

ZONING CODE UPDATE

Neighborhoods | Fall 2026

LA CROSSE
WISCONSIN

INTRODUCTION | THE PROJECT

This project is a comprehensive update of La Crosse's zoning & subdivision ordinance that.....*aims to modernize regulations to better reflect current growth patterns.*

The goal:

- *craft a **user-friendly** code*
- *aligns with community needs & policies*
- *make it **easier to understand** & **implement**.*



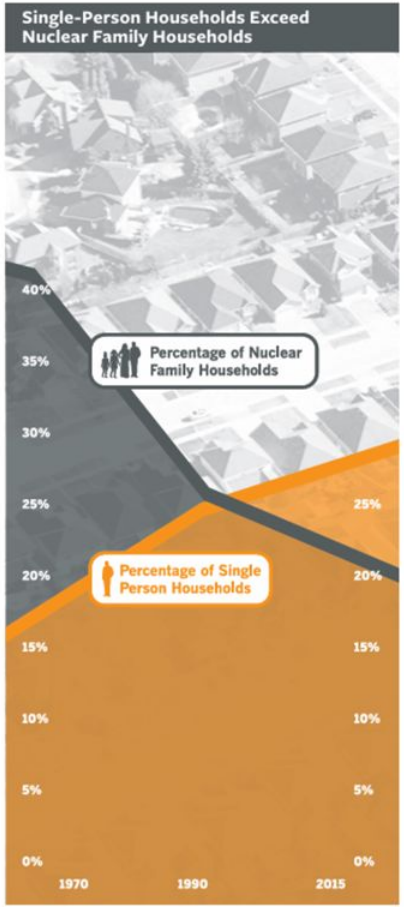
Project Steering Committee

City Plan Commission

Final Adoption

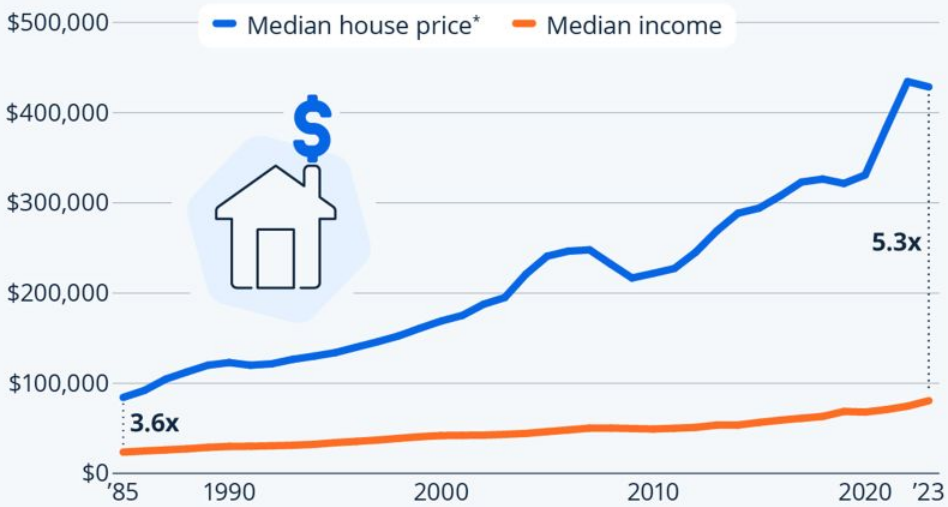
La Crosse Common Council





House Prices Outpaced Income Growth Over the Past 40 Years

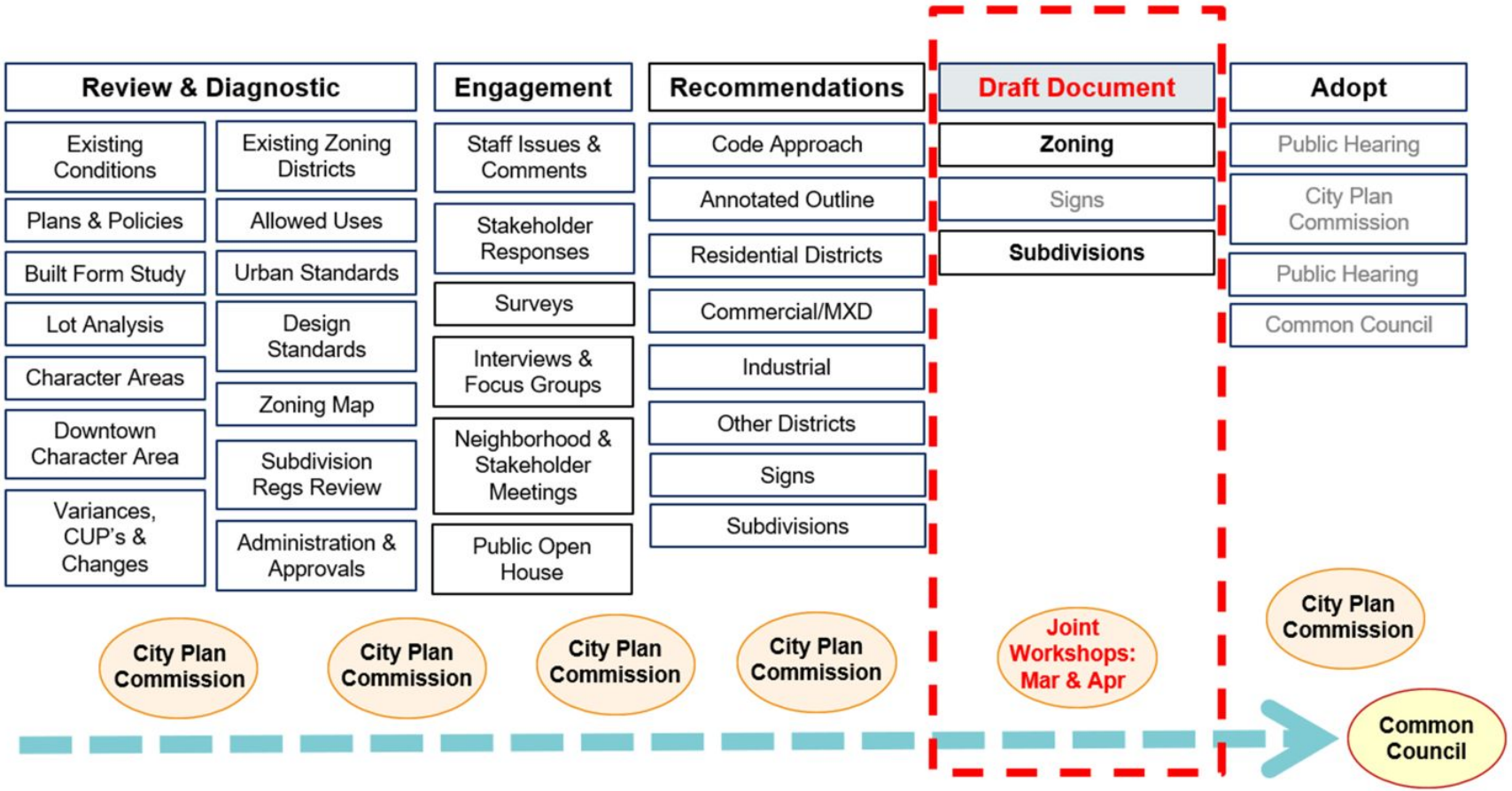
Median household income and median house price in the United States (in current U.S. dollars)

