

**Long Range Planning Committee**

**of the City of Onalaska**

Thursday, March 5, 2015

1

1 The Meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order  
2 at 5:35 p.m. on Thursday, March 5, 2015. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and  
3 a notice posted at City Hall.

4  
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Debbie Clarkin, Kristen Odegaard,  
6 Ken Schmocker, Jim Warren

7  
8 Also Present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Planner/Zoning Inspector Katie Meyer, Land Use and  
9 Development Director Brea Grace, Brad Hentschel of Short Elliott Hendrickson

10  
11 Excused Absences: Gary Lass, Dana Fredrickson, Jennifer Brown

12  
13 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from previous meetings**

14  
15 Motion by Kristen, second by Ken, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, as printed  
16 and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

17  
18 On voice vote, motion carried.

19  
20 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per individual)**

21  
22 As there was no one from the public present, Item 4 was addressed next.

23  
24 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

25  
26 **Item 4 – Review and discussion of the following documents for the 2015 Comprehensive**  
27 **Plan Update:**

- 28  
29 a. Chapter 5: Utilities & Community Facilities Update:  
30 • Comments from Parks & Recreation Board; and  
31 • Comments from Tourism Commission

32  
33 Katie noted the following suggestions that were made between the Tourism Commission and the  
34 Parks and Recreation Board:

- 35  
36 • Make updates regarding places of worship.  
37 • Update Tourism’s address on the map.  
38 • Correct typographical errors.  
39 • Come up with different name for “adult fitness equipment” at Community Park.

40  
41 Katie noted that Chapter 5 has made it through all city committee review and is ready for Brad to

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42 prepare it for the Final version.

43

44 b. Chapter 6: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Update:

45 • Review of staff update to Cultural Resources Section

46 • Comments from Historic Preservation Commission

47

48 Katie noted that the updated portion of Chapter 6 has been included in committee members'  
49 packets. Katie said this was included because there were a number of staff updates, particularly  
50 to the archaeological and historic preservation efforts of the past. Katie noted that the Historic  
51 Preservation Committee had reviewed the chapter on Monday and said it will be sent to other  
52 committees this month for review.

53

54 c. Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation (new version) & modified goals from original  
55 chapter in 2005 Comprehensive Plan

56

### 57 **8.1 – Existing Conditions**

58

59 Brad said one of the first things to examine with this chapter is with whom the City of Onalaska  
60 has partnerships, and also with whom does the city work on a consistent basis regarding  
61 delivering services to residents. The City of Onalaska currently does not have any cooperative  
62 boundary agreements. Brad noted there is one stipulated agreement that involves parcels  
63 between the City of La Crosse and the City of Onalaska; specifically, near South Kinney Coulee  
64 Road.

65

66 Brea said she believes a judge had made a boundary agreement between the City of La Crosse  
67 and the City of Onalaska. Brea said this agreement also includes the landfill area and the La  
68 Crosse industrial park.

69

70 Brad said the Department of Administration's website lists cooperative boundary agreements.

71

72 Kristen asked if it is unusual to not have a formal boundary agreement between communities.

73

74 Brea said it is not ideal, but it is typical. Brea said she believes a goal should be to strive toward  
75 establishing boundary agreements. Brea noted that the city is working on boundary agreements  
76 with the Village of Holmen and said joint discussions will take place with the Town of Medary  
77 and the City of La Crosse for another.

78

79 Brad said cooperative boundary agreements can assist the City of Onalaska, which is a  
80 developed community, in determining where it can possibly expand. Establishing a cooperative  
81 boundary agreement between the City of Onalaska, City of La Crosse and Town of Medary puts  
82 forward "an ordered growth" to take place in the future.

83

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84 Brad referred to the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, which completed a  
85 regional master plan. Brad noted that indirect relationships exist between neighboring  
86 jurisdictions, the Onalaska School District, La Crosse County, the MRRPC, Wisconsin  
87 Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and several other  
88 State of Wisconsin agencies/departments. Brad said perhaps the Holmen School District also  
89 should be included.

90

91 Brea agreed, noting that a portion of the Holmen School District is located within the City of  
92 Onalaska.

93

94 Brea said that when TIF districts are established, a base rate at which the tax revenues are going  
95 to the school district also is established. Brea said, "You're not giving them funding for a  
96 number of years to encourage economic development. That's a cooperative way we're working  
97 with them. We have one TIF district on [State Trunk] Highway 35. If there are other parts of  
98 town where we set up other districts, that may be in the Holmen School District and we would  
99 want to work cooperatively with them."

