

CITY OF ONALASKA MEETING NOTICE

COMMITTEE/BOARD: Long Range Planning Committee
DATE OF MEETING: February 4, 2016 (Thursday)
PLACE OF MEETING: City Hall – 415 Main Street (Rm 112)
TIME OF MEETING: 5:30 P.M.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

1. Call to Order and roll call.
2. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting.
3. Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per individual).

Consideration and possible action on the following items:

4. Discussion and consideration of draft 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update.
5. Discussion and consideration of 2015 Comprehensive Plan poster plan.
6. Adjournment

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that members of the Common Council of the City of Onalaska who do not serve on the Committee may attend this meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision making responsibility.

Therefore, further notice is hereby given that the above meeting may constitute a meeting of the Common Council and is hereby noticed as such, even though it is not contemplated that the Common Council will take any formal action at this meeting.

NOTICES MAILED TO:

Mayor Joe Chilsen
Ald. Jim Binash
Ald. Jim Olson
Ald. Jim Bialecki
Ald. Bob Muth
Ald. Harvey Bertrand
Ald. Barry Blomquist
City Attorney Dept Heads
La Crosse Tribune Charter Com.
Onalaska Holmen Courier Life Fox News
WIZM WKTY WLXR WKBH
WLSU WKBT WXOW

*Committee Members

* Gary Lass
* Kristen Odegaard – Vice Chair
* Dana Frederickson
* Debbie Clarkin – Chair
* Ken Schmocker
* Jim Warren
* Jennifer Brown

Katie Aspenson

Onalaska Public Library

Date Notices Mailed and Posted: 1-28-16

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the City of Onalaska will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability to ensure equal access to public meetings provided notification is given to the City Clerk within seventy-two (72) hours prior to the public meeting and that the requested accommodation does not create an undue hardship for the City.



CITY OF ONALASKA

PLANNING/ZONING DEPARTMENT

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ONALASKA, WI 54650-2953
<http://www.cityofonalaska.com>

MEMO

Date: January 27, 2016

To: Long Range Planning Committee

From: Katie Aspenson, Interim Land Use & Development Director

Re: 2015 Onalaska Comprehensive Plan – Chapter 5: Utilities and Community Facilities

As directed by the Plan Commission at the December 15, 2015 meeting, City staff were asked to put forth additional information regarding overhead transmission lines, explore mapping and consider the creation of a utility corridor through Onalaska. Legal counsel, City staff, and SEH, INC completed a search of comprehensive plans across the county to find language related to transmission lines, as well as specific goals and objectives.

Below are a summary of changes modifying Chapter 5: Utilities and Community Facilities of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan recommended by City staff and legal counsel.

- Creation of a map that notates locations of substations in the City of Onalaska and associated substation zones. City staff also mapped locations of a 161 kV and 59 kV transmission lines in the City.
- Updated Page 92 of Chapter 5 and included Dairyland Power who operates large transmission lines in the City in addition to Xcel Energy. Noted that a large natural gas pipeline runs through the City of Onalaska.
- Updated Page 100: Additional private investments in utilities, particularly electric transmission lines and cellular/data related towers will continue to be proposed in Onalaska. It is important that the City continue to evaluate these proposals on strict criteria in terms of placement, impact to residents and environmentally sensitive areas, and general aesthetics. The State of Wisconsin has a State Energy Policy, Wisconsin statute 1.12, which indicates that siting of new transmission lines should be consistent with economic and engineering considerations, reliability of the electric system, and protection of the environment, the following corridors should be utilized in the order of priority: a) Existing utility corridors; b) highway and railroad corridors; c) recreational trails, to the extent that the facilities may be constructed below ground and that the facilities do not significantly impact environmentally sensitive areas; d) new corridors. This is consistent with the City of Onalaska's preference that new transmission corridors be developed only as a last resort.
- Updated Pages 101-102 of Chapter 5 in the following manner:
 - Goal 1 (modified to read): Coordinate the location of public and private utilities and facilities with projected growth and development patterns.

