

LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

Land use directly influences all the various elements presented in the previous chapters. Many aspects of daily life within the planning area are impacted by elements of the previous chapters. The choices for housing type, location, transportation alternatives, decisions on employment locations, recreational opportunities, and the quality of the man-made and natural environments are all intricately woven together into land use. Land use policy decisions can have far-reaching repercussions for factors including housing growth and the protection of natural resources. For example, rural areas in Waushara County are under pressure from scattered rural residential and vacation home development. Large lot development in rural areas has fragmented farmland and forests and placed greater stress on the lakes, streams, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

This chapter describes existing land use patterns and current zoning ordinances. Development trends over the past 20 years were analyzed, and future land use needs were extrapolated. Finally, the chapter discusses the land use policy context and the need for additional intergovernmental cooperation. Several potential land use conflicts are identified, and issues that must be addressed are discussed.

Land Use Vision for 2030

New growth has been accommodated in ways that preserve the Town's rural character and natural features (woodlands, farmland, wetlands, water features and other open space). Success has been achieved in siting new residential development so that the integrity of existing land uses, open space and the area's highly valued environmental features are protected. As a result, land use conflicts such as those between rural residential development and the ongoing farming operations and light industrial/commercial are minimal.

A heightened sense of community has been achieved in the town through an annual community "pride" day and potluck. This has not only given residents a chance to connect with neighbors and other members in the community, but it has been successful in improving and maintaining private and public properties and facilities.

The upgrade of STH 21 has greatly reduced congestion through the town and inspired the development of new highway oriented commercial development near the junction of STH 21 and 49. Extraterritorial planning activities have strengthened the relationship that the town has with the City of Berlin. Through this avenue, land use and boundary disputes have been resolved to the satisfaction of all involved.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Existing Land Use

A detailed field inventory of land uses was conducted in the towns of Aurora and Bloomfield in 2000. Subsequent updates to the original inventory were completed during the comprehensive

planning process. Land use information was compiled into the general land use categories and is presented in Table 8-1 and Exhibit 8-1. As a result of this inventory, a number of conclusions and issues have been identified, and recommendations have been made to guide future land use planning efforts in the planning areas.

Land Use Categories

Agricultural. Agricultural land is broadly classified as land that is used for crop production. Agricultural uses include farming, dairying, pastures, apiculture (bees), aquaculture (fish, mussels), cropland, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture (grapes), and animal and poultry husbandry. Agricultural land is divided into two sub-categories: irrigated and non-irrigated cropland. Irrigated cropland is watered by artificial means, while non-irrigated cropland is watered by natural means (precipitation).

Residential. Residential land is classified as land that is used primarily for human habitation. Residential land uses are divided into single and two-family residential, farmstead, multi-family and mobile home parks. Single and two-family residential includes single family dwellings, duplexes, and garages for residential use. Within platted subdivisions, residential land use encompasses the entire lot. In rural areas where lots are typically larger, single family includes the primary residence, outbuildings, and the mowed area surrounding the structures. Single family also includes isolated garages and similar structures on otherwise undeveloped rural lots. Farmsteads include the farm residence, the mowed area between the buildings and the associated outbuildings (barn, sheds, manure storage, abandoned buildings). Multi-family includes apartments of three or more units; condos; room and boarding houses; residence halls; group quarters; retirement homes; nursing care facilities; religious quarters; and the associated parking and yard areas. Mobile home parks are classified as land that is part of a mobile home park. Single standing mobile homes are classified under residential.

Commercial. Commercial land uses represent the sale of goods and services and other general business practices. Commercial uses include retail and wholesale trade (car and boat dealers; furniture, electronics and appliance stores; building equipment and garden equipment; grocery and liquor stores; health and personal care stores; gasoline stations; clothing and accessories, sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores; general merchandise; miscellaneous store retailers; couriers; and massagers), services (publishing; motion picture and sound recording; telecommunications; information systems; banks and financial institutions; real estate offices; insurance agencies and carriers; waste management; accommodations; restaurants and drinking places; repair and maintenance; personal and laundry; social assistance, etc.) and other uses (warehousing and automobile salvage and junk yards).

Industrial. Industrial land uses represent a broad category of activities which involve the production of goods. Mining and quarry sites are separated from other industrial uses. Industrial uses include construction; manufacturing (includes warehousing with factory or mill operation); mining operations and quarries; and other industrial facilities (truck facilities).

Transportation. Transportation includes land uses that directly focus on moving people, goods, and services from one location to another. Transportation is divided into two separate categories: transportation and airport. Transportation uses include highway and street rights of way; support activities for transportation (waysides, freight weigh stations, bus stations, taxi,

limo services, park and ride lots); rail related facilities; and other related categories. Airports included areas that are dedicated specifically to air traffic.

Utilities/Communications. Utilities and communications are classified as any land use which aids in the generation, distribution, and storage of electric power (substations and transformers); natural gas (substations, distribution brokers); and telecommunications (radio, telephone, television stations and cell towers). It also includes facilities associated with water distribution (water towers and tanks); water treatment plants; wastewater processing (plants and lift stations); landfills (active and abandoned); and recycling facilities.

Institutional Facilities. Institutional uses are defined as land for public and private facilities dedicated to public services. Institutional land uses include educational facilities (schools, colleges, universities, professional schools); hospitals; assemblies (churches, religious organizations); cemeteries and related facilities; all governmental facilities used for administration (city, village, town halls, community centers, post office, municipal garages, social security and employment offices, etc.); and safety services (police departments, jails, fire stations, armories, military facilities, etc.). Public utilities and areas of outdoor recreation are not considered institutional facilities.

Recreational Facilities. Recreational facilities are defined as land uses which provide leisure activity opportunities for citizens. This category encompasses both active and passive activities. Recreational activities include designated hunting and fishing areas; nature areas; general recreational parks; sports facilities (playgrounds, ball diamonds, soccer fields, tennis courts, etc.); city, county and state parks; fairgrounds; marinas; boat landings; spectator sport venues; hiking trails; mini-golf; bowling; bicycling; skiing; golf courses; country clubs; performing arts centers; museums; historical sites; zoos; amusement parks; gambling venues; and other related activities.

Water Features. Water features include all surface water including lakes, streams, rivers, ponds, and other similar features. Intermittent waterways are also incorporated into this category.

Woodlands. Woodlands are forested areas which are characterized by a predominance of tree cover. Woodlands are divided into two subcategories: general woodlands and planted woodlands. General woodlands are naturally occurring; this category includes forests, woods, and distinguishable hedgerows. Planted woodlands include forestry and timber track operations where trees are typically planted in rows; this category includes tree plantations, orchards and land dedicated to Christmas tree production (nurseries are not included).

Other Open Land. This category includes land which is currently vacant and not developed in a manner similar to the other land use categories described within this section. Open land includes areas that are wet, rocky, or outcrop; open lots in a subdivision; or rural parcels and side or back lots on a residential property that are not developed.

Current Land Use Inventories

Developed land has been altered from its natural state to accommodate human activities. Although agricultural areas are considered undeveloped by land classification systems, these uses have different impacts on land use decisions than urbanized uses; thus, agricultural uses

have been separated to obtain an accurate total of all related activities. Less than eight percent of land is developed in both the Town of Aurora and the Town of Bloomfield (Table 8-1). The primary developed land uses in both municipalities are single family residential, farmstead, and transportation. Unplanted woodlands, non-irrigated cropland, and other open land are the three most common land uses within the towns. In both towns, non-irrigated cropland comprises over 38 percent of the total land area, with unplanted woodlands comprising from a fifth to a third of the total land area.

Table 8.1. Aurora and Bloomfield Existing Land Use Summary, 2005/2006¹

Land Use	Percent of Total	
	T. Aurora	T. Bloomfield
Single Family Residential	1.3%	0.8%
Farmstead	1.0%	0.9%
Multi-Family Residential	0.0%	0.0%
Mobile Home Parks	0.0%	0.0%
Commercial	0.3%	0.1%
Industrial	0.1%	0.0%
Recreational Facilities	1.9%	0.1%
Camps & RV Parks	0.0%	0.0%
Institutional Facilities	0.1%	0.1%
Utilities/Communication	0.1%	0.0%
Transportation	2.5%	2.6%
Total Developed	7.3%	4.5%
Non-irrigated Cropland	38.1%	42.7%
Irrigated Cropland	2.7%	0.0%
Planted Woodlands	1.4%	1.1%
Unplanted Woodlands	19.8%	33.2%
Quarries	0.0%	0.0%
Other Open Land	29.1%	16.9%
Water Features	1.5%	1.6%
Total Acreage	100.0%	100.0%

Source: East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 2005/2006

A detailed analysis of existing land use for each community is found below. Residential land uses have been divided according to their specific category: single family residential, farmsteads, multi-family units, and mobile home parks. Single family residential land use includes single family dwellings and duplexes.

Town of Aurora

The Town of Aurora encompasses approximately 22,118 acres (Table 8-2 and Figure 8-1). Approximately 7 percent (7.3%) of the total area is developed. The primary developed uses include residential (single family, farmstead and multi-family, 32.3%), recreational facilities (26.6%) and transportation (34.7%). Collectively these uses account for about 94 percent (93.6%) of the developed area.

¹ Town of Aurora, updated by committee, 2006. Town of Bloomfield, updated, 2005.

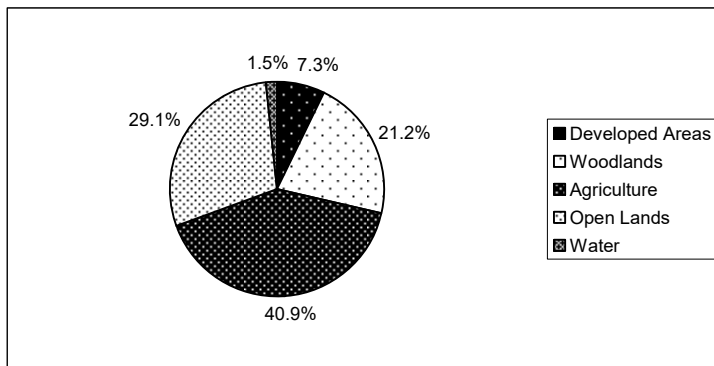
Overall, cropland (irrigated and non-irrigated) accounts for about 41 percent (40.8%) of the total land use, while other open land makes up another 29 percent (29.1%). Woodlands (planted and general, 21.2%) and water features (1.5%) comprises the remaining 23 percent (22.7%) of the remaining land uses.

