

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Chapter 2 presents a vision for the future of the community and describes the goals, objectives and strategies to achieve the vision.

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Community Vision

Community Vision Statement



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To be determined...

About the Goals, Objectives and Policies



Each section within this chapter contains goals, objectives, and strategies established during the planning process based on public input and the information contained in Appendix C: Community Indicators. This section defines the goals, objectives, and strategies 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 more detailed target end result necessary to achieve a more general goal.

Strategy: A strategy is a specific action or policy intended to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan. Not all strategies will be implemented by the City and some may require collaboration with other entities. Policies typically use words like “shall” or “will” to designate firm commitments by the City. All future actions and decisions made by the City should be consistent with these policies, unless unforeseen circumstances arise which make a policy impractical or impossible to adhere to. Such occasions should be rare and probably indicate a need to amend this plan according to the procedures identified in Chapter 4. Policies using the words “should,” “encourage,” “discourage,” or “may” are intended to serve as a guide for City decisions and actions.



Housing

2-4

As the City grows and changes, housing must change to meet the needs of the population. This section of the plan should be used by City officials, property owners and developers to guide housing investment projects of all types and sizes.

Vision Statement

The City of La Crescent is growing a diverse housing stock which is accessible to a wide variety of residents, including young professionals, first time home buyers, two and single-parent households, empty nesters, and the elderly. Housing density is increasing and more alternatives to single-family detached housing units are available. With the support of the City, property owners are modernizing or redeveloping older homes to fit contemporary needs, while in a manner that is compatible with the fabric of the neighborhood. All neighborhoods continue to be safe and attractive places to live with access to daily educational, retail and recreational needs.

Issues & Opportunities

The planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to housing that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. These statements are drawn from public comments, the Community Indicator Report, committee discussions and survey results and do not represent policy decisions. The list is meant as a summary of key points and not a list all issues or opportunities raised.

- The lack of available lots for construction or land for new residential subdivisions is a concern.
- The City currently has an adequate mix of detached single family homes and lot sizes, but typically at higher price points. The City currently lacks an adequate supply of owner occupied housing between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in value as compared to the greater La Crosse MSA.
- Residents do not support new or expanded mobile home parks (only 4% of survey respondents thought La Crescent needed more mobile home parks).
- According to the survey, regarding the need for housing in various categories, the highest number of respondents suggested the City needs more senior condominiums and apartments, assisted living facilities for seniors, and affordable housing.
- There are concerns that the price of housing and lack of housing diversity is a barrier to young professionals, first time home buyers, new families and single-parent households. There is a desire to provide a range of housing types, styles and price points to allow those that wish to return, or move to, La Crescent an opportunity to do so.
- There are concerns that empty nesters and seniors are staying in their detached single-family homes longer than they may desire due to the lack of alternative housing options within the City such as independent living senior condominiums, apartments, and assisted living facilities that may be a better fit for their housing needs. This has led to a secondary concern that these homeowners are deferring home maintenance and modernization projects which may be contributing to the deterioration of the City's housing stock. The lack of other senior housing options forces these individuals to look to other communities to meet their housing needs even though they desire to stay in La Crescent.
- There is a desire to maintain safe and attractive neighborhoods that have access to parks and daily retail needs.
- There is a desire to increase retail, service and entertainment uses in the City, especially the Downtown, in order to improve the livability of the City for existing residents and to attract young professionals and new families.
- There is a desire to maintain a strong school system, including both the quality of education and facilities, to keep and attract new families in La Crescent.

Goals & Objectives



Goal:

La Crescent offers safe, healthy, attractive and diverse housing options to people of all income levels, age groups and people with varied needs.

Objectives:

1. Increase the available supply and diversity of housing options to attract young professionals, first time home buyers, and new families.
2. Increase the available supply and diversity of housing options for existing residents wishing to “age in place” and remain in La Crescent as their housing needs change.
3. Expand the supply of affordable housing in the community.
4. Support the rehabilitation, modernization, and redevelopment of older housing to meet contemporary needs.
5. Update and maintain zoning and building code regulations that permit a variety of lot sizes, dwelling sizes, unit mixes, styles and densities.
6. Maintain safe and attractive neighborhoods that have convenient access to daily educational, retail and recreational needs.
7. Maintain a strong school system, including both the quality of education and facilities, to keep and attract new families to La Crescent.

Strategies



Communication and Programs:

1. Prepare a marketing campaign for the City focused on attracting and retaining new families and young professionals. The marketing campaign may include focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of why families choose to move to La Crescent, choose not to move to La Crescent, or choose to leave La Crescent.
2. Create user-friendly brochures and/or on-line guides to outline the permitting process for home improvement projects and available local, county, state, or federal housing programs that provide financial assistance with housing ownership or improvement projects.
3. Create a no cost or subsidized program that provides the services of an architect or home builder (e.g. initial consultations) to work with interested home owners to visualize potential home rehabilitation and modernization projects with priority given to owner occupied properties, older properties and low-income homeowners. Focus on those home improvement projects that will result in the best return on investment based on professional input.
4. Create a no or low-interest loan program geared toward construction projects that improve and modernize older properties in the City with priority given to low-income homeowners and owner occupied properties.
5. Create rebate programs and other financial incentives, in conjunction with public and private partners, for homeowners undertaking energy efficient home rehabilitation projects. Priority should be given to owner occupied properties, older properties and low-income homeowners.
6. Maintain civic programs (e.g. Neighbors in Action) focused specifically on assisting seniors in single family homes with home and property maintenance. Consider how programs such as these could be expanded to include volunteer or civic lead home modernization/construction projects.
7. Create a Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and purchase land to develop rental and

senior housing developments in areas identified for such uses in this plan. Issue a developer request for proposal to develop the specific housing desired.

