Farmland Preservation Plan WAUPACA COUNTY, WI

9/18/2018 Waupaca County



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This plan was prepared under the jurisdiction of the Waupaca County Land & Water Conservation Committee and the Waupaca County Planning and Zoning Committee. In addition, the Waupaca County Farmland Preservation Steering Committee was formed to advise Waupaca County Staff during formation of this plan.

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Waupaca County would like to also thank the elected officials and residents of the participating farmland preservation communities:

Town of Bear Creek Town of Lind Town of Matteson Town of St. Lawrence Town of Lebanon Town of Little Wolf Town of Scandinavia Town of Union

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Introduction

On July 1, 2009, the 2009 Wisconsin Act 28, often referred to as the Working Lands Initiative, repealed and recreated Wisconsin's farmland preservation law under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes and related tax credits under Subchapter IX of Chapter 71 of the Statutes. It also created a new program, under Section 93.73 of the Statutes, for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. The new law requires counties to update their farmland preservation plans. As stated in Chapter 91, due to the fact that Waupaca County experienced a moderate increase in population density from 2000 to 2007, Waupaca County must update the 1981 Farmland Preservation Plan and have the plan certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) before it expires on December 31, 2013. Waupaca County was awarded a \$30,000 farmland preservation planning grant to provide reimbursement for up to 50 percent of the county's cost of preparing the plan. A Farmland Preservation Plan Advisory Committee was established to guide plan development. This farmland preservation plan is a result of the new State laws and rep laces the farmland preservation plan adopted by Waupaca County in 1981.

Previous Planning Efforts

Enacted in 1977, the original Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program was designed to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to eligible farmland owners. The program was administered by County and local governments, but the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB) had to first certify that the county farmland preservation plan met the standards specified in Chapter 91 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*. Of the 72 counties in Wisconsin, 70 have certified farmland preservation plans. Waupaca County's Farmland Preservation Plan was adopted by the Waupaca County Board and certified in 1981.

Planning Process

The planning process used to create this plan was similar to that utilized in the 1981 Farmland Preservation Plan. The process began with the Waupaca County Land and Water Conservation Committee and the Waupaca County Planning and Zoning Committee recommending to the County Board to develop a Farmland Preservation Plan. The County then created a

Farmland Preservation Steering Committee to oversee the planning process. The steering committee was composed of one individual from each participating town and three technical experts.

Differing from the original FPP process where the county proposed the plan for review by the towns, the current planning process engaged not only the Steering Committee, but also each Town's Plan Commission, Town Board, as well as, citizens in the plan development process. Through both Steering Committee meetings and two Cluster meetings (generally consisting of 3 to 5 towns), local input was also garnered for creating farmland preservation maps for each town as well as development of goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies. In addition to the meetings, County staff met with each town to draft, review, and finalized each town's Farmland Preservation Map. These individual maps compose the Waupaca County Farmland Preservation Map.

Overview of the Working Lands Initiative

The preservation of Wisconsin's working lands is critical for the health and success of the State and its residents. These lands provide homes for people, flora, and fauna, and produce food, fiber, and sources of biomass for fuels and energy. Preservation of this resource base is vital for the future of agriculture, the health of our environment, and to sustain a healthy economy in Wisconsin. Wisconsin's farms and agricultural businesses generate \$59.16 billion in economic activity and provide jobs for 353,991 people, according to a 2007 study conducted by University of Wisconsin –Extension.

Over recent decades, Wisconsin's working lands have been threatened by the rapid pace and the fragmented fashion that farmland has been converted to other forms of land use, such as development, often referred to as "sprawl," as local governments approve subdivision plats according to their land use plans and comprehensive plans to accommodate population growth. Recognizing that housing development is needed as populations increase, the Working Lands Initiative (WLI) was created to protect the best agricultural lands from non-agricultural development and ensure agriculture remains a strong aspect of Wisconsin's economy, while encouraging strategies to increase housing density in areas outside of the farmland preservation areas.

There are many differences between the old farmland preservation program and the new State laws. A comparison of the requirements to develop a farmland preservation plan under the old Farmland Preservation Program prior to July 1, 2009 and Wisconsin's new farmland preservation law under Chapter 91 of the *Wisconsin Statutes* is displayed in Table 1.

Category	Original Farmland Preservation Program	Working Lands Initiative
Certification Process	 Required certification by the Land and Water Conservation Board. DATCP staff review all submissions and make recommendations for certification, denial or certification with conditions. Minor plan amendments are subject to same review requirements as complete plans. There is no deadline for turnaround of plan review. 	 Required certification by DATCP. DATCP staff have discretion to review plans or to accept self certification by county. Certification with conditions is avoided, except where county board has not yet adopted plan at time of review. Staff have discretion to avoid certification review of minor plan amendments. There is a 90-day turnaround time for plan review.
Certification Date	 No expiration date on original plans. Those submitted since 1995, and approved, were granted 10-year certification terms. 	- May be certified for up to 10 years.
Public Process	 Public hearing under s. 59.69 required prior to plan adoption. Copies of the plan or plan amendment must be submitted, at least 60 days prior to the public hearing, to all cities, villages and towns within the county, to the Regional Planning Commission, and to all adjoining counties. 	- Requires county to follow 66.1001(4) (comprehensive planning process for plan adoption)
Focus of Plans	- Preservation of agricultural land.	- Preservation of agricultural land, and economic development of agriculture.
Consistency Requirements	 Ag Preservation Plan must be consistent with and a component of county development plan under s. 59.69. 	- Farmland Preservation Plan must be included in and consistent with county comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001.
Preservation Areas	- Establish minimum size of 100 acres for each contiguous agricultural preservation area, and 35 acres for each contiguous ag transition area in plan Areas must be devoted to agricultural use, though natural resource and open space areas are allowed.	 No minimum size for farmland preservation areas. No transition areas allowed Areas must be devoted to either primarily ag use, primarily ag- related uses, or both, though natural resource and open space areas are allowed.
Rational for Exclusion Areas	 - Under s. 91.05, Stats. (2007), reasons for excluding areas previously mapped for FP must be provided, and meet one of four criteria. 	- All that is required is a general statement identifying differences from the previous plan; no specific rationale for removal of ag preservation lands in previous plan is required.
Planning Assistance	- No grant funding available for plan development.	- Planning grants available to reimburse counties for up to 50% of eligible costs to develop plan, not to exceed \$30,000 in State funding.

Table 1. Comparison of Farmland Preservation Requirements

Source: DATCP

Plan Certification Process

Once a farmland preservation plan is developed, the county must apply to DATCP for plan certification. By completing the "County Application for Farmland Preservation Plan Certification" a county self -certifies to DATCP that the plan meets the applicable requirements for certification identified in State law. Based on a county's self-certification, DATCP can certify the plan if all certification requirements are met. DATCP must then make a certification decision within 90 days if the application submitted was complete. There is no requirement to seek certification from a State level such as the Land and Water Conservation Board. A farmland preservation plan may be certified for a period of up to 10 years.

Self-certification of the plan requires the county corporation counsel and county planning director to review the farmland preservation plan and certify that it meets State law. DATCP has the authority to conduct additional review of the plan to ensure that the plan meets the working lands initiative standards. If a county plan is denied certification, the county can re -submit a revised application that addresses the issues cited by the department in denying the earlier certification request.

Key Inventory and Trends

Statutory requirements call for a farmland preservation plan to identify, describe, and document:

- Agricultural uses of land in the county at the time that the farmland preservation plan is adopted, including key agricultural specialties, if any.
- Key infrastructure for agriculture, including facilities for processing, storage, transportation, and supply.
- Key agricultural resources, including available land, soil, and water and resources.

A farmland preservation plan must also identify, describe, and document significant trends in the county related to agricultural land use, agricultural production, enterprises related to agriculture, and the conversion of agricultural land to other uses and anticipated changes in the nature, scope, location, and focus of agricultural production, processing, supply, or distribution. The plan must also identify, describe, and document development trends, plans, or needs that may affect farmland preservation and agricultural development in the county related to the following:

- population growth
- economic growth
- housing
- transportation
- utilities

- communications
- business development
- energy
- community facilities and services
- waste management
- municipal expansion
- environmental preservation

Development of Farmland Preservation Areas

A key component to development of a county farmland preservation plan is the identification of farmland preservation areas. A farmland preservation area (FPA) is an area where the county plans to preserve agriculture and agricultural related uses. These areas may also include natural resource areas such as wetlands. Counties must develop an objective rationale to explain the areas chosen for farmland preservation. The mapping of FPAs has direct implications for development of farmland preservation zoning ordinances since certification of farmland preservation zoning districts requires that the district be located within a FPA. Similarly, Agricultural Enterprise Areas and PACE easements that receive DATCP grants may only be located in an area identified as a FPA.

Development of Vision, Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Programs

A farmland preservation plan must state the county's policy related to farmland preservation, agricultural development, and the development of enterprises related to agriculture. In addition, the plan must identify, describe, and document the following:

- Goals for agricultural development in the county, including goals related to the development of enterprises related to agriculture.
- Actions that the county will take to preserve farmland and actions that the county will take to promote agricultural development.
- Policies, goals, strategies, and proposed actions to increase housing density in certain areas planned for nonagricultural development within 15 years after the date on which the plan is adopted (possibly excluding undeveloped natural resource and open space areas).
- Key land issues related to preserving farmland and promoting agricultural development and plans for addressing these issues.

Public Participation

The public participation plan describes the methods the County will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a farmland preservation plan, and the opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the county and for the county to respond to such comments.

Techniques to obtain public opinion included news releases, fact sheets, newsletters, a County website, local government websites, display exhibits, a landowner survey, focus groups, public open houses, a public hearing, local government meetings, and six advisory committee meetings.

Plan Review and Adoption

Section 91.10(3) of the *Statutes* requires that the County shall adopt the Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) following the procedures under s. 66.1001(4) for the adoption of a comprehensive plan. On November 3, 2014, Waupaca County's Land and Water Conservation Committee (LWCC) recommended the adoption of this farmland preservation plan to the Waupaca County Board of Supervisors by adopting a resolution by a majority vote of the entire committee. On October 30, 2014, Waupaca County's Planning and Zoning Committee (PZC) recommended the adoption of this farmland preservation plan to the Waupaca County Board of Supervisors by adopting a majority vote of the entire committee. The Waupaca County Board adopted this farmland preservation plan as an amendment to the County's comprehensive plan by adopting it by ordinance on November 12, 2014.

