

Living In BC

Housing Element

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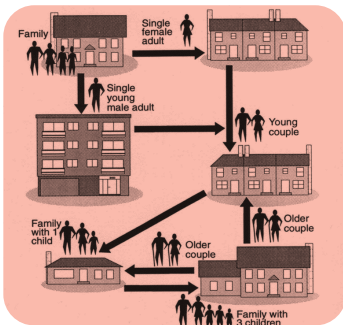


I. Introduction

Housing is a basic need for communities that are constantly changing, as a dynamic population presents challenges and opportunities to Brown County and the local municipalities.



The Brown County housing market has recovered from the housing crisis, and the overall population has continued to grow and change as new families continue to move into Brown County, “baby-boomers” approach retirement age, people experience homelessness, and the population becomes more diverse. These findings indicate that prioritizing affordability and housing diversity choices for these and all population segments is important in order to keep Brown County growing and vibrant. Rehabilitating, updating, and maintaining the existing housing also helps meet the changing population needs.



This chapter recommends a number of options that the county and local communities may utilize to meet the changing population needs. The main recommendations are to revise zoning ordinances to allow for more affordable and diverse housing to help meet the changing housing market; continue to seek financial mechanisms that will make housing more affordable to low to moderate households, which includes new construction and rehabilitation; and consider pursuing housing market specific studies that enhance a community's insight in meeting tomorrow's housing needs.



The Issues and Opportunities Chapter of the plan contains the forecasts potential estimates for new housing units within Brown County over the next 20 years. The Housing Chapter will build on these forecasts by identifying existing trends and characteristics of the housing market, identifying general goals and objectives for housing development in Brown County, and providing recommendations on how to improve existing and new housing. Relating these changes to anticipated future developments provides for the development and application of new and innovative housing practices.



II. Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. *Continue to work with local communities to encourage development of neighborhoods that provide quality housing opportunities for all of Brown County's population, and meets future population, and public health and safety needs.*

Objective 1. Promote concepts and strategies to create more affordable housing opportunities through housing infill and different housing types.

Objective 2. Work with the Brown County Housing Authority to explore partnership possibilities for housing opportunities.

Objective 3. Promote and encourage the design and construction of a wider range of housing types that increase housing supply across all income levels and age ranges.

Objective 4. Continue to manage the Northeastern WI Region CDBG-Housing Rehabilitation Program.



III. Age Characteristics

Figure 5-1 shows that 34.6% of the housing units in Brown County are less than 30 years old, as compared to only 29% for the State of Wisconsin. This suggests that much of the housing stock within the county, when compared to housing stock within the state, is relatively newer and therefore generally in good condition. However, there are a number of older homes located primarily within the near-downtown areas of the City of Green Bay, City of De Pere, the older suburban villages, and within the Villages of Denmark, Pulaski, and Wrightstown. There are also a number of older farm homes in the more rural parts of the county.

In 2013, the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department began to administer a housing Community Development Block Grant in a 10-county region of Northeastern Wisconsin, including Brown County, but exclusive of any entitlement community, such as the City of Green Bay, that receives a direct allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development. Funds from Brown County's program may be utilized to provide 0%, deferred payment loans to low- and moderate-income homeowners for housing repairs, including projects like replacing private onsite wastewater treatment systems, wells, roofs, siding, windows, heating and ventilation, electrical, plumbing, and lead paint and asbestos abatement. The loan payments are deferred until such time as the home is no longer the principal place of residence for the applicant, when the loan then becomes payable in full. Repaid funds may then be re-loaned through a revolving loan program. Additional programs allowable under the terms of the program include rental unit rehabilitation and home purchase down payment and closing cost assistance.

As homes age, increased maintenance and upkeep become a demanding task. The City of Green Bay has been proactive in addressing the maintenance and rehabilitation of its older homes through the utilization of Community Development Block Grant entitlement funds, city staff, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations, and overall citizen involvement.



III. Age Characteristics

Figure 5-1: Age of Housing for Brown County and Wisconsin, in 2017.

Year Structure Was Built	Brown County	%	Wisconsin	%
2010-2017	3,725	3.4%	60,537	2.2%
2000-2009	16,365	15.1%	344,300	12.9%
1990-1999	17,348	16.0%	371,125	13.9%
1980-1989	13,582	12.6%	265,382	9.9%
1970-1979	17,830	16.5%	393,850	14.7%
1960-1969	11,717	10.8%	261,254	9.8%
1950-1959	10,609	9.8%	297,380	11.1%
1940-1949	4,552	4.2%	151,579	5.7%
1939 or Earlier	12,472	11.5%	522,925	19.6%
TOTAL	108,200	100%	2,668,692	100%

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.



IV. Structural Characteristics

Brown County has a slightly lower percentage of one-unit detached structures than the State of Wisconsin, at 63.6% and 66.6% respectively. Brown County has a slightly larger percentage of one-unit attached structures (5.03%) compared to the state (4.3%), but a much larger percentage of 5- to 9-unit structures than the state (9.1% for Brown County versus 4.9% for the state). Although there is some variability in the categories, Brown County and the State of Wisconsin are generally comparable in terms of percentages of units in structure. Figure 5-2 details the units in structure for Brown County and the State of Wisconsin.

Figure 5-2: Units in Structure for Brown County and the State of Wisconsin in 2017.

Units in Structure	Brown County	%	Wisconsin	%
1-unit, detached	68,612	63.4%	1,776,970	66.6%
1-unit, attached	5,444	5.03%	114,444	4.30%
2 units	7,155	6.60%	173,245	6.50%
3 or 4 units	3,536	3.26%	99,396	3.72%
5 to 9 units	9,838	9.1%	130,296	4.90%
10 to 19 units	5,296	4.9%	91,393	3.40%
20 or more units	6,548	6.1%	188,319	7.0%
Mobile home	1,741	1.6%	94,013	3.5%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	30	0.00%	616	0.00%
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	108,200	100%	2,668,692	100%

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.