Land Use and Regulations:

8. Examine and revise the City's zoning codes to support improvements, expansions, creative redevelopment, and diversification of residential properties. Consider:

- Adding duplex uses as a conditional use in R-1A, R-1B, and R1-C zoning districts.
- Adding horizontally stacked duplexes and twindomimiums as a permitted use in the R2 zoning district.
- Adding townhouses as a conditional use in the R-2 district.
- Adding townhouses >6 units per structure as a conditional use in the R-3 district.
- Increasing the number of permitted units for multi-family dwellings in the R-3 district that can be built without requiring a conditional use permit from 8 to 50. Alternatively, remove restrictions that require a CUP based on the number of proposed units.
- Reducing minimum dwelling sizes to permit smaller more affordable houses (e.g. tiny homes) and apartment units.
- Modifying the existing requirement that all 1st floor residences must have individual entrances at street level in the CBD-1 and CDB-2 districts, to only those units that front a street.
- Adding townhouses as a conditional use in the CBD-1 and CBD-2 districts.
- Increasing maximum lot coverages to remove barriers to affordable housing and accessory dwelling structures.
- Allowing for a reduction in multifamily parking requirements to require only 1 parking space for 1 bedroom or efficiency

units to remove barriers to creation of multi-family developments especially in the Downtown area.

- Examine zoning regulations for principal and accessory buildings as they apply to existing residential properties which become annexed to the City to remove barriers to building additions or new structures which are compatible with the existing lot size.
9. Evaluate allowing construction of accessory dwelling units (e.g. units above garages) and small lot housing to provide market-rate affordable housing options.
10. Examine historical variance records (especially with regard to setbacks, building heights, lot coverages, and accessory uses) to see whether current codes are too prohibitive. When commonly granted variances for home expansion and improvement are found in variance records, draft amendments to zoning codes (rather than continuing to grant variances).
11. Continue to promote property maintenance through zoning and building code regulations. The City will actively enforce code violations related to housing standards and property maintenance.
12. Maintain and enforce a comprehensive building code that requires inspection of new structures and report of unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions. The City will work with property owners to improve the quality of living and appearance of housing properties including removal of "junk" materials, and will enforce property maintenance and public nuisance ordinance as needed.
13. Maintain and enforce development design guidelines for all housing types that will maintain neighborhood character, property values and aesthetics over time and enhance the social function, health, and safety of City neighborhoods. *Refer to representative images of housing design strategies within this plan and zoning code regulations.*

Strategies



14. Consider ordinances and programs that encourage the development of affordable and senior housing integrated with market-rate housing. Inclusionary housing ordinances can provide incentives to development with certain percentages of affordable or senior housing units (e.g. a density bonus allowing for more total units than otherwise permitted, or waiving fees on affordable or senior percentages of new development).
15. The residential component of the Future Land Use Plan shall indicate the generally acceptable zoning categories, residential uses, densities, intensities, and ancillary uses allowed in the City. These housing characteristics shall be adhered to unless there is a compelling overall community reason to change the Future Land Use Plan.
16. La Crescent plans to maintain a mix of housing types, styles, sizes and affordability. The housing mix should be represented in future land use mapping and new subdivision development. New subdivisions should include housing for all ages and family types as opposed to only singular types of development.
17. As supported by the market, increase the diversity of housing types, styles, and sizes in La Crescent. Within current and near future redevelopment opportunities, show support for creative housing and mixed-use proposals that bring new and diverse housing types to La Crescent.
18. Infill and housing redevelopment should be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood through appropriate transitions in housing density, styles, setbacks, heights, etc.
19. The City will work to improve walkability, lighting, streets and sidewalks in existing neighborhoods. Sidewalks should continue to be required on both sides of all new residential streets. Easements for walking and biking trails should be secured to link new housing and park developments. Unconnected residential development (i.e. no pedestrian or bicycle facility connections to the rest of the community) is strongly discouraged.
20. Residential development, especially multi-family and senior living developments, should be located in areas where there is safe pedestrian and bicycle access to park, retail and community facilities.
21. The City will promote the geographical dispersal of affordable housing throughout the community, and encourage development of affordable housing on transit routes and corridors.
22. The City will encourage and support the creation of neighborhood plans for areas proposed for new City expansion to proactively determine how varied housing types, sizes, and uses can be appropriately integrated into the neighborhood based on the policies of this plan to provide a more detailed vision for these areas to guide private development projects.



Economic Development

2-8

The La Crescent economy is a complex and evolving mix of production, sales and service-oriented enterprises. Local businesses are a source of income for residents and they respond to the purchasing needs of residents. This section of the plan should be used by City officials, business owners and developers to inform decisions and programs that affect business success in the City.

Vision Statement



The City of La Crescent is growing a diverse and resilient local economy. Employment opportunities are increasing due to the growth of local businesses and the willingness of residents to start new enterprises. Retail, restaurant and service businesses are thriving due to population growth and an increase in recreation tourism and residents can satisfy many of their weekly shopping and services needs within the City. It is apparent that the community values and celebrates the arts in La Crescent. These successes are the result of ongoing collaborations and communication between the City and private sector organizations.

Issues & Opportunities



The planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to economic development that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. (These statements are drawn from public comments and survey results and do not represent policy decisions.)

- The City enjoys convenient access to an interstate freeway and downtown La Crosse
- The City has many long-term family-owned businesses that anchor the local economy (though there is concern about succession planning)
- The cost of land is relatively high and the availability of land for growth is low.
- The bluffs and waterways are an underutilized economic asset – an opportunity for recreation tourism
- Tax and employment policy differences between Minnesota and Wisconsin are a challenge for commercial development here (commercial property taxes are higher, minimum wage is higher, workers' compensation costs are higher, sales tax is higher).
- We don't have many young professionals; we want our own kids to come back here to work and start businesses
- There is strong support for the enhancement of outdoor recreation opportunities in the La Crescent area, especially hiking and canoeing/kayaking trails and trailheads. A majority (53%) of survey respondents supported local public funding support for expanded hiking amenities.
- Based on survey results, most area residents (72%) believe employment opportunities are "lacking" in the La Crescent area. A plurality of respondents (40%) believe the City should commit additional tax dollars to attract and retain jobs in La Crescent. Only 19% did not support this, while another 41% answered "No opinion" or "It depends".

Goals & Objectives

Economic Development Goal 1

Employment will grow in La Crescent

Objectives:

1. Retain and grow existing businesses
2. Attract businesses to relocate to La Crescent
3. Increase local startups and entrepreneurship

Economic Development Goal 2

The City will continue to host a diverse and competitive workforce

Objectives:

1. The school district will have an excellent reputation based on good facilities and strong academic performance.
2. Residents will have more local shopping and dining options.
3. People of all ages will be attracted by the prevalence of recreation opportunities.
4. The City will continue to demonstrate support for sustainable energy and environmental stewardship.

