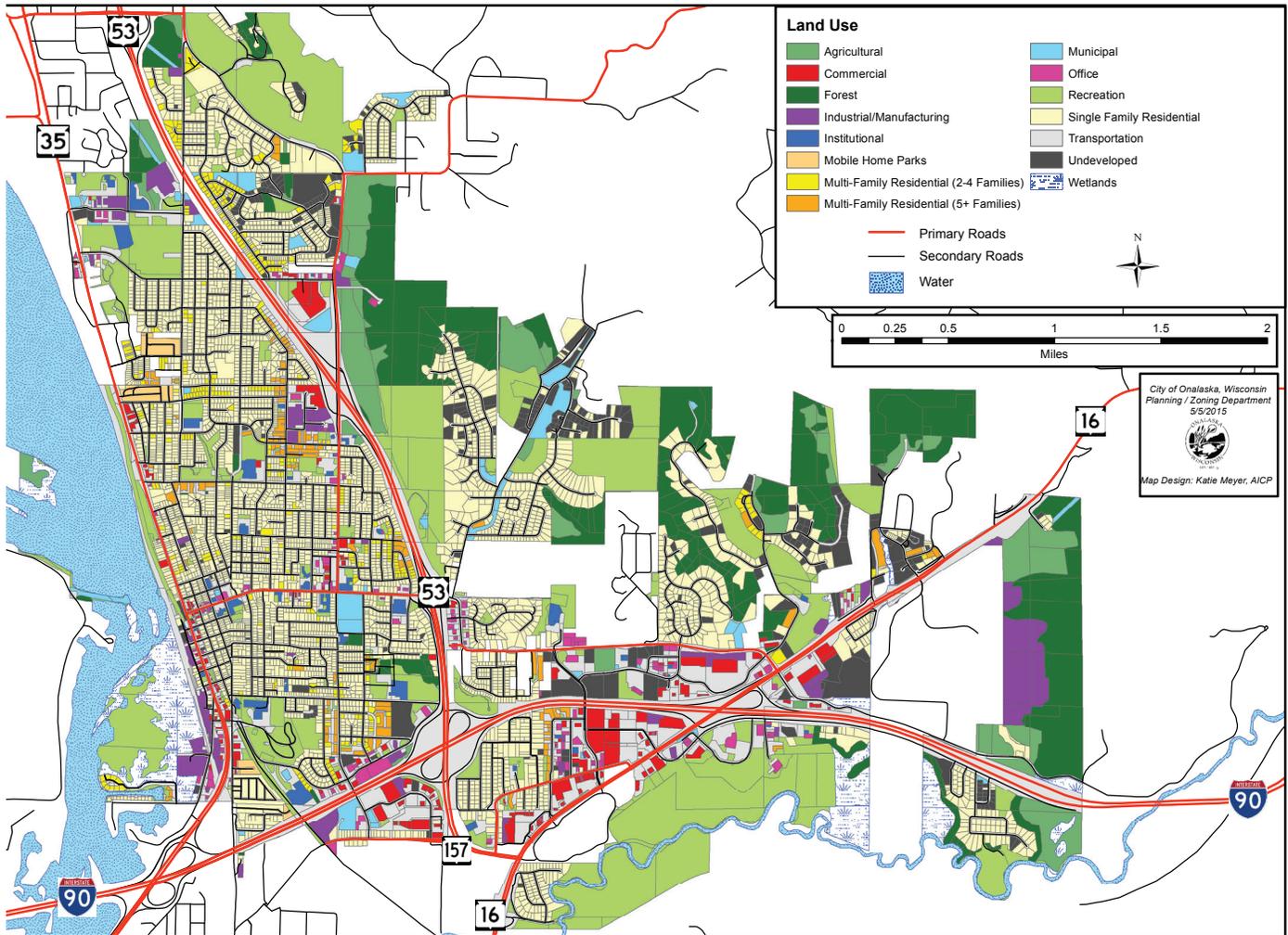


Figure 9-1. Current Land Use - City of Onalaska.

Figure 9-2 and Table 9-3 show the City’s existing zoning map and current land use acreages. The City’s zoning map is the regulatory mechanism for implementing the Future Land Use map, and as such, will over time become increasingly similar to the Future Land Use map (Figure 9-3).

Existing Land Use	
Existing Land Use Categories	Acreage
Single Family Residential	1,522
Multi-Family Residential (2-4 Families)	108
Multi-Family Residential (5+ Families)	67
Mobile Home Parks	23
Office	58
Commercial	122
Industrial/Manufacturing	157
Institutional	57
Municipal	107
Undeveloped	270
Agricultural	303
Forest	735
Recreation	1,575
Wetland	204
Transportation	1,610
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,918</b>

Table 9-3. Existing Land Use Categories.

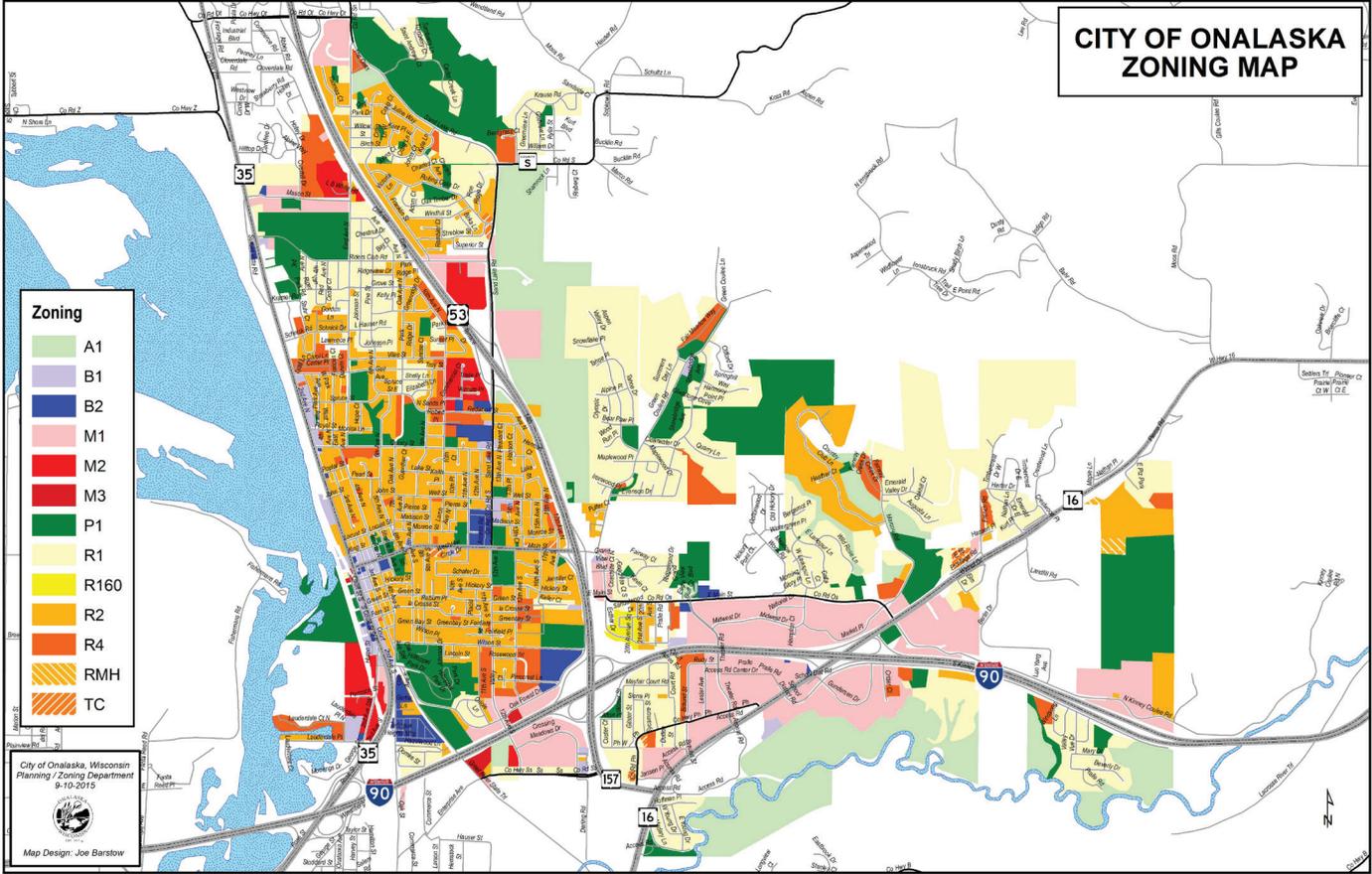


Figure 9-2. Zoning Map - City of Onalaska.

## COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Within the 2014 assessment, there were 575 commercially assessed properties (1,040 acres) in the City. There has been an increase of 114 parcels from 2004. While this is about 25 percent of the total City acreage, the commercial land class makes up over one-third of the City's valuation. These uses typically are found along Main Street and the I-90, STH 16, STH 35, Sand Lake Road and US 53 areas, as well as Theater Road.

## INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

There are 16 manufacturing properties (64 acres) in the City. This was an increase of five parcels from 2004. This is less than one percent of the City's property valuation. The majority of these land uses are in the Onalaska Industrial Park, located east of Tenth Avenue and north of Redwood Street, or along the railroad in the southwest portion of the City.

## FORESTED LAND USE

There are 18 parcels (264 acres) of assessed forest land in the City. This is a decrease of three parcels from 2004, making up a fraction of a percent of the City's valuation.

## RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

There are 5,575 residential parcels (2,104 acres) currently devoted to residential land use in the City, which results in an average of just over one-third of an acre per residential parcel. This is by far the most valuable land class, making up nearly 65 percent of the City's assessed valuation. Additional information on the composition of the City's housing stock is included in the Housing Element.

## AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

There are 18 parcels (288 acres) of assessed agricultural land in the City. This is a decrease of nearly half from 2004. More information about the change in farming in the City and La Crosse County is presented in the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element.

## PUBLIC/OTHER LAND USE

There are a significant number of public lands in the City of Onalaska, including several school properties, parks, the OMNI Center, the Onalaska Public Library, several medical facilities, the Onalaska Armory, several churches, and other non-profit, tax-exempt organizations. There are 309 "other" acres that are assessed for tax purposes, and it is estimated that there is roughly 164 acres that are municipally or institutionally owned, as well as another 3,400 acres that are wetlands, transportation-related or recreation related.

## LAND DEMAND AND PRICES

Land sales and prices can indicate changes in an economy and land use patterns. Particularly when agricultural and forested lands are sold and converted to alternative land uses, it is important to see if there is a desire to shift some of these lands to more intense uses, such as residential, commercial, or industrial.

Table 6-4 from the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element shows that in La Crosse County, there is a small premium being paid to keep agricultural property in agricultural land uses. On an annual basis for the past 16 years, about 28 percent of agricultural acreage that is sold gets diverted to other uses.

Forest land sales have seen a slightly different trend. In the late 1990's into the early 2000's, premiums were being paid to convert forest land to other uses. In more recent years, however, small premiums have been paid to keep forest land in forest use (Table 9-4).

According to Table 9-5, when looking at assessments, nearly all of the land use classes are valued more in Onalaska when compared to La Crosse County. The exception is in forest lands – where per acre values slightly lag La Crosse County. Housing land values per acre in Onalaska are more than double those in La Crosse County as a whole, as is manufacturing, which likely explains the relatively small proportion of industrial lands in Onalaska.

La Crosse County Forest Land Sold and Converted to Other Uses										
Year	All Forest Land			Forest Land Remaining as Forest Use			Forest Land Converted to Non-Forest Uses			Percent of Forest Land Converted to Non-Forest Uses
	Trans- actions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	Trans- actions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	Trans- actions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	
1998	53	3,298	\$1,005	37	2,501	\$1,015	16	797	\$972	24.20%
1999	34	2,268	\$1,255	21	1,467	\$1,054	13	801	\$1,624	35.30%
2000	29	1,716	\$1,172	21	1,337	\$1,098	8	379	\$1,435	22.10%
2001	30	1,208	\$1,500	17	764	\$1,334	13	444	\$1,787	36.80%
2005	24	980	\$2,841	10	618	\$2,379	14	362	\$3,631	36.90%
2006	26	949	\$4,066	20	682	\$2,750	6	267	\$7,426	28.10%
2007	14	586	\$4,153	7	205	\$3,042	7	381	\$4,751	65.00%
2008	18	766	\$4,131	15	679	\$4,074	3	87	\$4,575	11.40%
2009	10	582	\$3,495	8	488	\$3,520	2	94	\$3,362	16.20%
2010	10	536	\$3,403	7	432	\$3,294	3	104	\$3,856	19.40%
2011	26	1,152	\$2,641	26	1152	\$2,641	0	0	n/a	0.00%
2012	11	483	\$3,210	10	423	\$3,268	1	60	\$2,800	12.40%
2013	15	812	\$2,448	12	721	\$2,458	3	91	\$2,370	11.20%

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

Table 9-4. La Crosse County Forest Land Sold and Converted to Other Uses.

Land Value per Acre						
Land Type	Onalaska		City of La Crosse		La Crosse County	
	2004	2014	2004	2014	2004	2014
Residential	\$86,115	\$97,714	\$391,113	\$311,225	\$41,908	\$48,182
Commercial	\$135,455	\$143,156	\$133,256	\$156,692	\$73,903	\$96,475
Manufacturing	\$32,579	\$41,192	\$57,229	\$62,412	\$13,629	\$20,922
Agricultural	\$393	\$190	\$127	\$147	\$115	\$135
Undeveloped	\$1,120	\$3,299	\$262	\$305	\$509	\$739
Agricultural Forest	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$955	\$1,407
Forest	\$1,831	\$2,188	\$369	\$610	\$1,409	\$2,714
Other	\$21,475	\$38,300	n/a	n/a	\$4,277	\$8,101

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessments, Statement of Changes in Equalized Values by Class and Item

Table 9-5. Land Value per Acre.

## LAND USE ANALYSIS

The City of Onalaska has been, and is projected to continue to be, a very highly sought after location for new development, particularly continued residential and commercial development. Onalaska is highly regarded as a community in which to live and raise a family, with great schools, excellent recreation resources, great access and transportation infrastructure, and increasing employment opportunities and shopping options.

The City is located in a rapidly growing metropolitan area. Incorporated communities near Onalaska, including Holmen to the north and West Salem to the east, are also rapidly expanding. Future development of these communities provide the potential for competing annexations and land use conflict. Recently, the City of Onalaska has been proactive in approaching neighboring communities to establish cooperative boundary agreements. This will help enable the communities to plan for development around their borders in a cohesive manner.

Several areas of the City appear to have the potential for significant changes in land use over the next 20 years.

### **GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION**

The City of Onalaska has been proactive in its willingness to expand municipal boundaries to accommodate new development. Based on population projections, this will continue to be the case. Cooperative boundary agreements with neighboring communities will help in delineating mutually agreed-upon boundaries in which the City can grow. Areas of particular high pressure that the City anticipates expanding into include north of the current City limits to County Road OT, east towards West Salem, and northeast as development pressure from Mayo Clinic's proposed medical facility along Sand Lake Road.

### **HIGHWAY 16 CORRIDOR**

As the City of Onalaska and the Village of West Salem continue to expand towards one another, the Highway 16 corridor will continue to see increased traffic as an alternative route into Onalaska and La Crosse. This is anticipated to lead to increased commercial pressure, as well associated residential pressure into the undeveloped areas of this corridor. There are also plenty of redevelopment opportunities within this area.

### **SAND LAKE ROAD**

A large medical facility development is anticipated along Sand Lake Road north of the US 53 interchange. The City anticipates this will create an increased interest in the revitalization and redevelopment of the areas immediately surrounding this development for associated office, retail, hotel and personal service uses. There is also anticipation that increased commercial pressure will carry south along Sand Lake Road all the way to Main Street, with higher intensity commercial pressure anticipated immediately surrounding the higher traveled intersections.

### **STATE HIGHWAY 35 CORRIDOR**

The STH 35 area is expected to see increased development pressure with the improvement of roadways, as well as when the Great River Landing development begins to get underway. The City has already begun seeing some interest in parcels near the proposed Great River Landing, and this will likely continue as incremental progress is made. In addition, there are areas throughout this corridor, particularly near the Main Street intersection, with older vacant structures that will likely be highly sought after for redevelopment.

## LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Future land use in the City will continue to be predominantly residential. Commercial and community-based uses will likely increase in the areas described above. See Table 9-6 for a summary of projected acreage needs for Onalaska.

Based upon the population and housing projections developed in the Issues and Opportunities Element, the City of Onalaska is projected to see an increase in population of nearly 33% from 2010 to 2040, resulting in a projected population of 23,570. This is an increase of over 5,800 persons, and it is projected that an additional 3,300 housing units would be needed to accommodate this population rise. In 2010, there were 7,608 housing units in the City, and 2,179 acres assessed as residential. This results in 3.5 housing units per acre. At this benchmark rate, it would be projected that 942 additional acres would be needed by the year 2040 to accommodate the proposed residential growth if this were to all be new development. With the construction of large multi-unit facilities in 2014-2015 and proposed additional facilities, it appears that the City may even increase that density.

Commercial development and redevelopment activities are expected to be significant in the coming years. The last ten years has shown an increase of 16 percent in commercial acres, with a current average of 1.8 acres per commercially assessed parcel. Historically, commercial growth has occurred at a 10-15% rate per decade. However, given the proposed new development along Sand Lake Road, as well as ancillary development that will be expected to serve the new medical facility, commercial growth may rapidly occur throughout

Onalaska over the next 20 years. It is reasonable to expect a 20-25% growth rate over the next 10-15 years, then perhaps a leveling off at a 12-15% rate thereafter.

Industrial uses are projected to increase only slightly. The high cost of land in the City will continue to be a factor that will likely keep significant industrial growth locating elsewhere in the region. It is anticipated that this growth will be 10 percent or less into the future.

Agricultural lands will likely continue to decrease. Over the last decade these lands decreased by 18 percent. We project that this rate of recession continues throughout the planning period.

Undeveloped lands decreased by about 5 percent over the past decade. Much of the undeveloped lands are likely classified as such due to natural development limitations, such as wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, or blufflands. As the City continues to expand its boundaries, this acreage may actually increase as some of the annexations may include lands that are undevelopable.

Forested parcels will also continue to decline, but at a slower pace due again in part to many of these likely being undeveloped parcels due to natural limitations.

Projected Acreage Needs							
Real Estate Class	2004	2014	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Residential	1,940	2,104	2,292	2,480	2,668	2,856	3,046
Commercial	895	1,040	1,300	1,625	1,869	2,149	2,407
Manufacturing	43	64	70	80	88	94	100
Agricultural	352	288	236	193	158	130	107
Undeveloped	325	308	300	310	315	320	325
Agricultural Forest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forest	283	264	255	246	237	229	220
Other	4	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,842</b>	<b>4,069</b>	<b>4,454</b>	<b>4,935</b>	<b>5,336</b>	<b>5,779</b>	<b>6,206</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessments, Statement of Changes in Equalized Values by Class and Item & SEH

Table 9-6. Projected Acreage Needs.

## FUTURE LAND USE DISTRICTS

This section of the Land Use Element includes descriptions of each of the recommended Future Land Use Plan districts. Land-use related decisions, such as zoning, land division, annexations, among others, should be consistent with this plan.

Future Land Use Districts and Zoning Districts are different. Zoning districts contain specific requirements and standards for the development of land, such as height limitations, setbacks and types of uses.

The Future Land Use District classifications are meant to be more general, allowing for greater flexibility in making land use and zoning decisions. Following is a discussion of future land use categories and associated acreage found in Table 9-7 and Figure 9-3 for a visual depiction of the Future Land Use Districts.

### **ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

The Environmentally Sensitive Residential District is intended for lower density single family development on compact lots with common open space that allows for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, including farmland, blufflands, wetlands, forested lands, and water resources, among others. Applicable zoning districts include Single Family Residential, Planned Unit Developments, Conservation Cluster Developments, and Traditional Neighborhood Developments.

### **MIXED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

The Mixed Density Residential District is intended for residential units. The City generally encourages Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) patterns, which typically includes mixed-density development located in close proximity to essential goods and services establishments. Higher density residential development may be appropriate in locations adjacent to transportation corridors, commercial areas, and schools. Institutional uses, clinics, senior housing and services, clinics, children's nurseries, group homes, bed and breakfast establishments, neighborhood commercial and services, and home-based offices are also appropriate in this district with proper zoning controls. Applicable zoning districts include Single Family Residential, Single Family and/or Duplex Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Planned Unit Developments, and Traditional Neighborhood Developments.

### **MIXED USE DISTRICT (“SMART GROWTH AREAS”)**

The Mixed Use District allows complementary land uses including housing (primarily multi-family), retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses in an efficient, compact development. This may take place in both vertical development with mixed-use buildings (i.e. ground floor retail and upper residential) or horizontal development, with complementary uses adjacent to each other. This district is meant to be highly accessible by pedestrian and bicycle traffic, therefore additional site design review should ensure that these are comfortable areas for non-motorized transportation methods. Strip commercial development and typical big box developments are inappropriate in this district.

Prior to redeveloping these areas, detailed master plans or specific sub-area plans should be prepared to coordinate land uses, urban design, transportation circulation and functions, and open spaces. In general, Mixed Use areas should be developed as highly planned, compact activity centers or nodes rather than uncoordinated, poorly planned strip development. Applicable zoning districts include Single Family Residential, Single Family and/or Duplex Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Transitional Commercial, Neighborhood Business, Community Business, and Agricultural.

### **DOWNTOWN MIXED USE DISTRICT**

The Downtown Mixed Use District is intended to include the City's mixed-use central business district. The intent of this district is to have pedestrian-focused development with a mix of uses, including residential, personal service, commercial, institutional and civic uses.

Multiple story, mixed-use buildings that include high quality architecture, signage, lighting and streetscape amenities that are sensitive to and enhance the character of Onalaska's small central business district and the waterfront are strongly encouraged. Applicable zoning districts include Multi-Family Residential, Neighborhood Business, Community Business, Transitional Commercial, and Public & Semi-Public.

**COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

The Commercial District is intended to accommodate large and small-scale commercial and office development. A wide range of retail, service, lodging and office uses are appropriate in this district. Applicable zoning districts include Neighborhood Business, Community Business, and Transitional Commercial, and Light Industrial.

**INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT**

The Industrial District is intended to accommodate processing and manufacturing facilities, as well as those facilities that general heavy truck traffic frequently, and are more likely to produce nuisance odors or sounds. It is desirable to maintain separate of this district from residential development. Applicable zoning districts include Light Industrial, Industrial, and Heavy Industrial.

**MEDICAL FACILITY DISTRICT**

The Medical Facility District is intended to accommodate healthcare and medical facilities that should be well designed to spur adjacent economic development, be compatible with neighborhoods and integrate into natural landscapes. It is important that campuses set a high standard for architecture and site design for the community. Uses in this district will have a high degree of vehicle trips, resulting in the need for careful transportation planning. Ancillary and appropriate land uses for this district are offices, retail establishments, restaurants, personal service, transient lodging, as well as residential living facilities as an accessory use to the medical facilities. Zoning districts currently include Planned Unit Developments, Commercial, Light Industrial, and Agricultural. An applicable future zoning district would be a Medical Facility District.

Future Land Use	
Future Land Use Categories	Acreage
Environmentally Sensitive Residential	4,777
Mixed Density Residential	1,383
Mixed Use "Smart Growth Area"	352
Commercial	598
Industrial	295
Downtown Mixed Use	79
Medical Facility	221
Institutional	197
Parks & Open Space	1,981
Environmental Corridor	2,446
Long Range Planning Area	4,515
Transportation	1,641
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,485</b>

Table 9-7. Future Land Use Categories and Acreages.

**INSTITUTIONAL DISTRICT**

The Institutional District is intended to accommodate civic, institutional, and related uses including schools, churches, libraries, governmental buildings, utilities, and public parks. It is important for public and institutional developments within this district to set a high standard for architecture and site design for the community, which has been accomplished with City Hall and the library. Applicable zoning districts include Public and Semi-Public, Single Family Residential, Single Family and/or Duplex Residential, and Neighborhood Business.

**PARKS AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

The Parks and Open Space District is intended to include environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, steep slopes and floodplains, publicly-owned recreation facilities and other permanently protected open spaces. An applicable zoning district would be a Public and Semi-Public District.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR**

These areas are generally undevelopable due to slopes being greater than 30%.

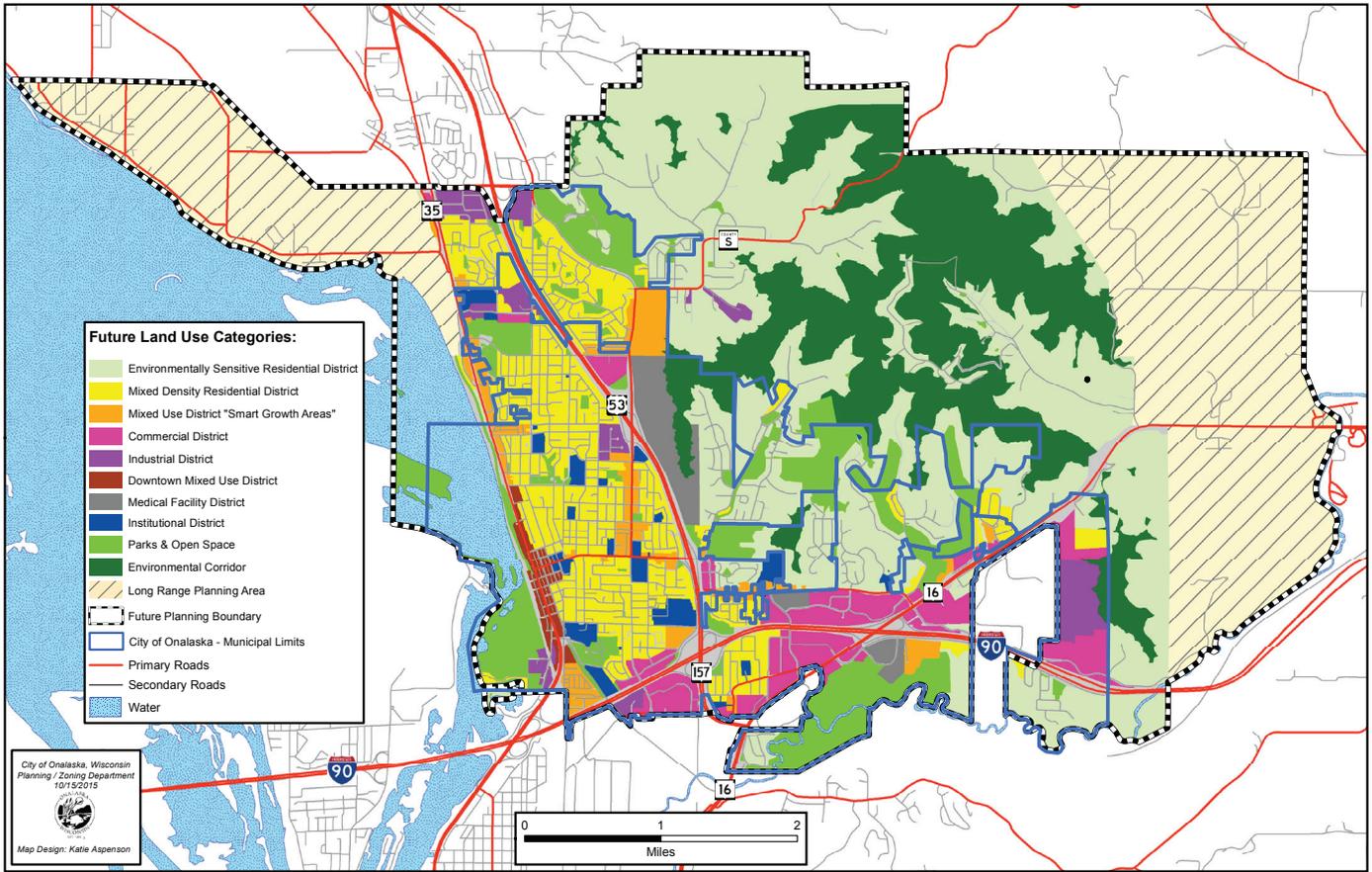


Figure 9-3. Future Land Use.

## 9.2 LAND USE AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS

There are a number of available agencies and programs to assist communities with land use projects. Below are brief descriptions of various agencies and programs.

### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

The UW-Madison, River Falls, Milwaukee, and Stevens Point can provide research and outreach planning services to area communities.

### MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRRPC)

Regional planning commissions provide planning assistance, assist local interests in responding to state and federal programs, serve as a coordinating agency for programs, and provide other technical and advisory assistance to local governments. For more information visit [www.mrrpc.org](http://www.mrrpc.org).

## 9.3 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

**GOAL 1: MAINTAIN A LAND USE PLAN AND MAP THAT REFLECTS CURRENT COMMUNITY VALUES AND IDENTIFIES APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS FOR GROWTH.**

### OBJECTIVES

1. By making land use decisions in a manner consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and Map.
2. By maintaining a flexible Plan while ensuring consistency between the Plan and implementing mechanisms.

**GOAL 2: REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN. ESTABLISH DOWNTOWN ONALASKA AS A VIBRANT COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL GATHERING PLACE, DESTINATION, FOCAL POINT, AND SOURCE OF CITY PRIDE.**

### OBJECTIVES

1. By identifying a core downtown area.
2. By implementing the Great River Landing Plan.
3. By promoting infill and redevelopment downtown.
4. By ensuring the transportation system is adequately designed to serve the downtown.
5. By ensuring that new development is well designed, high quality (materials), pedestrian/bicycle oriented, and environmentally friendly.

**GOAL 3: ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS. CREATE ATTRACTIVE, SAFE AND ENGAGING TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS.**

### OBJECTIVES

1. By enhancing the visual characters and identities of each corridor.
2. By enhancing and linking commercial districts to support existing and future neighborhoods.
3. By encouraging higher density housing to be located on the edge of districts along higher traffic roadways, near transportation corridors and transit facilities.

**GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH. PROMOTE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN A WAY THAT ALLOWS ONALASKA TO CHANGE WHILE PRESERVING COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND ACHIEVING BENEFITS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By involving the public in community planning efforts.
2. By creating community character while utilizing land efficiently protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
3. By promoting compatible infill development and redevelopment.
4. By participating in regional planning efforts to achieve a well planned regional land use pattern.
5. By coordinating extraterritorial growth policies.

**GOAL 5: ENCOURAGE QUALITY URBAN DESIGN. MAINTAIN AND ESTABLISH A CLEAR IDENTITY AND SENSE OF PLACE FOR THE CITY OF ONALASKA THROUGH QUALITY BUILDING AND SITE DESIGNS [NOTE: ALSO APPLIES TO CELL TOWERS].**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. By employing urban design practices which reflect and enhance the City’s character and natural amenities.
2. By ensuring plans and regulations facilitate quality design.
3. By minimizing or eliminating visual clutter.
4. By ensuring public improvements (e.g., signs, streets, buildings) incorporate attractive physical features in highly visible locations.
5. By ensuring streets are safe, convenient and enjoyable places for people to walk along (this means pedestrian friendly).
6. By ensuring community gateways are welcoming and attractive.
7. By maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.
8. By protecting, promoting, and improving natural features and important view corridors.

**POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Continue to promote infill and redevelopment opportunities, particularly downtown and along the waterfront.
2. Consider establishing development guidelines for the downtown.
3. Enhance the character of downtown Onalaska by encouraging the protection and rehabilitation of historic buildings.
4. Ensure access into downtown is easy and convenient for all modes of transportation, including the Great River State Trail.
5. Consider the views during all seasons of the City from the waterfront when planning for public improvements or reviewing private development plans.
6. Encourage environmentally sensitive design practices for infill and redevelopment along the waterfront.
7. Encourage waterfront land uses which will foster tourism and increase activity in the downtown, these may include recreational, entertainment, residential and office land uses.
8. Make funding downtown improvements a City priority and continue to identify funding sources for downtown projects.
9. Promote the provision of public art and cultural amenities in the downtown.
10. Coordinate planning efforts of neighboring and impacted local units of government, the County and school districts.
11. Encourage compact growth on the City’s fringe areas, while protecting natural resources. When feasible, clustered development patterns adjacent to existing development should be utilized.
12. Ensure all development can be adequately served by critical public facilities and services.
13. Increase the use of alternative modes of transportation through improvements to bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities as well as more transportation-efficient land use patterns.
14. Develop an annual monitoring program to track the rate of growth and development in the community. Fully analyze the pros and cons of growth management strategies.
15. Work with the neighboring communities to adjust municipal boundaries to more coherent and logical boundaries.

16. New neighborhoods should be planned comprehensively to allow a variety of community functions to coexist in close proximity, including design for community engagement.
17. New neighborhoods should provide various housing types and tenure (rental, ownership) options to attract residents of various household sizes, ages and income categories.
18. New neighborhoods should include public spaces such as parks or plazas; be in close proximity to neighborhood-oriented retail and services.
19. The Onalaska Central Greenway should be expanded to provide links to and through new neighborhoods as they develop.
20. New neighborhoods shall be designed to facilitate use of existing and future transit alternatives.
21. Establish and encourage City and neighborhood gateways at key locations using features such as monument signs, public art, attractive landscaping and banners.
22. New facilities constructed in transitional commercial areas should be designed to blend in with the existing structures and building setbacks.
23. Encourage pedestrian-oriented signs in commercial/civic districts.
24. Mixed-use areas (“Smart Growth Areas”) are intended to accommodate neighborhood scale retail, office, service, mixed use, multifamily residential, civic, and open space uses. Limited regional commercial development may also be allowed if it is designed (architectural and site) in a manner complementary of the neighborhood or urban area in which it is proposed.
25. Consider creating a sub-area or master plans for areas expected to rapidly change, such as the Sand Lake Road area, the Highway 16 corridor, and the Main Street/STH 35 “Downtown” area.
26. Create a corridor plan for the Great River Road (State Highway 35) between I-90 and OT. The purpose of this plan would be to facilitate land use types, design, and transportation improvements reflective of a “Great River Road” and a key gateway into and through the City. Meanwhile, consider developing criteria to evaluate land use decisions and zoning along this corridor.
27. Land use patterns and site designs shall preserve the bluffs, scenic vistas, woodlands, wildlife habitat and associated rare features found only in the Driftless Area.
28. Design buildings on hillsides to follow the natural terrain in a manner that minimizes earth disturbance.
29. Encourage environmentally sensitive development to minimize negative impacts on the environment, including water quality and soil integrity.
30. The City should continue to recruit clean businesses to the Onalaska area that contribute to the City’s image as a quality employment community.
31. Improve multi-modal transportation access to existing business or industrial parks and comprehensively plan new business/industrial areas to support alternative transportation options. This includes locating businesses so that employees and/or potential customers can safely walk, bike, drive or take public transportation to work or shop.
32. Ensure all developments along and visible from major transportation corridors present an inviting image to the City of Onalaska and region through high quality building and site design, lighting, and landscaping, and/or significant screening year round.
33. Commercial development, particularly warehousing and storage facilities in close proximity to residential neighborhoods should be designed to integrate into neighborhoods.
34. Where feasible, consolidate private access drives into shared drives and improve internal circulation with shared parking areas and/or rear drives that serve multiple commercial properties where appropriate.
35. Employ various streetscape techniques including: landscape treatments, principle street trees; ornamental lighting; banners; and pedestrian amenities to enhance the visual character, identity and pedestrian atmosphere of Onalaska’s commercial corridors.
36. Require landscaping or decorative fencing to screen parking areas where they abut public streets. Where feasible, locate parking areas to the side and rear of commercial properties. Parking areas shall incorporate lighting, landscaping and pedestrian walkways.



Photo 10-1. Bridge.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## *INTRODUCTION*

### **10.1** *ACTION PLAN*

### **10.2** *PLAN INTEGRATION AND CONSISTENCY*

### **10.3** *PLAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION*

### **10.4** *PLAN AMENDMENTS AND UPDATES*

## INTRODUCTION

This element serves as a “priority” list for implementing and realizing the Plan. It prescribes those actions necessary to realize the visions, goals, and objectives highlighted in previous chapters of the Plan. The Plan addresses many important components critical to sustaining a healthy community while preserving the community character and resources residents enjoy. As change is inevitable, the Plan may need to be amended to appropriately reflect land use changes.

If there is a question regarding a decision that is not clearly conveyed in the details of this Comprehensive Plan, then the decision should be based on community desires identified during the Placemaking workshop

results presented in the Issues and Opportunities Element of the Plan, as well as the results from the community-wide survey conducted in 2014. All nine elements included in this Plan work to achieve the desired future for the City of Onalaska.

Wis. Stats. 66.1001(2)(i)  
 (i) Implementation element. A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in pars. (a) to (h). The element shall describe how each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and shall include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the Comprehensive Plan. The element shall include a process for updating the Comprehensive Plan. A Comprehensive Plan under this subsection shall be updated no less than once every 10 years.

Completing the plan document is only one step in the planning process. Getting complete commitment in implementing the plan involves getting all departments and key individuals involved in order to have a unified stance in matters pertaining to the plan.

## 10.1 ACTION PLAN

The City of Onalaska Comprehensive Plan is intended to help guide decisions within the City. The Plan is an expression of the City of Onalaska's preferences and provides a series of policies for assisting the community in attaining its goals, and objectives. The Plan is not an attempt to predict the future, but rather an attempt to document the City's values and philosophies that citizens of Onalaska share. The Plan guides a variety of community issues including housing, transportation, utilities and community facilities, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and land use.

The City of Onalaska's Long Range Planning Committee, Plan Commission, Board of Public Works, Common Council, Staff, and citizens should utilize the Comprehensive Plan in reviewing all proposals pertaining to development in the City. Development proposals should be examined to determine whether they are consistent with City preferences as expressed in the Plan. As part of the development review, a thorough review of the Plan is necessary with particular attention given to the goals and objectives. Where the impact of a proposed development is minimal, the evaluation may simply be a determination of whether or not the Plan provides relevant direction and whether the requested action is in conformance with the Plan. Development proposals with significant potential impacts will require a more detailed analysis in order to determine consistency.

## 10.2 PLAN INTEGRATION AND CONSISTENCY

Within the Implementation Element, it is required to "describe how each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan." As a result of the Comprehensive Plan being developed in a coordinated and simultaneous effort, the planning process has ensured that the development and review of each element is consistent with the others; and based on that analysis, there are no known inconsistencies between the planning elements. In the future, as plan amendments occur, it is important that the City of Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee, Plan Commission, and Common Council all conduct consistency reviews. Those reviews will ensure the document continues to represent an integrated approach to planning.

To ensure consistency across jurisdictional boundaries, the City of Onalaska encourages early dialogue between all adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions (Towns of Onalaska, Hamilton, Campbell and Medary, Villages of Holmen and West Salem, City of La Crosse and La Crosse County) as they develop or revise their Comprehensive Plans and ordinances. Where inconsistencies are identified and a resolution cannot be reached, future actions can be developed to bring the parties together to address their concerns.

## 10.3 PLAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As part of the Comprehensive Planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and policy items were developed that, when implemented, are intended to build stronger relationships and give direction to the Common Council, as well as other City Committees and residents. The goals are the “purpose or end” that provides direction for the City and other governmental organizations, such as La Crosse County. Objectives are statements that are measurable benchmarks the community works to achieve, and the policies are more specific statements that set preferred courses of action to carry out the objectives in the future. While many of the objectives and actions can be accomplished in the short term, several others will be continuous or ongoing and do not have a specific implementation target date. A Comprehensive Plan must be updated at least once every ten (10) years. However, in order to ensure that the City’s plan is an effective management tool, the City of Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee will review the plan’s goals and objectives annually to track those activities that have been completed to realize its accomplishments, and identify areas where additional resources or actions are needed. Part of this effort will also include addressing conflicts which may arise between the elements of the Plan.

As a means of measuring progress towards achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, action steps for some of the goals have been developed that propose a timeline that may be followed to implement the goals.



Photo 10-2. Onalaska Natural Resources.



Photo 10-3. Downtown Redevelopment.

**GOAL:**  
*Encourage the development of a variety of housing types, styles and price ranges in the City.*

**HOUSING**

**STRATEGY**

- Identify areas throughout the City appropriate for infill residential development (refer to Future Land Use Plan)
- Coordinate with area housing agencies and key target populations to identify key features of diverse neighborhoods.
- Coordinate with Developers on strategies to make these developments more attractive.
- Maintain the characteristics of Onalaska’s neighborhoods by reviewing the Form-Based Zoning District.

**IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)**

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee

**KEY PARTNERS**

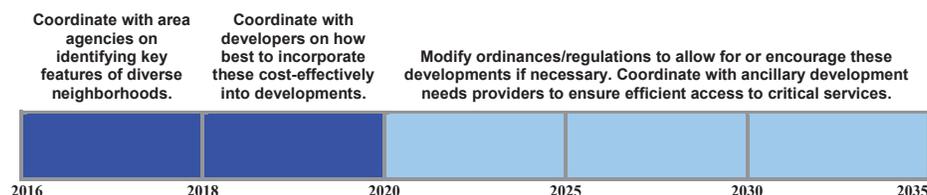
- Plan Commission
- Common Council
- City residents and landowners
- Regional housing agencies (e.g. CouleeCap, La Crosse County Housing Authority, etc.)
- Developers

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- City of Onalaska (meeting time)
- Local, regional and state housing-related non-project groups.
- WDOA – Small Cities Housing Program



Photo 10-4. Onalaska Residential Development.



**ACTION STEPS**

## TRANSPORTATION

### STRATEGY

- Continue to follow Complete Streets policies and existing development regulations that include appropriate multi-modal transportation infrastructure.
- Work with MTU to consider developing alternative delivery of services to improve timing and location of transit routes.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee
- Onalaska Utilities and Mass Transit Committee
- Common Council
- Onalaska Department of Public Works

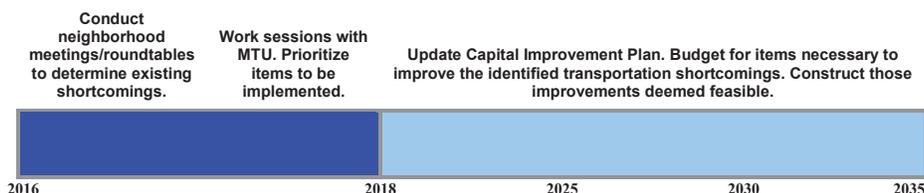
### KEY PARTNERS

- City residents, business owners, transit users
- MTU
- Neighboring communities with connecting linkages
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- La Crosse Area Planning Committee

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska
- MTU
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation – Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

**GOAL:**  
*The City will continue to improve alternative transportation methods, including having connected pedestrian and bicycle trails, and effective public transit.*



## ACTION STEPS



Photo 10-5. MTU Sign.

**GOAL:**  
*The City will strive to make upgrades to and/or replace infrastructure systems when needed to maintain proper service levels.*

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

### STRATEGY

- Inventory and identify City services that may become deficient in the next 20 years.
- Identify alternatives to address identified deficiencies. Evaluate alternatives based on cost, service life, and increased capacity, among other items.
- Select preferred alternative(s) for each identified deficiency. Begin budgeting for improvements through the utilization of a Capital Improvements Projects (CIP).

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Board of Public Works
- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Common Council
- Onalaska Department of Public Works

### KEY PARTNERS

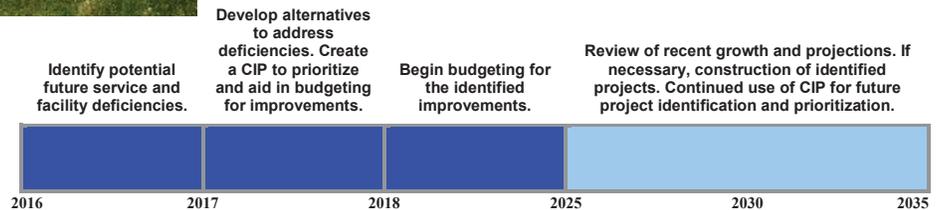
- City residents, businesses and landowners
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- La Crosse County

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska
- Wisconsin DOT – Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- WDNR – Safe Drinking Water and Clean Water Fund Loan Programs
- Community Development Block Grant – Public Facilities



Photo 10-6. Reservoir.