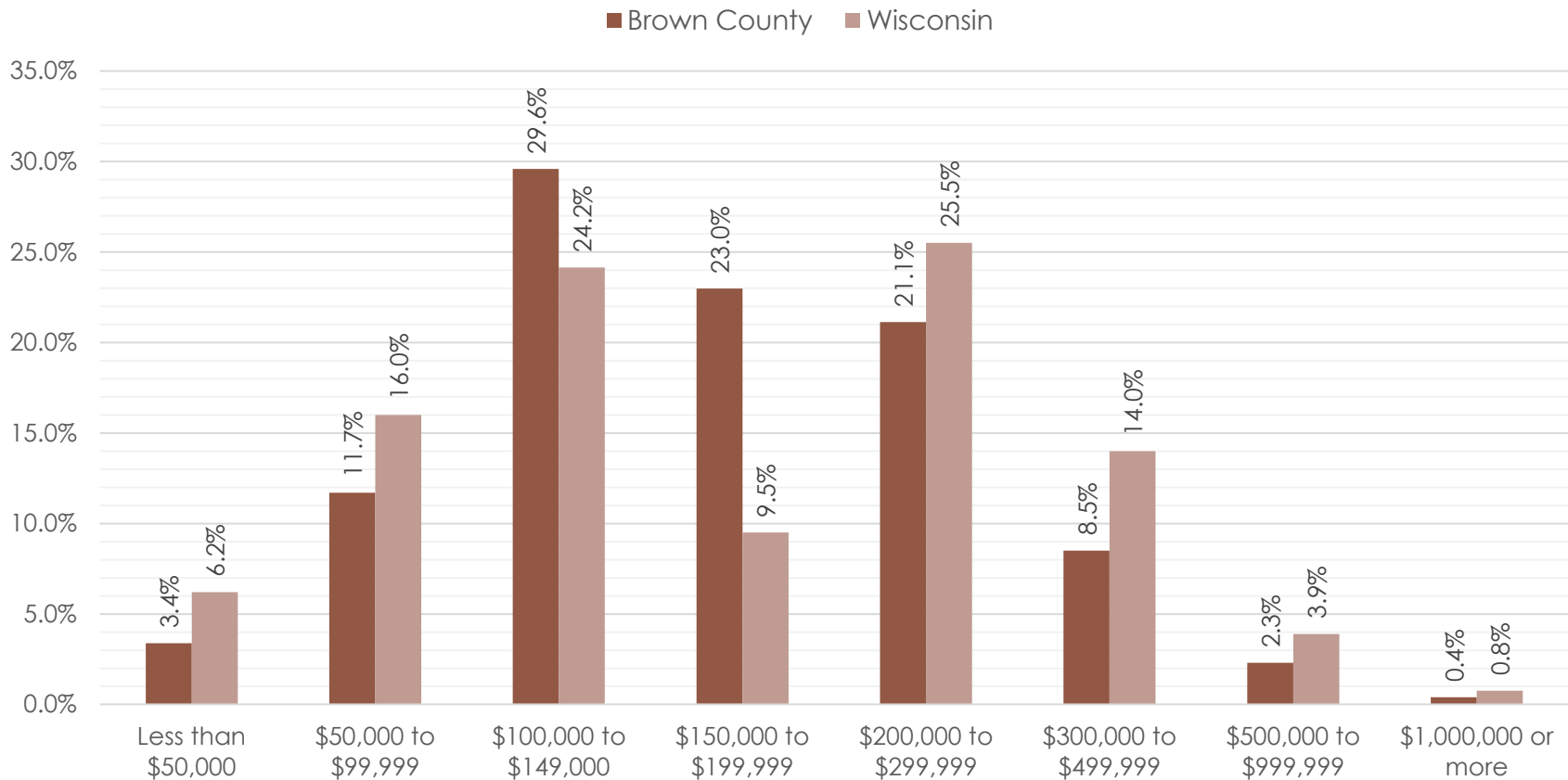
IV. Value Characteristics

According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey, the largest percentage of homes in Brown County is valued between \$100,000 and \$149,999, and Brown County has a median home value of \$163,200. For comparison, the State of

Wisconsin's largest percentage segment of home values are between \$200,000 and \$299,999 and has a median home value of \$169,300. Although the state has a larger percentage of higher-priced homes, Brown County has a much smaller percentage of

homes valued at less than \$100,000 than the state as a whole. Figure 5-3 displays the range of home values in Brown County as compared to the State of Wisconsin.

Figure 5-3: Range of Home Values, Brown County and State of Wisconsin in 2017.



Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.



V. Occupancy

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there were a total of 104,371 housing units within Brown County. This compares with 107,224 units in 2017, 2,853 units (2.7 %) over the 7-year period. Indicating a very slight increase in the number of residents who rent as compared to those who own. Rental demand has remained strong since 2008 and according to The State of the Nation's Housing Report in 2018, rental demand is starting to cool down but still remains relatively strong. Brown County should encourage a healthy mix of rental and ownership options. Figure 5-4 summarizes the changes that occurred in Brown County between 2010 and 2017 and Figure 5-5 summarizes the changes for the whole state over the same time.

Figure 5-4: Change in Housing Occupancy Characteristics, Brown County, 2010-2017.

	2010 Census	%	2017 ACS	%	Increase	% Change 2010-2017
Total Units	104,371	100.0%	107,224	100.0%	2,853	2.7%
Occupied Units	98,383	94.3%	103,267	95.0%	4,884	5.0%
Ownership Supply	64,585	61.8%	67,264	61.9%	2,679	4.1%
Rental Supply	33,798	32.3%	36,003	33.1%	2,205	6.5%
Vacant Housing Units	5,988	5.7%	4,933	5.0%	-1,055	-17.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2010 Census and 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Figure 5-5: Change in Housing Occupancy Characteristics, State of Wisconsin, 2010-2017.

	2010 Census	%	2017 ACS	%	Increase	% Change 2010-2017
Total Units	2,624,358	100.0%	2,668,692	100.0%	44,604	1.7%
Occupied Units	2,279,768	86.7%	2,328,754	87.2%	48,986	2.1%
Ownership Supply	1,551,558	61.8%	1,559,308	58.4%	7,750	0.5%
Rental Supply	728,210	31.9%	769,446	28.8%	41,236	5.6%
Vacant Housing Units	344,590	13.1%	339,938	12.8%	-4,652	-1.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2010 Census and 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.



VI. Housing Affordability

Why do we need affordable housing? This is a question that many communities ask as they develop their comprehensive plans. Affordable housing is a necessary and integral part of any healthy community. As people's lives change, so do their housing preferences and their ability to pay more or less for housing. For instance, many communities identify large areas in their comprehensive plans for commercial or industrial businesses. It is important to understand that the people who would work in these businesses would also need a place to call home.

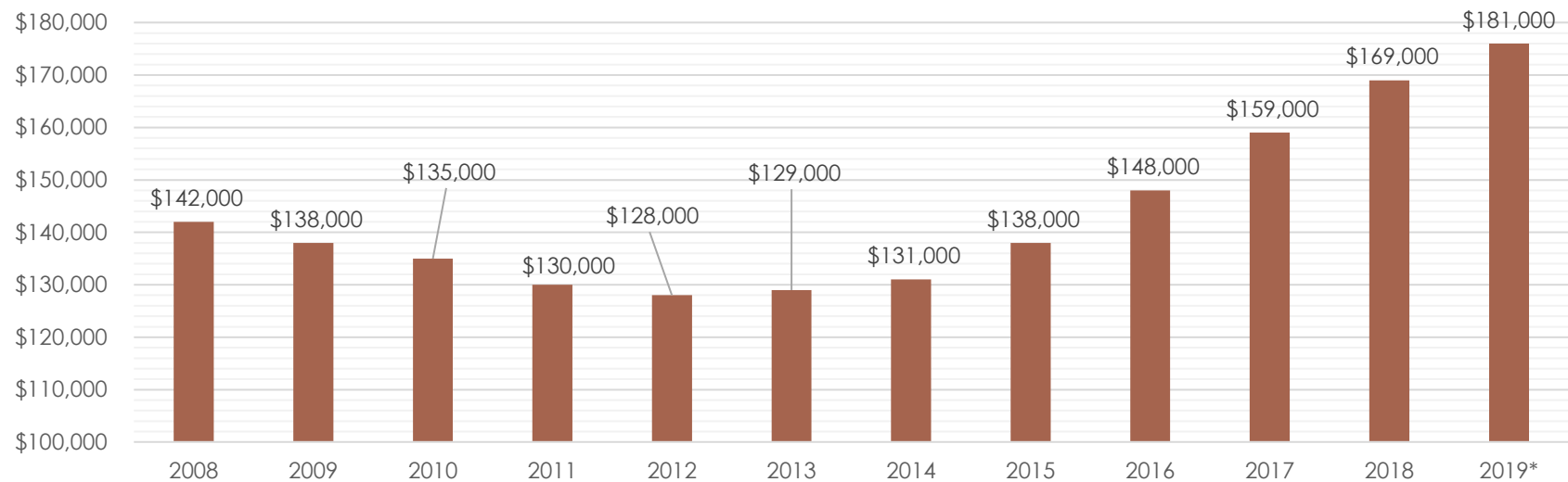
The affordability of housing is tied directly to income. According to the

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a family is considered "housing cost burdened" if the total expenses for housing exceed 30% of their income. When such a large percent of income is invested toward housing expenses, families will likely have trouble affording necessities such as transportation, clothing, meals, and medical care. As a frame of reference, a family with one full-time worker earning the minimum wage cannot afford the local fair-market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment anywhere in the United States¹.

