

**Comprehensive Planning in a Competitive Global Economy:
Recommendations for the City of Eau Claire**

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Executive Summary

The City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, has a comprehensive plan that is scheduled for a revision in 2015. The revision process provides an opportunity for the City to better address changes in the global economy. Technology is rapidly eliminating geographic constraints to goods and services. Consumers, businesses and residents have increasing choice over where they live, shop and pay taxes. At same time, the most productive individuals and companies are concentrating in select parts of the world. City governments must therefore compete more intensely for the businesses, customers and residents that they need to fulfill public objectives. This paper evaluates the 2005-2025 Comprehensive Plan to identify how changes in 2015 can better align with this new reality.

This study analyzes conditions in the City of Eau Claire, changes in the global economy, the theory and process of comprehensive planning, and the makeup of Eau Claire's Comprehensive Plan. The Strategy Change Cycle is used as an instrument to evaluate how well the Eau Claire Plan fits the internal and external economic environment of the City to determine where changes are most imperative.

This paper uncovers a specific need for the 2015 updates: To meet the challenge of a competitive global economy, the Comprehensive Plan must promote a re-alignment of the Eau Claire labor force. A high percentage of area workers are employed in low-paying and volatile manufacturing and sales occupations. Yet, Eau Claire's low cost of living, educated population and high quality of life make it possible for the city to acquire high-wage jobs that better utilize the local labor supply. The Comprehensive Plan can help adjust the makeup of Eau Claire area employment opportunities through promotion of telecommuting workers and telecommunications-reliant businesses. By encouraging employment to realign in such a way, the city will be in a far better position to face looming economic challenges.

Introduction

I returned to Eau Claire in June, 2010. Back home after a six-year career working at an online university in Minneapolis, I returned a community that had changed considerably during my hiatus. The blighted northern part of downtown was now a complex of condos and office buildings, replete with park land, a farmers market and bike trails. On the east side of town a new highway diverted the congestion that had once smothered the Hastings Way retail district. Low-density development had advanced westward and southward. A sporting goods store and private college replaced what had been patches of woods and farmland beyond I-94. Closer to the center of town, many neighborhoods appeared more affluent and densely populated. The Eau Claire I returned to was an improved version of its 2004 counterpart.

Eau Claire could not have acquired its improved character without the aid of the 2005-2025 Comprehensive Plan. A product of years of careful collaboration from hundreds of stakeholders, the Plan serves as “as a guide to the City Council, Plan Commission, and other City advisory boards in reviewing development proposals and preparing the City’s multi-year capital improvements budget” (City of Eau Claire, 2005, p. 1). It links day-to-day city operations with the community mission to inform public policy. The Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association credits the Plan for meeting high quality standards, as the Plan is counted among a handful of Honor Award recipients (Weber Planning, 2010) out of the 1449 submitted to the State since the year 2000 (Wisconsin DOA, 2010).

In 2015 state mandates require a thorough revision of the document (City of Eau Claire, 2011). I believe planners should use the 2015 revisions as an opportunity to better address Eau Claire’s place in the rapidly changing global economic climate. Once employees needed to be near the services they provided. The internet eliminates need for many workers to live near their customers. Bank transactions, for example, once required physical proximity between teller and patron. According to MSN, online banking eliminated this need for 14 million US customer in 2000, and 50 million in 2005 (Sullivan, 2005). Other professions, from book sellers to drive through fast food order takers, follow this trend.

Some services are and will likely remain bound by location. Cheap water and oil require proximity to distribution centers, and it is hard to envision an online housecleaning agency. Yet, citizens of Eau Claire have access to the same online movies, shopping and education as a citizen of Nome, Alaska or New York City. The evening distribution of certain resources has prompted author Thomas Friedman to declare that the world is once again flat; a place where goods and services are unhindered by geographic obstacles (2005). In this ‘flat’ world, taxpaying residents and economy-driving companies get to choose their place of residence based on quality of life. Dr. Richard Florida disagrees. He interprets the world in the emerging global economy to be spiky. Dr. Florida believes that cities that attract certain workers, such as “innovators, implementers and financial backers”, hold a significant and widening advantage over cities that don’t (2005). Both ‘flat’ and ‘spiky’ perspectives portray a climate in which Eau Claire must vigorously draw in firms and individuals in order to continue to generate the revenue needed to fulfill its civic mission. And competition from other communities is global and intensifying.

The purpose of this paper is to alert the participants in the 2015 comprehensive plan revisions about Eau Claire’s place in the competitive global economy, and to propose how the 2015 changes can best address this challenge. Specifically, the plan must promote a more effective distribution of the Eau Claire jobs by drawing in telecommuting workers and businesses.

Methodology

To justify the recommendation, I will first introduce Eau Claire as I know it, then explain why the world is a globally competitive place for city governments. Extensive work has been written on the global economy and on the relationship between public entities and private enterprise. I limit theoretical research to Friedman and Florida. These are two authors from different professional backgrounds (journalism and academia) who present two opposing viewpoints, yet their analyses affirm the idea of global inter urban competition. An expanded paper could use work from a multitude of scholars as basis for saying the world is competitive, but for this paper it is assumed that Friedman and Florida represent the theoretical viewpoint.

The next section of the paper explores the comprehensive planning process as a means for cities to address global competition. Here literature is used from strategic and comprehensive planning scholars to establish the history, theory and purpose of comprehensive planning. Comprehensive planning is compared to strategic planning in this section to differentiate it. Other planning methods could be used for comparison; however, the practice of comprehensive planning is evolving toward its strategic counterpart.

Next, Eau Claire's comprehensive plan is analyzed. In this section the mission and mandate of the plan are laid out in order to establish the permitted scope of change that potential changes could make, and to affirm that it represents the planning process and purposes described in the prior section.

With the problem identified and means for solution explained, I use parts of the Strategy Change Cycle (Appendix E) as an instrument to determine where the Eau Claire Comprehensive plan is the not the best fit for the local environment, and to propose changes to remedy the gaps.

The purpose of using the Strategy Change Cycle, a method of strategic rather than comprehensive planning, is to address the widest possible range of influences on Eau Claire in a structured and efficient way. My recommendations aim to answer challenges that are deeply integrated into the economic and political climate of the City. To understand each proposed change, one must understand where it fits into the regional political and economic context. The Strategy Change Cycle is a technique for strategic planning that helps inform change recommendations based on a variety of internal and external organizational attributes and influences (Bryson, 2004). Some of the benefits of using the Strategy Change Cycle are:

- **Organizational mandates, mission and values are recognized:** Eau Claire, like any other city, is accountable to the voters who set city objectives and higher governments that set mandates. Recommendations must not violate these.
- **Information can be obtained from collaborative research:** Successful planning is a collaborative effort (Weber Planning, 2011). In order for the recommendations to reflect

community needs, the information used to justify them should contain perspectives from a wide section of community stakeholders.

- **The internal and external environment is taken into account.** The Strategy Change Cycle recognizes that city governments are affected by internal and external issues. Recommendations should be appropriate for the environment.
- **Stakeholders are considered.** Careful analysis of stakeholder needs and capabilities is encouraged throughout the Cycle.
- **Strategic issues are mapped.** To be relevant, the recommendations must directly relate to organizational needs and opportunities.

The Strategy Change Cycle is a 10-steps process. The first step is to “Initiate and Agree on a Strategic Planning Process” (Bryson, 2004, p. 34). In this step, the person or group initiating the planning process seek support from the people that have the authority to make the plan possible. Agreement is obtained on how the process will be completed, who will be involved in what roles, what resources will be committed, and what limitations exist on the effort (p. 35).

Step Two is to identify organizational mandates. These are formal and informal constraints, restrictions, expectations and pressures confronting an organization (p. 37). This step enables planners to know the constraints placed on the planning process.

Step Three clarifies the organizational mission and values (pp. 37-38), which keeps the Strategic Change Cycle in line with other organizational activities. The process also helps affirms an organization’s existence outside of the planning process.

The next step analyses the internal and external environments. The benefit of Step Four is to “help planners and decision makers discern opportunities and challenges.” (p. 39) Bryson divides this step into external opportunities and challenges (Part A) and internal strengths and weaknesses (Part B). SWOT (Strength Weakness Opportunities and Threat) analyses and stakeholder mapping are common tools for environmental assessment, which will be discussed and used later in the paper.

Step Five is to identify strategic issues facing an organization. Here planners use the information obtained in the first four steps and determine where an organization fails to fit its environment (pp. 42-43).

In Step Six, planners take the issues identified in Step Five, and form a strategy to resolve or manage the issues. Bryson gives a few options for doing this. One option is a five-part process where planners compare visions for and barriers to alternative solutions, and then set a timeline for implementation. Another is to “map” alternative action outcomes with possible solutions and stakeholders (pp. 46-48).

Planners then “review and adopt the Strategies or Strategic Plan” in Step Seven, a part of the Cycle that is most useful in large organizations, where buy-in is needed from other internal departments or agencies (p. 48).

Step Eight exists to set an effective vision for the organization; an image of what the organization ought to resemble once the strategy is implemented (p. 49).

Step Nine focuses on the tasks for implementation. Here the planners review standard project management items, like timelines, roles and resource collection (p. 50).

Assessment of the Change Cycle happens at Step Ten. Planners review the strategic planning process and resolve weaknesses in order to prepare for the next round of planning. Here is where the planning process is modified and successful and unsuccessful strategies are analyzed (p. 51). This step prepares planners for Step One of the next Strategy Change Cycle.

The process of planning often begins at Steps One, Two, Five, Six, Nine and Ten. Goal formulation can be conducted at Steps One, Two, Five, Six, Seven, Nine and Ten. Vision formulation happens at Steps One, Three, Five, Six, Eight and Nine. Stakeholder analysis is possible, encouraged, in all steps of the process (Appendix E) (p. 33).

To analyze the Comprehensive Plan, I will use Step Four (internal and external environmental analysis), Step Five (Identify Strategic Issues), and Step Six (Formulate Strategies), along with stakeholder analysis. The first steps have already been completed. Step One is complete, as the City of

Eau Claire has agreed to a regular planning process. The second, acknowledgement of mandates, is covered in a plethora of detailed State and local regulations. The mission and values, the third step, are also clearly defined. The last steps are outside the scope of this paper. It is not my role to adopt the recommendations, set a new City vision or coordinate implementation.

Step Four A and B, environmental analysis of Eau Claire, is where this paper begins to use the Cycle. A SWOT Analysis and Power-Interest Grid assesses the conditions affecting Eau Claire. The SWOT analysis divides internal and external environmental factors based on their internal and external positive and negative implications (Bryson, 2004). To take stakeholders into account, in the section of this paper that follows puts stakeholders into groups based on influence and interest in community affairs using a Power-Interest Grid. Data in the SWOT and stakeholder analysis comes from the US Census, Department of Labor, regional interest groups like the Eau Claire Economic Development Corporation, and data collected by City agencies. Data does not always fall along city boundaries, particularly with the employment statistics that span the metropolitan area. Eau Claire is the biggest city in the Chippewa Valley and is deeply integrated into it. This paper assumes that global economic competition affects the Chippewa Valley as much as it affects the region's hub city.

Once the environmental and stakeholder analyses are complete, I apply Step Five of the Cycle by comparing findings from Step Four with content of the Comprehensive Plan, and explain areas of disjuncture (the Strategic Issues). Where disjuncture is detected, I explain the problem and note how the plan fails to meet the Mission, Mandates, Eau Claire Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats and Stakeholders. Not all strategic issues are included. Those that represent partial gaps (say, the 2005 Plan misses a potential threat, but stakeholders are appropriately accounted for), are omitted. Other strategic issues are omitted for not being directly or meaningfully relevant to the global economy.

Finally, I present recommendations, 'formulate strategy', as in Step Six. Each recommendation is explained. The recommendation is then compared to the environmental analysis and strategic issues, and an implementation plan is proposed.

The Setting: A mid-sized, mid-Western and mid-Income Community

Eau Claire is a city of over 65,000 located 85 miles east of Minneapolis along Interstate 94 (City of Eau Claire, 2011). It is the hub of a metropolitan area of 100,000 and a marketing area of 250,000 (See Appendix D) (EDC, 2010). The community is bounded by two suburbs, the Village of Lake Hallie and the City of Altoona. The physical geography of the city is defined by the Eau Claire and Chippewa rivers, small creeks, two large oxbow lakes – Dell’s Pond and Half Moon Lake – and steep, wooded river embankments. The highest points inside city boundaries are small, steep hills. A few of these hills are named, like Mount Tom, Mount Simon and Mount Washington. Eau Claire has a street layout comprised of disjointed grids patterns linked by bridges and inclines. Some grid patterns align north-south, others align northeast-southwest (Google Maps, 2011).

At 45-degrees north latitude and well inland, Eau Claire experiences long, cold and dark winters and warm, humid summers. The most prominent weather threats are blizzards, floods and severe thunderstorms. In 1980 national headlines were made when a strait-line wind thunderstorm caused millions of dollars of damage in the heart of the city (Associated Press, 1980).

The first Western settlers arrived in the area in the 1850s. They established three communities at the confluence of the Eau Claire and Chippewa Rivers. In 1872, with a collective population 2,293, the towns incorporated into a single community (City of Eau Claire, 2005). A population boom ensued, due to a thriving lumber industry. By 1885 Eau Claire was the third largest in Wisconsin with 21,000 inhabitants and was larger than Madison. The boom ended once the usable timber in the region had been harvested. The lumber industry followed the tree line northward, and the city lost population.

The economy gradually recovered as diversified industry replaced lumber as the main source of employment, and population growth has been steady ever since (City of Eau Claire, 2011). By 1985 Eau Claire held a large tire plant, a brewery and a paper mill. The city was also the location of a regional airport, a four-year university, and two big hospitals. The Presto Company had a kitchenware factory that

could also manufacture shell casings, should a military need arise. This prompted rumors that, if nuclear war started, Eau Claire would be one of the first cities hit. No written reports confirm this.

A tough transition from an industrial to a service economy took place in the early 1990's. The Uniroyal Tire plant shut down and the city lost thousands of jobs to low-wage workers in other countries (Cobb, 1992). At the same time, Chippewa Valley Technical College, a two year institution, expanded enrollment. Luther and Sacred Heart hospitals also increased staff and capacity and a company called Hutchinson Technology opened a hard drive factory.

