

Urban Design Analysis



Green Bay Smart Growth 2022

Urban Design Analysis

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Urban Design Analysis

Introduction

Purpose and Scope

This section examines past and current conditions in Green Bay's built environment, discusses forces affecting urban form, and summarizes the major urban design issues facing the community. This section is meant to build on the *Downtown Design Plan* adopted in 1997 by focusing on areas outside of the downtown. (The area addressed by the *Downtown Plan* extends, on the East Side, from Webster Street to the Fox River and from the East River on the North to Mason Street on the south. On the West Side, the plan covers the area between the Fox River and Ashland Avenue, and from Bond Street on the north to the railroad south of Tank Park.)

Factors Affecting Urban Form and Visual Character

Natural Features and Historical Development Patterns

Land forms and water bodies have significant impact on the growth patterns of cities. In Green Bay's case, the early development of the city reflected the opportunities and constraints presented by its location on Lake Michigan and the Fox River. The mouth of the Fox

River, although originally marshland, was the natural place for industry and port-related facilities to develop. Offices and commercial districts developed on either side of the river near these industrial areas.

Early residential development, for the most part, did not occur at the scenic bayfront, which was primarily marshland and offered a harsh winter environment. Neighborhoods were laid out to the south and east of the business district, with later development expanding to the west. The distinction between the original city of Green Bay and the city of Fort Howard on the west side of the river, annexed into Green Bay in 1895, has lingered in the perception of many residents that the two sides of the City have separate identities and character.

The fertile soils and gentle contours that have made the areas outside the port ideal for farming have also provided few restrictions to housing development. Much of the formerly agricultural areas are now residential, with only some small areas on the east side yet undeveloped.

Early Planning and Development

Many cities in the United States experienced their first periods of major growth in the early years of the Twentieth Century. Civic pride of place was strong, and cities were often laid out in detailed plan, with parks and parkways, civic buildings, bridges, and grand boulevards lined with trees. Building materials were often limited to what could be found in the region, and structures were designed

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according to a set of commonly held principles of proportion, form and ornamentation.

The result was usually varied enough to be interesting, but the underlying continuity of built form created a harmonious whole. And, as the automobile had not yet begun to dictate the form of the built environment, the pedestrian-scaled city could be experienced and appreciated by all during the course of everyday business.

Green Bay is fortunate to have had a city plan created by John Nolen, an influential American city planning pioneer. Many of Green Bay's established neighborhoods still exhibit the sound principles of urban planning that characterize development from the early twentieth century.

Contemporary Influences

After World War II, a booming economy and new technologies contributed to both the rise of the family car as the primary mode of transportation, and the spread of new housing into the countryside. The natural controls that had kept built form within the familiar parameters disappeared, and enthusiasm for the streamlined forms and new technologies of the 'automobile age' took off with the demand for new housing, business centers, and infrastructure.

The results have been mixed, for the blessings of the freedom of the highway, and the privacy and open space of the suburbs have had negative consequences that touch almost all aspects of life, many of which are a direct result of the way cities are planned and built.

In an effort to understand the forces affecting contemporary built form, it is useful to study the major influences of the last 50 years:

Dominance of the Automobile: Participation in the life of most contemporary cities or suburbs demands the use of a car. There is very little choice offered, as alternative modes of travel are either

dangerous, prohibitively inconvenient, or both. Large amounts of land are devoted to roadways, interchanges and parking. Traffic congestion in most cities is already at unacceptable levels, and new road construction often contributes to increases in the amount of traffic. The natural environment suffers as water and air are polluted, natural resources are depleted, and wildlife habitat is destroyed in order to create new roads and parking lots. The negative consequences of sprawl are many, but perhaps none are so destructive as the distancing from nature and the numbing monotony of the built environment that occurs when development is only concerned with automotive convenience.

New Technologies: New building technologies have affected the look of all types of built structures. Tilt-up panel systems have made large, inexpensive buildings easy to construct but have made featureless, uniform structures a common element in the landscape. Vinyl siding and other man-made building materials are relatively inexpensive to produce but often do not age well and have hidden environmental costs both on the production and disposal ends.

The rise of Internet business and shopping may eventually result in some reduced need for daily automobile trips. A related effect may be a resurgence of interest in the public realm, where a need for human contact and change of scene brings house-bound workers to their local coffee shop or neighborhood park. The demand for compact, aesthetically pleasing retail venues, safe public spaces, and a human-scaled environment will only increase in the coming years.

Changing Market Trends: The trends of the last twenty years have seen an increase in the amount of sprawl and automobile-associated retail and entertainment, as well as a resurgence of interest in urban living. While large-lot development is still pushing into undeveloped areas, a more compact, less auto-dependent lifestyle is becoming more desirable for many across a broad spectrum of household types.

