

An aerial photograph of Winona, Minnesota, showing the city, a large river, and a hill in the background. The city is densely packed with buildings and trees, and the river flows through the center. The hill in the background is covered in trees and has a small building on top. The sky is clear and blue.

# City of Winona Comprehensive Plan

August 2007

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City of Winona  
Comprehensive Plan  
August 2007

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## 1. Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan contains the essential planning policies and recommendations intended to guide Winona’s growth through the next ten to 20 years – the plan uses the year 2030 as a target date for many of its projections for housing, land use and economic growth, but should be updated at approximately 10-year intervals to remain relevant. Background information regarding conditions and resources that affect development and describing the planning process is included in a Background Report.

The Comprehensive Plan includes general goals, objectives and policies that will direct City decision-making, maps that depict desired future land use, and strategies and priorities for implementation. It is organized as follows:

- Vision statement: a broad citywide vision of the ideal outcome of the planning process, based on community input.
- Land Use Plan: because land use as a topic is central to the City’s development, and relates to all the other elements of the plan, it is covered in detail in this initial chapter. Land use as a topic was not the focus of a specific planning subcommittee, so this chapter draws on the work of the Steering Committee and various subcommittees; where relevant.
- Other specific plan elements: these topic areas are organized and defined based on the extensive background work and goal-setting of the City’s Plan Subcommittees, in the following areas:
  - Arts and Humanities
  - Downtown Revitalization
  - Economic Development
  - Environment and Energy
  - Historic Preservation
  - Housing
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Riverfront Revitalization
  - Transportation

Each element is organized to move from the general to the specific, and from identified issues to recommendations for action:

- Overview of Issues and Opportunities
- Goals and Objectives

- Policies and Actions

- Implementation Strategies: This chapter summarizes the strategies or actions that will be needed to implement the goals, along with the priority and phasing of each action. It assigns primary and secondary responsibilities for implementing each action, and identifies a range of potential funding sources for actions that involve expenditures.

Definitions of terms: The typical planning terms used in this report can be defined as follows:

- Vision: A general and idealized vision of the City in the future, assuming that the plan and related actions have been successfully implemented.
- Goals: Expected or desired outcomes of a planning process. Goals are usually broad, general expressions of the guiding principles and aspirations of a community.
- Objectives: More detailed statements of quantitatively or qualitatively measurable results the plan hopes to accomplish.
- Policies and Actions: Statements that will guide City decision-making. Policies may relate directly to a single goal or objective, or they may address several goals at once. Policies can be thought of as the central recommendations of the plan. This category also includes the major actions that the City and partnering organizations will take to implement the plan.

## 2. Vision Statement

One of the first steps in the planning process is typically the creation of a vision statement – a picture of the future city after successful implementation of the comprehensive plan. The vision statement is intended to be idealistic yet achievable, and to express the community's own values. At a workshop in May 2006, over 60 residents participated in development of a vision statement, which has been synthesized and refined as follows.

*Winona's multi-faceted relationship to the Mississippi River sustains the City's economic system, natural resources, and social and cultural character. The developed shoreline incorporates a vibrant port area and recreational boat docks, as part of a linear open space corridor emphasizing the River's natural systems. Green pedestrian and bike trails connect Levee Park, the downtown, Winona's cultural landmarks, college and university campuses, Lake Winona, and ultimately link to the bluffland residential and recreational areas and regional trails. Aghaming Park, river islands, and restored shoreland areas sustain habitat for native flora and fauna and allow residents and visitors to enjoy Winona's natural history.*

*Winona's river and rail connections continue to bring jobs and tax base that diversifies the local economy and offers energy-efficient transport of goods. Intermodal facilities have expanded, just back from the restored river banks and new docking/transfer points along the river are efficient and clean. Rail access is integrated with Winona's street grid, improving safety, limiting transportation conflicts and allowing expanded use of rail infrastructure without disturbing automobile and non-motorized links to Highway 61.*

*Winona's unique bluffland views and gateways are its most distinctive feature. The core of the City is linked to developing areas along the river and into the surrounding bluffland, minimizing sprawl while allowing a variety of housing choices. A multitude of housing types are dispersed throughout the community: on the island, in the blufflands, and along the river. Housing densities decrease as one moves away from the core.*

*Open space and wooded areas follow the bluff lines, gently folding into housing at the base of the bluffs. Residential areas in the valleys are integrated with native vegetation and woodlands and kept away from steep slopes, ridgelines, erosive soils, and waterways. Most developments use conservation design methods to minimize their impact on watersheds or the landscape.*

*Winona's historic downtown is the seat of City and County government and draws people from the entire region. Historic facades have been restored and buildings are occupied by entrepreneurial businesses on the ground floor and restored apartments and offices above. New residential buildings of compatible style and scale surround the downtown core and take advantage of river views and amenities. Street trees and planters help keep the downtown cool and green in summer months. The new performing arts theater is complemented by local artisans in and around the downtown. Expanded recreational boat docks draw river boaters into downtown. Ample parking is well marked and integrated into the urban fabric. Pedestrian traffic is accommodated on wide sidewalks, and transit systems link the river, the downtown, the campuses, and the highway commercial areas. The Highway 61 corridor has been enhanced with distinctive landscaping and wayfinding signs steering visitors to the downtown and riverfront attractions and other community landmarks.*

### 3. Land Use Plan

The purpose of the Land Use Plan chapter is to guide public and private actions in regard to the pattern of land use and development and to express ideas from other plan chapters as they relate to land use. Because of its direct relationship to development patterns, the land use plan and Future Land Use map are the central elements of the comprehensive plan.

The objectives and policies of this chapter are expected to be implemented primarily through comprehensive revisions to the City's zoning ordinance, zoning map, and other land use regulations, and through the development review and approval process.

#### Issues

**Inward vs. Outward Growth.** The question of “where” and “how much” the City of Winona will grow during the planning period is central to the comprehensive plan process. On the one hand, the City needs to ensure sufficient developable land area to allow needed expansion of business and industrial uses. The City's existing land base is increasingly limited by physical and environmental constraints. On the other hand, there are many opportunities within existing City boundaries for infill, redevelopment and intensification of existing uses.

**Neighborhood Stabilization or Improvement.** What should the plan include to help protect or revitalize older neighborhoods?

**New Neighborhood Design.** What design features should be incorporated to create the most attractive, sustainable neighborhoods?

**Demographic Changes.** What is the significance of current trends in population and household growth? How should the City respond to national trends of smaller household sizes and increases in the over-65 population?

**Industrial Growth.** Where should future industrial and office growth occur, within and outside city boundaries?

**Redevelopment.** How proactive should the City be in encouraging redevelopment?

**Brownfield Redevelopment.** To what extent, if at all, should the City expend funds to help cover costs related to pollution clean up, land assembly or access improvements to stimulate redevelopment?

**Major Institutions.** What should the City do in response to the campus plans and continuing expansion needs of Winona State University and other educational institutions? How should student housing needs be addressed?

Arterial Road Corridors. What approach should the City and County take to resolve conflicts between housing and commercial development along its arterial roads and to prevent or minimize those problems in the future?

Integration of Land Use and Zoning. How can land use plan goals be reflected and implemented through the City's ordinances?

Role of the Plan. How strong should the Comprehensive Plan be in setting City policy, ordinances and budgeting?

### Goals and Objectives

1. An Adequate Land Base; Resource Protection. Ensure an adequate land supply to support the creation of a full-range of jobs in a manner that is consistent with the responsible use of natural resources.

#### Objectives:

1. Identify sufficient land to accommodate future large-scale industrial employment.
2. Use land within city boundaries efficiently before looking outside city boundaries.
3. Preserve the opportunity for outward growth at such time as market forces support that growth.
4. Ensure that future development is located and designed to protect the full range of natural, scenic and recreational resources on and adjacent to the development site.

2. A Strong Central City. Work to strengthen the livability and vitality of the central city, including neighborhoods, educational institutions, downtown, riverfront, and commercial and industrial districts, taking advantage of the proximity of these districts and amenities.

#### Objectives:

1. Ensure that the city's core remains a viable and attractive option for business location and economic development projects.
2. Maintain and increase the livability of central neighborhoods through housing improvement programs, infill, redevelopment and reinvestment.
3. Encourage employment and housing densities that will support a viable transit system, primarily within the city core.

## The Future Land Use Plan – Maps and Land Use Categories

The following three graphics depict existing and proposed land use categories both within and outside the City's present boundaries. Figure 1, Existing Land Use, identifies general land use categories on a parcel-by-parcel basis, based on an inventory in 2006. Figure 2, Future Land Use Plan, depicts proposed land uses within city boundaries, while Figure 3, Urban Expansion Area, presents a more conceptual plan for long-range growth outside those boundaries.

The land use categories used in Figures 2 and 3 are presented in Table 1. These categories are much more general than those of the Existing Land Use map, and apply to larger areas.

Land use categories are different than zoning districts: they need to be thought of as a mix of land uses rather than a strict listing of allowed and conditional uses. For example, the "Downtown" and "Downtown Fringe" categories encompass a broad range of existing land uses, from industrial to commercial to housing and surface parking. Land use categories identify:

- The major preferred land uses and approximate mix of uses that could be found within the category;
- The approximate or typical density and intensity of land uses;
- Additional considerations such as natural resource standards or design considerations that may apply to particular land uses in that district

Land use categories are intended to represent the community's long-range intentions and preferences, rather than its current regulatory environment. However, zoning is one of the major implementation tools of the Comprehensive Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance should ultimately be modified to be consistent with the plan.

In addition to the land use categories shown on the map, the Comprehensive Plan uses several overlay districts that identify special considerations for development or preservation activities. The overlay districts are not land uses, but indicate that the underlying land uses need some special consideration.

The overlay district with the largest geographical extent is the Sensitive Resources Overlay. The concept behind this was originally identified in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, and has been partially implemented by the Environmentally Sensitive Lands zoning district. The overlay district is intended to encompass those lands that include:

- Bluffs and other slopes over 30%;
- 100-year floodplain;
- Wetlands, including the extensive marshes and backwaters of the Mississippi River;

Land Use Map – a 20-year distant snapshot of the community's preferred future mix of land uses. The map shows what the community *prefers* – the map guides land use decisions for the next 20 years.

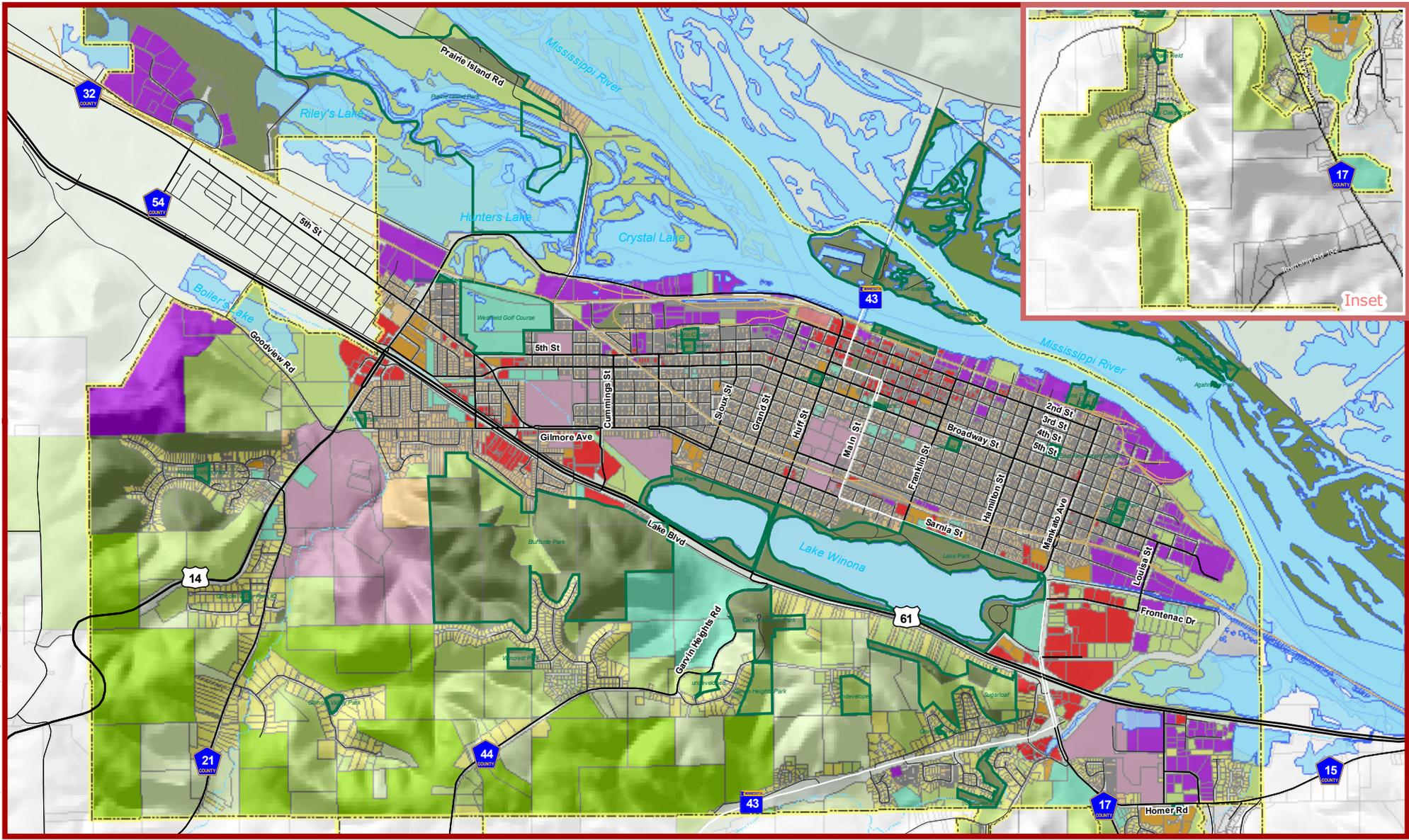
Zoning Map – a regulatory map for the immediate future. The map shows what the community has already decided to *allow* tomorrow.

- Water bodies, including the Mississippi River; Lake Winona; streams, including designated trout streams; and other water bodies;
- High-quality vegetative communities identified through the Winona County Biological Survey;
- Other areas that may be identified through additional study; for example, locations of rare or endangered species or archaeological resources.

Of course, only those resources that have already been identified are shown on the map, and even these may be subject to modification following more detailed studies.

A second overlay district is the Historic Resources Overlay, which currently includes the City's National Register historic districts. This designation recognizes the City's designated historic districts and indicates that City policies in these areas will support preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

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See Inset Above



Map Location

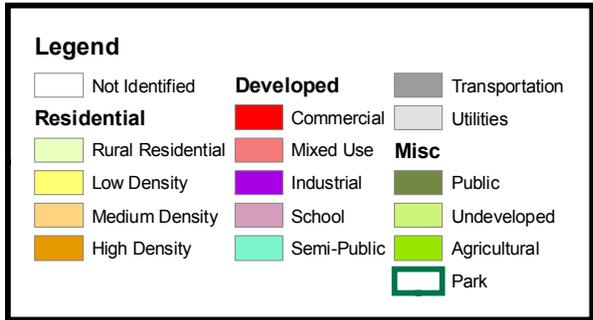
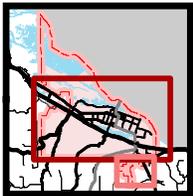


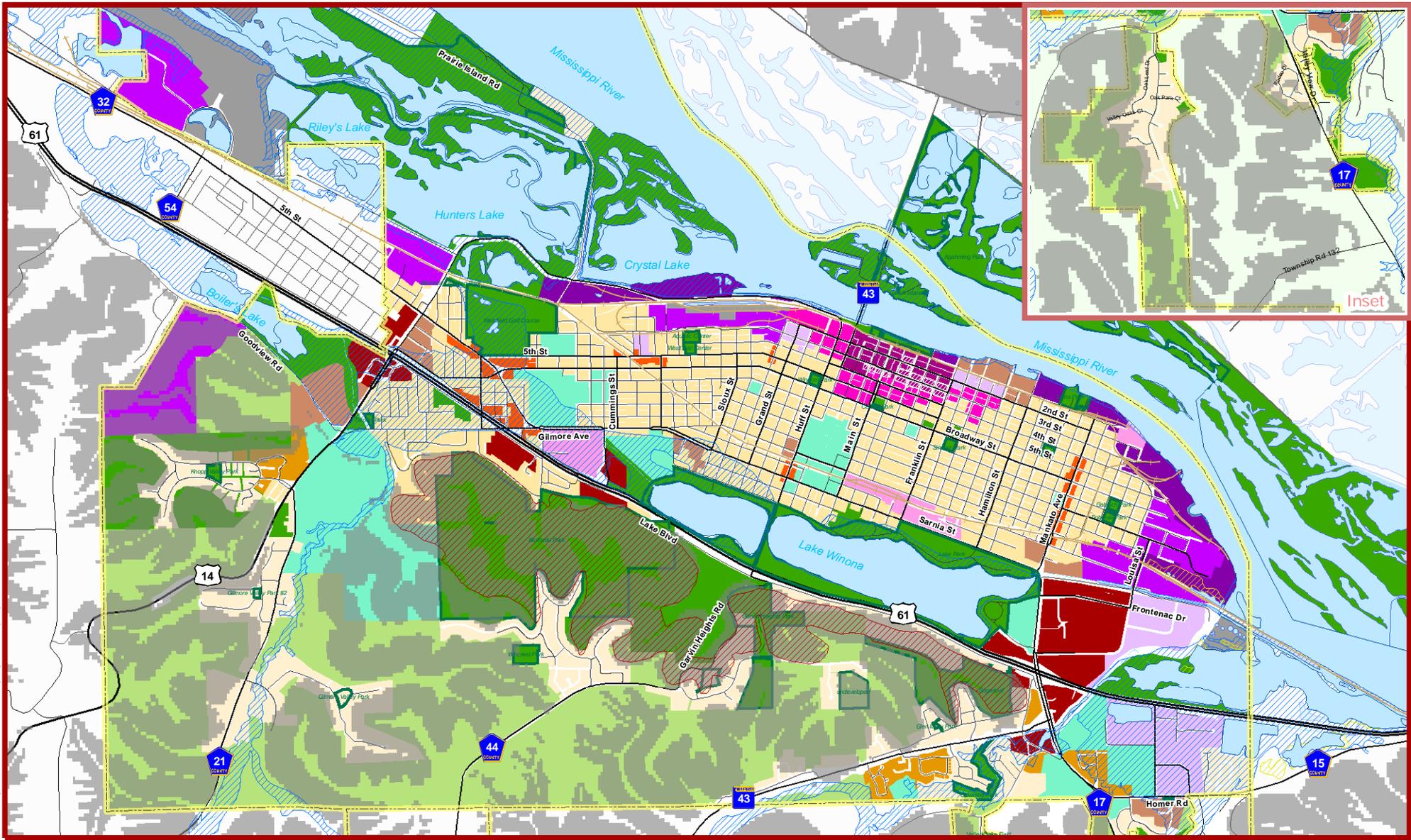
Figure 11  
**Existing Land Use**

August 2007



Data Sources: City of Winona

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Map Location

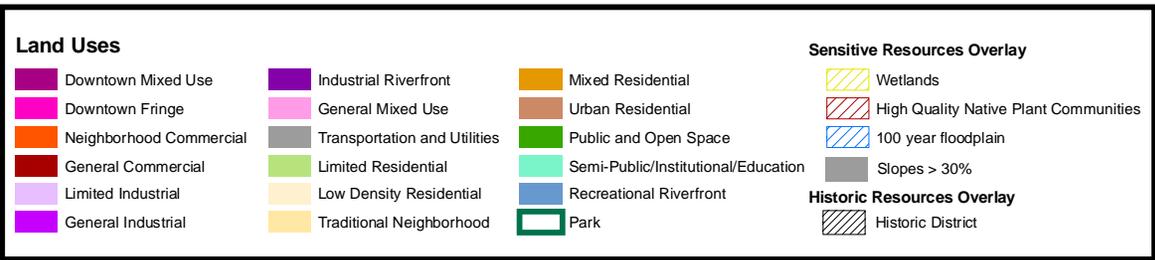
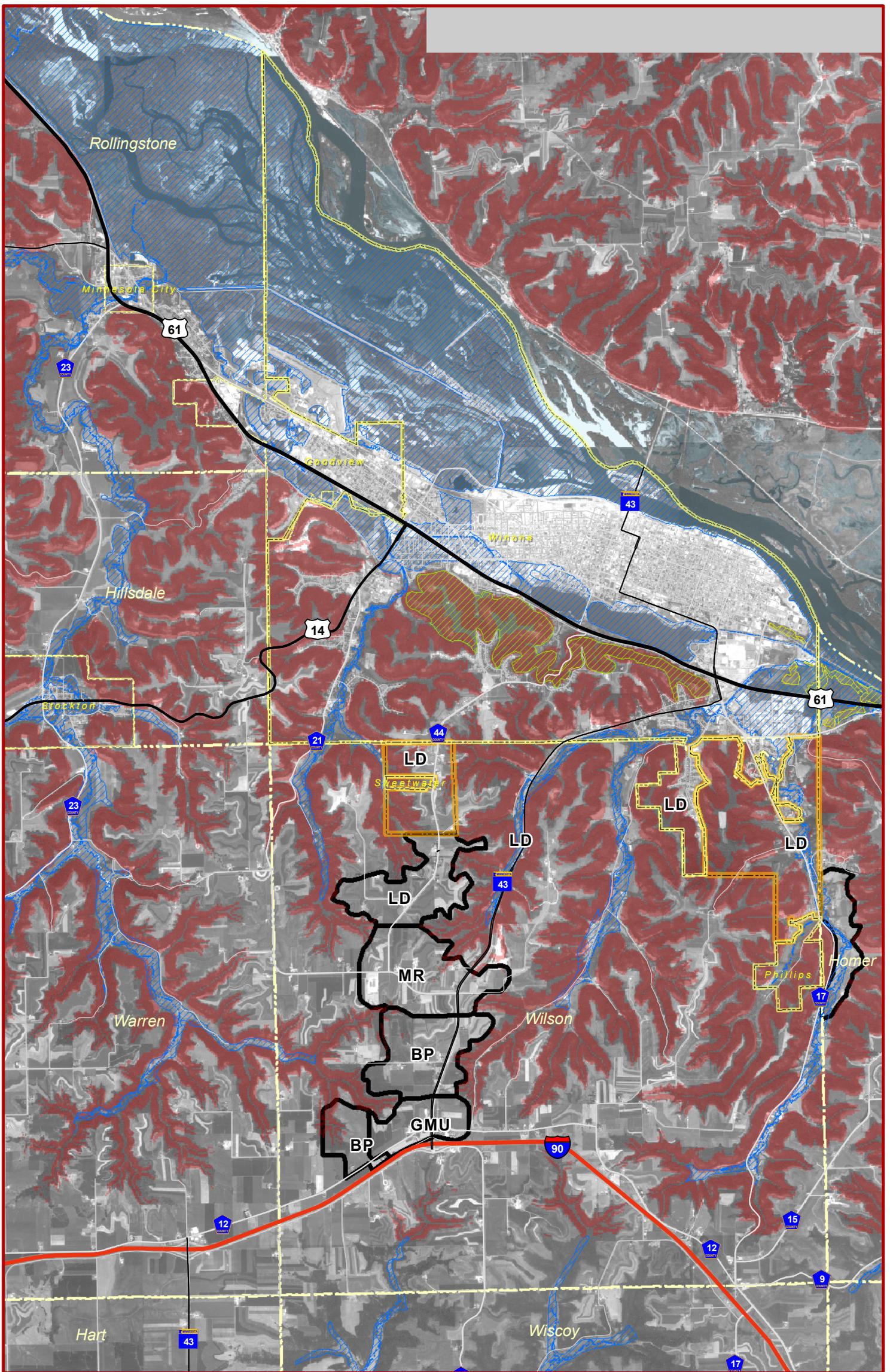