## ACTION STEPS

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

### STRATEGY

- Identify desired areas of utility and facility services based on future growth anticipation (refer to Future Land Use map).
- Determine costs of servicing these areas.
- Determine impacts of extending services to these areas.
- Develop a plan to meet data/cell coverage needs in an attractive and well-planned fashion while maintaining residents’ quality of life and the environmental integrity of the area.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Board of Public Works
- Onalaska Long Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Common Council
- Onalaska Department of Public Works

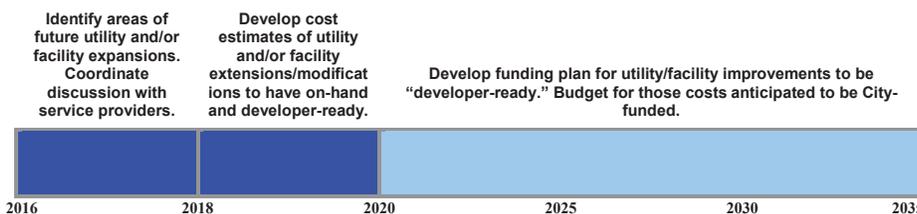
### KEY PARTNERS

- City residents, businesses and landowners
- Possible Developers
- Private Utility Services Providers

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska
- Special Assessments
- Developers (via Developer Agreements)
- Private Utility Services Providers
- WDNR – Safe Drinking Water and Clean Water Fund Loan Programs
- Community Development Block Grant – Public Facilities

**GOAL:**  
*The City will encourage environmentally friendly development with well-planned community utility and facility improvements.*



## ACTION STEPS

**GOAL:**  
*The City will encourage collaboration with the Onalaska and Holmen School Districts, as well as private educators on future development needs and impacts.*

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES**

**STRATEGY**

- Work with School Districts to determine service constraints with respect to population and geography.
- Share future development projections and learn of future School District facility needs.
- Determine if there are particular items the City can work on improving to better assist the School Districts, recognizing that the quality education offered has been identified as a key asset to the City.
- Meet regularly to exchange updated information.

**IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)**

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Common Council

**KEY PARTNERS**

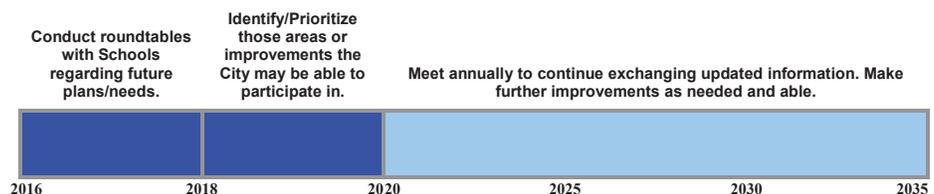
- Onalaska School District
- Holmen School District
- Private Schools

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- City of Onalaska (meeting time and/or related improvements)
- Onalaska School District



Photo 10-7. Onalaska School District.



**ACTION STEPS**

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

### STRATEGY

- Provide the exceptional fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) response protection as possible.
- Update and implement Strategic Staffing & Facility Plans.
- Utilize Insurance Services Organization (ISO) audit to make improvements and enhance services to our residents and businesses.
- Measure and evaluate our performance against established standards and adjust to meet the standards.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Onalaska Fire Department
- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee
- Common Council

### KEY PARTNERS

- City residents, business owners and landowners

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska (meeting time and/or related improvements)

***GOAL:  
Maintain  
or Improve  
the City's  
ISO Rating  
(currently 3).***



Photo 10-8. Onalaska Fire Department Vehicle.

**GOAL:**  
*Continue to provide the highest and most efficient level of police services to the community.*

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

### STRATEGY

- Update and implement the police staffing plan to ensure adequate staffing for increased demands for services due to a changing community
- Continue to implement new technological advances to improve protection and efficiency of Police Department.
- Continue to acquire appropriate equipment to provide services effectively and efficiently.
- Continue to develop community relations and advance community policing strategies.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Police Department Staff
- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee
- Common Council

### KEY PARTNERS

- Onalaska School District
- Common Council

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska (staff time)
- Onalaska School District
- Wisconsin Department of Justice
- Department of Homeland Security



Photo 10-9. Onalaska Police Department Squad.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

### STRATEGY

- Update the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Continue to partner with the school district to meet the recreation needs of the community.
- Continue to acquire appropriate equipment to perform maintenance effectively and efficiently.
- Continue to implement the Great River Landing Plan.
- Continue to implement the Onalaska Greenway Plan.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Park and Recreation Board
- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee
- Parks & Recreation Staff

### KEY PARTNERS

- Private Developers
- Onalaska School District
- Common Council

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Private Developers
- City of Onalaska (staff time)
- Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Wisconsin DNR Stewardship Funds
- Community Development Block Grant Program

**GOAL:**  
*Continue to maintain a community-wide park and recreation system that provides high quality facilities to fulfill the expanding needs of the community.*



Photo 10-10. Great River State Trail Signage.

**GOAL:**  
*Encourage environmentally sensitive land use patterns that preserve bluffs, scenic views, waterfront, wetlands, woodlands and wildlife habitat.*

## AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### STRATEGY

- Continue to evaluate and regulate identified environmentally sensitive areas for preservation.
- Review and modify existing codes/ordinances as needed to ensure environmentally sensitive areas are protected, including their depiction on proposed development plans and proposals.
- Evaluate feasibility of continued purchase of conservation easements.
- Continue to implement the Onalaska Greenway Plan.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Park and Recreation Board
- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Planning and Development staff

### KEY PARTNERS

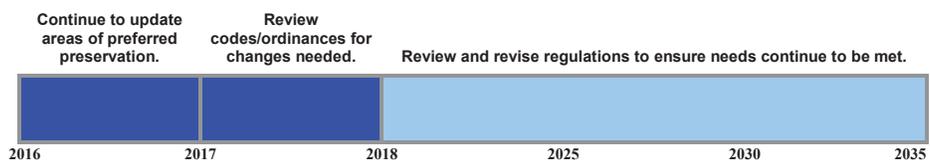
- Mississippi Valley Conservancy
- Private Developers
- Common Council
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska (staff time)
- Mississippi Valley Conservancy
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- US Fish and Wildlife Service



Photo 10-11. Waterfront.



## ACTION STEPS

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### STRATEGY

- Identify and charge a working group to complete an economic development strategy and master plan.
- Identify and evaluate techniques to aid in local economic development marketing efforts.
- Business expansion and retention surveys.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Onalaska Community Development Authority
- Common Council

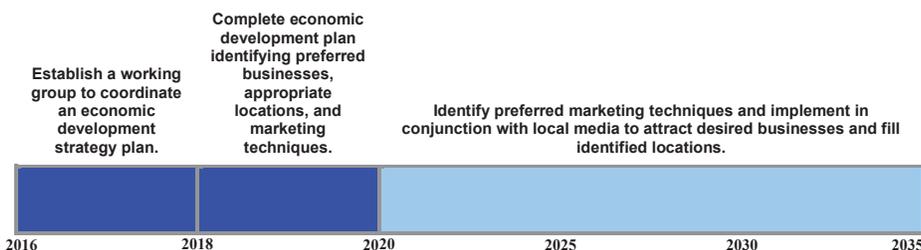
### KEY PARTNERS

- City businesses and Onalaska Area Business Association
- Onalaska Finance Committee
- Private developers
- La Crosse Area Development Corporation
- Seven Rivers Alliance
- Local media sources
- Celebrate Onalaska

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska
- La Crosse County
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

**GOAL:**  
*The City will strive to create an economic development strategy and master plan to help guide public and private investment to appropriate locations.*



## ACTION STEPS

**GOAL:**  
*The City will strive to update or create a new Downtown Redevelopment Plan.*

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**STRATEGY**

- Identify and charge a working group to complete a Downtown Redevelopment Plan.
- Identify study area and a defined “Downtown.”
- Identify strategies to encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in the downtown area that builds off of the Great River Landing Plan and further improves the WIS 35/Great River Road corridor area.
- Identify and evaluate techniques to aid in local economic development marketing efforts.
- Consider a public art program and encouraging performing arts/galleries/etc. Evaluate City Codes to ensure these land uses can be provided for.

**IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)**

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Onalaska Community Development Authority
- Common Council

**KEY PARTNERS**

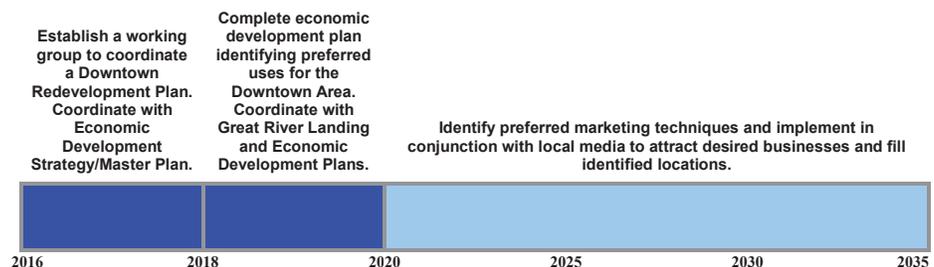
- City businesses and Onalaska Area Business Association
- Onalaska Finance Committee
- Waterfront Committee
- Private developers
- La Crosse Area Development Corporation
- Seven Rivers Alliance
- Local media sources
- Celebrate Onalaska

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- City of Onalaska
- La Crosse County
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation



Photo 10-12. Onalaska Downtown.



**ACTION STEPS**

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

### STRATEGY

- Identified planned areas of future growth for the City of Onalaska (refer to Future Land Use Map).
- Identify areas of growth for neighboring communities with their future land use maps.
- Initiate or continue discussions regarding possibilities of developing agreements for future boundaries.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Common Council
- Planning and Development and Public Works staff

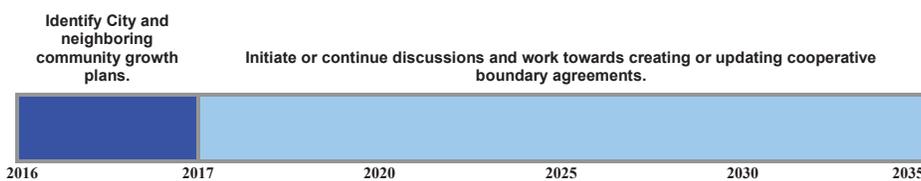
### KEY PARTNERS

- City Attorney
- City of La Crosse, Villages of Holmen and West Salem, Towns of Onalaska, Medary, Hamilton and Campbell.
- La Crosse Area Planning Committee
- La Crosse County

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska
- La Crosse Area Planning Committee

**GOAL:**  
*The City will continue to seek and/or update cooperative boundary agreements with neighboring communities.*



## ACTION STEPS

**GOAL:**  
*The City will work to improve key corridors and major entranceways to provide for better community identity/image and improved multi-modal accessibility.*

**LAND USE**

**STRATEGY**

- Determine key corridors to prioritize for improvements.
- Work to identify improvements needed, including visual characteristics and identity, accessibility, and welcoming image of Onalaska.
- Prioritize, budget, and implement identified improvements.
- Continue to update Capital Improvements Projects (CIP) with new corridor improvements as projects are completed.

**IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)**

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Board of Public Works
- Common Council

**KEY PARTNERS**

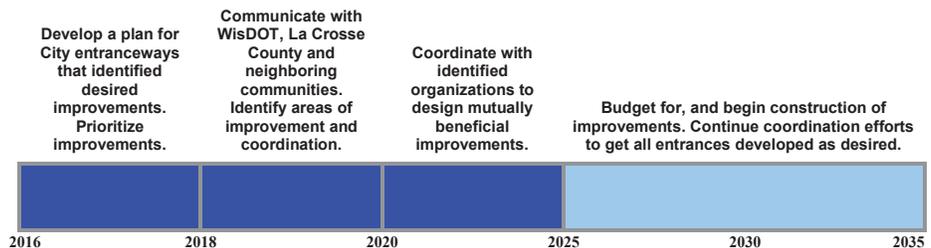
- Onalaska Public Works
- La Crosse County and neighboring communities (shared entrances)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- La Crosse County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Centering Onalaska
- La Crosse Area Planning Committee

**POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES**

- City of Onalaska (staff/meeting time)
- Neighboring communities (cost sharing of common entrances)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation



Photo 10-13. Decorative Signage.



**ACTION STEPS**

## LAND USE

### STRATEGY

- Identify strengths and weaknesses of Onalaska for existing medical facilities located in the City.
- Determine what, if any, changes can be made to improve marketability of Onalaska to these businesses.
- Review alternatives to amend ordinances if necessary.
- Update Menards/Elmwood Area Master Plan.

### IMPLEMENTATION LEAD(S)

- Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission
- Community Development Authority

### KEY PARTNERS

- Medical businesses
- Common Council
- Onalaska Area Business Association (OABA)
- Economic Development groups
- Technology Committee

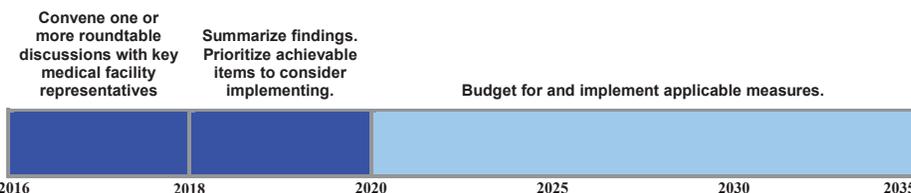
### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Onalaska (staff/meeting time)

**GOAL:**  
*The City will seek to continue attracting high quality development within the niche medical market.*



Photo 10-14. Future Mayo Clinic Health System Site.



## ACTION STEPS

## 10.4 PLAN AMENDMENTS AND UPDATES

Evaluating the Comprehensive Plan is an ongoing process and will, at some time, lead to the realization that the Plan requires updating and amendments. The time that lapses between the completion of the Plan and the need to amend the Plan will depend greatly on evolving issues, trends, and land use conditions. Periodic updates will allow for updates to statistical data, and to ensure the Plan's goals, objectives, and actions reflect the current conditions, needs, and concerns. The Comprehensive Planning legislation requires plan updates at least every 10 years. The City of Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission will remain flexible in determining when and how often the Plan should be updated. Generally, a Comprehensive Plan update should not be expected more often than once every five (5) years. A tremendous amount of change can occur in a community over just a couple of years and the City will be prepared to address changing conditions with timely plan updates. Amendments to the plan will follow the requirements of State law and will be evaluated for consistency with the existing plan, including all elements.

To ensure residents are involved in plan amendments, the following process and protocol should be followed to allow public involvement and comment. The City of Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission shall undertake a review of the Plan and shall consider the necessary amendment(s) to the Plan resulting from property owner requests and changes to social and economic conditions. Upon the Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission review, recommended changes to the Plan shall be forwarded to the Common Council. The City of Onalaska Plan Commission shall call a public hearing to afford the public time to review and comment on recommended Plan changes. A public hearing shall be advertised in accordance with the City's public meeting notice procedures and Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning legislation. Based on public input, Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission recommendations, and other facts, the Common Council will then formally act on the recommended amendment(s).

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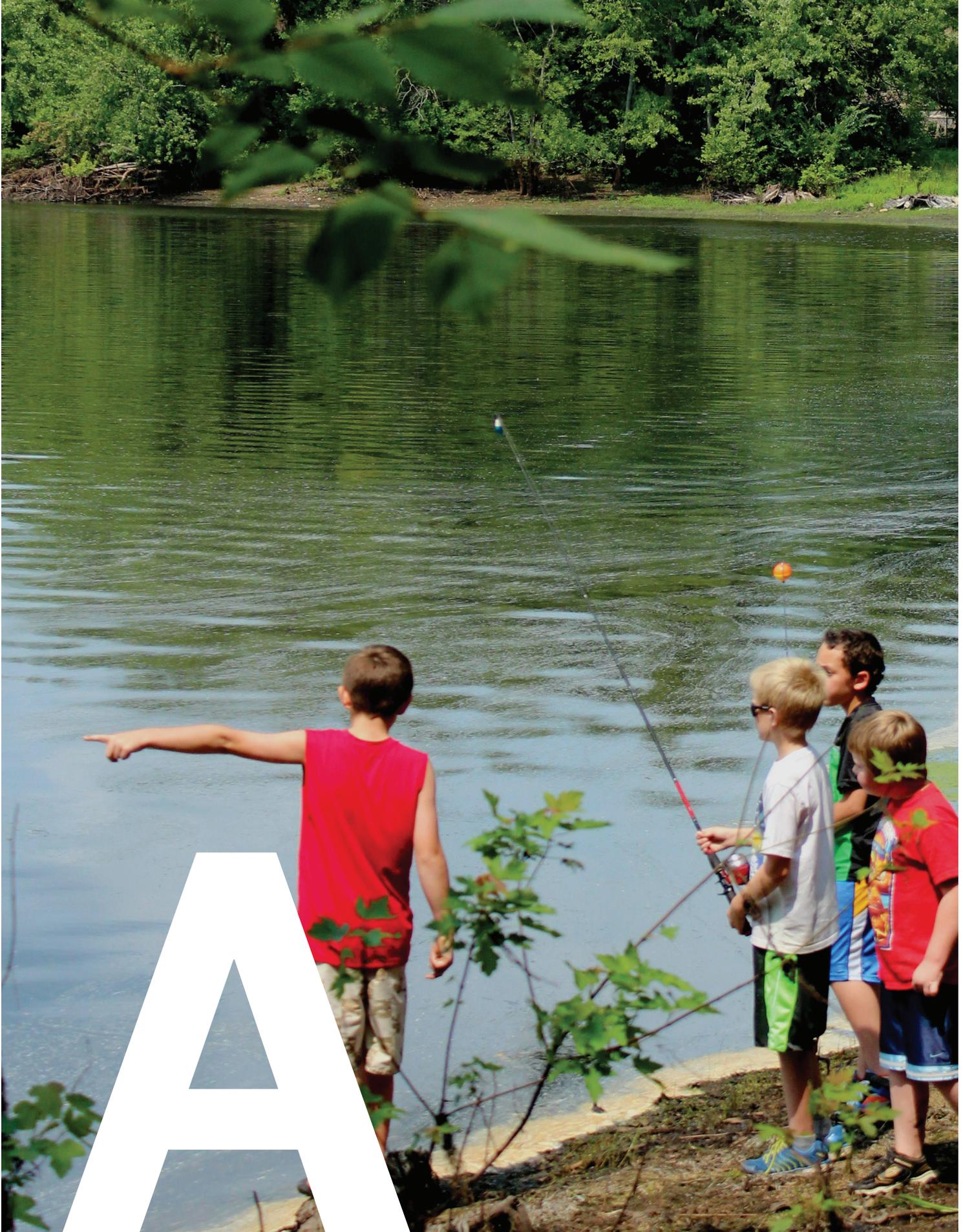


Photo Appendix A-1. Waterfront.

# APPENDIX A: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN



## CITY OF ONALASKA

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415 MAIN STREET  
ONALASKA, WISCONSIN 54650-2953  
FAX (608) 781-9506

PLANNING/ZONING  
(608) 781-9590

### **Public Participation Plan 10-year Comprehensive Plan Update**

The City of Onalaska intends to modify the 2025 Comprehensive Plan with a ten (10) year update. Section 66.1001(4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes specifically requires the governing body of the local governmental unit to adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meeting for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage in the preparation of the comprehensive plan. These written procedures contained within this public participation plan satisfy this requirement. This plan will guide public participation throughout the City of Onalaska's comprehensive planning process.

This public participation program offers all citizen, businesses, interest groups and other participate a range of opportunities to participation throughout the planning process in a meaningful way to shape the future of the City and region. Effective public input is critical for the success of this planning process because it is our citizen, businesses and groups that will experience the plan's costs and benefits on a daily basis for years to come. This plan will, in part, determine where and how our residents live, work and play, and how they travel from one place to another. They will also be the main implementers and enforcers of the plan.

Our participation program is creative, inclusive and persistent. It employs the use of innovative, unique and thoughtful ways to encourage people to participate in the process and maximize the effectiveness of their contributions. The opportunities are open to everyone with a stake in the outcome of the comprehensive plan. And, several participation opportunities are available to a wide range of citizens – people with different incomes, races, ages, and occupations – in all stages of the planning process.

Our public participation process will:

- Ensure all planning decisions are open to public comment;
- Produce better planning decisions;
- Support and add credibility to all City decision-making processes;
- Provide opportunities to disseminate information about the plan and process to all segments of the City;
- Strengthen the relationships between our decision-makers and citizens; and
- Develop a shared vision for the future of Onalaska.

### **Public Participation Opportunities:**

The City of Onalaska established the following list of public participation based upon the existing public participation plan. These techniques are designed to maximize public participation throughout the planning process that will satisfy Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

#### **1. Community Survey:**

A community survey will be mailed to all Onalaska households and be made available on the City's webpage, and distributed via a variety of means to obtain public opinions and preferences on key subjects addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **2. Visioning Meetings 1 & 2: Issue Identification / Modification (Volume 1 of Comprehensive Plan):**

These meetings serve a dual purpose to create public awareness and education about the planning process, answer questions, and facilitate a goal setting exercise. Consultants and Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) members will lead an exercise to engage community participants in discussions about issues and opportunities that should be address in the planning process. Participants will set their top priorities for the process and City of Onalaska for the next twenty years by ranking past issues and current/future opportunities. The results of the exercise will provide the foundation of the development of the project and community goals/objectives. The meetings will take place on June 18<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

#### **3. Stakeholder Meetings:**

The City intends to host stakeholder meetings in three forms. The first will include meetings with stakeholders including developers, civic leaders, and interested persons to work on specific sections of chapters or to gather relevant input throughout the update process. The second form revolves around key areas of the City for potential future development including, but not limited to, the Sand Lake Road area and the HWY 35 corridor. These areas will undergo special review & meetings with property owners and interested persons. The third form of stakeholder meetings includes utilizing existing City Committees to review specific chapters of the Comprehensive Plan to provide additional information and feedback on relevant goals, objectives, and policies.

#### **4. Website:**

The City will develop a webpage on the City's website that will host Onalaska's comprehensive plan and planning process information. This information will include project timeline, meeting dates, agendas, and minutes, draft plan elements and reports, maps, photographs, and survey results. The website will provide an opportunity for residents to submit comments and input on the plan and planning process at their convenience.

#### **5. Youth Participation Exercises:**

The Onalaska Planning Department, in conjunction with the Onalaska Public Schools, will work to involve young people in the planning process, while educating them on the field of planning. The focus of the exercises will be on two groups of students, a younger group (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade) and an older group of high school students. The specific activities for the two age groups will be determined at a later date.

#### **6. Press Releases:**

The City and consultant will work together to produce press releases and other public information pieces at key points to facilitate widespread awareness and education of events and overall plan creation progress.

**7. Meeting Notices:**

The City will post meeting notices for each meeting and event in a timely manner at accessible locations.

**8. Steering Committee (LRPC) Meetings:**

The nine elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be updated and developed at a series of meetings between the LRPC and the consultants. The meetings will be open to the public and allow opportunities for public comments. The meeting will focus on the development of plans, policies, and programs to implement the City's vision.

**9. Open House to Review Draft Plan:**

The Consultants will conduct an open house chaired by the LRPC. The intent of the community open house is to provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the complete "Draft Comprehensive Plan." After the community open house, the City LRPC will send a "Recommended Comprehensive Plan" to the Plan Commission for their review and recommendation to the Common Council for adoption.

**10. Public Hearing on Final Plan Adoption:**

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation requires municipalities to hold at least one formal public hearing with a Class 1 public notice prior to adoption of the "Final Comprehensive Plans." The Plan Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed "Recommended Comprehensive Plan" and ordinance adopting the plan. Following the public hearing, the Plan Commission will make a recommendation by resolution, on a "Final Comprehensive Plan" which will then be forwarded to the Common Council.

The Common Council is required to consider any comments received on the Recommended Comprehensive Plan prior to adopting a Final Comprehensive Plan. After adoption of the ordinance for the Final Comprehensive Plan, the plan and adoption ordinance shall be distributed by the City to the recipients listed in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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B

Photo Appendix B-1. Statue.

# APPENDIX B: 2014 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS



**City of Onalaska, WI**  
**2014 Community Survey**  
**Report of Results**  
**July 2014**

**Prepared By:**

City of Onalaska - Planning & Zoning Department

415 Main Street, Onalaska, WI 54650

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	1
Survey Background .....	2
Important Issues for Onalaska .....	4
Onalaska’s Scorecard: City and Community Services .....	6
Onalaska’s Future Development Needs & Standards .....	9
Who Responded .....	11
Onalaska Stepping Into the Future .....	11
Appendix A: Respondent Demographics .....	13
Appendix B: Summary Report of Responses to Survey Questions.....	17
Appendix C: Survey Respondent Comments to Questions.....	25
Appendix D: Community Survey (as delivered) .....	83

## Executive Summary

The Onalaska 2014 Community Survey gathered feedback concerning citizen's opinions on the quality of life in the City of Onalaska, types of future developments, and their satisfaction with both the performance of City government and service delivery. A total of 9,296 Community surveys were distributed to households within the 54650 zip code in spring 2014. 1,059 surveys were fully completed and/or returned to the City; representing an overall return rate of 11.4%, with a 12.8% return rate from Onalaska residents.

Once the survey results were tabulated they provided the following insights concerning what residents consider important and what needs improvement. For clarification purposes the information gleaned from tabulating the survey results is presented in graphic form throughout this report.

According to the survey results, the Onalaska community feels that maintaining a good school system, the retention and expansion of local employers, and improving and rehabilitating streets are the three most important issues in the next 20-years. The community also believes that the City should focus on promoting public health and an active community and enforcing property maintenance standards.

The community also reported that the quality of services offered throughout Onalaska are ranked as "good" (with a score of 4 out of 5), namely educational facilities and shopping, while medical facilities are considered "excellent".

When asked "What types of future development should the City encourage", the community feels that entertainment and attractions, single family homes, industry/manufacturing, and senior housing are types of development that should be encouraged.

The survey invited Onalaska residents to share their opinions and answer the question "if you could change one thing in the City of Onalaska... what would it be?" The top four results of this question related to: (a) traffic improvements; (b) downtown development; (c) recreational improvements; and (d) waterfront development in order of importance as indicated by the community.

Overall the survey results were positive with the City receiving a "good" ranking (with a score of 4 out of 5) for working with and on behalf of the community. Public opinion of City provided services was also positive with Police and Fire services being ranked highest, followed closely by the operation of City water, storm sewer, and sanitary sewer utilities and recreational programs.

The information gathered in the 2014 Onalaska Community Survey will be used to update and improve the 2015 Onalaska Comprehensive Plan. The data and responses will assist the City in determining new policies and amending goals and objective to move the City forward over the next 20 years. All responses are important and appreciated. Thank you Onalaska!

Katie Meyer, AICP  
Planner | Zoning Inspector  
Planning & Zoning Department

## Survey Background

The City of Onalaska requested citizens to complete the Onalaska 2014 Community Survey to obtain feedback on quality of life in the City, community and City services, City government performance, and the future direction of development in Onalaska. The survey allowed citizens an opportunity to voice issues, priorities, and support activities underway. The data generated from the Community Survey will be used as a guide for the 2015 Onalaska Comprehensive Plan update.

The last community survey took place in 2003 and the results were used as a foundation to build Onalaska's 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The survey provided the City with information to formulate goals, objectives, and strategies for future growth. Baseline comparisons are made throughout this report between data collected in 2003 and the 2014 citizen survey responses. These comparisons are useful because it will allow the City to gauge the impact of past surveys on ongoing community growth and progress.

The Onalaska 2014 Community Survey was distributed through a saturation mailing and was accessible online through the City of Onalaska Website. The saturation mailing method was intended to reach every household and post office box within the City of Onalaska, totaling 9,296. The surveys were distributed to all households, businesses, and P.O. Boxes within the 54650 zip code. Residents in surrounding communities (i.e. Town of Onalaska, City of La Crosse, etc.) were included in the mailing because residents of surrounding communities are likely to utilize services and/or community facilities within the City of Onalaska. Surveys were also made available at the Planning Department and a link to the survey was sent through email distribution lists. Multiple forms of media were used to promote the survey including press releases, newspaper stories, radio broadcasts, and television interviews. A week prior to the end of the survey the City sent a media reminder to Onalaska residents to return distributed surveys or submit responses online.

Of the 9,296 mailed surveys, 1,059 surveys were returned to the City or completed online (401 individuals utilized the website option), providing an overall response rate of 11.4%. To ascertain an accurate rate of return for City of Onalaska residents, 735 business addresses and 50% of the Mail Rural Route #4 (310 addresses, primarily Town of Onalaska residents) were subtracted. This allowed us to determine that the rate of response of solely Onalaska households was 12.8%. Typically, survey response rates between 15-20% are considered high return rates and a survey response rate that exceeds 10% is considered a successful survey.

Within this report, the majority of the survey responses are summarized in the form of frequency distribution (percent of respondents providing a response to a particular question). In some cases, not all portions of each question were answered by the survey respondent. In those cases, responses were recorded as "don't know" and are not included in the tables and/or charts as listed throughout the Report of Results to accurately portray results in the 1 to 5 ranked scale. If a survey had more than one answer selected, the higher of the values was used. This system was utilized for all answers that were not filled out correctly, excluding gender where 38 households filled out the survey "together" (both genders selected); this question/answer was not entered for data entry purposes.

## APPENDIX

The graphs and charts show total counts of how many respondents answered the questions and the raw data is presented in Appendix B.

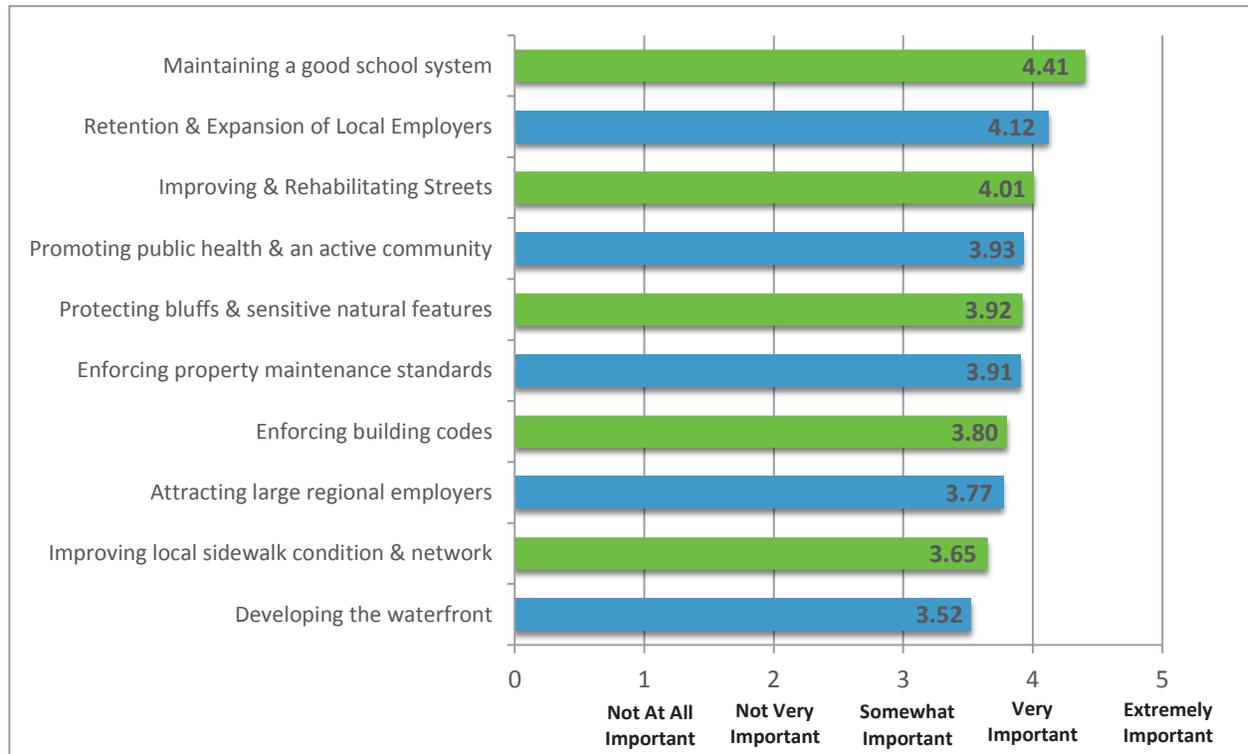
Respondents had four (4) opportunities to make comments throughout the survey. These comments are presented in Appendix C. Every legible comment that pertained to an item on the survey was entered verbatim into the results and filed under appropriate questions at the end of the survey. Staff did not withhold any comment, but did modify comments that made a direct insult against an individual, to a more general comment. In addition, if a comment was illegible; staff did not enter the information.

The 2014 Onalaska Community Survey is divided into the four (4) following sections; Important Issues, Scorecard for City and Community Services, Future Development Needs and Standards, and Who Responded.

### Important Issues for Onalaska

The information provided in Figure 1, illustrates the “Top Ten” most important issues that Onalaska will face in the next 20 years. Respondents were asked to rank 19 issues and the final information is presented from an average of 1 to 5, ranging from “Not at all Important” to “Extremely Important”. According to the survey results, the Onalaska community feels that maintaining a good school system, the retention and expansion of local employers, and improving and rehabilitating streets are “Very Important”. The subsequent seven issues ranged between “Somewhat Important” to “Very Important.” The lowest ranked issues between “Not Very Important” and “Somewhat Important” were promoting a mix of housing options, expanding municipal boundaries, and limiting train whistles, respectively. In general, within the “Top Ten” the respondents focused on health-related/environmental-oriented issues and the need for additional employers in the City. The 2003 Survey also ranked maintaining a good school system, encouraging a walk and bike friendly community and keeping local business thriving as important issues.

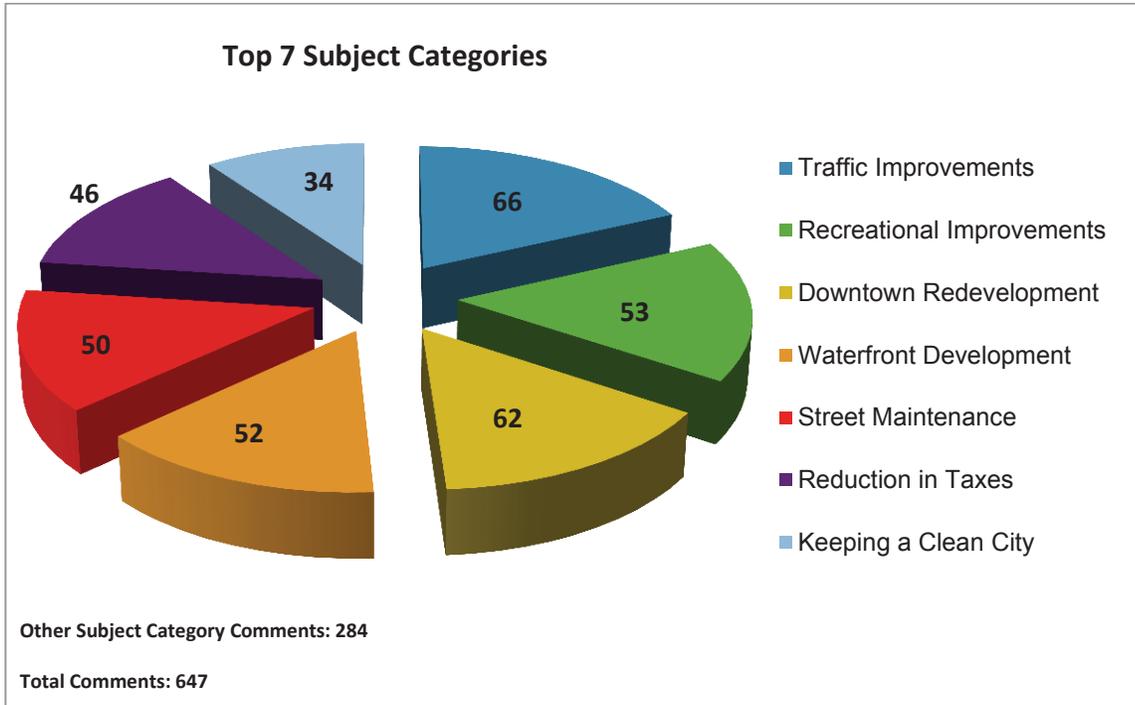
**Figure 1: Onalaska’s “Top Ten” Issues for the next 20 years.**



The survey invited Onalaska residents to share their opinions and answer the question “if you could change one thing in the City of Onalaska... what would it be?” The results of this question were divided according to subject and if a comment included multiple subjects, the comments were separated accordingly and are found in Appendix 3. A total of 579 residents provided feedback to the City of Onalaska for this question.

The top seven subject categories as determined by comment counts are as follows and shown proportionally on the following page in Figure 2. The smaller subject categories have been labeled as “other”. Additional detailed information is presented in Appendix 3.

**Figure 2: If Onalaska could change “One Thing”...**



Within the subjects, a variety of themes emerged that were heavily echoed in the “general comments” section of the 2014 Onalaska Community Survey. From the above chart it is apparent that traffic improvements are of concern to the community. Survey respondents specifically noted the Greens Coulee / East Main Street intersection and voiced concerns regarding safety, traffic and the potential for accidents. Other commonly noted traffic comments include the Main Street / Sand Lake Road intersection and the call for additional enforcement of traffic laws overall. Redevelopment of Onalaska’s downtown emerged as a concern with citizens who expressed support for redevelopment of the downtown corridor. Potential businesses, and the redevelopment of under-utilized buildings through renovations and/or demolition were some notable suggestions.

The concerns in the area of recreational services indicated the need for additional sidewalks, sidewalk connectivity issues, additional bicycle lanes, other bicycle accommodations, and the need for more parks/open spaces to enjoy the natural features of Onalaska.

The other major themes regarding waterfront development focused on the need for immediate action by the community and potential development options to better utilize the waterfront along Lake Onalaska.

## Onalaska's Scorecard: City and Community Services

The survey asked residents to rate City government services and other services offered in the community. In particular, the City was interested in feedback about the perceived value of government services provided to the public. The City also solicited suggestions from the community on methods to most successfully disseminate information within the community. Responses to these questions are presented in Figures 3 and 4 below.

City services ranked “Good” (with a score of 4 out of 5) in all but two service categories which echoed the 2003 Survey results. The second highest ranking for both Police and Fire services was “Excellent”, indicating a very high service opinion of the City’s emergency service departments. The second highest ranking for Street & Alley Maintenance, Promotion of Events & Tourism Opportunities, and Managing/Planning for Growth was “Average”. The two service categories received an “Average” ranking, the enforcement of property maintenance codes and building inspection services. The second highest ranking of these categories received a “Good” scoring. This information ties into the comments made regarding keeping the city clean and this being a priority for the City of Onalaska residents.

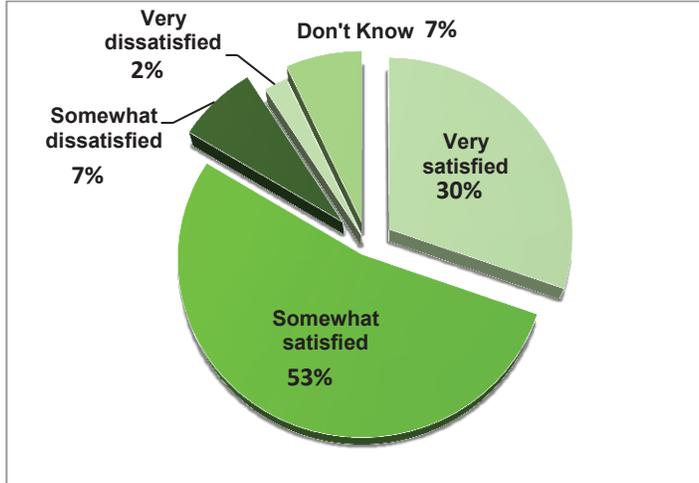
To note, this particular question overall did not have a high answer count. Categories within this question were marked “Don’t Know” over 3,100 times. This is a strong indicator that the City of Onalaska should focus on outreach of City services.

**Figure 3: City Services Ranking.**

Answer Options	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Fair (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Value of services provided by City government	15.4%	<b>55.2%</b>	22.8%	4.20%	2.5%
Welcoming citizen involvement	10.4%	<b>41.0%</b>	34.1%	8.00%	6.5%
Police services	35.6%	<b>46.4%</b>	13.3%	2.50%	2.2%
Fire services	41.0%	<b>46.3%</b>	10.1%	1.60%	1.0%
Operation of Municipal Court System	11.4%	<b>49.5%</b>	32.8%	3.60%	2.7%
Operation of City water utility	17.8%	<b>52.3%</b>	25.6%	2.00%	2.2%
Operation of City storm sewer utility	15.7%	<b>50.4%</b>	28.7%	2.90%	2.3%
Operation of City sanitary sewer utility	17.1%	<b>50.7%</b>	28.1%	2.60%	1.5%
Maintenance of parks, green space, trails	19.2%	<b>52.1%</b>	22.6%	3.20%	2.9%
Street & alley maintenance	7.3%	<b>38.4%</b>	34.1%	10.10%	10.0%
Street sweeping activities	12.4%	<b>42.9%</b>	29.6%	10.30%	4.9%
Snow removal activities	14.2%	<b>35.6%</b>	26.9%	10.70%	12.6%
Operation of Omni Center	9.8%	<b>45.9%</b>	28.2%	6.60%	9.5%
Operation of recreational programs	17.0%	<b>50.5%</b>	24.3%	5.10%	3.0%
Promotion of events & tourism opportunities	7.4%	<b>37.1%</b>	35.6%	11.90%	8.1%
Managing / planning for growth	5.0%	<b>37.4%</b>	36.0%	10.90%	10.6%
Enforcement of property maintenance codes	5.1%	28.1%	<b>38.5%</b>	12.90%	15.4%
Building Inspection services	7.5%	36.0%	<b>38.6%</b>	8.80%	9.1%

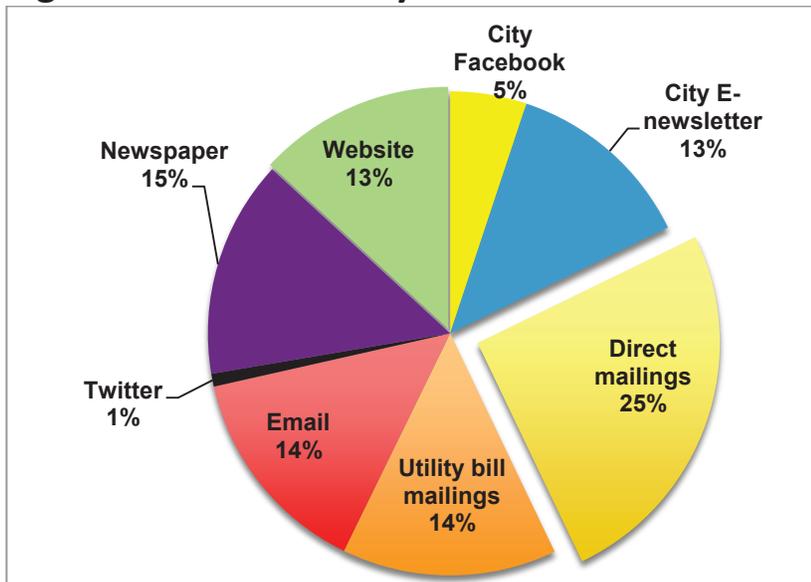
According to the survey results, as depicted in Figure 4 below, 83% of residents are either “Somewhat satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the availability of information on City services currently provided, compared to 9% that are “Somewhat Dissatisfied” or “Very Dissatisfied”. In the past, the City has attempted to provide information to the public through numerous outlets including press releases, newsletters, utility bill mailings, committee meetings, and the City’s website.