According to Zillow.com and as is depicted in Figure 5-6, the median selling price of a single-family home

in Brown County increase significantly from 2008 and has surpassing the annual average of \$153,200 in 2007. The housing market in Brown County has more than recovered as annual sales prices have increased by 30% and median sale per square foot has increased by 38% from 2011 to 2018. Median sales will continue to increase but not exponentially. The large percentage indicates that it is vital for Brown County and its communities to address affordability and housing diversity. Figure 5-6 displays the average selling price for a single-family home in Brown County over the past ten years and a 2019 projected price.

Figure 5-6: Average Selling Price for a Single-Family Home in Brown County, 2008-July 2018.



Source: Zillow.com, accessed 4/15/2019, <https://www.zillow.com/brown-county-wi/home-values/>. * indicates projected 2019 sales.



VI. Housing Affordability

Housing Cost Burdened Households

Housing cost burdened and extremely cost burdened is defined as a household spending more than 30% of their income before taxes on gross housing costs.

Figure 5-7 contains an inventory of current cost burdened households in Brown County and Wisconsin from the most recent data in 2017.

- Roughly 45% of the rental household population are cost burdened under the HUD definition.
- Approximately, 18.5% of homeowners in Brown County are considered housing cost burdened.

Housing Affordability Trends

Since, 1990 there has been an increase in cost burdened households throughout the United States, including Brown County. A quote from the 2018 State of the Nation's Housing Report, explains some reasons for the increase in housing cost burdened households. "While better housing quality accounts for some of the increased costs, higher costs for building materials and labor, limited productivity gains, increased land costs, new regulatory barriers, and growing income inequality, all played major roles as well."

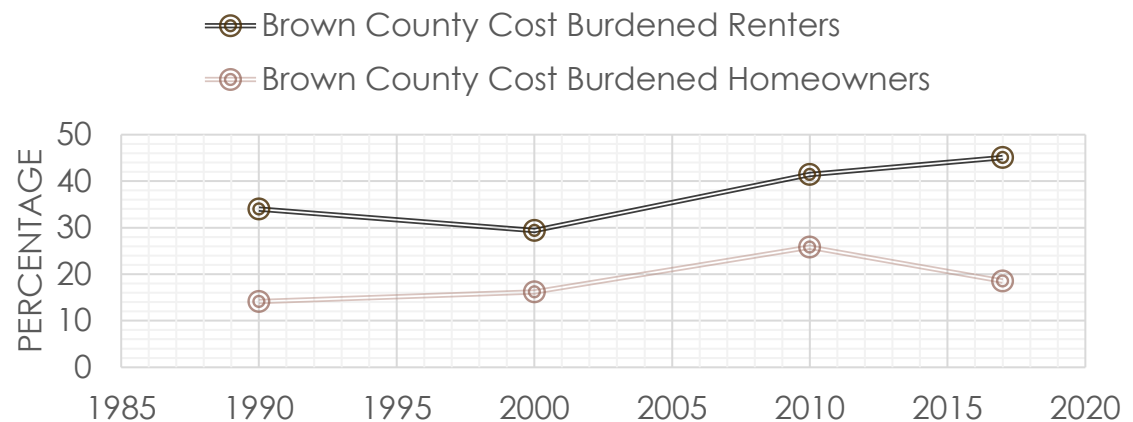
Brown County and its communities should plan to address housing affordability in areas it can control such as reducing lot requirements and allow zoning that is flexible to encouraging smaller homes and housing diversity.

Figure 5-7 Housing Cost Burdened Renters and Homeowners for Brown County and Wisconsin in 2017.

	Renters		Homeowners	
2017	Cost Burdened Units	%	Cost Burdened Units	%
Brown County	16,249	45.1%	12,480	18.5%
Wisconsin	343,513	44.6%	343,793	22.04%

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Figure 5-8 Brown County 10 Year Trends - Housing Cost Burdened Rates by Household Type.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



VI. Housing Affordability

Rental Housing Affordability

To further define the issue, the National Low Income Housing Coalition maintains a “Housing Wage Calculator” that calculates the hourly wage needed to afford monthly rent amounts. That estimates that the mean renter hourly wage in Brown County would need to be \$13.70, and that affordable rent at the mean renter wage would be \$713². Based on the most recent median gross rent estimate in Brown County of \$746 from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey, a person would need to earn at least \$14.34 per hour, or \$29,840 per year to pay no more than 30 % of income on housing. That is a \$0.64 hourly gap that’s higher than the estimated affordable rent at the mean renter wage.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2018 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for the Green Bay Metropolitan Area, there are a total of 76 different occupations employing approximately 88,614 people with a median hourly wage below \$14.34 per hour³.

The people who perform these jobs are important to our children, senior citizens, economy, and overall quality of life in Brown County. Critically, County and local communities planning for future commercial and industrial growth need to consider that these employees also need a place to live. A range of affordable housing options, including, but certainly not limited to apartments, townhouses, duplexes, and single-family homes are all necessary to house the people who work in our communities.

Figure 5-9: Sampling of Occupations Making Less Than \$14.34 per Hour in 2018.

Occupation Title	Median Hourly Wage
Counter and Rental Clerks	\$14.34
Orderlies	\$14.29
Cooks – Institution and Cafeteria	\$14.26
Tellers	\$14.26
Nursing Assistants	\$14.23
Sales and Related Occupations	\$14.20
Pharmacy Technicians	\$14.07
Helpers--Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	\$13.49
Landscaping and Grounds keeping Workers	\$13.42
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	\$13.35
Security Guards	\$13.03
Food Processing Workers, All Other	\$12.81
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	\$12.60
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursey, and Greenhouse	\$12.52
Home Health Aides	\$12.51
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$12.33
Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	\$12.18
Material Moving Workers, All Other	\$11.84
Cooks, Restaurant	\$11.69
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	\$11.61
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	\$11.30
Childcare Workers	\$10.30
Bartenders	\$9.68
Cashiers	\$9.63
Waiters and Waitresses	\$9.07

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2019 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates – Green Bay, WI. Web address at end of chapter.



VI. Housing Affordability

Rental Gap Analysis

A rental gap analysis measures the supply of rentals by price and compares it with the demand for rentals at a price based on renters' income. It follows the same HUD standard that no more than 30% of a household's gross income should go to gross housing costs. The analysis assumes that no household chooses to spend more than 30% and that higher income renters

prefer higher price rental units. The analysis indicates two rental affordability pressures. The first is that supply is not meeting demand for rental households in the 30% or lower Area Median Income (AMI) which in 2016, was less than \$16,252 a year.

New construction of rentals at prices \$406 or below, is generally not profitable for developers. Brown County and its communities should

encourage developers and nonprofits to apply for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and provide zoning flexibility that would reduce costs to develop low income rental units. The second, there are downward pressures from higher-income renters on medium income renters indicating a strong demand for both medium to higher priced rents at \$1,084-\$1,625.