Figure 2  
 Future  
 Land Use Plan  
 June 2007



Data Sources: URS



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Data Sources: City of Winona, MnDOT, MnDNR

**Proposed Land Use**

- LD** Low Density Residential
- MR** Mixed Residential
- BP** Business Park
- GMU** General Mixed Use
- Orderly Annexation Areas
- Slope > 30
- Wetlands
- High Quality Native Plant Communities
- 100 year floodplain

**Figure 3**  
**Proposed Land Use Plan,**  
**Urban Expansion Area**

June 2007



Future Land Use Categories / Descriptions	Density / Intensity / Design	Photo Illustrations	
<p>DMU - Downtown Mixed Use</p> <p>Encompasses a broad range of uses and intensities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governmental offices</li> <li>• Significant retail</li> <li>• Arts and entertainment, lodging, conference centers</li> <li>• Mid- to high-density housing</li> <li>• Public and private parking facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greatest densities and heights</li> <li>• Protection of historic buildings or building groups</li> <li>• Design guidelines</li> <li>• Pedestrian-oriented design</li> <li>• Limited off-street parking required</li> <li>• Emphasize river views</li> <li>• Redevelopment and rehab opportunities</li> </ul>		
<p>DF - Downtown Fringe</p> <p>Area supporting the central downtown core, with a similar mix of uses but a lower intensity. Includes 'arts district,' medium density residential, mixed neighborhood retail and offices, employment centers, public spaces, and satellite parking facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium densities; mixed-use buildings are encouraged</li> <li>• Pedestrian-oriented design</li> <li>• Redevelopment opportunities</li> <li>• Appropriate transitions to adjacent neighborhoods</li> </ul>		
<p>NC - Neighborhood Commercial</p> <p>Small- to moderate scale commercial, serving primarily the adjacent neighborhood(s). May include specialty retail; small businesses such as coffee shops, taverns (existing), offices; studios or housing above retail. May include a variety of housing types interspersed with other uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium densities and building heights</li> <li>• Typically &lt; 5 acres</li> <li>• May not be able to meet standard off-street parking requirements - consider some flexibility</li> </ul>		

Future Land Use Categories / Descriptions	Density / Intensity / Design	Photo Illustrations	
<p><b>GC - General Commercial</b></p> <p>Auto-oriented commercial and office uses focused primarily on needs and convenience of the motorist, without losing pedestrian access and connection. Situated along arterial roads, typically with parking in front of building. No residential uses, but these may be in close proximity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for transition to mixed use where appropriate</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian connections from adjacent neighborhoods</li> <li>• Enhance appearance of Highway 61 corridor with landscaping, materials and signage standards</li> <li>• Recognize Highway 61 access improvements</li> </ul>		
<p><b>BP - Business Park</b></p> <p>Primarily office and light industrial areas developed in a unified manner, with standards for site design and circulation patterns, signage, landscaping and building design. Undeveloped locations for this use type are in the Urban Expansion area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve transportation linkages, both motorized and non-motorized</li> <li>• Improve appearance with landscaping and materials standards</li> <li>• Limit commercial uses to preserve land for industrial and office use</li> </ul>		
<p><b>LI - Limited Industrial</b></p> <p>Areas for manufacturing, warehousing and distribution; uses that have few outside impacts, and are (or can be) located in relative proximity to non-industrial uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit and screen any outdoor storage</li> <li>• Add landscaping and materials standards, buffering from adjacent residential</li> </ul>		

Future Land Use Categories / Descriptions	Density / Intensity / Design	Photo Illustrations	
<p><b>GI - General Industrial</b></p> <p>Areas for manufacturing, processing and other activities that may have impacts off-site, and are generally isolated from other uses or buffered from them. Often contiguous to industrial riverfront, but less river-dependent. Sites should have direct access to major regional transportation facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance standards for environmental effects and nuisance mitigation</li> <li>• Screen outdoor storage where practical</li> </ul>		
<p><b>IR - Industrial Riverfront</b></p> <p>River, port and rail dependent industrial uses. May co-exist in proximity to other waterfront-related uses and general industrial uses. Should have good access to high-capacity roads or rail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain or establish riverfront trail</li> <li>• Preserve or establish riverfront access where feasible</li> </ul>		
<p><b>GMU - General Mixed Use</b></p> <p>The broadest mix of uses, including residential, office, commercial, and potentially even limited production uses, with performance standards to ensure compatibility. Includes areas that are in transition from industrial uses and large redevelopments that require master plans and phased development.</p>	<p>Master planning to be required for larger sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific mix of uses</li> <li>• transitions to surrounding uses, neighborhoods</li> <li>• pedestrian circulation, connectivity</li> <li>• open space amenities</li> </ul>		

Future Land Use Categories / Descriptions	Density / Intensity / Design	Photo Illustrations	
TU - Transportation and Utilities			
<p>Port and rail-related uses, highway right-of-way, airport, energy and communication infrastructure, wastewater and water infrastructure.</p>	<p>Protect key facilities, encourage redevelopment of others consistent with transportation plan.</p>		
<p>A - Agricultural</p>			
<p>Lands still being actively farmed. A transitional use type in the Urban Expansion area, but expected to continue in some locations throughout this planning period.</p>	<p>Prevent or minimize conflicts with residential and other non-agricultural land uses through buffering, conservation design.</p>		
<p>LR - Limited Residential</p>			
<p>Housing on large lots, generally not part of a subdivision, and often served by on-site utilities. A transitional use type in the Urban Expansion area, but expected to continue in some locations throughout this planning period.</p>	<p>Plan for eventual transition to central utilities, where feasible</p> <p>Site houses to protect significant viewsheds</p>		

<p>LD - Low Density</p>			
<p>Will be located in the City's Urban Expansion area as well as many existing hilltop and valley locations in the southern part of the City where steep slopes and other constraints limit densities.</p>	<p>May require conservation development in areas with steep slopes and other sensitive natural resources. Densities will be determined based on <u>buildable</u> land, not parcel size.</p>		
<p>Traditional Neighborhood (Medium Density)</p>			
<p>Characterized by grid or connected street pattern, houses oriented with shorter dimension to the street and detached garages, some with alleys. Interspersed with neighborhood parks, schools, churches, and home-businesses; neighborhood commercial within walking distance. Includes many of City's older neighborhoods, and a few newer ones that employ this pattern.</p>	<p>May also be appropriate in Mixed Residential portions of Urban Expansion area, as a way of protecting open space and creating more diverse and self-contained neighborhoods.</p> <p>May include small-scale commercial, office, civic uses.</p>		
<p>Urban Residential (High Density)</p>			
<p>Existing and potential high-density residential buildings, including student housing areas, live-work development, and limited retail and service. Housing types include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-family</li> <li>• Senior housing (typically hi-rise)</li> <li>• Attached housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be well-connected to parks, open space, shopping and services</li> <li>• Design appropriate transitions to existing neighborhoods</li> </ul>		

<p><b>MR - Mixed Residential</b></p> <p>A category applicable in neighborhoods with an existing mix of uses, from single-family to townhouses or small cottages, and in the Urban Expansion area, where the actual mix of housing densities and types is yet to be determined.</p> <p>Master plan should be required for large-scale new development. May involve conservation design approach.</p>	<p>Master plan to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water and wastewater infrastructure</li> <li>• Street connectivity and character</li> <li>• Housing types and overall densities</li> <li>• Natural resources and open space protection</li> <li>• Access to community services</li> </ul>		
<p><b>P - Public and Open Space</b></p> <p>Primarily public lands or private lands with substantial restrictions. Land has high value natural resource or scenic value, or severe development limitations. Resource types include high-value habitat, bluff, stream/lake/river shorelands, wetlands and floodplain.</p> <p>Includes public parks and other city-owned properties such as stormwater basins. Includes large cemeteries, National Wildlife Refuge, golf course, other protected lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape and lighting standards</li> <li>• Community access where public</li> <li>• Parking and traffic management</li> </ul>	 	 

<p>SP - Semi-Public/ Institutional</p> <p>Applies to hospitals, large religious institutions, university and college and public school campuses, large religious facilities or governmental campuses, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require master plans for institutional expansion or redevelopment</li> <li>• Require reuse study for change in use or prior to demolition</li> </ul>		
<p>RRec - Recreational Riverfront</p>			
<p>Public and semi-public riverfront land used for water-oriented recreation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marinas</li> <li>• Urban riverfront parks</li> <li>• Campgrounds</li> <li>• Boathouses (special use)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify distinctions between public parkland and privately-used shoreland (boathouse community)</li> <li>• Improve/manage public access to riverfront</li> </ul>		

## Policies and Actions

The City will use the Future Land Use Plan to make decisions regarding zoning changes and public investments and to evaluate the desirability of development or redevelopment proposals.

1. Targeted Infill, Redevelopment and Rehabilitation. Prioritize areas for development or redevelopment that utilize Winona's existing infrastructure before expanding and extending that infrastructure. Priority areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan include:

- Vacant or underutilized industrial areas, including specific riverfront areas, rail storage yards, and scattered infill sites;
- Commercial properties and districts that have been bypassed in favor of newer development, including areas along the Highway 61 corridor;
- Residential areas where the housing stock is outmoded and in need of rehabilitation or ready for replacement;
- Many locations within the downtown, identified in more detail in the Downtown Revitalization Plan, are suitable for adaptive reuse or redevelopment that includes medium-density housing, complementary retail, and conference/performing arts facilities, integrating structured parking;
- Areas adjacent to the downtown core, where large surface parking areas and underutilized buildings could be redeveloped for housing, studios, offices and similar uses that would strengthen the downtown retail core.

2. Phased Development and Infrastructure Expansion. As shown in the Urban Expansion Area map, lands in Wilson Township are identified as the most logical location for long-term future expansion in the direction of I-90. These areas are identified because of their relatively level topography in contrast to the steep bluffs and valleys found closer to the city boundaries. It is important to recognize that urban expansion into these areas will occur only when certain conditions are favorable:

- Market forces and developer interest favorable to one or more major developments in the area.
- Capacity to serve the area with City utilities, plus a City commitment to extending those public utilities to the area.
- Capacity to make transportation improvements that will adequately serve new development without overburdening the City's existing transportation system.

Improvements should include not only road improvements but also transit and pedestrian/bike connections.

- An orderly annexation agreement with Wilson Township, providing for joint planning of this urban expansion area along with protection of the Township's remaining rural and agricultural areas. (Note that the City and Wilson Township have an existing orderly annexation agreement for about 2,000 acres in two areas adjacent to the City boundary. The 2005 agreement specifies that no additional annexations may occur for ten years for residential or commercial development, or for three years for industrial development.)

Because of these factors, significant urban expansion will likely not occur in the short term and will require further study. The City will consider the following in planning for the future annexation and extension of utilities to the urban expansion area:

- Market opportunities and market limitations;
- The impact of new "greenfield" development on traffic flow and the existing transportation system;
- The impacts of new development on the cost and level of service of police, fire, and emergency response services;
- The impacts of new development on agricultural areas and on sensitive natural resources;
- Public infrastructure extensions that minimize both construction and operating costs.

3. Master Planning of Expansion Areas. The Urban Expansion Area is designated using general land use categories, indicating that these areas should not be developed without more detailed master planning. Specifically,

- The Low Density Residential designation is applied to areas closest to the bluffs and to the steep and winding Garvin Heights Road. The intent is to allow limited expansion while minimizing the impacts of additional traffic. Conservation design should be encouraged in these and other expansion areas where sensitive natural resources are present (see Policy 5 below).
- The Mixed Residential designation is designed to encourage integrated design of new neighborhoods, as discussed in the policy below. Its location around the intersection of County Roads 21 and 44 is based on the assumption that these roads can better handle some increase in traffic volumes than Garvin Heights Road;
- The Business Park designation indicates that areas close to I-90 are well-suited to siting of industrial and office uses that benefit from freeway access;
- The General Mixed Use category around the I-90 interchange indicates that new development will need to be carefully integrated with existing housing and commercial

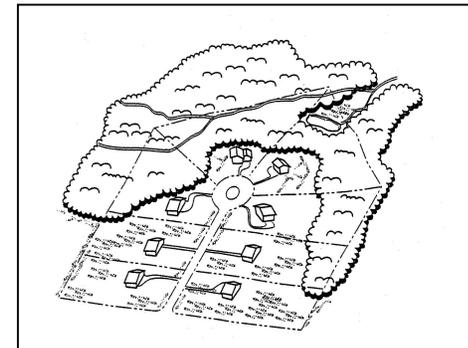
uses. New highway-oriented commercial uses should be limited in size and location, and carefully designed to preserve the area's attractive rural character.

4. **New Neighborhood Planning and Design.** The Mixed Residential designation in the Urban Expansion Area indicates that new residential areas should be planned as integrated neighborhoods, rather than large-lot single-family subdivisions. Neighborhoods should include:

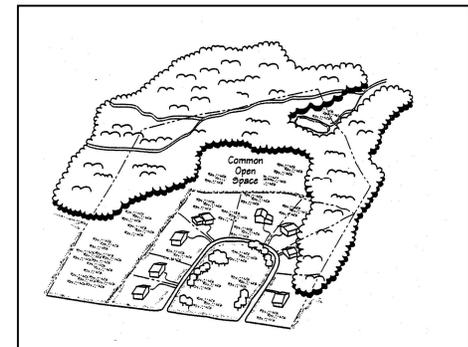
- Some diversity of housing types, including limited numbers of two-family and attached units and secondary units on single-family lots;
- Small neighborhood services and office uses, providing opportunities for residents to work at home and reducing the need to drive for daily necessities;
- Open space – playgrounds, parks and trails – designed to serve the neighborhood and to connect it to its surroundings;
- An interconnected street system within the neighborhood, providing a variety of routes and encouraging walking and biking, with adequate connections to surrounding roads and to adjacent neighborhoods. Topography may limit street connectivity, but the use of cul-de-sacs should be limited. Where lot sizes are narrow, the use of alleys or rear service drives to parking areas can create a more attractive and pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

5. **Conservation Design.** The City will encourage conservation design for privately-owned properties that fall within the Sensitive Resources Overlay. Conservation design, sometimes called 'cluster development' is a technique for open space preservation on a parcel-by-parcel basis. In a conservation subdivision, houses are clustered on relatively small lots, while the remainder of the site is protected as open space. Essentially, conservation design concentrates allowed density on the most suitable portions of a site, while protecting sensitive natural features and, in some cases, productive farmland. Advantages of conservation design include:

- Greater design flexibility in siting houses and other development features such as roads and utilities. Frequently the length of roads and utility runs can be reduced, and the amount of site clearance minimized.
- Preserving scenic views and reducing the visual impact of new development by maintaining landscaped buffer areas along roads.
- Providing housing units with direct visual and physical access to common open space.
- Creating environmental corridors by connecting open space between adjacent properties.
- Allowing for continuation of forestry or agricultural uses, where these can be adequately buffered from nearby residential uses.



*Conventional development, above, consumes the entire parcel with house lots, while conservation design, below, protects natural features and provides residents with common recreational areas.*



- Allowing active and passive recreational use of common open space by residents and/or the public.

Protected open space in a conservation subdivision is typically placed under a conservation easement to ensure that it remains undeveloped. It can be managed by a homeowners' association, land trust or (if used as public parkland) by a government agency.

The City will develop conservation design standards within the applicable zoning districts that will include the following elements:

- An inventory and assessment of natural and scenic features on each site prior to development, so that site design can respond to these features.
- Consolidation of permitted development (housing units or nonresidential floor area) in locations that will minimize the impact to sensitive resources.
- Standards that group housing units in coherent and interconnected neighborhoods with adequate visual and physical access to open space (as a general guideline, neighborhood clusters should be limited in size and oriented toward a natural feature or amenity such as a green, a park, or a parkway).
- Design connections between open space on adjacent parcels, to provide continuity for trails, habitat corridors and other interconnected resources or amenities.
- Incentives and standards for low impact development techniques, protection of biodiversity, and appropriate vegetation management.

6. Historic and Cultural Resource Protection. The City will encourage reinvestment in historic buildings and districts through historic designation that provides incentives for private investment through tax credits, and for preservation actions that meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

In areas identified in the Historic Resources Inventory (including but not limited to designated historic districts) the City will consider historical context of the area or neighborhood in public projects or in evaluating developments where the City is a financial partner and will use or encourage design, materials and detailing consistent with the surrounding character.

7. Cooperative Planning with Institutions. The City will continue to work cooperatively with institutional land owners such as Winona State University and Saint Mary's University in development of physical master plans that address the manner in which the institution interfaces with the larger community. Plans should address:

- Effects on neighborhoods and districts adjacent to the institution's boundaries;
- Natural resources, both within and outside of the institution's ownership;



*A well-known example of conservation design is the Jackson Meadows development in Marine-on-St. Croix, Washington County*

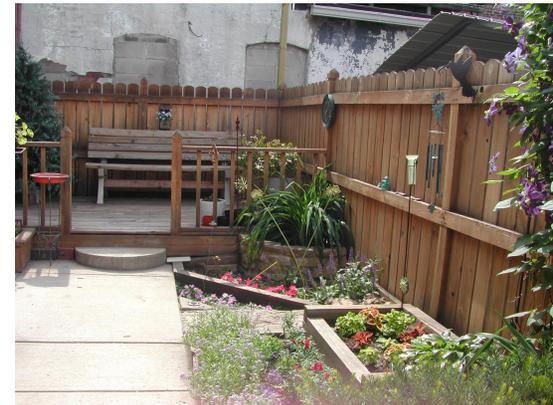
- Attention to vehicular traffic movements to and from the institution, traffic generation and management, and bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

8. Mixed Use. The City will encourage and act to foster a mix of activities, uses and densities consistent with its traditional built form and historical development patterns. To ensure that different land uses are compatible, and that new development is in scale with its context, the City will develop zoning standards and design guidelines that:

- Permit a variety of land uses to coexist within buildings when the building is of appropriate size and character;
- Recognize and reflect unique or traditional neighborhood building patterns and street and block layouts;
- Provide adequate transitions to lower-density neighborhoods and districts; and
- Keep sufficient separation between clearly incompatible uses, such as between intensive industrial or auto-oriented commercial and residential neighborhoods.



*Traditional storefront buildings are well-suited to mixed use, and many attractive residential environments exist downtown.*



## 4. Arts and Humanities Plan

### Issues

Among the issues identified by the Arts and Humanities Subcommittee were the following:

- **Visibility.** The arts community seems fragmented and there is a lack of visibility within the broader community.
- **Seasonal Shifts.** Many seasonal offerings leave a void in the winter months.
- **WSU Resources.** Winona State University's resources are not very well-known to City residents.
- **Lack of Venues.** The City lacks large permanent performance venues downtown and there are few galleries downtown.
- **Economic Development.** How can the arts become more of a force in economic development and tourism?
- **Opportunities for Participation.** Can more opportunities be provided for children to create and be exposed to art on a regular basis? For the general public?
- **Library and Parks Tie-Ins.** Can the Library's services be expanded to tie in to the arts community? Can parks and recreation programs be linked to the arts?



*Stained glass, such as this Merchants Bank skylight, is an important part of Winona's cultural and artistic heritage.*

### Goals and Objectives

1. **Community Participation.** The community will foster active participation in and enjoyment of the arts and humanities.

#### Objectives:

1. Promote establishment of centers for residents and the broader community to participate in the arts. Encourage participation from all levels, from beginning to expert.
2. Designate a specific arts district in or near the downtown area to connect arts and humanities to the success of economic and community development strategies.
3. With such people and organizations as artists, museums, galleries, libraries, theaters and foundations, create an environment that recognizes and maximizes the mutual benefit that individuals and organizations provide each other.

2. **Community Recognition and Support.** Recognize arts and humanities activities as a valued part of daily life and vital to the health of the City and region.

Objectives:

1. Work to ensure an adequate climate of public and private funding for diverse projects.
2. Promote the understanding that developing Winona's arts and humanities environment and resources for the future is as integral to community health as are good schools, public safety, and sound civic infrastructure.
  
3. The Arts in Economic Development. Use the City's rich artistic and humanities environment to attract visitors, students and new residents and to promote economic development.

Objective:

Link arts and humanities with Winona's geographic and ethnic heritage as a way to help draw visitors into town.

### Policies and Actions

1. Arts and Humanities Commission. Invigorate and restructure the City's Fine Arts Commission, by renaming it "Arts and Humanities Commission" and developing a work program that includes:
  - Potential funding sources
  - Procedures for project review and recommendations for arts and humanities initiatives in the Greater Winona area.
  - Tasks and timeline for implementing this Arts and Humanities subsection of the Comprehensive Plan.
  