A long view of population trends sees the aging (but still healthy) Baby Boomers seeking a high-quality-of-life environment for retirement outside of the planned retirement community. The rise of single-parent households necessitates smaller, more convenient housing, close to public transportation systems, while concern over the de-humanizing effects of contemporary suburban life on children and teenagers may cause many families to seek a more ‘traditional’ neighborhood way of life. Rising fuel costs and the uncertainties of the economy may also contribute to a slowing of demand for the extra-large suburban housing and truck-sized automobiles so popular in the 1990s. Increased public discussion and education about the issues of sustainable living may also have an effect on market trends.

Regardless of which forms dominate the market in the next twenty years, all indicators suggest that a healthy, successful community will offer a range of housing choices and transportation alternatives within a varied, human-scaled public realm.

Community Image

Defining the image or identity of a town is a way to develop an understanding for the overall feel of the community or the fundamental quality of the place.

Geography and Natural Features

Green Bay’s location on the Great Lakes is its most significant feature – not only in terms of its success as an inland industrial port, but as its most important natural asset, form determinant, and climate factor. Although the bay influences so much of life in Green Bay, it is rarely a part of the visual landscape. Settlement patterns and topography have limited the opportunities to see the bay from most of the residential or commercial areas of the city.

The Fox River is also a major factor in the city’s economy and physical form. As much of the business and industrial areas were established in relation to the river, views of the Fox are a part of daily life in the city. The East River is also a significant visible feature in the landscape, offering a more natural river’s edge than that of the Fox.

Green Bay also has other landscape features that are less visually dramatic, but present opportunities for preservation and enhancement. Of particular interest are lands located next to Baird Creek, large areas of wetlands in the southeast, and the Niagara Escarpment near the east shore of the bay.

Urban Form

A map of the city shows the earliest areas developed with the grid running parallel to the river. Subsequent development of later neighborhoods is laid out on the Cartesian grid of north/south and east/west streets. This creates areas of disjuncture, where one street pattern encounters another. These areas provide visual interest by altering the viewshed and disrupting the grid. Newer areas show a more suburban pattern of winding streets and cul-de-sacs that appears more random and disconnected.

The downtown area is comprised of a hierarchical grid of streets and a fairly dense collection of pre-World War II, multi-storied, brick and stone clad commercial and industrial buildings. Numerous older structures have been demolished over the years resulting in gaps in the street edge. Most of these gaps have been converted to surface parking lots. The downtown is segmented into several sub-districts by the East and Fox Rivers. Density and intensity diminish with distance from the center of the downtown sub-districts. These areas transition into a mix of older industrial and residential uses.

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The majority of primary retail businesses are located along the City's principal roadway corridors. For the most part, these businesses utilize a suburban strip-mall or medium-to big-box form with large, brightly-lit open parking lots and pylon signs facing the roadways. These forms transition to older, smaller, single-story commercial, institutional and multi-family residential uses as one proceeds towards the city center.

Settlement patterns in Green Bay have been largely influenced by the bay and the Fox River.



Green Bay's early development was guided by a Master Plan by noted landscape architect John Nolen.



The downtown and older residential areas are laid out on a grid pattern of streets.



Density decreases, and the grid disappears as development takes over the rural fringe.



Urban Design

Figure 7-1
Urban Form

Civic Identity

Green Bay is fortunate in that the features which have contributed to its success as an industrial and commercial center – a large Great Lakes bay, and the Fox and East Rivers – are also impressive visual and recreational assets. Although their beauty has been long recognized, it is only in the last twenty years or so that their full value has been reflected in public policy and public interest. It is not a coincidence that interest in preserving natural beauty often comes at a point when it is almost too late.

In Green Bay, the demands of industry have historically taken precedence over scenic beauty, but as suburban flight has slowed, city residents now demand more of their environment. High on the list of livability factors are clean air, clean water, a visually pleasing public realm, and easy access to recreation and parks. Green Bay, as a vital regional center, can now afford to make the most of its natural features, not only as an enriching amenity for its residents, but also as the base for a strong recreation and hospitality-based industry.

Green Bay is probably best known for its professional football team, The Green Bay Packers. The city is justifiably proud to be the home of this legendary team, which gives the city a reputation that few cities of its size can match. This pride manifests itself in the city's physical landscape as well as its psychic landscape: the green and gold Packer colors appear on fire hydrants, shop awnings, commercial signs, and buildings. Streets and schools are named after the team and its players.

The other elements that form civic identity – the city's location on Green Bay and as a port on the Great Lakes system, the legacy of Native American populations, the paper-making industry, the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay and Cofrin Arboretum, Bay Beach Amusement Park and the Wildlife Sanctuary – have taken a back seat to the primary civic identity as the Home of the Packers. Although the Packers will always be a strong element in Green Bay

