



## MEETING NOTICE

### AGENDA FOR LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

A Long Range Planning Committee meeting will be held on  
**Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 5:30 PM**  
in the **Council Chambers at City Hall, 819 Superior Avenue, Tomah, WI.**

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#### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7689466740?pwd=dEdLR2hXK0ZYMk1qNU5vNFwMzdSZz09>

**Meeting ID:** 768 946 6740 **Passcode:** Tomah2020

**Dial by your location:** (312) 626-6799 **Meeting ID:** 768 946 6740 **Passcode:** 546782713

#### 1. AGENDA:

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- A. Call to Order - Roll Call
- B. [Approval of March 26, 2024 Long Range Planning Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
- C. Nomination and election of officers (Chair and Vice - Chair)
- D. [Economic Development Workplan progress report](#)
- E. [Economic Development Workplan funds update](#)
- F. [Update regarding Comprehensive Plan](#)
- G. Discussion of potential future agenda items

**2. NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.**

#### 3. ADJOURNMENT

**NOTICE:** It is possible that a quorum of members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above-stated meeting to gather information. No action will be taken by any governmental body at the above-stated meeting other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice. Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact the City Clerk's office at 608-374-7420 x7420.



## LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

The City of Tomah Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) met in session on **Tuesday, March 26, 2024**, at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 819 Superior Ave, Tomah, WI, and via Zoom teleconference. The meeting access information was provided on the posted agenda. The meeting agenda notice was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in compliance with the provisions of Section 19.84 Wisconsin Statutes.

**Call to Order – Roll Call:** Eric Prise called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members present: E. Prise, Mike Murray Tina Thompson, Travis Scholze, and Shawn Zabinski. Absent: Jeff Holthaus and Pete Reichardt. Quorum present. Also in attendance: Building and Zoning Administrator Shane Rolff and Deputy City Clerk Nicole Jacobs.

**Approval of January 17, 2024, Long Range Planning Committee meeting minutes:** Motion by T. Thompson, second by S. Zabinski, to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2024, meeting. Motion carried.

**Discussion of Economic Development Work Plan prioritization:** B. Rohr of Vandewalle & Associates described the items identified by staff that they would like Vandewalle to assist the city with. Rohr wanted to bring it to the LRPC for feedback as to what committee members would like to see prioritized. Committee members indicated that they would like to prioritize items that would be the most impactful to the city and show visible progress or return on investment. S. Rolff suggested prioritizing marketing as other things such as relationship building and developing contacts take time and don't happen overnight. The discussion included developing an economic development webpage for the city website. The site would include marketing materials, which would be monitored and updated on a regular basis.

**Discuss and review the Comprehensive Plan draft:** B. Rohr took the committee through a review of the first draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan. The draft includes the results of the online public survey, updated data, and strategic changes from the 2013 plan to reflect data trends, survey results and plans that have been completed. The majority of changes occurred in the Land Use section and Action Plan section. Vandewalle revamped Future Land Use category names, policies, and associated zoning districts. The Action Plan was revamped to reflect completed projects, new ideas and references to applicable plans. Rohr explained that the next draft will include changes recommended by the committee, as well as updated maps, documents with photos, covers, and example images.

**Next meeting date:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:** Motion by T. Thompson, second by T. Scholze to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:

*Nicole Jacobs*

Nicole Jacobs, Deputy City Clerk, March 27, 2024





# VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.

## CITY OF TOMAH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKPLAN PROGRESS REPORT APRIL 23, 2024

As directed by the Long Range Planning Commission (LRPC), City staff and Vandewalle & Associates are actively implementing the City of Tomah Economic Development Workplan. This progress report aims to illustrate what work has been done since the last LRPC meeting and what's to come in the months ahead. Below is a summary of progress made related to each task within the Workplan:

### April

#### **On-Call City Liaison**

City staff and Vandewalle & Associates met to discuss the desired approach to handling new development inquiries. It was determined that the following roles and responsibilities will be employed:

- City Staff: handles all basic procedural steps and inquires related to developments that only requires a Site Plan or other smaller-scale projects that do not include anything listed below.
- V&A: as directed by City staff, handles projects of larger scale that include any type of potential assistance, the Comprehensive Plan, annexations, mixing of uses, or interest in doing something that requires additional procedural steps beyond just a Site Plan.

This process is very similar to the existing approach utilized between City staff and V&A that will continue over the next year. V&A will continue to track each inquiry directed to them by City staff and perform updates on progress during monthly staff meetings. The process will be reevaluated on an as-needed basis moving forward.

It was also determined that there was little value in establishing V&A regular office hours at City Hall. V&A will continue to provide services via email, virtual meetings, phone calls, and occasional visits to Tomah.

#### **ED Point Person**

No work on this task was performed during the month.

#### **Partnership Building**

City staff attended the Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Conference in March. A summary and all materials from this event were provided to V&A for reference purposes.

City staff attended a meeting with the local WEDC representative in April. V&A instructed staff on potential topics to discuss and to establish a working relationship with this important resource in the event that the City could leverage potential alternative funding sources or programs in the future for local economic development projects.

V&A continues to track active grant opportunities at the local, state, and federal level. Any opportunity that fits a known project is provided to City staff for consideration. No grants were further discussed or explored this month.

### **Marketing**

City staff began looking into website capabilities and drafting ideas for a new economic development webpage for the City website. V&A will review and provide feedback on the webpage approach following City staff's work.

### **Local Business Assistance**

City staff and V&A met with a local employer to discuss planning in and around their location and, more generally, that portion of the City. Prior meetings had occurred between the groups, but this was the first time all parties were together for an in-person discussion. It is anticipated that additional group meetings and employer meetings will occur in the future.

### **Economic Strategy**

No work on this task was performed during the month.

### **Other Work**

- Developed Draft #2 of the Comprehensive Plan
- Reviewed potential parking ordinance amendments
- Continued discussions with potential developers and property owners on housing site opportunities
- Continued to develop TID site inventory assessment

### **What's Next?**

- On-Call Staff Liaison: continue to track inquiries and discuss at monthly staff meetings, evaluate how the process could be streamlined and improved
- ED Point Person: staff to determine a system of directing information to V&A and V&A to establish a tracking system to provide regular updates to staff
- Partnership Building: explore additional opportunities to establish connections with local, regional, and state economic development groups
- Marketing: produce marketing materials and implement webpage changes on City website
- Local Business Assistance: determine next steps
- Economic Strategy: determine next steps
- Other Work: continue progress related to ongoing work



819 Superior Ave  
Tomah, WI 54660  
Phone: (608) 374-7420  
Fax: (608) 374-7424

## **Industrial Development Fund - \$770,000**

Fund was originally created to promote and assist with the development of the industrial park.

## **CDBG Fund - \$425,000**

Money collected on community development block grant loans. These funds were turned over by the Federal Government and can be used as determined by the City. The original intention was to use these funds on affordable housing projects.

## **ED Loan Fund - \$130,000**

This is a loan fund traditionally used to fund economic development loans within the City. These funds could be used to fund future loans but are not designated for this purpose.

# 2024 City of Tomah Draft #2 Comprehensive Plan Review Meeting April 2024

## City of Tomah Comprehensive Plan Update Project Schedule

| Task # | Event  | Date          |
|--------|--|---------------|
| 1      | Subcommittee and Staff Review of 2013 Plan           | 2023          |
| 2      | V&A Begins Draft 2024 Plan                           | December 2023 |
| 3      | Online Survey  | January 2024  |
| 4      | Staff Review of Draft #1                             | February 2024 |
| 5      | LRPC and Plan Commission Review of Draft #1          | March 2024    |
| 6      | Complete Draft #2                                    | April 2024    |
| 7      | LRPC and Plan Commission Review of Draft #2          | April 2024    |
| 8      | Complete Public Draft                                | May 2024      |
| 9      | Public Draft Release and Online Feedback Opportunity | May 2024      |
| 10     | Public Hearing and Adoption                          | Summer 2024   |

### Changes From Draft #1

- Appendix A: added last month’s meeting summary
- Appendix B: added new maps
- Main Plan: reformatted, added references to City’s Park Plan, minor updates to other areas based on past meeting feedback, and new future land use map

### Goals For This Meeting

- Review of new maps
- Discussion and questions on future land use map
- Guidance and direction on any changes needed to text or maps
- Ready (after today’s discussion) for public debut of plan

### Discussion Items – Future Land Use Map Key Areas

- South Side:
  - Proposed Regional and Planned Mixed Use around interchange
- Downtown:
  - Proposed Downtown Mixed Use on blocks surrounding Superior Avenue corridor
- Neighborhoods South of Railroad:
  - Proposed combination of Medium Density Residential, Institutional, and Parks, some Planned Mixed Use where commercial exists today

- Far East Side:
  - Proposed Regional Mixed Use, Airport, and Parks
- Superior Avenue North of Railroad:
  - Proposed Planned Mixed Use with Medium and High Density Residential on either side
- I-94/STH 21 Interchange:
  - Proposed Planned Mixed with Regional Mixed Use to the south and Planned Neighborhoods to the west
- Key Changes:
  - Using new land use categories and names (discussed last meeting)
  - No more splitting of parcels with land use designations
  - Filled in gaps for contiguity of growth areas beyond existing boundaries
  - Expanded higher density residential along West Veteran's Street
  - Other minor changes to correct errors in map
  - Slightly larger Regional Mixed Use areas around southern interchanges
  - Added some new long-term growth areas on north side

### **Next Steps**

- Make changes from today's discussion
- Public Draft release – May
- Pursue Adoption – Summer





# TOMAH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2045



# APPENDIX A: Public Participation Plan

Draft: April 2024

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# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

(insert Public Participation Plan here)





## Question 1 Responses (130 total)

|  |
|--|
| Deteriorating properties and trash/debris overflowing.   |
| Many barriers to developing the arts. The community has organizations bringing the arts to the community, but a poor infrastructure to support it. Its needs a band shelter at Gillett Park and Winnebago. Tomah ACT needs a new theater. The entire community needs an arts center. Science proves that incorporating the arts grows the economy.       |
| somewhere kids can get exercise during the winter indoor pool, open gym especially for the growing number of homeschoolers   |
| Maintaining infrastructure. Replanting trees lost to disease or storms to help with air quality & shade as we experience more heat in summer   |
| Growth & generating good jobs within our vicinity  |
| Making changes   |
| Government overreach   |
| Housing, mass job creation   |
| People feel they need to seek out other nearby towns to find things to do, places to eat, or places to shop. We have a significant drug problem in town as well.   |
| Keeping the schools competitive, bringing in businesses for more jobs, high cost of housing  |
| Businesses closing downtown  |
| Moving the train depot away from downtown to encourage families to live downtown instead of further away from downtown.  |
| Recreation space for kids and adults   |
| Downtown development and filling empty buildings   |
| water quality, lack of quality housing   |
| Pavement conditions  |
| Lack of dental and psychiatric services that are covered by Medical Assistance.  |
| ROADS. Small businesses staying in business.   |
| Housing, affordable daycare, significant drug issues in relation to the size of our town, transportation (taxi and uber services)  |
| Attracting business/manufacturing (Jobs), affordable housing, community center to include indoor swimming, street upgrades, continue advancing recreation trails/outdoor activities.   |
| Employment in healthcare. With surrounding cities paying more and having more resources in their communities, we are losing out on clinical staff and that affects the economic stability of our community. Also, property taxes seem to have skyrocketed, something that made us glad we bought a mortgage that allowed us room for the extra payments. |
| The dangerous intersection turning left from E. Veterans Street onto Superior. Also, turning left from West Veterans onto Superior.  |
| keeping young adults in Tomah--  |
| no new housing developments, lack of housing, lacking high end rentals   |
| The school buildings need to be updated. Lack of a community indoor recreation area. (indoor pool) We do not need any more ball fields! We need a place for our senior population to be able to walk indoors especially due to the long winters we have.   |
| Community connectiveness (how connected we feel to each other) plus drugs and homelessness issues (like what LaCrosse is dealing with now)   |
| Lack of diversity in its commercial landscape.   |
| Low income housing, Drug abuse, Crime  |
| Keeping up with the larger companies.  |
| As a family with small children, we travel to the neighboring communities to find activities for the children.   |
| The cost of rent here is extremely high. We should connect more with coulee cap to advertise the housing ownership program.  |

**Question 1 Responses (130 total)**

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|--|
| Lack of affordable housing   |
| Housing, child care, health care, public transportation  |
| Attracting businesses, industries and manufacturing to Tomah.  |
| Lack of adequate trained employees.  |
| High real estate taxes   |
| affordable housing & daycare   |
| Dealing with influx of people. Some that are not community minding that stretch our resources  |
| Lack of recreation/opportunities particularly for younger residents. Lack of restaurant/shopping options.  |
| Transportation. Only one transportation company available and they are very busy. The cost of rent is extremely high. Affordable housing is not attainable for many who wish to stay in the community.   |
| Affordable homes, street repair  |
| Keeping as best as possible a low real estate tax rate. Provide lower cost housing options. Expect homeowners and landlords to keep their properties updated.  |
| The City of Tomah needs a facelift. The downtown looks tired and old. The City needs to require, or incentivize, business/property owners to maintain a presentable store front and building. The other major NEED is a plan to upgrade the City streets and infrastructure. We have many areas of City streets that are in dire need of repair.   |
| Adequate daycare and after school care. Tomah needs to do more to help families find good and affordable daycare.  |
| Support for aging community, All types workforce education, School that can support educational needs. This would include building, staff, resources, and sports or activities. Overdoses and drug dependencies  |
| Lack of childcare, drugs   |
| Housing and shopping   |
| Electricity, Sewer, Schools, Bussing, Taxes  |
| Tomah is growing, but there isn't enough affordable housing. Yes, we have a lot of new apartments/duplexes near the Post Office, but they're "luxury" apartments that aren't affordable for everyone. I live in an apartment near the VA, and my rent went up \$100 a month in 2022 and \$60 a month in 2023. These increases were higher than my wage increases. I won't be able to afford living here much longer, and I live in some of the cheaper apartments in the city. |
| Road repair.   |
| HWY ET, HWY ET, HWY ET! This road must be replaced soon. It's an embarrassment and a hazard.   |
| Affordable housing for owners and renters. Drug trafficking.   |
| Taxes without improved services.   |
| Jobs   |
| Making the downtown more appealing to help current and new business owners. A downtown with a US Hwy running through it is like a ghost town on Saturday night. There used to be standing room only in many establishments on a Saturday night? Crazy days used to be actually crazy. The city needs to ask why people are not coming downtown.  |
| Road conditions and taxes  |
| TASD infrastructure, indoor community space, aging downtown buildings.   |
| Maintaining a unique identity and adequately serving the community.  |
| Growth   |
| Tomah has went from a small town to small city with population raising.  |

**Question 1 Responses (130 total)**

|   |
|---|
| The need for more diverse job opportunities and also much more affordable housing   |
| It would be nice if there were more options for kids during the winter. We find ourselves needing to go to La crosse or Wisconsin Dells for kid friendly activities. It would be really nice if there was a children's museum, movie theater, indoor swimming pool, arcade, etc   |
| Adapting to the present. No longer should be a good old boys town!  |
| Drug use by an increasing number of people in this community.   |
| taxes and improvements  |
| Activities for all ages.  |
| Keeping small business in Tomah   |
| Housing   |
| Up to date schools and athletic complexes. The intersection at the North end of Tomah (KFC/Subway one).   |
| Education and school building improvements  |
| Decline in school quality due to poor funding and lack of experienced teachers.   |
| - lack of amenities in Tomah, feeling the need to go to other smaller or larger towns with other options available (breweries, more shopping, public pools/rec areas, and variety of cuisines).<br>- limited housing options (not affordable, fair to poor conditions of houses that are affordable, but then need further remodeling to make better living condition. And taxes are too high with the housing market.  |
| Lack of leadership and ability to change. Tomah is just such a sad town. All bars and fast food. No changes, no forward thinking. Look at the progress in Sparta? Why are we so far behind the curve.   |
| Maintaining a strong and viable public school system.   |
| I think we need to focus on economic development and growth in downtown, and southern part of town by interstate, rather than just all on north side.   |
| Cost of Living- rent it seems is based on Tomah being this big city like Madison when it is not.  |
| Home Affordability. Houses are way too expensive compared to the average income most people can make here. That includes Apartments you can get a two-bedroom apartment for close to \$1,000 most people here can't even make that on their own and be able to live a comfortable and happy life. There's nothing to do here we have a prime location with the military bases and the main interstate but we do nothing with it there is nothing that makes living here worth it. Bring in a Target or Hobby lobby. A YMCA or an activity center like the one in Black River Falls provides youth and young adults and ever the elderly or even homeschoolers with things to do.<br>Cost of living goes. Up every year and wages hardly ever do.<br>Parks and mostly walkways need to be kept up more. Like the walkway between the dam and Napa a lot of open space but it's not being utilized. |
| I feel not unique to Tomah but everywhere in general is the challenges with increased cost of living. People are having to be frugal and save more which in turn can impact a smaller town. The increased cost of living can really strain families and in turn lead to increased crime rates potentially.  |
| Downtown shops.   |
| I think Tomah is a pretty good place to live. The only thing I think Tomah needs is a theater.  |
| Fixing the the roads. There are alot of roads around Tomah that REALLT need to be fixed!  |
| Affordable housing. Adequate workforce  |
| Affordable housing. Not apartments homes and or duplex  |
| Poor management and the desire to "do it like we've always done it." We are not progressive, but stagnant.  |
| We need to work on affordable housing, influx of drugs, and invest in our schools.  |
| Affordable housing, better use of down town area, traffic   |

**Question 1 Responses (130 total)**

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|---|
| Nation wide the fire and ems agencies are struggling, make sure you are paying the volunteer groups enough, better than have a good plan going into the future.   |
| Motel occupancy from lack of large entertainment coming to tomah.   |
| The high cost of everything   |
| To get businesses downtown  |
| Maintaining proper public safety  |
| Taxes... Roads... and children will grow up into a city that is controlled by the big business people who favor little advice from smaller businesses. echo chambers exist internally that dont allow change. the city is going to grow but affording housing is harder when the workers cant find successful work places. there is nothing to do here and we need to get off the "small sports town" kick. Not every family these days can afford to put a kid in sports not just because of the \$ but the time they would need off work potentially. mental health is going to catch up with all of us if we dont start talking to each other and start showing empathy for one another. |
| Jobs  |
| Affordable housing  |
| Mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, adequate and affordable housing  |
| Drug use, crowded schools, hiring quality teachers that stay long term, shopping options.   |
| No growth.  |
| Outdated schools and not having rec center for families all year around   |
| Housing costs, drug use, poverty  |
| Small businesses staying open and activities for young kids.  |
| Attracting and keeping qualified people for our workforce.  |
| Roads need work   |
| Lack of businesses that provide a variety of goods. Too many reasons to go out of town to purchase necessities. School district needs to get a referendum passed to support budgeting/funding dilemmas .  |
| Keeping people from moving to other developed areas   |
| Downtown businesses having problems thriving in today's economy.  |
| Growth - both in population and attracting and maintaining new businesses.  |
| To grow and yet preserve the community. Find businesses that want to be there. Not just fast food restraurants. Places to shop for clothing, craft items, etc.  |
| Generational poverty and drug/alcohol abuse   |
| Accommodating growth, affordable housing, transportation networks.  |
| High Real Estate Taxes. Businesses are not taxed equally. A smallee single building costs more than one that has apartments (income) and business below (income)  |
| Its leadership  |
| Cost of living versus wages, lack of affordable housing for lower wage workers, terrible sidewalks throughout town.   |
| Growing the economy. Affordable Housing. Public Transportation.   |
| Downtown is almost dead. Most businesses are for sale and the buildings don't shine like they should. The alternative hwy going right down the middle doesn't make people slow down and want to spent time there. The heart of a city is their downtown.  |
| Child care especially for infants. Rent for families of low income or even for the elderly.   |
| Public transportation, shopping, housing  |

Question 1 Responses (130 total)

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|---|
| Things to do in Tomah - YMCA - Movie theater - dining such as Cracker Barrel, Bob Evans type. Roller rink in town - Escape room and other activity type businesses.   |
| Lack of new business.   |
| Child Care, housing options, quality education, lack of recreational activities, no night life/things to do.  |
| Lack of growth mindset.   |
| Housing assistance for low-income residents; Staffing concerns for businesses (lack of employees/staffing shortages/major plant shutting down); Maintenance of city's roads (many roads need to be replaced); Taxi-service (would like to see a bus route put in place, especially with a second rail line coming through town. People who travel using Amtrack, don't have access to transportation to get to the north side of town to stay in hotels. Taxi-service isn't always reliable, a bus route with specific pickup times could be reliable); Lack of diversity; Lack of funding to support our Tomah Area School District (school buildings are getting old, lots of maintenance, growing out of classroom space, some schools lack options other schools have a lunch room and gymnasium.); Run down buildings/spaces where businesses have closed or left (If not maintained, buildings become a sore eye, lots of open space in downtown area – need to fill these spaces with retail stops so we can have a thriving downtown area and draw in more tourism. |

Q2. How would you describe the current image of Tomah? What makes the community different or unique from neighboring communities?



Question 2 Responses (117 total)

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|--|
| Ok. Government employers.  |
| MAKE THE RESIDENTS PUT THERE GARBAGE TOTES AWAY NOT LEAVING THEM OUT |



**Question 2 Responses (117 total)**

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|--|
| The lake doesn't stink as much anymore. That's a plus.   |
| Image of Tomah, boring. Drugs.   |
| Deteriorating image  |
| THERE IS NOTHING INIQUE IN TOMAH!!! THE DIFFERENCE IS HIGH RENT/TAXES FOR WHAT?? THE INCREASE IN SALARY FOR STAFF WHO WASTES MONEY.. THEY SHOULD NOT BE GETTING FEDERAL HOLIDAYS OFF. ROADS ARE TERRIBLE ,,TOMAH WASTES MONEY WITH A STREET SWEEPER THAT DOESNT CLEAN ANYTHING, JUST RIDES AROUND MAKING MORE OF A MESS **GET RID OF IT* |
| Lack of quality places for entertainment and dining. Our downtown area has so many vacant buildings but people are afraid of getting into them because of fire hazards. It needs significant redevelopment   |
| Aging current image, but unique in that there are so many sub- communities   |
| So many surrounding communities have grown their accessibility to the arts. Tomah businesses need relaxed regulations to allow them to offer outdoor cafes and wine bars, outdoor live music, and better curb appeal. Raising a local income tax and lowering property taces might help.   |
| Hope we can look progressive & create ways to enhance the lives of all our citizens, focus on health & well being  |
| Friendly, mostly safe community. Not too big..   |
| Downtown has several empty or for sale properties.   |
| Fine.  |
| We are a hub for so many small communities.  |
| I think the people who live here love it but outsiders see us as a small hick town   |
| Quiet and peaceful, lots of jobs   |
| Wish we had more unique stores in town   |
| A city that is barely surviving. Downtown during the winter is almost entirely deserted.   |
| Lots of empty business, rumors of growth (bigger stores coming), lacking support for education and better schools  |
| A bit tired and in need of a refresh. Tomah's location with two interstates is still a unique quality  |
| downtown is drab, need more public art, attractive landscaping, engaging storefronts, more restaurants downtown, coffee shops, breweries, more fitness options   |
| A small town that has nothing to offer on weekend nights except bars. There are almost no activities for people who either cannot drink or are trying to recover from drug abuse or alcoholism. Having no sober activities increases the problems with drug and alcohol abuse.   |
| Large Enough to not see people you know but small enough to have that small town feel.   |
| Unique downtown but with that also outdated and needs some sort of incentive for business owners/building owners to improve the look of buildings not that there should need to be incentive.  |
| More robust downtown, very good venues for banquets and meetings, plenty of hotel space and several good quality restaurants   |
| Stagnant. Stuttering. Bland. Mediocre. Let's show a bit of enthusiasm and forward thinking! Question #1 addresses Question #2, in part. Watching HSN city council proceedings reflects "old fogie" attitudes on the part of too many council persons. Ugh!   |
| Folks look at us a pitstop on the two highways. They look at our large employers and that's about it, they tend to go to Sparta, Onalaska and La Crosse for services, when we are so much more. I am worried about our downtown having viable businesses, worry just like all small towns.   |
| It is growing but has room for improvement. Compared to surrounding communities Tomah is growing faster in my opinion. But we need more shopping, eating businesses to match Tomah's growth.   |
| It is a pass through city. Stop for a meal. No reason to stay.   |
| blue collar, low unemployment, businesses don't come to Tomah because of lack of available employees   |
| Not progressive.   |

**Question 2 Responses (117 total)**

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| Many see it as a military town - we do have a lot of government paid positions with little manufacturing. Our location is unique (2 interstates bringing in travelers), not the county seat but have the county fairgrounds   |
| There is nothing that sticks out to me being uniquely Tomah. Maybe, the Fair Grounds if pushed.   |
| Okay place to live, community events, good schools. Tractor Pull  |
| Small town, known for drug issues.  |
| The town feels like a "Come & Go" City. Fast food trumps homemade food restaurants.   |
| Tomah is a welcoming community that offers a variety of activities.   |
| Expensive and racist  |
| Quality small-town living. The number of Federal and Military employees living here.  |
| While it has improved Tomah is not as progressive as Sparta or Black River Falls. Those communities are looking to the future and current leadership in Tomah is stuck in the past.   |
| Where the I divides. I can't think of a special or unique feature that someone from outside of Tomah would mention. People from Tomah would say Ft. McCoy and the VA. We are a rural community spread out along Superior Avenue with interstate access. Tomah's image is a nice rural community with a good school and lots of activities for kids. |
| Too many open store fronts  |
| lots to do thanks to the Chamber & non-profits - DTN  |
| Quite good. We have a loyal base of residents Good people doing good things   |
| Rural...  |
| Hospital within the city limits. Also having paramedic staff available 24/7.  |
| I think that Tomah is looked at as a city in a rural community. In that, Tomah doesn't have as many problems as a larger city does, and therefore a better quality of life. Tomah still has its problems.   |
| Our image is like many other smaller towns in Wisconsin, it is old and dated. We must renew the downtown and streets.   |
| It is stalled in growth with an aging down town. It has tons of natural resources around it.  |
| Our downtown has so much potential but seems to be failing. The storefronts (which i know are not the city's problem but the individual owner's) could use a facelift.  |
| Good with things like tractor pull and cranfest   |
| Were the interstate divides. Work opportunities. Newly updated Fire and Ambulance building. New Hospital facility. Shopping.  |
| Unfortunately, Tomah gets compared to Sparta all the time, which is unfair. Both communities have unique qualities and challenges. For Tomah, it feels like a community that wants to embrace its "Main Street" image, but it feels stuck in the 90s and early 2000s. It isn't moving forward.  |
| It doesn't look run down, if you don't go into the alley ways.  |
| Tomah is actually two cities. The "city" itself, and the "city" from ET to the freeway north.   |
| Blue collar community.  |
| Closed community. New blood not welcome.  |
| Clean   |
| Downtown Tomah is actually kind of sad to drive through. Facades are old and dirty. Many businesses are closed and vacant giving a picture of a non-vibrant business community. Storefronts are important but very expensive to maintain. Are there any grants that Tomah could help procure so businesses can upgrade                              |



**Question 2 Responses (117 total)**

|   |
|---|
| their front without hurting their bottom line? There are other downtowns that Tomah should look at to model themselves after. Downtown Chippewa Falls comes to mind as a quaint, inviting atmosphere.   |
| Nothing it is a good old boy community that only cares about what the elites think.   |
| I believe our image is positive but future planning can be improved. Our current leaders are doing well but I feel there is a need include a younger generation.  |
| Interesting downtown with some businesses that have been there for a long time, some nice parks,, a lake, etc...  |
| Boring.   |
| I feel tomah is a beautiful place to raise a family and grow.What makes tomah different from other cities I think its our school system I feel like the community is very involed with the school district,lf its family attending event to fundraiser happen for a good cost to the city.  |
| Tomah has a reputation for not having any tourist attractions except the fair and tractor pull.   |
| We love the community events: squirrel fest, downtown Thursday nights, music in the park. It is very fun to see the community come together in a family friendly atmosphere during these events.  |
| We don't have a city administrator. One is needed to explore/research what's available.   |
| When you drive through town there are definitely things that make downtown more appealing but there are also buildings that make the downtown look a little lackluster. I feel like the image Tomah portrays would be so much better if all the buildings had a facelift. I like that there are several new businesses that have opened recently. |
| interstate  |
| We aren't a destination. Nothing to draw people to Tomah.   |
| OK but we need new and younger people in our government. Should not be able to stay in city offices forever.  |
| High amount of drugs! Has more jobs!  |
| Downtown area has seen improvements but more is needed.   |
| small town that is slowly growing and progressing compared to other near by towns similar in population/size.   |
| Dirty. Behind. Sad.   |
| I think the image of Tomah is industrial and transportation hub focused. I think we have opportunity for tourism/travel and retail, restaurant, and hotel opportunities.  |
| The armpit of Wisconsin is how I describe Tomah at this current moment. There's nothing that really makes this community much different than others except the wasted potential and space. The only thing I can say that is positive is the fact that we have a prime location and that we have the VA  |
| Tomah has lots to offer from several park options to the lake to go fishing at. You have that perfect combination of nature and yet have that small town atmosphere to offer something for everyone.  |
| Kind of crappy - needs a good cleanup...first impressions are not the best. We have a nice wide main Street- the boulevards are well kept. Bring back the fountain! More trees!   |
| A pretty good place to live with a nice community. People are so loving here!   |
| Togetherness  |
| Progressive   |
| Merely a spot in the map. People comment there is now draw here-fast, but few dining options. Many not so great bars, few upscale opportunities. Very small town, inbred vibe.  |
| I believe the active Chamber of Commerce and continued economic development are great attributes to Tomah.  |
| Kind of boring,   |
| A bit run down, need more facade updates  |

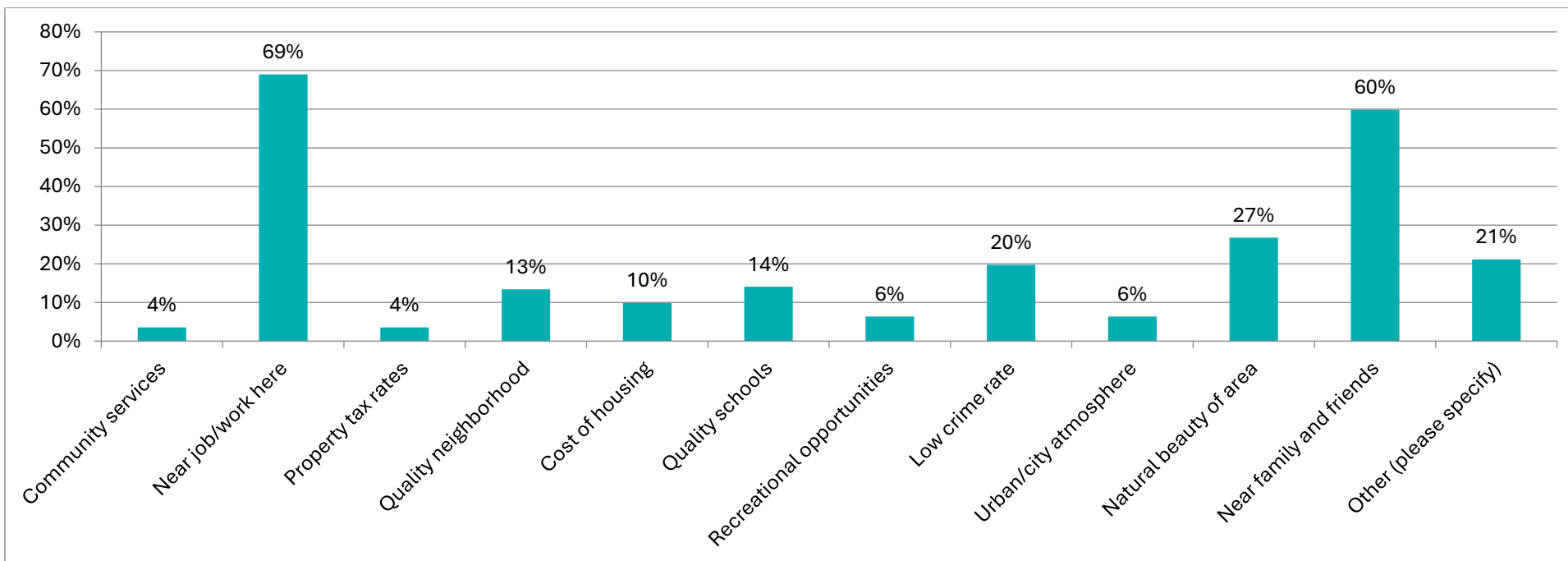
## Question 2 Responses (117 total)

|  |
|--|
| Transient community. Many who live here r only here for a short time. We need a more permanent community.  |
| We are well positioned on major highways   |
| I feel like our neighbors are blowing past us in the downtown scene. Food/shops  |
| To transient, people work Here, but nothing to make people want to live here, also affordable housing.   |
| a city of 9 hotels surrounded by cranberry growers, military establishments, and interstates with nothing much going for its image unless you are interested in some sports. its a city thats large and fortunate enough to have a prime spot on the Wisconsin map, but goes no length to change what is being attracted to us. Were the bigger of the neighboring towns, but dont stand out in any way outside of location, and the number of hotel rooms here. |
| Good old boy   |
| I think people see us as hicksville. We don't have many vibrant, unique businesses or restaurants like Sparta has, and we have a reputation as being redneck from what I hear from colleagues.   |
| Pretty friendly community. It does have convenience of stores and some local stores, but the small town business owners don't get as much support as say, the Sparta community. Tomah is upbeat and has a lot of room for opportunities and growth.  |
| Strong sense of Community  |
| We are a supportive community.   |
| We are a great small town! A truly wonderful place to raise kids.  |
| Good clean city, hub of military base and tractor pull, cranfest   |
| Lack of employees to fill jobs of all kinds.   |
| Ok ~ big on history and pride in history   |
| Quiet town with some fun activities year round. Not quite known for anything specific other than being in the heart of Cranberry country. (In comparison, Sparta has gone all in on Bicycling and complement it with Kriskindlmarkt.)  |
| Both the old town feel and the modernized updates make Tomah unique.   |
| It's cranberry country. and Military.  |
| Tomah is a relatively nice small city/large town that is culturally behind Sparta (West) and Mauston (East), but seems to be slowly improving.   |
| Tomah is very progressive and family-friendly.   |
| Needs more for teens, Elderly & Veterans   |
| Very closed minded. We should have double or triple the businesses our neighbors do.   |
| Not progressive, not enough jobs, lots of vacant storefronts, projects not being completed. Seems to be falling behind compared to other towns around. Tomah seems to be more concerned about short term projects then long term that would bring in more business through out the year versus 3 months like hockey does, but only benefits Hampton and Holiday Inn.   |
| Small town, friendly with some big events that attract people in for the events (for example: the big tractor and truck pull, the Thursday night downtown concerts).   |
| The lake makes it different. It's not up and coming like Sparta or even Black River Falls.   |
| Proud but in some cases we are too proud and we are hurting ourselves. By not listening to what matters. Like what I list above.   |
| Safe and clean   |
| The things that are available- nice hospital and clinics, music in the park, parades etc.  |
| Old community with a declini g downtown  |
| Very strong employer base for its size.  |
| We are falling behind our neighboring communities and other Wisconsin communities of size.   |

**Question 2 Responses (117 total)**

Tomah is a growing community, starting to see more small-town and family owned businesses picking Tomah over other cities. Tomah is embarking on becoming the first all-inclusive city! Our community members really know how to support our disabled, elderly, and Veteran community members. Supporting our special needs members through Special Olympics, Handishop Industries, Tomah Squirrels building all-inclusive playgrounds, offering bus & boat rides for the disabled and elderly, etc.); bringing investors to Tomah to help build an Equine Therapy Center. We should be painting a picture that all are welcome here and also that we invite diversity!

**Q3. What are the three most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Tomah area?**

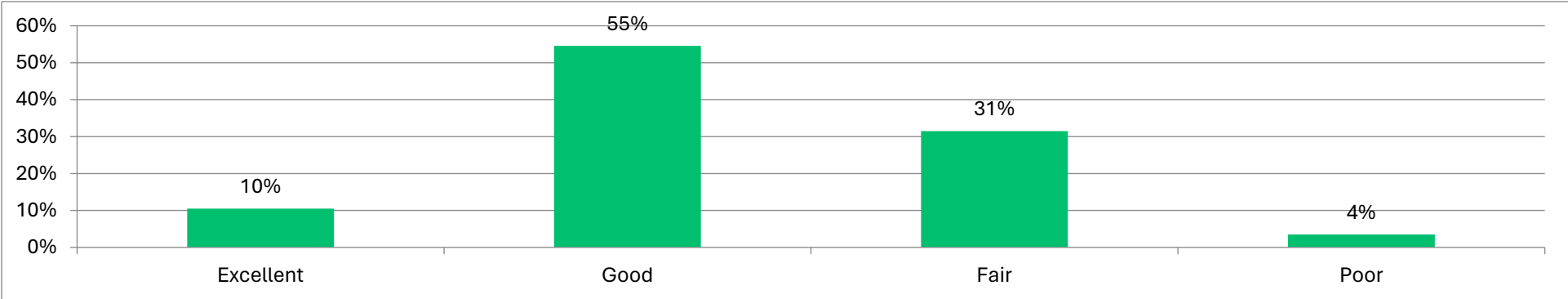


**Question 3 "Other" Responses (30 total)**

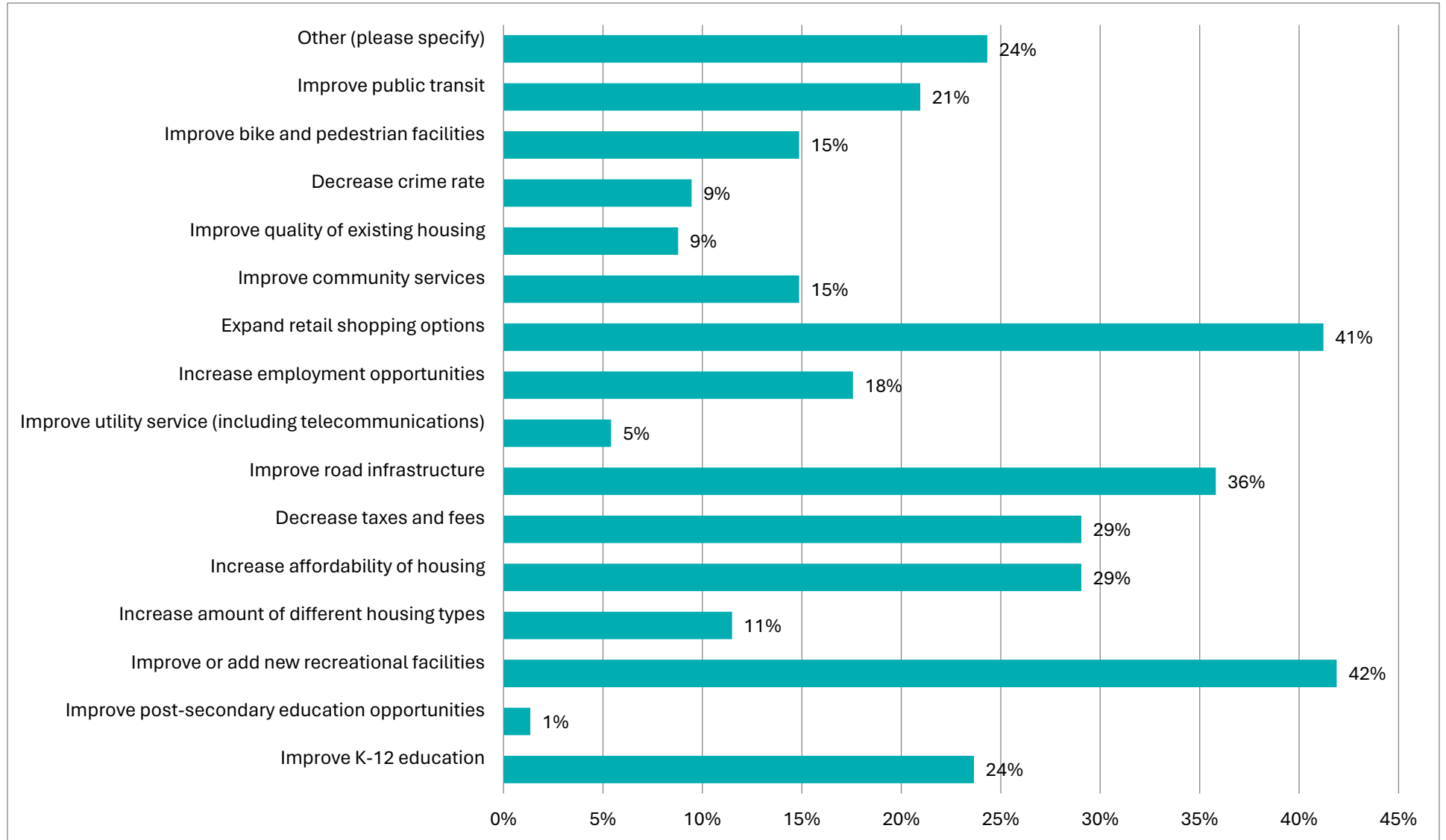
- I was imprisoned by my parents in Tomah at a young age.
- Grew up here
- CLOSE TO FT MCCOY THATS IT!!
- Americana Music in the Park
- I got stuck here, I want to leave. The schools are awful, the gap between classes pronounced, recreationally there is nothing but drinking, housing is terrible, and I work job that I hate because the only other option here is factory work
- Our church
- Friendly church (St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church).
- I have to live with family because I cannot afford to live on my own.
- Easy access to and from because of interstate highways location.

| Question 3 "Other" Responses (30 total)   |
|---|
| Like small towns after living in large towns for most of my life.   |
| My job  |
| N/A   |
| That's really all that is keeping us here.  |
| At that time there wasn't a third from this list.   |
| Family Business   |
| Rural lifestyle. Little traffic and congestion.   |
| Cost of house in the 90s  |
| Military  |
| #bornandraised  |
| Interstate.   |
| Found a home (house) that I loved.  |
| Healthcare services   |
| Easy drive to larger cities with cultural opportunities.  |
| Lifelong resident   |
| Born here   |
| Rural area  |
| I moved here when I married. I like the smaller town, but find it hard to find items I need so I do a lot of online ordering. |
| Life long resident & have always worked in Tomah  |
| Home for 60 yrs.  |
| Born here and never really left   |

**Q4. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in the Tomah area?**



**Q5. Please indicate the top three changes you think would improve the quality of life in the Tomah area.**



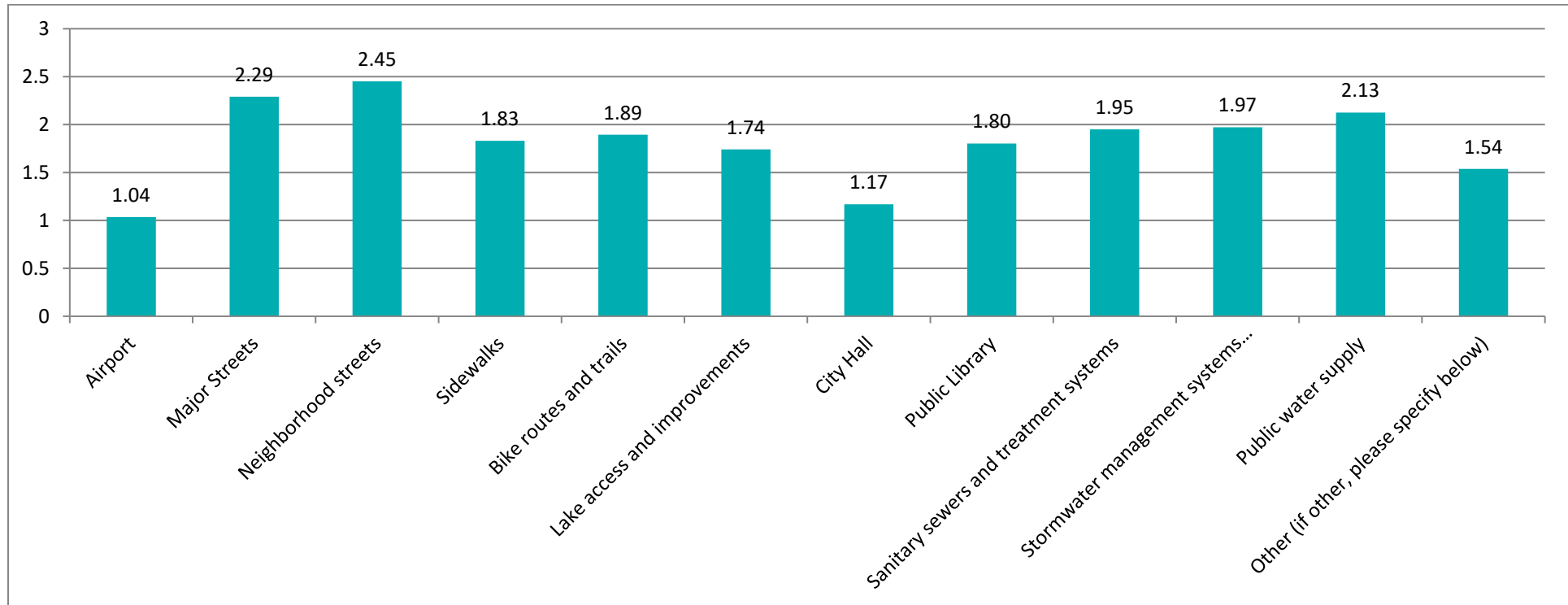
**Question 5 "Other" Responses (36 Total)**

|   |
|---|
| Make businesses clean up outside garbage/ pave sidewalks and driveways  |
| Improve walking trail with protected pollinator habitat instead of grass, more specifically the section behind glendale ave |
| Water quality   |
| A venue to host big events  |

