

# Town of Oconto Falls Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan



Planning for 2025 and Beyond  
March 2005

**OMNI**  
ASSOCIATES

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

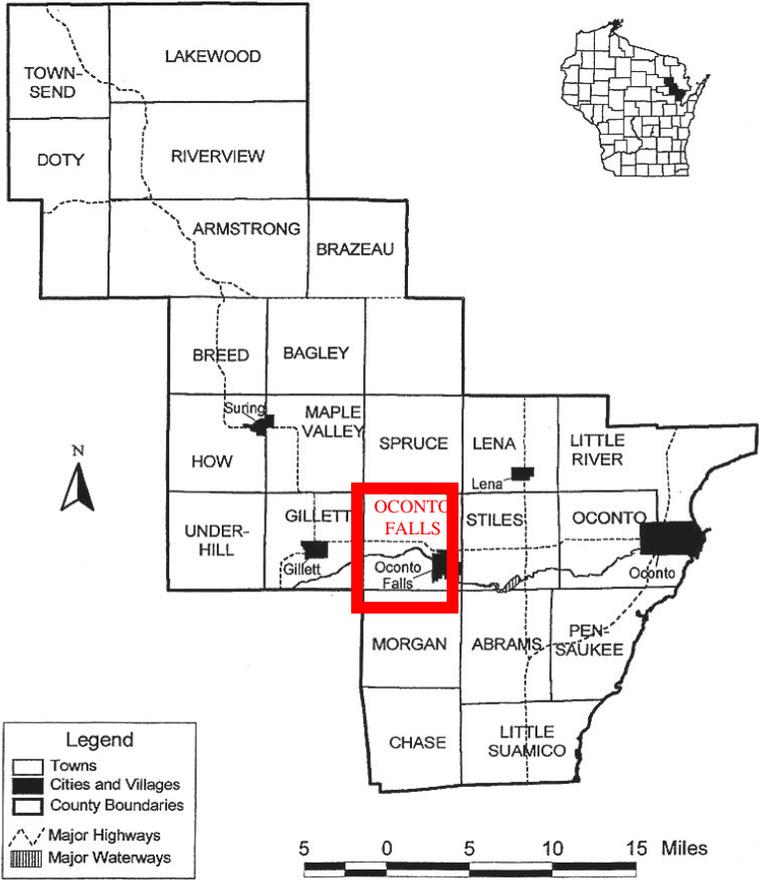
## Where is the Town of Oconto Falls?

The Town of Oconto Falls is located in the central southern half of Oconto County, Wisconsin between the City of Oconto Falls and City of Gillett. The Town is easily accessible via USH 141, which passes approximately 4 miles east of the Town of Oconto Falls. The Town is bisected by STH 22 and also enjoys easy access to STH 32.

The Town of Oconto Falls is an unspoiled rural paradise for residents seeking a relaxed living environment. The Town has a rich farming tradition and boasts approximately 4 miles of winding frontage along the Oconto River. Vast areas of woodlands, wetlands and other natural areas are found in the Town.

In total, the Town of Oconto Falls includes approximately 36 square miles of land area. The Town of Oconto Falls shares borders with: the Town of Spruce to the north, Town of Gillett to the west, Town of Morgan to the south, the Town of Stiles and the City of Oconto Falls to the east.

### LOCATION MAP TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS, OCONTO COUNTY, WI



Created at the Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1999.

## Planning History and Purpose

At the 1999 Annual Meeting, the Town Board budgeted \$5,000.00 to start the planning process. Nothing happened until the 2000 annual meeting when a Planning Committee of 10 was formed.

The Planning Committee began having meetings to learn what is required and how to proceed with the planning process. The Committee worked closely with the University of Wisconsin Extension Community Resource Development Educator, Robert Burke, to understand what is needed, how to proceed and the importance of the plan and planning process.

The Planning Committee met with a representative of the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission on December 6, 2000 and gained valuable information. This information led the Committee to form a 22-item list of concerns that they wanted a planner to address in the formation of a plan for the Town of Oconto Falls.

The list of 22 items was sent to six (6) planning consultants and the town had follow-up meetings with four of these firms. OMNI Associates, from Appleton, was hired.

In the meantime, the Town sent out a survey to all property owners, conducted a visioning meeting, and a strengths and weaknesses identification meeting. Members of the Committee also attended workshops in the Towns of Morgan and Gillett, and a Towns Association Meeting in the Wisconsin Dells. In October 2002, a seven member Planning Commission was appointed from the original Planning Committee.

This community-based planning approach helped the Town to identify and address important land use, resource protection, farmland preservation and development issues facing the Town of Oconto Falls.

Developing this plan sends a clear message that the Town of Oconto Falls wishes to act proactively – to set its own ground rules for the types of development that will benefit the Town, maintain a rural atmosphere and still provide flexibility for landowners.

A Planning Advisory Committee initiated the planning process in the Town. During the first year of the planning process, the Town of Oconto Falls established a Plan Commission. This



### DEFINITIONS

**Vision:** An overall statement related to each of the nine required elements expressing the Town's expectations for the future. These statements provide a framework and context to consider when making future land use decisions.

**Goal:** A statement that describes, usually in general terms, a desired future condition. Goals will usually only address one specific aspect of the vision.

**Objective:** A statement that describes a specific action or condition that is to be attained within a stated period of time. Objectives include ordinances changes, new programs, and other tasks. The objectives serve as a "to do" list to implement the plan. To be effective, objectives must be evaluated regularly and updated as necessary.

**Policy:** A course of action, or rule of conduct, used to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan. Policies are based on specific research. Therefore, they are developed after vision statements. In some cases, the policies relate closely to the vision, but provide more refined, specific actions the Town will abide by when making decisions.

Commission included members of the original Planning Advisory Committee. The Plan Commission continued the work started by the Planning Advisory Committee and recommended adoption of this comprehensive plan to the Town Board.

## Scope of This Document

This 20-year *Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Oconto Falls*, includes four major components:

- *A profile of the demographic, economic and housing characteristics of the Town;*
- *An inventory and assessment of the environment, community facilities, and natural resources;*
- *Visions, goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies; and*
- *A series of maps that depict existing and future land use patterns in the Town.*

This plan was developed under the authority of 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, Wisconsin’s “Smart Growth” Law. The law requires that a 20-year comprehensive plan be developed and adopted by all units of government that wish to have a say in land use decisions. The law authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans to serve as guides for the development of their communities. The law also authorizes multi-jurisdictional planning efforts.

The Smart Growth Law defines, for the first time, what is meant by a “comprehensive plan” in Wisconsin. It includes nine (9) required elements. These are:

- 1) Issues and Opportunities (Chapters 2 & 3)
- 2) Housing (Chapter 4)
- 3) Transportation (Chapter 5)
- 4) Utilities and Community Facilities (Chapter 6)
- 5) Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources (Chapter 7)
- 6) Economic Development (Chapter 8)
- 7) Intergovernmental Cooperation (Chapter 9)
- 8) Land Use (Chapters 10 & 11)
- 9) Implementation (Chapter 12)



In addition, the state requires that these elements be developed in concert with Wisconsin’s 14 goals for local planning, which are:

- 1) Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- 2) Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- 3) Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
- 4) Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

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

## **Public Involvement**

The *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan* was developed in an environment open to public input. To gain citizen understanding and support throughout the planning process, the public was provided with a variety of meaningful opportunities to become involved in the process. Public input was facilitated through a series of workshops and special activities. Copies of meeting agendas and attendance sheets as well as the *Public Participation Plan and Adoption Procedures* are provided in the appendices of this document.

What follows is a description of some of the primary opportunities for public education and input in the planning program.

### **KICK-OFF MEETING**

The Town of Oconto Falls “kick-off” meeting was Tuesday, April 23, 2002 at the Oconto Falls Town Hall. At that meeting, OMNNI Associates reviewed the planning program in detail, presented the *DRAFT Public Participation Plan and Adoption Procedures*, and facilitated a discussion about Town values.

## **PLAN COMMISSION MEETINGS**

The Plan Commission met monthly to review draft text, maps, establish goals and priorities for plan implementation. Each of these meetings was duly posted and open to the public.



## **VISION WORKSHOP**

At this workshop, participants engaged in an exercise to focus on what the Town would look like in 20 years. In the exercise, participants were given a series of phrases to complete about the future of the Town. For example, “In twenty years looking down from an airplane at the Town of Oconto Falls one would see ...?” OMNNI Associates used the responses to draft a vision statement for each of the nine (9) required plan elements.

## **MAP WORKSHOP**

In 2004, the Planning Commission hosted an informational meeting to share with the public copies of the plan maps. At the meeting, OMNNI presented an overview of how the maps were developed and unveiled the DRAFT future land use map. During this meeting, residents were also given the opportunity to participate in a consensus mapping exercise whereby everyone in attendance received a map of the Town. On this map, they were asked to identify where they would like to see future commercial, industrial, and residential development. They were also asked to identify important natural resources that should be protected and areas of concern.

## **INTERNET WEB PAGE**

The planning program was profiled on an interactive web page hosted on the OMNNI Associates Web Site. The page included meeting schedules, summaries of past meetings, draft maps and plan chapters, and general education materials about the Smart Growth law. The site was updated regularly to ensure that the information was current and would effectively inform the public.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING**

As part of the planning program, the Plan Commission hosted an intergovernmental meeting with representatives from neighboring units of government, the school district, Oconto County, the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to discuss the existing plans of these neighboring jurisdictions and agencies and identify potential conflicts that may exist with the proposed *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan*. Participants were given the opportunity for mutual exchange of ideas and recommendations to address any conflicts. Based on the conversations and suggestions received at this meeting, the *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan* includes recommendations to continue to resolve intergovernmental planning issues and conflicts over the 20-year planning period.

## Town Values

During the Kick-Off Meeting, those in attendance were asked to identify the values that influence people to live in the Town of Oconto Falls. More importantly, participants were asked what makes residents remain, take pride in, and become actively involved in the community. The complete list of those values is provided below. These value statements provided a clear direction for the development and implementation of the *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan*. Moreover, these values clearly indicate that residents of the Town of Oconto Falls share a strong sense of community identity and pride closely associated with the rural character and natural areas that make the Town of Oconto Falls a desirable place to live.

- *We value the Town's quiet, peaceful, and clean environment.*
- *We value the Town as a wholesome place to live and rear children.*
- *We value our access to recreation opportunities (i.e. Oconto River, hunting, nearby parks in City of Oconto Falls and Gillett).*
- *We value our location – surrounding the City of Oconto Falls.*
- *We value our access to quality fire and ambulance service through the City of Oconto Falls.*
- *We value the Town's beauty – its rolling hills, woodlands, river frontage, and open, scenic vistas – free from development.*
- *We value the Town's wildlife habitat areas.*
- *We value our farms and rural businesses.*

## **2.0 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT**

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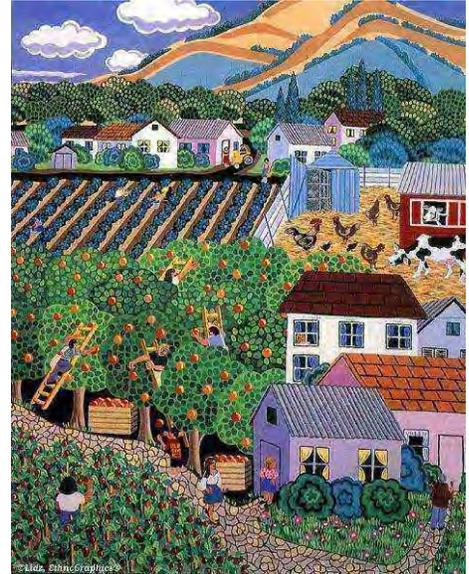
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## 2.0 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

### Introduction

The Issues and Opportunities Element provides the background information on the Town and the overall visions to guide future development and redevelopment over a 20-year planning period. Specifically, the Issues and Opportunities Element includes population, household and employment forecasts and demographic trends, age distributions, education levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local government unit.

This chapter presents the overall vision for the Town of Oconto Falls, including a complete assessment of local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The community characteristics and general background information that form the basis for the Issues & Opportunities Element, is included in Chapter 3 Community Profile.



### Visioning Process

To identify community issues and opportunities, a four-step process was utilized, which resulted in the development of individual vision statements for each of the nine required smart growth planning elements. This process included: community SWOT meeting, cognitive mapping and element vision development. What follows is a description of the activities and the major issues and opportunities identified through the issues and opportunities process.

### SWOT MEETING

What follows is a brief definition of a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat as used in a SWOT exercise.

- Strength**     *Something that makes a community stand out when compared to other communities. Something that makes you proud to call the community home. A strength can be a physical asset, a program, an environmental condition or an impression or feeling (i.e. friendly community atmosphere).*
- Weakness**     *Opposite of a strength. Problem that needs to be addressed.*
- Opportunity**     *Something that could be done to improve the community. A potential.*
- Threat**     *A threat may be internal or external. A threat can be anything that could jeopardize the future success of a community.*

A SWOT meeting is a planning exercise used to get communities thinking about:

- where they have been;
- where they are;
- where they want to be in the future; and
- how they want to get there.

On **Tuesday, June 25, 2002**, the Town of Oconto Falls Planning Committee participated in a SWOT exercise. The objective of the exercise was to find out how the Planning Committee members viewed various aspects of the Town. This could include their feelings on physical things such as roads, utilities, etc., and “quality of life” issues. Six committee members and one Town official attended. In addition, one committee member submitted comments in writing the day after the exercise was held. The exercise was facilitated by Rob Burke, Community Educator for the Oconto County UW-Extension, in cooperation with OMNNI Associates, the Town’s planning consultant.

At the meeting, each member of the Town of Oconto Falls Planning Committee was asked to share what he or she thought were the Town’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Anyone could list as many items as he/she wished under each category. Rob Burke recorded all ideas. The table on the next few pages lists the responses given, by category.

At the meeting, participants collectively agreed that the Town’s primary *strengths* lie in its rural character and natural features. The most important *weaknesses* seemed to be the Town’s lack of zoning control and poor relationship with the City of Oconto Falls.

Participants agreed that the Town’s greatest *opportunities* lie in its ability to capitalize on the Town’s rural environment by promoting recreational uses and limited development. Uncontrolled growth and annexation were among the greatest *threats* to the future of the Town of Oconto Falls.

# Strengths

- Oconto River - a source of scenic beauty and other recreational assets such as fishing, boating, canoeing, snowmobiling, skating, and wildlife habitat
- Well-maintained homes and properties that are spread out throughout the Town.
- A number of undeveloped lakes, several of which provide scenic vistas, and one (Balcom Lake) which has a public access point.
- Abundance of wooded areas, hilly terrain, and natural habitat for plants and wildlife. Probably more now than in past because of less pasturing.
- Well maintained local roads and State Highways, several of which are designated as “scenic”. The roads provide opportunities for biking and inline skating, dog walking, and limited access to snowmobile trails.
- While close and having easy access to Green Bay and Shawano for employment, shopping, and entertainment, and to Oconto Falls for city services (libraries, fire protection, groceries, hospital and banks), too far away to become a “bedroom community”.
- Friendly (not “nosy) people that you can count on to watch your home while away, help retrieve lost pets, and watch out for each other.
- Very good relationship with neighboring Town officials that respond positively when issues arise.
- Cooperation with the City of Oconto Falls on the joint fire department.
- Able to sustain several dairy farm businesses, plus other businesses that complement rural setting.
- Close proximity to some agricultural services.
- Good school district.
- Provides living opportunities for a variety of income levels - don't have to be rich.
- Some residents have long histories and deep roots in the area.
- Although development has increased, no part of the Township has been "spoiled" by development yet. We have no fast-food restaurants, no gas stations and few billboards.

# Weaknesses

- Abandoned, unsafe buildings.
- Unsafe wells, often in connection with unsafe buildings.
- Rapidly rising property taxes.
- The loss of good farmland due to development pattern.
- Lack of communication among realtors, sellers, buyers, county zoning, etc. regarding what residents should expect when moving into a rural area.
- Lack of enforcement of Land Use/Zoning requirements.
- County zoning policy is haphazard and not goal-oriented.
- Township can feel unwelcoming to newcomers.
- Some new homes that are set deeply from the road, cutting into farmland and inaccessible to services and homes that are being built behind homes on the same lots (County CC).
- Farm businesses are becoming less profitable.
- Lack of walking or biking trails and no location signs for boat landings or fishing areas.
- No social center for people to gather; nothing to bring us together.
- Poor relationship with City of Oconto Falls.

<h1 style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Opportunities</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism for canoeing on the river and outdoor recreation such as: bike and walking trails, sites for fishing and canoeing.</li> <li>• Agricultural tourism such as horses stables/riding, game farms, and variety of sizes of dairy farms.</li> <li>• Tourism and other businesses based on the increased traffic volume of those traveling to northern Oconto Co.</li> <li>• Rural/Bed and Breakfasts.</li> <li>• Development of a banquet hall.</li> <li>• The preservation of personal property rights, balanced with existing owners desires and community needs.</li> <li>• The preservation of wooded land, a beautiful river and river/lake frontage.</li> <li>• Preservation of existing farms and their land base.</li> <li>• Development of a mix of newer, older, affordable and luxury housing could be developed.</li> </ul>
<h1 style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Threats</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annexation by the City of Oconto Falls of land most suited for development, which lowers Town’s tax base.</li> <li>• Losing the fact that we are a well-kept “Secret” (Nice place to live)</li> <li>• Contamination of values and behavior by drugs, crime, and vandalism.</li> <li>• Loss of farmland and increased taxes due to rural subdivisions.</li> <li>• Poor placement of homes and subdivisions such that homes are built deep set from the road cutting up farmland and making it harder to crop.</li> <li>• Homes built around perimeter of farmland (on the roadside) could pit a couple farmers against dozens of homeowners.</li> <li>• Unsightly, spotty development.</li> <li>• Allowing developers or homeowners to put in a road and then have the Township take over maintenance may prove to be very expensive long term. Should every new house get its own road?</li> <li>• Depleting profits from farm businesses, resulting in the sell-off of land for development.</li> <li>• Loss of agricultural services in the area for farm businesses</li> <li>• Limited public access to river frontage.</li> <li>• Increased traffic, noise, pollution, etc., due to widening of county roads.</li> <li>• Loss of wildlife and water quality due to increased traffic and development.</li> <li>• Potential development of fast-food restaurants, gas stations and billboards.</li> </ul>

## PHOTO ASSIGNMENT

During the summer of 2002, the Planning Committee was provided with several disposable cameras to photograph areas of the Town to illustrate desired housing types, available and desired utilities and community facilities, transportation features, land uses, scenic areas and local economic development opportunities. The photos taken by the Planning Committee served as an important reference for understanding the Town vision. **The committee's photos are included throughout this plan.**

## COGNITIVE MAPPING

A cognitive map, or mental map, *is a map drawn by a person that geographically locates his or her memories, ideas and thoughts of a particular place.* Since cognitive maps are based on individual's preferences and opinions there are no "right" or "wrong" maps. Cognitive maps are used to delineate geographic areas of a community people like, dislike, frequently visit, feel are important, travel through regularly, feel safe, etc.

As part of the **Map Workshop**, the Planning Commission and other residents in attendance were provided two maps of the Town of Oconto Falls. On the **first map**, participants were asked to delineate important travel routes and aesthetically pleasing areas of the Town. The most attractive places were colored in one shade, less attractive another, not attractive in yet another color.

On the **second map**, participants outlined those areas where they would like to see new commercial/industrial development, new residential development, new recreation areas and open space in the Town of Oconto Falls.

These maps were used in the development of the *Future Land Use Map* presented later in this plan. This approach helped to ensure that the *Future Land Use Map* accurately reflects community concerns and priorities for the future.

## VISION DEVELOPMENT

At the SWOT Meeting in June 2002, the Planning Committee received a visioning assignment to complete individually. The assignment involved completing a series of statements related to what the Town of Oconto Falls would look like in 20 years. The statements related to each of the nine (9) required plan elements. For example, participants were asked to complete the following statement, "*In 20 years, looking down from an airplane at the Town of Oconto Falls, one would see...*" In August, the committee members met with OMNNI to share their responses. OMNNI then used the answers to develop draft vision statements, which the Planning Committee reviewed in September 2002. Each of the final vision statements is provided at the end of this chapter.

## Visions

Rather than develop a series of policy statements, the Planning Committee participated in an extensive visioning process to establish a framework from which to make future planning decisions for the Town of Oconto Falls. The result of this process was a vision statement for each of the nine required plan elements, including an overall vision statement. This process was critical to establish a unified vision for the Town of Oconto Falls and provide a direction and focus for the planning effort.

Below are the community vision statements, which represent the broad interests of Town residents, elected/appointed officials, business leaders and property owners. These visions establish the planning framework and a direction for subsequent planning efforts and decisions in the Town.

Supporting goals, objectives and program initiatives are described in Chapter 12 of this plan.

### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT (OVERALL VISION)

*The Town of Oconto Falls is a quiet, rural community with farmlands dominating the landscape. Limited single-family residential development is located on large lots throughout the Town helping to maintain rural character. Privately managed conservation or clustered development is available for those seeking smaller lot development. Seniors live independently, with assistance from family, friends, neighbors, and the County. The primary threats facing the Town are annexation, a limited tax base and increasing residential growth.*

### HOUSING ELEMENT VISION

*Single-family housing is available throughout the Town of Oconto Falls to all income levels where on-site waste treatment is permissible. To maintain the Town's rural character, single-family residences are located to blend in with the Town's natural features and farmland. All residential development in the Town of Oconto Falls is attractive and well maintained.*

### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT VISION

*Well-maintained local roads and county trunks serve the Town of Oconto Falls. Residents enjoy easy access to nearby communities via STH 22 and other connecting highways. Residents depend on their own vehicles to meet their transportation needs and use the Town's interconnecting bike, snowmobile and pedestrian trails. Residents without vehicles rely on the kindness of friends, families and neighbors. Volunteer groups (i.e. churches, etc.) and the County provide transportation opportunities for seniors and other transit-dependent residents. Care has been taken to ensure that local roads are wide enough for farm machinery.*



## UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT VISION

*The Town of Oconto Falls continues to provide all the basic Town. The Town works with neighboring communities to provide residents with efficient, cost-effective regional services that reduce the tax burden. Other needs are met by traveling to nearby communities like Oconto Falls. Residents in need of specialized services travel to the City of Green Bay or elsewhere. All residents rely on private well water and individual waste treatment systems.*

## AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT VISION



*The Town of Oconto Falls has successfully maintained more than 80 percent of the farmland and rural character that existed in 2004. This achievement was the result of dedicated farmers, the actions of Town government, and the consolidation of small family farms. Contiguous areas of woodlands, wetlands and other natural areas have also been protected from development. Farmland and natural areas enhance the rural character of the Town by maintaining open vistas and providing buffers*

*between residential areas to maintain the low, rural density of development desired by residents. Recreational opportunities include fishing, hunting and biking along Town roads. The Oconto River is a focal point for community pride and remains a prime source for various water-related recreation activities and scenic enjoyment.*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT VISION



*Economic development in the Town of Oconto Falls is in harmony with the Town's rural character. Farming remains the foundation of the local economy. Residents also enjoy small businesses that have developed along the STH 22 and 32 corridors. These businesses must rely on individual water and sanitary facilities. With limited employment opportunities in the Town, residents travel, on average, 65 miles roundtrip daily to work.*

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT VISION

*The Town of Oconto Falls works cooperatively, through shared service agreements, with the City of Oconto Falls and Oconto County to provide Town residents with cost-efficient services including police, fire/rescue and quality roads. The Town continues to pursue opportunities to provide coordinated, cost-effective services with neighboring communities and the County. The Town, City and County work cooperatively on issues such as zoning, annexation and development. The Gillett and Oconto Falls school districts coordinate with the Town on issues of mutual importance.*

## **LAND USE ELEMENT VISION**

*In 2025, agricultural uses still dominate the landscape in the Town of Oconto Falls. Through successful implementation of its Comprehensive Plan and supporting regulations, the Town has maintained its rural character while still providing quality single-family residential areas and commercial properties. New residences are well planned to protect the Town's natural resources, farmland and aesthetic appeal.*

## **IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT VISION**

*The Town of Oconto Falls works with neighboring communities and grant-providing agencies to fund needed municipal projects. The Town continues to recognize and value the importance of comprehensive planning as its primary tool to guide development. The Town, with input from residents, administers its ordinances to provide for orderly development. Development decisions and provision of public services are determined based on resident concerns and their impact on Town resources.*

## 3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

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## 3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

### Demographic Profile



The planning process for the Town of Oconto Falls begins with a profile of the people who live, work and own property in the community. Specifically, this section analyzes the size, composition and trends of the population. This information is critical to forecasting the need for community facilities and services, since it is people who will demand better schools, roads, parks, jobs and other public services.

### POPULATION TRENDS

The Town of Oconto Falls has experienced **sporadic population gains** over the last four decades as demonstrated in Table 1. To spite an overall population gain, the Town has seen its share of the total county population diminish.

TABLE 1 HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS						
Location	1970	1980	1990	2000	Actual Chg 1970-2000	% Change 1970-2000
<i>Town of Oconto Falls</i>	895	1,033	1,014	1,139	244	27.3%
Share of County Population	3.5%	3.6%	3.4%	3.2%	NA	NA
Oconto County	25,553	28,947	30,226	35,634	10,081	22%

Source: WI Dept. Administration, Demographic Service Center and 2000 U.S. Census

To put the population growth rate of the Town of Oconto Falls into context, Table 2 compares the population changes for all Towns in Oconto County. From this table, it is apparent that the growth in the Town of Oconto Falls is rather moderate when compared to the other Towns in the county and behind the average for all Towns. Of the 23 Towns in Oconto County, the **Town of Oconto Falls growth rate ranked 16<sup>th</sup>**.

From the 1990 Census to 2000, the population of Oconto County (as a whole – including cities and villages) increased by 5,138. This was a growth rate of 17 percent for the decade. As can be seen from Table 2, many of the smaller Towns experienced a faster growth rate than the county.

<b>TABLE 2 COMPARISON OF TOWN POPULATION TRENDS</b>			
<b>Town Name</b>	<b>1990 Population</b>	<b>2002 Population Estimate</b>	<b>% Change 1990 - 2002</b>
<i>Town of Oconto Falls</i>	1,014	1,179	16.3%
Town of Abrams	1,347	1,861	38.2%
Town of Bagley	271	341	26.0%
Town of Brazeau	1,169	1,436	22.8%
Town of Breed	564	686	21.6%
Town of Chase	1,375	2,270	65.1%
Town of Doty	184	263	42.9%
Town of Gillett	1,026	1,099	7.1%
Town of How	564	579	2.7%
Town of Lakewood	607	901	48.4%
Town of Lena	790	771	-2.4%
Town of Little River	1,003	1,076	7.3%
Town of Little Suamico	2,637	4,164	57.9%
Town of Maple Valley	690	678	-1.8%
Town of Morgan	815	918	12.6%
Town of Mountain	730	868	18.9%
Town of Oconto	999	1,349	35.0%
Town of Pensaukee	979	1,252	27.9%
Town of Riverview	483	848	75.6%
Town of Spruce	776	897	15.6%
Town of Stiles	1,243	1,515	21.9%
Town of Townsend	715	997	39.4%
Town of Underhill	668	869	30.1%
All Towns in Oconto County	21,379	26,817	25.4%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census and 2002 DOA Population Estimates

Table 3 projects the population of the Town of Oconto Falls through 2025 and compares this population change to Oconto County, and the State of Wisconsin for the same time period. These projections indicate that the Town of Oconto Falls is expected to experience a population increase greater than the state growth rate, but slightly less than the overall growth rate projected for Oconto County.

TABLE 3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000 – 2025			
Year	Town of Oconto Falls	Oconto County	Wisconsin
2000	1,139	35,652	5,363,675
2005	1,200	37,720	5,531,025
2010	1,258	39,670	5,700,303
2015	1,308	41,385	5,878,871
2020	1,355	43,018	6,056,186
2025	1,394	44,351	6,216,980
<b>Percent Change 2000-2025</b>	22.4%	24.4%	15.9%

Source: DOA Demographic Service Center Projections, 2004

**POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS**

Population figures and growth rates do not provide any insight about the characteristics of the population. To learn more about the people of the Town of Oconto Falls, information about the race, sex, and age of the population must be examined.

In 2000, there were **565 males and 574 females** living in the Town of Oconto Falls. Nearly 100% of the residents reported their race as white in 2000 U.S. Census.

The median age of a Town of Oconto Falls resident in 2000 was 38.5. This average is slightly lower than the median age of a Oconto County resident (38.8) and also higher than the median age of a Wisconsin Resident (36.0).

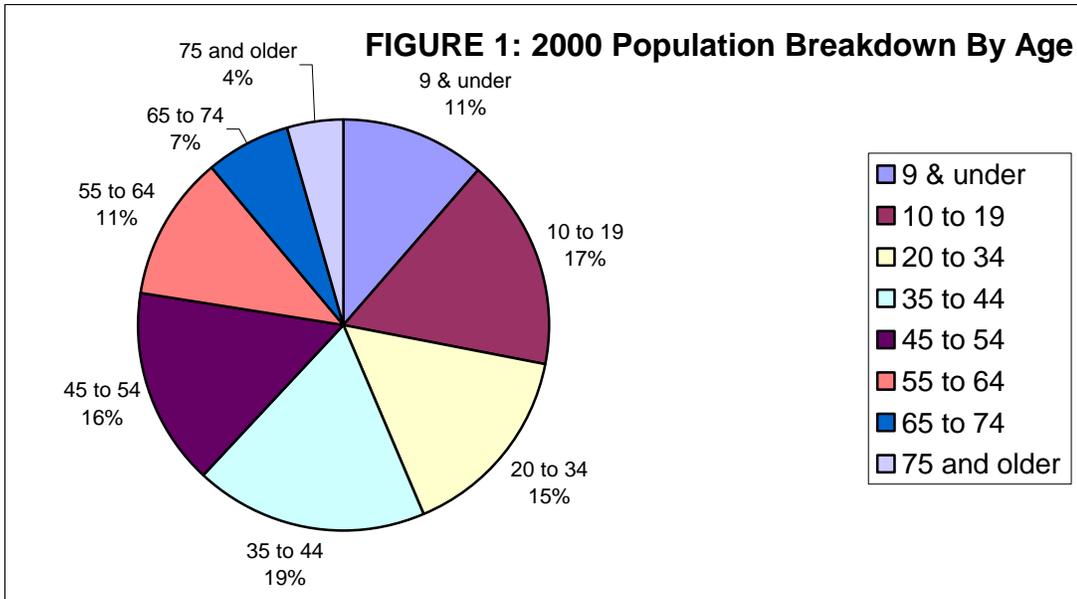


Figure 1 examines the age distribution of Town residents in 2000. What is significant to notice from the chart is that the age groupings are fairly evenly distributed. This is important because it suggests that services will be needed for residents of all ages (young and old).

## **GENERAL HOUSEHOLD TRENDS**

A “household” can be basically described as a group of people living together in a single dwelling unit. This could include a family, a single person, or a group of unrelated individuals sharing a house or an apartment, but excluding those persons living in a group quarters.

National and state trends have all moved towards an increase in the number of households, along with a decrease in the average number of persons per household. The main reasons for this decrease in household size include:

- a decrease in birth rate;
- people waiting longer to get married;
- an increased divorce rate; and
- an increase in the average life span thereby resulting in more elderly people living either alone or with another family member.

The Town of Oconto Falls has not escaped this trend. Between 1990 and 2000, the total number of households increased from 350 to 434. During this same period, the population per household decreased slightly from 2.69 to 2.62. This trend is expected to continue in the Town over the next 20 years.

The vast majority of the Town’s households (76%) are family households (families). Of these family households the most common type was married-couple family households (66.6%). However, the number of non-family households is quite large for a Town the size of Oconto Falls. In 2000, nearly a third of all households (104) were considered non-family households. The vast majority of these non-family households (80) were people living alone.

## **Economic Profile<sup>1</sup>**

Economic conditions have a direct impact on the supply, demand and costs for housing, infrastructure and services within a community. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the economic situation in the Town of Oconto Falls to predict additional housing, infrastructure and service needs. This section profiles the local economic environment by examining factors, including per capita income, poverty rate, and unemployment rate.

To understand and appreciate the local economic picture in the Town of Oconto Falls, it is necessary to look beyond the Town and examine characteristics in Oconto County.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the information included in this section was obtained from the *Oconto County Workforce Profile* developed by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Division of Workforce Solutions, Bureau of Workforce Information, October 2001.

Comparisons between the Town and the county provide much more information about the local economic situation than would a simple look at conditions only in the Town of Oconto Falls. Furthermore, these comparisons put economic characteristics into perspective.

## LABOR FORCE

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons who are 16 years of age and older. Table 4 tracks the rate of employment and unemployment in Oconto County between 1996 and 2001 (5 year period). According to the data available, there was a significant increase in the size of the labor force between 2000 and 2001. However, many of these individuals were unable to find employment, which significantly increased the unemployment rates. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the **Town of Oconto Falls had 852 individuals over the age of 16, 661 of which are in the labor force. Of those 661 individuals, 18 or 2.1% were unemployed.**

TABLE 4 OCONTO COUNTY CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE DATA						
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor Force	15,100	15,400	15,771	15,493	15,935	16,896
Employed	14,200	14,500	14,902	14,809	15,210	15,752
Unemployed	900	900	809	684	725	1124
Unemployment Rate	5.9%	5.8%	5.1%	4.4%	4.5%	6.8%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information. Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program.

The term used to describe the relationship between the labor force and population is participation rate. Oconto County has traditionally had a lower participation rate than the State of Wisconsin. The 2000 county participation rate was 66.7%, behind 2000 Wisconsin participation rate of 69%. This can be partially attributed to the fact that Oconto is a rural county and rural counties often have lower participation rates than urban counties primarily due to fewer employment opportunities. Participation rates are often affected by economic, cultural, and demographic conditions. The Town of Oconto Falls participation rate in 2000 was 77.5%.

## MAJOR COUNTY EMPLOYERS

According to the Town of Oconto Falls Resident Survey, **53% of respondents work outside of the township. The remaining respondents, 47% either did not work, were retired, or worked in the Town.**

About one-third of all employed Oconto County residents work outside of the county. The Green Bay/Brown County area is the destination for over 70% of the outbound commuters. Brown County also sends the largest number of workers into Oconto County for work. The majority of the workers who commute either to or from Brown County on

a daily basis use USH 41/141. This also applies to residents of the Town of Oconto Falls since STH 22, which connects to both USH 41 and USH 141.

Table 5 provides some detailed information about county commuting patterns. Though a bit dated, the patterns are still believed to be generally correct. Updated information will not be available until 2004.

<b>TABLE 5</b>					
<b>2000 OCONTO COUNTY COMMUTING PATTERNS</b>					
<b>(1994 Information Provided in Parenthesis for Comparison)</b>					
<b>County</b>	<b>Commute Into</b>		<b>Commute From</b>		<b>Net Commute</b>
Brown	6,518	(3,115)	644	(525)	-5,874 (-2,590)
Marinette	701	(564)	712	(402)	11 (-162)
Shawano	436	(230)	269	(326)	-167 (96)
Outagamie	195	(89)	55	(0)	-140 (-89)
Elsewhere	810	(385)	461	(115)	-349 (-270)
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,860</b>	<b>(4,383)</b>	<b>2,141</b>	<b>(1,368)</b>	<b>-6,520 (-3,015)</b>

Source: 1994 Data from Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; US Dept of Commerce, Census 2000

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, most residents of the Town of Oconto Falls were employed in management, professional and related occupations (26.9%), followed closely by sales and office occupations (23.3%), and production, transportation and material moving occupations (20.5%). Less than five percent (4.2%) of all Town residents indicated they were working in farming, fishing and forestry occupations in 2000.

The 2000 U.S. Census also indicated Town residents were employed in several different industry sectors. Table 6 provides a detailed look at Town resident employment in 2000 by industry group.

<b>TABLE 6</b>		
<b>INDUSTRY GROUPS REPORTED BY TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS RESIDENTS</b>		
<b>Industry Group</b>	<b>Number of Residents</b>	<b>Percent of Residents</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	71	11.0%
Construction	49	7.6%
Manufacturing	134	20.8%
Retail trade	59	9.2%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	45	7.0%
Finance, insurance, real estate	44	6.8%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management	32	5.0%
Education, health and social services	100	15.6%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census (Industries with less than 5.0% of the workforce are not listed)

Tables 7 and 8 highlight the top 10 industry groups and employers in Oconto County. There were a total of 669 private sector employers and 70 government reporting units in Oconto County in 1997 (most recent economic census information). The largest private employers employed 27% of all workers in Oconto County.

**Five of the county's top ten industry groups were in the manufacturing sector in 1997.** Although manufacturing employment wages in Oconto County are lower than the state average, manufacturing makes up 32% of the county's employment and represents a slightly larger portion of the county's total payroll (36.4%). The top ten industry groups accounted for 59% of non-farm wage and salary employment earnings in the county. All of the top ten employers are included in the largest industry groups in the county.

<b>TABLE 7 TOP 10 INDUSTRY GROUPS IN OCONTO COUNTY</b>		
<b>Industry Group</b>	<b>Employers</b>	<b>Employment</b>
Educational Services	6	798
Health Services	30	769
Eating & Drinking Est.	69	649
Executive, Legislative, & General Government	28	529
Transportation Equipment	3	500
Furniture and Fixtures	NA*	NA*
Food and Kindred Products	6	386
Lumber & Wood Products	16	367
Electronic & Electronic Equipment	NA*	NA*
Food Stores	15	294

Source: Oconto County Workforce Profile, 1997

\*NA (Not Available) used in accordance with confidentiality standards

<b>TABLE 8 TOP 10 PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS IN OCONTO COUNTY</b>		
<b>Company</b>	<b>Product or Service</b>	<b>Employees</b>
KCS Intl Inc.	Boat Manufacturing	500-999
Oconto Falls Public Schools	Education	250-499
Saputo Cheese USA Inc.	Cheese Processing	250-499
Oconto County	Government	250-499
Community Memorial Hospital Inc.	Hospital Services	100-249
Coop Educational Services Agency #8	Administration of Education Programs	100-249
Heyde Health Systems - Oconto	Skilled Nursing Care	100-249
Unlimited Services of Wisconsin Inc.	Current-Carrying Wiring Devices	100-249
Nercon Eng & Mfg Inc.	Conveyors and Conveying Equipment	100-249
Beverly Health & Rehab.	Skilled Nursing Care	100-249

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information. ES-202 file tape, 1998.

## INCOME & WAGES

Table 9 provides information about the relative income for residents living in the Town of Oconto Falls compared to Oconto County and Wisconsin residents. The table includes statistics for:

- **Per capita income** is total income divided by the total number of residents, including children and other groups of individuals who do not actually earn income.
- **Median household income** is the middle point of reported household incomes in a community (households include families, married couple households and individual households).
- **Median family income** is the middle income reported by families in the 2000 U.S. Census. (An important distinction between median family income and the Wisconsin Department of Revenue **adjusted gross income** data is that the latter does not include social security and other types of transfer payments.)

The Town of Oconto Falls compares favorably to Oconto County, but the County compares poorly with the state. The county's less than favorable comparison to the state is also reflected in unemployment and other key economic indicators. This trend is not expected to change in the near future.

### MEDIAN INCOME vs. AVERAGE INCOME

The U.S. Census Bureau data related to income is reported as a "median" figure. This represents the middle point of all incomes reported. It is not the same as an "average" income. For example, if 4 people reported their income at \$30,000 and 1 person reported their income at \$100,000, the median income for these 5 people would be \$30,000. In the same scenario, the average income would be \$44,000, which does not accurately depict where the majority (i.e. 4 people vs. only 1) reported their income.

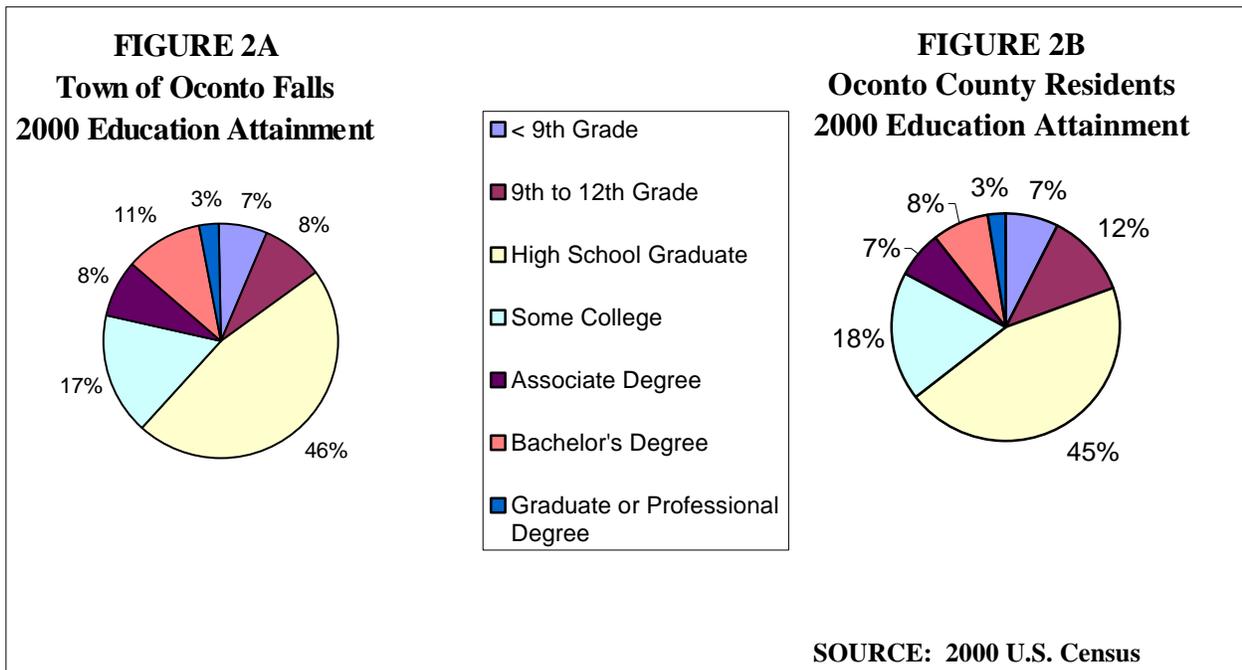
The U.S. Census does not provide an average income figure. Moreover, it is not possible to calculate an average without access to every individual census form from Evansville where an income was reported. The U.S. Census Bureau privacy policies prohibit this level of access. It is anticipated that the Town's average income figures would be higher than the median income.

	<b>2000 Median Household Income</b>	<b>2000 Per Capita Income</b>	<b>2000 Median Family Income</b>	<b>2000 Adjusted Gross Income</b>
Wisconsin	\$43,791	\$21,271	\$52,911	\$40,570
Oconto County	\$41,201	\$19,016	\$46,846	\$32,367
T. Oconto Falls	\$49,531	\$17,564	\$53,304	\$32,539

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, 2000 U.S. Census, and Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

## EDUCATION LEVELS

A good indicator of the quality of life in a community is the educational attainment of its residents. Generally, a high level of educational attainment reflects a skilled population with a higher earnings potential. Figures 2A and 2B illustrate the level of educational attainment for persons age 25 and over in Oconto County and the Town of Oconto Falls in 2000. In both the Town and county, about a quarter of the population is without a high school diploma. **Approximately 50% of the population has a high school diploma (or equivalent) and about 20% of county and Town residents have a post secondary education.**



## POVERTY STATUS

Slightly more than seven percent of the Town of Oconto Falls' population (7.3 percent or 84 individuals) were living below the poverty level in 1999. This is slightly behind the county statistics of 7.1 percent, but well ahead of the state average of 8.7 percent. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 13.6 of all elderly Town residents (age 65 and older) were living below the poverty level. Moreover, 4.2 percent of all families were living below the poverty level.

## EMPLOYMENT FORECAST FOR OCONTO COUNTY

The strong national economy of the last decade has had a positive impact on Oconto County and the greater Wisconsin Bay Area. The economy supports a variety of service industries, including tourism. Recent low-interest mortgage loan rates have also spurred

housing construction and commercial development, particularly in the southern portions of Oconto County.

Unemployment rates in Oconto County have been steadily rising since reaching a 10-year low in 1999 (4.4%). In 2000, rates increased to 4.9%. In 2001, the unemployment rate dropped to 6.9% (a reflection of a larger national economic recession). By 2002, rates had increased to 8.6%. Unemployment rates over the last two years have been around 8%. Manufacturing layoffs and shut downs have been responsible for the elevated unemployment rates in Oconto County. As a result, many workers commute beyond the county to find employment.

In a world economy, change is always on the horizon. The impact of the recent economy slowdown and the war on terrorism are yet to be seen. One indicator of the economic downturn is high gas prices, which have increased transportation, electricity, and natural gas costs. If gas prices continue to increase, development may be deterred in rural portions of Oconto County, including the Town of Oconto Falls. Furthermore, the cost of living will also increase significantly, particularly for residents who commute long distances to work each day. For now, it is important to monitor the economy and prepare for a potential economic recession by supporting a diversified county economic base.

## 4.0 HOUSING ELEMENT

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## CHAPTER 4.0: HOUSING ELEMENT

### Introduction

Unlike the other required elements of a Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan, the purpose of the housing element may not be as apparent given that the Town is not a housing developer or builder. Yet, the Town (and Oconto County) does influence the provision of safe and decent housing through land use regulations and development standards. In addition, transportation and infrastructure improvements affect the timing and location of residential development.

Traditionally, most rural Towns have a high percentage of single-family homes, often with few other housing types available. As new residents move in and the population ages, other types of housing must be looked at to provide the variety necessary to meet the needs of all residents. This is particularly true in Towns where a large proportion of the population has been long-time residents. In such communities, there is a desire for these residents to remain in the Town during their retirement years. In developing the 20-year plan for the Town of Oconto Falls, the existing housing stock has been reviewed and recommendations made to meet the housing needs for the next 20 years. This chapter includes specific goals and objectives to ensure that local housing choices exist for all stages and conditions of life and the vision described below can be achieved.

To learn more about housing, also see these chapters...

- √ Information related to **lot sizes** and **subdivisions** is provided in the Land Use Element Chapter.
- √ Information about **conservation subdivisions** is provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element Chapter
- √ Information about **zoning** is provided in the Land Use Element Chapter.
- √ Information about the **location and density of future housing** is provided in the Future Land Use Chapter.

### Housing Vision

**Single-family housing is available throughout the Town of Oconto Falls to all income levels where on-site waste treatment is permissible. To maintain the Town's rural character, single-family residences are located to blend in with the Town's natural features and farmland. All residential development in the Town of Oconto Falls is attractive and well maintained.**

### Existing Housing Supply

In 1990, there were 411 housing units in the Town of Oconto Falls. Based on the 2000 U.S. Census, this number grew to 488. This translates to a **17.8% percent increase in the total housing stock in the last 10 years**. In contrast, over the same period, the supply of housing in Oconto County increased by 5.2%. The new housing development in the Town is well scattered. Some significant areas of residential development are along the Oconto River and CTH CC.

The housing supply in the Town consists **mainly of single-family homes (83.8%)**. However, single-family homes may not be suitable for everyone. Some people are not able to afford a single-family home. Others may not be able to physically handle the maintenance necessary to

keep up a home and yard. Still others may simply prefer living in an alternative style of housing. Given the rural nature of the Town and limited facilities, it is not feasible to provide apartments, condominiums, and other higher density housing choices that would traditionally require water and sewer service. These types of housing options are available nearby in the City of Oconto Falls.

**Private wells and individual waste treatment systems** serve all of the housing units in the Town of Oconto Falls. There are no local sanitary districts in the Town.

In 2000, **10.6 percent of the Town of Oconto Falls housing supply was classified as rental-occupied housing.** According to the U.S. Census data, this translates into 46 residences.

In urbanized areas (i.e. cities and villages), one-quarter to one-third of a community’s housing supply is recommended, from a planning perspective, to be available as alternative housing to ensure diversity and affordability in a community. These percentages are not realistic in rural townships like Oconto Falls, which lack the necessary infrastructure to support alternative housing. The Town understands that if some areas for alternative housing are not part of the future plan, long-time residents and people with special needs may be forced to move away from the Town to nearby cities like Oconto Falls, which offer a more abundant supply of additional housing options. Therefore, the Town is encouraged to maintain a supply of alternative housing, including affordable single family homes (i.e. quality starter homes, manufactured homes, small senior facility).

## Senior Housing

Determining the need for senior housing in a community is not a simple task. Unfortunately, there are no clear formula or mathematical model available to determine need. This is largely due to the complexity of the marketplace. The majority of all seniors in Wisconsin, in all age groups, live in their own homes or in mixed family congregate housing (e.g. apartments that have residents of all age ranges). This is true for seniors living in the Town of Oconto Falls as well. The ability to remain in their own homes is enhanced by organizations and services that are becoming more common. Examples include: “meals on wheels,” parish nursing programs, home health care, etc. However, for a variety of reasons some elderly cannot or will not live in a private home or apartment, and will instead need to live in some type of senior housing arrangement.



Senior Housing in the City of Oconto Falls, WI

Fortunately, there are a wide variety of living options available in Oconto County for seniors including: independent living condominiums, subsidized and non-subsidized independent living apartments, assisted living facilities and nursing facilities. The level of care they offer to their residents differentiates the facilities. The most intensive care environment is the nursing facility.

There are no **senior living facilities, of any type**, in the Town. Residents in need of a senior living facility (including nursing, assisted and other arrangements) or retirement living environments must seek housing opportunities elsewhere. Given that the Town lacks municipal water and sewer service, the likelihood of another *large* senior care facility locating in the Town is very limited. However, there is some potential for a private developer to establish a *small* senior care facility in the Town of Oconto Falls. In recent years, some rural Wisconsin townships have seen small facilities (catering to 10 or fewer residents) established. Residents of these types of facilities are not in need of a nursing home, but do require assistance with meal preparation and enjoy organized activities. Residents who move to rural senior facilities are seeking to remain in the peaceful country surroundings they are accustomed to versus moving to a more urban environment. If such a facility were to locate in the Town it would be important that it be near STH 22 or STH 32 to provide quick emergency access.

The vast majority of seniors living in the Town must either be able to live independently, or with limited support from area programs, friends and family. Seniors also reside with other family members living in the Town.

### Age and Quality of Housing Stock



Understanding the relative age of the housing stock in a community is a good indicator of the quality of the available housing. According to the results of the SWOT (see Chapter 2), residents take great pride in the well-maintained housing in the Town. Table 10 lists the number of units and the corresponding percent of the Town’s total housing stock by year built.

The housing supply is relatively balanced in terms of its age. Whereas in some communities, the majority of housing would be built in a certain era, the Town of Oconto Falls has seen its housing supply continue to grow each decade. The result is an attractive blend of single-family housing choices.

<b>TABLE 10 AGE OF HOUSING STOCK*</b>		
<b>Year Structure Built</b>	<b># of Units in T. of Oconto Falls</b>	<b>% of Total T. of Oconto Falls Housing Stock</b>
1990 to 2000	93	19.1%
1980 to 1989	70	14.3%
1970 to 1979	90	18.4%
1960 to 1969	38	7.8%
1940 to 1959	86	17.6%
1939 or Earlier	111	22.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Age alone is not the best measure of housing condition in a community. To be more accurate, a visual assessment of the housing stock is helpful. Such an assessment is commonly referred to as a “**windshield survey**” because it entails driving or walking through the community and evaluating each housing unit based on visual appearance. The theory is that exterior condition generally correlates with interior conditions.

A windshield survey of the Town of Oconto Falls was conducted in 2003. Based on this assessment the following two predominate types of homes were found in the Town:

- **Farmhomes** dot the landscape of the Town. These homes have a distinct appearance. Typically, they are two-story with unattached garages and sizable porches. The farmhouses contribute significantly to the character of the community and provide a sense of history.



- The Town of Oconto Falls has a plentiful supply of more affordable, **established rural housing**. With more modest values (between \$85,000 and \$175,000), these homes are located on individual lots scattered along County Roads and in some subdivisions near the Oconto River and areas in the southern third of the Town. Most of these homes were constructed since the 1980s and adhere to modern building, plumbing and electrical code requirements. The condition of these homes vary from unit to unit, in some cases minor improvements are necessary. All homes appear to be structural sound (i.e. no visible evidence of cracked foundations, caving roofs, slanted walls, etc.).

Certainly, there are other types of housing in the Town, including mobile homes, and seasonal (hunting) cottages. However, these types of housing choices are not as dominate on the landscape, nor are they expected to become a significant housing choice in the future.