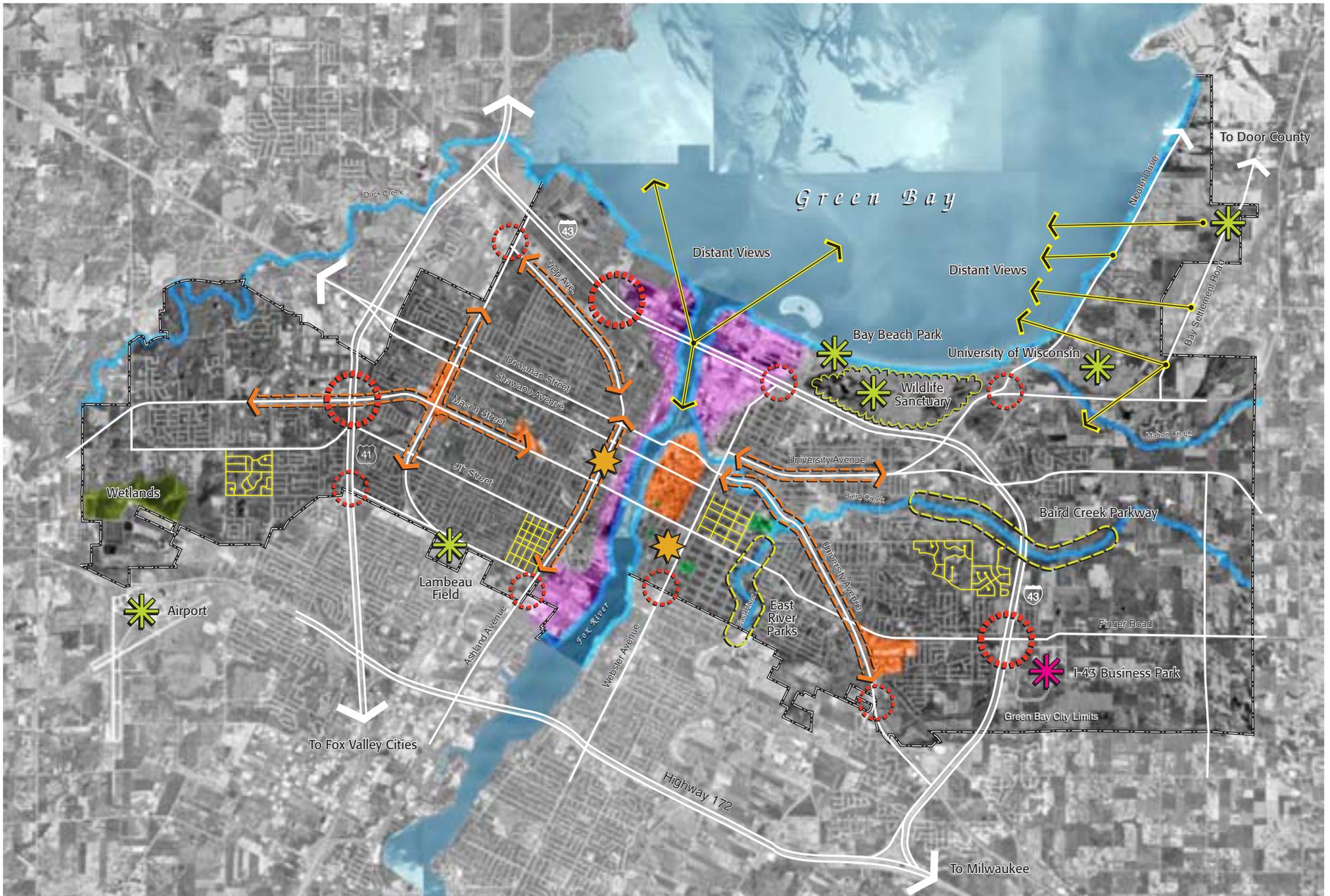
culture, it is perhaps time to diversify and extend civic identity and promote other elements of life in Green Bay.

Urban design elements alone cannot create civic identity, but they can reflect it, and can be employed to strengthen particular aspects of a city's culture, natural features or history.

Analysis of Specific Urban Design Elements

The primary urban design elements are summarized on Figure 7-2, Major Urban Design Features. The graphic identifies the major urban design elements that are analyzed in this section:

- Gateways and Entry Points
- Major Corridors
- Business Districts
- Residential Neighborhoods
- Industrial and Business Parks
- Parks and Open Space
- Historic Buildings and Districts



- Major Gateway
- Minor Gateway
- Commercial Corridor

- Special Places
- Commercial Node
- Waterfront

- Heavy Industrial
- Historic District
- Classic Parks

- Neighborhoods

Figure 7-2
Major Urban Design Features

Gateways and Entry Points

Currently there is no citywide program in place for entry enhancements. Standard “city limits” signs are in place on some roads entering the city. The Broadway revitalization effort has created some district identifying monuments for that area of the city, and the *Downtown Design Plan* of 1997 has identified key routes and interchanges for wayfinding and gateway signs. The plan further identifies intersections that should receive special treatments as gateways into the “Central Activity Core.”

Potential elements of city gateways include prominent and significant views of downtown Green Bay, the bay, the Fox and East Rivers, and other major identifying features. Infrastructure elements such as bridges, trestles, and water towers are very visible in the landscape and help to establish character as well provide wayfinding landmarks throughout the city. Prominent buildings and structures also act in the same way, with tall office buildings, smokestacks, grain elevators, towers, and church steeples forming the city’s skyline.