## Question 5 "Other" Responses (36 Total)

|  |
|--|
| shrink government  |
| Enlarge public library   |
| Move the train depot away from downtown  |
| Increase access to mental health services and dental services that accept Medicare and Medical Assistance  |
| Remove substantial drug (non-marijuana) problem and trafficking  |
| Make pool indoors, year round. Support cost with party rooms for rent/arcade/vending machines. Exercise times for adults. Times for new school swim team.  |
| Increase community activities for families   |
| Less fast food and more sit down restaurants or a brew pub   |
| More programs in Park and Rec, both during the day and after hours. Have buildings open for Pickle Ball, dance or yoga, weight training, indoor walking. Have more activities for older adults and not just for kids. Have a swimming beach at the lake. |
| have sit down restaurants versus fast food   |
| Continue quality law and order   |
| Improve Downtown, all of it  |
| Increase access to childcare   |
| Young people (kids, teens) need more things to do. Maybe this falls under "recreational facilities," but there aren't many kid-friendly places in Tomah.   |
| Making the downtown more vibrant and inviting  |
| Indoor pool  |
| Increase interest for tourists   |
| Quality Daycare Facilities   |
| Improve alley, and alley access to Main Street stores. Improve appearance to back side of stores.  |
| Childcare  |
| Add a wellness center/YMCA   |
| Movie theatre  |
| Recreational facilities other than hockey. An indoor swimming/recreational facility similar to the Lunda Center would be a good start.   |
| put tables up with shade at winnebago park   |
| Use hotel room tax for something other than parks and rec.   |
| Increase more walking paths and outside recreational parks   |
| State Certified Job Center   |
| Clean Lake Tomah   |
| All season sport facility with indoor track, field and swimming pool.  |
| Improve the downtown area. If it were a more attractive place to go, more businesses there would succeed.  |
| Child care   |
| Make Tomah a destination ie: meeting\convention facilities, shopping\restaurants   |

**Q6. The City maintains a wide array of public facilities and infrastructure with a limited budget. How would you like the City to prioritize maintenance and construction investments? Please indicate your spending preferences based on your satisfaction with these public facilities. (Weighted average on scale of 1-3, 1 is lowest possible support, 3 is highest possible support)**

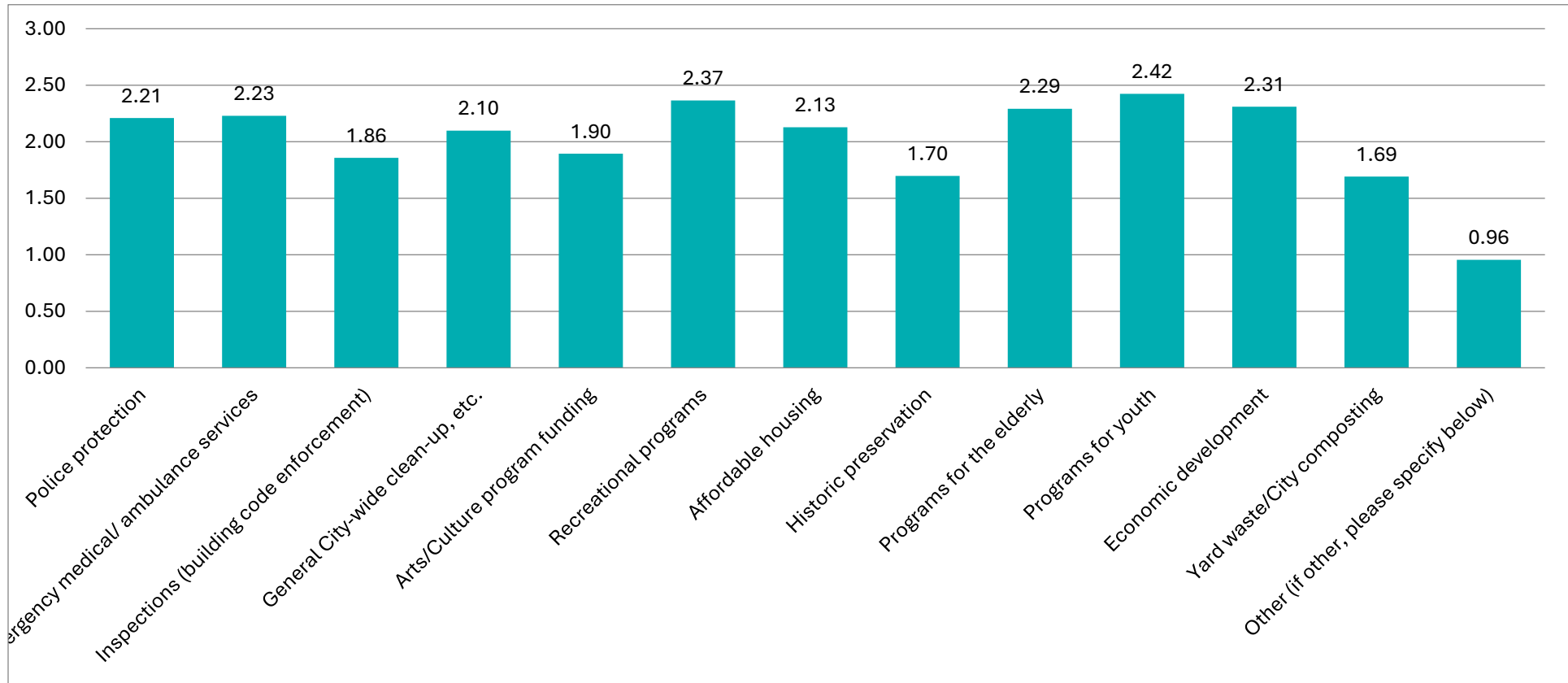


| Question 6 "Other" Responses (54 total)   |
|---|
| Free Chic fi La for ALL!  |
| Combine yellow & brown lids p/up to Same day  |
| NEED NO ATV ROUTE SIGNS NEAR SCHOOLS  |
| Arts infrastructure   |
| Bigger facility for senior citizens to gather   |
| Recreation facilities   |
| Rural Streets.  |
| Law enforcement to tackle drugs in our town   |
| I don't know enough about if the current budget levels meet the needs of the different areas. I'm less worried about recreation if we don't have good infrastructure. |
| City pool, make indoor for year round use.  |
| Let those who use the airport pay for it.   |

|  |
|--|
| parks/recreation programs and sites  |
| Public transportation options.   |
| Sell the airport to a private investor. Utilize the revenue from this to building sports complex.  |
| City parks and green spaces  |
| All indoor athletics are school spaces. Improve communication with TASD and potentially provide funds for new shared spaces. Winter court access is a challenge and neither can fully fund alone.  |
| Emergency services   |
| Improve curb and curbside parking on Glendale.   |
| Plant more trees.  |
| I think fire safety education  |
| Ambulance and fire services  |
| Improvements to Hockey rink  |
| Recreation Opportunities   |
| Validate safety of water with comprehensive PFAS testing at all well sites.  |
| Public transportation  |
| Move Thursday music to Recreation park. City worker Overtime would cease, wouldn't negatively affect down town businesses and people coming through-road closed to them. Huge loss of income.the rec park is set up for everything! Electricity, parking, seating, restrooms, can have the food trucks, not in front of Murray's on Main (always supporting him first-unfair and conflict of interest) not safe for Police station and emergencies, noise up town and so many other negative things for being on main street!!!! |



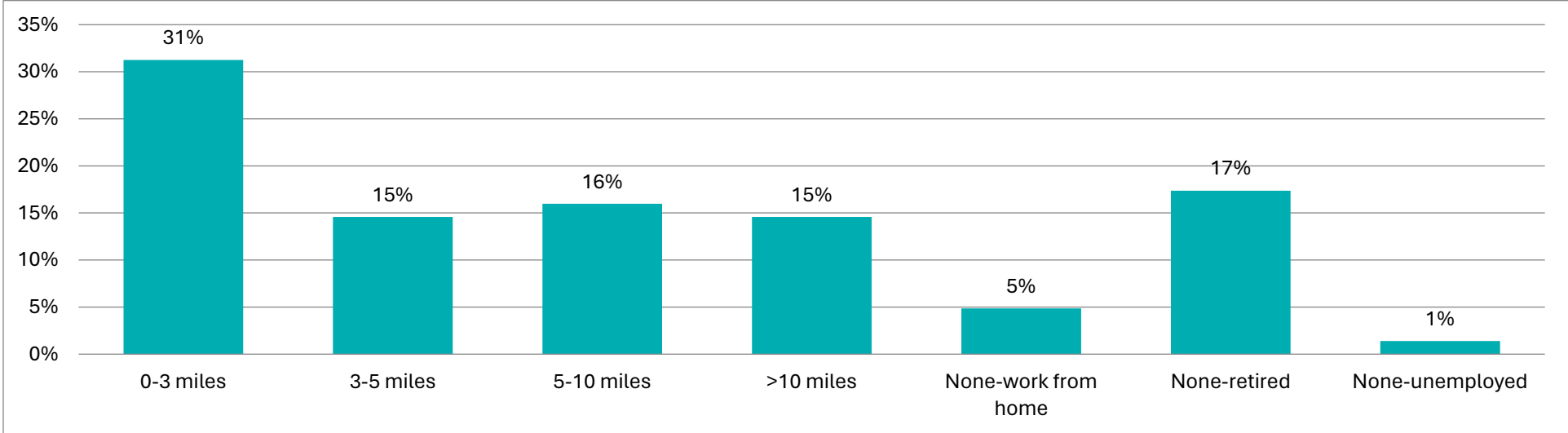
**Q7. The City supports many public services with a limited budget. How would you like the City to prioritize spending on these services? Please indicate your spending preferences based on your satisfaction with these public services. (Weighted average on scale of 1-3, 1 is lowest possible support, 3 is highest possible support)**



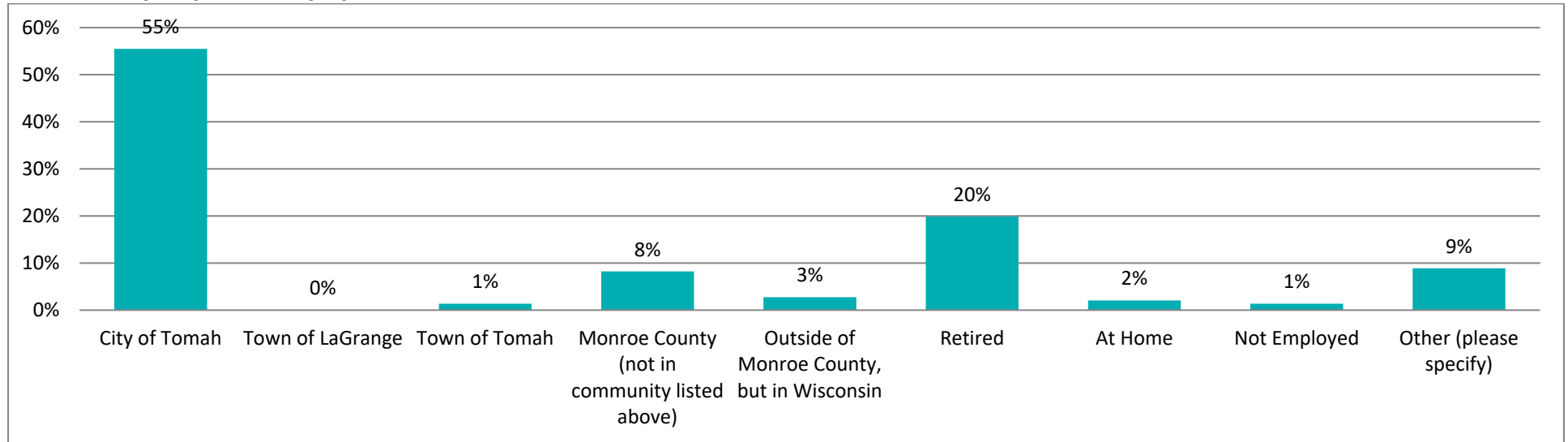
| Question 7 "Other" Responses (16 total)   |
|---|
| Did I mention Free Chic fil la for all  |
| INSPECT ALL HOUSING RENTALS FOR BLDG CODES INSIDE & OUT EVERY 2-3 YEARS.  |
| NEED MOTORCYCLES /ATVS FOR POLICE TO SLOW THESE DRIVERS DOWN  |
| SOBER recreational activities or community center open evenings and nights to offer an alternative to bars, and to give teens something to do other than drinking or getting involved with drugs. |
| Seriously consider a community center with indoor swimming.   |
| It's easier to prioritize what I think is most important to continue to have quality services: Affordable housing, programs for elderly and youth, utility management and economic development.   |
| DOWNTOWN STORE FRONTS/COLORS/UPKEEP ARE UNKEPT  |

|  |
|--|
| City pool, make indoor for year round use.   |
| Several city employees don't work to their potential and are not held accountable. Money & benefits could be saved there.  |
| I want to see city youth programs that are 'not' set up for Wed. nights or Sunday mornings. That is a time for Christian education and worship!  |
| Need to maintain current costs for Fire and EMS for a few years. Staff should be crossed trained for Fire and EMS. Spending to much funding to support two separate types of operations.   |
| Emergency services   |
| More trees.  |
| Parks  |
| A concentrated focus on downtown businesses. Include more blocks in Downtown Thursday Nights. Develop a theme for tourists i.e Antiques/Crafts/Thrift/Specialty Foods/Gifts. Again, similar to Sparta, the Dells, State St in Madison. |
| Have an indoor pool versus outdoor! Healthier for community and more ppl would use it. Pool is closed alot even during summer. A nice rec center like in Black River Falls, LaCrosse, Minong and other areas.                          |

**Q8. What is the approximate distance of your commute to work (total)?**

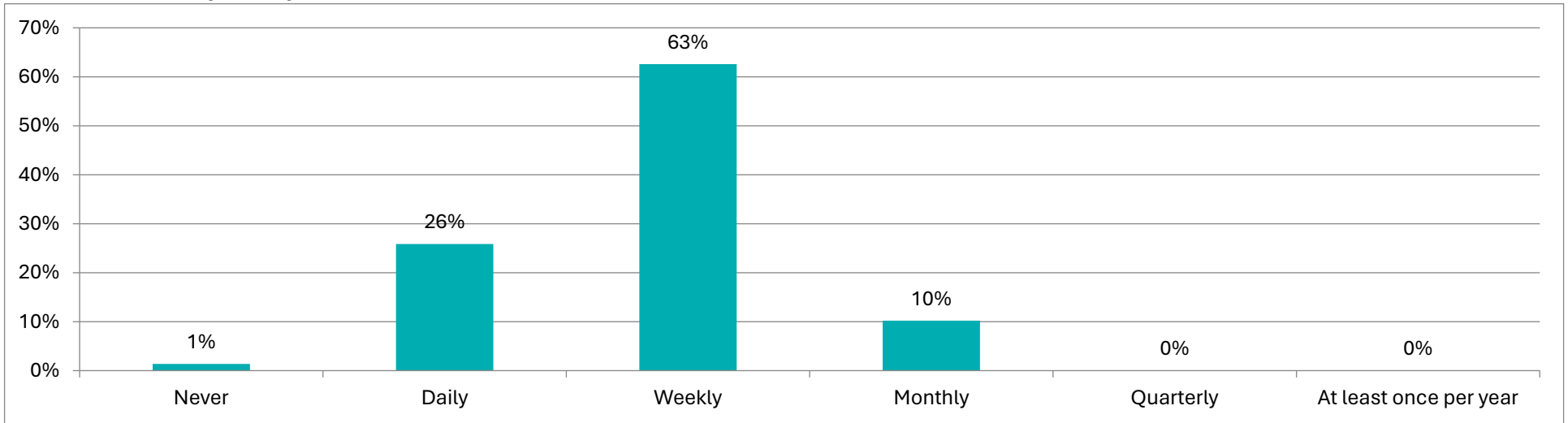
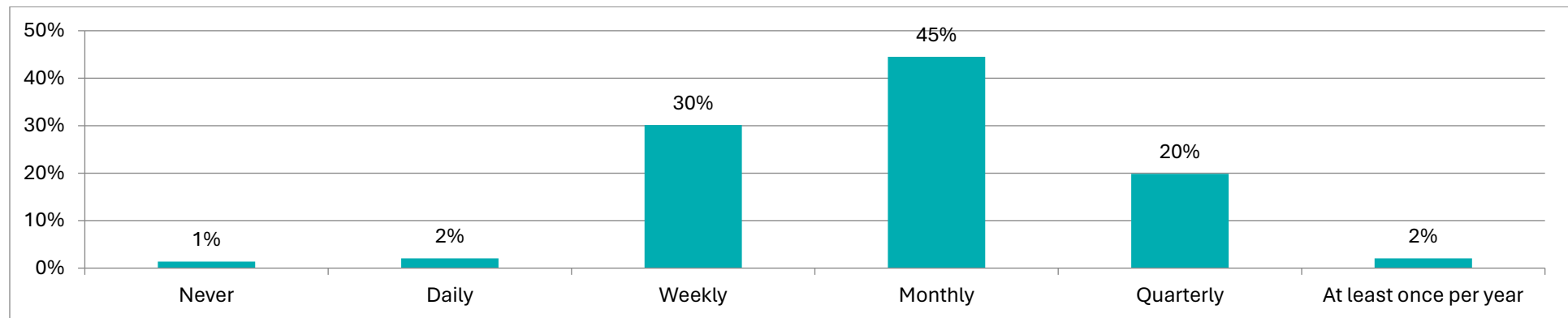


**Q9. Where is your place of employment?**

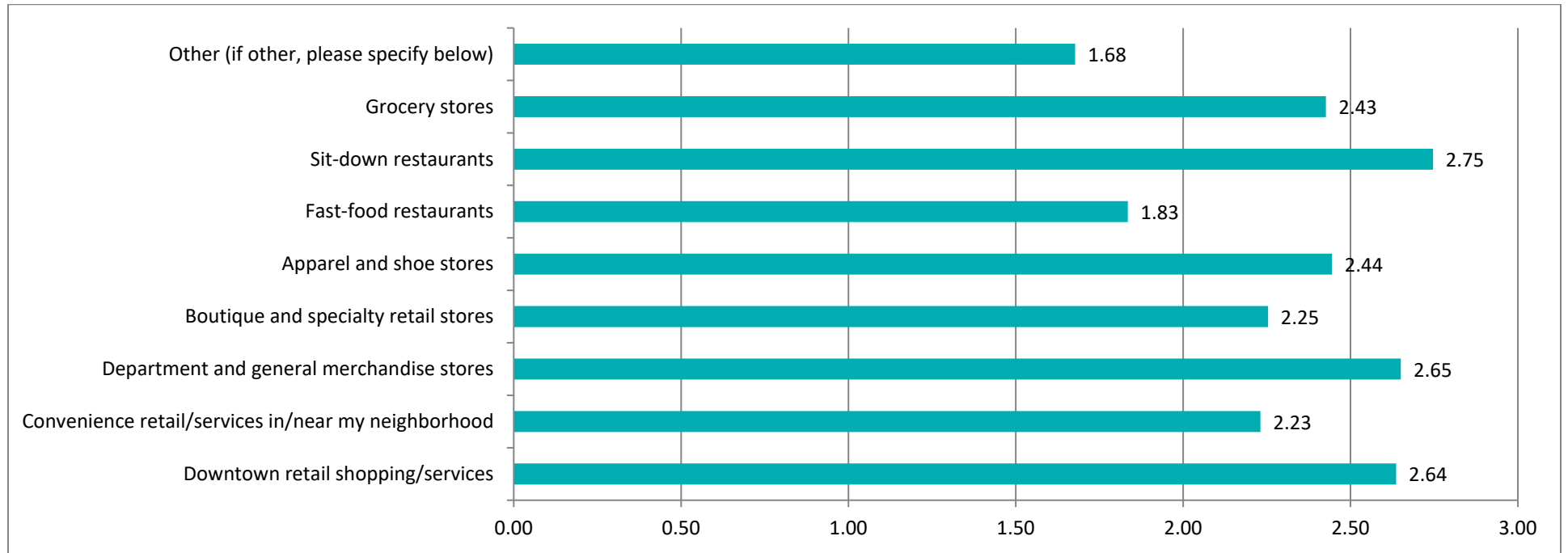


**Question 9 "Other" Responses (13 total)**

|   |
|---|
| Chic fil la wouldn't hire me              |
| Regional and national travel.             |
| Used to be VA                             |
| Tomah va                                  |
| TASD                                      |
| DoD Employee Fort McCoy                   |
| Tomah VA                                  |
| Self-employed                             |
| Fort McCoy                                |
| La Crosse                                 |
| Mixed employment between Tomah & LaCrosse |
| La Crosse                                 |
| Military                                  |

**Q10. How often do you shop in Tomah?****Q11. How often do you leave the Tomah area to shop?**

**Q12. Please share your opinions about the supply of various retail and service businesses in the Tomah area. (need more, have enough, have too much, not sure) (Weighted average on scale of 1-3, 1 indicates having too much, 3 indicates needing more)**

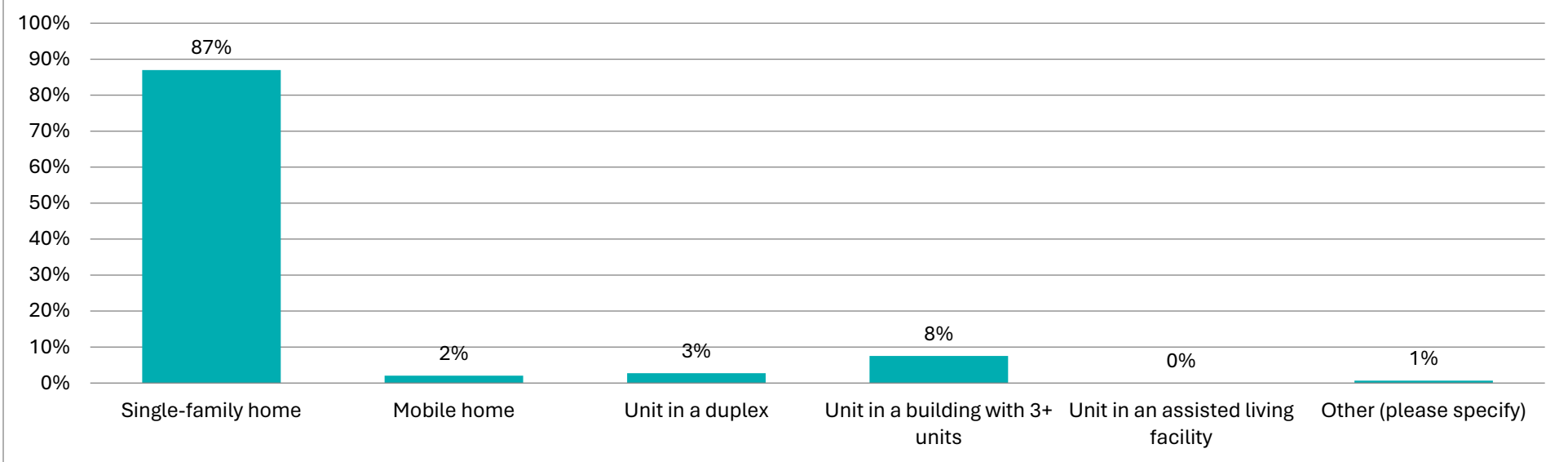


**Question 12 "Other" Responses (28 total)**

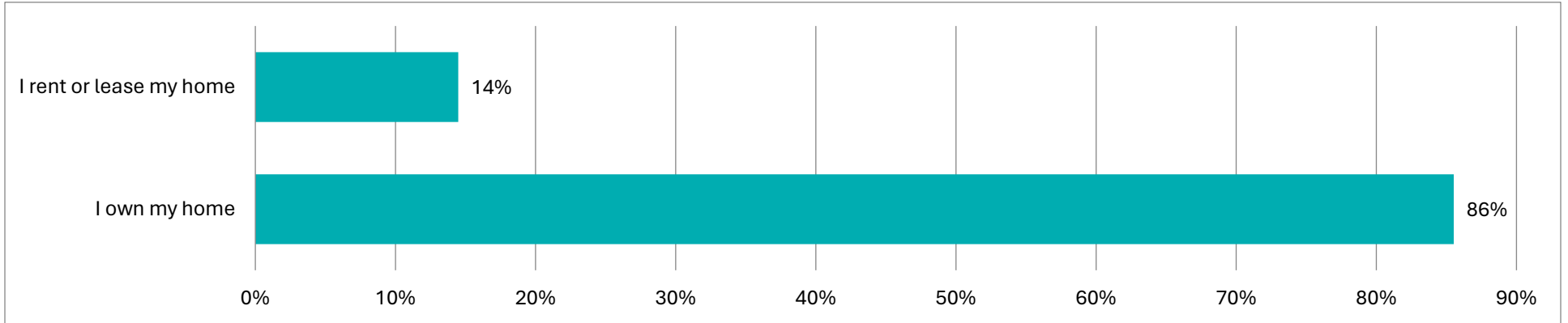
|  |
|--|
| CHICK FIL LA   |
| INSPECTIONS OF RESTAURANTS, RENTALS, GROCERY   |
| We need more quality dining. We also need more development of downtown area to eliminate vacant buildings. Don't invest in big business. Help the small businesses |
| Breweries, wineries, distilleries  |
| exercise options, we need a pool   |
| Coffee shop and bookstore  |
| daycare, taxi service  |
| Tearoom  |
| TOO MANY BARS  |
| We have too many cooperative stores. This has put our local grocery, hardware stores in risk of not surviving. Support local so revenues stay in communities.      |
| Menards, Home Depot, or Lowes.   |
| Tomah needs to have a hotel downtown to keep people from leaving downtown to stay by the interstate.   |
| Young men's clothing store and sports equipment store  |

|   |
|---|
| winery/distillery/brewery options   |
| Arts and craft materials like sewing and fabric retail.   |
| Resale/consignment  |
| Breweries. Wineries   |
| Need more store like Target or similar store  |
| Bars-have too many  |
| there are more than enough second hand places   |
| something to compete with walmart   |
| Taxi service  |
| Large meeting center for new things   |
| Walgreens   |
| Bring in an attraction to pull in more visitors year round (All-season sport facility w/pool). Themed approach to downtown, like antiques, custom furniture, crafts, gifts, artisans. |
| WalMart & Kwik Trip rule this town. Hate to go, but don't always have the time to drive to LaX or Eau Claire  |
| Indoor activities for families  |
| Small Grocery   |
| There are a lot of empty retail space in the Downtown Area which would be nice to see them filled with retail shops.  |

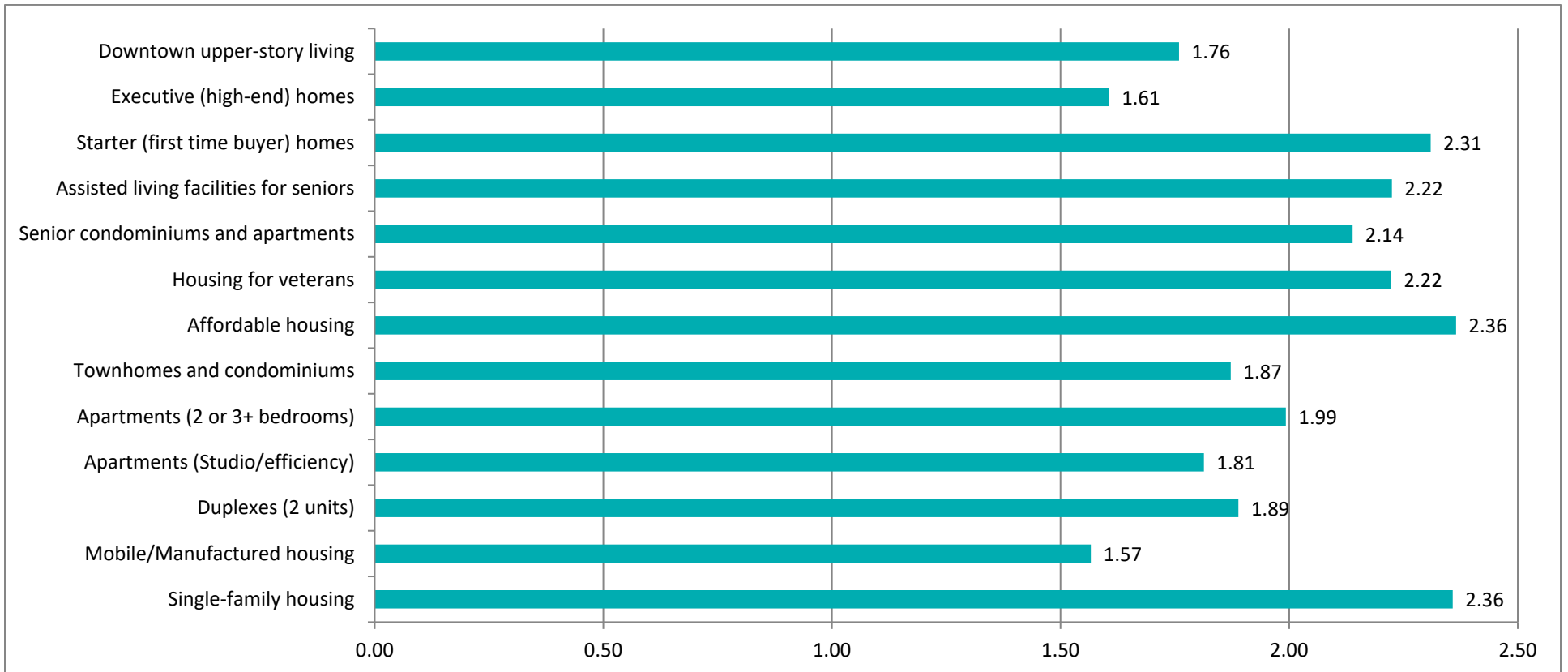
**Q13.What type of dwelling do you live in?**



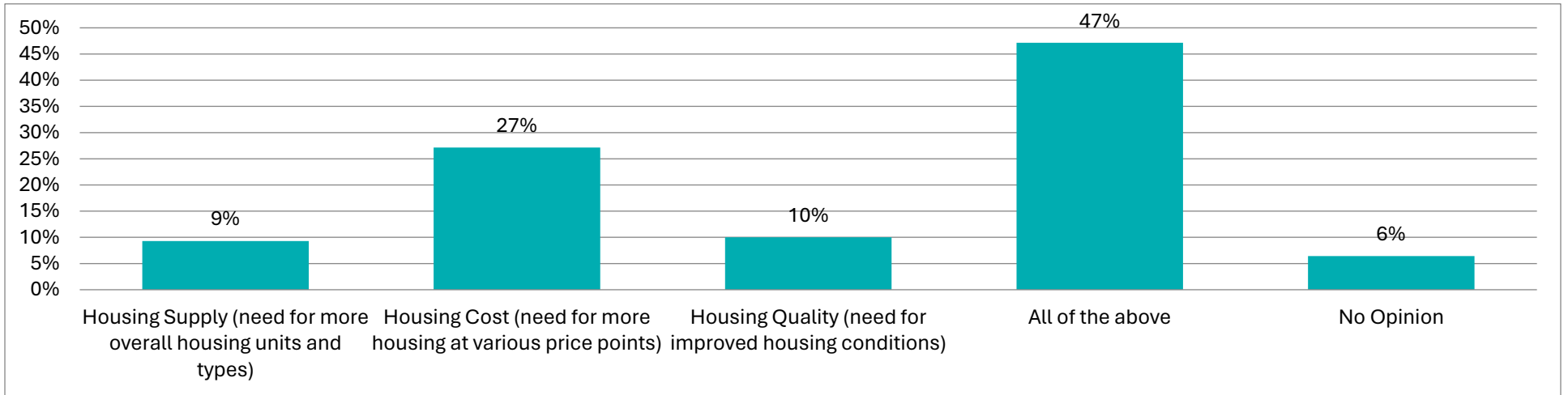
**Q14. Do you rent or own your dwelling?**



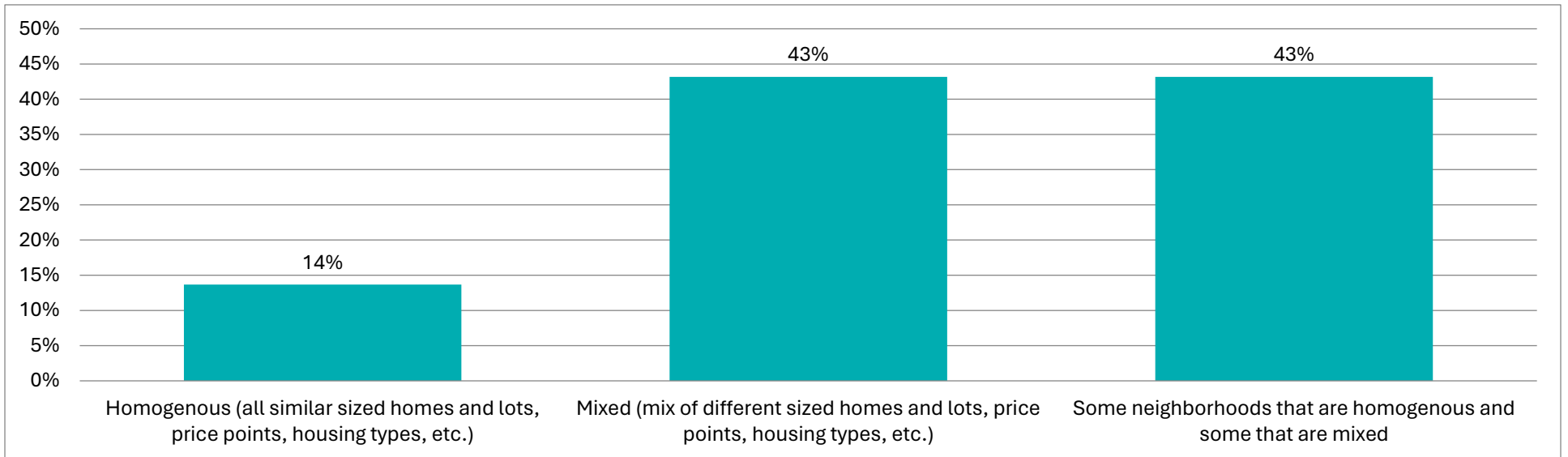
**Q15. Please share your opinions about the supply of various housing types in the Tomah area. (need more, have enough, have too much, not sure)  
(Weighted average on scale of 1-3, 1 indicates have too much, 3 indicates needs more)**



**Q16. Which of the following aspects of housing is most important to improve in the Tomah area?**

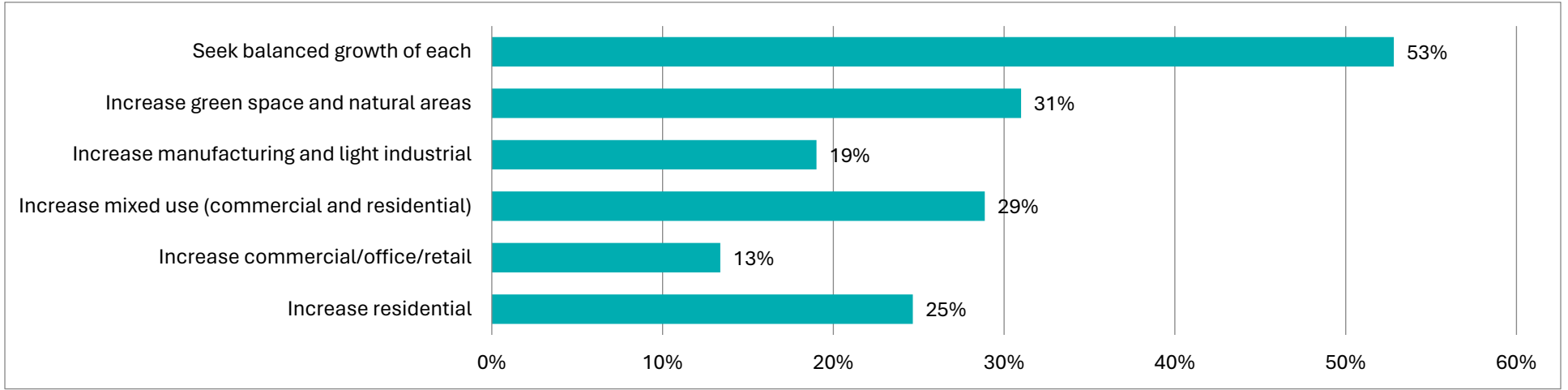


**Q17. What type of residential neighborhood make-up should be prioritized?**

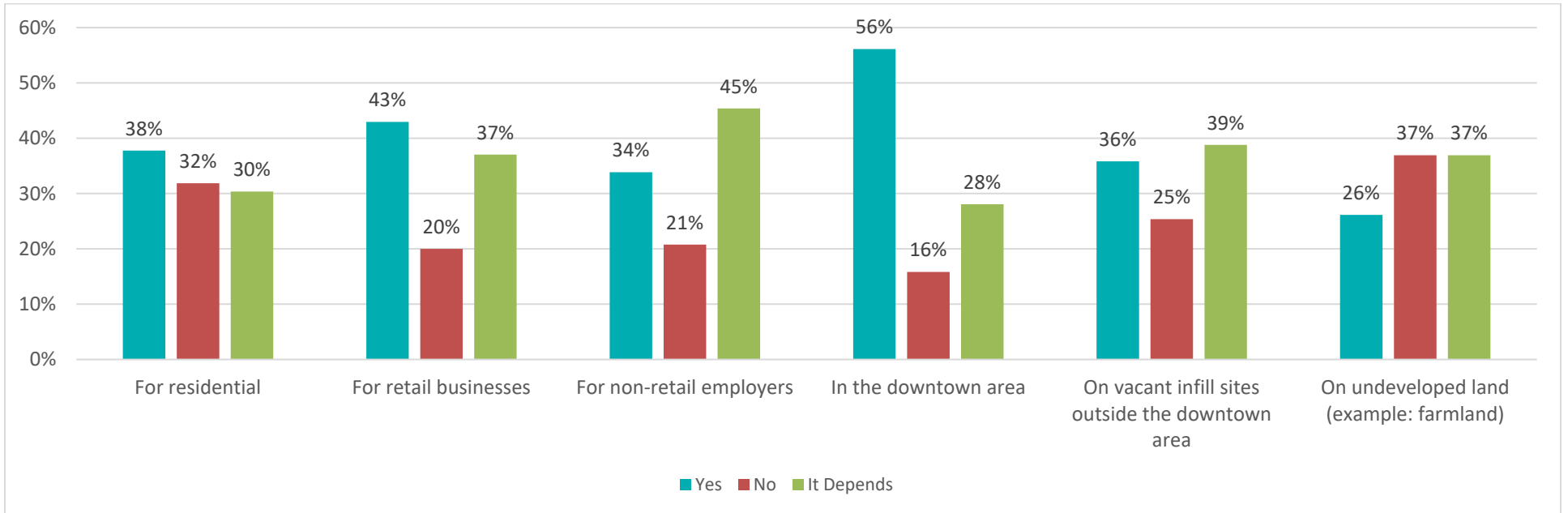




**Q18. What land use types should Tomah prioritize over the next decade? (select all that apply)**



**Q19. For each of the following, should the City offer financial incentives to encourage development and investment?**



**Q20. What should the City's top priority or most important goal be for the next 10 years?****Question 20 Responses (121 Total)**

|   |
|---|
| Work with School District to make sure we make K-12 education a priority. If we do not have good schools, it will be difficult to grow as a local economy as workforce becomes issue.   |
| INFORCE CITY ORDINANCES MAKE PEOPLE OBEY THE SPEED LIMITS RESPECT OUR POLICE DEPT.I   |
| You should know.... A Chick fil La  |
| Bring more money into the city.   |
| Inspections of all rental housing ie permanent, short term, vrbos etc for codes. Tomah businesses of what is here now /REPAVE SIDEWALKS,PARKING/CLEAN UP TOMAH. Would definately be concerned -- As Tomah is becoming a decreasing businesses , deteriorating village   |
| RESTAFFING -- LOWERING TOMAHS STAFF HOURS /NO FEDERAL HOLIDAY PAY/DAYS OFF. BETTER WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM. GET RID OF DRAINAGE PONDS IN NEIGHBORHOODS. IN TOWN BUS SERVICE  |
| Improve the affordable housing. Improve the schools. Help fill downtown buisness not large corporations   |
| Decrease property tax, look at freezing property taxes for the elderly.   |
| Clean up what already exists  |
| An arts center  |
| encourage property owners to maintain & improve their properties. Encourage respectful use of parks & common areas. Aim for a vital downtown area of shops, offices & residential use. Plant trees! Encourage homeowners to plant trees!                                |
| Decrease property taxes   |
| No more hotels and bring in another manufacturer. More for kids to do   |
| Limit growth. Re-develop existing land.   |
| Housing across the board.   |
| Figuring out more indoor and outdoor spaces for families and children of all ages to enjoy. We need a public indoor swimming pool, indoor playground/jump park, movie theater, amphitheater, free splash pad. Kids need more things close to home to occupy their time. |
| Indoor pool   |
| Roads   |
| Move the train depot away from downtown.  |
| Improve family, recreation opportunities to keep families in town and increase visitors for events, tournaments (to boost local economy).   |
| Economic development efforts to retain and grow new   |
| Encourage entrepreneurship, attract new business, and invest in local start ups and continue to invest in the police force to keep the community safe   |
| Improve the roads   |
| Increase access to mental health services including psychiatric care and access to sober activities at night and on weekends as an alternative to bars. Perhaps a community center staffed by volunteers?   |
| Infrastructure in all forms roads bridges railroad tracks buildings etc...  |
| Drug issues including our high school. Bathrooms in the high school always smell like weed.   |
| Recruit manufacturing/businesses. Key to all things future!   |
| Jobs and affordable housing, so folks WANT to stay and live and work in the Tomah area.   |
| Complete sidewalks for all neighborhoods. Fix the intersection issue Superior/Veterans. Increase retail(Target, sit down quality restaurants)   |

| Question 20 Responses (121 Total)   |
|---|
| buy and develop residential lots and industrial park  |
| CITY GOVERNMENT THAT LISTENS TO THE PEOPLE AND DOES WHAT IS BEST FOR THE COMMUNITY AND NOT IN THEIR PERSONAL INTEREST. A CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP THAT UNDERSTANDS CITY FINANCES/AND CITY PLANNING.   |
| Decrease government spending by focusing on most important government tasks (no need to add more and probably could do with less) and letting others lead non-government tasks  |
| Finding quality businesses that will create good, lasting jobs for the area. And not just the same manufacturing/fast food/bar/gas stations that we already have more than enough of. Also, businesses that offer higher pay will help keep and bring in workers for the area.  |
| low income affordable housing   |
| Beautify our town and bring in more shopping/restaurants.   |
| Creating activities in the community. We travel monthly to the Lunda center, wish we could keep our money in Tomah. The day is spent swimming with lunch and dinner in BRF. Our family also needs more healthier food options. The fast food options are endless, but not many homemade food options in the evening.  |
| I want Tomah to remain a small community. We have way too many chains popping up. I understand it helps business, but it takes away from our small town feel. Incentives towards businesses already going into vacant spaces may help this.   |
| find ways to bring people to visit Tomah - use recreation park, book the hotels   |
| Control wasteful spending.  |
| Build a convention center! Should have been done 20 years ago.  |
| Control taxation increases.   |
| Have a community center like BRF, LaCrosse and area cities do. Indoor pool (get rid of outdoor pool-it is just a money pit), Basket ball courts, pickle ball court, meeting rooms to rent for gatherings (that you can bring in your own food or cater in), safe walking area for everyone (so you don't have to deal with the weather or possible falling) |
| employment which then needs housing   |
| Fiscal and Moral leadership. Law and order.   |
| Community center/indoor pool  |
| Affordable Housing and more options for transportation.   |
| Affordable housing and street repair  |
| To make Tomah a wholesome city. Get rid of Mayor Mike, and his drag show fetishes! Get rid of illegal drug use.   |
| We need to enhance the downtown. IT must be improved to draw interest from businesses.  |
| Childcare, with the rising cost of childcare it is starting to become unfeasible for both parents to be in the workforce, especially with lower income families. This in turn will decrease the size of available workforce and decrease the quality of the workforce.  |
| Build a new school for K-12. Ensure you include sports and wellness. Work with the School district to build a sports complex that meets the needs for our community and will attract people to be here.   |
| Lack of childcare   |
| Electricity   |
| Everyone community wants to grow their population...but if the people moving here for work don't have an affordable place to live, then they won't stay long. Tomah should focus on making housing more affordable and more accessible.   |
| More activities to bring to public together.  |
| Building new schools as a cooperative venture between city/school district. Set a new precedent for others to follow.   |
| Affordable single family homes of decent size.  |

| Question 20 Responses (121 Total)  |
|--|
| Leaders and city employees should be required to live in community they serve.   |
| Protecting the community   |
| Making downtown Tomah more appealing and inviting to entice people to come downtown support the small business. Make sure there are good paying jobs for people in the trades such as welding, carpentry, etc. But also bringing in more high-tech companies to grow the tax base and diversify the population. This will ensure that new and different businesses can thrive in Tomah so all residents' needs and interests are served. I also believe that the Tomah area needs to focus on elderly services. More businesses that can have home visits would be a great way to keep costs down as elderly housing and service can be very expensive. Many facilities do not provide for a high quality of life which is quite sad . |
| Community center for kids as well as more retail and shopping businesses since there is a lack of them.  |
| Status quo for the most part is good. The need and ability to navigate the national issues will always play a part. Which is why "it depends" is my answer for incentive based questions.  |
| Indoor pool, indoor recreation area, activity center for the community   |
| Growth of the community/retail/housing   |
| Growth overall   |
| To keep and entice businesses to our town  |
| Adding indoor kid friendly facilities (movie theater, children's museum, indoor pool, arcade, trampoline park, ...etc)   |
| City administrator   |
| Bringing in something like a Y for all in Monroe County to use.  |
| maintain and expand  |
| Improve quality of life  |
| Keep Taxes affordable for retirees, actually everyone.   |
| More homes for Veterans.   |
| Increased money for schools  |
| continue to grow and expand with having good quality within the community as a whole.  |
| Progress. Model after Sparta, Viroqua, other small communities that grow small business, family friendly events/activities, nature   |
| Develop the downtown so people would want to get off the interstate to see it.   |
| Economic development in downtown and the southside/I-90 interstate area  |
| Improve the cost of living for the people who are alone who cannot make it on their own. More activity facilities in the area that would generate growth for the city as well as keeping people busy from doing wrong activities. Utilize the space that we have instead of leaving it to waste and rot. Cheaper Apartments like I said Apartments here are almost the same cost as a house payment. Bringing other retail stores.   |
| Continue to grow this community and provide ample opportunities for families to have activities/events that are cost effective. A Wellness Center/YMCA could be the perfect 10 year goal to incorporate and would be highly used.  |
| Clean up neighborhoods: ordinances for cleaned up property enforced. Garbage & Recycling Bins not put out until time for pickup AND put away timely. Our visitors have commented on how "crappy" this makes the town look.   |
| Fixing the roads!  |
| Mixed income housing for an adequate workforce   |
| More areas for our children to be able to safely play and grow with out fear of bullies, drugs, or alcohol.  |
| Develop a progressive agenda for all aspects-more than Downtown Thursdays! Elect city officials who do not present a conflict of interest.   |

| Question 20 Responses (121 Total)  |
|--|
| Providing reasonably priced housing and promoting housing upkeep.  |
| Make it more affordable to all income levels   |
| Public Safety, seems fire department is getting busier as the community grows  |
| There are hardly any places to shop. It would be nice to not have to drive to Onalaska to get clothes for my children, without going to Walmart here.  |
| Bring in a convention center so we can accommodate the motels and food establishments  |
| Efficiency   |
| bring in a store to compete with Wal-Mart. Put a restaurant by the hospital  |
| Public Safety, Fire/EMS  |
| Make Tomah better to be apart of. Favoring a few business plans and seeing success coming from only a few major people in town is not what it should look like. when one struggles we pick them up. Plan to have more traffic coming through if those high speed rails are ever put in. getting them to stop and spend money is a must. Filling the hotels rooms as much as possible to raise money and awareness of our area. I think sports are great but they stress people out. this world needs less stress and our goal should be to focus on relaxing and wellness. our younger ones will thank us i think. |
| Clean up downtown  |
| Continue to think about building a vibrant community of non-chain restaurants and shops.   |
| Affordable housing   |
| Build a recreation center with a pool for community use.   |
| Growth   |
| Updating Schools   |
| Overall citizen success, safety, and enrichment.   |
| Annexing nearby land for future development.   |
| Fix the road and streets Asap  |
| Freshening up Tomah. Looks old and somewhat rundown in many areas. Pride in our community and neighborhoods of all kinds.  |
| Diversify retail and restaurant opportunities ~ bring in brand names like Buffalo Wild Wings or Chipotle. Request established restaurants to revamp menus so it's not the same food years at a time.   |
| Revitalize downtown ("Gentrify it") Attract tourism dollars. More High-Vis Concerts.   |
| Growth and sustainability of businesses (restaurants, shopping, etc.) and growth of the housing market   |
| Becoming the type of city that people want to live in because the quality of life is so great  |
| Maintenance/repair of infrastructure   |
| The voting of officials and tasks should be open to business owners too. A lot of the "higher ups" are not qualified and are only buttering their own pockets with their ideas and goals.  |
| Reduce property taxes by reducing wasteful spending.   |
| Build a convention center that would bring in money and jobs in throughout the year.   |
| Have more things for families to do indoors in the cold months.  |
| Provide beautiful, friendly small town, family-oriented atmosphere with big city amenities for an inviting, comfortable atmosphere with a top quality education system, as well as opportunities of interest for seniors, and economical growth for jobs and leisure time pursuits that not only attract people to visit, but also to live and stay here.  |
| Bring back downtown and make it somewhere people want to linger and the rest will grow   |

| Question 20 Responses (121 Total)  |
|--|
| Taking care of people of all ages!   |
| Public transportation and affordable housing   |
| Getting in more commercial businesses on the south end of town. Getting more than fast food and dollar store on the North side of town                   |
| Equality   |
| Growth in bringing people to Tomah. Hockey is not the answer and spending room tax money needs to be for the good of the whole area not a single entity. |
| Road infrastructure and quality of water.  |

