Downtown revitalization and redevelopment plan for Durand

Urban and Regional Planning 912
Planning Workshop
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Executive Summary
About this Project

This report was created by a team of graduate students in the Urban and Regional Planning master’s degree program at University of Wisconsin–Madison on behalf of the City of Durand, Wisconsin. The project came to life through a partnership with the UniverCity Alliance program, where students, faculty, and professional staff in the University of Wisconsin system collaborated with local officials on various projects within Pepin County. The City of Durand requested a downtown revitalization plan that focused on enlivening the primary roadway through downtown, potential solutions for returning vacant buildings in the downtown area to active use, and an assessment of Durand’s current Tax Increment Financing District (referred to as both TID and TIF district). The team conducted its research and compiled this report within approximately six months, beginning in August 2019 and concluding in January 2020.

Study Area

The downtown Durand study area consists of 18 acres: Six blocks down Main Street, River Street, and Madison Street. The northwest side of the study area runs along the Chippewa River. The area also includes four empty lots and seven vacant buildings.

Flooding as Fact

The City of Durand has a long history with flooding. US Geological Survey monitoring indicates that in the last 90 years there have been over 100 days where the Chippewa River flooded at least some portion of downtown Durand. This flooding occurs because the Chippewa is undammed from Eau Claire to its confluence with the Mississippi River 60 miles away. Predictions from the Wisconsin Initiative for Climate Change Impacts indicate that Durand can expect an increase in flooding during the spring and winter months as the magnitude and frequency of rainfall events increases in these seasons. Flooding at Veterans Park and along River St is common; however, most of the entire downtown district is within the Chippewa River floodplain. All the following recommendations were formed based on the expected increase in flooding downtown Durand.

Revitalization Recommendations

Our redevelopment and revitalization efforts will focus on two distinct areas of downtown Durand. The first area includes lands adjacent to and connected with the Chippewa River and existing and future trail network. The second area includes areas along, and connected to, Main Street. Within the report, recommendations are divided into short term recommendations, which the City of Durand could implement within one to three years, and long-term recommendations, which could take greater than three years to implement.

River and Trail (RT)

- RT1: Design and Install Facade Murals on the river side of Main Street buildings
- RT2: Create designated Trailhead site at the north end of Lower Chippewa View Park
- RT3: Establish strong connection between Trailhead at Lower Chippewa View Park and Main Street
• RT4: Add seasonal infrastructure for boat, kayak, and canoe users to leave their vessel and visit downtown

Main Street (MS)

• MS1: Encourage local artists and agricultural vendors to locate in vacant properties and sell local goods such as wine, cheese, beer, produce and goods in a “pop-up” temporary market.
• MS2: Update Durand’s zoning code to promote contemporary services and industries in vacant buildings, such as telecommuting and co-working spaces for local entrepreneurs
• MS3: Provide tax incentives for owners of vacant buildings to be used as community gathering space, daycare, or youth programming
• MS4: Conduct ‘Tour of Empty Buildings’ in downtown Durand
• MS5: Perform downtown parking inventory and analysis to determine the amount of parking spaces and their occupancy rates
• MS6: Create and adopt form-based zoning for a designated Downtown District
• MS7: Incorporate design amenities such as planters, seating, trees, trash receptacles, bike racks and lighting into the Main Street streetscape between 1st Ave and 4th Ave W.
• MS8: Enlarge Main Street sidewalks between 1st and 4th Avenue W. to a width of 12’
• MS9: Create downtown civic square to activate programming in the park across from the intersection of 3rd Ave and Main Street
• MS10: Promote best design practices for flood resilience

Recommended Updates for City Ordinances

• Update Chapter 20 – Licenses, Permits, and Miscellaneous Business Regulations, Article II - Direct Sellers, Division 1. – Generally, Sec. 20-24(3) and Sec. 20-24(12) to allow the sale of locally produced goods in a temporary market
• Update Chapter 113- Zoning, Article III - Zoning Districts and Zoning District Regulations, Division 1. - Generally, Sec. 113-71(b)(5) to allow co-working spaces, shared office space, and community gathering spaces
• Reconfigure the current flat-rate vacancy building fee into a progressive vacancy building fee to entice property owners to rehabilitate, renovate, or sell their vacant building

Recommended Funding Options for Revitalization and Redevelopment (FO)

• FO1: TIF
  o Expand the TID #3 boundary due to TID #3 being only 2.02% on the 12% test
  o Make a minimum guaranteed value agreement with Kwik Trip
  o Begin planning now to use future TIF funds
  o Consider using the Affordable Housing Extension
• FO2: Consider creation of a BID in downtown Durand
• FO3: Begin an Upper Floor Renovation Loan program to activate upper floors of downtown buildings
• FO4: Make small but impactful changes to the Façade Grant program
• FO5: Utilize state grants and loans to fund revitalization recommendations

Community Engagement Recommendations (CE)

• CE1: Increase collaboration and improve the relationship between Durand government and community businesses so the number of opportunities for economic development increases throughout the City
• CE2: Conduct a website assessment and improve the City of Durand website so users can easily find relevant information
• CE3: Solicit public engagement to evaluate the recommendations in this report
• CE4: Include public engagement in the downtown revitalization decision making process
Acknowledgements
Thank you to those who assisted this project by providing data, resources, and perspectives.

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Chapter 1: Goals and Objectives

UniverCity Alliance and Course Goals

UniverCity Alliance connects education, service and research activities across UW–Madison with cities, furthering the practice of sustainability. UniverCity Year is a three-year partnership between UW–Madison and various Wisconsin communities. The community partner identifies projects that would benefit from UW–Madison expertise. Faculty from across the university incorporate these projects into their courses, and UniverCity Year staff provide administrative support to ensure a successful collaboration. Partners receive big ideas and feasible recommendations that spark momentum towards a more sustainable, livable, and resilient future.

Urban Planning 912: The class was designed to emphasize the interdisciplinary character of the planning practice and to provide an opportunity for students to apply socioeconomic analysis, physical planning, and implementation techniques in Pepin County.

Project Objectives

The City of Durand would like a Restoration and Revitalization Plan outlining a vision for redevelopment, revitalization of vacant buildings, and community design throughout downtown Durand (Figure 1). In collaboration with business owners, the City will advance investment and redevelopment of their downtown to:

- Grow the local economy and tax base
- Increase diversity of commercial services, retail activity, and restaurants which would eliminate vacancies
- Attract and retain visitors travelling on Highway 10 or Chippewa River Bike Trail
- Support small-scale commercial, retail, and light industrial uses
- Provide sensitive transitions to adjacent neighborhoods
- Create a sense of community and promote placemaking (see Placemaking Figure)
- Enhance the downtown visual character to serve community residents and engage visitors
- Mitigate the impacts of seasonal flooding
- Keep implementation and maintenance costs low

This Durand Downtown Revitalization Plan will help the City promote economic development, increase quality of life, improve streetscapes, and increase recreational opportunities in the City of Durand. It includes broad opportunities and detailed ideas to increase investment for redevelopment and revitalization in the downtown area.
Placemaking

“Placemaking” is a term used to describe the process of creating a strong sense of place in a given location within the community, most often public spaces, to make them vibrant and well-used. In addition to paying attention to designing the physical elements of a site – building materials, landscaping, site furniture, signage, and security – placemaking should also be a conscious effort by public and private management to organize, operate and sustain neighborhoods and commercial centers with activities that welcome and engage visitors and customers with both formal and casual events (concerts, street performers, sales, window displays) and with attention to recruiting and maintaining a variety of retail businesses, consumer services, and eating and drinking establishments.

Project Study Area
The downtown Durand study area consists of 18 acres: Six blocks down Main Street, River Street, and Madison Street. The northwest side of the study area runs along the Chippewa River. The area also includes four empty lots and seven vacant buildings (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Downtown Study Area](image-url)
Chapter 2: Introduction to Durand

Overview of Durand

The City of Durand is the county seat of Pepin County, which is located in Northwestern Wisconsin. The city is in the north central portion of the County and is situated on the banks of the Chippewa River (Figure 2). The City is noted for its small-town lifestyle and Driftless landscape of rolling hills and valleys. The City is the largest municipality in Pepin County with a population of 1,931 in 2010. The population is estimated at 1,820 in 2017, a decrease of 5.7 percent since 2010. The City is approximately 20 miles south of Menomonie, WI, 30 miles southwest of Eau Claire, WI, and 75 miles southeast of Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN.

Figure 2. Durand on the Banks of the Chippewa

The City of Durand has a rich cultural history and an abundance of natural features and amenities that contribute to a high quality of life. The Chippewa River, along with the rolling hills and deep valleys of the Driftless Area, provide recreational opportunities and enhance the City’s scenic beauty (Figure 3).
Over the last 40 years, the City’s population has been slowly decreasing. This is likely due to two factors. First, the increasing median age of the City, which was 46.8 in 2017, is significantly higher than the State’s median age of 39.2 and results in a smaller population of people of childbearing age which results in fewer children being born. Second, robust economic growth of nearby metropolitan areas, specifically Eau Claire and Minneapolis-St. Paul, have likely drawn residents, particularly younger residents and families, from the Durand area. However, the proximity of these two large metropolitan areas should be viewed as an asset to the Durand area, as families that desire small-town living with a great school district can live in Durand and easily commute to these neighboring metropolitan areas.

The City contains several businesses and employers, the largest of which is Bauer Built. Bauer Built has been a significant employer in the region since the mid-1940s when the company opened in Durand. As of 2019, Bauer Built has 36 locations spread across ten states. The company keeps its headquarters in downtown Durand and employs over 100 people locally. The School District of Durand and AdventHealth are two other large employers in the City.

Downtown Durand contains several retail, business, and eating establishments and acts as the core business area for the County. However, the downtown is troubled by vacant buildings, empty parcels, and lack of interest in investment or development (Figure 4; see also Figure 1). Additionally, the downtown is experiences frequent seasonal flooding of the Chippewa River, which has caused issues for businesses and residences along Main Street and River Street. Lastly, signage and streetscapes are lacking or absent throughout most of the downtown.
Strengths and Assets
Durand has much to offer its residents, and preliminary survey results tell us that residents love living in their community – an asset in itself! Durand is appreciated for being a great place to raise a family, for being a safe community, for its recreational opportunities, for its entertainment and music festivals, and for having affordable housing. Durand also has many strengths that position it for economic growth, such as having excellent broadband, for its designation as a Telecommuter Forward! Community, for its proximity to Minneapolis/St. Paul and Eau Claire metropolitan areas, and its proximity to UW–Stout, UW–Eau Claire, UW–River Falls, and Chippewa Valley Technical College.

Durand also has enormous assets that form the basis for its capacity to implement growth strategies, such as the Durand School District, its location on the Chippewa River and proximity to State trail networks, employers such as Bauer Built and AdventHealth Hospital, and being the County Seat of Pepin County.

This report and the recommendations herein reflect and build upon these strengths and assets.
Chapter 3: Flooding & Watershed Conditions

The Chippewa River is one of the largest rivers in Wisconsin and the City of Durand is the last community along the Chippewa River before it empties into the Mississippi River. The Lower Chippewa River Basin (measured from the Holcombe Dam south to its confluence with Mississippi River) drains an area of approximately 5,300 square miles within 15 Wisconsin counties. Almost all of Pepin County lies within this drainage basin and the City of Durand specifically lies entirely within the Bear Creek sub-watershed of the Lower Chippewa Basin which drains an area of 177 square miles (Figure 7).

