

Future Development in Pittsville, Wisconsin

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Applied Natural Resources Planning

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Authors: Lizabeth Edwardsen, Dane Friis, Trevor Howe, Logan Planer,
Claire Sturdy, Nicole Tennies

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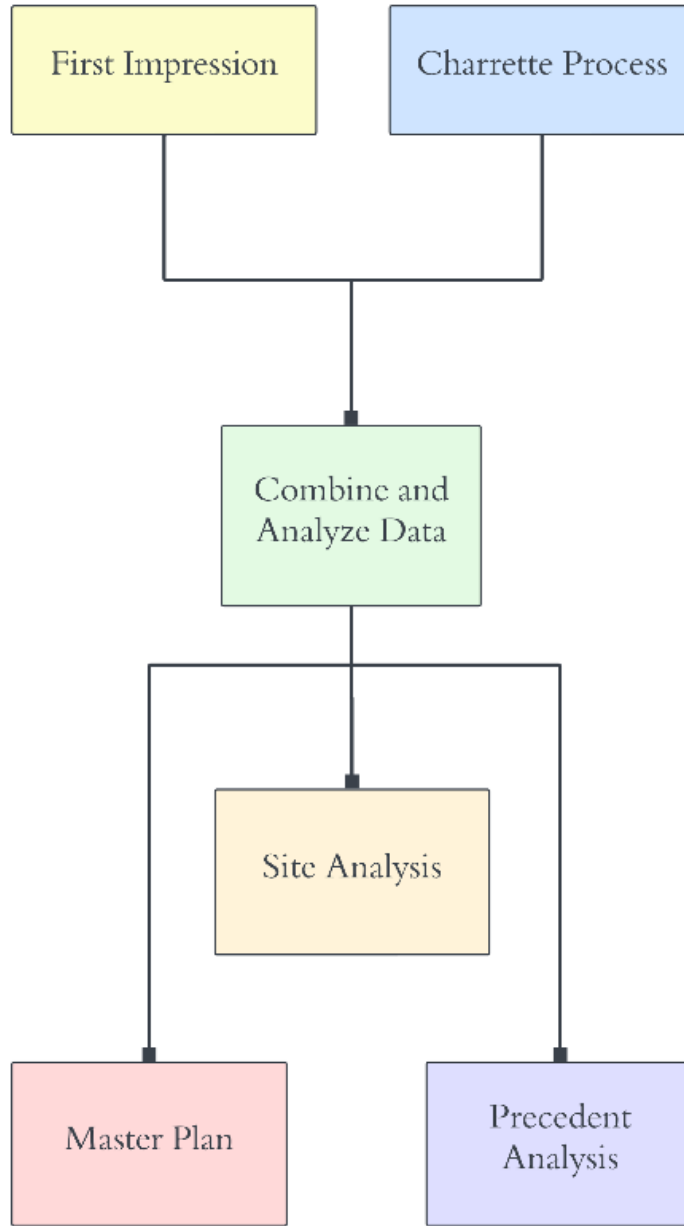
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Summary

As University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Natural Resource Planning students our senior capstone project involved helping the City of Pittsville answer important questions about the community. A local resident, Michael Hobbs, reached out to UWSP to get our input. To begin answering these questions, we formed two groups and gathered our first impressions of the community. The Downtown and Retail group focused on the diversity of businesses and shopping experiences. Known for being the "Geographic Center of Wisconsin" and its location on the Yellow River, Pittsville has the opportunity to implement new retail amenities to attract visitors downtown. The Recreation, Tourism, Government & Infrastructure group focused on parks, mobility, and visitor experiences.

On January 26, 2023, we visited the City of Pittsville to observe various aspects of the community through the first impressions process. Then, on March 2, we returned to Pittsville for the charrette process. The goal of the charrette process was to gather information from community members about our project areas. This information was used to guide us in the next steps, which were our site analysis, precedent research, and master development plans. These three components of our project were presented to the community on May 2. The diagram below outlines the order in which we conducted this process.



In the following report we outline the precedent research, site analyses, and master development plans that we created for the City of Pittsville.

First Impressions Final Report

We used the UW Extension's Community First Impressions Survey to gather data. During our visit we spent an hour driving and walking through the community and speaking with a local resident, Michael Hobbs, using the survey to guide us in recording our observations. The first group focused their observations on the downtown, retail, and tourism. The second group focused on the government, infrastructure, recreation, and entrances of the city. Additionally, the survey included an online background research portion that was completed prior to arrival and a section filled out post visit for reflecting on our experience during the visit. Following the visit both groups compiled their data in an excel spreadsheet. Commonalities among the data were analyzed and a grading scale of A to F was used to evaluate the subjects that were focused on by each group during the visit. The grading and analysis of observations informed our recommendations that were shared with residents during the charrette process.

Poplar Park

Describe your Charrette Process

The purpose of the charette process was to gather ideas from community members. When participants approached our table for the charette process, it was explained to them that our group wanted to their input on key parcels and areas in the community. Our overall goal was to provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Pittsville through several objectives. The objectives were to 1) utilize the two parcels near Poplar Street for the community, 2) create an engaging and attractive area for the Geographic Center landmark, and 3) provide a walking path connecting these two areas to other landmarks in the community. These areas of the community were displayed on the base maps we had on the table. The visitors to our table were encouraged to write down or draw their ideas for the Poplar Street parcels, the Geographic Center, and the walking path on the base maps.

Summary & Analysis of Participant Ideas

Ideas for the Poplar Park parcels included a dog park, kayak rental, kayak launch, fishing dock, cook pits, park benches, signage, and parking. These ideas suggest that residents are looking for more places to gather outside and enjoy the outdoors. It also suggests that residents desire easier access to recreational activities, such as kayaking and fishing. For the Geographic Center landmark, the ideas collected included a selfie station and a sign showing points of interest in the rest of the city. In addition, more space for parking was suggested. Residents want a selfie station and a point of interest sign for the town, because they are proud of the landmark and of their community and would like to share it with others. More parking allows more people to access the Geographic Center at the same time and would accommodate a general increase in visitors.

Walking path illustrations from participants connected the key parcels near Poplar Street to the existing sidewalk on 2nd avenue and other city roads with less traffic that

do not currently have sidewalks. Other illustrations went through the downtown area and connected existing paths in Riverside Park to the subdivision north of the school complex. The path to the subdivision runs through a field owned by the school, between the football field and track and the Yellow River. Participants' ideas for a walking path suggest that they'd like to have a safe route for walking and biking that allows them to access resources throughout the city, as well as recreational areas. It also suggests a desire for connectivity between neighborhoods, such as the residential area near the downtown and the subdivision in the northern part of town.

Steps to Incorporate Participant Ideas

A potential barrier to certain types of development for the Poplar Park parcels is that they are in a mapped floodplain. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, development in a floodplain is regulated through local floodplain ordinances. Examining the floodplain ordinance for Pittsville is the next step for pursuing development ideas. In addition, looking into uses that would be resilient to flooding. The participant's suggestion of a dog park, for example, could be a realistic option. Other cities, such as Stockbridge, GA have successfully created dog parks in floodplain areas. Important considerations for the Stockbridge dog park were drainage and placement of walking paths, sitting areas, and equipment. Because the Poplar Park parcels are not entirely within the floodplain zone, construction of a dog park or an alternatively simplistic recreational use could be successful through intentional and thoughtful design.

The next steps for the Geographic Center are to coordinate the construction of a "selfie station," which have become popular at Wisconsin State and County Parks. The stands are simple, yet sturdy. At first glance they are just a wooden sign, but a second look reveals a ledge – perfect for someone to set up their phone for a timed selfie. Usually, the sign has simple directions for setting up the perfect selfie, as well as a QR code or link to where people can share their selfies. The construction of another sign to direct visitors of the Geographic Center landmark to other attractions in the city is the other step. The sign would show points of interest in the city and routes to get there. The Schmeckle Reserve in Stevens Point designs and constructs cedar signs and could be a potential partner for the City of Pittsville for making the selfie station and the points of interest sign.