**Q21. Please share any additional comments you have that could assist the City of Tomah in planning for the future of the community.**

| Question 21 Responses (61 Total)   |
|--|
| Get City to fix County ET NOW. That project was supposed to be done 2 years ago! Where did the funding go? Voters approved a City Administrator. Current system may be fox guarding the hen house. Where is their oversight? I gave nothing against current people running the city. But that is not what voters mandated.   |
| Chick fil La   |
| Do not rely on Bases, Va hosp. For now, this is your bread and butter employment. Could include Walmart also. To even have anyone living here  |
| NO CASINOS THERE ARE ENOUGH OF THEM WHY CATER TO THE OWNERS  |
| Protected Pollinator habitat on the walking trails   |
| Rules about property upkeep that already exist need to be informed, especially neighboring/overflowing to public property/green space.   |
| The city should financiallt support Americana Music in the Park. Its Tomah's oldest music fest, its not focused on alcohol and family centered.  |
| Keep sprawl under control for less driving required for daily living, take care of the downtown area.  |
| Need new ideas from a younger generation. Out with the old in with the new   |
| Number 18 should have an option without increasing land use.   |
| This is a hub for many small communities. A lot of new families and young adults want to end up here but there needs to be a better housing market. Investors are snapping up homes and making duplexes taking away all the good first homes. The single family homes are disappearing leaving high end homes, or rentals and rental prices right now are outrageous. Actual homes are being snapped up instantly. There is a demand and a need for small homes. |
| Overpass at railroad crossing on Superior Ave  |
| Re-opening of movie theater or turn it into recreation facility - indoor mini golf, trampoline, rope course, Lazer tag   |
| Need to improve communications with residents in light of poor media resources/reporting   |
| Encourage sober activities to help lessen the problems with drug and alcohol abuse and to increase our overall mental health.  |
| A better Tomah sign coming into the city with electronic sign board which would spread news and possibly get people more involved with things and make a good first impression for the City. Possibly 2 or 3 signs for different ends of town but for sure on the south end by Kwik Trip   |
| Incentive to start a taxi or uber population   |
| Growth means progress. Give current and potential residents a reason to remain in or relocate to Tomah and immediate area.   |
| None   |
| Hire a person that will plan events to bring people to Tomah for a weekend /a week/ and want to come back again.   |
| Going along with my answer for #20, if you can bring in jobs for those with college degrees it will help the people that grew up in Tomah actually stay in Tomah. When I originally moved away it was because Tomah had no, to very little, jobs outside manufacturing, food service, or trucking. Nothing appeared to be available for someone who wanted to use any kind of degree they just spend 4 years paying for and working towards.                     |

**Question 21 Responses (61 Total)**

|  |
|--|
| Implement year round activities that youth are interested in that would give them incentive to occupy their time instead of falling back on drugs and poor self care.  |
| I think the Tomah Ambulance needs to have some contracts with local businesses that provide insurance. I work for Tomah Health and would use the TAA but it is not within network of my insurance which I think is absurd since it is the local ambulance service. When I check with my insurance, Gundersen Tri-state is within network but not Tomah ambulance. PLEASE change this and work together with Tomah Health.  |
| Activities for families  |
| I wish the parks and recreation department were more responsive and timely. Most of the time programs ate announced last minute, or the need for program facilitators are announced last minute  |
| Build a hotel/bar/restaurant/banquet room downtown.  |
| Building apartments and low end housing attracts people who don't want to invest in the community. Building stater homes, single family homes and high end homes will improve the community and the economy.   |
| Minimize subsidies that drive up taxes.  |
| Having real estate taxes fair from one person/business to another. Have people in the City Hall that is held accountable for "doing" their jobs. MOVE the Thursday night (drunk fest) to the Recreation Park instead of always having Murray's on Main the "main attraction". The rest of the town suffers by closing the main street down at 2-11 pm (the businesses that need this income), paying 4-6 city workers 6 hours of OT for less than 2 hours of work, interferes with the Police station and emergencies, with the Fire station moving-that helps that issue a little. The mess that is left behind that us tax payers have to pay for. Out at the Rec center, businesses that had to buy food trucks, tents, coolers and everything else-would have a better and safer location. Bathrooms and level parking is also there! Chamber doesn't want to listen--because they are all for "Ed Thompson and Mike Murray". Why does the city plow MOM's out and not the other businesses in Tomah? Mike has his personal, business vans and Gen3's business and apartment renters park there. Seems unfair again....if anything is mentioned, retaliation happens, just like most jobs ;-( Maybe this group will help us other hard working business owners to survive. thank you |
| Overall a good job. Just keep watch as dynamics are changing. Stick to our core values   |
| Homelessness is starting to become more prevalent in the Tomah area. Anticipate this is something that will need to looked at at some point.   |
| How the city allowed the apt buildings to be placed on the south-west side of of West Veterans St. and Berry Ave. is beyond comprehension. Too many people, packed in too dense of an area. Not enough green space for people with kids! Very poor planning!!! Shane, what were you thinking???  |
| The MAJOR, and immediate, underlying impediment to efficient growth with a City the size of Tomah, is not having a single person steering the ship. The City of Tomah currently has a group of people that are apparently designated to review issues and provide counsel and advice to the common council. City's the size of Tomah have a city administrator to manage City matters and oversee most departments. A single person. We will NOT become a progressive City with a management model that isn't used anywhere else. Hire an administrator to manage City matters and let's move forward together. An administrator would also provide effective oversight to department heads. Currently, there is no oversight, no boss, no manager, no supervisor...this model can not work for City government. Get rid of the "SET", hire an administrator, and let's begin rapidly improving our City.  |
| Please work with organizations within the community (Tomah Health, Gundersen Health, Mayo Clinic, WalMart, Toro, etc) to create more options for better childcare.   |
| Don't have standard leadership in the initial planning for the future. Ask the following types or groups so you get a much larger bandwidth of ideas. Employees from different employers, small business owners, doctors, tribal and people from all types of ethnic groups. Lastly, create a survey that you can get input from kids. Ask kids from 6th grade up on what they would like to see. Those ideas may be different from adults. You may find some things we need to better support them. Lastly, how will all people have access to this survey? Will be truly obtain the elderly's input on this if they don't have access to a computer or entranet.   |
| Tomah sometimes feels like a bunch of small neighborhoods, rather than one cohesive city. If you look at Sparta, every corner of that city is accessible by trail or sidewalk. But there are entire neighborhoods in Tomah that can only be reached by vehicle--you can't walk or bike to them, because there are no sidewalks   |
| Move the Thursday night summer concert throughout the downtown area. It should benefit the entire downtown, not just the mayor's restaurant.   |
| I think it's totally unfair that property owners are charged interest when curb/gutter and sidewalks are installed. Instead of being the heavy-handed bully, the city could give homeowners up to 10 years to pay with no interest.  |

**Question 21 Responses (61 Total)**

|   |
|---|
| Lower taxes   |
| Tomah has some nice things going but seems to drive people away from downtown instead of bring them in by not having some basic services. No hotel so people have to stay by the interstate. Also, this would allow people to have a good time without worrying about driving as there is no Uber or similar service for safe rides. Winnebago Park is a focus instead of Gillette Park. I believe Gillette could hold an excellent Christmas craft village like they do in Sparta. Downtown Thursdays could be expanded and incentives given to have businesses stay open longer. Many storefronts need to be updated. Are there grants for this? Urban blight such as empty stores need to be dealt with. The tractor pull used to bring people downtown. Now they all sit out at the campsite. How can you bring people back downtown? City staff also need to understand how expensive it is to run a small business and do whatever they can to help. If you do not have a vibrant downtown business community, you will not have a downtown. I believe Tomah can be a top-notch destination but there are things that must be done in order for that to happen. Thank you for caring enough to create this survey. Perhaps make a survey that focuses on downtown and what people like, don't like currently and ideas to bring people back downtown. A great first step toward growth and excellence for Tomah's future! |
| Indoor pool, more city wide events-wine walks, murder mysteries, activities for teens   |
| I do feel that race plays a big factor in a town like this speaking for hispanic/afican american/ect this town is not used to interecting to with diffrent kinds.So having billigul people to help get people sitiuted in new town for them as well as not distrimating and being more welcomeing.Maby even having more bully semanaries for schools just to learn how to adapt in big city deffrents.  |
| Affordable and sufficient available housing is a must. We need something for teens to do like a movie theater/ mini golf etc space  |
| Less Bars   |
| Public art, sculpture and murals would increase the interest in downtown. Move the parking to the rear of Main Street business. Increase walk through foot traffic. More green space on Main Street. Slow Main Street traffic down. Move truck traffic around downtown. More green space on main.   |
| Take this survey seriously along with others don't just brush it aside.   |
| Incorporate a wellness center/YMCA as the community and families truly needs this. The Lunda Center in Black River Falls is a prime example of what Tomah could and should have. Would also be nice to have a Target as Walmart really takes the lead in Tomah. A Target could provide a nice option for shoppers who don't want to always go to Walmart for the everyday essentials.   |
| The music festival stage should be located down by Gillette Park near the washrooms.  |
| Encourage citizen involvement in the entire process   |
| Take a look at Sparta aquatic center and design something for Tomah like Sparta. Fun, safe,and can be proud to say come to our town and enjoy our beautiful aquatic center.   |
| Promote events other than hockey and DTE. Recruit new businesses for downtown areas. Help Tomah become less dull and more vibrant. Hire a city administrator from outside the current good ol' boys network and encourage growth . We have a wealth of resources in this city and many are untapped. Support Americana in the Park-it's every bit as important to the residents and visitors as Downtown Thursdays. Everyone needs to work together and support each other. This area has supported Hockey for years...let's branch out and try new things...the arts, horticulture—whatever. We need to make this a destination versus someplace to escape.  |
| I've put my best foot forward for the City of Tomah for many years. When I sat on a board used to help tourism, our leaders had meetings and discussions about the tax money we raise without even saying anything to me. When I said there was a issue since the new hotel opened, I was asked to join meetings that were never going to go anywhere. I never thought the people that seen me change and become a community leader would turn its back on me when I said something was wrong from a professional standpoint. I took that personally.   |
| We could use a Lunda Center   |
| We have a great community, but we can't stand still. We need to be aggressive in incentivizing future housing development. We are also blessed to be on the corridor between the Twin Cities and Chicago. Consider other types of development west and southwest of Walmart.  |
| Please fix the roads, they are no longer just potholes, they are dangerous to personnel and vehicles  |
| Move Thursday night drunk fest to the Recreation park, Community center for all-pool, basketball & other courts, places to rent for parties & small gatherings (all spaces here you can't bring in food-which theirs is all expensive), have snow plowing/removable fair for all. Murray's doesn't have to pay anything, but his  |



**Question 21 Responses (61 Total)**

employees, customers, residents, party bus and everything else parks there. The people that pay to live or eat there. Most businesses can put snow in the street to have removed-others have to use their parking lots which eliminates parking spots and wrecks the lot.

I think that there is not enough of a need for any sporting events as we just do not have the business coming in versus the need/want for more events such as concerts and conventions. As someone who works at a hotel in town, we have more problems with the sports groups, mainly hockey and soccer, then we do with any other events. We have never had problems with our military, construction, contractors, business groups. They should be the main groups of people you should be trying to bring into town as they are the ones who spend the most time here.

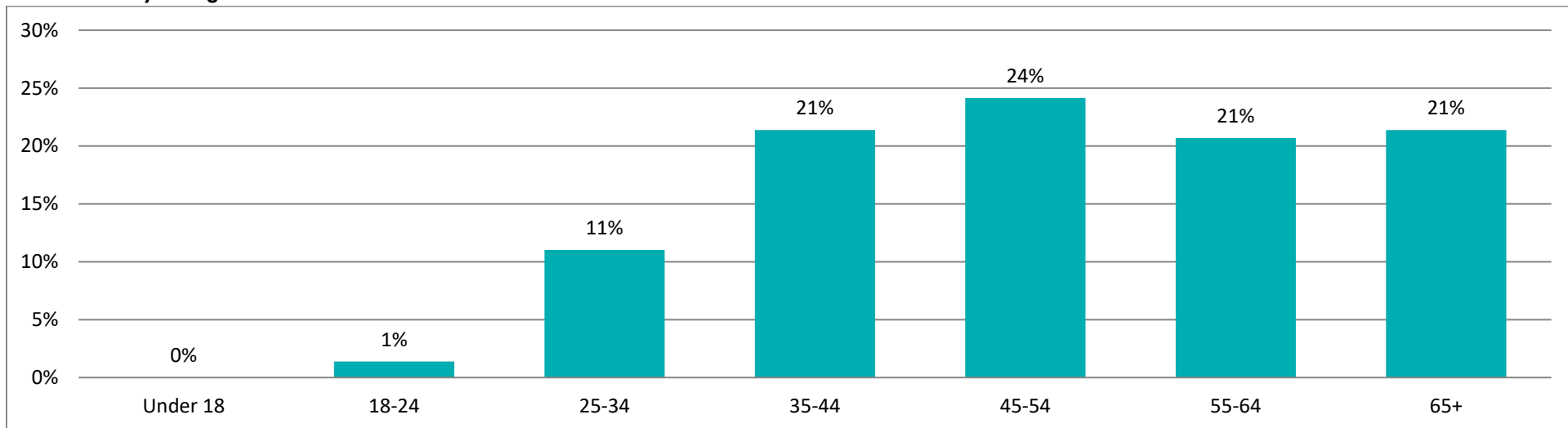
We need a place for children to grow outside of the school like the YMCA. And we need a bigger place for the senior center so it can help all of them with many hardships, and disability.

Do not be afraid of competition with local people - make sure that we treat any prospective business fairly and not take a local person just because they are old time tomah names

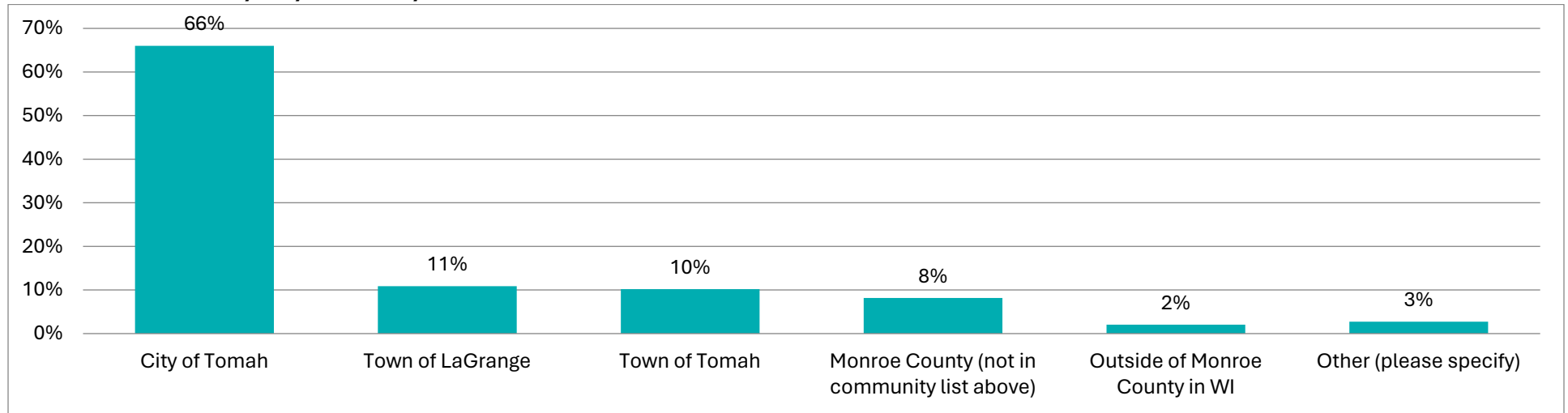
Get a qualified city administrator

We should be the one of largest convention destinations in the state. Our location lends itself to this type of business. This would also bring jobs and additional revenues in the form of taxes and out of the area spending. We need to be looking for additional types of businesses to relocate to Tomah other than fast food, pizza. We need to bring more technology type businesses that would attract more new employees to the area. Make Tomah attractive to people looking to relocate both businesses and families.

**Q22. What is your age?**



**Q23. In what community do you currently live?**



## REVIEW AND ADOPTION MEETINGS

|                   |                          |  |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>March 2024</b> | LRPC and Plan Commission | Both groups were introduced to the Draft Plan, the proposed changes, and a summary of the feedback collected through the survey. |
| <b>April 2024</b> | LRPC and Plan Commission | (to be filled in)  |
| <b>May 2024</b>   | (to be filled in)        | (to be filled in)  |
| <b>June 2024</b>  | (to be filled in)        | (to be filled in)  |



# TOMAH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2045



## APPENDIX B: Community Indicators

Draft: April 2024

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# ABOUT THE DATA

The Community Indicators Report is a summary of current conditions and recent trends in Tomah, based on the best available data. The purpose of these indicators is to enable informed choices about the future of the City. This report is included as an appendix to the comprehensive plan so that it may be easily updated from time to time as new data becomes available.

These indicators utilize a mixture of local, county, state, and federal data sources. The U.S. Census has historically been a key source of data for many community indicators. Much of the information previously collected by the decennial U.S. Census is now collected only by the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing survey that collects sample data every year and reports estimates of population and housing characteristics. For communities smaller than 20,000 people, the best available estimates are reported as rolling averages over 5-year periods – they indicate average conditions over the reporting period rather than a snapshot of a single point of time. Because the ACS estimates are based on a sample of the population, they include some error. As a general rule, the ACS data is quite reliable at the State level, generally reliable at the County level, and less reliable at the municipal level. The margin of error means caution should be used when interpreting the data. The second important note when using ACS estimates is that they cannot be compared to decennial census data because they are measured in different ways. While some of the tables in this report show both decennial census data and ACS data, caution should be used when trying to draw conclusions about trends by comparing the two sets of numbers. At the time of writing this report, the most recent ACS data was from 2022.

## SECTION 1: POPULATION & AGE TRENDS

Population trends for the City of Tomah show a 5% increase in population between 2010 and 2020, compared to 4% for Monroe County and 4% for the State. During that same period the adjoining towns of La Grange and Tomah grew by -3% and 6% respectively. Over the past 20 years (2000-2020) the population in the City of Tomah grew by 17%, in Monroe County by 18%, and in the State by 14%.

### Population Trends

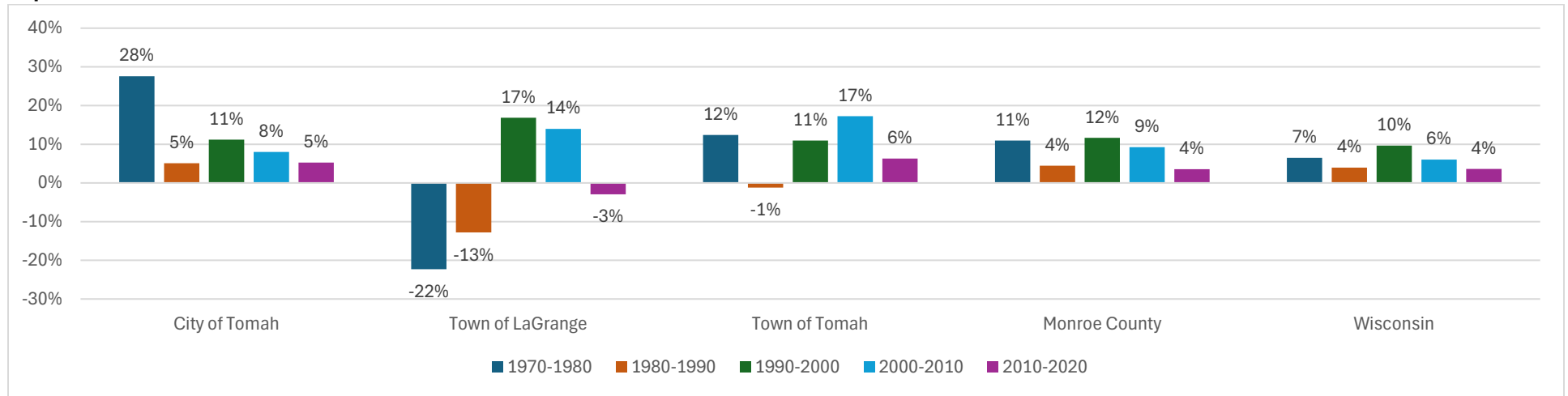
| Year  | City of Tomah | Town of LaGrange | Town of Tomah | Monroe County | Wisconsin |
|-------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1930  | 3,354         | n/a              | n/a           | 28,739        | 2,939,006 |
| 1940  | 3,817         | n/a              | n/a           | 30,080        | 3,137,587 |
| 1950  | 4,760         | n/a              | n/a           | 31,378        | 3,434,375 |
| 1960  | 5,321         | n/a              | n/a           | 31,241        | 3,951,777 |
| 1970  | 5,647         | 2,224            | 969           | 31,610        | 4,417,933 |
| 1980  | 7,204         | 1,728            | 1,089         | 35,074        | 4,705,642 |
| 1990  | 7,572         | 1,507            | 1,076         | 36,633        | 4,891,769 |
| 2000  | 8,419         | 1,761            | 1,194         | 40,899        | 5,363,675 |
| 2010  | 9,093         | 2,007            | 1,400         | 44,684        | 5,686,986 |
| 2020  | 9,570         | 1,948            | 1,488         | 46,274        | 5,893,718 |
| 2023* | 9,592         | 2,494            | 1,474         | 46,399        | 5,951,400 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1930-2020 Census.

\*Source: WisDOA 2023 Population Estimates by Municipality



## Population Growth Rates



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970-2020 Census.

Projections are important components of the planning process and provide a guide for decision makers. Since the market has fluctuated over the past 30 years, it is important to factor in multiple projection scenarios to account for the various outcomes that could occur in the future. Seven different population projection scenarios for the City through the year 2045 were calculated and compared.

These projections were derived using a variety of methodologies:

- **Linear Growth Rate 1990-2023, 2000-2023, 2010-2023.** This set of projections were calculated using the average annual population change over the time period and projecting that rate forward to 2045.
- **Compounded Percentage Rate 1990-2023, 2000-2023, and 2010-2023.** These estimations are determined utilizing the annual average percentage change over the time period and extrapolating that rate forward to 2045.
- **Department of Administration (WisDOA) Projection.** In 2013, the State Department of Administration forecasted population change for all communities in Wisconsin based on 2010 U.S. Census data. This data is outdated and should not be utilized to draw future conclusions on population growth over the next two decades.

Based upon these scenarios, the City's population is projected to be between 10,436 and 11,451 in the year 2045. While it is certainly possible that the City will not grow to this population or may grow beyond this projection by 2045, a careful approach to land use planning suggests that this plan shows how that amount of growth could be appropriately accommodated. Market conditions, regional growth, and City's policies will influence the actual rate of population growth.

The preferred population projection for this report was the linear growth rate based on population changes between 1990-2023 because it represents both the largest sample size and accounts for both pre- and post-Recession. Based on this methodology, the City's population is projected to be 10,020 in 2030. In 2045, the population is projected to increase to 10,939.

### Population Projections for Tomah, WI 1990-2045

| Projection Method                  | 1990         | 2000         | 2010         | 2020         | 2023*        | 2025         | 2030          | 2035          | 2040          | 2045          |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| WisDOA Projections                 | 7,572        | 8,419        | 9,093        | 9,570        | 9,592        | 10,300       | 10,680        | 10,860        | 10,930        | -             |
| <b>Linear Growth 1990-2023 (1)</b> | <b>7,572</b> | <b>8,419</b> | <b>9,093</b> | <b>9,570</b> | <b>9,592</b> | <b>9,714</b> | <b>10,020</b> | <b>10,327</b> | <b>10,633</b> | <b>10,939</b> |
| Linear Growth 2000-2023 (1)        | 7,572        | 8,419        | 9,093        | 9,570        | 9,592        | 9,694        | 9,949         | 10,204        | 10,459        | 10,714        |
| Linear Growth 2010-2023 (1)        | 7,572        | 8,419        | 9,093        | 9,570        | 9,592        | 9,669        | 9,861         | 10,053        | 10,245        | 10,436        |
| Compounded Growth 1990-2023 (2)    | 7,572        | 8,419        | 9,093        | 9,570        | 9,592        | 9,748        | 10,148        | 10,565        | 10,999        | 11,451        |
| Compounded Growth 2000-2023 (2)    | 7,572        | 8,419        | 9,093        | 9,570        | 9,592        | 9,709        | 10,006        | 10,313        | 10,629        | 10,955        |
| Compounded Growth 2010-2023 (2)    | 7,572        | 8,419        | 9,093        | 9,570        | 9,592        | 9,673        | 9,879         | 10,089        | 10,304        | 10,523        |

\*Source: WisDOA, 2023 Population Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990-2020 Census.

1. Extrapolated based on the average annual population change over the given years.
2. Extrapolated based on the average annual percent change over the given years.

### Population Projection Scenarios: Tomah, WI

| Projection Method               | Change 2023-2040 |       | Change 2023-2045 |       |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| WisDOA Projections              | 14%              | 1,338 | -                | -     |
| Linear Growth 1990-2023 (1)     | 11%              | 1,042 | 14%              | 1,348 |
| Linear Growth 2000-2023 (1)     | 9%               | 867   | 12%              | 1,122 |
| Linear Growth 2010-2023 (1)     | 7%               | 653   | 9%               | 844   |
| Compounded Growth 1990-2023 (2) | 15%              | 1,409 | 19%              | 1,861 |
| Compounded Growth 2000-2023 (2) | 11%              | 1,037 | 14%              | 1,363 |
| Compounded Growth 2010-2023 (2) | 7%               | 712   | 10%              | 931   |

\*Source: WisDOA, 2023 Population Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990-2020 Census.

1. Extrapolated based on the average annual population change over the given years.
2. Extrapolated based on the average annual percent change over the given years.

Tomah is a relatively balanced city in terms of demographics. In 2022, 20% of the City population was over the age of 65, and the age group with the highest population in the City was those age 25 to 34 years (14%). The median age in the City was 42 which is slightly higher than the median age for the County (40) and the median age in Wisconsin (40).

**Age Distribution, 2022**

| Age Group         | Tomah, WI |            | Monroe County |            |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
|                   | Total     | Percentage | Total         | Percentage |
| Under 5 years     | 566       | 6%         | 2,903         | 6%         |
| 5 to 9 years      | 551       | 6%         | 3,346         | 7%         |
| 10 to 14 years    | 449       | 5%         | 3,256         | 7%         |
| 15 to 19 years    | 561       | 6%         | 3,079         | 7%         |
| 20 to 24 years    | 578       | 6%         | 2,418         | 5%         |
| 25 to 34 years    | 1,297     | 14%        | 5,267         | 11%        |
| 35 to 44 years    | 1,182     | 12%        | 5,723         | 12%        |
| 45 to 54 years    | 1,074     | 11%        | 5,531         | 12%        |
| 55 to 59 years    | 800       | 8%         | 3,529         | 8%         |
| 60 to 64 years    | 582       | 6%         | 3,154         | 7%         |
| 65 to 74 years    | 853       | 9%         | 4,776         | 10%        |
| 75 to 84 years    | 597       | 6%         | 2,207         | 5%         |
| 85 years and over | 437       | 5%         | 1,019         | 2%         |
| Total Population  | 9,527     | 100%       | 46,208        | 100%       |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Age Comparison**

| Community     | Median Age |      |      |       | Percent Under 18 |      |      |       | Percent Over 65 |      |      |       |
|---------------|------------|------|------|-------|------------------|------|------|-------|-----------------|------|------|-------|
|               | 2000       | 2010 | 2020 | 2022* | 2000             | 2010 | 2020 | 2022* | 2000            | 2010 | 2020 | 2022* |
| City of Tomah | 37         | 38   | 38   | 42    | 26%              | 25%  | 23%  | 20%   | 18%             | 15%  | 19%  | 20%   |
| Monroe County | 37         | 39   | 40   | 40    | 28%              | 26%  | 25%  | 25%   | 14%             | 14%  | 18%  | 17%   |
| Wisconsin     | 36         | 39   | 40   | 40    | 26%              | 24%  | 22%  | 22%   | 13%             | 14%  | 18%  | 18%   |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.



## SECTION 2: HOUSING

### Household Counts

Household trends for the City of Tomah show a 7% increase in households between 2010 and 2020, compared to 5% for Monroe County and 7% for the State during the same period. Over the past 20 years (2000-2020) the number of households in the City of Tomah grew by 21%, in Monroe County by 9%, and in the State by 17%. During those time periods, the average household size has decreased or remained relatively stable.

### Number of Households/ Persons Per Household

| Year  | City of Tomah |                | Town of LaGrange |                | Town of Tomah |                | Monroe County |                | Wisconsin |                |
|-------|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
|       | Number        | Persons Per HH | Number           | Persons Per HH | Number        | Persons Per HH | Number        | Persons Per HH | Number    | Persons Per HH |
| 1980  | 2,674         | 2.69           | 536              | 3.22           | 336           | 3.24           | 11,894        | 2.95           | 1,652,261 | 2.85           |
| 1990  | 3,064         | 2.47           | 513              | 2.94           | 353           | 3.05           | 13,144        | 2.79           | 2,055,774 | 2.38           |
| 2000  | 3,451         | 2.44           | 641              | 2.75           | 428           | 2.79           | 16,672        | 2.45           | 2,084,544 | 2.57           |
| 2010  | 3,900         | 2.33           | 741              | 2.71           | 533           | 2.63           | 17,376        | 2.57           | 2,279,768 | 2.49           |
| 2020  | 4,173         | 2.21           | 746              | 2.51           | 562           | 2.80           | 18,197        | 2.51           | 2,428,361 | 2.52           |
| 2022* | 4,352         | 2.11           | 780              | 2.35           | 513           | 3.04           | 17,992        | 2.52           | 2,425,488 | 2.37           |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

For planning purposes, the number of households is used to estimate demand of additional dwelling units. If household size decreases, the number of households (and hence housing units) can be expected to increase for a given population. Changes in household composition will also influence the level of demand for various types of housing units such as housing suitable seniors or for families with children. Trends indicate that there will be a continued need for a range of household types for various ages, incomes, and lifestyles.

The number of projected households for Tomah through the year 2045 was calculated using the population projection numbers used above, in addition to a customized household size projection over the next 20 years. This plan assumes that the City's 2020 household size figure will decline at the same annual rate as the City experienced over the previous 20 years (2000-2020). As with the population projections, multiple projections were calculated using different methods and years to provide a range of potential household totals.

Based on this series of projections, in 2045, the City could have a total of approximately between 4,914 to 5,391 households, or 741 to 1,218 more households than in 2020.

Similar to the population projections, the preferred household projection for this report was the linear growth rate based on household changes between 1990-2023 because it represents both the largest sample size and accounts for both pre- and post-Recession. Based on this methodology, the City's number of households is projected to be 4,607 in 2030. In 2045, households are projected to increase to 5,150.

## Household Projections: City of Tomah

| Household Projection Methods | Number of Households |       |       |       |       |       |       | Additional HH |           |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|-----------|
|                              | 2010                 | 2020  | 2025  | 2030  | 2035  | 2040  | 2045  | 2020-2030     | 2020-2045 |
| Linear Growth 1990-2023      | 3,900                | 4,173 | 4,431 | 4,607 | 4,785 | 4,967 | 5,150 | 434           | 977       |
| Linear Growth 2000-2023      | 3,900                | 4,173 | 4,421 | 4,574 | 4,729 | 4,885 | 5,045 | 401           | 872       |
| Linear Growth 2010-2023      | 3,900                | 4,173 | 4,410 | 4,533 | 4,658 | 4,785 | 4,914 | 360           | 741       |
| Compounded Growth 1990-2023  | 3,900                | 4,173 | 4,446 | 4,666 | 4,896 | 5,138 | 5,391 | 493           | 1,218     |
| Compounded Growth 2000-2023  | 3,900                | 4,173 | 4,428 | 4,600 | 4,779 | 4,965 | 5,158 | 427           | 985       |
| Compounded Growth 2010-2023  | 3,900                | 4,173 | 4,412 | 4,542 | 4,676 | 4,813 | 4,955 | 369           | 782       |
| Projected Household Size*    | 2.25                 | 2.21  | 2.19  | 2.18  | 2.16  | 2.14  | 2.12  | -             | -         |

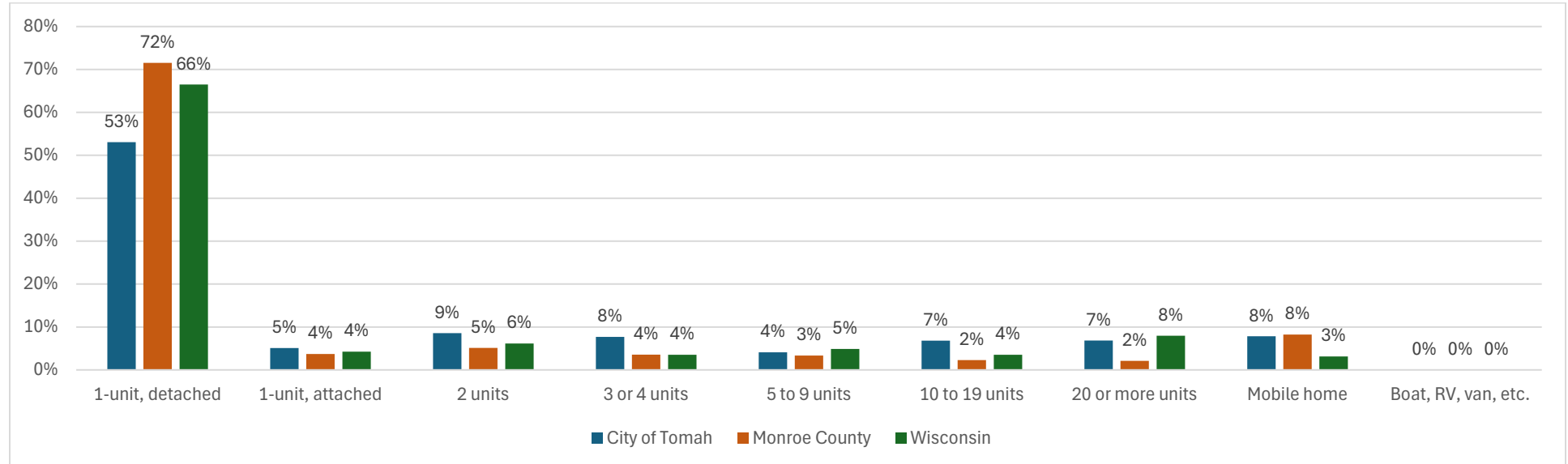
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990-2020 Census

\*Source: Wisconsin DOA, Estimated Household Size in conjunction with a customized value was projected to continue over the planning period based on the average decline in household size between 2000-2020

## SECTION 3: OCCUPANCY & HOUSING STOCK

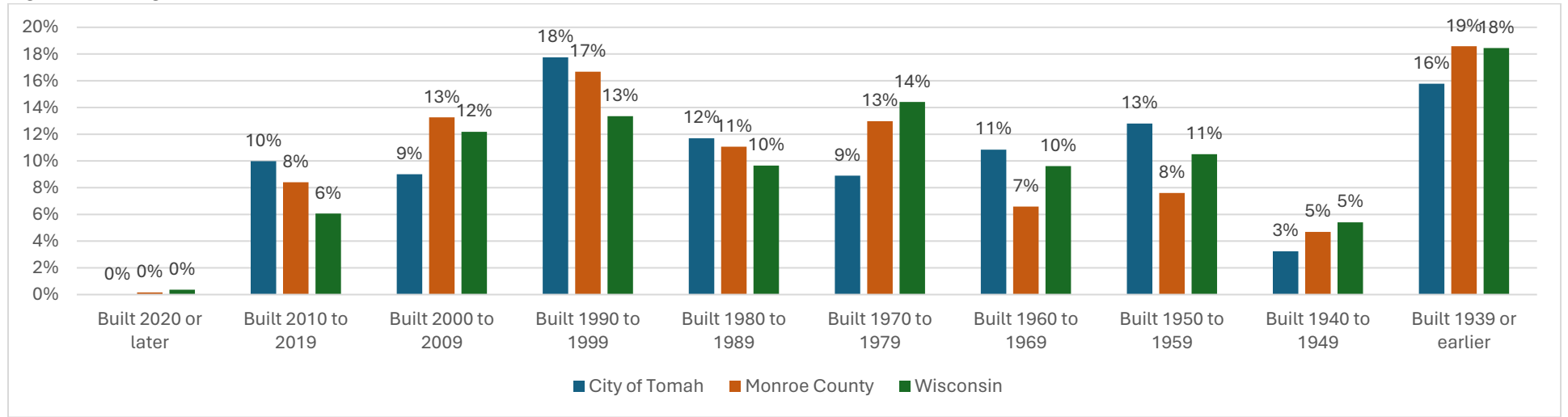
The diversity of Tomah's housing stock is atypical of small cities in the Midwest, with only 53% consisting of single-family homes. Multi-family housing in the City varies in number of units per dwelling with 16% having two to four units, 4% having five to nine units, and 14% having 10 or more units. About half of City residents live in owner-occupied housing. However, owner occupancy percentages have been declining over the past three decades due in part to the increase in multi-family units and a more mobile workforce. The vacancy rate (8%) is slightly high; a healthy rental vacancy rate is 5-6%. The majority of residents (78%) moved into their current residence after 2000, and 63% moved into their current residence after 2010. Nearly 16% of residential structures in Tomah were built prior to 1940. Tomah has seen a relatively consistent increase in housing stock, with 39% of houses built between 1980-2010.

### Housing Stock Unit Type, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Age of Housing Stock, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Owner/Renter Occupancy Rates: City of Tomah

|                 | 1990   |         | 2000   |         | 2010   |         | 2020   |         | 2022*  |         |
|-----------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
|                 | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Owner-Occupied  | 1,854  | 61%     | 2,100  | 57%     | 2,104  | 54%     | 2,012  | 46%     | 2,322  | 50%     |
| Renter Occupied | 1,046  | 34%     | 1,351  | 37%     | 1,796  | 46%     | 2,028  | 46%     | 1,973  | 42%     |
| Vacant          | 164    | 5%      | 255    | 7%      | 296    | 8%      | 384    | 9%      | 368    | 8%      |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

### Owner/Renter Vacancy Rates: City of Tomah

|                        | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2022* |
|------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| Homeowner Vacancy Rate | 2%   | 3%   | 0.4% | 0.3%  |
| Rental Vacancy Rate    | 8%   | 6%   | 9%   | 8%    |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

### Year Householder Moved In: City of Tomah, 2022

| Year Householder Moved In | Number of Units | Percent of Units |
|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 2021 or later             | 154             | 4%               |
| 2018-2020                 | 1124            | 26%              |
| 2010-2017                 | 1428            | 33%              |
| 2000-2009                 | 656             | 15%              |
| 1990-1999                 | 521             | 12%              |
| 1989 or earlier           | 469             | 11%              |
| Total                     | 4352            | 100%             |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## SECTION 4: AFFORDABILITY & VALUE

Affordable housing opportunities are often provided through the sale of older housing units. Housing is generally considered “affordable” when the owner or renter’s monthly housing costs do not exceed 30% of their gross monthly income. Over 17% of City homeowners with a mortgage and approximately 40% of renters exceeded the “affordable” threshold in 2022. While these numbers are important indicators of affordability, it is also important to note that some residents may consciously choose to devote more than 30% of their income to household and lifestyle expenses. Despite the fact that more renters do not have “affordable” housing, the median rent in the City (\$928) is slightly lower than the state median (\$992). The median value of a home in the City (\$151,000) has increased steadily since 2000, but is significantly below the State’s (\$231,400) and County’s median home value (\$184,000).