2. Funding Sources. Identify funding sources and promote development of new sources of public and private funding towards arts and humanities in Winona.
  - Evaluate and improve city resources and capabilities for attracting local, state, federal and private funds to Winona for arts and humanities activities (including the exploration of grant-writing, fundraising, lobbying, etc.) The establishment in 2006 of the new city position of Community Services Director, with responsibilities for arts programming and coordination, is one important step towards improving city capabilities in this area.
  - Coordinate fiscal planning and budgeting among arts and humanities, parks and recreation, and historical preservation, allowing for these areas to maximize their inherent synergy between these groups for furthering the arts and humanities goals of the City of Winona.

- Consider offering economic incentives and/or grants for individuals and organizations that develop and maintain buildings, programs, institutions and initiatives which further arts and humanities in Winona.

3. **Public Art and Improvement Projects.** The City will work with arts groups to pursue beautification and revitalization projects that contribute to a vibrant environment and that reflect Winona's commitment to the arts and humanities. Strategies could include the following:

- Purchase or commission from local artists public art for both downtown and parks locations in order to attract and engage residents and visitors. Provide maintenance and upkeep of public art.
- Commission a cycle of community murals along a theme (for example, River Life, Winona History, Women of Winona, etc.).
- Establish a presence of sidewalk art in Winona, such as the 2007 Blue Heron Project.
- Develop downtown and riverfront public spaces with architectural elements such as fountains and public seating to serve as focal points for the business district and attract the general public, arts workshops, and street performers.



4. **A Mixed-Use District.** Establish a mixed-use arts-oriented district focused on the downtown that will combine housing, studios, galleries, entertainment, retail and restaurants in a walkable setting. (See discussion of updated zoning for mixed use under Section 5, Downtown Revitalization Plan.)

5. **Offer Activities and Learning Opportunities.** Ensure that numerous and varied arts and humanities activities and learning opportunities are offered to community members on a day to day basis, so as to integrate arts and humanities into the fabric of daily life. Strategies include the following:

- Promote and participate in sponsoring organized events such as lectures, exhibits, installations and similar educational events. This may include support for events sponsored by other agencies or organizations.
- In conjunction with the Park and Recreation Department, area schools, and Community Education, offer affordable classes in dance, theater, music, literary and visual arts for the general public.
- Purchase or commission works of art for both downtown and parks locations from local artists.

6. **Arts Facilities.** Ensure that arts and humanities activities are visible, accessible, comfortable and housed in appropriate facilities.

- Encourage the establishment of a Winona art gallery, either freestanding or in another public building, that will exhibit pieces created by local and regional artists.
- Work towards establishment of an enhanced community arts center(s), either in a new building(s) or by retrofitting an existing unused structure(s). An arts center should offer studio space for artists to create; auditorium space for performance of theater, dance and music; classroom space for hands-on instruction in the arts; space for lectures and other such events; and gallery areas for the display of local and visiting artists' work.

7. **Wayfinding.** Link Winona's arts and humanities amenities, natural resources, parks and recreation facilities and area lodging with a complete, integrated wayfinding system, including signage identifying pedestrian and bike trails and transit routes. ("Wayfinding" also appears under the Downtown and Transportation headings and is discussed in more detail in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.)

## 5. Downtown Revitalization Plan

The downtown revitalization plan is provided here in summary format, with a focus on goals, objectives and policies. The full Downtown Revitalization Plan is a separate document that includes a detailed and site-specific analysis of the issues and topics discussed below.

### Issues

The Downtown Revitalization Committee was established in 2004 and held meetings for over a year prior to the start of the comprehensive planning process. The Committee identified a number of major issues that the plan and other initiatives should resolve:

- Riverfront Wayfinding and Access. How can access and visibility of the riverfront from downtown be improved, especially given the presence of the railroad storage tracks?
- Historic Preservation. Historic buildings within the National Register historic district have no protection against demolition or alteration. Establishing a local historic district is a priority of the Committee.
- Parking. There is a strong perception of inadequate or poorly located parking. How can existing problems be addressed? Will the perceived lack of off-street parking act as a barrier to desirable downtown development?
- Business Mix. What is an appropriate mix of businesses for downtown? Can desired uses, such as higher-end restaurants, be successful? Can certain uses be limited in number?
- Housing. Is new housing in the downtown desirable and economically feasible? What type of housing (configuration, income, target population, rental or ownership) is most feasible from a market standpoint?
- Livability. Winona's large college-age population brings activity to the downtown, but the concentration of activity around downtown bars can create livability problems and discourage both residential and higher-end commercial uses.
- Zoning. Much of the downtown is zoned for industrial use, which does not reflect its existing character or desired mix of uses.

- Status of the Julius C. Wilkie Steamboat Center. The future of this steamboat replica has been under discussion for some time, but remains unresolved. Discussions have focused on the advantages and disadvantages of removing, moving or renovating the structure.

### Vision Statement: Historic Downtown Winona – Rich Heritage. Wealth of Opportunity

The Downtown Revitalization Committee developed a specific vision statement that outlines its priorities:

The Downtown Revitalization Committee is committed to Historic Downtown Winona being the heart of our community and region, a vibrant hub of commerce, entertainment, recreation and residential life.

Historic Downtown Winona will link the Mississippi River to the rest of our beautiful community by serving as an inviting place where residents and visitors can experience our diverse culture, celebrate the arts and preserve our architectural heritage.

Through partnerships with private and public landowners, our historic downtown will:

Be the Heart of the Community and Region... by promoting residential living, celebrating the arts, encouraging entrepreneurial endeavors, and promoting hospitality and recreational activities.

Strategic goals will create and maintain an aesthetically pleasing and welcoming downtown environment - one that is accessible, orderly, safe and easy to use. Use of streetscaping, signage, and other methods will visibly enhance and delineate the location.

Be River Focused... by focusing on and capturing the natural allure of the river and appreciation for its history through appropriate land use.

Strategic goals will include enhanced visual and physical access for both land- and water-based visitors, preservation and interpretation.

Be Committed to Historic Preservation... by developing ways to educate, celebrate, promote and create awareness of our cultural and architectural heritage.

Strategic goals will establish local historic districts and provide ongoing education and incentives to ensure that future generations share our commitment to historic preservation.

Be Inclusive and Connected... by being proactive in the larger community and recognizing the importance of connections with the greater Winona area, while maintaining and enhancing the social and economic advantages of living in a small city.

Strategic goals will focus on the infrastructure, citizen and visitor support systems that link the diversified assets of the downtown to the community as a whole.

### Goals and Objectives

1. **Historic Preservation.** Preserve and enhance the historic character of Downtown Winona, as expressed through the Historic Preservation goals and policies. Maintain and improve upon the condition of historic downtown buildings.

2. **Downtown-Riverfront Connections.** Enhance the accessibility and view of the Mississippi River from within the downtown district.

#### Objectives:

1. Create a seamless transition between downtown and the riverfront.
2. Create a presence of residential, retail, restaurant, entertainment and professional office use along the river near downtown.
3. Make the downtown area of the riverfront accessible to recreational boating traffic.
4. Establish Levee Park as a recreational destination for residents and tourists.

3. **Economic Development.** Promote and enhance economic development in the downtown area.

#### Objective:

Through public, private and non-profit implementation of multi-use planning, creative financing and encouragement of entrepreneurial endeavors, create an area of economic vitality in Downtown Winona that will by its activity establish it as the heart of the community.

4. **Connectivity.** Develop clear and obvious transportation connectivity to and throughout the downtown area that addresses safety and supports commerce for residents and tourists alike.

#### Objectives:

1. Establish easily identified routes that will get people from highways, the airport and the passenger rail depot into downtown.
2. Better define safe truck routes via clear signage and minimize the presence of trucks on downtown streets. (see also Transportation)
3. Assure an adequate and visible supply of short- and long-term downtown parking, serving visitors, employees and downtown residents.
4. Provide safe pedestrian and non-motorized transportation facilities downtown.

5. Enhanced Streetscape. Create a downtown streetscape that is attractive and inviting to visitors, current and prospective residents, downtown workers and business owners.

Objectives:

Implement streetscape improvements, including lighting, street furniture and vegetation, designed at a pedestrian scale that fosters comfort and safety and encourages both daytime and evening activity.

Policies and Actions

The following policies are intended to provide a general framework for downtown revitalization efforts. More site-specific plans and recommendations are included in the complete Downtown Revitalization Plan. (Note that the policies relating to historic preservation of downtown buildings are in the Historic Preservation Plan.)

1. Downtown-Riverfront Connections. Develop improved public access to and use of the riverfront while preserving the mixed use heritage of the “working” river. This policy includes recommendations for street connections and relates closely to the following policy on the redesign of Levee Park.

- Main Street should be redesigned as the “gateway” to Levee Park. This action depends on relocating the railroad switching yard along Levee Park, which may not occur for some time. Interim actions include:
  - Create a comfortable and safe access to Levee Park over the railroad tracks at Main Street. Access to the river by way of Main Street should be as wide as Main Street itself.
  - Until the railroad switching yard is relocated, create comfortable and safe access to Levee Park over the railroad tracks at all feasible access points.
  - Develop signage and landscaping for all alternative street accesses to the River (as well as Main Street) that clearly designates, invites, and draws one to Levee Park from the Downtown area.

2. Levee Park Redesign. Levee Park should be redesigned according to the following general goals. (However, it is understood that the actual redesign will be a separate process with additional public input, and that the final design will reflect this process.)

- Reference and draw upon the original Levee Park design plan, while recognizing and accommodating the levee structure and other contemporary needs.





*Steamboat Days festival in Levee Park.  
The park below the levee is dominated by  
pavement.*



- Minimize the visual impact of fencing and landscaping that block views and access to the riverfront.
- Balance vehicular and pedestrian access. In general, maintain vehicular access to overlook areas, but consider limiting vehicular access along the length of the riverfront to transit and emergency vehicles.
- Maximize and enhance views of the river from throughout the park, through terracing or other changes in elevation.

Examples of potential improvements that should be considered as part of the redesign process include:

- Increasing the docking facilities on the riverfront and include a means of easy identification (directions and attractions) and access routes from the docking area to the downtown area.
- Redesigning the current site of the Wilkie Steamboat Center (whether the structure is ultimately removed or remains at its current location) to create an enhanced visual focus for the park, to include landscape and public art elements and maximize views of the river.
- Creating additional picnic and seating areas throughout the park.
- Improved lighting in order to make the area functional, inviting, and safe for both day and evening entertainment venues and gatherings.

3. Updated Zoning for Mixed Use. Encourage mixed use, including commercial, housing, office and entertainment uses, throughout the downtown riverfront area, fostering pedestrian flow and activity. Mixed use can be promoted through updated zoning that offers incentives for preferred types of uses, as well as through public investments such as the Levee Park redesign. Zoning standards can also encourage a strong arts presence in the downtown area, and facilitate redevelopment of industrial sites (where industrial facilities could be relocated). Updated zoning standards should also address issues such as building height and massing, to ensure that taller buildings are carefully sited to avoid “walling off” the riverfront

4. Design Guidelines. Implement design guidelines for the greater downtown area. The primary purpose of design guidelines is to foster high-quality development and redevelopment that is compatible with downtown’s historic buildings and streetscapes. Design guidelines can also complement public investment in streetscape or parking improvements, while reducing uncertainty in the development review process. Guidelines typically apply to new construction, major exterior additions, or site improvements such as new parking. They can be linked to updated zoning standards (see above) or incorporated into a site plan review process. Design guidelines are included as an Appendix to the Downtown Revitalization Plan.

5. Business Mix. Define and establish an appropriate business mix that will make the downtown area vibrant year round, during the day and into the evening and be appealing for residents and visitors alike. While the current downtown business mix is oriented towards community needs, there is a need for additional visitor-oriented retail and services. Examples of desirable complementary businesses include:

- Specialty retail oriented towards particular clusters of activities, such as crafts, gifts, home supplies, antiques, furnishings and décor, that can draw customers from a larger area;
- Art galleries and artists' studios, providing opportunities for visitors to interact with artists and craftspeople;
- River-oriented recreational equipment and visitor services, such as canoeing, kayaking, biking and fishing equipment and tours.
- Restaurants – there is a strong desire for more upscale “fine dining” restaurants, but these have proved difficult to attract and retain. However, as downtown residents increase in number, the potential for such businesses will also increase.

6. Support New and Existing Businesses. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, explore offering new business incentive programs, incubator concepts and business start up resources. Expand existing training opportunities, and create new ones, for business owners in areas such as customer service and employee training. Encourage coordination of business hours, advertising and promotions.

7. Downtown Housing. Create additional living space in the downtown area that will enhance the vitality of the business community. In this case, Winona can draw upon housing prototypes from the Twin Cities and other riverfront communities such as La Crosse. Loft-type multifamily buildings of up to 4 to 6 stories in height, with some amount of retail at ground floor level, have proved popular both as condominiums and rental units. While the condo market may have peaked in larger cities, its potential in Winona remains untapped. Potential market segments include university faculty, staff and graduate students, empty-nesters, retirees and young professionals. Live-work combinations such as artists' studios should also be explored. The Downtown Revitalization Plan identifies several suitable locations for conversions or new construction. Of course, detailed market studies would likely be part of any large-scale development proposal.

Concentrations of taller buildings can have the negative effect of ‘walling off’ the riverfront from public view. New buildings should be carefully sited to maintain view corridors, using techniques such as orienting buildings with their longer axis perpendicular to the riverfront (see Design Guidelines, Downtown Revitalization Plan).

8. Recreation. Create recreational opportunities that will appeal to downtown residents, residents of the rest of Winona, and visitors. Recreational opportunities are those that relate to use of the river and riverfront (boating, biking, fishing, etc.) as well as the City's extensive upland trail and park resources. Sales of recreational supplies, equipment rentals and shuttles to riverfront sites would make it easier for visitors to explore new activities.

9. Tourism. Coordinate tourism and hospitality activities and promotions within the downtown area. Continue to build on communication and promotional opportunities to encourage tourism activity in the downtown area, working with public, private and nonprofit organizations (see also Economic Development).

10. Wayfinding and Traffic Flow. Define clear and well-signed traffic routes into downtown for general vehicular traffic, truck traffic, and bicycle and pedestrian traffic. A citywide wayfinding system should be developed to address the needs of these different populations. (See Transportation section for discussion of specific routes.)

- Investigate the feasibility of a downtown/riverfront trolley service linking satellite parking areas to downtown businesses and recreational, cultural and entertainment venues, including the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, the County Historical Society Museum, the Watkins and Polish museums, Levee and Aghaming parks, and other sites as they become accessible.

11. Parking Management and Improvements. As with many downtowns, Winona suffers from somewhat exaggerated perceptions of inadequate parking supply because of peak hour shortages of visible parking. Parking management should distinguish between different populations:

1. Visitors and customers: highest priority for visible and convenient on- or off-street parking;
2. Employees: long-term, off-street parking, with incentives for its use and disincentives for on-street parking;
3. Downtown residents: need dedicated off-street parking, although generally at lower ratios than typical single-family housing. The issue of student housing and related parking demands will require some additional analysis.

The site-specific parking recommendations outlined in the Downtown Framework Plan include the following strategies:

- Conversion of several north-south street segments to one-way pairs in order to provide diagonal parking on both sides, increasing the on-street supply;
- Conversion of parallel to diagonal parking on one side of several two-way streets;



*Mid-day on-street parking, Third Street.*

- Recommendations for structured parking in combination with liner retail or office uses in several central locations. (“Liner” buildings have retail or office uses wrapped around one or more facades, with parking in the interior.)
- Surface parking lots in more remote locations, with incentives for employee or overflow resident use and a possible trolley or shuttle service.
- Provision of resident parking on new housing or mixed use development sites.
- Improved enforcement and employee training.

12. Streetscape Improvements. Continue to implement streetscape improvements throughout the downtown, with priority given to those blocks that provide connections to the riverfront and support the greatest concentration of pedestrian-oriented uses. Streetscape improvements will require more detailed design, but should include:

- Wayfinding signage with a consistent historic appearance that leads pedestrians and motorists to downtown landmarks.
- Street trees and other landscaped green space that will attract future downtown residents and provide gathering spaces.
- Decorative lighting and a coordinated palette of street furniture – benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc. – with consistent design, materials and colors.
- Decorative brick paving in the “boulevard” area of downtown sidewalks and within crosswalks.
- Preservation of existing brick streets.

In addition to the design of streetscape improvements, creation of sign standards and façade improvement guidelines for downtown businesses, both within and outside of local historic districts, will complement and strengthen the public streetscape investment.

13. A Permanent Downtown Association. The existing Downtown Revitalization Committee and the Historic Downtown Business Group are both volunteer organizations working on complementary activities and relying on a similar pool of volunteers. The two groups should ideally combine their efforts and create a permanent structured downtown association that will oversee the implementation of this plan and lead the City’s downtown revitalization efforts. The existing Revitalization Committee has already established a strong set of priorities. Additional activities could include:

- Organization of seasonal events such as Steamboat Days
- Encouragement of consistent business hours and shared promotions
- Recruitment of complementary businesses



*Parking behind buildings, Third Street.*

- Management of a grant or revolving loan program providing funds to downtown property owners for building rehabilitation and upgrading
- Oversight of specific projects such as the Levee Park redesign or streetscape improvements.

Potential strategies to support its efforts include:

- Membership or contributions by downtown businesses and cultural and educational institutions, banks and government agencies.
- Creation of a special services district (SSD) similar to those created in many Minnesota cities and districts. An SSD can raise funds for desired downtown improvements, activities or events, using assessments from businesses, a majority of which must agree to participate. See Appendix 2 of the Downtown Revitalization Plan for further discussion of SSDs.

## 6. Economic Development Plan

### Issues

Issues identified by the Economic Development Subcommittee at the beginning of the planning process included:

- Local jobs and job creation. Today many students provide inexpensive labor, but are there sufficient middle-income jobs that can support families? What types of jobs should the City target for growth? Should an incubator with WSU be explored?
- Land use. Where is growth going to occur, what infrastructure is needed for it, and how much would it cost? How much land is available and how much is needed? What kind of jobs could new growth areas generate? What supporting land uses – such as housing – might be needed. Should coordination between City and County be improved?
- Entrepreneurship. Most companies are here because their founders are here. What types of business have been successful, and how do we grow the next generation of entrepreneurs?
- Workforce. Where does Winona's workforce come from, and how many leave for other employment areas? Where are the 'gaps' in employment? How can employees be retained and trained to be more productive?
- Health care. Winona's health care industry is smaller than it should be for its population. Is this an issue the plan can or should address?

### Goals

1. Quality of Life. Use the assurance of a continued high quality of life in the area through the responsible stewardship of our resources and heritage, to attract and retain employers and employees to Winona.

#### Objectives:

1. Highlight in all marketing and promotional activities Winona's excellent healthcare, educational, and recreational facilities.
2. Utilize the city's geography, heritage and natural resources to enhance its desirability as a place to live, study, work, and visit.



*River-dependent industries will remain in their current locations*





2. Business Development. Retain and grow existing businesses and attract new businesses.

Objectives:

1. Continue to partner with local businesses and educational institutions that will promote and support the strong entrepreneurial base of the city.
2. Support the development and retention of a productive workforce.
3. Attract businesses that will provide jobs that can provide a broad range of options for skills, wages and salaries, and development.
4. Collaborate with the State of Minnesota and the surrounding communities on the development of regional business opportunities.
5. Support and enhance the city's intermodal transportation facilities to support the domestic and foreign trading activities of industries.
6. Develop a tourism strategy that fully utilizes the area's heritage and natural resource endowments.
7. Support the use of renewable energy and other practices consistent with sustainable development.
8. In anticipation of demographic trends, support the development of private and public services that will cater to an aging population.

Policies and Actions

1. Invest in Recreational and Cultural Amenities. To enhance the City's attractiveness to skilled workers and employers, it is necessary to provide a high level of recreational and cultural opportunities. This is particularly true of professional, health care and other "knowledge" workers, who have many choices as to where to live. The recommendations under Arts and Humanities, Downtown Revitalization, and Parks and Recreation include several strategies that support this policy, including:

- A variety of performing arts venues, art galleries and studios, and learning opportunities in the arts and humanities, taking advantage of the resources of Winona's universities;
- Better identification and marketing of City parks and other recreational facilities;
- A complete and regionally-connected recreational trail system;
- A focus on facilities for year-round sports, including winter sports;
- Downtown and riverfront housing and workplaces that offer a high degree of architectural character and an "urban" lifestyle, in proximity to many cultural and recreational opportunities.

2. Support and Expand the Composite Materials Cluster. Winona has a strong and successful industrial cluster centered on composite materials and components that gives the city a unique role in the national and international market. This cluster, anchored by RTP, dates from World War II and has created a series of spin-off firms based on a vibrant workforce knowledge and skills base and an entrepreneurial business community.<sup>1</sup> Economic development efforts should be focused on assisting the existing business base to expand, supporting new spin-off firms, and attracting new industrial and consumer applications. The Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation sponsored a study of the composite cluster in 1996, and continues to support emerging high-potential businesses in the cluster.<sup>2</sup> The City should promote this cluster world-wide as a unique opportunity for other corporate and start-up firms in the same and related fields.

As with other industries, the long-term viability of the composite materials cluster depends on attracting a skilled workforce. Policy 1, above, offers recommendations on this issue.

3. Pursue Development of a Downtown Conference/Performing Arts Center. In 2006 the City received a state appropriation for a feasibility study for a downtown conference and performing arts center. A task force of City staff and other stakeholders has been appointed to oversee this effort. The downtown planning effort identifies a potential site for such a center and links it to other downtown attractions and facilities. The upcoming study will help refine the design, programming, costs and funding sources for this facility.

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<sup>1</sup> “Winona is the center of advanced composites manufacturing. Composite materials consist of ‘a matrix of one material that has been reinforced by the fibers and/or particles of another material’ which has the effect of making it stronger, more conductive, flame retardant, water resistant, etc. This cluster developed in the region after World War II to serve a fast-growing defense and aerospace market. Winona State University enhanced this cluster through the country’s only undergraduate composite materials engineering program, and applied research and testing facilities for local firms. Today the cluster consists of firms producing advanced composite materials as well as firms applying these technologies to existing products such as electric heaters, stringed instrument bows, canoes, and softball bats.

*Source:* Rural Knowledge Clusters in Minnesota for Economic Development. By Lee Munnich, Director, State and Local Policy Program, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota. U. of Minnesota Extension Service. See also the following footnote.