Downtown

Describe your Charrette Process

The charrette process began with residents being met at the door where the project was explained to them. Afterwards, project findings, recommendations, and the definition of a business incubator were presented. During the presentation residents could ask questions and make comments on the information displayed. Following the presentation, they were handed a layout of what a hypothetical business incubator

would look like and were instructed to list any businesses they would want to be there as well as components that would make the space a desirable place to hang out. Once they handed in their suggestions, they made their way over to a base map displaying the parcels that our team was generating ideas for and were asked what ideas they have. Participants were given sticky notes and pencils and encouraged to place the notes on the map to inform the team of their recommendations and the locations of where the recommendations should be implemented. At the base map suggestions for signage, sidewalk, and cross walk placements, and utilization of the under used parcels were discussed.

Summary & Analysis of Participant Ideas

At the end of the charrette process, six business incubator layouts were filled out and turned in. The ideas that were provided included: pizza shop, fruit/veggie stand, deli, tables to sit at, video/web design store, student art display, antique shop, farmhouse décor shop, book store, play music, outdoor furniture store, metal yard art shop, exotic bird house shop, local artist co-op, woodwork shop, pottery/paintings shop, Native American art (beadwork, baskets), mobile art shop, hair salon, physical therapist, massage therapist, fast food restaurant, and café/bistro. The most mentioned ideas were coffee shop, kids after school space, nail salon, cranberry products shop, bakery, and hang out area for teens.

Some recommendations made on the parcel base map were to keep the Baum's Mercantile building a grocery store, add a patio and pocket park to the empty lot beside Baum's. Additional ideas for ways to utilize the empty lot were to add a wine bar, small microbrewery, small campfires, live music, and local art displays. Parking was identified as a recurring recommendation for how to use the empty lot. Residents cited the need for parking lots as well as off street parking. Residents were concerned about semis coming down main street endangering people who parked along the street. The addition of trees, landscaping, and benches were popular suggestions regarding improvements to the empty lot. Many residents also agreed that there needed to be more directional signage downtown. Recommended locations for signage included: by Monroe St. and outside of the Baum's Mercantile building. Lastly, between 2nd and 1st avenue, as well as on 1st avenue behind the municipal building, residents felt sidewalk was needed.

Steps to Incorporate Participant Ideas

In order to incorporate the ideas discussed above, our team will conduct research regarding what was recommended by residents and reevaluate our own recommendations based off what we learned. Furthermore, real-life examples of the ideas and recommendations will be looked into in order to determine the feasibility of implementing them in the City of Pittsville. The current conditions of the downtown and target parcels will also influence feasibility.

Site Analysis

The site analysis section is dedicated to understanding the area of Pittsville. In this section we will introduce the main improvements and changes that we have heard from the community. We also examined trends from state to local levels.

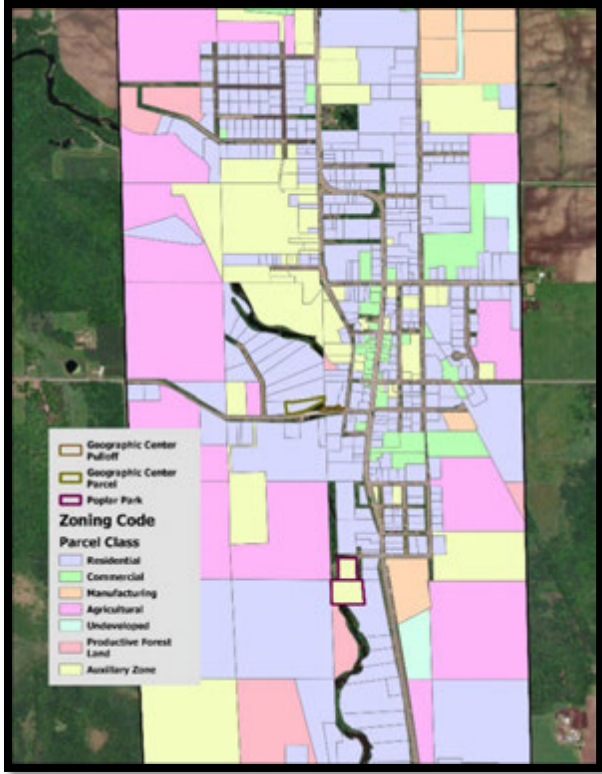
Poplar Park

The two areas this analysis will cover are the Poplar Park and Geographic Center. These are comprised of three parcels and a roadside pull-off that is not zoned as a parcel. As these areas are both located on the yellow river, this analysis investigates the river's floodplain. There is also a lack of dog parks in Wood County, causing our group to investigate this idea further.

Current Land Cover and Zoning

The Poplar Park area consists of two parcels in the southern part of town. These parcels are 4.86 acres in total and are situated half of a mile from downtown, next to the Yellow River. Potential development of this area is limited by the environmental factors and zoning of the area. Potential for restoration and recreation opportunities are present.

The Geographic Center is currently not dedicated as a parcel, since the pull-off is considered as part of the road. The proposed area for redesign will take up 0.31 acres on the west side of town. The parcel containing the actual center of the state was also discussed as a potential area for redesign for recreation. This parcel takes up 1.71 acres and is predominantly an open space with river access. If acquired by the city, this parcel would have no restrictions due to zoning, but would have a few environmental restrictions.



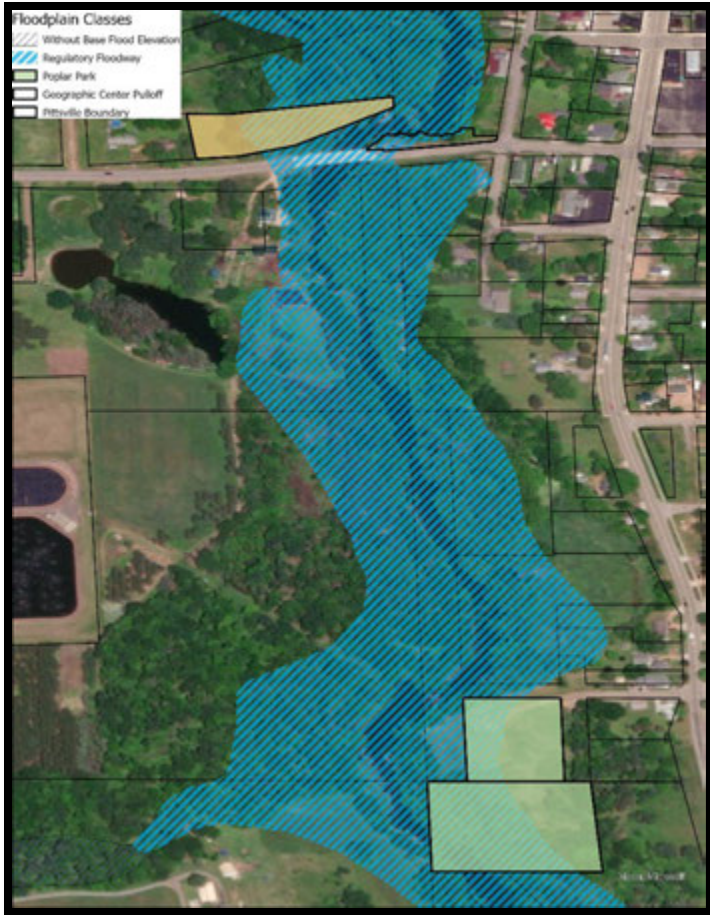
Zoning map for the areas of interest

Flooding

If we are to implement recreation in these two areas, they must be resilient to flooding. On sight measures, like levees and bank reinforcements, are necessary to these areas as they are on the Yellow River.

Most of the area in the poplar park site lies in a floodplain. For the southern parcel, this would hamper the ability to extend any park into this. This parcel is more of a depressional (lowland) area, meaning drainage will be an inherent issue. For the northern area, there will need to be flooding measures in place for any park on this parcel, as the western half does lay within the floodplain.

The Geographic Center areas have similar issues. The parcel containing the Geographic Center is mostly on a lowland area, which would need flooding mitigation. The pull-off area has been shown to have flooding issues, so keeping the pull-off elevated would provide resiliency for redesigned structures and features.