### Affordability Indicators

| Community     | Median Gross Rent |       |       | Median Monthly Owner-Occupied Costs<br>(with a mortgage) |         |         | Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units |           |           |
|---------------|-------------------|-------|-------|--|---------|---------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|               | 2000              | 2010  | 2022* | 2000   | 2010    | 2022*   | 2000                                 | 2010      | 2022*     |
| City of Tomah | \$492             | \$683 | \$928 | \$741  | \$1,121 | \$1,301 | \$76,400                             | \$106,300 | \$151,000 |
| Monroe County | \$455             | \$634 | \$919 | \$793  | \$1,216 | \$1,434 | \$77,500                             | \$126,800 | \$184,000 |
| Wisconsin     | \$540             | \$713 | \$992 | \$1,024  | \$1,433 | \$1,602 | \$112,200                            | \$169,000 | \$231,400 |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

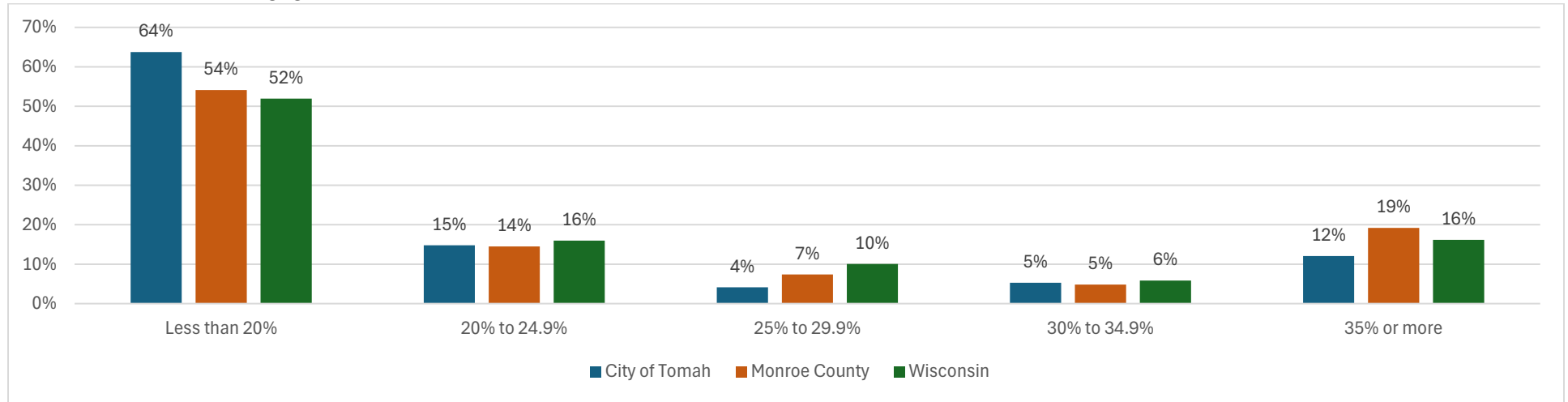
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

### Owner Occupied Housing Values: City of Tomah, 2022

| Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units | Number of Units | Percent of Total Units |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Less than \$50,000                    | 254             | 11%                    |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999                  | 268             | 12%                    |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999                | 624             | 27%                    |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999                | 693             | 30%                    |
| \$200,000 to \$299,999                | 404             | 17%                    |
| \$300,000 to \$499,999                | 79              | 3%                     |
| \$500,000 to \$999,999                | -               | 0%                     |
| \$1,000,000 or more                   | -               | 0%                     |
| Total                                 | 2,322           | 100%                   |

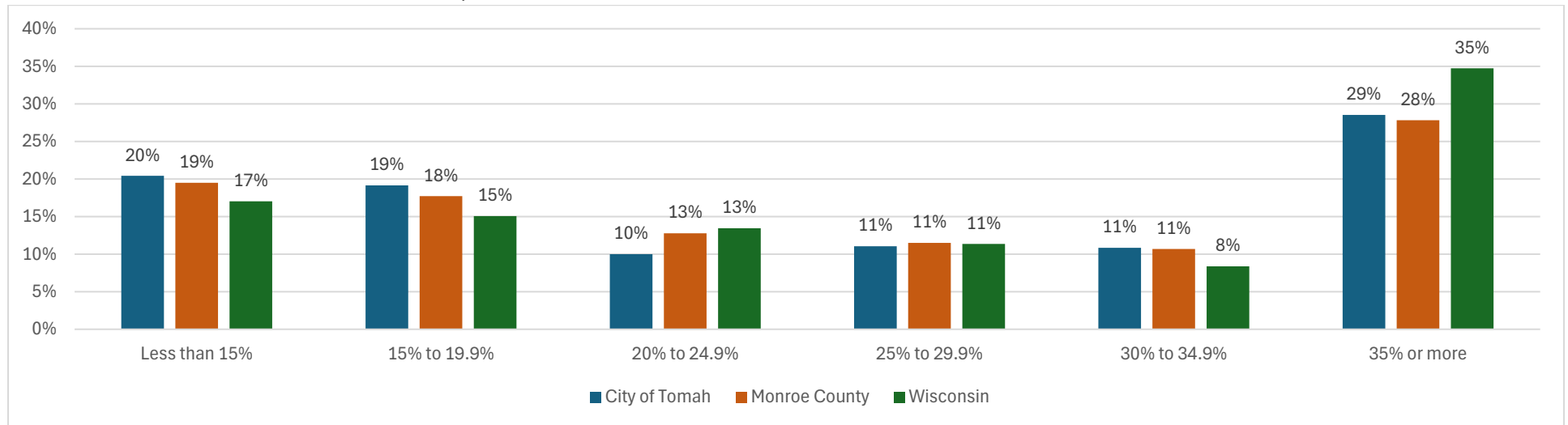
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Owner Costs (With A Mortgage) As Percent Of Household Income, 2022**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Rental Costs As Percent Of Household Income, 2022**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## SECTION 5: HOUSING PROGRAMS

### **Tomah Public Housing Authority**

The City of Tomah has an established housing authority to assist with affordable housing placement for low-income families. The Tomah Housing Authority owns & manages 72 apartments for seniors, persons with disabilities and families located in the City of Tomah and administer 76 Housing Vouchers through the Rental Assistance Program.

### **Homebuyer Down Payment and/or Closing Cost Loan Program**

The Community Development Department can provide eligible low/moderate income households, who are purchasing a home in the City of Tomah, with a deferred payment loan to pay for closing costs and up to one-half of a required down payment to purchase a home. The maximum loan is 10% of purchase price.

### **Home Repair and Rehabilitation Loan Program**

Couleecap provides eligible low/moderate income City of Tomah homeowners with a deferred payment loan to complete major home repairs and remodeling such as roof replacement, window replacement, foundation repair, furnace replacement, siding installation including insulation, kitchen remodeling, bathroom remodeling, electrical repairs and other interior repairs. Maximum amount of loan is 50% of the equalized value of home. A Deferred Payment Loan is provided to income eligible homeowners and is paid back to the City at the time the home is sold or refinanced.

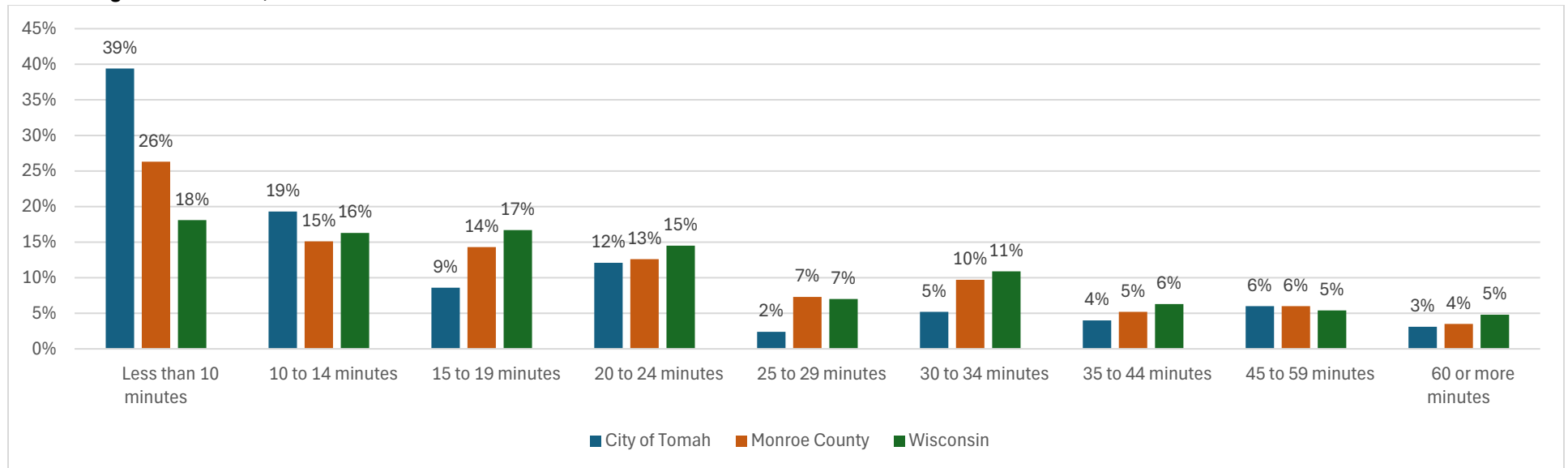
## SECTION 6: MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

### Commuting

Approximately 59% of the City's commuters age 16 or older work within 14 minutes of their place of employment. Over 85% of commuters in Tomah are employed within Monroe County. The percentage of those who work out of state (14%) is most likely due to the relatively close proximity of Minnesota. Tomah commuters, on average, have a travel time to work of 17.7 minutes, which is slightly less than the County (20.4 minutes) and State as a whole (22.2 minutes). These times suggest most residents work in the City or in nearby areas.

Commuting in Tomah is mostly done by car, with 85% of commuters traveling in a single occupant vehicle. This number is slightly lower for Monroe County (78%) and Wisconsin (77%). Only 4% of commuters in Tomah carpooled to work, 3% walked, and 5% worked from home.

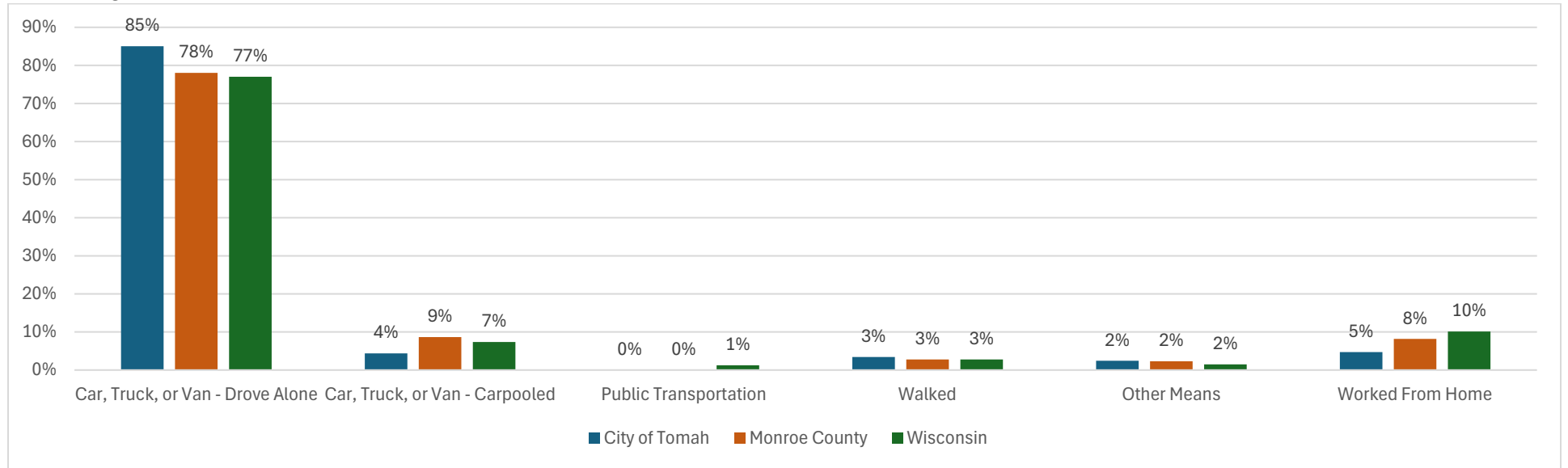
### Commuting Time To Work, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



**Commuting Methods to Work, 2022**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Percentage of Residents Commuting, 2022**

|                                 | City of Tomah | Monroe County |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Within Monroe County            | 85%           | 79%           |
| Outside of County, Within State | 14%           | 21%           |
| Outside of State                | 0.4%          | 1%            |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

# SECTION 7: MAJOR MODES OF TRAVEL

## Aviation Service

Bloyer Field is a city-owned airport used regularly by local corporations for executive travel and by pilots for general recreation. The airport contains one paved runway (07-25) which is 3,900 feet long. There is an adjacent area designated for model aviation users.

The airport is classified as a Small General Aviation Airport by the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics. Small General Aviation airports primarily support single-engine general aviation aircraft, but may also accommodate small twin-engine general aviation aircraft and occasionally business aircraft activity.

Due to environmental and physical restraints expansion opportunities are limited for the airport. The existing Airport Layout Plan (ALP) identifies the potential to expand Runway 25 by 400 feet to provide additional runway length to service larger airplanes.

Chapter 52, Article VIII of the City's Municipal Code provides regulations regarding the height of structures within three miles of the airport.

There is also the Sparta/Fort McCoy Airport, a public airport, located within the Fort McCoy installation and used primarily by the US Army. Volk Field, a military Air National Guard field, is located about twenty miles east of Fort McCoy in Juneau County. The La Crosse Municipal Airport is also close to Tomah along with the Black River Falls Airport.

## Road Classifications

All federal, state, county, and local roads are classified into categories under the "Roadway Functional Classification System" based upon the type of service they provide (see map on the next page for road classifications in the Plan Area). In general, roadways with a higher functional classification should be designed with limited access and higher speed traffic.

## Truck Routes

Interstate 90 and 94 are designated as Long Truck Routes. Highways 12, 16, and 131 are designated as 75' Restricted Truck Routes.

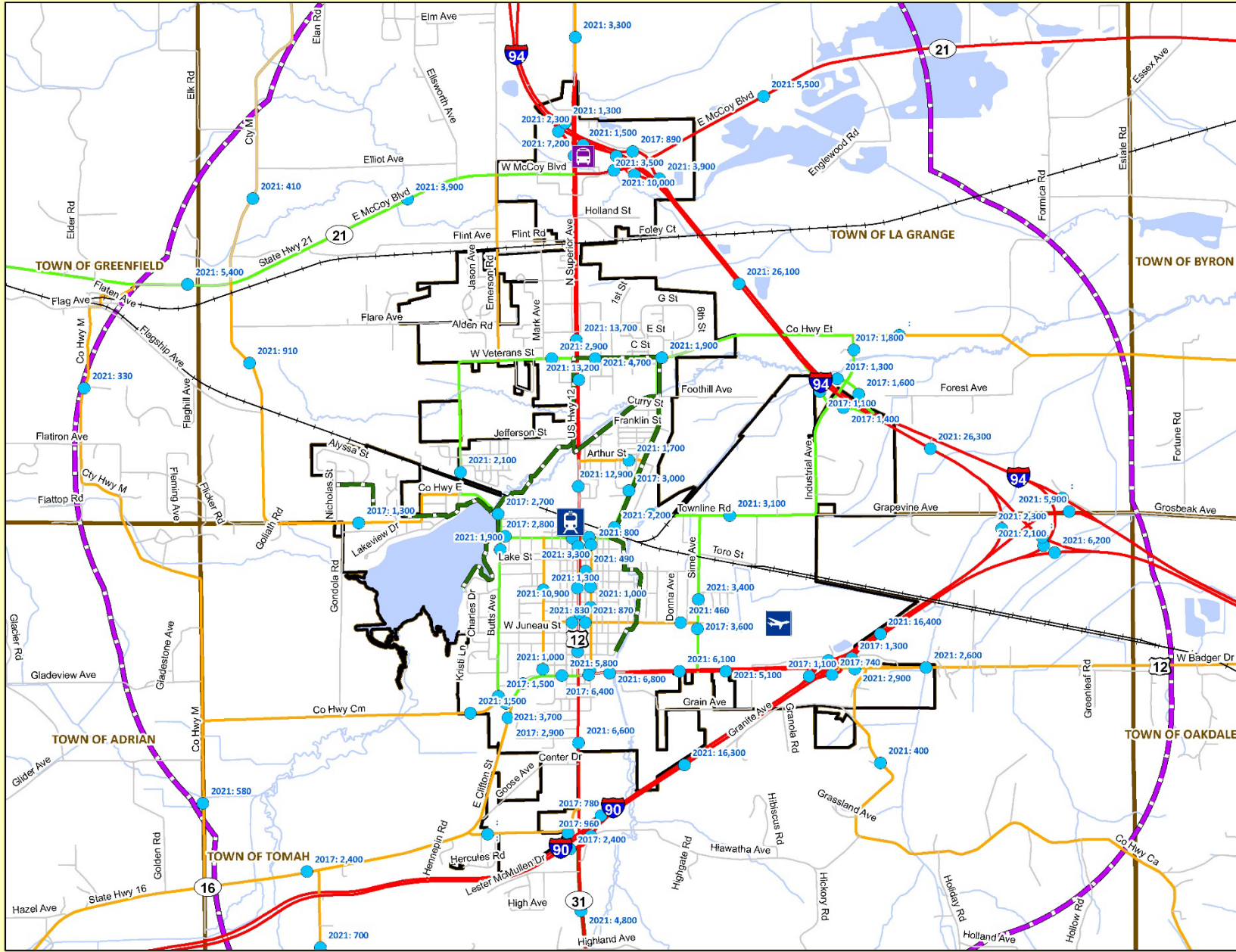
## Roadway Improvement Projects

Wisconsin's Six Year Highway Improvement Program identifies projects by county and project limits. This list provides projects to be completed during 2023 and 2028. The City of Tomah will be impacted by 15 different projects over this time frame. None of the projects listed are major improvement projects.

## Roadway Improvement Projects, 2023-2028

| ROUTE   | PROJECT TITLE             | Miles | Fiscal Year | PROJECT DESCRIPTION                 |
|---------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| IH 090  | TOMAH - CAMP DOUGLAS, EB  | 16.57 | 2023        | CONST/SHLDRS FOR 1017-01-73/RSRF    |
| STH 021 | TOMAH - NECEDAH           | 8.23  | 2023        | CONST/MILL & OVERLAY/RSRF           |
| STH 131 | ONTARIO - TOMAH           | 4.69  | 2023        | CONST/MILL & OVERLAY/RSRF           |
| USH 012 | TOMAH - MAUSTON           | 0.20  | 2023        | CONST/PAV'T REPLACE/PVRPLA          |
| USH 012 | TOMAH - MAUSTON           | -     | 2023        | CONST/WATER MAIN & SAN SEWER/PVRPLA |
| IH 090  | TOMAH - CAMP DOUGLAS, EB  | 15.77 | 2024        | CONST/MILL & OVERLAY EB RDWY/RSRF   |
| STH 021 | SPARTA - TOMAH            | 15.70 | 2024        | CONST/MILL & OVERLAY/PSRS           |
| USH 012 | BLACK RIVER FALLS - TOMAH | 0.21  | 2024        | CONST/LEFT TURN LNS/MONOTUBES/MISC  |
| USH 012 | TOMAH - MAUSTON           | 8.11  | 2025        | CONST/RESURFACE/B-41-147/RSRF       |
| USH 012 | BLACK RIVER FALLS - TOMAH | 8.51  | 2026        | CONST/MILL & OVERLAY/RSRF           |
| IH 090  | LA CROSSE - TOMAH         | 8.51  | 2027-2028   | CONST/REPAIR BOTH RDWYS/PSRS30      |
| STH 016 | SPARTA - TOMAH            | 6.38  | 2027-2028   | CONST/PVRPLA                        |
| IH 090  | SPARTA - TOMAH            | 4.27  | 2027-2028   | CONST/PAVT REPAIR/BOTH RDWYS/PSRS   |
| IH 094  | BLACK RIVER FALLS - TOMAH | 0.06  | 2027-2028   | CONST/BRRPL                         |
| USH 012 | TOMAH - MAUSTON           | 1.86  | 2027-2028   | CONSTRUCTION/ PVRPLA                |

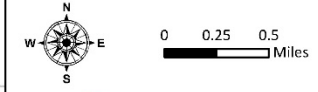
Source: WI Department of Transportation



## Map 2: Transportation Facilities

City of Tomah Comprehensive Plan

- City of Tomah
  - 1.5 Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
  - Other Municipal Boundaries
  - Bike/Pedestrian Trails
  - Rail
- Functional Classification**
- Principal Arterial
  - Minor Arterial
  - Collector
  - Local Road
- Avg. Daily Traffic Counts
  - Airport
  - Amtrak Station
  - Bus Station
  - Water



**VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.**  
Shaping places and a better change

Date: April 2024  
 Sources: City of Tomah, Monroe County, WI DNR, WI LTSB, FEMA, MSA

**DRAFT**

# SECTION 8: BIKE, PEDESTRIAN, & TRANSIT TRAVEL

## **Sidewalks, Trails, & Routes**

Pedestrians and bicyclists use a combination of roadways, sidewalks, and off -street trails. Most of the City's residential neighborhoods include sidewalks; however, there are some neighborhoods along the outer fringe of the City that do not have sidewalks. Most of these neighborhoods were built between 1970-2000. The City's Subdivision Code does not mandate the installation of sidewalks within new subdivisions; however, Section 38- 35 provides that "all properties adjacent to street reconstruction where a city street section is being completed shall have sidewalk installed where none exists and sidewalk repaired or replaced when the existing sidewalk is deemed unsafe, defective, or insufficient."

The region has several trails. The Cranberry Cruise starts on the east side of Monroe County and circles up around the edge of coulee terrain before passing through colorful cranberry fields. The Elroy-Sparta State trail extends from Sparta to Elroy to the southeast. The trail is known as the "three tunnel trail" as its route passes through tunnels originally designed for railroad traffic of the Chicago & North Western Railroad companies.

Additionally, the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan includes both existing trail bicycle and pedestrian facilities and future recommended facilities. This plan is the guide for future priorities and investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities within Tomah.

## **Transit Service**

The City of Tomah and surrounding area currently have limited options for the elderly and disabled individuals. Tomah does not have an intracommunity public transportation system outside of privately owned taxi companies and a Shared Ride Program, which includes three handicap vans. Monroe County Senior Service Department provides transportation for seniors and disabled residents in the county. A mini-bus and volunteer drivers take users to medical appointments, banks, grocery stores, etc. Intercity bus travel is available through Greyhound Bus lines in Tomah. From Tomah, passengers can reach Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN or Chicago, IL. The McDonalds restaurant at 2015 N. Superior Ave. serves as the greyhound station.

## **Railroad Service**

Canadian Pacific Railroad has a line that runs through downtown Tomah. The former Canadian Pacific Railroad yard property is vacant with potential for redevelopment and reuse. In 2010, the City Council adopted the Canadian Pacific Site Redevelopment Plan and Community Development Plan for this area. However, to date the yard is still owned by railroad company and plans to develop the site have not progressed since the plan was adopted. Passenger rail is provided by Amtrak. Daily passenger services is provided on the Empire Builder route on the CP Line. The station is located W. Washington St., west of Superior Ave.

## **Water Transit**

There is no waterborne freight movement in Monroe County. The nearest port is located in La Crosse which has access to the Mississippi River. Local navigable waters are used only for recreational purposes.

## SECTION 9: EDUCATION AND INCOME

Education attainment can provide valuable insight into the existing labor force, including availability of skilled and professional workers and demand for training opportunities. The percentage of Tomah residents 25 years or older who have at least a high school diploma (91%) is in line with Monroe County and Wisconsin (91% and 93%, respectively). The percentage of residents who have obtained a bachelor's degree is higher (16%) than the county (14%) but lower than the state (21%). This may indicate a need for additional vocational and adult learning programs.

Tomah's median and per capita income levels are lower than the county and state. Median household income in Tomah is \$55,203 compared to Monroe County's \$66,451 and Wisconsin's \$72,458. In the City, 13% of individuals and 8% of families are below the poverty level. The poverty rates in Tomah are consistent with State and County trends.

### Educational Attainment, 2022

|                                | Tomah | Monroe County | Wisconsin |
|--------------------------------|-------|---------------|-----------|
| Only High School Graduate      | 31%   | 37%           | 30%       |
| Some College                   | 25%   | 22%           | 20%       |
| Associate's Degree             | 10%   | 12%           | 11%       |
| Bachelor's Degree              | 16%   | 14%           | 21%       |
| Graduate/Professional Degree   | 9%    | 6%            | 11%       |
| High School Graduate or Higher | 91%   | 91%           | 93%       |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Income Trends

|               | Median Household Income |          |          |          | Per Capita Income |          |          |          |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|
|               | 2000                    | 2010     | 2020     | 2022*    | 2000              | 2010     | 2020     | 2022*    |
| City of Tomah | \$31,986                | \$40,150 | \$51,304 | \$55,203 | \$17,409          | \$22,823 | \$31,656 | \$35,223 |
| Monroe County | \$37,170                | \$47,333 | \$60,595 | \$66,451 | \$17,056          | \$23,052 | \$29,946 | \$33,256 |
| Wisconsin     | \$43,791                | \$51,598 | \$63,293 | \$72,458 | \$21,271          | \$26,624 | \$34,450 | \$40,130 |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Census.

### Poverty Trends

|               | Families in Poverty |       |       |       | Individuals in Poverty |       |       |       |
|---------------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|               | 2000                | 2010* | 2020* | 2022* | 2000                   | 2010* | 2020* | 2022* |
| City of Tomah | 8%                  | 16%   | 6%    | 8%    | 13%                    | 18%   | 7%    | 13%   |
| Monroe County | 8%                  | 10%   | 7%    | 8%    | 12%                    | 14%   | 10%   | 12%   |
| Wisconsin     | 6%                  | 8%    | 7%    | 7%    | 9%                     | 12%   | 11%   | 11%   |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

## SECTION 10: EXISTING LABOR FORCE

A community's labor force includes all people over the age of 16 classified as employed or unemployed as well as members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Those not included in the labor force statistics include students, homemakers, retired workers, seasonal workers not currently looking for work, institutionalized people, and those doing only incidental unpaid family work.

Tomah's labor force overall is similar to that of Monroe County and Wisconsin.

- Over the last decade the unemployment rate decreased for all jurisdictions. Note, in 2010 the United States was in an economic downturn commonly referred to as the "Great Recession", accounting for the higher unemployment rates.
- A majority (70%) of workers in Tomah earn a private wage and salary, less than Monroe County (75%) and Wisconsin (82%). This is likely due to the presence of a VA Hospital in Tomah.
- The top occupation category in Tomah is "Management, Business, Science, & Arts" (31%), followed by "Production, Transportation and Materials Moving" (23%).
- The largest industries in the City include Educational, Health & Social Services (26%), Manufacturing (17%), and Retail Trade (14%), which is consistent with the City's largest employers.

### Employment Status

|               | 2000           |                   | 2010           |                   | 2022*          |                   |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
|               | In Labor Force | Unemployment Rate | In Labor Force | Unemployment Rate | In Labor Force | Unemployment Rate |
| City of Tomah | 4,121          | 3.2%              | 4,647          | 6.0%              | 4,730          | 3.6%              |
| Monroe County | 18,188         | 5.0%              | 24,634         | 7.3%              | 21,789         | 2.7%              |
| Wisconsin     | 2,598,898      | 4.3%              | 3,082,676      | 8.5%              | 3,020,890      | 3.4%              |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2010 Census.

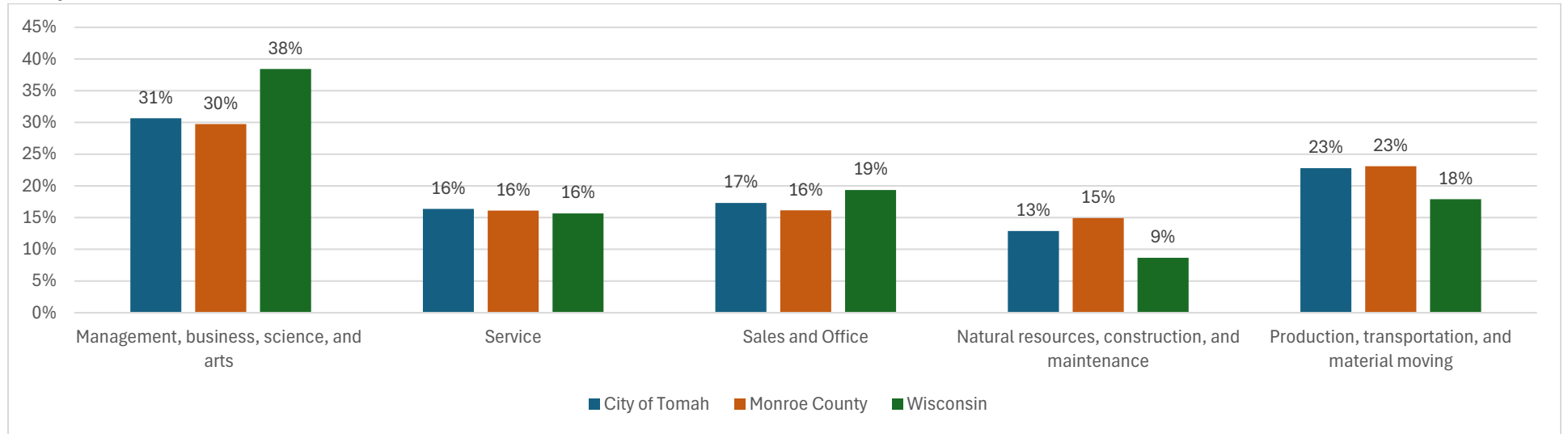
### Class of Worker, 2022

|               | Private wage and salary | Government | Self-employed | Unpaid family |
|---------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| City of Tomah | 70%                     | 27%        | 3%            | 0%            |
| Monroe County | 75%                     | 19%        | 6%            | 0%            |
| Wisconsin     | 82%                     | 12%        | 5%            | 0%            |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

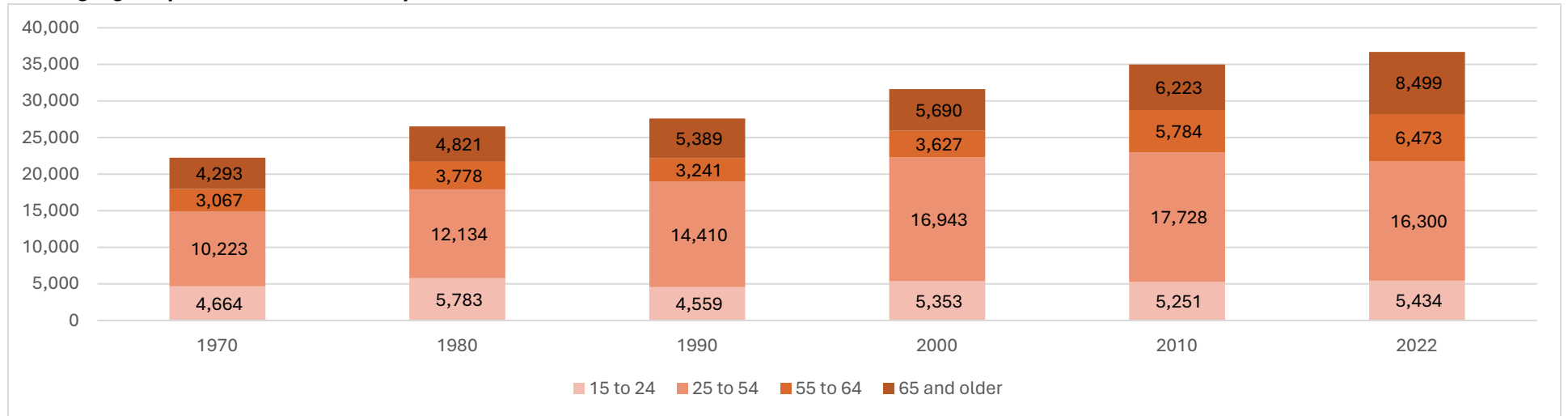


### Occupations, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Working Age Population, Monroe County

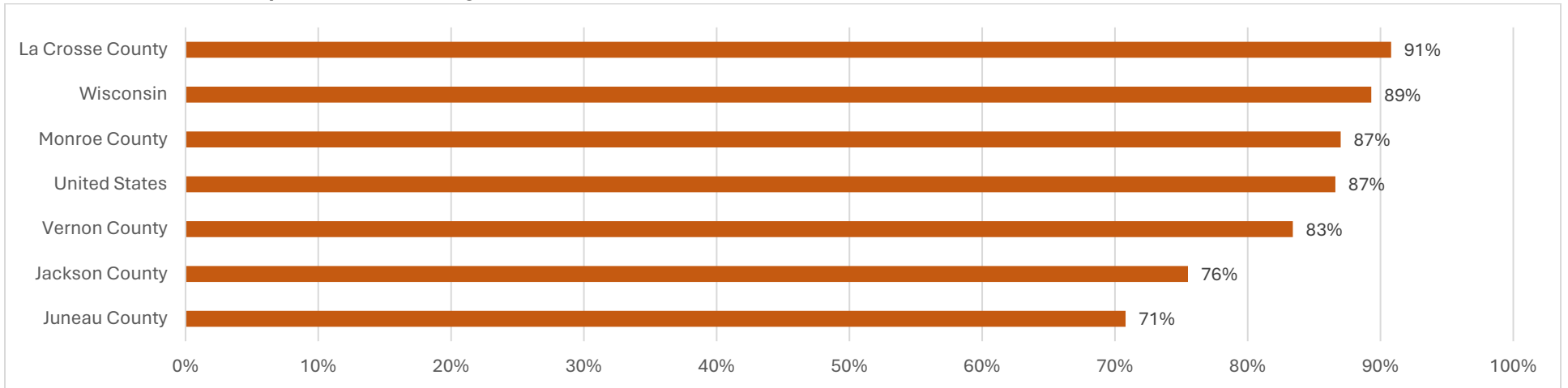


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970-2010 Census.

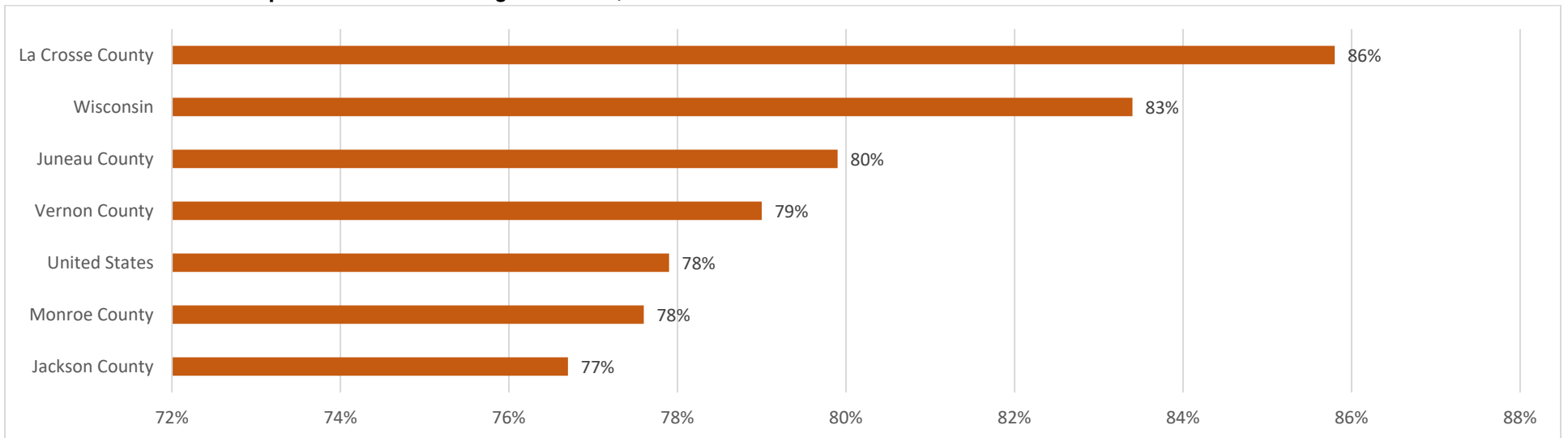


### Civilian Labor Force Participation Rates Men Ages 25 to 54, 2022



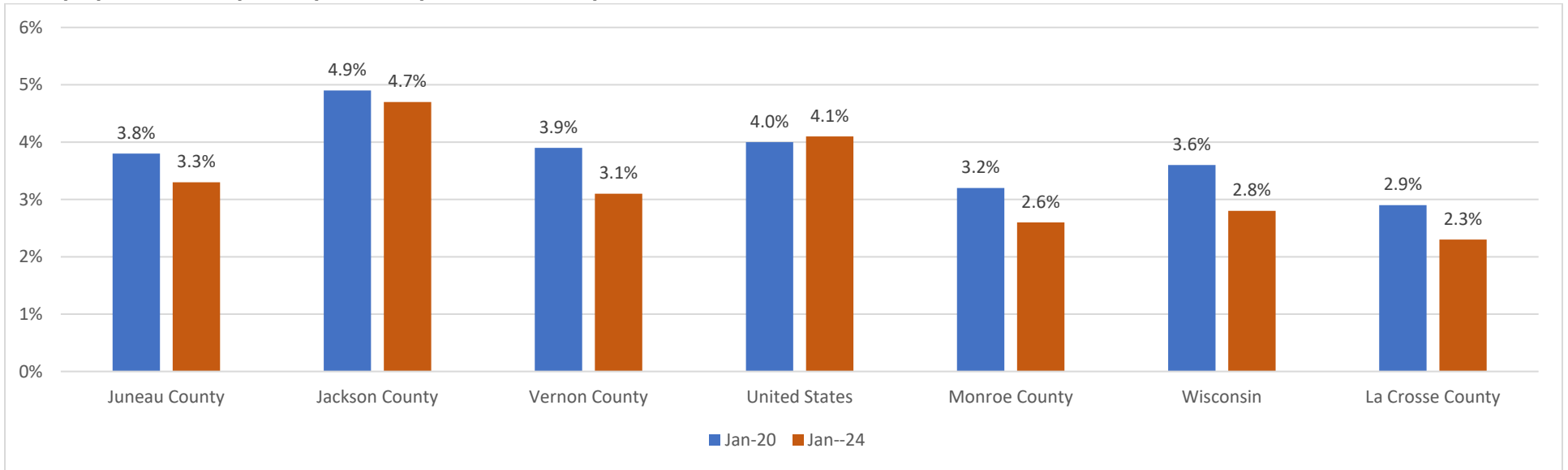
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Civilian Labor Force Participation Rates Women Ages 25 to 54, 2022



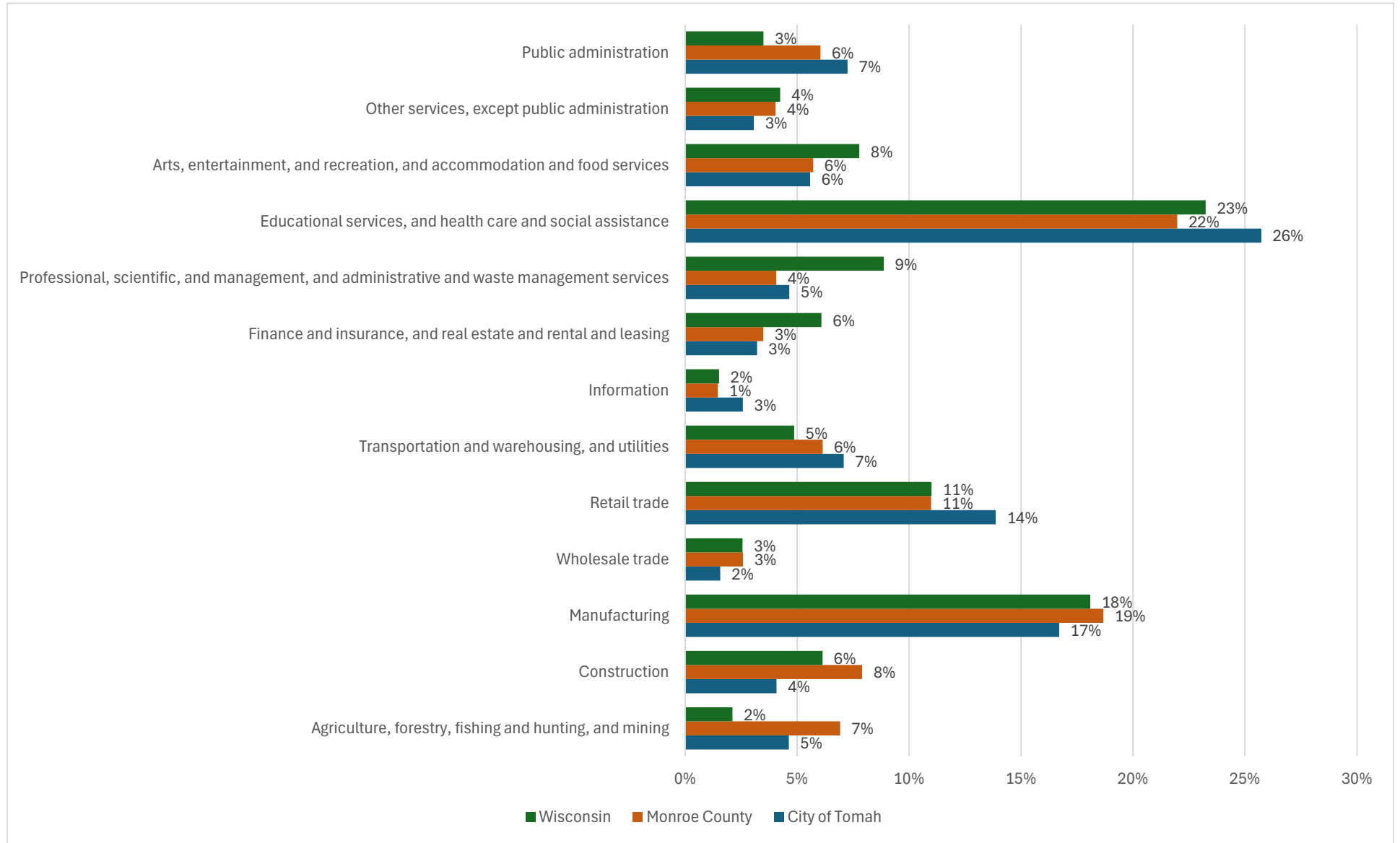
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Unemployment Rates by County – January 2020 vs January 2024



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics LAUS

Industries, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

# SECTION 11: BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

## Industrial Sites

Tomah has an abundance of land available for business development and redevelopment. Tomah North Side Development Park, Interstate Industrial Park, and Ce Pete Bean Industrial Park have the largest concentrations of industrial land available. Additionally, there are several individual industrial, commercial and office sites available throughout Tomah.

## Major Employers

The largest employer in the City is the Tomah VA Medical Center, with over 1,000 employees. Other major employers include a Walmart Distribution Center and several large manufacturing operations including Toro and Cardinal Glass.

| Employer Name                 | NAICS Title  | Employee Size Range |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| US Veterans Medical Center    | General Medical and Surgical Hospitals                           | 500-999             |
| Walmart Distribution Center   | Other Misc. Durable Goods Merchant Wholesalers                   | 500-999             |
| Toro Co                       | Outdoor Power Equipment Retailers                                | 500-999             |
| Cardinal IG Co                | Flat Glass Manufacturing   | 250-499             |
| Walmart Supercenter           | Department Stores  | 250-499             |
| Knights of Columbus           | Civic and Social Organizations                                   | 250-499             |
| TC Transcontinental Packaging | Paper Bag and Coated and Treated Paper Manufacturing             | 250-499             |
| Ho-Chunk Gaming Tomah         | Casinos  | 100-249             |
| Allen Gerke & Sons Inc        | Specialized Freight  | 100-249             |
| Tomah Health                  | General Medical and Surgical Hospitals                           | 100-249             |
| Express Employment Pro        | Employment Placement Agencies                                    | 100-249             |
| Handishop Industries Inc      | Nonupholstered Wood Household Furniture Manufacturing            | 100-249             |
| Marten Transport              | Specialized Freight  | 100-249             |
| Band Box Cleaners & Laundry   | Drycleaning and Laundry Services                                 | 100-249             |
| Allstate Peterbilt of Tomah   | Motor Vehicle Stamping   | 100-249             |
| Ocean Spray Cranberries Inc   | Fruit and Vegetable Canning                                      | 100-249             |
| Meca Sportswear Inc           | Commercial Screen Printing                                       | 100-249             |
| Tomah High School             | Elementary and Secondary Schools                                 | 100-249             |
| Usemc Co Inc                  | Military Armored Vehicle, Tank, and Tank Component Manufacturing | 100-249             |

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, 2023

# SECTION 12: DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The City of Tomah employs several tools to support economic development within the City.

## **Tax Increment Financing Districts**

Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIDs) are created for the purpose of funding capital improvement projects using Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is a method of public financing that enables the City to fund projects that would otherwise not occur, such as street resurfacing or reconstruction, sanitary or storm sewer, streetscaping (sidewalks, street trees, streetlights, etc.), and business recruitment. Tax increment financing is sometimes used to fund aspects of private development projects that advance city planning goals. All TIF expenditures should directly or indirectly contribute to growth of the tax base, as it is the tax revenue from this growth that pays for the expenditures.

To date Tomah has created eleven TIDs, and four of them are still open. TID #8 is a Rehabilitation and Conservation district that was created in 2015 and will terminate in 2042. TID #9 is an Industrial district that was created in 2018 and will terminate in 2039. TID #10 is a Mixed-Use district that was created in 2021 and will terminate in 2039. Lastly, TID #11 is a Mixed-Use district that was created in 2021 and will terminate in 2041.

Municipalities are limited to having no more than 12% of total municipal property value in TIF Districts. As of 2023, TIF Districts account for 9.32% of all municipal property value in the City; therefore, the City has capacity to establish new TIF Districts as desired.

## **City of Tomah Business Revolving Loan Fund**

The City's Community Development Program promotes economic development and encourages new business start-ups and business expansions that create new employment/job opportunities. To assist businesses in this endeavor the Community Development Program administers a Business Revolving Loan Fund.

## **Tomah Convention & Visitors Bureau/Chamber of Commerce**

The Tomah Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Tomah Chamber of Commerce actively work to facilitate business development and retention in the Tomah area through the development and implementation of programs aimed at attracting visitors, meetings, and events to Tomah.

## **Community Development Block Grant Program**

This grant can provide economic development loans, public facilities for economic development, assistance for transportation grants, Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Bond Program and industrial revolving bonds.

## **Monroe County Revolving Loan Fund**

This fund is designed to promote economic development by providing a source of long term, fixed rate, low interest financing for new and existing business projects that are located in Monroe County.

## **CMV Growth Development Revolving Loan Fund**

This fund seeks to foster growth in economic based activities that affect growth or decline in the Tri-County area of Crawford, Monroe and Vernon counties. The fund targets manufacturers, tourism and select service industries to create jobs.

## **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation**

As the state's lead economic development organization, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) nurtures business growth and job creation in Wisconsin by providing resources, technical support, and financial assistance to companies, partners and the communities they serve. The WEDC administers a variety of economic and community development programs for private businesses and municipalities. Visit [www.inwisconsin.com](http://www.inwisconsin.com) to learn more.

## SECTION 13: ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

Tomah is located in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain, just east of the Mississippi River. The topography of Tomah is mostly flat to gently rolling. Areas to the northwest and west of the city are hilly and those to the east and southeast are flat. Elevation ranges from 1,220 feet above sea level to 935 above sea level. Areas of steep slopes within the planning area are shown on the Development Limitations Map.

### Mineral Resources

Sand is currently the only mineral resource within the Tomah area. There are four active sand pits located within the City's planning area. In addition to sand, three active limestone pits are found in the southeastern portion of the Town of Tomah, just outside the planning area.

Achievements in new technology for extracting natural gas through the process of fracking have created a demand for sand byproducts, called frac sand or silica, used in the extraction process. Western Wisconsin, including Monroe County, contains an abundance of the sandstone formations valued for natural gas extraction in other states (mostly in North Dakota and Montana). In the past five years Monroe County has seen an increase in the amount of requests for new mineral extraction sites to meet the growing demand. The sandy soils and presence of the railroad have drawn the attention of businesses involved in this industry.

### Agricultural Land and Open Space

There is approximately 13,597 acres of agricultural land and open space in the planning area. This is approximately 63.3% of the land. The majority of this land is located outside of the City of Tomah but within the planning area.