- Goal 1 Objective 4 (new): By evaluating requests to change existing or install new corridors based on such factors including but not limited to: residential impacts, neighboring land uses, bluffland impacts, preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites, protection of natural areas and wildlife, density, lighting, and health and safety impacts.
- Goal 1 Objective 5 (new): By determining the practical minimum level of development or redevelopment for which utility relocation is financially feasible on a case-by-case basis.
- Goal 1 Objective 6 (new): By considering amendments as appropriate to the subdivision / zoning ordinance for requiring utility relocation as part of development activities.
- Goal 1 Objective 7 (new): By encouraging burying existing aerial powerlines as appropriate in older neighborhoods through redevelopment efforts or utility upgrades.
- Goal 1 Objective 8 (new): By enforcing the Airport Overlay Zoning District Ordinance in conjunction with the City of La Crosse and the La Crosse Airport and updating the ordinance as deemed necessary.
- Goal 3 Objective 2 (modified to read): By installing utilities underground (where and when feasible), to avoid blufflands and other environmentally sensitive areas and utilizing designs and locations that minimize ridge lining and other environmentally-sensitive areas.
- Goal 4 Objective 4 (modified to read): By educating and involving the public in facility and utility expansion decisions, when possible, and asking for public comments and placing citizens on appropriate boards.
- It is of the opinion of City staff and legal counsel that the City does not define a specific utility corridor for transmission lines. Such corridors would likely be along HWY 35 (Great River Road), HWY 53 and Interstate 90. Previously, in 2014 the City of Onalaska successfully fought the Badger-Coulee Transmission Line that was proposed to run along HWY 53 and Interstate 90 that would have bisected the community. Had the Comprehensive Plan noted such a corridor, we would not have been able to fight the project as we would have specified that we wanted the transmission lines in those areas. Rather, the City of Onalaska believes that the process outlined in Goal 1 Objective 4 (above) will better the position the City for future proposed projects.

With the changes already made to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan to strengthen the City's position and the above modifications; City staff and legal counsel believe that the changes both prepare and protect the City of Onalaska in regard to future transmission lines.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ONALASKA COUNCIL
 JIM ONALASKA, Mayor
 JIM ONALASKA, Council
 PAUL HART, Council
 HARRY BERGMAN, Council
 LEO BANG, Planning Commission
 DREW COLANGELO, Chair
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 JASON HERRON, City Engineer
 LARRY MULLER, Development Director
 BOB GARDY, Planning/Zoning Director
 KAREN ANDERSON, GIS Technician/Events Coordinator
 JIM BARTON, Planning/Zoning Director

PLAN PURPOSE AND USE

The City of Onalaska Comprehensive Plan is intended to help guide decisions within the City. The Plan is an expression of the City of Onalaska's preferences and provides a series of policies for assisting the community in attaining its goals and objectives. The Plan is not an attempt to predict the future, but rather an attempt to document the City's vision and philosophies that citizens of Onalaska share. The Plan guides a variety of community issues including housing, transportation, utilities and community facilities, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and land use.

Completing the plan document is only one step in the planning process. Getting complete commitment in implementing the plan involves getting all departments and key individuals involved in order to have a unified stance in matters pertaining to the plan.

This Plan has been prepared under the State of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, adopted in 1999 and contained in §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. The Law requires that all City land use decisions be consistent with this Plan.

Evaluating the Comprehensive Plan is an ongoing process and will, at some time, lead to the realization that the Plan requires updating and amendment. The time that elapses between the completion of the Plan and the need to amend the Plan will depend greatly on evolving issues, trends, and land use conditions. Periodic updates will allow for updates to statistical data, and to ensure the Plan's goals, objectives, and actions reflect the current conditions, needs, and concerns. The Comprehensive Planning legislation requires plan updates at least every 10 years. The City of Onalaska Long Range Planning Committee will remain flexible in determining when and how often the Plan should be updated. Generally, a Comprehensive Plan update should not be expected more often than every five (5) years. A tremendous amount of change can occur in a community over just a couple of years and the City will be prepared to address changing conditions with timely plan updates. Amendments to the plan will follow the requirements of State law and will be evaluated for consistency with the existing plan, including all elements.

The individuals, above, along with many other City of Onalaska staff, community members, and City residents and business owners were instrumental in the creation of this Plan. Special thanks go to the City of Onalaska Planning Commission for their support in developing this Comprehensive Plan. It is a multi-disciplinary project that involved a team of professionals in a full range of transportation, civil, environmental and structural engineering services, urban design, community planning and architectural design and technology and GIS services.



THE CITY OF ONALASKA is a growing community that plays a central role in the economics of La Crosse County and West Central Wisconsin economy. The City is nestled along the Black River and has both scenic beauty with nearby hillsides and waterways, along with functionality and regional impacts. Onalaska was planned and founded by Thomas G. Rowe and John C. Lath, who had come to the area from New York in the mid 1850s. The area was instrumental in the logging industry, as the area was used to transport logs loaded to rafts and rafts. The City has experienced rapid growth since the 1950s and 60s, and is expected to continue growing exponentially. The City's location with regard to transportation access, good-paying jobs, and natural amenities make the City a desired destination for people of all ages.