Figure 5-10 Rental Gap Analysis for Brown County in 2016.

Area Median Income (AMI)	<30% AMI (Less than \$16,252)	31-50% AMI (\$16,253- 27,086)	51-80% AMI (\$27,087- \$43,338)	80-120% AMI (\$43,339- \$65,006)	>120% AMI (more than \$65,007)
Maximum Affordable Rent (Per Month)	<\$406	\$406-677	\$678-1,083	\$1,084-1,625	>\$1,625
Number of Rental Housing Units	2,142	11,366	10,622	5,601	272
Number of Renters	7,694	7,680	7,955	6,056	6,078
Rental Gap	-5,552	3,685	2,667	-456	-5,806

Source: 2011-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.



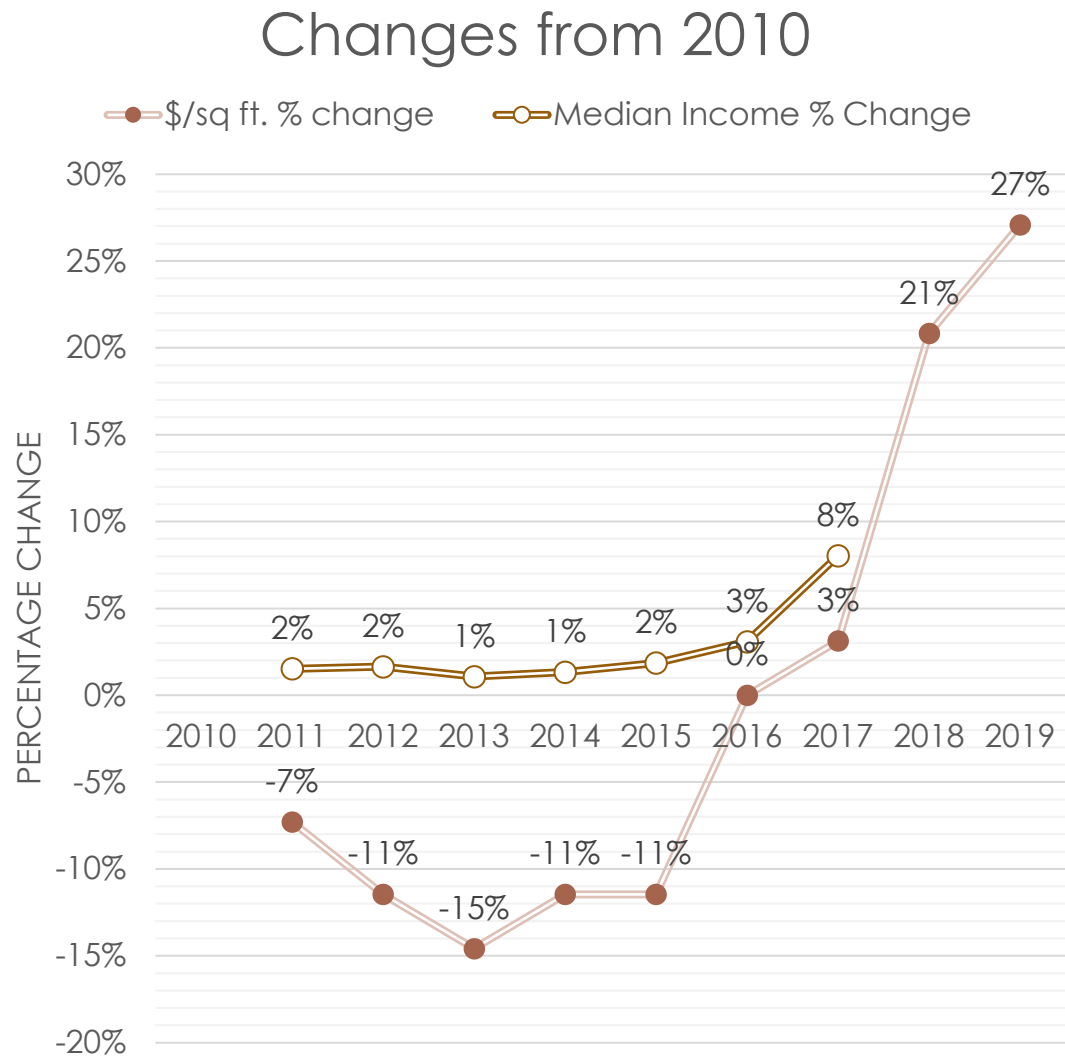
VI. Housing Affordability

Homeownership Affordability

Brown County and its communities should be aware of recent trends that housing sales per square foot have been exceeding increases in median household income for some time. A snap shot from 2010-2017 shows that housing prices per square foot have greatly increased ever year, median incomes have relatively kept pace with inflation. If Brown County and its communities do not address recommendations presented in this chapter, housing affordability will become a major barrier to homeownership, resident recruitment, and the overall community well-being.

"...housing sales per square foot have been exceeding increases in median household income for some time."

Figure 5-11 Annual Percentage Changes in Median Home Sales Per Square Foot and Household Median Income for Brown County from 2012-2016.



Source: Zillow.com and 2010-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census. No median income data available yet for 2018.