Table 8.2. Town of Aurora Existing Land Use, 2006

Land Use	Acres	Percent of Developed Land	Percent of Total
Single Family Residential	290	18.1%	1.3%
Farmstead	220	13.7%	1.0%
Multi-Family Residential	9	0.5%	0.0%
Mobile Home Parks	0	0.0%	0.0%
Commercial	60	3.7%	0.3%
Industrial	17	1.0%	0.1%
Recreational Facilities	428	26.6%	1.9%
Camps & RV Parks	0	0.0%	0.0%
Institutional Facilities	13	0.8%	0.1%
Utilities/Communication	15	0.9%	0.1%
Transportation	557	34.7%	2.5%
Total Developed	1,608	100.0%	7.3%
Non-irrigated Cropland	8,435		38.1%
Irrigated Cropland	606		2.7%
Planted Woodlands	307		1.4%
Unplanted Woodlands	4,387		19.8%
Quarries	9		0.0%
Other Open Land	6,428		29.1%
Water Features	338		1.5%
Total Acreage	22,118		100.0%

Source: East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 2006

Figure 8.1. Town of Aurora Existing Land Use, 2006



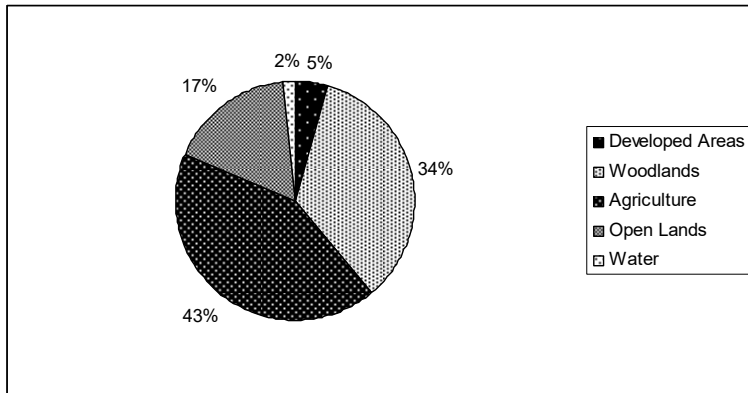
Town of Bloomfield

The Town of Bloomfield is a largely undeveloped town in which agriculture is the most predominant land use (Table 8-3 and Figure 8-2). About 43 percent (42.7%) of the total undeveloped land in the town is non-irrigated cropland. Other major land uses are woodlands (34.3%) and other open land (16.9%). Less than five percent (4.5%) of the 22,962 acres are developed. Farmsteads (0.9%), single family residential (0.8%), and transportation (2.6%) are the most prevalent developed land uses; they comprise about 96 percent of the total developed land.

Table 8-3. Town of Bloomfield Existing Land Use, 2005

Land Use	Acres	Percent of Developed Land	Percent of Total
Single Family Residential	181	17.6%	0.8%
Farmstead	213	20.7%	0.9%
Multi-Family Residential	0	0.0%	0.0%
Mobile Home Parks	0	0.0%	0.0%
Commercial	16	1.5%	0.1%
Industrial	3	0.3%	0.0%
Recreational Facilities	13	1.3%	0.1%
Camps & RV Parks	0	0.0%	0.0%
Institutional Facilities	13	1.2%	0.1%
Utilities/Communications	0	0.0%	0.0%
Transportation	590	57.4%	2.6%
Total Developed	1,029	100.0%	4.5%
Non-irrigated Cropland	9,811		42.7%
Irrigated Cropland	0		0.0%
Planted Woodlands	249		1.1%
Unplanted Woodlands	7,625		33.2%
Quarries	11		0.0%
Other Open Land	3,877		16.9%
Water Features	360		1.6%
Total Acreage	22,962		100.0%

Source: East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 2005.

Figure 8.2. Town of Bloomfield Existing Land Use, 2005

Zoning

Zoning is a major tool used to regulate land uses. A zoning ordinance regulates the use of property in order to advance public health, safety, and welfare through orderly development. Zoning is performed at several levels in Waushara County. Each incorporated city or village has general zoning powers.² Waushara County has general zoning jurisdiction within most unincorporated areas of the county; the ordinances are administered by the Zoning and Land Conservation Department (WCZLC).³ The Town of Warren has not adopted county zoning and the county has limited powers within the portion of the Town of Aurora that falls within the extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction for the City of Berlin. However, a general county zoning ordinance only becomes effective if individual towns approve the county ordinance. The towns of Aurora and Bloomfield have each adopted the general Waushara County Zoning ordinances. Towns with "village powers" can adopt their own zoning ordinances as long as they are at least as restrictive as the general county ordinance.⁴ The City of Berlin has adopted its own zoning ordinance and performs extraterritorial zoning within 1.5 miles of its incorporated limits.

Waushara County

The towns of Aurora and Bloomfield adhere to Waushara County Zoning.⁵ All zoning district information is contained within the Waushara County Zoning Ordinance adopted in 2003. A summary of the usage requirements and restrictions of the districts found within the area is listed below.

- *(A-G) General Agriculture Zone:* This zone is designed primarily for large-scale agricultural uses of land related to growing of crops and the raising of livestock. Permitted uses include airstrips, general farming, single family residential homes, home occupations, and other uses. Residential lot sizes vary. Minimum lot sizes are indicated by the suffix. For example, lots zoned AG-5 must be a minimum of 5 acres.

² *Wisconsin Statutes* 62.23 for cities and *Wisconsin Statutes* 61.35 for villages.

³ *Wisconsin Statutes* 69.69.

⁴ *Wisconsin Statutes* 60.22.

⁵ WCZLC. 2003. *Code of Ordinances: Waushara County, Wisconsin*.

- *(A-R) Agricultural Residential Zone:* This zone is intended to provide a semi-rural type of environment which allows general agricultural use. Single family residential development on minimum one acre lots, general farming, and home occupations are permitted under this classification.
- *(C-G) General Commercial:* This zone provides for uses found in small commercial areas located throughout the county. Permitted uses include banking; bed and breakfast establishments; professional offices; medical clinics; funeral homes; Laundromats; storage garages; restaurants; semi-public uses; warehouses; and retail stores. Single family dwellings are permitted only as accessory to a principal use.
- *(C-C) Community Commercial:* This zone provides for uses found in the central business districts of small communities. Permitted uses include banks, bed and breakfasts, professional offices, medical clinics, funeral homes, laundromats, storage garages, restaurants, semi-public uses, warehouses, and retail stores. Single family dwellings are permitted only as accessory to a principal use.
- *(C-S) Service Commercial:* This zone is designed for small commercial service businesses which are oriented toward the traveler, tourist or vacationer. Lots sizes must be a minimum of 10,000 square feet. Permitted uses include bed and breakfasts; boat sales and service; clubs or lodges; and public swimming pools.
- *(M-G) General Manufacturing Zone:* This zone is intended for any manufacturing or industrial operation which, on the basis of actual physical and operational characteristics, would not be detrimental to the surrounding area or the county as a whole by reason of noise, dirt, smoke, odor, traffic, physical appearance, or any other similar features. Automotive-heavy repair and upholstery; cleaning, pressing, and dyeing establishments; commercial bakeries, greenhouses, and recycling operations; distributors; farm machinery sales and/or service; food locker plants; laboratories; machine shops; manufacturing and bottling of nonalcoholic beverages; manufacturing, fabrication, processing, packaging, and assembly of selected products; printing or publishing; storage and sale of machinery and equipment; trade and contractors' offices; warehousing and wholesaling; offices, storage, power supply, and other such uses normally incidental to the principal use are permitted uses that fall under this classification. Lot sizes must be a minimum of 20,000 square feet.
- *(M-I) Intensive Manufacturing Zone:* This zone is intended to provide for uses which by their nature can exhibit characteristics harmful, noxious, or detrimental to surrounding uses. Permitted uses include all those permitted under General Manufacturing Zone, as well as freight yards and depots, breweries, and inside storage. Lot sizes must be a minimum of 20,000 square feet.
- *(O-N) Natural Resource Preservation Zone:* This zone provides for the conservation and protection of natural resources. Generally this zone includes swamps, marshlands, river and lakeshore and other land of natural aesthetic value. Residential development is allowed within these areas on one-acre lots. Permitted uses include agriculture, wildlife preserves, fish hatcheries, and farm ponds. Camping trailers, mobile campers, and houseboats are permitted for temporary living quarters within the district.

- *(GWPOD) Groundwater Protection Overlay District:* The purpose of this district is to institute land use regulations to protect the municipal water supplies and to promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the county. The residents of the county depend exclusively on groundwater for a safe drinking water supply. Certain land use practices and activities can seriously threaten or degrade groundwater quality.
- *(O-F) Forest Zone:* This zone provides for the continuation of forestry practices and related uses in those areas best suited to this activity. This zone is further intended to encourage forestry and to recognize the value of the forest as a recreational resource. Permitted uses include all uses within the O-N zone; debarking operations; maple syrup processing plants; and portable sawmills. Single family dwellings are allowed as a conditional use. Residential lot sizes must be a minimum of one acre.
- *(O-P) Park and Recreation Zone:* This zone provides for the orderly and attractive grouping of recreational oriented service establishments and is further intended to encourage the maintenance and protection of natural resources. Permitted uses include all agriculture, wildlife preserves, fish hatcheries, and farm ponds. Camping trailers, mobile campers, and houseboats are permitted for temporary living quarters within the district.
- *(O-SW) Shoreland/Wetland Zone:* This purpose of this zone is to maintain safe and healthful conditions; to prevent water pollution; to protect fishing and spawning grounds and aquatic life; and to preserve shore cover and natural beauty.
- *(RS-10) Residential Single-Family:* This zone provides a suitable environment for single-family residential development on moderate size lots in areas with public sewer systems. Permitted uses include agriculture and single-family dwellings. The minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet.
- *(RS-20) Residential Single-Family Zone:* This zone is intended to provide a suitable environment for single-family residential development on large lots in areas without public sewage systems. Permitted uses include single-family residential lots of a minimum of 20,000 square feet and agricultural uses.
- *(R-M) Residential Multiple-Family Zone:* This zone provides for multiple-family dwellings in a residential environment. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multiple-family dwellings and duplexes. The regulations for this zone apply to multiple-family dwellings served by public sewer systems. Multi-family dwellings not served by a public sewer must have an approved septic system. Sewered lot sizes must be a minimum of 12,000 square feet.
- *(RS-P) Residential Single-Family Planned Development Zone:* The purpose of this zone is to provide the means whereby land may be planned and developed as a unit for residential uses under standards and conditions which encourage good design and promote a stable living environment.
- *(RM-P) Residential Multifamily Planned Development Zone:* The purpose of this zone is to provide the means whereby land may be planned and developed as a unit for residential uses under standards and conditions which promote a stable living environment. This zone is intended to permit flexibility and variety in development at increased densities, to

encourage the preservation of natural features and open space, and to minimize present and future burdens on the community as a whole which result from poor planning.