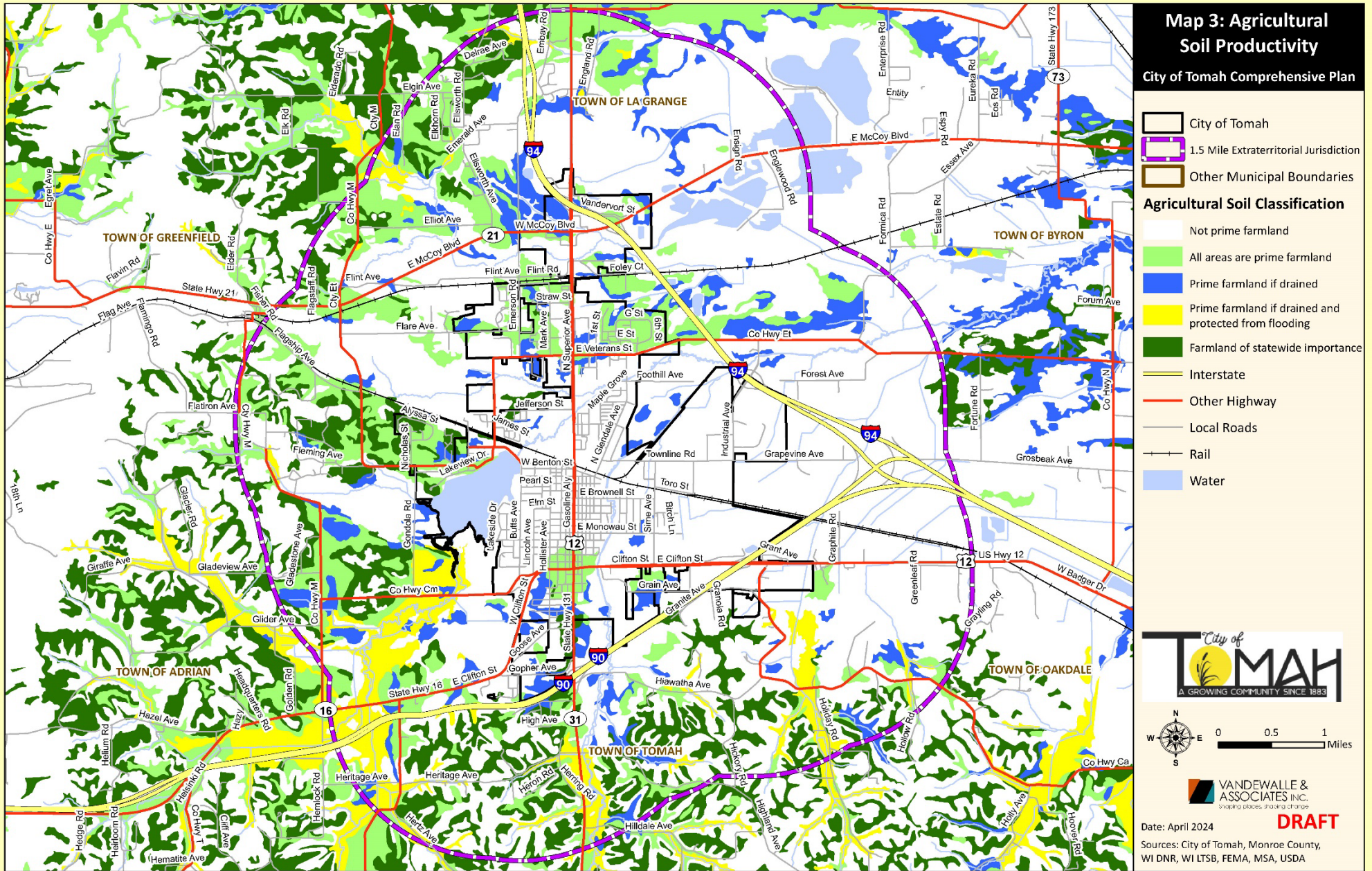
A map of prime farmland areas within the planning area is shown on the next page. "Prime farmland" designates land that has the best combination of characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops according to the Natural Resource Conservation Service. However, it should be noted that many of the areas used for cranberry growing typically are not classified as prime farmland; however, these lands are still a valued part of the agricultural, cultural, and economic fabric of the area. The same can be said for other specialty food crops and hobby farms.

### Soils

The soils in Monroe County include: loam, silty loam and sandy. The most prominent soil associations are the Norden-Urne-La Farge, TarrBoone-Impact, Billette-Impact and NewsonDawson Meehan

- The Norden-Urne-La Farge, soils are found on the southern portion of the City's planning area south of I-90. This soil is characterized as gently sloping to very steep, well drained to somewhat excessively drained silty and loamy soils on uplands.
- The Tarr-Boone-Impact, soils are categorized as nearly level to very steep, excessively drained to moderately well drained sandy soils on stream terraces and uplands. They are found in the southeastern portion of the City, just southeast of Council Creek and southwest of I-94 and southeastern portion of the City's planning area, south of I-90.
- The Billette-Impact, soils are found in the northern, central and western portions of the City of Tomah and its planning area. This soil is characterized as nearly level to moderately steep, excessively drained to moderately well drained loamy and sand soils on stream terraces and uplands.
- The Newson-Dawson Meehan, soils are found in the eastern, central and southern portions of the City and planning area. The soils are characterized as nearly level to gently sloping, very poorly drained to somewhat poorly drained peaty and sandy soils on flood plains, lake basins, and stream terraces.





# SECTION 14: WATER RESOURCES

## **Watersheds**

The City of Tomah lies within the Mississippi River drainage basin and Little Lemonweir River Subbasin.

## **Surface Water**

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the “303(d) list.” This list identifies waters that are not meeting water quality standards, including both water quality criteria for specific substances or the designated uses, and is used as the basis for development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

Lake Tomah and the Lemonweir River are two of the most significant water features in the area. Lake Tomah is man-made lake from the Lemonweir River, located at the western edge of the City. Five tributaries of the Lemonweir River are creeks located in the Tomah area (Council, Kreyer, Deer, Mud and Chab).

## **Ground Water**

Groundwater is a critical resource, not only because it is used as a source of drinking water, but also because rivers, streams, and other surface water depend on it for recharge. Groundwater contamination is most likely to occur where fractured bedrock is near the ground surface, or where only a thin layer of soil separates the ground surface from the water table.

According to the WIDNR Susceptibility to Groundwater Contamination Map (not shown), the City of Tomah generally ranks “medium-low” for susceptibility to groundwater contamination. Susceptibility to groundwater contamination is determined based on five physical resource characteristics: bedrock depth, bedrock type, soil characteristics, superficial deposits, and water table depth. Groundwater can be contaminated through both point and non-point source pollution (NPS). The most common NPS pollutants are sediment (erosion, construction) and nutrients (farming, lawn care).

## **Wetlands**

Wetlands are located along the Lemonweir River, Council Creek, Deer Creek and Mud Creek. A large portion of the wetlands to the northeastern and eastern portion of the planning area are used for cranberry production. Chapter 22 of the Municipal Code provides regulations for development within shoreland-wetland areas.

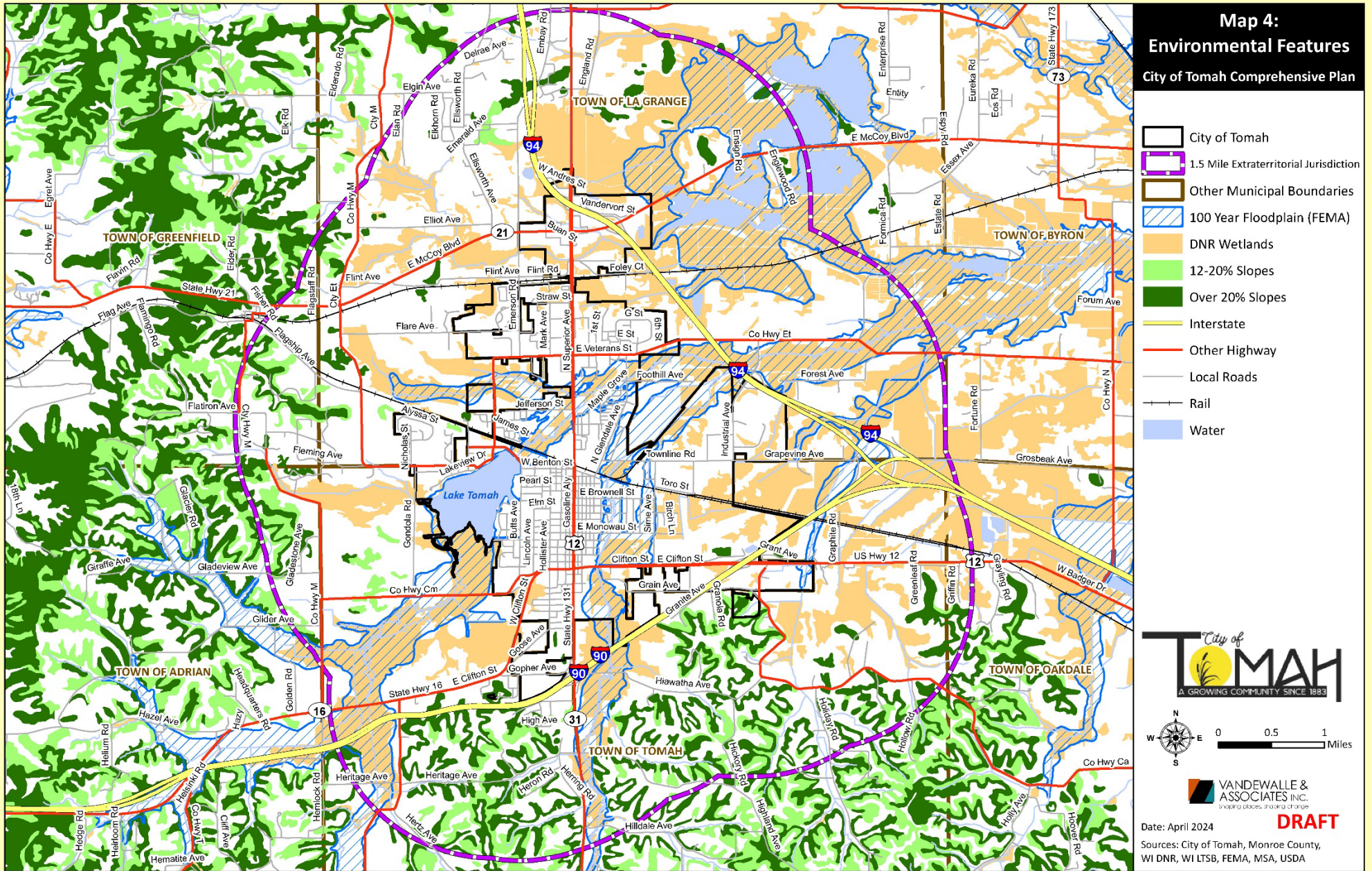
## **Floodplains**

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated 100- and 500-year floodplains within the planning area are illustrated on the Development Limitations Map. Chapter 22 of the Municipal Code provides regulations for development within floodplain areas.

## **Natural Heritage**

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), there are occurrences of endangered species in the City. There were occurrences of both aquatic and terrestrial endangered species. Detailed information regarding the types of endangered animals, plants, and natural communities can be found at the Department of Natural Resources’ website.





# SECTION 15: GENERAL FACILITIES

## **Health Care Facilities**

The City of Tomah is served by Tomah Health and Gunderson. There are several assisted living facilities and a nursing home in the Tomah Area. Veterans are served by the Tomah Veteran Affairs Medical Center. They provide a series of services and programs including: library services, valor program, homeless resources, hospice/palliative care, mental health, pharmacy, primary care, social work, caregiver support coordinator, specialty care and women's health.

## **Police & Emergency Facilities**

Law enforcement in the City is provided by the Tomah Police Department. Fire protection and emergency services are provided by the Tomah Fire Department and Ambulance.

## **Cemeteries**

There are two cemeteries located within the City of Tomah: Saint Mary's cemetery located at 2409 Superior Avenue, and Oak Grove Cemetery Located off Highway 31.

## **Library Facilities**

Tomah is serviced by the Tomah Public Library. Built in 1917, the school emulates the prairie school style of architecture. In its early years it was used as a schoolhouse and is now used as the City's public library. The building is recognized on the State and National Registers and Historical Places in 1976. The VA Medical Center also provides library services.

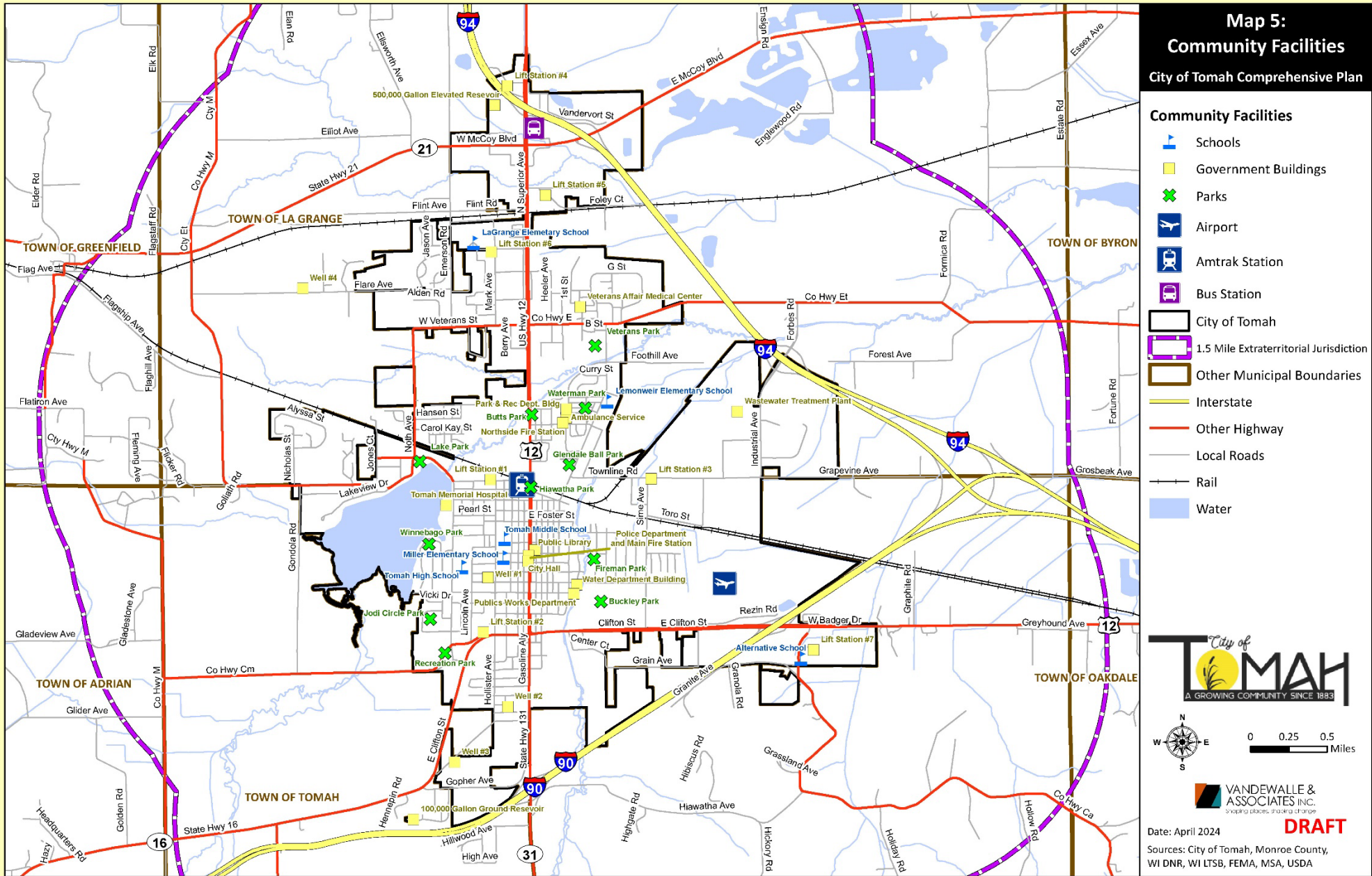
## **School & College Facilities**

The City is served by the Tomah Public School District. The Tomah Public School District is a K-12 public school system with 11 schools, providing services to 3,056 students. The district operates seven elementary schools, one junior high school, one high school, a K-12 Learning Center and a 4k learning center. Additionally, there are two private schools in the area. There are four higher education facilities located within forty miles, including UW-La Crosse, Western Technical College, Viterbo College, and Globe University.

## **Other Government Facilities**

The City of Tomah has a City Hall building located on Superior Avenue and a U.S. Postal Office, located on Flagship Avenue.





# SECTION 16: UTILITIES & SERVICES

## **Stormwater Management**

Stormwater management typically includes the collection and controlled release of storm runoff to natural receiving systems, typically through detention and/or retention facilities. The Public Works Department is responsible for approximately 30 miles of storm sewer. The City addresses stormwater in several ordinances including: Code of Ordinances Chapter 46-127 Prohibited Acts

## **Wastewater & Sanitary Sewer System**

All sanitary wastewater generated in the City is treated by the Tomah Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Tomah Wastewater Treatment Plant is a secondary treatment facility located at 520 Industrial Avenue. The treatment facility is capable of treating 2.2 million gallons per day, serving a population of 11,380. An oxidation ditch is used for biological treatment and uses biological nutrient removal for the control of ammonia and phosphorus. The facility can also produce biosolids of “exceptional quality.” The facility aims to minimize detrimental effects on the environment. The system is composed of approximately 54.5 miles of sewer mains and 7 lift stations.

## **Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities**

Solid waste services are provided by the City and recycling services are provided by the Modern Disposal Systems. Solid waste is disposed of at the Monroe County Landfill. The City also provides a spring clean-up and yard waste pick-up.

**Water Supply** The City of Tomah maintains five active wells with a total of 3,050 gallons per minute capacity. There is an additional, inactive well with the capacity of 800 gallons per minute located at 300 McAdams Drive. This well was closed in April 2002 due to a V.O.C. contamination. Two wells are currently doing removal extraction: well #6 is being treated for iron removal and well # 10 for radium removal. The system also includes a 1,000,000 gallon reservoir, a 500 gallon tower, 338, 871 feet of water mains (2”- 14” diameter), 3,083 water services, 3,459 water meters, 496 fire hydrant and 787 water main valves.

## **Telecommunications Facilities**

There are many telecommunication providers for the Tomah area. Telephone service for the City is provided by Charter Communications and Century Link. A main fiber optic cable also runs through Tomah.

## SECTION 17: PARKS & RECREATION

In total, the City has a total of 251 acres of park, recreation, and open spaces equaling 26.75 acres per 1,000 residents. That is three times the national average. Below is a breakdown of Tomah's parkland total by park type in comparison to national standards.

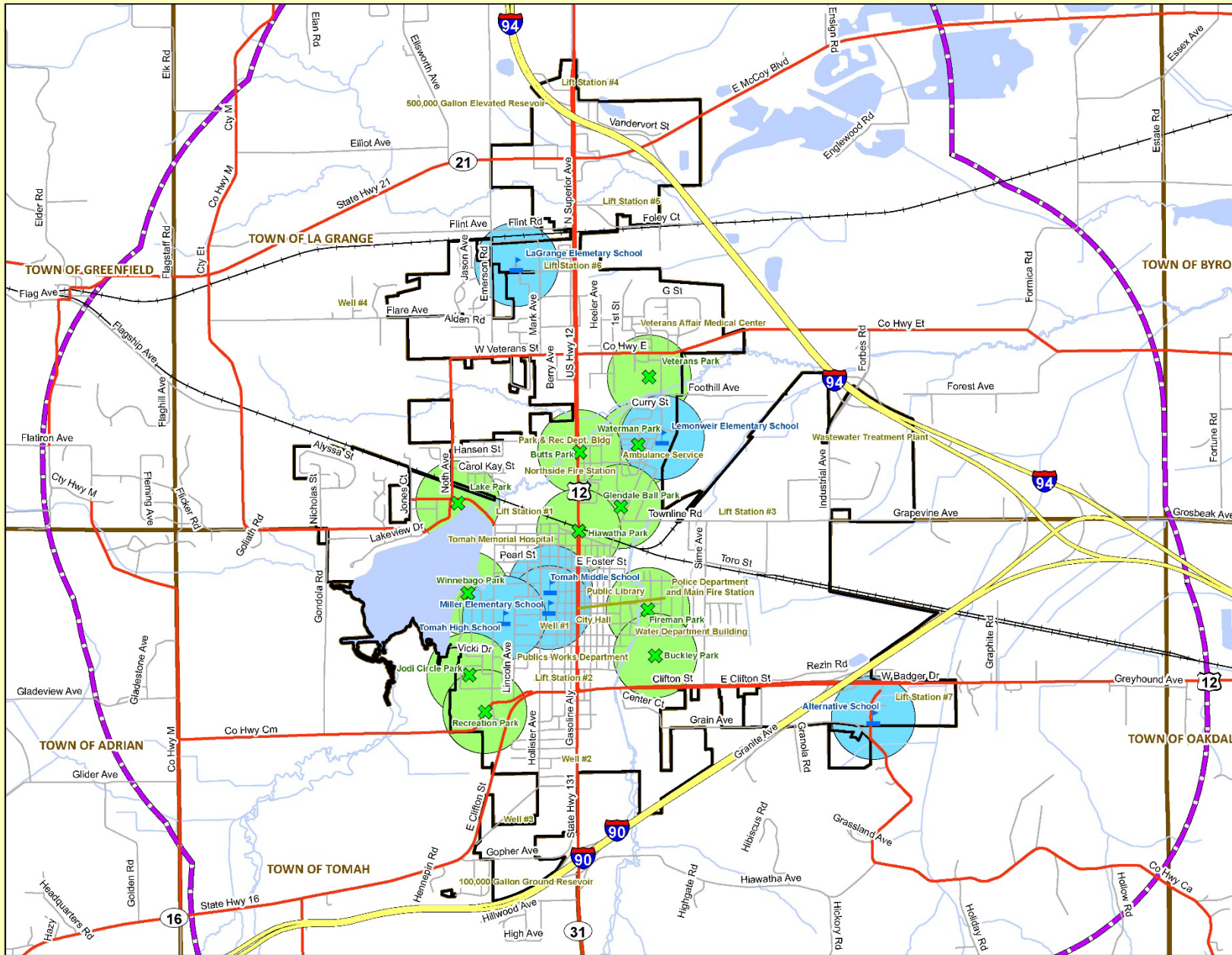
| Park Type                  | National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards | Total Acres by Park Type | Tomah Parks               |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|                            | Acres per 1,000 Residents                                 |                          | Acres Per 1,000 Residents |
| Mini Parks                 | 0.25-0.5  | 0                        | N/A                       |
| Neighborhood Parks         | 1-2   | 2.2                      | 0.23                      |
| Community Parks            | 5-8   | 153.8                    | 16.4                      |
| Special Use Parks          | None  | 2.5                      | 0.26                      |
| Natural Areas              | None  | 80                       | 8.5                       |
| Other Recreation Area      | None  | 36.4                     | 3.8                       |
| School Park and Open Space | None  | 34.8                     | 3.7                       |

The City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan includes a full analysis of the existing park system, future needs, and prioritized recommendations. As it continues to be updated over the planning period, it will remain as this plan's recommendations for all park, open space, bicycle, and pedestrian facility upgrades, development, and establishment.

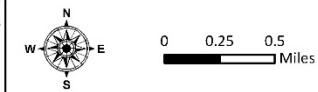


### Map 6: Park Service Areas

City of Tomah Comprehensive Plan



- Park and Education Facilities**
- Schools
  - ✕ Parks
- 0.25 Mile Walkable Service Area**
- School Service Area
  - Park Service Area
  - City of Tomah
  - 1.5 Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
  - Other Municipal Boundaries
  - Interstate
  - Other Highway
  - Local Roads
  - Rail
  - Water



**VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.**  
shaping places, creating change

**DRAFT**

Date: April 2024  
 Sources: City of Tomah, Monroe County, WI DNR, WI LTSB, FEMA, MSA, USDA

## SECTION 18: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The City of Tomah has several historically and culturally significant features that contribute greatly to the City's identity. Several buildings are on both the Wisconsin and National Register of Historic Places. A list is provided below.

### Historically and Culturally Significant Features

| Name                                       | Historic and Culture Resource Description   |
|--|---|
| Gasoline Alley                             | The comic strip "Gasoline Alley," still in print today is the creation of Tomah native Frank King. The "Alley," which is the City's Superior Avenue, was based on the characters and settings that King grew up with in the Tomah area. "Gasoline Alley Day" is held on the first Sunday in August at Gillet Park to commemorate the Mr. King |
| Fort McCoy Military Base                   | Fort McCoy is a U.S. Army installation located 10 miles west of the City of Tomah, along STH21. Founded in 1909 it has played a major role in past military missions and remains an active site today.  |
| Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center      | The Veteran Affairs (VA) medical center is a 600 plus bed medical center opened in 1947. It is located at the former Tomah Indian School, which was in operation from 1892 to 1935. The VA employees over 700 people.   |
| Little Red School House                    | Preserved one-room schoolhouse located in the south-central portion of the city, within Gillet Park.  |
| Tomah Area Historical Society Museum       | Located centrally along Superior Avenue, the museum catalogs the history of the Tomah area. It includes displays from Tomah native son Frank King, creator of "Gasoline Alley." It also displays Tomah's early industries and businesses, including railroad and lumber years as well as agricultural and cranberry operations.               |
| Tomah Public Library                       | Built in 1917, the school emulates the prairie school style of architecture. In its early years it was used as a schoolhouse and is now used as the City's public library. The building is recognized on the State and National Registers and Historical Places in 1976.  |
| Tomah Post Office                          | Constructed in 1927 this "classical revival" building was built as a post office and is currently being used as offices. The building is recognized on the State and National Registers and Historical Places in 2000.  |
| Monroe County Fair                         | This annual five-day fair takes place at Recreation Park during the third week of July. One of the largest festivals in the area, the event features a carnival, junior fair, art and craft booths, a horse pull, demolition derby, lumberjack show, entertainment and food.  |
| Wisconsin Dairyland Truck and Tractor Pull | This event is held annually at the City's Recreation Park during the third weekend in June. The event features pull competitions, commercial booths, art and craft show, flea market, antique tractor displays and food.  |
| Historical Marker                          | This official State Historical marker is located along Superior Avenue within Butts Park. The marker explains the alleged derivation of the name for the City.  |
| Amish                                      | Monroe County has one of the State of Wisconsin's largest Amish populations. Many of the families live on farms in areas located south and west of the City of Tomah. Most of these families have settled into Tomah area during the past twenty years.   |
| Warrens Cranberry Festival                 | This annual three-fay festival is held in Warrens WI on the last weekend in September. Since Warrens is only 15 miles from Tomah, the event has a significant tourism impact for Tomah.   |

## SECTION 19: EXISTING AREAS OF COLLABORATION

| Organization/Entity                    | Existing Collaboration Efforts  |
|--|---|
| Towns of LaGrange and Tomah            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share common boundaries and waterways.</li> <li>• Collaboration on Amubulance Service; The Tomah Area Amubulance Service provided emergency medical service to the City of Tomah and the town of LaGrange and Tomah as well as nearby villages of Warren, Wyeville and Oakdale, and the town of Adrian, Byron, Grant, Greenfield, Lincoln, Oakdale, Scott, Knapp, Bear, Bluff, and Kingston</li> <li>• Collaboration on future land use decisions at municipal boundaries</li> </ul> |
| Tomah Area School District             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School District serves the City of Tomah and the towns of LaGrange and Tomah. It also serves nearby villages of Oakdale, Warrens, and Wyeville and the towns of Oakdale, Adrian, Greenfield, Ridgeville, Wilton, Clifton, Byron, Scott, Lincoln, Grant, Knapp, Bear Bluff, Kingston, Cutler, and Orange</li> </ul>   |
| Wisconsin Department of Transportation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorial Park is a State wayside. WisDOT is responsible fo the facility but the park is owned and maintained by the city</li> </ul>  |
| Wisconsin Historical Society           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wisconsin Historical Society owns the historical marker located along North Superior Avenue, the city maintains the marker</li> </ul>  |
| U.S. Deparation of Army                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fort McCoy Military Base is located approximately 10 miles west of the City, along STH 21. The 60,000 acre facility is owned and operated by the U.S. Army</li> </ul>  |
| U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center is located along East Veterans Street on the north side of Tomah. The 173-acre facility has 321 beds and provided medical, health and nursing care services to approximately 10,000 veterans living in the mid-western portion of Wisconsin and bordering counties in Iowa, Minnesota, and Michigan. The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs owns and operates the complex.</li> </ul>  |
| Monroe County                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services; transportation for elderly and disabled individuals; housing and economic development programs.</li> </ul>  |



## SECTION 20: POTENTIAL AREAS OF COLLABORATION

| Organization/Entity                                    | Potential Collaboration Efforts  |
|--|--|
| Monroe County  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration in achieving goals set forth in the Comprehensive plan and subsequent updates</li> <li>• Marketing regional and natural amenities</li> <li>• Planning for growth and economic development</li> <li>• Decreasing property tax competition</li> </ul>   |
| U.S. Department of Army                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master Plan Development and updates</li> </ul>  |
| U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan for the Tomah VA Medical Center</li> </ul>   |
| Town of La Grange and Tomah                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of natural resources, including the Lemonweir River, Lake Tomah, creeks, bluffs, etc.</li> <li>• Ensure development patterns, especially near border areas, are congruent with local development goals</li> <li>• Manage commercial development along the highway segments and other roadways segments</li> <li>• Cooperation and collaboration on preparation of comprehensive plans</li> </ul> |
| Wisconsin Department of Transportation                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration on transportation and roadway improvements that would impact the Tomah area</li> </ul>  |
| Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration for water and natural resource management and enhancement</li> </ul>  |
| Adjacent Counties (La Crosse, Jackson, Juneau, Vernon) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism and regional bicycle connections</li> </ul>   |

## SECTION 21: EXISTING & PROJECTED LAND USES

As of 2010, the population density is 1,421 people per square mile and the housing density is 609 households per square mile. The largest land use category is vacant land at 25.9% of the city's total land use. Residential and Transportation area comparable at approximately 18%. Industrial properties comprise the next largest percentage at 13.5%. About 8% of the public or institutional land uses and another 8% is commercial and office land uses.

The "planning area" identified on the existing land use map is the City limits plus a buffer of 1.5 miles from those limits, corresponding to the City's extraterritorial land use and subdivision review jurisdiction. The planning area features a significant amount of agricultural or open space use (66.4%). Approximate existing land uses in the City and planning area as of year 2012 were based on aerial photography.

Developable land is limited by several natural features including floodplains, slopes greater than 20%, and wetlands. After accounting for these development limitations, only 13.0% of the City and 46.7% of the plan area is developable.

Using the projected population and household sizes, it is expected that Tomah will need an additional 213 acres of residential land, 91 acres of commercial land, and 157 acres of industrial land in the next 20 years. Residential use projections were calculated by multiplying the change in projected households by the average households per acre (4.2), as of year 2010.

Projections for commercial and industrial acreage assume that these land uses will grow at a similar rate to the current proportion of commercial or industrial land to residential land (i.e. maintaining status quo). Actual land needs may differ based on market conditions and the land use policies of the City.

Charts on Historic Urban Density

Tomah Existing Land Uses Table

Development Limitations Table

Projected Land Use Needs table

Insert Map #8: Existing Land Use Map

Redevelopment Opportunities

Redevelopment opportunities are buildings or parcels that have fallen into disrepair and are no longer contributing positively to the social or economic life of the City. Redevelopment is typically synonymous with infill development, which is development within existing urban areas that utilizes existing public infrastructure. Such investments help to make communities more efficient and sustainable.

(entire section to be updated in next draft)

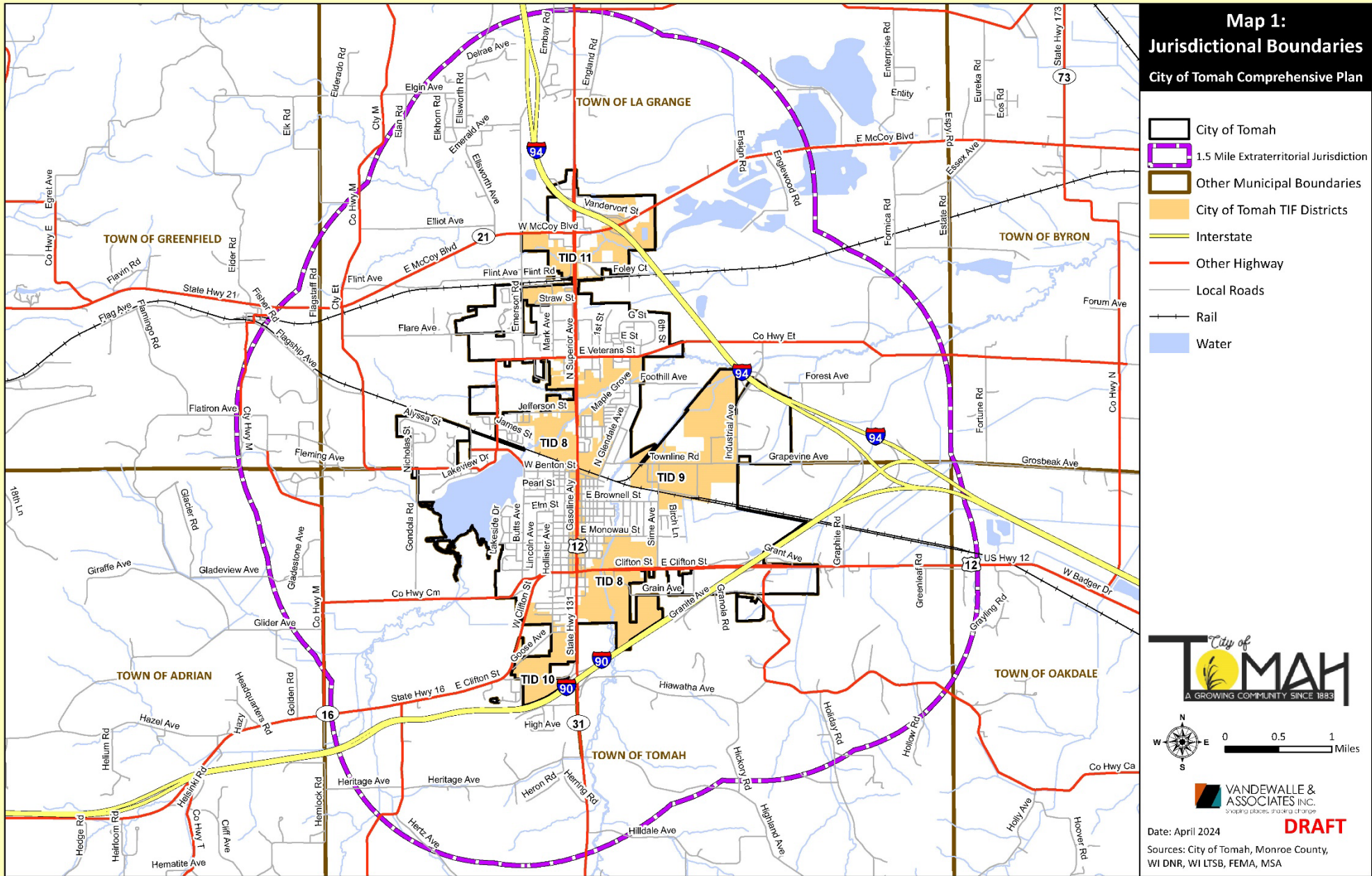
### Contaminated Sites

Brownfields sites can offer a glimpse into the industrial history of an area as well as provide prime sites for redevelopment. According to the Wisconsin DNR's Contaminated Site Program, there are 30 closed and 13 open environmental remediation sites.

### Open Environmentally Contaminated Sites

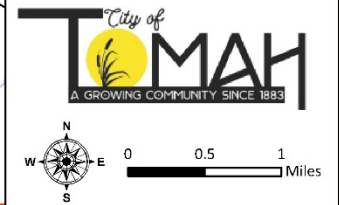
| Activity Number | Activity Name                      | Address             |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 02-42-000009    | Engelien Wood Preserving Pesticide | 800 Townline Rd     |
| 02-42-000263    | Tomah Armory                       | 520 Mill St         |
| 02-42-000264    | Tomah Fairgrounds                  | 1625 Butts Ave      |
| 02-42-000265    | Tomah Sanitary LF                  | Noth Ave & Cth Et   |
| 02-42-120750    | Cp Rail System TCE Site            | 205 N Superior Ave  |
| 02-42-240977    | S & I Cooper Scrap Yard            | 205 N Superior Ave  |
| 02-42-266634    | CP Railway Burn Pit                | 205 N Superior Ave  |
| 02-42-525072    | Band Box Cleaners Inc              | 1217 Superior Ave   |
| 02-42-526095    | Tomah Cty Garage                   | 515 E Monowau St    |
| 02-42-577991    | US VA Medical Center Tomah         | 500 E Veterans St   |
| 02-42-592889    | Amtrak Station                     | 121 W Washington St |
| 03-42-590207    | XPO Logistics                      | 1710 Winnebago Ave  |
| 08-42-555475    | Blue Poly Drum                     | 310 N Superior Ave  |

Source: WI Department of Natural Resources BRRT



**Map 1:  
Jurisdictional Boundaries**  
City of Tomah Comprehensive Plan

- City of Tomah
- 1.5 Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- City of Tomah TIF Districts
- Interstate
- Other Highway
- Local Roads
- Rail
- Water

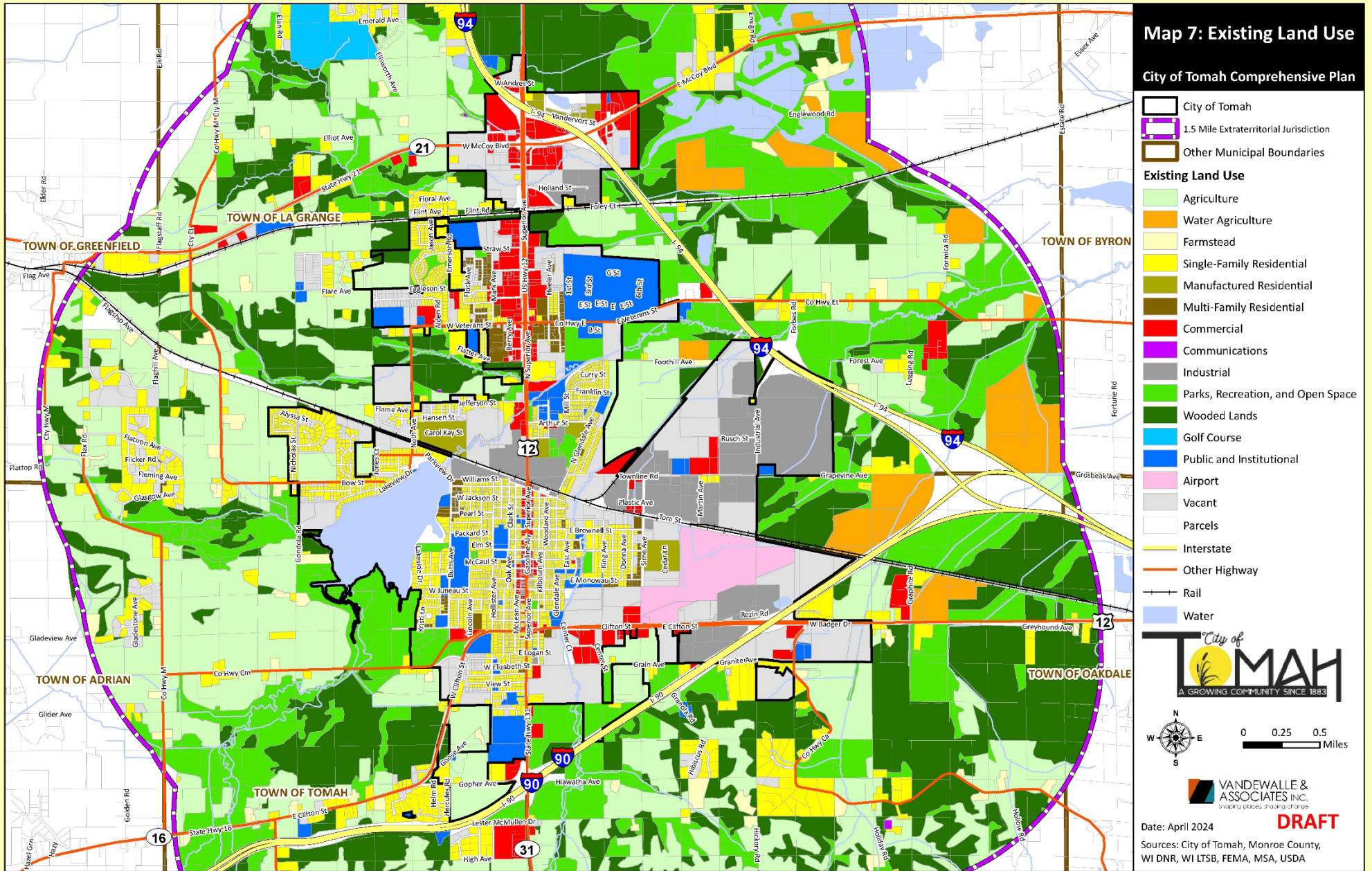


**VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.**  
shaping places. creating change.

**DRAFT**

Date: April 2024  
 Sources: City of Tomah, Monroe County, WI DNR, WI LTSB, FEMA, MSA









# TOMAH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2045



Draft: April 2024

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## City Council

Mike Murray, Mayor  
 Alderperson John Glynn  
 Alderperson Nicole Hart  
 Alderperson Lamont Kiefer  
 Alderperson Nellie Pater  
 Alderperson Dean Peterson  
 Alderperson Travis Scholze  
 Alderperson Richard Yarrington  
 Alderperson Shawn Zabinski

## City Planning Commission

Mike Murray, Mayor  
 John Glynn  
 Bryan Meyer  
 Eric Prise  
 Brian Rice  
 Travis Scholze  
 Tina Thompson

## Long Range Planning Committee

Jeffrey Holthaus  
 Mike Murray  
 Eric Prise  
 Pete Reichardt  
 Travis Scholze  
 Tina Thompson  
 Shawn Zabinski

## City Staff

Becki Weyer, City Clerk  
 Shane Rolff, Zoning Administrator/Building Inspector  
 Kirk Arity, Public Works and Utilities Director  
 Molly Powell, City Treasurer

## Planning Assistance

Vandewalle & Associates  
 Scott Harrington, AICP  
 Ben Rohr, AICP  
 Scott Heacock  
 Dan Eckberg, AICP

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# 1. INTRODUCTION



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan, outlining why we plan, the planning process, Smart Growth Planning, and the planning area. In addition, Chapter 1 also provides community background information including key community indicators, a summary of existing plans relevant to this study, and a summary of public feedback gathered throughout the planning process.

## WHY PLAN?

It is difficult to know what the future may bring for Tomah, or for any community. As residents and businesses come and go, and economic trends rise and fall, changes will occur. The purpose of this plan is to establish a shared vision for Tomah to guide future actions and decisions. This guidance provides predictability and consistency over time, which encourages investment. We plan so that we can act and react in a changing world with a confident understanding of our common values and goals.

## PLAN MAINTENANCE

This planning document is a “living” guide for growth and change in the City of Tomah. The plan represents the City’s best effort to address current issues and anticipate future needs; however, it can and should be amended from time to time if conditions warrant reconsideration of policies in this plan. If decisions are being made that are not consistent with this plan, then the plan has lost its relevance and should be amended. The process of amending the comprehensive plan should not be onerous, but it should trigger a brief pause to consider again the long-term vision for the community. This plan’s value is dependent upon frequent use and occasional updates.

## WISCONSIN SMART GROWTH PLANNING

Wisconsin’s “Smart Growth” planning law [s. 66.1001 Wis. Stats.] was adopted in October of 1999. The law requires that, after January 1, 2010, if a local government unit enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, the ordinance must be consistent with that local governmental unit’s comprehensive plan:

- Official maps
- Local subdivision regulations
- General zoning ordinances
- Shoreland/wetland zoning ordinances

The Wisconsin Smart Growth Law does not mandate how communities should grow, rather it requires that communities and state agencies consider Smart Planning Principles when planning for the future and provides guidance concerning important elements local plans should include.





## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GUIDANCE

The Wisconsin Smart Growth Law outlines 9 elements that must be included in a community's comprehensive plan:

- Issues and opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities & community facilities
- Agricultural, natural & cultural resources
- Economic development
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Land Use
- Implementation

The City of Tomah has chosen to slightly modify the terminology used throughout this plan from that used in state statute. For example:

- Issues and Opportunities has been modified to Demographics.
- Transportation has been modified to Mobility & Transportation.
- Economic Development has been modified to Economic Prosperity.
- Utilities and Community Facilities has been modified to Community Facilities & Services.
- Intergovernmental Cooperation has been modified to Collaboration & Partnerships.
- Cultural Resources has been split off from Agricultural and Natural Resources into its own element titled Community Character.

While the City has chosen to deviate slightly from the terminology used in state statute the prescribed requirements from Wis. Stats. 66.1001 are still addressed in their entirety throughout this plan. The final 10 elements of this plan are:

- Demographics
- Housing
- Mobility & Transportation
- Economic Prosperity
- Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Community Facilities & Services
- Community Character
- Collaboration & Partnerships
- Land Use
- Implementation



## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The organization of the plan is based both on the planning process and the guidance provided by the Wisconsin Smart Growth Legislation. The plan is divided into four chapters, plus several important appendices.

### Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 discusses the role of the plan, the Wisconsin Smart Planning Act, the planning area boundaries and regional context, and Tomah's previous planning efforts.

### Chapter 2: Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Chapter 2 presents a vision for the future of the community and describes goals, objectives, and policies to achieve that vision. This chapter addresses all planning elements except implementation, which is addressed in separate chapters.

### Chapter 3: Future Land Use

Chapter 3 defines categories of land use and features a Future Land Use map showing where each use will be permitted.

### Chapter 4: Implementation

Chapter 4 describes the process for adopting and amending the plan, tools and procedures by which the plan will be implemented, and a set of actions to be pursued in the next 10 years to help the City realize the vision, goals, and objectives in this plan.