<sup>2</sup> The 1996 “Southeastern and South Central Minnesota Industry Cluster Study” is available at [http://www.hhh.umn.edu/img/assets/9140/southeast\\_industry\\_cluster.pdf](http://www.hhh.umn.edu/img/assets/9140/southeast_industry_cluster.pdf). Industry clusters studied included composites, food processing, industrial machinery (including computer manufacturing), and printing and publishing (including software)

4. Develop a Regional Tourism Strategy. While tourism marketing efforts by the Convention and Visitor's Bureau have been increasingly effective, especially in working with tour groups and steamboat visitors, future efforts should strive to position the City and region as a tri-state destination opportunity for visitors. New or potential future attractions include:

- The new Minnesota Marine Art Museum
- The Great River Shakespeare Festival (including the potential for extending the festival season)
- The Beethoven Festival
- The historic Watkins complex and museum, an under-utilized attraction, and the nearby Polish Heritage Museum
- The proposed conference and performing arts center
- The planned riverfront trail system and enhanced recreational access

5. Workforce Training Strategies. In order to develop and retain a skilled workforce, training opportunities are needed for increasingly diverse populations, and for a variety of age groups that will dominate the workforce in the future. For example, Southeast Asian, Latino and North African immigrants contribute significant portions of the workforce in other cities and regions of Minnesota, but are under-represented in Winona. With appropriate training, these groups could help fill shortages in the manufacturing workforce. Likewise, an aging population nationwide will require employers to do more to attract younger workers (as discussed under Policy 1) and older workers. Winona already attracts retirees, some of whom may seek part-time or flexible work opportunities.

6. Foster Global Connections. Globalization is both a challenge and an opportunity for the U.S. economy, particularly manufacturing businesses. Winona's intermodal transportation connections give it an advantage in moving materials and products to and from overseas ports. Several local companies have begun working in China to source and import products or components, one example being a trading company established by Fastenal, Inc.

7. Maintain and Strengthen Partnerships. Take advantage of the community's major educational institutions to support academic/industry partnerships in research, employment and training. Cooperative efforts such as the Composite Materials Engineering program at Winona State University and traditional and custom training programs at Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical are successful examples of such partnerships.

## 7. Environment and Energy Plan

### Issues

The Environmental Subcommittee identified major issues through a “SWOT” exercise (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) and a review and updating of the goals of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. These issues can be summarized as follows:

- Strengths:
  - Blufflines
  - Existing public/natural areas
  - Forested slopes and valleys
  - Springs and streams, including trout streams
  - Green space around Lake Winona
- Weaknesses:
  - Lack of connections to the river and barriers to river access.
  - Lack of adequate bike/pedestrian facilities
  - Lack of developable land
  - Current regulations inadequate to fully protect resources
  - Lack of awareness of existing policies
  - Multiple jurisdictions (i.e., Aghaming Park’s Wisconsin location) complicate enforcement of environmental regulations and open space protection.
- Opportunities:
  - Brownfield redevelopment, residential redevelopment in older neighborhoods
  - Utilize and capitalize on the resources of the city’s higher education institutions
  - Developable land southwest of city
  - Downtown revitalization; more green space downtown
- Threats:
  - Loss of historic buildings downtown, increase in surface parking
  - Priority to auto-oriented development
  - Increasing development pressure
  - Decreasing quality of recreational experience on river

### Goals and Objectives

1. Protect Key Resources. Protect the visual, aesthetic and ecological integrity of the river corridor, bluffland areas and steep slopes, and other valued resources.



Objectives:

1. Work cooperatively with other units of government, institutions and organizations to manage growth without compromising the natural environment.
2. Promote redevelopment within older portions of the city to minimize the need for development on the fringes.
3. Use low-impact development techniques in both new development and redevelopment to control stormwater runoff and minimize impacts on resources.
4. Promote conservation design in new development in sensitive areas.

2. Maintain and enhance open space connections. Protect and enhance the visual and aesthetic integrity and continuity of public open space, greenways, and recreational corridors.

Objectives:

1. Protect significant natural features when planning public infrastructure improvements and private developments.
2. Restore and maintain the more “undeveloped” parks, such as Aghaming and Prairie Island, as areas for natural recreation and environmental education.
3. Actively pursue permanent conservation easements, acquisition and similar methods of preserving open space.
4. Encourage and support a city-wide tree planting program.

3. Protect water quality and aquatic resources such as streams, rivers, lakes, springs, seeps and wetlands to maintain the integrity of the natural environment.

4. Foster stewardship. Promote a community environmental vision through the establishment of education, preservation and energy conservation programs.

Objectives:

1. Promote environmental awareness regarding low-impact lifestyles, pollution prevention, recycling techniques and benefits, etc.
2. Promote use of native species in City, development and homeowner plantings.
3. Increase public awareness of the need for environmental regulations.

Policies and Actions

1. Continue to Strengthen Environmental Protection Standards. Environmental policies and regulations at the City, County and State level have been strengthened and enhanced since completion of the 1995 comprehensive plan. These policies and regulations include the



City's Wellhead Protection Plan, Stormwater Management Ordinance and Environmentally Sensitive Lands Development Ordinance, and the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge Management Plan. Additional improvements should include:

- Requirements for the use of conservation design in sensitive resource areas. Conservation design, also known as clustering or open space development, concentrates allowable development on the least sensitive portions of a site while protecting key natural, scenic or historic resources; it can also be used to protect working farmland. (See the discussion in Section 3, Land Use Plan.)
- Limitations on impervious coverage in all zoning districts, so that a percentage of each parcel will remain vegetated, providing improved stormwater management, aesthetics and pedestrian comfort.
- Stronger requirements for landscaping as part of the development review process, including both protection of existing vegetation and establishment of new landscape screening around site elements such as surface parking, service areas and outdoor storage.
- Setbacks of structures from bluffs and ridgelines in order to protect biodiversity and key scenic viewsheds.

2. Support Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy. Both the City and Winona County have been at the forefront of government initiatives in this area. In December 2006, the City was approved by the Internal Revenue Service to sell almost \$1.9 million in interest-free Clean Renewable Energy Bonds to install solar panels on City Hall, the wastewater treatment plant and the central city garage. Winona County was approved for \$3.2 million to install a wind turbine project in Mount Vernon Township. In February 2007 the City Council approved the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, committing to programs that reduce global warming pollution levels.

Further initiatives should focus on educating residents, businesses and the development community on how to utilize conservation techniques and renewable energy sources. Examples include:

- Community workshops on sustainable, alternative energy sources such as solar and wind power.
- Continuing to promote the use of renewable energy in city facilities, including the use of alternative fuels for city vehicles
- Encouraging site designs that will minimize energy use through reduction in paved area and other conservation and low impact development techniques.
- Encouraging site designs that will support the use of solar and wind energy.



*Example of green roof and solar panels on office / industrial building.*

3. Create Incentives for Low Impact Development. “Low Impact Development (LID) is based on the philosophy that stormwater should be treated as a resource, not a waste product. Rather than using one or two large, costly treatment facilities at the base of a drainage area, LID uses small cost-effective features at the lot level. These are designed to store and treat rainwater where it falls. If done correctly, LID features are viewed as an amenity by landowners. LID can be incorporated into new development as well as redevelopment projects.”<sup>3</sup> Examples of incentives include:

- Workshops for homeowners and business on LID techniques such as green roofs, rain gardens, bioswales and pervious pavement, and on the use of native species in home landscaping.
- Small grants or loans to businesses for installation of LID facilities.



*Example of planted swale between sidewalk and property line.*

4. Develop Street Standards that Minimize Impervious Coverage and Runoff. While the City’s existing street system relies largely on the existing stormwater collection system, new development outside the Island has the opportunity to use drainage swales rather than the typical curb and gutter system, as a means of managing stormwater more effectively. This type of street design can be used in conjunction with sidewalks or a pathway system, either placing the swale between the sidewalk and the property line or within the planting strip between street and sidewalk. The narrower street widths recommended in the Transportation section of this plan would also reduce stormwater runoff.

5. Develop a Comprehensive Tree Planting and Urban Forestry Program. Street trees can reduce energy consumption and cool the urban environment while increasing the level of pedestrian comfort during the summer months. While the City’s original street system was designed with street trees, placed in boulevards (planting strips) between curb and sidewalk, there is currently no street tree planting policy in place. Several steps are recommended:

- Institute a requirement for street tree planting as part of new subdivisions. Options could include requiring developers to provide trees within the street right-of-way as part of their required improvements, or for the City to plant trees, possibly under a cost-sharing arrangement. The City would then commit to maintaining street trees and replacing them if they are damaged or destroyed.
- Require at least one tree to be placed on any new lot created under the subdivision ordinance, with future maintenance by the homeowner.

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<sup>3</sup> Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, *WaterPro* newsletter, Fall 2005.

- Assist homeowners wishing to plant trees on their properties by providing appropriate tree species at low cost or providing matching funds. Offer educational materials to homeowners on proper selection, planting and maintenance of trees.

6. Open Space and Public Lands Enhancements. The City's parks and public lands, while extensive, have tended to be managed with conventional methods – use of pesticides and an emphasis on “manicured” turf rather than native vegetation. These policies should be re-evaluated so that areas are managed according to their level of use. Adopt-a-Park or other volunteer programs should also be considered as a way to enhance City parks and public lands by re-introducing native plants and removing invasive species.

7. Emphasis on Enforcement and Education. Since the 1995 comprehensive plan, much progress has been made to improve environmental regulations. However, an increased commitment of staff time is needed to adequately enforce environmental regulations, and to educate landowners and developers about how best to comply with these standards. This commitment of staff time should be explicitly defined in the City's annual budget.



*Street trees on 7<sup>th</sup> Street*



*A block of Washington Street shows mature street trees and locations where trees have been removed.*

## 8. Historic Preservation Plan

### Issues

Since the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, much has been accomplished in the area of preservation, including development of historic contexts for the City and design guidelines for the Second Street Historic District. The Historic Preservation Subcommittee identified some of the major issues that the 2007 Comprehensive Plan should address:

- **Visibility.** A general lack of public awareness of some of the City's most unique resources, such as the Watkins and Polish museums.
- **Cost concerns.** The idea that historic building standards can increase costs of building renovation or rehabilitation.
- **Lack of a local historic district.** Locally established districts can offer some level of protection for existing historic buildings, compared to the largely honorary National Register district designation. The recent demolition of several contributing buildings in the Third Street Historic District for employee parking highlighted the importance of this issue.



### Goals and Objectives

1. Preserve the City's unique character. Identify, value and preserve the unique and diverse characteristics of Winona's architectural and built environment and its valuable outdoor and other public spaces.

#### Objectives:

1. Preserve, protect and promote identified significant architectural themes, unique elements of infrastructure in the City, (such as limestone sidewalks, brick streets and iron fences) and the established green space that helps define the City's historical character.
2. Encourage infill construction appropriate to neighborhood context and aesthetics.
3. Preserve and protect significant historical structures and districts through the promotion of local designations and the creation of clearly written design guidelines.
4. Promote methods of identifying and considering archeological resources prior to the development/redevelopment of property.



2. Preserve and enhance the historic character of downtown Winona.

Objectives:

1. Educate and create awareness for celebrating and promoting cultural and architectural heritage.
2. Maintain and improve upon the condition of historic downtown buildings.

3. Recognize the City's diverse heritage. Identify and celebrate the role of diverse peoples in Winona's development and preserve the artifacts of their lives. Recognize the legacy and many contributions of religious, fraternal and other groups to the City.

Objectives:

1. Celebrate the City's pre-settlement and post-settlement ethnicity.
2. Encourage Winonans and visitors to learn about and appreciate Winona's unique stories by collecting oral histories, written records and artifacts.

Policies and Actions

1. Establish a local historic district in downtown Winona. Districts and properties on the National Register of Historic Places, while eligible for federal tax incentives, are not protected against demolition or unsympathetic alteration. A local historic district, by contrast, when combined with a design review process, can protect the character-defining elements of a property, and can provide for review and approval or denial of demolitions.

A downtown local historic district would be located along Third Street from Johnson Street to Franklin Street and along Second Street from Center Street to Lafayette Street, matching the boundaries of the existing National Register East Second Street and Third Street districts. An attempt to establish such a district in the mid-1990s failed due to the opposition of some property owners. A renewed effort should build on the increased awareness of and commitment to downtown revitalization, focus on educating property owners, and offer incentives for renovation of historic buildings.

Related actions include the following:

- Implement design standards for both contributing and non-contributing<sup>4</sup> buildings,

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<sup>4</sup> Contributing buildings have retained their historic character, whereas the historic character of non-contributing buildings has been compromised.



including uniform signage within the Downtown Local Historic District. (Design standards were developed in 1999 for the East Second Street Historic District, primarily focusing on building renovation standards, and are currently being updated for the Third Street Historic District.)

- Implement design guidelines for the greater downtown area, focusing primarily on achieving compatibility between new infill development and surrounding traditional storefront buildings. Design guidelines can be linked to updated zoning standards (see below) or incorporated into a site plan review process. (This recommendation is also identified in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.)
- Compile reference materials for building owners regarding process and time line for permitting projects within the Downtown Local Historic District and informing them of the existing tax credit attached to the National Historic District and other state, federal and local funding options.

2. Update zoning regulations to encourage preservation and context-sensitive development. Zoning standards, both in downtown Winona and in its traditional neighborhoods and commercial districts, should encourage mixed use development, emphasize pedestrian-oriented design, and encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Zoning standards should provide incentives for such reuse, such as reduced requirements for off-street parking, relaxation of setback requirements, or additional density or intensity of development.

3. Implement financial incentives and resources for historic building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. Programs should include, but are not limited to, public/private partnerships with financial institutions, grants, revolving loans, tax abatement, and tax increment financing. Programs should focus primarily on downtown Winona, but should also include historic buildings outside the downtown.

4. Develop educational and informational programs that are designed to heighten an awareness and understanding of local history for all citizens and visitors to the City. Examples of such programs may include the development of K-12 curricula, brochures, travel exhibits and specialized seminars, using available media resources.

5. Encourage intergovernmental and interagency partnerships between the City, County, Winona County Historical Society, Visit Winona and others to promote preservation opportunities and programs.

## 9. Housing Plan

### Issues

The Housing Subcommittee reviewed housing conditions and needs and identified the following primary issues the comprehensive plan should address:

- Demographic changes – matching housing needs to future demographics of the community including senior housing, student housing, singles and families.
- Innovation – need for innovative approaches to redevelopment – “thinking outside the box.”
- Downtown and riverfront housing – what is the current and future potential for housing downtown and along the riverfront?
- Tax exempt housing – implications of the expansion of tax exempt (university and other nonprofit) housing and an increase in vacancy rates affecting tax base (27% of properties in the City are tax exempt).
- Rental/owner-occupied housing balance – the limited protection offered for homeowners in the core (R-3) area of the city (regulations limiting rental housing do not apply in this area).
- Costs of development and difficulties of encouraging new affordable housing.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Preserve the integrity and character of the housing in Winona's older central neighborhoods to enhance the livability of the entire community. Encourage new and innovative approaches for mixed housing development and older neighborhood renewal.

#### Objectives:

1. Continue code and zoning enforcement to strengthen and enhance existing neighborhoods and promote the maintenance and stewardship of property.
2. Ensure that single family dwellings in older neighborhoods remain attractive and viable for families.
3. Promote the integration of schools, parks, open space and community centers in neighborhoods.



4. Encourage redevelopment of areas where the housing is structurally or functionally obsolete, with a mix of housing types, including affordable new construction.
5. Promote green building practices, low-impact development techniques for storm water management, recycling, energy conservation and other ecological practices that reduce impacts on the environment.



2. A balanced housing supply. Plan for a housing supply that meets the current and future needs of all demographic and socioeconomic sectors of the population.

Objectives:

1. Assess the future needs for housing in Winona, including the large “baby boom” population segment.
2. Encourage affordable housing that is integrated into neighborhoods to facilitate choices in housing for eligible individuals.
3. Consider conversion of underutilized commercial areas to mixed use development that will include housing and recreation, focusing on opportunities in the downtown and along the riverfront.

3. Rental housing improvements. Improve the appearance, livability and affordability of rental housing in the City of Winona while maintaining a reasonable balance between ownership and rental housing.

Objectives:

1. Consider incentives for modification and updating of existing rental properties.
2. Continue to work with owners of rental properties to maintain neighborhood livability and address homeowner concerns, especially in those districts where the percentage of rental housing is not limited.

Policies and Actions

1. Maintain and enhance the viability of single-family housing in older neighborhoods, through existing housing rehabilitation programs, appropriate zoning standards, code enforcement, and additional neighborhood revitalization efforts. Strategies include:

- A point-of-sale inspection program is used by many cities for both owner-occupied and rental housing, in order to assure that basic health and safety standards are met when properties change hands. Point-of-sale ordinances can apply to one- to four-family



dwellings, condominiums, townhouses, and in some cases to multifamily or commercial properties.

- A Block Club or Adopt-a-Block program in which neighbors identify properties in need of improvement can be an effective tool to encourage property owners to maintain or upgrade their properties, while also improving the physical appearance of the block through trash pick-up and weed removal. Neighborhood Watch areas in the City have conducted informal programs of this type.
- Compile or develop architectural resources that help homeowners to appropriately update their older homes. Plan books have been developed for bungalow, Cape Cod and rambler housing styles in Minnesota,<sup>5</sup> and could be made available as part of a lending library for homeowners. Development of a similar architectural plan book for Winona's "half-lot houses" should also be considered, as discussed below.
- The "half-lot" single-family houses found throughout much of the East End represent an important part of Winona's heritage, having been constructed by Polish immigrants and added on to as economic circumstances improved or to accommodate extended families. Today they provide some of the only affordable single-family detached housing in the city. However, their lot width (typically 25 feet) and 'shotgun-style' design make them difficult to update and often require multiple variances. Zoning standards should be revised to recognize this housing type, perhaps as a distinct subdistrict, and to allow reasonable expansion. In addition, development of an architectural "plan book" for half-lot houses should be considered. Guidebooks of this type provide guidance for typical renovations or expansions that are consistent with the architectural character of these houses.



*"Half-lot" houses*

2. Encourage mixed use and mixed income infill and redevelopment. As shown in the Land Use Plan (Figure 2), certain areas of the City – including both industrial and residential districts – are identified as suitable for redevelopment. Many other residential neighborhoods could benefit from introduction of new housing types or complementary commercial and office uses. But can new housing types such as duplexes, townhouses, or carriage houses be introduced into a largely single-family neighborhood without threatening its character? What about offices, coffee shops or convenience stores? To ensure that any land use changes are beneficial to surrounding neighborhoods, the following strategies should be explored as part of an update of the City's ordinances:

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<sup>5</sup> One example of such a guide is *Cape Cods and Ramblers: A Remodeling Planbook for Post WWII Houses*. Available from <http://www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/yourhome/remodbook.htm>

- Zoning and design standards that will allow for some degree of housing diversity while maintaining neighborhood character. For example, some cities have used “neighborhood conservation” overlay districts to allow for some design review of new development proposals, while others have established “form-based” zoning standards that define specific compatible building types.
- A limit on the number or size of any new housing type or nonresidential use, based on percentage of block face, number of units per block, or similar standards. Similar to the City’s “30%” standard for rental properties, this type of zoning standard can help prevent replacement of entire blocks of housing with other housing types or land uses.
- Consideration of the use of carriage houses or similar secondary units (typically built above detached garages) as a means of adding additional affordable units without some of the negative impacts of multifamily conversions of single-family houses. Adding secondary unit of this type can also help homeowners provide for elderly family members or provide additional rental income that can help them maintain their older homes. Secondary units can be designed to be compatible with the principal structure.

3. Encourage creation of new “traditional” neighborhoods that combine varied housing types, open space and recreation, schools and shopping, to create a safe, convenient and walkable environment. This policy is discussed in Chapter 3, Land Use Plan, under “New Neighborhood Planning and Design.”

4. Continue to assess housing needs. Conduct an updated Comprehensive Housing Study to determine the future needs for housing in the Winona community, addressing issues such as the aging of the “baby boom” sector and the specific housing needs of students, low- and moderate-income households, and special needs populations (elderly and handicapped).

5. Encourage historic preservation and appropriate rehabilitation of historic buildings for housing and complementary uses. This policy is discussed in Chapter 8, Historic Preservation Plan, and includes both regulatory and financial incentives.

6. Maintain and enhance the appearance, livability and affordability of rental housing. Rental housing should remain a viable and desirable housing choice. The recently adopted “30% rule” limits the percentage of rental housing to 30% of the units on a given block in most residential zoning districts. However, it does not apply in the R-3 zoning district, which has a high concentration of rental housing. Several strategies should be considered to improve rental housing and avoid negative impacts on neighborhoods:

- The City should support rehabilitation or upgrading of rental properties through grants, loans or design assistance. The City should make use of state and federal programs such as the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency's HOME Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program (a 0% interest loan to preserve existing rental housing occupied by low income persons or families).
- A point-of-sale inspection program, discussed above under Policy 1, could also be applied to rental properties. (Rental properties in the City are currently required to renew their licenses every five years, at which time they are inspected.)
- As part of property inspections, an increased emphasis on the exterior appearance of rental properties, including accessory buildings, parking areas, outdoor storage, outdoor lighting and other site elements, would help to address the overall appearance and stability of the neighborhood.

7. Student housing. Continue to work with the City's institutions of higher education to ensure that the student housing that they provide is appropriately sited and designed. A recent study by Winona State University focused on more effective use of on-campus buildings as a short-term solution to student housing. Additional student housing outside campus boundaries should be carefully designed to have a positive impact on surrounding neighborhoods and commercial districts. WSU's master plan (last updated in 2004) should be referenced and eventually updated to be consistent with the policies of this Comprehensive Plan.



## 10. Parks and Recreation Plan

### Issues

The following issues were identified by the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee and through additional analysis by the consultant team.

- Lack of connectivity. Highway 61 presents a major barrier between parks and neighborhoods north and south of the highway, especially for children and pedestrians.
- Distribution of parks. Are neighborhood park facilities distributed across the city so that they are convenient to each residential neighborhood?
- Visibility and identification of parks. Many parks lack even an identifying sign, while others lack clear identifiers of public and private areas. This lack of signage means that parks are difficult for the visitor to find without prior research.
- Fragmented park maintenance and planning. Park maintenance responsibilities are the responsibility of the Public Works Department, while maintenance of park buildings and structures are the responsibility of the Park and Recreation Department. No City department focuses on physical planning for parks as a unified system.
- Lack of sustained public input. Because there is no citywide Park Board or advisory committee, City parks staff only hear from the public regarding specific issues, such as youth sports or particular facilities. As a result, there is no way to balance competing demands and assess priorities on a citywide basis.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Thorough Assessment. Improve the park system based on an understanding of user needs, strengths and weaknesses, and on public input.

