



De Pere Neighborhood Preservation Plan

September, 2010

Acknowledgements

Neighborhood Residents

Special thanks to the neighborhood residents of Broadway, Randall and Michigan-Superior. This document was tailored by the residents involved in the design process, creating a guide for celebrating the beauty of the area and making it an even better neighborhood for tomorrow!

Mayor Michael Walsh

City Council

Kevin Bauer
James Boyd
Michael Donovan
Robert Heuvelmans
Paul Kegel
Daniel Robinson
Kathleen Van Vonderen
Robert Wilmet

Plan Commission

Mayor Michael Walsh
Rebecca Afshar
Derek Beiderwieden
James Kalny
Alderson Kathleen Van Vonderen
Tom Walsh
Alderson Robert Wilmet

Historic Preservation Commission

Chair - Mary Jane Herber
Brian Netzel
Gene Hackbarth
Mike Fleck
Alderman Paul Kegel
Tom Monahan
Carla Nicks

City of De Pere

Ken Pabich,
Planning & Economic
Development Director
Larry Delo, City Administrator
Bill Boyle, GIS Coordinator
Kaylin Helm, Planning Intern

Consultant Team



RDG Planning & Design

Martin Shukert, FAICP, Project Principal
Cory Scott, AICP, Project Manager
Ben Iwen
Dave Heuring, AIA, LEED AP
Amy Haase, AICP
Nate Dittman
Sonja Carter - Graphic Design

The Organization of the Plan

page 7

Part One: Neighborhood Analysis and Key Issues. This section includes a brief analysis of the fabric and character of the entire historic neighborhoods study area and of the three constituent historic districts. It uses this analysis to identify key issues that affect the future integrity of the three neighborhoods.

page 15

Part Two: Maintaining Neighborhood Character, Design and Land Use Requirements (Regulatory Recommendations). This section identifies specific elements that should govern public or private sections. These “mandatory” requirements may be established through the creation of local historic districts under the terms of De Pere’s Historic Preservation Ordinance, and may differ somewhat for each of the three historic districts.

page 19

Part Three: A City/Neighborhood Program to Support Historic Neighborhoods (Advisory Recommendations). This section presents ideas that can guide private owners as they consider improvement projects or alterations to their properties. It includes a gallery of architectural features that are characteristic of the three neighborhoods. These recommendations are not mandatory, but can provide important assistance if owners choose to take advantage of federal or state tax credits.

page 27

Part Four: Guiding New Investments, Advisory Ideas for Future Private Improvements (Policy and Project Recommendations). This section includes recommendations for projects that are largely in the public realm – streets, sidewalks, street landscaping, lighting, and other projects – that support the neighborhood conservation efforts of neighborhood residents and property owners.

page 59

Part Five: Implementation and Next Steps. This section presents steps that will help both neighborhoods and the city implement the recommendations of this plan. It also includes references to programs and other tools that promote neighborhood conservation.

Introduction

In 2009, the City of De Pere engaged RDG Planning & Design to prepare Neighborhood Preservation Plans for three historic neighborhoods on the east bank of the Fox River, immediately north of Downtown, all of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These neighborhoods include the North Broadway, Randall, and Michigan-Superior National Register Districts. Under the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance, preservation plans include provisions that guide public and private development, and may propose other changes to conserve the quality of historic neighborhoods. The specific recommendations of these plans should adapt to the character and specific needs of neighborhoods and their residents. To this end, residents of all three districts participated in public meetings to discuss distinguishing qualities and identify critical features for protection or enhancement.

Purpose

Successful conservation policies encourage appropriate improvements, investments, and public actions that sustain the value and quality of neighborhoods. Each of the three neighborhoods considered in this plan have distinctive qualities, and their development played an important role in the history of De Pere and the Green Bay metropolitan region. Their historical roles are ably discussed in the extensive research compiled to support their nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Their physical nature – residential architecture, street landscape, and relationship to their surroundings – contribute to their attractiveness as places to live and make them valuable to both property owners and the city as a whole.

Built environments achieve harmony and coherence when development has respected certain patterns or relationships over the course of many years. We intuitively recognize and appreciate this harmony, but have more difficulty trying to define the patterns that lead to it. These patterns may include such factors as street width and landscaping, land use, size of buildings, types of materials, location of houses on their lots, and relationship of buildings to their adjacent street. One of the goals of this document is to define these patterns in the North Broadway, Randall, and Michigan-Superior districts, and encourage public and pri-

vate actions that reinforce the character and integrity of individual neighborhoods.