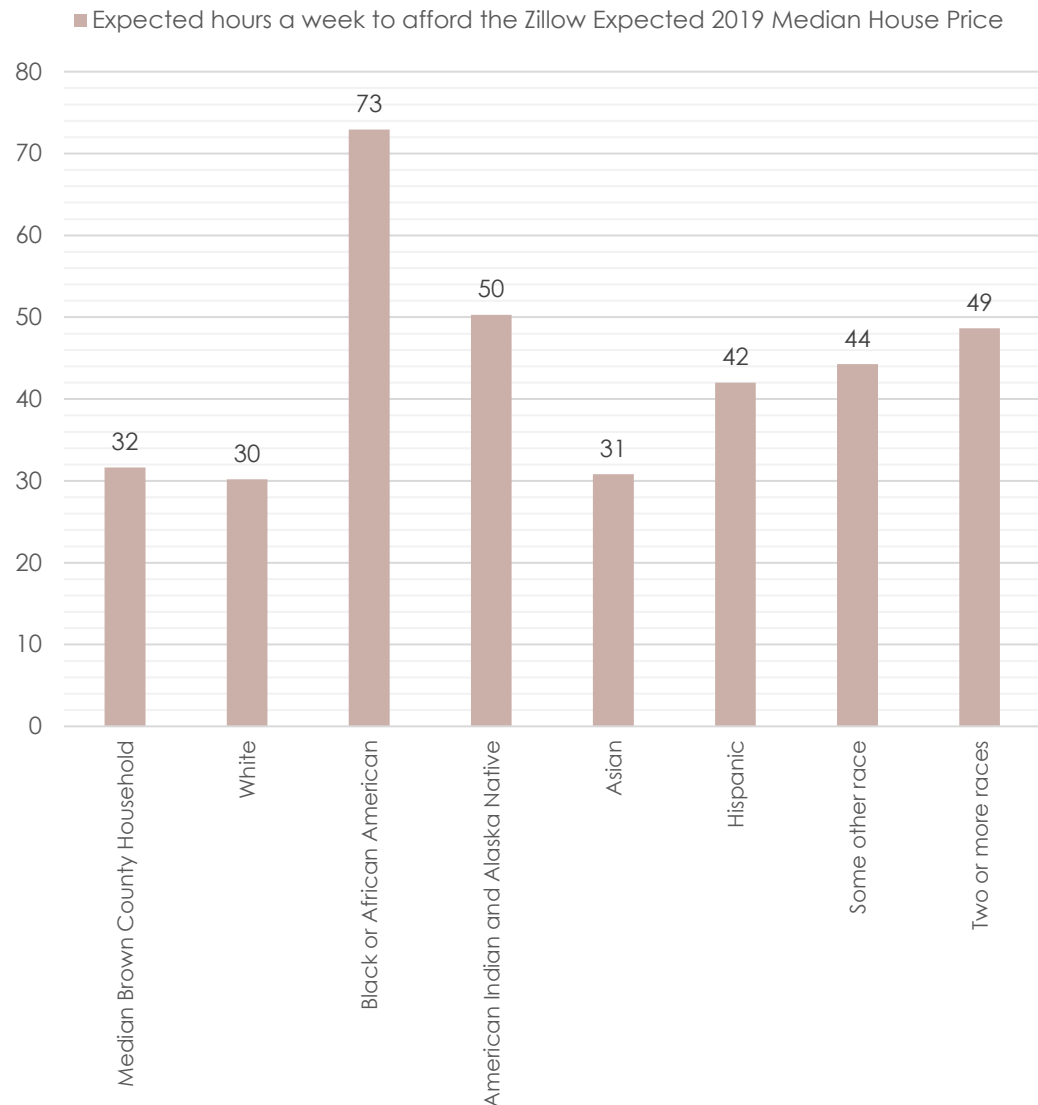


VI. Housing Affordability

Inclusive Homeownership

The Country as whole is becoming a more racially diverse nation and it is expected that America will be a minority majority country by 2045. From 2011 to 2016, Brown County has seen small increases in the White Population of about .9%, while the population as whole has increased by 4%. The County should expect the population to become more diverse and should pay close attention to how that affects barriers to homeownership. Of note, the median White household needs to only work roughly 30 hours per week to afford the expected 2019 Median Home Sale Price of \$176,000. For Black, American Indian, and Hispanic households, they need to work much more (73, 50, and 42 hours a week) to spend less than 30% of their income on the median sales price of \$176,000. Brown County and its communities should continue to seek down payment assistance options as well as follow the recommendations listed in this chapter to make homeownership more inclusive achievable for all households. Figure 5-12 assumes that each household will be purchasing a house at \$176,000 with a 30-year fixed rate 4.7% Annual Percentage Rate and has an escrow loan that includes property taxes and home insurance.

Figure 5-12 Expected Work Hours a Week for Household Wages Combined to Afford the 2019 Zillow Projected Median House Price by Race.



Source: Zillow.com and 201-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census.



VII. Homelessness in Brown County

Existing Conditions

Brown County has seen an upward trend in people experiencing homelessness over the last decade.

Existing Efforts to Address Homelessness in Brown County

In 2013 a task force within the continuum of care (partners working on homelessness in Brown County) started the Basic Needs committee to address chronic homelessness. Basic Needs initiated two studies to show what chronic homelessness costs the community. The costs to the community for care including hospital care, rescue, police, and crisis services were \$750,000 (2013) and \$1.1 million (2016). Also 2017 study by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness estimated it cost a community between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per person, per year to leave someone chronically homeless.

Basic Needs had been working with homeless organizations already but started including housing program agencies throughout Brown County in 2016 because those providers were working with so many people that were previously living on the street or in shelters. This helped tie together different parts of the care continuum, and holistically

addressing people's life situations. Basic Needs also worked to develop the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) and Peers, Coaches and Circles (PCC), described on the following page.

Figure 5-13: Homeless Student Enrollment in Brown County 2003-04 through 2017-18 School Years

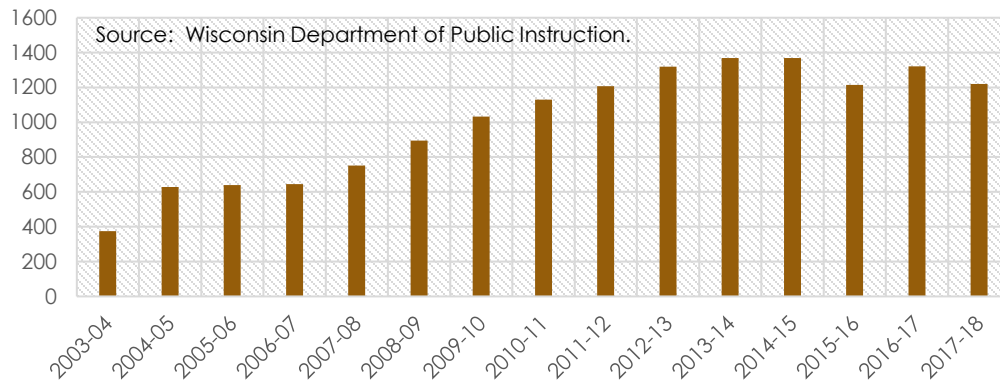


Figure 5-14: Basic Needs Collaborative Partners

HSHS St Vincent/ St Mary's Hospitals	Family Services Northeast WI
Bellin Psychiatric Center	Lakeland Care Inc
Aurora Hospital	Golden House
Brown County Mental Health Treatment Center	Newcap (PSH)
The NEW Community Clinic, Outreach Health Care	Veterans Outreach Program
Options for Independent Living	Center for Veterans Issues
CleanSlate Outpatient Addiction Medicine	Jackie Nitschke Center
NEW Community Shelter	House of Hope
St John's Homeless Shelter	Transformation House Inc
Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition	Rawhide Inc
Libertas	



VII. Homelessness in Brown County

Resources

Brown County Housing Authority (BCHA)

Working with the Brown County Housing Authority (BCHA) is one tool the County can utilize to help reduce homelessness. The BCHA has roughly 3,500 vouchers it issues to help pay for housing assistance. The BCHA has preferences for its waiting list which will reduce the time residents will wait to receive a voucher. It is quite common for residents to wait over a year across the country to receive a voucher. The same is true for the BCHA, however, homeless residents are currently the second of fourth preferences which helps reduce their wait time. The County should continue to encourage the BCHA to have a higher preference for homeless residents.

Brown County Housing and Homelessness Coalition

The Brown County Housing and Homelessness Coalition (BCHHC) is a nonprofit that has a mission to provide leadership in the development, advocacy and coordination of community strategies to prevent and end homelessness. The BCHHC lists available (as of October 2019) resources on its website.

Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)

The HOT is a partnership between the Green Bay Police Department and the BCHHC. The team provides street outreach in the community and works to connect people experiencing homelessness to the Continuum of Care in the area. This partnership works with agency partners that provide shelter and additional resources for people experiencing homelessness. The HOT Team can be a first point-of-contact for people experiencing homelessness.

Peers, Coaches, Circles (PCC)

The Green Bay Police has partnered with Options for Independent Living, Circles USA, National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) and Newcap Permanent Supportive Housing Program to facilitate PCC. A Certified Peer Specialist will partner with people going through recovery while in housing programs and create a connection and provide support to that person through the process.



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

As discussed throughout the chapter, the Brown County housing market has recovered since the 2008 recession, changes in demographics are also changing housing preferences, increases in housing costs are exceeding increases in household incomes, and there is not an adequate supply of rentals for very low income and high-income rental households which is causing financial pressures on low- and moderate-income rental households. Brown County and its communities need to plan for a resilient housing stock that meets the future needs of Brown County for all incomes while reducing adverse effects on the environment.

Brown County should encourage residential subdivisions that consist of multiple residential types, smaller lots sizes, allows for the possibility of mix uses, and encourages active transportation such as biking or walking.