**Figure 4: Availability of City Services Information.**



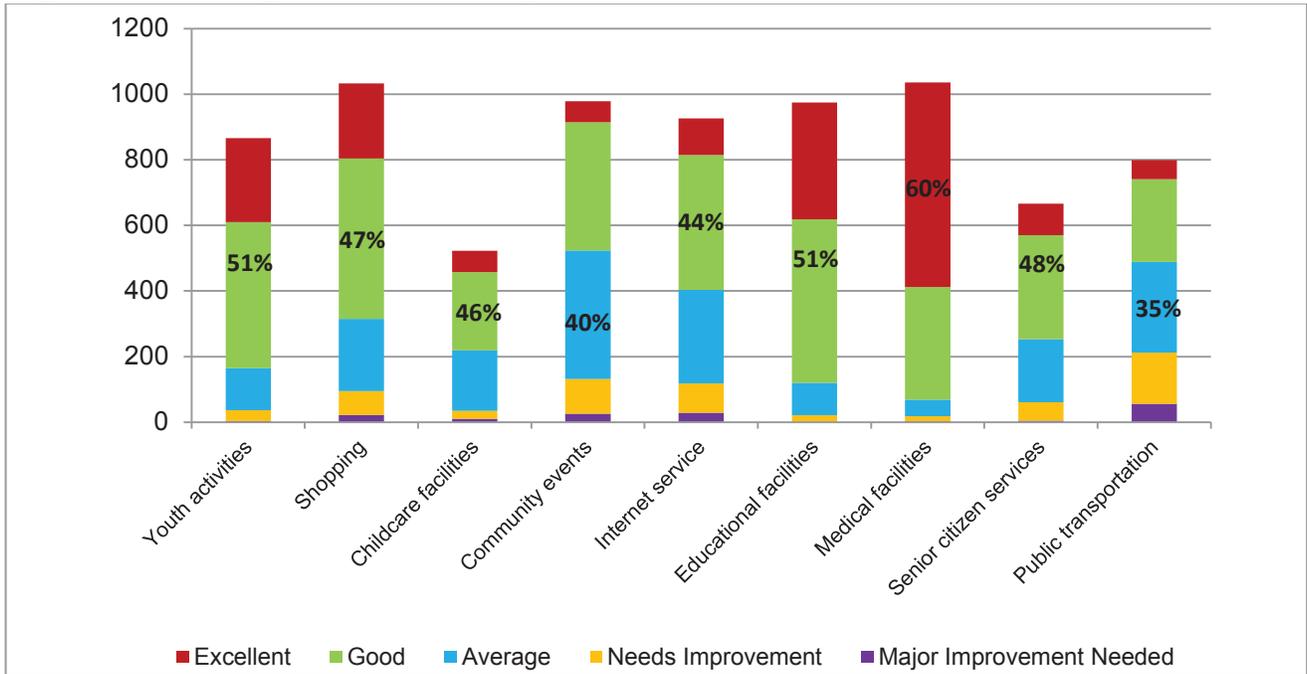
The City queried residents to determine the most preferred method to receive information about City services. Figure 5 shows community feedback on outreach methods to disseminate City information. As illustrated below, the preferred method is Direct Mailings (25%). Other methods (newspaper, utility bill mailings, emails, and a City E-Newsletter) received votes within two percentage points of each other. The City should investigate which opportunities to use to provide information to the community to increase transparency and ease of communication from the City to the public and vice-versa.

**Figure 5: Preferred City Outreach Methods.**



The final portion of Onalaska’s scorecard includes the ranking of Community Services offered both by the City and by others in the community. Figure 6 ranks (on a scale of 1 to 5) the quality of services from “Excellent” to “Major Improvements Needed”. The highest quality services noted in Figure 6 are medical facilities with an “Excellent” rating, followed closely by education facilities, youth activities, and senior citizen services, with “Good” ratings.

**Figure 6: Rating of Community Services.**



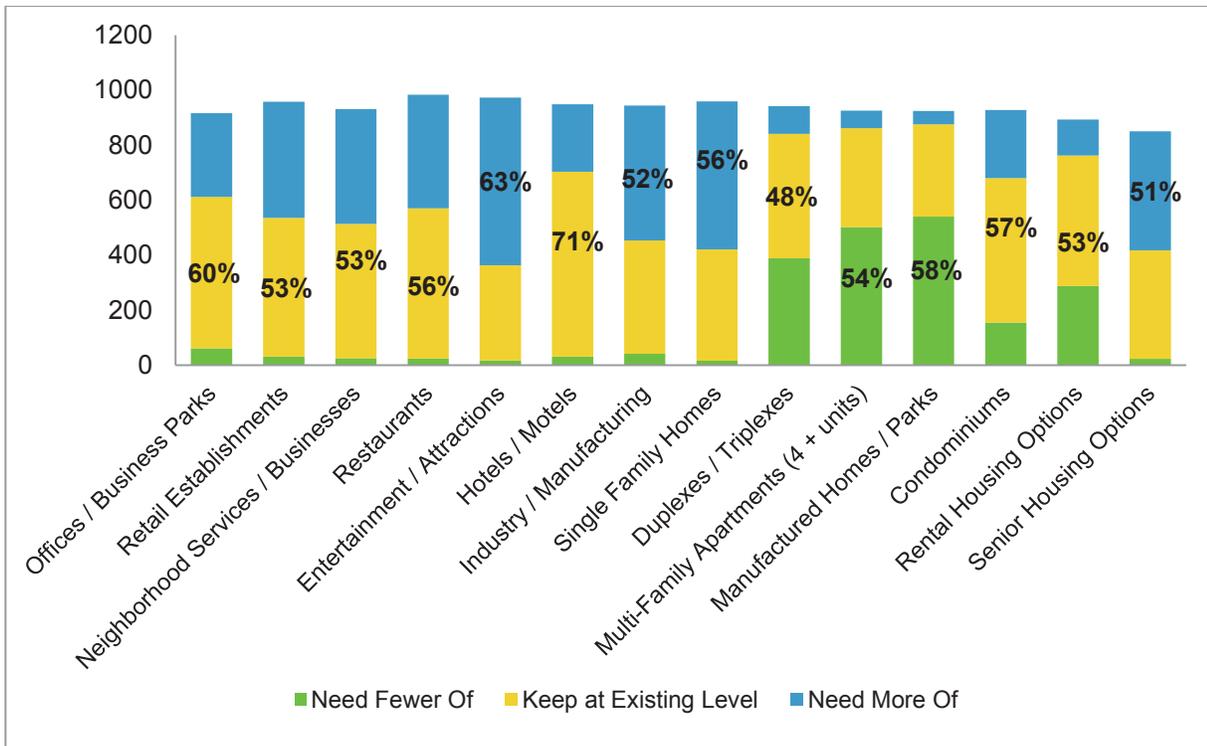
Overall, the numbers show strong satisfaction with Community Services offered in the City of Onalaska.

## Onalaska’s Future Development Needs & Standards

In recognition of the fact that survey results are intended to supplement the update to the 2015 Onalaska Comprehensive Plan two specific questions were asked; “What types of future development should the City encourage and ”What standards new development and redevelopment of existing buildings need to meet”. As indicated in Figure 7 below citizens feel that the development categories which should be encouraged are entertainment and attractions, single family homes, industry/ manufacturing, and senior housing. The need for additional single family homes and senior housing were also noted in the 2003 Survey. According to the 2014 survey results citizens feel that the City is currently well-served in the area of hotels/motels, office/business parks, restaurants, retail establishments and neighborhood services/businesses. Comparatively, the 2003 Survey found that additional local and neighborhood retail and restaurants were wanted by the community. The 2014 Survey found that housing appears to be a split issue concerning duplexes/triplexes, condominiums, and rental housing options between “keeping at existing level” and “need fewer of”. Additionally, survey respondents were not in favor of additional multi-family apartments and manufactured/mobile home parks.

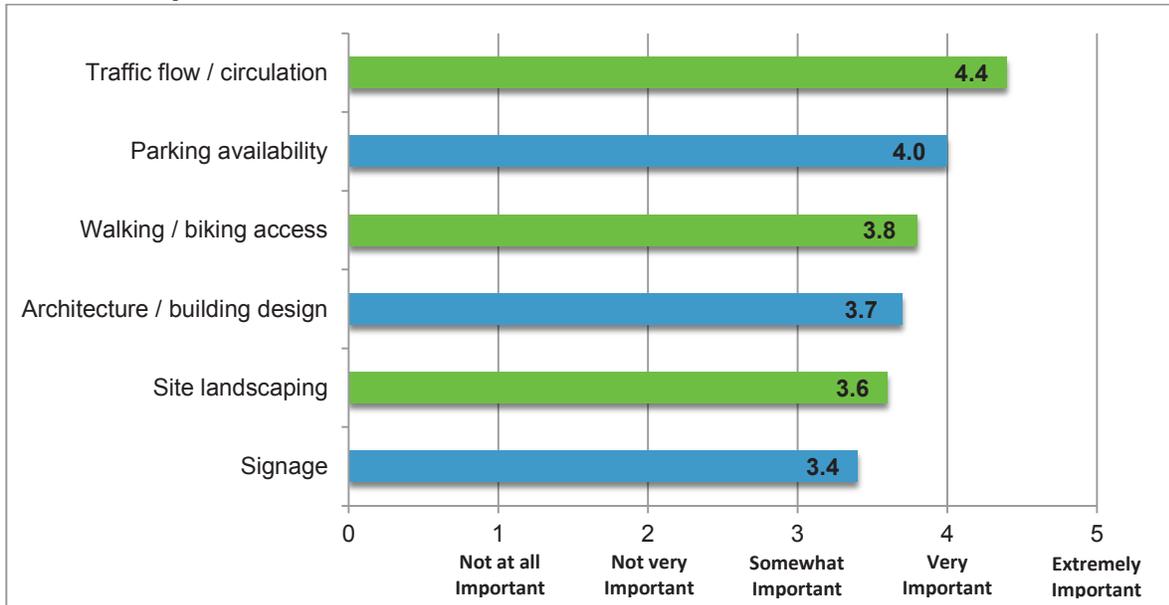
As Onalaska is expected to increase significantly in population, the need for various housing types will continue to grow. How this increasing need will be met will need to be determined and community feedback, as was obtained in the 2014 Community Survey will play a significant role in guiding that process.

**Figure 7: Development Types to Encourage, Keep Consistent, or Reduce in Onalaska.**



Focusing on both new development and redevelopment opportunities, the following factors were reviewed by the community to determine the level of development standards for Onalaska. As illustrated in Figure 8, the factors include traffic flow/circulation, architecture/building design, parking availability, walking/biking access, site landscaping, and signage. The development standards considered by survey respondents as between “Extremely Important” and “Very Important” include traffic flow/circulation and the availability of parking for said development. The other four development standards fell within “Somewhat Important” and “Very Important”.

**Figure 8: Development Standards for New Development and Redevelopment within Onalaska.**



This data suggests that the City should continue to put forth effort in maintaining and improving the current development standards in order to ensure quality and attractive buildings and facilities within the City of Onalaska.

## Who Responded

To be meaningful, survey responses must be contextualized. To do this it is necessary to understand the demographic that is represented in responses. The following information about the survey respondents will provide the necessary context:

Over 93% of the survey respondents reside within the City of Onalaska, with 28% living in the City between 1-10 years, compared to 56% of respondents who have lived in Onalaska between 11-40 years. This information shows that those who responded to the City have a vested interest. The majority of the respondents (29.6%) are in the 35-54 age range, followed closely by those in 55-64 (22.8%) and 65-74 age ranges (23.4%); with a fairly even divide among men and women. The respondents overall have attained high levels of education, noting almost 57% have bachelor or graduate/professional degrees. Nearly 48% are employed full-time; 30.3% work in Onalaska and 10.2% own a business in Onalaska. The majority of respondents (80.7%) live in single detached homes, with the remaining respondents living in condominiums (7.5%) and duplexes (7.1 %). Nearly 92% own their homes.

To provide further meaningful context, the survey collected information from respondents (and families) on how recreational time was spent. The survey provided a number of options and respondents were able to select as many options as applied to their families. The highest percentage of respondents participated in the following activities, hike/use walking trails (61.1%), visit the OMNI Center (59.9%), use bicycle trails (56.1%), and are members of the YMCA or gym (42.5%) and over half attended a City event in 2013. Other outdoor related activities included golfing, fishing, and using the outdoors and visiting City parks. Indoor activities included attending organized fitness classes or sporting team events. Nearly 74.2% of the respondents visited the Onalaska library in 2013.

## Onalaska Stepping Into the Future

The 2014 Onalaska Community Survey responses will be used to supplement the update to the 2015 Onalaska Comprehensive Plan. The survey was intended to be a way for citizen's to have a meaningful voice in the City's future. The data and responses will assist the City in determining new policies and amending goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan to continue to move the City forward for the next 20 years. The City greatly appreciates the time and effort put forth by residents to share their vision for the City of Onalaska. Thank you Onalaska!

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## Appendix A: Respondent Demographics

The following Tables 1-8 summarize Onalaska respondent demographic characteristics. Charts 9 & 10 illustrate other information about survey respondents noting recreational activities that people participate in and other information regarding work location, attending City events and visiting the Library.

<b>Table 1: In what Municipality do you reside?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
City of Onalaska	93.8%
City of La Crosse	1.0%
Town of Onalaska	3.3%
Town of Medary	1.5%
Town of Hamilton	0.2%
Village of Holmen	0.2%

<b>Table 2: How long have you lived in Onalaska?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Less than 1 year	2.8%
1-5 years	13.9%
6-10 years	13.9%
11-20 years	23.0%
21-40 years	33.0%
41 + years	13.5%

<b>Table 3: What age range are you in?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Under 18	1.2%
18-24	2.1%
25-34	7.8%
35-54	29.6%
55-64	22.8%
65-74	23.4%
75 +	13.2%

<b>Table 4: Your Gender?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Male	51.4%
Female	48.6%

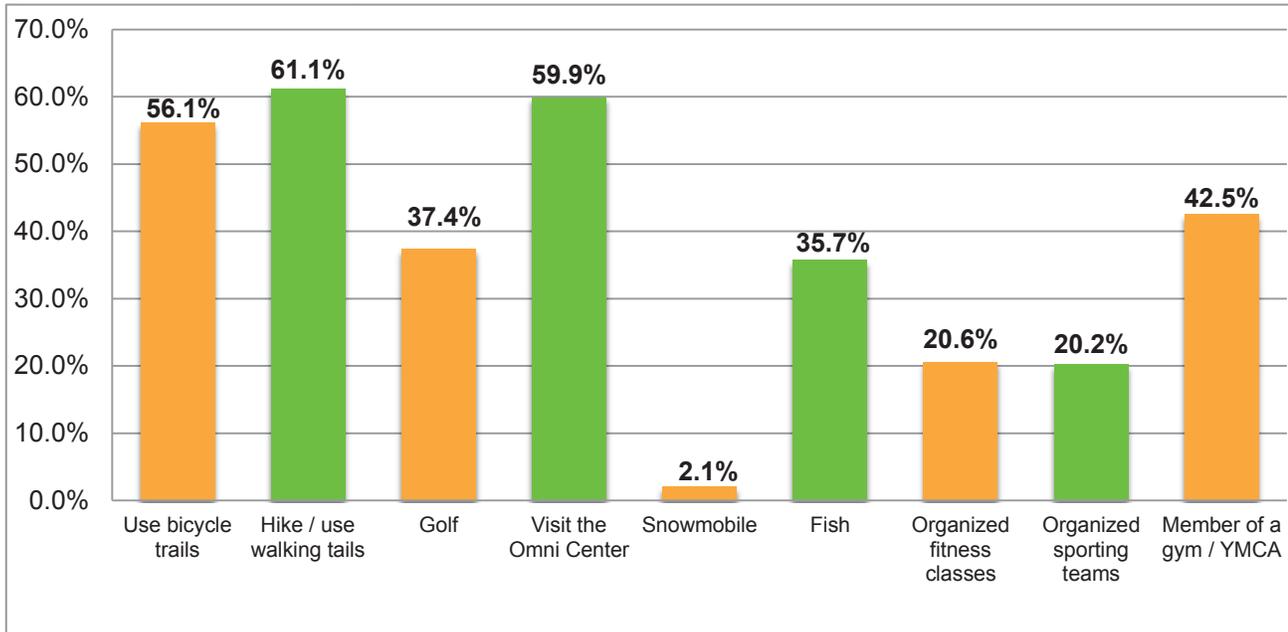
<b>Table 5: Level of Education: Which best applies to you?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Less than High School	1.5%
High School Graduate	11.1%
Some College, no degree	18.0%
Associate's degree	12.6%
Bachelor's degree	28.4%
Graduate / Professional degree	28.4%

<b>Table 6: Employment Situation: Which best applies to you?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Full-Time	47.8%
Part-Time	9.9%
Homemaker	3.5%
Retired	35.9%
Unemployed	1.2%
Student	1.8%

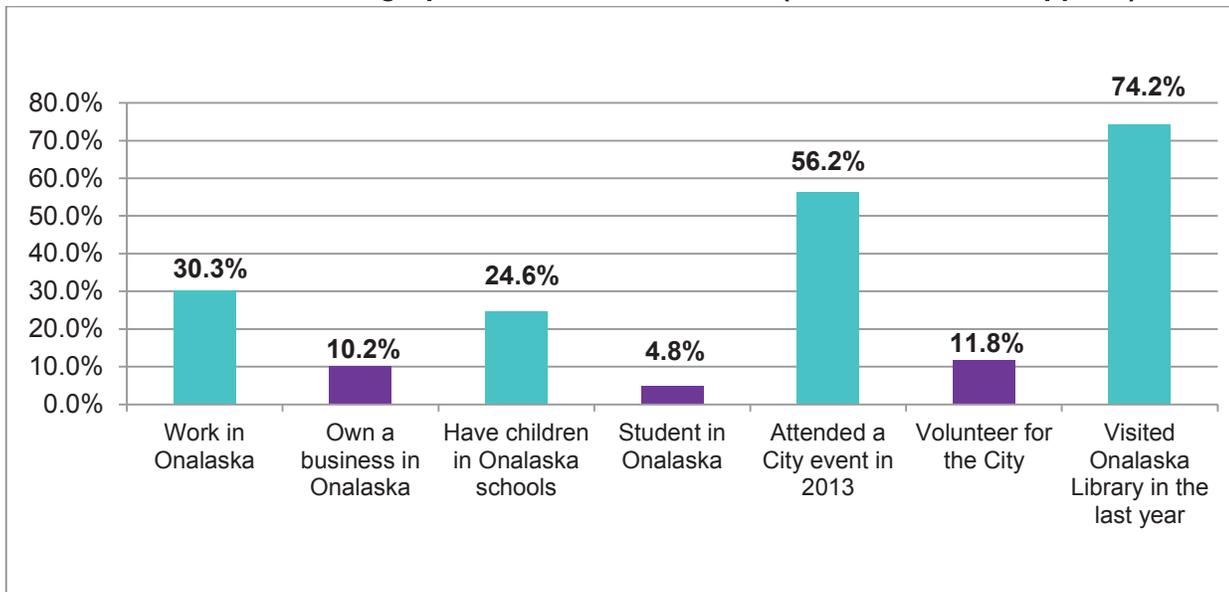
<b>Table 7: Housing: Which best applies to you?</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Detached single family home	80.7%
Duplex	7.1%
Condominium or Townhouse	7.5%
Apartment complex	1.9%
Mobile home	1.5%
Senior housing	1.2%

Table 8: Your Home: Do you?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Own	91.9%
Rent	8.1%

**Chart 9: In Onalaska, what recreational activities do you / your family participate in? (Checked all that applied).**



**Chart 10: Additional Demographic-related Information. (Checked all that applied).**



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**Appendix B: Summary Report of Responses to Survey Questions**

<b>Question 1. How important are the following issues for Onalaska in the next 20 years?</b>							
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Extremely Important (5)</b>	<b>Very Important (4)</b>	<b>Somewhat Important (3)</b>	<b>Not Very Important (2)</b>	<b>Not at all Important (1)</b>	<b>Don't Know (0)</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Maintaining a good school system	53.5% (566)	32.4% (343)	10.4% (110)	0.8% (8)	0.7% (7)	2.3% (24)	1058
Promoting public health & an active community	26.3% (278)	44.0% (466)	22.4% (237)	2.8% (30)	1.7% (18)	2.7% (29)	1058
Promoting tourism opportunities	13.1% (138)	37.8% (400)	35.7% (377)	8.6% (91)	2.6% (28)	2.2% (23)	1057
Accessibility/availability of local bicycle routes	15.9% (168)	32.9% (348)	33.7% (357)	11.7% (124)	3.0% (32)	2.7% (29)	1058
Improving local sidewalk condition & network	19.2% (203)	36.0% (380)	34.0% (359)	6.9% (73)	1.8% (19)	2.2% (23)	1057
Developing the waterfront	23.6% (250)	27.3% (289)	28.5% (302)	12.2% (129)	5.7% (60)	2.6% (28)	1058
Protecting bluffs & sensitive natural features	31.4% (332)	36.8% (389)	22.9% (242)	4.7% (50)	2.3% (24)	2.0% (21)	1058
Redeveloping 2nd Ave District (downtown district)	16.8% (178)	30.7% (325)	35.6% (377)	10.0% (106)	3.8% (40)	3.0% (32)	1058
Reinvesting in existing housing stock	6.7% (71)	24.4% (258)	42.4% (448)	12.5% (132)	2.7% (28)	11.3% (119)	1056
Promoting a mix of housing options	6.8% (72)	20.6% (218)	38.9% (411)	20.2% (214)	7.9% (83)	5.6% (59)	1057
Enforcing building codes	23.3% (247)	39.3% (416)	27.4% (290)	5.4% (57)	1.5% (16)	3.0% (32)	1058
Enforcing property maintenance standards	27.4% (290)	42.3% (448)	21.7% (230)	4.5% (48)	1.8% (19)	2.2% (23)	1058
Retention & expansion of local employers	34.8% (368)	42.7% (451)	16.8% (178)	1.6% (17)	0.9% (10)	3.1% (33)	1057
Attracting large regional employers	25.2% (267)	36.3% (384)	26.6% (281)	7.1% (75)	2.2% (23)	2.6% (28)	1058
Expanding regional shopping centers	11.1% (117)	27.8% (294)	38.3% (405)	14.9% (158)	4.7% (50)	3.2% (34)	1058
Improving & rehabilitating streets	26.7% (283)	48.7% (515)	20.1% (213)	2.3% (24)	0.4% (4)	1.8% (19)	1058
Planting & maintaining boulevard trees	14.8% (157)	30.7% (325)	36.9% (390)	10.2% (108)	4.9% (52)	2.5% (26)	1058
Expanding municipal boundaries	5.3% (56)	13.6% (144)	36.4% (385)	25.4% (269)	10.5% (111)	8.7% (92)	1057
Limiting train whistles (railroad quiet zone)	13.6% (144)	11.1% (117)	26.1% (276)	25.0% (264)	19.9% (211)	4.3% (46)	1058

Question 2. Rate the following services in Onalaska:							
Answer Options	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Major Improvement Needed (1)	Don't Know (0)	Response Count
Youth activities	24.3% (256)	<b>42.2%</b> <b>(445)</b>	12.1% (128)	3.1% (33)	0.4% (4)	17.9% (189)	1055
Shopping	21.7% (229)	<b>46.4%</b> <b>(489)</b>	20.9% (220)	6.9% (73)	2.1% (22)	2.0% (21)	1054
Childcare facilities	6.2% (65)	<b>22.7%</b> <b>(239)</b>	17.5% (184)	2.4% (25)	1.0% (10)	50.3% (529)	1052
Community events	6.1% (64)	37.1% (391)	<b>37.2%</b> <b>(392)</b>	10.0% (106)	2.5% (26)	7.2% (76)	1055
Internet service	10.5% (111)	<b>39.1%</b> <b>(412)</b>	27.0% (285)	8.4% (89)	2.8% (29)	12.1% (128)	1054
Educational facilities	33.8% (356)	<b>47.4%</b> <b>(499)</b>	9.4% (99)	1.8% (19)	0.2% (2)	7.4% (78)	1053
Medical facilities	<b>59.2%</b> <b>(624)</b>	32.5% (343)	4.8% (51)	1.4% (15)	0.3% (3)	1.7% (18)	1054
Senior citizen services	9.1% (96)	<b>30.0%</b> <b>(317)</b>	18.2% (192)	5.3% (56)	0.5% (5)	36.9% (389)	1055
Public transportation	5.5% (58)	23.9% (252)	<b>26.3%</b> <b>(277)</b>	14.8% (156)	5.3% (56)	24.2% (255)	1054

\*Note: In the event the highest response count/percentage is in the "Don't Know" category, the second highest category was selected.

Question 4: What type of development should Onalaska encourage in the next 20 years?					
Answer Options	Need More Of	Keep at Existing Level	Need Fewer Of	Don't Know	Response Count
Offices / Business Parks	28.9% (304)	<b>52.3%</b> <b>(550)</b>	5.9% (62)	12.8% (135)	1051
Retail Establishments	40.2% (422)	<b>48.0%</b> <b>(504)</b>	3.0% (32)	8.8% (93)	1051
Neighborhood Services / Businesses	39.7% (417)	<b>46.5%</b> <b>(488)</b>	2.5% (26)	11.3% (19)	1050
Restaurants	39.2% (412)	<b>52.0%</b> <b>(546)</b>	2.4% (25)	6.4% (67)	1050
Entertainment / Attractions	<b>58.0%</b> <b>(609)</b>	33.0% (346)	1.7% (18)	7.3% (77)	1050
Hotels / Motels	23.3% (245)	<b>64.1%</b> <b>(673)</b>	3.0% (31)	9.6% (101)	1050
Industry / Manufacturing	<b>46.7%</b> <b>(490)</b>	39.2% (412)	4.0% (42)	10.1% (106)	1050
Single Family Homes	<b>51.2%</b> <b>(538)</b>	38.4% (404)	1.6% (17)	8.8% (92)	1051
Duplexes / Triplexes	9.6% (101)	<b>43.0%</b> <b>(452)</b>	37.0% (89)	10.4% (109)	1051
Multi-Family Apartments (4 + units)	6.1% (64)	34.3% (360)	<b>47.8%</b> <b>(502)</b>	11.8% (124)	1050
Manufactured Homes / Parks	4.6% (48)	32.0% (336)	<b>51.4%</b> <b>(540)</b>	12.0% (126)	1050
Condominiums	23.6% (248)	<b>50.0%</b> <b>(525)</b>	14.7% (155)	11.7% (123)	1051
Rental Housing Options	12.5% (131)	<b>45.2%</b> <b>(474)</b>	27.5% (288)	14.9% (156)	1049
Senior Housing Options	<b>41.1%</b> <b>(432)</b>	37.5% (394)	2.3% (24)	19.1% (201)	1051
Other: See Appendix C (Question 3)					65

Question 5: How important are these factors for new development and redevelopment?							
Answer Options	Extremely Important (5)	Very Important (4)	Somewhat Important (3)	Not Very Important (2)	Not at all Important (1)	Don't Know (0)	Response Count
Traffic flow / circulation	<b>51.4%</b> (540)	36.8% (386)	9.1% (96)	0.7% (7)	0.4% (4)	1.6% (17)	1050
Architecture / building design	18.4% (193)	<b>37.4%</b> (393)	34.2% (359)	5.0% (52)	1.8% (19)	3.2% (34)	1050
Parking availability	29.0% (304)	<b>46.5%</b> (488)	19.4% (204)	2.5% (26)	0.7% (7)	2.0% (21)	1050
Walking / biking access	28.0% (294)	<b>34.1%</b> (358)	27.0% (284)	6.7% (70)	1.7% (18)	2.5% (26)	1050
Site landscaping	17.6% (185)	<b>35.6%</b> (373)	34.2% (359)	6.8% (71)	1.1% (12)	4.7% (49)	1049
Signage	12.6% (132)	28.1% (295)	<b>38.9%</b> (408)	11.5% (121)	3.1% (33)	5.7% (60)	1049

Question 6. How would you rate the performance of the City of Onalaska government?							
Answer Options	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Fair (2)	Needs Improvement (1)	Don't Know (0)	Response Count
Value of services provided by City government	14.1 (148)	<b>50.5</b> <b>(530)</b>	20.9 (219)	3.8 (40)	2.3 (24)	8.4 (88)	1049
Welcoming citizen involvement	8.6 (90)	<b>33.9</b> <b>(356)</b>	28.2 (296)	6.7 (70)	5.3 (56)	17.3 (182)	1050
Police services	33.8 (355)	<b>44.1</b> <b>(463)</b>	12.7 (133)	2.4 (25)	2.1 (22)	4.9 (51)	1049
Fire services	37.7 (396)	<b>42.7</b> <b>(448)</b>	9.3 (98)	1.4 (15)	1.0 (10)	7.9 (83)	1050
Operation of Municipal Court System	6.0 (63)	<b>26.1</b> <b>(273)</b>	17.3 (181)	1.9 (20)	1.4 (15)	47.3 (495)	1047
Operation of City water utility	15.3 (160)	<b>44.8</b> <b>(469)</b>	21.9 (230)	1.7 (18)	1.9 (20)	14.4 (151)	1048
Operation of City storm sewer utility	12.9 (135)	<b>41.4</b> <b>(434)</b>	23.5 (247)	2.4 (25)	1.9 (20)	17.9 (188)	1049
Operation of City sanitary sewer utility	13.8 (145)	<b>41.0</b> <b>(431)</b>	22.8 (239)	2.1 (22)	1.2 (13)	19.0 (200)	1050
Maintenance of parks, green space, trails	18.4 (193)	<b>49.9</b> <b>(524)</b>	21.6 (227)	3.0 (32)	2.8 (29)	4.3 (45)	1050
Street & alley maintenance	6.9 (72)	<b>36.0</b> <b>(377)</b>	32.0 (335)	9.4 (99)	9.4 (99)	6.3 (66)	1048
Street sweeping activities	11.9 (125)	<b>41.1</b> <b>(432)</b>	28.4 (298)	9.9 (104)	4.7 (49)	4.0 (42)	1050
Snow removal activities	13.8 (145)	<b>34.6</b> <b>(363)</b>	26.1 (274)	10.4 (109)	12.2 (128)	2.9 (30)	1049
Operation of Omni Center	7.2 (76)	<b>34.0</b> <b>(357)</b>	20.9 (219)	4.9 (51)	7.0 (74)	26.0 (273)	1050
Operation of recreational programs	13.9 (146)	<b>41.3</b> <b>(433)</b>	19.8 (208)	4.2 (44)	2.5 (26)	18.3 (192)	1049
Promotion of events & tourism opportunities	6.3 (66)	<b>31.5</b> <b>(331)</b>	30.3 (318)	10.1 (106)	6.9 (72)	15.0 (157)	1050
Managing / planning for growth	3.9 (41)	<b>29.1</b> <b>(305)</b>	28.0 (294)	8.5 (89)	8.3 (87)	22.2 (233)	1049
Enforcement of property maintenance codes	3.7 (39)	20.5 (215)	<b>28.1</b> <b>(295)</b>	9.4 (99)	11.2 (118)	27.0 (284)	1050
Building Inspection services	4.8 (50)	23.0 (241)	<b>24.6</b> <b>(258)</b>	5.6 (59)	5.8 (61)	36.3 (381)	1050

\*Note: In the event the highest response count/percentage is in the "Don't Know" category, the second highest category was selected.

Question 7. Overall how satisfied are you with the availability of information about City Services?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	30.4%	319
<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>53.3%</b>	<b>559</b>
Somewhat dissatisfied	7.3%	76
Very dissatisfied	2.1%	22
Don't Know	6.9%	72

Question 8. Which methods would you prefer to receive information from the City? (Check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
City Facebook page	12.5%	129
City e-newsletter	31.1%	322
<b>Direct mailings</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>636</b>
Utility bill mailings	35.1%	363
Email	34.9%	361
Twitter	2.1%	22
Newspaper	35.6%	368
Website	32.2%	333

<b>Question 10. In Onalaska, what recreational activities do you / your family participate in? (Check all that apply)</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Use bicycle trails	56.1%	555
Hike / use walking trails	61.1%	604
Golf	37.4%	370
Visit the Omni Center	59.9%	592
Snowmobile	2.1%	21
Fish	35.7%	353
Organized fitness classes	20.6%	204
Organized sporting teams	20.2%	200
Member of a gym / YMCA	42.5%	420
Other (please specify)		108

<b>Question 11. Please check all that apply: (Other Demographic Information)</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Work in Onalaska	30.3%	291
Own a business in Onalaska	10.2%	98
Have children in Onalaska schools	24.6%	236
Student in Onalaska	4.8%	46
Attended a City event in 2013	56.2%	539
Volunteer for the City	11.8%	113
Visited Onalaska Library in the last year	74.2%	712

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## Appendix C: Survey Respondent Comments to Questions

Four questions had opportunities for survey respondents to submit additional comments and thoughts. These included questions 3, 4, 10, and 20 which was the “Additional Comments” question. The comments were organized according to subject matter and the subjects and comments have been listed in no particular order.

### Question 3: If you could change one thing in the City of Onalaska, what would it be?

#### Comments Related to Recreation/Trails/Sidewalk Networks:

- Direct access to Lake Onalaska.
- More public bluffland, parks for hiking.
- More recreational access to riverfront, walking paths, hiking trails etc.
- More trails on the bluffs.
- Invest in Lake Onalaska. It seems like that it is turning into swamp land. Find someone to lease Sias Isles. They can sell bait, rent boats, rent camp sites. Also, how about thinning the underbrush along the HWY 35 bike trail. You can't even see the lake from the trail.
- Improve and maintain the natural beauty of our river and bluff environment.
- I was born in Onalaska in 1931 and I was told that I am an "original" by Mayor Chilsen. I do lots of walking but the sidewalks are very bad and have always been that way.
- Complete area where sidewalks start and stop to make them continuous.
- Sidewalks on all streets, on both side of the street.
- Add more sidewalks and parks to the city.
- Sidewalks at all streets.
- One good change would be to complete the sidewalk system within Onalaska, especially where there are gaps because of a single empty lot. Some of these lots have remained empty for over fifteen years.
- Require all new developments have public sidewalks. Either that or the city should pay for all sidewalk repairs within the city. Fair is fair.
- To have sidewalks on all streets.
- Continue to improve walking and bicycling routes in and around the city.
- Safer crosswalks. Cops don't even stop for pedestrians. Or more walking paths.
- Improve the ability to get out of Green Coulee by foot (the street crossing to the West is dangerous) and by vehicle (turning left is well known to be difficult) A sidewalk over the bluff to Menards would be a major improvement.
- More sidewalks to walk on.
- More walking, biking and hiking trails.
- Sidewalks. It is a shame that streets only 1 block off of Main Street don't have sidewalks (i.e., Monroe, 10th, Pierce, where kids walk streets to attend St. Paul's, St. Pats and Irving Pertsch).
- Improve sidewalks especially Green Coulee subdivisions - someone is going to get hurt.
- They need to add additional sidewalks on Oak Ave. N. School children have to cross busy street in the a.m. when traffic is very busy. Only 4 homes have sidewalks on the one side of the street. They can't be Grand Fathered because they were built after homes were built where we had to have sidewalks.
- Why isn't there a sidewalk on 14th Avenue North?
- There should be complete sidewalks on all City blocks so walkers do not have to walk in the street. We are 70 years old and walk daily to maintain our health; walking in the streets is dangerous for us.
- It is very important to require all property owners to have and maintain a sidewalk for the safety of all. How can we provide hiking trails and bike trails and not provide a safe place for people to walk in our City. Currently we have sidewalks that start and end for no apparent reason. I watch students walking in the streets to get to school. This should be priority #1 for City.
- Finish and add sidewalks to connect walking for the community!

- Install a sidewalk on Troy Street from East Avenue to Highway 35 (or Kwik Trip).
- Improve bike routes, more and safer.
- Walkways/bike paths to connect N. Kinney Coulee to safely ride a bike on this road and connect to rest of paths. N. Kinney has 2 hotels, but no sidewalk/walking paths for people to safely walk down this 3 mile dead-end road.
- Pave the bike trail.
- Better/expanded bike paths to/from mall and La Crosse.
- More bicycle/running paths.
- A larger integrated network of bicycle lanes so that road bikes can travel safely.
- Investing in making the community and walking and biking community by investing in pathways and complete streets that would encourage those activities. Currently it is not even safe to be biking out of Green Coulee where I live. Developing pathways and crossways that would encourage biking to stores, athletic fields and schools would help make this area a more desirable as well as a more healthy community.
- A bike path and walking path that runs through the woods or along the river. Moved here from Winona & really miss the bike/walking path around their lakes.
- More bike lanes/paths.
- Convenient bike trail from Holmen to La Crosse.
- The price to use the bike trail isn't worth it. It is a gravel path.
- I cannot safely bike with my children. I would like to see the creation of a bike-friendly community.
- I would pave all the bike trails. I think they would get a lot more use and attract more people to the area.
- Pave the bike trails so that it can be used safely by thin-wheeled bikes, rollerblades, etc.
- More bike/running trails.
- Bike/pedestrian access to pool (esp. if coming from Kwik Trip/Coulee area).
- Bring attention to the bike trail we have going right through the town. You can go either direction. It is a great trail. Very beautiful. Grade the trail so it is not so rough. Make people clean up their places that the bike trail goes past. The house at Court and Elm on the bike trail is an eyesore. Someone needs to make them clean it up. It doesn't say much for our City or Tourism.
- Large dog park like ones in Sheboygan.
- More Park and Rec Staff to coach youth programs versus parents.
- Free or low cost fitness activities/facilities for seniors without having to buy a senior meal-some of us still cook.
- Would like to see more trees on the boulevards, what happened to the crab apple tree capital of the world that was started in the 60's. Sunny would look neat in front of blooming crabapple trees.
- Further development of a community center for all ages from children to seniors.
- Improved facilities and upkeep of neighborhood parks. For example: Wellington Greens Park could support baseball or soccer field. Playground area needs landscaping work to fill and level out wood chips. Additional trees, gardens and more frequent mowing would be a plus.
- Add a community park and bike/walking trail along highway 16 for the residents of Nathan Hill Estates. There are lots of children in the subdivision, no place for them to play, no safe way for them to go elsewhere.
- Build an indoor park for families.
- Get a splash pad, put in some new parks. Van Riper Park is a dump.

## Comments Related to Waterfront Development:

- Develop waterfront.
- Waterfront destination with shopping, adequate parking and vendors.
- Improve waterfront access and development.
- Clarify what is happening with the Waterfront area.
- I would like to see the City finish redevelopment projects. It seems to me that the City starts but does not finish them. Like the Waterfront Project.
- Finishing the waterfront project - including a park, visible access to the trails, tourism, restaurants, retail - making it very attractive. It's our front door & our biggest asset.
- Make sure the waterfront project gets completed at least with bathrooms and an area for people to meet for biking, walking, running etc.
- Redeveloping the waterfront.
- Develop the waterfront; community access to enjoy the natural beauty in Onalaska. Very important that it is developed in a creative, yet modest (financially) way. The draw to the community and tourist is the area and the people, not a big, expensive building. Simple, warm, welcoming, beautiful connecting - that is what it's about.
- Nice waterfront area.
- Develop waterfront.
- Finish development the waterfront ASAP.
- finishing the waterfront is also very important.
- Finish the waterfront project on Main Street and Highway 35.
- Developing the waterfront.
- Develop the Waterfront with a quiet zone, upscale motel, tourist center, and historic museum, also Public access to the Black River with beach, toilets, boat rental and parking.
- Waterfront.
- Develop the waterfront.
- Get waterfront improvement done.
- Develop waterfront area.
- Clear view and more accessible waterfront which, I think in turn, would lead to more tourism, activity and future development.
- The waterfront project needs to continue to improve on downtown area, even if the money is not available to build a structure. We need to make that a very attractive area with some landscaping, flowers and park benches. Do hope in the future a structure will be built but it is utmost important that it be quality built and needs to be built so in the future it can be added on to when more money is available. It needs to be done so all of us in Onalaska can be proud of it and tourist will be impressed. I feel strongly that we now need to continue removing some of the old building so it isn't such a shabby part of town.
- Develop the waterfront area.
- Improving the waterfront area.
- Improve waterfront.
- Improve waterfront.
- Expansion of waterfront property for walking, picnics.
- We have a beautiful waterfront that is hidden. A master plan for the HWY 35 area must be implemented!
- Improve the waterfront which would help with tourism along with more retail opportunities.
- A beautiful waterfront destination that would attract visitors and keep residents in their hometown.

- Need to develop waterfront.
- I really wish we had a waterfront park with tables and benches. That is quiet and peaceful. "Fish park" on HWY 35 is too public, too loud. The poor excuse for a park downtown smells and is always swampy. No parking, and then that whole criminal element coming and going from the spillway. Yuck. Then add in the terrifying loud train.
- Develop the riverfront.
- Develop the Riverfront.
- Better use of the riverfront.
- If we can't afford to complete the Visitor's Center and Park at this time, the least we could do is tear down the eyesore buildings on this site and expose a very nice river view.
- Open up the water to the community for boat launching. We the taxpayers do own the land.
- Build a boat landing on City property on Black River.
- I would put in a boat landing. We are on the Black River. Can it get any simpler than that?
- Install Boat landings on the Black River (Old Sias Boat Landing).
- Start and complete the Riverfront Project. I am beginning to doubt that I will see this project completed in my lifetime. The City of La Crosse also sets a poor example with the Mobil oil site project.
- Get the new tourism center done so that it is closer to the bike trail. Has been too far away for too long.
- I would find a way for the Cultural Center or Learning Center to happen. There is so much history, nature, native people and beauty in this area - we could be doing better in looking at it as a resource for visitors.
- Use existing "Timbers" building for Tourism Center and Waterfront.
- Use the Timbers for tourism center. It would be perfect.
- I would like to see it have a golf driving range.
- The loss of the riverfront project is tragic. We lost an opportunity to create an image of a truly progressive community mindful of our history, our natural resources, and our riverfront beauty. So sad.
- The fact of the railroad running between the river and City. I'm not so much concerned about safety but the fact that direct access to the river/waterfront prevents a true integration of the waterfront and the City itself.
- I think too much emphasis has been placed on developing the waterfront over producing services to the residents. The whole "land purchase deal" spent way too much money.
- Get waterfront area started! It has been drug out too long.
- Get rid of that money pit you call the waterfront. It is a bad idea. It will require extra tax money to maintain after the flood takes out all you build down there. The railroad tracks are not moving so, its a poor place for development.
- End the 'waterfront' project.

### **Comments Related to Traffic:**

- Get the corner at Main Street & Green Coulee Road corrected - someone will get killed there.
- Implement safer intersection at Green Coulee and Main Street, possibly a traffic circle.
- Please improve the intersection at Main and Greens Coulee. Someone will get seriously injured, it's just a matter of time. I have seen many close calls and I worry for pedestrians and bicyclists - especially kids on their bikes. It's not safe. You have to do something please!

