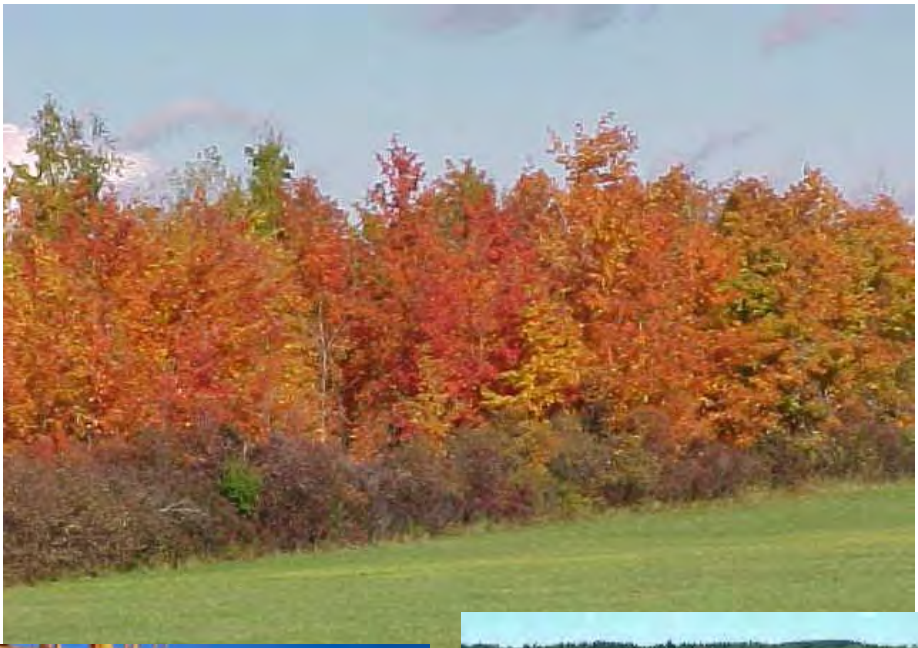
Local Assistance Project No. 113

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin

20-Year Comprehensive Plan

May 2003



Prepared by:
Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

TOWN OF HOW
OCONTO COUNTY, WISCONSIN

CHAIR:	Lawrence Buhrandt	
CLERK:	Mary Woods	
SUPERVISOR:	David Hischke	
	James Boettcher	
TREASURER:	Norman Gipp	
PLAN COMMITTEE:	Lawrence Buhrandt	Chairperson
	William Bartz, Jr.	
	Adelaide Boettcher	
	Dennis Gerndt	
	Tim Reed	

TOWN OF HOW
20 YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Principal Authors:

Brandon G. Robinson, Community Assistance Planner
Dale W. Mohr, Community Assistance Planner

Prepared by:
Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission
Suite 211, Old Fort Square
211 North Broadway
Green Bay, WI 54303
(920) 448-2820

The preparation of this document was financed through contract #56074 between the Town of How and the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission with financial assistance from the Department of Administration Office of Land Information Services. Portions of the transportation element of this plan were underwritten by the Commission's Regional Transportation Planning Program which is funded by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and portions of the economic element were underwritten by the Commission's Economic Development Program which is funded by the Economic Development Administration.

Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

Suite 211, Old Fort Square, 211 N. Broadway, Green Bay, WI 54303-2757
tele: 1 (920) 448-2820 fax: 1 (920) 448-2823 www.baylakerpc.org
Martin W. Holden, Executive Director

The regional planning commission for Northeastern Wisconsin serving communities within the counties of:

FLORENCE · MARINETTE · OCONTO · BROWN · DOOR · KEWAUNEE · MANITOWOC · SHEBOYGAN

June 25, 2003

Mr. Lawrence Buhrandt
Chairperson of the Town of How Town Board
and Members of the Town Board

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission is pleased to present this Comprehensive Plan, entitled; *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan* to the Town Board. This Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Bay-Lake Commission staff in accordance with contract #56074 and adopted by the How Town Board on May 10, 2003, under Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 (Smart Growth).

This Comprehensive Plan represents the town's commitment to the long-term planning needs of the community. The Comprehensive Plan also provides the town with a framework for preserving its prime agricultural lands and many natural resources, while allowing for controlled orderly development.

In addition to setting forth a land use plan and supporting plan implementation devices, this document presents pertinent information on many factors affecting land use development in the town of How, including existing and probable future residential population levels, the natural resource base, existing land uses, intergovernmental cooperation and existing local plan implementation devices.

The delivery of this plan constitutes the completion of the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission's obligation regarding the town's request for assistance in developing the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission staff stands ready to assist the town in presenting the information contained in this report and in implementing, over time, the plan set forth herein.

Sincerely,

Martin W. Holden

Martin W. Holden
Executive Director

RESOLUTION NO. 1

ADOPTION OF THE TOWN OF HOW
20 YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Statutes 62.23 authorizes the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the Town;

AND WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan has been prepared by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission which contains proposals, programs, descriptions, maps, and explanatory matter regarding natural resources, population, housing, economic development, transportation, land use, public facilities, outdoor recreation, and general plan design (land use plan) for the 20 year planning period;

AND WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan has been prepared in accordance with the elements of a plan as defined in Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 (Smart Growth);

AND WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan has been drafted and reviewed by the Town of How Plan Committee;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of How Plan Committee hereby recommends to the How Town Board that a Comprehensive Plan entitled: *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan,* be adopted by the Town Board pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes Sections 62.23 and 66.1001(4).

Dated this 8 day of april, 2003.

Resolution introduced and adoption moved by adelaide Boettcher

Motion for adoption seconded by Bill Barty Jr.

Voting Aye: 3 Nay: 0

APPROVED:

Lawrence Buhrandt

How Plan Committee Chair

ATTEST:

Adelaide Boettcher

How Plan Committee Secretary

TOWN OF HOW
ORDINANCE NO. 1-2003

An Ordinance to Adopt a Comprehensive Plan Pursuant to
Wisconsin Statutes Section 66.1001 (Smart Growth)

WHEREAS, in August 2001 the Town Board for the Town of How approved a contract with Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the Town of How under the guidelines of Section 66.1001 Wisconsin Statutes; and,

WHEREAS, the project included a public participation plan in every stage of the process for preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for the Town of How, which addressed provisions for wide distribution of the proposed elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and provided an opportunity for written comments to be received from the public and for the Town to respond to such comments; and,

WHEREAS, on April 8, 2003, the Town of How Plan Committee recommended to the Town Board adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by resolution, which vote is recorded in the official minutes of the Plan Committee; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of How Town Board held a public hearing on May 10, 2003, which was preceded by a Class 1 Notice provided as described in Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 985, that was published at least 30 days before the hearing was held, and the notice included all of the following information:

1. The date, time and location of the hearing;
2. A summary of the proposed Comprehensive Plan;
3. The name of the individual employed by the Town of How who may provide additional information regarding the proposed ordinance;
4. Information relating to where and when the proposed Comprehensive Plan could be inspected before the hearing, and how a copy of the Plan could be obtained; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of How, having carefully reviewed the recommendation of the Town Plan Committee, having determined that all procedural requirements and notice have been satisfied, having given the matter due consideration, including consideration of the Plan elements relating to issues and opportunities, agricultural, natural and cultural resources, housing, economic development, transportation, utilities and community facilities, intergovernmental cooperation, land use and implementation, and having determined that the Comprehensive Plan will serve the general purposes of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the Town of How which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote the public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Town Board of the Town of How, Oconto County, Wisconsin, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: The Comprehensive Plan recommended by the Town of How Plan Committee to the Town of How Town Board, attached hereto as Exhibit A, is hereby adopted.

Section 2: The Town Clerk is directed to file a copy of the attached Comprehensive Plan for the Town of How with all the following entities:

1. Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the Town of How;
2. The Clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the Town of How;
3. The Wisconsin Land Council;
4. The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission;
5. The public library that serves the area in which the Town of How unit is located.

Section 3: SEVERABILITY Several sections of this ordinance are declared to be severable. If any section or portion thereof shall be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, unlawful, or unenforceable, such decision shall only apply to the specific section or portion thereof directly specified in the decision, and shall not affect the validity of any other provisions, sections or portions thereof of the ordinance. The remainder of the ordinance shall remain in full force and effect. Any other ordinances whose terms are in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed as to those terms in conflict.

Section 4: EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance will take effect immediately upon passage and publication as provided by law

Adopted this 10 day of May 2003, by a majority vote of the members of the Town Board of the Town of How.

Lawrence Buhrandt
Lawrence Buhrandt, Town Board Chairperson

Attest: Mary Hope Woods
Mary Woods, Town Clerk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 - Issues and Opportunities Element 1-1
INTRODUCTION 1-1
CONTRACT WITH BAY-LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION 1-2
DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA 1-2
COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS 1-2
PLAN CONTENTS 1-2
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION 1-3
Written Public Participation Procedures 1-3
Public Meetings 1-3
Community Survey Results 1-3
VISION STATEMENT 1-4
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, & PROGRAMS 1-4
BACKGROUND INFORMATION-SUMMARY 1-6
Existing Conditions 1-6
Forecasts 1-7

Chapter 2 - Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources 2-1
INTRODUCTION 2-1
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS 2-1
NATURAL RESOURCES STRATEGY 2-1
GEOLOGY 2-4
CLIMATE 2-5
SOIL LIMITATIONS 2-5
General Soils Description 2-5
Basements 2-6
Prime Agricultural Lands 2-6
TOPOGRAPHY 2-7
WATER RESOURCES 2-7
Watersheds 2-7
Lakes 2-7
Rivers and Streams 2-8
Groundwater 2-8
Floodplains 2-8
Wetlands 2-9
WOODLANDS 2-10
AIR QUALITY ISSUES 2-10
WILDLIFE HABITAT 2-10
THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES 2-10
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES 2-10
SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS 2-10
ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS AND ISOLATED NATURAL AREAS 2-11
HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES 2-11
METALLIC AND NON-METALLIC MINING RESOURCES 2-12

COMMUNITY DESIGN....2-12

Chapter 3 - Housing and Population....3-1
INTRODUCTION....3-1
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS....3-1
HOUSING STRATEGY....3-2
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS....3-5
Historical Population Levels....3-5
Population Trends....3-5
Decade Population Pyramids....3-10
School Age, Working Age, and Retirement Age....3-11
Median Age....3-11
HOUSING INVENTORY....3-12
Total Housing Unit Levels by Decade....3-12
Historic and Projected Household Size....3-13
Housing Permits Current Decade....3-13
Projected Occupied Housing Units & Total Housing Units....3-14
Housing Projection Selection....3-15
Housing Types - Units in Structure....3-15
Housing Occupancy and Tenure....3-16
Age of Housing....3-16
Condition of Housing Stock....3-17
Household Relationship....3-17
Housing Values....3-18
Subsidized and Special Needs Housing....3-18
Housing Development Environment....3-19
ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS....3-19
Housing Programs....3-19
Housing Plan....3-22

Chapter 4 - Economic Development....4-1
INTRODUCTION....4-1
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS....4-1
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES....4-1
ECONOMIC PROGRAMS....4-4
LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS....4-6
Place of Work....4-6
Occupation....4-7
Industry....4-7
Unemployment Rate....4-8
Employment Forecast....4-9
Median Household Income....4-10
Personal Income....4-10
ECONOMIC BASE....4-11
Employment by Economic Division....4-11
Location Quotient Analysis....4-11

Threshold Analysis 4-12
STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ANALYSIS 4-12
Introduction 4-12
Physical Capabilities....4-13
Programmatic Capabilities 4-14
Financial Capabilities 4-15
Quality of Life 4-15
SITES FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT 4-16
Existing Site Inventory and Analysis....4-16
Evaluation of Environmentally Contaminated Sites: 4-16
Designation of Business and Industrial Development For: 4-16
Acreage Projections....4-17
COMMUNITY FINANCES....4-17

Chapter 5 - Transportation....5-1
INTRODUCTION 5-1
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS 5-1
TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY....5-2
TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS....5-5
INVENTORY OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES 5-9
Inter-County Bus Service (WETAP) 5-9
Air Service....5-11
Trucking 5-11
Traffic Counts 5-14
Traffic Crashes 5-16
Access Controls 5-17
EVALUATION OF CURRENT INTERNAL TRAFFIC CIRCULATION SYSTEM....5-17
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF APPLICABLE TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND PROGRAMS 5-17
Wisconsin State Highway Plan....5-17
Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan....5-18
State Airport Plans....5-18
State Railroad Plans....5-18
State, Regional and Local Bicycle Plans 5-18
FUNDING THE TOWN ROAD SYSTEM 5-19
TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS....5-19
Road Improvements....5-19
Initiate A Pavement Management Program....5-20
Employ Adequate Design Standards 5-20
Apply Traffic Considerations 5-20
Assess Special Transportation Needs....5-21

Chapter 6 - Utilities and Community Facilities....6-1
INTRODUCTION 6-1
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS 6-1
UTILITY AND COMMUNITY FACILITY STRATEGY 6-2

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES INVENTORY 6-4
How Town Board 6-4
How Comprehensive Plan Committee 6-4
UTILITIES INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS-LOCATION, USE AND CAPACITY 6-4
Electric Service....6-4
Natural Gas....6-5
Public Water System 6-5
Sanitary Sewer Service....6-5
Storm Sewer System....6-5
Solid Waste Disposal & Recycling Facilities....6-5
Telecommunications Facilities....6-6
COMMUNITY FACILITIES INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT LOCATION, USE AND CAPACITY 6-6
Municipal Building....6-6
Road and Other Maintenance 6-6
Postal Services....6-6
Cemeteries 6-7
Law Enforcement and Protection 6-7
Fire Station/Protection....6-8
Emergency Services....6-9
Library 6-9
Schools 6-10
Child Care Facilities....6-10
Health Care Facilities 6-10
Senior Care Facilities 6-11
OUTDOOR RECREATION INVENTORY 6-11
Community Owned Sites....6-11
National, State and County Facilities 6-12
Other Recreation Facilities 6-12

Chapter 7 - Intergovernmental Cooperation....7-1
INTRODUCTION....7-1
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS....7-1
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION STRATEGY 7-1
EXISTING ACTIVITIES 7-2
Adjacent Governmental Units 7-2
School District....7-3
County 7-3
Region....7-3
State 7-4
INVENTORY OF PLANS AND AGREEMENTS UNDER S. 66.0307, S. 66.0301 OR S. 66.0309 AND 66.0313 7-5
Cooperative Boundary Plan....7-5
Annexation 7-5
Extra-territorial subdivision regulation 7-5
Extra-territorial Zoning....7-6

Law Enforcement; Mutual Assistance 7-6
Intergovernmental Cooperation 7-6
Revenue Sharing; Municipal 7-6
INVENTORY OF EXISTING OR POTENTIAL CONFLICTS 7-6
PROPOSED CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS 7-7

Chapter 8 - Land Use 8-1
INTRODUCTION 8-1
LAND USE STRATEGY 8-1
INVENTORY OF EXISTING LAND USE CONTROLS 8-4
Existing Comprehensive Plans 8-4
Farmland Preservation Plan 8-4
Zoning Ordinances 8-5
Sanitary Ordinance 8-8
Subdivision Ordinance 8-8
Official Map 8-9
Erosion Control Plan 8-9
Oconto County Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinance 8-9
Shorelands 8-9
CURRENT LAND USE INVENTORY 8-10
Planning Area 8-11
Residential Land 8-11
Commercial Land 8-11
Industrial Land 8-11
Transportation 8-11
Communication/Utilities 8-11
Institutional/Governmental 8-11
Parks and Recreational 8-12
Agricultural Structures 8-12
Croplands/Pasture 8-12
LAND SUPPLY 8-12
Amount 8-12
Price 8-13
Redevelopment Opportunities 8-13
Demand 8-13
LAND USE ISSUES AND CONFLICTS 8-13
ANTICIPATED LAND USE TRENDS 8-14
DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS 8-14
Environmental and Public Utility Considerations 8-14
Planning Criteria 8-15
DESIGN YEAR LAND USE PROJECTIONS 8-17
Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections 8-17
DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS 8-19
General Plan Design Classifications 8-19
RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 8-20
Commercial Strategy 8-24

Industrial Strategy....8-25
Governmental/Institutional....8-26
Communication/Utilities....8-27
Park and Recreation....8-28
Agricultural Strategy....8-29
Forest/Open Space....8-30
Environmental Corridors....8-31
Transportation....8-31
IDENTIFIED "SMART GROWTH" AREAS....8-32
SUMMARY....8-32

Chapter 9 - Implementation....9-1
INTRODUCTION....9-1
Role of the plan....9-1
Role of the Elected Officials....9-1
Role of the Town Plan Commission....9-1
LAND USE PLANNING CONTROLS RECOMMENDATIONS....9-2
Zoning....9-2
Official Maps....9-2
Sign Regulations....9-3
Erosion and Storm Water Control Ordinances....9-3
Historic Preservation Ordinances....9-3
Design Review Ordinances....9-4
Economic Development Committee....9-4
Building/Housing Codes....9-4
Floodplain Ordinance....9-4
Sanitary Codes....9-5
Subdivision Ordinances....9-5
Lighting Controls/Ordinances....9-5
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INTERNAL CONSISTENCY....9-6
IMPLEMENTATION MILESTONES....9-6
PROCESS FOR UPDATING PLAN....9-7
ACTION PLAN....9-7

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Land Capability Classification 2-7
Table 3.1: Historical Population Levels, 1900-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas.....3-5
Table 3.2: Population Trends, 1970-2015, Town of How & Selected Areas.....3-6
Table 3.3: Estimated Seasonal Population, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas.....3-7
Table 3.4: Male and Female Distribution by Age and Sex, 1980-2000, Town of How.....3-9
Table 3.5: Population by Age Groups and Sex, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas 3-11
Table 3.6: Median Age, 1970-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas 3-11
Table 3.7: Total Housing Units, 1970-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas.....3-12
Table 3.8: Household Projections by Household Type, 1990-2015, Oconto County.....3-13
Table 3.9: Persons Per Household Projections, 1990-2020, Town of How & Selected Areas .3-13
Table 3.10: Housing Unit Additions and Deletions, 1990-1999, Town of How & Selected Areas.....3-14
Table 3.11: Units in Structure, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas 3-16
Table 3.12: Housing Occupancy and Tenure, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas 3-16
Table 3.13: Housing Units by Year Structure Built, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas ...3-17
Table 3.14: Household Type and Relationship, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas 3-17
Table 3.15: Values of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas.....3-18
Table 4.1: Place of Work, 1990 Town of How & Selected Areas.....4-6
Table 4.2: Commuting Patterns, 1994, Oconto County 4-7
Table 4.3: Employed Persons by Occupation, 2000, Town of How & Oconto County.....4-7
Table 4.4: Employed Persons by Industry Group, 2000, Town of How & Oconto County.....4-8
Table 4.5: Average Civilian Labor Force Estimates, 1991-2001, Oconto County.....4-9
Table 4.6: Median Household Income, 1989, 1997 and 1999, Town of How & Selected Areas 4-10
Table 4.7: Municipal Per Return Income, 1997-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas.....4-11
Table 4.8: Employment by Industry Group, 1990-1998, Oconto County and United States, Location Quotient Analysis 4-12
Table 4.9: Comparative Tax Appropriations, 1995-2000, Town of How 4-17
Table 4.10: Public Indebtedness, 1998-2000, Town of How 4-17
Table 5.1: Functional Classification Criteria for Rural Roads and Highways 5-13
Table 5.2: Road Function, Total Mileage and Percent of Total Road Mileage, Town of How, 2001.....5-14
Table 5.3: Annual Average Daily Traffic, Town of How, 1992, 1995, 1998, and 2001; Number Change 1998 to 2001; and, Percent Change 1998 to 2001.....5-15
Table 5.4: Uninterrupted Traffic Flow Capacities Under Ideal Conditions 5-15
Table 5.5: Vehicle Crashes, Town of How, 2000 and 2001.....5-16
Table 5.6: Intersection/Non-Intersection Crashes by Highway Jurisdiction, 2000 and 2001.....5-16
Table 6.1: ISO Fire Protection Ratings, 2000 6-9
Table 8.1: Town of How 2002 Land Use 8-10
Table 8.2: 2023 General Plan Design Acreage Calculations, Town of How. 8-33

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Historical Population Levels, 1900-2000, Town of How 3-5
Figure 3.2: Population Trends and Projections, 1970-2020, Town of How.....3-8
Figure 3.3: Population Pyramids, 1980-2000, Town of How.....3-10
Figure 3.4: Historic Housing Unit Levels, 1970-2000 - U. S. Census, Town of How.....3-12
Figure 3.5: Occupied Housing Unit Trends & Projections, 1970-2020, Town of How.....3-15
Figure 4.1: Percent Employment by Industry Group, 2000, Town of How 4-8
Figure 4.2: Unemployment Rate, 1991-2001, Oconto County.....4-9

LIST OF MAPS

Map 2.1: Location Map 2-16
Map 2.2: Planning Area.....2-17
Map 2.3: Glacial Geology.....2-18
Map 2.4: Bedrock Geology.....2-19
Map 2.5: General Soils 2-20
Map 2.6: Prime Agricultural Soils.....2-21
Map 2.7: Steep Slope.....2-22
Map 2.8: Watersheds 2-23
Map 2.9: Surface Water Features 2-24
Map 2.10: Floodplains.....2-25
Map 2.11: WDNR Wetlands 2-26
Map 2.12: Woodlands 2-27
Map 2.13: Environmental Corridors.....2-28
Map 2.14: Historic and Archeological Sites.....2-29
Map 5.1: Functional Classification of Roads 5-22
Map 5.2: Traffic Volumes 5-23
Map 8.1: Farmland Preservation 8-34
Map 8.2: Shorelands.....8-35
Map 8.3: Zoning 8-36
Map 8.4: 2002 Land Use 8-37
Map 8.5: 2023 General Plan Design.....8-38

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DETAILED LAND USE TABULATION A-1
APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS B-1
APPENDIX C: RARE SPECIES & NATURAL COMMUNITIES LIST C-1
APPENDIX D: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION WORKSHOP D-1
APPENDIX E: CONSERVATION BY DESIGN E-1
APPENDIX F: RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS F-1

Chapter 1 - ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Town of How is a mostly agrarian community, comprised of many natural amenities the residents have cherished for many decades. Though the community has few developments, an unincorporated community of Hayes lies centrally within the town as a built up location based upon past enterprises - general store, tavern, church - dairy production being the primary business. Today, Hayes has primarily residential properties along with St. John's Church being the draw for the community. The STH 32 provides a ready route to nearby Suring and Gillett. The town shares a border with the Menominee County/Menominee Indian Reservation, to include Grignon Lake.

This comprehensive plan is the initial plan for the Town of How, Oconto County, Wisconsin. The plan was prepared to meet the requirements of Wisconsin's newly created "Smart Growth" law (1999 Wisconsin Act 9) and adopted under the authority granted by Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes, which states in part that, "Beginning on January 1, 2010, any program or action of a local governmental unit that affects land use shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan."

The comprehensive plan is a policy document that provides a specific guide as to where future conservation, growth and development should occur within the community. The plan should be consulted when the town makes decisions concerning land use and other issues impacting the development of the town including:

- Municipal incorporation procedures under s. 66.0215, 66.0201 or 66.0203.
- Annexation procedures under s. 66.0217, 66.0219 or 66.0223.
- Cooperative boundary agreements entered into under s. 66.0307.
- Consolidation of territory under s. 66.0229.
- Detachment of territory under s. 66.0227.
- Municipal boundary agreements fixed by judgment under s. 66.0225.
- Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23 (6).
- Local subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or 236.46.
- Extraterritorial plat review within a city's or village's extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction, as defined in s.236.02(5).
- County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 59.69.
- City or village zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 62.23 (7).
- Town zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 60.61 or 60.62.
- An improvement of a transportation facility that is undertaken under s. 84.185.
- Agricultural preservation plans prepared or revised under subch. IV of chapter 91.
- Impact fee ordinances that are enacted or amended under s. 66.0617.
- Land acquisition for recreational lands and parks under s. 23.09 (20).
- Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231.
- Construction site erosion control and storm water management zoning under s. 59.693, 61.354 or 62.234.
- Any other ordinance, plan or regulation of a local governmental unit that relates to land use.

CONTRACT WITH BAY-LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The How Town Board entered into a contract (#56074) with the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC) to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with Wisconsin's Smart Growth law in August, 2001. A 21-month time period was established for the completion of the plan, which began September, 2001 and ended in June 2003. The plan was prepared and approved by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Town Board, and citizens of the Town of How. A copy of the Town Board's Ordinance adopting this plan appears at the beginning of this document.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

The town lies within the west central portion of Oconto County known as the "Oconto River Valley". The town consists of approximately 22,800 acres, (36 square miles) which are primarily agricultural lands with scattered woodlands. The nearest cities from the center of the town are: Gillett, seven miles southeast of the center of town, Oconto Falls, 13 miles to the east; Oconto, 23 miles to the east; Shawano, 22 miles to the southwest; Antigo, 37 miles to the northwest and the City of Green Bay, 45 miles southeast. The Village of Suring lies adjacent to the town on the east side. The Town of How contains one unincorporated community, Hayes, which is located in the north central portion of the town. Map 2.1 shows the location of the town in reference to the state and Map 2.2 shows the planning area.

COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process was essentially completed in four stages. ***Initially,*** the Comprehensive Plan Committee**,** with help from University of Wisconsin Extension mailed a community wide survey to residents to identify issues and concerns relative to land use and development within the town.

The ***second stage,*** inventory and interpretation, began with the collection of data on existing conditions within the community. The data was then analyzed to identify existing and potential problem areas. Using results from the community wide survey, as well as background data compiled during the inventory stage, the Comprehensive Plan Committee developed an overall vision statement as well as goals, objectives, policies and programs for each of the nine elements required in the comprehensive plan under "Smart Growth".

The ***third stage,*** was the development of the General Plan Design. The first two stages were combined to create a recommended land use plan to guide future conservation, growth and development within the town over the next twenty years. The preliminary General Plan Design was presented to the citizens of the community as well as nearby municipalities and government organizations for their review and comment. The comments were considered and included in the final General Plan Design map and document.

The ***fourth stage,*** established the tools necessary for implementation of the plan. Recommendations for regulatory techniques including zoning, and an action plan were established to ensure that the intent of the plan will be achieved.

PLAN CONTENTS

This comprehensive plan contains nine chapters that correspond to the nine elements required by Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes: **Chapter 1:** Issues and Opportunities Element; contains a summary of demographic information on the town, a vision statement, and overall

goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the plan; **Chapter 2:** Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element; provides goals, objectives, policies, and programs and description of the physical setting and cultural resources of the planning area; **Chapter 3:** Housing and Population Element; presents goals, objectives, policies, and programs as well as information on the demographics of the town and on future population and housing growth; **Chapter 4:** Economic Development Element; contains goals, objectives, policies, and programs and a development strategy regarding future and existing economic conditions within the town, including an inventory of the labor force and an analysis of the town's economic base; **Chapter 5:** Transportation Element; presents goals, objectives, policies, and programs and an inventory of the existing transportation system and an overview of transportation needs; **Chapter 6:** Utility and Community Facilities Element; contains goals, objectives, policies, and programs and an inventory of the town's community facilities, including schools, recreational opportunities and town utilities; **Chapter 7:** Intergovernmental Cooperation Element; contains goals, objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local governmental units; **Chapter 8:** Land Use Element; contains goals, objectives, policies, and programs, a land use inventory for the town, a projection of future land use demands, and the General Plan Design for the town; **Chapter 9:** Implementation Element; contains a strategy and short-term action plan to assist implementation efforts

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Written Public Participation Procedures

A major element of the comprehensive planning process is public participation. In accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(4), which defines "Procedures For Adopting Comprehensive Plans", the town adopted by resolution written procedures that will be followed in order to involve the public in the comprehensive planning process to the greatest extent practicable.

Public Meetings

Over a 21 month period, the Town Plan Committee met more than 14 times to review town data and growth options. In addition, the town hosted two Open Houses to present the plan's background information and future plans to the residents of the town as well as interested parties. From these meetings, the Town Plan Committee and other interested citizens developed a 20 Year General Plan Design.

Community Survey Results

In January 2001 a survey was conducted and tabulated (Appendix B). In all, residents indicated that they were satisfied with the past development of the town, wanted stricter protections of their resources, should develop a comprehensive plan, should discourage residential development near established agricultural facilities, support farmer's rights to farm, want cooperation with the Village of Suring in planning, and wanted higher use developments located closer to the Village of Suring and low density development elsewhere within the town.

VISION STATEMENT

According to Wisconsin's New Smart Growth Law, the town is required to develop a vision statement that describes what the town will be like in the next twenty years as well as a description of the policies and procedures that will lead them there.

> *"Over the past 20 years, the Town of How has remained a productive rural farming community that has experienced limited complementary growth while ensuring its natural features were preserved and protected for the enjoyment of all of its residents. New homes and small businesses are clustered near Suring or found within a village like setting around Hayes, while having spacious development elsewhere - protecting openspaces and prime soils while also keeping service costs down. Agricultural industries and home-based businesses have been continued as a viable economic option for town residents. Future developments are well buffered from active farmlands so as to minimize conflicts between uses."*
>
> *"The town is still defined by its large tracts of open spaces and agricultural lands, as well as its varied water features, trails, acres of wetlands and woodlands. How's roads are well maintained and uncluttered adding to the scenic beauty of the town. The town's "doorway" with the Village of Suring remains uncluttered, has few developments along it, is free of any billboards and has been controlled so as to reveal the "small community characteristics" of the town to any passerby - all of which has ensured preserving the rural quality of life past residents have valued."*
>
> *"How's small community way of life has been preserved through working with neighboring communities and by basing planning decisions upon the town's adopted Comprehensive Plan, supporting regulations, and public participation."*

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, & PROGRAMS

The following statements describe the town's intent regarding the overall growth and development over the next 20 years.

Goals, objectives, policies and programs each have a distinct and different purpose within the planning process:

- Goals describe desired situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long range. They represent an end to be sought, although they may never actually be fully attained.
- Objectives are measurable ends toward reaching a defined goal.
- Policies are a rule or course of action used to ensure plan implementation.
- Programs are a coordinated series of policies and actions to carry out the plan.

Goal:

The goal of the town will be to ensure consistency with that described in s.66.1001 of the Wisconsin State Statutes in order to best protect the interests of all of its residents as well as to develop the town in an orderly, cost efficient method when developing.

Objectives:

1. Adopt and maintain a 20 year comprehensive plan under s.66.1001, that reflects the needs of all current and future citizens of the town for the next 20 years.
2. Keep current the adopted 20 year comprehensive plan in order to provide for the greatest possible benefits regarding the future developments of such things as residential, commercial, industrial, and parkland development.

Policies:

1. The town should establish a Town Plan Commission that would regularly refer to the plan and would use the plan as one of the primary guides for recommendations to the Town Board regarding current and future land uses.
2. Remain informed upon the adopted town and county ordinances as they relate to the implementation of this plan.
3. Work with Oconto County to update the town's zoning map in order to be consistent with the General Plan Design map in Chapter 8 of this document, and text.
4. Utilize the Official Map ordinance to designate future road right-of-ways and any future parklands/trailways the town would like to see developed.
5. This plan should be consulted by the Town Plan Commission, Town Board, Board of Appeals/Adjustments and other units of government before making any decision regarding land use and land use policies.
6. Present the adopted 20 year comprehensive plan to neighboring municipalities and Oconto County as described within the Implementation element of this plan.
7. Encourage cooperation and communication between the town, neighboring municipalities, and county government in implementing this 20 year comprehensive plan.

Programs:

1. Hold Town Plan Commission meetings/working sessions to periodically review the adopted 20 year comprehensive plan and make amendments to accommodate changing conditions following the guidance of s.66.1001.
2. Hold community planning related education efforts/meetings with local schools, the media, and private organizations to publicize ongoing planning projects and plan implementation projects listed/identified within the comprehensive plan to gain new insight, provide for new ideas, promote support, and to educate the public.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION-SUMMARY

The following summary includes information regarding population and employment forecasts, as well as demographic trends, age distribution, education levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the town.

Existing Conditions

Demographic Trends

Since 1970, the population in the Town of How has been slowly decreasing, with the exception of a small increase in 1980. From 1970 to 1980 the population increased by 27 persons, 4.8 percent. From 1980 to 1990, the town's population decreased by 28 persons, or 4.7 percent. The neighboring Town of Maple Valley also experienced a similar decline in population for this period, but the county, the Town of Underhill and the Village of Suring had a small population increase, during this time. For the period 1990 to 2000, the Town of How declined very slightly by 0.2 percent, or one person. For this same period, the Village of Suring and the Town of Maple Valley declined in population, whereas the Town of Underhill and Oconto County grew by 26.6 percent and 15.2 percent respectively.

In 1993, the WDOA Demographic Services Center prepared population projections to the year 2015 for the communities and counties of the state, utilizing a projection formula that calculates the annual population change over three varying time spans. From this formula, the WDOA indicated that the Town of How was projected to have 530 persons in 2015. According to the most recent trends, the WDOA projections appear to be closely accurate. However, even with the accuracy of the WDOA projections, they do not project to the year 2020. Thus, alternative population projections were created by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission and can be found later within this chapter.

Age Distribution

For the last 30 years, the Town of How has had more males than females. From 1980 to 2000 there have been notable shifts in the age distribution of the population within the Town of How. In 1980, 21.7 percent of the population was under the age of 15, and 34 percent were under the age of 20. In 1980, the greatest percentage of the population was in the 35-44 age group, with most of the population being between the ages of 15 to 54. In 1990, the population shifted up, with most of the population between the ages of 25 to 59. Most of the population was within the "Prime Earning" age group of between 33 and 54. By 2000 those under the age of 20 dropped to 30.6 percent, while those between 25 and 59 continue to increase.

Education Levels

The level of education that is attained by the population of a community will often be an indicator of the type of jobs in the area and the standard of living. In 2000, the town had 208 residents with a high school diploma, 22 with an Associate Degree, two with a Graduate Degree or other profession degree, or (for those 25 or over) approximately 83 percent with a high school diploma and 6.7 percent with an Associate Degree or higher.

Income Levels

In 1989, the median household income for the Town of How was $22,054, which is greater than

the Village of Suring and the Town of Maple Valley, but less than the Town of Gillett. By 1997, the median household income for the town increased by $6,594 up to $28,648. By 1999 (reported in 2000 Census) the income is reported to have increased to $39,167. Similar increases of the median household income were also evident in the surrounding communities.

Per return income is based on income tax returns filed in the year cited to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. In 1999, the municipal per return income reported in the Town of How was $24,066, which was a 4.0 percent decrease from 1997. By comparison, the Town of Maple Valley experienced an increase of approximately 10 percent, while the Town of Gillett and the Village of Suring each increased by about 20 percent during the same time period. The Town of How had the lowest income in 1999 when compared to all other communities, including Oconto County and the State.

Employment Characteristics

The civilian labor force for Oconto County has experienced both slight increases and decreases since 1991. The unemployment rate and the number of unemployed in 1999 was the lowest it has been during the whole decade. For the period 1991 to 2001, the number of unemployed decreased 3.7 percent, and the number of employed increased by 3,000 jobs (see Table 4.5).

The greatest percentage of employment in the Town of How was within manufacturing with 32 percent. The agricultural, forestry, fishing, and hunting and mining also has high numbers of employment with 23 percent.

Forecasts

Tables, figures and additional text is provided in later chapters to aid in the explanation of the forecasting methods used below.

Population

Due to the fact that the WDOA projections do not go beyond the year 2015 to include the 2020 planning period, the Commission has prepared alternative population projections to determine an approximate growth rate for the Town of How.

Projections were found by using a ratio methodology, termed share-of-the-county, to distribute county projections to the town level. The limitations of population projections should be recognized. Population projections are not predictions, rather they extend past growth trends into the future and their reliability depends on the continuation of these past growth trends. Smaller communities are also subject to more error because even minor changes in the community can result in significant changes in population projection estimates.

According to Commission's share-of-the-county projections, the projected 2005 population for How is 556 persons. The projected 2010 population is 524 persons, the projected year 2015 population is 489, and the projected year 2020 population is 450 persons. Therefore, it is projected that the Town of How's 2000 population will decrease by 113 persons, a decline of 20.0 percent, by the year 2020. It should be noted that the town's projections are based off county projections, and BLRPC projections indicate that the county will experience a declining population, therefore making the town projections also decline. It should be noted that although the population of the town is estimated to decline, these projections are based on past trends in

which the population has been declining. Small changes in the community or the region in the future may cause significant changes to these population projections. The BLRPC share-of-the-county projections create the "Low Growth" scenario for the town.

A "High Growth" projection was developed by using the 1970 to 2000 census figures and creating a "growth trend series" to the year 2020. This method identified a projected year 2005 population of 563 persons, a projected year 2010 population of 563 persons, an estimated 2015 population of 561, and a projected year 2020 population of 559. The town's population will fluctuate very little for the next 20 years by staying about the same for 15 years and then declining, just as past trends also illustrated. According to this "High Growth" projection, the Town of How's 2000 population (563 persons) will decrease by 4 persons in the year 2020 (to 559 persons).

Housing

The total number of housing units within the Town of How (as reported by the U.S. Census) increased from 1970 to 1980, and then declined from 1990 to 2000 by 23 housing units. In 2000, there were 229 total housing units, a 32 percent increase since 1970. The adjacent Town of Underhill increased its housing units by 59 percent in the same time period from 1970 to 2000. From 1990 to 2000, the number of housing units in the town decreased by 9 percent. By comparison, the number of housing units in the Town of Maple Valley and the Village of Suring also declined for the same period. The town increased its housing units by 17 percent for the period 1980 to 1990, and 24 percent from 1970 to 1980.

It was determined by the town's Plan Committee to reflect the last ten years of housing permits within any future housing demand projection. Thus, the housing demand would best be reflective of the 346 total housing units by 2020 - an increase of 64 households. This projection was determined to be both reasonable and to best reflect the recent activity over the past 10 years, within the town. The projection of 346 total units (or the addition of 62 units) will be used for planning purposes for the next 20 years.

Employment

In 1996, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development created the Northeast Wisconsin Projections: 1992-2005, a projection for industries, occupations, and the labor force. These projections are for all of Northeast Wisconsin, including Oconto County. The study concluded that overall employment is expected to increase by more than 20 percent in the region. Unemployment rates will remain low through 2005, and labor shortages may be common in some occupations.

According to the Department of Workforce Development, in 2005, the manufacturing industry is projected to continue to be the industry with the largest share of employment. Although manufacturing jobs will continue to increase, the rate of increase will slow down. Occupations in manufacturing are expected to move away from general labor positions to more semi-skilled and skilled operator and technician jobs. This is due primarily to production processes that are more efficient and new available technology.

Service industry employers will add approximately 18,400 jobs to the region's labor market by 2005. The largest divisions within this industry group will be business and health services with a

similar growth in professional or technical jobs. With the aging of the population, the demand for such services will continue to increase. The overall health of the Northeast Wisconsin economy is projected to be strong with no major projected decreases in any occupation or industry.

The county as well as the region have been negatively impacted during the economic slowdown this past year and will remain in a negative pattern due to manufacturing plant closings until new industries locate themselves in the county, or at least within an acceptable commuting distance.

Chapter 2 - AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The Town of How lies within the west central portion of Oconto County known as the "Oconto River Valley". The town consists of approximately 22,800 acres, (36 square miles) which are primarily agricultural lands with scattered woodlands. The nearest cities from the center of the town are: Gillett, 7 miles southeast of the center of town, Oconto Falls, 13 miles to the east; Oconto, 23 miles to the east; Shawano, 22 miles to the southwest; Antigo, 37 miles to the northwest and the City of Green Bay, 45 miles southeast. The Village of Suring lies adjacent to the town on the east side. The Town of How contains one unincorporated community, Hayes, which is located in the north central portion of the town. Map 2.1 shows the location of the town in reference to the state and Map 2.2 shows the planning area.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The Town of How is an agricultural community that contains a variety of natural amenities and the unincorporated place of Hayes. The town has a couple of small lakes with public access, several creeks, the Oconto River, and a portion of the Peshtigo Brook in addition to approximately 6,615 acres of wetlands. The town's landscape consists of large areas of woodlands, an abundance of open fields along with some areas of steep slope. Several sites of historic or archeological importance also exist within the town.

The town relies on a good groundwater source to provide its residents with safe drinkable water. At this time, land uses within the town pose a moderate threat to the ground water. Floodplains in the town exist along the waterways. Currently there are no ambient air quality concerns for the town. Both threatened and endangered species exist within Oconto County and likely within the town. The town also has plenty of wildlife habitat available for the diverse fauna that lives within the area.

The natural resources of the town will need to be monitored and in some cases protected in order to preserve them for future generations. As growth pressures begin to climb, the town will need to consider future impacts on these resources against any proposed future gains. Community "character" will be of importance as well. Preserving/promoting a sense of place is key for all community's. Protecting entryways into the town as well as considering the visual impacts along transportation corridors will greatly assist the town in reaching its vision. Working closely with businesses and the county will be needed in order to best manage these high profile locations.

NATURAL RESOURCES STRATEGY

Goal: Natural Resources

Provide a safe, clean and orderly natural environment for the residents of the Town of How.

Objectives:

1. Require strict enforcement of existing regulations (federal, state, county, town) in environmentally sensitive areas.

2. Conserve and enhance the town's distinctive natural amenities.
3. Development adjacent to rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands needs to be carefully planned in order to not negatively impact these areas.

Policies:

1. Identify key natural resources within the town.
2. The town will communicate with residents regarding regulations governing their own property and natural resource(s).
3. Discourage development within identified environmental corridors.
4. Identify and protect key open spaces and wildlife habitats from development to preserve the town's scenic value.

Programs:

1. Work with Oconto County on informational programs and brochures regarding natural resources to educate and inform the public.
2. Establish a sub-committee that would work with the town and County Zoning Department to further explore ways to best utilize or preserve natural features within the town.
3. Coordinate the town's efforts with adjoining municipalities and state agencies.
4. Encourage a 50 foot buffer area (a zone of no buildings) around delineated wetlands.
5. Work with the county to ensure enforcement of floodplain zoning, conservancy zoning and shoreland zoning ordinances to protect water quality.

Goal: Agricultural Preservation

Protecting farmland while providing for the orderly development of land that is currently, or was historically in productive farm use, for non-farm development.

Objectives:

1. Retain large contiguous areas of prime agricultural lands for future farming operations.
2. Develop smaller less productive farmlands before developing areas that are larger and more productive.
3. Identify future development areas on the General Plan Design.

Policies:

1. Discourage development on soils that have been identified as being prime agricultural areas thus encouraging the use of these lands for farming purposes only.
2. A "Cost to Benefit" comparison on all future agricultural land conversions should be conducted to ensure the town is not negatively impacted by the proposed change in use.

3. Consider development in areas of prime agricultural soils that are (1) located on fragmented smaller parcels and/or (2) areas that are adjacent to the Village of Suring.
4. If a large tract of farmland is to be developed, then a planned unit development (PUD) approach as opposed to a piece by piece method over a long time period should be utilized, this will help alleviate fragmentation within the town and help lower development pressures.
5. Explore the option of establishing a mandatory buffer strip and/or setback between farm operations and adjacent residential developments to minimize conflicts of farming operations on residential living.
6. Continue to work with farmers on finding a viable solution for both them and the town when they look to retire from farming and thus want to have alternative development uses for their lands.

Programs:

1. Establish a sub-committee that will work with the county and state to develop informational material regarding farmer's rights and what they need to do in order to farm.
2. Investigate the future use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) within the town and work with the county and state to get this program operational within the county.
3. Work with the county to establish specific criteria for determining whether or not to allow conversion of use (re-zoning).

Goal: Metallic and Non- Metallic Resources

Future mining sites should not negatively impact the town or its residents.

Objectives:

1. All possible mining sites should be identified and mapped by Oconto County for the town's use.
2. Incompatible uses with mining should not develop adjacent to one another.
3. Scenic views, the natural environment and rural characteristics should not be harmed by mining operations.

Policies:

1. The town should steer incompatible uses away from identified mining sites.
2. The town should acquire the Oconto County mining location maps and use them when deciding land use issues.
3. The town should ensure all future mining operations will someday be reclaimed to a natural setting.

Programs:

1. The town should work with Oconto County to locate possible mining sites within the town.
2. The town should inform residents of any future mining sites.
3. The town should work with the county and land owners to ensure that incompatible uses do not develop adjacent to one another or in a location that will foster conflict.

Goal: Historic, Archeological and Cultural Sites

The towns historic, archeological and cultural locations and structures should remain preserved for the town residents.

Objectives:

1. The town should preserve buildings (churches, historic homes and buildings), structures (out buildings, bridges, etc.) and other landscape features (cemeteries, fence lines, etc.) that are the town's cultural history.
2. These resources should be identified (to the best of the town's ability) to the town residents for their information and possible use.

Policies:

1. When deemed most appropriate the town supports the preservation of these locations.
2. The town should discourage the destruction of these sites and should not allow incompatible uses around them that would have negative impacts on the resource.

Programs:

1. The town should work with federal, state and county agencies to ensure all sites are identified and properly protected.
2. Consider a sub-committee that would explore the future integration of these sites into possible recreation sites, in conjunction with the county.

GEOLOGY

Geology is divided and explained as two distinct categories, 1) glacial or surface geology and 2) bedrock geology. Glacial geology is the visible surface remnants of the what the glaciers left behind. The surface features of Oconto County are the result of the movement of the Green Bay lobe of the Continental Glacier. The glaciers moved in a general northwest to southeast direction as indicated by existing drumlins and eskers. Deposits left by glaciers are divided into two types: till, which is unsorted debris deposited directly from the ice with little or no reworking by water; and sorted and stratified water-laid deposits noted as glacio-fluvial deposits. The majority of How contain the second deposit, stratified till, classified as lake deposits and ice-contact deposits. The northwestern corner and parts of the eastern part of the town consist of unstratified end moraine. Map 2.3 shows the glacial geology within the town.

Ordovician and Cambrian rock units from the Paleozoic Era underlie all of the southern portion of Oconto County. The town is divided into sedimentary sandstone on the east and intrusive

granite in the west. In most areas of southern Oconto County these rock units are approximately 300 feet thick and vary in depth from the surface from between zero to 100 feet. Map 2.4 shows the bedrock geology of the Town of How.

In the past, bedrock has not presented any significant problems to development. The areas where bedrock may cause problems, are where large stones and bedrock exist near the surface and have the potential for hindering excavation and considerably increasing the cost of construction. In addition, conventional on-site septic systems cannot function properly where bedrock is near the surface, possibly resulting in wastewater passing through the cracked bedrock and contaminating the groundwater.

CLIMATE

The climate of the Town of How and Oconto County is typical of northern Wisconsin. Winters are cold and summers are short and warm. Average winter and summer temperatures are 19 and 67 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively. Precipitation is distributed throughout the year with a slight peak in the summer. Snow covers the ground from late fall to spring. The total annual precipitation is about 30 inches. About 19 inches or 65 percent falls between April and September which is the growing season for most crops. Average seasonal snowfall is 45 inches. In winter, construction may be hindered because soils occasionally freeze to a depth of several feet when very cold and before the ground is covered with snow.

SOIL LIMITATIONS

General Soils Description

Soils are grouped into general soil associations which have similar patterns of relief and drainage. These associations typically consist of one or more major soils and some minor soils. Within the town, there are three general soils associations identified (Map 2.5).

Menahga-Rousseau-Shawano Association:

These soils are nearly level to very steep, excessively drained and moderately well drained sandy soils on uplands and cover the western quarter of the town. Most of these areas are suited to woodlands. Many have been planted to pine. Seedling survival and water erosion are the main management concerns. Where irrigated and protected from soil blowing the nearly level to sloping soils are suited for crops. The Menahga and Shawano soils that have a slope less than 20 percent are suited to residential development. Septic tank absorption fields function satisfactorily in these soils, but groundwater pollution is a hazard because of rapid permeability. The Rousseau soils of this association are poorly suited for residential development due to the seasonal high water table.

Onaway-Solona-Emmet

Soils in this association are found on uplands with nearly level to very steep slopes, are well drained to poorly drained and loamy. These soils are moderately permeable with moderate water capacity. These soils are mostly used for crops and woodland, with some pastureland. The main limitation is water erosion and wetness. The areas of gently sloping, well drained Onaway soils are suited to residential development, whereas the Solona soils are not due to seasonal high water tables.

Tilleda-Menominee-Emmet

These soils are nearly level to moderately steep well drained, loamy and sandy soils found on uplands. The soils have moderate to rapid permeability and moderate to high water capacity. Many of the less sloping areas of this association are used for crops. Water erosion and soil blowing are the main concerns. These soils are also suited to trees. The less sloping soils are suited for residential development. Septic tanks have moderate limitations in the Tilleda soils, due to the moderate permeability, but function satisfactorily in the Menominee.

Basements

Within the *Oconto County Soil Survey*, the NRCS provides information on the suitability and limitations of soils for a variety of natural resource and engineering uses. In particular, the soil survey provides information on the limitations of each soil for building site development including the construction of dwellings with basements. Dwellings are considered to be structures built on shallow excavations on undisturbed soil with a load limit the same as for a single family dwelling no higher than three stories. The ratings are based on soil properties, site features and observed performance of the soils.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, *severe limitations* mean soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or so difficult to overcome that special design, significant increases in construction costs, and possibly increased maintenance are required. *Moderate limitations* mean soil properties or site features that are not favorable for the indicated use may require special planning, design, or maintenance to overcome, or minimize limitations. *Slight limitations* mean soil properties and site features are generally favorable for the indicated use and limitations are minor and easily overcome. Refer to the *Oconto County Soil Survey* for additional information regarding soil limitations for building site development.

Prime Agricultural Lands

Almost 40 percent of the town's land has soils that are classified as "most productive" or "productive" according to the *Soil Survey of Oconto County*. Most productive soils have a land capability classification of I or II. Productive soils have a classification of III or IV. The remaining 60 percent of the town are grouped into the least productive category and have a land capability classification of V through VIII. The first four classes are suited to cultivation, where as the last four classes are limited to grazing, pasture or woodlands. Map 2.6 shows the prime agricultural lands in the town and Table 2.1 lists the land capability classes.

Table 2.1: Land Capability Classification

Class	Limitations
I	Few
II	Moderate -may require conservation practices and plant selection
III	Severe -require special conservation practices and have reduced choice of plants
IV	Very Severe-reduction in plant choice and require very careful management practices
V	Not likely to erode, but have other limitations, impractical to remove
VI	Severe limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation
VII	Very severe limitations that make them unsuitable for cultivation
VIII	Limitations that nearly preclude their use for commercial crop production

Source: Soil Survey of Oconto County, 1988; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2000.

TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the town varies from relatively flat to gently rolling, following the patterns of the glacial geology stated above. The elevation in the town varies approximately 180 feet. Elevations vary from approximately 970 feet above sea level in the northwest corner by Wiscobee Lake, to 787 feet above sea level in the east central part of the town along the Oconto River. The majority of the town, however, maintains an elevation between 850 and 900 feet above sea level. Areas of steep slope are also a concern. Steep slope is defined as a slope greater than 15 percent. Slopes greater than 15 percent are more susceptible to soil erosion and may require special building and construction restraints, such as retaining walls or major grading efforts to remove the area of steep slope. Within the town, there are only 820 acres of steep slope, which are concentrated in the northwest corner of town just west of the Village of Suring (Map 2.7).

WATER RESOURCES

Watersheds

The Town of How is within three main watersheds (Map 2.8). These watersheds are the Lower North Branch Oconto River, the Lower Oconto River and the South Branch Oconto River. All three watersheds are part of and flow into the Green Bay basin. The Lower Oconto River watershed covers the southern and southeastern part of town, the South Branch Oconto River watershed covers the northern and eastern part of town, including Hayes Creek, while the Lower North Branch Oconto River is found in the northeast corner of town.

Lakes

There are two named lakes according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource's publication of *Surface Water Resources of Oconto County1977*. Lakes are defined as all waters navigable, meandered, or public that hold water nine out of ten years. Map 2.9 illustrates the locations of these water bodies. Grignon Lake is a 26 acre lake with public access. Wiscobee

Lake is a 32 acre lake also with public access. The fish species that are present within both lakes include largemouth bass, northern pike and panfish.

Rivers and Streams

The following information for the rivers and streams within the town has also been taken from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources *Surface Water Features of Oconto County, 1977*. Streams are defined in this study as those which have a permanent flow or any streams of intermittent (seasonal) flow which have significance for recreational purposes. The northeastern side of the Town of How is the converging point of four major rivers. The Oconto River, North Branch Oconto River, South Branch Oconto River and Peshtigo Brook all converge just west of the Village of Suring. Pecore Creek and Hayes Creek both flow into the South Branch Oconto River. Map 2.9 shows the location of these streams.

Groundwater

In Wisconsin the primary sources for groundwater contamination are agricultural activities, municipal landfills, leaky underground storage tanks, abandoned hazardous waste sites, and spills. Septic tanks and land application of wastewater are also sources for possible contamination. The most common ground water contaminant is nitrate-nitrogen, which comes from fertilizers, animal waste storage sites and feedlots, municipal and industrial wastewater and sludge disposal, refuse disposal areas, and leaking septic systems.

The town's groundwater source is part of a large aquifer system called the Cambrian-Ordovician aquifer system. It is the second largest source of groundwater for public supply, agricultural, and industrial use in the northern segment which consists of the four states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, and Iowa. This aquifer is a complex multi-aquifer system with several aquifers separated by leaky confining units. The Maquoketa confining unit caps the whole system where it is overlain by younger bedrock.

More specifically, the groundwater comes from the Mount Simon aquifer, which is the lowermost aquifer of the Cambrian-Ordovician aquifer system. It consists of the coarse to fine grained Mount Simon Sandstone and the Bayfield Group in Wisconsin. The Mount Simon aquifer underlies the southern two-thirds of the state and has the broadest distribution of any of the aquifers in the Cambrian-Ordovician aquifer system. Wells penetrating the Mount Simon aquifer in Wisconsin generally are open to overlying Cambrian-Ordovician aquifers. These aquifers are collectively called the sandstone aquifer. The thickness of the unconsolidated material ranges from 50 to 300 feet in the central portion of the county. The water flows toward the cities of Green Bay and Milwaukee. Within this area, there is a moderate susceptibility to groundwater contamination.

Floodplains

Floodplains are often viewed as valuable recreational and environmental resources. These areas provide for storm water retention, ground water recharge, and habitat for various kinds of wildlife unique to the water.

Development permitted to take place in these areas is susceptible to storm damage and can have an adverse effect on water quality and wildlife habitat. In addition, it can also result in increased development and maintenance costs such as: providing floodproofing, repairing damage

associated with flooding and high water, increased flood insurance premiums, extensive site preparation, and repairing water related damage to roads, sewers, and water mains. Some communities have special ordinances for buildings within the floodplain for remodeling and expanding. New expansions may have to be compliant to the rules of floodplain construction.

As a result, the state of Wisconsin requires that counties, cities and villages adopt shoreland/floodplain zoning ordinances to address the problems associated with development in floodplain areas. Development in shoreland areas is generally permitted, but specific design techniques must be considered. Development in floodplain areas is strictly regulated and in some instances is not permitted. For planning and regulatory purposes, the floodplain is normally defined as those areas, excluding the stream channel, that are subject to inundation by the 100-year recurrence interval flood event. This event has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year. Because of this chance of flooding, development in the floodplain should be discouraged and the development of park and open space in these areas encouraged.

The authority to enact and enforce these types of zoning provisions in counties is set forth in Chapter 59.97 of the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 116. This same authority is also vested to cities and villages in Chapter 62.23 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

There are 1,985 acres of floodplain within the Town of How (Map 2.10). These areas are located along all the named rivers and creeks in the town.

Wetlands

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, wetlands are areas where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophilic vegetation. Other common names for wetlands are swamps, bogs, or marshes. Wetlands serve as a valuable natural resource. They provide scenic open spaces in both urban and rural areas. Wetlands act as natural pollution filters, making many lakes and streams cleaner and drinking water safer. They act as groundwater discharge areas, and retain floodwaters. Finally they provide valuable and irreplaceable habitat for many plants and animals.

Because of their importance, there are strict regulations regarding wetlands. Wisconsin Administrative Codes NR 115 and NR 117 fall under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and mandate that shoreland wetlands be protected in both the rural and urban areas of the state. In the unincorporated areas, NR 115 provides the legislation to protect wetlands of five acres or more that are within the jurisdiction of county shoreland zoning ordinances. This wetland provision would be applicable in the Town of How. Wetlands not in the shoreland zone are protected from development by the federal government and the WDNR through Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and NR 103, respectively.

Within the town, there are approximately 6,615 acres of wetlands. Map 2.11 shows the WDNR inventoried wetlands greater than two acres. It should be noted that all wetlands, no matter how small, are subject to WDNR and possible federal regulations if they meet the state definition. Also, please note that Map 2.11 is a tool to use as a guide since not all wetlands are identified on the map.

WOODLANDS

There are a total of 12,025 acres of woodlands within the town. Woodlands are displayed on Map 2.12 and depict upland woodlands (lands not within wetlands) and lowland woodlands (lands within wetlands). Upland woodlands constitute approximately 6,033 acres, whereas the lowland woodlands comprise of 5,992 acres of land in the town. Woodlands are scattered throughout the Town of How and generally follow the stream corridors and wetlands.

AIR QUALITY ISSUES

There are no areas within the Town of How which exceed the limits of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone, particulates, or carbon monoxide. The nearest ozone monitoring sites are in Brown, Outagamie and Florence Counties, and all are within attainment standards.

WILDLIFE HABITAT

The fauna that lives within the planning area is quite diverse. Many animals such as the white-tailed deer, turkey, grouse, porcupine, beaver, muskrat, gray and red squirrel, and chipmunks are some of the more well known species found in the area. Migratory fowl also frequent the area during the summer months utilizing the lakes and streams to raise their young. Due to the large agricultural tracts of land in the town, mammals that require large areas of woodlands for hunting and raising young, such as bear, wolf, bobcat, coyote, and the bald eagle are not as prevalent in the town as they are in the northern communities of the county and state. The surface water features within the town provide habitat for fish. Northern pike, pumpkinseed, perch, trout, largemouth bass and bluegill are known to inhabit the lakes and streams of the town.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Many rare, threatened, and endangered species are found within Oconto County. Rare species occurrences within the Town of How were found in the Wiscobee Lake and Grignon Lake areas. Care should be taken before development occurs to not disturb potential habitats for these flora and fauna. Appendix C lists the rare species and natural communities that have occurred in Oconto County, identified in the Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The town is limited on its availability of publicly owned recreational sites. Due to its rural character, most residents utilize the open spaces and town roads for recreational activities. The town does have a ball field and two access points to town lakes. A small recreational site also exists along Pecore Creek near Willow Road. A county recreation trail exists within the town and residents are able to go to the Village of Suring for the use of the Riverside Memorial Park and the privately operated golf course within the village (Cathedral Pines).

SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS

Within the town there are no state designated natural areas. The Wisconsin State Natural Area program was established to formally designate sites in natural or near natural condition for scientific research, the teaching of conservation biology and most of all, preservation of their natural values and genetic diversity for the future. These areas are not intended for intensive recreation use, but rather to serve the mission of the Natural Areas Program, to locate and

preserve a system of State Natural Areas harboring all types of biotic communities, rare species, and other significant natural features native to Wisconsin.

ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS AND ISOLATED NATURAL AREAS

Environmental corridors serve many purposes. They protect local water quality and wildlife habitat through identification and preservation of areas sensitive to development. They can be used as a means of controlling, moderating, and storing floodwaters while providing nutrient and sediment filtration. Environmental corridors can provide fish and wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and serve as buffers between land uses while improving the aesthetics of the community.

As part of its on-going effort to complete a regional master plan, the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission has begun to compile and delineate region-wide data needed for land use planning within the region. The Commission has defined its environmental corridors to include the following set of uniformly available information: All Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources identified wetlands; 100-year FEMA floodplains; areas with slopes greater than or equal to 12 percent; lakes, rivers, streams and ponds; a 75-foot lake and river setback; and, a 25-foot buffer of wetlands. Other features that are considered as part of the environmental corridor definition on an area by area basis include: designated scientific and natural areas; unique and isolated woodland areas; scenic viewsheds; historic and archaeological sites; unique geology; wetland mitigation sites; isolated wooded areas; unique wildlife habitats; parks and recreational areas; and other locally identified features. Environmental corridors cover approximately 8,500 acres of land within the Town of How (Map 2.13).

HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

There are many sites of historic or archeological importance within the town. Below is a description of these structures taken from a list compiled by State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Map 2.14 shows the general location of the sites. The list is compiled by many individuals on the belief that these areas be considered for eligibility on the state registry. There is a possibility that several structures or sites may not be listed. The information on these structures is dated so some structures may be altered or no longer exist. The majority of these structures are privately owned.

1. Gabled ell brick house built in 1900, located on Hayes Rd. in the unincorporated community of Hayes.
2. Two story cube brick house built in 1910, located on CTH M within Hayes.
3. Balloon frame clapboard general store built in 1880, located on the corner of Hayes Rd. and CTH M within Hayes.
4. Town of How Community Building - Used to be a one to six room balloon frame school house constructed out of wood in 1920, located on STH 32.
5. William Buhrandt Farmstead - Gabled ell brick house built in 1890, located on Red Bank Rd.
6. Side gabled, balloon framed clapboard house built in 1900, located on Hayes Rd.
7. Wood Workery - formerly the Grignon Schoolhouse, located at the corner of CTH M and Elm Rd.

There are also several listed archeological sites in the town. Copper spear points, a Potawatomi cemetery, and lithic artifacts have all been discovered within the town.

Care should be taken when excavation is done within the Town of How, since there is the possibility of disturbing a historical or archeological site. The State of Wisconsin requires any findings of human bones to be reported (*Wisconsin Statute 157.70)* so an investigation can be done by the State Historical Society. Also, land developers trying to obtain state permits from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources or any development involving federal monies, are required to be in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties. For further information, please contact the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State St., Madison, WI 53706.

METALLIC AND NON-METALLIC MINING RESOURCES

Metallic mining in Wisconsin has occurred since the time it was settled. Metals mined in the state include copper, lead, iron, and zinc. Mining has economic value to multi-regional areas, but also has the ability to potentially harm natural resources. Any new mines need to have a permit granted by the WDNR and are subject to the requirements of NR 135, which includes a reclamation plan. This plan is a detailed technical document designed to meet the goals which lead to successful reclamation and will help reduce the effects to the environment once the mine is abandoned. The plan has minimum standards that must be met in order to be accepted. The WDNR defines successful reclamation as "the restoration of all areas disturbed by mining activities including aspects of the mine itself, waste disposal areas, buildings, roads and utility corridors". Restoration is defined as, "returning of the site to a condition that minimizes erosion and sedimentation, supports productive and diverse plants and animal communities and allows for the desired post-mining land use". There is currently no metallic or non-mettalic mining within the town.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Community design (Character) deals with the large-scale organization and design of the community, particularly the organization of the buildings and the space between them. An evaluation of community design is often subjective and requires personal judgement. In an effort to remove this subjectivity, the community design resources of the community have been inventoried that represent the building blocks and language of community design:

Signage

Community character can be impacted quit dramatically by the type of signs allowed throughout the community and along transportation corridors such as the town's STH 32 and the County Trunk Roads. In order to preserve a sense of place and to help define community character without it being dictated by competing signage, the community can follow the general standards (commonly used in municipalities) below:

1. Free standing signs (excepting those along highways and freeways) should never exceed a height of 20 feet, and only heights below eight feet are consistently considered as noticeably low. These low monument signs can be effectively landscaped to meet desired community visions while tall pylon signs are unable to readily achieve this. No buildings should be

allowed more than one freestanding sign, to include both a single commercial use or a joint commercial center.

2. Wall signs should relate to the area of the wall on which they are located. No wall should contain more than one sign (except a joint commercial center type development). Commercial centers should maintain consistency between sign materials and location of signs. In a development with a number of business occupants, individual outside signage should not be allowed for every occupant but rather the smaller occupants should only have nameplate signs on a kiosk sign.

Many zoning ordinances prohibit types of signs that can distract drivers or cause a nuisance. Those signs that should be prohibited because of this and due to their being difficult to make and keep attractive include off-site advertising signs, roof signs and portable signs. Billboards can have the potential to degrade the community's entryways "doorways"(such as along STH 32 entering from the Village of Suring) and should be prohibited within these areas. Additional signs for prohibition include those that are inflatable, flashing, rippling or sparkling, strings of lights, use of tinsel, "pom poms", pinwheels, pennants, banners, and streamers. The community needs to evaluate whether changeable lettering, electronic message boards, and trademark color schemes are to be prohibited if considered disruptive to the community or detract from the visual character of the community. The community should also take on the added responsibility of informing the zoning authority of signs that are distracting and/or do not follow existing rules and ordinance so that they come into conformance and not establish a negative "Norm" for the community appearance.

Landmarks

Landmarks are important reference points that represent a prominent feature of the landscape and have the ability to distinguish a locality, mark the boundary of a piece of land, or symbolize an important event or turning point in the history of a community. It is encouraged that wherever possible, public buildings, monuments and parks should be located at important intersections at the end of streets. In new developments, prominent sites should be reserved for civic buildings.

- Town Hall/Community Center, Cemetery, Park-Ball Field on STH 32,
- "Top of the hill" along STH 32 west of Suring,
- STH 32 intersection with Hayes Rd and Red Banks Rd,
- Unincorporated area of Hayes,
- St John's Church, School and Cemetery
- The "Iron Bridge" on River Road spanning the Oconto River.

Pathways

Pathways are linear features that represent both vehicular and pedestrian movement. Pathways provide connections between places, as well as along them. Whether a major arterial, local street, or undefined woodland trail, pathways are hierarchical and represent a degree of usage.

It is encouraged that major pathways receive special planning and control considerations to include site design reviews, lighting/signage/landscaping controls to ensure that a heavily used

corridor (through the community) does not become an "eyesore" nor becomes a safety hazard due to a confusing stretch of roadway cluttered with competing signage and hard to access driveways. All this compounded by high traffic volumes and high traffic speeds would most likely be a liability to the community's character and overall development potential. Secondary pathways should be largely allowed to remain uncluttered and undeveloped in order to promote valued aesthetic qualities of the community. In some instances by meandering/curving the pathway will help reduce speeds, will reduce the horizon point and thus add to the leisurely use of the route.

Major:

- State Highway 32

Secondary:

- County Trunk Highways M & R,
- All town roads,
- Recreational corridors/trailways.

Edges

Like pathways, edges are linear. Edges are important organizing elements that represent boundaries that can be either soft or hard, real or perceived. Edges should be well defined in order to allow the traveler to transition from one use to another and to keep certain uses from negatively affecting others. Allowing ample natural vegetation or open spaces to separate uses is one preferred method.

- Town of How/Village of Suring Boundary,
- Oconto River (including both North and South Branches),
- Unincorporated area of Hayes and the less developed surrounding area.

District

Districts encompass areas of commonality. Examples of districts may include a residential district or central business district. These areas represent buildings and spaces where clearly defined and separate types of activities take place.

- Unincorporated area of Hayes.

Nodes

Nodes are specific points of recognition. They are destinations and very often represent the core or center of a district. In addition, nodes are closely associated with pathways as they provide access to and from districts. An example of nodes within a district may include separate areas for government functions versus entertainment activities within a central business district.

- St. John's Church and School located within Hayes.

Community Entryways

Community entryways are associated with edges in that the entryway begins at an edge. Entryways can be unique and are vary valuable assets for they help define a community to those

using the entryway. In many cases these entryways are more correctly described as "Doorways" to a community. How people perceive an entrance to a business area or doorway to a town will determine weather they stop or drive on through the community. These points of interest need to be protected or enhanced through the use of zoning standards requiring landscaping, building design, signage, lighting, and public furnishings.

The ***Primary*** entryways into How should be protected and enhanced. These areas may contain high quality public entry signs and/or public art which is used to formally announce entry to the town. Around the town's periphery, primary entrances include **STH 32** (especially entering from the Village of Suring), **CTH M and CTH R** entering the town. In order to preserve a sense of place and to help define community character, the Town of How could install unique signage on the highways entering the town. It is recommended that the town (at a minimum) maintain any existing entry signs throughout the planning period.