PLANNING PROCESS

15 month process with significant community input.

STUDENT LISTENING SESSIONS

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



PLACEMAKING

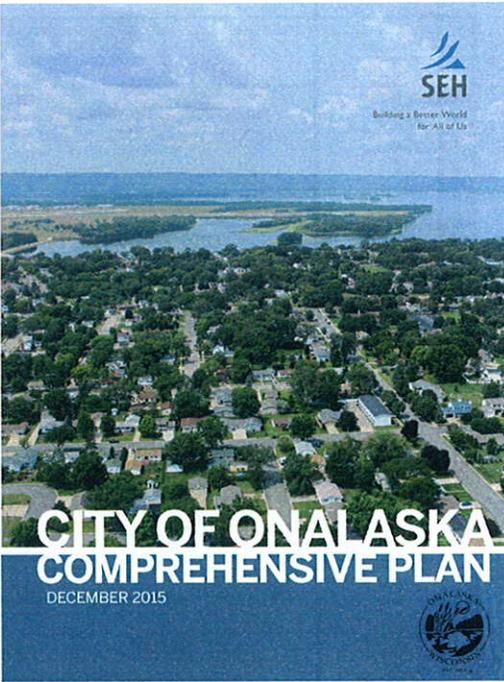
On June 18 and 19, 2014, residents, business owners, and landowners were invited to participate in community workshops to identify areas in the City of Onalaska, as well as to identify things the City is doing quite well. The meetings were held at the Onalaska OMNI Center. The focal point of these meetings were to identify what the City of Onalaska needs to do to become known as a "Great Place." Great Places are where community celebrations are held, social and economic exchanges take place, information interchanges happen, and cultures mix. When combined on a variety of scales, in a variety of areas, they result in Great Communities.

SURVEY

The Onalaska 2014 Community Survey gathered feedback concerning citizens' opinions on the quality of life in the City of Onalaska, types of future development, and their satisfaction with both the performance of City government and service delivery. A total of 9,296 Community surveys were distributed to households within the 54650 zip code in spring 2014. 1,059 surveys were fully completed and returned to the City, representing an overall return rate of 11.4%, with a 12.8% return rate from Onalaska residents. According to the survey results, the Onalaska community feels that maintaining a good school system, the retention and expansion of local employment, and improving and rehabilitating streets are the three most important issues in the next 20 years. The community also believes that the City should focus on promoting public health and an active community and enforcing property maintenance standards. The community also reported that the quality of services offered throughout Onalaska are ranked as "good" (with a score of 4 out of 5), namely educational facilities and shopping, while medical facilities are considered "excellent." When asked "What types of future development should the City encourage?" the community feels that entertainment and attractions, single family homes, industrial/manufacturing and senior housing are types of development that should be encouraged. The survey invited Onalaska residents to share their opinions and answer the question "If you could change one thing in the City of Onalaska, what would it be?" The top five results of this question related to: (a) traffic improvements, (b) downtown development, (c) recreational improvements, and (d) waterfront development in order of importance as indicated by the community. Overall the survey results were positive with the City receiving a "good" ranking (with a score of 4 out of 5) for working with and on behalf of the community. Public opinion of City provided services was also positive with Police and Fire services being ranked highest, followed closely by the operation of City water, sewer, and sanitary sewer utilities, and recreational programs.

VISION STATEMENT

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



IMPLEMENTATION

HOUSING

GOAL: Encourage the development of a variety of housing types, styles and price ranges in the City.

- Identify areas throughout the City appropriate for infill residential development (refer to Future Land Use Plan)
- Coordinate with area housing agencies and key target populations to identify key features of diverse neighborhoods
- Coordinate with Developers on strategies to make these developments more attractive
- Maintain the characteristics of Onalaska's neighborhoods by reviewing the Form-Based Zoning Districts



TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: The City will continue to improve alternative transportation methods, including having connected pedestrian and bicycle trails, and effective public transit.

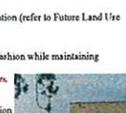
- Continue to follow Complete Streets policies and existing development regulations that include appropriate multimodal transportation infrastructure
- Work with MTU to consider developing alternative delivery of service to improve timing and location of transit routes.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

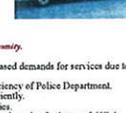
GOAL: The City will strive to make upgrades to and/or replace infrastructure systems when needed to maintain proper service levels.

