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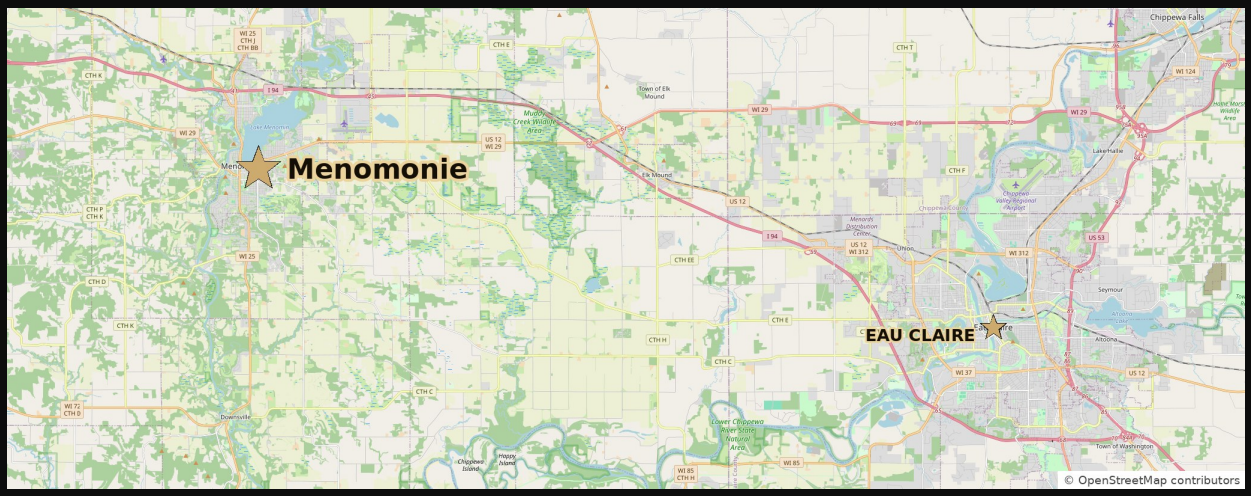
HOMETOWN REALTY GROUP · EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN

Menomonie & Its Lakes

A college town on the Red Cedar — with two lakes woven in.

A DUNN COUNTY COMMUNITY & LAKE GUIDE · INCLUDES TAINTER LAKE & LAKE MENOMIN

UW–STOUT · LAKE MENOMIN · TAINTER LAKE · I-94 WEST



16,843
Population — 2020 Census

~25 min
West of Eau Claire on I-94

1,605 acres
Tainter Lake — Dunn Co. plan / WI DNR (2016 lake figures)

1,009 acres
Lake Menomin — Dunn Co. plan / WI DNR (2016 lake figures)

HOMETOWN REALTY GROUP

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Why people love it here

- UW–Stout gives this town an engine most places its size don't have — students, jobs, arts, and a downtown that stays awake.
- Lake Menomin sits right in town: shoreline parks, a beach at Wakanda Park, and water you can see from daily life, not just weekends — and Tainter Lake, just north, is bigger, wider, and more rural.
- The Mabel Tainter Center for the Arts — an 1890 theater that looks like a wedding cake and hosts shows all year.
- Lake homes with a town attached: Menomonie's hospital, campus, groceries, and schools are minutes from both lakes — no cabin-country compromises.



Real map in Carter's CMA style — OpenStreetMap data, not to survey scale.

WHERE IT IS

Menomonie in gold — about 25 minutes west of Eau Claire on I-94, where the Red Cedar River slows into Lake Menomin, with Tainter Lake just north at Cedar Falls.

Facts checked October 2026 — sources on the closing page. Lake acreages are the DNR 2016 lake figures cited in the Dunn County plan. Prices and listings change fast; ask Carter for the current read before you budget.

Lumber money built it; the university keeps it young

Menomonie grew up on the Red Cedar River as a lumber town — Knapp, Stout & Company ran one of the largest lumber operations in the country here, and the town's grandest buildings are lumber money made visible. James Huff Stout founded a manual-training school in 1891 that grew into the University of Wisconsin–Stout, today Wisconsin's Polytechnic University.

The river is still the town's spine: dammed into Lake Menomin in the middle of the city and Tainter Lake just north, it gives Menomonie something few college towns have — real lake frontage woven into everyday neighborhoods. The Red Cedar State Trail starts here and runs 14.5 miles south along the river — bike it to Downsville and beyond.