The overall approach of this plan is positive, designed to encourage public and private actions that make neighborhoods better. However, a plan to conserve the quality of neighborhoods also assumes that changes are possible that could alter and even threaten that quality. These changes could include land use patterns, street projects, or new buildings developed on vacant lots that change the time-honored scale or character of residential streets. Thus, this plan also identifies these possible threats, and establishes policies and regulations to guard against them.

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that the North Broadway, Randall, and Michigan-Superior neighborhoods continue to be distinctive, vital neighborhoods for many years. It recognizes that the development of towns and neighborhoods is a process that residents, developers, and governments contribute to over time. Based on this, the plan has regulatory, advisory, and policy components.

The regulatory component identifies possible threats to the patterns and features that are central to the integrity of the three neighborhoods, and to provide regulations that address these threats. These regulations are limited to a small number of serious issues that could seriously harm the neighborhoods.

The advisory component provides guidance to private property owners as they contemplate changes to their own properties and homes, based on the characteristics of their neighborhood. These ideas do not dictate styles or specific solutions, but instead suggest a choice of approaches that maintain the harmony and consistency that define these residential districts. Most residents and property owners understand their responsibilities to neighbors and want to do “the right thing.” This part of the plan provides a gallery of possible solutions, based on the precedents already found in the three neighborhoods.

The policy component considers actions such as public projects that can support the neighborhood conservation efforts. These policies and projects are often the result of partnerships between city government and private property owners.

Intentionally left blank



NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS AND ISSUES

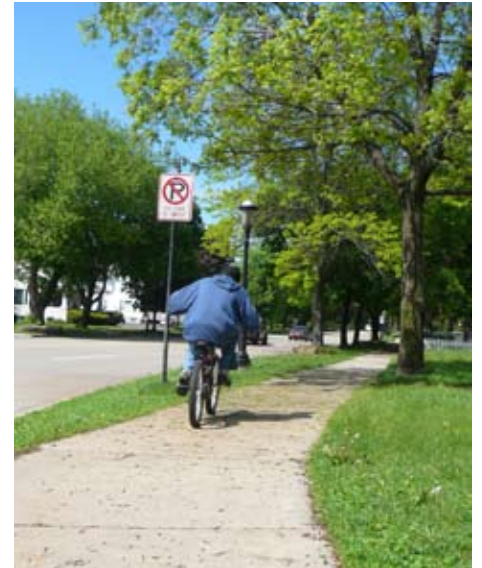
PART

1



Understanding the issues of the neighborhoods.

The three historic districts highlighted by this plan are located north of De Pere's "east bank" Downtown, with an irregular boundary that extends as far south as George Street and north to the Norbertine property on the north edge of the city. The neighborhoods are almost entirely residential in use, and are configured along a regular grid of local streets. This street grid rotates south of Franklin Street, as city neighborhood plats adjusted their orientation with a bend in the Fox River shoreline.



Major street corridors that serve the three historic neighborhoods include:

- **North Broadway.** North Broadway, a major north-south arterial and Wisconsin Highway 57 linking De Pere with Green Bay to the north. This is a four-lane facility fronted by homes north of Cass Street.
- **Ridgeway Boulevard.** Ridgeway Boulevard is a divided local street, providing parallel parking and one lane of traffic in both directions east to Webster Avenue. Ridgeway continues as a collector through residential areas to the east side of the city. As a result, Ridgeway has become a conduit of convenience for westbound local traffic to Broadway.

Most homes in the three historic districts are oriented to north-south streets. The neighborhoods also boast extensive tree cover both along streets and on private property. Street orientation and the quality of this urban forest are important common characteristics of the three districts. Map One displays the street pattern and building fabric of the three historic districts, while Map Two illustrates the extent of their urban forests.

The National Register nominations for each historic district describe the history and architecture of each district in extensive detail. The discussion below briefly summarizes character features of each historic district and identifies issues that affect future public and neighborhood policy and potential regulation. Map Three identifies the historic significance of each structure in the districts.