#### Objectives:

1. Analyze and assess the park system, including land and water resources, facilities, programs and user needs, in order to identify and prioritize needed improvements.
2. Improve the visibility, awareness and identification of the park system, and the enforcement of park regulations, through coordinated wayfinding and identification signage, including clear delineation of public and private properties.
3. Establish a process for regular public input on park and facility needs by Winona citizens and park user groups.



4. Develop joint agreements with other government agencies and institutions to address community facility needs and funding mechanisms
2. Integrated management. Reorganize and improve the internal management of the City's parks.

Objective:

Review and redefine the related functions of park capital improvements, operations and maintenance, and programming. Organize these functions so they are effectively integrated among city departments.

3. Park and trail expansions. Continue to expand the City's trail and park system to improve linkages, meet identified land and facility needs, and serve both existing neighborhoods and developing areas.

Objectives:

1. Complete a trail system that interconnects major parks, neighborhoods and schools within the City
2. Continue to work towards a regional trail system that connects Winona to the Root River Trail and the Great River Trail in Wisconsin.
3. Identify and prioritize land that would best suit community needs for parkland, trails, water-based recreation and open green space.
4. Identify and promote year-round recreation activities, with a particular focus on winter park use.

Policies and Actions

1. Adopt and Utilize a Parks Classification System. The classification system shown in Table 2 organizes parks by their size, function and character. It is based on the system developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association, adapted for Winona's specific conditions.<sup>6</sup> Table 3 applies these classifications to the City's parks. Parks classifications can make the process of programming activities and making improvements more understandable, by defining which parks serve their immediate neighborhoods, which serve larger sectors of the city, which are primarily devoted to active recreation, and which are centered on natural areas, trails and open space.



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<sup>6</sup> Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, NRPA, 1996.

Table 2: Park Classifications

<b>Classifications</b>	<b>General Description</b>	<b>Location Guideline</b>	<b>Size Guideline</b>	<b>Desirable Site Characteristics</b>
Play lot or Mini-Park	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Less than a ¼ mile distance in residential setting	Between 2,500 sq. ft. and one acre in size	Within neighborhoods and close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse development or housing for the elderly.
Historic Square	This type is unique to Winona and other cities developed in the late 19 <sup>th</sup> and early 20 <sup>th</sup> century. These block-sized squares were laid out as amenities and focal points for neighborhoods.	Varies	Typically one city block in size (about 2 acres)	Developed with ornamental landscaping, seating, and sometimes with informal play areas or equipment. Historic and aesthetic qualities should be preserved.
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population-geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school-park facility.
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and ½ to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.	May include natural features such as water bodies and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.
Nature Preserve, Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.	Large area with unique natural habitat. Active recreation should be designed to avoid or minimize impacts to resources. Typically include bluffs, river channels and islands.
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.	Along waterways, linear wooded areas, and former railroad beds. See Trails section.

<b>Classifications</b>	<b>General Description</b>	<b>Location Guideline</b>	<b>Size Guideline</b>	<b>Desirable Site Characteristics</b>
Athletic Fields, Sport Complexes	Heavily used or programmed athletic fields and associated facilities. May be consolidated into larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal.	Large, flat area isolated from housing and with good roadway access is ideal.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use, including water access points, aquatic centers, indoor ice rinks, etc.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable	Variable, depending on the use.
Water Access	Piers, boat docks, canoe landings, etc. that may or may not be associated with a larger park.	Variable	Depends on type of facility and access	Dedicated vehicular or pedestrian access; adequate protection from other water-related uses

## Parks and Recreational Facilities - By Park

		Acres	Address/Location	Facilities	Park Classification	Comment
	Aghaming Park	284.2 (±1,200 total)	North bank of river (WI) NE of Latsch Island	nature preserve, fishing access, hiking, swimming beach	nature preserve	problems with access and policing due to Wis. location -- access road recently closed
	Belmont-Whitten Park	0.8	100 Pelzer Street	playground equipment, softball fields	play lot	recently reduced in size due to Pelzer Street reconstruction
	Bluffside Park	453.9	800 W. Lake Blvd.	nature preserve, hiking, mountain biking, trails, X-C ski trails, Holzinger Lodge, horseshoe pits, playground	nature preserve	facilities only in Holzinger Lodge area; trails throughout park
	Central (2nd Ward) Park	0.6	50 W. 6th Street	paths, seating, landscaping	historic square	reduced in size due to post office construction, primarily decorative open space
	East Recreation Center	2.1	210 Zumbro Street	4.8 Skate Park, basketball courts, playground, softball field, indoor gym and games	community center	
	Gabrych Park	2.1	950 E. 7th Street	baseball fields	athletic fields	
	Garvin Heights Park	66.0	Between East Garvin Heights Road (Lookout) and Lake Park Drive (Lower)	nature preserve, scenic overlook, cross-country ski and hiking trails	nature preserve	
	Gilmore Valley Park	3.2	Jaybee and Thomas Drives	shelter, playground equipment, softball fields	neighborhood park	
	Gilmore Valley Park #2	1.1	Country Drive - Sunnyside Lane	basketball, tennis, volleyball courts, playground equipment	neighborhood park	
	Glen Mary Park	0.5	Glen Mary (W. Burns Valley Rd)	unimproved	undeveloped open space	seems to have been absorbed into surrounding yards - remove "park" designation?
	Glenview Park	15.0	300 Glenview Rd (south of Hwy 43)	nature preserve, fishing access to creek, hiking	nature preserve	
	Knopp Valley Park	3.4	300 Knopp Valley Drive	basketball, playground, outdoor ice rink, softball field	neighborhood park	
	Lake Park	179.6	Surrounds Lake Winona (east and west)	Dakota Street Fields, Visitor Center, Lake Lodge, bike path, Bambenek Fields, Disc Golf Courses, 2 shelters, Bandshell, Beteran's Memorial, Rose Garden, piers, boat docks, soccer, softball fields, disc golf	community park	many individual sites and facilities within park
	Mankato Park	n/a	Parks Ave. & Frontenac Drive	contiguous to Lake Park	community park	being redesigned as Unity Park with Dacotah Indian Community
	Latsch Island	88.4	main river channel, access from Interstate Bridge	public boat dock (Municipal Harbor), fishing, cross-country ski and hiking trails, bike trails	special use area	lack of signage and designated public use areas makes park appear like private houseboat community
	Levee Park	8.3	1 River Front Street	public boat dock, boating, fishing, bike trail, concerts, refreshments, picnic sites	special use area	central downtown riverfront location
	Lions Park	9.1	670 East Front Street	Lions Field Complex, Bud King Ice Arena, boat ramp, fishing access	special use area	Ice Arena expansion will remove one baseball field
	Miller Park	1.2	200 Links Lane	playground, trail access?	play lot	
	Prairie Island Park	540.0	Prairie Island Road	nature preserve, Prairie Island Campground, Kiwanis Shelter, Latsch Shelter, Spillway Boat Ramp, public boat dock, swimming beach, cross-country ski and hiking trails, playground, shelter, softball fields, volleyball courts	community park	good example of park signage

## Parks and Recreational Facilities - By Park

	Acres	Address/Location	Facilities	Park Classification	Comment
Sinclair (3rd Ward) Park	2.1	Wabasha and Liberty Streets	basketball courts, playground	neighborhood park	
Sobieski (4th Ward) Park	2.1	950 E. 8th Street	basketball, tennis courts, playground	neighborhood park	
Sugarloaf	69.8	Sugarloaf Road	nature preserve, hiking trails	nature preserve	trail access difficult to find
Tillman Park	1.4	549 Kerry Drive	basketball, tennis courts, outdoor ice rink, playground	neighborhood park	
Valley Oaks Field	1.9	Valley Oaks Drive	softball fields	athletic fields	
Valley Oaks Park	5.2	Valley Oaks Drive	shelter, nature preserve, basketball, tennis courts, playground, outdoor ice rink	neighborhood park	
West Recreation Center	2.5	800 W. 5th Street	Aquatic Center, playground, outdoor ice rink	community center	
Westfield Golf Course	83.8	1460 W. 5th Street	9-hole course, pro shop, rentals, refreshments	special use area	
Wincrest Park	22.6	end of Woodpark Road	nature preserve, basketball, tennis courts, hiking trails, outdoor ice rink, playground, softball field	neighborhood park	
Windom (1st Ward) Park	2.1	250 W. 6th Street	gazebo, landscaping, fountain, seating	historic square	
<b>Undeveloped O. Space</b>	22.3	2 parcels -- Garvin Heights area		to be determined	
<b>Water-Related Facilities</b>					
Dacota Street Pier / Boat Ramp		Lake Park	pier and public boat dock on Lake Winona	water access	
East End Boat Harbor			public boat dock on Mississippi	water access	
Franklin Boat Ramp		Lake Park	public boat dock on Lake Winona	water access	
Hamilton Street Boat Ramp		Lake Park	public boat dock on Lake Winona	water access	
Huff Street Pier		Lake Park	pier on Lake Winona	water access	
Wagon Bridge		1 Old Dike Road - Latsch Island Park	historic bridge to Aghaming Park, bike, ped, limited vehicular traffic	special use area (part)	rebuilt 2005



2. **Maintain Partnerships.** Continue to partner with schools, neighboring jurisdictions and higher educational institutions to provide a full range of recreational opportunities. The City has worked effectively with these partners to jointly provide sports programming and shared management of some facilities. These practices could be enhanced by better centralized information about recreational opportunities.

3. **Continue Developing a Parks Plan.** Figure 4 shows parks classified by function, and also indicates locations in the City where new parks may be needed. It represents a preliminary step toward a complete parks improvement plan. A parks plan would require additional assessment of existing facilities at each park, park user needs, and neighborhood recreation needs in general. It would outline future land acquisition needs, search areas for new parks, and planned improvements at each park, along with estimated costs and phasing over approximately a 10-year period (similar to the City's Capital Improvements Plan).

4. **Continue to Implement a Trails Plan.** The plan of existing and proposed trails, as shown in Figure 6, Transportation Plan, is fairly well established, based on input from a regional city-county trails committee. Trail improvements center on the riverfront trail as detailed in the Riverfront Plan document, and neighborhood loops connecting parks, schools and other community centers. Issues that remain to be resolved include:

- A suitable connection to the regional Root River Trail system, given the steep grades of most existing routes.
- A safer and more pleasant bridge crossing to the Wisconsin trail system, notably the Great River Trail – this improvement will likely occur as part of the Interstate Bridge reconstruction.
- Delineation of river and lake 'trails' for boating, paddling and fishing.



5. **Enhance Winter Recreational Opportunities.** Park users and trail advocates have raised the issue that there is a high unmet demand for winter recreation such as cross-country skiing and outdoor ice skating. Winona's erratic snowfall pattern makes it difficult to develop permanent trails without an investment in snow-making equipment. Many Twin Cities regional parks are beginning to make such investments. Winona's topography would lend itself to creation of a 'signature' winter sports area with snow-making equipment. City staff and committee members should evaluate the feasibility, potential location and costs of creating such a facility as a long-term investment. Partnerships with other recreation providers and Winona County should be explored as part of this evaluation. Any winter sports facility should meet certain criteria: it should not disturb key scenic vistas, and should be designed to maintain an ecological balance, with minimal grading and clearing of land.

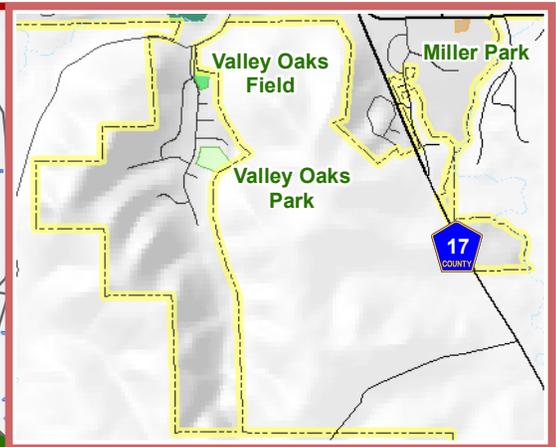
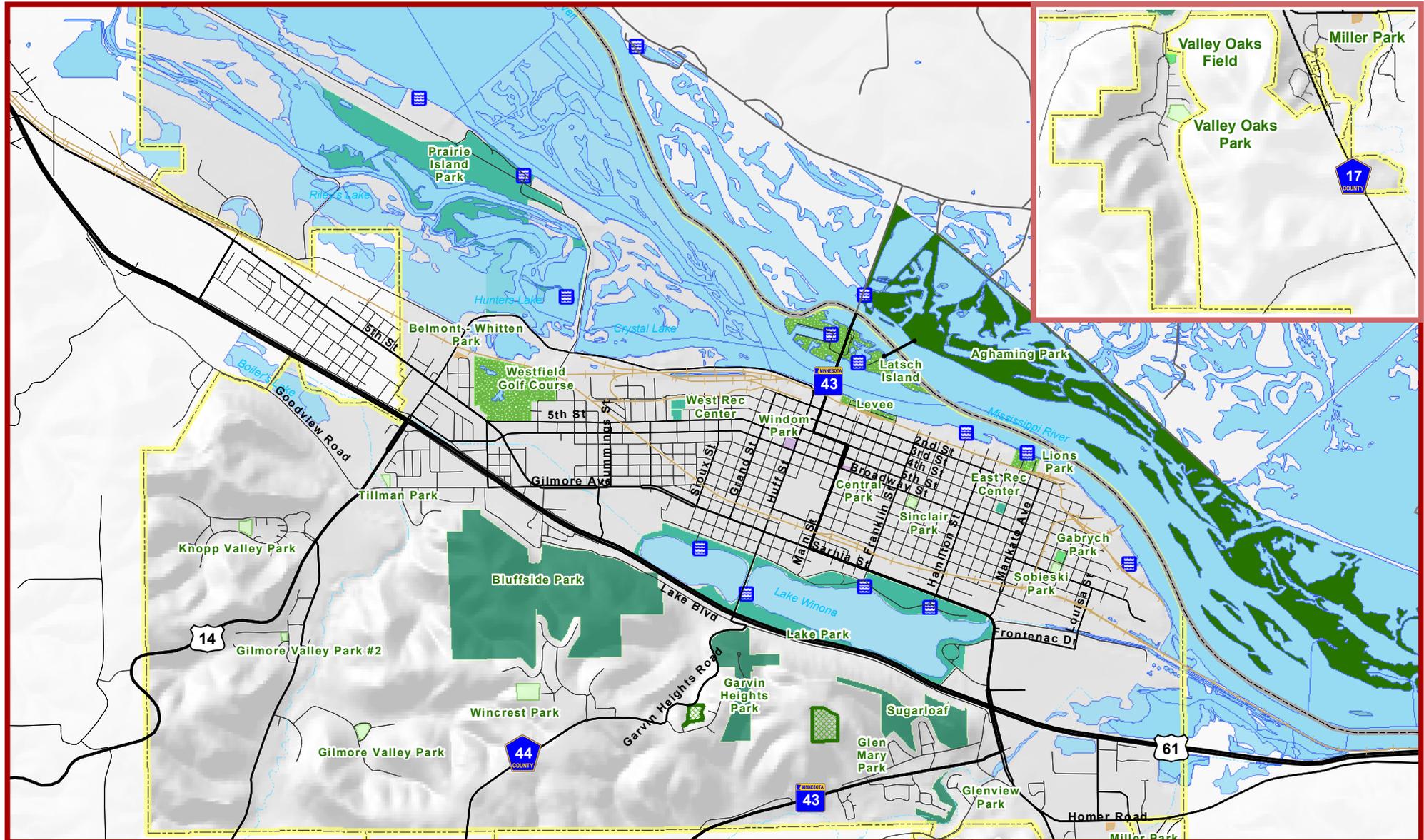
6. **Enhance and Integrate River-Based Recreation into the Parks System.** While parks in Winona and adjacent cities and the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge offer ample opportunities for river-based recreation – boating, paddling, fishing, etc. – access points are often poorly signed and routes are not well-defined. There is little coordination between the recreational routes and resources of local and federal agencies. As part of the

trails plan (see above), water-based trails and access points should be defined, mapped and publicized. The City should work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide coordinated information on access points and land and water trails within the National Wildlife Refuge.

7. Seek a Site for a Public Swimming Beach. Although it is a “river city,” Winona lacks an outdoor beach. River currents can be dangerous, making the former City beach on Latsch Island unsuitable for public use. Possibilities should be explored for a new beach along Lake Winona, or for shoreline improvements that could create a safe river beach.

8. Park Commission or Committee. An official citizens’ commission or committee should be established to provide coordinated input on park, recreation and trail improvements and to monitor the progress of park planning efforts. Whether this group is designed as a purely advisory body (committee) or given a policy-making role (board or commission), its presence is critical for the future management of the parks system.

9. Centralize Park Management Responsibilities. Park programming (recreation) and parks and trails maintenance should be combined within the Park and Recreation Department, or at a minimum, dedicated maintenance staff from the Public Works Department should be assigned to work closely with Park and Recreation staff. Continued park planning (see Policy 3 above) should be a shared responsibility between Planning and Park staff, since the former group has greater experience with community involvement and the management of similar studies.



Map Location



**Legend**

- Water Access
- Play Lot
- Historic Square
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Nature Preserve
- Athletic Field
- Special Use Area
- Undeveloped

**Figure 4  
Parks Classification Plan**

June 2007



Data Sources: City of Winona, MnDOT, ESRI, URS



## 11. Riverfront Revitalization Plan

### Issues

The following issues were identified by the Riverfront Subcommittee and through additional analysis by the consultant team. Like the Downtown Revitalization Plan, the full Riverfront Revitalization Plan is a separate document that includes a detailed and site-specific analysis of the issues and topics discussed below.

- Balance of uses – How to balance ongoing industrial and transportation uses with the increasing demand for recreational use of the riverfront.
- Improved access – Move the rail storage tracks east of Bay State Milling.
- River-related uses – Not all riverfront uses require water and/or rail access.
- Trails – Continue to pursue trail links from Middle School to Prairie Island; connections to Aghaming Park, to regional trails (Root River, Great River trails).
- Redevelopment – Opportunities for high-end housing, retail, lodging along the riverfront.
- Public campground – Should the City continue to provide a campground? Issues with seasonal and semi-permanent use.
- Water-based recreation – How can the City enhance and promote water-based recreation for visitors and residents? For example, consider backwater tours of boats, tows and boathouses; and facilities for canoe and kayak storage and access.
- Identify and promote key riverfront destinations – These include Prairie Island Park, the Municipal Harbor, Levee Park, various boat landings, the Winona Yacht Club, the new Minnesota Marine Art Museum, and Aghaming Park.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Mix of Uses. Encourage a wide range and integrated mix of industrial, retail, restaurant, park, entertainment and residential uses along the riverfront. The following general priorities are established for riverfront uses, with the understanding that these will vary depending on the character of each river segment:

1. Parks and protected open space
2. River-related industrial uses that take full advantage of their location
3. Housing and related uses that capitalize on the riverfront's amenities while providing for public access.



2: Improve access. Improve visual and physical access to the River and the riverfront's relationship with adjacent areas of the City.

**Objective:**

Create the Winona Waterfront Trail and connecting streets and river access points as an attractive, safe and accessible bicycle, pedestrian and paddling network that will enable people of all ages to access uses on the Mississippi River.

3. Provide recreation options. Provide river recreation options along the Mississippi River shoreline to enhance community livability and attractiveness to tourists.

**Objectives:**

1. Develop Prairie Island and Latsch Island parks as regional recreation and tourism attractions, focusing on attractions that will generate the highest returns on costs and produce the lowest impact on community assets and resources. Examples of attractions could include canoe and kayak rental, boating tours, fishing piers, birding/hiking paths, dog park/trail system, etc. Improvements to signage and circulation are needed in particular at Latsch Island Park.
2. Improve Levee Park as a gateway to Downtown Winona, to include day use dockage and a major visitor attraction.



4. Maintain current assets. Maintain and improve upon Winona's existing industrial, business and goods-transportation assets on the River while improving the River ecologically.

**Objectives:**

1. Improve the aesthetics of industrial parks and rail yards
2. Work with MnDOT and other agencies to improve access and traffic flow along the developed riverfront.
3. Minimize the number of physical and aesthetic obstacles between riverfront areas and adjacent areas of the City
4. Seek opportunities to acquire any vacant or abandoned buildings for redevelopment, to increase the tax base and clean up the industrial parks.

## Policies and Actions

1. Waterfront Trail. The centerpiece of the riverfront plan is the development of the Waterfront Trail, envisioned as a continuous multi-purpose riverfront trail following or paralleling the levee, designed for non-motorized use: pedestrians, bicycles, inline skates and similar modes. Multiple easements for the trail have already been acquired. The design of the trail must address a variety of different shoreline conditions and existing access barriers, and therefore varies from segment to segment, as detailed in the Riverfront Plan. Specifically:

- The trail should be integrated with the potential downtown Conference/Performing Arts Center and with existing trails at Levee Park.
- The trail should be designed to avoid conflicts with port and dockage facilities

2. Riverway Streets. Create a series of riverway streets connecting neighborhood civic landmarks, parks/open space, and homes to the riverfront. The concept of a riverway street is that of a signed route geared towards bicycle and pedestrian as well as vehicular use, with visible bike/pedestrian connections to the Waterfront Trail. Suggested streets are: Johnson, Walnut, Liberty, Zumbro and Wall.

3. Water Recreation Trails. Re-institute and sign the canoe and kayak routes that extend from Prairie Island Park downstream to Aghaming Park and upstream to Verchota Landing. (A portage would be needed around the Prairie Island Spillway at Lock and Dam 5A.)

4. River Activity Zones. As detailed in the Riverfront Revitalization Plan, the riverfront should be thought of as a series of four districts or activity zones, which are similar to but more detailed than the land use classifications shown on the Land Use Plan. Each activity zone should have certain priorities for land uses, both primary and secondary. These priorities should be implemented through zoning and other land use decisions. The activity zones and priorities are:

- Natural/Open Space: wetlands, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation. Priorities are natural resource protection, pedestrian land access, and non-motorized (paddling) water access
- Urban Recreation: active recreation, camping, marinas and dockage. Priorities are pedestrian, bike and limited vehicular land access, motorized and non-motorized water access. Remove rail conflicts, emphasize natural resource protection and seasonal/visitor activities.
- Urban Transition: commercial, recreational, housing. Priorities are pedestrian, bike and vehicular land access, minimizing of rail conflicts, encourage motorized and non-motorized water access
- Urban Diversified: industrial, commercial, utilities. Priorities are to sustain river-related industrial and transportation uses; rail and port activities may take precedence over vehicular access; pedestrian/bike access may follow closest alternate route where shoreline is unavailable.