Today Eau Claire is known as a college town with a diversified mix of service, education, and health care industries. The city maintains low unemployment, low cost of living and low crime rates. Average income is slightly lower than the state and national average (US Census, 2010). The population is a mix of college students, families with school-aged children and senior citizens. Ethnicity is predominantly white. Scandinavian, German and English last names are common. The city is also a center of Hmong immigration (Moua, 2008).

The nationally-known Indie band Bon Iver came from Eau Claire. Two public orchestras and two theater groups produce live performances at indoor and outdoor venues. Eau Claire is home to NASCAR driver Paul Menard, columnist Ann Landers and baseball player Hank Aaron.

The big-picture view of Eau Claire is one of a mid-sized, Midwestern and middle-income community with consistent growth. But as stable and normal as it is, Eau Claire is not immune to the changes of the outside world. The next section of this paper describes the looming economic challenge.

The Challenge: the World is Competitive

Friedman's flat world model is based on the idea that technology is eliminating geographic barriers to resources and services. Dr. Florida's spiky model comes from the notion that the only truly productive people are concentrated in a few regions (the 'spikes'), while the rest of the world (the 'valley') languishes. Flat or spiky, the global economy of 2015 is likely to be a competitive place for city governments. In Florida's spiky world; "The innovative, talent-attracting 'have' regions seem

increasingly remote from the talent exporting 'have-not' regions. Second tier cities ... are entering an escalating and potentially devastating competition for jobs, talent, and investment. And inequality is growing across the world and within countries" (2005). In Friedman's 'flat' world, "The relentless quest for efficiency is squeezing some of the fat out of life" (Nissley, 2005). No matter which viewpoint prevails, for city governments in this new global economy, the world is competitive.

Friedman and Florida do not offer a complete perspective on the global economy. I choose these authors for their popularity, recent publication and rivalry. Michael Porter is another important author. His most prominent work was published in the 1980's and 1990's. Porter uses a 'cluster' model. In this metaphor, modern technology enhances the value of physical proximity; growing complexity and knowledge reliance favor closely integrated and sometimes face-to-face business relationships (Porter, 1998). Though far different from Friedman and Florida's perspectives, the 'clustered' world supports the idea that local-level governments face greater competition (1998).

What this means for Eau Claire is that, to maintain adequate funding of services, growth alone is insufficient. Nor is it sufficient to out-compete cities of similar size and character. The city government must sustain a competitive edge over places as large as Chicago and as small as Hayfield, Minnesota. Communities as near as LaCrosse and as far as Tokyo can draw away taxpaying residents and businesses. This is the nature of the modern global economy.

An example of this competition is playing out ninety miles west of Eau Claire, where Minneapolis and St. Paul face a threat from the Los Angeles area. For decades the Minnesota Vikings have generated hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue to the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro. They have attracted new business development and bolstered the tourist industry (Croman, 2009). In recent years, however, community leaders in Southern California have offered incentives for the Minnesota Vikings to relocate.

Minnesota officials have a choice. They can grant expensive concessions to the Vikings in order to keep the team, or they can allow the team to leave. If concessions are granted, these would have to be absorbed at considerable public expense, perhaps in the form of zoning exceptions or low-interest loans.

If concessions are not granted, the region loses a valuable economic asset. The commerce and tax revenue generated by an NFL team will move elsewhere. No matter what option is chosen, Twin Cities governments lose revenue from the loss of a major team or concessions in tax incentives and infrastructure upgrades.

Beyond loss of revenue, the Twin Cities faces the possibility of losing the talented football players, managers and publicists. It would become, in Dr. Florida's metaphor, a football 'valley'. As of this writing, Twin Cities' officials are finalizing a publicly-funded option to keep the Vikings in the region.

Though stories of sports team relocation have made headlines in recent years, inter-urban competition itself is not a new phenomenon. *Megalopolis*, a work on the urbanization of the U.S. Northeast written by Jean Gottman in 1961, states that American cities have sustained vigorous competition for hundreds of years. In the early 1800's, places like Boston, New York and Philadelphia vied to be the primary terminus for the lucrative North Atlantic trade route with England. On the other side of the US and half a century later, rival Western boom towns coveted access to expanding railroad lines, often spending considerable public resources to bribe officials, build infrastructure or improve regional security from Native Americans and outlaws (Ambrose, 2000).

Technology, trade and government improvements allowed the scope of inter-urban rivalry to become global. According to Friedman's 'flat' earth perspective, the growth and improvement of the internet and the spread of democracy and free trade eliminate barriers to geographic obstacles (2005). Companies like Elance.com, an online provider of writing and data entry services, illustrate the range of goods and services that are entirely geography-independent. Through Elance, businesses with employees in India, China and Russia performs data entry, computer programming, research and graphic design services (Elance, 2011). Communities fortunate to have a supply of workers who have the appropriate talents, the 'spike' communities of Dr. Florida's world perspective, can benefit from the incomes these individuals receive, via sales and property taxes.

In this new competitive economy, the Eau Claire that once found rivals in nearby logging towns now faces rivals from across the world. Businesses and talented individual can choose to leave cities with sub-par tax rates, excessive operating costs, poor services and poor quality of life. In March, 2011, 200 jobs were lost at Hutchinson Technology as a result of “a shift of the customer base from 100 percent American to 98 percent Asian” (Keen, 2011). A more traumatic event happened in the early 1990’s, when the Uniroyal tire plant laid off thousands of well-paid Eau Claire workers as it shifted manufacturing operations to locations with lower wage standards (Cobb). A ‘flat’ environment for businesses allowed the company to move more easily.

Eau Claire can also benefit from the new environment. Residents once had two options for higher education: Chippewa Valley Technical College and UW-Eau Claire. Those willing and able to drive a half hour or longer had higher education institutes in nearby cities. The growth of online universities promises to expand these opportunities. Capella Online University, for example, has grown to a “campus” of 25,000 students from humble beginnings in the early 1990’s (Capella, 2009). Capella Online University is just as accessible to an Eau Claire citizen as it is to a fisher in northern Alaska, a soldier in Kuwait, or a hospital patient in Boston. Education access in Eau Claire will continue to grow as these universities gain greater popularity legitimacy. Education has become flatter because opportunities are more equal. It has become spikier because the talent pool of online professors and administrators can choose where they live, and not all cities have qualities that attract these tax-paying individuals.

In spite of the greater ease for businesses and residents to relocate, not every city seeks new residents and employers. Many governments and residents fear the negative consequences of growth, which include traffic, high cost of living and overdevelopment. The community of La Pointe in Madeline Island on Lake Superior is one of them. Some citizens of the small resort community prefer to maintain the rural and rustic nature of the area (Madeline Island News, 2009). The idea of a tranquil community of quiet roads free from the bustle of commerce is pleasant to many. Because of inter-urban competition, this pleasantry is costly. Civic resources are shrinking and a community that chooses to block new sources of revenue is choosing to limit the quantity and quality of its public services. In order to achieve

the city mission and vision, cities must have revenue. If the people of La Pointe want a quality education for their children and paved roads for their vehicles, they must allow the occasional newcomer. This is especially true in a period when external resources to local government, such as state and federal aid, are shrinking (City of Eau Claire, 2005). Cities that do not attract and retain taxpaying businesses and residents must reduce civic programs. Dr. Wirth-Davis, CEO of Goodwill, states that revenue is not a bad thing for nonprofit organizations. “No margin, no mission” (2009). The same need for revenue holds true for city governments.

The opposing Friedman and Florida world views both affirm that cities face more intense competition for sources of tax revenue. Like the geography of Eau Claire, an area of flat plateaus bounded by steep river valleys and pocked with sharp hills, the global economic climate is flat and spiky at the same time. The next two sections of this paper explain what tools Eau Claire has to address this challenge.

The Tools: Strategic and Comprehensive Planning

The 2005-2025 Comprehensive Plan is a valuable tool for helping the City of Eau Claire succeed in this flat, yet spiky, urban competitive climate. Comprehensive planning is an approach to planning used by local governments to guide policy decisions. The purpose and scope of comprehensive planning is varied and inconsistent between cities, which makes the process hard to define. To establish a more coherent notion of what a comprehensive plan is – and thereby make it clear where Eau Claire’s plan can address the global economy – I will first define what strategic planning is and how it differs from comprehensive planning.

Strategic planning is a “disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it” (Bryson, 2004, p. 6). The planning process involves assessing an organization, identifying issues – areas where change is needed – and evaluating the outcomes. It focuses “on achievement of the best ‘fit’ between an organization and its environment. Attention to mandates and the external environment, therefore, can be

thought of as planning from the *outside in*” (Bryson and Roering, 1987, p. 11). When used by public agencies, strategic planning “incorporates financial and business plans, with an emphasis on process as to how the plan is to be accomplished” (Washington Ports, 2009).

Strategic planning also takes input from a full spectrum of stakeholders. It places, “greater emphasis on the formation, maintenance and alignment of broad-based coalitions of individuals and organizations” than other planning methods (Government of Alberta, 1998, p. 2). Thus, stakeholder analysis is a higher priority in strategic planning than it is in other methods.

The focus of comprehensive plans, as compared to strategic plans, is limited. The original purpose of comprehensive planning was to regulate community land use to most effectively direct city services (Leung, 2003, p. 19). By the middle of the 20th century, the scope of comprehensive plans had broadened to serve more civic needs. These could be land use, transportation, environmental issues, open space management, neighborhood design, utilities and infrastructure growth and upkeep, school facility planning, or historic preservation (Kelly, 2010). A comprehensive plan, unlike a strategic plan, is not likely to address issues like city structure, organizational culture or non-development related city council legislation.

Community and state leaders determine exactly how limited in scope a comprehensive plan is. There is no universally-accepted standard, and a community or state defines comprehensive planning to fit their unique circumstances. Calvert County, Maryland, for example, states the purpose of their plan is to be “a guide when evaluating proposed projects or changes to the Zoning Ordinance” (Calvert County, 2011). The Village of Campbellsport, Wisconsin grants a broader scope. They say the reason for their comprehensive plan, beyond what the state government requires, is for “deciding how we want our community to look, function and feel” (2011).

The benefits of comprehensive planning are equally varied. The State of Wisconsin outlines twelve of them in its Comprehensive Planning Law guide. These are:

- Analysis of trends
- Planning the future
- Land use guides

- Proactive resolution of issues
 - Coordinated community activity
 - Cost savings
 - Preservation of local control
 - Preservation of local autonomy
 - Promotion of property rights
 - Promotion of economic development
 - Promotion of intergovernmental cooperation
 - Protection of resources
- (Wisconsin DOA Comprehensive Planning Law, 2010)

The New York State Department of State, Division of Local Government Services says that the benefit of comprehensive planning is that it; “Provides a process for identifying community resources, long range community needs, and commonly held goals ... Provides a process for developing community consensus ... Provides a blueprint for future governmental actions” (1999).

As to why such benefits exist, Kelly sees the situation as a matter of commons sense. He writes that communities need an all-encompassing plan to avoid building sewer lines for empty lots and schools on land without road access (2010). Garvin notes that some plans “have proved to be powerful agents for change” (2002). He credits this method for bringing major improvements in the appearance and quality of life in certain Chicago, Philadelphia, Fort Worth and St. Louis neighborhoods. He believes such accomplishments were made possible by the availability of information and public participation, coordinated into a specific roadmap for implementation (2005).

Another benefit to comprehensive planning is the growing ease of creating effective plans. New technology introduces convenient tools for planners. The ability to connect with people without having to be physically present enables more flexibility in the time and place of meetings, as well as offering email and conference call options. Technology also reduces the cost and effort of obtaining huge amount of information needed for comprehensive planning. For example, detailed information on budget, zoning and demographics is available online, free of charge, for cities as disparate in Wausau, Wisconsin, Population 38,000 (City of Wausau, 2011); Arco, Idaho, Population 3,000 (Arco COC, 2011); and Los Angeles, California (City of Los Angeles, 2011).

Whatever the reasons, comprehensive plans have become the “predominant form of local government planning in the United States” in recent decades (Kelly, 2010, p. 2). State requirements play a role. In Wisconsin comprehensive plans are mandatory for all city, county and townships (Wisconsin DOA). The next section of this paper delves into what Eau Claire’s plan is and what it can do.

The Asset: Eau Claire’s Comprehensive Plan

Creation of the 2005-2025 Comprehensive Plan began when the Eau Claire City Council, to comply with state mandate, approved a review of the then existing 1993 Comprehensive Plan. The Citizens Advisory Committee was formed to provide feedback as the process advanced. The Committee eventually consisted of seven private citizens, eight members of townships or neighborhood associations, and three City Council members. UW-Eau Claire and Chippewa Valley Technical College, major campuses inside city limits, each had a representative. Four members were from businesses associations. One member came from the Sierra Club. The remaining five sat on City commissions (See Appendix A).

Principles of Chapter 66 of the Wisconsin State Statutes guided the initial review. Chapter 66 promotes the concept of “Smart Growth”, a practice of creating compact, walk-able, diverse and environmentally sustainable communities (Wisconsin Department of Affairs, 2010).

Private consultants drafted Summary of Conditions and Issues reports in 2003 (City of Eau Claire, 2005). These used internal and external environmental scans to uncover strategic issues in the community. From 2003-2005, the City conducted numerous public hearings and conducted surveys to obtain information on community issues from the public. The public, in turn, was regularly informed via online, television, newsprint and radio coverage.

The outcome of the process was a plan charged with the following mission:

The Comprehensive Plan serves as the basis for the City’s subdivision regulations, official mapping, and amendments to the City Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. The *Plan* serves as a guide to the City Council, Plan Commission, and other City advisory boards in reviewing development proposals and preparing the City’s multi-year capital improvements budget. The *Plan* also serves as a guide to public spending for community facilities, roads, utilities, parks, housing assistance, economic development, and other municipal programs and services. Finally, Wisconsin State Statutes provide that by 2010 the City’s official mapping, subdivision, and

zoning actions shall be consistent with the adopted *Comprehensive Plan* (City of Eau Claire, 2005).

Planners defined 14 assumptions:

- Proactive local government is essential for creating a high-quality city.
- It is critical to the long-term future of Eau Claire that it be able to grow efficiently on its perimeter.
- Collaborative growth management among Eau Claire, the Towns and the two Counties is possible and mutually beneficial.
- Greater cooperation among governments will be required to meet the needs of a growing population.
- Most growth should be accommodated in sewered areas in and around Eau Claire.
- Urban density is desirable.
- Prosperity is enhanced if growth is planned and managed.
- Public facilities help the economy.
- The public and private sectors should collaborate.
- Redevelopment sometimes requires public assistance.
- Environmental protection is desirable.
- The vitality of Downtown and the older neighborhoods is important.
- Existing neighborhoods should be protected.
- Current public revenue problems are cyclical.