Durand is in a unique position along the Chippewa as it is the only municipality in the approximately 60 mile stretch of the River below the Dells Dam in Eau Claire, which is the last dam on the river before it flows to the Mississippi. This portion of the Chippewa represents some of the last of the Upper Midwest’s large rivers that remain undammed for a significant distance. The fact that the Chippewa River remains undammed in Pepin County is, at the same time, an extreme asset and a liability for the City of Durand. This lower section of the Chippewa River is home to 70% of all the fish species found in Wisconsin and is one of the most diverse fisheries in the Upper Midwest region. There are clear recreational and economic benefits to having such a world-class fishery accessible directly from downtown Durand. However, with such a long stretch of undammed river comes potential complications.

Durand has a long history with the Chippewa River and it certainly has seen its fair share of flooding (Figures 5 and 6). The USGS has been monitoring the Chippewa River at Durand continuously since 1928 with the earliest recorded observation occurring in 1880. As a result of these continuous measurements researchers understand the relationship between the amount of discharge flowing past the USGS monitoring station and the corresponding height of the river; this relationship is called a stage-discharge or rating curve (See Appendix I). The rating curve that has been established for the Chippewa River at Durand informs regulators and decision-makers that at any flow rate above 40,890 cubic feet per second (CFS) downtown Durand begins to flood as this is correlated with a river stage height of 12.5 ft (Figures 8 and 9). With the information from the USGS monitoring station and the rating curve, it is possible to determine the historical frequency and magnitude of flooding within the downtown Durand area (Figure 10). Monitoring indicates that since 1928 there have been over 100 days where the Chippewa River has flooded at least some portion of downtown Durand (Figure 8). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped the areas of Durand that have a significant chance of experiencing flooding in their official floodplain maps.
Figure 5. Downtown Durand August 13, 2016. Photo Credit: (Myers, 2016)

Figure 6. Downtown Durand March 20, 2016. Photo Credit: (Walker, 2016)
Figure 7. Bear Creek Subwatershed
Examination of the FEMA floodplain map for Durand shows that most of the downtown area is within some portion of the established flood hazard areas (Figure 10). Approximately 13% (~2 acres) of the downtown area is within the regulatory floodway, which is the region of the floodplain where the active discharge of the base flood occurs (strong currents and accumulating debris). No development can occur in the regulatory floodway that will increase the height of the base flood for downstream areas. Beyond the regulatory floodway, approximately 40% (~7 acres) of the downtown Durand area has a 1% annual chance being inundated by floodwater; this area is also called the 100-year floodplain or the regional flood (base flood) floodplain. Similar to the regulatory floodway, the 100-year floodplain has limitations for development that are meant to reduce the risk of increasing the flood in downstream areas and reduce the risk for costly flood damage in Durand. Finally, approximately 17% (~3 acres) of the downtown area has a 0.2% annual chance of being inundated by flooding; this area is typically known as the 500-year floodplain. While the 500-year floodplain does not have regulatory development restrictions FEMA still maps these areas to give home and business owners information for making informed decisions about acquiring flood insurance to protect their investments. The established FEMA floodplain maps give communities like Durand good information for making decisions, however, climate change predictions indicate that there may be reasons for thinking about changes to these floodplain maps and associated expectations about flooding in the community.

The Wisconsin Initiative for Climate Change Impacts (WICCI), widely regarded as the scientific authority on climate change in Wisconsin, has used sophisticated climate modeling to make predictions about potential changes to Wisconsin’s climate and the resulting changes to flooding in the state. In general terms, the WICCI scientists are predicting the following: increases in the magnitude and frequency of large rainfall events, increases in total monthly rainfall in spring and fall, and increases in the amount of precipitation falling as rain instead of snow in winter and spring (Figure 11). Using these predicted changes in precipitation, the WICCI team interpreted the potential implications for flooding in the state. They predict that there will not be a major increase in urban stormwater flooding. However, the predicted increases in spring rainfall do indicate increases in flood risk for rivers and lakes depending on local soils, land use, and land management. Based on these changes it is likely that Durand will see an increase in flooding during the spring and winter months as the magnitude and frequency of rainfall events increase in these seasons. Essentially, this means that the established 100-year floodplain may end up being more akin to a 50-year or even a 10-year floodplain in the future. Thus, it may be in Durand’s best interest to be proactive and establish policy and regulation now to mitigate the impacts of impending precipitation changes and increasing flood risk. Specifically, Durand could enact policy to manage the 500-year floodplain the same as it currently manages the 100-year floodplain to mitigate the fact that FEMA did not account for climate change when it established these floodplain maps.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage Height (ft)</th>
<th>Estimated Discharge (cfs)</th>
<th>Number of Days at or above this stage (1929-2018)</th>
<th>Narrative Result</th>
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<td>12.5</td>
<td>40886.3</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>River St in downtown Durand begins to flood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>44035.32</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>The basement of businesses along the river begin to flood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>82960.69</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Highway 10 on the north approach to the bridge across the Chippewa River may flood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>99719.36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The southwest side of the city begins experiencing flooding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Figure 8. Relationship between Chippewa River discharge and the River’s stage height with resulting impacts to Durand (USGS, NWS 2019)*

![Graph showing discharge vs. stage height](image)

*Figure 9. Time series of mean daily discharge for the Chippewa River at Durand (USGS 2019).*
Figure 10. Floodplain Map with Zoning Districts and Vacant Buildings; City of Durand, WI
Flood Mitigation Efforts in the Midwest
While major flooding affects many communities in the Midwest, some cities in Wisconsin and Iowa took proactive steps to make their communities more resilient to flood events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reedsburg Flooding Event – Reedsburg, WI (population 9,487)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since its major flood in 2008, the city of Reedsburg has taken initiatives to better manage flood events in the community. The Baraboo River runs through the middle of downtown Reedsburg, so the city has installed automated river gauges to monitor the river more closely. Reedsburg has also implemented a new emergency management plan that provides more training to emergency staff. Additional storm and sanitary sewers have been installed. The city also hired a part-time city administrator that communicates with the public to notify them of an emergency situation such as a flood, using Facebook and Nixle, a notification service that residents in a community can sign up for to receive notifications from their local public safety departments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cedar Rapids Flooding Event – Cedar Rapids, IA (population 132,228)</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cedar Falls also had a major flooding event in 2008. About 25% of the city is within the 100 and 500-year floodplain, making up over 1,500 structures in the city. As a result of the impacts experienced in the 2008 flood, the city has implemented a variety of mitigation and recovery strategies to make the community and downtown core more resilient. These strategies include hazard mitigation plan updates, floodplain management, and improving the stormwater system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve the stormwater system, the city focused on natural stormwater drainage through expanding green infrastructure. Through a FEMA hazard mitigation buyout program, the city received grant funding to buy out and remove structures from the floodplain, designating the land left over as greenways in orders to make sure they remain undeveloped. The City also passed a revised floodplain ordinance that requires structures within the floodplain boundary to be elevated one foot above the 500-year flood elevation and prohibited the creation of new development lots within this boundary. The city’s hazard mitigation program was updated so that each hazard mitigation activity had an action step, analysis, timeline for completion, estimated cost, responsible party, and related goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4: Downtown Durand Revitalization and Redevelopment

Downtown Durand extends for six blocks down Main Street, River Street, and Madison Street along the banks of the Chippewa River. The downtown currently contains four empty lots, several of which are used as parking lots, and seven vacant buildings. See Figure 8 below.

Several vacant buildings and empty lots are located near the Chippewa River along River Street and West Main Street, which we’ve labeled Zone 1 in green, and several others are located along West Main Street and West Madison Street, which we’ve labeled Zone 2 in purple (Figure 12). These zones are important to distinguish as Zone 1 contains several development restrictions due to its floodplain location, whereas Zone 2 does not encounter these same restrictions as it exists outside of the floodplain.

![Downtown Durand Revitalization Zones and Vacant Buildings](image)
Redevelopment and revitalization efforts in downtown Durand will be constrained and limited due to the floodplain of the Chippewa River. As mentioned elsewhere in this Plan, buildings in downtown Durand, especially along River Road and West Main Street, frequently experience flooding year-round. In fact, 70 percent of downtown Durand is in the floodplain of the Chippewa River (Zone 1). This presents our redevelopment efforts with several local, State, and federal constraints in building, or renovating existing buildings, located in a floodplain. Please see Appendix I: Floodplain Districts which includes a table outlining permitted uses, limitations, prohibited uses, and requirements for development within each of these floodplain districts. Only 30 percent of downtown Durand exists outside of the floodplain where development limitations are fewer and less restrictive (Zone 2).

**Successful Small-Town Redevelopment and Revitalization Efforts**

There are examples across Wisconsin and the Midwest of small-town downtowns attracting businesses, increasing activity, and promoting their local economy and community. After analyzing several successful case studies of downtown revitalization efforts of similarly sized communities to Durand, several observations were noted:

- Most of the retail businesses do not compete directly with big-box chain stores.
- Several successful businesses combine various retail categories in one location.
- Niche stores and services serve a larger geographic market beyond the local trade area.
- A strong partnership and cooperation between retail stores and local farmers, artists, skilled workers, and producers.
- The property owners and operators typically have a strong connection with the community.
- The majority of funding was provided by owner’s investment, followed by initial loans and grants.
- In some cases, community financing or assistance made the project feasible.

**Revitalization Focus Areas**

Our redevelopment and revitalization efforts will focus on two distinct areas of downtown Durand. The first area focuses on lands adjacent to and connected with the Chippewa River and existing and future trail network. These recommendations are labeled in a **blue** color throughout this Plan. The second area focuses on areas along and connected to Main Street. These recommendations are labeled in a **green** color throughout this Plan.

**River & Trail**

The City of Durand is fortunate to have a variety of high-quality natural resources within and adjacent to its borders. The most significant resource, in terms of size and quality, includes the Chippewa River on the western border. Boaters can access Durand from the Lower Chippewa View Park and can visit the City as the travel along the river. Additionally, Durand is the trailhead for the Chippewa River State Trail, a 30-mile trail that extends from downtown Eau Claire and travels south along the Chippewa River through a wide variety of habitat including...
These resources present challenges for management, protection and development, and are also a great way to attract new people to visit the downtown area of Durand. Durand could better integrate these resources to the downtown area to encourage economic activity. Environmental features can be used as a means of promoting sustainable urban development, revitalization and increase quality of life for both residents and visitors by providing enhanced recreational opportunities and preserving the natural beauty of the area.

**Main Street**

Downtown Durand owns picturesque views of the Chippewa River and affords wide opportunities for riverside dining, recreation and accessory commerce. Downtown Durand encompasses 18 acres, extending for six blocks down Main Street, River Street, and Madison Street along the banks of the Chippewa River (*Figure 12; see also Figure 1*). The downtown is currently occupied by several restaurants and bars, wellness services, residential units, as well as Durand City Hall.