Economic Development Goal 3

Recreation tourism will grow in La Crescent

Objectives:

1. There will be more businesses catering to outdoor recreation enthusiasts, including residents and visitors.
2. There will be more access to the region's highlands and lowlands/waterways, especially via trails and trailhead improvements.

Strategies

1. Respond promptly and collaboratively with existing businesses seeking to remodel, expand, or move to La Crescent.
2. Collaborate with and support the Chamber of Commerce in efforts to maintain regular contact and communication with local businesses, especially manufacturers and other primary sector employers.
3. Identify and protect land for business growth, including redevelopment areas.

4. Continue to use Tax Increment Finance Districts to facilitate development, especially to assist redevelopment costs.
5. Continue to utilize Tax Abatement as a strategy to encourage business expansion.
6. Support entrepreneurship by allowing and encouraging low-impact home-based businesses.
7. Work with the La Crescent-Hokah school district to increase connections with local businesses. For example, leverage local construction industry strengths with a program that enables students to build homes or garages.
8. Encourage local businesses to establish internship and apprenticeship collaborations with UW-La Crosse, Western Technical College, and Viterbo.
9. Take an active role in Downtown redevelopment by acquiring property and soliciting redevelopment proposals.
10. Actively pursue the development of a river trailhead on Blue Lake, including property acquisition and/or conversion from other uses if necessary.
11. Actively pursue the improvement of bluffland and lowland hiking trails and connections to those trails from downtown, including a bridge over 14/61.
12. Use the City and/or Chamber websites to promote local recreation opportunities.
13. Encourage the establishment of a recreation tourism booster group in the City to help promote local resources.
14. Collaborate with the La Crosse County Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote La Crescent attractions.
15. Incorporate more recreation-oriented activities into Applefest or host new, standalone events focused on recreation in the bluffs and/or river/lake.
16. Continue to provide a Community and Economic Development Coordinator to support local business success, including guidance for new local businesses (start-up or relocations).
17. Maintain an active Economic Development Committee (EDC) to help guide the efforts of the Community and Economic development Coordinator.
18. Create a high-profile trail from the Mississippi River to Hokah via Downtown La Crescent, and build a coalition of municipal and state and federal agency stakeholders to support development of that trail.



Natural Systems, Open Spaces and Recreation

La Crescent is surrounded by exceptional natural features and maintains excellent park and recreation resources. This chapter describes the City's commitments to protect and enhance those features.

2-10

Vision Statement



Our community in 2035...

The City of La Crescent is known not only for its exceptional driftless landscape, but also its conservation of natural features and resources. The City is recognized as a leader in environmental stewardship across the region. By expanding public access to bluffs and waterways, and attracting businesses that serve recreation needs, the City has cultivated a reputation for outdoor recreation opportunities. Recreational users have become active participants in the sustainable management of the region's bluffs and waterways.

Issues & Opportunities



The planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to natural systems, open spaces and recreation that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. (These statements are drawn from public comments, the Community Indicator Report, committee discussions and survey results and do not represent policy decisions.)

- The City is surrounded on three sides by prominent bluffs. The bluffs to the north and west feature some urban development, and also parks that provide some access to these lands. The bluff to the south remains largely undisturbed.
- The City borders the Mississippi River, however the river itself is not visible from most parts of the City. Residents identified the river as their most frequent outdoor recreation destination - nearly 60% of survey respondents reported using it for recreation at least four times in the past year.
- Eighty percent of residents rate the City's parks as "Good" or "Excellent". The City has several parks that are very lightly utilized and little known, based on survey results, including North End Park, Harris Park, and Vollenweider Park.
- Recreational walking is the most common recreational activity practiced in the City, according to the survey, and walking trails are the recreational amenity that the most people would like to expand or improve. The second most popular amenity for which improvements are desired is bike trails.
- Residents indicated strong support in the survey for bluffland protection and access; more than 60% favor more trails, private and public land acquisition, and increased regulation on development and tree cutting.
- Blue Lake is considered a high quality wetland by the US Fish and Wildlife Service because of the diverse species it hosts (see box on next page)

Goals & Objectives



Goal:

Natural features and ecosystems in the La Crescent area will be conserved and restored

Objectives:

1. Local waterway health will improve through enhanced management of both urban and rural stormwater runoff
2. Bluff faces overlooking La Crescent will be permanently protected from further development
3. Existing residential development on bluff faces in and around the City will be obscured by mature trees

Goal:

Public access to and recreational use of parks, blufflands and waterways will be expanded and improved in the La Crescent area

Objectives:

1. There will be more hiking and biking trails and users in the bluffs around La Crescent
2. There will be more access points to the wetlands north and south of the pike, and more non-motorized users enjoying those areas
3. Public access improvements to natural areas will be designed to prevent or repair ecosystem damage and will be long-lasting with minimal maintenance requirements
4. Downtown La Crescent will serve as a trailhead for a system of regional hiking, biking and boating trails
5. Businesses tied to recreation uses will locate and thrive in La Crescent
6. La Crescent parks will be accessible to all residents and highly utilized
7. Parks and trails in the region will be clearly identified and easy to find and navigate.
8. As access to natural areas increases, there will continue to be wild and secluded places with limited human visitation
9. Scenic views of the bluffs and wetlands will be enhanced through the removal of billboards

Goal:

La Crescent will be recognized as a leader in environmental stewardship and natural resource conservation

Objectives:

1. *Continue to be recognized as a leader in urban forestry*



1. Encourage and support efforts by federal and state agencies, and local authorities, to protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in the backwaters of the Mississippi River located in proximity to the City of La Crescent. These backwaters extend in a “crescent” around the city, from the upper end of Shore Acres to below Barron Island, and include Blue and Target Lakes. Management actions to protect and enhance backwater habitat may include managing flows and hydraulic connectivity, increasing depth diversity in channels and backwaters, managing floodplain forests, invasive plant and animal management, and watershed management programs.
2. Support local and watershed-level water quality management activities that reduce nutrient, sediment, and other pollutant loads through point and nonpoint source pollutant control programs within the Pine Creek watershed. The City will also encourage and participate in watershed-level planning efforts.
3. *Use and enforce the City’s sign ordinance to manage the size and brightness of signs, with particular emphasis on the protecting and improving scenic viewsheds.*
4. Encourage the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to install interpretive sign(s) at the canoe/kayak accesses planned near Chestnut Street and Twilite Street. Interpretive topics could include an introduction to the National Wildlife Refuge, the importance of Blue Lake as wildlife habitat and its function as part of the Mississippi River, and/or local history.
5. Explore construction of a birdwatching overlook along the shore of Blue Lake, including parking and interpretive signs. A key partner is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which identified this as a possible project in its 2006 Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Other partners may include FOR 78 (local Refuge Friends organization), corporations, and area service clubs.
6. Encourage the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to install interpretive signage along the Wagon Wheel Trail. Interpretive topics may include the history of the Stagecoach trail, the trail’s recent and ongoing improvements, and the hydrology of the adjacent impounded backwaters.
7. Collaborate with La Crescent Township and private landowners to establish a contiguous trail network in the bluffs immediately surrounding the City. Identify former logging roads and current snowmobile trails as possible linkages between existing sites and trail segments.
8. Work with La Crosse area partner governments to enhance the use of bluffland trails in the La Crescent area, including identification of public access sites on regional bluffland maps and use of common trail signage standards
9. Continue to collaborate with the Minnesota Land Trust to identify and pursue acquisition of bluffland sites for protection from development and public access improvements
10. Establish the downtown area as a trailhead for hiking, biking and canoe/kayak adventures in and around La Crescent. Add features such as a prominent information kiosk about trails and access points, public-access bathrooms that remain open during daylight hours, bike racks and an outdoor bike repair station, and safe and well-marked bike routes between downtown and key parks and trails. Consider creation of an interpretive center with robust information about the region’s natural setting and recreational opportunities, possibly as part of a new City Hall.
11. *Establish a well-maintained, web-based source of information about outdoor recreation sites, trails, and amenities in the La Crescent area.*
12. *Highlight the City’s scenic and recreation resources as part of a comprehensive promotion strategy to tell La Crescent’s story and attract visitors, residents and investment.*
13. *Highlight in recreation promotion efforts, both externally and within the City, the location of Mississippi River access points, including Sportsman’s Landing and the Upper and Lower I-90*

Strategies



landings.

14. Prevent tree cutting around homes on the bluffs by working with La Crescent Township, Houston County, and private landowners to establish and enforce strict regulatory limitations on tree cutting.
15. Plant more street trees in all parts of the City, and especially in newer neighborhoods.
16. Pursue and maintain Tree City USA designation.
17. Continue to use and implement the 2012 Park and Recreation Plan. Update that plan every 5 to 7 years, with an emphasis on improvements to the City's parks, trails systems, and water access points.
18. Maintain and implement a capital improvement schedule for all City parks that emphasizes trail development, signage improvements, and accessibility improvements.
19. Maintain participation in and Implement best practices encouraged by the Minnesota GreenStep program, which La Crescent joined in 2015.

About Blue Lake...

Community survey results revealed that many residents are not aware that the shallow water body south of the pike is called Blue Lake. While a portion of Blue Lake is within the city limits, much of the lake, and Target Lake to the south, is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and managed as part of the 261-mile long Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

Blue and Target Lakes and sections of other backwaters located in proximity to the city have been classified as having high value fish and wildlife habitat which is unique and irreplaceable on a national basis or in the ecoregion. Most notable and visible are the migratory bird species, including Wood Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, Least and American Bitterns, Common Morrhends, Night Herons, Sandhill Cranes, Tundra Swans and others.

To protect nesting birds, fish nurseries and furbearers, Blue Lake and the upper end of Target Lake were designated a seasonal Slow, No Wake Area by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2006. Each year from March 16 through October 31, watercraft must travel at slow, no-wake speed and no airboats or hovercraft are allowed in this area. Year round public access continues, with an emphasis on non-motorized boats that cause less disturbance to this valuable habitat.

Ownership of the rest of the Mississippi River backwaters in proximity to the city is a mixture of private and public ownerships, including the City of La Crescent and Minnesota Department of Transportation.

State agencies who typically work with the two federal agencies on river habitat enhancement/restoration projects in the area include the Minnesota and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Depending on the jurisdiction, permits for wetland work are issued by the Corps, Minnesota DNR, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and/or Houston County through the Environmental Services Department.

About the Billboards

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will remove billboards from Refuge-acquired land along Highway 14/61 after an existing use agreement with the sign company expires in 2022. The tract was acquired from willing sellers in 2004 with the use agreement in place.



Natural Systems, Open Spaces and Recreation

Future Trail Map, 2012 Park and Recreation Plan

2-14







Downtown Enhancement

2-16

Downtown La Crescent is the heart of the community - its economic and civic center, but there are mixed feelings about its quality and attractiveness. This section of the plan should be used by City officials, business owners and developers to inform development decisions and infrastructure design.

Vision Statement



The Downtown area is thriving, with activity from morning to evening. A series of new buildings and uses have brought energy to the community and enhanced the character of the place while retaining a small town feel. Streetscape improvements, including more trees, planting beds, corner bumpouts and crosswalks have defined the downtown area and made it a very pleasant place to visit and walk around. Downtown is recognized as a central trailhead for river and bluff adventures, with convenient parking and safe walking and biking connections to popular trails.

Issues & Opportunities



The current planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to downtown enhancement that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. (These statements are drawn from public comments and survey results and do not represent policy decisions.)

- Residents desire more retail and service businesses in La Crescent, especially sit-down restaurants and breakfast/café options.
- Residents value the existing downtown businesses, especially the grocery store and hardware store, but would like longer and more uniform hours of operation.
- Existing downtown development has weak urban form, including a prevalence of front yard parking, and single-story buildings with small windows facing the street. These characteristics don't attract visitors.
- Many residents wish to retain a small-town feel in the downtown area, as compared to and distinct from downtown La Crosse.
- Most area residents are comfortable with multistory buildings downtown (only 8% of survey respondents "opposed" or "strongly opposed").
- There is sufficient convenient parking downtown for current uses - 88% of survey respondents rated parking convenience "adequate" or "excellent".
- People like and want to maintain/restore trees and landscaping in the downtown area.

Goals & Objectives

Downtown Enhancement Goal 1

New development on Main Street and Walnut Street in the Downtown Core will have urban character appropriate to La Crescent.