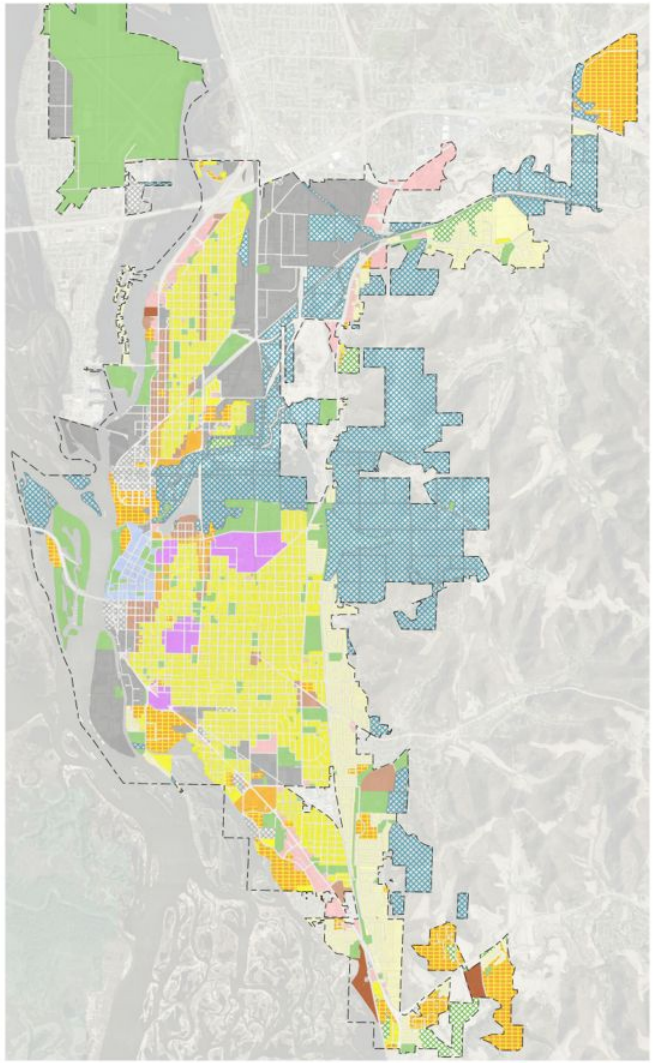


* Median sales price of new privately-owned houses

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

SCOPE | PROCESS TO DATE





Proposed Zoning Map

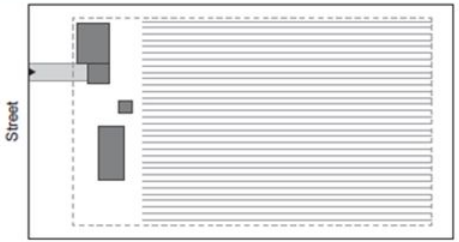
- OSR - Open Space Reserve
- FRD - Fringe Residential
- NRD - Neighborhood Residential
- MHD - Mobile Home
- PD - Planned Development
- NMX - Neighborhood Mixed Use
- UMX - Urban Mixed Use
- MXD - Downtown Mixed Use
- CCD - Commercial Corridor
- DFX - Development Flex
- IND - Industrial
- INS - Institutional
- PFP - Public Facilities & Parks
- CON - Conservancy

FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Agriculture Reserve District (ASR)



1.1 Typical Development Pattern





2.4 Structure Height	
(L) Primary Building Height (Max.)	55 Ft
(M) Acc. Structure Height (Max.)	N/A

1.3 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Min.)	5 Ac
Lot size (Max.)	N/A
Lot width (Min.)	250 Ft
Density (D.U. / Ac) (5 Ac)	1

1.4 Building Types Allowed
Single Family Unit
Two Family Unit
Accessory Dwelling Unit
Agricultural Out Buildings

Mobile Home Residential District (MHD)



1.1 Typical Development Pattern



1.3 Area Standards	
Park Size (Minimum)	5 Acres
Separation (Minimum)	20 Ft
Drive / Access (Minimum)	30 Ft

1.4 Building Types
Mobile/Manufactured Homes
Accessory Structures

Fringe Residential District (FRD) | ALLOWED RESIDENTIAL TYPES



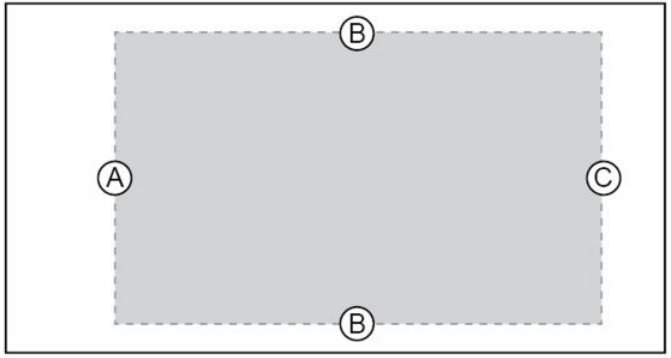




1.4 Building Types Allowed
Ⓐ Single Unit Detached
Ⓑ Two Unit Attached
Accessory Dwelling Unit
Accessory Structure

Fringe Residential District (FRD) | Lot Standards and Building Placement

Current Zoning Standards	
Corresponding Zoning District(s)	R1 & R2
Lot Size Minimum	7,000 Sq Ft
Front Setback	25 ft
Side Setback	6 Ft, 7 Ft
Rear Setback	20% Dept of Lot



1.3 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Minimum)	7,000 Sq Ft
Lot Size (Maximum)	5 Ac
Lot Width (Minimum)	50 Ft
Maximum Density (D.U. / Acre)	10

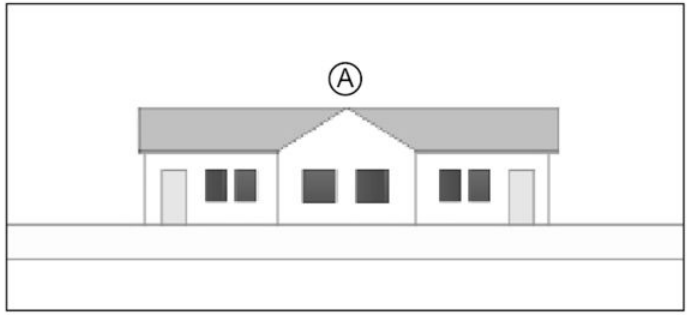
2.2 Building Placement Minimums	
Ⓐ Front Setback	25 Ft
Ⓑ Side Setback to building overhang	2 Ft
Ⓒ Rear Setback	15 Ft

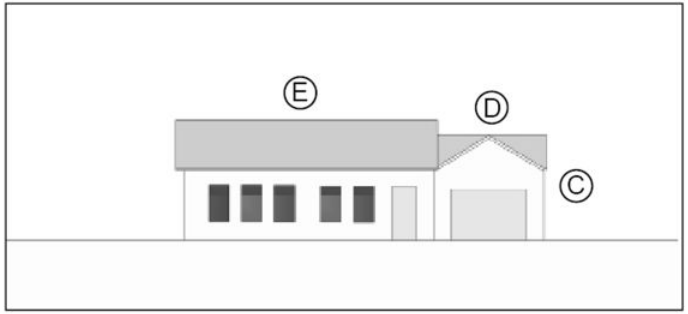
FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