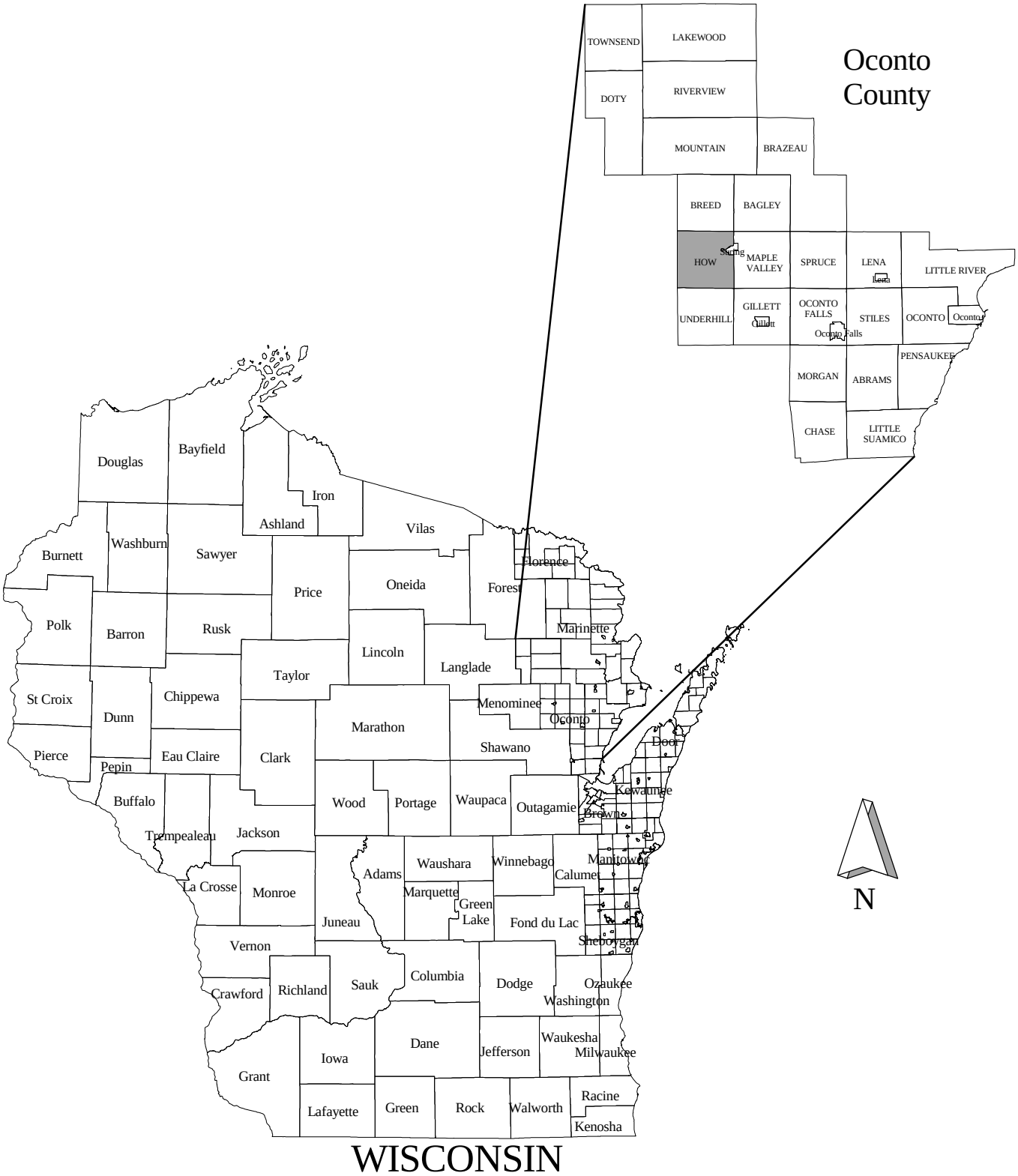
The ***Secondary*** entryways into How are more subtle portals enjoyed by town property owners. The use of formal entry markers such as signage and artwork should be low key, if used at all, in order to maintain the rural look of the area.

Location Map

Map 2.1

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



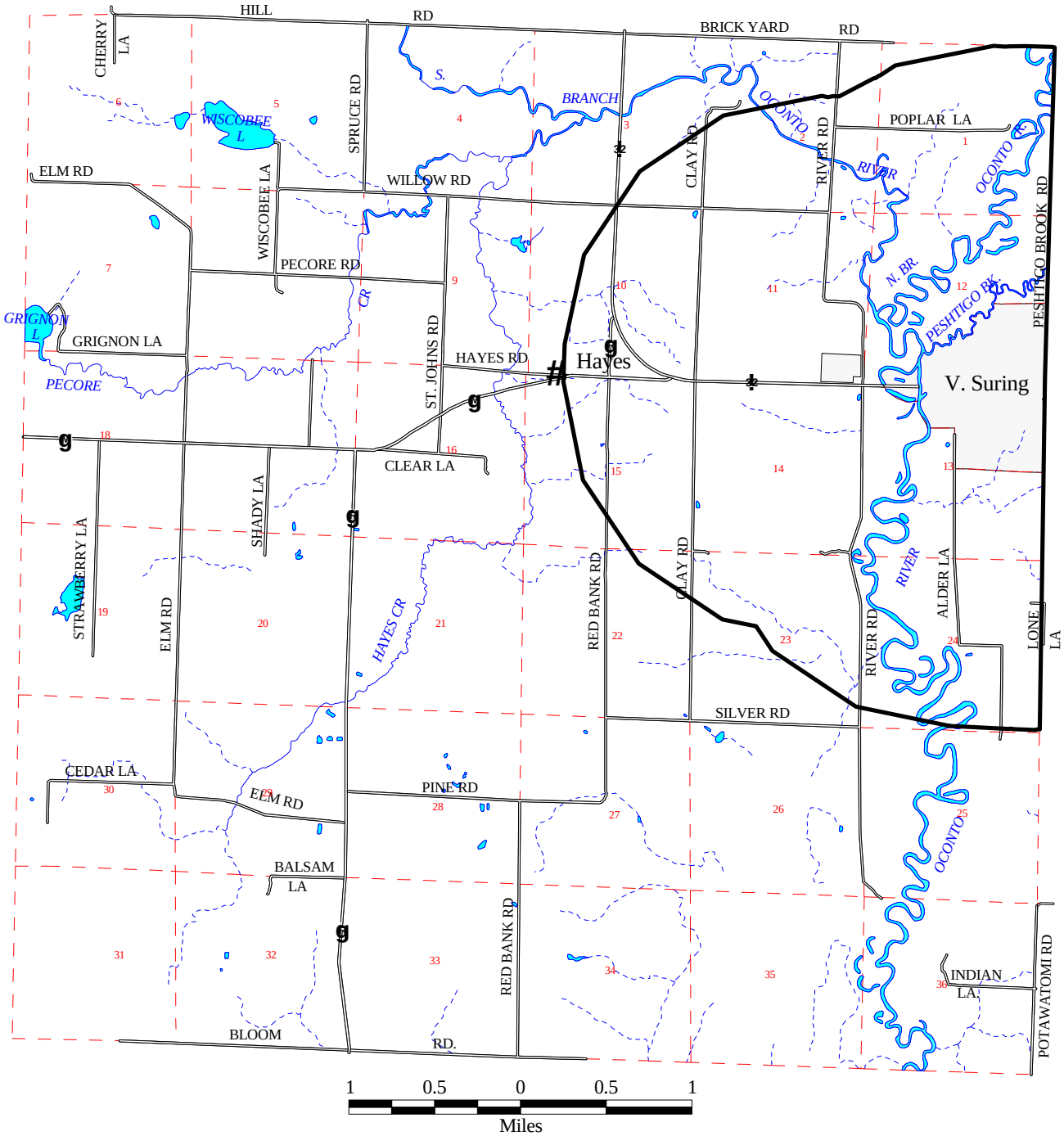
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.2

Planning Area

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Village of Suring 1.5 Mile Extraterritorial Boundary

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

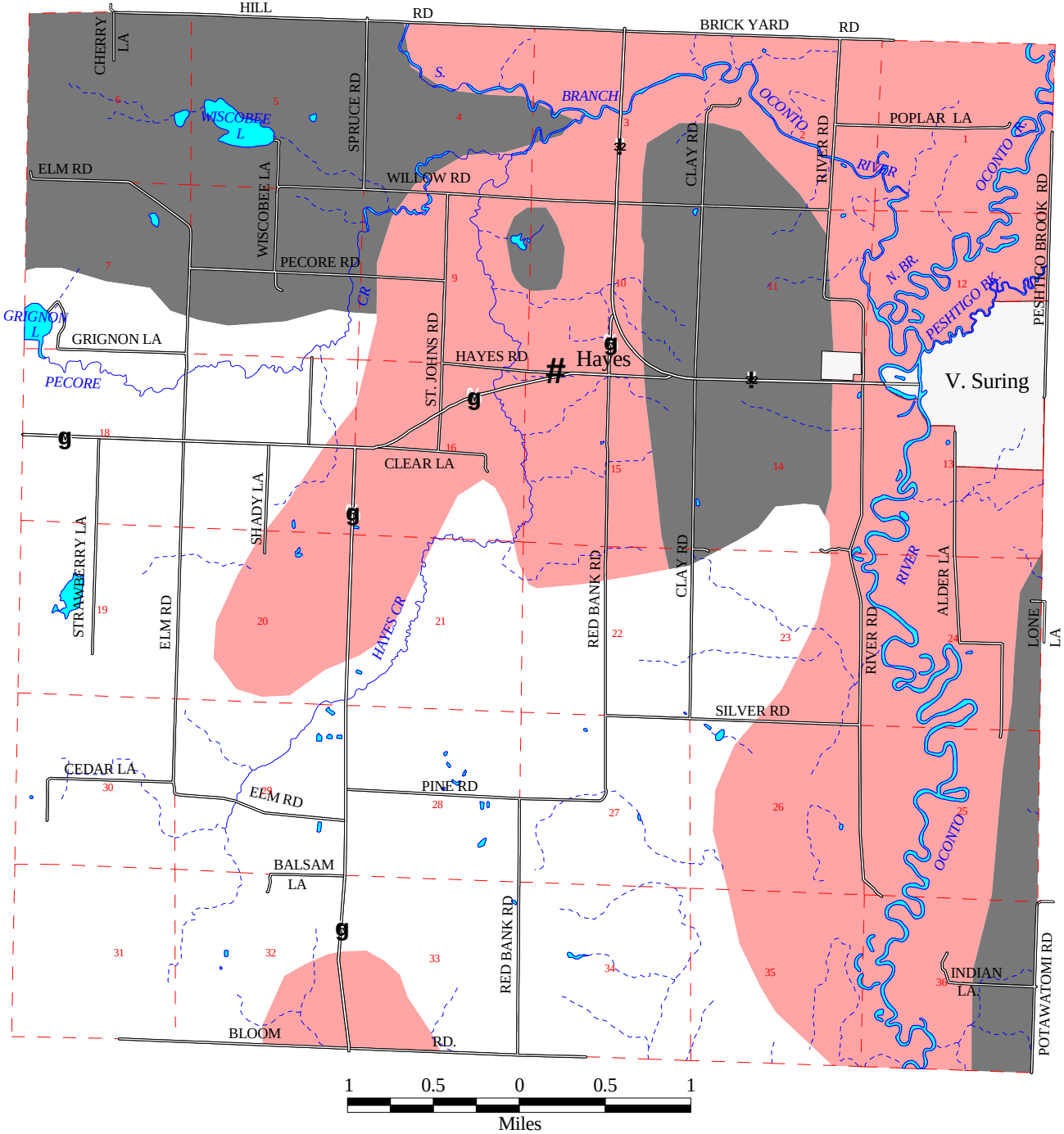
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.3

Glacial Geology

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



End Moraine
Lake Deposits
Outwash & Ice-Contact Deposits

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

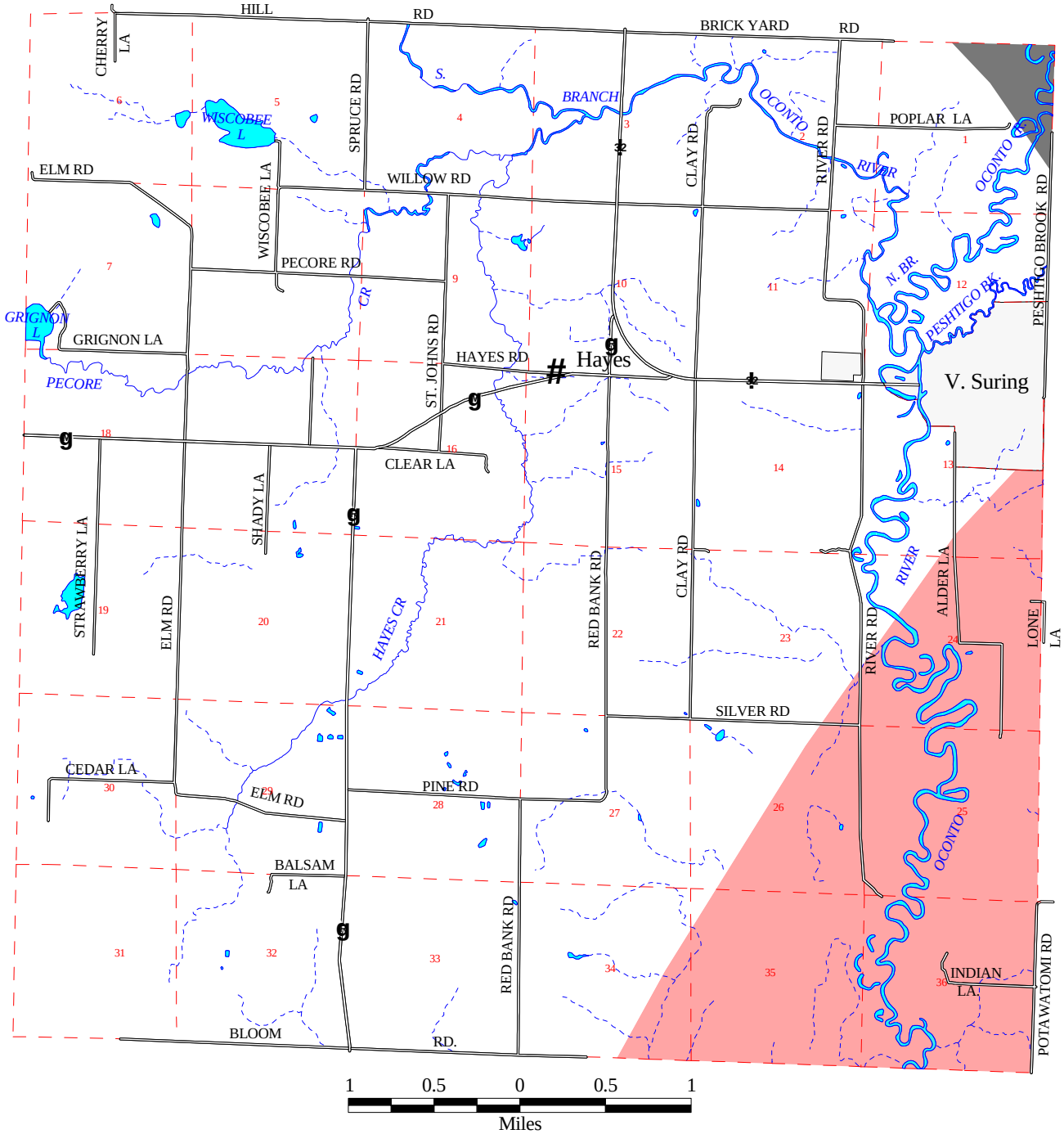
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.4

Bedrock Geology

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Metabasalt
Rapikivi Granite
Sandstone

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

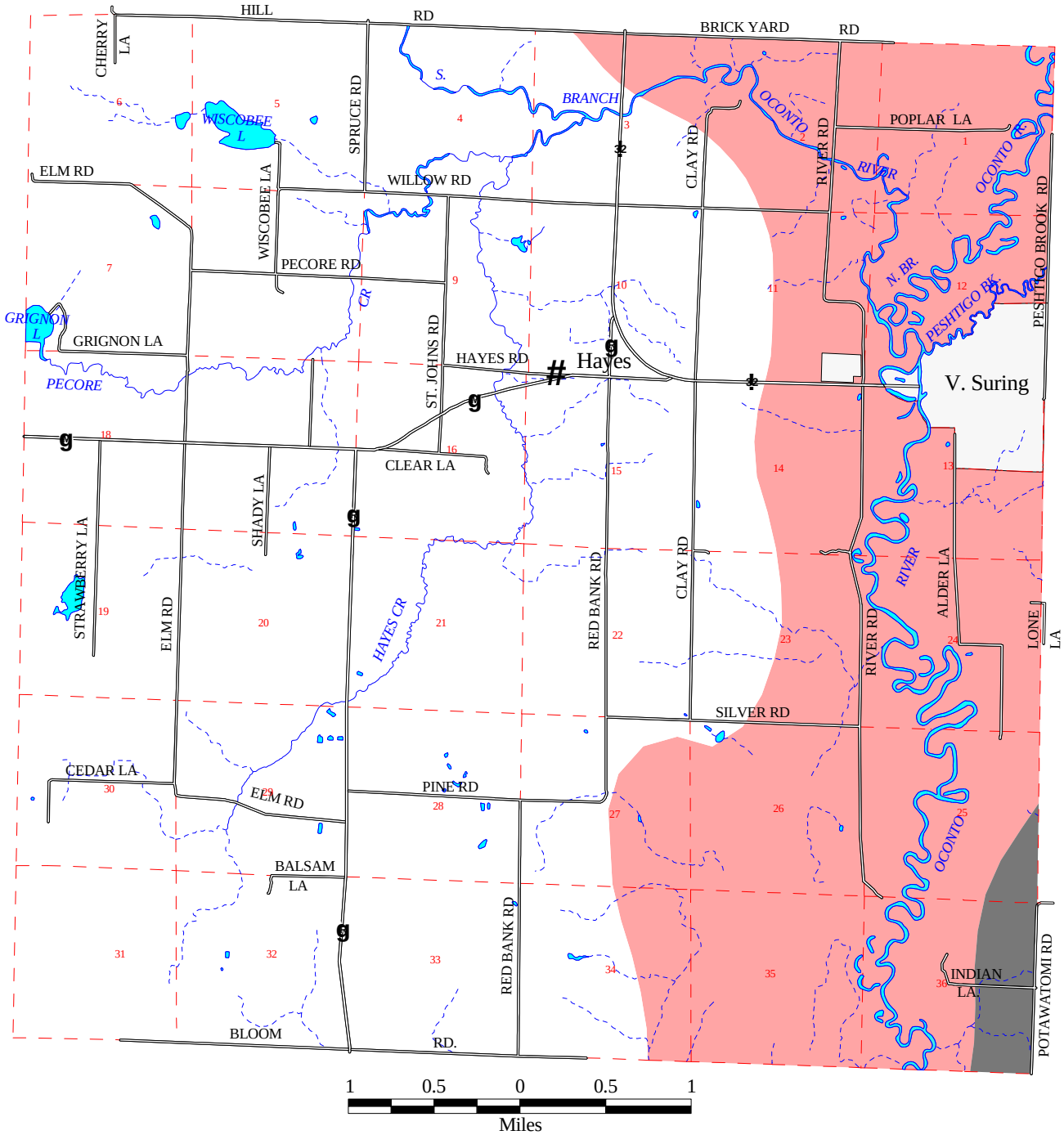
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.5

General Soils

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Menahga-Rousseau-Shawano
Tilleda-Menominee-Emmet
Onaway-Solona-Emmet

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

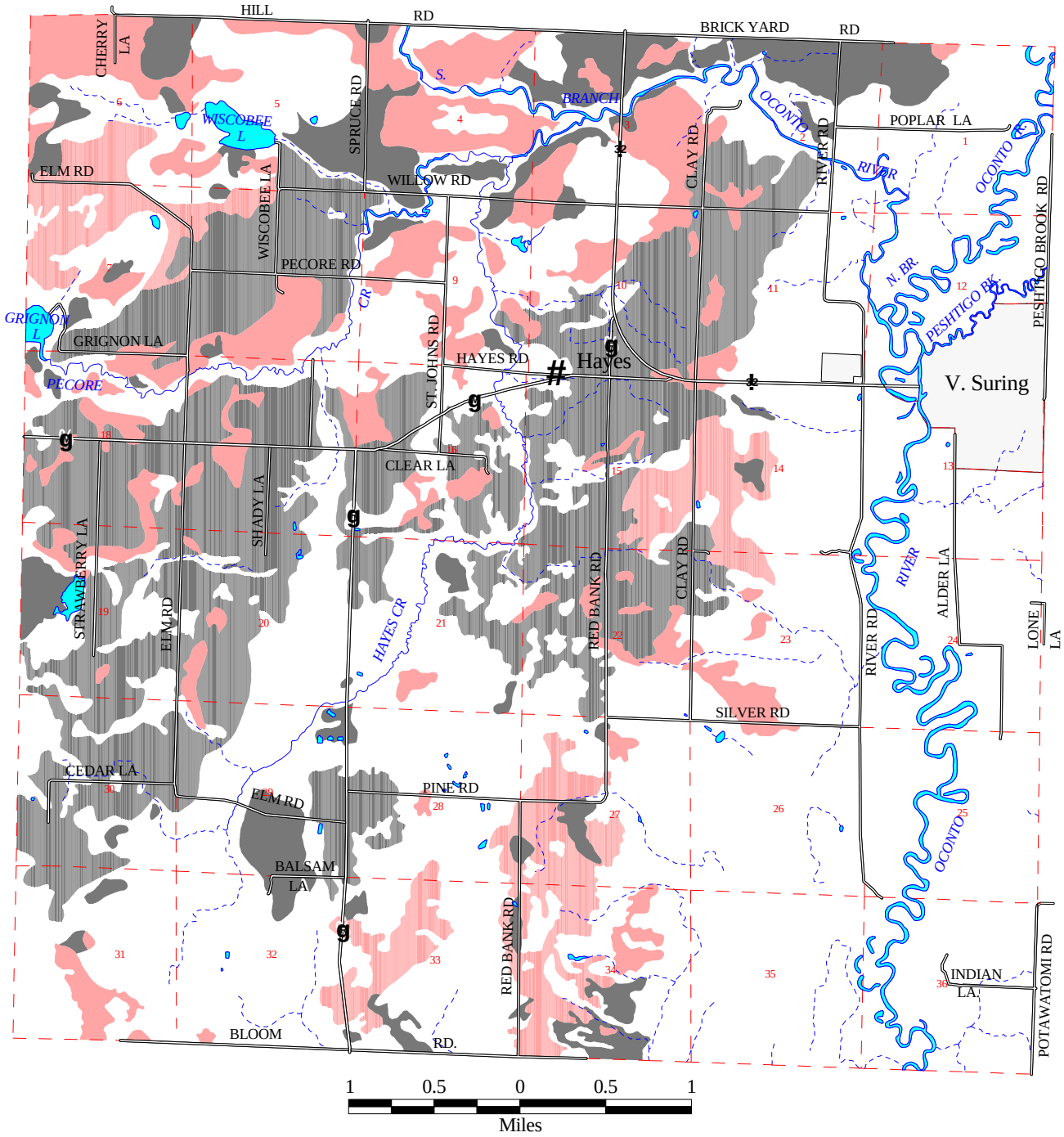
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.6

Prime Agricultural Soils

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Most Productive
Productive
Least Productive

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

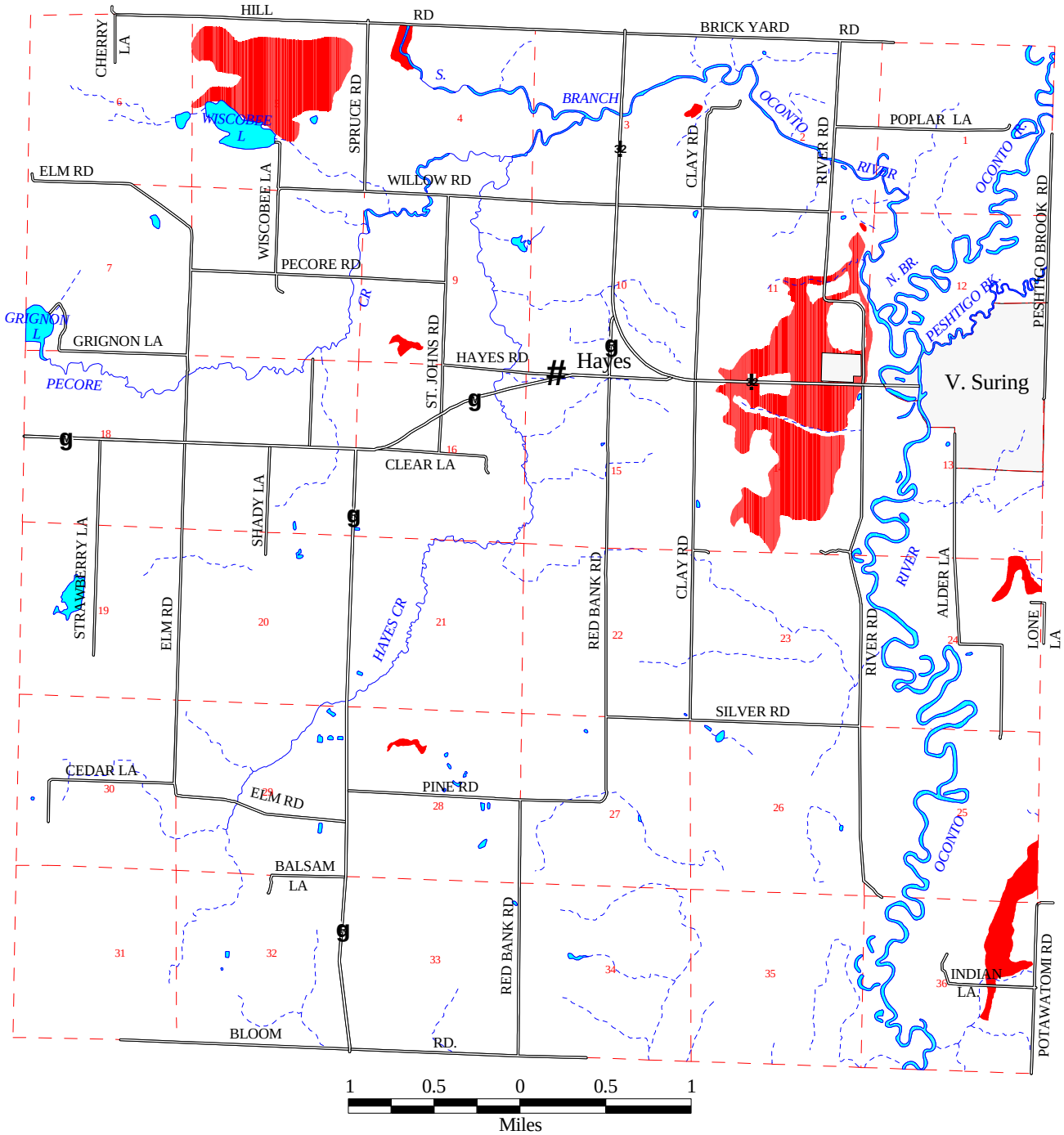
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.7

Steep Slope

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Slope 12 Percent or Greater

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

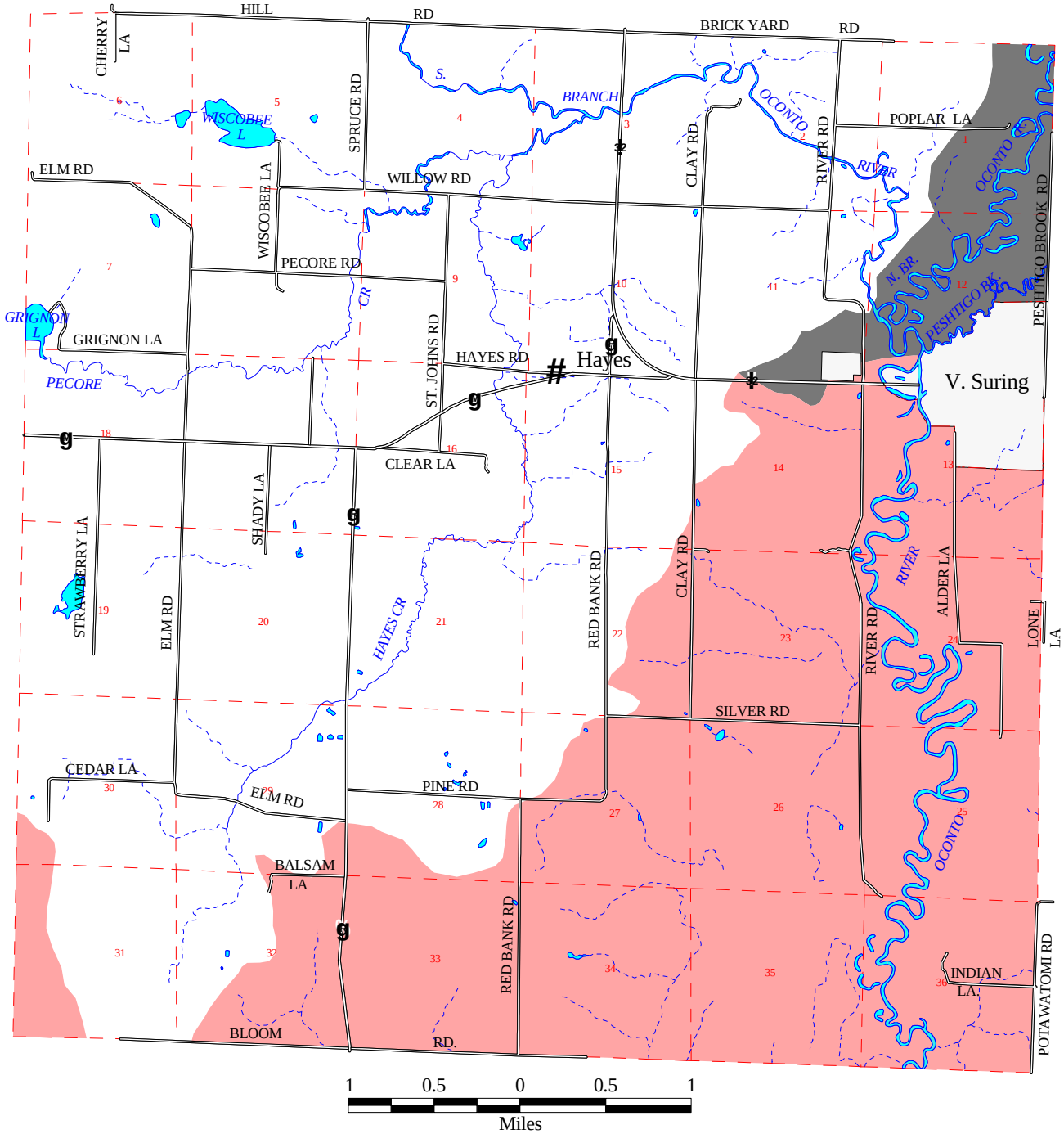
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.8

Watersheds

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Lower North Branch Oconto River
Lower Oconto River
South Branch Oconto River

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

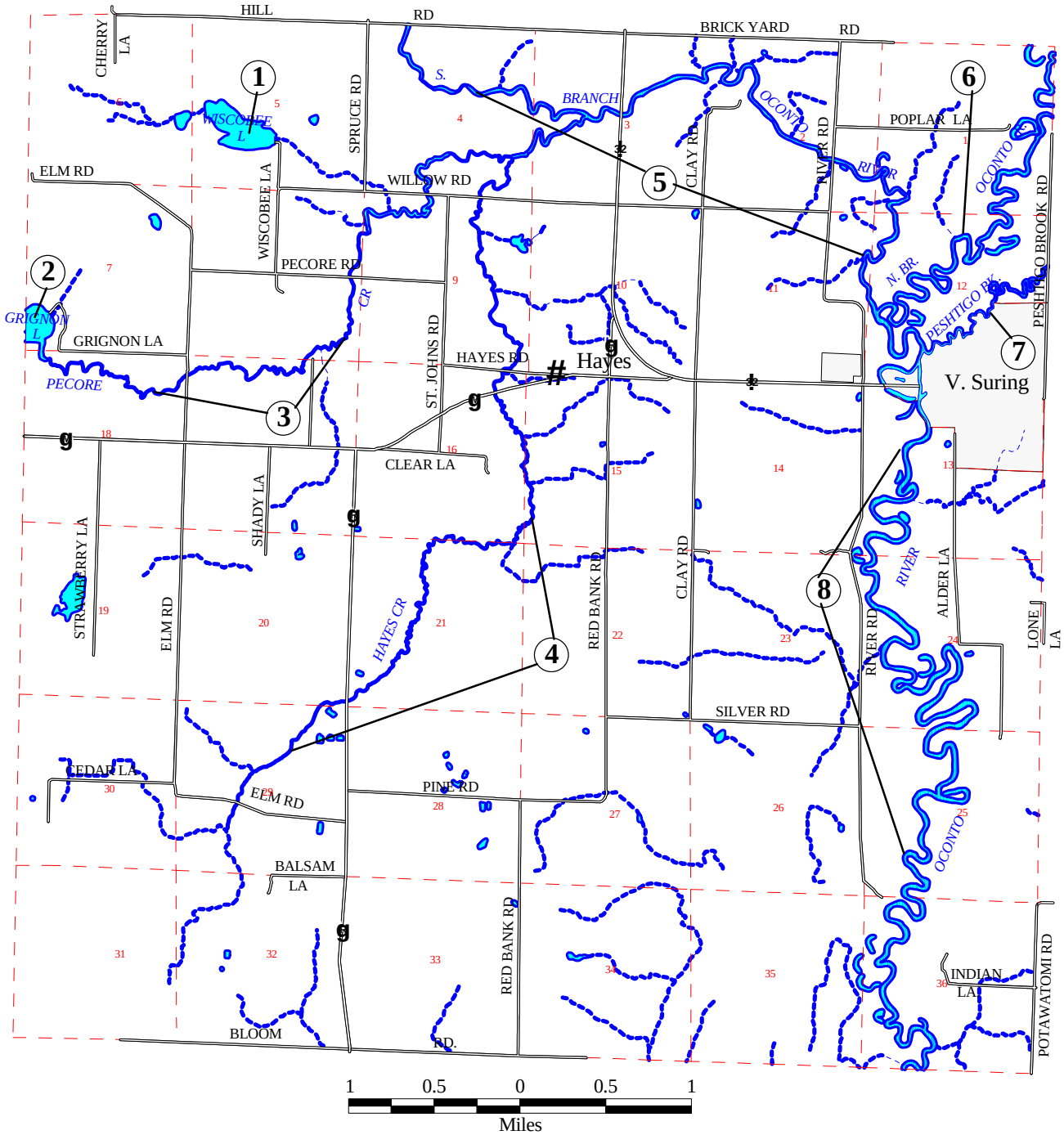
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.9

Surface Water Features

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



1 Wiscobee Lake
2 Grignon Lake
3 Pecore Creek
4 Hayes Creek
5 South Branch Oconto River
6 North Branch Oconto River
7 Peshtigo Brook
8 Oconto River

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

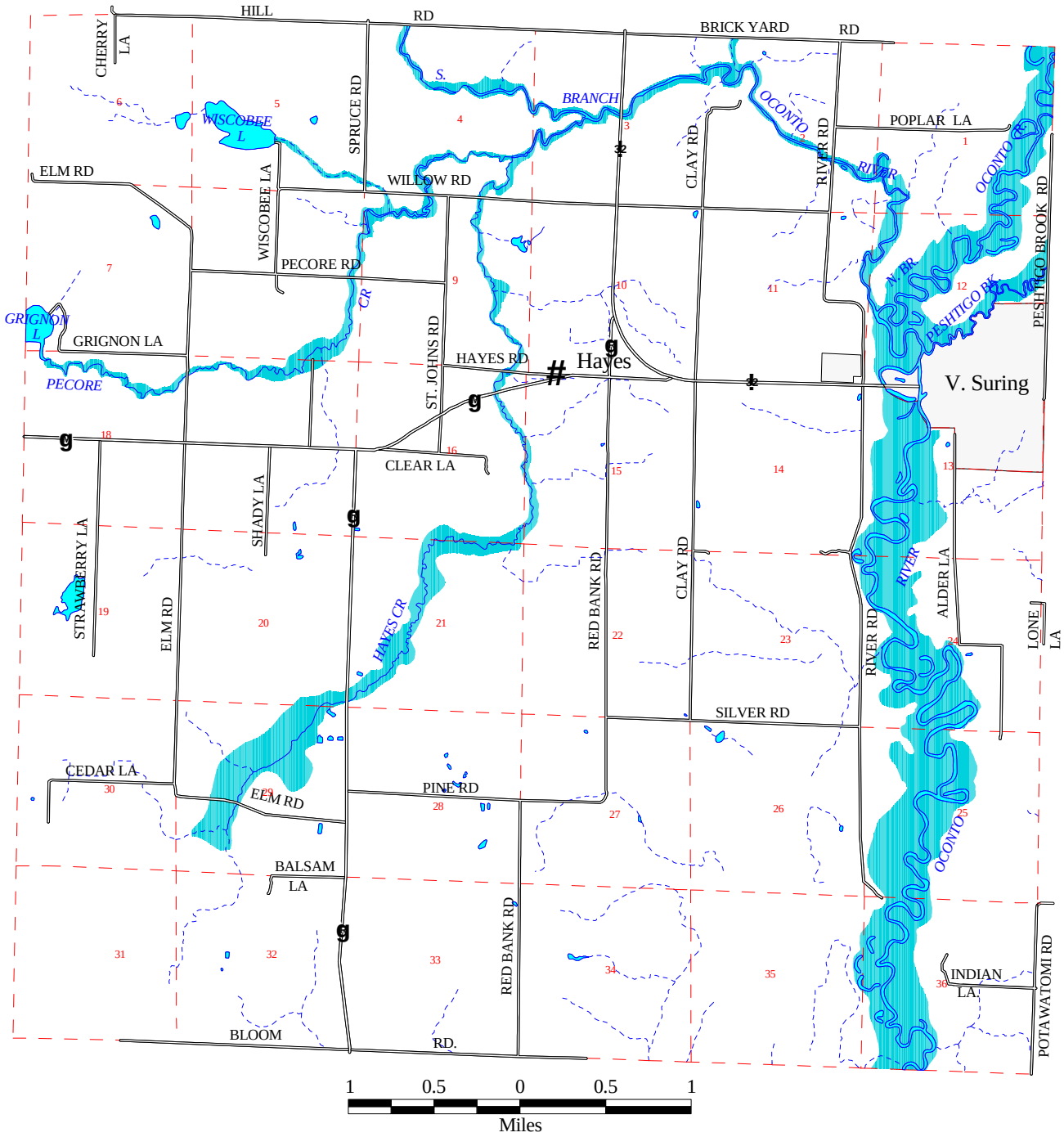
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.10

Floodplains

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



100 - Year Floodplain

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- S State Highway
- C County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

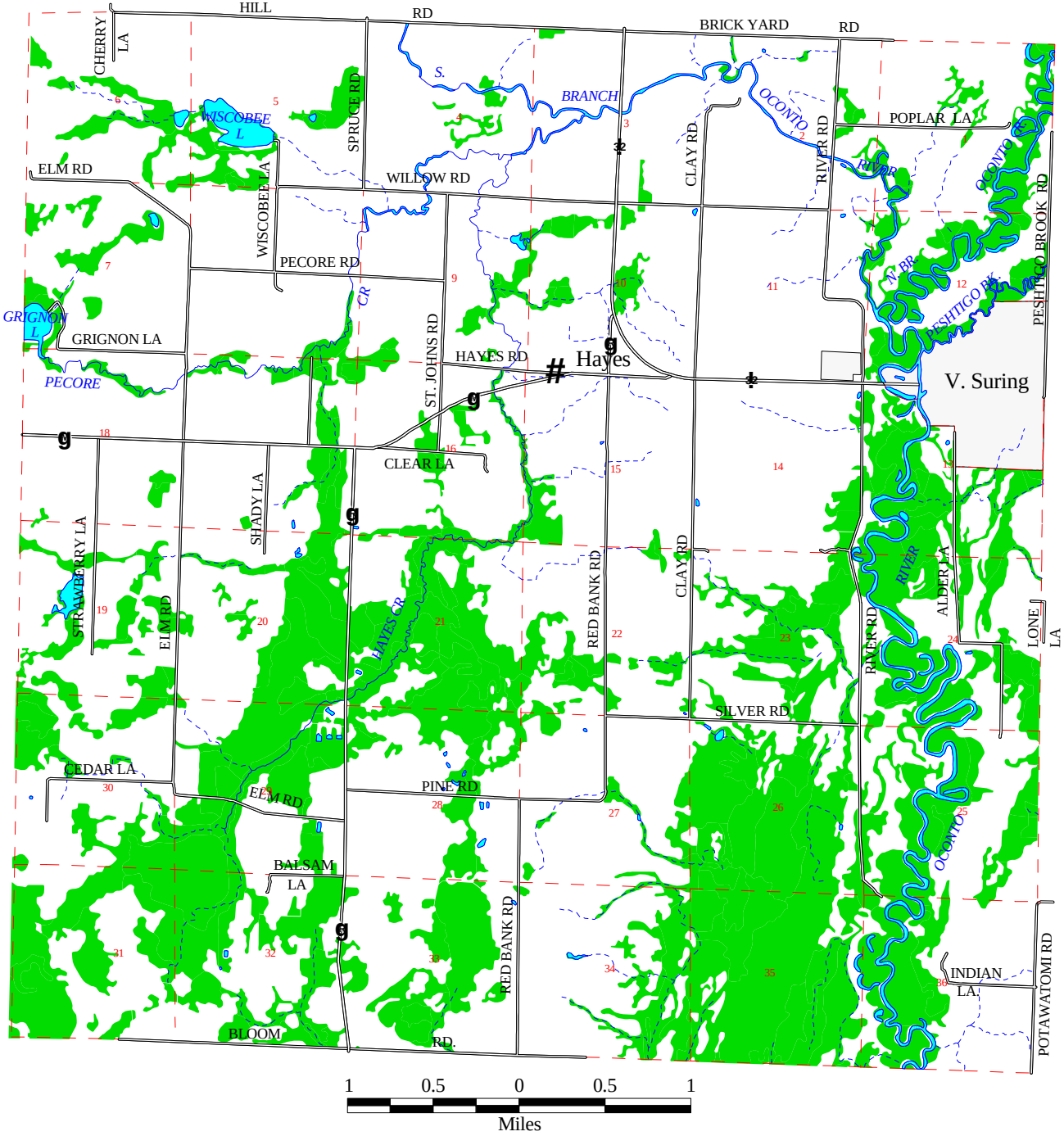
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.11

WDNR Wetlands

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



WDNR Wetlands

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

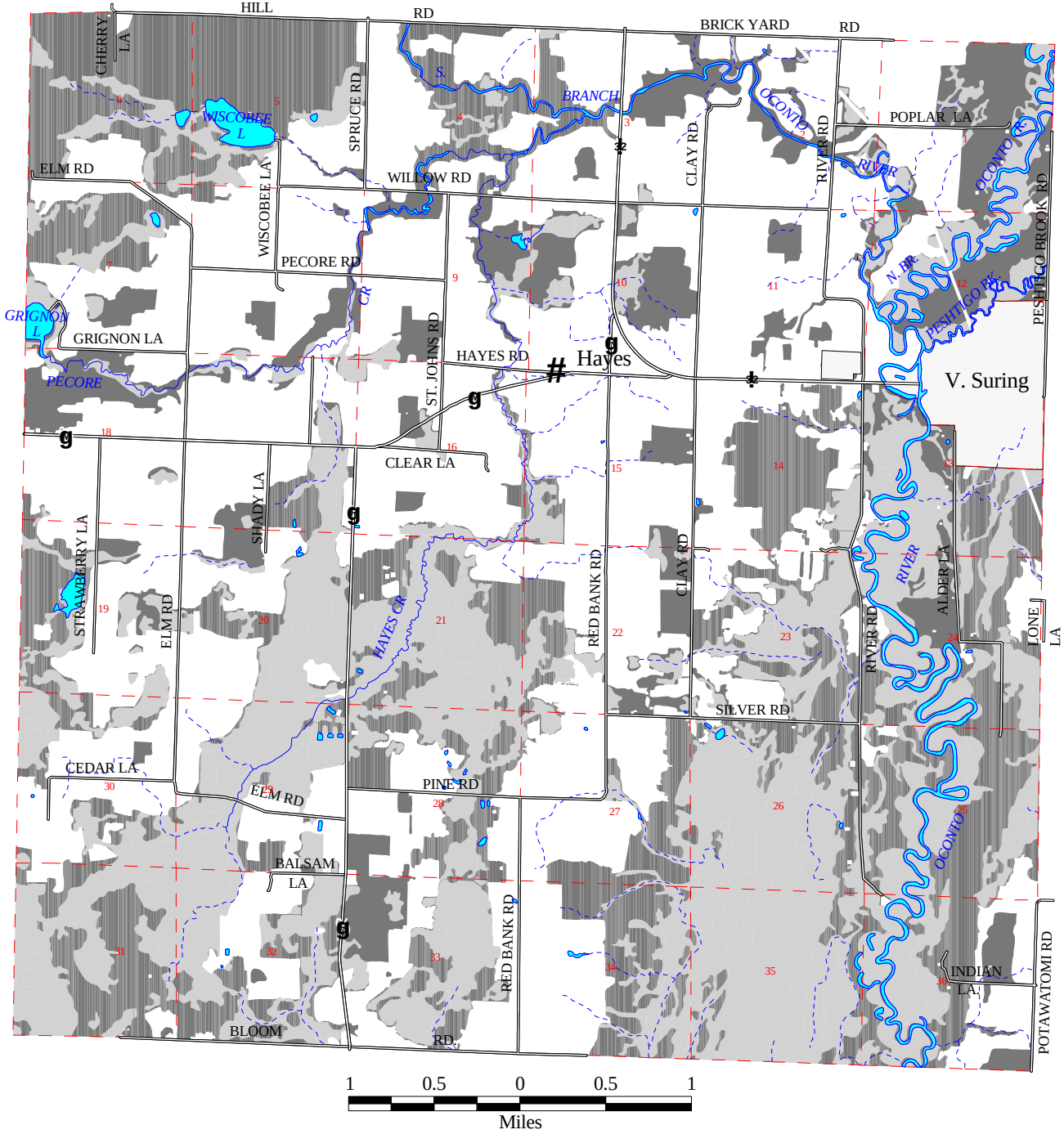
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.12

Woodlands

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Lowland Woodlands
Upland Woodlands

Map Features

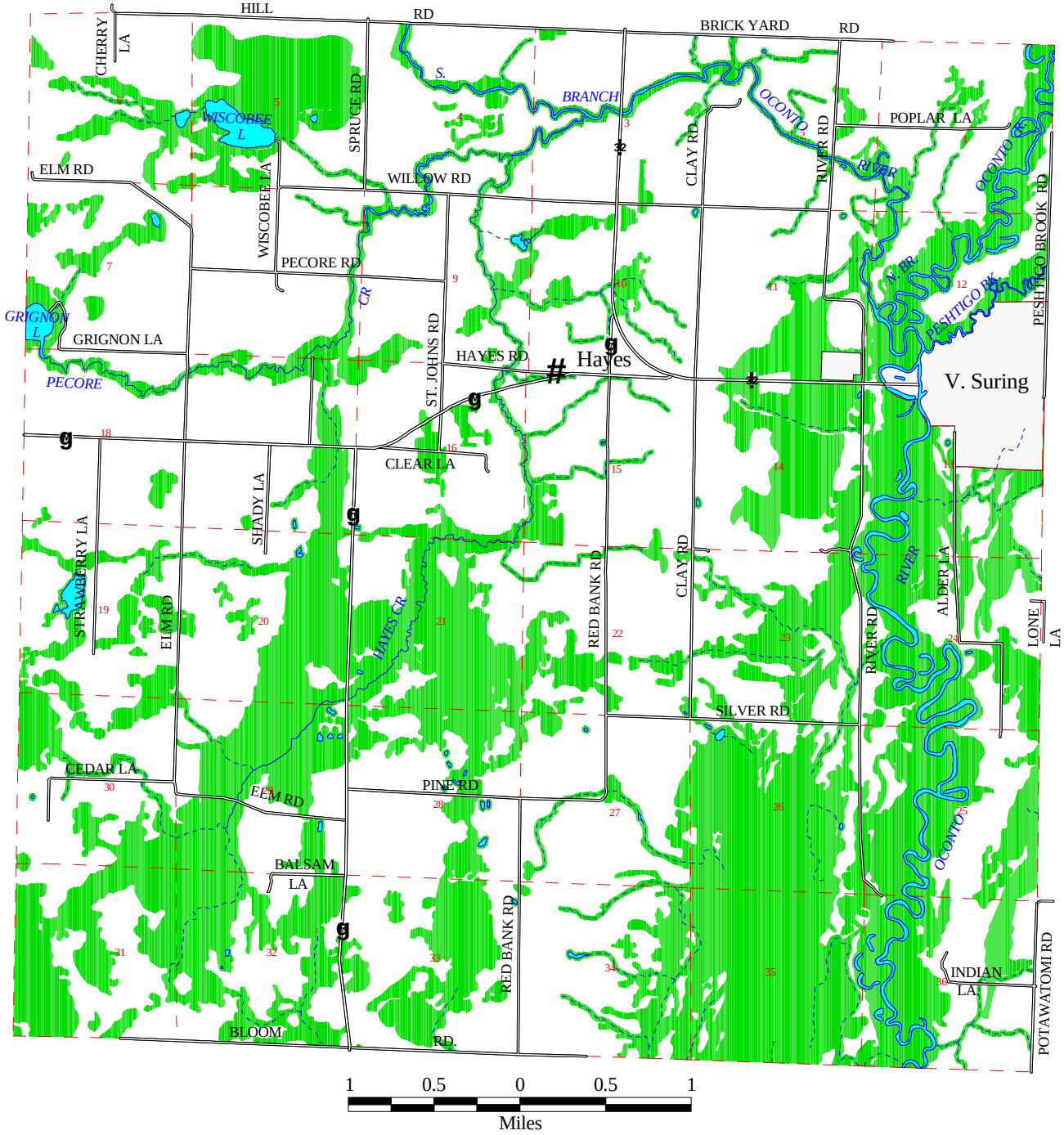
- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.13

Environmental Corridors
Town of How
Oconto County, Wisconsin



Environmental Corridors
- WDNR Wetlands with 25 Foot Buffer
- 100 - Year Floodplain
- Slope 12 Percent or Greater
- 75 - Foot Water Setback

Map Features
- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

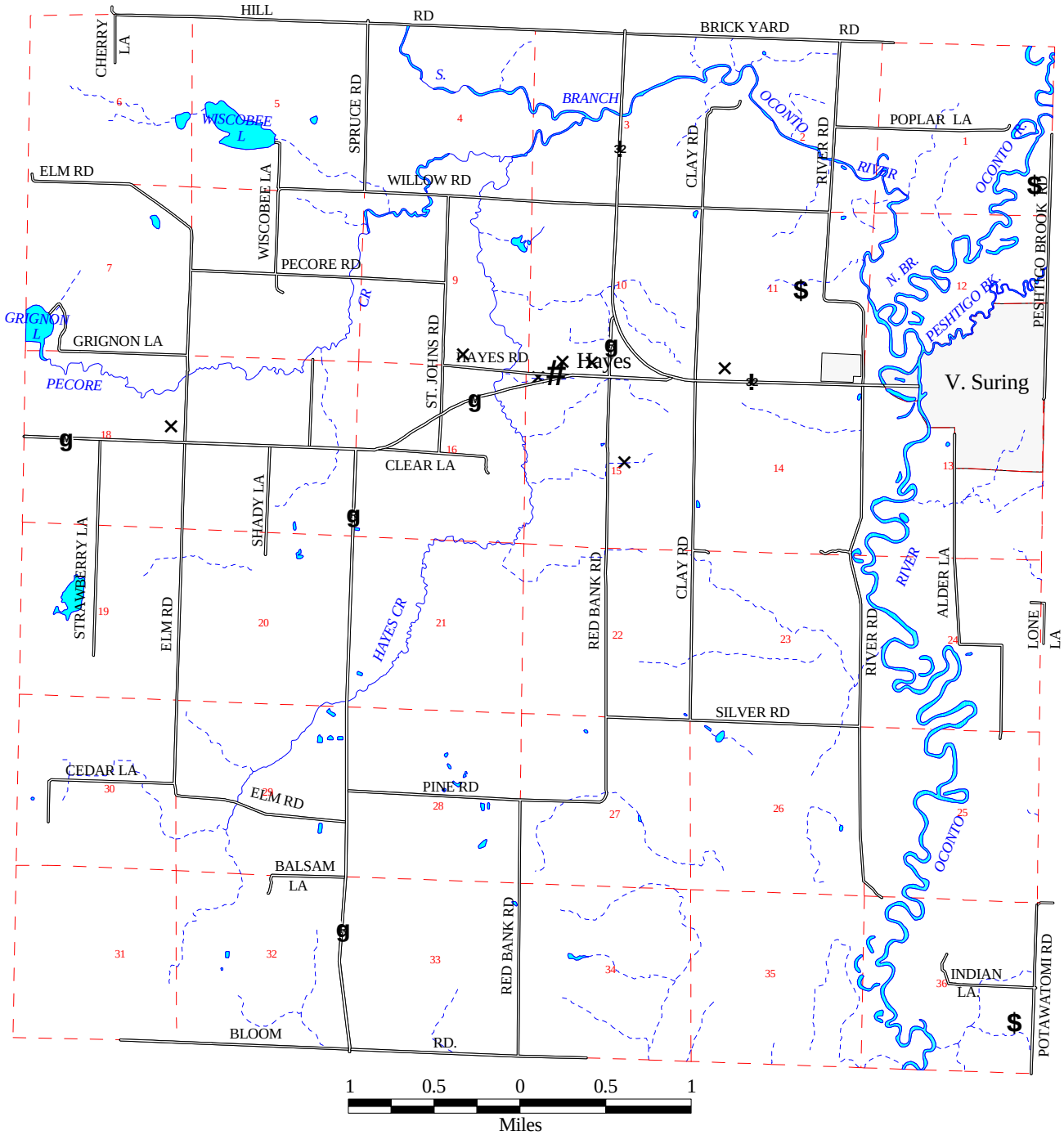
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 2.14

Historic & Archeological Sites

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



$ Archeological Sites
× Historical Sites

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Chapter 3 - HOUSING AND POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

Population change is the primary component in tracking the past growth of an area as well as predicting future population trends. Population characteristics relate directly to the town's housing, educational, community and recreational facility needs, and to its future economic development. It should be noted that over time there are fluctuations in the local and regional economy and population, which generally cannot be predicted. These fluctuations and changes may greatly influence the town's population growth and characteristics. This chapter will identify population and housing trends that may greatly affect the future of the Town of How.

The majority of the information within this chapter is based upon 1990 and 2000 Census information. It serves as background data to help determine such things as; how much population growth the town can expect to accommodate over the next twenty years; the condition of the housing stock and what types of housing will be needed in the future.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

1. The town experienced a population of 563 persons in 2000, a less than one percent decrease from 1990.
2. In 2000, the largest age group was between 25 and 54 years old. Individuals within this age group traditionally having the highest earning power (33 to 54 years old).
3. The town's median age in 2000 was 38.8 years old, which indicates a growing adult population. Implications are that an aging community may require additional specialized services to accommodate these age groups in the future.

The town's population has been decreasing very slowly over the course of the last four decades, excluding an upward swing of 27 persons in 1980. The WDOA projections developed after the 1990 Census indicate that the town's population was likely to drop through the year 2015. The trend in declining population (over the past two decades) seems to give these projections some validity. Similar to other neighboring towns within Oconto County, the town has experienced (over the past three decades) an age structure shift towards the older age groups. This may lead the town to spend more on services to accommodate an aging population over the next twenty years of this plan. Likewise, the aging population can also mean additional business opportunities, especially for a rural town like How. This aging population requires basic services such as groceries, housing and health care, but these persons tend to spend their incomes locally, if given opportunities. Well planned and financed services and programs directed towards the elderly can go a long way in keeping the buying power of the retired community within the area.

4. The total number of housing units in the Town of How has reportedly declined (23 units) from 1990 to 2000 as reported by the 2000 U.S. Census, following along with other communities in the region. However, the Town has reported a 29 unit increase over the period of 1990 to 1999 to the Department of Administration based upon issued building permits.

5. The household size for the town is expected to decline over the next 20 years from 2.7 to 2.4 persons per household.

Throughout the planning period there will be a demand for additional housing units within the town. A stable population, a region wide demand for larger lot sizes, a growing number of out-dated residential structures and a trend of smaller household sizes is expected to increase the demand for new residential developments. The town will need to consider specific areas to accommodate this change in land use while ensuring adequate services are provided. It should be noted that additional housing does not always lead to a community making money, and in most cases can be the most costly land use development due to the wide array of supporting services needed to accompany it. The town should closely monitor all costs, associated with future housing, on the town's budget in order to best control future property taxes.

6. In 2000, 43 percent of housing units (101 structures) were built before 1940.
7. In 2000, approximately only two renters where living in "non-affordable" housing, due to their paying 30 percent or more of their incomes towards rent.
8. In 2000, 11 homeowners where paying 30 percent or more of their incomes towards housing payments.
9. According to the 2000 Census the Median Household Income for the town was $39,167 less than Oconto County as a whole ($46,846), and lower than the state of Wisconsin of $52,911.

Approximately 88 percent of the housing within the Town of How is residential single family, yet almost half of the homes are over 60 years old. Few renters as well as a few home owners are considered to be living in non-affordable housing. For the reasons listed above, it is likely that some residents will need additional assistance regarding loans for housing rehabilitation as well as affordable housing. The town should stay aware of assistance programs and county efforts and explore actions that promote a mix of housing choices.

Even though the town is experiencing a decline in overall population, this plan's future land use is projecting an increase of 68 new housing units over the twenty year planning period. More than enough undeveloped land exists (allowing for a range in housing choices) within the town to accommodate these growth forecasts.

Overall, the town is expected to remain an agricultural community. The town supports the ideals of promoting housing for all residents, providing a range in housing, working towards gaining more financial assistance for its residents for rehabilitation of housing and rental assistance by working with county, state and federal agencies.

HOUSING STRATEGY

The current legislation on comprehensive plans under s 66.1001 requires that the housing element will need to be integrated and made consistent with the other nine elements of the comprehensive plan. For example, implementing the goals and policies of the housing element will need to correspond to actions undertaken in other elements such as land use, economic development, transportation, and community facilities.

The following stated *Goals*, *Objectives*, *Policies*, and *Programs* are based on the information provided within this chapter of the comprehensive plan, with special attention being made to the

detailed actions and programs available to the town identified at the end of this chapter. The town reviewed the options it has in order to obtain a balanced housing initiative. The preferred options the town wishes to implement are integrated into the following statements.

Goal:

To provide for a variety of quality housing opportunities for all segments of the town's current and future population.

Objective 1:

To develop and enforce policies and programs that provide a range of housing choices to meet the needs of all income levels and of all age groups including persons with special needs.

Policies:

1. Support housing developments for all persons including low and moderate income, elderly, and residents with special needs.
2. Ensure that the county's zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance continue to allow for a range in densities and lot sizes.
3. Support mixed use development throughout the town, with higher densities adjacent to the Village of Suring, to provide additional housing choices.
4. Support conservation by design developments (Appendix E) as well as cluster type developments as an alternative to conventional zoning methods.

Objective 2:

Promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing.

Policies:

1. Consider the use of a community land trust which can preserve affordable space for community center, health care facility, small business, and day care center.
2. Seek the donation of lands for affordable housing opportunities.
3. Encourage the infilling of existing residential developments.
4. Support adaptive reuse of existing developments such as business to residential.
5. Ensure that zoning regulations do not unduly restrict manufactured housing.

Objective 3:

Preservation of the existing housing stock through adequate maintenance and rehabilitation.

Policies:

1. The construction of new homes will be regulated by adequate building codes and ordinances.

2. Work with federal, state, and county agencies to assist town residents in achieving home loans.
3. When qualified, the town should apply for grants and become involved in programs to address the town's housing needs.
4. The town will assist residents by providing educational materials and information on financial programs and on home repairs.
5. Provide affordable housing information and assistance for first time home buyers.
6. Encourage rehabilitation and preservation of the existing housing stock in the town.

Objective 4:

New housing development will be in areas that preserve the town's rural nature and which are done in a cost effective way.

Policies:

1. Consider new development ideas which encourage a responsible use of land and the retention of natural or unique areas.
2. Identify areas in which new development should be restricted or maintained as open space.
3. Work with Oconto County and neighboring towns to establish innovative development guidelines for future consideration within the town.

Programs:

1. The town's zoning approval process (with veto authority) will consider new development techniques as being permitted (e.g. conservation subdivision designs, etc.) within the town.
2. The town will consider the above policies and evaluate their effectiveness at least once every year to help their residents in meeting their housing needs.
3. The Town Board will work with the state, county and BLRPC to monitor the town's population characteristics to stay informed of changing demographics/characteristics within the town.
4. The town' Comprehensive Plan has identified areas for a future mix of residential development with a variety of minimum densities to help in establishing a housing stock which meets differing needs of the community.
5. The town will assist the county in reviewing existing zoning and subdivision ordinances to identify antiquated standards that limit certain housing choices and to measure impacts that current ordinances have on the town's housing stock and future choices. The town will also work with the county on any future controls affording more flexibility in regulations allowing for a greater variety of housing choices to include considering Conservation Subdivisions and clustering.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Historical Population Levels

Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1 displays the increases and decreases of the historic population trends for the Town of How. The population was at its highest level in 1900 with 1,083 persons. The town's population declined by 11 percent in 1920, then declined again by 17 percent in 1930, and has been mostly declining slowly ever since. The 2000 census revealed an all time low of 563 persons in 2000.

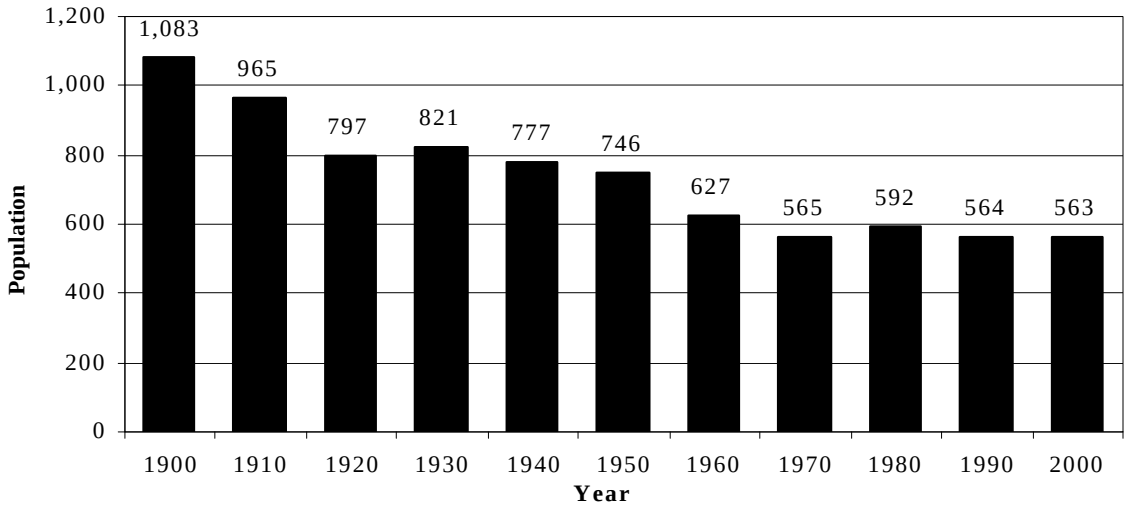
Table 3.1: Historical Population Levels, 1900-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

Year	Town of How	Town of Maple Valley	Town of Underhill	Village of Suring	Oconto County
1900	1,083	870	631	NA*	20,874
1910	965	1,163	851	NA*	25,657
1920	797	1,074	960	294	27,104
1930	821	989	825	421	26,386
1940	777	934	736	437	27,075
1950	746	880	691	546	26,238
1960	627	742	600	513	25,110
1970	565	679	613	499	25,553
1980	592	715	664	581	28,947
1990	564	690	668	626	30,226
2000	563	670	846	605	35,634

* Village of Suring was not incorporated until 1915.

Source: General Population Characteristics 1840-1970, Bay-Lake Regional Planning, December 1975; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Figure 3.1: Historical Population Levels, 1900-2000, Town of How



Source: General Population Characteristics 1840-1970, Bay-Lake Regional Planning, December 1975; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Population Trends

Since 1970, the population in the Town of How has been slowly decreasing, with the exception of a small increase in 1980 (Table 3.1). From 1970 to 1980 the population increased by 27

persons, 4.8 percent. From 1980 to 1990, the town's population decreased by 28 persons, or 4.7 percent. The neighboring Town of Maple Valley also experienced a similar decline in population for this period, but the county, the Town of Underhill and the Village of Suring had a small population increase, during this time. For the period 1990 to 2000, the Town of How declined very slightly by 0.2 percent, or 1 person. For this same period, the Village of Suring and the Town of Maple Valley declined in population, whereas the Town of Underhill and Oconto County grew by 26.6 percent and 15.2 percent respectively.

In 1993, the WDOA Demographic Services Center prepared population projections to the year 2015 for the communities and counties of the state, utilizing a projection formula that calculates the annual population change over three varying time spans. From this formula, the WDOA indicated that the Town of How was projected to have 530 persons in 2015 (Table 3.2). According to the most recent trends, the WDOA projections appear to be closely accurate. However, even with the accuracy of the WDOA projections, they do not project to the year 2020. Thus, alternative population projections were created by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission and can be found later within this chapter.

Table 3.2: Population Trends, 1970-2015, Town of How & Selected Areas

Year	Geographic Location						
	Town of How	Town of Maple Valley	Town of Underhill	Village of Suring	Oconto County	Bay-Lake Region	State of Wisconsin
Actual Population							
1970	565	679	613	499	25,553	440,926	4,417,731
1980	592	715	664	581	28,947	476,134	4,705,767
1990	564	690	668	626	30,226	498,824	4,891,769
2000	563	670	846	605	35,634	554,565	5,363,675
WDOA Population Projections							
2005	553	651	741	698	32,372	539,948	5,409,536
2010	544	635	748	707	32,495	546,261	5,512,313
2015	530	611	753	714	32,464	550,833	5,603,528
Number Change							
1970-1980	27	36	51	82	3,394	35,208	288,036
1980-1990	-28	-25	4	45	1,279	22,690	186,002
1990-2000	-1	-20	178	-21	5,408	55,741	471,906
2000-2015	-33	-59	-33	109	-3,170	-3,732	239,853
Percent Change							
1970-1980	4.8	5.3	8.3	16.4	13.3	8.0	6.5
1980-1990	-4.7	-3.5	0.6	7.7	4.4	4.8	4.0
1990-2000	-0.2	-2.9	26.6	-3.4	17.9	11.2	9.6
2000-2015	-5.9	-8.8	-5.9	18.0	-8.9	-0.7	4.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, 1970-2000; Wisconsin Department of Administration, for years cited; Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Population Projections, 1993; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Seasonal Population

The estimated seasonal population was found by multiplying the number of seasonal housing units by the average number of persons per household (Table 3.3). In 2000, the Town of How had 18 total seasonal housing units, or 7.9 percent of total housing units in the town. This creates an estimated seasonal population of 49 persons, or 8.7 percent.

Table 3.3: Estimated Seasonal Population, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

	Geographic Location				
	Town of How	Town of Maple Valley	Town of Underhill	Village of Suring	Oconto County
Population	563	670	846	605	35,634
Persons Per Household	2.72	2.51	2.57	2.17	2.52
Total Housing Units	229	323	468	269	19,812
Total Seasonal Housing Units*	18	47	129	6	4,837
Percent of Housing Units Seasonal	7.9	14.6	27.6	2.2	35.4
Estimated Seasonal Population**	49	118	332	13	17,665
Percent Population Seasonal	8.7	17.6	39.2	2.2	58.4

*Seasonal housing includes seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units, does not include other vacant
**Estimated Seasonal Population = Seasonal Housing Units x Persons per Household
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Revised Population Projections

Due to the fact that the WDOA projections do not go beyond the year 2015 to include the 2020 planning period, the Commission has prepared alternative population projections to determine an approximate growth rate for the Town of How.

