



PEOPLE
PLANNING
PORTAGE



2030 Comprehensive Plan Update
2/27/2020





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Introduction

The 2030 City of Portage Comprehensive Plan is an update of the 2008 Plan conducted by Schreiber Anderson Associates, Inc. and has been developed to provide background and direction for a variety of land use decisions. Included in this plan are chapters, or elements, that provide baseline information, community input, and specific goals, objectives, and strategies on important topics to the City. Other Plans have also been prepared by the City as have been used as reference in this Plan. There are also a number of organizations which contribute to the City's growth and vitality and are key partners in implementing planning and development efforts. This Plan also seeks to build upon the efforts of these organizations.

Previous and Current Plans

2008 Comprehensive Plan

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan was developed in order to provide background and direction for City land use decisions and capital improvement projects. The Plan includes baseline information and specific goals, objectives, and recommendations for each of the nine (9) elements required by State Statute. The Plan has been supplemented with additional priorities, or action items, from the Common Council since its adoption in order to continue to provide direction. Periodic updates are required to ensure this plan remains current over time. However, a complete update is required in order to ensure the Plan reflects recent trends and conditions.

2012 Strategic Economic Development Plan

In 2012, the City retained Ady Voldedge to develop a strategic plan for the City's economic development efforts. The Plan evaluated available properties, identified target industries, and developed strategies for business recruitment positioning and marketing. The Plan also focused on downtown redevelopment and coordination with existing economic development organizations in the local area.

2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The City has recently adopted an update to the 2013 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) to catalog local recreational amenities, assess future and current needs, and plan for improvements to meet those needs.

Transportation Plans

There are also a number of Plans related to transportation which affect the City, including; the Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020, the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan, the Wisconsin State Freight Plan, the Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030, and the Portage Area Trail and Heritage System (PATHS) Vision Plan.

Key Development Partners

Portage Area Chamber of Commerce

The Portage Area Chamber is very active in many aspects of City life. They promote business and tourism activity through a variety of programs and events. Programs include advertising the City to potential new business prospects, providing start-up services to entrepreneurs, and promoting the revitalization of the historic downtown. They host a career fair, gold outing, and business luncheons. Events include networking and tourism events designed to encourage collaboration and promote the natural amenities in the area.



Some of the recent projects they have assisted with or support include; the Band Shell at Pauquette Park, Columbia County Fairgrounds planning, the NAPA building mural project, the roof for the Portage Center for the Arts, the Columbia County Gateway Building project, the Portage Family Skate Park, and the Columbia Energy Center. Business Improvement District Board and Downtown Portage Inc.

These organizations have taken over the role formerly filled by Main Street Portage, which was part of the Main Street USA program. Both organizations team together to promote downtown development efforts, help locals and tourists find happenings around the downtown area, and sponsor a number of events, such as Canal Days, Winter Break Out, and various music, recreation, and arts and crafts events.



Background and Community

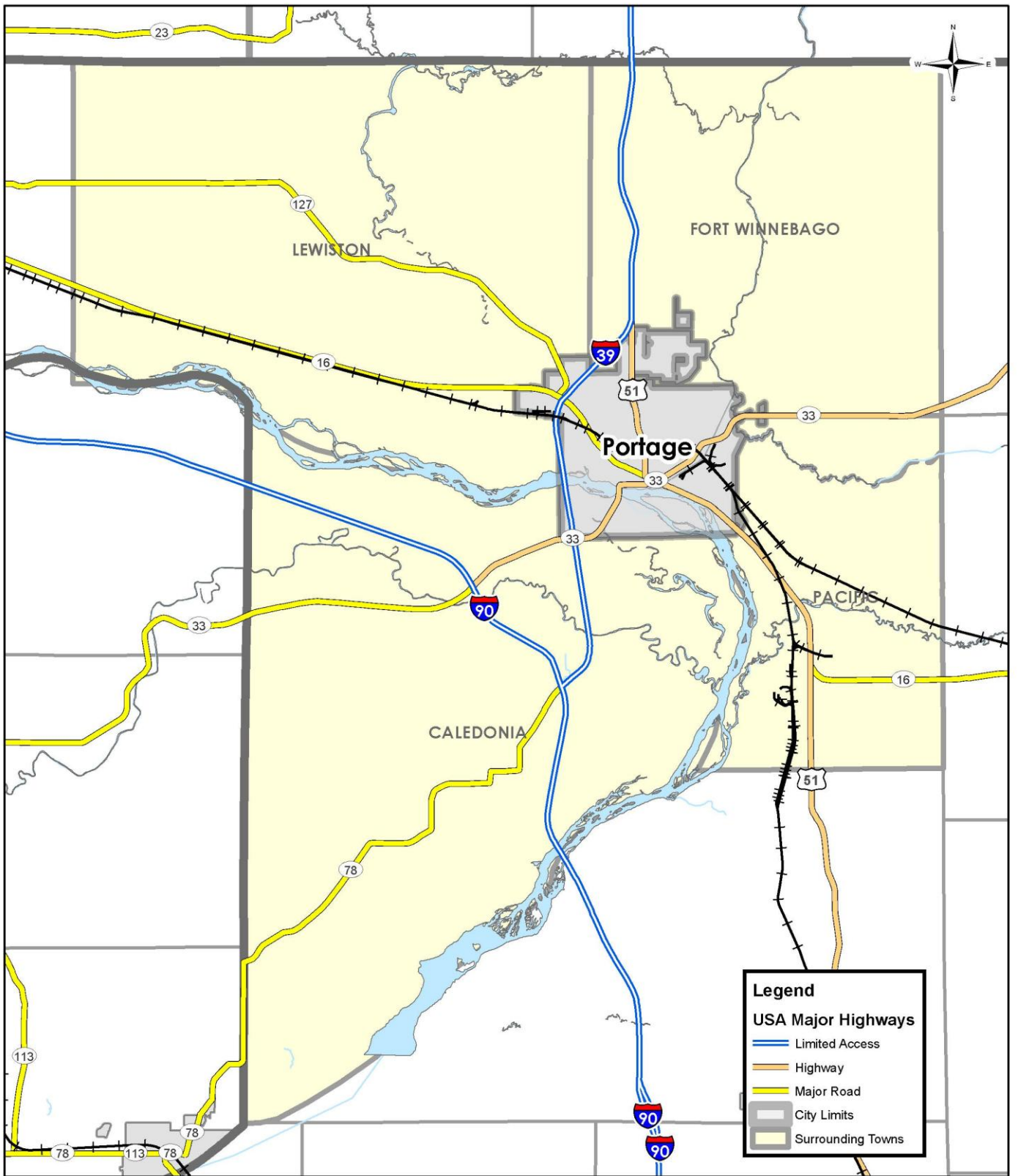
Residents and visitors to the City have access to a number of natural, historic and cultural amenities.

Historically, Native American tribes and European traders settled between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers as a natural “por-tage,” which eventually lends itself to the name of the community, taken from the word the French fur traders used to describe the place, “le portage.” The City naturally developed as a center of commerce and trade, and later, a canal was constructed to facilitate this trade. Railroads helped to continue this role.

Important cultural and historic buildings were developed over the decades, including Fort Winnebago at the Fox River end and other important structures. The Fox-Wisconsin waterway underwent improvements for steamboat traffic and a canal linking the City to the lower Fox industrial cities of Neenah, Menasha, Appleton, Fond du Lac and Green Bay. The canal is still an important resource today, although now it is used more for recreation.

Its location along the Wisconsin River places the City in the low lying area with many wetlands within and around its borders. The natural setting of the River and wetlands natural resources and a beautiful setting, as well as challenges to growth and development. Recent completion and certification of a levee along the Wisconsin River removed portions of the City from floodplain designation. However, dams along the Wisconsin River often result in low flow conditions on the River during summer months, limiting access to the River for boating and recreation.

The City is currently the largest municipality in Columbia County and is the County Seat. The City has good access to transportation, including Interstate 39 and U.S. Highway 51. The City is neighbored by the Towns of Lewiston, Fort Winnebago, Caledonia, and Pacific. Given the importance of natural amenities to the City, for both recreation and tourism purposes, working closely with each of the towns the promotion of local assets is very important. Numerous regional efforts and organizations, which include the City, towns, and County have undertaken natural assets promotion and improvement projects which greatly benefit area residents.



Vicinity Map
 2030 Comprehensive Plan
 May 8, 2019

Data Sources: City of Portage, Columbia County



Legend

USA Major Highways

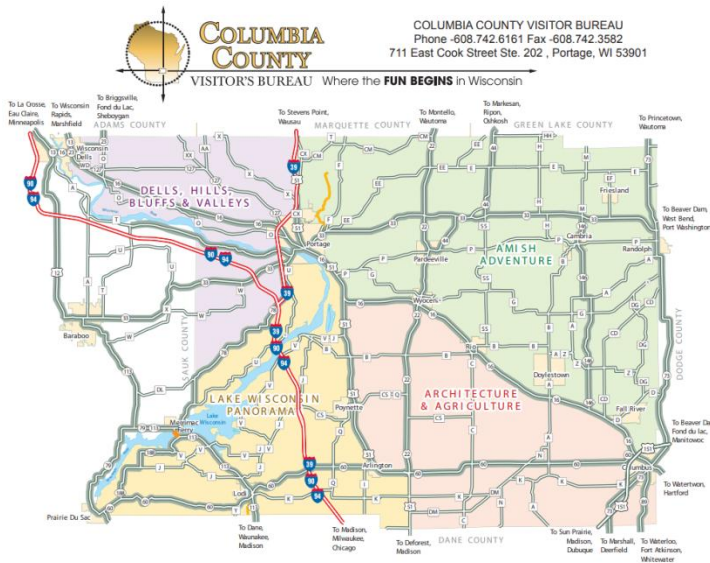
- Limited Access
- Highway
- Major Road
- City Limits
- Surrounding Towns

vierbicher
 planners | engineers | advisors

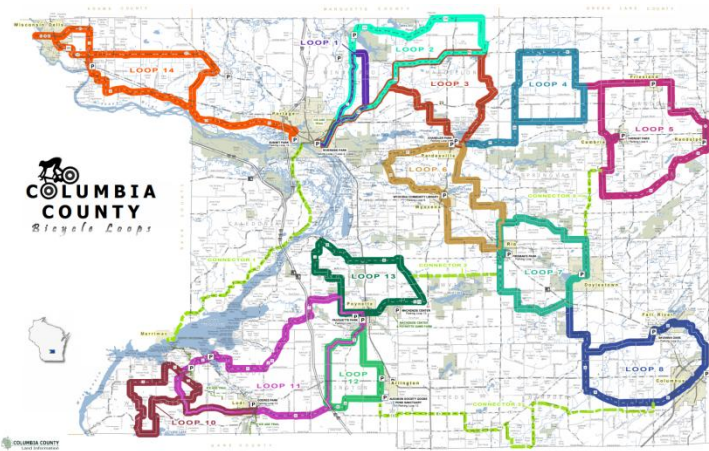


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Columbia County Area Tourism Map



Columbia County Bicycle Map



National Scenic Ice Age Trail

Regional Organizations, Plans, & Initiatives

Columbia County Visitor's Bureau

The Columbia County Visitor's Bureau is an active organization which promotes the many historic, cultural, and recreational sites, activities, and events in the County, including those in Portage. The Visitor's Bureau promotes regional lodging options, such as; campground, hotels, and bed and breakfast establishments. They also promote local food manufacturers and food-oriented events, including; local wineries, breweries, orchards, corn mazes, and cheese and dairy farms. Promoted parks and recreation destinations include bicycle loops, fishing, boating, skiing, and hiking. These efforts complement the City efforts and provide an opportunity to continue to partner with this organization and promote the local area as a state-wide and national tourism destination.

Ice Age Trail Alliance

The mission of the Ice Age Trail Alliance is to create, support and protect a thousand-mile footpath tracing Ice Age formations across Wisconsin — the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. In collaboration with their many partners, they work to promote a premier, continuous, permanently protected Ice Age National Scenic Trail. The City has great access to the Ice Age Trail and should continue to build connections to this resource and promote the City's ideal location for access.

Other Organizations

Other contributing public, private, non-profit, and for-profit organizations include;

- The Portage Area Community Fund
- Travel Wisconsin
- Escape to Wisconsin

Public Participation

A Public Participation Plan was adopted at the beginning of the Comprehensive Planning process in order to ensure there was meaningful input from the Technical Review Committee, local officials, and residents. The full Public Participation Plan details the public engagement process and can be found in Appendix B.

As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The results of the survey can be found in Appendix A. The survey was administered on-line, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan question, CORP questions, or both. Survey responses were summarized in each relevant Chapter in order to provide public engagement context as part of the needs assessment, goals, and objectives in each Chapter.

Plan Organization

The Comprehensive Plan is organized into nine (9) chapters, which correspond to the nine (9) elements required by State statute. These Chapters include;

- Issues and Opportunities
- Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Housing
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use
- Implementation

The Issues and Opportunities Chapter includes issues and opportunities which were developed through input from the Technical Review Committee, local officials, the community survey, a public workshop, and needs assessments in each of the other chapters.

Each subsequent chapter includes;

- A summary of relevant community survey responses
- A list of Goals and Objectives
- An assessment of demographics, assets, facilities, and/or other relevant information
- An implementation matrix outlining the Strategies needed to implement the Goals and Strategies, as well as duration to achieve, responsibilities, potential costs, and priorities.

The Implementation Chapter includes an outline of the processes and issues related to the implementation of each of the matrices listed in each of the other Chapters.

The Plan also includes the following Appendices;

- Appendix A – Community Survey Results
- Appendix B – Documentation





Chapter 1 - Issues & Opportunities Element



Public Participation

A public participation process was conducted which sought input from City area residents throughout the Comprehensive Planning process. An initial method of gathering input was to send an electronic public survey to area residents via email. Paper copies were also made available. The survey was divided into six (6) sections; Character & Quality of Life, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Community Facilities, and Infrastructure & Growth. A summary of the survey results can be found in Appendix A.

In addition to the survey, a public workshop and public hearing were held to gather additional input.



Public Workshop attendees



Public Workshop attendees

Issues and Opportunities

A number of major issues and opportunities facing the City were identified from engaging the public through public workshops and working with the Technical Review Committee and elected officials during the planning process. Issues and opportunities were also identified as part of the demographic analysis conducted for each Chapter, or Element, of the Plan. A summary of the identified issues and opportunities is listed below.

Housing Issues

- There is currently a low vacancy rate for homeowners and a low vacancy rate for rentals. There is a need for additional owner-occupied homes and some need for more rentals.
- The ratio of renters is almost half of all occupied housing units in the City. This may indicate an imbalance in the local housing market and the need to encourage more homeownership.
- Few housing units have been built in the last 10 years, compared with building rates from 2000 to 2009. Building since 2010 has only represented .87% of all housing stock, compared with 12.67% for the previous decade. More housing construction is needed to keep up with historic levels.
- A large number of homes built in the 1950s and 1960s and an even larger number built before 1949 may need renovation.
- Higher building levels in the surrounding towns indicates suburban growth has been stronger in the past decade.
- The percentage of renters spending between 20% and 30% of their income on rent is low, showing a gap between renters who can more easily afford their rent and those that are struggling. This also shows a potential need for more workforce rentals in the City.

- The City has a relatively large family size, yet a lower household size, when compared to the County. This indicates more family members living on their own.

Housing Opportunities

- The City has a good stock of older homes which represent an opportunity to encourage and promote rehabilitation of owner-occupied and renter housing.
- Remaining lots in an existing subdivision, such as Rolling Hills Country Subdivision, represent an opportunity to add new housing to City stock.
- Continue to market the City Housing Assistance Program to encourage home ownership.
- Potential housing units above storefronts in the downtown district represent an opportunity to provide additional downtown living options.
- Developable land within and surrounding the City is available for new construction.



Historic Home

Transportation Issues

- There is a concern that the volume of truck traffic in downtown is an issue for pedestrians and is interfering with parking.
- Supporting outdoor recreation and promoting recreational and ecotourism will continue to require improvements to contributing assets.

Transportation Opportunities

- There are alternate routes throughout the City which could be utilized to disperse traffic and provide for bicycle and other modes of transportation.
- Maintain a local street system to provide alternate routes throughout the City and the use of appropriate routes by different types of users.
- Working with local employers can be an opportunity to re-route incoming and outgoing truck traffic to alternate routes which do not go through the downtown.
- Under the supervision of the Non-Motorized Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee (NMTAHC), prepare a pedestrian and bicycle master plan.
- Federal and other public funding sources represent an opportunity to enhance the walkability of neighborhoods, such as those surrounding K-8 schools, in the City.
- The Transportation Alternatives (TA) program provides an opportunity to help fund sidewalk, multi-modal and other transportation projects.
- Existing corridors, such as New Pinery Road, Wisconsin Street, and Cook Street, in the City are areas where there are opportunities to encourage infill development or attract new businesses.

Utilities and Community Facilities Issues

- The City may have a need for additional indoor facility space for activities and services for seniors, children and youth and community recreation.
- Wastewater treatment and stormwater facilities need upgrades.
- The City continually faces the need for enhance existing post-secondary educational options to attract new students and workers to the City as the skills needed by businesses evolve.
- The City may have a need for additional outdoor recreational facilities for seniors.

Utilities and Community Facilities Opportunities

- There is continued opportunity to expand and improve local and regional recreational connectivity through the completion of Portage Area Trails and Heritage System (PATHS) Project, under the supervision of the Non-Motorized Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee (NMTAHC), and other trail projects.
- There is continued opportunity to seek funding for trail construction from State and Federal grant programs as well as private sources such as donations and foundation funds.
- Upgrade wastewater treatment and stormwater facilities as needed to maintain sufficient capacity to meet demand through 2030.
- There is an opportunity to generate a greater economic impact for the City through the promotion and improvement of larger recreational facilities and venues, such as the Veteran's Memorial Park and County Fairgrounds.
- Promoting on-site stormwater infiltration through measures such as rain gardens, rain barrels and "green" roofs, can enhance current stormwater management practices.



Water Treatment Plant

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Issues

- The City and the surrounding area is well known throughout Wisconsin as the home of many significant cultural, historic and archaeological sites. Protection of these resources represents a continued challenge.
- The City has two (2) residential Districts listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places, a Downtown Historic District, and an Industrial Historic District. Protection and Promotion of Districts represents a continued challenge.
- The City and adjoining townships have a large concentration of wetlands, which will need to be protected and managed as the City continues to grow.
- Protection of water resources remains essential, as groundwater is the primary source for most municipal, industrial and private domestic supplies in the area.
- The poor water quality of Silver Lake is a concern. Run-off of nutrients from agricultural and urban uses reduces water quality of Silver Lake.
- Low water levels in the Wisconsin River reduce opportunities for access by boat or foot during summer months. The City's location between dams results in low water flow along the Wisconsin River. Low flow during summer months reduces or prevents access to the river by foot or boat, and creates stagnant, unappealing conditions.
- Flood level elevations of Wisconsin River in spring and after heavy storm events impact access to several roads and homes.

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Opportunities

- Continued coordination with Wisconsin River Dam operators and Columbia County can help to minimize volatility in River elevations.
- The completion of the management plan by UWSP should yield additional opportunities to reduce and mitigate nutrient run-off into Silver Lake through lake planning and other cooperative initiatives.
- Delineating environmental corridors on preliminary plats and certified survey maps will help to develop additional corridor protection methods.
- The City's unique history is a continued opportunity to brand the community, enhance community identity, and promote tourism and downtown revitalization.



View of Wisconsin River from West Conant Street

Economic Development Issues

- Some commercial and former industrial buildings are vacant and underutilized.
- Continued effective marketing and promotion is needed to attract and retain businesses that provide quality, well-paying jobs.
- The City will continue to study the potential for acquiring additional land for the airport and for new land uses and development/ redevelopment activity adjacent to the airport, depending upon the results of the Airport Master Plan.
- The continued revitalization of Downtown Portage is one of the critical issues facing the City.



592

Total Businesses

Source: ESRI



8,591

Total Employees

Economic Development Opportunities

- Continued Economic Development Strategic Planning will remain important to keep up with changing economic conditions.
- Downtown revitalization planning will remain important to keeping the District thriving and successful.
- The Industrial Park will continue to need promotion to attract new businesses and existing businesses will need to be monitored and surveyed to ensure they have the ability to expand and retain employees.
- Identified clusters, such as those related to food services, plastics, and tool and die industries, continue to represent sectors of the economy which can be expanded.
- Continued coordination with all the relevant economic development stakeholders and partners in the region will remain important as the City looks to recruit new businesses.
- Different areas and neighborhoods in the City may have infill sites which can accommodate a mix of uses to serve local residents and may benefit from neighborhood planning to uncover other opportunities.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues

- Intergovernmental cooperation is important to the successful implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan as outdoor recreation and promotion of natural resource can be regional issues.
- It will continue to be important to work effectively with neighboring jurisdictions to continue to maintain balanced growth and development policies to meet future land use and development needs of the City.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities

- Continuing to work with adjacent municipalities and the County in developing annexation plans and extra-territorial jurisdiction policies will be necessary to provide housing and other growth solutions in a balanced manner that is beneficial to the region.
- There is continued opportunity to identify the potential for shared resources and/or joint programs that generate tax savings
- There is continued opportunity for regional water management and erosion control in partnership with Towns, County and State agencies.
- There is continued opportunity to build upon the success of regional recreation and natural resource and tourism promotion efforts by working with surrounding towns, the County, the State, and both profit and non-profit outdoor recreation organizations and partners.

Land Use Issues

- Redevelopment of the existing airport site should be a major consideration if a new airport location is determined to be necessary and is supported by the Airport Master Plan
- The City is a unique blend of abundant natural areas, historic places, neighborhoods and rural lands which should be taken into context along with future development plans and projects
- The City has undeveloped and underutilized property within the current City limits which are in need of redevelopment.

Land Use Opportunities

- There is an opportunity to continue to attract new residents and serve existing residents by encouraging the development of vacant and underutilized properties.
- There is an opportunity to consider preparation of small area plans for neighborhoods and other City areas which may need revitalization and/or redevelopment.

Implementation Issues

- An number of the identified strategies will require funding and assistance with such funding should be sought from organization and agency grant and loan programs to ensure strategies are completed within the plan time frame

Implementation Opportunities

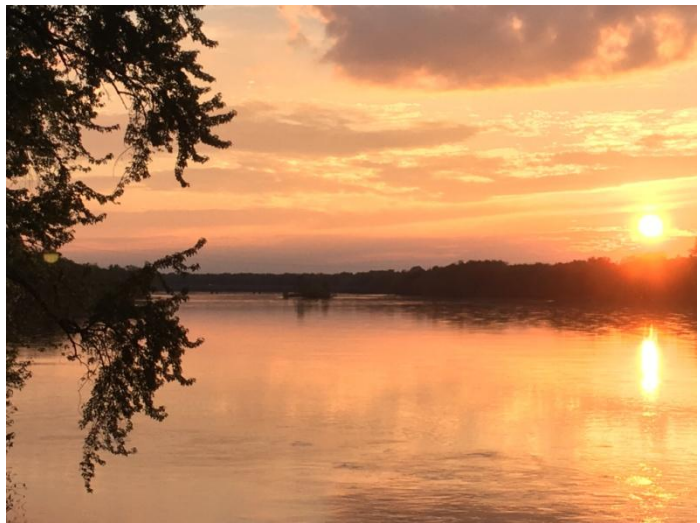
- Updating the Capital Improvement Plan on an annual basis with regular budget review will yield opportunities to find budget shortfalls and prepare for grant funding during near-term grant cycles.

History and Setting

The City and its surrounding areas, make up a community rich in natural amenity and history. The Native American tribes that once lived here, and later the European traders and settlers, took advantage of the lowlands between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers as a natural "portage," which eventually lends itself to the name of the community, taken from the word the French fur traders used to describe the place, "le portage." As a portage, this community developed as a center of commerce and trade, and later, a canal was constructed to facilitate this trade. When the railroads came through, it continued in this role.

By the end of the 17th century, the Fox-Wisconsin waterway, linked at The City, served as the major fur trade thoroughfare between Green Bay and Prairie du Chien. In 1828, the federal government recognized the strategic economic importance of the City and built Fort Winnebago at the Fox River end. Development of the State's resources necessitated the movement of bulk cargo to the Great Lakes. Navigated by canoes for over 100 years, the Fox-Wisconsin waterway underwent improvement for steamboat traffic beginning in the late 1830s. The improvement linking the City and its canal to the lower Fox industrial cities of Neenah, Menasha, Appleton, Fond du Lac and Green Bay were sufficient to carry barges of lumber and bulk farm goods by the 1850s. Shifting sand bars defeated efforts to improve navigation of the Wisconsin through a system of wing dams. These efforts were abandoned after 1886. In 1857 and 1858, the railroad linked the City to the major commercial centers of Milwaukee and La Crosse. The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul constructed a regional railroad center in north Portage in the 1860s. In 1877, the Wisconsin Central connected south Portage to Ashland and Milwaukee. These connections assured the City its role in the commercial development of the state and eventually absorbed the bulk cargo carried along the canal.

The City is currently the largest municipality in Columbia County and the County Seat, located in the southern portion of central Wisconsin. In addition to its historical connection to the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers, and the railroads, The City is located along Interstate 39 and U.S. Highway 51. Regional traffic headed to northern parts of Wisconsin typically exits Interstate 90/94 onto Interstate 39-Highway 51, traveling through the City. Recognizing this important juncture, The City adopted the motto, "Where the North Begins." Its location along the Wisconsin River places the City in the low lying area with many wetlands within and around its borders. A portion of the area lies within floodplains. The natural setting of the River and wetlands provides both ample natural resources and a beautiful setting, as well as challenges to growth and development. Recent completion and certification of a levee along the Wisconsin River removed portions of the City from floodplain designation. Dams along the Wisconsin River often result in low flow conditions on the River during summer months, limiting access to the River for boating and recreation.



Sunset over the Wisconsin River from Highway 33 Bridge

Demographic Analysis

This section provides information about current demographic trends. For the purpose of this report, demographic data is provided at the municipal level, the sub-area level, and the County level, and where necessary, State data is provided for comparative purposes.

Population Trends and Forecasts

The 2010 Census of Population recorded the population of the City at 10,324, which is a 6.1% increase from the 2000 Census population of 9,728. The rate of growth in the City from 2000 to 2020 was 2% slower than the rate of growth in Columbia County and equal to the overall growth rate in Wisconsin. Of the four towns that adjoin the City, Caledonia experienced the fastest rate of growth from 2000 to 2010 with a 17.67% rate and Fort Winnebago experienced a decline in population with a 3.5% decrease for the same period. Town of Pacific had a similar rate of growth to the City at 7.5%.

Historic Population Trends 1990 – 2010

Figure 1-1 shows the rate of population growth in the City to have steadily increased over the past 25 years. The population increase from 1990 to 2000 was 12.6% and the increase was 6.1% from 2000 to 2010. The current, 2017, population estimate from the US Census Bureau has the City at 10,321. This represents a very slight decline of 0.03% since 2010. Annual percentage change since 2000 has been 0.34%, very similar to the surrounding towns, County, and State. Only Fort Winnebago showed an annual decline.

Figure 1-1 Population Growth Rates Comparison

	1990	2000	2010	2017	Total % Change 1990 - 2000	Total % Change 2000 - 2010	Total % Change 2010 - 2017	Annual % Change 2000 - 2017
City of Portage	8,640	9,728	10,324	10,321	12.59%	6.13%	-0.03%	0.34%
Town of Caledonia	1,031	1,171	1,378	1,577	13.58%	17.68%	14.44%	1.93%
Town of Fort Winnebago	825	855	825	786	3.64%	-3.51%	-4.73%	-0.45%
Town of Lewiston	1,123	1,187	1,225	1,281	5.70%	3.20%	4.57%	0.44%
Town of Pacific	1,944	2,518	2,707	2,721	29.53%	7.51%	0.52%	0.45%
Columbia County	45,088	52,468	56,833	56,790	16.37%	8.32%	-0.08%	0.46%
State of Wisconsin	4,891,769	5,363,715	5,686,986	5,763,217	9.65%	6.03%	1.34%	0.41%

Source: US Census & 2017 ACS

The 1990 to 2018 growth rate in the City was equal to the overall State of Wisconsin growth rate and 8% slower than the Columbia County rate for the same period. The Town of Caledonia had the fastest growth rate of the adjoining communities for the 1990 to 2018 period with a 37% rate and the Town of Fort Winnebago had a zero percent growth rate for the same period. The Town of Lewiston experienced modest population growth from 1990 to 2018 with an increase of 9.3%.

Age Distribution as a Percentage of the Total Population

The age distribution as a percent of the population for the Census ACS Year 2017 is shown in Figures 1-2 and 1-3. The City has 2.6% fewer children between the ages of 5 to 14 than either Columbia County or the State of Wisconsin average. In the 25 to 34 age range, the City has 3.5% more people than the State average and 4.5% more than the Columbia County average. The City also has a higher percentage of residents than the Columbia County and State averages in the 35 to 44 category.

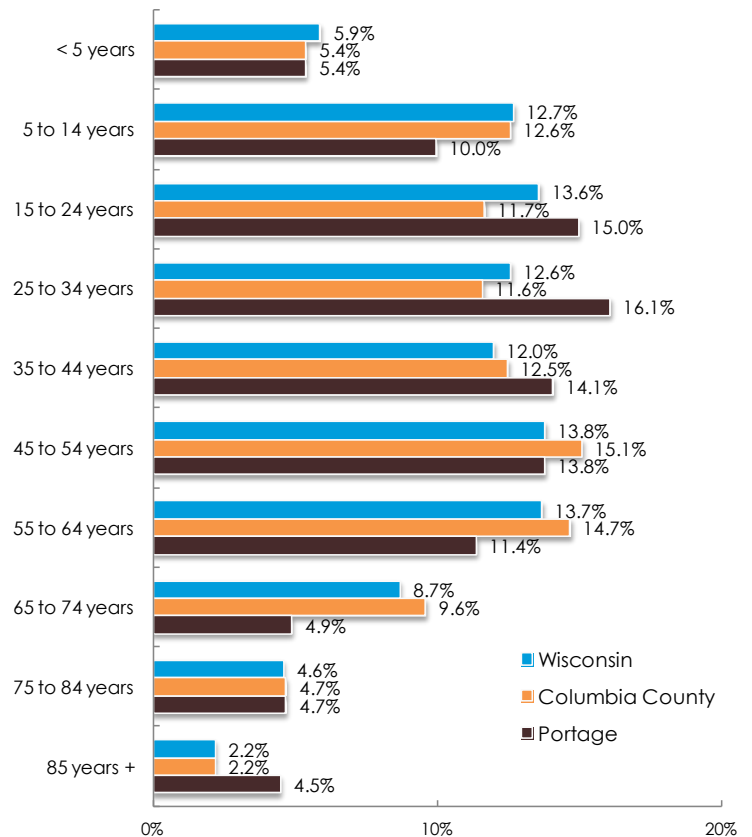
This is expected as more young adults tend to live in cities, which have greater employment opportunities, than rural areas. Retaining these young adults is an important issue for the City and ensuring adequate employment opportunities for them should be a key focus. Retaining middle-aged adults is also important and requires attention to the quality of life issues; such as increased access to housing, cultural resources, and recreation. The City has less than the County and State averages in the 55 to 74 age range; however, the City has a higher percentage in the 85 and older group. The City needs to ensure the senior population is served and have a full range of housing, senior amenities, accessibility.

Figure 1-2 Age Distribution by Percent in 2017, 5 yr. Cohorts

	Wisconsin	Columbia County	Portage
Under 5 years	5.9%	5.4%	5.4%
5 to 9 years	6.3%	6.0%	3.8%
10 to 14 years	6.4%	6.6%	6.2%
15 to 19 years	6.6%	6.4%	8.2%
20 to 24 years	6.2%	5.3%	6.8%
25 to 29 years	6.2%	5.5%	7.7%
30 to 34 years	6.4%	6.1%	8.4%
35 to 39 years	6.1%	5.8%	6.2%
40 to 44 years	5.9%	6.7%	7.9%
45 to 49 years	6.5%	7.1%	6.3%
50 to 54 years	7.3%	8.0%	7.5%
55 to 59 years	7.3%	7.5%	6.2%
60 to 64 years	6.4%	7.2%	5.2%
65 to 69 years	5.1%	5.5%	2.8%
70 to 74 years	3.6%	4.1%	2.1%
75 to 79 years	2.6%	2.6%	3.0%
80 to 84 years	2.0%	2.1%	1.7%
85 years and over	2.2%	2.2%	4.5%

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 1-3 Age Distribution by Percent in 2017, 10 yr. Cohorts



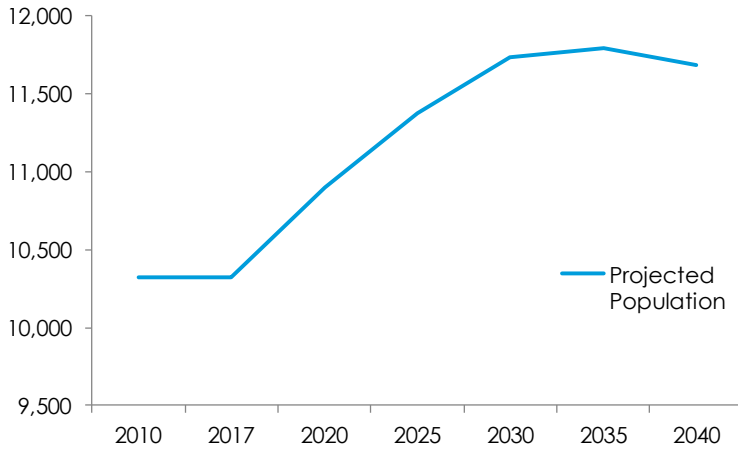
Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 1-4 Median Age

	Median Age	Under 18	18 & Over
City of Portage	37	2,072	8,249
Town of Caledonia	44.4	341	1,236
Town of Fort Winnebago	50.8	134	652
Town of Lewiston	52.3	201	1,080
Town of Pacific	51.5	462	2,259

Source: 2019 WEDC - Portage/2017 ACS - All others

Figure 1-5 Projected Portage Population



Median Age

Figure 1-4 shows the median age in the City to be 37. Surrounding towns all had higher median ages starting with the Lewiston at 52.3, Pacific at 51.5, Fort Winnebago at 50.8, and Caledonia at 44.4.

Population Projections

The last official population projections published by the Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center were completed in 2013 and were based on the 2000 Census of Population. The 2020 and beyond projections were based on a mathematical extrapolation from the population trends that were experienced during the period from 1990 to 2010.

Figure 1-5 and 1-6 show the population projection, as prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, for the City reaching a population of 11,680 by 2040. This represents an increase of 7.16% from 2020, which is a similar projected increase for the State (8.1%), yet a smaller increase than projected for the County (11.46%).

In comparison, the Town of Caledonia is expected to experience the largest percentage increase, at 20.77%, followed by the Towns of Pacific and Lewiston. The Town of Fort Winnebago is projected to decrease in population by 1.18%, to 835 in 2040.

Figure 1-6 Projected Regional Populations

	2010 Census	2017 Estimate	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	2035 Projection	2040 Projection	% Change 2020 - 2040
City of Portage	10,324	10,321	10,900	11,370	11,730	11,790	11,680	7.16%
Town of Caledonia	1,378	1,577	1,565	1,685	1,795	1,855	1,890	20.77%
Town of Fort Winnebago	825	786	845	865	875	860	835	-1.18%
Town of Lewiston	1,225	1,281	1,295	1,345	1,380	1,385	1,365	5.41%
Town of Pacific	2,707	2,721	2,955	3,135	3,290	3,360	3,370	14.04%
Columbia County	56,833	56,790	61,410	64,745	67,455	68,460	68,450	11.46%
State of Wisconsin	5,686,986	5,763,217	6,005,080	6,203,850	6,375,910	6,476,270	6,491,635	8.10%

Source: US Census, 2017 ACS, Dept. of Administration

Racial Distribution & Hispanic Origin

Figure 1-7 shows the City had 9,254 White residents in 2017, which represents 89% of the population, 492 Black/African American residents, representing 4.7%, and 93, or .9% of residents who identify with other racial groups.

The population in the towns of Caledonia, Fort Winnebago, Lewiston and Pacific are more than 95% White residents.

Figure 1-8 shows the City had 480 residents in 2017 who considered themselves to be of Hispanic origin, which represents 4.6% of the population. Of those, 298 were of Black/African American descent, representing 2.8% of the population, and 82, or .79% of residents, who identify with other racial groups and are of Hispanic origin.

The population in the towns of Caledonia, Fort Winnebago, Lewiston and Pacific are less than 3.5% of Hispanic Origin.

Figure 1-7 Residents by Race

	White	Black/ African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	Other Race	Two or More Races
City of Portage	9,254	492	136	52	0	93	294
Town of Caledonia	1,544	0	0	0	0	10	23
Town of Fort Winnebago	760	0	0	0	0	3	23
Town of Lewiston	1,237	6	0	0	0	13	25
Town of Pacific	2,661	0	0	37	0	0	23

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 1-8 Residents by Hispanic Origin

	Hispanic or Latino Total	White	Black/ African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	Other Race	Two or More Races
City of Portage	480	298	7	14	0	0	82	79
Town of Caledonia	50	33	0	0	0	0	7	10
Town of Fort Winnebago	7	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
Town of Lewiston	19	6	0	0	0	0	13	0
Town of Pacific	40	38	0	0	0	0	0	2

Source: 2017 ACS

Educational Levels

The total school enrollment in the City, including college or graduate school, in 2017 was 2,156 persons (see Figure 1-9). The percent of City residents who only have a high school education is 42.4%, while the percent that have a bachelor's degree or higher is 14.2%. These rates are lower than those for the state of Wisconsin, which has a high school graduation rate of 85% and 22% of residents age 25 or older have a college degree or higher.

Figure 1-9 Portage School Enrollment

	Number	Percent
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	2,156	
Nursery school, preschool	143	6.6%
Kindergarten to 12th grade	1,648	76.4%
Kindergarten	119	5.5%
Elementary: grade 1 to grade 4	267	12.4%
Elementary: grade 5 to grade 8	464	21.5%
High school: grade 9 to grade 12	798	37.0%
College, undergraduate	336	15.6%
Graduate, professional school	29	1.3%

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 1-10 Portage Educational Attainment

	Number	Percent
Population 25 years and over	7,176	
Less than 9th grade	163	2.3%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	512	7.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	3,042	42.4%
Some college, no degree	1,731	24.1%
Associate's degree	710	9.9%
Bachelor's degree	717	10.0%
Graduate or professional degree	301	4.2%

Source: 2017 ACS

Concluding Observations

Although recent population growth, since 2010, has been flat, projected population growth is expected to increase through 2030 and then diminish through 2040.

The City has a higher percentage of residents than the Columbia County and State averages in both the 25 to 34 and the 35 to 44 age ranges. This is expected as more young adults tend to live in cities, which have greater employment opportunities, than rural areas. Retaining these young adult is an important issue for the City and ensuring adequate employment opportunities for them should be a key focus.

The City has a higher percentage in the 85 and older group than the County or State and needs to ensure the senior population is served and have a full range of housing, senior amenities, accessibility.



Chapter 2 - Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element



Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of the City's agricultural, natural, and cultural resources. Community survey responses related to agricultural, natural, and cultural resources have also been summarized. Goals, objectives, and strategies have been developed based upon the data presented in this chapter and in other chapters of this Plan, as well as community input, in order to effectively manage and utilize the City's resources and assets.