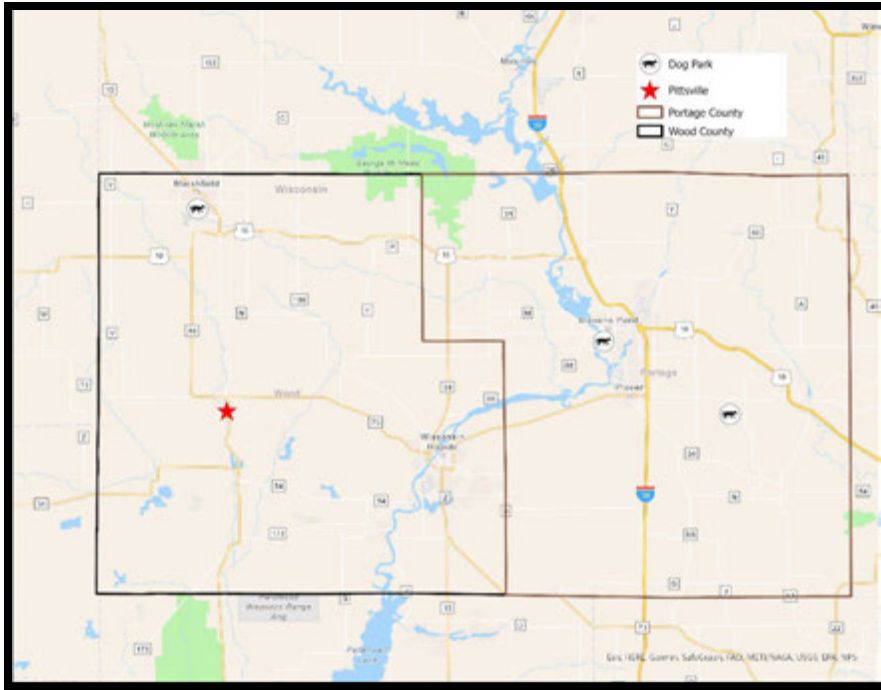
Flooding risks for the areas of interest

Dog Parks

In Wood County, there is only one dog park in Marshfield, WI, making Pittsville a potential destination for people to travel to from around the area to find a place to recreate with their furry friends.

Dog parks can be low impact. Although the area of the proposed dog park is within a floodplain, using drainage systems and non-corrosive materials within the park can eliminate the threat of damaging this development opportunity. Using underground drainage systems also can result in more effective drainage after storms. Coupling mitigation strategies with a low impact development would be an easy way to develop this site.

Designs can be made to have the equipment and walking areas that are common for people and dogs to frequent to be out of wet areas.



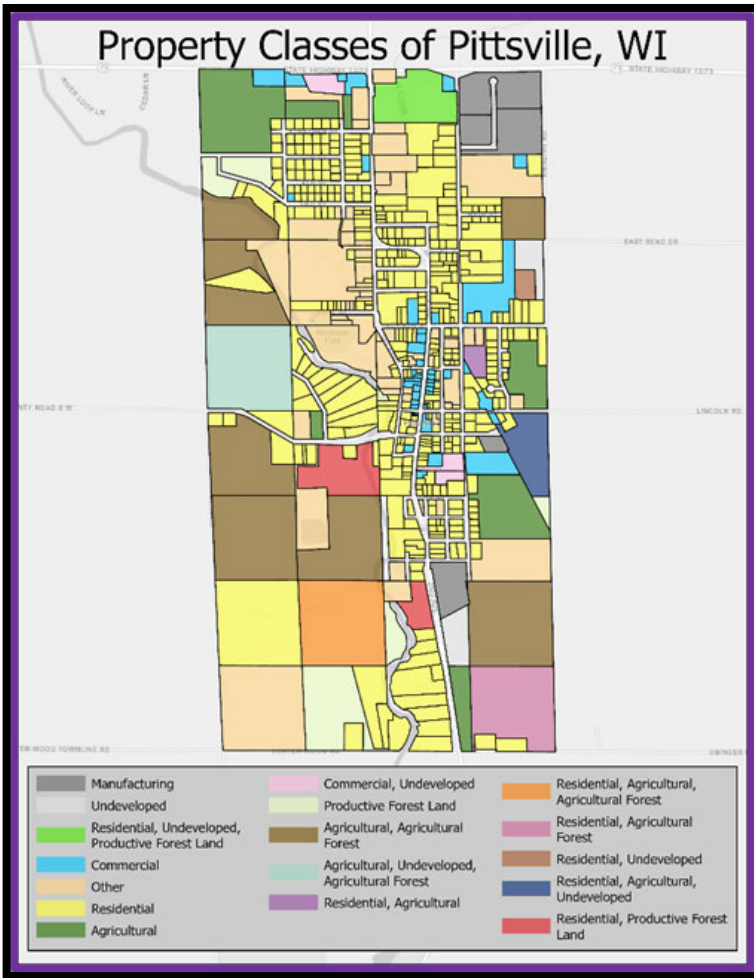
Dog parks in Wood and Portage Counties

Downtown

The next location that we focused on is the downtown area, specifically Baum’s mercantile and the empty lot next to it. Based on the first impressions survey that was given to us from the University of Wisconsin and precedent research that was conducted earlier in the year. The following concepts were analyzed, the viability of putting in an EV charger, possible locations and size restriction on a business incubator, and the range that people must go for a splash pad and the impact one would have.

Current Development

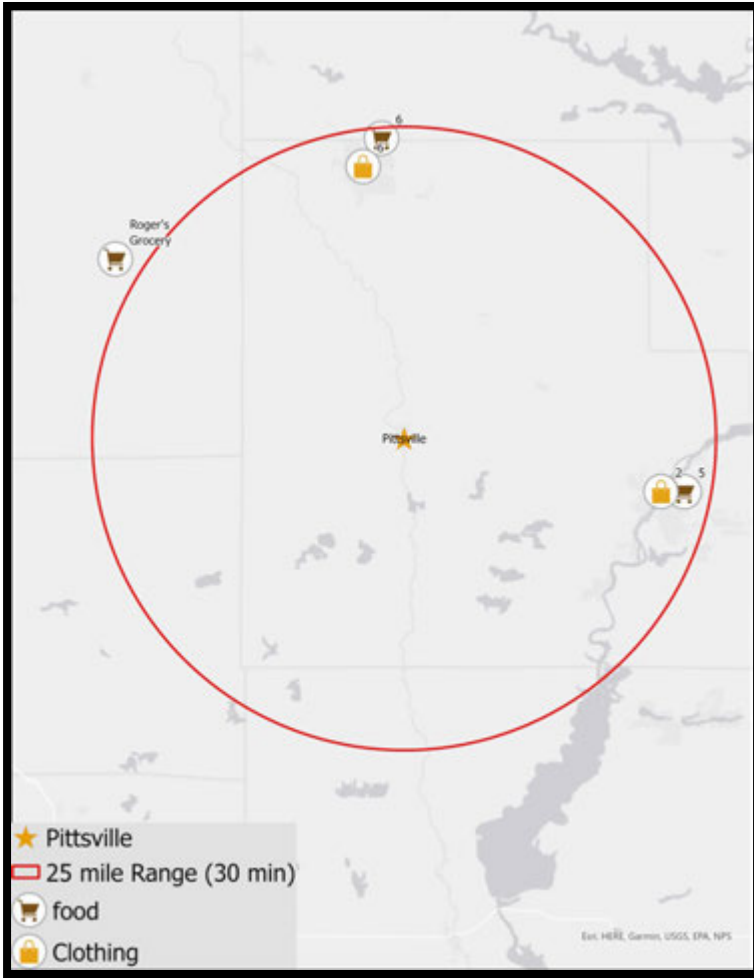
Over the past 20 years the population has stayed level. The population of Pittsville, WI as of 2021 is 813. The population is getting older, and the income of residents has gone up. The median household income in 2021 was \$54,867 compared to \$41,964 in 2000. The city has 9 local retailers. The diversity of retail is the largest issue. (Bureau, United States Census 2023)



Business Incubator

This led us to recommend adding a business incubator to allow for a lower cost of entry to start a business. After conversing with residents, we understood that there was an ebb and flow of businesses. If a large building (7 thousand square feet) goes out of business, we would recommend implementing this idea. There are no business incubators in Wood County, and this could be a great way to draw entrepreneurs to the city. Pittsville is made up of many different property classes. The downtown area is primarily classified as commercial. And the remaining areas of the city are predominantly residential.