Farmland Preservation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

- 1. **Goal**: Preserve the rural character of large areas of Waupaca County *Objectives*:
 - a. Utilize farmland preservation tools to encourage landowners to preserve their farms
 - b. Encourage land owners to cooperate to preserve contiguous tracts
 - c. Utilize Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to protect areas planned for agriculture
- 2. Goal: Preserve a strong agricultural economy

Objectives:

a. Promote educational tools to encourage buy local programs

- b. Provide incentives to promote value added agriculture
- c. Maintain use value assessment
- d. Promote home occupations in agricultural areas
- 3. Goal: Preserve a healthy natural environment

Objectives:

- a. Provide additional funding and technical assistance for conservation practices
- b. Promote the preservation of open space and agricultural land adjacent to important natural resources
- c. Promote sustainable agriculture, organic practices and local food supply planning
- 4. **Goal**: Promote a strong balance of landowner rights and community benefit *Objectives*:
 - a. Ensure that public participation is encouraged and utilized in drafting plans
 - b. Promote open and transparent government
 - c. Policy must be made while respecting land owner comments
- 5. Goal: Foster effective, cooperative government units

Objectives:

- a. Include all levels of local government in decisions
- b. Respect the activities of local governments
- c. Build open, honest and supportive relationships between government units
- d. Collaborate, cooperate and compromise
- 6. Goal: Support agriculturally related businesses

Objectives:

- a. Promote Agricultural Enterprise Areas
- b. Educate the public on benefits of local agriculture and agribusiness
- c. Support agri-business with technical assistance and revolving loan funds
- d. Include agriculture in economic development discussions
- 7. **Goal**: Respect local Comprehensive Plans and encourage development that is consistent with those plans.

Objectives:

- a. Ensure that the Farmland Preservation Plan is consistent with county and local comprehensive plans
- b. Promote development with density bonuses and streamlined approval

processes in areas planned for development

8. **Goal**: Identify areas of Waupaca County suitable for long term preservation and viability of diverse agriculture enterprises and resources. Protect or encourage protection of those areas for the benefit and use of current and future generations.

Objectives:

- a. Maintain a sufficient acreage of land in agricultural production in Waupaca County to economically sustain crucial agricultural support industries.
- b. Minimize the amount of land converted from agricultural use to accommodate permitted non-farm development.
- c. Reduce scattered rural nonfarm development by encouraging clustering of rural development as part of a town farmland preservation strategy.
- d. Encourage future urban development to be compact, utilize existing infrastructure and consistent with town planning policies.

Policies:

- a. Develop and implement new tools, such as Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easements (PACE), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), and cluster land divisions to meet agriculture resource goals.
- b. Provide incentives to support development that meets agriculture resource goals.
- c. Establish design guidelines that minimize the conversion of agriculture land, support farm operations and allow for agriculture related businesses.
- d. Establish eligibility for farmland preservation tax credits under chapter 91, Wisconsin State Statutes.
- 9. **Goal**: Maintain Waupaca County as a productive and economically viable agricultural area. Keep farming economically viable in Waupaca County through the 21st century.

Objectives:

- a. Continue to develop and implement a comprehensive economic development program to support, expand, and enhance agriculture as a viable economic activity in Waupaca County.
- b. Support and encourage the development of regional agriculture enterprise including: agriculture cooperatives, manufacturing to process farm products, and new agricultural technologies.

- c. Support farm marketing programs that promote Waupaca County agriculture and help farmers improve their profitability.
- d. Identify and help develop new markets for production agriculture, biotechnology, value added processing and Community Supported Agriculture.
- e. Strengthen transportation infrastructure such as rail transit and roads to support agricultural commerce.
- f. Support and promote using targeted investments of public funds where necessary, infrastructure and organizational capacity that serves agriculture and related enterprises.

Policies:

- a. Continue and expand direct services, marketing assistance and on demand technical assistance provided to farmers through University of Wisconsin Extension programs.
- b. Provide information about agricultural production to foster understanding and tolerance between farmers and their residential neighbors.
 - c. Include transportation of agricultural goods to market in all long-term planning related to truck, rail and air freight transport.
 - d. Highway shoulders and crossing should be designed to accommodate farm equipment and minimize safety conflicts with automobile traffic.
- 10. **Goal**: Encourage compact, economically and environmentally sustainable development in Non-Farm Areas.

Objectives:

- a. Create or encourage compact development to avoid the unnecessary conversion of agricultural or open space areas.
- b. Maintain Waupaca County's rural character and preserve the distinct character and physical separation of Waupaca County communities.
- c. Encourage separation of incompatible uses in rural areas.
- d. Reduce scattered rural nonfarm development by encouraging clustering of rural development as part of a town farmland preservation strategy.
- e. Promote the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- f. Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low government and utility costs.

g. Encourage future rural development to be compact, adjacent to existing development and consistent with county, town and city, and village planning policies.

Policies:

- a. Reduce zoning minimum lot size requirements to encourage conservation and cluster development and to reduce housing costs.
- b. Establish design guidelines and site plan review procedures for compact development that minimizes the conversion of working lands to residential use and the amount of land consumed per unit of new housing in the towns.
- c. Seek to maintain or increase housing densities in areas planned for development within the Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan.
- d. Promote development clusters based upon historical patterns such as existing hamlets, cross road communities, subdivision and conservation subdivisions, as well as environmental factors such as soils, slopes, and view sheds.
- e. Continue to direct development requiring a full range of public services to Waupaca County's range of public services to Waupaca County's incorporated communities.
- Goal: Maintain the viability, operational efficiency and productivity of the County's agricultural resources for current and future generations. *Objectives*:
 - a. Protect productive working lands from fragmentation and conflicts with non-working land uses.
 - b. Allow for farming expansion in areas where conflict with existing residential land use can be prevented or mitigated.
 - c. Protect the investment made, in both public infrastructure (roads) and private land and improvements that support the agricultural industry.
 - d. Allow for the opportunity to accommodate and create unique forms of agriculture.
 - e. Increase awareness relative to the importance of protecting the viability of the County's agricultural industry.
 - f. Explore opportunities to allow farmers and farmland owners to secure financial benefits for the preservation of farmland.
 - g. Encourage the use of agriculture Best Management Practices to minimize erosion, ground and surface water contamination.

Policies:

- a. Waupaca County permits properly conducted agricultural operations. Owner of property in areas planned for agricultural use (AE, AR or AWT) or adjacent to such areas should expect that they will be subject to conditions arising from such agricultural operations. Conditions may include, but are not limited to, exposure to: noise, lights; any hour of day or night; insects; chemicals; machinery operation, including aircraft, during spraying or other means of chemical pesticides, fertilizers, and other soil amendments. The conditions described may result of an agricultural operation which is in conformance with accepted customs, standards, laws and regulations. Residents in and adjacent to agricultural areas should be prepared to accept such conditions as a normal and necessary aspect of living in an area with a strong rural character and active agricultural sector.
- 12. **Goal**: Balance the protection of farmland with the exercise of development rights in rural areas.

Objectives:

- a. Identify lands where the primary intent is to preserve productive farmland and to allow for farming expansion.
- b. Identify lands where the primary intent is to allow for rural residential development.
- c. Consider establishing site design requirements that direct rural residential development to areas that minimize conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses and maintain the rural character of the County.

Policies:

a. Conservation and cluster land division design shall be supported as options for proposed major land divisions to minimize the negative impacts to agriculture, active farms, natural resources, cultural resources and rural character while accommodating residential development.

CHAPTER TWO – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Population, Housing, and Community Growth

Section 91.10 (1) (b) of the *Wisconsin Statutes* requires that a farmland preservation plan identify, describe, and document trends, plans, or needs related to population, economic growth, and housing. Section 91.10 (c) (7m) specifically requires that a farmland preservation plan include policies, goals, strategies, and proposed actions to increase housing density in areas that are not planned for future agricultural use. Each of these aspects place demands on the landscape and can significantly impact land use. Since farmland loss is affected by the demand placed on land for non-agricultural purposes, preservation efforts should acknowledge the factors that promote development or otherwise affect land use.

Many of the planning recommendations set forth in plan are directly related to the existing and probable future population, household, and employment levels in the county. A farmland preservation plan can provide a community with the rationale to allow for development and preservation simultaneously by acknowledging the influence of population growth and housing demand on land and the need to accommodate development in areas not designated for protection.

Population and Housing Trends

Population numbers are used as an indicator to show how much a community has grown. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a large portion of the growth in Waupaca County has occurred in and around the City of Waupaca, along the Highway 10 corridor, and areas in towns surrounding the larger cities and villages. Historically, the rural population was almost entirely composed of farmers, but rural non-farm development has accelerated since the previous farmland preservation plan. Farmland has been under increasing pressure most of the three decades due to a relatively poor agricultural economy and a robust nonfarm development market, especially in amenity- rich rural areas, such as Waupaca County. The villages and cities, with the exception of New London, Clintonville, and Waupaca owe their existence to the dominant agricultural economy. Urban dwellers provided services and equipment to farmers and processed or transported farm goods. The county's largest city, Waupaca, has a population of only 6,069.

Over the past 60 years, Waupaca County has experienced steady population

growth as the total county population increased from 35,056 in 1950 to 52,410 in 2010. According the latest census, between 2000 and 2010, the County population remained relatively stable, only adding 679 residents, for a growth rate of 1.3 percent. On average, Waupaca County has added 2,892 residents per decade over the past 60 years. The change in population by community is displayed in Table 2. The cities of Clintonville, New London, and Waupaca continue to be the largest in terms of population. Since 1950, their relative share of population in the County has decreased from 35.1 percent in 1950 to 31.1 percent in 2010. This trend is typical of comparatively faster rural residential development patterns. Table 2 displays the historical demographic growth by individual municipality in Waupaca County from 1950 to 2010.

It is evident from the data that the strongest gains in population were in rural areas rather than in the cities and villages. In fact, 5 out of the 12 incorporated municipalities lost population from 2000 to 2010. The largest population gains were both in numeric gains and percent change occurred in the towns of Iola, Caledonia, and Lind. About 55 percent of the people now live in rural towns, while the remaining 45 percent live in incorporated communities. This is a 5 percent increase since 1980.