The re-routing of Highway 10 to the north of Durand reduced the traffic count travelling directly through Main Street but rather than being a corridor where drivers move quickly through on their way to another destination, missing the vibrant attractions and services that Durand could offer, Main Street can now be a destination in and of itself.

A strategically planned “Main Street” district attracts and retains visitors, capturing their economic value, while simultaneously serving the needs of community residents. Studies have shown that well-designed streetscapes encourage people to inhabit the space, increasing foot traffic for local businesses, and creating more opportunities for the social interactions that build community capital and spark creativity. From a retail perspective, visitors in a walkable, people-oriented downtown with engaging event programming are more likely to spend time and money at local businesses and increase the number of venues they visit. An integrated approach from an array of community stakeholders to programming these spaces maximizes the effectiveness of urban design principles.
Revitalization Recommendations

Recommendations are divided into short term recommendations, which the City of Durand could implement within one to three years, and long-term recommendations, which could take greater than three years to implement. The color code associated with each recommendation matches the identified focus areas of Main Street (green) and River & Trails (blue).

River & Trail Recommendations

RT1: Design and Install Facade Murals on river side of Main Street buildings

Existing Condition:

The riverside businesses of Main Street are on full display for Highway 10 bridge traffic. The façades are in various states of repair and business signage is limited. This area houses refuse containers and is less aesthetically inviting than the customer-facing side. Lower Chippewa View Park and the Chippewa River Trail run along the river near these businesses and travelers have a close-up view.

Figure 13. Riverside view of Durand
**Recommended Approach:**

The City of Durand should engage with riverside businesses to communicate the benefits of having upgraded riverfront facades and to determine which businesses are supportive of a mural. Large-scale murals would be designed specifically for visibility from highway traffic, but smaller-scale business signage should also be installed to capture the attention of visitors walking past along the river. Directly painting the business signage onto the building façade would exempt businesses from the City of Durand sign ordinances. Any projecting signs installed onto the façade or otherwise require permitting and should comply with city ordinances.

After determining which businesses would be willing to host murals, the City should connect with community groups and/or the Durand public school system to see what art groups might be willing to participate. School art classes and local art groups are an excellent connection to make for such an undertaking. With local youth involved, this generates community-wide interest in the downtown area and can serve as a meaningful educational experience for the students in learning the role that art can play in the public sphere.

To further reduce startup costs to the city, and to engage more community members in supporting the downtown revitalization efforts, local hardware or paint supply stores could be solicited as sponsors for materials (paint, scaffolding, brushes, rollers).

Hosting a design competition can get community residents, groups and schools interested and engaged in the downtown revitalization process. Design guidelines for the murals should be determined in conjunction with the UniverCity branding project currently being undertaken with the City of Durand. The city may want to consider incorporating outdoor rec/biking themes in the mural project to reinforce the city’s standing as trailhead for the Chippewa River Trail and the city’s connection to the Chippewa River.

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**Why Murals?**

Eastbound traffic crossing the Chippewa River on Highway 10 are afforded a panoramic view of the riverside of downtown Durand. Lower Chippewa View Park is a scenic waterfront, but the adjacent buildings display their less aesthetically pleasing “service-sides”. Embarking on a mural program for the riverside of Main Street establishments can serve to build the identity and branding of the community and can be a key means of attracting visitors to make the trip downtown.

In addition, this could present an excellent opportunity to engage local artists, community groups, or school arts departments in downtown revitalization efforts. Creating partnerships of this kind between the city and the community can strengthen community bonds, instill pride and emotional investment in the downtown area, and be a doorway to further, community-based initiatives.

Murals can be quick and inexpensive improvements relative to other forms of development. Maintenance is generally low and they can be fairly long-lived. With proper surface preparation and materials, they can remain in good condition for as long as 25 years.
RT2: Create designated Trailhead site at north end of Lower Chippewa View Park.

Existing Condition:

Beautifully designed Lower Chippewa View Park has parking for boat loading and unloading. There is a bike path that is in excellent shape. Its aesthetics and location at the end of the Chippewa River State Trail position it as a potential trailhead site.
Why a Trail Head?

Durand is uniquely positioned as a Trail Head for the Chippewa River State Trail which runs 30 miles from Durand to downtown Eau Claire. Embracing the City’s role as a start and end point for the trail through branding, marketing and spatial design has the potential to facilitate job growth in the form of trail construction and maintenance as well as through economic opportunities for the community from visitors. Additionally, an increase in trail-related traffic may act as a catalyst for outdoor and recreational businesses to locate in Durand, potentially reducing or eliminating downtown building vacancies.

Short-Term Approach:

A short-term strategy for establishing Lower Chippewa View Park, and downtown Durand, as a trailhead point of attraction entails coordination with other trail cities. The City of Eau Claire’s website promoting tourism in the region already has a “day trip” webpage highlighting places of interest for people wishing to make a day trip to Durand. By collaborating with Eau Claire’s tourism board and trail groups like Friends of the Chippewa River State Trail to sponsor events and trail programming, Durand can increase its stature as a trailhead and begin to garner further traffic from trail visitors.

Additionally, Durand could implement temporary pop-up facilities in Lower Chippewa View Park in conjunction with trail events until demand is sufficient for further permanent facilities. Examples of this include (in the case of a bicycling event) bike repair stations and bike racks.

Long-Term Approach: A long-term approach would build upon the connections and programming established by the short-term strategies and develop consistent, annual events with marketing and outreach budgets. Depending on market evaluation of pop-up shops and event-specific services in the short term, permanent businesses in the recreation industry may be sought to fill downtown commercial real estate space (See “Connection” recommendation below).

Additionally, permanent bike racks strategically located at the trailhead and off River Street near the civic square should be installed. The City should also construct a permanent informational kiosk with trail information and city maps showing attractions and services.
**RT3: Establish strong connection between Trailhead at Lower Chippewa View Park and Main Street.**

**Existing Condition:**

There is only a small sign on Main Street across from the 2nd Avenue intersection visible to southbound traffic to downtown indicating that the bike lane on the road transitions to the bike path to Lower Chippewa River Park (Figure 16). Other than that, signage is limited or non-existent.

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*Figure 10.*

*Figure 16. Existing Wayfinding Signage*
Short-Term Approach:
To facilitate wayfinding, the City of Durand could initially install temporary signage, in conjunction with trail events, indicating locations of key downtown establishments, available restrooms, and featured attractions. An important location for this kind of signage is at the intersection of River Street and 1st Ave, directing foot traffic from the trailhead to downtown establishments. Additionally, a larger directional sign facing southbound, bike lane traffic on Main Street north of City Hall should be installed indicating the location of the bike path and trailhead for bike lane users coming down Main Street.

To further capitalize on the connection between Durand and its position as a trailhead, if vacant buildings exist in the downtown area during an event, coordination with property owners could lead to making use of that space as a temporary event-related shop. This serves the dual-purpose of reducing the negative appearance of an empty storefront downtown and acts as a beta-test for the viability of a potential recreation-oriented business.

Long-Term Approach:
Permanent signage and wayfinding should correspond with the City of Durand’s branding project. The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) has put together the Trail Wayfinding Guidebook as a resource for municipalities in its jurisdiction to consult when planning to install trail-specific wayfinding and informational signage. Suggestions and guidelines in their informational document are consistent with those outlined in the Wisconsin Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (WMUTCD) and would be an excellent resource for officials from Durand to examine.

RT4: Add seasonal infrastructure for boat, kayak, and canoe users to leave their vessel and visit downtown.

Existing Conditions:
Currently there is a boat launch on River St between 1st and 2nd Ave. There are a couple locations along River St where kayakers or canoers could tie their boats. However, there are no structures for boaters to tie their boat and visit downtown Durand.
**Approach:**

A seasonal dock could be installed near the boat launch for visitors to tie up their boat while they have lunch or enjoy a cup of coffee. Depending on the size of the dock this could be implemented within the next 1-3 years. The dock could be installed after the seasonal flooding and removed once the summer has ended and demand decreases. Depending on how popular the dock is, additional space could be added in subsequent years depending on usage. Conditional use permits for the seasonal dock must be obtained, installation should ensure that the dock does not disturb shoreland or wetlands, and should follow Wisconsin Statute Chapter 30.
Main Street Recommendations

Streetscapes / City Design
A strategically planned and designed Main Street in Durand can fill a role as both a public gathering place where community pride is expressed, and connections are made and as space to attract and retain visitors and their economic value. The following section recommends short- and long-term actions the City can take to reinforce a vibrant downtown.

Managing Costs
The past few decades have seen a reduction in federal funding for municipalities. This, combined with increasing global economic pressures, has caused financial strain for small town America. Assuming the same is true in Durand, focusing development efforts on the downtown core could reduce costly infrastructure investments in other parts of the city. The recommendations in this section of the report attempt to account for and reduce implementation and maintenance costs to the City of Durand by examining the potential for public-private partnerships, temporary development strategies, and community engagement opportunities.

Temporary Interventions: Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper
One way that municipalities of all sizes can act without implementing costly infrastructure development projects is through community-driven, temporary interventions. The greatest asset a city has is its people; when citizens are invested in their community, the city truly comes to life. Partnerships with private enterprises or the general public minimize costs for smaller municipalities. Short-term recommendations throughout this section of the report emphasize these partnerships in order to take immediate, inexpensive action as “quick-win” test cases for further development. In this way, tangible results are produced and can be evaluated without costly investments.

MS1: Encourage local artists and agricultural vendors to locate in vacant properties and sell local goods such as wine, cheese, beer, produce and goods in a “pop-up” temporary market.

Existing Conditions:

Durand, Pepin County, and neighboring counties contain several wineries, breweries, cheesemakers, farmers and artists looking to sell their products locally. The City of Durand currently has several vacant properties on Main Street and further in our report we recommend a system of progressively increasing fines to incentivize property owners to put them to use. A dedicated space in downtown Durand would provide them with a location to sell their fare daily, instead of seasonally at farmer’s markets. A temporary, indoor market showcasing local vendors currently does not exist in Durand but has been listed as a desirable business by locals and visitors alike. This type of space would boost the local economy by providing space for vendors to sell their products, bring people downtown, and further create a sense of community by “buying local”. Locating this type of store in a vacant property would bring life and vitality to unused space.
Short-Term Approach:

Create a request for proposal (RFP) for a third-party administer to manage a pop-up store program. Examples of third-party administrators could be local churches, food pantries, or businesses. Concurrently, the City of Durand can implement a progressive fine on vacant buildings as recommended in the “Durand Code of Ordinance Updates” section of this report and offer fine waivers or reductions to incentivize participation in the pop-up store program. The City should have written agreements with the property owners of vacant buildings downtown indicating owner interest in implementing a “pop-up” local food store on their property.

Through the contract established by the RFP, the third-party administrator would contact local farmers, arts and craft producers, wineries, breweries, beekeepers, and cheesemakers on selling their fare in the store. It can be up to the property owner on if these vendors will be charged a small fee or if vendors can sell their fare in the store without charge. Vendors of any alcoholic beverages will need a Retail Class A liquor license.

Long-Term Approach:

Consider working with interested property owners on turning this local goods store into a permanent, year-round indoor market. During the winter, agricultural products and goods such as arts, crafts, honey, jams, flowers, cheese, wine, beer, and desserts could be sold. Continue to promote, support, and assist any artist space and artist galleries in the City, either through volunteers and/or possible financial assistance in the form of tax incentives or aids.

