

DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE

VISION STATEMENT

We support sustainable growth through land uses and development that reduces fossil fuel consumption, supports healthy eco-systems, promotes social and economic equity, and creates a beautiful community.

GOAL 1: Provide a balance of land uses to serve existing and future residents of the City as well as non-residents that allows for a sustainable economy and environment and maintains the high quality of life that Stevens Point residents currently enjoy.

Objective 1.1: Enhance existing neighborhoods by encouraging reuse of existing buildings where physically and economically possible; retaining and creating public open space where appropriate; and encouraging redevelopment where and when appropriate.

Objective 1.2: Enhance neighborhood identities by preserving and promoting cultural and historic features, including buildings and parks; enhancing natural features (trees, streams, rivers); and supporting the creation of neighborhood associations.

Objective 1.3: Reinforce centers - including downtown and established neighborhoods - with building reuse and architecturally compatible rehabilitations / renovations; retention and recruitment of businesses offering services and goods for residents, employees, and visitors who frequent each center; pedestrian and bicyclist amenities; increased transit service; and enhancement of green space.

Objective 1.4: Create, reinforce and identify edges.

Objective 1.5: Increase density through infill, reuse, and redevelopment when physically and economically feasible.

Objective 1.6: Address growth and urban form as a region.

Objective 1.7: Encourage use of unused city owned lands for neighborhood and community gardens.

GOAL 2: All new development will be in a compact and contiguous development pattern.

Objective 2.1: Establish a method for measuring and reporting development densities and spatial patterns of population and monitor changes over time.

Objective 2.2: Annex to allow for compact and contiguous development.

Objective 2.3: Use incentives to encourage regional cooperation with respect to growth patterns.

GOAL 3: Land uses in the city are sufficiently diverse and spatially configured to minimize distances between homes, work places, and activities.

Objective 3.1: Minimize distances between residential areas and activity centers so that pedestrians can make trips in no more than 15 minutes.

Action 1: Analyze the location of activity centers (such as convenience stores) and their relations to residential areas to identify “pedestrian deserts” where households are overly auto-dependent.

Action 2: Revise zoning in light of the spatial analysis of “pedestrian deserts” to permit new mixed uses that can reduce dependence on automobiles.

Objective 3.2: Permit and encourage present and future mixes of residential, commercial and institutional land uses for each neighborhood.

Action 1: Explore the use of form-based land use codes that more explicitly permit mixed uses

GOAL 4: The city shall be a leader in applying innovative development techniques and patterns.

Objective 4.1: Create a self-guided tour and web page that highlights best practices and innovations in municipal-managed land use.

Objective 4.2: Change ordinances where needed to allow use of innovative techniques.

GOAL 5: Downtown shall be the residential, economic, cultural, entertainment, and recreational heart of the City of Stevens Point.

Objective 5.1: Create an attractive downtown environment that appeals to a mix of residents of different ages and socio-economic backgrounds.

- Action 1: Enhance the schedule of downtown maintenance and sanitation to ensure that sidewalks and streets are regularly cleaned.
- Action 2: Create and implement the “upstairs” rehab program for downtown buildings.
- Action 3: Encourage owners and developers to create new (and enhance older) apartments/condominiums and renovated historic properties in downtown and in the adjacent neighborhoods to appeal to a wider range of incomes and ages.
- Action 4: Recruit and provide incentives to stable businesses that will provide basic goods and services (e.g., groceries) to residents and employees of downtown and the adjacent neighborhoods.

Objective 5.2: Encourage greater diversity in downtown food, drink, and entertainment venues (i.e. improved offerings in cinema, performing arts, live music, and casual evening dining).

- Action 1: Encourage the development of a small-scale downtown hotel by promoting reuse of existing downtown buildings (i.e., Whiting Place, the Castle Apartments, or one of the Noel Group buildings that may become vacant in the future).

Objective 5.3: Maintain all city and county government offices in the heart of Stevens Point (with the exception of substations or satellites on the outskirts for library, police, sheriff, fire, and emergency services).