Pauquette Park



Portage Market

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address agricultural, natural, and cultural resources;

- Protection of community character is very important to respondents, with almost half strongly agreeing.
- Agricultural resources are relatively important to respondents, with 39% of respondents "somewhat" agreeing.
- Just of a third, 36%, of respondents, 36%, "strongly" agree and 33% "somewhat" agree that wetlands, wooded areas, and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from development.
- Most respondents either "strongly" agree or "somewhat" agree that the City should enforce aesthetic requirements for development.
- Most respondent also "strongly" agree or "somewhat" agree that the City should protect historic structures and sites.
- Finally, just over a third, 38%, of respondents "somewhat" agree that the City needs to work with surrounding communities to preserve the City's character.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found at the end of the chapter and list priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.

Goal 2-1 – The City will work to protect the natural resources including groundwater, surface water (lakes, wetlands and rivers), and important natural features that contribute to an enhanced quality of life and sense of place.

Objective 2-1.1 – Maintain policies and programs to improve and protect surface water quality and biological diversity.

Objective 2-1.2 – Maintain policies and programs to protect ground water quantity and quality to meet human needs.

Objective 2-1.3 – Maintain policies and programs to protect forests, agriculture, and important natural habitats.

Goal 2-2 – Continue to make improvements, manage, and provide access to important water bodies, including the Wisconsin River, Fox River, Portage Canal, and local lakes.

Objective 2-2.1 – Continue to make improvements, manage, and provide access to the Portage Canal.

Objective 2-2.2 – Continue to make improvements, manage, and provide access to Silver Lake.

Goal 2-3 – The City will build on its unique history to enhance the City's sense of identity, attract visitors and increase economic development.

Objective 2-3.1 – Use and protect the City's unique history and historic resources to brand the community, enhance community identity, and promote tourism and downtown revitalization.

Agricultural Resources

Agricultural Lands

There are 742 acres of agricultural/open land within the City. This accounts for 14% of all the land within the City.

Soil Types & Capability

The majority of the City is covered with Plainfield-Okee Association of soil types. A smaller portion to the east and north is covered by the Houghton-Adrian-Palms Association.

- Plainfield-Okee Association - The soils in this association are characterized as excessively drained and well drained sandy soils that have sandy or loamy subsoil and are underlain by sandy sediment or sandy loam glacial fill. These soils are poorly suited for crops and are often wooded providing wildlife habitat. Generally, both the Plainfield and Okee soils in this association are suitable for onsite sewage disposal and basements in areas without excessive slope.
- Houghton-Adrian-Palms Association - It generally occurs throughout the County along stream corridors. The soils in this association are characterized as very poorly drained soils that are underlain in places by sandy or loamy sediments.
- All soils in this association are poorly suited for crops however where they can be drained these soils are used to grow crops such as potatoes, mint, and sod. Generally, the soils in this association are not suitable for onsite sewage disposal and basements due to a high water table and flooding potential.

Agricultural Dependency

Figure 2-1 shows the City has less than 1% of the population over 16, working on a farm. This rate is smaller than the Towns directly adjacent to the City and the overall County level. This is not surprising given that the City is more urban than the surrounding towns and County.



The Mercantile cooperative building

Figure 2-1 Employment in the Agricultural Industry

	Columbia County		Town of Caledonia		Town of Fort Winnebago		Town of Lewiston		Town of Pacific		City of Portage	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Civilian employed population 16 years +	30,041		906		446		691		1,410		5,000	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	916	3.05%	34	3.75%	25	5.61%	48	6.95%	17	1.21%	41	0.82%

Source: 2017 ACS

Natural Resources

Floodplains

Floodplains are continually identified and mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Flood recovery costs can be considerable after a flood event and recovery may even not be possible if the damage too great. Therefore, federal, state, and local governments encourage hazard mitigation planning that discourages floodplain development. Counties, cities, and villages are responsible for administering floodplain zoning in accordance with regulatory standards of Chapter NR 116 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code and the standards of the National Flood Insurance Program. The City has floodplain zoning and continues to monitor and enforce the ordinance.

The historic reason for the City's existence is tied to connecting the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers for transportation and commerce. This location also places the City in low lying areas within floodplains. Therefore, the City has approximately 2,700 acres in floodplains, which represents approximately 45% of the total area of the City.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined in Wisconsin Statutes 23.32 as areas where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions. Wetlands are environmentally sensitive due to the many values and functions they provide, including:

- Filtering and replenishing groundwater.
- Flood protection – wetlands act like sponges by storing and slowly releasing rainfall and runoff, which reduces flood peaks and flood recovery costs.
- Filters for certain kinds of wastes and soluble contaminants generated from runoff, which protects water quality.

- Food and habitat for many plants and animals, which benefits hunting, fishing, sightseeing, and other recreational or tourism interests.
- Shoreline protection – wetlands protect shorelines from erosive wave action and enhance the quality of life by providing spacious and scenic open spaces.

Like floodplains, wetlands in Columbia County are concentrated in the northern and western portions of the County. Among cities and villages within the County, the City has the largest number of acres of wetlands, approximately 1,400 acres, and the largest percentage of land area in wetland, approximately 23%.

Groundwater

Columbia County has a largely untapped supply of good quality groundwater found in layers of porous subsoil and bedrock known as aquifers. The water in an aquifer travels underground from its source to a discharge point such as a well, wetland, spring or lake. These aquifers supply the water to County residents through private and municipal wells.

The University of Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey has conducted statewide surveys of river basins in Wisconsin. This inventory includes an examination of groundwater in each basin. Columbia County is situated within three river basins, the Rock-Fox Basin, the Wolf-Fox Basin, and the Wisconsin River Basin.

Surface Water

Located in Columbia County is the sub-continental divide. This divide determines the direction in which precipitation that falls on the County will flow. Precipitation falling in the Wisconsin River basin will ultimately flow to Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico while precipitation falling in the Rock-Fox River Basin and the Wolf-Fox River Basin will ultimately flow to the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean. In the municipal area, this divide is very narrow with the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers flowing within less than two miles of each other. The City is located within the Wisconsin River Basin. Lakes within the City include:

Mud Lake and Fox River Basins

Mud Lake is a small shallow depression in marsh deposits at the base of a glacial terminal moraine within the City. The lake is drained by wetlands to the Fox River. The water is clear and moderately fertile. Winterkill, weeds and fluctuating water levels are obvious problems; however, they do not detract from its value for waterfowl. Large numbers of ducks and geese frequent the area. City roads provide access. About 440 acres of wetland adjoin the pond.

Silver Lake

Silver Lake is a small, irregular landlocked kettle lake in the glacial terminal moraine located in the City. The water is clear and moderately fertile. Weeds and stunted panfish are used problems. Largemouth bass, panfish, and northern pike provide a fishery, and rainbow trout have been stocked in the lake. A city park provides easy access. About five (5) acres of wetland adjoin the lake and provide suitable conditions for limited numbers of migrant and nesting waterfowl.

Woodlands

The City has approximately 650 acres of woodlands. This represents approximately 11% of the total area of the City. Woodlands perform important aesthetic, environmental, and ecological functions. The area's scenic wooded covered hills and coulees are one of the most attractive features of the landscape and have a major impact on residents and tourists alike. Woodlands also provide important settings, backdrops, and screens for homes, businesses, farms, roads, and shorelines, which creates an attractive landscape that benefits the economy and aesthetics of the County. In addition, woodlands generate or contribute to energy, oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon cycles. They also provide essential habitats for numerous varieties of plants and animals and can mitigate the destructive effects of erosion, pollution, and severe weather.

Bedrock Geology and Topography

The City lies above the Upper Cambrian Sandstone Formation. This formation includes the Ordon Sandstone, the St. Lawrence Dolomite, the Lone Rock Sandstone, and the Elk Mound Group, with thicknesses around 50 to 80 feet. The municipal area lies in the glaciated area, which covers much of south-central Wisconsin. The topography of glaciated areas is characterized by large deposits of sand and silt, flatter elevations with low flow rates, and significant areas of wetlands and floodplains.



Silver Lake Beach

Steep Slopes

Due to the low lying topography and relatively flat elevations, there are relatively few steep slopes in the City.

Wildlife, Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

The U.S. government, in an attempt to protect biological resources, enacted the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. The Act essentially prohibits the taking of a threatened or endangered species or its habitat.

Wisconsin, in accordance with the ESA, has developed the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists. The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists contains species known or suspected to be rare in the state. The list and a map depicting the general location of these rare species can be viewed on the DNR website.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not list any endangered or threatened species that are permanent inhabitants of Columbia County. However, several threatened and endangered species, including the Bald Eagle and Whooping Crane, may use portions of the County during part of the year.

Included in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory are 155 rare, threatened, or endangered species and natural communities that are known to exist in Columbia County. Map 5.8 in the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan shows the municipal area with both aquatic and terrestrial rare, threatened, or endangered species or habitats.



Environmental corridor with wetlands

Open Spaces, Environmental Corridors, and Environmentally Significant Areas

Environmental corridors are continuous systems of open space that include environmentally sensitive lands, floodplains, wetlands, and natural resources requiring protection from disturbance and development, and land specifically designated for open space or recreational use. Columbia County defines environmental corridors as including the following areas:

- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- 35 Foot Buffers Along All Lakes, Ponds, Rivers, Streams, and Drainage Ways
- Publicly Owned Lands and Parks
- Steep Slopes Over 12%
- Shallow Soils to Bedrock
- Woodlots 20 Acres or Greater

Map 5.7 of the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan shows much of the area within and around the City classified as environmental corridors. This classification for the City is mostly due to the prevalence of floodplains and wetlands.

Mining and Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

While there are 40 registered non-metallic mine sites with Columbia County, none exist within the City.

Cultural Resources

Historic Structures and Places

There are numerous historic properties and sites in the City that are an important part of its historical past. As of 2007, there were nine sites listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places in the City:

- Church Hill Historic District Roughly bounded by Adams, Pleasant, Lock, and Franklin Sts.
- Fox-Wisconsin Portage Site - Address Restricted
- Gale, Zona, House 506 W. Edgewater St.
- Merrell, Henry, House 505 E. Cook St.
- Old Indian Agency House NE end of old Agency House Rd.
- Portage Canal between Fox and Wisconsin Rivers
- Portage Industrial Waterfront Historic District Jct. of E. Mullet and Dodge Sts.
- Portage Retail Historic District Roughly, Cook from Wisconsin to Main, Wisconsin from Cook to Edgewater and DeWitt from Conant to Edgewater
- Society Hill Historic District roughly bounded by W. Wisconsin, Cass and W. Emmett Sts. and MacFarlane Rd.

In addition to these places, there are 2,255 sites in Columbia County that are listed as local historic resources in the Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) database. The AHI contains data on buildings, structures, and objects that illustrate Wisconsin's unique history.

Archaeological Resources

Map 5-15 in Appendix I of the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan shows no archeological sites in the City.

Museums, Historical Markers and Historical Societies

The following museums, historical markers, and societies are located in the City:

- Frederick Jackson Turner Historical Marker
- Ketchum's Point Historical Marker
- Indian Agency House Museum
- Museum at the Portage Museum
- Portage Historical Society Historical Society
- Society Hill Historic District Historical Marker
- Zona Gale Center for the Arts Museum

Concluding Observations

The protection of community character is very important to City residents. Part of that character is embodied in local agricultural resources, which are often subject to development and market pressures. Ensuring there is a range of zoning options which encourage conservation of agricultural resources, such as prime farmland, will continue to be important as market pressures increase.

Just as important to conserve are the wetlands, wooded areas, and environmentally sensitive areas that can often be harmed during development. Riparian and wetland protection ordinance should continue to be monitored for effectiveness and updated as needed. Wooded areas and the landscapes that give the City its character should also be considered as development projects are reviewed and land development regulations applied to ensure these assets continue to be protected.

The historic structures and sites of the City contribute greatly to community character and these resources need to be continually respected as vacancies and renovations can slowly diminish these assets. A regular historic survey should be undertaken to monitor the integrity of historic districts. Funding should be sought to supplement existing commercial and residential structure renovation programs. Neighborhood planning should also be considered to help gain a full understanding of the issues and opportunities each neighborhood is experiencing.

Related to the character of historic structures is the overall aesthetics of buildings and construction projects which take place in the City on vacant or infill lots. Architectural and landscape standards should be reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure design of new projects does not become “dated” and remains relevant to current aesthetics as well as a compatible with neighboring developments to the greatest extent possible.

Finally, the City needs to continue to work with surrounding communities to preserve the City's character. As development pressures continue to affect the surrounding townships and the County, the City needs to ensure City environmental and design standards are being shared and taken into account when neighboring develop occurs.

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 2-1 – The City will work to protect the natural resources including groundwater, surface water (lakes, wetlands and rivers), and important natural features that contribute to an enhanced quality of life and sense of place.						
Objective 2-1.1 – Maintain policies and programs to improve and protect surface water quality and biological diversity.						
Continue to update and maintain storm water management plans and erosion control regulations.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue to protect watercourses and drainage ways through the use of appropriate buffer requirements.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Discourage the application of chemicals and land spreading along watercourses and drainage ways.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue to require delineation of environmental corridors on preliminary plats and certified survey maps and continue to protect the integrity of the environmental corridors from the negative impacts of development.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Explore additional land use regulations to provide protection to the sensitive natural resource areas included in the environmental corridors.	3	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or Staff time	N/A	
Continue to discourage the impacts of development on the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered species or natural communities.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Implement and update plans to protect and improve the water quality and health of Silver Lake and other bodies of water.	2	1-3 yrs.	City, environmental advocacy and recreation non-profit partners	Depending upon protection and improvement measures	City, Environmental Advocate and Recreation non-profit partners, WDNR	
Continue to administer the Shoreland Wetland Zoning Ordinance.						
Objective 2-1.2 – Maintain policies and programs to protect ground water quantity and quality to meet human needs.						
Cooperate with the State to identify potential sources of groundwater pollution and consider additional appropriate policies and regulations that mitigate and prevent groundwater pollution.	2	1-3 yrs.	City, WDNR, private Partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or Staff time	City, Environmental Advocate and Recreation non-profit partners, WDNR	
Objective 2-1.3 – Maintain policies and programs to protect forests, agriculture, and important natural habitats.						
Maintain the City's Urban Forestry Plan to increase the diversity and health of the urban forest canopy.	2	Ongoing	City, environmental advocacy non-profit partners	Staff Time	N/A	
Explore opportunities to create or expand natural conservancy areas.	2	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Identify and assess programs that enable the City to become a "green city" in a cost effective manner.	3	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 2-2 – Continue to make improvements, manage, and provide access to important water bodies, including the Wisconsin River, Fox River, Portage Canal, and local lakes.						
Objective 2-2.1 – Continue to make improvements, manage, and provide access to the Portage Canal.						
Continue with Phase II of the Portage Canal restoration project, including design and construction, for completion by 2022.	1	1-3 yrs.	City, WDNR	Dependent upon project budget	City, WDNR	
Continue to coordinate with Wisconsin River Dam operators and Columbia County to minimize volatility in River elevations.	1	Ongoing	City, Wisconsin River Dam operators, Columbia County	Staff Time	N/A	
Objective 2-2.2 – Continue to make improvements, manage, and provide access to Silver Lake.						
Continue to explore the feasibility of measures to reduce and mitigate nutrient run off into Silver Lake.	1	Ongoing	City, environmental advocacy non-profit partners	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue to be engaged with the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point to analyze Silver Lake and prepare a lake management plan with recommendations for maintaining public and private access while improving water quality.	1	Ongoing	City, UWSP, environmental advocacy partners	\$25,000 to \$35,000 and/or Staff Time	City, UWSP, WDNR	
Goal 2-3 – The City will build on its unique history to enhance the City's sense of identity, attract visitors and increase economic development						
Objective 2-3.1 – Use and protect the City's unique history and historic resources to brand the community, enhance community identity, and promote tourism and downtown revitalization.						
Adopt policies and programs to maintain and enhance the historic districts of the City of Portage.	2	1-3 yrs.	City, Portage Historic Preservation Commission, Portage Historical Society, Wisconsin Historical Society	Staff Time	N/A	
Consider a zoning overlay district to further preserve single-family homes in historic districts.	1	<1 yr.	City, Portage Historic Preservation Commission, Portage Historical Society, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or Staff Time	City, Wisconsin Historical Society	
Direct the Historic Preservation Commission to identify and catalogue historic places of interest, historic markers, and monuments.	3	<1 yr.	City, Portage Historic Preservation Commission, Portage Historical Society, private partners	\$25,000 to \$35,000 and/or Staff Time	City, Wisconsin Historical Society	



Chapter 3 - Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of the City's utilities and community facilities. Community survey responses related to utilities and community facilities have also been summarized. Utilities include sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water systems, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and solid waste disposal systems, including recycling. Community facilities include schools, libraries, parks, police, fire, health care, churches, and other similar facilities. Goals, objectives, and strategies have been developed based upon the data as well as community input in order to effectively manage and utilize the City's utilities and community facilities.



Portage Farmers Market

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address utilities and community facilities;

- Respondents indicated relative satisfaction with the number of parks in the community, with 36% "strongly" agreeing there are enough.
- Respondents showed an even distribution of opinion regarding cultural and recreational opportunities. Most either "somewhat" agree, "somewhat" disagree, or were neutral regarding the adequacy of these opportunities.
- Respondents indicated that most either "somewhat" agree or "strongly" agreed that municipal buildings and facilities are adequate.
- Healthcare facilities were generally thought to be adequate, with more than half of respondents agreeing.
- There was an even distribution of respondent opinions on mental health facilities though, where 28% of respondents had a neutral opinion, and 38% did not agree that local facilities are adequate.
- There was a strong response to the question of water and sewer service in the City, with most respondents agreeing services were adequate.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found at the end of the chapter and list priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.

Goal 3-1 – Provide efficient and accessible facilities to meet the needs for activities, recreation, and services for the elderly, youth and the community.

Objective 3-1.1 – Conduct a study of space needs for senior, youth and community activities, services and recreation.

Goal 3-2 – Continue to provide safe, reliable and cost-effective water, sewer and stormwater facilities that meet the projected demand during the comprehensive plan period through 2030.

Objective 3-2.1 – Continue to maintain city water treatment and stormwater facility capacity to meet city needs through 2030.

Goal 3-3 – Protect public health through proper solid waste disposal.

Objective 3-3.1 – Provide quality and cost-effective access to city residents for composting, recycling, disposal of solid waste, and disposal of hazardous waste.

Goal 3-4 – Support high-quality educational opportunities for all City residents.

Objective 3-4.1 – Increase the levels of post-secondary educational achievement of City residents.

Objective 3-4.2 - Continue to work with the Portage Community School District in meeting facility and program needs of the growing City population.

Objective 3-4.3 - Continue to work with the Portage Library in meeting the facility needs of the growing City population.

Goal 3-5 - Provide and maintain attractive, safe, accessible, park, fairground and open spaces that are integrated with and enhance surrounding land uses and contribute to economic development.

Objective 3-5.1 – Take a comprehensive approach towards parks and trails maintenance and improvement.

Objective 3-5.2 – Complete the PATHS Project to link cultural, historical and natural resources of the City along a walking and bicycling trail system, under the supervision of the Non-Motorized Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee (NMTAHC).

Objective 3-5.3 – Continue to improve the Veteran's Memorial Park and continue to use the facility to attract more venues and visitors, and generate a greater economic impact for the City.

Example Strategy:

- Continue implementation of the 2014 Veterans Memorial Field Master Plan and continue to seek opportunities for alternate funding via relevant grant programs and participation from user groups.

Objective 3-5.4 – Maintain and Improve Pauquette Park.

Example Strategies:

- Place signage for native vegetation garden.
- Remove backstop, it is in a poor location, rusting and the field is not level.
- Construct a multi-use pavilion.
- Create multi-use trail through the park to connect proposed West Conant Street multi-use trail to existing Ice Age Trail and to proposed multi-use pavilion and add signage along the trail route.
- Acquire Parcel 1956 for park expansion.

Objective 3-5.5 – Continue to gather user feedback and improve access and experience of shore fishing, boating, and canoe routes.

Example Strategy:

- Improve or Upgrade Wisconsin River Boat Launch on Corner of Summit and Conant Streets.

Objective 3-5.6 – Explore the potential for NTAHC to plan for, and add to the PATHS plan, the utilization of electrical transmission corridors to connect the Ice Age Trail to Sunset Park.

Objective 3-5.7 – Continue to improve the Northridge natural area and work towards establishment as City park.



Portage Skate Park

Parks and Recreation

The City has an excellent network of park and recreation facilities, managed by the Portage Parks and Recreation Department. In addition, many acres of quality recreational lands for activities such as hunting, fishing, camping, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling exist in the surrounding area.

The 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan provides a complete inventory, needs assessment, and goals and recommendations for the City's outdoor recreation facilities; however, the main recreational facilities that exist in the City are included here.

Parks Inventory

The City's system of parks and playgrounds is comprised of City-owned, school-owned and privately-owned properties. The park system provides ample opportunity for citizens to enjoy a wide variety of passive and active recreational opportunities. In addition to the recreational facilities within the City, the Swan Lake State Wildlife Area (east of the City) and Pine Island State Wildlife Area (southwest of the City) are both located less than two miles away. These wildlife areas provide the residents of the City with numerous recreational opportunities. However, since the refuge is located outside of the City limits and is owned by the state government, the wildlife area is not included in the inventory. The following provides brief descriptions of the City's recreation sites and shows the location of each park.

Park Classification Definitions & Terms

Community Parks: Generally Range from 10 - 99 acres in size. They may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities such as athletic complex and large swimming pools. The City could classify five (5) parks as a Community Park; including the Veteran's Memorial Fields and Columbia County Fairgrounds, Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex, Collipp-Worden Park, Pauquette Park, and Silver Lake Park.

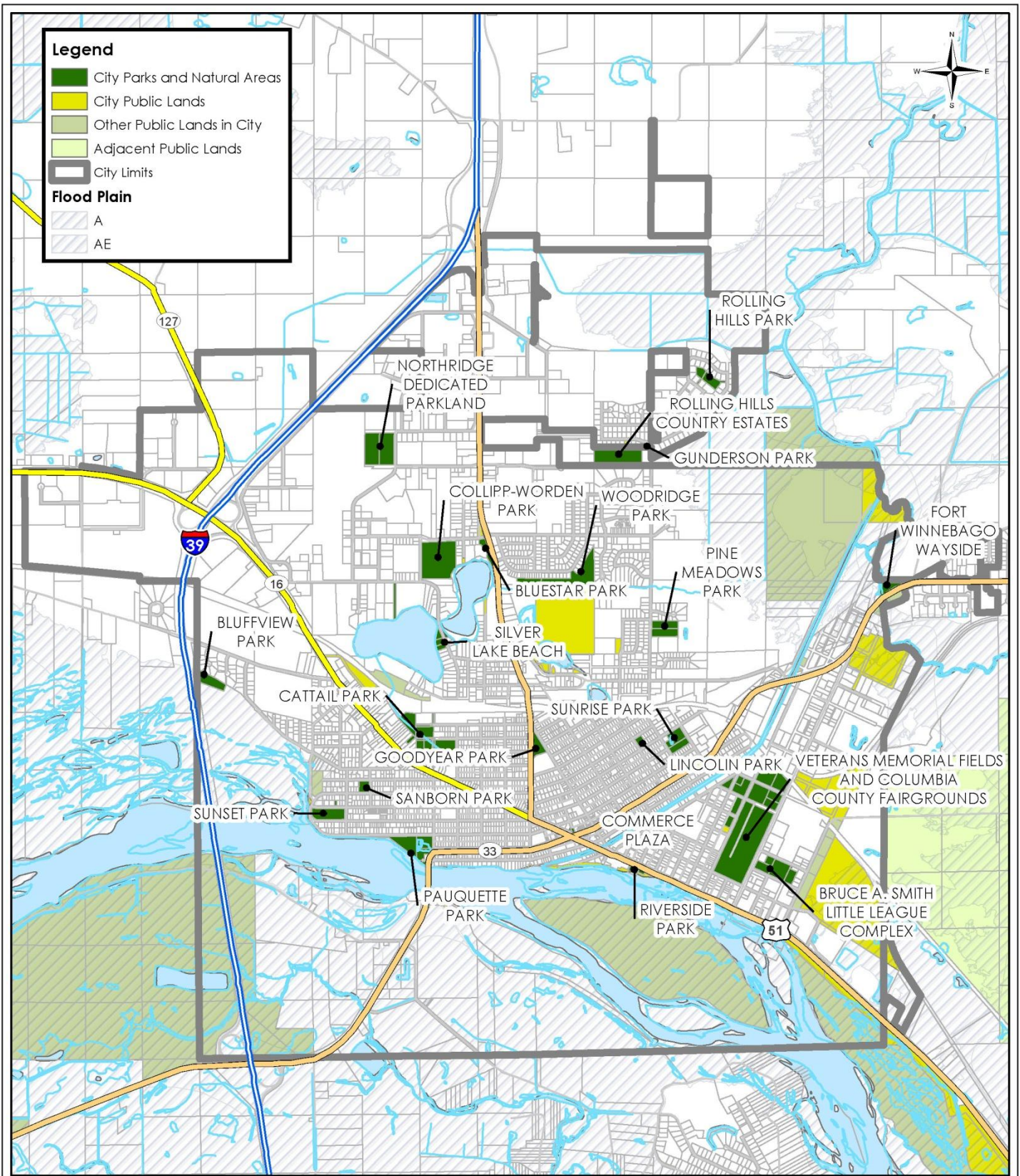
Neighborhood Parks: Generally less than 10 acres in size and greater than 1 acre. The service radius for these parks is 3/4 miles. These types of parks usually attract user from a small service area and are provided primarily to meet the outdoor recreation demands of residents in the area. There are 11 such parks in the City; including Bluestar Park, Cattail Park, Goodyear Park, Highway 33 Wayside Park, Pine Meadows Park, Riverside Park, Silver Lake Park and Beach, Sanborn Park, Sunrise Park, Sunset Park, and Woodridge Park.

Natural Area/Undeveloped Sites: Natural area sites include lands which are preserved in their natural setting for conservation, research, recreational purposes, or lands not yet set for development as a park. Special use sites provide for spectator and participant activities, as well as provide facilities for unique recreational pursuits. There are a total of four (4) such areas. These areas are Northridge Park, Bluffview Park, Rolling Hills Country Estates, and Rolling Hills Park. The City was granted easements to access and use this land.

Mini Parks/Play Lots: Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific groups such as Tots or Senior Citizens. They should have a service area of 1/4 mile and be one acre or less in size. The City has three (3) parks measuring approximately one (1) acre or less; including Lincoln Park, Gunderson Park, and Commerce Plaza.

Park Descriptions and Location

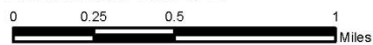
Map 3-1 shows the location of City parks and public open space. The following is a description of each public park.



Map 3 - 1 - Parks and Public Lands

2030 Comprehensive Plan

November 29, 2019



vierbicher
planners | engineers | advisors



REEDSBURG - MADISON - PRAIRIE DU CHIEN - MILWAUKEE METRO
999 Fountain Drive, Suite 201, Madison, WI 53717
Phone: (608) 826-0532 Fax: (608) 826-0530

Source: City of Portage, Columbia County, ESRI

File Path: M:\Portage, City of\180281_Comprehensive Plan and CORP Update\CORP\6_Mapping\1_MXD's

Bluestar Park

This Neighborhood Park is located at 100 West Slifer Street. Blue Star Park is home to a Veterans Memorial and Killed in Action Memorial for the City and annually hosts the City of Portage Memorial Day Celebration. A gazebo, shelter, and picnic tables are located in this park.

Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex

Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex located at 1208 Coit Street is home to Portage Youth Baseball Inc. who operates and helps maintain the facility. This community park contains three (3) youth baseball fields, a concession stand with restrooms and batting cages.

Cattail Park

This neighborhood park is located at 510 West Burns Street adjacent to St. Johns school. The park is equipped with a ball diamond, backstop, play equipment, and an open play area.

Collipp-Worden Park

This Community Park is named after Conrad Collipp who owned one of the first brickyards in the City and the Worden Family who sold the property to the City in 1968. Development of the park started in 1975 through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and the City. Collipp-Worden contains two rentable shelters, playground equipment, three basketball courts, two (2) tennis courts, horseshoe pit, sand volleyball court, and a nine (9) hole disc golf course.



Blue Star Park

Commerce Plaza

This Mini Park is located in the downtown district and was deemed a park by the Common Council. The park is equipped with a bathroom facility with a small canopy, park benches, trees, plant vegetation, and flower beds. Located in the heart of downtown, this area is a beautiful natural scene in a busy downtown atmosphere.

Gunderson Park

This Mini Park is located at 574 Meadowlark Lane. This park is equipped with the first stretch of trail within the City park system and connects to a trail in the adjoining park parcel that winds behind Divine Savior Healthcare.

Goodyear Park

This Neighborhood Park was originally donated to the City in 1903 by D.A. Goodyear. Another addition to the park was deeded to the City by the Portage Community School District in 2012. Goodyear Park is home to the splash pad, skate park, playground equipment, two rentable shelters and large green space areas along with two (2) veteran monuments which pay tribute to the military.

The Portage Splash Pad was constructed within Goodyear Park in 2013 and is now open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend with operating hours of 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. Goodyear Park is also home to the Portage Family Skatepark constructed in 2016 with operating hours from 8:00 am to dusk.

Lincoln Park

This neighborhood park was donated by Chauncy J. Pettibone in 1874. A school was erected shortly afterward and remained standing until the 1940s. This park is equipped with a small shelter, basketball court, picnic tables, and play equipment.

Pauquette Park

This Neighborhood Park is the most picturesque park in the City. It is located at the west entrance of the City at 900 West Conant Street. Pauquette Park bears the name of Pierre Pauquette, a famous fur trader/translator for the French and Native Americans who operated a ferry from 1828-1857; a marker is located near the Pauquette Park sign on the north side of the bridge to pay tribute.

Originally used as a brickyard, Pauquette Park was later dredged to form Bridal Pond. William Armstrong, owner of "Armstrong Brick Yard" obtained this land from the U.S. Government in 1869 and used it to produce bricks for the construction of homes in the City. Attorney Charles H. Hall donated the land to the City in 1924. This park has two (2) shelters and a gazebo that are all available for rent.

Pine Meadow Park

This Neighborhood Park is located at 865 Hamilton Street. The park is equipped with a small shelter with electricity, picnic tables, tennis court, playground equipment, and a large green space. A back-stop is located at the far corner of the park for softball and baseball activities.

Riverside Park

With the Wisconsin River just a few feet away, this Neighborhood Park has an appropriate name of Riverside. Columbia County and some private landowners donated the land to the City in 1867. The shelter was erected in 1924 and the city slogan of "Where the North Begins" can be found on the top of the shelter. The park is located at 300 East Wisconsin Street. This is a wayside park with a large open shelter, picnic tables, and benches.



Pauquette Park



Pauquette Park Gazebo



Riverside Park

Sanborn Park

Home of the second brick yard in the City, Sanborn Park is named after the Sanborn Brothers, James and Frank, who owned and operated the Sanborn Brick and Ice Company in the 1800s. This Neighborhood Park, located at 922 West Franklin Street, was used as a city dump after it was donated to the City in 1939 by Charles Smith. Today this park has a small shelter, basketball court, play equipment, and green space.

Silver Lake Park and Beach

Silver Lake Beach is a Community Park staffed with lifeguards from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend. The beach is considered one of the finest beaches in the area by visitors and is a popular regional attraction. Silver Lake Beach was donated to the City in 1948. A boat landing, boat pier, accessible fishing pier and large parking lot are located in this park to aid the fisherman and water enthusiasts. Crappies, Large Mouth Bass, Blue Gills, and Northern Pike are just a few of the fish that can be caught in Silver Lake. The park has an open-air shelter, swimming area, changing house, water, electricity, picnic tables, and play equipment.



Sanborn Park

Sunrise Park

This Neighborhood Park is known to most City residents as "The Gully", Sunrise Park is our winter sledding area. The land sat vacant after the Jones Family donated the property to the City in 1933. The Portage Lions Club assisted in developing Sunrise Park in the early '70s through financial assistance from the Federal Land and Conservation Funds and the City. Today the "Gully" is equipped with picnic tables, a shelter, play equipment, and nature walking trail. It is located at 513 Hamilton Street.

Sunset Park

Originally owned by the Tenant Family, Sunset Park was donated to the City in 1931 by Zona Gale Breese and Eleanor Breese to be used solely for public park purposes. The stone wall and steps were landscaped by Betty Tenant through one of President Roosevelt's New Deal programs in the 1930s. Sunset Park has a picturesque view of the Wisconsin River which can be seen by walking the gravel path to the peak of the park.

Veterans Memorial Fields and Columbia County Fairgrounds

This Community Park is located on the south side of the City at 300 Superior Street. This park is home to the Columbia County Fair, Portage Youth Soccer, Portage Little League Baseball, numerous ball field facilities for baseball, softball and soccer and several City events. Several buildings are available for rent for events and activities by contacting the office. Winter storage of vehicles and equipment is held annually from October through April at this location. With a paid permit, overnight camping is allowed within the complex for \$15 per night. The Fritz Port Dog Park is located within the complex adjacent to the Agriculture building at 800 Morgan Street and is open year round. A daily user fee or annual pass is required to use the dog park. Passes are available at the Park and Recreation office and daily passes may be paid at the park entrance.

Woodridge Park

This Neighborhood Park is located at 424 Winnebago Street on the north side of the City. The park has a small shelter, swings and playground equipment.

Trails and Paths

Ice Age National and State Scenic Trail

The Ice Age National and State Scenic Trail is one of eight congressionally designated National Scenic Trails located throughout the United States. The Trail was authorized by Congress in 1980 and when completed will be a 1,200-mile footpath that meanders through 31 Wisconsin counties along the terminal moraine left by the glacier over 10,000 years ago. The Trail traces features left by the advance of the last glacier – the Wisconsin Glacier – from Potawatomi State Park in Door County to Interstate State Park on the St. Croix River in Polk County.

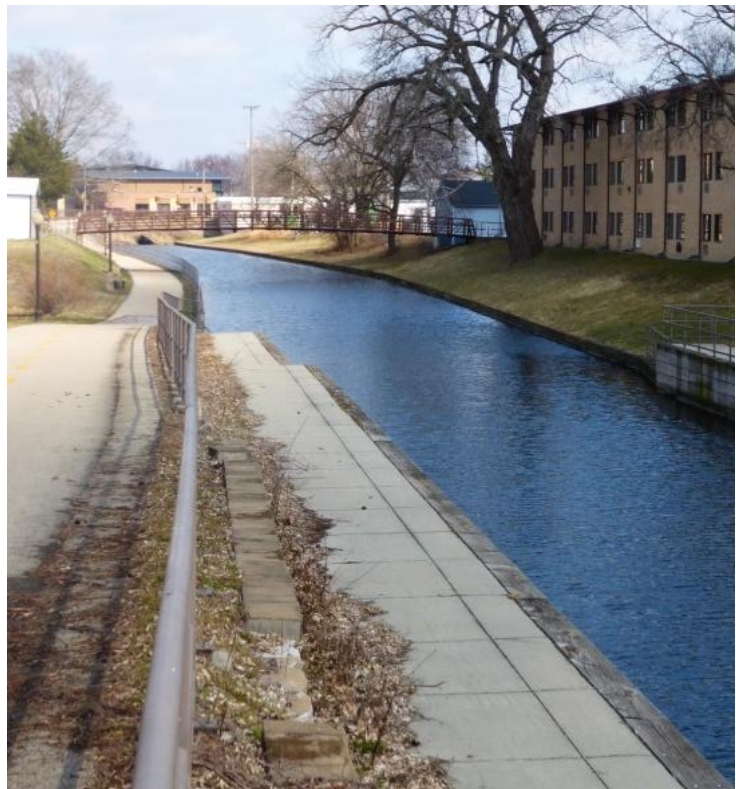
Today, approximately half of the trail is complete. Over two million visitors use the Trail each year. The Wisconsin Department of Tourism recognizes the Ice Age Trail as Wisconsin's number one outdoor recreation resource.

Trails Inventory

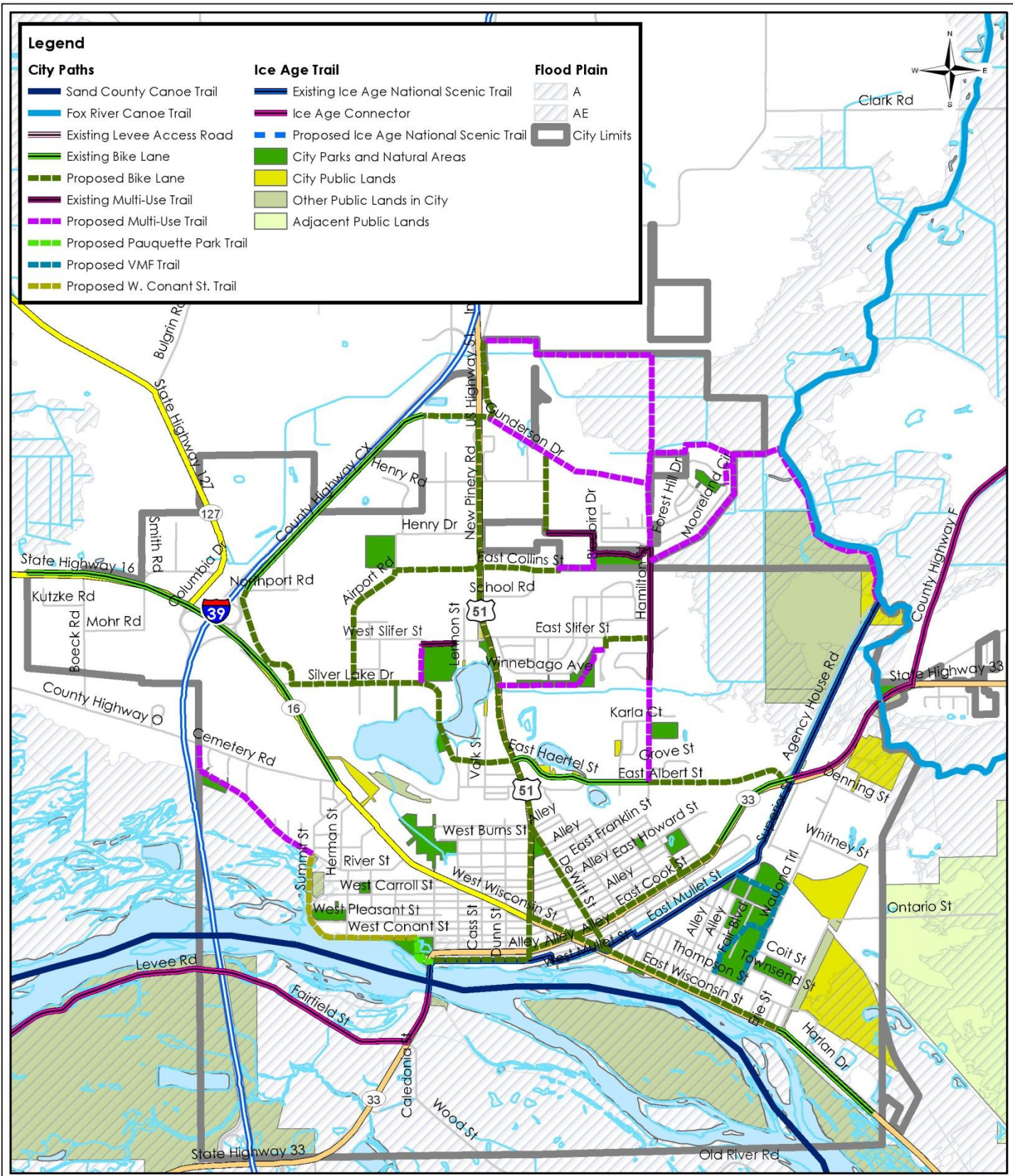
Map 3-2 shows the location of existing and proposed City multi-use trails as well as existing and proposed bike lanes.