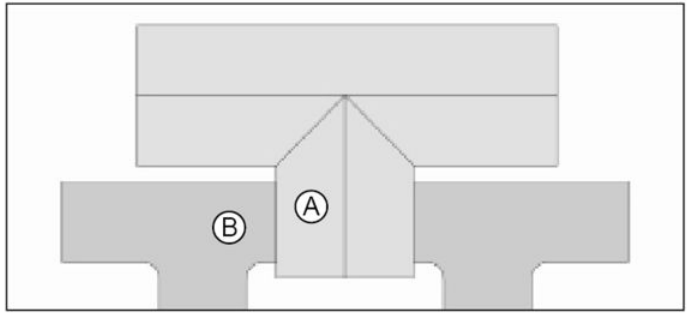
Fringe Residential District (FRD) | Formed Based Elements

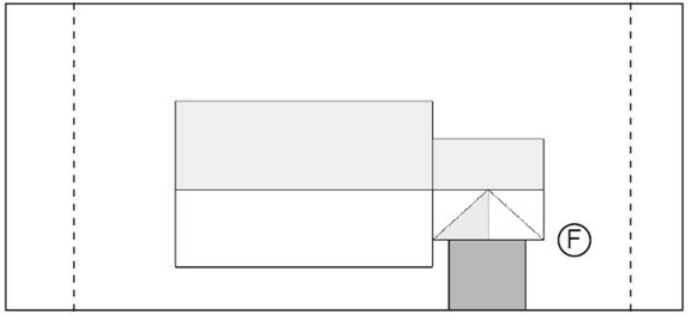
3.2 Frontage
(A) Two unit building with garage forward design; gable faces street; garage loads
(B) Perpendicular to street

3.3 Configuration
(C) Street facing garage
(D) Garage cannot exceed 50% of total principal building facade (E)
(F) Garage setback from principal building 5 feet minimum



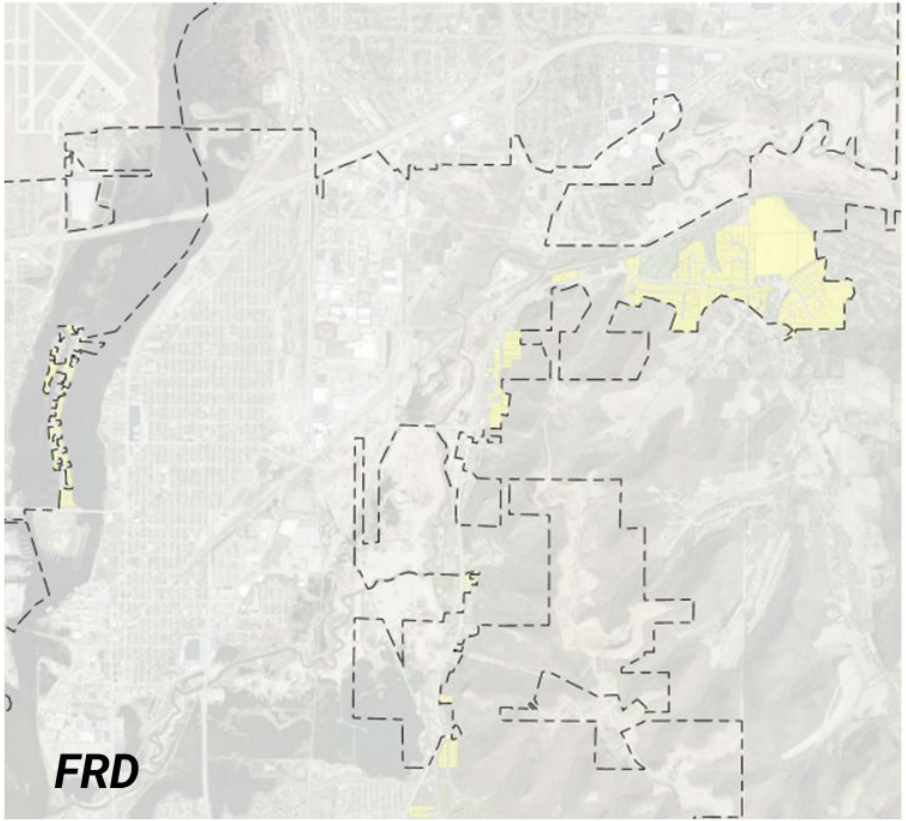


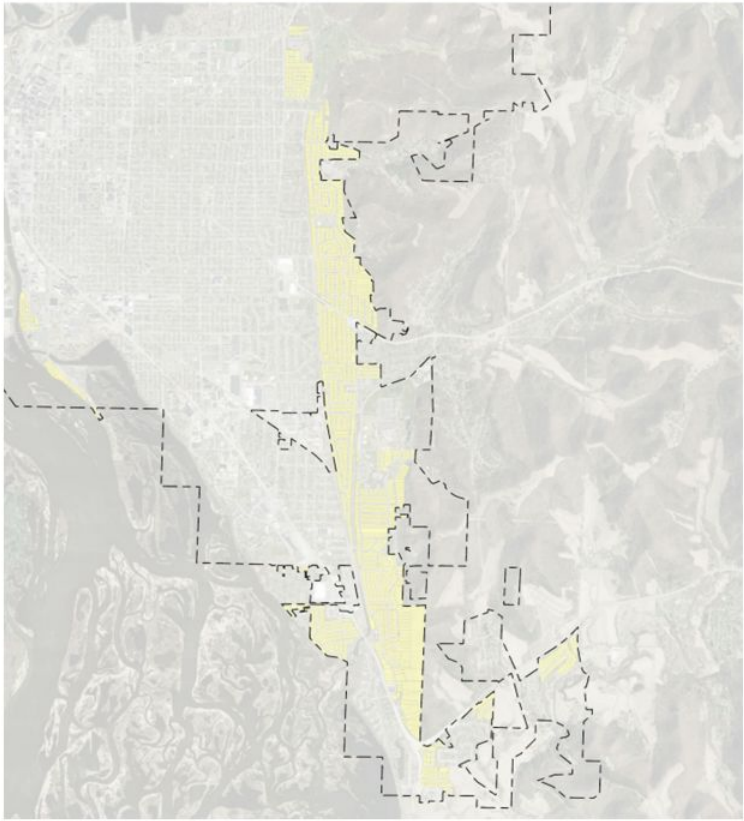




FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Fringe Residential District (FRD)



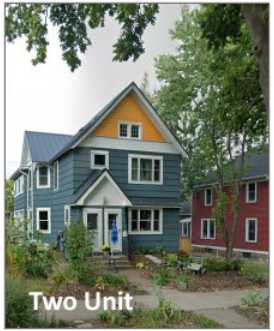


FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Neighborhood Residential District | Allowed Building Types