- Inventory and identify City services that may become deficient in the next 20 years.
- Identify alternatives to address identified deficiencies. Evaluate alternatives based on cost, service life, and increased capacity, among other items.
- Select preferred alternative(s) for each identified deficiency. Begin budgeting for improvements through the utilization of a Capital Improvements Projects (CIP).
- The City will encourage environmentally friendly development and well-planned community utility and facility improvements.
- Identify desired areas of utility and facility services based on future growth anticipation (refer to Future Land Use map)
- Determine costs of servicing these areas.
- Determine impact of extending services to these areas.
- Develop a plan to meet data/cell coverage needs in an attractive and well-planned fashion while maintaining residents' quality of life and the environmental integrity of the area.
- The City will encourage collaboration with the Onalaska and Johnson School Districts, as well as private educators on future development needs and impacts.
- Work with School Districts to determine service constraints with respect to population and geography.
- Share future development projections and learn of future School District facility needs.
- Determine if there are particular items the City can work on improving to better assist the School Districts, recognizing that the quality education offered has been identified as a key asset to the City.
- Meet regularly to exchange updated information.



GOAL: Maintain or Improve the City's ISO Rating (currently 3).

- Prevent the exceptional fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) response protection as possible.
- Update and implement Strategic Staffing & Facility Plans.
- Utilize Insurance Services Organization (ISO) audit to make improvements and enhance services to our residents and businesses.
- Measure and evaluate our performance against established standards and adjust to meet the standards.
- Continue to provide the highest and most efficient level of police services to the community.
- Update and implement the police staffing plan to ensure adequate staffing for increased demands for services due to a changing community.
- Continue to implement new technological advances to improve protection and efficiency of Police Department.
- Continue to develop community relations and advance community policing strategies.
- Continue to maintain a community-wide park and recreation system that provides high quality facilities to fulfill the expanding needs of the community.
- Update the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Continue to partner with the school districts to meet the recreation needs of the community.
- Continue to acquire appropriate equipment to perform maintenance effectively and efficiently.
- Continue to implement the Great River Landing Plan.
- Continue to implement the Onalaska Greenway Plan.



AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Encourage environmentally sensitive land use patterns that preserve bluffs, scenic views, wetlands, wetlands, woodlands and wildlife habitat.

- Continue to evaluate and regulate identified environmentally sensitive areas for preservation.
- Review and modify existing code/enforcements as needed to ensure environmentally sensitive areas are protected, including their depiction on proposed development plans and proposals.
- Evaluate feasibility of continued purchase of conservation easements.
- Continue to implement the Onalaska Greenway Plan.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: The City will continue to create an economic development strategy and master plan to help guide public and private investment in appropriate locations.

- Identify and charge a working group to complete an economic development strategy and master plan.
- Identify and evaluate techniques to aid in local economic development marketing efforts.
- Implement business expansion and retention surveys.
- The City will strive to update or create a new Downtown Redevelopment Plan.
- Identify and charge a working group to complete a Downtown Redevelopment Plan.
- Identify study area and a defined "Downtown."
- Identify strategies to encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in the downtown area that builds off of the Great River Landing Plan and further improves the WIS 35/ Great River Road corridor area.
- Identify and evaluate techniques to aid in local economic development marketing efforts.
- Consider a public art program and encouraging performing arts/galleries. Evaluate City Codes to ensure these land uses can be provided for.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

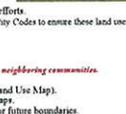
GOAL: The City will continue to seek and/or update cooperative boundary agreements with neighboring communities.

- Identify planned areas of future growth for the City of Onalaska (refer to Future Land Use Map).
- Identify areas of growth for neighboring communities with their future land use maps.
- Initiate or continue discussions regarding possibilities of developing agreements for future boundaries.

LAND USE

GOAL: The City will work to improve key corridors and major arterials/expressways to provide for better community identity/image and improved multi-modal accessibility.