City of Berlin

The City of Berlin adopted extraterritorial zoning in 1989 that establishes a one and one half mile zone extending from the city limits which includes parts of the Town of Aurora that are regulated by the Berlin Zoning Ordinance. Zoning district information is contained within the City of Berlin Zoning Ordinance.⁶ Waushara County regulates shoreland zoning within the extraterritorial area⁷ and issues building permits⁸. A summary of the usage requirements and restrictions of the districts found within the extraterritorial zone are listed below.

- *(C-1) Conservancy District:* The purpose of this zone is to protect areas which may pose a public safety hazard due to poor drainage, are valuable wetland resources, or are valuable recreation areas. Permitted uses include grazing and gardening, harvesting of wild crops, hunting, fishing, and sustained yield forestry.
- *(A-1) Agricultural District:* This zone is designed to provide for farming and other agricultural activities and related uses. Permitted uses include all uses permitted in C-1 district, all normal farming uses, keeping or raising of farm animals, churches, schools, cemeteries, parks, hospitals, etc. Single-family residences on lots or five acres or more, unless subdivided into plats or certified survey lots are allowed.
- *(A-2) Agricultural Preservation District:* The agricultural preservation zone is designed to preserve agricultural lands and open spaces, promote soil and water conservation, promote orderly land use planning and development and provide owners of lands in the A-2 district with the opportunity to participate in the state's farmland preservation program in order to obtain real property tax relief. This district is further divided into a Transmission zone and a Preservation zone. Permitted uses include beekeeping, commercial feedlots, dairying, forest and game management, grazing, orchards, nurseries, sod farm etc. Farm dwellings including single-family residences or duplexes are allowed if the occupant is related to the agricultural parcel use.
- *(R-1) Residential District:* This district is intended to provide a suitable environment for single-family residential development and to protect such areas from the encroachment of incompatible uses. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, parks, playgrounds, schools (non-boarding), churches, libraries and home occupations.
~~Lot sizes of not less than 20,000 square feet are allowed in the ETZA area.~~
- *(R-2) Residential District:* This district is intended to provide for a quality residential development of a higher density than the R-1 district. Permitted uses include all uses permitted in the R-1 district, two-family dwellings, hospitals, medical clinics, etc. ~~Lot sizes of not less than 20,000 square feet are allowed in the ETZA area.~~
- *(R-3) Residential District:* This district is intended to provide for a pleasant residential development of a higher density than the R-2 district. Permitted uses include any use

⁶ City of Berlin. 1989. *Code of Ordinances: City of Berlin, Wisconsin.*

⁷ Mary Lou Neubauer, Assistant City Administrator, City of Berlin.

⁸ Town of Aurora Comprehensive Plan Committee.

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permitted in the R-2 district, multi-family, school dormitories and lodging houses. ~~Lot sizes of not less than 20,000 square feet and a lot area of not less than 3,000 square feet per unit are allowed in the ETZA area.~~

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- *(B-1) Business District:* This district is intended to accommodate retail and office uses which are characteristic of the major shopping streets of the downtown area. No residential occupancy of first floor or ground floor stories shall be permitted. Permitted uses include retail and service shops, banks and financial institutions, utility services, business and professional services, hotels and motels, commercial recreational and entertainment establishments, funeral parlors, printing and publishing, department and variety stores, parking lots and municipal buildings, bakeries, medical and dental clinics, bed and breakfast establishments, etc.
- *(B-2) Business District:* This district is intended to provide for the orderly and attractive grouping of commercial activities of a more general retail and wholesale nature. Permitted uses include those uses permitted in the B-1 district, general merchandising and wholesaling, transportation terminals, farm implement sales, automobile sales, animal hospitals and pet shops, commercial green houses, etc.
- *(M-1) Light Manufacturing District:* This district is intended to provide for light manufacturing uses which would not be detrimental to the surrounding area or to the community as a whole by reason of noise, smoke, odor, traffic, physical appearance or other factors deemed appropriate for the type of use involved. Permitted uses include machine shops; testing and experimental laboratories; beverage bottling; electric and neon sign fabrication; light sheet metal assembly; manufacturing of light metal products, and water, heating treating equipment; vehicle repair/service; service industries; truck transfers; wholesale or distributing, lumber and building supplies establishments; municipal wastewater treatment facilities; and mini-warehousing.
- *(M-2) Medium Manufacturing District:* This district is intended to provide for more intensive uses than found in the M-1 district, but less intensive than the M-3 district. The uses are designated on the basis of actual physical and operational characteristics which would not be detrimental to the surrounding area or community as a whole by reason of noise, dust, smoke, odor, traffic, physical appearance or other factors deemed appropriate for the type of use involved. Permitted uses include knitting and textile facilities, manufacturing.
- *(M-3) Heavy Manufacturing District:* This district is intended to provide for the heaviest manufacturing uses. It is intended that most of the uses under the M-3 district shall be conditional uses so that the city may specify provisions for protection of the general public when authorizing such heavy manufacturing uses. Permitted uses include foundry; leather and tanning; paper, pulp and plastics manufacturing; painting and coating facilities; and all uses permitted in the M-1 and M-2 districts.

Several generalizations can be made about zoning in the towns of Aurora and Bloomfield (Table 8-4 and Exhibit 8-2). The predominant zoning district in both towns is General Agriculture. This category comprised 59.0 percent of the area in the Town of Aurora and 83.7 percent of the area in the Town of Bloomfield. The Natural Resource Preservation district comprises the next largest area in both towns. This district accounted for 29.9 percent of the total area in the

Town of Aurora, and 13.6 percent in the Town of Bloomfield. Less than two percent of the land area in the towns is zoned residential in either town. Similarly, less than one percent of both towns are zoned for either commercial or manufacturing uses. Table 8-4 and the percentages above do not include the areas within the Town of Aurora that ~~are~~ were previously within the City of Berlin ETZA.

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Table 8.4. Aurora and Bloomfield Zoning

Zoning Classification	T. Aurora ¹		T. Bloomfield ²	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Gen. Ag. (A-G)	12,530	59.0%	19,230	83.7%
Ag. Res. (A-R)	70	0.3%	36	0.2%
Gen. Comm. (C-G)	47	0.2%	18	0.1%
Community Comm. (C-C)	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
Service Comm. (S-C)	5	0.0%	0	0.0%
Gen. Man. (M-G)	0	0.0%	4	0.0%
Intensive Man. (I-G)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nat. Res. Pres. (O-N)	6,349	29.9%	3,116	13.6%
Forestry (O-F)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Park and Re. (O-P)	1	0.0%	18	0.1%
Shoreland/Wetland (O-SW)	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
Res. S. F. (RS-10)	0	0.0%	8	0.0%
Res. S. F. (RS-20)	57	0.3%	179	0.8%
Res. M. F. (R-M)	0	0.0%	38	0.2%
Res. S. F. Plan. Dev. (RSP-10)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Res. M. F. Plan. Dev. (RM-P)	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NA (NA)■	2,182	10.3%	311	1.4%
Roads*				
Total	21,242	100.0%	22,962	100.0%

Source: WCZLC, 2005¹, 2006².

*Waushara County does not include roads in zoning data.

■Includes areas not zoned, surface water and City of Berlin ETZA.

Development Trends

The growth of the area has been influenced by a number of factors. These factors include the abundance of navigable surface waters and the proximity of the area to the southern half of the state, the Fox Cities, and Oshkosh. The rural charm and abundant natural resources of the area continue to attract new residents.

Early settlers began to arrive in the late 1840s. A trading post was established, and the community of Sacramento was platted in the southeastern corner of Aurora along the Fox River in 1849. This bustling town, which served as the first Waushara County seat, supported a steam sawmill, a hotel, a school, a tavern, and several stores. After purchasing supplies trappers, traders, and hunters followed a trail northward to the Pine River and northeastern Waushara County. The vitality of Sacramento was short-lived. In 1854, the county seat was relocated to Wautoma. The extension of the Milwaukee and Horicon Railroad to Berlin and building of the Berlin Bridge drew traffic away from Sacramento. Buildings were either moved out of the area to the cranberry marshes on the north side of the Fox River or torn down. Sacramento has since been bypassed. Today, only remnants such as the Sacramento Cemetery

recall the importance of this once prosperous community which was paramount in settling Waushara County.⁹

Tustin, on the north shore of Lake Poygan, has not faded from memory. Due to the isolated location of this hamlet, the area is still a quaint vacation area and tourist destination. Originally settled in 1856, Tustin was once a thriving commercial center on the northwest end of the Winnebago Pool Lakes. Two commercial fishing companies shipped their daily catch to Oshkosh, Milwaukee, and Chicago. Also located within the community, sawmills, a winery, and a cheese factory also shipped consumer goods. Daily transportation of freight and passengers occurred between Oshkosh, Fremont, and Tustin. Passenger traffic was mainly for pleasure. As such, a hotel, general store, and other business establishments served local residents and tourists. Today, the Tustin area is a popular fishing, hunting and tourist area with numerous vacation homes. Commercial enterprises consist primarily of restaurants and taverns, while agriculture is dominant in rural areas.

In 1850, Eli Daniels purchased several hundred acres of land along the banks of the Willow Creek. He immediately constructed a dam across Willow Creek and built a sawmill on the north side and a grist mill on the south. In 1853, Auroraville was platted. Lots were gradually sold and several businesses, a school and a church were established. The Eli Daniels' home, south of town, served as a stagecoach station for the unincorporated village of Auroraville. The village prospered and soon catered to area residents' needs for lumber, grain, banking, cheese, blacksmith, general store and lodging. However, gradually businesses closed and people moved away. While most of the old buildings and businesses are gone, this area has recently been rediscovered. This quiet rural setting provides a nice residential area and people are slowly moving back into the community.

Current residents highly value the abundance of natural resources including the Fox River, Lake Poygan, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife, and other open spaces. These aspects as well as the friendly small community atmosphere continue to draw people to the area and have played a role in retaining existing residents. Lake Poygan has attracted vacation home development; many residential structures serve as a second home. Development around Tustin necessitated the construction of a sanitary sewer system in the early 1990s to protect these resources. While the water quality of the lake has improved, the addition of the sanitary sewer system has resulted in an increase in both residential and commercial development.

Similar to many rural areas in the state, the towns have faced development pressures. Large portions of farm and wood lands have been converted to small parcel residential development. Easy access to STH 21 and central location of the towns with respect to the Fox Cities, Oshkosh, and rest of the state have contributed to the development of the area. Highway commercial development continues to occur at the STH 21/49 intersection. Due to the construction of the Redgranite State Correctional Facility and widening of USH 10, new housing development has occurred in both Aurora and Bloomfield.

As growth occurs, land use changes in intensity and net density. Analyzing the patterns in land use provides valuable information to local communities in determining how the community has changed and assessing current needs. This information can be used to plan for the appropriate development in the future. To analyze land use changes, East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) looked at a number of different data sources, including its own

⁹ Reetz, E. 1981. *Come Back in Time*. Fox River Publishing Co.: Princeton, WI.

land use inventories of the area, revenue data from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR), and building permit records from both the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) and Waushara County Zoning and Land Conservation Department (WCZLC).