5. Collaboration with State and Federal Agencies. Much of the river corridor is a 'patchwork' of state, federal and local jurisdictions and authorities, including the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, the City, Winona County and Buffalo County, Wisconsin. This situation produces overlaps, gaps in protection, and occasional conflicts. Most notably, the City-owned Aghaming Park is located in Wisconsin and falls under both federal and state authorities, making enforcement and management difficult. Riparian rights are also interpreted differently in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The City should initiate discussion with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding a management agreement for Aghaming Park, allowing it to be managed in a manner consistent with the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge and the adjacent Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge.

6. River-Related Park Improvements. The Parks and Recreation Section of the Comprehensive Plan discusses parks as a citywide system. The following recommendations pertain specifically to high-priority improvements to riverfront parks:

- Latsch Island: Define and demarcate public and private (boathouse) parts of the park with signage, road improvements, and designated visitor parking and activity areas. Incorporate the (privately managed) Municipal Harbor as part of the park.
- Prairie Island: Revise management policies to encourage short-term use of the campground, rather than the current pattern of permanent seasonal use.
- Levee Park: Redesign this park to improve its connectivity to the downtown, to maximize river views and access, and to meet the other criteria discussed in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.

## 12. Transportation Plan

### Issues

The following issues were identified by the Transportation Subcommittee and updated through additional analysis by the consultant team.

- Access barriers. Rail storage tracks and at-grade crossings impede riverfront access and pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- Alternative transportation modes. How can bicycle, pedestrian and transit use be encouraged and enhanced?
- Port and commercial harbor. How to maintain and improve the functioning of the Port while minimizing conflicts with recreational river use and natural resources?
- Intermodal connections. Winona is already a significant intermodal connection point. Can connections between river and rail or truck transport be improved (i.e. better container facilities)?
- Trail connections. What are the priorities for completing a citywide non-motorized trail system? What are the options for linkages to regional trails?
- Truck traffic. Can the management of truck traffic and the truck route system be improved?
- Land use. How should new development or redevelopment be designed to encourage and support increased transit use, walking and biking?

### Goals and Objectives

1. River use. Continue to support the use of Mississippi River for commerce, recreation and transportation.

#### Objectives:

1. Balance the needs of transportation, recreation and the environment.
2. Maintain and promote a safe commercial harbor and expand Winona's commercial activity through cargo transportation on the river.

2. Rail system improvements. Improve the rail system in Winona, in terms of both passenger and cargo transportation, in a manner that minimizes conflicts with the City's motorized and non-motorized transportation system.



Objectives:

1. Support the rail industry as a viable means of goods movement and passenger transportation into and out of Winona.
  2. Maximize safety and efficiency in the movement of goods via rail.
  3. To the greatest extent possible, minimize the negative effect that rail lines have on other transportation in Winona.
  4. Coordinate with other transit systems for smooth flow of passenger services from all entities, such as bus services, taxi and limousine services, bicycles, etc. with rail service.
3. Surface transportation improvements. Maintain and improve upon the surface transportation system's safety, efficiency and aesthetics.

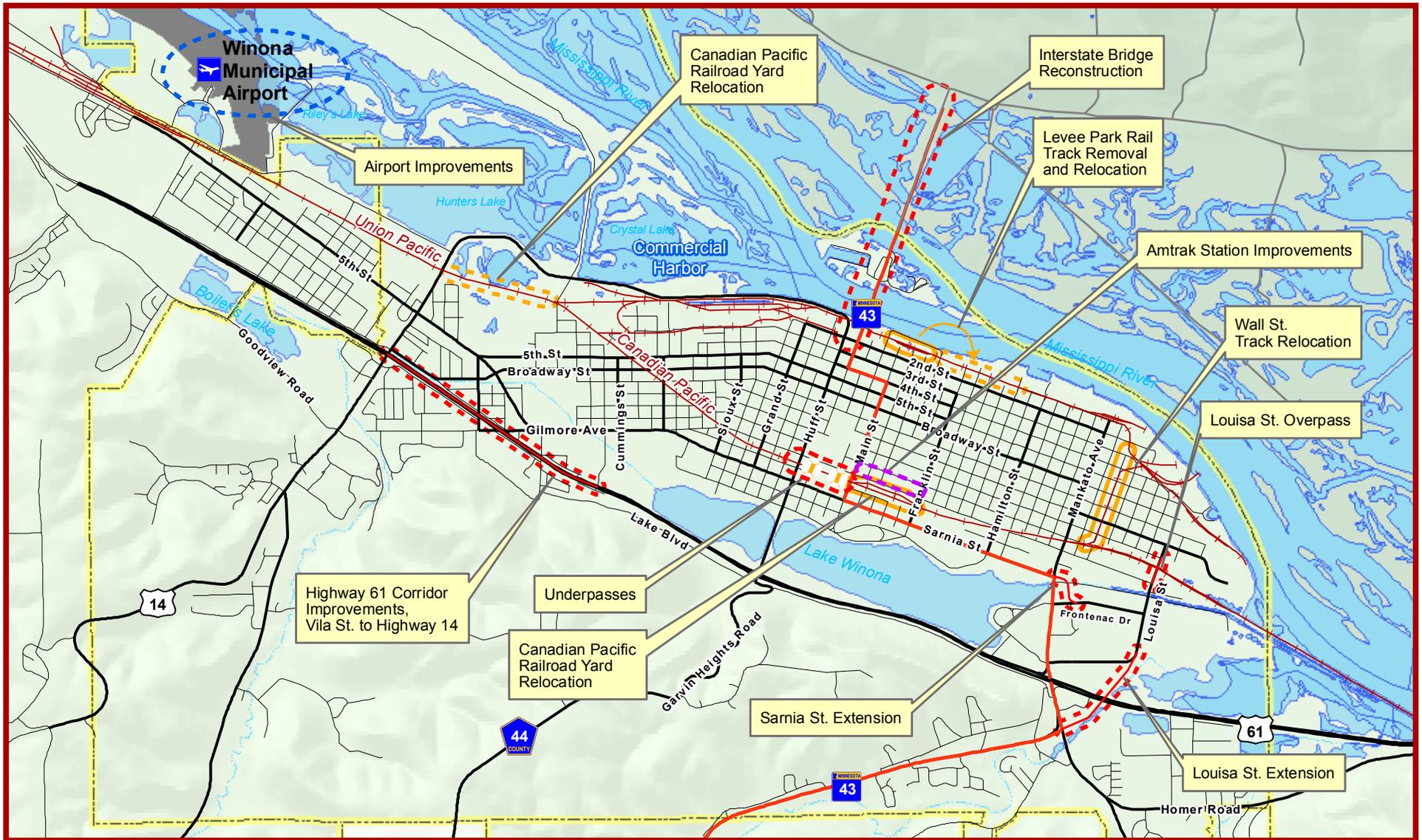
Objectives:

1. Improve safety and efficiency of truck traffic in Winona while minimizing the impacts on residential neighborhoods, commercial districts and visitor attractions.
  2. Improve the aesthetics and cleanliness of all roadways through landscape improvements and code enforcement.
  3. Incorporate traffic calming measures in future street construction and to address identified neighborhood problems.
  4. Design new streets and reconstruct existing streets to a width that does not encourage excessive traffic speeds.
4. Non-motorized transportation. Establish a safe and efficient non-motorized transportation system that accesses all parts of Winona and the regional trails network.

Objectives:

1. Expand the City's network of sidewalks and crosswalks in order to provide comfortable and safe pedestrian access throughout Winona.
2. Expand the network of bicycle and pedestrian trails that provide transportation use along with recreation use. The network should connect residents to schools, parks, retail areas, downtown and houses of worship as well as existing trails within and near Winona.
3. Expand and improve the on-street bicycle lane and route network in order to safely connect bicycle commuters and recreational riders with trails and destinations.

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Map Location



**Legend**

-  Pedestrian Underpass
-  Existing Rail Track Location
-  Proposed Track Location
-  Proposed Road Improvement

**Figure 5**  
**Road and Rail Improvements**

August 2007



Data Sources: City of Winona, MnDOT, ESRI, URS

5. Public transit. Promote and improve the public transportation system as a viable alternative to driving alone.

Objectives:

1. Establish a public transportation system that is accessible by nearly all Winona residents and provides efficient service to most employers, schools, retail areas and other City attractions.
2. Promote carpooling and ridesharing.
3. Promote land use development strategies that incorporate pedestrian, bicycle and transit access and reduce dependence on private vehicles.

6. Airport improvements. Continue to support and improve the Winona Municipal Airport to serve cargo and passenger demands.

Objectives:

1. Support the aviation industry as a viable means of transportation to and out of Winona.
2. Maintain and expand upon the existing services that the Winona Municipal Airport offers.
3. Utilize air transportation to support Winona's industries.

### Policies and Actions

The following recommendations are organized by transportation mode and type of facility. Locations of proposed improvements are shown in Figure 5, Road and Rail Improvements, and Figure 6, Trails Plan.



1. Commercial Harbor and Port Facilities. Continue to maintain and enhance the commercial harbor through regular dredging and related improvements. The most recent dredging project was completed in 2006. The Port Authority has worked to discourage interaction between recreational boating and commercial traffic by prohibiting mid-stream fleeting of barges. However, the new Minnesota Museum of Marine Art may attract more recreational boaters to the commercial harbor. Additional improvements to be considered in the future include:
  - Improvements to docking facilities of individual East End industries, in order to better accommodate the Waterfront Trail and minimize interference with commercial traffic in the main shipping channel. These include improvements to the salt storage areas in the East End.
  - A container transfer facility to accommodate river-to-rail transfers, if demand for such a facility continues to increase. A multi-modal facility would need to be evaluated in terms of its impact on truck routes and traffic, with the goal of not increasing truck traffic volumes.

2. Rail Relocations and Safety Improvements. Continue to pursue the track and storage yard relocations recommended in the Intermodal Study. These include:

- Levee Park Rail Yard relocation: Rail cars are stored and switched at Levee Park Yard, which is located directly south of Levee Park, a major recreational area and riverfront gateway. The removal of the rail storage yard will eliminate the physical and visual barrier between downtown Winona and the Mississippi River. The rail line that serves the industrial users along the river will remain while the storage area will be removed. This project eliminates switching operations for Bay State Milling at Walnut Street. Additional switching lines and storage tracks will need to be constructed east of Walnut Street to Laird Street. Grade crossings could be closed at Kansas and/or Liberty streets. This project would significantly improve safety and access for park users, while allowing for redevelopment of the current rail storage yard property and providing for future growth of rail traffic at riverfront industries.
- Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail Yard relocation and Amtrak Station improvements: CP maintains local offices and a rail yard adjacent to the Amtrak Station where rail cars are stored and switched. Switching operations block the Main Street and Franklin Street crossings. This concept proposes to construct five substitute tracks near Pelzer Street including maintenance building and engine service track for the CP.

This project would also remove the CP yard tracks and traffic at the Amtrak Station, eliminating switching over Main and Franklin streets. This concept, in conjunction with Wall Street project, would remove the majority of all switching operations along the CP mainline, significantly reducing congestion. The project would also allow for redevelopment of the property and potentially the future development of a multimodal transit facility in the vicinity of the station.

- Wall Street track removal and switching track replacement: Canadian Pacific operates over the Wall Street track to access riverfront industries. The track is located within the street right-of-way for about 2,800 feet and intersects with seven cross streets and 30 driveways. Switching of cars from the main line to the Wall Street spur causes significant delays of vehicle traffic on Mankato Avenue. Removal of the Wall Street spur will eliminate most but not all switching conflicts on Mankato.
- Rail crossing improvements: The Canadian Pacific mainline operates over approximately 16 grade crossings within Winona's boundaries, effectively bisecting the city. The City has completed a number of crossing improvements, including grade separations and enhancements of some crossings. Remaining planned improvements include pedestrian underpasses at Johnson and Winona streets to connect the Winona State University campus with its athletic fields. Future improvements may also include a four lane Huff Street underpass for vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

3. Continue to support and enhance passenger rail service. This initiative involves pursuing Amtrak Station improvements, multimodal facility and related redevelopment in the station area, as discussed above under CP rail yard relocation. A multimodal facility could provide links to buses, taxis, and even rental car options for rail passengers. Areas around the station are identified in the Land Use Plan as suitable for redevelopment for a variety of uses, depending on a more detailed master plan for the area. The City will also continue to monitor and



support the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI), a cooperative, multi-agency effort to develop a nine-state, 3,000 mile regional passenger rail system. The Minnesota portion of the system includes 130 miles in southeastern Minnesota from La Crescent to St. Paul that could accommodate high-speed trains. Today, only one train brings passengers from Minnesota to Chicago in about eight hours travel time. With the MWRRI, Minnesotans could travel to Chicago on an additional six trains in a little more than 5½ hours of travel time from St. Paul, with correspondingly shorter travel times from Winona.

4. Improve transit service. Transit service in Winona can be improved through a better understanding of existing and potential customers, better amenities at transit stops, and improved publicity. Specific initiatives include:

- Completion of a survey by City staff of existing transit users and potential users. Survey information could guide adjustments of transit routes to meet demand.
- Invest in improved amenities at transit stops, such as benches, lighting, and shelters at the highest-volume locations.
- Promote the use of alternative fuels by transit vehicles.
- Evaluate the feasibility of a dial-a-ride service for those needing point-to-point transportation, as well as promotion of carpooling and ridesharing for commuters to Winona, or from Winona to Rochester, La Crosse or Arcadia, Wisconsin.
- Improve public information about transit service, including – signage, schedule information, and on-line information.
- Review transit routes periodically and adjust to meet changing demands. Explore the feasibility of transit service to the employment centers mentioned above, as well as nearby cities such as Red Wing.
- As discussed in the Downtown Revitalization Plan, continue to pursue development of a trolley or shuttle serving remote parking lots and visitor attractions. This route should be incorporated as part of the transit system, making it eligible for transit funds. Remote parking could utilize existing under-used lots, such as those at churches and shopping centers, if agreements could be negotiated with property owners.

5. Plan for Interstate Bridge reconstruction. The Trunk Highway 43 (Interstate) Bridge is tentatively programmed for reconstruction to a four-lane facility in approximately 10 to 15 years. While the planning process for this project has not yet begun, the City recognizes that this project is likely to have far-reaching impacts on circulation patterns and land uses at the bridge approach, throughout the downtown, and city-wide. The City will work with MnDOT on the planning process to maximize opportunities for enhancements and minimize disruption. Some initial assumptions regarding the process are:

- An additional bridge span will likely be necessary, since the current bridge would be difficult to widen. The existing bridge will remain in use during the reconstruction process.
- An additional span or a replacement span will be located somewhere to the west of the existing bridge.
- Improvements to traffic flow will include elimination of sharp 90 degree turns from connecting streets, to

facilitate truck traffic.

- Some acquisition of property will be necessary to accomplish the project.

The City's initial goals for the process are as follows:

- The new bridge should include safe and inviting bicycle/pedestrian facilities. The bridge is an essential link in the City's trail system, especially for connections to Latsch Island and Wisconsin trails and bike routes.
- Some buildings and properties should be protected from demolition, including the historic Huff-Lamberton House and Windom Park, and the recently renovated YMCA.
- The Municipal Boat Harbor on Latsch Island should be preserved to the extent feasible.
- Truck access to Riverview Drive is critical.
- The design of the new and rebuilt bridges should contribute as much as possible to achieving the goals and priorities of the Land Use Plan and the Downtown Revitalization Plan.
- As part of the planning process, the City will review the current route alignment of Trunk Highway 43 (Sarnia, Main, Fourth and Winona streets) and may recommend changes in the route to improve wayfinding, safety and traffic flow. Changes to truck routes will also be considered.

6. Revise truck routes. Existing routes have created problems with loading operations, noise and congestion in residential neighborhoods and the downtown. Some initial suggestions include:

- Emphasize Second Street as the primary east-west truck route and Mankato Avenue and Main Street as the primary north-south routes. Planned upgrades of Second Street should aid this process. Consider eliminating the Fourth Street route. Once Louisa Street is extended to Highway 61, consider eliminating the Franklin Street route.
- Enforce vehicle noise laws on all routes and citywide to the extent feasible.
- Consider additional truck route changes in the East End in conjunction with the priority road improvements discussed below.

7. Improve Highway 61 access points and frontage roads. The segment of Highway 61 between Vila and Pelzer streets includes a series of intersecting roads with poor geometries and visibility, including Gilmore Avenue, Orrin Street and Clarks Lane. Accident data show a concentration of crashes in this area. Improvements should rationalize and consolidate access points, improve the frontage roads and improve the geometry of the Gilmore Avenue intersection. The City will continue to work with MnDOT on the design and funding of these improvements.

8. Pursue priority road improvements. These projects were identified by the City as critical to implementing the Land Use Plan and other planned improvements. The City will continue to pursue funding for these projects, possibly through a local-option sales tax (as was attempted in 2006). To generate public support, it will

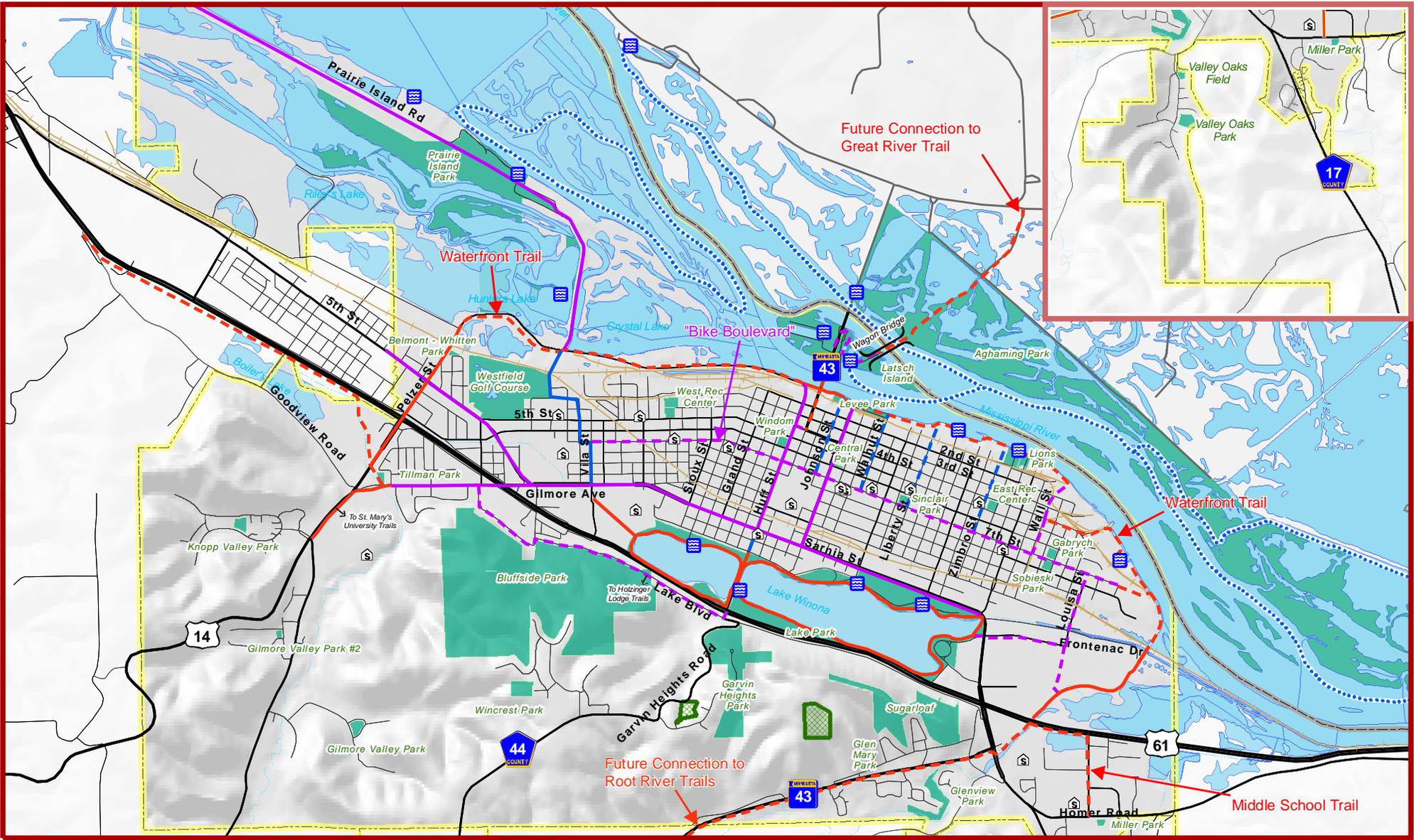


be important to document the need for these improvements, and to prioritize and phase them in a fiscally sound manner.

- Louisa Street extension: This project is designed to provide a second access to the East End of Winona. This new street will provide access to the Riverbend Industrial Park, including many commercial and industrial businesses. Traffic will have an alternative to Mankato Avenue. The entrance to Fleet Farm and the businesses south of Highway 61 will be closed and Louisa Street will have a better designed intersection at Highway 61. The intersection will be designed with a stop light option when traffic volumes are sufficient to warrant signalization. An overpass would also be constructed over the CP rail tracks (see below).<sup>7</sup>
- Louisa Street overpass: The Louisa Street overpass would be a two-lane rail overpass over the CP rail, connecting with the Louisa Street extension to Highway 61. The project would eliminate delays at grade crossings in the East End and improve emergency access to the medical center. Pedestrian and bicycle access would be built as part of the overpass. Truck access would be improved to most East End industries. Traffic levels may be reduced on Mankato Avenue.
- Sarnia Street extension into the Riverbend Industrial Park (connecting to Louisa Street): The intersection at Mankato Avenue and Sarnia Street is part of the Highway 43 corridor. It is not currently a fully-functioning intersection and needs to be redesigned to facilitate circulation from Mankato to Sarnia and from Sarnia into the Riverbend area. A newly-designed intersection allowing for full traffic turns would require extension of Sarnia on the east connecting with Frontenac Drive.