### Appendix A: Public Participation Plan

Appendix A includes a copy of the public participation plan and all feedback gathered throughout the planning process.

### Appendix B: Community Indicators

Appendix B is a compilation of data that describes the existing conditions, trends, and projections for the City of Tomah. This data informs the planning process and should be updated from time to time to track progress and change in the City.

### Appendix C: Maps

A set of the existing conditions and future land use maps with the entire plan area, including the 1 1/2 mile extraterritorial area.

## PLANNING PROCESS

In late 2023, the City of Tomah engaged Vandewalle & Associates, to assist in updating its Comprehensive Plan complying with Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" requirements, State Statute 66.1001. The City completed the City's first comprehensive plan in March of 2003 and a subsequent update in September of 2013. Per SS 66.1001. A comprehensive plan must be updated every 10 years.

As required by SS 66.1001, every community must adopt a public participation plan at the beginning of the planning process. The purpose of the public participation plan is to define procedures for public involvement during every stage of the planning process (See Appendix A for the complete Public Participation Plan). Key components of the planning process included an online community survey, review meetings with the Plan Commission and Long Range Planning Commission, and a public hearing prior to adoption of the updated plan.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

- Plan Commission and Common Council Adopt Project Participation Plan (January 2024)
- Online Survey (January-February 2024)
- Staff, Long Range Planning Committee, and Plan Commission Review (March 2024)
- Long Range Planning Committee, Plan Commission, and City Council Public Hearing and Adoption Meetings (Spring 2024)



## PLANNING AREA

The study area for this plan includes all lands in which the City has both a short- and long-term interest in planning and development activity. The Planning Area includes all lands within the current municipal limits and within the City's potential 1.5-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. The City is approximately 5,026 acres (7.85 square miles). The entire Planning Area is approximately 25,497 acres (39.84 square miles). Refer to the maps in Appendix C.

## HISTORY OF TOMAH

Tomah was founded by Robert E. Gillette in 1855 and was incorporated 28 years later in 1883. Robert and his son Robert A. named the city after hearing a tale of a Native American Legend, a Chief named Thomas (pronounced "Tomah") Carron who built a council house at the intersection of where the Menomonee and Winnebago tribes met.

When you are driving down Tomah's City Center on Superior Avenue, you are driving on "Gasoline Alley", a constant reminder of Comic Strip originator Frank King and the characters: Uncle Walt, Phyllis, Skeezeix, and all of the rest published in over 300 daily newspapers with a daily combined readership of over 27,000,000.

King's pictures began to arouse a lot of interest. Ideas for a progressive comic strip and Gasoline Alley came to him many years later when he was employed by the Chicago Tribune. Prior to that he worked for a newspaper in Minneapolis as an illustrator. During World War I he was overseas sketching scenes of the war for publication in United States newspapers. He also worked for the Chicago Examiner in his early days.

King has been praised widely for his natural, wholesome credible characters. His drawings have been exhibited as "Distinctive American Art" in many places. He had a one-man show in Springfield, Illinois and Buffalo, New York. In 1959, the National Cartoonist Society named him cartoonist of the year, and the same group judged "Gasoline Alley" best of the year. King saw the plot of the feature as developing progressively further. Skeezeix, as Dad Walt, will change from father to grandfather.

Frank King Died in 1969 at the age of 89 years and was buried beside his wife in Oak Grove Cemetery in Tomah. Frank King was and continues to be one of Tomah, Wisconsin's true keepsakes.

The City of Tomah has three Industrial Parks. Due to Tomah's location, midway between Milwaukee and Minneapolis and where the state's interstate system divides, it provides for a prosperous industrial development environment. Distribution facilities, local and statewide trucking firms enjoy the advantages Tomah has to offer. From Lake Tomah to Recreation Park, visitors and residents enjoy many recreational opportunities. Tomah is also located between Fort McCoy and Volk Field and is fortunate to have the Tomah VA Medical Center in the community. Tomah residents also have the opportunity to obtain quality healthcare services from two hospital affiliated clinics (Mayo Health Care System and Gundersen Lutheran) as well as Tomah Memorial Hospital. The Tomah School District offers students a quality, well- rounded education and geographically is among the largest in the State of Wisconsin.

Governed by an elected Mayor and Common Council, a Senior Executive Team supervises the daily municipal services offered to residents. We are fortunate to have the Tomah Area Ambulance Service, Fire Department and Police Department services available to residents.



## REGIONAL CONTEXT

Tomah is located in Monroe County Wisconsin midway between Milwaukee and Minneapolis, where Interstate 90 and Interstate 94 divide. Tomah has embraced its identity as “a Growing Community since 1883”. The city is bordered by the Towns of Tomah (south) and La Grange (North).

The Tomah area lies on the edge between two major geographic areas in Wisconsin, the unglaciated driftless area and the central sand plains. The topography of the City of Tomah is mostly flat to gently rolling. The areas to the east and northeast of the City, within the Town of La Grange, are primarily characterized as flat. To the northwest and west of the city, the terrain is rolling to hilly. Most of the area within the Town of Tomah, south of the city and I-90 is hilly.

**Table 1.1: Major Cities Near Tomah, 2022**

| City                          | Population* | Distance from Tomah (approx. miles) |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mauston                       | 4,311       | 28                                  |
| Black River Falls             | 3,488       | 31                                  |
| La Crosse                     | 52,043      | 43                                  |
| Wisconsin Dells & Lake Delton | 6,963       | 47                                  |
| Eau Claire                    | 69,098      | 81                                  |
| Madison                       | 268,098     | 99                                  |

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 ACS 5 year estimates.

## KEY COMMUNITY INDICATORS

Population trends for the City of Tomah show a 5.2% increase in population between 2010 and 2020, compared to 3.6% for Monroe County and 3.6% for the State during the same period. During that same period the adjoining towns of La Grange and Tomah grew by -2.9% and 6.3% respectively.

Over the past 20 years (2000-2020) the population in the City of Tomah grew by 16.7%, in Monroe County by 18.0%, and in the State by 14.0%.

Projections are important components of the planning process and provide a guide for decision makers. Since the market has fluctuated over the past 30 years, it is important to factor in multiple projection scenarios to account for the various outcomes that could occur in the future. Seven different population projection scenarios for the City through the year 2045 were calculated and compared. Details on those calculations can be found in Appendix B. Based upon those scenarios, the City’s population is projected to be between 10,436 and 11,451 in the year 2045. The preferred population projection for this report was the linear growth rate based on population changes between 1990-2023 because it represents both the largest sample size and accounts for both pre- and post-Recession. Based on this methodology, the City’s population is projected to be 10,327 in 2035. In 2045, the population is projected to increase to 10,939. Tomah is a relatively balanced city in terms of demographics. In 2022, 20% of the City population was over the age of 65, and the age group with the highest population in the City was those age 25 to 34 years (14%). The median age in the City was 42 which is slightly higher than the median age for the County (40) and the Wisconsin median age of 40.

Additional community indicators are summarized in Appendix B.

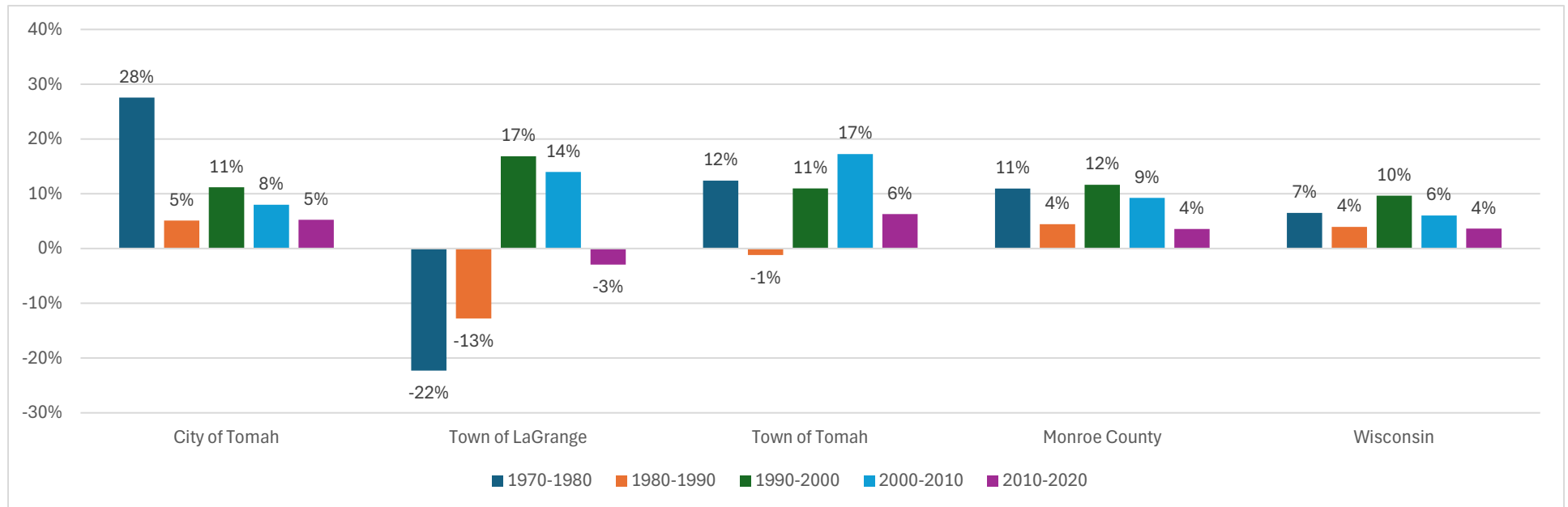
**Table 1.2: Population Trends**

|       | City of Tomah | Town of LaGrange | Town of Tomah | Monroe County | Wisconsin |
|-------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1930  | 3,354         | n/a              | n/a           | 28,739        | 2,939,006 |
| 1940  | 3,817         | n/a              | n/a           | 30,080        | 3,137,587 |
| 1950  | 4,760         | n/a              | n/a           | 31,378        | 3,434,375 |
| 1960  | 5,321         | n/a              | n/a           | 31,241        | 3,951,777 |
| 1970  | 5,647         | 2,224            | 969           | 31,610        | 4,417,933 |
| 1980  | 7,204         | 1,728            | 1,089         | 35,074        | 4,705,642 |
| 1990  | 7,572         | 1,507            | 1,076         | 36,633        | 4,891,769 |
| 2000  | 8,419         | 1,761            | 1,194         | 40,899        | 5,363,675 |
| 2010  | 9,093         | 2,007            | 1,400         | 44,684        | 5,686,986 |
| 2020  | 9,570         | 1,948            | 1,488         | 46,274        | 5,893,718 |
| 2023* | 9,592         | 2,494            | 1,474         | 46,399        | 5,951,400 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1930-2020 Census.

\*Source: WisDOA 2023 Population Estimates by Municipality

**Figure 1.1: Population Growth Rates**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1930-2020 Census.



## EXISTING PLANS AND STUDIES

A number of existing plans were reviewed, and pertinent information helped to shape this plan.

### City of Tomah 2003 and 2013 Comprehensive Plan

In 2003 the City of Tomah adopted its first comprehensive land use plan. The 2003 Comprehensive Plan and subsequent 2013 update for Tomah, WI was developed based on:

- A concern for and interest in the community's future;
- To prevent or deal with conflicts in land use;
- To protect the public safety, health and general welfare;
- Resource protection;
- To protect property values and promote community economics ; and
- To coordinate private land uses and public services.

The Comprehensive Plan has served as the City's principal policy document, guiding everyday decisions to shape the community's vision and future.

### Capital Improvement Plan

The city maintains a five-year capital improvement plan which is updated annually by each department for approval by the City Council.

### Town of Tomah and Town of La Grange Comprehensive Plans

The Town of Tomah and Town of La Grange both adopted their first comprehensive plans in 2007 to comply with the Wisconsin Smart Growth Legislation. The Town of Tomah completed a new comprehensive plan in 2024 in collaboration with Monroe County.

### Monroe County Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan for Monroe County represents an overall vision for the county. It was adopted in 2010 and most recently updated in 2014. The County incorporated individual community future land use plans and policies, for those that existed, into the overall County land use plan.





## METHODS

In the months of January and February 2024, the City of Tomah conducted a community survey. The survey was designed to gather stakeholder opinions on a range of topics relevant to preparing a plan to guide growth and change in Tomah over the next 20 years. The survey covered change, quality of life, city facilities and services, economic development, housing, and land use and development. The majority of the questions asked in 2024 mirrored those from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan survey, offering the ability to track trends and changes that occurred over time. In total, 148 individuals responded to the survey 2024 survey and 299 responded to the 2013 survey.

In comparing the 2013 and 2024 surveys, a few key trends include:

- Top reasons to live in Tomah
  - 2013: 75% “Near Job”, 51% “Near Family and Friends”
  - 2024: 69% “Near Job”, 60% “Near Family and Friends”
- Ranking the quality of life in Tomah
  - 2013: 21% “Fair”, 67% “Good”, 8% “Excellent”
  - 2024: 31% “Fair”, 55% “Good”, 10% “Excellent”
- How often people leave Tomah to shop
  - 2013: Monthly (51%)
  - 2024: Monthly (45%)
- Increasing employment opportunities dropped significantly as a priority (2013: 43%, 2024: 18%)
- Items that remain high priorities:
  - Adding new recreational programming (52%) and facilities (42%)
  - Expanding options for sit-down restaurants (76%), department stores (66%), and downtown retail (71%).
  - Homes targeted at first time buyers (60%), veterans (60%), and seniors (50%).
  - Affordable housing units (64%) and single-family housing units (56%) over other housing formats (mobile homes, duplexes, apartments, and townhomes).
- Other highlights of the 2024 survey included: Top Challenges: infrastructure, housing, childcare, community facilities, economic development, public safety, education, community engagement, downtown revitalization, transportation, healthcare, affordability, community identity and well-being, development.
- Tomah’s Image: mixed overall perception of Tomah, focus on improving infrastructure, revitalizing downtown, and promoting economic and cultural development to enhance the community’s image and quality of life.
- Most of the respondents who live in Tomah do so because of its proximity to work and/or family and friends are located here. The majority of respondents travel less than 5 miles to work and work in the City of Tomah.
- Most respondents shop in Tomah at least weekly or more, but have to leave at least monthly to shop in other communities. Respondents would like to see more downtown shopping, sit-down restaurants, and general department and merchandise stores.



- The majority of respondents expressed satisfaction with the quality of life in Tomah. However, the top ways that could be improved include more: recreational facilities, retail options, and addressing infrastructure.
- Top priorities for infrastructure included: streets, bike routes and trails, sidewalks, public library, and public water supply.
- Top priorities for public services included: recreational programs (especially youth and senior-oriented), economic development, and affordable housing.
- Top housing priorities included a need for more starter homes, affordable units, housing for veterans, assisted living facilities, and single-family homes. This could be accomplished through future mixed residential neighborhood make ups, which was also prioritized over homogeneous neighborhoods.
- Most respondents indicated that housing supply, cost, and quality all need improvement in Tomah.
- Top land use priorities included the need for balanced growth of residential, commercial, industrial, mixed use, and green space.
- If financial incentives were utilized in the future, respondents supported those being allocated within the downtown area, but many also said it depends on the situation.
- Top priorities over the next 10 years include: education, public safety, infrastructure improvement, economic development, housing, community amenities, tourism, downtown revitalization, government efficiency and fiscal responsibility, community engagement, environmental sustainability, and civic pride and identity.
- Demographics:
  - 66% of respondents are 45 years old or older
  - 66% of respondents live in the City of Tomah
  - Nearly 90% of respondents live in a single-family home and own the home







## 2. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

# CHAPTER 2: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

This chapter presents a vision for the future of Tomah and describes goals, objectives, and policies to achieve that vision. Housing, Mobility & Transportation, Economic Prosperity, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Community Facilities & Services, Community Character, Collaboration & Partnerships, and Land Use are all addressed.

## VISION STATEMENT

The following vision statement describes Tomah as we wish it to be in 2045, or sooner. This shared vision is the foundation of our plan – the goals, objectives, and policies that follow are all intended to help us realize this vision.

### 2045 City of Tomah Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

Tomah is a complete community. Our natural resources, businesses, public services, infrastructure, recreational opportunities, and the greatest asset of all, our residents, makes Tomah a great place to live, work, shop, play, and stay.

Each element of the comprehensive plan contains goals, objectives, and policies established during the planning process based on public input (Appendix A) and the information contained in Appendix B. This section defines goals, objectives, and policies, as follows:

- **Goal:** A goal is a long-term target that states what the community wants to accomplish. Written in general terms, the statement offers a desired condition.
- **Objective:** An objective is a statement that identifies a course of action to achieve a goal. They are more specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities.
- **Policy:** A policy is a specific rule of conduct or course of action intended to help the City achieve the goals and objectives of the plan. Policies using the words “shall” or “will” are firm commitments by the City – all future actions and decisions made by the City should be consistent with these policies, unless unforeseen reasons arise which make a policy impractical to adhere to. Such occasions should be rare and probably indicate a need to amend this plan according to the procedures in Chapter 4. Policies using the words “should,” “encourage,” “discourage,” or “may” are intended to serve as a guide for City decisions and actions.

## TOMAH'S GOALS FOR A BETTER FUTURE...

- Tomah's neighborhoods will offer safe, attractive, and diverse housing options.
- Tomah will provide a safe, efficient, multi-modal, and well-maintained transportation network.
- Retain, expand, create, and attract businesses that strengthen and diversify the local economy, grow the tax base, and enhance employee wages and benefits.
- Reinforce the character of the city and surrounding landscape by preserving productive agricultural lands and activities, rural vistas, and natural areas.
- Maintain reliable and high-quality services, utilities, and facilities.
- Ensure high quality site and building designs within the community to uphold property values, attract new development, and reinforce the character of the city.
- Maintain mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with neighboring municipalities, Monroe County, state and federal agencies, and the schools, colleges and universities serving Tomah residents.
- Tomah will have an adequate supply of municipal serviced land to accommodate growth in residential, commercial, and industrial uses, located in appropriate places.

## HOUSING

| Goal   |
|--|
| Tomah's neighborhoods will offer safe, attractive, and diverse housing options.  |
| Objectives   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a variety of housing types to meet the changing and diverse housing needs of the population.</li> <li>• Support the establishment of complete, livable neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Tomah homeowners will maintain their homes and properties and new housing will be designed and built to meet aesthetic standards of the community. The median home value in Tomah as a percentage of the County and State median home values will continue to improve.</li> </ul>   |
| Policies   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tomah plans to maintain a mix of housing units, including single-family, two-family, and multi-family housing units throughout the community. This housing mix should be represented in future land use mapping and new subdivision development. Neighborhoods should include housing for all ages and family types.</li> <li>• All residential development, and particularly multiple-family and senior living developments, should be located in areas where safe pedestrian access to parks, retail, and community facilities is possible. However, this policy should not result in the concentration of multiple-family housing in any one area – such housing should be located in many parts of the City.</li> <li>• New neighborhoods should be connected to existing and planned neighborhoods through sidewalks or multi-purpose trails. The City will work to improve walkability, lighting, and sidewalks in existing neighborhoods.</li> <li>• The City will continue programs through Coulee Cap that offer assistance with maintenance, rehabilitation, and energy conservation projects that improve the local housing stock.</li> <li>• The City will continue to support the Tomah Housing Authority in providing accessible housing to all populations through rental assistance programs. The City will continue to support opportunities for homeownership for low to moderate income families through grant opportunities.</li> <li>• The City will maintain and enforce a comprehensive building code that requires inspection of new structures and repair of unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions. The City will work with landlords to improve the quality of living and appearance of rental properties. The City discourages the use of properties for the accumulation of “junk” materials and will enforce property maintenance/public nuisance ordinances as needed. The City has added a Code Enforcement Officer to administer these initiatives.</li> <li>• The City will implement the recommendations of the 2022 Housing Assessment, including its strategies for diversifying the housing stock, addressing affordability and availability, and reversing key data trends.</li> </ul> |



**What is Affordable Housing?**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as housing in which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities.

**What is Low-Income Housing?**

Per HUD, low-income housing is determined by the percentage of a household's annual income related to the median household income for that area. Low-income is defined as 80% of median family income for the area and very low-income is defined as 50% of median family income for the area. If the household's annual income falls within these definitions, they are eligible for federally subsidized housing programs which are often administered at the county level. In Tomah, the Tomah Housing Authority administers the program.

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Glossary of Terms*

As of 2023, Very-Low Income (50% of Monroe County AMI) for a family of one person was \$30,100 and for a family of four was \$43,000. Moderate Income (80% of Monroe County AMI) for a family of one person was \$48,200 and for a family of four was \$68,800.

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY 2023 Income Limits Documentation System*

**What is Workforce Housing?**

Workforce housing is homeownership, as well as rental housing, which can be reasonably afforded by households experiencing moderate to middle income and located in acceptable proximity to centers of employment. The most common definition of workforce housing comes from the Urban Land Institute, which defines workforce housing as: "housing that is affordable to households earning 60% to 120% of the area median income." This term may be used by some to place housing in economic development terms and to avoid misplaced stigmas of identifying something as "affordable" housing. Based on 2023 Area Median Incomes (AMI) in Monroe County, 60% of AMI is a household making \$50,940 and making 120% of AMI is \$101,880.

*Source: Urban Land Institute and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY 2023 Income Limits Documentation System*

### What is Missing Middle Housing?

“Missing middle housing” is a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types scaled between single-family detached houses and larger apartment buildings. Missing middle housing is compatible in scale with most single-family residential areas and can help meet the growing demand for urban living. Missing middle housing types contribute to a walkable neighborhood, require simpler construction types than larger buildings, and contribute to higher residential densities than single-family homes.

Despite the higher density, they have lower perceived density than other building types because the units are small and well designed. Housing types that should be considered as part of the missing middle include: tiny homes, traditional small-lot single-family detached homes, side-by-side duplexes, two-, three-, and four-flats, townhouses, live-work buildings, accessory dwelling units, and small apartment buildings.

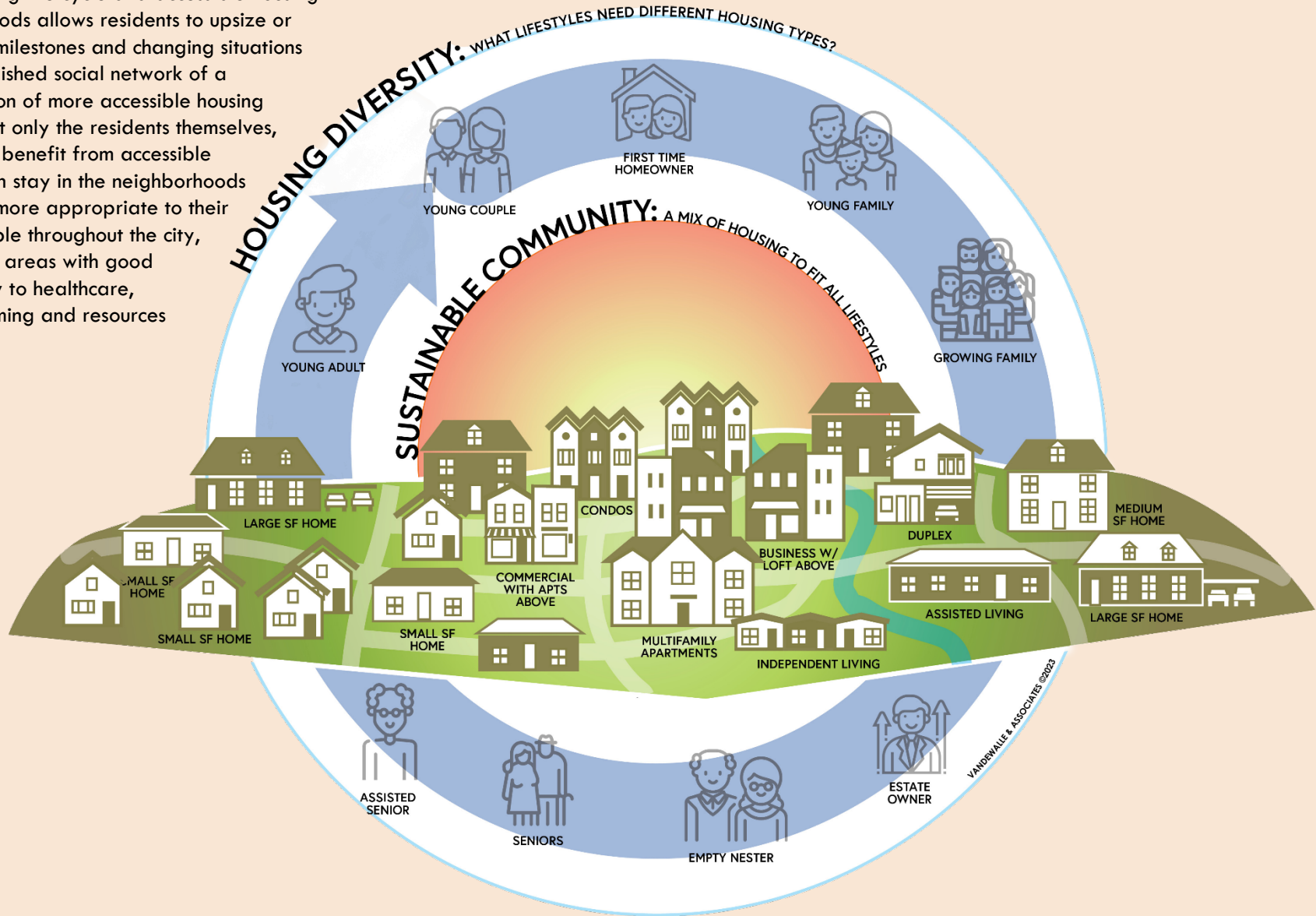


Source: *Missing Middle Housing: Thinking Big and Building Small to Respond to Today's Housing Crisis*. Daniel Parolek.



### What is Life Cycle Housing?

Housing must be provided to accommodate all stages of life and all abilities. Integrating life cycle and accessible housing options within neighborhoods allows residents to upsize or downsize along with life milestones and changing situations without leaving the established social network of a neighborhood. The inclusion of more accessible housing across Tomah supports not only the residents themselves, but also visitors who may benefit from accessible features. Older adults can stay in the neighborhoods of their choice if housing more appropriate to their changing needs is available throughout the city, especially in amenity-rich areas with good walkability and proximity to healthcare, basic needs, and programing and resources for seniors.



## MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

| Goal  |
|---|
| Tomah will provide a safe, efficient, multi-modal, and well- maintained transportation network.   |
| Objectives  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tomah street network will safely balance the needs of all users. The City will manage access and design of the transportation network in order to effectively maintain the safety and functional integrity of City streets for all users.</li> <li>• Biking and walking in Tomah will be safe, enjoyable, and efficient. Alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips will increase as a percentage of all transportation trips within the City.</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance access to other modes of transportation including rail, bus, and air facilities.</li> <li>• The efficiency and function of freight and commercial transportation systems will continue to improve.</li> <li>• Maintain the local transportation network at a level of service desired by residents and businesses.</li> <li>• Local transportation systems will be well-coordinated with regional systems and investments.</li> <li>• Leverage the airport as a community amenity and key economic development growth opportunity to support local and regional businesses.</li> </ul>  |
| Policies  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City encourages a connected, flexible street grid that promotes Complete Street principles. New roads shall be built according to City standards and inspected before accepted for dedication. The City will continue to map the preferred routes and connection points for major streets and recreational trails in growth areas and will ensure adequate and appropriate right-of-way dedication as land is divided. The City will utilize its official mapping powers to coordinate long-term facility planning in the City and surrounding extraterritorial area.</li> <li>• When considering new development proposals, the City may require intergovernmental agreements that define the responsibilities of the City, the developer and neighboring jurisdictions regarding any required improvements to City streets and funding of such improvements. The City may also require that the property owner, or their agent, fund the preparation of a traffic impact analysis by an independent professional prior to approving new development. Where appropriate, the City may designate weight restrictions and truck routes to protect local streets and improve traffic flow.</li> <li>• The City will work with property owners to create a local bicycle loop (using on- and off-road facilities) to connect important sites within the City (e.g. parks, public facilities, retail areas) and region. New developments, and redevelopment, shall be designed to connect to adjacent developments through sidewalk installation and/or recreational trails. The City will continue to encourage sidewalk installation where gaps are present. The City will continue implementation of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as part of this effort.</li> <li>• The City will maintain a Capital Improvement Plan to plan for the annual construction and maintenance of roads and other transportation facilities. Annual transportation investments will include funding for both traditional road improvements and alternative transportation modes such as bike trails, sidewalks, rail, bus and air facilities.</li> <li>• The City will work with representatives from the WisDOT and Monroe County to raise awareness of local concerns when State and County highways in the area are slated for improvement. The City will coordinate improvements to adjacent local roads, when appropriate.</li> <li>• The City will work with the Town of LaGrange and Town of Tomah to plan, construct, and maintain those roadways that cross jurisdictions, including cost sharing where appropriate.</li> </ul> |

## ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

|  |
|--|
| <b>Goal</b>  |
| Retain, expand, create, and attract businesses that strengthen and diversify the local economy, grow the tax base, and enhance employee wages and benefits.  |
| <b>Objectives</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tomah will focus on our existing assets, infrastructure, and location to build a resilient local economy.</li> <li>• Tomah will have both land (space) and incentive tools to support business expansion, creation, and attraction.</li> <li>• Downtown Tomah will be economically robust.</li> <li>• Existing Tomah businesses will retain and expand employment.</li> <li>• Tomah's tourism and destination travel industry will continue to grow.</li> <li>• Tomah's retail sector will continue to expand and diversify thereby reducing leakage, increasing consumer choices, and enhancing the quality of life of the community.</li> <li>• The per capita, median family and median household income for Tomah will increase as a percentage of County and State averages. The percentage of families living below the poverty line will also decrease.</li> <li>• Economic development costs and benefits will be coordinated within the region and through public and private partnerships.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Policies</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurism and business growth will be enthusiastically and continuously supported in Tomah. The City will actively monitor policies to ensure that Tomah is a development-friendly community. The City supports the idea of public-private partnerships and will work proactively with private business and landowners to facilitate investment in the community.</li> <li>• The City's economic development strategy is to first focus on maintaining existing jobs and businesses (Maintain What We Have); second to expand existing businesses (Grow Our Own); third to create and attract businesses that complement existing businesses and regional assets (Create an Economic Development Cluster/ Synergy); and fourth to create and attract new industries to the region (Diversify to become more Resilient).</li> <li>• The City will strategically plan areas for freight intensive business growth and expansion near existing and planned transportation facilities such as Interstate access ramps, arterial roadways, the railroad, and airport. The City encourages industrial or commercial businesses that generate large volumes of traffic or wastewater, or have a high water demand to locate where a full range of compatible utilities, services, roads, and other infrastructure is available to adequately support such developments.</li> <li>• The City may offer incentives such as grants, loan interest loans, land sales, public infrastructure improvements, and tax increment financing to encourage economic development.</li> <li>• The City may consider the use of public land acquisition to expand the industrial and commercial tax base of Tomah.</li> <li>• The City will work with private landowners and State agencies to clean up contaminated or blighted sites that threaten the public health, safety and welfare and to redevelop these sites to productive uses.</li> <li>• The City promotes its Downtown as a compact, pedestrian-oriented business district that supports retail, office, housing, and recreational uses. The City will work to develop a cohesive and attractive "feel" to the Downtown through unique streetscaping, signage, lighting, branding, outdoor art, and other public infrastructure improvements.</li> <li>• The City supports home occupations and home-based businesses in residential districts as a means to enhance residents' income opportunities, increase local employment, and foster business creation and entrepreneurship. However, activities that alter the residential character of the neighborhood, such as objectionable changes in traffic, noise, odor, light, or appearance of the home and property, will not be permitted.</li> <li>• The City supports the development of farm-based businesses and cottage industries within its boundaries and extraterritorial area to support farm families and enhance the agricultural economy and identity of the area.</li> <li>• The City will collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce, Forward Tomah Development Corporation, Monroe County, neighboring municipalities, and other economic development organizations to promote economic prosperity for the Tomah region. The City and its partners will promote local businesses, products, and community festivals in promotional materials.</li> </ul> |

## AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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| <b>Goal</b>  |
| Reinforce the character of the city and surrounding landscape by preserving productive agricultural lands and activities, rural vistas, and natural areas.   |
| <b>Objectives</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve the region's productive agricultural resources and heritage.</li> <li>• Protect, improve, and sustain our natural resources and rural vistas.</li> <li>• Maintain and improve the water quality of Lake Tomah.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Policies</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City will evaluate the development of prime agricultural areas for non- agricultural uses, particularly when alternative viable sites exist.</li> <li>• The City will explore ways of creating and supporting community gardens, greenhouses, farmer's markets, food pantries, and other similar community-based food products initiatives.</li> <li>• The City encourages efforts by local institutions with large food service responsibilities, such as schools, hospitals, etc. to seek local food procurement options.</li> <li>• The City will plan for a greenway system in which parks and open spaces are linked and offer connected ecological habitats.</li> <li>• The City will support and encourage educational programming targeted at preservation and appreciation of the environment.</li> <li>• The City promotes the conservation of urban forests and mature trees and will enhance urban streets, parking lots, and other hardscapes with native vegetation.</li> <li>• The City will restrict development in areas that have documented threatened and endangered species, or have severe limitations due to steep slopes, soils not suitable for building, or sensitive environmental areas such as wetlands, floodplains, and streams in order to protect these areas from degradation. The City shall require these natural resources features to be depicted on all site plans, preliminary plats, and certified survey maps in order to facilitate preservation of natural resources.</li> <li>• The City will use its zoning and subdivision powers to protect waterways, shorelines, wetlands, steep slopes, and floodplain areas within the City's extraterritorial area.</li> <li>• The City will seek to reduce non-point and point source pollution to Lake Tomah and local streams through best management practices.</li> </ul> |

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

| Goal  |
|---|
| Maintain reliable and high-quality services, utilities, and facilities.   |
| Objectives  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that public/private utilities and facilities are constructed and maintained according to professional and governmental standards to protect the public health, minimize disruption to the natural environment and to reinforce the traditional character of the City.</li> <li>• Monitor satisfaction with public and private utility and service providers and seek adjustments as necessary to maintain adequate service levels.</li> <li>• Ensure that public facilities and services continue to meet the needs of residents and businesses, especially as new development increases demand for those facilities and services.</li> <li>• Mitigate the risk of impacts before a disaster, protect residents and assets as best as possible during a disaster, and successfully recover from disasters.</li> <li>• Maintain financial practices that allow the most efficient and effective use of tax dollars.</li> </ul>   |
| Policies  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Sanitary Sewer</u> – The City encourages logical, cost-efficient expansion of sanitary sewer to serve compact development patterns. The City will plan for sewer extensions on a system basis, rather than as a series of individual projects and will require that developers locate and size utilities with enough capacity to serve adjacent future growth.</li> <li>• <u>Water Supply</u> – The City will monitor the quality and quantity of water pumped from City wells to ensure the needs of the community are met in terms of health and sustainability. The City encourages programs and development techniques that support water conservation and both groundwater protection and recharge.</li> <li>• <u>Utility Services and Extensions</u> – Utilities and municipal services will be provided in accordance with development needs and the comprehensive plan. New utilities and municipal infrastructure will not represent an unreasonable cost to the City-development will pay its fair share. The City generally requires all development that relies on municipal services to be located within Tomah’s corporate limits unless a boundary or developer’s agreement has been executed. Non-farm development not served by public sanitary sewer and water is discouraged within areas planned for City growth, except as approved through intergovernmental planning or related agreements, consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, and designed to potentially accommodate the long-term retrofitting of public services into the development. In areas not served by municipal sewer, the City requires adherence to the Wisconsin Sanitary Code and Monroe County Sanitary Code.</li> <li>• <u>Stormwater Management</u> – The City requires that during development planning, and the onsite construction, natural drainage patterns (i.e. existing drainage corridors, streams, floodplains, and wetlands) are preserved and protected. Developers will be responsible for erosion control and stormwater quality and quantity control both during and after site preparation and construction activities in accordance with applicable local, county or state regulations. The City encourages the use of stormwater management devices that improve the quality and reduce the quantity of runoff (e.g. rain gardens, infiltration basins, vegetated swales) in the design of stormwater management plans and a general effort to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces within new or existing developments.</li> <li>• <u>Solid Waste and Recycling</u> – The City annually reviews levels of service provided by the contracted solid waste disposal and recycling services and will meet with them as necessary to address any concerns raised by residents or local businesses. The City encourages participation in recycling and clean sweep programs for the disposal of hazardous materials.</li> <li>• <u>Parks</u> – The City will work to meet the recreational needs of its residents, and coordinate City activities through its website. The City will implement and maintain a five-year Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to coordinate and prioritize long-term park and recreation improvements, and to maintain eligibility for park acquisition and improvement grant programs. The City encourages the connectivity of local parks and recreational facilities with regional facilities, via bicycle trails or marked routes on existing roads. The City requires all proposed residential subdivision developments to dedicate land, or pay a fee in lieu thereof, for public parks, recreation and open space acquisition and development (in accordance with State Statute).</li> </ul> |

- Power Plants, Transmission Lines, and Telecommunication Facilities – The City will work with representatives from the Public Service Commission and energy providers to raise awareness of local concerns during the planning and siting of any major transmission lines, facilities, natural gas lines, wind towers or telecommunication towers. If such facilities are proposed, they should be located in an area safely away from existing or planned residential areas and should avoid environmentally sensitive areas. Underground placement and co-location (or corridor sharing) of utilities is encouraged and the City will investigate the costs of burying utility lines as part of street reconstruction projects.
- Energy Conservation – The City supports the efforts of energy providers, government agencies and others, to inform residents about energy conservation measures. The use of energy-efficient materials or designs is highly encouraged for new building construction. The City will consider the use of energy efficient alternatives when upgrading local buildings or equipment.
- Renewable Energy Facilities – The City will work with energy providers and landowners to support appropriate applications of renewable energy and utilization of on-site distributed energy generation (e.g., solar, wind, geo-thermal, biomass, solid waste) as a means of protecting the City against future fluctuations in energy costs. The City allows the installation of solar and wind energy systems in line with WI State Statute 66.0401.
- Schools – The City collaborates with the Tomah School District and post-secondary institutions, such as Western Technical College, to provide high quality educational facilities and opportunities for City residents, and will actively participate in the planning and siting of any new school facility in the community or the adaptive reuse of decommissioned school properties. The City will collaborate with area schools to maximize the community’s capital investment in school facilities by making those facilities readily available, as feasible, for other uses that support social interaction and health within the community, such as community meetings, neighborhood festivals, youth and adult sports.
- Libraries – The City collaborates with the Tomah Public Library to maintain and improve access to public library facilities for City residents.
- Special Needs Facilities – The City works with Monroe County and adjacent communities to maintain and improve access to special needs facilities (e.g. health care, senior care, etc.) for area residents. The City will collaborate with local non-profits and social service agencies to ensure there are adequate resources for all residents and that service is fair and equitable.
- Emergency Services – The City works through its Police Department, Fire Department, and Tomah Area Ambulance Service to maintain adequate provision of emergency services (i.e. fire, police, EMS) for City residents and businesses, and will review service provision levels with the appropriate departments/agencies annually. The City encourages opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation on emergency services.
- Hazards – The City encourages disaster preparedness, including resilient zoning and building practices and materials, establishment of disaster response and recovery plans by the City, families and businesses, and maintenance of emergency kits and supplies as recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). When forewarning is possible, the City will strive to keep citizens accurately apprised of the situation and possible outcomes. The City will plan for the effective delivery of emergency services and basic human needs in the event of a disaster. The City will work with non-profits, human services agencies, and emergency management agencies to plan for efficient disaster response that meets the needs of all in the community.
- City Facilities - The City annually evaluates the condition of the City’s facilities and associated equipment to ensure that it will continue to meet City needs. Upgrades for handicap accessibility will be considered for all City facilities (including parks) whenever changes are made to those facilities. The City will continue to use its Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan to coordinate and prioritize long-term public needs.
- City Fees - The City requires developer agreements or fees to recoup the costs associated with processing, reviewing, or inspecting building or land use proposals and permits, including pass through fees of consultants hired by the City to perform these services. The City may also assess impact fees to recoup the measurable capital costs necessary to support new developments (in accordance with State Statutes).
- City Finances - The City will manage the ratio of general obligation debt to overall revenues at an appropriate level.



## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

| Goal  |
|---|
| Ensure high quality site and building designs within the community to uphold property values, attract new development, and reinforce the character of the city.   |
| Objectives  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide the design of new development such that new development and existing development can coexist in an attractive manner.</li> <li>• Safeguard the city’s architectural, historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Maintain site and building design guidelines or standards for new development, especially multifamily and commercial developments, which establishes a small-town, “pedestrian-oriented” environment.</li> <li>• Enhance the aesthetic appearance of the City, especially along Superior Avenue and along community gateways.</li> </ul>   |
| Policies  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Utilities</u> – The City desires to bury overhead utilities lines and will evaluate the cost of doing so during street reconstruction projects.</li> <li>• <u>Historic Resources</u> – The City will preserve and celebrate landmark buildings. Adaptation and reuse of existing structures that have historic architectural character is strongly encouraged, and the City will review and guide adaptations through the design review process. The City supports community events and programs that celebrate the history and culture of Tomah. The City will ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials, or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or other development activities. Construction activities on a development site shall cease when unidentifiable archaeological artifacts are uncovered during either land preparation or construction. The developer shall notify the City of such discovery. The City has an established Historic Preservation Commission, Historic Preservation Ordinance, and Downtown Master Plan to support these efforts.</li> <li>• <u>Context Sensitive Design</u> – In areas with significant environmental sensitive resources or prime agricultural land, the City encourages the use of cluster development in and adjacent to the City’s municipal boundary, and conservation subdivision design in rural sections of the Planning Area. Both design practices are alternatives to conventional land division practices and help to protect the rich natural and agricultural resources of the region. Refer to Chapter 3 for strategies to assist guiding the design of future cluster or conservation subdivisions.</li> <li>• <u>Single-Family Residential</u> – The City encourages well-designed neighborhoods that reflect aspects of Traditional Neighborhood Design principles. Refer to Chapter 3 for strategies to assist guiding the design of future single-family residential development.</li> <li>• <u>Multi-Family Residential</u> – The City encourages proposed multi-family housing to be designed to blend in with traditional neighborhoods. Refer to Chapter 3 for strategies to assist guiding the design of future multi-family residential development.</li> <li>• <u>Commercial &amp; Industrial Development</u> – Commercial and industrial uses provide the City with economic stability and provide goods, services, and jobs for its residents. However, the buildings designed for these uses are often not adaptable for another use after the initial user leaves. Refer to Chapter 3 for strategies to assist guiding the design of future business development.</li> <li>• <u>Downtown</u> – The City will continue to pursue implementation of the Downtown Master Plan to stimulate reinvestment and revitalization efforts in this area.</li> </ul> |

## COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

| Goal  |
|---|
| <p>Maintain mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with neighboring municipalities, Monroe county, state and federal agencies, and the schools, colleges and universities serving Tomah residents.</p>  |
| Objective   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tomah will think regionally, while acting locally.</li> <li>• Reduce costs and improve quality of municipal services through partnerships with neighboring towns and municipalities.</li> <li>• Ensure adequate school facilities by coordinating and communicating growth plans with the Tomah School District.</li> <li>• Communicate clearly with the Town of La Grange, Town of Tomah, and Monroe County to establish mutually agreeable development goals and objectives in Tomah's extraterritorial area.</li> <li>• Leverage Western Technical College and University Extension resources to help the City further it's planning and economic development interests.</li> </ul>   |
| Policies  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City encourages an efficient and compatible land use pattern that minimizes conflicts between land uses across municipal boundaries and preserves natural resources in mutually agreed areas. To the extent possible, the City will coordinate its future planning efforts with Monroe County, the Town of La Grange, and Town of Tomah.</li> <li>• Where intergovernmental cooperation efforts do not yield mutually agreeable results, the City may utilize its zoning, subdivision, official mapping, and extraterritorial powers where necessary to protect City interests and coordinate development in the Planning Area with the City's Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>• Prior to the adoption of the Tomah Comprehensive Plan, and for subsequent updates, the City will request comments from Tomah School District officials, neighboring municipalities, and Monroe County.</li> <li>• The City will actively participate, review, monitor, and comment on pending plans from neighboring municipalities, Monroe County, and State or Federal agencies on land use or planning activities that would affect Tomah.</li> <li>• The City will continue to work with neighboring municipalities and Monroe County to identify opportunities for shared services or other cooperative planning efforts. This may include, for example, shared municipal facilities, sharing recreation facilities, and renting street maintenance equipment from neighboring municipalities.</li> </ul> |

## LAND USE

| Goal   |
|--|
| Tomah will have an adequate supply of municipal serviced land to accommodate growth in residential, commercial, and industrial uses, located in appropriate places.  |
| Objectives   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The supply of land to accommodate new development will be adequate to satisfy local demand.</li> <li>• The City's growth areas will be protected from development incompatible with City growth.</li> <li>• Development will use land, utilities, and community services as efficiently as possible.</li> <li>• Development and redevelopment in existing developed areas and growth areas will establish or enhance neighborhoods.</li> </ul>  |
| Policies   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City will work to ensure availability of appropriately zoned land for various types of development, recognizing that an efficient market requires a choice of multiple suitable sites.</li> <li>• The City will be proactive in efforts to increase supply for uses as necessary, including comprehensive plan amendments and, if necessary and feasible, the use of financial incentives to specifically encourage an increase in supply of land, space, or units if the market is for some reason not naturally responding to demand.</li> <li>• Neighborhoods will generally include a mix of residential types and densities. Business uses will be strategically located throughout the City so that small scale retail uses are within proximity to all neighborhoods and office and industrial uses are located adjacent to major transportation routes and existing or planned infrastructure.</li> <li>• The City will collaborate with Monroe County, Town of LaGrange, and Town of Tomah to encourage new development within the City's 1.5-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction that is compatible with the use, density, and configuration recommendations of this plan.</li> <li>• Development in growth areas will occur incrementally, outward from the existing urban edge. Leapfrog development is strongly discouraged.</li> <li>• Infill development where City roads and utilities already exist is a priority for the City and is strongly encouraged.</li> <li>• Any development with uses more intensive than neighboring residential uses will utilize siting and screening techniques to minimize a negative impact on those uses due to noise, light, traffic, etc.</li> <li>• The City will utilize the Planned Unit Development Process, as appropriate, to achieve projects that integrate residential and non-residential uses in creative ways not achievable with standard zoning.</li> <li>• The City will update and amend the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances over time to implement the recommendations in Chapter 3.</li> </ul> |



### 3. FUTURE LAND USE





# CHAPTER 3: FUTURE LAND USE

There are many unique uses of land across Tomah, and many more ways to configure those uses. It is the City's responsibility to regulate where and how development occurs so that conflict between incompatible uses is minimized, land and infrastructure are used as efficiently as possible, and Tomah continues to grow as a pleasant, attractive place to live and work. This chapter outlines the desired future land use for Tomah and the surrounding area, including categories of land use, and strategies for development design consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies defined in Chapter 2.