The circle to the right shows a rough estimate of a 30 min drive, it is a 25-mile radius around Pittsville. A business incubator would solve many of the issues as it would increase the variability of commercial options. Many of the items that people want and need have a 30-minute round trip to get. This needs to be fixed to make the city more inviting for people to move to. The Business incubator would also function as a 3rd place for people to go to after work and school.

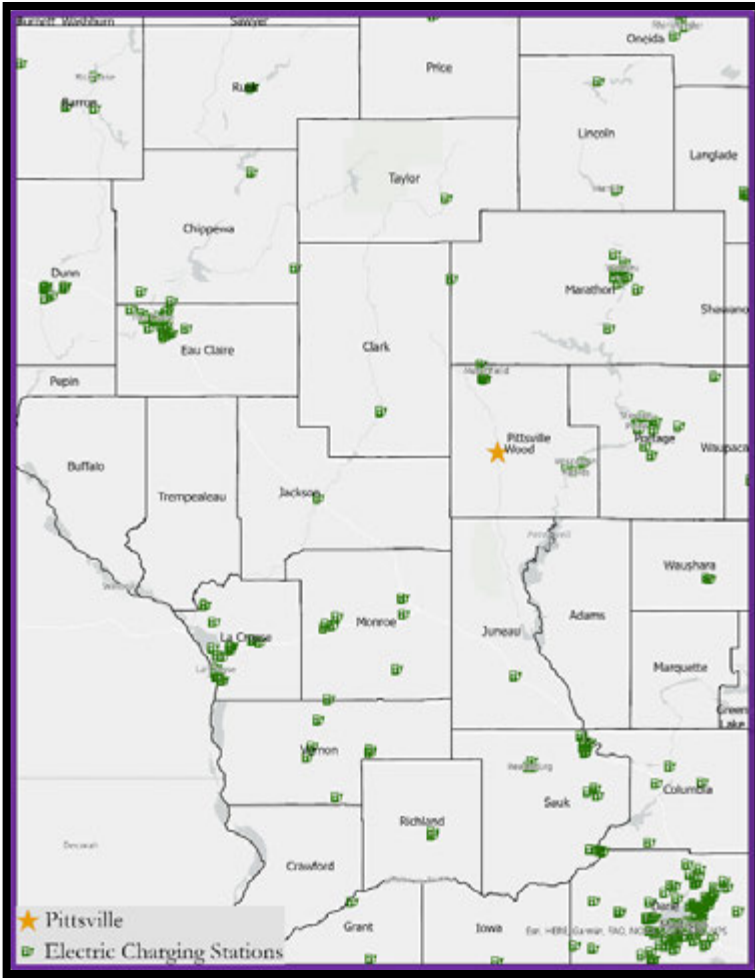


Electric Vehicle Charging

The addition of an electric vehicle charging station has the potential to increase traffic through the town, while also increasing tourism.

Pittsville is located at a crossroads between Highway 73 and Highway 80. This location as well as being relatively isolated from the other EV charging locations would make Pittsville a perfect spot for EV chargers.

EV chargers would also increase the tourism of the city. The owners of electric vehicles all have a map to help people find EV chargers. Getting Pittsville on this map would get the name of Pittsville out and bring people into the city. As they charge their car, they will have time to walk around Pittsville and shop at the local stores and eat at local restaurants.



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Precedent Research

We had multiple opportunities to collect information on Pittsville, WI, from the UW Extension Community's First Impression Survey and the Charrette process held on March 2, 2023. Our goal was to meet the needs and wants of the community and we did this by gathering information from other online sources to search for examples with ideas that were applicable to our plans for the City of Pittsville. We collected this data to ensure that our goals were realistic and could meet the wants and needs of the community.

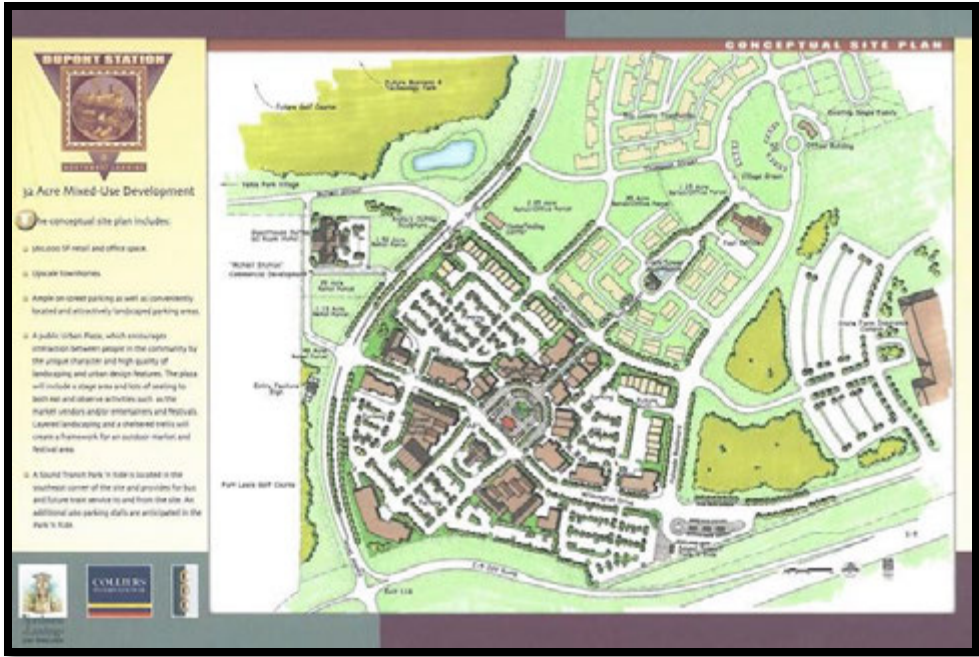
Poplar Park

During our Charette process research, a common theme of issues we heard were the issues of connectivity and walkability throughout the community of Pittsville. After performing relevant research, we produced three goals to increase the connectivity and diversity of recreational opportunities. Within these goals, we included examples of other communities of similar size that had similar issues and show how they had solved their common challenges within their communities. The three goals we came up with for Pittsville were:

1. To create a more connected community
2. Create diverse outdoor recreation opportunities
3. Leverage the natural resources in Pittsville and surrounding area for economic success

Goal 1: Creating a more connected community.

To create a more walkable community, we first had to find out a scoring system on how to grade the city's ability for getting around. We found a website called [walkscore.com](https://www.walkscore.com) which grades the bikeability and walkability of a community on a scale of 0-100 based upon the amount of sidewalk access and bikeable roads within the city. Pittsville has a walkability score of 40/100 and a bikeability score of 38/100, meaning most of the errands necessary for households require a car. To make the city more walkable, an example development we found was a community called Northwest Landing in DuPont, WA.



Interconnected Map of Norwest Landing in DuPont, WA.



Grid of the City of Pittsville

Both communities share the characteristics of narrow residential streets, a grid development pattern, and a short distance from homes to landmarks within the city. To

make DuPont, WA more walkable and bike-friendly, developers implemented more walking trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, and other forms of paths to better connect residents to the necessities in their city. They increased their walkability and bikeability score to becoming a 92/100 and 91/100 which are considered “Walker’s and Biker’s paradise”.