Jurisdiction				Year				Percent Change	Numeric Change
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2000 - 2010	2000 - 2010
C. Clintonville	4,657	4,778	4,600	4,567	4,423	4,736	4,559	-3.7%	-177
C. Manawa	990	1,037	1,105	1,205	1,169	1,330	1,371	3.1%	41
C. Marion (pt.)	1,118	1,200	1,218	1,348	1,242	1,296	1,235	-4.7%	-61
C. New London (pt.)	3,738	4,066	4,433	4,941	5,321	5,618	5,685	1.2%	67
C. Waupaca	3,921	3,984	4,342	4,472	4,946	5,676	6,069	6.9%	393
C. Weyauwega	1,207	1,239	1,377	1,549	1,665	1,806	1,900	5.2%	94
V. Big Falls	146	119	112	107	75	85	61	-28.2%	-24
V. Embarrass	303	306	472	496	461	487	404	-17.0%	-83
V. Fremont	504	575	598	510	632	666	679	2.0%	13
V. Iola	867	831	900	957	1,125	1,298	1,301	0.2%	3
V. Ogdensburg	221	181	206	214	220	224	185	-17.4%	-39
V. Scandinavia	286	266	268	292	298	349	363	4.0%	14
T. Bear Creek	938	844	861	820	787	838	823	-1.8%	-15
T. Caledonia	705	715	882	1,040	1,177	1,466	1,627	11.0%	161
T. Dayton	665	729	979	1,514	1,992	2,734	2,748	0.5%	14
T. Dupont	744	682	645	615	634	741	738	-0.4%	-3
T. Farmington	1,746	1,885	2,242	2,959	3,602	4,148	3,974	-4.2%	-174
T. Fremont	361	449	514	618	561	632	597	-5.5%	-35
T. Harrison	587	423	379	450	432	509	468	-8.1%	-41
T. Helvetia	488	425	401	568	587	649	636	-2.0%	-13
T. lola	536	462	549	702	637	818	971	18.7%	153
T. Larrabee	1,237	1,257	1,295	1,254	1,316	1,301	1,381	6.1%	80
T. Lebanon	774	845	906	1,168	1,290	1,648	1,665	1.0%	17
T. Lind	804	707	787	1,038	1,159	1,381	1,579	14.3%	198
T. Little Wolf	930	955	1,089	1,138	1,326	1,430	1,424	-0.4%	-6
T. Matteson	870	829	737	844	889	956	936	-2.1%	-20
T. Mukwa	799	1,000	1,208	1,946	2,304	2,773	2,930	5.7%	157
T. Royalton	1,193	1,138	1,205	1,432	1,456	1,544	1,434	-7.1%	-110
T. St. Lawrence	605	551	517	608	697	740	710	-4.1%	-30
T. Scandinavia	576	528	519	772	890	1,075	1,066	-0.8%	-9
T. Union	873	850	774	784	733	804	806	0.2%	2
T. Waupaca	761	743	830	1,040	1,122	1,155	1,173	1.6%	18
T. Weyauwega	549	448	538	559	653	627	583	-7.0%	-44
T. Wyoming	357	293	292	304	283	285	329	15.4%	44
Waupaca County	35,056	35,340	37,780	42,831	46,104	51,825	52,410	1.1%	679

Table 2. Population By Community in Waupaca County: 1950-2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Based on the Wisconsin Department of Administration's 2008 population projection estimates, Waupaca County is forecasted to increase by 7,179 persons from 52,410 in 2010 to 59,004 in 2030. Table 2 identifies the projected populations for all Waupaca County communities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 21,387 households (occupied housing units) in Waupaca County in 2010 with an average household size of 2.37 persons. The number of households has increased over the last three decades while the average number of person per house has decreased. This trend is typical throughout Wisconsin reflecting the fact that family sizes have decreased. Recent household trends are displayed in Table 3.

Year	Number of Households	Change from Preceding Census	Average Household Size	Change from Preceding Census
1990	17,597		2.86	
2000	19,863	2,266	2.51	-0.35
2010	21,387	1,524	2.37	-0.14

 Table 3. Number of Households and Average Household Size for Waupaca

 County: 1990-2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As the county population increases, the number of homes will grow faster than in the past and depending on where the homes are located, their density will determine the impact to the agricultural community of the county. Currently, residential property accounts for 3.4 percent of the land area in Waupaca County. The forecasted future land area needed to accommodate the projected housing need is approximately an additional 2,700 acres. Though some of this acreage will come from agricultural lands, much of the growth will be absorbed by existing, vacant lots, marginal lands, and in -fill development sites within cities and villages. The projected percent of residential land area in the County in 2030 is approximately 4 percent.

From 2000 to 2010, a total of 1,716 new lots have been created in the unincorporated towns of the county. Many of these were recorded in platted subdivisions as small residential lots. However, a handful of new parcels are being carved out at the minimum lot size or larger and remain vacant. From 1991 to 2007, over 1.2 million acres of Wisconsin farmland have been removed from agriculture. Over the same time, Waupaca County has seen its quantity of farmland decrease by nearly 7,000 acres according to the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. The proliferation of unsewered, scattered residential development in the County has resulted in a trend towards low-densities and increased dependency on the automobile. A substantial portion of new development has occurred in a dispersed pattern outside of public services, such as public drinking water and waste treatment.

Household Income

Personal income is another primary indicator of the overall economic wellbeing of a community. Household income is one of the primary metrics of personal income. In Waupaca County, the median household income in 2012 is \$48,604, which is \$3,770 below the state's average.

Municipal Growth Strategies

According to the 2007 Waupaca Count y Comprehensive Plan, urban development is planned primarily around existing urban centers and existing areas of dense development in order to preserve the existing urban and rural development patterns of the County. The County's development pattern has formed a backwards "L" which follows Highway 10 in an east/west corridor and then northward along the County boundary along Highway 45. The Plan also acknowledges the economic advantages of this urban development policy in efficient and fiscal use of existing infrastructure investment. Expansion of municipal boundaries will likely be based on town comprehensive plans and population increases. Since the adoption of the comprehensive plan, the County has encouraged higher residential development densities in areas where public utilities will be available. Waupaca County also intends to work with neighboring municipalities and bordering towns to preserve adequate lands around existing cities and villages to allow reasonable expansion while honoring farmland preservation and natural resource protection.

Utilities and Communications

It is forecasted that the population in Waupaca County will grow by 12–20% over the next 20 years. This increase in population will undoubtedly increase the demand for public utilities and community facilities. However, the exact needs to expand, rehab, or create new utilities and community facilities are difficult to determine. Forecasts for the future utility and community facility needs of Waupaca County will vary across the county, according to growth pressure and the level of service that is deemed publicly acceptable.

An analysis of the County utilities is provided in chapter 4 of the Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan. Renewable energy sources are getting increased attention around the state as well as within the Waupaca County. As the County pushes to become more sustainable and support the continuing efforts by utilities and private individuals to generate more energy using renewable sources, this could have an impact to agriculture in the County. A growing business Wisconsin is the use of biodigesters which produce methane gas animal waste, crop residue, or byproducts from milk and cheese. In 2010 the United States had 156 farm scale biodigesters and 26 of them are located in Wisconsin. An added advantage to the biodigesters is they can reduce the environmental problems associated with manure waste such as stream and groundwater contamination.

Agricultural Resources

The farming industry of Waupaca County is an integral part of Wisconsin's agricultural economy and heritage. It is an important hub of dairy and livestock operations and remains in the top ten counties in vegetable crop production in the state. While maintaining its prominence in the more traditional farming practices, the agricultural industry in Waupaca County has also been able to effectively diversify its activities in response to changing market conditions. The County supports a growing cooperative program in which farmers produce more value added products and direct- marketing sales through roadside stands, auctions, farmers' markets, pick-your-own operations, and community supported agriculture or CSA. These new diverse activities have also led to a growing agritourism industry in the county, attracting thousands of visitors each year. At the same time, the conversion of agricultural land has long been considered a necessity for

economic development and growth. However, prime farmland often is converted prematurely with little consideration of the impacts to remaining agricultural infrastructure. This leads to speculation on other lands and often removes the incentive for farmers to reinvest into their farming operations. Substantial development in the midst of an agricultural area also may interfere with farming operations, including the movement of farm equipment on local roads. Further, new residents unaccustomed to practices such as manure spreading or nighttime harvesting may seek to limit such activities.

Waupaca County's productive farmland and rich agricultural heritage have helped make the county an important producer in the food and dairy industry. The county's agricultural land base is an important factor in keeping the county a competitive force in the agricultural marketplace, in supplying healthy and affordable foods to meet a growing population, and in fostering the local economies of rural communities.

Since the previous Farmland Preservation Plan, the most serious threat to the resiliency of farmland in the county is scattered residential development. Much of the county's growth in the past two decades has occurred on former agricultural land. Though the housing market bubble over the past several years has dramatically slowed down the pace of residential development, it still remains as one of the most significant threats to farmland. A large number of "ghost lots" or undeveloped small parcels invisibly dot the landscape, awaiting a landowner with a blueprint and building permit.

Land Use

The following table approximates the amount of land in each of the major land use classifications for Waupaca County. Depending on the data source, agriculture ranges from 35 to 53 percent of the total land area in the County (Table 4).

Table 4. Waupaca C	ounty Land Use	
Classification	Land Area (Acres)	Percent of Land Area
Agriculture	173,363	35%
Commercial	1,314	0.3%
Industrial	2,205	0.4%
Institutional	1,081	0.2%
Residential	16,659	3%
Undeveloped	54,364	11%
Transportation	16,102	3%
Utilities	398	0.1%
Water	19,815	4%
Woodlands	206,308	42%

Table 4. Waupaca County Land Use

Figure 1 shows the latest land use inventory in Waupaca County. Throughout the entire county, agriculture remains the most dominant land use activity.

Figure 1. Current land use patterns in Waupaca County



Farming in Wisconsin has undergone considerable change in the last few decades. According to the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistical Service (WASS), the state has experienced an 18 percent decline in the number of acres of farmland between 1980 and 2012. Waupaca County experienced a 26 percent decline in the number of acres of land in farmland

production between 1974 and 2012. Figure 2 illustrates the decline in the number of acres of land in farmland production.



Figure 2. Agricultural Acres in Waupaca County: 1974-2007

Number of Farms

Since 1987, the number of farms in Waupaca County has fluctuated, peaking in 2002 at 1,398 farms. However, since the 1950's, the overall trend is a decline in the number of farms. Similarly, the average farm size is decreasing as indicated in Table 5. This mirrors a growing statewide trend toward smaller average farm sizes.