Residential subdivisions that have been developed since the 1950s tend to be very uniform and consist almost exclusively of single-family homes. These subdivisions are primarily separated from other uses

(commercial, institutional, recreational, etc.) and housing types, resulting in "pods" of single-use developments and creating an environment where every trip out of the house to run errands must be by vehicle because the land uses are separated and spread out. Creating an environment where walking and bicycling are viable transportation options through the mixing of compatible land uses, including a variety of housing types, is to be encouraged.

In order to maintain a healthy mix of housing options in Brown County, it will become necessary for all Brown County communities to recognize how a few demographic changes may impact the demand for various types of housing options.

A few of the current (2000-2016) demographic trends that may directly impact the housing market in Brown County and are expected to continue over the next 20 years include:

- *A continuing decrease in family size from 3.08 persons per family in 2000 to 3.02 persons per family in 2010. (Under 3 as of 2016)*

- *A continuing increase in non-family households from 34.1% in 2000 to 35.65% in 2010.*
- *A continuing increase of households with individuals 65 and over from 18.8% in 2000 to 21.2% in 2016.*

Other more general trends include:

- *An expected increase in the number of elderly family members living with extended family due to the increasing cost of assisted living, home health care, and/or long-term health care facilities.*
- *A continuation of the "back to the city" movement among young adults and empty nest adults to take advantage of the cultural, culinary, recreational, and nightlife options in cities.*
- *Continued increase in the nonwhite population as a proportion or percentage of the Brown County population.*



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

Smaller Residential Lot Sizes

One of the first and easiest ways for a community to increase the amount of affordable housing is to encourage the use of smaller lots. In newer developments in Brown County with public sewer and water, the typical residential lot is approximately 1/4- to 1/3-acre (10,800 to 14,520 square feet). In areas without public sewer or water, most communities require a minimum of at least 1.5 acres (65,340 square feet) to build a home even though the Brown County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance requires a minimum of only 20,000 square feet for a lot served by an onsite system.

In addition to helping to keep the housing costs down, smaller lots provide for greater efficiencies in the delivery of such services as postal delivery and garbage and school bus pickup. Also, in terms of cost savings, the more homes that front on a street, the less the impact on the individual homeowner when paying assessments for sewer main, water main, sidewalk, or street repairs.

Within the rural parts of Brown County where public sewer service may not be available, it is common for very large lots to be required. However, many of these communities are also intent upon protecting farmland and preserving rural character. Oftentimes the required acreage for a large

minimum residential lot takes land out of agricultural production that is not necessarily required for the home site. In communities where this is an issue, the utilization of smaller maximum lot size for new residential development would bring the cost of the home down, as well as take less land out of agricultural production.

A second technique to protect farmland or the rural character of the community is to utilize conservation designed subdivisions. These types of developments also have smaller residential lots, which can keep housing costs down. However, the housing costs are typically more because of the greenspace requirements that are a required part of the development.

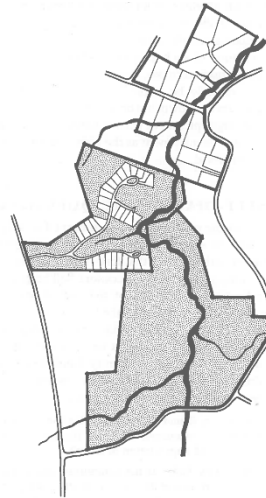


Figure 6-4. Three parcels of land located along a stream illustrate how opportunities to conserve open space networks are typically lost when developments are conventionally laid out, and how such connections can be incorporated into the design of conservation subdivisions. This illustration also shows the role of a land trust preserve (or of a public park) in protecting additional segments of the stream corridor.

Source: Smaller lots (middle of image) compared to larger lots (upper part). Conservation Design for Subdivisions, Arendt.

Downtown Residential Development

The key to any downtown residential development when it comes to housing is density. Within a downtown, land values are typically higher than on the fringe. To make residential development financially viable in a downtown district, it is generally necessary to encourage higher densities through apartment buildings, multi-floor condominium developments, upper floor residential units above first floor commercial, group homes, and similar developments. An added benefit to additional density within a downtown is that it provides readily available customers to the many local small businesses within easy walking distance or a short bus ride. It is important that new residential developments within a downtown contribute to the overall design and streetscape through architecture, landscaping, parking, and site planning that is sensitive to its downtown location and is not simply a transplanted suburban design.



Source: City of Seattle Housing Affordability and Livability MHA Zone Summaries.



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

Accessory Dwelling Units on a Residential Parcel

As residents age, there may be a time when they may not be able to live independently, but do not want to or cannot afford to live in a retirement or elderly care home. An alternative would be to allow small, attached or detached accessory dwelling units on one residential parcel. These "granny flats," or "backyard cottages" as they are sometimes called, allow older residents to maintain their own independent living quarters while being able to easily interact with their family for meals and socializing in the principal residence.



Source: City of Seattle Guide to Building a Backyard Cottage.

Traditional Neighborhood Development

Traditional neighborhood developments

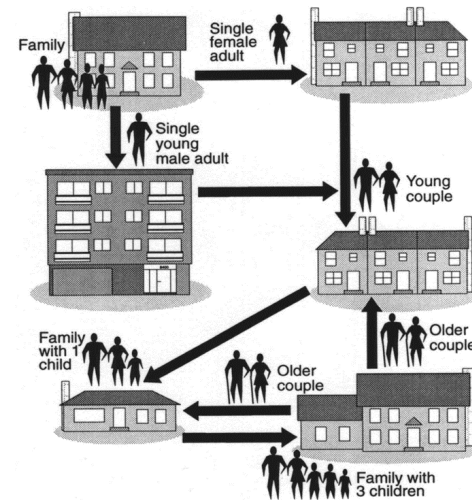


TND development in Buena Vista, CO. Source: Public Square, a CNU Journal.

(TNDs) emphasize the neighborhood as a functional unit rather than the individual parcel or home. The State of Wisconsin formalized its support for this type of development when it required that all cities and villages with a population of over 12,500 residents develop an ordinance that permits these types of developments. Communities within Brown County have addressed this requirement by either creating a stand-alone TND zoning district or utilizing their Planned Development District (PDD) process, both of which are valid approaches. Typical TND neighborhoods are about 100 to 160 acres, which is large enough to support retail services and amenities that meet some of the needs of daily life, but small enough to be defined by pedestrian comfort and interest. The size of the neighborhood is based on a 5-minute walking distance (about a quarter-mile) from the edge to the center and a 10-minute walk (about one-half mile) from neighborhood edge to edge. Each neighborhood typically has an identity that evolves from its

public spaces, such as streets, parks and outdoor spaces, schools, places of worship or other shared facilities. Automobiles do not take precedence over human or aesthetic needs. Instead, a neighborhood provides many ways of getting to, through, and between it and other parts of the community by driving, walking, and bicycling.

Neighborhood housing forms within a traditional neighborhood are mixed to provide more opportunities for people of different ages and income levels to live in various parts of the neighborhood. The concept of mixed housing types is very important because many people prefer to remain in their neighborhoods as their incomes and/or family size increase or decrease. This housing mix allows a young family to rent, purchase a starter home, move into a larger home as their family grows, move to smaller home when they retire, and move to an apartment or other housing type all within the same neighborhood.



Example housing preferences for different life stages. Source: Local Government Commission, 2003.



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

Traditional Neighborhoods, cont.