Several limitations with the information in all four data sets necessitate utilizing general summaries for land use trends. A brief discussion of the limitations follows.

ECWRPC conducted land use inventories in 1980 and again in 2000. This information was updated by the planning committees representing the communities in the cluster. Two distinct classification systems were used in the 1980 and 2000/2005/2006 land use inventories. This made it difficult to compare specific categories between the two inventories. Secondly, computer technology has changed the degree of specificity in which data is collected. In 1980, computerized parcel data was not available. Current land use utilizes parcel data; therefore if a house is located in a subdivision, the entire parcel may be included as residential. Residential areas in 1980 may have included only a portion of these areas.

A comparison of Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) data was used to analyze land use changes between 1990 and 2004.¹⁰ The DOR collects information by real estate class for each minor civil division in the state.¹¹ Acreage figures from DOR do not include Department of Natural Resource (DNR) lands or other tax-exempt properties.¹² Acreage data for incorporated communities is also incomplete, as their information is frequently provided in number of parcels, as opposed to the total acreage of the parcels. Beginning in 1996, the DOR also changed their classification system. Wisconsin Act 27 mandated that agricultural land was categorized from a standard based on use value instead of a standard based on full market value.¹³ Therefore, some land use changes between 1990 and 2004 are a direct result of Act 27 and do not necessarily reflect a change in land use but a change in the way that the land was classified. Following the implementation of the use value standard, agricultural land with improvements was moved to other categories. If these improvements included residential, then the agricultural land with improvements was moved to residential. Additionally, following the use value assessment, less productive land was moved out of agriculture and reclassified as swamp and waste land. Furthermore, the increasing popularity of privately owned recreational land caused a shift of lands from agriculture to both forestland and swamp and wasteland.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) collects building permit information for new construction as well as demolition information from communities within the state.¹⁴ This data is annually reported by communities and includes single-family, two-family, multi-family and mobile homes. The data is an inventory of the net change in the number of residential units for each community that were reported to DOA. This data set includes information that is reported by individual communities to the DOA. If a community does not accurately report its building permit information, it is infeasible to determine actual land use changes.

Building permit data from the Waushara County Zoning and Land Conservation Department (WCZLC) is collected for new residential development.¹⁵ Records are maintained for single family residential dwelling and mobile homes. WCZLC issues building permits only in towns

¹⁰ DOR. 1980. *1980 Statistical Report of Property Values Waushara County, Wisconsin.*

¹¹ DOR. 1990, 2000, and 2005. *Statement of Equalized Values.*

¹² DOR. 1990, 2000, and 2005. *Statement of Assessments.*

¹³ Wisconsin State Assembly. 1995. *Wisconsin Act 27 (Assembly Bill 150).*

¹⁴ Wisconsin Demographics Service Center. 1990 to 2004. *Annual Housing Units Surveys.*

¹⁵ WCZLC. 1981 to 2004. *Land Use Permits Issued.*

which have adopted County zoning. If a town has not adopted county zoning, building permits are issued only for areas affected by the Waushara County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. Otherwise, building permits are issued by the minor civil division. Furthermore, this data set indicates only the number of permits issued each year. If the building is not constructed after a permit is issued, it still appears as if a new residential unit was constructed within the data set.

While the historical data from ECWRPC, DOR, DOA, and WCZLC gives us an incomplete picture of the total amount of land historically devoted to the various land uses, it does give us a picture of land consumption patterns within the communities. According to these data sources, several trends can be seen within the planning cluster. The collective summary utilizing all three sources is presented for each individual community; general trends are discussed.

Town of Aurora

According to historic data from ECWRPC and DOR, the Town of Aurora experienced significant gains in residential and smaller gains in commercial land uses between 1980 and 2006. While gains were seen in these two categories, losses occurred in agricultural land. Net building permit information from the DOA, also points toward gains in residential uses. According to the DOA, 72 residential buildings (single and two-family) were added in the town between 1990 and 2000, and another 56 single-family were added between 2000 and 2004. Information from the U.S. Census Bureau further justifies that housing is being added in the town. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there was an increase of 50 residential dwelling units between 1990 and 2000. Residential development has occurred throughout the town, and is not limited to any specific area.¹⁶

Town of Bloomfield

Historical data from both ECWRPC and DOR have indicated that the Town of Bloomfield has experienced gains in residential land uses with simultaneous losses in agricultural land and forestland over the last 25 years. These local trends mirror state and national trends. A portion of the decline can be attributed to a conversion of agricultural land to residential development, while other losses are a result of differences in classification/delineation of agricultural properties and farmsteads. Large gains in residential acres were observed in the town; this corresponds to DOA data that indicates that 96 units were added in the Town of Bloomfield. According to DOR data, commercial and industrial land uses have remained constant since 1980. Forestland losses have been seen in the town. This is most likely due to the conversion of woodlands to new residential development.

Building Permits

As stated above, net building permit data is available from the DOA. This data has been submitted by the jurisdictions that issue building permits. Net building data indicates the net change, not the total number of building permits. Therefore, if a building is demolished within a community, this information is subtracted from the new permit numbers. Between 1990 and 2004, 224 net units were added within the planning area. This averages to about 15 units per year (units/yr).

¹⁶ Aurora Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Town of Aurora

According to the DOA, 128 residential units (8.5 units/yr) were added between 1990 and 2004. The largest growth in single family units occurred during 2001 to 2003. During these three years, an average of 15 units was added per year. According to the DOA, 16 two-family units were added in the town in 1995. This corresponds to the new housing units that were built by United Migrant Opportunities Services at its facility in the town. Building permit information from Waushara County also indicates similar gains in residential construction. According to the county, 124 new single family homes were built in the town between 1990 and 2004. It is important to note that one would expect differences in data between DOA and the county, since DOA data is net new buildings and Waushara County is based on total building permits that have been issued and not necessarily built.

Town of Bloomfield

According to the DOA, 96 single-family units (6.4 units/yr) were added in the town. The fastest period of growth occurred between 1997 and 2001; a total of 43 single-family units (8.6 units/yr) were added. Single family residential development has remained consistent, albeit slower, since 2002 (6.3 units/yr). WCZLC data shows that a higher number of building permits have been issued when compared with DOA data. Between 1997 and 2001, WCZLC issued 10.4 building permits per year; this figure increased to 10.6 permits per year between 2002 and 2004. As stated previously, the accuracy of both data sources is dependent on timely reporting by local officials.

Density and Intensity

Density

Density is broadly defined as "a number of units in a given area"¹⁷. For the purposes of this report, residential densities are defined as the number of housing units per square mile of total land area (units/ sq. mile), excluding water. Between 1990 and 2000, residential densities increased throughout the county, state, and towns of Aurora and Bloomfield. As the population of the area has grown, so has the overall housing density (Table 8-5). The total number of housing units has increased by 9.4 percent in the Town of Bloomfield and 14.7 percent in the Town of Aurora.

Residential densities varied between the two towns. The Town of Bloomfield continues to maintain a higher housing unit density than the Town of Aurora. In 2000, the residential density in Bloomfield was 13.22 units/ sq. mi. compared to a residential density of 11.36 units/ sq. mi. in Aurora. While the Town of Bloomfield has a higher residential density, the Town of Aurora saw more growth from 1990 to 2000 (1.46 units/sq. mi.) than the Town of Bloomfield (1.10 units/sq. mi.).

¹⁷ Measuring Density: Working Definitions for Residential Density and Building Intensity, November 2003. Design Center for American Urban Landscape, University of Minnesota.

Table 8.5. Residential Density, 1990 to 2000

	Land Area Sq. Miles	1990		2000	
		Tot. Units	Units/Sq. Mi.	Tot. Units	Units/Sq. Mi.
Wisconsin	54313.7	2,055,774	37.85	2,321,144	42.74
Waushara County	626.1	12,246	19.56	13,667	21.83
Town of Aurora	34.2	339	9.90	389	11.36
Town of Bloomfield	34.4	416	12.09	455	13.22

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, 2000

Intensity

Intensity is the degree of activity associated with a particular land use. Generally, higher intensity land uses also have higher environmental impacts. Due to limited information available, this report will compare the intensities of single-family versus multi-family developments in the various communities. To calculate land intensities, the ECWRPC categories single and two-family residential, farmsteads, and mobile homes as "single family."

Incorporated communities or areas served by public sewer often have more intense development patterns than rural towns. Single-family residential development is typically a less intense land use than multi-family (3 or more units) which is typically restricted to areas on public sewer. For example, there are only two structures with three or four units in the Town of Aurora. Second, incorporated areas in Waushara County are smaller in overall land area than the surrounding towns, resulting in a more intensive land use. Finally, incorporated municipalities, in the county, have areas of older development that were constructed during a period when society was less dependent on cars for transportation. This necessitated the need for smaller lot development that allowed for closer proximity to neighbors and services.

Land use was more intense in the Town of Bloomfield than in the Town of Aurora (Table 8-6). The overall intensity was greater in Bloomfield due to the presence of two unincorporated villages and a number of larger subdivisions. In 2005, single-family land use was about 1.23 units per acre (units/ac) in Bloomfield compared to 0.87 units/ac in Aurora. Multi-family land use in Aurora was 0.23 units per acre.

Table 8.6. Intensity, 2005¹/2006²

Municipality	Single Family ³			Multi-Family		
	Units	Acres	Units/Ac.	Units	Acres	Units/Ac.
T. Aurora ²	443	510	0.87	2	9	0.23
T. Bloomfield ¹	485	394	1.23	0	0	0

¹Town of Bloomfield land use data 2005

²Town of Aurora land use data 2006

³Single Family includes mobile homes and duplexes

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Recommended State, Regional, and County Goals

State, regional, and county goals were developed to provide communities with a framework on which land use decisions could be based. These goals make the planning process and decisions

defensible to the general public when formulating alternate scenarios for developing parcels within a community.

State of Wisconsin

The State of Wisconsin requires that communities address 14 specific goals in their comprehensive plans.¹⁸ These goals encourage development to occur in an orderly well-planned manner. The goals are:

- Promoting the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
- Encouraging neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- Protecting economically productive areas, including farmlands and forests.
- Encouraging land uses and development patterns that promote cost-efficient government services and utility costs.
- Preserving cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
- Encouraging coordination and cooperation with neighboring communities.
- Building community identity by improving overall appearance and attractiveness to visitors.
- Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels.
- Providing adequate infrastructure, public services, and a supply of affordable land to meet existing needs and accommodate future growth.
- Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of additional and better employment opportunities.
- Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- Planning and developing a pattern of land use that preserves and creates a pleasing and unique setting.
- Providing all citizens, including those that are transportation dependent, a variety of economical, convenient, and safe transportation options adequate to meet their needs.