Woodridge Park Playground



Portage Canal



Map UF-2 - Paths and Trails

2030 Comprehensive Plan

November 29, 2019



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 999 Fourrier Drive, Suite 201, Madison, WI 53717
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Data Sources: City of Portage, Columbia County, ESRI

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Community Facilities

Recycling Facilities

Columbia County operates a recycling and composting facility on State Highway 16 in the Town of Pacific, which is open to City residents.

Recyclables are transported to the facility where they are sorted and prepared for shipment to market. The facility handles 22 tons of recyclables a day. Solid waste is transported to the county composting facility to be processed by composting machines at the facility. About half the material removed from the machines is used as agricultural compost. The other half consists of non-compostable materials, such as plastic bags, and is sent to a landfill in Winnebago County.

Libraries

Public libraries serve an important function in making a wide range of informational materials as well as after-school programming available to the City's population. The City is serviced by the Portage Public Library at 253 W. Edgewater Street.

Schools

The City is served by the Portage Community School District, which includes the City and towns of Caledonia, Lewiston, Fort Winnebago, and Pacific. The School District includes the Portage High School, the Portage Middle School and the elementary schools of John Muir, Woodridge (Primary School), Rusch, Caleonia, Endeavor, Fort Winnebago, and Lewiston. The District also includes the Portage Academy and River Crossing Charter Schools. Enrollment in the School District was 2,492 for the 2017-2018 school year. The City and the School district have also jointly funded a School Resource Officer.

In addition, the City has two (2) private schools that provide additional educational choices for residents. St. John's Lutheran served 78 students, in 2017-2018, through grade 8. Another private school in the City, St. Mary Catholic, served 119 students, in the 2017-2018 school year, through grade 8.

City residents also have access to post-secondary education schools through the Portage campus of the Madison Area Technical College, located at 330 West Collins Street. MATC-Portage offers courses in accounting, administrative assistance, business management, business software, college parallel, nursing, plastics technology, and supervisory management.



Rusch Pool



Portage Public Library

Police, Fire, and Rescue

The City's Police Department is located at 117 W. Pleasant St. There are twenty-two (22) sworn officers, two (2) Lieutenants, an Assistant Police Chief, and a Police Chief, within the department. There are also two (2) Community Service Officers, three (3) detectives, and two (2) full-time secretaries, as well as two (2) part-time crossing guards and a part-time high school student through a youth apprenticeship program. The department also has a K-9 Unit.

The Portage Fire Department provides fire service to the City, all of the Towns of Fort Winnebago and Pacific, and parts of the Towns of Caledonia and Lewiston. Divine Savior EMS provides emergency medical services in this area. The department services an area of 170 square miles with a population estimate of 15,000 people with equalization in excess of \$467 million dollars. The Portage Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement with all Columbia County fire departments as well as the Baraboo and Lake Delton Fire Departments. The department employs four (4) full-time firefighters, one (1) fire inspector and a Fire Chief. The department also has 23 paid-on-call firefighters available. The current Fire Station was constructed in 1972 and has six double deep drive-through bays.

The department responds to 300 - 350 emergency calls per year. Firefighting equipment includes one (1) command vehicle, one (1) inspection vehicle, three (3) engines, two (2) tankers, one (1) grass unit, one (1) brush unit, one (1) hovercraft, one (1) heavy rescue, one (1) squad-hazmat vehicle, one (1) aerial platform, one (1) boat, and two (2) extrication units. There is a need for replacement equipment and increased full-time firefighters. The department's water supply rating is fair in the Towns and excellent in the City.

Health Care Facilities

The main health care facility located within the City is Divine Savior Healthcare. In October 2003, Divine Savior opened a new state-of-the-art facility in the City, replacing an undersized and outdated facility. The inpatient facility includes a 40-bed medical/surgical unit with private rooms and a six-bed intensive care unit. The hospital has a staff of 640 people and many volunteers. Divine Savior's Emergency Department physicians and nurses provide comprehensive, round-the-clock emergency services. They also maintain their own EMS service, which is integrated with the Emergency Department. Other services include nursing therapy, dietary, laboratory, radiology, cardiopulmonary, social services, speech, audiology, extended and home care and spiritual care personnel.

Utilities

Water Supply

The Portage Waterworks was established in 1886. There are approximately 3,640 metered customers served by the system. Groundwater is the only source of water for the utility. The utility has four (4) active wells with depths of 125, 145, 269, and 274 feet. The well pumping capacities range from 1,000 to 2,150 gallons per minute with an average daily pumpage of 1.35 million gallons and a maximum daily pumpage of 2.2 million gallons. System water pressures range from 35 to 70 psi. Water in the system is treated with chlorine, fluoride, and polyphosphate. Iron removal and zeolite softening are also performed on the water in the system. Water storage for the system consists of three elevated storage tanks with capacities of 500,000, 500,000 and 750,000 gallons. The utility has approximately 325,000 feet of water mains and 516 hydrants.

Sanitary Sewer Service

The City's wastewater treatment facility includes rotating biological contactors, chemical phosphorus removal, chlorine disinfection, anaerobic digesters, and cake sludge storage. The plant was designed to meet the following criteria: a design flow of 2.1 million gallons per day, an average BOD(5) loading of 5,673 pounds per day, and an average suspended solid load of 4,685 pounds per day. The current flows at the wastewater treatment plant average 1.5 million gallons per day. The City provides sewer service to the Oakwood Terrace Mobile Home Park in the Town of Lewiston and Saddle Ridge Estates in the Town of Pacific.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

The City uses the County Solid Waste Department for collecting and processing its solid waste and recyclables. City crews collect brush and yard waste, which they process into compost. Curbside pickup of recyclables in the City is conducted through a contract with the County Solid

Waste Department. Recycling drop off sites are available in the City as well.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater management has gained attention in recent years as an environmental concern because of its impacts on flooding, erosion of lands, property damage, and surface water quality issues. Similar to water supply and wastewater treatment, stormwater management is an important part of municipal infrastructure.

Mandated by Congress under the Clean Water Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed a program to address urban sources of stormwater pollution called the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The NPDES requirements were then passed on to the states for implementation. In an effort to meet these requirements, Wisconsin created its version of the NPDES called the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES). Under the WPDES program, municipalities that discharge pollutants into the storm drain system are required to obtain a stormwater discharge permit. The City identified the need to upgrade its stormwater system to comply with WPDES requirements and obtained a WPDES permit.

Telecommunication Facilities

Local and long-distance telephone services and Digital video services and high-speed internet access are provided to the City by Verizon and Charter Communications. A quality telecommunication system in Columbia County is important for economic development, with some businesses relying heavily on the telecommunication system. The telecommunication system is also important to public safety, providing contact with police, fire, and emergency services.

Power Plants, Electricity, Transmission Lines, Natural Gas, and Oil.

Electrical and natural gas service are provided by Alliant Energy. There are five (5) substations in the City. The Columbia Power Plant is located south of the City on US Highway 51. The plant consists of two coal-fired generation units. The first unit began operating in 1975 and the second in 1978. Each unit produces 527 megawatts of electricity for a total plant output of 1,054 megawatts. Two 138 KV electrical transmission lines go through the City. There are also substations located on Hamilton Street as well as New Cemetery Road.

Demand for electricity increases each year. As a result of increasing demand, several projects to improve the capacities and reliability of the electrical system are being planned by American Transmission Company (ATC) the company that owns and operates major transmission lines in Columbia County and all of Wisconsin. Three projects are currently being planned or have recently been completed. The first project, the Portage to Montello Electric Reliability Project will rebuild a 20-mile long transmission line mostly along an existing route roughly paralleling County Highway F. Two segments of the line will be rerouted to move the power line out of the French Creek Wildlife Area.

Natural gas is brought into Columbia County by large underground pipelines that deliver gas to local distribution systems. A large underground natural gas pipeline runs east and west just to the south of the City.

The location and capacity of these natural gas lines is important to economic development in the County. Access to natural gas can be a major factor in a business or industry choosing to locate in the County.

Crude oil is pumped through Line 61, which runs from Duluth, Minnesota to Flanagan, Illinois. The pipeline has recently, September 2017, been upgrade to carry up to 1.2 million barrels of oil per day through Columbia County. A pump station is located in Portage, off Dumke Road.

Concluding Observations

City residents enjoy access to wide range of outdoor recreational facilities. The City has a higher number of parks per 1,000 than average for a City of its size. However, even though the City has a large number of parks, total acreage is slightly low, when compared to other communities. The 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan provides a complete description of the City's outdoor recreation needs, including acreage. Acquisition of new parkland is one way to meet park needs, expansion of existing parks is another alternative.

City residents also have access to a number of recreational facilities at each of the parks in the City. Facilities range from active ones, such as little league baseball fields and biking trails, to more passive ones, such as walking trails, picnic areas, and a beach. As the City has a high number of younger residents as well as those 85, a balance of active and passive facilities should continue to be maintained and improved to ensure all residents have access to recreation.

Although the City has a number Municipal buildings and facilities, one need identified was the need for a cultural center which could cater to senior, youths, and others who may need specialized space to perform activities and sponsor cultural events. A study team will most likely be needed to study the programming needs of various cultural groups in the City and decide upon an existing or a new building to meet those needs.

Other facilities in the City include healthcare facilities, which are becoming increasingly important as the City population ages. The Divine Savior Healthcare facility is a great healthcare asset for the community. There could be significant opportunities to partner with this hospital to sponsor assisted-living and other senior-oriented living facilities.



Collipp-Worden Basketball Courts

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies- Utilities and Community Facilities						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 3-1 – Provide efficient and accessible facilities to meet the needs for activities, recreation and services for the elderly, youth and the community.						
Objective 3-1.1 – Conduct a study of space needs for senior, youth and community activities, services and recreation.						
Form a space needs study committee with representation from senior, youth and community organizations to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a community center.	2	<1 yr.	City, recreation non-profit partners, Library, School District	Staff Time	N/A	
Goal 3-2 – Continue to provide safe, reliable and cost effective water, sewer and stormwater facilities that meet the projected demand during the comprehensive plan period through 2030.						
Objective 3-2.1 – Continue to maintain city water treatment and stormwater facility capacity to meet city needs through 2030.						
Continue to annually update and fund the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Upgrade wastewater treatment and stormwater facilities as needed to maintain sufficient capacity to meet demand through 2030.	2	Ongoing	City, Public Works	Cost dependent upon upgrades	City	
Consider amending the Stormwater Management Ordinance to promote on site stormwater infiltration through measures such as rain gardens, rain barrels and "green" roofs	3	<1 yr.	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue to enforce the local Sanitary Sewer ordinance for existing and new development, and monitor for updates when appropriate.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue to meet the 2013 Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Stormwater permit requirements of 40% suspended solids, including the measures needed (such as stormwater ponds, more frequent sweeping, etc.), estimated cost and financing options.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Update stormwater policies and ordinance to implement TMDL requirements.	1	1 to 3 yrs.	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue working towards the completion of the stormwater management plan (SWMP) by 2020.	1	<1 yr.	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Continue to assess and project waste water treatment capacity needs through 2030 and estimate timeline for upgrades.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Prepare a study to meet the water pumping and storage needs of the City through the year 2030.	3	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$15,000 to \$35,000	City	

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies- Utilities and Community Facilities					
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Goal 3-3 – Protect public health through proper solid waste disposal.					
Objective 3-3.1 – Provide quality and cost effective access to city residents for composting, recycling, disposal of solid waste, and disposal of hazardous waste.					
Continue to promote recycling, composting and solid waste disposal through public awareness campaigns and study potential for expanding recycling facilities in the City to encourage greater usage.	3	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A
Promote awareness of the damage leaves and debris entering the storm sewers can cause in order to encourage better residential leaf collection and disposal practices as well as on-site composting.	2	Ongoing	City	Staff Time	N/A
Goal 3-4 – Support high quality educational opportunities for all City residents.					
Objective 3-4.1 – Increase the levels of post secondary educational achievement of Portage residents.					
Continue to support the expansion the Madison College (MATC) and other post secondary facilities in areas such as nursing, veterinary services, and vocational training, in order to increase post secondary educational options available to Portage resident and support workforce development.	1	Ongoing	City, MATC, Columbia County EDC, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Northwoods, Inc.	Staff Time	N/A
Objective 3-4.2 Continue to work with the Portage Community School District in meeting facility and program needs of the growing City population.					
Continue to work with the Portage Community School District in sharing playground and other recreational facilities, where appropriate.	1	Ongoing	City, School District	Staff Time	N/A
Continue to support the housing building trades program offered by the Portage Community School District.	1	Ongoing	City, School District	Staff Time	N/A
Continue to support after-school programs and explore other potential programming needs.	2	Ongoing	City, School District, Library, education/training partners	Dependent upon programs	City
Continue to support the School Resource Officer and engage in collaborative programs as needed.	2	Ongoing	City, Police Department, School District	Budget contributions	N/A
Continue to support the school district metals, woods, AutoCAD, Auto body Enterprise, and other trade programs.	1	Ongoing	City, School District	Staff Time	N/A
Continue to support the Madison Area Technical College (MATC), Portage High School industrial maintenance program collaborative effort.	1	Ongoing	City, MATC, School District	Staff Time	N/A
Objective 3-4.3 Continue to work with the Portage Library in meeting the facility needs of the growing Portage population.					
Continue to support the library outreach programs for teen and adult programming and services.	1	Ongoing	City, Library	Staff Time	N/A

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies- Utilities and Community Facilities						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 3-5: Provide and maintain attractive, safe, accessible, park, fairground, and open spaces that are integrated with and enhance surrounding land uses and contribute to economic development.						
Objective 3-5.3 – Continue to improve the Veteran’s Memorial Park and continue to use the facility to attract more venues and visitors, and generate a greater economic impact for the City.						
Continue implementation of the 2014 Veterans Memorial Field Master Plan and continue to seek opportunities for alternate funding via relevant grant programs and participation from user groups.	2	Ongoing	City, Parks and Recreation Department	Dependent upon amenities; types of construction, market value of property	City, WDNR, Federal and private funding sources	
Objective 3-5.4 – Maintain and improve Pauquette Park.						
Place signage for native vegetation garden.	1	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department	\$220 per sign	City	
Remove backstop, it is in a poor location, rusting and the field is not level.	1	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department	Staff time	City	
Construct a multi-use pavilion.	1	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department	\$274,637	City, WDNR, Federal and private funding sources	
Create multi-use trail through park to connect proposed West Conant Street multi-use trail to existing Ice Age Trail and to proposed multi-use pavilion and add signage along trail route.	1	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department	\$95,500	City, WDNR, Federal and private funding sources	
Acquire Parcel 1956 for park expansion.	1	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department, NMTAHC	Dependent upon acreage & real estate market valuation	City, WDNR, Federal and private funding sources	
Objective 3-5.5 – Continue to gather user feedback and improve access and experience of shore fishing, boating, and canoe routes.						
Improve or upgrade Wisconsin River Boat Launch on Corner of Summit and Conant Streets.	1	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department	Depending upon improvements	City, WDNR	
Objective 3-5.6 – Explore the potential for NTAHC to plan for, and add to the PATHS plan, the utilization of electrical transmission corridors to connect the Ice Age Trail to Sunset Park.						
Identify properties and property owners along suitable transmission corridor and evaluate potential for easement acquisition.	2	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department, NMTAHC	Staff time	City, WDNR	
Estimate preliminary cost of easement acquisition, improvements, and maintenance and determine feasibility of corridor trail establishment.	3	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department, NMTAHC	Dependent upon acreage, real estate market valuation, and improvements	City, WDNR, Federal and private funding sources	
Objective 3-5.7 – Continue to improve the Northridge natural area and work towards establishment as City park.						
Prepare Northridge Park Plan to assess need and cost of facilities, potential additional land, and other improvements.	2	<1 yr.	City, Parks and Recreation Department, NMTAHC	Staff time	City	
Pursue funding to implement Northridge Park Plan	3	1-3 yrs.	City, Parks and Recreation Department, NMTAHC	Staff time	City, WDNR, Federal and private funding sources	



Chapter 4 - Transportation Element



Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of transportation infrastructure, capacity, and needs. The City's transportation network is important to both residents and visitors when accessing City amenities, services, and jobs. The transportation network is also important to serving the needs of existing and future industry, as well as recreational and tourism needs. Community survey responses related to transportation have also been summarized. Goals, objectives, and strategies have been developed based upon the facilities assessment as well as community input in order to understand how best to improve and maintain the City's transportation network.

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address transportation;

- Just over half of survey respondents strongly disagree that street and pavement quality is acceptable in the City.
- A majority of respondents think that traffic is acceptable and not too light or heavy.
- Most respondents think vehicles generally travel at the speed limit, although a high percentage also think traffic travels too fast.
- There is some support for more public transportation, with almost half of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing on the need for more public transportation options.
- There is even stronger support for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, with the majority of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing on the need for more bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found at the end of the chapter and list priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.



Downtown traffic

Goal 4-1 – Provide a balanced, safe transportation system that provides a range of transportation options and makes efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Objective 4-1.1 – Maintain a transportation system which encourages appropriate uses within and to major transportation corridors and destinations within the City.

Objective 4-1.2 – Ensure safe traffic speeds downtown to address pedestrian safety and help improve the economic viability of retail districts.

Objective 4-1.3 – Improve pedestrian safety and comfort in the downtown.

Objective 4-1.4 – Reduce truck traffic in downtown.

Objective 4-1.5 – Provide a balance of facilities to serve the pedestrian and vehicular transportation needs of residents, visitors, businesses and other users in new and existing developments.

Objective 4-1.6 – In cooperation with transportation and recreation-related organizations and objectives, develop additional bicycle lanes on existing roads and as part of future road improvements.

Goal 4-2 – Support transportation improvements which promote tourism and accommodate healthy recreational activities.

Objective 4-2.1 – Encourage tourism through the designation and promotion of scenic and historical transportation routes.

Transportation Overview

This Chapter reviews and summarizes the current City transportation network, reviews state and regional transportation plans and programs, and reviews all available transportation modes available in the City and in Columbia County. This section is divided between the movement of people and goods, with the movement of people organized by trip type. Within the movement of people, first reviewed is longer distance, intercity travel opportunities. The intercity travel modes are categorized by the interstate system and state routes, airport, intercity transit, and passenger rail service. This section then examines intra-city transportation opportunities, such as County and local streets, local transit services, bicycling facilities, and pedestrian facilities.

Movement of Goods

The current Wisconsin State Freight Plan shows that Wisconsin's freight movements were accommodated through three main modes: trucks on highway (59.2 percent), rail (24.7 percent), and water (19 percent). All three cargo modes are available in Columbia County. The County's closest intermodal terminals are in Minneapolis/St. Paul and Chicago.

Highways

The officially designated trucks routes within the City are Interstate 39, U.S. Highway 51, and State Trunk Highways 16 and 33. Interstate 39 connects with Interstates 90 and 94 about 4 miles south of the City. The east-west routes are STHs 16 and 33 through the City, connecting the City to the Wisconsin Dells directly to the west and Fond du Lac and Fox Valley to the east. U.S. Highway 51 and STHs 16 and 33 all pass through the downtown. STH 16 also runs east to west through the north-west portion of the City from the City of Columbus to the City of La Crosse. STH 33 is a major truck route connecting Interstates 39, 90 and 94 to destinations to the east, particularly in the Fox Valley area. This connection brings significant truck traffic on Cook Street through the downtown

business district. The volume of truck traffic was identified as an issue and priority item. The Columbia County Comprehensive Plan identifies a potential truck bypass of the downtown via a new bridge over the Wisconsin River connecting Interstate 39 to the east of the City's downtown business district.

Water

Although the City was founded to serve the business, housing and community needs of water transportation between the Great Lakes and interior of the continent (through the Portage Canal connecting the Fox River to the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers), the Canal no longer serves this purpose. Rail and road transport replaced the Canal and water shipment for the City in the early part of the 20th century.



Bridge under Interstate 39



Portage Canal



Railroad car operations



Canadian Pacific Locomotive

Rail Freight

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CP Rail) connects the City to Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul. Within the City, there is a freight siding in the business park and the downtown area. The Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities study in 1996 forecasted that rail cargo lines that serve Columbia County will continue to serve as higher density lines. CP Rail operates a maintenance yard in the City, the only one between Milwaukee and St. Paul.

Air Cargo

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics in conjunction with the Bureau of Planning has developed the Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030. Most airports included in the State Plan are eligible for State and Federal improvement grants. The State Plan identifies four (4) general classifications of airports based upon the type of service they provide; Commercial Service, Large General Aviation, Medium General Aviation, and Small General Aviation.

The Portage Municipal Airport is the only airport in Columbia County that is part of the State's Airport System Plan. The Portage Municipal Airport is classified as a Medium General Aviation Airport and is expected to remain at this classification for the duration of the 20-year planning period.

Intercity Transportation

Highways

The City has easy access to many of the highways that run throughout Columbia County. Interstate 39/U.S. Highway 51 serves as the major transportation route to and from northern Wisconsin. Interstate 90/94 serves long distance, inter-city trips to Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, and areas west, and areas to the east including Madison and Chicago, Illinois. STHs 33 and 16 provide east-west travel.

Air Transportation

The Portage Municipal Airport is a Medium General Airport, intended to serve virtually all small general aviation single and twin-engine aircraft, with a maximum takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds or less. Typically, these aircraft are used for business and charter flying and for personal reasons. In Wisconsin, airports in this category normally have a primary runway length of 3,900 to 4,800 feet.

The Wisconsin DOT's Five Year Airport Improvement Program includes the Portage Municipal Airport as a facility slated for improvement. In 2019 the City engaged TKDA to complete a master plan for the airport, which is scheduled for completion in 2020. While the City awaits the results of the master plan, designated potential improvements to the airport currently include;

- Land acquisition for runway approaches and hanger spaces
- Relocate lift station
- Reconstruct crosswind Runway 4/22, including lighting
- Reconstruct hangar taxiways and portions of ramp
- Construct Perimeter Fence
- Reconstruct primary Runway 17/35, including lighting



Downtown Landmark



Portage Amtrak Station

Passenger Rail

Intercity passenger rail is available through Amtrak service in the City which served 9,077 passengers in 2017. The Amtrak Empire Builder operates one (1) train per day and serves the City with regional connections to Chicago, Milwaukee, Columbus, Wisconsin Dells, Tomah, Winona, Red Wing, and St. Paul. Through a connection in Chicago, the national Amtrak network is available as well. The passenger rail station is located at 400 W. Oneida Street, and which is connected to Seattle, WA, via the Empire Builder line.

A number of organizations have been studying ways in which intercity passenger rail system could be expanded and developed into a more robust component of the region's overall transportation system. A number of organizations have proposed a high-speed Twin City, Milwaukee, Chicago train, while others advocate other high speed and/or expanded rail service accommodating multiple states throughout the Midwest. Some of these organizations and initiatives include;

- Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers
- Midwest Departments of Transportation
- Great River Rail Commission
- Midwest High-Speed Rail Association
- Midwest Regional Rail Initiative
- Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study

Bus

An intercity passenger bus service is not available in the City. Greyhound Lines provides service to the Wisconsin Dells.

Intracity Transportation

There are a variety of modes that provide transportation within the City, and, subsequently Columbia County.

Local Roadway Network

The street network shapes access and circulation through the City. Public streets in the area are classified by their primary function, as described below:

Principal Arterials – Serve longer intra-urban trips and traffic traveling through urban areas. They carry high traffic volumes and provide links to major activity centers.

Minor Arterials – Provide intra-community continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials. The minor arterial system interconnects with the urban arterial system and provides system connections to the rural collectors.

Collectors – Provide both land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. These facilities collect traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it onto the arterial system. In the central business district, and in other areas of like development and traffic density, the collector system may include the street grid which forms the basic unit of traffic circulation.

Local Streets – Local streets primarily provide direct access to adjacent land and access to higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility and through traffic movement on this system is usually discouraged.

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

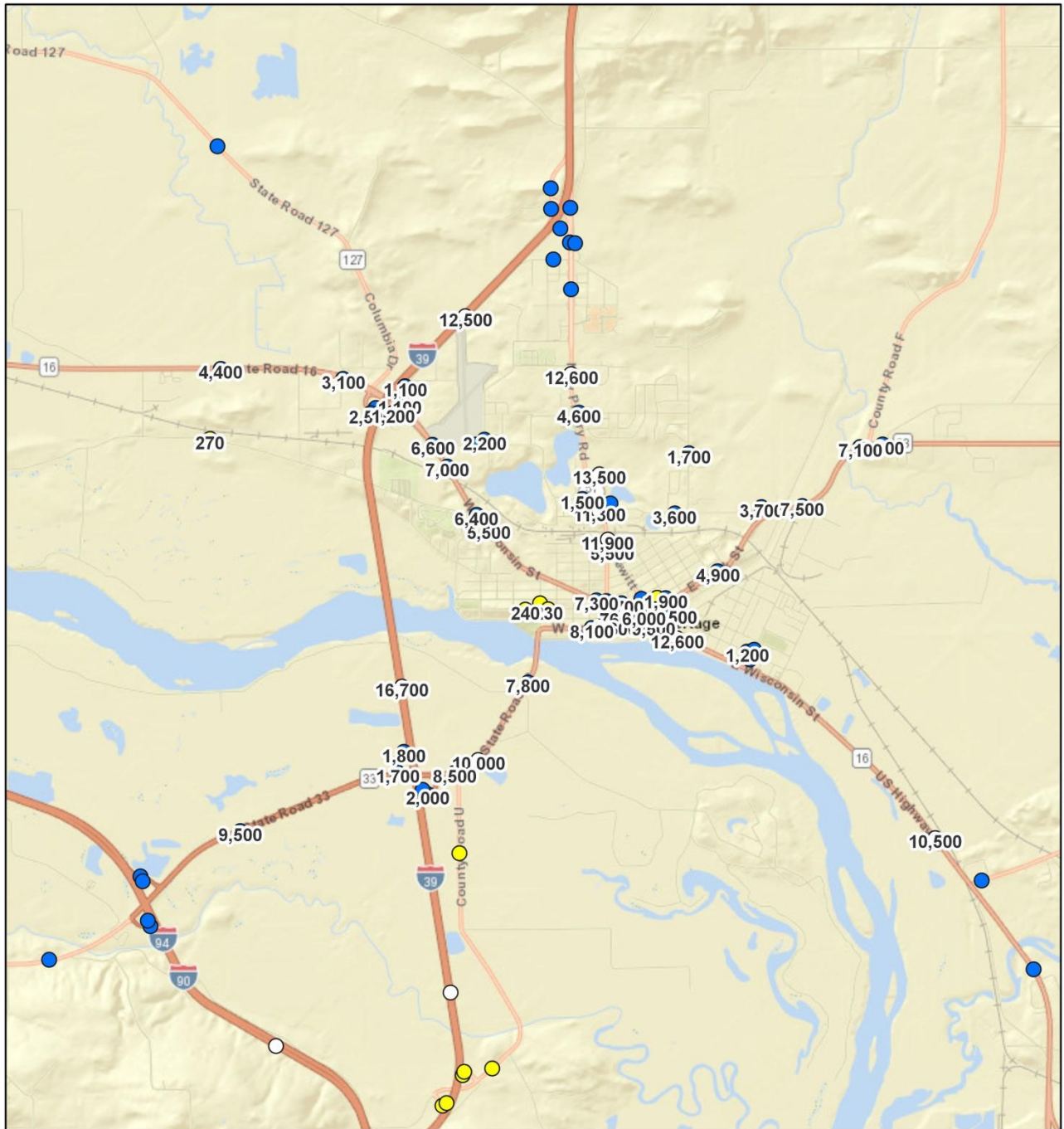
One method to understand the usage patterns on a community's street network is through counting the daily traffic of each roadway segment present on an average day. These counts are one characteristic that can be used to describe the function of a road and to observe change in usage over time.

Map 4 – 1 shows Interstate traffic volumes which are represented by an AADT determined from an actual count or a growth factored count. Traffic counts are collected continuously by WisDOT, the most recently available is from July, 2017. The AADT count indicates that approximately between 12,500 and 16,000 vehicles traveled through the City on I-39. Traffic counts in 2017 were 11,900 on Highway 51 north of the downtown; 6,600 on STH 16 just east of the I-39 interchange; 7,800 on STH 33 just south of the Wisconsin River; 8,000 on STH 33 leaving the City to the east; and 4,400 on STH 16 leaving the City to the west.



Downtown truck traffic

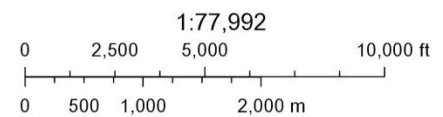
Map 4 – 1 Average Annual Daily Traffic



5/30/2019, 2:20:42 PM

Traffic Count Sites - Short Duration

- 0 – 999
- > 999 – 9,999
- > 9,999 – 49,999



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Source: WisDOT

Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS |

Rustic Roads

While the County's transportation system supports all economic activity, some roadways in Columbia County have been designated to promote tourism and related economic activity. These Rustic Roads are scenic, lightly traveled country roads that have outstanding natural features along its borders such as rugged terrain, native vegetation, native wildlife, or include open areas with agricultural vistas that singly or in combination uniquely set this road apart from other roads.

The City has two designated Rustic Roads. Rustic Road 49 follows Fairfield Street in the City and Levee Road in the Town of Caledonia. The full length of the Rustic Road 49 is 9.8 miles, from CTH T in Sauk County to STH 33 in Columbia County. The road travels through the Aldo Leopold reserve and the Pine Island Wildlife area along the Wisconsin River. Rustic Road 69 follows Old Agency House Road in the City. The full length of Rustic Road 69 is 0.75 miles, from Albert Street to the road's termini. The road travels along the Portage Canal and ends at the historic Indian Agency House Museum.

Opportunities exist elsewhere in the greater Municipal area for additional roads to be designated as Rustic Roads. Roads to be considered for Rustic Road designation include Fox River Road and Lock Road in the Town of Fort Winnebago, Owen Park Road in the Town of Caledonia, Cheese Factory Road in the Town of Lewiston, and County Highway O in the Towns of Lewiston and Newport.

Public Transportation, Transit, Taxi and Paratransit

Although the City does not operate a public transportation or transit system, the City does fund the only twenty four (24) hour per day, seven (7) day per week shared-ride taxi system in the State. Shared taxi service in the City is provided by Portage Cab, operated by Running, Inc. They operate 13 vehicles and have 40 employees serving the Municipal area.

Transportation services are available to the elderly and disabled in Columbia County through the County Department of Health & Human Services Division of Aging & Long Term Care Support. Transportation Services are available to people who are over age 60 or are disabled and have no other access to affordable transportation. The Department provides a vehicle that transports older and disabled people from their homes to medical facilities located in Madison. The elderly and disabled also can get transportation for medical appointments or other important personal business from available Department vehicles or through volunteers willing to drive them.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration offers a Vanpool to assist commuters in their ride to work. The State Vanpool provides alternate transportation for state and non-state employees commuting to Madison from outside communities. Participants can join a group that is already established or, if there are enough interested people, they can form a new vanpool. Vanpools are based on sharing commute expenses. Generally, one member of the group volunteers to drive and riders share the cost of operating the Vanpool.



Portage Canal



Pedestrian bridge

Biking

The Portage Area Trail and Heritage System (PATHS) was established as a non-profit, all-volunteer organization whose mission is to create and improve trail opportunities in and around the municipal area. Currently, PATHS is under the supervision of the Non-Motorized Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee (NMTAHC), and is involved in a number of initiatives to improve the multi-user trail network in the municipal area for walking, bicycling and boating. Portions of the system are existing including most of the Big Loop Trail (around the City), Portage Canal Towpath Trail, Top O' the Levee access road, North Loop Trail (north from Big Loop Trail), and the water trails on the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers. The goal of PATHS is to link all the natural and historic features of the municipal area into a comprehensive area trail and heritage system of foot and bicycle paths and roadways. This network allows for increased recreational, economic, and visitor opportunities in the City. City trails currently tie into the Columbia Country Bike Loop as well, increasing the potential for trail travel from Portage considerably.

Bicycling within the City is available through on-street facilities. Local, collector and arterial roads are available for biking. The need for improved bicycling designations on City roads was identified during the comprehensive planning process and has consistently been an important issue for the City. As local roads are improved, the addition of bicycle lanes should always be considered as part of the design and construction process.

Walking

Pedestrian facilities are not mapped by the City. The City has a formally adopted sidewalk policy. It requires the installation of sidewalks in new developments and maintaining existing facilities.

Transportation Plans

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020

The Plan pertains to State Roads in Wisconsin (STH). There are no specific projects identified within the Plan, though it does recommend strategies and actions to improve the State's highway system. The Plan emphasizes preservation of pavement and bridges, traffic movement, and improved safety. The local policy on this plan is to encourage continued development of the State Highway system, and to be active in planning for, and ensuring access to local highways.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The State of Wisconsin DOT has prepared the Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020. The purpose of this Plan is to establish bicycling as a viable, convenient, and safe transportation choice in the State. The Plan outlines the benefits offered by improving and expanding bicycling opportunities in the State. These benefits include the following: an alternative means of transportation, reduced traffic congestion, decreased need for parking, reduced pollution, increased physical activity, added roadway safety from paved shoulders (for both bicycles and motorists), and economic benefits from bicycle sales, service, and tourism. The Plan also outlines the roles and responsibilities of counties in implementing the State Plan. These roles and responsibilities include:

- Consider the needs of bicyclists in all road projects and build facilities accordingly.
- Develop, revise, and update long-range bicycle plans and maps.
- Consider adopting a shoulder paving policy.
- Promote land use policies that are bicyclist-friendly.
- Educate county sheriffs on the share-the-road safety techniques and enforcement strategies for specific high-risk bicyclist and motorist infractions of the law.

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

The development of WisDOT's statewide long-range bicycle plan, Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020, involved many people, including an advisory committee. This bicycle planning document is intended to help both communities and individuals in developing bicycle-friendly facilities throughout Wisconsin. Although specific projects in the planning area are not specified, the recommendations within the plan are worth considering locally if development of a regional bicycle plan occurs.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020, created by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), was established to make pedestrian travel a viable, convenient and safe transportation choice throughout Wisconsin. While the Policy Plan primarily aims to minimize the barrier to pedestrian traffic flow from State Trunk Highway expansions and improvements, it provides guidance to local communities on how to encourage pedestrian travel through the creation of pedestrian plans, increasing enforcement of pedestrian laws, adopting and implementing sidewalk ordinances, and addressing pedestrian issues through the public participation component of Comprehensive Smart Growth Planning.

Concluding Observations

Respondents to the community-wide survey generally agreed the level of traffic through the City is acceptable and traffic generally travels at the speed limit. Some respondents felt traffic was somewhat high and some felt some traffic exceeded the speed limit. However, downtown truck traffic was found to be an issue and additional solutions needed to be sought. One solution to this issue would be to work with local employers which are either sending out trucks for delivery or receiving delivery trucks and working with them to find alternate routes.

More public transportation options were found to be needed as well. With the recent addition of ridesharing services to local transportation capabilities, the need to rely on the City's taxi system will not be as strong and will make other options available at different price ranges. Increased passenger rail service to the City has found to have state-wide advocates, which may result in additional rail options.

There is support for additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities to connect City amenities and destinations. City efforts to increase the number of paths, including multi-use trails and bike lanes should provide an expanded network through the City and connect parks and other destinations to City neighborhoods.

Finally, transportation should be seen as an opportunity to advertise City assets and guide visitors to the historic, cultural, and recreational sites and facilities in the area. Maps of transportation options and clear signage should ensure resident and visitor experiences are easy and enjoyable when navigating the City.

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Transportation

Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Goal 4-1 – Provide a balanced, safe transportation system that provides a range of transportation options and makes efficient use of existing infrastructure.					
Objective 4-1.1 – Maintain a transportation system which encourages appropriate uses within and to major transportation corridors and destinations within the City .					
Prepare corridor redevelopment plans for major transportation corridors, such as New Pinery Road, Wisconsin Street, and Cook Street, in the City to address corridor development needs.	3	<1 yr. per corridor	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or staff time per corridor	City, WEDC, WisDOT, EDA
Explore potential to continue State Highway 33 corridor study beyond preliminary results.	2	1-3 yrs.	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, WEDC, WisDOT, EDA
Complete the Airport Master Plan and assess viability of current airport site as well as potential alternative sites for new airport.	1	<1 yr.	City, private partners	Staff time	City, WisDOT
Objective 4-1.2– Ensure safe traffic speeds downtown to address pedestrian safety and help improve the economic viability of retail districts.					
In conjunction with WisDOT, examine measures to ensure safe traffic speeds including: lower speed limits, signal light timing, curb bump outs, speed readout signs, raised intersection tables, enhanced pedestrian crossings, slow down signs, and yield to pedestrian signs along major retail transportation corridors.	2	1-3 yrs.	City, WisDOT	Staff time	City, WisDOT
Objective 4-1.3 – Improve pedestrian safety and comfort in the downtown.					
Prepare, adopt and implement an improved downtown "streetscape" plan for the space between the curb and the building facades. Elements to consider in the streetscape plan, to improve pedestrian safety and comfort are: sidewalk width (maintain, do not narrow), street trees (add to pedestrian comfort through shading and visual appeal), street furniture, "way finding" signage, pedestrian crossings (shortened through curb bump outs), and maintenance of on street parking.	2	<1 yr.	City, WisDOT, private partners	\$25,000 to \$35,000 plus implementation costs	City, EDA
Conduct a parking study for the downtown to ensure the downtown street network is operating effectively and downtown destinations are easy to access.	2	<1 yr.	City, WisDOT, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 plus implementation costs	City, City of Portage BID, EDA
Objective 4-1.4 – Reduce truck traffic in the downtown.					
Continue to develop strategies for reducing downtown truck traffic by working with local employers to encourage truck drivers to use other routes, where feasible.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	City, City of Portage BID

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Transportation

Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Goal 4-1 – Provide a balanced, safe transportation system that provides a range of transportation options and makes efficient use of existing infrastructure.					
Objective 4-1.5 – Provide a balance of facilities to serve the pedestrian and vehicular transportation needs of residents, visitors, businesses and other users in new and existing developments.					
Extend Gunderson Drive to connect to Hamilton Street.	2	1-3 yrs.	City	Dependent upon street section	City
Improve the DeWitt/Cook Street intersection and allow for east/west travel turning north on DeWitt Street.	1	1-3 yrs.	City	Dependent upon improvement project	City
Continue to implement the Portage Area Trail and Heritage System (PATHS) plan, as recommended by the Non-Motorized Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee (NMTAHC).	1	Ongoing	City, NCTAHC, PATHS	Costs vary by project	City, County, State and Federal agencies, non-profit recreation partners
Under supervision of the Non-Motorized Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee (NMTAHC), develop a pedestrian and bicycle master plan to meet the needs of City pedestrians and bicyclists.	4	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$25,000 to \$35,000	City
Continue to complete missing sidewalks per Common Council policy adopted in 2014.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A
Implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) related to pedestrian and other access throughout the City.	1	Ongoing	City	Costs vary by project	City, County, State and Federal agencies, non-profit recreation partners
Continue to explore the potential funding, grants to enhance the walkability of neighborhoods surrounding K 8 schools for children and to decrease automobile traffic during pick up and drop off times in these areas.	3	Ongoing	City, WisDOT	Costs vary by project	City, WisDOT
Continue to explore the potential for utilizing Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to help fund sidewalk, multi-modal and other transportation projects.	2	Ongoing	City, WisDOT	Costs vary by project	City, WisDOT
Support the extension of McMahon Road as a connector arterial to State Highway 16, as shown in the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan 2030.	1	Ongoing	City, County	Staff time	N/A
Continue to assess effectiveness of the specialized taxi service operated in the City in meeting the needs of people with disabilities, people without access to private automobile, and the local workforce.	1	Ongoing	City, Portage Cab - Running Inc.	Staff time	N/A

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Transportation

Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<p>Goal 4-1 – Provide a balanced, safe transportation system that provides a range of transportation options and makes efficient use of existing infrastructure.</p>					
<p>Objective 4-1.6: In cooperation with transportation and recreation-related organizations and objectives, develop additional bicycle lanes on existing roads and as part of future road improvements.</p>					
<p>Update the Capital Improvements Program annually to include bicycle lane maintenance and add additional segments.</p>	2	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A
<p>Construct additional bicycle lanes as shown in the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) as part of road improvement projects, where feasible.</p>	3	Ongoing	City	Dependent upon improvement project	City
<p>Goal 4-2 – Support transportation improvements which promote tourism and accommodate healthy recreational activities.</p>					
<p>Objective 4-2.1: Encourage tourism through the designation and promotion of scenic and historical transportation routes.</p>					
<p>Designate additional routes in Portage as "Rustic Roads".</p>	4	Ongoing	City, County, surrounding towns	Staff time	N/A
<p>Explore potential to designate relevant roads in Portage as a National Scenic Byway.</p>	4	Ongoing	City, County, surrounding towns	Staff time	N/A





Chapter 5 - Economic Development Element



Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of the City's current and projected education and labor force data. Community survey responses related to economic development have also been summarized. Goals, objectives, and strategies have been developed based upon the data as well as community input in order to increase and maintain the City's economic assets and opportunities.