Table 5. Land in Farms – 1987 - 2007

Farms & Land in Farms	1987	1992	1997	1992	1997	002	2007	2012
Farms	1,365	1,190	1,129	1,190	1,129	1,398	1,330	1,145
Land in Farms (acres)	272,429	241,778	226,746	241,778	226,746	247,351	234,932	215,330
Average Farm Size	200	203	201	203	201	177	176	188

Table 6 shows farm size trends in Waupaca County from 1978 to 2012. In 1987, the greatest percentage of farms within Waupaca County was 180 - 499 acres in size (49 percent) and the majority of farms were 10 -499 acres in size (87 percent). A shift in farm size has occurred since the original farmland preservation plan. By 2012, the greatest percentage of farms was between 50-149 acres (28 percent). Parallel trends have occurred throughout the state, where the average farm size has consistently decreased from 1978 to 2012. From 1987 to 2012 the number of farms sized from 180-499 acres decreased nearly 60 percent from 628 to 228 farms. Meanwhile, the number farms size from 10-49 acres grew by nearly 99 percent, far more than any other size class.

Farms & Land in Farms	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	% Change 1987-2012
1-9 acres	69	53	61	72	72	30	-56.5%
10-49 acres	143	164	163	327	334	284	98.6%
50-149 acres	370	484	463	563	552	360	-2.7%
180-499 acres	628	403	361	336	263	258	-58.9%
500-999 acres	75	74	67	79	83	65	-13.3%
1000+ acres	17	12	14	21	26	26	52.9%

Table 6. Farm Size in Waupaca County: 1987-2007

Table 7 illustrates farm land uses in Waupaca County. The most significant changes occurred relative to land used for pasturing. In this instance, cropland used solely for pasture declined from 20,024 in 2002 to 4,388 acres in 2007. This change may be attributed to some acres moving into harvested cropland, taken out of pasture for farmsteads, or more accurate accounting of the land use.

Land According to Use	2002	2012
Total Cropland (acres)	171,522	141,514
Harvested Cropland (acres)	145,444	129,584
Cropland used only for pasture or grazing	10,901	8,486
Irrigated Land (acres)	8,478	7,004
Total Woodland	52 <i>,</i> 986	45,236
Permanent pasture (other than cropland or wooded pastured)	5,481	9,311
Land in farmsteads (buildings, livestock, facilities, ponds, roads, etc.)	17,362	19,269
Pastureland, all types	20,024	14,388

Table 7. Land in farms - 2002 and 2012

Rising Land Values

According to a Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics report, agricultural land values are rising sharply. Table 8 depicts the average value of farm real estate and farmland without buildings. Similarly, cash rents have risen steeply, but are not shown.

Year	Ag Land without Buildings	Ag Land with Buildings
2000	\$1,635	\$1,993
2001	\$2,016	\$2,762
2002	\$1,989	\$3,141
2003	\$1,915	\$2,795
2004	\$2,414	\$2,505
2005	\$2,598	\$3,188
2006	\$3,190	\$4,178
2007	\$2,675	\$4,576
2008	\$3,810	\$4,501
2009	\$3,356	\$5,315
2010	\$3,046	\$5,029

 Table 8. Waupaca County Average Farmland Values - 2003 - 2007

Table 9 illustrates that between 2000 and 2011, fewer agricultural acres were changed to other uses and the price per acre more than doubled. Much of this can be attributed to rising commodity prices.

Lable 9. Agricultural land sales			
Waupaca County	2000	2005	2011
Agricultural land continuing in agricultural use			
Number of acres sold	2,305	1,261	1,408
Dollars per acre	\$1,742	\$2,726	\$3,116
Agricultural land being diverted to other use			
Number of acres sold	450	113	19
Dollars per acre	\$2,293	\$4,371	\$6,274
Total of all agricultural land			
Number of acres sold	2,755	1,374	1,427
Dollars per acre	\$1,832	\$2,861	\$3,158

With respect to the type of farming operation, Figure 3 illustrates that the nearly 90% of the 1,330 farms in the county are owned by individuals or families.



Figure 3. Type of farm ownership in Waupaca County.

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Commodity prices have a significant impact on farm incomes and profits. Even small shifts in commodity prices directly impact the bottom lines. Corn prices have risen in accordance with increasing demand from ethanol plants. Record or near-record corn acreages have been planted since 2007 in anticipation of high demand. On a statewide basis, productivity for some commodities increased considerably, specifically, the yields for corn, soybeans, and milk all rose more than 80 percent from 1970 to 2005.

Although the number of farmers and the total acreage of farmland has fallen over the past three decades, those still employed in farming have seen a large increase in productivity. These improvements in productivity have helped offset decreases in the number of farmers and farmland and confirm that the growth in farm incomes is the result of increases in farm efficiency.

Table 10 and Table 11 indicate the number of livestock, poultry, and crops in Waupaca County.

Table 10. Livestock and poultry - 2007	
Livestock and Poultry (numbers)	2012
Cattle and calves inventory	53,073
Beef cows	1,776
Milk cows	22,429
Cattle and calves sold	21,595
Hogs and pigs inventory	1,046
Sheep and lambs inventory	1,583
Layers 20 weeks old and older inventory	4,192
Broilers and other meet-type chickens sold	1,885

Table 11	. Select ci	rops - 2007
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Farms & Land in Farms	2012
Total Cropland (acres)	141,514
Harvested Cropland (acres)	129,584
Corn for Grain	42,949
Corn for Silage	18,440
Soybeans	20,221

Specialty Crops

Specialty crop farming may provide one means of maintaining agricultural production within growth pressured areas of the Waupaca County where large tracts of agricultural lands are not available. Unlike traditional crops such as corn or soybeans, the profitability of farming nontraditional crops is not closely tied to large acreage requirements. For example, a single acre of farmland is capable of producing 36,000 pounds of potatoes, 32,000 pounds of lettuce, 35,000 pounds of strawberries, or 28,000 ears of sweet corn. Specialty crops such as these are capable of yielding substantial revenues to the County's economy while diversifying and stabilizing the agricultural industry in the face of increased commercial and residential development. Smaller specialty crop farms could offer

a means of integrating agricultural uses within developing commercial and residential areas. In order to make such a strategy effective, it is also important that agricultural producers have local outlets to market their goods.

In addition to specialty crop farms, nurseries and sod farms could also serve a transitory role in areas under pressure to develop. As an area develops, and traditional agriculture becomes constrained or nonviable, nurseries and sod farms provide a means of taking greater advantage of the undeveloped agricultural lands by generating a profit from smaller areas. It should be noted, however, that when these transient uses leave a site, the land may not always be suitable for traditional agriculture.

Specialty crops found in Waupaca include nuts & berries (50 acres), orchards (36 acres), vegetables (1427 acres), floriculture (6 facilities), Christmas trees (1306), maple syrup (1311 gallons produced), potatoes (1612 acres) and organic crops (4 farms). For additional data see the USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture at: <u>http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_C hapter_2_County_Level/Wisconsin/</u>

Agricultural Infrastructure

Farms in Waupaca County are served by a network of local agricultural support businesses, such as implement dealers, feed and seed operations, agricultural product processors, and transportation systems (including rail), which provide necessary services, materials, and access to markets for the County's farmers. As such, the maintenance and expansion of these businesses are critical to the economics of farmland preservation in Waupaca County. The County will continue to support agricultural infrastructure businesses in appropriate locations that are close to the farms they serve. A broad list of storage, processing, and other agricultural support services and business can be found in section 5-20 of the Inventory and Trends Report, an appendix of the Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan.

The anticipated changes in local support businesses and agricultural enterprises in Waupaca County are such that they follow the trend of the past 15 years in consolidation of businesses and services. For example, the larger national agricultural suppliers are purchasing local service suppliers that were formerly locally owned. In most cases the service suppliers remain open under new management. Occasionally the supply businesses are being closed and relocated to other sites managed by the parent company. Some relocation has resulted in a loss of local convenience for both dairy and grain producers, however, a focus on internet supply and custom delivery of materials has adequately replaced the loss of some local suppliers. Another example of a change in agricultural services is in the area of grain storage. Waupaca County has been reduced to only two grain storage facilities within the county. However, the growth in private grain storage

and drying facilities has risen to 17% among grain producers within the county and is anticipated to continue if long term commodity price trends stay elevated. The second largest employer in Waupaca, AgriPur, and the largest grain distributor, Larsen CO-OP are both anticipating future growth. Therefore, given the steady (and sometimes dramatic) rise in agricultural revenue, supply and processing, we anticipate reciprocal increases in agricultural production and distribution. Agricultural production, regardless of commodity pricing, has risen steadily over the past several decades and is expected to continue to increase even if commodity prices stagnate or drop due to advances in technology. Future spikes in commodity prices will only serve to accelerate advances in production.

Economic Growth and Business Development

Agriculture remains a vital component of Waupaca County's economy. Farms, farming and farm-related businesses support the local economy. Farms are local businesses (see Chapter 5 and 6 of the Inventory and Trends report: http://www.co.waupaca.wi.us/Portals/7/PDF/Planning/Inventory%20and%20Trends%20Master%20Report.pdf

Agriculture provides 4,427 jobs in Waupaca County and farmers support many other businesses by purchasing equipment, products and services they need to grow, harvest, process, market and deliver food and feed to consumers and other markets. The 1,330 farms in Waupaca County have production expenses that flow through the County's economy, to support food processors and manufacturers, veterinarians, garden centers, equipment sales, repair shops, and a host of other products and services. The Census of Agriculture, (USDA and National Agricultural Statistics Service) reported that the total value of agricultural products sold in Waupaca County in 2011 was \$136.9 million, significantly higher than the \$86.2 million reported in 2002. This represents the total market value before taxes and production expenses of all agricultural products sold from Waupaca County farms. Dairy products remain an important part of the total agricultural product sales in the County.

In Waupaca County, agriculture generates \$871.9 million (24% of the county's total) annually in economic activity, and is home to major cheese plants and food processors. In addition, the food processing/packaging related businesses represent important economic forces in Waupaca County. This industry includes hundreds of family-owned farms and related businesses that provide equipment, services, and other products needed to process, market, and transport food and agriculture -related products to consumers. The production, sales, and processing of Waupaca County farm products generates employment, economic activity, tax revenue, and income.

Dairy farming is the dominant agricultural industry in Waupaca County. On farm milk production generates \$116.4 million in business sales. Processing milk into dairy products accounts for another \$629.8 million. Located in Waupaca County are seven plants that process dairy products. The production of on-farm milk accounts for over 1,100 jobs, while the processing of dairy products accounts for another 2,100 jobs.