Strategies:

1. Most new buildings in these locations will be built to the sidewalk and all within 10' of the sidewalk
2. New buildings in these locations will generally be at least 24' tall on all sides, and will include at least two functional stories
3. All new buildings and significant renovations of existing buildings will have a large percentage of clear glass windows along the ground floor street façade to increase visual connections to and from the street
4. There will be no off-street surface parking within 50' of an intersection and no parking that is closer to the street than an adjacent building.



Downtown Enhancement Goal 2

Downtown streetscaping will be improved to define and enhance the downtown character

Strategies:

1. Improve key downtown intersections with corner bumpouts to slow traffic, increase landscaping, reducing the pedestrian crossing distance, and identify the core downtown area.
2. Keep downtown green with street trees, planting beds or grass, and/or planters.
3. Add dedicated bike parking racks throughout the downtown area.





Downtown Enhancement

2-18

The downtown district will be apparent and accessible to visitors from all directions

Strategies:

1. Improve signage identifying access to downtown, especially from the north.
2. Design, fund and build a pedestrian bridge over 14/61 to connect downtown to the waterfront and provide a visual indicator of downtown's location.
3. New downtown buildings will be visible from the highway due to their height



Downtown Enhancement Goal 4

Downtown activity and retail/service market demand will be increased through the development of more residential units in the downtown area.

Strategies:

1. There will be upper story apartment units in some new buildings in the Downtown Core (Main and Walnut)
2. There will be new multi-unit buildings in a variety of formats (flats, townhomes) and serving a variety of market needs (senior housing, efficiencies, three-bedrooms) constructed in the Downtown Fringe and Downtown Mixed Residential areas.



Parking will remain convenient and free in the downtown area

Objective

1. Customers will be able to find parking within one block of their final destination at most times

Strategies:

1. The City will maintain as much on-street parking capacity as possible to reduce the need for off-street lots, including existing angle parking.
2. The City will improve existing public parking lots downtown, including pavement quality and signage. As opportunities arise, the City will acquire and reserve parcels for additional off-street public parking, typically at the edge of the urban core.
3. There will be routine reminders for downtown business employees to reserve prime parking for customers by parking their own vehicles in secondary lots and streets.



Downtown Enhancement Goal 6

Downtown will be recognized locally and regionally as the civic heart of the La Crescent community

Strategies:

1. Key civic buildings will continue to be located in the downtown core, including City Hall and the library.
2. Downtown streets will be closed for community events in every season, including parades, recreation events, car shows, arts festivals, etc.





Community Facilities and Services

2-20

Local government is responsible for a broad array of essential services, from sewer and water service to park and recreation facilities, fire and police protection and public schools. The quality, efficacy and efficiency of these services have a direct relationship to quality of life for residents. While each of these services is individually managed and monitored, they are considered in the comprehensive plan to ensure that investment in these services serves the overall vision for the City.

Vision Statement

The City of La Crescent works to meet the community facility and service needs of all residents equitably. Facilities and services adapt to changes in technologies to improve levels of service, reduce costs and achieve more sustainable operations.

Issues & Opportunities

The planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to community facilities and services that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. These statements are drawn from public comments, the Community Indicator Report, committee discussions, agency interviews and survey results; they do not represent policy decisions. The list is meant as a summary of key points and not a list all issues or opportunities raised.

- There are concerns about the age, condition and space deficiencies for City Hall, Police Department, La Crescent-Hokah Elementary School, and Public Works Maintenance Facilities.
- The cost to extend water and sewer utilities to serve outward expansion of the City is a concern. Developers should pay for these service extensions.
- There are concerns related to recruiting qualified applicants to fill City staff positions and succession planning to enable smooth transitions when long-term City staff retire or leave for other positions. There is also concern regarding overall staffing levels keeping pace with service provision needs.
- The changing landscape of federal and state water and utility regulations present numerous challenges for the City including staying abreast of these regulations, implementing required improvements, and reviewing development plans for compliance.
- Opportunities may exist for constructing joint public works maintenance and storage facilities with the DOT, Houston County and La Crescent township as each entity has concerns regarding aging of facilities, space deficiencies, and costs related to building and maintaining individual facilities.
- According to the survey (question 15), based on respondents' satisfaction with various public services, 60% of respondents indicated they supported spending more money on Public Schools, the highest rated response and the only category to receive support for spending more than current spending levels.
- There are concerns regarding declining school enrollments and the impacts this presents to the community in terms of both attracting new families and decreasing school revenue.
- There are concerns that state imposed new school siting requirements, which require minimum acreages for open space, do not reflect the challenges of La Crescent's landscape. Relocating La Crescent-Hokah Elementary School to a site that meets one-size fits all open space requirements could mean locating the school at the edge of the City, which may increase costs to provide utilities and services to the site and increase transportation costs to provide safe routes to the school. A new school located at the edge of the community could also impact public health as less students may walk or bike to school than a facility centrally located to existing City neighborhoods.
- Keeping residents informed of existing community amenities, services offerings and engaged in meetings and events is an on-going challenge.

Goals & Objectives



Goal:

La Crescent provides reliable and high quality services, utilities, and facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.

Objectives:

1. Public/private utilities and facilities will be managed to meet and exceed professional and governmental standards to protect and enhance public health and the natural environment.
2. Land use planning and development will support the efficiency and fiscal sustainability of energy, sewer, water, and stormwater systems.
3. Infrastructure maintenance and construction projects will be scheduled and financed to maximize cost efficiency and minimize cost fluctuation for taxpayers.
4. Public facilities and services will continue to meet the needs of residents and businesses, especially as new development increases demand for those facilities and services.
5. Protect people and property from natural and man-made disasters.
6. Community facilities and utility infrastructure will enhance the aesthetics of the community and new or renovated public buildings will incorporate a unified theme built around the City's brand.
7. City staffing, technical skills, and available equipment will match the needs of the community and be provided in a cost efficient manner.
8. La Crescent area school investments will keep pace with changes to the population and other districts in the region, to provide a reputation and outcomes that attract families to La Crescent.
9. La Crescent area schools endeavor to be an integral part of community life, much more than simply a primary and secondary education service.
10. Information about La Crescent amenities, community events, and active city projects/meetings are accessible and promoted to residents and visitors.