Goal 2: Create diverse outdoor recreation opportunities

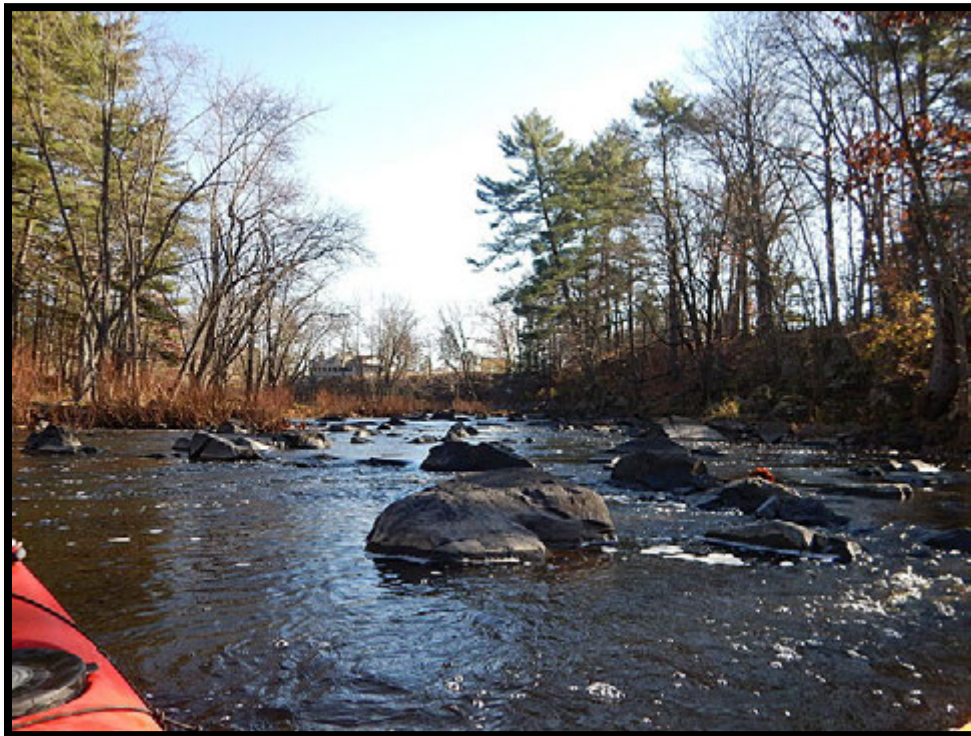
One of the suggestions for the green space near Poplar Street was a dog park. A potential barrier for development is that the parcels are in a mapped floodplain. With the right design a dog park could be compatible with land use for a floodplain and provide a form of recreation that is not currently available in Pittsville. The City of Stockbridge, GA transformed an under-used floodplain into a two-section dog park, it was once an unusable area within the city and now is the most used park in the area which provides exercise and social interaction to both the dogs and their owners. The park offers two separate fenced in areas for off leash dogs: one area is for dogs under 20 lbs. and the other is for larger dogs to roam freely. To overcome the challenges of the possible flooding in the area, designs were made to have the equipment and walking areas away from areas that would tend to stay wet and hold water. Within those wetter areas, underdrains were placed to help divert the water to a nearby pond through a simple drainage system, which overall results in more effective drainage after storms. Stockbridge also installed watering stations, agility equipment, and benches that enhance the park experience for the dogs and their owners. The City of Pittsville’s property on the south side of the city at the end of Poplar Street has many of the same environmental features that the new park in Stockbridge, GA had before construction. The lot sizes of both areas are very similar in size, Pittsville has approximately 10 acres of developable land and Stockbridge developed 11.8 acres into a playground, a large pavilion, a multi section dog park, and lots of open green spaces for people to recreate in.



Dog Park from Stockbridge, GA

Goal 3: Leveraging the natural resources in Pittsville and surrounding area for economic success.

The first step to achieving this goal is recognizing the community's natural assets and their ability to generate economic activity. Outdoor recreational opportunities attract visitors and connect them to the community. Recreationists visiting the area to enjoy the outdoors contribute to the local economy when they dine at restaurants, shop locally, and seek lodging. Access to outdoor recreation can also benefit residents as well by improving public health. Pittsville's vicinity to the Yellow River provides residents and visitors access to water-based recreation. The Geographical Center of Wisconsin and the possible addition of a dog park near Poplar Street are both located along the Yellow River, which is a reviewed water trail on wisconsinrivertrips.com.



Picture of the Yellow River running through Pittsville, WI.

In addition, an official walking path through the City of Pittsville would add to the City's outdoor recreational opportunities and connect these natural resources to each other. Many state and county parks in Wisconsin have installed "selfie stands" for visitors to capture photos of themselves in front of picturesque sites or landmarks of significance. Installing a selfie stand at the Geographical Center would make the landmark more interactive and more well-known through social media. Including a wayfinding sign at the Center would help to connect visitors to places of interest in Pittsville, such as restaurants and places to shop, or other recreational opportunities in the area, like the

dog park. The Geographical Center of Wisconsin would be a great place to put a selfie stand because it shares characteristics of other locations that have selfie stands.



An example of a Travel Wisconsin Selfie Stand.

Downtown

From our research we determined that the City of Pittsville could benefit from goals that encouraged shopping locally and promoted tourism, increased the city's visibility, and improved the quality of living and strengthened sense of place. The three goals we focused on were:

1. Promote local economy
2. Attract people to the area using electric vehicle technology
3. Improve community aesthetics and gathering spaces

Goal 1: Promote local economy.

Pittsville currently has nine local businesses. However, the retail opportunities offered are not diverse and spaces where community members can gather and socialize are lacking. A business incubator would fulfill both needs as it would introduce multiple diverse retail opportunities under one roof and provide a community space.

An example that we found that was comparable to the lot size in Pittsville was The Village in Washington, Iowa. The Village is a business incubator located in an old department store building with over 15,000 square feet. It includes 7 shop spaces, 80 to 140 square feet in size, and vendor carts within the courtyard. There is a central check out area that is worked by shop owners according to scheduled shifts throughout the week. Shop owners pay an affordable monthly rent to the owner of the space.



Exterior of incubator.



Incubator includes a “central courtyard” hang out space and gallery wall featuring the work of local artists, available for purchase.

Goal 2: Attract people to the area using electric vehicle technology.

Pittsville is in a prime location to be the first in the area to invest in a few fast chargers. The fast chargers could have many positive effects on the city. If there were to be electric vehicle chargers, it could possibly give more people a reason to go to Pittsville and spend their time and money. It would also promote the name of Pittsville as it would be in every electric vehicle charging database. This could also have the potential to show younger people that Pittsville is an appealing place to live and encourage them to move to the city.

A relevant example of electric vehicle charging in a smaller area is the city of Lake Mills, WI. Lake Mills is a smaller city between Milwaukee and Madison. To get more people to stop in their city they installed two electric vehicle fast chargers next to their downtown area. As people used their charging locations, they also shopped and spent money getting coffee.



Lake Mills two vehicle charging location outside of city hall.

Goal 3: Improve community aesthetics and gathering spaces.

The empty lot next to what was previously Baum's Mercantile has a lot of potential to create a wonderful 3rd place for people to recreate and strengthen their sense of community. From the charette process we found that residents of Pittsville would like to see improvements in the aesthetics of the area and create a community gathering space. Some of the ideas that we gathered from the community and our own research included improving the parking spaces, adding trees, benches, and a splash pad.

The city of Wisconsin Rapids, WI is home to Mead Field Splash Pad, which contains many of the features that members of Pittsville expressed that they would like to see in their community. If implemented in Pittsville, it would be on a much smaller scale, but this shows us that facilities like these are used in surrounding communities. A simple design would leave space for the farmers' market and other events to take place. Some of the facilities that could be implemented include seating with shade, restrooms, accessible water features, and landscaping.



Potential concept for adding seating and vegetation.



Interactive fountain in Portland, Oregon which could be implemented as a splash pad in Pittsville.

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Master Plan

The charette process yielded many ideas from community members regarding our project areas. We used suggestions and ideas to identify themes and create goals to guide our research. Using our research, we have created a Recreational Development plan and a Downtown Revitalization plan for Pittsville.

Poplar Park

We asked for feedback on three main topics during the charette process, including how can the City of Pittsville utilize the greenspace near Poplar Street, create an engaging and attractive area for the Geographical center, and provide a walking path that connects these areas to other parts in the community. The suggestions we received informed us of our precedent research and research goals, which ultimately allowed us to create the Pittsville Recreational Development Plan.