Agriculture is linked to many other industries in the county. Agriculture supports equipment and implement manufacturers, dealers, and repair technicians, food processing industries, construction trade, trucking, genetic research, and veterinary services. See Chapter 5 of the Inventory and Trends report for a detailed analysis of existing assessment of related agricultural enterprises

http://www.co.waupaca.wi.us/Portals/7/PDF/Planning/Inventory%20and%20Trends%20Maste r%20Report.pdf

Farming is an enterprise that operates in much the same way as a local business. Agricultural producers purchase items such as seed, feed, fertilizer, chemical, fuel, and machinery from local suppliers and the commodities they produce with those items are then sold at market. In addition to farming enterprises, many agricultural related businesses are located within the county such as seed dealers, grain elevators, dairy processors, equipment sales, and farm chemical, fuel, and supply dealers. These industries, like all others stimulate Waupaca County's economy through property taxes, sales tax, and employment (Figure 4). Maintaining this significant element of the local economy is financially beneficial to public service providers such as County and municipal governments.

As the number of homes in the county continues to grow, the cost of providing services will increase as well. It is critical that the county pursue policies and tools that limit the premature conversion of farmland and encourage development patterns that allow the most efficient provision of services possible.

Future Trends



The market value of products sold on Waupaca County farms has increased every year since 1992 (Table 12). During that span, the average sales per farm increased 26percent.

	_2002		2012	
	No. of		No. of	
Waupaca County	farms	\$ Amount	farms	\$ Amount
Total sales	1398	\$86,222,000	1,145	\$ 160,033,000
Average sales per farm		\$61,675		\$102,973
Value of sales:				
Less than \$1,000	431	\$49,000	265	\$ 42,000
\$1,000 to \$2,499	140	\$220,000	98	\$ 191,000
\$2,500 to \$4,999	109	\$396,000	110	\$ 314,000
\$5,000 to \$9,999	103	\$761,000	131	\$ 680,000
\$10,000 to \$19,999	94	\$1,400,000	122	\$ 1,568,000
\$20,000 to \$24,999	65	\$1,461,000	36	\$ 757,000
\$25,000 to \$39,999	50	\$1,591,000	51	\$ 2,193,000
\$40,000 to \$49,999	41	\$1,797,000	27	\$ 1,291,000
\$50,000 to \$99,999	150	\$11,032,000	72	\$ 5,647,000
\$100,000 to \$249,999	132	\$21,005,000	137	\$ 20,304,000
\$250,000 to \$499,999	53	\$16,799,000	73	\$ 23,014,000
\$500,000 or more	30	\$29,708,000	56	\$ 104,031,000

Table 12. Total Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold - 2002 and 2012

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2002, 2007 (Census of Agriculture)

The market value of livestock and poultry products increased from 2002 to 2012. Total livestock and poultry grew by 60 percent. Milk and other dairy products from cows increased by 62 percent while at the same time seeing 88 fewer dairy operations (Table13).

Waupaca County	farms	\$ Amount	farms	\$ Amount
Total Livestock, poultry				
& their products	700	\$68,180,000	558	\$ 109,429,000
Poultry and eggs	64	\$60,000	93	\$ 105,302,000
Cattle and calves	571	\$11,592,000	416	\$ 18,303,000
Milk and other dairy				
products from cows	340	\$ 55,617,000	197	\$ 89,989,000
Hogs and pigs	46	\$430,000	33	\$ 150,000
Sheep, goats and their				
products	47	\$90,000	51	\$ 436,000

Table 13. Market Value of Livestock & Poultry Sold

Table 14 depicts changes in the market value of farm products sold in Waupaca County and the amount of government subsidies paid to farmers from 1992 to 2007. The market value of farm products sold increased by 71 percent from 1992 to 2007. Government payments to farmers also increased by 58 percent during the same time span, whereas the average payment per farm decreased by 14 percent.

Changes in Market Value and				
Government Payments	1992	1997	2002	2007
Market Value of Products sold	\$80,182,000	\$86,182,000	\$86,222,000	\$136,954,000
Average per Farm	\$67,345	\$76,334	\$61,675	\$102,973
Government Payments	\$1,637,000	\$2,089,000	\$4,314,000	\$2,580,000
Average per Farm	\$3,797	\$3,505	\$6,487	\$3,270

Table 14. Changes in market value and government payments

Tourism

Tourism is another aspect of economic development that needs to be addressed. Waupaca County ranks high in the state for tourism spending. According to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, in 2011, visitors spent \$77 million, supporting over 1,200 jobs and \$9.6 million in state and local taxes. Agri- tourism stands out as a significant means of aiding the local economy while at the same time enhancing the rural image of the county. In Waupaca County, agri-tourism has been recognized as an economic development driver that supports many local businesses by creating demand for new services and providing supplemental income to agricultural operations.

More and more Waupaca County farmers sell directly to consumers through farmer's markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture (CSA). In 2011, 139 farms generated \$1.3 million in direct-marketing sales. Sales made directly to a farmer often result in greater returns to the grower than if products were sold at wholesale prices. Therefore, the economic impact of agri-tourism is typically more immediate than other commercial enterprises in that it provides a direct relationship between locally owned and operated producers and the consumer. Successful agri-tourist destinations can also benefit local restaurants, hotels, shops, and other destinations.

Natural Resources

Waupaca County is located in the east central region of the state, surrounded by Shawano County to the north, Outagamie County to the east, Winnebago and Waushara Counties to the south, and Portage County to the west. It lies entirely within the most recent Pleistocene glaciation event. Consequently, the topography is characterized by sandy outwash till and eskers in the west and thicker outwash plains in the east, making Waupaca County rich in natural resources. In addition, the County offers a diversity of recreational activities.

Local officials recognize that economic development and environmental quality are equally important components of a resilient community. Unfortunately, this awareness has come after decades of sprawling development, environmental degradation, and rapid conversion of prime agricultural land well beyond the urban boundary. It's obvious that development often has substantial impacts on the quality and quantity of an area's air, land, water, and biological resources. Yet, economic development has often taken precedence over environmental protection. The benefits of environmental protection are often less evident and immediate, but are nonetheless important as natural resources continue to become scarce and threats to environmental and human health are ever present.

General Soil Characteristics

While water supply and topography are important, the most critical natural resource from an agricultural perspective is soil. Soil characteristics are closely related to the type and intensity of farming operations and often determine the kinds of management practices necessary for long term production. An inclusive approach to farmland preservation planning, however, involves the consideration of other natural resources such as forests and wetlands. These areoften part of farm tracts and contribute to the overall aesthetic and environmental quality of the county.

Soils can be considered a non-renewable resource. Most soils are only a few feet in

thickness and have taken hundreds or thousands of years to form. The soils, as well as, topography of Waupaca County vary considerably from east to west because of the glacial activity 15,000 to 18,000 years ago. These factors have resulted in a mix of productive farmlands and wooded rolling hills to the west and more extensively gently rolling productive farmlands to the east.

The eastern portion of the county is dominated by relatively productive silty

- clay loams such as the Oshkosh, Neenah, Zittau, and Borth soil types. Most of these soils are characterized by slow to moderate permeability, medium available water capacity, medium natural fertility, and relatively low erosion rates. Other productive soils common in the eastern portion of the county include Symco and Hortonville sandy loams. Less productive soils frequently found in the area include Plainfield loamy sand and Shawano loamy fine sand, although these soils could become productive with irrigation. Muck soils supporting wetlands are also common along the Wolf River.

The western side of the county is characterized by sandy and loamy soils. Common soil types include Richford, Plainfield, and Kanski loamy sand, and Kennan and Rosholt sandy loam. These soils generally have low to medium available water capacity and relatively rapid permeability rates. The soils are often shallow, droughty, or stony and subject to erosion. However, in many cases high levels of productivity can be achieved through irrigation. Hortonville and Tilleda loams, characterized by moderate permeability and high available water capacity, are also common in the west. These soils are highly productive on level or moderate slopes. Muck and peat soils also comprise significant areas along the streams in this part of the county.

Based on the detailed soil survey, it is estimated that 60 to 70 percent of the soils in Waupaca County fall into class's I-IV. The majority of these are classes II and III with only a small percentage falling into Class I or IV. The total of Prime, Statewide, and Local soils in this County is 239,843 acres or 49% of the total land area as illustrated in Table 15 and shown on Figure 5.

		% of
Soil Classification	Acres	County
Prime soils	119,471	24%
Farmland of statewide importance	57,661	12%
Not prime soils	249,633	51%
Prime farmland if drained	56,419	12%
Prime farmland if drained and protected from flooding	6,292	1%

Table 15. Soil Classifications in Waupaca County




Forest Resources

Forests provide raw materials for the forest products industry and for venue hiking, hunting, and fishing. Forests once covered much of the area. Today, these woodlands generally occupy rolling hills and rough topography as well as much of the marshes and floodplains. Over 40% of the county is covered in woodlands Figure 6. This constitutes nearly a 10% increase since the original farmland preservation plan. The 203,000 acres of woodlands are scattered throughout the county, although the larger contiguous blocks of forestland are located in the northwestern towns and along the Wolf River. These woodlands are closely associated with the excellent wildlife resources and recreational opportunities available in the county. At present, over 90,000 acres or 44% of the woodlands in the County are enrolled under the Managed Forest Law Program. This land is privately owned and managed for timber production and is preferentially taxed.

Rural parcelization and ensuing residential development continues to chip away at the forested land base. While the amount of forestland has grown over the years in the county, the pattern of forestland continues to become more fragmented. The growing number of forestland owners with small wooded parcels reduces the long-term economic viability of large scale forest management, put homes in fire prone areas, and reduces the amount of core habitat needed by many plants and animals. Figure 7 shows the spatial distribution of new parcels by town in Waupaca since 2000. While many of the new parcels remain undeveloped, they still invisibly dot the landscape and are a precursor to development.



Figure 7. Parcelization Trends in Waupaca County (2000 - 2010)

Waupaca County Parcel Changes 2000-2012 Waupaca County Famland Preservation Plan 자 -le-46 56 64 67 75 G T. Wyoming T. Dupont T. Harrison T. Larrabee T. Matteson 94 53 74 41 T. Union T. Iola T. Bear Creek T. Helvetia 73 154 74 152 T. St. Lawrence T. Little Wolf T. Scandinavia T. Lebanon 90 174 69 141 T. Waupaca T. Royalton T. Farmington T. Mukwa 4 142 73 38 267 174 T. Weyauwega T. Dayton T. Caledonia T. Lind Τ. Fremont



Water Resources

Waupaca County has an abundant supply of underground water (Figure 8). In the western portion of the county, most of the groundwater supply is found close to the surface as result of a shallow mantle of bedrock. This region contains many spring seeps. Depending on the rate of discharge and topography of the immediate area, the ground water may discharge into a stream or accumulate in ponds or marshes. Ground water seepage is largely responsible for the abundance of trout streams found in this part of the county.