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<sup>7</sup> The Intermodal Study originally recommended an extension of Bundy Boulevard to Highway 61, but the presence of wetlands along that alignment resulted in a change to Louisa Street.



Map Location



**Legend**

- Water Access
- Park
- Open Space
- School

**Existing Trails**

- Multi-Purpose Trail
- Bicycle Lane / Shared Shoulder
- Signed Bicycle Route

**Proposed Trails**

- Multi-Purpose Trail
- Bicycle Lane / Shared Shoulder
- Signed Bicycle Route
- Water Trail

**Future Trails and Bikeways Plan**

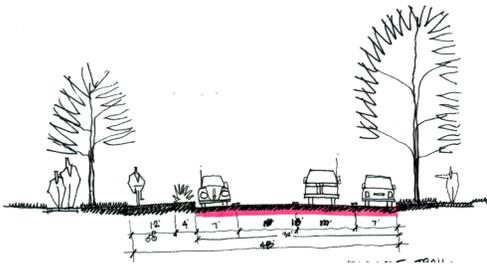
Figure 6

June 2007

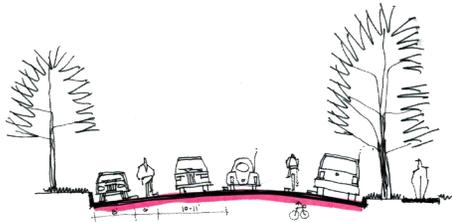


Data Sources: City of Winona, MnDOT, ESRI, URS





*Separated bike trail within right-of-way, 12' width*



*Bicycle lane, 6' wide with 8' parking lane*

9. Citywide Trail System. These recommendations build on City and County planning efforts to develop a citywide trail system for bikes, pedestrians, and other non-motorized travel. As with the parks system, the trail system includes a hierarchy of trails serving different uses, from purely recreational to commuting and local transportation. The system also includes bike lanes, signed bike routes, sidewalks, and other facilities. Trails and other bike/pedestrian facilities can be defined based on their design and function:

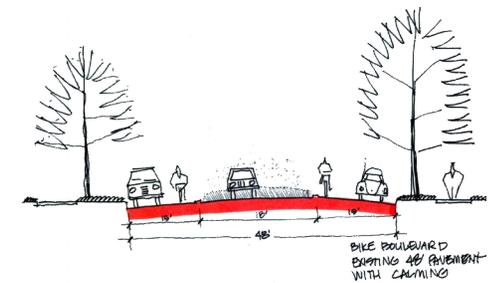
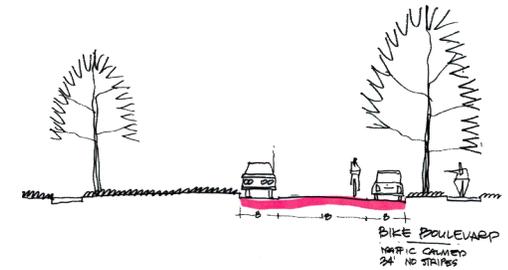
- Multi-purpose trails: A separate path for exclusive use of bikes, pedestrians, in-line skaters and similar non-motorized uses. This type makes important connections between neighborhoods, schools and workplaces, and other destinations within the City. Winona's primary planned multi-purpose trail is the 'Riverfront Trail,' which will follow or parallel the levee, with occasional detours onto shared-use streets.
- Park multi-purpose trails: A paved park trail can serve the whole spectrum of non-motorized uses, but is primarily geared to recreational use, although it can also provide general transportation. The well-used Lake Park trail is an example of this type.
- Bicycle lanes: Bicycle lanes are typically striped on-street lanes designed to provide a location for preferential bicycle use. A problem with existing bike lanes in Winona is that some of them (i.e., 5<sup>th</sup> Street) are located in the parking lane, creating multiple conflicts between users. A bike lane should be at least five feet wide from the curb, or the parking lane, to the traffic lane. (Experimental techniques include diagonal striping of a slightly narrower lane.)<sup>8</sup>
- Shared shoulder: Typically used on a more rural road where parking is not permitted, the shoulder acts as a bicycle route and also allows for emergency use by motorists. Shared shoulders can provide important connections to regional trails, but are more attractive to long-distance cyclists rather than family groups.
- Bicycle route: A bicycle route is typically signed but not striped, and is used on low-traffic-volume streets where bicyclists can safely share the road with motorists.
- Hiking and ski trails: These are typically located in parks, such as Bluffside Park, but may also connect parks and other semi-public lands (such as the St. Mary's University campus trails).
- Water trails: As discussed in the Riverfront and Parks and Recreation Plan sections of this report, the City will designate and sign a system of water trails and put-in/take-out locations for non-motorized boating (canoes, kayaks, etc.) The City's system of water access points, including boat ramps and canoe accesses, are an important part of this system.

The sidewalk system plays an equally important function for pedestrians. Most parts of Winona are well-served by sidewalks; policies for new sidewalks are addressed below.

<sup>8</sup> *The MnDOT Bicycle Modal Plan, 2005, page 67. See [www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/pdfs/modal\\_plan.pdf](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/pdfs/modal_plan.pdf)*

Figure 6, Trails System Plan, includes all of the components listed above, except for sidewalks and the water trail. Development priorities for the system are as follows:

- The Waterfront Trail. Years of planning have resulted in acquisition of easements for about half this route, which would extend from Prairie Island along the riverfront to its eastern limits, connecting across Highway 61 to the planned Middle School Trail. Details on trail opportunities, barriers, and typical designs are included in the Riverfront Plan.
- Wabasha Street “Bicycle Boulevard.” This new bicycle lane was identified as part of the Downtown Design Workshop. Extending along lightly-traveled Wabasha (7<sup>th</sup>) Street, it connects several elementary and middle schools and parks, and offers a safer, more pleasant alternative to heavily traveled Broadway (6<sup>th</sup>) Street. It is also recommended as a replacement for the current shared bike/parking lane on Fifth Street, which does not meet bicycle safety standards. One design option would be a two-way lane on one side of the roadway, separated by a median from the traffic lanes. Other options could include traffic calming options, as shown in the sketches.
- Key Linkages between Trails. These include
  - A bike lane along Louisa Street (in connection with the Louisa Street road improvement projects mentioned above) connecting the Wabasha Street route to the planned Middle School Trail;
  - A bike lane or signed route along Lake Boulevard, which offers a pleasant scenic route paralleling Highway 61.
- Riverway Streets. The concept of a riverway street is that of a signed route geared towards bicycles and pedestrians as well as vehicular use, with visible bike/pedestrian connections to the Waterfront Trail. Suggested streets are: Johnson, Walnut, Liberty, Zumbro and Wall.
- Regional Connections. Linkages are needed to regional trails: the Root River Trail, which extends from Houston to Harmony, and the Great River Trail that follows the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi from Marshland south to Onalaska.
  - The main obstacle to the Great River Trail connection is the current inadequate bike/pedestrian lane on the Highway 43 bridge, which remains marginally usable if bicycles are walked (the bridge is tentatively scheduled for reconstruction after 2017). Once on the Wisconsin side, an off-road trail is planned from Aghaming Park to the Trempeleau National Wildlife Refuge, where the Great River Trail currently begins.
  - The main obstacle to a Root River Trail connection is the steep grade of all the roads leading south from Winona, and the heavy traffic on Highway 43 (the road with the gentlest grades). An interim





*Sidewalk with rural character.*  
 Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org](http://www.pedbikeimages.org)  
 /Dan Burden



*A 36-foot wide local street, especially when combined with off-street parking, creates an excessive amount of impervious pavement and tends to encourage excessive traffic speeds*

option for the Root River Trail connection would be the construction of a separated trail on Highway 43's additional right-of-way, which is reserved for future four-lane construction. The City recognizes that widening of Highway 43 to four lanes is a long-term prospect. Therefore, a temporary trail could serve its users for years to come. At such time as the highway is reconstructed, a permanent grade-separated trail facility could be planned.

10. Sidewalks and Paths in Neighborhoods. Sidewalks and paths are essential pedestrian features in existing and new neighborhoods. While the older parts of the city are interconnected by sidewalks, newer neighborhoods have been developed without a consistent sidewalk policy. The issue of whether or not to require sidewalks is often a controversial one. Some residents feel that the "rural character" of newer neighborhoods is incompatible with sidewalks. Others appreciate the pedestrian safety, comfort and connections that sidewalks can provide. The City will require sidewalks, or interconnected off-street trails (non-motorized) as part of new development, unless it is determined that an exception or waiver is warranted. Criteria for an exception to the sidewalk policy may include:

- Steep topography (alternative trail alignments should be considered)
- Very low density and traffic volumes
- Distance from schools, parks or citywide trails, making connections difficult or impractical

Sidewalks should generally be required on both sides of a new street, unless parkland or open space is adjacent to the street on one side, in which case an off-street trail might be preferable.

It is important to recognize that:

- Sidewalks would be provided in future development, not in existing neighborhoods, unless specifically requested by residents.
- Existing sidewalks also need to remain usable, and to be replaced on a regular maintenance cycle.
- In combination with narrower street widths, sidewalks do not result in more pavement.
- Sidewalks can be designed in a manner compatible with the rural character of some neighborhoods.

11. Related Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements. The city will consider providing bicycle racks as a component of any new public parking facility, and will also work to provide racks in existing parking lots. The City may require bicycle parking as a component of any new private off-street parking facility. Bicycle racks within the downtown will be integrated into the overall streetscape plans, as detailed in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.

12. Local Street Improvements. Current City street design policies call for a standard 36-foot pavement width for local streets, although narrower streets may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. There is no consistent policy to require sidewalks in new development (see discussion above) and they are often omitted.

Most of Winona's older streets are 40 feet wide, but many of them are effectively narrowed by the amount of on-street parking they accommodate. Most newer streets serve larger lots and have little on-street parking. The result, combined with the lack of sidewalks, is a local street that is oversized for the traffic levels it accommodates. An overly-wide street results in additional stormwater runoff, encourages higher traffic speeds, and is not safe or comfortable for pedestrians.

Another local street safety issue is the number of uncontrolled or "yield" intersections of local streets. While stop signs are not required at such intersections, the current system is confusing to visitors and new arrivals such as students.

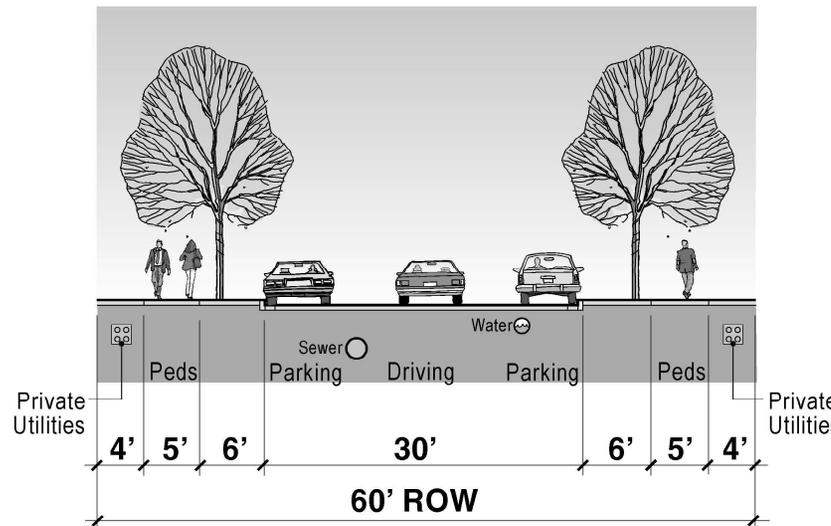
The following policies should be applied to local streets as they are developed or reconstructed.

- **Connectivity.** In general, streets should connect to other local or collector streets in at least one direction in order to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections and alternative routes for vehicular traffic. While the steep topography of the city's developing areas can make such connections difficult, providing such connections should always be a goal.
- **Street Design.** Local street policies should be reviewed and revised, to establish optimum widths for streets in order to promote safe traffic speeds and provide a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- **Traffic Calming.** Traffic calming should be considered for local streets or predominantly residential collector streets where problems with traffic speeds or vehicular or pedestrian safety have been identified.
- **Traffic Control Devices.** The City will consider the use of "Yield" signs or traffic calming measures such as small traffic circles at uncontrolled intersections.

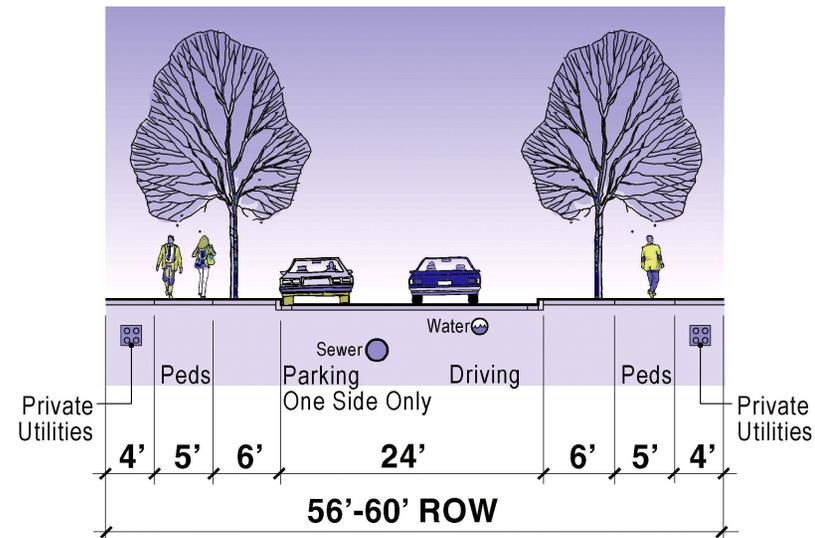
The design of new local streets should provide for traffic movement while ensuring a safe, attractive, and pedestrian and bicycle friendly neighborhood environment. The following street design provides 30-feet from curb to curb and allows for two-side parking and two-way traffic.

Figure 7. Recommended Local Residential Street Designs:

Parking on Both Sides



Parking on One Side



A 30-foot road width allows seven-feet of parking width on each side of the road leaving 16-feet of shared through-lane for traffic. Where cars are parked across from each other, on-coming vehicles will have to slow down to pass or one car will pull into the parking lane while the other car passes. In new development where substantial off-street parking is provided, the need to slow for on-coming traffic will be minimal. Unlike arterial and collector streets that allocate space for each directional lane of traffic, local streets, which have very low traffic counts, can operate with a shared through-lane that accommodates both directions of traffic

Table 4 below lists examples of design options for new residential streets. New culs-de-sac should be allowed only where topography, parks, or other protected resources limit access to properties, or when mutually agreed to by the developer and the City. Table 4 includes a minor collector street as an alternative to the local street design where proposed neighborhood development is anticipated to produce more than 1,000 vehicles per day on a local street and/or have high on-street parking demand.

Table 4. Examples of Residential Street Dimensions

Type of Street	Street Width *	Right-of-Way Width	Traffic Direction	Parking	Planting Strip	Sidewalk	Utilities
Loop around a green (fewer than 6 houses)	20	44	One way	One side	6 with trees	2 @ 5	Easement behind the sidewalk for electricity, telephone, cable TV. Sewer and water under the street.
Cul-de-sac (fewer than 8 houses)	24	48	Two ways	One side	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Cul-de-sac (8 or more houses)	28	52	Two ways	Both sides	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Local	24	48	Two ways	One side	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Local	30	60	Two ways	Both sides	6 with trees	2 @ 5	
Collector (Minor)	32	60	Two ways	Both sides	8 with trees	2 @ 8-10	
Collector (Major)	36	72	Two ways	Both sides	8 with trees	2 @ 8-10	

\* All dimensions are in feet to the back of the curb.

While the recommended local street design calls for a 30-foot pavement width with two-side parking, narrower streets have been used in many cities to successfully accommodate local traffic movements, parking demand, snow issues, and emergency vehicle and maintenance vehicle access.

Narrow streets have been shown to reduce traffic speeds, creating a quieter, safer, and more comfortable pedestrian and bike friendly environment. Narrow streets benefit developers by reducing costs and benefit the City by reducing maintenance, snow removal and reconstruction costs. On streets with one-side parking, weekly alternative-side parking can accommodate street cleaning and snow removal. Narrow streets can create challenges for emergency and maintenance vehicles, although many cities have been able to successfully address these challenges.



*This local street easily accommodates high school marching band practice and parking on both sides.*



*An intersection neck-down can reduce pedestrian crossing distance and slow traffic by narrowing sight lines. This design is particularly appropriate in high pedestrian areas such as near schools or parks.*

13. Traffic Calming. The Institute of Transportation Engineers defines traffic calming as “the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.” The purpose of traffic calming is to slow traffic in order to increase safety, particularly to create a safe environment for children, seniors, and the disabled, and increase neighborhood livability. Traffic control devices, such as stop signs and speed limit signs, differ from traffic calming measures, in that they are a regulatory measure that requires enforcement. Traffic calming measures are intended to be self-enforcing.

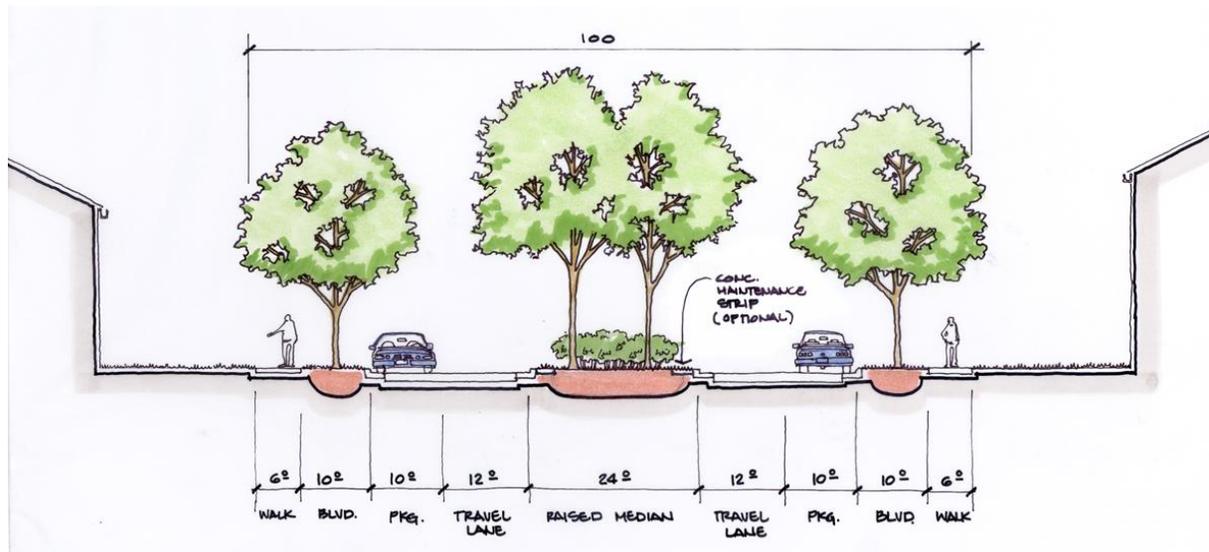
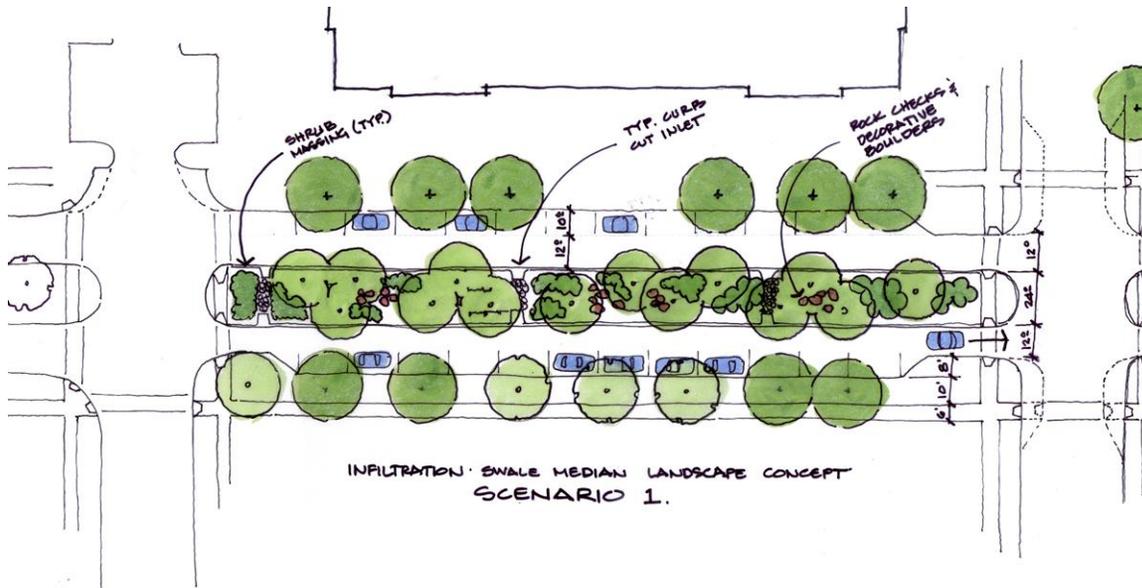
While traffic calming measures are usually applied to local residential streets, traffic calming is also appropriate for functionally classified streets in residential areas, pedestrian activity areas, and older commercial areas where buildings and sidewalks are close to the street. The City’s Residential Street Reconstruction Program rebuilds local streets in the older parts of the city, replacing pavement, curbs, street trees and utilities as needed. This reconstruction process provides an opportunity to evaluate the need for traffic calming strategies

The City will consider traffic calming strategies to improve safety and livability on identified streets. As local streets are reconstructed, problems with traffic speeds or safety issues should be evaluated and traffic calming strategies should be considered. In new or redeveloped areas, traffic calming can be integrated into the street design.

Traffic calming strategies vary dramatically in type, design, and function. In general, traffic calming strategies should focus on slowing traffic to appropriate speeds and not diverting traffic from one neighborhood street to another. Traffic calming measures that alter street width or the perception of street width are more comfortable for drivers than strategies that alter the physical road environment, such as speed humps or tables. Whenever such strategies are proposed, it should be done in consultation with neighborhood residents and businesses, and with sufficient opportunities for public input.