For the first goal, which was to create a more connected community, we created the Pittsville Walking and Biking Trail. We used the actual lines drawn by community members for potential paths to create parts of the trail. We extended the trail to reach the northeastern corner of the town, where few walking and biking accommodations are present. A major addition we made was a sidewalk along Highway 73 from state road 80 to 4th avenue to connect people to resources within the northern part of the city.



Example of what this sidewalk could look like

Pittsville Walking and Biking Trail created from the charette process.

Adding crosswalks to several locations on the trail would make the trail safer for pedestrians. Proper signage to show direct trail users to other attractions on the trail, such as Poplar Park, Riverside Park, and Downtown would also be helpful for increasing accessibility. Without a consistent sidewalk system in Pittsville, a cost-effective option to create this connectivity is through painted walking lanes. In residential areas with lower traffic, this is a viable option. Overall, the goal for the Pittsville Walking and Biking Trail was to connect each park in the city and bridge the gap between where accommodations for walking and biking were present and not present.



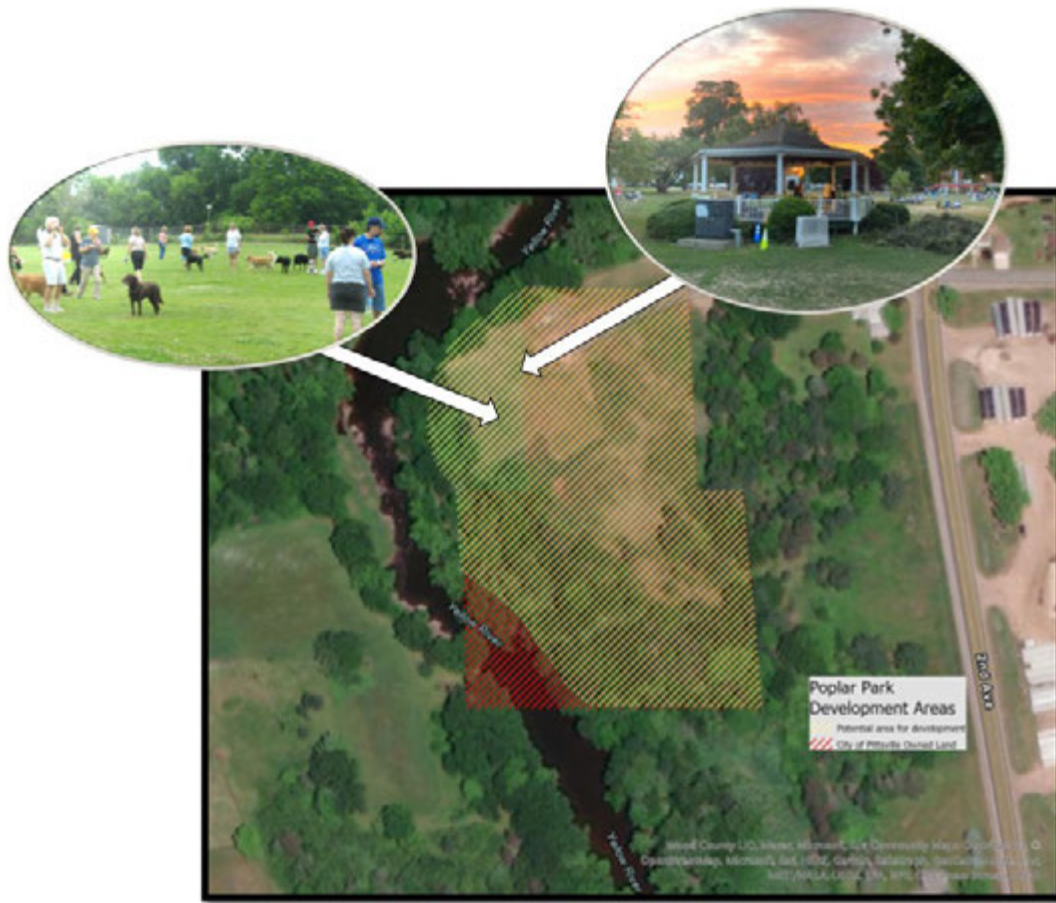
Crosswalk at the intersection of Highway 80 and poplar street



Example of painted walking path lines

For the second goal, which was to create outdoor recreational opportunities, we focused on the idea of a dog park at the green space near Poplar Street. There is only one other dog park in Wood County, so this addition would add diversity to the types of outdoor

recreation in the area. Transforming this unused floodplain into a two-section dog park could provide exercise and social interaction for both dogs and their owners within the community. The main design considerations for a dog park in this location are the installation of drainage systems and the use of non-corrosive building materials to resist the effects of flooding.



Developable areas of the Poplar Park green space.

A selfie stand and a wayfinding sign with points of interest at the Geographical Center were both suggestions from the charrette process that we thought could help with the third goal, which was to leverage Pittsville's natural resources for economic success. Constructing a selfie stand at the Geographic Center is one way the City of Pittsville can make the landmark more engaging and attract more visitors through selfies posted on social media. The City of Pittsville can also use this selfie stand as a wayfinding sign, which is a great way to leverage the Geographic Center, an important attraction for the city. A wayfinding sign at this location would point visitors in the direction of local establishments where they can find places to eat, shop, and stay overnight.



Selfie stand and wayfinding sign visualization for the Geographic Center.

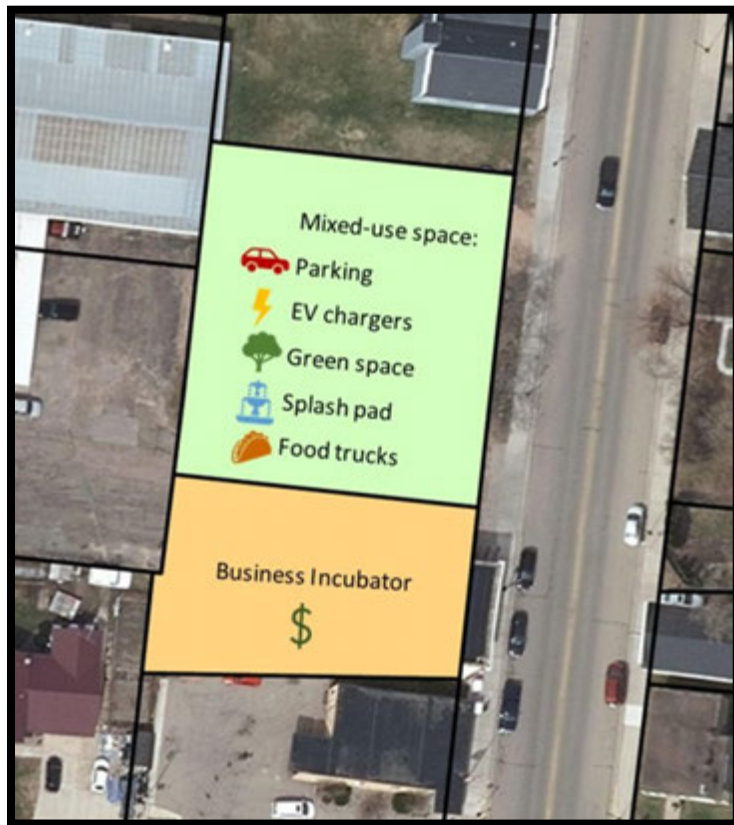
One idea for future development at the Geographic Center is to purchase the neighboring parcel (Parcel #3100633) to create a small parking lot and a trail or boardwalk leading to the center. This development would draw more visitors to the Center by making the landmark more "park-like." A trail also increases accessibility and makes the Geographic Center more engaging for visitors. Creating a parking lot in this location would increase the parking capacity of the site, allowing for more visitors. In addition, a parking lot on this parcel is a safer option than the existing parking space on the side of the road.



Future development proposal at the Geographic Center.

