



VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.

To: City of Whitewater Planning & Architectural Review Commission
From: Jackie Mich, AICP
Date: September 9, 2016
Re: Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan is to:

1. Update the data in the plan to reflect changes that have occurred since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2010 and to include the latest available Census, housing, economic, and land use data.
2. Update the text of the Comprehensive Plan to reflect changes to the zoning ordinance, new zoning district, and the creation of the R-2A and R-3A permission areas and zoning designations.
3. Amend the Future Land Use Map to depict the R-2A permission area.

Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Text

1. Chapter 1: Update the demographic data to reflect the latest U.S. Census data.
2. Chapter 6: Update the housing data to reflect the latest information available.
3. Chapter 7: Throughout the chapter, update descriptions of other future land use categories to reflect changes to the zoning ordinance and the new zoning districts adopted in 2014.
- ★ 4. Chapter 7: Update the description of the “Central Area Neighborhoods” (see attached pages 84-86) to reflect the new R-2A permission area.
 - a. The currently language states that in the Central Area Neighborhoods, rezonings to more intensive residential zoning districts (e.g., from R-2 to R-3) is strongly discouraged. Clarify that within the R-2A permission area, rezoning parcels to R-2A to allow up to five unrelated individuals may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Clarify that rezoning to more intensive residential zoning districts is strongly discouraged outside of the R-2A permission area.

5. Chapter 7: Update the description of the “Higher Density Residential” future land use category to reflect changes to the zoning ordinance, new zoning districts, and the creation of the R-2A permission area.
- ★ 6. Chapter 7: Revise the description of the “Mixed Use” future land use category (see attached pages 99-100) to provide more policy direction to the City and to suggest design features suitable for mixed use, pedestrian-oriented development.
7. Chapter 7: Update the land use data and land demand projections to reflect the latest information available.
8. Chapter 10: Update the economic data to reflect the latest information available.
9. Chapter 11: Update the deadline for the next Comprehensive Plan update on page 165.

Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Maps

1. Update the Existing Land Use Map (Map 4) to reflect current development patterns.
- ★ 2. Update the Future Land Use Map (Map 5) to depict the R-2A permission area and reflect current development patterns and adjustments in policy.

Importance of the Future Land Use Map:

A primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to recommend a future pattern of development for the community. To accomplish this, the Comprehensive Plan establishes distinct future land use categories (e.g. Agricultural Preservation, Single Family Residential-City, Community Business, etc.). These categories are depicted on the Future Land Use Map and are each represented by a unique color. Future land use categories are assigned to every parcel of land in the City and in the City’s 1½-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction.

In the Comprehensive Plan, descriptions of the future land use categories are provided on pages 80-100. The Future Land Use Map is provided on page 103 (Map 5). The categories shown on the Future Land Use Map is important, because Wisconsin Statutes require zoning map amendments (rezonings) to be consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

- e. For townhouses and rowhouses allowed under this future land use designation, require clearly defined, individual entries to the outside for each housing unit; a clear orientation of each housing unit to the public street; and clearly defined front porches/stoops and other architectural details to enhance street-facing appearance and activity.
- f. Allow up to eight attached housing units in townhouse/rowhouse designs, provided that this is compatible with existing zoning or the scale of the surrounding neighborhood if rezoning is proposed. This policy is not intended to enable standard eight-unit apartment buildings under this designation, but rather townhouses/rowhouses that meet the design standards in this section.

4. Central Area Neighborhood

Description: The Central Area Neighborhood future land use designation is mapped within areas of the City characterized by some variety of housing types, usually focused on single-family housing, but also including two-family and some multi-family (three+ units per building) housing. Housing occupancy is mixture of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units. Central Area Neighborhoods are positioned relatively close to campus and/or are along a logical travel corridor between areas with higher concentrations of student-oriented housing and the campus. Carefully addressing the City's Central Area Neighborhoods is key to an effective and sustainable Neighborhood Preservation Strategy.



Example of typical home within the Central Area Neighborhood future land use designation.