## Occupancy

For a housing market to operate efficiently, it must possess an adequate supply of available housing units (units for sale or rent). *A housing market's supply of available units must be sufficient to allow for the formation of new households by the existing population, to allow for in-migration, and to provide opportunities for households to change their housing because of a change in household size or status.*

According to **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**, an overall available vacancy rate of 6.5% (1.5% for the owned portion of a housing stock and 5.0% for the rented portion) is required to allow for an adequate housing choice among consumers. The overall available vacancy rate for Wisconsin is 4.75% for rentals and 1.14% for owner occupants (WI Dept. of Commerce, 2000 Consolidated Plan). Vacancy rates vary from one community to the next. High vacancy rates offer a degree of competition in terms of price. The available

vacancy rate of a housing market is a good indication of the adequacy of the housing supply, which in turn helps dictate the cost of housing.

In 2000, the vacancy rate for owner-occupied housing units in the Town 0.5% and there were no vacant rental units. These figures are quite comparable to the vacancy rates in 1990. The owner-occupied housing unit vacancy rate in Oconto County was 1.6% in 2000 and the rental vacancy rate was 5.5%. Using these figures for comparison, there are few choices for owner-occupied housing in the Town and no choice for rental housing. Therefore, if someone were interested in moving to the Town, they would likely need to build a new home.

## Cost of Housing

The available supply, age and condition of the housing stock are the basis for determining the demand for and cost of housing. The 1990 U.S. Census indicated that the median value of an owner-occupied home in Oconto County was \$43,200 and the median value in the Town of Oconto Falls was \$48,800 (including seasonal units and mobile homes). Table 11 compares the 2000 median home values in all Towns of Oconto County. The **housing value in the Town of Oconto Falls ranked 13<sup>th</sup>** (tie with Townsend) of the 23 Towns in Oconto County. Between 1990 and 2000, the Town’s median home value nearly doubled.

<b>Town Name</b>	<b>2000 Median Home Value</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<i>Town of Oconto Falls</i>	\$ 95,900	13
Town of Abrams	\$114,800	3
Town of Bagley	\$ 93,900	15
Town of Brazeau	\$106,700	5
Town of Breed	\$ 59,700	22
Town of Chase	\$135,100	2
Town of Doty	\$ 96,000	12
Town of Gillett	\$ 77,000	19
Town of How	\$ 72,100	20
Town of Lakewood	\$101,500	8
Town of Lena	\$ 79,400	17
Town of Little River	\$ 96,300	10
Town of Little Suamico	\$137,100	1
Town of Maple Valley	\$ 58,800	23
Town of Morgan	\$105,200	6
Town of Mountain	\$ 77,200	18
Town of Oconto	\$ 96,300	10
Town of Pensaukee	\$111,300	4
Town of Riverview	\$ 99,500	9
Town of Spruce	\$ 92,500	16
Town of Stiles	\$102,700	7
Town of Townsend	\$ 95,900	13
Town of Underhill	\$ 66,700	21
All Towns in Oconto County	\$94,417	NA

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 12 provides a detailed breakdown of the 2000 Census information pertaining to the value of owner-occupied housing units in the Town of Oconto Falls.

TABLE 12 2000 TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING VALUE		
Cost Range	Number of Units	% of All Housing
Less than \$50,000	22	11.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	88	44.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	53	26.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	23	11.6%
\$200,000 or more	12	6.1%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census – Based on 172 Housing Units Reporting from Long Census Form

With respect to rental housing, there were 46 renter-occupied housing units in the Town of Oconto Falls in 2000. The median monthly contract rent rate in the Town was \$438 in 2000 (based on 2000 U.S. Census data). This rate does not include utilities. This rate is competitive with the 2000 median monthly contract rent rate for Oconto County (\$429). The rate is especially affordable when you consider that the rental units in the Town are primarily single-family homes as opposed to the apartments, condos and other alternative housing included in the county average.

## Housing Affordability Analysis

According to the results of the SWOT (see Chapter 2), Town residents take great pride in the fact that the Town includes housing for residents of all income ranges. Does the cost of housing match the ability of residents to pay for it? This is the fundamental question to answer when determining housing affordability. There are many ways to answer this question. One common technique comes from the **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**. This method involves comparing income to housing costs. According to HUD, housing is considered affordable when it costs no more than 30% of total household income. Per HUD standards, people should have the choice of having decent and safe housing for no more than 30% of their household income.

In 2000, the median annual household income in the Town of Oconto Falls was 49,531, and the median monthly income was \$4,128. Thirty (30%) percent of the median monthly income yields \$1,238 or less, to be used for housing costs. The median value of a home in the Town of Oconto Falls in 2000 was \$95,900 with the median monthly mortgage payment of \$850. The median monthly contract rent rate was \$438. Based on these figures, it is easy to understand why single-family housing is the predominate housing choice in the Town. Based on the median income and cost of housing, **single-family homes are affordable to Town residents**. Housing may become affordable to additional homebuyers if interest rates continue to remain low.

One strategy to promote affordable housing is to support developer and landowner requests for **quality manufactured housing** in the Town of Oconto Falls. It is important to point out that manufactured homes are not mobile homes. Likewise, it must be clearly stated that the Town of

Oconto Falls does not want to encourage mobile home park development or additional mobile homes on individual lots. In 2000, mobile homes accounted for approximately 15% of the total housing stock, including seasonal or hunting units.

Manufactured housing is considered a viable affordable housing choice only if units are compatible in size, appearance and quality of area stick-built housing. Any manufactured housing unit must be constructed in accordance with local building and zoning restrictions. The manufactured home, once located on a property, should be virtually indistinguishable from 80 percent of site built housing located within a mile of the home. Therefore, manufactured housing should have a similar roof pitch, garage facilities, and be located on a foundation, basement, or crawl space as a site built home would be required. Manufactured homes may even be two stories.

### **Opportunities for Housing Choice - Barriers to Affordable Housing**

**Opportunities for elderly, disabled, and low-income housing are limited** in the Town of Oconto Falls. The existing housing supply consists primarily of single-family dwellings. There are no senior or disabled housing facilities. Therefore, seniors and disabled persons who reside in the Town must be able to live independently, have assistance available to them, or seek residency in the City of Oconto Falls or other larger communities that can provide needed services.

The fundamental reason for limited housing choices in the Town of Oconto Falls is the fact that the **community is rural in nature**. The Town's development consists of low density, single-family residential units.



**Photo Above is Example of a Mobile Home Development that is Not Desired**



**The Two Photos Above are Examples of Desirable and Affordable Manufactured Housing with attached garages, appropriate roof pitch, front porches, and located on a foundation, crawl space or basement.**

The **low density of development** (e.g. less than 5% of all Town land area is covered by housing. Average residential parcel size is 4 acres) **is not anticipated to change** significantly during the life of this plan given that:

- The Town has no sanitary districts to accommodate more dense development patterns;
- Oconto County Zoning restricts the amount, type and density of development; and
- According to the community survey results, Town residents desire continued single-family low-density residential development patterns in the limited areas of the Town where on-site waste treatment is possible.

Consequently, the supply of jobs, public transportation and other services and opportunities that are necessary to accommodate low-income, elderly, and disabled populations will continue to be either unavailable or extremely limited in supply. This is not to say that residents don't desire senior and affordable housing opportunities in the community. However, these types of development are **available nearby in communities**, which are easily accessible to the Town.

## Future Housing

The projected population for the Town of Oconto Falls is 1,376 in the year 2025. Based on the projected population and persons per household projections, it is estimated that an additional 97 dwelling units will be needed by the year 2025. With these figures, it is important to remember that dwelling units do not necessarily equate to single-family homes. Dwelling units can include apartments, duplexes, condominiums, senior housing units, etc. However, the Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission determined that alternative housing, like apartment, duplexes and the like, are not needed due to the fact that the City of Oconto Falls offers these choices.

<b>TABLE 13: HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected Population</b>	<b>Projected Households</b>
2005	1,196	508
2010	1,250	531
2015	1,296	551
2020	1,340	570
2025	1,376	585

Source: WI Dept. of Administration

These projected household growth rates translate into roughly **5 new units per year**.

## Housing Issues and Concerns

A major housing issue facing the Town of Oconto Falls is that as people move into the Town from urban areas, they **expect to receive city services**. The issue stems from a lack of communication among realtors, sellers, buyers and the Oconto County Zoning Department about the realities of living in a rural area. Education is the best tool to address this issue. The Town has developed notices that inform new property owners that the Town is a farming community and thus has the related smells and sounds of such a community.

Also of concern with respect to housing in the Town of Oconto Falls is the **prevention of sprawl (i.e. haphazard scattered) development patterns**. Much of the Town's growth has been on large parcels or lots scattered throughout the Town. Homes developed in this fashion will impact the Town's rural character by interrupting scenic vistas and farmland areas with roadside homes. The *Future Land Use Map* seeks to mitigate some of these issues by encouraging cluster subdivisions, conservation subdivisions and buffering techniques.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**  
The Town of Oconto Falls Community Survey Results reveal that the residents want the Town to remain an agricultural community with abundant natural areas.  
Rural housing is preferred on large lots. Smaller lots (i.e. 1 acre) adjacent to the City of Oconto Falls are also encouraged.

A related issue is **building setbacks**. Some of the newer homes being developed in the Town are setback a great distance from the roadway, cutting into farmland and natural areas. Homes setback a great distance from the roadway are also difficult to provide with protection services (police, fire, ambulance). Likewise, in some areas, particularly along CTH CC, homes are being built behind existing homes on the same lot. This pattern of development is particularly troubling and is discouraged.

The Town of Oconto Falls is also concerned about **homes being developed too close to the Oconto River**. This situation can have a negative impact on the quality of the river and adjacent wildlife habitat. The Town does not want to see the shores of the Oconto River fully developed with homes. Visual and physical access to the Oconto River is an important community amenity that should be protected.

## Housing Programs

A number of **federal and state housing programs are available** to help the Town of Oconto Falls promote the development of housing for individuals with lower incomes, senior housing, housing for people with special and/or housing maintenance needs.

### FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES

**HUD** is the federal agency primarily responsible for housing programs and community development. Though many of its programs are directed to larger cities and urban areas, the Town of Oconto Falls does qualify for some available funds. Specifically, HUD provides money to non-entitlement (i.e. communities with populations less than 50,000) communities through

grants. In the State of Wisconsin, the Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR) within the Department of Administration is responsible for the distribution of these federal funds. It awards these funds through a competitive proposal process.

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

## **STATE PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES**

Beyond the funds distributed through HUD, the DHIR administers several state funded programs that can potentially be used to finance housing improvements. Money available through the DHIR, because it is funded by general-purpose revenue, cannot be used to invest directly in housing development. However, funds can achieve the desired result by helping organizations develop the capacity to develop houses or by providing various types of financial assistance to homebuyers or renters through grants to local governments or non-profit agencies.

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (**WHEDA**) is a quasi-governmental agency that finances housing development through the sale of bonds. Unlike the DHIR, it receives no direct state-tax support. Therefore, WHEDA can provide mortgage financing for first-time homebuyers and financing for multifamily housing as well. Specific programs evolve and change with the needs of the housing market.

## **LOCAL PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES**

The Town of Oconto Falls has the ability to affect the type and cost of housing available in the area through local regulations and policies. While most government regulations are implemented in order to protect public health, safety and welfare needs, they may also have unintended adverse impacts on affordability.

One technique for ensuring a range of housing choice is to provide a variety of densities and lot sizes. This can be regulated through recommended improvements in the comprehensive plan, subdivision control ordinances (including conservation subdivisions), and zoning controls.

At this time, Oconto County enforces all zoning and subdivision regulations in the Town of Oconto Falls. While the Town has no separate zoning or subdivision ordinances, it does have the authority to recommend denial of a rezoning petition to the county. As growth continues in the Town of Oconto Falls, other regulatory tools may need to be adopted to preserve the rural character of the area. Specifically, the Town of Oconto Falls may want to consider developing growth management tools (such as “purchase of development rights”, a subdivision/land division ordinance, driveway ordinance, and a design ordinance to gain better control over local land development. These ordinances must at least be as stringent as similar ordinances currently being enforced by Oconto County.

## **Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements**

Housing is the primary developed land use in the Town of Oconto Falls. As such, it directly affects most other elements of this comprehensive plan. Land Use, Utilities and Community Facilities, Transportation, Economic Development and Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources are all elements directly affected by housing. The goals and policies set forth in this Housing Element will affect these elements and vice versa. Therefore, it is important that the elements are consistent and support one another.

### **LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use dictates the amount of land available for housing, as well as its location, type and density. The *Future Land Use Map* devotes **XX** number of acres to residential use over the next 20 years in accordance with current density restrictions. Furthermore, the goals and objectives of the Land Use Element recommend reviewing building permit and residential platting activity to gauge development trends.

One major factor that will impact land use in the Town of Oconto Falls is annexation by the City of Oconto Falls. The City views annexation as a tool to direct growth and development. Generally, annexation requests are initiated by property owners to obtain various city services. Requests may be initiated by individuals who wish to develop vacant land or by owners who seek services to solve a problem, such as a failing septic system. Chapter 66.02 *Wis. Stats.* describes the various methods for Town land to be annexed into an adjoining village or city.

### **UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Improvements such as roads, sewer, water, parks, recreational facilities and schools all need to be coordinated with the housing decisions and vice versa. The best method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern presented on the *Future Land Use Map* as closely as possible and plan for future improvements in a Capital Improvements Program as recommended in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element (and Transportation Element). This approach will greatly enhance the efficiency of capital improvements and services.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The location of housing affects commuting patterns and transportation costs. The inverse is also true - the location and density of housing affects transportation needs. The location of housing influences on which roads people drive or whether they need to drive at all. These factors were carefully considered in the Transportation Element to ensure compatibility with projected residential development. Of particular concern was traffic on STH 22 and CTH CC / C.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Housing needs must be linked to a community's economic situation. Specifically, it is important to ensure that the local housing supply is affordable to Town residents working in the Town of Oconto Falls or elsewhere within Oconto County. For this reason, an affordability analysis is

presented in this chapter. Moreover, given that housing is the primary developed land use in the Town of Oconto Falls, quality local housing directly impacts the Town's ability to finance needed improvements to support the local economy through receipt of property taxes.

## **AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The desire to preserve agricultural and natural areas competes with the desire of others to build additional housing in the Town of Oconto Falls. These competing interests are balanced through the land suitability analysis information presented in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element. This information helps to ensure that housing is located in areas that will have the least impact possible on existing farming areas and important natural resources, while still supporting additional residential development needs.

## **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

Based on population projections and the predicted reduction in household size over that same period, it is estimated that there will be 97 additional housing units needed in the Town of Oconto Falls in 20 years. To ensure that these units are of a high quality, goals and objectives are included in the Implementation Element based on the information gained during the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis and input from Town residents and the Planning Committee.

The goals and objectives were developed to ensure that the Town of Oconto Falls:

- *Remains a good place to raise a family for the next 20 years;*
- *Offers predominately single family residential choices;*
- *Respects the opportunity for all property owners to receive fair value for their land; and*
- *Has defined standards for managing growth and effective planning.*

## 5.0 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

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## 5.0 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

### Introduction

The primary routes in the Town of Oconto Falls's transportation system consist of four county roads (CTH B, C, CC, and K) and two state highways (STH 22 and STH 32). All other roads in the Town of Oconto Falls are Town Roads. The Oconto River also supports recreation-based travel in the Town. Opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian traffic are very limited. However, Town Roads are adequate for town travel. As a result, private automobiles are the primary means of transportation in, through, and around the Town. Of immediate concern to the Town is increasing traffic and the need for trails.



CTH K – Town of Oconto Falls, WI

### Transportation Vision

**Well-maintained local roads and county trunks serve the Town of Oconto Falls. Residents enjoy easy access to nearby communities via STH 22 and other connecting highways. Residents depend on their own vehicles to meet their transportation needs and use the Town's interconnecting bike, snowmobile and pedestrian trails. Residents without vehicles rely on the kindness of friends, families and neighbors. Volunteer groups (i.e. churches, etc.) and the County provide transportation opportunities for seniors and other transit-dependent residents. Care has been taken to ensure that local roads are wide enough for farm machinery.**

### Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities in the Town of Oconto Falls provide a varied mix of road facilities ranging from rural Town Roads to state trunk highways. While residents enjoy easy access to STH 22 and STH 32, opportunities for safe pedestrian travel are limited given a lack of sidewalks and trail facilities. Residents rely on their personal vehicles to meet most of their transportation needs. Other modes of transit, including light rail and air transportation are not available in the Town, nor are they likely to be developed given that the population and local businesses do not demand, nor can they support, these types of services. Austin Straubel International Airport in Green Bay provides a full-range of air transportation services for Town residents. More limited (general aviation facilities) are available in some neighboring communities.



## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The Town of Oconto Falls Community Survey Results reveal that the residents want the Town to work with Oconto County to provide bike/walking lanes on some Town Roads.

### WALKING OPPORTUNITIES

Most local roads in the Town have limited shoulder areas, areas with short sight distances, or posted speed limits of 45 miles per hour or more. These conditions hamper safe pedestrian travel. Moreover, given the low-density development and distance from the City of Oconto Falls, walking to places of work or shopping is not realistic for Town residents.

Many residents enjoy recreational walking and pedestrian travel may be more realistic within the Town's rural subdivisions. Unfortunately, these subdivisions are not located next to each other.

Wider paved shoulders would help to improve the situation for both cyclists and walkers in some areas. A walking/cycling trail along the Oconto River would also be a wonderful amenity in the community and could provide a link between the cities of Oconto Falls and Gillett.

### CYCLING OPPORTUNITIES

There are **no bicycle trails in the Town of Oconto Falls** at this time. Bicyclists in the Town must share roadways with motorists.

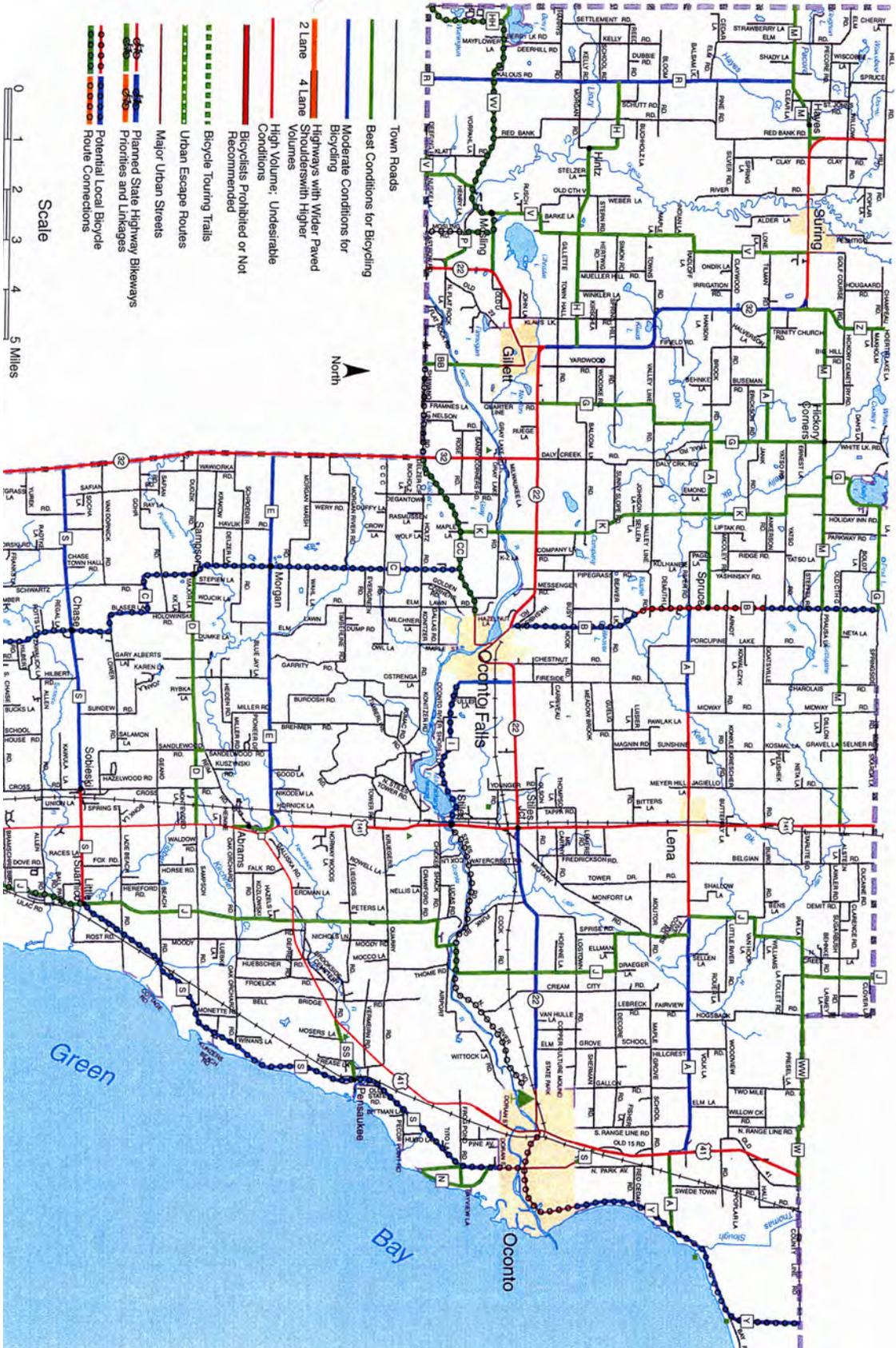
As part of its *State Highway Plan 2020*, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) completed a bicycling conditions assessment in conjunction with planned state highway priority corridors, to identify key linkages in Oconto County. Specifically, WisDOT considers road width (i.e. ability to accommodate a paved shoulder) and traffic volume as primary factors for bicycle paths. Secondary considerations include the percent of truck traffic and site distance restrictions.

The WisDOT Map provided on the next page only suggests possible bicycle routes along state, county, and town roads. Although the plan does not establish bicycle routes in these areas, routes along state highways will be included in WisDOT's State Highway 2020 Plan and WisDOT will control their development. In the Town of Oconto Falls, WisDOT identified **CTH K and CTH CC as having the best conditions for bicycling**. CTH B and CTH C were identified as having moderate conditions for cycling.

The WisDOT suggestions for bicycle routes are simply suggestions. They are not firm recommendations. The user of the State Bicycle Map bears full responsibility for his or her safety. The bicyclist assumes the risks encountered and is advised to use good judgment and obey traffic laws on all roads, regardless of their classification on the map provided on the next page.

The Bay Lake Regional Plan Commission has prepared a regional bicycle plan. That plan recommends five foot paved shoulders along STH 22 between Oconto Falls and Gillett and STH 32 between Pulaski and Suring.

# Bicycling Conditions Assessment with Planned State Highway Priority Corridors and Key Linkages Oconto County



The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has long-term plans to provide trail access between the City of Oconto and Gillett to provide expanded access to the Nicolet State Trail that extends into Gillett. Part of this corridor (from Stiles Junction to the Oconto) is already DNR-owned and operated by Oconto County. The remaining portion to the Nicolet State Trail connection can most easily be accomplished by placing signs on roads scheduled for widening and upgrading (e.g. STH 22 bicycle lane). The Oconto to Stiles Junction portion of the trail parallels the Oconto River, a popular water for float trips and fishing. Users can float part of the river and safely hike or bike back on the trail to retrieve vehicles. A similar river trail design may also be possible through the Town of Oconto Falls.



### RAILROAD CORRIDORS

There are no active railroad corridors in the Town of Oconto Falls. Likewise, there is no plan to establish passenger or freight rail service through the Town. Freight railroad service (including service for animal

feed commodities) is available in the City of Oconto Falls.

### STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land. Arterials accommodate the movement of vehicles, while local roads are designed to provide direct access to individual parcels of land. Collectors serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local roads. Facilities classified under the Federal Aids Secondary System (county trunks and state highways) qualify for federal aid for capital projects involving construction, reconstruction or repair. State highway aids are available to communities for construction and maintenance. Aids cannot exceed 85% of expenditures based on a 3-year average.

**Principal Arterials.** There are no principal arterials in the Town. However, there is limited service to the City of Oconto Falls.

**Minor Arterials.** STH 22 and STH 32 are classified as minor arterials in the Town.

**Major Collectors.** County highways B, C, CC, and K are considered major collectors in the Town.

**Minor Collectors.** There are no minor collectors.

**Local Roads.** The remaining roads in the Town are local. They provide access to agricultural, residential and commercial uses within the Town of Oconto Falls.

*Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land.*

- ✓ **Principal Arterials** – serve interstate and interregional trips. U.S. Highways generally fall into this category.
- ✓ **Minor Arterials** – accommodate inter-regional and inter-area traffic movements, often in conjunction with principal arterials. Many state trunk highways fall into this category.
- ✓ **Major Collectors** – provide service to moderate sized communities and other intra-area traffic generators. Many county trunk highways fall into this classification.
- ✓ **Minor Collectors** – these roads collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining portions of smaller communities and other higher function roads.
- ✓ **Local Roads** – provide direct access to residential, commercial and industrial development.



**The Town of Oconto Falls values its road network and the many connections it provides. Therefore, the Town considers road maintenance an important priority.**

All the roads described in this section are illustrated on the *Transportation Network Map*. Available **traffic count information** (provided by Oconto County in 2002) is also provided on the map.

## MASS TRANSIT

Mass transit is not available in the Town of Oconto Falls, and is not likely to be established in the next 20 years, given the relatively low density of development in the Town. Transit dependent residents of the Town must rely on the assistance of friends or family, or seek volunteer services such as those listed below.

The **Oconto County Community Options Program** (described more fully in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element) does try to provide transportation to seniors, disabled and chronically ill residents. The **Oconto County Commission on Aging** (1210 Main Street, Oconto) provides volunteer-based transportation service to residents in need in exchange for a donation to cover mileage. They also have a wheelchair accessible bus and an eight-passenger van available to meet resident needs. For info call 920-834-7707.

Resident also enjoy easy access to a **park and ride lot** at the east junction of STH 32 and 22. This park and ride lot is actually located in the Town of Gillett. The lot includes 12 standard parking spaces and 1 handicap space. It provides residents with a transportation amenity that makes carpooling easier. Information about additional park and ride locations within Oconto County and the rest of northeast Wisconsin is available at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/parkride/d3/index.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/parkride/d3/index.htm).

## WATER TRANSPORTATION

**The Oconto River** is the primary water feature in the Town. This river is classified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as “navigable stream” and is capable of supporting water-based transportation opportunities. The river is utilized primarily as a **recreation travel route**. Additional information about this river is provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element.



## TRUCK TRANSPORTATION

**STH 22 and STH 32 are the primary trucking routes** through the Town of Oconto Falls. WisDOT has officially designated STH 22 and STH 32 as truck routes. This designation is based on the design of the roadway to withstand truck weight and traffic. In Oconto County, STH 22 connects USH 141 to STH 29. STH 32 connects STH 22 to Pulaski. Local truck traffic is found on other county trunk roads in the Town, but it is much more limited in volume than the truck traffic on STH 22 and STH 32.

## AIRPORTS

As previously mentioned in this chapter, there is not a public or private airport in the Town of Oconto Falls. The Brown County Airport, **Austin Straubel International**, is the nearest major airport facility. It is located in Green Bay. Austin Straubel is the third largest airport in the State of Wisconsin. It operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The airport provides the physical facilities for up to 90,000 take-off and landings annually serving approximately 720,000 commercial passengers, and thousands of sports and general aviation enthusiasts. The airport is currently served by 5 commercial air carriers, several airfreight companies, two fixed-base operators, five rental car agencies, five taxicab companies, two gift shops, a restaurant and cocktail lounge, a custom house broker and an amusement arcade (airnav.com, December 2002). The Austin Straubel International Airport has two runways. Specifications for the runways are provided in Table 14.



**TABLE 14**  
**AIRPORT RUNWAY SPECIFICATIONS**

Runway Name	Length	Width	Surface Material
Austin Straubel RWY 6-24	7,699 feet	150 feet	Grooved Concrete
Austin Straubel RWY 18-36	8,200 feet	150 feet	Grooved Concrete

SOURCE: [AirNav.com](http://AirNav.com)

In 2000, Austin Straubel International had 368,693 passenger enplanements (WisDOT, 2000). Moreover, in 2000, the airport was responsible for 568,138 pounds of enplaned cargo. In the State of Wisconsin, total enplaned cargo pounds for the year 2000 decreased by approximately 5.9% from the previous year. Only the Green Bay and Outagamie airports reported an increase in enplaned cargo for 2000 (WisDOT, 2000). Currently, officials at Austin Straubel are considering a terminal renovation and expansion project to be completed in the next few years.

According to the *WisDOT State Airport System Plan for 2020*, Austin Straubel International Airport will continue to provide air carrier and air cargo service through 2020 and beyond. The airport will continue to be an important component of the state's air transportation system. Based on the information provided in the *WisDOT State Airport System Plan for 2020*, Austin Straubel was slightly behind its forecasted enplanements for 2000 (381,000). By 2020, it has been forecasted that the annual airport passenger enplanements will increase to 588,000. Given that the airport is currently operating behind forecast, this figure is likely below the actual number of passenger enplanements that will be experienced in 2020.

Beginning in January 2003, a 24-million dollar project began to expand the 53-year-old airport to 12 gates and add covered loading bridges for passengers. The construction will replace the existing two concourses and eight gates. The first concourse is scheduled for completion in 2004, the second in 2005. The old concourses will be torn down because they do not have enough space to allow for the additional gates and loading bridges.

The nearest regional airport is located in the City of Oconto. The **Oconto Municipal Airport** has two runways, a hanger and fueling capabilities. This small facility caters to single engine airplanes and ultralights. The planes are privately owned. Commercial passenger flights are not provided from this facility. There are no plans to expand this facility.



A 2700' airstrip is also located in the northern part of the Town of Oconto Falls, parallel to Pipgrass Road. This privately owned grass airstrip is not lighted. There are no plans to expand this airstrip or establish additional airstrips in the Town.

## Summary of Existing Transportation Plans

### WISDOT STATE HIGHWAY PLAN 2020

Wisconsin's State Trunk Highway system, consisting of approximately 11,800 miles of roads, is aging and deteriorating at the same time traffic is increasing. In response to this critical issue, WisDOT, in partnership with its stakeholders, has developed the **WisDOT 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 traffic movement and safety needs. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin.



**STH 22 and STH 32** are the only corridors in the Town of Oconto Falls impacted by the *WisDOT State Highway Plan 2020*. Neither corridor is expected to experience a congestion problem. As a result, no major expansions or improvements are planned. WisDOT also has a *2004-2009 Highway Improvement Plan* that it uses to implement the *WisDOT State Highway Plan 2020*. According to the plan, **STH 32 is to be resurfaced between 2005 and 2007 and reconstruction of STH 22 is planned between Oconto Falls and Gillett in 2010**. No other projects are identified in the Town of Oconto Falls at this time. However, the plan is updated annually and additional projects may be added.

## **WISDOT BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2020**

This plan presents a blueprint for developing an integrated bicycling network in Wisconsin to encourage cycling between communities. The recommendations from this plan that will impact the Town of Oconto Falls are presented in the Cycling Opportunities section of this chapter.

## **WISCONSIN STATE AIRPORT SYSTEM PLAN 2020**

This plan provides a framework for the enhancement of public use airports in Wisconsin. Of the 143 public use airports in the state, 100 are part of the State Airport System addressed by this plan. Based on the coverage, facilities and services of existing airports, as well as anticipated demand, no new airports are to be developed and no existing airport is to be eliminated. The plan provides recommendations for needed improvements related to pavement (i.e. runway surface), instrument capability (i.e. traffic control) and airport service.

## **WISCONSIN CONNECTIONS 2030**

WisDOT is currently developing a long-range transportation plan for the state, called Connections 2030. This plan will address all forms of transportation over a 25 year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. The overall goal of the planning process is to identify a series of policies to aid transportation decision-makers when evaluating programs and projects. Information from this plan will be important to include in the first comprehensive update of this plan. Additional information is available on-line at: [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/connections2030.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/connections2030.htm)

## **OCONTO COUNTY**



The Oconto County Highway Department does not have an officially adopted transportation plan. Such a plan will likely be developed as part of the Oconto County “Smart Growth” Comprehensive Plan. Current priorities for the Oconto County Highway Department include completing a road rating of all county roads using the

Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and continuing to provide required maintenance and improvements to existing county roads.

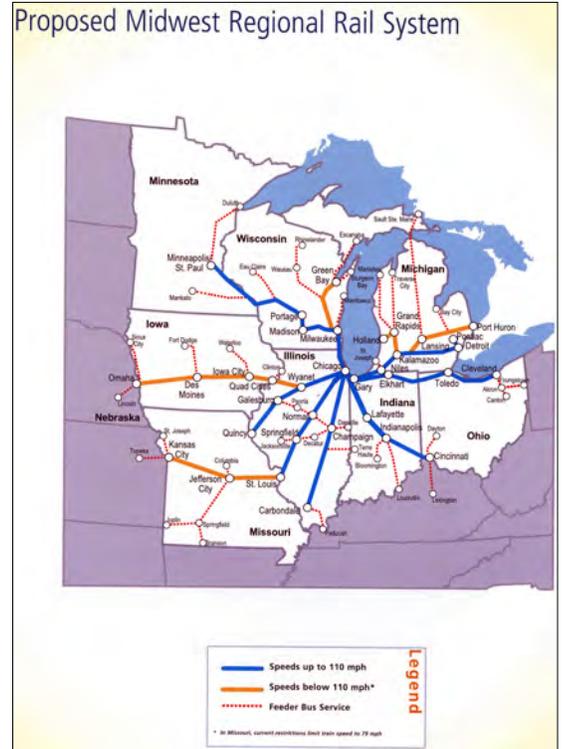
Current priorities for the Oconto County Highway Department include continuing to provide required maintenance and improvements to existing county roads.

## **MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL INITIATIVE**

Since 1996, transportation experts from across the Midwest, Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration have developed a proposal to bring high-speed passenger rail to the Midwest. The Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) advanced from a series of service concepts, including increased operating speeds, train frequencies, system

connectivity and high service reliability, into a well-defined vision to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century regional passenger rail system. This vision has been transformed into a transportation plan known as the Midwest Regional Rail Systems (MWRRS). The primary purpose of the MWRRS is to meet future regional travel needs through significant improvements to the level and quality of regional passenger rail service. The major MWRRS elements will improve Midwest travel. These elements include:

- Use of 3,000 miles of existing rail rights-of-way to connect rural, small urban and major metropolitan areas throughout Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin.
- Operation of “hub-and-spoke” passenger rail system through Chicago to locations throughout the Midwest.
- Introduction of modern train equipment operating at speeds up to 110 mph
- Provision of multi-modal connections to improve system access
- Improvements in reliability and on-time performance



The cost to provide the improvements needed to facilitate a Chicago-Milwaukee-Minneapolis/Green Bay Route would be \$978 million, including rolling stock (i.e. passenger cars) and infrastructure improvements (i.e. track improvements). If the plan is carried out, residents of the Town of Oconto Falls will be able to access a train in Green Bay or in the City of Oshkosh (planned connection point) to connect in Milwaukee to a high-speed rail line. The current schedule provided in the MWRRS plan calls for the entire project to be completely on-line by 2012 (this completion date is dependent on federal funding).

As proposed, the passenger railroad service would be more accessible to area residents, with five round trips per day on a route between Green Bay and Milwaukee. Construction of this route as proposed would occur in the latter stage of development of the system.

### **BAY-LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (BLRPC)**

Since the mid-1970’s, the BLRPC has provided regional transportation planning in northeastern Wisconsin including:

- Bicycle facility plans
- Elderly and disabled transportation plans
- Highway corridor plans
- Pavement management plans
- Transit plans
- Transportation plans
- Harbor impact studies
- Transportation grant writing
- Transportation data
- Technical assistance to local communities

The primary plan developed by the BLRPC with implications for the Town of Oconto Falls is the *Bicycle Transportation Facilities Plan*. That plan recommends a five foot paved shoulder to accommodate bicycle traffic along STH 22 (between USH 141 and Gillett) and STH 32 (between Pulaski and Suring). The BLRPC has the ability to assist the Town with future transportation planning needs. Furthermore, to solicit input from the BLRPC in the development of this Comprehensive Plan, representatives from the BLRPC were invited to participate in the intergovernmental meetings. They were also provided a copy of this plan to review and provide input.

## PASER RATING SYSTEM REPORT

In 2001, all Town of Oconto Falls roads were evaluated in accordance with WisDOT requirements using Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER). PASER is a visual inspection system to develop a condition rating for community roads. PASER is an important tool for smaller government unit planning because it gives a picture of road conditions on all roads and can identify candidates for maintenance and rehabilitation. Surface defects, cracking and potholes are all examined during a typical PASER evaluation. Paved roads are rated 1 – 10 based on their condition. Gravel Roads are rated 1-5.

Paved Roads	Rating	Need(s)
	Rating 9 & 10	no maintenance required
	Rating 7 & 8	routine maintenance, crack sealing and minor patching
	Rating 5 & 6	preservative treatments (seal coating)
	Rating 3 & 4	structural improvement and leveling (overlay or recycling)
	Rating 1 & 2	reconstruction

Gravel Roads	Rating	Need(s)
	Rating 5	no maintenance required
	Rating 4	good; routine maintenance
	Rating 3	fair; ditch improve. & culvert maintenance; gravel in some areas
	Rating 2	poor; new aggregate; ditch reconstruction & culvert maintenance
	Rating 1	failed; rebuilding

It is important to understand that the Town Roads were rated in segments. As a result, a portion of a particular road may rank as 9, whereas a different segment may only rank as 6. These fluctuations can greatly impact the overall need for construction improvements.

Tables 15 and 16 list all town roads and their surface type and PASER rating. According to the PASER manual, it is recommended that communities strive to attain a rating of 7 for all paved roads. To achieve this goal, if, in the future, the Town decides that additional tools are necessary to determine the best course of action with respect to annual road improvements and to maximize available funds, it is recommended that the Town **further analyze its PASER results using PASERWARE**. This software program is designed to help communities consider different scenarios for optimizing road maintenance and improvements expenses. Using PASERWARE, a community can determine what sequence of improvements is recommended to meet a certain goal (i.e. get all roads to a 7 rating). PASERWARE also will provide cost estimates for maintenance and construction projects.

**TABLE 15  
TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS PAVED ROAD PASER RESULTS**

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Functional Class</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Traffic Lanes</b>	<b>PASER Rating</b>
Balcom Lake Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	6
Beaver Lake Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	7
Busy Nook Road	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt & Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	8
Chestnut Road	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt & Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	5
Coffey Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt & Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	3
Columbia Street	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	6
Company Lake Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	4
Dahlquist Lane	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Daly Creek Road	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	6
Degantown Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	5
Delzer Circle	Low Use	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	4
Donegal Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	6
Elm Lawn Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	9
Fireside Road	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	9
Gallas Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	9
Golden Corners Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	8
Gray Lake Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	7
Greenwood Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	3
Hardwood Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	6
Hazelnut Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	8
Hemlock Trail	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Holtz Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	7
Johnson Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Kingfisher Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	9
K-Z Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Konitzer Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	9
Leigeois Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	6
Little Beaver Lake Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	3
Mac Bailey Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	9
Maple Street	Local	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	7
Meadowview Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	9
McDermid Drive	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	9
Messenger Road	Local	Cold Mix Asphalt	2	8
Milwaukee Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Pine Bend Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	7
Pipegrass Road	Low Use	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	6
Rea Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	9
Renel Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	7
Rose Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	2
Sandy Corners Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	5
Sellen Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Splinter Creek Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8
Sunny Slope Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	10
Valley Line Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced & Hot Mix Asphalt	2	7
Waschbisch Road	Local	Hot Mix Resurfaced	2	4
Westerhoff Lane	Low Use	Hot Mix Asphalt	2	8

SOURCE: 2003 PASER Rating System Report, Town of Oconto Falls

NOTE: Some roads are rated in segments. PASER rating listed are an average rating is for all segments rated.

**TABLE 16  
TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS GRAVEL ROAD PASER RESULTS**

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Functional Class</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Traffic Lanes</b>	<b>PASER Rating</b>
Maple Lane	Low Use Rd	Gravel	2	None

Source: 2003 PASER Rating System Report, Town of Oconto Falls

Based on the 2003 PASER results, the Town should also consider developing a **capital improvements program** to effectively plan for road improvements in relation to other Town spending needs. A capital improvements plan and budget may use the recommendations of PASERWARE, to plan for road improvements in a 5 – 6 year cycle. For additional information about capital improvement plans and budgets.

For additional information, including a comprehensive definition of a Capital Improvements Program refer to the *Transportation Issues and Concerns* section of this chapter and the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.

## Transportation Issues and Concerns

### TRAIL DEVELOPMENT/BICYCLE ROUTES

The Town is interested in improving opportunities for walking and cycling. Presently, opportunities for walking and cycling are limited. To successfully establish trails and bicycle routes, the Town of Oconto Falls should coordinate with Oconto County, the City of Oconto Falls, and the City of Gillett. Most importantly, the Town will need to communicate with residents to identify routes that are desirable for trail users and acceptable to landowners. Opportunities for trail development exist along the Oconto River, power line easements, and along county roads (as they are improved). The Bay Lake Regional Plan Commission and DNR have also identified a bicycle route along STH 22 between Gillett and Oconto Falls. Funding opportunities exist through the WDNR and WDOT to help finance a trail project in the Town of Oconto Falls.

### MAINTAINING TOWN ROAD RURAL CHARACTER

The Town of Oconto Falls takes great pride in its rural roadways. Residents believe it is these rural, hilly roads that help to shape the character of the community. As such, the Town would like to maintain its rural roadways, to the fullest extent possible. When improvements projects are considered, the Town discourages operations that will require the removal of a substantial number of roadside trees.

***Rustic Road Program***

For additional information about Rustic Roads, contact the Oconto County Highway Department or visit the WDNR Web Site at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/scenic/application.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/scenic/application.htm)

One method of identifying and protecting rural roads is seeking rustic road designation from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The Rustic Roads System in Wisconsin was created by the 1973 State Legislature to help citizens and local units of

government preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers and motorists.

Unique brown and yellow signs mark the routes of all officially designated Rustic Roads. These routes provide bikers, hikers, and motorists with an opportunity to leisurely travel through some of Wisconsin's scenic countryside.

A small placard beneath the Rustic Roads sign identifies each Rustic Road by its numerical designation within the total statewide system. Each Rustic Road is identified by a 1- to 3-digit number assigned by the Rustic Roads Board. To avoid confusion with the State Trunk Highway numbering, a letter "R" prefix is used such as R50 or R120. The Department of Transportation pays the cost of furnishing and installing Rustic Roads marking signs.

Any officially designated Rustic Road would continue to be under Town control. The Town shall have the same authority over the Rustic Road as it possesses over other highways under its jurisdiction. A Rustic Road is eligible for state aids just as any other public highway.

To qualify for the Rustic Road program, a road should:

- have outstanding natural features along its borders such as rugged terrain, native vegetation, native wildlife, or include open areas with agricultural vistas that singly or in combination uniquely set this road apart from other roads.
- be a lightly traveled local access road, one which serves the adjacent property owners and those wishing to travel by auto, bicycle, or hiking for purposes of recreational enjoyment of its rustic features.
- Not be scheduled nor anticipated for major improvements which would change its rustic characteristics.
- have, preferably, a minimum length of 2 miles and, where feasible, should provide a completed closure or loop, or connect to major highways at both ends of the route.

A Rustic Road may be dirt, gravel or paved road. It may be one-way or two-way. It may also have bicycle or hiking paths adjacent to or incorporated in the roadway area.

The maximum speed limit on a Rustic Road has been established by law at 45 mph. A speed limit as low as 25 mph may be established by the local governing authority.

## **FARM TRAVEL NEEDS**

The Town of Oconto Falls is a farming community and wishes to remain so. The Town takes great pride in its farming operations and believes farming should be an important part of the Town's future. Modern farming operations often require farmers to travel

with large equipment on local roads. These large, slow moving vehicles present a potential hazard for other motorists and can damage road surfaces.

## TRANSPORTATION BUDGETING

Another long-standing transportation issue is the ever-present concern of road maintenance and improvements costs. Town road projects are a **major expense and can consume a large share of the limited Town budget**. This plan recommends strategies, including a capital improvements program and budget, to help the Town to effectively budget for these costs over time.

A **capital improvements program (CIP)** in the Town of Oconto Falls would serve as the Town’s present and near-future financial plan to match future capital improvement costs, such as roads, to anticipated revenues. The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission should be given the authority to develop and review the CIP, thereby linking planning to the annual budgetary process. CIP are usually prepared for five or six years into the future and updated annually. The CIP process would first identify and then prioritize capital expenditures. An estimated cost and means of financing each capital expenditure would be included as part of the process. The desired expenditures would be compared to the budget to determine annual spending priorities. The process helps to ensure that improvements are made in a logical order and do not “surprise” Town Officials or taxpayers.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**  
The Town of Oconto Falls Community Survey Results reveal that the 59% of residents want the Town to address widening and improving Town Roads if traffic patterns and volumes increase.

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

As USH 141 has been improved from two to four lanes, the travel time between the Town of Oconto Falls and the City of Green Bay has been significantly reduced. This increases the chances that some people may seek to live in the Town who work in the greater Green Bay area. These residents will be able to enjoy the rural atmosphere provided in the Town and the economic activities available in the Brown County/Green Bay area. Even more likely, the highway improvements will expose the Town to second home development pressures, particularly along the Oconto River. This will create additional demand for housing, roads, utilities, schools and other community facilities. If not carefully planned, additional growth may negatively impact the Town’s rural character and create congestion.

To address potential growth, the *Future Land Use Map* will serve as a guide for directing development to those areas where it is most desired. Moreover, the Town will coordinate with Oconto County to improve zoning through the use of the Conservation Design Residential and Large Scale Agricultural Zoning Districts and potentially the development of a new Rural Overlay District. (refer to Chapters 10 & 12 for more information).

## **CRASH DATA**

The Oconto County Sheriff keeps detailed accident data for all town, county, and state highways in the county. The data for the Town of Oconto Falls reveals that between 1995 and 2002:

- 241 crashes were reported in the Town of Oconto Falls.
- 6 of these crashes resulted in fatalities (7 individuals were killed).
  - Half of the fatal crashes occurred on STH 22
  - 2 of the 6 fatal crashes occurred on CTH CC
  - 1 of the 6 fatal crash occurred on Fire Side Road.
- Most of the crashes 32% (78) occurred on STH 22. However, there is no pattern to indicate a particular location on STH 22 as being particularly dangerous.
- Roadways with elevated crash rates over the period include: Fireside Road (13), CTH B (24), CTH CC (15), CTH K (13) and STH 32 (19).
- Most crashes on CTH B were reported at the intersection with Beaver Lake Road.
- Most crashes on CTH K occurred at the intersections of Gray Lake and Balcolm Lake Roads.

It is important to understand that the number of crashes reported over the 7-year period in the Town of Oconto Falls does not justify specific traffic improvements (i.e. reduced speed, signage, grading, etc.) or identify a particular “problem” intersection. The town should continue to monitor crash data to identify patterns and address safety concerns in the future.

## **ROAD MAINTENANCE**

Given the importance of Town roads as the primary amenity provided by the Town of Oconto Falls, maintenance of the roadways is very important. Timely, efficient, and quality maintenance improves the Town and demonstrates to residents the effectiveness of its government.

In the past, there have been some issues with the quality of road resurfacing work and other maintenance projects. To prevent poor construction and maintenance in the future, it is recommended the Town Board award road contracts based on qualifications, rather than only price considerations. Moreover, the Town should monitor road construction and maintain detailed records, including evaluations by the Town, of completed construction and maintenance projects to better evaluate proposals of companies that have done work in the Town. Goals, objectives and policies have been added to this chapter to address road maintenance.

## **Coordination with Other Required Plan Elements**

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Issues and Opportunities Element establishes the framework for planning – the overall future visions – the ideal from which this plan has been developed. That vision will impact the way the Town considers and approves changes to the transportation network. To realize the vision, and support the transportation vision presented in this chapter, the Town will seek to maintain its roads and establish trail routes.

### **AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The critical question with respect to the Transportation Element and this element is: how will changes to the transportation system impact the preservation /protection of environmental resources such as water quality? Given the development limitations presented by the abundant areas of wetlands, rivers and floodplains in the Town of Oconto Falls, new road construction and development in much of the Town is discouraged.

Given that the Town only has jurisdiction over Town Roads, the answer to this question in many areas of the Town of Oconto Falls will likely be dictated by actions of Oconto County and WisDOT. However, both agencies have policies in place designed to protect the natural environment. In particular, WisDOT is charged with taking into consideration locally adopted comprehensive plans when making transportation decisions. A representative of WisDOT was invited to participate in the Intergovernmental Meeting of the comprehensive plan. It will be incumbent upon Town residents and leaders to continue to participate in public hearings and other opportunities for input, to ensure that local interests are realized in these projects as they relate to the natural environment.

### **UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

How will the Town of Oconto Falls ensure that the decisions made for the transportation system preserve the existing facilities and potentially reduce the need for expansion or realignment? The answer to this question is realized in the Land Use Element whereby the location of future development, and associated transportation improvements, are correlated to the location of adequate utilities and community facilities.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Providing a quality transportation system is important to the success of any business. Just as businesses need access, employees also want to be able to efficiently access their places of employment. Lack of access to employment opportunities may affect individual decisions to live in a community. In the Town of Oconto Falls, these issues were carefully considered, particularly with respect to the location of new commercial and industrial development and the long-term maintenance of important inter-community transportation routes like STH 22 and STH 32. The local solutions to these issues are reflected on the *Future Land Use Map*.

## **LAND USE**

While transportation improvements generally respond to changes in land use, they also have the potential to directly and indirectly affect land development either by inducing new development or altering the pattern of existing development. However, land use changes are dependent on other factors as well. These include local plans, zoning, taxation, and the provision of public services.

What steps will be taken to ensure that transportation decisions and land use decisions are compatible? Although transportation is not the only influence on land use, it is important to be aware that decisions regarding the transportation system may impact land use both directly and indirectly. Direct impacts are caused by the construction of a new transportation facility, changes to an existing facility, and/or decisions to change traffic patterns along a facility. These may result in positive or negative impacts. Efforts were made to plan accordingly for land uses along STH 22 and STH 32 and the county roads in the Town. The result of these efforts is reflected on the *Future Land Use Map*.

The Future Land Use Chapter also includes some specific information related to community design, including roadway design considerations. Specifically, this chapter addresses frontage roads, managed roadway access and roadscape ideas.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Through the development of a capital improvements plan and budget, the associated costs of the transportation element can be addressed. The Town's CIP will seek to not only plan for Town expenditures but also to locate grant and low interest loan opportunities that may exist to fund needed improvements.

## **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

It is the goal of the Town of Oconto Falls that residents will enjoy safe roads with minimal traffic congestion and safe bike/pedestrian routes and trails along Town Roads. Because the Town of Oconto Falls has a limited amount of control over county roads and state highways, the goals in this section are related to actions that the Town can control. The Town of Oconto Falls will work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of the Wisconsin "Smart Growth" Law, with Oconto County and WisDOT to ensure that adequate community transportation facilities are available to serve the area. A complete list of goals, objectives and policies are provided in the Implementation Element.

# 6.0 UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## ELEMENT

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## 6.0 UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Town of Oconto Falls Hall, STH 22

### Introduction

Understanding the location, use and capacity of utilities and community facilities is an important consideration when planning for the future. This information, coupled with the demographic trends and projections, provides a realistic picture of service supply and demand. The community facilities and utilities discussed in this chapter were carefully considered in the development of the *Future Land Use Map*.

### Utilities and Community Facilities Vision

**The Town of Oconto Falls continues to provide all the basic Town services. The Town works with neighboring communities to provide residents with efficient, cost-effective regional services that reduce the tax burden. Other needs are met by traveling to nearby communities like Oconto Falls. Residents in need of specialized services travel to the City of Green Bay or elsewhere. All residents rely on private well water and individual waste treatment systems.**

What follows is a description of existing utilities and community facilities within the Town of Oconto Falls. Neighboring communities, private companies, and Oconto County provide many of the services available to residents. This helps to control Town costs. Included in this chapter is information about some of the utilities and community facilities located in and provided by nearby communities, private companies, and Oconto County.

### Existing Utilities Inventory– Location, Use, Capacity

#### WATER SUPPLY

Residents and businesses in the Town of Oconto Falls receive their water from **individual, private wells**. There is no municipal water service in the Town and no plans to establish such service.