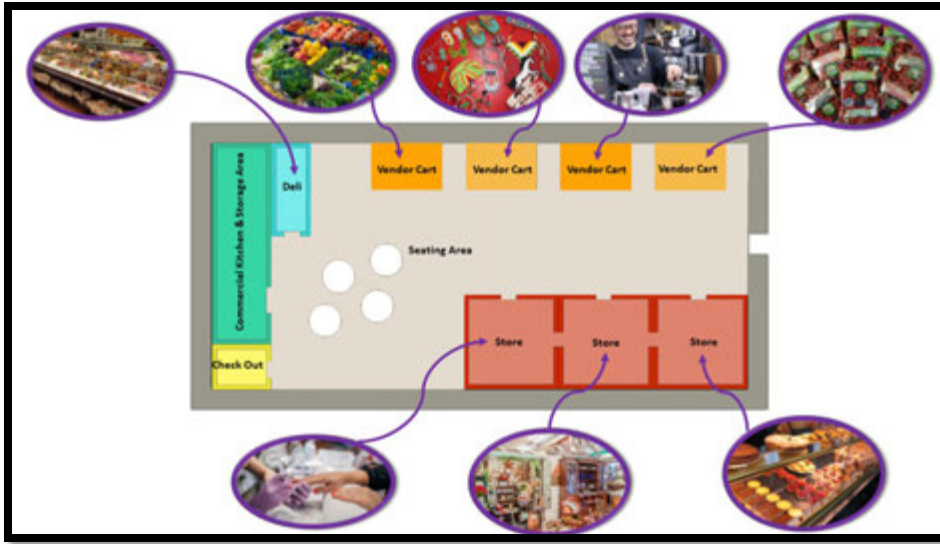
Downtown

The overall goal of our master plan was to provide the City of Pittsville with plentiful opportunities for community engagement and economic growth. Moreover, we wanted to assist in sharing what Pittsville has to offer to those that visit. Our master plan included a business incubator that would inspire the creation of more local businesses, and a mixed-use lot that would meet many of the needs and requests that residents shared with us. The mixed-use lot we came up with could be utilized as a parking lot (including electric vehicle (EV) chargers), a green space, splash pad, and area for food trucks to operate out of. The desired outcome of these combined efforts and development ideas will stimulate the local economy, improve quality of living, strengthen sense of place, and invite others to experience Pittsville.



Overview of parcels where development plans were proposed.

Our first goal was to create a business incubator inside of the building that was previously Baum’s Mercantile. This would stimulate the economy by providing an affordable space for aspiring small business owners to begin their new ventures. Likewise, the incubator would double as a community gathering space that reinforces sense of place and provides residents with a diverse range of retail opportunities.

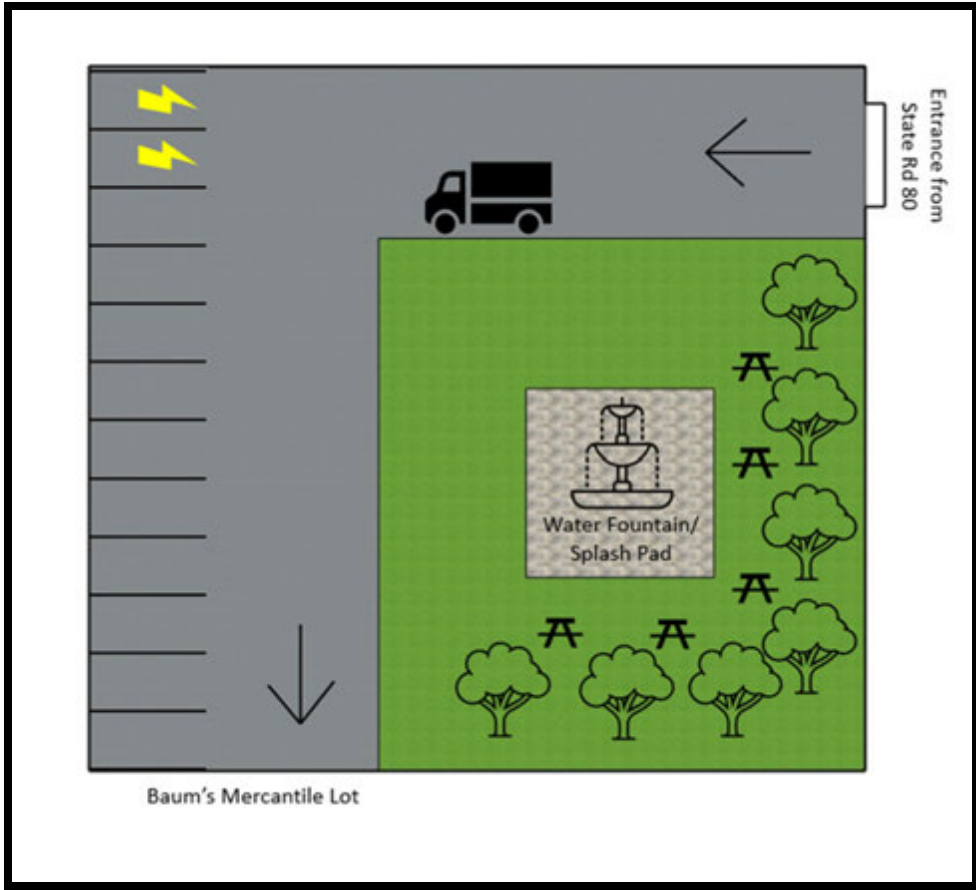


To scale layout of proposed business incubator.

Next, we turned our attention to the lot located next to Baum’s Mercantile, that is currently used as a parking lot and in the summer hosts food trucks and farmers markets. Residents explained that they wanted this space to be maintained as a parking lot. We met this request by retaining 12 parking spaces. Additionally, we further maximized the usage of the space by creating a green space and splash pad area, so that residents would have another community gathering space. It should be noted that we took great care in making sure that the new lot design left enough room around the perimeter of the green space for food trucks and small farmers market events.



Image of where mixed-use lot is proposed.



To scale layout of proposed mixed-use lot.

Lastly, within that same lot we also proposed placing electric vehicle (EV) chargers in two out of the twelve parking spaces. The implementation of these chargers would encourage EV owners to visit Pittsville in order to charge their vehicle. And while they wait for their vehicle to be fully charged, they could explore local businesses. This draw would be created by installing two level 2 Clipper Creek EV chargers adjacent to the municipal building. This would cost around 6-9 thousand dollars to install. This price range depends on the location of the chargers, what the municipal building has for wiring and the timeline for installation.



Clipper Creek level 2 chargers.

Future Steps

Poplar Park

Short term

Geographic Center

Installing a selfie stand and wayfinding map is a relatively short-term strategy that the City of Pittsville can implement to leverage the Geographic Center. One option for pursuing this project is coordination with Travel Wisconsin. An email to Travel Wisconsin regarding their selfie stand program and the process for that revealed that they do not have the resources for creating, distributing, and maintaining new signs at this time. However, future coordination may still be possible. Another option for the creation of the selfie stand could be a local business, such as Schmeckle Reserve's Handcrafted Cedar Sign and Bench shop. They create custom signs and benches for clients through a work order form, which can be found on the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point website.

<https://www3.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/schmeckle/Pages/shop/signs.aspx>

Long term

Walking and Biking Trail

A more long-term step would be implementing the full walking trail. After the lines for the walking path have been painted, the next steps would be to paint crosswalks and construct the sidewalk along Highway 73. This could help be funded by the safe streets and roads for all grant program provided by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

One major addition for the Pittsville Walking and Biking Trail that was not a part of the charette process suggestions was a sidewalk along Highway 73. We included it in the trail, because it would connect people to resources in the northern part of the city. Several community members commented on this proposition at the final presentation open house, stating that people do walk along the highway, even though there is no existing sidewalk or path. The sidewalk would be an expensive and large project, but as we have heard it would address an existing need in the community for a safe route in this part of the city. The sidewalk is a long-term project that would most likely only occur if the stretch of road is reconstructed. If a roundabout is constructed at the intersection of State Rd 80 and State Rd 73, the road leading up to it could be redone and the speed reduced, creating an opportunity for the sidewalk to be installed. In the short term, painting the walking trail lines would be a cost effective and easy first step to take to further Pittsville towards this goal.