One example of a traffic calming approach – sometimes called a “road diet” – that may be considered for a minor arterial is the concept shown in Figure 8 for East Broadway Street. Broadway carries about 7,000 to 9,000 vehicles per day, but its current four-lane configuration encourages higher speeds and creates hazards for pedestrians in crosswalks and entering traffic from cross-streets. This approach would involve the redesign of Broadway with two travel lanes and two parking lanes on either side of a planted median ( a raised median or a swale), turn lanes at major intersections, and curb bump-outs at other intersections to improve pedestrian safety.

Figure 8. Concepts for Redesign of Broadway with Landscaped Median





14. Aviation Improvements. The recent 2002 Airport Layout Plan Update<sup>9</sup> indicated that various improvements are either needed or desired by airport users. Specifically, the airport runway length of 5,199 feet (the longer of the two runways) is marginal for the current or projected airport fleet. The result is that takeoffs in hot weather must reduce passenger or cargo load or shorten their haul length to use the airport. The plan recommends lengthening of about 300 feet. Additional improvements that airport users recommended included:

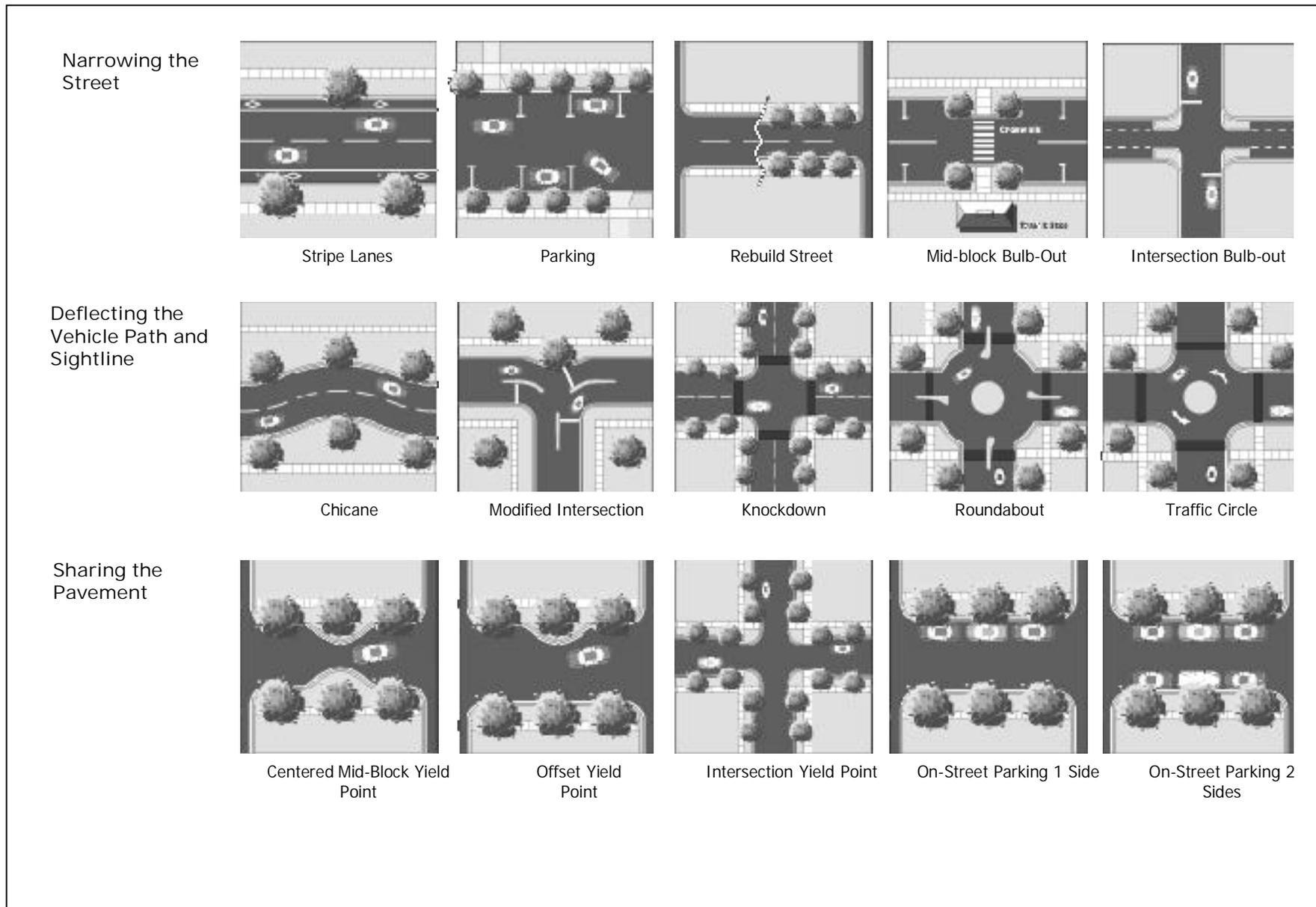
- Instrument landing system or GPS
- Additional hangar for aircraft storage
- New arrival/departure building

The City will work with MnDOT to seek funding for the runway lengthening, and will review the feasibility of other recommended improvements as funding becomes available.

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<sup>9</sup> *Winona Municipal Airport – Max Conrad Field, Airport Layout Plan Update*. Prepared by Mead & Hunt, Inc., May 2002

Figure 9. Examples of Traffic Calming Strategies



### 13. Implementation

Plans are typically judged not only by their quality but by the extent to which they are implemented. The City of Winona undertook this plan update with the intention that it would be used by staff and elected or appointed officials on a regular basis to guide decisions. Some plans are approved but are rarely referenced, or gradually lose relevance because they are not updated. To keep the comprehensive plan relevant, its role in City decision-making needs to be affirmed.

Another planning axiom is that a community plan is most worthwhile if it influences how a city writes its regulations or spends its money. Leadership and encouragement, while critical, are not sufficient alone to effect changes. Therefore, the plan should provide guidance in both of those topics.

#### The City's portfolio of implementation tools

The City has a number of tools at its disposal to shape development patterns, protect natural and human infrastructure, and protect the quality of life for residents. Implementation strategies can be separated into several distinct 'tool' categories. Each tool has distinct characteristics that make it suitable for specific goals and circumstances. The tools available to the City comprise the City's implementation portfolio:

- *Education and Promotion* – Formal programs or informal efforts undertaken by the City or in conjunction with the City to encourage voluntary actions by individuals or businesses that help fulfill the City's desired future as described in the Comprehensive Plan.
- *Incentives and Incentive Regulation* – Inducements offered by the City or in conjunction with the City to elicit actions by individuals or businesses that move the City toward its desired future. The inducements or incentives can include:
  - Direct financial assistance such as cost sharing
  - Indirect financial assistance such as assistance in applying for grants, or with infrastructure improvements
  - Regulatory incentives such as density bonuses or flexible regulation
  - Professional assistance incentives such as technical assistance in façade or infrastructure design, integration of historic elements, or meeting State or Federal regulatory standards
- *City Ordinances and Other Regulation* – City ordinances, including zoning, subdivision, environmental, and other standards, as well as the administrative approvals process. Regulation includes:
  - Threshold standards such as minimum or maximum lot sizes and height requirements
  - Performance standards that regulate development impacts such as erosion
  - Administrative standards such as information or analyses required for a development
  - Application and the order and timing of approvals by regulating authorities
- *Managing Public Processes and Resources* – Public investments and management decisions for infrastructure, public services, public lands, and public processes. Such investment or decisions can include:
  - Programming of public improvements through the Capital Improvements Plan

- Water, wastewater, and transportation investments made by the City or ultimately managed by the City
- Land acquisition, sale, or exchange for the purpose of preservation or development
- Management decisions and expenditures for public resources such as streets, parks, and deployment of public services
- Conducting studies and making decisions on enhancing or modifying the Comprehensive Plan or supporting documents

Rarely will a single tool or category of tools be sufficient to achieve Comprehensive Plan goals. Most policies, and most of the preferred mix of land uses shown on the future land use map, require the use of several tools from different categories in order to be realized and sustained. The City must take a 'portfolio' approach in its implementation choices, recognizing that each category of tools has unique strengths and weaknesses.

#### Summary of Implementation Actions

The following table lists the major actions needed to implement the policy recommendations in each element of the plan. It briefly describes each action, designates its relative time frame, and indicates which departments, agencies or interest groups should be involved, both in primary (**bold**) and secondary or advisory roles.

Table 5: Summary of Major Implementation Actions

Phasing	Land Use Plan Actions	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Short-term	<p>Plan Adoption: The City will adopt the Land Use Plan map and land use categories and use these to guide future zoning changes and capital investments.</p>	<p>Community Development Department                      Planning Commission                      City Council                      Public Works Department                      Park and Recreation Department                      Other City Departments</p>
Short-term	<p>Update Zoning Ordinance and Development Regulations: Completely rewrite the City's zoning ordinance to bring it into conformance with this plan and contemporary practices, improve site planning standards, and clarify administrative procedures, among other changes. Ordinance changes should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of local historic district standards</li> <li>• Encouragement of mixed use where shown in plan land use categories</li> <li>• Integration of sensitive resources overlay standards with zoning</li> <li>• Standards for residential neighborhood design that will encourage the integration of diverse housing types, schools, parks and open space</li> <li>• Standards for conservation design (cluster development) in sensitive natural resource areas.</li> </ul> <p>Amend the City's subdivision ordinance to require narrower local residential streets, sidewalks or interconnected trails along every local residential street and street trees or equivalent landscaping along most streets.</p> <p>Consider combining all development regulations into a Unified Development Code (UDC). A UDC can streamline development processes by combining zoning, subdivision, environmental and similar regulations in a single cross-referenced document.</p>	<p>Community Development Department                      Planning Commission                      City Council                      Public Works Department                      Other City Departments</p>

Short-term: 1-3 years  
 Medium-term: 3-8 years  
 Long-term: over 8 years

Medium – ongoing	Redevelopment: Continue the process of redevelopment and infill development in the downtown, the Downtown Fringe, identified riverfront areas, and other locations, using all available tools. Target public improvements (for example, structured parking or streetscape improvements) to key locations, in order to create incentives for private investment.	Community Development Department Port Authority Downtown Revitalization Committee
Medium – as needed	Master Plans for Expansion Areas: Continue to prepare Alternative Urban Areawide Reviews or similar master plans to guide development in the City's urban expansion areas, in conjunction with plans for extension of utilities to these areas. In addition to environmental review, specific plans for these areas should specify more detailed land use and circulation patterns than the generalized ones in this plan.	Community Development Department Public Works Department Port Authority Winona County and townships State agencies
Ongoing	Development Review: Use the plan routinely to review applications for rezoning, subdivision or site plan approval.	Community Development Department Planning Commission and City Council Public Works Department Other City Departments
<b>Phasing</b>	<b>Arts and Humanities Plan Actions</b>	<b>Lead and Coordinating Agencies</b>
Short-term	Commission: Restructure the Fine Arts Commission as the Arts and Humanities Commission. Develop a work program for that body and develop funding sources.	Arts & Humanities Commission City Council Community Services Director Park and Recreation Department
Short-term	Arts District: Establish a mixed-use arts-oriented district focused on the downtown. (See zoning recommendations under Land Use Plan)	Community Development Department Arts & Humanities Commission Downtown Revitalization Committee Planning Commission and City Council
Short-term	Wayfinding System: Develop a comprehensive wayfinding system linking cultural, natural, recreational and other attractions.	Community Development Department Public Works Department Visit Winona Downtown Revitalization Committee
Medium	Arts Center: Establish a community arts center offering studio and performance space	Arts & Humanities Commission Park and Rec. Department Other City assistance

Short-term: 1-3 years

Medium-term: 3-8 years

Long-term: over 8 years

Ongoing	Partnerships: Collaborate to provide arts and humanities activities and learning opportunities.	Community Services Director Visit Winona Universities Arts & Humanities Commission
Ongoing	Public Art: Pursue public art and beautification projects	Arts & Humanities Commission City Departments Visit Winona Downtown Revitalization Committee
Phasing	Downtown Revitalization Plan Actions	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Short-term	Downtown Organization: Combine and restructure Downtown Revitalization Committee and Historic Downtown Business Group to form a permanent downtown organization	Downtown Revitalization Committee Historic Downtown Business Group
Short-term	Special Services District: Investigate feasibility of a Special Services District or other permanent funding source for downtown improvements	Downtown Organization Community Development Department City Council
Medium	Riverfront Access: Improve public access to the riverfront: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access points at Main Street</li> <li>• Continue to pursue switching yard relocation (ongoing)</li> </ul>	Community Development Department Public Works Department
Medium	Housing: Encourage development of downtown housing opportunities	Community Development Department Private or Nonprofit Developers Winona State University Downtown Organization
Medium – Long-term	Levee Park: Initiate redesign of Levee Park. Steps include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking funding</li> <li>• Obtaining public input and professional assistance</li> <li>• Preliminary design</li> <li>• Construction</li> </ul>	Community Development Department Downtown Organization Public Works Department Park and Rec. Department Winona County Historical Society
Ongoing	Business Mix: Define and pursue a desirable and complementary mix of year-round and seasonal businesses	Downtown Organization Chamber of Commerce Community Development Department Port Authority

Short-term: 1-3 years

Medium-term: 3-8 years

Long-term: over 8 years

Ongoing	Business Support: Support new and existing businesses with training, coordination and promotions	Downtown Organization Chamber of Commerce Visit Winona
Ongoing	River-oriented Recreation: Create/encourage river-oriented recreational opportunities in the downtown. Coordinate tourism and promotional activities.	Downtown Organization Visit Winona Port Authority
Ongoing	Parking: Improve parking management and parking facilities. Improve parking enforcement.	Community Development Department Public Works Department Police Department Downtown Organization Downtown Businesses Winona County Government
<b>Phasing</b>	<b>Economic Development Plan Actions</b>	<b>Lead and Coordinating Agencies</b>
Short-term	Conference/Performing Arts Center: Pursue development of Downtown Conference / Performing Arts Center, with initial feasibility study. Based on the results of that study, continuing funding and development efforts may be needed.	Community Development Department Port Authority State economic development agencies Winona County government Universities Local arts organizations
Ongoing	Recreational/cultural investments: Invest in recreational and cultural amenities	See actions under Arts and Humanities, Park and Recreation and Downtown
Ongoing	Composite Materials: Support and expand the composite materials cluster	Community Development Department Port Authority State economic development agencies
Ongoing	Regional Tourism: Develop a regional tourism strategy	Visit Winona Community Development Department Cultural organizations State agencies and regional tourism organizations
Ongoing	Training: Develop workforce training strategies	Community Development Department Winona Workforce Council Port Authority Colleges and universities

Short-term: 1-3 years

Medium-term: 3-8 years

Long-term: over 8 years

Ongoing	Partnerships: Strengthen academic/industry partnerships	Community Development Department Colleges and universities Private industry Port Authority Chamber of Commerce
Phasing	Environment and Energy Plan Actions	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Short-term	Environmental standards: Continue to strengthen environmental protection standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation design standards</li> <li>• Impervious coverage limitations</li> <li>• Improved landscaping standards</li> <li>• Setbacks from blufftops and ridgelines</li> </ul>	Community Development Department (part of zoning ordinance update) Planning Commission Environmental Quality Committee
Short-term	Low Impact Development: Create incentives for low impact development (LID)	Public Works Department Community Development Department
Medium-term	Parkland Enhancements: Initiate open space and public lands enhancements to encourage native vegetation and LID techniques	Park and Recreation Department Public Works Department Environmental Quality Committee Other organizations
Ongoing	Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy: Support energy conservation and renewable energy through design and use in city facilities, site design standards, community workshops	Public Works Department Community Development Department Inspections Department Winona County Environmental Quality Committee Other organizations
Ongoing	Education and Enforcement: Improve enforcement and education on environmental regulations through increased staff time and volunteer efforts	City Council Community Development Department Environmental Quality Committee

Short-term: 1-3 years

Medium-term: 3-8 years

Long-term: over 8 years

Phasing	Historic Preservation Plan Actions	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Short-term	Local Historic District: Establish a local historic district in downtown Winona <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement design standards for the district</li> <li>• Implement design guidelines for the greater downtown area</li> </ul>	Heritage Preservation Commission Community Development Department Planning Commission Winona County Historical Society Downtown Revitalization Committee
Short-term	Zoning Updates: Update zoning regulations to encourage preservation and context-sensitive development	Community Development Department Planning Commission Heritage Preservation Commission Downtown Revitalization Committee
Medium-term	Rehabilitation Incentives: Implement financial incentives and resources for historic building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse	Community Development Department Heritage Preservation Commission Downtown Revitalization Committee
Ongoing	Education and Information: Develop educational and information programs for property owners, schools, visitors, etc.	Heritage Preservation Commission Community Development Department
Ongoing	Partnerships: Encourage intergovernmental and interagency partnerships	Heritage Preservation Commission City Council, City Departments Downtown Revitalization Committee Winona County Historical Society Visit Winona
Phasing	Housing Plan Actions	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Short-term	Comprehensive Housing Study: Continue to assess housing needs – update Comprehensive Housing Study	Community Development Department
Medium-term	Mixed Use and Mixed Income Housing: Encourage mixed use and mixed income infill and redevelopment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning and design standards for housing diversity, secondary units</li> </ul>	Community Development Department

Short-term: 1-3 years  
Medium-term: 3-8 years  
Long-term: over 8 years

Ongoing	Neighborhood Stability: Maintain and enhance the viability of single-family housing in older neighborhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing rehabilitation programs</li> <li>• Compile architectural resources for homeowners</li> <li>• Zoning updates and guidance for 'half-lot' houses</li> </ul>	Community Development Department Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Ongoing	Rental Housing: Maintain and enhance quality of rental housing	Community Development Department Housing and Redevelopment Authority State housing agencies
Ongoing	Student Housing: Coordinate with institutions of higher education on the location and design of student housing	Community Development Department Winona State University St. Mary's University Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical
Phasing	Parks and Recreation Plan Actions	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Short-term	Parks Classification: Adopt and utilize a parks classification system	Park and Recreation Department Community Development Department
Short-term	River-based Recreation: Enhance and integrate river-based recreation into the parks system	Park and Recreation Department Public Works Department U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Short-term	Parks Commission: Establish a Parks Commission or Committee	City Council Park and Recreation Department Planning Commission
Medium to long-term	Winter Recreation: Enhance winter recreational opportunities	Park and Recreation Department Community Development Department Visit Winona
Medium to long-term	Management: Centralize park management responsibilities among Park and Recreation and Public Works Departments	City Council Park and Recreation Department Public Works Department
Ongoing	Partnerships: Maintain recreational programming partnerships with schools, neighboring jurisdictions, etc.	Park and Recreation Department
Ongoing	Parks Plan: Continue developing a Parks Plan	Park and Recreation Department Community Development Department

Short-term: 1-3 years  
Medium-term: 3-8 years  
Long-term: over 8 years

Ongoing	Trails Plan: Continue to implement the citywide trails plan	Public Works Department Community Development Department Winona City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee (Also see under Transportation)
<b>Phasing</b>	<b>Riverfront Plan Actions</b>	<b>Lead and Coordinating Agencies</b>
Short-term	Waterfront Trail: Pursue development of the Waterfront Trail	Community Development Department Port Authority Winona City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee Public Works Department
Short-term	Water Trails: Re-institute and sign water recreation trails	Community Development Department Public Works Department
Medium-term	Riverway Streets: Create Riverway Streets that provide pedestrian/bike connections to the riverfront	Community Development Department Public Works Department
Medium-long term	Park Improvements: Undertake river-related park improvements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latsch Island</li> <li>• Prairie Island</li> <li>• Levee Park</li> </ul>	Community Development Department Park and Recreation Department Public Works Department (See also under Parks and Recreation Plan)
Ongoing	Activity Zones: Use the concept of River Activity Zones in future planning	Community Development Department Port Authority Planning Commission
Ongoing	Collaboration: Collaborate with state and federal agencies on river corridor management	Community Development Department Public Works Department Park and Recreation Department Port Authority U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service MN and WI DNR
<b>Phasing</b>	<b>Transportation Plan Actions</b>	<b>Lead and Coordinating Agencies</b>
Short-term	Local Street Policies: Update policies for local street improvements	Public Works Department Community Development Department

Short-term: 1-3 years  
Medium-term: 3-8 years  
Long-term: over 8 years

Short to medium term	Transit: Improve transit service	Community Development Department City Clerk's Office
Short to long term, depending on funding	Road Improvements: Pursue priority road improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Louisa Street extension</li> <li>• Louisa Street overpass</li> <li>• Sarnia Street extension</li> </ul>	Public Works Department Community Development Department City Council Port Authority
Short to medium-term – varies by project	Trail System: Pursue development of citywide trail system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waterfront Trail</li> <li>• Wabasha Street Bicycle Boulevard</li> <li>• Trail linkages</li> <li>• Riverway streets</li> <li>• Regional connections</li> </ul>	Public Works Department Community Development Department Winona City/County Bicycle Advisory Committee Port Authority
Short to long-term – varies by project	Aiport Improvements: Pursue airport improvements recommended in Airport Layout Plan	Public Works Department
Medium-term – ongoing	Rail Improvements: Pursue rail relocations and safety improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levee Park Rail Yard relocation</li> <li>• CP Rail Yard relocation</li> <li>• Wall Street track removal</li> <li>• Rail crossing improvements</li> </ul>	Community Development Department Public Works Department Port Authority Railroad companies
Medium- to long-term	Interstate Bridge: Plan for Interstate Bridge reconstruction	Public Works Department Community Development Department MN Dept. of Transportation (MnDOT)
Medium- to long-term	Truck Route System: Revise truck routes in conjunction with other road improvements.	Public Works Department Community Development Department MnDOT
Medium-term, depending on funding	Highway 61 Improvements: Improve Highway 61 access points	Public Works Department Community Development Department MnDOT

Short-term: 1-3 years

Medium-term: 3-8 years

Long-term: over 8 years

Ongoing	Passenger Rail: Continue to support and enhance passenger rail service	Community Development Department City Clerk's Office (Transit) Amtrak
Ongoing	Port Facilities: Maintain and enhance commercial harbor and port facilities	Port Authority Community Development Department
Ongoing	Sidewalk policies: Require sidewalks and paths in neighborhoods	Public Works Department Community Development Department
Ongoing	Pedestrian and bike facilities: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle facilities in all new development	Public Works Department Community Development Department
Ongoing	Traffic calming: Consider traffic calming strategies on local residential streets and other identified streets	Public Works Department Community Development Department

Short-term: 1-3 years  
Medium-term: 3-8 years  
Long-term: over 8 years