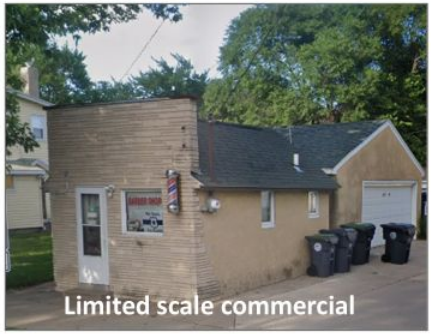
















1.3 Building Types Allowed
Single Unit Attached
Single Unit Detached
Two Unit Building
Three Unit Building
Four Unit Building
Small Unit Detached (ADU)
Small Commercial Building
Small Mixed-Use Building

FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Neighborhood Residential District | Lot Standards and Building Placement



2.2 Building Placement	
(A) Front Setback	20 Ft
(B) Side Setback	3 Ft
(C) Rear Setback	10 Ft



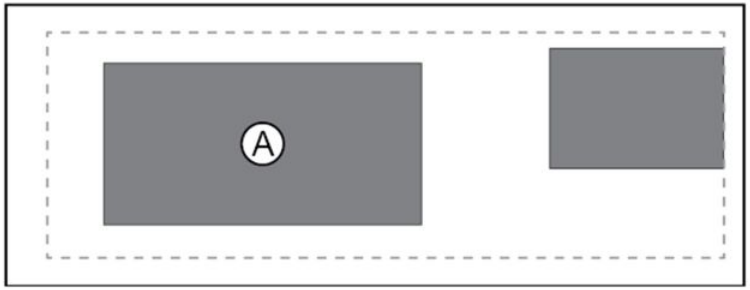
3.2 Building Placement	
(A) Front Setback	10 Ft
(B) Street Setback	10 Ft
(C) Rear Setback	3 Ft
(D) Alley Setback	0 Ft

Current Zoning Standards	
Corresponding Zoning District(s)	R1 – R4
Lot Size Minimum	7,200 Sq Ft
Front Setback	20 Ft-25 Ft
Side Setback	6 Ft-7Ft
Rear Setback	20% Depth of Lot

1.2 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Min.)	2,500 Sq Ft
Lot Size (Max.)	10,000 Sq Ft
Lot Width (Min.)	30 Ft
Density (D.U. / Acre)	20

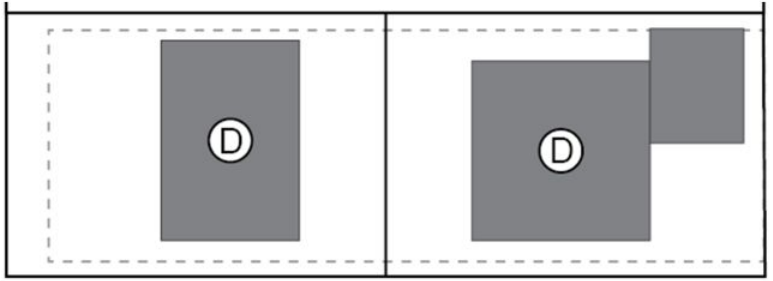


Single-unit detached is a separate and detached one-unit dwelling on a single lot designed and arranged for use by one household



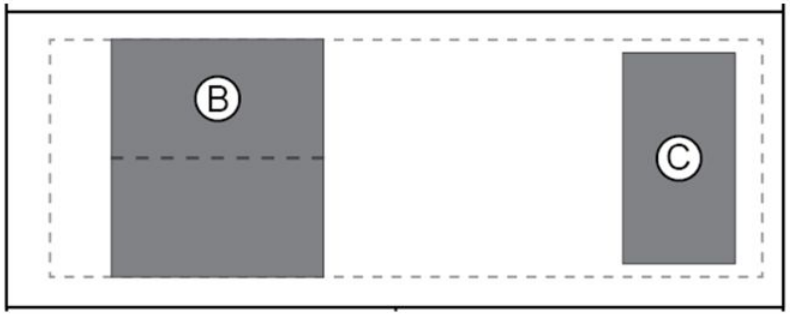


Small-unit detached is a detached, separate one-unit dwelling with a small square footage on a single small lot designed and arranged for use by one household. See the diagram D to the right and the difference in size from diagram A above.



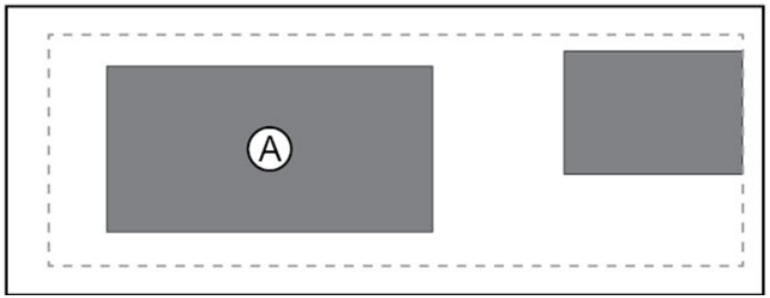


Two Unit - a separate or detached two-unit residence on a single lot. This could be upper and lower floors or side by side with a shared wall depending on what the lot size could allow.





Single Unit Attached- an attached two or more unit residence on a single lot. This could be upper and lower floors or side by side with a shared wall depending on what the lot size could allow.





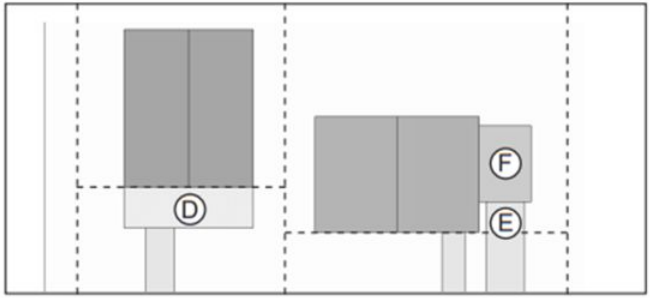
Allowed Encroachment



Frontage	
A	Typical detached unit presents gable to the public street
B	Two unit building w/ gable facing frontage
C	Transverse gable should include gable entry/porch feature



Garage setback



Encroachment	
D	Front encroachment allowed at front setback up to 8 feet to permit stoops, porches and overhangs
E	On small "end grain" lots, garage and/ or parking stall should be set back 5 feet behind
F	Garage



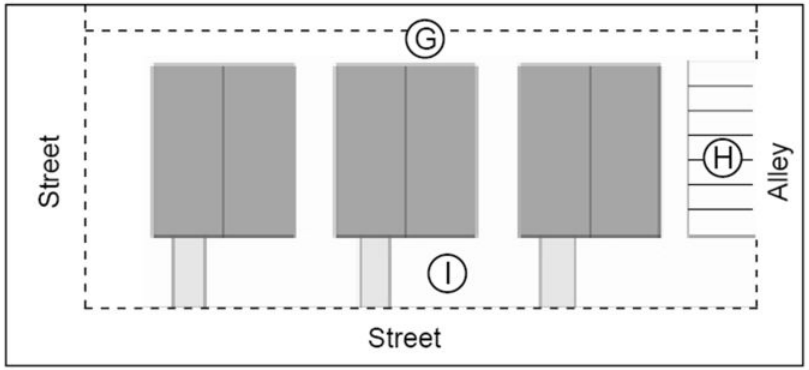
Small Commercial Building- Limited to corner lots on Local Streets, allowed midblock on local arterials and collectors. Includes low intensity uses such as barber shops, lawyer offices, coffee shops, small-scale retail, etc. Maximum size 2,500 square feet.

