

Appendix C: Local Comprehensive Plan Reviews

LAPC staff conducted an analysis of the transportation and land use goals identified in the local comprehensive plans of LAPC planning area communities and compared them to those adopted by the LAPC policy Board in its approval of *Coulee Vision 2040* (CV2040)—the metropolitan transportation plan (MTP) for the region. The review identified local transportation and land uses goals inconsistent with those approved in CV2040.

As the LAPC and its member communities update their plans in the future, this analysis can be used to help align local (community) and regional (LAPC) goals with consideration of urban and rural differences.

Comparison of MTP Goals and Guiding Principles to Local Planning Goals

Table 37 evaluates the land use and transportation goals of each planning area community against those approved by the LAPC in CV2040. Un-filled circles indicate MTP goals are not included or referenced in a community comprehensive plan, partially filled circles indicate some level of goal or goal concept concurrence, and filled circles represent goal or goal concept agreement. Of the planning area communities, all but the townships of La Crescent and Dresbach in Minnesota have adopted comprehensive plans. Many of the comprehensive plans are outdated, with plan approvals dating as far back as 2002.

General Findings

- ⇒ Most of the MTP transportation and land use planning goals address the urbanized area and urban development issues. Some of the planning area communities have both urbanizing and distinctly rural areas and the rural component needs to be better considered.
- ⇒ Most planning area communities appear to have limited knowledge/awareness/support of LAPC plans and planning efforts.
- ⇒ Each planning area community has a strong desire to maintain its own community identity. The communities recognize regional context and the urbanized area, but their planning goals stress the importance of retaining their unique community identity.
- ⇒ Wisconsin state planning laws (i.e. “Smart Growth,” planning grant program) make the planning process onerous, resulting in goals being included because they are required to be rather than desired to be. The State of Minnesota does not have a state statute addressing comprehensive planning goals.

Goal Specific Findings

- ⇒ MTP goals most referenced in local plans focus on infill development and the promotion of mixed-use developments, and the safety, connectivity, and mobility for all transportation users.
- ⇒ More regional MTP goals are notably absent, including those referencing Regional Transit Authority (RTA), Mississippi River locks and dams, passenger rail, etc.
- ⇒ Although local plans do not explicitly reference the MTP goal regarding “cooperation on boundary agreements,” several of the planning area communities have approved boundary agreements with their neighbors while others are still in the negotiating process.
- ⇒ The comprehensive plan goals for the city of La Crosse are most aligned with MTP goals.
- ⇒ The MTP senior housing goal is not explicitly mentioned in any local planning documents, however, local residential development, especially in the village of Holmen, has included senior housing.
- ⇒ The MTP residential development density goal is not referenced in most local comprehensive plans likely because it is not applicable to residential developments that are not served by municipal sewer.

Overall MTP land use and transportation goals or goal concepts were only occasionally referenced in most of the local comprehensive plans. Our challenge will be to work with our planning area communities to better align local comprehensive plan goals and MTP goals.

Recommendations

- ⇒ For the 2025 MTP update, the plan process should include a review of the goals and guiding principles, addressing both the urbanized area and the less densely developed rural and lightly urbanizing (i.e. town centers) areas of the planning area.
- ⇒ Over the next five years, the LAPC will work in conjunction with planning area communities to achieve a common understanding of planning goals and to develop a cooperative process for achieving goal consistency. LAPC staff will work with planning area communities to create a framework for incorporating community and MTP transportation and land use goals into appropriate agency planning documents.

Table 37: Evaluation of Local Comprehensive Plans in Addressing MTP goals

| | City of La Crescent | City of La Crosse | City of Onalaska | Town of Barre | Town of Campbell | Township of Dresbach | Town of Greenfield | Town of Hamilton | Town of Holland | Township of La Crescent | Town of Medary | Town of Onalaska | Town of Shelby | Village of Holmen | Village of West Salem |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Land Use Goals | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Housing and neighborhoods in the City of La Crosse will attract new investment and more residents, especially through renovation and enhancement of existing housing stock. | NA | ● | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Senior housing options will continue to expand, and new housing intended for residents who remain mobile and active should be located within a 10-minute walk of retail and services. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | NA | ○ | ○ | ○ | NA | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| New housing will continue to include a range of housing types and lot sizes, including a priority on single family lots smaller than 1/2-acre. | ◐ | ◐ | ○ | ◐ | ○ | NA | ◐ | ◐ | ◐ | NA | ◐ | ◐ | ◐ | ○ | ○ |
| The region places a high priority on infill development to enhance the utilization of existing urban infrastructure and enhance the concentration of uses so that more residents are within a 10-minute walk of their daily retail needs. | ◐ | ◑ | ○ | ◑ | ○ | NA | ◑ | ◐ | ◐ | NA | ◑ | ○ | ○ | ◑ | ○ |
| New buildings and development areas will often include a mix of uses. | ◐ | ◑ | ○ | ◐ | ◑ | NA | ◐ | ○ | ○ | NA | ◑ | ◐ | ◑ | ◐ | ○ |
| Towns, villages and cities will pursue and approve boundary agreements that allow some growth in unincorporated areas. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | NA | ○ | ○ | ○ | NA | ○ | ◐ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Transportation Goals | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New roads for the primary purpose of facilitating regional commuter traffic will generally be avoided – community preference is for expansion of existing roads and transit enhancements instead. | ○ | ◑ | ○ | ○ | ◐ | NA | ○ | ○ | ○ | NA | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Road projects will be designed to improve the safety and mobility of all users, with emphasis placed on maintaining neighborhood connections and cohesiveness. | ◐ | ● | ◐ | ◐ | ○ | NA | ◐ | ○ | ◐ | NA | ◑ | ◑ | ○ | ◑ | ◐ |
| The region will have a flexible and fully interconnected grid of streets and highways. | ◐ | ◐ | ○ | ○ | ○ | NA | ○ | ○ | ◐ | NA | ○ | ◐ | ○ | ○ | ◐ |

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|----|--|--|--|----|--|--|--|--|--|
| A Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will be created to fund and maintain transportation systems. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Transit use will increase among all age groups. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Fixed-route regional transit, such as Bus Rapid Transit, should be actively studied and pursued. Routes should be identified and necessary right-of-way protected (or gradually acquired) until implementation becomes feasible. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Intelligent transportation systems and mass data gathering technologies will be utilized to the extent practicable to improve the safety and mobility of our transportation networks. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Growth will be accommodated without a significant increase in congestion through the use of many strategies, including road and highway improvements.... improved transit services, enhanced and expanded bike and pedestrian facilities.... | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Truck routes in the region will be efficient and clearly identified, especially including those through the City of La Crosse. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Mississippi River locks and dams will be upgraded to accommodate modern shipping requirements. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Interstate passenger rail service to Minneapolis and Milwaukee/Chicago will increase in frequency and reliability. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Public and private landowners will reduce their subsidy of automobile use through a mix of strategies. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |
| Bike and pedestrian facilities will be present everywhere. | | | | | | NA | | | | NA | | | | | |

- Goal or goal concept identified in comprehensive plan and strongly supported.
- Goal or goal concept mentioned and encouraged/promoted in comprehensive plan.
- Goal or goal concept somewhat mentioned or referenced in comprehensive plan.
- Goal not included or referenced in comprehensive plan.