Land to the east and especially along the west bank of the Wolf River contains many artesian wells. While not contributing significantly to the volume of surface water lakes and streams, these springs are valuable in maintaining the large number of marshes and wetlands present in this area.

Ground water in the eastern portion of the county is generally deeper and less available. A larger percentage of the precipitation runs off so the ground water recharge is much slower. All of the ground water in the county is from local precipitation that infiltrates through the soil to recharge the aquifers. Contamination risks from land use practices are the greatest threat to ground water resources. Potential point source contamination originates from old unregulated landfills, underground fuel storage tanks, private septic systems, livestock manure handling and storage, septic disposal and excessive agricultural fertilization. These risks are again most prevalent in the western portion of the county where infiltration is greatest. Vegetable crops are grown on approximately 5% of the cropland in this region. Vegetable crops require large amounts of fertilizer and irrigation water, which results in the potential for ground water contamination.

The county is entirely within the Wolf River basin or watershed. There is 7,240 acres of surface water in lakes along with 1,732 acres of rivers and streams. There are approximately 74 named rivers and streams along with numerous small unnamed and intermittent tributaries. The total length of named rivers and streams is 337 miles. The largest river is the Wolf, which accounts for 41% of the river and stream surface area. There are 275 lakes in the county, of which 145 are named. Sandy soils found in western Waupaca County readily allow water from precipitation to percolate to groundwater rather than runoff to lakes and streams. This condition leads to continual recharge of groundwater supplies and accounts for both stable and high quality water in streams in the western half of the county. All of the trout streams are located in this region. In the eastern part of the county the opposite is true. Heavy soils are not conducive to infiltration and percolation. Stream flows more readily reflect seasonal runoff rates. As a result, there are fewer permanent streams and more dry runs and intermittent tributary streams. Higher

runoff rates also result in more sediment and nutrient delivery to surface waters in this region.



Wetlands

Approximately 124,473 acres of wetland exist in Waupaca County. There has been a net loss of about 25% of the original wetlands since settlers began manipulating the land for agricultural purposes. Wetlands are located throughout the county. All indigenous wetland types are represented in Waupaca County. Each of these represents a unique ecosystem based on hydrologic conditions, vegetation, and location in relationship to other wetlands, drier upland areas, or adjacent water bodies. In addition to providing habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife species, wetlands are important for the recharge of aquifers and the protection of ground water quality. They are extremely efficient at trapping and filtering out nutrients and sediments contained in runoff and provide highly effective flood storage areas. All natural resource programs administered by Waupaca County will protect wetlands from further destruction. The protection of wetlands adjacent to lakes and rivers are particularly important for protecting water quality. Every effort will be made to protect these areas.

Utilities, Community Facilities, and Services

It is forecasted that the population in Waupaca County will grow by 10- 30% over the next 20 years. This increase in population will undeniably increase the demand for public utilities and community facilities. However, the exact needs to expand, refurbish, or build new infrastructure are difficult to determine. Forecasts for future utility and community facility needs of Waupaca County will vary across the County, according to growth pressure and the level of service that is considered necessary.

Infrastructure includes the physical elements of development that directly influence the form and function, and quality of growth. They include the broad categories of utilities, transport, and other public facilities, most of which represent a substantial and long-term investment and many of which are underground and, therefore, often unseen or overlooked. It is essential that all infrastructure, despite being provided by separate agencies, be planned in concert with a single vision of county or regional growth and development.

For a more detailed listing of all community facilities reference Section 4 of the Inventory and Trends Report.

http://www.co.waupaca.wi.us/Portals/7/PDF/Planning/Inventory%20and%20Trend s%20Master%20Report.pdf

Communications

Advanced communications technology is critical to economic development and quality of life in Waupaca County, and can be planned, designed, and maintained to avoid disruption of desired land use patterns, and minimize environmental or visual impact. Telecommunication towers, specifically cellular phone towers, are on the rise with increased use of cell phones. Refer to the County Planning and Zoning office for more information on the number and location of telecommunication towers in the County.

Communication Towers

The siting of new wireless telecommunication towers continues to take place around the State of Wisconsin. The need to construct additional towers is being driven by advancements in mobile telephone technology, additional demand for mobile telephone service, and increased numbers of service providers competing to supply that increased demand. The popularity of the digital phone is the primary reason that more towers are needed. These phones require more towers to operate than the older cellular telephone. The expansion of digital service can assist in the ability to access the internet by wireless modem. Areas along major highways tend to be targeted first for expansion of wireless communication services.

Telephone Service

According to Waupaca County Emergency Management and local community information, telephone service providers in the county include the following.

- Amherst Telephone
- Century-Tel Communications
- Frontier Communications
- Iola/Scandinavia TDS Telecom
- Manawa/Ogdensburg Telephone Company
- SBC

Energy

Waupaca County's energy needs are supplied by seven power utilities:

- Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative
- Alliant-Wisconsin Power & Light
- Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative
- Clintonville Water & Electric Utility
- New London Electric & Water Utility
- Wisconsin Electric Power Company
- Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

Waste Management

Solid waste and disposal is an essential government service in Waupaca County. The Waupaca County Processing and Transfer Facility provides solid waste, recycling, and composting services to County residents. In 2012, nearly 2000 tons of recycled material and yard waste were processed in addition to 5,838 tons of solid waste. The facility is expected to meet the needs of the County for the next ten years.

Highways

Personal motor vehicles account for most of the daily trips in Waupaca County.

Slow moving farm machinery and fast-moving automobiles must frequently share local, county, and state roads, resulting in increased risk of traffic accidents. As travel patterns disperse from urban areas, pressure on farmland increases as well. Widening existing roads not only directly consumes farmland through expanded rights-of-way, but can also create barriers to movement of farm machinery. Building new roads can effectively bisect existing farms, reducing their economic viability. In addition, residential or highway-oriented commercial development spurred by transportation improvements not only consumes additional farmland, but can create secondary conflicts with existing agricultural use.

However, continued growth and development of Waupaca County depends on the availability of good transportation, whether to carry agricultural products to market or to provide a means of access to recreational opportunities. Similarly, residents in the County benefit from a network of highways and rail to assure that materials, people, and equipment move freely. U.S. Highway 10 serves the County, connecting it to Stevens Point and the Fox Cities. The County currently has 171 miles of U.S. and State Highways, 312 miles of County Highways, and 1,170 miles of local roads.

Railroads

One freight company serves the County. Canadian National operates about 50 miles of freight rail, passing through 8 of the County's 22 towns. Rail service is routed along the southern and eastern perimeter of Waupaca County. The rail lines connect Waupaca County to larger metropolitan centers to the east and west, such as Minneapolis, Appleton, Milwaukee, and Chicago.

Agricultural Infrastructure

Farming infrastructure includes businesses and services such as a feed mills, equipment vendors, farm supply businesses, and food processing facilities (Figure 9). A listing of this infrastructure for Waupaca County by Town is included in the Inventory and Trends Report of Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan at:

http://www.co.waupaca.wi.us/Portals/7/PDF/Planning/Inventory%20and%20Trends %20Master%20Report.pdf



CHAPTER 3 – CHALLENGES TO FARMLAND

Like many counties across Wisconsin, Waupaca County is losing farmland to a variety of forces, most notably to development and community change. Since 1950, over 8.2 million acres of farmland has been lost in the state (Figure 10). In some areas this change has been desirable and in the best interest of community development and orderly growth. But when farmland conversion occurs on productive soils, in areas of agricultural investment, in sensitive environmental areas, or in a sprawling, haphazard pattern, change can have serious consequences.



Figure 10. Declining Agricultural Acreage in Wisconsin from 1950 - 2010

Throughout the planning process a range of issues and opportunities were recognized. Most of these specifically relate to agriculture, while some are associated with the state's Working Lands Initiative and its implementation. The following are list of the issues that were identified during the planning process.

Changing demographics

- □ Farmers are aging. The average age of a farmer has increased from 55 to 57 since 2002. As farmers retire, farmland is often subdivided and sold for residential use.
- □ Urban growth and commuting from Waupaca County to the Fox Cities, Stevens Point, and Wausau is a reality.
- □ The number of farmers and farm workers is declining.

Land use conflicts and issues

- □ Non-farm growth pressures have increased the opportunities for farmers to liquidate their wealth in land.
- □ In some areas where development pressure is high, farmers may feel that development is unavoidable.
- □ Agricultural activities, such as manure hauling, equipment noise, odor from livestock and chemicals, irrigation for growing crops, and night time harvesting of plants may be objectionable to nonfarm residents.

Agricultural economics

- □ The large scale of some modern farms requires substantial economic investments and financial uncertainties.
- □ Many landowners feel that current incentives are too low to participate in state and federal programs.
- Over the last several years, cash receipts for crops have risen sharply, especially for corn and soybeans, which has temporarily spurred a slow-down in acres being converted from agriculture to development. However, many do not expect this trend to continue, therefore strong farmland preservation measures need to be put in place.
- □ As prime farmland is converted to non-agricultural uses, less productive and marginal lands may be brought into production at increased financial and environmental costs

□ There is a growing concern that placing greater acreage into row crops may compromise traditional conservation practices that have long facilitated land preservation and water quality.

CHAPTER 4 – TOOLS FOR PROTECTING WORKING LANDS

This chapter describes farmland protection tools that are intended to help protect farmland from incompatible uses and land development. Some of the tools are unique to Wisconsin, while others have been used in various parts of the country.

The people of Waupaca County have worked diligently to develop this plan as a vision for the future of farmland preservation. Governmental bodies, both elected and appointed, make decisions that determine whether or not the farmland preservation plan can be achieved. All of this affects how the plan relates to the future of agriculture in Waupaca County. Over the ten year lifespan of the plan, many decisions will be made that will impact the plan's success. Therefore, it is critical that each of these decision making bodies accept the fundamental recommendations of the plan and make decisions based upon it.