- Action 1: Reuse current city and county buildings, incorporating them creatively into a new campus plan for the justice center.
- Action 2: Support the presence and growth of the Portage County Historical Society downtown. Incorporate the synagogue into the plans for a new civic campus, i.e., downtown justice center.
- Action 3: Build one or more parking structures to permit redevelopment of existing surface parking lots for civic buildings, housing, and public green space.

Objective 5.4: Pursue all funding avenues for preserving, renovating, and/or restoring, historic buildings in the central city and downtown.

Objective 5.5: Enhance the connectivity between the Main Street downtown and the riverfront park.

Action 1: Narrow Centerpoint/Water St, extending Main St. into what is now the Chase Bank parking lot, and providing safe and appealing pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations.

Objective 5.6: Maintain and expand public open space and access on the downtown waterfront.

Action 1: Use the PDI plan (2008) as a framework for future downtown redevelopment

Objective 5.6: Redesign and rehabilitate the downtown square to accentuate pedestrian use and improve the visibility and aesthetics of the historic farmers market.

GOAL 6: Major institutional uses including the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, Mid State Technical College, St. Michael's Hospital and others shall remain strong and grow in the central city in a pattern that is sustainable, diverse, and accessible.

Objective 6.1: Work with these groups to better create their identity (their own identified neighborhood).

Objective 6.2: Create distinguished entrances to these institutions that people and traffic can easily identify and utilize.

Objective 6.3: Encourage these organizations to use land more intensively rather than extensively so as to protect and preserve surrounding residential neighborhoods.

GOAL 7: Identify and sustain outstanding natural features both for the contribution that it makes to the quality of human life and for its own inherent value.

Objective 7.1: Protect and enhance the city's urban forest and ecology.

Action 1: Review the city's tree ordinances to ensure adequate incentives for proactive urban forest management on private lands including storm water credits for trees, right/right place and tree sale/distribution.

Action 2: Review street tree ordinances to allow fruit trees, fruit shrubs and other sustainable uses in right-of-ways where there is not a conflict with traffic and pedestrians.

Action 3: Decrease mowing on city-owned passive lands (medians, park periphery, etc)

- Action 4: Create site plans for all city owned property and parks using sustainable methods of maintenance and retrofitting.
- Action 5: Highlight environmental stewardship in park planning and management
- Action 6: Revise ordinances to permit yard landscaping and gardens that does not require mowing.
- Action 7: Revise ordinances to allow dead trees where there are little or no hazards.
- Action 8: Identify natural features that need preserving/conserving.
- Action 9: Reduce or eliminating synthetic fertilizer use and pesticide applications on city owned lands.

Objective 7.2: Work to ensure that land uses do not harm water resources

- Action 1: Establish 1000 square feet of rain gardens annually on city property.
- Action 2: Create bio-swales for street and parking lot run-off to limit storm water discharge to the river.
- Action 3: Enact a ban on fertilizers that contain phosphorous

Objective 7.3: Establish a finance system that relates the cost of environmental management to the landowners & practices that generate the needs for management.

- Action 1: Conduct feasibility study of storm water utility by 2010.
- Action 2: Review and update the city's impact fee ordinances.

Goal 8: Implement the Comprehensive Plan's transportation components, which highlight best practices for meeting multiple needs in small areas.

Objective 8.1: Create at least one visible demonstration site to educate citizens of the multiple needs that good street design can help meet.

- Action 1: Identify the area within Stevens Point that best illustrates good transportation design for the widest range of travel modes.
- Action 2: Create model parking lot screening and landscaping demonstration sites at select city-owned parking lots.

Action 3: Design and carry out informational signage that explains what good transportation design consists of.

Objective 8.2: Make walking and bicycling safer for and more appealing to residents of all ages and abilities.

Action 1: Narrow traffic lanes at crosswalks to slow traffic.

Action 2: Allow alternate materials for sidewalks to allow for easy changes or repairs when impacted by tree roots.

Action 3: Use alternate crosswalk paving to accentuate crossing areas

Action 4: Add crosswalks and sidewalks to all existing commercial and retail areas.

Action 5. Require that pedestrian and bicycle use is included in all new development plans and road reconstruction projects.