The airport for the Green Bay area is located in the adjacent town of Ashwaubenon. Highway 172 takes the traveler to Interstate 41 going north, which crosses the city limits at Lombardi Avenue, the street on which Lambeau Field is located. Currently Lambeau Field is undergoing renovation and is likely to offer an improved entry experience in the near future.

Mason Street serves as a secondary gateway from the west. This two-lane corridor has a mixed, rural-residential character as it enters Green Bay. Shawano Avenue is another secondary western gateway, entering the city just east of exit 168 at the US-41/141 interchange.

The major route into downtown Green Bay from the northwest is Route 41, or Velp Avenue. This corridor runs through residential,

commercial, and industrial areas, and leads to the recently revitalized section of Broadway before crossing the river into Downtown.

I-43 also carries traffic into downtown from I-141, but travels through filled marshlands and industrial areas to the north of Velp Avenue. This route crosses the mouth of the Fox River close to the bay front, and offers one of the City’s best views of the bay and the downtown. Unfortunately, this experience is momentary as there is no place to stop and enjoy the view, and the bridge is not open to pedestrians.

Route 54/57, Sturgeon Bay Road provides the major gateway for travelers coming from Door County and areas to the northeast. This route offers views of the University and the wildlife sanctuary.

Coming into Green Bay from points east, Route 29/141 cuts diagonally across from the southeast to become Main Street. Main crosses Baird Creek, runs parallel to the East River and then joins the gridded street pattern of the downtown area as it crosses the East River. The other main eastern gateway is at Exit 183 where Mason Street crosses under I-43.

Many of Green Bay’s major hotels are located on Main on the east side of the Fox River. The Main Street Bridge over the Fox is of distinctive design, with towers marking the bridge ends. The view across to the west side includes the landmark Titledown Brewery restaurant, the refurbished Chicago and Northwestern railroad depot. To the north can be seen the smokestacks and other elements of the paper and concrete industries. For many visitors to Green Bay, these river views constitute their primary image of the city.

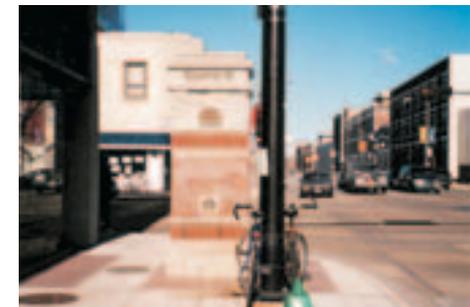
Typical downtown scenes do not include a view of the bay.



In the heart of Green Bay, the Main Street bridge crossing provides a view of the Fox River with the historic Tiletown Brewery on the western bank.



Green Bay gateway signs exist in a few locations. The Broadway area has a newly designed entry monument.



Boaters experience arrival in Green Bay from Lake Michigan and the Fox River, with the lighthouse and bridge structures as gateway monuments.



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Route 32, Ashland Avenue, parallels Fox River on west side and is a secondary southern gateway into the City. Route 57, Monroe Avenue parallels the east side of the river and is also a secondary southern gateway, since it offers the most direct route to downtown from the airport.

Recreational and commercial boat traffic entering the Fox River from Lake Michigan is greeted by the recently refurbished lighthouse at the marina, the Ken Euers Nature Area, the I-43 bridge, and the stacks and structures of the municipal sewage treatment plant.

Boaters may also arrive from points south on the Fox River. Bridges across the river currently act as landmarks and gateways to the city. It is important to remember that new riverfront development will be seen from this vantage point.

Major Corridors

Velp Avenue

Auto-related businesses and structures occur along the north side of this four-lane minor arterial with warehouses, small industrial and repair shops lining the roadway. The south side is lined with a mix of small commercial establishment and older housing, with residential neighborhoods directly to the south. Billboards, utility poles, and signs are common elements of the corridor, with no landscaping or trees to soften the view. This corridor is a major route into the city from the north.

Mason Street

This is the only street that spans the city east to west and maintains the same name throughout its length. It is classified as a principal arterial for most of its length and is a four-lane roadway. On the western edge of the city it is rural in character, but as it moves east it

quickly becomes suburban, with houses backing up to the right-of-way rather than facing the street. A commercial node of ‘big-box’ retail begins at Packerland Drive and continues east approximately to Taylor Street. Residential areas alternate with commercial zones for the rest of its run, with the large shopping center at Military Avenue presenting the usual ‘strip’ landscape of parking lots, signs, and utility poles. Another large commercial area occurs at Main Street, where the enclosed mall was converted to a single-loaded strip mall. The bridge over Ashland Avenue just east of the Fox River creates an imposing visual and psychological barrier. The street’s appearance is generally good in the residential areas east of the Fox River but improvements such as sidewalks, planting, and lighting could enhance the pedestrian experience and its visual appeal. East of I-43 it becomes County Route V and the corridor resumes a more rural character with mixed agricultural, residential and light industrial uses and no curb and gutter.