- The intersection at Main Street and Greens Coulee Road needs to be upgraded to accommodate the growth and density in the coulee.
- The Green Coulee/East Main Intersection. It is dangerous and getting worse all the time. It needs to be addressed very, very soon or someone will get seriously injured! Do something!
- We need to create a safer intersection at Main Street and Green Coulee Rd. (By the Coulee Golf Course) and up to Grandview Road and in and out of Kwik Trip. Traffic is crazy there during the rush hours. (Especially 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.)
- Traffic relief at the intersection of East Main Street and Green Coulee Road. Something needs to be done!
- The intersection between Main St and Green Coulee Road.
- The intersection of E. Main Street and Green Coulee is atrocious. It needs a light! Once a week, we've seen accidents narrowly missed as people get impatient and pull out from Green Coulee, go much too fast on E. Main Street, or try and turn into Kwik Trip or Altra. Do something about it, please!
- I would invest in a stoplight/roundabout at the Green Coulee Road and Main Street intersection. If that was deemed infeasible, that intersection must be overhauled regardless.
- Intersection and Greens Coulee and Main Street.
- New intersection at E Main St & Greens Coulee Road and/or access from Greens Coulee area to Sand Lake Road.
- Traffic problem at Main and Greens Coulee Road Intersection.
- Redesign Main Street/Greens Coulee Intersection to include signals.
- Intersection by Coulee Golf Bowl.
- Something needs to be done with the Greens Coulee and Main Street intersection. It is terribly unsafe and clogged up. Traffic engineers say that you cannot put traffic lights up. I think a traffic circle combine with HWY 157 off ramp would be a great solution.
- Stoplight or roundabout by Coulee Golf Bowl, very dangerous intersection!
- The intersection at Greens Coulee and Main Street.
- Greens Coulee Rd and Main Street traffic light.
- I would like to see some type of traffic light at the corner of Greens Coulee Road and Main Street. There are times of the day that I can't even cross traffic, it is so heavy, I just pull out and pray the other driver will slow down. It's ridiculous.
- More roundabouts - one near Coulee Golf Bowl and Kwik Trip.
- Egress - East Main Street/OS & Greens Coulee Road. This is an accident waiting to happen / what a mess, however, it is a problem to be solved.
- The traffic flow/congestion which happens in the area around primarily by Kwik Trip and Coulee Golf Bowl and to about Esther Dr. Engineering design of street has/did not keep up with growth and traffic volume.
- The fact that there is only one access point to Greens Coulee Road. If there was ever an emergency that blocked the current entrance, what would the option be for people to get to their homes?
- Install turn light arrows at Main St. & Sand Lake Road.
- Put left turn arrows at Sand Lake Rd. and Main Street, Utilize the flashing speed control lights which we own and never use in high traffic areas to reduce speed of drivers to school zone and posted speeds.
- Put a turn signal light at 12th Avenue South & Main Street.
- Improve Sand Lake Road & Main Street intersection.

- Add left turn arrows at the stoplight of Sand Lake Road and Main Street.
- Left turn signal lights on main street turning north onto Sand Lake Road, and 12th Avenue South turning West onto Main Street.
- Left turn lane and left turn signal at the intersection of Main Street and Sand Lake Road. I've seen way too many close calls at that intersection.
- The intersection at Oak Forest Dr. and 3rd Ave. S. continues to be horrible. Would a round-a-bout work there?
- Change the intersection at Oak Forest Drive and 3rd Ave. S. - It is terrible from 3-5:30 p.m.
- Stop and Go lights intersection of Library, Kwik Trip on Oak Forest Drive. Takes so long to wait for traffic.
- Slow down the traffic on South Kinney Coulee Rd. We have a nice walking/biking path but the speeding, careless drivers make it dangerous to use! Make speed limit 25 mph and install speed bumps and ticket all those who run the stop sign, make illegal U-turns by Kwik Trip/Mall/South Kinney Coulee Road and those making left turns from middle lane when going from South Kinney to HWY 16 - mostly Kwik Trip customers - all dangerous things. Traffic violations are rampant out here!
- Enforcement of speed limit on Oak Avenue South where semis, dump & garbage trucks, & autos drive like it is an interstate instead of a residential neighborhood with posted signs, This will be increasingly important if Culvers is going into the old Happy Joe's location & traffic increases. Also a better intersection at Oak Ave S/Oak Forest Drive to accommodate increased traffic flow.
- Improve bottleneck traffic areas.
- Keep line of vision clear on intersections or stop signs. There are too many corners. Ex: out by Festival - can be dangerous pulling out from stop signs - people travel too fast.
- Improve/add/reconfigure/ street intersections, speed limits, traffic lights.
- I think the traffic roundabouts are nice, but an unnecessary expense!
- Traffic patterns - Main Street, OS, Theater Road, Greens Coulee Rd, Mall area.
- Road access from one end of town to another. Not really shortcuts anywhere w/HWY 53 through the middle of town.
- Traffic issues. Roads are too busy especially over the holidays with shoppers.
- Not having the 'red paver' crosswalks on 2nd Ave. (HWY 35). These have ruined and otherwise perfectly good road. These "speed bumps" are terrible.
- Too many dead end street and cul-de-sacs.
- Traffic - speeders.
- Speed bumps (crosswalks of brick) on HWY through City a was big mistake. This will be costly over the years and are already after 1 year - plow damage (big mistake).
- I wish 12th Ave South wasn't such a 'thoroughfare'. Wasn't the highway extension supposed to do that? It hasn't, cars, and trucks of all sizes speed past my house every day. It's not even the amount, as it is the speed/noise when they blow by.
- The traffic pattern by the Mall. The lanes coming from HWY 53 to the mall need to be changed to have 2 left turn lanes. Currently there are 2 lanes going straight through the light to the mall. There is one lane turning left. The lane next to that lane which currently only allows traffic to go straight to the mall needs to be changed to also allow left turns. This would minimize the back up during peak shopping times. Seems like an easy fix.
- Traffic issues. Roads are too busy especially over the holidays with shoppers.
- Have more streets that go through the City.

- Better traffic flow needed on HWY 16. Mall bypass expressway. Extend 12th Ave. S. to River Valley Dr. / Palace Street.
- Traffic safety - Kwik Trip & library.
- Speed limits.
- Route to La Crosse that bypasses the mall.
- Improvement of traffic flow and circulation on Main Street between 11th Ave and Theater Road/Eagle Bluff Ct. Businesses hard to access and very pedestrian and bike unfriendly on this section of Main Street.
- Road Access to Industrial, Business & Shopping Areas.  
Fire the City Planner. One road going to the mall from downtown is nuts.  
Eliminate yield signs at intersections and replace with stop signs.
- Hwy 35 South needs a better turn lane for right turn to Nutbush. Lower speed limit to 40 mph. Needs to police this area in the morning from 7-9 a.m. please!
- Traffic flow - lights - safe pedestrian crossings speeding and noise from car stereos.
- The City should have designed access roads along business routes instead of individual driveways by each building - would need less traffic signals - traffic would move smoothly & safely.
- The Main Street - Oak Forest - Onalaska Care Center - 17th Ave. intersection is waiting for a massive accident! It is dangerous to make a Left turn on this street going East. Too many streets joining together there. The round-about-by Menards should be at this intersection.
- Update stop and go light at Main St and Sand Lake or put four way stop sign at Quincy and Sand Lake Road.
- Better enforcement of traffic laws, especially speed limits. People use the main traffic arteries like their own personal race tracks. A 25 MPH speed limit means that people are going 40, 45, 50 MPH. Why have speed limits if you aren't going to enforce them? I drive between 25-30 MPH and I have nearly gotten run over on numerous occasions.
- Enforce the speed limit on Main Street between 11th & 12th Street.

### **Comments Related to Retail/Business/Shopping Wants:**

- More local businesses.
- More boutiques or small businesses.
- Need local small town atmosphere of cafe/restaurants business (small business owned by local citizens).
- Encourage development of a casino and a motel with a large water park to build within the City. That would bring in mounds of tourists, year round, and provide some good paying jobs.
- A new movie theater would be lovely!
- Entertainment (movie theater, amusement park or water park).
- Have more family (plain food) restaurants. Also need little coffee shops & (reasonable) gift shoppe (combined).
- More restaurants.
- Bring back Paul's Pantry - it was a nice (good) place to have breakfast.
- Healthy/local food restaurants in the area. Also outside eating areas.
- Increasing the variety of healthier & interesting dining choices, especially Mediterranean/Greek (Nupas in Rochester), Noodles & Co., another Casa Blanca.
- A little bit better shopping and that the access to outdoor fun isn't limited!
- Shopping: Add a Costco store.

- Have more shopping options in the Onalaska - Holmen corridor so not have to travel south to La Crosse. Development of a major food store near Menards with a retailer (Meijers, Wal-Mart, and services : hair, etc. nearby to make this area more user friendly).
- Get better shopping! We need stores like Nordstroms, Stimark or Dillard so we can shop in Onalaska instead of going to other towns. If you want us to shop here, we need department stores to bring customers to town.
- More shopping.
- More shopping and restaurant variety.
- Bring in more shopping (Bed Bath & beyond, Crate & Barrel, etc.) bring in more restaurant options. Build an indoor play area for kids and adults (soccer fields, tennis courts, climbing wall, indoor family play center for chilly fall, winter and cool spring months).
- More updated retail: Trader Joes, Pottery Barn, Coldwater Creek, Bed Bath & Beyond, Costco, home interior decorating.
- Improving the shopping.
- Get a grocery store back in Center 90.
- Have another grocery store.
- A Kwik Trip by Menards (on Riders Club) or a grocery store.
- The placement of the new Auto Zone. I don't know who is responsible for approving it (Council, City Planner), but it is poor planning. It is being built on a very busy corner. There is an entrance off of OS as cars are trying to make a right turn and right around the corner. Are you so focused on new business, that the safety of citizens is not considered the priority?
- We need to have a place for teenagers to go to have fun. Some type of teen center, etc. Hopefully this will decrease the number of kids who end up on drugs and other criminal activity.
- Affordable clinics. I also don't understand not renewing the movie theatre contract and letting it sit empty as we have to go to the south side of La Crosse.

### Comments Related to Taxes:

- Lower property taxes. Very difficult for a widow to pay high taxes on a very modest house (a small one). Pensions go down and taxes go up. P.S. I worked full-time till almost age 69.
- I would like to see my real estate taxes be lower.
- Lower taxes for retired home owners!
- Lower taxes.
- Lower property taxes! Especially for seniors!
- Reduce property tax rate.
- Keeping taxes down so retirees on limited income don't have to sell their homes.
- Lower taxes & reduce extra fees (EG - Fire pits, pet licenses etc.).
- Keep taxes down!
- Taxes, property tax bill (including school's portion) has gone up by 30% in 7 years. This is excessive. Low taxes promote growth and was a key reason we chose Onalaska (from out of state).
- Reduced taxes.
- Reduce property taxes.
- Keep property taxes reasonable.
- My taxes are over \$7,000 - really?
- Lower taxes. Pick up yard waste with no extra charge.
- Lower taxes.

- Work hard to lower taxes, prioritize spending between wants and needs.
- Cost of taxes.
- Lower property taxes.
- Lower taxes.
- Lower property taxes. The recent "balanced assessment" took away the perceived benefit of my recent purchase of a house with an older assessment and lower taxes. This was used as a selling point and I lost the benefit within a year of purchasing inside the city limits.
- Lower property taxes.
- Lower taxes.
- Lower taxes and less fees.
- Keep property taxes low.
- Lower taxes.
- Reduce taxes.
- Lower the property taxes!
- Lower property taxes.
- Much lower property taxes.
- Lower property taxes.
- Property taxes are beyond ridiculous. Need significant relief in this area.
- I should not pay school taxes when I don't have children in the School of Onalaska. Seniors should get some kind of tax credit.
- Lower property taxes.
- Reduce property taxes!
- Lower property taxes. We're getting taxed out of our homes.
- Lower taxes.
- Taxes, city water and sewer bills.
- Property tax system need considerable overhaul: Assessment, tax or mill rate, school referendum tied to homes with families not homeowners. Retired, over 62 years with fixed income, property taxes tied to home improvement. Taxes reduced per dollar spent and held low for fixed period of time.
- Lower taxes! Why do you waste money on this survey when you, the committees, do not listen to us citizens anyway and you know what you want.
- Lower taxes!
- Lower property taxes.
- Lower property taxes.
- Lower property taxes! Why do taxes vary per property value when we all receive the same services? A person saves to build a nice retirement home and then has to pay high taxes (\$7870.55).
- Decrease taxes.
- A lot less spending on needless things so property tax could and should go down.

### **Comments Related to Housing:**

- More housing for elderly. Another Eagle Crest but include a nursing home - better care for senior citizens.
- In future, more senior housing like or similar to Eagle Crest.
- Less building of multiplex apartments. More twin homes for rent and not for buying which would be suitable for seniors

- More apartment buildings for disabled people.
- Build affordable 1st home buyer options. Nice houses in the \$150,000 to \$200,000 range.
- Beautiful condos by the river.
- Need condominiums on HWY 35 to face the southwest.
- More variation of pricing of houses. The houses that are in the \$130,000-\$160,000 range are few and far between and toward the lower end the houses are often awful. Then, the next step up for housing is \$220,000 or more.
- More housing w/an emphasis on becoming more energy efficient and using sustainable resources (exp. solar panels, wind, etc.). In fact, some of these produce more energy than is used and that can be sold back to the electric companies.
- Have City require more attractive multi-unit housing. Oak Manor is a good example of unattractive. It's a long box, painted ugly colors. Require more attractive roof lines with more interesting features, please.
- Do not allow more apartment, duplex, condo buildings! There are enough of them now! These types of buildings do not promote healthy neighborhood environments. Instant slum! I feel they are not a good tax base.
- Limit the number of rental properties to current level, so we don't have the problem La Crosse is now facing. (I believe this occurs when the landlord does not live in the duplex/triplex) (in some instances).
- Fewer duplex/triplexes and more single family units.
- Too many apartments and duplexes.
- Less rentals and more single family homes.
- Please no more rental (residential units) in the City. They bring in more transient people. You can see the results of this in La Crosse.
- Use better sense when allowing rental complexes (green space - play areas etc.).
- Reduce the number of multi-plex rentals. The renters in these facilities seem to have little stake in the community and take a lot of services.
- Limit the number of rental/multi-family housing. There are way too many rental properties in the City of Onalaska.
- Too many trashy rentals.
- Control or limit rental properties.
- Group homes in residential areas (not available off street parking and disrespectful behavior from transient employees who work there).
- City Planners do a terrible job of zoning residential areas, i.e. allowing low income housing in middle class neighborhoods.
- Stop the building of large apartment complexes like the one by the middle school.
- Residents in our area of the City went before the Council and asked for a large apartment not to be built. It was voted down-then the City down sized the apt. complex and went behind our backs and built one anyway. This is located behind the middle school and looks like a cheap motel. It is an eyesore and downgrades the Community, you would not believe comments in reference to this.
- Reduce the number of twin homes and apartment complexes. The city needs more quality yet affordable family homes.

## Comments Related to Street Maintenance:

- Place more priority on critical infrastructure maintenance (streets & utilities). Stop buying new fire trucks every year!
- Better street surfacing - better parking for all businesses and services - especially for seniors.
- Improve streets & roads. Cracks and potholes and uneven roads are unacceptable. We have the technology - manpower - money. Taxes are high. We should have very good roads and streets.
- Fix the potholes and manholes and broken streets before my wheels fall off my car!
- I would pave/ blacktop the city roads instead of resurfacing currently used. Current process limits use of roads for rollerblading and other physical activities- rocks constantly coming indoors on pet's feet. Has damaged/stained belongings in car, boat carpet, etc. Simply awful! Put it to a vote for taxpayers to decide.
- Better Road, too many pot holes.
- Take better care of the streets.
- Better roads.
- Better roads.
- Condition of roads.
- Resurface streets, outlaw seal coat process.
- Fix the streets. They are horrible. I feel I live in a 3rd world country. And stop using that wasteful gravel tar mix they throw in the pot holes, so stupid.
- More upkeep on neighborhood streets, some streets are in very bad condition.
- Change street resurfacing method. Tar and gravel may save a few bucks but creates long term dust, mess for several years.
- Better streets.
- Maintain the streets better.
- Better streets.
- Fixing streets.
- Roads are in terrible shape. Something needs to be done.
- Fix the streets! Our deteriorating streets are bumpy, and full of potholes and crumbling asphalt. They're miserable to drive on, they're ruining our vehicles, and they are a public eyesore and embarrassment.
- Improving streets. They are rough and in bad need of repair in many locations.
- Road improvement - many roads need to be re-paved.
- Improve the streets.
- Fill the potholes.
- Better street maintenance (year round).
- Snowplow the entire road at one time. As it is now, they plow up to the business places, then U-turn and leave the second half unplowed until late in the day. Just have one company/city do this - we used to take turns, one year Onalaska would do the rest, next year West Salem would. Every since the business park came in, we residents have been ignored when plowing is needed.
- Street plowing very poor. Two feet away from the curbs make the street too narrow! Don't use street sweeper when leaves are falling.
- The street maintenance conditions are horrid, unsafe and embarrassing. Cars are ticketed for alternate side parking violations nightly though the streets are not plowed for days at a time. I have to apologize to visitors for the ridiculous road conditions. The street plowing in Onalaska is not comparable to other cities.
- Snow removal in winter.

- Improve snowplowing along Irving Pertzsch School!
- Eliminate alternate side parking, as it penalizes the lower income residents and we don't need to have this in effect for so many months with only 2-3 snowfalls that would constitute a snow emergency.
- Better/faster snow removal on secondary streets.
- Better snow removal and ice control at Coachlite Greens - you do Grandview Blvd well, but our side streets sometimes are forgotten about for days after a snowfall. Then you just go down the middle and the sides aren't done and we get stuck trying to get out to the street and I have to shovel to the center, where did they plow? They need to clean the snow to the curbing.
- Better snow removal and cleaning of roads.
- Care of the streets in the winter. The new bike trail by Menards gets completely cleaned and yet we cannot get our streets plowed in a timely fashion.
- Snowplowing in the last few years has been terrible, roads are real bad all winter long since plow don't remove the snow down to the streets like the county does.
- Plow my street better it was horrible this winter!
- Expect people to take responsibility for themselves and their actions, particularly during winter and snow events. Do not plow unless there is more than 2" of snow, nor salt unless there is freezing rain, sleet or extreme slickness.
- Better street maintenance especially snow plowing - please plow closer to the curb. When streets aren't plowed even after a small amount of snowfall the snow packs onto the roadways making them slippery for the remainder of the winter.
- Snow plowing.
- Snowplowing! Very poor job!
- Only one? Alternate side parking should only exist in a snow emergency. This should not be used to generate revenue. What a complete waste of time for police officers. After a snowfall, city plows rarely come through and plow the other side of the street it's pointless. In addition, why aren't the plows plowing closer to curbs? That is one thing I would change. Hard to choose only one though.
- Snow plow smaller streets sooner.
- Improve HWY 35 - repave, slow, re-route, add lights/roundabouts, widen. Was told in 2006 improvements to 35 and Riders Club was scheduled in 2011 - per City?
- Eliminate speed bumps on PH
- Make the mobile home park owners keep their streets maintained. If the street is in bad shape don't just fill the potholes every year, maybe resurface it once every ten years.
- Fix 14th Avenue North.
- Making sure that the dead end street located at 16th & Well St. on the east side gets plowed better in the winter months. When they plow 16th street, Well St. at the dead end does not get plowed right away and then it gets packed down by the vehicles.
- I would like the road repaired in front of Festival Foods.
- Clean it up! Gutters, roadways-about the dirtiest of any City we have seen - except Boston-even Chicago-large city is cleaner-get civic groups to clean up-People sitting in jail doing nothing but be on the dole. Be proud to look "upscale".

## Comments Related to Keeping a Clean City:

- More green (trees, flowers, grass) or river rock is even better. Cigarette butts should be cleaned up at every intersection. There's always trash blowing around. The Post Office parking lot is a mess.
- Would like to see one day a month where people can put out items on the curb they no longer want but are still worthy of use so others can pick them up and use them and waste them wanted. Also Onalaska will be more "green" friendly and the items will not be filling up the landfill.
- I would enforce all rules, regulations, laws and any ordinances on the books involving maintenance and upkeep of grounds, lawns and buildings in all residential areas particularly rental properties. To include no parking of semi tractors and trailers, camping trailers, mobile home, construction trailers, day time only, plus boats and trailers. There are boat docks for that. Place a fine upon the home occupant that does not cut their grass. I don't care to watch these yards that are yellow, then white with the seeds ending up in my yard. The same people who don't shovel their sidewalk are the same people who ignore their yard upkeep.
- Keeping older neighborhoods? Preserving the look and not letting low income housing and duplexes in. It lowers the value of existing homes. Also to create a downtown area that is pleasing to the eye. Eliminate some of the signs on Main Street.
- Housing stock, in general, in La Crosse County is very sub-par need incentives for repair/upgrades.
- Reduce the number of duplex, apartments in the City. Once these properties are built, the money and time invested to keep the building and landscape looking good is reduced. Take a ride on 10th Ave. N. from Quincy (North). The landscaping along this major street looks terrible.
- Step up monitoring and enforcement of property conditions for rentals!
- Homeowners/renters required to keep yards clean.
- Make people responsible for keeping up their yard and house. Some people have had old kitchen stoves or Bar-B-Q grills sitting in their yard for years.
- Maintaining properties to a higher standard should be a priority. We need to improve what we have before we put a lot of money into new developments.
- Fix up rundown properties. Rentals/duplexes in particular.
- Fewer rental properties. When I drive or walk past many of these areas there tends to be a lot of junk outside and no pride taken in keeping up the yards. Especially the Quincy Street apartments where people keep furniture and junk all over and the condos on Troy Street, where there tends to be a lot of garbage outside.
- We wish that people who own rental property would have the renters take care of the yard and that the owner would maintain the building to the best of their ability, repair, painting, replacement, and yard maintenance.
- Enforcement of housing codes. Many rentals and homes in general that are unkempt which ultimately deteriorates the overall property values of all surrounding homes.
- Work to clean up run-down rental properties. Get landlords to maintain to community standards.
- Maintaining the integrity of neighborhoods in and around areas that are being commercially/industrially developed, e.g. Valley View Mall, Hwy 35, Theater Road, County Rd. OS.
- Crack down on landlords who do nothing to improve or maintain their properties - such as simple things as removing cars from parking lots that haven't been moved/used in over one year and junk such as old tires which can be a health hazard, fire hazard and removing/raking garbage from lawn areas.
- Be more strict with landlords who let buildings look run down. The long grass on lawns gives neighborhood a grubby appearance and lowers property values in the area.

- More progressive and larger emphasis on encouraging residents to maintain and improve properties.
- Enforce the ordinances. I am very upset with the sign pollution especially out by the Home Depot on East Main Street. There are signs (political) posted on City or Public Property. These are not in yards. They are in the boulevard. Also, Walgreens doesn't need 30 signs to let you know they have flu shots.
- Get slobs to clean up their yards!
- Encourage people to keep property in better shape.
- Cars idle unattended on the street. Cars with no plates, no mufflers, noise, loud radios.
- Vehicles parked in alleys blocking sidewalks. Trash cans exposed. Not very appealing.
- Limit how many cars can be parked by one resident - we have a neighbor with 3 cars in driveway and up to 4 parked on the street and it's a single family home!
- Enforce ordinances for dog dropping clean-up & noise control especially dog barking and other disturbances.
- I would like people to keep their new garbage cans in garage or at least on the side of their house. Two of my neighbors leave them in front of their garage near front door. Makes neighborhoods look bad.
- Better zoning laws - please no auto repair shop at apartment buildings! Self-employed people should not be working in apartment buildings where autos are parking/noise problems. "Self Employed" should not be running an auto/truck repair show where noise disturbs neighbors from sleeping. 1006/1008 10th Avenue North & Vilas Street by Mathy.
- I would like to see a good clean-up on 3rd Ave. S. from Main Street to the High School. Too many unkempt houses, yards, parked junk, old cars, limo's, boats. It is an eyesore if you want to attract waterfront traffic. Too many eyesore properties. Feel sorry for people who do keep up their own property.
- Better upkeep of rental housing in the 300 Block of 14th Avenue North. Landlords are not keeping up outside appearance of their properties.
- improve the appearance of rental/apartment properties. Example: apartment buildings on upper 10th Avenue North: lawns, general upkeep etc. Their appearance could lower property values in that area.
- Individuals running business from a home, should have a standard of maintaining property appearance, tidiness, storage of equipment.
- Better enforcement of City Ordinances, especially removal of snow.
- Fine people for not clearing their sidewalks in the winter.

### **Comments Related to City Policies:**

- Put sod on boulevards after doing street replacement rather than throwing down some damp-filled dirt and seed.
- Give homeowner the choice to have trees in sidewalk boulevard. I want mine gone. In the way for new garbage cans and raising my sidewalk.
- Have alternate parking done by April 1st. This does not apply to me personally. I feel it is inconvenience for those need parking.
- Change alternative side parking to match the weather patterns rather than the calendar.

- I also would like the City to make citizens move their cars in the a.m. when you alternate parking. We have had cars on wrong side of the street for 3 days some times. They don't always get a ticket so they are scott free. Also, when they plow with the big plow, one side of the street gets 2/3 of all the snow. Bummer for all of us old citizens - younger people all live on the side of that street that gets less snow.
- Spend less money on the City of Onalaska decorative things and fancy walkways (like the bricks on Main/35) and boulevards and more on fixing and maintaining what we have. The City should have made the newly done road/intersection look nice without going to the extreme of bricks and plants/cement areas in the sidewalk - it's just one more thing that needs maintenance - at a higher cost.
- Timeliness of city providing said services.
- Work closer with La Crosse on Tourism. Onalaska is not considered a tourism destination independent of La Crosse.
- Get rid of the tourism office and combine with La Crosse.
- Merge Tourism Center with La Crosse Tourism Center.
- Sell Omni center.
- The city should not be in the tourism/convention business. Eliminate tourism/convention department.
- We need better City Leaders and Department Heads. Engineering Department has too much power and lack of accountability. We need better people in Planning. We need better people, there has been so much wasted tax payer dollars because of these individuals and City Council. I work hard to have my tax dollars wasted on their mistakes.
- Avoid governmental regulations whenever possible and let free enterprise do it's work.
- Use taxpayers' monies more efficiently and wisely.
- Keep the citizens informed! No more secrets like how the City Hall Land was purchased (and the buildings built the citizens were never asked)!
- I think we need to improve the look of our cemetery. Make some rules about how graves are decorated and change the fencing. The sign for Onalaska out by Woodmans is great but who sees it? Everybody drives by the cemetery, let's make it look nicer!
- Lack of communication.
- Cronyism.
- We do not need a good ole boys club.
- City Manager style of government and the elimination of the mayoral/city council style of government.
- Limit amount of time citizens can be on boards, Common Council to two terms or max of 6 or 8 years.
- City Government - Hire a City administrator or CEO.
- Divide aldermanic districts, only one alderman person per district, more districts would allow a greater diversity of ideas and opinions.
- Part-time Mayor with a full time administrator. Eliminate the Tourism Department.
- City Council - need better listening and communication skills to encourage healthier dialog which should in turn, increase respect and decrease feelings and futility among citizenry.
- Have people that know and understand what they are doing.
- City leadership should have administrative/managerial experience. Have a City Administrator. Mayors should be more figure-head, promotion.
- Onalaska needs a City Administrator - change of personnel every few years is not productive. What has gotten done in the last few years?

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- Concerns regarding staff not going in the right direction - seem more concerned about tax revenues than beautifying Onalaska.

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  - Communication from City Hall regarding proposals before enactment by committees and/or City Council. Never hear from my alderman so some form of communication is necessary!

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  - If the City Council could set their egos aside and work together and make a decision on the downtown and riverfront project.

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  - I would like our elected officials and appointed committees to be more genuinely open to citizen's input.

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  - More support and better cooperation between city and library. Better communication between dept. heads and others. Faster response between department heads and others.

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  - Improve communication avenues between citizens, elected officials, and staff; i.e. smart phone technology and improvements to city website.

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  - Two things - more positive, forward thinking people on the city council and the ability to move things through city government quicker.

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  - I think all the people that work for the City of Onalaska should wear a nametag.

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  - Take the blinders off - work together.

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  - More transparent government.

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  - Increase staffing of the fire department and public safety services.

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  - Maintain the city as a whole better...it seems like the city is growing but the "City" resources have remained stagnant or near stagnant resulting in a city that is showing signs of falling behind.

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  - City leaders need an attitude adjustment. I feel the city council is a "good ol boy network" serving their own interests. Rarely do they listen to their residents. They vote on their own interests. Council needs a handful more seats to represent the community vision better. The council currently acts as a you scratch my back I will scratch yours. City hall is full of attitude like they don't have to answer to anyone. They seem to have a "I wish you wouldn't bother me attitude". An example was shoving the new trash system down our throats. Waste of money. Fiscal responsibility needs to take the place of over spending practice.

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  - Stop the advance of drug dealers.

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  - Switch the streets with a bike lane back to two sided parking.

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  - Change its ability to bring public safety and utilities up to the same level as the City has grown. Onalaska has been very lucky with no large events but we lack and are so far behind in staffing.

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  - Cheaper burning permits for recreational fires.

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  - Improve fire response by adding another Fire Station. Highway 16 area.

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  - Find a way to cooperate with surrounding communities. More "metro" services and cooperation. Onalaska is not the center of the universe. City Government should stop acting like it is. Stop charging for leaf/lawn pickup! Will just throw them in the street.

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  - Establish better cooperation with neighboring communities.

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  - Merge some services i.e. fire protection with La Crosse.

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  - Enforce existing laws the same for all.

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  - All street lighting should be converted to environmentally-friendly, downward directed, and not be originally installed in any other way.

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## Comments Related to Downtown Development:

- Redeveloping downtown.
- Improve downtown.
- Create a "downtown".
- Improve downtown area.
- Finish downtown project. Some of the buildings on Main Street and Hwy 35 corridor are eyesores.
- Improve the downtown area with more restaurants/ local establishments/shops.
- Revitalize the "downtown" area.
- Downtown Onalaska is more vital.
- Improve Downtown!
- Continue to revitalize downtown - there are some great buildings that just need to be used.
- Redo and revitalize Downtown Onalaska!
- Finish downtown project.
- Finish Downtown redevelopment.
- Make the downtown bigger.
- More character - downtown area needs more improvement as well as the mall area. Center 90 looks really sad.
- Continue attempt at Centering Onalaska. Give us a Main Street and Downtown. Thank you.
- Improve the looks and develop downtown area. It clearly brings people as we have only 2 restaurants, I see them busy on the weekends, but we need more. Also, some of the old buildings need to be torn down. The benches that were put down are nice but one is sitting at a slant, it looks terrible, especially in front of an old dumpy building.
- Improve the downtown area along 2nd and Main to make the downtown a destination. It would promote the city and possibly improve the housing and desire to leave more centrally in Onalaska.
- Old downtown development.
- More locally owned shops, coffee shops, bookstores, ice cream shops on Main Street Downtown, making it a place where people want to walk to leisurely.
- More shopping in the main downtown district.
- Improve the downtown area. We've been hearing about developing this area for a long time, but it seems like it's slow for it to get going. I'd like to see Onalaska improve the areas that look run-down.
- We need a lively Main Street with small businesses, professional offices, retail shops, and cafes -- as well as green-built condos or similar residences -- with some sort of connection to the river that's safe, walkable, and bike-able. I want the downtown area to attract residents and tourists alike, and I want the city to embrace the Mississippi, at least the view. Provide a parking lot or two off the main corridor, make the area a tree-line boulevard, ideally with a community space that holds events, music, etc. Call it an "arts district," whatever. We just need a sense of place, our place, a small-town feel that's rooted in our spot between the river and the bluffs with a fantastic, sweeping sunset. To paraphrase the late Wallace Stegner, we are failing to live up to our geography. Why?
- Downtown or lack of.
- More vibrant downtown with more retail to draw you there.
- Creating a vibrant downtown area with shops, restaurants and services within walking distance of the new river front area.
- The downtown area.

- Suggest downtown development with bistros and sidewalks. Cafes for social gathering. Old Town in Fort Collins, CO is an excellent example.
- A well developed downtown that is accessible, attractive and has a variety of features such as shops, restaurants (not chains), and community activities. Tear down the ugly bait shop and concrete building next to it. Buy the building supply store and tear it down. Build a small trail and water access area and building with bathrooms, water, etc. Tear down the unattractive buildings across the street to the East.
- Bring in more attractions - to give it more of a "big city" feel.
- More businesses on Main Street (i.e. shops, antiques, restaurants).
- Better eye appeal on 2nd Ave & Main Street.
- Visual improvements and more modernization to Sand Lake Road mall areas. Looks very dated except for Gerard Hoesler building. The mall is unattractive, the sidewalk area is boring. Not enough trees or fancy street lights. Main Street looks great! But the improvements should continue to the Sand Lake/ Main Street area.
- Develop Main Street & HWY 35 into a unique shopping area that has small businesses and restaurants. No chains or big box retail, just a block of specialty stores that attract tourism.
- It needs a heart...a center. There is no community feel. Nothing to bring you to the center of town. Main Street needs to be developed.
- While Centering Onalaska has done much to enhance Main Street's appearance, the white building on the corner of Main and 2nd Ave. takes away from the rest of the look of the nice area. If anything could be arranged to help with that - aesthetic improvement.
- Put use to existing business buildings vs. building new ones.
- Better development in creating business, commercial and residential districts. Everything is scattered through out the city.
- Improve development, employment and growth opportunities for businesses in the city.
- Add small shops so we don't have to go to mall to pick up a birthday card or small items.
- The City should take a more aggressive approach to new development.
- More retail and family restaurants on or near Main Street.
- Improve the business/buildings along Hwy 35 and Main Street.
- More professional, retail services along Main Street.
- Create more retail and restaurants outside the mall area such as Center 90 and 2nd Avenue / Main Street.
- Create more incentives for new business to relocate here.
- Develop a vision for active transportation from a health and economic foundation, and include it in an overall transportation vision that de-escalates auto-centric approach. We can do this by setting an established budget item for pedestrian/bike facilities.
- Bigger Tax Base for more revenue.
- The proximity of businesses, manufacturing and housing. Not the most attractively done.
- Expansion of Business.
- I would like Onalaska to continue becoming a bigger city. Since La Crosse is landlocked they can't expand much more, but Onalaska can. I would focus more energy to economic development.  
Thanks.
- Attract some new employers, but that is less in our control than doing something with the waterfront project area.
- Better paying jobs other than retail or restaurants.
- The building on the corner of Main Street (white building) is an eyesore to Main Street. Sorry!

- Remove old Sias building on corner of 2nd and Main St. Eyesore! Could use more parking for Mary's and pizza business. Pave alley between 2nd & 3rd - King and Main St.
  - Demolish 2-story building on the corner of highway and main street (across from former Tradition's Restaurant). It is an eyesore. It has been empty for years. Thank you.
  - Demolish the old house on the SE corner of Main Street and HWY 35. Also, the Lumber Co. building on HWY 35. They are eyesores!
  - Move faster on 2nd Ave. Tear down Braund Lumber!
  - Finish cleaning up 2nd Avenue District. Junky looking businesses do not attract new businesses.
- 
- Revitalize the downtown. It looks awful. There are a few storefronts that look good but most don't. The white building on the corner of Hwy 35 and Main St. is a real eyesore and should be torn down and replaced.
  - Need a movie theater.
  - Stop trying to sell the public on creating a "downtown" for Onalaska. The public - obviously me - does not want any time or money allocated for this. Put the question to the votes as an advisory type of referendum on a future regularly scheduled election day. Thanks.

### **Comments Related to Train Whistles:**

- Silence the trains.
- Railroad train whistles will solve problems with downtown, and waterfront plans. There is a lot of unnecessary noise. The noise at times is deafening.
- Take the money from developing the riverfront and put it into stopping the train horns.
- No train whistles. Going too fast through Onalaska.
- Limit night time train whistles.
- Stop train whistles at night (I live next to the train).
- Train horns blowing excessively at 3:00AM. My husband had Alzheimer's for 19.5 years, although he was born in Onalaska near the tracks, he was wakened every night. What about families with small children? We've lived in Onalaska since 1950 and never had the excessive noise we have now. They never completely remove snow from our driveway so we can get into our garage. It's too heavy to shovel ourselves so we deal with it for a very long time. If you go to 12th Street in La Crosse (across from Pepsi Cola) at the Railroad Crossing there you will see signs which say "no horn blowing within the city limits," La Crosse has limits!
- Stop the train whistles in City limits.
- Starting a railroad train whistle ordinance - ever since the Jewell Tea Building was removed and the terrain changed the train horns by Sias Landing are louder than ever!
- Stop the Train whistles!
- Train whistles bother me, wake me up they are so loud. Wish we could do something, seems to be overused.
- Please need to limit the train whistles! Too loud! Wakes up my family at night!
- Noise of the trains, especially late evenings and early mornings.
- Get rid of the train whistles! People need to be responsible for themselves and watch at train crossings.
- No more train whistles 11PM to 7AM, our family never sleeps 6-7 contiguous hours now. Very sad outside trains waking all neighborhood children over here along Sand Lake Road & Bluffs - even in our heavily, well-insulated \$220,000 warm house & finished basement! Stop whistles! Rumble?

- Limit train whistles at night through town. Not necessary. You can't attract tourism (hotels, restaurants 2nd Ave. District) with horns blaring all night.
- Need to stop train whistles from 9 p.m. - 7 a.m. with expected increase in train traffic! This could be done with very little investment.
- Perhaps train whistles all night long, how quaint.
- Most important, train whistles quiet zone.

### **Comments Related to Schools:**

- Elementary, middle and high school should have more programs for gifted and talented kids.
- Make the schools better still. This attracts the right kind of people to make a vibrant and healthy community.
- Put a crossing guard at the high school/Wilson Street. There are too many parked cars on Wilson Street around the beginning and the end of days. Kids can't see to cross the street safely.
- I would like to see/hear more discussions about how parents need to help the public schools stay strong and fully-funded (no vouchers). If the parents would take a more active role in their children's education/good citizenship then the teachers could spend their time teaching and not dealing with ill-mannered, ill-prepared students. Turn off the electronics/TVs/ computers for 30 minutes. Parents have to step up and help the teachers. The public schools have to stay strong and achieve high marks. I don't any of my tax money spent sending someone else's child to a private school ever.
- Need a public indoor pool at the school that would have some time accessible for all (especially seniors).
- Create neighborhood "centers" - multi-age and use - begin with more public use & schools.
- Passing the Onalaska School's Referendum and improving Northern Hills was overdue. This should have been done years ago.
- Rebuild Northern Hills quickly so our kids can transition there seamlessly. Also don't skimp - make all the necessary changes as they deserve the best.
- Improve educational facilities
- Improve the education for students. Very different from spending more money on staff.
- The entire city should be in the Onalaska school district. Having half of the Meier Farm subdivision in the Holmen district is silly. We get mailings about Onalaska district issues and we can't even vote on them.
- School boundaries. I live in the City of Onalaska with no children in school and pay a lot more school taxes to Holmen. If you have no children you should pay the lesser amount of school taxes if it is Onalaska or Holmen.
- Want the school boundary lines to match the city boundary lines
- Would like to be in Onalaska School District -- not Holmen -- we live in Onalaska!
- Multi-use auditorium/convention center large enough for all schools to use and better designed for city entertainment venues with high versatility.
- Schools are constructed with an over abundance of unused space, i.e.. Eagle Bluff & Pertzsch. Concentrate on destroying the drug culture in our City. Minors with drugs should go to a detox or drug awareness program. The parents should also be required to accompany their child. Accountability & education!

- I would bring down the use of square footage area to a more reasonable level! Currently the schools have been being built with the idea that the bigger more architectural a building is, the more a child will attain in their education.....nothing could be further from the truth. Simpler designed with more basic education on the 4 R's and less money for the extravagant curriculum type classes. The great society indeed.
- Improvement in the school district administration and school board. I am outraged that the referendum passed when they can not manage their money. It was sold with fear and intimidation to the public, without telling the entire story about what is going to happen with policy, programs and building. The employees are not treated very well in the wake of Act 10. There has been great turnover due to retirements and people not able to work in a disrespectful, unorganized system. Teachers do not resign mid-year here. Now they are. Moral is low and fear is high. Visit your nearby school. You will feel it in the air!
- Better management of existing education dollars. Concentrate on core studies.
- Too much \$ is spent on Educational Facilities
- Less spending on schools.
- All schools should be self-sufficient.
- Limit school spending.
- Schools - live within your budgets.
- Get rid of Common Core in our schools! It's \*\*\*\*! Government shouldn't be involved in schools anyways. But regardless, go back to teaching the trivium and quadrivium. In case you don't know what it is - Google it!
- I was surprised to see the motorized window shades in the entry to Pertzch Elementary School. Makes one wonder how many more excessive expenses have been put into our schools. Our taxes are high enough.
- No drug problems in schools and community!
- In regard to the school system beware of Common Core - it will be a ruination of our schools.
- School administrator.
- Get our school system to live in their budget and we the public need to do in ours.
- Schools should have Spanish Immersion offered in the Onalaska School District.
- Take 4 year olds out of school system (let them be children).
- More cooperation between city government and the Onalaska school district.
- This week was the second time that my daughter has told me that children are using heroin at Onalaska Middle. Can we crack down on that?

### **Comments Related to Mass Transportation:**

- Bus service to Onalaska.
- As a community I believe we should place a larger emphasis on public transportation.
- More public transportation.
- Greater access to public transportation and cabs.
- The mass transit options for the residents of the city of Onalaska are atrocious. People who rely on public transportation are essentially prisoners in their homes after 6:30 pm Monday through Friday and all day on the weekends. Outside of that, employees who travel to the City of Onalaska for work have to make sure their jobs let them out so that they can use the pathetic excuse of transportation that is available. I would expand the public transportation availability in the city so that it covers the same hours as those that are covered in La Crosse.

- I would like to see the City of La Crosse Bus System go north to south. This would help with transportation to the Omni Center, pool, Y, etc.
- Support the MTU.
- Late night public transport
- Provide easy bus service to La Crosse.
- Public transportation.
- Transportation should be available 24 hours and the vehicles should be allowed to take and get us to clinics in La Crosse.
- Transportation for someone that doesn't drive "stinks"! Developing a bus service that would pick up Seniors at various stops, with no restrictions regarding areas would be nice but it can't cost too much or you won't get riders. When it cost two people more for a bus fare (round trip) it costs . Cheap passes that we can BUY and we can go where we want to.
- Have City bus go down 12th Avenue to Main Street for pick ups.
- Expand public transportation times so a person could use it to go work in La Crosse (if work started between 7 and 8 it is not possible).
- Bus never gets to senior living places.
- Have City bus go down 12th Avenue to Main Street for pick ups.
- Public Transportation, doesn't start early enough or late enough to make it to work in Downtown La Crosse.

### **Comments Related to Community Events/Entertainment:**

- Onalaska needs to have businesses or some attraction that will make the City a destination rather than a connection to La Crosse. How about some community activity, music concerts in the parks, a tournament, art exposition, Festival Foods museum, and local museum, open air theater performances or something to draw and keep visitors?
- A Community-supported and sponsored and celebration with different highlights: City scavenger hunt, minute to win it, relays, High School Quiz Bowl, Onalaska Idol, etc.
- More cafes. More live music shows. Maintenance of bike trails (Great River State Trail).
- More City of Onalaska related activities to draw people to our Community - bring back Fish Days with better activities - runs, ball tournaments, volley ball, etc. Fire works are excellent.
- I would love to continue to see lots of family friendly activities and things to do for all ages and also have lots of choices of activities to do that don't have to cost a lot.
- There needs to be more activities for the youth. Part of the reason for drug use is simply because of boredom and having nothing to do.
- More community events.
- Promote the recreational activities.
- More outdoor activities that accommodate all.
- We should have a community theater/performance space that seats 1000+.
- More things to do for adults for entertaining.
- More things to do besides school activities in the summer. Some kind clean-up for the children to earn extra money (trash pick-up).
- Places for the kids to go after school.
- More activities for adults.
- More community events.
- More adult programs. If you don't have kids yet and you are out of college there aren't many options.

- Host community events centered around family life and enjoying our waterfront. Focus on nature education and hobbies.
- Have more programs for elderly - include transportation etc.
- More community activities such as outdoor movie night.