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address economic development;

- City residents were split when considering whether there were enough good jobs in the City, although more disagree than agree on the subject.
- More than half of respondents said they would actively seek employment in the City if there were more opportunities.
- Many respondents strongly agree that the promotion of business and economic development should be a City priority.
- Most respondents feel that the City should concentrate on attracting new businesses. Additionally, almost half also thought the City should offer financial incentives to both grow existing businesses and attract new ones.
- Almost half of the respondents agree that there are sites currently available for manufacturing.
- Nearly half of respondents agree the City should place a special focus on improving the downtown.
- Respondents are relatively neutral in their opinion of post-secondary education opportunities in the City.
- Respondents are also fairly neutral response with almost half of respondents, 49% neither agreeing nor disagreeing about the need to expand home occupation opportunities.

- Most respondents strongly agree that the City needs more commercial activity in general, including jobs and shopping.
- More than half of respondents would do most or all of their shopping in the City if there were more big box retail options, while almost half would do most or all of their shopping in the City if there were more local options.
- There is also strong interest in more restaurants, with almost half of respondents saying they would do most or all of their dining locally, given more options.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found at the end of the chapter and list priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.

Goal 5-1 – Leverage the natural and unique assets of the City to increase economic activity.

Objective 5-1.1 – Increase access, use and views of the Wisconsin River as an amenity for recreation and tourism.

Objective E1.2 – Increase tourism promotion in the municipal area and orient efforts towards workforce talent and industry attraction.

Goal 5-2 – Strengthen the economic vitality of the downtown area.

Objective 5-2.1 – Continue to support downtown revitalization partners.

Objective 5-2.2 – Continue to support current downtown efforts and develop new initiatives.



Drug store on Wisconsin Street

Goal 5-3 – Strengthen the economic vitality of existing City business and industrial districts outside of the downtown area.

Objective 5-3.1 – Continue to attract businesses to the Portage Industrial Park and continue to incentivize those which bring new, create additional, and retain existing well-paying jobs.

Objective 5-3.2 – Continue to revitalize the Northside area, manufacturing corridors, and commercial corridors.

Objective 5-3.3 – Identify and assess areas in the City which contribute to the local economy and increase the potential of those areas.

Goal 5-4 – Continue to coordinate with and promote Economic Development area organizations and new and existing programs that welcome and support diverse businesses that provide well-paying jobs and strengthen the tax base.

Objective 5-4.1 – Promote coordination and cooperation among all the entities that engage in economic development in the region.

Objective 5-4.2 – Increase internal capacity in order to more effectively engage in regional, state, national, and international economic development efforts.

Goal 5-5 – Continue to implement and expand efforts to retain existing business and employees.

Objective 5-5.1 – Continue to document existing industry and business needs in order to address changing industry needs and provide support for potential solutions.

Objective 5-5.2 – Support existing business by assisting with local supply and demand issues.



Portage Community Schools Vocational Program

Existing Conditions

Education Level of Labor Force

Figure 5-1 shows the City to have a slightly lower percentage, 10%, of those over 25 with a Bachelor's degree in 2017 as their highest educational attainment, when compared to the surrounding towns. Only Lewiston had a similarly low rate.

This figure also shows a slightly higher rate, 24.1%, of those with some college, yet no degree, as compared to the surrounding towns. This indicates there could be an opportunity to assist those who start college to graduate, with an Associate's or higher degree, with financial assistance, expanded course offerings, and/or workplace-sponsored assistance.

Participation in Labor Force

Figure 5-2 indicates that 61.4% of residents 16 years and over are active in the City labor force. This figure is similar to the towns of Pacific and Lewiston, as well as for the State, yet lower than the rate for Caledonia and the County. The unemployment rate of 5.1% is higher than the towns of Pacific and Caledonia, yet lower than for Lewiston and comparable with the rate for the State. This reflects a more urban workforce that likely has higher transition rates than more rural areas.

Figure ED-1 Educational Attainment

	Wisconsin	Columbia County	Town of Caledonia	Town of Fort Winnebago	Town of Lewiston	Town of Pacific	City of Portage
Population 25 years and over	3,907,816	39,986	1,141	623	995	2,085	7,176
Less than 9th grade	110,095	787	13	9	8	26	163
%	2.80%	2.00%	1.10%	1.40%	0.80%	1.20%	2.30%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	213,704	2,091	19	28	65	91	512
%	5.50%	5.20%	1.70%	4.50%	6.50%	4.40%	7.10%
High school graduate	1,222,791	13,927	352	260	456	752	3,042
%	31.30%	34.80%	30.90%	41.70%	45.80%	36.10%	42.40%
Some college, no degree	814,870	9,191	299	126	220	474	1,731
%	20.90%	23.00%	26.20%	20.20%	22.10%	22.70%	24.10%
Associate's degree	411,875	4,951	133	78	114	268	710
%	10.50%	12.40%	11.70%	12.50%	11.50%	12.90%	9.90%
Bachelor's degree	748,413	6,391	228	85	103	334	717
%	19.20%	16.00%	20.00%	13.60%	10.40%	16.00%	10.00%
Graduate or professional degree	386,068	2,648	97	37	29	140	301
%	9.90%	6.60%	8.50%	5.90%	2.90%	6.70%	4.20%

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 5-3 shows the majority of the labor force in the City derived its income from private companies, 84.7%. This figure is higher than for both the County and State. Government workers accounted for 12.4% of the labor force, lower than for the County and slightly higher than for the State. This helps to explain the higher unemployment rate, as the City has fewer government employers providing steady employment. The percentage of those who are self-employed is 2.7%, half that of the County and State. This presents a continued opportunity to encourage entrepreneurship and incentivize people to become self-employed.

Employment Statistics

Figure 5-4 shows the highest percentage of workers in the City to be employed in the manufacturing industry, at 25.8% of the workforce. This is significantly higher than the percentages for the towns of Pacific and Caledonia and higher than both the State and the County. This represents a more urban workforce as well as a significant presence of manufacturing firms.

The second highest percentage of workers in the City is in the educational services, health care and social assistance industry, at 18.6%. This percentage is lower than for the towns of Pacific and Winnebago, yet higher than Caledonia and Lewiston. The percentage is slightly lower than for the County and lower than the State percentage at 23.2%. Other important industries for employment include construction, professional, scientific, and management. Additionally, the City has a much lower percentage of workers in retail trade, 7.1%, compared to the surrounding towns, County and State. This shows better employment opportunities can be found in the City, likely with higher wages.

Figure 5-2 Labor Force Participation

	Wisconsin	Columbia County	Town of Caledonia	Town of Fort Winnebago	Town of Lewiston	Town of Pacific	City of Portage
Population 16 years and over	4,618,274	45,734	1,277	664	1,117	2,310	8,579
In labor force	3,087,719	31,309	930	461	735	1,444	5,271
%	66.90%	68.50%	72.80%	69.40%	65.80%	62.50%	61.40%
Civilian labor force	3,085,151	31,226	925	458	735	1,444	5,271
%	66.80%	68.30%	72.40%	69.00%	65.80%	62.50%	61.40%
Employed	2,939,880	30,041	906	446	691	1,410	5,000
%	63.70%	65.70%	70.90%	67.20%	61.90%	61.00%	58.30%
Armed Forces	2,568	83	5	3	0	0	0
%	0.10%	0.20%	0.40%	0.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Not in labor force	1,530,555	14,425	347	203	382	866	3,308
%	33.10%	31.50%	27.20%	30.60%	34.20%	37.50%	38.60%
Unemployment Rate	4.70%	3.80%	2.10%	2.60%	6.00%	2.40%	5.10%

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 5-3 Type of Worker

	Wisconsin	Columbia County	City of Portage
Private wage and salary workers	82.50%	79.20%	84.70%
Government workers	12.20%	14.90%	12.40%
Self-employed	5.10%	5.60%	2.70%
Unpaid family workers	0.20%	0.30%	0.20%

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 5-4 Employment by Industry

	Wisconsin	Columbia County	Town of Caledonia	Town of Fort Winnebago	Town of Lewiston	Town of Pacific	City of Portage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	70,575	947	34	25	48	17	41
	2.40%	3.20%	3.80%	5.60%	6.90%	1.20%	0.80%
Construction	160,587	2,438	106	44	60	85	399
	5.50%	8.10%	11.70%	9.90%	8.70%	6.00%	8.00%
Manufacturing	540,274	5,364	113	89	148	232	1,291
	18.40%	17.90%	12.50%	20.00%	21.40%	16.50%	25.80%
Wholesale trade	79,418	727	14	15	15	20	11
	2.70%	2.40%	1.50%	3.40%	2.20%	1.40%	0.20%
Retail trade	331,399	3,154	118	51	89	156	354
	11.30%	10.50%	13.00%	11.40%	12.90%	11.10%	7.10%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	127,961	1,533	29	21	36	86	206
	4.40%	5.10%	3.20%	4.70%	5.20%	6.10%	4.10%
Information	48,221	484	21	5	3	47	54
	1.60%	1.60%	2.30%	1.10%	0.40%	3.30%	1.10%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	177,957	1,713	34	12	32	107	184
	6.10%	5.70%	3.80%	2.70%	4.60%	7.60%	3.70%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	243,554	2,101	67	25	22	73	385
	8.30%	7.00%	7.40%	5.60%	3.20%	5.20%	7.70%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	682,285	6,007	152	97	113	336	929
	23.20%	20.00%	16.80%	21.70%	16.40%	23.80%	18.60%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	254,526	2,752	117	22	60	115	727
	8.70%	9.20%	12.90%	4.90%	8.70%	8.20%	14.50%
Other services, except public administration	121,136	1,123	35	19	26	20	202
	4.10%	3.70%	3.90%	4.30%	3.80%	1.40%	4.00%
Public administration	101,987	1,698	66	21	39	116	217
	3.50%	5.70%	7.30%	4.70%	5.60%	8.20%	4.30%

Source: 2017 ACS

Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires communities to evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program maintains a list of contaminated sites, or brownfields. The DNR identifies brownfields as "abandoned or under-utilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination." Properties listed in the DNR database are self-reported and do not represent a comprehensive listing of possible brownfields in a community. Other state and federal databases may provide more comprehensive lists. The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Trading System (BRRTS) has 22 records classified as "Open" as of April, 2019, in the City. The designation of "Open" means the contamination activity is in need of clean up or the cleanup is still underway. Figure 5-5 lists the activity, or company, name as well the activity address.

Figure 5-5 Open BRRTS Activity Sites

BRRTS NUMBER	ACTIVITY NAME	ADDRESS
02-11-583104	ALTER TRADING CORPORATION	300 E MULLETT ST
02-11-512824	PORTAGE CLEANERS INC	104 E WISCONSIN
02-11-000824	PENDA CORP	N7660 INDUSTRIAL RD
02-11-245012	MAEL AIRPORT PROPERTY	1125 SILVER LAKE DR
03-11-000491	COLUMBIA CNTY RECYCLE CENTER	STH 51
03-11-000494	GLACIER OIL	US ROUTE 51
03-11-001043	ATKINSON PROPERTY	1101 WAUONA TR
03-11-002365	CRAIGS SERVICE	206 W WISCONSIN AVE
02-11-000838	PORTAGE WELL #3 #6	115 W PLEASANT
03-11-582145	POLNOW GASOLINE STATION AND SERVICE GARAGE	311 W CONANT ST
02-11-118172	URBAN PROPERTY	2653 NEW PINERY RD
02-11-543021	PORTAGE CANAL SEGMENT 1	DEWITT ST TO ADAMS ST
02-11-248551	CRAWFORD OIL BULK PLT	SUPERIOR & CENTER ST NE CNR
03-11-519489	AMERITECH/SPORTSWEAR SCREENPRINT SITE 31	501 E MULLETT ST
02-11-519588	GRUBER AUTOMOTIVE PARTS	208 E EDGEWATER ST
03-11-519977	STH 78 & OLD CTH U	STH 78 & OLD CTH U
03-11-550304	H & H POOLS & SPAS	213 DEWITT ST
02-11-559057	PORTAGE SMALL ARMS TARGET RANGE	CTH F
02-11-577055	PORTAGE CANAL SEGMENT 2	ADAMS ST TO CPR BRIDGE
02-11-577056	PORTAGE CANAL SEGMENT 3	RR BRIDGE TO STH 33
02-11-577057	PORTAGE CANAL SEGMENT 4	STH 33 TO FOX RIVER

Source: WDNR

Downtown Revitalization

Many people and organizations have invested a significant amount of time in past years as well as current efforts to revitalize downtown including, among others, Main Street Portage, Portage Business Improvement District, Portage Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Portage, City of Portage, Portage Center for the Arts, the Portage Canal Society, and the Portage Area Trail and Heritage System (PATHS). The efforts of these groups and individuals have contributed to plans and studies, including:

Options for Downtown Improvement: A Downtown Revitalization Plan for Portage (1984).

City of Portage Needs Analysis Report and Downtown Action Plan (2002), SmithGroup JJR. The Needs Analysis identified the need for a downtown strategic planning process and action plan.

The Portage Community Charrette (2002), a team of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning designers from Ball State University and many local community leaders participated in a charrette (an intensive, visioning and design workshop) August 23-25, 2002. The product was a charrette report describing and illustrating the visions, goals, strategies and designs for downtown revitalization.

Portage Main Street Market Analysis, UW Extension (2005). The market analysis portrays the size and shape of the municipal trade area.

National Main Street Resource Team Assessment and Report (2005). A team from the National Main Street Program visited the City in February 2005 to observe and make recommendations to Portage Main Street. The recommendations dealt with the four points of the National Main Street Program: organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring.

Wisconsin Main Street Assessment and Report (2007). Representatives from the Wisconsin Main Street program visited the City and provided observations and recommendations based on the four point approach.



Historic restaurant in downtown Portage

Past and Current Downtown Revitalization Efforts

The hard work of many individuals and organizations has generated a number of important improvements.

- Additional work is proceeding. Some of the accomplishments and efforts are:
- Portage Center for the Arts restoration of the former Presbyterian Church in 1986 as a performing arts center.
- Redevelopment of Commerce Square, including significant fundraising efforts.
- Development of the Mercantile Building as a business incubator.
- Façade improvements such as the Portage Daily Register building.
- Development of senior housing.
- On-going promotional events and downtown beautification.
- Current efforts within the downtown Tax Increment District No. 6 to fund improvements related to the downtown street reconstruction, and downtown redevelopments.

Downtown Assets

The City is located only 30 minutes from two growing economic centers, Madison and Wisconsin Dells, and is easily accessible to Wisconsin's Northwoods. As the Dane County market area continues to expand, the ability to live in an affordable community such as Portage and work in Madison is very attractive. The popularity of Wisconsin Dells is an important asset and allows the City to market itself to regional and state-wide visitors. The City is near many day-trip destinations that can also supply visitors to the area, such as Cascade Mountain Ski Hill, Devil's Lake State Park, Mirror Lake State Park, wildlife and canoe areas, hunting and fishing destinations and nearby campgrounds.

The downtown area is both physically and economically central to the community. The downtown is located at three (3) primary arterials; Wisconsin Street, Highway 51, and Highway 33. The downtown has easy access to an interchange at US Interstate I-39.

Downtown is supported by both a Business Improvement District as well as the Downtown Portage non-profit. With these two mechanisms in place, the downtown now has additional opportunities for funding, and access to strategic support that will aid in its viability. The community can be proud of the revitalization efforts that have been undertaken.

The City has played an important role in Wisconsin's history and will always have the opportunity to encourage tourism in the area. Efforts to maintain the canal, along with aggressive local, County, and regional parks and recreation planning will continue to support an increase in tourism. Many important historic locations are located in the downtown area. Preserving the heritage of the City and using it as a market asset will continue to be an advantage that can be capitalized upon.

The Wisconsin River is also an amazing, and amenity for the downtown and the community. It is a key natural resource for the State and offers many sporting and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Planning that offers better vista and physical connections to the river will benefit overall downtown revitalization efforts.



Historic commercial building on Wisconsin Street



Historic pub on Wisconsin Street

Downtown Challenges

Traffic concerns in the downtown area continue to persist, despite City actions over the years to mitigate downtown transportation issues. Although traffic can be great for business, the type of traffic and the management of that traffic is also important. Because of the intersecting highways within the downtown district, there can be a certain amount of truck traffic during the day. This truck traffic can be disruptive to pedestrians and those looking visit downtown businesses. However, continue efforts to work with local employers and other strategies can be effective overtime and should continue to be pursued.

Regarding signage and wayfinding, the downtown area does have public signage; however, additional signage could be beneficial to visitors and could include identification of public parking, connections to local attractions, directions to local parks and facilities, and identification of neighborhood districts. Better signage at angled street intersections in the downtown district could also be particularly helpful to keep visitors oriented.

The building stock in downtown is quite varied in its quality and its presentation on the street and there are still many properties that could benefit from a significant renovation. Continued support and advertisement of the Building Façade Improvement Loan Program will remain important to spurring downtown renovation.

Continued City support of Business Improvement District and Downtown Portage will also remain important as these organization champion the downtown and provide the management and marketing needed to continually provide a good downtown experience for residents and visitors.

Concluding Observations

Employment is a key concern in the City. Promotion of business and industry is seen by residents as a priority and helping existing companies to expand is also see as important.

For the City to continue attracting new industry, marketing of current existing manufacturing sites and providing assistance for potential improvements to those sites will continue to be an important focus. However, other economic development projects, including the development of shopping and restaurant options are important as well. Residents have indicated they would support new options through the City as well as in the downtown area.

Current efforts to improve the downtown should continue to be supported through more signage and possible bike and trail connections to nearby historic, cultural, and recreational sites.

Finally, the City should continue to focus on marketing and improving tourism activities in the City and in the surrounding area. The City has the historic, cultural, and recreational sites and facilities to draw visitors from across the State and across the Country. Hotel and other visitor-oriented projects will help to capitalize on the efforts to improve area attractions and establish the City as a competitive tourist destination.

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Economic Development						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 5-1 – Leverage the natural and unique assets of the City to increase economic activity.						
Objective 5-1.1 – Increase access, use and views of the Wisconsin River as an amenity for recreation and tourism.						
Implement the Portage Area Trails and Heritage System plan (see Transportation Element).	1	Ongoing	City, NMTAHC, PATHS, non-profit recreation partners	Costs vary by project	City, County, State and Federal agencies, non-profit recreation Partners	
Continue working towards the completion of the Portage Canal restoration project (see Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element).	1	Ongoing	City, WDNR, Portage Canal Society	Dependent upon project budget	City, WDNR	
Objective 5-1.2 – Increase tourism promotion in the Portage area and orient efforts towards workforce talent and industry attraction.						
Work cooperatively with surrounding communities to incorporate Portage into day trips to the Wisconsin Dells, the Merimac Ferry, and for golf, skiing, hunting and fishing recreation and develop informational brochures.	2	Ongoing	City, County, Regional Jurisdictions, non-profit recreation partners	Costs vary by project	City, County, Regional Jurisdictions, non-profit recreation partners, Wisconsin Department of Tourism	
Coordinate marketing efforts of Portage recreational, cultural and heritage partners with the Business Improvement District (BID) and other entities that promote tourism in the City, Columbia County, along the Wisconsin River, and in other historic, cultural and scenic areas to develop joint marketing materials for use as attraction and promotion materials.	2	1-3 yrs.	City, County, Regional Jurisdictions, non-profit recreation partners	Staff time plus marketing costs	City, County, Regional Jurisdictions, non-profit recreation partners, Wisconsin Department of Tourism	
Goal 5-2 – Strengthen the economic vitality of the Portage downtown area.						
Objective 5-2.1 – Continue to support downtown revitalization partners.						
Continue to support the Business Improvement District (BID) and contracted employees.	1	Ongoing	City, City of Portage BID	Staff Time plus budget allocations	City, City of Portage BID, local business partners	
Objective 5-2.2 – Continue to support current downtown efforts and develop new initiatives.						
Consider preparing a Downtown Revitalization Plan.	3	<1 yr.	City, City of Portage BID, private partners	\$25,000 - \$35,000 and/or staff time	City, City of Portage BID, local business partners	
Prepare, adopt and implement downtown design guidelines that include requirements for pedestrian friendly building façade features including minimum area of fenestration on first floor façades, entries onto the main street, and pedestrian scaled signage.	3	<1 yr.	City, City of Portage BID	\$25,000 - \$35,000 and/or staff time	City, City of Portage BID, local business partners	
Explore the potential to apply for participation in the Wisconsin economic Development Corporation's (WEDC) Connect Communities Program.	3	Ongoing	City, City of Portage BID	Staff time	City, City of Portage BID, local business partners, WEDC	
Develop plans to improve downtown pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist safety (see Transportation Element).	2	1-3 yrs.	City, City of Portage BID	\$25,000 to \$35,000 and/or staff time	City, City of Portage BID, local business partners	

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Economic Development

Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Goal 5-3 – Strengthen the economic vitality of existing Portage business and industrial districts outside of the downtown area.					
Objective 5-3.1 – Continue to attract businesses to the Portage Industrial Park and continue to incentivize those which bring new, create additional, and retain existing well paying jobs.					
Continue to identify potential new companies within identified clusters, such as those related to food services, plastics and tool and die industries, to recruit to the Portage Business Park.	1	Ongoing	City, economic development partners	Staff time	N/A
Develop Portage Business Park marketing packets for industrial park, sites, and vacant buildings.	2	<1 yr. initially, on-going after	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$35,000 and/or staff time	City, WEDC, EDA
Identify major and/or OEM manufacturers within trucking distance of the Portage Business Park in order to develop marketing materials to recruit potential new supplier companies looking to locate in Portage and bring new well-paying jobs.	2	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$35,000 and/or staff time	City, WEDC, EDA
Encourage wage increases across all Portage industries, similar recent increases in the plastics industry.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	City
Objective 5-3.2 – Continue to revitalize the Northside area, manufacturing corridors, and commercial corridors.					
Continue development of the Northside Business Park.	1	Ongoing	City, private partners	Costs vary by improvements, site work needed	City, WEDC, EDA
Continue to assess and support the economic development needs of the business districts along Highways 33 and provide incentives, where appropriate, to spur revitalization of these areas.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	City
Prepare corridor plans for major commercial and industrial corridors (see Transportation Element).	3	<1 yr. per corridor	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or staff time per corridor	City, WEDC, EDA
Objective 5-3.3 – Identify and assess areas in the City which contribute to the local economy and increase the potential of those areas.					
Continue to develop the Airport Master Plan and evaluate, implement resulting recommendations.	1	<1 yr.	City	Staff Time plus cost of recommended improvements	City, WEDC, EDA, WisDOT
Identify areas in need of revitalization and prepare revitalization plans for those areas.	3	<1 yr. per area	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or staff time per area	City, WEDC, EDA, WDNR
Continue to inventory potential infill development sites and prioritize for commercial, manufacturing, and/or institutional development.	2	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, WEDC, EDA, WDNR

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Economic Development

Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Goal 5-4 –Continue to coordinate with and promote economic Development area organizations and new and existing programs that welcome and support diverse businesses that provide well paying jobs and strengthen the tax base.					
Objective 5-4.1 – Promote coordination and cooperation among all the entities that engage in economic development in the region.					
Consider a unified promotional campaign with the Columbia County Economic Development Corporation to develop business attraction strategies and materials, conduct outreach to existing businesses to establish needs and assets, including workforce development challenges and opportunities.	2	<1 yr.	City, Columbia County EDC, private partners	\$12,500 to \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, Columbia County, WEDC, EDA, WDWD
Have joint Columbia County promotional campaign results provided to the Madison Regional economic Partnership and the Wisconsin economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to use as County Profile supplements.	3	<1 yr.	City, Columbia County EDC	Staff time	N/A
Continue to support local and regional efforts to promote entrepreneurship; including, the three (3) County Innovative Champions program, small business incubators, and the Enterprise Center.	1	Ongoing	City, County	Staff time	N/A
Continue to support Chamber of Commerce efforts to market Portage to young professionals throughout the state and in major metropolitan areas such as Chicago.	1	Ongoing	City, Chamber of Commerce	Staff time	N/A
Continue to support Chamber of Commerce efforts that recirculates dollars within the local economy and reduce the "leakage" of dollars outside the local economy, such as shop local events and initiatives.	2	Ongoing	City, Chamber of Commerce	Staff time	N/A
Continue to implement the economic Development Strategic Plan and update the Plan as necessary.	1	Ongoing	City, economic development partners	Staff time	N/A
Objective 5-4.2 – Increase internal capacity in order to more effectively engage in regional, state, national, and international economic development efforts.					
Continue to make the Community Development Authority more robust by updating and creating programs and responsibilities as needed.	1	Ongoing	City, CDA	Staff time plus budget contributions, depended upon needed programs, initiatives	City, CDA
Review development regulations and amend, as necessary, to ensure development is efficiently and effectively accommodated, including a potential expedited review process.	3	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City
Review existing Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIDs) for potential amendments to better utilize related financial incentives and resources.	1	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Economic Development						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 5-5 – Continue to implement and expand efforts to retain existing business and employees.						
Objective 5-5.1 – Continue to document existing industry and business needs in order to address changing industry needs and provide support for potential solutions.						
Prepare and distribute an annual survey to local manufacturing and professional services businesses to assess workforce, capital, existing facility, supply, demand, and other needs.	1	Ongoing	City, Chamber of Commerce	Staff time and/or survey costs	City, WEDC, EDA, Chamber of Commerce	
Evaluate potential expansion requirements of local industry and assess local availability of land and buildings.	1	<1 yr.	City	Staff time and/or survey costs	City, WEDC, EDA, Chamber of Commerce	
Prepare preliminary site assessments (PSAs) for any property which local businesses have identified as likely candidates for expansion and which may have site constraints.	3	1 -3 yrs.	City	\$1,500 - \$3,000 per site	City, EDA	
Pursue funding and brownfield redevelopment technical assistance, including the WDNR "Green Team", to help with environmental remediation efforts, such as a Phase I or Phase II assessment, for targeted properties which may have environmental issues.	3	1 -3 yrs.	City, WDNR, economic development partners	Dependent upon environmental remediation need	City, EDA, WEDC, WDNR	
Ensure local businesses are aware of regional, State and Federal ED incentives for expansion and/or retention. Coordinate company interviews of ED organizations to encourage use of ED programs.	1	Ongoing	City, economic development partners	Staff time	City, EDA	
Consider utilizing Tax Incremental District (TID) funds in order to provide infrastructure and other improvements which would assist with local expansion efforts.	2	Ongoing	City	Staff time	City	
Objective 5-5.2 – Support existing business by assisting with local supply and demand issues.						
Ensure local businesses are utilizing available supply chain networks, such as the Wisconsin Supply Chain Marketplace, WEDC supply chain workshops, and the Wisconsin Supply Chain Institute.	1	Ongoing	City, economic development partners	Staff time	N/A	
Coordinate regular communication between local businesses, the Canadian Pacific Railway, and utility providers in order to assist with identifying member companies which may have a demand for local products.	1	Ongoing	City, economic development partners, CP, Alliant Energy	Staff time	N/A	
Coordinate with regional, State and National ED partner and trade associations to ensure or assist businesses in attending trade shows.	3	Ongoing	City, economic development partners	Staff time	N/A	



Chapter 6 - Housing Element



Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of The City's current and projected household demographics, the housing market, and housing stock. Community survey responses related to housing have also been summarized. Goals, objectives, and strategies have been developed based upon the data presented in this chapter and in other chapters in this Plan, as well as community input, in order to increase and maintain the City's housing stock.

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address housing;

- Nearly half of survey respondents agreed that the City should limit residential development to mostly single-family detached houses, although some disagreed.
- There was a fairly even response regarding the adequacy of housing. Some residents felt there was adequate housing; however, most were either neutral on the question or they did not feel the City had adequate housing choices.
- City residents also responded fairly strongly that the City should promote the construction of more affordable housing.
- Furthermore, despite the fact that many respondents agreed on limiting development to mostly single-family residential, almost half of the respondents felt the City should encourage a greater mix of housing.
- Most respondents also agreed that the City should protect historic structure and sites, which could include historic homes.
- Some respondents agreed that it is appropriate to allow for multi-family residential development along with commercial businesses, although some were neutral and a smaller percentage disagreed.
- More than half of the respondents agreed that the City should extend utilities to encourage growth, which could include housing development.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found at the end of the chapter and list priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.



Historic home



Historic home

Goal 6-1 – Strive to offer a variety of quality housing choices for all residents, including different age, income, and special needs.

Objective 6-1.1 – Assess and address the need for different housing types in the City.

Objective 6-1.2 Incentivize the development of moderately-priced single-family housing on existing infill and subdivision lots.

Objective 6-1.3 – Incentivize the development of additional housing types by providing more flexibility in the zoning ordinance and working with housing-related organizations.

Objective 6-1.4 – Encourage home ownership through the use of incentives and assistance from the City in partnership with housing agencies and organizations.

Objective 6-1.5 – Encourage home rehabilitation and upkeep.

Objective 6-1.6 – Encourage the rehabilitation of second-floor space above first-floor commercial properties for residential uses.

Objective 6-1.7 – Encourage site preparation and remediation in designated development/ redevelopment areas or Neighborhood Plans.

Objective 6-1.8 – Increase supply and utilization of available land for housing development.

Goal 6-2 – Promote safe, attractive neighborhoods for a range of families and households with a high quality of life and stable property values.

Objective 6-2.1 – Promote a mix of housing types within new neighborhoods, and discourage the development of single housing type subdivision in order to foster diversity and stability.

Objective 6-2.2 – Incentivize the development of mixed-use developments by allowing multi-family housing in commercial districts.

Housing Market & Demographics

Household Characteristics

Figure 6-1 shows the number of households, average household size, families as well as the presence of minors and seniors in the City, surrounding towns, and the County. A “household” is an occupied housing unit consisting of families and/or unrelated persons living together. A “family” is a group of people who are related by birth or marriage. Households classified as “nonfamily” are households with persons living together who are not “family”. This figure shows there to be an estimated 4,207 households in The City in 2017, 43% of which are non-family households. Of the total households, 28.7% have minors present and 34.8% have seniors, those over 60 years old, present.

The City has a higher percentage, 43.07%, of nonfamily households than the surrounding towns and the County. The City also has a comparatively high percentage, 28.7%, of households with minors present, when compared to surrounding towns, but a smaller percentage, 34.8%, of households with seniors present.

This figure also shows the City to have a relatively large family size, 2.9, yet a lower household size of 2.21 persons. This indicates more family members living on their own and may indicate a need for more starter homes and affordable rentals as well as senior living. The need for senior housing will likely increase as the senior households in surrounding towns retire and desire a smaller in-town house without rural residential maintenance.

Figure 6-1 Household Characteristics

	Total households	Average household size	Nonfamily households	Total families	Average family size	Households with 1 or more people <18 yrs.	Households with 1 or more people 60 yrs.+
City of Portage	4,207	2.21	43.07%	2,395	2.9	28.70%	34.80%
Town of Caledonia	621	2.5	24.96%	466	2.89	30.90%	35.30%
Town of Fort Winnebago	355	2.21	31.55%	243	2.7	21.10%	45.60%
Town of Lewiston	546	2.35	22.53%	423	2.67	23.40%	46.00%
Town of Pacific	1,198	2.27	28.96%	851	2.63	23.20%	52.80%
Columbia County	23,317	2.37	32.29%	15,787	2.86	30.10%	38.90%

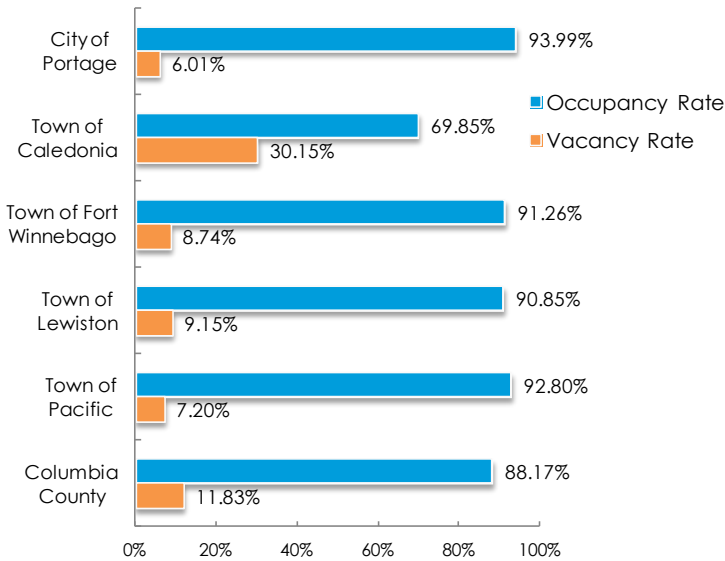
Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-2 Occupied Units

	Total	Occupied	Vacant
City of Portage	4,476	4,207	269
Town of Caledonia	889	621	268
Town of Fort Winnebago	389	355	34
Town of Lewiston	601	546	55
Town of Pacific	1,291	1,198	93
Columbia County	26,447	23,317	3,130

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-3 Occupancy Rates



Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-4 Vacancy Rates

	Homeowner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate
City of Portage	1.40%	4.10%
Town of Caledonia	5.50%	0.00%
Town of Fort Winnebago	1.80%	0.00%
Town of Lewiston	2.10%	0.00%
Town of Pacific	0.00%	0.00%
Columbia County	1.50%	6.70%

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-5 Vacancy Types

	For rent	Rented, not occupied	For sale only	Sold, not occupied	For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	For migrant workers	Other vacant
City of Portage	86	47	32	27	0	0	77
Town of Caledonia	0	0	32	8	216	0	12
Town of Fort Winnebago	0	0	6	0	0	0	28
Town of Lewiston	0	0	10	0	45	0	0
Town of Pacific	0	15	0	0	72	0	6
Columbia County	452	180	272	58	1548	70	550

Source: 2017 ACS

Housing Units & Occupancy

Figure 6-2 shows that the City has 4,476 housing units, 4,207 of which are occupied and 269 are vacant. Figure 6-3 depicts the occupancy and vacancy rates for the City as well as for surrounding towns and the County. The City has a slightly higher occupancy rate than the County and surrounding towns and a correspondingly lower vacancy rate. As the City is more urban, vacancy rates can be expected to be lower; however, an overall 6% vacancy rate can still be considered to be a "healthy" vacancy rate.

Figure 6-4 shows homeowner and rental vacancy rates. The vacancy rates do include for sale, sold, and for rent units while discounting those vacancies that are classified as "other". Figure 6-4 indicates a low 1.4% vacancy rate for homeowners and a slightly low 4.1% vacancy rate for rentals. Normally, a 5% vacancy rate is considered "healthy" for owner-occupied homes and 3.5% for renter-occupied homes. These rates indicate a need for both additional owner-occupied homes and a need for more rentals. The rental vacancy rate is also likely to be lower than stated, as older rentals can be less desirable than newer ones and may be out of date.

Figure 6-5 shows the full range of vacancy types, with The City having a considerable number of "other" vacant. This likely indicates properties in need of maintenance, renovation, or demolition and is not counted in the overall vacancy rate.

Homeownership

Figure 6-6 shows owner occupied and renter occupied estimates for 2017 for the City and County, and State. Figure 6-7 shows the percentage of owner occupied and renter occupied housing units for the City, surrounding towns, County, and State. The City is more urban than the surrounding Towns and, therefore, has a much higher percentage of renters versus owners. However, looking at the State, Wisconsin has a statewide homeownership rate of 69% and a corresponding renter rate of 31%, rates which are closer to the City's. This may indicate a slight imbalance in the local housing market and the need to encourage more homeownership to more closely match the State levels.