(City of Eau Claire, 2003)

The final draft of the Plan, a thirteen-chapter document, was adopted by the City Council on September 27, 2005. A fourteenth chapter was added in 2009. These are:

Land Use Chapter: This section analyses issues in land development. It includes land inside the city as well as land that may affect future urban growth. The purpose of the chapter is to “promote orderly development of Eau Claire, create an attractive and efficient urban environment of the larger urban area, and protect the City’s capacity for the future expansion of its tax base.” (City of Eau Claire, 2005, p. 2-1) This chapter is intended to serve as an information source for decision making on annexation, development, zoning, and other land-related topics. The chapter describes eight key issues facing Eau Claire’s land use. These involve controlling growth along the city outskirts, sewer and road layout, downtown redevelopment and urban and residential growth. A need to acquire land along community waterfronts and land use coordination with other communities are also issues identified in the section (pp. 2-2 – 2-3).

Natural Resources Chapter: This is the chapter that focuses on the environmental resources of the community. It is written to provide guidance for decisions that involve the distinct or fragile parts of Eau Claire’s physical landscape, such as wetlands and hillsides. Key issues highlighted are waterfront access and preservation, effective care of the many steep slopes in the city, and protection of highly productive farmland on the urban fringe (p.3-1).

Transportation Chapter: One of the longer chapters, its purpose is to “guide public policy regarding the evolution of the City’s overall transportation system, and to recommend policies and actions that are consistent with the land use and urban design components of the *Comprehensive Plan*” (p. 4-1). Key issues of the chapter include road and bridge infrastructure, public transit, bikeways, growth management and improved coordination with the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport. Rail traffic – current freight and possible commuter – is also reviewed. Some of the challenges outlined in the chapter involve the need to resist urban sprawl and to improve connectivity between city roads (pp. 4-1 – 4-3).

Parks System Chapter: The Eau Claire Parks system already has sufficient plans in place, in the Five-Year Parks Plan and in thorough coverage in the 1993 Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this section is to review and affirm prior findings. Key issues in the Parks System chapter involve how Eau Claire can best utilize a park system that is assumed to be high quality. It notes that the conversion of waterfront land and rail lines from industrial to public ownership gives Eau Claire an abundance of open space. Expanding the trail system and assuring adequate numbers of parkland in new neighborhoods are some to the key issues in this chapter (pp. 5-1 – 5-3).

Physical Character Chapter: This section has been drafted to aid incoming public and private investments in physical improvements to the community. Public improvements are parks, streets, bridges and the like. The private improvements are new real estate developments, industrial plants and retail structures. The disconnected city road layout is a key issue in this chapter, along with the need for more open public spaces, public access to waterfronts, design guidelines for commercial structures, and improvements on the appearance of roadways in certain neighborhoods. The chapter reviews such structural topics as streetlights, road width, and building appearance standards (pp. 6-1– 6-3).

Economic Development Chapter: The economic conditions of Eau Claire are reviewed in this section. The purpose is to “work cooperatively with private industry, regional economic development partners, and state and federal agencies to promote investment in projects that will create quality employment opportunities for area residents and a quality tax base for the community” (p. 7-1).

The chapter emphasizes the importance of supporting the business and industrial parks in town. The need to promote downtown revitalization is also iterated. Key issues pointed out are the changing global economy, the need to redevelop sites throughout the city (including downtown), adding business and industrial sites, attracting businesses and ensuring the tax base. Other key issues are maintaining a diverse local economy, enhancing transportation infrastructure and improving inter-agency cooperation (pp. 7-1 – 7-3).

Public Utilities: Guidance for clean water, efficient sewage removal and effective water drainage are the topics of this chapter. Key issues listed involve growth management; how to best extend current systems. Coordination with other local governments also matters, as well as limiting the environmental impact of these services (pp. 8-1 – 8-3).

Community Facilities: This chapter analyzes the state of Eau Claire public libraries, park buildings schools, and other structures. The key issues identified concern questions of intergovernmental collaboration for sharing public facilities, creation of community and convention centers, and linking park locations with public school locations (p. 9-1).

Housing Chapter: This chapter exists to provide guidance for City decisions regarding supply and demand of housing. The scope of the Housing Chapter covers the supply, demand and community factors that affect the condition of Eau Claire residential areas. The chapter recognizes the role of local government in creating affordable housing at attractive and well-serviced locations. Issues in the Housing Chapter are the supply of rental housing, encouraging a diverse mix of homes within neighborhoods, home design standards, needs of elderly and low-income residents and, like other chapters of the plan, historical preservation (pp. 10-1 – 10-3).

Historic Preservation Chapter: Though other sections prioritize historical preservation, this is the chapter that focuses on the goal. The purpose is to, “set forth the policy framework to preserve and enhance the cultural and historic resources within the City of Eau Claire” (p. 11-1). Key issues involve educating the public on Eau Claire’s history, promoting tourism, seeking greater inter-governmental cooperation. Four of the 12 listed issues relate to improving public awareness (pp. 11-1 – 11-3).

Downtown: Downtown Eau Claire is the only neighborhood with a chapter in the Comprehensive Plan devoted to it. The Downtown Chapter explains that this part of the city had been the major retail center for the surrounding region, but has since lost become a less-significant area of offices, shops and small industries. This chapter centers its key issues on “the transformation of the Downtown into a multi-functional town center active both day and night, seven days a week” (p. 12-1). The list of key issues contains a mix of facilities improvements, business development initiatives and utilization of the rivers as a scenic asset (pp. 12-1 – 12-4).

Intergovernmental Cooperation: The need for better cooperation between government agencies is a recurring theme in the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter was written as a guide for improving cooperation between the City of Eau Claire and surrounding local governments. The section explains the role of communities like the growing townships south and west of Eau Claire, the neighboring City of Altoona, the newly-incorporated Village of Lake Hallie, and the City of Chippewa Falls, a town of 13,000 located a few miles north of the airport. The key issues listed in this chapter elaborate on the overarching need for the Chippewa Valley to grow as a unified metropolitan area, rather than a collection of disjointed civic jurisdictions. Some of the goals are the promotion of shared public infrastructure, joint control of certain public services and cooperation in growth management (pp. 13-1 – 13-4).

Plan Implementation Chapter: This chapter leaves direct city-related issues and focuses on the Comprehensive Plan, itself. The goal is to advise leaders on effective implementation of the Plan, and calls for annual reports, regular reviews, periodic alteration and plan for short and long term implementation of recommendations (p. 14-1).

Sustainability Chapter: This is a 2009 addition to the Plan. The City Council decided to add the Chapter in order to advise community leaders on ways to integrate environmental protection into civic policy. The Sustainability Chapter, unlike the Natural Resources and Physical Character chapters, addresses global environmental concerns, such as global warming, air pollution, energy consumption and locally-grown food (pp. 15-1 – 15-4).

Since 2005 information from all of these chapters has been referenced for a number of meaningful policy changes. Among the most visible is the Hastings Way redevelopment. Hastings Way is the name of a section of State Highway 53 that runs along the east side of Eau Claire and is lined with retail property. The roadway was a part of the quickest route between Madison/Milwaukee and Duluth/Superior until the 2006 completion of a bypass. Non-local vehicles no longer needed to pass through the retail district, and traffic along Hastings Way fell by about half. With the help of a state grant, the City of Eau Claire approved of a plan to convert Hastings Way from a highway to a slower, narrower and tree lined route (SEH, 2010). Information in the Comprehensive Plan confirmed that the new construction fits city needs, objectives and physical character.

Along with major projects, the Comprehensive Plan has also aided in resolving a disputed bike trail extension, accommodating a new entertainment center along I-94, planning future downtown revisions and myriad minor infrastructure improvements.

The content of the chapters and the ways in which the plan has been implemented give insights into the plan mandate: what it is supposed to accomplish formally or informally. The mandate calls for a document that weighs heavily on physical, economic and environmental aspects of the community. It is also allowed to take minor political stances. It assumes local government must take an active role in facilitating, guiding and regulating the private sector, and puts a priority on environmentally sustainable activity. It opts to avoid social issues, like race and gender. It adheres closely to State guidelines. The plan also finds middle ground between specific, step-by-step recommendations and sweeping generalities. The next section of this paper steps outside the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan to examine conditions affecting the community.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis takes environmental conditions of an organization and divides them into four categories. Strengths are an organization's internal assets: what is going well. Weaknesses are organizational liabilities: what is not working well. This method identifies how "current capabilities and limitations (Strengths and Weaknesses) match up against influencing factors (Opportunities and Threats)" (International Institute of Business Analysis, 2009). Opportunities are assets that the organization has the potential to gain. Threats are possible and actual external dangers. "By focusing on threats and opportunities, a SWOT analysis draws attention to major internal and external forces that can enhance or undermine system effectiveness." (Harrison, 1999, pp. 49)

The SWOT has a few drawbacks. Hard statistics on the qualities of the analysis are hard to come by. There are few studies indicating the likelihood of a SWOT will have an advantage over another analysis tool. The benefits of a SWOT are ultimately a matter of the users' subjective judgment. Second, it is easy for a SWOT analysis to paint such a broad image of a situation that it overlooks important details, unless a prohibitively expensive effort is undertaken to collect data on every relevant detail.

Fortunately extensive data collection has occurred and public input has been obtained and compiled by Eau Claire citizens, government and nonprofit groups. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats highlighted in this paper are found in research done from 2003 through 2005 for the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan. Information from Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce, the local Economic Development Corporation, and a number of news outlets, and public records also contribute. Though not exhaustive, this review attempts to list the most important topics facing Eau Claire's ability to compete in the new urban environment. Here are a summary of the primary issues.

SWOT Table	
<p>Strengths Parkland/Scenery Location along I-94 Largest city in a wide geographic area Low crime Higher Ed Institutions Diversified Economy Short Commute Growing share of global GDP</p>	<p>Weaknesses Cold Climate Street layout Uneven neighborhood growth rates Lack of highly educated 25-34 year-olds Shrinking share of global population High percentage of manufacturing jobs</p>
<p>Opportunities Undeveloped lake and riverfront properties Sprawl-limiting soil on outskirts Greater telecommuting options Greater access to online services Possible high-speed commuter rail Growth of geography-independent businesses Incoming educated workforce</p>	<p>Threats Climate change Loss of external support Uncoordinated land use along the outskirts Sprawl Rising health care costs International competition</p>

Strengths

Eau Claire benefits from a variety of environmental attributes that strengthen its ability to compete for residents and businesses. Some of these strengths, such as Eau Claire’s abundant and scenic park land, have been valuable and acknowledged contributors to city quality of life for decades. The Analysis of Conditions and Issues Reports compiled prior Comprehensive Plan makes frequent references to positive public perception of Eau Claire’s natural environment, which includes an extensive and well-maintained riverfront, numerous parks and scenic bike trails (2003).

The location of the city itself is another long-term strength. Eau Claire sits adjacent to Interstate 94, the most direct land route between the populous Twin Cities and the Chicago metropolitan areas (Google Maps, 2011). Traffic along this route has been increasing. 27,100 drivers daily traversed a section of I-94 along Elk Mound, immediately west of Eau Claire, in 2001. The number increased steadily and by 2007, 36,000 drivers had passed this area each day (Wisconsin DOT Travel Information, 2001 & 2007).

Along with highway proximity, Eau Claire lies at the edge of a very large, sparsely populated region of Wisconsin. Northward, the next largest city is Duluth, MN (US Census, 2011), 155 miles away (Google Maps, 2011). To the East, the next metropolitan area capable of providing the same level of

services is Wausau, a smaller city, 99 miles away. Southward, the next comparable metropolitan area is the smaller city of LaCrosse, at 70 miles away (Google Maps). Thus, Eau Claire is the largest city and primary supplier of goods and services for a major portion of Northwest Wisconsin.

Another long-term strength of Eau Claire is the consistently low crime rate for its size. In 2009, Eau Claire ranked as the 6th safest among the 336 largest US communities (Eau Claire Economic Development Division, 2011), and as of April 2010 crime rates were at their lowest levels since the 1970's (Cerling, 2010). One example of how public safety helps the local economy is found in the way it encourages a vibrant night-life. A safe neighborhood attracts customers to taverns, restaurants and theaters. In nearby Minneapolis, for example, public perception of crime has hindered the development of the 1st Avenue entertainment district (Mack, 2007).

Education institutions are among Eau Claire's most lauded long-term assets. The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire began as a one-building teachers' college in 1916. It has since grown to a campus of over 10,000 enrolled students that consistently ranks among the best regional public universities of the Upper Midwest (EDC, 2011). At Chippewa Valley Technical College, over 8,000 students study courses in technology, data management, civil engineering, hospitality and other programs. Globe University established a facility in 2008 to educate of students in business administration (EDC). These campuses have brought cultural vitality to the community in the various student organizations and arts, athletic and entertainment venues. They also attract professors and administration leaders, people Dr. Florida considers the "creative class", a group that Eau Claire must keep in order to stay on the 'spike' (2005).

A more recent strength is Eau Claire's diversified economy. Chamber of Commerce employment data shows no one businesses holds more than 4-5 percent of the 100-thousand strong regional labor force (EDC, 2011). The largest employment sector, Education and Health Services, accounts for 17 percent of the workforce. Manufacturing and Retail Trade each account for 13 percent, followed by Professional and Business Services at 11 percent (EDC, 2009). Such variety of industry enables cities to handle change, as the loss of any one industry has little effect on the entire city economy. The variety also prepares the city for new growth, since, should any one of the sectors experience growth, it could locate to Eau Claire

without introducing an entirely new business into the city, where a pool of talented individuals and facilities would already be residing.

The diverse economy has given Eau Claire an additional strength of lower-than-average unemployment. In September, 2008 city unemployment was 4 percent, or two points below the national level. In March 2009 it had risen to 8.2 percent, but remained below the 9 percent national level. The latest figures available from City administration show unemployment at 6.6 percent in 2009, compared to the 9.5 percent national level (EDC, 2011).

A breakdown of the workforce distribution by sector finds, along with variety of industry, a slightly higher proportion of health care workers in the community, than in the U.S. as a whole (Appendix F) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).