### Miscellaneous Comments:

- Overall this is a happening little town in a very progressive area. I am impressed!
- Onalaska is one of the best locales I've ever lived in.
- Onalaska is a great place to live. I believe it is well run - Thank you!
- Continue to improve in all areas.
- Improve entrance from La Crosse by River.
- Have Sunny the Sunfish painted to a more natural and corrective paint job.
- Keep it a small town feeling. Not too much growth with business and Tourism. I feel safe in my town because of the great Police Department. I can walk at night and go anywhere in this town safely. I like that. Keep it safe. Thank you
- Make Wednesdays a family night all year long when schools, private business and clubs (dance, hockey, etc.) would all agree to not schedule anything so that families could have a night to worship, do not much at all or whatever they choose.
- Vendors in the Omni Center to provide services like food, shopping for sports equipment etc.
- Increased direct competition between utility companies, such as Riverland as well as internet/cable providers (i.e. Charter & CenturyLink).
- Don't let the Badger-Coulee/ATC Transmission line come through Onalaska.
- Go for Google Fiber!
- Cell phone coverage.
- Improve WIFI throughout the city.
- Use the electric service of Xcel energy instead of Riverland.
- Improve internet service.
- Better cell phone reception by Irving Pertzsch, Main Street and 2nd Avenue North area.
- The attitude of a small town.
- More emphasis on cultural diversity.
- I'm a Hmong homeowner and you ain't doing \*\*\* for the Hmong population that is migrating from La Crosse to invest in your city. This would apply to our people as well as other minority groups. You all need some diversity training.
- Positive and fair annexation program.
- Enlarge the City's corporate limits by annexing the rest of Greens Coulee, all of Brice Prairie, all of the Town of Hamilton between Onalaska & West Salem & any remaining parts of Town of Medary north of the La Crosse River.
- Create privacy for neighborhoods (e.g., trees, natural barriers, quiet zones) to separate them from the many, scattered highways and business roads.
- People need to drive less. Save the environment and stuff.
- I would change the name so one is not confused with a city "on" Alaska instead of Onalaska.
- Everything.
- Everything.
- Educate the driving public to be more courteous and patient. Start a drive friendly program; stop pulling out in front of other drivers; promote public service announcements of good driving habits. This applies to the entire Coulee Region, not just Onalaska.

- We only need mail on Mon, Tue not Wed. Thursday and Friday, Not Saturday or Sunday. 4 days are enough.
- I would like to see increased law enforcement driving the streets.
- Have police enforce more rules like very dark tinted windows, need for front license plates to name a few. I see these violations daily among others and I perceive a lack of enforcement.  
Would like to see police officers walking the streets so that you can talk with them - be more connected.
- Better enforcement of vehicle standards such as noise (exhaust) and lights. There are to many unsafe cars and trucks zooming around.
- No alley parking and when there is alley parking and police are called - a ticket should be given. Unless we all should park in the alley! Police Department should be ticketing without a phone call.
- The amount of police officers patrolling the streets.
- Less police officers
- There are too many police officers in the City of Onalaska. They are unnecessary.
- Too many police officers.
- I'd like to preface this by saying I have never been given a ticket for anything in my life. We do not need as many police officers actively watching the streets as there are. Speeding may be a crime, but is it really our biggest concern? This money could be spent in far better ways than making people late for whatever they're already in a hurry for.
- Enforce Bike Laws.
- I would make Harter honor his contract times/dates for leaf pick up in the months of October and November. The last two years and possibly longer he has made a joke out of the city officials with his negligence of the fall leaf contract.
- Provide residents with a no cost yard waste drop off site.
- Different garbage pick up service.
- Recycle items picked up weekly.
- Pick up recyclables every week!
- Give citizens choice of size for garbage & recycle containers before just dispensing them & declaring "Here's how we roll".
- Have my recycling picked up weekly instead of every other week. If this would happen our 65 gallon receptacle would have been ok - but now we need a larger bin. Also, check into going back to our local Hilltopper Refuse, as I was always pleased with their services. Also, 12th Ave. S. receptacles should not be allowed at the end of driveways. I see more of them in the streets and could be a potential accident hazard!
- Get rid of the new garbage can system. There are to many rules with it and not enough space. Not only that you only get one garbage can which is not enough for a bigger family . If you want another one you have to purchase it which is not right. You guys wanted the garbage can situation you should supply as many as the residence thinks they need, ask them. Just because you can fit your garbage in one can doesn't mean everyone else can. So if someone could take care of that situation there wouldn't be as many complaints!
- Not happy with new garbage system.
- The new garbage collection system is ridiculous! Amongst other issues with the new system...If the City is so big on recycling, they need to be collected every week, not every other week! The cost of this new system does not outweigh the benefits, that is for sure! The public should have been allowed greater input into this before decisions were made with our tax dollars!

- Why doesn't the City of Onalaska have a drop off place for grass clippings and leaves? La Crosse, Holmen, West Salem, Town of Campbell provide that service for their residents. Paying Harter to pick up on Monday is inconvenient for us who have our own vehicles. Going to the landfill is not a good option because minimum charge for a few clippings is excessive.
- Not happy with new garbage system. Also disappointed our mail can no longer come from City of Onalaska (but realize this is likely out of the City's control).
- Remove the garbage cans that are now sitting out all over the City and go back to the way garbage was collected. Use Hilltopper's which collected everything and did not dictate terms to the City as Harter does now.
- The garbage system. Those containers are so small.
- Go back to the regular garbage and recycling ! The ugly, cumbersome blue and brown carts are very difficult to manage! I have no place to store them except outdoors !
- Get Hilltopper Refuse back for Garbage pick-up.
- A "free" yard waste drop off site and "pick up" compost site like our neighbors can do in La Crosse or Holmen. Our only option is to "pay" and go to the County Landfill.
- Somewhere to get rid of tree branches and things like that.
- Onalaska should have a yard waste location and eliminate the yard waste pick up at residents - saving the City money.
- Refuse service has terrible, lazy and unmotivated employees!
- Since Jason left it seems that there is a lack of vision.
- Rehire Jason Gilman.
- Improve the Senior Center and offerings. Center needs new card tables and other equipment. Very disproportional amount of money spent on Seniors compared to the youth. ..
- Plant native plants rather than non-native landscapes (to save the environment). For expert advise: Neil Diboll - Prairie Nursery; Westfield, WI ; prairienursery.com 1-800-476-9453 (consults on site are expensive, but he is very knowledgeable) Bill Carter - Prairie Moon Nursery; near Winona, MN, prairiemoon.com 1-866-417-8156 very knowledgeable people, but no onsite consults as of last information.
- I would plant more trees and enhance/protect our natural resources. Focus on tree/bend cities and states. Encourage this as an area of Tourism for the outdoor activists. The area north of the Omni Center and large church once had many native prairie type plants and now we have parking lots!
- Utilize our natural resources, improve tourism and encourage new business growth.
- I would make it the greenest city in the Coulee Region.
- Bigger/Taller buildings.
- Zoning Regulations - I want to know why I was refused a garden shed in my yard, which my husband would build and it would be beautiful and some people can have 5 or 6 cars in their yard or let everything fall apart and that's ok!
- Eliminate the noise from HWY 157. The highway noise (truck traffic etc.) is very bad where it cuts along the bluffs.
- Enforce noise ordinance (Legion Events - fireworks in residence housing area - they belong in Omni Area only.) (possible city liability).
- Reduce noise pollution.
- Turning down/off advertising lights after midnight for places that are closed at night except for what is needed for security.

- I just moved here from living in La Crosse for 8 years, and I have to say that Onalaska water is just terrible. Not only does it smell bad, it tastes bad, and it is ruining my clothing and appliances. I have never experienced water this hard, and have never had to live in a place where I didn't want to drink the water out of the tap. Yuck!
- Need Clean Water (tastes bad). For the last 10 years I have to buy bottled water for drinking. Please remove the fluoride from the water.
- Make golf carts and alternative transportation legal within city limits.
- Less government/regulations.
- A long range plan for the city and sticking to it.
- If you plan on doing a project, do it right the first time.
- Enhance police protection as "trash" from other communities (Chicago/Milwaukee) infiltrate our community selling their poison to children and adults!
- Better communication with people who have an Onalaska mailing address but do not live in the City of Onalaska.
- Can't think of a thing - just keep up the excellent work of planning Onalaska's future!
- Don't know. The town seems pretty good to me.
- I can't think of anything really
- Do not know.
- None.
- None.
- N/A.
- Nothing at this time.
- N/A.
- No comment.

## Question 4: What type of development should Onalaska encourage in the next 20 years?

### Comments Related to General Development:

- It is important that Onalaska continues to grow but I don't feel anything particular needs to grow more than another.
- Keep us a small town and take care of what we have rather than creating more.
- Buildings that use green technology/energy efficient, using renewable resources.
- Limit growth in coulees.
- Free market is best - all types are encouraged by high level of city services with a low property tax rate.
- Rebuild/refill existing retail, grouped restaurants on Main Street, high-end multi-family apartments, condominiums in duplex/triples.
- Capitalize Onalaska's strength: its natural beauty.
- Does the City of Onalaska have the area/space to expand and build these developments without creating problems for existing neighborhoods? Obviously the City will need to sustain attract these types of developments over the next 20 years. You need a category between "need more of" and "keep at existing level".

### Comments Related to Wanted Businesses:

- Want more local, not chains, stores and restaurants.
- Need more ethnic choices for restaurants.
- Non-chain restaurants.
- Quality restaurants (not chains).
- There are a lot of chain restaurants, would like to see more local restaurants.
- Need parking for existing restaurants.
- Noodles & Company.
- Fill empty storefronts, improve entertainment rather than more.
- Want a food coop.
- More farmers markets.
- Veterinary emergency clinic.
- Need a movie theater.
- Need a movie theater.
- Movie Theatre.
- Movie Theatre.
- Re-establish a theater.
- Improve the mall.
- Encourage Super Target to come in, need a bigger Target.
- Review options to establish a gambling casino to produce additional revenue.
- Need research and development opportunities.

### Comments Related to Housing:

- We need lots of different types of housing, but we need to be smart about where we put each type.
- Want small units with fewer senior residents.
- Senior care/assisted living (very important).
- Senior Housing - especially considering the baby boomer population which need to be cared for.
- Senior housing with small dogs, not just cats.
- Need more 55 or better with cheaper rent.
- One level condominiums built with the elderly and disabled in mind.
- Senior housing with various levels of care in the same facility.
- Single family homes that house multiple generations of the same family.
- I love my city. I would like to see more homes in older neighborhoods more well-maintained.
- Need more homes in the \$200-300,000, not more mini-mansions.
- More reasonable prices on condos \$200,000 is way too high for most retired couples, who don't want house payments.
- Need more \$75,000 - \$150,000 (low income).
- We do not have a dearth of housing. In fact, the soft home prices suggest we are trying to develop too much new housing.
- Maintain apartment buildings (Vilas Street, Redwood Street) some have been updated and look great.
- Have better maintenance standards for mobile home parks.
- Less manufactured homes.
- The City is allowing too many multi-family buildings. It needs to focus on bringing more single family dwellings. I don't think you realize what the City will look like in the many years to come with unowner-occupied housing. You can already see it in many areas, run down.
- Rental properties, in general, lower property values for the whole neighborhood.
- More single-family homes for rent.

### Comments Related to Recreational Improvements:

- Develop waterfront.
- Riverfront entertainment options: park, outdoor activities, venue/stage.
- More city parks and easy access with adequate parking to Waterfront Park down at Irwin Street.
- More parks.
- Need more parks .
- Parks.
- Parks and Recreational facilities (need more).
- More parks. A dog park, and parks, where dogs aren't allowed, with just open grass where kids can just run.
- More play equipment close to park shelters.
- Need more dog parks (small dogs).
- More trails near the river and bluffs.
- More running/walking/biking trails with several access points.
- Walking and biking improvements to mall area.
- Need more museums, hiking trails in natural settings.
- More and better sidewalks.
- Senior citizen centers with no benefit cuts.

**Miscellaneous Comments:**

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- No frac mining.

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- Small farms.

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- Discourage new churches being built without need.

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- The Green Coulee exit and entrance on Main Street is very dangerous people are taking risks to take a turn. With all the new development it is getting worse.

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- How about taking care of trees - diseased ones - etc.

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- Clean up what's already here.

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### Question 10: In Onalaska, what recreational activities do you / your family participate in?

#### Comments Related to Parks & Recreation:

- Park & Rec Summer Activities.
- Park & Rec Activities.
- Park & Rec Programs.
- Park & Rec.
- Aquatic Center (a lot in the summer).
- Aquatic Center swimming.
- Aquatic Center.
- Aquatic Center.
- Pool.
- Pool.

#### Comments Related to Community Events:

- Salute to the 4th.
- Community Days, Legion Event.
- Legion Activities.
- American Legion Community Days.
- Try to attend local fairs and community events.

#### Comments Related to Outdoor Activities:

- Kayaking/outdoor sports.
- Kayaking.
- Kayaking.
- River access.
- River access.
- Scenic beauty of rivers.
- Frisbee golf/canoeing/kayaking.
- Disc golf.
- Disc golf.
- Frisbee Golf and City Parks.
- Boating.
- Boat.
- Boat.
- Fishing/boating.
- Boating.
- Picnicking.
- Bird/wildlife watching, paddle sports, jogging, relaxing in parks/greenspace.
- City parks.
- Parks.
- Use of parks.
- Parks.
- Park.
- Use parks, playgrounds, tennis courts, and basketball courts.

- Use public parks.
- Use public parks.
- Frisbee golf and city parks.
- Parks.
- Use of Parks - Kids equipment / basketball etc.
- Go to the parks to walk while the kids play.
- Play at the park.
- Dog park.
- Dog park.
- Dog park.
- Dog park (daily).
- Visit dog park daily.
- Walk sidewalks.
- Walking outside in the summer.
- Walk/run events.
- Walk sidewalks.
- Walking on sidewalks to various destinations.
- Walk on the sidewalks.
- Walk on sidewalks, bike on streets.
- Walk neighborhood sidewalks.
- Walking on city sidewalks.
- Walk/run City sidewalks.
- Walking neighborhood.
- Walking neighborhoods.
- Sidewalk usage.
- I walk in the park. I was told by Tourism office when I moved here that I couldn't use the bicycle trails unless I paid for a permit.
- Biking on roads.
- Bicycle group rides.
- Bike lanes.
- Bike lanes.
- Visit dog park daily.
- Tennis.
- Tennis, Pickelball.
- Park and Rec tennis & baseball.
- Tennis.
- Pickle Ball.
- Sledding Hill.
- Hunt.
- Urban archery deer hunt.
- Golf.
- Cross Country Ski on Trails.
- Cross Country Ski.
- City Gardens by Mayo.

**Comments Related to Indoor Activities:**

- Library.
- Library.
- Library.
- Library.
- Library, Senior Center.
- Friends of Onalaska Library.
- Live in senior housing.
- Senior Center very supportive of Onalaska Schools.
- Senior Center Activities.
- Cards.
- Bowling.
- Bowling.
- Bowl, member of Golf Club at Coulee Golf Bowl - a real community asset.
- Show Choir.
- School district activities.
- School events.
- High school sports.
- Play hockey at Omni Center.
- Recreational gambling, Playing Slots at the places that have them.

**Miscellaneous Comments:**

- Shopping/food.
- Shopping.
- Visit Onalaska area businesses and spend money there.
- Bus Trips.
- Church, Clinic, Shop.
- Would use biking and walking trails if we had them originating in our neighborhood.
- Need area for recreational snow sledding for children.
- No more senior days.
- I don't visit the Omni Center, but your web form "requires an answer," even though I don't do any of these things.
- Only checked Omni Center because it needed an answer.
- I have not participated in any of these activities.
- None.
- None.
- None.
- None.
- None.
- None apply.
- None of the above.

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## Additional Survey Respondent Comments:

### Comments Related to Waterfront Development:

- The new tourism center must be built to bring in more tourists. I love this City but there is a lot of projects that should be done or completed. The HWY 35 project also needs to be completed now! We also need to the waterfront done so more people of all ages can start to enjoy it. Disabled people would love to be able to get down there too!
- I hope the waterfront developed soon it will be enjoyable to go walk - sit by water.
- Please continue with the waterfront project! Thank you!
- It will be nice when the Hwy 35/Waterfront is developed. Access to Lake Onalaska and water activities would be nice too.
- Please speed up the waterfront process.
- Waterfront Project - move ahead with access to the water.
- Do "something" with the waterfront!
- We would like to see Onalaska's waterfront developed for entertainment/recreation purposes - not business - for example, a beach/swimming area with attached park that could host events such as Farmer's Markets, Food Trucks/Cart, music and many other opportunities.
- I am looking forward to the waterfront development.
- Develop waterfront area.
- Would love to see waterfront project happen faster!
- The visitation - waterfront project needs to continue at a faster rate. People are frustrated that only a small part has been completed. Too much "fact finding" stuff & use of money which could have been better spent toward fruition of the final waterfront development.
- Developing an attractive/accessible "waterfront" is critical overall.
- Please work on finishing the waterfront area, with walking and biking paths that are well lighted and are safe.
- The one thing I would love to see is the completion of the waterfront project.
- Development of the waterfront.
- I would like to see the waterfront area developed.
- Want nice Black River Access from Main Street. I would rather see a nice park with access to downtown with the old buildings removed near the railroad than to have a cultural/tourism Center there. A park would be more useful for people to bring people to the river and less expensive for taxpayers.
- I enjoy the scenic river updates. Look forward to possible expansion south.
- I think the riverfront development is critical to the future of Onalaska. That, in combination with cleaning up the HWY 35 corridor so it looks like you are coming into a nice suburban community, would be my first focus in improving the image of the city. The riverfront development spurs everything else from new businesses, jobs, tourism, etc. There is no other single project that can impact the area faster and more positively than that. Fast tracking that is important.
- Park for City Land on Hwy 35.
- A suggestion: Have someone on the Great River project committee that had grown up here and know the river area. The BUMP (railroad) has been there since the late 1800's. It may not have been necessary to raze two blocks of buildings. My childhood home was the last one north.
- We love Onalaska. Moved here in 1969. Please finish the riverwalk and building. It would give Onalaska a great place to visit.
- So much has already been done to improve and beautify our city. I want to see the city of Onalaska move forward with improving the waterfront area.

- I welcome the development that has been taking place toward the waterfront and hope to see it continue and grow. Would also like to see efforts then made to promote walking and biking paths for better access to it.
- Don't sink all of our money into the waterfront. The land purchase price should not have been more than of the previous price or no more of an inflation than 2% per year of property increase.
- Put a stop to the waterfront development madness. Not only is it far too costly, but would create a danger to those encouraged to be near the railroad tracks.
- Also, development of the waterfront seems a different "sell" if people can't enjoy the area due to the train whistles blowing all of the time.
- The waterfront is near impossible to get to. The railroad tracks and the steep grade down to the tracks make it almost non-reachable. I attended the log rolling and had to wait for the train to go by before leaving. I have heard of people crawling under a stopped train to get down to the river because the crossing was blocked. I feel without over the tracks the waterfront is a deadly accident waiting to happen. Don't waste anymore of our tax dollars on this project.
- The waterfront development should be reconsidered. It won't be pedestrian friendly with the railroad traffic and every city along the river is looking to create a bird watching site. Onalaska will not be the tourist draw that everyone is hoping for.
- I am disappointed that after all the years of planning the riverside park, final decision went into a close door hearing, not given a chance to hear the opinions of the Onalaska residents. I think the site of the proposed park would have been good proximity to I-90. Also with La Crosse Riverside Park, it would have been nice if we would have development in our City. I know the only draw back is the railroad - also, it could be unique.
- Don't get carried away with the riverfront project. That has practically held the City hostage for years now. Spend energy on other more important matters.
- Also the Lake is getting so weedy, parts of the Lake someday will be nothing but a marsh.
- Waterfront Project - How much time and money has been wasted on this? Stop it - it is a poor project.

### **Comments Related to Downtown Development:**

- More parking is needed in the downtown area. Parking is more important right now than the waterfront project. Police need to enforce the 2 hour parking in the downtown area so others can find parking to use the businesses soon no parking - no businesses!
- It would be nice to see Timber Ridge filled with businesses again. That seems like a prime location and makes me wonder why businesses don't seem to do well there. I think 2nd Ave from Dairy Queen to Main Street could be more visually pleasing. I like the new lights and signage (and am anxious to see the new water features in use this summer), but I feel more could be done to make the land/property look nicer.
- Promote use of Timbers Buildings.
- The City should relook at Centering Onalaska, as the downtown may be maxed out on its
- I love how Main Street has turned out, all the beautiful plants, lamp posts, everything, except I would like the white building torn down by the stop lights. Anyway, something historical put on the corner - a statue or something like a neat sign that says Onalaska on it. Otherwise I am proud to say that I live in Onalaska.
- 2nd Street intersection by Main Street is a long needed improvement.

- Corner of 2nd & Main (200 Bldg) & Braund Lumber on corner of Irvin & 2nd Ave & the white building across from Braund & the foundation next to it on 2nd Street. Should all be repainted or torn down! They are the "eye sores" of Onalaska.
- On the corner of 2nd Avenue and Main Street the home (white) is in a commercial district and needs to be rezoned as commercial not residential.
- The biggest need for improvement, however, is the downtown. It looks awful - there are some nice storefronts but quite a few that are run down. Get rid of the rundown bars. Bulldoze that
- Hopefully the building supply store on road will either be knocked down or standards enforced. It is an eyesore.
- Find an answer for the building on 2nd Ave and tear down the old stuff.
- Continue to market to fill vacant business space on 2nd Avenue.
- We need to improve 2nd Ave since we now have improved traffic movement in place.
- Braund Building owned by the City - what an eyesore - take it down. This is what visitors see when they first come to our City!

### **Comments Related to Development & New Business Wants:**

- Would like to see more commercial (restaurants/shopping) on the north end of the City.
- I would love to see more restaurants and high end clothing stores for both men and woman. I usually have to drive back home to the twin cities to get these things.
- Overall, this is a great community to live in. We have excellent schools, excellent healthcare, it's safe, we have strong infrastructure. We need to keep focused on the future and thinking like a city of 25,000 because it won't be too long before we are there. Our planning needs to be based on a City of 25,000 so we aren't caught off guard from an infrastructure perspective, school perspective, street perspective, etc.
- Business growth, maintaining schools and maintaining housing are keys to ensure that what is happening in La Crosse doesn't happen here.
- We need more businesses and industry to help our city grow.
- Attract businesses that offer family supporting occupations.
- The City should remember that private investors and entrepreneurs will create the jobs and businesses for the community. Private sector decisions should decide development. The City should create a great environment for individuals, businesses and organizations to create a great place to live.
- Interested to know what types of businesses are desired in Onalaska. Also, what funding services may be available for small business development.
- I like that the City is attracting new businesses but I really do not want to see our green spaces and environment suffer because of that. I also think the City should look at the quality of the businesses they attract - how many more auto parts stores does the area need?
- Need some industry and smaller school system.
- Do not need more office buildings - already have spaces empty/not utilize. Any chance of a IHOP in the area! Think about using Timber Square building for Tourist Center and add stop light at the intersection.
- Now that the Valley Square Theater has closed, we could use a new updated theater complex.
- I miss having a movie theater close by.
- Onalaska needs more restaurants, more retail, a large movie theater.
- It would be great to have fewer fast food and franchise restaurants. Better restaurants would be great for the community development of Main Street & waterfront are important.

- Please consider healthier eating establishments in Onalaska, specifically "old" Onalaska near Kwik Trip on Main street. Local cafes, coffee houses would be excellent for us living here. Biking to and from with the new sidewalks would be ideal too. Thank you.
- As for restaurants - wish we had a Cracker Barrel - and a White Castle!
- We need a Noodles and Company!
- We need more grocery stores, Kwik Trip charges too much for items that are not their own to sell.
- Would be nice to have a place to go for groceries. and other shopping opportunities.
- Too many empty office buildings yet more are being built. Why? How about another grocery store more accessible to seniors? Suppose the ones here have the "corner" on that.
- I am pleased with the child care facilities, but it would be great if there were more around here.
- I miss not having some more stores in Center 90.
- We need Forever21.
- Stop rapid growth. Keep the trains!
- A Lego land park.
- Sand Lake Road project needs future vision to connect to other communities (biking/walking).
- Onalaska is never going to be a mecca for tourists. Restoring Historic Downtown Onalaska would mean re-establishing saw mills because that is all it ever was.
- The City needs some sparkle. Use local resources - needs to develop Art Community - not homemade/handmade (all art). Start is Olive Juice Quilts. Pay Attention to loss of incoming and outgoing air traffic. This is needed for growth. Think "outside the box" like living over the store. Note: Everything old is new again, moved to 21st century, come out get it together!

### Comments Related to Housing:

- New development in housing should also include park areas and common recreation centers and tree retention.
- In considering housing development/subdivision planning, MORE attention needs to be devoted to issues of too much density (large homes on tiny lots), road service adequacy for the population (or lack thereof), adequate water runoff drainage, proper road engineering, environmentally friendly lighting, and destruction of the environment/building on to high of slopes on hillsides and less monetary emphasis (i.e., how much can we increase the tax base with this one). I cite Greens Coulee as a prime example of how development can go horribly wrong and have demonstrated "insult upon injury" as the development of that area has progressed. City planners should be ashamed of how this has been done.
- Senior independent rental, well managed, with attached garages (and/or underground - under multi-story buildings which make a smaller footprint - energy efficient). Native plantings. General population housing with smaller, compact, space-efficient homes, yet spacious feeling. All made with glass that will not kill birds; energy efficient maybe geo-thermal, solar, etc. Also low maintenance.
- Onalaska needs more affordable (up to \$100K) seniors housing in the form of condo buildings or life-lease communities that allow small pets for those who want to own but want the privacy/security of a building and no maintenance and for those who are not yet ready for assisted living facilities. Such housing is limited to non-existent in the Lacrosse/Onalaska area, forcing many seniors to consider moving to other communities that offer better/more affordable living options.

- We need more single family homes and less rentals in our community. Encourage home ownership and pride. Make it tougher on landlords so they sell small houses that are rented to become first-time home buyers. Less extravaganza and more substance.
- Please - no more rentals - need more single family housing. The manufactured/trailer housing needs to be cleaned up - then maybe look at more.
- We do not need any more apartment buildings. There are already too many tenants not respectful.
- We need to limit rental properties and enforce building maintenance so we don't become another La Crosse.
- We have enough apartment complexes in this town - please limit!
- More rules for bad landlords and limit the amount of rentals, way too many rentals in town, need more single family homes and more 55 or better housing.
- Less duplexes, multifamily homes which make the community look less desirable and often bring in lower socio-economic families.
- I would like to see less mixing of single family homes and rentals.

### **Comments Related to Schools:**

- I am pleased to see that Onalaska Public Schools excel in the area.
- We appreciate the value and quality of Onalaska Schools!
- I really like the high quality the schools offer, and the wonderful music programs, as well as the extra-curriculars like sports.
- Schools are very well funded compared to national statistics, spend more wisely.
- Property owners can't afford much more taxes for schools and other services.
- Schools need to reign in their spending! I do not see smarter kids? I see over indulged children that lack manners.
- School officials are paid too much.
- All money needed for schools, improving buildings, programs, or anything any school needs, needs to come from parents, family members, donations, fundraisers, sales or large organizations that choose to contribute - not at all a responsibility of a every property owner.
- I think Onalaska Schools should have a balanced academic calendar. I think it would benefit students and teachers. Shorter breaks in the fall, winter, spring, and maybe a month in the summer. 4-day school days with one day for teacher workday or staff development.
- It seems strange to me that the public schools would not help the department of recreation by agreeing to make the rec schedule more effective by handing out the brochures. "Tell them to go to the website" is a cop-out.
- School referendums should be held in August rather than in the Spring when many senior citizens are residing in the Southern States.
- I am confused on the facts that I live in the city of Onalaska and am in the Holmen school district. Where do my taxes go for education? How is that determined? Which school board would I run for if I chose to do so? Which school referendums do I vote on? It's a mystery to me.
- An important goal must be to have all City of Onalaska properties be part of the Onalaska school district, i.e. some parcels in Aspen Valley, Cedar Creek, Innsbrook - mayo area (menards) property are in Holmen school district.
- We're newer to the community and I'm not entirely sure why the subdivision I live in is in the Holmen school district. I don't have any complaints about Holmen, but it does feel odd to live in Onalaska and send my kids to Holmen.

- School district lines between Onalaska and Holmen must be reconsidered. Why are homes north of Rider's Club Road in the Holmen School district?

### Comments Related to Entertainment Wants:

- Neighborhood night out is something we always attend.
- Need music events, summer parties, parades, etc. Sunfish Days was eliminated, now parade for Legion Days eliminated. Turning into "old folks" City. Some fun will bring Tourism to the City, no fun will keep people away.
- Onalaska need to bring in more events and entertainment to the area. This will not only give residents to get together but it will boost tax revenue with people staying in hotels. The Legion does a good job with a few events but I think the City needs to be more involved!
- In 2012 there was a concert on Main/Highway 35. In 2013, it moved to the park. I grew up in a small town in Eastern, WI that had street dances & it was a wonderful, safe, family event. Would like to see "street dances" come back with streets blocked off.
- Bring back the Saturday night street dances that were held where City Hall is now from 7-10 p.m. Families got together for a free night of fun! What a better way to get the young and old moving. Maybe have some local garage bands provide the music.
- Bring back Sunfish Days. Get the Movie Theater restored and running in Onalaska again.
- It has been hard to hear / be informed of local events.
- There needs to be more businesses that offer more leisure to teens and young adults. Onalaska/Lacrosse is very boring and dead. I've heard many complaints. We need more things to see and do!
- Boring City - no night clubs, nothing fun except Coulee Golf and Bowl.
- Police need to back off and allow clubs in the City.
- Entertainment for families and senior citizens.
- More family community activities, bringing town together.
- It would be great to provide some enrichment activities for children under the age of 3.
- Would like to see more senior activities.
- Would like to see extended low cost park and recreation options (gymnastics, less intense t-ball, crafts, fun activities).
- Onalaska YMCA is a huge asset.
- Need an indoor tennis facility.

### Comments Related to City Policies:

- Would like to volunteer for the city but don't know how to get started. Need more information about opportunities.
- Make information available to citizens on everything from garbage can size to waterfront development and let them help make decisions.
- Has the City ever considered a program that allows homeowners who live next to City green space (parks, paths, etc.) that require mowing/shoveling to maintain these for the City for a tax credit?
- Expand Parks & Rec.
- More communication from the City of Onalaska is needed, especially from the mayor's office.
- Need a current list of city officials. This includes phone numbers!
- Bring Tom Hammill Back - Omni was doing better - and off the tax roll. Bring Jason Gilman back. He was the driving force behind the City Development.

- No more money wasted on the hockey rinks at the Omni center, which is only used by a select few.
- Improve management of youth programs and Omni Center. Manager is a dictator with minimum management skills. Would like to pay water and sewer with auto pay. It would be more economical to send out bill over the internet rather than by mail. Love the new garbage pick up. The younger adults use their smart phones to look up attractions and motel offers - Tourism Centers are becoming a thing of the past.
- When the city crews are out tree trimming pay attention to branches that are over the sidewalk and lower than six and a half feet. Also trees planted between sidewalk and curb should be shade trees not bush's or ornamental trees. Thank you.
- I rated the Water Utility as "Good". It would be excellent if there was a way to automatically pay the water bill. Every recurring bill I have is automatically taken out of my account each billing period, except the water bill. If not auto-pay, then at least let me pay with debit card online. Thanks.
- Why do they let fences on the border line. We have a patio and our neighbors fence blocks our sun. Why can they burn wood in the City. It creates pollution and is terrible to breathe. We have to shut our windows. It's not the best for your health.
- Police Department not very friendly. Water office not very friendly.
- More professional attire for City Hall/Police Department Staff! Flip Flops and 4" heels? Unheard of, unprofessional!
- From a taxpayer perspective, I see an awful lot of City of Onalaska vehicles around the city with one sometimes two people in them, but very seldom do I see them doing anything which leads me to believe there maybe an excess of employees, in the area I live undoubtedly I will see a minimum of three vehicles a day, but very seldom do I see anything being done. Also I believe there have been some bad decisions made in Onalaska, such as the waterfront area, (no direction, the garbage can sizes, Theater Rd. and Midwest Dr. signal lights.), just to name a few. It's decisions like that that got La Crosse in trouble with high taxes. Is Onalaska going the same way? Also I believe staffing in the Fire Dept. should be looked at, I believe the staffing could be reduced with the improvement in equipment, the trucks are capable of doing so much more with the modern day hydraulics etc. thus allowing the reduction of personnel. Police Dept. is doing a good job, but all other areas should be looked at.
- The City in the past has spent tax money wisely until the past few years. Wasted \$175,000 on garbage because of poor choices. Not allowing residents to choose can size, that hurts. \$175,000 that we got nothing for. The whole Onalaska does not need a full time Tourism Center and employees.
- As a tax payer, I would like to see city employees be better stewards of tax payers money?
- How many new vehicles has the City bought this year? Necessary to drive Jeep - Ford Expeditions? How rich are your tax payers that the City can afford this? Give your tax payers a break and drive something that has better gas mileage!
- Why do we have a separate Visitors & Convention Bureau from La Crosse? We all could benefit by working together and probably reducing expenses. We are missing the boat (literally) by not doing something with the waterfront!
- If City makes a mistake on your property taxes they should give you a refund and not say we cannot do that. That would be the right thing to do.
- I would rather yard waste was included in taxes rather than paying separately for the service.

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- It seems that taxes and the size of the city seem to grow however services such as police numbers do not grow. Looking into staffing it appears that there has been no growth in that area in about 20 plus years so far as staffing. Additionally other areas seem to have had cuts or no growth in staffing as well. Priorities should be set on good pay for employees and proper staffing levels to entice business to come here due to a safe clean environment to prosper.

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  - Continue funding for the drug task force (Dan & his dog).

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  - I think it is great that the City is looking for feedback. This is a wonderful City with wonderful people in it. I wish our City Council, as a whole, would look out for the best interest of the citizens vs. their own agenda. Our public service is so low in its staffing, the City seems to be careless in that sense. Thank you for your interest.

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  - There is an unnecessary amount of police officers proportional to the size of the city and criminal activity. Get rid of them.

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  - City Administrator needed!

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  - Get rid of your covert, black ops police vehicles - seems like we live in NYC. Get rid of fluoride in the water system! It's killing your children for God's sake! It's poison! You idiots! Last thing, publish your CAFR as it is required by law!

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  - Get rid of the Mayor. Hire a City Manager. More referendums, let the people decide on what they want (Not City Council wants).

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  - Should be able to rate Mayor and Council Members on this survey. City must control their spending.

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  - Would be nice to talk to a person when calling City Hall just love leaving messages and waiting and waiting.

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  - Would like to see the city increase the staffing of the fire department and expand to a second station.

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  - Ambulance service is real good.

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  - Reduce emergency vehicle sirens etc. - especially during the late night and early morning times.

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  - Fireworks & noise in our area are not acceptable (American Legion should use the Omni Area where they belong). City has created a garbage and recycle City with the big containers sitting outside of garages. It will stink all summer long. City screwed up big time here and cost taxpayers money.

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  - Water utilities are way too expensive. Prices for water have increased dramatically over the years to the point that it is severely disappointing to see the bill every three months.

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  - Water bills could be emailed. Do newsletter on web - Keep it updated and simple.

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  - Get rid of fire burning pits.

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  - City needs to expand public safety services, staffing is very inadequate for a City our size with all of the people we have come into Onalaska on any given day. We feel the citizens current Mayor is doing a fabulous job as well.

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  - The police should enforce all laws, not just speeding. For example: Illegal left turns, lack of adequate or no turn signals, not coming to a complete stop and stop signs & stoplights (running yellow or red lights). Not merging into traffic properly, particularly off a ramp onto a limited access highway.

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  - Need more open government.

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  - The City Council must stop meeting in closed session so much and allow the citizens to be part of or know how decisions are made. Quit spending so much on the FD. You have bought some type of vehicle every year since Chief Skogen retired!

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  - Stop all of the closed meetings. Control fire department spending!
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- I love and care for this City but I worry about the inability of the City Council and development committees to make a plan and go forward with it. I know of several good people who were on the development groups and left because of foot dragging on "moving forward".
- When Jim was Mayor and Jason was City Planner - Onalaska had vision - no vision exists today.
- Way too many police officers.
- Council was not responsive to citizen input on billboard issue. I believe private-vested interests prevailed.
- City Council / Elected Officials need to make a decision and stick with it. They seem to change their minds quite often and not stick with a decision made by either the present or previous council. Elected officials shouldn't come off as egotistical and pompous.
- City Council members need to be positive, proactive, forward thinkers. They need to see the assets in our community (Omni Center for one) as assets that other communities would die for. Quality of life, availability of affordable housing and good schools is what brings people here. How they are treated by others once they get here plays a big role in how long they stay. Work collaboratively with neighboring cities to keep costs down and be proud of your city. Your job is to help us grow, not to pinch pennies. We can and will pay for good services just like we pay for good schools. Staying at status quo means we are moving backwards. No one wants that.
- Look forward to the expansion plans for Onalaska!
- The city has developed too many regulations and make it very difficult for home and business owners.
- Need to grow City Services as the City grows. More Fire/Police needed, more street workers also.
- Keep finances under control.
- Appreciate absentee ballots mailings in winter.
- I would like to see more trees/greenscaping. I used to live and work in a larger older town and the large parking lots looked so much better because they required tree oasis throughout.
- Understaffed Police and Fire services for our population. Our City continues to grow yet the services for Police, Fire, Streets, Water, etc. do not?? We, as a City, can not keep growing if we don't increase the services we provide. I believe we are on tract to start fading as a place to move to residentially and commercially if we don't change our strategy soon. "Saving money" only works for so long. Eventually you need to "spend money" to make money.
- Expand the City as far as you can now!
- As I live in an area with a park. I would like to see more emphasis on the littering and people who do not pick up after their pets. Perhaps more strategic signage? Also, would like to see the police here at 7-8 a.m. and 5-6 p.m. to get the people who speed in this area and who "sail" right through the stop signs (Holiday Heights).
- There are areas with no sidewalks in our town. Put them in! It isn't right that some citizens must maintain and shovel and others don't. Is it safe for children to walk in the street to get to school? I don't think so!
- We enjoy walking around the city, but do wish sidewalks were not so hit and miss in some areas. There will be sidewalk for some distance, and then you come to a spot where the sidewalk is only for half of the block, so you need to walk in the street.
- I would like to see connected sidewalks and just more sidewalks period. We have 3 areas on our block with no sidewalks. This would keep walkers and runners out of the street. Oak Forest Dr by Marineland is a road in need of improvement and sidewalks. I have encountered numerous walkers there who walk in the street and don't want to move over when cars approach. I would like to see the fire pit ban put back in place, it's stinky and unhealthy.

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- Sidewalk repairs or continuum of same on older streets need to be addressed. Bike lanes drive us crazy.

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  - Do not need sidewalks on Emerald Valley and Marcou Rd.

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  - Really need a sidewalk along the Southside of East Main Street so crossing this busy road to use the sidewalk is not necessary.

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  - Need sidewalk north of Quincy St. and 6th Ave. N. Kids are walking on street to and from school.

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  - Sidewalks on both and all sides of the street. The lack of sidewalks on streets is a safety issue especially during winter months. At that time your walking in the street and around cars. Again it becomes a safety issue.

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  - A sidewalk on one side till all are done then go back and put it on the other side.

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  - More sidewalks and people-crossing lights by the Mall (Hwy. 16/53) area.

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  - Way too many building permits are required for home maintenance!

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  - I think the City should ban storage sheds. I think they look tacky and should be removed from all properties over a ten year period. The Oak Park Addition looks terrible and other additions that have been around for a while (Park Ridge) are starting to add sheds after this original owners have sold their homes. Fences should be required to look the same on both sides. Some property owners have put the good looking side facing inward and the bad side facing outward.

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  - Onalaska needs a new paper. Print a schedule of City meetings (upcoming City meetings and events) in utility bills. Thanks

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  - Would like you to bring back the Weather Warning Siren. Many times I don't have the phone on me or the battery is dead or is on the charger and if the phone is on the charger and power goes out I will not get the warning call

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  - I really like the idea of an e-newsletter that people can sign up for and receive pertinent city info/messages. I forget to check the website for the city, but if an email came I would read it.

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  - Please enforce people/vehicles from parking less than 4 feet from the driveway!

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  - Erosion and sediment control on construction sites is poor.

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  - Continue to collaborate with other municipalities. Continue the challenge to "go green".

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  - The government should never be in the real estate business.

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  - When we were building our home the inspector came to our house at least twice a day. He commented that if anything were off 1/2 inch off everything has to be torn off and done over. Our contractor said he would never build another house in Onalaska. We've heard many complaints from others!

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  - Overnight parking tickets are over enforced. Received ticket on second day of alternate side parking with no warnings. This was legally correct however is poor service!

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  - Put a cap on spending for vehicles and equipment for the City Parks and Rec Departments, Water, Sewer, Police and Investigation Departments. Get rid of the drug dealers on Royal and Quincy Streets.

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  - Given the city's proximity to the interstate and the nearby drug and crime problems, please factor safety and security into your planning. Onalaska should be known as a safe city that actively deters crime.

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  - If police would issue tickets for speeders & people who do not stop for stop signs, there would be a lot of money for Onalaska expenses. Also, the streets would be a lot safer. Use recycled tires for road surfaces - very effective and long-lasting

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  - Continue to work with other communities to merge/combine city departments that can be staffed properly with out increasing expenses

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  - Have large item pick-up week 1x/year.

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- I feel that as our City continues to grow the City of Onalaska has failed to keep up with it. This is evident through the Cities inability to keep up with items such as road maintenance, snow removal, delayed Fire response, short staffed PD, etc. If we continue to push ahead with a plan of a City that invites new business and residence we also need to push to continue to staff the City with the appropriate level of employees to keep us competitive. We will reach a breaking point in which continued cutting of resources or lack of funding for department will have a catastrophic effect in the form of an aging, un-kept city.
- I personally would like the City of Onalaska to take more steps to be more "green", but otherwise think it's doing a good job.
- Please continue to increase budget for Police and Fire departments to keep up with growth of the area.
- Improve internet service; make it a City priority.
- Onalaska was a great place to raise children, until the drug culture moved in. There are areas in the community that house the drug culture. Residents have connections with non-residents from larger metro areas that have invaded our neighborhoods. Minors apprehended for drug violations are turned over to their parents and the cycle repeats itself. Adult addicts/pushers should be run out of town. Minors that are drug addicts should be expelled from schools. Accountability?
- Does the City of Onalaska have an ombudsman who can address concerns/problems and deal with them fairly and without political ramifications? Sometimes it is difficult to know to whom to speak when a question or concern arises-without being dismissed or made to feel the issue is not important enough.
- Also, maintenance of boulevard trees was inconsistent and over excessive in our yard - trees were butchered!
- Code red should be more publicized including notifying neighborhoods of suspicious activity.
- The City also constantly attempts to or puts off leaf pick up too soon! Not everyone has early dropping ash trees. The service needs to be until the week of Thanksgiving to accommodate late dropping maples.
- Make lawn waste pickup a free service.
- The City of Onalaska should consider enforcing established leash laws on school property, city parks, and public sidewalks. More signage, education, and fines should be enacted. My family routinely encounters uncontrolled dogs with owners walking on school property, parkland, or on sidewalks. These dogs are allowed to defecate on athletic fields that our children use. No one cleans up after these dogs since no one seems to care.
- Consider adding signs in our parks regarding leash law. Also consider adding bags for dog droppings and signs about same. Many dogs are walked on leashes in Rowe Park, but many are not. Few owners pick up droppings which isn't so good for children in play areas and others enjoying disc golf.
- Please improve response time to auto accidents, especially on Highway 16. I have seen it take twenty minutes for a police officer to drive what can't be more than three miles; meanwhile there's mayhem.
- Our city street sewer/water system needs replacing along with old Charter cable services in Holiday Heights
- I purchased a home in this city 20 some years ago and the building codes were not enforced for the contractor who built the home. Why?