Dog Park

The development of a dog park onto the city owned property on Poplar Street is a great way to bring new people into the community and to connect residents with their neighbors in the community to build stronger bonds and create new friendships. An option for developing this area is to start by holding a public meeting to help find supporters in and around the community that are wanting to see this project come into the community. Then create a budget and a plan on the size and shape of the park along with the features and amenities that could be provided within this area. On GrantWatch.com, an organization called PetSafe has a set of grants set up to help provide funding for local governments that wish to set up new dog parks in their communities and provide funding of up to \$25,000. There are many other organizations on the site that also have funding sources for creating dog parks within new communities. Lastly, create a proposal and request a hearing with local officials to show the funding and plans for the site area, and with approval the dog park could be built within the City of Pittsville.

Geographic Center

An option for the future development at the Geographic Center would be the purchase of Parcel #3100633 to create a parking lot and footpath leading to the center. The most ideal option for this would be the purchasing of this land by the city. If this is not possible, another option could be a conservation easement by the existing property owner and allowing public access. A conservation easement, rather than a regular easement for public use, would preserve and protect the land. The property owner would maintain ownership of the land; however, certain rights, such as the right to develop the land, would be held in trust by a land trust. A land trust is an organization that oversees the property and ensures that the easement requirements are upheld by the current and subsequent property owners. The North Central Conservancy Trust (NCCT) operates in several counties, including Wood County. A partnership between NCCT and the owner of Parcel #3100633 would preserve the property and allow for better access to the Geographic Center.

Downtown

Short Term

Business Incubator

To implement the proposed ideas, locations and funding sources would need to be determined. The addition of a business incubator into the community would require a building of at least 7,000 sq. feet. Businesses that would be interested in occupying a space in the building would also need to be identified. Due to the time frame in which it would take for a business incubator to be established, we would suggest that those who are interested in selling their goods presently investigate the farmers' market that is currently held.

Electric Vehicle Charging

Adding the electric vehicle chargers would require collaboration with Clipper Creek Chargers. There will be a lot of variation depending on who owns the EV chargers and how, or if there will be a cost to charging from the chargers. Talk with your Alliant Energy representative to see if you can get help from the utility for installation. Working with local business owners is also recommended. Creating a map next to the EV chargers to show where the local shops are located would improve the effectiveness of the EV chargers.

Mixed-use Lot

Making improvements to the empty lot would require the property owners to take initiative. There is currently a small green space on the east side of the empty lot, which could easily incorporate some of the simple features such as adding trees and other vegetation. A few of the smaller concepts such as adding vegetation, seating, and shading could be dispersed throughout the entire downtown easily and not just the specific lot, to improve downtown aesthetics.

Long Term

Business Incubator

Funding for a business incubator could be set aside over time by implementing a capital improvement plan that would recommend/include this project. A capital improvement plan is a “community planning and fiscal management tool used to coordinate the location, timing, and financing of capital improvements over a multi-year period – usually 4-6 years” (Center for Land Use Education, 2008). If a suitable space for a business incubator becomes available in the future, a variety of different grants and programs could also be used to support development. The State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) could be used to help with initial funding and get the incubator started. The funds are federally provided to states to distribute to municipalities through the American Rescue Plan Act. SSBCI essentially allows “... jurisdictions [to] provide funding to small businesses through equity/venture capital programs tailored to local market conditions” (U.S. Department of Treasury, 2023). Likewise, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation’s (WEDC) Community Development Investment Grant would be another great source of funding. The grant “support[s] urban, small city, and rural community (re)development efforts by providing financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with emphasis on, but not limited to, downtown community-driven efforts” (WEDC 2023). Additionally, an alternative to waiting for an available space to present itself is to clean up brownfield sites downtown and develop a business incubator on these properties once they are fully remediated. The Brownfields Grant Program could be used to alleviate the financial burden of remediating a brownfield site. The WEDC’s Brownfields Grant Program, “... assist[s] with the assessment and remediation of environmental contamination of abandoned, idle or underused industrial or commercial facilities or sites. This program helps convert contaminated sites into productive sites that are attractive and ready for redevelopment” (WEDC 2023). The WEDC also offers a program called Connect Communities. The program

assists communities with revitalization efforts by providing “... educational workshops, webinars and conferences; networking opportunities; and an online resource guide and discussion group – all designed to facilitate revitalization of downtowns and urban commercial districts” (WEDC 2023). In order to be eligible, “A participating community must have an organization or group that focuses on downtown/ historic commercial district issues, be able to commit to participation in education and training opportunities, and fulfill annual reporting requirements” (WEDC 2023). The Connect Communities program applications are accepted twice per year, in the spring and in the fall. This program could be useful in providing ideas and resources for how a business incubator and other downtown improvements could be implemented, as well as funded.

Electric Vehicle Chargers- Funding Options

There are two main ways to help fund the addition of EV chargers to Pittsville the first is the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the other is the Inflation Reduction Act. These two bills would be using federal funds to accomplish the task. The Bipartisan infrastructure bill has two main clauses that are important to the addition of EV charging “National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program and the Discretionary Grant Program for Charging and Fueling Infrastructure. The law also makes the installation of EV charging infrastructure an eligible expense under the USDOT Surface Transportation Block Grant formula program” (Federal funds program) the Inflation reduction act “provides additional resources to improve access to EVs and EV charging infrastructure” (inflation reduction act). It also provides additional programs for EV vehicles and chargers. One that we would recommend that you look at is the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program. This program is to help rural communities invest in lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Looking more into these programs to get funding would be very helpful in finding the correct chargers and the most cost-effective option.

Mixed-use Lot

The mixed-use lot development idea had many components that could be incorporated into the parcel we worked with this semester or a parcel of similar or larger size over time. For example, a splash pad could be financed through a fundraising program, until more grants and funding opportunities become available. Additionally, it would be beneficial to work with other organizations that can strengthen economic development in Pittsville. For instance, the WEDC’s Wisconsin Downtown Action Council could partner with Pittsville in the future to provide the community with revitalization strategies and tools for the downtown. The council “... is a statewide organization established to facilitate the revitalization of Wisconsin downtowns as vibrant social and economic centers through a mix of strategies including developing partnerships with other organizations, information sharing, and facilitating networking and peer learning” (WEDC 2023). As for a funding source for revitalization efforts, the Vibrant Spaces Grant, a pilot program ran by the WEDC this year would align perfectly with Pittsville’s downtown redevelopment goals. The program was ran for the first time this year, and applications for it closed in January. Communities applied for between \$25,000 to

\$50,000 in funding for projects that focus on local placemaking efforts. The purpose of the grant is “... to transform vacant or underused spaces into multi-purpose community gathering spaces” (WEDC 2023). No more than 30 grants were made available for this year's application cycle. The submitted projects were evaluated “... based on their ability to create visible and pedestrian-oriented public spaces that attract and accommodate multiple user groups and activities. Successful projects will benefit the local district, nearby businesses and the community as a whole” (WEDC 2023). If this program is continually renewed over the next couple of years, this would be an excellent source of funding for downtown improvements similar to the mixed-use lot we proposed.

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About the Authors



Dane Friis

Natural Resource Management and Planning

In the future, I want to work for a land trust or local government to help people create more sustainable developments and communities.

Trevor Howe

Natural Resource Management and Planning

In the future I want to head out west and work in the national parks out there to help preserve our natural lands.



Claire Sturdy

Natural Resource Management and Planning

All kinds of planning, community and conservation based, interest me. In the future I can see myself in a variety of different roles.



Nicole Tennies

Natural Resource Management and Planning

I hope to pursue a career with an organization that is passionate about preserving our earth's natural resources and improving the quality for future generations.



Logan Planer
Natural Resource Management and Planning
My career goals include working as a Conservationist for the Wisconsin DNR and assist in planning efforts across the state.

Lizabeth Edwardsen
Natural Resource Management and Planning
My plan is to pursue a career in conservation planning.