Occupation (SOC code)	Number employed	% of Total Employed	Annual mean wage	E.C. Employed % over US Employed %	E. C. Annual mean wage adjusted for cost of living (EC = 95.8% of US*)	EC adjusted mean wage/US mean wage (\$44,410)
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations(290000)	4570	6.06%	\$63,980	1.05	66785	0.94

The high proportion of health care workers is a strength because of high tax revenue acquired from these wages. The two hospitals, various clinics and health care programs in area universities also creates a what Porter might call a “cluster” of professionals in the metropolitan area. Clusters in Porter’s model allow for greater productivity and innovation because of the collaboration they enable between members of a profession (1998).

The relatively healthy economy has driven population growth. Between the 2000 Census figures and 2009 estimates, Eau Claire grew 6.9 percent, from 61,704 to 65,950 residents. In doing so, the city replaced Oshkosh as the eighth largest city in Wisconsin. No non-metropolitan cities of comparable size in Wisconsin grew faster. And, in spite of the relatively low unemployment rate and stable growth rate, the cost of living in the city remains low (EDC).

A final notable strength of Eau Claire is the short commute time. These remain consistently below the national average, as the city is small enough to avoid severe traffic congestion, yet is large

enough to have a variety of employment opportunities and cultural assets within easy reach of residents. A contributing factor could be the strong and improving downtown area. Since 2005, Downtown has experienced major park, retail and office construction near the Chippewa-Eau Claire river confluence. A net influx of companies has also contributed to the revitalization. The number of businesses increased from 392 in 2002 to 545 in 2009 (Downtown Eau Claire, 2009, p. 7). Property assessment values also increased steadily during this time period, which includes the 2008 Recession (pp. 4-5).

Weaknesses

While many long and short-term internal qualities give Eau Claire an advantage over other cities, it also suffers a share of disadvantages. To meet the challenges of inter-urban competition, additions to the comprehensive plan must account for the many physical, geographical, economic, and demographic weaknesses of the community.

One of these shortcomings is climate. Northern Wisconsin has long, cold winters. The average January temperature is 11.9 degrees and seasonal freezing temperatures can begin as early as September and last until April (Wisconsin State Climatology Office, 2011). The impact on weather and economic growth cannot be over-emphasized. Quebec, for example, has easy access to international seaways, immense land resources, a stable and prosperous economy and a wealth of natural resources. The province also has winters where the temperature regularly falls to below freezing for long periods. The climate is one of the reasons why only 7.5 million people live in Quebec, and that the population is concentrated in the temperate parishes along the southern border (Quebec Travel Guide, 2011).

While weather issues may seem outside the scope of city governments, authorities have plenty of ways to offset or adapt to it. The cities of Minneapolis (SkywayMyWay, 2011) and Calgary (Calgary Travel Guide, 2011) counter their harsh cold climates by building extensive skyway networks: second-floor walkways that straddle downtown streets and make it possible for pedestrians to travel from building to building without exposure to the outside climate. So while Eau Claire cannot make January

warmer, it can promote winter sports or indoor events, or take other steps to mitigate the effects of harsh winters.

Another obstacle to Eau Claire’s success in inter-urban competition is the fact that the city is in the upper Midwest. The population of this part of the United States in recent decades has been, at best, stable. From 2000 to 2010, the population of the Midwest (states near Wisconsin) increased by 3.2 percent, but the population of the South (roughly the former Confederate states), grew 14.3 percent (US Census, 2011). Sunbelt employers are attracted to the warm climate, increasingly educated workforce, cheap immigrant labor, and business friendly laws of Southern states. Eau Claire fares well against places like Green Bay, WI or Fargo, MN, but in a world of global competition, it’s global markets that matter. The fact that Eau Claire’s current annual growth rate of .68 percent exceeds the Wisconsin growth rate (EDC, 2011) is overshadowed by the .97 percent annual national growth rate (US Census). Global population is rising at 1.2 percent (US Census International Database, 2010). Eau Claire’s total share of the US and world population is falling.

Weaknesses also exist within the city limits. The 2005 Comprehensive Plan notes the street layout as a primary shortcoming. The inner city street grid pattern was planned in the mid- 19th Century. As urban growth extended beyond the river bluffs that once bounded development, new street patterns emerged that were inconsistent with the downtown layout. Roads needed to negotiate difficult terrain along the bluffs in order to meet these upland neighborhood street patterns (City of Eau Claire, 2005). The effect is a city layout that lacks easy access from the highways to the business core.

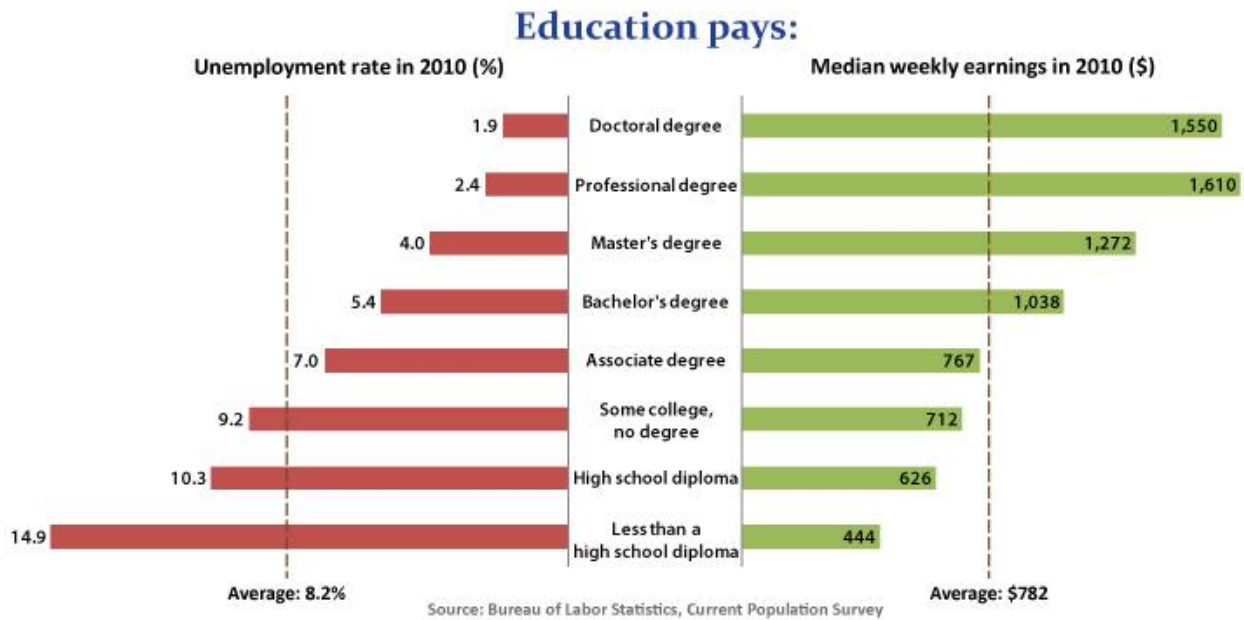
Eau Claire has one more major weakness that hinders its ability to compete against other communities in the global economy. This is the lack of college-educated young adults in the community. While the metro area has a higher than average ratio of citizens in the 20-29 year age group, the proportion of 25-34 year-olds is only 85 percent of the national average (Appendix I) (US Census, 2011) .

Age group	Eau Claire metro	United States	E.C. over U.S.
15 to 19 years	8.20%	7.10%	115.49%
20 to 24 years	11.80%	7.00%	168.57%
25 to 29 years	6.10%	6.90%	88.41%
30 to 34 years	5.30%	6.50%	81.54%

The flight of college students is apparent when one observes that only 24.4 percent of the Eau Claire area residents age 25 and up hold a bachelor's degree or higher, versus 28 percent nationally. (Appendix I) (US Census).

Population 25 years and over	Eau Claire	US
Some college, no degree	19.80%	20.70%
Associate's degree	11.80%	7.50%
Bachelor's degree	16.60%	17.60%
Graduate or professional degree	7.80%	10.20%
Percent high school graduate or higher	90.10%	84.90%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	24.40%	27.80%

Educated 25-34 year-olds are a consumer group that is aggressively sought by businesses. These young adults have growing incomes. Many have large disposable incomes due to lack of children. They travel, pay attention to trends, and are technologically savvy. Termed “Brain Drain”, the shortfall in educated young adults, has been a concern for a number of area businesses and local government entities (Eau Claire County, 2006) (Downtown Eau Claire, Inc., 2009). A Bureau of Labor Statistics report highlights the disparity in pay between education levels:



(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011)

The high proportion of Eau Claire area residents with Associate degrees and low proportion of citizens with Bachelor’s degrees, despite the high number of college students represents a lost opportunity: Eau Claire institutions educate college graduates, but other communities reap the benefit. Lack of local employment opportunities for college graduates is likely a factor. Roughly 30 percent of the Eau Claire area work force is engaged in Sales, Food Preparation and Production occupations. These employers generally do not require a university-educated workforce. Moreover, the percentage of the Eau Claire area population working in these occupations is greater than the US average, particularly in regard to Production (Appendix F) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).

Occupation (SOC code)	Number employed	% of Total Employed	Annual mean wage	E.C. Employed % over US Employed %	E. C. Annual mean wage adjusted for cost of living (EC = 95.8% of US*)	EC adjusted mean wage/US mean wage (\$44,410)
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations(350000)	7150	9.48%	\$19,500	1.09	20355	0.96
Sales and Related Occupations(410000)	9430	12.50%	\$29,030	1.18	30303	0.82
Production Occupations(510000)	7380	9.78%	\$31,830	1.51	33225	0.98

Thus, the need for four-year college educated employees is lower in the Eau Claire area than in the national average, despite a higher than average student population.

While diverse, the distribution of occupations in the City of Eau Claire occupations yield wages lower than the national mean. The US Bureau of Labor reported mean wage for 2010 is \$44,410. The Eau Claire metropolitan area mean is \$37,110. For example, the ratio of workers in legal occupations in the Eau Claire area, .29% of the regional working population, is 63 percent lower than the ratio of legal workers in among the U.S. population. Along with a lower proportion of workers in high-paying occupation categories, wages are usually lower for employees in Eau Claire, even when these are adjusted for the low (95.8 percent) cost of living. A comparison of Bureau of Labor statistics is below (2010). Appendix F has a complete table for all occupations.

Occupation (SOC code)	Number employed in Eau Claire	% of Eau Claire Total Employed	E.C. Annual mean wage	E.C. Employed % over US Employed %	E. C. Annual mean wage adjusted for cost of living (EC = 95.8% of US*)	EC adjusted mean wage/US mean wage (\$44,410)
Management Occupations(110000)	3090	4.10%	\$82,360	0.86	85971	0.82
Business and Financial Operations Occupations(130000)	3350	4.44%	\$56,680	0.93	59165	0.87
Computer and Mathematical Occupations(150000)	1570	2.08%	\$58,320	0.81	60877	0.79
Architecture and Engineering Occupations(170000)	1190	1.58%	\$61,570	0.87	64269	0.85
Community and Social Service Occupations(210000)	910	1.21%	\$43,540	0.81	45449	1.05
Legal Occupations(230000)	220	0.29%	\$77,900	0.37	81315	0.84
Education Training and Library Occupations(250000)	4540	6.02%	\$45,450	0.90	47443	0.94

Opportunities

Strengths and weaknesses describe present and mostly internal qualities of the Eau Claire economic environment. The opportunities and threats sections look outside the community. The City of Eau Claire area offers many opportunities to gain on the competitors. Under-utilized natural resources count among them. Eau Claire is home to miles of undeveloped lakefront and riverfront property. New bike trails have opened up scenic and well-visited parks for visitors in recent years (City of Eau Claire Parks Department, 2011). Businesses like Royal Credit Union have also used the riverfront as backdrops for new offices, such as the Royal Credit Union headquarters along the Chippewa River. Yet large tracts of under-used property within view of wooded river and lake banks hold the possibility for further development (City of Eau Claire, 2005, pp. 2-4 – 2-5). This includes waterways outside of the inner city, such as Otter and Sherman Creek (p. 2-25).

A second natural opportunity results from the high quality of soil along the city outskirts (EDC, 2011). The soil provides an economic incentive to continue farming and limit growth along the fringes, thus setting up a de facto Urban Growth Boundary, or UGB. Proponents say UGB's promote denser development that, among other benefits, reduce damage to the natural environment, make mass transit more feasible and ease infrastructure expenses (Liberty, 1997).

Other opportunities come from technology and the job market. Eau Claire's "Brain Drain" is partially the result of young adults moving to big cities to seek a greater variety of employment opportunities and leisure activities (Downtown Eau Claire, Inc.). But the gap in employment opportunities between Eau Claire and, say, Los Angeles, is shrinking. The reason is that more people are telecommuting; 2.18 percent of the entire US workforce, not counting the 40 percent of businesses that are home-based, telecommute as of 2008 (Telework Research Network, 2008). As these jobs don't require one to be physically present at normal worksites, obtaining such a job requires no relocation.

Technology also decreases the need to relocate for shopping and entertainment. Large movie theaters, shopping malls and video arcades used to draw in visitors from far away. They were a major reason for moving from a small town to a large one. Big cities no longer hold such an advantage with these venues. First, weekly movie theater attendance has fallen from 65 percent of the population in 1930 to 9.7 percent in 2000. More movies are viewed at home (Pautz, 2002). Second, online shopping eliminates the need to be near goods in order to buy them, though the act of shopping at an exotic location remains a draw for some consumers. Compared to bigger cities, Eau Claire is losing much of its shopping and entertainment disadvantages, though it also means residents of small towns have a lower need to visit.

A final technology-related opportunity is the growing access to education. In the 1980's, Eau Claire residents had two choices for higher education institutions. In the 1990's online institutions began rapid growth in enrollment and legitimacy. Schools like Capella University and the University of Phoenix educate tens of thousands of students yearly in hundreds of accredited programs (University of Phoenix, 2011). Internet access is the only obstacle for attending these institutions. As the online education continues to expand, access to higher education institutions will be less of a factor in where instructors and students choose to live. Eau Claire has an established university culture, which planners could utilize in draw in online education providers and students.

The growth of telecommunications opens the possibility for Eau Claire students to find local employment after graduation; provided employers are aware of the lower than average cost of living and higher than average supply of potential college educated applicants.

Along with the natural and technology opportunities, Eau Claire's location as the most direct land route between Minneapolis and Chicago opens the possibility that the region may become a priority for transit improvements. Eau Claire sits on one of two routes for a proposed high speed commuter rail line between Minnesota and Illinois (WQOW, 2010).