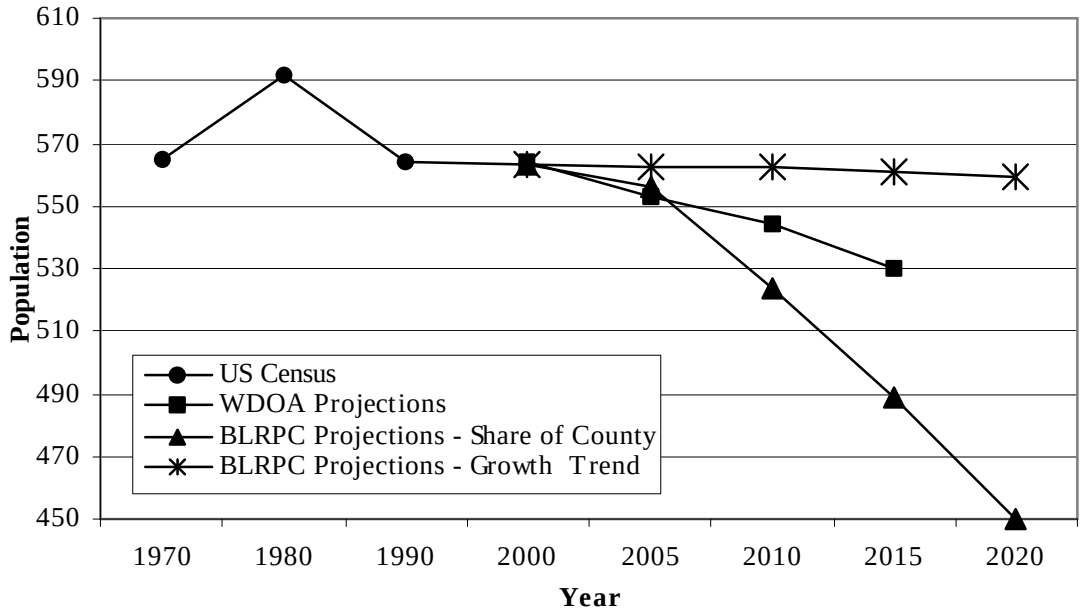
Projections were found by using a ratio methodology, termed share-of-the-county, to distribute county projections to the town level. The limitations of population projections should be recognized. Population projections are not predictions, rather they extend past growth trends into the future and their reliability depends on the continuation of these past growth trends. Smaller communities are also subject to more error because even minor changes in the community can result in significant changes in population projection estimates.

According to the Commission's share-of-the-county projections, the projected 2005 population for How is 556 persons. The projected 2010 population is 524 persons, the projected year 2015 population is 489, and the projected year 2020 population is 450 persons. Therefore, it is projected that the Town of How's 2000 population will decrease by 113 persons, a decline of 20.0 percent, by the year 2020. It should be noted that the town's projections are based off county projections, and BLRPC projections indicate that the county will experience a declining population, therefore making the town projections also decline. It should be noted that although the population of the town is estimated to decline, these projections are based on past trends in which the population has been declining. Small changes in the community or the region in the future may cause significant changes to these population projections. The BLRPC share-of-the-county projections create the "Low Growth" scenario for the town.

A "High Growth" projection was developed by using the 1970 to 2000 census figures and creating a "growth trend series" to the year 2020. This method identified a projected year 2005 population of 563 persons, a projected year 2010 population of 563 persons, an estimated 2015 population of 561, and a projected year 2020 population of 559. The town's population will fluctuate very little for the next 20 years by staying about the same for 15 years and then declining, just as past trends also illustrated. According to this "High Growth" projection, the Town of How's 2000 population (563 persons) will actually decrease by four persons in the year 2020 (to 559 persons).

Figure 3.2 displays the actual U.S. Census counts, the "Low Growth" BLRPC - Share of County projection, WDOA projections, and the "High Growth" BLRPC - Growth Trend projection based off the Census data.

Figure 3.2: Population Trends and Projections, 1970-2020, Town of How



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, 1970-2000; Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Population Estimates and Projections, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Population By Age and Sex

From 1980 to 2000 there have been notable shifts in the age distribution of the population in the Town of How In 1980, 28.4 percent of the population was under the age of 15, and 38 percent were under the age of 20. In 1980, the greatest percentage of the population was in the 25-44 age group. In 1990, the population shifted up, with most of the population between the ages of 25 to 54 which was within the "Prime Earning" age group (between the ages of 33 and 54). By 2000 those under the age of 20 dropped to 30.6 percent, while those between 35 and 54 grew. Also, for the last 30 years, the Town of How has had more males than females. Table 3.4 and Figure 3.3 display the shifts in population for the Town of How.

Table 3.4: Male and Female Distribution by Age and Sex, 1980-2000, Town of How

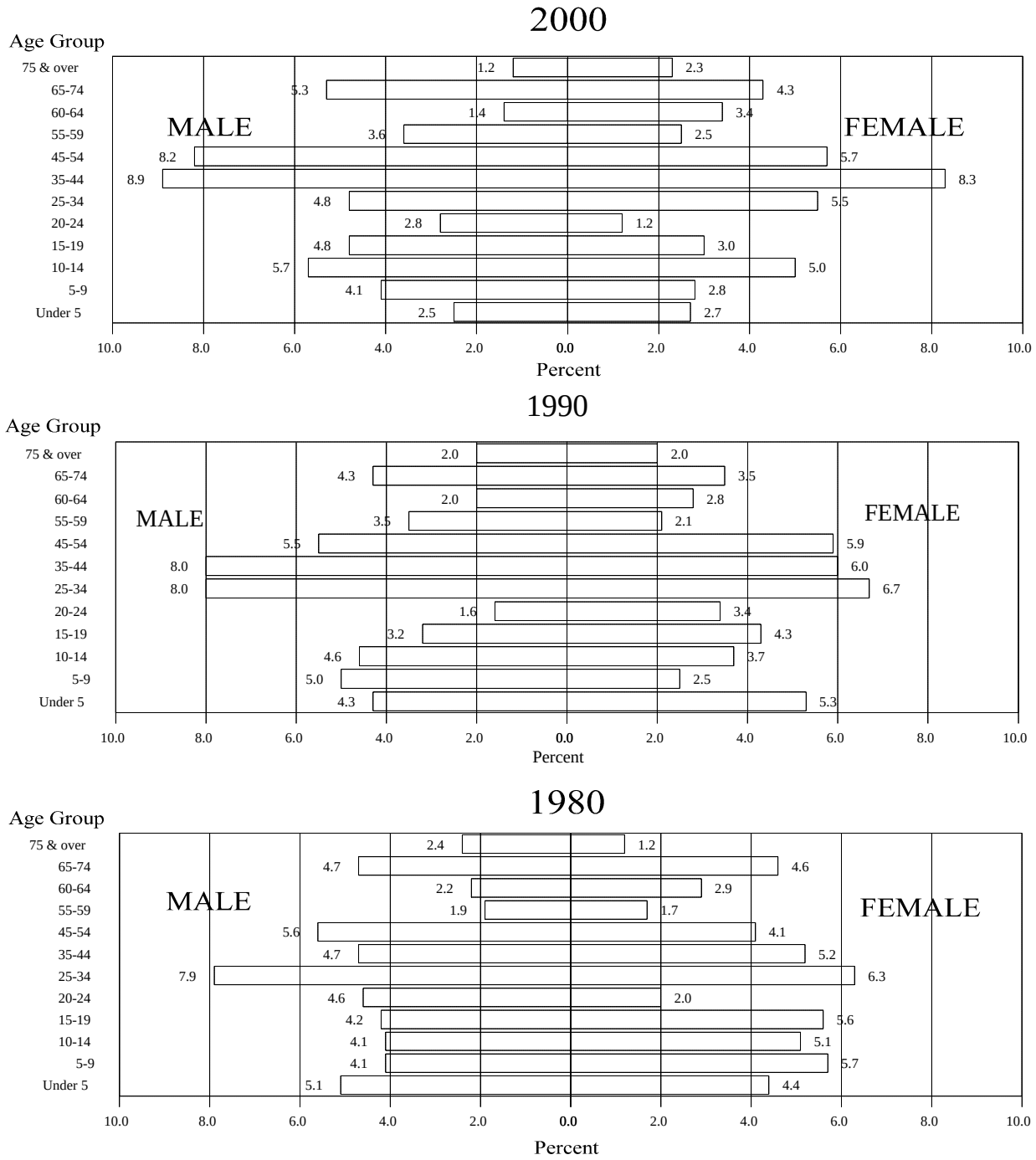
1980								
	Male			Female			Total	
		Percent			Percent			
Age	Count	Male	Total	Count	Female	Total	Count	Percent
75 & over	14	4.6	2.4	7	2.4	1.2	21	3.5
65-74	28	9.2	4.7	27	9.4	4.6	55	9.3
60-64	13	4.3	2.2	17	5.9	2.9	30	5.1
55-59	11	3.6	1.9	10	3.5	1.7	21	3.5
45-54	33	10.9	5.6	24	8.3	4.1	57	9.6
35-44	28	9.2	4.7	31	10.8	5.2	59	10.0
25-34	47	15.5	7.9	37	12.8	6.3	84	14.2
20-24	27	8.9	4.6	12	4.2	2.0	39	6.6
15-19	25	8.2	4.2	33	11.5	5.6	58	9.8
10-14	24	7.9	4.1	30	10.4	5.1	54	9.1
5-9	24	7.9	4.1	34	11.8	5.7	58	9.8
under 5	30	9.9	5.1	26	9.0	4.4	56	9.5
TOTAL	304	100.0	51.4	288	100.0	48.6	592	100.0
1990								
	Male			Female			Total	
		Percent			Percent			
Age	Count	Male	Total	Count	Female	Total	Count	Percent
75 & over	11	3.8	2.0	11	4.0	2.0	22	3.9
65-74	24	8.2	4.3	20	7.4	3.5	44	7.8
60-64	11	3.8	2.0	16	5.9	2.8	27	4.8
55-59	20	6.8	3.5	12	4.4	2.1	32	5.7
45-54	31	10.6	5.5	33	12.1	5.9	64	11.3
35-44	45	15.4	8.0	34	12.5	6.0	79	14.0
25-34	45	15.4	8.0	38	14.0	6.7	83	14.7
20-24	9	3.1	1.6	19	7.0	3.4	28	5.0
15-19	18	6.2	3.2	24	8.8	4.3	42	7.4
10-14	26	8.9	4.6	21	7.7	3.7	47	8.3
5-9	28	9.6	5.0	14	5.1	2.5	42	7.4
under 5	24	8.2	4.3	30	11.0	5.3	54	9.6
TOTAL	292	100.0	51.8	272	100.0	48.2	564	100.0
2000								
	Male			Female			Total	
		Percent			Percent			
Age	Count	Male	Total	Count	Female	Total	Count	Percent
75 & over	7	2.3	1.2	13	4.9	2.3	20	3.6
65-74	30	10.0	5.3	24	9.1	4.3	54	9.6
60-64	8	2.7	1.4	19	7.2	3.4	27	4.8
55-59	20	6.7	3.6	14	5.3	2.5	34	6.0
45-54	46	15.3	8.2	32	12.2	5.7	78	13.9
35-44	50	16.7	8.9	47	17.9	8.3	97	17.2
25-34	27	9.0	4.8	31	11.8	5.5	58	10.3
20-24	16	5.3	2.8	7	2.7	1.2	23	4.1
15-19	27	9.0	4.8	17	6.5	3.0	44	7.8
10-14	32	10.7	5.7	28	10.6	5.0	60	10.7
5-9	23	7.7	4.1	16	6.1	2.8	39	6.9
under 5	14	4.7	2.5	15	5.7	2.7	29	5.2
TOTAL	300	100	53.3	263	100	46.7	563	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A, Table 10; 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A, Table P012; 2000 Census of Population and Housing SF-1; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Decade Population Pyramids

Figure 3.3 represents the distribution of the age and sex of the population of How for 1980, 1990 and 2000. The pyramids show the population shift into the older age groups. Each decade reveals that there have been differences in the percentages between male and female leaning more towards males than females in the town.

Figure 3.3: Population Pyramids, 1980-2000, Town of How



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A, Table 10; 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A, Table P012; 2000 Census of Population and Housing SF-1; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

School Age, Working Age, and Retirement Age

For this section, the population of the Town of How was divided into four age groups: the school age group (5-17), the working age group (16+), the voting age group (18+), and those of retirement age (65+). In 1990, the working age group accounted for 83 percent of the total population, while in 2000 (Table 3.5) this age group dropped to 76.4 percent. The town's population distribution among the age groups is very similar to Oconto County and the state.

Table 3.5: Population by Age Groups and Sex, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

Age Groups	Total	Male	Female	Percent	Oconto County Percent	Wisconsin Percent
School Age						
5-11	65	40	25	11.5	10.2	10.1
12-14	34	15	19	6.0	4.9	4.5
15-17	32	19	13	5.7	5.0	4.5
Working and Voting Age						
16+	430	228	202	76.4	77.5	77.5
16-64	356	191	165	63.2	62.4	64.4
18+	403	212	191	71.6	74.3	74.5
18-64	329	175	154	58.4	59.2	61.4
Retirement Age						
65+	74	37	37	13.1	15.1	13.1
Total Population	563	300	263		35,634	5,363,675

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A, General Profile and Table P012; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Median Age

The median age for all compared areas has increased for the period 1970 to 2000 (Table 3.6). This indicates that the overall aging of the population is not just occurring for the United States as a whole, but at local levels as well. This national trend taking place in Oconto County and its communities should be noted for the future needs of the town and the area. An aging population demands additional community services and can also mean additional economic opportunities.

Table 3.6: Median Age, 1970-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

Geographic Area	1970	1980	1990	2000
Town of How	27.1	29.2	33.6	38.8
Town of Maple Valley	28.2	34.2	34.8	40.2
Town of Underhill	32.7	31.8	35.2	39.3
Village of Suring	38.2	38.8	43.5	42.3
Oconto County	30.8	31.3	35.0	38.8
Bay-Lake Region	29.6	30.7	34.6	38.6
State of Wisconsin	27.2	29.4	32.9	36.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, Wisconsin, 1970, Tables 33,35; 1980 Table 14; 1990 STF 1A, General Profile; Census 2000 and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

HOUSING INVENTORY

Total Housing Unit Levels by Decade

The total number of housing units within the Town of How (as reported by the U.S. Census) increased from 1970 to 1990, and then declined from 1990 to 2000 by 23 housing units (Table 3.7 and Figure 3.4). In 2000, there were 229 total housing units, a 32 percent increase since 1970. The adjacent Town of Underhill increased its housing units by 59 percent in the same time period from 1970 to 2000. From 1990 to 2000, the number of housing units in the town decreased by 9 percent. By comparison, the number of housing units in the Town of Maple Valley and the Village of Suring also declined for the same period. The town increased its housing units by 17 percent for the period 1980 to 1990, and 24 percent from 1970 to 1980.

Note: The town is required to report to the Department of Administration annual housing building permits. In doing so, the town reported a net of 29 additions between 1990 and 1999. The U.S. Census and the reported WDOA figures do not coincide with one another. The following text details the Census information, and is useful in comparing the town to past U.S. Census information as well as neighboring community's Census counts. However, when projecting future housing needs the town will determine which numbers best reflect the activity within its community (WDOA or U.S. Census).

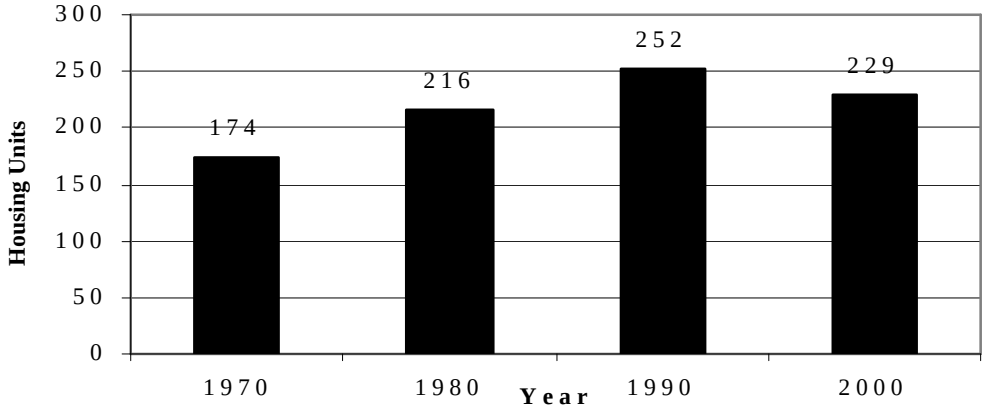
Table 3.7: Total Housing Units, 1970-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

	Year				Percent Change			
Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	1970-80	1980-90	1990-2000	1970-2000
Town of How	174	216	252	229	24.1	16.7	-9.1	31.6
Town of Maple Valley	221	306	327	323	38.5	6.9	-1.2	46.2
Town of Underhill	294	417	438	468	41.8	5.0	6.8	59.2
Village of Suring	194	278	282	269	43.3	1.4	-4.6	38.7
Oconto County	11,947	16,940	18,832	19,812	41.8	11.2	5.2	65.8
Bay-Lake Region	148,035	194,960	222,116	248,916	31.7	13.9	12.1	68.1
Wisconsin	1,472,466	1,863,897	2,055,774	2,321,144	26.6	10.3	12.9	57.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970 Census of Population and Housing, Series 100, Table 2; 1980 Census of Population and Housing, Table 45; 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A; Census 2000; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Note: The 2000 Housing total is reported by the town to be low, an additional 29 housing units needs to be added to the1990 total for an accurate 2000 count for projections.

Figure 3.4: Historic Housing Unit Levels, 1970-2000 - U. S. Census, Town of How



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970 Census of Population and Housing, Series 100, Table 2; 1980 Census of Population and Housing, Table 45; 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A; State of Wisconsin Demographic Services Center, Table DP-1, Profile of General Demographics: 2000; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Historic and Projected Household Size

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the household size within Oconto county is projected to decrease throughout the planning period. Table 3.8 and Table 3.9 indicates that the number of persons per household will consistently decrease during the planning period, from 2.5 in 2000 to 2.2 in 2020. This county trend will likely be reflected in the Town of How as well. Using the county's trend to project the town's household size indicates 2.4 person per household for the town in 2020.

Table 3.8: Household Projections by Household Type, 1990-2015, Oconto County

	Planning Year				
Characteristics	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015
Population	30,226	35,634	32,372	32,495	32,464
Persons Per Household	2.65	2.52	2.45	2.36	2.30
Households	11,283	13,979	13,031	13,530	13,892
Family Households (families)	8,368	10,046	9,725	10,089	10,305
Married-couple Family	7,334	8,479	8,571	8,914	9,134
Female Householder	685	958	762	775	771
Nonfamily Households	2,915	3,933	3,306	3,441	3,587
Householder Living Alone	2,536	3,283	2,882	3,016	3,170
Age 65 and over	1,414	1,492	1,557	1,636	1,782

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Wisconsin Household Projections, December 1993; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Table 3.9: Persons Per Household Projections, 1990-2020, Town of How & Selected Areas

	Planning Year					
Geographic Area	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Town of How	2.85	2.72	2.64	2.55	2.48	2.41
Oconto County	2.65	2.52	2.45	2.36	2.3	2.23

Source: WDOA, Wisconsin Household Projections by Household Type, 1990-2015, December 1993;Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Note: The increments used to obtain the projected household sizes for the Town of How were taken from Oconto County's projection increments prepared by the Demographic Services Center and through linear trending from 1990 to 2020 by BLRPC, 2001.

Housing Permits Current Decade

The Town of How had 32 housing unit additions (and three deletions) for the period 1990 to 1999 (see Table 3.10). For the same period, the Town of Gillett had 58 housing unit additions. It appears that during the latter portion of the 1990's the Town of How had accelerated its housing unit growth, most likely due to the demand created from an increasing population due to low interest rates, and low unemployment.

Table 3.10: Housing Unit Additions and Deletions, 1990-1999, Town of How & Selected Areas

Year	Town of How	Town of Gillett	Oconto County
1990	1	2	241
1991	1	2	209
1992	1	10	338
1993	0	6	315
1994	4	4	364
1995	4	5	442
1996	7	9	452
1997	7	7	506
1998	4	9	541
1999	3	4	501
Total Additions	32	58	3,909
Total Deletions, 1990-1999	3	12	264
Net Change, 1990-1999	29	46	3,645

Source: State of Wisconsin Demographic Services Center, Annual Housing Unit Surveys, July 18, 2000; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Projected Occupied Housing Units & Total Housing Units

In formulating a "best guess" for the future residential needs of the community, three methods were used in order to determine the most likely housing projection to 2020. The year 2000 "occupied housing" count of 207 units was used as a base figure as was the 2000 count for "total housing" units of 229 for methods "one and two". Method three used the Annual Permit Reports supplied by the town to the Department of Administration between the years 1990 and 1999 which increased the number of dwellings from 1990's total number of 252 units to 281 by 1999 (some 52 housing unit difference from the U.S. Census total count for 2000). The occupied number of households was 257 units in 2000. Keep in mind that seasonal/vacant housing units for all were kept as a constant (9.6 percent) throughout the planning period (2000 to 2020) regarding future housing needs.

Method One:

A *"linear trend"* to the year 2020 was also created utilizing the census "occupied" housing counts from 1970 to 2000. This created a housing unit projection that indicated that by 2020 the Town of How would have 232 total housing units, or an increase of three housing units.

Method Two:

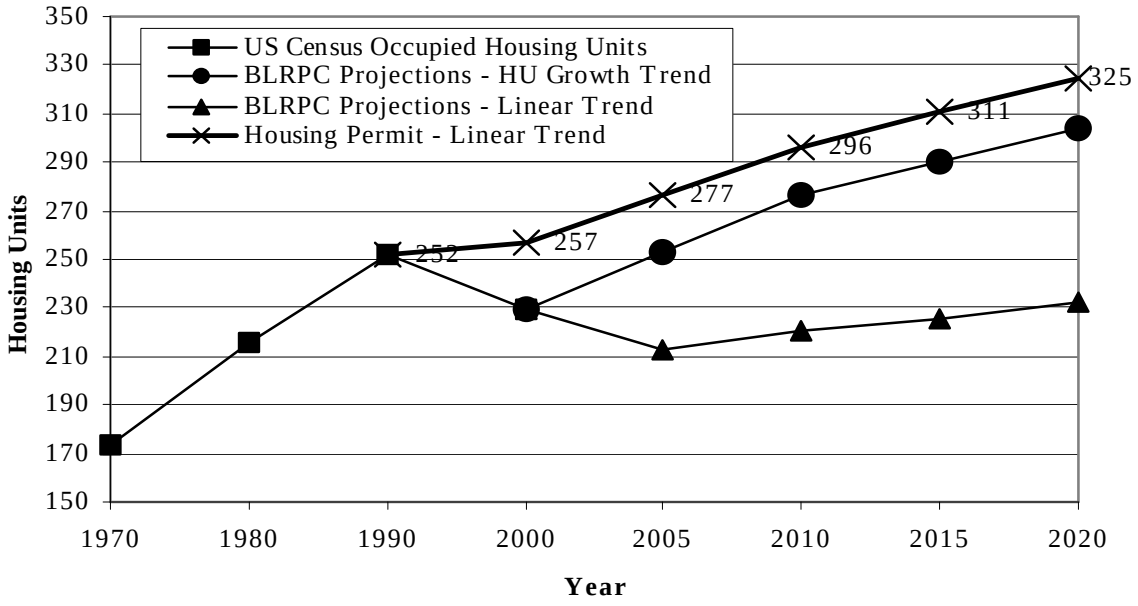
By using the "High" population projection to 2020, and the projected Persons Per Household number to 2020, one can predict another range in the number of housing units needed by 2020. The High population projection, which shows a loss of 4 persons from 2000 to 2020, would still equal an increase in housing demand of 75 units.

Method Three:

This method, utilized permit data gathered from the Department of Administration which provided annual housing construction permits from 1990 to 1999 (reported by the town). The method is based upon the 1990 housing count for the town adding the net addition totals of 29

housing units reported. The town averaged a net of 2.9 housing units per year over this ten year period. Projecting to 2020 from this new figure utilizing a linear trend, the town would expect an increase in housing demand of 68 units (325 units overall) from the year 2000.

Figure 3.5: Occupied Housing Unit Trends & Projections, 1970-2020, Town of How



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970 Census of Population and Housing, Series 100, Table 2; 1980 Census of Population and Housing, Table 45; 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 1A; State of Wisconsin Demographic Services Center, Annual Housing Unit Surveys, July 18, 2000; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001

Housing Projection Selection

It was determined by the town's Plan Committee to reflect the last ten years of housing permits within any future housing demand projection. Thus, the housing demand would best be reflective of the 325 total housing units by 2020, an increase of 68 units. This projection was determined to be both reasonable and to best reflect the recent activity over the past 10 years, within the town. The projection of 325 total units (or the addition of 68 units) will be used for planning purposes for the next 20 years.

Housing Types - Units in Structure

The majority of housing types in the Town of How in 2000 were one unit detached structures, 88 percent (Table 3.11). There are no 3-4 unit structures, or housing types with 10 or greater units, however there are 19 mobile homes (33 in 1990) in the town. Oconto County also has the majority of its housing types being one unit detached structures. Additionally, the county has a high percentage of mobile homes, 15 percent (18.5 percent in 1990, a decline over the last ten years).

Table 3.11: Units in Structure, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

	Town of How		Town of Maple Valley		Town of Underhill		Village of Suring		Oconto County	
Units	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1 unit, detached	206	88.0	275	86.2	350	75.1	179	64.2	15,356	77.5
1 unit, attached	4	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.1	127	0.6
2 units	5	2.1	0	0.0	3	0.6	13	4.7	465	2.3
3 or 4 units	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	3.9	219	1.1
5 to 9 units	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	35	12.5	337	1.7
10 to 19 units	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	2.2	125	0.6
20 or more units	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	17	6.1	175	0.9
Mobile home	19	8.1	44	13.8	109	23.4	15	5.4	2,975	15.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.9	0	0.0	33	0.2
Total	234	100.0	319	100.0	466	100.0	279	100.0	19,812	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF- 1; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Housing Occupancy and Tenure

The Town of How had 18 housing units (7.9 percent) out of a total of 229 being used for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. In 2000, the county had a significant number of seasonal housing units at 4,837. The majority of these seasonal units are found in the northern portions of the county.

Table 3.12 displays the housing occupancy and tenure in 2000. The Town of How had 207 occupied housing units (90.4 percent) and 22 vacant units (9.6 percent) in 2000. Of the 207 occupied units, 172 were owner occupied while 35 housing units were renter occupied. The Town of How has a much higher percentage of occupied housing units than the county, due to the large number of seasonal housing units that exist within the county.

Table 3.12: Housing Occupancy and Tenure, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

	Town of How		Town of Maple Valley		Town of Underhill		Village of Suring		Oconto County	
Units	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied	207	90.4	267	82.7	329	70.3	252	93.7	13,979	70.6
Owner	172	75.1	237	73.4	293	62.6	153	56.9	11,598	58.5
Renter	35	15.3	30	9.3	36	7.7	99	36.8	2,381	12.0
Vacant	22	9.6	56	17.3	139	29.7	17	6.3	5,833	29.4
Seasonal, Recreational, Occasional Use	18	7.9	47	14.6	129	27.6	6	2.2	4,837	24.4
Other	4	1.7	9	2.8	10	2.1	11	4.1	996	5.0
Total Units	229	100.0	323	100.0	468	100.0	269	100.0	19,812	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Age of Housing

According to the 2000 Census, approximately 43.2 percent of housing units in the Town of How were built before 1940 (Table 3.13). As a result, there is a substantial amount of older housing units within the Town of How. Nearly 25 percent of the housing units were built between 1970 and 1989. The county, region and state have a significant number of housing units built before 1940, however the Town of How shows the greatest percentage.

Table 3.13: Housing Units by Year Structure Built, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

Year Structure Built	Town of How		Town of Maple Valley		Town of Underhill		Village of Suring		Oconto County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1999 to March 2000	6	2.6	4	1.3	4	0.9	3	1.1	705	3.6
1995 to 1998	7	3.0	20	6.3	19	4.1	6	2.2	1,903	9.6
1990 to 1994	12	5.1	7	2.2	33	7.1	8	2.9	1,293	6.5
1980 to 1989	24	10.3	43	13.5	89	19.1	16	5.7	2,677	13.5
1970 to 1979	35	15.0	63	19.7	80	17.2	84	30.1	3,656	18.5
1960 to 1969	6	2.6	16	5.0	38	8.2	11	3.9	2,016	10.2
1940 to 1959	43	18.4	49	15.4	32	6.9	87	31.2	3,386	17.1
1939 or earlier	101	43.2	117	36.7	171	36.7	64	22.9	4,176	21.1
Total	234	100.0	319	100.0	466	100.0	279	100.0	19,812	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF- 3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Condition of Housing Stock

Determining the number of substandard housing units in the Town of How will be an indication of the condition of the overall housing stock. Those units that are determined to be substandard should not be considered as part of the overall housing supply. The definition of substandard can vary from community to community, and change over time. Determining a structure as substandard can be based solely on the age of the structure, however, many older housing units have been remodeled or renovated and should not be considered substandard.

In 2000, there were 101 structures built prior to 1940 (115 structures in 1990), many of which are not substandard. According to the 2000 Census, there were only 2 housing units in the town that lacked complete plumbing facilities, and none that lacked complete kitchen facilities (12 housing units in 1990 lacked complete plumbing facilities). These units are considered substandard and are removed from being considered as part of the overall housing stock.

A listening session was conducted in Oconto County in 2001 regarding housing. Many residents were concerned that most rental properties were older structures, and that new affordable housing was not being built and would not be available to residents 10 years from today.

Household Relationship

The 2000 Census revealed that 100 percent of people in the Town of How lived in households (Table 3.14). For Oconto County, 99 percent of people lived in households, with the remaining one percent of the people living in group quarters. This is similar for all areas compared, with the exception being the Village of Suring that has over 9 percent of people living in group quarters.

Table 3.14: Household Type and Relationship, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

Relationship	Town of How		Town of Maple Valley		Town of Underhill		Village of Suring		Oconto County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
In Households	563	100.0	670	100.0	846	78.0	548	90.6	35,276	99.0
Householder	207	36.8	267	39.9	329	30.3	252	41.7	13,979	39.2
Spouse	142	25.2	175	26.1	206	19.0	110	18.2	8,479	23.8
Child	186	33.0	195	29.1	253	23.3	148	24.5	10,561	29.6
Other Relative	14	2.5	9	1.3	21	1.9	10	1.7	769	2.2
Non Relative	14	2.5	24	3.6	37	3.4	28	4.6	1,488	4.2
In Group Quarters	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	57	9.4	358	1.0
Institutionalized	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	53	8.8	290	0.8
Noninstitutionalized	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.7	68	0.2
Total Persons	563	100.0	670	100.0	1085	100.0	605	100.0	35,634	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 2000, through Demographic Services Web site, WDOA, PDF file; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Housing Values

In 2000, the majority of housing units in the Town of How were valued between $50,000 and $99,999 (Table 3.15). The median value of specified owner-occupied housing units in the town was $72,100, which was lower than the median value for the county, which was $89,900.

Table 3.15: Values of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

	Town of How		Town of Maple Valley		Town of Underhill		Village of Suring		Oconto County	
Value	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than $50,000	27	31.8	37	33.3	33	22.1	60	46.2	1021	13.7
$50,000 to $99,999	39	45.9	54	48.6	86	57.7	68	52.3	3335	44.9
$100,000 to $149,999	13	15.3	12	10.8	19	12.8	2	1.5	1727	23.2
$150,000 to $199,999	4	4.7	2	1.8	8	5.4	0	0.0	814	11.0
$200,000 to $299,999	2	2.4	2	1.8	3	2.0	0	0.0	434	5.8
$300,000 to $499,999	0	0.0	4	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	81	1.1
$500,000 to $999,999	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	0.2
$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	0.1
Total Units	85	100.0	111	100.0	149	100.0	130	100.0	7428	100.0
Median Value	$72,100		$58,800		$66,700		$52,500		$89,900	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Housing Costs - Rents and Mortgage

Providing affordable housing that meets the needs of future Town of How residents is an important element of planning. Housing influences the economy, transportation, infrastructure, natural features and various other aspects of a comprehensive plan. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), housing affordability is defined as paying no more than 30 percent of household income for housing. According to the 2000 census the median household income was $39,167 up from 1990's $22,054, lower than Oconto County's ($46,846) and Wisconsin's ($52,911). Assuming individuals made the median household income in 2000, the monthly amount a household can afford for housing is approximately $979.

Rent and Income Comparison

According to the 2000 Census, the median gross rent for renter-occupied housing units in How was $506, compared to $429 for Oconto county as a whole. Only two renter-occupied housing units in How paid 30 percent or more of their 1999 income in rent.

Owner Costs and Income Comparison

The 2000 Census indicated that 11 specified owner-occupied housing units paid 30 percent or more of their 1999 incomes for selected monthly owner costs. For owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage in 2000, the median monthly owner cost was $668 in the Town of How. For owner-occupied units without a mortgage, the monthly cost was $231.

Subsidized and Special Needs Housing

Within the Oconto County area exists a variety of agencies that help find and develop housing for persons with various physical and mental disabilities or other special needs. The county does not have funding for these services. The Human Services Department of the County has information regarding the following agencies: WHEDA, NEWCAP, Housing Authority and Housing Management Services.

Within the Town of How, it is expected that assistance with home improvement (due to the aging of the structures) and rent are the greatest needs (partly due to an aging population). An adhoc listening session conducted in Oconto County in April of 2001 revealed that many residents and property owners were concerned about affordable housing and assistance with loans to improve aged housing. A study on housing within Oconto County (2000) was conducted and its results indicate that the County is classified as being "weak" on providing housing units to the elderly.

Housing Development Environment

Within the planning area is a limited number of services due to the rural atmosphere of the town. Roads comprise the majority of public services within the town. Future housing will develop along already established transportation corridors of both the county and town, with local subdivision roads being added with future developments as needed.

The town has a vast number of acres of developable lands. As with many of the towns in Oconto County, the lands vary on their aesthetic qualities based upon location to roadways and natural features. Current housing regulations/zoning allow for a variety of housing opportunities to include the option of manufactured homes, duplexes, mobile home parks, multi-family, elderly housing and personal assistance housing, and single-family housing. Over the last ten years, the developers operating within the town are averaging three housing units per year.

ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The following text (as well as the above housing and population data) was presented to Town officials for their review and consideration. It assisted in determining the overall policies and programs the town will follow over the planning period in order to provide the desired housing condition within the community. These identified actions appear at the beginning of this chapter within the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs section.

Although there are currently no programs, policies, or assistance programs specifically regarding housing in the town there are some programs available at the county, state, and federal level in which town residents would be eligible.

All communities in Wisconsin have a number of implementation options available to them. One important implementation option is ongoing education of citizens and local officials about the contents of this housing chapter and on the role of housing within the community. Citizens need to understand the relationship of housing to economic development, land use, community facilities, and transportation.

Other implementation options available to communities include regulatory tools, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, governmental and private non-profit programs available to encourage the maintenance and development of affordable housing.

Housing Programs

A number of federal and state housing programs are available to help local communities promote the development of housing for individuals with lower incomes and certain special needs. Some communities may also want to explore developing their own programs. Below are agencies established to provide assistance to a wide variety of communities.

Note: *Not each program is available to the town, nor is each recommended. The programs are described in order to educate residents on specific agencies and their programs, and to be an inclusive information source during planning discussions.*

Federal programs and revenue sources

The **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** is the federal agency with primary responsibility for housing programs and community development. It provides subsidized housing through low-income public housing and the Section 8 program that provides subsidies for rent in private apartments to low-income households. Both of these programs operate principally through local public housing authorities. To be eligible for these programs and others, a community may want to explore establishing a public housing authority under section 66.40 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

HUD also provides money to communities for a variety of housing purposes. Part of this money is distributed to entitlement jurisdictions (cities of over 50,000 population and designated urban counties) also to other communities through grants to states who distribute the money to non entitlement communities. In Wisconsin, the state agency that serves as the conduit for these funds is the Division of Housing & Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) within the Department of Administration. It awards these funds through a competitive "request for proposals" process. Funding from other HUD programs is distributed through national competitions.

For information about programs that might be available for specific local initiatives, contact the Wisconsin HUD office located in Milwaukee. The general phone number is (414) 297-3214. You can also visit the office's web site at www.hud.gov/local/mil/.

Rural Development - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA-RD) provides a variety of housing and community development programs for rural areas. Its programs are generally available in areas with populations of 10,000 or less. It provides support for rental housing development, direct and guaranteed mortgage loans for home buyers, and support for self-help and cooperative housing development.

USDA-RD has district offices serving most parts of Wisconsin. To find out about programs that might benefit your community, look in the phone book in the federal government listings under "Agriculture, Department of" for "Rural Development." You can also call the state office located in Stevens Point at (715) 345-7600, or explore the web site of the national office at www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rhs/rhs.html. Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission is also available to assist you in gathering information.

State Programs and Revenue Sources

Department of Administration, Division of Housing & Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) is one of two state agencies that administers housing programs. It administers several programs funded by the state and many more funded by HUD. State programs funded by general purpose revenue cannot be used to invest directly in housing development. Instead these funds are used to help organizations develop the capacity to develop houses or to provide various types of financial assistance to home buyers or renters through grants to local governments or non-profit agencies.

Information about current programs administered by DHIR can be obtained by telephoning (608) 266-0288.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) is a quasi-governmental agency that finances housing development through the sale of bonds. It receives no direct state-tax support. It provides mortgage financing for first-time home buyers and financing for multifamily housing as well. Specific programs evolve and change with the needs of the housing market.

WHEDA also manages several federal housing programs. One program, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, encourages housing development by providing private investors with income tax credits when they invest in low income housing development. Tax credits are allocated to housing projects on a competitive basis.

Information about WHEDA programs can be obtained by telephoning (800) 362-2761 or by visiting its web site at www.wheda.state.wi.us.

The ***Northeast Wisconsin Community Action Program (NEWCAP Inc.)*** has an assistance program available to residents in Oconto County, Florence County, Marinette County and Brown County. This program is the ***Section 8 Voucher Housing Assistance*** program that provides rental subsidies to low income families, senior citizens, handicapped, and disabled individuals who reside in rental housing.

References/Additional Resources

A Guide Identifying Public Sources of Housing Financial and Informational Assistance for the Development of Low and Moderate-Income Rental Housing. October, 1999 Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations, Department of Administration (updated annually).

Local Programs and Revenue Sources

Housing trust fund. A housing trust fund is a pool of money available for housing projects for middle or lower income households. The fund is used to fill financial gaps to make projects feasible. Trust funds may be replenished yearly or they may be designed to be perpetual and self-sustaining. Revolving funds are sustained by the payments of loan recipients and then used to supply additional loans. Sources of revenue to begin or replenish housing trust funds include eschewed or abandoned funds, sale of public land, general obligation bonds, general appropriations, endowments and grants, and surplus reserve funds.

Housing trust funds are particularly well suited to meet the large and long-term capital investment needs of projects. Unlike funds that rely on the vagaries of state or local annual appropriations, a housing trust fund is a permanent dedication of a specified amount for housing. Trust fund money can be used in a number of ways. It may assist in home purchase, down payment assistance, security deposit assistance, housing construction, rehabilitation, maintenance, and operation, technical assistance for housing organizations, homeless shelters, debt or equity financing, and second mortgages. The City of Stevens Point, in central Wisconsin, is one example of a community that has established a housing trust fund. For information on how this fund was established and how it is used, contact the Housing Authority of the City of Stevens Point (715) 371-3444.

Housing linkage programs. Voluntary housing linkage programs encourage developers of office, commercial, retail, or institutional development to construct or make financial contributions towards affordable housing. The underlying rationale is that new non-residential development creates a need for housing by attracting employees to an area. Therefore, the developers should contribute towards satisfying this need. Linkage programs usually apply to new construction but they may also apply to expansion of existing space. The programs are popular with developers when they either reduce costs or add value to the project. Examples of incentives are density bonuses, reduced setbacks, and reduced parking requirements.

These programs benefit businesses, the developer, and the community. Developers benefit from the incentives while communities benefit from more affordable housing. Businesses benefit from a well-housed and accessible labor force. Office/housing linkage programs will be most useful in communities experiencing high growth rates where developers are more willing to take advantage of incentives and where linkage programs can reduce the pressure for housing.

Private Programs

Non-profit housing development corporations. A non-profit corporation is an organization that may qualify for tax-deductible donations, foundation grants, and public funds. To be eligible, the organization must apply for and receive non-profit status from the IRS. Non-profits build and maintain housing in many areas of Wisconsin. Their projects help communities improve their range of housing opportunities.

Non-profits are eligible for state and federal financial resources, making them an important vehicle for publicly desired housing. They often work in collaboration with local governments, civic organizations, citizen groups, and for-profit developers. This improves communication and coordination in the community and creates an atmosphere for future projects. Municipalities too small to have their own housing staff or programs may contract with non-profits to provide services such as housing management and grant-writing. They may also be able to pool resources with the non-profit organizations in other area communities. Non-profits can develop technical expertise and skills with regard to finance, construction, rehabilitation, and project management.

Wisconsin is unique in that it has a program to specifically assist nonprofit housing organizations. The program is called the Local Housing Organization Grant (LHOG) Program. It provides grants to nonprofits to increase their capacity. To find out if there is a non-profit housing developer serving your area or about LHOG, contact the Department of Administration, Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations at (608) 266-0288.

Housing Plan

Below is a detailed discussion of how the community can achieve their desired housing for all of their residents utilizing information provided by the UW-Extension along with state programs. The three housing requirements as defined by s66.1001(2)(b) are detailed below -- along with options or actions presented to meet these state requirements. An overall recommended community strategy is formulated at the beginning of this chapter that states specific policies and programs the town will follow to meet these requirements.

Requirement 1. Promoting the development of housing that provides a range of housing choices to meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs.

An increasing number of people cannot find housing in their community that is suitable for their stage of life--from young wage earners to couples with grown children. Local communities and their governments need to pursue strategies that encourage the development of a range of housing choices to meet the needs of people with different income levels and with various needs. People with special needs typically include the elderly, physically and mentally disabled persons and may include other classifications such as farm workers and migrant laborers. As the general population of Wisconsin ages, affordability, security, accessibility, and proximity to services, transportation, food, and medical facilities will all become more important.

Specific local actions that can be taken

Local governments affect the type and cost of housing available in their community through their regulations and policies. While most government regulations are implemented in order to serve specific community health, safety, and welfare needs they may have unintended adverse impacts on affordability. A review of local regulations may reveal areas where changes can be made to decrease the impact on affordability without compromising the protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

Some specific strategies to promote a range of housing choices to meet a variety of needs include the following:

Zoning and subdivision regulations for smaller lot size

One technique for assuring a range of housing is to provide a range of densities and lot sizes. Traditional zoning ordinances may only allow a limited variety of lot sizes throughout a community for single-family residential development.

Land costs can be 25 percent, or more, of the total cost for a home. One way to reduce land cost is to reduce lot size. First, lot prices are less expensive for smaller parcels. Second, land development costs are less because they may be spread over a larger number of units. Third, less infrastructure is needed because development on smaller lots requires fewer miles of roads, sidewalks, gutters, and shorter utility runs. In a competitive market, reduced land development costs are passed on to consumers.

Smaller lot sizes that seek to increase overall density within the community can also be linked to other community planning objectives. For example, higher density development can (1) preserve farmland, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas by reducing the overall amount of land needed for housing; (2) improve the viability of mass transit, provide opportunities for residents to live near their jobs, and thereby help reduce vehicle miles traveled; (3) use existing infrastructure more efficiently than less compact development thus reducing service costs and saving tax dollars.

Increasing density may meet with opposition from existing area residents. To address this concern, attention must be given to site design characteristics. For example, design elements such

as the layout of streets and lots, a mix of lot and house sizes, variation in building setbacks and elevations, variation in exterior designs, and quality landscaping to provide privacy, are all possibilities. The development must be attractive if it is to be accepted by the larger community.

A word of caution: Concentrating the lowest income households together in high densities has proven to have a negative effect upon the community, the residents, and the condition of the housing. A broader mix and range of housing choices throughout a community is, therefore, important.

Standards in zoning and subdivision ordinances

Many communities have zoning and/or subdivision ordinances that contain building requirements that may unnecessarily increase the cost of housing thereby limiting the range of housing choices available in the community. These include requirements setting forth minimum floor area size. By removing minimum floor area sizes, communities can increase the range of housing opportunities.

Many local subdivision regulations also include standards for how subdivisions are designed (e.g., road widths, sidewalks, tree plantings, setback, materials, land dedication, sidewalks or paths, location of the structure on the site, garages). Communities should review their subdivision ordinances to identify provisions that constrain housing. Old ordinances in particular may be in need of revision to meet current needs. Current neighborhood design emphasizes social, economic, and environmental aspects and endeavors to create neighborhoods that are more energy efficient and that have a greater range of housing options.

The following are some suggestions for reviewing subdivision regulations:

Setbacks - Large setbacks increase housing costs. They originated as a means of fire protection. Subdivision regulations should establish maximum front yard setbacks, either in addition to or instead of minimum setbacks. Side yard setbacks may also need to be decreased.

Streets - Narrower streets can reduce development costs.

Lot layout - Traditional platting design has been to site large, one-sized lots without regard to local climate, topography, or hydrology. Current practice emphasizes variety in lot size, shape, and use to increase housing options within the development.

Lot design and vegetation - Using breezes and topography and trying to capture winter sun and block summer sun can save residents money on fuel costs.

References/Additional Resources

Removing Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing in Wisconsin: A Report by the Governor's Task Force on Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing (1994).

Affordable Housing Techniques: A Primer for Local Government Officials by the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (1992).

Changing Development Standards for Affordable Housing by Welford Sanders and David Mosena (American Planning Association, PAS Report # 371, 1982).

Planning for Affordable Housing by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs (1990).

A Citizen's Guide to Conserving Land and Creating Affordable Housing by the Burlington Community Land Trust and the Vermont Land Trust (1990).

Smart Growth: Creating Communities for People by Allison Semandel and Mike Kinde (Citizens for a Better Environment, 1999).

Model Code Provisions - Urban Streets & Subdivisions Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (1998).

Innovative zoning and subdivision techniques

Innovative development techniques, such as ***mixed-use development***, ***zero lot lines***, and ***cluster development***, can encourage a broader range of housing choices.

Mixed-use development allows different land uses, such as commercial and residential, and allows several different housing densities within a single development. Mixed-use developments can range in size from single buildings with apartments located over retail uses, to large-scale projects that include office and commercial space along with housing.

Mixed uses may make housing development economically feasible when it otherwise would not be. Higher density housing in commercial zones may be more politically acceptable than increasing densities in established single-family areas. Sensitive design and site planning is critical with mixed-use developments.

Mixed-use developments can be regulated in various ways. Some communities allow residential uses by-right in certain identified commercial zones. Other communities consider housing in commercial areas as conditional uses. Other communities allow mixed uses within a planned development district (also commonly referred to as planned unit development or PUD) or in special mixed-use districts.

Zero-lot-line. Conventional zoning requires that the home be set back from every lot line. However, for small lots the "yards" created on each side of the house are very small, and usually useless. Zero-lot-line ordinances place the house on one of the side-lot lines and/or on the rear or front-lot line. By placing a house on the lot lines, the amount of useable space on the other sides is doubled.

Some communities permit houses to be sited on a common lot line so that they resemble duplexes. Other communities require that they be sited on alternate lot lines, to give the appearance of housing in a conventional development. The advantage of zero lot line is that it offers the lower costs associated with high-density development while still maintaining the privacy and appearance of traditional single-family detached housing.

Cluster development allows housing units to be grouped within a residential development on lots smaller than those normally allowed. Clustering can help reduce housing costs because of decreased lot sizes and because of decreased development costs. However, cluster development may increase site planning, design, and engineering costs. It can create common open space and protect environmentally sensitive land. It is a technique that has been used in developing urban areas and in rural areas. Cluster developments are regulated in a number of ways. Zoning ordinances can specify zones in which cluster developments are permitted and/or allowed by special permit. Subdivision regulations can outline development standards for clustering. Cluster development may also occur as part of a planned development district.

References/Additional Resources

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, *Rural Cluster Development Guide* (Planning Guide No. 7, 1996).

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, *Rural Development Guide for East Central Wisconsin Governments and Landowners* (1999).

Randall Arendt, *Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A Practical Guide to Creating Open Space Networks* (Island Press, 1996).

Density bonuses

A *density bonus* allows a developer to build more units in a project than would otherwise be permitted. Bonuses may be offered in exchange for preservation of open space or other things valued by the community. Density bonuses increase the value of the overall project and may therefore make certain projects economically feasible when they otherwise would not be. Density bonuses offer a positive alternative to mandatory programs that may be resisted by developers. Developers may decide for themselves whether participation will be cost effective.

The community will need to decide the amount of increased density given in exchange for the desired development features. Because the market ultimately determines the success of density bonus programs, program designers will need a thorough understanding of the local and regional real estate market. For example, if current zoning already allows enough density to satisfy market demand, developers will have no interest in a density bonus. Density bonus programs may be implemented through zoning or subdivision ordinances, or both.

Inclusionary zoning

Inclusionary zoning requires that a certain number of units in a new development be set aside as affordable. Inclusionary programs may apply to both rental and owner-occupied units and may be mandatory or voluntary. Some communities have found that mandatory programs impose costs on developers that are too heavy and actually retard new construction of both affordable and market-rate units by making them economically unfeasible. If requirements are imposed, they should be modest enough to ensure developers an adequate return on their investment. Voluntary programs are preferable to mandatory programs if developers will use the incentives.

Voluntary programs provide incentives to allow developers to determine for themselves whether participation will be cost effective. Incentives may be density bonuses, waiving development fees, and financial assistance through federal, state, and local programs.

References/Additional Resources

Affordable Housing Techniques: A Primer for Local Government Officials by the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (1992).

Planning for Affordable Housing by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs (1990).

Affordable Housing: Proactive and Reactive Planning Strategies by S. Mark White (American Planning Association, PAS Report #441, 1992).

Accessory or "granny" apartments

An *accessory or "granny" apartment* is a living unit separate from the primary residential unit. It includes separate kitchen, sleeping, and bathroom facilities. Accessory apartments may be attached to the primary dwelling or detached. Attached accessory units typically involve some space in the existing home, such as an attic, garage, or basement family room. Detached units are sometimes referred to as "accessory cottages." They may be guest or servant quarters, converted sheds, or garages.

Accessory apartments benefit elderly persons with limited resources living in large single-family homes with under-used space; households with an older relative who is still able to live substantially independently but requires some degree of assistance; and young adults who want to live independently while still being near to their parents.

Accessory units may already exist in the community without ordinances. Communities may want to adopt regulations to address the size of units, their concentration, their exterior appearance, and parking requirements. In some communities accessory units can only be used for a frail elderly person or caretaker and the kitchen must be removed when this permitted use ends.

References/Additional Resources

Accessory Apartments: Using Surplus Space in Single-family Houses by Patrick H. Hare, Susan Conner, Dwight Merriam (American Planning Association, PAS Report #365, 1981).

Streamlined permitting processes

The land-use permitting process affects the cost of housing. Delays in the review of proposed housing developments can add to development costs. A more efficient land-use review process can also result in a more cost-effective way to administer land-use regulations.

The following are ideas for streamlining the land use permitting process. Because each of these reform measures is designed to accomplish different objectives, they are best used in combinations:

Self-assessment - Begin by taking stock of the permitting process. For example, how long does a typical development review take from start to finish? Are there places where the system bogs down? Are there ways to eliminate or consolidate some of the steps in the approval process?

Centralized one-stop permit desk - This saves applicants from needlessly backtracking to different offices and departments. Include interdepartmental review to help coordinate the numerous departments that may be involved in the development process.

Checklists and flow charts - Consider publishing guidebooks that outline the local permit process.

Zoning and subdivision ordinances should describe the application process from start to finish - Ordinance language should be simple and direct and the sections and standards that relate to one another should be cross-referenced. Doing so benefits applicants and those who administer and enforce the ordinance.

Pre-application conferences - Formal or informal meetings with community staff to present concept or sketch plans and address requirements will save money by clarifying expectations before the expensive technical and engineering work begins.

Concurrent review - Concurrent review allows different steps in an application to proceed at the same time (like a petition for a zoning change and review of a subdivision plat) thus reducing the overall time needed.

Staff discretion on administrative matters - Minor subdivision approvals and issues involving mostly technical and minor changes to submittals can be handled by planning staff. Plan commission time should not be wasted on such matters.

Fast-tracking - Development projects that are desirable because of type or location can be encouraged by exempting them from certain permit requirements.

Encourage innovation - Innovative techniques may be encouraged by an expedited permit process and by allowing them as conditional uses or as overlays to existing zoning districts.

References/Additional Resources

Streamlining the Development Approval Process by Debra Bassert (Land Development, Winter 1999, pp. 14-19).

Streamlining Land Use Regulations: A Guidebook for Local Governments by John Vranicar, Welford Sanders, and David Mosena (American Planning Association, 1982).

Affordable Housing: Proactive and Reactive Planning Strategies by S. Mark White (American Planning Association, PAS Report #441, 1992).

Impact fees

Impact fees are fees imposed on development to mitigate the capital costs of new public facilities necessitated by the development. Public facilities include infrastructure for transportation, water, stormwater, parks, solid waste, and fire and police. However, impact fees cannot be used for school facilities. Under section 66.0617(7) of the Wisconsin Statutes, impact fee ordinances must provide for an exception from, or a reduction in the amount of impact fees on developments that provide low-cost housing.

Requirement 2. Promoting the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing

Communities must promote the availability of undeveloped or underused land as one way to meet the low and moderate-income housing needs identified in the housing element of s66.1001. Several options are available to communities. For example, communities should ensure an adequate supply of land is planned and zoned for multifamily housing and for development at higher densities to meet forecasted demand.

Promoting the availability of land for low and moderate-income housing can also be integrated with other planning issues. For example, urban communities may try to identify areas near transit

lines or where new transit might be feasible because of higher density and mixed-use development.

Additional strategies for promoting the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low and moderate-income housing include the following:

Specific local actions that can be taken

Community land trust

Community land trusts protect housing by keeping land from the speculative market. They typically work by owning the land and selling or leasing the buildings. Buyers or lessors agree to a limited appreciation should they decide to later sell or lease to another. The model works to preserve both existing residential units and new units built on the land. Also, it can be used to preserve affordable space for such things as community centers, health care facilities, small businesses, or day care centers. Community land trusts are similar to conservation land trusts which protect natural resources and open space.

Community land trusts provide the following benefits:

Lower land costs - Because land trusts remove land costs from the purchase price of a property, housing units can be sold or rented for less;

Permanent affordability - Removing land costs and limiting the amount of appreciation means that land trust housing will always be more affordable than market-rate housing for as long as the trust exists (which may be indefinitely);

Retention of investment - Grants, loans and other investments in a land trust are effectively recycled year after year through rents or sale prices, instead of requiring continuous financial support;

Community stability - Community land trusts are non-profit organizations controlled by local personalities. They are committed to stabilizing local housing costs for the long term and preserving a community's social fabric;

Speed - Land trusts can more quickly purchase properties that become available than can government.

The Madison Area Community Land Trust has been active since 1990 working with the City of Madison. For more information about the Madison Area Community Land Trust call (608) 255-6442.

References/Additional Resources

Institute for Community Economics, 57 School Street, Springfield, MA 01105-1331. 413-746-8660.

A Citizen's Guide to Conserving Land and Creating Affordable Housing by the Burlington Community Land Trust and the Vermont Land Trust (1990).

Use of public or donated land for housing

Development of housing on publicly owned land or land donated for affordable housing can substantially increase the financial feasibility of many housing projects. Communities can also seek to encourage the donation of land for affordable housing.

Lands acquired by the community through tax forfeiture may be appropriate for affordable housing. Local governments and nonprofits may also engage in a program to acquire land and hold it until the community is ready to develop housing. Funding to acquire land may be available from federal and state programs.

Infrastructure improvements reserved for affordable housing

Giving priority for sewer and water extension to projects that include housing units affordable to middle and lower-income households can increase the likelihood that such housing will be built. The priority may be formalized in an ordinance or informally as a plan policy.

Infill development

Infill refers to development on vacant or under-used land within built-up urban areas. Infill can range from construction of single-family housing on one or two adjacent lots to development of entire city blocks containing both residential and commercial uses.

Infill development has several advantages. Infill areas are already served by public facilities, including roads, sewer and water, police, fire, utilities, schools, and transit. Infill opportunities may sometimes be located on higher-cost urban land. If this is the case, then multi-family housing and/or mixed-use projects, that have lower per-unit development costs, may be most appropriate. Density bonuses or faster permitting may also add to an infill project's economic feasibility.

Communities may encourage infill development by preparing an inventory of potential infill sites and distributing it to developers; adopting flexible regulations which allow development of irregular or substandard infill lots; allowing mixed uses for infill developments, which may enhance the economic feasibility of projects; assisting in the consolidation of infill lots into larger, more easily developed sites; and acquiring abandoned property and demolishing structures beyond rehabilitation.

To minimize neighbor concerns infill units should be designed to fit in with the massing and density of the existing neighborhood as much as possible. For example, if the neighborhood is all two story houses with steep pitched roofs the infill units would probably be more acceptable if they had two stories with steeply pitched roofs. The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority has had a special financing program to support the development of infill housing. They used this program in several cities where they successfully added new structures to existing neighborhoods using modular homes.

Adaptive reuse involves the conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings to economically viable new uses such as housing. Examples of outmoded buildings include old schools, hospitals, warehouses, and factories. It is one method for introducing housing into non-residential areas.

Projects that involve historically or architecturally significant buildings may qualify for preservation tax credits.

Communities can facilitate adaptive reuse by developing flexible ordinances to facilitate adaptive reuse, arranging for possible property transfers of publicly-owned buildings, and by providing assistance in obtaining sources of funding such as loans, grants, and rent subsidies.

Manufactured Housing

Manufactured housing can be an important source of low and moderate cost housing in a community. Communities may want to encourage manufactured housing as a means of expanding the range of housing opportunities. Manufactured housing is less expensive to build than site-built housing because of lower production costs. The term *manufactured housing* describes housing that is constructed in a factory and delivered to the site as a finished product. While these homes are often referred to as "mobile homes" fewer than 5% of manufactured homes are moved once placed on a site.

Local communities often try to prohibit the siting of manufactured housing due to concerns about the effect on the tax base since manufactured housing is often taxed as personal property. However, a study by the University of Wisconsin-Extension suggests that manufactured home communities may actually have a positive impact on local taxes. There also may be concerns about the effect on adjacent property values and the visual quality of manufactured homes. A University of Michigan study, however, concluded that manufactured home parks have little or no impact on adjacent residential property values.

Communities may want to review their zoning ordinances to be sure that their regulations do not unduly restrict the use of manufactured homes. For additional information regarding manufactured housing and integrating them into single-family neighborhoods, contact the Wisconsin Manufactured Housing Association at (800) 236-4663.

The Foundation for rural housing located in Madison has developed a program with the Wisconsin Manufactured Housing Association and the Department of Corrections to obtain donated manufactured homes, rehabilitate them with prison labor and make them available for low income housing. For information contact the Foundation at (608) 238-3448.

References/Additional Resources

Manufactured Housing: Regulation, Design Innovations, and Development Options by Welford Sanders (American Planning Association, PAS Report #478, 1998).

Manufactured Housing Impacts on Adjacent Property Values by Kate Warner and Jeff Scheuer (University of Michigan, 1993).

Municipal Revenue Impact of Tax Exempt Mobile Homes: A Methodology for Extension Agents by Richard Stauber (University of Wisconsin-Extension, 1995).

Product Report: 'Manufactured Housing' available from the American Association of Retired Persons website at www.aarp.org/manhov1.html.

Manufactured Housing and Standards: Fact Sheet for Purchasers of Manufactured Homes (1999) available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development website at hud.gov/fha/sfh/mhs/mhssht3.html.

Regulating Manufactured Housing by Welford Sanders (American Planning Association, PAS Report # 398, 1986).

Requirement 3. Maintaining or rehabilitating existing housing stock

It is important that the community's housing plan consider conservation of the community's existing housing stock. The existing stock often is the primary source of affordable housing. In many communities this existing housing is aging and may need investment to maintain its utility. Communities and local governments should develop strategies that prevent neglect, and encourage reinvestment in the existing housing stock.

Specific local actions that can be taken

Building code

The State of Wisconsin has a uniform dwelling code that must be followed for the construction and inspection of all one- and two-family dwellings in the state. Local communities in the state have certain responsibilities for enforcement of the code. The uniform dwelling code is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce and is found in the Administrative Rules for the Department of Commerce (COM 20 - COM 25).

Historic building code

The standard state building codes may make rehabilitation of certain older homes prohibitively expensive or impractical. Communities in Wisconsin that have adopted historic preservation ordinances certified by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin can use the Wisconsin Historic Building Code for locally designated historic buildings. The Historic Building Code, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, permits a flexible and cost-effective approach to rehabilitating historic buildings. The code is found in the Administrative Rules for the Department of Commerce (COM 70). Information is also available from the Division of Historic Preservation at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at (608) 264-6500.

Housing code

All communities in Wisconsin can enact housing codes under their general authority to protect public health, safety, and welfare. Housing codes provide standards for how a dwelling unit is to be used and maintained over time.

It is important for communities to review housing code enforcement efforts to determine if they need to be increased or modified to make them more effective. Communities can intensify housing code enforcement programs to help maintain housing and upgrade deteriorating housing stock. In some communities code enforcement capacity is so limited that routine inspections are scheduled only once in ten years. Communities could consider focusing enforcement efforts on select neighborhoods, publicizing code provisions, and complaint procedures.

Community paint/fix up events

Local governments should target home maintenance/rehabilitation programs at the neighborhood level because the visibility can help create peer pressure to motivate others to fix up their homes.

One strategy is to organize painting/fix-up events in partnership with local professional and civic groups to encourage volunteers to help with exterior maintenance of target residences.

Rehabilitation loans and grants

Code enforcement can be supplemented with financial and technical assistance to homeowners and tenants. Communities may establish loan or grant programs to assist owner occupants with repairs. Such programs are commonly funded by federal Community Development Block Grant dollars. The programs often focus on specific census tracts or neighborhoods where the concentration of deferred maintenance is highest. In addition to keeping housing units functioning, maintenance and rehabilitation are also worthwhile because they build pride among residents, stimulate others to repair their homes, encourage long-term investment and maintenance, and reduce potential neighborhood problems.

Occupant education and cooperation

Many repairs are simple enough that most homeowners can help if given some guidance. Educational programs to train homeowners and renters can help ensure that the homes are rehabilitated and maintained in good condition. These educational programs help property owners better understand the responsibilities.

Chapter 4 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the planning process, many factors contribute to economic development opportunities and needs within a community. For this reason, labor force characteristics and economic base indicators were analyzed at the local, county, regional and state level to determine trends, opportunities and needs for the Town of How. The economic data primarily used for this plan is from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census. This economic information is valuable for it establishes a good indicator of the economic situation in and around the town.

Even though the Town of How is a rural community with few commercial and industrial sites, it is still important for both the Town officials and town residents to review the economic factors listed below to quantify what the town has as strengths and weaknesses (in economic terms) so that the town can work towards promoting its identified goals. Likewise, the town may wish to devote some resources toward recruiting/promoting certain types of development deemed most appropriate for its future.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

1. Federal, state, regional, county, and local programs exist to promote opportunities within the town.
2. Employment opportunities for town residents exist within the surrounding communities of Gillett, Suring, Oconto Falls, Shawano and Keshena, plus the cities of Green Bay, Marinette and other communities that are within an hour drive of the town. The 1990 Census indicates that 52 percent of town residents chose to work outside of Oconto County.
3. According to the 2000 Census, the majority of employed persons in the Town of How were either in production, transportation, and material moving occupations (27.5 percent) or they were management, professional, and related service (27.1 percent).
4. For the period 1990 to 1999, the Oconto County civilian labor force increased 7 percent and the number of unemployed decreased 40 percent. Unemployment in Oconto County increased from 4.4 percent in 1999 to 6.8 percent in 2002.
5. In 1999, the town had a median household income of $39,167, compared to $28,648 in 1997.
6. The town's rural atmosphere, which includes its many open spaces and preserved natural features are much of the town's many positive attributes.
7. The Town of How is typical of many rural communities in northeastern Wisconsin. It provides few services and most amenities are found in surrounding municipalities. However, the town has contract agreements with other communities and Oconto County for provision of services.

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The following *Goals*, *Objectives*, *Policies*, and *Programs* will help guide the town's vision regarding economic growth. The town's land use survey expressed the views of the respondents to have stricter protection over the town's natural resources, discourage residential developments

near established agricultural uses (businesses), a farmer's right to farm should be protected and direct more intensive growth along the border with Suring. Respondents felt stimulating economic growth was low on the town's priorities compared to other issues within the town. The following statements are both broad and specific and reflect town residents views for how economic development should occur within the town.

Goal 1:

Provide opportunities for small scale economic development while protecting and enhancing the town's environmental assets.

Objective:

Future businesses will be in areas specified in the general plan design chapter which will enhance and promote the rural character of the Town of How.

Policies:

1. Encourage the establishment of local businesses in areas that can enhance and promote the rural character of the Town of How.
2. Encourage commercial and industrial growth in adjacent communities where utilities are adequate and to prevent incompatible land uses in the Town of How
3. Locate commercial development dependent on automobile traffic in areas that contain safe and easy access.
4. Consolidate commercial and industrial growth in areas best suited for their operation and where needed services exist or can be readily extended - in order to establish specific service areas and to prevent co-locating incompatible uses.
5. Support standards to minimize pollution and adverse impacts on the environment.
6. Develop and enforce landscape requirements for any future businesses.
7. Develop and enforce a town ordinance for sign and lighting standards.
8. Allow cottage types of industries/ and "at home" businesses to locate within the town until such a time as a zoning change is needed - then require them to locate within an area predominantly composed of business uses.

Programs:

1. Work with the county and public services to monitor closely the capacity of existing infrastructure, roads, electricity, public safety services, etc, to accommodate any new economic development and weigh the costs to potential benefits before permitting them.
2. Work with the county and the Oconto Economic Development Corporation in promoting the approved types of commercial development wanted by the town.
3. Work with desired businesses to apply for grants and/or loans to establish or expand such businesses.

4. Work with future developers and local residents to approve established compatible hours of operation, signage, lighting, parking, and landscaping requirements to meet the town's desire for well planned growth and rural character preservation.

Goal 2:

Preserving the town's rural farming community and lifestyle.

Objectives:

1. Protection of quality farmlands for future agricultural businesses.
2. Utilize less productive farmlands for more intensive uses.
3. Maintain compatibility of uses within the town.

Policies:

1. Encourage conservation farming practices that minimize non-point source pollution of the town's surface water and contamination of groundwater with animal waste and man-made chemicals
2. Nonagricultural uses should be adequately buffered (to include earthen berms with plantings of trees and/or shrubs) from agricultural businesses in order to promote their operation and to minimize potential conflicts.
3. Encourage future non-farming commercial and industrial development to be clustered and not dispersed throughout the town's prime agricultural lands in order to protect these farmlands and to lessen the development pressures on them.
4. Work with local, county, state and federal partners to create options and resources for farmers facing retirement and/or looking to transition into other business activities.
5. Consider the value of the prime agricultural lands and the rural/scenic nature of the town before changing the zoning to non-agricultural uses.
6. Through the use of both zoning and subdivision ordinances, limit nonagricultural development in areas primarily agricultural in nature and identified within this plan as continuing as agricultural.
7. Maintain awareness and tracking of the town's most productive farmland acreages by utilizing the Oconto County soil surveys, this plan and the Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan.
8. Explore the possibility of adopting Industrial Agricultural Regulations that would provide environmental protection and prevent any adverse effects to the surrounding community or be a detriment to the lifestyles and "rural character" of the town

Programs:

1. Work with the county and state in identifying the possible use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) within the county, to assist farmers and to help preserve farming within the town.