Ripon College Project Space – Ripon, WI (population 7,733)

Ripon College Project Space is a multi-use community venue for art exhibits, concerts, poetry readings, lectures, performances, speakers, classes, community events, and more.

Zach Messitte, the president of Ripon College, conceived of this space as a way for the college to develop a greater presence in downtown Ripon and with the community. He reached out to the three faculty advisors, who found the space, contacted student leadership, and oversaw the space’s opening.

College and community members alike are invited to submit their ideas for using this dynamic new space. Upon approval, use of the space is completely free.

MS2: Update Durand’s zoning code to promote contemporary services and industries in vacant buildings, such as telecommuting and co-working spaces for local entrepreneurs.

Existing Conditions:

According to Global Workplace Analytics, working from home for non-self-employed people has grown by 140% since 2005. Additionally, approximately 20 to 25 percent of the workforce
telecommutes at least part of the time. Of workers who do not telecommute, 80 to 90 percent would like to. This desire means companies are changing their workplace culture, how their teams are managed, and their technology capabilities in order to offer more work from home opportunities.

Given Durand’s high-quality internet service, a local shared co-working space would be useful for those that often work from home, or work in nearby cities like Menominee, Eau Claire, or Minneapolis, but do not need to go to the office every day. This type of space would also bring people downtown to eat and shop during the lunch hour and after work. Currently, the zoning code is out-of-date and does not include verbiage concerning recent trends in employment such as telecommuting, co-working, shared office space uses, and incubators.

The City of Durand was recently designated a Telecommuter Forward! Community, illustrating recent efforts made by the City to have quick and efficient broadband access. Durand can use this designation to promote itself as a telecommuter-welcome and telecommuter friendly city.

**Short-Term Approach:**

Update Durand’s zoning code to include co-working spaces, incubators, and shared office space uses. See the “Relevant Updates to Zoning and Ordinances” section. Contact owners of vacant properties to gauge interest in implementing a shared co-working space.

**Long-Term Approach:**

Continue to update the zoning code to reflect updates in new technologies related to employment and co-working. Given a higher cost-of-living in Minneapolis/St. Paul and Eau Claire, Durand may become an attractive destination for telecommuters and workers needing a designated co-working space.

**MS3:** Provide tax incentives for owners of vacant buildings to be used as community gatherings, daycare, or youth programming.

**Existing Conditions:**

Indoor community gathering spaces do not exist in Durand outside of school functions or school buildings. Using a vacant space for these types of uses, even temporarily, brings people downtown and provides a sense of community to residents. The space can accommodate local meetings, events, and individual uses.

Additionally, Durand lacks a daycare or any type of youth center outside of school buildings. There is a high level of demand for this type of service in Durand. Currently, the closest daycare is 3 miles away between Arkansaw and Durand. A local daycare downtown would provide families a nearby option for their children. Additionally, students and youth, particularly teenagers, do not have a space of their own. A youth center would provide a great and safe space for youth to play games, study together, network, and socialize.
Located in a former bank building with striking windows, the Third Place serves as a community gathering space. The owners of the building created this public space to benefit the community.

The owners of Third Place purchased a landmark building downtown for use as a community gathering space that accommodates local meetings, events, and individual users. The unattended facility serves community groups and individual users much like a public library. The space can be reserved for school groups, card groups, showers, class reunions, and other organizations.

**Short-Term Approach:**

Discuss this option with property owners of vacant buildings and ensure any vacant building that is selected meets Americans with Disabilities Act and other code or use requirements. Minimizing the cost of renovations would be important and could also be a community-oriented effort. A vacant building that will be used as a daycare or youth center will likely need to be renovated, safe for children, and entirely ready for use.

**Long-Term Approach:**

Continue to promote, support, and assist any community centers, daycares, or youth centers in the City, either through volunteers and/or possible financial assistance in the form of tax incentives or aids.
**MS4: Conduct ‘Tour of Empty Buildings’ in Downtown Durand.**

*Existing Conditions:*

There are several vacant buildings in downtown Durand and interested parties often do not know what they look like inside, the assets each building has, or the conditions of each building. This provides people that are curious about specific buildings or storefronts the ability to see inside the building and understand current conditions and opportunities for investment and rehabilitation. By promoting the available buildings, a community can show a welcome sign to entrepreneurs and businesses.

Additionally, given Durand’s proximity to UW–Stout, UW–Eau Claire, and UW–River Falls, Durand is very close to hundreds of students that graduate each year with degrees in Business and Entrepreneurship. The City should specifically target the Tour to students at these universities lets them know they have a place in Durand to start their business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Tour of Empty Buildings - Webster City, IA (population 7,723)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Webster City, Iowa implemented a ‘Tour of Empty Buildings’ through the downtown in 2013. This tour resulted in the sale of one building and a young attorney, who worked out of town, brought her practice back home and rented one of the vacant buildings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Short-Term Approach:*

Create a committee to oversee the ‘Tour of Empty Buildings’ and schedule a date, preferably when the weather is warmer and when other events are happening around town. Ensure community members, stakeholders, and businesses know about the event. Extend an invite to the Business and Entrepreneurship programs at UW–River Falls, UW–Stout, and UW–Eau Claire.

*Long-Term Approach:*

Continue the event on an annual or bi-annual basis and expand the tour to include other parcels and properties throughout the City of Durand. If the Tour is a success, extending the invitation to the Business and Entrepreneurship programs at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities may also bring in further investment.

**MS5: Perform downtown parking inventory and analysis to determine the amount of parking spaces and their occupancy rates.**

*Existing Conditions:*

Downtown Durand contains a significant amount of parking, but it is not known if this amount of parking is too much, adequate, or too little. A downtown parking analysis and inventory will determine the number of public parking spaces downtown and occupancy of those spaces to calculate space utilization rates during weekday business hours, weekday evening hours, and
weekend hours. These types of studies are used to identify the adequacy of parking based on location and type of parking. This study will let Durand officials and business owners know if there is too much parking, and what can be done with the excess, or if there is too little parking, and what can be done to improve the situation.

**Short-Term Approach:**

The first step in performing a downtown parking inventory and analysis is determining if this analysis will be done by city officials or done by a third-party consultant, such as UniverCity or another consulting agency. Depending on the bandwidth of city officials, the study could be done in-house, but several consulting firms across the State specialize in parking studies and can provide a detailed, professional study.

**Long-Term Approach:**

After the downtown parking inventory and analysis is performed, review the study and determine if parking spaces need to be added or removed throughout the downtown area or in specific sections of downtown. If parking spaces can be removed along specific streets, these spaces could be turned into a bike lane, additional greenspace, or contain planters. Additionally, if a large excess of parking exists across the entire downtown, the entire street network can be reconfigured to include expanded sidewalks, dedicated bike lanes, room for outdoor tables and seating for local eateries, and expanded greenspace.

**MS6: Create and adopt form-based zoning for a designated Downtown District**

**Existing Condition:**

The downtown area examined in this report is zoned as B-1: Central Business District with permitted, prohibited, and conditional uses outlined in the City of Durand Code of Ordinances. Additionally, 13% of Durand’s downtown lies in the Floodway District with an additional 40% in the Flood Fringe District. These districts encounter additional restrictions related to permitted and prohibited uses and contain different requirements for redevelopment. (See Figures 10 and 12 in the Redevelopment and Revitalization section for further information.) Only 47% of Durand’s downtown lies outside of the Floodway and Flood Fringe districts, and therefore contain parcels for which redevelopment and revitalization will be easier.
Durand’s Main Street currently has a variety of building types. Key municipal offices are housed in a non-descript building with limited signage. Commercial storefronts lack a cohesive design framework or style.
Short-Term Approach:
Consult with UniverCity Alliance branding group to further develop the visioning process for the City of Durand. Identify “quick wins” in facade improvement, such as pressure washing and repainting deteriorating exteriors or repairing broken awnings and fixtures, and reach out to local community groups or school classrooms to solicit assistance through community partnerships.

Long-Term Approach:
Building upon the community branding endeavor, codify the vision of the character of Downtown Durand through a form-based overhaul of the zoning code. One additional area to focus on is the buildings housing municipal offices. These should be distinctive in some way to

Why Form-Based Codes?
Conventional zoning focuses on what is and is not acceptable use, or activity, for a defined area. Form based zoning, as its name suggests, focuses on the form of a building or buildings for a defined area. Form based zoning codes are particularly effective for cities looking to build on a community vision and create a distinctive character. The City of Durand, in working on a branding project through UniverCity Alliance, is well positioned to begin considering the aesthetic tone it wants to set for its downtown core.

High quality, predictable design is an attractive feature for prospective retail businesses looking to locate downtown. Studies have demonstrated how a strategically designed built environment can promote retail activity. Customer-oriented storefronts have been shown to be most successful when they consist of 60% glass; such buildings address the 8 second rule: a storeowner typically only has 8 seconds to interest the passerby enough to walk in. Mixed-use buildings, similar to those found on sections of Main Street in Durand, should have a ground floor that is distinct from the rest of the building facade. These are but two examples of the various design strategies that can be found in planning resources, particularly Robert Gibb’s work *Principles of Urban Retail Planning and Development.*

Adopting a form-based zoning code will ensure that future development and remodeling is done in a way that maintains community character and attracts and retains businesses downtown.

Figure 20. Image from forbes.com; City of Breckenridge, Colorado USA

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*Long-Term Approach:*
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coincide with civic branding. This may entail further consultant work and could result in the creation of a new “Main Street” district.

**MS7**: Incorporate design amenities such as planters, seating, trees, trash receptacles, bike racks and lighting into the Main Street streetscape between 1st Ave and 4th Ave W.

*Existing Condition:*

Amenities on Main Street, when they exist, are provided by individual establishments. There is some bench seating located in front of several buildings, but design, placement and integration are left uncoordinated. There is limited planting and almost no trees. Any lighting that exists is not at the “pedestrian level” except for flood lights and store lights.

*Figure 21. Main Street Durand Existing Design Conditions*
Why Design Streetscapes?

Well-designed streetscapes encourage people to inhabit the space, increasing foot traffic for local businesses and creating more opportunities for the social interactions that build community capital and spark creativity. From a retail perspective, visitors in a walkable, people-oriented downtown are more likely to spend time and money at local businesses and increase the number of venues they visit. The concept of a “sticky street” was introduced to give a visceral description of what excellent public space feels like: a street is thought of as “sticky” if people are constantly invited to slow down, linger and enjoy the activity happening in the surrounding environment. Activating the downtown streetscape with amenities signals to both community residents and incoming visitors that this is a welcoming place to stay for a while.

A Special Note on Trees: Trees influence climate, energy use, and air quality by providing shade, transpiring moisture, and reducing wind speeds. Trees and soils improve water quality and reduce the need for costly storm water treatment, by intercepting and retaining or slowing the flow of precipitation reaching the ground. Landscaping with trees—in yards, parks and greenways, along streets, and in shopping centers—can increase property values and commercial benefits including increased prices in areas landscaped with trees. Potential shoppers claim they are willing to travel more often, for more time, and over a greater distance, and once arriving will spend more time in a retail district having trees and planters. The presence of urban trees and forests can make the urban environment a more aesthetic, pleasant, and emotionally satisfying place in which to live, work, and spend leisure time.