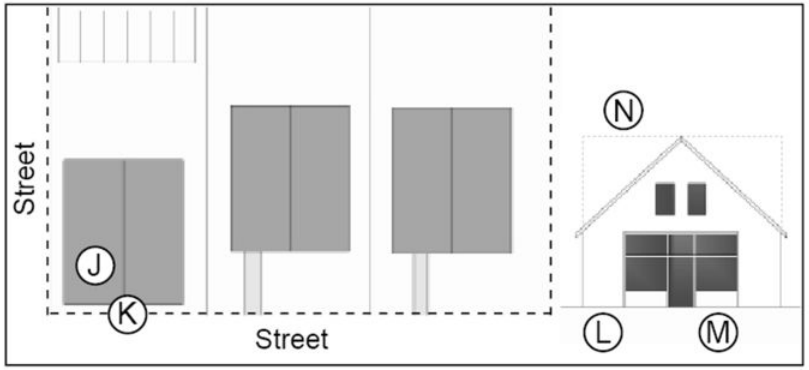


Small Mixed Use, low-traffic, and low-impact businesses: Limited to corner lots on Local Streets, allowed midblock on local arterials and collectors. Local markets, cafes, coffee shops, neighborhood offices, laundromat, and small, specialized retail shops & stores with residential on the top floor.









4.4 Configuration	
G	Cluster
H	Parking from alley shared
I	"End grain" lot
J	Commercial uses are limited to corner lot locations **on local roads*** **
K	Front setback of 0 - 20 feet is allowed
L	Neighborhood commercial building should be a gable-facing facade
M	Shopfront building frontage should include 40 - 60% transparency
N	If mixed use, then second story can have a flat roof











FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

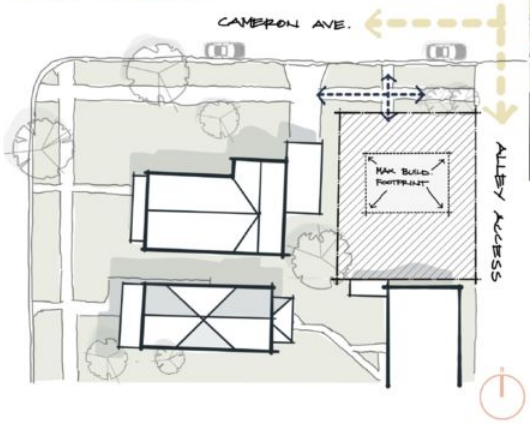
Small Lot Redevelopment Example



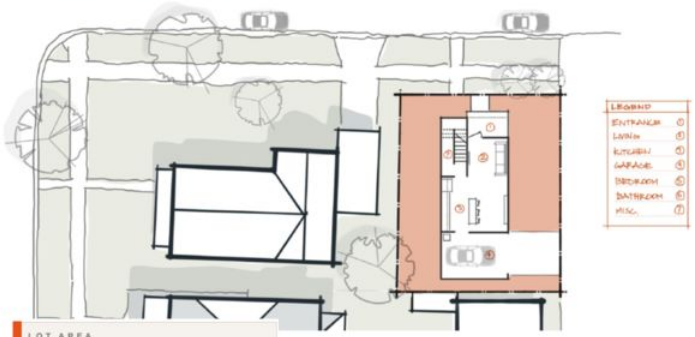




SETBACK SITE DIAGRAM



MASSING SKETCH CONCEPT



LOT AREA

2,906 sq ft

0.067 acres

PROGRAM BREAKDOWN

38 × 20 ft each floor
1st level: Living spaces, (1+) car garage, WC
2nd level: (2) bedrooms, 1.5 bath
3rd level (optional): 1 bedroom, flex space