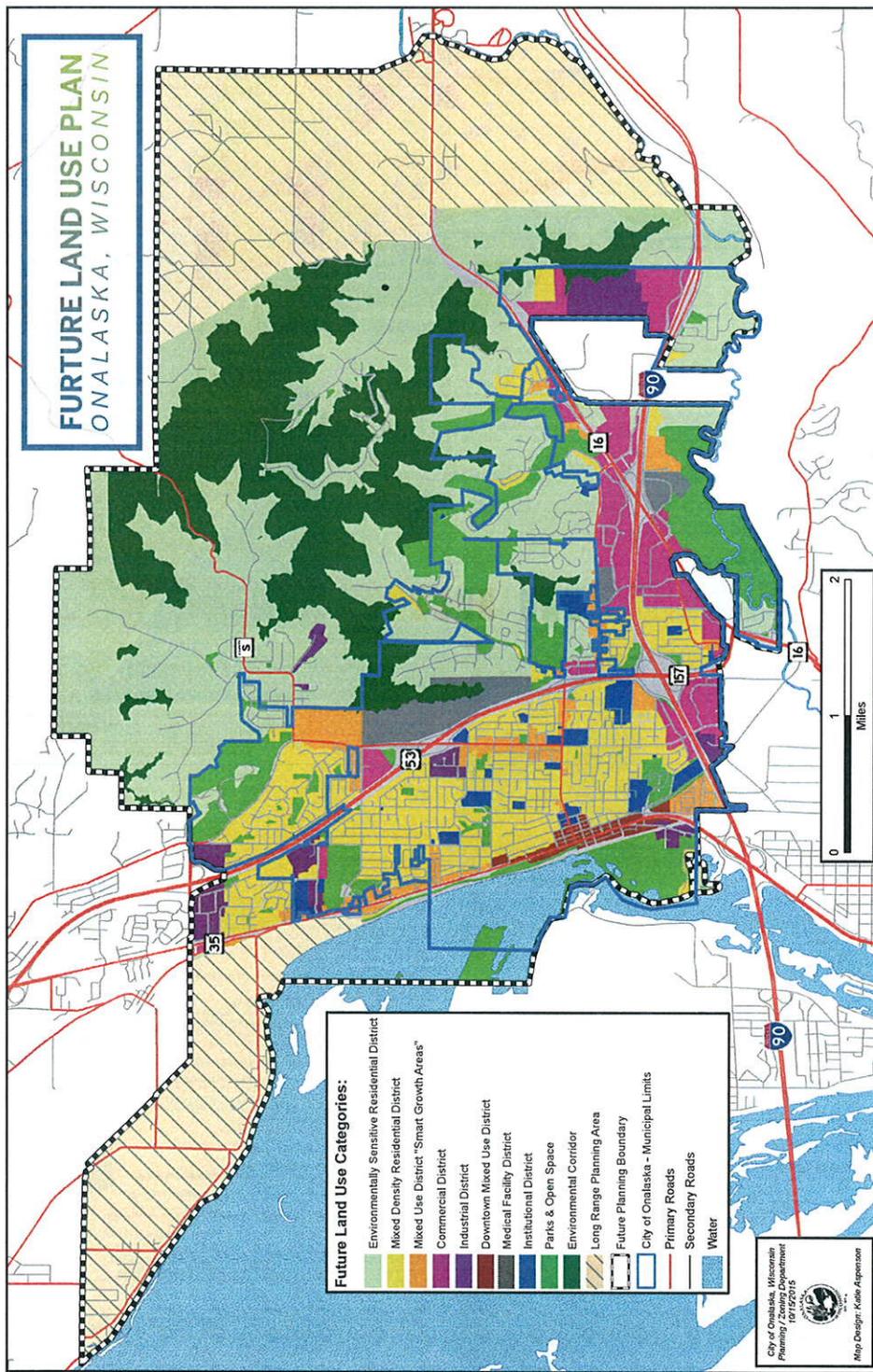
- Determine key corridors to prioritize for improvements.
- Work to identify improvements needed, including visual characteristics and identify accessibility and welcoming image of Onalaska.
- Prioritize, budget, and implement identified improvements.
- Continue to update Capital Improvements Plan with new corridor improvements as projects are completed.



GOAL: The City will seek to continue attracting high quality development within the niche medical market.

- Identify strengths and weaknesses of Onalaska for existing medical facilities located in the City.
- Determine what, if any, changes can be made to improve marketability of Onalaska to these businesses.





DEFINITIONS OF FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

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

MIXED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

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

MIXED USE DISTRICT ("SMART GROWTH AREAS")

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

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

DOWNTOWN MIXED USE DISTRICT

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

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

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

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

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

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

MEDICAL FACILITY DISTRICT

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

INSTITUTIONAL DISTRICT

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

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

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

ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR

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