The homes

Three Menomonies, housing-wise: historic homes near downtown and the lake (lumber-era bones, porches, mature trees), campus-adjacent streets where rentals mix with owner-occupied homes, and newer subdivisions on the town's edges near I-94. Lake Menomin shoreline homes trade at the top of the local market; a few blocks inland, prices soften fast.

The two lakes — Tainter and Menomin

The Red Cedar River slows twice at Menomonie: at Cedar Falls, where it widens into Tainter Lake, and again through town as Lake Menomin. The lakes were working water first — mill ponds for the lumber era — and became the town's recreational front yard as the mills faded. Together they hold over 2,600 acres of water (2016 DNR figures: Tainter 1,605 acres, Menomin 1,009) — boating and fishing without a northern drive. Menomin is the in-town lake with parks and a beach; Tainter's shoreline is more rural: cabins, lake homes, and acreage in the townships north of the city. Both lakes mix full-time residents and weekenders, with Menomin skewing full-time.

Honesty is part of this guide: both lakes sit under a state phosphorus TMDL, and summer algal blooms are a documented, ongoing management fight — UW–Stout's LAKES research program literally studies these waters. Shore-by-shore and week-by-week conditions vary a lot; buy with your eyes open and the local data on the table. Tainter's east end is filling with sediment at the river delta (documented in DNR project work) — check depth and access at the lot.

On the water: Wakanda Park and the Lake Menomin beach — the town's front porch — plus boating and fishing across both lakes, and UW–Stout game days and Mabel Tainter shows five minutes from the dock.

What to watch for

- How close to campus a home sits — rental density changes a block's feel during the school year.
- Summer algae on both lakes is a documented, ongoing issue (the state runs a phosphorus TMDL for these lakes) — ask how a specific shoreline behaves, and visit in mid-August to look at the water in the bay you're buying.
- Sediment: Tainter's east end is filling at the river delta — check depth and dock access at the lot.
- Flowage levels and dock history, as with any river impoundment.
- Septic records on the rural Tainter shores.
- Flood history and drainage near the river and lake edges.
- Winter commute reality on I-94 if you'll be driving to Eau Claire daily.

Schools & services

The School District of the Menomonie Area serves the city and both lakes, including Menomonie High School and a spread of elementary schools across town. Attendance areas change — confirm the assignment for any specific address with the district before you buy.

The market, honestly

No single median tells Menomonie's story — the market splits between college-driven demand near campus, lake frontage on Menomin and Tainter, and family neighborhoods in between. The lakes are working lakes with working prices — frontage you can live on full-time, priced below the resort lakes because the water asks more of you in August; for a Menomonie or Eau Claire commuter, that trade is the opportunity. The honest way to price all of it is by

segment and by shore: Carter can pull recent sales street by street and shore by shore before you budget.

Who it fits — and the honest trade-offs

GOOD FIT IF…

UW–Stout staff and students who want to stay, Eau Claire commuters who want more house for the money, full-timers who want lake frontage with town services, and anyone who'd rather boat after work than drive north on weekends.

THINK IT THROUGH IF…

If a quiet, campus-free street feel matters most, some blocks near the university won't suit you — visit during the school year, not just in July. And if your lake dream is gin-clear and bloom-free every single week of summer, the seepage lakes farther north will suit you better — at their prices.

Showing-day checklist

- Walk the Lake Menomin shoreline and Wakanda Park.
- Visit in mid-August and look at the water in the bay you're buying.
- Check depth and sediment at the dock, especially on Tainter's east end.
- Check flood and drainage records near the river.
- Visit a campus-adjacent block during the school year.
- Time the I-94 drive to Eau Claire at your real commute hour.
- Ask the lake association about current conditions and projects.
- Confirm the school assignment for the address.

Good next step

Pick your Menomonie first — lake, campus, or subdivision — then tour that segment only. For the lakes, tour Menomin and Tainter as the pair they are: town lake first, big lake second. Carter can bring recent sales for each segment and both shores.

Carter's Menomonie sales

Guides are opinions; closings are proof. 2 of Carter's 55 career sales are in Menomonie — $333,100 in closed volume from the MLS-verified record behind the numbers on the home page. Most recent first:

STREET	SOLD PRICE	SOLD DATE
1020 10th	$180,000	Sep 24, 2025
1020 10th	$153,100	Oct 4, 2022

Taxes & total cost

The short version: At the city rate, about $439 a month on a $250,000 home, with the schools the biggest single slice — while Tainter Lake and the rural shores out in the towns pay far lighter township rates.