Municipal water service is available in the City of Oconto Falls. It is the policy of the City to require properties to annex into the City to receive municipal water service. The Town of Oconto Falls has a high quality supply of potable groundwater and surface water for nearly all anticipated uses. Additional information about groundwater resources is provided in the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element*. Residents



interested in testing the quality of their well water can find additional information on-line at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/welltest.htm>

### COMM 83

In July 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce implemented an administrative rule known as COMM 83. This rule allows homebuilders to install nine (9) kinds of innovative septic systems. The rule allows for development in areas that cannot be served by conventional systems.

**The Town of Oconto Falls supports the use of innovative treatment systems permissible through COMM 83.**

For additional information about the COMM 83 rule and the nine systems permitted, go to the Department of Commerce Web Page at:

[www.commerce.state.wi.us](http://www.commerce.state.wi.us)

[www.wra.org/pdf/government/landuse/Onsite\\_System\\_Descriptions.pdf](http://www.wra.org/pdf/government/landuse/Onsite_System_Descriptions.pdf)

### WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT

There are **no sanitary districts** in the Town of Oconto Falls. Likewise, there are no plans to establish sanitary districts. Residents and businesses utilize on-site private individual or community wastewater systems. The Town supports the continued use of these types of private on-site facilities to handle wastewater needs. Furthermore, the Town supports the use of *innovative treatment systems*, as approved by the Town and permissible through COMM 83. The Town of Oconto Falls does not believe that future residential, commercial or industrial development must connect to municipal sanitary service since safe and efficient on-site service can be achieved in most areas of the Town.

Additional information about the nine types of innovative treatments systems is available on-line at:

#### WDNR Stormwater Regulations

In Wisconsin, the WDNR is responsible for issuing stormwater permits. The WDNR has recently adopted a series of stormwater resolutions and requirements.

**NR151, Runoff Management**– Modified in 2002, to include five resolutions impacting performance standards for agricultural operations, wetlands and in-fill development.

**NR 152, Model Ordinances for Construction Site Erosion Control and Stormwater Management** – Modified in 2002 to reflect changes to NR 216 and NR 151.

**NR 216, Stormwater Discharge Permits** – Defines the WNDNR stormwater permit requirements. Certain industrial sites in the City of Oconto Falls are required to obtain discharge permits under this law through the WDNR.

A complete copy of the law is available at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/nr/nr216.pdf>

**P-8 Urban Catchment Model.** Available free of charge from the WDNR, this model is used to evaluate site plans for stormwater performance.

### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

**Stormwater runoff** is water from rainstorms or snowmelt that flows over the land rather than evaporating or soaking into the ground. Stormwater runoff is both urban and rural; however, urban areas generate more runoff because they have more impervious surface. An **impervious surface** is one that prevents water from infiltrating into the ground. Common impervious surfaces include roads, sidewalks, rooftops, and parking lots.

The Town of Oconto Falls has **no curb and guttered areas**. Stormwater management requirements are limited to construction sites and agricultural limitations imposed by Oconto County. There is **no stormwater management plan** in place for the Town of Oconto Falls. Open ditches are used to provide drainage for stormwater runoff. There are **no county drainage districts** in the Town of Oconto Falls and no plans to establish any in the future.

To meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act, the WDNR developed the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Stormwater Discharge Permit Program, which is regulated under the authority of ch. NR 216, Wis. Adm. Code. As part of the EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, the WPDES Stormwater Program regulates discharge of stormwater in Wisconsin from construction sites, industrial facilities, and selected municipalities. Additional information about WDNR stormwater requirement is provided in this section.

Given the limited density of proposed future development, Town officials believe that existing practices will be adequate to meet local needs for the next 20 years. The Town will also consider some of the following techniques to mitigate potential stormwater impacts in the future:

**Land Conservation Techniques.** Land conservation techniques include: cluster and conservation subdivisions, setbacks, buffers, land acquisition, and following the development patterns outlined on the *Future Land Use Map*.

**Aquatic Buffers.** Aquatic buffers are natural areas on either side of area creeks and streams to buffer against runoff. The Oconto County Land and Water Conservation Department recommends at least a 75-foot buffer on either side of a stream to protect the stream from harmful impacts.

**Site Design Techniques.** Effective site design techniques will encourage the use of natural landscaping, limit impervious surface, enforce setbacks and buffers, and protect natural resources. It is recommended that the Town establish a site plan review ordinance to allow for Town review of any commercial, industrial, or residential subdivision developments to consider stormwater impacts.

**Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP).** Stormwater best management practices seek to reduce stormwater pollutant loads, maintain ground water recharge and quality, protect stream channels and safely maintain the 100-year floodplain. Successful BMP's include ponds, wetlands, infiltration, filtering systems and open drainage channels. The Town will work with the county to encourage developers to utilize these techniques, especially where necessary to protect the Oconto River.

**Erosion and Sediment Control.** Typically, erosion and sediment control requirements affect construction sites and farming operations. To be effective, erosion and sediment control measures need to extend beyond these two situations. Probably one of the most effective techniques is to reduce the time that soil is exposed. As with the other mitigation techniques outlined in this subsection, education will be critical to success. The Town will work with the county to educate local developers and farmers about these practices.

## ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

The Town of Oconto Falls receives its electricity from the Oconto Electric Cooperative and Wisconsin Public Service. Properties along portions of STH 22 and some town roads can connect to an existing natural gas pipeline. All other properties must use private propane gas tanks. This situation may change in the future.

**Oconto Electric Cooperative.** Oconto Electric Cooperative (OEC), 7479 Rea Road, Oconto Falls, serves rural Oconto, Marinette, Menominee and Shawano Counties. OEC serves approximately 9,000 members with over 1,300 miles of power lines. The OEC was originally formed in 1936. At that time, large investor-owned utilities refused to bring electric power to the rural areas because it would cost too much to build the system, fears that farmers couldn't afford to pay for the electricity, and a general belief that the investment would not provide a profitable return.



With the formation of the Rural Electrification Administration (1935) and the passing of the Rural Electrification Act (1936), numerous rural areas throughout the United States began organizing their own electric cooperatives to bring power to the countryside.

Today, the **OEC serves nearly all residents in the Town of Oconto Falls.** The cooperative also owns a **substation off REA Road.**

Based on historic growth trends and future projections, OEC predicts that its existing facilities will serve the Town adequately for the next 20.

**Wisconsin Public Service.** Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) was formed in 1883 as the Oshkosh Gas Light Company and incorporated as Wisconsin Public Service Corporation in 1922. WPS provides electricity and natural gas to more than 400,000 customers within an 11,000 square mile (20 county) service area of Northeast and Central Wisconsin and a small part of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. WPS operates fossil, nuclear and hydroelectric generating plants to produce electricity. **In the Town of Oconto Falls, WPS provides electricity services to portions of STH 22, Washbisch Road, CTH K and the southeast corner of the Town.** WPS also owns and maintains a large overhead power transmission line that runs north-south through the center of the Town (illustrated on the *Utilities and Community Facilities Map*). WPS projects that its existing facilities will not serve the Town adequately for the next 20 years and is planning to expand its facilities to meet the future needs of the Town.

**ANR Pipeline Company.** ANR owns and maintains a natural gas transmission pipeline that provides WPS natural gas service. ANR was the first interstate pipeline to deliver natural gas supplies to Wisconsin, and it currently delivers most of the natural gas consumed in the state. ANR operates and maintains five compressor stations, four warehouses, 130 meter stations and more than 1,700 miles of pipeline. Wisconsin field operations are managed through an area office in Waukesha, which also serves as a satellite marketing office to provide closer liaison with local distribution companies and other customers. ANR has no plans to expand its pipeline in the Town of Oconto Falls. The ANR pipeline easement is illustrated on the *Utilities and Community Facilities Map*.

## **Existing Community Facilities Inventory– Location, Use & Capacity**

### **PUBLIC PARKS**

There are **no Town or County park facilities** located in the Town of Oconto Falls. However, there are several City and County park facilities adjacent to the Town of Oconto Falls and an Oconto River public access point for fishing is being pursued.

What follows is a detailed description of City and County park facilities that are available for use by Town residents. In addition to the park facilities, the City provides a number of **organized recreation programs during the summer**. Town residents can participate in these programs if space is available. A non-resident fee also applies.

**Eastside Beach.** With nearly 4-acres of Oconto River frontage, this park offers a swimming beach, boat launch, fishing piers, picnic areas, playground and a covered shelter. It is located on the northwest side of the City.

**Memorial Park.** This 15-acre park between Chestnut Avenue and Jefferson Street is home to the Oconto Falls High School Panther's track, football and baseball programs. It contains covered pavilions, picnic areas, and children's playground equipment.

**Pine Grove Park.** Located on the north side of Sherman Street between Oakland and Elm, this 3.7-acre City park features tennis courts, a basketball court, volleyball courts, playground, a covered shelter and picnic tables.

**Pleasant View Park.** The newest park facility in the City, Pleasant View Park, is a 2.5-acre site including a baseball diamond, bleachers and playground equipment. The park is located on the east side of the City off CTH I.

**Tubing Hill.** On the slopes of the bluff overlooking the River Island Golf Course, the tubing hill has been a long winter tradition. Operated by the Oconto Falls Lion's Club the rope tow permits tubers the luxury of enjoying the slide down the steep hillside without the struggle of a long climb back to the top. The site of the tow is a wooded 61-acre site

bounded by the Oconto River, River Island Golf Course and the residential neighborhoods of the community that offers biking and hiking experiences during the remainder of the year.

**Veterans Park.** Once the home of a hospital and City Hall, this 0.4-acre park is located near the Washington Middle School on the corner of Franklin Street and Central Avenue. The park features a war memorial and fountain.

**Westside Beach.** Located on the western shore of the Oconto River at the end of Flatley Street, this 3-acre City park includes a picnic shelter, boat launch, picnic areas, hiking opportunities, fishing areas, and a small playground.

**Riverside County Park.** Located in the Town of Gillett off CTH B, this day-use park property provides boat access to the Oconto River, as well as fishing opportunities, a sandy beach and picnic tables.

## GOLF COURSES

**River Island Golf Course.** This 9-hole public golf course is located off Mead Avenue in the City of Oconto Falls. The course plays to 3,034 yards and a par 35. Property amenities include a practice range, practice green, bar/grill, full restaurant and banquet facility.

## TRAILS

**Snowmobile Trails.** There are several snowmobile trails located in the Town of Oconto Falls.



These trails extend beyond the Town limits, through the county and beyond. The trails in the Town are illustrated on the *Transportation Network Map*. The trails are marked and maintained by a private

organization called the “Oconto Falls Sno Jokers.” Trail operation depends on the organization reaching agreements with landowners to allow snowmobilers to traverse private property.

**ATV Trails.** Wisconsin’s many miles of ATV trails are mainly located through the north woods of the state. At this time, there are **no official ATV trails in the Town of Oconto Falls.**

### Snowmobile & ATV Regulations

The State of Wisconsin has snowmobile and ATV Laws to protect public health and safety. Copies of these regulations are available on-line at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/es/enforcement/safety/pdfs/ATVregs2001.pdf](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/es/enforcement/safety/pdfs/ATVregs2001.pdf)

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/es/enforcement/safety/pdfs/Snomo.pdf](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/es/enforcement/safety/pdfs/Snomo.pdf)

The Town of Oconto Falls may adopt its own ordinance. The following items are suggested in any ordinance adopted by the town:

- Along US Highways, state and county highways a distance of 10 feet or more is required for operation of snowmobiles or ATVs.
- Travel on the improved portion of the road (i.e. blacktop, cement or gravel) is prohibited except for crossing.
- Travel along town roads is limited to the outside of the roadway on the shoulder or berm alongside a town road.
- During daylight hours, vehicles may travel in either direction.
- At night, travel shall conform to the direction of the vehicular traffic in the nearest lane.
- Travel adjacent to a roadway shall observe roadway speed limits.

However, there certainly are many area residents who own ATV units that desire local trails. These residents either use their ATV units on their own property or transport their ATV to the two official trails in the county. The nearest designated ATV trail runs between Suring and Mountain. A second loop trail is located 1 mile south of the junction of STH 32 and STH 64 through the Towns of Bagley, Breed, Mountain and Brazeau.

**There are limited opportunities to develop ATV trails in the Town of Oconto Falls** without having a negative impact on local wildlife or rural residential areas. There is little potential to convert snowmobile trails to ATV trails through Town because the Sno Joker Trails run through active farm fields during ATV season.

### **IS A TOWN PARK NEEDED?**

The **National Recreation and Park Association** recommends a community standard of 10 acres of local recreation land per 1,200 residents. The current population of the Town of Oconto Falls is 1,179 persons (2002 WDOA Estimate). To meet this national standard 10 acres of Town parkland should be considered.

There are **two primary locations to establish a Town park**. The first would be to acquire additional property adjacent to the Town Hall to accommodate picnic tables, playground equipment, and possibly a pavilion. This site has the advantage of being centrally located. However, given the traffic volumes on STH 22, this site is not the most ideal location for children to play. Moreover, a short drive from this site, residents can utilize one of the many park facilities in the City.

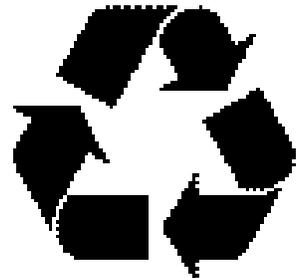
A second opportunity to develop a park in the Town exists in Section 20, where CTH K meets the Oconto River. This location is still quite centrally located. Additionally, it has the advantage of being situated away from the state highway. This site, with its river frontage, could potentially accommodate a Town boat landing and picnic tables.



**Potential Town Park Site – CTH K & Oconto River**

### **SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING**

In 1989, the State of Wisconsin adopted a recycling law. Beginning in 1995, the disposal of paper products such as newspaper, office paper, magazines and corrugated cardboard and containers made from aluminum and steel were prohibited from being disposed of in landfills. Certain glass and plastic containers were also banned. In addition, the recycling law also prohibited landfill disposal of tires, automotive batteries, oil, appliances and yard wastes.



The Town of Oconto Falls does not provide solid waste or recycling services. Landowners in the Town either **contract individually with private waste and recycling haulers** (i.e. Waste Management, G&S Refuse) or take their waste and recycling to the **Oconto Falls Recycling Center** (located on Pioneer Drive, City of Oconto Falls) on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7am and 3pm or on Saturdays between 8am and noon. This center accepts garbage and recycling materials for disposal from residents of the City and Town of Oconto Falls. Town residents are required to buy garbage bags from the City for this purpose.

This arrangement has been in effect for nearly 30 years. Due to future needs, this arrangement is continually being re-evaluated. There are no plans to change these practices in the future. The City recycling center is capable of handling all future Town waste needs.

### COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Access to communication facilities is more important than ever before in the modern economy.

- Several communication companies provide telephone, radio and television service to the Town of Oconto Falls from other locations in the state.
- Cable television service is not available in the Town.
- The Town does not currently distribute a newsletter to residents or provide a Town Internet web page.
- Many residents receive the *Oconto Times Herald* – a weekly paper distributed from the City of Oconto Falls.

All communication services currently serving the Town are expected to continue in the future and be expanded as technology and demand dictates. The quality of communication services depends on the capacity of the lines serving in the Town. Some residents have experienced difficulties with internet connections and other services given the limited capacity of the lines serving rural areas. The local telephone providers indicated that by identifying and planning for future residential development areas, the plan will help to guide their decisions for installation of upgraded facilities and lines which will be needed to provide quality services as the Town's population grows.

One particular area of concern with respect to communication facilities is the availability and demand for cellular service. The advent of new communication technologies, such as wireless internet, has greatly increased the need for towers to provide receiving and sending capabilities. The federal government formally recognized



**Tower off CTH K  
Town of Oconto Falls**

this need by the passage of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 has increased the need for many local governments to examine their zoning ordinances to make sure that they do not discriminate against cellular communications in land use and zoning decisions. Under Section 704 of the act, townships do have the power to regulate the placement, construction and modification of personal wireless facilities, as long as the rules do not unreasonably discriminate between providers or prohibit service.

Currently, there are **two (2) cellular towers located in the Town** (one off Johnson Lane and the other off Gallas Road). Presently, there are no plans pending for additional towers. Town residents do have cellular service coverage from towers located in neighboring communities. The Planning Commission will review future plans for communication towers. Local ordinances will be developed to restrict tower height. **Appendix D** provides additional information for the Town to consider when siting a tower in the Town.

## CEMETERIES

Often overlooked, cemeteries are an important facility every community must provide. Currently, there are 2 cemeteries in the Town of Oconto Falls.

- **Volk Family Cemetery** – Located on Golden Corners Road near the southern Town boundary, this private cemetery is approximately 1 acre in size. There are no plans to expand this cemetery.
- **St. John’s Riverside Cemetery** – This Town cemetery is approximately 1 acre in size. It is located on the north side of Gray lake Road near STH 32. There are no plans to expand this cemetery.



**Volk Family Cemetery**



**St. John’s Riverside Cemetery**

The Town anticipates that there is ample space in the existing cemeteries to meet all future Town needs. This would include space available in the cemeteries located nearby in the City of Oconto Falls, Gillett, Town of Morgan and Town of Chase. The Town of Oconto Falls has no plans to establish an additional cemetery.

If the Town, or a private individual, were to decide to **create another cemetery** in the Town of Oconto Falls, specific state regulations apply. Specifically, **Chapter 157 of the**

**Wisconsin Statutes regulates the establishment of cemeteries.** The statutes stipulate ownership requirements (including requirements for municipalities), platting requirements, acreage requirements, and record-keeping standards. These statutes are available on-line at [www.wisconsin.gov](http://www.wisconsin.gov) and from the Department of Regulation at [www.drl.state.wi.us](http://www.drl.state.wi.us). The Department of Regulation is the primary agency responsible for enforcement of the Wisconsin Statutes provided in Chapter 157.

State statutes do not regulate **pet burial**, by individual homeowners on their own property. County zoning is the tool to establish requirements or prohibition of pet burial. At this time, the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance does not address pet burial issues.

### **CHILDCARE FACILITIES**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, of the Town's 1,139 residents, 285 (25% are under the age of 18). This is a significant portion of the local population that has particular service demands (i.e. schools, parks, child care facilities). While school and park facilities are profiled elsewhere in this chapter, this section discusses childcare facilities available to residents of the Town of Oconto Falls.

There are **no commercial childcare facilities** located in the Town of Oconto Falls nor are there any plans to build such a facility. However, residents have informal networks of child care (i.e. family or friends). Some residents may provide childcare from their home for their neighbors.

The nearest commercial childcare centers to the Town are found in Oconto Falls and Gillett. As the Town population grows, it is possible over the 20 year life of this plan a local center may be built along STH 22 to accommodate demand. However, at this time, space is available in the facilities currently serving the area, though the quantity of available space varies by location and time of year.

### **HEALTH CARE FACILITIES**

There are **no health care** facilities located in the Town. The Town population is not large enough to support its own hospital, primary care, or clinic facility. However, Town residents can reach several primary and advanced specialty health care facilities located in the City of Oconto Falls, Green Bay, or Appleton (and beyond). Town residents have very easy access to health care facilities in comparison to many other rural communities in northern Wisconsin.

Nearby health facilities provide a range of primary and specialized medical services including: trauma care, neonatal care, rehabilitation, laser vision correction, orthopedic care, cardiac care and cancer treatment. Moreover, these facilities pride themselves on their efforts to maintain a quality care environment through continued efforts to improve facilities and services.

**Community Memorial Hospital.** Community Memorial Hospital was established in 1921. On March 17, 1972, the current facility, at 855 South Main Street in Oconto Falls, opened its doors to patients. The hospital is licensed for 25 patient beds. Community Memorial offers 24-hour Emergency Care, Ambulance Service, Obstetrics, Intensive Care Services and Surgical Services as well as an Inpatient Acute Care Unit. The hospital is a community-based facility providing healthcare services for Oconto County and its surrounding areas. Community Memorial Hospital is affiliated with Brim Healthcare and an accredited Medicare service provider. Services at Community Memorial include:

- AIDS Center
- Anesthesia
- Blood Bank
- Cardiac Echocardiogram, Rehab & Stress Testing
- Cardiology
- Colonoscopy
- Diabetic Education
- Emergency Services
- Laboratory (comprehensive)
- Intensive Care Unit
- Mammography
- Nuclear Medicine
- Nutrition Education
- Obstetrics
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedics
- Otolaryngology
- Outpatient Services
- Pediatrics
- Pharmacy
- Postoperative Recovery
- Psychiatric Services
- Pulmonary Function
- Rehab - Physical, Occupational, & Speech
- Surgery
- Trauma Center
- Urology
- X-ray, CT, MRI, & Ultrasound

Community Memorial Hospital also operates **primary care clinics** located in Oconto Falls, Gillett, Lena, and Oconto. The clinics specialize in Obstetrics and general family medicine, as well as preventive health for all ages. Services at the clinic include: well child exams, pap smears, acute and chronic illness care, hearing screening, x-rays, laboratory services, immunizations, allergy injections, and minor surgical procedures.

In addition to the CMH primary care clinics, there is a medical clinic located in Abrams. This clinic is home to a single general practitioner and is not affiliated with CMH. As a result, the physician is free to refer patients to any nearby hospital, not just CMH.

### SENIOR CARE FACILITIES

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 128 people (11.2%) living in the Town of Oconto Falls are age 65 or over. Like youth populations, seniors also demand particular services and housing options to meet their specific needs. The Town of Oconto Falls must continue to pay particular attention to the special needs of seniors when providing utilities and community facilities.

Since the Town's population base is not large enough to support a local senior care facility, retirement home, or nursing home, **it is critical that the informal networks of friends, family and support services continue to provide needed assistance to seniors living in the Town of Oconto Falls.** To facilitate these efforts, it may be desirable for the Town to **consider using the Town Hall on a limited basis as a local senior center.**

The Town of Oconto Falls does not have any senior housing, assisted living or retirement communities located within its boundaries. Seniors living in the Town of Oconto Falls must be able to live independently or find assistance from family members, friends, and neighbors. There are some programs serving Oconto County that provide services and opportunities for older persons living in the Town of Oconto Falls. Specifically, there are two (2) organizations that provide assistance to help the elderly remain living independently in Oconto County.

**Oconto County Commission on Aging, Inc.** The Oconto County Commission on Aging is a non-profit private organization whose mission is to assist older persons living independently in Oconto County. State and federal grants and local donations fund the organization. The Oconto County Commission on Aging has a small staff and a large network of volunteers to provide services to those in need. The organization offers a number of programs and services to seniors in Oconto County. Specifically, the Oconto County Commission on Aging:

- Manages a **home delivery meal program**, which serves over 100 people in the county each day a hot noonday meal. This program also includes 6 congregate meal sites in addition to the home-delivered meals.
- Has on-staff a **benefits specialist** to help older adults with questions about public benefits and programs. The staff benefits specialist helps seniors in need understand what services and programs are available to them. In the winter months, the staff benefits specialist also assists people who need fuel assistance.
- Coordinates **transportation** for seniors age 60 and over through a network of volunteers who drive individuals to medical appointments.
- Sponsors **events and activities** like craft fairs, seminars, and special trips for people living in nursing homes or seniors in the area that want to go on a fall color or holiday light tour.

The Oconto County Commission on Aging foresees that in the near future it will be expanding its home delivered meal program based on growth being experienced in the area. In addition, the organization may provide adult day care and home chore services for the elderly living in Oconto County.



**Community Options Program.** The Community Options program helps people who need long term care to stay in their own homes and communities. Its purpose is to provide cost-effective alternatives to expensive care institutions and nursing homes. Elderly people and people with serious long-term disabilities receive funds and assistance to find services they are not able to get through other programs. Based on individual

needs, Community Options provides services, equipment or aids that allow seniors to live safely, with dignity and respect in the community. Some examples include:

- Home Modification
- Adaptive Equipment
- Care Management
- Home Health Care
- Personal Care
- Respite Care
- Financial Counseling
- Communication Aids
- Residential Services
- Housekeeping

Oconto County also offers an **elderly nutrition program** through the Human Service Department. Through this program, congregate meal sites and home delivered meals are available.

If a senior living in the Town of Oconto Falls is unable to live independently or desires a living arrangement with other seniors, he or she can find quality private assisted living, nursing homes, and retirement homes in other nearby communities. Available space and waiting lists depend on the location and cost of the facility and can fluctuate regularly. Like childcare establishments, providers of senior housing regularly assess the local market conditions to determine if additional facilities or expansion are needed based on local population demands.

#### **FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED**

The Town of Oconto Falls has no facilities or programs for disabled residents. As with programs for elderly residents, **Oconto County offers some developmentally disabled services to residents in need.**

Programs and services for disabled residents are also provided through Oconto County. Most notably, the **Community Options Program (COP)** assists individuals with chronic illness or disability to obtain services needed to remain in their own home or to return to their home. COP serves children and adults of all ages with long-term disability. COP services include: home healthcare, transportation, respite care, dental care, equipment, home weatherization and remodeling, vans and lifts, therapy, medical bills, and counseling. County programs and services provide vital services that make independent living possible.

#### **POLICE PROTECTION<sup>1</sup>**

The Town of Oconto Falls does not have a police station or its own police department. The **Oconto County Sheriff's Department (OCSD)** provides protection services to area residents.

The OCSD has a post in the City of Oconto, from which OCSD serves the entire county. This post provides 24-hour emergency assistance to a 1,006 square mile area. The department operates on two (2) 12-hour shifts. Each patrol officer has his/her own cruiser. Vehicles are



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<sup>1</sup> Information based on telephone interview with Michael Jansen, Oconto County Sheriff, April 17, 2003.

replaced every 2-4 years. Generally, after a vehicle reaches 100,000 miles, the OCSD will seek to replace it.

**Response times** for calls to the Town depend on where the nearest cruiser is located. Response times can range between 5 - 30 minutes.

**FBI Standards** for police protection generally recommend 2 officers for every 1,000 persons. OCSD serves a year-round population base of approximately 25,710 (excludes city and village populations with their own departments) with a sworn staff of 23. As a result, the officer to citizen ratio is approximately 1:1,118, significantly below the standard. When the state patrol (4 assigned to the county primarily for traffic enforcement) and local city and village officers are included as back-up assistance, residents of Oconto County have more adequate police protection, but still do not meet the FBI Standard.

OCSD is seeing a trend of increasing calls each year, without subsequent increases in staff. Although the department has requested additional personnel in its annual budget request, funds have not been provided. It is difficult to predict when the budget will support additional staff. The OCSD will continue to monitor the situation and request additional staff annually as needed.

**OCSD also provides 911 emergency dispatch** for all emergency operations. The 911 dispatch is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The current service is enhanced to supply an address and directions when a call is received. The OCSD is working to update the system to provide a map whenever a call is placed to further improve response times.



In addition to the primary protection services provided by OCSD, the Wisconsin State Patrol has assigned 4 troopers to the county to patrol state and county highways for traffic violations. Furthermore, local villages and cities also have their own police departments. The OCSD has mutual aid agreements with the state and other local departments to provide back-up assistance as needed.

The OCSD also operates a county jail facility in the City of Oconto. The jail is currently operating at capacity. The OCSD has purchased property in the Town of Little River in anticipation of building a new jail facility at some point in the future.

## FIRE AND RESCUE

The Town of Oconto Falls does not have its own fire department. Instead, the Town contracts with the **Oconto Falls Fire Department**. This multi-jurisdictional on-call volunteer fire department provides coverage to the City and Town of Oconto Falls, as well as, a portion of the Town of Stiles. Under this arrangement, the Oconto Falls Fire Department prepares an annual budget that is financed by all three communities. If a resident makes a call to the fire department, the Town is invoiced for the run. The Town then invoices the resident to recoup the expense.

For More Information about the  
Oconto Falls Fire Department visit  
[www.offd.com](http://www.offd.com)



Equipment Truck

The fire station is located in the City of Oconto Falls on Cherry Street. The department has 26 trained volunteer firefighters. Maintaining adequate staffing is a challenge to the department. According to the Assistant Fire Chief, John Salscheider, during the daytime hours especially staffing is a challenge. Many of the volunteers work in Green Bay and other communities; therefore they are not readily available during an emergency. Also, as volunteers become well trained, they seek opportunities in larger communities to work full-time as a firefighter.

The fire department provides 911-based emergency service dispatched by the Oconto County Sheriff's Department. The response time within the Town of Oconto Falls varies depending on the location of the call and the time of day. Typical response times average between 5-10 minutes.

The department has a variety of specialized equipment to meet fire service needs. Specifically, the department has:

- 2001 Pierce Heavy Duty Fire Truck
- 1975 Pumper Truck - 1000 gpm (gallon per minute)
- 1968 Pumper Truck – 750 gpm
- 4x4 Brush Truck
- Equipment Truck
- 2 Tanker Trucks (2,000 gallons each)



4x4 Brush Truck

The **Town of Oconto Falls owns the two tanker trucks.** These trucks are critical for fire protection to the Town, given there are no hydrants. Within the City limits, hydrants are available to meet water extinguishing needs.

In 2003, the **Insurance Services Office (ISO)** rated fire protection service by the department as a 5 (out of 10 with 1 being the best). The ISO issues "fire protection" ratings and classifications across the United States. Most insurance underwriters utilize the assigned fire protection



Tanker Truck

rating to calculate residential, commercial and industrial insurance premiums. Fire districts are evaluated on a cyclical basis that is determined by district growth and the size of the population served.

The fire department annually considers needs for additional equipment and vehicle replacement and upgrades. Generally, the department is on a 10-year rotation for major vehicle replacements. Recommendations by the Fire Chief are forwarded to City and Towns for approval.

### **OCONTO FALLS AREA AMBULANCE SERVICE**

Oconto Falls Area Ambulance Service, Inc. is a paid **volunteer organization** providing a wide array of pre-hospital emergency medical services to approximately 9,100 residents from the City of Oconto Falls and surrounding Townships of Abrams, Morgan, Oconto Falls, Spruce and Stiles. The rural service area is approximately 200 square miles.



Oconto Falls Ambulance Service has **34 paid on-call volunteers** of ACLS- Certified Registered Nurses, EMT's and First Responder's trained in the latest techniques of life-saving care. The Oconto Falls Area Ambulance operates using four ambulances and an off-road ATV. It is a paid on call volunteer service with an annual run volume of over **500 calls per year** for a rough average of 1 1/2 calls per day. The **average response time is 10.2 minutes** from the time the call is placed to the ambulance arriving on-scene.

In 2002, the Oconto Falls Ambulance Service completed a major expansion of its facility, after acquiring its fourth ambulance. The expansion included a 5-bay storage addition and remodeling of the office. No additional expansion projects are anticipated.

Like the Oconto Falls Fire Department, the only on-going challenge for the ambulance service is to retain enough volunteers to staff the operation 24-hours a day 365 days a year. Daytime staffing is a particular challenge as many of the volunteers work beyond the service area.

### **LIBRARIES**

The Oconto Falls Community Library and the Gillett Public Library serve the Town of Oconto Falls. In addition to these public libraries, each of the local school districts operates several library facilities.



The **Oconto Falls Community Library** is located at 251 N. Main Street in Oconto Falls. The 9,600 square foot facility was opened in 1992. Prior to 1992, the library was in a much smaller building. In 1999, the total circulation for the Oconto Falls

Community Library was 45,367 with 3,472 registered borrowers (Oconto Falls Community Library Annual Report, 1999). The library offers a host of special services and programs including: public Internet access, computers for word processing, a summer reading program, story hours for children, photocopying, and a meeting room which can be rented. In addition to books and periodicals, the library also loans videos, educational play totes for children, and puppets.

The **Gillett Public Library** was constructed in 1996. It is located at 200 E. Main Street in Gillett. The library has regular hours Tuesday – Saturday and offers an array of services, including a summer reading program and weekly story hour for children.

All libraries in Oconto County are part of a web catalogue that can be accessed 24 hours a day from the Internet. **WISCAT** is the statewide bibliographic database and catalogue for Wisconsin. It contains 6.7 million bibliographic records with local holdings statements for 1,270 libraries of all types throughout Wisconsin. The libraries listed in WISCAT are willing to loan many of the materials through established statewide interlibrary loan channels. WISCAT has been on-line since the summer of 2000. Users simply connect to the Internet web page, search for the materials they are interested in, and place a hold on those materials so that they can be picked up during regular library hours.

Given the improved access to resources via the web catalogue and the interlibrary loan program, in addition to the resources the internet makes available to residents, it is anticipated that the library services are adequate to meet future demand through 2020 and beyond.

## SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town of Oconto Falls is served by **two school districts**, but there is **no school building located in the Town**. Almost the entire Town is in the Oconto Falls School District. Limited areas along STH 32 are in the Gillett School District.

**Oconto Falls School District**. The Oconto Falls School District serves the majority of the Town of Oconto falls. The district just completed \$20 million in upgrades, including, a new gym, performing arts center, technical education shops, additional classrooms and a community fitness center in the High School, new classrooms in Abrams Middle School, and the purchase of land in Little Suamico for future elementary school site development. The district has **no plans to expand its existing**



Oconto Falls High School



Oconto Falls District Office

**buildings or build a new school in the Town of Oconto Falls.** Table 17 provides a detailed breakdown of school building locations, grades, enrollment and capacities.

**Spruce Elementary School** is a charter school focusing on environmental education and multi-age classroom settings. This elementary currently includes two classrooms. One accommodates students in 1, 2, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades and the other is for students in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades.



Oconto Falls Elementary School

The Oconto Falls School District also operates an **Alternative Learning Center (FALS)**. This facility functions as an alternative high school for troubled youth in the community.

TABLE 17 OCONTO FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT				
School Name	Address	Grades*	Enrollment	Capacity Estimate
Abrams Elementary	5810 Elm Street, Abrams (Town of Spruce)	PreK-5	335	500
Spruce Elementary	7904 CTH A, Lena	1-5	29	46
Oconto Falls Elementary	415 E. Mara Volk Dr, Oconto Falls	Pre K-5	530	725
Oconto Falls Middle School	102 S. Washington Street, Oconto Falls	6-8	460	725
Oconto Falls High School	408 Cedar Avenue, Oconto Falls	9-12	600	750

Source: Oconto Falls School District, April 2003

\* Pre-K refers to 4-year-old kindergarten classes offered through the school district.

\*\* Capacity estimates were calculated using the number of classrooms x 23 students. These figures may fluctuate if classroom sizes are decreased or if the number of teachers available in the district decreases.

**Gillett School District.** Some Town residents living on the far western edge of the township are included in the Gillett School District. Like the Oconto Falls School District, Gillett has no plans for expansion or new facility development. Table 17 provides a detailed breakdown of school characteristics.

TABLE 18 GILLETT SCHOOL DISTRICT				
School Name	Address*	Grades	Enrollment	Capacity Estimate**
Gillett Elementary School	208 W. Main Street, Gillett	K-5	395	598
Gillett Middle School	208 W. Main Street, Gillett	6-8	212	253
Gillett High School	208 W. Main Street, Gillett	9-12	289	713

Source: Gillett School District, April 2003

\*Capacity estimates were calculated using the number of classrooms x 23 students. These figures may fluctuate if classroom sizes are decreased or if the number of teachers available in the district decreases.

**Private Schools.** In addition to the public schools, St. Anthony School (253 N. Franklin Street, Oconto Falls) provides instruction to all faiths from grades K-5. Other area communities also have private parochial education facilities. Classrooms size and expansion decisions at these facilities are based on congregation funds and interest.

**Colleges and Universities.** There are no colleges or universities in the Town of Oconto Falls. The nearest centers for higher education are located in Green Bay (UW-Green Bay and the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College), Appleton (Lawrence University & Fox Valley Tech), and Stevens Point (UW-GB). The Northeast Wisconsin Technical College has a permanent classroom facility (e.g. regional learning facility) in the City of Oconto Falls. From this site a variety of classes are offered.

## **Town Facilities**

Town facilities generally include such things as fire stations, meeting halls and equipment. The Town of Oconto Falls has a hall located on STH 22, west of the City of Oconto Falls. The hall includes a public restroom and kitchen facility. The Town also has a garage to store road maintenance equipment. The Town does not own any other properties and has no plan to acquire additional properties.



## **Utilities and Community Facilities Map**

The *Utilities and Community Facilities Map* provided on the next page illustrates the location of utilities and community facilities in the Town of Oconto Falls. The map outlines the school district boundaries, identifies the location of the Town Hall, electric substation, churches, cemeteries and potential future park sites.

# UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



**Legend**

- ROADS
- - - POWER LINES
- ANR GAS PIPELINE
- 🏠 TOWN HALL (potential town park site)
- 🗼 TOWERS
- ✝️ CHURCH
- ✝️ CEMETERIES
- 🏢 SUBSTATION
- ★ POTENTIAL TOWN PARK SITES
- 🚤 RIVER ACCESS POINT
- 🚤 COUNTY BOAT LANDING TOWN OF GILLETT
- 💧 WATER
- 🏫 OCONTO FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT
- 🏫 GILLETT SCHOOL DISTRICT



**OMNI ASSOCIATES**  
PROJECT # M109462  
DATE: 8/6/02  
DRAWN BY: KAL  
REVISED: 1/8/05/04

LOCATION: F:\GIS\B109462\DRAWING\08\08\_1117.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

## Utilities and Community Facilities Concerns

### TOWERS

Town residents are concerned about cellular towers. While residents understand the issues of supply and demand for cellular service, the Town does not want to see **extensive cellular tower development**. Given the rolling hills in the Town, the fear is a tower would be placed in a prominent hilltop location, visible for miles, with a light on top. Towers are also believed to have a negative impact on local bird populations. The Town of Oconto Falls will only consider tower applications that support many users, less than 200 feet in height, and designed to minimize impact on local bird populations. For more information on cellular towers, refer to Appendix D.

### KETTL COMMISSION- REGIONAL COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

In April 2000, former governor Tommy Thompson formed the Kettl Commission to “rethink what Wisconsin governments do and how they can do it better.” The commission included representatives from state and local governments, school districts and universities. Given this mission, the commission held a series of 15 meetings and developed a report recommending four primary principles:

1. **Economic Development** – strengthen state and local partnerships and minimize competition between communities for economic development.
2. **Citizens at the Center** – Seek to ensure that governments at all levels provide customer driven service that is cost effective.
3. **Performance Driven Government** – Seek to improve government efficiencies through coordination and consolidation of services.
4. **Maximum local flexibility in pursuing statewide goals.** “One size doesn’t fit all.” As such local governments should have the freedom to develop their own policies and programs, under the guide of statewide goals, to solve issues locally.

The Town’s progressive role in coordinating services with the City of Oconto Falls exemplifies the principles outlined by the Kettl Commission. As desirable, the City and Town should continue to build on existing coordinated efforts in the future.

### BUDGET CONSTRAINTS

In the wake of Wisconsin’s debate over the future of **shared revenue**, the Town understands the need to carefully consider all expenditures. This consideration certainly extends to providing utilities and community facilities for the community. The Town will pursue efficient, cost-effective opportunities for regionalized services that benefit the Town. Likewise, the Town may also consider a CIP and others tools to further improve its budgeting abilities.

## **WIND POWER**

Wind power has great potential as an alternative energy source in Wisconsin. Unlike fossil fuel dependent technologies, wind power does not pollute the environment. Depending on wind speeds, each turbine is designed to produce a maximum flow of 660 kilowatts of electricity, enough electricity to supply about 300 homes with energy. During the course of a year, wind turbines will generate approximately 3,450 megawatt-hours of electricity. If that power were produced using conventional fossil fuels, there would be 1,956 tons of carbon dioxide emissions; the equivalent of 260 people driving sport utility vehicles for a year.

There are proponents and opponents in the Town of Oconto Falls to the use of wind power. If this technology were to be seriously pursued in the Town, officials must pay careful attention to siting and visual impact on the rural character of the Township. Moreover, migratory bird patterns should also be considered before placing a windmill in the Town of Oconto Falls. Standards restricting location, height, noise and other issues with respect to the turbines should be included as conditions to any approval to minimize potential impacts on neighboring property owners.

## **Utilities and Community Facilities Funding Options**

Other governments and agencies (i.e. county and school districts) provide many of the utilities and community facilities serving the Town of Oconto Falls. As such, they are funded through their general budgets and funding through tax revenues and referendums.

The Town of Oconto Falls, like other communities across the state, welcomes opportunities to finance needed utilities and community facilities. There are numerous grant and loan programs that the Town may seek to help finance needed improvements. These programs are available through the State of Wisconsin and the U.S. Federal Government. What follows is a description of some of the major opportunities available to the Town.

### **RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANTS**

The USDA Rural Development also offers grants to communities seeking to build or improve their community buildings (i.e. halls, libraries, community center, and fire departments). These grants are awarded to communities with a population up to 10,000 based on a competitive application process.

### **STATE TRUST FUND LOAN PROGRAM**

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands provides this loan program with terms of up to 20 years and deeply discounted interest rates. Loans may be used for a variety of purposes including: road improvements, community centers/halls, trail development, and property acquisition. The funds available fluctuate annually. The current annual loan limit is \$3,000,000.

## **FIRE ADMINISTRATION GRANTS**

The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) offers over \$100,000,000 in annual grant awards to fire departments in six specific areas: training, fitness programs, vehicles, firefighting equipment, and Fire Prevention Programs. Applicants from communities, which serve a population of less than 50,000, must provide a 10% match.

## **TOWN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM**

As discussed in the *Transportation Element*, the Town of Oconto Falls may develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to plan effectively for costly improvements. If approved, it will be an important tool for implementation of this Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan.

A CIP is a five to six year plan that is updated yearly, including items such as public building improvements and maintenance, roads, and emergency vehicle purchase and replacement. Capital items are generally defined as those items that are expensive (cost \$5,000 or more) and will last at least 3-5 years.

### **STEPS TO DEVELOP A CIP**

The general steps involved in developing and maintaining a CIP include:

1. Identifying desired capital items.
2. Estimating the cost and means of financing for each item.
3. Comparing the desired expenditures to the budget to determine priorities.

This process helps to ensure that improvements are made in a logical order and do not surprise local officials or taxpayers.

## **Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements**

Utilities and community facilities can dictate future planning for a community if capacity, location, and services are not adequate to support development. Therefore, it is important to inventory existing utilities and community facilities and understand how utilities and community facilities will be provided over the planning period. Furthermore, utilities and community facilities have a direct impact on the other elements of the comprehensive plan. In particular, the Housing, Economic Development, Land Use, and Intergovernmental Coordination Elements are most directly impacted by utilities and community facilities.

## **HOUSING**

Improvements such as roads, recreational facilities and schools all need to be coordinated with the housing decisions and vice versa. The best method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern presented on the *Future Land Use Map* as closely as possible and plan for future improvements. This approach will greatly enhance the efficiency of capital improvements expenditures. To provide further assistance in these efforts, the Town should consider the use of a capital improvement plan as a tool to help organize and plan for future capital expenditures.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The availability of utilities like electricity and communications services is critical to economic development. This infrastructure is needed to support growth in the Town of Oconto Falls. Therefore, the goals and objectives of this chapter seek to maintain, and where feasible, improve local utilities and community facilities to provide some additional economic development opportunities in the Town of Oconto Falls.

## **LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use dictates the need for utilities and community facilities. Inversely, the availability of utilities and community facilities can dictate where development can and should occur. The *Future Land Use Map* was developed after careful consideration of where utilities and community facilities are now available, or will be available, within the planning period. In addition, the *Future Land Use Map* considers the economic feasibility of utilities and community facility extensions to serve areas planned for future development.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

As is obvious from this chapter, utilities and community facilities are not provided solely by the Town of Oconto Falls. Utilities and community facilities that serve the area are provided by Oconto County, private companies and neighboring communities. It is important that these utilities and community facilities continue to effectively serve the Town of Oconto Falls. Therefore, continued coordination is essential to ensure that development in the Town of Oconto Falls is compatible with local utility and community facility capacities. Goals and objectives included in this chapter, as well as the Intergovernmental Coordination Element, support continued coordination to efficiently provide needed utilities and community facilities to the Town of Oconto Falls.

## **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

It is the goal of the Town that all future utilities and community facilities needs are met through the year 2020 (and beyond). Though many of these facilities will be located outside of the Town limits, they will be easily accessible in nearby communities. The services provided will also meet the special needs of elderly, disabled and youth populations in the Town.

The Town of Oconto Falls has limited control over resource allocations in neighboring communities and the school districts, so the goals in this plan are related to actions that the Town can control. The Town of Oconto Falls will work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Wisconsin “Smart Growth” Law, with neighboring communities, the county, and the school districts to ensure that adequate community and utilities facilities are available to serve the area. To review the Goals, Objectives and Policies, refer to the Implementation Element Chapter.

# 7.0 AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

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## 7.0 AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL ESOURCES

### Introduction

The Town of Oconto Falls has a very strong farming history. The rivers, rolling hills, and farms establish the character of the community, provide a sense of place, determine the potential for future development, and support the local economy. This is reflected in the values expressed in Chapter 1. This chapter is a primary focal point of the plan. The information presented in this chapter was the foundation for preparing the *Future Land Use Map*.

This chapter provides an inventory of existing Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources. In addition, issues associated with these resources are discussed. A vision, with supporting goals and objectives, is also presented.

To learn more about Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources, also see these chapters...

- √ **Existing and Future Land Use Chapters** provide information about zoning and rural preservation design techniques.
- √ **The Economic Development Element** provides information about the importance of Agriculture in the Town.
- √ **The Economic Development Element** also includes information about environmentally contaminated sites and brown fields.
- √ **The Utilities & Community Facilities Element** profiles community facilities like schools, libraries and parks that enrich the local culture.

### Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Vision

**The Town of Oconto Falls has successfully maintained more than 80 percent of the farmland and rural character that existed in 2004. This achievement was the result of dedicated farmers, the actions of Town government, and the consolidation of small family farms. Contiguous areas of woodlands, wetlands and other natural areas have also been protected from development. Farmland and natural areas enhance the rural character of the Town by maintaining open vistas and providing buffers between residential areas to maintain the low, rural density of development desired by residents. Recreational opportunities include fishing, hunting and biking along Town roads. The Oconto River is a focal point for community pride and remains a prime source for various water-related recreation activities and scenic enjoyment.**

### Agricultural Resources Inventory

Why should farmers care about this Smart Growth Plan? First, farmers are the largest landholders in the Town. In fact between 10 and 20% of all residents live on farms.<sup>1</sup> Farm families are the heart and soul of the Town -- with a sense of history and place -- as well as the Town's economic foundation. As major landowners, farmers pay property taxes that support schools and other services used by farmers and non-farmers. Therefore, farmers have a direct and important say in the future of the Town. The Town

<sup>1</sup> The Program on Agricultural Technology Studies & The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Wisconsin Land Use Research Program, July 1, 1999, based on tax record data from WDNR and Tiger Census Files. Information is available on-line at:  
<http://www.wisc.edu/pats/landuse/rpcmaps/eastcentral/chgtaxag.html>.

of Oconto Falls values the input of local farmers and sought to include them to the fullest extent possible in the development of this plan.

Nearly 70 percent of the Town of Oconto Falls is farmland. As a percentage of total land area, this is slightly more than several adjacent communities.

**FARMING IS IMPORTANT IN THE TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS**

In the Community Survey, residents were asked if “A farmers right to farm is important and should be protected, despite the dust, noise, odors, etc.?” Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with this statement.

150 – strongly agree (51%)  
 105 - agree (34%)  
 16 – neutral (5%)  
 16 - disagree (5%)  
 15 - strongly disagree (5%)

TABLE 19: LAND COVER				
Town Name	Farmland	Urban (subdivisions/ Commercial)	Forests	Wetlands
Oconto Falls	68.6%	0.0%	12.4%	18.7%
Gillett	72.1%	0.1%	10.2%	17.0%
Morgan	56.1%	0.0%	24.0%	19.4%
Spruce	66	0.0%	10.2%	23.6%
Stiles	42.5	0.0%	27.3%	30.1%

Source: 1993 Land Cover Data, Wisconsin Town Land Use Data Project: Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, UW-Madison

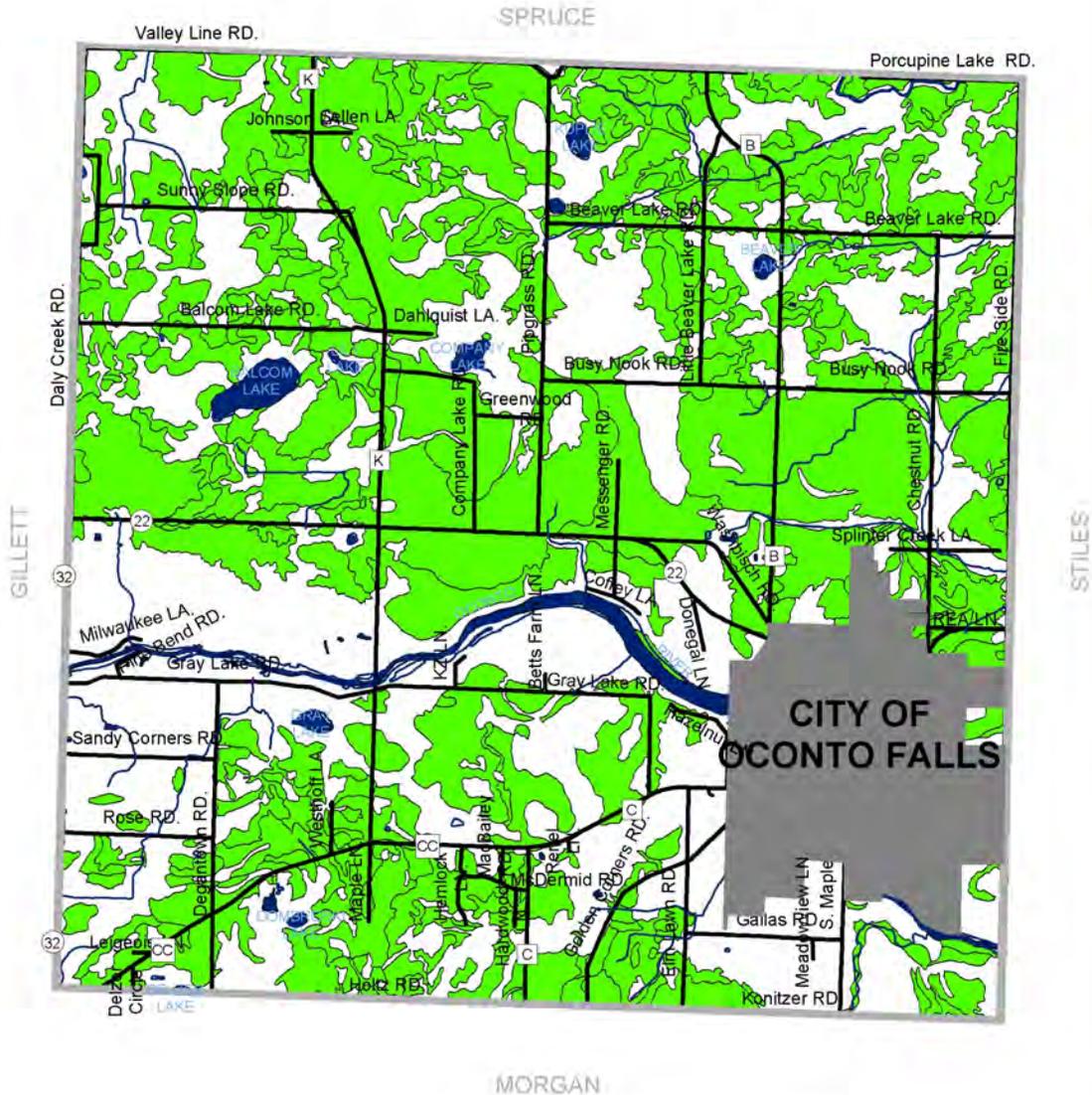
**PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL AREAS**



**Prime farmlands** (productive agricultural areas) **are determined by soil types** that are capable of producing high yields of crops under a high level of management. Productive soils are considered to be those soils that are capable of producing an average of 4 tons per acre per year of grass-legume hay, or 100 bushels per acre of corn. The United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service considers a “high level of management” to include provisions for adequate drainage, appropriate tillage, planting and seeding with high yielding varieties, control of weeds, diseases, insects, optimum fertilizer application and timely, efficient harvesting techniques. Productive agricultural soils are illustrated on the *Agricultural Suitability Map*. The soils in the Town of Oconto Falls are considered highly productive and have an estimated crop yield of 112 bushels per acre of corn.

