

WAUSHARA COUNTY

20-Year Comprehensive Plan

Volume Two: Existing Conditions Report

Waushara County, Wisconsin
Adopted by the Waushara County
Board of Supervisors



Prepared by:
East Central Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission



ABSTRACT

TITLE: WAUSHARA COUNTY EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT –
VOLUME TWO

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This report describes existing conditions for Waushara County.

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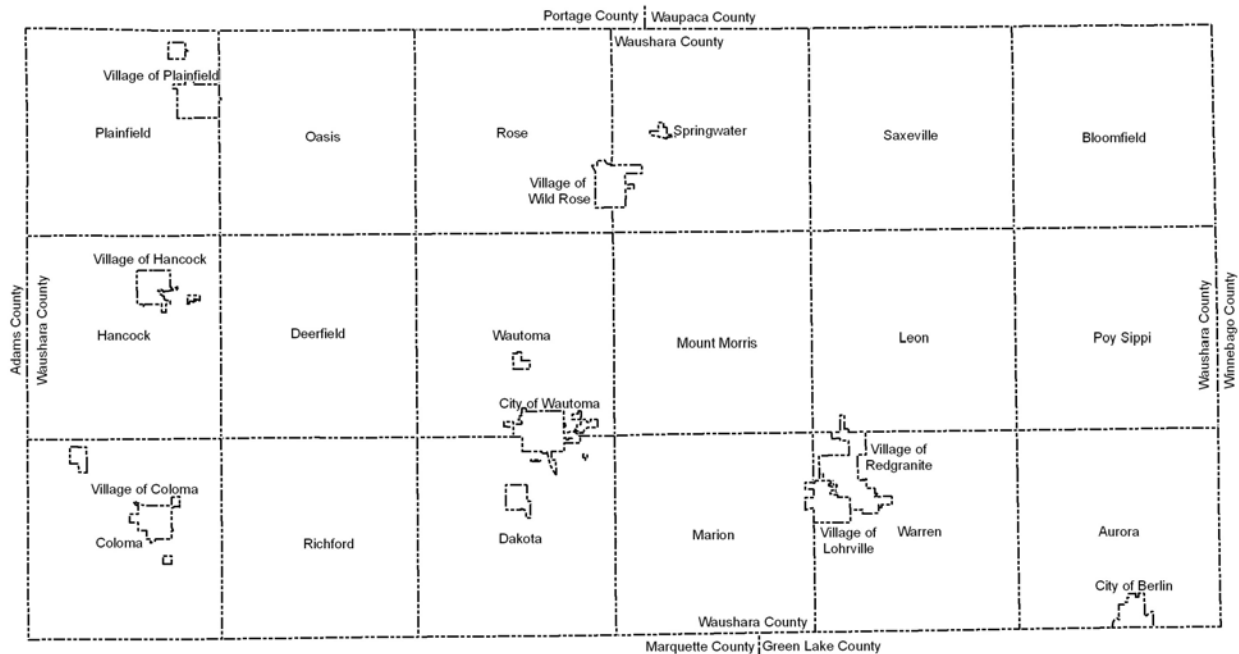
- A Issues and Opportunities
- B Housing
- C Transportation
- D Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- E Economic Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Location

Waushara County is located in central Wisconsin and is surrounded by the counties of Portage and Waupaca to the north, Winnebago to the east, Green Lake and Marquette to the south and Adams County to the west. The county is essentially six towns in width and three towns in height. Waushara County is comprised of 18 towns (Plainfield, Oasis, Rose, Springwater, Saxeville, Bloomfield, Poy Sippi, Leon, Mount Morris, Wautoma, Deerfield, Hancock, Coloma, Richford, Dakota, Marion, Warren and Aurora), two cities (Berlin – partial and Wautoma) and six villages (Coloma, Hancock, Plainfield, Wild Rose, Redgranite and Lohrville). Interstate 39, found in the western part of Waushara County, provides north-south vehicular movement through the center of the state, while STH 21, another popular transportation corridor traverses east-west through the county, providing access from Oshkosh to I-39, I-90/I-94 and the western part of the state.

Figure ES-1. Waushara County Wisconsin



Waushara is a rural county whose major industries are agriculture and tourism. Waushara County's 136 lakes make up about 7,000 acres of surface water. The greatest concentration of lakes is found among the moraines and drumlins in the central and western portions of the county. These lakes, along with 500 miles of rivers and streams and 185,000 acres of woodlots provide for a diversity of boating, fishing, hunting, hiking and other recreational opportunities. Although agriculture has seen a decline over the years, it is still a viable industry in the County. Scattered agricultural lands exist throughout the County, but are more concentrated in eastern and western Waushara County.