## USING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map identifies categories of similar use, character, and density. These categories, and associated policies, are described in the preceding pages, including an explanation of the City's intent and design and development strategies for each.

This map and the corresponding text are to be consulted whenever development is proposed, especially when a zoning change or land division is requested. Zoning changes and development shall be consistent with the use category shown on the map and the corresponding text.

Where uses in this map differ from the current use, it is not the general intent of the City to compel a change in zoning or a change in use. Except in rare instances when the City may actively facilitate redevelopment of a priority site, the City's use of this map will be only reactive, guiding response to proposals submitted by property owners.

## AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

It may from time to time be appropriate to consider amendments to the Future Land Use Map. See Chapter 4 for a description of the procedural steps for amending any aspect of this plan. The following criteria should be considered before amending the map.

### Consistency With Other Portions of this Plan

The proposed development is consistent with the general vision for the City, and the other goals, objectives, and policies of this plan.

### Housing and Transportation

The proposed development will contribute to addressing the City's housing needs as described in the 2022 City of Tomah Housing Assessment. The property divisions are consistent with traditional neighborhood development and rights-of-ways are constructed with appropriate connections to surrounding areas that support multi-modal transportation connectivity.





### Natural Resources

The land does not include important natural features such as wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, scenic vistas, or significant woodlands, which will be adversely affected by the proposed development. The proposed building envelope is not located within the setback of Shoreland and Floodplain zones (raised above regional flood line). The proposed development will not result in undue water, air, light, or noise pollution. Petitioner may indicate approaches that will preserve or enhance the most important and sensitive natural features of the proposed site.

### Emergency Vehicle Access

The lay of the land will allow for construction of appropriate roads and/or driveways that are suitable for travel or access by emergency vehicles.

### Ability to Provide Services

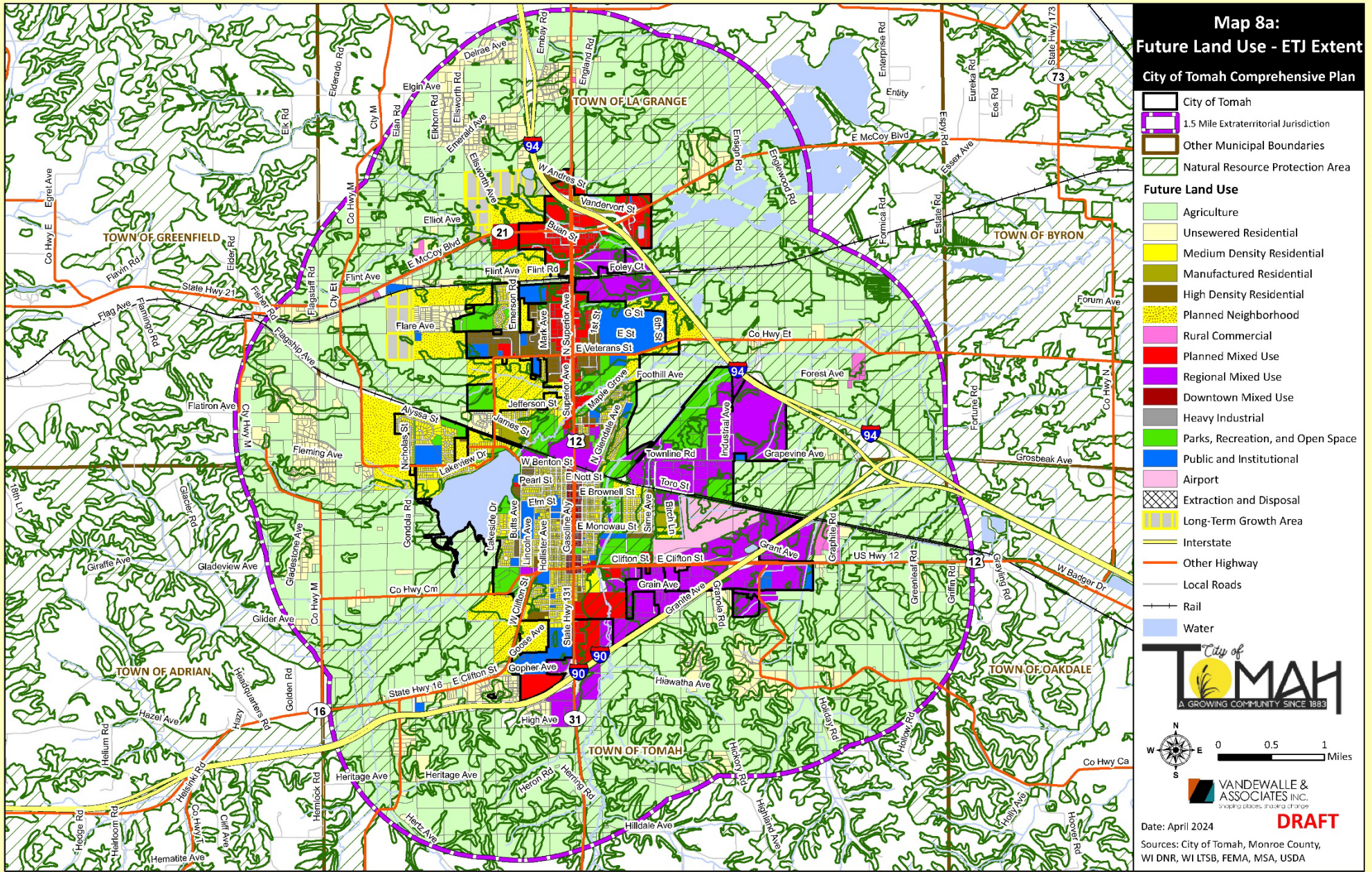
Provision of public facilities and services will not place an unreasonable financial burden on the City. Petitioners may demonstrate to the City that the current level of services in the City, or region, including but not limited to school capacity, transportation system capacity, emergency services capacity (police, fire, EMS), parks and recreation, library services, and potentially water and/or sewer services, are adequate to serve the proposed use. Petitioners may also demonstrate how they will assist the City with any shortcomings in public services or facilities.

### Public Need

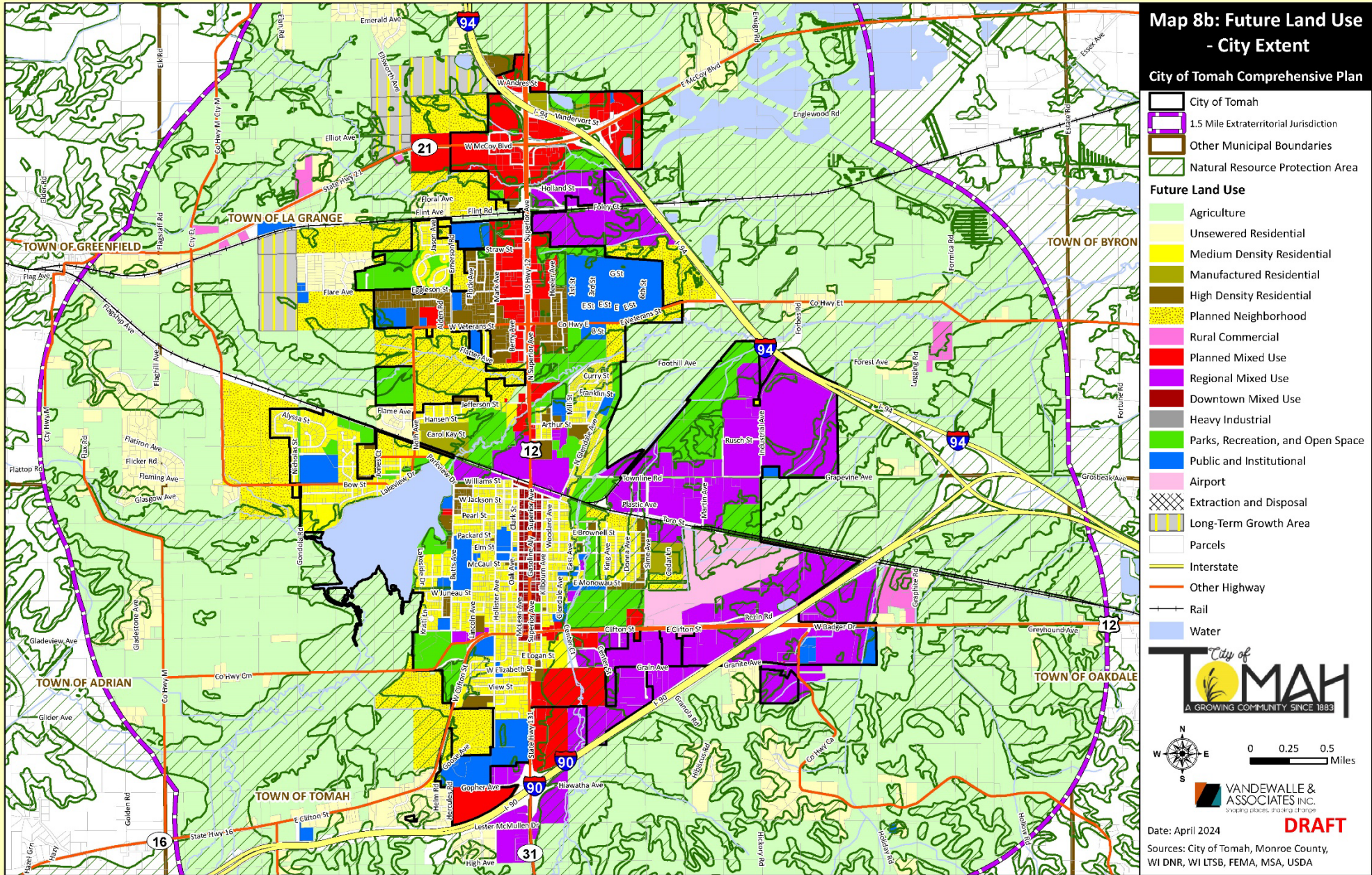
There is a clear public need for the proposed change, or unanticipated circumstances have resulted in a need for the change. The proposed development is likely to have a positive fiscal impact on the City. The City may require that the property owner, or their agent, fund the preparation of a fiscal impact analysis by an independent professional.













## INTERPRETING BOUNDARIES

Where uncertainty exists as to the boundaries of districts shown on the Future Land Use Map, the following rules will apply.

1. Boundaries indicated as approximately following the centerlines of streets, highways, or alleys will be construed to follow such centerlines.
2. Boundaries indicated as approximately following platted lot lines or U.S. Public Land Survey lines will be construed as following such lot lines.
3. Boundaries indicated as approximately following municipal boundaries will be construed as following such boundaries.
4. Boundaries indicated as following railroad lines will be construed to be midway between the main tracks.
5. Boundaries indicated as following shorelines and floodplains, will be construed to follow such shorelines and floodplains, and in the event of change in the shorelines and floodplains, it will be construed as moving the mapped boundary.
6. Boundaries indicated as following the centerlines of streams, rivers, canals, or other bodies of water will be construed to follow such centerlines.
7. Boundaries indicated as parallel to extension of features indicated in the preceding above will be so construed. The scale of the map will determine distances not specifically indicated on the map.

## FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

The future land use categories identify areas of similar use, character, and density. These classifications are not zoning districts - they do not legally set performance criteria for land uses (i.e. setbacks, height restrictions, density, etc.); however, they do identify those City of Tomah Zoning Ordinance districts that currently fit within each future land use category. The illustrations and strategies listed within each category are provided to help landowners and City officials make design decisions during the development process consistent with the intent of the land use category. These strategies may be used to help determine whether to approve a rezoning, which zoning district to apply, and what conditions to set, if any. Some categories also feature design recommendations.

The identification of future land use categories and associated uses does not obligate the City to approve any and all development petitions consistent with the future land use category. Other factors will have to be considered, such as the quality of the proposed development, its potential effect on adjacent properties, and ability to provide services to the site, and the phasing of development before an application is approved.

The seventeen categories designated on the Future Land Use Map are:

| Future Land Use Categories       |                              |                                      |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| AG – Agricultural                | PN – Planned Neighborhood    | PBI – Public and Institutional       |
| UR – Unsewered Residential       | DMU - Downtown Mixed Use     | AI- Airport                          |
| RC - Rural Commercial            | PMU – Planned Mixed Use      | POS - Parks, Recreation & Open Space |
| MDR - Medium Density Residential | RMU – Regional Mixed Use     | EC – Environmental Corridors Overlay |
| HDR - High Density Residential   | HI – Heavy Industrial        | LTG – Long-Term Growth Area          |
| MR – Manufactured Residential    | EX – Extraction and Disposal |                                      |

## DETAILED FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGIES

Each land use strategy is described in further detail. Additionally, this section describes the suitable zoning districts for each land use, detailed land use strategies, and additional design considerations. Figures referenced in this section are found at the end of this chapter.

### Agricultural

**Description:** The Agricultural (AG) category is intended to preserve land and rural character in areas deemed unlikely or infeasible for urban development over the planning period. Typical uses in these areas include open space, farming, farmsteads, agricultural businesses, forestry, quarries, and limited rural residential on well and septic systems. Development is expected to be less than one dwelling unit per 35 acres.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Rural Lands within the Town of LaGrange and Town of Tomah are regulated by the Monroe County Zoning Code. Any areas identified as Agricultural which become annexed to the City of Tomah may be temporarily zoned to either the City's Agricultural (A-1) or Conservancy (C-1) district.

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Development shall be located to minimize the fragmentation of productive agricultural land and to minimize any disruption to existing farm operations. New access points to state highways should be avoided when possible, particularly those intended on serving only one property.
2. The preferred gross residential density is one (1) dwelling unit per thirty-five (35) acres (.0285 units/ acre), or more, of contiguous land under single ownership, rounded to the nearest whole number. The preferred minimum lot size is two acres.
3. The development of residential subdivisions is prohibited in areas designated as Agricultural. Proposals for residential subdivisions shall require an amendment to the Future Land Use Map to an alternative land use classifications.

### Unsewered Residential

**Description:** The Unsewered Residential (UR) category includes existing non-farm residential development and rural subdivisions on well and septic systems. The primary intent of UR areas is to allow for some rural non-farm residential development particularly in areas where urban development is unlikely to occur and in areas with non-productive agricultural soils or agricultural uses. Rural residential subdivisions are strongly encouraged to utilize conservation or cluster design strategies (refer to Figure 3.3).

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Unsewered Residential within the Town of LaGrange and Town of Tomah are regulated by the Monroe County Zoning Code. Any areas identified as Unsewered Residential which become annexed to the City of Tomah shall be zoned to one of the City's residential zoning districts.

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Development shall minimize the fragmentation of productive agricultural land and to minimize any disruption to existing farm operations. New access points to state highways should be avoided, when possible, particularly those intended on serving only one property.
2. The preferred gross residential density is one (1) dwelling unit per five (5) acres (0.2 units/acre), or less, of contiguous land under single ownership, rounded to the nearest whole number. The preferred minimum lot size is two acres. Densities may exceed one dwelling unit per five acres of land if a developer proposes a conservation subdivision or cluster development, if urban services are extended to the development or a community wastewater system is proposed. After exceptions have been granted, gross density shall not exceed one (1) dwelling unit per two (2) acres of contiguous land under single ownership, rounded to the nearest whole number.
3. No businesses shall be permitted except for approved home businesses.



### Rural Commercial

**Description:** The Rural Commercial (RC) category includes business and limited industrial uses on well and septic systems. The primary intent of Rural Commercial areas is to allow for some rural non-farm commercial uses particularly in areas where urban development is unlikely to occur, in areas with non-productive agricultural soils or agricultural uses, and along major transportation corridors. In these areas the best uses will typically be those that are rural in nature (e.g. veterinarian clinic, agricultural businesses, blacksmith, nurseries, greenhouses, etc.).

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Rural Commercial within the Town of LaGrange and Town of Tomah are regulated by the Monroe County Zoning Code. Any areas identified as Rural Commercial which become annexed to the City of Tomah shall be zoned to one of the City's business or industrial zoning districts.

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Development shall minimize the fragmentation of productive agricultural land and to minimize any disruption to existing farm operations. New access points to state highways should be avoided, when possible, particularly those intended on serving only one property.
2. Where businesses are proposed adjacent to existing or planned residential developments care should be taken to reduce potential land use conflicts using the design strategies.
3. The preferred minimum lot size is two acres.

### Medium Density Residential

**Description:** The Medium Density Residential (MDR) areas are intended for housing with densities that range from approximately two to five units per acre. Neighborhood areas classified as MDR will typically be predominately single-family detached units with the potential for some duplex/twinhome, four plex, and other lower density attached housing developments.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Medium Density Residential are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within MDR areas include: Single-Family Residential (R-1), One- and Two-Family Residential (R-2), Multifamily Residential (R-3), Zero Lot Line Residential (R-6), and Institutional (I).

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Urban services will be required for all new development, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
2. Though medium density housing is the predominant use in most neighborhoods, healthy, balanced neighborhoods may also include other uses that support the needs of residents, including:
  - a. Parks and recreational facilities
  - b. Small municipal and institutional facilities (e.g. learning center, library, fire station, etc.)
  - c. Community centers
  - d. Places of worship
  - e. Day care centers
  - f. Small pockets of High Density Residential
  - g. Small commercial uses that serve neighborhood needs.
3. The City encourages residential projects (new construction and remodeling) to incorporate design strategies that will maintain neighborhood property values over time and enhance the social function and safety of the neighborhood.
4. Consider amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the considerations as listed below, in addition to reducing minimum lot size and dimensional setbacks, allowing greater building coverage, accommodating alley-loaded residential formats, removing minimum lot area standards for two-family and multi-family, allowing accessory dwelling units or in-family suites, reducing minimum parking requirements, and allowing multi-family configurations with zero lot lines (townhomes, condos, etc.).

**Additional Considerations:**

**Relationship to the Street:** Buildings and sites should be designed to establish visual and physical connections between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the home, with layers of increasingly private space in between.

Consider the following techniques (see Figures 3.2 and 3.4):

- A. The front door should face the street and there should be a clear route to the door from the street or sidewalk.
- B. There should be windows on the street façade.
- C. Building setbacks will vary according to building type and lot size, but should generally not exceed 30 feet.
- D. Incorporate a covered front porch, or at least a raised stoop, preferably covered.
- E. Utilize low fences, hedges, or other landscaping to establish a layer of privacy behind the sidewalk.

**Relationship among buildings:** Buildings within a neighborhood should be both cohesive and varied.

Consider the following techniques:

- A. Homes along a street should utilize similar setbacks to establish a consistent “street wall”.
- B. Home sizes may vary along a street but should utilize design techniques such as similar roof line heights and deeper setbacks for portions of wider houses to minimize apparent size variations.
- C. The mix of architectural themes or styles should generally be consistent within a neighborhood, but repeated use of identical floor plans or colors is strongly discouraged, especially for adjacent buildings.

**Garages:** Consider garage location and scale to avoid a “garage-scape” street appearance.

**Landscaping:** Provide generous landscaping, with an emphasis on native plant species, especially along street frontages.

**Lighting:** Exterior lights should be full-cut-off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare, light trespass, and light pollution. Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).

### High Density Residential

**Description:** The High Density Residential (HDR) areas are intended for housing with densities that exceed approximately five units per acre. Uses in this category include single-family detached, duplexes/twinhomes, four plex, townhouses, row houses, apartment buildings, and senior housing.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as High Density Residential are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within HDR areas include: One- and Two-Family Residential (R- 2), Multi-Family Residential (R-3), Zero Lot Line Residential (R-6), and Institutional (I).

**Land Use Strategies:**

1. Urban services will be required for all new development, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
2. Though high-density housing is the predominant use in most neighborhoods, healthy, balanced neighborhoods may also include other uses that support the needs of residents, including:
  - a. Parks and recreational facilities
  - b. Small municipal and institutional facilities (e.g. learning center, library, fire station, etc.)
  - c. Community centers
  - d. Places of worship
  - e. Day care centers
  - f. Small pockets of Medium Density Residential
  - g. Small commercial uses that serve neighborhood needs.
3. The City encourages residential projects (new construction and remodeling) to incorporate design strategies that will maintain neighborhood property values over time and enhance the social function and safety of the neighborhood. The additional considerations below apply mostly to multi-family formats - for higher density single-family developments, see the MDR design strategies. Consider amendments to the City’s Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the considerations as listed below, in addition to reducing minimum lot size and dimensional setbacks, allowing greater building coverage,

accommodating alley-loaded residential formats, removing minimum lot area standards for two-family and multi-family, allowing accessory dwelling units or in-family suites, reducing minimum parking requirements, and allowing multi-family configurations with zero lot lines (townhomes, condos, etc.).

#### **Additional Considerations:**

**Relationship to the Street:** Buildings and sites should be designed to establish visual and physical connections between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the building, with layers of increasingly private space in between.

Consider the following techniques (see Figures 3.2 and 3.5):

- A. The front door should face the street and there should be a clear route to the door from the street or sidewalk.
- B. There should be windows on the street façade.
- C. Building setbacks will vary according to building type and lot size but should generally not exceed 30 feet.
- D. Utilize low fences, hedges, or other landscaping to establish a layer of privacy behind the sidewalk.

**Relationship among buildings:** Buildings within a neighborhood, or within a single development, should be both cohesive and varied.

Consider the following techniques:

- A) When adjacent to lower density residential buildings, larger buildings should incorporate strategies to minimize the apparent size of the building, including flat roofs instead of pitched roofs, deeper setbacks for upper stories, and/or variation in the depth of setback along the building facade.
- B) The mix of architectural themes or styles should generally be consistent within a neighborhood or development, but there should be variation in floor plan, facade design, and color choice to avoid monotony.

**Garages:** Street-facing garage doors should be avoided whenever possible. When necessary, street-facing garages should be set back at least 10 feet behind the front façade of the building.

**Landscaping:** Provide generous landscaping, with an emphasis on native plant species, especially along street frontages. Use trees and low bushes in and around parking areas to partially obscure views of parking while retaining visual connections to maintain personal safety.

**Lighting:** Exterior lights should be full-cut-off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare, light trespass, and light pollution. Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).

**Common Open Space:** Provide gardens, grass areas, and playgrounds to serve the needs of residents.

**Service Areas:** Trash and recycling containers, street-level mechanical, rooftop mechanical, and outdoor storage, should be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.

### **Manufactured Residential**

**Description:** Professionally managed arrangements of manufactured homes and associated amenities.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Manufactured Residential are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within MR areas include: Manufactured Home Residential (R-4) and Mobile Home (R-5).

#### **Land Use Strategies:**

1. Leverage infill and redevelopment opportunities in these areas to promote a mix of residential densities that reflect the character of the neighborhood.
2. Promote rehabilitation and maintenance efforts of the neighborhood.
3. Encourage housing designs which are attractive and emphasize the house in relation to the internal road (front porches, stoops, etc.).
4. Require Manufactured Home Residential developments to be professionally managed and provide adequate recreational open space within the neighborhood.

## Planned Neighborhood

**Description:** The Planned Neighborhood (PN) area is intended to provide a carefully planned mix of single dwelling unit detached or attached, two-dwelling, multi-dwelling, small scale business, community facilities, and parks, recreation, and conservancy uses consistent with Traditional Neighborhood Design principles and forms of development.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Planned Neighborhood are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within PN areas include Single-Family Residential (R-1), One- and Two-Family Residential (R-2), Multifamily Residential (R-3), Zero Lot Line Residential (R-6), Institutional (I), and Business (B).

### Land Use Strategies:

1. Planned Neighborhoods should feature a variety of lot sizes and housing styles according to the Housing policies in Chapter 2. These areas should include a carefully planned mixture of single-family residential, two-family, and multi-family developments. This allows higher density development to be dispersed throughout the community instead of being concentrated in any one area. A small amount of neighborhood business uses or mixed uses may be appropriate; however, incremental commercial strip development is discouraged, as the downtown and interstate corridors should remain the focal point of retail services in the community. Planned Neighborhoods should include opportunities for residents to gather through the development of public open spaces or parks. Sidewalks, bicycle routes, and trails should be an integral part of the design of new neighborhoods and the connection to the rest of the community.
2. The City will encourage and support the creation of neighborhood plans for growth areas and for existing neighborhoods experiencing redevelopment pressure, to proactively determine how varied housing types and uses can be appropriately integrated into the neighborhood, and to establish a unique identity for each neighborhood.

### Additional Considerations:

**Relationship to the Street:** Buildings and sites should be designed to establish visual and physical connections between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the home, with layers of increasingly private space in between.

Consider the following techniques (see Figure 3.1):

- A. The front door should face the street and there should be a clear route to the door from the street or sidewalk.
- B. There should be windows on the street façade.
- C. Building setbacks will vary according to building type and lot size, but should generally not exceed 30 feet.
- D. Incorporate a covered front porch, or at least a raised stoop, preferably covered.
- E. Utilize low fences, hedges, or other landscaping to establish a layer of privacy behind the sidewalk.

**Relationship among buildings:** Buildings within a neighborhood should be both cohesive and varied.

Consider the following techniques:

- A. Homes along a street should utilize similar setbacks to establish a consistent “street wall”.
- B. Home sizes may vary along a street, but should utilize design techniques such as similar roof line heights and deeper setbacks for portions of wider houses to minimize apparent size variations.
- C. The mix of architectural themes or styles should generally be consistent within a neighborhood, but repeated use of identical floor plans or colors is strongly discouraged, especially for adjacent buildings

**Garages:** Consider garage location and scale to avoid a “garage-scape” street appearance.

**Landscaping:** Provide generous landscaping, with an emphasis on native plant species, especially along street frontages.

**Lighting:** Exterior lights should be full-cut-off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare, light trespass and light pollution (see side bar). Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).



Figure 3.1: Planned Neighborhoods Design Strategies



# PLANNED NEIGHBORHOODS

**Planned Neighborhoods provide attractive places to live, play and take care of day-to-day service needs.**

Planned Neighborhoods support diverse housing choice and options, including single family homes (detached or attached), two family homes, townhomes, and small-, middle-, and larger-scale multi-family. They also include small-scale businesses, community facilities, parks, recreation, and conservancy uses consistent with Traditional Neighborhood Design principles and forms of development, including mixed use. Planned Neighborhoods provide attractive, desirable, and sustainable places to live, play, work, and meet day-to-day service needs.

- Mix of housing types and densities
- Mix of lot sizes: small lot (6,000 sf), mid-size (8,000 sf), and large lot (10,000 sf)
- Diverse ages & incomes
- Homes within a comfortable walk of parks and services
- Opportunity to center around plazas, parks, public spaces
- Streets connected internally and to larger community
- Neighborhood-wide multi-use path system with interconnected sidewalks, bike lanes, and routes
- Natural areas protected and made central to development
- Integration of neighborhood focal points such as schools, churches or shopping



**A** Single Family Homes



**B** Townhomes



**C** Two-Family



**D** Multi-Family – Apartments & Condos



**E** Neighborhood Mixed-Use





Figure 3.2: Traditional Neighborhood Design Strategies

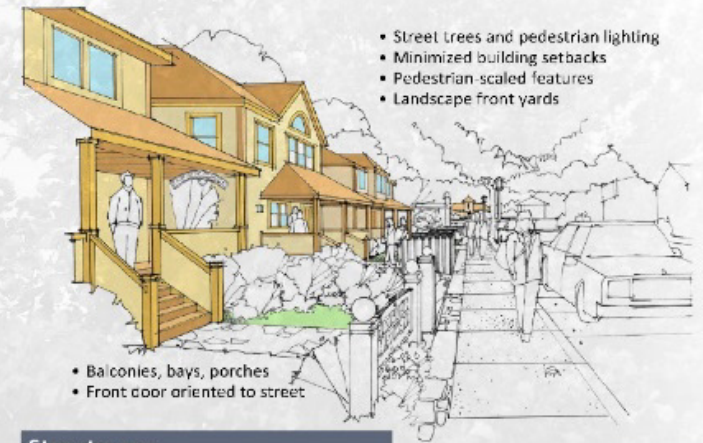


# TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Traditional Neighborhood design aims to enhance quality of life and community character through integrated multi-modal transportation options, diverse housing types, parks, schools, services, and jobs within walking distance of one another, preserving environmental systems, and reducing long-term demand for fiscal resources.

This can be accomplished by implementing the following guiding:

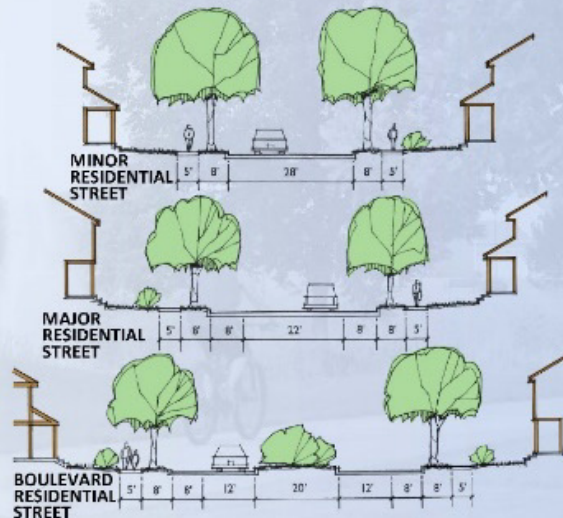
- Establishing community gathering places
- Providing housing variety
- Advancing equity and inclusion
- Blending land uses
- Promoting walkability
- Promoting connectivity
- Calming traffic
- Creating attractive and active streetscapes
- Highlighting natural areas
- Incorporating public health and sustainability



Streetscape



Single Family Parcel



Street Cross-Sections



Multi-Family Parcel

### Downtown Mixed Use

**Description:** The Downtown Mixed-Use (DMU) area is intended to provide a unique mix of commercial, residential, public, and related uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment. It is expected that the downtown area will continue to include a mix of retail and service commercial, office, institutional, higher density residential, public uses, and park and recreation uses. Uses in the DMU area are expected to be integrated both vertically and horizontally.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Downtown Mixed Use are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within DMU areas include: Business (B), Multi-Family Residential (R-3), Zero Lot Line Residential (R-6), and Institutional (I). In addition, those properties between McLean Ave and the alley running parallel to Superior Ave., and between Kilbourn Ave. and the alley running parallel to Superior Ave., may be zoned for One- and Two-Family Residential (R-2).

**Land Use Strategies:**

1. Urban services will be required for all new development, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
2. The City encourages all new development, or exterior site and building renovations, in the downtown area to maintain the urban fabric and character. New buildings should fit their context by including the additional considerations below.
3. Future projects in the Downtown Mixed Use land use category should be consistent in advancing the goals and recommendations of the City of Tomah Downtown Master Plan.

**Additional Considerations:**

Design Context and Architectural Character: New buildings should fit their context. Consider the following techniques:

- A) The surrounding context, especially adjacent buildings, should always be documented and considered before design begins. City reviewers should require photos of this context during the review process.
- B) Buildings should incorporate architectural elements that provide visual interest and human scale, such as differentiation of the ground floor level, awnings, or canopies over entrances, etc.
- C) It is not necessary to replicate historic architectural styles with new buildings, but there should be some consistency of the scale and rhythm of design features, such as windows and floor heights, that help fit a new building within a block of older buildings.
- D) Building materials should be consistent with other nearby buildings. Brick and stone are strongly encouraged in most parts of downtown, but other quality, long-lasting materials may be appropriate in some places.
- E) Building design and signage should incorporate small accents that celebrate the City's history (e.g. Gasoline Alley), culture, and industries (e.g. Cranberry Country).

Building Height: Multi-story buildings are strongly encouraged on all downtown sites.

Relationship to the Street: Buildings and sites should be designed to establish visual and physical connections between the public realm of the street and the private realm of the building. Consider the following techniques (see Figure 3.6):

- A) In most cases there should be no setback from the sidewalk, though occasional partial setbacks to create usable space, as for an outdoor seating area, are acceptable. Shallow setbacks may be permissible for properties that do not face Superior Ave.
- B) The front door should face the primary street.
- C) There should be clear vision windows on the street facade. Retail and service spaces should have large, clear windows that provide good visual connection between the building interior and the sidewalk.

Garages: Street-facing garages doors should be avoided whenever possible.

Parking: Front yard parking is not permitted. Side yard parking should be separated from the sidewalk by a low fence or landscape buffer to partially obscure views of parking while retaining visual connections to maintain personal safety. (Refer to Figure 3.6)

Landscaping: In places where the building is not built at the front property line, hardscape improvements and native plants should be used to provide visual interest and a comfortable pedestrian environment.

Lighting: Exterior lights should be full-cut-off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare and light pollution, and especially to avoid light trespass to residential uses. Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).

Signs: Signs should be pedestrian-scaled. Desired sign types include building-mounted, window, projecting, monument, and awning. Signs should not be excessive in height or square footage.

**Service Areas:** Trash and recycling containers, street-level mechanical, rooftop mechanical, outdoor storage, and loading docks should be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.

**Stormwater:** Green roofs, permeable pavement and other stormwater management technologies should be utilized as feasible to filter pollutants and infiltrate or delay runoff.

### Planned Mixed Use

**Description:** Planned Mixed Use (PMU) areas are intended for a well-planned mix of commercial, office, institutional, and multi-family uses that serve neighborhood, community, and regional markets. Examples include large retail and service businesses, multi-family apartments, offices, clinics and health care facilities, hotels, restaurants and entertainment businesses, storage, mixed-use residential and commercial structures, and automobile sales and services. The type and size of use will be determined by location and market forces. Additionally, it is expected for high-density residential and institutional uses to be located in this area.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Planned Mixed Use are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within these areas include: Business (B), Office Business (B-1), Highway Business (B-2), Multi-Family Residential (R-3), and Institutional (I).

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Urban services will be required for all new development, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
2. Commercial areas should generally be served by a contiguous sidewalk network and safe bike routes.
3. The City encourages and supports investment in older commercial uses and sites in existing neighborhoods. Older commercial sites with depilated buildings should be targeted for redevelopment into new commercial or residential uses through the use of all economic development tools at the City's disposal.
4. The City encourages for all commercial projects the use of design strategies that will maintain property values over time. This section offers different strategies for highway settings and neighborhood settings in some categories.
5. Consider amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the considerations as listed below, in addition to a percentage-based approach to mixed-use buildings instead of all residential above the ground floor, reducing minimum lot sizes and setbacks, increasing lot coverage standards, reducing minimum parking requirements, allowing shared parking situations by-right, minimum bicycle parking standards, and modernizing land use categories.

#### Additional Considerations (see Figures 3.7 and 3.8):

- **Relationship to the Street:** The building should be designed such that the primary building facade is oriented towards the street (toward the larger street on corner lots) and should have a public entrance.
- **Architectural Character:** The building should be designed using architectural elements that provide visual interest and a human scale that relates to the surrounding neighborhood context.
- **Building Materials:** The building should be constructed of high-quality, long-lasting finish materials, especially along prominent facades with frequent customer traffic.
- **Building Projections:** Canopies, awnings, and/or gable-roof projections should be provided along facades that give access to the building.
- **Signs:** Signs should not be larger or taller than necessary based on the context of the site, and within the limits established by the zoning ordinance.
- **Highway commercial:** desired sign types include building-mounted, monument.
- **Neighborhood commercial:** desired sign types include building-mounted, window, projecting, monument, and awning.
- **Parking:** Front yard parking should be limited; side yard, rear yard, or below building alternatives are preferred. Shared parking and access between properties is encouraged to minimize curb cuts and make more efficient use of land and paved surfaces. Landscaping and trees should be incorporated into all surface parking areas to improve aesthetic and environmental performance. Vegetative buffers should be provided between pedestrian circulation routes and vehicular parking/circulation. Access drive lanes should be separated from parking stalls to reduce congestion.



- **Landscaping:** Generous landscaping should be provided with an emphasis on native plant species. Landscaping should be placed along street frontages, between incompatible land uses, along parking areas, and in islands of larger parking lots. Use trees and low bushes in and around parking areas to partially obscure views of parking while retaining visual connections to maintain personal safety.
- **Lighting:** Exterior lights should be full-cut off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare and light pollution, and especially to avoid light trespass to nearby residential property. Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).
- **Stormwater:** Rain gardens, bio-retention basins, permeable pavement, and other stormwater management technologies should be utilized to filter pollutants and infiltrate runoff.
- **Service Areas:** Trash and recycling containers, street-level mechanical, rooftop mechanical, outdoor storage, and loading docks should be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.

### Regional Mixed Use

**Description:** Regional Mixed Use (RMU) areas are intended for indoor commercial, offices, showrooms, warehousing, storage, and light industrial uses with associated office functions. RMU developments are usually designed in a unified manner and feature both public and private landscaping, and common directory signage and/or entry features.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as RMU are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within RMU areas include: Office Business (B-1), Highway Business (B-2), Limited Industrial (M-1), General Industrial (M-2), and Highway Industrial (M-3), and Institutional (I).

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Urban services will be required for all new development, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
2. RMU areas should generally be served by a contiguous sidewalk network and safe bike routes.
3. The City encourages the use of design strategies that will maintain property values over time in RMU areas.
4. Consider amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the considerations as listed below, in addition to reducing minimum lot sizes and setbacks, increasing lot coverage standards, reducing minimum parking requirements, allowing shared parking situations by-right, minimum bicycle parking standards, and modernizing land use categories.

#### Additional Considerations (see Figures 3.7 and 3.9):

- **Relationship to the Street:** Buildings should be designed such that the primary building facade and entrance are oriented towards the street (toward the larger street on corner lots).
- **Architectural Character:** Buildings should be designed using architectural elements that provide visual interest. A consistent design theme or style among different sites is not necessary.
- **Building Materials:** Buildings should be constructed of high-quality, long-lasting finish materials.
- **Building Entrances:** Building entrances should utilize architectural features that make them easy to find and which provide some measure of protection from the elements immediately in front of the door.
- **Signs:** Signs should not be larger or taller than necessary based on the context of the site, and within the limits established by the zoning ordinance. Common directory signs at entrances and a common style or format for all sites are encouraged.
- **Parking:** Parking should be in the side yard or rear yard wherever feasible. Front yard parking should be limited to one double-loaded aisle. Shared parking among neighboring sites is encouraged to make more efficient use of land and paved surfaces. Vegetative buffers should be provided in parking lots between pedestrian circulation routes and vehicular parking/ circulation. The use of on-street parking is encouraged. Access drive lanes should have adequate throat depths to allow for proper vehicle stacking.
- **Landscaping:** Generous landscaping should be provided with an emphasis on native plant species. Landscaping should be placed along street frontages, between incompatible land uses, along parking areas, and in islands of larger parking lots. Use trees and low bushes in and around parking areas to partially obscure views of parking while retaining visual connections to maintain personal safety.

- **Lighting:** Exterior lights should be full-cut-off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare and light pollution, and especially to avoid light trespass to any nearby residential property. Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).
- **Stormwater:** Rain gardens, bio-retention basins, permeable pavement, and other stormwater management technologies should be utilized to filter pollutants and infiltrate runoff.
- **Service Areas:** Trash and recycling containers, street-level mechanical, rooftop mechanical, outdoor storage, and loading docks should be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.

### Heavy Industrial

**Description:** Heavy Industrial (HI) areas are intended for heavy and outdoor industrial uses such as heavy manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, wholesale trade, accessory offices, and similar uses. Industrial areas are typically larger, individual sites not part of a larger business park.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Industrial are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within HI areas include: Limited Industrial (M-1), General Industrial (M-2), and Highway Industrial (M-3).

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Urban services will be required for all new development, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
2. Industrial areas should be located near regional transportation routes. Industrial areas should generally be served by safe bike routes.
3. The City encourages and supports investment in older industrial uses and sites in existing neighborhoods. Older industrial sites with dilapidated buildings should be targeted for redevelopment into new industrial or commercial uses through the use of all economic development tools at the City's disposal.
4. Consider amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance to ensure all industrial projects integrate design strategies that will maintain property values over time. Many of the design strategies previously illustrated for Downtown, Planned Mixed Use, and Regional Mixed-Use areas are not applicable for Heavy Industrials areas; however, the City encourages adherence to the lighting and service area design strategies illustrated in Figure 3.9 and the signage and stormwater management strategies. In addition, loading docks should be screened from public view along the front of the building through landscaping or building design.
5. Consider amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance to incorporate reducing minimum parking requirements, allowing shared parking situations by-right, minimum bicycle parking standards, and modernizing land use categories.
6. Consider the establishment of a new Zoning District to accommodate and provide zoning regulations for heavy industrial uses to give the City the needed regulatory power outside of the Conditional Use Permit process.

### Extraction and Disposal

**Description:** Extraction and Disposal areas (ED) are intended for the most intensive industrial, outdoor storage, disposal, quarries, gravel pits, clay extraction, peat extraction, and related uses, often associated with high intensity operations, traffic, and potential impacts to surrounding land uses.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Extraction and Disposal are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within ED areas includes the General Industrial (M-2) District.

#### Land Use Strategies:

1. Consider the establishment of a new Zoning District to accommodate and provide zoning regulations for extraction, disposal, and similar high-intensity land uses to give the City the needed regulatory power outside of the Conditional Use Permit process.

### Public & Institutional



**Description:** Public & Institutional (PBI) areas are intended for churches, schools, cemeteries, art and cultural facilities, local government facilities and other parcels that are owned by a public or quasi-public entity. Park and recreational uses are sometimes a secondary use on these sites.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:**

Areas identified as Public and Institutional are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. These uses are permitted in most all zoning districts as a conditional use. Generally acceptable zoning districts within PBI areas also includes the Institutional (I) District.

**Land Use Strategies:**

- 1. Decommissioned public properties, such as schools or churches, be reused or redeveloped in ways compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

**Additional Considerations:** Many public and institutional uses are located in or next to residential areas. The following strategies are intended to mitigate negative impacts on surrounding uses.

- **Traffic and Parking:** Parking and driveway access should be designed to minimize the impacts of vehicle headlights, congestion, and aesthetic appearance on the surrounding neighborhood. Parking lots should be buffered from adjacent residential uses by a landscaping buffer that blocks headlights and the view of parked cars.
- **Landscaping:** Generous landscaping should be provided with an emphasis on native plant species. Landscaping should be places along street frontages, between incompatible land uses, along parking areas, and in islands of larger parking lots. Use trees and low bushes in and around parking areas to partially obscure views of parking while retaining visual connections to maintain personal safety.
- **Lighting:** Exterior lights should be full-cut off fixtures that are directed to the ground to minimize glare and light pollution, and especially to avoid light trespass to nearby residential property. Limited uplighting is acceptable for architectural accentuation, flag lighting, and to highlight key civic features (e.g. church steeples).
- **Stormwater:** Rain gardens, bio-retention basins, permeable pavement, and other stormwater management technologies should be utilized to filter pollutants and infiltrate runoff.
- **Service Areas:** Trash and recycling containers, street-level mechanical, rooftop mechanical, outdoor storage, and loading docks should be located or screened so that they are not visible from a public street. Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.

**Airport**

**Description:** Airport areas (AI) are intended for lands that are designated as current or future locations for airports, hangers, and associated airport activities and operations.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Airports are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. Generally acceptable zoning districts within AI areas includes the Limited Industrial (M-1) and General Industrial (M-2) Districts

**Land Use Strategies:**

- 1. Consider the establishment of a new Zoning District to accommodate and provide zoning regulations for airport land uses to give the City the needed regulatory power outside of the Conditional Use Permit process.

### Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

**Description:** Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (POS) areas are intended for active and passive recreation uses or preservation of natural areas.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Park and Open Space are regulated by the City of Tomah Zoning Code. These uses are permitted in most all zoning districts as a conditional use. Generally acceptable zoning districts within POS areas also includes the Institutional (I) District or the Conservancy (C-1) District.

**Land Use Strategies:**

1. Areas identified as POS should be preserved for passive and active recreational uses. Some stormwater management or other utility/institutional uses (e.g. water towers, recreational-based building/facilities) may be located within these areas.
2. The Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) will be used as the guide to future investment and development within this land use category. See the City's CORP for detailed recommendations within each park and open space site.

### Environmental Corridor Overlay

**Description:** The Environmental Corridor (EC) overlay classification identifies sensitive lands that may be subject to development restrictions enforced by County, State, or Federal agencies. Mapped EC areas include all land that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Water bodies and wetlands mapped as part of the WIDNR Wetland Inventory, or
- 100-Year Floodplains based on FEMA maps, or
- Areas with steep slopes greater than 20%

The primary intent of these areas is to retain sensitive natural areas in either public or private ownership for the benefit of maintaining fish and wildlife habitat; to prevent and control water pollution; to prevent erosion and sedimentation; to prevent property damage caused by flooding; to preserve areas of natural beauty; and to provide areas for outdoor recreation. A majority of the EC represents areas that are vital to the region's ecosystem and are key ingredients of the rural character and image of the Tomah community, and thus development in areas designated EC shall be limited.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** NRP lands may be zoned as described by the underlying land use classification, but are subject to development restrictions defined by other City, County, State, or Federal rules and regulations.