Figure 6-6 Tenure

	Total Occupied	Owner occupied	Renter occupied
City of Portage	4,207	2,228	1,979
Town of Caledonia	621	539	82
Town of Fort Winnebago	355	330	25
Town of Lewiston	546	474	72
Town of Pacific	1,198	1,077	121
Columbia County	23,317	17,241	6,076

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-7 Tenure Rates

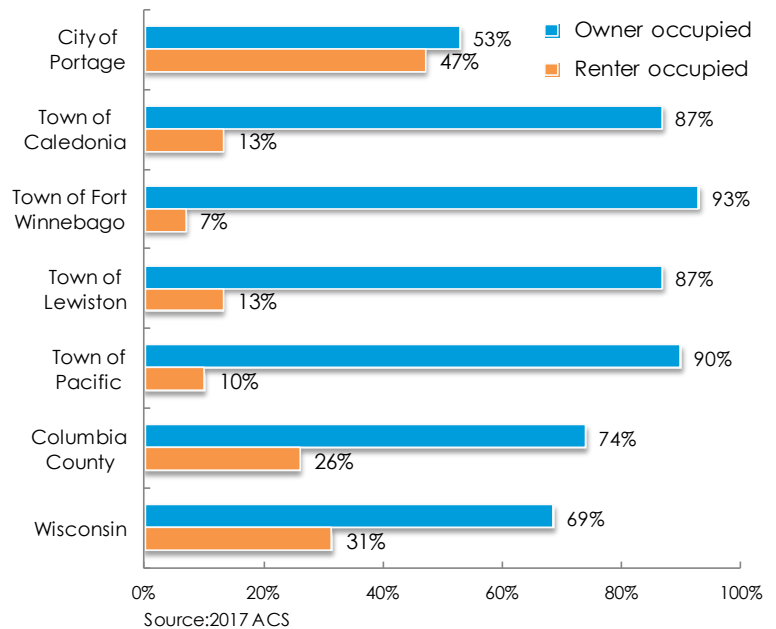
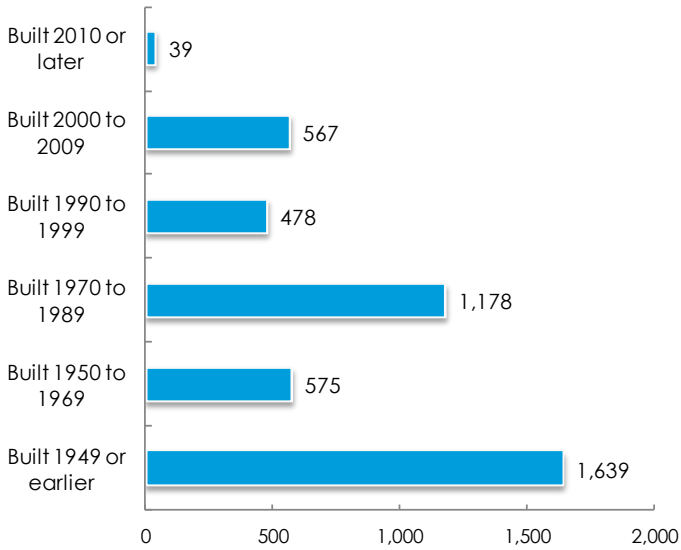


Figure 6-8 Year Housing Built



Source: 2017 ACS

Age of Housing Structures

Figure 6-8 provides a detailed analysis of when housing units were constructed within the City. This figure shows on 39 units have been built in the last 10 years, compared to 567 from 2000 to 2009. Clearly, there has been a slowdown in construction in recent years, and there is a strong indication that more housing construction is needed to keep up with historic levels. Looking at 20-year intervals, housing construction was similar in the 1990s and 2000s to the 1970s and 1980s, indicating historically strong growth, yet comparatively little recent activity. There was also a large number, 575, of homes built in the 1950s and 1960s, and an even larger number, 1,639, built before 1949. These homes likely require renovations and present an opportunity to increase the available housing stock in the City, should renovations be able to be encouraged at a high rate.

Figure HS-9 shows the percentage of homes built by time period for the City as well as the towns of Lewiston, Caledonia, Pacific, Fort Winnebago, and Columbia County. These areas also show lower percentages of homes built since 2010, compared to the 2000s and earlier time periods.

Figure 6-9 Year Housing Unit Built Percent

	Built 2010 or later	Built 2000 to 2009	Built 1990 to 1999	Built 1970 to 1989	Built 1950 to 1969	Built 1949 or earlier
City of Portage	0.87%	12.67%	10.68%	26.32%	12.85%	36.62%
Town of Caledonia	3.49%	24.41%	15.19%	23.96%	14.62%	18.34%
Town of Fort Winnebago	1.29%	7.71%	8.23%	33.93%	21.34%	27.51%
Town of Lewiston	3.00%	12.15%	12.98%	32.45%	21.46%	17.97%
Town of Pacific	0.39%	17.66%	22.77%	45.55%	8.21%	5.42%
Columbia County	1.64%	14.91%	16.56%	24.18%	13.96%	28.75%

Source: 2017 ACS

Types of Housing Units

Figure 6-10 outlines the number of housing structures by the number of units per structure. In the City, single-family detached homes are the most common type of housing, with 2,421 structures of this type. The second highest number of structure types is those with 5 to 10 units, followed by structures with 3 or 4 units. Overall, the City has a wide range of multi-family units, reflective of the wide range of structure age and the types of structures popular during those time periods. Many of these single-family and multi-family units could benefit from renovation incentives.

Housing Values

Figures 6-11 outline the values of owner-occupied housing units within the City, according to the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS). In 2017, the median home value in the City was \$118,900 as compared to \$180,100 in Columbia County. The highest percentage of homes by value category was those in the \$100,000 to \$149,000 range. Surrounding towns had higher percentages in the higher value categories than the City. This could be reflective of suburban development and the higher levels of new homes build in the past two (2) decades.

Figure 6-11 Owner-Occupied Housing Value Percent

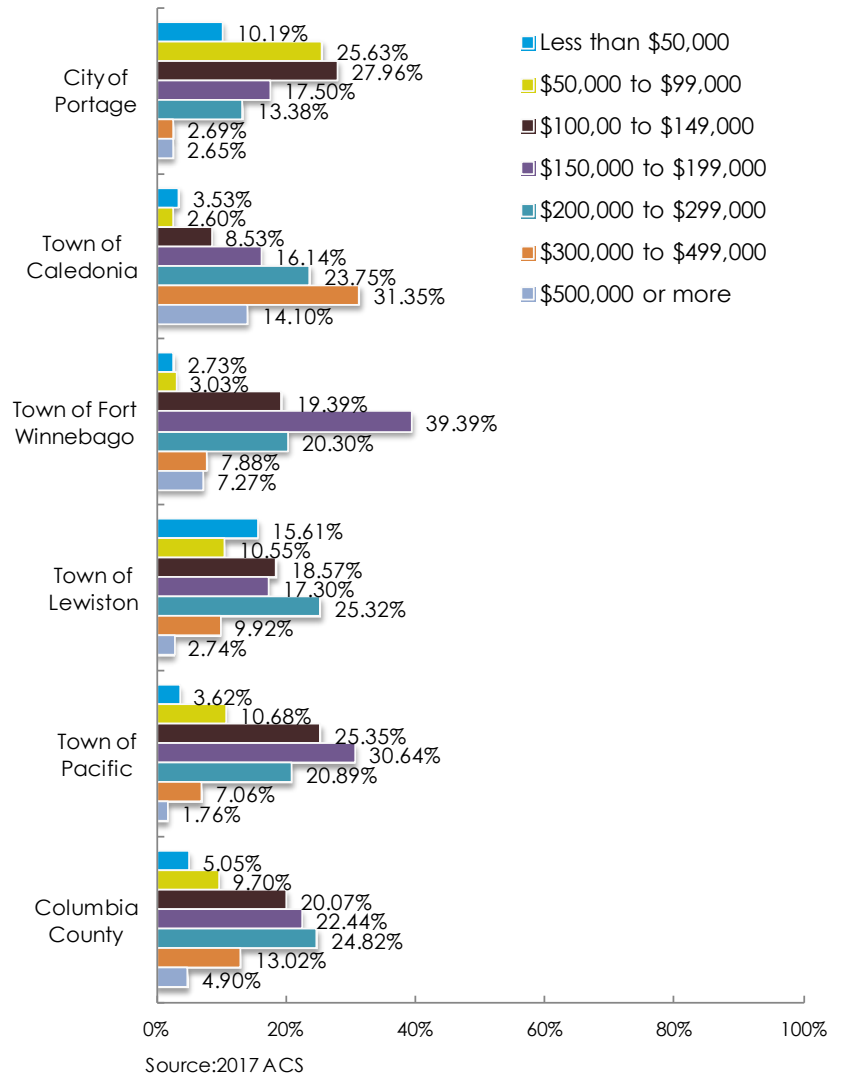


Figure 6-10 Units per Housing Structure

	Total	1, detached	1, attached	2	3 or 4	5 to 9	10 to 19	20 to 49	50 or more	Mobile home
City of Portage	4,476	2,421	78	301	319	347	276	317	242	175
Town of Caledonia	889	847	13	7	0	0	0	0	0	22
Town of Fort Winnebago	389	380	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Town of Lewiston	601	486	12	6	0	0	0	0	0	97
Town of Pacific	1,291	945	219	16	34	15	0	0	0	56
Columbia County	26,447	19,679	1,076	913	1,027	948	833	701	269	995

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-12 Median Household Income

	All	Owner	Renter
City of Portage	\$45,684	\$65,833	\$29,014
Town of Caledonia	\$79,861	\$83,566	\$45,909
Town of Fort Winnebago	\$70,625	\$70,714	n/a
Town of Lewiston	\$56,618	\$57,500	\$53,636
Town of Pacific	\$61,061	\$65,402	\$35,938
Columbia County	\$63,293	\$74,386	\$35,345

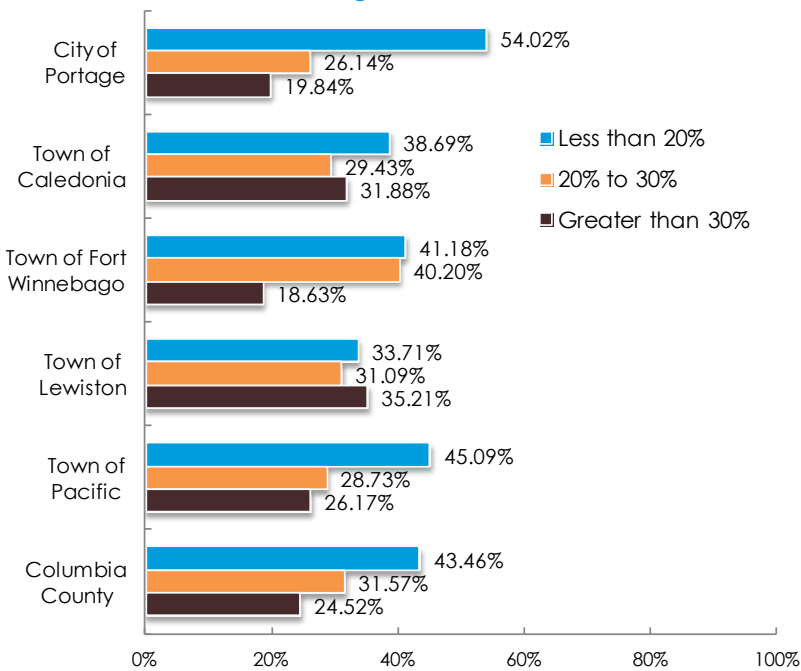
Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-13 Households w/Mortgage by Housing Cost by Percent of Income

	Less than 20%	20% to 30%	Greater than 30%
City of Portage	806	390	296
Town of Caledonia	142	108	117
Town of Fort Winnebago	84	82	38
Town of Lewiston	90	83	94
Town of Pacific	317	202	184
Columbia County	5,092	3,699	2,873

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-14 Percent Households w/Mortgage by Percent of Housing Cost



Source: 2017 ACS

Affordability of Housing

Figure 6-12 lists median household income for the City, area towns, and the County. Median household incomes are listed for all residents, as well as specifically for owners and renters. The overall City median household income is lower than for the surrounding towns and the City as well. The median household income is less than half the City owner income and also lower than for the surrounding towns and the County. This indicates a need to continue to attract well-paying employers to the City and to also provide workforce rental housing affordable to a wide range of residents.

Looking at a comparison of income to home affordability, Figure 6-13 shows the number of homeowners with a mortgage by the percent of their income that they are paying in housing costs. Figure 6-14 shows the percentage of those with a mortgage by the percentage of what they are paying for housing. It is generally recommended that a person/family should spend no more than 30% of their income on housing costs. For those with a mortgage, the City has the highest percentage, 54.02%, of those paying less than 20% of their income and almost the lowest, 19.84%, in the region paying more than 30%. This shows that those who have bought a home in the City are more able to afford their mortgages than those who bought in the County.

Figure 6-15 shows the median value of housing in the City and the number of houses by price range. The highest number of homes, 623, are valued within the \$100,000 to \$149,000 range, with the second highest number, 571, of houses in the \$50,000 to \$99,000 range. Some of the surrounding towns, Caledonia, Fort Winnebago, and Pacific, all have more homes in the higher ranges than in the \$100,000 to \$149,000 ranges, reflective of the more expensive suburban development that has occurred outside of the City limits in recent decades.

The percentage of renters spending between 20% and 30% is a low 14.65%. This shows a gap between renters who can more easily afford their rent and those that are struggling. The latter case could be the result of both lower incomes and higher rents. This shows the need for more work-force rentals in the City. The former case may conversely show the need for more market-rate and higher rental options.

Looking at renter affordability, Figure 6-16 shows the number of renters by the percentage of income spent on rent for the City, surrounding towns, and the County. Figure 6-17 shows the percentage of renters by amount of income spent on rent for the same areas. This figure indicates that a smaller percentage of City renters spend less than 20% of their income on rent than homeowners in the same spending bracket. Conversely, a much higher percentage of renters, 46.24%, spend more than 30% of their income on rent, when compared to homeowners spending the same on a mortgage.

Figure 6-15 Housing Units by Value Range

	Median Value	Total	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 to \$99,000	\$100,000 to \$149,000	\$150,000 to \$199,000	\$200,000 to \$299,000	\$300,000 to \$499,000	\$500,000 or more
City of Portage	\$118,900	2,228	227	571	623	390	298	60	59
Town of Caledonia	\$275,000	539	19	14	46	87	128	169	76
Town of Fort Winnebago	\$171,800	330	9	10	64	130	67	26	24
Town of Lewiston	\$161,200	474	74	50	88	82	120	47	13
Town of Pacific	\$163,200	1,077	39	115	273	330	225	76	19
Columbia County	\$180,100	17,241	871	1,672	3,460	3,869	4,279	2,245	845

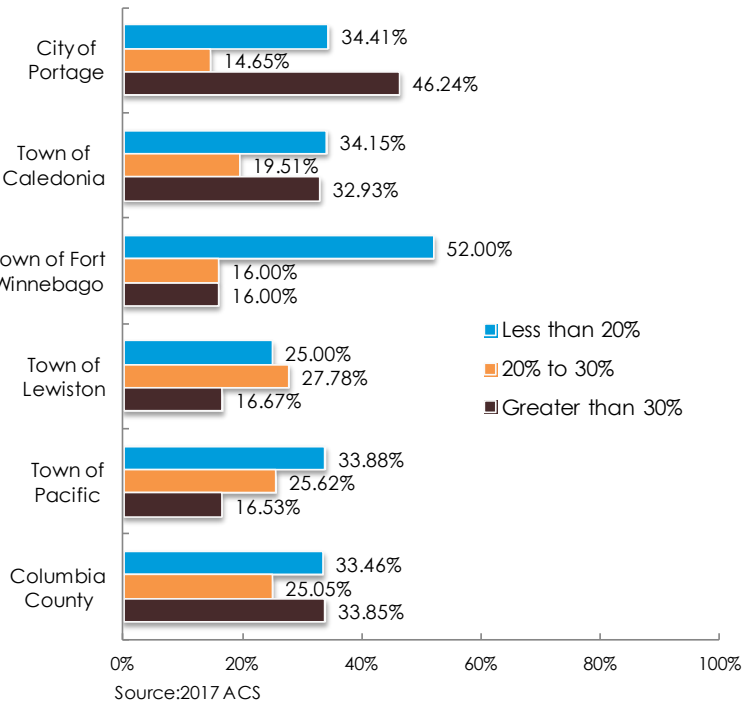
Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-16 Income Spent on Rent Estimate

	Less than 20%	20% to 30%	Greater than 30%	Not computed
City of Portage	681	290	915	93
Town of Caledonia	28	16	27	11
Town of Fort Winnebago	13	4	4	4
Town of Lewiston	18	20	12	22
Town of Pacific	41	31	20	29
Columbia County	2,033	1,522	2,057	464

Source: 2017 ACS

Figure 6-17 Income Spent on Rent Percent



City renters spending more than 30% is also higher than renters in the surrounding towns and the County. The County and some towns also show a gap between those who can afford their rent and those who may not, but the gap is not as pronounced as it is in the City. Much of this could be the result of the higher percentage of rental units in the City and lower renter incomes.

Household Growth Projections

Figure 6-18 shows projected numbers of households, as prepared by the State Department of Administration, for the City, surrounding towns, and the County. This figure shows projections for The City to be 4,427 for 2020, 4,831 for 2030, and 4,832 for 2040. With the 2017 ACS households estimated to be 4,207, the difference between the 2017 estimate and the 2040 projection is 405 units. However, given that the number of households has declined from 4,261 in 2010 to 4,207 in 2017, the DOA projections seem very high and unrealistic. The City should focus on maintaining a vacancy rate of 5% and current household needs instead of planning to meet the DOA projections.

Figure 6-18 Household Projections

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
City of Portage	4,427	4,659	4,831	4,874	4,832
Town of Caledonia	645	702	756	790	813
Town of Fort Winnebago	364	378	386	384	377
Town of Lewiston	552	580	602	612	609
Town of Pacific	1,286	1,381	1,465	1,514	1,534
Columbia County	25,391	27,069	28,466	29,186	29,406

Source: Wisconsin DOA

Current Housing Needs

Figure 6-19 shows a range of owner-occupied houses currently needed by price range. This figure was developed by identifying the number of households in each income range and then identifying the typical housing prices that would equate to those income ranges. This assumes households are spending, on average, 20% of their income on housing. The figure illustrates how many households can afford to buy a house in each housing price range and compares that number to the current housing supply.

The number of existing owner-occupied housing units are then identified within each housing price range in order to segment the City's housing stock. The difference between the number of housing units in each price range and the number of households which can afford a house in that range is the housing balance. A positive balance is a surplus of houses in that range, and a negative balance is the deficit of houses in that range. These calculations are based on total existing owner units, not the number of available owner units. Also shown is the number of houses in each price range as a percentage of all owner-occupied housing units.

Finally, the balance of housing units in each price range is compared to the estimated number of vacant units in each price range which could potentially be used to satisfy the housing balance. However, not all vacant housing units are available for sale and not all are in suitable condition. Therefore, the needed units range is shown as the housing balance (surplus or deficit) minus existing vacant units on the low end and the housing balance without subtracting those vacant units on the high end.

This figure shows there is a shortage of houses units in the \$143,749 to \$191,664 range, a shortage of units in the \$191,665 to \$287,498 range, and a shortage of units \$287,499 or higher. However, this is based upon the assumption that households in the shown income ranges are willing to spend 20% of their income on housing and that they are currently looking to move. Residents could be retired and/or could have paid off their mortgage and are less likely to buy another house in a different cost range. Therefore, the actual number of housing units needed to satisfy demand is at the lower end of the range. In addition, even though there is the potential for households to buy houses at the \$0 to \$24,999 and the \$75,000 to \$99,000 ranges, it is not feasible build homes at these ranges. Therefore, the potential demand for units in these ranges could be eliminated, dropping the lower end of the total houses needed to 233 owner-occupied units.

Figure 6-19 Owner Occupied Housing Balances

Income Range	Owner Occupied HH In Income Range	Affordable Monthly Housing Cost Range	Affordable House Value Range	Owner Occupied Units in Affordable Range	Balance	% of Total Owner Occupied Units	Vacant Units	Needed Units to Satisfy Balance
\$0 - \$24,999	239	\$0 - \$416	\$0 - \$48,914	167	-72	7.50%	20	52 - 72
\$25,000 - \$49,999	643	\$417 - \$833	\$48,915 - \$95,831	878	235	39.41%	106	0
\$50,000 - \$74,999	389	\$834 - \$1,249	\$95,832 - \$143,748	531	142	23.83%	64	0
\$75,000 - \$99,999	396	\$1,250 - \$1,666	\$143,749 - \$191,664	359	-37	16.11%	43	37 or less
\$100,000 - \$149,999	391	\$1,667 - \$2,499	\$191,665 - \$287,498	253	-138	11.36%	31	107 - 138
\$150,000+	170	\$2,500 +	\$287,499 +	40	-130	1.80%	5	125 - 130
Total Owner HH	2,228							
Total Owner Units				2,228				
Total Vacant Units							269	
Total Needed Units								285 - 377

Source: 2017 ACS; Vierbicher

Figure 6-20 shows numbers of rental houses currently needed by price range. Similar to figure 6-19, this figure was developed by identifying the number of households in each income range and then identifying the typical rent that would equate to 30% of those income ranges. This illustrates how many households can afford to rent in each housing price range.

The number of existing rental units were then identified within each rental range. However, not all of the housing units in each rental range have cash rental, such as those paid by vouchers or other assistance. Therefore, those units are not counted.

The difference between the number of rental units in each rent range and the number of households which can afford to rent a unit in that range is the rental housing balance. A positive rental balance is a surplus of units in that range, and a negative balance is a deficit of units in that range. These calculations are based on total existing rental units, not the number of available rental units. The balance is also shown as a percentage of total renter-occupied housing units.

Finally, the balance of rental units in each price range is compared to the estimated number of vacant rental units in each price range which could potentially be used to satisfy the housing balance. However, not all vacant rental units are available for rent and not all are in suitable condition. Therefore, the needed units range is shown as the housing balance (surplus or deficit) minus existing vacant units on the low end and the housing balance without subtracting those vacant units on the high end.

There is an estimated need for rental units in all rent ranges except for the \$375 to \$624 range and the \$625 to \$1,249 range. However, these are assuming that those renters are willing to spend 30% of their income on rent and are willing to move. This also assumes renters are going to continue to rent and not buy when they do move. Therefore, the actual number of housing units needed to satisfy demand is likely to be at the lower end of the range. In addition, even though there is the potential for households to rent at the \$0 to \$374 range, it is not feasible build rentals at this range. Therefore, the potential demand for units in this range could be eliminated, dropping the lower end of the total rentals needed to 255 renter-occupied units.

Figure 6-20 Renter Occupied Housing Balances

Income Range	Renter Occupied HH In Income Range	Affordable Monthly Rent Range	Renter Occupied Units in Affordable Range	Balance	% of Total Renter Occupied Units	Vacant Units	Needed Units to Satisfy Balance
\$0 - \$14,999	480	\$0 - \$374	254	-226	13.17%	35	191 - 226
\$15,000 - \$24,999	425	\$375 - \$624	505	80	26.19%	70	0
\$25,000 - \$49,999	609	\$625 - \$1,249	1,057	448	54.82%	147	0
\$50,000 - \$74,999	257	\$1,250 - \$1,874	86	-172	4.43%	12	160 - 172
\$75,000 - \$99,999	126	\$1,875 - \$2,499	27	-100	1.37%	4	96 - 100
\$100,000 - \$149,999	55	\$2,500 - \$3,749	0	-55	0.00%	0	55 or less
\$150,000+	27	\$3,750 +	0	-27	0.00%	0	27 or less
Total Renter HH	1,979						
Total Renter Units			1,928				
Total Vacant Units						269	
Total Needed Units							446 - 580

Source: 2017 ACS; Vierbicher

Concluding Observations

Feedback from those who took the public survey produced a range of opinion on housing needs. Many thought the City should limit residential development to mostly single-family detached houses and some felt the City had inadequate housing. However, respondents also shared a need for more affordable housing and many felt the City needed a greater mix of housing. Single-family homes alone will not likely solve housing choice, affordability and changing housing issues in the City. A wider range of housing to accommodate first-time homebuyers, new renters, seniors and others will likely be needed.

One way to provide more housing choice is to rehabilitate existing homes. Most survey respondents also agreed that the City should protect historic structure and sites and City has a large percentage of homes built before the 1960s. Enhance renovations programs should be an important focus on bringing more housing options back on the market.

Providing housing options could include a range of housing types, including town-homes, apartment, and condominiums. Encouraging apartments and condominiums in commercial districts with vacant land could help to add higher density housing in areas which already have infrastructure and my already have development interest. Other vacant or infill land should also be considered for development or redevelopment and incentives for building on infill lots should be considered.

New housing development could occur on vacant land outside the City as well. The past two (2) decades have seen higher value homes built in the surrounding towns. Extending water and sewer along with annexation could encourage more suburban housing development in the City.

This element has shown a need for more starter homes and affordable rentals as well as for senior living. The need for senior housing will likely increase as the senior households in surrounding towns retire and desire a smaller house in the City without rural residential maintenance.

The current vacancy rate for homes is currently low, especially for those looking for buy. The current vacancy rate for rentals is not as low; however, with a high level renters versus homeowners, demand for rental units at both the high end and workforce levels can be supported.

Finally, the City should continue to support and potentially expand programs to assist homebuyers, homeowners who may need assistance with home rehabilitation projects, and landlords needing to update rentals. The City already administers housing programs funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, including an owner-occupied rehabilitation loan program and rental unit rehabilitation loan program. Additional funding should be sought to expand these programs and partnerships should continue to be developed to provide a wide range of housing assistance.



Historic home on West Conant Street

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Housing						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 6-1 – Strive to offer a variety of quality housing choices for all residents, including different age, income, and special needs.						
Objective 6-1.1 – Assess and address the need for different housing types in the City.						
Prepare a housing study to assess need, availability, and potential for encouraging the development of different housing types to accommodate the current population and future residents.	2	<1 yr.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$35,000 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	
Continue to update the land use plan to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for projected residential growth (see Land Use Element).	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A	
Objective 6-1.2 – Incentivize the development of moderately-priced single-family housing on existing infill and subdivision lots.						
Amend the zoning code to allow for smaller residential lot sizes in the R-1, R-2, and/or R-3 residential zoning districts to help incentivize the development of more moderate priced living units.	2	<1 yr.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$7,500 - \$12,500 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	
Continue to support road extensions and building on remaining lots in the Rolling Hills Country Subdivision.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A	
Objective 6-1.3 – Incentivize the development of additional housing types by providing more flexibility in the zoning ordinance and working with housing-related organizations.						
Amend multi-family districts to allow for more large-scale multi-family uses as Permitted Use instead of a Conditional Use.	2	<1 yr.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$7,500 - \$12,500 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	
Allow for age-restricted senior living or assisted-living residential developments to be a permitted use in appropriate residential zoning districts.	2	<1 yr.	City	Staff Time	N/A	
Explore zoning amendments and programs which encourage in-home health care assistance that help seniors stay in their homes longer.	2	<1 yr.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$7,500 - \$12,500 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	
Continue to work with Divine Savior Healthcare to develop new housing and aging-related programs and projects.	2	<1 yr.	City, Divine Savior	Staff time	N/A	

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Housing

Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Objective 6-1.4 – Encourage home ownership through the use of incentives and assistance from the City in partnership with housing agencies and organizations.					
Seek housing agency funds, or promote housing partner programs, to provide down payment assistance to low and moderate income first time home buyers.	1	<1 yr.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, financial institution, WEDA	Staff time	WEDA, State & Federal housing agencies, housing or other non-profit partners, financial Institutions
Continue to market the City housing Assistance Program to encourage home ownership.	1	Ongoing	City, Realtors, housing or other non-profit Partner	Staff time	N/A
Market assistance and incentives offered by housing partners to first time homebuyers in order to help increase homeownership and increase awareness of the City's first-time homebuyer program.	1	Ongoing	City, housing or other non-profit partners, financial Institutions, WEDA	Staff time	WEDA, State & Federal housing agencies, housing or other non-profit partners, financial Institutions
Identify and apply for additional sources of funding to help encourage development of needed housing types and affordability for potential buyers and renters.	1	Ongoing	City, housing or other non-profit Partner, financial Institutions	Staff time	WDOA, State & Federal housing agencies, housing or other non-profit partners, financial Institutions
Provide homebuyer education and certificates of completion to first time homebuyers and partner with local lending institutions to connect certified buyers with approved down payment assistance to home loan programs.	1	1-3 yrs.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, financial Institutions	Staff time	State & Federal housing agencies, housing or other non-profit partners, financial Institutions
Objective 6-1.5 – Encourage home rehabilitation and upkeep.					
Evaluate the number of homes and rental properties which need to be rehabilitated within the City and develop the programs necessary to assist owners and landlords with rehabilitation efforts.	3	1-3 yrs.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$12,500 - \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations, financial Institutions
Explore potential to develop an dilapidated house purchase and resell program to encourage individuals, builders, and housing partners to put moderately-priced houses back on the market.	4	3-5 yrs.	City, housing or other non-profit Partner, private Partner	\$12,500 - \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations, financial Institutions
Explore potential to develop a duplex to single-family reversion program to encourage individuals, builders, and housing partners to provide more moderately-priced single-family houses.	3	1-3 yrs.	City, housing non-profit partners, private partners	\$12,500 - \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations, financial Institutions
Continue to promote the use of CDBG housing assistance and other agency programs to assist with meeting the demand for property maintenance and rehabilitation.	1	Ongoing	City, WDOA, housing or other non-profit partners	Staff time plus program funding	City, WDOA
Market rehabilitation programs to landlords and realtors to increase awareness of available programs, funds, and assistance.	1	Ongoing	City, Realtors, housing or other non-profit partners	Staff time plus program funding	City, CDA
Continue to coordinate building code enforcement with the housing rehabilitation efforts.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A
Continue to enforce building codes through inspections and citations where necessary.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Housing						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Objective 6-1.6 – Encourage the rehabilitation of second floor space above first floor commercial properties for residential uses.				Staff time		
Determine the potential number and condition of second floor spaces above commercial properties and evaluate the need and feasibility of establishing a commercial to residential conversion program.	1	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time	N/A	
Assess the City building code to determine where revisions could be made to assist the rehabilitation of second floor residential units without compromising health and safety and revise the building code where appropriate.	1	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time	N/A	
Evaluate the potential to provide additional incentives, through housing partners, (such as lower interest rates, longer terms, deferred payment period), and utilize Tax Increment Financing, where feasible, for rehabilitation of second floor residential units.	2	3-5 yrs.	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$12,500 - \$25,000 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations, financial Institutions	
Objective 6-1.7 – Encourage site preparation and remediation in designated development/ redevelopment areas or Neighborhood Plans.						
Prepare Preliminary Site Assessments (PSAs) for identified areas suitable for larger mixed-income or mixed-type housing development.	2	1-3 yrs.	City	\$1,500 - \$3,000 per site	City	
Apply for funding to prepare Phase I and Phase II environmental assessment on targeted properties and utilize WDNR "Green Team" and other brownfield remediation resources.	3	1-3 yrs.	City, WDNR	Dependent upon environmental remediation need	City, WDNR	
Create and administer a Preliminary Site Assessment (PSA) grant/loan fund, policies & regulations to assist developers with environmental assessment and/or remediation costs associated with housing development.	3	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time and capitalization funding	City	
Create and administer an environmental assessment and/or remediation grant/loan fund, policies & regulations to assist developers with environmental assessment and/or remediation costs associated with housing development construction.	4	3-5 yrs.	City, WDNR	Staff time and capitalization funding	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations, financial Institutions, local employers	
Create and administer a demolition grant/loan fund, policies & regulations to assist developers with demolition associated with housing development.	4	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time and capitalization funding	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations, financial Institutions, local employers	

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Housing						
Goals, Objectives, Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Objective 6-1.8 – Increase supply and utilization of available land for housing development.						
Develop program to purchase smaller vacant/redevelopable lots suitable for smaller housing construction projects or parcel assembly for larger redevelopment projects	3	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time and annual acquisition budget	City, CDBG, housing partners, local employers	
Develop program to acquire lots which have become vacant due to a raze or repair program or are tax delinquent	3	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time and annual acquisition budget or tax delinquent acquisition legal cost	N/A	
Sell acquired properties for profit and use proceeds to purchase additional/better properties for housing development (land banking)	4	3-5 yrs.	City, housing or other non-profit partner	Staff time and annual budgeting for additional staff	N/A	
Work with realtors to create a list of vacant land and currently available land for development/purchase.	1	<1 yr.	City, local realtors	Staff time	N/A	
Develop and administer land donation or reduced price policy and procedures to allow for municipality to donate or discount smaller municipally-owned property to potential builders/developers (including development guarantees and claw-back provisions)	3	1-3 yrs.	City	Staff time and legal costs	N/A	
Develop a City-managed new home construction program which provides financial assistance to builders, non-profits, and investors participating in the City's land banking program to build homes on acquired parcels to expected standards	4	3-5 yrs.	City, housing or other non-profit partner	Staff time and annual budgeting for additional staff	City, CDBG, HUD HOME, EDA, housing partners, local employers	
Goal 6-2 – Promote safe, attractive neighborhoods for a range of families and households with a high quality of life and stable property values.						
Objective 6-2.1 – Promote a mix of housing types within new neighborhoods, and discourage the development of single housing type subdivision in order to foster diversity and stability.						
Continue to monitor use of Traditional Neighborhood District Zoning district to assess usage and potential amendments needed to improve usage by developers.	1	Ongoing	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$7,500 - \$12,500 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	
Objective 6-2.2 – Incentivize the development of mixed use developments by allowing multi-family housing in commercial districts.						
Allow for townhome use as a permitted use in the B-1 neighborhood business district.	1	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A	
Allow for townhome and apartment uses in the B-3 interchange business and B-4 general business district.	1	City	Staff time	N/A	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	
Allow for age-restricted senior living residential developments to be a permitted use in commercial zoning districts.	1	Ongoing	City, housing or other non-profit partners, private partners	\$7,500 - \$12,500 and/or staff time	City, housing or other non-profit partners, foundations	



Chapter 7 - Intergovernmental Cooperation Element



Introduction

Intergovernmental cooperation is a critical component of this planning effort and the future well-being of the City. Local services and planning strategies can be strengthened by cooperative relationships with neighboring communities. This chapter contains goals, objectives, and strategies for maintaining or enhancing intergovernmental relationships including those potential relationships with the Towns of Caledonia, Fort Winnebago, Lewiston and Pacific, and Columbia County. Community survey responses related to intergovernmental cooperation have also been summarized.

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address intergovernmental cooperation;

- Almost half of all respondents somewhat agree that the City should work with surrounding communities to share service costs, with a full third strongly agreeing.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found and the end of the chapter and list priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.

Goal 7 -1 – Maintain good relationships with governmental units in and around the region.

Objective 7-1.1 – Continue to communicate with surrounding towns and municipalities on issues of annexation, extraterritorial jurisdiction, road plowing, and other intergovernmental efforts.

Goal 7-2 – The City will work with neighboring jurisdictions, Columbia County and State agencies to prepare regional plans.

Objective 7-2.1 – Participate in regional planning efforts, such as transportation, natural resource protection, outdoor recreation, and economic development, with neighboring communities, Columbia County, and the state agencies, as appropriate.

Goal 7-3 – Coordinate with neighboring communities and Columbia County to provide high-quality services in the most cost-effective manner possible.

Objective 7-3.1 – Identify opportunities to jointly provide expanded, enhanced, or new services with neighboring communities.

Example Strategy

Work with neighboring communities and appropriate county, state and federal planning agencies to coordinate regional natural resource protection planning and outdoor recreational planning efforts, such as open space corridors, regional recreational systems and facilities, and PATHS projects, see 2019 CORP.



City Hall

Existing Relationships

Columbia County

The City is the County Seat for Columbia County. County administrative offices are located in downtown Portage. The City coordinates with the County on regional plans and programs for transportation, economic development, and natural resources. Columbia County adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 2007. The County Comprehensive Plan establishes the broader framework within which the City Comprehensive Plan operates. The County Highway Department oversees County Trunk Highways within the City.

Columbia County operates the solid waste and recycling facilities used by the City. The County manages the Land Information System and Property Records for City properties. It also provides a range of human services for City residents.

Towns

The City is surrounded by the towns of Caledonia, Fort Winnebago, Lewiston, and Pacific. The City provides a range of services to the surrounding Towns including police, fire, schools and parks and recreation.

The City provides sanitary sewer to developments in the Towns of Pacific and Lewiston. The City serves as regional employment, cultural, transportation, and shopping destination. City residents enjoy the outdoor recreational and natural resources offered by the surrounding towns.

Regional Planning Commission (RPC)

State regulations require water quality planning for urbanizing areas. In most of the state, Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) perform water quality planning related to water and sewer service provisions. Since the City and Columbia County are not within the jurisdiction of a Regional Planning Commission, water quality planning is provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPO)

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally designated transportation planning organizations. MPOs prepare transportation plans that govern the expenditure of transportation expenditures for regional facilities in metropolitan areas. The City does not currently meet the federal criteria for MPO designation. In the absence of an MPO, regional transportation planning is conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Important State and Federal Agency Jurisdictions

There are many state and federal agencies that affect planning in Columbia County. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation District 1 plays a critical role in many aspects of the County's transportation system, from highway design and development to bicycle and pedestrian facilities and networks. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administers laws and programs related to natural resources, brownfields, and hazardous materials.

The City communicates with state and federal agencies on an as-needed basis. For the comprehensive planning process, state agencies may be asked to review the plan documents as follows:

- WisDOT: review the Transportation Element and provide planning expertise and comments, particularly regarding development and related planning for I-90 and STHs 33 and 16, both of which traverse the City.
- WDNR: review the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element regarding future park and trail development and protection techniques for the City's existing natural resources.

School Districts

The City is served by the Portage Community School District. The District serves the surrounding Towns as well.

Existing or Potential Conflicts and Processes to Resolve Conflicts

There have been no existing or potential conflicts identified through the planning process. To date, any past conflicts have not required a formal policy for the resolution of intergovernmental disagreements involving the City.

Concluding Observations

Working with surrounding jurisdictions to reduce potential service costs for shared services will always provide potential opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation. Periodic review of shared services is important to maintain and even a more formal review with each participating jurisdiction could be appropriate.

In addition, working with surrounding jurisdictions to apply for Federal and State program funding is another opportunity to build intergovernmental cooperation and communication. As this area grows in size and as more historic, cultural, and recreational amenities and sites are made available, working with surrounding jurisdictions to maximize tourism exposure will become critical to establishing a successful tourism campaign. Identifying regional projects and working together to match grant and other funds will also become important as costs for improvements rise and more ambitious projects are undertaken in the area.

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Intergovernmental Cooperation

Goals/Objectives/Strategies	Priority	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<p>Goal 7-1: Maintain good relationships with governmental units in and around the region.</p> <p>Objective 7-1.1 – Continue to communicate with surrounding towns and municipalities on issues of annexation, extrajurisdictional jurisdiction, road plowing, and other intergovernmental efforts.</p> <p>Explore the potential for cooperative boundary agreements to ensure fair, orderly and efficient processes of annexation and provision of joint services.</p>					
<p>Goal 7-2: The City will work with neighboring jurisdictions, Columbia County and State agencies to prepare regional plans.</p>	3	2 -3 yrs.	City, surrounding towns, Columbia County	Staff time	City, Columbia County
<p>Objective 7-2.1 – Participate in regional planning efforts, such as transportation, natural resource protection, outdoor recreation, and economic development, with neighboring communities, Columbia County, and the state agencies, as appropriate.</p> <p>Work with neighboring communities and appropriate county, state and federal planning agencies to coordinate regional natural resource protection planning and outdoor recreational planning efforts, such as open space corridors, regional recreational systems and facilities, and PATHS projects, see 2019 CORP.</p>	1	Ongoing	City, surrounding towns, State, Columbia County Parks, Ice Age Alliance, NMTAHC, PATHS	Staff time plus improvements cost sharing	City, Columbia County, WDNR
<p>Coordinate marketing of City recreational, cultural and heritage attractions with entities that promote Tourism in Columbia County, along the Wisconsin River, and along Highway 51.</p>	1	Ongoing	City, City of Portage BID, Chamber of Commerce, Columbia County Visitor's Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Tourism	Staff time plus marketing cost sharing	City, Columbia County, Wisconsin Department of Tourism
<p>Goal 7-3: Coordinate with neighboring communities and Columbia County to provide high quality services in the most cost effective manner possible.</p> <p>Objective 7-3.1 – Identify opportunities to jointly provide expanded, enhanced, or new services with neighboring communities.</p> <p>Work with surrounding jurisdictions to determine the feasibility of combining City and Town services in order to save money and improve service delivery through the reduction or elimination of duplication of services.</p>	3	2 -3 yrs.	City, surrounding towns, Columbia County	Staff Time	City, Columbia County





Chapter 8 - Land Use Element



Introduction

This chapter provides an assessment of the City's current land uses and zoning districts and provided future land use mapping and associated policies. Community survey responses related to land use have also been summarized. Goals, objectives, strategies, land use policies and the Future Land Use Map have been developed based upon the data and analysis presented in this chapter and in the other chapters within this Plan. Community input was also gathered to help formulate the implementation items. This chapter will assist the City in encouraging orderly growth and create new opportunities for housing, employment, recreation, and tourism development.