Student-oriented housing usually involves a higher number of residents per dwelling unit, which is often associated with increased traffic, waste, noise, and property maintenance issues. Certain properties in the Central Area Neighborhoods are suitable for increased occupancy, specifically those on larger lots that can accommodate additional on-site parking and those buildings that are designed so that they could accommodate additional bedrooms. Other properties are not suitable for such conversions. In order to accommodate student-oriented housing on a case-by-case basis, the City of Whitewater has established the R-2A overlay zoning district which allows up to five unrelated individuals per dwelling unit with the granting of a conditional use permit. Only properties in the R-2A Overlay Permission Area are eligible to apply for R-2A zoning. R-2A zoning is granted on based on the suitability of the property for increased occupancy as well as other factors specific to the property. Areas outside of the R-2A Overlay Permission Area are limited to three unrelated individuals per dwelling unit.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use designation in areas on Map 5 where this designation is shown:

- a. When considering future rezoning requests, the existing City zoning districts most appropriate to implement this future land use designation are the R-1 Single-Family Residential District, the R-2 One

and Two Family Residential District, and the R-3 Multi-Family Residential District (but only in areas where the R-3 district was already mapped on the date this *Comprehensive Plan* was adopted).

b. In addition to the city-wide neighborhood preservation approaches described in the Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter, the City will pursue the following additional neighborhood preservation approaches for Central Area Neighborhoods, following additional research where necessary:

1. Within the R-2A Permission Area: Consider rezonings to R-2A zoning district to allow up to five unrelated individuals on a case-by-case basis.
- 1.2. Outside of the R-2A Permission Area: Strongly discourage rezonings from less intensive to more intensive residential zoning districts (e.g., from R-2 to R-3), in order to preserve the overall character of the Central Area Neighborhoods and prevent R-3-level housing densities in areas that were not previously zoned R-3.
- 2.3. Consider amending the existing R-2 District to (i) allow all forms of duplexes and two-flats (both converted buildings and new buildings) as conditional uses, (ii) limit the maximum allowable building size to duplexes/two-flats, and (iii) revisit lot coverage standards to preserve neighborhood character and limit large backyard parking lots for aesthetic, noise and light control, and stormwater management reasons.
- ~~3. Within pre-existing areas zoned R-3 in Central Area Neighborhood areas shown on Map 5, and where other discretionary development approvals (e.g., conditional use permits) are considered, consider limiting the number of unrelated housing occupants to the number of bedrooms in the unit.~~
4. Consider amendments to the zoning ordinance that would require design review of any proposed increases in the number of bedrooms of pre-existing housing units within Central Area Neighborhood areas.
5. Work with developers and landlords to identify ways the City can help facilitate housing conversions, housing upgrades, and the development of new housing to meet expected demands for student and renter-occupied housing.
6. Work to form and empower neighborhood associations in these areas to serve as a voice for the neighborhood on areas of common concern.

c. To protect and elevate the character, quality, appearance, and function of Central Area Neighborhoods, utilize the following criteria to consider whether and how to grant requested approvals that will result in increases in the number of housing units within any building or lot: **Policy Question: Should we discourage this outside of the R-2A Permission Area?**

1. The extent to which the project provides a positive and lasting contribution to the character of the neighborhood.
2. The extent to which the project improves the appearance and condition of the building and lot, and increases or at least maintains the value of the subject property and surrounding properties for current and possible future uses in accordance with City plans.
3. A determination that architectural styles, building size, building height, lot coverage, setbacks, buffering, number of housing units, parking, tenure (owner or renter) and landscaping are compatible with surrounding development and preserve the overall character of the neighborhood. New and converted buildings that are out of proportion with the houses on nearby lots are discouraged.
4. A design whereby all housing units provide or retain individual entries to the outside. Entries from a common hallway are generally not permitted.
5. Design and placement of residential buildings so that are they oriented toward the street. For example, modest front setbacks, porches and balconies on the front façade, and new garages located behind the front façade of the residence are encouraged.
6. Proposals to convert attached garages to living spaces would be allowed only under certain conditions, such as when the applicant can demonstrate that the conversion will actually improve the

appearance, value, and function of the house and lot and that where following construction there will be no evidence that the space was once a garage (e.g., driveways once leading to the garage ideally restored to green space or reoriented, new façade of the former garage matches the remainder of the house).

7. A design and operational approach that assures that the project will not require the establishment of “commercial” or “apartment-like” features (e.g., commercial dumpsters, tall light poles, large parking lots).
8. Assurances that the maximum number of unrelated persons in the housing unit will be restricted to the number of bedrooms in the unit, or maximum requirements of the zoning district, whichever are less.
9. The extent to which stormwater management enhancements contribute to efforts to reduce stormwater runoff ~~city-wide~~citywide.
10. A determination that required off-street parking will be provided in a manner results in a parking arrangement and associated landscaping that are aesthetically pleasing and include progressive stormwater management approaches.
11. Where applicable, a design that shows that a house that is proposed for conversion/expansion is suitable for that intent without significant compromises to the building architecture, floor plan, and/or historic character.
12. In the case of proposed expansions to existing buildings, consideration of whether the lot (possibly in combination with other adjacent) would instead be better suited for building demolition and new construction.
13. Variances to zoning ordinance provisions are not required, except where such variance will clearly meet hardship criteria and advance the above criteria.