A final opportunity is Eau Claire's growing share of the global economy, at least prior to the Recession. Real annual growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was of 3.3percent between 2001 and 2008 (EconPost, 2010), which exceeded the average global growth rate of 2.9 percent (World Bank, 2011). While losing its share of global population, Eau Claire gained its share of global wealth. If Dr. Florida's model is correct, the City is in a good position to retain or enhance its place among the 'spikes'.

Threats

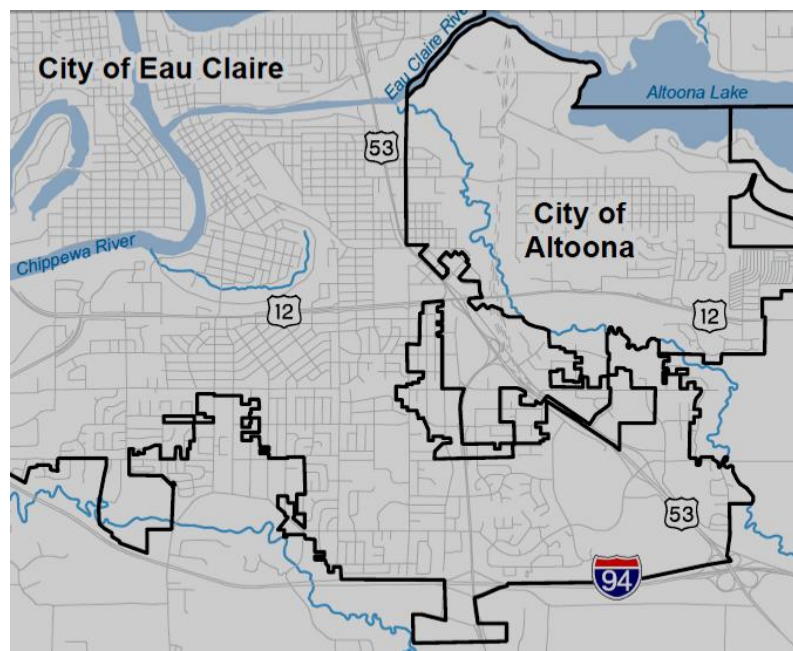
To make Eau Claire a more effective player in the new urban economic climate, additions to the comprehensive plan must also guard against threats that could impact the City's physical appearance, demographic makeup and resource availability.

Global climate change represents a physical threat. Climate change will likely cause an increase in severe rain and snowstorms (City of Eau Claire, 2009, p. 15-1), causing more frequent and severe river flooding. Updates to the plan need to prepare to protect development along the river from the danger, as the rivers and properties along them are key assets for the city.

If a major storm damage occurs, the City of Eau Claire will have less outside help in long-term community recovery due a second threat; the loss of state and federal grants. With state and federal budgets strained, there is increased pressure to cut support for local governments further. UW-Eau Claire and the Chippewa Valley Technical College, major assets of the community, are also affected by dwindling state support. Wisconsin college students continue to pay a growing share of their education (Mianulli, 2010), and a risk exists that other states – and other countries – may offer more competitive

prices for the same quality of education. Potential competition from online universities exacerbates this risk.

Competition over these dwindling resources could further hamper cooperation between Eau Claire and surrounding communities. The City already struggles to coordinate land use plans with neighboring townships, one cause of sprawl in the mostly rural Township of Union, where uncoordinated land use plans prevent dense development. Lack of cooperation with the City of Altoona and Eau Claire County has contributed to a jagged city boundary (City of Eau Claire, 2011).



(Excerpt from the 2003 Environmental Analysis, p. 1-4)

Urban sprawl is another risk to Eau Claire. Wisconsin Planning Guidelines see sprawl as a strain on civic resources and a detriment to the quality of life (Smart Growth America, 2010). Accelerated sprawl is a distinct possibility. The number of housing units per population is already increasing (City of Eau Claire, 2005); each person requires more land. A recovery in the real estate market would aid the physical dispersal of Eau Claire residents. As the city has an exceptionally low commute times (ECDC, 2011), increases in gas price are less likely to hold back future residential construction spurts. On the business and retail side, empty lots line the half-dozen or so exits along the Highway 53 Bypass, a new thoroughfare that lines the eastern outskirts of town.

In addition to preparing for bad weather, loss of external support and urban sprawl, the city must also contend with future challenges common to most U.S. communities; including rising health care costs for employees and declining revenue from an aging tax base. While (pre-Recession) City and US GDP has been on the rise, so has the age of the population (US Census, 2011). The elderly population will likely constitute a greater proportion of the Eau Claire population in coming years.

Technology and global trade, for all their benefits, also threaten to decrease employment in Eau Claire's largest industries. The region lost thousands of Uniroyal tire workers to foreign trade. It lost hundreds of Hutchinson Technology workers due in part to technology-induced changes to the market. As noted, over 7,000 area residents work in the Production sector, 50 percent more than the US average for a region of equal size (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010), and the stories of Hutchinson and Uniroyal layoffs highlight the volatility of these industries.

This SWOT analysis is far from exhaustive, but it does present an assorted array of major topics for Comprehensive Plan reviewers to consider in weighing the merits of the paper recommendations. The next section adds a human element to the climate analysis.

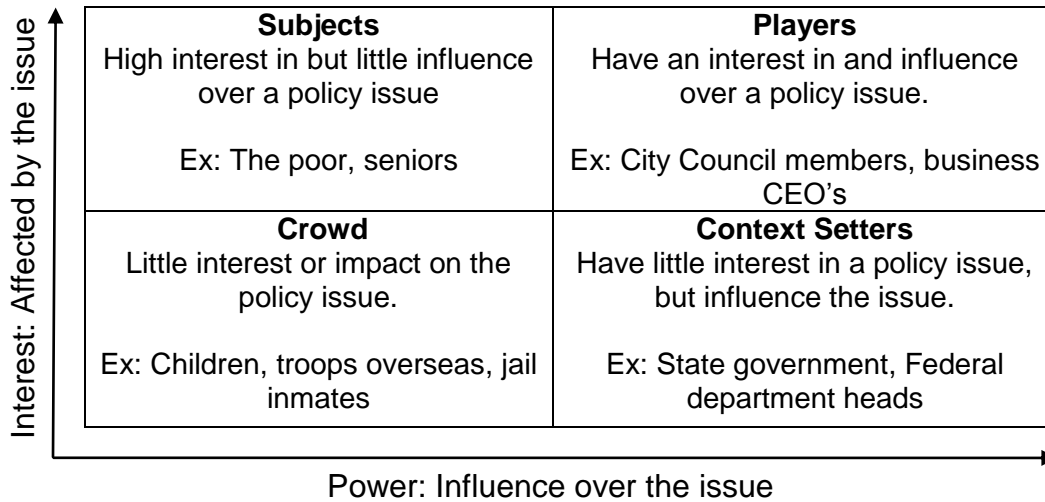
Stakeholder Analysis

Behind every strategic issue are individual or groups who are affected, or are responsible, or both. The purpose of stakeholder analysis is to determine help “organizations meet their mandates, fulfill their missions, and create public value” (Bryson, 2005, p. 335). With stakeholder analysis it is possible to uncover key stakeholders in each issue. By doing so, it is possible to focus efforts on behalf of policy change on the individuals that matter most.

A proper stakeholder analysis begins with an overview of who these people and organizations are. For this paper I listed organizations frequently cited in the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan, the 2003 Climate Review, and Chamber of Commerce data, and created the following list of groups, their interests and their sources of power:

Stakeholder	Possible Interests	Possible Sources of Power
Eau Claire Government	The City of Eau Claire mission. Obtaining resources necessary to accomplish it.	State law. Public support.
Eau Claire School Board	The City of Eau Claire mission. Obtaining resources necessary to accomplish it. City demographics.	State law. Public support. 3,000+ employees. Thousands of students served.
UW-Eau Claire and Chippewa Valley Technical College.	Access to state resources. Quality housing. Park and recreation venues. Role within the city.	11000+ students Employ ~3,000 people. Major source of culture and quality of life.
Neighborhood Associations	Quality of life issues, property values, urban layout.	A small but active and energized group of citizens.
Neighboring Governments	Community resources, street layout, development along outskirts.	Ability to block projects, or share resources
Eau Claire County	Urban sprawl. Facilities for the courthouse.	Court system. Land management along city outskirts.
State of Wisconsin	Roadway infrastructure, tax revenue, public higher education institutions within city limits	State regulations, influence over infrastructure, the public universities and control of grants.
Federal Government	Stable local economy and tax revenues.	Federal regulations, influence over infrastructure, the public universities and control of grants.
Nonprofit (nonmedical) Organizations	Low taxes. Access to city amenities (roads, transit). Growing market for services. Quality local labor force.	Provide needed services to residents, active in local government
Luther and Sacred Heart Hospital	Educated workforce, demand for services, infrastructure	Employs 4,500+ people. Serves a growing portion of the population.
Business Associations (COC, Downtown, Water St., etc.)	Improved business environments, city investment in development, local economic growth, supply of labor	They are active local lobbies that represent businesses employing thousands of people.
Large private employers	Low taxes. Access to city amenities (roads, transit). Growing market for services. Quality local labor force.	Top 3 employ ~7,000 people. Tax revenue.
Small private employers	Low taxes. Access to city amenities (roads, transit). Growing market for services. Quality local labor force.	Less than major employers, but collectively make up a large portion of local workforce.
Potential employers.	Low taxes. Access to city amenities (roads, transit). Growing market for services. Quality local labor force.	Employment for local citizens, tax revenue.
Potential residents	Quality of life, school system, local economy, tax rates, cost of living, low taxes.	Potential tax base. Freedom to relocate.
Current residents	Quality of life, school system, local economy, tax rates, cost of living, low taxes.	Ability to vote. Freedom to relocate.
Tourists and shoppers	Variety of goods, availability of prices	Disposable income.

This information was then used to create a Power Versus Interest Grid, which places stakeholders into four groups based on relative influence (power) over an issue, or interest in the issue (p. 338). A Power-Interest Grid is an effective tool for categorizing key stakeholders. These groups are summarized here:



Note that power and interest are subjective measures, and that not all stakeholders fit perfectly into each category. For example, senior citizens have considerable influence when they vote, so this stakeholder group could fit inside either the Subject or Player box depending on the situation.

Player Stakeholders

Eau Claire’s inter-urban competitive issues have players in the public, private and nonprofit sector. A key public player is the City of Eau Claire. It initiates and holds ultimate responsibility for the comprehensive plan. Other public stakeholders are neighboring local governments. The ability of the comprehensive plan to make a positive impact on the Eau Claire economy has a direct effect upon the financial wellbeing of adjacent communities, as both belong to the same economic region (ECDC, 2011). Likewise, the actions of the Chippewa Falls, Lake Hallie, Altoona and Eau Claire and Chippewa County governments can have significant implications for how the Eau Claire government operates. This is especially true when it comes to coordinating public services, infrastructure and development (City of Eau Claire, 2005).

Other public players are the two public colleges in Eau Claire: Chippewa Valley Technical College and UW-Eau Claire. These institutions employ 1,750 instructors and support staff and serve 17,000 students (Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce, 2011). They affect the surrounding community by bringing in entertainment venues, employing educated professors, and altering the age demographic of various neighborhoods. They are affected by the Eau Claire city government in many ways, including provision of recreation areas, zoning laws, off-campus security, and mass transit options.

A list from the Eau Claire Economic Development Corporation helps identify the remaining players by virtue of the number of workers they employ:

	Employer	Service/product	Employed	Sector
1	Menard Inc	Home centers	4,500	Private
2	Luther Hospital/Midelfort Clinic	General medical & surgical hospitals	3,000+	Nonprofit
3	Eau Claire Area School District	Elementary & secondary schools	1,700	Public
4	University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire	Colleges & universities	1,450	Public
5	Hutchinson Technology Inc	Computer storage device manufacturing	1,400	Private
6	Sacred Heart Hospital	General medical & surgical hospitals	1,350	Nonprofit
7	Chippewa Valley Technical College	Junior colleges	1,300	Public
8	United Healthcare Services Inc	Direct health & medical insurance carriers	1,191	Private

Source : www.eauclairedvelopment.com/employment/areaemployers.html. The 'Sector' column has been added by the author.

The above table highlights the large private companies that play a critical role in a city's ability to compete in the global, 'flat' economic environment. The consequences for losing a major employer were made clear by the loss of the Uniroyal tire factory in the early 1990's (Wirtz, 2005). They are likewise affected by urban policy changes, involving taxation, transit infrastructure, and education of the workforce and the like. Along with existing businesses, potential employers are another key group of players, as attracting them is vital to sustaining the tax base.

The local nonprofit sector also has its share of player stakeholders. The largest among these are Luther Hospital, Eau Claire's second largest employer, and Sacred Heart Hospital (EDC, 2010). Other nonprofits are players because of the role they take in civic policy formation. Some of these nonprofits, like the Third Ward Neighborhood Association and Chippewa Valley Homebuilders Association, had

members on the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. Nonprofits like the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce are repositories of information and energetic issue advocates.

Subject Stakeholders

Subjects lack influence over policy issues, but knowing who these stakeholders are helps provide additional moral background behind civic change. These are the stakeholders who need outside help with having their needs met. And today's subjects could be tomorrow's players.

The Eau Claire political and economic scene is large enough to include subjects from the public, private and nonprofit sectors. A significant public subject to consider is the Eau Claire Area School District. The District is a major regional employer (Eau Claire School District, 2011) and has much involvement in the life of the community. Buildings house public events, and the needs of the district attract much attention from the City government. The school district is not a player because, for all its involvement, it is heavily influenced by outside forces. The children they serve are determined by the number of children in the city; their revenue is influenced by property values of homeowners; and their performance standards are increasingly dictated by State and Federal mandates. At the same time, the School District is not a powerless subject. The organization employs hundreds of staff, serves thousands of children and controls millions of dollars. Here is a reminder that stakeholders do not all fall exactly into one category or another, but do so by degrees.

The private sector subjects are the small businesses and nonprofits; establishments that individually hold a small share of the economic activity in the Eau Claire area yet are greatly affected by the supply of customers, demand for services and availability of urban amenities (parking access) and regulations (liquor licenses).

A final group of subjects are apolitical individuals in town. Urban taxes, services and amenities affect individual citizens in countless ways, yet those who choose to remain inactive in the community life are subjects by choice. Policy should address their needs, but their input has a limited role.

Context Setter Stakeholders

The value in understanding context setters is that these stakeholders help set the bounds of what is and isn't possible. When context setter buy-in is needed for a policy change, it is often necessary to get their attention. When buy-in isn't possible, local governments can find ways to implement the policy without violating the formal and informal rules set by the context setter.