Short-Term Approach:

Streetscape Amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trash Receptacles</th>
<th>To further foster downtown community engagement, coordinate with local programs and/or school groups to design and paint trash receptacles, perhaps coordinating with Mural Painting initiative (see below recommendation).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>May be planted in existing greenspace, but with an eye toward matching the streetscape design visualized in the model in this section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planters</td>
<td>Reach out to local gardener’s groups, nurseries, or landscaping companies for materials sponsorship and maintenance in exchange for recognition. Ideal design would match the streetscape model and could feature native plants or succulents. Perfect use as a parking lane buffer to add visual interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches/Seating</td>
<td>May be temporarily sourced from community sponsors and installed with plaques or other forms of recognition. Locations should approximate the streetscape model, may be in proximity to other amenities (trees and lighting) and should not impede pedestrian access or ADA compliance zones. Ideally, sustainable and durable materials should be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lighting</strong></td>
<td>Temporary, pedestrian-scaled lighting could be installed in the form of small, white “bee” lights strung along storefronts or awnings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bike Racks</strong></td>
<td>Freestanding, commercial bike racks can be sourced “second-hand” via online retailers. Locations should ensure a clear surrounding walkway to be ADA compliant and be near public destinations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Long-Term Approach:**

The City should consider designating a Main Street district and creating and adopting a master plan for streetscape design and amenities. Design should attempt to coordinate with the character of the Main Street design principles outlined in either the form-based code or the branding project.

**Additional Considerations:**

The City of Durand maintains a Flood Fringe District in its zoning ordinances with specific development restrictions for property within its boundaries. This district cuts through Main Street in a Northwest to Southwest direction halfway between 3rd Ave W and 4th Ave W. In both the short- and long-term implementation strategies, the City should ensure that any development in that area does not transgress Flood Fringe ordinances. Alternatively, the City could choose to implement both short- and long-term strategies from the boundary of the Flood Fringe District to 1st Ave with an aesthetic transition at that boundary location.

**A Special Note on Trees:**

To create a complete urban canopy, some sidewalk or parking spaces should be converted to planting areas. As with any large-scale improvement, a comprehensive plan will guide a tree and landscape project to successful completion. A comprehensive plan also helps garner support from community members, helps support project fund-raising, and ensures that details of the project are thought through and resolved in the best way. Following planning and planting, ongoing maintenance is needed to assure maximum benefit, and to control costs. Careful planning and maintenance of trees can prevent nuisances—such as reduced sign visibility, debris, and sidewalk damage. Trees and other plants planted in downtown Durand should be native to the region and hardy enough to survive harsh weather events. Bioretention rain gardens could also be considered to reduce stormwater runoff and increase permeable surfaces in downtown Durand. Trees and plants must also not obstruct traffic signs or views at an intersection, as per Durand code.
**MS8: Enlarge Main Street sidewalks between 1st and 4th Avenue W. to a width of 12’**

*Existing Condition:*

Sidewalks along the entirety of Main Street (from 2nd Ave E through 5th Ave W) are currently 10’ wide. A cross-section of the street, seen in the diagram below, shows 10-foot sidewalks on both sides, 15 foot street space for angled parking on both sides, and two driving lanes each 15 feet wide (Figure 22).

![Figure 22. Sidewalk cross-section](image)

**Why larger sidewalks?**

For a city this size, and under normal, non-event conditions, 10 foot wide sidewalks are perfectly acceptable. However, in an effort to maximize downtown space activation and strategically orient the main retail corridor to attract and retain pedestrian visitors, widening to 12 feet is a preferred approach.

In this way, the path for pedestrian shoppers is structured to accommodate three distinct “zones”:

- 2 - 3’ of viewing space next to storefronts,
- 8’ of walking lane,
- and 1 ½ - 2’ of street buffer.

The additional street buffer also lends itself as a potential space for planters and bike racks, while the greater overall width allows for comfortable seating implementation near store entryways. Wider sidewalks lessen the impression of the space as a corridor and enhance its “stickiness”, encouraging people to linger and observe. By focusing this intervention on the section between 1st and 4th, it creates a distinct variation in an otherwise homogeneous stretch of road.
**Short-Term Approach:**

Rather than immediately embark on expensive reconstruction projects, the City could test this intervention by “stealing” 2 feet of space from angled parking on either side of the street. This space would need to be repurposed and newly demarcated to indicate to people parking that these can no longer pull all the way up to the curb. There are numerous ways to accomplish such an adjustment: installing planters in this street space, forming temporary barriers, repainting the pavement - the options are only limited by one’s creativity!

Repurposing the 2 feet of road space as an additional sidewalk buffer would leave the requisite 15 feet for angled parking but would narrow the driving lanes to 13 feet wide each. This still exceeds the Wisconsin Department of Transportation roadway design criteria requiring 10-12-foot wide lanes for design class “1b” and is serviceable for larger delivery vehicles accessing local businesses and the grocery store.

**Long-Term Approach:**

*Figure 23. New sidewalks cross-section*

Long-term strategies would depend upon evaluating the short-term, “pop-up” approach for its efficacy. This evaluation would likely be based upon feedback solicited from community members and business owners in affected areas. If the intervention was well received, the City could decide to initiate a more substantial infrastructure project by investing in sidewalk reconstruction to permanently add the additional width (Figure 23). An undertaking of this kind would require careful planning and cost evaluation to ensure efficiency. For example, construction to widen the sidewalk could be coordinated with the permanent installation of bike racks embedded in the concrete or the installation of pedestrian level lighting solutions.
Additionally, creative use of diverse construction materials or design patterns in such an endeavor could enhance the aesthetic appeal and could be coordinated with the form-based code and community branding requirements.

**MS9:** Create downtown civic square to activate the park across from the intersection of 3rd Ave and Main Street for programming.

**Existing Condition:**

Currently, events and programming in the City of Durand are hosted at disparate venues. The park at the intersection of 3rd Ave and Main St provides a scenic overlook of the Chippewa River and is centrally located in the downtown stretch (Figure 24). The intersection of 3rd Ave and Main St is the joining of the two widest streets in downtown Durand (60’ wide each) and, when used in conjunction with the park, could be closed off as a central gathering point during programming for the community and event-goers.
The area also resides predominantly outside both the Floodway and Flood Fringe Districts, with just a small section of the northwest corner of the park in Flood Fringe. Aesthetically, the buildings adjacent to the park on the north and south sides have plain, windowless facades. The building on the south side is separated from the park by a stairway to River Street, a small paved area with a dumpster, and a fence at the boundary of the park.

**Why a Civic Square?**

Retail oriented, downtown squares help Main Street businesses with additional foot traffic and can feature the community in front of a larger audience. Local vendors having outdoor retail space in the square at events opens up businesses to incoming visitors and builds the profile and reputation of the community. A beautiful, central gathering location could also serve as an anchor and unifying place for the community to share public space together near an increasingly vibrant downtown. An engaging, lively downtown requires the presence of people using it; a central, civic square can facilitate that process.

*Short-Term Approach:*

To increase foot traffic along Main Street, the City could begin fostering community engagement with the square by first opening discussion with adjacent property owners and businesses along Main Street and communicating the intention to activate the space through additional programming. It may be desirable to explore local restaurants, cafes or other businesses having pop-up booths during existing downtown events.

*Additional “Quick-Wins”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Murals</th>
<th>Coordinating with adjacent property owners to participate in mural installation would reduce the “boxed-in” feel of the square.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantings</td>
<td>Small flowering trees like redbuds or dogwoods adds interest and is low maintenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Seating</td>
<td>Lightweight seating in locations around the edges builds on Prospect-Refuge Theory: well-designed spaces provide let people observe a space without themselves being an object of observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Seating</td>
<td>Relocating the two benches from the center of the square to less centralized locations reduces the feeling that users are “on display” and opens that space up to other use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Long-Term Approach:

Figure 25. Civic park - before

Figure 26. Civic park - after

Long-term development would include eliminating a portion of the southern fence and opening the paved area there up for programming, including outdoor dining. The City should explore implementing overlay zoning specific to a geographical area around the square to specify future acceptable use in the adjacent buildings, address refuse locations, and put forth maintenance and aesthetics requirements. Some recommendations for further space activation include restricting building tenants to restaurants or cafes and requiring either windows or entrances on the side of the building facing the square.

Additional Considerations:

Care should be exercised so that the overlay zoning does not create a regulatory “takings” issue. While a more proscriptive zoning code for this area may seem restrictive to the adjacent property owners at the moment, successful implementation of the code and activation of the public space could stand to be a great economic benefit to those property owners in the future from both a property value and retail visitor standpoint.
MS10: Promote best design practices for flood resilience.

**Existing Condition:** Some buildings and roads in downtown Durand, especially along River Road and West Main Street, frequently experience flooding as a result of weather events or seasonal changes.

**Short-Term Approach:** Green stormwater infrastructure techniques such as planting additional street trees, rain gardens, or permeable pavement should be considered, as this will mitigate flooding and stormwater impacts and reduce impervious surface area. An inventory of vulnerable people, buildings, and facilities within the flood zone should be taken to reduce future flooding risk. The lowest floor of any structure within a community’s special flood hazard area zoning should be raised at least 1-2 feet above the base flood elevation. (Base flood elevation is the elevation to which flood water is expected to rise during a 100-year flood) According to city ordinance, the fill should not be less than 1 foot below the area’s flood protection elevation and extend 15 feet beyond the limits of the structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why Green Infrastructure?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Installing green infrastructure can help efficiently manage stormwater by reducing and treating stormwater at its source. These practices can also enhance water and air quality. Through these cost-effective techniques, municipalities can become more resilient to the results of a changing climate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Long-Term Approach:** Updates to the Long-Term Comprehensive Plan for the city of Durand, when made, must include a flood planning section with hazard mitigation strategies. Within financial reason, existing structures should be retrofitted to raise the lowest floors on fill or above the base flood protection elevation. According to city ordinance, the fill should not be less than 1 foot below the area’s flood protection elevation and extend 15 feet beyond the limits of the structure. The amount of impervious surfaces in Durand should be reduced, rainwater could be reused for landscaping, gardening or irrigation, and constructing green roofs for absorbing or storing rainwater. Consideration should also be taken to proper stormwater management practices that will prevent stormwater runoff; encouraging the use of pervious material in new driveways and parking lots, roadside swales, and upgrading infrastructure (culverts) that can handle a higher volume of stormwater.
Chapter 5: Durand Code of Ordinance Updates

This Plan contains several recommendations for redevelopment and revitalization of downtown Durand. Most of these recommendations can be performed as is and do not conflict with any language in the Code of Ordinances. However, some recommendations do conflict with language in the Code of Ordinances or require the Code to be updated to better support the recommendation. These updates are shown below. The recommendation is explicitly listed, with all appropriate and relevant code. The language that will need to be changed to support our recommendations is listed in blue and underlined.

Main Street Recommendations

**MS1**: Encourage agricultural vendors to locate in vacant properties and sell local goods such as wine, cheese, beer, produce and local goods in a “pop-up” temporary market.