2. Work with farmers in acquiring loans or grants from state and federal agencies.
3. The Town should establish a dialogue with Land Preservation Organizations and invite educational offerings from organizations that work with private landowners to protect natural resources and preserve open spaces, such as land trusts and conservancy organizations.
4. Continually review and petition the county to update the county's Zoning Ordinance, specifically as it relates to agricultural practices. Regulatory language should assure a strong future for agriculture in the town but should not cause a hardship on neighboring uses, the environment or the general public. The farmers 'Right to do Business' is best protected by local zoning power. The State of Wisconsin through the Agricultural Protection Act (WI Stat. 823.08) recommend properly asserted zoning power, as the best means for preserving a towns agricultural base while avoiding conflicting uses.

ECONOMIC PROGRAMS

This section contains a brief explanation of the agencies that could potentially help the town and town's businesses with loans and grants. Contact the Oconto County Economic Development Corporation for the latest information and any changes.

Local

Currently the town does not contain any established economic development programs. However, the town can assist a local business by officially supporting the business within the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission's *Overall Economic Development Strategy* document, published annually and reported to the Department of Commerce - thus making the business eligible for state grant consideration.

County

The Oconto County Economic Development Corporation considers itself the single point contact for development assistance in Oconto County. Through this agency, the Town of How would have access to both a county-wide revolving loan fund and a tri-county revolving loan fund. In addition, the entire county has been designated as a community development zone by the Department of Commerce and is entitled to tax credits. For additional information about this agency, please contact the corporation's Executive Director.

Regional

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission annually creates a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report that evaluates local and regional population and economic activity. Economic development trends, opportunities and needs are identified within the CEDS report. All communities that are served by the Commission, including the Town of How, are invited to identify future projects for economic development that the community would like to undertake. Those projects are included within the CEDS and may become eligible for federal funding through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Public Works grant program.

State

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce has several grant programs that would be available to the Town of How. The federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for housing, economic development and public facility improvements. The program is designed to assist economically distressed smaller communities with improvements to such things as utilities and streets, fire stations, community centers, and housing rehabilitation, and many other improvements needed by a community. Specifically, the CDBG-Public Facilities for Economic Development (PFED) program is designed to assist communities with expanding or upgrading the infrastructure to accommodate businesses that have made a firm commitment to create jobs and invest in the community. The CDBG-Economic Development (ED) program assists businesses that will invest private funds and create jobs as they expand or relocate in Wisconsin. Funds are awarded to a community, which then loans the funds to a business. The community may retain the repaid loan to capitalize a local revolving loan fund.

Federal

Some examples of federal programs that could assist the Town of How in economic development include:

USDA Wisconsin Rural Development Programs

- **Rural Business Opportunity Grants Program**

Rural Business Opportunity Grant Funds provide for technical assistance, training, and planning activities that improve economic conditions in rural areas of 50,000 people or less. A maximum of $1.5 million per grant is authorized.

- **Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants**

Zero interest loans may be made to any Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to promote economic development and/or job creation. Projects include, but are not limited to; project feasibility studies, start-up costs, incubator projects, and other reasonable expenses. Grants can be provided to rural communities through RUS borrowers, to be used for revolving loan funds for community facilities and infrastructure, and for assistance in conjunction with rural economic development loans.

- **Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program (RBEG)**

The Rural Business-Cooperative Service makes grants under the RBEG Program to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and federally recognized Native American Tribal groups to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises. The businesses must be located in areas outside the boundary of a city, or unincorporated areas of 50,000 or more and its immediately adjacent urbanized or urbanizing area. The small or emerging business must have less than 50 new employees, less than $1 million in gross annual revenues, and utilize technological innovations and commercialization of new products and/or processes to be eligible for assistance. Funds can be used for a variety of things including, but not limited to; construction of buildings and plants, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utility and service extensions, and a variety of other costs.

US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration Programs

- **Public Works and Economic Development Program**

The Public Works Program empowers distressed communities in economic decline to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure. The objective is to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment.

LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

The labor force is comprised of employed persons and those seeking employment, and excludes persons in the armed forces and those under age 16. Variations in the number of persons in the labor force are the result of many factors. Shifts in the age and sex characteristics of the population, changes in the number of residents aged 16 and over, the proportion of this group (16 and over) working or seeking employment, and seasonal elements are all factors affecting the size of the labor force.

Place of Work

The ability to retain valuable human resources within a county or a town is an indicator of the overall health of the economy in the county and its respective municipalities. In 1990, approximately 91 percent of workers who were 16 years and older in the Town of How worked in Oconto County (Table 4.1). When looking at the whole county, 67 percent of county residents worked within the county. The City of Green Bay, located to the south, and the City of Marinette, located to the north, most likely are the greatest sources of out of county employment for Oconto County residents.

Table 4.1: Place of Work, 1990 Town of How & Selected Areas

Place of Work	Town of How	Town of Maple Valley	Town of Gillett	Village of Suring	Oconto County	State of Wisconsin
Worked in state of residence	300	341	469	250	12,811	2,271,607
Worked in county of residence	272	273	354	211	8,524	1,846,382
Worked outside county of residence	28	68	115	39	4,287	425,225
Worked outside state of residence	0	0	2	6	96	78,084

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 3A, Table P045; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Table 4.2 represents the 1994 commuting patterns of Oconto County residents. Although 1,368 persons commuted into Oconto County, approximately 4,383 commuted out of the county, primarily traveling to Brown County. This creates a net loss of employees for the county of 3,015 persons. In addition, the 2000 Census also provides an indicator of the commuting patterns of the citizens within the Town of How. According to the 2000 Census, the average travel time to work for a How resident was 22 minutes. However, the community survey conducted in 2001 (Appendix B) indicated that the majority of town respondents (32 percent) worked within the town.

Table 4.2: Commuting Patterns, 1994, Oconto County

Area	Commute Into	Commute From	Net Commute
Brown	3,115	525	-2,590
Marinette	564	402	-162
Shawano	230	326	96
Outagamie	89	0	-89
Elsewhere	385	115	-270
Total	4,383	1,368	-3,015
Work w/in Oconto County	8,524		

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information, *Wisconsin's Commuting Patterns*, 1994; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2001.

Occupation

According to the 2000 Census, the majority of employed persons in the Town of How were either in production, transportation, and material moving occupations (27.5 percent) or they were management, professional, and related service (27.1 percent).

Table 4.3: Employed Persons by Occupation, 2000, Town of How & Oconto County

	Town of How		Oconto County	
Occupation	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Management, professional, and related	79	27.1	4,234	23.9
Service	28	9.6	2,504	14.2
Sales and office	49	16.8	3,580	20.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry	21	7.2	428	2.4
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	34	11.7	2,093	11.8
Production, transportation, and material moving	80	27.5	4,841	27.4
Total	**291**	**100.0**	**17,680**	**100.0**

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Industry

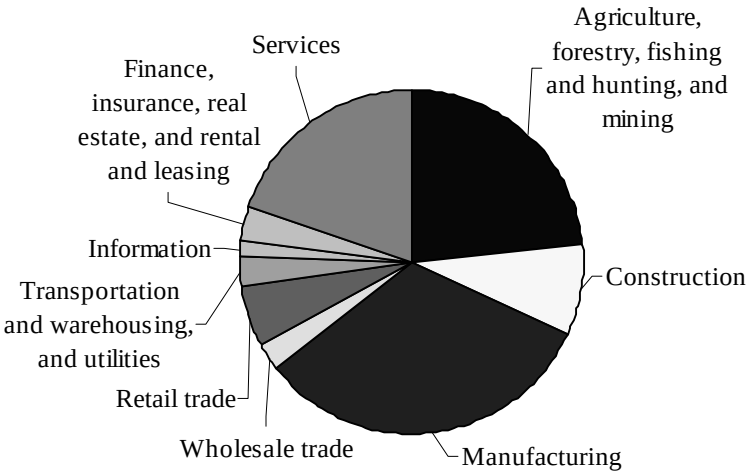
The number and percent of employed persons by industry group in the Town of How and Oconto County in 2000 are displayed in Table 4.4. The greatest percentage of employment in the Town of How was within manufacturing with 32 percent. The agricultural, forestry, fishing, and hunting and mining also has high numbers of employment with 23 percent. Figure 4.1 illustrates the percent employment by major industry group for the Town of How.

Table 4.4: Employed Persons by Industry Group, 2000, Town of How & Oconto County

Industry	Town of How Number	Town of How Percent of Total	Oconto County Number	Oconto County Percent of Total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	67	23.0	1,112	6.3
Construction	25	8.6	1,346	7.6
Manufacturing	93	32.0	5,126	29.0
Wholesale trade	7	2.4	463	2.6
Retail trade	17	5.8	1,517	8.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	8	2.7	1,263	7.1
Information	4	1.4	210	1.2
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	9	3.1	733	4.1
Profssnal, scientific, mangmnt, admin, and waste mngmnt serv	4	1.4	730	4.1
Educational, health and social services	31	10.7	2,723	15.4
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food serv	9	3.1	1,286	7.3
Other services (except public administration)	13	4.5	640	3.6
Public administration	4	1.4	531	3.0
Total	**291**	**100.0**	**17,680**	**100.0**

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Figure 4.1: Percent Employment by Industry Group, 2000, Town of How



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Unemployment Rate

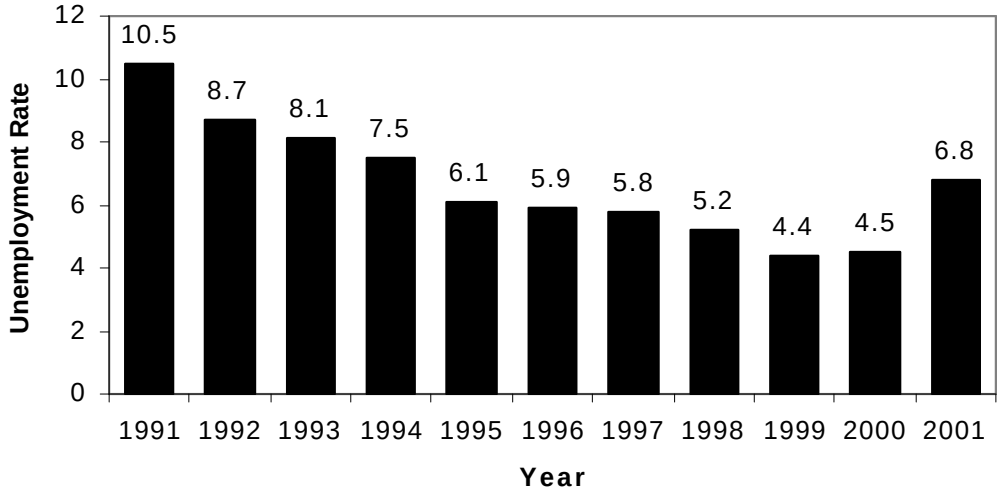
The civilian labor force for Oconto County has experienced both slight increases and decreases since 1991 (Table 4.5). The unemployment rate and the number of unemployed in 1999 was the lowest it has been during the whole decade (Figure 4.2). For the period 1991 to 2001, the number of unemployed decreased 3.7 percent, and the number of employed increased by 3,000 jobs.

Table 4.5: Average Civilian Labor Force Estimates, 1991-2001, Oconto County

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployed	% Civilian Labor Force	Employed
1991	14,237	1,494	10.5	12,743
1992	14,210	1,234	8.7	12,976
1993	14,482	1,170	8.1	13,312
1994	14,745	1,109	7.5	13,636
1995	14,778	905	6.1	13,873
1996	15,137	897	5.9	14,240
1997	15,355	895	5.8	14,460
1998	15,715	810	5.2	14,905
1999	15,446	684	4.4	14,762
2000	15,935	725	4.5	15,210
2001	16,896	1,144	6.8	15,752

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Civilian Labor Force Estimates, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Figure 4.2: Unemployment Rate, 1991-2001, Oconto County



Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Civilian Labor Force Estimate, 1991-2001; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Employment Forecast

In 1996, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development created the Northeast Wisconsin Projections: 1992-2005, a projection for industries, occupations, and the labor force. These projections are for all of Northeast Wisconsin, including Oconto County. The study concluded that overall employment is expected to increase by more than 20 percent in the region. Unemployment rates will remain low through 2005, and labor shortages may be common in some occupations.

According to the Department of Workforce Development, in 2005, the manufacturing industry is projected to continue to be the industry with the largest share of employment. Although manufacturing jobs will continue to increase, the rate of increase will slow down. Occupations in manufacturing are expected to move away from general labor positions to more semi-skilled and

skilled operator and technician jobs. This is due primarily to production processes that are more efficient and new available technology.

Service industry employers will add approximately 18,400 jobs to the region's labor market by 2005. The largest divisions within this industry group will be business and health services with a similar growth in professional or technical jobs. With the aging of the population, the demand for such services will continue to increase. The overall health of the Northeast Wisconsin economy is projected to be strong with no major projected decreases in any occupation or industry.

Since September 11, 2001 the economic projections have slowed. The economic forecasts remain viable - so long as further national and international markets continue to recover and no more attacks against US interests take place. The county as well as the region was negatively impacted during the economic slowdown this past year, but already the economy has begun to turnaround as consumer confidence levels increase.

Median Household Income

In 1989, the median household income for the Town of How was $22,054, which is greater than the Village of Suring and the Town of Maple Valley, but less than the Town of Gillett (Table 4.6). By 1997, the median household income for the town increased by $6,594 up to $28,648. By 1999 (reported in 2000 Census) the income is reported to have increased to $39,167. Similar increases of the median household income were also evident in the surrounding communities

Table 4.6: Median Household Income, 1989, 1997 and 1999, Town of How & Selected Areas

Area	1989	1997	1999
Town of How	$22,054	$28,648	$39,167
Town of Maple Valley	$21,667	$28,145	$35,795
Town of Underhill	$18,359	$23,848	$31,905
Village of Suring	$19,559	$25,407	$26,023
Oconto County	$22,927	$29,911	$41,201
State of Wisconsin	$29,442	$42,538	$43,791

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 3A, Table P080A; Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Estimated 1997 Median Household Income; 2000 Census of Population and Housing, DP-3 and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Personal Income

Per return income is based on income tax returns filed in the year cited to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. In 1999, the municipal per return income reported in the Town of How was $24,066, which was a 4.0 percent decrease from 1997 (Table 4.7). By comparison, the Town of Maple Valley experienced an increase of approximately 10 percent, while the Town of Gillett and the Village of Suring each increased by about 20 percent during the same time period. The Town of How had the lowest income in 1999 when compared to all other communities, including Oconto County and the State.

Table 4.7: Municipal Per Return Income, 1997-2000, Town of How & Selected Areas

Area	1997	1998	1999	2000	Percent Change 1997-2000
Town of How	25,074	23,329	24,066	23,797	-5.1
Town of Maple Valley	24,732	24,587	27,432	28,293	14.4
Town of Underhill	23,359	23,575	30,936	27,585	18.1
Village of Suring	21,453	24,697	25,628	29,226	36.2
Oconto County	27,544	29,571	31,300	32,367	17.5
Wisconsin	34,716	36,996	38,930	40,570	16.9

Source: Wisconsin Municipal Per Return Income Report, for years cited, Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Division of Research and Analysis; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

ECONOMIC BASE

Employment by Economic Division

To understand the future of employment in the Town of How, an understanding of the local and county economy is required. The Economic Base Analysis technique divides the economy into basic and non-basic sectors. The basic sector is made up of local businesses that are dependent on external factors. Manufacturing and local resource-oriented firms are usually considered to be basic sector firms because their fortunes depend largely upon non-local factors, and they usually export their goods. The non-basic sector, in contrast, is composed of those firms that depend largely upon local business conditions. Economic Base Theory asserts that the means of strengthening and growing the local economy is to develop and enhance the basic sector.

There are nine basic economic divisions that are used for Economic Base Analysis. There are four goods-producing sectors: agriculture, forestry, and fishing; mining; construction; and manufacturing. There are five services-producing sectors: transportation and public utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and services.

Location Quotient Analysis

The Location Quotient Analysis technique compares the local economy, Oconto County, to the United States. This allows for identifying specializations in the Oconto County economy (Table 4.8). If the location quotient (LQ) is less than 1.0, all employment is considered non-basic, therefore, that industry is not meeting local demand for a given good or service. An LQ equal to 1.0 suggests that the local employment is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for a given good or service, employment is still considered non-basic. An LQ greater than 1.0 suggests that local employment produces more goods and services than the local economy can use, therefore, these goods and services are exported to non-local areas, which makes them basic sector employment.

Table 4.8: Employment by Industry Group, 1990-1998, Oconto County and United States, Location Quotient Analysis

Item	Oconto County		United States		Percent Change 1990-1998		Oconto Location Quotient	
	1990	1998	1990	1998	Oconto	U.S.	1990	1998
Total full-time and part-time employment	12,104	13,684	139,426,900	160,198,700	13.1	14.9		
Farm employment	1,582	1,427	3,153,000	3,127,000	-9.8	-0.8	5.78	5.34
Nonfarm employment	10,522	12,257	136,273,900	157,071,700	16.5	15.3	0.89	0.91
Private employment	8,951	10,437	115,077,900	135,123,700	16.6	17.4	0.90	0.90
Ag. Services, forestry, fishing, & other	118	(D)	1,453,000	2,042,600	NA	40.6	0.94	NA
Mining	52	(D)	1,044,100	855,500	NA	-18.1	0.57	NA
Construction	560	875	7,260,800	8,799,100	56.3	21.2	0.89	1.16
Manufacturing	2,878	2,952	19,697,200	19,568,500	2.6	-0.7	1.68	1.77
Transportation and public utilities	543	649	6,568,600	7,668,300	19.5	16.7	0.95	0.99
Wholesale trade	286	253	6,711,500	7,351,900	-11.5	9.5	0.49	0.40
Retail trade	1,847	2,363	22,920,500	26,710,200	27.9	16.5	0.93	1.04
Finance, insurance, and real estate	472	547	10,712,600	12,229,900	15.9	14.2	0.51	0.52
Services	2,195	2,580	38,709,600	49,897,700	17.5	28.9	0.65	0.61

(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, REIS 1969-98; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2000.

Threshold Analysis

Export Base (Basic Employment)

There are four areas within the 1998 Oconto County economy that can be considered basic employment areas: farm employment, construction, manufacturing, and retail trade. These four areas produce more goods and services than the local economy can use. When LQs increase over time, this suggests that the Oconto County economy is getting closer to reaching and exceeding local demand. For example, retail trade had gone from 0.93 in 1990, to 1.04 in 1998. Having basic employment also suggests that if a downturn in the local economy occurs, these sectors will not be strongly affected because their dependent more on non-local economies. Having strong basic sector employment and industry will strengthen the local economy.

Non-Basic Employment Industry

Under private employment, there are three areas that can be considered non-basic: wholesale trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and services. These industries are not meeting local demand for a given good or service. For example, the wholesale trade industry LQ actually decreased since 1990, however the Oconto County economy could support more of this industry. The transportation and public utilities industry is currently reflecting an LQ equal to one that would indicate that local demand is being met and services are not being exported.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ANALYSIS

Introduction

This element of the plan looks at conditions within the town as either a strength, a weakness, or as a general statement of fact for retaining or attracting businesses. These factors may greatly influence the future economic climate over the next two decades. Therefore, they are important for the community to identify as part of this plan in order to understand their community's continued economic viability and future draw for preferred businesses. This portion of the

element gives a perspective from a "business point of view" and reflects concerns, issues, questions current and future business owners would ask about a community in formulating a plan, or before expanding their business. Within these categories are assumptions and statements based on information available on the community, as well as information derived from the local planning committee/commission.

Physical Capabilities

Utilities

Strengths:

Electric services are provided by Wisconsin Public Service and Oconto Electric Coop. The Village of Suring is located on the eastern border of the town and can provide potential new commercial or industrial businesses with the infrastructure that How lacks.

Weaknesses:

The town currently does not have a public water or sewer system, nor natural gas service to offer potential commercial businesses.

Telecommunications

Strengths:

Telephone service (local and long distance) is provided with digital switching. There are no major differences in the quality of telephone service between the town and other municipalities within the county.

Weaknesses:

Cable and fiber optics are not readily available to the town.

Transportation

Strengths:

The town has access to STH 32, which is a pathway that provides highway exposure to the town. Another pathway that gives the town some added exposure is the Oconto County Recreational Trail, which guides users of the trail through the northeastern portion of the town. Most town residents are within minutes of the Village of Suring and the City of Gillett.

Weaknesses:

The town does not have port access, nor its own access to rail or air service.

Local Labor Force Characteristics

Strengths:

The unemployment rates (6 percent) within the county are still low.

Weaknesses:

The town is experiencing an aging structure shift due to the baby boomers reaching retirement age. Current and future labor shortages are, and will be, due to low numbers in the age group of 16-24, and due to the large number of traditional businesses and farming operations within the Oconto County area employing/needing large numbers of young workers. In addition, more of these younger individuals are moving away to find employment and housing opportunities elsewhere.

Industrial/Commercial Site Availability

The town, as does its neighboring townships, has ample space for commercial/light industrial development primarily along STH 32. The areas adjacent to the highway provide for highway access, ease of access and good visibility. The Village of Suring, located on the eastern edge of How, has areas set aside for future commercial and industrial lands. These areas offer infrastructure, better marketing, and are also located along STH 32, which provides easy access and good visibility.

It should be noted that:

The Town of How is not looking to compete with the Village of Suring - commercially, or with industry. It is deemed mutually beneficial that these types of businesses locate within the village. The town is preserving its rural nature and open spaces, thus, if any new commercial businesses were to locate within the town, it should be small neighborhood-commercial businesses that relate to the towns character instead of highway oriented business directed to pass-through sales. In addition, the more intensive business operations will locate in the Village of Suring or other adjacent communities that have adequate services.

Highway oriented commercial sites along STH 32 will likely be counter to the wishes of the town - because associated development and placement of billboards and other off-site signage with their lighting will most likely conflict with the current community character of openspaces, and dark evening skies. The town favors strict enforcement on signage and lighting, especially at its community doorways with Suring, also at points entering the township, at high profile areas of major intersections such as STH 32 and CTH M, CTH M and Hayes Road.

<u>Programmatic Capabilities</u>

Existing Business Base Analysis

The town has few acres dedicated to industrial and commercial uses. Businesses within the town are primarily agricultural based. Good, well planned commercial businesses could locate within Hayes offering a village like setting, with good exposure and a year-round population.

Available Government Services

The town has an adopted Comprehensive Plan, a County Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance, and Shoreland Wetland Ordinance. Police services are provided by Oconto County, and Village of Suring, fire service is provided by Suring and

ambulance services are provided by Gillett. Postal services are provided by the Suring Post Office. Government assistance comes from a Town Board, Plan Commission, Town Clerk, and various planning agencies that assist the town on writing grant applications and monitoring these grants (park acquisitions/improvements, community developments, housing improvements, etc).

Specific Inhibitors To Economic Development

Infrastructure does not exist in planned areas of commercial and industrial growth. Rail and air services do not exist within the town.

Training Programs

Strengths:

The town has access to training from UW-Green Bay, the UW-Extension services (providing education and training seminars and courses), and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College NWTC.

Weakness:

Many of the formal training sites are between 45 minutes and an hour (by automobile) away.

Financial Capabilities

Tax Base Comparisons

The town had a 1999 Full Value equal to $22,697,600, which is higher than only one other town and two villages in Oconto County. The Full Value Effective Rate for the town in 1999 was 0.019, greater than the county's "town average" of 0.017.

Incentives For Development

The Town of How has no local incentives for development.

Banking Capability And Capacity

The town and its residents have access to numerous lending firms throughout the county, state and nation. With today's linking of lending agencies via telecommunication's networks and other "high speed" services a borrower can have a lender in distant locations to include other nations.

A common problem is the "template" approach to many lending agencies. Borrowers fitting a standard criteria are quickly approved for loans, while those deviating or not meeting the well defined criteria are often denied a loan. The local lender does not have the flexibility they once held years ago, especially since many lenders no longer personally "know" their borrower due to the availability of high speed telecommunications.

Quality of Life

Housing Prices

Only 11 homeowners within the town paid more than 30 percent of their incomes towards housing costs in 2000. In 2000 the median household income was $39,167. Based on the

household income median, a median housing payment would be $979, or approximately a home valued around $100,000. In 2000 the median value of a house was $72,100. Within the area of the Town of How, homes sold were around $115,000.

Aesthetics

The town consists of vast rural countryside with various water features. The abundance of open fields, woodlands and sloping terrain make up much of the town's prominent views.

Environment

Within the town exists areas of woodlands, farm fields, miles of rivers and creeks, and acres of wetlands. The waters are open to fishing, while the lands are used for hunting and hiking. The county has ordinances and plans protecting and enhancing the environment.

Education And Health Care

The town is within the Suring and Gillett School Districts. Health care is available in the communities of Suring, Gillett, Oconto Falls, Lena, Shawano and Green Bay. The nearest dental services exist within Gillett, Oconto Falls and Shawano.

SITES FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Existing Site Inventory and Analysis

The Town of How has few areas developed as commercial or industrial. Being primarily an agrarian community, pressure for these types of growth have been limited. Specific sites are located within the Land Use Element of this plan, and detailed upon the Land Use Map which was inventoried and mapped in 2002.

Evaluation of Environmentally Contaminated Sites:

Recently the DNR and EPA have been urging the clean up of contaminated commercial or industrial sites so they may be utilized for more productive uses. According to the list of Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) sites, the Town of How currently has one LUST site located at 13461 Hayes Road, Hischke Trucking.

Designation of Business and Industrial Development For:

Commercial Uses:

The comprehensive plan has identified that throughout the planning period, the town will work towards establishing well defined commercial areas/corridors to better enhance the town's look, to minimize conflicts between differing uses, and to maximize service efficiency. Commercial locations shall have good visibility and access, and may require additional buffering and landscaping to meet the town's desired vision on community character. The town will allow home occupational business to continue as well as those scattered types of businesses providing needed services to locals.

Industrial Uses:

The town intends to provide well defined, well designed areas for "light industrial" manufacturing and warehousing activities only, to accommodate those businesses located within the town and any future business use. Any consideration of locating industry along STH 32, needs to be accompanied with well landscaped areas with a buffer to add aesthetic qualities to the entryways into the town. It is important that if this use were to develop, that a detailed landscape plan, signage plan, street access plan and lighting plan be done that would fit the character of the town and not detract or negatively impact adjacent land uses. Any lands, off of main corridors, will also need to be buffered in order to minimize the negative impacts to adjacent properties.

Acreage Projections

The town will designate acreage associated with community business needs as well as common use sizes for industrial development. For more information see the General Plan Design that has specified locations within the town along with approximate acreage totals.

COMMUNITY FINANCES

A community must be concerned about its ability to generate sufficient public revenues to provide the types and levels of services demanded by its citizens. Tables 4.9 and 4.10 provide a history of the taxes levied in the Town of How. The full value increased 53.7 percent for the period 1995 to 2000. The total property tax also increased 9.4 percent for the same period and is at its highest since 1995.

Table 4.9: Comparative Tax Appropriations, 1995-2000, Town of How

Year Levied	Full Value	Percent Assm't Level	Total Property Tax	State Tax Credit	Full Value Rate Gross	Full Value Rate Effective	Taxing Jurisdiction Share School	Taxing Jurisdiction Share Vocational	Taxing Jurisdiction Share County	Taxing Jurisdiction Share Local	Taxing Jurisdiction Share Other
1995	14,765,800	92.52	418,907	30,894	0.02837	0.02627	255,282	20,327	81,834	58,511	2,953
1996	15,566,300	84.54	339,470	42,834	0.02180	0.01905	195,022	20,092	77,814	43,429	3,113
1997	17,473,000	75.68	365,615	39,855	0.02092	0.01864	205,156	21,924	83,847	51,194	3,495
1998	19,974,900	104.76	389,372	37,663	0.01949	0.01760	211,683	25,962	104,471	43,262	3,995
1999	22,697,600	91.72	458,254	36,431	0.02018	0.01858	234,473	30,535	119,765	68,942	4,540
2000	25,081,500	81.50	474,476	37,500	0.01891	0.01742	244,450	34,887	135,572	54,552	5,016

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, *Town, Village and City Taxes*, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

The ability to finance community projects is measured by general obligation debt capacity. According to the Wisconsin Constitution there are limits on how much a municipality may borrow. They are limited to an amount equal to five percent of the equalized value, or full value, of the unit of government. The town's existing debt as of December 31, 2000, was $0, with a debt margin of $1,254,075.

Table 4.10: Public Indebtedness, 1998-2000, Town of How

Year	Full Value	Debt Limit*	Existing Debt	Debt Margin
1998	19,974,900	998,745	0	998,745
1999	22,697,600	1,134,880	0	1,134,880
2000	25,081,500	1,254,075	0	1,254,075

*Debt Limit equals five percent of the full value.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Bureau of Local Finance Assistance, Equalized Value and Debt Limit Value, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Chapter 5 - TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Comprehensive Plan presents the community's transportation goals, objectives, and policies. This section of the plan also compares local plans to transportation plans developed at the state, regional and county level. This chapter also inventories existing transportation facilities that serve the Town of How in Oconto County and addresses the future transportation needs and concerns of the community. The inventory includes descriptions of the various modal elements of the town's transportation system. Those elements include transit systems (where applicable), elderly and disabled transportation system, intercity bus, bicycle transportation, pedestrian transportation, waterborne, rail, air service, trucking, and, most importantly, a detailed description of the town's highway and road system. The detailed description of the highway and road system includes the functional classification of roads within the town, traffic counts, traffic flow capacity, vehicle crashes, access controls, and an evaluation of the current internal traffic circulation system. This chapter also includes an inventory and analysis of applicable transportation plans, including county functional and jurisdictional studies, transportation corridor plans, rural transportation plans, state and local airport plans, state railroad plans, state, regional and local bicycle plans, state and local pedestrian plans, state and local transit plans, as well as any other special transportation plans that are applicable to the town. At the conclusion of the chapter, specific transportation system recommendations are presented and include design standards, recommended improvements, capacity additions to existing facilities, new road alignments, highway expansion projects, and improvements to other transportation modes.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Through its comprehensive planning program the Town of How seeks to establish a safe and efficient transportation system for motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles that is compatible with the town's adopted 20 Year Comprehensive Plan.

The transportation facility inventory conducted for the Town of How has established that the town currently has jurisdiction over and responsibility for approximately 43.5 miles of local roads. The town's jurisdictional responsibility relative to its local roads includes maintenance, repair and reconstruction of the roads as needed. The primary funding source for maintaining, rehabilitating and reconstructing the local road system in the Town of How is the state's disbursement of general transportation aids. The state provides a payment to the town for costs associated with such activities as road and street reconstruction, filling potholes, snow removal, grading shoulders, and marking pavement. In addition, the town's local transportation system is complimented by STH 32, and the county trunk highway system, which provide access to the communities located within Oconto County, the region, and the state.

The town currently does not have any specific facilities (bicycle paths, paved shoulders, and or sidewalks) to serve bicyclist and pedestrians. However, provided that traffic levels remain moderate to low, the town's existing local road system can and does safely and efficiently serve the needs of bicyclist and pedestrians.

The transportation facility inventory conducted for this plan also determined that the town has readily available and efficient access to multi-modal transportation services and facilities including; transportation services for the town's elderly and disabled residents (Oconto County Commission on Aging); private intercity bus service (Greyhound connections in the City of Oconto and Shawano); local air service (Oconto County Airport); and, regional passenger-air service (Austin Straubel Airport at Green Bay). There are no existing or operating rail facilities located within or adjacent to the town.

TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

Transportation in its many forms is the link that connects the town's land uses into a cohesive pattern. The following transportation objectives have been adopted to represent and define the importance of transportation in achieving the goals of the *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan.*

Transportation Goal

To establish a safe and efficient transportation system for motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles that is compatible with the town's adopted 20 Year Comprehensive Plan.

Transportation Principle

An integrated area transportation system serves to freely interconnect the various land use activities located within the town, county and region, thereby providing the accessibility needed to support these activities.

Transportation Objectives

1. To develop a transportation system that provides for all transportation modes.
2. To develop transportation system that is harmonious with surrounding land uses.
3. To provide for convenient and efficient vehicular movement near all commercial, industrial, and public facility locations.
4. Provide for adequate traffic controls (e.g. turning lanes, frontage roads) near businesses located along the STH 32 corridor.
5. To provide and maintain aesthetically pleasing transportation corridors.
6. Provide a safe system of bicycle paths and designated bicycle routes throughout the town.
7. To provide safe and convenient pedestrian traffic movement.
8. To plan for and designate future road rights-of-way within the town.
9. Develop an integrated multi-modal transportation system which, through its location, capacity, and design, will effectively serve the existing town land use development pattern and promote implementation of the town land use and transportation plan, meeting the anticipated transportation demand generated by existing and planned land uses.
10. Develop a balanced transportation system which will provide the appropriate types of transportation needed by all residents, regardless of income, physical ability or age, businesses, and industries at a level of service which will permit ready adaptation to changes

in transportation demand and technology including travel needs and transportation management.

11. Develop a transportation system that reduces accident exposure and provides for increased travel safety.
12. Develop a transportation system that is economical and efficient, satisfying other objectives at the lowest possible environmental, social and financial public cost.
13. Develop a transportation system that minimizes adverse effects upon the property tax base and the natural and cultural resource base.
14. Develop a transportation system that preserves a high aesthetic quality and possesses a positive visual relation to the land.
15. Develop a transportation system that facilitates energy conservation while minimizing associated pollution effects.
16. Develop a transportation system that identifies and preserves multi-use utility and transportation corridors.

Transportation Policies

1. The proper use of land for, and adjacent to, transportation facilities should be pursued in accordance with the town's land use development objectives. The disruption of future development should be minimized by utilizing transportation corridor preservation techniques.
2. The total amount of land used for transportation facilities should be minimized.
3. The dislocation of households, businesses, industries, and public and institutional buildings as caused by the reconstruction of existing or the construction of new transportation facilities and terminals should be minimized.
4. The destruction of, or negative impacts to, historic buildings and of historic, scenic, scientific, archaeological, and cultural sites as caused by the reconstruction of existing or the construction of planned transportation facilities and terminals should be minimized.
5. Transportation facility construction plans should be developed using sound geometric, structural, erosion control and landscape design standards which consider the aesthetic quality of the transportation facilities and the areas through which they pass.
6. Transportation facilities should be located to minimize impacts on visually pleasing buildings, structures, and natural features; and to enhance vistas to such features.
7. The location of transportation facilities in or through environmental corridors and natural areas should be avoided.
8. The loss of wetlands and environmental corridor land to transportation facility construction should be avoided.
9. Adverse impacts on significant natural habitat, with special attention to endangered species should be avoided.

10. Use of the natural resource base in the development of transportation facilities should be minimized.
11. Abandoned rail and/or utility right-of-way corridors should be preserved for future transportation facilities such as bicycle, pedestrian, transit, future rail service and/or arterial streets where such need is shown in the county land use plan.
12. Full use of all existing transportation facilities should be encouraged through low- and non-capital intensive techniques cooperatively fostered by government, business, and industry, prior to any capital-intensive or disruptive construction of new facilities.
13. The amount of transportation system operating and capital investment costs should be minimized.
14. The direct benefits derived from transportation system improvements should exceed the direct costs of such improvements using life-cycle costing methods.
15. The transportation system should provide access and service with choices of modes throughout the town in a way designed to reduce overall average travel times to destinations within the town and county.
16. Bicyclists and pedestrians should be accorded a comfortable margin of safety on all streets and highways by ensuring compliance with American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidelines and standards.
17. Bicycle lanes or wide curb lanes should be constructed on arterial highways and major collectors.
18. Bicycle paths should be constructed to serve corridors not served by streets and highways. The most common uses are along rivers, lake shores, canals, utility rights-of-way, and within college campuses.
19. Bicycle routing should direct bicyclists to suitable highways and streets without significantly compromising directness. Established bicycle suitability models should be used.

Transportation Programs

Work with the Oconto County Highway Commission, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission to develop a long-range maintenance and improvement program for town roads.

Work with the Oconto County Highway Safety Commission to provide an ongoing assessment of town road safety and efficiency.

Work with the Oconto County Highway Commission and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to ensure safe and efficient access to STH 32 and other major collector roads.

The Town Board or a designated committee should conduct an annual assessment of town road pavement conditions, road drainage and ditch maintenance needs, adequacy of existing driveways and culverts relative to safe access and to and from adjoining parcels of land, and to determine the adequacy of sight triangles at all road intersections.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The following provides a brief description of transportation related funding programs that are administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The programs are divided into two categories: 1) formula driven programs for which funding is based on population and/or road mileage; and 2) competitive funding programs.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

General Transportation Aid (GTA)

Town road improvements, construction and maintenance is funded, in part, through the state's disbursement of general transportation aids. The state provides a payment to each county and municipality in the state that pays a portion of local governments' costs for such activities as road and street reconstruction, filling potholes, snow removal, grading shoulders, marking pavement, and repair of curb and gutters. The statutory "rate per mile' is $1,704 for 2001. Beginning in 2000, each municipality was required to establish and administer a separate segregated account from which moneys may be used only for purposes related to local highways and must deposit into that account all state or federal money for local highway purposes.

Local Mileage Certification

Each local government that increased or decreased the mileage of its roads is required to file a certified plat with DOT by December 15 of each year. Local governments that have no changes in total local road miles are required to file a certified plat or a certified statement that no mileage increases have occurred. Beginning in 2001, the requirement for local governments to file certified plats with county clerks is eliminated and the mileage certification process was changed from an every other year activity to an annual activity. State GTA payments is based on the certified mileage of each local unit of government.

Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP)

This program provides funding to local units of government for the costs associated with improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and municipal streets in cities and villages under the authority of the local unit of government. Projects are required to have a minimal design life of 10 years. This is a biennial program and all funds are distributed the first year. Applications are submitted through the county highway commissioners by November 15 of the odd numbered years.

There are three entitlement components for funding road improvements: 1) County Highway Improvement component (CHIP): 2) Town Road Improvement component (TRIP); and 3) cities and villages under Municipal Street Improvement component (MSIP).

In addition LRIP funds three statewide discretionary programs; CHIP-D County Highway Discretionary Improvement Program; 2) Trip-D Town road Discretionary Improvement Program; and 3) MISP-D Municipal Street Discretionary Improvement Program for cities and villages.

All LRIP projects are locally let, with up to 50% of the costs reimbursed by WisDOT upon completion, and the remainder matched by the local unit of government. Eligible projects include but are not limited to design and feasibility studies, bridge replacement or rehabilitation,

reconstruction, and resurfacing. Ineligible projects include, but are not limited to: new roads, seal coats, ditch repair, and/or curb and gutter construction.

Local Bridge Program

This program includes two separate programs 1) a statewide local bridge entitlement program and 2) a high cost local bridge program (High cost bridges are those that cost more than $5 million and exceed 475 feet in length.)

This program funds 80% of project costs to replace and rehabilitate structures on the Federal Bridge Register, in excess of 20 feet. Bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 50 are eligible for replacement and those with sufficiency ratings less than 80 are eligible for rehabilitation.

Counties set priorities for funding within their area, with projects funded on a statewide basis.

Local bridge projects are solicited by local WisDOT transportation Office (District 3) staff in winter of the odd numbered years, with program approval in summer of the odd numbered years. The program has a three-year cycle.

Flood Damage Aids

This program provides local governments with financial assistance for replacing or improving roads or roadway structures that have had major damages caused by flooding.

County Forest Aid Program

This program provides assistance to counties that have eligible roads located within county forests. It is intended to defray the costs for the improvement and maintenance of public roads within a county forest.

Rural and Small Urban Area Public Transportation Assistance Program - Section 5311

Allocations to the State are set at the federal level. Funds may be used for operating assistance, and capital assistance. Eligible public transportation services include public transportation service operating or designed to operate in non-urbanized areas (a non-urbanized area is one that has a population of 50,000 or less).

Specialized Transportation Assistance Program for Counties - Section 85.21

Allocations under this formula program are based upon the proportion of the state's elderly and disabled population located in each county, subject to two minimums: no county can receive less than a ½ percent of the total annual appropriation; and no county can receive an allocation smaller than they received in 1992. A local match of 20 percent is required.
Eligible expenditures include:

- directly provided transportation service for the elderly and disabled;
- purchase of transportation service from any public or private organization;
- a user-subsidy for the elderly or disabled passenger for their use of the transportation service;
- volunteer driver escort reimbursement;
- performing or purchasing planning or management studies on transportation;
- coordinating transportation services;
- performing or purchasing in-service training relating to transportation services; and/or

- purchasing capital equipment (buses, vans etc.) for transportation services.

The following provides a brief description of competitive (transportation related) grant programs that are federally and state funded:

Local Transportation Enhancement Program (TE)

Administered by WisDOT the TE program provides funding to local governments and state agencies for projects that enhance a transportation project. There are 12 eligible project categories;

- providing facilities for bicycles and pedestrians;
- providing safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists;
- acquiring scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
- sponsoring scenic or historic highway programs; including the provision of tourist and welcome centers;
- landscaping and other scenic beautification;
- preserving historic sites;
- rehabilitating and operating historic transportation buildings and structures;
- preserving abandoned railway corridors;
- controlling and removing outdoor advertising;
- conducting archaeological planning and research;
- mitigating water pollution due to highway runoff or reducing vehicle caused wildlife mortality; and
- establishing transportation museums.

Federal funds will cover up to 80 percent of the project, while the project sponsor is responsible for providing at least a 20 percent match.

Surface Transportation Program - Discretionary (STP-D)

This program encourages projects that foster alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips. Such as rehabilitation and purchase of replacement vehicle for transit systems, facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, system-wide bicycle planning, and a wide range of transportation demand management (TDM) projects. Communities over 5,000 are eligible to apply for the funds through the competitive application process.

Transportation Demand Management Programs

Transportation Demand Management consists of policies and programs designed to reduce the number of single occupant vehicles (SOV) trips in a region, especially during peak travel periods.

There are two grant programs: TDM Grant Program; and Wisconsin Employment Transportation assistance Program (WETAP).

1. TDM Grant Program

The TDM Grant program provides funding to successful grant recipients to implement projects that encourage innovative solutions and alternatives to reducing SOV trips. WisDOT accepts applications annually. Eligible applicants may include local governments, chambers of

commerce, and others as defined by the program. The required local match is 20 percent of the project costs.

2. Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)

As a joint program between the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and WisDOT, it provides funding to help low-income people access, or retain or advance in employment with the goal of meeting the entire population's transportation needs. This program is funded with combined federal and state dollars, and requires a local match.

Application requirements include the development of regional job access plans that identify the need for transportation services and illustrate the alternatives proposed for the program. Plans should be developed between public transit providers, local units of government, transportation planners, human service agencies, low-income individuals and other interested parties

Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA Grant) Program

This program provides a 50 percent state grant to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor and airport projects that are necessary to help attract employers to Wisconsin, or to encourage business and industry to remain and expand in Wisconsin.

Federal Highway Administration

Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP)

The TCSP program is an initiative that assists communities as they work to solve interrelated problems involving transportation, land development, environmental protection, public safety and economic development. It was established in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the six-year surface transportation law signed into law by President Clinton on June 9, 1998.

The TCSP program is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department's Federal Transit Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, and Research and Special Programs Administration. Funding for this program has been authorized through 2003.

TCSP funds are used to help achieve locally determined goals such as improving transportation efficiency; reducing the negative effects of transportation on the environment; providing better access to jobs, services and trade centers; reducing the need for costly future infrastructure; and revitalizing underdeveloped and brownfield sites. Grants also can be used to examine urban development patterns and create strategies that encourage private companies to work toward these goals in designing new developments. The grants will help communities become more livable by preserving green space, easing traffic congestion and employing smart growth strategies while promoting strong, sustainable economic growth.

Grants may be awarded to improve conditions for bicycling and walking; better and safer operation of existing roads, signals and transit systems; development of new types of transportation financing and land use alternatives; development of new programs and tools to measure success; and the creation of new planning tools and policies necessary to implement TCSP-related initiatives. Implementation activities may include community preservation

activities to implement transit oriented development plans, traffic calming measures or other coordinated transportation and community and system preservation practices.

There is no local match required under this program, projects are fully funded although priority is given to those applications that demonstrate a commitment of non-Federal resources.

INVENTORY OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Elderly and Disabled Transportation System

Elderly and disabled transportation systems refer to those programs that provide rides through scheduled bus services, volunteer programs with private vehicles etc. Current transportation services for elderly and disabled persons living within the Town of How are provided through programs administered by the Oconto County Commission on Aging. Transportation is provided by wheelchair accessible buses, an eight-passenger van and by volunteer drivers using personal vehicles. The Oconto County Department of Human Services also provides limited transportation service to the county's disabled population. Service is provided by appointment, and involves door-to-door transportation.

Medical related and nutritional related trip purposes receive priority, followed by work related and recreational and/or business related trip needs. A four member advisory committee to the County's Commission on Aging provides coordination of the special transportation services that are available within the town. The committee sets policy and oversees transportation services. The transportation is provided by paid and volunteer staff utilizing both publicly and privately-owned vehicles. The cost of the special transportation services is borne by state subsidy through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Section 85.21 (*Special Transportation for the Elderly and Disabled Transportation)* grant program, county funds (20 percent of the state grant), donations and fares collected from passengers.

Inter-County Bus Service (WETAP)

In 2001, the Marinette/Oconto County Job Services Center in cooperation with Oconto County obtained a grant to initiate an inter-county transit system pilot program that will provide transportation service to lower-income workers between major employment centers in the two counties.

The funding for this program is provided by a combination of state TANF and federal DOT JARC funds. The purpose of the grant is to provide employment related group transportation assistance to people earning less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. However, non-eligible persons may ride if there is space available. Employment related purposes include education, work experience, private and public employment, program appointments and services, etc.

The grant funding will pay 80% of the net deficit of the cost of the service after fares are deducted. A local match of 20% of the total system costs is required.

A Transportation Coordination Committee will be established to coordinate the program.

Initially, four routes (two servicing Oconto County) will be established. One will travel between the Village of Suring and the City of Oconto Falls. The second will travel between Oconto Falls and Oconto looping up into Stiles Junction and Lena, and going beyond into the cities of Peshtigo and Marinette, in Marinette County.

The WETAP program will provide startup and operational funding for three years, after which other sources of funding such as Section 18, will need to be obtained to provide continued service.

Intercity Bus

In the past, nearly every small community in the state was connected by an intercity bus service which traditionally served the elderly, those who could not drive, students, and those individuals unable to afford alternative forms of transportation. Following World War II, intercity bus systems helped to fill a void for "affordable transportation" that was created by the decline of passenger rail service. Unfortunately, intercity bus service suffered the same fate as passenger rail; as intercity bus ridership decreased, the number of intercity bus routes operating within the state also declined drastically. Intercity bus routes tend to serve only the largest urban centers and those smaller urban areas that just happen to be adjacent to a route that connects two larger cities.

Greyhound Bus currently provides service twice daily through Oconto County, both trips originate in the City of Green Bay. The final destinations are to Marquette, Michigan and Calumet, Michigan. Both routes provide service through the City of Oconto. The Green Bay to Marquette, Michigan route leaves Green Bay at 5:15 P.M. and arrives in the City of Oconto at approximately 6:00 P.M; continuing northward through the cities of Peshtigo, Marinette and Menominee. The return trip to Green Bay arrives at the City of Oconto at approximately 3:10 A.M., daily. The Green Bay to Calumet, Michigan route leaves Green Bay at 9:45 P.M, and arrives at the City of Oconto at approximately 10:15 PM. The returns service to Green Bay arrives at the City of Oconto at approximately 10:15 A.M., daily.

Connections to Milwaukee, Chicago, Madison and Minneapolis, can be made in the City of Green Bay.

Bicycle Transportation System

The Oconto County Recreation Trail traverses the northeastern corner of the Town of How through the Village of Suring, crossing the North Branch of the Oconto River, and then crossing Poplar Lane and River Road before continuing northeasterly into the Town of Breed.

Rail

There are no rail facilities currently operating within the Town of How. In 1978 the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad (C&NW) was granted right of abandonment of their Gillett to Scott Lake line which traversed the northeastern corner of the town, crossing STH 32 in the Village of Suring and continuing northward, crossing Poplar Lane and River Road. Prior to abandonment this segment extended north from the Town of Gillett, 87.2 miles through Oconto, Forest, and Florence County to its intersection with a C&NW west to east mainline at Scott Lake. Shipments on the line, which were generally destined to paper production industries located in the City of Green Bay and the Fox River Valley, declined dramatically after 1973. The principal causes for the decline in activity was declines in the pulpwood market and production and the fact that shippers were shifting to trucks as a means of transporting their wood to the markets.

Air Service

The inventory of air transportation systems and facilities includes both public airports that service the region and also the private or semi-public airport facilities that service private commercial and recreational interest.

At the regional level, the primary commercial-passenger and air freight service for residents of the Town of How is provided by Austin Straubel International Airport, located near the City of Green Bay. The facility is owned and operated by Brown County. Austin Straubel International Airport is a full service regional connector that in 1999 is providing direct service flights to four major cities, including Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Flights are provided on six airlines with approximately 32 arrivals and departures daily. An alternative choice for passenger service is Mitchell International Airport located in Milwaukee, which is able to provide a wider range of continental and international destinations, as well as services and fares unavailable at Austin Straubel Airport.

In addition to the full service airport located at Green Bay, Oconto County owns and operates a facility on approximately 240 acres located in the Town of Oconto, immediately to the southwest of the City of Oconto. The Oconto Municipal Airport is classified as a general utility airport facility and is capable of handling single and larger twin engine aircraft as well as smaller corporate jets

There are also several privately owned airstrips located within Oconto County providing general small craft services and/or recreational flights to the public. These small, private airport facilities offer minimal services, and are generally utilized by recreational fliers.

Private airport facilities are required to obtain a certificate of approval or permit from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Bureau of Aeronautics. The permit is issued if the Department determines that the location of the proposed airport is compatible with existing and planned transportation facilities in the area. Generally, permits are granted provided that the proposed air-strip is located so that approaching and departing aircraft clear all public roads, highways, railroads, waterways or other traverse ways by a height which complies with applicable federal standards. The permit is issued upon the applications review by WisDOT, the county and the town in which the facility is located and by the appropriate regional planning commission.

Private facilities are generally characterized by short (2,000' to 3,000') turf covered runways which can accommodate small single engine and light twin engine aircraft. There are two privately owned facilities, available for public use near the Town of How. One is located near the Village of Suring (Piso Airport).and the other near Lakewood (Lakewood Country Club Airport).

Trucking

There are no commercial trucking terminals located within the town.

Streets and Highways

There are several basic considerations useful in assessing the road system within a community. Those considerations include the functional classification of the existing road system, the annual average daily traffic on roads within the town, and an evaluation of the system's capability to handle present and

projected future traffic volumes. In addition, vehicle crash data is useful in determining problem areas relative to road safety. This information can provide an indication of the road improvements that may be needed during the planning period.

Functional Class

Roads, which are the principal component of the circulation system, may be divided into three categories: arterial, collector and local. The three categories of roads are determined by the function that the road serves in relation to traffic patterns, land use, land access needs and traffic volumes. The road system for the Town of How shown in Map 5.1 has been functionally classified based on criteria identified in Table 5.1.

Arterial Roads

The function of an arterial road is to move traffic over medium to long distances, often between regions as well as between major economic centers, quickly, safely and efficiently. Arterial roads are further categorized into either “major’ or “minor” arterial roads based on traffic volumes. State Highway 32 (STH 32) is the only arterial highway located within the Town of How. STH 32 travels west from the Village of Suring and turns northward just before intersecting with County Highway R (CTH R). STH 32 comprises approximately three miles or 4.6 percent of all roads located within the town.

STH 32, also designated the "32nd Division Memorial Highway," commemorating the 32nd Division for obvious 'numerical' reasons, is the primary access route to the Town of How for northbound cottage dwellers and tourists traveling from Green Bay, the Fox River Valley, Milwaukee and the southeastern part of the state. The southern terminus of STH 32 is the Wisconsin/Illinois state line at Pleasant Prairie south of Kenosha. The northern terminus is the Michigan state line (concurrent with USH 45) at Land O’Lakes. From Illinois to Michigan the highway traverses approximately 325 miles through the state of Wisconsin through Milwaukee and Green Bay. From Michigan, STH 32 traverses south and eastward through Monico and Crandon. At Crandon, the highway traverses due east into Laona concurrent with USH 8. At Laona, the highway traverses southward through Wabeno, Carter, Townsend, Lakewood, and then through the Oconto County communities of Mountain, Suring and Gillett. From Oconto County, STH 32 continues southward, connecting with STH 29 at a point just west of the City of Green Bay.

Table 5.1: Functional Classification Criteria for Rural Roads and Highways

		Must meet any two of these (or) the parenthetical traffic volume alone for collectors)			
Functional Classification	**Traffic Volume**	**Population Service**	**Land Use Service**	**Spacing**	**SUPPLEMENTAL CRITERIA** Or must meet both of these plus 90 percent of traffic volume
Principal Arterial	> 3,000	Connect places 50,000 with other places 50,000 Connect places 5,000 with places 50,000	Provide area access to major recreational areas of the state	Maximum 30 miles	None for Principal Arterials
Minor Arterial	> 1,000	Connect places 5,000 with other places 5,000 Connect places 1,000 with places 5,000 or with principal arterials	Serve all traffic generating activities with an annual visitation ≥ 300,000 if not served by a principal arterial	Maximum 30 miles	1. Alternative population connection 2. Major river crossing/restrictive topography
Major Collector	> 500 (> 2,000)	Connect places 1,000 with other places 1,000 Connect places 500 with places 1,000 or higher function route Connect places 500 with other places 500 or higher function route Connect places 100 with places 500 or higher function route	Land use service index ≥ 16 Provides access to smaller attractions (e.g., airports, schools, factories, parks, etc.)	Maximum 10 miles	1. Alternative population connection 2. Major river crossing 3. Restrictive topography 4. Interchange with freeway 5. Parallel to a principal arterial
Minor Collector	>200 (>800)	Connect places 100 with other places 100 Connect places 50 with places 100 or higher function route	Land use service index ≥ 8 serves same type of attractions as major collector	Maximum 10 miles	1. Alternative population connection 2. Major river crossing 3. Restrictive topography 4. Interchange with freeway 5. Parallel to a principal arterial

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, *Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter Trans 76*, 1984; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Collector Roads

The primary function of roads classified as “collectors” is to provide general "area to area" routes for local traffic. Collector roads take traffic from the local roads (and the land based activities supported by the local roads) and provide relatively fast and efficient routes to farm markets, agricultural service centers and larger urban areas. With an overall socioeconomic trend that is characterized by the decline of small and medium agricultural concerns, and a significant increase in the number of rural single-family residential properties, collector roads generally serve the same function but with different trip purposes. Collector roads typically serve low to moderate vehicle volumes and medium trip lengths between commercial centers at moderate speeds. Collector roads serve to distribute traffic between local and arterial roads, between home and the work place, home and the place of worship, home and school and between the home and those places where business and commerce are conducted.

In the Town of How, CTH R, CTH M and CTH V are classified as “collector roads” and comprises 12.7 percent or 8.22 miles of the towns total road system.

Table 5.2: Road Function, Total Mileage and Percent of Total Road Mileage, Town of How, 2001

Road Function	Miles	Percent
State Trunk 32 (Arterial)	2.98	4.63
CTH R, CTH M and CTH V (Collector)	8.22	12.71
Local Roads	43.50	82.66
Total Road Mileage	64.72	100.00

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, *Town Plat Record*, 2001; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Local Roads

The primary and most important function of local roads is to provide direct access to land adjacent to the road. Local roads are constructed to serve individual parcels of land and properties. They also tend to serve the ends of most trips within the rural area. All roads that are not classified as arterial or collector facilities within the town are classified as local roads

Local roads should be designed to move traffic from an individual lot (more often than not, a person's home, cottage or farm) to collector roads that in turn serve areas of business, commerce and employment. Local roads should not be designed or located in such a manner that they would or might be utilized by through traffic. In total, there are more than 43 miles of local roads under the jurisdiction of the town, comprising approximately 83 percent of the total road mileage located within the town.

Local Mileage Certification

Each local government that increased or decreased the mileage of its roads and streets is required to file a certified plat with DOT by December 15 of each year. Local governments that have no changes in total local road miles are required to file a certified plat or a certified statement that no mileage statements have occurred. In addition, beginning in 2001, the town is required to provide WisDOT with a numeric based evaluation of the pavement condition of each segment of town road within their jurisdiction.

Traffic Counts

An analysis of past and present traffic volumes is beneficial in determining the traffic conditions in a community. Traffic volumes are usually presented as an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figure, and are calculated for a particular intersection or stretch of roadway. The Wisconsin Department of

Transportation, as part of its traffic count program, provides highway traffic volumes from selected roads for all state communities on a rotating basis, providing those counts for a community once every three years. For the Town of How, traffic volumes were last counted in 1998. Counts were also taken in 1995 and 1992. The average daily traffic volumes on principal and minor arterial roadways within the town for those years are listed in Table 5.3, and are shown on Map 5.2. The daily rural traffic counts are taken for 48 hours, and are reported as a 24-hour average weekday count for a specific data collection period.

Table 5.3: Annual Average Daily Traffic, Town of How, 1992, 1995, 1998, and 2001; Number Change 1998 to 2001; and, Percent Change 1998 to 2001

Highway	Count Location	1992	1995	1998	2001	Number Change 1998-2001	% Change 1998-2001
STH 32	west of Village of Suring	3,100	3,100	4,100	3,400	-700	-17.07
STH 32	north of CTH R intersection	3,200	3,700	3,900	3,700	-200	-5.13
CTH R	south of CTH M	1,680	1,900	2,000	2,400	400	20.00
CTH R	east of intersection with Hayes Road	960	1,900	2,400	2,200	-200	-8.33
CTH M	west of intersection with CTH R	620	640	550	560	10	1.82

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, *Wisconsin Highway Traffic Volume Data*, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Within the Town of How the highest traffic volumes (annual average daily traffic of 3,700 vehicles in 2001) is found on the section of STH 32 just north of its intersection with CTH M. CTH R services the most traffic of all county trunk highways in the town, with 2,400 vehicles per day in 2001. Conversely, annual average daily traffic on CTH M accommodates only 550 vehicles daily.

Traffic Flow Capacity

The roads that serve the state, the region and the local community are designed and engineered to accommodate a maximum level of traffic (Table 5.4). The maximum total capacity of a two-lane, two-way highway (such as STH 32 and CTH R) under ideal conditions is 2,000 vehicles per hour in both lanes, as determined by the Peak Hourly Traffic (PHT), regardless of traffic distribution by direction. The maximum capacity values given in Table 5.4 should be considered as the average maximum volume on various types of roads under ideal conditions.

Table 5.4: Uninterrupted Traffic Flow Capacities Under Ideal Conditions

Highway Type	Capacity Peak Hourly Traffic
Multi-Lane and Divided Highways	2,000 vehicles per lane
Two-Lane, Two-Way Highways	2,000 vehicles both lanes
Three-Lane, Two-Way Highways	4,000 vehicles both lanes

Source: Highway Capacity Manual, Highway Research Board of the Division of Engineering and Industrial Research, 1985; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

As the comparison of the recorded average annual daily traffic, peak hourly traffic and the traffic flow capacities indicate, at present, there are no roads or road segments located within the town that have approached or appear to be approaching the roads design capacity.

Traffic Crashes

Vehicle crash reports, filed with the Oconto County Sheriff's Department and also with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provide the detail of the time, location, type and severity of the accident that has occurred. These reports are often excellent indicators of problems with road alignments, roadway construction, and geometric design of the road. The number, location and severity of accidents can often indicate problem areas (in terms of traffic safety) which may be alleviated through a variety of measures. Alterations in the road geometry, enlargement of the intersection turning radii, and placement of more prominent signs, relocation of access drives and speed changes are just a few of the physical alterations and adjustments that can be made to make a specific intersection or area safer.

Table 5.5: Vehicle Crashes, Town of How, 2000 and 2001

Year	Crashes	Fatalities	Crashes With Injuries	Property Damage
2000	13	1	6	6
2001	9	0	5	4
Total	22	1	11	10

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 2002; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

For the two-year period between 2000 and 2001 there were a total of 22 reported crashes in the Town of How, one of which resulted in a fatality, 11 of which resulted in injuries to the vehicles occupants and 11 that resulted in property damage only.

The crash data are further delineated by non-intersection and intersection crashes and by highway jurisdiction. Non-intersection crashes typically include: crashes between a vehicle and deer, crashes between a vehicle and a fixed object such as a sign post, mailbox, or a tree; vehicles leaving the road and sliding into a ditch, and crashes between a vehicle traveling on the roadway striking another vehicle entering or exiting the roadway or stopped to turn into a private property access. Intersection accidents are typically characterized by angle crashes, rear-end accidents and head-on crashes within the immediate area of a particular intersection. Intersection accidents often may be indicators of a problem with the sight triangle at the intersection (visibility), location of and visibility of signs, and/or the geometric configuration of the roadway itself.

Table 5.6: Intersection/Non-Intersection Crashes by Highway Jurisdiction, 2000 and 2001

		Intersection		Non-Intersection	
Crash Location	Total Crashes	Crashes	Percent	Crashes	Percent
STH 32	6	0	0.00%	6	27.27
County Highways	9	3	13.64%	6	27.27
Local Town Roads	4	1	4.55%	6	27.27
Total	22	4	18.19%	18	81.81

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 2002; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

There were a total of 22 crashes reported to have occurred in the Town of How in 2000 and 2001. Of that total 18 crashes, or 81.82 percent of the total crashes reported, were non-intersection types; and four crashes or 18.18 percent of the total crashes reported occurred within a road intersection with another road. There were no intersection crashes reported on STH 32, three crashes occurred within intersections with county trunk highways and one crash occurred at an intersection of two town roads. Four of the crashes reported for 2000 and 2001 occurred on River Road, including a single vehicle crash (overturn) that resulted in a fatality.

Access Controls

Access management is a means to maintain the safe and efficient movement of traffic along arterial highways by controlling the number and location of intersecting roads and driveways. State statutes allow counties, cities and villages (through an adopted ordinance) to control access on county highways that have traffic counts in excess of 1,000 vehicles daily.

At this time, Oconto County does not have nor does it plan to adopt a Controlled Access Ordinance

EVALUATION OF CURRENT INTERNAL TRAFFIC CIRCULATION SYSTEM

The town's internal traffic circulation system consist of a typical north/south and east/west grid road pattern in the northern half of the town serving agricultural and scattered rural-residential properties. In the southern half of the town the traffic circulation system is influenced by natural features including numerous small streams, lakes, and the Oconto River, resulting in a road pattern that is largely non-continuous and circuitous.

The town's local road system and the county trunk highways located within the town provide excellent access to STH 32 as well as STH 22 and STH 29 to the south. The state highway, in turn, provides town residents with efficient inter-regional access throughout the state.

The town is also well served by several major and minor collector roads (CTH R, CTH M, CTH V) providing nearly direct and efficient connections to other locations within Oconto County and in particular, to the numerous, essential services located in the Village of Suring, City of Gillett, and the City of Shawano.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF APPLICABLE TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND PROGRAMS

The following section of this chapter presents information on existing state, regional, county, and local transportation related plans that apply within the town.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan

The Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020 states that, "Wisconsin's State Trunk Highway system, consisting of approximately 11,800 miles of roads, is aging and deteriorating at the same time traffic congestion is increasing." In response to this critical issue, WisDOT, in partnership with its stakeholders, has developed the *State Highway Plan 2020*, a 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. The plan will be updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin.

The *Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020* addresses three key elements or issues of concern relative to the State Highway System;

- Preserving the system by improving or replacing aging pavements and bridges;
- Facilitating movement of people and goods through an efficiently designed system, and with programs that reduce traffic congestion; and
- Improving highway safety through combined strategies of engineering, education and enforcement.

Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation develops a *Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan* which addresses the *rehabilitation* of Wisconsin's state highways. Rehabilitation falls into three major categories (r*esurfacing, reconditioning and reconstruction*) giving it the often used abbreviation 3-R Program.

Resurfacing entails provision of a new surface for a better ride and extended pavement life

Reconditioning entails addition of safety features such as wider lanes, or softening of curves and steep grades

Reconstruction entails complete replacement of worn of roads including the road base and rebuilding roads to modern standards.

The State's six-year plan indicates that STH 32 from Mountain to Lakewood and from Townsend north to the county line will be resurfaced in 2004; and STH 64 from its intersection with STH 32 west to the county line will be resurfaced in 2002.

State Airport Plans

The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020 (SASP 2020) provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of the system of public-use airports adequate to meet current and future aviation needs of Wisconsin. The plan determines the number, location and type of aviation facilities required to adequately serve the state's aviation needs over a 21-year planning period, 2000 through 2020. The plan defines the State Airport System and establishes the current and future role of each airport in the system.

State Railroad Plans

An update of the State Rail Plan is in progress. Although there are no rail lines currently operating within the town, the former C&NW rail line does traverse north to south through the entire town. The state has and will continue to recommend that public ownership of the former right-of-way be maintained.

State, Regional and Local Bicycle Plans

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* has as its two primary goals

- Increase levels of bicycling throughout Wisconsin, doubling the number of trips made by bicycles by the year 2010 (with additional increases achieved by 2020).

- Reduce crashes involving bicyclists and motor vehicles by at least 10% by the year 2010 (with additional increases achieved by 2020)

Recommended actions include 1) developing local bicycle transportation plans; 2) providing suitable space for bicyclists when designing roadway projects; 3) following accepted bikeway guidance and standards; and 4) routinely considering bicyclists when developing roadway projects.

There are currently no county or local bicycle plans currently addressing bicycling or bicycle facilities.

FUNDING THE TOWN ROAD SYSTEM

The cost of constructing, maintaining and operating roads under local jurisdiction (town roads) is defrayed through the provision of General Transportation Aids (authorized in Section 86.30 of the Wisconsin Statutes). General Transportation Aids are distributed to all Wisconsin towns through a highway aids formula administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Under the formula, local aid is distributed either as a share of eligible highway-related expenditures incurred by the town or on a per-mile basis, whichever is higher.

Eligible expenditures generally include all road construction and maintenance within the right-of-way, as well as a percentage of eligible law enforcement, street lighting maintenance and construction, and storm sewer construction. The share of cost rate is determined by the available funding and the average costs reported by the town. The 2001 funding level has resulted in a share of cost percentage of **20.8** percent for towns. Each town's share of costs is determined by multiplying the six-year average costs by the percentage rate.

The 2001 flat rate has been set at $1,740 per mile. Transportation Aids for towns, as well as all other local units of government and counties, are derived primarily from motor fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Road Improvements

In order to improve traffic safety and to maintain the efficiency of STH 32 (particularly in the areas immediately adjacent to the Village of Suring) the town should continue to direct and promote development that minimizes, as much as is possible, direct access to the state highway. This can be achieved by requiring adequately spaced driveways, by requiring frontage roads that access numerous properties or driveway accesses that can serve more than one property. Future development on the property that is planned for commercial development on either side of STH 32, should only be accessible from an existing driveway or, preferably, from county or town roads.

There are numerous single-purpose or dead-end roads located throughout the town. If lands adjacent to these single-purpose roads are developed into residential or other uses in the future, the town may wish to require that property owners provide adequate turning areas (cul-de-sacs or circular driveways) in order to provide safe and efficient access and egress for service vehicles and safety equipment.

Initiate A Pavement Management Program

Town roads are rehabilitated, repaired and maintained with funds provided by the State's Local Roads Program (LRP). This program provides each local unit of government in the state with financial support derived from state taxes on gasoline and other transportation/vehicle related surcharges for local road maintenance and repair.

It is recommended that a "pavement management" system be developed and utilized by the town. The system provides a detailed inventory and description of all roads within the town, provides a detailed surface condition survey of those roads, defines the goals and objectives of the town with respect to its road maintenance and repair, and establishes a long-term maintenance schedule which would prioritize the road maintenance and repair needs.