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is currently developing a regional comprehensive plan.¹⁹ As a part of this planning process, East Central has identified several key policies:

- Facilitate cost-effective, centralized, compact, and contiguous urban growth.

¹⁸ *Wisconsin State Statutes 66.1001.*

¹⁹ ECWRPC, 2004. *Milestone Report #2: Issues/Opportunities and Visioning.*

- Encourage urban development that is environmentally sound and compatible with the natural resource base.
- Facilitate urban levels of development where facilities and services are readily available to support the development.
- Encourage individual community character and identity.
- Avoid intermingling urban and rural land uses.
- Promote rural land development which meets the needs of rural residents and landowners in a compatible, cost-effective, and environmentally sound manner.
- Provide government services in an efficient, environmentally sound, and socially responsible manner.
- Build community identity by improving overall appearance and attractiveness to visitors.
- Ensure that open space is available to meet the recreational needs of all residents.
- Preserve and protect natural and cultural resources.

These goals are consistent with the visions for land use development and future growth within both Aurora and Bloomfield.

Waushara County

The Waushara County Zoning Ordinance has identified the following criteria for all unincorporated areas within the county:

- Promote and protect public health, safety, comfort, convenience, prosperity, aesthetics, and other aspects of general welfare.
- Establish reasonable standards to which buildings and structures shall conform.
- Regulate and restrict lot coverage and population density.
- Conserve the value of land and buildings.
- Guide the proper distribution and location of land use patterns.
- Promote safety and efficiency of transportation networks.
- Provide adequate light, air, sanitation, and drainage.
- Prevent the uncontrolled use of shorelands and pollution of the navigable waters of the county.
- Encourage the preservation, conservation, and development of land areas for a wide range of natural resources.
- Minimize expenditures of public funds for flood control projects; rescue and relief efforts undertaken at the expense of the taxpayers; business interruptions and other economic disruptions; damage to public facilities in the floodplain; and minimize the occurrence of future flood blight areas.
- Discourage the victimization of unwary land and homebuyers.

Local Land Use Issues

Citizen questionnaires were distributed to residents and landowners within the towns of Aurora and Bloomfield to gather opinions regarding land use and development issues.²⁰ According to responses that were received, the top issues that were identified included: increasing taxes; the attraction of new businesses and good paying jobs; and the protection of agricultural operations and businesses.

Environmental and Public Utility

Development costs vary based on density, design, social, economical, political and environmental constraints. Public opposition can increase costs through project delays. Development often necessitates the expansion of public infrastructure such as sewer, water, streets, schools, parks and services such as fire and police protection. Increased development can infringe on wetland and floodplain areas, destroy wildlife habitat, and increase runoff to streams and lakes.

To protect and enhance the natural resource base, communities should identify and protect environmental corridors found within the planning area. Environmental corridors are areas in the community that contain and connect natural areas, open space, and other resources. They often lie along streams, rivers, and other natural features. Environmental corridors provide a beneficial buffer between sensitive natural resources and human development. These areas can provide flood control and valuable wildlife habitat and can significantly benefit the aesthetic appeal of the community.

Land Supply

The amount of land available for development within the towns of Aurora and Bloomfield is finite. Factors that limit the amount of developable land include environmental restrictions (floodplains, high groundwater, wetlands, steep slopes, and water quality), zoning (setbacks, conservancy and development easements, permitted uses), and conflicts between uses.

Land Price

The price of developable lands varies depending on the surrounding land uses, location, access, services, and other subjective factors. Natural amenities such as water frontage, forests, and open space may increase the overall value. Land prices are subject to market demand and fluctuations. As such, land values show periodic variations. Housing affordability is dependant on land prices. Real estate professionals in the area can provide updated information on land values.

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) annually reports equalized value as set by the department by real estate class per municipality in Wisconsin. Additionally, DOR reports the individual clerk's statement of assessments that includes the number of parcels (improved and unimproved), acres, and the local assessment per real estate class (Appendix G, Tables G-1 to

²⁰ ECWRPC. 2005. *Summary Report: Town of Aurora and Town of Bloomfield Group F Planning Cluster Waushara County, Wisconsin Citizen Questionnaire Results*. The executive summary is contained in Appendix A.

G-8)²¹. Historical land prices within the towns of Aurora and Bloomfield were derived using acreage and equalized value.²²

While data from DOR can offer insight into historical land prices, this data is not complete. Within the towns, some of the changes in land acreages and price per acre can be directly attributed to the changes that have occurred since 1980 in the way that agricultural land is assessed. Starting in 2000, agricultural land must be based on use value instead of full market value.²³ At that time, land formally classified as agricultural was moved to other categories based on the use of the property. For example the portion of agricultural land that contained the house and buildings were transferred to residential. Agricultural land is currently taxed at a lower rate than forestland, wetlands, or other land uses within agricultural properties. Although equalized values indicate that residential properties decreased in the 1980s, this may not be the case.

Town of Aurora

According to the DOR, the number of residential acres in the Town of Aurora steadily rose between 1980 and 2005 (Appendix G, Table G-9). The largest increase in the number of acres occurred between 2000 and 2005 (a five year period), while the largest percent change in the number of acres (in one decade) occurred between 1980 and 1990. During the 1980s residential acreage increased by over 118 percent from 186 acres to 406 acres. Since the 1990s, residential acreage has continued to increase at substantial rates. Between 1990 and 2000, the growth rate slowed to 75 percent. While the growth rate between 2000 and 2005 was at only 47 percent, it happened over a five year period. Therefore, time will tell if the decade between 2000 and 2010 exceeds the previous decade for growth or falls short. In 2005, 1,043 acres was designated as residential. The average value of residential land per acre fell by 53 percent between 1980 (\$5,807) and 1990 (\$2,736). Since 1990, the value of residential acreage has steadily risen; in 2005, it was worth, on average, about \$6,884 per acre.

Commercial acreage increased slightly between 1980 and 2005 from 46 to 66 acres. While the acreage remained constant, the average value of land increased from \$5,191 in 1980 to \$8,299 in 2005. The largest increase in a decade occurred between 1990 and 2000, when the average value of commercial land increased by 45 percent. Following state, county and area trends, the acres of land devoted to agricultural use has declined since 1980. In 1980, 14,898 acres of land was designated as agricultural use, while in 2005, this number fell by 37 percent to 9,355 acres. The average value of an acre of agricultural land has declined from a high of \$687 an acre in 1980 to a low of \$163 an acre in 2005.

Town of Bloomfield

Residential land acreage has progressively increased in the Town of Bloomfield since 1980 (Appendix G, Table G-10). Between 1990 and 2005, residential land acreage grew by over 300 percent. Like Aurora, land values decreased during the 1980s and subsequently increased steadily since 1990; the average price per acre rose by over 200 percent between 1990 and

²¹ DOR 1980 *Statistical Report of Property Values Waushara County, Wisconsin*. DOR 1990, 2000, and 2005. *Statement of Assessments*.

²² DOR 1980 *Statistical Report of Property Values Waushara County, Wisconsin*. DOR 1990, 2000, and 2005. *Statement of Equalized Values*.

²³ Wisconsin State Assembly. 1995. *Wisconsin Act 27 (Assembly Bill 150)*.

2005. In 1990, there were 607 acres of residential land in the town valued at an average of \$2,817 per acre. By 2005, residential acres had increased to 1,082, while the average cost per acre had risen to \$8,491. Commercial and manufacturing acreage in the town has remained constant. Similar to residential acreage, the average value of commercial and manufacturing land has risen. Commercial average land value increased by 241 percent from \$8,160 in 1980 to \$27,807 in 2005, while the average value of manufacturing acreage increased by 83 percent over this time frame from \$2,733 to \$5,000. Keeping in mind the changes in reporting and assessing agricultural land and other related real estate classes between 1990 and 2005, the number of agricultural acres fell by 39 percent from 17,321 acres to 10,514 acres. Similar to other communities, the value of agricultural land fell from \$576 in 1990 to \$105 in 2005. Forest land, however, rose in value from \$374 in 1980 to \$1,632 an acre in 2005. Forest land remained relatively constant at around 4,800 acres.

Energy demands

Development is dependant on the availability of a cost-effective, abundant, efficient energy supply. Industry needs to know that reliable energy will be available to run equipment and people rely on affordable energy to heat and power their homes. Not only is energy important for heating and power, but the cost and availability of gasoline may also impact development in both Aurora and Bloomfield. Tourism is a major revenue generator for the county, and many people within the county also regularly commute to work. Over half the people in the county regularly travel further than 27.1 minutes to work. In 2000, there were about 111 seasonal units in Aurora and Bloomfield. An increase in gas prices may cause some residents to move closer to their place of employment and out of Waushara County or cause others to consider closer locations from home for their vacation destinations. Therefore, energy availability can have an impact on new and sustained development in the towns.

FUTURE LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Future Land Use Map

Future land use needs and the resulting future land use map represents a compilation of the previous elements (Exhibit 8-3). This map was developed using:

- Existing land use maps and patterns
- Demographics (population, housing)
- Natural resource areas with limiting conditions (wetlands, floodplains, water resources)
- Development limitations (quarries, abandoned landfills, atrazine prohibition and wellhead protection areas)
- Future land use projections
- Results from public input including the citizen questionnaire
- Committee input including the SWOT analysis and visioning exercise
- Waushara County and City of Berlin Zoning Ordinances

The following land use categories were used in the Future Land Use Map

- **Future Residential:** Future residential land is classified as land that that will be used primarily for future human habitation. Future residential land uses include single-family

residential, farmsteads, individual mobile homes and duplexes. This land use category can include mobile homes in communities that have not made a distinction between these uses. Within the Town of Aurora this designation indicates areas where the town would like to see smaller lot residential development. The Town of Bloomfield has designated three different residential classifications: future residential within the North Lake Poygan Sanitary District (compact development) and areas immediately adjacent to Tustin, and an area near Berkans Drive; future residential development north of CTH A and west of STH 49 (a minimum lot size of 5 acres) and two areas for future mixed use commercial/residential development along STH 49 and CTH HH in West Bloomfield and adjacent to Tustin.

- **Future Multi-Family.** Future multi-family land is classified as land that will be used primarily for future residential uses of more than two residential units per building.
- **Future Commercial.** Commercial land uses represent the sale of goods and services and other general business practices. Commercial uses include retail and wholesale trade; services; and other related businesses. The Town of Aurora has combined the future commercial and industrial classification and has designated an area for future commercial and light industrial use near the intersection of STH 21 and STH 49, while the Town of Bloomfield has designated an area of mixed use commercial and residential (see future residential above).
- **Future Industrial.** Industrial land uses represent a broad category of activities not classified as future commercial such as construction, manufacturing, and other industrial facilities.
- **Future Recreational.** Recreational facilities are defined as land uses that provide opportunities for citizens to enjoy leisure activities. This category encompasses both active and passive activities. It includes designated parks; hunting and fishing areas; nature areas; areas for spectator sports, hiking, mini-golf, bowling, bicycling, skiing, golf courses, country clubs; and other related activities. The Town of Aurora has designated an area adjacent to their town hall.