Here is the number to plan around. For the City of Menomonie, Dunn County's 2025 mill rate report puts the net mill rate at $21.07 per $1,000 of assessed value (0.021066008), for the 2025 levy collected in 2026. A mill is $1 of tax per $1,000 of value. The tax is figured on the assessor's value, which is supposed to track market value but can sit above or below what a home actually sells for — the county put the city's assessment ratio at 68.18 for this levy, so assessed values in the city run behind market values. Check the assessment on the specific home, not just the rate.

That rate is a bundle of levies. The Wisconsin Department of Revenue's 2025 Statement of Taxes for Dunn County breaks the city's total levy into these shares:

- School District of the Menomonie Area — 34.2% of the total levy.
- City of Menomonie — 30.0%.
- Dunn County — 26.0%.
- Tax increment districts — 5.9%.
- Chippewa Valley Technical College — 3.9%.

The biggest driver is the school district, with the city levy a close second — together they are just under two-thirds of the bill.

The worked example, on a $250,000 home. Step 1: treat $250,000 as the home's assessed value — that is the assumption in this example, stated out loud. Step 2: $250,000 ÷ 1,000 = 250, and 250 × $21.07 = $5,267.50, or about $5,270 a year. Step 3: $5,270 ÷ 12 = about $439 a month.

That is the gross figure, and the real check is smaller. Wisconsin's lottery and gaming credit — $151.23 on the county sheet for Menomonie district parcels, for a primary residence — and the first dollar credit are subtracted after the bill is calculated. Special charges are not in the rate, and your home's actual assessment may differ from this example.

Why here versus the next community? This guide describes three Menomonies, and they do not all pay this rate. The $21.07 is the city rate — in-town and Lake Menomin homes, campus-adjacent streets, and subdivisions. Tainter Lake's rural shores sit out in the towns, where the same school district shows up at $10.66 per $1,000 in the Town of Menomonie and $11.26 in the Town of Tainter — township services and septic instead of city services, exactly the trade the lake sections describe. Picking your Menomonie is also picking your tax bill. In the city, put the $439 a month in the full equation — mortgage, plus taxes, plus insurance.

See how all 28 areas compare: Chippewa Valley property taxes, side by side.

Questions Menomonie buyers ask

How far is Menomonie from Eau Claire?

About 25 minutes west on I-94. That short interstate drive is why Menomonie works both as its own college town and as a landing spot for Eau Claire commuters who want more house for the money — just time the drive at your real commute hour, and respect what winter on I-94 can do to it.

What is the difference between Lake Menomin and Tainter Lake?

Both are the Red Cedar River slowed down — mill ponds from the lumber era that became the town's recreational front yard. Lake Menomin, at 1,009 acres, is the in-town lake, with shoreline parks and the beach at Wakanda Park. Tainter Lake, at 1,605 acres just north at Cedar Falls, is bigger, wider, and more rural, with cabins, lake homes, and acreage. Those acreages are the Wisconsin DNR's 2016 lake figures.

Should I worry about algae on the lakes?

Buy with your eyes open. Both lakes sit under a state phosphorus TMDL, and summer algal blooms are a documented, ongoing management issue — conditions vary a lot shore by shore and week by week. Visit in mid-August and look at the water in the bay you are buying, ask the lake association about current conditions and projects, and check depth and sediment at the dock — Tainter's east end is filling at the river delta.

Which school district serves Menomonie and the lakes?

The School District of the Menomonie Area serves the city and both lakes, including Menomonie High School and a spread of elementary schools across town. Attendance areas change, so confirm the assignment for a specific address with the district before you buy.

What kinds of homes does Menomonie have?

Three Menomonies, housing-wise: historic homes near downtown and the lake, with lumber-era bones, porches, and mature trees; campus-adjacent streets where rentals mix with owner-occupied homes; and newer subdivisions on the town's edges near I-94. Lake Menomin shoreline homes trade at the top of the local market, and a few blocks inland, prices soften fast.

How does UW–Stout affect living near campus?

UW–Stout gives the town an engine most places its size do not have — students, jobs, arts, and a downtown that stays awake. Near campus, rental density changes a block's feel during the school year, so if a quiet, campus-free street matters most, visit a campus-adjacent block while school is in session, not just in July.

How much are property taxes in Menomonie?

At the city rate, about $439 a month on a $250,000 home. Menomonie's net rate is $21.07 per $1,000 of assessed value on the 2025 levy, with the schools the biggest single slice — while Tainter Lake and the rural shores out in the towns pay far lighter township rates. The Taxes & total cost section above breaks the whole bill down.

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Thinking about a move? Call or text (715) 828-0039, or email Carter@echtrg.com — Carter can pull recent sold comps for any street in this guide and line up showings so you can compare in person.