Community Survey Responses



As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered online, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan questions, CORP questions, or both. The following are sample responses from the survey which address land use;

- Survey respondents showed a strong response regarding the extension of utilities. More than half agreed utilities should be extended to encourage growth, with 39% of respondents somewhat agreeing and 17% strongly agreeing.
- The majority of respondents, a combined 70%, agreed that new development and growth should be accommodated on vacant land around the City.
- Most respondents, 61%, strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that the development process should be easier, although 29% were neutral.

Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe the desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals. Strategies identify the actions necessary to achieve goals and objectives.

The goals, objectives, and strategies related to this element can be found at the end of the chapter. The implementation items are listed with priorities, duration to achieve, responsible parties, and potential funding sources. The relationship between the goals in this element and the goals in other elements is important as many of them reinforce each other. The relationship of goals to their objectives is also important to consider in order to have a broader understanding of the multiple aspects of each goal.



Neighborhood Coffee and Gift Shop

Goal 8-1 – The City of Portage shall plan for growth that can be efficiently served with public infrastructure and services and that will have minimal impact on the necessary functions of natural systems and sensitive environmental resources.

Objective 8-1.1 – Promote infill development.

Objective 8-1.2 – Promote growth that is contiguous and connected to existing developed areas; avoid “leapfrog” growth (new development physically separated from existing City developed area).

Objective 8-1.3 – Plan for growth that protects the necessary functions of natural systems (such as water filtration) and sensitive environmental resources.

Objective 8-1.4 – Ensure that the cost of services to new developments are reasonable and do not burden city taxpayers.

Goal 8-2 – The City of Portage shall support and foster existing and new neighborhoods that include a variety of housing options, support retail and services businesses, and interconnected networks of roads and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Objective 8-2.1 – Maintain and enhance Portage’s traditional urban character in established neighborhoods.

Objective 8-2.2 – Preserve and revitalize neighborhoods to enhance and maintain quality of life, safety, and property values.

Objective 8-2.3 – Promote growth in the form of traditional neighborhoods.

Goal 8-3 – The City of Portage shall promote complementary and harmonious land uses and activities in the City.

Objective 8-3.1 – Minimize or eliminate land use conflicts.

Goal 8-4 – The City of Portage shall implement and maintain a Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan chapter that reflects community values and provides for future expansion.

Objective 8-4.1 – Maintain and use the Future Land Use Plan and Map as the basis for land use decisions.

Objective 8-4.2 – Ensure consistency between planning initiatives and implementation tools.

Goal 8-5 – Enhance transportation corridors that complement and meet Portage’s land use needs, minimize land use conflicts with residential areas, and create attractive, safe and efficient transportation opportunities for residents, visitors, and industry.

Objective 8-5.1 – Link commercial and industrial districts to existing and future neighborhoods through the encouragement of bicycle, pedestrian, and/or street connections.

Objective 8-5.2 – Limit commercial development patterns that decentralize pedestrian accessible development.



Downtown Historic Commercial Building



Downtown Street Furniture

Existing Conditions

The City of Portage has 6,215 acres of land within its boundary. This area includes sections of both the Wisconsin River and the Fox River. The City also has other water bodies, railroad, and street rights-of-way, and protected areas which are not developable or not classified as zoning or land use districts. As a result of the presence of rivers and some low-lying areas, the City also has a significant amount of area located within the floodplain. Floodplains will factor into the amount of developable land and the ability of the City to accommodate future growth.

Zoning

Map 8-1 on the next page, shows the zoning districts in the City. Figure 8-1 shows the area, by acres, for each zoning district. This figure also shows the area for each of the total area of properties which have a zoning designation. This total is lower than the total area within the City boundaries since water bodies, railroad and road right-of-way, and land zoned as Regional Floodplain by the County, are not included.

Figure 8-1 shows the highest percentage, 28.56%, of land in the City is zoned A1 – Agricultural. The second-largest percentage, 8.77%, is zoned M1 – Industrial. The third-largest amount of area zoning is a three-way tie of M3 – Interstate Industrial, 7.67%, R1 – Single Family, 7.98%, and R2 – Single Family, 7.6%.

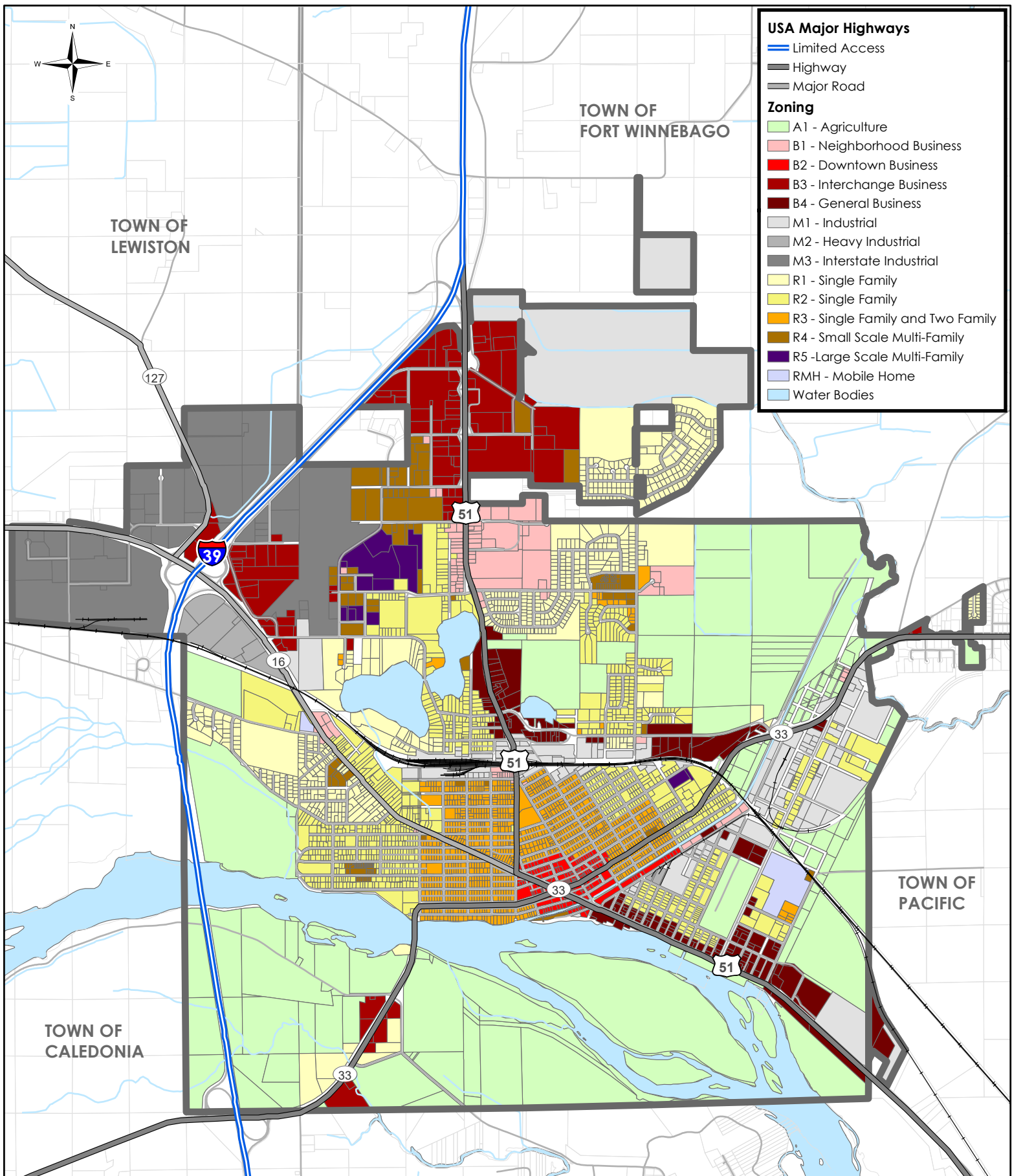
Figure 8-1 Current Zoning

Zoning District	Area (Acres)	Percent of Total
A1 - Agriculture (minus Wisconsin River)	1,774.94	28.56%
B1 - Neighborhood Business	129.48	2.08%
B2 - Downtown Business	42.07	0.68%
B3 - Interchange Business	332.78	5.35%
B4 - General Business	176.17	2.83%
M1 - Industrial	544.91	8.77%
M2 - Heavy Industrial	50.97	0.82%
M3 - Interstate Industrial	476.51	7.67%
R1 - Single Family	496.17	7.98%
R2 - Single Family	472.48	7.60%
R3 - Single Family & Two Family	201.62	3.24%
R4 - Small Scale Multi-Family	150.61	2.42%
R5 - Large Scale Multi-Family	54.13	0.87%
RMH - Mobile Home	25.32	0.41%
R-T - Traditional Neighborhood	0.00	0.00%
Total Zoned Area	4,928.14	79.29%
No Zoning (Water, Regional Floodplain, ROW)	1,287.43	20.71%
Total City Limits Area	6,215.56	

Source: City of Portage/Vierbicher



Historic Single Family Home



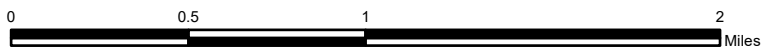
Map 8-1 Zoning
2030 Comprehensive Plan

* This map is representational of existing zoning districts. This is not the official City zoning map.

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Historic Hike and Bike Trail

Vacant Land

Map 8-2 shows the location of the vacant properties in Portage. Vacant properties are classified as “Low Intensity Use”, “Undeveloped”, and “Exempt”. Agricultural properties are also included. The Low Intensity Use parcels are vacant or have been minimally developed and are too small to host large-scale developments or have significant environmental constraints. Low Intensity Use parcels also include productive forest lands used for timbering. The Undeveloped parcels are vacant or are minimally developed and have significant development potential. The exempt parcels are larger government owned or right-of-way parcels which are not currently available for development.

Current Land Use

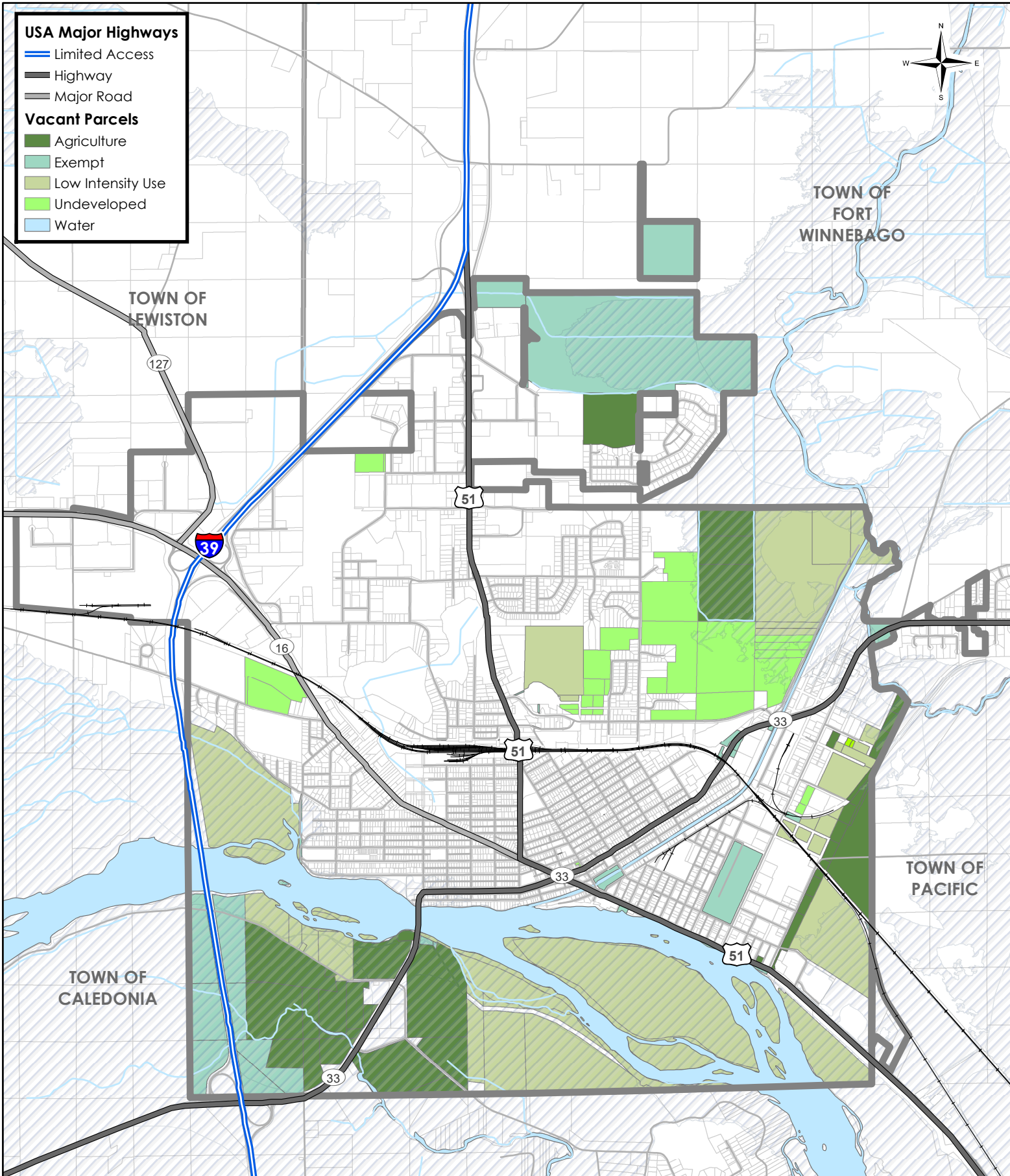
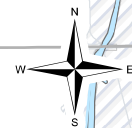
Map 8-3 shows current land use. The current land use categories are based upon the Columbia County assessment classifications and property ownership records.

USA Major Highways

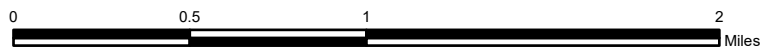
- Limited Access
- Highway
- Major Road

Vacant Parcels

- Agriculture
- Exempt
- Low Intensity Use
- Undeveloped
- Water



Map 8-2 Vacant Parcels
2030 Comprehensive Plan

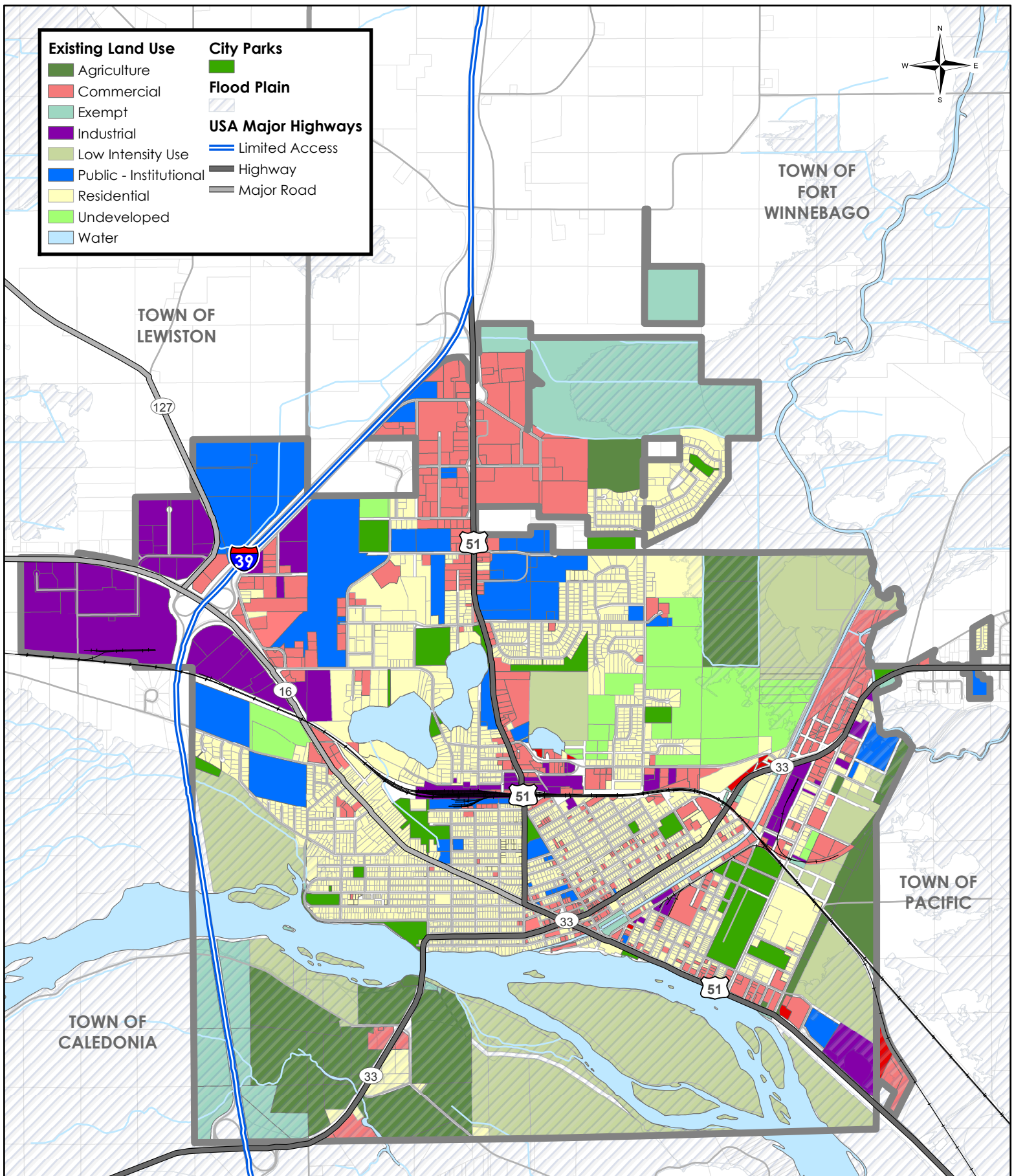


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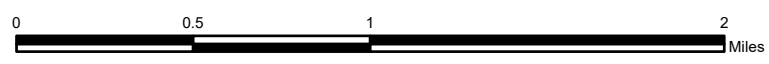


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Existing Land Use	City Parks
Agriculture	City Parks
Commercial	Flood Plain
Exempt	Flood Plain
Industrial	USA Major Highways
Low Intensity Use	Limited Access
Public - Institutional	Highway
Residential	Major Road
Undeveloped	
Water	



Map 8-3 Existing Land Use
2030 Comprehensive Plan



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Data Sources: City of Portage, Columbia County

Future Land Use Planning

Residential Growth

Chapter 6 provides summaries of the current and future needs for housing. Chapter 6 includes ranges of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units needed to satisfy current unmet demand that has occurred since 2008 as well as projected households needing to be accommodated through 2030.

Unmet owner-occupied demand includes those who can afford larger homes, yet cannot find for-sale homes at their desired price range. Unmet demand also includes those looking to move from rental homes and those moving to Portage want to buy a home. The vacancy rate for owner-occupied homes is a low 1.4%, which is contributing to the unmet demand.

Unmet demand for rental units includes those who can afford to move to more expensive rental units and cannot find units at their desired price range, as well as those looking to retire and or those moving to Portage and wanting to rent. However, the estimated vacancy rate for rentals, 4.1%, is considered to be a "healthy" rental vacancy rate and, therefore, the current need for rentals is likely not as strong for owner-occupied homes.

In addition to current needs, an additional 405 households are projected to be needed within the City by 2040. This number represents the difference between the 4,207 existing units reported in the 2017 American Community Service for the City and the Department of Administration projections of 4,832 units for 2040. As the percentage of home-owners in the City is 53%, the number of owner-occupied units needed by 2040 could be as high as 215 units.

The City's housing stock is currently 47% renter-occupied, an additional 191 renter households, could be needed by 2040 as well. However these numbers should be discounted by any units built since 2017.

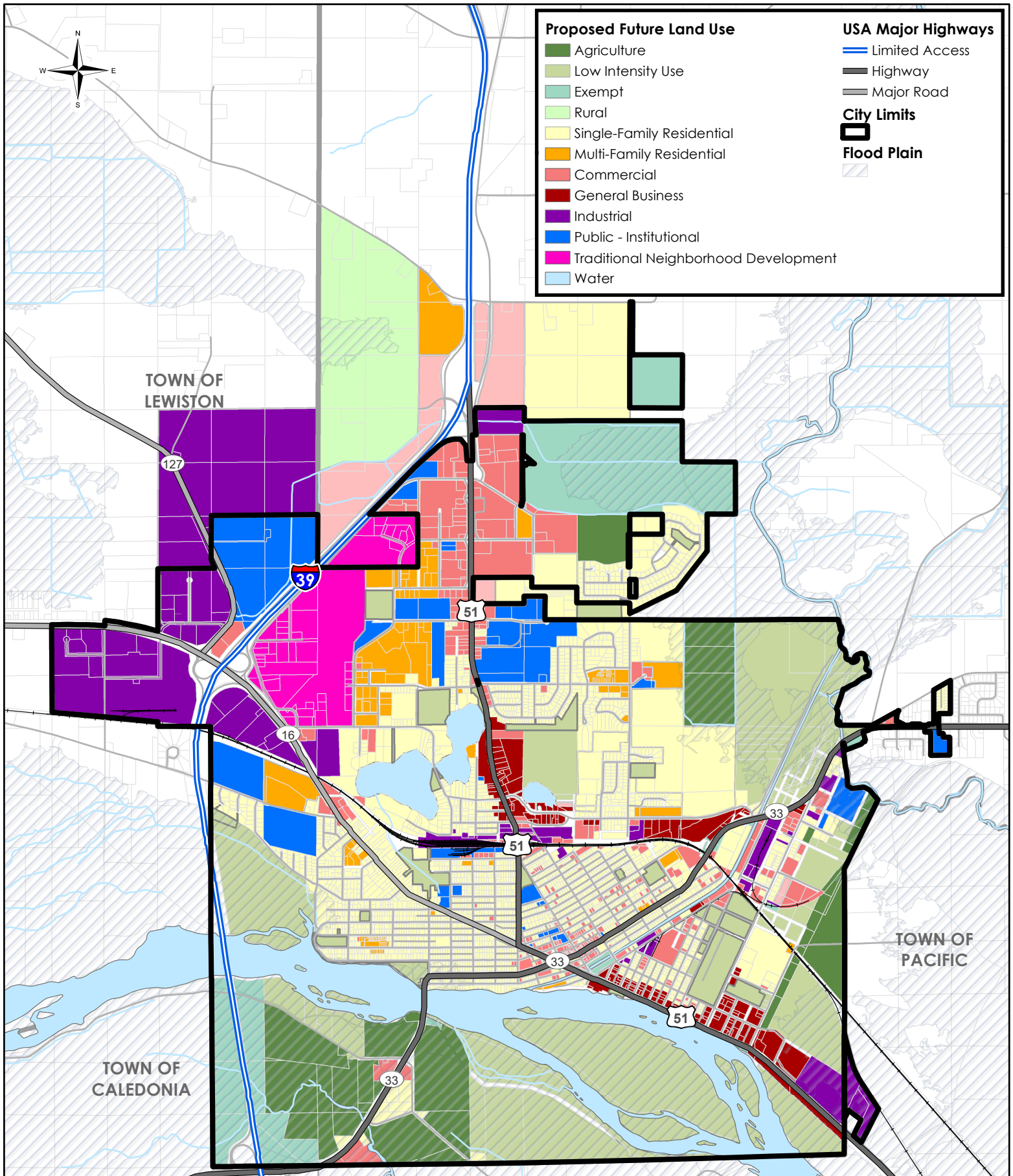
In addition to the potential for residential growth, commercial goods and services will be needed by new residents. Many new residents will also need employment opportunities in order to stay in the City long-term and in order to meet the employment needs of a growing family. Therefore, an adequate supply of both commercial and industrial future land use districts should be maintained and even expanded, in response to any growing demand for rezoning.

2030 Future Land Use Map

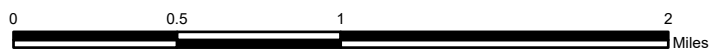
Map 8-4 shows the location and configuration of the future land use districts needed to accommodate current and future residential, commercial, industrial, and other land use demand.

The Future Land Use Map reflects the City's stable existing land uses and zoning districts as well as proposed land use designations for undeveloped parcels. Development of the Future Land Use Map included citizen input from a public workshop as well as input from the Plan Commission.

The Future Land Use Map identifies residential areas as either Single Family or Multi Family in order to provide guidance on where to support low density development and where to support medium density development. Also identified are areas identified as Rural, where future growth may be possible; however, the potential applicable zoning districts are more broadly defined to allow for flexibility. The Commercial land use designation is applied to areas designated for commercial development in the newer areas along US Highway 51 as well as in the historic downtown. The areas designated as General Business are older commercial and industrial areas which are redeveloping and may have underutilized large and small-scale properties.



Map 8-4 Future Land Use
 2030 Comprehensive Plan



vierbicher
 planners | engineers | advisors



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This district is intended to support a range of uses appropriate the redevelopment of these older properties. Undeveloped properties outside the City, where potential annexation could occur, were also identified for additional Industrial, Commercial, Multi Family and Rural uses. In addition, there are a number of opportunities for infill development and redevelopment within the City. Chapter 5 highlights the need to identify infill opportunities in the Downtown area and along some of the major transportation corridors in the City. The largest future opportunity for redevelopment could be the current municipal airport, should the airport be relocated to a new site. The current airport site, if vacated, will open up approximately 150 acres of land adjacent to US Interstate 39 and the Interstate interchange. This area is designated for Traditional Neighborhood Development.

Table 8.2 shows those zoning districts which best correspond to each future land use district. This table should be used as a general guide and should not preclude the inclusion of a different zoning district or a Planned Unit Development (PUD) district in the corresponding land use district, should particular property or use circumstances be present or proposed which merit a different zoning.

Figure 8-2 Corresponding Zoning Districts

Future Land Use District	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Low Intensity Use	A-1
Agricultural	A-1
Exempt	A-1
Rural	A-1, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-T
Single Family	R-1, R-2, R-3
Multi Family	R-4, R-5
Commercial	B-1, B-2, B-3
General Business	B-4
Industrial	M-1, M-2, M-3
Traditional Neighborhood Development	R-T



Municipal Airport

Land Assessments

According to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, the total assessed value for land in the City of Portage in 2013 was \$77,829,200. The 2018 report recorded an assessed real estate value of \$87,838,700. This represents an increase of 12% over the past five (5) years. For comparison, the assessed value for land in the Town of Fort Winnebago increased from \$22,169,200 to \$25,268,000, representing a 13% change during this same period. The assessed value for land in the Town of Pacific increased from \$69,292,500 to \$80,832,000, representing a 16% change. The assessed value for land in the Town of Caledonia increased from \$83,332,500 to \$106,080,500, representing a 27% change. This is an indication of the growing rural residential market that is not being captured within the City and supports ongoing cooperative efforts between the City and surrounding jurisdictions.

Guiding Land Use Principals

The City faces significant barriers to expansion due to the large amount of floodplains and wetlands. The only areas without such environmental limitations are third-highest to the east along State Highway 33 and County Highway E, or to the northwest across US Interstate-39. Given the limited amount of available buildable land, maximizing the value of the available land is very important. Placing more density on the available land through the greater utilization of the Traditional Neighborhood and R-3 zoning regulations or through a potential reduction in the minimum lot sizes in the R-1 and R-2 regulations would help to increase the potential for residential development of scarce vacant land. The following principals were used to help formulate the detailed Goals, Objectives, and Strategies found at the end of this chapter. They are meant to help guide growth and encourage maximum and appropriate utilization of available land.

Future Land Use should encourage and promote the following:

- The redevelopment and infill development of available land within the City as a high priority for future development. Infill and redevelopment should focus development resources on areas where public utilities, services, and roads are already in place.
- The study of the potential relocation of the Portage Municipal Airport, not only to meet future air travel needs but to free up the current airport site for redevelopment. The location of the current airport site between City development and I-39 and an interchange makes it a strong location for value-added redevelopment. Redevelopment of the airport site should be done in a planned and strategic manner to maximize the potential value of the location.
- The annexation of Town islands and peninsulas within the City boundaries before seeking annexation or boundary agreements outside of City boundaries.
- The use of Traditional Neighborhood zoning through incentives, such as reduced review fees and/or reduced review time. Traditional Neighborhood zoning allows for a mix of housing types and mixes of uses in close proximity, organized around an interconnected network of pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets which could result in lower municipal costs per unit, higher land values, greater pedestrian and bicycle travel choices, and reduced automobile dependency.
- The preparation of neighborhood plans for established neighborhoods and new growth areas in order to guide development in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The development of new neighborhoods and districts compact enough to encourage pedestrian activity but not dense enough to exclude automobiles.

- A diverse mix of activities (residences, shops, schools, workplaces, and parks, etc.) in order to allow residents to access needed goods and services in walking distance and to allow for greater neighborhood vitality.
- A wide spectrum of housing options within existing and future neighborhoods which include a variety of dwelling types so that younger and older people, singles and families, of varying income levels may find places to live.
- A range of transportation options designed to facilitate the safe and efficient use by walkers, bikers, drivers and transit riders.
- Pedestrian-friendly features, such as narrower streets, shorter block lengths, and walkable destinations to facilitate viable walking options to auto trips.
- Open spaces and passive recreation parks that are accessible and convenient, along with significant cultural and environmental features incorporated into the design of new larger developments.
- A range of active recreation parks, from playground to ball fields, and community gardens within new neighborhoods.
- An interconnected network of streets of various sizes which form a connected network within larger developments, dispersing traffic and offer a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination while connecting and integrating the neighborhood with surrounding communities.
- Distinct neighborhood/community centers that include public spaces and institutional buildings, such as churches and farmers markets, that can provide a civic focus and informal place of gathering within a neighborhood.

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Land Use				
Goals	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Goal 8-1: The City of Portage shall plan for growth that can be efficiently served with public infrastructure and services, and that will have minimal impact on the necessary functions of natural systems and sensitive environmental resources.				
Objective 8-1.1 – Promote infill development.				
Identify infill parcels which are suitable for development or redevelopment and do not have significant environmental or other development constraints.	<1 yr. initially, on-going after	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City, WDNR
Rank infill parcels in terms of suitability for development or redevelopment, correct zoning, market demand, and environmental constraints.	<1 yr. initially, on-going after	City, private partners	Part of infill identification budget and/or staff time	City, WDNR
Develop incentives, including environmental pre-development assessments, to encourage commercial development on priority infill parcels as part of a larger infill development program (see Economic Development Element).	<1 yr. initially, on-going after	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City
Develop incentives, including environmental pre-development assessments, to encourage housing development on priority infill parcels as part of a larger infill development program (see Housing Element).	<1 yr. initially, on-going after	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City
Objective 8-1.2 – Promote growth that is contiguous and connected to existing developed areas; avoid "leap frog" growth (new development physically separated from existing City developed area).				
Update the General Transportation Map as needed to ensure roads continue to be correctly classified.	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A
Prepare thoroughfare plan for large undeveloped areas of the City and extraterritorial areas to assist with future phasing and connectivity.	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City
Prepare standards and metrics, such as number of houses, tying required current subdivision street classifications to function and projected usage.	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City
Continue to review and update the City of Portage Zoning Code in order to address the circulation needs for both automobile-oriented commercial districts and the pedestrian-oriented Downtown commercial district.	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A
Update the General Transportation Map, as needed, to match identified extraterritorial areas require which long term infrastructure planning for future annexation.	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A
Objective 8-1.3 – Plan for growth that protects the necessary functions of natural systems (such as water filtration) and sensitive environmental resources.				
Prepare conservation plans for each extraterritorial area, as necessary, to ensure environmental resources are protected, including land use purchase, purchase of development rights, and/or restrictive zoning.	<1 yr. per area	City, private partners	Up to \$7,500 per area and/or staff time	City, WDNR

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Land Use					
Goals	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources	
Goal 8-1: The City of Portage shall plan for growth that can be efficiently served with public infrastructure and services, and that will have minimal impact on the necessary functions of natural systems and sensitive environmental resources.					
Objective 8-1.4 – Ensure that the cost of services to new developments are reasonable and do not burden taxpayers. Develop standards and require detailed developer agreements which match infrastructure extension to development phases while ensuring future connectivity.	<1 yr.	City, private partners	\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	City	
Goal 8-2: The City of Portage shall support and foster existing and new neighborhoods that include a variety of housing options, support retail and services businesses, and interconnected networks of roads and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.					
Objective 8-2.1 – Maintain and enhance Portage’s traditional urban character in established neighborhoods. Continue to enforce and update, as necessary, design guidelines for construction, reconstruction, alteration and demolition projects in the Historic District. Establish residential and non-residential design standards which reflect the Portage building vernacular, as identified in neighborhood, corridor, or small-area plans.	Ongoing <1 yr.	City, Historic Preservation Commission City, Historic Preservation Commission, private partners	Staff time \$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time	N/A City	
Objective 8-2.2 – Preserve and revitalize neighborhoods to enhance and maintain quality of life, safety, and property values. Explore potential benefits to developing a neighborhood planning program. Consider preparation of small area plans for neighborhoods and other City areas which may need revitalization and/or redevelopment. Consider establishing a grant fund program for neighborhood associations to prepare neighborhood plans and investigate the potential for mix of housing types, land uses, and infill development.	Ongoing <1 yr. per plan/neighborhood <1 yr. per plan/neighborhood	City City, neighborhood associations City, neighborhood associations	Staff time Staff time Staff time plus grant fund, \$25,000 to \$50,000	N/A N/A City	
Objective 8-2.3 – Promote growth in the form of traditional neighborhoods. Continue to monitor use of Traditional Neighborhood District Zoning district to assess usage and potential amendments needed to encourage additional usage by developers.	Ongoing	City	Staff time	N/A	

2020-2030 Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, & Strategies - Land Use

Goals	Duration to Achieve	Responsibility	Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<p>Goal 8-3: The City of Portage shall promote complementary and harmonious land uses and activities in the City.</p>				
<p>Objective 8-3.1 – Minimize or eliminate land use conflicts. Evaluate landscaping screening, building orientation, parking lot orientation, and other physical design features, and update the zoning and land division code sections to ensure new development as well as infill development and redevelopment is compatible with adjacent uses.</p>	<p>< 1 yr.</p>	<p>City, non-profit planning advocacy partners, private partners</p>	<p>\$7,500 to \$12,500 and/or staff time and/or technical assistance donation</p>	<p>City, non-profit planning advocacy partners</p>
<p>Goal 8-4: The City of Portage shall implement and maintain a Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan chapter that reflects community values and provides for future expansion.</p>				
<p>Objective 8-4.1 – Maintain and use the Future Land Use Map and chapter as the basis for land use decisions. Use revitalization plans, neighborhood plans, and corridor plans to periodically update the Future Land Use Map and chapter and assist with rezoning and other land use decisions.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Objective 8-4.2 – Ensure consistency between planning initiatives and implementation tools. Consider developing a long term staffing plan to ensure sufficient delivery of programs and services.</p>	<p>< 1 yr.</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Goal 8-5: Enhance transportation corridors that complement and meet Portage's land use needs, minimize land use conflicts with residential areas, and create attractive, safe and efficient transportation opportunities for residents, visitors, and industry.</p>				
<p>Objective 8-5.1 – Link commercial/industrial districts to existing and future development areas and neighborhoods through the encouragement of bicycle, pedestrian, and/or street connections. Encourage new industrial and commercial developments to provide bicycle and sidewalk connections to neighborhoods and street connections to adjacent commercial and industrial properties.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Objective 8-5.2 – Limit commercial development patterns that decentralize pedestrian accessible development. Encourage new commercial developments to provide pedestrian amenities on-site and a pedestrian building and parking configuration along transportation corridors.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>N/A</p>



Chapter 9 - Implementation Element



Introduction

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will require decision-making and the participation in various planning-related efforts by both public officials and the citizens of the community. These decisions should take into account the welfare of the general community, the willingness to make substantial investments for improvements within the community, and the commitment to enforce new and existing policies and guidelines. In order to maintain and improve high quality environment and high quality of life found within the City, a number of implementation measures can be taken to address the issues, opportunities, goals and strategies described in each chapter of this Plan. These action items can include regulatory, non-regulatory, fiscal, and administrative implementation measures.

Implementation Measures

The implementation and enforcement of the regulatory, non-regulatory, fiscal, and administrative items included in each chapter are meant to foster the development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth in this Plan. The establishment and support of continued implementation processes provides for an effective approach with can achieve goals and objectives in not only the short term, but also in the medium and long terms. The support of committees and local organizations to carry out specific community improvements as identified in the comprehensive plan is also important in order to establish a sustained implementation effort.

Regulatory Measures

Implementation tools include the rules, policies, and ordinances used to facilitate or control for a desired outcome. Examples include zoning, subdivision, and official mapping, or the availability of certain incentives. These are considered regulatory measures and are officially adopted as ordinances, or as revisions to existing ordinances.

Zoning

Zoning is a regulatory measure used to guide and control the use of land and structures on land. In addition, zoning establishes detailed regulations concerning the areas of lots that may be developed, including setbacks and separation for structures, the density of the development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose for zoning is to avoid undesirable side effects of development by segregating incompatible uses and by maintaining adequate standards for individual uses.

The establishment of new zoning districts or regulations or the amendment of existing zoning districts or regulations is generally conducted after careful consideration of the development patterns indicated in the Comprehensive Plan. The City Council

makes the final decisions on the content of the zoning ordinance and the district map. However, these decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the Plan Commission. The zoning amendments considered in this Plan would need to adhere to these procedures.

Official Maps

The Official Map for the City shows the location of areas which the municipality has identified as necessary for future public streets, recreation areas, and other public grounds. By showing the area on the Official Map, the municipality puts the property owner on notice that the property has been reserved for future taking for a public facility or purpose. The municipality may refuse to issue a permit for any building or development on the designated parcel; however, the municipality has one year to purchase the property upon notice by the owner of the intended development. The Official Map needs to be kept up to date and should be considered a document which will help guide growth and development in the City.

Environmental Regulation

Similar to water supply and wastewater treatment, stormwater management is an important part of municipal infrastructure. The purpose of stormwater or erosion control ordinances is to set forth stormwater requirements and criteria which will prevent and control water pollution, diminish the threats to public health, safety, welfare, and aquatic life due to runoff of stormwater from development or redevelopment. The City also regulates the control of soil erosion from construction sites through the Construction Site Erosion Control Ordinance. The Stormwater and Erosion Control ordinances need to be maintained and kept current in response to change in Federal and State law, as well as in response to local development pressures.