Left: Ridgeway Boulevard

Above: Broadway

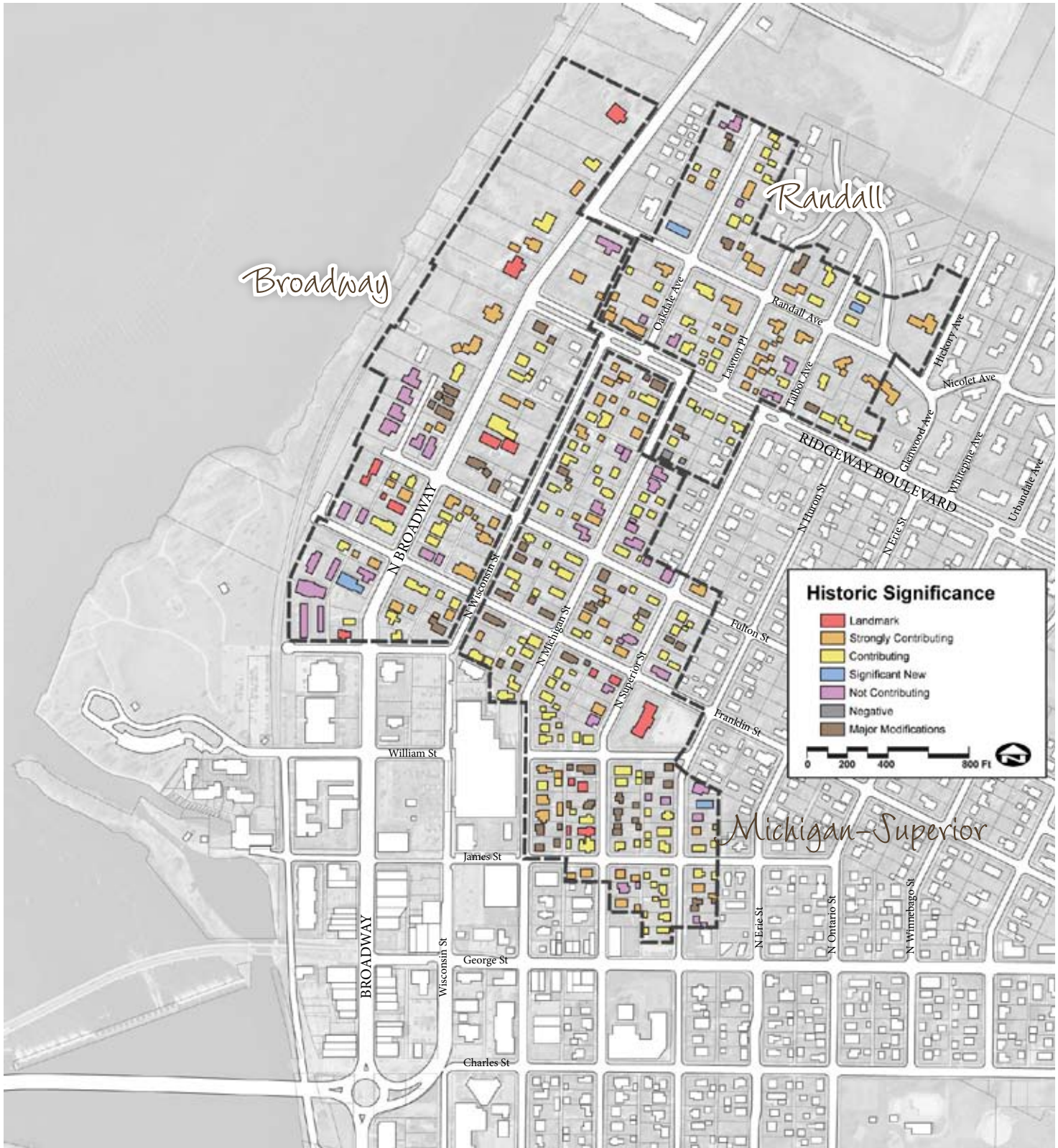
Map 1.1: Historic Neighborhoods



Map 1.2: Tree Cover



Map 1.3: Historic Significance



NORTH BROADWAY HISTORIC DISTRICT

CHARACTERISTICS

- Single street district with lots oriented to North Broadway. Location at the north edge of De Pere along a major metropolitan corridor paralleling the Fox River, marks the district as a gateway to the city.
- Traditional pattern of large, deep lots along both sides of North Broadway north of Fulton Street. Deep lots north of Fulton Street have been subdivided to provide rear access lots with a river orientation.
- Density gradient from south to north, with higher density and building coverage to the south and large, mansion-quality lots on the north. Large lot frontages and relatively deep front yard setbacks are important definers of street quality.
- Variety of residential architectural forms, including high styles along this portion of De Pere's "gold coast." Nineteenth and early 20th Century development of most of the North Broadway frontage, with contributing historic structures built between 1836 and 1923.

ISSUES

- Possible continued subdivision of lots on the east side of North Broadway north of Morris Street alignment. If this trend continues, an additional North Broadway access will be required, with a possible impact on the street frontage.
- Possible division of lots with large frontages on North Broadway, with consequent impact on the rhythm of the street and spacing of structures.
- Possibility of increased traffic loads along Ridgeway Boulevard, leading to future warrants for signalization at the Ridgeway and North Broadway intersection.
- Continued traffic volumes and operating speed of traffic along North Broadway.
- Development of open sites, including corner lot at Randall and North Broadway.
- Preservation of high-style residential architecture along the street.