# AGRICULTURAL SUITABILITY

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



MORGAN

Areas in green indicate soil types which are capable of producing high yields of crops typically grown in the county under a high level of management. Productive soils are considered to be those which are capable of producing an average of 4 tons per acre per year of grass-legume hay, or 100 bushels per acre of corn. The Soil Conservation Service considers a "high level of management" to include provisions for adequate drainage, appropriate tillage, planting and seeding with high yielding varieties, control of weeds, diseases, insects, optimum fertilizer application and timely, efficient harvesting techniques.



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	REVISED:

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 SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## MANURE MANAGEMENT & ODOR CONCERNS<sup>2</sup>

In the Community Survey, residents expressed concern over manure management. To begin this discussion it is necessary to answer a few basic questions:

### What smells?

Over 150 volatile compounds have been identified in manure gases. Of these, ammonia, hydrogen sulfide and several other sulfur compounds produce the odors. When manure is field-spread, the gases often remain near ground level and can permeate the air for a considerable distance.

### What Technologies are Available to Reduce Odors?

1. **Manure Additives.** While certainly not the least expense, manure additives are one of the first alternatives farmers consider when confronted with odor problems. Many companies sell additives and farmers themselves have come up with some mixtures of their own. Commercial products include bacterial suspensions, enzymes and plant extracts. These additives are intended to reduce odors and ammonia loss, break down solids and crust, and stimulate bacterial activity. There is little information based on controlled studies that support these claims.
2. **Composting.** While this is an excellent alternative for manure that contains a considerable amount of bedding, liquid or slurry manure would require the addition of something to increase the dry matter content enough so that the product will stack. Commercial windrow turners do an excellent job of mixing and turning manure that is being composted, but they are expensive. A “farmer-friendly” alternative is to use a front-end loader or backhoe to move the windrows of manure 10-20 feet, thus aerating the stack. The end product may not be as marketable to garden centers, but it will have considerably reduced the odor and volume. Properly composted manure has an earthy smell that is not as objectionable to neighbors.
3. **Aerobic Treatment.** Aerobic means adding oxygen to manure to reduce odors. Aerobic digestion is relatively odor-free, but aerobic treatment of manure isn’t commonly used in livestock waste systems because of its high costs and the large lagoon surface area needed for proper function. Floation-type aerators have been used successfully in some hog operations, but dairy manure has remarkable abilities as a sealant and can quickly plug up these aerators.

### HOW TO MINIMIZE CONFLICTS BETWEEN FARMS AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Establish **buffers** to minimize conflicts the *Future Land Use Maps* support this. To be effectively enforced, zoning requirements should be established. The use of buffers between agricultural and residential development was supported by 64% of Town survey respondents.
2. Pay particular attention to **prevailing winds** when locating and approving residential development.
3. Encourage farmers to use **manure management** practices and technologies to limit odors.
4. Encourage farmers to communicate with neighbors when spreading or storing waste.
5. **Educate** residents about realities of rural living and distribute this information to local realtors.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, Everett D., *All About Odors*, NRAES-96, 1996.

4. **Anaerobic digestion**<sup>3</sup> is used mainly by industries and municipalities to stabilize waste solids, generate methane gas and control odors. In an anaerobic digestion system, a tank holds the manure while anaerobic bacteria break it down, releasing anaerobic gases (methane, ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, and carbon dioxide). The digester size is based on the detention time and the pounds of manure produced by the animals each day. For effective stabilization, the waste must be held for 10 to 15 days to allow the bacteria to work. Anaerobic digesters are very effective at controlling odors, nearly eliminating them from associated manure storage structures. Odors remain sealed within the digester during biodegradation. When the biologically stabilized liquids and solids are transferred to the storage pit, they produce very little odor. Agricultural use of anaerobic digestion has been limited by high construction cost and high management requirements.
5. **Soil Injection**<sup>4</sup> controls odor emissions from manure during and after land application. Soil immediately covers the manure during soil injection - isolating it from the air above. Soil injection significantly reduces odor during land application. Injecting manure into the soil increases the cost of hauling manure. Although injection adds to the cost of land application, nutrient savings can offset the extra cost.
6. **Biocovers**.<sup>5</sup> Biocovers are fibrous biological materials, such as straw or chopped cornstalks, placed (typically blown) on top of liquid storage units to provide a physical barrier between the liquid manure surface and the air. The success of biocovers depends on 100% coverage of the storage structure. Getting an adequate depth of cover is also important to controlling odors. Biocovers must be at least 8 inches thick. Biocovers are useful for slurry pits, but not for anaerobic lagoons since they are much larger than pits with much more surface area to be covered.
7. **Ultrasound Blasting**. David Soll, a biological sciences professor at the University of Iowa, has tested the effectiveness of applying ultrasound waves to manure in lagoons and pits to reduce odors. Acoustic waves generated by titanium tubes vibrating as 20,000 times per second penetrate the manure, breaking chemical bonds and triggering chemical reactions that alter the typical decomposition process so there is less hydrogen sulfide emitted. Research has been successful with hog manure. Tests on dairy manure continue. Assuming the research is successful, cost will be a concern with this approach.

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<sup>3</sup> *Iowa Odor Control Demonstration Project Report*, Iowa State University Extension, Jun 1998

<sup>4</sup> See Footnote #3 for source.

<sup>5</sup> See Footnote #3 for source.

### *Practices Which Reduce the Effects of Manure Odors*

**Farmers can take simple measures to reduce the manure odors. These simple practices include:**

1. **Incorporation.** The more quickly manure is covered by soil, the less odor generated. Rapid incorporation into the soil by plowing works well. Depending on the application rate and the size of the field, it may be advisable to plow part of the field before applying manure to the rest of the field.
2. **Rate.** Heavy, uneven applications dry more slowly than moderate ones and will generate more odors for a longer period of time. Extremely heavy rates are also subject to runoff and pollution of surface water. Therefore, more moderate application is recommended.
3. **Minimize Aerosol Production.** Limiting the agitation of pits and lagoons will help to reduce odors. Some commercial manure additives are advertised as reducing crusting on pits. While this may reduce agitation time, there is also evidence that a crust will limit odor problems during the time the pit is being filled.
4. **Timing.** Morning applications have all day to dry. In the morning the air (and odors) rise. Prime time for spreading is morning and early afternoon. Working neighbors will be away from home much of the day. By the time they come home, odors will be reduced, which will help to minimize complaints. Also check wind direction and spread when the winds are blowing away from residential areas. If possible, avoid spreading near residential areas on Fridays and weekends when residents are more likely to be home and outside.

### *What Do Current Regulations Require?*

The Oconto County Land and Water Conservation Department enforces the County's waste management ordinance. The ordinance begins by stipulating that animal feedlots and waste storage areas will be subject to conditions:

*Conditions may include, but are not limited to exposure to: noise, lights; fumes; dust; smoke; insects; chemicals; machinery operations, including aircraft during any hour of day or night; storage and land application of manure; and application by spraying or other means chemical pesticides, fertilizers and other soil amendments.*

Furthermore, the ordinance goes on to state:

*Residents in and adjacent to agricultural areas must accept such conditions as a normal and necessary aspect of living in an area with a strong rural character and an active agricultural sector.*

The intent of the ordinance is to enforce the following prohibitions:

- No overflow of manure storage structures;
- No unconfined manure stacking (piling) within water quality management areas (adjacent to stream banks, lakeshores, and in drainage channels.);
- No direct runoff from feedlots or stored manure to waters of the state;

- No unlimited livestock access to waters of the state where high concentrations of animals prevent adequate sod cover maintenance;
- Require permits for new and expanding feedlots; and
- Required removal of feed piles.

The ordinance requires a permit be obtained for waste storage facilities and animal feedlots. Operators must also develop plans that adhere to: NRCS 313 - the *Conservation Practice Standard* of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (see box at right for more information).

**CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARDS**

The NRCS (a division of the USDA) has developed a handbook that provides **technical guidance** for nutrient management concerns, including those related to manure management, including:

- 313 Waste Storage Facilities
- 359 Waste Treatment Lagoons
- 634 Manure Transfer
- 561 Heavy Use Protection Area

Additional information is available on-line at: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/afo/cnmp\\_guide\\_index.html](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/afo/cnmp_guide_index.html)

The county ordinance includes the following standards and specifications:

*Animal Feedlots. The standards and specifications for design, construction, operation and maintenance of animal feedlots are those identified in standards 350 and 312, USDA-NRCS Technical Guide. Feedlots requiring a permit under this ordinance shall be designed to deliver no more than 20 pounds of phosphorus annually draining into waters of the state as determined by the Oconto County Land Conservation Division (using the latest computer model).*

*Animal Feedlot Separation Requirements. All new animal feedlots permitted under this ordinance shall be sited a minimum of 100 feet from the property line of any other property owner, 300 feet from any lake or perennial stream (as defined by the USGS quadrangle maps), and at least 2 vertical feet from groundwater.*

*Animal Waste Storage Facilities. The standards and specifications for design, construction, operation, and maintenance of animal waste storage facilities are those identified in Standard 313, USDA-NRCS Technical Guide.*

*Animal Waste Storage Facilities Separation Requirements. All new animal waste storage facilities shall be sited a minimum of 250 feet from property lines of adjacent property owners, 300 feet from any lake or perennial stream (as defined by USGS quadrangle maps), and separated from ground water according to NRCS Standard 313. Reception pits as part of the animal feedlot or buildings with under-floor storage shall be sited a minimum of 100 feet from adjacent properties.*

*Animal Waste Management and Utilization. Animal wastes for which storage permits are issued under this chapter of the Code shall be managed and utilized in accordance with Standard 590, USDA-NRCS Technical Guide. A current (590) Nutrient Management Plan must be submitted annually to the Oconto County Land Conservation Division until the animal waste storage facility is no longer in use and it has been properly abandoned.*

## CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFOs)



Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (farms with over 1,000 animal units. An “animal unit” is equivalent to 1,000 pounds.), or “mega farms”, are increasing in number in Wisconsin. In 1985, there was one such operation in the state. By 1990, 24 operations and by 2000 there were 77 mega farms in Wisconsin.

Generally, CAFOs locate in rural areas where conflicts with neighboring property owners can be minimized.

**CAFOs often bring advantages and disadvantages** to a community.

- From an economic standpoint, CAFOs generate jobs and taxes in a municipality.
- Proponents also argue that animals in CAFOs are generally cleaner and better cared for than animals on smaller farms.
- Opponents site concerns related to manure management, odor, traffic, neighboring land value, and lighting issues as concerns which must be addressed to successfully locate a CAFO in a community.

**Locating CAFOs is a challenge.** Helping landowners locate larger operations prevents problems later with potential feedlot runoff, manure storage, and manure handling problems. Of particular concern is having more animal units than cropland available for spreading.

**Recent changes to Wisconsin State and local (county) regulations** mean more livestock and cash grain producers are following nutrient management plans (NMP). In addition, the USDA and EPA are proposing changes that will reduce the number of animal units that a farm may have before a WPDES permit is required. Those farms currently required to have a nutrient management plan include:

- Farms with more than 1,000 animal units;
- Farms under county conditional use permits;
- Farms that have taken cost sharing money for a manure system since 1990; and
- Farms that have had a DNR notice of discharge (NOD).

In the community survey, residents were asked what position, if any, do they feel the Town of Oconto Falls should take with respect to expansion of dairy herds/farms. Residents answered as follows:

Generally Favor – 98 (32%)  
Oppose – 24 (8%)  
No Position – 135 (44%)  
Not Sure – 43 (14%)  
Other – 9 (3%)

### WHAT IS A WPDES PERMIT?

The WDNR regulates municipal, industrial, and significant animal waste operations discharging wastewater to surface or groundwaters through the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit program.

The permits are for a maximum of 5-years. They establish the performance standards for the wastewater treatment systems and set numeric criteria the discharger must meet. The permit is the discharger's approval to discharge a set quantity of wastewater at a specific location.

More information is available on-line at:  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/ww/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/ww/)

**One major change as a result of the new regulations is that counties and townships are no longer allowed to have more restrictive livestock ordinances than state statutes, unless the government body can document that more restrictive rules are necessary to protect water quality (state statutes 92.15).**

The newly revised regulations require nutrient management plans for all farms, *including those with no livestock*. By 2008, all farming operations must meet nutrient management standards. The new rules apply to all fields that receive nutrients (fertilizers and manure). To meet the nutrient management standards, farms must have a plan that complies with the NRCS standard 590.

**THE CHANGING FARMING DYNAMIC<sup>6</sup>**

The loss of farms and farmland is a problem that affects all Wisconsin communities. However, the pace and severity of agricultural decline varies considerably across the state. In the last decade, in the Town of Oconto Falls the number of farms has decreased significantly. In 1990 there were 59 farms (36 of which were dairy operations). By 1997, these numbers had decreased to 51 farms (a 13.1% decrease) with only 17 dairy farms (52.8% reduction). These losses are higher than neighboring Towns.<sup>7</sup>



TABLE 20: FARMLAND LOSS 1989-1997		
Town Name	Percent Loss of Farmland	Percent Loss of Dairy Operations
Oconto Falls	13.1%	54.3%
Gillett	8.0%	25.5%
Morgan	13.6%	46.6%
Spruce	6.2%	39.5%
Stiles	10.0%	20.0%

Source: Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, based on 1990 U.S. Census Data & WI Dept. of Revenue Tax Record Data

The story is the same when looking at the difference in the amount of farmland acres in the Town in 1990 compared to 2000. In that decade the Town saw approximately 12% of the farmland on the tax rolls disappear (i.e. developed, converted to another use, annexed). More specifically, 48 parcels totaling 1,832 acres were sold between 1990 and 1997. Of those acres sold,



<sup>6</sup> This section is based on several studies and documents produced by the Program on Agricultural Technology Studies. The program is a joint program of the Departments of Rural Sociology and Agricultural and Applied Economics at UW-Madison and UW-Cooperative Extension. Additional information is available on-line at [www.pats.wisc.edu](http://www.pats.wisc.edu)

<sup>7</sup> Same reference as #2

1,217 remained in farming uses with 615 acres converted for development.

The average value of agricultural land *sold* is between \$500 and \$1,000 an acre. This is higher than the Town of Stiles (less than \$500 per acre), but comparable to all other surrounding Towns. These values are from 1997 and have been rising steadily since that time.

The major livestock sectors – poultry, hogs, dairy and beef – have been at the leading edge of change in U.S. agriculture. In recent decades, four trends in the national livestock industry have been particularly striking:

- 1) Dramatic rates of decline in the numbers of all types of livestock producers;
- 2) The emergence of “industrial-type” confinement systems that permit extremely large scales of production;
- 3) Increased reliance on hired labor rather than family labor; and
- 4) A new emphasis on contracted relationships among producers, suppliers and buyers.

Reflecting nationwide trends, Wisconsin has lost substantial numbers of livestock farms over the past two decades. Overall livestock numbers and sales in Wisconsin have also declined. While modest-scale family farms continue to be the mainstay of Wisconsin agriculture, there has been growing debate about the desirability of expanding existing farms or creating new larger scale enterprises to restore or boost livestock production levels.

The Town of Oconto Falls understands the challenges associated with modern farming operations. To support a strong local farm economy, the Town of Oconto Falls will:

- ✓ Support local farmers right to farm;
- ✓ Direct new residential development to the edges of rural farmland areas or to properties that are difficult to farm given their irregular shape or topography in order to preserve large, contiguous areas of farmland and minimize conflicts between farming and residential uses;
- ✓ Support the establishment of agri-businesses to support local farming needs;
- ✓ Provide farmers with information about private (i.e. land trusts), state, and federal assistance programs.



## Long Term Sustainability of Farmland

During the planning process, concern was expressed over the future of farming in the Town of Oconto Falls. While residents support the continuation of local farms, the reality is that a few families own the

remaining farms. As these farmers age, they will consider selling their land or simply stopping their farming activities. Unfortunately, there are relatively few young people that are becoming farmers. Instead, young people seek jobs with vacations, 401K, and other benefits farming cannot provide. As a result, as local farmers retire, they cannot find young farmers looking to purchase additional farmland. Often, faced with a need for retirement income, local farmers have no choice but to sell their property for development.

This chapter has highlighted some options local farmers have with respect to their land. While local land trusts and conservation subdivision designs are encouraged, they will not be appropriate in all areas. Funds available from land trusts are limited. Unless the WDNR, or other state agencies, provide funds, other means to protect farmland must be found. Strategies include:

- Permitting value-added operations such as cheese making and on- and off-farm direct retailing (roadside farm stands).
- Encouraging local schools to provide education to students about careers in farming
- Encouraging the City of Oconto Falls and other nearby communities to support economic endeavors that provide services local farmers need including: implement dealers, feed stores and veterinarians.

Those farmers that continue to work their land will also face challenges as residential development occurs nearby.

## **Preservation of Farmland**

The primary issue with farmland preservation in the Town of Oconto Falls is that individual farmers faced with development pressures, retirement needs, and a worsening farm economy, see the sale of their land for development, as an attractive financial opportunity. Moreover, there seems to be an endless supply of urban dwellers that want to fulfill their dream of living in the “country.”

The Town does not want to see all farmland lost to this pattern of development. Likewise, residents are not interested in finding their rural roadsides lined with homes. This will destroy the rural, open, scenic quality of the Town.

This situation will present a challenge in the future. Fortunately, there are many methods to protect farmland. Several of the major options are highlighted below.

### **OPTIONS FOR LAND TRANSFERS**

As farm owners approach retirement, the Planning Commission will encourage them to consider ways of using or transferring their lands which yield a return, while also preserving the rural and agricultural character of the township. Options may include: rental of land for farm use, sale by land contract to other farm businesses, sale of land for

recreational use, sale of land with deed restrictions, leasing land for hunting rights, lease to nearby canning operations, registering with CRP programs, and so forth.

## ZONING

Zoning is a tool that use been used to regulate land uses across the country for more than 80 years. Wisconsin was one of the first states in the country to authorize zoning for rural areas. The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance includes agricultural districts that are enforced in the Town of Oconto Falls. These areas are restricted to protect farmland areas. Additional information about zoning is provided in the Existing and Future Land Use Chapters.

## BUILDING PERMIT LIMITATIONS

### WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

A conservation easement is a **voluntary legal agreement** between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that limits present and future development of a parcel.

Under a conservation easement, the **landowner retains ownership** of the land (within the terms of the easement – i.e. only for farmland or natural space, not for development) and the land trust takes the responsibility for protecting the land's conservation values.

Donated conservation easements that meet federal tax code requirements can provide significant **tax advantages** to landowners because their land will be taxed as undevelopable land, which is a much lower rate than developable land.

Some communities seek to restrict residential development in rural areas by limiting the number of building permits issued each year. This approach will require that the Town establish an annual limit for new housing development. This can be based on historic building trends or anticipated population growth.

### LAND TRUSTS

Another option available to landowners seeking to protect natural areas and farmland is through the activities of land trusts. Land trusts provide landowners with advice on protection strategies that best meet the landowner's conservation and financial needs. Land trusts accept lands donated by landowners for conservation purposes. Land trusts can also work with landowners

to establish *conservation easements* (see box at left).

## CONSERVATION/CLUSTER SUBDIVISIONS

Yet another method to protect farmland, while minimizing conflicts with residential development, is **conservation or cluster subdivisions**. *Conservation subdivision designs encourage the preservation and protection of open space, natural areas and farmland resources.* In a conservation subdivision, homes are “clustered” together on smaller lots so that a greater proportion of the land is protected from development.

### HOW IS A CONSERVATION/CLUSTER SUBDIVISION CREATED?

- 1. Develop a Yield Plan.** This plan essentially shows how many homes could be developed if a traditional subdivision layout were used.
- 2. Identify Primary And Secondary Conservation Areas.** Primary conservation areas include: poor soils, steep slope, wetlands, waterways and floodplains that are not conducive to development. Secondary conservation areas include other areas of local importance targeted for protection (i.e. farmland, woodlands, scenic views, etc.).
- 3. Locate the Home Sites.**
- 4. Include Roads, Sidewalks and Trails.**
- 5. Draw the Lot Lines.** This is usually the first step in a traditional approach.

- Typically, a conservation subdivision will require at least 50% of a site be protected from further development.
- Protection and maintenance of the conserved area can be accomplished through a conservation easement with an appropriate conservation organization, land trust, homeowners association or government body, or through deed covenants.
- The areas to be conserved must be protected indefinitely.
- The land designated for protection should either be left as natural habitat, open space, or farmland.
- In conservation subdivisions, the development of walking and bicycle trails is encouraged, particularly to provide limited access to protected natural areas.



### THE RIGHT TO FARM ACT

Wisconsin has a right-to-farm **law protecting farmers from nuisance lawsuits related to typical farm noise and odors**. As residential development expands into farmland areas, it is inevitable that odor issues develop. Often the issues relate to manure spreading and storage. Another common farm practice is plowing and harvesting at night, which also creates some disturbance concerns for residents living nearby. People who move to rural areas near farmland are not aware of these and other potential nuisances. As more people move to rural farmland areas and as farm operations get bigger, conflicts are inevitable. To minimize conflicts, education is strongly recommended. By educating new landowners about potential conflicts, “surprise” nuisances can be avoided.

### 1996 FREEDOM TO FARM ACT

For 60 years, the government has encouraged farmers to raise corn, wheat, cotton and rice by providing a price floor for those crops.

Of course, farmers always had the choice of dropping out of the program and raising whatever they wanted, and some have. But the volatility of markets and the lack of marketing infrastructure for alternative crops prevented most from striking out on their own.

The USDA estimates that between 1990 and 1995, farmers received 5 percent of their gross cash income via direct government payments. Overall, that’s not a huge chunk of the farm income pie. But for farmers who have not diversified beyond the production of one or two program crops, subsidies have evolved from being a safety net to a form of support that can play a critical role in an operation’s economic survival.

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the **Freedom to Farm Act**. The act was intended to reduce farmer dependence on subsidies. The Freedom to Farm Act mandated that

between 1996 and 2002, farmers would be given fixed subsidy payments, no matter what they raised. Congress also granted farmers the flexibility to plant hay and graze on acres previously set aside for program crops. Under the act, payment amounts (subsidies) would decline year-by-year until they were zeroed out by 2002, leaving farmers to fend for themselves in the open market.

The 1996 act did reduce regulatory burdens on farmers and ended requirements that farmers idle land to qualify for crop subsidies. However, the core of the act consisted of "market transition payments" - money that Congress gives farmers to compensate them for the possibility that farm subsidies might end sometime in the next century. Federal farm spending traditionally was inversely related to crop prices: the higher the prices, the lower the subsidy. Crop prices were near historic highs when the Freedom to Farm Act was enacted; without the new law, farm subsidies would have fallen to their lowest levels in decades.

While the 1996 farm bill was a significant step in the right direction, it certainly had its flaws. Most notable of which is the **dairy program**. The 1996 farm bill provided only minimal reform of the dairy program. Although it called for a phase out of the dairy price support program and mandated some reform of the federal milk marketing order system, it also authorized the creation of the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact, a cartel of milk producers in six New England states that is allowed to establish artificially high milk prices and restrict the interstate commerce of milk from other states like Wisconsin. Any milk sold within the compact states must be sold at a minimum price that is established by the compact, regardless of what milk prices may be in the rest of the country.

Making matters worse, even the minimal reforms that had been included in the 1996 farm bill were reversed in 1999 by Congress, which voted to extend the dairy price support program, repeal even modest reforms of the milk marketing orders, and extend authorization for the Northeast Compact. Authorization for the compact was finally allowed to expire on October 31, 2001, but recently re-extended.

## **2002 FARM SECURITY AND RURAL INVESTMENT ACT**

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, which **governs federal farm programs for the next 6 years**, was signed into law on May 13, 2002. Its provisions support the production of a reliable, safe, and affordable supply of food and fiber; promote stewardship of agricultural land and water resources; facilitate access to American farm products at home and abroad; encourage continued economic and infrastructure development in rural America; and ensure continued research to maintain an efficient and innovative agricultural and food sector.

Under the 2002 Farm Act, the **milk support purchase program**, which had been operating year-to-year recently, became a multiyear program. The milk support price equals \$9.90 per hundredweight (cwt). The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) will buy, at support purchase prices, any butter, cheddar cheese, or nonfat dry milk that is

offered to it and meets specifications. The support purchase prices are set to ensure that the price of manufacturing milk averages at least the milk support price of \$9.90 per cwt.

The **Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP)** pays cash bonuses that allow dairy product exporters to buy U.S. products and sell them abroad when international prices are below domestic prices. DEIP removes products from the domestic market, helps develop export markets, and plays an important role in milk price support. The DEIP quantities and dollar amounts are subject to World Trade Organization restrictions under the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture.

The 2002 Farm Act also established a national **Dairy Market Loss Payments (DMLP) Program** to provide a price safety net for dairy producers. A monthly direct payment is made to dairy farm operators if the monthly Class I price in Boston (Federal Order 1) is less than \$16.94 per cwt. Payments are to be made on up to 2.4 million pounds of milk per year per organization (based on 2001 U.S. average data, which is the production from about 132 cows).



#### **LOCAL FARM PROTECTION**

The Town of Freedom in Outagamie County has an Agricultural Committee to respond to concerns and or complaints of rural residents pertaining to farming operations. This committee

includes local farmers and other residents. As a policy, if a farm operation is adhering to required ordinances and standard operating procedures, the Agricultural Committee will not interfere with said farming operation. The Town of Oconto Falls may consider establishing a similar committee in the future. This may become particularly important as development pressures mount in the future.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)**

EQIP was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

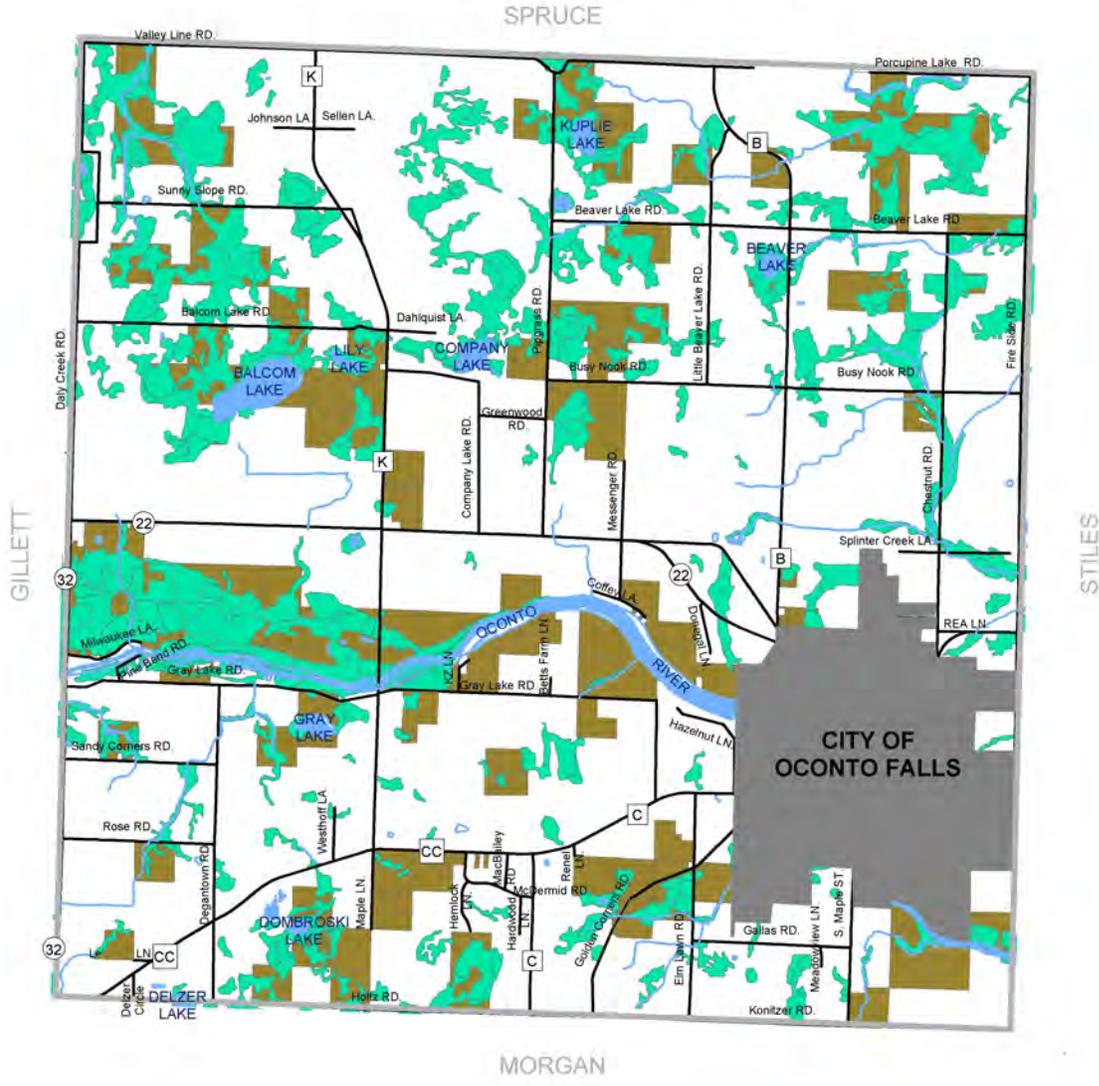
**For Additional Information...**

[www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/)

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices. Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. EQIP activities are carried out according to an environmental quality incentives program plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that

# NATURAL FEATURES

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



**Legend**

- ROADS
- WATER
- WETLANDS
- FORESTED



**OMNI ASSOCIATES**

PROJECT # M190402  
 DATE: 10/3/02  
 DRAWN BY: KAL  
 REVISED: 10/6/04

LOCATION: F:\GIS\190402\DRAWING\Natural\_11x17.mxd  
 SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 BAY LAKES REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resource concerns. The practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions. The local conservation district approves the plan.

EQIP may cost-share up to 75 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices. Incentive payments may be provided for up to three years to encourage producers to carry out management practices they may not otherwise use without the incentive.

## Natural Resources & Environmental Concerns

Natural resources help to determine the potential for development. Geology, topography, drainage patterns, floodplains, wetlands, and soil characteristics are among the natural and environmental features that determine if an area is physically suitable for specific types of development. Likewise, natural resources provide important recreational benefits for hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, snowshoeing, and other outdoor activities.

### NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION IS A LOCAL PRIORITY

In the Community Survey, residents were asked if stricter protection of natural resources (groundwater, wetlands, wildlife, river fronts) is necessary? Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with this statement.

115-strongly agree (37%)  
104-agree (34%)  
51-neutral (17%)  
27-disagree (9%)  
11-strongly disagree (4%)

Preservation of natural resources (wetlands, surface and groundwater, woodlands, shorelines) is an important priority for the Town of Oconto Falls (see survey box at right).

## BEDROCK GEOLOGY

Crystalline rocks underlie Oconto County. These rocks, of the Precambrian Era, are composed mainly of granites and other igneous and metamorphic types. Overlying the Precambrian crystalline rocks in the central and southern sections of the county are younger rocks of the Cambrian and Ordovician Periods. These rocks form the bedrock of these areas. Beginning at the eastern edge of the Precambrian exposures and moving to the southeast toward the City of Oconto and the Bay of Green Bay, sandstone deposits of the Cambrian overlie the Precambrian.

## GLACIAL GEOLOGY

The geology of the Town of Oconto Falls is mixed between the predominate features of the northwestern portion of the county and central portions of the county as described herein.

The northwest portion of Oconto County was once a mountainous region of Precambrian crystalline rock, which has since been reduced by erosion and glaciations. This entire Highland is covered with glacial material deposited during the last stages of glaciation.

Landforms in this area are composed of end moraines and pitted outwash plains. These features create an undulating and rolling surface with soils containing large quantities of sand and gravel.

The central portions of Oconto County, including the Town of Oconto Falls, is relatively gently rolling plain approximately 20 miles wide and underlain by Cambrian sandstone. For the most part, the relief in this area is slight and is mostly composed of glacial lake deposits and ground moraines.

## TOPOGRAPHY

The topography in the Town of Oconto Falls is characterized by rolling hills, plain meadows, lush and forested wetland and river systems.

## WATERSHEDS & DRAINAGE

The Town of Oconto Falls is split between three watersheds: the Lower Oconto, Little River and Pensaukee. The map on the next page illustrates the boundaries of each watershed in the Town. Watershed information is important for understanding drainage patterns.

### WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

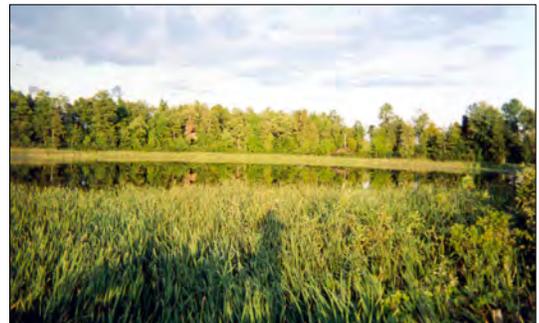
The area drained by a river. Several watersheds will make up a basin.

## SURFACE WATER (NAVIGABLE WATERS)

The **Oconto River** is the primary water resource in the Town. It flows through the center of the Town, parallel with STH 22. The WDNR *Land Legacy Report* identifies the Oconto River as an important state environmental asset that should be protected. The *Land Legacy Report* was prepared by the WDNR in 2002 to identify important natural areas in the state. The report does not identify how or who should be responsible for the protection of the natural areas identified. For more information on the Land Legacy Report visit [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us). During the development of this Plan, residents also identified the river as an important local natural resource, community focal point, and recreation resource.



Oconto River



Undeveloped Lake

Other water features in the Town include local streams and several lakes. Specifically, **Balcom Lake, Dunk's Lake, Lily Lake, Company Lake, Kuplie Lake, Gray Lake, Dombroski Lake and Delzer Lake**. Dunk's (5-acre lake) has public access from Pipgrass Road. Balcom Lake also has public access on its north side from an easement acquired by Oconto County. All of the other lakes are privately owned with undeveloped shores. This situation is desirable because it prevents contamination of the lakes from residential development (i.e. phosphorus from septic systems) and runoff problems from grass lawns planted to

# WATERSHEDS

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



**Legend**

- ROADS
- RIVERS / STREAMS
- WATER
- LITTLE RIVER WATERSHED
- LOWER OCONTO WATERSHED
- PENSAAKEE WATERSHED



PROJECT #1058282  
DATE: 7/20/21  
DRAWN BY: PAC  
REVISED: 1/20/22

LOCATION: #1058282/2021/07/20/21/07/20/21  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

shorelines. It also retains the natural wildlife habitats and contributes to the rural, undeveloped character.

**The Oconto County Land and Water Conservation Department and the WDNR work cooperatively to protect the quality of local water features.**

Of particular concern with respect to surface water quality is overgrazing and cropping along the river/stream corridors. This results in reduction of natural buffer areas and increased stream bank erosion and sedimentation that in turn results in overall loss of water quality. Farmers should be educated about the need to maintain buffers along area creeks and rivers.

**SHORELINES<sup>8</sup>**

Studies show that there can be as much as 500% more diversity of plant and animal species along a natural shoreline compared to upland areas. Shoreland areas in the Town of Oconto Falls are limited to the winding shores of the Oconto River, area feeder streams and lakes described in the surface water section and illustrated on the *Natural Features Map*. The **Shoreland/Wetland Ordinance** adopted by Oconto County regulates shoreland uses and development within 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water mark of a lake, pond or flowage, and within 300 feet from the ordinary high water mark of a river. A permit for any filling or grading activity within these areas is required to protect water resources harmful impacts. The WDNR and Army Corp of Engineers are also involved with development issues near waterways. The Town of Oconto Falls supports the WDNR and County’s efforts to protect shorelands.

Owners of shoreland property in the Town can also do a lot to protect water quality through shoreland management efforts and the creation of native plant buffers. Shoreland property owners are encouraged to:

- **Maintain natural vegetation** along their shoreland areas rather than planting grass lawns to the waters edge that can create fertilizer related phosphorus contamination from runoff and wildlife habitat destruction.
- **Create a buffer zone by simply not mowing along the shoreline.** This is an easy and inexpensive method to protect shoreland areas. Turf grasses will grow 12-24 inches tall before going to seed. Creating a curving edge that separates the buffer from your lawn and any pathways to the water will also give your shoreland a pleasing, natural appearance. Over time, shrubs and trees will naturally fill in and promote a diverse plant cover.

**TOWN RESIDENTS FAVOR BUFFERS**

In the Community Survey, residents indicated that they would favor a buffer area (a zone of no buildings) around designated wetlands.

Yes – 196 (63%)  
No – 75 (24%)  
Not Sure – 41 (13%)

The question did not ask how large of a buffer is needed. Current county requirements stipulate that a 75 foot buffer be provided adjacent to wetland areas. Buffers are also desirable adjacent to shorelines. Given most of the wetland in the Town are located adjacent to shoreline areas, a buffer will serve both purposes.

<sup>8</sup> Information for this section was obtained from *The Shoreland Stewardship Series* -- newsletters published by the UW-Extension, WDNR, Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, the GMU Basin Teams, and the Wisconsin Association of Lakes in 2002.

- **Plant a buffer zone.** Area nurseries and garden centers carry native plant stock and can recommend the best plans for your site. Oconto County UW-Extension and Land & Water Conservation Offices also have information for planting shoreland buffers.

Landowners who use the aforementioned techniques will enjoy less maintenance. Native wildflowers, ground covers and trees along the shore add seasonal color and diversity to the landscape. Native vegetation, once established will discourage exotic species, such as purple loosestrife, from overtaking your property and can also deter Canada Geese from loitering on your lawn.

## WETLANDS

Due to their many benefits (see box at right), County and State regulations place limitations on the development and use of wetlands and shorelands. Wetlands in Oconto Falls are shown on the *Natural Features Map*. Nearly 20 percent of the Town is covered by wetlands.

### BENEFITS OF WETLANDS

- Wetlands act as a **natural filtering system** for sediment and nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrates.
- Wetlands serve as a **natural buffer**, protecting shorelines and stream banks from erosion.
- Wetlands are also essential in providing **fish & wildlife habitat, flood control, and groundwater recharge.**

## FLOODPLAINS

Floodplains serve many important functions related to flood and erosion control, water quality, groundwater recharge and fish and wildlife habitats. Areas susceptible to flooding are considered unsuitable for development because of risks to lives and property. Floodplains are regulated by the County and State. All requirements of these agencies, including permit requirements, must be met prior to proceeding with development that may impact a floodplain. Specifically, the **Oconto County Shoreland/ Wetland Ordinance** regulates uses in and adjacent to floodplain areas. State statute 87.30 pertains to floodplains. The WDNR also oversees floodplain regulations provided in the administrative code in NR 116 Wisconsin's Floodplain Management Program.

### DEFINITIONS

In this chapter and on all maps the floodplain area is not distinguished between the floodplain and floodway fringe. The following definitions distinguish these areas.

**Floodplain** is defined as an area that may be covered by water during the *regional flood* (i.e. 100-Year Flood)

**Floodway** – the channel of a river or watercourse or those areas immediately adjacent to the waterway required to carry the regional flood discharge. In the Town of Oconto Falls many of these areas are classified as wetlands.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the Town of Oconto Falls (panels 255, 260, 265 and 270) illustrate floodway areas. According to the data, there are no floodplain areas (100-Year or 500-Year) in the Town. There are floodways adjacent to the Oconto River and area streams, but no additional floodplain areas in the Town.

## GROUNDWATER & RUNOFF

### **Groundwater is the source of the water supply in the Town of Oconto Falls.**

Recharge to the glacial aquifer percolates through the land, and then moves toward one of the rivers. In general, domestic and farm wells in the Town are recharged from the area immediately adjacent to the well.

**The overall quality of groundwater in the Town of Oconto Falls is generally considered to be of good quality.** Contamination risks from land use practices are the major threat to groundwater resources. Potential contaminant sources include:

- o old, unregulated landfills
- o nitrates from failed septic systems
- o nitrates from farm runoff
- o pesticides
- o leaking underground storage tanks.

All of these sources are regulated through ordinances or technical assistance services by various County and State agencies. It is important to note here that lands that are within 1,200 feet of an active or inactive landfill are prohibited from drilling a well on that property according to NR 812. Lands that are within the capped boundaries of a closed landfill are restricted from any building or other disturbance as noted in NR 506.085.

The Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey prepared a statewide map of groundwater susceptibility for contamination. This map is intended to illustrate the ease with which a contaminant can enter the groundwater based on depth to bedrock, bedrock type, depth to water table, soil characteristics and surface deposits. Although the map is not intended for site-specific use, it indicates that area groundwater is not readily susceptible to contamination. This does not mean that groundwater cannot be polluted, only that the likelihood of it being polluted from within the Town is not highly probable. It is possible groundwater could be contaminated by a pollutant entering the groundwater in an area of recharge beyond the Town limits. A copy of this map is available on-line at: <http://www.uwex.edu/wgnhs/gwmap.htm>.

Over-pumping of the aquifer may become an issue, since the nearby communities of Oconto Falls and Gillett are also supplied from the groundwater. As their populations increase, the additional pumping may cause groundwater cones of depression that may extend into the Town of Oconto Falls and require residents to dig deeper wells.

Residential development can have many impacts on both the quality of local groundwater and the amount of water needed by a community. Good planning can balance the need

#### **DAIRY FARM RUN-OFF IS A CONCERN...**

Rainwater and runoff from feedlots and dairy farms is a threat to water quality due to phosphorus contamination. Once runoff enters surface water, excessive nutrients often results in weed growth and depleted oxygen supplies resulting in the degradation of aquatic habitats. Through NR 243, the WDNR enforces any direct runoff into waters of the state. This is the only regulation currently in effect.

#### **MORE GROUNDWATER INFORMATION**

The WDNR maintains a database containing well information for public and high capacity private wells in the state. This information is available at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/DWS.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/DWS.htm)

Information about contamination sites in the Town is provided in the Economic Development Element.

for residential development with protection of both the health of well being of residents and the quality and quantity of water resources. **Techniques to minimize the effects of development on groundwater resources include:**<sup>9</sup>

1. Using *raingardens* to encourage infiltration of stormwater and recharge to groundwater.
2. Minimizing paved surfaces such as driveways. This can be achieved with driveway maximum length standards that have the added benefit of providing better access to residences for fire and police protection.
3. Requiring the use of advanced wastewater treatment systems, such as nitrate removal systems, in vulnerable groundwater areas.
4. Educating homeowners on the need for proper maintenance of private well and onsite wastewater treatment systems, periodic testing of private well water, and planning for eventual well, pump or drain field replacements.
5. Placing private wells up gradient from onsite wastewater treatment system on the same or neighboring property to prevent recycling of wastewater into private wells.
6. Strongly encouraging or require water conservation and use of water saving devices such as low-flow toilets within homes.
7. Strongly encouraging conservation or cluster subdivisions due to their groundwater benefit associated with less developed and that requires less fertilized lawns and landscaping.
8. Providing education on natural landscaping and other low water demand vegetation.
9. Providing opportunities, such as Clean Sweep Programs, for residents to properly dispose of hazardous household products.
10. Requiring periodic maintenance of onsite wastewater treatment systems if they are used.

#### WHAT IS A RAINGARDEN?

A raingarden is an attractive native plant garden with a special purpose; to reduce the amount of stormwater entering our beautiful Wisconsin waters. It is constructed as a place to direct stormwater from your roof, and landscaped with beautiful native Wisconsin plant species.

By creating a raingarden on your property, you can help reduce the amount of stormwater that enters local streams, rivers and lakes. You can use rain the way nature intended, instead of throwing this resource away. A raingarden is a natural way for you to help solve our stormwater pollution problems.

For more information visit...

<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/raingarden/gardens.pdf>

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<sup>9</sup> Groundwater and its Role in Comprehensive Planning, Comprehensive Planning and Groundwater Fact Sheet 3, Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council, July 2002.

## WOODLANDS

Prior to settlement, the vegetation of Oconto County was forested with areas of mixed conifer-northern hardwood forest. As people moved to the area, forests were cleared for agricultural crops. Currently, 12.4 percent of all land in the Town is considered forested.



The *Town of Oconto Falls Natural Features Map* delineates the location of woodland areas, included wooded wetlands. To protect woodlands, the **WDNR Managed Forest Law** is a program available to landowners who own more than 10 acres of contiguous forestland. Through the program, landowners agree to manage their forestland for hunting, fishing, wildlife, and recreation purposes and not permit development in exchange for significant tax credits. Additional information is available on the internet at [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry).

To further protect forested areas, the town can adopt a landscape ordinance to limit the clearing of forested areas to accommodate development.



## WILDLIFE HABITATS

Unfortunately there is not a source of comprehensive habitat information specific to the Town of Oconto Falls. Information is available for Oconto County, but these sources of data cover a broad area to protect habitats from encroachment.

Resident observation is the best available local resource about wildlife habitat areas. **Primary wildlife habitat areas correspond to the forested areas and wetland areas shown on the *Natural Features Map*.** These areas provide food and cover for deer, raccoons, skunk and other small creatures common in the area. The local **farm fields** also serve as a food source for deer, sandhill cranes, turkeys and waterfowl in the area. Farmland is also a very important local wildlife habitat that provides travel corridors between waterways and woodlands. Farmland also provides cover opportunities and large contiguous open spaces needed by wildlife.

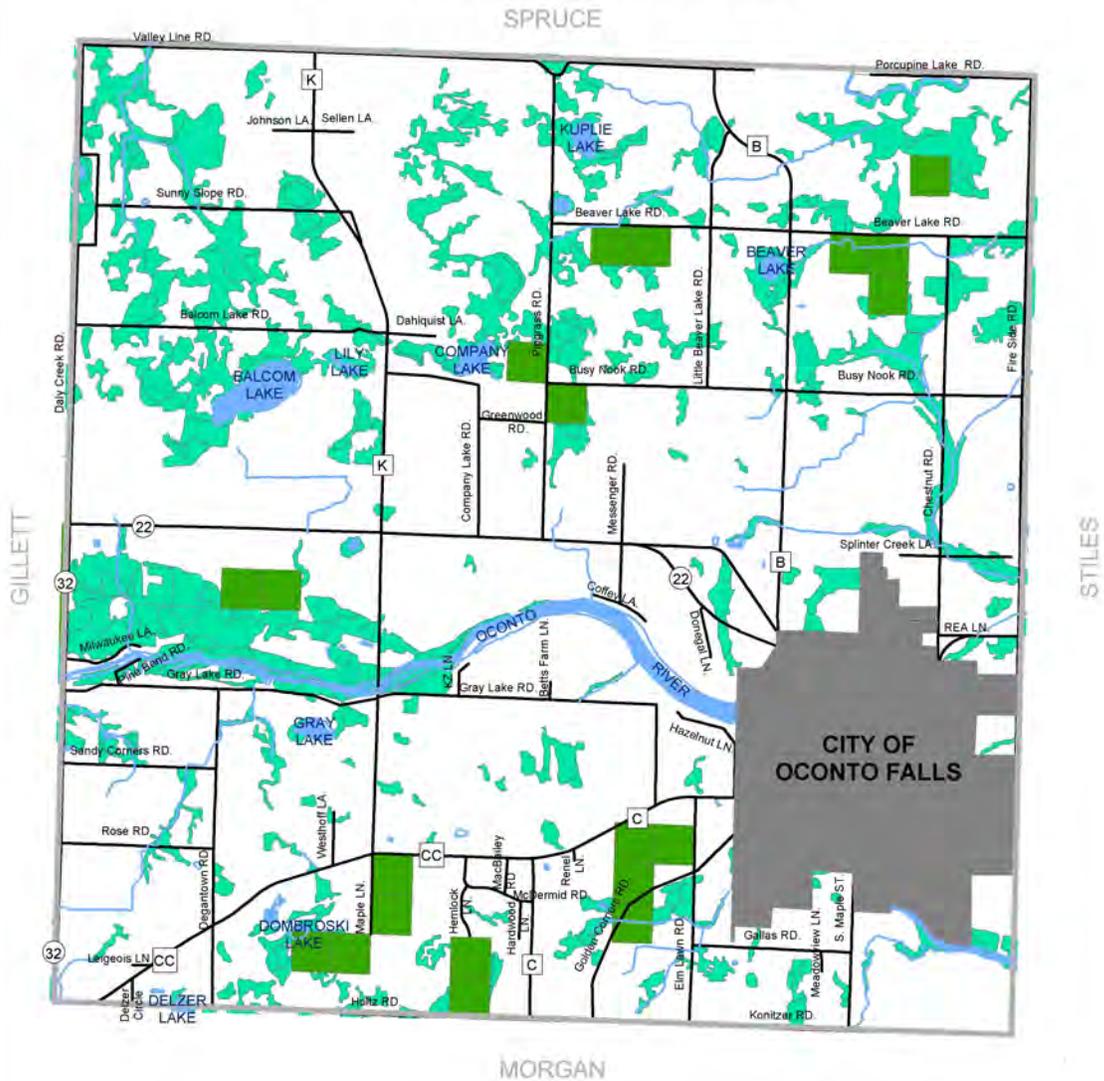
The **Oconto River** is also a major waterfowl, aquatic, reptile and amphibian habitat area. The river is a valuable local fishing habitat.

### WILDLIFE HABITAT FRAGMENTATION

A primary threat to wildlife is **fragmentation** -- the breaking up of larger habitat areas into smaller sections. Fragmentation decreases wildlife population sizes, isolates habitat areas and creates more edges -- where two dissimilar habitats meet (i.e. wetlands and residential subdivisions).

# MANAGED FOREST PROGRAM

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



**Legend**

- ROADS
- MANAGED FOREST LAW
- WATER
- WETLANDS

Lands enrolled in Forest Crop Law (FCL) are open to hunting and fishing. In general, lands enrolled in Managed Forest Law (MFL) are open to public hunting, fishing, cross country skiing, hiking, and sightseeing. However, the land owner may elect to close up to 80 acres per municipality to the public.

Due to scale and processing limitations, some FCL and MFL land parcels depicted on the map are shown as full 40-acre units. In reality, actual FCL and MFL acreage amounts may be much smaller than 40 acres.



**OMNI ASSOCIATES**

PROJECT # M108442  
DATE: 9/5/02  
DRAWN BY: KAL  
REVISED: 10/5/04

LOCATION: F:\GIS\M108442\DRAWING\Managed\_Forest\_11x17.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAY LAKE'S REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The remaining areas of the Town (i.e. residential areas, road corridors, and other developed areas) are not classified as primary wildlife habitat areas - though certainly animals do wander into these areas.

**Additional information about wildlife habitats is available from the WDNR.** The WDNR is concerned about loss of wetlands, aquatic habitat and open land to development as well as pollution to surface and groundwater. Moreover, simplification of diverse habitat and loss of special places that support rare species are also major concerns. **The Town supports WDNR programs to protect wildlife habitats.**

### **THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Based on information contained in Wisconsin's Natural Heritage Inventory, there are 41 aquatic animal and 31 aquatic plant species that are threatened, endangered or a species of special concern in Oconto County. There are an additional 15 terrestrial (land based) animals and 18 terrestrial plant species that are threatened, endangered or a species of special concern in Oconto County.

Unfortunately, there is **not a specific species list or map available for the Town of Oconto Falls.** Available county and basin maps are general and do not specially identify habitat areas within the Town of Oconto Falls. The reason for this is because the WDNR does not want people to visit or otherwise intrude on the habitats of endangered and threatened species. The WDNR is attempting to identify and catalog endangered plant and animal species across the state. For a complete, up-to-date list, refer to [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us). The state and federal government have programs and laws in effect to protect threatened and endangered plant and animal species in the Town of Oconto Falls and beyond.

### **EXOTIC & INVASIVE SPECIES**

Non-native, or exotic, plant and animal species have been recognized in recent years as a major threat to the integrity of native habitats and species, as well as a potential economic threat (damage to crops, tourist economy, etc). Examples of invasive species include: **Purple loosestrife** (plant specie), **zebra mussels** and **Eurasian Watermilfoil** (plant specie). Additional information about exotic and invasive species is available from the WDNR.

The WDNR requires that any person seeking to bring a non-native fish or wild animal for introduction in Wisconsin obtain a permit. **The Town of Oconto Falls can help combat exotic species by educating residents about non-native species and encouraging residents to use native plants in landscaping.**

## METALLIC & NON-METALLIC MINING RESOURCES

Non-metallic mining operations are widespread across Wisconsin. An estimated 2,000 mines provide aggregate for construction, sand, gravel and crushed stone (limestone and dolomite) for road building and maintenance, as well as, for agricultural use as lime.



There are presently three **(3) quarry operations in the Town** (Zippel's on CTH K, another on CTH CC, and another on STH 22 near the City limits). In addition, there are several operations located in adjacent communities.