### Comments Related to Bicycle / Pedestrian Paths:

- Need better bicycle community options between La Crosse and Onalaska.
- Bike trails off the road, but are near the road, sharing street lights and are quick easy paths connecting La Crosse and Holmen would be excellent! The paths should be paved in the city. Cities should be connected by trails beside the roads, near shopping and residential areas.
- More walking/biking paths on HWY 16 from South Kinney Coulee to Woodmans and Wal-Mart.
- I utilize and enjoy the well-maintained bike trails.
- Needs more paved running paths.
- I feel it would be beneficial to the city to pave the existing bike trails all the way. I think they would get a lot more use and it would attract more people to the area. The addition of the bike trail in front of Menards is great!
- I do wish that the mall shopping area was more pedestrian friendly. For those who ride the bus, bike, or walk, it seems quite dangerous along Hwy 16 to cross or get around by foot from store to store/restaurant.
- If there were a good bike route to my job in north La Crosse I would buy a bike and use it when weather permitted. Need a way to get across I-90.
- Continue to improve bike, walk and recreation; and opportunities for healthy living.
- Please create more "Bike Lanes" on local roads like the one created on Sand Lake Road.
- On street with white solid bike lanes I believe it is illegal to pass on the right. Unless it is enforced, I won't use those bike lanes; it is too dangerous.
- I think the bicycle trail should be better maintained and promoted.
- Trim/remove trees along bike trail so a person can see the lake, enforce dog leash law on bike trail, clean up the dog crap on trail. Police should patrol bike trail on foot, not their vehicle when it's soft. Patrol at night when gangs are present.
- We don't need more parks, athletic fields, bike lanes - half or more don't use them anyway - they are in the streets which are dangerous enough.

### Comments Related to Train Whistles:

- Please help with noise of passing trains, especially late evenings.
- Please get the trains to stop blowing their horns all the time! We can't sleep at night and we can't carry on conversations when we are outside because of the train whistles.
- We hear the train whistles most disgustingly. One cannot have a conversation outside in the summer because they are so loud and one cannot really enjoy visiting with friends and company outside! Also, if the windows are open a person is awakened during the nights. Our visiting friends have made comments (not nice) when they are here. Naturally we hear them in the winter also! The train comes through so very frequently!
- Would like to see an all out effort to reduce noise pollution. Train whistles are way out of control. Pass a Railroad ordinance like La Crosse.
- The train horns have become very bothersome.
- Please fix the loud railroad noise problem. No more waiting everyone up 2AM - 6AM.
- Please do something to stop the train whistles from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. I live 1/2-1 mile from the tracks and hear them all year, even in the winter months when the windows are closed. Train traffic will be increasing drastically in the coming year. I lived about 1 block from the tracks in La Crosse and never had this problem.
- Please do something about train whistle noise. We are considering moving out of the area because it is so loud, day and night.

- Since cutting down the trees along 2nd Avenue North, the noise from the trains in the middle of the night is ridiculous. The horns wake us up and our dogs up all the time, even in the winter when the windows are closed.
- I appreciate the question about limiting train whistles. This is done in the City of La Crosse and greatly adds to the quality of life for those living close to the tracks.
- Spend some money for quiet zones at both railroad crossings. This would be a quality of life improvement for a large number of residents and businesses.
- If I knew about the trains, I would not have moved here!

### **Comments Related to Traffic:**

- I live in Greens Coulee and access/egress to the Coulee is reaching critically bad. The potential for traffic accidents (especially involving pedestrians) is extremely high. Solving this issue should be a priority, especially with the additional building going on in the Coulee.
- Do something about poor access/egress from Greens Coulee. We do pay taxes! We do vote! At least control the speed of cars passing through the intersection. Restrict Kwik Trip access point across from Greens Coulee to ingress only. The egress portion of this driveway is in existence at the expense of all the people located in Greens Coulee.
- Intersection of Greens Coulee Rd and Main St must be addressed. This is one of the few growing residential areas in the city, with a significant portion of the residential tax base in the Coulee. Consider changing driveways, no left turns from businesses, round about, traffic light.
- Put a roundabout where Green Coulee Road has to go out either right or left.
- Something needs to be done about the entrance/exit of Greens Coulee. It's dangerous.
- Maybe do a frontage road for Greens Coulee to go past Coulee Golf Bowl and Altra Credit Union and exit by the subdivision. This makes a better view of traffic from the East and West. Have a turn lane for Kwik Trip and the Credit Union on East Main Street.
- Need lights at Main and Greens Coulee. Dangerous to come out of Greens Coulee and turn left.
- Need to plan a fix for traffic out of Green Coulee-where was your engineer when housing developments were approved with only one exit out of the Coulee onto a busy thoroughfare? How come calls to the Mayor are redirected to the engineer? Mayor should be answering questions from the public!
- Fix the Green Coulee/East Main Intersection!
- Often concerned about the traffic by Coulee Golf. How safe is it living behind Coulee Golf Bowl with only one exit?
- Request a safer intersection and Green Coulee Road and Main Street.
- The intersection of Main Street and Greens Coulee Drive by Coulee Golf Bowl needs serious attention. Everyone in our neighborhood has either been in an accident or close call at that intersection. This should be your main focus this year! The people pulling out of Kwik Trip are causing many of the issues. They don't signal and just pull out in front of everyone.
- Install traffic light at Greens Coulee and East Main Street and Kwik Trip.
- I can't for the life of me understand why Green Coulee is allowed a single entrance into the valley. Please do not allow such poor planning in the future.
- I think the road situation at the intersection of Green Coulee Road and East Main Street needs to be looked at and fixed. I don't live over there but I wouldn't consider it either unless a fix is made to that intersection. Roundabout?
- Slowing down the traffic on Main Street thoroughfares - Especially during the school year.
- Redesign the Main St & 12th St. light for turns.

- Add left-turn light at Main Street and Sand Lake Road.
- Put left turn arrows at Sand Lake Rd and Main Street. Utilize the flashing speed control lights which we own and never use in high traffic areas to reduce speed of drivers to school zones and posted speeds!
- There should be left turn signals at the lights on the corner of Sand Lake Road and Main Street.
- Traffic flow on Main Street and Sand Lake is ridiculous.
- Need to address traffic on Main Street. Need to police for speeders.
- The semi truck traffic on Riders Club Road has really gotten bad. I have lived on Riders Club road for 8 years and the traffic has steadily increased to a point where it is affecting my quality of life. There are restrictions on trucks using air brakes and train whistles, it is disturbing when the trucks turn from East ave onto Riders Club rd and run through all the low gears at 5 am on Sunday mornings. The truck route should be removed (trucks can go to OT and not go through any neighborhoods) or truck traffic should be limited from 6 am to 6 pm Monday thru Friday.
- Speed limit reduced to 25 mph total length of South Kinney Coulee Road. Traffic enforcement on South Kinney Coulee Road - speeding, running stop signs, and illegal U-turns by Kwik Trip - sign needs to be relocated on the East side so they see it - not that they will obey it. Speed bumps on South Kinney to slow down the Valley Vue Estate speeders! Post speed limit of 45 mph in front of the mall makes no sense at all? Fine drivers making illegal left turns from center lanes on South Kinney Coulee to HWY 16 (very dangerous).
- Please consider making all the north side of Hansen Place "no parking". This is the street between Red Lobster and the adjacent parking lot at the shopping center. In the winter with snow at the curves, two cars cannot pass with cars parked on both sides. When the roads are clear it is difficult to drive thru when people are getting in and out of their cars that are parked. There is only room for 4 cars to park on north side. Red Lobster has an ample lot and there is plenty of room at the shopping center lot.
- Left turn signal coming from OT onto 35 South!
- Stop and go lights at corner of Riders Club Road and East Avenue North.
- 2nd Avenue & Oak Forest Drive intersection is worse now than before it was reconstructed and turning left is a \*\*\*\*\* when roads are busy.
- Fine drivers making illegal left turns from center lanes on South Kinney Coulee to HWY 16 (very dangerous).
- Traffic flow problems at Oak Avenue and Ash Street. Traffic problems from East Main Street from Hwy 53 to Theater Road.
- Traffic has become an extremely large issue, and our streets must be improved before they worsen. Less traffic is part of the reason businesses and people move out of La Crosse.
- McDonald's across from Kwik Trip on OT needs lights. Thank you.
- This City needs fewer stop lights. More Round-abouts and "low light" street lights to fight light pollution!
- Roundabouts (dangerous).
- I applaud the installation of both the round-a-bout and the nearby new exit lane to Sand Lake Road by Menards. Everyone loves it, it should get more media coverage, a very positive result.
- Traffic flow pattern to bypass mall to get to La Crosse would be improvement. The argument that we are a burden on the City of La Crosse as we commute is still a loser as there is more work capacity and jobs than their real estate allow.
- The addition of the signs noting dead end streets is a good thing.
- Traffic control - where is it? Never hear anything from Police Department.

### Comments Related to Street Maintenance:

- Would like to see the snow plows plow street more. Have notice over the years the plows don't come out as soon as they used to and stay out as long as they should.
- Please plow the streets! If the City does not plow, do not ticket.
- Never happy with City plows. Run majority of snow to one side. Two trucks running side by side with one in the center lane. I can't drive in center lane. Drive plow trucks in excess of speed limit. We live on Grove Street.
- It is time for the City to look at employees doing road maintenance around the Main Street, 8 and 5th Street location. Snow Plowing is marginal to poor during winter. Look at other areas in Onalaska (shopping by Wal-Mart, Home Depot) and High School - Older Children can be seen, little ones cannot. Wake up Onalaska before a child is injured.
- We live in a cul-de-sac and snow removal is very bad.
- Snow removal sucks! You require residents to remove within 48 hours but the City does not do it.
- Please plow my street better and more frequently! It was miserable for my husband to shovel so far away from the curb.
- I realize that it was a bad winter, but I do feel that snow removal was not what I would like. The residential street up from me was always open and mine was not. I have lived in other communities and am tired of clearing my driveway only to have a plow dump so much that I had difficulty removing once I have cleared mine. I made a point not to blow snow in the roadway, but it was not reciprocated in my driveway.
- Only plowing snow when there is more than 2" of snow, as well as not plowing driveways throats full when they do plow.
- Snow removal is prompt - but track goes so fast he completely fills the end of driveway - after I've shoveled it out.
- Snow plowing side streets is a bit to be desired. Some roads after and during winter are full of holes that are very hard on suspension for our vehicles.
- Snow removal - Equipment is too big for some areas in Onalaska. The retail areas are kept very well but the residents are not! Grade school is poor to unacceptable - High School is great. Next winter have the alderman look.
- The snow removal here is absolutely horrible. I have lived in several Wisconsin cities, and for the money Onalaska has living here, it is one of the worst snow removal jobs I have ever seen. The streets around Onalaska are in pretty bad shape. They need a lot of work.
- I live on SS when the snow plow plows our side of the street, they sometimes leave snow any where from 5 to 7 feet away from the mailbox. Most of us are retired. To remove that 5-7 feet is difficult. SS is really two lanes in front of our houses, but really only one lane is plowed. Can something be done about that?
- The idea of putting tar on the roads and then gravel is bad. My carpet is ruined because of this and when snowplowing the blade is not down far enough.
- Street sweeping is done well but it is done too often.
- Terrible Street and alley maintenance and noted extremely need improvement under snow removal activities.
- I would like to see the crud off the sewer grate.
- Fix the pot holes, manholes & back streets.
- Older areas of the City get lesser road maintenance - especially 14th Avenue North, Redwood Street, poor road drainage in some areas due to only surface runoff.
- Holiday Heights - New street resurfacing, with curb, but no added sidewalks.

- 
- Storm sewers are a problem. Some become clogged and back up so that lower areas flood and freeze into huge ruts. Nearby homeowners do not clear debris. 15th Avenue North is the land that time (and the city) forgot.
- 

### Comments Related to Keeping the City Clean:

- 
- City should create incentives for home repairs, upgrades. Neighborhood revitalization programs.
  - How about organizing a Spring Yard Cleanup with the teenagers volunteering to help Senior Citizens clean their yards in spring like they do at French Island? This would be a way of helping seniors stay in their homes instead of having to find other housing. This teaches young people responsibilities. French Island service is free, but I'm sure some people would be willing to pay a fair fee.
  - Maintaining property values and neighborhoods is very important.
  - Please continue with the yard waste service. Without it, I could not maintain my yard. I feel the \$20 annual fee is acceptable.
  - I noticed many uncleared sidewalks along East Ave. this winter. It seems that would be a safety concern especially for kids walking to and from school.
  - Onalaska should enforce the City ordinances for keeping sidewalks shoveled. The worst eyesores in the City is the chain-link enclosures for aluminum cans. Since everyone now knows they exist, couldn't the enclosures be relocated to the rear of the lots and away from the main streets?
  - Also, all the weeds out of sidewalks and wings. Start fining people for not shoveling their sidewalks and wings. I don't like weeds in the empty lots. Get busy and follow the ordinances.
  - Clean up area from Timbers North to Bike Trail (eyesore).
  - Trees & Brush needs to be trimmed on Hwy 35 along the Lake Side, you can hardly see the Lake this could be a very scenic over look.
  - City is lax in enforcing codes.
  - The house on the Court and Elm really needs clean the place up and any other house that is on the trail. There must be some rule about that and the City Inspection Department needs to enforce it.
  - Don't we have a City Inspector for enforcement of property maintenance codes and building inspection services. These should be excellent if we use him/her.
  - Code enforcement in high visibility areas. Also, a home on 800 block of Main needs to be better maintained and restrictions enforced.
  - I'd like to see the appropriate departments keep a cleaner Onalaska in mind also.
  - Building Inspectors need to do something with the riffraff on East Avenue and Thomas Court. It is an eyesore to the neighborhood. An abandoned pool and satellite dish in the backyard, uncut grass in summers and pets left loose outside to major home maintenance needed. Garbage has not been put out in weeks which means a garage full of rodents!
  - Does our City inspect rental properties? I have one across the street that looks like the City Dump. I don't think that should be allowed! I think our City should be doing inspections and require more of landlords. Need less signage. House rentals need improvement.
  - Think it is time to do something about the yards that are sealed in the high fences. They are hiding stuff. Also, how long does it take or warnings to clean up yards like North 9th and 3rd South on other places. Also How long does a car or truck belong parked and not moved in months - about three warnings is enough then large fines plus removal. This is to the point as a laugh of the City.
-

- Property owners should be held accountable for their property. Look at 5th & Locust (northwest corner: a junk yard, old cars, trucks, boat, falling down old fence) The 300 block of 5th North: unkempt rental units storing hugh campers, hugh boats all winter long in their front yards, and cars on lawns.
- Eliminate the placing on the curb of sofas, upholstered furniture or any household furniture, such as mattresses and wood piles.
- Please find a way to plan that the older areas of Onalaska don't end up like the La Crosse housing issues.
- I go the park to read, when noisy neighbors work on his auto repair shop at the apartment building across the street.
- Apartment buildings should be checked more frequently for leak, black mold and needed repairs!
- Have landlords neaten up their rental units - some are really looking shabby. Enforce show shoveling on sidewalks.
- Either landlords need to enforce maintenance of homes to not let neighborhoods deteriorate or rentals should be limited to apartment buildings and promote some exterior requirements to maintain some level of attractiveness.
- Please inspect Rental properties for proper maintenance and removal of junk from the property including used-old tires. Particularly concerned about apartment fire safety such as gas grills stored/used on first floor patios. No proper cigarette butt disposal units located at entrances and dryer vents not regularly inspected for lint blockage. Ensure proper water drainage away from building, to prevent flooding.
- Too many buildings that need better maintain appearance from street. 825/829 Main Street Onalaska.
- Strict enforcement of property ordinances (1006-1008 10th Ave. N.)
- Enforce people who walk their dog to stop leaving dropping on the sidewalk and not picking it up!

### **Comments Related to the Library:**

- We enjoy the Onalaska Library and greatly appreciate the children's events there.
- The Onalaska Library has the best story hour I have ever been to & has wonderful programs and staff. Thank you!
- The library is one of the City's greatest assets. I hope that they get the frontage rehabbed and rebuilt.
- The City of Onalaska should consider having its own City Library instead of using its resources to fund the efficiencies of the County-wide system. We have the buildings, the Sias Fund and the support of the Friends Group. We deserve better than we have.
- Make it easier for Friends of the Library to provide financial support to the library rather than "everything has to be out of the City budget".
- It would be nice to have online books through the library or more adult open hockey.

### **Comments Related to Taxes:**

- Lower taxes, can't afford to live here. We are seniors.
- Property tax relief for fixed income retirees. I cannot afford school referendums.
- Freeze property taxes for seniors.
- I have lived in Onalaska for 60 years. Maybe not much longer though because of the tax burden place on home owners.

- Taxes are going too high for school and somewhat the City. Please don't increase taxes more than price of living. Overall the City is doing a good job with taxes.
- Lower taxes.
- Lower property taxes.
- Much lower property tax rates desired.
- Lower taxes.
- Please try to reduce property taxes by being frugal in choices. Thank you.
- Taxes are always a concern. As a comparison, Arizona has so much to offer and property taxes are a fraction of what we pay here.
- City hall, Police Department and Fire Department waste taxpayer money. Need more spending restraint and control on non-essentials.
- I see no need for the stormwater fee or tax. It's been raining and storming for thousands of years!
- Seems like more taxes, less service.
- School taxes should be based on if you have children in school. It becomes a hardship when only 1,000 people vote for something out of 15,000 citizens, yet it affects everyone.
- Equalize the property tax for taxpayers that live in the City of Onalaska and have to pay Holmen School Tax.

### **Comments Related to Trash / Recycling:**

- The citizens of Onalaska that received mailers and were forewarned of that 65 gallon trash and recycling containers and did nothing until the containers were delivered are to blame for the extra expense. You did the best you could when the complaints started rolling in but a small exchange fee would not have been unfair. Good work!
- Thank you for having big dumpsters for old trash cans. Please continue to have them into the spring, so we can have time to figure out which ones we need to get rid of. Thanks for giving us the chance to have some input into our City's direction.
- Also, I liked the garbage trucks with a worker who picked up the bins. He didn't not pick up my trash two weeks ago.
- Good job getting the automated trash pick up started with plenty of information. Onalaska has plenty opportunities for its residents to dispose of waste and keep our City clean.
- I really like the new garbage pick up system! It makes the boulevard look so much neater on garbage days.
- Make garbage collection & recycle calendar easier to read. The map with streets is a mess.
- Better look at refuse services. Feel that current services could be improved. Have noticed not all garbage gets out of the cans, and if garbage falls onto the ground it does not get picked up by the refuse company especially when it falls out of their trucks at the time of collection.
- I would like recycling pick up service to be weekly. With the wonderful changes to our recycling program, we have much more recyclables than garbage each week. Our garbage pick up could switch to every other week, and have recyclables be weekly.
- I'd like to see the city revert to the previous garbage collection and recycling programs.
- Just fix the garbage can situation.
- The garbage decision was not well thought out - should have been done like La Crosse.
- By my count I have to touch, move, and reposition my garbage cans up to 8 times per week. The garbage men touch them, move them and reposition them zero times per week. Does that seem right? Who is serving who?

- My only other complaint/suggestion is to bring back Hilltopper refuse. Harter's does not show our City well.
- Please have Recyclables picked up every week.
- New refuse/recycling system is awesome! Big improvement from old routine! Really like the new bins.
- Need weekly recycling pickup.

### **Miscellaneous Comments:**

- My family chooses to remain in Onalaska. This is a nice community with excellent schools and a low crime rate. We are close to our church and shopping.
- Nice to get a chance to comment. Now we will see if someone listens.
- Sorry I am so long winded but thanks for asking my opinion. I love Onalaska! It's neat place to live and raise a family.
- Thank you to the staff and city officials that help make Onalaska a great place to call home.
- Thanks for seeking input.
- Thank you!
- Thank you for this survey.
- Thank you for this possibility! I appreciate it!
- Thank you for the opportunity.
- Thank you for caring about community thoughts!
- Great city to live in!
- Overall I think this is a very well run city and am glad I have my business here instead of downtown La Crosse.
- Thank you!
- Thanks for offering the survey.  
We have such a beautiful City. I am glad to live here.
- Way too many banners and flags on street lights. Maybe hang them on the corner street lights. Too much clutter hides the neat street lights we have downtown and also take away from the beautiful scenery we have. How many times do you have to read Onalaska Onalaska Onalaska, to know you are in Onalaska. However, I must say that the flower baskets are beautiful! Please continue hanging them each year. Love the black metal circle cutouts on the street lights - classy stuff!
- Overall, nice community, employees at City Hall very helpful and courteous.
- Love Onalaska!
- I love this City, it has changed so much for the better in the years that I have lived here.
- Nice place to live.
- Great City to live in.
- We love living here and raising our family here!
- A very nice city to reside in.
- Great place to live.
- Love living in Onalaska.
- Very good idea to do survey.
- We love it here! We think this is a great place to live--except for the winter weather!
- Greatest place to live.
- We are happy to live in Onalaska.

- 
- Onalaska has made great strides in the last 15 years. It is becoming a very beautiful city and a great place to live and work. Keep up the good work.

---

  - I really think the city is a beautiful and pleasant place to live. The city does a nice job of keeping things tidy.

---

  - I think Onalaska is a great community!

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  - Appreciate being asked for input. Good community to live in.

---

  - While this survey sets us up to be critical, I would not live in any other community. Onalaska is home, home, home. I take ownership in my home.

---

  - The survey is a great idea. Hopefully, a large percentage of the community takes the time to fill it out and help our city form into something even better.

---

  - Onalaska is a great community to live in.

---

  - Onalaska is the 4th city that my husband and I have lived in our 29 years of marriage. Aurora, CO; Madison, WI; and Lodi, WI are the other three. Although we enjoyed our time in all places, Onalaska is by far our favorite, and we are thrilled that our life journey led us here. It's by far the best value for community services. It is the right mix of outdoor nature with services still being close by, and the pride in making the community a nice place to live shows. It is the perfect fit for us!

---

  - Nice survey.

---

  - What is my vision for Onalaska's future? Make it a pleasant, useful place to live and go about. Don't have a vision for 20 years from now (I am 75) Good Luck in your future plans!

---

  - Love to live here.

---

  - This is a nice City I enjoy living here.

---

  - We love living in Onalaska!

---

  - I enjoy living in the City of Onalaska.

---

  - Just recently moved back into Onalaska. Had lived here prior for many years. My kids went thru the Onalaska school system. I am very pleased with the school system, it is where I have three grandchildren attending.

---

  - This is the best place I've ever lived-God's country. I lived here for a short time in the 80's.

---

  - Overall a good job is being done.

---

  - City is pleasant safe and well run. I can't imagine a better place to live and to have raised our children.

---

  - Our children and grandchildren love coming to Onalaska. We are good friends with our neighbors. Our two sons and grandson went to Onalaska schools, made many life long friends - all kinds of extended family. Do everything you can to maintain Onalaska's friendly, caring atmosphere. Thank you for what you've provided for our family.

---

  - I feel Onalaska needs to continue to grow but I also feel we have to keep our taxes reasonable. You keep raising taxes and keep reducing services. I like living in Onalaska - I feel safe and my neighborhood is clean and quiet. I feel the City government does a good job but there's always room for improvement. Thank you for asking my opinion.

---

  - Keeping Onalaska focused on being a safe, family friendly community! It doesn't need to grow or change too much as it is nearly perfect now.

---

  - I am 86 years old. Some of the questions do not apply to me. I am still active and walk 1-1/2 miles when weather is good.

---

  - Maintain beautiful hanging flower baskets on Main Street. Good job!

---

  - The Christmas street decorations on light poles are beautiful - many positive comments from visitors.

---

- Have not found it practical or convenient to pay different providers for natural gas (xcel energy) and Riverland Energy for our electrical service. Would prefer 1 provider for both services. That would be Xcel Energy.
- I'm a Hmong homeowner/taxpayer and have lived in the City of Onalaska for six years now and plan on selling my home and reinvesting my tax dollars back to the City of La Crosse as they are more equipped to deal with minority issues and/or our concerns. My time here in your municipality has been a waste of time as your city has not changed a damn bit in 20 years. The city's lack of services to meet minority needs and inability to fix parks and waterfront properties to help tourism is damn shame. It's still the same old racist/bias city that I saw 20 years ago. Nothing has changed. Just want to be frank and honest with you city officials.
- Do your best for the taxpaying public and not politics.
- Check your business owner's solvency or previous business experience.
- I taught here many years ago - lived in La Crosse. When retired we moved to the Senior Center.
- Since I live in the Town of Onalaska, I am not able to provide as much input.
- Would have completed on-line, but didn't read that part until I finished this survey. Would probably have seen that message if it was right above question #1 - Sorry.
- Instead of just taking surveys, do something about the issues!
- Need more water pressure. Thanks for asking input.
- June 2013 someone (no one knows who) mowed the banks on each side of N. Kinney up to the end of the businesses. This person mowed down 3 trees and a sign on a 4"x4" post which states "no outlet" for the semis who come for repair work at Freightliner. Now that this sign is down, we have had several semis try to drive up our personal driveway so they can turn around on this dead end road to get back to Hwy 16. This has caved in our driveway due to the excessive weight of the semis - but no one has replaced/repared the sign - it's lying down on the side of the road - I prop it up so it can kind of be seen. Please fix this - no one claims responsibility - La Crosse nor Onalaska. This is across from Freightliner, parallel to I-90.
- Will there be community involvement or input for the Mayo Sand Lake Tract of Land??
- There is a group that runs down 10th Ave. every morning side by side about 4-5 women and they refuse to move when a car comes up to them and the car has to stop because of traffic coming from other side. I don't believe this is right. They should be running single file when traffic approaches them.
- The City caters to the rich! If they want it, everything is done to make them happy. I am sick of items brought to the public for a vote on non-election years. The City and School Board know people wouldn't remember or show up which makes it easier to pass. Last time about 3,000 people out of over 12,000 people voted. It's time to help the ones with less. Work for everyone!
- The fresh hanging baskets and the light posts Christmas decorations on Main Street are lovely and well maintained!
- Enlist help of volunteers (especially those over 60 years of age either retired or soon to be retired) for special projects. Form short term work teams to accomplish specific projects and then disband after project is completed.
- No billboards.
- Limit beggars at intersections.
- Availability of natural gas.
- We would like you to convince the state to have No Jake Break Signs - Exits 2 - 5 on I-90. Install sound barrier walls where homes are close to interstate highways.

- 
- Both my partner and I filled this out as best we could. She is a homebody - works, bowls, and is happy working in /on the house. I drive semi between here and Chicago and back every day. Basically I go to work on Sunday at 4-5pm and get off Friday between 6-8pm. So I do not have a lot of community interaction unless it occurs on the interstate.

---

  - It would be great to have Transit Bus Service in Onalaska along Main Street.

---

  - Better bus pick up locations and more often to allow students to live at home in Onalaska, and utilize bus system.

---

  - Van Riper park play equipment was in need of repair in September. Repair if not completed. Pierce Park needs water drainage corrections and more tree shade for play equipment.

---

  - Would like to see a trail system expanded in the bluff areas similar to Hixon Forest.

---

  - Promote Cross Country Skiing in parks.

---

  - Walking paths in an expanded dog park would be great!

---

  - Park and Rec is a great program for youth sports, but wish there were more coaches versus relying on adult/parent volunteers. There have got to be more college students and others that would coach teams for a reasonable wage.

---

  - The dog park here is too small. Bags don't need to be provided we can bring out extra plastic bags. In Sheboygan Falls they have much larger dog parks that don't require a license. Also, in Green Bay. I think you should look to that area for ideas. There are lots of dogs here!

---

  - Maybe single user porta-potties. I know we have to be extra safe. It would be nice if people using Rowe Park to walk their dogs would follow the leash law and not let their dogs run loose. Many do pick up after their dogs but many don't. Maybe reminder signage and doggy bags at strategic locations would help encourage leash and pick up behavior by dog owners. Can we find a way to have open bathrooms for park users? Tennis, disc golf, walkers, playground children could use them!

---

  - Even one light pole in Van Riper Dog Park.

---

  - It would be nice if the City Parks had open restrooms available. Otherwise, it's very inconvenient to use them with small children.

---

  - Tried to do online on 4/3 but couldn't.

---

  - Question 11 required me to check one of the boxes before proceeding. But, given that I work in La Crosse and have no children, none of the questions applied. In the end, I said I'd attended a city event but I have not. Please note this for future surveys, that they aren't building in accidental flaws -perhaps an 'other' or 'none' button would work.

---

  - Question 11 doesn't have a "none of the above" response. I don't participate in any of the listed options, I selected "work in Onalaska" as my response because my wife works in Onalaska.

---

  - Question 11 was not possible to answer correctly but it required an answer. Since I used to have children in Onalaska schools, I chose that response.

---

  - The question "reinvesting in existing house stock" does not give enough information, City-owned housing? What does this question mean and what is the significance to current residents?

---

  - My son and I both filled out this survey.

---

  - We do not have a computer.

---

  - I have lived in the area since 1979. I would be willing to discuss survey in person.

---

  - No more tourism please. The majority of the jobs created are minimum wage and thus are supported by taxpayers thru food stamps and other welfare programs while only a few get rich.

---

  - I believe the City is very well run. I do have concern with the issues faced by the City of La Crosse. Many Onalaskans rely on the City of La Crosse for employment (i.e., Trane, Gunderson, Mayo). Onalaska needs to do whatever it can for La Crosse.
-

- One additional concern is the growing number of crows - look to Rochester, MN and you'll quickly understand the consequences of waiting to deal with the "crow" problem.
- My question on boulevard Ash tree treatment was ignored by city staff.
- None.
- None
- Can't think of anything at this time.

## Appendix D: Community Survey (as delivered)

<b>1. How important are the following issues for Onalaska in the next 20 years?</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not very Important</b>	<b>Not at all Important</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Maintaining a good school system	5	4	3	2	1	0
Promoting public health & an active community	5	4	3	2	1	0
Promoting tourism opportunities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Accessibility/availability of local bicycle routes	5	4	3	2	1	0
Improving local sidewalk condition & network	5	4	3	2	1	0
Developing the waterfront	5	4	3	2	1	0
Protecting bluffs & sensitive natural features	5	4	3	2	1	0
Redeveloping the 2nd Ave District (downtown)	5	4	3	2	1	0
Reinvesting in existing housing stock	5	4	3	2	1	0
Promoting a mix of housing options	5	4	3	2	1	0
Enforcing building codes	5	4	3	2	1	0
Enforcing property maintenance standards	5	4	3	2	1	0
Retention & expansion of local employers	5	4	3	2	1	0
Attracting large regional employers	5	4	3	2	1	0
Expanding regional shopping centers	5	4	3	2	1	0
Improving & rehabilitating streets	5	4	3	2	1	0
Planting & maintaining boulevard trees	5	4	3	2	1	0
Expanding municipal boundaries	5	4	3	2	1	0
Limiting train whistles (railroad quiet zone)	5	4	3	2	1	0

<b>2. Rate the following services in Onalaska:</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Major Improvements Needed</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Youth activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Shopping	5	4	3	2	1	0
Childcare facilities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Community events	5	4	3	2	1	0
Internet service	5	4	3	2	1	0
Educational facilities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Medical facilities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Senior citizen services	5	4	3	2	1	0
Public transportation	5	4	3	2	1	0

**3. If you could change one thing in the City of Onalaska, what would it be?**

4. What type of development should Onalaska encourage in the next 20 years?	Need More Of	Keep at Existing Level	Need Fewer Of	Don't Know
Offices / Business Parks	3	2	1	0
Retail Establishments	3	2	1	0
Neighborhood Services / Businesses	3	2	1	0
Restaurants	3	2	1	0
Entertainment / Attractions	3	2	1	0
Hotels / Motels	3	2	1	0
Industry / Manufacturing	3	2	1	0
Single Family Homes	3	2	1	0
Duplexes / Triplexes	3	2	1	0
Multi-Family Apartments (4+ units)	3	2	1	0
Manufactured Homes / Parks	3	2	1	0
Condominiums	3	2	1	0
Rental Housing Options	3	2	1	0
Senior Housing Options	3	2	1	0
Other:				

5. How important are these factors for new development and redevelopment?	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not very Important	Not at all Important	Don't Know
Traffic flow / circulation	5	4	3	2	1	0
Architecture / building design	5	4	3	2	1	0
Parking availability	5	4	3	2	1	0
Walking / biking access	5	4	3	2	1	0
Site Landscaping	5	4	3	2	1	0
Signage	5	4	3	2	1	0

6. How would you rate the performance of the City of Onalaska government?	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Needs Improvement	Don't Know
Value of services provided by City government	5	4	3	2	1	0
Welcoming citizen involvement	5	4	3	2	1	0
Police services	5	4	3	2	1	0
Fire services	5	4	3	2	1	0
Operation of Municipal Court System	5	4	3	2	1	0
Operation of City water utility	5	4	3	2	1	0
Operation of City storm sewer utility	5	4	3	2	1	0
Operation of City sanitary sewer utility	5	4	3	2	1	0
Maintenance of parks, green space, trails	5	4	3	2	1	0
Street & alley maintenance	5	4	3	2	1	0
Street sweeping activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Snow removal activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Operation of Omni Center	5	4	3	2	1	0
Operation of recreational programs	5	4	3	2	1	0
Promotion of events & tourism opportunities	5	4	3	2	1	0
Managing/planning for growth	5	4	3	2	1	0
Enforcement of property maintenance codes	5	4	3	2	1	0
Building inspection services	5	4	3	2	1	0

**7. Overall how satisfied are you with the availability of information about City Services?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

**8. Which methods would you prefer to receive information from the City? (Check all that apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> City Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/> Email
<input type="checkbox"/> City e-newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Twitter
<input type="checkbox"/> Direct mailings	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/> Utility bill mailings	<input type="checkbox"/> Website

**9. In what municipality do you reside?**

<input type="checkbox"/> City of Onalaska
<input type="checkbox"/> City of La Crosse
<input type="checkbox"/> Town of Onalaska
<input type="checkbox"/> Town of Medary
<input type="checkbox"/> Town of Hamilton
<input type="checkbox"/> Village of Holmen
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**10. In Onalaska, what recreational activities do you / your family participate in? Check all that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Use bicycle trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Hike / use walking trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Golf
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit the Omni Center
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish
<input type="checkbox"/> Organized fitness classes
<input type="checkbox"/> Organized sporting teams
<input type="checkbox"/> Member of a gym / YMCA
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**11. Please check all that apply:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Work in Onalaska
<input type="checkbox"/> Own a business in Onalaska
<input type="checkbox"/> Have children in Onalaska schools
<input type="checkbox"/> Student in Onalaska
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended a City event in 2013
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer for the City
<input type="checkbox"/> Visited Onalaska Library in the last year

**Information About You:** We ask for this information so that we can better understand responses. You will remain anonymous and your responses will never be reported individually.

**How long have you lived in Onalaska?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 21-40 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 41+ years

**What age range are you in?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64
<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 65-74
<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 75+
<input type="checkbox"/> 35-54	

**Your gender?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Female

**Level of Education: Which best applies to you?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than High School	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree
<input type="checkbox"/> High School Graduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Some College, no degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate / Professional degree

**Employment Situation: Which best applies to you?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired
<input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> Student

**Housing: Which type best applies to you?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Detached single family home	<input type="checkbox"/> Condominium or Townhouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Duplex	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home
<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment complex	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior housing

**Your home. Do you?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Own
<input type="checkbox"/> Rent

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide us with your email address to receive additional information from the City. Your survey responses will remain anonymous and your email address will not be distributed for external purposes.

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY!**

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

## City of Onalaska — Community Survey 2014

The City of Onalaska is beginning the process to update its 20 year Comprehensive Plan. Onalaska updated the Comprehensive Plan in 2005, when a survey of residents and businesses was also completed. The City of Onalaska invites you to complete the enclosed Community Survey and share your vision for Onalaska’s future. **This survey will only take about 10 minutes!**

**We encourage you to complete the survey located online at [www.cityofonalaska.com](http://www.cityofonalaska.com).**

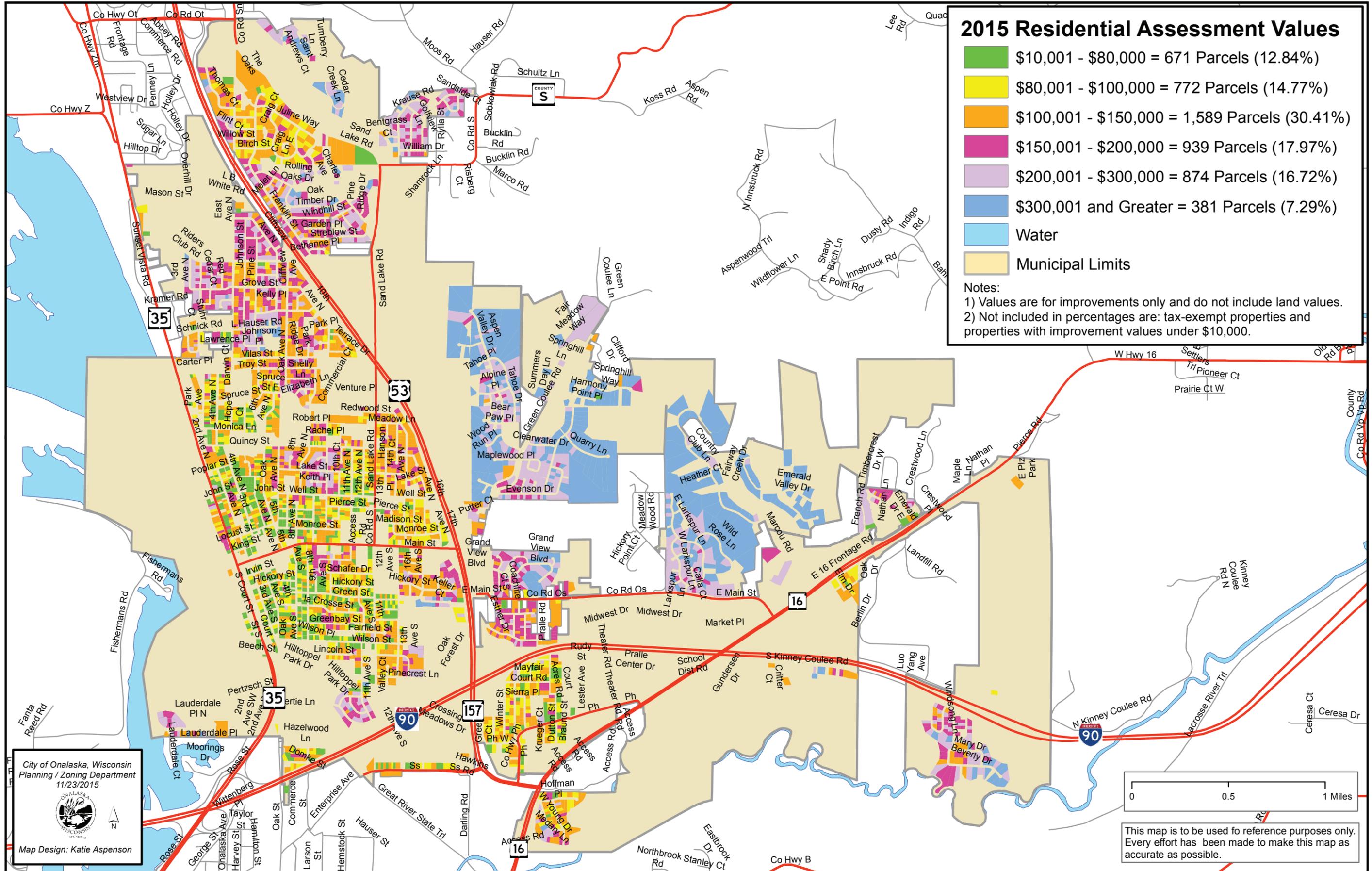
If you do not complete the survey online, please drop off this paper copy at any of these locations: City Hall, City Payment Drop Box at City Hall, Onalaska Public Library, the Tourism Office at 1101 Main Street or mail the completed survey to: City of Onalaska, 2014 Community Survey, 415 Main Street, Onalaska, WI 54650. Thank you. **Please return by April 25, 2014.**

**Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Photo Appendix C-1. Bicyclist on the trail.

# APPENDIX C: MAPS



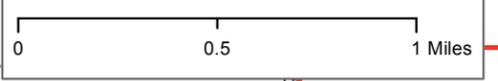
### 2015 Residential Assessment Values

<span style="color: green;">■</span>	\$10,001 - \$80,000 = 671 Parcels (12.84%)
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	\$80,001 - \$100,000 = 772 Parcels (14.77%)
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	\$100,001 - \$150,000 = 1,589 Parcels (30.41%)
<span style="color: pink;">■</span>	\$150,001 - \$200,000 = 939 Parcels (17.97%)
<span style="color: purple;">■</span>	\$200,001 - \$300,000 = 874 Parcels (16.72%)
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	\$300,001 and Greater = 381 Parcels (7.29%)
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span>	Water
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Municipal Limits

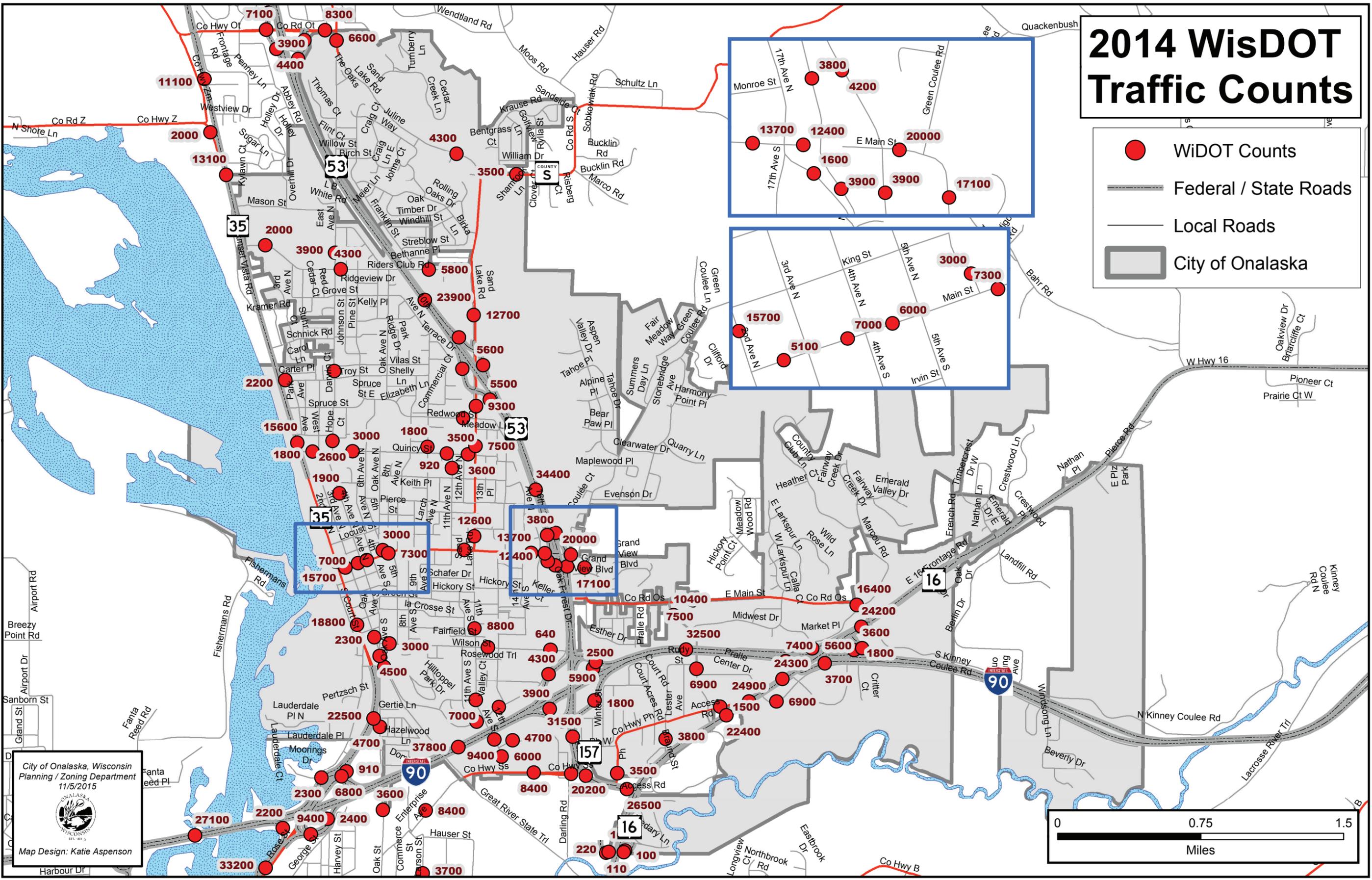
Notes:  
 1) Values are for improvements only and do not include land values.  
 2) Not included in percentages are: tax-exempt properties and properties with improvement values under \$10,000.