SECOND LEVEL

SILVA ARCHITECTURE







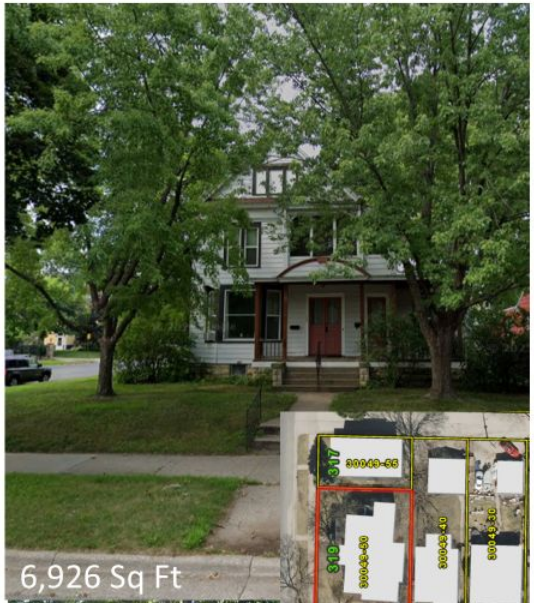




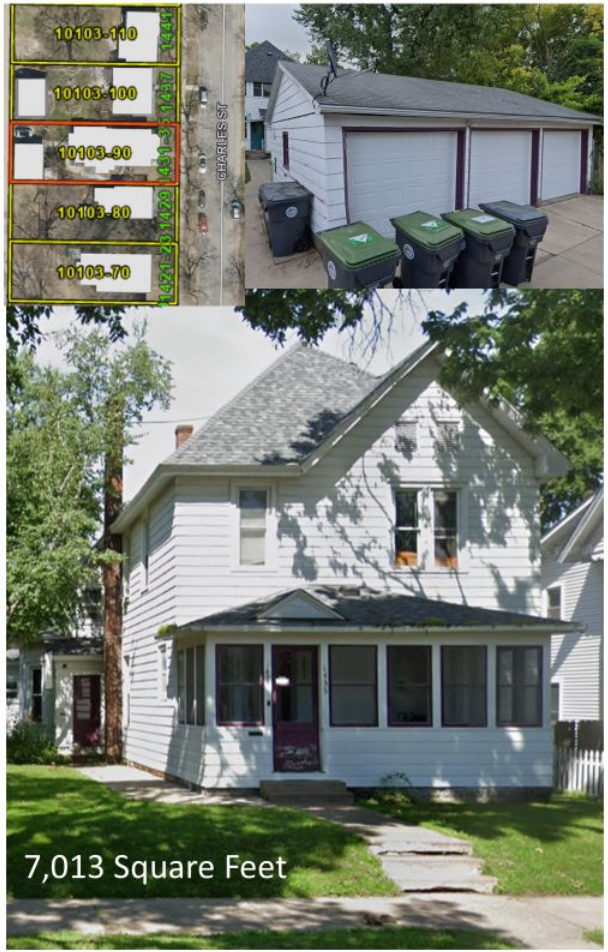




FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE


6,926 Sq Ft
1003-05
1007
1011

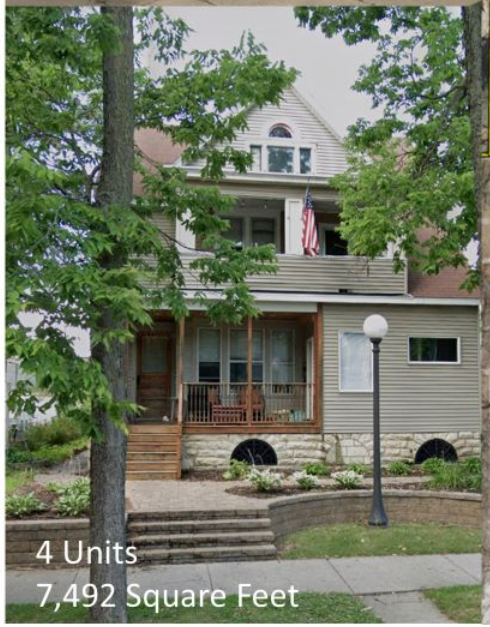



10103-110
10103-100
10103-90
10103-80
10103-70
CHARLES ST
7,013 Square Feet


6,621 Square Feet


1021-25
1027





4 Units
7,492 Square Feet



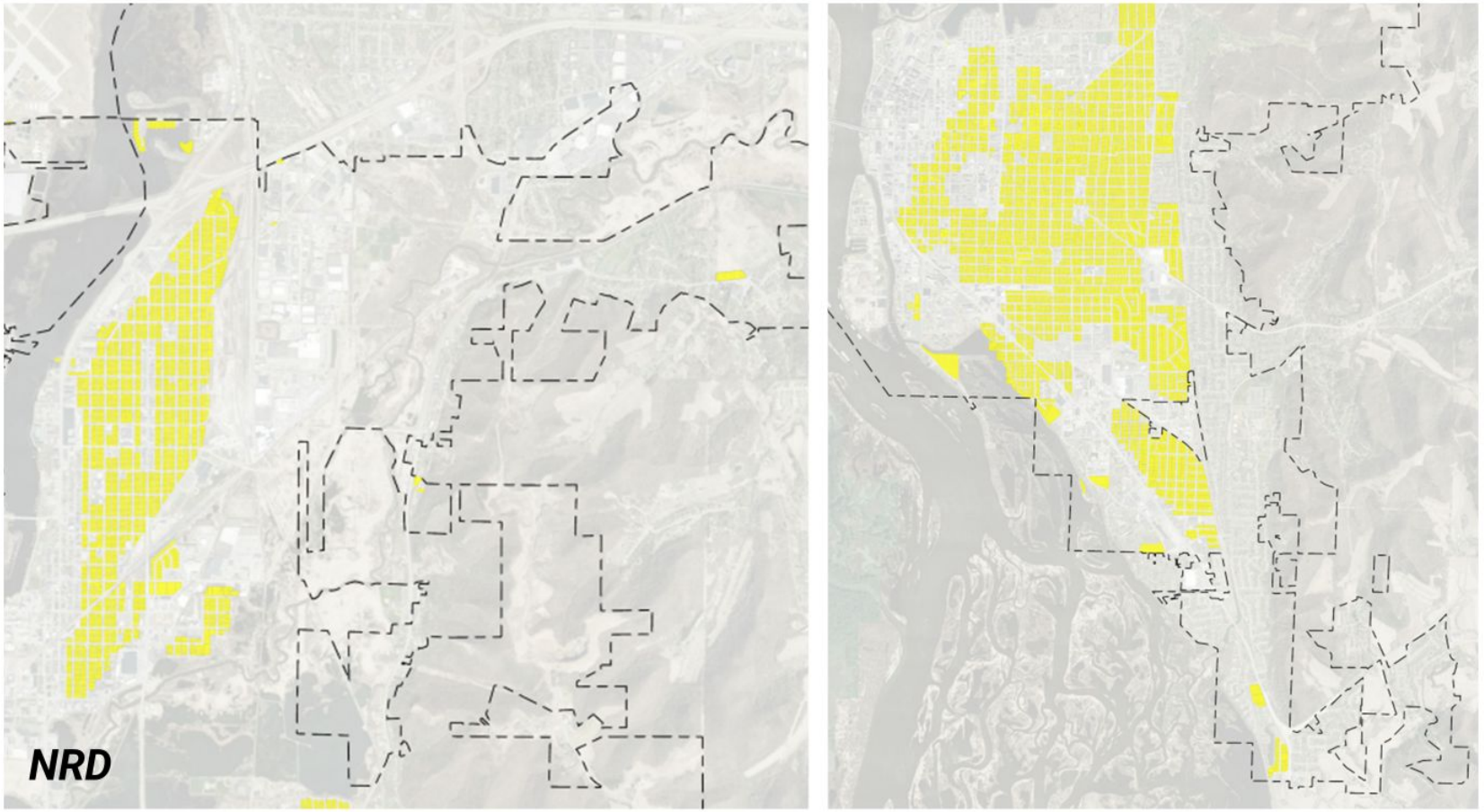


4 Units
8,407 Square Feet



FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Neighborhood Residential District



FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Neighborhood Mixed Use District | Allowed Building Types















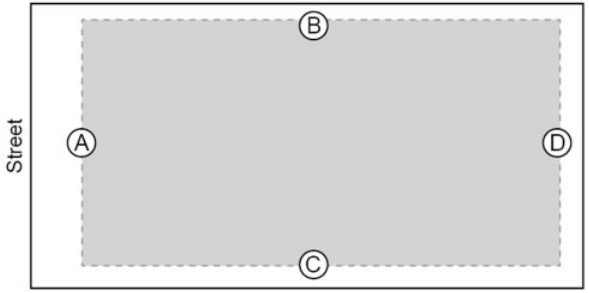
Current Zoning Standards	
Corresponding Zoning District	C1-Local Business
Lot Size Minimum	No Minimum
Front Setback	0 Ft
Side Setback	0 Ft or 6 Ft
Rear Setback	20 Ft

1.3 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Minimum)	5,000 Sq Ft
Lot Size (Maximum)	65,000 Sq Ft
Lot Width (Minimum)	30 Ft
Density (D.U. / Ac) (Maximum)	80
Commercial Building Sq Ft (Maximum)	12,000 Sq Ft

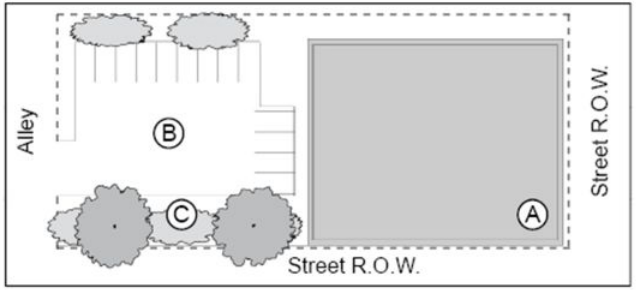
1.4 Building Types
Residential Single Unit Detached
Residential Single Unit Attached
Multi Unit Residential
Commercial / Retail
Office
Mixed Use

FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

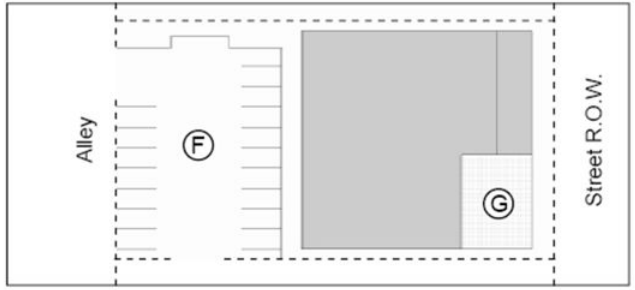
NMX | Dimensional and Form Based Standards