These maps should be used as a planning tool by the communities in accordance with the Smart Growth Law. Elected and appointed officials should use these maps as a guide for making future land use decisions.

Future Land Use Projections

Wisconsin statutes require comprehensive plans to include five year projections for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses over the length of the plan.²⁴ A summary of future land use projections and criteria follows.

While projections can provide extremely valuable information for community planning, by nature, projections have limitations which must be recognized. First and foremost, projections are not predictions. Projections are typically based on historical growth patterns and the composition of the current base. Their reliability depends to a large extent on the continuation of those past growth trends. Second, projections for small communities are especially difficult and subject to more error, as even minor changes can significantly impact growth rates. Third,

²⁴ *Wisconsin State Statutes 66.1001.*

growth is also difficult to predict in areas which are heavily dependent on migration, as migration rates may vary considerably based on economic factors both within and outside of the area.

The actual rate of growth and amount of future growth communities experience can be influenced by local policies which can slow or increase the rate of growth. Regardless of whether communities prefer a no growth, low growth or high growth option, it is recommended they adequately prepare for future growth and changes to provide the most cost-effective services possible. Furthermore, individual communities can maximize the net benefits of their public infrastructure by encouraging denser growth patterns which maximize the use of land resources while minimizing the impact on the natural resource base.

Town of Aurora

Expected increases in residential and commercial acreage and resulting decreases in agricultural acreage can be estimated by analyzing and projecting historical data into the future. An anticipated range of population and housing growth and the amount of land that would be required to accommodate that increase in growth were made using past housing and population trends and future population and household projections.

In 2000, 971 permanent residents resided in the Town of Aurora in a total of 389 dwelling units²⁵. Of these units, 356 dwelling units were occupied year round and 21 were used on a seasonal basis. The remainder of the vacant units were for rent, sale or other purposes. The 356 occupied dwelling units (households) had an average size of 2.73 people. Based on ECWRPC projections, the population is expected to increase by 284 to 1,255 people by 2030; these people are expected to live in a total of 500 households. Due to a number of reasons including the aging population base and a decrease in the number of children that people are having, the average household size is expected to decrease to 2.51 people per housing unit. It is important to remember that the number of total dwelling units does not equal the total number of households. The total number of dwelling units in the town is a combination of occupied units and vacant units (for sale, rent, seasonal and other), while the total households is equal to the number of dwelling units times a vacancy rate. Assuming a constant vacancy rate of 8.5 percent (vacancy rate from 2000 Census held constant), it is anticipated that there will be a total of 546 dwelling units in the Town of Aurora by 2030 or 157 new units. Since current multi-family units account for less than 1 percent of the total units it is assumed that all new units will be single-family. Over a 25 year period this assumes that an average of 5 dwelling units will be added in the town per year.

Historical building permit data from the DOA indicates that between 1990 and 2000, a net total of 72 units were added in the Town of Aurora (7.2 dwelling units per year). Between 2000 and 2004, 56 dwelling units were added (11.2 dwelling units per year). According to U.S. Census data, a total of 50 additional dwelling units were built in the town between 1990 and 2000 (5 dwelling units per year). While historical building permit data from DOA and the U.S. Census indicates that town averaged 5 to 7.2 dwelling units per year between 1990 and 2000, and more between 2000 and 2003, these trends are not expected to continue. Recent building permit information from Waushara County indicates that there were 5 new residential building permits issued in 2004 and 2005. Therefore it seems reasonable to assume for planning

²⁵ U.S. Census 2000.

purposes that on an average, 5 dwelling units per year will be added in the town over the planning period.

Based on existing information, there are approximately 443 single/two-family residential units in the town²⁶ that occupied approximately 510 acres²⁷. As a result, the average size of a residential parcel in the Town of Aurora is approximately 1.2 acres. Given that residential land use may be based on the developed portion of a residential parcel of land not in a subdivision, it can be assumed that the actual size of a residential parcel may be higher. Since the minimum lot size for a residential parcel is one acre in a general agricultural zone²⁸ and given that the town has not designated another value, for the purpose of this planning effort, it is assumed that the average lot size of a future residential parcel will be in the range of one to five acres. This means that the Town of Aurora would likely experience an increase of about 125 to 625 acres of new residential growth. The information shown in Table 8-7 is based on an average lot size of 3 acres or an increase of 375 acres of residential development over the planning period. Per the future land use map, the town has target areas near Auroraville (section 6) and the City of Berlin (section 33, 35 and 36) for small lot residential development. It is also anticipated that infill development will occur within platted subdivisions that have not been fully developed. The remainder of the town is expected to experience scattered residential development.

The Town targeted one area for future commercial and light industrial development. Due to its location, the area near the intersection of STH's 21 and 49 has been experiencing commercial and light industrial growth. Data from the DOR indicates that commercial growth increased by 76 percent in the town between 1990 and 2000. According to the committee, part of this increase was due to a reclassification of a parcel of land. To predict the amount of commercial and light industrial land use that may occur in the Town during the planning period it was assumed that commercial/industrial growth would somewhat mirror population growth. Therefore as population increases, the amount of commercial growth would also increase. Currently there are 77 acres of land devoted to commercial/industrial uses (Table 8-2). For purposes of this planning effort it is assumed that an additional 30 acres of commercial and light industrial development will occur in the town. While the town has targeted this type of growth at the intersection of STH 21 and STH 49, it is reasonable to assume that commercial growth may also occur near the City of Berlin.

Growth within the Town of Aurora will generally occur in areas where agriculture is the current land use. Therefore it is assumed that agricultural acreage will continue to decrease in the town (Table 8-7).

Table 8.7. Town of Aurora Land Use Projections

Future Land Use Acreages	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Residential S.F. ¹	510	585	660	735	810	885
Commercial ²	77	83	89	95	101	107
Agricultural	9,041	8,972	8,903	8,834	8,765	8,696

¹Assumed 1 to 5 acres per dwelling unit per year. Table reflects 3 acres per dwelling unit per year or average.

²Includes Industrial

²⁶ U.S. Census 2000 plus DOR net building data.

²⁷ ECWRPC existing land use 2006.

²⁸ Waushara County Zoning Ordinance.

Town of Bloomfield

The Town of Bloomfield had a population of 1,018 persons in 2000. There were 455 housing units in the town that were divided between single family detached (414), two-family (13), and mobile homes (28). The residents of the town comprised a total of 392 individual households. Based on ECWRPC projections, the population will increase by seven (7) individuals by 2025; there will be an estimated 454 individual households. Although population levels will remain stable, the average household size is expected to decrease. This will result in an increased need for additional housing units. Assuming a constant vacancy rate of 4.2 percent (units that are available for rent and sale) and a constant seasonal percentage of 11.6 percent, this indicates 539 housing units are estimated to be inhabited in 2025. Since there are no multi-family units and the town does not wish to promote this type of development, it is assumed all new units will be single family dwellings. This indicates 84 new single family houses are anticipated to be constructed by 2025. This averages to about 4.4 new homes per year.

Past building permit data indicates that housing development has occurred at a slightly higher rate. An average of 6 new single-family homes has been constructed each year since 1990. If past construction trends remain constant, 114 new homes would be anticipated over the course of the plan.

Several factors make housing predictions problematic. First, many respondents in the citizen questionnaire indicated they are planning on building new homes on their seasonal properties in Bloomfield within the next ten years. Other areas within Waushara County have incurred a net increase in population due to the in-migration of retiring "baby-boomers." Comprehensive plan committee members felt this was occurring in Bloomfield. Although these trends and ECWRPC population projection suggest there will be an increase in the town's population, recent news stories indicated that there may be a decrease in the rate of house sales within the region.²⁹

Slight modifications were made to ECWRPC population modeling scenarios and past building trends to complete housing projections. The planning committee developed a consensus that it was necessary to acknowledge that growth rates will most likely remain constant or decrease over the planning period. Thus, the committee agreed that it was reasonable to assume five (5) new homes would be constructed each year, or a total of 95 new homes will be constructed by 2025. To facilitate the calculation of the required five-year projections, this figure was rounded to 100 new homes.

Two primary areas were targeted for development in the town: the North Lake Poygan Sanitary District (NLPSD) surrounding the Tustin area and the unincorporated community of West Bloomfield. These rural communities serve as town centers and have existing infrastructure which can readily accommodate new development. Several subdivisions have also been platted along Berkans Drive, 37th Avenue, and other areas. Although it is anticipated that scattered residential development will continue throughout the Town, infill development within platted subdivisions is preferred and will be highly encouraged. To further protect the rural character of the Town of Bloomfield, conservation subdivisions will be promoted as an alternative to allow new residential development while preserving the open space and natural areas which town residents highly value.

²⁹ Wisconsin Realtors Association. 2006. *Wisconsin Home Sales Moderate But Outperform Nation and Region*. http://www.wra.org/online_pubs/press_releases/2006/pr0806.htm.

Specific lot sizes have been recommended for each of the targeted areas. Compact lot development was recommended in areas currently serviced by the sanitary district and areas immediately adjacent to Tustin. Since this area is currently zoned RS-10, lots should not exceed 10,000 square feet in the sanitary district. New residential development north of CTH A and west of STH 49 has an average lot size of 5 acres in area; it is anticipated this trend will continue (See overlay on Figure 8-3.) Residential development elsewhere in the Town, including West Bloomfield, should have a minimum lot size of one (1) acre and a maximum lot size of two (2) acres. This range allows adequate area for individual on-site sewage disposal systems while retaining the rural character of the town. Where feasible, landowners should maintain their properties in natural vegetation to retain the natural beauty of the town and to improve stormwater filtration.

Land use projections were calculated assuming development would be directed towards the NLPSD. Ideally, the town would like at least one-quarter of all new home construction to occur with the sanitary district. Residential development outside the sanitary district was assumed to be evenly distributed among the remaining areas. Utilizing these and previously discussed parameters for residential intensities, an additional 250 acres are expected to be for allocated single-family homes. In standard residential developments, approximately 25 percent of the gross land area will be needed to construct streets, stormwater management facilities, and other infrastructure required by current and future legislation. It is anticipated that 326 acres are necessary for future residential growth (Table 8-8). While this is an estimate, actual development will depend on land and housing availability and affordability; the local and state economies; and other factors. It must be taken into consideration that:

- It is not the intent of the plan to see an entire area within the specified zones to develop. Instead, the specified use shall be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of the development; and
- Some of the land would hinder development based on soil suitability, adjacent natural resources, conflicting land uses, or other factors.