Shawano Avenue

Shawano Avenue (Route 29) is a 4-lane principal east-west arterial and as an exit off Highway 41 it is also a major gateway to the west side of Green Bay. The visual character shifts from west to east starting with the suburban campus environment of St. Mary's Hospital and associated clinics and medical offices. At Military Avenue a cluster of strip commercial buildings is dominated by signs and surface parking. East of Military Avenue the character changes to a mixed residential-urban arterial. A wide variety of residential structures, amply set back from the curb, sporadic street trees and sidewalks line both sides of the roadway. Lincoln Elementary and West High School both front the street and contribute favorably to the corridor’s visual character. Shawano becomes Walnut Avenue east of Oakland and serves as an entry to the Broadway-Chestnut historic business district.

Packerland Drive

Packerland Drive is a four-lane minor north-south arterial and one of the primary routes to the airport. The character of the corridor changes from a wide divided tree-lined suburban residential street to a mixed commercial-industrial roadway north of Mason Street, lined with pylon signs, unscreened surface parking lots and utilitarian buildings.

Military Avenue

As the location for a majority of the City's post-war commercial development, this four to five-lane minor arterial presents a wide variety of dated suburban sprawl development. Much of the corridor is dominated by free-standing signs, unscreened surface parking lots, single story commercial strip centers and "medium box" retail stores. North of the Wisconsin Central Rail line the character becomes more suburban until the roadway crosses under I-43. Dispersed, large-scale heavy industry dominates the bayfront until the road ends at the Ken Euers Nature Area.

Commercial strips are lined with utility poles, pylon signs, highway lighting, and large parking lots, resulting in an inhospitable environment for pedestrians and other users.



Landscaping in large parking lots is inadequate.



Older commercial areas are pedestrian-friendly and integrated into the neighborhood. These areas present opportunities for revitalization and also provide models for new development.



Business Districts

Downtown

There are many beautifully designed and maintained buildings in the downtown area. Others are in the process of being restored or renovated. A few streets have all the elements for a successful commercial and business area: sidewalks with street trees, on-street parking, well-articulated shopfronts and ground floors, good lighting and street furnishings. Other streets have some but not all of the above elements.

One of the less pleasing features of the downtown area is the enclosed Port Plaza shopping mall, which interrupts the street pattern and presents blank, windowless facades to the street. The city is currently studying options for future improvements to the mall.

The *Downtown Design Plan* of 1997 outlines a strategy for implementing streetscape and other urban improvements.

Other Commercial Nodes

The majority of retail businesses are located along the City's principal roadway corridors. For the most part, these businesses utilize a linear strip-mall or medium to big-box format. Large, brightly-lit parking lots with minimal landscaping separate the buildings from the roadway. Pylon signs, highway lighting, and utility poles line the street, and there is no consistent street tree planting.

Many commercial strip areas are over-lit and create light spill and glare into roadways and surrounding residential areas. Illumination levels should be analyzed, and standards established to strike a better balance between light pollution and public safety.

Downtown Green Bay is currently undergoing improvements according to the Downtown Design Plan of 1997. Traditional commercial areas of downtown Green Bay can be used as a model for new commercial development.

This two-story brick building presents many of the elements of a successful facade design: Good proportions, harmonious materials, and well placed ornamentation.



Much of the downtown riverfront is occupied by industrial uses, many of the buildings on the riverfront turn their backs to the river, and there are few points of pedestrian access to the river's edge.



'Rip-rap' stone or sheet-piling has been used to stabilize the river edge. There is very little green to be found along the river near the downtown area.



Trails, overlooks, and riverside parks are beginning to bring people to the riverfront.



Urban Design

Figure 7-6
Downtown Riverfront

Residential Neighborhoods

General Character

The availability of cheap lumber as a building material, cold winter temperatures, and the cultural legacy of early settlers have all played a part in determining the architectural character of Green Bay's residential neighborhoods.

Residential properties are predominantly of wood frame construction with wood, brick or stucco siding with detached garages on lots ranging from 1/6 to about 1/4 acre in size. A wide variety of classic American architectural styles are represented in the City's older residential neighborhoods.

Post-World War II housing is predominantly composed of production style single-family detached houses with attached garages in rambler, two-story, split entry and split level layouts sited on 1/4 to 1/3 acre lots.

Six planning districts have been established for the Comprehensive Plan. They are described and analyzed in greater detail in the Neighborhoods and Land Use sections of the Plan. Briefly they are as follows:

District 1 – The Far West Side: This district is generally suburban in terms of its development pattern, with single-family houses on large lots. Many of the houses have been built in the last twenty years, some of them within large subdivisions. Smaller houses of 1950s and 60s construction occur in the eastern part of the district. Small duplexes or four-plexes can be found south of West Point Road; some are in need of repair.

This area still contains parcels of undeveloped or agricultural land, and has several large parks. The gently rolling land offers views to adjacent farmlands. Duck Creek runs through this district and much

of the creek bank is protected as open space by a conservation corridor but is not readily visible from nearby roads. For the most part, the roadway patterns are discontinuous and it is difficult to perceive an identity or sense of place.