Traditional neighborhood developments are particularly appropriate in areas of higher-density infill development or in areas directly adjacent to existing development. It is important to note, however, that TND is more than just increased residential density. Traditional neighborhood development is a “package” of amenities, including public and institutional uses, integrated neighborhood commercial uses, a mix of residential types and styles, a connected street pattern, and an array of transportation options.



Conservation subdivision open space feature.

Conservation by Design Developments

In certain parts of the County there may be critical environmental, historical, or agricultural features that should be preserved, but the local property owner wishes to develop his or her property. In situations such as these, conservation by design subdivisions could accomplish both goals. In terms of housing, the lots in conservation by design subdivisions are typically smaller and clustered together to prevent damage to the feature(s) to be preserved.

Living in BC

There are currently several conservation by design subdivisions in Brown County, primarily associated with waterways, wetlands, and the Niagara escarpment. It is important for local communities to clearly identify the ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the areas to be preserved.

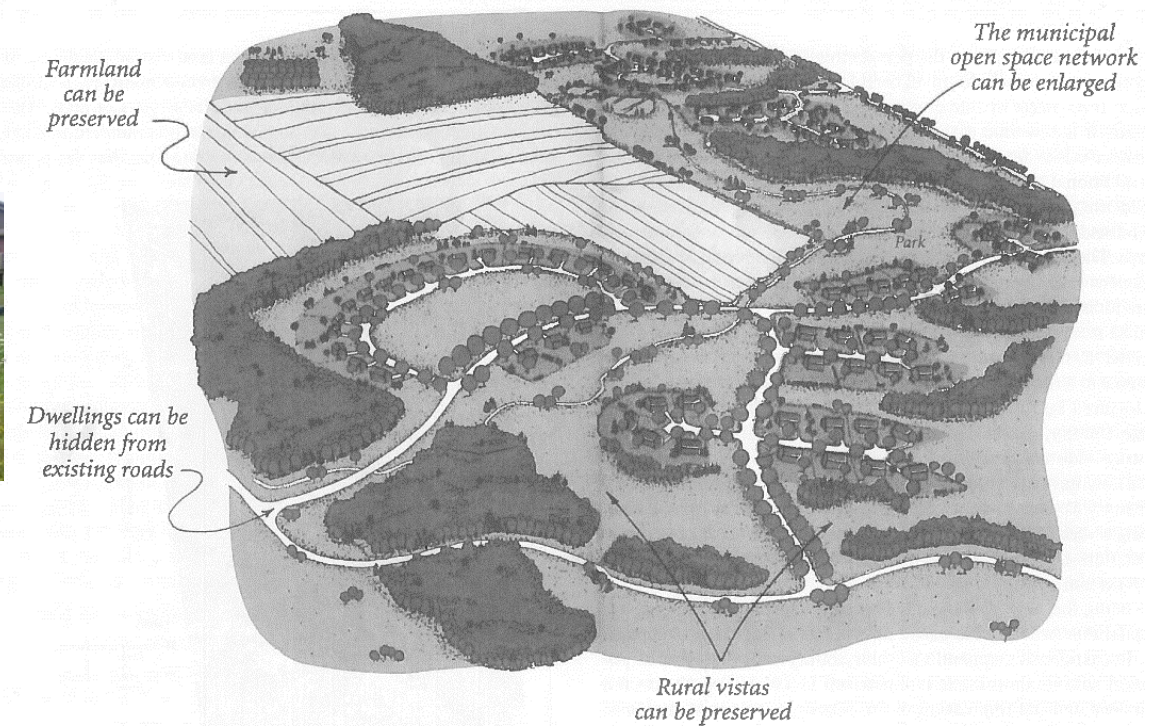


Figure 6-2. This aerial perspective sketch illustrates the multiple benefits that can be achieved when conservation design is used in laying out new subdivisions on several adjoining properties. Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission in southeastern Pennsylvania, this drawing shows how a conservation fabric of protected lands could be woven together to form an interconnected network of open space meeting a number of related community objectives, including the protection of woodlands, fields, scenic vistas, cultural landscapes, and additions to the municipal open space system of parks and trails.

Example of a conservation subdivision, with protected views, woodlands, agricultural land, open space, and houses. Source: Conservation Design for Subdivisions, Arendt.



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

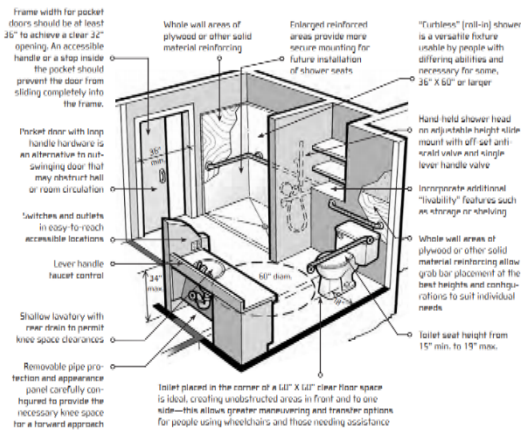
Enhance Public Knowledge of “Visitability” Concepts and Universal Design

As is evident from the Issues and Opportunities Chapter, the overall population of Brown County is continuing to age. As people age, their ability to move around their own home can become increasingly difficult. For a number of elderly and mobility-impaired Brown County residents, the simple presence of a single stair to enter a home can cause a great deal of difficulty. According to Green Bay-based Options for Independent Living, “visitability” applies to the construction of new single-family homes to make them “visit-able” by people with any type of physical or mobility disability. Typically, visitable homes have:

- One entrance with no steps.
- A minimum 32-inch clear passage through all the main floor doors and hallways.
- A useable bathroom on the main floor.

Although these improvements do not allow full accessibility, such as is promoted in universal design, they do allow (at a minimum) elderly and people with a mobility limitation the ability to visit a home or remain living in their home for a longer period.

Universal design is a concept that promotes designing spaces for use by everyone from the start, not just creating separate spaces, or only designing places that could be easily modified in the future. Communities may incorporate universal design principals into housing through things such as curbless showers and stepless entrances.



Source: Residential Rehabilitation, Remodeling and Universal Design, The Center for Universal Design, NC State University.

Reinvestment in Existing Housing Stock

Although 30.9% of Brown County’s housing stock was constructed since 1990, this means that 69.1% of the housing stock was built prior to 1990 and is now at least 23 years old. Housing rehabilitation and maintenance is often thought of as an urban community issue. However, there are many older farmhouses in the rural towns that were built prior to 1939. Maintaining and rehabilitating these older farmhouses also preserves a link to Brown County’s agricultural history and heritage.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, there are now housing rehabilitation programs for residents of Green Bay administered by the City of Green Bay and a separate program for the 23 other local units of government administered by Brown County. The programs are expected to continue and should be encouraged by the local communities for their critical role in helping to maintain aging housing

stock within their communities.

In addition to rehabilitating deteriorating housing, the local communities could adopt minimum housing maintenance standards to ensure that the housing stock is properly maintained. The housing maintenance standard is used most often when there are no structural or safety issues that could be addressed through Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) enforcement but when the appearance of the property is having an adverse effect on neighboring property values.



Above images: Housing rehabilitation before and after completed through the Community Development Block Grant program administered by Brown County.



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

Mixing of Residential Types

One of the components of traditional neighborhoods that should be considered throughout new residential developments in Brown County is the inclusion and mixing of different housing types. Historically, housing types were mixed, and this can be seen in the near downtown neighborhoods of Green Bay and De Pere. More recently, housing types other than single-family detached homes have been grouped together, thereby concentrating these uses. Mixing housing types avoids the concentrations of large tracts of rental properties and their perceived negative impacts. Residents and landlords of rental units are more apt to better maintain their properties if they are mixed with owner-occupied housing.