A pavement management program is simply a Capital Improvement Program geared specifically to the town's roads. The pavement management program provides the town with a detailed, defensible document, which will assist elected and appointed officials in making informed decisions regarding road maintenance and repair.

Employ Adequate Design Standards

New highways and roads, in the optimum setting, should be designed for their projected and desired use. Design standards should be applied to all new construction and, where possible, existing roads which are to undergo major repair and reconstruction shall undergo this work according to the standards set forth in this plan.

In examining the design of town roads, the “road-scape” of these facilities also should be considered as well. The “road-scape” includes the area adjacent to the road and within the established right-of-way or the ditch that serves as a vegetative buffer between the road and the adjacent lots, a location for traffic signs and for utility lines.

The reconstruction of STH 32 in 2005 would be an opportune time to assess intersections with the state highways and incorporate improvements into the reconstruction of the state highway if needed.

Apply Traffic Considerations

Traffic considerations which the town should take into account when planning for future development may include the following:

1. Adequate vehicular and pedestrian access should be provided to all parcels of land.
2. Local road systems should be designed to minimize through traffic movement.
3. The road pattern should minimize excessive travel.
4. A simple and comprehensible system of road names and house numbering should be provided.
5. Traffic generators located within new subdivisions (such as schools, churches and parks) should be considered in the local circulation pattern.
6. The planning and construction of local residential roads should clearly indicate their function.
7. The local roads should be designed for a relatively uniform and low volume of traffic.
8. Local roads should be designed to discourage excessive speeds.

9. Minimize intersections.
10. Devote a minimal but adequate amount of space to road uses.
11. Roads are a function of land use, and therefore should not unduly hinder the development of land.
12. Pedestrian and bicycle paths should be separated from vehicle paths where possible.

Assess Special Transportation Needs

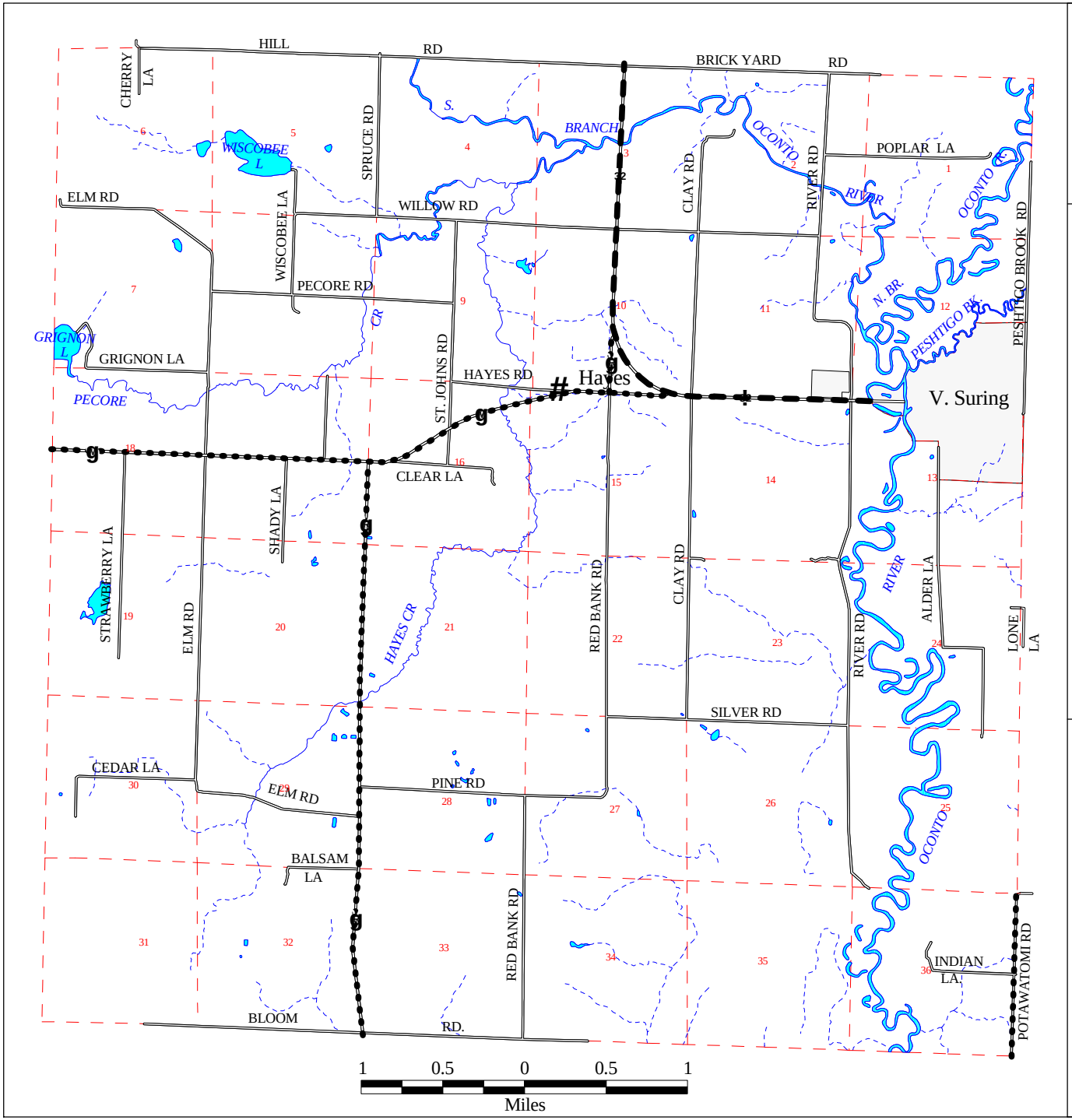
Transportation services for elderly and disabled persons are provided by the county and by private nonprofit and for profit carriers. The town should play as active a role as possible in the support, development and maintenance of special transportation services for the elderly and disabled population of the town.

Map 5.1

Functional Classification of Roads

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Arterial
Collector

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

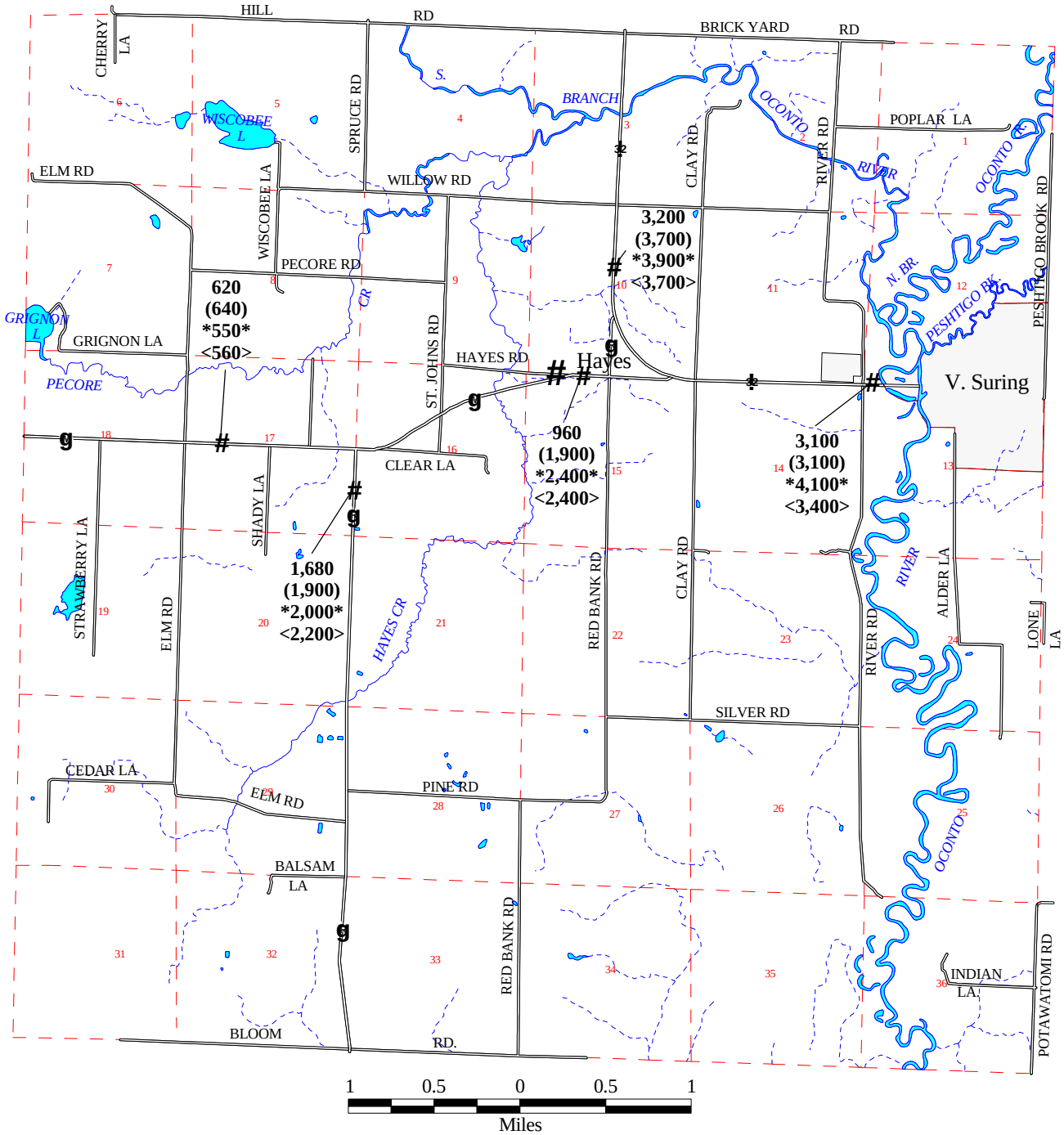
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 5.2

Traffic Volumes

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Year	Count
1992	000
1995	(000)
1998	*000*
2001	<000>

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- S State Highway
- U County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Chapter 6 - UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

As part of the comprehensive planning program, the Town of How's utilities and community facilities were reviewed and broadly evaluated as to their present condition and adequacy to meet the town's present and future needs. Data and information were obtained through discussions with town and county officials and their employees.

To continue to maintain a good level of public services, the town should continuously monitor existing facilities in relation to its changing population figures and their needs. The general recommendations contained within this chapter are based upon general long-range planning (20 year) considerations and should not be substituted for more detailed architectural or engineering studies required before expending substantial community resources and undertaking specific public works projects. The levels of accuracy of the referenced materials herein is highly subject to change ("time sensitive") and should only be used as an initial guide/reference in establishing this plan's initial land use needs. As time goes on, the town should again gather updated information regarding services as it looks to modify/improve them. Within some cases, greater informational detail should be gathered before approving recommendations.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Due to the Town of How's rural nature, many of the services provided are located in other communities or are in cooperation (Mutual Aid Agreements) with surrounding communities. Several of these services include: emergency services (sheriff/police, fire, rescue, ambulance), library facilities, etc. Electric service for the town is provided by Wisconsin Public Service and Oconto Electric Cooperative. Residents in the town maintain individual wells for water, in addition to their septic systems or holding tanks. The Town of How is located within the School Districts of Suring and Gillett. The Oconto County Recreation Trail is an important recreational facility within the town. How and its surrounding communities have many natural amenities that are currently utilized for recreation. It is recommended that the town cooperate with Oconto County, Village of Suring and other adjacent communities when the town determines to expand or develop additional recreational facilities for its residents and visitors.

As developments grow adjacent to the Village of Suring, there may be a need to increase the number of services for those types of developments. Likewise, the possible growth adjacent to the village may result in additional development pressures away from the village, to more isolated areas of the town. These areas would most certainly require services both more difficult and less efficient to extend. Either way, the town may find itself having to provide for additional services, to include expanding or upgrading its current operations.

Additionally, the town has few services to offer its aging population. Many comprehensive healthcare facilities are close to an hour drive away. The Village of Suring does, however, provide some nursing home care and clinical care, allowing residents an option to remain in their "home town area" as they seek assistance. Oconto County provides limited assisted services for those home bound residents, and the situation is most likely that the aging population will need to someday relocate to other communities. This prospect not only removes a valued population but also removes valued buying power of the retired community within the area.

UTILITY AND COMMUNITY FACILITY STRATEGY

Goal: Community Facilities

To provide quality community services to all the residents of the Town of How and to provide for orderly development of the town through the planned development of public and community facilities.

Objective:

1. The town's community facilities and public services are well maintained and sufficient for the needs of its residents.

Policies:

1. Ensure that Oconto County and other public and private service providers to the elderly continue to offer them valued services. Promote additional services for the elderly and home dependent residents.
2. Support the development of additional medical services and childcare services within the area.
3. Continue to encourage the concept of "mutual aid agreements" for all public services being provided, e.g. brush cutting, snow removal, waste, etc.
4. Continue to invest in newer roadwork equipment (brush cutter, etc) or look to contract these out in order to adequately and economically perform these services.
5. Oversee the town's protective service agreements in order to ensure that the town continues to receive effective and efficient law enforcement, fire and emergency/medical services.
6. Work cooperatively with select service providers to upgrade telecommunication, cable, electrical and natural gas services when needed. Future ordinances should be considered/adopted to limit possible negative impacts (e.g. communication towers).
7. Continually monitor resident satisfaction of private waste haulers and remain informed upon any of the service providers' needs to re-locate their services (especially regarding Mar-Oco).
8. Ensure that adequate solid waste disposal, recycling facility and stormwater removal services are provided.
9. Consider the possible impacts to the town's groundwater system when weighing future developments.
10. Ensure that the maintenance of individual septic systems are conducted to protect the town's valued groundwater sources.
11. Promote continued cooperation and communication between the Gillett and Suring school districts and Town Board to collectively provide for quality educational opportunities.

Programs:

1. The Town Board or their representative should continue to work with Oconto County, the Village of Suring and adjacent communities and districts in order to provide the best level of police, fire, rescue (EMS), educational and other provided services on an annual basis.
2. The Town Board or their representative should explore (at least annually) other ways to improve town road conditions and upgrade as needed road maintenance using fully the PASER system.
3. The Town Board or their selected representative should stay informed (minimum contact - at least yearly) on service providers' plans/needs to upgrade facilities within the town.

Goal: Parks and Recreational Lands

Ensure residents have safe recreational sites within the town that provides a number of activities.

Objectives:

1. Continue to have quality recreational sites within the town for all of the town's residents.

Policies:

1. The town should cooperate with Oconto County, the Village of Suring and adjacent communities to develop future recreational lands within the area.
2. Continue to improve the recreational sites within the town and encourage both the Village of Suring and Oconto County to develop an area park adjacent to Suring's north side - as detailed within their Comprehensive Plan. This park would be an additional natural site available for town use. Any development of a new park should be by joint effort.
3. Ensure that any future trailway (e.g. snowmobile/ Oconto County Trail) development is discussed with residents as well as affected property owners.
4. Promote utilizing as many natural features, as reasonably possible, for enhancing the town's recreational opportunities.
5. Continue to upgrade the ball field next to the Community Center.
6. Use the town's official mapping powers to preserve any areas the town designates for future park and recreational uses.
7. Consider access for the disabled, elderly and very young when planning/designing/coordinating and constructing any new recreation projects, including parking, trails, etc.
8. Recognize the potential of public and private donations for funding park system improvements.

Programs:

1. The Town Board or their representative should work with the county and adjacent municipalities in identifying future recreational areas.
2. Town Board/representative should meet/work closely with adjoining neighbors to design interconnecting trailways to further enhance existing recreational sites.
3. The Town Board or their representative should work with state agencies and private property owners to ensure that existing trails (e.g. snowmobile) are properly maintained and that any user/property owner disputes are reconciled quickly, so as to continue to provide quality trail networks throughout the town.
4. The Town Board or their representative should explore available resources and to contact appropriate agencies (e.g. WDNR, BLRPC, etc) to further enhance the quality of the town's recreational systems.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES INVENTORY

How Town Board

The How Town Board members consist of the Town Chairperson and two Supervisors, along with the Clerk and the Treasurer. The Town Board should work for the benefit of the public, recognizing that public interests must be their prime concern.

How Comprehensive Plan Committee

The Town of How Comprehensive Plan Committee contains five members. The Town Board established the Plan Committee to develop the town's first comprehensive plan. This committee has the responsibility of recommending a comprehensive plan to the Town Board for its adoption. It is encouraged that the town develop a Plan Commission under village powers to help the Town Board utilize, review, amend and eventually update the comprehensive plan.

Along with the Plan Committee are representatives of the State Historical Society, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Oconto County Zoning, Oconto County Economic Development Corporation, and Wisconsin Realtors Association whom review information within the plan and provide a source of information respective to their agencies.

UTILITIES INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS-LOCATION, USE AND CAPACITY

Electric Service

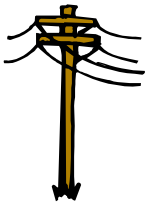
The Town of How is provided with electricity by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation and Oconto Electric Cooperative.

Wisconsin Public Service (WPS)

WPS disperses a voltage capacity of 24.94 KV to the town residents in the northeastern portion of the town approximately 25 percent of the customers within the town. The current system is

believed to be adequate for the town's uses at this time. However, if a large business was to move into the area, an upgrade in voltage capacity may be needed. Likewise, remote developments may incur higher costs (than more dense development near Suring) due to the likelihood of service gaps within the town. Higher density development will be more cost effective due to the increased efficiency.

Oconto Electric Cooperative (OEC)



OEC is an electric utility in northeast Wisconsin, serving power to rural Oconto, Marinette and Shawano counties and part of the Menominee Reservation. Overall, OEC serves approximately 8,500 members with over 1,276 miles of distribution lines. A vast majority of the Town of How is provided electricity by OEC. The current system servicing the town is believed to be adequate at this time. As with WPS, the future costs of expansion will vary upon the location of the development. Both WPS and OEC have incentive programs for multiple users.

Natural Gas

The town does not have natural gas service. The town relies primarily on the use of propane and electricity for heating structures. It is likely to be cost prohibitive for individual residences located away from the Village of Suring (which is provided service from WPS) to receive natural gas service because of the initial cost of connection (due to low density scattered residential development), however in areas where residential subdivision may be built with higher densities of dwellings and/or industrial/commercial concentrations, economy of scale will make connection more attractive (WPS provides incentive programs for multiple users). The town will be planning for both transitional areas for business and industrial development adjacent to the Village of Suring which may take advantage of nearby natural gas services in the future.

Public Water System

The Town of How does not have a public water system. Residents in the town have individual wells that are owned and maintained by the property owner. Currently the town has no plans to develop a public water system.

Sanitary Sewer Service

The Town of How currently does not have a sanitary sewer system. Property owners within the town are responsible for owning and maintaining individual septic systems and holding tanks.

Storm Sewer System

The Town of How allows stormwater to drain through a series of ditches and culverts along the town roads and county highways. There are no plans to add a storm sewer system to the town.

Solid Waste Disposal & Recycling Facilities

The Town of How has a refuse and recycling drop-off location at Knapp Street in the Village of Suring. On Wednesdays (12pm - 5pm) and Saturdays (8am - 1pm) town residents can drop off their garbage and recycling to include: aluminum cans, tin cans, paper, steel, tires, scrap iron, plastic (types 1 & 2), tires, waste oil, glass (brown, green, and clear), cardboard, and clothing (for Goodwill).

The solid waste for the town is handled through a contract with Superior. Garbage is removed from the drop-off site by Superior and taken to MAR-OCO Landfill in Marinette. Town residents also have the option for curb side pickup. This service is provided on an individual agreement between the town resident and Superior.

The town contracts with Oconto County (the county is the responsible party) which administers the recycling program. The county collects materials from local drop-off centers and brings them to the Oconto County Materials Recycling Facility located in the City of Oconto at 153 Evergreen Road. Collected materials are then sold at the best available market rate. In 2000, the Materials Recycling Facility was expanded to include additional cold-storage warehousing space. There are currently no further plans to expand the facility within 10 to 20 years.

Telecommunications Facilities

The Town of How has telephone service provided by CenturyTel, which has a switching building located on Mill Street in Suring. Cable television is not available to the town however, various satellite dish providers are. Three transmission towers are located along STH 32 providing cellular service as well as radio broadcasting from WRVM. The third is used for utilities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT LOCATION, USE AND CAPACITY

Municipal Building

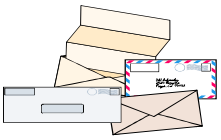
The How Town Hall is located at 12896 STH 32 and is utilized for elections, community meetings and general events. No Town offices reside therein - the Town Clerk operates out of his home. The facility is ADA accessible and contains a meeting room, a kitchen, bathrooms running water and a furnace. The building was purchased by the town in 1965 and contains adequate parking. The building is insured for a value of $120,000 and is thought to be adequate for its current use. There are no future improvement plans for the facility in the next 10 to 20 years.

Road and Other Maintenance

The everyday maintenance of roads within the town is performed by the Oconto County Highway Department. The county shop is located at the intersection of STH 32 and CTH Z. The Town Hall is maintained by a town resident (Custodian) while the yards are mowed by Quality Yard Maintenance. Additionally, the town roads' ditches are mowed by a town resident. Maintenance equipment for the town includes a New Holland Tractor and Brahma mower, and a brush chipper. The current equipment and personnel are deemed adequate for the town.

Postal Services

The Village of Suring has one United States Post Office facility, centrally located at 507 East



Main Street. The 2,600 square foot building was constructed in 1990 and contains ample parking facilities. The Post Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The present building meets the needs of the community with 530 lock boxes and is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Cemeteries

All over the globe, cemeteries have been threatened by neglect, insufficient funds, inappropriate development or insensitive public policy. This is true even for the small communities within northeast Wisconsin. A primary objective of the community ought to be to increase the awareness and highlight the importance of its historic cemeteries as sources of community and community pride, while promoting an attitude of reverence and respect, and encouraging the further preservation of these unique historical resources for future generations to appreciate and learn from. If society fails to appropriately and adequately deal with this issue through some definitive action, whether legislative or otherwise, not only will genealogical and historical resources likely be irreparably harmed, but society will potentially lose a valuable resource for charting its inexorable course into annals of human history.

The town and Village of Suring jointly maintain one of seven cemeteries within the town. The cemeteries located within the township (three are collocated) include ST. John's Lutheran (Section 9, ST. Johns Rd.), Pleasant Hill (Section 11 STH 32, west of Suring), Riverside (Section 11 River Rd, north of Suring), Zion Evangelical (Section 11), Mt. Olive Lutheran (Section 11), How Township Cemetery (Section 11), and ST. Michael Catholic (Section 18 on CTH M). In adjacent communities more than a dozen other cemeteries exist. Discussions with local churches, the Village of Suring and the town has identified that available space within existing cemeteries exceeds fifty acres. This amount of land could accommodate more than sixty thousand persons in the future, which is more than adequate for the planning period of the town and adjoining communities. The town does not plan on developing additional town cemeteries over the planning period.

Law Enforcement and Protection

Law enforcement service for the Town of How is provided by the Oconto County Sheriffs Department. The Oconto County Sheriff's Department is located in the City of Oconto. This Department provides 24-hour emergency assistance to the entire county to include 23 towns. The department operates on two 12-hour shifts. There is a staff of 23 officers along with 27 patrol vehicles. Each patrol officer has his/her own cruiser. At any given time, there are three patrol officers on duty. The Department also has a 32-foot trailer that serves as a mobile command center. There is an enhanced 911 system that rings through the department. Special patrol units in the department include an ATV patrol, snowmobile patrol, and two K-9 units. Currently the police protection is believed to be adequate for the Town of How. Future improvement plans for the department in the next ten to twenty years include construction of a new jail where the 911 system and Sheriff's Department may be located. Sheriff Department response times can be quite long for the town.

In addition, the Suring Police Department (with one full time officer and one part time officer) assists with police protection for the town by taking part in Oconto County's 911 system for emergencies. There are no known written or verbal mutual assistance agreements in place between the Village of Suring, How or Oconto County.

National standards for police protection generally recommend one officer for every 2,600 persons. The Oconto County Sheriff's Department serves a population base of approximately 34,000 people (2000 WI DOA Estimates). As a result, the officer to citizen ratio is approximately

1:5,667. By 2015 the ratio is expected to be 1:5,410 (based on WDOA projection of 32,464 persons in the county). Both ratios are more than double the national recommended ratio. The department reported a trend indicating increasing numbers of calls for assistance, without subsequent increases in staff. Although the department has requested additional personnel in its annual budget request, funds have not been provided. It is not determined when, if at all, the budget would be sufficient to add additional staff.

Fire Station/Protection

Fire protection for the Town of How is provided by the Suring Fire Department located at 604 East Main Street in the Village of Suring. The department consists of 34 volunteers for fire protection and services are accessed by calling the 911 system, which in turn pages the volunteers. The department owns six fire trucks capable of handling fires within the Town of How. Mutual Aide agreements do exist with neighboring departments for the rare instances of simultaneous fires, disasters, etc. In addition to the six vehicles, the fire department also has special equipment such as a thermal image camera, water backpacks for grass fires, and foam for oil fires.

The current fire rating for the Town of How is nine. Presently, the Town of How's fire services are reported by the town as being adequate for the community. However, the town may need to explore additional methods of providing water sources in the town as it develops in the future. Improvements within the next 10 to 20 years could include strategically locating dry fire hydrants in the far end of the town or in other good locations so they can be accessed in a reasonable amount of time. The Town of How had five "fire runs" in 2000-2001. The Fire Department had a total of 37 fire runs in the same period eight of which were house fires and 12 grass/brush fires.

Insurance Service Office (ISO) Grading

The adequacy of fire protection within the township is evaluated by the Insurance Service Office (ISO) through the use of the *Grading Schedule for Municipal Fire Protection*. The schedule provides criteria to be used by insurance grading engineers in classifying the fire defenses and physical conditions of municipalities. Gradings obtained under the schedule are used throughout the United States in establishing base rates for fire insurance. While ISO does not presume to dictate the level of fire protection services that should be provided, it generally contains serious deficiencies found, and over the years has been accepted as a guide by many municipal officials in planning improvements to their fire fighting services.

The grading is obtained by ISO by its Municipal Survey Office based upon their analysis of several components of fire protection including:

- Fire department equipment
- Alarm systems
- Water supply system
- Fire prevention programs
- Building construction
- Distance of potential hazard areas from a fire station

In rating a community, total deficiency points in the areas of evaluation are used to assign a numerical rating of one to ten, with one representing the best protection and ten representing an

unprotected community. In 2000, the Town of How was rated nine by the ISO. By comparison, the Town of Gillett received an eight, and the towns of Underhill and Oconto Falls received a rating of a nine. Table 6.1 illustrates these ratings.

Table 6.1: ISO Fire Protection Ratings, 2000

Municipality	Fire Protection Rating	
Town of Maple Valley	9	
Town of How	9	
Town of Gillett	8	(Has their own fire department)
Town of Underhill	9	
Town of Oconto Falls	9	

Source: ISO Commercial Risk Service Inc., and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002.

Emergency Services

Ambulance service for the Town of How is provided by the Gillett Area Ambulance Service Inc. The ambulance service is housed in two locations: the City of Gillett and in the Village of Suring. The main office is located at 100 West Main Street in the City of Gillett. This volunteer organization consists of 21 full-time EMT's, two part-time EMTs, four First Responders and four drivers. Currently, the Gillett Area Ambulance Service possesses three ambulances, along with other usual rescue equipment and supplies that provide basic life support. The Gillett Area Ambulance serves the towns of How, Underhill, Gillett, Maple Valley, Breed and Green Valley (Shawano County), the City of Gillett and the Village of Suring. At this time, the level of emergency service and equipment are deemed adequate. The construction of a new building with updated facilities is one possible improvement over the next 10 to 20 years.

Library

There is no public library located in the Town of How. The nearest library facility is the Suring Area Public Library located on Main Street in the Village of Suring. The operational costs are shared by the towns of How, Maple Valley, Breed, Bagley, and the Village of Suring. These municipalities own the contents of the library, but the building is owned by Krist Oil. The library is open year round.

There is one librarian and two support staff working at the library, with the facility's average monthly circulation at approximately 1,866 volumes per month (400/month for the Town of How). The library is not entirely handicapped accessible, has a lack of space, a lack of safe parking, and there are concerns by the village and town about the landlord's commitment to renting the space to the library. Future improvement plans include a new building (constructing and owning an updated facility) with adequate space and ADA accessibility. Future sites include Mill Street and at the iron bridge site crossing STH 32. Both would have views of the nature trail and be within residential areas of the village. The site along STH 32 would provide the most visibility, and add significantly to the village's main street.

Schools

The Town of How is located within the Suring and Gillett school districts. The Suring Schools, located within the Village of Suring, educate grades K-12 and has a student enrollment of 650. St. John's Lutheran School (K-8) also exists within the Town of How and has an enrollment of 60 students. Currently, the Suring School Board is considering if it should build a new K-6 elementary school located between Suring and Mountain within the next 10 to 20 years.

The Gillett School District facility is located within the City of Gillett, and educates grades PreK-12 and has a student enrollment of 844. The school facilities are thought to be adequate with no major improvements planned within the next 10 to 20 years.

Child Care Facilities

As with many rural areas within the state, the Town of How does not contain any licensed public childcare facilities. Town residents possibly utilizes private childcare facilities which may or may not be certified, or use childcare facilities located in adjacent communities. Within the Village of Suring exists one childcare facility - Suring Child Center Inc., licensed for 40 children. The Sunshine Child Care facility is located in the City of Gillett, and is licensed for 35 children. There is currently a waiting list for more children to be enrolled at both facilities. For this reason it is felt the facilities are not adequate enough to serve the area. Future improvement plans are underway for a larger facility in Gillett with room for expansion.

Health Care Facilities

There are no existing hospital facilities within the Town of How. In fact, the town has been classified as being "Medically Underserved" by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - 1994 Report). Town residents need to travel to hospitals (General Medical - Surgical & Critical Access Hospital) and medical facilities/clinics located in the surrounding communities and approximately within an hour drive to **Oconto Falls** (Community Memorial Hospital - CMIR Primary Care Clinic), **Lena** (Lena Medical Clinic), **Gillett** (Thedacare Physicians-Gillett Family Medicine Clinic, and the Primary Care Clinic), **Suring** (Artwich Clinic LTD), **Green Bay** (Bellin Memorial Center, ST Mary's Hospital, ST. Vincent Hospital, Aurora Medical Center, along with a number of clinics), **Shawano** (Shawano Medical Center), Antigo (Langlade Memorial Hospital). Currently, there are no known plans for healthcare facilities to be located within the town.

The nearest dental facilities can be found in the communities of Gillett, Oconto Falls and Shawano. Town residents may also utilize Rehabilitation Facilities within the areas of Milwaukee and Racine. Enhanced 911 service is provided throughout the Town of How and Oconto County. Flight for Life is available for emergency situations. Two of the state's ten Psychiatric Hospitals are located within the City of Green Bay. The only Alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) facility in the state is within the City of Green Bay (Libertas).

The nearest Veterans Hospital (providing primary and selected secondary care) is located within Michigan's Upper Peninsula (Iron Mountain VA Medical Center). Referrals for tertiary medical and surgical care are made primarily to Milwaukee VAMC and Madison VAH; for psychiatric

care to Tomah VAMC. Primary care is provided at clinics in Appleton, Union Grove, Rhinelander, and in the Village of Cleveland, as well as through a mobile clinic.

Senior Care Facilities

The town does not contain senior care facilities, however within the county there are four licensed senior care facilities likely to be utilized by town residents. These four facilities are summarized below. Within the last year Gillett Nursing Home and Sharp Care LTD have been under new ownership. Overall, the county has an occupancy rate of 93 percent (Reported in 1999 from WIDHFS) with 322 licensed beds.

Riverside Health and Rehabilitation Center - 101 First Street City of Oconto, 103 licensed beds, 74 percent occupancy rate and a nurse staffing percentage of 119 percent.

Woodlands of Gillett (Formerly Gillett Nursing Home) re-opened March 2001 - 330 Robinhood Lane City of Gillett, 40 licensed beds with three private rooms, 50 percent occupancy rate, approximately 130 percent nurse staffing percentage. Facility staff stated that they are looking to only renovate the interior of the facility.

Sharp Care (Formerly Sharp Care LTD) - 100 East Highland Drive Oconto Falls, 115 licensed beds, 92 percent occupancy rate. The facility is planned for upgrading and some renovation within the next year.

Woodland Village - 430 Manor Drive Suring, 60 licensed beds and a nurse staffing percentage of 120 percent. The facility reported no planned improvements or expansions.

Each nursing home in Wisconsin is required by law to provide a minimum number of working hours based on the number of residents it has and the type of care those residents require. The state average for nurse staffing (for facilities between 100 and 199 beds) is 128 percent. For facilities with between 50 and 99 beds the state average is 127 percent.

In addition to nursing homes, there exists a number of adult residential care facilities within Oconto County. Those include the Newberry Adult Foster Care, Royal Manor, Pines Bayshore, the Country house, and the Oconto Falls Meadowlands. Additionally, to help the town's elderly residents continue to live independently within a rural setting with few services - there exists the Oconto County Commission on Aging, Inc, and the Community Options Program.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INVENTORY

The Town of How contains few organized recreational opportunities. The youth in the town can however participate in organizational activities in the Village of Suring and in nearby cities of Gillett and Oconto Falls.

Community Owned Sites

Ball Field

The Town of How currently has one recreational site offering a ball field for its residents use. This site is located adjacent to the Community Center along USH 32. Future plans, over the next 10 to 20 years, for the site are to add a shelter with concession stand.

Boat Landings

The town has two access points for Wiscobee Lake and Grignon Lake. No improvements are planned for these sites and they are deemed adequate for the planning period.

National, State and County Facilities

Oconto County Recreation Trail

The Oconto County Recreation Trail is an abandoned railroad right of way that extends from Gillett north to Townsend. The trail runs through the northeast corner of the town (approximately five miles through the Village of Suring and town) and provides views of farmland, wetlands, and forested areas. The trail can be used for hiking, biking, horseback riding and ATV's (ATV use from Suring to Mountain only). However, only hiking, biking, and horseback riding are recommended on the trail north of Gillett to Suring in the non-winter months and snowmobiling during the winter.

Other Recreation Facilities

The Suring Elementary & High School located in the northern portion of the Village of Suring contains a playground for both its students and residents within the area. The area contains additional recreational facilities (e.g. playfields) and equipment, plus the School Forest located along Peshtigo Brook Road. Several communities adjacent to How also offer many recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of the area.

Riverside Memorial Park (Highway 32 Suring)

This park setting exists within the Village of Suring on the town's eastern edge. The site is approximately three acres in size and is comprised of a wetlands walking trail, playground equipment, flush toilets available, fishing access, boat ramp, and an animal viewing area. The village will continue to make improvements to the park to ensure ADA accessibility.

Golf Course

Cathedral Pines Golf Course is located in the Village of Suring and provides an 18 hole course. This is a privately owned and operated business open to the public.

Chapter 7 - INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

INTRODUCTION

The Town of How's relationship with neighboring communities and school districts can impact town residents in terms of planning, the provision of services, and siting of public facilities. An examination of these relationships and the identification of existing or potential conflicts can help the town address these situations in a productive manner.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The Town of How currently has several cooperative agreements with other municipalities. The intergovernmental cooperation issues identified within this element, and in Chapter 6 of this document, are fairly consistent and related well to identified issues found in the town survey that was completed early in the planning process. As the town gains more understanding and sophistication in planning, its ability and comfort in using tools (e.g. land trusts, purchase of development rights, conservation subdivision design, etc.) will be key in making this plan more effective. Learning how to make effective use of planning tools may serve as a joint goal of communities within the area. Gaining additional information/education on these tools can be provided by Oconto County, the Towns Association, Bay-Lake, UW-Extension and Stewardship programs, as well as other state agencies such as WDNR. Overall, it is anticipated that the area intergovernmental cooperation workshop will serve as a starting point for future collaborative planning efforts in and around the Town of How.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION STRATEGY

***Goal*:**

Have cooperation between the Town of How and any other governmental agency that makes decisions impacting the town.

***Objectives*:**

1. Develop coordination and sharing/joint ownership of community facilities, equipment and other services whenever possible.
2. Coordinate with adjacent communities on future planning projects to best maintain the rural character of the surrounding area.
3. Have improved participation with neighboring communities regarding meetings, workshops, mutual planning endeavors.

Policies:

1. Work with neighboring communities regarding any water issues and other land uses which lie across township lines or within extraterritorial jurisdictions such as: Oconto River, Grignon Lake, Oconto County Forest, WDNR lands, etc.
2. Explore the possibility of jointly developing and managing future recreational facilities.

3. Work cooperatively with surrounding municipalities to address possible boundary issues to minimize conflicts.

Programs:

1. Town Board or its representative (as the responsible party) monitor/work with the DNR, Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure compliance with flood fringe, floodplain and water quality regulations, in developing controls preserving ground water resources, etc.
2. Town Board or its representative (as the responsible party) will meet annually (minimum) and work with the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission or other planning agencies on town planning activities, and county and/or regional planning activities.
3. Town Board or its representative (as the responsible party) will remain aware of planning activities that may impact the town.
4. The Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA) is a non-profit statewide organization created under s. 60.23 (14) of the Wisconsin State Statutes. This agency serves the state's 1,266 towns in providing assistance to town boards. The WTA is organized into six districts and convenes annual district meetings, a statewide convention, publications, participation in cooperative training programs to assist local units of government.
5. Mutual Assistance is a key program for any community. Communities enter into agreements or can legally request assistance from other jurisdictions. Either way, this form of providing services to the community is vital and will continue as a viable alternative to the town.

EXISTING ACTIVITIES

Adjacent Governmental Units

The Town of How shares borders with eight other municipalities, and two school districts. The Village of Suring is located in the northeast side of the town.

Relationship

The Town of How has a good working relationship with the surrounding towns. Since towns are not incorporated they cannot annex land. Therefore, the borders between the Town of How and adjacent towns are fixed and boundary disputes are virtually nonexistent. There is cooperation with several of the adjacent communities in regards to the provision of public services such as road maintenance and emergency services.

The Town of How and the Village of Suring have a relationship that is best described as good. The Village of Suring, being an incorporated municipality, has the power to annex land from the town. This power is not seen as being a strain to relations. Many town residents (as noted within the town survey) agree that the town and Suring need to cooperate in the best interest of the town's future. Also strongly supported, is the concept of locating higher densities of development adjacent to the village in order for the village to grow and to keep town service costs down.

Siting Public Facilities

Due to the rural nature of the town and it having few facilities, How does not share facilities with neighboring communities. How has no future plans to jointly site public facilities with another governmental unit at this time or during the planning period.

Sharing Public Services

Currently, the Town of How has several intergovernmental agreements with neighboring communities in regards to public services. The town's fire protection, police/sheriff service, road maintenance, waste landfill, ambulance service, are all a part of an agreement with other municipalities providing the services.

School District

The Town of How is located within the Suring School District and Gillett School District

Relationship

The Town of How's relationship with the School Districts is best described as limited. The School Districts tend to operate rather independently and interaction with the town tends to be minimal.

Siting School Facilities

The siting of new school facilities is mainly conducted by the School Districts. The town has historically had little input into the location of new school facilities. However, the town may want to become more involved in the siting of future schools and their services to ensure that the goals and objectives of this plan can be met.

Sharing School Facilities

The town has no formal agreement with the School Districts for shared use of the schools facilities. However, the schools' outdoor recreational facilities provide opportunities to residents of the town.

County

The Town of How is located in Oconto County and therefore the county has some jurisdiction within the town. In particular, the county has jurisdiction in the town over zoning, land divisions, on-site sanitary systems, etc. The town and county continue to maintain open communication with each other in order to build a good working relationship of both general agreement and respect. The town's relationship with Menominee County is informal and not very extensive. Oconto County is in its early stages of pre-planning for the county as a whole. The town has an opportunity to make its land use preferences known as well as included within the county's plan by taking part in any county planning efforts.

Region

The Town of How is located in Oconto County, which is located in the northeast region of the State of Wisconsin. Oconto County is a member of the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC) which is the regional entity that the town is involved with. The BLRPC has a number of programs and plans in place covering natural resources, population projections, community

plans, transportation plans, bike plans, etc. The relationship with the commission is one that has focused upon planning (prepared the town's comprehensive plan) and education on planning. The relationship is limited yet mutually supportive.

State

The town's relationship with the State of Wisconsin is one which deals mainly with issues related to transportation (WisDOT) and natural resources (WDNR). Relationships in the past with these two agencies have been positive.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Wisconsin's natural resource management approach is built around the concepts of watersheds and ecosystem management. The approach led by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has a geographic focus reflective of the state's 32 major river basins. These river basins encompass multiple watershed areas and range in size from 500 to more than 5,000 square miles. The state's 32 river basins are further organized into 23 geographic management units (GMU) to better integrate land and water resources management in terms of an ecosystem or watershed approach.

State watershed-based planning efforts which encompass the Town of How either completed or in progress are summarized below:

Wisconsin Basin Initiative

In 1998, a unique partnering opportunity referred to as the "Wisconsin Basin Initiative" was begun by the WDNR, University of Wisconsin-Extension, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to promote and focus more on citizen-led decision making in resource management policy. The initiative has pulled together Basin Partnership Teams to promote clean water, wise land-use, and protection and stewardship of Wisconsin's natural resources for each of Wisconsin's 23 GMU's. The "Partner Teams" consist of citizens, organizations, businesses, agencies, and others, and is intended to provide a forum for collaborative efforts related to natural resource management. Specifically, they work to identify, prioritize and address natural resource management issues within the GMU. By bringing individuals from all sectors of society together, it is envisioned that innovative and collaborative approaches to resource management will evolve.

The Upper Green Bay Basin Partnership Team (UGBBPT) for which the Town of How is a part of is currently comprised of 20 members. The team first convened October of 1998 and has identified and prioritized the present and future threats to the natural resources of the basin. Regular meetings are scheduled on a quarterly basis. The UGBBPT recommended to the WDNR 10 Partnership Priorities. Along with WDNR guidance these priorities served as the sole basis for development of the basin specific objectives. Long-terrn, it is envisioned that the LBPT will continue to be a vehicle for obtaining "citizen" input for natural resource planning within the GMU, including future updates of the *"Upper Green Bay Basin Plan. "*

The Upper Green Bay Basin Integrated Management Plan, adopted February 2001.

The Basin Plan covers three main rivers, Menominee River, Peshtigo River, and the Oconto River, and 820 lakes, along with 950 miles of trout streams. The Basin Plan identifies the sources of water quality problems/concerns and identifies management objectives that the WDNR, industries, local communities (including towns), counties, and other agencies should take to protect and improve the water resources within the basin, including wetlands and groundwater. In total, the plan contains 223 basin-wide or watershed-specific management recommendations covering Outdoor Recreation, Terrestrial Communities, Aquatic Communities, Partners and the Public.

INVENTORY OF PLANS AND AGREEMENTS UNDER S. 66.0307, S. 66.0301 OR S. 66.0309 AND 66.0313

Cooperative Boundary Plan

Currently, the Town of How has not entered into a boundary agreement with any municipality. State Statutes 66.0307 and 66.0301 allow municipalities to enter into agreements regarding the location of municipal boundaries. The Cooperative Boundary Plan is any combination of cities, villages, and towns that may determine the boundary lines between themselves under a cooperative plan approved by the DOA. The cooperative plan must be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the territory covered by the plan which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or general welfare. Cooperative boundary plans cover at least a 10-year period. Additionally, Cooperative boundary agreements are a tool that could also be used for service sharing between local units of government.

The majority of Municipal Boundary Plans or Agreements are conducted between a town and a city or village. However, in order to promote harmonious development in the area, the town may want to discuss Boundary Agreements with adjacent municipalities in the future.

Annexation

Wisconsin Statute 66.021 provides for a means to annex lands. Annexation is the transfer of one or more tax parcels from a town to a city or village. Consent of property owners is but one of the procedures in annexation. A town is not authorized these powers and thus may not annex lands.

Extra-territorial subdivision regulation

State Statutes allow an incorporated village or city to extend Extra Territorial Plat Review over surrounding unincorporated areas. This helps cities or villages protect land uses near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits. The extra territorial area extends for 1.5 miles for villages and cities under 10,000 people, cities over 10,000 the area extends to 3 miles. In the Town of How, the Village of Suring has extra territorial jurisdiction within the town. The village currently has a population of less than 10,000 (1,256) and has a right to exercise extra territorial plat review jurisdictions and thereby influence the division of land within 1.5 miles of its border with the town likely to be annexed at a later date.

Extra-territorial Zoning

Extra territorial zoning is not currently being administered in the Town of How. State Statutes allow an incorporated village or city to extend Extra Territorial Zoning over surrounding unincorporated areas. The extra territorial area extends for 1.5 miles for villages and cities under 10,000 people, cities over 10,000 the area extends to 3 miles, however the entire jurisdiction does not need to be included in the zoning. Extra Territorial Zoning requires a joint effort between the town and the city or village to develop a plan for the area to be zoned. The extra-territorial zoning is then established according to the developed plan.

Law Enforcement; Mutual Assistance

Upon the request of any law enforcement agency, including county law enforcement agencies, personnel may assist the requesting agency within the latter's jurisdiction. While acting in response to a request for assistance, the responders shall be deemed employees of the requesting agency.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

This agreement allows local agreements to be entered between state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, and certain special districts, including school districts, public libraries systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, as well as others.

This is the most common form of agreements made between communities, usually regarding fire and rescue services. This agreement is also available for revenue sharing, determining land use within a designated area, and in setting temporary municipal boundaries.

Revenue Sharing; Municipal

Cities, villages and towns may enter into agreements to share revenue from taxes and special charges with each other per s. 66.0305 Municipal Revenue Sharing. The agreements may also address other matters, including agreements regarding services to be provided or the location of municipal boundaries. The following must be included in agreements; specified boundaries, a duration of 10 years, a formula for sharing revenue, dates of payments, means by which the agreement may be invalidated after the minimum 10 year period.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING OR POTENTIAL CONFLICTS

On May 16, 2001, How participated in an "area assessment" nominal group process held in the adjoining township of Gillett (at the Town Hall) with surrounding municipalities, school districts, WDNR, WisDOT, etc. This meeting identified the major issues regarding joint cooperation and problems, and then discussed possible ways to help resolve the issues in the future. Participants generated a list and voted on the issues to reveal the top five concerns facing the town and surrounding areas. Overall the majority of the comments illustrated a strong interest in two major areas:

1. Balancing individual property rights and community interests;
2. Protection of water resources.

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, and the UW-Extension has copies of the complete listing of issues discussed (Appendix D).

PROPOSED CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

After the area participants identified the existing or potential concerns/problems, they also began to generate a list of possible solutions to address the issues mentioned at the nominal group session. The following ideas were developed by reviewing the list of concerns and issues, and then "brainstorming" possible solutions. Recommendations are noted to assist the town.

Possible Conflict Resolutions

1. More meetings among governmental units on specific issues;

   Recommendations:
   - Staying aware of How's neighbors' comprehensive plans is the first step.
   - Discussing How's Comprehensive Plan with all of its neighbors will identify common ideals, concerns and goals.
   - Setting up sub-committees to deal with similar problems will help the county address them more efficiently.

2. Educate citizens on land use planning utilizing the newspapers and quarterly newsletters;

   Recommendations:
   - Identify key topics for discussion/education campaign.
   - Contact UW-Extension, Bay-Lake, etc. for information sheets/background information to be presented to public.
   - Establish a bi-annual or annual newsletter for the town.
   - Develop educational displays for use in town activities/ annual meeting, or events the town participates in, community picnics, etc.

3. Establish a process in the comprehensive plan for facilitating intergovernmental cooperation;

   Recommendations:
   - Ensure that goals and objectives, policies support intergovernmental cooperation within current and future comprehensive plans.
   - Adopt Intergovernmental Procedures similar to those for public participation for greater interaction with other municipalities.
   - Consider having an "Area" get-together with neighboring municipalities to discuss topics of interest.

3. Help in determining the costs of growth;

   Recommendations:
   - Obtain published documents detailing true costs of developments.
   - Ensure the complete costs of any proposal are known and that future costs associated with the proposal are also hypothesized.

Chapter 8 - LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents information on the current land use and land use ordinances within the Town of How, Oconto County, Wisconsin. A complete land use inventory was done by the Commission in the Spring of 2002. In addition, a projection of future land use demands based upon population projections, discussions on land-use issues and land-use controls are included.

LAND USE STRATEGY

Goal: General Plan Design

Promote future development that will meet the needs of the town while protecting and enhancing its visual character, promoting environmental protection, conserving natural resources, meeting the needs of social and economic forces, providing for adequate services and facilities, and ensuring compatibility of future land uses.

Objective:

Ensure that all growth and development occurs in a planned and coordinated manner that will maintain or improve the quality of life associated with the rural character of the town for both existing and future residents.

Policies:

1. Utilize the Comprehensive Plan as an illustration of the town's overall development policy.
2. Allow future development in an orderly way to allow for proper distribution of community services.
3. Work with the neighboring towns, Oconto County and Menominee County to ensure compatible growth within the border areas of the town.
4. Prior to recommending approval of any Zoning change or Conditional Use, it shall be shown that the development is consistent with the town's Comprehensive Plan and overall Vision.
5. Explore the creation and adoption of additional ordinances to control likely nuisances (e.g. excessive lighting, noise, etc.) produced during more intensive operations within the town, such as commercial uses, farming, etc.

Objective: Residential

Maintain the existing open space areas while encouraging the development of new residential areas sufficient to meet the housing needs of the projected population. The town encourages continued agricultural practices, a variety of housing types and densities, inclusion of open green spaces within developments, and environmental protection.

Policies:

1. Protect residential neighborhoods from impacts of non-residential uses not appropriate for the neighborhood. Residential areas should be distanced, buffered, or otherwise mitigated from physical hazards, unhealthy conditions, and protected from traffic, noise, and incompatible uses.
2. Provide for sufficient densities and a broad range of housing choices within the town to meet the current and future needs of the local population.
3. Housing developments shall conform to the zoning districts that they are contained within. Modified conformance standards will be considered in areas that have been designated for conservation subdivision designs or open space designs such as:
    - adjacent to environmental corridors; and
    - along transportation corridors, i.e. County Trunk Highways; and
    - in areas where the town wants to preserve the open space views and natural appearance as part of retaining community character.

Objective: Commercial

Recommend commercial developments that will serve the needs of the town and area residents, and the specialized farming needs of the rural area.

Policies:

1. Locations already characterized by commercial development and where services and facilities are available should be given preference over scattered non-serviced areas.
2. Future commercial establishments that require excessive traffic and a full range of public services shall be directed to locations in neighboring communities.
3. Adequate landscape screening "buffers" should be provided between commercial uses and adjacent noncommercial uses to shield or limit viewing of parking spaces, storage areas, outside machinery, etc.
4. Ensure adequate building setbacks are provided from abutting streets and highways.

Objectives: Light Industrial

Future intensive industrial uses (to include those requiring outside storage; excessive traffic; generate odors; generate noise; generate water - soil - air pollution) shall be directed to the neighboring locations within the surrounding communities where adequate industrial facilities and services (sewer, water, natural gas, electricity, etc.) already exist.

Policies:

1. To be permitted, an industrial development shall not detract from the rural community appearance, over burden community services of the town, nor clutter any "Corridor" through the town such as along the state and county trunk highways.
2. The town shall follow a set of performance criteria before allowing industrial uses within the town.

Objective: Agricultural

Large contiguous areas of prime agricultural lands should be retained for future farming operations.

Policies:

1. Discourage development on soils that have been identified as being prime agricultural areas thus encouraging the use of these lands for farming purposes only.
2. Consider development in areas of prime agricultural soils that are (1) located on fragmented smaller parcels and/or (2) areas that are adjacent to the Village of Suring.
3. If a large tract of farmland is to be developed, then a planned unit development (PUD) approach as opposed to a piece by piece method over a long time period should be utilized, this will help alleviate fragmentation within the town and help lower development pressures.

Objective: Natural and Cultural Resources

Achieve the preservation of water resources, unique open spaces, and other cultural and natural resources while also maintaining existing natural areas (contiguous woodlands, meadows, open spaces, marshes, wetlands, etc.) into site designs thus creating environmental corridors throughout the town for wildlife habitat.

Policies:

1. Encourage innovative residential subdivision designs that promote open spaces and conservation.
2. Utilize the environmental corridor designation of the General Plan Design to promote and preserve wildlife habitat and trails where appropriate.
3. Carefully consider the impacts of allowing greater use of lands within and adjacent to the comprehensive plan's identified environmental corridors (depicted on the General Plan Design Map).
4. Consider being more restrictive within the environmental corridors, to include the establishment of minimum distances from features such as water ways, wetlands, etc.

Objective: Community Services

Continue to provide adequate community services throughout the planning period in order to reach the desired vision of this plan.

Policies:

1. The town will continue to monitor services provided to town residents and explore options for maintaining or improving upon the level of existing services.
2. The town will work with adjoining towns, and service providers (public and private) to help ensure that future services are as effective and efficient as reasonably possible.
3. The town will continue to monitor and address the facility and program needs of the elderly population and those approaching senior status.

Program:

The Town Board has the overriding responsibility to review and update the General Plan Design to ensure that it continues to meet the goals and objectives stated above as well as those goals and objectives outlined in previous elements of the plan. The Town Board may fulfill this obligation by establishing a Plan Commission to carry out these specified tasks and duties.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING LAND USE CONTROLS

This section inventories and discusses the land use controls, whether they be state, county or local, that currently exist within the Town of How, which may affect or restrict the use of land for specific purposes. These controls should be reviewed periodically to make sure that they assist in implementing the general plan design for future development within the town.

Existing Comprehensive Plans

This will be the first Comprehensive Plan for the Town of How. Several surrounding communities have completed plans, or are in the process of developing a plan. The Village of Suring completed a land use plan in 1999. The towns of Gillett and Maple Valley completed plans in 2001 and the Town of Underhill is currently in progress with their plan. These plans should be referenced to gather ideas as to how surrounding communities are progressing with "smart growth", and to avoid any conflicts in future land use decisions.

Farmland Preservation Plan

The Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan, published in May, 1985 by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, identifies areas which are of prime agricultural importance for which the owners may partake in allowable tax credits under the Farmland Preservation Program. The overall goal of the Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan is stated as, "...to preserve productive and potentially productive agricultural land, forest land, and environmentally significant areas, while providing for well planned urban growth that is compatible with the agricultural, recreational and natural resources of the county." Farmland Preservation Categories which are available for the tax credit include, and are shown on Map 8.1:

Agricultural Preservation Areas

Areas that are currently cultivated (in agricultural use) that are part or wholly consist of 100 contiguous acres at a minimum. This definition is intended to include all types of farmland and agricultural uses in order to provide the option of participating in the preservation program to the greatest number of farmers as possible. Farmers in agricultural preservation areas are eligible to

sign contracts for ten to twenty years. Within the Town of How, 15,557 acres of land, or 68 percent of the town is in agricultural preservation areas.

Transitional Areas

Transitional areas are those areas that are currently in agricultural use, but in the short-term are expected to convert to non-farm uses, such as residential, commercial or industrial uses. Transitional areas include incorporated areas in agricultural use and areas around developed unincorporated areas that are serviced by existing roads and public services. Transitional areas must be a minimum of 35 acres in size. Farmers whose lands are in a transitional area may sign a contract agreeing not to develop their lands for a period of five to twenty years. The Town of How does not have any land designated as transitional areas.

Environmental Areas

The following areas are considered to be environmental areas: wetlands, woodlands, cultural, historic, or archaeological sites, the 100 year floodplain, public lands, lakes, rivers, and streams. Environmental areas are eligible for Wisconsin Farmland Preservation tax credits if the cultivated area of the farm unit, of which they must be a part of, is eligible for a tax credit. Approximately 11 percent (2,556 acres) of the Town of How is within an area classified as environmental.

Excluded Areas

Excluded areas are considered ineligible for the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program. They include airports, landfills, quarries, developed incorporated and unincorporated areas, platted subdivisions, quasi-public lands (gun clubs, golf courses, etc.) cemeteries, transitional areas under 35 acres, all ten acre or larger non-agricultural related uses, and all land zoned for non-agricultural use. Excluded areas in the town total 4,673 acres of land, or approximately 21 percent of the total town area.

Zoning Ordinances

The Town of How does not have a zoning ordinance of its own. Rather, it falls under the jurisdiction of the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance which is set forth in Chapter 14 of the Oconto County Code of Ordinances. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote the health, safety, morals, prosperity, aesthetics, and general welfare of the County. In order to accomplish this purpose, the ordinance regulates and restricts the use of property. The ordinance divides the county, and therefore the Town of How, into districts for the purpose of regulating: 1) the location and use of land, water, buildings, and structures, 2) the height and size of building structures, 3) the percentage of a lot that may be occupied, 4) the density of the population, and 5) the size of lots.

The Wisconsin enabling legislation requires that zoning ordinances be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan. This has been interpreted by planning professionals to mean that the zoning ordinance must be based on a master plan or land use plan and that the ordinance must seek to implement that plan. The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance, which was adopted in 1989 and revised in 1999, is not based on a county-wide comprehensive land use plan, but several towns within the county have individual plans. The individual comprehensive plans use common future

land use categories developed by the regional planning commission that allow for local flexibility and re-coding of more detailed local land use categories into a county and regional framework, while also allowing for re-coding to County Zoning Districts. The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance also includes, but is not limited to the Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan and Oconto County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Oconto County Zoning Districts

Residential Single Family District (R-1)*	Agricultural District (A)*
Residential Multiple-Family District (R-2)	Large Scale Agricultural District (LA)
Mobile Home Park District (R-3)	Restricted Commercial District(RC)
Community Service District (CS)	General Commercial District (GC)*
Park and Recreation District (P-R)	Neighborhood Commercial District
Forest District (F)*	Light Industrial District (LI)
Rural Residential District (RR)*	Industrial District (I)*

* Districts Applicable to the Town of How

Note: There are several areas in the Town of How that do not have zoning and are categorized as "No Zoning" on Map 8.3

Residential Single Family District (R-1)

This district provides attractive areas for development of single-family residences and protection of such residences from incompatible land uses.

Residential Multiple-Family District (R-2)

The purpose of this district is to accommodate residential development at higher densities than single-family densities, and to provide necessary supporting services and facilities. This district should be mapped as demand warrants at locations that have size and physical capacity to handle multiple-story or multiple-unit buildings, greater area of paving and parking and higher intensity activity. The sites should be attractive for human occupancy and should be buffered from high intensity commercial, industrial or transportation activity. Buffer areas or open space should be provided between this district and other residential districts, agriculture and forest areas.

Mobile Home Park District (R-3)

The Mobile Home Park District is intended to regulate the design and arrangement of mobile home parks and the residential use of mobile homes therein.

Community Service District (CS)

This district provides for areas of use for community services such as churches, clinics, parks, schools, community buildings, emergency facilities, etc.

Park and Recreation District (P-R)

The Park and Recreation District provides for recreational oriented establishments, as well as encouraging the maintenance of natural resources.

Forest District (F)

This district provides for commercial production of trees, the conduct of forestry practices and related uses on large tracts of land that are well suited to these activities. The intent is to encourage forestry and also to recognize the value of forested areas as a recreational resource.

Rural Residential District (RR)

The Rural Residential District provides for a mixture of farming, forestry and non-farm residential uses in those rural areas that are not suited for large scale agricultural use or large scale forestry practices.

Agricultural District (A)

The County's Agricultural District is designed for agricultural uses of land devoted to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock. Oconto County's minimum parcel size to establish a residence or farm operation in this district is currently 10 contiguous acres.

Large Scale Agricultural District (LA)

The Large Scale Agricultural District is designed for large scale agricultural uses of land devoted to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock. The minimum parcel size to establish a residence or farm operation in this district is much greater than that of the Agricultural District. Oconto County's minimum parcel size for the Large Scale Agricultural District is currently 35 contiguous acres.

Restricted Commercial District (RC)

This district is created to regulate an exclusive commercial use on one or more parcels in an area predominately zoned residential, agricultural or forest. Owners of parcels petitioning for inclusion into this district shall declare their intended use and this use shall remain as the only use until discontinued or petitioned for change.

General Commercial District (GC)

The General Commercial District provides locations for primarily retail and wholesale trade establishments engaged in sales of merchandise or service or both. The intent is to allow firms and operations whose primary function is selling to retail customers or clients. Processing of materials may be conducted as subordinate to retail or wholesale sales. It is the policy of Oconto County to promote economic development and a strong local economy. It is recognized, however, that most commercial uses should be located in the urban communities where the full range of needed services can be afforded to such uses.

Light Industrial District (LI)

This district provides locations for retail and wholesale trade establishments engaged in sales of merchandise which is primarily produced, manufactured or assembled on the premise. The intent is to allow firms and operations whose primary function is manufacturing to sell to retail customers or clients. It is the policy of Oconto County to promote economic development and a strong local economy. It is recognized, however, that most commercial and industrial uses should be located in the urban communities where the full range of needed services can be afforded to such uses.

Industrial District (I)

The Industrial District is established to accommodate manufacturing and related processing activities such as furniture and fixtures, lumber and wood products, printing, publishing and allied industries, fabricated metal products, etc.

In addition to the zoning districts discussed, the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance has several overlay districts. These districts include a Conservancy District (C), Floodplain District (FP), Airport Height Limitation District (AH), Adult Entertainment Overlay District (AEOD), Quarrying District, Metallic Mining Exploration District (MME), and a Mining District (M). The provisions of an overlay district shall be in addition to any underlying zoning district requirements.

Map 8.3 displays the zoning for the Town of How. Refer to the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance for a detailed explanation, and information on the restrictions of each of the zoning districts.

Sanitary Ordinance

The Oconto County Sanitary Ordinance in contained within Chapter 12 of the Oconto County Code of Ordinances and regulates the private sewage and septic systems of all residential, commercial, industrial, and governmental uses within the town. Although this ordinance does not directly determine land uses, it does have an impact on the locations of future development based on soil suitability for on-site treatment systems.

Subdivision Ordinance

Oconto County's Land Division Ordinance is contained in Chapter 13 of the Oconto County Code of Ordinances. Portions of this ordinance have recently been re-written to address current land division concerns. The ordinance regulates the subdivision of land where the act of division creates five or more parcels or building sites of which four may be less than 1.5 acres (65,340 square feet). The ordinance also regulates minor land division (certified survey map or commonly referred to as CSMs) where it is proposed to divide land into two, three or four parcels or building sites of less than 10 acres each of which the original parcel has existed for a 5-year period. The ordinance also contains design standards for streets, curb and gutter, sidewalks, drainage, erosion control, utilities, and easements that must be complied with in order for the subdivision to be approved by the County. The ordinance also contains requirements for park and public land dedication. The land division ordinance in conjunction with other tools, provides a means of implementing the county's zoning.

Official Map

An official map is intended to implement a town, village, or city master plan for streets, highways, parkways, parks and playgrounds, and drainageways. Its basic purpose is to prohibit the construction of buildings or structures and their associated improvements on land that has been designated for current or future public use. The Town of How does not currently maintain an official map. Oconto County is in the process of completing a county wide parcel base map. The town may want to utilize the county's parcel map as a possible start for an official map.

Erosion Control Plan

Under s. 92.10, Wis. Stats., those counties that are designated as priority counties by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) must prepare and adopt erosion control plans. The county land conservation committee prepares plans to conserve long-term soil productivity, protect the quality of related natural resources, enhance water quality and focus on severe soil erosion problems. In 1985, The Oconto County Land Conservation Committee entered into an agreement with DATCP to prepare a County Erosion Control Plan. The Oconto County Erosion Control Plan was adopted in 1987.

Oconto County Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinance

The *Oconto County Shoreland and Floodplain Zoning Ordinances* were adopted by the Oconto County Board in 1983 and 1987, respectively. The purpose of the shoreland zoning ordinance is to further the maintenance of safe and healthful conditions; to prevent and control water pollution; to protect fish spawning grounds and other aquatic life; to control building sites, placement of structures and land uses; and to preserve shore cover and natural beauty.

The shoreland ordinance applies to all shorelands of navigable waterways in the unincorporated areas of Oconto County which are: 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water elevation of navigable lakes, ponds, or flowages; and 300 feet from the ordinary high water elevation, or to the landward side of a floodplain, of the navigable reaches of rivers or streams, whichever distance is greater. This ordinance regulates parcel size, alteration of surface vegetation, land surface alterations, sewage disposal, filling, toxic dumping, lagooning/dredging, commercial advertising and mandates a basic building and structure setback of 75 feet from the ordinary high water mark.

The Oconto County Floodplain Zoning Ordinance was adopted to promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and to minimize flood losses in areas subject to flood hazards. The ordinance regulates residential development, storage of hazardous materials, uses which may be detrimental to permitted uses in adjoining districts, sewage disposal, wells for drinking water, and wastewater ponds or facilities, except those permitted under Wisconsin Administrative Code (NR 110.15) within the FEMA designated floodplain area. Refer to Map 2.10 for an illustration of these rural areas which are covered by the Floodplain Ordinance.

Shorelands

Shorelands are often viewed as valuable recreational and environmental resources in both urbanized and rural areas. As a result, the State of Wisconsin requires that counties adopt shoreland/floodplain zoning ordinances to address the problems associated with development in floodplain areas. Development in shoreland areas is generally permitted but specific design techniques must be considered. Development in these areas is strictly regulated and in some

instances, is not permitted. The authority to enact and enforce these types of zoning provisions is set forth in Chapter 59.692 of the *Wisconsin Statutes* and Wisconsin Administrative Codes NR 115,116, and 117 and is established in the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance, Section 14.

Oconto County is currently administering its Shoreland/Floodplain Ordinance in its unincorporated areas. The jurisdiction of the ordinance includes shoreland of navigable waters of the county which are 1,000 feet from the normal high water elevation of a lake, pond or flowage and 300 feet from the normal high water elevation of a river or stream, or to the landward side of a 100 year floodplain boundary. Map 8.2 illustrates the locations of How's shoreland areas.

CURRENT LAND USE INVENTORY

A detailed field inventory of land uses in the Town of How was conducted in the spring of 2002 by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. This land use information was then compiled into generalized land use categories and is presented in Table 8.1 and Map 8.4 (Appendix A) contains the detailed land use calculations). As a result of this inventory, a number of conclusions and issues have been identified, and recommendations have been made to help guide future land use planning efforts.

Table 8.1: Town of How 2002 Land Use

Land Use Type	Total Acres	Percentage Total Land	Percentage Developed Land
DEVELOPED			
Residential	117.3	0.52	13.68
Single Family	111.0	0.49	12.94
Mobile Homes	5.5	0.02	0.64
Vacant Residential	0.8	0.00	0.09
Commercial	10.5	0.05	1.22
Industrial	24.5	0.11	2.86
Transportation	460.3	2.05	53.67
Communications/Utilities	2.8	0.01	0.33
Institutional/Governmental	22.8	0.10	2.66
Recreational	38.6	0.17	4.50
Agricultural Structures	180.8	0.81	21.08
Total Developed Acres	857.6	3.82	100.00
			Percentage
UNDEVELOPED			Undeveloped Land
Croplands/Pasture	8,320.4	37.08	38.55
Woodlands	12,025.3	53.59	55.72
Other Natural Areas	904.1	4.03	4.19
Water Features	333.4	1.49	1.54
Total Undeveloped Acres	21,583.2	96.18	100.00
Total Land Area	22,440.80	100.00	

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Planning Area

The Town of How makes up approximately 22,440 total acres of land. Of this, 858 acres, or approximately four percent of the town is developed, leaving 96 percent of undeveloped lands in the town. These undeveloped lands consist mainly of woodlands and agricultural lands.

Residential Land

Residential land in the town accounts for 117 acres or 13.7 percent of the developed land within the town. The majority of this land (111 acres) is single family residential with the remaining being mobile homes, multi-family and vacant. Residential uses are scattered throughout the community.

Commercial Land

Land under commercial use occupies 10.5 acres, or 1.2 percent of the town's developed land. The commercial development is scattered throughout the Town of How. Some commercial establishments in the town include the Frontier Log Homes, The Wood Workery warehouse, Denny's Print Shop, Great Lake Trailers, etc.