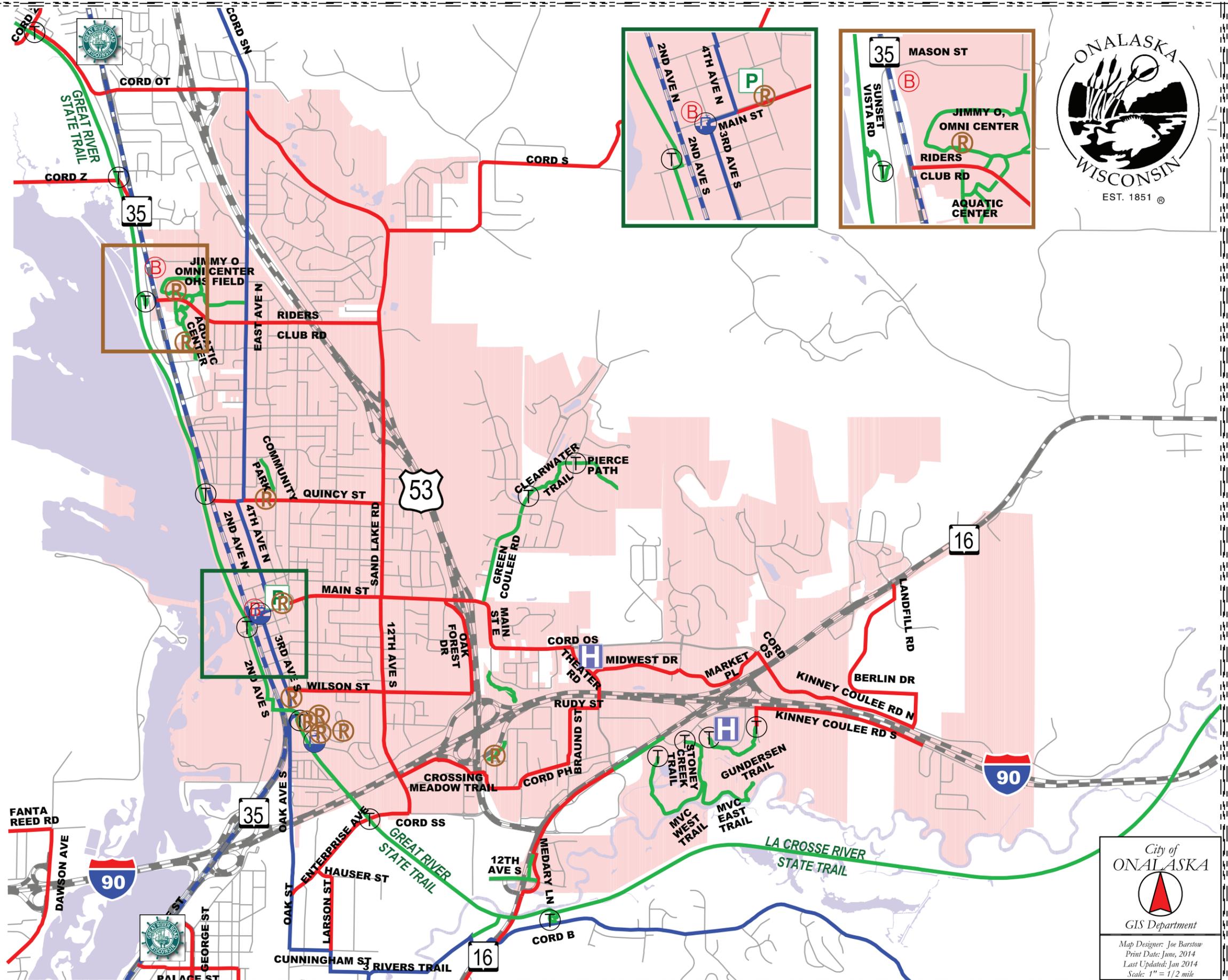
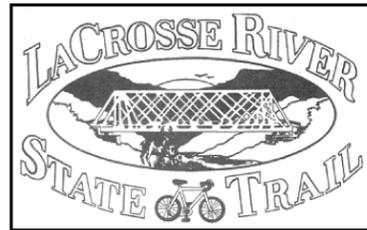
City of Onalaska, Wisconsin  
 Planning / Zoning Department  
 11/23/2015

Map Design: Katie Aspenson



This map is to be used for reference purposes only. Every effort has been made to make this map as accurate as possible.





### Legend

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

- BIKE SHOPS
- HOSPITAL OR CLINICS
- PUBLIC BIKE PARKING
- PUBLIC FOUNTAIN ONLY
- RESTROOM & PUBLIC FOUNTAIN
- TRAIL HEAD

**BIKE ROUTES**

- REGIONAL ROUTES
- LOCAL ROUTES
- GREAT RIVER ROAD
- BIKE TRAILS

CITY OF ONALASKA

City of  
**ONALASKA**

GIS Department

Map Designer: Joe Barstow  
Print Date: June, 2014  
Last Updated: Jan 2014  
Scale: 1" = 1/2 mile



### Sanitary Utilities

#### Manholes, Lift Stations, Siphon, Meter

- ◻ City Lift Stations/Meter Pit/Siphon (11)
- ◈ Private Lift Stations, Sump (5)
- ◉ City Manholes (1758)
- ◉ Private Manholes (86)

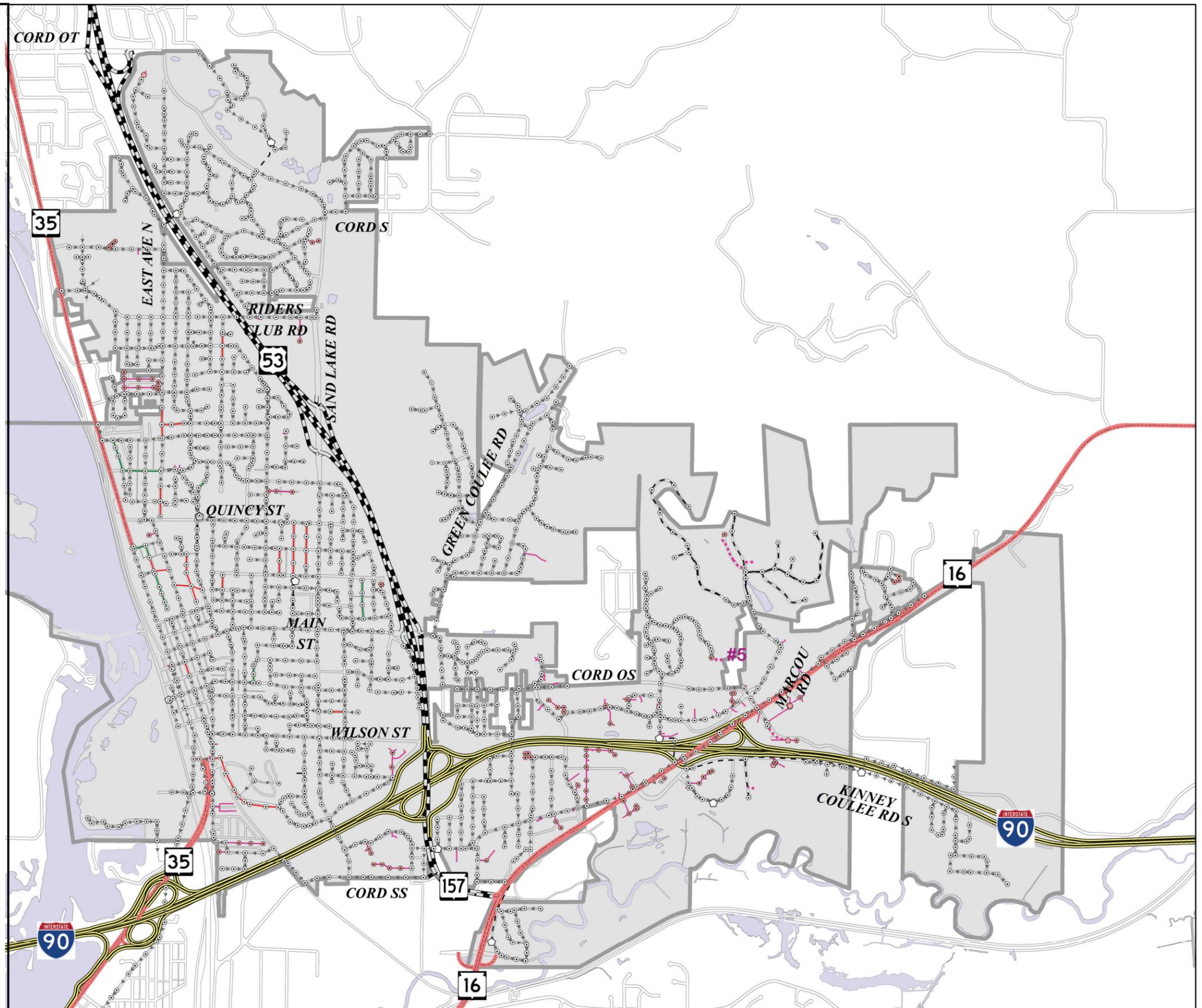
#### Mains

- Normal Mains - 80.0 miles
- - - - Forcemain - 6.6 miles
- Yearly Checks - .9 miles
- Private - 5.5 miles
- ⋯ Private Forcemain - .6 miles
- Sliplined Mains - 2.4 miles
- City of Onalaska



Not to Scale

GIS Dept  
 Map Designer: Joe Barstow  
 Date: 10/28/2014



**Storm Utilities**

**Inlets/Outfalls**

- △ Inlet - City (71)
- ▲ Inlet - Private (49)
- △ Outfall - City (178)
- ▲ Outfall - Private (106)

**Catch Basins**

- City (1980)
- Private (616)
- 🏠 Storm Liftstation

**Manholes**

- City (753)
- Private (149)

**Mains**

- Mains - 56.5 miles
- - - - - Forcemains - .5 miles
- Private Mains - 16.8 miles

- City Dry Ponds Private Ponds

- City Wet Ponds

City of Onalaska

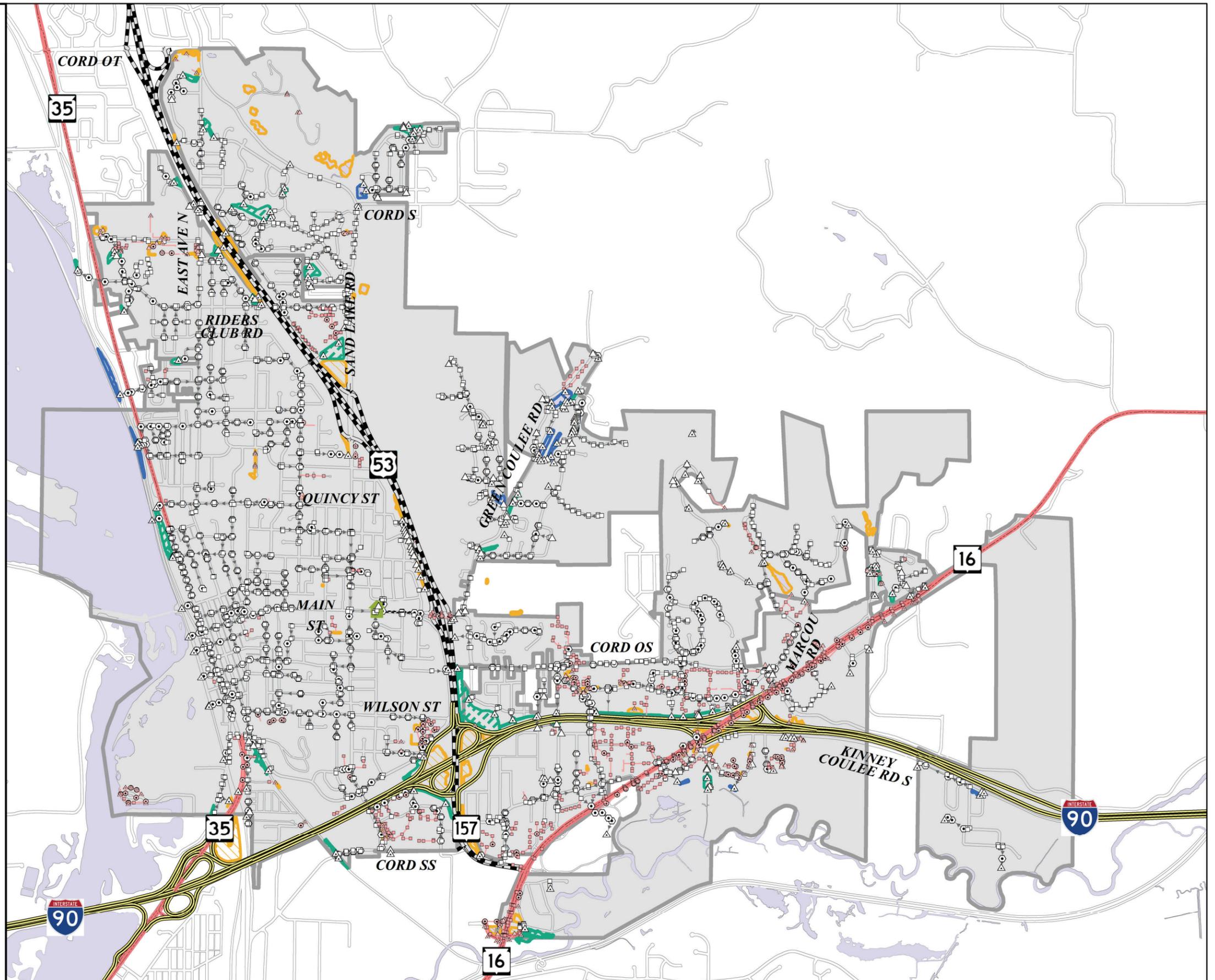


Not to Scale

GIS Dept

Map Designer: Joe Barstow

Date: 10/28/2014



**WATER UTILITIES**

- Reservoirs
- Booster Stations

**Hydrants (Pressure)**

- Normal (1010)
- High (81)

**Water Valves**

- Turn - 1322
- Get On Only - 215

- Wells

**Water Mains**

- Normal Pressure - 96.6 miles
- High Pressure - 8.7 miles
- Private - 9.0 miles
- City of Onalaska

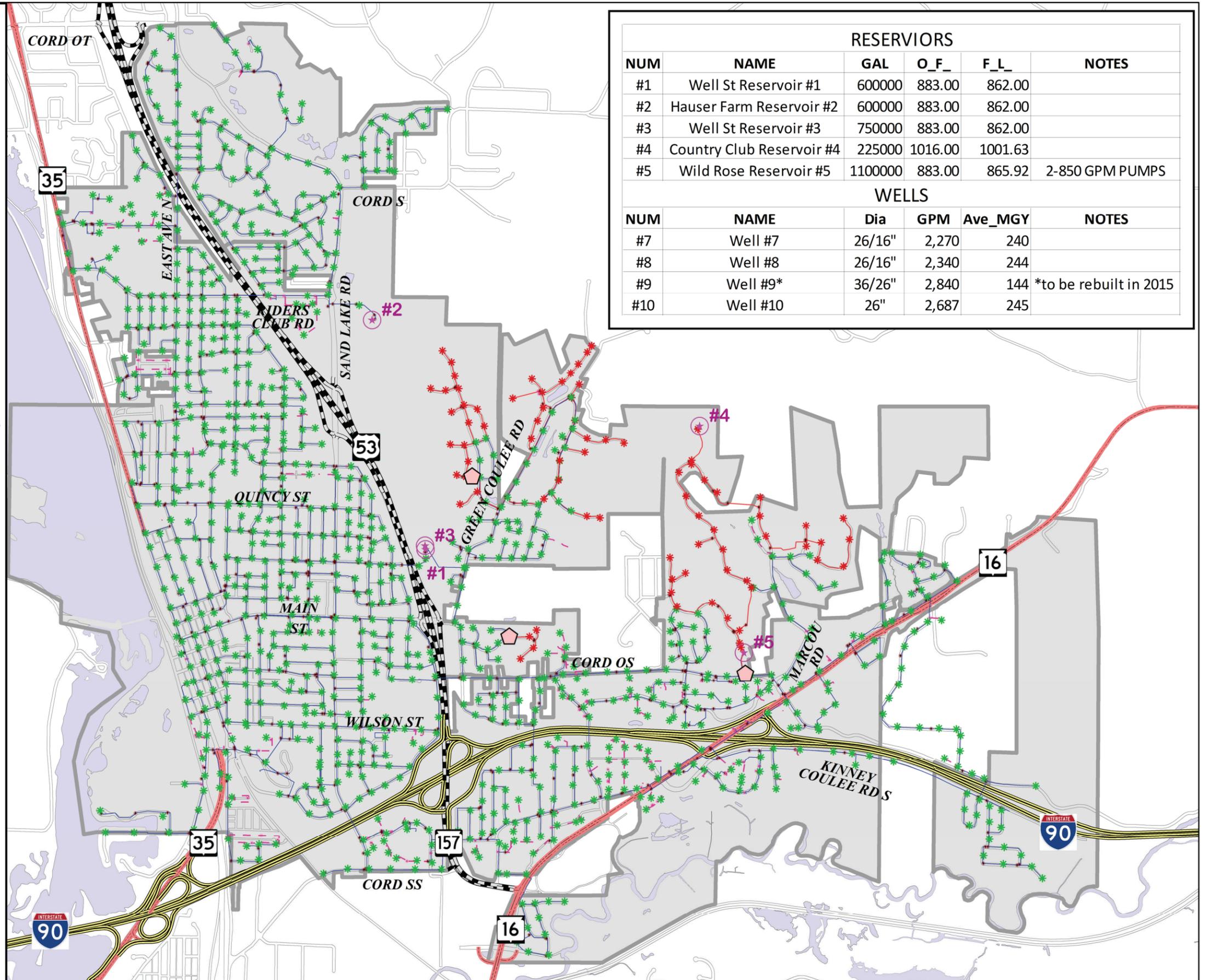


Not to Scale

GIS Dept

Map Designer: Joe Barstow

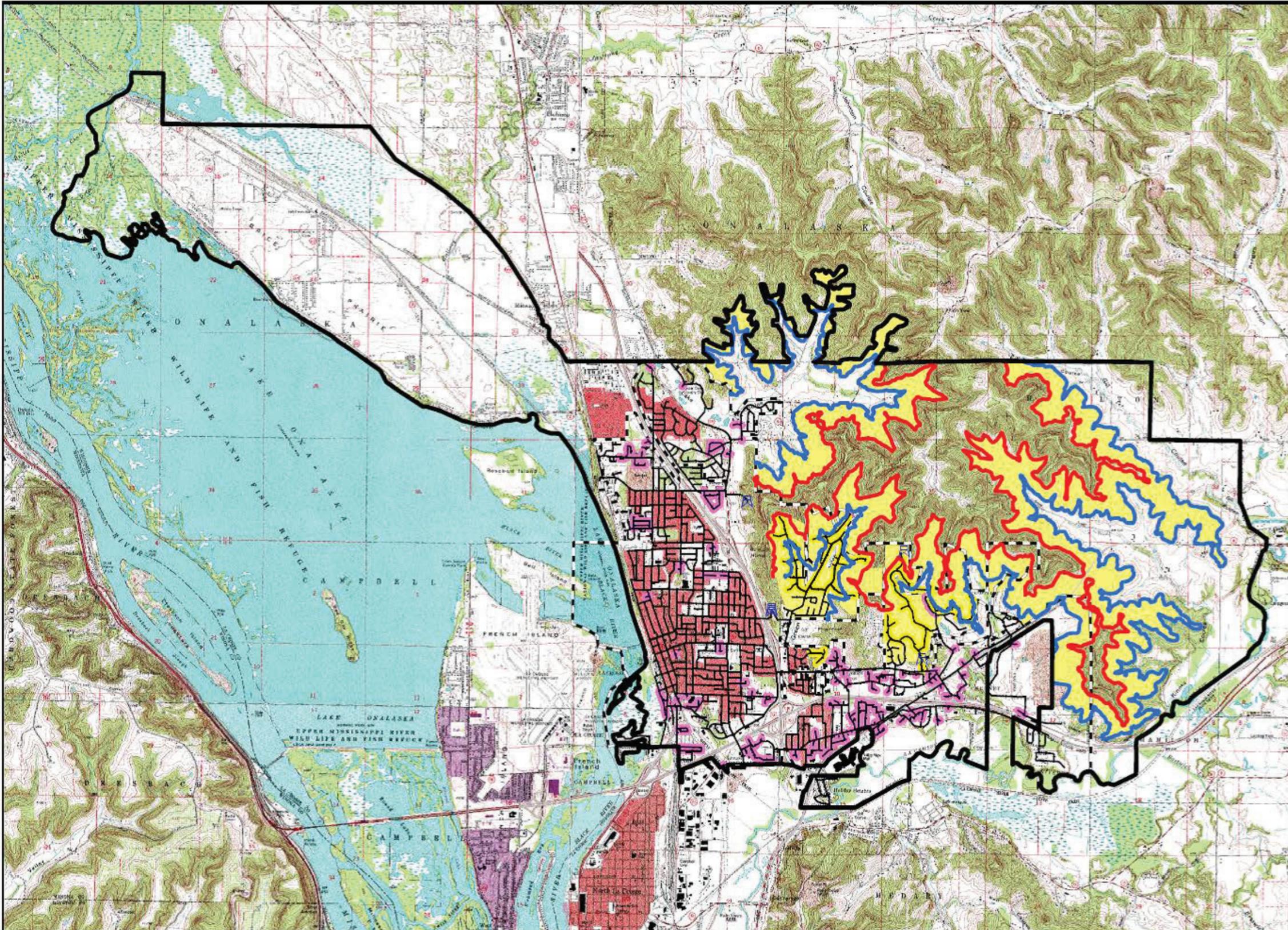
Date: 10/28/2014



RESERVOIRS					
NUM	NAME	GAL	O_F_	F_L_	NOTES
#1	Well St Reservoir #1	600000	883.00	862.00	
#2	Hauser Farm Reservoir #2	600000	883.00	862.00	
#3	Well St Reservoir #3	750000	883.00	862.00	
#4	Country Club Reservoir #4	225000	1016.00	1001.63	
#5	Wild Rose Reservoir #5	1100000	883.00	865.92	2-850 GPM PUMPS

WELLS					
NUM	NAME	Dia	GPM	Ave_MGY	NOTES
#7	Well #7	26/16"	2,270	240	
#8	Well #8	26/16"	2,340	244	
#9	Well #9*	36/26"	2,840	144	*to be rebuilt in 2015
#10	Well #10	26"	2,687	245	



### Legend

-  Future Service Area
  -  Water Main Pipe
  -  City Limits
  -  Parcels and Roads
  -  Future High Level Zone
- Future Service Limits**
-  Recommended boundary that can be served by the main pressure zone
  -  Recommended boundary that can be served by the future high pressure zone



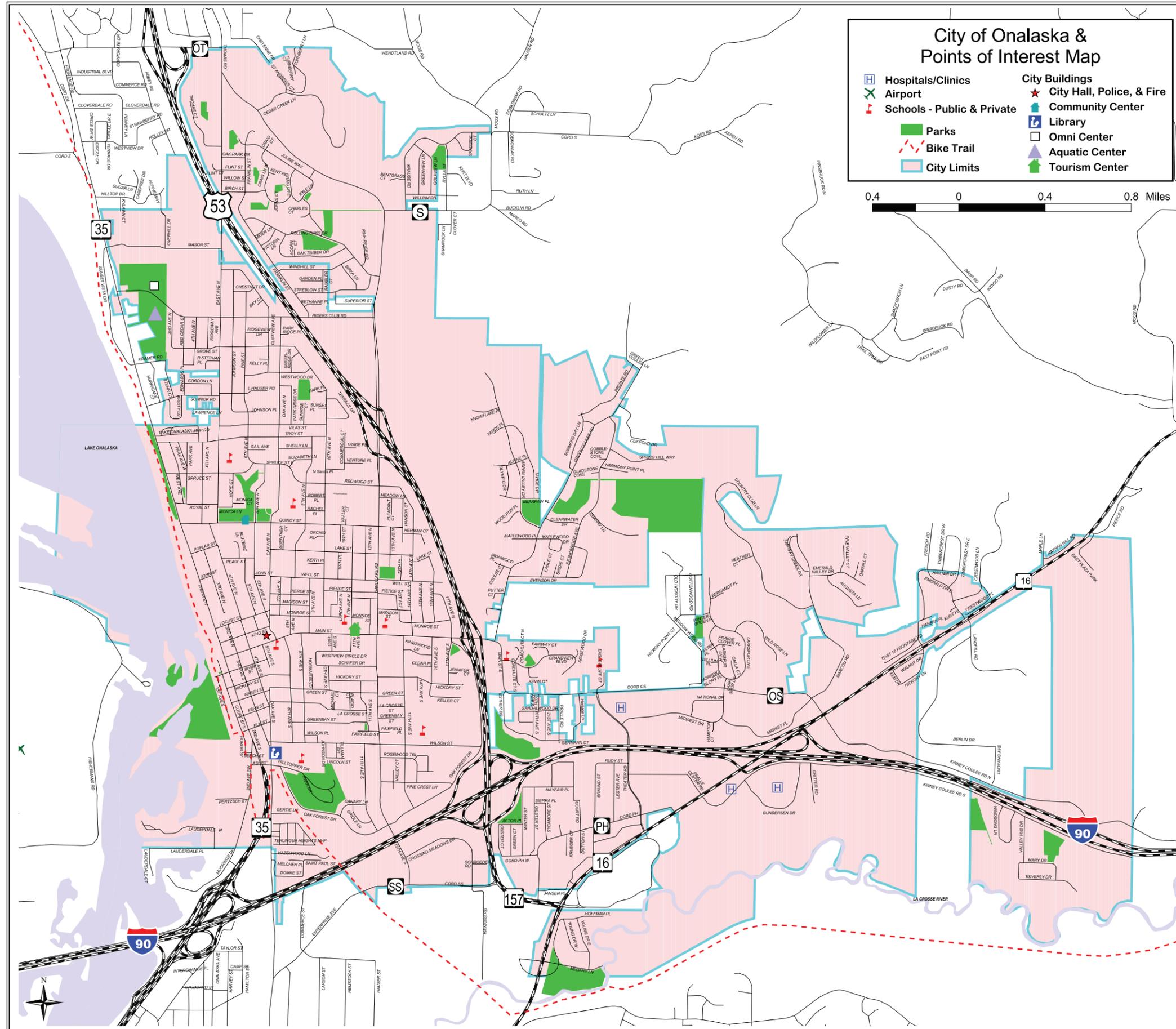
 <p>312 S. 3rd Street La Crosse, WI 54601-4007 PHONE: (608) 782-3161 FAX: (888) 808-5188 WATTS: 800-325-2055 www.sehinc.com</p>	<p>Project Number ONALA 122004</p>
	<p>10/04/13</p>

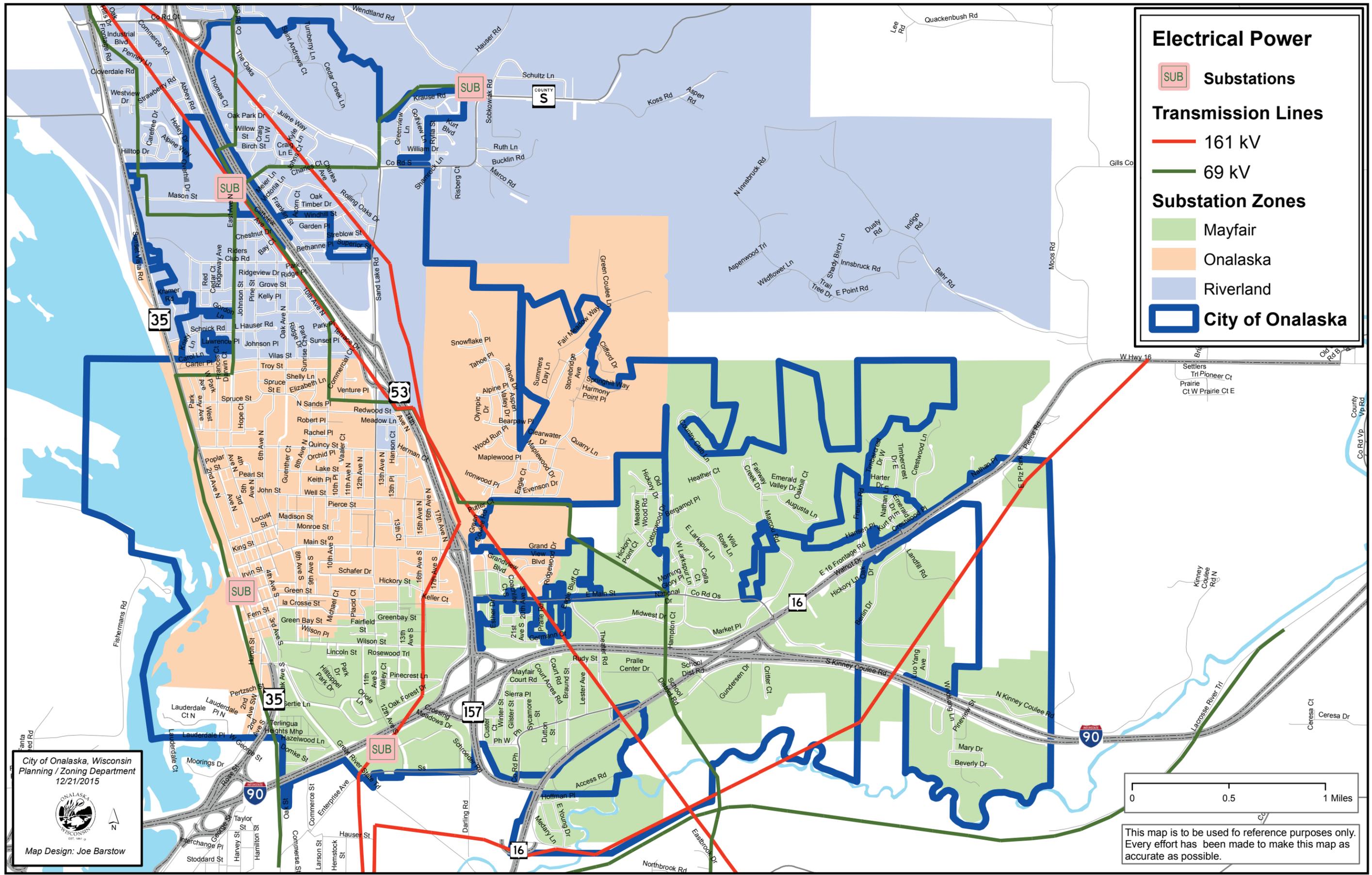
## WATER SYSTEM EVALUATION

Onalaska, Wisconsin

Water System  
Master Plan

Figure  
7-5

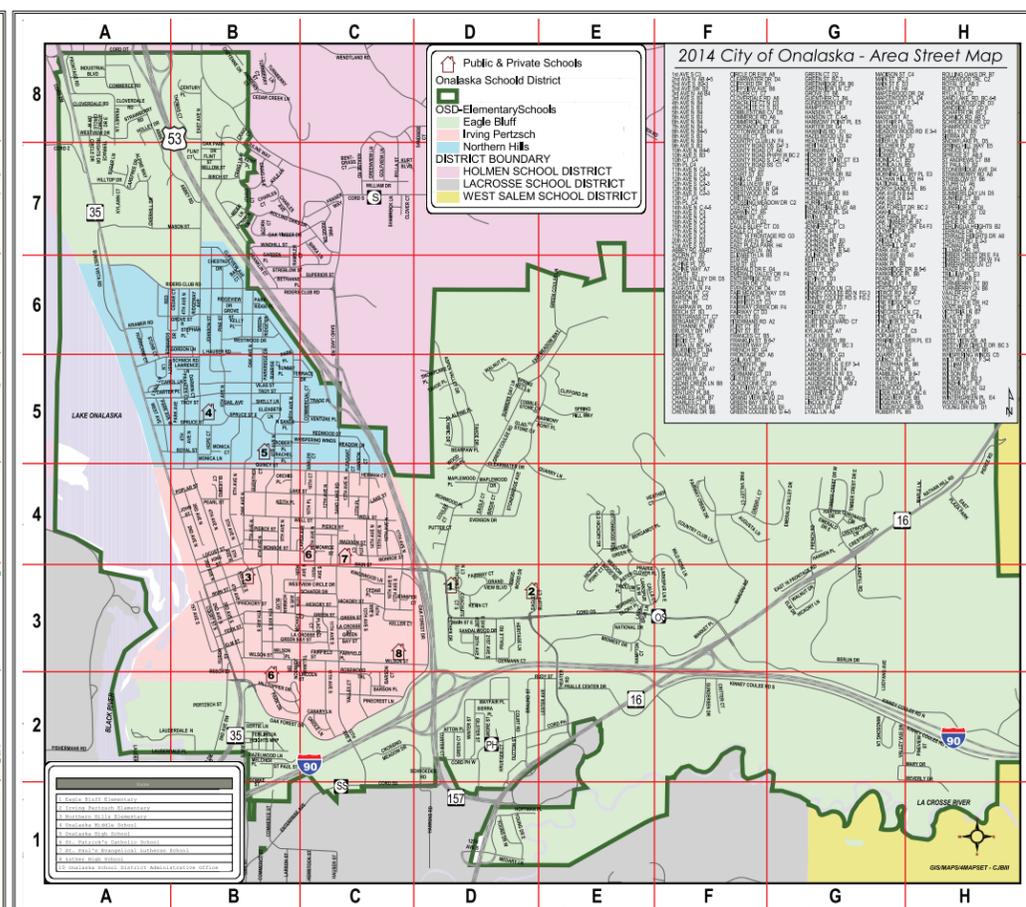
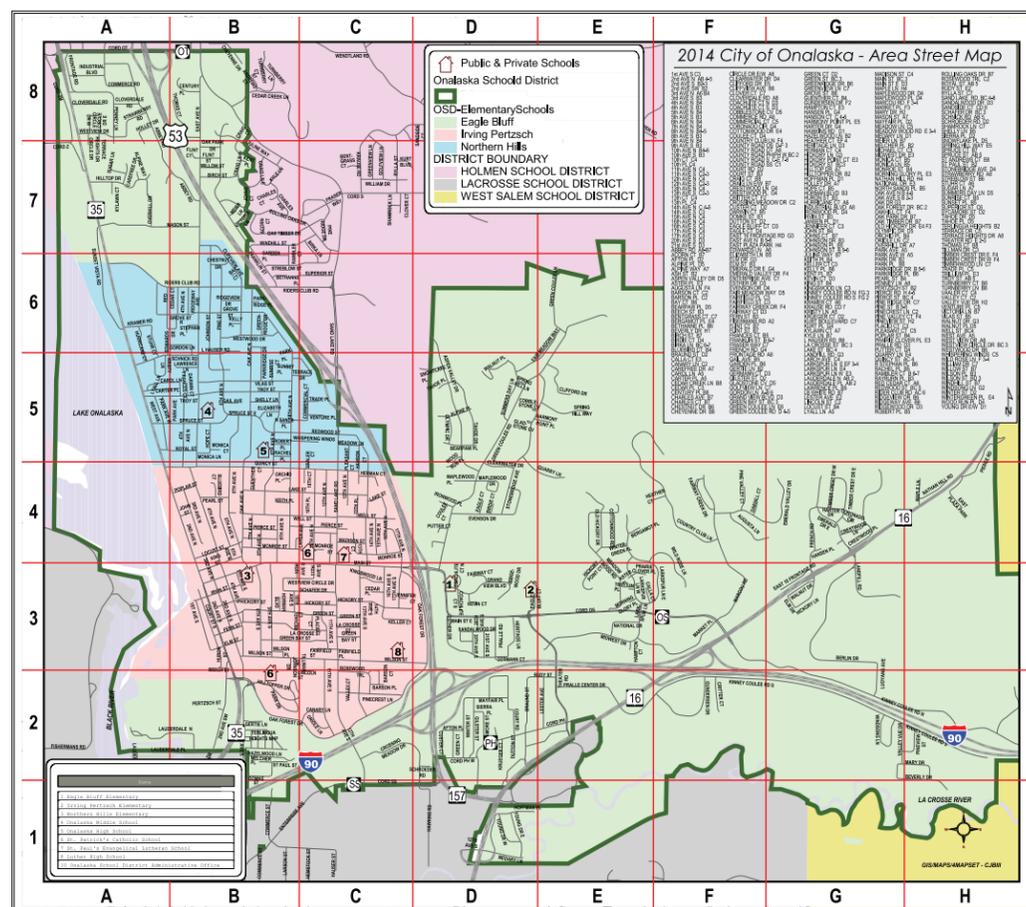
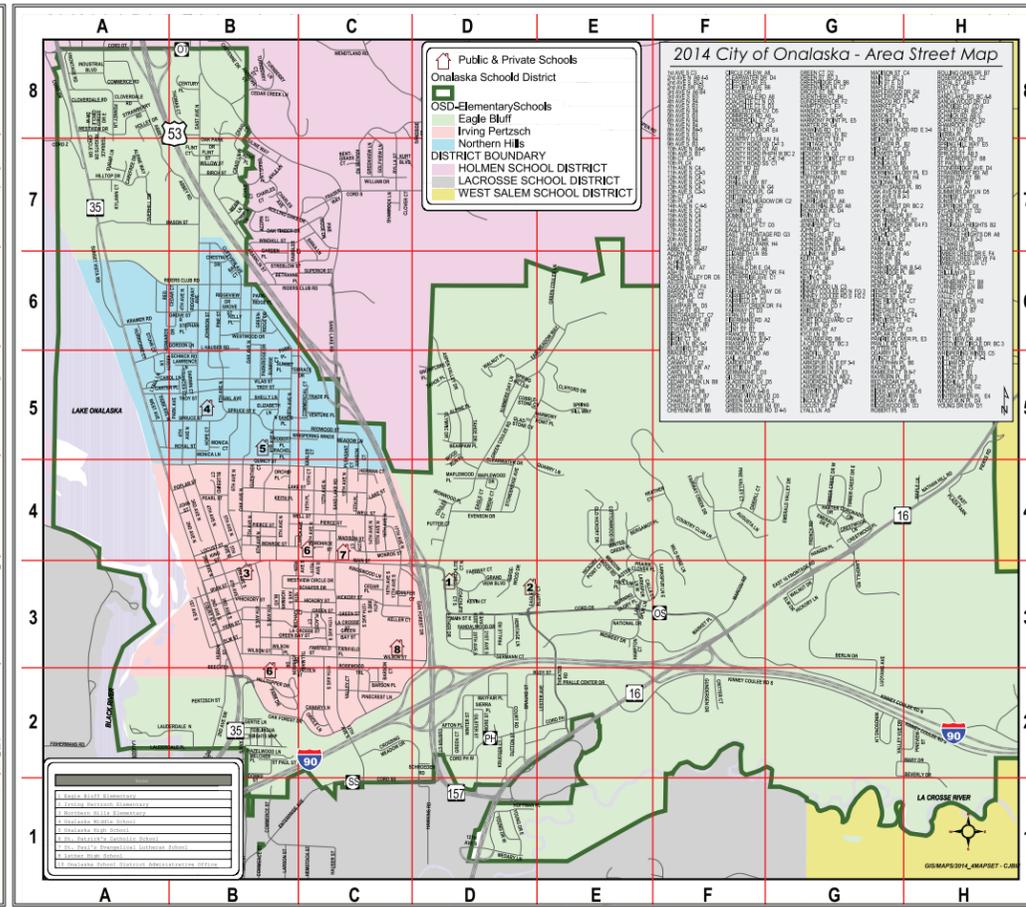
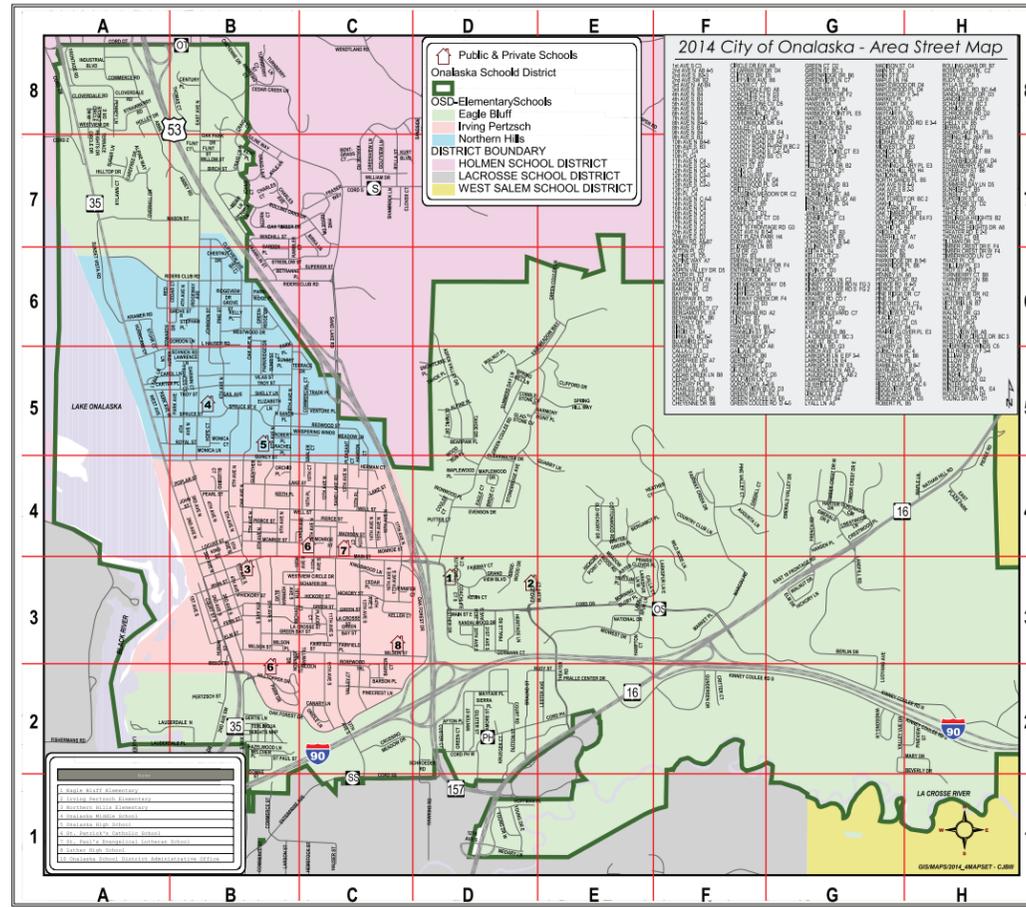