100

101 Brad said he utilized the word "indirect" in this situation because cooperative boundary  
102 agreements and regional master plans have specific State of Wisconsin Statutes that relate to  
103 them. Brad said the other agreements, while they might have to be compliant with state statutes,  
104 are not specifically called out by the legislation that addresses planning.

105

106 Brad referred to a list of intergovernmental agreements that is included in committee members'  
107 packets. This list also appeared in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. Brad noted that Katie and city  
108 staff had discovered more agreements. Brad said not every agreement has to necessarily be  
109 specifically identified in the plan and noted he had removed the Village of Holmen  
110 Comprehensive Planning Grant because this has been completed.

111

112 Katie said the updated list of intergovernmental agreements may be revised as it applies [to the  
113 Comprehensive Plan].

114

115 Debbie asked if any of the contracts are dated.

116

117 Katie noted there is a Microsoft Word document listing every agreement into which the city has  
118 entered. Katie said some agreements automatically roll over, some may be terminated after 30  
119 days, and some have no expiration date.

120

121 Brad referred to the Village of Holmen Swimming Pool Agreement from 2003-04 and said it  
122 might be prudent to include expiration dates.

123

124 Brad discussed adjacent jurisdictions, noting that the City of Onalaska borders both the Town of  
125 Onalaska and the Town of Medary. The city shares a common boundary with the City of La

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126 Crosse to the south, the Village of Holmen abuts the city to the north, and the Village of West  
127 Salem lies to the east of the city. Surface waters, including the Black River, Mississippi River  
128 and Lake Onalaska, create a natural boundary to the west. The City of Onalaska lies entirely  
129 within the La Crosse Sewer Service Area and contracts with the City of La Crosse for all its  
130 wastewater treatment. The City of La Crosse and the City of Onalaska also work cooperatively  
131 to coordinate the Metropolitan Transit Utility (MTU). Brad noted that the City of Onalaska  
132 provides fire service to the Town of Onalaska.

133

134 Brea said it is possible the city will reach a boundary agreement with the Village of Holmen  
135 before the Comprehensive Plan Update has been finalized and suggested to Brad that he wait  
136 before putting this chapter into its final format.

137

138 Kristen asked if the Town of Onalaska's attempt to incorporate will affect the Comprehensive  
139 Plan.

140

141 Brad said he has included a comment on the attempted incorporation.

142

143 Brea said the Town of Onalaska's petition for incorporation had been approved at the Circuit  
144 Court level. Brea also said the process might take a year or two years.

145

146 Brad asked if the city enforces extraterritorial zoning.

147

148 Brea said the city "exercises its powers" and complimented La Crosse County for informing the  
149 city when there is a subdivision proposal within three miles of the City of Onalaska.

150

151 Brad explained extraterritorial zoning as, depending on the class size of a city, almost an  
152 extension of the city's boundary as city officials may weigh in on zoning decisions on  
153 surrounding towns.

154

155 Brea cited the example of a house located on a hill near Eagle Bluff Elementary School and  
156 noted that in 2011 the owners wanted to subdivide property and construct another house. Brea  
157 said the city exercised its extraterritorial zoning rights, noting Fire Chief Don Dominick had  
158 expressed concerns over the slope of the driveway and the ability for emergency vehicles to  
159 navigate it. There also were concerns regarding "skylining" and street frontage. Brea said the  
160 Plan Commission denied the request over the aforementioned concerns and the parcel split never  
161 occurred. Brea said any house that is constructed after a subdivision occurs [in this area]  
162 eventually will be within the City of Onalaska, and will require utilities and be served by the City  
163 of Onalaska's Fire Department.

164

165 Brad said comprehensive plans are created because State of Wisconsin Statutes mandate that  
166 land use decisions must be consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan. Brad said if the  
167 Town of Onalaska is eventually allowed to incorporate, it would greatly impact the City of

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168 Onalaska's ability to grow and expand into the areas located within the Town of Onalaska. Brad  
169 referred to the city's relationship with the Village of Holmen as "cooperative." Brad also noted  
170 there is the potential for a future conflict between the city and the Village of West Salem as the  
171 municipalities eventually might share a border as both continue to grow.

172  
173 Brad said towns typically do not like boundary agreements because they likely will lose tax base.