2.2 Building Placement	
(A) Front Setback	0 - 12 Ft
(B) Side Setback	3 Ft
(C) Side Setback (Residential)	10 Ft
(D) Rear Setback	5 Ft



3.2 Frontage
(A) Commercial buildings at the intersection must be built to the corner (0 - 10 ft)
(B) Parking access from alley should be located behind the building
(C) Surface parking fronting a public R.O.W. must be screened a min. 48" with wall or landscaping
(D) Principal facade and 50% of side facade must include at least 50% transparency at street level



3.4 Configuration
(F) Multi-unit building parking should be located behind principal building
(G) Optional courtyard should be 1,000 sq. ft. (min.)
(H) Fourth floor must be step back minimum 8 ft from principal facade and/or facade that fronts public street R.O.W.



FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Urban Mixed Use District | Allowed Building Types

Current Zoning Standards	
Corresponding Zoning District	C3-Community Business
Lot Size Minimum	No Minimum
Front Setback	0 Ft
Side Setback	0 Ft or 6 Ft
Rear Setback	9 Ft or 20 Ft if dwelling

1.3 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Min.)	15,000 Sq Ft
Lot Size (Max.)	87,120 Sq Ft
Lot Width (Min.)	N/A
Density (D.U. / Ac) (Max.)	100

1.4 Building Types
Mixed Use
Multi-Unit Residential
Office
Parking Structure

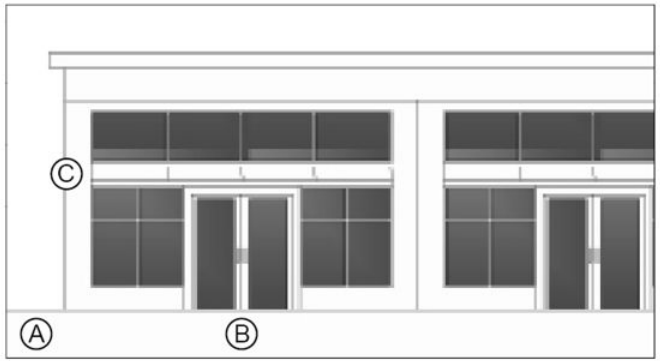








FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE



3.2 Shopfront
(A) Shopfront facade must include minimum 60% transparent glazing
(B) Entrance must front the public street
(C) Entry should include a covered doorway

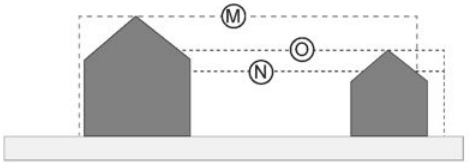
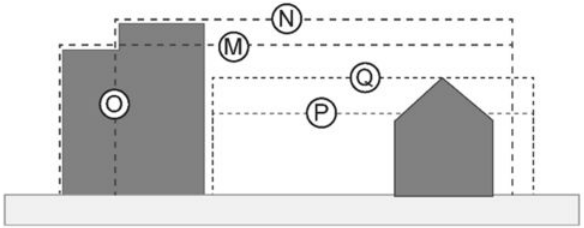
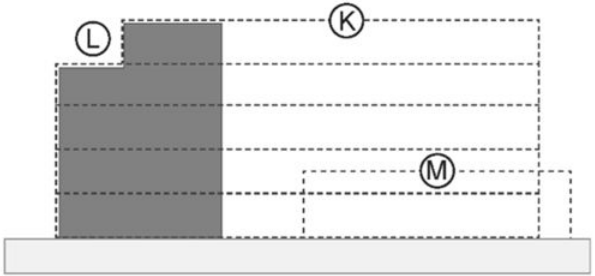
2.2 Building Placement Minimum	
(A) Front Setback	0 - 10 Ft
(B) Side Setback to building overhang	4 Ft
(C) Rear Setback	10 Ft



3.3 Common Entry
(D) Common entry building (office, multi-unit residential, etc.) must include a prominent entrance fronting the public street
(E) Entry should include a covered doorway

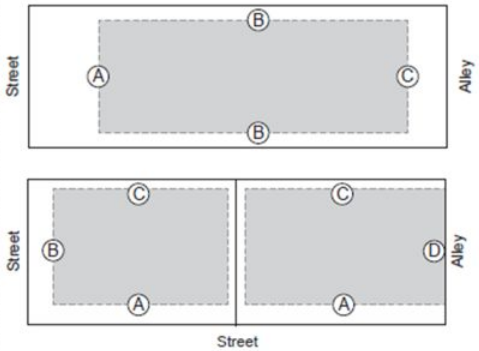
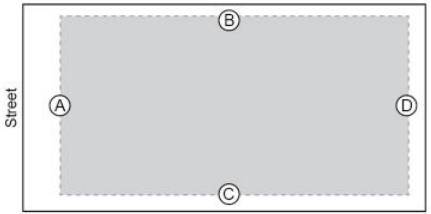


Height Comparisons | FRD, NRD, NMX & UMX

Fringe/ Neighborhood Residential	Neighborhood Mixed-use	Urban Mixed-use
		
35 feet	**45 feet**	**55 feet**
**** Accessory dwelling unit allowed height = 25 feet***	***e.g., Rose, Caledonia, George, Jackson/19th, State 33/Losey…***	***e.g., Rose, Copeland, Monitor, La Crosse, West Ave, South Ave (between Ward & Victory)…***

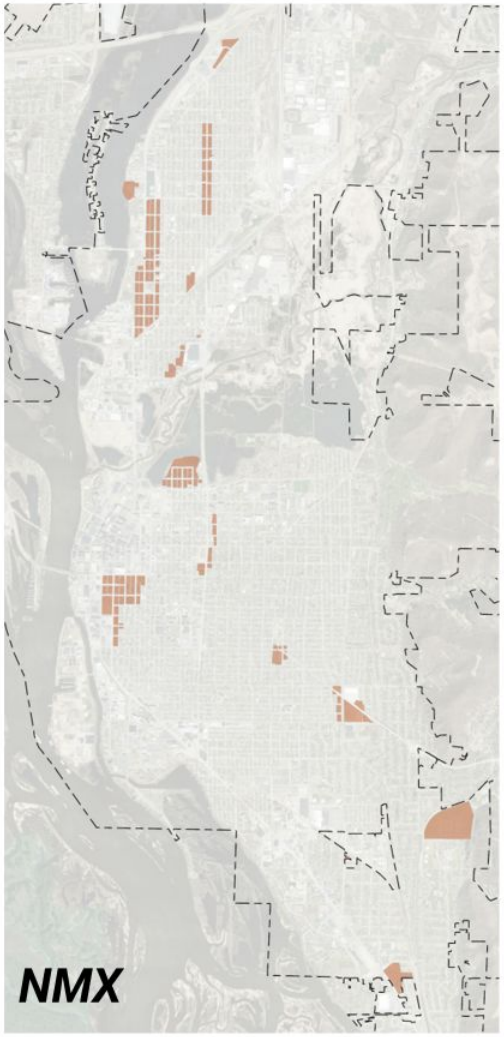
FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