RANDALL HISTORIC DISTRICT

CHARACTERISTICS

- Multiple street district, generally including one block north and south of Randall Avenue. Most structures are oriented to north-south streets, with the exception of houses oriented to Ridgeway Boulevard.
- Contemporary “suburban” pattern of moderately-sized to large single-family lots without alleys.
- Constant density throughout the district, with building coverage and lot size intermediate between the large-lot pattern of the North Broadway district and the small-lot, high-density configuration of the Michigan-Superior district.
- Surrounded by other residential land uses on all sides, and less affected by possible land use or density changes than the North Broadway or Michigan-Superior districts. Low-density, contemporary residential streets along Glenwood Avenue and Lawton Place are outside the historic district, but frame it on the north.
- Diverse residential architecture, with both period and more contemporary, post-World War II design.
- Significant topography, grading down from Ridgeway Boulevard.

ISSUES

- Potential future traffic loads along Ridgeway Boulevard, leading to possible street widening or other capacity improvements along the street. Additionally, street lighting is relatively poor along Ridgeway. Ridgeway is a residential boulevard through the Randall district, and traffic-related changes would have a substantial effect on neighborhood quality.
- Development of open sites, including a site on Oakdale north of Randall.
- Possibility of additional subdivision of large lots in the district.
- Maintaining reasonable architectural harmony that respects diverse residential building forms.



MICHIGAN-SUPERIOR HISTORIC DISTRICT

CHARACTERISTICS

- Multiple street district with irregular boundaries. Most structures are oriented to north-south streets, including Wisconsin, Michigan, Superior, and two blocks of Huron Street.
- Small urban lot configuration, with intervening north-south alleys. The local street grid shifts between Franklin and William Streets.
- Constant density throughout the district, with relatively high lot coverage. Small setbacks establish a consistent building line and strong street orientation to primary north-south streets.
- Commercial land uses on the west and south sides of the historic district include the rear wall of ShopKo along Michigan Street, and the smaller scale buildings along and north of George Street.
- Primarily single-family residential, with some duplex and small multi-family residential. Largest structure is a school building converted to offices on Superior Street between William and Franklin Streets.
- Diverse residential architecture, dating from nineteenth century. A prevalent housing type includes finely scaled 1-1/2 story houses with gable roofs and ridgelines perpendicular to fronting street. Materials include both clapboard and masonry.



ISSUES

- Preserving a strong residential setting at the boundary of residential and commercial uses on the south and western edges of the historic district, including protecting against encroachment of non-residential uses into the residential fabric.
- Ensuring that infill development on vacant lots is consistent in use and scale with other structures in the historic district.
- Providing guidance that provides property owners with both flexibility and affordable options in making home improvements while maintaining the historic quality of the neighborhood.
- In common with the other districts, maintaining Ridgeway Boulevard's character as a low-speed residential boulevard.
- Softening the edge of the ShopKo interface with the residential east side of Michigan Street.
- Possibility of acquisition and demolition of small lot single-family houses to assemble larger lots.

The Organization of the Plan

page 7

Part One: Neighborhood Analysis and Key Issues. This section includes a brief analysis of the fabric and character of the entire historic neighborhoods study area and of the three constituent historic districts. It uses this analysis to identify key issues that affect the future integrity of the three neighborhoods.

page 15

Part Two: Maintaining Neighborhood Character, Design and Land Use Requirements (Regulatory Recommendations). This section identifies specific elements that should govern public or private sections. These “mandatory” requirements may be established through the creation of local historic districts under the terms of De Pere’s Historic Preservation Ordinance, and may differ somewhat for each of the three historic districts.

page 19

Part Three: A City/Neighborhood Program to Support Historic Neighborhoods (Advisory Recommendations). This section presents ideas that can guide private owners as they consider improvement projects or alterations to their properties. It includes a gallery of architectural features that are characteristic of the three neighborhoods. These recommendations are not mandatory, but can provide important assistance if owners choose to take advantage of federal or state tax credits.

page 27

Part Four: Guiding New Investments, Advisory Ideas for Future Private Improvements (Policy and Project Recommendations). This section includes recommendations for projects that are largely in the public realm – streets, sidewalks, street landscaping, lighting, and other projects – that support the neighborhood conservation efforts of neighborhood residents and property owners.

page 59

Part Five: Implementation and Next Steps. This section presents steps that will help both neighborhoods and the city implement the recommendations of this plan. It also includes references to programs and other tools that promote neighborhood conservation.