- a. Recognize that the existing City zoning districts that are most appropriate to implement this future land use designation are the M-1 General Manufacturing District and the M-2 Manufacturing and Miscellaneous Use District.
- b. Require that all proposed Manufacturing projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan, and signage plan prior to development approval.
- c. Encourage the creation of landscaped and bermed buffers (or tree preservation areas) where existing and future industrial use areas abut existing or future residential areas.
- d. Promote opportunities to locate businesses that can take advantage of and utilize excess energy (e.g., steam) produced by the power plant.

7. Mixed Use



Description: This future land use designation includes a carefully planned and intentionally integrated mix of commercial, office, residential, and institutional uses on public sewer and water. This category is designed to grow the City's economic and employment base and create dynamic, walkable, and convenient places to live and work.

This category is intended to allow consideration of a range of uses and zoning districts, with the understanding that the appropriate combination and arrangement of uses and zoning districts will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Approvals for such projects should be granted only after submittal, public review, and City approval of detailed site, landscaping, signage, lighting, stormwater, erosion control, and utility plans—often as part of a Planned Development. Mixed Use areas are intended to be vibrant places that should function as community focal points and gathering spots. This designation facilitates a blend of land uses in the following land use designations described in detail elsewhere in this chapter: Community Business, Higher Density Residential, Institutional, and Parks and Recreation. This future land use designation is shown on Map 5 in strategic/transitional locations along key community roadway corridors such as West Main Street, Elkhorn Road, and Highway 12.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use designation in areas on Map 5 where this designation is shown:

- a. ~~Acknowledge that the~~ The existing City zoning district that is most appropriate to implement this future land use designation is the PCD Planned ~~Community~~ Development District.
- b. Avoid rezoning or approving land division of any area designated for Mixed Use development until public sanitary sewer and water service is available, the land is within City limits, and a specific development proposal is offered.
- c. Grant approvals for projects within this future land use designation only after submittal, public review, and City approval of detailed site, landscaping, signage, lighting, stormwater, erosion control, and utility plans.
- d. If Mixed Use areas are developed in phases, require the individual phases to be planned and presented to the City with consideration of the entire area.
- e. Through site layouts, development scale, and building groupings, reflect appropriate relationships between the different land uses occupying the site.
- f. Incorporate adequate recreational space into residential components of Mixed Use projects, either on-site or within walking distance.
- g. Meet the design guidelines applicable to Higher Density Residential and ~~Community Commercial~~ Community Business future land use areas, as appropriate. Figure 7.6 shows some examples of how mixed use development could look in Whitewater, and incorporate the following additional design features, as appropriate:

- a. Walking relationship between uses.
- b. Regular street activity.
- c. Multi-story buildings, generally with more active uses on the first floor.
- d. Minimal front setbacks.
- e. Buildings and sites designed for pedestrians.
- f. Parking located on streets and to rear of buildings.
- g. Building entrances oriented to the street.
- h. Intensive landscaping.
- i. Modest and coordinated signage.
- j. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, connecting with other locations in the City.

Figure 7.6 shows some examples of how mixed use development could look in Whitewater.

- h. Promote opportunities for a live/work development in the City that effectively and appropriately combines residential uses with jobs. Such a development project should advance entrepreneurialism in the community, and promote affordable options for residents to expand their home-based businesses. The development should also be designed in the context of adjacent developments.

8. ———

Figure 7.6: Examples of Mixed Use Development Appropriate for Whitewater



PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE CHANGES

CITY OF WHITEWATER



-  R-2A Overlay
-  City Boundary
-  Sewer Service Area
-  Extraterritorial Boundary

FUTURE LAND USE

-  Ag/Vacant
-  Business/Industrial Park
-  Central Area Neighborhood
-  Central Business
-  Community Business
-  Institutional
-  Environmental Corridor
-  Mineral Extraction
-  Highway Commercial
-  UW-Whitewater
-  Manufacturing
-  Mobile Home
-  Higher Density Residential
-  Technology Park
-  Mixed Use
-  Future Neighborhood
-  Parks and Recreation
-  Right of Way
-  Single Family Residential
-  Single Family Residential - Exurban
-  Surface Water
-  Two Family/Townhouse Residential