Chapter 20 – Licenses, Permits, and Miscellaneous Business Regulations, Article II - Direct Sellers, Division 1. – Generally, Sec. 20-24(3) and Sec. 20-24(12):

The following shall be exempt from all provisions of this article:

1. Any person delivering newspapers, fuel, dairy products or bakery goods to regular customers on established routes
2. Any person selling goods at wholesale to dealers in such goods;
3. Any person selling agricultural products which such person has grown or produced;
4. Any person selling locally produced goods such as wine, cheese, beer, produce, and other goods as part of a “pop-up”, or temporary, agricultural or farmers’ market.

**MS2**: Update Durand’s zoning code to promote contemporary services and industries in vacant buildings, such as telecommuting and co-working spaces for local entrepreneurs.

Chapter 113- Zoning, Article III - Zoning Districts and Zoning District Regulations, Division 1. - Generally, Sec. 113-71(b)(5):

- B-21. Antiques store, appliance store, bar or cocktail lounge, bakery, barbershop, beauty shop, book and stationery store, car showroom or rental establishment, cigar store, club or lodge, co-working space, department store, drug store, dry goods and variety store, eating and drinking place, financial institution, florist, food store, furniture store, gift shop, hardware store, hobby shop, hotel or motel, indoor amusement such as theater, bowling alley, pool hall, laundry or dry cleaning reception and delivery depot, library, locksmith, museum, music store, newspaper office and press room, newsstand, night club, office, business, professional, government, utility, travel agent, office equipment store, package liquor store, paint and wallpaper store, pawn shop, photographic equipment and supply store, professional, business or technical school, and school or studio for art, music, dancing or photography, radio or television repair shop, radio or television studio, shared office space, shoe repair shop, shoe sales, soda fountain,
specialty shop, sporting or athletic goods, tailor and dressmaker, taxi stand, wearing apparel store.

**MS3:** Provide tax incentives or aids, for owners of vacant buildings that open their buildings to be used as a community gathering space, daycare, or youth center.

Chapter 113- Zoning, Article III - Zoning Districts and Zoning District Regulations, Division 1. - Generally, Sec. 113-71(b)(5):

1. **B-21.** Antiques store, appliance store, bar or cocktail lounge, bakery, barbershop, beauty shop, book and stationery store, car showroom or rental establishment, cigar store, club or lodge, community gathering space, department store, drug store, dry goods and variety store, eating and drinking place, financial institution, florist, food store, furniture store, gift shop, hardware store, hobby shop, hotel or motel, indoor amusement such as theater, bowling alley, pool hall, laundry or dry cleaning reception and delivery depot, library, locksmith, museum, music store, newspaper office and press room, newsstand, night club, office, business, professional, government, utility, travel agent, office equipment store, package liquor store, paint and wallpaper store, pawn shop, photographic equipment and supply store, professional, business or technical school, and school or studio for art, music, dancing or photography, radio or television repair shop, radio or television studio, shoe repair shop, shoe sales, soda fountain, specialty shop, sporting or athletic goods, tailor and dressmaker, taxi stand, wearing apparel store.

**MS6:** Create and adopt form-based zoning for designated Downtown District.

Bellevue, Kentucky (population 5,955) implemented a form-based code to shape public space and preserve Bellevue’s historic downtown character. An example of form-based zoning in a Code of Ordinances can be seen in Bellevue, Kentucky’s Code of Ordinances online.

More information can be found in the References section under ‘City of Bellevue, Kentucky Form Based Zoning Map’ and ‘Form Based Codes’.

**Vacancy Fee Recommendation**

**Reconfigure the current flat-rate vacancy building fee into a progressive vacancy building fee to entice property owners to rehabilitate, renovate, or sell their vacant building.**

**Existing Conditions:**

In September 2015, the City of Durand implemented Ordinance #522 which imposed a flat fee on property owners of $1,000 on any vacant building in the City. This was created to ensure that vacant property remains secure and properly maintained while also penalizing owners for keeping their buildings vacant. The ordinance additionally helps recapture some of the City’s costs related to properties that are vacant and may not be properly maintained.

**Short-Term Approach:**
Update the Code of Ordinances to progressively increase the vacancy fee every year, two years, or every five years as determined by the City. One example Durand could follow is the progressive vacancy fee implemented by Wilmington, Delaware. The vacancy fee increases from $500 the first year a building is vacant to over $5,000 if the building remains vacant after 10 years. If Durand feels, however, that these amounts would be either too harsh or not harsh enough, it would have the flexibility to determine its own fine amounts and progression structure. For more information, see the Wilmington, Delaware ‘Vacant Property Registration Fee Program’ link in the References section.

Long-Term Approach:

Make any desired changes to the progressive vacancy fee after the fee has been implemented for several years. Furthermore, return a proportion of the fee to property owners that begin to rehabilitate or renovate their vacant properties after they’ve already paid their vacancy fee. For example, if a property owner pays their vacancy fee in September, but begins to rehabilitate their vacant property six months later in March, return half of the vacancy fee to the property owners once rehabilitation or renovation of the building or property is complete.

See Appendix IV for examples of progressive vacancy fee rates and ordinances.
Chapter 6: Funding Options for Revitalization and Redevelopment

Several funding options are available to help Wisconsin communities reinvigorate their Main Streets and downtown spaces, and Durand is in a good position to take advantage of funding sources. Residents would like to see improvement to the Downtown streetscape and façades, greater access to recreational amenities, and reduction in the vacancy rate in downtown Durand. There is available funding to address many of these problems, and there are many appealing solutions that are modest and cost-effective and will go a long way in improving the local economy relative to their cost. Following are some potential funding sources available to assist municipal governments improve their downtowns.

Tax Increment Financing in Durand
Durand currently has one TIF District (TID), TID #3 (Figure 27). The TID encompasses most of downtown Durand and stretches to the northeast to also encompass Countryside Cooperative, what is currently the Pepin County Highway Department, and three of the four quadrants created by the intersection of US 10 and STH 85/STH 25/Prospect Street. It was created in 2007 with a blight designation, has a maximum life of 27 years, which creates a 2034 termination date, and an expenditure period that ends in 2029. It has a base value of $10,391,700 and had an increment of $1,755,100 in tax year 2018. Other than debt repayment costs, there were no apparent pre-committed costs.

Figure 27. TID #3 Existing Boundary
Financial Status

12% Test
Durand currently has about 2.02% of its total equalized value in its singular TIF district, which is well below the state-imposed 12% limit. This is also abnormally low compared to other cities of this size. For example, nearly one-third of Wisconsin municipalities with populations between 1,000 and 5,000 exceeded the 12% limit in 2018, meaning that they cannot create any new TIDs; Mondovi, a peer city to Durand, is among these at 13.98%. The average percent-of-value for these cities is nearly 10%. Because of this, we recommend that Durand consider expanding the TID boundaries, which will be discussed further below.

Kwik Trip
Kwik Trip has finalized negotiations with Pepin County, so our assumptions throughout this project have been that Kwik Trip will be building in Durand and will be doing so in TID #3. Kwik Trip has estimated that, once the everything is completely built, the property will be worth between $2.5 million and $3 million. After cross-checking against Kwik Trip property values in peer cities (specifically, those located on the confluence of two major transportation routes), we believe that this is a reasonable expectation. It is important to note that, since the value of the site is currently $0 for tax and TIF purposes, the full $2.5-$3 million will form the increment that will be added to the TID.

The city is planning to do some infrastructure work in preparation for Kwik Trip that will cost at least $200,000. If the City does not receive utility easements from Kwik Trip, their work estimates are closer to $465,000. If the City’s work total is closer to the lower end estimate, the TID should finish with an end balance of approximately $570,000 after accounting for $200,000 in City expenditures. If the City spends closer to $465,000, the TID’s end balance will be closer to $300,000, which would still be helpful in completing some projects.
FO1: TIF Recommendations

Expand TID #3 Boundary
Since TID #3 currently is about 2.02% of the allowable 12%, the City of Durand has considerable “wiggle room” to expand its boundary. Though the base value of the addition will be added to the existing base value of the TID, any increases in value will be considered increment and will, therefore, contribute funds that may be used for economic development efforts within the TID. For this reason, if the City expands the TID boundary (Figure 28), it should purposefully include the higher value parcels that are adjacent to the TID, such as those demarcated in red in the proposed boundary addition map, which will likely grow the most.

Figure 28. TID #3 Potential Boundary

Make a Minimum Guaranteed Value Agreement with Kwik Trip
Minimum guaranteed value agreements can ensure that, no matter the assessed value of a property, it is taxed as if it is worth a pre-determined amount. This is a relatively new and innovative TIF safeguard for cities and villages. Durand currently has minimum guaranteed value agreements with four high-value properties located within TID #3. They include:

- Acker, aka the Durand Travel Stop
Currently, all these agreements are in effect; that is, none of these four properties are currently assessed at or above the agreed-upon values. They are, however, making up for this shortfall and providing revenue to the TID, showing the importance of the agreements.

**Begin Planning to Use TIF Funds**

Though the increment from Kwik Trip, and the increment from a boundary expansion if the City so chooses, will not materialize for several years, the City should begin planning on what to do with the funds sooner rather than later, especially since no new expenditures may be planned or promised after 2029. Candidates for investment include the Main Street and river/trail recommendations included in this report. The City should endeavor to solicit public opinion to determine the most desirable approach.

**Consider using the Affordable Housing Extension**

The “Affordable Housing Extension” (AHE) is a TIF extension designed to help municipalities improve the housing stock and benefit affordable housing. The AHE allows municipalities to extend the life of a TID for one additional year, and the TID then receives one additional year of final increment. The TID can also incur new project costs, provided the expenditures benefit affordable housing.

The AHE is available to TIDs created under Wisconsin Statute § 66.1105 in 2009, provided the TID has retired its debt and paid for all its project costs. To obtain the extension, a municipality must first (a) adopt a resolution extending the life of the TID for a specified number of months (up to one year) and specifying how it intends to improve its housing stock; and (b) forward a copy of the resolution to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR), notifying the DOR that it must continue to authorize the allocation of tax increments to the district.

The municipality must spend the final increment to improve the housing stock or benefit affordable housing. State law requires that at least 75% of the final increment must benefit affordable housing in the municipality and that the remaining portion must be used to improve housing in the municipality. Additionally, the municipality must pass a resolution specifying how it will improve its housing stock.

Though the AHE is still somewhat underused, many municipalities have taken advantage of it and have displayed varied, and often creative, applications of the final increment. For example:

- The City of Appleton extended one TID since 2015, using the AHE funds towards street repairs in a low-income neighborhood
- The City of La Crosse extended one of their TIDs since 2015 and combined the final increments funds with grants to build five energy-efficient single-family homes for the sale to low- and moderate-income families.
• The City of Plymouth recently extended one TID, intending to use the funds to establish a $2.2 million housing revolving loan fund program when the final increment begins in 2026.
• The City of Monona extended one TID since 2015, funding their “Renew Monona” loan program initiative, which offers 0% loans for home improvements that increase energy efficiency and modernize homes.
• The City of Madison has extended more than five TIDs since 2015, using the final increment to fund their Affordable Housing Initiative Fund, which incentivizes developers to obtain Section 42 tax credits to build affordable housing developments. The Affordable Housing Initiative Fund has funded over 486 affordable housing units since 2015.
• The City of Milwaukee has extended more than seven TIDs since 2015, generating more than $2 million in final increment funds, which were put towards programs for their Strong Neighborhoods plan.
• The Cities of Fitchburg, Green Bay, and Stoughton have also or are also planning to spend several million dollars, combined, on affordable housing initiatives and improving the affordable housing stock.