174  
175 Kristen said it seems as though the Town of Medary is more open to establishing a boundary  
176 agreement.

177  
178 Brea said she has spoken with an individual from the Town of Medary who acknowledged that  
179 the town might no longer exist at some point in the future.

180  
181 Brad addressed schools, noting that a majority of students in the city attend the Onalaska School  
182 District, with some children attending the Holmen School District. Brad said the city's  
183 relationship with the school district as "cooperative."

184  
185 Debbie pointed out that there is no specific mention of private schools where the Comprehensive  
186 Plan mentions the Onalaska School District. Debbie also mentioned open enrollment and noted  
187 that some students living in the city might attend school in the City of La Crosse.

188  
189 Brad inquired about capacity in the Onalaska School District.

190  
191 Kristen noted that elementary school-aged students who open enroll must attend Northern Hills  
192 as there is no room either at Eagle Bluff or Irving Pertzsch. The only exception to this rule is if a  
193 family member previously attended either Eagle Bluff or Irving Pertzsch. Kristen said this might  
194 change in the 2015-16 school year due to the expansion of both Northern Hills and Irving  
195 Pertzsch, which will allow students to attend kindergarten at their neighborhood school instead  
196 of the Onalaska Kindergarten Center at Eagle Bluff. Kristen also noted that the Onalaska School  
197 District has placed a cap on special education students entering the district due to open  
198 enrollment. Kristen said the Onalaska School District has been consistent with having a net gain  
199 of students due to open enrollment. Kristen also noted that the Holmen School District loses a  
200 significant number of kids to the Onalaska School District due to open enrollment and said it is  
201 her understanding that Holmen will begin pursuing some of these students more aggressively.

202  
203 Brea said she believes the school district boundaries should be reviewed, adding she believes it  
204 makes sense for them to match municipal boundaries.

205  
206 Brad referred to county and regional agencies, noting that La Crosse County has limited  
207 jurisdiction within the City of Onalaska regarding what it can regulate. Brad pointed out that the  
208 city and county have joint economic development groups, general mutual aid agreements with  
209 emergency services, and transportation issues.

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210  
211 Brea told Brad another area of emphasis that should be included is the La Crosse County Health  
212 Department.  
213

214 Brad noted that the city and county are part of the MRRPC. Regional planning commissions  
215 provide planning assistance, assist local interests in responding to state and federal programs,  
216 serve as a coordinating agency for programs, and provide other technical and advisory assistance  
217 to local governments.  
218

219 Brea suggested adding the UW Extension, which provided the city with technical advice  
220 concerning the Emerald Ash Borer.  
221

222 Brad referred to state agencies and said he considers the primary state agencies to be the  
223 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.  
224

225 Katie suggested adding the Wisconsin Historical Society.  
226

227 Brad referred to the Onalaska Armory, which underwent a \$3 million remodeling project in  
228 2013. Katie noted that the Onalaska Armory is planning another remodeling project, and also is  
229 looking to construct an enclosed storage building for vehicles.  
230

### 231 **8.2 – Assessment of Future Conditions**

232  
233 Brad said that in the future, an open and continuous dialogue between the City of Onalaska, La  
234 Crosse County and other governmental jurisdictions will result in cooperative and mutually  
235 beneficial efforts. These efforts are critical to the future planning and development of public and  
236 shared services and open communications. As growth and land use changes continue in the area,  
237 development in the city may be a contentious topic as there is significant competition to attract  
238 development in many of the surrounding communities. Continued work with the Village of  
239 Holmen and the Town of Medary/City of La Crosse toward cooperative boundary agreements  
240 would reduce contention. Brad addressed conflict resolution procedures, stating that if conflicts  
241 arise, initial attempts to resolve such conflicts could involve written or face-to-face  
242 communication between elected or appointed community officials. If these efforts do not result  
243 in a mutually satisfactory agreement, more formal conflict resolution methods could be explored,  
244 such as mediation or arbitration. Additional conflict resolution techniques are available as  
245 described in Wisconsin State Statutes 820.12.  
246

### 247 **8.3 – Growth Trends and Planning Activities in Adjacent Communities**

248  
249 Brad said the City will seek to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, La Crosse County,  
250 State of Wisconsin agencies, and the Onalaska School District for mutual benefit. To ensure  
251 compatibility with the planning goals and objectives identified in the City of Onalaska's  
252 Comprehensive Plan, the City will share its plan with adjacent communities and agencies, and

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253 would like to participate in future planning efforts with these entities.