Strategies



Strategies:

1. Water quality standards will be strictly adhered to, including both drinking water standards and standards for stormwater returned to local waterways.
2. The City will consider possible impacts to surface and ground water quality and quantity during the review of new development proposals to protect and enhance public health and the natural environment. New developments should consider how impacts to the natural environment, energy systems and public health can be mitigated through new technologies (such as greywater recycling systems), sustainable site and building design practices.
3. Annually review development ordinances and applications for consistency with changes in state or federal regulations, best practices, and environmental stewardship. Areas of special concern include regulations allowing appropriate use of on-site, neighborhood, or community renewable energy systems and greywater recycling systems.
4. Keep current City engineering assessments of water, sewer, and stormwater systems resolving issues and planning for expansion, new development and increased environmental leadership. Review and keep current intergovernmental agreements with the City of La Crosse for waste water treatment.
5. The City will encourage compatible infill development, increases in housing density, and other practices that efficiently and cost effectively utilize existing infrastructure or minimize the cost per household to provide utility services.
6. New utilities and municipal infrastructure will not represent an unreasonable cost to the City - new development should pay for extensions or improvements to new utilities needed to service the development.
7. The City generally requires all development that relies on municipal services to be located within La Crescent's corporate limits. Non-farm development not served by public sanitary sewer and water is discouraged within areas



Community Facilities and Services

Strategies



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- planned for City growth, except as approved through intergovernmental planning or related agreements, to provide for the efficient and cost effective growth of the City.
8. The City will maintain a Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to plan for the annual construction and maintenance of community facilities. When possible the City will pursue grants, state or federal low interest loans to minimize the costs to update community facilities. Consider updating the CIP every year to create a rolling five-year plan.
 9. The City will review intergovernmental agreements with the City of La Crosse to ensure that sewer service treatment capacity will not be a constraint on economic or population growth.
 10. Meet with representatives from the DOT, Houston County and La Crescent Township to discuss planning for a future joint public works/highway shop, storage and maintenance facility. A space needs analysis should be jointly conducted for each entity including identification of potential suitable sites.
 11. The City works through its Police Department and Fire Department to maintain high quality 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, including reviewing, improving, and upgrading service provisions.
 12. The City will work with representatives from energy providers to raise awareness of local concerns during the planning and siting of any major transmission lines, facilities, natural gas lines, community solar, 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 minimize disturbances to environmentally sensitive areas. Underground placement and co-location (or corridor sharing) of utilities is encouraged and the City will consider burying utility lines as part of street reconstruction projects to improve the aesthetics of the community.
 13. The City will work with energy providers, land owners, and other communities to support appropriate applications of renewable energy and utilization of on-site distributed energy generation (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, solid waste, and community solar) as a means of protecting the City and property owners against future fluctuations in energy costs and to support environmental stewardship.
 14. Implement new technology within City facilities and construction projects that can provide cost efficiency, improved levels of service, and sustainable operations.
 15. Ensure that residents and businesses continue to have access to high speed broadband technologies to enhance quality of life and community development.
 16. The City will work with surrounding counties, townships, state and federal agencies to adopt plans, policies, and procedures that seek to minimize the threat and damage to people and property from natural and man-made disasters before, during and after such events. Natural disasters and disasters related to rail and truck corridors through the City are areas of special concern.
 17. The City will lead by example when constructing new community buildings to have high quality structures that enhance community aesthetics. The City will consider the use of similar architectural design features for new or renovated City buildings that establishes a unified theme consistent with the community's branding efforts.
 18. Complete an organizational study to identify short and long term City staff needs. The study should consider opportunities for cross training and continuing education to enable succession planning and career growth for City staff. The

Strategies



study should also consider the possibility of outsourcing or sharing staffing with adjacent government agencies to reduce costs or fulfill specific technical knowledge needs.

and news related to city meetings, projects, and development review.

19. The City and its residents support investments in the La Crescent-Hokah School District facilities, including the incorporation of sustainable building materials and energy systems. Improvements to the La Crescent Hokah Elementary school are a current priority.
20. The City may partner with the school district to consider jointly lobbying against the application of standardized state school siting requirements which would have a detrimental affect on public health, urban sprawl and the cost to build and provide services, including transportation facilities, to new school built in La Crescent.
21. The City will continue to 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, theatre productions, and adult sports.
22. The City will work with the school district to engage students in civic involvement and City operations. This may include student representation on City committees to foster the next generations of community leaders and to gather input from the youth of the community on City projects.
23. The City encourages local businesses to coordinate with area schools to establish internships and curriculum programs designed to match with local business needs.
24. Consider developing a "sister city" to La Crescent to share and exchange ideas for community improvement projects.
25. The City will consider the use of new technologies, such as mobile applications, to provide or make more accessible information to residents and visitors regarding community amenities, events



Transportation and Mobility

2-24

Transportation is an essential aspect of life. It is about the ability to readily and safely gain access to work, school, shopping, recreation, essential services and social gatherings. It is also an essential component of most economic activity and community infrastructure. This section of the plan should be used by City officials, residents, other government agencies, and developers to inform decisions that affect transportation in the City.

Vision Statement

The City of La Crescent has a multi-faceted transportation system that enables the economic, environmental, and social functions of the community. Our street network will be safe and accessible for all users, regardless of age or ability, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and drivers. Infrastructure investments follow Complete Streets principles.

Issues & Opportunities

The planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to transportation and mobility that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. These statements are drawn from public comments, the Community Indicator Report, committee discussions, agency interviews and survey results; they do not represent policy decisions. The list is meant as a summary of key points and not a list all issues or opportunities raised.