Other Funding Options
FO2: Business Improvement District
Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are organizations formed by private property owners and businesses within a legally constituted city district. Members pay a special assessment to cover the expense of providing their BID with services beyond what the local government offers in their area. Examples of services funded via BIDs include increased funding for building and street landscaping, signage, and marketing and promotion funds. Many BIDs also support a full-time Director/Manager or at least a part-time manager. BID administration is handled by a Board of Directors. Businesses along Main Street could develop their own BID plan according to their priorities independent of Durand’s staff. Black River Falls, which has a comparable population to Durand at about 3,500, would be a good model for a BID.

FO3: Upper Floor Renovation Loans
Funding options are also available for renovating the deteriorating interiors of the upper floors in a building for new and higher economic development uses, oftentimes apartments or office space. This type of funding option can both enhance downtown rehabilitation, encourage economic development, and provide a greater variety of residential properties. These loans fund interior rehabilitation such as installing elevators, walls, and floors, or repairing utilities.

For example, La Crosse, Wisconsin has an Upper Floor Renovation Loan Program which assists property owners to renovate upper floors of buildings in downtown La Crosse. The program, via a resolution approved by the City of La Crosse Common Council, authorizes the city to use State
of Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands Funding for activities that renovate upper floors of buildings in downtown La Crosse.

**FO4: Façade Grants**

Façade Grants are another way a municipality can encourage downtown rehabilitation, and which are already in use in Durand. The City of Durand currently reimburses half of the costs of improving facades, with a ceiling $5,000. Other municipalities have gone further. For example, Neenah, Wisconsin currently matches funds dollar for dollar, up to $10,000 and for each street facing façade. Matching funds for each street facing façade is an option downtown Durand could benefit from given the configuration of Durand’s downtown blocks. This report also recommends that the City of Durand places information about their façade grant program on the City of Durand website.

Additionally, Durand could consider funding increases to the façade grant program with funds gained from the progressive vacancy building fee if the City decides to adopt that recommendation.

**FO5: Recreation Based Grants – State Administered**

The State of Wisconsin provides many grants which are administered by State Agencies, including recreation grants that appeal to any community with as many recreational assets as Durand. Listed below are a sample of State grants that are of interest to Durand:

**Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF) - DNR**

The federally funded LAWCON program provides up to 50 percent matching grants for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

**Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP) - DNR**

ADLP provides up to 50 percent matching grants to acquire or develop public outdoor recreation areas.

**Urban Green Space Program (UGS) - DNR**

UGS provides up to 50 percent matching grants to provide natural space within or near urban areas, protect scenic or ecological features, and, in some specialized cases, to provide for noncommercial gardening.

**Urban Rivers Grant Program (URGP) - DNR**

This program provides up to 50 percent matching grants to acquire lands, or rights to lands, adjacent to urban rivers, for the purpose of preserving or restoring them for economic revitalization or outdoor recreation activities.

**Recreation Boating Facilities Program (RBFP) - DNR**

The RBFP provides funds for developing boat launch ramps, transient service piers or “courtesy docks”, breakwaters, dredging, parking lots, sanitary facilities, and other structures that directly support recreational boating activities.
Urban Forestry Grant - DNR

Urban Forestry Grant makes grants for 50% of the cost to communities to perform tree inventories, prepare urban forestry planting plans, tree disease and insect control plans, and public education efforts.

Sport Fishing Restoration (SFR) - DNR

The program provides local communities with funding for public fishing access land acquisition and facilities such as launch ramps and fishing piers.

Local Transportation Enhancements Program (TE) - DOT

The program provides 80 percent federal funding for activities related to transportation, all of which have direct outdoor recreation relevance (walkways, trails, rest areas, scenic easements, etc.).
Chapter 7: Community Engagement in Downtown Revitalization

Community Coordination Strategies

The goal of most public economic development initiatives is to encourage business investment and improve business productivity, with a desired cumulative effect of increased employment and personal incomes. Engaged communities investing in their downtowns with coordinated programming bring vibrant energy to economic revitalization efforts and the impacts reverberate city-wide.

Why is it important for a municipality to support businesses?

Some benefits of strengthening connections between government and promoting community business partnerships include:

- A displayed commitment to being involved with the community
- Increased economic benefits for the entire community
  - Durand could play a proactive and interested role in improving the economic prosperity of a community. Durand could become more attractive to businesses wanting to establish themselves there
- Increased social benefits for the community
  - Durand could use partnerships to help strengthen the community and an improving or better community is beneficial to all
  - Empowering and assisting the community will look more attractive locally and derive more benefits locally
- Empowered local businesses and community groups
  - As businesses and community groups work with Durand officials, they can become more self-sufficient and self-reliant
- Encourages local business to seek out further partnerships if they know the local government is supportive and understands the needs of businesses

The tighter and more clearly defined partnership between the public and private sectors, the greater the chances for a stronger and healthier downtown.

CE1: Increase collaboration and improve the relationship between Durand government and community businesses so the number of opportunities for economic development increases throughout the City.

Existing Conditions:

Durand currently does not have a Chamber of Commerce. Presently, the Durand Improvement Group (DIG) is comprised of Durand business owners, and members partake on a voluntary basis. There is no formal relationship with DIG and the City government, and there is a lack of formal coordination among the members. DIG leadership is also informal, which works efficiently at the present, as the current leaders have taken ownership for the group’s success.
Concern for the lack of DIG leadership among the next generation has been expressed by members of DIG and residents of Durand.

In the past, Durand had a Commerce Club which had some formal roles and responsibilities.

**Short Term Implementation Strategy:**

Initiate the process of having facilitated, regular meetings with downtown businesses since businesses will be the base of economic growth in the upcoming years. In addition to strengthening relationships with existing businesses, Durand could better target people who could start a business, people who could fill unmet demands for workers, and community development organizations. Although helping existing businesses is a significant part of economic development efforts, increasing the supply of entrepreneurs who start new businesses is important for economic growth. Entrepreneurship education focuses on financial institutions, government agencies and community resources that can support a start-up business. It can also involve training on basic business functions such as budgeting, management and marketing. These trainings could be provided at the high school or a nearby college for interested residents. Durand could facilitate the organization of community members to create a non-profit focused on economic development in the City.

**Long Term Implementation Strategy:**

Strengthen relationships with members of DIG and foster the creation of a Downtown Association or Chamber of Commerce. These organizations actively encourage the maintenance and development of elements which enhance the economic and social strength of the downtown area. Additionally, they provide networking opportunities, credibility, increased marketing potential and exposure, and a stronger voice in local decision making for business owners. Once these voluntary groups have been created and as support grows for organizing business owners, a Business Improvement District could be created in downtown Durand. Additional information about BIDs, including a case study, can be found in the funding section.

**CE2:** Conduct a website assessment and improve the City of Durand website so users can easily find relevant information.

**Existing Conditions:** Durand’s website has important information about the City but features and documents could be added to improve functionality.

**Implementation:** An assessment of Durand’s website would examine the website design and development including navigation efficiency, simplicity, usability, and color schemes. Usability and navigation should be the highest priorities. Quick ways to improve usability include using concise language, bulleted lists, and images. Additionally, a specific page for new/current business owners outlining different grant opportunities could be a valuable resource for attracting new businesses. Sound website design has been identified as a key driver of public engagement.
Community Feedback Strategies

An effective public engagement process

The following steps outline the recommended process for a successful public participation plan.

1. Define Project Scope
2. Gather Data
3. Define Decision Criteria
4. Develop Alternatives
5. Evaluate Alternatives
6. Make the Decision

At the time of this report, we are at Step 4: Develop Alternatives; however, little is known regarding the City of Durand’s efforts in Steps 1-3. The following parts in this section will provide the City strategies to engage the community through the remainder of the public engagement process.

Identifying appropriate levels of public engagement

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) identifies a spectrum where certain levels of public engagement are beneficial depending on the type of project.

### IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORM</th>
<th>CONSULT</th>
<th>INVOLVE</th>
<th>COLLABORATE</th>
<th>EMPOWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL</strong></td>
<td>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</td>
<td>To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</td>
<td>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</td>
<td>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC</strong></td>
<td>We will keep you informed.</td>
<td>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 29. Spectrum of Public Participation*
Since this report necessitated providing recommendations without having first performed public engagement with the community, the City of Durand is placing its citizens and stakeholders in the “consult” category. Given the technical complexity of floodplain management and the general investment locals of rural community typically show for their town, the City of Durand may receive better citizen and stakeholder support for these alternatives by shifting to the “involve” category. By involving the community in the decision making process, citizens and business owners are more likely to feel understood and be supportive of the changes that will occur in their downtown. Similarly, the city government will likely gain more credibility and support when it actively shows that it values its citizens perspectives, values, and goals.

CE3: Solicit public engagement to evaluate the recommendations in this report

Newspaper Inserts

Informational inserts share the alternatives to the public and may be used to raise awareness for specific alternatives. This method is a passive way of engaging the community but may be useful in disseminating information to a large group of people. While the method is passive, a strategic use of newspaper inserts would provide the opportunity to showcase specific alternatives that the City would like to highlight.

Open Houses with Public Meetings to follow

Having these two approaches combined may be more effective than hosting each option separately. First, the open house component informs attendees of the proposed alternatives and provides them an opportunity to provide feedback if they cannot attend the public meeting. Second, the public meeting component allows Durand to address their intent and intended actions for downtown and allows the community to voice their concerns directly to the City. Comment cards should be available for attendees to provide feedback and ask questions.

Briefings with community groups

Conduct private meetings with specific community stakeholders and local community groups to explain the alternatives and to solicit feedback. Use comment cards for these stakeholders to provide feedback and ask questions. This approach is more targeted than an open house or public meeting because the briefing is intentional on who attends the briefing and what information will be shared by the City.

Guided Tour of Downtown

Visit places in the downtown area where alternatives may take place. Have signs at these locations showcasing the alternatives or the tour guide provide information at these locations. Tours could be guided by a city official or could be self-guided if the signage works as an information kiosk about the alternative taking place at that location.
CE4: Include public engagement in the downtown revitalization decision-making process

Referendums

Depending on how Durand plans to fund any of the alternatives in this report, the City may need to pass a referendum. Adding the approval of an alternative to a ballot puts citizens in control of decision making. If using this approach, the City should try to inform the community why the alternative is important and also be prepared for other alternatives should the referendum fail to pass.

Fishbowl Meetings

A fishbowl meeting is a traditional working meeting that is open to the public for attendees to witness the process but not necessarily contribute.
Limitations

These recommendations were performed without community engagement and data about the community was limited. Further data should be collected through site assessment, surveys, and studies. Public engagement should be conducted prior to implementing the recommendations in this report. Additionally, most group members only visited Durand once in September or October. Most of the recommendations were made based from observations made during these visits. The group does not understand the dynamics of the City as well as residents and staff. Their involvement and perspective should be valued in the redevelopment process.