Land Division Ordinance

Land division regulations serve an important function by ensuring the orderly growth and development of unplatted and undeveloped land. These regulations are intended to protect the community

and occupants of the proposed subdivision by setting forth reasonable regulations for public utilities, storm water drainage, lot sizes, street design open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset to the City. The City Council makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the Plan Commission.

The City of Portage has a subdivision ordinance (Chapter 70: Subdivisions) that includes application procedures, preliminary and final plat requirements, certified survey map requirements, and required improvements among other regulations. The ordinance is particularly important in light of potential boundary agreements between the City and the Towns of Caledonia, Lewiston, Fort Winnebago and Pacific. This ordinance will be used to approve plats and regulate development within the Portage extraterritorial planning area, should one be approved.

Non-Regulatory Measures

Implementation tools also include planning efforts which assess the issues and opportunities of specific areas of the City, provide mechanisms for funding, and establish agreement between different governmental entities and services providers. These are considered non-regulatory measures and generally involve different partners to develop solutions to accomplish goals and objectives which cannot be fulfilled through a regulatory measure or ordinance change.

Planning

Some communities develop neighborhood plans for areas of new development. Neighborhood plans identify environmental features to be preserved, examine the local street network, consider the allocation of land uses, and identify issues and opportunities facing a neighborhood. A neighborhood plan can serve as a guide to future development and can assist with identifying goals and funding for addressing those goals at a more focused level.

In addition to neighborhood plans, corridor plans allow for a closer analysis of a

transportation corridor, usually a busy commercial street, to find development and redevelopment opportunities which might need City assistance or incentives. This Plan recommends both neighborhood and corridor planning to find infill sites for development and to encourage connectivity and access between difference neighborhoods.

Cooperative Boundary Agreements

These agreements attempt to facilitate problem solving through citizen involvement, negotiation, mediation, and other cooperative methods. Generally, boundary agreements help both an incorporated community and an unincorporated community forecast future lands for annexation so that infrastructure needs can be forecast and funded. They can also ease contentious relationships. Portage has long-standing relationships with the Towns of Lewiston, Fort Winnebago, Caledonia and Pacific. Further cooperation with these governmental entities should be pursued. Increased cooperative measures, including cooperative boundary agreements, should be pursued in order to ensure growth along the City border is orderly and results in the most effective use of land.

Impact Fees

Impact fees are exactions levied on a developer or homeowner by a municipality to offset the community's costs resulting from a development. To set an impact fee rate, an analysis called a Public Facilities Needs Assessment must be performed to quantify the fee. The City should continue to update the Public Facilities Needs Assessment on a regular basis to accurately forecast future needs and to stay compliance with State law.

Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the implementation element describe how each of the nine-elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since the City of Portage completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist.

This Comprehensive Plan references previous planning efforts, and details future planning needs. To keep consistency with the Comprehensive Plan the City should incorporate existing plans as components to the Comprehensive Plan, and adopt all future plans as detailed elements of this Plan.

Amendments

The actions identified at the end of each chapter are appropriate to implement in the next ten (10) years. The City of Portage will continue to make educated decisions and potential amendments to this Plan based upon available information, changing conditions, and public opinion.





Appendix A - Community Survey Results

Response Summary

As part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process, a public survey was prepared and administered in conjunction with the 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update process. The survey was administered on-line, with paper input made available as an option. Respondents were given the option to reply to the Comprehensive Plan question, CORP questions, or both.

A total of 734 people viewed the survey, with 376 starting the survey and 190 persons completed the survey. Of those, 87%, or 165 persons, completed the Comprehensive Plan survey. The survey was divided into six (6) sections; Character & Quality of Life, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Community Facilities, and Infrastructure & Growth.

Character & Quality of Life

Figure AA-1 shows protection of community character is very important to respondents, with almost half strongly agreeing.

Figure AA-2 shows agricultural resources to be relatively important to respondents, with 39% somewhat agreeing.

Figure AA-3 has 36% of respondents strongly agreeing and 33% somewhat agreeing that wetlands, wooded areas, and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from development.

Figure AA-1 Protection of the community's character and quality of life should be the City's top priority.

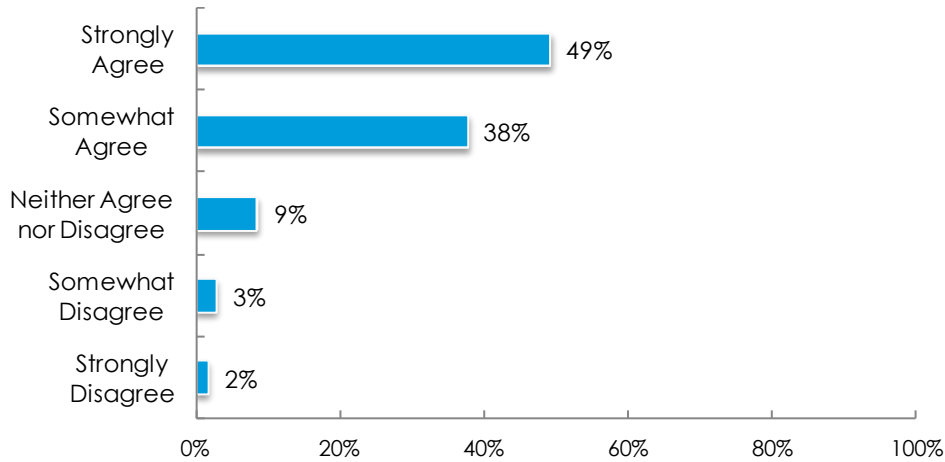


Figure AA-2 Agricultural resources should be protected from development pressures.

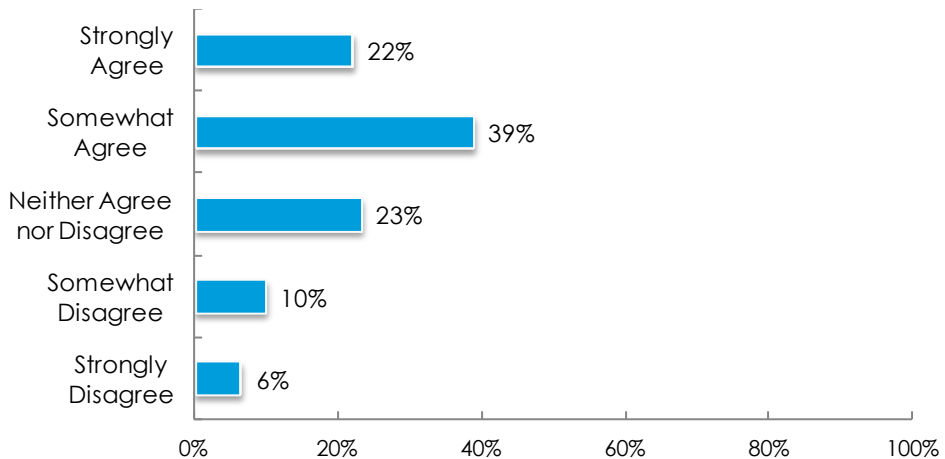


Figure AA-3 Wetlands, wooded areas, steep slopes, and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from development.

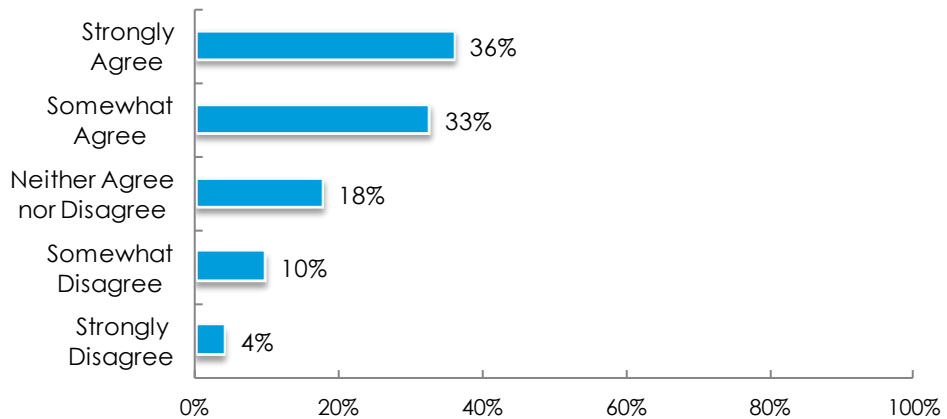


Figure AA-4 The City should enforce community-wide aesthetic requirements for development, such as landscaping, signage, screening, storage, and building exterior design requirements

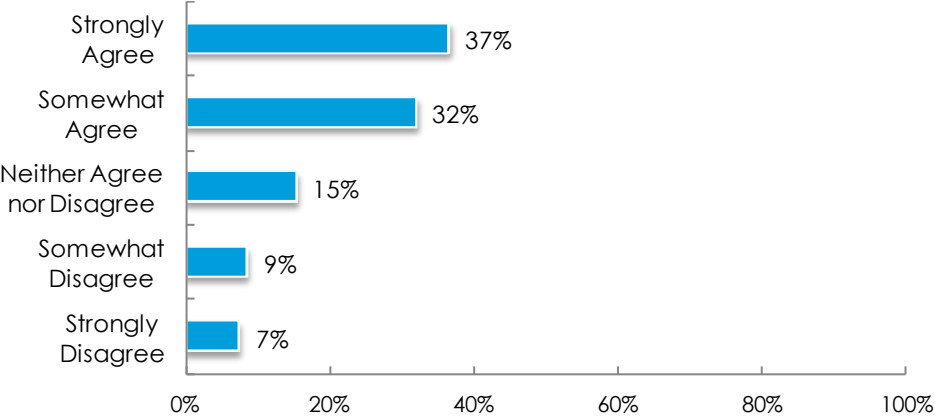


Figure AA-4 shows most respondents either strongly agree or somewhat agree that the City should enforce aesthetic requirements for development.

Figure AA-5 shows most respondent also strongly agree or somewhat agree that the City should protect historic structure and sites.

Figure AA-6 has 38% of respondents somewhat agreeing with the City needing to work with surrounding communities to preserve the City's character.

Figure AA-5 The City should make efforts to preserve and protect historic structures and sites in Portage.

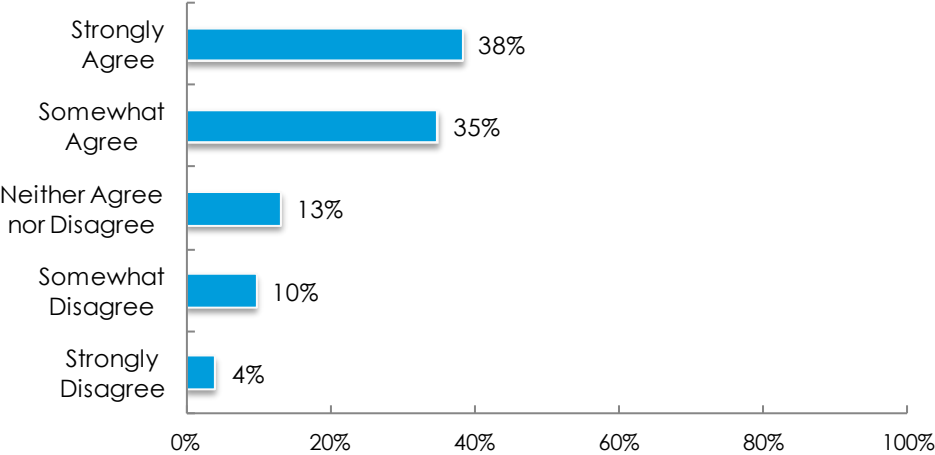


Figure AA-6 The City of Portage should work closely with surrounding communities to preserve the City's character.

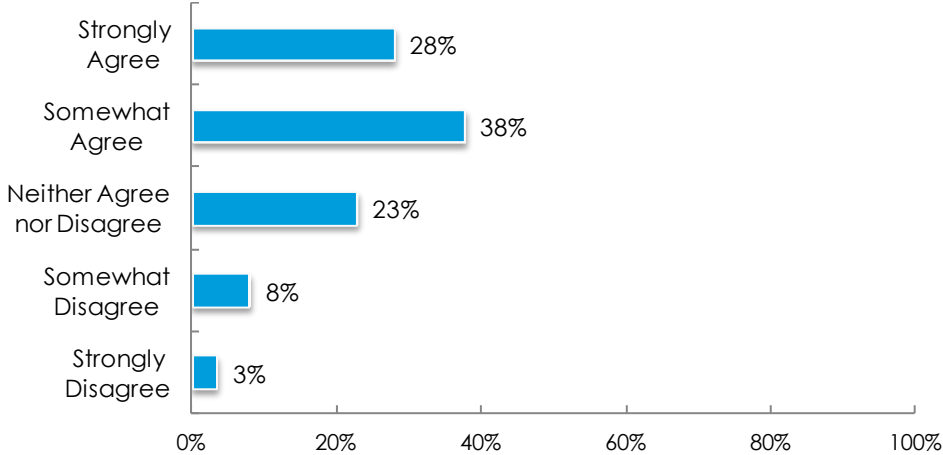


Figure AA-7 shows fairly even distribution of opinion on gateway standards, with 33% somewhat agreeing but 20% somewhat disagreeing.

Figure AA-8 shows the Wisconsin Highway 33 at the Wisconsin River Bridge to be the most important gateway, with the US Highway 51 at the north boundary of the City to be the second most important

Figure AA-7 The City should hold development at important entryways to Portage to a higher standard than other areas.

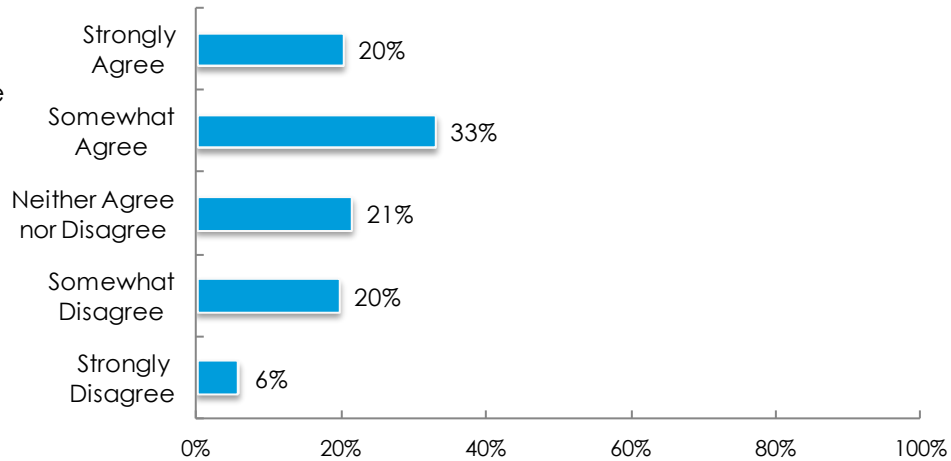


Figure AA-8 Please select the two gateways into Portage which you think are most important:

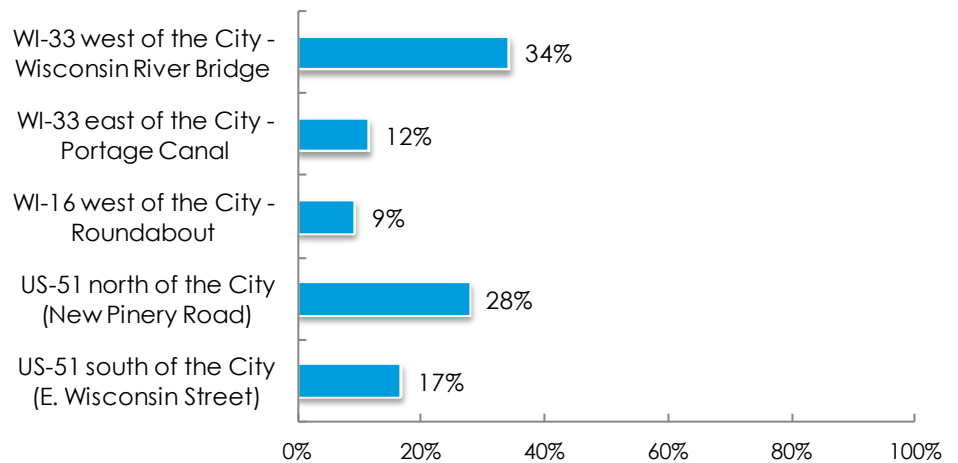
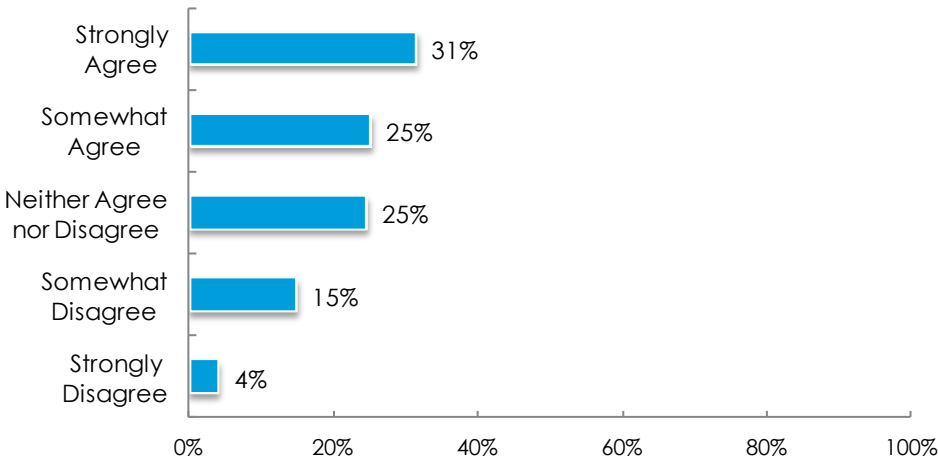


Figure AA-9 The City should limit its residential development to mostly single-family detached houses, and limit the development of apartment buildings.



Housing

Figure AA-9 has 31% of respondents strongly agreeing that the City should limit residential development to mostly single-family detached houses, with 25% somewhat agreeing and 25% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Figure AA-10 shows fairly even distribution of respondent opinions regarding housing choices at all price points, with 25% strongly disagreeing and 23% either somewhat disagreeing or neither agreeing or disagreeing. Few, 8%, strongly agreed with this statement.

Figure AA-11 indicates 34% of respondents somewhat agree that the City should promote construct more affordable housing and 24% strongly agree.

Figure AA-10 There are adequate housing choices at all price points.

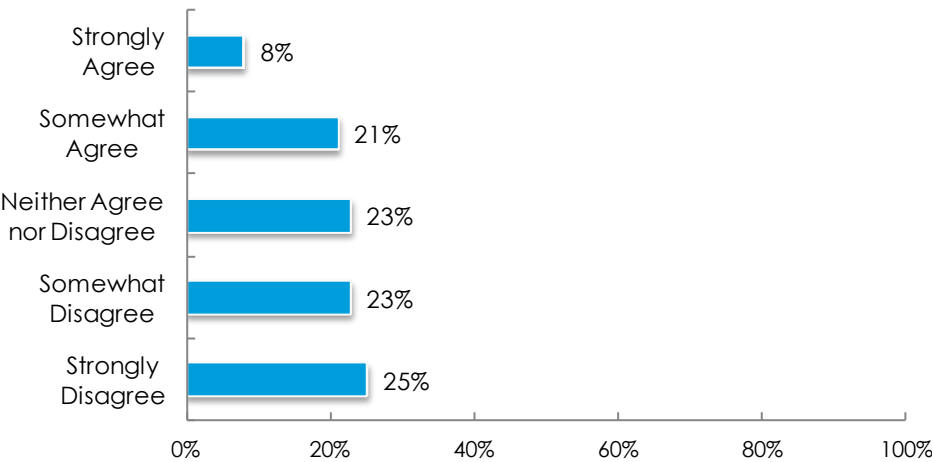


Figure AA-11 The City should promote the construction of more affordable housing.

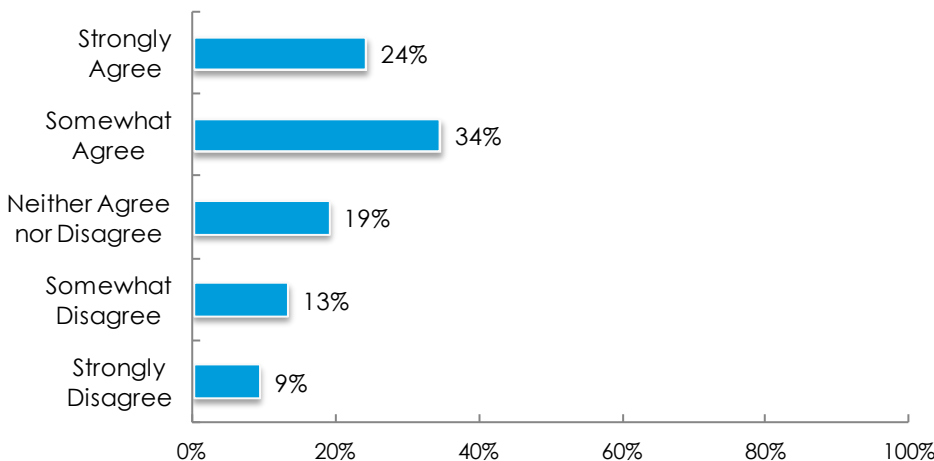


Figure AA-12 shows that despite their being agreement on limiting development to mostly single-family residential, 30% of respondents somewhat agreeing that the City should encourage a greater mix of housing, and 15% strongly agree.

Figure AA-13 indicates 33% of respondents somewhat agree that it is appropriate to allow for multi-family residential development along with commercial businesses.

Figure AA-12 The City should encourage a greater mix of housing types, including apartments, row houses, townhouses, and single-family detached houses.

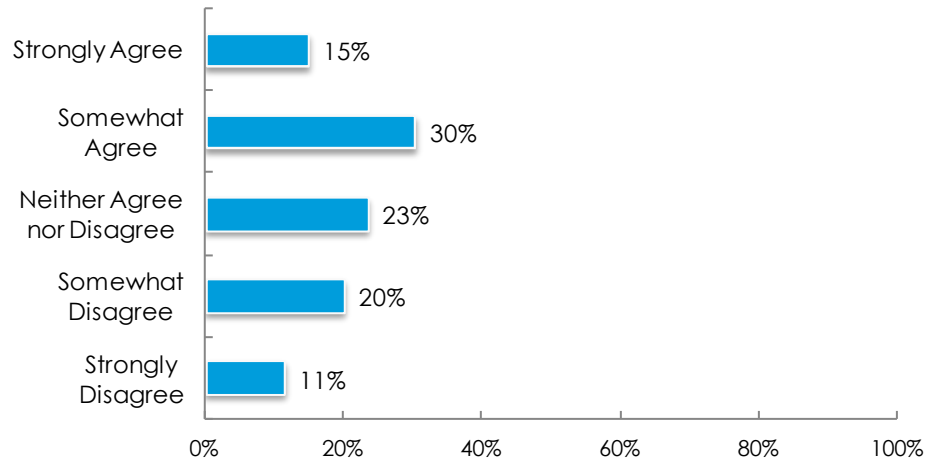


Figure AA-13 It is sometimes appropriate for commercial businesses and multifamily residential to be co-mingled.

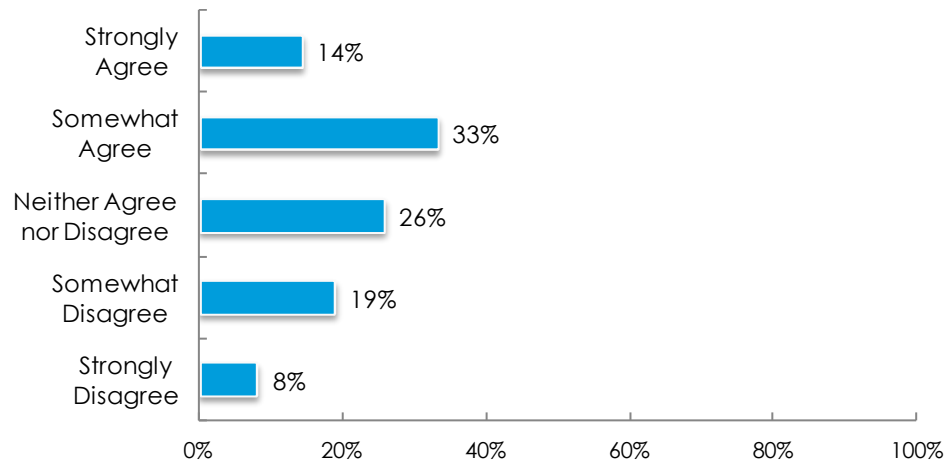
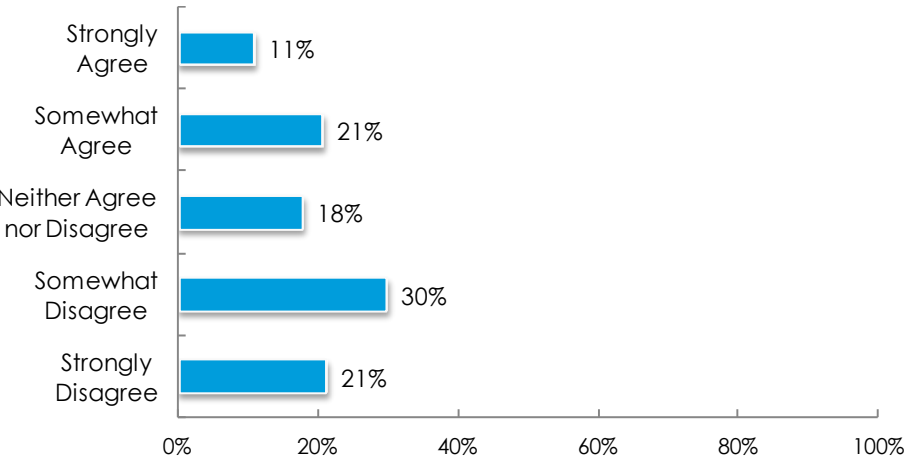


Figure AA-14 There are enough good jobs in Portage for those who want them.



Economic Development

Figure AA-14 shows a large percentage, 30%, of respondents somewhat disagree there are enough good jobs in Portage, while 21% somewhat agree there are.

Figure AA-15, indicates that more than half, 55%, of respondents would actively seek employment in the City if there were more opportunities.

Figure AA-16 follows these opinions with 37% of respondents strongly agreeing that the promotion of business and economic development should be a Portage priority.

Figure AA-15 If there were more employment opportunities available in Portage, would you look for jobs in the City?

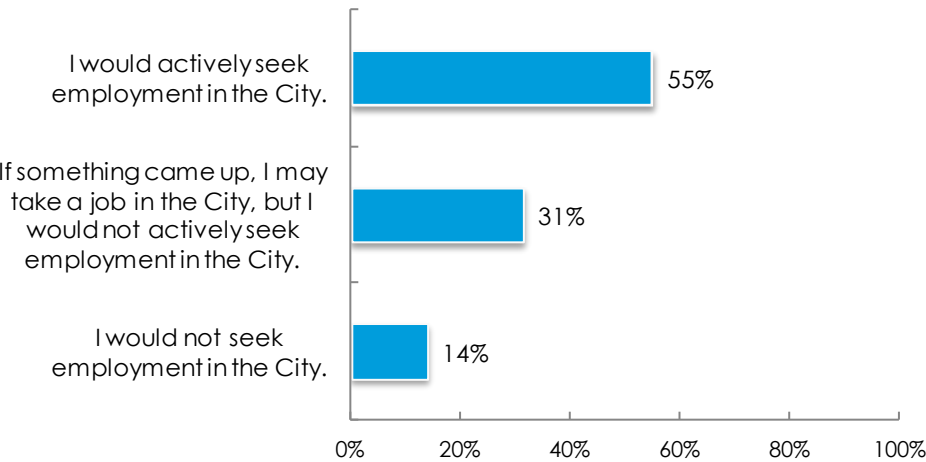


Figure AA-16 Promotion of business and economic development should be Portage's priority.

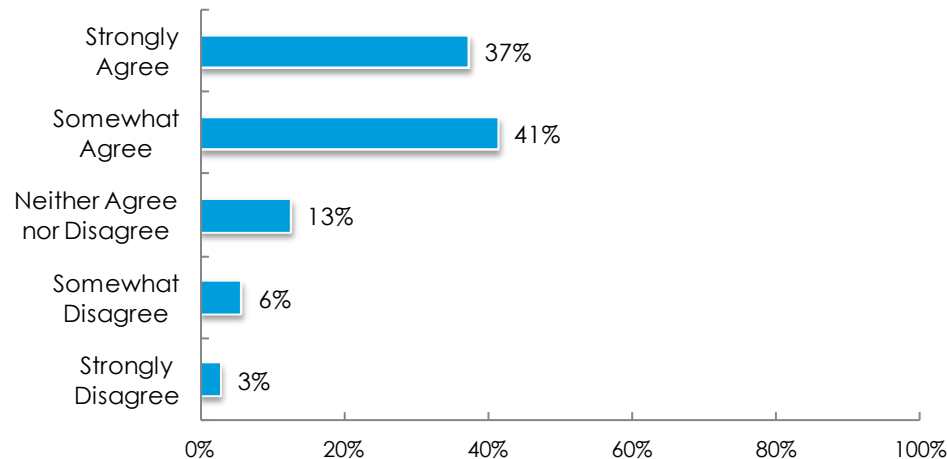


Figure AA-17 also shows most respondents either strongly agree, 33%, or somewhat agree, 30%, that the City should concentrate on attracting new businesses.

Figure AA-18 indicates that almost half, 41%, of respondents somewhat agree that the City should offer financial incentives to grow existing and attract new businesses.

Figure AA-19 shows 34% somewhat agree more sites available for manufacturing and 16% strongly agree.

Figure AA-17 The City should put more effort toward attracting new businesses rather than toward expanding existing businesses.

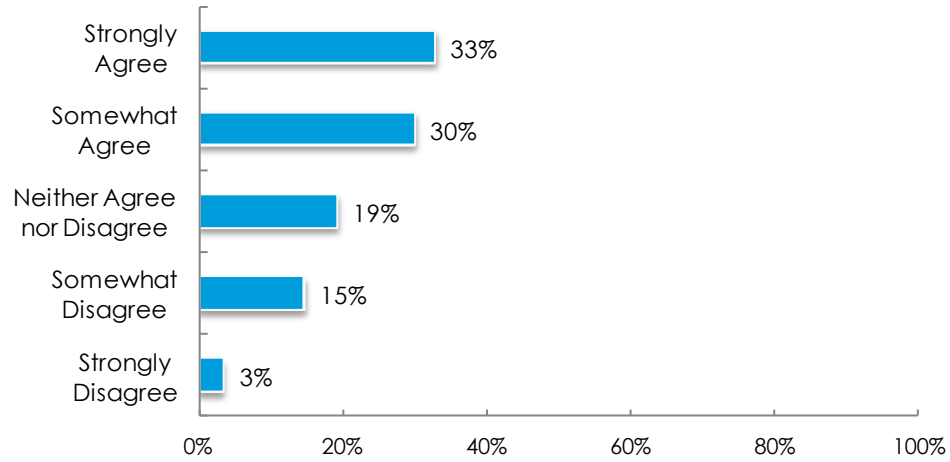


Figure AA-18 The City should offer financial incentives to grow existing businesses and attract new businesses to Portage.

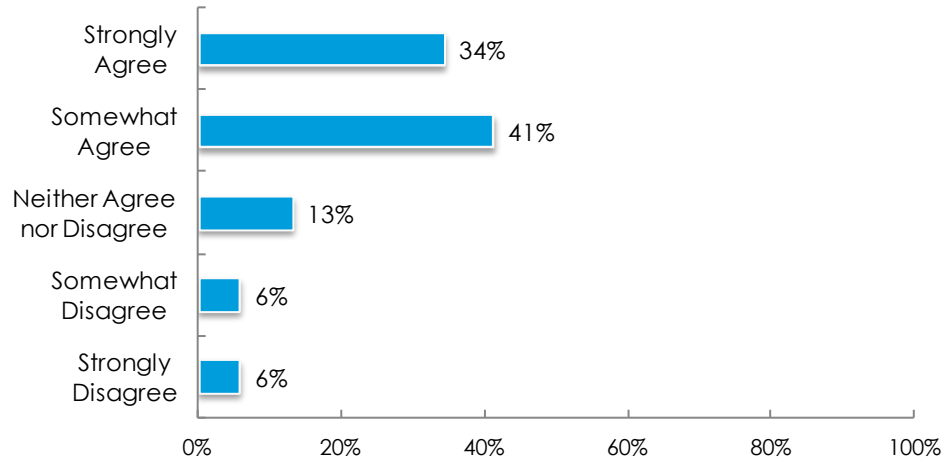


Figure AA-19 The City should make more sites available for manufacturing and light industrial businesses.

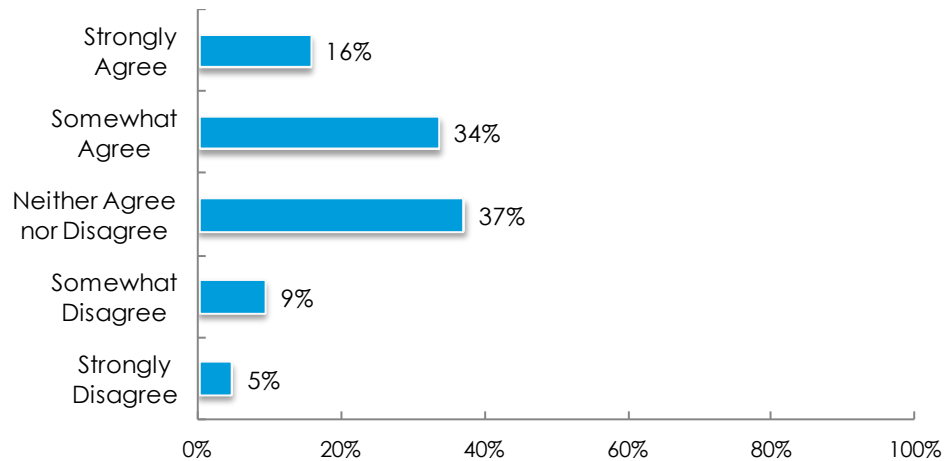


Figure AA-20 The City should place a special focus on improving its downtown area.

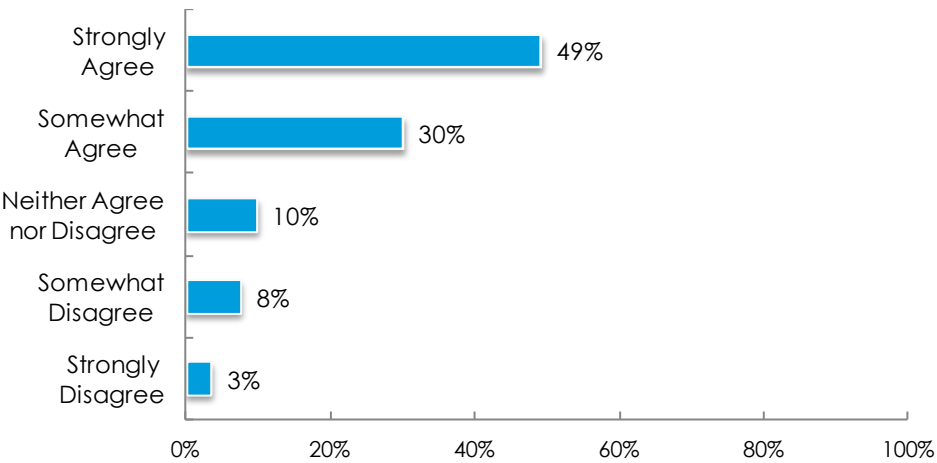


Figure AA-20 shows nearly half of respondents, 49%, strongly agree the City should place a special focus on improving the downtown.

Figure AA-21 indicates a fairly even distribution of opinions regarding post-secondary education opportunities. Most either somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or neither agree nor disagree.

Figure AA-22 shows a fairly neutral response with almost half of respondents, 49% neither agreeing nor disagreeing about the need to expand home occupation opportunities.

Figure AA-21 Post-secondary educational and vocational opportunities in Portage are adequate.

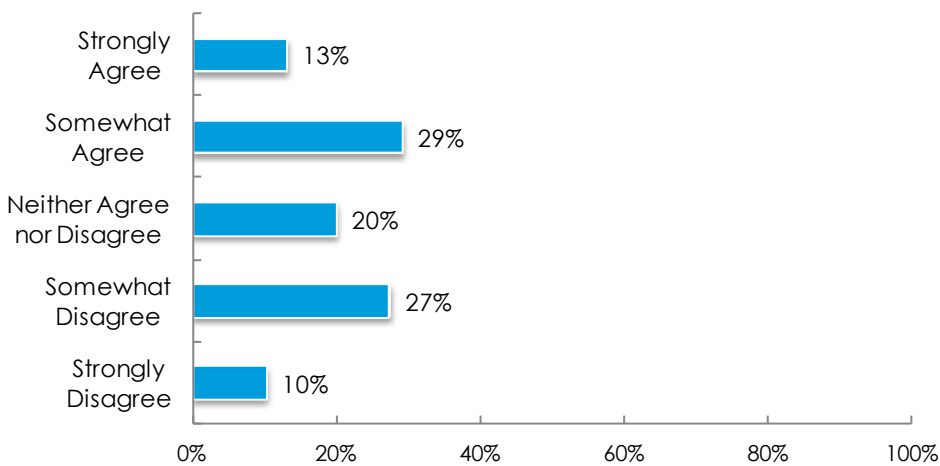


Figure AA-22 The City needs to expand opportunities for home occupations.

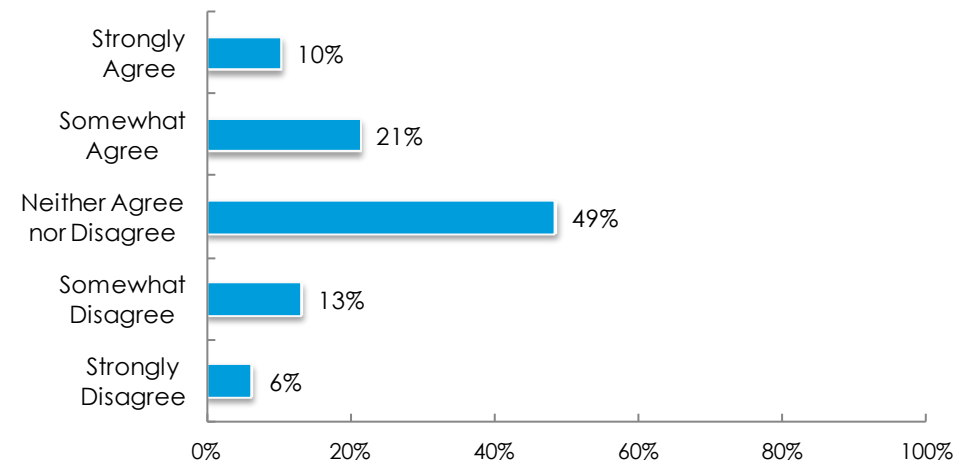


Figure AA-23 Portage needs more commercial activity - more jobs and shopping.

Figure AA-23 shows most respondents, 57%, strongly agree that the City needs more commercial activity in general, including jobs and shopping.

Figure AA-24 indicates 54% of respondents would do most or all of their shopping in the City if there were more big box retail options.

Figure AA-25 shows a smaller percentage, 40%, would do most or all of their shopping in the City if there were more local options. However, this is still a strong showing of support for more local retailers.