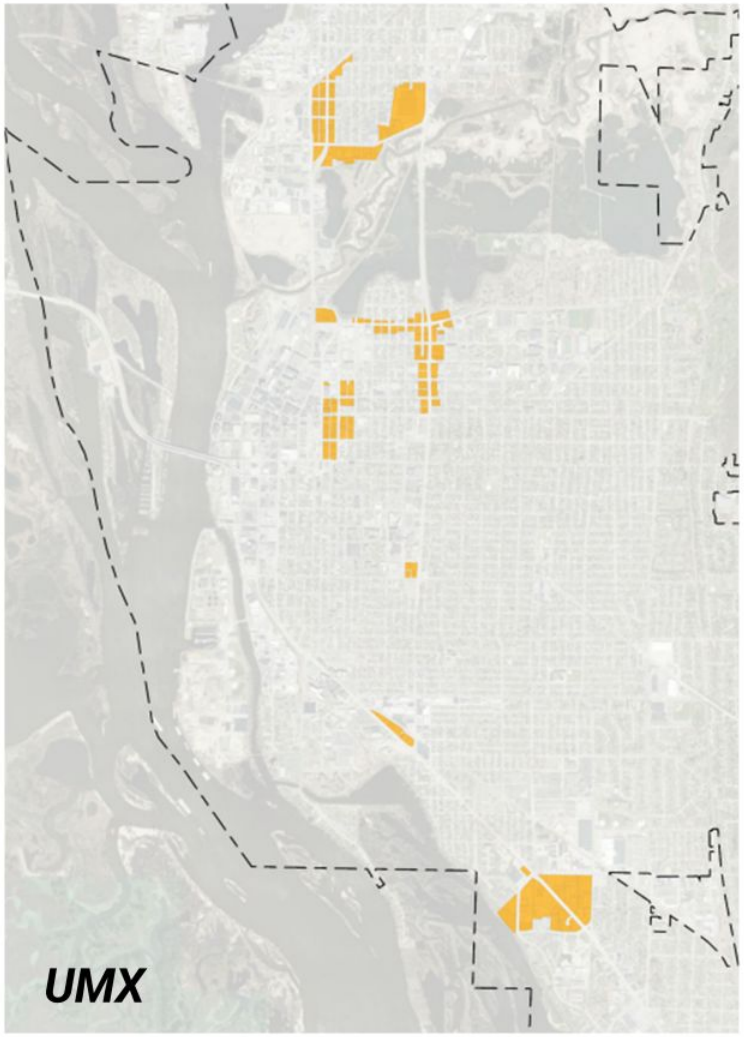
Setback Comparisons | FRD, NRD, NMX & UMX

	Fringe Residential	Neighborhood Residential	Neighborhood Mixed-use	Urban Mixed-use
				
Front	25 feet	20 feet	0-12 feet	0-10 feet
Side	6 feet	3 feet	3 feet (10 ft residential)	4 feet
Rear	15 feet	10 feet	5 feet	10 feet
		** End-grain lots allow smaller setbacks (10,3,0)*	*e.g., Rose, Caledonia, George, Jackson/19th, State 33/Losey…*	*e.g., Rose, Copeland, Monitor, La Crosse, West Ave, South Ave (between Ward & Victory)*

FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Neighborhood & Urban Mixed Use Districts





FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

Institutional District (INS)



1.1 Typical Development Pattern



1.4 Campus Master Plan

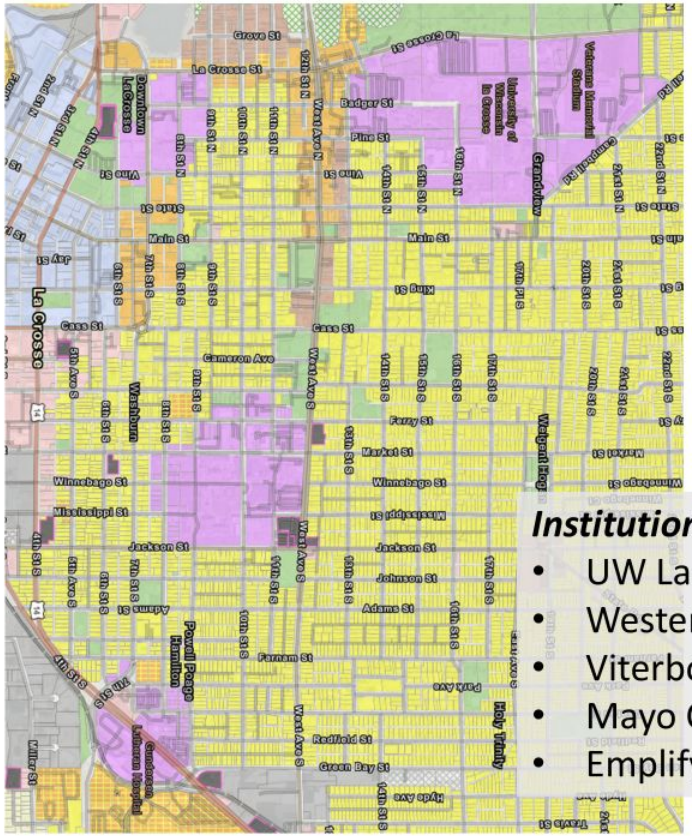
A. Large institutional users are advised to submit a campus/ facilities master plan every 3 years for city review and approval. The master plan should identify current operations/renovation/changes, short- and long-term future improvements, as well as on-site and offsite parking and circulation.

B. Institutional users shall submit an ownership boundary.

C. Institutional users will conduct an annual informational meeting with city representatives.

1.2 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Min.)	1 Ac
Lot Size (Max.)	N/A
Lot Width (Min.)	100 Ft

1.3 Building Types Allowed
Classroom
Office
Laboratory
Recreation / Sports
Performing Arts
Residential
Utility / Power Plant
Parking Structure
Medical
Storage / Supply
Hotel



Institutional Districts

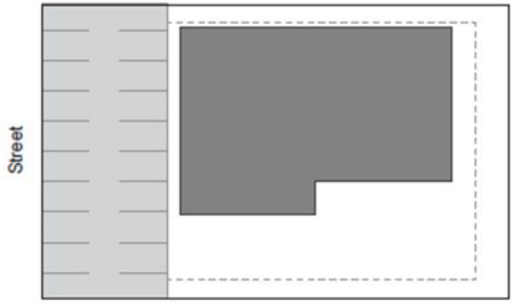
- UW La Crosse
- Western Tech
- Viterbo University
- Mayo Clinic
- Emplify (Gundersen)

FORWARD LA CROSSE ZONING CODE UPDATE

DEVELOPMENT FLEX DISTRICT

1.3 Area Standards	
Lot Size (Min.)	15,000 Sq Ft
Lot Size (Max.)	217,800 Sq Ft (5 Ac)
Lot Width (Min.)	50 Ft

1.4 Building Types Allowed
Multi-Family Residential
Manufacturing / Assembly
Storage
Office





Residential & non-industrial uses

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www.forwardlacrosse.org