

September 30, 2025

## Century Code Update to Go Live October 1, 2025

In 2023, the City of Eau Claire embarked on the **Century Code Update**, a once-in-a-generation effort to modernize a zoning code that started in 1923 and was last updated in 1990. This historic undertaking not only honored a century of zoning in the City but also looked boldly to the future, aligning land use with the needs, values, and aspirations of today's community. Over the course of more than two years, the process engaged residents and local stakeholders through public meetings and an interactive website—ensuring that every voice had the opportunity to shape the outcome. On August 12, 2025, the Eau Claire City Council adopted the final product: the **Land Development Ordinance (LDO)**. Beginning October 1, 2025, this comprehensive new ordinance takes effect citywide, ushering in a new era of growth, sustainability, and community vision.

The LDO combines the City's previous zoning and subdivision codes into one. All of Eau Claire's land development regulations have been updated and rewritten to be more user-friendly, graphically illustrated, and modernized for land use districts and standards.

The overall project represents a significant milestone toward increasing compact development, the primary development goal of the City outlined in its Comprehensive Plan. Examples are the removal of arbitrary density standards and reduced lot sizes, setbacks, and parking requirements. Incentives for real affordable housing have been included, and more live-work and mixed-use spaces will be allowed. A wider diversity of housing types, such as accessory dwelling units/tiny homes and rowhouses, along with cluster subdivision formats, such as green courts and carriage courts, will provide more living choices and use less land. The code also introduces new quality-of-life components, such as tree preservation, building design standards, and social gathering spaces. These will help keep Eau Claire environmentally healthy and socially attractive.

In the months ahead, the City will share a series of news items and social media posts to help the community better understand the new Land Development Ordinance (LDO) and how it may affect residents, businesses, and future development. These updates will highlight key changes, explain new opportunities, and make the ordinance more accessible to the public. For those who want to explore the details directly, the full LDO and application manual are available at [EauClaireWI.gov/Planning](https://eau-claire-wi.gov/planning). In addition, the Century Code Project website—which chronicles the two-year public process that shaped the LDO—will remain active through the end of the year at <https://eau-claire-zoning-code-rewrite-hlplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>

For more information, contact Ned Noel, Planning Manager, at 715-839-4914.