Industrial Land

Industrial land totals 24.5 acres or approximately three percent of the developed land within the town. Uses under this category include sand or gravel pits (nine acres), and private storage facilities

Transportation

Transportation uses include the local road network, active railroads, and large parking facilities. Within the Town of How there are 460 acres of land that account for transportation uses. This is the largest portion of the developed land in the town at 54 percent, and makes up two percent of the total land. The land in this category consists primarily of the road network. Almost 364 acres of this is in local roads, 66 acres in county highways and 29 acres in state highways. The road network is discussed in more detail in the transportation element of this plan

Communication/Utilities

Uses under this category include land used for the generation, processing and/or transmission of electronic communication of water, electricity, petroleum or other transmittable products, plus for the disposal, waste processing and/or recycling of byproducts. Within How, 2.8 acres of land in the town consist of these uses. They include radio/television transmission towers and recycling center.

Institutional/Governmental

Institutional/governmental uses are defined as land for public and private facilities for education, health or assembly; for cemeteries and/or related facilities; and for all government facilities used for administration or safety, except public utilities and areas of outdoor recreation. Within the town, this category accounts for 23 acres of land. Uses include in How include the town hall, churches, cemeteries, fraternal organizations, etc.

Parks and Recreational

Park and recreation lands account for approximately 38 acres of land, or 4.5 percent of the developed land in the town. The majority of this land is the Oconto County Recreation Trail, with the remaining land consisting of a boat launch, baseball field, shooting range, etc.

Agricultural Structures

Agricultural structures include sheds, silos and other farm structures. These uses account for 181 acres of land, or 21 percent of the developed land in the town. Aside from the transportation uses, this is the largest category of developed land in the town. Agricultural structures are scattered throughout the Town of How.

Croplands/Pasture

Nearly 37 percent (8,320 acres) of the town's total land area is associated with some type of agricultural land including croplands, pastures, or grazing. The agricultural land is spread throughout the town, being interspersed with the large tracts of woodlands and wetlands.

Woodlands

Woodlands represent the largest land use category within the town accounting for 12,025 acres, or 54 percent of the total land. There are large tracts of woodlands scattered throughout the town, which generally follow the stream corridors and wetlands.

Other Natural Areas

Uses in this category include lands primarily in a natural state for their natural functions including non-wooded wetlands, grasslands and prairies. 904 acres, or four percent of the undeveloped land in the town are natural areas. These areas are scattered throughout the Town of How.

Water Features

Water features include lakes, streams, rivers, ponds, etc. In How there are 333 acres of water related features. These features include the South Branch Oconto River, North Branch Oconto River, Peshtigo Brook, Oconto River, Pecore Creek, Hayes Creek, Wiscobee Lake, Grignon Lake, and numerous ponds scattered throughout the town.

LAND SUPPLY

Amount

Currently the Town of How allows for ample room to develop with residential, commercial, industrial, park and recreation, utilities, etc., while preserving the natural amenities found within the town. Design elements that promote open space, natural buffering, etc. are recommended to minimize any negative impacts and reduce conflicts between land uses.

The amount of land available for development within How is determined by factoring in the existing development and areas not recommended for development such as environmental corridors (wetlands with a 25 foot setback, floodplains, areas of steep slope, water resources with a 75-foot setback from the water resources, designated natural and scientific areas, parks and recreation areas, etc.). It is also the intent of this plan to preserve the prime agricultural lands

within the town. After reviewing the many factors that may affect development within the town, it is determined that an adequate amount of developable lands exist within the Town of How for the 20 year planning period.

Price

The price of developable lands varies depending on the surrounding land uses, location, access, services, along with other subjective factors. For example, residential prices can depend on whether a parcel has water frontage, is wooded, or has a vast amount of open space in and around it. Waterfront properties generally attract higher price listings. The land prices listed for How are very similar to the surrounding towns in the area. However, the land prices in the town will continue to fluctuate as the market continues to change. Contact any local realtor to obtain more information on residential, commercial, industrial and other land prices within the town.

Redevelopment Opportunities

Redevelopment possibilities within the Town of How include:

- Areas within the town that are beyond repair should be redeveloped in a way that maintains/improves the overall character, including scale, architectural styles, etc.
- Evaluate and devise a plan for the redevelopment of existing contaminated sites. Since the nature of the contamination and clean up for these areas differs by site, the redevelopment plans for each specific site may also differ.

Demand

Based on building permit information from the Wisconsin Department of Administration and Oconto County, the Town of How experienced 29 housing permits for new residential construction from 1990 to 1999. If this trend continues, the town could expect approximately 70 additional homes by the year 2023.

The demand for commercial or industrial lands in the town has not been high in the past 10 to 20 years. Many of the businesses have been locating within the Village of Suring or surrounding municipalities. With the increased development of highway commercial businesses throughout the area, the demand for highway commercial lands in the Town of How may increase along STH 32 during the planning period.

LAND USE ISSUES AND CONFLICTS

The town will need to work with the Oconto County Zoning Office in order to correct the town's zoning map. As with a number of towns within the county the town's zoning map needs to be updated to reflect current uses within the Town of How and to correct obvious mapping errors. In utilizing the Commission's Geographic Information System to overlay the current (2002) land use with the county zoning districts, some obvious conflicts appear between the zoning and land use. For example, there are several lands in the town that do not have zoning, and should have a district classification.

In addition, there are opportunities for other conflicts to arise between uses in the future, especially as residential growth takes place in the historically agricultural areas. Allowing for adequate screening, setbacks and buffering should alleviate much of the incompatibility, as will

additional county controls within the subdivision ordinance and ordinances regulating signage, lighting and noise.

The General Plan Design addresses areas for uses with regards to their neighboring parcels and in many cases there are recommendations for additional steps to make the development practicable while limiting potential incompatibilities. For example, the area identified for residential growth in the northeastern portion of the town is recommended for additional design standards. Any subdivision that is allowed must be designed and such way that preserves much of the open space and natural areas. This will help to lessen any negative impacts on neighboring uses (e.g. the Oconto County Recreation Trail) and surrounding land uses.

ANTICIPATED LAND USE TRENDS

Analyzing data within past presented chapters, the following land use trends were developed for the planning period. It is expected that these trends will influence the town's future growth and preservation. The Town's Plan Commission and Town Board will need to address these trends over the next two decades in order to reach the town's desired vision. The following trends were used to provide direction in the development of the General Plan Design, along with the town's goals, objectives, and policies, and the town wide survey results. Some of these trends are also very similar to the trends of several communities located adjacent to the Town of How.

- The demand for increased lot sizes will increase and the ratio of persons per household will decrease resulting in greater acreage needs to accommodate future residential growth.
- The Town of How can expect a projected minimum (232) occupied dwelling units and a projected maximum (304) dwelling units through the year 2020, a 3 to 75 housing unit increase.
- Farmlands will continue to be preserved in the town to allow for general crop farming.
- The rural character will continue to be maintained in the town, preserving the natural vegetative structure resulting in the protection of wildlife and fish habitats.
- The use of on-site wastewater septic systems and individual groundwater wells will continue within the town throughout the planning period.
- If commercial uses begin to increase, small businesses will primarily locate in a concentrated area along STH 32.
- The town will experience a demand for public services, as the median population age continues to increase.
- The Town of How will work with the Village of Suring and Oconto County to ensure that seasonal and year-round residents will continue to enjoy the trails, lakes and woodlands for generations to come.

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental and Public Utility Considerations

The population projections found in Chapter 3 of this document can be used to provide the town with an adequate measure of the number of acres that will be needed to accommodate future

growth. The following environmental and public utility considerations should be utilized to provide the town with an indication of which acreage of the municipality is best suited for development.

Since suitable vacant lands exist within the town, it would **not** be necessary to propose development within the town's remaining "environmental corridors". These areas shall be protected and integrated into the overall development of the town. The town has an abundance of these unique areas including wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes which can add significantly to the aesthetic appeal of the community while providing important ecological and environmental functions such as stormwater retention and flood control.

The majority of the residents in the town currently are not provided municipal sewer and water. This plan recommends that individual property owners continue to install and maintain their own wells and on-site wastewater systems, unless they are able to hookup to the Village of Suring. The need for the protection of the watersheds and aquifers within the town is thus required in order to provide town residents with safe, usable water.

Regarding transportation, it is determined that an adequate network of arterial, collector, and local roads are already in place throughout the township, which could readily serve future traffic flows generated from any increased growth.

Planning Criteria

Planning criteria are developed in order to give the community a sense in which to base their land use recommendations. Criteria make the planning process defensible when presenting scenarios to the general public and when modifying or developing alternative sites for land use developments. The criteria used by the town when developing the general plan design was based upon values identified by the State, Oconto County and the Town of How.

The following State criteria are based upon Smart Growth criteria encouraged within community plans:

- Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
- Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
- Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.

- Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
- Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
- Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The *Oconto County Zoning Ordinance* has identified the following criteria for all the unincorporated areas within Oconto County:

- Preserve adequate open spaces for present and future use and recreational use;
- Maintain natural or undeveloped lands and buffer zones between developed areas;
- Protect scenic and historically valuable sites;
- Protect forests, wilderness and wildlife, and maintain other factors that insure balance of ecological systems by not developing forests, wetlands, beaches, estuaries and shorelands;
- Prevent the construction of buildings in hazardous areas such as floodplains and wetlands;
- Maintain highly productive farmland;
- Prevent erosion and unnecessary destruction of ground-cover;
- Minimize pollution of the water, land and air.

The Town of How has identified the following criteria from the issue identification process, the town wide survey results, and the plan's goals and objectives:

<u>Community Growth</u>

- To maintain the How's rural atmosphere;
- To provide for limited development while preserving the agricultural lands and maintaining the integrity of the environment;
- To protect future growth areas from incompatible development;
- Steer intensive developments adjacent to or within the Village of Suring – which is better equipped with infrastructure to handle them;

- Cooperate with the Village of Suring and surrounding towns on future planning projects and boundary issues to minimize conflicts.

Residential

- Residential developments should be directed to areas which will allow for compatible uses, and will minimize conflicts between farming and non-farming land uses within the town;
- Situate higher density residential development in and adjacent to areas that minimize impacts upon agricultural lands and the environment;
- Direct intensive developments toward areas that have the adequate facilities and services that they need;
- Provide for a variety of quality housing opportunities for all segments of the town's current and future population.

Commercial/Industry/Parks

- It is expected that future commercial businesses and industries will locate in the Village of Suring or other surrounding municipalities because of the adequate services that exist;
- If commercial businesses were to develop, they should be concentrated in distinct areas along STH 32 and not scattered throughout;
- Cooperate with the Village of Suring, Oconto County and other adjacent communities on the maintenance of existing parks and development of additional recreational opportunities.

DESIGN YEAR LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Map 8.5 was developed based on the information contained in previous chapters of this document including demographics, land use projections, physical characteristics, the goals, objectives, policies and programs, and town-wide survey results. Over a 20 month period, the Town Plan Committee met more than 13 times to review town data and growth options. From these meetings and presentation to the public, a 2023 General Plan Design was developed and approved.

Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections

Wisconsin statues require Comprehensive Plans to include projections, in five-year increments, for future residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses in the community over the twenty year planning period.

Residential Projections

The methodology used to project the town's future residential land use acreage employed:

1. the projected housing needs presented in Chapter 3 of this document,
2. an average dwelling unit per 5 acre ratio for each housing type, and
3. a multiplication factor ranging from 1.25 to 2.0, allowing for market flexibility.

Based on this methodology, the town would need to accommodate approximately 125 acres for future residential development over the next five years, 142 acres between 2005 and 2010, 131

acres between 2010 and 2015, and 140 acres between 2015 and 2020, for a total of 538 acres needed by 2020. This is a net total for residential development. However, there are several other factors that must be taken into consideration including,

- it is **not** the intent of the plan to see the entire area within a classification to develop, rather the specified uses shall be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of the development;
- some of the lands would hinder development based on the nature of the area;
- within residential growth areas, lands must be allocated for future roads, parks, and recreation areas.

In most standard residential developments, these additional factors generally account for approximately 25 percent of the gross land area. Therefore, the gross total for land allocated for residential development should be approximately 717 acres in the town. On the 2023 General Plan Design map, the Town of How has allocated an adequate amount of land for future residential growth.

Commercial Projections

To calculate commercial land use projections, the Commission compared the current ratio of residential acreage to commercial land use acreage by parcel in the town (11:1) based on the 2000 land use inventory. Based on this methodology, the town would need to accommodate about 11 acres for future commercial development over the next five years, 13 between 2005 and 2010, 12 acres between 2010 and 2015, and 13 acres between 2015 to 2020. The town has not designated commercial land on the 2023 General Plan Design for commercial developments. Due to the close proximity of the Village of Suring and the City of Gillett, the town recommends that the majority of future commercial businesses locate within these surrounding communities which can provide adequate services. If new commercial uses were to develop in the Town of How, these developments shall fit the character of the town, as well as allow for proper parking facilities and adequate buffers between the different business types and other adjacent land uses.

Industrial Projections

Industrial lands are projected in the same manner as the commercial lands. According to the 2000 land use inventory, the current ratio of residential acreage to industrial land use acreage in the town is 5:1. Therefore the town would need to accommodate about 25 acres for future industrial development over the next five years, 28 between 2005 and 2010, 26 acres between 2010 and 2015, and 28 acres between 2015 to 2020. However, the Town of How has not allocated industrial lands on the 2023 General Plan Design. It is felt that the majority of the industries will locate within the Village of Suring or nearby communities. If new industrial uses were to develop in the Town of How, these areas shall fit the character of the town and be environmentally friendly.

Agricultural Projections

The Town of How has a vast amount of agricultural lands and it is the town's intention to preserve much of the prime agricultural areas over the next 20 years. However, a portion of the lands currently being used for agricultural purposes will likely be developed over the next 20 year. Most development is recommended in the general areas designated on Map 8.5, but it is difficult to determine the rate of agricultural decline since development will likely also occur in the rural portions of the town. An overall change in agricultural lands for the 20 year planning period can be determined by comparing Table 8.1 with Table 8.2. In addition, in order to preserve the prime farmland in the surrounding area, future land developments are encouraged to consider alternative design techniques (e.g. clustering, conservation by design, etc.).

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

General Plan Design Classifications

The classifications listed below closely follow a set a standards which were developed and are utilized by the Regional Planning Commissions (RPC)of eastern Wisconsin (Bay-Lake RPC & Southeastern Wisconsin RPC). These classifications set by the RPC's were utilized in the beginning of the development of the General Plan Design to assist the town with allocating various areas for the different types of land use. The town in some cases follows the standards set by the RPC's, and in other cases set town specific standards which the town believes are a better representation of the community's character and more fully meet the wishes of the town's citizens.

The General Plan Design has ten classes of land use. The majority of the classifications correspond to the districts within the *Oconto County Zoning Ordinance* that are in existence within the Town of How, to ease future implementation of the plan. A more detailed explanation of recommended uses within each classification can be found in the Recommended Development Strategy portion of this plan. The General Plan Design classifications, and a general description of each are as follows:

1. Rural Residential
2. Commercial
3. Industrial
4. Governmental/Institutional
5. Communication/Utilities
6. Park & Recreation
7. Agricultural
8. Forest/Open Space
9. Environmental Corridors
10. Transportation

Rural Residential

Identifies areas that are recommended concentrated residential development. These areas will also allow a mixture of uses (primarily single family residential)

Commercial

Identifies areas recommended for commercial development, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the town. Also incorporates existing and future home occupational businesses.

Industrial

Specific areas identified by the town as existing, or recommended for industrial use for the planning period.

Governmental/Institutional

Identifies existing or planned governmental/institutional facilities within the town.

Communication/Utilities

This classification discusses communication or utility facilities within the town that are existing or are recommended for the planning period.

Park & Recreation

Identifies recreational facilities within or near the Town of How that are existing or planned.

Agricultural

Identifies areas recommended to be preserved for the purpose of the raising of livestock and general crop farming.

Forest/Open Space

Includes areas of vast woodlands and valuable open spaces within the Town of How.

Transportation

Identifies the existing road network along with recommendations for improved and safe traffic movement in the town.

Environmental Corridors

Contains four elements including; 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), DNR wetlands, steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, and a 75-foot setback from all navigable waterways as defined by the Oconto County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. Also includes other significant features or areas identified by the town.

RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The classifications detail the type, location and density of use. This portion of the plan will detail further recommendations on the land uses within the town. The following text discusses each of the major future land use classifications as depicted on the General Plan Design map. It should be

noted that the specified classification does not designate individual areas within the classification for development, rather, it designates the entire area for that use to occur. Also, it is not the intent of the plan to see the entire area within a classification to develop, rather the specified uses be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of the development in the event of a land conversion. The type and density of the land use is identified within each classification.

Residential Development

As residential development pressures continue, the town must closely monitor the proposed types of development regarding their impacts on the natural resources and rural nature of the Town of How. Single family residential will be the primary development within the town, while larger multifamily developments are encouraged to locate within adjacent communities that have adequate services and utilities. The General Plan Design includes two areas for residential types of growth.

Rural Residential

The rural residential designation addresses those developments that are intended for concentrated residential developments while providing for spacious living environments and allowing for a mixture of uses. This classification is also designated to help preserve the town's rural nature and ensure that there will be less conflicts between incompatible land uses.

Recommendations:

1. **Existing residential developments are proposed to remain intact**. Residential developments found within this classification will continue throughout the 20 year planning period with the possibility of infill developments and rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing structures.
2. **Single family residencies will be the primary development** in these areas with the intent that they are developed at a minimum lot size of two acres. The option for density bonuses is possible for developments that are one acre, through the preservation of open space and/or clustering. The developments are intended to promote orderly and efficient growth which are consistent with the adjacent land uses.
3. **Designated area at the community of Hayes.** The community of Hayes currently has several residential developments, and is recommended to be platted for orderly development to occur. The designation of this particular area aides in preserving the open spaces, viewsheds and natural settings found throughout the town. It also ensures that the majority prime farmlands found throughout the town are preserved, thus lessening potential conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses.
4. **Designated area between the North Branch Oconto River and the Oconto River** in the northeastern portion of the town. It is encouraged that this area be planned for conservation subdivision development (Appendix E) in order to preserve much of the natural areas found within and adjacent to the designation. A buffer is also encouraged near the Oconto County Recreation Trail in order to limit incompatibilities between the residential activities.

5. **Detailed site plans approved by the town shall guide any subdivision development of the areas.** Site plans shall detail the land use mix, densities, road layouts, open spaces, etc. The specific details of each site plan will be at the discretion of the town, ensuring that the approval or denial is based on sound land use planning, is developed without negatively affecting the scenic beauty of the area. The town should also work with the Village of Suring, since the village has a right to exercise extraterritorial plat review over the town and possibly influence the division of land within 1.5 miles of its border.
6. **Address the need for potential Boundary Agreements with the Village of Suring.** The Town of How is encouraged to work with the Village of Suring to develop Boundary Agreements in order to work cooperatively and lessen conflicts regarding future land use issues within the village's 1.5 mile extraterritorial planning area.
7. **New residential development types should conform with surrounding uses.** A new development that is out of context due to size, use, or architectural character may detract from existing adjacent properties visually and economically in terms of property values.
8. **The town should work closely with the county to set standards for all new residential buildings to ensure that quality housing development will occur.** Standards for new residential construction should be adopted (e.g. requiring all new structures to be on a permanent foundation and establishing size requirements for all new residential buildings). These standards could go as far as regulating certain architectural design elements as well.
9. **A mixture of farming uses are allowed** in this category. The Rural Residential category will also allow farming uses that are compatible with other surrounding land uses to limit conflicts.
10. **Ensure that there is adequate housing for all persons in the community.** Housing should be promoted for people with low to moderate income, the elderly, and residents with special needs. A mix of new housing is recommended, including starter homes, making home ownership more attainable by lowering costs and expenses. The town recommends that much of this housing should be located within adjacent communities where public services and facilities are more adequate.
11. **Developments should maintain the rural character.** The town recommends that these lands be used for residential uses that will maintain the natural views that currently exist within these areas. It is recommended that developments along major transportation corridors in these areas apply landscaping/buffers that would help to preserve the rural atmosphere of the town.
12. **Future residential developments shall be sensitive to natural features.** Environmentally sensitive lands in new areas of development should be preserved to the greatest extent possible to maintain the natural beauty of the area and preserve the wildlife habitat.

Open Space/Forestry/Agricultural Areas

The second type of residential development addresses lands within agricultural, wooded and open areas found throughout the town. The town feels that further development of theses areas will likely spur greater fragmentation of the remaining agricultural lands and natural features within the town. Therefore development within these classifications will need to be carefully planned to protect and preserve that which makes up much of the town's landscape and overall character.

Recommendations:

1. **Existing residential developments throughout the town are proposed to remain intact**. Residential developments found throughout the town will continue throughout the 20 year planning period with the possibility and rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing structures.
2. **It is intended that low density residential development be allowed with a minimum density of one residential unit per 10 acres or greater.** The intent of the plan is to preserve much of the town's scenic atmosphere. With larger lot sizes, many of the natural amenities can be retained, including large tracts of woodlands, open space, etc. However, the town has also decided that it may allow for the development of smaller lot sizes through subdivision development. The subdivision design shall complement the town's atmosphere with the town having discretion on the approval or denial of the development. Zoning will have to reflect any changes that occur within this classification.
3. **The town encourages new development techniques which maintain a balance between natural areas and new development.** As new development occurs within the town, the surrounding natural amenities that exist can be preserved by utilizing various development techniques (e.g. conservation/cluster subdivisions). These techniques can help protect the surrounding environmental features, allow for more open space, preserve prime farmland and wildlife habitats within the town. The specific details of the subdivision design shall be at the discretion of the town, ensuring that the approval or denial is based on sound land use planning, and developed without negatively affecting the areas scenic beauty. The town should also work with the Village of Suring, since the village has a right to exercise extraterritorial plat review over the town and possibly influence the division of land within 1.5 miles of its border.
4. **The town encourages Oconto County to develop a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.** Work with Oconto County, cooperating towns, the UW-Extension, and other professional experts to adopt a subdivision ordinance which includes conservation and cluster type developments, in order to maintain the town's open spaces and visual aesthetics.
5. **Maintain existing viewsheds.** Care shall be given that developments occurring within these areas and along transportation corridors (state highways, county highways, or town roads) not negatively impact the view along these roads. Any future developments should be situated with ample buffer strips of natural vegetation between adjacent roads

and the developments, in order to mostly screen the development and thus maintain the existing rural character residents want to preserve.

6. **Develop in a manner that will minimize potential conflicts.** If residential development were to occur in these areas, adequate buffers should exist between farming and non-farming operations in order to lessen conflicts. If it is found that new residential development will not have a negative affect on an existing farm operation or the rural character of the town, residential development may occur.

Overall, the town should encourage future land divisions and residential developments within these proposed residential classifications. This practice will encourage infill development and discourage further fragmentation of agricultural areas. All subdivisions proposed within the Town of How shall be submitted to the Town Plan Commission for review .

Additionally, it is the intent of this plan to see all future residential developments occur without negatively affecting the function or the look of the town's unique environmental features. Large tracts of woodlands as well as open spaces, if they are to be developed, should be developed in such a way as to complement their scenic beauty. In most cases, the plan's intent is to protect existing natural areas (vegetated areas and/or open space views) from being developed by steering most development to areas designated for rural residential or to areas within the town that consist of least productive soils.

Commercial Strategy

The town does not view itself as a community that would attract large commercial businesses during the twenty year planning period. Therefore the town has not designated commercial areas, other than those commercial developments currently in operation within the town. It is expected that future businesses will locate within the Village of Suring or nearby communities that have adequate infrastructure.

Recommendations:

1. **Commercial uses throughout the town are envisioned to continue**. Those businesses that are in current commercial operations will continue to function throughout the 20 year planning period.

2. **Recommend potential commercial development along STH 32 or to adjacent communities.** The town decided not to designate any commercial sites. However, if any new commercial businesses were to be developed within the Town of How, it is recommended to be concentrated in a few distinct areas along STH 32 and not be dispersed throughout the town. The highway (STH 32) provides for high visibility and ease of access. It is also recommended that new businesses locate within the Village of Suring or other adjacent communities to receive adequate services and utilities.

3. **Encourage small scale commercial developments.** The commercial uses that may be allowed within the town should serve both transient traffic along with services available to the town's population. The developments must also preserve the rural character of the town through building scale, and building appearance.

4. **Establish design standards for any commercial development in the town.** In addition, if any new development were to occur, developers shall follow design standards implemented by the town, also sign regulations, landscaping, lighting, parking and access that do not detract from the town's rural character. The hours of operation shall be also be regulated.
5. **If commercial is allowed on STH 32, access to the designated commercial area should be maintained to one or two areas and not individual lots along the roadways.** This will provide for more efficient traffic flow and safety. Also, commercial developments should allow for shared parking and driveways, have ample landscaping to break-up the parking areas as well as to shield the view from the roadway, and do not negatively the town's rural atmosphere.
6. **Commercial signage will continue to be controlled**. In order to control sign's appearances, rather than allowing signs to control the town's appearance, the town will need to address signage regulations. Several sign designs that are inflatable, glittering, flashing, rippling, sparkling, strings of lights, made with tinsel, "pom poms", pinwheels, pennants, banners, and streamers can have the potential to degrade the rural character of the town. It is also recommended that changeable lettering, electronic messaging, and trademark colors be prohibited because they are often deemed disruptive.
7. **Home-based businesses are envisioned to remain and are permitted**. With greater access to the Internet and better telecommunication systems, working from the home is a viable alternative to traditional employment practices. These uses do not need a zoning change and rarely disrupt neighboring uses. Each of the classifications, regarding residential uses, recognizes home occupational businesses as a permitted use.. The town will need to ensure that what home occupational businesses exist do not outgrow their current location or become nuisances to adjoining land owners. Those home occupational businesses that need a zoning change (to continue to operate) will be encouraged to relocate their business in commercial areas identified on the General Plan Design.

Overall, as with any kind of development, when commercial development is proposed within the town, the Town Plan Commission and Town Board must closely monitor the capacities of the infrastructure and community services that accommodate this new development and weigh the future costs to benefits. The town shall **not** encourage the development of commercial businesses that are not consistent with the scale of the town. More intensive commercial businesses should be directed to the Village of Suring, or other adjacent communities that currently have adequate infrastructure and services.

Industrial Strategy

As with the Commercial Strategy, the Town of How does not envision itself as attracting industries. Therefore the town has not designated any sites for future industrial development on the General Plan Design Map. However, if any new light industry were to locate within the town, it shall reflect the character of the town.

Recommendations:

1. **Direct industrial development to adjacent communities.** Since the town does not view itself as attracting industry, it is envisioned that new industries locate in adjacent communities (e.g. Village of Suring, etc.) with existing services and infrastructure. According to the community survey,. the majority of residents are against heavy industry and are ultimately in favor of preserving the rural atmosphere that the town provides.
2. **It is the recommendation of the town that existing industrial lands remain throughout the planning period.** These areas generally consist of storage facilities and other small industrial uses that exist in the rural countryside.
3. **If light industry is to locate within the town, it shall be compatible with the character of the town.** Any new industry allowed must be consistent with the scale of the town and be environmentally sound. Industrial developments shall incorporate buffers to lessen conflicts and maintain the rural character of the town.
4. **Ensure any past, present and future quarry operations are properly closed and that negative impacts do not affect neighboring properties.** The town will monitor quarries for negative effects and work with surrounding towns, counties and state agencies to ensure they are reclaimed to a natural setting.
5. **Redevelopment of existing industrial sites.** This plan is recommending the assessment and cleanup of any environmentally contaminated sites and utilizing them for more productive uses. The town should have any potential sites evaluated and devise a plan for the redevelopment of contaminated areas. Since the nature of the contamination and clean up for these areas differs by site, the redevelopment plans for each specific site may also differ.

As with the commercial development, when industrial development is proposed within the town the Town Plan Commission and Town Board must closely monitor the capacities of the infrastructure and community services that accommodate this new development and weigh the future costs to benefits.

Governmental/Institutional

This plan identifies the How Town Hall, churches, cemeteries, etc. These uses will continue to be maintained throughout the 20 year planning period.

Recommendations:

1. **Continue to provide additional services associated with the Town Hall.** If the town is in a situation where additional governmental or utility services are considered for the town, the lands adjacent, or nearby the Town Hall should be considered. Also continue the maintenance of the structure throughout the planning period.
2. **The Town Board will continue to monitor services provided to the town residents -** for most of these services are being provided by other agencies and municipalities. The Town Board will work with adjoining communities, school districts, religious organizations and Oconto County to help provide future services as effectively and

efficiently as reasonably possible. The town should continue to explore different options for handling future town road services, recycling services and disposal of solid waste, which could be more cost effective and more efficient for its residents.

3. **The town will continue to work with Oconto County -** to ensure that private wells are monitored throughout the township, and explore options of maintaining the high level of services from the Oconto County Sheriffs Department, the Gillett Area Ambulance Services, Suring Volunteer Fire Department, and other service providing entities.
4. **Ensure a cost effective road system management plan**. In order to control expenditures on town road repairs, it is recommended that the Town Board utilize the Pavement Management Program developed by BLRPC to assist in maintaining the roads in the future.
5. **Receive grants and other aid to assist the town in providing needed services.** Grant and aid programs shall be explored by the Town Board, when considering improvements to any of the town services. The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission is one such agency that can inform the town on future grants available to them.
6. **Ensure the updating of the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance**. The town will continue to work with adjoining towns and Oconto County to update the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance in order to best protect the residents' quality of life, while providing the needed controls over incompatible uses.

Communication/Utilities

The Town of How contains several utilities facilities (telecommunication and radio transmission towers, etc.) and the present utility services that are provided to the town are deemed adequate.

Recommendations:

1. **Future Communication and Utility structures will need to complement the community**. In order to protect and enhance the rural character of the town, future locations of utilities shall be based on their sensitivity to developed areas as well as the aesthetics of the town. High tension wires, transformer substations, communication towers with their identification lighting, highway department shops and storage yards, etc. can have quite a negative effect on adjoining uses. Many of these are located based upon the availability of lands or because they are central to the area and many do not consider the immediate effects they have on adjoining property values, residents views, etc.
    - Transmission lines shall not unnecessarily cross over/through residential developments or areas set aside for natural resource protection or recreation. Likewise, utility lines shall be encouraged to follow edges of natural features (that parallel roads) rather than roadways to maintain aesthetics of the town by minimizing their negative visual effects.
    - Types of substations shall be heavily screened with natural vegetation from neighboring properties and roadways, and should not be located adjacent to high transportation corridors such as county roads nor adjacent or within

crossroad communities or identified Expansion areas on the General Plan Design map.

- Telecommunication transmission towers need to be located away from crossroad communities, away from existing residential, and shall not be located adjacent to town or county roads. Preferably, multiple companies should be located in one location (in the town) sharing a single tower, that has natural vegetation near its base which helps shield the support buildings associated within this use from neighboring uses and roadways.
- Utility signs shall complement the community character. Signage associated with any utility should be reviewed upon its design. Signage shall follow minimum standards that help establish and maintain an approved theme to the town.

2. **The town will continue to monitor telecommunication towers and antennas** due to the expanding use of "cell phones" which provide many benefits, including safety and convenience. However, problems can arise when new towers, are built near people's homes, next to historic buildings, or in rural, scenic areas. In many cases these towers often do not fit in with their surroundings and destroy scenic vistas. Although the Town of How contains several towers, it should continue to address the telecommunication tower issue, it is recommended that the town, along with UW-Extension, Oconto County, and other professional agencies develop a program to educate community officials and citizens on the existing rules and regulations associated with these structures. In addition, the program should be used to discuss issues such as using alternate structures as a first alternative versus new towers, co-locating antennas, or joint use of existing towers or adequate structures, and visual and other potential adverse impacts of telecommunication towers.

Park and Recreation

This classification identifies the existing and future recreational uses, as well as the existing boat launches located within the Town of How.

Recommendations:

1. **Cooperation in planning park and recreational facilities**. If future recreational development were to occur, it is recommended that the town cooperate with the surrounding towns, Oconto County and other surrounding counties and developing agencies.
2. **Encourage the maintenance, expansion and updating of parks and recreational facilities.** The intent is to see a continuation and possible extension of park and recreation opportunities (area adjacent to How Town Hall). This includes maintaining and upgrading existing facilities to meet the needs of citizens with special needs along with providing opportunities for all ages of the population.

3. **Village of Suring park and recreational facilities.** Due to the close proximity of the Village of Suring park facilities, the town has not designated areas for future parks. The village parks, golf course and school facilities offer a variety of activities.
4. **Promote the Oconto County Recreation Trail.** Located in the northeastern corner of the town, the trail should be promoted as a valuable recreational resource. Such promotional activities might include local informational brochures, signs, and additional trail heads.
5. **Encourage of buffer along the Oconto County Recreation Trail in areas designated for residential development.** As use of the trail increases and residential development occurs along it, the town should investigate a more restrictive setback from the trail to buffer trail users from residential development and to buffer the residences from trail activities.

Agricultural Strategy

This classification is to accommodate the existing lands devoted to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock.

Recommendations:

1. **Preserve, where appropriate, agricultural lands and open spaces**. The Agricultural classification was developed based upon the principle that the town will encourage the preservation of agricultural lands (until a time a better use or value of the land is determined) and the farmer's right to farm in order to better serve the residents of the town and to safeguard for future generations the limited rural, agricultural atmosphere and character valued by the residents of the Town of How.
2. **Low density residential development** - Future residential development should be directed toward residential areas identified on the General Plan Design Map (Map 8.5). However, if the need for residential development arises, a single family residence with a 10.1 acre minimum is recommended to preserve areas deemed appropriate for agricultural zoning, and to protect natural areas, viewsheds, open spaces within the town. However, the town decided that it may allow for the development of smaller lot sizes through subdivision development. The subdivision design shall complement the town's rural atmosphere with the town having discretion on the approval or denial of the development.
3. **As development pressure increases within the town, the town will need to weigh the cost of converting farmland to other intensive uses**. A preferred approach regarding this future prospect is for property owners thinking about developing subdivisions to be encouraged to plan for development on <u>lands that are least productive</u> - based upon the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) map data - in order to continue to preserve the most productive farmlands for future farming use. This also includes <u>those lands most buffered/hidden from the views</u> of those driving along town roads, and state and county highways and thus keeping large areas of open space undeveloped - in order to maintain a sense/perception that the town is still a rural community.

4. **Encourage natural buffers for development.** Adequate buffers are encouraged between farming and non-farming operations in these areas in order to lessen conflict between land uses. Decisions to allow residential development in areas identified for agricultural uses should be limited and decisions to approve or deny must be based on sound land use planning criteria.
5. **Ensure that these lands are under adequate farming practices.** It is important for these lands to continue to be under the best management practices for agricultural activities. Inappropriate agricultural practices can have a significant adverse impact on the quality of surface water unless properly managed.
6. **It is also recommended that the town address the issue of mega-farming operations**. The trend in farming within the State of Wisconsin and Oconto County is showing that the smaller, family-owned farms have difficulty trying to compete with the larger farming operations, which eventually leads to the smaller farms ceasing operations and possibly selling out to developers just to survive. This in turn, could change the landscape of the town as a whole, and possibly create conflicts between different types of land uses.

   Throughout the State of Wisconsin and beyond, the trend is turning to cooperative farming practices in which two or more small farming operations combine funds and materials in order to keep up with the corporate mega-farms. To address the mega-farming issue, it is recommended that the town, along with UW-Extension, Oconto County, and other professional agencies develop a program to discuss several issues including the potential impacts that these corporate farms pose to the environment, as well as how mega-farms can affect a community's character. Several issues may include the spreading of animal waste, maintenance of local roads, etc.

Forest/Open Space

The Open Space/Forest classification is intended to achieve the goal of encouraging the preservation of woodlands and valuable open spaces within the Town of How, historically not farmed or developed due to the natural limits of the existing soils.

Recommendations:

1. **Allowing limited residential developments within and/or adjacent to stands of woodlands will be acceptable to the town**. Many of the forested lands within the town are undisturbed. However, the town will likely face growing pressure to develop within these wooded areas and/or adjacent to them over the twenty year planning period. Many people are looking for home sites that are already comprised of or adjacent to natural features (such as a wood lot, steep slopes, etc.)

2. **Protect the forestlands with the current zoning requirements**. The town shall control the future developments by maintaining these forested areas under the one dwelling unit per 10 acre minimums currently in place through the county zoning ordinance, and will support keeping this minimum requirement throughout the planning period. Rarely should the woodlands be developed with greater densities. Lands adjacent to woodlands may be developed at the same or at higher densities, but the town prefers a sensitive approach to future development and is thus viewing favorably unique development

options such as conservation subdivision designs or clustering to take place. Developments will be encouraged to locate in a manner that will have a minimal impact on wildlife habitats and other natural areas within the town. In addition, preserving open space views along the town's roadways is also encouraged when development occurs within this classification..

Environmental Corridors

The preservation and protection of natural areas within the Town of How will become increasingly important as population and development pressures increase. Many natural features are either unsuitable for development, enhance the appearance of the town, improve natural processes such as flood control, water retention or groundwater recharge. Wetlands, floodplains, the Oconto River, North Branch Oconto River, Peshtigo Brook, Pecore Creek, along with several small creeks and lakes are all significant natural features within the town.

Recommendations:

1. **This plan recommends that the natural features within the town remain in their natural state or be minimally modified for possible recreational uses**. Environmental corridors are represented by four elements including; (1) 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), (2) DNR wetlands, (3) steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, (4) and a 75-foot setback from all navigable waterways as defined by the Oconto County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. These four elements provide serious limitations to development and the floodplains, wetlands and the 75-foot building setback are generally regulated by either the federal, state, or county government. Together, these elements represent the areas of the town that are most sensitive to development and are intended to be preserved.
2. **This plan should serve as a guide for the preservation of environmental corridors and impacts to these areas will be minimized to the fullest extent possible when developments are permitted**. Using the environmental corridors as a guide when reviewing proposed developments will give the town background information on what areas the town residents believe are important to maintaining the town's rural character and the quality of its natural resource base. The town should direct development away from environmental corridors, as much as possible - or have them sensitively designed within developments which will help minimize the negative effects on wildlife habitats and the rural nature of the town.
3. **Utilize existing natural areas to enhance the character of the town.** It is encouraged that the town preserve large natural areas and/or features within possible subdivisions to enhance/retain buffers between residential uses and transportation routes, sheltering the developments while also helping to shield the developments from views along the routes.

Transportation

The Town of How's transportation network consists of State Highway 32, several County highways and town roads. The local road system that is in place provides good traffic flow within

the town. In addition, the maintenance of these roads has been very good in the past. If any new subdivisions are proposed within the town, the Plan Commission and Town Board should require Area Development Plans. This will allow the town to review and ensure that future roads are well designed to promote efficient traffic flow and to avoid unnecessary cul-de-sacs and loops that can increase the town's future maintenance costs. The town should also adopt an Official Map to delineate future road extensions. The Official Map also allows the Town Board to review development requests to ensure that all new developments and streets conform to the Official Map. Also, by limiting driveways and recommending landscaping/buffers along major corridors would help to preserve the rural atmosphere that the town currently maintains.

It is also highly recommended that the town continue to utilize the PASER pavement rating system. The information derived from the PASER survey is used to assess the overall condition of road pavements and to determine the town's road maintenance, restoration and construction needs.

IDENTIFIED "SMART GROWTH" AREAS

During the planning process, the Town of How Plan Committee developed a recommended land use plan (Map 8.5) which identifies how the town will develop and preserve its lands throughout the planning period. During this process the Plan Committee identified areas that are considered "smart growth areas". According to s. 16.965, Wis. Stats., a "smart growth area" is "an area that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands within existing infrastructure and municipal, state and utility services, where practicable, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are both contiguous to existing development and at densities which have relatively low utility and municipal and state governmental costs." Since the Town of How is a rural community, the entire town is viewed as a "smart growth area." The community of Hayes is one area in the town that encourages contiguous development patterns, however the provision of services and their adequacy will need to be continuously monitored as developments increase in the rural portions of the town. Also, a large number of natural features provide limitations to development adjacent to the Village of Suring, thus intensive developments are steered toward the village or surrounding municipalities with readily available public utilities/services. Directing the higher intensity developments to the Village of Suring and surrounding municipalities assists the town in maintaining its rural character, while preserving the many valuable natural areas and prime agricultural lands that make-up much of How's landscape.

SUMMARY

Overall, the Town of How 2023 General Plan Design is the result of approximately 20 months of preparation and work done by the Town of How Plan Committee which generally works towards several issues including:

- finding a balance between individual property rights and community wide interests and goals;
- steering residential developments to areas designated within the town in order to minimize land use conflicts;
- understanding the value of environmental corridors and wildlife habitats by steering development away from these areas;

- promoting environmental corridors to serve as natural buffers which will help lessen conflicts;
- preserving productive farmlands within the town;
- maintaining the town's rural and open space character;
- steering more intensive development toward the Village of Suring in order to promote more efficient development patterns;
- cooperation with Oconto County, the Village of Suring and surrounding towns;
- identify enough land to accommodate a variety of developments over a 20 year planning period.

The effect that this comprehensive plan will have on the town is twofold: first, it identifies a responsible program to improve the overall condition and delivery of public facilities and services; and second, it provides a future development scheme which is not only cost-effective, but is also compatible with the town's existing development pattern and provides for the achievement of the town's vision and goals outlined within the plan. In simple terms, the town must not only plan for new development that may occur, but must also plan on the timing and location of the new development that is within the framework of this plan design. To accomplish this, the Town Board, Town Plan Commission and all town residents must work together in an organized and cooperative manner on all future planning efforts within the community. This may require cooperative agreements and joint planning with the adjoining towns and the county.

Table 8.2 contains a summary of the year 2023 land uses which have been designated in the General Plan Design for the Town of How along with their approximate acreage totals. It is important to note that the 2023 acres are generalized and not done by individual land uses, resulting in larger acreage calculations than those acreage totals found in the 2002 land use inventory.

Table 8.2: 2023 General Plan Design Acreage Calculations, Town of How.

Land Use Type	2023 Acres
Residential	285
Commercial	160
Industrial	14
Governmental/Institutional/Utilities	4
Parks and Recreation	52
Transportation	459
Agricultural	8,391
Woodlands/Other Natural Areas	12,741
Water Features	334
Totals	22,440

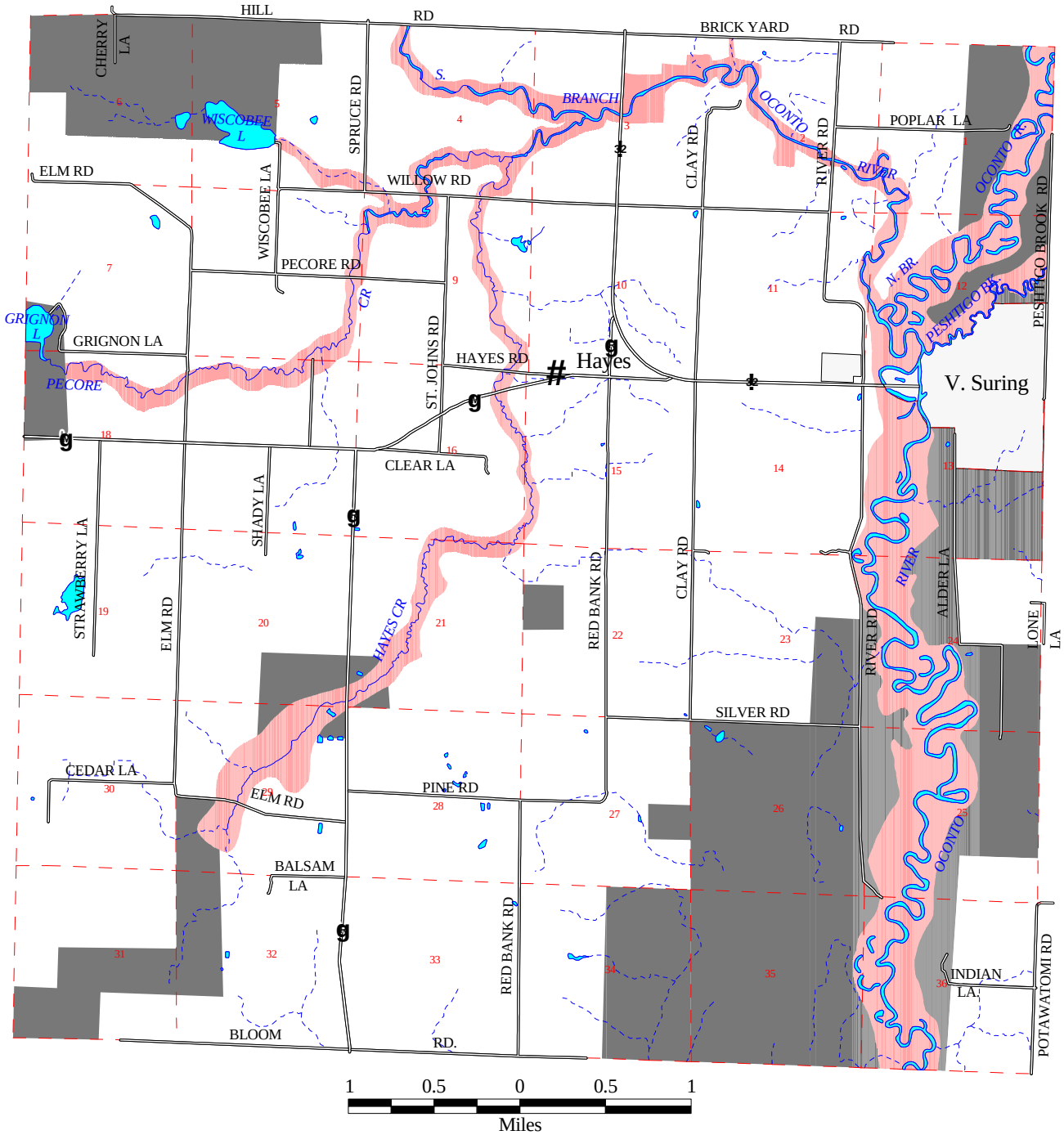
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003

Map 8.1

Farmland Preservation

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Excluded Areas
Environmental Areas
Agricultural Preservation Areas

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

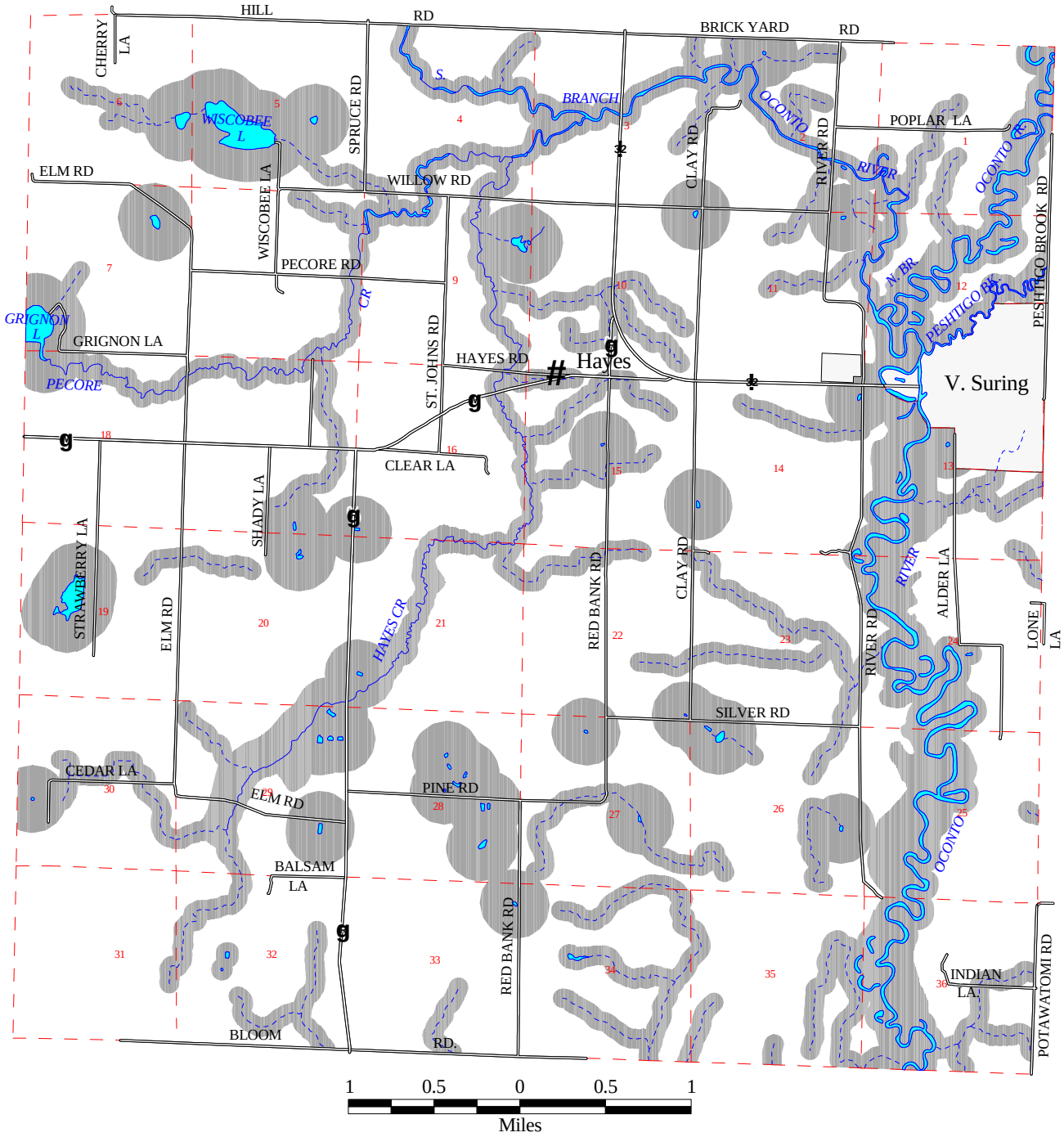
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 8.2

Shorelands

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Shoreland Zone

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- # Unincorporated Community
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

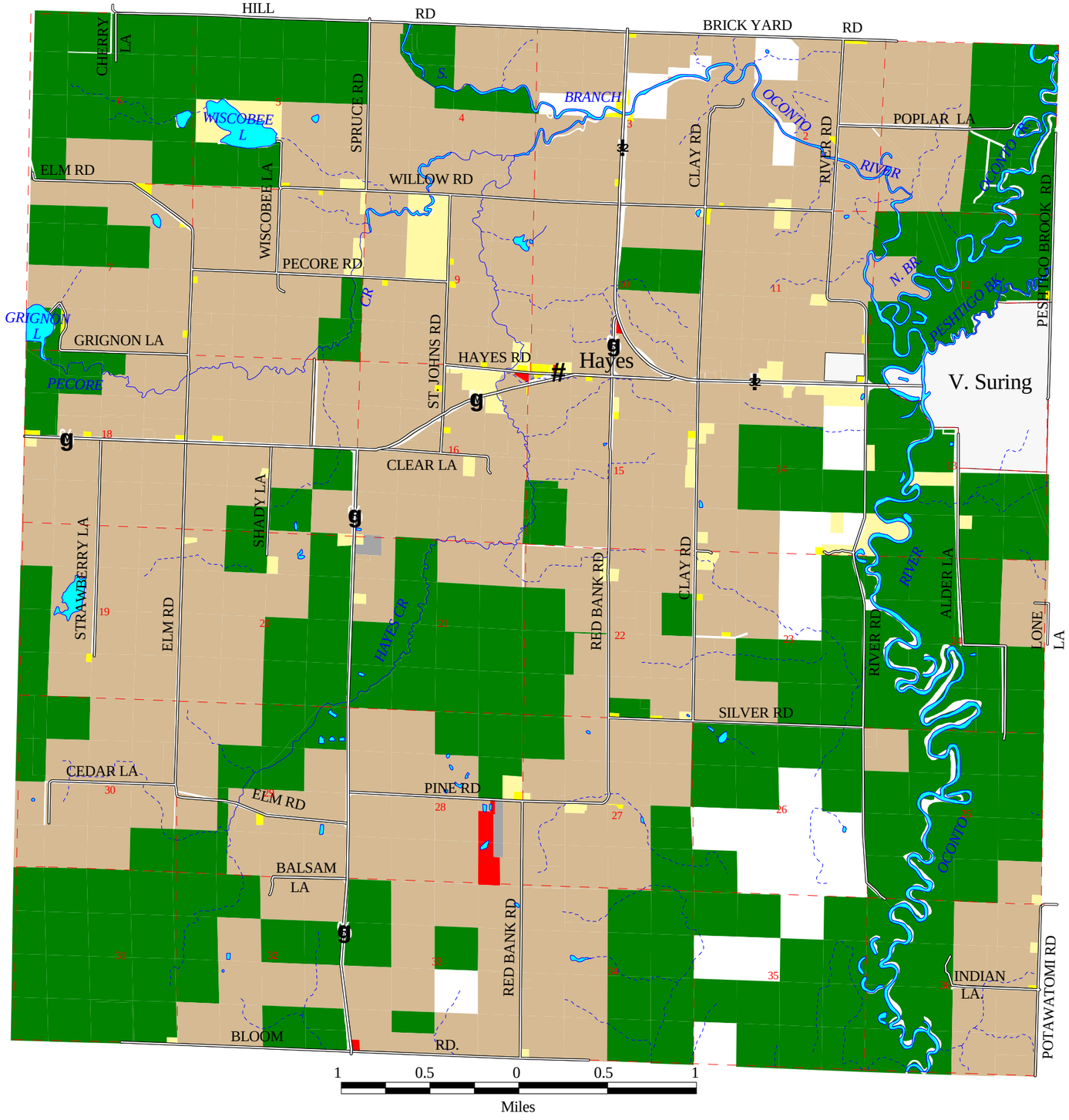
Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 8.3

Zoning

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Single-Family Residential
Rural Residential
General Commercial
Industrial
Forest
Agricultural
Unzoned

Map Features

Village of Suring
Unincorporated Community
State Highway
County Highway
Local Road
Surface Water Features
Railroad Corridor
Section Line
36 Section Number

N

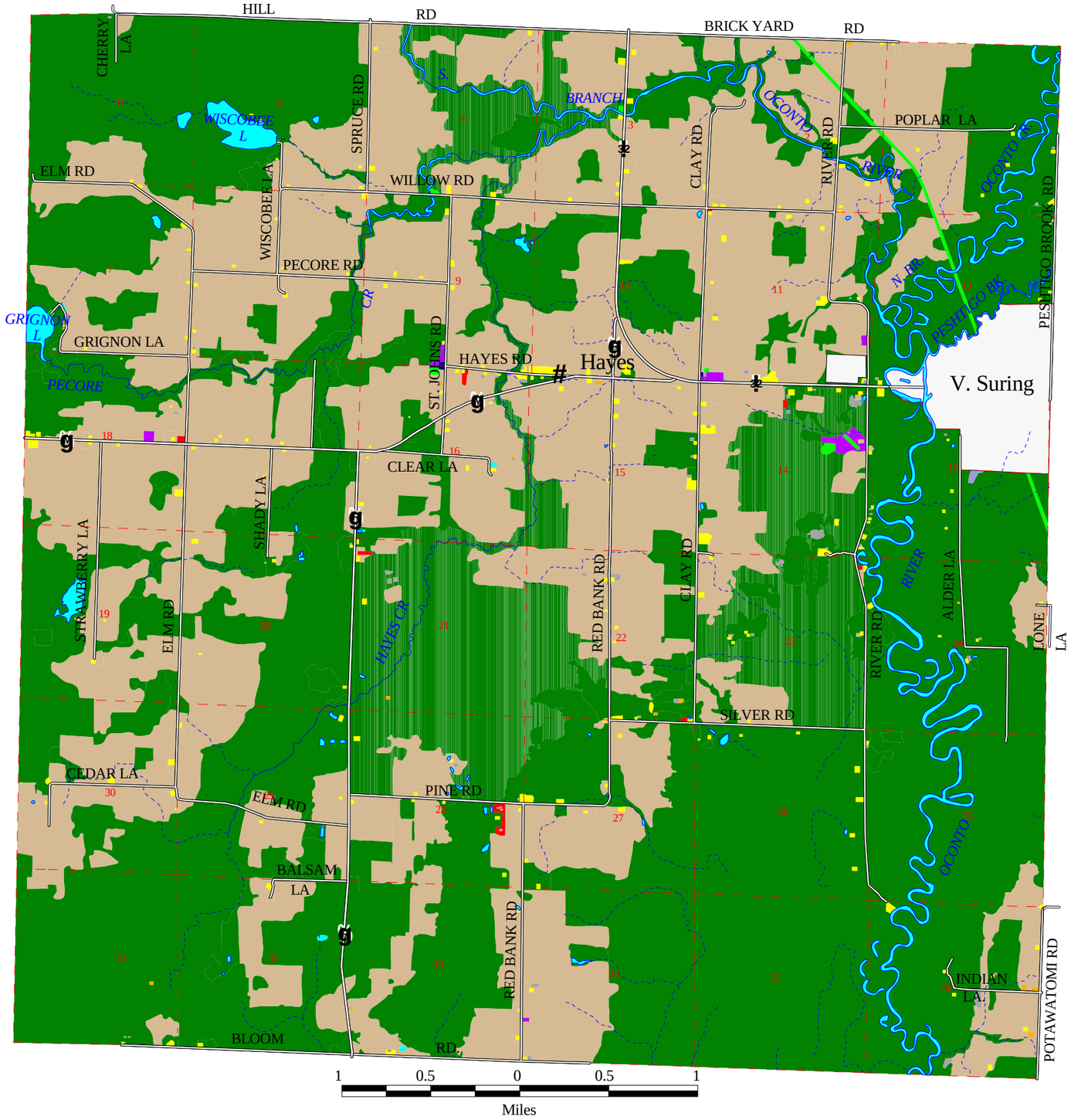
Source: Oconto County; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 8.4

2002 Land Use

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



Residential
Mobile Homes
Commercial
Industrial
Roads
Transportation
Communications/Utilities
Governmental/Institutional
Parks and Recreation
Open Space/Fallow Fields
Agricultural
Water Features
Woodlands, Wetlands, Undeveloped Open Space

Map Features

Village of Suring
Unincorporated Community
S State Highway
U County Highway
Local Road
Surface Water Features
Railroad Corridor
Section Line
36 Section Number

N

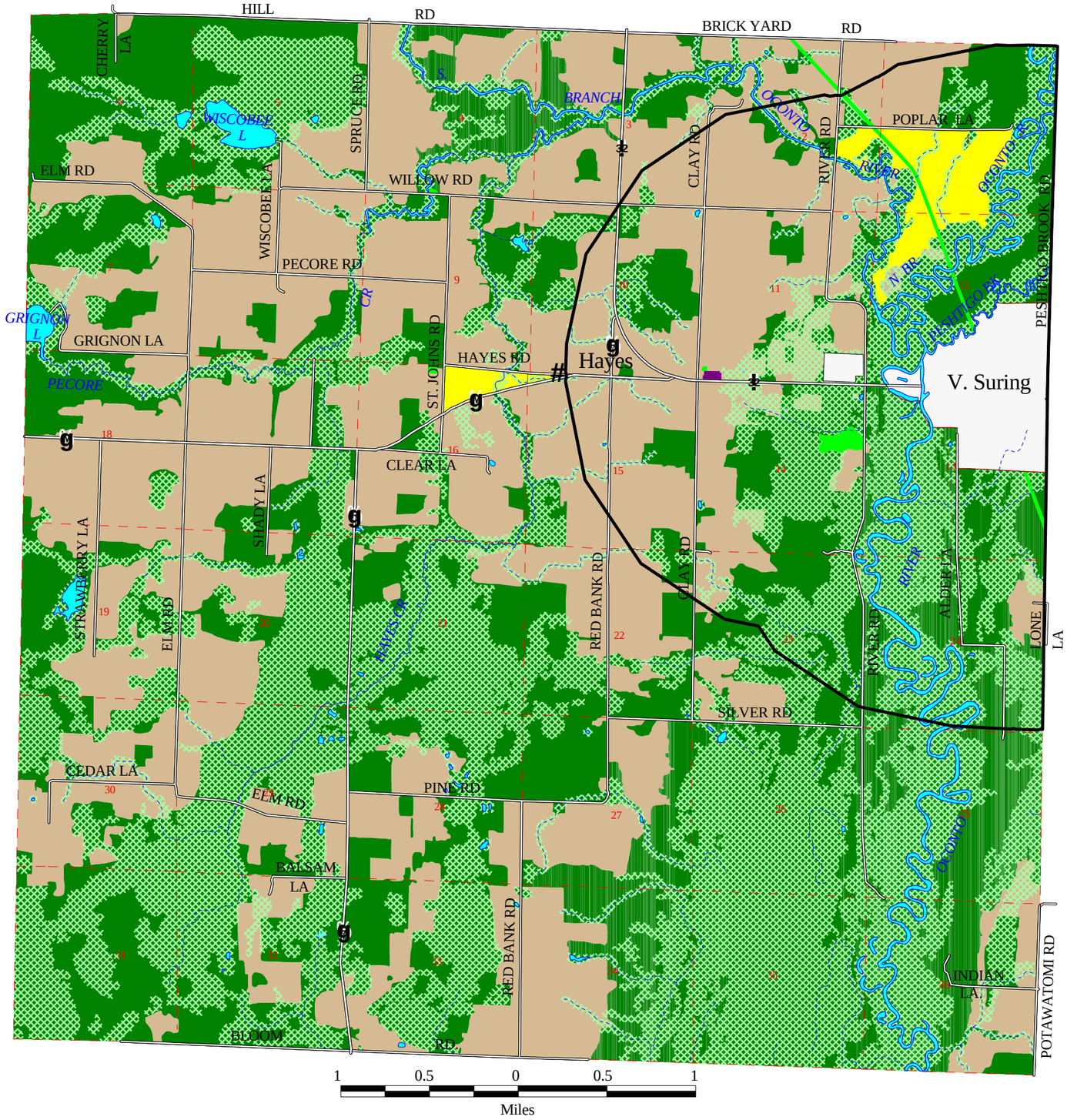
Source: Oconto County; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Map 8.5

2023 General Plan Design

Town of How

Oconto County, Wisconsin



GPD Categories

- Rural Residential
- Communication / Utilities
- Institutial Governmental
- Agricultural
- Park and Recreation
- Woodlands, Wetlands, Undeveloped Open Space
- Environmental Corridors
- Water Features

Map Features

- Village of Suring
- Village of Suring 1.5 Mile Extraterritorial Boundary
- # Unincorporated Community
- S State Highway
- U County Highway
- Local Road
- Surface Water Features
- Railroad Corridor
- Section Line
- 36 Section Number

N

Source: Oconto County; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

Chapter 9 - IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Due to this being the Town of How's first comprehensive plan, it will be imperative that the town quickly understand the connection between planning and land use controls, e.g. zoning ordinances. This chapter provides information on the comprehensive plan amendment/update process and its overall use by the Town of How. More detailed information on various statutory powers which the town may utilize to implement the 20 Year Comprehensive Plan are also included in this chapter (under specific powers, the plan has identified recommendations for the town to consider in order to best bring about the vision identified in Chapter 1 of this document)

Examples of implementation can take the form of:

1. Carrying out the recommendations in the plan for specific projects, for example, creating an Official Map;
2. Using the plan as a guide to public and private decision-making on matters that relate to the development of the town, for example, a rezoning request, and;
3. Reviewing and amending the plan as changes in the demographics, economy or political climate changes.

Role of the plan

Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 (3) stipulates that the land controls governing the town be consistent with the community's adopted comprehensive plan. When reviewing any petition or when amending any land controls within the town, the plan shall be reviewed, and a recommendation will be derived from its identified statements, goals, objectives, vision statement and General Plan Design. If a decision is one that needs to be made in which it is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan, then before the decision can take effect, the comprehensive plan must be amended to include this change in policy.

Role of the Elected Officials

The elected officials must make their decisions from the standpoint of overall community impact - tempered by site specific factors. In this task they must balance the recommendations made by plans and policies, the objectives of the applicant, the technical advice of staff, and the politically neutral recommendations of advisory boards, with their own judgement on the matter at hand.

Role of the Town Plan Commission

The powers and duties of the Town Plan Commission are set in Wisconsin Statutes and within any town ordinances establishing it. Overall, the Town Plan Commission should promote good planning practices in the town, plus keep the public and Town Board well-informed on planning issues. A major function of the Town Plan Commission will be to oversee the comprehensive plan recommendations - making recommended amendments to it from time to time in order to keep it current and thus a valuable planning tool. The Town Plan Commission will also ensure that existing and future ordinances (or other land controls) are compliant to the adopted comprehensive plan.

LAND USE PLANNING CONTROLS RECOMMENDATIONS

Zoning

The Town of How is under the authority of the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance administered by Oconto County, Wisconsin. Many of the future land uses may need re-zoning in order to take place. The town will also need to stand firm on minimum zoning standards regarding natural features and should veto any relaxing attempts of regulations.

- A comparison between the preferred land uses and the County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to determine compatibility of text and realignment of boundaries within various districts should take place. The Town of How should work with Oconto County in amending the County Zoning to reflect the town's desires, which may mean the development of additional zoning districts.
- Work with the county in identifying standards for lighting, and landscaping in order to best protect the rural look of the town, regarding future commercial and industrial uses.
- Continue to participate within county meetings regarding sign controls, especially off-premise sign controls. It is important that the county consider the town's requests and understand the town's viewpoints. Additional changes to the sign ordinance are very likely due to the wide spectrum of controls the towns within the county want.

Official Maps

Under §62.23(6), the city council/village board/town board (under village powers) "..may by ordinance or resolution adopt an official map showing the streets, highways, parkways, parks and playgrounds laid out, adopted and established by law." "The council/board may amend the map to establish the exterior lines of planned new streets, highways, parkways, parks, or playgrounds, or to widen, narrow, extend or close existing streets, highways, parkways, railroad rights-of-way, public transit facilities, waterways, parks or playgrounds. " Once an area is identified on an official map, no building permit may be issued for that site, unless the map is amended.

The official map serves several important functions:

1. It helps assure that when the city/village/town acquires lands for streets, etc., it will be at a lower vacant land price;
2. It establishes future streets that subdividers must adhere to unless the map is amended; and,
3. It makes potential buyers of land aware that land has been designated for public use.

    - Given the rural character of the Town of How, it is recommended that the town begin the official map process in specific areas where more intensive development is to take place, as opposed to the entire township. One method (to get started) is to take the County Parcel Map and add to it all approved subdivision layouts the town has okayed.
    - Another option is to require Area Development Plans prior to the approval of certified survey maps or subdivision plats. It is important to note that the Village of Suring currently has a right to exercise extra-territorial plat review over the town, and thereby influence the division of land within 1.5 miles of its border with the town. The town would have discretion in the design of the development plan and in most instances the

Village of Suring would have approval authority of any Area Development Plans within 1.5 miles of the village. If approved, the plans would be incorporated as part of the official map. Thus, developers would be required to ensure the town that their proposals will result in planned, orderly growth and development. In effect, roads and utilities would be planned to include areas beyond the land proposed to be platted. This would help the town avoid dead ends and looped streets that are characteristic of developments that have not considered adjacent lands owned by other parties.

Sign Regulations

Many communities are finding themselves having to regulate signage especially along transportation corridors, in order to preserve a sense of place and "community character". As signs become more bold, have greater illumination directed at them, and have greater square footage (some 600 square feet), the sides of roadways and within community centers become places of growing confusion as each sign attempts to get your attention, and makes communities appear the same.

- The town may wish to adopt stricter sign controls than the county's in order to preserve the rural look and character that the town currently maintains, especially as commercial businesses develop within the town along transportation corridors, as well as in adjoining communities.

Erosion and Storm Water Control Ordinances

Under § 61.354 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the town may enact a construction site erosion control and storm water management zoning ordinance. Oconto County has an adopted Erosion Control ordinance in place. The purpose of such an ordinance is to protect water quality and to minimize the amount of sediment and other pollutants carried by runoff or discharged from construction sites to lakes, streams, and wetlands.

- The Town of How should support this type of ordinance and work with the county to develop, adopt, and ensure compliance by developers. In the long term, the town may wish to enforce such an ordinance themselves, though it is not recommended that the town undertake this responsibility within the planning period.