- Safety is a high-priority concern, for all types of transportation in and through the City: walking, biking, driving, public transit or rail.
- Specific areas of concern include crosswalks near school sites, Oak Street, 7th Street/Kistler Park; increased thru traffic, especially heavy truck traffic through town on CTH 6 and CTH 25 due to potential housing, industrial, and frac sand mining growth in Houston County; lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to existing housing off of CTH 6 and CTH 25; bike rider safety on STH 14/61 to La Crosse; access from N. 4th St and N. 2nd St. to the highway.
- Opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle improvements include completion of the Wagon Wheel Trail and bridge to Downtown; completion of connections to the Root River and Mississippi Scenic Trails; providing wider shoulders along highways and bridges during reconstruction projects to accommodate safer lane widths for bikers; continuing to secure right-of-way for future facility development; improving signage to improve safety by reducing driver and pedestrian/bicycle conflicts; filling gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail network.
- Most government agencies (City, County, State) lack sufficient funding to adequately maintain roadways let alone provide for expansion projects. A potential roadway expansion project is the extension of 7th Street to STH 16/S. Chestnut St. to alleviate thru traffic in town. Other desired improvements include providing scenic overlooks along the major highways and improving aesthetics along gateways into the City.
- Other transportation enhancement opportunities include weekend transit service to La Crosse; increasing transit-oriented developments; installation of real time GPS technology to enhance transit ridership; whistle-free train zones; and completing road diets to local streets to accommodate bike/ped users.
- According to the survey (question 11), 58% of respondents ranked Maintenance of Existing Roads the highest priority for transportation investments in the next 10 years, followed by Improvements to Off-Street Multi-Use Trails (22%), Improvements to Sidewalks (21%), Improvements to Bike Lanes (18%), Improvements to Public Transportation (10%) and New Roads or Connections within the City (10%).
- According to the survey (question 12), improving Crosswalks Near the Elementary School was the highest priority for bike and pedestrian safety improvements, followed by Improvements on Oak Street (sidewalk both sides and bike lane), Improvements to 7th Street (sidewalks), Biking and Pedestrian Lane on STH 6 and Wider Shoulder-Designated Bike Lane on STH 25.
- There are concerns regarding how new school site selection occurs and the cost to the community to retrofit or provide transportation facility enhancements that provide safe routes to school.

Goals & Objectives



Goal:

La Crescent provides a safe, efficient, multi-modal and well-maintained transportation network that balances the needs of all users.

Objectives:

1. Traffic growth, and corresponding facility improvements, will be managed in balance with cost, pedestrian, bicycle and neighborhood impact considerations.
2. Biking and walking in La Crescent will be safe, enjoyable and efficient, especially in regards to providing Safe Route to Schools.
3. Create a well connected and safe regional trail system.
4. Alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips will increase as a percentage of all transportation trips within the City and to/from the rest of the La Crosse-La crescent metro area.
5. Roadways will be designed, maintained and reconstructed to meet the needs of all users and to correspond to the needs and demands of surrounding land uses within a hierarchical system of functional classification.
6. Improvements to collector and arterial streets within La Crescent will continue to meet interstate and intrastate travel needs in balance with impacts to City neighborhoods.
7. Local transportation facilities and investments will be coordinated with regional facilities and investments.
8. Transportation corridors and gateways will be aesthetically attractive and enhance the image of the community.

Strategies



Strategies:

1. Gaps in the City's existing sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure will be systematically addressed through new facility construction. The City will implement the recommendations contained in the 2013 City of La Crescent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (refer to the maps on the following pages). This plan should be amended as needed due to changes in land uses since the plan was adopted (e.g. Kistler Park/Aquatic Center crosswalk improvements at 7th Street)
2. The City will review the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan when updating the City's Capital Improvement Plan and during annual City budgeting discussions to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects as may be reasonably addressed given budget constraints.

Low hanging fruit such as enhanced cross walk markings, bike/ped signage, and other improvements which do not require facility reconstruction should be prioritized first. Short-term strategies include:

- Painted crosswalks near school sites and Kistler Park. This may also include the use of other cost efficient safety improvements such as off-street pedestrian crossing signs; on-street portable/moveable crosswalk signs and stands; and installation of crosswalk flags.
- Installation of painted bike lanes and bicycle signage along CTH 6 and CTH 25 to connect existing and planned developments (e.g. Racetrack area) to existing City bike/ped infrastructure along 7th and Elm Streets.
- Lowering speed limits on highways entering the City as warranted.

Long-term strategies include:

- Installation of Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB) at high traffic/high profile pedestrian and bicycle crossings
- Intersection/street reconstruction to provide off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities/enhancements. For example, realigning the intersection of CTH 6 and CTH 25.
- Identification of Highway 1 or Apple Blossom



La Crescent Strategic Bicycle Planning Existing and Proposed Biking Facilities

January 2013





Transportation and Mobility

Strategies



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- Trail as a premier bike route with enhanced safety and signage.
3. The City will complete a grade separated pedestrian and bicycle access across STH 16/61 to improve access to the Mississippi River and Blue Lake Marsh from the downtown area.
 4. The City will follow Complete Street principals. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists, including those County or State roadways which pass through La Crescent.
 5. The City encourages the development of neighborhoods that are oriented towards pedestrians and well-served by sidewalks, bicycle routes, and other non-motorized transportation facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be designed to connect to adjacent developments, schools, parks, shopping areas, and existing or planned pedestrian or bicycle facilities.
 6. The City will continue to work with regional and state organizations to create a well connected regional trail system, including connections to the Root River Trail and Mississippi River Scenic Trail. These connections may start as on-road facilities with the goal of eventually achieving off-road facilities through incremental and systematic land acquisition and trail development. Priority improvements include connecting La Crescent to Millers Corner and then on to Hokah.
 7. Coordinate with local snowmobile associations and area landowners to consider possible utilization of snowmobile trails and trail corridors for hiking or biking opportunities.
 8. The City will continue to promote the growth of the La Crosse Municipal Transit (MTU) system ridership in La Crescent. In collaboration with local and regional organizations, the City will host events that encourage and celebrate alternative transportation.
 9. The City will maintain a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to plan for the annual construction and maintenance of roads and other transportation facilities. Maintenance and safety improvement to existing roads should be prioritized over capital expenditures for new road construction. Annual transportation investments should also include funding for both traditional road improvements and alternative transportation modes such as bike trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike/ped signage, and transit facilities. Consider updating the CIP every year to create a rolling five-year plan.
 10. New roads shall be built according to City standards and inspected before accepted for dedication. The City maintains requirements for new roads and driveways that aim to ensure safety for all users.
 11. Roadway design will account for snow removal needs, including adequate terrace width between the street and the sidewalk. Roadway width should be designed based on the functional classification of the roadway and alternative transportation needs. The use of wide local streets in single-family residential neighborhoods should be avoided. Where existing roadway widths are deemed excessive the City may consider the use of a road diet during future reconstruction projects to accommodate facility improvements for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users. A road diet is a technique whereby the number of travel lanes, roadway width, or number of parking lanes is reduced in order to achieve systemic improvements often for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit users. Road diets can also be used to provide shared turn lanes and increased greenspace to reduce areas of impervious pavement. Areas to prioritize for future road diets include:
 - 3rd Street from Walnut Street to Elm Street.
 - Residential neighborhoods that do not have existing sidewalk facilities and existing natural (e.g. mature trees) or man-made objects (e.g. shallow building setbacks) make installing a sidewalk outside of the existing curb area impractical.