254

#### 255 **8.4 – Goals, Objectives and Policies**

256

257 Brad said he had edited the goals, objectives and policies down to two pages. Brad referred to  
258 Goal 1, Objective ‘e,’ which discusses intergovernmental agreements with neighboring  
259 communities.

260

261 Brea referred to an area past Woodman’s that includes properties that the City is considering  
262 annexing. Brea referred to a parcel and a past debate between the City of Onalaska and the  
263 Village of West Salem as to which municipality would provide utilities. Brea said the Village of  
264 West Salem committed to installing \$3 million worth of infrastructure. Brea referred to  
265 properties near County Trunk Highway S and noted that half are located in the Town of  
266 Onalaska, and the other half are located in the Town of Hamilton. Brea also referred to a  
267 preliminary plat approved in French Valley.

268

269 Brea asked that the Town of Campbell be added to adjacent jurisdictions because the two  
270 municipalities work together even though they are not adjacent. Brea also noted that the City of  
271 Onalaska has been performing building inspections for the Town of Campbell since 2009. Brea  
272 suggested that perhaps a note should be added to the Fire Service page stating the City of  
273 Onalaska provides fire services to the Town of Onalaska and the Town of Hamilton.

274

275 Brea referred to corridor development, noting there are several areas near Valley View Mall that  
276 “zigzag” between municipalities. Brea said she believes it is an important goal to cooperate on  
277 the redevelopment of corridors.

278

279 Kristen referred to the upcoming Coulee Region Transportation Study meeting and said it will be  
280 a cooperative effort. Brad noted one policy recommendation under Goal 3 is to jointly plan  
281 transportation and trail (bicycle and pedestrian) improvements and connections.

282

283 Brea noted that earlier Thursday she had attended a technical advisory group meeting attended  
284 by engineers and planners from the surrounding municipalities. Brea said much of the  
285 discussion revolved around improving multimodal transportation systems in the region and doing  
286 it in a way that is logical from a land use perspective. Brea said she believes it would be helpful  
287 to have a policy and recommendation addressing this.

288

289 Kristen referred to No. 8 under Goal 3: Policies and Recommendations (“*Consider participating*  
290 *in a regional Purchase of Development Rights and similar programs to preserve environmentally*  
291 *sensitive areas, important open spaces for recreational uses or other public properties, and*  
292 *farmland*”) and asked if this pertains to land conservation.

293

294 Brad said yes and asked if the Mississippi Valley Conservancy is active in this area.

295

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296 Brea said the MVC does not have a Purchase of Development Rights Program, but rather simply  
297 purchases parcels outright and converts them into openly accessible land. Brea said the Purchase  
298 of Development Rights Program secures land for, say, a trail easement. It is not necessary to  
299 purchase an entire parcel.

300  
301 Katie referred to the Public Participation Plan, which cited a number of things the city should be  
302 addressing, and said two requests focused on partnering with schools. Katie said there are two  
303 upcoming projects. One will ask Onalaska High School students for feedback on issues such as  
304 transportation, public health, land use, and community facilities. The students' feedback will be  
305 tied into the different chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. Another project will involve tree  
306 removal and planting on City Hall property with Irving Pertzsch students on Arbor Day (April  
307 24). Katie said this will be tied into the Natural Resources section. Katie said Chapter 8 now  
308 will go before the Plan Commission either at its March 24 meeting or its April 28 meeting.  
309

310 **Item 5 – Pay Estimates: Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc.**

311  
312 **LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
313 **MONTHLY ESTIMATES**

314  
315 **March 5, 2015**

316	317	318	319	320
	<b>Original</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Paid to</b>	<b>Due this</b>
<b><u>Contractor</u></b>	<b><u>Contract</u></b>	<b><u>Orders</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Estimate</u></b>
	<b><u>Amount</u></b>			
321 1. <b>SEH INC.</b>				
322     Comprehensive Plan				
323     Update				
324	\$ 39,500.00	\$ -	\$ 29,007.28	\$ 2,223.86

325  
326 Motion by Jim, second by Ken, to approve the pay estimate of \$2,223.86.

327  
328 On voice vote, motion carried.  
329

330 **Adjournment**

331  
332 Motion by Kristen, second by Jim, to adjourn at 6:45 p.m.

333  
334 On voice vote, motion carried.  
335

336  
337 Recorded By:

338  
339 Kirk Bey

Reviewed 3/11/15