The Working Lands Initiative (WLI), outlined in Ch. 91 of the Wisconsin State statutes, identifies multiple farmland preservation tools and techniques that farmland owners may utilize to protect their lands and become eligible to claim tax credits. Specifically, the WLI is based upon three preservation techniques: farmland preservation zoning, establishment of agricultural enterprise areas, and the purchasing of agricultural conservation easements. This chapter describes the County's approach to farmland preservation supportive land use planning and zoning. The policies and associated maps will guide County decision making on future development, preservation, zoning changes, and land divisions, in combination with land use policies and maps in the 2030 Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan.

Farmland Preservation Implementation Tools

A necessary tool in protecting farmland is to better educate stakeholders and local governments about the economic benefits of farming and the public costs of converting farmland to non-agricultural uses. It is equally important to give farmers information on how they can better protect their land while at the same time enhance their financial security. Improving public awareness can also help protect farming and in turn improve public perception of the overall value of a large agricultural base.

The following tools have proven effective in helping ensure the long-term economic viability of agriculture.

Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE)

The PACE program provides state funding for the purchase of agricultural

conservation easements. The Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will provide funding to cooperating local entities for the purchase of easements from willing landowners. The easements are deed restrictions that landowners voluntarily place on their properties to protect productive agricultural land. Landowners retain full ownership and continue to pay property taxes, and manage and operate the farm. If and when the property owner sells the farmland, the development restrictions are passed on to the new owner. PACE funded easements are intended to strengthen areas that have been planned and designated as local farmland preservation areas in a certified County farmland preservation plan.

In 2010, six landowners in Waupaca County were awarded PACE agreements by DATCP, totaling over 3,300 acres in protected farmland Figure 11. However, the 2011-2013 state biennial budget eliminated PACE funding, so at the time of this plan, DATCP is longer accepting additional PACE applications.

In 2009, Waupaca County passed Chapter 47 of County Code of Ordinances known as the Farmland and Forest Conservation Easement Donation Program. This ordinance arose out of local demand to have a permanent land protection tool expressed during the comprehensive planning process in 2006-2007. To date Waupaca County has accepted over 700 acres of donated perpetual conservation easements on farmland or forested land. This program was a precursor to the county's involvement in PACE and still continues today. Accepted properties must be consistent with the county preferred land use map in such a manner that they are targeted to be long term forestry or agricultural uses. Currently AE, AR, PVRF and RP are the only land uses accepted for easement. Figure 11. Location of PACE recipients in Waupaca County.



Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA)

This method for preserving farmland is to designate area as an 'Agricultural Enterprise Area'. AEA is a new tool for farmland preservation set forth in Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. Designation of an AEA identifies the area as primarily devoted to agricultural use and target local agricultural preservation and supportive development. AEAs are authorized by DATCP through a competitive application process. In order for an area to be a designated AEA, the area must be:

- o Located in a farmland preservation area
- Land must be contiguous
- Be primarily in agricultural use
- o A minimum of five eligible landowner petitioners

Eligible farmers in an AEA can receive income tax credits. Landowners can also enter into a voluntary Farmland Preservation Agreement that allows them to claim additional income tax credits in exchange for keeping land in agricultural use for at least 15 years and meeting conservation standards.

Farmland Preservation Zoning

Farmland preservation zoning is a preservation tool that may be implemented by the local zoning authority (towns with farmland preservation areas). The farmland preservation zoning ordinance and corresponding map must identify areas zoning for farmland preservation and describe the permitted uses.

Farmland preservation zoning serves to maintain agricultural activity and is designed to protect large contiguous blocks of land. Such large areas can provide landowners with assurance regarding the continued agricultural and agriculturally-related use of land. Benefits from this security include contributing predictability to farm management decisions, limiting land use conflicts with neighbors, and encouraging agricultural investment, all of which are diminished when land is removed from agricultural use.

Farmland preservation zoning allows some residential development, but can restrict density. Such constraints on development potential can limit land speculation and keep land affordable to farmers. Keeping large areas relatively free of non-farm development can reduce the likelihood of conflicts between farmers and non-farming neighbors. Local governments can use this zoning to conserve a critical mass of agricultural land, to keep individual farms from becoming isolated among residential development, and ensure there will be enough farms to support local agricultural service businesses. Tax credits for land under Farmland Preservation Zoning:

- o \$10/acre if under zoning and located in an AEA
- o \$7.50/acre if the land is under zoning

Rezoning

Section 91.48 of the *Statutes* outlines the conditions to rezone land out of a certified farmland preservation zoning district. Though rezoning may be done without penalty as part of a farmland preservation zoning ordinance map revision, special procedures apply for removing individual parcels from a certified farmland preservation district outside of such updating.

State law requires a zoning authority to do all of the following before rezoning land out of a certified farmland preservation district at the request of any person:

- Hold a public hearing on the requested rezoning
- Make all of the following findings after a public hearing:
 - The rezoned land is better suited for a use not allowed in the farmland preservation zoning district
 - The rezoning is consistent with the applicable town and County comprehensive plans
 - The rezoning is substantially consistent with this certified farmland preservation plan
 - The rezoning will not substantially impair or limit current of future agricultural use of surrounding parcels of land that are zoned for or legally restricted to agricultural use

Alternative to Rezoning

Under *State Statute* 91.46, the County may utilize a conditional use permit to allow for residential development in the farmland preservation zoning district. Conditional use permit standards ensure that approved residences are compatible with the farmland preservation district. Such an amendment would not take away any existing landowner rights in farmland preservation districts. An amendment would allow farmers in the affected district to continue claiming tax credits and permit compatible residential construction within the farmland preservation district without the need to rezone. The text amendment alternative can protect farmland and does not require any official zoning map changes.

By state law, utilization of conditional use permits for the creation of nonfarm residences within farmland preservation zoning districts is an option only if all of the following apply:

- The ratio of nonfarm residential acreage to farm acreage on the base farm tract on which the residence is or will be located will not be exceed the 1 to 20 ratio after the residence is constructed.
- There will not be more than four dwelling units in nonfarm residences, nor, for a new nonfarm residence, more than five dwelling units in residences of any kind, on the base farm tract after the residence is constructed.

Farmland Preservation Planning and Zoning Approach

The policies and maps in this plan will guide County decision-making on future development, preservation, zoning changes, and land divisions, in combination with land use policies and maps in the 2030 Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan. Specific type of land uses that allow for and encourage development are not included in this plan. This level of planning detail is included in the 2030 Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan and within town comprehensive plans.

The 2030 Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan established the most recent and applicable framework for farmland preservation planning and zoning in the County. That structure was established after several years of analysis and discussion in the mid-2000s. With the adoption of the new Working Lands Initiative, some adjustments required to the County's program and were considered as part this planning process.

The resulting farmland preservation land use planning and zoning approach focuses primarily on continued farmland preservation and other agricultural/open space zoning of most lands in unincorporated areas of the County. Within the planned Farmland Preservation Area, agricultural -related uses will be supported and non-farm development will be limited. Residential development in the planned Farmland Preservation Area will be limited to a density (not minimum lot size) of one home per 20 acres or one home per 40 acres of land owned. Outside of the Farmland Preservation Areas, the County supports other types of development to maintain the quality of life and economy.

Farmland Preservation Areas

Figure 12, the Waupaca County Farmland Preservation Map, presents recommendations for future preservation in Waupaca County. The time horizon can generally be understood as a 15 year planning span, despite the fact that both the State's comprehensive planning and Working Lands law will require this map and plan be revisited at a minimum of once every 10 years.

Affirming the right of Waupaca County landowners to continue farming with minimal land use conflicts from current and future land uses is critical to the long-

term sustainability of farming. The purpose of the Farmland Preservation Area is to:

- Preserve productive agricultural lands in the long-term
- Preserve rural character and aesthetic quality of the County
- Provide equity and fairness to owner of land with comparable resource and location characteristics
- Minimize non-agricultural development on prime farmland -Protect existing farm operations from encroachment by incompatible uses
- Allow a maximum residential density of one residence per 20 acres of land, as described in greater detail in the policies that follow.
- Maintain farmer eligibility for farmland preservation programs, such as tax credits.

The farmland preservation area is mapped largely to accommodate agriculturalrelated uses and to focus on areas actively used for farming, with productive soils, and have a long-term suitability for farming. This designation also accommodates forest management, farmsteads, and limited non-farm housing as permitted in the zoning districts.





Designated Farmland Preservation Areas

Farmland preservation areas are those lands designated and mapped in Waupaca County with the best combination of soil characteristics needed to produce high levels of food, feed, and fiber. Delegating, mapping, and protecting farmland preservation areas in Waupaca County are the foundation of this Farmland Preservation Plan. Farmland preservation areas are best suited for farming in the County and will be preserved for agricultural-related uses into the future.

The mapping of farmland preservation areas has direct implications in the development of farmland preservation zoning ordinances since the certification of farmland preservation zoning districts requires that the district be located within an FPA. Similarly, agricultural enterprise areas (AES) and PACE easements that receive DATCP grants may only be located in an area designated as an FPA.

Rationale for farmland preservation areas

Below is a list of criteria used for the delineation of farmland preservation areas, or FPA's. These criteria once enacted, allowed the steering committee and towns to draft an appropriate map of these areas. Farmland preservation areas, as shown on the Waupaca County Farmland Preservation Plan Map, include lands that meet all the following criteria:

- 1. Are predominately in active agriculture, agricultural accessory, or forestry- related;
- 2. Are planned to support a predominance of agriculture, agricultural accessory, or forestry-related use for at least twenty years;
- 3. Are clearly shown as "Farmland Preservation" on preferred land use maps in town, village, city, or extraterritorial cooperative plans adopted as part of the Waupaca County Comprehensive Plan;
- 4. Are in areas with sufficient regulatory or other policy mechanisms in place to implement farmland preservation plan policies and to effectively limit non-farm development.
- 5. All parcels must be located outside of a city or village boundary and planned sanitary sewer service area;
- 6. All parcels must not be planned for nonagricultural development;

7. All parcels must not be located in a non-agricultural zoning district

The designation and mapping of farmland preservation areas began with an assessment of soil resources. The Waupaca County farmland preservation areas largely consist of lands with soils designated by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as Prime Farmlands and Farmlands of Statewide Importance, or lands with soils classified primarily as Land Capability Class I, II, or III. This method of classifying soils based on their ability to produce common cultivated crops without deteriorating over time has been widely adopted across the country.

To ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan, the County created the Farmland Preservation Plan as an appendix. The Agriculture, Natural, Cultural Resources chapter was used as the basis for the Farmland Preservation Plan, referencing similar data sources, charts, and maps. Next, staff from both the Planning and Land and Water Conservation Departments attended individual town meetings to present the new Working Lands Initiative to local officials.