Strategies



12. When considering new development proposals the City may require development agreements that define the responsibilities of the City and the developer 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 to better understand potential impacts from new development and potential mitigation efforts.
13. The City encourages other adjacent local governments to consider requiring independent traffic impact analysis before approving potential developments that would significantly increase traffic on roadways through La Crescent to better understand potential impacts from new development and potential mitigation efforts.
14. When considering new development proposals the City will consider potential impacts to roadway traffic counts, accelerated maintenance needs/costs, public safety, and neighborhood impacts. The City should investigate opportunities to require developers to provide additional funds for long-term maintenance needs as part of the approval of new development or annexation proposals.
15. Where appropriate, the City may designate speed limits, weight restrictions, truck routes, or access restrictions to protect local streets and improve traffic flow and public safety for all users.
16. The City will work with La Crescent - Hokah School District to promote Safe Routes to School via education, evaluation and engineering, enforcement and encouragement (i.e. the "Five E's"). Low-hanging strategies include:
 - Painting/marketing crosswalks,
 - Adding pedestrian crossing signs near intersections,
 - Adding more volunteer crossing guards,
 - Establishing a higher police presence before and after school.
17. The City will work with representatives from the Department of Transportation, La Crosse Area Planning Committee, railroad companies, and surrounding Counties to raise awareness of local concerns when State and County highways or railroads in the area are slated for improvement. The City will inform the community about regional and state transportation projects and will encourage public involvement in regional transportation facility improvement planning. Enhancing safety of existing rail road facilities is an area of special concern.
18. The City will work with State and County agencies to provide scenic overlooks along their roadways to enhance regional tourism and recreation.
19. The City will work with State and County agencies to explore the possibility of extending 7th Street to STH 16/S. Chestnut Street to alleviate thru traffic in town and to complete a cost-benefit analysis of this potential facility, including impacts to adjacent property owners and the natural environment.
20. The City will work with State and County agencies to maintain aesthetically pleasing transportation corridors and gateways which reflect the community's charm and vision. This may include enhanced landscaping, artistic enhancements, clean-up of trash and debris, decorative lighting, improved community signage and removal of billboards. Areas to prioritize include:
 - Along the Pike from the Twilite area west into the City.



Collaborations & Partnerships

Vision



2-30

Vision:

The City of La Crescent is a collaborative participant in a variety of local and regional partnerships in the La Crosse-La Crescent region. The active participation in regional organizations has enhanced La Crescent's integration into the regional economy and culture, and this has helped attract residents and business investment. A close working relationship between the City and the La Crescent-Hokah School District has enabled investment in the schools and helped to make them an asset for attracting families and growth. By establishing clarity about annexation policies and rural land use controls the City has maintained a working relationship with the Township of La Crescent while also protecting its growth area.

Issues & Opportunities



The current planning process revealed the following issues and opportunities related to collaboration and partnerships that inform this plan for the future of La Crescent. (These statements are drawn from public comments and survey results and do not represent policy decisions.)

- The City has many existing formal ties to the La Crosse metro area, including participation in the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility, and the La Crosse Wastewater Utility. It also has strong social and economic ties, especially as a place of employment for La Crescent residents.
- The La Crescent community is an area larger than the City, including residents of the Dresbach, La Crescent and Hokah Townships, and the City of Hokah, linked by the La Crescent-Hokah School District.
- The City needs to maintain its population above 5,000 to continue receiving Municipal State Aid
- The City has several Orderly Annexation Agreements with La Crescent Township, mutually approved by resolution in April 2015, that immediately annexed about 20 acres of developed residential parcels adjacent to the City. The agreements prevent further annexation of contiguous lands before 2021 except by landowner petition or mutual City and Township agreement.

Goals & Objectives

Collaboration and Partnerships Goal 1

The City will work with La Crescent Township to enable continued growth and efficient public services.

Objective:

The City will ensure that new urban development within the immediate vicinity of the City occurs only within the City and on City services.

Strategies

1. The City of La Crescent will not extend City sewer or water services to properties that are not located within La Crescent City limits. Property owners that want or need such services will be required to first annex to the City.
2. The City of La Crescent will not allow urban development to occur outside the City's boundaries if the property proposed for development is able to be served with City sewer and water services, either now or in the foreseeable future. The City will contest and initiate annexation proceedings of any such properties that are proposed for urban development outside the current City limits.
3. The City of La Crescent may pursue annexation of adjacent developed lands in La Crescent Township at any time, within the constraints of any existing orderly annexation agreements.

Objective:

The City will explore collaboration options with La Crescent Township to serve all La Crescent residents more efficiently

Strategies

1. The City and Township will continue to share fire protection services.
2. The City of La Crescent will invite La Crescent Township to explore collaborations options, possibly including a long-term orderly annexation agreement or voluntary annexation of the entire township (merger)
3. The City recognizes that a new collaborative agreement between the City and Township could conflict with this plan, including the preceding annexation strategies. Where in conflict, such an agreement would supercede this plan.

Collaboration and Partnerships Goal 2

The City will be a strong partner with the La Crescent-Hokah School District.

Strategies:

1. Collaborate closely with the School District on issues related to expansion or improvement of school sites that are within direct City control, such as land use and access, utilities and traffic. Collaboration could include assistance with studies or infrastructure construction.
2. Collaborate with the School District, the Chamber of Commerce and others to promote the best qualities of the La Crescent-Hokah schools to prospective residents.
3. Utilize City communication tools to help share school-related news and outreach, when appropriate and requested by the School District.
4. Encourage and facilitate, as possible, connections and initiatives between local employers and the School District.

Collaboration and Partnerships Goal 3

The City will attract attention, investment, and growth through active participation in regional organizations and initiatives.

Objectives:

1. Seek bluffland protection and recreation improvements around the City in coordination with regional partners as described in The Blufflands Plan.
2. Maintain and enhance transit service through continued partnership with La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility.
3. Advocate for local interests and support regional initiatives through active participation in the La Crosse Area Planning Committee.
4. Participate in the La Crosse Region Convention and Visitors Bureau.