To calculate commercial land use projections, the current ratio of residential acreage was compared to commercial land use acreage (15.7 acres) based on the current land use inventory. This ratio (25:1) was held constant over the planning period. Based on this methodology, the Town of Bloomfield is anticipated to develop approximately 13 acres. In order to account for the increased impervious surfaces of commercial areas, this amount was doubled to 26 acres to facilitate on-site infiltration and other innovative stormwater management strategies. The Future Land Use Map designates several areas along STH 49 and CTH HH in West Bloomfield and adjacent to Tustin for commercial development. These areas are designated as "future mixed-use residential-commercial." Additional service based commercial uses are also likely to develop in other appropriate areas such as the rural community of Metz. Home-based businesses will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Infill development and mixed use development will be essential in the future vitality of the Town. Infill development stresses construction techniques which renovate and revitalize existing structures or building on vacant properties within an existing community. There are several abandoned commercial and industrial properties within the Town that would be ideal for future infill. Furthermore, a variety of commercial and residential uses are sought within the unincorporated communities of Bloomfield. A primary benefit of mixed use development is the

option it provides in terms of access and transportation to a variety of destinations and services. The proximity of residential development and commercial establishments allow residents living nearby to walk to various businesses. Families can also benefit from mixed use development by being able to ride their bicycles to local parks.

Industrial lands are projected in the same manner as the commercial lands. According to the 2005 land use inventory, the current ratio of residential acreage to industrial acreage is 118:1. After additional land is factored in for stormwater management purposes, it is anticipated the town will develop three (6) acres for industrial uses. Since this is a small amount of land, this will most likely occur in one development. Therefore, five year projections were not completed for industrial uses.

The Town of Bloomfield does not see itself as being a community that would attract large industries; thus, industrial development will be directed primarily to the existing industrial parks in the City of Weyauwega, Village of Redgranite, or other nearby communities. These areas contain adequate public facilities and services for more intensive industrial uses. However, areas designated as commercial may be considered for future light industrial developments. If light industrial uses are allowed to develop in the Town of Bloomfield, they shall fit the character of the town and be environmentally friendly.

Table 8.8. Town of Bloomfield Land Use Projections

Future Land Use Projections	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
S.F. Residential	394	476	557	639	720
Commercial	16	23	29	36	42
Industrial	3	3	3	9	9
Agricultural	9,811	9,730	9,648	9,567	9,485

Agricultural lands are found throughout the Town of Bloomfield. Large concentrations are found west of STH 49 and in the southeast corner of the town. It is the town's intention to preserve as much of these remaining farmlands as possible over the next 20 years. Wherever feasible, the town would like to preserve large tracts of the most productive farmland for future agricultural production. As development pressures continue to grow, a portion of the lands currently being used for agricultural purposes may be developed over the planning period. New residential uses near existing agricultural operations should be set back and adequately buffered from the farms to minimize potential land use conflicts and serve as a buffer area.

Agricultural projections were made assuming that all new residential development would convert existing agricultural land into new housing. Although this may not be the case, it presents the "worst case scenario." Thus, it is anticipated there will be a net loss of 208 acres of agricultural land during the planning period.

The Town of Bloomfield considered the possibility that some farmers may wish to expand existing agricultural feeding operations or begin new developments which may be regulated as a concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO). CAFOs are farms which care for 1,000 animal units or more. (See Natural Resources Element for more information.) To date, only two farmers may consider expanding their operations to meet CAFO parameters. For this reason, the Town of Bloomfield has chosen to allow CAFOs in all areas zoned for agricultural uses. The

Plan Commission, Town Board, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and other appropriate agencies will collaborate to properly site CAFOs if the need arises.

The Town of Bloomfield currently exceeds national standards for recreational facilities. Pony Creek Park, the West Bloomfield Fire Department Park, and the public boat ramp in Tustin provide a diversity of recreational opportunities. The town also plans to build a small park adjacent to the proposed town hall. This will increase the availability of active recreational activities to residents on both sides of the town. Other future recreational facility expansions such as a swimming beach in Tustin can also be explored as the need and demand occur.

The overall intent of plan is to direct specific development types to appropriate areas within the town. Areas designated for future residential, commercial, and mixed-use development on the Future Land Use Map actually exceed the overall anticipated acreage requirements for each development type. This allows increased flexibility for future development location. First, the plan conveys the conceptual ideas rather than site-specific designation. Second, environmental limitations to development such as wetlands and high groundwater are quite common in Bloomfield. Allocating extra resources will allow new development to occur without jeopardizing the pristine quality of the natural resource base.

Land Use Issues and Conflicts

For the most part, the communities within the Group F cluster chose to meet independently to discuss a majority of the issues within the comprehensive plan. In order to avoid future land use conflicts, neighboring towns should establish a communication process to determine the potential effects of new developments within 0.5 mile of their common border. By doing so, the impacts of the development will be more likely to be minimized.

Future conflicts with the Town of Poy Sippi may be minimal, as their committee has also stressed the importance of in-fill development within the unincorporated village centers of Poy Sippi and Borth. Town officials and planning commission members from both Bloomfield and Poy Sippi should continue to effectively communicate to avoid conflicts.

Bloomfield Town officials and the planning commission will want to provide public comment to the towns of Lind and Fremont (Waupaca County) during their ongoing comprehensive planning process which is currently underway. Likewise, public comments will be necessary when the Town of Saxeville and Town of Wolf River (Winnebago County) begin their planning processes.

The North Poygan Sanitary District serves both the towns of Bloomfield and Wolf River. Potential land use conflicts may arise as new development occurs within the sanitary district. Town officials and sanitary district employees will need to collaborate to ensure that the overall density of development within both towns is consistent with the overall land use visions for both towns. In addition, development will need to be monitored to ensure that the capacity on the existing sanitary sewer system is not exceeded.

~~The City of Berlin exercises exterritorial jurisdiction within 1.5 miles of its borders. Sections 32 to 36 in the Town of Aurora as well as portions of the Town of Berlin fall within the Exterritorial Zoning Area (ETZA). A joint committee made up of representatives from the towns of Aurora and Berlin and the City of Berlin approve or disapprove of any zoning changes within this area.~~

~~This insures that orderly development is occurring in this area and that all communities affected have input. To assure that land use issues and conflicts are minimal in other areas of the town, the Town of Aurora should strive to monitor development within 0.5 miles of its borders as well as establish an effective method of communication with all of its neighbors.~~

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Natural resource preservation and development may be in conflict with each other. High quality wetlands, floodplains, and other features comprise the natural resource base for the towns. Increased development near these resources could lead to displacement of wildlife; degradation of surface and groundwater; and loss of forest, farmland and other open lands and resources.

Incompatibilities may arise between adjacent land uses as development continues. Future land use maps designate specific areas for various uses. To minimize these conflicts, other land use controls such as setbacks, screening, and buffering should be utilized to limit potential conflicts. Many of these controls are detailed within the respective zoning ordinances. Any subdivision that is approved should be designed in a manner that preserves the rural character of the area while enhancing the natural resource base.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PLAN ELEMENTS

Land use cannot be considered in isolation from other elements. Economic development; housing; transportation; community and public facilities; and agricultural, natural and cultural resources all interact with one another. A vibrant economy brings people to the area in search of jobs and housing. Additional jobs may require the construction of more businesses, while additional people may demand other housing and services. Infrastructure such as roads and sewer and water extensions may be needed to serve these areas and people. This development may impact existing farm lands, forest areas, and other natural features.

Economic Development

Commercial and industrial land uses should be located in areas that are compatible with adjacent land uses, minimize environmental impacts, and utilize existing infrastructure. Additionally, industrial and concentrated commercial land uses should be situated in areas, if possible, where public sanitary sewer and water are available. While public sewer is not available in the Town of Aurora, commercial and light industrial uses should be concentrated near similar land uses. This would include the areas near the STH 21 and STH 49 intersection and the City of Berlin.

Emphasizing the vitality of Tustin and West Bloomfield, incorporating historic elements of the region, and directing unique businesses to these areas are important to the economic vitality of the communities. Industrial parks with available land and expansion capacity for commercial and industrial development are located in nearby communities. Although the towns of Bloomfield and Aurora may not garner direct tax benefits from new industrial development, town residents will benefit from the creation of good paying jobs.

Housing

It is critical that an adequate supply of reasonably priced land be available for residential development. The amount of land that is required depends on the density, design, and

placement of development. Residential development should be placed to minimize environmental impacts and utilize existing infrastructure. Scattered residential development increases the cost to provide public services such as fire, police and emergency protection; consumes and fractures large tracts of agricultural and forested areas; and increases conflicts between agricultural and residential uses.

Demand for property with access to natural resources has driven up land values and the cost of housing in the area. New residential development may not be affordable to residents who depend on the area for jobs. The provision of a mix of residential units must be available for all income ranges. Affordable housing including smaller homes on smaller lots and reasonably priced rental properties must be provided for individuals on low or fixed incomes. These areas should be located within walking distance of schools, stores, and other services.

Transportation

A well planned transportation system provides access to housing, schools, work and through traffic. As part of this transportation system, bike and pedestrian facilities should be expanded in existing areas to provide safe access to schools and business. When new subdivisions or roads are built or existing roads are reconstructed, pedestrian and bike access should be incorporated into these new designs.

~~Communities should carefully consider the creation of a system of recreational trails for both non-motorized and motorized traffic. Bicycling and pedestrian trails provide alternative transportation methods for local residents and potential tourist attractions. A year-round trail system for ATVs will also increase recreational opportunities for local residents and tourists alike.~~

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Utilities and Community Facilities

New development should occur in proximity to existing infrastructure. Unsewered development should not be allowed to occur in areas that can be cost effectively and readily served by public sewer. Areas within and near Tustin should be served by public sewer if it is readily available. In rural areas, scattered residential development increases the cost or makes costs prohibitive for services such as fire, police and emergency protection and public transportation (school bus and elderly/disabled). The road network should provide easy access to all areas as valuable time is lost when emergency vehicles must travel on winding local roads.

Agricultural Resources

Agriculture not only supports the economy of the county, but also defines the rural character that residents of the area value. The county is experiencing a decrease in the number of farming operations as farmland is converted to other uses. Farmland areas are being fragmented by scattered residential development which often results in agriculture operational conflicts and limits farm expansion for farmers who wish to remain in farming.

Natural Resources

An abundance of natural resources including Lake Poygan, Willow Creek, the Fox River, streams, woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitat, agricultural land and other open spaces can be

found in the area. People who visit and live in the area value these resources. Increased development can adversely affect these very resources that drew people to the area and caused them to remain. New development should be directed away from sensitive environmental areas including floodplains and wetlands. Care should be taken to minimize the effects of new construction on the existing environment by strictly enforcing erosion control practices. Older septic systems should be inspected regularly to minimize the consequences of failing systems on water quality.