Planning Purpose

A comprehensive plan is created for the general purpose of guiding a coordinated development pattern. This will result in land use decisions that are harmonious with both the overall vision of

the community's future and will ensure the future sustainability of the local natural resource base. Developing a comprehensive plan is a proactive attempt to delineate the ground rules and guidelines for future development within a community. Comprehensive planning decisions evaluate existing facilities and future needs; promote public health, safety, community aesthetics, orderly development, and preferred land use patterns; and foster economic prosperity and general welfare in the process of development.

The comprehensive plan is a guideline for future development. The plan evaluates what development will best benefit the community's interests in the area while still providing flexibility for land owners and protecting private property rights.

Planning History

Planning in Waushara County started in 1994, with the creation of the Waushara County Land Use Committee. The committee, comprised of elected officials and local citizens, includes representation from each community in Waushara County. Many of the earlier plans that were developed in Waushara County were started before or immediately after the state implemented its current comprehensive planning law and consequently do not conform to the "smart growth" legislation. Plans developed during later planning efforts conformed to the current legislation. In total eleven communities (towns of Coloma, Deerfield, Hancock, Leon, Mount Morris, Oasis, Plainfield, Richford, Saxeville, Springwater and the Village of Hancock) participated in a countywide process to update their community/land management plans. Another three communities (villages of Coloma, Lohrville and Plainfield) completed their first comprehensive land use plan. Finally, a countywide plan was created that combines the plans of the various municipalities. The current plans were prepared in compliance with *Wisconsin State Statutes* 66.1001 and utilized a comprehensive planning grant obtained through the Department of Administration.

Enabling Legislation

This plan was developed under the authority granted by s. 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin State Statutes* and meets the requirements of 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 which states "Beginning on January 1, 2010, any program or action of a local governmental unit that affects land use shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan".¹

Waushara County should consult this plan when making decisions relative to land use and other issues including:

- Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23 (6).
- Local subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or s. 236.46.
- County zoning ordinances enacted or amended s. 59.69.
- Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692.

Plan Contents

The Waushara County Comprehensive Plan is composed of two documents – Volume One and Volume Two. Together, the two volumes contain all information necessary to meet state

¹ Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau. 1997. *Budget Brief 97-6*.

regulations. The purpose of the two reports is to create a user-friendly plan that separates a majority of the required background material from the County's goals, objectives, and recommendations. Generally speaking, Volume One serves as the "guide" for decision making whereas Volume Two provides data and support for actions detailed in Volume One. Specific details are provided below for each volume.

Volume One: "Comprehensive Plan (Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations)". This volume contains issues, goals, objectives, and recommendations for each of the nine required comprehensive plan elements for implementation over the next twenty years. It describes actions and strategies to achieve the goals and objectives listed in each of the nine planning elements, or chapters, within the plan. This document should be consulted by the Planning and Zoning Committee and County Board when managing county resources. It will also be used by Waushara County on matters where a county land use control is applied within the local municipalities.

Volume Two: "Existing Conditions Report". The second volume of this comprehensive plan contains an analysis of existing conditions within the County. It provides a series of Census and other empirical data available through local, regional, state, and national sources. These data reveal current findings within the County and how these compare to historical numbers within the State of Wisconsin. These data were primarily used to identify challenges and opportunities in Volume One. The report is a companion document to Volume One and should be used to locate evidence of existing conditions that provide support for recommendations and strategies located in Volume One.

The comprehensive plan contains nine elements that are required by s. 66.1001:

- 1) Issues and Opportunities
- 2) Economic Development
- 3) Housing
- 4) Transportation
- 5) Utilities and Community Facilities
- 6) Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- 7) Land Use
- 8) Intergovernmental Cooperation
- 9) Implementation

In addition, the state requires that Wisconsin's 14 goals for local planning be considered as communities develop their goals, objectives, and strategies. These goals are:

- 1) Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
- 2) Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- 3) Protection of natural features, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- 4) Protection of economically productive farmlands and forests.
- 5) Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.
- 6) Preservation of cultural, historic, and archeological sites.

- 7) Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- 8) Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
- 9) Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
- 10) Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- 11) Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.
- 12) Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- 13) Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
- 14) Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

CHAPTER 1: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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