The best source of data about quarry materials is a well log (e.g. *record of the material encountered during the boring of a well*). Well logs document how much (e.g. depth) material is available. It can then be used to determine if a location would be a profitable one for a quarry. Unfortunately, well logs are only created when a person is seeking to establish a well and build a house, thereby generating a potential conflict for a quarry.

The *Potential Quarry Location Map* illustrates the results of available well logs and surveyors observations since the Town was first surveyed. Well logs are not available in all areas of the Town. In addition, the surveyor's surface observations provide no information about the depth of material. Accordingly, this map should be used as a general reference. Specific borings will be necessary to determine if the quantity of material available in any location could support a quarry operation.

The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance regulates the Town of Oconto Falls. The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance regulates quarries through the Quarrying District (Q). This district permits quarrying by conditional use permit. Applicants for this zoning are required to submit an operation plan and complete a reclamation plan. Moreover, the county ordinance requires a financial guarantee by bonding, conditioned upon faithful performance of the conditional use permit, to sufficiently insure full reclamation of the quarry area. The conditional use permits are to be renewed every three years.

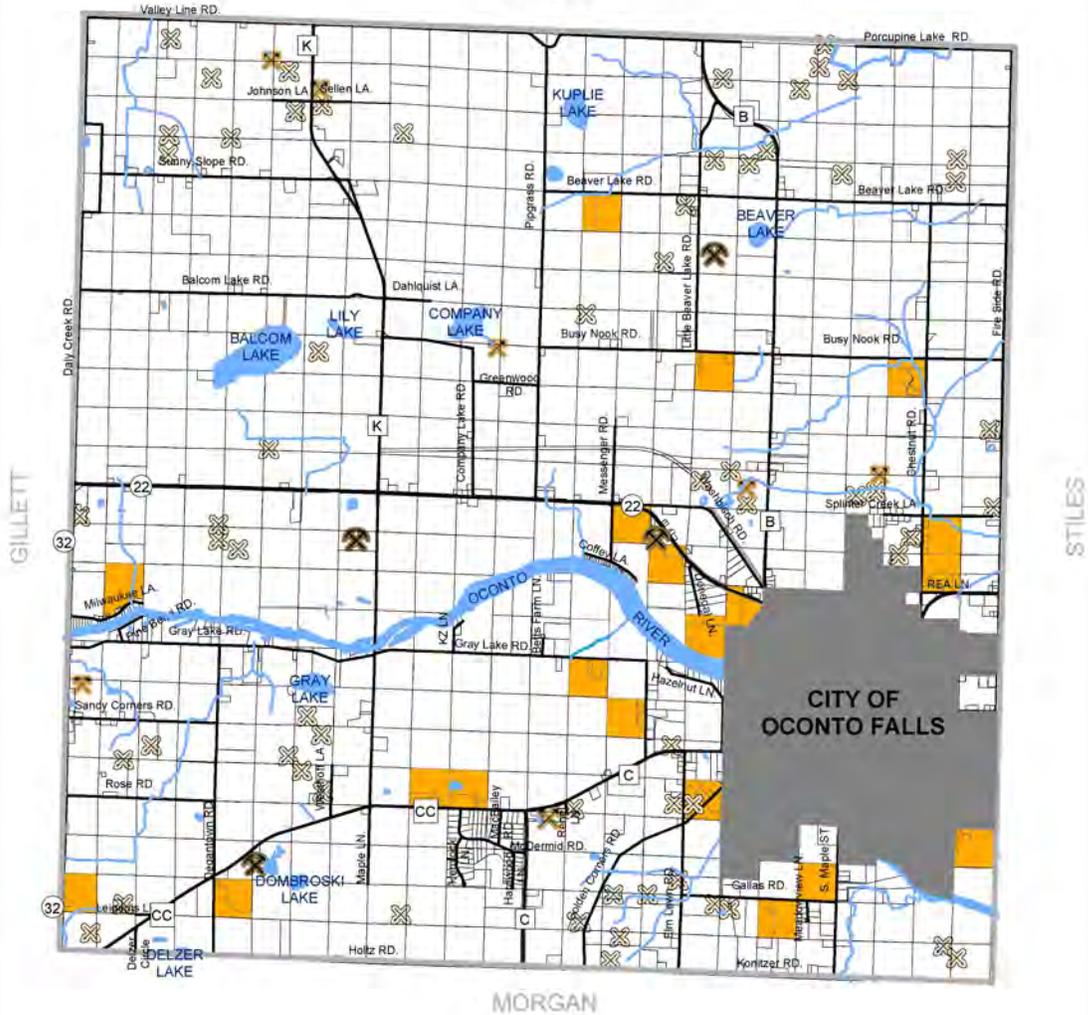
The Town of Oconto Falls reviews all rezoning requests, including requests for quarry operations. The Town will continue to provide recommendations to the County Zoning Board to ensure that local operations do not have a negative impact on neighboring properties or the rural character of the Town. As part of this review, the Town will consider:

- √ Location and Size of Operation
- √ Hours of Operation
- √ Blasting Periods
- √ Reclamation Plans
- √ Patterns of Land Use on the *Future Land Use Map*
- √ Conditional Use and Blasting Permits to be renewed annually.

# POTENTIAL QUARRY SITES

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS

SPRUCE

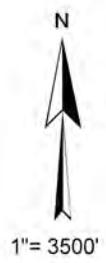


Potential locations based on surveyors observations and available well logs. Refer to the **Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources** chapter for more info.

**OMNI ASSOCIATES**  
 PROJECT # M108402  
 DATE: 4/20/14  
 DRAWN BY: EAL  
 REVISED: 10/05/14

**Legend**

- ROADS
- RIVERS/STREAMS/LAKES
- ⓧ EXISTING QUARRIES
- ⓧ POTENTIAL SAND QUARRY DEPOSITS
- ⓧ POTENTIAL GRAVEL QUARRY DEPOSITS
- WELL LOG RECORD LOCATIONS (Quarter Sections)



LOCATION: I:\GIS\108402\Drawings\OCONTO Falls\_121113.mxd  
 SOURCE: DECATH COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

As part of **NR 135**, Wisconsin Administrative Code, adopted in December 2000, any community in Wisconsin could adopt an ordinance to establish requirements for reclamation of non-metallic mines, such as gravel pits and rock quarries. The ordinances must establish reclamation requirements to prevent owners and operators of quarries and gravel pits from abandoning their operations without proper reclamation of the mines.

Oconto County has adopted a detailed ordinance that establishes requirements for reclamation. The ordinance requires all new quarries to submit a reclamation plan at the time of application for a quarry permit. All existing quarry operations, including those in the Town of Oconto Falls, must complete a reclamation plan. The Town of Oconto Falls Town will seek to require quarries to adhere to NR135 in the areas of nuisance, traffic, dust, etc.

Under NR 135, any landowner of a demonstrated “marketable non-metallic deposit” may register the site for mining. **Local zoning authority can object to the application if the zoning does not permit it.** Registration expires after a 10-year period and may be extended for a single 10-year period if it is demonstrated that commercially feasible quantities continue to exist at the property. Otherwise, remediation action is required.

**The process of siting a mine continues to be a local matter governed under existing zoning procedures by local authorities.** The new reclamation requirements through NR 135 add to the status quo but do not replace or remove any other current means of regulation. The requirements neither regulate active mining process nor have any effect upon local zoning decisions like those related to the approval of new mine sites. **Towns (on their own or through the use of county zoning) rezoning property in a manner consistent with a Comprehensive Plan are not required to permit non-metallic mining operations that are inconsistent with their plan.**

The Town of Oconto Falls supports its local quarry operations and understands their need to expand in the future. Likewise, the Town understands that in these tough economic times, local farmers and larger landowners consider quarry operations as a means to improve their economic situation.

However, the Town wants to ensure that the community remains attractive for residential development. For this reason, **the Town will require agreements with local quarry operators** to limit nuisances for neighboring properties. These agreements will also include **annual Town licensing** fees that the Town will collect in a fund to be used to maintain roads damaged by quarry traffic. This fee shall be in addition to any financial assurance required through the Oconto County Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance.

The *Future Land Use Map* does not illustrate any quarry expansions or new quarry operations. In the future, local quarry operators will make expansion decisions depending on availability of the resource and local demand. The Town will consider all expansion requests, in accordance with all local, county, and state requirements.

Over the 20 year planning period, as quarries are reclaimed, the Town of Oconto Falls will support the conversion of these properties into wildlife habitat areas, conservation-based subdivisions and farmland. County, regional and Town parklands are also an option for these reclaimed quarries. Quarry operators should not assume that their property will be developed into residential subdivisions.

For newly proposed quarry operations, the Town of Oconto Falls should pursue **development agreements** with local operators. At a minimum, these agreements must:

1. Include provisions for requiring local quarry operators to submit annual written reports discussing the status of their quarry site, significant changes in mineral extraction operations, and activities anticipated during the next year. Said report shall also document blasting activities for the year of the report and log all complaints received, and include the results of annual groundwater monitoring efforts.
2. Require a detailed site plan submittal to the Town to define the existing and proposed limits of any quarry operation.
3. Require landscape berms to be installed at mutually agreed upon locations to screen quarry operations for roadways and nearby residential development.
4. Require that quarry access to County and Town roads be paved as needed so as to prevent the overflow and tracking of materials on Town and County roadways.
5. Define blasting times and restrictions related to ground vibration, air blasting, fly rock.
6. Stipulate requirements for the safe storage of explosives in accordance with COMM 7 of the Wisconsin Administrator Code and annually submit to the appropriate fire department a copy of its explosives storage permit.
7. Require quarry operators to maintain a call list to notify residents in the vicinity of the quarry of imminent blasting activities. The calls will be on a request basis only and a single telephone call will be satisfactory.
8. Require quarry operators to comply with all applicable noise regulations.
9. Require quarry operators to pay an annual licensing fee, the profits from which will be used to offset Town road maintenance and safety costs.
10. Require quarry operators to maintain liability insurance policy that includes provisions for addressing well problems for adjoining property owners.

11. Require quarry operators to provide a groundwater-monitoring program, including the use of monitoring wells at the perimeter of the quarry site to monitor the impact of mining operation on groundwater levels and quality.
12. The Town of Oconto Falls reserves the right to have Town authorized personnel or its representative conduct on-site inspections as needed per conditional use agreement.

In order to adequately consider quarry operation applications for new quarries and conditional use permit renewals, several pieces of information are requested by the Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission, in addition to those materials required by the Oconto County Quarrying Zoning District and the Oconto County Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance. This information shall include, but not be limited to:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| √ Current zoning (for new quarry applications)                            | √ Traffic pattern and road maintenance proposal                              |
| √ Total number of acres involved  | √ Dust control measures  |
| √ Total number of acres for quarry operation only                         | √ Wellhead protection (insurance)  |
| √ Total number of yards to be removed (soil type)                         | √ Listing of types of equipment  |
| √ Estimated number of years to be operated                                | √ Projected work hours and number of days per week                           |
| √ Boring sample results (independent company may be required)             | √ Description of how blasting will be monitored and by whom                  |
| √ Any blasting required (state licensing supervisor)                      | √ Description of contents of blasting records and location of records        |
| √ Proposed operating hours for crushing, blasting, washing, hauling, etc. | √ Description of how citizen complaints will be handled and by whom          |
| √ Detailed site plan  | √ Description for groundwater monitoring provisions                          |
| √ DNR delineated wetlands map of area                                     | √ Home and well pre-inspection results (independent company may be required) |
| √ Dewatering locations  | √ A reclamation plan under the guidelines of NR135                           |

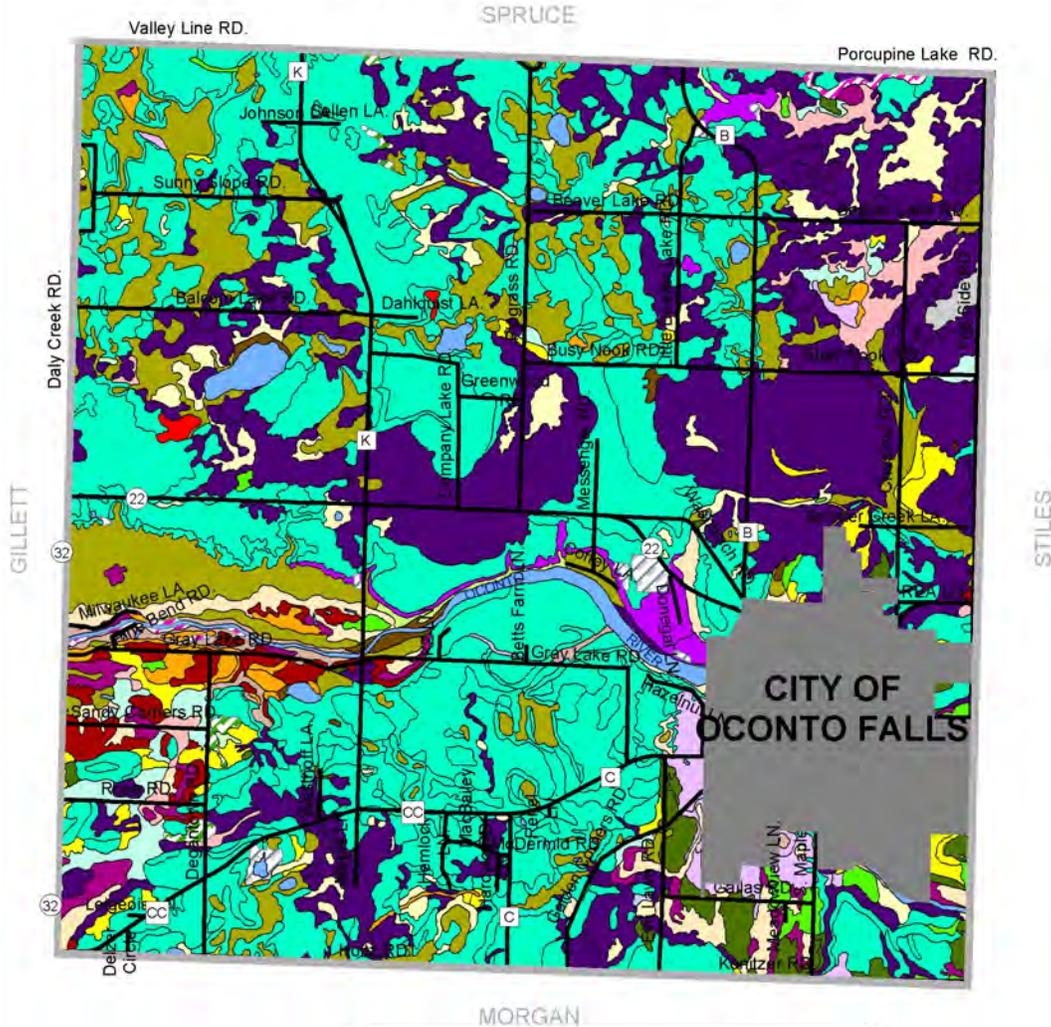
**SOILS & DEVELOPMENT**

The maps provided on the next several pages illustrate the different soil types in the Town of Oconto Falls and their ability to support development. Knowledge of their limitations and potential difficulties is important in evaluating crop production capabilities and other land use alternatives, such as residential development. Soil problems that limit development potential include: slumping, compaction, erosion and high water tables. Severe soil limitations do not always mean a site cannot be developed, but rather that more extensive construction measures may have to be taken to prevent damage to the land or structures.

For **additional information** about specific soil characteristics and limitations, refer to the *Oconto County Soil Survey, 1988.*

# SOILS ASSOCIATION

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



**Legend**

ROADS	
BREVORT MUCKY LOAMY SAND	PELKIE LOAMY FINE SAND
CORMANT LOAMY FINE SAND	PITS
ENSLLEY MUCKY LOAM	ROUSSEAU FINE SAND
FENCE VERY FINE SANDY LOAM	SAPRISTS AND AQUEENTS, PONDED
IOSCO LOAMY FINE SAND	SEELYVILLE AND MARKEY MUCKS
KIVA SANDY FINE LOAM	SHAWANO FINE SAND
LOXLEY MUCKY PEAT	SHIOCTON VERY FINE SANDY LOAM
MENAHGA SAND	SOLONA FINE SANDY LOAM
MENOMINEE LOAMY FINE SAND	WATER
MINOQUA MUCKY FINE SANDY LOAM	WAINOLA LOAMY FINE SAND
OCONTO FINE SANDY LOAM	WAUPACA VERY FINE SANDY LOAM
ONAWAY FINE SANDY LOAM	WINTERFIELD FINE SANDY LOAM
ONAWAY-KIVA-MENAHGA COMPLEX	WORCESTER LOAM

**Omni Associates**

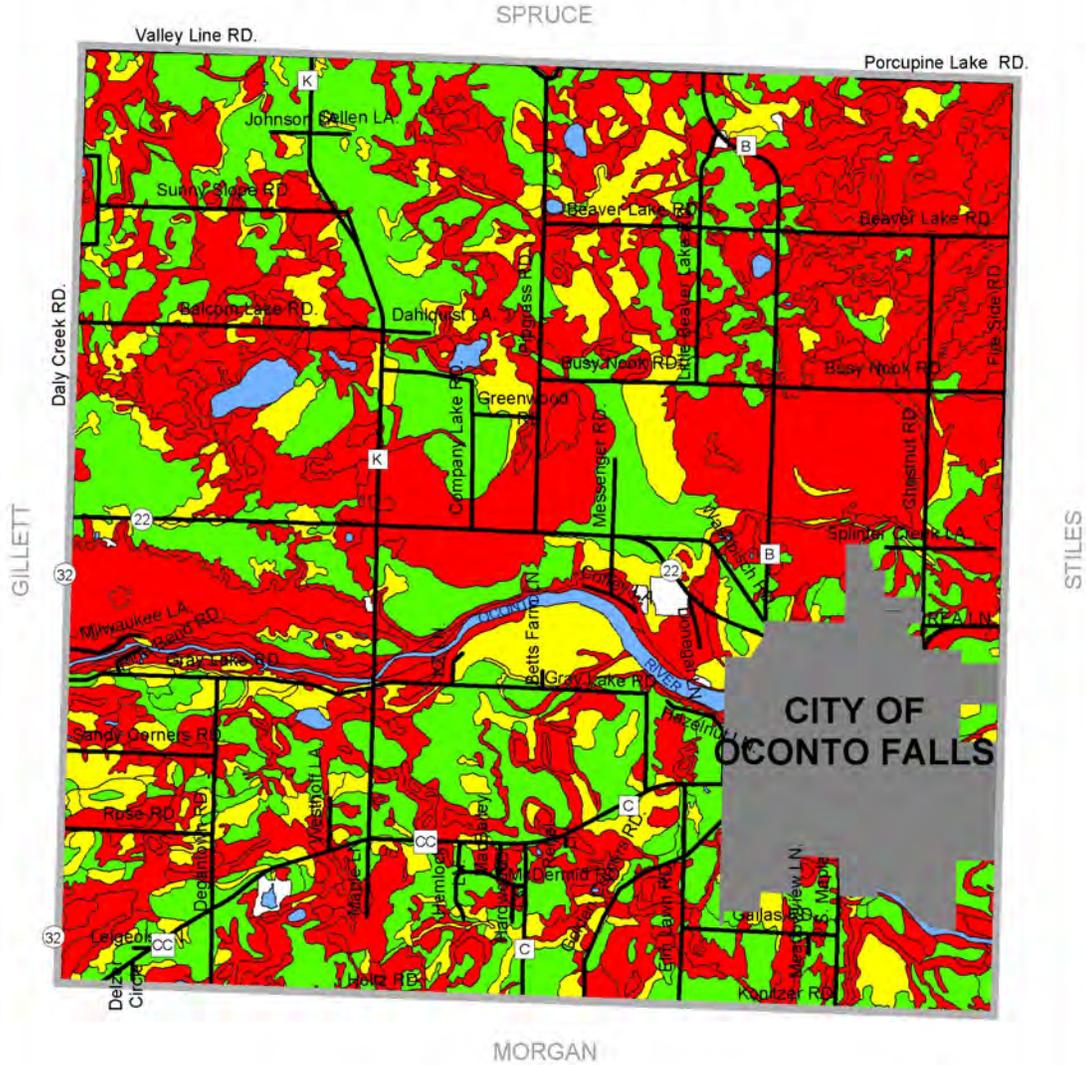
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DATE: 7/18/20  
DRAWN BY: KAL  
REVISION: 1/20/20

LOCATION: F:\GIS\180424\DRAWINGS\04\_1117.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
AND LAKE SUPERIOR PLANNING COMMISSION  
OCONTO COUNTY GIS SURVEY, US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



# BUILDING SUITABILITY

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



The Building Suitability Classifications illustrated on this map are based on information obtained from the *Oconto County Soil Survey*. The Soil Survey evaluates soil types based on their ability to support buildings with basements. Areas identified as **Severe Risk** are not recommended for development given sloping, steepness, wetness or other limitations. **Moderate Risk** areas may be suited for development if certain precautions or mitigation techniques are used. Areas of **Slight Risk** are well-suited for dwellings with basements.

**Legend**

- SEVERE RISK
- MODERATE RISK
- SLIGHT RISK
- NOT RATED
- SURFACE WATER
- ROADS



**OMNI ASSOCIATES**

PROJECT # W030462  
 DATE: 7/15/02  
 DRAWN BY: KAL  
 REVISED: 10/05/04

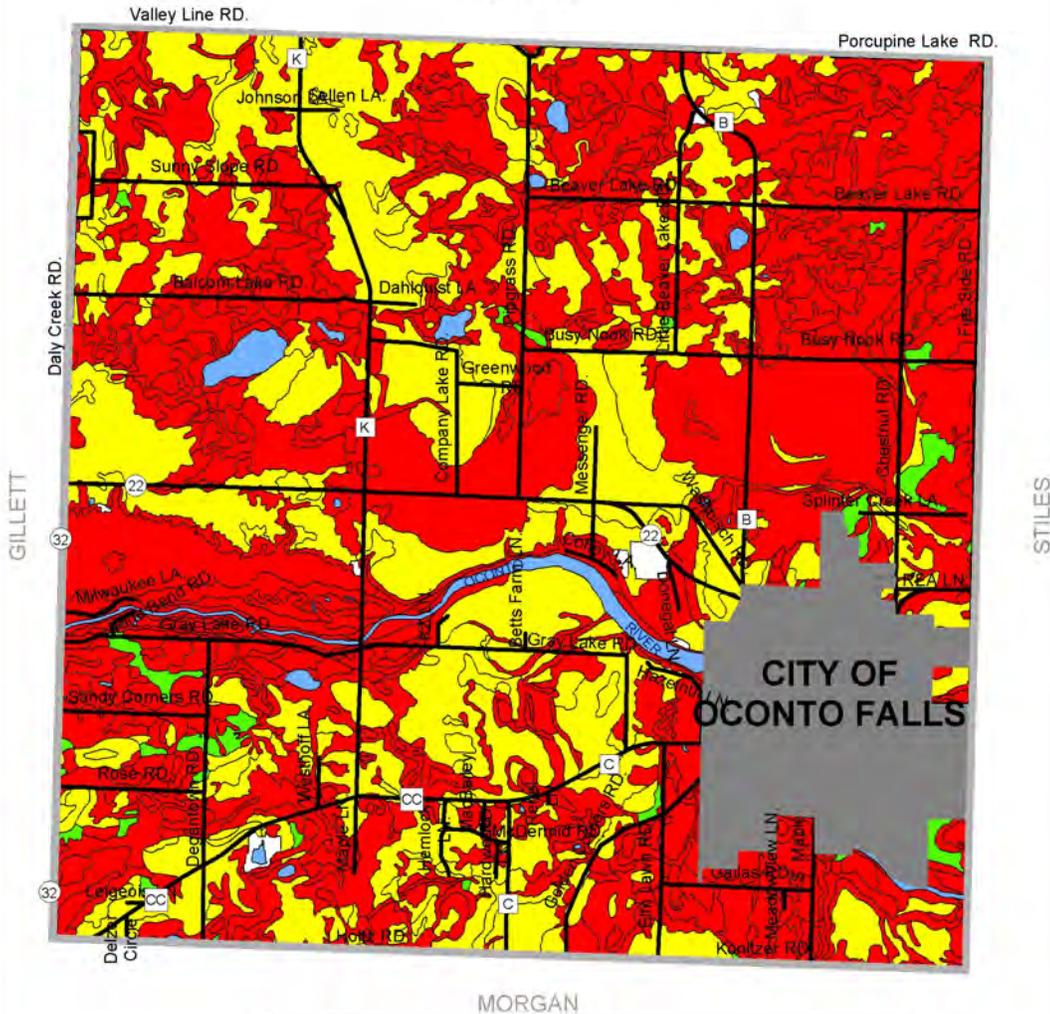
ONE SIX THREE DASH WITELSON 363601  
 PHONE: 920.759.0461 FAX: 920.759.0100

LOCATION: #1543M08A02006AW020546\_Drawing\_11x17.mxd  
 SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 DAY LAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
 OCONTO COUNTY SOIL SURVEY, US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# SANITARY SUITABILITY

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS

SPRUCE



The Sanitary Suitability Classifications illustrated on this map are based on information obtained from the *Oconto County Soil Survey*. The Soil Survey evaluates soil types based on their ability to support septic tank absorption fields. Areas identified as **Severe Risk** are not recommended for development given sloping, steepness, wetness or other limitations. **Moderate Risk** areas may be suited for development if certain precautions or mitigation techniques are used. Areas of **Slight Risk** are well-suited for septic tank absorption fields.

**Legend**

- SEVERE RISK
- MODERATE RISK
- SLIGHT RISK
- NOT RATED
- SURFACE WATER
- ROADS



**OMNI ASSOCIATES**

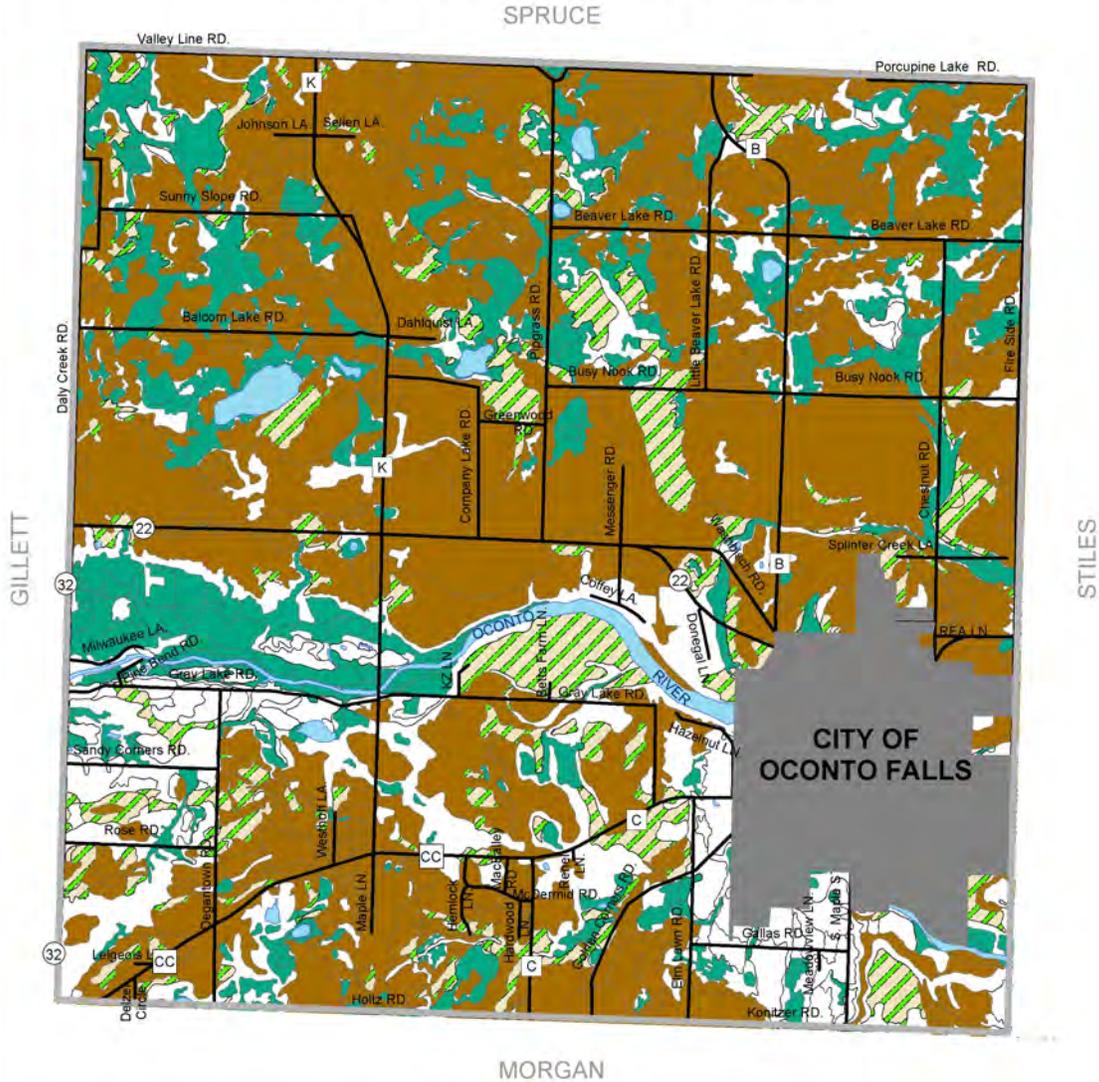
PROJECT #1016482  
DATE TYPED:  
DRAWN BY: JAC  
REVISED: 10/2014

THIS SYSTEM IS NOT A PLAN AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION.

LOCATION: F:\GIS\1016482\1016482\_Sanitary\_11.rvt.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAY LINDS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
OCONTO COUNTY SOIL SURVEY (DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE)

# DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY MAP

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



### Definitions:

#### PRODUCTIVE AG -

Refer to **Agricultural Suitability Map** for Definition

#### PRIMARY BUILDING AREAS -

Represent areas of **SLIGHT** or **MODERATE RISK** based on soil types for both buildings with basements and sanitary systems and are **NOT** classified as *Productive Ag Areas*.



PROJECT # M160402  
DATE: 9/20/12  
DRAWN BY: CAL  
REVISED: 10/26/14

LOCATION: F:\GIS\DATA\DRAWINGS\Map\_Overlay\_11x17.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAYLAND CONSULTING CORPORATION  
OCONTO COUNTY SOIL SURVEY, US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Legend

- PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL SOILS
- PRIME BUILDING AREAS
- AREAS UNSUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT  
(See Suitability Maps for More Info)
- WETLANDS
- SURFACE WATER
- ROADS



1" = 4000'

Soils are the physical base for development and agriculture. There are more than 20 soil types in the Town of Oconto Falls. Generally productive agricultural soils are classified as loams, which are spread throughout the Town. Table 21 provides a description of two soil associations (groupings of individual soil types) found in the Town of Oconto Falls.

TABLE 21: Soil Characteristics		
Soil Association and Location	Attributes	Qualities and Concerns
<b>Onoway-Solona Association</b> Covers more than 95% of the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Well drained</li> <li>▪ Loamy soils on uplands</li> </ul>	Makes up about 30 percent of the soils in Oconto County. Most areas are used for crops. Some areas are used as woodland or pasture areas. Water erosion and wetness are the main farm management concerns.
<b>Menahga-Rousseau-Shawano Association</b> Found in the far southeast corner of the Town - south of the City of Oconto Falls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Excessively drained</li> <li>▪ Sandy soils on uplands</li> </ul>	These soils are often found on the side of slopes and glacial lake plains. It makes up about 20 percent of the soils in the County. Most of these soils are use as woodland. Where irrigated and protected from soil blowing, the soils are suitable fro cropping. Septic tank absorption fields function satisfactorily in these soils but ground water pollution is a hazard because of rapid permeability.

Source: Oconto County Soil Survey, 1988

The soils that are capable of supporting building development (i.e. dwellings with basements) are illustrated on the *Building Suitability Map*. In the Town of Oconto Falls, areas identified as “severe risk” are not recommended for development given wet conditions. These areas correspond to the wetland areas shown on the *Natural Feature Map*.

The *Sanitary Suitability Map* is very similar to the *Building Suitability Map*, but more areas are classified as able to accommodate on-site sanitary systems than building foundations.

The *Development Suitability Map* overlays the data presented on the other maps in this chapter to illustrate the best locations for development based on soil conditions, wetland locations and floodplain areas. Together, **these maps paint a clear picture of where development potential exists in the Town of Oconto Falls.**

## AIR QUALITY

The following information is from the WDNR:

*“A few common air pollutants are found all over the United States. These pollutants can injure health, harm the environment and cause property damage. EPA calls these pollutants **criteria air pollutants** because the agency has regulated them by first developing health-based **criteria** (science-based guidelines) as the basis for setting permissible levels. One set of limits (**primary standard**) protects health; another set of limits (**secondary standard**) is intended to prevent environmental and property damage. A geographic area that meets or does better than the primary standard is called an **attainment area**; areas that don't meet the primary standard are called **nonattainment areas**.”*

Oconto County is an attainment area. The nearest air quality monitoring stations are located in Green Bay. More information on air quality is available at:

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/air/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/air/).

The primary local air quality concern is top dressing manure on agricultural land by local farmers. Top dressing and storage issues are addressed in detail in the Agricultural Resources Section of this chapter.

The WDNR regulates air quality by requiring permits from dischargers. Emissions must meet health related standards. Odors released from manure are in the form of ammonia and hydrogen sulfide gas. Both are regulated contaminants. The WDNR typically considers manure gas emissions to be low-level and non-persistent, posing no health risk to residents

The WDNR recommends best management practices to decrease odor emissions. If there is a health problem and it persists, the WDNR can refer the issue to the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services for resolution.

Of less concern in the Town of Oconto Falls, is the impact of automobile travel on air quality. Scattered residential development requires residents to drive to places of employment, shopping, and other destinations. This situation is not expected to change in the future given the pattern of development in the Town.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS**

Natural features (i.e woodlands, wetlands, rivers, lakes and wildlife habitat) are a very important part of the community. Resident support for protecting natural areas is very strong.

The Bay Lake Regional Plan Commission has established a standard definition of environmental corridors to include the following set of uniformly available information: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources wetlands; 100-year 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 as are further described by the figure below.

**FIGURE 3: BLRPC Standard Environmental Corridor Layers**

<b>Layer</b>	<b>Source</b>
Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, flowages	USGS 1:24,000-scale quadrangle maps, local base maps
Wetland areas of two (2) acres or greater	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wisconsin Wetland Inventory maps
100-year floodplains	Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps
Areas of steep slope (12 percent or greater)	USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
75-Foot Setback from navigable waters	Create by buffering hydrological features
25-Foot Wetland Buffer	Create by buffering wetland features

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2003.

In 2003, Oconto County formed a Technical Advisory Committee to specifically define environmental corridors in Oconto County using the Bay Lake Definition as a starting point. The Technical Advisory Committee will complete a refined definition in 2004. The *Future Land Use Map* provided later in this plan includes an environmental corridor based on the BLRPC standards.



St. John's Riverside Lutheran Church



St. John's Riverside Lutheran Church Cemetery



Volk Family Cemetery

## Historical & Cultural Resources

Cultural resources, like natural resources, are valuable assets, which should be preserved. The Town does take great pride in its history and traditions, especially farming.

Cultural resources in the Town are limited to local churches and cemeteries. Specifically, there is one church and two cemeteries located in the Town (See *Utilities & Community Facilities Map* for Locations).

Additional cultural resources, including historic districts, libraries, churches and museums are found in nearby cities like Oconto Falls, Oconto, and Green Bay.

The **Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory (AHI)** is the State of Wisconsin official historic catalogue. The AHI is comprised of written text (and some photographs) of each property, which document the property's architecture and history. Most of the properties became part of the AHI as a result of systematic architectural and historical surveys. Inclusion in the AHI conveys no special status or advantage; it is merely a record of

the property. The AHI inventory is housed at the **State Historical Society** of Wisconsin in Madison and is maintained by the Society's Division of Historic Preservation. At this time, four structures are identified in the Town of Oconto Falls in the AHI. They are all located on the east side of Daly Creek Road (.4 miles north of Balcom Lake Road) on what is referred to as the "Jerry Coolman Farm". These structures include:

- Front Gabled Clapboard Style House
- Astylistic Utilitarian Building Wisconsin Dairy Barn
- Astylistic Utilitarian Building Metal Pole Building
- Astylistic Utilitarian Building Shed

Visit the AHI on the internet at [www.shsw.wisc.edu/ahi/](http://www.shsw.wisc.edu/ahi/).

The Town of Oconto Falls supports the activities of the **Oconto County Historical Society** and the **State Historical Society** to identify and protect historic resources.

Oconto Falls will not seek to develop its own historic preservation district or ordinance. If, in the future, residents desire additional historic preservation measures, perhaps to preserve local barns and silos, the **Town may establish a committee to develop a local program for historic preservation.**

Under Wisconsin Statute 66.1007, any municipality with a historic district can establish an **Architectural Conservancy District**. If such a district is established and approved by the Town, an operating plan must be developed that describes how much money will be assessed to tax parcels in the district. The operating plan must explain how the money raised will be spent. This money can be used to preserve farmland (through easements), widen roadways to accommodate farm equipment, or create natural resource buffers to preserve the Town's rural character.

## **Current Policies & Programs**

### **COUNTY ZONING**

The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance regulates zoning in the Town of Oconto Falls. Therefore, land uses within the Town, including agricultural and natural areas must adhere to the zoning requirements (bulk, height, density, etc.) stipulated in the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance (Refer to the *Zoning Map* provided in Chapter 9).

The Town of Oconto Falls does have village powers under Wis Stats. Ch. 60, Sec. 60.62. This allows the Town to adopt its own zoning regulations, provided they are at least as restrictive as the provisions of the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance. However, since Oconto County already has a county zoning ordinance, the Town of Oconto Falls must first obtain permission from Oconto County to develop its own Town Zoning ordinance. Historically, Oconto County has not allowed Towns under the requirements of County Zoning to adopt their own independent zoning ordinances, separate from those outlined in the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance.

### **SHORELAND/WETLAND ZONING**

Shorelands and wetlands are often viewed as valuable recreational and environmental resources. These areas provide for stormwater retention and habitat for various types of fish and wildlife. Development in these areas may have an adverse effect on water quality, wildlife habitat and stormwater drainage. In addition, it may also result in increased development and maintenance costs to protect from the occurrence of flooding and high water, increased flood insurance premiums, extensive site preparation, and maintenance and repairs of roads.

The State of Wisconsin requires that every county adopt a Shoreland/Wetland Ordinance to address the problem associated with development in these 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,*

*not permitted.* The authority to enact and enforce these types of zoning provisions is set forth in Ch. 59.97 Wis. Stats. and Wisconsin Administrative Codes NR115.116 and 117, and is established in the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance.

Oconto County is currently administering its Shoreland/Wetland Ordinance in unincorporated areas of the County.

### **FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN/EXCLUSIVE AGRICULTURAL ZONING**

Maintaining productive land for agricultural uses has been a long-time goal of Wisconsin. To achieve this goal, the state has enacted several types of legislation that provide monetary incentives to eligible landowners to keep their land in a productive state.

Oconto County has adopted a **Farmland Preservation Plan** so that local farmers are eligible for tax credits through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Farmland Preservation Program and provide for exclusive agricultural zoning. Farmers interested in this program sign-up with DATCP. Unfortunately, the Farmland Preservation Program is not working as well as it was intended. Not only has the amount of tax credits been reduced significantly over the last several years, but also farmland is being lost in Oconto County as more and more people seek to develop rural residences. Oconto County will likely address this farmland preservation and protection issue through a county comprehensive plan that will be developed prior to 2010.



Oconto County does have an exclusive agricultural zoning classification to delineate agricultural lands. **No properties in Oconto Falls are zoned as Exclusive Agricultural.**

### **OCONTO COUNTY LAND & WATER RESOURCE PLAN**

The Oconto County Land and Water Resource Plan was developed in August of 1999 in accordance with Chapter 92.10 Wis. Stats. The plan:

- Serves as a guide for resource management planning and decision making
- Assesses land and water resource conditions
- Identifies problems and priorities

Copies of the plan are available from the Oconto County Land and Water Conservation Department.

### **CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CRP)**

CRP is a USDA program that has run in the U.S. since 1985. In Wisconsin 600,000 acres have been taken out of agriculture

**For More Information...**  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm)

production to decrease erosion, enhance water quality, and establish wildlife habitat in the 13 years since its inception. Under the program, a farmer volunteers to take land out of production for a period of 10 or 15 years and is paid annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving covers on eligible farmland.

The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) makes annual rental payments based on the agriculture rental value of the land, and it provides cost-share assistance for up to 50 percent of the participant's costs in establishing approved conservation practices. Participants enroll in CRP contracts for 10 to 15 years through an application and bidding process.

The CCC through the Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers the program. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, Cooperative State Research and Education Extension Service, state forestry agencies, and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts provide program support. At the end of that contract period the farmer can sell the land, put it back into production--basically whatever they want to do.

## **Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements**

The development of the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element required coordination with all of the required plan elements. For example, when considering economic development strategies, the future role of agricultural operations in the Town, as well as the importance of natural resources, was important to consider. Below is a description of the critical issues addressed with respect to the Land Use and Housing Elements. These elements are profiled because their coordination with the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element is critical to the success of the plan.

### **LAND USE**

Town residents have clearly indicated through the Community Survey that the preservation of agricultural operations and the protection of natural resources is a priority. As a result, when the *Future Land Use Map* was developed special consideration was given to these two priorities. Also, when developing the *Future Land Use Map*, special consideration was given to soil characteristics as they relate to building site limitations and limitations for septic tank absorption fields (refer to COMM 83 information in the *Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter*). Likewise, the *Implementation Element* will help to ensure that through the enforcement of desired planning and zoning requirements, natural resources and farming operations are protected in the Town of Oconto Falls.

### **HOUSING**

Housing, if not carefully located and planned for, can have a severe impact on natural resources and farming operations. Housing development can create a nuisance for farmers and fragment wildlife habitat areas. If not carefully planned, additional traffic,

people, and services associated with housing development can quickly destroy rural character. The Town will seek to direct development to areas where soils will support residential development. Furthermore, the Town discourages residential development in prime farm areas. Directing development to certain areas will help to protect natural resources and farmlands, while still accommodating residential development. The strategy for housing development is reflected in the *Future Land Use Map*.

## **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

It is the vision of the Town of Oconto Falls that the community will retain its rural character by continuing to enjoy a mix of scenic, open, natural, undeveloped areas and farming operations through 2025. Natural resources will be protected and serve as an environmental, recreational, and economic asset to the Town. Residential and commercial development will be very limited in scale and in harmony with the Town's natural environment. The Town will also work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Wisconsin "Smart Growth" Law, with neighboring communities, school districts, Oconto County, the Bay-Lake Regional Plan Commission and the State of Wisconsin to ensure that natural resources are adequately protected for future generations.

The goals, objectives and policies for this element are provided in the Implementation Element Chapter.

## **8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT**

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## CHAPTER 8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Introduction

According to the Smart Growth Law, the purpose of the Economic Development Element is to promote the stabilization, retention and expansion of the economic base, and quality employment opportunities. To address this requirement, this chapter includes:

- Highlights of the **labor force information** from Chapter 3;
- An assessment of **strengths and weaknesses** with respect to attracting and retaining business and industry;
- An overview of programs that deal with **environmentally contaminated sites** for commercial and industrial uses; and
- A list of organizations (and contact information) providing **economic development programs** at the county, regional, state and federal levels.

Like most rural Towns, Oconto Falls does not have an economic activity center/focal point (i.e. a downtown) where business development is concentrated. Business development in the Town is very limited. Businesses that do exist are scattered around the community. The primary economic activity is farming.

### Economic Development Vision

**Economic development in the Town of Oconto Falls is in harmony with the Town's rural character. Farming remains the foundation of the local economy. Residents also enjoy small businesses that have developed along the STH 22 and 32 corridors. These businesses must rely on individual water and sanitary facilities. With limited employment opportunities in the Town, residents travel, on average, 65 miles roundtrip daily to work.**

### Labor Force and Economic Base

The Community Profile Chapter (Chapter 3) provides a detailed analysis of the local economy and labor force. Highlights from the chapter include:

- Oconto County has a somewhat lower participation rate than the State of Wisconsin and the United States. Oconto County's labor force participation rate is 66.7 percent. The United States' participation rate is around 70 percent,

To learn more about economic development, also see these chapters...

- √ Information related to local farms and quarries is provided in the **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element**.
- √ Information about desired future development is provided in the **Future Land Use Chapter**.

**Participation Rate** describes the relationship between the labor force and population. Participation Rate is the percent of residents, over the age of 16 that are working or looking for work in a community. Retired persons and others not participating in the labor force would not be included in the participation rate.

while the overall State of Wisconsin participation rate is 69 percent. **The 2000 participation rate in the Town of Oconto Falls was 77.5 percent.**<sup>1</sup>

- Oconto County **workers are very mobile**. Almost a third of residents travel beyond the county to places of employment. Brown County (Green Bay, Ashwaubenon, DePere) is the main destination point for most workers.
- According to the 2000 U.S. Census, most Town residents were working in manufacturing (20%), education and health care (15%) and farming (11%) occupations. For a complete breakdown refer to Table 6 in Chapter 3.
- Town resident median household and median family **income figures compare favorably** to county and state data.



Building Block CDC Two

## Current Business Inventory & Business Environments

Since there are relatively few employers located in the Town, the vast majority of all income earned is from employment opportunities found beyond the Town limits. This is consistent with the vision statement provided at the beginning of this chapter.

Given natural development limitations (refer to the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element* for more information), the overall amount of new business development is not expected to change dramatically. Simply put, much of the developable land is also prime farmland. Farming is encouraged on these properties. Other properties have limitations for buildings and on-site sanitary systems based on soil characteristics. Wetlands and floodplains restrict development along the Oconto River. Furthermore, services available in the Town are limited (i.e. no municipal water and sewer).



Antique Shop, 6048 STH 32



Ustabee's Bar and Grill, STH 32 & Sandy Corners Road

<sup>1</sup> This participation rate may have changed since 2000 due to several plant closings in the County.

**Businesses in the Town of Oconto Falls are situated primarily along STH 22 and STH 32.** A few businesses are also located on REA Lane and Chestnut Road adjacent to the City. The location of Town businesses is shown on the *Existing Land Use Map* presented in the Land Use Chapter of this plan.



Oconto County Lumber , STH 22

Specifically, the Town of Oconto Falls is home to:

- Aaron Associates, Inc (Surveyor), 5830 Donegal Lane
- KBM (Chemical Sales) 5836 Donegal Lane
- Gary LaBrosse (Machine Shop), 8162 Gray Lake Road
- Anderson Lumber Company (Lumber Mill) 9254 Valley Line Road
- Gary Allen (Bison Mead and Well Pump Sales), 7392 Busy Nook Road
- Paul Champeau (Auto Repair), 5366 Golden Corners Road
- Vorpahl’s Bookkeeping, Inc. (Tax Preparation), 8814 HWY 22
- Oconto County Lumber (Lumber Company), 8494 HWY 22
- O’Harrow’s Inc. (Milk Production), 6401 Company Lake Road
- Hillberg Electric (Electrical Contractor), 7265 Pipegrass Road
- Pine Creek Electric Inc. (Electrical Contractor), 6991 Little Beaver Lake Road
- G&S Excavating and Refuse (Excavator and Trash Collection), 6024 Chestnut Road
- Fox Ridge Game Farm (Shooting & Preserve), 8585 Valley Line Road
- Lilac Plantation (Supper Club), 8446 STH 22
- Zippeal Construction (Heavy Construction), 9588 STH 22
- Blazer Farms (Milk Production), 9207 STH 22
- Chicken Young Well Drilling (Well Drilling Service), 9584 Rose Road, Gillett
- Chad Holtz (Milk Production), 8804 Holtz Road
- Evergreen Builders (Home Construction), 1349 Chestnut Road
- William Fabry (Milk Production), 6732 CTH K
- Steve Fischer (Mason), 8054 King Fisher Lane
- David Fritz (Carpentry), 7021 CTH K
- Dennis Herzog (Milk Production), 5464 Degantown Road
- Robert Wolf (Cattle Hauling), 8460 CTH CC
- Club 32 (Supper Club), 5506 STH 32
- Snazz & Jane’s (Supper Club), 9154 STH 22
- Michael Krause (Trucking), 8003 Gallas Road
- Kevin Wirtz (Ostrich Farm), 5098 CTH C
- Ustabee’s (Tavern), STH 32
- Herbert Barke (Antique Shop), 6048 STH 32
- Ana Senn (Appraisal), 5120 Maple Lane
- Dave Tureasky (Landscaping), Donegal Lane
- Joe Kershek (Feed Grain), 9345 STH 22
- Darwin Damp (Taxidermy), Beaver Lake Road
- O’Harrow’s Charhes (Replacement Cows), 8703 Gray Lake Road
- Jeff Sellen (Milk Production), 8976 Sellen Lane
- Stoll Brothers (Milk Production)
- Daryl Konitzen (Lumber Mill), 8542 CTH CC
- Washbisch Brothers (Cattle), 8058 Washbisch Road
- Jesse Long Construction, 6940 CTH B

It is also believed that some **home occupations** (i.e. child care, hair stylist, cabinet makers, taxidermy, etc.) also exist in the Town without any special permits or other zoning approvals. Moreover, some residents may work at home utilizing the Internet and other technologies. The nature of these businesses presents no noticeable impact or nuisance to adjacent properties, so their location is difficult to detect. The Town encourages a resident's right to have a small business operation on his/her property or work at home, provided that the business activity or establishment conforms to all zoning codes (and conditional use permits) addressing issues of excessive traffic, noise, lighting, visual structural obstructions, etc.

**Farming** is also an important economic activity. However, given the limited number of remaining farmers and decreasing profit margins, farming will be a challenge in the long-term. Farmers have indicated that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to find buyers interested in continuing to farm their property after they retire. Likewise, most children of local farmers have found jobs in other professions. Residents support the continued long-term future of farming, but also sympathize with the farmers right to sell their property.

Supporting farmland is a challenge the Town of Oconto Falls will work to address through zoning, program assistance, education, and by supporting agri-business development to make farming easier. Additional information is provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element, as well as later sections of this chapter.

## Attracting and Retaining Business, Industry and Farming

Beyond a comparatively low tax rate, the Town of Oconto Falls has few attributes to offer potential businesses. As a result, the Town has little opportunity to



Snazz and Jane's Bar and Restaurant, STH 22

attract new business development. However, this situation is desirable as it will help to ensure the Town remains largely undeveloped, rural in character, and natural resources are not threatened by business development that may result in undue stormwater runoff, wildlife habitat fragmentation, or other undesirable constraints upon the environment.

The Town's limited ability to attract new business ventures is further constrained by the following factors:

- Town roads see **relatively little traffic**.
- County and State Highways have **access limitations** that restrict business development locations.
- The Town has **limited services** to offer potential businesses (i.e., no municipal water service).
- The Town population is not large enough to provide the customer base necessary to support a commercial endeavor.
- **Town residents are very mobile** and can easily drive to nearby communities to purchase services and products.

Existing businesses have learned to adapt to the challenges of the Town's business environment. These businesses do not require extensive services or traffic from walk-in business. **To support additional business opportunities the Town will:**

- Support rezoning requests for businesses adjacent to STH 22 and STH 32.
- Coordinate with the City of Oconto Falls and local property owners, to limit the impacts of annexation. This will include pursuing shared revenue agreements (Refer to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element for more information) so that the Town can continue to receive a portion of tax revenue from new development on lands annexed into the City.
- Market itself as a agricultural community with opportunities for limited business development along STH 22 and STH 32 using a Town internet web page, this plan document, and by coordinating and sharing information with area realtors.
- Open lines of communication with the Oconto County Economic Development Corporation and City of Oconto Falls Community Development Authority to pursue area economic interests, particularly development that supports area farming operations.

**To help retain farmland in the Town of Oconto Falls, the Town will:**

- Seek to permit value-added operations such as cheese making and on- and off-farm direct retailing (roadside farm stands).
- Encourage local schools to provide education to students about careers in farming
- Encourage the City of Oconto Falls and other nearby communities to support economic endeavors that provide services local farmers need including: implement dealers, feed stores and veterinarians.
- Coordinate with key county personnel, including the County Conservationist and UW-Extension Agriculture Agent to identify and promote programs and policies at a local and county level that support farmers.