The state and federal government are primary context-setter stakeholders. Eau Claire contains a small percentage of the population and wealth of Wisconsin, so has little impact on state government. State regulations and resources, however, have a significant, often immediate effect on the city. Intergovernmental aid comprises 23% of the 2011 City revenues (City of Eau Claire Department of Finance, 2010, p. B-18).

Eau Claire has an even smaller impact on the Federal government, an entity that has direct influence over infrastructure like Interstate 94 and regulations like income tax rates. It also employs people in two military headquarters, the Post Office branch downtown, and other areas.

Other context setters are potential businesses. Eau Claire is one of many possible locations for them. The difference between Eau Claire and another city could hinge upon something as small as the unemployment rate or proximity to the nearest airport. Location in Eau Claire versus elsewhere matters little to a business because other towns offer similar benefits. For Eau Claire, the relocation of an industry could alter the local economy by millions in tax revenue and hundreds of jobs. Like potential businesses, potential residents are potential context setters if viewed as a collective. A given group of 500 people could choose to locate to Eau Claire and have a major impact on the economy.

Crowd Stakeholders

Obtaining stakeholder support consumes time, money and effort. With so many groups and individuals to consider, a risk exists that planners will waste resources gaining buy-in from irrelevant supporters. Identifying the crowd stakeholders prevents city leaders from wasting effort where it effort isn't needed. Crowd stakeholders lack influence or interest in a policy outcome. Among them are children, who are more directly affected by the actions of parents, military members who hold Eau Claire addresses but serve elsewhere, or individuals with long-term mental illness or criminal records.

Between the types of stakeholders, their power and influence, it is notable how such a variety of stakeholders is involved in an issue as specific as comprehensive planning for a competitive global economy. The SWOT and stakeholder analysis are common activities conducted in Stage Four of the Strategy Change Cycle. They attempt to establish a coherent picture of the internal and external influences upon an organization, or city in this case. The next step in the Cycle uses the information to identify specific needs.

Strategic Issues in the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan

Strategy Change Cycle Step Five results in identification of the strategic issues, or areas of disconnect, between the Comprehensive Plan and the City environment. Identification of these involved a chapter-by-chapter review of how the Plan meets the challenge of global competition; the mission and mandates; the internal and external climate of the region; and the individuals involved. In this section each issue is described and then compared against the mission and mandates of the Plan, the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in the city environment, and the affected stakeholders.

Housing and fringe growth

A comparison of the Plan against Eau Claire's internal and external environment found issues where economic conditions have changed since the 2005 draft. This is understandable, since the expense of creating such a lengthy and all-inclusive document make annual revision neither necessary nor practical. Meanwhile, the national economy continues to change, particularly in the housing market. Housing is a very relevant issue in Eau Claire's ability to attract businesses and residents in the modern global economy, as the status of housing affects tax revenue, demand for community services and the quality of life of residents (Smart Growth America, 2010). Home prices influence urban density, development and sprawl. When gas prices surged and the housing market collapsed, the growth of urban sprawl halted in some communities (Schalch, 2008). 2007, 2008 and 2009 home construction in Eau Claire was drastically lower than pre-Bust construction, and single-family home construction – units that tend to require more land per person than other types of housing – was hit most heavily (City of Eau

Claire, 2009). This easing of a major component of urban fringe growth is something the 2005 Plan does not anticipate, though a turnaround in the housing market could renew the challenge. To better consider changes in housing, the Plan needs to address the following areas:

Mission	Information for decisions on housing and fringe growth are among the primary objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
Mandate	The Plan has a role aiding public expenditure for zoning, growth management and development.
Strengths	Eau Claire’s short commute times counter the problem of fringe growth.
Weaknesses	Like other communities, Eau Claire has lost tax revenue from the decline in the housing market.
Opportunities	The decreased pressure to grow outward is eased, bringing opportunities to develop the city core.
Threats	An unstable housing market has had consequences in the past. Ongoing changes are likely to continue to bring new challenges to the local economy.
Stakeholders	Construction and real estate employees are affected, but the reduced pressure of fringe growth eases tension between Eau Claire and neighboring communities.

Teleworking and internet-based services

Another post-2005 development is the increase in teleworking employees, or employees providing remote services. As mentioned earlier, the number of workers providing services from home or remote locations is expanding rapidly. For now the types of companies affected by online commerce are limited. Businesses relying on products and face-to-face services, such as medical, education and manufacturing firms, contain some of Eau Claire’s largest employers (Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce), and are unlikely to be replaced in the immediate future. However, the unpredictability and speed of e-commerce caught book and entertainment providers, like Borders and Blockbuster, off guard. There is no telling whether the next internet-driven industry shift will affect Eau Claire’s largest employers. The first medical surgeries, for example, are already being performed online with remote controlled machines (Robotic Telesurgery, 2011). If Eau Claire utilizes its (potentially) educated workforce to take advantage of ecommerce and telecommunications-based services, then it has the potential to acquire significant gains in tax revenue. This opens an opportunity for the 2015 Plan revisers to consider the following areas:

Mission	The Comprehensive Plan was created to inform local policy makers on economic decisions. Growing telecommuting industries affect the Eau Claire economy.
Mandate	The Plan is intended to offer information for guiding local policy makers' decisions on meeting anticipated economic challenges.
Strengths	Eau Claire's diverse economy minimizes the impact of the collapse of any one industry.
Weaknesses	The City cannot anticipate every change.
Opportunities	New growth industries could be a boon to the region, as there is a large supply of college students.
Threats	Massive layoffs have affected Eau Claire manufacturing industries. Future layoffs could also occur.
Stakeholders	Local college students looking for employment, potential area employers, and area businesses sourcing more operations to telework are stakeholders that the plan can consider.

Downtown Revitalization

Some gaps between the 2005 Plan and present conditions involve issues that the community is already resolving. One of these is downtown revitalization, a subject that appears frequently. While there remains plenty of room for improvement in this neighborhood, particularly in the under-utilized Banbury Place business park, the community is making good progress in fulfilling the objectives of the Downtown Chapter and is freer to focus on other need-points – such as global urban competition. Planners in 2015 are therefore free to determine how to best harness the opportunities that a revitalized downtown has to offer, bringing the need for more attention in the following areas:

Mission	The Plan applies to all parts of the city, so as needs of neighborhoods change, the Plan must shift its focus.
Mandate	The Plan is expected to address new objectives as old ones reach completion.
Strengths	The success of Downtown revitalization demonstrates the ability of the Community to address a complex need and accomplish a major objective.
Weaknesses	The number of issues the community can handle is limited.
Opportunities	The degree of success in revitalizing downtown can be applied to other need-spots in the city.
Threats	Uneven neighborhood growth rates, particularly slow-growing districts near the city center, may become future areas of need if left neglected.
Stakeholders	Downtown area employers may see a shift in community support, but also benefit from greater commerce in the central business district. Influential stakeholders with interests in other parts of the community may see an opportunity to gain greater attention from community leaders.

Global economy

Other gaps between the Plan and present economic conditions happen where the severity of the impact is understated. One such issue is the risk of losing industrial jobs in a global economy. The Economic Development Chapter cites “Dynamic Global Economy” as one of the objectives. The recommended policies are limited to a brief mention, displayed in its entirety below:

1. **Development Areas:** Monitor local and regional development trends and absorption rates; adjust development strategies, policies, and investments to maintain a diverse and competitive inventory of development sites and buildings.
2. **Incentive Programs:** Monitor changing economic conditions and regional trends; review and update economic development finance, incentive, and technical assistance tools. Target incentives to businesses that provide higher wage jobs with benefits.
3. **Organization:** Periodically review how economic development programs are organized and delivered; adjust to reflect changes in economic conditions or community priorities; identify opportunities to deliver services more effectively and efficiently (p. 7-3).

The primary Economic Development Chapter approach to the global economy, as mentioned three times in the section above, is to keep track of global economy issues. The only specific action to address current (2005) conditions is to target employers that offer high wage jobs (City of Eau Claire, 2005, pp. 7-3 – 7-4). Few, if any, recommendations on the global economy exist in other chapters or sections. Of the 2003 Environmental Analysis, a threat is noted that, “Loss of manufacturing employment due to competition from China and other low cost locations” (City of Eau Claire, 2003 p. 8-29).

The lack of content about the global economy is puzzling. Eau Claire has gained and lost thousands of jobs due to global economic conditions in recent decades, losing factory jobs to inexpensive foreign labor and gaining jobs due to the highly educated workforces, noted earlier in this paper. The global economy is a major factor in the vitality of the city. Such a disjuncture could be understood if global issues were outside scope of the Comprehensive Plan. But global issues aren't. The second longest chapter of the plan, the Sustainability Chapter, includes detailed analysis of Eau Claire's global environmental impact and provides numerous policy recommendations. Planners in 2015 can remedy this inconsistency by adding content on Eau Claire's place in the global economy in the Economic Development chapter. Other areas to consider are:

Mission	The Comprehensive Plan informs local policy makers on economic decisions, and needs to better consider external factors like global competition.
Mandate	Governments need to be involved in the regional economy, as the public and private sector are more intertwined.
Strengths	Eau Claire lies within a prosperous and educated part of the world and has a good position when viewed from a global perspective.
Weaknesses	Eau Claire has an excess of low paying and local-focused jobs despite having an educated population.
Opportunities	Flat or spiky, the global economy is more relevant than ever. Eau Claire has much to gain from greater participation.
Threats	If the City fails to participate, there is a risk that other places will.
Stakeholders	All major area employers are affected by changes in the global market.

Manufacturing

Another gap is that the 2005 Plan contains objectives on retaining local manufacturing firms. Manufacturing, still a major factor in the City economy and employing over 7,000 Eau Claire area workers (D.O.L, 2010), holds limited growth prospects for the future. The Economic Chapter stresses the importance of preserving Eau Claire’s existing industrial base (2005). This includes ongoing direct and indirect public support for four manufacturing-oriented business parks along the outskirts of the city (EDC, 2010, p. 9). “Low percentage of manufacturing” is labeled a Weakness in the 2003 Environmental Analysis (2003, p. 8-29). There is no doubt that manufacturing is and will continue to play a role in Eau Claire’s and the US economy for decades. Yet, as the manufacturing sector lost its prominence in the Eau Claire economy (EDC), the City’s share of total global (and US) GDP went up (World Bank). The relationship fits Dr. Florida’s ‘spiky’ world model, in which wealth accumulates in communities that produce inventions and innovations, rather than material goods (2005). 2015 Comprehensive Plan reviewers need to closely review how changes can better match the low wage, slow growth and volatility of the manufacturing or production occupation sector by considering these areas:

Mission	Helping leaders make sound decisions on economic policy is a key part of the Plan mission.
Mandate	The Economic Development Chapter recommends target industries, so focus on specific business categories is within the Plan mandate.
Strengths	The high proportion of college educated young adults in Eau Claire can be better utilized if civic priorities move away from manufacturing.
Weaknesses	The existence of a strong manufacturing base means that it is difficult to reduce city dependence on it without extensive physical changes.
Opportunities	A shift away from manufacturing opens the possibility of growth and modernization of the local economy.
Threats	If Eau Claire retains a high proportion of manufacturing jobs, there is a risk that other communities will develop clusters of industry that attract more growth, leaving Eau Claire at a disadvantage.
Stakeholders	The city government is affected, as manufacturing requires extensive infrastructure improvements and upkeep, but the wages they generate are lower than average. The college students and potential employers also have much to gain from the region and give to the region if the community cuts back efforts to attract and retain manufacturing.

Consideration of stakeholders

A final gap that prevents the comprehensive plan from achieving best fit between Eau Claire and its environment is probably endemic to the comprehensive planning process itself. The stakeholder

analysis section of this report shows a large number of diverse groups that affect Eau Claire’s ability to compete in the global economy. The comprehensive plan addresses each of these stakeholders to varying degree, but except for intergovernmental cooperation objectives, stakeholders are seldom the focus of Plan action items. The mission of the Plan is to “guide public spending” on capital improvements and economic initiatives (City of Eau Claire). Bridge lanes, parks and budget line items are not stakeholders. But stakeholders do determine the location of the bridge, the open hours of the park and the size of the budget. As Bryson notes, addressing stakeholder needs is a crucial task an organization (2004, p. 35).

Mission	The mission statement lists numerous stakeholders.
Mandate	Wisconsin planning law leaves room for 2015 planners to orient the final document toward meeting stakeholder needs.
Strengths	ability of EC to create good, adaptable plans
Weaknesses	The current plan under-considers stakeholders like potential residents, potential employers, and communities that may draw them away from Eau Claire.
Opportunities	opening a stakeholder view enables many new opportunities for orgs/groups willing to assist with previously unforeseen projects
Threats	As the nature of comprehensive planning changes, other cities may alter their plans to become more effective guides for inter-urban competition, and leave Eau Claire behind.
Stakeholders	Other cities are the stakeholder to consider. Eau Claire needs an effective comprehensive plan to stay ahead of other communities in a competitive world.

Between the issues of housing and fringe growth uncertainty, telecommuting opportunities, successful downtown revitalization, insufficient attention to global economic issues, over-abundance of manufacturing jobs and [opportunities for rail one], [planners have a lot to consider in 2015]. The next stage of this paper, in line with Step Six of the Strategy Change Cycle, presents the recommendation as a remedy for these issues.

Recommendations

Previous sections of this paper explain how the challenge of a competitive global economy grants success to cities that have educated and high-income individuals. The Comprehensive Plan is presented as tool to help Eau Claire leaders meet that challenge. An internal and external analysis shows the city as one with a high population of college students, but low population of college-educated adults. The community is also gaining a greater share of global wealth as its manufacturing-based economy transforms into a service based economy. All the while, an eclectic mix of stakeholders in the public,

private and nonprofit sectors, along with individual citizens, influences the shape of civic policies. The Strategic Issues section identifies gaps where the Plan does not fully address global competition.

The stage of the Strategy Change Cycle that follows Strategic Issues, Strategy Formulation offers a solution to the issues. I believe the best way the Comprehensive Plan can meet the challenge of inter-urban competition is to promote re-alignment of the local workforce so that employees are distributed in higher-paying occupations that though attracting telecommuters.