District 2 – Near West Side: This area is fully developed, composed of primarily single-family houses of post-war construction. Single-story and small Cape style houses are the predominant styles, and they are generally in good condition, but with limited visual appeal. Most of the residential streets are shaded by continuous rows of large attractive street trees. There are a few large attached multi-family complexes. The street pattern is generally on a grid oriented with the Fox River and Green Bay. The sidewalk pattern is not continuous, with walks only extending one or two blocks off the main roadways.

Large commercial centers on West Mason Street and Military Avenue service most of the west side, and pose issues of traffic congestion, access management and visual clutter.

Lambeau Field and the Arena Convention Center are major destinations and landmarks at the southern edge of the district.

This district's bayfront location is a distinctive feature, with a large area of filled wetlands and a preserved remnant wetland (Ken Euers Nature Area) at the water's edge.

District 3 – Near Downtown West: This district includes the Tank and Seymour Park neighborhoods and the unorganized neighborhood of Fort Howard. It also includes the Fox riverfront with its associated industrial uses. Many of the neighborhoods here are separated from one another by railroad lines and industrial corridors. This district contains carefully preserved historic districts as well as areas with declining infrastructure and maintenance problems. In general, the street / house relationships and street / sidewalk connectivity are good and can be used as

models for new development. Neighborhood identity and revitalization, streetscape maintenance, and connections are issues to be addressed.

District 4 – Downtown East: The 1997 *Downtown Design Plan* describes issues, opportunities and provides recommendations for improvements to downtown and adjacent residential areas. The district also includes the Astor, Navarino and Northeast neighborhoods. The downtown is comprised of a discontinuous arrangement of attractive older mid-rise commercial buildings separated by surface parking lots. The Brown County Courthouse block is an inviting pedestrian-supportive area. Much of the Fox River frontage is hidden from view. The Fox Riverwalk, once fully implemented, will greatly improve pedestrian accessibility. Plans are underway to reconnect the street grid currently interrupted by the downtown shopping mall.

The integrity of the adjacent residential neighborhoods are impacted by ongoing expansion of downtown commercial uses (usually in the form of residential conversions) as well as the expansion of Bellin / St. Vincent hospital (usually in the form of parking lots.) Once outside of the downtown's influence, the district varies significantly from the older, high- quality residential character of Astor Park to the industrial truck-oriented river and bayfront.

District 5 – Near Downtown East: This is a large and diverse district, with a fragmented street pattern, divided by grade-separated highways, rail lines, major four- and six-lane arterial roadways, the East River and Baird Creek. The area between the East River and Main Street has a mixed residential character of small single family detached homes and small multi-family dwellings. Larger complexes of older unadorned, multi-family housing are concentrated along Imperial Lane. There are also numerous residential-industrial conflicts in the area north of Eastman and south of University Avenues.

The Three Corners neighborhood, a small, mixed-use district with older commercial and industrial structures near the residential areas, is well-suited to revitalization as a business district. Growing Hmong and Hispanic populations in the surrounding areas offer fresh cultural influences to the physical development of the area, and programs to encourage minority business development will assist in integrating these groups into Green Bay.

Commercial development is generally unattractive franchise type architecture in the form of big-box and strip centers with minimally landscaped, highly lit, surface parking lots.

The district also includes the Bay Beach Park and Wildlife Sanctuary area. The short residential streets along the bayfront were identified as potential “street-end parks” in the *Waterfront Plan*.

District 6 – Far East Side: Newer residential development in this district (1980's to present) has departed from the forms commonly found in older areas of the city. Street widths are wider (36 feet from curb to curb), and housing forms and placement on the lot are less uniform, with large attached garages commonly fronting the street. Entrances to houses are often played down and connections to the street in the form of walkways or paths are uncommon. Hierarchies of space (street, front yard, entry, side yard) are poorly defined by trees and other landscape elements. The end result is less satisfying in terms of its visual appeal, social value, and usefulness. As builders become more convinced of the market appeal of ‘traditional’ housing, some elements of new development are beginning to change. Well-developed entries and connections to the street, front porches and side-loading garages are starting to be seen. However, many of the important elements of neighborhood building such as street widths and street connectivity are determined by City public works standards and thus are an issue that should be considered in this plan.

Older residential areas have a well-developed pedestrian environment. Design elements such as street width, relationship of house to street, and placement of trees are critical to pedestrian comfort.



Houses in established neighborhoods present a good model for new development. This example presents a well-defined entry, and the landscape material helps to establish the public, semi-private, and private zones.



Multi-family housing is often found in large complexes separate from single-family housing areas, and little care is taken to blend the structures with the environment.



The streetscapes in many new residential areas are dominated by driveways and garages.



Deep front-yard setbacks, few and immature street trees, and minimal landscaping result in an unfriendly pedestrian environment.



Streets widths are designed to accommodate large emergency and maintenance vehicles, and sidewalks are placed on only one side of the street, further contributing to an auto-dominated environment.