**Land Use Strategies:**

1. This classification is intended to function as an overlay district, such that the underlying future land use classification remains in place, but the overlay classification indicates the possibility of additional restrictions on development.
2. Landowners are advised that land within EC areas may be restricted from building development, site grading, or vegetation clearing under the City, County, State, or Federal regulations. The City maintains that some sites may be suitable for development with proper site planning. Where building development is permissible additional building setbacks and buffer yards beyond the minimum requirements are encouraged.
3. Recreational uses, agricultural and silviculture operations are usually permitted in accordance with county, state, and federal laws. Best Management Practices are highly encouraged in these areas.

### Long-Term Growth Area

**Description:** Land where the City may grow beyond the 20-year planning period, for which it is premature for the City to designate any particular type of future land use. Prior to the development within any part of the Long-Term Growth Area, the City will amend this Comprehensive Plan to recommend specific future land uses (beyond agriculture) and identify how the specific land use pattern would be served by transportation, utility, and other public services.

**Suitable Zoning Districts:** Areas identified as Long-Term Growth Areas within the Town of LaGrange and Town of Tomah are regulated by the Monroe County Zoning Code. Any areas identified as Long-Term Growth Area which become annexed to the City of Tomah shall be zoned in accordance with the newly designated Future Land Use.

**Land-Use Strategies:**

1. Policies and recommendations on permissible uses for the Long-Term Growth Areas shall be the same as those listed for the Agricultural future land use category unless and until the City's Comprehensive Plan is amended.
2. The City will use its extraterritorial land division review authority to ensure that any development proposed in these areas aligns with the long-term extension of the City's growth pattern.
3. Prior to allowing more intensive forms of development within the Long-Term Growth Area, the City will, through the Comprehensive Plan amendment process, identify specific future land uses (other than agriculture) and how the specific land use pattern would be served by transportation, utility, and other public services.

## SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS

Special Planning Areas (SPA) includes locations identified for either redevelopment or new development where additional sub-area planning should be considered in order to facilitate the vision and goals for these areas. Sub-area planning may take the form of detailed neighborhood land use plans, zoning code modifications, or economic development initiatives.

### Canadian Pacific Railroad Property (CPP):

In 2010, the City of Tomah created a sub-area plan for portions of properties owned by Canadian Pacific Railroad. The property is a highly-visible, 60-acre parcel near the center of the community and just north of Downtown. This vacant property has been targeted for redevelopment by the city for many years. The sub-area plan recommended developing the site into an Intermodal Hub and Regional Welcome Center to help drive customer activity into Tomah's downtown businesses district and to help improve the aesthetics of the property as viewed from Superior Avenue. At the time the plan was created the State was considering plans to develop high-speed passenger rail from Minneapolis to Chicago (Midwest High Speed Rail System). Developing a new platform and station was in integral part of the planning process, including connections for bus transit and bicycle trails, on-site restaurants and space for a visitors center. Since the sub-area plan was completed funding for the Midwest High Speed Rail project in Wisconsin has not been approved and the management from Canadian Pacific have indicated to City Officials a desire to contain to maintain the property for freight movement. The Intermodal Hub and Regional Welcome Center may become a viable idea again in the future, and if this becomes the case, the recommendations of this sub-area plan should be revisited and considered for approval as a component of this comprehensive plan.

### Downtown

In 2017, the City of Tomah adopted a Downtown Master Plan covering the majority of the area designated with the Downtown Mixed Use land use category. This plan includes visioning, branding, and marketing strategies, public use and infrastructure recommendations, land use and redevelopment opportunities, and a detailed action plan. These various recommendations and strategies have been integrated into this plan and Tomah is actively working to implement the Downtown Plan.

### Housing

In 2022, the City of Tomah adopted a Housing Assessment which detailed the issues, opportunities, and gaps within the City's housing market. While this assessment doesn't reflect a special planning area, it does provide recommendations for addressing the community's housing needs that dovetail with the land use strategies listed above. Increasing the community's housing affordability and availability will continue to be a high priority initiative over the planning period.






## DESIGN STRATEGIES

The following design strategies, referenced in the detailed future land use section above, demonstrate the preferred layouts and designs for new development throughout the City.

### CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT



Conservation development usually attempts to hide development from the main road(s) through natural topography, landscape buffers and setbacks in order to preserve rural character.

Figure 3.3: Conservation Design Strategies



**Discouraged Layout**



**Desirable Layout #1**



**Desirable Layout #2**

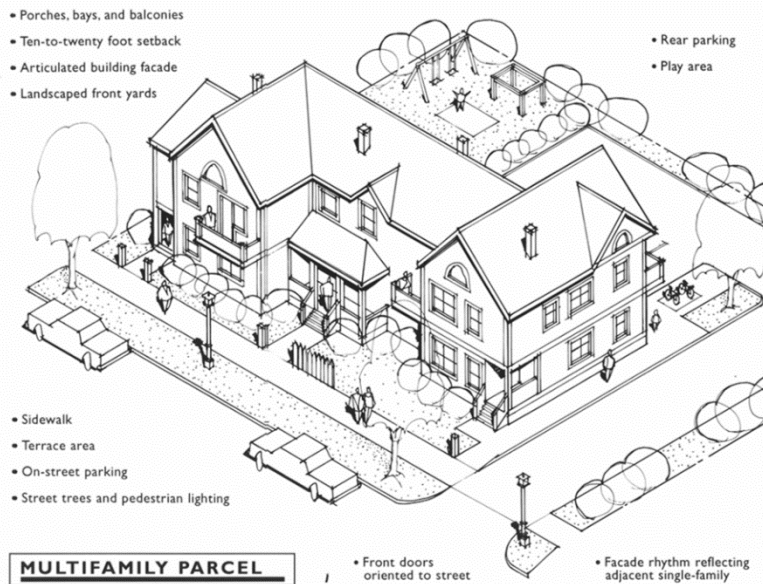


Figure 3.4: Single-Family Design Strategies



- The front door should face the street and there should be a clear route to the door from the street or sidewalk.
- There should be windows on the street façade.
- Building setbacks will vary according to building type and lot size, but should generally not exceed 30 feet.
- Incorporate a covered front porch, or at least a raised stoop, preferably covered.
- Utilize low fences, hedges, or other landscaping to establish a layer of privacy behind the sidewalk.

Figure 3.5: Multifamily-Family Design Strategies



- The front door should face the street and there should be a clear route to the door from the street or sidewalk.
- There should be windows on the street façade.
- Building setbacks will vary according to building type and lot size but should generally not exceed 30 feet.
- Utilize low fences, hedges, or other landscaping to establish a layer of privacy behind the sidewalk.

Figure 3.6: Downtown Design Strategies

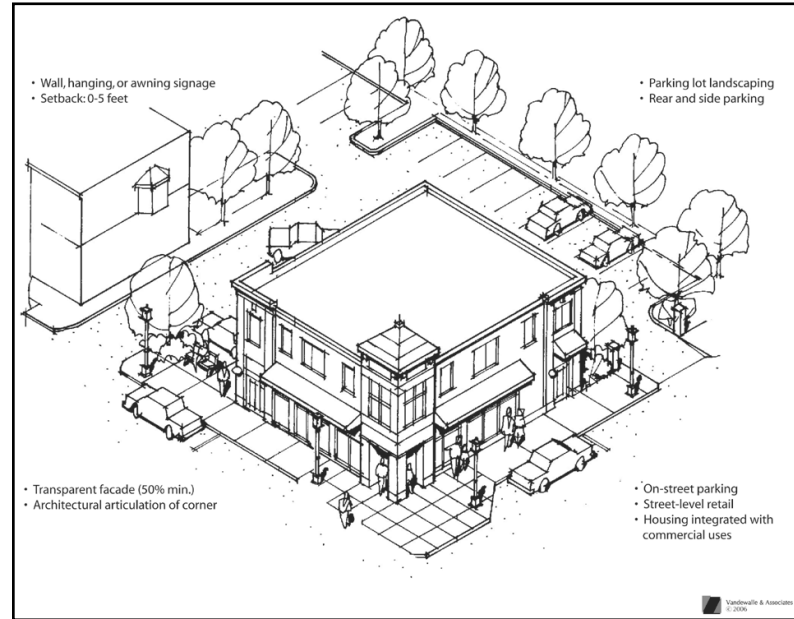
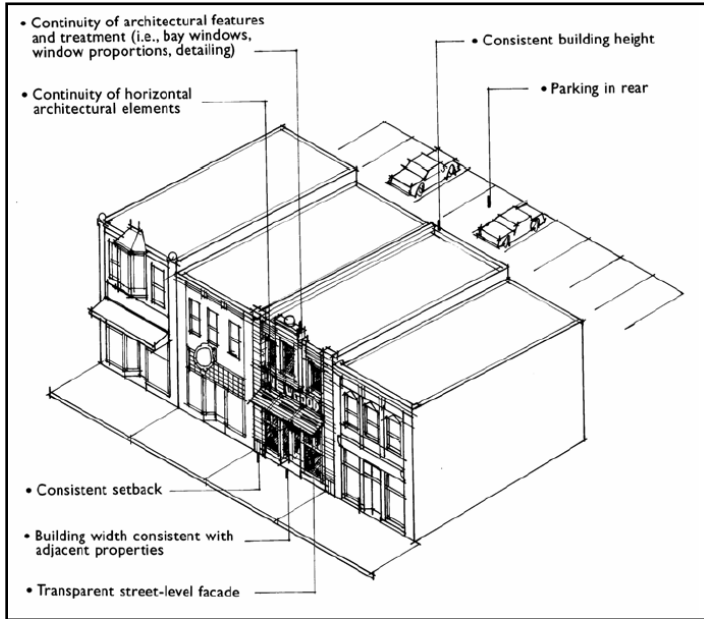


Figure 3.7: Commercial Design Strategies

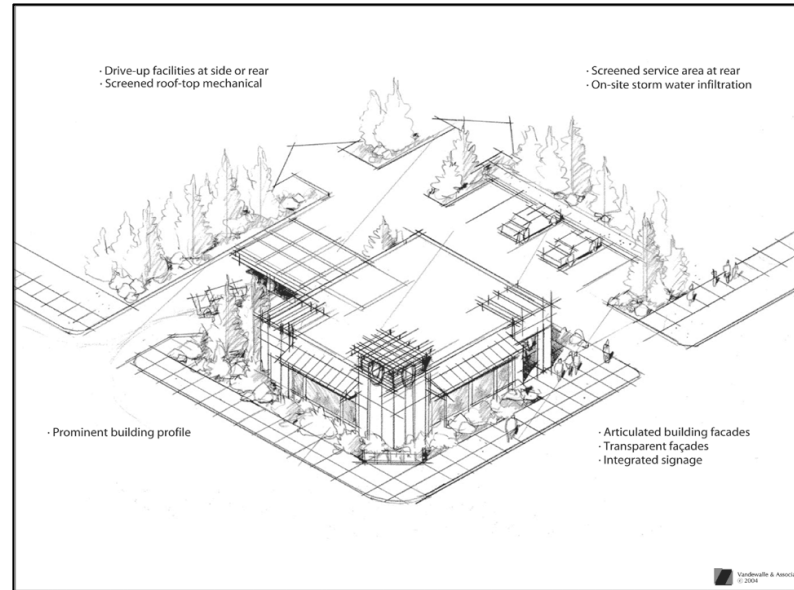
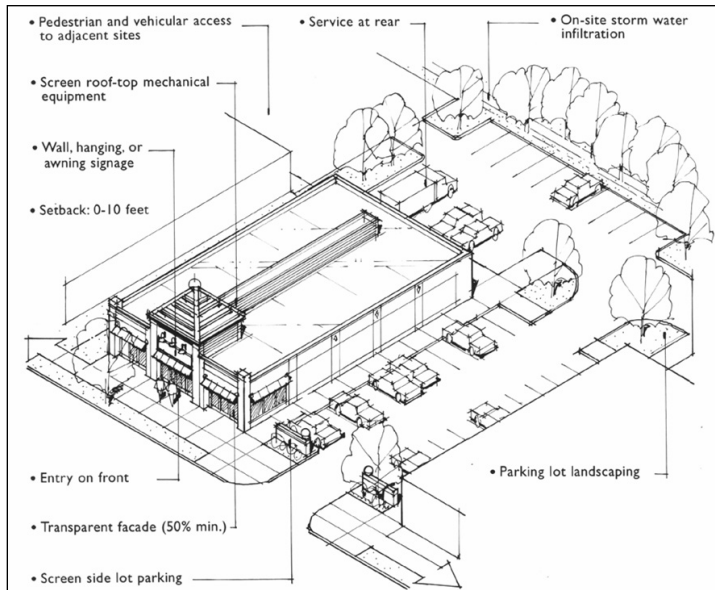




Figure 3.8: Mixed-Use Center Design Strategies



# MIXED-USE CENTERS

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES, INC.

**Mixed-Use Centers are designed to create vibrant, pedestrian environments in which people can live, work, shop and obtain daily services.**

Buildings with different uses, sometimes even on different floors, are arranged within walking distance to each other and are connected via sidewalks. Obtaining moderate to higher densities and paying close attention to design and quality are critical aspects of mixed use centers.

**Characteristics of Mixed Use Centers include:**

- Walking relationship between uses
- Street activity from morning through evening
- Multi-story buildings, generally with more active uses on first floor
- Minimal front setbacks
- Buildings and sites designed for pedestrians not automobiles
- Parking located on streets, to rear of buildings, and/or in structures
- Transit service potential
- Building entrances oriented to street



**Typical Mixed-Use Center Land Uses:**

- Multi-family and attached housing
- Offices
- Clinics
- Restaurants, including outdoor dining
- Coffee shop
- Deli/market
- Grocery store
- Urban gathering spaces (e.g. farmer's market)
- Dry cleaner
- Day care
- Drug store



**A** Retail/Residential Above



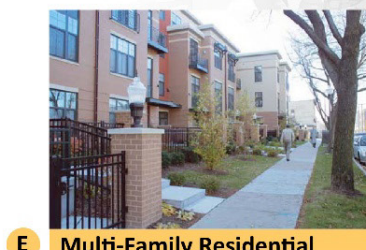
**B** Retail/Office Flex Space



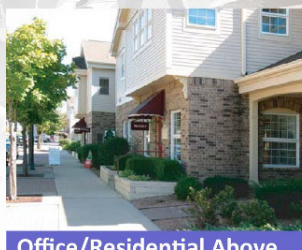
**C** Retail



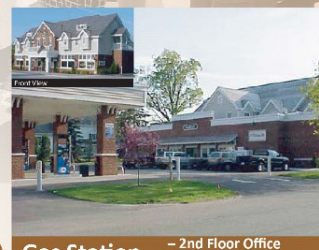
**D** Office



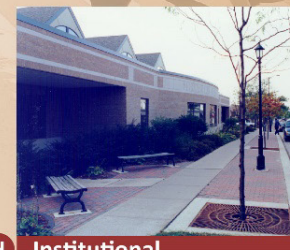
**E** Multi-Family Residential



**F** Office/Residential Above

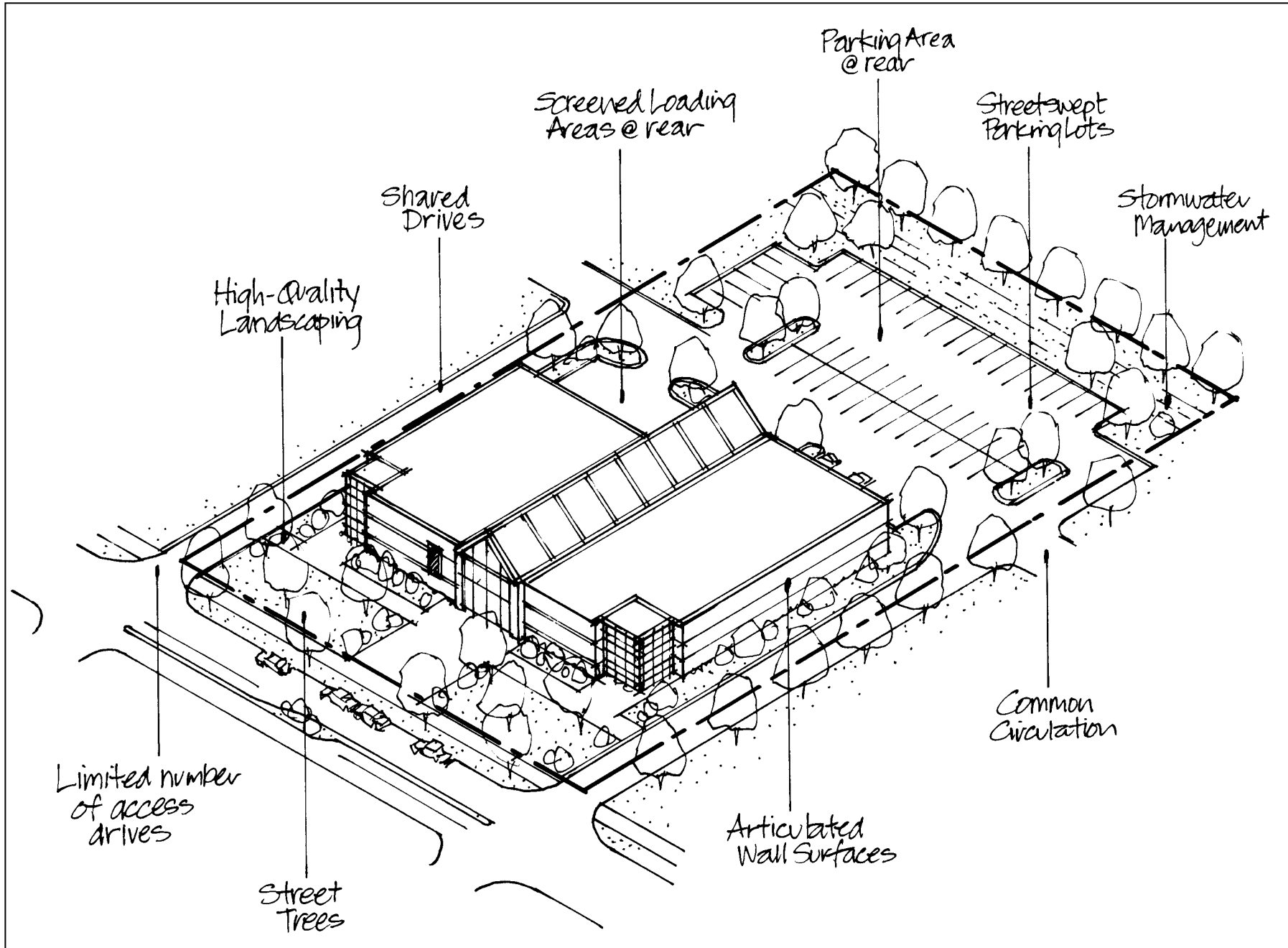


**G** Gas Station  
- 2nd Floor Office  
- Fuel Pumps in Back



**H** Institutional

Figure 3.9: Industrial Design Strategies







## 4. IMPLEMENTATION





# CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter describes the process for adopting and amending the plan, tools and procedures by which the plan will be implemented, and a set of actions to be pursued in the next 10 years to help the City realize the vision, goals, and objectives in this plan.

## GUIDING DAILY DECISIONS

Responsibility for implementing this plan lies primarily with City Council, City Planning Commission, and City Staff.

### City Council

The City Council sets priorities, controls budgets and tax rates, and often has the final say on key aspects of public and private development projects. The value and legitimacy of this plan is directly related to the degree to which Council members are aware of the plan and expect City actions to be consistent with this plan. Each council member should have a copy of this plan and should be familiar with the major goals and objectives described herein. The City Council should expect and require that staff recommendations and actions both reference and remain consistent with this plan.

### City Plan Commission

Land use and development recommendations are a core component of this plan, and the Planning Commission has a major role in guiding those decisions. Plan Commission members must each have a copy of this plan and must be familiar with its content, especially Chapter 3: Future Land Use. It is generally the responsibility of the Plan Commission to determine whether proposed projects are consistent with this plan, and to make decisions and recommendations that are consistent with this plan. In cases where actions that are inconsistent with this plan are deemed to be in the best interest of the City, the Plan Commission should initiate efforts to amend the plan to better reflect City interests. This will help to reinforce the legitimacy of the plan as an important tool in City functions.

### Other City Committees & Agencies

In some cases, particular initiatives and action items listed in this plan may be more appropriately carried out by another City committee such as the Long-Range Planning Committee or Park & Recreation Commission, or in cooperation with other units of government, business organizations, or non-profit agencies. In such cases, this plan should serve as a foundation for city related decision making. City staff and officials should take an active lead role in sharing this plan with other organizations, communicating the intent of relevant objectives and strategies.

### City Staff

Key City staff have a significant influence on the selection and completion of all kinds of capital and operational projects. It is imperative that individuals in key roles know about, support, and actively work to implement the various strategies and actions in this plan. Specifically, the Senior Executive Staff Team and Department Heads should consult and reference the comprehensive plan during goal-setting and budgeting processes, during planning for major public projects, and in the review of private development projects.

These key staff members are expected to know and track the various goals, objectives, strategies, and actions laid out in this plan, and to reference that content as appropriate in communications with residents and elected and appointed officials. All other department directors should also be aware of the plan and the connections between the plan and City projects. The purpose of this extra effort is to strengthen staff recommendations and reinforce the plan as a relevant tool integral to City functions.



## GUIDING ANNUAL DECISIONS

To provide lasting value and influence, this plan must be used and referenced regularly, especially during annual goal-setting, budgeting, and capital planning processes. To inform these annual processes, the Senior Executive Staff Team will prepare, with input from other departments, a concise Comprehensive Plan Annual Report with the following information:

- Action items in progress or completed during the prior 12 months (celebrate success!)
- Staff recommendations for action items to pursue during the next 12 months.
- Staff recommendations for any amendments to the adopted plan

The Comprehensive Plan Annual Report/Working Action Plan should be maintained on an annual basis, starting with the actions in the section and evolving over time. Completed actions should be celebrated and removed, while those actions not yet carried out should be given new deadlines (if appropriate) and assigned to specific individuals, boards, or committees for completion per the new schedule and City Council directive. If the updated action plan is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan, updating the action plan should not require an amendment to the plan and can be approved simply by City Council resolution.

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Many of the strategies identified in this plan presume the use of existing City ordinances and programs. The City's key implementation tools include:

### Operational Tools

- Annual Budget Process
- Capital Improvement Program

### Regulatory Tools

- Land Use Regulations (including zoning, land division, subdivision, landscaping, and signage regulations)
- Architectural & Site Design Regulations
- Historic Preservation Ordinances
- Building and Housing Codes (including sanitary, mechanical, and electrical codes)
- Erosion and Stormwater Ordinances
- Official Maps

### Funding tools

- Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) Districts
- Grant Programs
- General Fund Revenues
- Fees & Special Assessments
- Fundraising





## PLAN ADOPTION, AMENDMENT, & UPDATE PROCEDURES

The procedures for comprehensive plan adoption or amendment are established by Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (66.1001, Stats.). This comprehensive plan and any future amendments must be adopted by the City Council in the form of an adoption ordinance approved by a majority vote. Two important steps must occur before the City Council adopts or amends the plan: the Plan Commission must recommend adoption and the City Council must hold an official public hearing.

### Plan Commission Recommendation

The Plan Commission must recommend adoption or an amendment by passing a resolution that very briefly summarizes the plan and its various components. The resolution should also reference the reasons for creating plans and the public involvement process used during the planning process. The resolution must pass by a majority vote of the Plan Commission, and the approved resolution should be included in the adopted plan document.

### Public Hearing

Prior to adopting this plan, or any subsequent plan amendment, the City Council must hold at least one public hearing to discuss the plan or amendment. At least 30 days prior to the hearing a Class 1 notice must be published that contains, at minimum, the following:

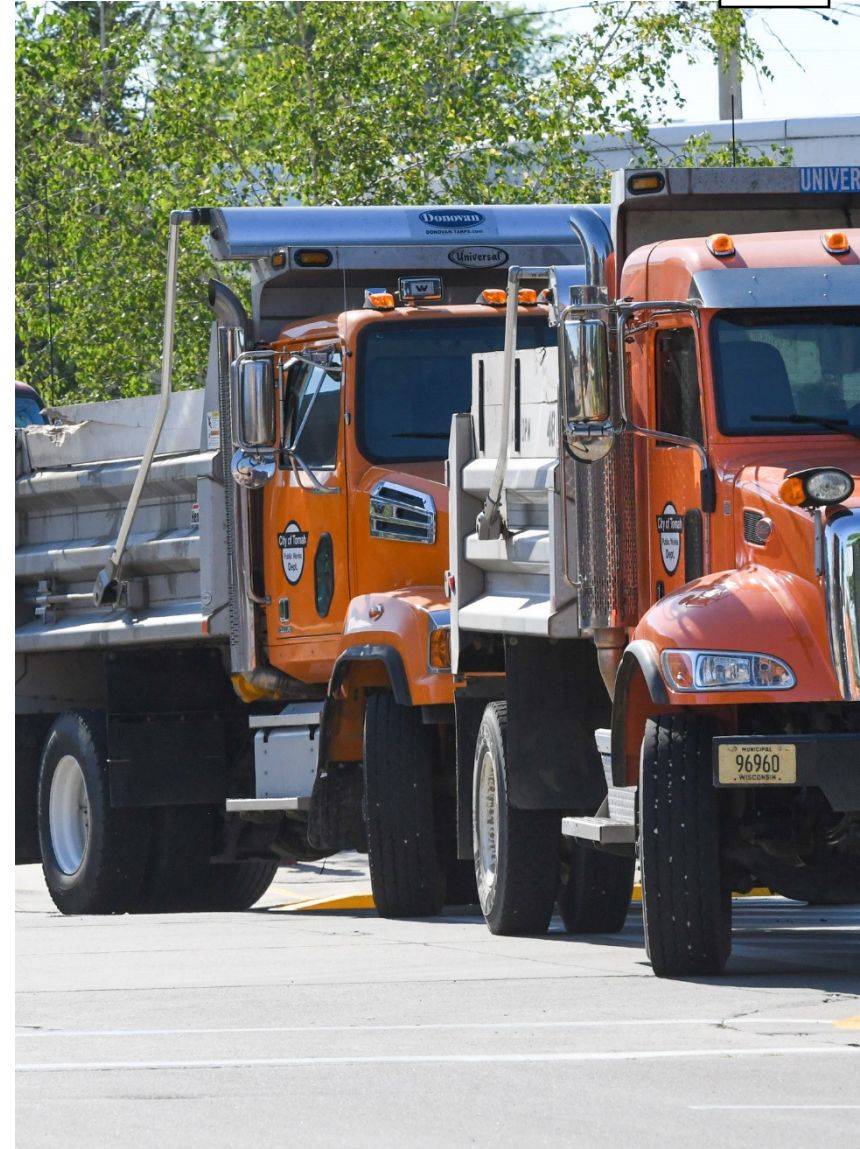
- The date, time and location of the hearing,
- A summary of the proposed plan or plan amendment,
- The local government staff who may be contacted for additional information,
- Where to inspect and how to obtain a copy of the proposed plan or amendment before the hearing.

The notice should also provide a method for submitting written comments, and those comments should be read or summarized at the public hearing.

### Draft Distribution and Public Hearing Notifications

The City is required to provide direct notice of the public hearing to all of the following:

- An operator who has obtained, or made an application for, a permit that is described under s. 295.12(3)(d).
- A person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit under s. 295.20.
- 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 government unit provide the property owner or leaseholder notice of the hearing.
- Any individuals who request, in writing, notification of the proposed comprehensive plan ordinance or public hearing. Each such individual must be sent a notice of the public hearing and a copy of the ordinance at least 30 days prior to the public hearing. The City may charge a fee equal to the cost of providing such notice and copy.



Finally, the City should send the notice and a copy of the proposed plan, or plan amendment, to the Plan Distribution List (see below). These draft distributions are not required by statute prior to adoption, but are strongly recommended as a matter of courtesy and good planning practice. The City should coordinate directly with the public library to make a hard copy of the proposed plan, or plan amendment, available for viewing by any interested party.

### **Plan Adoption**

This plan and any future amendments become official City policy when the City Council passes, by a majority vote of all elected members, an adoption ordinance.

### **Adopted Plan Distribution**

Following final adoption of this plan, and again following any amendments to the plan, a copy of the plan or amendment must be sent to each of the following:

1. Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the City, including any school district, sanitary district, or other special district.
2. The clerk of every town, city, village, and county that borders the City.
3. The regional planning commission in which the City is located.
4. The public library that serves the area in which the City is located.
5. The Comprehensive Planning Program at the Department of Administration.

### **Plan Amendment vs. Plan Update**

From time to time the City may be faced with an opportunity, such as a development proposal, which does not fit the plan but is widely viewed to be appropriate for the City. Should the City wish to approve such an opportunity, it must first amend the plan so that the decision is consistent with the plan. Such amendments should be carefully considered and should not become the standard response to proposals that do not fit the plan. Frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals threaten the integrity of the plan and the planning process and should be avoided.

Any change to the plan text or maps constitutes an amendment to the plan and must follow the adoption/amendment process described in this section. Amendments may be proposed by either the City Council, Plan Commission, Long Range Planning Committee, City Staff, or city property owners. Amendments may be made at any time using this process. A common and recommended approach is to establish a consistent annual schedule for consideration of amendments. This process can begin with a joint meeting of the Plan Commission and Long-Range Planning Committee (January), followed by Plan Commission recommendation (February), then the 30-day public notice procedures leading to a public hearing and vote on adoption by the City Council (March or April).

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning statute (66.1001) requires that this plan be updated at least once every 10 years. Unlike an amendment, the plan update is a major re-write of the plan document and supporting maps. The purpose of the update is to incorporate new data and ensure that the plan remains relevant to current conditions and decisions. The availability of new data and/or a series of significant changes in the community may justify an update after less than 10 years. Frequent requests for amendments to the plan should signal the need for a comprehensive update.





## PLAN CONSISTENCY

Once formally adopted, the plan becomes a tool for communicating the City's land use policy and for coordinating legislative decisions. Per the requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, if a local government unit enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, the ordinance must be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan:

1. Official maps
2. Local subdivision regulations
3. General zoning ordinances
4. Shoreland/wetland zoning ordinances

An action will be deemed consistent if:

1. It furthers, or at least does not interfere with, the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan,
2. It is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities/intensities contained in this plan,
3. It carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for community facilities, including transportation facilities, other specific public actions, or actions proposed by nonprofit and for-profit organizations that are contained in the plan.

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. Prior to adoption of the plan, the City reviewed, updated, and completed all elements of this plan together, and no inconsistencies were found.

### **Inconsistencies with Town of Tomah or Town of La Grange Comprehensive Plans**

No known inconsistencies were identified during the planning process. In addition, the future land use categories and policies for the City's extraterritorial area are similar to those terms and policies adopted by both the Town of Tomah and Town of La Grange. The policies of this plan encourage continued cooperation with the neighboring towns to jointly plan boundary areas and coordinate their long-term growth plans with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

### **Inconsistencies with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan**

No known inconsistencies were identified during the planning process. As required by state statute 66.1001, the City's updated comprehensive plan will be provided to Monroe County so that the County may update its comprehensive plan to reflect the City's new plan.



## SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Comprehensive Plan will be found to be invalid or unconstitutional, or if the application of this Comprehensive Plan to any person or circumstances is found to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality will not affect the other provisions or applications of this Comprehensive Plan, which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application. If any requirement or limitation attached to an authorization given under this Comprehensive Plan is found invalid, it shall be presumed that the authorization would not have been granted without the requirement or limitation and, therefore, said authorization shall also be invalid.

## ACTION PLAN

Based on public, City staff, and committee input, the following action plan was developed. The following page provides additional information regarding implementation of each action item, including incremental steps which should be pursued in order to complete each item.

### Priorities

Decisions regarding the timing, budgeting, and coordination of each action item within the next 10 years will be reviewed annually with the City Council as part of the municipal budget setting process and the Comprehensive Plan Annual Report.

### Project Implementation

All action items are perceived to have a deadline of 10 years. In order to assist in the progression of each project intermediate tasks have been identified.

### Responsible Parties

Most of these actions require leadership and effort by multiple people and organizations. Each action item indicates those parties considered necessary to implementation, with the understanding that the City Council generally has ultimate budgeting and approval authority.

### Funding Sources

Most of these actions come at some cost. It is presumed that most could be supported by tax revenue from the City's general fund. Where other sources of potential funding may exist, such as grant programs, these are noted.

### Measuring Success

Success in implementing the following action items will vary. In some cases, success is evaluated based on whether an action item is completed or if substantive steps have been taken to advance said action item.

## ACTION ITEMS

### Action Item: Build a multi-purpose indoor recreational facility

**Description:** This type of project received substantial support throughout the public input process. The development of a multi-purpose indoor recreational facility could include an indoor swimming pool, fitness areas, track, court space, and community room space. The City of Tomah recognizes that the development of this type of facility would not only fill an existing community void and improve overall community health, but also could be a regional asset that would bring additional non-residents to the City who may then visit other local businesses. In addition, a “YMCA-type” facility may also attract new families to the community.

**Project Implementation:** The City will continue to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan related to this topic and build collaborative relationships with potential operating entities, identifying and analyzing potential sites, and complete a feasibility study which includes:

- Identify facility space and programming needs.
- Identify and evaluate alternative building sites.
- Develop conceptual site plans for each alternative site.
- Develop initial cost estimates for building construction.
- Identify potential funding sources and partners.

**Responsible Parties:** City Staff and City Council

**Funding Sources:** Funding for a public indoor recreational facility will likely come from a combination of City funds, grants, partnerships, and fundraising. A funding strategy should be developed to assist in the implementation of this action item. .

### Action Item: Develop a City of Tomah Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and/or update the City’s Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

**Description:** Increasing multi-modal transportation is a key opportunity to provide more walking and biking opportunities throughout Tomah. One of the best ways to accomplish this is through the development of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan or incorporating those opportunities withing a full update to the City’s Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. These plans help identify and prioritize upgrades to existing facilities and new facilities that can create a cohesive and complete network of infrastructure throughout Tomah. Once adopted, they serve as the guide for implementation and infrastructure upgrades that can be added to the City’s annual Capital Improvement Plan each year.

**Project Implementation:** The City will complete a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and/or update its 5-Year Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) to provide recommendations, strategies, and mapping of existing and proposed community and regional bike and pedestrian routes.

**Responsible Parties:** Parks and Recreation Director, Parks and Recreation Commission

**Funding Sources:** Once adopted, these plans will make the City of Tomah grant-eligible in the implementation of various bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational projects. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant Program and the Recreational Trails Grant Program are the two most viable grant sources. In order to be eligible for funding, projects must be identified in a CORP.

### Action Item: Create a unified economic development approach.

**Description:** In an effort to attract and retain businesses in various areas of Tomah and increase the City's local tax base, a unified economic development approach is needed.

**Project Implementation:** There are numerous tasks which are necessary in order to achieve this community improvement project. However, during the planning process two important issues emerged which should be addressed in order to position the City for success.

- A. Assemble Additional Land for Business Expansion. Tomah is strategically located at the crossroads of two interstate roads, and the additional freight railroads and an airport make Tomah an attractive place for manufacturing, warehousing, and office uses that typically bring with them higher wage jobs with health and retirement benefits. However, the Tomah area also has abundant streams, wetlands, floodplain, and steep slope areas which present challenges to assembling land and providing cost efficient infrastructure to create additional areas for business development. The Future Land Use Map identifies areas for future industrial and business park uses, which are strategically located around the City's existing transportation facilities. This plan, at the time of adoption, does not advocate for additional utility extensions east or south of I-94 and I-90, where it has not already occurred, to develop additional areas for business development. Therefore, the focus over the next 10 years should be on developing existing vacant parcels or redeveloping existing parcels for new business use. This plan recommends working with the area property owners to acquire, develop, or in some cases annex, areas identified on the Future Land Use Map for commercial, industrial, and business park development. If other opportunities arise for additional business uses in areas not identified for such use on the Future Land Use Map the City will evaluate the need to amend the map according to the policies and procedures in this plan.
- B. Organize Public and Private Resources to Foster Economic Development. During the planning process, it was determined that the utilization of consultants was the most effective method of advancing community-wide economic development efforts. This includes:
  - a. One contact person to direct all economic development inquiries.
  - b. Partnership building with local, regional, and state groups.
  - c. Marketing efforts utilizing existing City channels, such as the City website.
  - d. Actively maintaining a database of available properties and buildings and working with businesses and developers to connect those entities with various local opportunities.
  - e. Creating a development handbook to outline development procedures and identify ways to streamline said processes.
  - f. Continue to monitor grant funding opportunities and other public/private funding sources that may be available.
  - g. Manage and monitor Tax Increment Financing Districts to identify opportunities and focus prioritization.
  - h. Consider the creation of a City-wide economic development strategy to focus community efforts on highest priority projects and objectives. This strategy would be updated annually.

**Responsible Parties:** Senior Executive Team, Long Range Planning Committee, City Council

**Funding Sources:** The City's general fund, Economic Development Fund, and Tax Incremental Financing will be a central component of furthering these economic development objectives and projects. Collaboration with other local, regional, county, and state organizations will also be included within these efforts and may be able to support additional funding for particular projects.



**Action Item: Improve the appearance of private property in the City, create a “Clean Tomah” initiative.**

**Description:** There is growing concern about the appearance and upkeep of the housing stock in the City. Dilapidated housing and storage of junk in yards erodes the quality of the City’s neighborhoods which can have secondary consequences such as decreasing property values, increased crime, and urban sprawl as more people look for housing outside of the central city. The City has added a Code Enforcement Officer to address these lingering issues.

**Project Implementation:** Implementation of this community improvement project should focus on three pillars: housing assistance programs, code education/enforcement, and absentee landlord programs. The City offers housing programs for repair and rehabilitation, home buyer down payment, and rental vouchers through Couleecap. Information about these programs is well organized and documented on the City’s web site and this plan recommends continuation of these programs. In addition, the City may establish an annual award program to recognize outstanding building rehabilitation projects or landscape improvements. The annual award would celebrate the efforts made by residents to improve their properties and raise awareness of various housing programs, improvement initiatives, and property maintenance requirements.

The City will review its Municipal Code to identify whether any ordinance modifications should be made to regulate the maintenance of housing and property and will issue code violations as necessary.

The City will investigate landlord accountability programs used in other communities and implement those that are appropriate to Tomah’s needs.

**Responsible Parties:** Building & Zoning Inspector, Couleecap, Code Enforcement Officer

**Funding Sources:** The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing (DOH), provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low and moderate income (LMI) households. Funding for annual housing and property awards could come from a percentage of building or zoning permit fees.

**Action Item: Revitalize Downtown and Superior Avenue as a pedestrian friendly, aesthetically pleasing, robust mixed-use community destination.**

**Description:** The downtown is the heart and soul of the community. During the planning process concerns were raised regarding the lack of a unified theme, building, and signage standards, and streetscaping features in the downtown. To address these concerns, the City of Tomah adopted the Downtown Master Plan in 2017.

**Project Implementation:** The City will continue to implement the Downtown Master Plan over the planning period to stimulate revitalization efforts in the downtown area and along Superior Avenue. Several projects have been implemented or are ongoing, including streetscaping, wayfinding signage, and detailed design guidelines. However, other action items are still a work in progress as of the writing of this plan. At a minimum, it is recommended that the City of Tomah continue evaluate and complete a full update the Downtown Master Plan over the planning period as implementation advances.

**Responsible Parties:** Senior Executive Team, Plan Commission, & Chamber of Commerce

**Funding Sources:** The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation provides grants to offset the cost of creating downtown master plans.

**Action Item: Enhance the aesthetics along major City streets and community gateways.**

**Description:** US 12, WIS 131, WIS 21, WIS 16, CTH ET, and CTH CM are the main transportation routes in and out of the City. As such these corridors offer the first and last impression of the community. The design and appearance of these community gateways has a lasting impact on visitors, either positively or negatively. Well landscaped and signed entry ways communicate that Tomah is an inviting place to live, work, shop, play and stay.

**Project Implementation:** As part of the implementation of the Downtown Master Plan, or as a stand-alone project, the City will continue to evaluate the existing condition and appearance of the community’s gateways and identify strategies to improve the entrances to the community through the use of enhanced landscaping, gateway features, public art, private and community signage. The evaluation may identify the need to coordinate improvements to both public and private property. It may also include Zoning Ordinance amendments to improve standards along community gateways (more information can be found below).

**Responsible Parties:** Senior Executive Team, Long-Range Planning Commission, Public Works and Utilities Commission

### Action Item: Become the safest small-town city in Wisconsin.

**Description:** There is continuing concern about increases in crime, drug, and alcohol abuse within the community. While some of these concerns may simply be perceived, rather than actual, no city wants to develop a reputation as an unsafe community.

**Project Implementation:** There is no single action the City can take to accomplish this community improvement project. Becoming the safest small-town city in Wisconsin is an on-going effort that requires collaboration between law enforcement, schools, social service agencies, civic organizations, businesses, and area residents. This plan suggests establishing a set of social indicators that the City can use to monitor the rise and fall of crime, drug and alcohol abuse within the community. In addition, the City can designate 5-10 sister cities to compare annual indicators in order to track to what degree Tomah is achieving its goal of becoming the safest small town in Wisconsin.

**Responsible Parties:** Police Department Staff

### Action Item: Update and amend the City Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to implement the recommendations of this plan, the 2022 Housing Assessment, and the 2017 Downtown Master Plan.

**Description:** The City's ordinances require consistent evaluation over time to continue to evolve and adapt to changing situations. In lieu of a full Zoning Ordinance rewrite, there are several identified amendments below that could be implemented over the planning period.

**Project Implementation:** The following recommended ordinance changes and amendments include: .

- Reduce existing residential zoning district lot sizes and setbacks, and increase building coverage standards.
- Remove multi-family zoning district's minimum lot size standards by unit and utilize a flat minimum lot size.
- Allow zero lot line multi-family development by-right and adapt bulk dimensional standards to provide that option.
- Allow accessory dwelling units (ADU) and/or in-family suites in single-family zoning districts with defined standards.
- Provide flexibility for residential infill development by allowing variable front setbacks by averaging existing development setbacks.
- Promote front porches and deemphasize front-loaded garages by reducing setbacks for porches, creating maximum front façade percentages for garages, and minimum front-loaded garage setbacks.
- Create a mixed-use (commercial and residential) land use that is permitted by-right in all commercial zoning districts that is percentage based, rather than requiring residential only above the ground floor.
- Promote infill and redevelopment by reducing business zoning districts lot sizes and setbacks, and increasing height.
- Reduce minimum parking requirements for all land uses, consider establishing maximum parking requirements, require minimum bicycle parking standards, and allow shared parking situations by-right.
- Consolidate land uses into overarching land use types (personal and professional services vs. clinics, banks, offices, etc.).
- Modernize land uses to include solar, electric vehicle charging, short-term rentals, community gardens, etc.
- Increase user-friendliness by creating overarching land use tables by zoning district.
- Create a defined list of Accessory Land Uses with defined standards and bulk dimensions.
- Allow more than one building per lot with defined standards and address nonconforming sites, structures, and lots to promote infill and redevelopment.
- Reduce the number of Conditional Uses in each zoning district and consider additional zoning districts to address Wisconsin Act 67 requirements.
- Develop and modernize new design and landscaping standards by land use.
- Rewrite the City's Sign Ordinance to become compliant with the U.S. Supreme Court Reed v. Gilbert decision (content neutrality).

**Responsible Parties:** Building and Zoning Inspector and Plan Commission

#### Action Item: Create and adopt an Official Map.

**Description:** An Official Map allows communities to plan for long-term transportation, utilities, infrastructure, and community facility needs through identification of future needs both within the City's existing boundary and beyond it within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. This is one of the most powerful tools municipalities have to protect areas from premature development that would impede orderly, cost effective, and logical expansions of infrastructure and community facilities.

**Project Implementation:** Following the completion of this plan, the City should develop and adopt an Official Map which is reflective of the recommendations of this plan. Additionally, as other plans are completed and/or updated (Downtown Master Plan, CORP, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, other corridor plans, etc.), the Official Map should also reflect those recommendations.

**Responsible Parties:** Building and Zoning Inspector and Plan Commission

#### Action Item: Continue to implement the City of Tomah Housing Assessment and update the assessment over the planning period.

**Description:** In 2022, the City of Tomah adopted a Housing Assessment which outlined issues, opportunities, and gaps within the local housing market and established strategies and approaches to reversing trends and building on opportunities.

**Project Implementation:** Many other areas of this plan, including other action items listed above, are reflective of the Housing Assessment's recommendations. The City will continue advancing ongoing initiatives and prioritizing new initiatives over the planning period. However, it is recommended that this report be updated every 5 years to have an accurate picture of data trends and provide the ability to evaluate and update its recommendations.

**Responsible Parties:** Senior Executive Team and Long Range Planning Commission

#### Action Item: Take a leadership role in advancing community-wide sustainability.

**Description:** Sustainability includes social, economic, fiscal, and environmental components, which are integrated into many different components of this plan. However, leadership in collectively moving a community towards greater sustainability often falls to the municipality.

**Project Implementation:** While sustainability is broad and addressed in many other areas of this plan, there are some specific projects the City can advance in taking a more defined leadership role on this topic. These include:

- Developing new topic-specific sustainability plans or studies such as an electric vehicle charging station siting analysis, energy audits, waste reduction studies, shared service agreements, etc.
- Adapting City policies to reflect stormwater management, urban forestry, green infrastructure, native plantings, multimodal transportation, alternative energy, and other best practices.
- Creation of new City programs such as incentivizing new sustainability features in development, transitioning municipal vehicle fleets and buildings to alternative energy sources, creating more community gardens, establishing a local sustainability award, training and education of local elected officials and municipal staff, etc.

**Responsible Parties:** Senior Executive Team and City Council

#### Action Item: Update this plan at least once every 10 years.

**Description:** Wisconsin's comprehensive planning statute (66.1001) requires that this plan be updated at least once every 10 years. Unlike an amendment, the plan update is a major re-write of the plan document and supporting maps. The purpose of the update is to incorporate new data and ensure that the plan remains relevant to current conditions and decisions. The availability of new data and/or a series of significant changes in the community may justify an update after less than 10 years.

**Project Implementation:** This plan will be updated by 2034.

**Responsible Parties:** Long Range Planning Committee and Plan Commission