Historic Preservation Ordinances

As communities progress, historic preservation ordinances can assist them in protecting their culture and history. The ordinances provide identification, protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts within a community that reflect special elements of a communities historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or aesthetic heritage. The ordinances can also set standards for alterations, design, restoration, demolition or new construction, ensuring that the features/neighborhoods maintain their historical significance. In addition, historic preservation can increase the economic benefits to a community and its residents, protect/increase property values, and enhance the overall visual character of a community.

- The town may wish to adopt a historical preservation ordinance identifying possible historical districts, structures, landmarks, etc. which are significant elements detailing the town's

history. The ordinance should also describe ways to renovate and restore structures or sites that reflect How's history.

Design Review Ordinances

Design review can accompany many different development aspects and will assist communities in achieving the identified look and character they expressed within their vision statements and goals. These ordinances however, need to be based upon well defined sets of criteria. Signage, lighting, exterior building material types and colors will have to be specifically identified within any ordinance.

- The town may wish, in the future, to explore the use of such ordinances to promote a specific look for an identified area within the town, such as along its highways or adjacent to the town's "doorways".

Economic Development Committee

An Economic Development Committee (EDC) is a not-for-profit organization representing the interests of both the public and private sectors within a community. EDCs have been formed in a number of communities to handle the municipality's economic development activities and bridge the communication gap that oftentimes exists between the public and private sectors. Typical activities undertaken by an EDC include commercial and industrial development, business retention and recruitment, and tourism. EDCs consist of a Council of Directors and professional staff members. Council members typically depict a broad representation of the community's business, labor and educational sectors and are jointly appointed by the community and its Chamber of Commerce or other existing business associations. The Council sets policy for the EDC and is responsible for all actions undertaken.

- Oconto County has an Economic Development Corporation. It is recommended that the commercial and industrial needs of the town be expressly conveyed to this agency in order to attract the desired commercial and industrial growth in the future.

Building/Housing Codes

The town should work closely with Oconto County in the enforcement of all applicable building/housing codes to ensure that properties are adequately maintained to preserve the rural character of the town and to protect property values. This is important especially for those older areas within the town and for properties that are not owner occupied.

- The town should review the codes with the county to determine their effectiveness within the town.

Floodplain Ordinance

Oconto County regulates through its Floodplain ordinance development within the designated FEMA floodplain areas. These regulations will limit development within identified areas. In some instances it will be important to re-adjust the floodplain boundaries in specific areas or within the entire town. To do so the town must follow three steps:

1. Hire an engineering firm to conduct hydrologic and hydraulic engineering models to calculate floodplain boundaries for the specified area.

2. Submit the re-calculated floodplain boundaries to the WDNR Bureau of Watershed Management and the FEMA for their review.
3. If approved, amend existing zoning maps to reflect the re-calculated floodplain boundaries.

Sanitary Codes

The town will need to work with Oconto County to ensure that strict compliance with all sanitary codes is adhered to within the town. Groundwater protection is of great importance to the town and surrounding communities. Uncontrolled waste can have detrimental and wide ranging impacts on health and property values.

- The town will want to review code enforcement with the county to determine its effectiveness within the town, and the town will need to stay informed on any future changes to code minimum standards which may effect residents and their lands.

Subdivision Ordinances

Section 236 of the Wisconsin Statutes regulates the division of raw land into lots for the purpose of sale or building development. The town may regulate, by ordinance, the subdivision of land within its boundary. The subdivision ordinance is related to the zoning ordinance in that the zoning ordinance regulates the lot size, density, and use of the land, while the subdivision ordinance regulates the platting, or mapping, of newly created lots, streets, easements, and open areas. Most importantly, the subdivision ordinance helps implement the comprehensive plan. A basis of the approval of a subdivision is its conformance or consistency with a local comprehensive plan. A subdivision ordinance would also allow the town to encourage well designed neighborhoods and ensure the creation of adequate land records. In addition, a subdivision ordinance would allow the town to set construction standards and timelines for improvements such as streets. The town could also require dedication of parks and playgrounds or a fee-in-lieu of dedication as a condition of approval of a subdivision, thus implementing another aspect of the comprehensive plan.

- It is recommended that the Town of How explore developing and adopting a subdivision ordinance to utilize the ordinance to regulate how lots are developed and arranged within specific areas. It is recommended that any ordinance be developed jointly with Oconto County, BLRPC and/or other planning services. Also, the Village of Suring currently has a right to exercise extra-territorial plat review over the town, and thereby influence the division of land within 1.5 miles of its border with the town.
- The town can petition the county to amend the County Subdivision Ordinance to include specific town wishes/standards, as other towns have done in the past.

Lighting Controls/Ordinances

As development encroaches upon the countryside, communities find that not only are the open spaces and natural features being altered, but also the night sky they enjoy in the evenings. Yard lighting can change the character of a town as surely as any physical developments. This is indeed the case when lighting is deemed excessive - such as in the case of many industrial uses (e.g. lighting of stockyards, parking lots, equipment yards, etc.). This is also the case in night operations of many Mega Farms.

Direct lighting or glare can and should be regulated in order to maintain the community character of the town so many want to preserve. Many light manufacturers have light cutoff shields that will limit or remove glare, thus increasing the lights effectiveness and thus lowering its overall energy consumption (adding savings to the owner). Currently lighting and its evening glare is one of the chief complaints residents have in communities across this state and nation and the manufacturers of lights have positively responded. There are many examples today of gas stations, malls, as well as street lighting that have non-glare lighting. The technology exists and non-glare lighting is no more expensive than the older inefficient lighting.

- Consider a lighting control ordinance governing excessive light glare, especially over any operation that continues into the evening hours or may intrude on neighboring parcels or impact drivers' visibility.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INTERNAL CONSISTENCY

The comprehensive plan was developed sequentially in order to develop a plan with supportive goals, objectives, policies, and programs. Utilizing a community survey as a base, key issues were identified within each of the nine elements of the plan. Using these issues along with factual information regarding natural features, past population and housing data and infrastructure, a set of goals, objectives, policies and programs were developed in order to determine a desired vision which would be used throughout the planning period. The identified vision, goals and strategies expressed within this plan were utilized to determine the final General Plan Design as well as the specified implementation actions the town will undertake throughout the planning period. Any amendment to the plan shall be accompanied with an overall review of the nine elements along with their identified goals, objectives, policies and programs, in order to ensure that inconsistency within and between elements does not occur in the future.

IMPLEMENTATION MILESTONES

Implementation Timeline

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Planning Elements			Review Chapters' Goals & Evaluate Against WDOA Population Estimates		Review Chapters' Goals & Evaluate Against WDOA Population Estimates				Plan Commission Gathers Needed Information to Update Plan	Review & Update Plan
Governmental	On-Going Education/Training of Plan Commission				Review Chapters' Projections & Compare to Latest Information			Contact Consultant to Update Plan		Adopt Plan by Ordinance
Ordinances	Initiate Ordinance Updates	Complete Ordinance Updates			Revise Ordinances as Appropriate					Review & Amend Ordinances
Intergovernmental	Establish Meetings to Work With Other Communities	On-Going Evaluation of Shared Goals			Evaluate Shared Goals					Continue Intergovernmental Cooperation

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

PROCESS FOR UPDATING PLAN

As directed by §66.1001, any plan commission or other body of a local governmental unit authorized to prepare or amend a comprehensive plan may recommend the adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan only by adopting a resolution by a majority vote of the entire commission (or governmental unit). This plan shall be amended/updated following §66.1001 (4)(b) and the adopted written community procedures for fostering public participation.

- It is envisioned that the comprehensive plan will be amended with the assistance of a Town of How Plan Commission and that this Commission will follow the amendment process as outlined under §66.1001 (4)(b). Questions on procedures and resolution/ordinance languages can be forwarded to the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission for assistance.

ACTION PLAN

The following is a plan of the key implementation activities needed to be followed to ensure initial progress is made after the adoption of the comprehensive plan. The Action Plan identifies the activity **(What)** and the appropriate body **(Who)** that would have the responsibility for carrying out the activity. The timeframe the activity needs to be initiated for most applicability **(When)** is also identified - usually within the first year of the plan's adoption. The actions are as follows:

Town of How Action Plan

1. Activity Establish a Town Plan Commission to administer the Comprehensive Plan.

Who: Chief Elected Officials
When: Immediately after the adoption of the comprehensive plan or as close to the adoption as possible.

2. Activity Administer the comprehensive plan's recommendations, and monitor/update the statistical projections within the comprehensive plan.

Who: Town Plan Commission
When: Ongoing/ Minor Update of Plan's Components Every three to five Years, a complete update of the plan after 10 Years.

3. Activity Communicate with the Village of Suring, surrounding towns and counties in an effort to identify shared goals, visions, and efforts to further the town's and area's developments

Who: Town Plan Commission
When: Within first year after adoption of the plan

4. Activity Review the applicability and effectiveness of ordinances under the county and request modifications to the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance to reflect the recommendations of the *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan* General Plan Design.

Who: Chief Elected Officials, Town Plan Commission, Assistance From Oconto County Planning and Zoning Department, UW-Extension and other planning agencies.
When: Fall 2003

5. Activity Monitor public facility needs and improvements so as to be able to determine their associated impacts on the plan's proposed development goals regarding future land development.

Who: Town Plan Commission with assistance from Chief Elected Officials
When: Ongoing continuous effort

6. Activity Work on educating the town residents on non-traditional methods of development such as Conservation Subdivisions, Cluster Districts, cost of development to the entire town, impacts on natural resources, stewardship grants available, etc. - that will promote the plan of the town to allow creative development opportunities while protecting and enhancing the natural resources of the town.

Who: Chief Elected Officials, Town Plan Commission/UW-Extension
When: Begin within six months of the adoption of the plan, establish an ongoing schedule to last throughout the 20 year planning period.

7. Activity Require Area Development Plans for all new subdivisions in lieu of an Official Map.

Who: Town Plan Commission and Chief Elected Officials
When: Ongoing

8. Activity Have discussions with the Village of Suring regarding services and seek to establish a formal boundary agreement.

Who: Chief Elected Officials
When: Ongoing

APPENDIX A
DETAILED LAND USE TABULATION

2002 TOWN OF HOW DETAILED LAND USE

CODE	LAND USE CLASSIFICATION	ACRES
100	RESIDENTIAL	
110	Single Family Residential	111.0
180	Mobile Homes	5.5
199	Vacant Residence	0.8
200	COMMERCIAL	
210	Retail Sales	10.5
300	INDUSTRIAL	
360	Extractive	9.1
381	Open Storage	2.0
382	Enclosed Storage	13.4
400	TRANSPORTATION	
412	State Highways	29.0
413	County Highways	65.7
414	Local Streets and Roads	364.4
417	Off-Street Parking	1.2
500	COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES	
546	Radio/Television Transmission Towers/Antennae	0.6
586	Auto Salvage/Recycling/Disposals	2.2
600	INSTITUTIONAL/GOVERNMENTAL FACILITIES	
611	Administrative Buildings	0.4
642	Primary Schools	0.4
684	Fraternal Organizations/Clubhouses	12.3
691	Churches/Temples/Synagogues	0.9
694	Cemeteries	8.3
699	Vacant Institutional/Governmental Facilities	0.5
700	OUTDOOR RECREATION	
721	Designated/Historic/Cultural/Archaeological Sites	0.7
736	Parks/Parkways/Trails/Forest Related Picnic Areas	0.9
741	Playfields/Ball Diamonds/Volleyball Courts	2.1
747	Trails	29.9
766	Archery/Gun/Skeet Ranges	4.5
781	Boat Launching Sites/Areas	0.5
800	AGRICULTURE/SILVICULTURE	
810	Croplands/Pastures	8,306.8
830	Long-Term Specialty Crops	7.9
850	Animal Husbandry	5.7
870	Farm Buildings/Accessories	179.6
899	Vacant Agricultural Buildings	1.2
900	NATURAL AREAS	
911	Lakes	58.6
912	Reservoirs and Ponds	40.4
913	Rivers and Streams	234.5
950	Other Natural Areas	904.1
951	Woodlands	12,025.3
	TOTAL ACREAGE	22,440.8

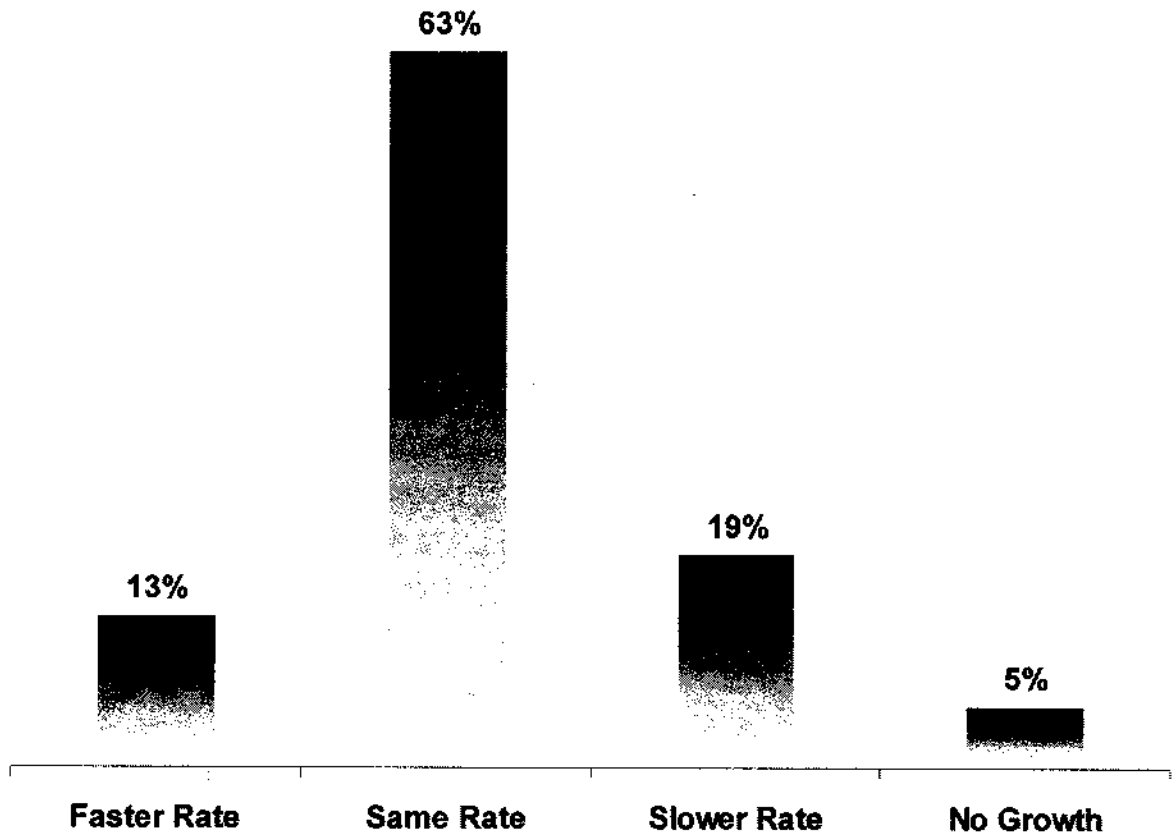
APPENDIX B
2001 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Town of How

Land Use Planning Survey Results

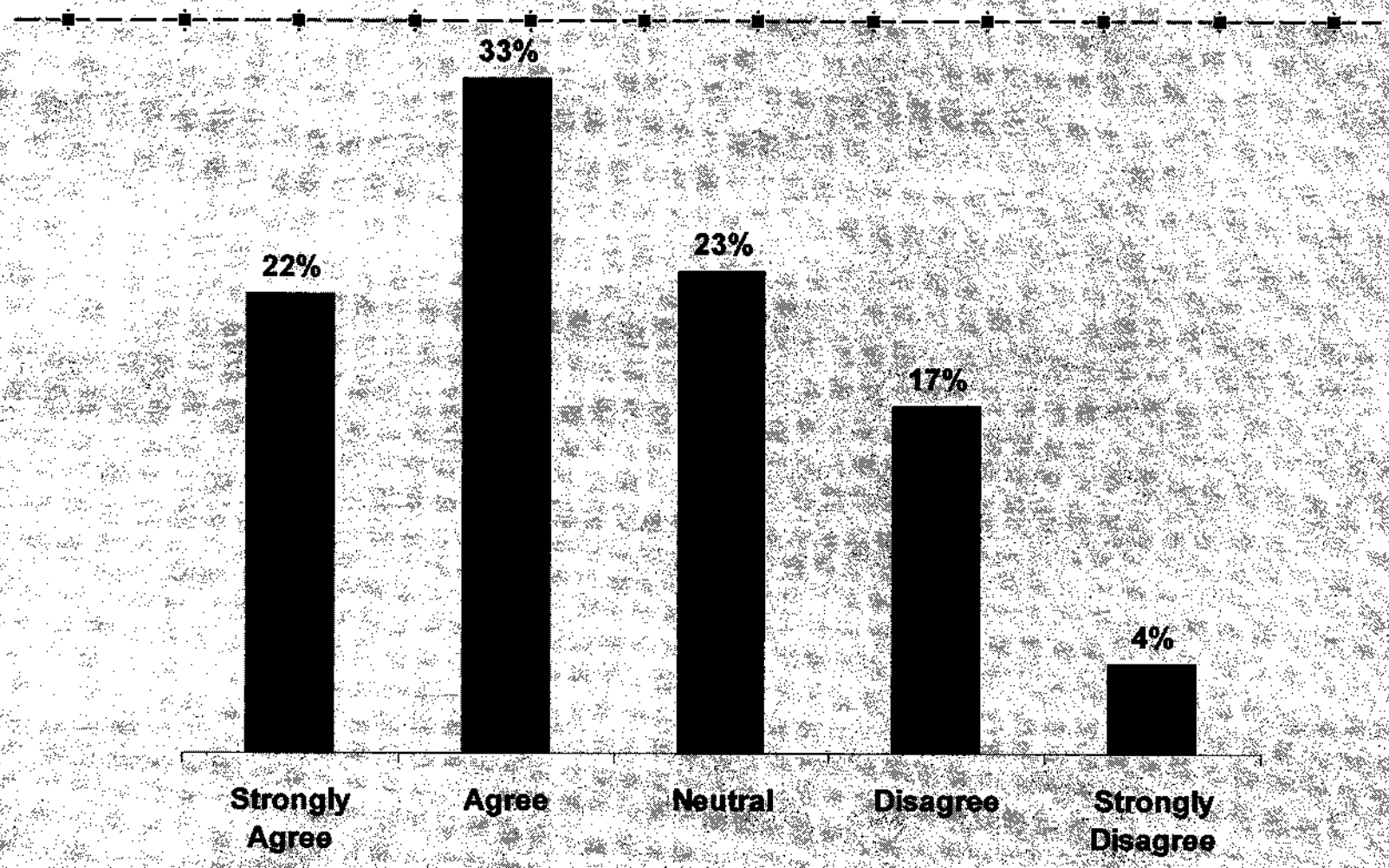
January, 2001

What rate of growth in population do you favor for the next 20 years?

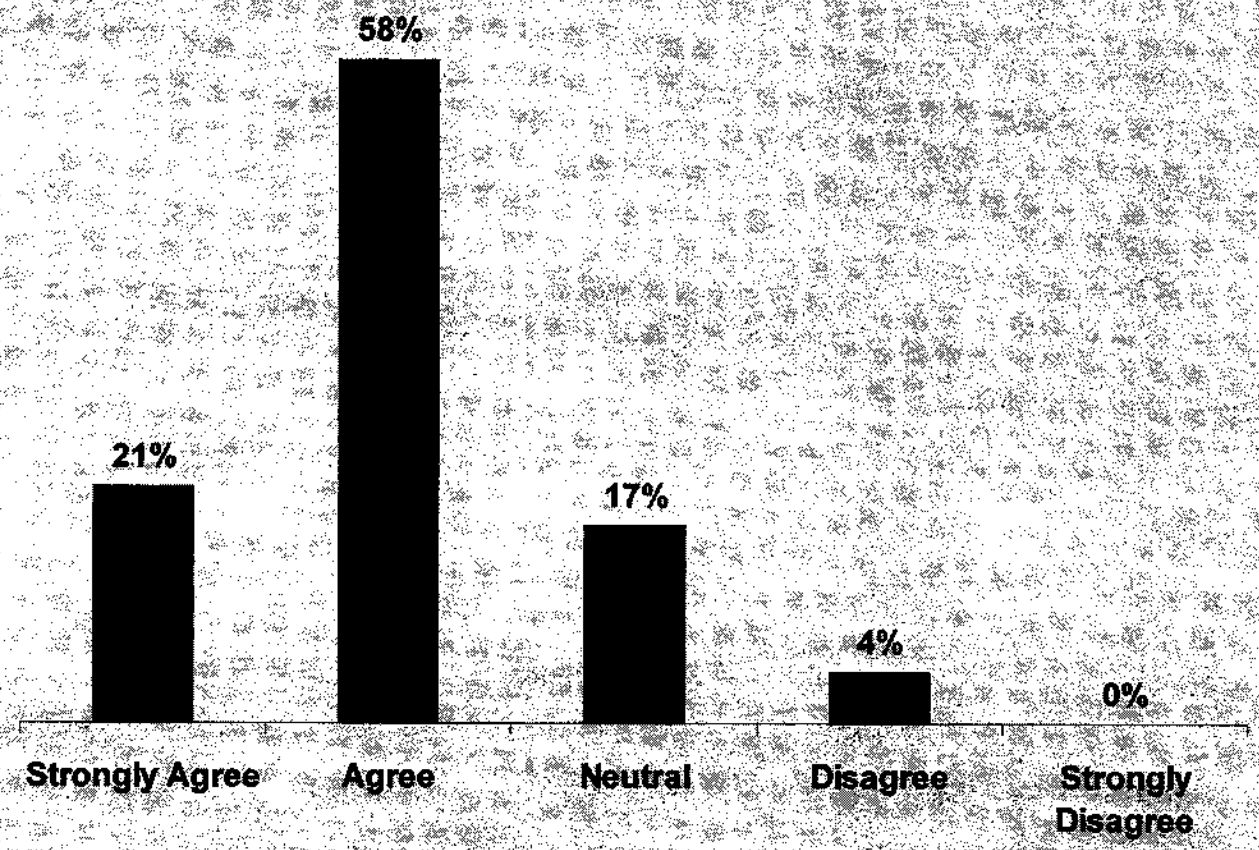


Town of How Land Use Planning Survey Results

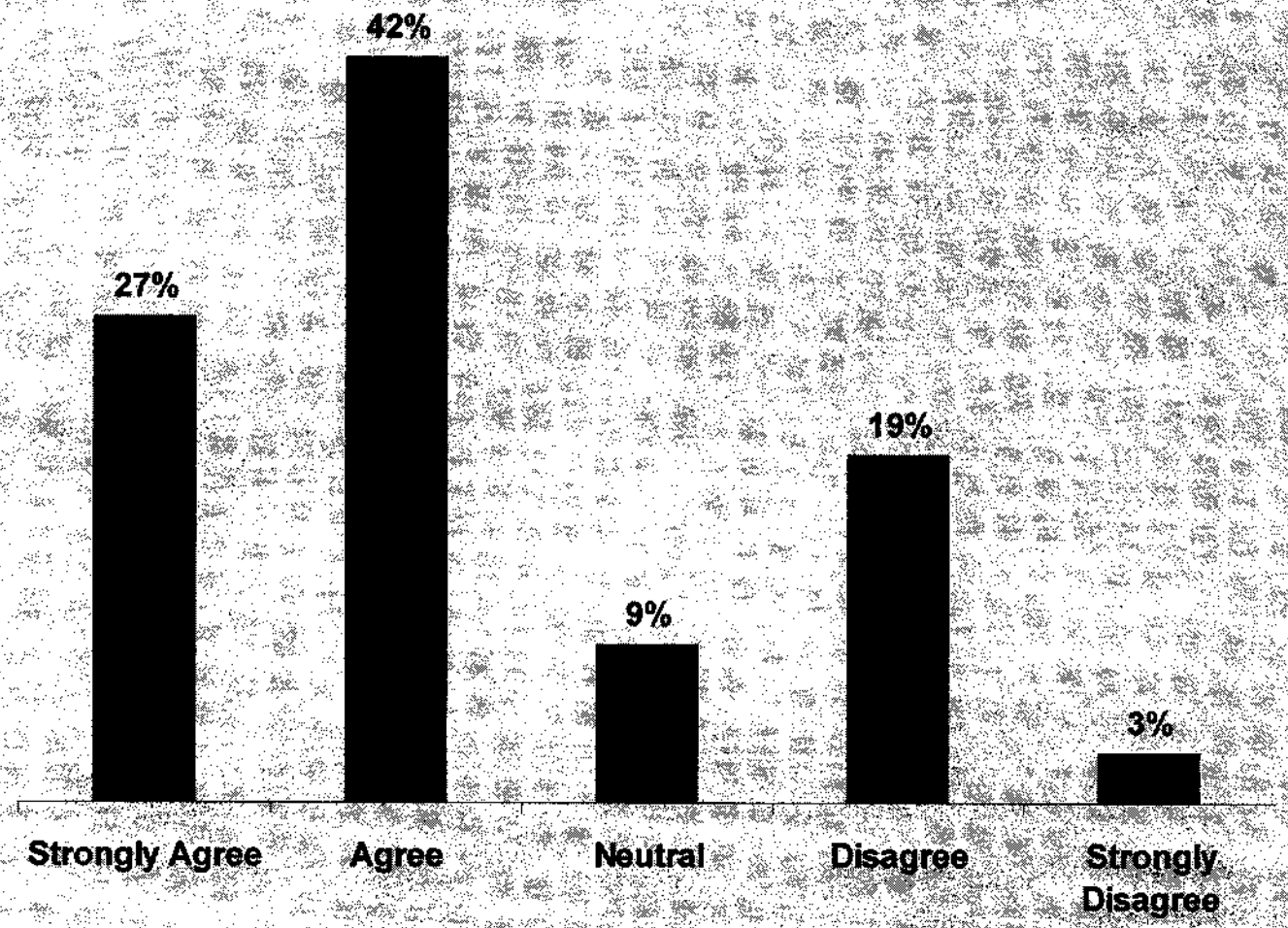
Stricter protection of our natural resources is necessary.



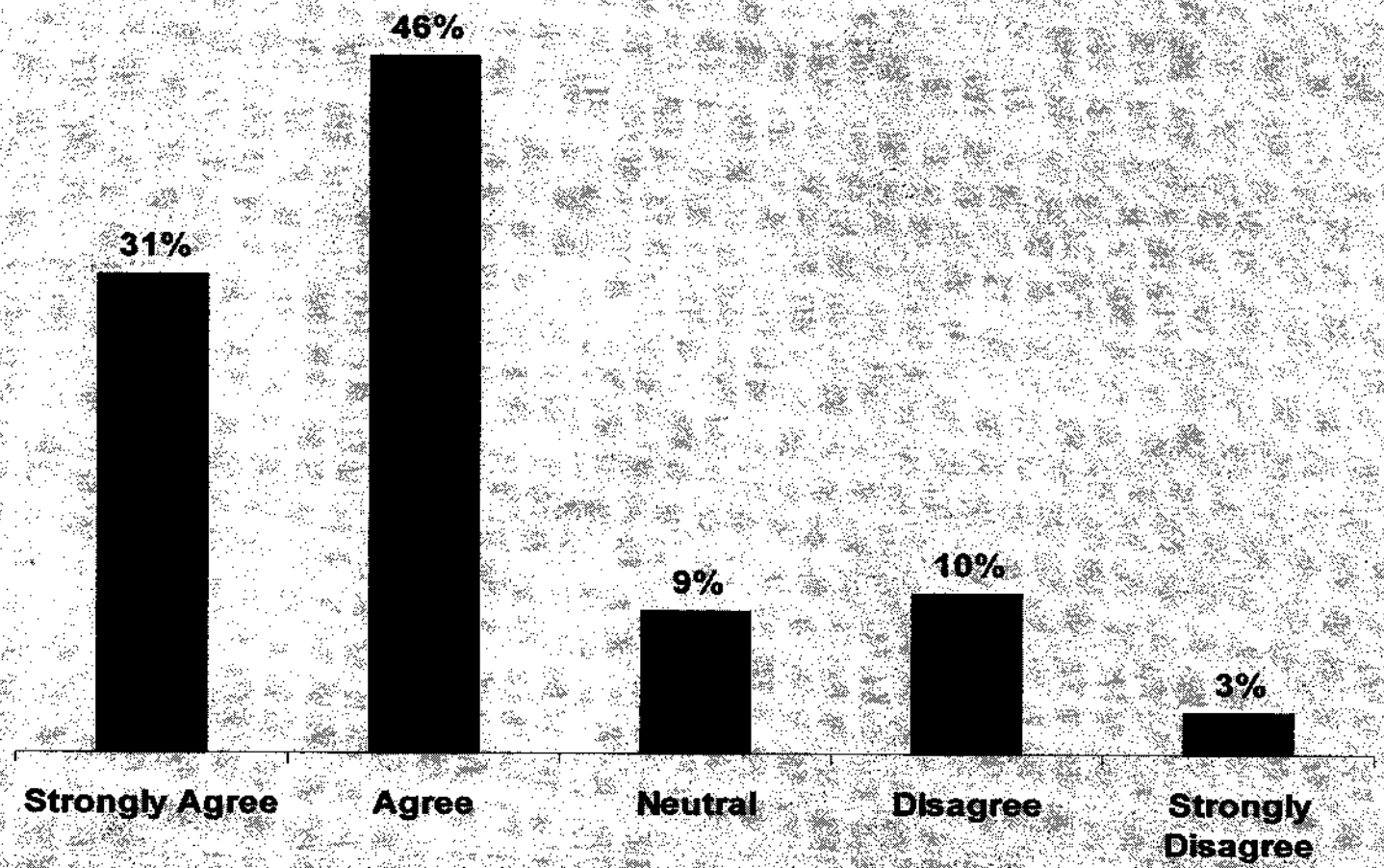
The town should develop it's own comprehensive plan, with strong public involvement.



The town should discourage future residential developments near established agricultural facilities (farms).

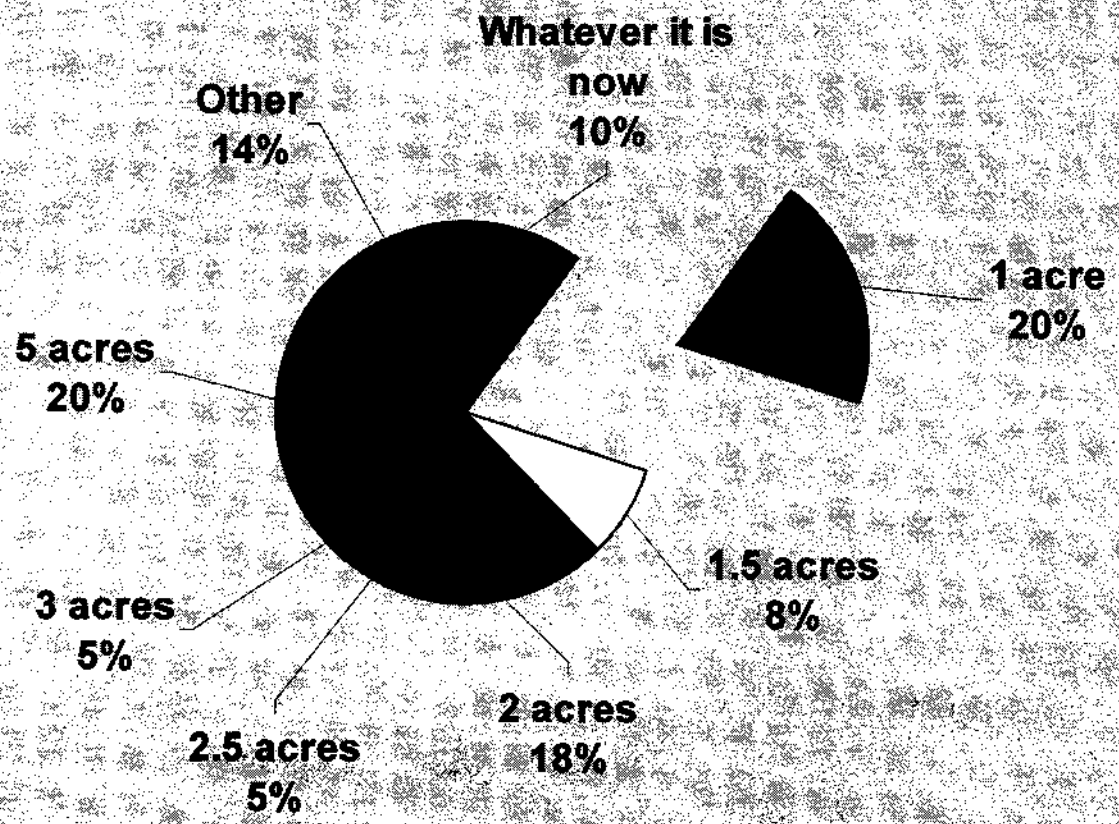


A farmer's right to farm is important and should be protected, despite the dust, noise, odors, etc.

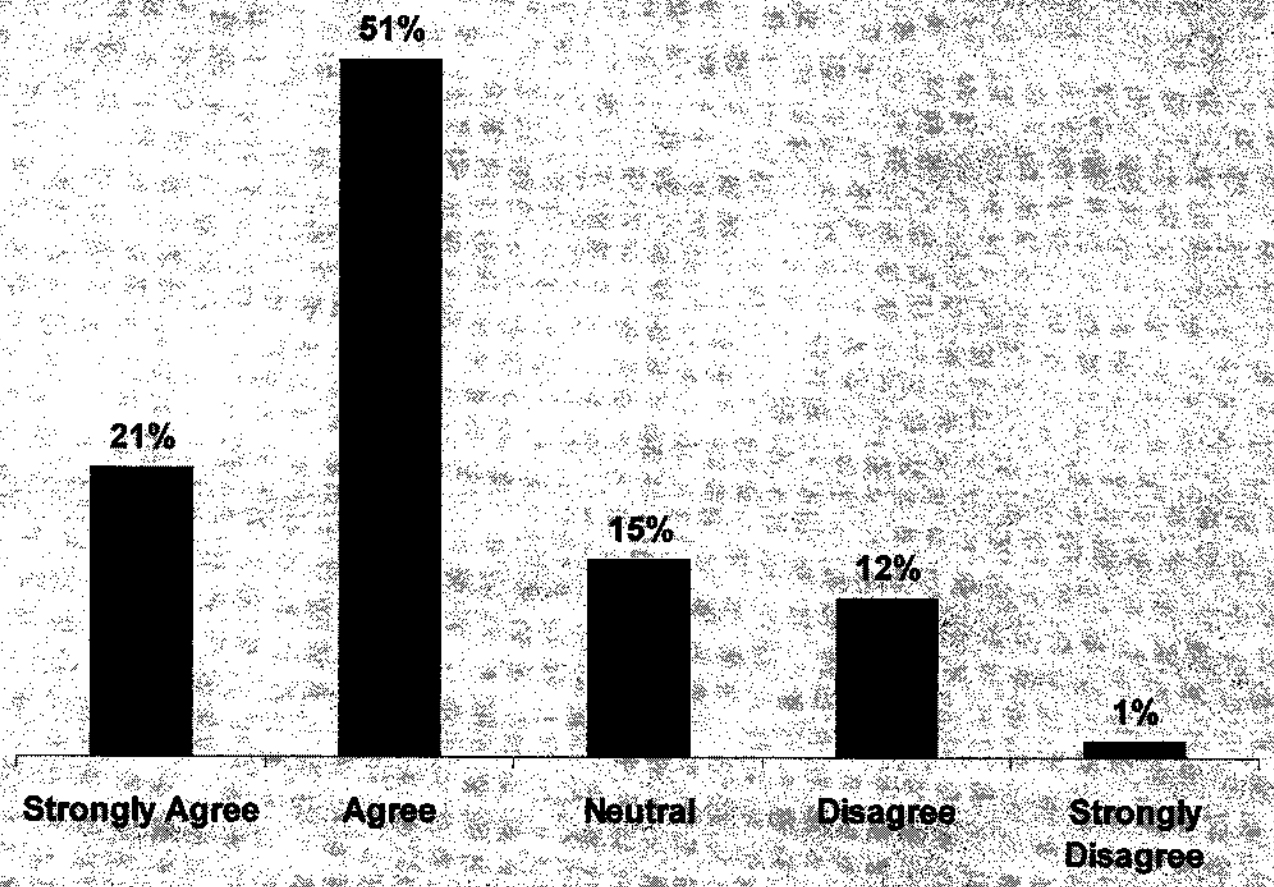


Town of How Land Use Planning Survey Results

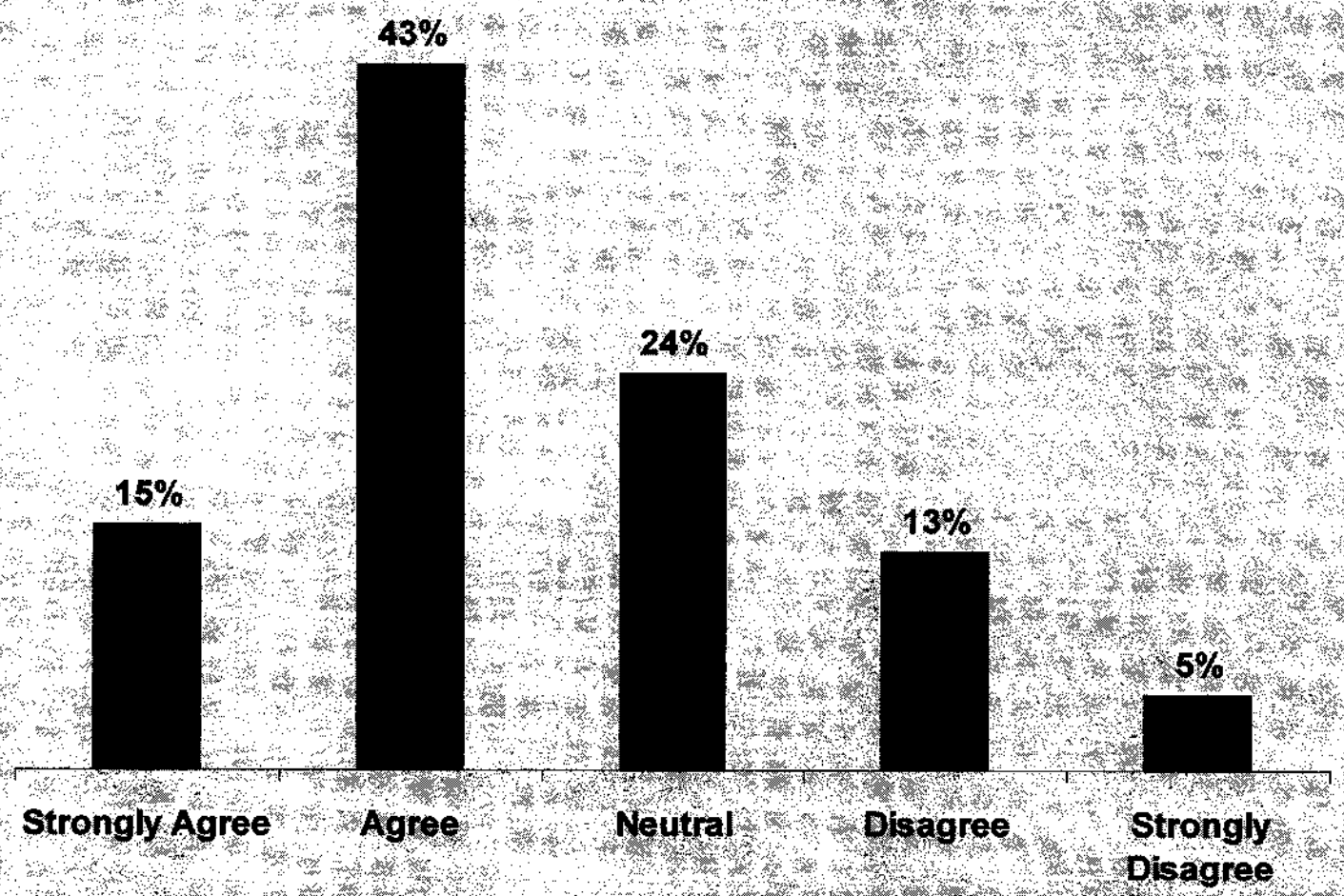
What minimum lot size would you generally like to see for future residential lots in the Town of How?



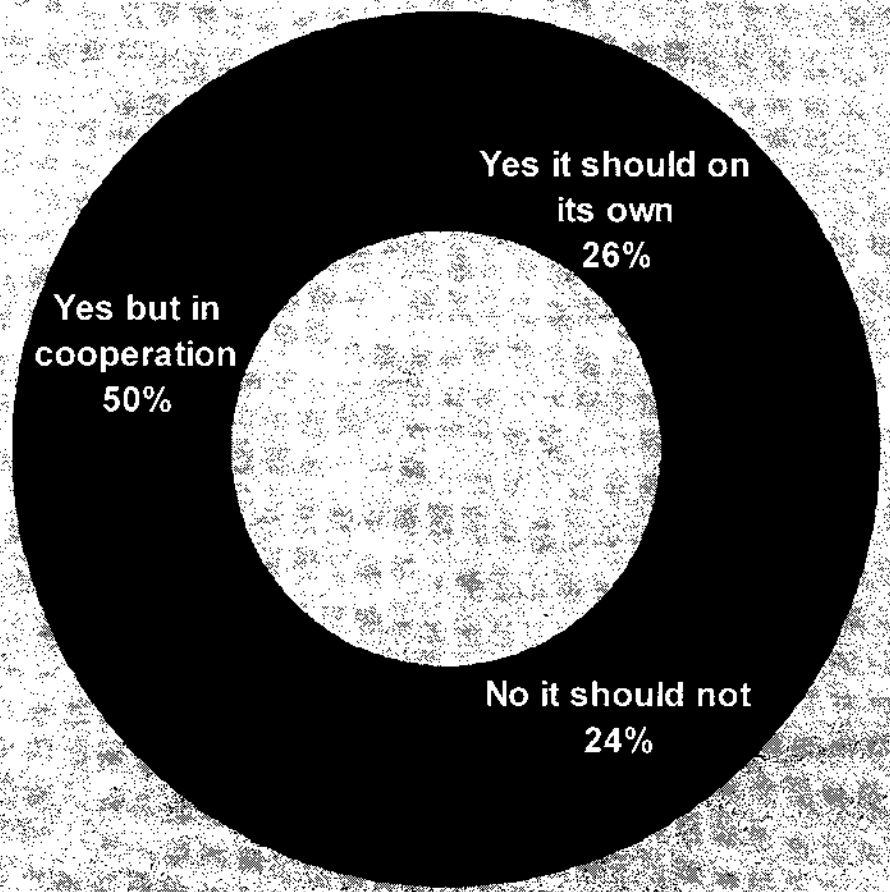
Cooperating on land use issues, growth, and development with the Village of Suring is very important to our town's future.



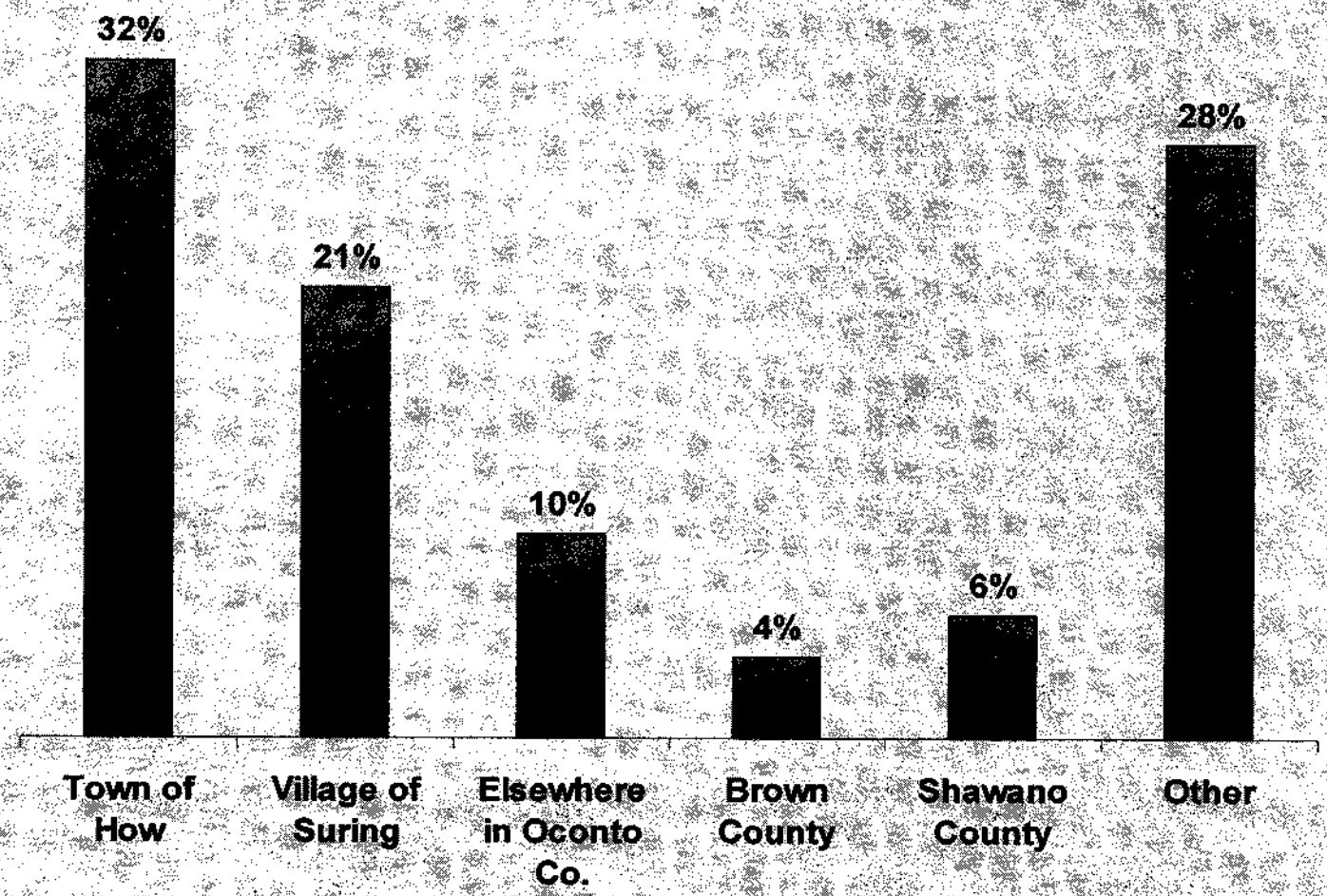
Would you favor a policy allowing a wider variety of developments (commercial, residential, business, etc.) along our border with Suring, but more spacious, rural type of development elsewhere in town?



Should the Town of How develop and own park and recreation facilities (ball fields, trails, etc.)?



If you live in town and are currently employed, is your workplace in:



APPENDIX C
RARE SPECIES & NATURAL COMMUNITIES LIST

Oconto County
Rare Species & Natural Communities List

The following list includes Oconto County's rare species and natural communities that have been recorded in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI).

AQUATIC OCCURRENCES

ANIMALS

- Wood turtle
- Elktoe
- Forsters tern
- Longear sunfish
- Bullfrog
- Red shouldered hawk
- Snuffbox
- Buckhorn
- Caspian tern
- Pygmy snaketail
- Amber winged spreadwing
- Round pigtoe
- Greater redhorse
- Redfin shiner
- Common tern
- Dion skipper
- Western ribbon snake
- Black crowned night heron
- Bald eagle
- Swamp metalmark
- Mulberry wing
- Blandings turtle
- Swamp spreadwing
- Zebra clubtail
- Pigmy shrew
- Bog copper
- Green faced clubtail
- Least clubtail
- Common loon
- Slippershell mussel
- Lake darner
- Lake sturgeon
- Red necked grebe
- Four toed salamander
- Black tipped darner
- Green striped darner
- Yellow rail
- Least darter
- Piping plover
- Paddlefish
- Skillet clubtail

PLANTS

- Common bog arrow grass
- Leafy white orchis
- Showy ladys slipper
- American shore grass
- Sparse flowered sedge
- Swamp pink
- Capitate spikerush
- Rams head ladys slipper
- Sheathed sedge
- Northern bog sedge
- Round leaved orchis
- Squarestem spikerush
- Variegated horsetail
- White adders mouth
- Crawe sedge
- Many headed sedge
- Few flower spikerush
- Adders tongue
- Fairy slipper
- Robbins spikerush
- Marsh bedstraw
- Northeastern bladderwort
- Purple bladderwort
- Downy willow herb
- Silky willow
- Yellow screwstem
- Arrow leaved sweet coltsfoot
- Waxleaf meadowrue
- Vasey rush
- Slim stem small reedgrass
- Slender bog arrow grass

NATURAL COMMUNITIES

- Boreal rich fen
- Lake soft bog
- Muskeg
- Lake shallow, hard, seepage
- Northern wet mesic forest
- Northern sedge meadow
- Spring pond
- Lake shallow, soft, seepage
- Emergent aquatic
- Open bog
- Northern wet forest
- Lake deep, hard, seepage
- Shrub carr
- Stream fast, hard, cold
- Alder thicket
- Lake deep, hard, drainage
- Stream fast, soft, cold
- Lake shallow, hard, drainage
- Lake hard bog
- Floodplain forest
- Stream slow, hard, cold
- Hardwood swamp
- Submergent aquatic
- Lake deep, soft, seepage

TERRESTRIAL OCCURRENCES

ANIMALS

- Northern goshawk
- Smokey eyed brown
- Northern myotis
- Northern blue butterfly
- Woodland jumping mouse
- Leonard's skipper
- A tiger beetle
- Karner blue butterfly
- Yellow bellied flycatcher
- Tawny crescent spot
- Broad winged skipper
- Jutta arctic
- Bird rookery
- Loggerhead shrike
- Merlin

PLANTS

- Deam's rockcress
- Indian cucumber root
- Pale green orchid
- Northern black currant
- Hooker orchis
- Cuckooflower
- American sea rocket
- Large roundleaf orchid
- Dwarf huckleberry
- Little goblin moonwort
- Heart leaved foam flower
- Northern wild raisin
- Crinkled hairgrass
- Braun's holly fern
- Rocky mountain sedge
- Blunt lobe grape fern
- Dwarf milkweed
- Purple clematis

NATURAL COMMUNITIES

- Bedrock glade
- Pine barrens
- Northern dry mesic forest
- Oak woodland
- Northern mesic forest
- Northern dry forest
- Inland beach
- Glaciere talus
- Southern dry mesic forest

APPENDIX D
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION SUMMARY

Intergovernmental Cooperation Meeting

May 16, 2001
Gillett Town Hall

Towns of Bagley, Breed, Gillett, Green Valley (Shawano County), How, Maple Valley, Oconto Falls, Spruce, Underhill, and the Village of Suring

Intergovernmental Cooperation in Comprehensive Planning
Issues Identification and Discussion
Gillett Town Hall, Oconto County
May 16, 2001

Participating Communities
Oconto County Towns of: Gillett, Maple Valley, Underhill, How, Oconto Falls, Spruce, Breed, Bagley. Village of Suring. Town of Green Valley, Shawano County. Gillett School District.

Co-Facilitators:
Brandon Robinson, Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission (920) 448-2820
Rob Burke, Oconto County UW-Extension (920) 834-6851

Background Statement

Comprehensive Planning among towns in Oconto County is progressing rapidly. Under the recent "Smart Growth" legislation communities that engage in planning should consult with their neighboring municipalities. It is not expected that solutions to the challenges that face the communities will be instantly discovered, rather it may represent the start of much more cooperation among local governments. Towards accomplishing the requirement of consulting with neighboring municipalities, this workshop was held to identify the major issues all participants face, and discuss possible ways to help resolve the issues in the future. All participating communities may utilize the information generated in this meeting as helping accomplish the Intergovernmental Element of their Comprehensive Planning Process.

Brainstorming Issues

The process for this meeting included a round-robin modified Nominal Group process to identify issues. Approximately 40 representatives of 11 jurisdictions participated.

The results of the initial round-robin brainstorming of issues generated the following items:

1. Use of quarries and blacktopping
2. Protection of the Oconto River (controlling development)
3. Better communications between neighboring communities
4. Enhancing business

5. Stick w/plans, don't give into development pressures
6. Protect wetlands
7. Job opportunities to allow younger citizens to remain in community
8. Highways remain in current location
9. Protect undeveloped shorelines
10. Develop a plan that balances agriculture, manufacturing, recreation, and residential.
11. To allow towns to enforce their own ordinances.
12. Need to educate the public regarding land use plans
13. Intergov. Cooperation is a must
14. Planned growth
15. Preserve the quality of water near Kelly Lake
16. Expand Kelly Lake Sanitary District (develop a plan)
17. Keep planning as an ongoing business
18. Maintain and improve protective services (fire, ambulance, police)
19. Identify location of aquifer, before designating areas for residential
20. Frequent review of water features, wetlands, and pollution issues
21. Minimum lot size for residential development
22. Protect groundwater and wetlands
23. Long-range planning
24. Encourage "conservation by design"
25. Better cooperation with zoning and Oconto County
26. Energy conservation and preservation
27. Plan for shared services
28. Joint planning for Industrial Park in Gillett
29. Better working relationship between 2 ambulance services in Gillett
30. Highway planning
31. Drainage and run-off management
32. Shared responsibility for resource management
33. Protect groundwater
34. Keep habitats together
35. Where is agriculture going if people are bothered by odors, etc.
36. Communicate with school districts to collaborate on goals
37. Have plans that people can live with
38. Address all ages of people in our plans including ADA
39. Specify areas for mobile home units
40. Develop specific areas for residential
41. Plan for versatile trail use – diversify trail use
42. Can't deny right to develop property
43. Plans should be compatible with growth and development
44. Sharing fire/ambulance services
45. Fair taxation of property
46. How to balance property rights with restrictions
47. Animal Control (dogs)

Prioritization

Attendees voted on these issues, each participant could vote for their top 2 priorities. The voting was weighted giving two points for the first priority, and one for the second priority. Twenty-six of the 47 items received at least one vote. The tabulation of the weighted vote count is as follows:

[Note: Items ranked 1'st each received 10 points; 2'nd received 6 points each; 3'rd received 5 points each; 4'th 3 points each; 5'th 2 points each; and 6'th 1 point each]

Rank	Issue # and Description
1. [Tie]	10. Develop plans that balance agriculture, manufacturing, recreation, and residential. 33. Protect groundwater
2. [Tie]	22. Protect groundwater and wetlands 43. Plans should be compatible with growth and development
3. [Tie]	13. Intergovernmental Cooperation is a must 46. How to balance property rights with restrictions
4. [Tie]	19. Identify location of aquifer, before designating areas for residential 20. Frequent review of water features, wetlands, and pollution issues 34. Keep habitats together
5. [Tie]	2. Protection of the Oconto River (controlling development) 7. Job opportunities to allow younger citizens to remain in community 9. Protect undeveloped shorelines 14. Planned growth 26. Energy Conservation and Preservation 31. Drainage and Runoff Management 37. Have Plans People Can Live With 38. Address all ages of people in our plans, including ADA 45. Fair Taxation of Property
6. [Tie]	4. Enhancing Business 6. Protect Wetlands 11. Allow towns to enforce their own ordinances 23. Long Range Planning 24. Encourage Conservation by Design 27. Plan for Shared Services 39. Specify areas for mobile home units 42. Can't deny right to develop property 44. Sharing fire/ambulance services

Groupings of Related Issues

Several of the issues identified in the round-robin brainstorming exercise and related to each other in the following two categories:

Protecting Water Resources
Together this category received a total of 29 points

2. Protection of the Oconto River (controlling development)
6. Protect wetlands
9. Protect undeveloped shorelines
15. Preserve the quality of water near Kelly Lake
19. Identify location of aquifer, before designating areas for residential
20. Frequent review of water features, wetlands, and pollution issues
22. Protect groundwater and wetlands
31. Drainage and run-off management
32. Shared responsibility for resource management
33. Protect groundwater

Balancing Individual Property Rights and Community Interests
Together this category received a total of 30 points

10. Develop a plan that balances agriculture, manufacturing, recreation, and residential.
24. Encourage "conservation by design"
37. Have plans that people can live with
42. Can't deny right to develop property
43. Plans should be compatible with growth and development
46. How to balance property rights with restrictions

Discussion of Possible Solutions and Strategies to Further Intergovernmental Cooperation in the Future

1. More meetings among governmental units on specific issues
2. Educate citizens on land use planning utilizing the newspapers and quarterly newsletters
3. Establish a process in the comprehensive plan for facilitating intergovernmental cooperation.
4. Help in determining the costs of growth
5. Work with county to improve zoning

Final Observations

The strong interest among the represented communities to protect water resources and at the same time to respect property rights of individuals emerges as the most prominent statement generated by this meeting. If a joint statement were composed based on the strength of these two issues, it might read:

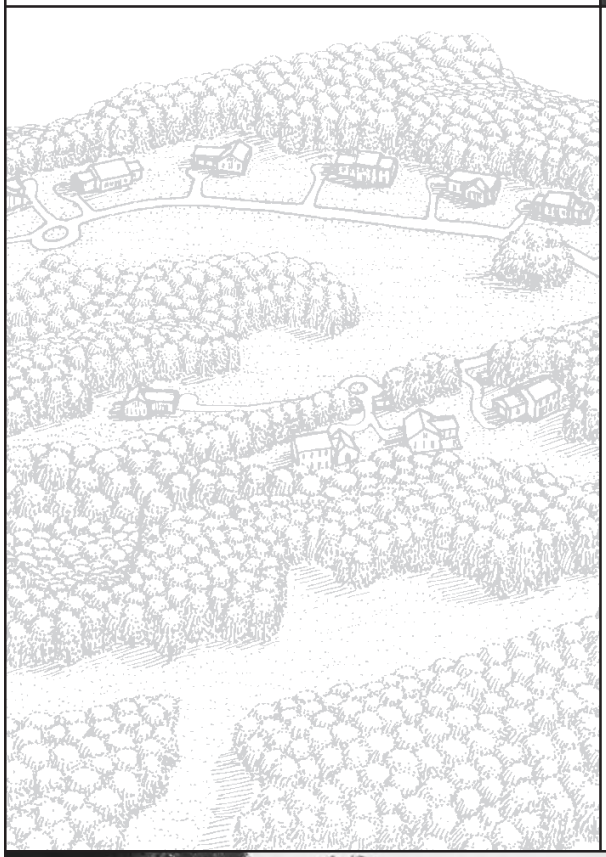
"To be successfully implemented, comprehensive plans developed by municipalities will need tools to protect water resources *in ways that are fair and equitable to property owners.*"

Such tools are being developed and popularized in Wisconsin and throughout the US (land trusts, purchase of development rights, conservation subdivision design as examples). As the communities involved in this meeting gain more understanding and sophistication in planning their ability and comfort in using these tools will be a key in making their plans effective. Learning how to make effective use of these tools may serve as a joint goal of planning communities in this area.

APPENDIX E
CONSERVATION BY DESIGN

Growing Greener

Conservation by Design



Communities across Pennsylvania are realizing that they can conserve their special open spaces, greenways and natural resources ***at the same time*** they achieve their development objectives. How? Conservation through local zoning and subdivision ordinances, an approach we're calling *Growing Greener: Conservation by Design*. If you want your community to take control of its destiny and ensure that new development creates more livable communities in the process, the *Growing Greener: Conservation by Design* approach might be right for you.

Background

This booklet summarizes how municipalities can use the development process to their advantage to protect interconnected networks of open space: natural areas, greenways, trails and recreational lands. Communities ***can*** take control of their destinies so that their conservation goals are achieved in a manner fair to all parties concerned. All that is needed are some relatively straightforward amendments to municipal comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and subdivision ordinances. These steps are described on the pages that follow.

Growing Greener: Conservation by Design is a collaborative program of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR); the Governor's Center for Local Government Services; Natural Lands Trust, Inc., a regional land conservancy located in Media, PA; and an advisory committee comprised of officials from state and local agencies including the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, the Pennsylvania State University Cooperative Extension, and other non-profits and the private sector. The program is based on the work of Randall Arendt, Senior Conservation Advisor at Natural Lands Trust, and Michael Clarke, former president of Natural Lands Trust.

How Do I Learn More?

The following services are available in Pennsylvania: (1) educational workshops, held at the county and regional level, for local officials, developers and others involved in making land use decisions; and presentations at conferences; (2) technical assistance for communities—primarily in the form of assessments of land use regulations, ordinance assistance and design services; and (3) training for professionals interested in learning how to write the ordinances and use the design methods that implement the *Growing Greener: Conservation by Design* standards.

For more information contact:

NATURAL LANDS TRUST

Hildacy Farm
1031 Palmers Mill Road
Media, PA 19063
tel: 610-353-5587
fax: 610-353-0517
www.natlands.org

Ann Hutchinson, AICP
ahutchinson@natlands.org

Monica Drewniany, AICP
mdrewniany@natlands.org

DCNR

717-772-3321
www.dcnr.state.pa.us

Todd Stell
Environmental Planner
tstell@dcnr.state.pa.us

Governor's Center for Local Government Services

888-223-6837
www.landuseinpa.com

Neil Kinsey
Local Government Policy Specialist
nkinsey@state.pa.us

Putting Conservation into Local Codes

The Conservation Design Concept

Each time a property is developed into a residential subdivision, an opportunity exists for adding land to a community-wide network of open space. Although such opportunities are seldom taken in many municipalities, this situation could be reversed fairly easily by making several small but significant changes to three basic local land-use documents—the comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinance and the subdivision and land development ordinance. Simply stated, Conservation Design rearranges the development on each parcel as it is being planned so that half (or more) of the buildable land is set aside as open space. Without controversial "down zoning," the same number of homes can be built in a less land-consumptive manner, allowing the balance of the property to be permanently protected and added to an interconnected network of community green spaces. This "density-neutral" approach provides a fair and equitable way to balance conservation and development objectives.

Four Keys to Conservation

Communities protect open space because it protects streams and water quality, provides habitat for plants and animals, preserves rural "atmosphere," provides recreational areas, protects home values and reduces costs of municipal services. In short, land conservation makes your community a better place to live. Four basic actions underlie the *Growing Greener* process:

1 *Envision the Future: Performing "community assessments"*

Successful communities have a realistic understanding of their future. The assessment projects past and current development trends into the future so that officials and residents may easily see the long-term results of continuing with current ordinance provisions. Communities use this knowledge to periodically review and adjust their goals and strategies for conservation and development.

2 *Protect Open Space Networks Through Conservation Planning*

Successful communities have a good understanding of their natural and cultural resources. They establish reasonable goals for conservation and development—goals that reflect their special resources, existing land use patterns and anticipated growth. Their comprehensive plans document these resources, goals and policies. The plan contains language about the kinds of ordinance updating and conservation programs necessary for those goals to be realized. A key part of the Comprehensive Plan is a *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* that is intended to guide the location of open space in each new subdivision as it is being laid out.

3 *Conservation Zoning: A "Menu of Choices"*

Successful communities have legally defensible, well-written zoning regulations that meet their "fair share" of future growth and provide for a logical balance between community goals and private landowner interests. They incorporate resource suitabilities, flexibility, and incentives to require the inclusion of permanent conservation lands into new subdivisions. The five zoning options summarized in this publication and described in detail in the *Growing Greener* manual respect the private property rights of developers without unduly impacting the remaining natural areas that make our communities such special places in which to live, work, recreate and invest in.

4 Conservation Subdivision Design: A Four-Step Process

Successful communities recognize that both design standards and the design process play an important part in conserving community resources. Such communities adopt subdivision codes which require detailed site surveys and analyses identifying the special features of each property, and introduce a simple methodology showing how to lay out new development so that the majority of those special features will be permanently protected in designated conservation areas or preserves. To a considerable extent, those preserves within new subdivisions can be pre-identified in the Comprehensive Plan so that each such area will form an integral part of a community-wide network of protected open space, as noted above.

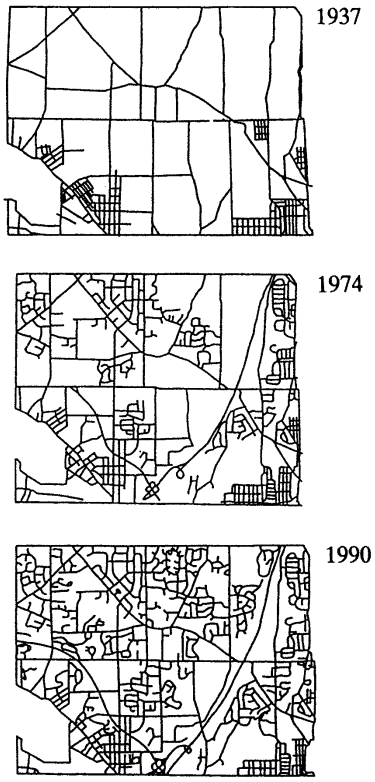


Figure 1
The pattern of "wall-to-wall subdivisions" that evolves over time with zoning and subdivision ordinances which require developers to provide nothing more than houselots and streets.

1 Envisioning the Future
Performing "Community Assessments"

The "community assessment" visioning process helps local officials and residents see the ultimate result of continuing to implement current land-use policies. The process helps start discussions about how current trends can be modified so that a greener future is ensured.

Sad but true, the future that faces most communities with standard zoning and subdivision codes is to witness the systematic conversion of every unprotected acre of buildable land into developed uses.

Most local ordinances allow or encourage standardized layouts of "wall-to-wall houselots." Over a period of decades this process produces a broader pattern of "wall-to-wall subdivisions" (see Figure 1). No community actively plans to become a bland suburb without open space. However, most zoning codes program exactly this outcome (see Figure 2).

Municipalities can perform assessments to see the future before it happens, so that they will be able to judge whether a mid-course correction is needed. A community assessment entails an evaluation of the land-use regulations that are currently on the books, identifying their strengths and weaknesses and offering constructive recommendations about how they can incorporate the conservation techniques described in this booklet. It should also include a realistic appraisal of the extent to which private conservation efforts are likely to succeed in protecting lands from development through various nonregulatory approaches such as purchases or donations of easements or fee title interests.

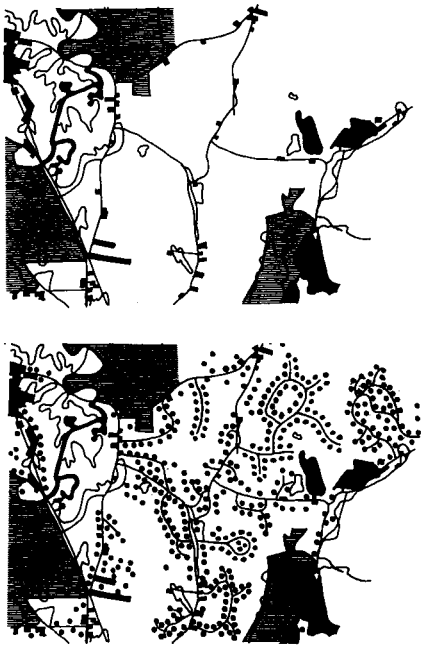


Figure 2
A matching pair of graphics, taken from an actual "build-out map," showing existing conditions (mostly undeveloped land) contrasted with the potential development pattern of "checkerboard suburbia" created through conventional zoning and subdivision regulations.

The following parts of this booklet describe practical ways in which communities can take control of their destinies so that conservation goals will be achieved simultaneously with development objectives, in a manner that is fair to all parties concerned. Three interrelated documents—the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code and Subdivision and Land Development Code, stand together like a three-legged stool providing a balanced footing for achieving a municipality's conservation goals.

2 Protecting Open Space Networks Through Conservation Planning

Although many communities have adopted either Comprehensive Plans or Open Space Plans containing detailed inventories of their natural and historic resources, very few have taken the next logical step of pulling together all that information and creating a *Map of Potential Conservation Lands*.

Such a map is vitally important to any community interested in conserving an interconnected network of open space. The map serves as the tool which guides decisions regarding which land to protect in order for the network to eventually take form and have substance.