Industrial Areas and Business Parks

Older industrial areas near the Fox River and industrial corridors near the railroad present both problems and opportunities. For the most part, their aging structures have not been well-maintained, and the nature of their operations makes their locations near older residential neighborhoods and at the riverfront unsuitable. However, these properties offer opportunities for redevelopment as mixed use and commercial. The revitalization of the Broadway area is a good example of this kind of redevelopment.

The newer business park east of I-43 has been developed at very low density and presents an unimproved public realm, lacking pedestrian amenities such as trails, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, or outdoor areas for picnics or gathering.

Parks and Open Space

In general, parks in older areas are well-integrated into the fabric of the community. Usually bounded on all sides by public streets, they are easily accessible and function as neighborhood gathering spots. Their central locations, well-marked entrances, and “traditional” designs make them focal points for the neighborhood. Their smaller size and “open” boundaries ensure that they are well monitored by nearby residents and passersby. Many of the parks in established areas are located adjacent to school properties, allowing mutually beneficial sharing of facilities and maintenance.

Conservation easements or ‘parkways’ along some creeks create more natural green areas for neighborhoods, but the public access is discontinuous.

Parks in newer neighborhoods tend to be larger and to offer more opportunities for organized sports but are not within close walking distance of the entire service area. Often there are no sidewalk or

trail connections to these parks, requiring park patrons to walk in the street.

Historic Buildings and Districts

Green Bay’s history can be seen in many of the neighborhoods, and in industrial and business districts in the form of buildings, bridges, water towers, railway structures, and harbor infrastructure. It is important to preserve these remnants of the past, not only as a record of history, but as visible reminders of regionally-influenced design, scaled for pedestrian use, that has formed Green Bay’s sense of identity as a place.

As Green Bay builds for its future, it will be important to respect the character and context of existing built form and landscape, in both ‘high design’ and vernacular forms of expression. Building a harmonious and well-knitted urban fabric requires that the builders of today understand the principles of form, proportion, scale, and detail that informed the best structures of the past. Preserving and showcasing those best examples provides a living stylebook for reference that can guide and influence design for today.

Much research and documentation has been done to identify significant architecture and historic districts in Green Bay. Currently four districts have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP):

- The Astor Historic District
- The Oakland-Dousman District
- The Broadway-Dousman District
- The Broadway-Walnut District

The 1989 *Green Bay Intensive Resource Survey* has also identified several potential additional NRHP districts, discussed in the Historic Preservation section of this report.

Industrial property in the downtown area presents opportunities for redevelopment. The Broadway redevelopment effort offers an excellent model for adaptive re-use of older industrial and commercial structures.

Newer industry is often located in a 'business park' setting. These areas often suffer from lack of pedestrian amenities, distance from commercial centers, and poorly defined and underutilized green space.



7. Urban Design

Also of interest are significant elements of historic public infrastructure such as bridges, tunnels, water towers, trestles, and valued city views. Significant examples of landscape architecture and important or ‘record’ trees should also be identified for evaluation and designation.

Major Planning Issues

Special Places

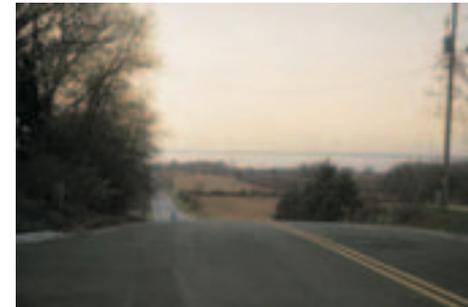
The following is a list of places that offer distinctive and valued experiences in Green Bay, shown on Figure 8-10. Some present opportunities for continued development, and others require preservation or restoration. Some of these places are discussed in greater detail in the Parks and Open Space section of this document.

- **Bayfront:** Much of the remaining privately-owned bayfront land is targeted for purchase by the city, and will be part of the expanded Bay Beach Park. Would a master plan for the development of this area be appropriate?
- **Fox Riverfront:** Should pedestrian connections and overlooks, and ‘green’ alternatives to rip-rap or sheetpile shore stabilization be considered?
- **East Riverfront:** How might the natural river edge be preserved or restored? Should more recreation opportunities such as canoeing and kayaking be encouraged?
- **Baird Creek:** Trail connections and a continuous parkway are currently underway. Is a bike and jogging trail along Baird Creek desirable? Should Baird Creek Parkway be connected to the East River open space? How wide should the public open space be along Baird Creek? Should wide conservation easement (beyond the banks) and park ‘nodes’ be part of the greenway plan or will private housing lots be allowed to line the banks in some areas?
- **Lambeau Field:** This landmark is currently undergoing major improvements. Should the City’s efforts include some improvements to the adjacent streetscape and entry enhancements on major routes to the field?
- **Astor Historic District Residential Neighborhood:** This district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Can its features serve as a model for new or redeveloping neighborhoods?
- **Downtown Historic District:** Many buildings of architectural and historic interest have been identified in the downtown. Should any additional buildings receive historic designation?
- **Oakland-Dousman Historic District:** This district contains many of the best examples of historic residential architecture to be found in the city.
- **Broadway -Dousman and Broadway-Walnut Historic Districts:** The revitalization of these districts and the adjacent Broadway corridor has resulted in new uses for historic buildings and streetscape improvements. Can this effort be looked to as a model for improving other historic business districts?
- **Niagara Escarpment:** Should the possibility of an open space corridor along the Niagara escarpment with connections to the Cofrin Arboretum and Joliet Park be considered?