## Economic Development Opportunities

Given the rural nature of the Town, a substantial amount of commercial and industrial development is not desired, nor can it be supported by available infrastructure. Intensive land uses are more appropriately located in neighboring communities with water, sewer, and storm water management systems, as well as industrial parks.



G&S Excavating, 6024 Chestnut Road

This is not to say that the Town does not desire economic development. The Town's primary economic development source is its local farming operations. The Town strongly supports its local farmers. Accordingly, the Town will consider needed expansions, as well as, supporting agri-related businesses. Decisions about these uses will be based on their location, anticipated traffic, noise, groundwater impacts, soil quality, and proximity to natural resources (i.e. Oconto River, wetlands, floodplains, etc.).

The primary location for non-farm businesses in the Town is along the STH 22 and STH 32 corridors. These corridors provide the greatest visibility for business ventures. Moreover, these corridors provide easy access for customers. It is for these reasons that most of the existing businesses in the Town are located along these corridors. This pattern is expected to continue in the future.



Club 32 - Supper Club, STH 32 & Sandy Corners Road

## Desired Business and Industry

Overall, the Town wants to remain a rural, farming community. The Town does not desire abundant areas of commercial and industrial development. The Town does not want to see the STH 22 and STH 32 corridors infill completely, or even partially with commercial and industrial developments.

Therefore, the Town of Oconto Falls supports most business and industrial development locating in the City of Oconto Falls, where services and infrastructure are available. This strategy will help to ensure the livelihood of the City, which in turn, ensures that Town residents have easy access to a wide range of quality businesses, services, and employment opportunities. In addition, the approach helps the Town retain its rural character.

It is anticipated that a few additional businesses will seek to locate in the Town. These businesses will be directed to locations along STH 22 and STH 32. The Town wants to be sure that new development does not jeopardize the quality of life. Therefore, businesses and industries that locate in the Town should:

- Be **environmentally friendly**
- Have **limited outdoor storage** (if any) to control unsightliness
- Generate **minimal noise and traffic** that can be easily accommodated by the existing transportation network
- Produce **little or no waste** that could pose a hazard to the creeks, groundwater and wetlands
- Require only **minimal lighting** (on-site lighting only, no beams, or other protruding, invasive light sources)
- Require only on-site signage (**no billboards**)
- Have **generous landscaping** to improve the façade from the roadway and buffer the development from adjacent land uses.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**  
When asked if the Town should restrict new businesses to certain areas, more than half of respondents (58%) indicated this was important.

The Town of Oconto Falls will support current businesses and the following economic activities:

- **Home occupations** of a professional nature to take advantage of the Internet and other technologies that allow people to work from the privacy of their homes. Home occupations are particularly attractive to the Town given the Town’s low density of development that limits the likelihood that a home occupation will become a nuisance to neighboring property owners.
- **Businesses that are suited to the rural setting** will also be encouraged. These may include tourism or service businesses (e.g. restaurants, bed & breakfasts, game farms, woodworking, gift shops) or those that serve the agricultural community (e.g. implement dealers, feed mills, veterinarians).
- Based on the results of the community survey, **farming** is strongly supported in the Town. While the Town realizes the many challenges associated with farming, the community will seek to support the activities of local farmers. This effort may include the establishment of an Agricultural Committee (refer to the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural resources Chapter for more information).

## Residential Development as Economic Development

Residential development has steadily increased in the Town of Oconto Falls. In fact, residential development provides a significant share of the area’s tax base. Therefore, residential development does provide some economic development gains for the Town.

However, to a much greater degree than commercial and agricultural development, housing requires extensive services to accommodate resident needs. These services

include: schools, parks, public safety, roads and associated maintenance (including snowplowing), and other amenities. As an example, in 1994, the Town of Dunn<sup>2</sup> in Dane County, WI conducted a study to understand the tax implications of development. The study showed for every dollar of tax revenue collected from residential development, \$1.06 was required in services for residential users. (Any service costs greater than \$1.00 result in a net loss for the Town.) Conversely, for every dollar collected from a commercial development, \$0.29 was required for services. Therefore, commercial uses bring additional tax dollars into the community. For every dollar collected from farmers, as little as \$0.18 was required in services.

It is important to ensure that local residential tax dollars cover the costs to provide needed services. While the Town of Oconto Falls supports some additional residential development opportunities, the Town does not want to see poorly planned new residential development significantly increase Town operating and service costs for all existing homeowners and taxpayers. Therefore, the Town supports new residential development paying a fair and proportionate share of service costs. This will require developers to pay up-front the costs of road improvements and other amenities needed to accommodate development. Likewise, roads and other improvements should be constructed to county zoning specifications, even if they are to be private, to ensure that they are accessible to police and fire equipment.

## Tools to Promote Economic Development

What follows is a description of some tools available to assist existing businesses and other ventures that may be proposed in the Town.

**For more information on the Industrial Revenue Bond Program**, contact the Wisconsin Department of Commerce at (608) 267-0762 or get information on the internet at:  
[www.commerce.state.wi.us](http://www.commerce.state.wi.us).

### INDUSTRIAL REVENUE BOND

The Department of Commerce's Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program allows all Wisconsin cities, villages and towns to support industrial development through the sale of tax-exempt bonds. The proceeds from the bond sale are loaned to businesses to finance capital investment projects at, primarily, manufacturing facilities. Even though IRBs are municipal bonds, they are not general obligations of the municipality. The company or business that will use the facilities provides the interest and principal payments on the loan. The local government is in partnership with the business, lending its name, but not its credit, to the bond issue.

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<sup>2</sup> Additional Information about the Town of Dunn Community Services Study is available on-line at [www.Town.dunn.wi.us](http://www.Town.dunn.wi.us).



## **INTERNET MARKETING**

Many Towns in Wisconsin are creating internet web pages. The Town of Oconto Falls does not have a web page.

The Town may consider marketing itself by providing up-to-date detailed information about community services, programs, organizations and businesses on its own web site. Demographic, economic and housing statistics should also be provided on the web site. Much of this information could be taken from this plan or provided as a link to the Oconto County Web Site.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)**

Through a CIP, the Town will be able to responsibly plan for future improvements that may generate additional development in Oconto Falls. Additional information about CIP is provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter.

## **MILK VOLUME PRODUCTION PROGRAM (MVP)**

The MVP program is designed to assist dairy producers that are seeking to acquire additional cows. The program is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. The goal of the MVP program is to provide qualifying dairy producers with needed financing and to partner with local communities to increase dairy production in Wisconsin. Assistance is limited to no more than \$500 per cow added to an operation or a maximum award of \$1 million. Additional information about this program, including application requirements, is available at [www.commerce.state.wi.us](http://www.commerce.state.wi.us).

Oconto County has been included in the award of a 15-county Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP) designed to bring high-paying jobs to Wisconsin through start-up and expansion of technology businesses.

- Former Governor Scott McCallum announced the creation of the Northeast Wisconsin technology zone on Friday June 28, 2002.
- It is one of eight zones created throughout the state, and each has \$5 million in income tax credits to provide incentives to attract high-tech companies to the area, and to help existing companies increase productivity and free up capital.
- The zones will be in effect for 10 years – until 2012.
- Projects within the region will be considered and approved based on their ability to create high-wage jobs and support the development of high-tech industries in the region.
- There will probably be technology “clusters” created within the zone to more aptly meet the needs of local, homogeneous communities.
- For more information, contact Bruce Mommaert, Chairman, at [ocedc@oconotcounty.org](mailto:ocedc@oconotcounty.org).

## Program and Organization Assistance

What follows is a description of the area programs and organizations available to support economic development opportunities.

### **CITY OF OCONTO FALLS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

This agency is responsible for economic development within the City of Oconto Falls. It seeks to market the City to prospective businesses and industry. Coordination with this authority will help the Town to appreciate area economic strategies, goals, and plans for the future. Likewise, by establishing a partnership with the authority, the Town can direct interested developers to the City where services and infrastructure are available.

### **OCONTO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

The Oconto County Economic Development Corporation promotes economic development in the county. Participants in this organization pool their resources and talents in an effort to market the economic opportunities. The corporation maintains a web site at [www.ocontocounty.org](http://www.ocontocounty.org).

### **UW-EXTENSION**

Through the Oconto County office of the UW-Extension, the **Oconto County Resource Development Agent** offers:

- Small business management assistance workshops or one-on-one counseling
- Information on county revolving loan funds and other sources of financing
- Research into available government loans
- Local demographic information

The **Oconto County Agriculture Agent** is another resource available to the Town of Oconto Falls and its local farmers. The Agent's mission is to foster profitable, environmentally responsible agricultural production through the application of principles of modern farm production and financial management. The Agriculture Agent has information about farm preservation techniques, as well as new technologies that may be beneficial to area farmers. The Agent can provide education materials to the Town and its farmers in an effort to address the goals, objectives and visions of this plan.

In addition to these county organizations and programs, there are many federal, state, and regional organizations that can help the Town of Oconto Falls to support economic development opportunities and initiatives in the Town.

### **REGIONAL AGENCY**

Bay Lake Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission ( [www.baylakerpc.org](http://www.baylakerpc.org)). maintains an economic development program that provides communities with information for economic development, reviews of program changes and initiatives, and review

assistance for local economic development proposals and plans. Bay Lake also reviews regional economic development program recommendations for more effective application at the local level.

A significant portion of the economic development program is updating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), an annual report that includes a review of the previous year's accomplishments, current demographic and economic statistics and any significant changes in the local economy. As part of the process, the Commission's Economic Development Committee helps to identify economic problems, opportunities, and economic development projects to address their needs.

Bay Lake also collects and distributes socio-economic data about the region that is useful for market analysis by prospective developers. Furthermore, Bay Lake maintains an inventory of industrial sites and buildings within the region.

### **STATE AGENCIES/PROGRAMS**

- Wisconsin Department of Commerce ([www.commerce.state.wi.us](http://www.commerce.state.wi.us)). This department is the state's primary agency for delivery of integrated services to businesses.
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation ([www.dot.state.wi.us](http://www.dot.state.wi.us)): The Office of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Programs encourages firms owned by disadvantaged individuals to participate in all federal and state transportation facility contracts.
- Forward Wisconsin ([www.forwardwi.com](http://www.forwardwi.com)). Forward Wisconsin markets outside Wisconsin to attract new businesses, jobs, and increase state economic activity.
- Department of Workforce Development ([www.dwd.state.wi.us](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us)). This department builds and strengthens Wisconsin's workforce by providing job services, training and employment assistance, and helping employers find necessary workers.
- Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers ([www.uwex.edu/sbdc](http://www.uwex.edu/sbdc)). These centers help ensure the state's economic health and stability. They offer formative business education, counseling, and technology training. The nearest Small Business Development Center to the Town of Oconto Falls is located at UW-Oshkosh.

### **FEDERAL AGENCIES/PROGRAMS**

- Department of Agriculture Rural Development Administration ([www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov))
- US Small Business Administration ([www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)) provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run and grow their businesses.
- US Department of Commerce ([www.doc.gov](http://www.doc.gov))
- US Department of Transportation ([www.dot.gov](http://www.dot.gov))

## Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Town can pursue organizational and financial assistance from Oconto County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to address environmentally contaminated sites. There are many grant programs available through these agencies to help communities address brownfields, leaking underground storage tanks, and other environmental concerns should they arise in the future. To prevent any future environmental situations, the Town will encourage only environmentally friendly business development that is properly permitted and regulated to protect the Town's natural environment.

A **Brownfield** refers to an abandoned, idled, or underused industrial or commercial facility or property where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

A **complete history and listing of brownfields and contaminated sites in the Town of Oconto Falls**, including spill locations and mitigation actions taken, is available from the WDNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment and posted on their Internet web site tracking list available at: [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/brrts/index.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/brrts/index.htm). According to the site, there are no contaminated properties in the Town of Oconto Falls. However, there are several spills documented in the City of Oconto Falls.

## Relationship to Other Required Plan Elements

### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Town residents take pride in their rural roadways and want to maintain their scenic character and quality in the future. Businesses that generate high traffic volumes are not encouraged on these roadways. This situation helps to minimize traffic potential and allows farm equipment to travel more easily.

State highways located in the Town have access limitations. These limitations are designed to maintain that the integrity of the roadways as a through route by not allowing too many driveways in close proximity. To support these limitations, development is encouraged at intersections along the highways so that driveways can be provided on side roads, rather than (or in addition to), driveways on the highway. As necessary, the Town also supports the installation of turn lanes – installed at developer's expense - for businesses that may generate substantial traffic or slow-moving truck traffic.

### AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter clearly documents physical site development limitations that exist in the Town of Oconto Falls due to wetlands, floodplains, water features, wildlife habitat, and soil conditions. Aware of these limitations and the benefits natural areas and farmland provide, the Town will seek to limit the amount and type of permitted business ventures to areas that will not jeopardize the natural environment and have limited impact on farming operations. Furthermore, the Town believes that its natural resources have economic benefits (i.e. tourists for

canoeing, hiking, snowmobiling). For this reason, their preservation is of utmost importance.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

The Town of Oconto Falls lies between the City of Oconto Falls and Gillett. Moreover, two important regional highway corridors pass through the Town – STH 22 and STH 32. This situation provides some opportunities for the Town to support development, particularly along these roadways. However, the Town does not want to see these areas infill completely with development. This undesirable situation would destroy the urban and rural boundary between these neighboring communities and the Town. As a result, the rural character of the Town would be severely impacted. Rather, the Town would like to work with its neighbors to promote regional economic development opportunities that benefit all communities.

## **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

In 20 years, the Town of Oconto Falls expects to remain largely the same as it exists today. Physical development limitations (i.e. wetlands, flood plains, poor soils) will limit development potential. Most entrepreneurs will locate elsewhere to obtain needed services. The Town will continue to support a limited number of small business ventures and home occupations. The primary economic activity will be farming. Supporting farm-related business ventures will increase. The goals and objectives needed to expand the economic base are provided in the Implementation Element Chapter.

## 9.0 EXISTING LAND USE

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## 9.0 EXISTING LAND USE

### Introduction

To understand the character of the Town of Oconto Falls one only needs to look at the landscape. From the scenic farms, woodlands, Oconto River shoreline to the residential subdivisions, the Town of Oconto Falls is a rural community, with a rich farming tradition. These attributes are echoed in the value statements presented in Chapter 1 and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, listed in Chapter 2.

To learn more about land use, also see these chapters...

- √ Information related to local farms, quarries and natural resources is provided in the **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element**.
- √ Information about desired future development is provided in the **Future Land Use Chapter**.

### Existing Land Use Inventory

The *Town of Oconto Falls Existing Land Use Map* was created from information provided by Oconto County and the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission provided additional updates in 2004.

What follows is a description of the land use categories illustrated on the *Town of Oconto Falls Existing Land Use Map*.

#### ROADS

All town, county, and state roadways in the Town of Oconto Falls are shown in black on the *Existing Land Use Map*. To learn more about transportation facilities serving the Town, refer to Chapter 5.

#### ABANDONED RAILROAD GRADE

The abandoned railroad grade is shown in yellow. It runs from the City of Oconto Falls, across the Town parallel to STH 22.

#### RIVERS/STREAMS/LAKES

The Oconto River, Balcom Lake, Lily Lake, Kuplie Lake, Beaver Lake, Company Lake, Gray Lake and Dombroski Lake are illustrated on the map, as are several smaller creeks and drains. Additional information about the rivers, lakes and streams is provided in Chapter 7.

#### AGRICULTURAL AREAS

The vast majority of the Town is classified in this category. Agricultural lands include family farms and rented cropland. For additional information about the Town's agricultural land uses, refer to Chapter 7.

#### FORESTED

Woodlands and wetlands are illustrated in dark green.

## COMMERCIAL

A few scattered commercial properties are found in the Town located primarily along STH 22 and STH 32. Chapter 8 profiles economic development opportunities in the Town of Oconto Falls.

## INDUSTRIAL

Industrial land uses are found adjacent to the City of Oconto Falls along REA Lane.

## SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single-family residential development includes subdivisions and smaller lot developments located mainly along the Oconto River, Gray Lake Road, Meadowview Lane and CTH CC. Information about the characteristics and quality of the Town's housing supply is available in Chapter 4.

## RURAL RESIDENTIAL

This category includes homes on larger parcels (5-10 acres or more). These homes are scattered around the township along Town and County Roads.

## QUARRY SITES

There are several quarry pits identified on the map. For more information about non-metallic mining operations, refer to the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element, Chapter 7.

## Existing Land Use Breakdown

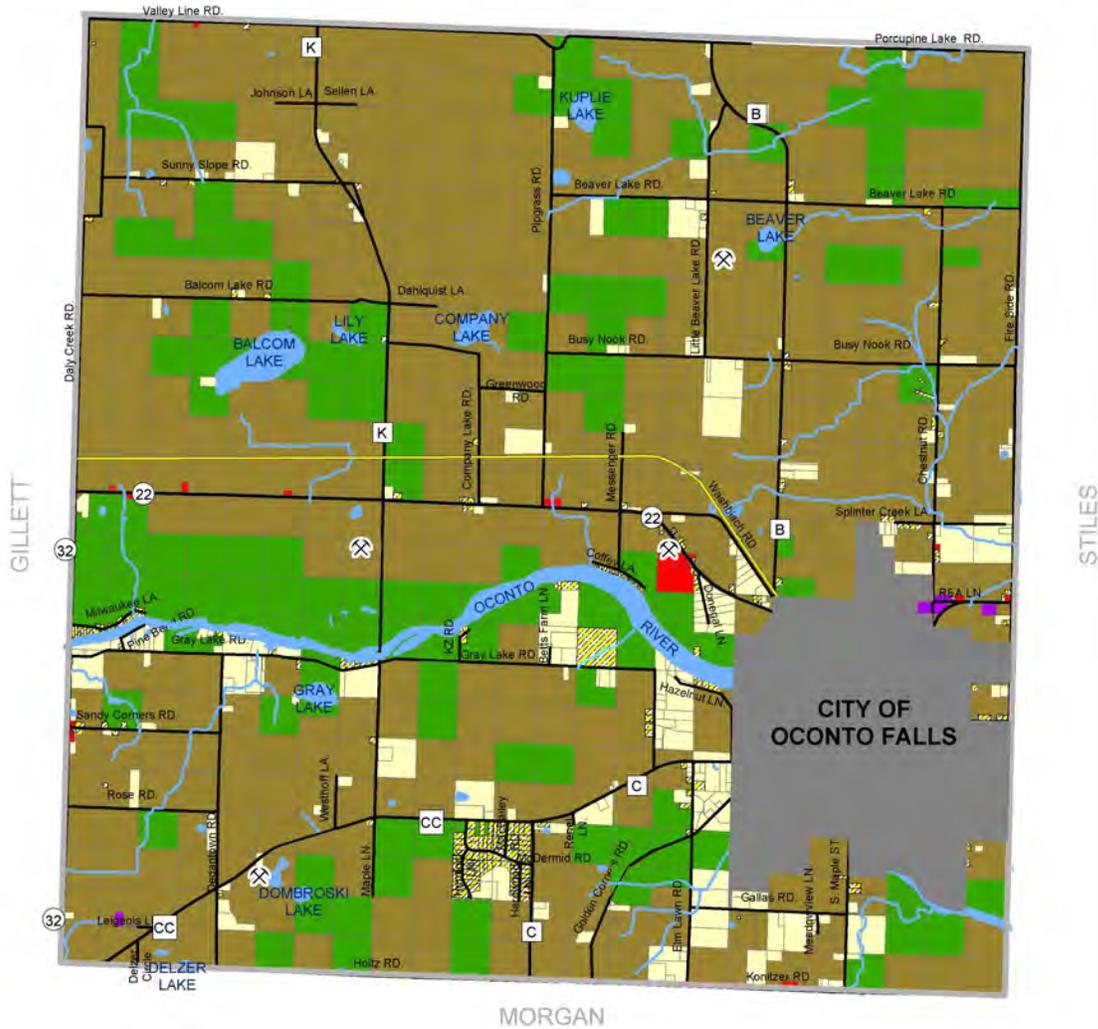
The table below is a required numerical breakdown of the existing land uses in the Town. This table is required by 1999 WI Act 9, Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law. The net density (total number of dwelling units divided by all residential acres) in the Town of Oconto Falls is 0.29 dwelling units/acre (488 housing units/1,698 acres).

<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>Amount (in acres)</b>	<b>% of Planning Area</b>
Transportation – Roads & Railroad Grades	165	0.8%
Rivers, Streams, Lakes	50	0.2%
Agriculture	14,935	70.5%
Forested	4,281	20.3%
Commercial	23	0.1%
Industrial	18	0.1%
Single Family Residential	260	1.2%
Rural Residential	1,438	6.8%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>21,170</b>	<b>100%</b>

# EXISTING LAND USE

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS

SPRUCE



**Legend**

- ROADS
- ABANDONED RAILROAD GRADE
- RIVERS/STREAMS/LAKES
- AGRICULTURE
- FORESTED
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- ⊗ QUARRY



**Omni Associates**  
 PROJECT #10108402  
 DATE: 10/2012  
 DRAWN BY: KAL  
 REVISED: 10/25/2014

LOCATION: F:\GIS\10108402\DRAWING\DLINK\_11x17.mxd  
 SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

## Zoning Regulations

The *Town of Oconto Falls Zoning Map* is very similar to the *Existing Land Use Map*. Therefore, it seems that properties in the Town are zoned appropriately for their current use. The vast majority of the Town is zoned as agricultural. The second most common zoning classification found in the Town is forested. Neither Oconto County nor the Town of Oconto Falls regulates the unzoned properties shown on the map. As a result, there are no enforceable zoning restrictions in place to regulate what may be developed on these parcels.

The Town of Oconto Falls, which is currently under county zoning, may **not** adopt its own zoning ordinance. Desired zoning ordinance changes will need to be coordinated with Oconto County. The only opportunity to get out of county zoning is if the county makes a comprehensive update of the zoning ordinance.

TABLE 13						
OCONTO COUNTY ZONING DISTRICTS <sup>1</sup>						
DISTRICT	MINIMUM AREA	MINIMUM FRONTAGE	FRONT SETBACK	SIDE SETBACK	REAR SETBACK	HIGH WATER SETBACK
Agricultural	10 Acres	100 feet	30 – 50 ft from ROW	Principle Bldg. 10 ft Accessory Bldg. 5 ft	20 feet	75 feet
Rural Residential	2 Acres	100 feet	30 – 50 ft from ROW	Principle Bldg. 10 ft Accessory Bldg. 5 ft	20 feet	75 feet
Forest	10 Acres	100 feet	30 – 50 ft from ROW	Principle Bldg. 10 ft Accessory Bldg. 5 ft	20 feet	75 feet
General Commercial	20,000 sq. ft Approx. ½ Acre	100 feet	30 – 50 ft from ROW	None	10 feet where property is adj. to commercial/industrial property. 50 feet from any other district.	75 feet
Industrial	20,000 sq. ft Appx. ½ Acre	100 feet	30 – 50 ft from ROW	None	10 feet where property is adj. to commercial/industrial property. 50 feet from any other district.	75 feet
Single Family Residential	20,000 sq. ft	100 feet	30 - 50 ft from ROW	Principle Bldg 10 ft Accessory Bldg. 5 ft.	20 feet	75 feet

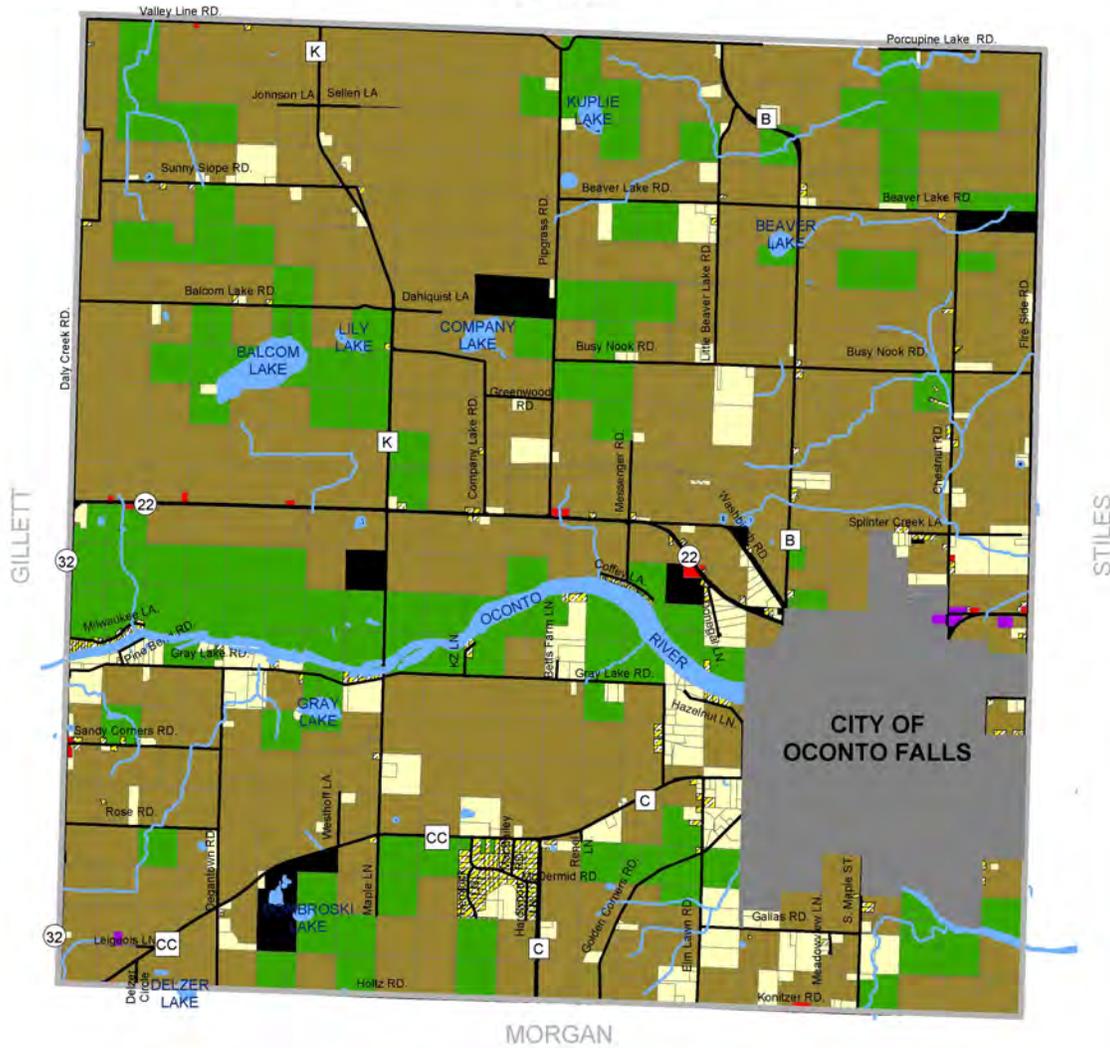
SOURCE: Oconto County Land and Water Resources Department

<sup>1</sup> Regulations are subject to change. Current zoning requirements should be obtained and reviewed before proceeding with development.

# ZONING

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS

SPRUCE



### Legend

- ROADS
- RIVERS/STREAMS/LAKES
- AGRICULTURE
- FORESTED
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- UNZONED





PROJECT # M108402  
DATE: 7/19/02  
DRAWN BY: KAL  
REVISED: 10/05/04

THE CITY OF OCONTO FALLS, WISCONSIN  
PROJECT: 2001-03-0000 / 01-020-001-010

LOCATION: F:\GIS\M108402\DRAWING\Zoning\_11x17.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAY LAKE'S REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The *Town of Oconto Falls Zoning Map* illustrates the existing zoning pattern established under the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance. What follows is a more detailed description of the primary zoning classifications found in the Town of Oconto Falls:

#### **AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT**

This district is designed to allow farming activities including traditional “family farms,” “hobby farms”, and scattered residential development. The agricultural use is to be recognized as the dominant activity of the area. The minimum parcel size in this district is 10 acres.

Oconto County also has a “large scale agricultural district” which requires a minimum parcel area of 35 acres. The intent of this district is to identify and establish those areas of the county suited to the economics of large-scale agricultural uses. In turn, the value of this land is to be maintained by protecting these areas from the intrusion of urban uses. There are no properties in the Town of Oconto Falls currently in this zoning classification.

#### **RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (NON-SUBDIVIDED)**

This district provides for single-family home sites (including mobile homes) developed on a scattered basis. The homes developed are not in close proximity to each other for the purpose of creating a neighborhood setting. The minimum parcel size for a property zoned “rural residential” is two acres.

#### **FOREST**

This district includes undeveloped areas of woodlands or wetlands (wooded or non-wooded), prairie areas, and areas with thick ground cover.

#### **GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

The primary intent of this district is to provide for the special development needs of those wholesale and retail stores, shops and services and those professional offices, which by their nature, are dependent upon a local trade area and/or employee base. The secondary intent of this district is to provide for certain commercial activities, which are uniquely oriented toward the service of highway traffic. The properties zoned “general commercial” should be utilized to produce a safe and orderly placement of facilities and activities along and/or with access to major traffic routes. In unsewered areas a parcel must be 20,000 square feet in size in this district.

#### **INDUSTRIAL**

This district provides for the development of light and heavy industrial activities. Non-metallic mining is permitted in the industrial district.

#### **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

Single-family residential development requires a 20,000 square foot (1/2 acre) lot with 100 feet of road frontage to meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

#### **UNZONED**

The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance does not currently regulate the unzoned properties in the Town. According to county records these properties were never assigned a zoning designation.

## **ZONING SETBACK REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the various zoning districts, the zoning ordinance also includes provisions for signage and setbacks along highways. The setback from state highways (like STH 22 and 32) is 110 feet from the centerline of the highway of the closest lane or 50 feet from the right of way, whichever is greater. Setbacks from county trunk highways (Class B Highways) are 75 feet from the centerline of the highway or 42 feet from the right of way, whichever is greater.

## **CONSERVATION DESIGN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (CDR)**

As this plan was being developed, Oconto County was working to develop a zoning district that would be used in conjunction with conservation-based subdivision development. The ordinance requires a minimum 20-acre parcel. In the CDR, a minimum lot size of 1 acre is required. A development in this zone must preserve at least 45% of a parcel, in addition to wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, and existing right-of-way. The use of this ordinance requires several approvals by the Town. The development of conservation-based subdivisions is encouraged throughout this plan.

## **Town of Oconto Falls Land Divisions & Subdivision Ordinance**

The Town of Oconto Falls does not have its own subdivision ordinance. Oconto County enforces a Land Division/Subdivision Ordinance in all unincorporated areas of the county.

**The Town may develop and adopt its own subdivision/land division ordinance in the future.** The Town's ordinance, to be enforced, must be more restrictive than the existing county requirements. To support the goals and objectives of this plan, the Town's subdivision ordinance should strongly encourage conservation subdivisions. In fact, it is recommend that the ordinance require conservation-based subdivisions and allow traditional subdivisions under more limited criteria that would be defined in the ordinance. The subdivision/land division ordinance can be used to establish minimum lot sizes that may be more restrictive (e.g. larger) than the County Zoning Requirements.

## **Trends in Supply, Demand and Price of Land**

The Town of Oconto Falls has a strong desire to carefully regulate the location of new residential development in order to ensure that future growth will not have a negative impact on the Town's rural character, natural resources, interfere with farming operations, or result in significant increases in service needs and costs.

## **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Historically, farmsteads were the focus of residential development. However, in recent decades people have been moving to the Town, not to farm, but to take advantage of the rural setting and comparatively affordable land prices. Also, with the improvements to USH 141, commuting time between the Town of Oconto Falls and Green Bay had significantly decreased to a point where some people are willing to consider living in the Town and commuting to work. This situation has also increased development pressure.

While the Town has welcomed some residential development, it does not want to see an excessive amount of development that will change the character of the community and potentially impact the farming operations.

Soil characteristics presented in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element will prevent development of septic systems and homes with basements in many areas of the Town. These soil characteristics were an important guide for determining potential development locations in the Town.

Residents of the Town take great pride in their natural environment. Therefore, the Town encourages conservation-based development approaches to accommodate new residential development that can also successfully adapt to the natural environmental limitations.

## **FARMING**

There is a strong desire to retain farmland in the Town of Oconto Falls. This priority was clearly expressed in the community survey and during the planning workshops and meetings. However, the state, regional and county farming economy has continued to suffer from a reduction in the number of farmers. Likewise, the number of local farmers has also decreased. This can be attributed to diminished farm product returns and aging farmers seeking retirement.

As local farmers age, the supply of farmers willing and able to purchase land for farming is diminishing. Unlike the past, when the children of a farmer would take over the land, children of today's farmers are seeking jobs with 401K and other benefits the farm cannot provide. Nevertheless, farmers wishing to retire need to find ways to raise the money needed to sustain their lifestyle in retirement. This leads to pressure to sell and convert farmland to other more profitable uses for better sale prices. Reported farmland sales values are in the range of \$2,000 per acre if sold for farmland, but existing farmers willing to buy are fewer, thus land is sold for development.

Preservation of rural character is contingent upon successful efforts to retain farmland. The Implementation Element provides additional detail about strategies to be considered, including:

- Encouraging landowners to pursue opportunities to partner with land trusts charged with protection of natural areas and farmland;
- Establish an Agriculture Committee to minimize farmland conflicts through negotiation and open communication;
- Establishing networks, through the Agriculture Committee to connecting farmers who are considering selling their land property with other farmers who would like to acquire additional property; and
- Pursue transfer and purchase of development rights program opportunities (refer to the Implementation Chapter for more information).
- Encouraging development techniques that preserve farmland and cluster residential development.

## **COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Town's commercial and industrial development sectors constitute a small fraction of the Town's land area. The Town will support additional commercial and industrial development to support the local tax base and provide quality local employment opportunities, provided such development is properly zoned and maintained.

New commercial and industrial development is most likely along the state highways. Commercial and industrial land sold in the Town costs less than properties sold in the City of Oconto Falls, but the town properties do not have access to water or sewer. This difference in land value is not expected to change in the future. Town land will continue to be more affordable.

### **Opportunities for Redevelopment**

Given the Town's limited development history, there is not a strong need for redevelopment. The primary opportunity for redevelopment is the long-term redevelopment of local quarries. Redevelopment of a quarry site may include residential development, farming, or recreational opportunities in accordance with approved reclamation plans.

### **Existing Underdeveloped Industrial/Commercial Areas**

All areas shown on *Existing Land Use Map* as commercial and industrial are in fact developed accordingly. Areas shown on the *20-Year Future Land Use Map* for future commercial/industrial development have the potential to be developed in this manner. These sites are currently underdeveloped in their existing state and the development will maximize the potential of the area from the Town's perspective. Higher end development would require municipal water and sewer service that is not available or anticipated in the Town.

# 10.0 FUTURE LAND USE

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## 10.0 FUTURE LAND USE

### Introduction

This chapter provides the *20-Year Town of Oconto Falls Future Land Use Map*. The map illustrates the goals, objectives, visions and policies expressed throughout this plan.

### Land Use Vision

**In 2025, agricultural uses still dominate the landscape in the Town of Oconto Falls. Through successful implementation of its Comprehensive Plan and supporting regulations, the Town has maintained its rural character while still providing quality single-family residential areas and commercial properties. New residences are well planned to protect the Town's natural resources, farmland and aesthetic appeal.**

A great deal of time and effort went into the development of the *Future Land Use Map* presented in this chapter.

The planning process was initiated with an extensive **vision development** effort and review of the historic and existing population characteristics. This information is described in Chapters 2 and 3.

The Plan Commission studied current conditions and future needs related to:

- **Housing** (Chapter 4)
- **Transportation** (Chapter 5)
- **Utilities & Community Facilities** (Chapter 6)
- **Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources** (Chapter 7)
- **Economic Development** (Chapter 8).

### Desired Development

#### COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Prior to initiating the planning program (September 2000), the Town of Oconto Falls distributed a survey to all households in the Town. Results from the survey have been highlighted throughout the plan, including this chapter. This information has been an important guide for understanding resident desires and expectations for the future. What follows are some of the results specific to land use development issues.

**From 1990 through 1999 the Town of Oconto Falls had an estimated increase in population growth of 9%, growth from 1,014 to 1,101. Do you favor growth at a rate for the next 20 years that is:**

Faster Rate – 14%      Same Rate – 56%      Slower Rate – 23%      No Growth – 8%

**For the most part, I am satisfied with the way the Town of Oconto Falls is developing.**

Strongly Agree – 7%      Agree – 48%      Neutral – 25%      Disagree – 16%      Strongly Disagree – 4%

**The Town of Oconto Falls should have a say in the development of future residential subdivisions in Town.**

Strongly Agree – 39%      Agree – 34%      Neutral – 12%      Disagree – 8%      Strongly Disagree – 7%

## **COGNITIVE MAPS**

On August 4, 2004, the Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission hosted a special public meeting to allow residents to participate in a cognitive mapping exercise. Cognitive mapping is a planning tool used to determine desired future development. Cognitive mapping is a two-part process. Participants first have the opportunity to create an *Attitude Map* to express their ideas about what areas of the Town are attractive and unattractive. These maps also indicate important local travel routes and places that have special meaning. A *Composite Attitude Map* is provided on the next page. This map represents consistent patterns and ideas represented on the maps prepared by individual participants. It is not a direct translation of any single map created during the exercise.

Next, participants had the opportunity to develop *Individual Future Land Use Maps* based on their ideas, perceptions, experiences and beliefs. A copy of the *Composite Future Land Use Map* based on the individual maps created is provided in this chapter.

## **VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY**

On August 4, 2004, during the same evening the cognitive mapping exercise was facilitated, residents also had the opportunity to complete a visual preference survey. In this activity, participants were shown a series of 24 different images. The photos included areas from the Town and Areas Beyond. The images included natural areas, farmland areas, housing, and commercial uses. Participants were asked to rank (on a scale of -5 to +5) what they felt were the images most consistent with what they would like to see developed in the community. The results of this exercise were presented to the Plan Commission as an information item. The results are included in the appendix.

## **LAND USE PREFERENCES**

What follows is a list of desirable, possibly desirable, and undesirable land uses in the Town of Oconto Falls. The Town Planning Commission developed this list in the fall of 2004. As part of a comprehensive review of the initial draft plan document, survey results, cognitive mapping and visual preference survey results, and resident the Planning Commission developed this list as a general guide for understanding future development preferences.

### **Desirable Land Uses**

1. Public or private ecological reserves, including wetland, forestry, floodplain and conservation preserve areas.
2. Home occupations or home-based businesses
3. Kennels/veterinary clinics
4. Highways and other public transit facilities
5. Public and private parks, campgrounds, swimming pools, and beaches
6. Hatcheries, fisheries, stables, nurseries, greenhouses, and other animal and plant breeding facilities
7. Artificial lakes or ponds
8. Damns, piers, boat docks
9. Fire arm and archery ranges and associated facilities
10. Dairies, cheese factors, and other milk processing facilities
11. Farmers markets and road side stands
12. Lumber yards, fuel yards and metallic and non-metallic storage facilities
13. Motels, hotels, boarding houses, rooming houses and bed-and-breakfasts
14. Bakeries and restaurants
15. Schools, colleges, libraries, museums, and art galleries
16. Churches religious and cultural institutions
17. Petroleum or propane storage facilities or farms
18. Feed, garden, and seed facilities
19. Residential subdivisions, land divisions, and certified surveyed lots
20. Dance halls
21. Athletic facilities, stadium and athletic courses, including golf and golf driving ranges
22. Community and private large volume community water usage water wells
23. Metallic and non-metallic mines
24. Cemeteries, mausoleums and burial grounds
25. Recycling centers and transfer stations

### **Uses that May Be Desirable, Subject to Plan Commission Review and Approval**

1. Expansion of agricultural facilities, and large volume animal facilities, including aqua-cultural facilities and animal feed lots
2. Hospitals, medical or health facilities and clinics
3. Fire or police stations
4. Moratoriums, crematoriums and funeral homes
5. Multiple family residences, including duplexes, apartments, and townhomes
6. Billboards and advertising facilities
7. Public or private towers (e.g. water, communication, electrical)
8. Public and private antennas and satellite dishes
9. Tourist campgrounds and migrant labor housing
10. Mobile homes, manufactured home and modular home parks
11. Sewer plants and septic disposal centers
12. Motion picture and theater facilities
13. Massage, sauna and tanning parlors
14. Auction facilities
15. Livestock depots, stations and stockyards
16. Liquor stores and taverns
17. Automobile and implement dealers (new and used) and repair
18. Outdoor music concerts and public and private festivals
19. Exotic animal facilities, zoos, and farms
20. Racetracks and demolition vehicle alteration facilities
21. Carnivals, circuses, amusement facilities and fairs
22. Airports and heliports
23. Junkyards, wrecking yards, and salvage yards
24. Group, nursing, foster, adult and child care facilities
25. Banks and other financial institutions
26. Explosive fireworks and volatile material facilities
27. Pipelines, electrical sub-stations and power plants, communication structures (e.g. TV, radio) and windmills
28. Warehouses, private storage facilities and commercial wholesale storage facilities
29. Snowmobile, ATV, recreational vehicle, domesticated animal, and bicycle trails
30. Convenience stores, retail shops and offices
31. Non-profit clubs and lodges
32. Marine sales and services

**Undesirable Lands Uses Considered Inconsistent With The Goals, Objectives, Policies And Vision Of This Plan:**

1. Sludge disposal and application areas
2. Pesticide and fertilizer disposal and application areas
3. Planned unit developments
4. Brownfield or other soil and water contaminated areas
5. Tunnels and caves
6. Pawn shops and check cashing facilities
7. Canneries, packaging and bottling facilities
8. Parking lots and ramps
9. Shopping centers, malls, department stores and exhibit halls
10. Military bases, camps or armories
11. Jails, prisons or other detention facilities
12. Industrial research, assembly, production, manufacturing and industrial park uses and developments.
13. Railroad, bus, taxi and truck depots
14. Tattoo parlors
15. Laundries and dry cleaners
16. Gambling facilities
17. Animal rendering and slaughterhouses
18. Solid or hazardous waste disposal, storage, or treatment facilities
19. Adult entertainment facilities
20. Abandoned or dilapidated buildings or structures, including abandoned mobile homes, condemned property, excavations, abandoned wells and cisterns.

## **Special Considerations**

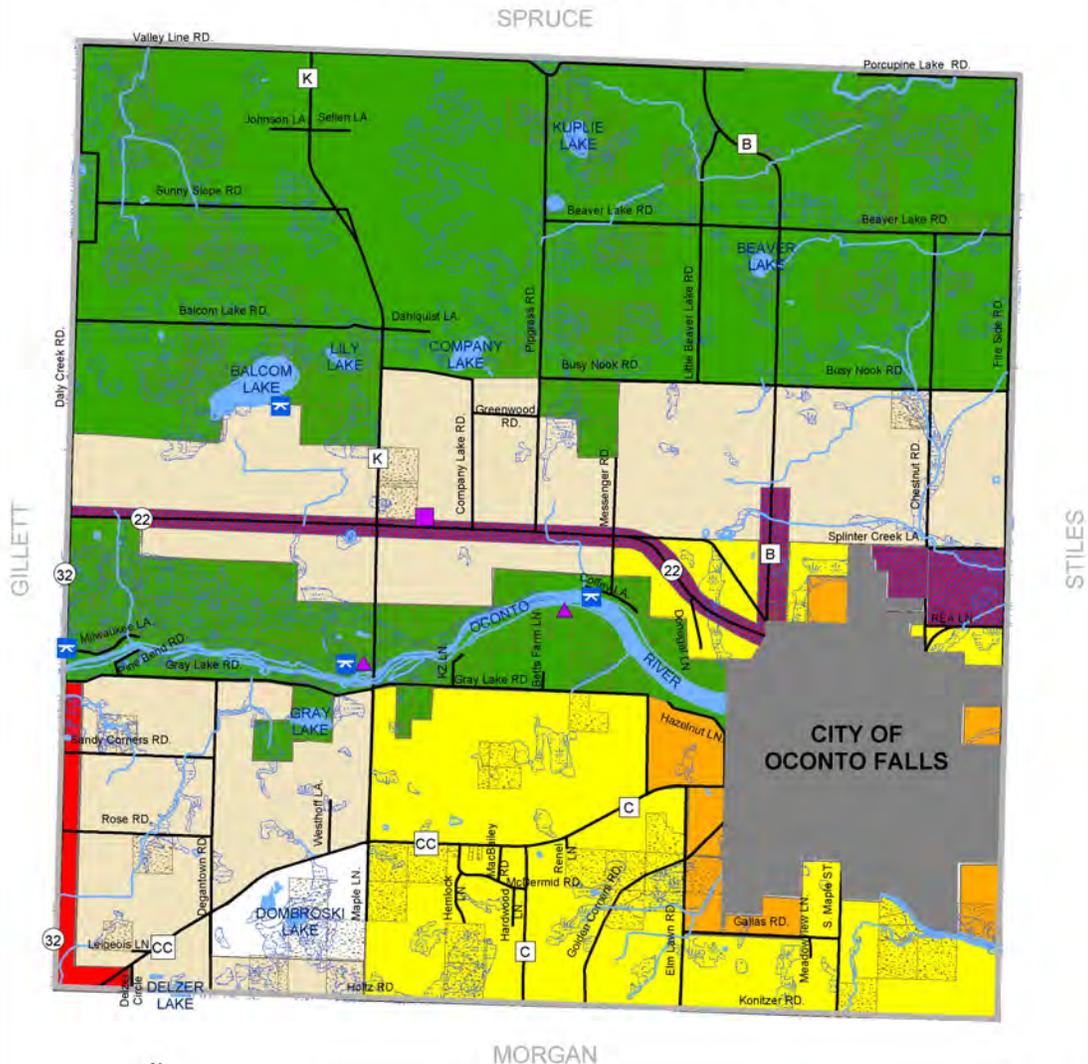
### **PRIVATE WELL SETBACK AREAS**

Landfills are intensive land uses. As such, they may create disturbances to neighboring properties including: vibration, odors, noise, and groundwater issues. The WDNR requires a 1,200-foot setback around landfills for private wells. To develop within this area, property owners are required to obtain a variance from the WDNR to drill a residential well (irrigation wells are not subject to this requirement). This process is intended to protect residents from potential environmental hazards, including groundwater issues. There are two abandoned landfills located in the Town of Oconto Falls.



# COGNITIVE OPINION MAP

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS



**OMNI ASSOCIATES**  
 PROJECT # M10MAGD  
 DATE: 06/05/04  
 DRAWN BY: KAL  
 REVISED: 10/05/04

LOCATION: F:\GIS\M10MAGD\Cognitive\_Map\_11x17.mxd  
 SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**Legend**

ROADS	WATER
ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION	WETLANDS
POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	FORESTED
POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE HOUSING	UNSPECIFIED LAND USES
POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	POTENTIAL PARK SITES
POTENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT	POTENTIAL BOAT LANDING
POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT	
POTENTIAL TOWN GARAGE/RECYCLING CENTER	

## QUARRY OPERATIONS

As mentioned in Chapter 7, The Town of Oconto Falls has an accessible supply of non-metallic mining resources. To better understand the potential location of future quarry operations (based on resource availability), a *Potential Quarry Sites Map* is provided in Chapter 7.

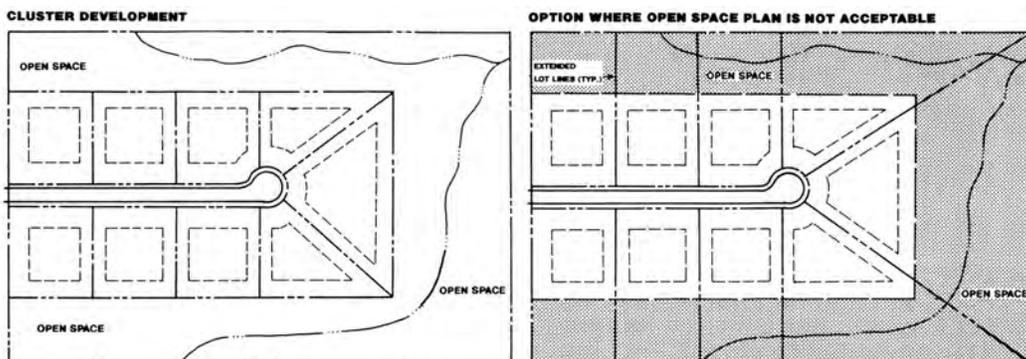
## CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION DESIGNS

The Town of Oconto Falls believes that conservation/cluster subdivisions are a tool to balance the growth desires of landowners and retiring farmers with the rural character preservation desires of other residents.

There are two ways to develop conservation-based subdivisions. Figure 3 illustrates the differences between the two approaches. If the landowner agrees to **common open space**, a *conservation easement* is established. A *conservation easement* is a restriction against further development on a portion of a parcel. Conservation easements can be used to protect floodplains, areas of steep slope, woodlands, and scenic views beyond the home sites in the development. In this approach, individual lot sizes are reduced and surrounding land is held in common ownership -- usually maintained by a homeowners association. The overall density of development remains the same (i.e. no more homes are permitted than in a traditional subdivision development). The Oconto County Conservation Design Residential District (CDR) supports this model.

In some situations, it is not feasible to reduce the lot size to develop a conservation subdivision. In these situations, lot lines can be extended so that there is no common open space, but rather **private open space**. Areas beyond the home sites can then be deed-restricted against further development, keeping the property open without creating a “common” open space. If viewed from above there is no difference in the resulting development.

**FIGURE 3**



SOURCE: Fred Heyer, *Preserving Rural Character*, American Planning Association PAS Report No. 429.

NOTE: Illustration is to represent concept only. Cul-de-sac development is not encouraged in the Town due to snow removal concerns. If a cul-de-sac is desired, space must be provided for ample snow removal.

Supporting objectives are provided in the Housing Element (e.g. to develop a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance). The information in this chapter, as well as the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element should be a guide in that effort.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS**

The Bay Lake Regional Plan Commission (BLRPC) is working with Oconto County to define environmental corridors for preservation in the county. That definition will not be completed until the fall of 2004. In the meantime, the standard definition of environmental corridor used by the BLRPC includes:

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources wetlands
- 100-year floodplains
- Areas with slopes greater than, or equal to, 12 percent
- Lakes, rivers, streams and ponds
- A 75-foot lake and river setback
- A 25-foot buffer of wetlands

Residents of the Town of Oconto Falls expressed a desire to preserve the natural features in the Town. Accordingly, the *Future Land Use Map* in this chapter illustrates an environmental corridor in accordance with this definition, and also includes shoreland and wetland zoning areas mandated by the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance.

## **OFFICIAL MAP**

The official map is one of the oldest plan implementation devices at the disposal of the local communities. It is also one of the most effective and efficient devices to manage the problem of reserving land for future public use. Section 62.23(6) of the Wisconsin Statutes provides that the governing body of any local municipality may establish an official map for the precise identification of right-of-way lines and site boundaries of streets, highways, waterways, and parkways, and the location and extent of railway right-of-ways public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds. Such a map has the force of law and is deemed to be final and conclusive with respect to the location and width of both existing and proposed streets, highways, waterways, and parkways, the location and extent of railway right-of-ways public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds.

The official map is thus intended to implement the community's plan of streets, highways, parkways, parks, and playgrounds. Its basic purpose is to inhibit the construction of buildings or structures and their associated improvements on land that has been designated for future public use. The official map is a plan implementation device that operates on a communitywide basis in advance of land development and can thereby effectively assure the integrated development of the street and highway system. Unlike subdivision control, which operates on a plat-by-plat basis, and acts on development proposals, the official map can operate over the entire Town in advance of development proposals. The official map is a useful device to achieve public acceptance of long-range plans, since it serves legal notice of the government's intention to all parties concerned

well in advance of any actual improvements. It thereby voids the altogether too common situation of development being undertaken without knowledge or regard for the long-range plan. Thus it can help avoid public resistance when plan implementation becomes imminent.

The Town of Oconto Falls will consider the adoption of an official map.

### **COMM 83**

Areas proposed for residential development, will be required to demonstrate their ability to provide adequate sewer service (i.e. perk test). The Town of Oconto Falls supports the use of innovative waste treatment systems permissible under the COMM 83 legislation (refer to the Utilities & Community Facilities Element for additional information). Specifically, the Town supports the installation of individual systems, mounds, and other sewage treatment methods to meet rural residential sanitary needs in the future. The Town (and other officials) will review any proposed treatment system to determine effectiveness in the proposed environment.

### **DRIVEWAY ORDINANCE**

During the planning process, concern was expressed over the length and distance between driveways being created in the Town of Oconto Falls. Extremely long driveways present safety concerns with respect to emergency fire vehicle access and visibility during an emergency.