The anticipated outcome, after the Plan has been altered and ideas implemented, is a community that has a distribution of employment in industries that offer high wages compared to the U.S. average. The U.S. is used as the benchmark because it holds the largest economy for a country and is a very ‘spiky’ area for education and technology (Florida, 2005), though ambitious planners can set higher standards if conditions make them feasible. High wages would fuel the tax revenue needed to accomplish civic objectives and the disposable income to fuel the local economy. The ratio of Eau Claire jobs in legal, financial and management occupations would need to grow at the expense of production, food service and sales jobs to accomplish this distribution, which would resemble this ideal:

Occupation (SOC code)	Annual mean wage	% Employed: E.C.	% Employed: US	E. C. Ideal distribution
Management Occupations(110000)	\$82,360	4.10%	4.67%	4.67% or more
Legal Occupations(230000)	\$77,900	0.29%	0.47%	0.47% or more
Healthcare Practitioners & Tech (290000)	\$63,980	6.06%	5.76%	5.76% or more
Architecture and Engineering (170000)	\$61,570	1.58%	1.79%	1.79% or more
Computer and Mathematical (150000)	\$58,320	2.08%	2.48%	2.48% or more
Business and Financial Ops. (130000)	\$56,680	4.44%	4.75%	4.75% or more
Life Physical & Social Science (190000)	\$56,120	0.41%	0.62%	0.62% or more
Education Training and Library (250000)	\$45,450	6.02%	6.62%	6.62% or more
Construction and Extraction (470000)	\$44,310	3.27%	3.86%	3.86% or more
Community and Social Service (210000)	\$43,540	1.21%	1.44%	1.44% or more
Installation Maint. & Repair (490000)	\$39,990	3.35%	3.82%	3.82% or more
Protective Service Occupations(330000)	\$37,790	2.09%	2.45%	2.45% or more
All occupations	\$37,110	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Arts Design Ent. & Media (270000)	\$34,340	0.93%	1.22%	1.22% or less
Production Occupations(510000)	\$31,830	9.78%	4.79%	4.79% or less
Farming Fishing & Forestry(450000)	\$30,110	0.13%	0.21%	0.21% or less
Office and Admin. Support (430000)	\$29,610	15.31%	16.84%	16.84% or less
Sales and Related Occupations(410000)	\$29,030	12.50%	10.25%	10.25% or less
Transportation & Mat. Moving (530000)	\$28,350	6.63%	6.70%	6.70% or less
Healthcare Support (310000)	\$25,270	5.00%	2.00%	2.00% or less
Building and Grounds Cleaning (370000)	\$23,800	2.86%	3.23%	3.23% or less
Personal Care and Service (390000)	\$22,650	2.49%	2.69%	2.69% or less
Food Preparation and Serving (350000)	\$19,500	9.48%	8.63%	8.63% or less

The chart has a clear problem at first glance: It is difficult to attract more educators and researchers without the institutions to house them, and managers will not move to a community where there are few companies with employees to manage. Telecommuting is the workaround. With telecommuting it is possible for an Eau Claire attorney to distribute a growing range of services to clients in California, or an architect to draft a church in Dublin, or an online instructor to lecture a student in Kuwait. Telecommuting workers can help Eau Claire come closer accomplish an ideal distribution of employment without having to first undertake expensive and extensive physical change.

As fast as the telecommuting is growing, it is not going to transform the U.S. workforce overnight. A World at Work.org survey shows that, of 28 million telecommuters in the country, only about half perform 80 percent or more of their tasks exclusively via telecommuting. The rest engaged in telework part of the time, and the number of full and part-time telecommuters is increasing by about four million per year (2010). Most white collar employees will not be full-time telecommuters in the next decade. But Eau Claire does not need a major increase. The difference between the Eau Claire area current and the ideal workforce distribution, noted in the previous chart, amounts to 7.6 percent, or about 5,800 people. To accomplish the goal in ten years would require a shift of 580 jobs per year, which is slightly more than the number of new residents the City of Eau Claire gains each year through net birth and migration.

To attain this distribution, I recommend the following changes to the Comprehensive Plan:

Economic development priorities: The plan should stress a gradual reduction in percentage of residents engaged in manufacturing occupations. This could include plans to reduce support of the industrial parks along the city outskirts, and development of office space in the city center.

New target industries should be businesses that rely upon telecommunication infrastructure, such as online consultants or distance learning companies. The Plan can also establish target residents. A target resident is one of the 14 million U.S. teleworkers who earn a higher-than-average income (World at Work) and do not need to be in physical proximity to their superiors or customers. A section should be

added to describe Eau Claire's relationship with the global economy, to will keep community leaders attuned to the changing opportunities and risks involving the workforce.

Infrastructure priorities: Explore city-wide wifi to create a tech friendly atmosphere. A greater focus on telework business will mean that more Eau Claire companies will produce products that are knowledge-based and less consumptive of space and natural resources. Infrastructure priorities can therefore refocus toward quality of life amenities (recreation and entertainment facilities, trails, public spaces), and less on traditional commerce needs (rail connections, electricity needs, roads for big trucks).

The current plan stresses the need for better road links between inner city businesses and the highways. A new objective could be to stress the need for better road links between the city parks and rivers and the highway. It would not be a major priority shift, as many businesses are near parks and rivers anyway, and road re-alignment will enable greater access to Eau Claire's natural assets.

Land use priorities: Promotion of riverfront park and office space development will facilitate attractive work environments for telework companies as well as create an environment attractive to new employees and residents.

Planning process changes: The needs and capabilities of stakeholders should be included in publications. The trend in comprehensive planning is for greater stakeholder analysis and more overt stakeholder consideration. Each chapter could list the individuals and organizations needed for success for each objective. Knowing stakeholder interests will help city leaders determine if an objective is imperative, feasible, or impossible to achieve.

With the recommendations defined and specific changes listed, the reader may wonder why using telecommuting to alter the makeup of Eau Claire's employment opportunities is the best option for altering the plan. The Mission and Mandate of the Comprehensive Plan make a wide selection of alternatives possible. Planners could add a section that calls for lower taxes and less regulation on businesses. They could focus on quality of life issues; investments in park space and the school district. They could target high-tech production firms. They could promote culture and attract Dr. Florida's 'creative class' with plan priorities for the oft-discussed convention center. Many of these options have

qualities that could make the Plan better address Eau Claire's role in the competitive global economy. It is possible that an option not considered by this author is the best option. Regardless, the recommendations proposed in this paper address not only the internal and external environmental inputs affecting the city, but also answers the needs of key stakeholders and contains solutions for each of the strategic issues.

The recommendations first align with the Comprehensive Plan mission to guide the city leaders to make changes that affect local economy. The Plan mandate is also met, as the recommendations are not an extreme measure or one that requires the Plan to hold more authority than it possesses.

Not all environmental factors are addressed by these recommendations. Eau Claire's location along I-94 may make it more likely for new employees and employers to arrive, but does little in a world where geography is less relevant to commerce and migration. The same applies for Eau Claire's role as the largest city in a wide geographic area. The need for a better street layout remains, as the presence of teleworkers and online businesses does nothing to alter the street pattern. Uneven neighborhood growth rates will have to be addressed, particularly if the recommendation is successful and Eau Claire gets an influx of wealthier residents. Altering the makeup of one community's workforce would also have little impact on global climate change, though growth of manufacturing would limit local pollution and natural resource consumption. The risk of flooding will need to be addressed, since Eau Claire's waterfront would play a greater role in economic development. An aging population and growing health care expenses are other unmet threats. That said, the chart below notes the numerous strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are addressed:

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths that are utilized</p> <p>Parkland/Scenery: High quality parks in a city with a low cost of living can attract teleworkers. Low infrastructure needs for online businesses enable the City to enhance this strength.</p> <p>Higher Ed Institutions: Potential labor supply.</p> <p>Diversified Economy: A pool of trained workers already exists for a variety of industries.</p> <p>Short Commute: Another quality that makes it possible to attract teleworkers</p> <p>Growing share of global GDP: The community is in a 'spiky' part of the world, so has a climate friendly to new knowledge-based development.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses that are circumvented</p> <p>Cold Climate: Winter storms are less likely to cause absenteeism for teleworkers. Online businesses are able to function because employees and customers are located in climates around the country and world.</p> <p>Lack of highly educated 25-34 year-olds: The recommendation promotes jobs for them, and intends to attract this group.</p> <p>Shrinking share of global population: Economic growth increases population. If successful the recommendation will do just this.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities that are harnessed</p> <p>Undeveloped lake and riverfront properties: Office and park development will utilize these spaces.</p> <p>Sprawl-limiting soil on outskirts: The recommendation calls for development of dense and small offices in the urban core.</p> <p>Greater telecommuting options and growth of geography-independent services: More teleworkers in town does just this.</p> <p>Greater access to online services: The recommendation opens more Eau Claire area operations to these new opportunities.</p> <p>Possible commuter rail: A better Eau Claire economy makes the city a more viable destination.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats that are avoided</p> <p>Uncoordinated land use along the outskirts and sprawl: The recommendation drives demand for land close to the center of town</p> <p>International competition: More educated and high-income residents providing online services will enable Eau Claire to grow, acquire tax revenue to meet civic objectives, and draw in employers.</p>

Along with meeting many environmental and stakeholder factors, the recommendation answers all of the strategic issues.

Fluctuations in housing and fringe growth: Unlike large new manufacturing, no major changes to city physical structure and resource consumption and infrastructure development are needed for telecommuters and telecommuting-based businesses. These are therefore less affected by a volatile housing market and their location within the community – on the outskirts or urban core – also matters less.

Unanticipated growth of telecommuting: Telecommuting has shown steady growth in the last ten years, and technology is enabling more services to be delivered online. The recommendation puts the Plan economic development priorities in line with current trends.

Downtown revitalization: With structural revitalization of Downtown in full swing, promotion of small office complexes near rivers takes revitalization to a new level, and benefits from ongoing public interest and investment in that neighborhood.

Under-considered global economy: The occupations Eau Claire needs are ones that cannot be replicated at lower cost by foreign workers. Seeking a new distribution of Eau Claire’s workforce

through telecommuting helps ensure that the educated population of the city maintains an active role in the global economy.

Manufacturing: The recommendation gears the Plan toward keeping more students in the City after graduation. Manufacturing jobs require less education than the thousands of UW-Eau Claire, Globe University and Chippewa Valley Technical College students attain. More employment opportunities in occupations requiring a college degree will give these students a reason stay.

Consideration of stakeholders: Comprehensive planning has evolved a lot in the last hundred years (Keen, 2011). Today the cities that draft plans face increased need to share scarce resources with other government entities, businesses and nonprofits. As Bryson says, “the boundaries between public, private and nonprofit sectors have eroded (2004, p. 5).” This greater integration requires cities to more carefully consider needs of stakeholders. Planners in 2015 should therefore put more focus on stakeholders in plan action items.

Planners can implement this recommendation by first considering the stakeholders. All relevant stakeholders need to be aware of the challenge and recommendations. A Support Versus Opposition grid can then help identify stakeholders whose buy-in is necessary (Bryson, 2004, pp. 41-42). A hypothetical grid is below. The stakeholders considered here had representation in the 2005 planning process, or could be involved, directly or indirectly, in the 2015 process:

Support Versus Opposition grid	
Weak (potential) Supporters College students Potential employers	Strong (potential) Supporters UW-Eau Claire and Chippewa Valley Technical College Downtown Eau Claire, Inc. Certain individuals in City government or neighborhood associations. Environmental groups
Weak (potential) Opponents Low and middle income residents	Strong (potential) Opponents Eau Claire manufacturers and interest groups, particularly those in the industrial parks or neighborhood associations. Individuals in City government

Planners will need to use stakeholders in the Strong Supporters category to sell the recommendation to stakeholders in the Strong Opponents category. Stakeholders with interests in

manufacturing and sales occupations will likely be an obstacle. These opponents can be sold by being alerted to the threats and opportunities of global competition, the need for Eau Claire to acquire tax revenue, and the 2005 Plan's lack of consideration for the topic. Opponents can also see how the current makeup of the Eau Claire metro area work force puts the city at a disadvantage. Those strong opponents who cannot be sold can be circumvented if enough supporters can influence drafting.

Once the findings are presented to the necessary stakeholders and the influential individuals and groups are sold or out-voted, the changes can be added to the 2015 updates. Like all parts of the Plan, the recommendation would likely undergo revisions if they are accepted. The end result, I hope, is a city with a comprehensive plan that fits the challenge of urban competition in a flat and spiky global economy.

Conclusion

The recommendations I offer, unsolicited, to the individuals responsible for the 2015 Plan review reflect an economic reality that already exists. And the implications are already being felt. This paper is a product of that reality. All but two of the sources were obtained online. The content was written on a laptop from various homes, libraries, and coffee shops in Rochester, MN, Eau Claire and Minneapolis. It could have just as easily been written in Portsmouth, UK; Daejeon, South Korea; or any other community in 'spiky' parts of the globe. The professors and classmates who offered invaluable insights often did so by email and online conferences.

Even though the recommendations are intended for future updates, Eau Claire leaders and citizens can act on them now. Comprehensive Plans are just one device to aid local policy change. People, not plans, drive change. Neighborhood associations, county political parties and even groups of concerned citizens have considerable potential influence over community governance. Last year a rally was hosted by a small group of citizens from the North Side Hill Neighborhood worried about the loss of trees due to a bike trail extension. Their worries prompted an immediate response from city administrators, engineers and council members. Neighborhood residents received more information on their concerns, and the city found ways to preserve some of the trees near the trail. Global economic forces could have a significant

effect prior to 2015. The closure of the Hutchinson plant and the relocation of the Menards distribution center are two unlikely but plausible scenarios. If this happens, the Eau Claire policy advocates have the ability (assuming they agree with the paper recommendations) to act through citizens' initiatives, changes in the budget, new regulations, and any number of other ways.

Because of technology and trade, the Eau Claire I returned to is more a part of the outside world than it once was. In these 2015 Plan revisions are an opportunity to help this city best fulfill its civic mission in this changing global economy.

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Appendix A: Primary Drafters of the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan

Modified from the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan Acknowledgements page, City of Eau Claire, 2005.