Mix of housing types and sizes, Butte, Montana. Source: Carolyn Torma, American Planning Association.

Mixed Uses in Residential Developments

Most residential subdivisions developed over the past 50 years consist almost exclusively of single-family detached homes separated from any other commercial, institutional, or even recreational uses.

Residents of these subdivisions having to then drive a vehicle to go to a store, school, or park instead of having the opportunity to walk or bike a relatively short distance to these destinations. The segregation of uses and reliance on a vehicle is especially difficult for the elderly, mobility-impaired, children, and others who may not want to or cannot drive.

The intent of this recommendation is to develop neighborhoods rather than simply subdivisions. In order to encourage people to walk or bike, uses other than only single-family residential uses should be encouraged within these new neighborhoods. For example, corner lots are very good locations for small neighborhood commercial uses and higher density residential developments, while recreational and institutional uses should be in places that provide a focus point, gathering place, and identity for the neighborhood and its residents.

For uses other than single-family detached homes to be palatable to surrounding property owners, the neighborhood commercial, higher density residential, and institutional uses all need to be of a scale and design that

blends in with the residential character of the neighborhood. In order to achieve the desired seamless integration of these uses into the neighborhoods, strict commercial design standards should be employed. The design standards would let the developer know ahead of time what standards the neighbors expect for the building, and the neighbors would know that the development meets their expectations, as well.



Mixed-use development on Vine Street in Cincinnati, Ohio.. Source: Kelly Wilson, American Planning Association.



Commercial infill in Chicago. Source: Sylvia Lewis, American Planning Association.



VIII. Recommended Programs and Policies

Community Housing Needs Assessment Process

In 2017, the Wisconsin Legislature passed Act 243 to address housing affordability, requiring that by January 1, 2020, cities or villages with a population of 10,000 or more must prepare two reports: the first on the implementation of the housing element of the community's comprehensive plan and the second on the community's residential development fees. The Brown County Planning Commission should explore the possibilities for helping local communities to complete these reports. Planning Commission staff has knowledge in this field and would be able to aid local communities. This in turn would help local communities start to better understand the current housing market conditions in their community.

A good resource to consider is *Enabling Better Places: A User's Guide to Wisconsin Neighborhood Affordability*. The document was a collaborative effort, lead by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and the Congress for the New Urbanism and sponsored by different organizations that are interested in housing affordability and development. The document looks at zoning code reforms and ways that those changes can help make it easier to develop a greater range of housing options, ultimately increasing housing in Wisconsin communities⁴.



IX. Summary of Recommendations

Brown County and its local communities must continue to monitor their progress in meeting the housing goal and objectives contained within this chapter. The housing programs and policies identified, if followed, would lead the County toward the overall stated housing goal.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

- 1) Reduce lot sizes, street widths, and encourage a reduction in home sizes to encourage the construction smaller residential lots that reduce costs and barriers to homeownership.
- 2) Permit a small, secondary principal structure ("granny flat") on residential parcels to allow the elderly a place to continue to live semi-independently.
- 3) Encourage the local communities that can support a traditional neighborhood development (TND) to adopt a traditional neighborhood development district in their respective zoning ordinances.
- 4) Allow for adequate growth of the rental market and middle housing (2-8 units) in future land use maps. Special consideration should be given to transportation routes or near amenities frequently visited by families such as parks, trails, grocery stores, and medical facilities.
- 5) Provide zoning flexibility for vacant lots as single-family housing in an older neighborhood will sell for less, but a duplex or fourplex could be more profitable for developers.
- 6) Encourage downtown residential developments as moving back into the center is a more popular preference than in recent past.
- 7) Reducing parking requirements to a range of 1 to 1.5 spaces per unit for larger rental properties to reduce construction costs and gross rent.
- 8) In areas of the county where there are unique resources, conservation by design developments should be encouraged rather than larger lot rural subdivisions.
- 9) Encourage Brown County communities to consider a housing needs assessment to identify and improve their housing supply for current and future residents.
- 10) Encourage affordable housing options within Brown County that support local economic development efforts.
- 11) Utilize the governmental programs and nonprofit agencies listed in the Implementation Chapter to assist Brown County and its local units of government in attaining the goal and objectives of this chapter.
- 12) Consider changing demographics with new housing developments.
- 13) Work in cooperation with Brown County's local units of government and non-profit agencies to ensure safe and sanitary shelter options for the county's homeless population.
- 14) Coordinate with local non-profit and governmental agencies to provide educational information on purchasing a home to potential homebuyers.



Open space incorporated into neighborhood. Shippy Park, Village of Pulaski.

Range of Housing Recommendations



Source: Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, 2018.



IX. Summary of Recommendations

Financing and Housing Policy Recommendations

Financing is an important component of implementing housing solutions. There are often three barriers to executing housing policies financially. One is that the homeowner or landlord does not have the funds to implement or improve their house. Secondly, there may not be a large enough incentive to improve a house because the homeowner will just pay more in property taxes. Sometimes, certain housing types or construction of certain housing may not be profitable for developers. The recommendations below are general financial recommendation or strategies.

Disclaimer: Brown County does not support one nonprofit, grant program, or municipality over any other. The following programs mentioned are to show some examples. For communities or individuals seeking help please contact the Planning and Land Services or the Brown County Health and Human Services Departments.



Mixed-use development.

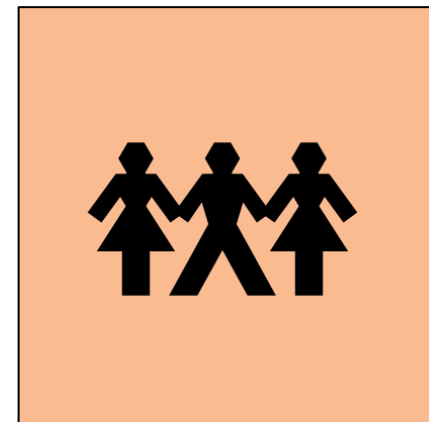
Individual Homeowner Aid

- 15) Encourage more homeowners to inquire about the Northeast Wisconsin Rehabilitation Home Loan Program and continue to improve marketing for the loan program.
- 16) Encourage homeowners to seek energy such as Newcap Inc and credit counseling services.
- 17) Assist in the promotion of residents seeking down payment assistance help from organizations such as NeighborWorks.
- 18) Coordinate with the Brown County Lead Coalition to improve education, outreach, and potential financing of lead home renovation.



Community-Based Aid

- 19) Encourage and assist developers in seeking Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), USDA Rural Loans, and Federal Home Loan Bank loans, and other grants to encourage the construction of lower income affordable rentals.
- 20) Establish a Neighborhood Revitalization Commission or Task Force to encourage revitalization of older housing.
- 21) Investigate the possibility of establishing financial incentives to improve the quality of homes such as neighborhood revitalization districts, housing authorities, and low interest loan programs.





References

¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development website.

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/

² National Low Income Housing Coalition Website. <https://reports.nlihc.org/oor/Wisconsin>.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2018 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates – Green Bay, WI. https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_24580.htm#00-0000.

⁴ Enabling Better Places: A User's Guide to Wisconsin Neighborhood Affordability. <https://lwm-info.org/DocumentCenter/View/5566/WI-Zoning-Guide-Final-2-2022>.