These recommendations and analyses are based on the best data available during the study period. Challenges in obtaining high resolution data required the project team to use publicly available data with a lower resolution than desired for the scope of our downtown Durand study area. Future analyses could address this limitation.

Conclusion

Durand has many strengths and assets including excellent fishing and hunting, superior internet, a highly regarded school system, and proximity to several urban centers. Regular flooding in the downtown area will worsen over time; thus, the fact of flooding guided the recommendations in this report. These recommendations are intended to increase downtown visibility and accessibility to both residents and visitors. Funding options exist in the form of TID restructuring and grant opportunities to facilitate the downtown redevelopment and revitalization. Community engagement is recommended to vet the recommendations provided in this report and to generate business and public support for these redevelopment and revitalization efforts.
Appendix

Appendix I: Provisional Stage Discharge Curve for the Chippewa River at Durand
### Appendix II: Floodplain Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Permitted Uses and Activities</th>
<th>Limitations and Prohibited Uses</th>
<th>Requirements for Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Floodway**      | Floodway district: includes mapped floodway areas on the official floodplain zoning map showing the regional flood limits which are based on flood hazard boundary maps or flood insurance study maps prepared by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. | - Agricultural  
- Nonstructural, industrial, commercial such parking areas and loading areas  
- Recreational uses such as golf courses, tennis courts, driving ranges, picnic grounds, parks, hunting and fishing areas  
- Marinas, docks, piers  
- Railroads, bridges, streets  
- Structures accessory to the uses above, provided they are:  
  o Not designed for habitation  
  o Have low flood damage potential  
  o Offer minimum obstruction to the flow of floodwaters  
  o Firmly anchored  
  o Have service facilities at or above the flood protection elevation                                                                                            | - No new onsite sewage disposal system, or additions to existing onsite sewage disposal systems  
- No new well used to obtain water for ultimate human consumption, or modifications to an existing well  
- No developments which, acting alone or in combination with existing or future similar uses, cause an increase equal to or greater than 0.1 foot in height of the regional flood for any main stem, tributaries to the main stem of any stream, drainage ditches, or any other drainage facilities | - Land use permit  
- Any modifications or additions to a structure will not increase the amount of obstruction to flood flows in sec. 105-4(h)(1)  
- Any addition to a structure shall be floodproofed according to sec. 105-5(e) by means other than the use of fill, to the flood protection elevation  
- If any nonconforming structure is destroyed or is so badly damaged that it cannot be practically restored, it cannot be replaced, reconstructed or rebuilt unless permanently changed to a permitted use |
| **Flood Fringe**  | Flood Fringe district: consists of that portion of the floodplain between the regional flood limits and the floodway area. | - Any structures, land use, or development may be permitted to the extent that they are not prohibited by this or any other ordinance or any other federal, state or local regulations and provided that a land use permit has been issued by the zoning administrator  
- Modifications/additions to structures which are protected to elevations lower than flood protection elevation may be permitted if:  
  o Human lives are not endangered  
  o Public facilities, such as water or sewer, are not to be installed  
  o Flood depths will not exceed 4 ft  
  o Flood velocities will not exceed 2 ft per second  
  o The structure will not be used for storage of materials described in sec. 105-9(3)e | - No developments shall materially affect the storage capacity of floodplains, based upon an equal degree of hydrologic encroachment (volume of the storage area which is lost)  
- No such area in general use by the public shall be inundated to a depth greater than two feet or subjected to flood velocities greater than four feet per second upon the occurrence of the regional flood  
- All solid waste disposal sites, whether public or private, are prohibited in flood fringe areas | - Land use permit  
- Any modifications or additions to any nonconforming structure, which do not exceed 50% of its present equalized assessed value, shall be protected by floodproofing measures in sec. 105-5(e)  
- Any new addition to, replacement, repair or maintenance of an on-site sewage disposal system in a flood fringe area shall meet the applicable provisions of all ordinances and Wis. Admin. Code H 62.20  
- Any new, addition to, replacement, repair, or maintenance of a well in a flood fringe area shall meet the applicable provisions of this chapter and Wis. Admin. Code chs. NR 111 and NR 112 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Shoreland / Wetland Zoning District</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shorelands</strong>: lands within the following distances from the ordinary high-water mark of navigable waters; 1,000 feet from a lake, pond or flowage; and 300 feet from a river or stream or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever distance is greater.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wetlands</strong>: those areas where water is at, near or above the land surface long enough to support aquatic vegetation and which have soils indicative of wet conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoreland/wetland zoning district</strong>: includes all wetlands in which are 5 acres or more and are shown on the final wetland inventory map that has been adopted and made a part of this article and which are listed in the shoreland and wetland definitions above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provided that no wetland alteration occurs, the following uses are permitted:
- Recreational activities, such as hiking, fishing, trapping, swimming, hunting, and boating
- Agricultural cultivation
- Wild crop harvesting
- Silviculture
- Livestock pasturing

Uses allowed upon the issuance of a conditional use permit:
- Construction and maintenance of roads necessary for continuity of the system
- Construction and maintenance of nonresidential buildings if the building:
  - Is used with a use permitted in the district
  - Cannot be located outside the wetland
  - Does not exceed 500 sq. ft
  - Requires limited filling and excavating
- Public and private parks and recreation areas
- Electric lines, telephone transmission lines, water and gas distribution lines, sewage collection lines, railroad lines, and related facilities that cannot be located outside the wetland and require limited filling and excavation

Any use not listed in sec. 109-60 is prohibited, unless the wetland or a portion of the wetland has been rezoned by amendment of this article in accordance with sec. 109-47.

The use of a boathouse for human habitation and the construction or placement of a boathouse or fixed boathouse below the ordinary high-water mark of any navigable waters are prohibited.

- Zoning permit
- Any use listed as a conditional use in this article shall be permitted only after an application has been submitted to the zoning administrator and a conditional use permit has been granted by the board of appeals.
## Appendix III: Zoning Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Permitted Uses and Activities</th>
<th>Conditional Uses requiring a Conditional Use Permit</th>
<th>Limitations and Prohibited Uses</th>
<th>Requirements for Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-1 – Residential 1 and 2 family</td>
<td>Single-family residences Two-family residences</td>
<td>Library, museum, nursery, day care center, adolescent day care center, adult day care center, elementary and secondary schools, park or playground, photographic studio, real estate brokers Public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104 and residential uses specified in Sec. 113-105</td>
<td>No more than one principal dwelling and two accessory structures, including a private garage, on each lot in any R-zone</td>
<td>Must have sanitary sewer access Parking: 2 stalls for each single-family dwelling unit; 1.5 stalls for each multi-family dwelling unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2 – Residential multiple family (excl. condos)</td>
<td>Single-family residences Two-family residences Multi-family residences (3 or more families)</td>
<td>Boardinghouse, day care center, adolescent day care center, adult day care center Public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104 and residential uses specified in Sec. 113-105</td>
<td>No more than one principal dwelling and two accessory structures, including a private garage, on each lot in any R-zone</td>
<td>Must have sanitary sewer access Parking: two stalls for each single-family dwelling unit; 1.5 stalls for each multi-family dwelling unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3 – Residential 1 and 2 family rural</td>
<td>Single-family residences Two-family residences</td>
<td>Mobile Home Park if in compliance with Sec. 113-109 and public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104</td>
<td>No more than one principal dwelling and two accessory structures, including a private garage, on each lot in any R-zone No public sewer One acre lots or greater</td>
<td>Parking: two stalls for each single-family dwelling unit; 1.5 stalls for each multi-family dwelling unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-4 – condominiums</td>
<td>Residential condominiums</td>
<td>Public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104</td>
<td>No more than 1 principal dwelling and 2 accessory structures, including a garage, on each lot in any R-zone Condominium structures may not exceed 4 single-family units per structure and 3 structures per lot</td>
<td>Must have sanitary sewer access Parking: two stalls for each single-family dwelling unit; 1.5 stalls for each multi-family dwelling unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-1 – Business, central (Downtown Durand)</td>
<td>Commercial uses oriented toward the central business district List of uses in Sec. 113-71(b)(5)</td>
<td>Automobile sales and service, boat sales, car wash, caterer, day care, adolescent day care, adult day care, family day care home, dry-cleaning plant, electric supply store, laundry, lumber yard, newspaper office, public garage, railroad terminal, steam bath house, veterinary offices, warehouse, wholesale establishment. Manufacturing and processing in enclosed buildings of dental products, dress and garments, Commercial activities only Accessory use: dwellings over permitted uses, essential services, parking garage, parking area Maximum building height: 45 feet where adjacent to an R-zone, otherwise 60 feet</td>
<td>No minimum yard dimensions No accessory building yard dimensions No parking minimums and standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Zoning Category</td>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>Commercial Activities</td>
<td>Industrial Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-2</td>
<td>Business, general</td>
<td>Commercial uses oriented towards highway users or intended to service vehicles</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>List of uses in Sec. 113-71(b)(6)</td>
<td>Commercial activities</td>
<td>Commercial activities</td>
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<td>Jewelry, monuments, musical instruments, office products, photographic printing, ruling and binding, toys and novelties. Places of worship Public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104 and Planned Developments specified in Sec. 113-108</td>
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<tr>
<td>I-1</td>
<td>Industrial, enclosed storage</td>
<td>Manufacturing, processing, repairing, or warehouse use, wholesale establishment, assembly of prepared material</td>
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<td>Animal hospital and kennel, commercial boat dock, hotel or motel, office, restaurant Public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104 Mineral extraction specified in Sec. 113-106 Planned Developments specified in Sec. 113-108</td>
<td>Industrial development only</td>
<td>Closed storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-2</td>
<td>Industrial, open storage</td>
<td>Manufacturing, processing, repairing, or warehouse use, wholesale establishment, assembly of prepared material</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Dump, junk yard Public and semi-public uses specified in Sec. 113-104 Mineral extraction specified in Sec. 113-106 Planned Developments specified in Sec. 113-108</td>
<td>Industrial development only</td>
<td>Open storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Dairying, agriculture, forestry, general farming, greenhouse, hatcheries, horticulture, livestock raising, poultry raising, paddocks Single-family residence Public and semi-public uses</td>
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<td>Animal hospital if 100 feet or more from any residential district, archery range, driving range, golf course Drainage, water measurement and water control facilities, park buildings, utilities, and wild crop harvesting</td>
<td>5 acre lots or greater</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Conservancy</td>
<td>Fishing, preservation of scenic, historic, and scientific areas, soil and water conservation, streambank and land and shore protection, water retention, wildlife preserve, public parks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No other uses than those specified as permitted uses</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix IV: Examples of Progressive Vacancy Fee

About UniverCity Year

UniverCity Year is a three-phase partnership between UW-Madison and one community in Wisconsin. The concept is simple. The community partner identifies projects that would benefit from UW-Madison expertise. Faculty from across the university incorporate these projects into their courses, and UniverCity Year staff provide administrative support to ensure the collaboration’s success. The results are powerful. Partners receive big ideas and feasible recommendations that spark momentum towards a more sustainable, livable, and resilient future. Join us as we create better places together.