City of Onalaska, Wisconsin  
 Planning / Zoning Department  
 12/21/2015



Map Design: Joe Barstow



Topo Map

- LIDAR - 50ft Contours
- LIDAR - 810 Elevation\*
- LIDAR - 930 Elevation\*\*

\* Elevation Extent for Normal Pressure Water Service

\*\* Elevation Extent for High Pressure Water Service

30% Slopes or Greater

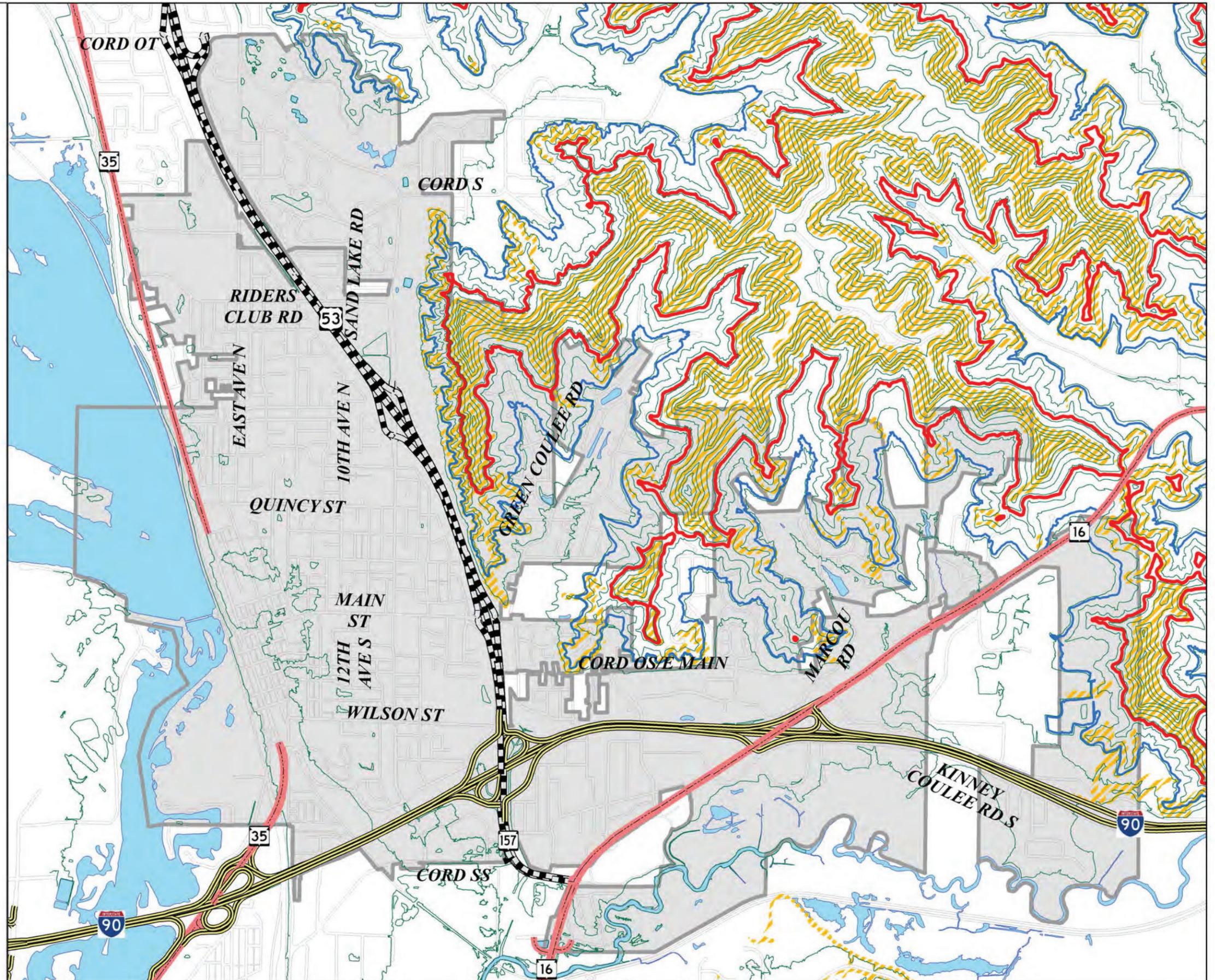
City of Onalaska Limits



Not To Scale

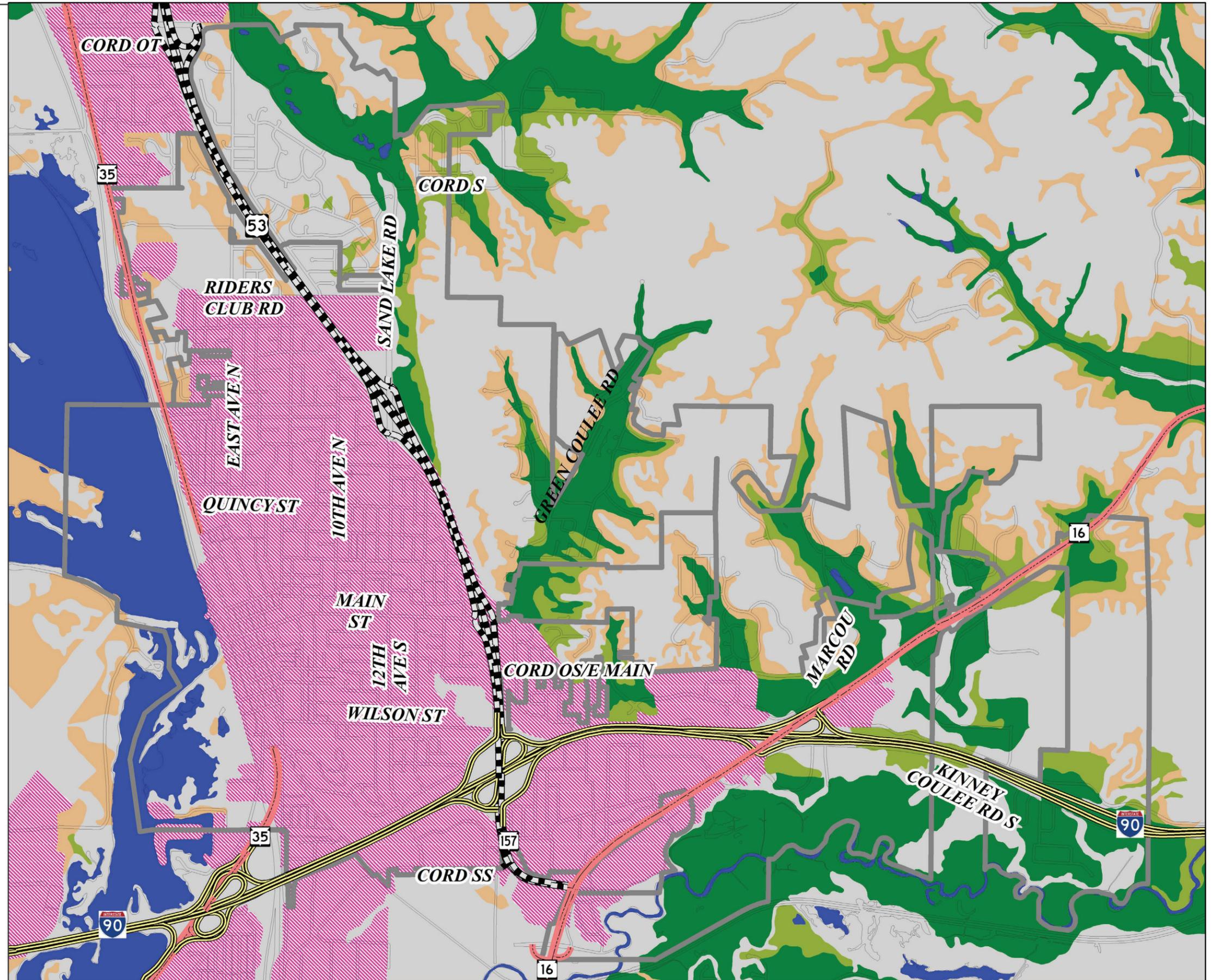
GIS Dept  
Map Designer: Joe Barstow  
Date: 01/02/2015

This map is to be used for reference purposes only. Every effort has been made to make this map as accurate as possible.



### NRCS Soil Classifications

- CLASS I & II
- CLASS III
- CLASS IV
- CLASS V-VIII
- MISC./WATER
- URBAN
- WATER
- City of Onalaska



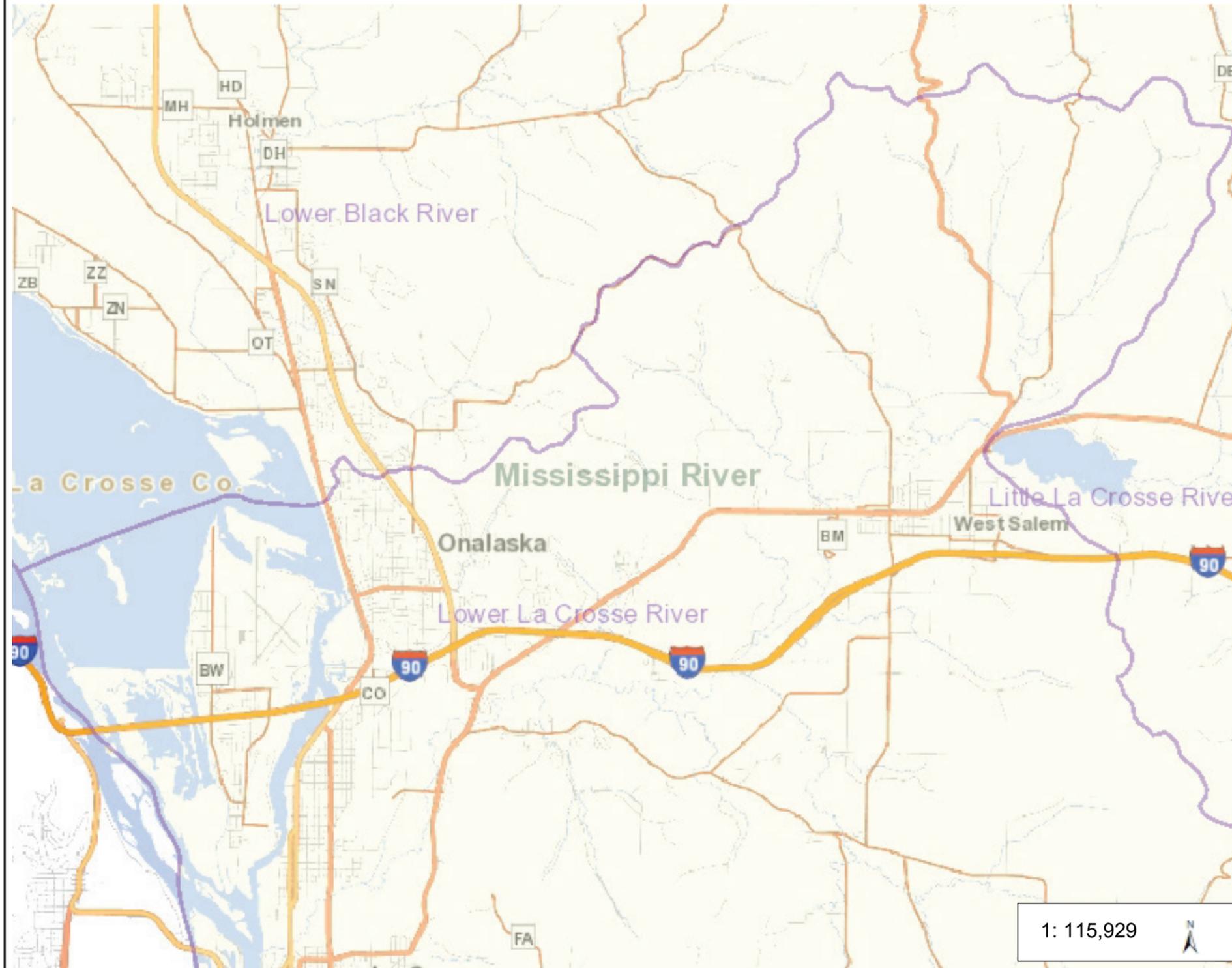
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GIS Dept  
 Map Designer: Joe Barstow  
 Date: 01/02/2015

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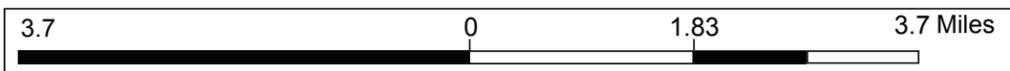
# Watershed Map



**Legend**

- Watersheds
- Great Lakes & Mississippi Bas
  - Great Lakes Basin
  - Lake Superior Basin
  - Mississippi River Basin
- Rivers and Streams
- Open Water

1: 115,929



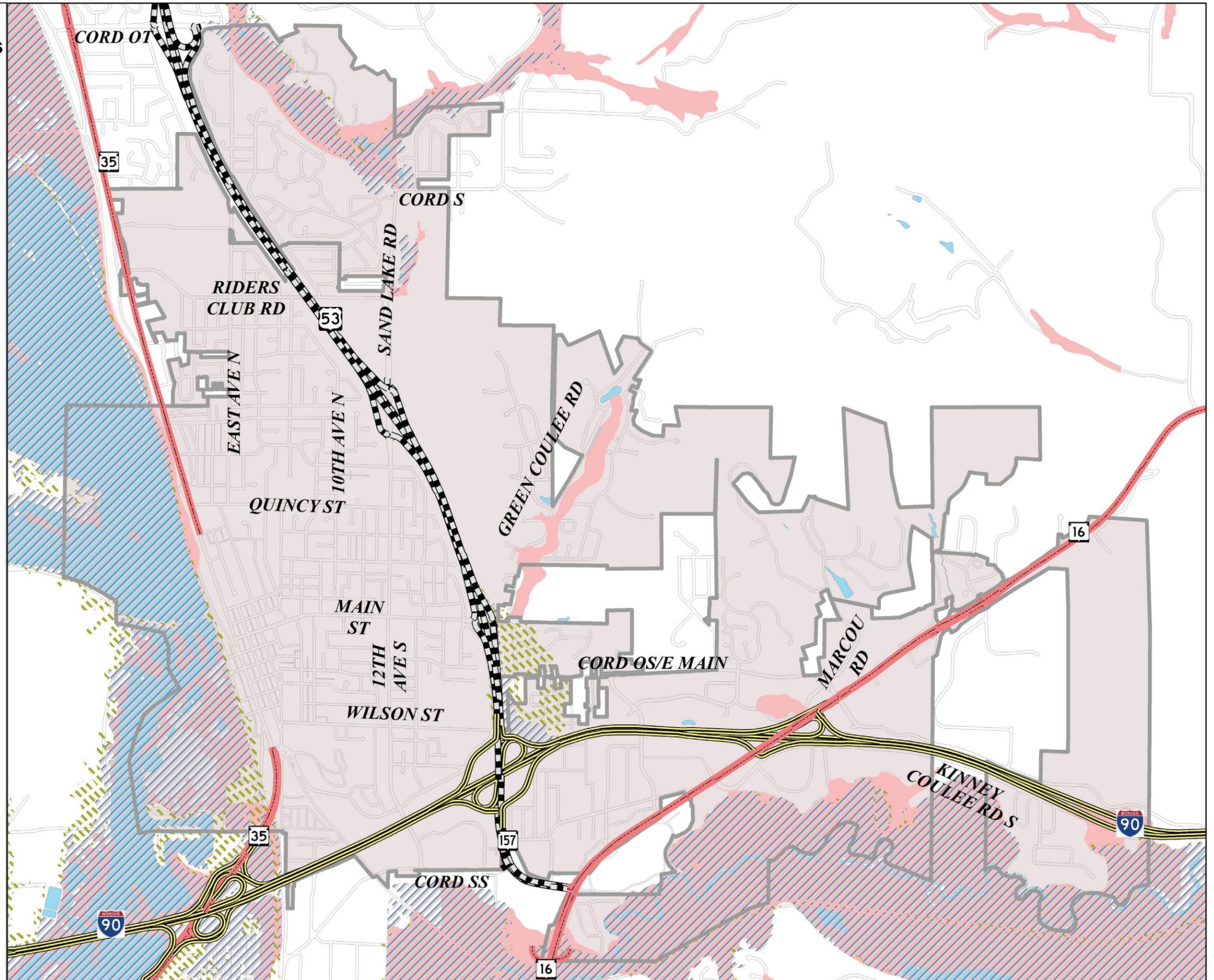
NAD\_1983\_HARN\_Wisconsin\_TM  
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**Notes**

### FEMA Flood Data & Wetlands

-  FEMA - 100yr Event
-  FEMA - 500yr Event
-  Wetlands  
(Defined by Soil Type)
-  City of Onalaska Limits



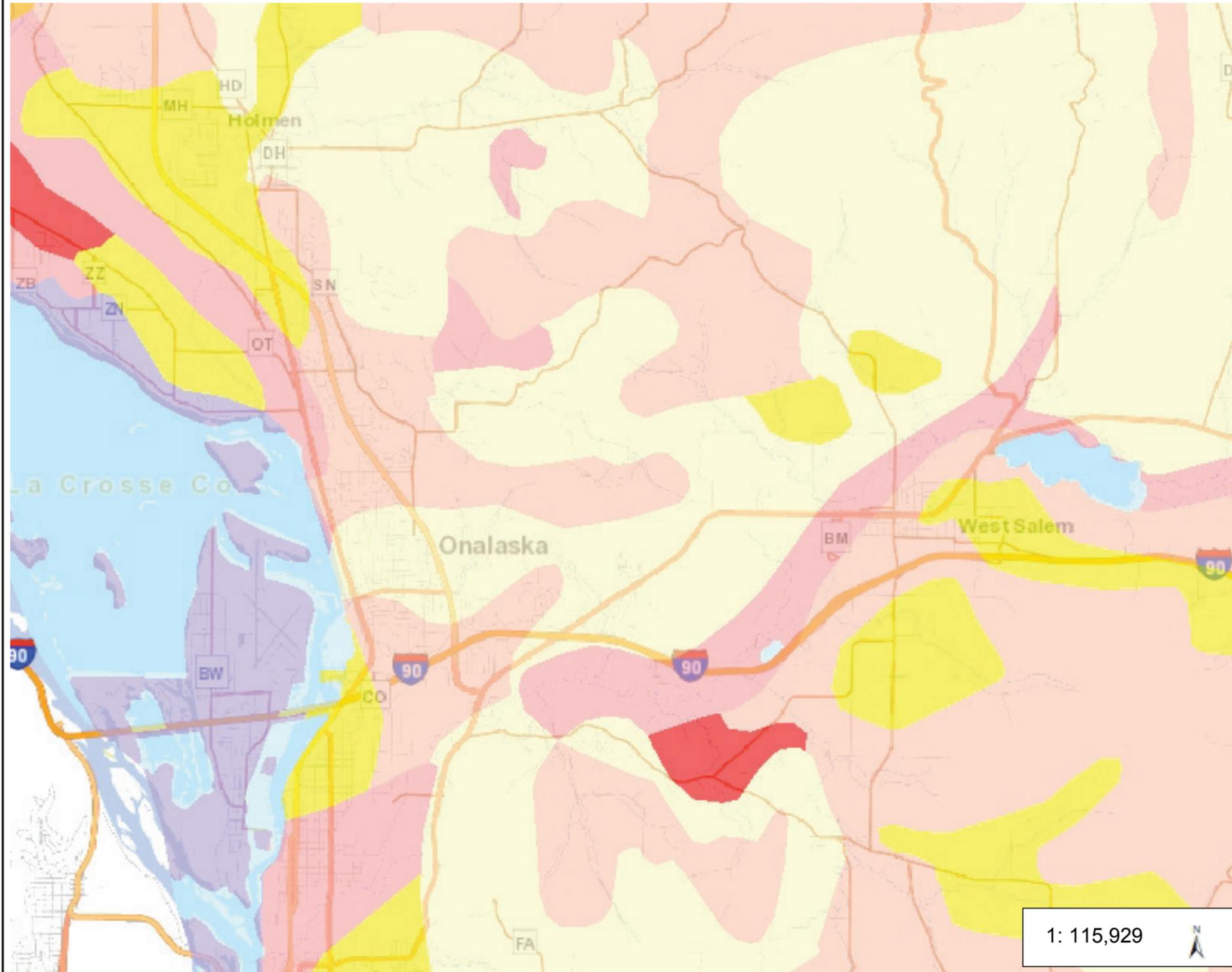
Not To Scale

GIS Dept  
Map Designer: Joe Barstow  
Date: 01/02/2015

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# Vegetative Cover Map



**Legend**

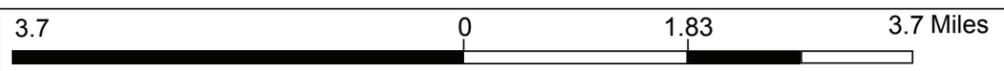
**Original Vegetation Cover**

- <all other values>
- 0 - Water
- 1 - White spruce, balsam fir, tamarac, birch, aspen
- 2 - Beech, hemlock, sugar maple, yellow pine, red pine
- 3 - Hemlock, sugar maple, yellow birch
- 4 - Sugar maple, yellow birch, white pine
- 5 - White pine, red pine
- 6 - Jack pine, scrub (hill's), oak forest
- 7 - Aspen, white birch, pine
- 8 - Beech, sugar maple, basswood, oak
- 9 - Sugar maple, basswood, red oak
- 10 - White oak, black oak, bur oak
- 11 - Oak openings bur oak, white oak
- 12 - Prairie
- 13 - Brush
- 14 - Swamp Conifers
- 15 - Lowland Hardwoods
- 16 - Marsh and sedge meadow, wetland
- Area with vegetation cover type not mapped

Rivers and Streams

Open Water

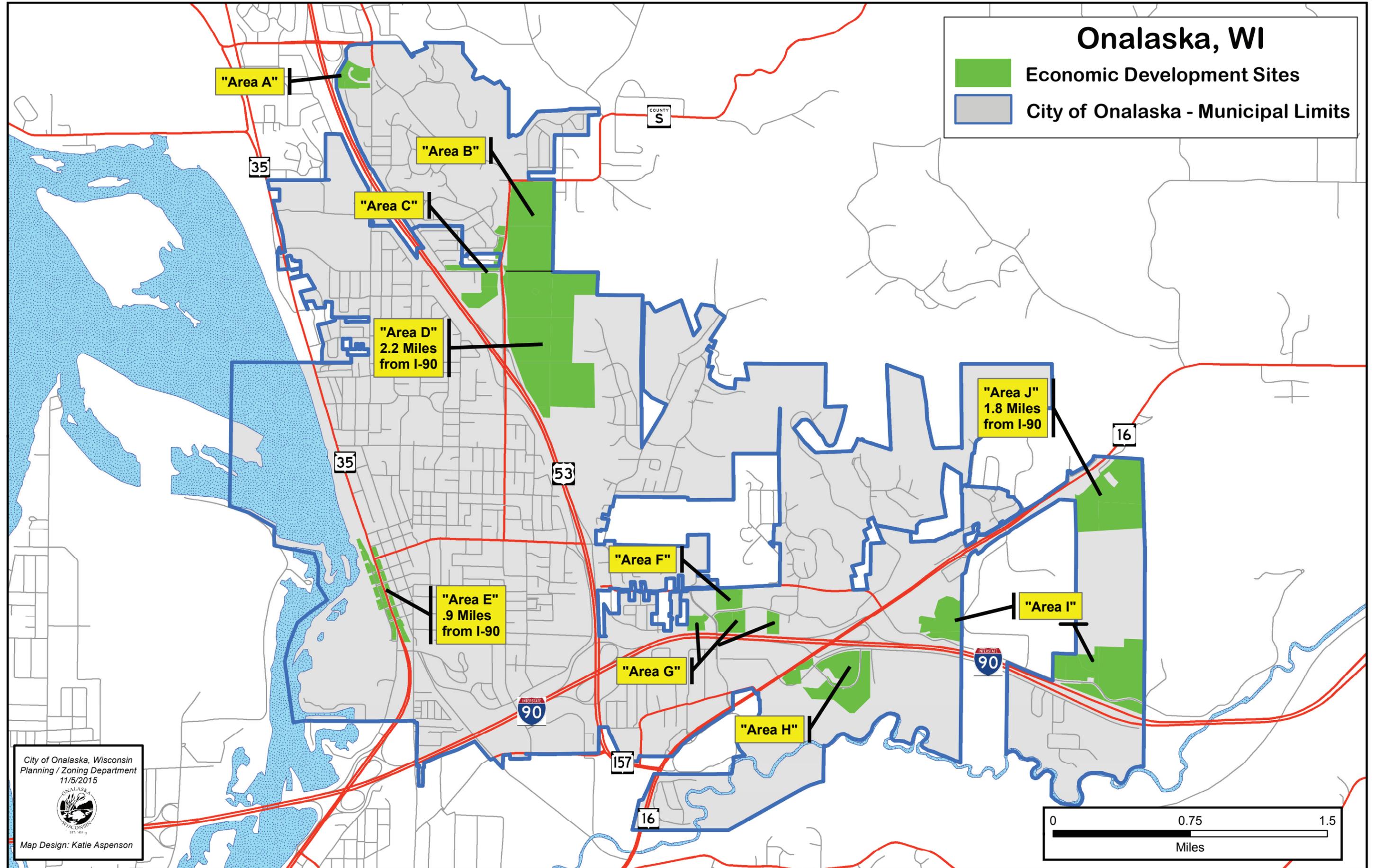
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Notes



City of Onalaska, Wisconsin  
Planning / Zoning Department  
11/5/2015



Map Design: Katie Aspenson

**Legend**

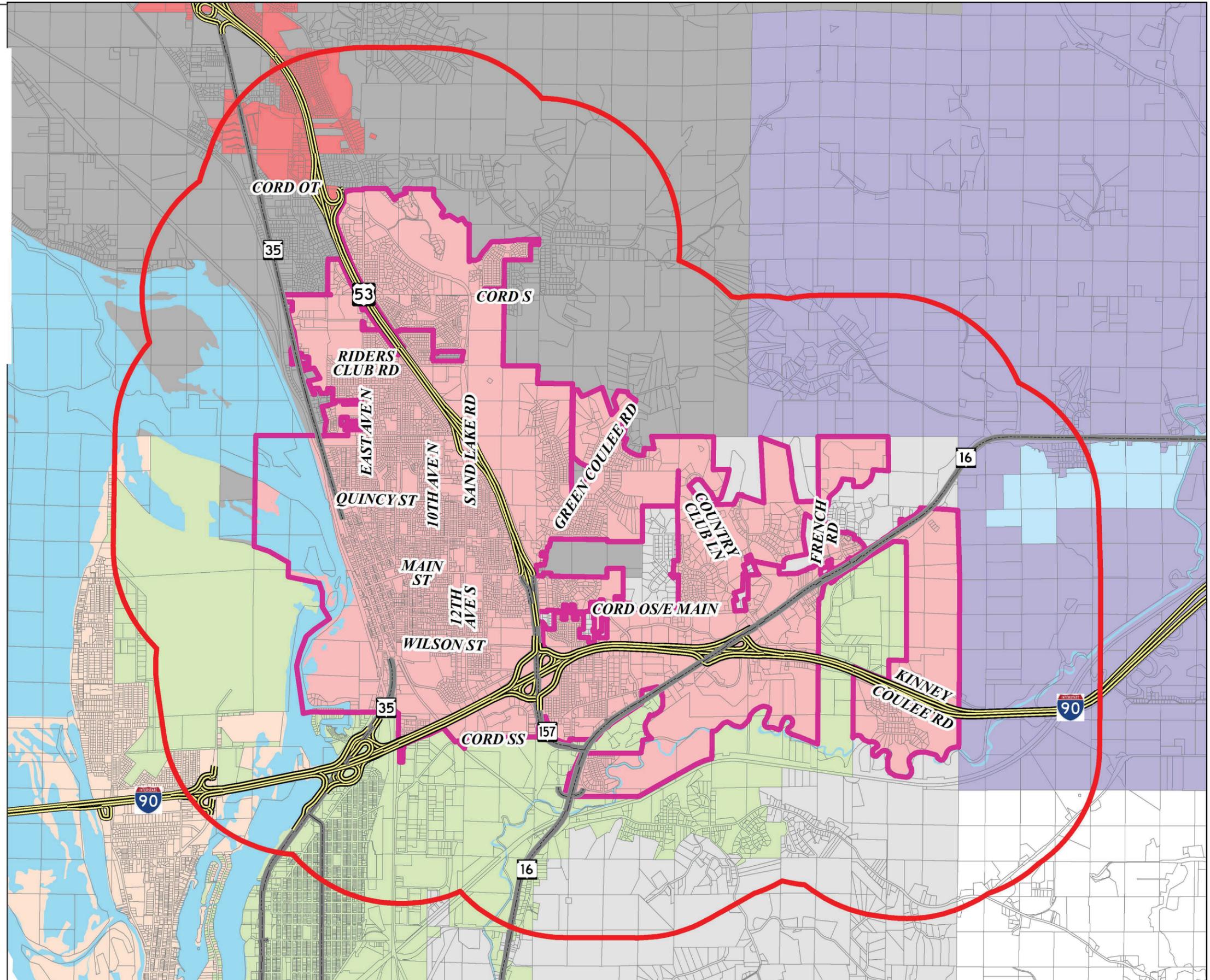
- CITY OF ONALASKA - 1 MILE BUFFER
- City of Onalaska
- CITY OF LA CROSSE
- VILLAGE OF HOLMEN
- VILLAGE OF WEST SALEM
- TOWN OF CAMPBELL
- TOWN OF HAMILTON
- TOWN OF HOLLAND
- TOWN OF MEDARY
- TOWN OF ONALASKA

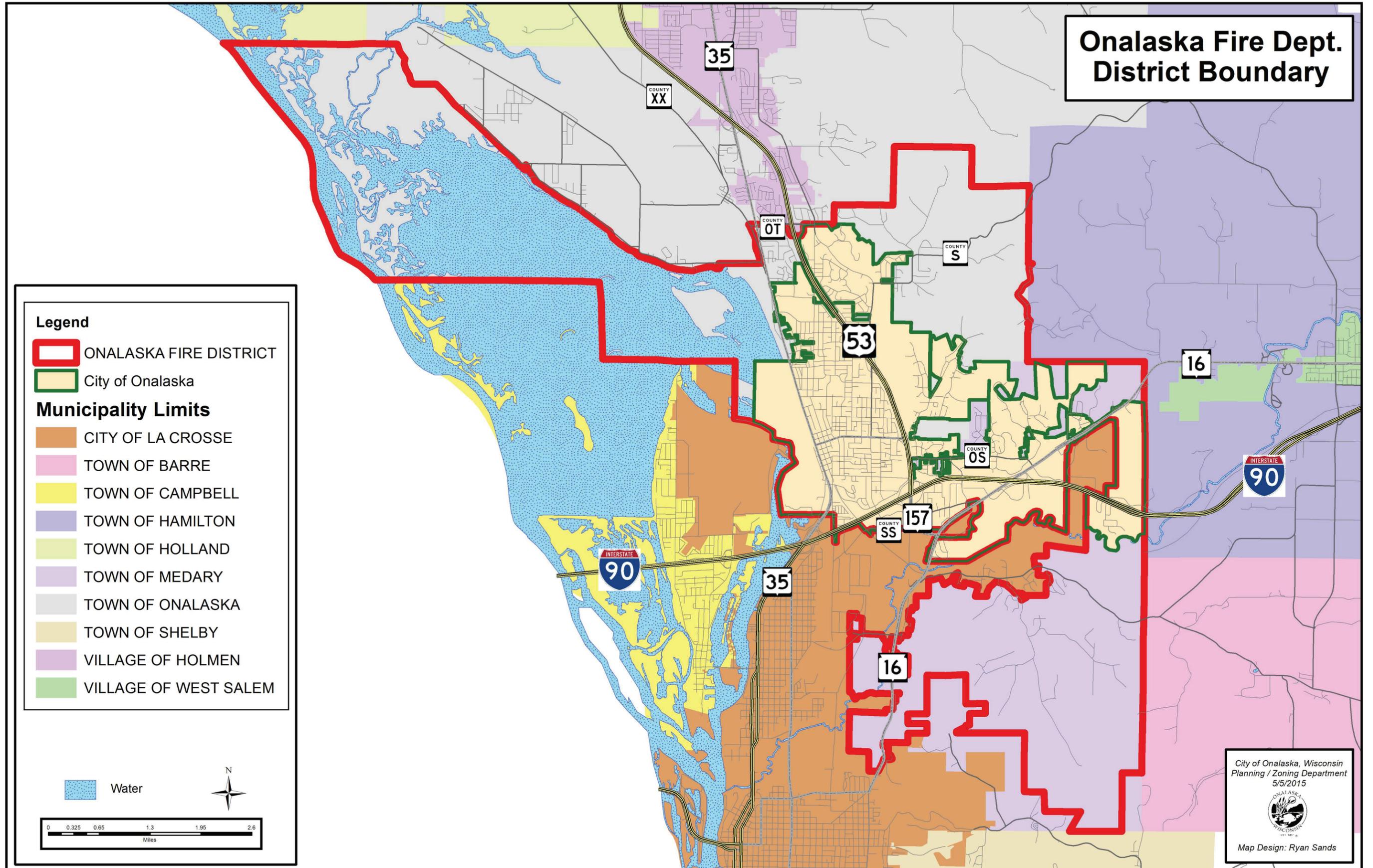


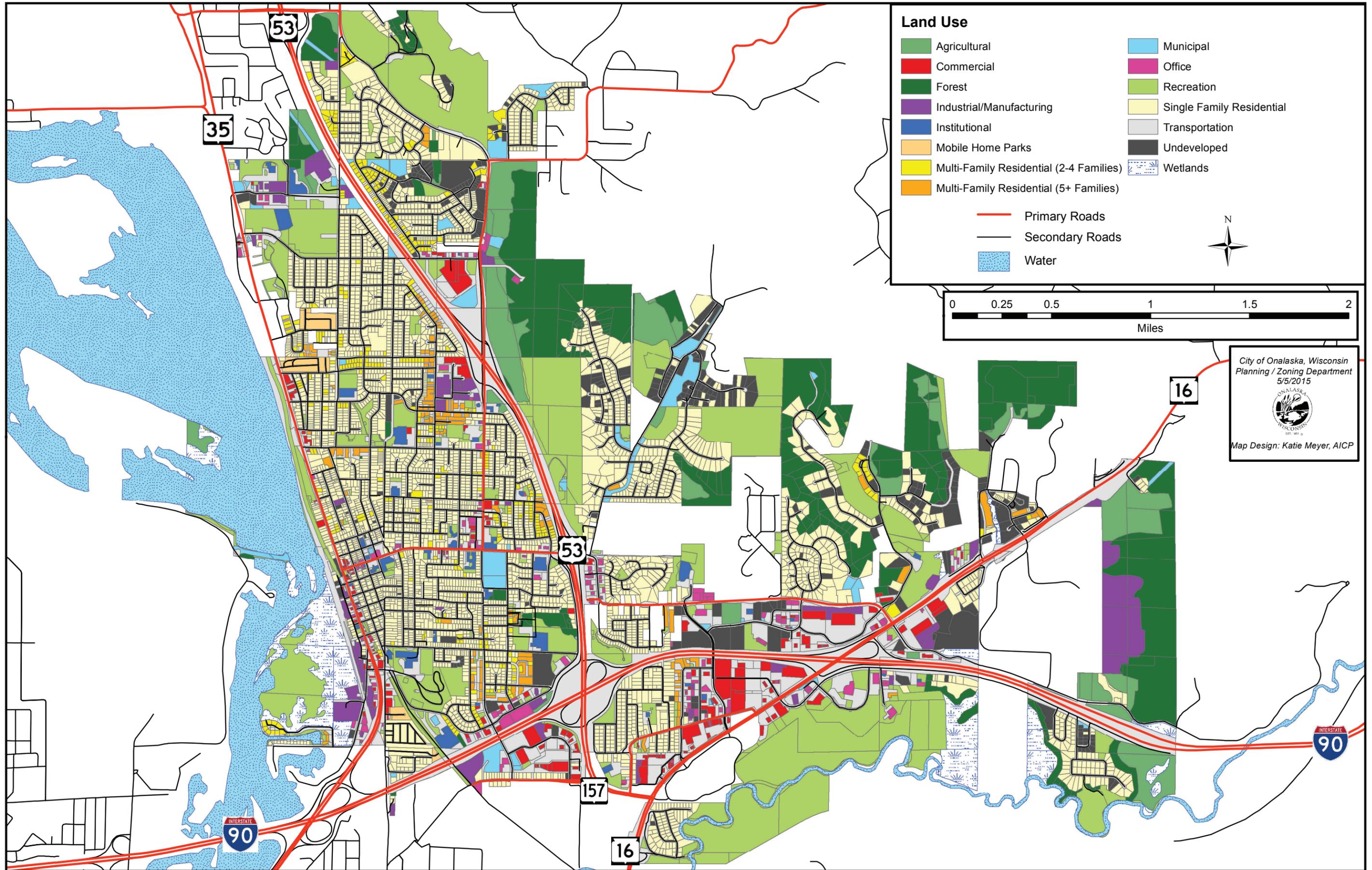
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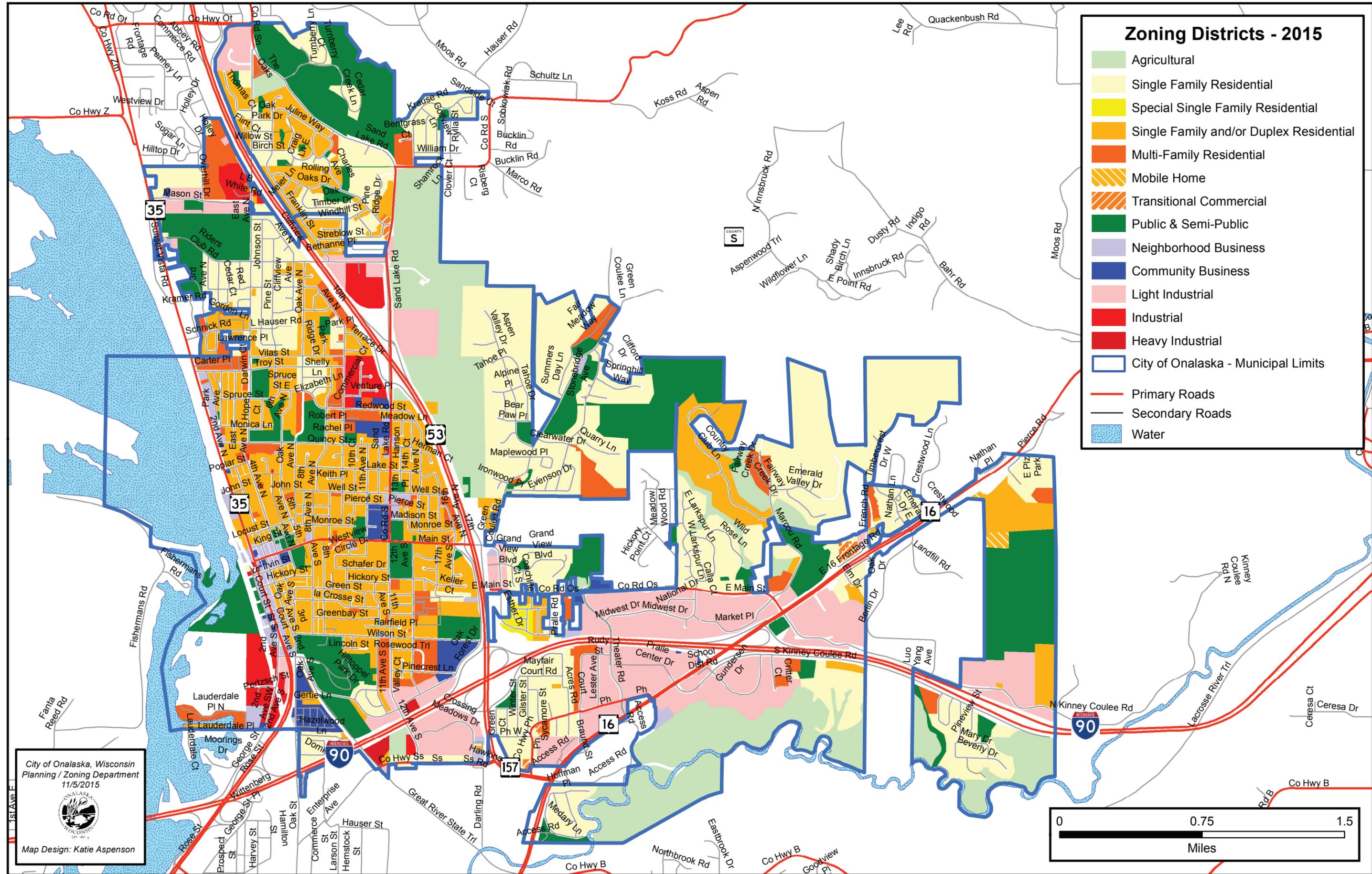
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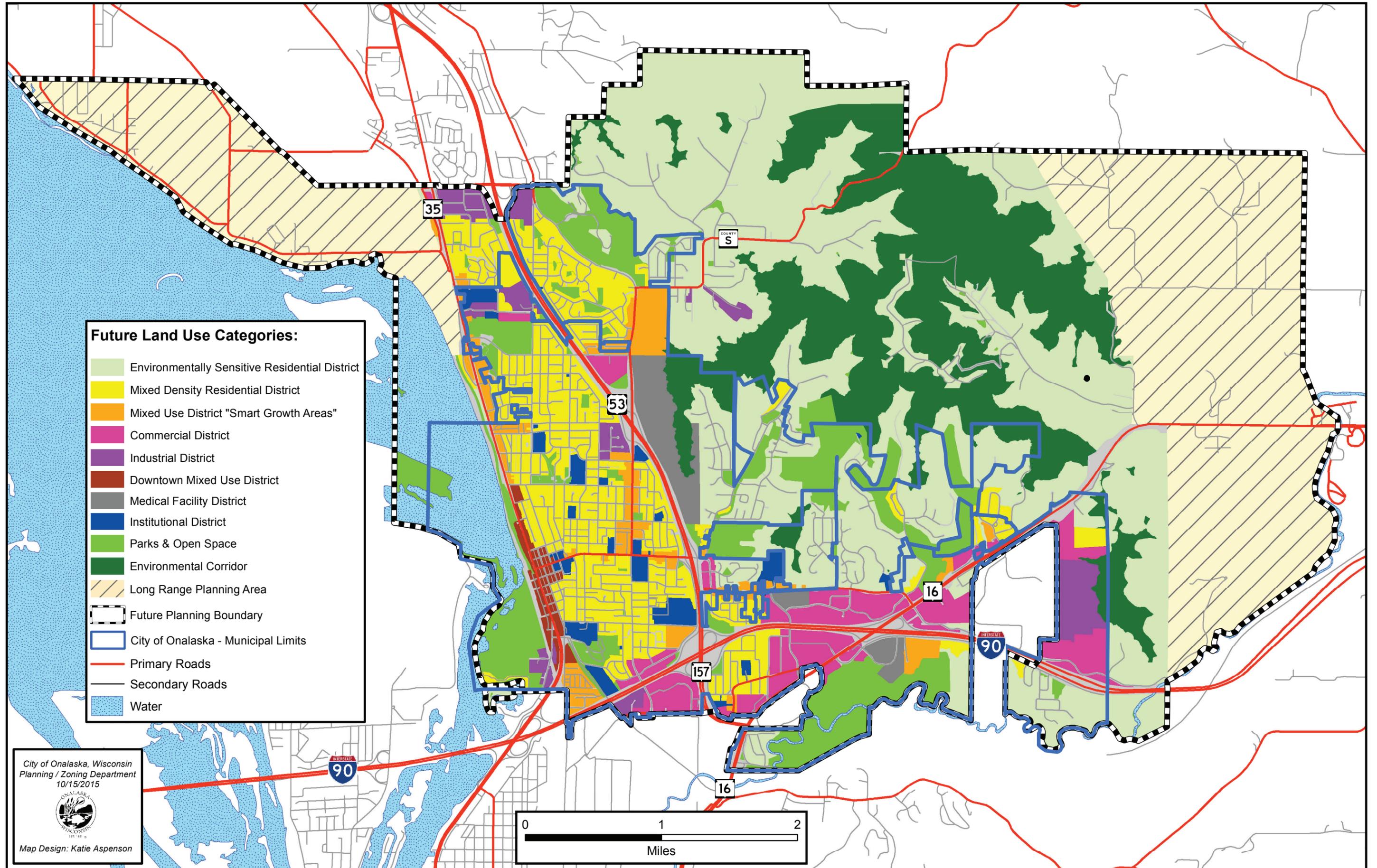
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