A local driveway ordinance regulates the length and location of driveways. These ordinances require persons interested in development to first obtain a driveway permit from the Town. Accordingly, the local driveway permit becomes the first step in pursuing development. By establishing such an ordinance, the Town will have a direct say in development that would otherwise not be reviewed by the Town. To explain, currently uses permitted by right and variances are approved by Oconto County without local Town review. The Town only reviews conditional uses. A local driveway ordinance would require a Town permit before any type of development could occur. Some towns in Oconto County have taken this approach to have a more direct and early say in local development.

### **Annexation**

If the Town of Oconto Falls is concerned about annexations, the Town should study **why residents decide to petition for annexation:**

- Do residents want services the Town is unable to provide?
- Does annexation increase the marketability and value of their property?
- Is the City more willing than the Town to address their concerns?
- What other issues are involved?

#### **COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

According to the community survey, Town residents support annexations for planned growth (35%), but a nearly equal amount do not support any annexations (33%). Sixteen percent of respondents support annexation to extend services (e.g. water, sewer).

Once the issues have been identified, the Town needs to determine what measures it can, and is willing, to take to address the issues.

Presently, there is potential for annexation by the City of Oconto Falls. Boundary agreements, shared tax revenue, or other forms of intergovernmental agreement should be aggressively pursued by the Town to protect its boundaries from annexation. Likewise, an effort must be made to educate residents about the benefits and downfalls of annexation. Additional information about these tools is provided in the Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter.

## **Community Design Considerations**

Ensuring that developed and natural areas of the Town of Oconto Falls are attractive and well-maintained is an important priority. To that end, the Town supports the continued enforcement of zoning regulations, including sign ordinances. Likewise, the Town of Oconto Falls supports the use of a detailed site plan review process, including lighting, sidewalk, building material and sign proposals, to ensure that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses and the visions, goals, objectives and policies expressed in this plan.

### **PRESERVING RURAL CHARACTER**

What is “*rural character*”? For every Town the answer may be somewhat different. In the Town of Oconto Falls, rural character means a blend of:

- Farm fields, barns, silos and cows
- Open space
- Rustic town roads
- Rolling topography
- Distant views
- Abundant natural resources and wildlife

The goals and objectives include specific ideas for preserving rural features and economic activity suited to rural areas (e.g. farm and related agricultural business, outdoor tourism, forestry related, home-based, etc.).

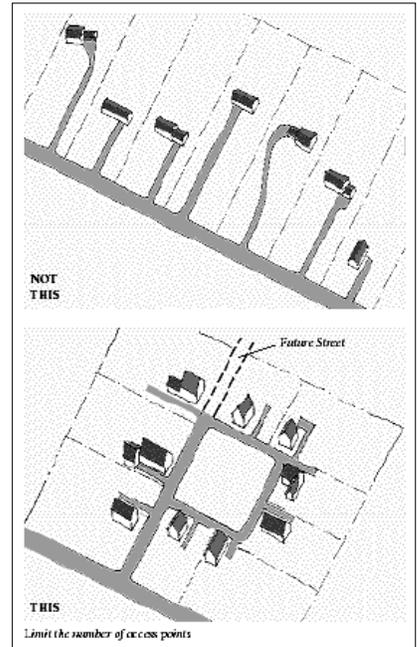
### **OUTDOOR ADVERTISING (BILLBOARDS)**

STH 22 and STH 32 offer opportunities for billboard advertising. To preserve and enhance the scenic character of the Town of Oconto Falls, the Town would like to prohibit billboard signs. Billboards distract from the rural scenic quality of this local highway route. The Town believes that preservation of natural beauty, including open views of woodlands, wetlands and farmlands from roadways, is important to protect the quality of life and rural community identity. Billboard signs are regulated by the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance. For more information refer to the Existing Land Use Chapter. The Town will develop its own sign ordinance.

**MANAGED ROADWAY ACCESS**

Managing roadway access points help to promote safe and efficient travel and minimize disruptive and potentially hazardous traffic conflicts. Managed roadway access involves minimizing the number of driveways along a roadway and establishing standards for driveway spacing. Rather than promoting driveway after driveway along rural roadways and highways, shared driveways are encouraged (See diagram). This approach has the added benefit of limiting impervious surface and its associated impacts on groundwater quality. Likewise, driveway spacing is determined based on the posted speed limit, not property lines (See table).

Posted Speed Limit (MPH)	Minimum Driveway Spacing (in Feet)
25	90 - 125
30	155
35	185
40	225
45+	300



Source: E. Humstone & J. Campoli, *Access Management: A Guide for Roadway Corridors*, Planning Commissioners Journal, Winter 1998.

The Oconto County Planning Department and WisDOT regulate current standards for roadway access. Coordination with these agencies is important to ensure that rural character is preserved. WisDOT has identified STH 22 and STH 32 as limited access roadways. Accordingly, the DOT will seek to limit the number of driveway access points provided along these roadways. The reason for this is because the more access points given, the greater potential for vehicle conflicts, and the less effective a roadway will be to move traffic.

A strategy to accommodate development requests under this restricted access limitation is to direct development toward intersections so driveways can be located on intersecting roads rather than the state highways. The Transportation Element of this plan includes an objective to work with WisDOT and Oconto County to develop a Town Road Access Ordinance. The Town also has the ability to adopt a local driveway ordinance.

**SPOT DEVELOPMENT / PROPOSED RURAL DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY**

Areas shown on the plan as natural areas and agricultural areas face residential development pressure. The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance permits residential development in areas zoned Agricultural - provided a minimum lot size of 10 acres is provided. This requirement quickly consumes valuable farmland and natural areas and results in sprawling development patterns.

**WHAT IS AN OVERLAY ZONE?**

Special additional zoning requirements that apply to identified areas in addition to the regular zoning requirements. Examples of overlay zones include shoreland/wetland overlay zones and airport high restriction overlay zones.

A desirable strategy to address the issue of spot development is to coordinate with Oconto County to approve a special “*rural overlay zone*” in the Town of Oconto Falls. An “*overlay zone*” could include special zoning requirements that would only be in effect in the Town of Oconto Falls. If desired by the Oconto County Zoning Office, the proposed “*rural overlay zone*” could be expanded to the entire county as a general zoning change. The intent of the “*rural overlay zone*” is to address the particular land use development concerns facing the Town of Oconto Falls through the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance.

If the *overlay zone* approach were unsuccessful, the Town could develop its own *Town Design Review Ordinance*. It could regulate all those things listed on the next page, except for decreasing the minimum lot size, as that change would be less restrictive than the current county ordinance.

The proposed “*overlay zone*” could:

- Only apply to new residential uses in areas zoned Agricultural under the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance, areas shown as agricultural or natural areas on the *Town of Oconto Falls Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map*.
- Prohibit residential development on 10-acre parcels or larger as a use by right.
- Only permit new residential development by conditional use permit.
- Establish a maximum lot size of 2 acres for residential development to prevent situations where lots are created that unnecessarily usurp prime farmland. This would represent a reduction of current county requirements and could only be approved if the county revised its zoning ordinance or approved this zoning overlay.
- Direct new dwellings to parcels that are undesirable for farming due to soil conditions, location or irregular lot size.
- Direct new development to the edges of existing farm fields and forested areas.
- Roads should be constructed to follow existing contours.
- Disturbance for the construction of roads, basins and other improvements should be kept at a minimum.
- Limit the total number of potential rural lot divisions per property. This would require a record keeping system to keep track of the total number of splits permitted and recorded per parcel. This strategy has been used successfully in Jefferson County.

The Town will explore the benefits of an overlay zone for the purpose of maintaining the rural character of the Town.

## **ZONING TO PROTECT AGRICULTURE**

The Oconto County Zoning Ordinance includes a “Large Scale Agricultural” district. Unlike the “Agricultural” zone with a 10-acre minimum lot size, the “Large Scale Agricultural” zone has a 35-acre minimum lot size. An opportunity exists to coordinate with landowners, and the County, to initiate a comprehensive rezoning throughout the Town from “Agricultural” to “Large Scale Agricultural” to more effectively protect agricultural uses and prevent small lot residential development from lining roadways, creating a conflict with adjacent farming uses (e.g. complaints of noise, smells, etc.), adversely impacting rural character.

The Town can also encourage Conservation –Based Subdivisions using the County’s Conservation Design Residential Zoning District (CDR).

## **OUTDOOR LIGHTING**

Increasingly, light pollution caused by excessive exterior lighting is become a source of concern. The Town of Oconto Falls can address the problem by educating residents and others about more efficient exterior lighting practices (e.g. sensor lighting, pointing lighting sources down vs. up, providing shields to direct lighting to where it is needed). This education can be done through a web site and/or town newsletter. The Town can also adopt an ordinance to regulate the type, placement, and brightness of residential and commercial light fixtures. The Town of Koshkonong in Jefferson County has adopted an outdoor lighting ordinance to prevent glare, light trespass and sky glow that the Town of Oconto Falls may want to review as a resource. Additional standards can be found from the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America ([www.iesna.org](http://www.iesna.org)) and the International Dark-Sky Association has additional information on this topic ([www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org))

**DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

To help the Plan Commission review development proposals in a consistent manner, the following checklist is provided as a tool.

YES	NO	
		<u>APPLICATION:</u>
___	___	Legal description & parcel number
___	___	Acreage
___	___	Zoning – Verify requirements have been met (i.e. minimum lot size)
___	___	Zoning district of all adjacent properties listed on application/map
___	___	Current land use of property and adjacent properties
___	___	Plat Date, Company, and Seal of Professional
___	___	Compliance with Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan
___	___	Zoning requested, if any, noted
		<u>EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS:</u>
___	___	Identification of existing stands of trees to be preserved and removed
___	___	Topography, soils data and location of natural features of the site
___	___	Existing Utilities, roads and driveways
___	___	Existing Buildings, with notation for any structures to be demolished and access to be removed
		<u>PLAT/SUBDIVISION DRAWING:</u>
___	___	North arrow and scale drawn
___	___	Scale not more than 1" = 200 feet
___	___	Location map provided at a scale not less than 1" = 2,000 feet
___	___	Number of Phases
___	___	Lot numbers, in consecutive sequence, by phase shown
___	___	Outlots are lettered alphabetically
___	___	Road names and ROW widths shown
___	___	Location of proposed utilities
___	___	Topography drawn at contours of at least (2) feet in elevation
		<u>PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION:</u>
___	___	Lot area, in acres and square feet, for each lot in any subdivision, excluding rights of ways shown
___	___	Location and outline of all existing development on the property – driveways, drives, parking areas, wells, septic tanks, drain fields, utilities, poles and ditches
___	___	All proposed development (including new subdivision lots) comply with zoning, width and setback requirements
___	___	Side lot lines in subdivisions perpendicular to straight streets & radial to curves
___	___	No double frontage lots (excluding corner lots) except where necessary to provide separation from major thoroughfares
___	___	Each lot and outlot has access to a street
		<u>SENSITIVITY TO SITE'S NATURAL FEATURES:</u>
___	___	Massive road grading along steep slope areas is avoided
___	___	Lot lines drawn through flood hazard areas, leaving little build able area
___	___	Lot lines drawn through tree stands - no attempt to preserve trees

- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Floodplain status determined
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Soil type and review and limitations identified
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Wetland boundaries

ROAD DESIGN:

- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Trail development opportunities considered
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Subdivision streets will not reduce efficiency on connecting Town & County Roads
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Subdivision streets designed to discourage excessive speeds (i.e. varying widths & curves provided)
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Pedestrian (i.e. trail) & vehicular conflict points minimized
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Minimize amount of space devoted to streets (length & width) to minimize runoff
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Effort made to limit the number of driveways/roadway access points with Town, County, and State Roads
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Provide a clear vision triangle at intersections of at least 25 feet in all directions
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Subdivision street intersections with Town & County roads are as close to 90 degrees as possible
- \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Proposed Road Names shown (if applicable)

## How Was the Future Land Use Map Developed?

The *Future Land Use Map* was developed using a very specific process:

1. Natural resource areas were identified to understand development limitations.
2. Future population and household projections were examined to understand the extent of future residential development needed in the Town.
3. Utility and community facility capacities were reviewed to ensure new development would be adequately serviced.
4. Existing development plans were incorporated into the plan map.
5. Planned and anticipated road and trail network changes were incorporated into the plan map.
6. The results of the community survey and public meeting activities were reviewed to emphasize resident desires and expectations.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

The Town should develop a comprehensive plan, with strong public involvement, to serve as a guide for managing future growth and change.

Strongly Agree – 38%

Agree – 42%

Neutral – 11%

Disagree - 7%

Strongly Disagree – 2%

The result of this process is the detailed *Future Land Use Map* presented at the end of this chapter.

## How Is the Future Land Use Map Used?

The *Future Land Use Map* is a planning tool for the Town of Oconto Falls. In accordance with the **Smart Growth Law**, it should be used to guide the following actions:

- ✓ Official Mapping
- ✓ Local Subdivision Regulation
- ✓ Zoning

**Town appointed and elected officials** should use the plan map as a *guide* for making future land use decisions.

**Developers and residents** should understand the plan map is intended to direct development to certain areas where facilities and services are available.

It is important to remember that a **plan is not a static document**. It must evolve to reflect current conditions. If not regularly **reviewed and amended**, it will become ineffective.

Applications for rezoning and development that are inconsistent with the plan and plan map must still be considered. In some situations, it may be desirable to amend the plan (and map) to accommodate a compatible, but previously unplanned use. Likewise, a change in county or regional policy, technological changes, or environmental changes may also impact the plan.

Any change to the plan (including the plan map) must be considered in the context of all nine required plan elements, including the visions, goals and policies expressed in this document. If an amendment is to be approved, the process must include a formal public hearing and distribution per the requirements of the Wisconsin Smart Growth Law. Any amendment must be recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by the Town Board **before** development is permitted.

## Future Land Use

Provided at the conclusion of this chapter is the **20-Year Future Land Use Map** for the Town of Oconto Falls. This map illustrates the anticipated amount, location, and intensity of new development. Accordingly, the *20-Year Future Land Use Map* is the Town's guide for land use and development decisions.

The *Future Land Use Map* designates specific areas for residential development and environmental corridors (see definition below). Commercial and industrial development is not expected to increase in the Town beyond what is shown on the *Existing Land Use Map*. If a proposal were to be received, the *Future Land Use Map* would be updated accordingly. All future development must adhere to the requirements stipulated in the *Oconto County Zoning Ordinance* and any applicable local zoning code.

What follows is a description of the *Future Land Use Map*:

**PRIME RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

Based on soil conditions, these areas have the greatest potential for accommodating residential development. Soils in these areas can accommodate dwellings and on-site sanitary systems. Ideally, these areas would develop as

conservation-based subdivisions in order to preserve farmland, protect woodlands and wetlands, and retain the rural character of the community. Trail access is also encouraged in these areas.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

43% of residents support the Town allowing smaller lots surrounding the City of Oconto Falls, but larger lots elsewhere in the Town.

**FARMLAND/LIMITED RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

To the greatest extent feasible, it is recommended that these areas remain agricultural. To that end, the Town is encouraged to pursue rezoning much of this area to Large Scale Agricultural. However, if other development is desired, limited rural residential development using a CSM to split a few lots (up to 4) would be considered permissible. A 2-acre lot size is recommended for land divisions, with a maximum lot size of 5 acres so as not to consume too much farmland. It is also recommended that the density of development not exceed 1 home / 35 acres to ensure that the area remains primarily a farming area. CSM development is encouraged to use managed roadway access techniques to maintain views of farm fields and natural areas along roadways. These recommendations could be formally imposed through an overlay zone or enforcement of the Large Scale Agricultural Zoning District.

**FUTURE TRAILS / BIKE LANES**

An on-road bike trail (e.g. paved shoulders and signage, including trail crossing signs on STH 22) is shown along CTH K, CTH CC, and CTH C. The potential also exists for an off-road trail along portions of the Oconto River. To establish an effective trail network, intergovernmental coordination with neighboring Towns is needed to extend the proposed trails to provide routes that go to destination points beyond the Town (e.g. Oconto Falls, Gillett, etc.)

**LIMITED ACCESS CORRIDOR**

STH 22 and STH 32 have been designated as a limited access corridor by the WDOT. As a result, development along these corridors should utilize side streets and crossroads for access as opposed to providing additional driveways directly onto the state highway.

**POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Future commercial development is limited to areas adjacent to STH 22. Recognizing the access limitations imposed along this corridor and the need to prevent sprawling development patterns that can impact the Town’s rural character, specific locations for future commercial development are identified within a quarter mile radius of: STH 32, the City of Oconto Falls western boundary and CTH K.

### **POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

An area for a mix of commercial and industrial development uses is planned adjacent to existing similar developments on the northeast side of the City of Oconto Falls along Chestnut Road. A more focused industrial development area is shown adjacent to REA Lane.

### **ALTERNATIVE HOUSING**

This area has the potential to accommodate duplex or senior housing development. This area is immediately adjacent to the City of Oconto Falls and has the potential to be served with municipal water and sewer service.

### **POTENTIAL TOWN PARKS & RIVER ACCESS POINTS**

The Utilities and Community Facilities Element identifies a need for additional parks. Accordingly, several sites are shown on the *Future Land Use Map*. Specifically, the land adjacent to the Town Hall is shown as a potential park site. This land could be used for passive recreation and open field activities. Two additional possible park sites are shown along the Oconto River in conjunction with possible additional river access points. Parks at these locations could offer picnic tables, a boat launch and possibly some playground equipment or a pavilion.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS**

A 300' corridor is shown adjacent to all water features in the Town (e.g. streams, rivers, lakes). Most of these areas have soils that are not suited for development. Accordingly, development is discouraged within these environmental corridors to protect the quality of the water resource and to maintain a corridor wide enough to meet the needs of wildlife.

### **WETLANDS**

These same wetland areas are shown on the *Natural Features Map* provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element of this plan.

### **OTHER AREAS**

Other areas are shown in gray. These properties are not expected to experience a change in use over the 20-year planning period. If a change is desired, the Planning Commission would need to review the request in the context of nearby planned uses, natural features limitations, transportation access, and proximity to the City and then modify the *Future Land Use Map* accordingly.

Table 20 provides a detailed breakdown of projected future development, in five-year increments, in the Town of Oconto Falls.

### **To implement this plan, the Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission will:**

- ✓ Direct development to areas identified on the *Future Land Use Map*
- ✓ Minimize residential development lining rural road frontages by encouraging managed roadway access techniques and cluster subdivisions.

As with any long-term planning document, as proposals are presented, amendments may be necessary to reflect market forces that shift land use patterns.

<b>TABLE 20 20-YEAR PROJECTIONS FOR FUTURE LAND USE ACREAGE</b>					
<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>2005 (acres)</b>	<b>2010 (acres)</b>	<b>2015 (acres)</b>	<b>2020 (acres)</b>	<b>2025 (acres)</b>
Single Family Residential (includes subdivisions & rural residential)*	1,776	1,853	1,929	2,006	2,088
Commercial	23	23	23	23	23
Industrial	18	18	18	18	18
Transportation Features	640	663	670	680	696
Parks	0	5	10	10	15
Water Features	50	50	50	50	50
Agricultural/Forest**	15,501	15,358	15,195	15,083	14,950
Environmental Corridors***	3,630	3,630	3,630	3,630	3,630
<b>Total****</b>	<b>21,638</b>	<b>21,600</b>	<b>21,525</b>	<b>21,500</b>	<b>21,470</b>

\* 85% of future residential calculated as rural residential at 4.55-acre density (based on existing land use pattern) and 15% of future residential as subdivision development at 1-acre density. Based on projected increase of 97 additional households.

\*\* Includes quarry operations

\*\*\* Includes some existing forested areas

\*\*\*\* Reduction reflects anticipated impact of annexations by City of Oconto Falls (168 acres over 20+ years)

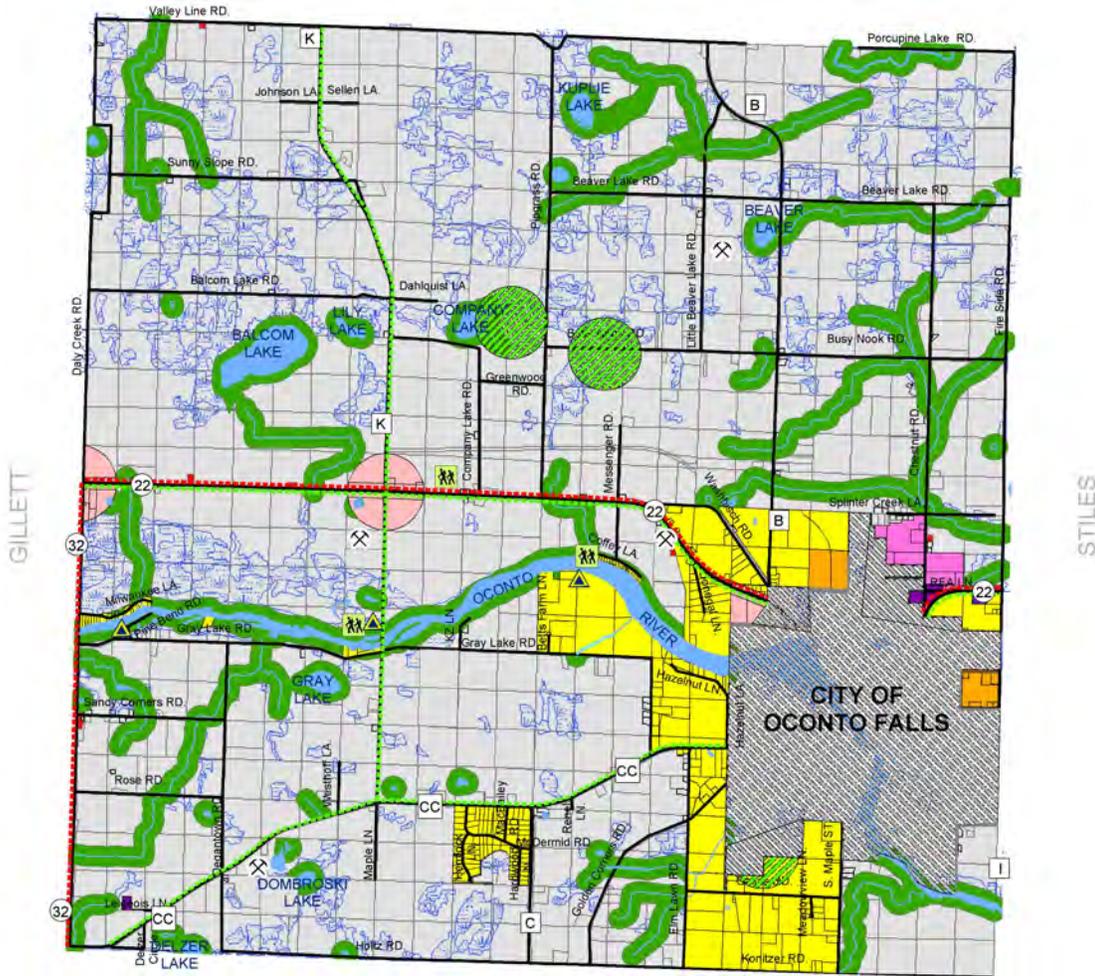
## Goals, Objectives and Policies

The Town of Oconto Falls anticipates that it will grow over the next 20 years. To ensure that this development will not destroy the rural character of the area, negatively impact the natural environment, or create undue congestion on roads, the Town of Oconto Falls, will pursue the goals, objectives and policies outlined in the Implementation Element Chapter.

# FUTURE LAND USE

## TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS

SPRUCE



MORGAN

### Legend

- FUTURE SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING
- POTENTIAL FUTURE ALTERNATIVE HOUSING
- EXISTING COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
- POTENTIAL FUTURE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
- EXISTING INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
- POTENTIAL FUTURE COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL
- FARMLAND / LIMITED RESIDENTIAL / FORESTED
- POTENTIAL FUTURE TRAILS/BIKE LANES
- POTENTIAL TOWN PARK SITES
- LIMITED ACCESS CORRIDOR
- POTENTIAL OCONTO RIVER ACCESS POINT
- 300' ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR
- 1,200' LANDFILL BUFFER
- WETLANDS
- ROADS
- RIVERS/STREAMS/LAKES
- QUARRY



**OMNI**  
ASSOCIATES

1845 NORTH OAK STREET, SUITE 200  
STRAZBURG, MISSOURI 65758

PROJECT #M10BARG2  
DATE: 4/21/14  
DRAWN BY: KAL  
REVISED: 02/10/15

LOCATION: F:\02\10\10BARG2\DRAWING\SLINE\_104\_11x17.mxd  
SOURCE: OCONTO COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



1" = 3500'

# 11.0 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

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## 11.0

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION



### Introduction

Intergovernmental cooperation involves working with neighboring communities and agencies to understand how their future planning activities will impact the Town of Oconto Falls. At a minimum, this involves sharing information about the Town's plan with neighboring communities and agencies and vice versa. However, the Town believes intergovernmental cooperation should not end with the sharing of plans. Instead, this process should be the beginning for joint planning and decision-making, conflict resolution, and other strategies to promote regional coordination.

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the Town of Oconto Falls coordinate with:

- Towns of Gillett, Spruce, Morgan and Stiles
- Oconto County
- Oconto Falls and Gillett School Districts
- City of Oconto Falls
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Bay Lake Regional Plan Commission

**To learn more about the intergovernmental activities, also see these chapters...**

- √ Information related **county zoning** is provided in the Existing Land Use Chapter.
- √ Information about **overlay zones** is provided in the Future Land Use Chapter.
- √ Information about the **school districts, county sheriff's department, fire protection**, and more is provided in the Utilities and Community facilities Element Chapter.

### Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision

**The Town of Oconto Falls works cooperatively, through shared service agreements, with the City of Oconto Falls and Oconto County to provide Town residents with cost-efficient services including police, fire/rescue and quality roads. The Town continues to pursue opportunities to provide coordinated, cost-effective services with neighboring communities and the County. The Town, City and County work cooperatively on issues such as zoning, annexation and development. The Gillett and Oconto Falls School Districts coordinate with the Town on issues of mutual importance.**

## Existing Intergovernmental Activities and Partners

Many intergovernmental programs already in effect impact the Town of Oconto Falls. This section highlights programs that are currently in place.

### ADJACENT/NEARBY GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

- City of Oconto Falls
- Town of Gillett
- Town of Morgan
- Town of Spruce
- Town of Stiles

The Town of Oconto Falls nearly surrounds the City of Oconto Falls. As such, the Town has the most direct interaction with the City. The City and Town of Oconto Falls coordinate with one another to provide fire protection and emergency medical service through the Oconto Falls Fire Department and the Oconto Falls Area Ambulance Service.

From time to time the City of Oconto Falls annexes property from the Town of Oconto Falls to accommodate development requests that require municipal water and sewer. This situation sometimes strains the relationship between the Town and City. However, the Town supports higher density development in the City because:

- It helps to direct development away from the Town, which ultimately helps the Town to protect its natural resources, farming traditions and rural residential areas by directing development elsewhere.
- It supports the economic vitality of the City which in turn benefits Town residents who work, shop, or use facilities in the City (schools, library, parks, etc.).

The Town of Oconto Falls relationship with its neighboring Towns can be characterized as one of mutual respect and compatibility from a land use and political standpoint. Towns around the Town of Oconto Falls share a common rural character, a strong farming tradition and abundant natural areas. Towns cannot annex land from one another. Therefore, the borders between the Town of Oconto Falls and the adjacent Towns are fixed and boundary disputes are non-existent. Each Town is responsible for its own public services (i.e. road maintenance and construction, garbage collection, etc.). However, as mutually beneficial opportunities for shared services arise, the Town of Oconto Falls will consider these options.

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town's relationship with the Oconto Falls and Gillett School Districts can be characterized as limited, but cooperative. There are no school buildings in the Town. The Town is also not responsible for a significant portion of the overall enrollment in either district. Moreover, neither district has plans to construct facilities in the Town of Oconto Falls.

The Town of Oconto Falls appreciates the quality service provided by the school districts.

## **OCONTO COUNTY**

The Town of Oconto Falls is located in Oconto County. Oconto County provides many programs, services, and facilities (e.g., parks) that are available to Town residents. Oconto County programs that most directly impact Town include:

- Highway maintenance and improvement programs;
- Zoning, on-site sanitary system permitting, and land division ordinance regulation and enforcement;
- Library funding support (to help cover the costs of county residents who use the library);
- Educational and assistance programs provided by the UW-Extension; and
- Social services.

The relationship between the Town of Oconto Falls and Oconto County can be characterized as slightly strained, due to the fact that communication is not always clear and effective. Because of confusion about who is accountable for which decisions, there is a perception that the Town has sometimes been bypassed in decision making. However, the Town is optimistic about devising plans that will allow the County to be more responsive to the needs of the Town. Improved communication will lead to better oversight of planning and zoning issues in the future. Communication will also be especially important as it relates to:

- Zoning and land division ordinance enforcement
- Storm water management (impervious surfaces, etc.)
- The Oconto County Comprehensive Plan
- Public safety

## **BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLAN COMMISSION**

The Town of Oconto Falls, is part of the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC). Historically, the Town of Oconto Falls has little interaction with the BLRPC. During the development of this plan, the BLRPC provided mapping information and completed reviews of several draft chapters. The BLRPC was also provided with the opportunity to review and comment on the recommended plan.

## **STATE AGENCIES**

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)
- Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary state agencies with whom the Town of Oconto Falls must coordinate to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.

WDNR takes a lead role in wildlife protection and the sustainable management of woodlands, stormwater regulations, wetlands and other natural wildlife habitat areas.

WisDOT is a key player in the planning and development of highways and pedestrian/cycling facilities in the Town and region. The Town of Oconto Falls has a cooperative relationship with WisDOT and seeks to provide input into transportation decisions that may impact the Town.

The mission of the DATCP is to serve the citizens of Wisconsin by assuring:

- The safety and quality of food
- Fair business practices for the buyer and seller
- Efficient use of agricultural resources in a quality environment
- Consumer protection
- Healthy animals and plants
- The vitality of Wisconsin agriculture and commerce

Given the importance of farming in the Town of Oconto Falls, DATCP plays an important role in the Town. DATCP policies, programs and directives impact local farm operations. Accordingly, the Town will seek to provide feedback to DATCP, as necessary, to express the impacts of DATCP policies, programs and directives on the Town of Oconto Falls.

## Intergovernmental Planning Process

To facilitate a planning environment open to intergovernmental cooperation, the Town of Oconto Falls sent adjacent municipalities, the WDNR, WDOT, the school districts and Oconto County a letter at the on-set of the planning program. The purpose of this letter was to:

- Notify all involved of the Town's planning effort at an early point in the program so intergovernmental cooperation opportunities could be an integral part of the plan.
- Learn about existing plans developed by these agencies and communities that may impact the Town of Oconto Falls.

On an element-by-element basis, the Town (through its consultant) also contacted Oconto County officials, local school district representatives, neighboring communities, and state agencies to complete inventories of available services, facilities and programs. For example, during the development of the *Transportation Element*, WisDOT was contacted to obtain information available related to transportation facilities and programs in the Town of Oconto Falls. Likewise, WisDOT was provided a preliminary copy of the *Transportation Element* to review and comment upon. This same courtesy was extended to the WDNR during development of the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element*. Similarly, the

The activities of the WDNR are discussed further in the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element* of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at: [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us).

For additional information about WisDOT activities in the Town of Oconto Falls, refer to the *Transportation Element* of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at: [www.dot.state.wi.us](http://www.dot.state.wi.us)

school district was an important resource during development of the *Utilities and Community Facilities Element*.

The Town has also attended neighboring township meetings.

On December 14, 2004 the Town hosted an intergovernmental meeting. Prior to this event, representatives from neighboring communities, Oconto County, the DOT, DNR, and local school districts were mailed invitations to attend. During the meeting, a summary of the town's planning program was presented and the Draft *Future Land Use Map* was discussed. All participants had the opportunity to comment on this chapter and the *Future Land Use Map*.

More than 30 days prior to the public hearing, all intergovernmental agencies/communities were provided a copy of this plan and asked to provide comments. Comments received were addressed at the Public Hearing and in the Final Adopted Plan.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs**

The Town of Oconto Falls does not have a formal cooperative agreement or boundary agreement (see box on next page) with any of its adjoining municipalities. All intergovernmental coordination activities have been voluntary arrangements between the Town and its neighbors for practical purposes (i.e. recycling/fire protection).

As growth and change continues in the area, land use will remain a controversial topic. The Town of Oconto Falls has the opportunity, under State Statutes 66.023 and 66.30, to pursue a boundary agreement with the City of Oconto Falls. If a boundary agreement were completed, the City and Town could work together to make rational decisions about where growth will occur, including the setting or changing of boundaries, and how public services (including sewer) could be provided.

## **Existing and Proposed Plans**

### **ADJACENT/NEARBY GOVERNMENTAL UNITS**

The adjacent communities of Green Valley, Morgan and Gillett have adopted Smart Growth Comprehensive Plans. The Town of Oconto Falls welcomes the opportunity to participate in the planning efforts of its neighboring communities.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

The school districts have a long history of planning for improvements and expansion in response to area growth rates. District officials do not anticipate, given growth projections, that a school facility will be constructed in the Town of Oconto Falls. Additional information about school district facilities is provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter.

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## What is a Boundary Agreement?

### What is it?

Such an agreement is a formal contract between municipalities and/or towns to set ultimate boundaries and other provisions related to shared municipal services. It is different from traditional intergovernmental cooperation agreements using s. 66.0301, Stats., and municipal boundaries fixed by judgment - stipulations and orders, s.66.0225, Stats. This relatively new tool (1992) is a legal, binding plan and agreement for maintaining or changing the natural and developed uses of a combination of town, village and city territory for a period of 10 or more years. About 9 cooperative boundary agreements under the new statute have been approved in Wisconsin thus far.

### How long can an Agreement last?

An Agreement under 66.0307 can last up to 20 years. In some cases, parties to an Agreement have included language stipulating that the Agreement will last forever. The important point is that new town, city or village administrations cannot unilaterally dissolve or amend an Agreement without the consent of all the government units involved.

### How is the state involved?

Besides providing technical support, and mediation services in special cases, the Department of Administration reviews and approves the Agreement before it can take effect.

### How are annexations affected after an Agreement is approved?

Once an Agreement is approved, annexations initiated by individual property owners are no longer possible. Annexations (then more properly called attachments) occur only as specified in the Agreement.

### Are residents "forced" into attaching to a city or village if the approved Agreement specifies so?

Basically yes. Keep in mind, however, that no Agreement can be approved without town and city/village approval and the required public hearings. In many cases, attachments are phased in over a period of several years to give residents ample lead time. Frequently, properties with failing septic systems or wells are earmarked for the initial phases.

### Can utilities, road maintenance, easements, and revenue sharing be parts of an Agreement?

Absolutely.

### Does the state "Smart Growth" law require cooperative boundary agreements?

No. It merely requires intergovernmental cooperation to be addressed in a comprehensive plan. There are no specifics about how such cooperation takes place.

### What type of content does an Agreement contain?

Current land use; agreement duration; proposed boundary changes; conditions that may trigger future boundary changes; a physical plan for the agreed upon area, including public improvements; proof of consistency with existing plans and ordinances; environmental, economic, and social impact analysis; plan for providing public services to area; summary of public comments.

### What are the advantages to working out an Agreement?

- Avoid lengthy, bitter, costly, time-consuming lawsuits. Towns can tie up cities and villages for a long time in boundary disputes.
- Avoid potential loss of discretionary state aids.
- Cooperation and shared services can save taxpayers money.
- Developers and businesses have a stable, peaceful political climate.
- Stable borders and specific timetables allow for easier planning.
- Cities and villages can grow without opposition.
- Residents know what the future will hold.
- Allows communities to decide boundary issues and related development matters, rather than be put in the position of reacting to often unpredictable private proposals.

### State contact information:

George Hall (608-266-0683), Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, Municipal Boundary Review, 101 East Wilson Street  
Madison, WI 53702

Sources: "Boundary Agreements and Cooperative Plans" by Atty William White; "County & Local Government Land Use Planning & Regulation" by James Schneider, J.D; "Process and Statutory Elements of Cooperative Boundary Agreements" by George Hall, Municipal Boundary Review - WDOA Compiled by Kevin Struck, Growth Management Educator, Sheboygan & Washington Counties.

## **OCONTO COUNTY**

Oconto County will soon be initiating a comprehensive planning process. As a local unit of government, the Town of Oconto Falls will participate in any county planning effort to provide information about this plan, including local goals, objectives, policies and visions for the future.

There are many other plan documents that the County has prepared that were reviewed in order to develop this plan. Information from these documents is profiled in the corresponding element chapter of this plan. For example, pertinent recommendations from the *Oconto County Land and Water Conservation Plan* are highlighted in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element Chapter.

## **BAY LAKE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (BLRPC)**

The BLRPC provides an advisory planning role to local governments and local government officials. Local planning activities include but are not limited to, comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, grant writing and administration, GIS mapping and outdoor recreation plans. The BLRPC is in the initial phases of a regional planning effort. The Town of Oconto Falls will seek to participate in the regional planning effort as opportunities arise.

## **STATE AGENCIES**

The WDNR and WisDOT support local planning by providing information.

The WDNR maintains property management plans for the lands it owns. It also provides permit requirements, plans and information for the state's water resources (including the Oconto River), non-metallic mining operations, wellhead protection, floodplain and shoreland management, threatened and endangered species, and woodlands protection.

In recent years, WisDOT has completed a series of statewide planning documents for use in the development of local comprehensive plans. These documents include plans for the state highway corridors, bicycle corridors, rail corridors, and air transportation. These plans were used as an important reference when preparing the Transportation Element of this plan. Furthermore, WisDOT's 6-Year Capital Improvement Plan was used for identifying immediate projects in the Town of Oconto Falls and surrounding areas.

## **Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements**

Intergovernmental cooperation has the potential to significantly impact the Town of Oconto Falls and its comprehensive planning efforts. Successful intergovernmental cooperation efforts have the potential to impact every element of this plan.

- Successful coordination with WisDOT will ensure that the state highway corridors function well over the long-term. A particular focus for cooperation will be with respect to coordinating intersection and driveway approvals and signage along STH 22 and STH 32.
- Cooperation with the WDNR can help the Town to better protect its natural areas, including the Oconto River and woodlands. The WDNR can provide landowners with incentives, including grants to protect these resources. The WDNR may also be an important partner in the development of a Town Park.
- Coordination with the City of Oconto Falls will allow both communities to better address housing development pressures, as well as, service and facility availability. Ideally, this coordination will help the Town to direct housing and other development to areas where services and facilities are available (in or adjacent to the City). This approach will help the Town to protect its farmers and rural character by preventing sprawling development patterns that can jeopardize farming operations and threaten natural resources.
- Cooperating with neighboring communities and the school districts may also help the region realize economic development goals, including job growth, and reduce Town service, operating, and equipment costs.

## **Intergovernmental Goals, Objectives and Policies**

The goals, objectives and policies provided in the Implementation Chapter generally seek to enhance the lines of communication between area governments. This approach will help to create an environment where cooperation is possible and conflicts are minimized.

## **12.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

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## Introduction

The Implementation Element is the “how to” portion of the plan. It prescribes those actions necessary to realize the visions, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, sign regulations, site plan regulations, design review ordinances and subdivision ordinances.

This chapter includes all of the goals, objectives and policies highlighted in previous chapters of the plan. In this way, this chapter serves as the master “to do” list for implementing the plan.

## Relationship Between Elements

Throughout the plan, coordination between the nine required elements has been highlighted as a special section of each element chapter. In several instances, a single objective and theme applies to more than one element of the plan and was reprinted in several chapters.

## Measuring Progress

To track planning progress and help to ensure that the plan is implemented, milestone dates (see definition in box) are provided for each objective. Special attention has been given to the milestone dates to ensure that individual objectives act in harmony with other stated goals and objectives. The Planning Commission has reviewed the milestone dates to ensure that they are feasible expectations for the Town.

### Milestone Date

A specific date, after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, when the Town will review the plan implementation action to see if the objective has been met and consider additional implementation strategies to achieve the stated goal.

To ensure that the plan elements are understood in their totality over the life of the plan, the Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will annually review the goals and objectives. Part of this effort, will also include addressing conflicts which may arise between the nine elements.

## Responsibilities

Implementation of the Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan will be the primary responsibility of the Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will make recommendations pertaining to development issues, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, for the Town Board and County to consider when making final decisions.

## Updating the Comprehensive Plan

As is stipulated in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, a comprehensive plan must be updated at least once every 10 years. However, in order to ensure that the Town's plan is an effective management tool, the Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will review the plan goals and objectives annually to track those activities that have been completed and add additional objectives as needed to accomplish the stated goals.

The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will initiate its first update of this plan by 2013. At that time, information from the 2010 census will be available to update several tables. This update will also involve a comprehensive review of the inventory information presented in each chapter. Furthermore, the Town will coordinate with all partners identified in the Intergovernmental Element Chapter to understand any external changes that may impact the plan. Finally, the Planning Commission will complete a comprehensive review of all visions/policies, goals, objectives and programs outlined in this plan to evaluate progress and consider additional opportunities.

## Special Implementation Considerations

Over the course of the planning effort, some specific implementation considerations were raised. To adequately address these topics, information is provided in this section.

### **PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR)**

One of the most serious land use problems facing Wisconsin today is the accelerating rate at which prime farmland is being sold, subdivided and developed for non-agricultural use. Evidence of rural land conversion can be seen virtually everywhere, including the Town of Oconto Falls.

One way of protecting farmland is purchasing of development rights (PDR). PDR is a voluntary program, where a land trust or some other agency usually linked to local government, makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer, or to try to negotiate a higher price.

When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farmer receives payment equal to the difference between the fair market value of the land a developer would pay if it could be developed and the price the land would command for agricultural use. In return for this payment, a conservation easement is recorded on the deed to the property. This easement stays with the land so it is binding not only on the current owner, but future owners of the property as well.

When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farm remains in private ownership. The private landowner still retains the right to occupy and make economic use of the land for agricultural purposes. The landowner gives up the right to develop the property for some other use in the future. Farmers are not compelled to sell their development rights. Participation in PDR programs is entirely voluntary.

### **Advantages and Disadvantage of PDR**

Restrictions on land use, including zoning, have been used to protect agriculture for many years. One of the main benefits of PDR, is that it is completely voluntary. Under PDR, the landowner is not deprived of any of the value of the property. This is very important because many farmers rely on their property in order to fund their retirement. Simply depriving them of the opportunity to realize the full economic value of their property has important ethical, socioeconomic, and perhaps legal ramifications. Moreover, zoning regulations may be easily changed in the future.

The main advantage of PDR over other approaches to farmland preservation is that it offers a permanent, long-lasting solution. PDR virtually assures that land will remain forever in agriculture because it extinguishes the right to develop agricultural land for non-agricultural uses. Farmland preservation tax credits and use value assessment of agricultural land encourage farmers to keep their land in agricultural use somewhat longer than otherwise might be the case, but do not assure that land will remain in agricultural use.

Another major advantage of PDR is that it is perceived as an equitable, fair, and voluntary way to preserve agricultural land. A third advantage is that it provides a way to correct a major shortcoming of the current Farmland Preservation Program by targeting limited financial resources to preserve and protect agricultural land most worthy of preservation.

Another benefit of PDR is that it makes it much easier for a farmer to pass their farm on to an heir interested in farming the land. Once the development rights have been separated from the land, the value of the parcel typically declines to its agricultural value. This generally has an enormous effect on reducing the inheritance tax liability. If taxed at the full development value, many parcels are simply taxed out of agriculture, because the heirs are not able to pay the taxes without selling the land.

The main disadvantage of PDR is cost. Development rights can be expensive to purchase, and so funding for PDR needs to be selectively targeted to preserve and protect agricultural land that is most worthy of preservation. As a result, not every farmer who wants to sell his or her development rights will be able to do so.

### **PDR in the Town of Oconto Falls**

The establishment of any PDR program would begin with the Town of Oconto Falls. The Town of Oconto Falls Agricultural Committee (to be established), jointly with the Planning Commission, should be responsible for the implementation of this program. Together, they would need to first raise the capital needed to purchase local development rights. This may mean asking residents to consider a tax increase specifically dedicated to this program, or perhaps seeking foundation or grant funds to initiate the program.

Once the pool of funds has been established, the Planning Commission and Agricultural Committee would review applications of landowners who wish to sell development rights. This process would require obtaining appraisals, prioritizing parcels, negotiating agreements, and ensuring that deed restrictions are enforced.

## **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)**

Like a PDR program, the landowner who voluntarily sells his or her development rights will not be able to develop their property. It will remain as agricultural land. However, unlike a PDR program, where the development rights are acquired by a body that has no intention of using them, in a TDR transaction the development rights are applied, or transferred, to another property in the Town.

A TDR program is premised on the idea that legally certain property rights can be separated from one property owner and transferred to another to achieve community development goals. In the case of the Town of Oconto Falls, the development rights would be transferred from rural areas of the Town to the sanitary district.

The two basic elements of TDR are “sending” and “receiving” areas. Sending areas are those parcels that are deemed less desirable to be developed. For example, areas that have been identified as primary farmland. As a result, these parcels send or transfer their development rights to properties in the receiving areas. The receiving areas are those parcels that are deemed more desirable to be developed, like the sanitary district. They “receive” transferred rights, therefore allowing development to occur at a density greater than would be normally allowed.

The primary challenge of a TDR program is administration. Successful programs require strong administration policies to keep track of development rights sold and transferred.