Cultural Resources

The historical past of the area helps to define the present. Care should be taken to preserve, protect, and enhance the cultural resources, historic areas, and buildings that remain. New development should be incorporated into existing development so that it enhances the historic components that remain. The downtown areas of Tustin, West Bloomfield and Auroraville could be developed to enhance the historical significance of the area.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Land use decisions that are made within one municipality often affect the decisions and land use of another. For example, the development of a heavy industrial activity near the border of one community has the potential to affect the land use, natural resources and economy of an adjacent community. In this example, a residential use may not be compatible with the heavy industrial use, the industry may pollute a stream that flows through another community, or the business may purchase raw products or supplies from a business in an adjacent community. To minimize conflicts, communities should solicit input and find an effective form of communication with neighboring communities and residents.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Regional, County and Local Policies

Zoning Ordinances

The Wisconsin enabling legislation requires that zoning ordinances must be reviewed and modified if necessary to be consistent with a community's comprehensive plan.

Local municipalities and counties can enact wind energy zoning ordinances to proactively plan for siting future wind energy projects.³⁰ Wind energy zoning ordinances can establish setbacks from property lines, roads, communication and electricity transmission systems, and residential structures. Additionally, setbacks can be established for undeveloped residential properties. Although noise level effects may be difficult to determine due to differences between individuals, it is possible to establish maximum allowable decibel levels at residential dwellings and specific public facility sites. Height restrictions can be placed on individual turbines. Height restrictions must be used cautiously since a restriction could lead to an increased number of turbines and decreased land use efficiencies. Several safety features can be incorporated into a zoning ordinance. For example, restrictions can be placed controlling the accessibility (lockable, non-climbable towers), electrical connection systems, and appropriate warning signage

³⁰ *Wisconsin State Statutes 66.0401.*

installation to cite a few examples. Ordinances can also include specific plans for site reclamation if a turbine is abandoned or its use is discontinued.

Other zoning tools can also be utilized to limit the number of potential sites for wind energy facilities. Extra-territorial airport zoning can restrict the maximum height of structures to a distance of three miles from a public airport facility. In addition, overlay zoning can be utilized to further protect significant natural or cultural resources by limiting the conditional uses within a specific area.

County Policies

County Zoning. The Waushara County Code of Ordinances regulates private on-site wastewater treatment systems, land divisions and land uses. A few of the chapters that relate to land use are summarized below.

Waushara County Utilities Ordinance is contained within Chapter 54 of the Waushara County Code of Ordinances. This ordinance regulates all private on-site wastewater treatment systems within the county. Although this ordinance does not directly determine land uses, it influences the location of future development according to soil suitability.

Waushara County's Subdivision Ordinance is contained in Chapter 42 of the Waushara County Code of Ordinances. The ordinance facilitates division of larger parcels of land into smaller parcels of land. Land divisions create less than three lots of 15 acres or less. Land divisions can be classified as either major or minor subdivisions. A major subdivision creates five or more lots which are each 5 acres or less in area by successive divisions within a 10-year period. A minor subdivision contains three or more lots that are 15 acres or less in area by successive divisions within a 10-year period. The ordinance also contains design standards for streets, setbacks, utility easements, stormwater management techniques, and erosion control.

The **Floodplain Zoning Ordinance** is contained within Chapter 18 of the Waushara County Code of Ordinances. The purpose of the floodplain ordinance is to protect life, health, and property; to minimize the costs associated with flood control projects; and to minimize the costs associated with relief and reconstruction efforts. The ordinance regulates residential uses, storage of hazardous materials, sewage disposal, wells for drinking water, and uses mentioned in NR 110.

The **Shoreland Zoning Ordinance** is contained within Chapter 58 of the Waushara County Code of Ordinances. Shorelands are defined as unincorporated areas which are: 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water elevation mark of navigable lakes, ponds, or flowages; or 300 feet from the ordinary high water elevation mark of navigable rivers or streams. If the landward side of the floodplain exceeds either of these two measurements, this is used as the zoning standard. This ordinance controls the lot size, building setbacks, landfills, agricultural uses, alteration of surface vegetation, sewage disposal, filling, grading, lagooning, and other uses which may be detrimental to this area.

Chapter 58 also addresses **wind energy generation facilities**.³¹ The existing ordinance permits wind energy facilities in areas that have been zoned for either general agricultural (A-G) or forestry (O-F) uses. As such, the landscape within these areas must be dominated by

³¹ WCZLC. 2006. *Code of Ordinances: Waushara County, Wisconsin 58.236 (20)*.

agricultural practices or woodlots. Several setbacks, safety restrictions, and ground clearance requirements have been established. The County and local municipalities may wish to collaborate to designate specific sites appropriate for future wind energy facilities.

Farmland Preservation Plan. Waushara County adopted the county Farmland Preservation Plan on June 9, 1981.³² The goal of the plan is to preserve productive and potentially productive agricultural land, forest land, and environmentally sensitive areas while providing other areas for well planned growth in other appropriate areas of the county. Agriculturally productive areas are defined as existing farms consisting of a minimum of 35 contiguous acres of productive farmland. This plan allows farmers in preservation areas to sign agreements on a voluntary basis under the state's Farmland Preservation Act for tax credits.

Pine River/Willow Creek/Poygan South Priority Watershed Plan. The Pine River/Willow Creek/Poygan South Priority Watershed was selected as a priority watershed in 1995.³³ The watershed drains 308 square miles in Waushara and Winnebago Counties. Both waterways are clear, hard water streams that drain the southern two-thirds of Waushara County. The local soils, geology, and other physical resources present in the watershed are highly susceptible to groundwater and surface water contamination from poor land use practices. The high occurrence of agricultural uses exacerbates this vulnerability. The overall goal of the High Priority Watershed program is to reduce sedimentation and nutrient loading to local water resources. The project will end in 2009. In 1997, the Pine River/Willow Creek/Poygan South Priority Watershed Plan was adopted to protect these watersheds.

Land and Water Resource Management (LWRM) Plan. The Waushara County LWRM plan was written in 1999.³⁴ In 2005, it was revised in response to a legislative call to redesign Wisconsin's programs to reduce pollution from unknown sources. The revised plan was adopted in February 2006. The plan identifies long term goals and implementation strategies to reduce non-point source pollution into rivers, streams, and lakes in Waushara County. The four goals that were identified include: 1.) Reduce soil erosion and continue to protect natural resources; 2.) protect and enhance in-stream, riparian, wetland and upland habitat; 3.) protect surface waters from construction site erosion control & non-metallic mining; and 4.) implement the animal waste prohibition.

Local Policies

~~**City of Berlin Zoning.** The City of Berlin holds extraterritorial zoning rights that extend into the Town of Aurora. While the City of Berlin may establish extraterritorial zoning up to a mile and a half from the corporate boundary of the city, the City and Town have elected to only include sections 32, 33, 34, and 35 in the extraterritorial area (ETZA) at this time. The zoning regulates land use and land divisions within the ETZA that are similar but unique from the zoning within the city boundary. ETZA zoning ordinances are contained within the City of Berlin Zoning Ordinance.~~

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³² WCZLC. 1980. *Waushara County Farmland Preservation Plan*. http://www.co.waushara.wi.us/more_lcd.htm.

³³ WDNR. 1995. *Pine River and Willow Creek Watershed*. <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/gmu/wolf/surfacewaterfiles/watersheds/wr02.htm>.

³⁴ WCZLC. 2005. *Waushara County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*. http://www.co.waushara.wi.us/more_lcd.htm.

Official Map. An official map is intended to implement a master plan for a city, village, or town. The master plan helps direct development by designating areas for streets, highways, parkways, floodplains, and other pertinent land uses. Official maps direct development away from sensitive areas which are designated for future public use. Towns of Aurora and Bloomfield currently do not have an official map and may want to adopt one as part of this planning effort. The Waushara County parcel map may serve as a basis for their official map.

Existing Comprehensive/Land Management Plans. This is the first planning effort for the towns of Bloomfield and Aurora. Several adjacent towns in Waushara County have already adopted land management plans (Town of Poy Sippi, 2002; Town of Leon, 2002). The Town of Saxeville prepared a land management plan in 2001, but has not formally adopted the plan. The Town of Poy Sippi is currently updating its land management plan to make it compliant with *Wisconsin State Statutes* 66.1001. To date, the Town of Warren has not been involved with land use planning. The towns of Fremont and Lind (Waupaca County) are currently preparing comprehensive plans. The Town of Wolf River (Winnebago County) adopted a land management plan in 1995; to date the town has not begun its comprehensive planning process. The towns of Poygan and Rushford (Winnebago County) are currently preparing comprehensive plans, while the Town of Nepeuskun has not begun this process. Within Green Lake County, the City of Berlin (2003) and the towns of Berlin (2002), Seneca (2003) and the County (2003) have adopted Comprehensive Plans. Winnebago County has completed a county-wide plan.

Federal, State and Regional Programs

State of Wisconsin

Land and Water Resource Management Planning Program (LWRM). The land and water resource management planning program (LWRM) was established in 1997 by Wisconsin Act 27 and further developed by Wisconsin Act 9 in 1999.³⁵ Although both Acts are designed to reduce non-point pollution, Wisconsin Act 27 regulates rural and agricultural sources while Wisconsin Act 9 regulates urban sources.³⁶ Counties are required to develop and periodically revise LWRM plans. Citizens and professionals in each county identify local needs and priorities in regards to conservation needs through watershed based planning. All LWRM plans must be approved by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection.

Wisconsin Act 204. Recent blackouts and other incidents throughout the United States have raised concerns regarding both the supply of energy and the adequacy of the transmission grid. Wisconsin Act 204 mandates that a portion of electricity generation facilities be from renewable resources. To ensure that the renewable energy goals set forth in Wisconsin Act 204 are not unduly hindered, the State passed additional legislation restricting the ability of local governments to prohibit or curtail the development of wind and solar energy systems.³⁷ Municipalities can only impose restrictions on the construction and operation of wind turbines to protect public health and safety. Furthermore, communities cannot impose regulations which increase construction/operation costs, decrease the efficiency of wind generation systems, or specifically prohibit installation of alternate energy systems.

³⁵ Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau. 1997. *Budget Brief 97-6*.

³⁶ Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau. 2000. *Budget Brief 00-7*.

³⁷ Wisconsin Statutes 66.0401

Although traditional approaches such as coal and natural gas are still utilized, other options are being explored that include renewable resources. Under this mandate, other sources of energy such as wind are currently being proposed at several locations throughout Wisconsin. While there is an extensive review process for the placement of large electrical generation facilities, smaller facilities, such as wind turbines, often fall below the size limitation and bypass this review process. Thus, many communities find themselves unprepared to handle future wind turbine proposals.