Bay Beach Park combines bay views with picnic areas, historic amusement park, and dance pavilion. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary provides nature trails and wildlife habitat.



The Niagara Escarpment is an important geological feature of the Green Bay area, and offers a rare high point from which to view the bay.



Baird Creek Parkway, when complete, will offer a linear green space that connects the Downtown area with east side parks.



The East River is a popular place for boating, and has a natural edge on most of its run through Green Bay.



New Residential Development

- **Street Connectivity:** Should streets in new development be interconnected and should they connect with major arterials at more than one point, or should the suburban pattern of one main entrance and cul-de-sac streets be followed?
- **Size and Design of Streets:** Should local residential streets be designed to a narrower standard than presently (36 feet)?
- **Sidewalks:** Should local (minor) residential streets have sidewalks on both sides, just one side, or none at all?
- **Development Model:** Is the older, “traditional” neighborhood or suburban model preferred? Should alleys be encouraged, and should street tree planting in the right-of-way be required?
- **Architectural Guidelines:** To what extent does the public want to control the appearance of new housing, both single-family and multi-family? How far should guidelines go (location and size of garages, type and use of materials, color, relationship to the street, etc.)?
- **Public Space Component:** Should new small neighborhood parks be given an aesthetic focus or a recreational focus (such as gardens and gazebos vs. playfields)?
- **Small Commercial Nodes:** In what locations, if any, would the older urban model of neighborhood corner store be allowed and encouraged?
- **Form and Density of Development:** Should the ‘conservation subdivision model’ be followed for preserving natural amenities, or should the city look to the ‘village’ model of a compact mixture of housing types with a small commercial component?

Residential Infill and Redevelopment

- **Context-Sensitive Architecture:** Should new infill and redevelopment of existing structures (both single-family and multi-family) follow established site design patterns and be stylistically compatible with the predominant neighborhood aesthetic?
- **Site Design Guidelines:** Should guidelines be established in the zoning ordinance to regulate such elements as placement of structures on lot, circulation and parking, massing and size, materials, openings, facade treatments or landscaping?
- **Street and Sidewalk Pattern:** Should the existing street grid or street configuration be replicated in new development or should new development be allowed to take over one or more blocks and create an alternative internal circulation pattern?
- **Public Open Space:** Should additional public open space be required in residential redevelopment locations?
- **Mix of Housing Types:** Would it be appropriate to introduce multiple-family housing into redeveloping single-family areas? Should a mixture of housing types be sought in any redevelopment area?
- **Mixed-Use Development:** Where might it be appropriate to mix residential and with non-residential land uses? When might they be mixed vertically (housing above business) or horizontally (next to commercial space)?
- **New Cultural Influences:** How, if at all, should the City take advantage of new cultural influences resulting from its changing population?

- **Neighborhood Identification Signs:** Should neighborhood or districts be identified by signs or markers?

New Industrial and Business Park Development

- **Pedestrian–Friendly Environment:** Should sidewalks be required on streets, should trails through green areas be created, and should trail connections to natural amenities be encouraged?
- **Mixed-Use Development:** Should some areas be developed to include live-work units? Should some (or all) new business parks include some commercial component?
- **Guidelines for Site Planning:** Should the zoning ordinance be amended to increase the requirements for site planning, signage and landscaping?
- **Density of Development:** Should the density of the I-43 business park be used as a model? What other models might be appropriate?
- **Architectural Guidelines:** Should guidelines be established to control the appearance of buildings? How specific should they be, and what models might be appropriate to follow?

Adaptive Re-Use of Existing Industrial and Infill Development

- **Context-Sensitive Design:** Should guidelines be established for architectural scale, massing and street presence (entry, facades, setbacks)?

- **Street and Sidewalk Connectivity:** Should existing street patterns be preserved or can new development break the street grid?

Major Commercial Corridors and Associated Nodes

- **Design Guidelines and Design Review:** Should the City’s zoning ordinance be amended to increase its requirements for landscaping, lighting, site planning and sidewalks? Should additional planting take place in a privately owned green strip as well as in the public right-of-way? Should power lines be buried?
- **Design Guidelines for Commercial Signs:** Should sign height, size, placement, design, and materials be more closely regulated?
- **Rear Screening and Facade Treatments:** Should guidelines be developed to control the appearance of the rear and sides of commercial structures? How much, and what type of screening should be required of docking and service operations?

Waterfronts

- **More Riverfront Access:** In which locations is it most important to provide additional pedestrian access and views to the river?