Origin of member:

Contractor, Elected Official, City Administration, Other government entity,
Nonprofit, Business Associations, Private Citizen

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Jason Splichal, *Citizen*
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Rolf Utegaard, *Waterways/Parks Commission*
Ken Van Es, *Citizen*

Appendix B: Location of Eau Claire

Source: http://www.eauclaire-wi.com/market_info/compare/regionalhighwayMap.php



Appendix C: Map of Eau Claire major parks and roads

<http://www.uwec.edu/Maps/eauclairemmap.htm>



Appendix D: Eau Claire Regional Trade Area
<http://www.eauclaire-wi.com/pdf/ECProfile-Web.pdf>

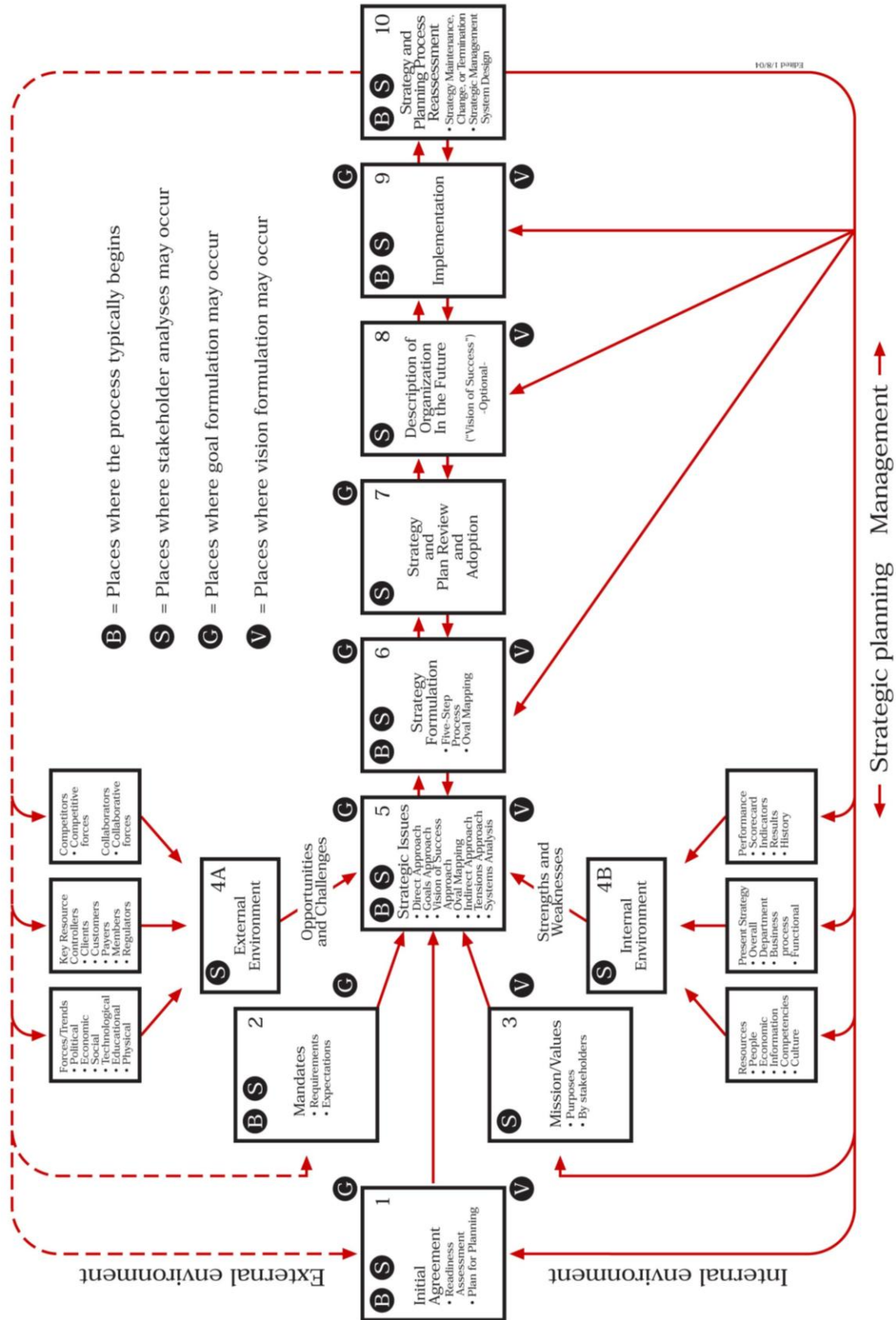


Eau Claire Regional Trade Area

Appendix E: The Strategy Change Cycle
 From <http://pa5251.wikispaces.com/>

THE STRATEGY CHANGE CYCLE

© John M. Bryson, 1995, 2003



Appendix F, Eau Claire economic profile

(US Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Occupation (SOC code)	Number employed	% of Total Employed	E.C. Annual mean wage	E.C. Employed % over US Employed %	E. C. Annual mean wage adjusted for cost of living (EC = 95.8% of US*)	EC adjusted mean wage/US mean wage (\$44,410)
All Occupations(000000)	75450	100.00%	\$37,110	1.00	38737	0.87
Management Occupations(110000)	3090	4.10%	\$82,360	0.86	85971	0.82
Business and Financial Operations Occupations(130000)	3350	4.44%	\$56,680	0.93	59165	0.87
Computer and Mathematical (150000)	1570	2.08%	\$58,320	0.81	60877	0.79
Architecture and Engineering (170000)	1190	1.58%	\$61,570	0.87	64269	0.85
Life Physical and Social Science Occupations(190000)	310	0.41%	\$56,120	0.49	58580	0.88
Community and Social Service (210000)	910	1.21%	\$43,540	0.81	45449	1.05
Legal Occupations(230000)	220	0.29%	\$77,900	0.37	81315	0.84
Education Training and Library Occupations(250000)	4540	6.02%	\$45,450	0.90	47443	0.94
Arts Design Entertainment Sports and Media Occupations(270000)	700	0.93%	\$34,340	0.69	35846	0.69
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations(290000)	4570	6.06%	\$63,980	1.05	66785	0.94
Healthcare Support Occupations(310000)	3770	5.00%	\$25,270	1.60	26378	0.98
Protective Service Occupations(330000)	1580	2.09%	\$37,790	0.83	39447	0.93
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations(350000)	7150	9.48%	\$19,500	1.09	20355	0.96
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations(370000)	2160	2.86%	\$23,800	0.87	24843	0.98
Personal Care and Service Occupations(390000)	1880	2.49%	\$22,650	0.92	23643	0.96
Sales and Related Occupations(410000)	9430	12.50%	\$29,030	1.18	30303	0.82
Office and Administrative Support Occupations(430000)	11550	15.31%	\$29,610	0.90	30908	0.92
Farming Fishing and Forestry Occupations(450000)	100	0.13%	\$30,110	0.41	31430	1.29
Construction and Extraction Occupations(470000)	2470	3.27%	\$44,310	0.82	46253	1.05
Installation Maintenance and Repair (490000)	2530	3.35%	\$39,990	0.86	41743	0.98
Production Occupations(510000)	7380	9.78%	\$31,830	1.51	33225	0.98
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations(530000)	5000	6.63%	\$28,350	0.99	29593	0.91

*In the 1st quarter of 2010, the ACCRA Cost of Living Index Eau Claire received an index of 95.8. (City of Eau Claire Economic Development Corporation, 2009)

Appendix G: Eau Claire Population Statistics

(US Census FactFinder, 2011)

Eau Claire, WI Metro Area

S0101. Age and Sex

Data Set: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Survey: American Community Survey

Subject	Total	Margin of Error	Male	Margin of Error	Female	Margin of Error
Total population	157,294	*****	78,134	+/-134	79,160	+/-134
AGE						
Under 5 years	6.1%	+/-0.1	6.3%	+/-0.1	5.8%	+/-0.1
5 to 9 years	5.6%	+/-0.2	6.0%	+/-0.4	5.2%	+/-0.3
10 to 14 years	6.4%	+/-0.2	6.5%	+/-0.4	6.3%	+/-0.3
15 to 19 years	8.2%	+/-0.1	8.3%	+/-0.2	8.2%	+/-0.1
20 to 24 years	11.8%	+/-0.1	11.5%	+/-0.1	12.1%	+/-0.1
25 to 29 years	6.1%	+/-0.1	6.6%	+/-0.1	5.6%	+/-0.1
30 to 34 years	5.3%	+/-0.1	5.6%	+/-0.1	5.1%	+/-0.1
35 to 39 years	6.1%	+/-0.3	6.3%	+/-0.4	6.0%	+/-0.3
40 to 44 years	6.7%	+/-0.3	7.2%	+/-0.4	6.3%	+/-0.3
45 to 49 years	7.2%	+/-0.1	7.2%	+/-0.1	7.1%	+/-0.1
50 to 54 years	6.8%	+/-0.1	6.7%	+/-0.1	6.8%	+/-0.1
55 to 59 years	6.1%	+/-0.2	6.1%	+/-0.3	6.1%	+/-0.3
60 to 64 years	4.7%	+/-0.2	4.8%	+/-0.3	4.6%	+/-0.3
65 to 69 years	3.6%	+/-0.2	3.4%	+/-0.2	3.7%	+/-0.3
70 to 74 years	2.7%	+/-0.2	2.4%	+/-0.2	3.0%	+/-0.3
75 to 79 years	2.5%	+/-0.2	2.2%	+/-0.2	2.9%	+/-0.2
80 to 84 years	1.9%	+/-0.2	1.5%	+/-0.2	2.3%	+/-0.2
85 years and over	2.2%	+/-0.2	1.4%	+/-0.2	2.9%	+/-0.3
SELECTED AGE CATEGORIES						
5 to 14 years	12.0%	+/-0.1	12.5%	+/-0.1	11.4%	+/-0.1
15 to 17 years	4.0%	+/-0.1	4.3%	+/-0.1	3.8%	+/-0.1
18 to 24 years	16.0%	+/-0.1	15.5%	+/-0.1	16.5%	+/-0.1
15 to 44 years	44.3%	+/-0.1	45.4%	+/-0.1	43.3%	+/-0.2
16 years and over	80.7%	+/-0.1	79.8%	+/-0.2	81.6%	+/-0.2
18 years and over	78.0%	*****	76.9%	+/-0.1	79.0%	+/-0.1
60 years and over	17.6%	+/-0.2	15.7%	+/-0.3	19.4%	+/-0.3
62 years and over	15.5%	+/-0.2	13.7%	+/-0.3	17.3%	+/-0.3
65 years and over	12.9%	+/-0.1	10.9%	+/-0.1	14.8%	+/-0.1
75 years and over	6.6%	+/-0.1	5.1%	+/-0.1	8.1%	+/-0.1
SUMMARY INDICATORS						
Median age (years)	35.5	+/-0.1	34.2	+/-0.3	36.6	+/-0.2
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	98.7	+/-0.3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Age dependency ratio	53.7	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Old-age dependency ratio	19.8	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Child dependency ratio	33.8	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

Appendix H: Eau Claire Population Statistics
(US Census FactFinder, 2011)

United States

S0101. Age and Sex ?

Data Set: 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Survey: American Community Survey

Subject	Total	Margin of Error	Male	Margin of Error	Female	Margin of Error
Total population	301,461,533	*****	148,535,646	+/-6,574	152,925,887	+/-6,584
AGE						
Under 5 years	6.9%	+/-0.1	7.2%	+/-0.1	6.7%	+/-0.1
5 to 9 years	6.6%	+/-0.1	6.8%	+/-0.1	6.4%	+/-0.1
10 to 14 years	6.8%	+/-0.1	7.1%	+/-0.1	6.6%	+/-0.1
15 to 19 years	7.1%	+/-0.1	7.5%	+/-0.1	6.9%	+/-0.1
20 to 24 years	7.0%	+/-0.1	7.3%	+/-0.1	6.7%	+/-0.1
25 to 29 years	6.9%	+/-0.1	7.2%	+/-0.1	6.7%	+/-0.1
30 to 34 years	6.5%	+/-0.1	6.7%	+/-0.1	6.3%	+/-0.1
35 to 39 years	6.9%	+/-0.1	7.0%	+/-0.1	6.8%	+/-0.1
40 to 44 years	7.3%	+/-0.1	7.4%	+/-0.1	7.2%	+/-0.1
45 to 49 years	7.5%	+/-0.1	7.6%	+/-0.1	7.5%	+/-0.1
50 to 54 years	6.9%	+/-0.1	6.9%	+/-0.1	7.0%	+/-0.1
55 to 59 years	6.0%	+/-0.1	5.9%	+/-0.1	6.1%	+/-0.1
60 to 64 years	4.8%	+/-0.1	4.7%	+/-0.1	4.9%	+/-0.1
65 to 69 years	3.6%	+/-0.1	3.4%	+/-0.1	3.8%	+/-0.1
70 to 74 years	2.9%	+/-0.1	2.6%	+/-0.1	3.1%	+/-0.1
75 to 79 years	2.5%	+/-0.1	2.1%	+/-0.1	2.8%	+/-0.1
80 to 84 years	1.9%	+/-0.1	1.5%	+/-0.1	2.3%	+/-0.1
85 years and over	1.7%	+/-0.1	1.1%	+/-0.1	2.3%	+/-0.1
SELECTED AGE CATEGORIES						
5 to 14 years	13.4%	+/-0.1	13.9%	+/-0.1	12.9%	+/-0.1
15 to 17 years	4.3%	+/-0.1	4.4%	+/-0.1	4.1%	+/-0.1
18 to 24 years	9.9%	+/-0.1	10.3%	+/-0.1	9.5%	+/-0.1
15 to 44 years	41.8%	+/-0.1	43.0%	+/-0.1	40.5%	+/-0.1
16 years and over	78.2%	+/-0.1	77.4%	+/-0.1	79.1%	+/-0.1
18 years and over	75.4%	+/-0.1	74.4%	+/-0.1	76.3%	+/-0.1
60 years and over	17.4%	+/-0.1	15.5%	+/-0.1	19.3%	+/-0.1
62 years and over	15.3%	+/-0.1	13.4%	+/-0.1	17.2%	+/-0.1
65 years and over	12.6%	+/-0.1	10.8%	+/-0.1	14.4%	+/-0.1
75 years and over	6.1%	+/-0.1	4.7%	+/-0.1	7.4%	+/-0.1
SUMMARY INDICATORS						
Median age (years)	36.5	+/-0.1	35.2	+/-0.1	37.9	+/-0.1
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	97.1	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Age dependency ratio	59.3	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Old-age dependency ratio	20.1	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Child dependency ratio	39.2	+/-0.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

Appendix I: Eau Claire and US Education Statistics

(US Census FactFinder, 2011)

Population 25 years and over	Eau Claire	US
Less than 9th grade	3.90%	6.30%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6.00%	8.80%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	34.20%	29.00%
Some college, no degree	19.80%	20.70%
Associate's degree	11.80%	7.50%
Bachelor's degree	16.60%	17.60%
Graduate or professional degree	7.80%	10.20%
Percent high school graduate or higher	90.10%	84.90%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	24.40%	27.80%