## Housing Agenda

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to permit smaller lots (i.e. 1 acre or less) immediately adjacent to the City of Oconto Falls and rural larger lot residential development elsewhere in the Town without sacrificing the rural character and economy, natural areas and farmland.. This policy is intended to accommodate growing demand for development in the Town without sacrificing natural areas and farmland.*

<b>HOUSING GOAL #1</b>		
<i>Maintain the environmental assets and rural character of the community so that it continues to be an attractive place to live.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>BLRPC Oconto County  Oconto County Land &amp; Water Conservation  Town Budget</b>	1. Using the information provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element, identify and map areas for <b>secondary conservation</b> in the Town of Oconto Falls. <i>Primary conservation areas</i> include wetlands, floodplains, areas with poor soil conditions and steep slope. Maps of these areas are provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element. <i>Secondary conservation areas</i> include scenic areas, farmlands, woodlands, and other features that the Town would <u>like to preserve</u> , but would otherwise be subject to development.	<b>2009</b>
<b>Town Budget  Potential Joint Endeavor with Neighboring Towns</b>	2. Encourage landowners who are interested in developing their land, as well as outside developers, to pursue conservation-based subdivision developments utilizing the Conservation Design Residential District (CDR) in the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance. Such subdivisions will encourage the preservation of natural areas, minimize the impact of urban sprawl, and protect farmland in the Town.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>NA</b>	3. Encourage “low impact” development within the Town that can help reduce storm water runoff and flooding.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	4. Develop a Town subdivision / land division ordinance.	<b>2006</b>

<b>HOUSING GOAL #2</b>		
<i>Preserve the quality of existing single-family housing and maintain housing values over time.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>a. Town Budget &amp; Volunteer Assistance  b. NA</b>	1. Educate residents about the importance of property maintenance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop articles for a Town Newsletter that highlight property maintenance techniques and benefits.</li> <li>b. Coordinate with area school districts, local churches and community service organizations to provide volunteer services on “Make A Difference Day” as well as a regular program to assist seniors and disabled residents in need of</li> </ul>	<b>a. Annually  b. Beginning in 2011</b>

	home maintenance services.	
<b>a. Town Budget &amp; Volunteer Assistance</b> <b>b. Town Budget</b> <b>c. NA</b>	2. Educate new residents moving into the area about what it means to live in the country. a. Develop “welcome” packet for prospective and new homebuyers in the area that discusses the Town’s rural character and farm practices. b. Provide information about available Town services and amenities on the Town’s web page. c. Have local realtors and area builders distribute this packet	<b>a. 2005</b> <b>b. 2007</b> <b>c. Beginning in 2007</b>

<b>HOUSING GOAL #3</b>		
<i>Provide a housing choice for residents in all stages of life (i.e. starter homes, family homes, senior housing, etc.).</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
NA	1. Support existing efforts (i.e. county and private) and consider new private development proposals that will provide additional elderly and disabled resident housing opportunities and services in the Town of Oconto Falls.	<b>Continuous</b>
NA	2. Establish specific conditions under which alternative housing developments will be approved. Adopt these conditions as a policy.	<b>2012</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	3. Survey seniors to understand the services that are needed locally.	<b>2013</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	4. Use a Town Newsletter, Web Page and Annual Meeting to educate elderly residents, who wish to remain in their own homes, about services available through the Oconto County Commission on Aging	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Oconto County</b> <b>Town Budget</b> <b>Potential Joint Venture with Neighboring Towns</b>	5. Coordinate with Oconto County to establish an overlay zoning district to permit small senior homes, subject to the approval of a special use permit. Establish specific conditions under which a senior housing development will be approved in the Town.	<b>2008</b>
<b>a. NA</b> <b>b. Town Budget</b>	6. Encourage quality affordable housing opportunities in the Town of Oconto Falls by: a. Supporting the efforts of private, non-profit organizations like community housing development organizations (CHDOs) to develop affordable housing units in the Town. b. Form a partnership with Oconto County to help with local enforcement of residential codes and ordinances to ensure properties are in good condition.	<b>a. Continuous</b> <b>b. 2009</b>

## Transportation Agenda

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to consider trail development opportunities when new subdivision developments are proposed, along the Oconto River, and as part of county and state transportation projects.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to maintain its rural roadways, to the fullest extent possible without jeopardizing resident safety.*

*It is the policy of the Town to maintain local roads in a timely manner.*

*It is the policy of the Town to award road construction and maintenance work to contractors based on qualifications, rather than only price considerations.*

TRANSPORTATION GOAL #1		
<i>To maintain and improve Town Roads in a timely and well planned manner</i>		
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE	SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
<b>Town Budget</b>	1. In accordance with state law, using PASER, continue to update road ratings in the Town of Oconto Falls, as required.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to coordinate and plan for annual roadway improvements and maintenance as well as and other capital improvements	<b>2005</b>
<b>NA</b>	3. Become an active partner in transportation improvements made in the Town by WisDOT and Oconto County. a. Coordinate with WisDOT and the Oconto County Highway Department with respect to improvements on STH 22, STH 32, CTH C, CTH CC, CTH K, and CTH B. b. Provide copies of this plan to WisDOT and Oconto County c. Coordinate with Oconto County during the development of the County Comprehensive Plan to ensure that Town interests are represented.	<b>a. Continuous</b> <b>b. 2004</b> <b>c. Through 2010</b>
<b>NA</b>	4. Closely monitor Town road construction and maintenance projects to ensure work is completed to the satisfaction of the Town	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	5. Evaluate road work completed by contractors and keep detailed records of the work, including ability to remain on schedule, cost overruns, quality concerns, and long-term durability of the work (this may require annual inspections for a period of time).	<b>Continuous</b>

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL #2</b>		
<i>To provide trail facilities in the Town.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>NA</b>	1. Coordinate with Oconto County so when improvements/reconstruction of county roads are scheduled, appropriate consideration is given to the development of bike lanes.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>OCONTO COUNTY BLRPC TOWN BUDGET</b>	2. Petition and coordinate with Oconto County to develop a County Bicycle / Trail Plan. a. Utilize the recommendations from WisDOT presented in this chapter. b. Solicit local resident input to delineate trail routes in the Town. c. Educate residents about trail projects and routes in the Town Newsletter and Web Page d. Communicate transportation plans with WisDOT and WDNR officials to identify potential funding sources e. Solicit funds from residents and areas businesses that are interested in sponsoring segments and amenities (i.e. benches/kiosks) along any trail route in the Town.	<b>Continuous</b>

<b>TRANSPORTATION GOAL #3</b>		
<i>To preserve the rural character of Town Roads.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget Oconto County Volunteer Efforts</b>	1. Identify local roads in the Town that qualify for official designation as Rustic Roads. Apply for this official designation on desired roads to protect their rural character.	<b>2014</b>
<b>Oconto County WisDOT</b>	2. Develop and enforce a Town Road Access Ordinance. Coordinate with WisDOT and Oconto County when developing this ordinance to ensure that local requirements can be enforced. This ordinance should be compatible with WisDOT requirements for STH 22 and STH 32.	<b>2006</b>
<b>Oconto County</b>	3. Work with Oconto County to revise development standards to allow residential subdivision streets to be narrower, provided trails are provided. This arrangement will result in less costly subdivisions, less stormwater runoff, less snow to plow, and less snow to shovel out of driveways.	<b>2006</b>

**TRANSPORTATION GOAL #4**

*To ensure that the road network functions well for motorists and farmers.*

<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<p><b>Town Budget</b> <b>Oconto County</b> <b>WisDOT</b></p>	<p>1. Seek to keep Town residents informed of transportation improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide information about local, county and state road improvements at the Town’s Annual Meeting.</li> <li>b. Provide information about local transportation improvements on the Town Web Site.</li> <li>c. Encourage WisDOT and Oconto County to send letters to property owners along any roads they will be improving in order to keep residents informed of work schedules and plans.</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Continuous</b></p>
<p><b>Town Budget</b> <b>Oconto County</b> <b>WisDOT</b> <b>Potential Joint Venture with Neighboring Communities</b></p>	<p>2. Seek to minimize the potential for farming vehicle conflicts on local roadways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Encourage farmers to provide adequate warning signage and lighting on their vehicles. Include information about these practices in the Town Newsletter and on the Town Web Site.</li> <li>b. Provide additional signs notifying motorists that the Town is a farming community and to beware of farm vehicles on the roads.</li> <li>c. Consider opportunities to provide gravel pull-offs on particularly congested roads as a means for farm equipment to pull off and allow faster moving vehicles to safely pass. Share any recommendations with WisDOT and the Oconto County Highway Department.</li> <li>d. Ensure that all future road improvements are engineered to withstand the weight of farm equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Continuous</b></li> <li>b. <b>2007</b></li> <li>c. <b>2015</b></li> <li>d. <b>Continuous</b></li> </ul>

## Utilities & Community Facilities Agenda

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to pursue opportunities for shared services (i.e. fire protection, ambulance service, road maintenance, park development, etc.) with neighboring communities and Oconto County to reduce Town expenses and improve efficiencies for the benefit of all parties involved.*

<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL #1</b>		
<i>Support the continued availability of utilities and community facilities provided by Oconto County, the local school districts, private companies and neighboring communities, which serve residents of the Town of Oconto Falls.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	1. Communicate service needs and challenges with aforementioned agencies.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Educate residents about the availability of these services through use of a Town newsletter and internet web page.	<b>Continuous</b>

<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL #2</b>		
<i>Ensure that all development is served by adequate services.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>Oconto County</b>	1. Work with Oconto County, and if necessary adopt a Town policy and supporting ordinance, to encourage developers to consider alternative waste treatment systems in support of innovative subdivision designs (i.e. cluster and conservation subdivisions).	<b>2010</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>Potential Joint Venture with Neighboring Communities</b>	2. As desirable, issue permits for innovative waste treatment systems (pursuant to the requirements of COMM 83) that will provide safe and effective results for commercial development opportunities along STH 22.	<b>2012</b>

<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL #3</b>		
<i>Limit the development of towers in the Town to minimize impacts on migratory birds and scenic vistas.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Oconto County Town Budget</b>	Coordinate with Oconto County to ensure that the county cellular tower ordinance provides adequate protection and provisions for the Town of Oconto Falls.	<b>2007</b>

<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL #4</b>		
<i>Provide seniors with improved access to services.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget Oconto County</b>	1. Conduct a survey of senior residents to determine awareness about available services and identify additional needs.	<b>2013</b>
<b>Town Budget Oconto County</b>	2. Educate seniors about services and amenities available through articles in a Town Newsletter and use of a Town Internet web site.	<b>Begin in 2007</b>
<b>Grant Funds Town Budget Oconto County Commission on Aging</b>	3. Complete a feasibility study for utilizing the Town Hall as a Senior Site for congregate meals (provided through county programs), locally organized meetings, and recreation activities (i.e. card groups and book clubs).	<b>2008</b>
<b>NA</b>	4. Support the establishment of partnerships between the county, residents, and local churches to establish transportation services to seniors in need.	<b>Continuous</b>

<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL #5</b>		
<i>Educate residents about available utilities and community facilities, particularly populations with special needs (i.e. seniors and youth).</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>NA</b>	1. Encourage the <i>Oconto County Times Herald</i> (weekly paper) to publish periodic articles spotlighting services available.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Develop and distribute a Town Newsletter that includes articles about available utilities and community facilities.	<b>Annually</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	3. Develop a Town Web Site that includes links and information about available utilities and community facilities.	<b>2008</b>

<b>UTILITIES &amp; COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL #6</b>		
<i>Limit the impact of storm water runoff in the Town of Oconto Falls.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>Potential Joint Venture with Neighboring Communities</b>	1. Develop a local site plan review ordinance to accommodate a more thorough review of development requests, particularly pertaining to natural resource limitations, road access, storm water management, and design.	<b>2015</b>
<b>UW-Extension</b>	2. Coordinate with the UW-Extension to provide articles about the importance of erosion and sediment control in a Town Newsletter and Web Site.	<b>2009</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	3. Make copies of any articles available to developers and realtors.	<b>Continuous</b>

## Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Agenda

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to discourage development that will interfere with important natural resources, including the Oconto River, wildlife habitats, and wetlands.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to maintain its rural character by:*

- *Limiting residential development to areas with soils to support foundations and septic systems.*
- *Communicating with local farmers who want to sell their property about options available through land trusts and conservation development design techniques.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to only recommended approval of non-metallic mining operations permits that have include complete reclamation plans in accordance with NR135 at the time of application.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to require, as part of a conditional approval, that all new non-metallic mining operations enter into an operation agreement with the Town of Oconto Falls and Oconto County. Existing quarry operators seeking to expand, modify their operations, or review their conditional use permit shall also be required to enter into an operation agreement with the Town.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to support local farmers and farm operations.*

<b>AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #1</b>		
<i>Preserve the best farmland in the Town for agricultural production.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>NA</b>	1. Using the <i>Future Land Use Maps</i> as a guide for rezonings and conditional use permits, as well as, any local ordinances (including a Town Subdivision /Land Division Ordinance), restrict residential and commercial development to areas least suited for farming, with soils that support foundations and septic systems.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Adopt a Town Subdivision / Land Division Ordinance to limit land divisions or subdivisions on prime farmland, unless conservation based and at least 50 percent of farmland is preserved. Individual lot development on farmland should be directed to the edges of farm fields.	<b>2006</b>

**AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #2**

*Protect surface and groundwater quality.*

<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Oconto County</b>	1. Support the efforts of Oconto County to enforce stream and lake setback requirements and protect wetland and floodplain areas by enforcing county zoning requirements and policies established in the Oconto County Land and Water Resource Management Plan.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Oconto County DATCP WDNR Town Budget</b>	2. Create, maintain and enhance natural buffers along stream banks. Work with Oconto County, the WDNR and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to promote and help fund buffer strips along rivers and streams in accordance with the environmental corridors illustrated on the <i>Future Land Use Maps</i> .	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	3. Seek to establish buffers between farmland operations and future residential development (i.e. reasonable setback and other land uses like light commercial) to minimize conflicts.	<b>2010</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	4. Encourage farmers to use manure management technology. This may be achieved with several farmers forming partnerships to purchase and share technology or direct Town investment in local farm operations.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	5. Educate farmers about manure management criteria so they can make long term plans.	<b>Continuous beginning in 2008</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	6. Provide education materials to residents on Town Web Site, through Town Newsletter and in a welcome packet related to raingardens, proper well maintenance and wastewater maintenance, water conservation techniques and devices, natural landscaping and low water demand vegetation.	<b>Continuous beginning in 2008</b>
<b>Town Budget Potential Joint Venture with Neighboring Towns</b>	7. Develop a driveway ordinance to, among other things, establish a maximum driveway length to limit impervious surface area and promote better emergency access to development.	<b>2005</b>
<b>Town Budget Oconto County</b>	8. Providing opportunities, such as Clean Sweep Programs, for residents to properly dispose of hazardous household products.	<b>2010</b>

<b>AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #3</b>		
<i>Maintain and expand wildlife habitat.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
NA	1. Partner with local land trusts to protect wildlife habitat areas. Encourage local landowners to pursue opportunities to protect their land by working with land trusts.	Continuous
NA	3. Coordinate with WDNR to identify and protect wildlife habitats.	Continuous
NA	2. Discourage habitat fragmentation by encouraging development adjacent to existing development.	Continuous

<b>AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #4</b>		
<i>Preserve natural and cultural resources to ensure their value for future generations.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
Oconto County State Historical Society Volunteers/Donations Town Budget	1. Coordinate with the Oconto County Historical Society to inventory and catalogue historic properties and locations in the Town of Oconto Falls. Share this information with the State of Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory.	2016

<b>AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL &amp; CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #5</b>		
<i>Preserve and maintain open space and rural views.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
NA	1. Preserve scenic views by seeking to limit housing development on hilltops.	Continuous
NA	2. Participate in the planning efforts of Oconto County to ensure that the county comprehensive plan represents the interests, visions, and expectations of the Town of Oconto Falls.	Through 2010

**AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #6**

*Ensure that quarries operate in harmony with the rural character of the Town of Oconto Falls.*

<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	1. Work with Oconto County and local quarry operators to ensure that the provisions of NR135 are enforced. This process should include a <u>Town review</u> of all submitted reclamation plans at the time of application for a new quarry and conditional use permit renewal for existing quarry operations.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>Oconto County</b> <b>Potential Joint Effort with Neighboring Communities</b>	2. Coordinate with local quarry operators to ensure that operations do not interfere with public health, safety and welfare and adhere to NR 135. Likewise, local quarry operations should not distract from the rural atmosphere of the Town. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop a “Model Operation Agreement” between the Town of Oconto Falls and any local quarry operation.</li> <li>b. Seek to approve individual operation agreements utilizing the “Model Operation Agreement” as a guide, between the Town of Oconto Falls and all local quarry operators. As needed, hire a consultant to represent the Town in this effort to ensure that the agreements protect public health, safety and welfare.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>2006</b></li> <li>b. <b>Beginning 2007</b></li> </ol>

**AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL #7**

*Pursue development of a public river access within the Town of Oconto Falls.*

<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>State Grants</b> <b>Private Donations</b>	1. Work with Oconto County, the Bay Lake Regional Plan Commission, WDNR and other state agencies to ensure adequate public access to the Oconto River.	<b>Continuous</b>

## Economic Development Agenda

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to direct business developments to areas along STH 22 and STH 32.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to require developers to pay a fair and proportionate share of their infrastructure costs up-front, to ensure that needed road improvements and other infrastructure is installed at a cost that is not borne by all taxpayers.*

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL #1</b>		
<i>Ensure that town financial responsibilities (i.e. road maintenance, fire protection, park facilities, and other services) are efficiently managed to provide an environment conducive to economic development</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>NA</b>	1. Monitor local property tax revenue to ensure that revenues are adequate to provide needed services. Consider adjustments as necessary.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Utilize a Capital Improvement Program to anticipate future budget expenses.	<b>2005</b>
<b>NA</b>	3. Coordinate improvements with state, county and other agencies as needed to minimize duplication of services and increase efficiencies in services provided.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>  <b>Potential Joint Effort with Neighboring Towns, Oconto County, UW-Extension</b>	4. Conduct a cost of services study, similar to the study completed by the Town of Dunn, to better understand the sources and allocations of tax dollars.	<b>2010</b>

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL #2</b>		
<i>Support local farmers in their efforts to maintain farmland in the Town of Oconto Falls.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	1. Periodically review farmland sales and development in the Town and monitor changes in state and county farmland programs and policies. Substantial changes may require amendments to this Chapter, as well as the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Element, as well as the <i>Future Land Use Maps</i> .	<b>Continuous</b>

NA	2. Encourage value-added operations such as cheese making and on- and off-farm direct retailing (roadside farm stands) to provide farmers with secondary income sources. Coordinate with Oconto County to further encourage these types of uses in the zoning ordinance.	Continuous
NA	3. Encourage the local schools to provide education to students about careers in farming. Once the Town establishes an Agricultural Committee, charge this committee with the responsibility of providing information about area farming operations to the school districts. The committee should be a resource to the schools when seeking to arrange tours of area farms and interviews with local farmers.	Establish Ag Committee 2005
NA	4. Encourage the City of Oconto Falls and other nearby communities to support economic endeavors that provide services local farmers need including: implement dealers, feed stores and veterinarians. As feasible, encourage these types of businesses to locate in the Town, particularly along STH 22 and STH 32.	Continuous
NA	5. Coordinate with key county personnel, including the County Conservationist and UW-Extension Agriculture Agent to identify and promote programs and policies at a local and county level that support farmers.	Continuous

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL #3</b>		
<i>Support existing Town business and promote some additional development along the STH 22 and STH 32, as well as new commercial and industrial development in neighboring communities, to provide job opportunities and entertainment, shopping, and service choices.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
Town Budget	1. Coordinate with neighboring community, county and regional organizations to address economic growth opportunities. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a Web Page to document demographic characteristics and available development sites. The site should also include a list of local businesses.</li> <li>Open lines of communication with the Oconto County Economic Development Corporation and the City of Oconto Falls Community Development Authority to pursue area economic interests, including marketing.</li> <li>Educate local business owners and entrepreneurs about services available through the UW-Extension for modern business planning and management.</li> </ol>	a. 2007 b. Continuous c. Continuous

NA	2. Support rezoning requests for businesses adjacent to STH 22 and STH 32.	Continuous
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>UW-Extension</b> <b>Oconto County</b>	3. Encourage and support the establishment of home occupations, provided such uses do not constitute a nuisance to neighboring properties (i.e. excessive noise, traffic, odors, vibration, etc.) or deter from the rural character of the area (i.e. signage, lighting, etc.). a. Adopt a policy for providing recommendations to Oconto County about proposed special use permits to allow for home occupations in the Town of Oconto Falls. b. Develop a guide for local property owners who wish to establish a home occupation. Include criteria for site development and zoning approvals.	<b>a. 2008</b> <b>b. 2009</b>

## Intergovernmental Cooperation Agenda

*The Town of Oconto Falls will seek to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, the county, state agencies, and school district for mutual benefit.*

<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOAL #1</b>		
<i>The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will maintain and seek additional opportunities to improve communication with intergovernmental partners.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	1. Every 2-years the Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission will host an intergovernmental workshop with the governments and agencies identified in this chapter to discuss concerns, plans, exchange ideas, and report implementation achievements.	<b>Beginning in 2006</b>
<b>NA</b>	2. Actively participate in the comprehensive planning activities of neighboring communities, Oconto County, and the BLRPC.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>NA</b>	3. Participate in the planning activities of the school districts, particularly with respect to expansion and building of new facilities.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>NA</b>	4. Participate in the Oconto County Land and Water Conservation Office efforts to update the Oconto County Agricultural Preservation Plan to ensure that issues with respect to concentrated animal feeding operations and manure management are fairly addressed.	<b>Continuous</b>

<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOAL #2</b>		
<i>Resolve development, annexation and boundary disputes in a mutually beneficial manner.</i>		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	1. Pursue development of a boundary agreement with the City of Oconto Falls to establish expansion areas for a minimum of 10 years. By developing a boundary agreement, the Town would hope to address timing issues that would allow the City to concentrate first on in-fill development opportunities before additional development is permitted at the edges of the Town.	<b>2011</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>Oconto County</b> <b>Potential Joint Venture with Neighboring Communities</b>	2. Coordinate with the Oconto County Planning & Zoning Committee to establish a custom overlay zone that would apply to the Town of Oconto Falls to protect the rural character of the Town, including farmland preservation.	<b>2008</b>
<b>Oconto County</b>	3. Improve enforcement of Oconto County Zoning and development restrictions.	<b>Beginning in 2006</b>

<b>Town Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will assist in local enforcement of Oconto County Zoning requirements, by acting as a public forum for residents to report zoning violations and concerns.</li> <li>b. The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will seek to investigate situations and work with Oconto County to notify residents of violations.</li> <li>c. The Town of Oconto Falls Planning Commission will submit a yearly (perhaps more frequent) report to Oconto County with respect to zoning enforcement issues.</li> </ul>	
<b>Oconto County Town Budget</b>	4. Coordinate with Oconto County Planning and Zoning to initiate an education effort and campaign for rezoning from agricultural to large scale agricultural (35 acre minimum) to protect farmland from development and keep rural development limited.	<b>Beginning in 2006</b>

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOAL #3**

*Seek new ways to coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities, the school districts and Oconto County.*

<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate opportunities to provide road maintenance and snow plowing with neighboring communities to reduce costs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consider opportunities when signing contracts with private companies to coordinate with neighboring communities that need similar services (i.e. plowing, resurfacing, etc.) and then negotiate with the private company for a reduced cost based on the larger project volume.</li> <li>b. Pursue opportunities to purchase expensive road maintenance equipment together with neighboring communities that can share the equipment in exchange for paying a portion of the purchase and maintenance costs.</li> <li>c. Consider opportunities to lease Town equipment to generate revenue for the Town and avoid situations where neighboring communities own similar equipment that is underutilized.</li> <li>d. Coordinate with surrounding communities to consider snowplowing schedules that efficiently meet the needs of area residents. This may involve using Town equipment to plow portions of neighboring communities (and vice versa) to maximize efficiencies and minimize costs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Investigate opportunities to provide garbage collection and recycling more efficiently by cooperating with neighboring communities, coordinate collection times, and mutual contract negotiations with private providers to secure costs savings.	<b>2008</b>

## Land Use Agenda

*The Town of Oconto Falls will recommend denial of any spot-zoning request to Oconto County. The Town's determination of a spot zoning will be made when an application for rezoning demonstrates little or no evidence or interest in:*

- *The general welfare of the public;*
- *The effect on surrounding property;*
- *Whether all uses in the zoning sought are appropriate in the location proposed; or*
- *Conformity to the comprehensive plan.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to Review all development proposals in the Town. For any proposal requiring rezoning, the Town will review the request in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations, based on the guidelines provided in the plan, will be forwarded to Oconto County.*

*The Town of Oconto Falls will encourage landowners and developers to use conservation-based approaches.*

*The Town will work to enforce local and county zoning and subdivision ordinance requirements.*

LAND USE GOALS		
<i>Protect the Town's abundant and high quality natural resource areas to maintain the Town's rural atmosphere and community character.</i>		
<i>Maintain the Town's rural character by limiting residential development in agricultural and natural areas of the Town.</i>		
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE	SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
<b>Oconto County Town Budget</b>	1. Establish conservation / rural design requirements for development in the Town of Oconto Falls. Coordinate with the Oconto County Planning Department to establish overlay zone requirements for conservation considerations in rural areas of the Town of Oconto Falls or perhaps modify the county zoning ordinance for all rural areas.	<b>2008</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. Work with the UW-Extension, Oconto County Zoning Department, and other professional experts to develop and enforce a site plan review ordinance to present a positive image of the community and provide guidelines for developers related to the appearance of any commercial and industrial development in the Town. The ordinance should require developers and landowners to discuss ideas with the Plan Commission before they go to the expense of developing engineered plans.	<b>2008</b>

<b>Town Budget</b>	3. Develop, adopt, and maintain an official map, to address access requirements along STH 22, future Town Road locations, and trails.	<b>2007</b>
NA	4. Retain rural features to protect rural character. a. Existing farm roads should be incorporated into subdivision designs. b. Stone rows, tree lines, and traditional historic barns should be preserved. c. Residential lot development should be directed toward irregularly shaped parcels that are difficult to farm. d. Residential development, though subdivisions or CSMs should utilize roadway management techniques, rather than simply lining town roads. This approach will maintain distant, open views that are integral to the Town's rural character.	<b>Continuous</b>
NA	5. Minimize the disturbance to the natural environment when new development occurs. a. Once an environmental corridor definition is completed between BLRPC and Oconto County, consider needed changes to the <i>Future Land Use Map</i> and the text in this chapter. b. Coordinate with landowners and Oconto County to consider comprehensive rezoning from agricultural to large scale agricultural.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Oconto County Town Budget</b>	6. Coordinate with Oconto County to establish marked on-road trail routes in the Town. This effort should include paving shoulder areas to safely accommodate cyclists.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	7. Formalize the development review process for people interested in rezoning, subdivision development and other land use development activities in the Town. a. Provide a copy of the development review checklist to all applicants. b. Develop and make available a brochure related to zoning procedures and contacts. c. Create a development application form for persons to submit to the Town for review. This form should include the applicants name, landowner's name, current zoning, description of the request, and other basic information. d. Require landowners to submit a site plan for all proposed home sites or other requested uses to the Plan Commission and Town Board for review. This site plan must address the following criteria and concerns: 1. All existing property boundaries, lot lines, and easements must be shown. 2. All existing uses, structures, roads, and driveways must be shown. 3. Areas of differing soil productivity shall be delineated. 4. All natural features such as wetlands, floodplains, woodlands, and steep slopes must be delineated. 5. The minimum level of tree clearing for building in the site shall be indicated and enforced through a Town Landscape Ordinance.	<b>2007</b>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NA</b></p>	<p>8. Minimize the visual impact of development to maintain rural, undeveloped character and feeling. To support this, the Plan Commission, through its site plan review effort, will seek to promote the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. When possible (e.g. perk tests will permit), new homes should not be placed in the middle of open farm fields.</li> <li>b. Residences should be located adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges, if available. If not, homes should be clustered on the edges of farm fields to maintain as much contiguous open farmland as possible.</li> <li>c. Where clustering of homes will yield open space that can remain actively farmed or protect vital wildlife habitat, this strategy must be explored.</li> <li>d. Discourage development on hilltops. This shall include cellular towers and homes – both of which will disrupt scenic, open, rural vistas.</li> <li>e. Where practicable, local residential development on non-prime soil of a farm.</li> <li>f. Locate and construct new roads or utility transmission lines in a manner that minimizes impact on productive farmland and other natural resources.</li> <li>g. Discourage driveways that cross-productive agricultural lands and disrupt the agricultural use of a property.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Continuous</b></p>
<p><b>Town Budget</b></p>	<p>9. Develop a Town Driveway Access Ordinance.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2005</b></p>
<p><b>Town Budget</b></p>	<p>9. Consider developing a Town Sign Ordinance to provide more restrictive sign requirements than are currently available in the Oconto County Zoning Ordinance.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2011</b></p>

## Implementation Agenda<sup>1</sup>

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to use its comprehensive plan as a central tool in local decision-making.*

*It is the policy of the Town of Oconto Falls to have the Town Planning Commission diligently research and provide recommendations to the Town Board and Oconto County on all zoning and planning matters in order to effectively implement this Comprehensive Plan.*

<b>IMPLEMENTATION GOAL</b>		
To ensure that the <i>Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan</i> is an effective tool for making local land use decisions and a model for other communities.		
<b>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>MILESTONE DATE</b>
<b>NA</b>	1. Annually review the goals and objectives presented throughout this chapter to assess implementation success and consider additional objectives.	<b>Annually</b>
<b>Town Budget</b>	2. As available, provide updated information to supplement the plan information (i.e. updated county zoning map, updated population projections, U.S. Agricultural Census Data, future local survey results, etc.)	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Town Budget</b> <b>Donations</b> <b>Foundations</b> <b>County</b>	3. Consider developing a Town PDR or TDR program. a. Investigate potential funding sources b. Provide residents with additional information about the benefits and limitations of PDR and TDR programs. c. Coordinate with Oconto County to determine potential for shared funding and shared administration of such a program.	<b>2012</b>

<sup>1</sup> As part of this element, the Town determined no changes were needed to existing building, mechanical, housing, and sanitary codes to implement this plan. Existing code requirements are consistent with the recommendations of this plan. However, the Town may consider changes in the future if needed to further support this plan. A new state law requires all communities to enforce the uniform dwelling code, including erosion control. Communities have the option of local enforcement, delegating responsibility to the County (if the County will agree) or take no action and the State Dept. of Commerce, with its Safety Building Division, will be required to provide inspection and enforcement services.

## **APPENDIX**

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# APPENDIX A: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

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## Introduction

In order for the public to be kept continually informed during the development of the *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan*, and to meet the requirements of Wisconsin's "Smart Growth Law" (Ch. 66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.), the Town of Oconto Falls has prepared the following public participation plan

## Smart Growth Law Requirements – Ch. 66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.

"The governing body of a local government unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments."

## Intent

The Town of Oconto Falls, in its comprehensive planning process, desires to make the opportunity for public participation, input and contribution available to its residents and to all interested and/or potentially affected parties, public and private, within and surrounding the Town of Oconto Falls. The town also desires to strike a fair, compromised, consensus-based plan that balances private and community desires in order to achieve the best future for the town.

## Public Participation Procedures

The Town of Oconto Falls, Oconto County, Wisconsin, in order to provide the greatest amount of public involvement possible, and to meet the provisions of Ch. 66.1001(4) (a) Wis. Stats., has adopted the following Public Participation Procedures. It is the intent of these procedures to provide opportunities for the public to be meaningfully involved in efforts throughout the planning process.

The Town Board had, at first, designated the Town of Oconto Falls Planning Committee to lead this public involvement effort. However, within the first six months of plan development, the Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission was established in accordance with Ch 66.1001(4). From that point forward, it was the responsibility of this Plan Commission, through its consultant and other designated parties, to:

- Make available to the public, information about the planning process and copies of plan documents. This information shall be made available in the most suitable variety of media possible, including newsletters, public meetings, workshops and the internet at [www.omni.com](http://www.omni.com).
- Prepare meeting summaries that shall be made available to interested individuals upon written request to the Town Clerk at the cost of \$0.25 per page. Requests should be submitted to the Ms. Gwen Holtz, Town Clerk, 8702 Holtz Road, Oconto Falls, WI 54154. Copies of meetings summaries for meetings facilitated by OMNNI Associates will also be posted on the internet.
- Keep meeting attendance sign-in sheets as part of the record for all meetings. Both Plan Commission members and general public in attendance shall be requested to sign in.
- Recommend to the Town of Oconto Falls Board the adoption of the Public Participation Procedures.
- Actively solicit comments and suggestions from the residents and property owners of the town, neighboring governmental units, school and special purpose districts serving residents of the town, Oconto County, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Land Council and the University of Wisconsin Extension (UW-EX).
- Accept written comments from residents, landowners, and other interested parties throughout the planning process.
- Work closely with the consultant hired by the town to prepare the comprehensive plan.

All meetings on the comprehensive plan shall be open to the public and duly posted pursuant to Ch. 985.02(2) Wis. Stats. The required public hearing on the plan shall be published as a class 1 notice, pursuant to Ch. 985.02(1) Wis. Stats. at least 30 days prior to the hearing. The class 1 notice shall include the following: (1) date, time and place of the hearing, (2) a summary of the *Recommended Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan*, (3) the name of the town employee who may provide additional information regarding the plan, and (4) where and when a copy of the proposed comprehensive plan may be viewed prior to the hearing, and how a copy of the plan may be obtained.

Copies of the *Recommended Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan* shall be made available for viewing by the general public at the same time as the hearing notice is published. Copies of the proposed plan shall be available at the Office of the Town Clerk, 8702 Holtz Road, Oconto Falls, WI 54154 and at the Oconto Falls Community Library, 251 North Main Street Oconto Falls, Wisconsin 54154. Written requests to the Town Clerk for copies of the proposed comprehensive plan will require payment of duplication costs. Duplication costs shall be charged at a rate of \$.25 per black and white page, \$1.00 per color page, and \$2.00 per 11" x 17" color map. After the notice of the public hearing has been published, those wishing to submit written comments on the plan may do so until one week prior to the public hearing. Written comments on the proposed plan should be submitted to the Town Clerk. Written comments received prior to the public hearing will be addressed at the hearing and will be given the same weight as oral testimony.

## **Plan Adoption**

**Town Board** - Based on the recommendation of the Plan Commission and comments received, the Town Board, by majority vote, shall enact an ordinance adopting the *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan*. A copy of the ordinance and adopted plan shall be sent to clerks of neighboring units of government, school and special purpose districts serving residents of the town, Oconto County, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Land Council and the University of Wisconsin Extension (UW-EX).

A copy of the adoption ordinance and the plan shall be available for inspection at the Office of the Town Clerk. Copies of the *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan* may be purchased from the Town Clerk at a cost of \$30.00 each.

**Plan Commission** –The Town of Oconto Falls Plan Commission shall assist the Town Board in implementing the provisions of the *Town of Oconto Falls Comprehensive Plan*. From time to time, but not less than once every five (5) years, the Plan Commission shall review the comprehensive plan for potential changes, additions or corrections. The Plan Commission shall also be responsible for recommending comprehensive plan amendments to the Town Board on a majority vote of its entire membership.

## **APPENDIX B**

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Community Survey Results are Provided in this Appendix.  
Paper Copies Available from the Town.

# Town of Oconto Falls Land Use Survey Results

30-Sep-00

1. From 1990 through 1999 the Town of Oconto Falls had an estimated increase in population of 9%, growing from 1,014 to 1,101 persons. Do you favor growth at a rate for the next 20 years that is:

Faster Rate	Same Rate	Slower Rate	No Growth	Total
42	173	72	24	311
14%	56%	23%	8%	

2. For the most part, I am satisfied with the way the Town of Oconto Falls is developing.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
22	150	79	49	12	312
7%	48%	25%	16%	4%	

3. Stricter protection of our natural resources (groundwater, wetlands, wildlife, river fronts) is necessary.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
115	104	51	27	11	308
37%	34%	17%	9%	4%	

4. The town should develop a comprehensive plan, with strong public involvement, to serve as a guide for managing future growth and change.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
120	130	35	21	6	312
38%	42%	11%	7%	2%	

5. There should be buffer zones (meaning a reasonable setback, or allowing another land use such as light commercial) between established farm operations and future residential subdivisions to minimize conflicts.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
87	112	49	41	18	307
28%	36%	16%	13%	6%	

6. A farmer's right to farm is important and should be protected, despite the dust, noise, odors, etc.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
158	105	16	16	15	310
51%	34%	5%	5%	5%	

7. Given a situation where a farm family sells their farm, which one of the following best describes how you would like to see the land used after the sale?

Allow to divide/subdivide	34	11%
Keep in agriculture	119	39%
Use however new owner desires	118	39%
Other	34	11%
Total	305	

8. Expansion of dairy herds/farms is a growing trend. What position on this issue, if any, do you feel the Town of Oconto Falls should take?

Generally Favor	Oppose	No Position	Not Sure	Other	Total
98	24	135	43	9	309
32%	8%	44%	14%	3%	

9. The Town of Oconto Falls should have a say in the development of future residential subdivisions in town.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
120	105	38	24	23	310
39%	34%	12%	8%	7%	

10. What minimum lot size would you generally like to see for future residential development in town?

Under 1 acre	1 acre	1.5 acres	2 acres	2.5 acres	3 acres
31	48	36	51	15	36
10%	16%	12%	17%	5%	12%
	5 acres	Other	Total		
	60	24	301		
	20%	8%			

11. For future residential development would you favor a town policy allowing smaller lots immediately surrounding the city, but larger lots elsewhere in the town?

Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
133	113	65	311
43%	36%	21%	

12. Would you favor a buffer area (a zone of no buildings) around designated wetlands?

Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
196	75	41	312
63%	24%	13%	

13. Annexation: Which ONE of the following do you favor (please each respondent choose ONLY ONE)

Annexation to extend services	49	16%
Annexation for planned growth	109	35%
No annexation	103	33%
No opinion	48	16%
Total	309	

14. Should the town pursue development and ownership of park and recreational facilities?

Yes, develop & own	69	23%
Yes, but in partnership	105	35%
No	121	40%
Other	7	2%
Total	302	

15. If traffic patterns and volume increase the town should address widening/improving the roads.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
61	120	59	45	26	311
20%	39%	19%	14%	8%	

16. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most favorable please rate your feeling on these issues...

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	Total
Current Land Uses allowed to continue under new plans	17 6%	5 2%	3 1%	6 2%	39 13%	16 5%	20 7%	32 10%	12 4%	155 51%	305
Residential Dev. Should be limited to certain areas of town?	59 20%	6 2%	15 5%	2 1%	35 12%	4 1%	12 4%	31 10%	18 6%	116 39%	298
Restrict where Apts/Duplex/Mobile Hm can go?	31 10%	6 2%	3 1%	4 1%	21 7%	11 4%	5 2%	24 8%	23 8%	169 57%	297
New businesses restricted to areas in town they may locate?	37 13%	6 2%	7 2%	4 1%	42 14%	11 4%	17 6%	23 8%	19 6%	128 44%	294
New Owners should be notified of existing noises, traffic, odors from farms before they buy.	38 13%	10 3%	12 4%	3 1%	37 12%	10 3%	12 4%	19 6%	12 4%	150 50%	303
Town should have a say in location of billboards, towers, wind turbines, etc.	21 7%	5 2%	4 1%	5 2%	33 11%	9 3%	10 3%	28 10%	15 5%	157 55%	287
Town should work with county to provide bike/walking lanes on some town roads.	46 15%	4 1%	4 1%	8 3%	37 12%	15 5%	11 4%	23 8%	12 4%	140 47%	300
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

**Question 16, Please see reverse side**

**17. Would you favor requiring quarries to implement a reclamation plan as it operates? (i.e. open a limited area, mine it, then reclaim it before opening a new area in the same quarry)**

	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Yes</b>	18	54	293
221	6%	18%	
75%			

**18. Age of Respondents**

<b>Under 18</b>	<b>18-24</b>	<b>25-45</b>	<b>46-61</b>	<b>62-74</b>	<b>Over 74</b>
0	4	83	137	53	19
0%	1%	28%	46%	18%	6%
				<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>

**Gender of Respondents**

<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
155	118	273
57%	43%	

**Years resided in the town**

<b>0-5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>11-20</b>	<b>Over 20</b>	<b>Just own property</b>	<b>Total</b>
43	29	54	134	36	296
15%	10%	18%	45%	12%	

**Commute to a workplace outside of town?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
146	128	274
53%	47%	

**If you commute, # of miles 1 way:**

<b>0-10</b>	<b>11-25</b>	<b>26-40</b>	<b>41-55</b>	<b>Over 55</b>	<b>Total</b>
40	29	50	5	7	131
31%	22%	38%	4%	5%	

## APPENDIX C: COMMON PLANNING ACRONYMS

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### -A-

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act  
 APA American Planning Association

### -B-

BLM Bureau of Land Management  
 BLRPC Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

### -C-

CAA Clean Air Act  
 CBD Central Business District  
 CDBG Community Dev. Block Grants  
 CIP/B Capital Improvement Program/Budget  
 COG Council of Governments  
 Corps Army Corps of Engineers  
 CTY County Road  
 CPM Critical Path Method  
 CRA Cost-Revenue Analysis  
 CUP Conditional Use Permit  
 CWA Clean Water Act  
 CSM Certified Survey Map

### -D-

DA Development Agreement  
 DATCP WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
 DHFS WI Department of Health and Family Services  
 DHIR Div. Of Housing & Intergov. Relations  
 DOA WI Department of Administration  
 DOC U.S. Department of Commerce  
 DOE U.S. Department of Energy  
 DOI U.S. Department of Interior  
 DOL U.S. Department of Labor  
 DOT U.S. Department of Transportation  
 DU Dwelling Unit  
 DU/A Dwelling Units/Acre

### -E-

EA Environmental Assessment  
 ECRPC East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
 Elev. Elevation, Above Sea Level  
 EIS Environmental Impact Statement  
 EPA U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

### -F-

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency  
 FHA Federal Housing Administration

FNMA Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae)

### -G-

GDP Gross Domestic Product  
 GIS Geographic Information System  
 GPS Global Positioning System

### -H-

HHS U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
 HUD U.S. Depart. of Urban Development  
 HWY Highway

### -I-J-K-

ISTEA Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act  
 K 1 Thousand, 1,000, kilo, kilometer

### -L-

LB Pound(s), 16 ounces  
 LF Linear Feet  
 LOS Level of Service (Highways & Streets)  
 LUC Land Use Controls  
 LULU Locally Unwanted Land Use

### -M-

MI Mile, 5,280 Feet  
 MPO Metropolitan Planning Agency  
 MSA Metropolitan Statistical Level

### -N-

NEPA National Environmental Policy Act  
 NIMBY "Not In My Backyard"  
 NOI Notice of Intent  
 NPS National Park Service  
 NU Neighborhood Unit

### -O-

OMB Office of Management and Budget  
 OSHA Occupational Safety & Health Act  
 OZ Ounce(s)

**-P-**

PASER Pavement Surface Evaluation & Rating  
PUD Planned Unit Development  
PUC Public Utilities Commission  
PWA Public Works Administration  
PDR Purchase of Development Rights  
PT Primary Treatment

**-Q-R-**

RPC Regional Planning Commission  
RTC Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

**-S-**

SBA Small Business Administration  
SEWRPC Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
SF Square Foot (feet)  
SHA Scenic Highways Act  
SM Square Mile, 640 Acres  
SOL Standard of Living  
SQ Square  
SRO Single Room Occupancy  
ST Secondary Treatment  
SUP Special Use Permit

**-T-**

TDR Transfer of Development Rights  
TOD Transit Oriented Development  
Ton 2,000 Pounds  
TSCA Toxic Substances Control Act  
TWP Township, 36 square miles (statutory)

**-U-**

UBC Uniform Building Code  
UDAG Urban Development Assistance Grant  
USAE Army Corps of Engineers  
USCS U.S. Civil Service  
USDA U.S. Department of Agriculture  
UW University of Wisconsin

**-V-W-X-Y-Z-**

V/CR Volume to Capacity Ratio  
WAPA WI Chapter of the APA  
WDNR WI Department of Natural Resources  
WDPI WI Department of Public Instruction  
WDWD WI Department of Workforce Development  
WHEDA WI Housing and Development Authority  
WisDOT WI Department of Transportation  
WPS Wisconsin Public Service  
WTA Wisconsin Towns Association  
WW Waste Water  
ZB Zoning Board  
ZBB Zero Base Budgeting  
ZO Zoning Ordinance

## APPENDIX D: CELLULAR TOWERS

### TOWER LOCATION AND COVERAGE

How large is the service area for a single cellular tower? This is a very complicated question to answer. Coverage areas depend on topography and tower height. In order to provide a complete network, towers must be able to “see” one another.

When cellular technology first came about, analog service required towers of a height of 300 feet or more. These towers could provide coverage within a five-mile radius of the tower. Today, new digital technologies, PCS, and the wireless Internet operate at a higher frequency than the older analog towers. This increased frequency reduces the coverage from a five-mile radius to a 2-3 mile radius. As a result, there is a need for more towers to serve the same area. If new towers and antennas are needed in the town, the coverage zones will vary with frequency, height, and service type. A radio frequency engineer can determine the exact coverage areas for any new tower or antenna.

There are two “schools” of thought on tower height and location. One “school” prefers the use of several shorter towers in a community; whereas, the other group prefers the use of fewer taller towers. Each of these approaches can provide adequate coverage within a community, but do not necessarily eliminate the need for additional towers.

While the Town of Oconto Falls has 2 cellular towers at this time, as technology changes and as demand for service increases, particularly along STH 22 and STH 32, additional tower requests may soon follow.

The Town of Oconto Falls has several **options to reduce the overall number** of towers needed in the future and to minimize their visual impact. For example, **co-location** of several antennas on a single tower reduces the need for additional towers. Carriers also are more and more willing to **camouflage** their towers by locating antenna on church steeples, silos, and tall power transmission lines. These techniques can help to minimize the impact of the wireless industry in the Town of Oconto Falls.



Tower “Flag” Pole Distance  
& Up- Close Views



“Cell Tree”



“Cell Tree” in Forest



Cell Antenna on Water  
Tower

## TOWERS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS. <sup>1</sup>

Cellular, television and other towers pose **risks for migrating birds** on their seasonal journeys and in the places they live each summer and winter. Birds have died by the thousands in collisions with lighted television and radio towers around the country. While incidents involving massive bird kills occur infrequently, there's concern among scientists that bird deaths will greatly increase because of the explosive growth in the number of towers being sited in the U.S to provide wireless services.

The growth in tower numbers comes when evidence shows the numbers of songbirds migrating to and from the tropics – "neotropical migrants" – have significantly declined, mostly due to habitat loss and related problems. According to the Ornithological Council, of the 124 species on the 1995 List of Migratory Nongame Birds of Management Concern in the U.S., 60 are neotropical migrants.

Unfortunately, the types of dead birds found most frequently at tower sites are neotropical species such as **warblers, thrushes, vireos and flycatchers**. Ironically, scientists are pretty certain about this because, armed with collector's permits, the scientists themselves and amateur bird enthusiasts have been visiting tower sites for years as favored places to gather dead birds for study purposes.

So how big an impact do towers have on bird deaths? Scientists put the estimate **two to four million songbirds die each year** in the eastern United States. The overall impact of tower collisions on bird populations on a national, regional or species scale is unknown.

Most species of songbirds migrate at night, flying aloft at 1,000-2,000 feet. They rely on many aids to guide them on their journey, including the sun, moon and stars, landscape features, weak magnetic fields, polarized light, barometric pressure, low-frequency sound waves, even odors.

Lights on taller towers are thought to lead to bird deaths by confusing the different cues birds use on their journeys to nesting or wintering grounds. Most bird-tower deaths occur when there is fog or low clouds. Towers featuring flashing red lights appear to confuse birds more than those with white strobe lights do.

Towers 200 feet or higher must be lit to comply with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations designed to aid safe airplane navigation. As of June 1999, more than 40,000 lighted towers and tower farms were registered in the FAA database of obstacles in the U.S. that exceed 200 feet in height.

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<sup>1</sup> February 2000, Wendy K. Weisensel, DNR's Bureau of Communication and Education in Madison

According to the Ornithological Council, of the five long-term studies that have been conducted at single towers 800 feet tall or higher, annual documented mortality ranged from 375 to 3,285 bird carcasses per year (20-year average). About half the birds were found dead over many months rather than at single night catastrophes.

The most well-known series of tower kill incidents -- documented in a set of data Evans calls "phenomenal" -- occurred in Wisconsin as observed by Dr. Charles Kemper, a physician and bird enthusiast who is also a past president of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.

From 1957-1994, Dr. Kemper regularly collected dead birds at a TV tower in Eau Claire. During that period the kill totaled 121,560 birds of 123 species. A thousand or more birds were killed at this tower on each of 24 nights since 1957. A record 30,000 birds were estimated killed on one night in the mid-1970s.

Dr. Kemper noticed bird deaths dramatically rose after the station put up a taller tower in 1956. The new one was about 1,000 feet high, twice the height of the previous tower. "One day the county public health department called because all these dead birds were being found near the tower site; they thought the birds might have been dying from a type of disease."

The number of bird deaths could go up around Wisconsin and the U.S. because more towers, including taller, lighted ones, are being constructed or retrofitted to serve the broadcast and telecommunications industries. At the current rate of construction, the Ornithological Council says the number of towers in the U.S. will likely double to 80,000 by 2010.

To help reduce the impact of towers on migratory birds the following actions are recommended:

- o **Changes in Tower Lighting** -- When fog or clouds dissipate around towers known to kill birds, observers have noted that the birds previously flying confusedly around the lit towers soon reorient themselves and fly off. That silver

### Why are Birds Important?

Birds are critical links in native ecosystems. Wild birds pollinate plants, distribute seeds and eat enormous numbers of insects. According to the Ornithological Council, on average, a pair of adult warblers removes caterpillars from more than a million leaves in the two to three weeks from the time the pair's young hatch until they leave the nest. This behavior provides enormous benefits to forestry and agriculture.

Birds are big business. While broadcast and wireless technologies take up a lot of people's leisure time, money, and support highly competitive industries, birds and birding also involve a lot of people and pack a financial wallop in Wisconsin and nationally. The 1996 federal Fish and Wildlife Service outdoor recreational survey reports that more than 1.65 million Wisconsin residents over age 16 participated actively in wildlife watching, photography, bird-feeding and maintaining natural areas for wildlife. Most of this activity was directed toward birds.

The dollar amount spent in Wisconsin for wildlife watching activities totaled nearly \$913 million and did not include amounts spent on fishing (\$1.1 billion) and hunting (\$855 million). Trip-related expenses for wildlife watching amounted to \$436 million, while equipment such as binoculars, bird feed, film and cameras accounted for \$476 million.

Birding is reportedly second only to gardening as the most rapidly growing leisure interest in the U.S. The number of bird-watchers in the U.S. grew 155 percent between 1983 and 1995. The FWS survey states that 62.9 million Americans participated in wildlife watching and spent \$29.2 billion doing so.

lining makes researchers believe that changes in tower lighting might spare birds even as more towers go up. Certain colors of lights or changes in flashing intervals may confuse birds less.

- o **Tower Height and Design Modifications** – Guy wires are the main cause of bird death at tower sites, so reliance on self-supporting or other tower designs may offer solutions. Lower tower heights remain a possible option as well. Dr. Kemper believes communities should only permit towers less than 500 feet tall, which may spare many birds, though little formal research has been conducted on the impact of shorter towers on bird deaths.
- o **Tower Sighting Considerations**-- Tower owners could co-locate their equipment where possible. Tower sitings in sensitive areas also could be limited. While the Department of Natural Resources in Wisconsin has little or no regulatory authority over tower siting, the agency has encouraged telecommunication representatives to consider alternatives if a tower siting proposal may affect natural resources.

#### **FUTURE TOWER NEEDS IN THE TOWN OF OCONTO FALLS**

The federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 forbids towns from barring towers completely and denying access. But the law does allow local governments great leeway in restricting the height, appearance and location of towers. A Portage County, WI ordinance that went into effect last year to protect birds and other natural resources prohibits telecommunications facilities from being sited in floodplains, wetlands, shorelands and conservancy-zoned districts.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to develop a map of specific locations to site towers in the Town of Oconto Falls. This is because networks provided by different carriers have different location requirements for towers. Moreover, as technologies change and new licenses are granted for additional carriers to move into the area, locations identified on a map would quickly become outdated.

It is anticipated that in the next 5-10 years the primary coverage area for wireless service in the Town of Oconto Falls will continue to be along the STH 22, STH 32 and CTH C corridors. Beyond this timeframe, coverage will likely extend next to other county trunk lines and finally to other remote areas of the town. The rate of tower construction will depend on local demand, the number of licenses granted by the FCC, and the capacity of new towers to accommodate additional carriers.

## APPENDIX E: VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

During this exercise, participants were asked to rate each picture from -5 to +5, with 0 being neutral. The ratings would correspond to their interest in seeing that type of development/land use in the Town of Oconto Falls in the Future.



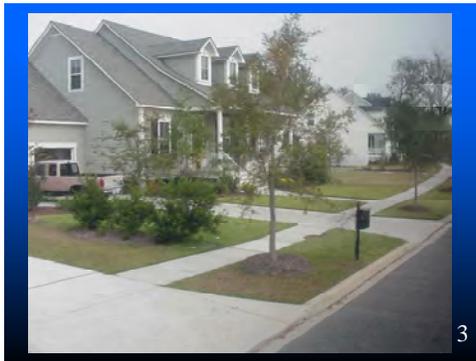
Total  
% **1)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%	1	1				2	2	1	10	6	29



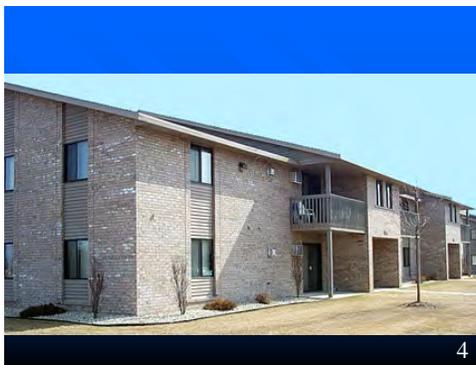
Total  
% **2)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	10	5	6	4	4	2	8	4	4	2	4



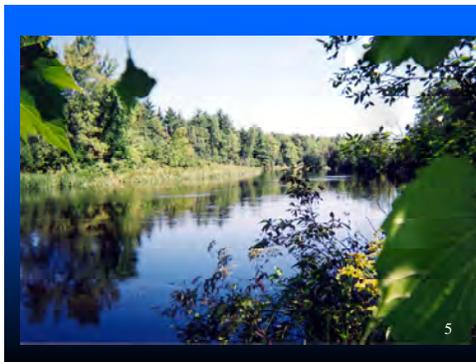
Total  
% **3)**

51	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
96%	8	9	7	1	4	4	4	2	3	3	6



Total  
% **4)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%	10	6	5	4	2	4	3	3	1		1



Total  
% **5)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	1							3	2	3	45



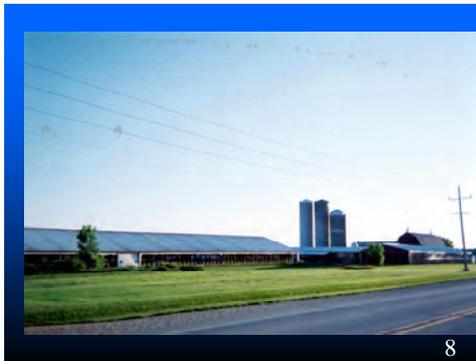
Total  
% **6)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%	1					2	1	3	7	6	32



Total  
% **7)**

51	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
96%	37	5	1	2	1	3				1	1



Total  
% **8)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	5	1	4	1	5	7	4	3	5	6	12



Total  
% **9)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	14	10	6	2	4	5	4	5	2		1



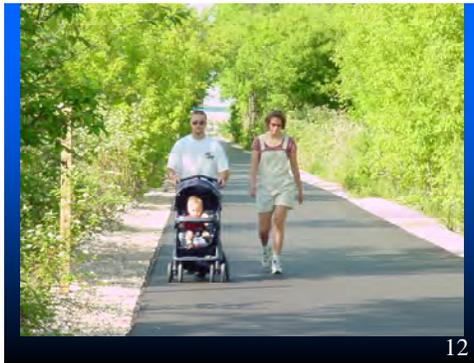
Total  
% **10)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%	7	6	7	5	10	5	6	3		3	



Total  
% **11)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%			2	1	3	6	8	7	7	6	13



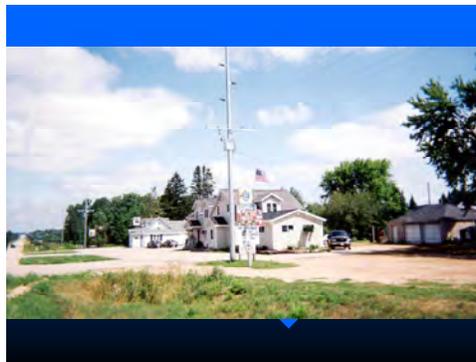
Total  
% **12)**

51	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
96%	1	4			1	5	5	9	10	3	13



Total  
% **13)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%	16	8	2	5	4	6	5	4	1	1	



Total  
% **14)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	3	2	2	3		9	8	5	9	7	5



15

Total  
% **15)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	34	3	3	5		2	3	1			2



16

Total  
% **16)**

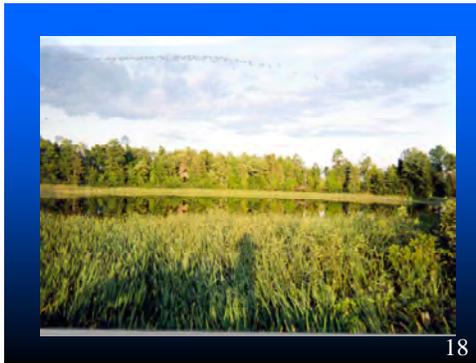
53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	1	1	2		4	9	3	5	9	5	14



17

Total  
% **17)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	9	4	4	5	3	6	7	6	4	2	3



Total  
% **18)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%					1	2		1	1	8	40



Total  
% **19)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%	7	4	2	2	6	7	5	4	8	2	5



Total  
% **20)**

52	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
98%						3	3	5	10	7	24



21

Total  
% **21)**

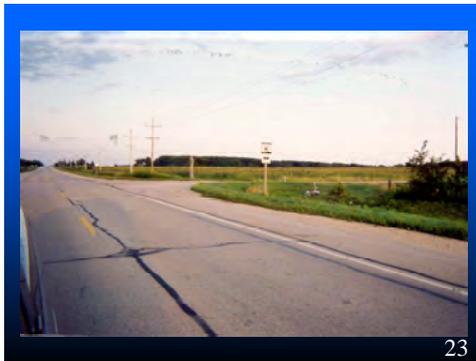
53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	7	2		6	3	9	6	11	5	2	2



22

Total  
% **22)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	3	2	2	4	3	9	8	11	7	4	1



23

Total  
% **23)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	1			1	2	5	2	5	12	8	17



Total  
% **24)**

53	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
100%	1				1	3		1	6	10	31

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Would like to see better paying jobs in area. And more businesses, it's a joke, for jobs.
- No mega farms. No gravel quarries.
- When going to slide show, explain what the pictures are.