A *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* starts with information contained in the community's existing planning documents. The next task is to identify two kinds of resource areas. *Primary Conservation Areas* comprise only the most severely constrained lands, where development is typically restricted under current codes and laws (such as wetlands, floodplains, and slopes exceeding 25%). *Secondary Conservation Areas* include all other locally noteworthy or significant features of the natural or cultural landscape—such as mature woodlands, wildlife habitats and travel corridors, prime farmland, groundwater recharge areas, greenways and trails, river and stream corridors, historic sites and buildings, and scenic viewsheds. These Secondary Conservation Areas are often best understood by the local residents who may be directly involved in their identification. Usually these resource areas are totally unprotected and are simply zoned for one kind of development or another.

A base map is then prepared on which the Primary Conservation Areas have been added to an inventory of lands which are already protected (such as parks, land trust preserves, and properties under conservation easement). Clear acetate sheets showing each kind of Secondary Conservation Area are then laid on top of the base map in an order reflecting the community's preservation priorities (as determined through public discussion).

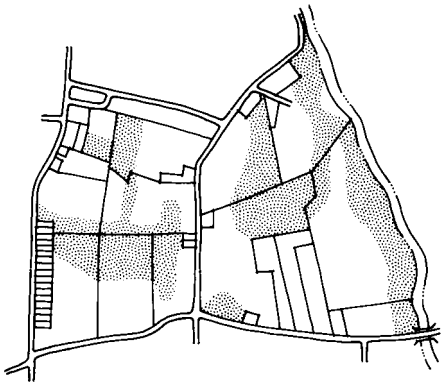


Figure 3
Part of a *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* for West Manchester Township, York County. West Manchester's map gives clear guidance to landowners and developers as to where new development is encouraged on their properties. Township officials engaged a consultant to draw, on the official tax parcel maps, boundaries of the new conservation lands network as it crossed various properties, showing how areas required to be preserved in each new development could be located so they would ultimately connect with each other. In this formerly agricultural municipality the hedgerows, woodland remnants, and the riparian buffer along the creek were identified as core elements of the conservation network.

This overlay process will reveal certain situations where two or more conservation features appear together (such as woodlands and wildlife habitats, or farmland and scenic viewsheds). It will also reveal gaps where no features appear.

Although this exercise is not an exact science, it frequently helps local officials and residents visualize how various kinds of resource areas are connected to one another, and enables them to tentatively identify both broad swaths and narrow corridors of resource land that could be protected in a variety of ways.

Figure 3 shows a portion of a map prepared for one Chester County township which has followed this approach.

The planning techniques which can best implement the community-wide *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* are Conservation Zoning and Conservation Subdivision Design. These techniques which work hand in hand are described in detail below. Briefly stated, conservation zoning expands the range of development choices available to landowners and developers. Just as importantly, it also eliminates the option of creating full-density "checkerboard" layouts that convert all land within new subdivisions into houselots and streets.

The second technique, "conservation subdivision design," devotes half or more of the buildable land area within a residential development as undivided permanent open space. Not surprisingly, the most important step in designing a conservation subdivision is to identify the land that is to be preserved. By using the community-wide *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* as a template for the layout and design of conservation areas within new subdivisions, these developments help to create an interconnected network of open space spanning the entire municipality.

Figure 4 shows how the open space in three adjoining subdivisions has been designed to connect, and illustrates the way in which the *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* can become a reality.

Figure 5 provides a bird's-eye view of a landscape where an interconnected network of conservation lands has been gradually protected through the steady application of conservation zoning techniques and conservation subdivision design standards.

3 Conservation Zoning
A "Menu" of Choices

The main reason subdivisions typically consist of nothing more than houselots and streets is that most local land-use ordinances ask little, if anything, with respect to conserving open space or providing neighborhood amenities (see Figure 6).

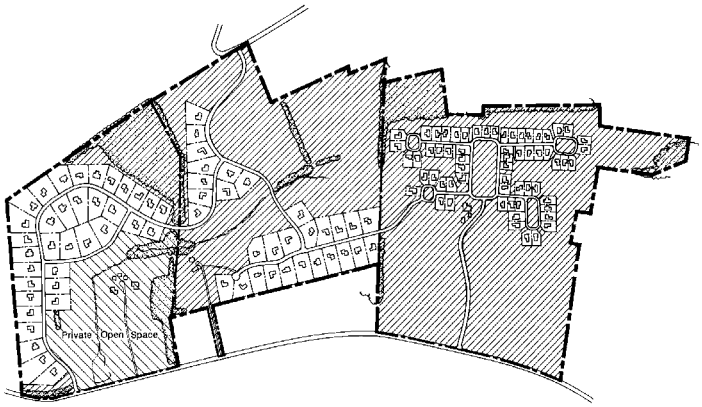


Figure 4
The conservation lands (shown in gray) were deliberately laid out to form part of an interconnected network of open space in these three adjoining subdivisions.

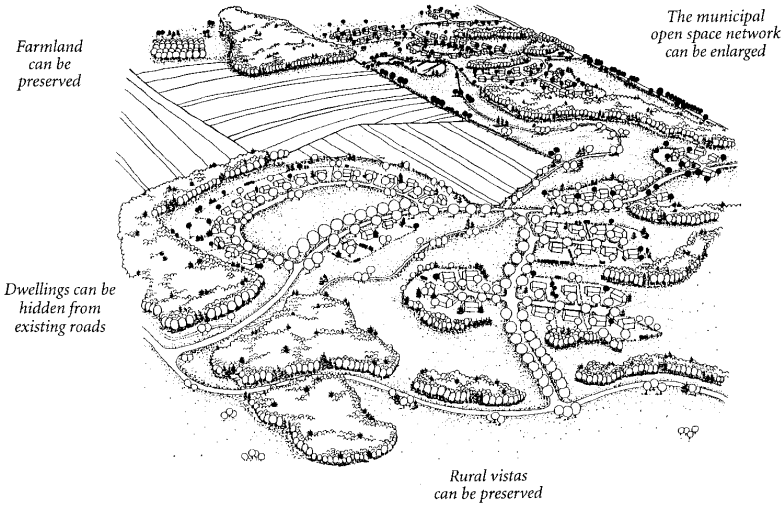


Figure 5
This sketch shows how you can apply the techniques described in this booklet to set aside open space which preserves rural character, expands community parkland and creates privacy for residences. (Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission)

Communities wishing to break the cycle of "wall-to-wall houselots" need to consider modifying their zoning to actively and legally encourage subdivisions that set aside at least 50 percent of the land as permanently protected open space and to incorporate substantial density *dis*incentives for developers who do not conserve any significant percentage of land.

Following this approach, a municipality would first calculate a site's yield using traditional zoning. A developer would then be permitted full density *only* if at least 50 percent of the buildable land is maintained as undivided open space (illustrated in Figure 7: "Option 1"). Another full-density option could include a 25 percent density bonus for preserving 60 percent of the unconstrained land (Figure 8: "Option 2"). Municipalities might also consider offering as much as a 100 percent density bonus for protecting 70 percent of that land (Figure 11: "Option 5").

It is noteworthy that the 36 village-like lots in Option 5 occupy less land than the 18 lots in Option 1, and that Option 5 therefore contributes more significantly to the goal of creating community-wide networks of open space. The village-scale lots in Option 5 are particularly popular with empty-nesters, single-parent households, and couples with young children. Its traditional layout is based on that of historic hamlets and villages in the region, and new developments in this category could be controlled as Conditional Uses subject to a set of extensively illustrated design standards.

Developers wishing to serve the "estate lot" market have two additional options. One involves lots containing at least four acres of unconstrained land (Figure 9: "Option 3"). The other is

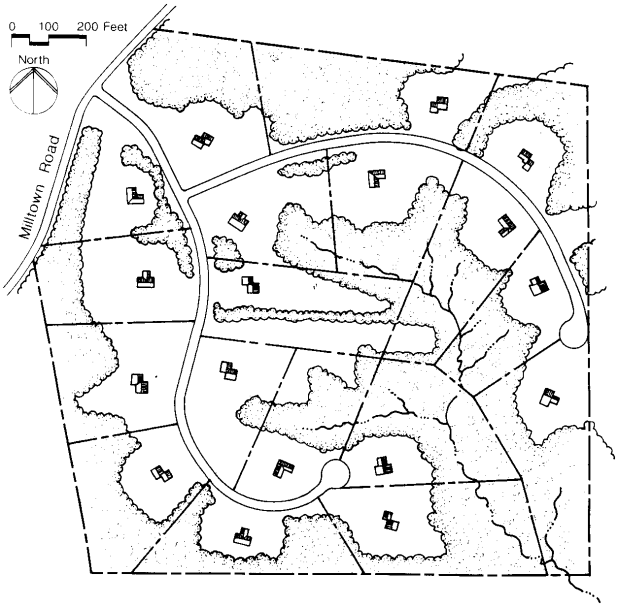


Figure 6 YIELD PLAN
The kind of subdivision most frequently created in Pennsylvania is the type which blankets the development parcel with houselots, and which pays little if any attention to designing around the special features of the property. In this example, the house placement avoids the primary conservation areas, but disregards the secondary conservation features. However, such a sketch can provide a useful estimate of a site's capacity to accommodate new houses at the base density allowed under zoning—and is therefore known as a "Yield Plan."

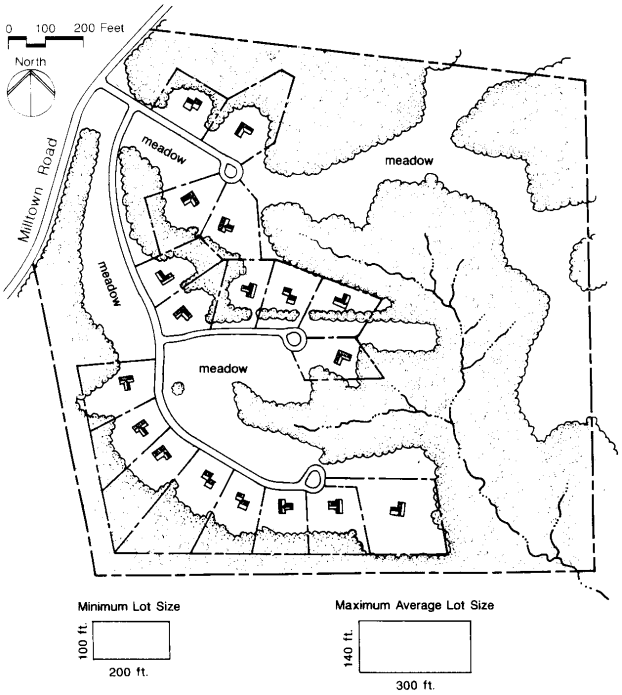


Figure 7 OPTION 1
Density-neutral with Pre-existing Zoning
18 lots
Lot Size Range: 20,000 to 40,000 sq. ft.
50% undivided open space

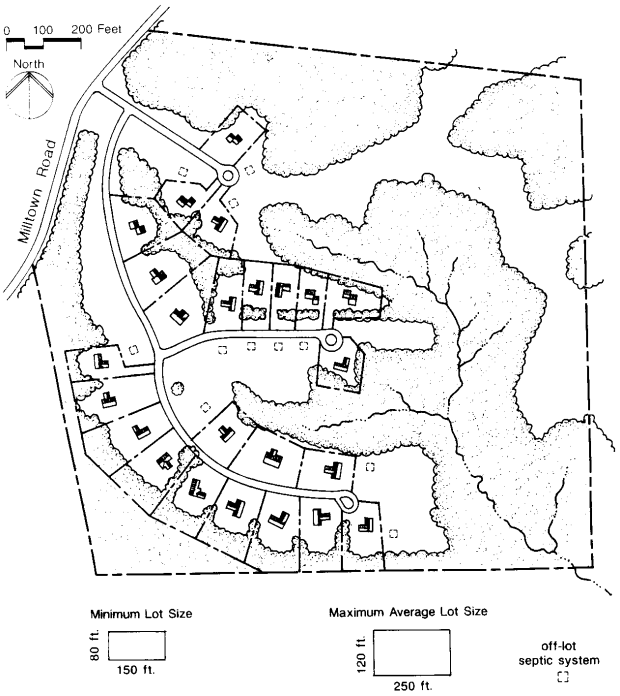


Figure 8 OPTION 2
Enhanced Conservation and Density
24 Lots
Lot Size Range: 12,000 to 24,000 sq. ft.
60% undivided open space

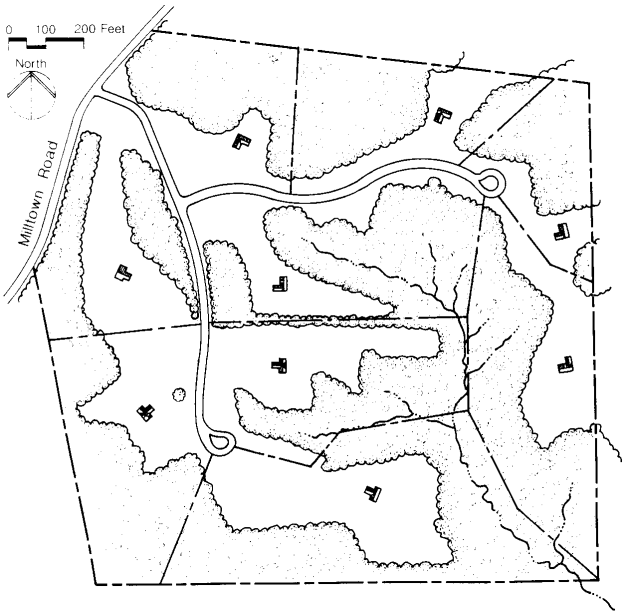


Figure 9 OPTION 3
50% Density Reduction
9 Lots
Typical Lot Size: 160,000 sq. ft. (4 acres)
Estate Lots

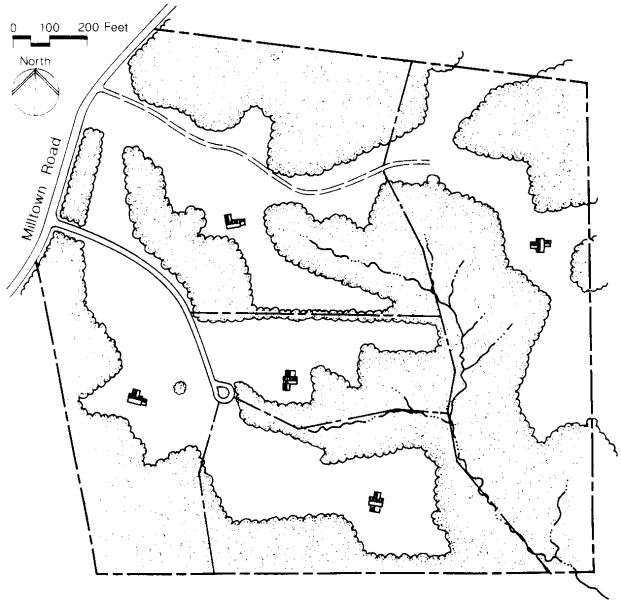


Figure 10 OPTION 4
Country Properties
5 Lots
Maximum Density: 10 acres per principal dwelling
70% density reduction

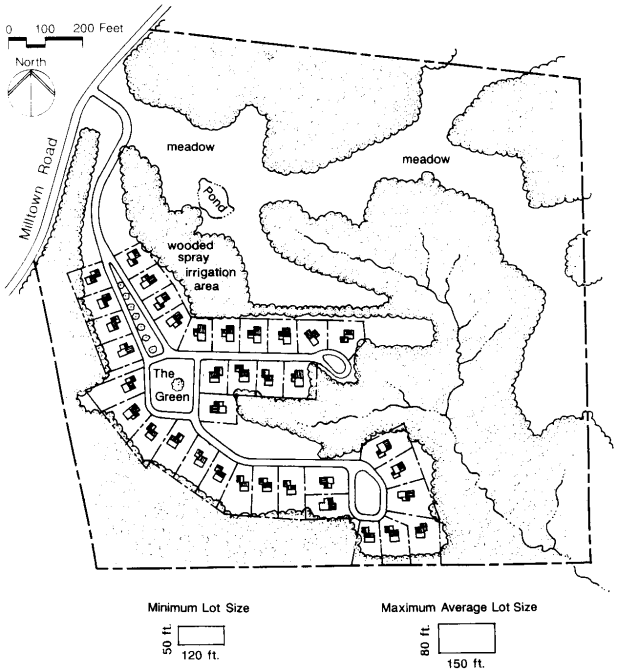


Figure 11 OPTION 5
Hamlet or Village
36 Lots
Lot Size Range: 6,000 to 12,000 sq. ft.
70% undivided open space

comprised of "country properties" of at least 10 acres, which may be accessed by gravel drives built to new township standards for very low-volume rural lanes (Figure 10: "Option 4"). An additional incentive to encourage developers to choose this fourth option would typically be permission to build up to two accessory dwellings on these properties. Those units would normally be limited in size, subject to architectural design standards to resemble traditional estate buildings, and restricted from further lot division.

Two or more of these options could be combined on a single large property. One logical approach would combine Options 4 and 5, with the Option 4 "country properties" comprising part of the required greenbelt open space around an Option 5 village (see Figure 12).

Conspicuously absent from this menu of choices is the conventional full-density subdivision providing no unfragmented open space (Figure 6). Because that kind of development causes the largest loss of resource land and poses the greatest obstacle to conservation efforts, it is not included as an option under this approach.

For illustrative purposes, this booklet uses a one dwelling unit per two acre density. However, conservation zoning is equally applicable to higher density zoning districts of three or four units per acre. Such densities typically occur in villages, boroughs, urban growth boundary areas and TDR receiving areas where open space setasides are critical to the residents' quality of life.

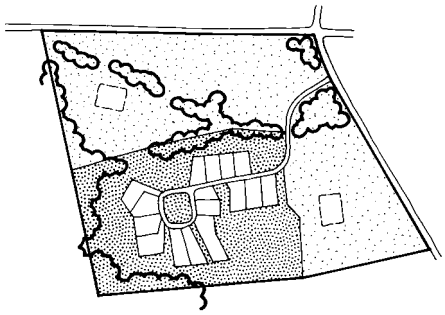


Figure 12
An Option 5 village surrounded by its own open space and buffered from the township road by two "country properties" (Option 4).

4 Conservation Subdivision Design
A Four-Step Process

Designing subdivisions around the central organizing principle of land conservation is not difficult. However, it is essential that ordinances contain clear standards to guide the conservation design process. The four-step approach described below has been proven to be effective in laying out new full-density developments where all the significant natural and cultural features have been preserved.

Step One consists of identifying the land that should be permanently protected. The developer incorporates areas pre-identified on the community-wide *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* and then performs a detailed site analysis in order to precisely locate features to be conserved. The developer first identifies all the constrained lands (wet, floodprone, and steep), called *Primary Conservation Areas* (Figure 13). He then identifies *Secondary Conservation Areas* (Figure 14) which comprise noteworthy features of the property that are typically unprotected under current codes: mature woodlands, greenways and trails, river and stream corridors, prime farmland, hedgerows and individual free-standing trees or tree groups, wildlife habitats and travel corridors, historic sites and structures, scenic viewsheds, etc. After "greenlining" these conservation elements, the remaining part of the property becomes the *Potential Development Area* (Figure 15).

Step Two involves locating sites of individual houses within the Potential Development Area so that their views of the open space are maximized (Figure 16). The number of houses is a function of the density permitted within the zoning district, as shown on a *Yield Plan* (Figure 6). (In unsewered areas officials should require a 10 percent sample of the most questionable lots—which they would select—to be tested for septic suitability. Any lots that fail would be deducted and the applicant would have to perform a second 10 percent sample, etc.)

Step Three simply involves "connecting the dots" with streets and informal trails (Figure 17), while **Step Four** consists of drawing in the lot lines (Figure 18).

This approach reverses the sequence of steps in laying out conventional subdivisions, where the street system is the

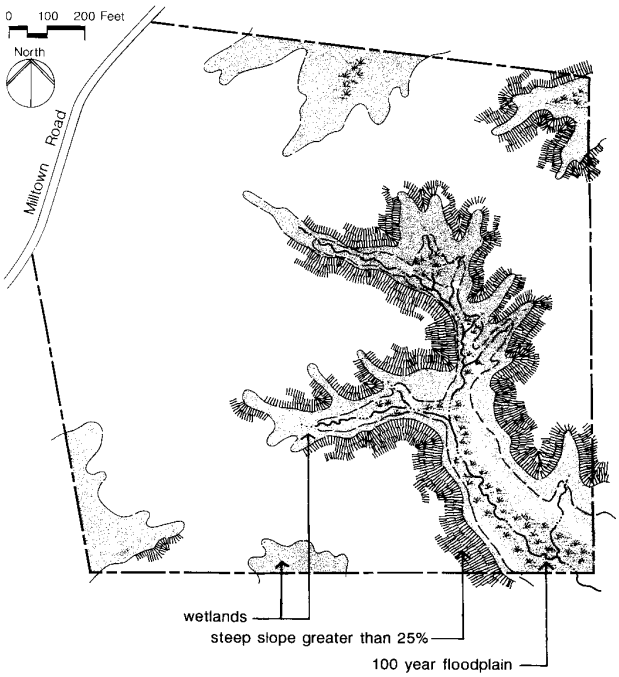


Figure 13 STEP ONE, *Part One*
Identifying Primary Conservation Areas

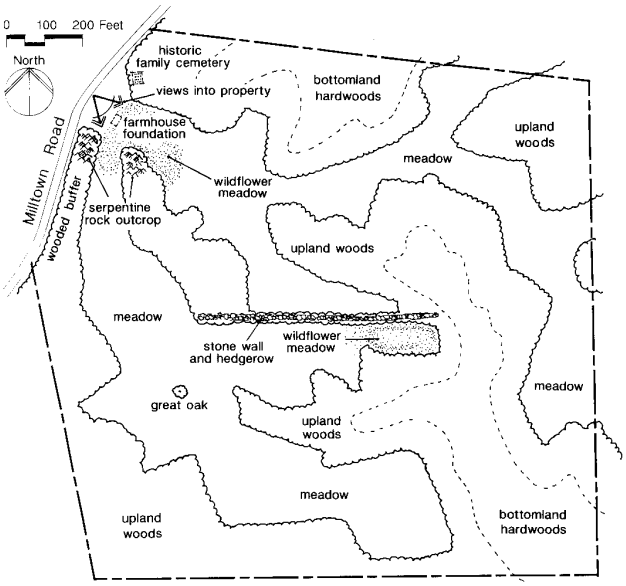


Figure 14 STEP ONE, *Part Two*
Identifying Secondary Conservation Areas

Typically unprotected under local codes, these special features constitute a significant asset to the property value and neighborhood character. Secondary conservation areas are the most vulnerable to change, but can easily be retained by following this simple four-step process.

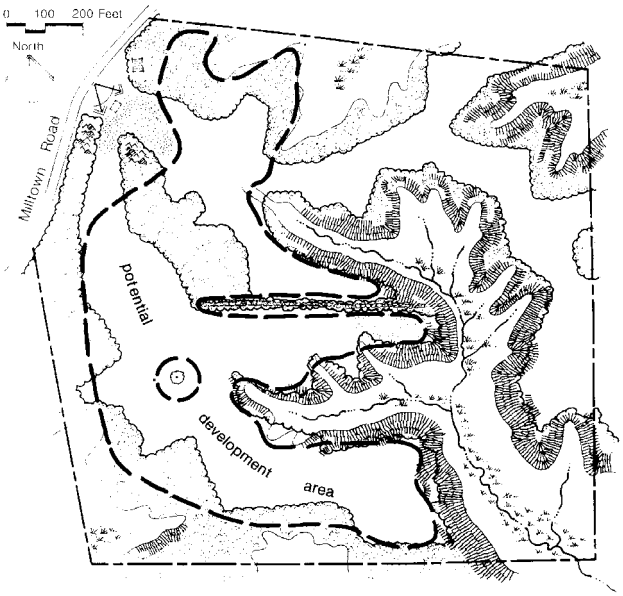


Figure 15 STEP ONE, *Part Three*
Potential Development Areas
for Options 1, 2, and 5

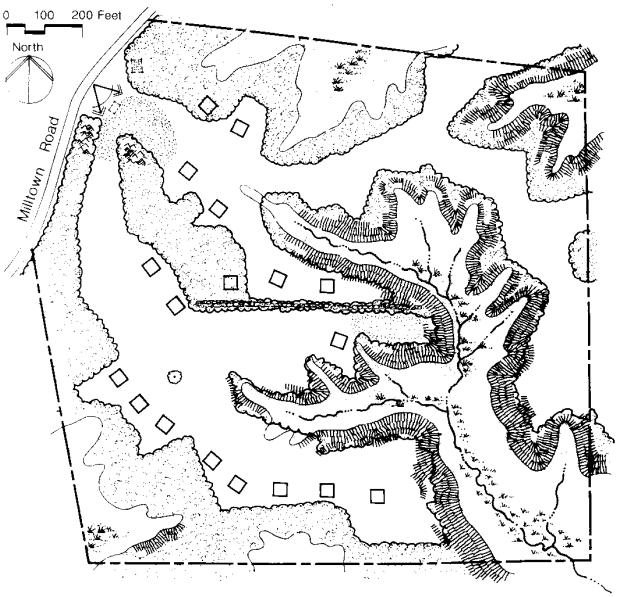


Figure 16 STEP TWO
Locating House Sites

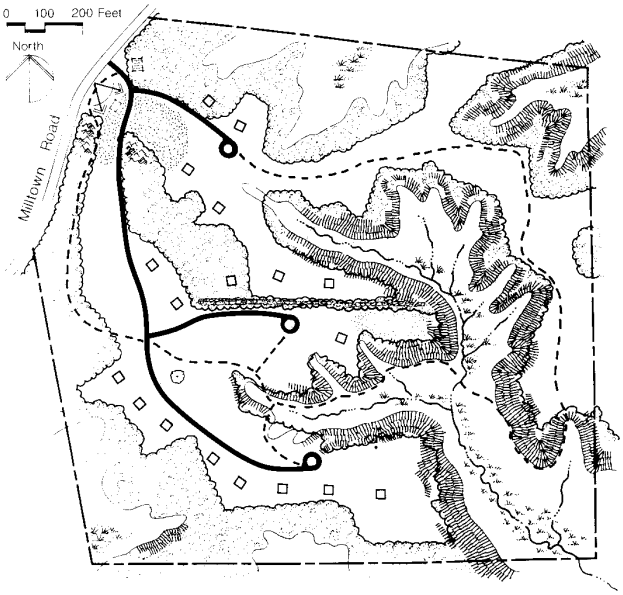


Figure 17 STEP THREE
Aligning Streets and Trails

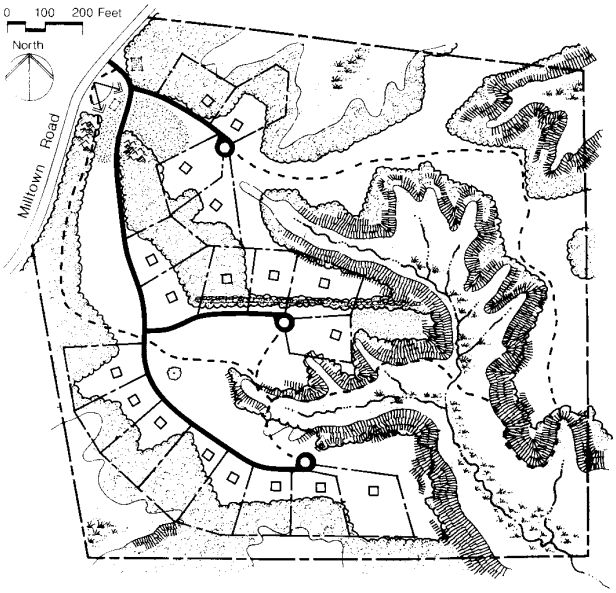


Figure 18 STEP FOUR
Drawing in the Lot Lines

first thing to be identified, followed by lot lines fanning out to encompass every square foot of ground into houselots. When municipalities require nothing more than "houselots and streets," that is all they receive. But by setting community standards higher and requiring 50 to 70 percent open space as a precondition for achieving full density, officials can effectively encourage conservation subdivision design. The protected land in each new subdivision would then become building blocks that add new acreage to community-wide networks of interconnected open space each time a property is developed.

Frequently Asked Questions About Conservation Subdivision Design

Does this conservation-based approach involve a "taking"?

No. People who do not fully understand this conservation-based approach to subdivision design may mistakenly believe that it constitutes "a taking of land without compensation." This misunderstanding may stem from the fact that conservation subdivisions, as described in this booklet, involve either large percentages of undivided open space or lower overall building densities.

There are two reasons why this approach does *not* constitute a "taking."

First, no density is taken away. Conservation zoning is fundamentally fair because it allows landowners and developers to achieve full density under the municipality's current zoning—and even to increase that density significantly—through several different "as-of-right" options. Of the five options permitted under conservation zoning, three provide for either full or enhanced densities. The other two options offer the developer the choice to lower densities and increase lot sizes. Although conservation zoning precludes full-density layouts that do not conserve open space, this is legal because there is no constitutional "right to sprawl."

Second, no land is taken for public use. None of the land which is required to be designated for conservation purposes becomes public (or even publicly accessible) unless the landowner or developer wants it to be. In the vast majority of situations, municipalities themselves have no desire to own and manage such conservation land, which they generally feel should be a neighborhood responsibility. In cases where local officials wish to provide township recreational facilities (such as ballfields or trails) within conservation subdivisions, the municipality must negotiate with the developer for the purchase of that land on a "willing seller/willing buyer" basis. To facilitate such negotiations, conservation zoning ordinances can be written to include density incentives to encourage developers to designate specific parts of their conservation land for public ownership or for public access and use.

A legal analysis of the *Growing Greener* workbook, by Harrisburg land use attorney Charles E. Zaleski, Esq., is reprinted on the last page of this booklet.

How can a community ensure permanent protection for conservation lands?

The most effective way to ensure that conservation land in a new subdivision will remain undeveloped forever is to place a permanent conservation easement on it. Such easements run with the chain of title, in perpetuity, and specify the various conservation uses that may occur on the property. These restrictions are separate from zoning ordinances and continue in force even if legal densities rise in future years. Easements are typically held by land trusts and units of government. Since political leadership can change over time, land trusts are the most reliable holder of easements, as their mission never varies. Deed restrictions and covenants are, by comparison, not as effective as easements, and are not recommended for this purpose. Easements can be modified only within the spirit of the original agreement, and only if the co-holders agree. In practice, while a proposal to erect another house or a country club building on the open space would typically be denied, permission to create a small ballfield or a single tennis court in a corner of a large conservation meadow or former field might well be granted.

What are the ownership, maintenance, tax and liability issues?

Among the most commonly expressed concerns about subdivisions which conserve open space are questions about who will own and maintain the conservation land, and who will be responsible for the potential liability and payment of property taxes. The short answer is that whoever owns the conservation land is responsible for all of the above. But who owns this land?

Ownership Choices

There are basically four options, which may be combined within the same subdivision where that makes the most sense.

• *Individual Landowner*

At its simplest level, the original landowner (a farmer, for example) can retain ownership to as much as 80 percent of the conservation land to keep it in the family. (At least 20 percent of the open space should be reserved for common neighborhood use by subdivision residents.) That landowner can also pass this property on to sons or daughters, or sell it to other individual landowners, with permanent conservation easements running with the land and protecting it from development under future owners. The open space should not, however, be divided among all of the individual subdivision lots as land management and access difficulties are likely to arise.

• *Homeowners' Associations*

Most conservation land within subdivisions is owned and managed by homeowners' associations (HOAs). A few basic ground rules encourage a good performance record. First, membership must be automatic, a precondition of property purchase in the development. Second, zoning should require that bylaws give such associations the legal right to place liens on properties of members who fail to pay their dues. Third, facilities should be minimal (ball fields and trails rather than clubhouses and swimming pools) to keep annual dues low. And fourth, detailed maintenance plans for conservation areas should be required by the municipality as a condition of approval. The municipality has enforcement rights and may place a lien on the property should the HOA fail to perform their obligations to maintain the conservation land.

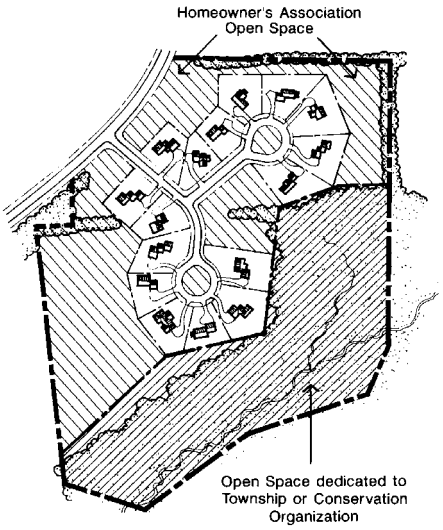


Figure 19
Various private and public entities can own different parts of the open space within conservation subdivisions, as illustrated above.

• *Land Trusts*

Although homeowners' associations are generally the most logical recipients of conservation land within subdivisions, occasionally situations arise where such ownership most appropriately resides with a land trust (such as when a particularly rare or significant natural area is involved). Land trusts are private, charitable groups whose principal purpose is to protect land under its stewardship from inappropriate change. Their most common role is to hold easements or fee simple title on conservation lands within new developments and elsewhere in the community, to ensure that all restrictions are observed. To cover their costs in maintaining land they own or in monitoring land they hold easements on, land trusts typically require some endowment funding. When conservation zoning offers a density bonus, developers can donate the proceeds from the additional "endowment lots" to such trusts for maintenance or monitoring.

• *Municipality or Other Public Agency*

In special situations a local government might desire to own part of the conservation land within a new subdivision, such as when that land has been identified in a municipal open space plan as a good location for a neighborhood park or for a link in a community trail network. Developers can be encouraged to sell or donate certain acreage to municipalities through additional density incentives, although the final decision would remain the developer's.

• *Combinations of the Above*

As illustrated in Figure 19, the conservation land within new subdivisions could involve multiple ownerships, including (1) "non-common" open space such as cropland retained by the original farmer, (2) common open space such as ballfields owned by an HOA, and (3) a trail corridor owned by either a land trust or by the municipality.

Maintenance Issues

Local officials should require conservation area management plans to be submitted and approved prior to granting final subdivision approval. In Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County, the community's "model" management plan is typically adopted by reference by each subdivision applicant. That document identifies a dozen different kinds of conservation areas (from woodlands and pastures to ballfields and abandoned farmland that is reforesting) and describes recommended management practices for each one. Farmland is typically leased by HOAs and land trusts to local farmers, who often agree to modify some of their agricultural prac-

tices to minimize impacts on nearby residents. Although ballfields and village greens require weekly mowing, conservation meadows typically need only annual mowing. Woodlands generally require the least maintenance: trimming bushes along walking trails, and removing invasive vines around the outer edges where greater sunlight penetration favors their growth.

Tax Concerns

Property tax assessments on conservation subdivisions should not differ, in total, from those on conventional developments. This is because the same number of houses and acres of land are involved in both cases (except when part of the open space is owned by a public entity, which is uncommon). Although the open space in conservation subdivisions is taxed low because easements prevent it from being developed, the rate is similar to that applied to land in conventional subdivisions where the larger houselots are not big enough to be further subdivided. (For example, the undeveloped back half of a one-acre lot in a one-acre zoning district is subject to minimal taxation because it has no further development value.)

Liability Questions

The Pennsylvania Recreation Use of Land and Water Act protects owners of undeveloped land from liability for negligence if the landowner does not charge a fee to recreational users. A tree root or rock outcropping along a trail that trips a hiker will not constitute landowner negligence. To be sued successfully in Pennsylvania, landowners must be found to have "willfully or maliciously failed to guard against a dangerous condition." This is a much more difficult case for plaintiffs to make. Even so, to cover themselves against such situations, owners of conservation lands routinely purchase liability insurance policies similar to those that most homeowners maintain.

How can on-site sewage disposal work with conservation subdivisions?

The conventional view is that the smaller lots in conservation subdivisions make them more difficult to develop in areas without sewers. However, the reverse is true. The flexibility inherent in the design of conservation subdivisions makes them superior to conventional layouts in their ability to provide for adequate sewage disposal. Here are two examples:

Utilizing the best soils

Conservation design requires the most suitable soils on the property to be identified at the outset, enabling houselots to be arranged to take the best advantage of them. If one end of a property has deeper, better drained soils, it makes more sense to site the homes in that part of the property rather than to spread them out, with some lots located entirely on mediocre soils that barely manage to meet minimal standards for septic approval.

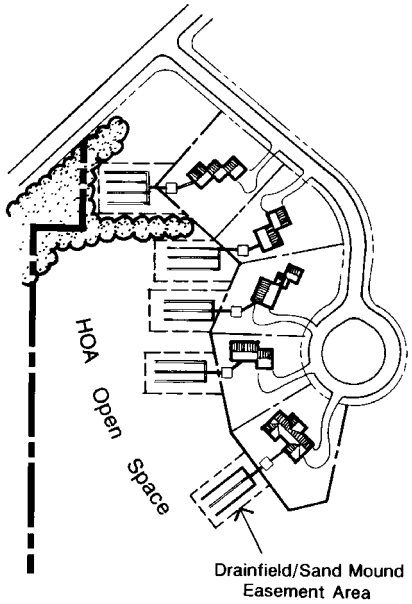


Figure 20
A practical alternative to central water or sewage disposal facilities are individually-owned wells and/or septic systems located within conservation areas, in places specifically designated for them on the final plan.

Locating individual systems within the open space

Conventional wisdom also holds that when lots become smaller, central water or sewage disposal is required. That view overlooks the practical alternative of locating individual wells and/or individual septic systems within the permanent open space adjacent to the more compact lots typical of conservation subdivisions, as shown in Figure 20. There is no engineering reason to require that septic filter beds must be located within each houselot. However, it is essential that the final approved subdivision plan clearly indicate which parts of the undivided open space are designated for septic disposal, with each lot's disposal area graphically indicated through dotted lines extending out into the conservation land. These filter beds can be located under playing fields, or conservation meadows in the same way they typically occupy positions under suburban lawns. (If mound systems are required due to marginal soil conditions, they are best located in passive use areas such as conservation meadows where the grass is cut only once a year. Such mounds should also be required to be contoured with gently sloping sides to blend into the surrounding landscape wherever possible.)

Although maintenance and repair of these septic systems remains the responsibility of individual lot owners, it is recommended that HOAs be authorized to pump individual septic tanks on a regular basis (every three or four years) to ensure that the accumulated sludge never rises to a level where it can flow into and clog the filter beds. This inexpensive, preventive maintenance greatly extends the life of filter beds.

How does this conservation approach differ from "clustering"?

The *Growing Greener* conservation approach described here differs dramatically from the kind of "clustering" that has occurred in many communities over the past several decades. The principal points of difference are as follows:

Higher Percentage and Quality of Open Space

In contrast with typical cluster codes, conservation zoning establishes higher standards for both the quantity and quality of open space that is to be preserved. Under conservation zoning, 50 to 70 percent of the unconstrained land is permanently set aside. This compares with cluster provisions that frequently require only 25 to 30 of the gross land area be conserved. That minimal open space often includes all of the most unusable land as open space, and sometimes also includes undesirable, left-over areas such as stormwater management facilities and land under high-tension power lines.

Open Space Pre-Determined to Form Community-wide Conservation Network

Although clustering has at best typically produced a few small "green islands" here and there in any municipality, conservation zoning can protect blocks and corridors of permanent open space. These areas can be pre-identified on a comprehensive plan *Map of Potential Conservation Lands* so that each new development will add to—rather than subtract from—the community's open space acreage.

Eliminates the Standard Practice of Full-Density with No Open Space

Under this new system, full density is achievable for layouts in which 50 percent or more of the unconstrained land is conserved as permanent, undivided open space. By contrast, cluster zoning provisions are typically only optional alternatives within ordinances that permit full density, by right, for standard "cookie-cutter" designs with no open space.

Simply put, the differences between clustering and conservation zoning are like the differences between a Model T and a Taurus.

How do residential values in conservation subdivisions compare to conventional subdivisions?

Another concern of many people is that homes in conservation subdivisions will differ in value from those in the rest of the community. Some believe that because so much land is set aside as open space, the homes in a conservation subdivision will be prohibitively priced and the municipality will become a series of elitist enclaves. Other people take the opposite view, fearing that these homes will be smaller and less expensive than their own because of the more compact lot sizes offered in conservation subdivisions.

Both concerns are understandable but they miss the mark. Developers will build what the market is seeking at any given time, and they often base their decision about selling price on the character of surrounding neighborhoods and the amount they must pay for the land.

In conservation subdivisions with substantial open space, there is little or no correlation between lot size and price. These developments have sometimes been described as "golf course commu-

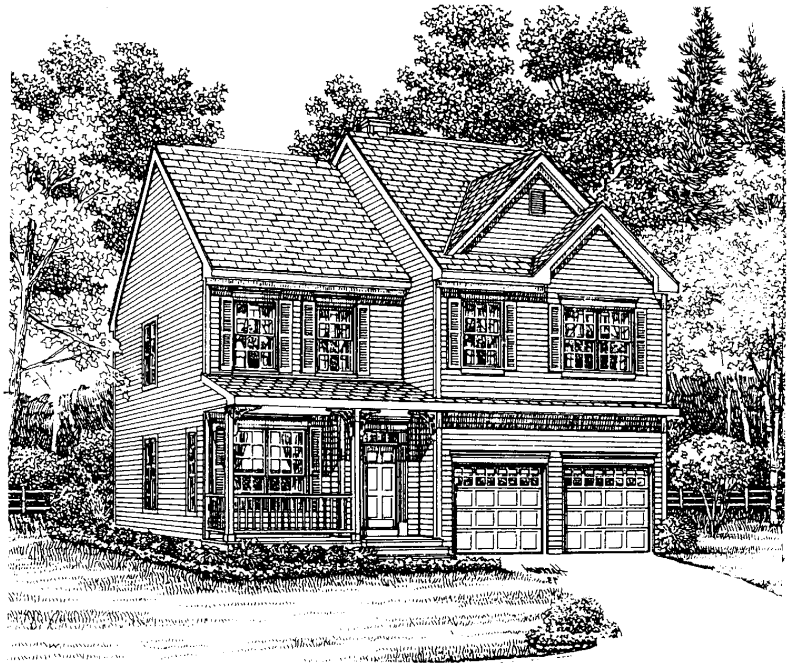


Figure 21
This house design fits comfortably on lots 45 to 50 feet wide, demonstrating that homes with 2,400 sq. ft. of floorspace and a two-car garage can be built within the village-scale lots featured in the "Option 5" zoning alternative. (Courtesy of Hovnanian Homes, Fox Heath subdivision, Perkiomen Township, Montgomery County.)

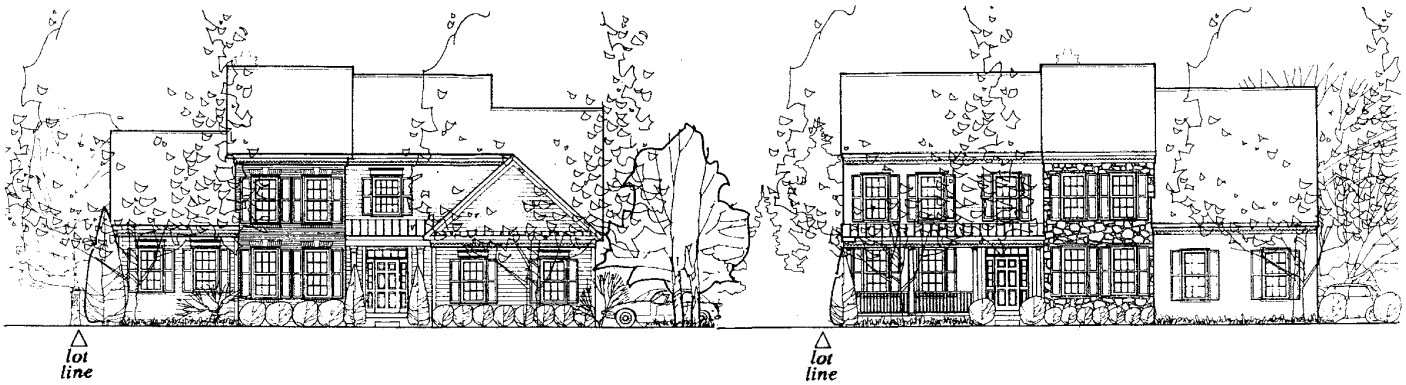


Figure 22
Developers who wish to build larger homes will find this example interesting. Although it contains nearly 3,000 sq. ft. and features an attractive side-loaded garage, it fits onto lots just 100 feet wide. This has been achieved by positioning the homes off-center, with 30 feet of side yard for the driveway and five feet of yard on the opposite side. This ensures 35 feet spacing between homes. (Courtesy of Realen Homes, Ambler)

nities without the golf course," underscoring the idea that a house on a small lot with a great view is frequently worth as much or more than the same house on a larger lot which is boxed in on all sides by other houses.

It is a well-established fact of real estate that people pay more for park-like settings, which offset their tendency to pay less for smaller lots. Successful developers know how to market homes in conservation subdivisions by emphasizing the open space. Rather than describing a house on a half-acre lot as such, the product is described as a house with 20 and one-half acres, the larger figure reflecting the area of conservation land that has been protected in the development. When that conservation area abuts other similar land, as in the township-wide open space network, a further marketing advantage exists.

Relationship of the *Growing Greener* Approach to Other Planning Techniques

Successful communities employ a wide array of conservation planning techniques simultaneously, over an extended period of time. Complementary tools which a community should consider adding to its "toolbox" of techniques include the purchase of development rights; donations of sales to conservancies; the transfer of development rights; and "landowner compacts" involving density shifts among contiguous parcels. Other techniques can be effective, but their potential for influencing the "big picture" is limited. The *Growing Greener* approach offers the greatest potential because it:

- does not require public expenditure,
- does not depend upon landowner charity,
- does not involve complicated regulations for shifting rights to other parcels, and
- does not depend upon the cooperation of two or more adjoining landowners to make it work.

Of course, municipalities should continue their efforts to preserve special properties in their entirety whenever possible, such as by working with landowners interested in donating easements or fee title to a local conservation group, purchasing development rights or fee title with county, state or federal grant money, and transferring development rights to certain "receiving areas" with increased density. However, until such time as more public money becomes available to help with such purchases, and until the Transfer of Development Rights mechanism becomes more operational at the municipal level, most parcels of land in any given community will probably eventually be developed. In that situation, coupling the conservation subdivision design approach with multi-optioned conservation zoning offers communities the most practical, doable way of protecting large acreages of land in a methodical and coordinated manner.

Appendix

Selected Examples of Conservation Subdivisions in Pennsylvania

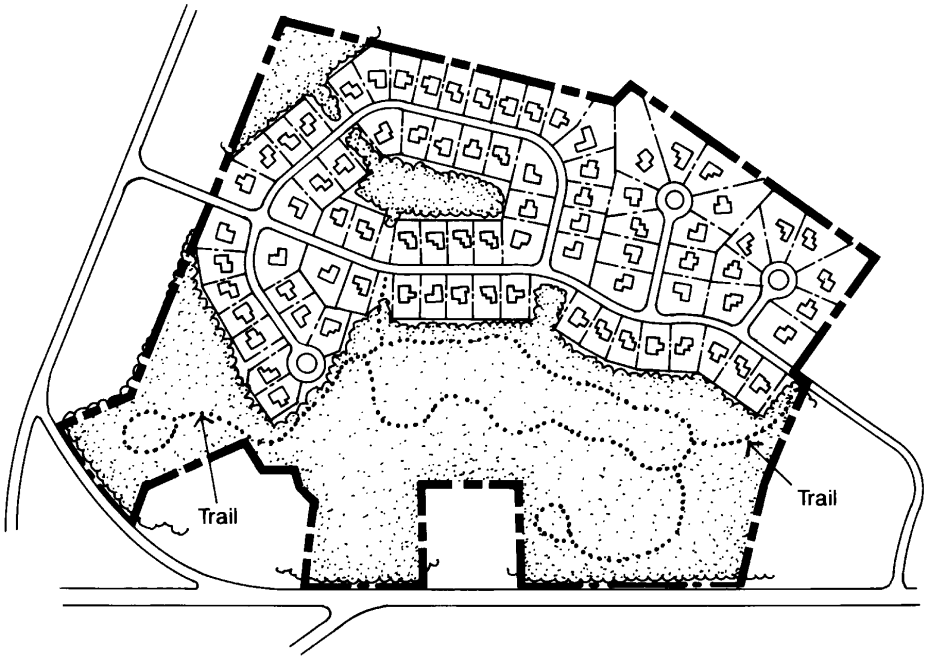
The two examples shown here demonstrate how conservation design principles can be used to protect different kinds of resources. In Garnet Oaks, a woodland wildlife preserve was set aside by the developer, who also constructed extensive walking trails. A well-equipped tot lot and an informal picnic grove provide additional amenities to the residents. At Farmview, 137 acres of productive farmland were permanently protected, in addition to most of the woodlands. This subdivision prompted the township to revise its conventional zoning so that the developer's creative design could be approved. Since that time over 500 acres of prime farmland has been preserved in this community through conservation subdivision design representing a $3.5 million conservation achievement (at an average land value of $7,000) and these figures continue to grow as further subdivisions are designed. The potential for replicating this and achieving similar results throughout the Commonwealth is enormous.

Garnet Oaks

Foulk Road, Bethel Township, Delaware County
Developer: Realen Homes, Ambler
Development Period: 1993–94

Just over half of this 58-acre site has been conserved as permanent privately-owned open space through the simple expedient of reducing lot sizes to the 10,000–12,000 sq. ft. range (approximately 1/4 acre). The developer reports that these lot sizes did not hinder sales because about two-thirds of the lots directly abut the densely wooded open space, which gives them the feel and privacy of larger lots. In fact, the evidence indicates that the open space definitely enhanced sales in two ways: increased absorption rates and higher prices (through premiums added to the prices of lots which abut the conservation areas).

The locations of these conservation areas were carefully selected after a comprehensive analysis of the site's natural and historic features had been conducted. Those secondary features that



were identified for preservation included a line of mature sycamore trees along an existing farm lane, a stone wall and springhouse, and several areas of healthy deciduous upland woods, in addition to the site's delineated wetlands. Based on information received from post-sales interviews in its previous developments, Realen's staff learned that today's homebuyers are considerably more discerning than they were 10 and 20 years ago, and now look for extra amenities not only in the houses but also in the neighborhood setting. This knowledge led Realen to take special measures to protect trees on individual houselots and within the street right-of-way. Their approach included collaborating with the Morris Arboretum in preparing a training manual for subcontractors and conducting training sessions in tree conservation practices, attendance at which was required of all subcontractors.

The woodland trail at Garnet Oaks

The centerpiece of Garnet Oaks' open space is the near mile-long woodland trail which winds its way through the 24-acre conservation area, connecting a well-equipped playground and a quiet picnic grove to the street system in three locations. Where the trail traverses areas of wet soils it is elevated on a low wooden boardwalk. This trail, which was cleared with assistance from a local Boy Scout Troop, features numerous small signs identifying the common and botanical names of the various plants and trees along the trail. Realen's staff also designed and produced an attractive eight-page trail brochure that illustrates and describes the flora, fauna, environmental areas, and historic features along the trail. The guide also explains the developer's creative use of low-lying woods as a temporary detention area for stormwater runoff, a naturalistic design that helped avoid a more conventional approach in which many trees within the preserve would have been removed to provide for a conventionally engineered basin. Realen's sales staff reported that prospective buyers who picked up a copy of the trail brochure and ventured out onto the trail typically decided to make their home purchase in Garnet Oaks.

Farmview

Woodside Road and Dolington Road, Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County
Developer: Realen Homes, Ambler
Development Period: 1990–96

Located on a 418-acre site, Farmview is a 322-lot "density-neutral" subdivision whose layout was designed to conserve 213 acres of land (51 percent of the property), including 145 acres of cropland and 68 acres of mature woods. While 59 percent of the original farmland was needed for development, 41 percent categorized as prime agricultural and farmland of statewide importance was able to be preserved in addition to nearly all of the wooded areas.

The 145 acres of farmland that have been saved were donated by the developer to the Lower Makefield Farmland Preservation Corporation, a local conservation organization whose members include local farmers, township residents and an elected official liaison. This cropland is leased to farmers in the community through multi-year agreements that encourage adaption of traditional farming practices to minimize impacts on the residents, whose yards are separated from their operations by a 75-foot deep hedgerow area thickly planted with native specie trees and shrubs.

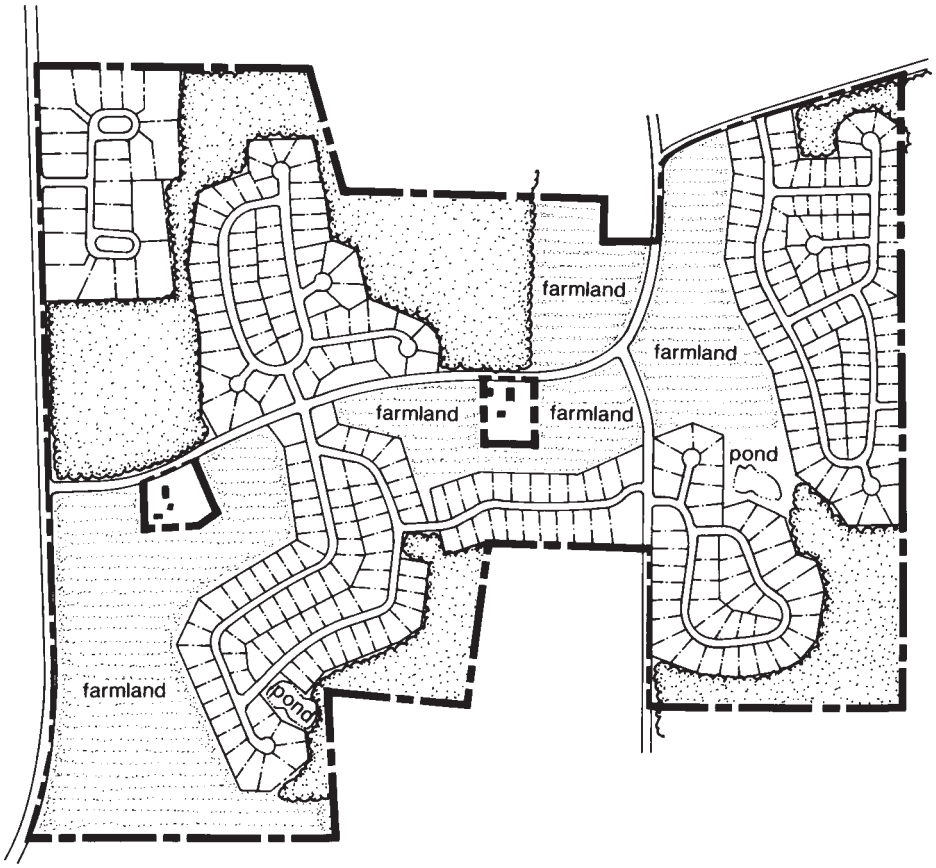
Realen Homes also donated the 68 acres of woodland to the township to support local conservation efforts in creating an extended network of forest habitat and wildlife travel corridors. These areas also offer potential for an informal neighborhood trail system in future years. (The developer's offer to construct such trails was declined by the supervisors, citing liability concerns, despite the fact that other townships in the region actively encourage such trails in new subdivisions and also on township conservation lands.)

Had it not been for the developer's initiative and continued interest, this subdivision would have been developed into the same number of standard-sized

one-acre lots, which was the only option permitted under the township's zoning ordinance in 1986 when Realen purchased the property. After 18 months of discussing the pros and cons of allowing smaller lots in exchange for serious land conservation benefits, the supervisors adopted new zoning provisions permitting such layouts specifically to preserve farmland when at least 51 percent of a property would be conserved. These regulations target the most productive soils as those which should be "designed around."

Although other developers were at first skeptical of Realen's proposal to build large homes (2,600–3,700 sq. ft.) on lots which were typically less than a half an acre in a marketplace consisting primarily of one acre zoning, the high absorption rate helped convince them that this approach was sound. Contributing to the project's benefits to both the developer and the township were reduced infrastructure costs (for streets, water, and sewer lines). Premiums added to "view lots" abutting the protected fields or woods also contributed to the project's profitability.

Homes with views overlooking working farmfields at Farmview



ECKERT SEAMANS CHERIN & MELLOTT, LLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

October 16, 1997

One South Market Sq. Building
213 Market Street
Post Office Box 1248
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Randall G. Arendt, Vice President
Conservation Planning
Natural Lands Trust, Inc.
1031 Palmers Mill Road
Media, PA 19063

Re: Conservation Planning Documents and
Growing Greener Workbook

Dear Mr. Arendt:

I have had the opportunity to review the *Growing Greener* workbook and the proposed conservation planning concepts set forth in that workbook for compliance with the provisions of the United States Constitution, the Pennsylvania Constitution, and the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (the "MPC"). In my opinion, the conservation planning concepts as set forth in the *Growing Greener* workbook are constitutional land use control concepts and the provisions comport with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

The subdivision concept which provides for a conceptual preliminary plan and standards for that plan is authorized specifically under the MPC as part of the two-stage planning process allowed by Section 503(1) of the MPC. The Zoning Ordinance concept utilizes a multi-tiered zoning system with options available to the landowner under the Zoning Ordinance. Such a device is specifically authorized under Section 605 of the MPC which specifically encourages innovation and promotion of flexibility, economy and ingenuity in development based upon express standards and criteria. The proposed ordinances contained in the workbook satisfy that specific requirement.

Harrisburg
Pittsburgh
Allentown
Philadelphia
Boston
Fort Lauderdale
Boca Raton
Miami
Tallahassee
Washington, D.C.

The provisions of both the United States Constitution and the Pennsylvania Constitution require that the land use regulations be reasonable and be intended to benefit the public health, safety and welfare. The concept of providing a variety of options for choices by the landowner meets both the reasonableness and public purpose tests of constitutionality. The benefit of the *Growing Greener* concept is that there will be a greater amount of usable open space, while at the same time the landowners will be able to make reasonable use of their property under the options available as proposed in the workbook.

Individual municipalities within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will have to apply the concepts and will have to establish their own densities based upon the unique circumstances in each particular municipality. There can be no guarantee that all such ordinances will be constitutional unless they satisfy the requirements of being reasonable with regard to the locational circumstances of the particular property and community in question. However, it is my opinion that if the concepts and procedures set forth in the *Growing Greener* workbook are followed and that the densities and requirements reflect the unique circumstances of the individual municipality, that the *Growing Greener* concept is lawful and constitutional in the Commonwealth. The concepts set forth in the *Growing Greener* workbook provide a new method of addressing the pressures of growth and development throughout both the urban and rural portions of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and I urge the municipal officials to give full consideration to these exciting new concepts.

Very truly yours,

Charles E. Zaleski

Charles E. Zaleski

CEZ/jr

Initial funding for
Growing Greener: Conservation by Design
was provided by:

Pennsylvania Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources

The William Penn Foundation

The Alexander Stewart, MD Foundation

With subsequent funding from:

Pennsylvania Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources

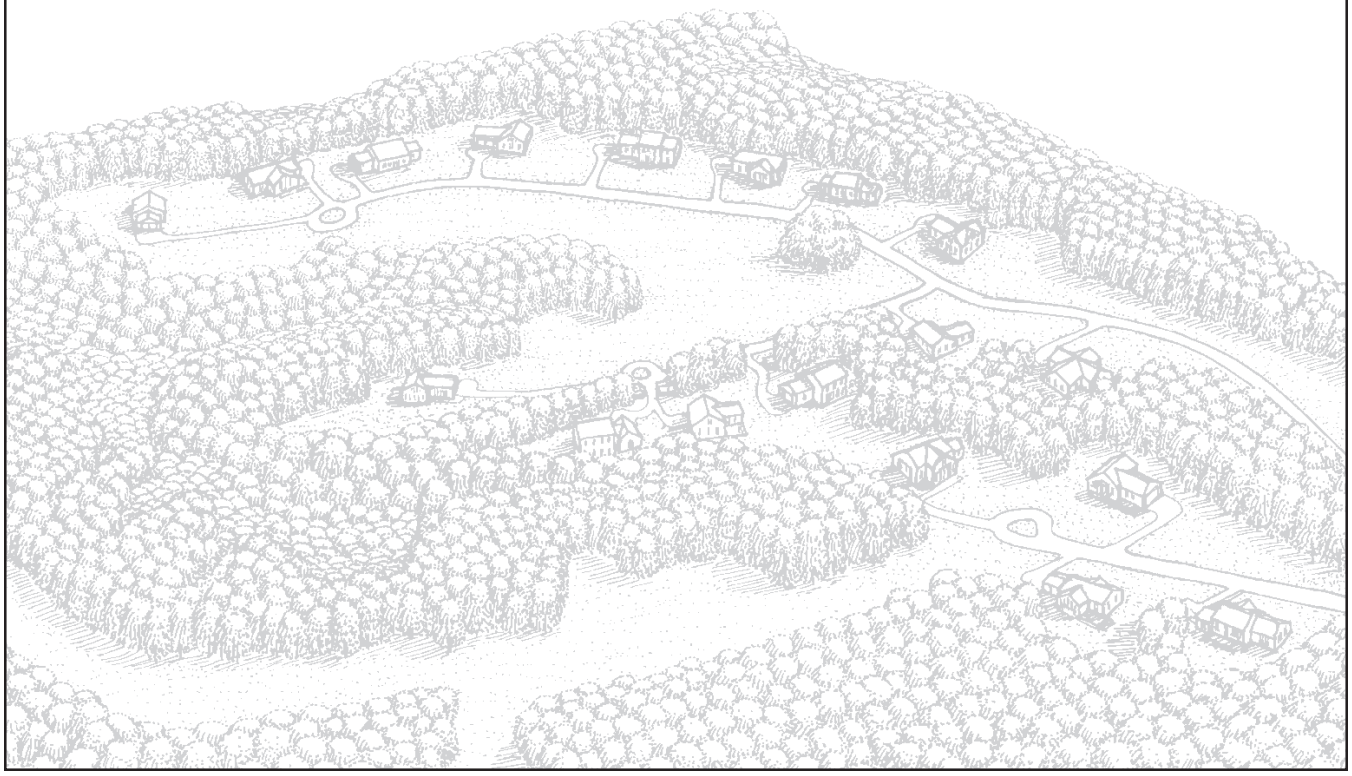
The Heinz Endowments

Pennsylvania Department of
Community and Economic Development/
Governor's Center for Local Government Services

Pennsylvania Department of
Environmental Protection

The United States
Environmental Protection Agency
Chesapeake Bay Program

The William Penn Foundation



APPENDIX F
RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

TOWN OF HOW
OCONTO COUNTY, WISCONSIN

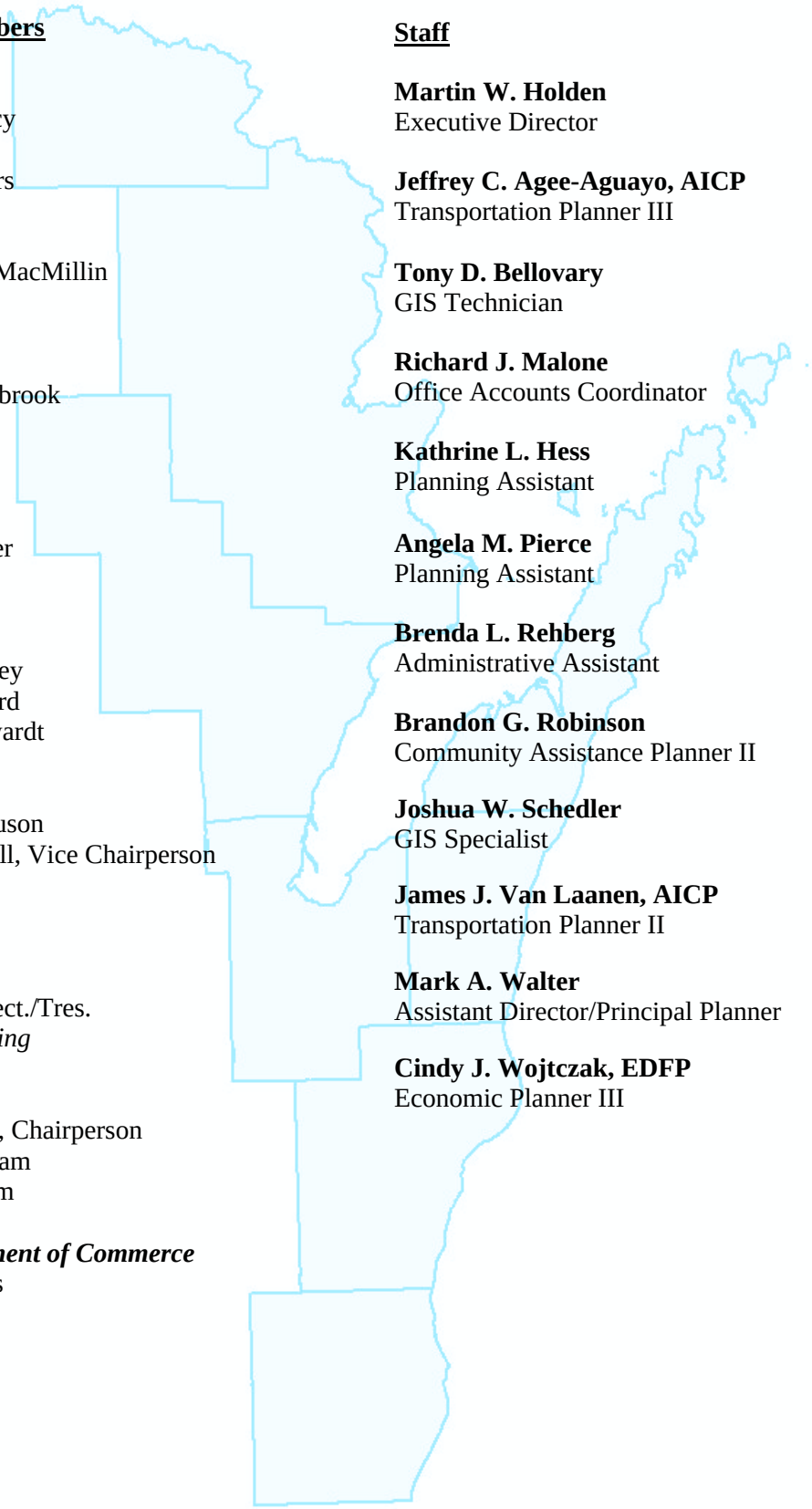
RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Town of How has prepared the following in response to comments received regarding the *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan* prior to its adoption on May 10, 2003. All comments were reviewed on a case-by-case basis and separated into two categories: those comments addressing information of a factual nature; and those comments expressing an opinion about aspects of the plan. All factual comments were reviewed, compared to the plan and information was changed accordingly where needed. All comments expressing opinions or ideas were reviewed and may be considered for incorporation into the plan on a case-by-case basis. Incorporated ideas or opinions will be consistent with the vision of the *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan*.

The town received one written comment (Department of Administration - Office of Land Information Services) and several verbal comments at the public hearing on the *Town of How 20 Year Comprehensive Plan*.

Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

May, 2003



Commission Members

Brown County
William M. Clancy
Paul Jadin
Clarence J. Lamers

Door County
Colleen Crocker-MacMillin

Florence County
Edwin Kelley
Yvonne Van Pembrook
John Zoeller

Kewaunee County
Gerald Novickis
Charles R. Wagner
Mary Hanrahan

Manitowoc County
Gregory E. Buckley
Kevin M. Crawford
Donald C. Markwardt

Marinette County
Florence I. Magnuson
Cheryl R. Maxwell, Vice Chairperson
Mary G. Meyer

Oconto County
Donald A. Glynn
Lois L. Trever, Sect./Tres.
Nomination Pending

Sheboygan County
James E. Gilligan, Chairperson
Michael K. Leibham
James R. Schramm

Wisconsin Department of Commerce
Sec., Cory Nettles

Staff

Martin W. Holden
Executive Director

Jeffrey C. Agee-Aguayo, AICP
Transportation Planner III

Tony D. Bellovary
GIS Technician

Richard J. Malone
Office Accounts Coordinator

Kathrine L. Hess
Planning Assistant

Angela M. Pierce
Planning Assistant

Brenda L. Rehberg
Administrative Assistant

Brandon G. Robinson
Community Assistance Planner II

Joshua W. Schedler
GIS Specialist

James J. Van Laanen, AICP
Transportation Planner II

Mark A. Walter
Assistant Director/Principal Planner

Cindy J. Wojtczak, EDFP
Economic Planner III