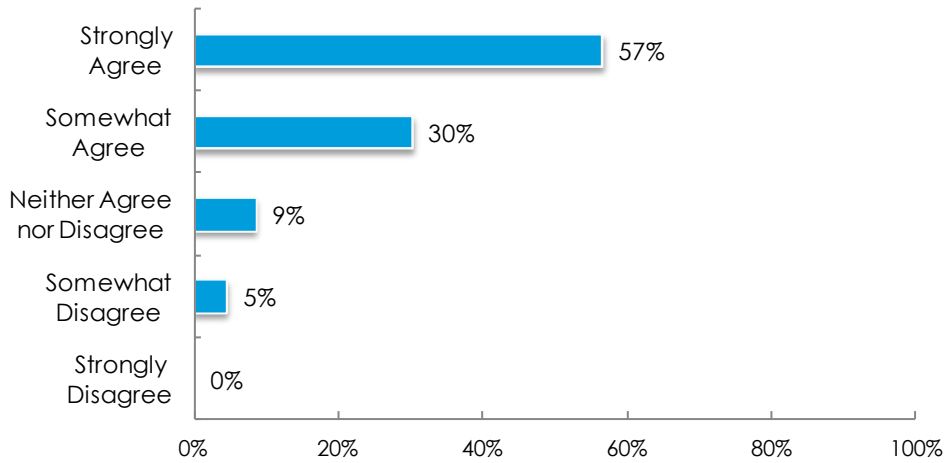


Figure AA-24 If there were big box retail options (hardware, household goods, etc.) available in Portage, would you do more of your shopping in the City?

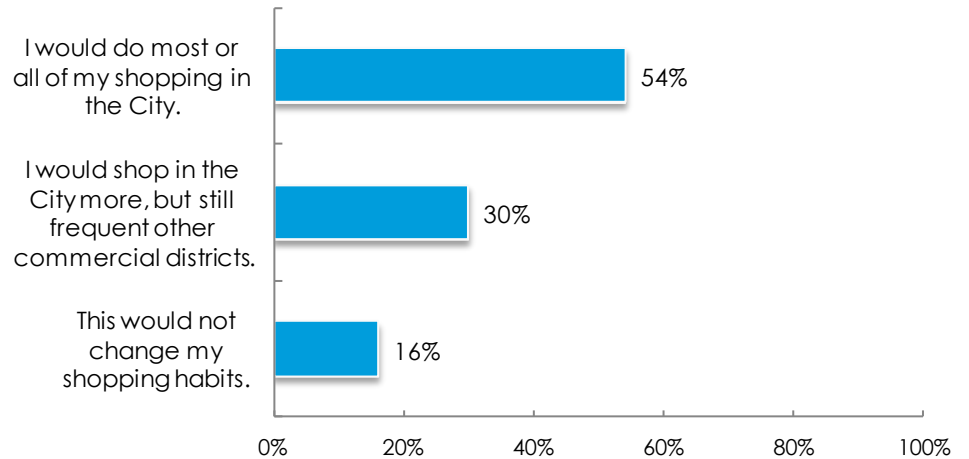


Figure AA-25 If there were local retail options (small, locally-owned shops, boutiques, specialty shops) available in Portage, would you do more of your shopping in the City?

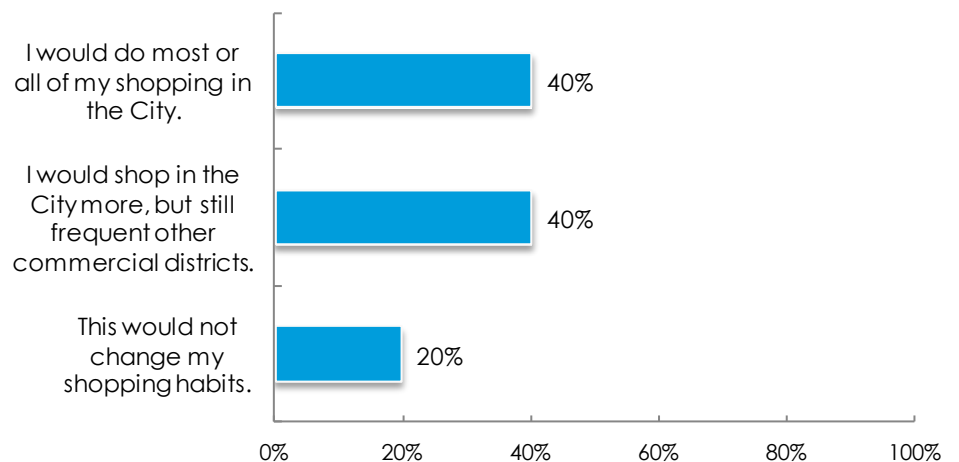


Figure AA-26 If there were more restaurants available in Portage, would you do more of your dining in the City?

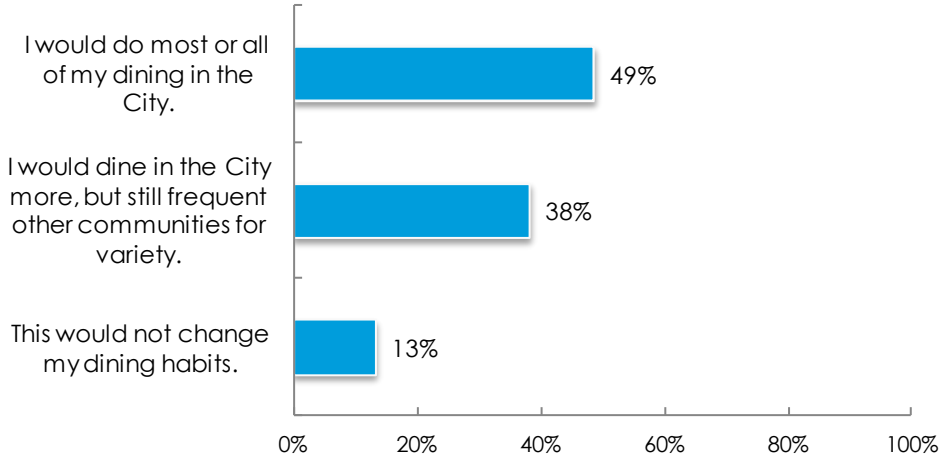


Figure AA-26 also indicates strong interest in more restaurants, with almost half, 49%, of respondents saying they would do most or all of their dining locally, given more options.

Transportation

Figure AA-27 shows little more than half, 52%, of respondents strongly disagree than street and pavement quality is acceptable and only 1% strongly agree.

Figure AA-28 indicates that 68% of respondents think that traffic is acceptable and not too light or heavy.

Figure AA-29 further indicates that most respondents think vehicle travel at the speed limit, although 42% think they travel too fast.

Figure AA-27 Street and pavement quality in Portage is acceptable.

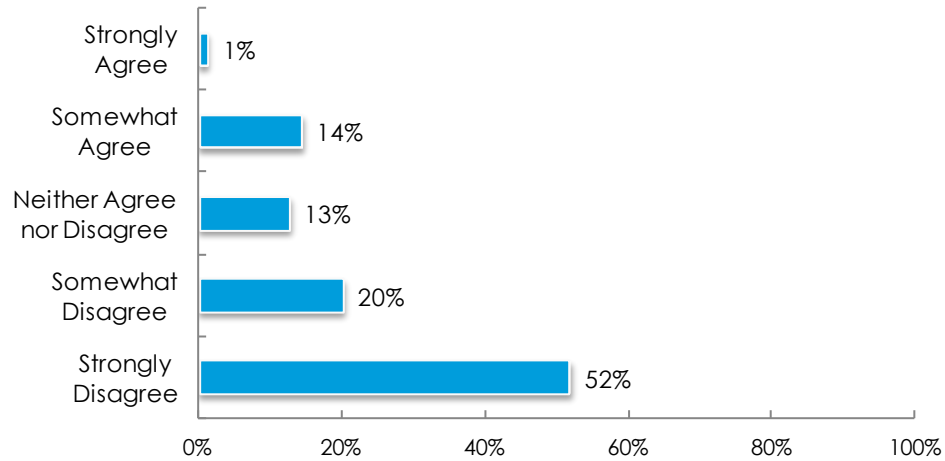


Figure AA-28 Vehicle traffic in Portage is:

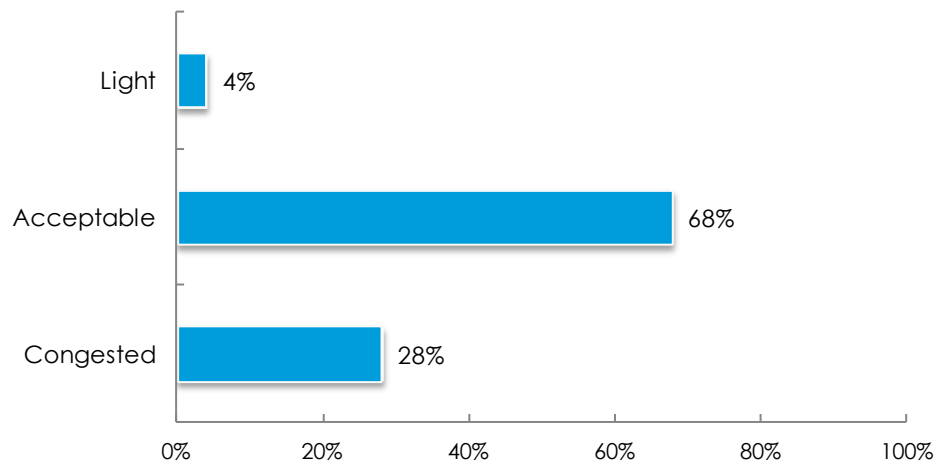


Figure AA-29 Vehicles in Portage tend to travel:

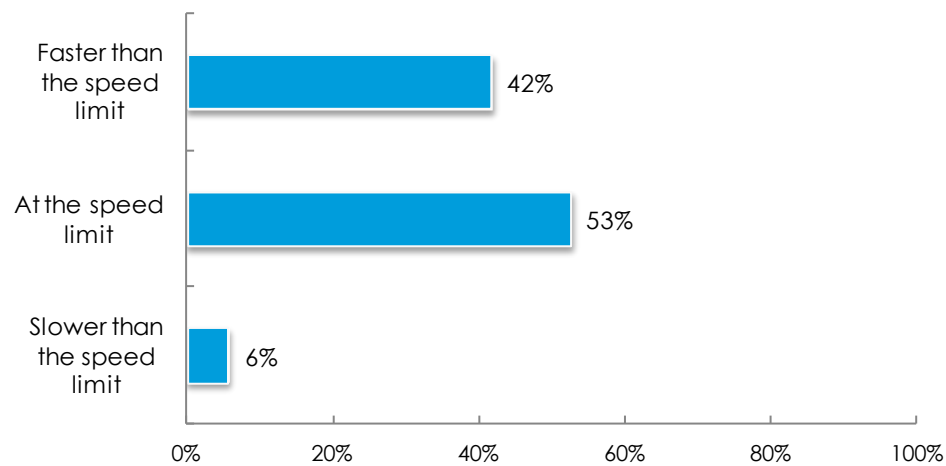


Figure AA-30 The City should focus on providing more public transportation options.

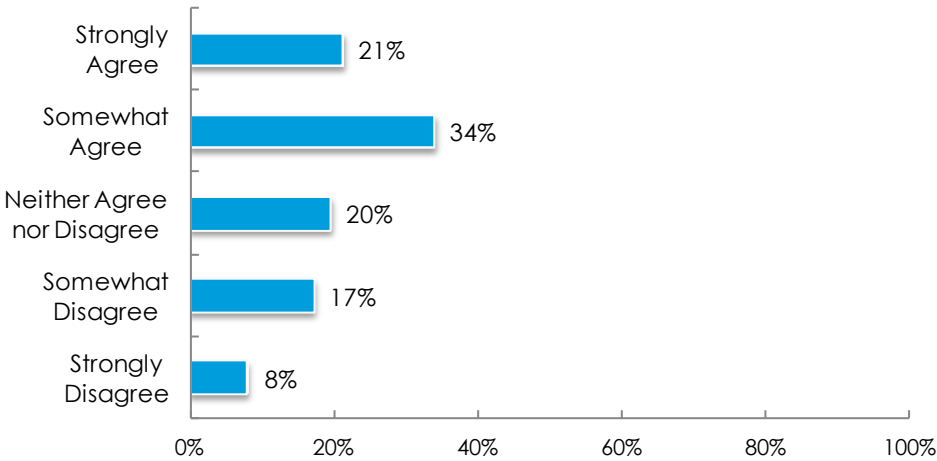
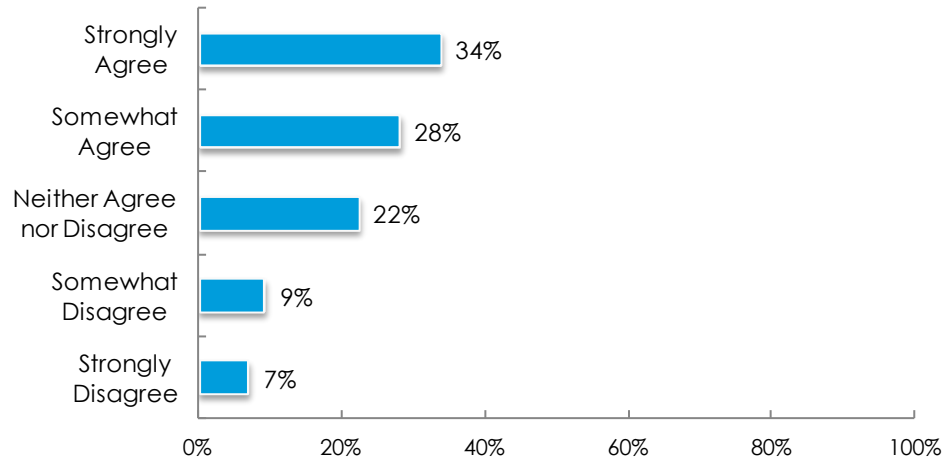


Figure AA-30 shows some support for more public transportation, with 34% somewhat agreeing and 21% strongly agreed for with this focus.

Figure AA-31 shows even stronger support for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, with those strongly agreeing at 34% and those somewhat agreeing at 28%.

Figure AA-31 The City should focus more on providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



Community Facilities

Figure AA-33 indicates a good level of satisfaction with the number of parks in the community, with 36% strongly agreeing there are enough.

Figure AA-34 shows an even distribution of opinion regarding cultural and recreational opportunities. Most either somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or are neutral.

Figure AA-35 indicates that most respondents either somewhat agree or strongly agree that municipal buildings and facilities are adequate.

Figure AA-33 There are enough park sites in Portage.

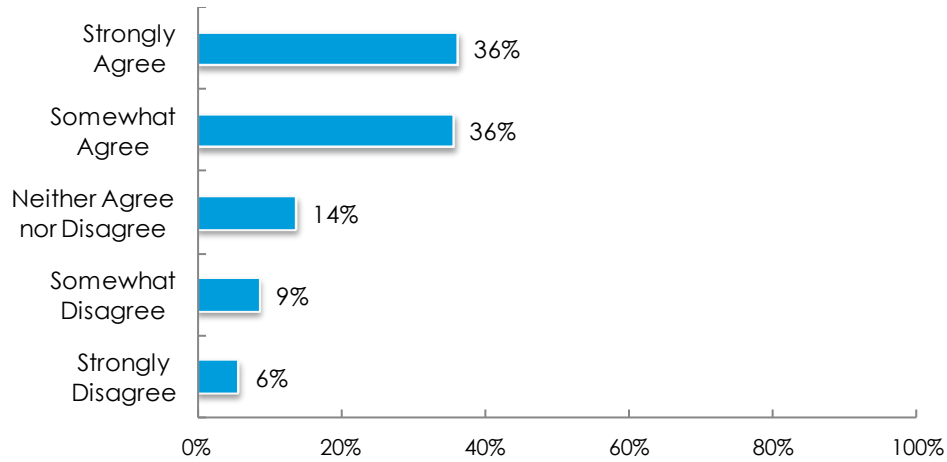


Figure AA-34 New cultural and recreational opportunities in Portage are adequate.

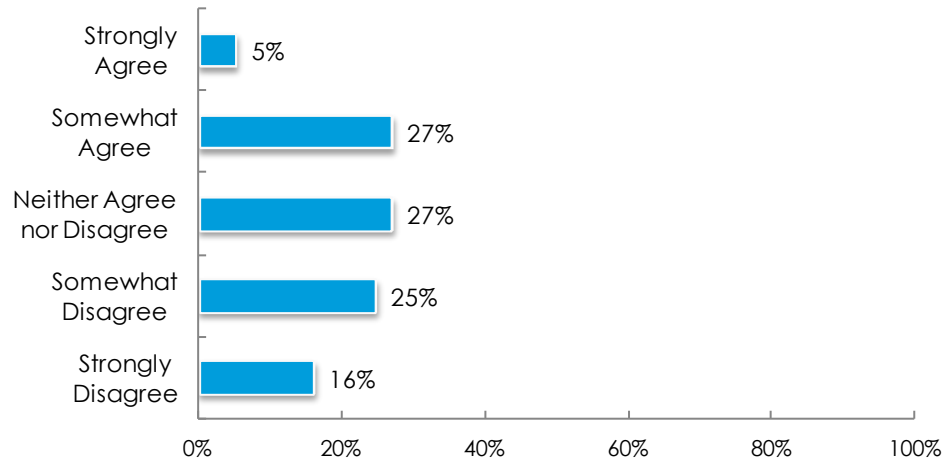


Figure AA-35 The municipal/community buildings and facilities in Portage are adequate (not including new County buildings along the Canal).

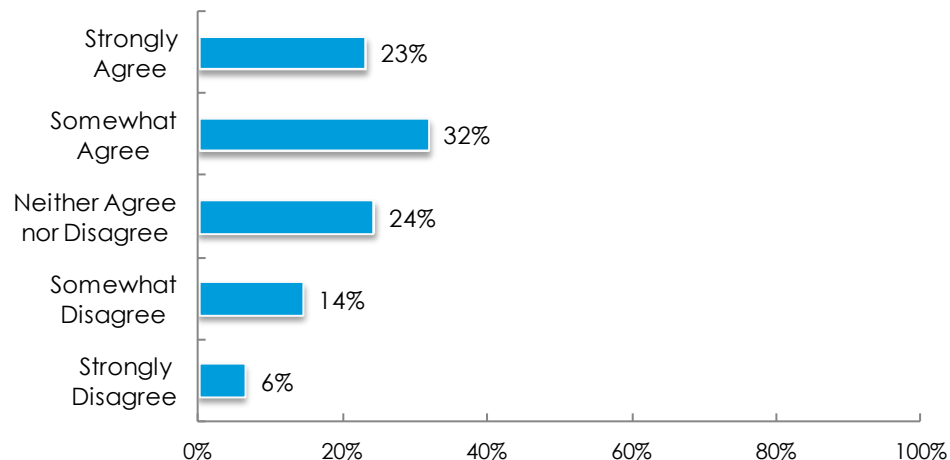
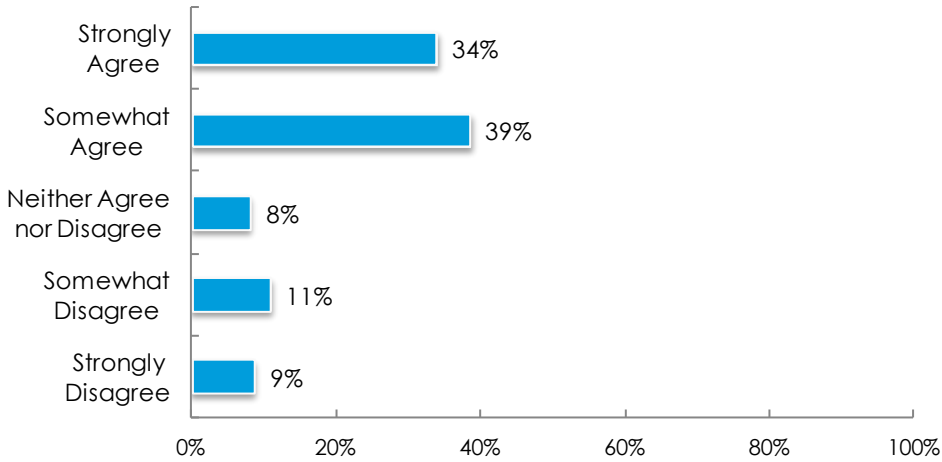


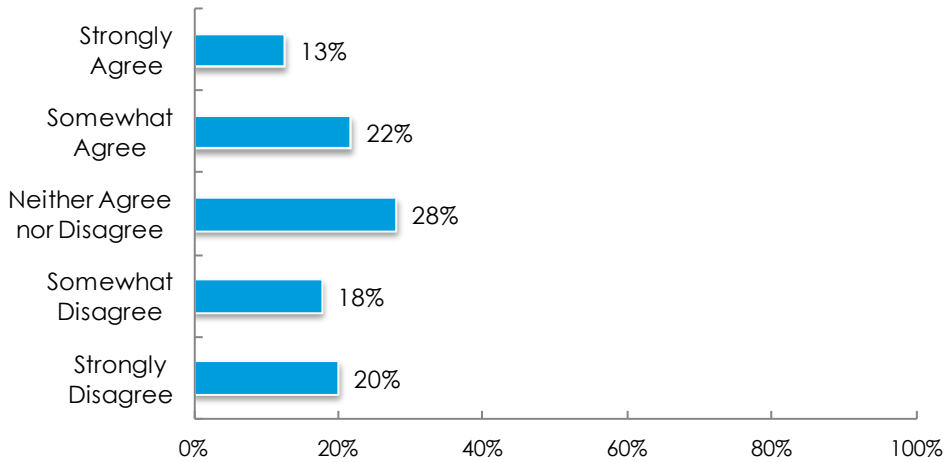
Figure AA-36 The City has adequate healthcare facilities.



Healthcare facilities are generally thought to be adequate, with Figure AA-36 showing more than half of respondents agreeing.

Figure AA-37 shows an even distribution of respondent opinions on mental health facilities, with 28% being neutral and a combined 38% disagreeing on the adequacy of local facilities.

Figure AA-37 The City has adequate mental health services to meet the needs of its residents.



Infrastructure & Growth

Figure AA-38 shows a strong response to the adequacy of water and sewer service in the City, with most respondents agreeing.

Figure AA-39 shows a similar response regarding extension of utilities. More than half agree utilities should be extended to encourage growth, with 39% of respondents somewhat agreeing and 17% strongly agreeing.

Figure AA-40 asks the same question as AA-39, only in the negative. Responses to this form of the question were more evenly distributed with no clear majority of opinion. This question didn't include encouragement of growth, which may be the reason for the more neutral response.

Figure AA-38 Sewer and water service in the City is adequate.

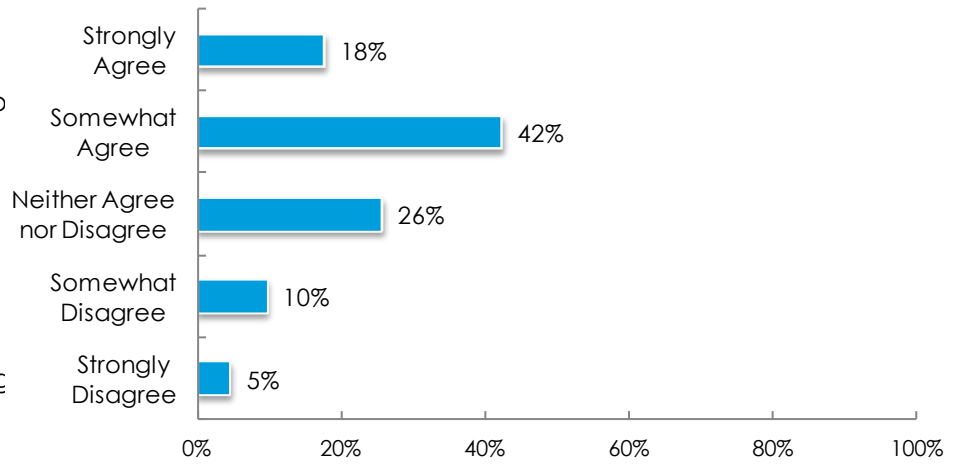


Figure AA-39 The City should extend utilities to undeveloped areas to encourage growth.

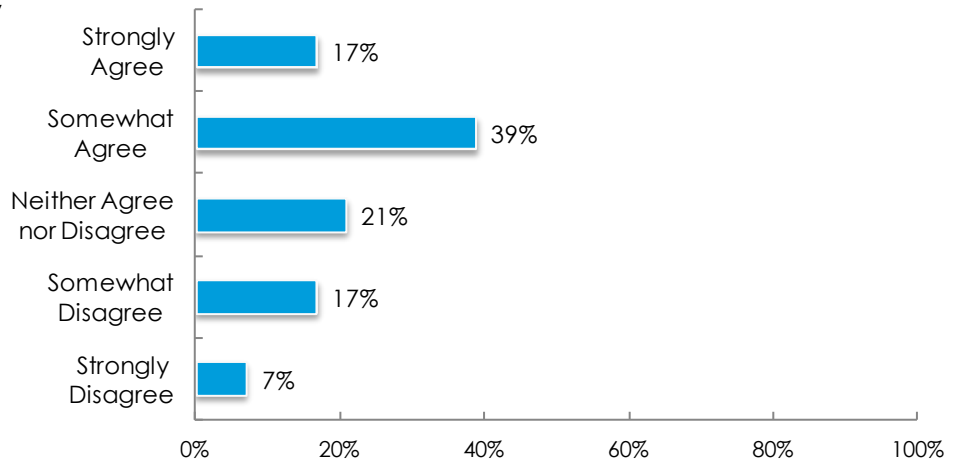


Figure AA-40 The City should not extend utilities such as sewer and water to undeveloped areas.

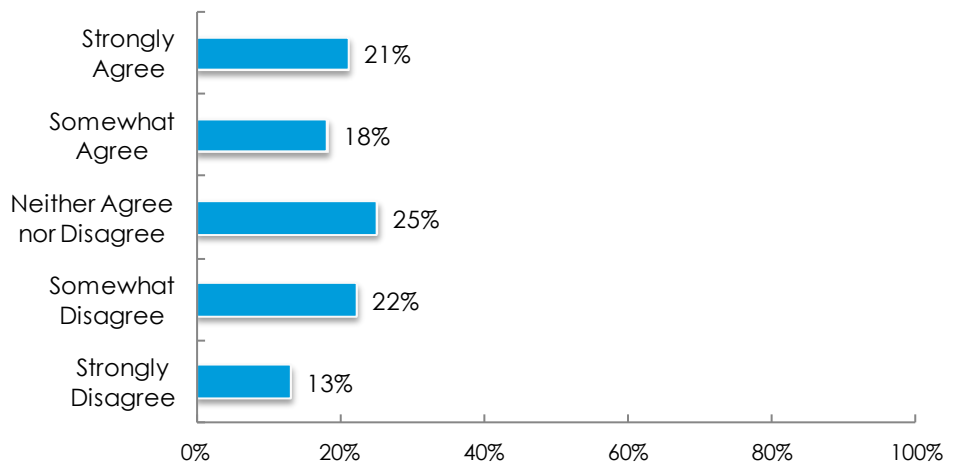
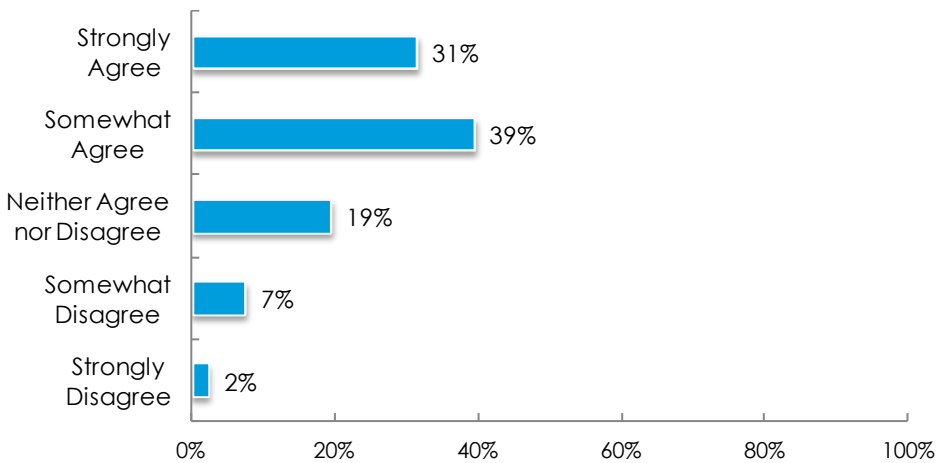


Figure AA-41 New development and growth in Portage should be accommodated on empty sites or new development areas around the City.



The majority of respondents, a combined 70%, are shown in Figure AA-41 to agree that new development and growth should be accommodated on vacant land around the City.

Figure AA-42 shows most respondents think the development process should be easier, although 29% were neutral.

Regarding intergovernmental cooperation, Figure AA-43 indicates that 43% of respondents somewhat agree the City should work with surrounding communities to share service costs, with 33% strongly agreeing.

Figure AA-42 The City should make the development and construction process easier.

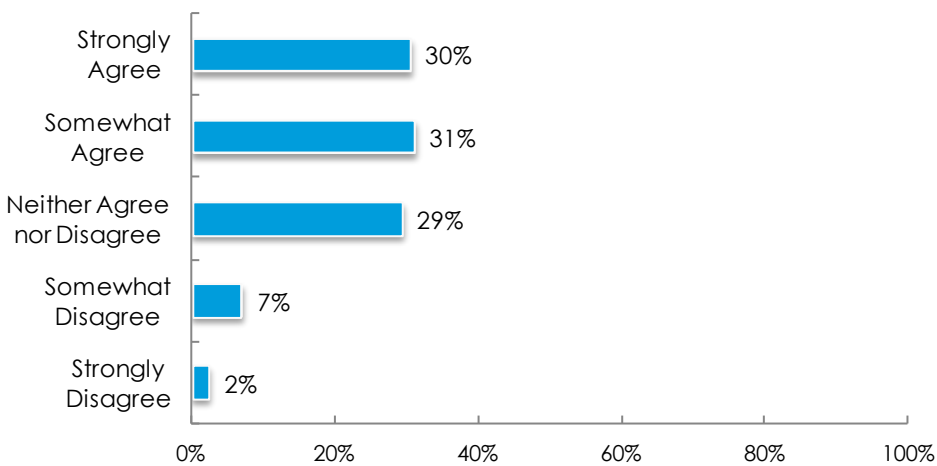
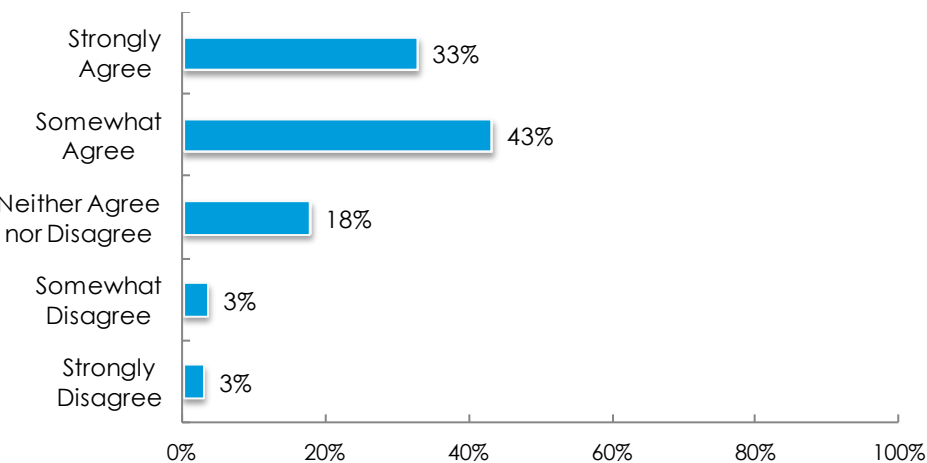


Figure AA-43 The City of Portage should work closely with surrounding communities to share service cost.





Appendix B Public Participation Plan



City of Portage Comprehensive Plan Update 2019

Public Participation Plan

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Achieve broad community participation in updating the City's long-range Comprehensive Plan and its vision, goals, and recommendations for action. Promote public awareness of the planning process and of the Comprehensive Plan as the primary policy document that guides City decision making related to land use, future growth, and preservation. Serve as support and additional input, data and analysis to the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) planning effort.

The City of Portage recognizing the need for comprehensive planning in accordance with the Wisconsin "Comprehensive Planning" legislation has created a Comprehensive Plan consistent with Section 66.1001 of Wisconsin Statutes. Per the Wisconsin Statutes, the City will provide updates to its comprehensive plan at a minimum of every ten (10) years. The City Common Council or its appointed designee administers the Public Participation Plan. In order to facilitate public knowledge and involvement in the Comprehensive Planning process the City of Portage has prepared the following public participation plan.

The plan was prepared in conformance with Section 66.1001 (4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes which states: "The governing body of a local government unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments."

GOALS

The goals of the public participation plan are as follows:

- Provide a range of opportunities and venues for the residents of the City of Portage to participate in the Comprehensive Planning Process.
- Meet the standards set forth in Section 66.1001 (4)(a), Wisconsin Statutes.
- Establish a formalized and recorded framework for public participation.
- Work with the City of Portage Common Council or its appointed designee and the City Plan Commission to create a thorough plan that can implement the goals and vision of the City.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. City to designate a Technical Review Committee to guide the Comprehensive Plan update process.
2. Technical Review Committee to provide guidance and feedback to Vierbicher on the content of the plan.
3. City to distribute the Community Survey to solicit feedback on the current issues and opportunities as they relate to the required plan elements.
4. Vierbicher team to help facilitate public meetings and activities, and prepare materials that will help gather public comments on the plan contents, goals & strategies.

CITIZEN/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY AND METHODS

1. **Timeline** – The project timeline provides an approximate timeframe and a description of the key events and opportunities for public participation. See below.
2. **Community Survey** – City to distribute a survey to the public (both online and on paper) to solicit feedback from residents and land owners on what matters most to them. The survey will ask questions about their priorities, concerns, and vision for the future of the City.
 - **Online survey** – created and maintained by Vierbicher with guidance from the City, distributed by City via social media and other outlets (see below)
 - **Paper survey** – same as online version, but hard copies to be distributed and returned to City. City will input paper responses into online survey to be compiled with online responses.
3. **Direct eMail** – Use email databases to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan update process and encourage their participation in the Community Survey during the months of February and March. The City will conduct the emailings.
 - Email full Survey to members and employees of local school districts, churches, major employers, local library, and local non-profit organizations, as available.
4. **Press Release** (Portage Daily Register) – To be used as necessary to advertise public meetings.
5. **City Newsletter** – City mails newsletter three (3) times per year. Newsletters to be used to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan update process and public meetings.
6. **Flyers** – In key public places
 - City Hall, Post Office, Columbia County Sherriff Department, Portage Police Department, Portage Public Library
 - Other nearby Post Offices and Police Departments
 - Area secondary and post-secondary schools
7. **Community Meetings** – Residents will also have the opportunity to provide input concerning the Comprehensive Plan at selected regular meetings of the Plan Commission and Common Council.
 - A **Public Open House** will be held immediately before a regular City Plan Commission meeting, where residents will have the opportunity to review the Community Survey and see a presentation of the revised Plan elements and provide feedback.
 - At the June, July, and/or August meetings of the Plan Commission, residents can see a presentation of updated data and maps and review draft goals and strategies for each element in the updated Plan.
 - In addition to the public input meetings noted above, a required **Public Hearing** will be held at a meeting of the City Plan Commission to review the Draft Comprehensive Plan and provide feedback. After the public hearing has been held, the Plan commission may recommend the Comprehensive Plan to the City Board for adoption.
8. **Social Media** – Information about the Comprehensive Plan Update, and the Community Survey, will be shared online to encourage residents and land owners to participate.

NOTICE OF HEARINGS AND THE RECOMMENDED PLAN

Public notice of hearings will be provided as follows:

Per Wis. Stats. § 66.1001(4)(d), the required public hearing by the City Plan Commission must be preceded by a Class 1 notice under Wis. Stats. Chapter 985 that is published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. The political subdivision or regional planning commission may also provide notice of the hearing by any other means it considers appropriate. The Class 1 notice shall contain at least the following information:

1. The date, time and place of the hearing
2. A summary, which may include a map, of the proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to such a plan.
3. The name of an individual employed by the local governmental unit who may provide additional information regarding the proposed ordinance.
4. Information relating to where and when the proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to such a plan may be inspected before the hearing, and how a copy of the plan or amendment may be obtained.

At least 30 days before the public hearing is held, the City will provide written notice to all of the following:

1. An operator who has obtained, or made application for a permit that is described under Wis. Stats. § 295.12(3)(d).
2. A person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit under § 295.20.
3. Any other property owner or leaseholder who has an interest in property pursuant to which the person may extract nonmetallic mineral resources, if the property owner or leaseholder requests in writing that the local governmental unit provide the property owner or leaseholder notice of the hearing.
4. A political subdivision shall maintain a list of persons who submit a written request to receive notice of any proposed ordinance, for the adoption of a comprehensive plan or amendment that affects the allowable use of the property owned by the person. Written notice and the proposed ordinance shall be provided, either by mail or in any reasonable form that is agreed to by the person and the political subdivision. The political subdivision may charge each person on the list who receives a notice a fee that does not exceed the approximate cost of providing the notice to the person. Additionally, written notice shall be sent to every governmental body that is located in whole or part within the boundaries of the City of Portage and the clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the City of Portage.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Written Comments Written comments will be collected both electronically and on paper throughout the comprehensive planning process. Electronic comments should be emailed to the City of Portage Clerk. Written comments should be directed to the City Clerk. Copies of the comments will be routed to the City of Portage Plan Commission, City of Portage Chairman and project consultant. The City Clerk will respond to the written comments by acknowledging receipt of the document and that the comments have been shared with those noted above for consideration in the final plan and/or amendment.

RECOMMENDATION AND PLAN ADOPTION PROCEDURES

A draft plan and/or amendments, when complete, shall be available at the City Hall and at a website location to be provided by the City.

The City of Portage Plan Commission will adopt a resolution to recommend the draft plan and/or amendment to the City Board, after the public hearing. A public hearing will be held in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001(4)(d) prior to City Board approval of the comprehensive plan and/or amendment. Subsequent to the public hearing and on the recommendation from the Plan Commission, the City Board shall enact an ordinance adopting the City of Portage Comprehensive Plan and/or amendment.

Upon Plan Commission recommendation of the plan, the City will provide copies of the recommended plan to the Clerks of all local governments adjacent to the City, including the Towns of Fort Winnebago, Lewiston, Caledonia, and Pacific, as well as Columbia County, the Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Portage Public Library.

TIMELINE

January – Meeting #1 at Technical Review Committee (Kickoff Meeting)

March – Meeting #2 at Technical Review Committee

April – Meeting #3 at Technical Review Committee

May – Public Open Housing and Meeting #4 at Technical Review Committee/City Plan Commission

June – Meeting #5 at Technical Review Committee (City Plan Commission invited)

July – Meeting #6 at Technical Review Committee (City Plan Commission invited)

August – Meeting #7 at Technical Review Committee (City Plan Commission invited)

October – Public Hearing and Meeting #8 Technical Review Committee/City Plan Commission

October – Meeting #9 City Common Council (Plan Approval)

(Note: Dates are subject to change at City's discretion)