The Farmland Preservation Areas identified on the maps largely coincide with the areas designated Agriculture Enterprise (AE), Agriculture Retention (AR), and occasionally Private Forestry and Recreation (PVRF) on the future land use maps within the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and within individual town plans. When creating the Farmland Preservation Plan, the County used the future land use maps from the Comprehensive Plan to help identify farmland preservation areas. In addition to the future land use maps, the County, steering committee members, and town officials, used prime agricultural soils, parcel sizes, irrigated cropland, and proximity to urban areas as factors for prioritizing farmland preservation areas. The County then utilized GIS mapping information to assist towns in designating large contiguous blocks of land for farmland preservation. After the creation of the initial maps, copies were sent to the Towns for their review and for additions and/or changes.

The proposed farmland preservation maps for the Towns of Bear Creek, Lind, Little Wolf, Scandinavia, and Union were developed using similar criteria. These towns are primarily agriculture in nature with highly productive soils that allow for viable, long-term farming and forestry. The following lists the criteria used for identifying farmland preservation areas in these towns:

- Types of soils that promote productive agriculture
- Areas mapped as Agriculture on the town's preferred land use map

- Small parcels in which town/county ordinances allow growth (usually 5 acres and less) were excluded from FP areas
- Productive forestland mapped as Forestry the town's preferred land use map
 - Certain woodland parcels have been removed as they are not farmable nor are they viable forestlands for timber production
 - Other swamp, wetland, and lowlands were removed because they would not be able to participate and/or collect credits on the land
- Existing agriculturally related support businesses
- Large continuous tracts of land, especially those currently being farmed

The proposed farmland preservation maps for the Towns of Farmington, Lebanon, Matteson, and St. Lawrence used slightly different criteria for identifying farmland preservation areas due to unique landscape characteristics within those communities. While these maps appear less contiguous than the towns listed above, they do identify parcels that are actively engaged in either farming or forestry and have made substantial investments to ensure the long-term viability of their working lands.

Town of Farmington:

- Areas mapped as Agriculture on the town's preferred land use map
 - Except some parcels that were surrounded by residential districts these were excluded because it is anticipated that development could eventually occur there
 - Small parcels in which town/county ordinances allow growth (usually 5 acres and less) were excluded from FP areas
- Parcels surrounding the City of Waupaca and in the general vicinity of the Chain of Lakes were excluded as they are potential areas of residential development
- Existing farms adjacent to Hwy 10 and Hwy 54 were looked at closely to determine whether future residential development was possible. Farms with substantial agricultural investment were included
- Types of soils that promote productive agriculture
- Existing agriculturally related support businesses
- Attempts were made to create large, contiguous blocks of viable farmland and forestland

Town of Lebanon:

- Areas mapped as Agriculture on the town's preferred land use map
 - Except some parcels that were surrounded by residential districts these were excluded because it is anticipated that development could eventually occur there
 - Small parcels in which town/county ordinances allow growth (usually 5 acres and less) were excluded from FP areas
- Some parcels on the periphery of "Lebanon Swamp", which bisects from east to west, were included in FP areas because they either have productive woodlands or have historically

been farmed

- Types of soils that promote productive agriculture
- Existing agriculturally related support businesses
- Attempts were made to create large, contiguous blocks of viable farmland and forestland

Town of Matteson:

- Areas mapped as Agriculture on the town's preferred land use map
 - Except some parcels that were surrounded by residential or hamlet districts these were excluded because it anticipated that development could eventually occur there
 - Small parcels in which town/county ordinances allow growth (usually 5 acres and less) were excluded from FP areas
- Woodland areas in the town were excluded from FP areas because they are mostly floodplains and lowlands and therefore are not viable forestlands
- Types of soils that promote productive agriculture
- Existing agriculturally related support businesses
- Attempts were made to create large, contiguous blocks of viable farmland and forestland

Town of St. Lawrence:

The Town of St. Lawrence has been significantly impacted by glaciation. The landscape consists of isolated pockets of productive working lands, but is extremely perforated with potholes, wetlands, and small forested patches. The soils are even more diverse than the terrain which made using soil types difficult as criteria for identifying FP areas. Instead, local officials identified the Town's most productive working lands, mainly parcels that had made significant agricultural investments, like cropland irrigation systems as well as:

- Viable farmland
- Large parcels with cropland irrigation systems
- Marginal farmland was excluded from FP areas even though it was mapped as agriculture on the preferred land use map. While currently in agriculture production now, local officials decided to exclude isolated farmland areas on marginal soils.
- Woodland areas in the town were excluded from FP areas mostly due the parcelization pattern in the town. Many woodland areas are either unproductive forests due to poor quality soils or are carved up into small parcel sizes among many owners.

CHAPTER 5 - IMPLEMENTATION

Policies, Programs, and Actions for Farmland Preservation Areas Waupaca County has chosen to adopt and have a County-wide certified farmland preservation zoning ordinance to ensure that landowners are covered by the ordinance are eligible to claim farmland preservation tax credits, (Ch. 91, Wis. Stats.). Certification of a local farmland preservation zoning ordinance must be obtained through application to the department. A farmland preservation zoning ordinance does not qualify for certification under s. 91.36 if the farmland preservation zoning ordinance allows a land use in a farmland preservation zoning district other than the following:

- (a) Agricultural uses
- (b) Accessory uses
- (c) Agriculture-related uses
- (d) Nonfarm residences constructed in a rural residential cluster
- (e) Undeveloped natural resource and open space areas
- (f) A transportation, utility, communication, or other use
- (g) Other uses identified by the department by rule
- **1. Preferred Zoning Districts**: Utilize the Farmland Preservation Overlay (FPO) zoning district as the zoning regulation to implement Farmland Preservation Area policies.
- **2. Pre-Existing Residences to Remain**: Allow legally established residences to remain within the FPO zoning district when historically zoned in that manner, except where new land divisions are required.
- **3.** General Rezoning Criteria: Whenever land is proposed for rezoning from the FPO district to an non-DATCP-certified zoning district, require that the following criteria are met:
 - a. The land is better suited for a use not allowed in the FPO zoning district.
 - b. The rezoning is consistent with the applicable town and county comprehensive plans.
 - c. The rezoning is substantially consistent with the Waupaca County certified Farmland Preservation Plan.

- d. The rezoning will not impair or limit current of future agricultural use of surrounding parcels of land that are zoned for or are legally restricted to agricultural use.
- 4. Conversion of Prime Farmland: Minimize the conversion of prime farmland, (generally class I-III soils), for residences and other non-farm development. Creation of new residential lots on prime farmland will be considered by the Planning and Zoning Committee only if the Committee determines that no available non-prime farmland exists on the parcel of record, or that placement of lots on prime farmland provides better protection of land resources than a non-prime location. In addition, per Section. 91.46(2) of Wisconsin Statutes, new development may not convert prime farmland from agricultural use or convert land previously used as cropland, other than a woodlot, from agricultural use if on the farm there is a reasonable alternative location or size for a nonfarm residential parcel or nonfarm residence; or significantly impair or limit the current or future agricultural use of other protected farmland.
- **5. Potential Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs):** Support landowner/town applications to DATCP to establish new Agricultural Enterprise Areas that meet the following criteria:
 - a. The AEA is located within the Farmland Preservation Area particularly suited for long-term agricultural enterprise development.
 - b. The AEA is consistent with DATCP criteria for such designation.
 - c. There is sufficient interest among area farmers and town governments.
 - d. The AEA is clearly consistent with this farmland preservation plan.
- 6. Land and Water Conservation: Allow the Land and Water Conservation Department, as budget resources allow, to assist farmers in the Farmland Preservation Areas to meet the Agricultural Performance Standards (as outlined in Administrative Rule NR 151, Sub-Chapter II) and nutrient management requirements.

- 7. New Residences Require Rezoning: Allow no new non-farm residences in the FPO zoning district, except for replacement of existing residences permitted under the Working Lands Initiative and the Waupaca County zoning ordinance. Instead, require the rezoning of FPO zoned lands when new homes are proposed.
- 8. Rural Residential RR as Preferred Rezoning District: Utilize the Rural Residential zoning district as the preferred zoning district for rezoning, except where the applicant can demonstrate that another zoning district meets the Farmland Preservation Area purpose and policies.
- **9. Residential Density:** Subject to County and town rezoning approval and compliance with all Comprehensive/Farmland Preservation Plans and ordinance requirements, the owner of each set of lands in contiguous ownership lands designated as AE, AR, or PVRF on the preferred land use maps and within the Farmland Preservation Area may develop single family residences, subject to the following criteria:
 - a. The owner is allowed the same number of development rights as set in the county zoning ordinance and local town comprehensive plans.
 - b. Each new non-farm residence must be on a new lot of at least two acres (or greater if multiple development rights are being used) created by a Certified Survey Map (CSM). Each development right equates to a maximum of 2 acres and can be used to create fractional acreage provided there is a minimum lot size of 2 acres. For example, a 5 acre parcel would require 3 development rights.
 - c. The balance of the acreage used to enable the approval of a non- farm residential lot shall be restricted to agricultural or open space uses consistent with established farm preservation policy. Once all development rights are utilized within a farm under common ownership and municipality, the farm will no longer be able to develop any more non-farm lots.
 - d. Development rights may be transferred between non-contiguous land under common ownership and municipality. Development rights can also be transferred from a farm preservation area to an area outside but not vice versa.

10. Affect on Agricultural Operations:

The Waupaca County Planning and Zoning Committee shall evaluate the following factors when reviewing residential rezone requests:

- a. The proposed lot(s) are located in a manner as to minimize the amount of agricultural land converted to nonagricultural use.
- b. New roads or driveways do not divide and fragment existing farm fields.
- c. The proposed residential lot(s) will not adversely affect agricultural operations in surrounding areas or be situated such that future inhabitants of a residence might be adversely affected by agricultural operations in surrounding areas.

Appendix A

Waupaca County Farmland Preservation Areas

Town Maps

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Town of Bear Creek, Waupaca County, WI

Map produced by: Dan McFarlane Waupaca County Land & Water Con

15.258.6245



/lap Date 10/24/2014

Town of Farmington, Waupaca County, WI





Map Date 10/20/201

Town of Lebanon, Waupaca County, WI





Town of Lind, Waupaca County, WI



Map Date 10/24/2014



Town of Little Wolf, Waupaca County, WI



31 T.Helvetia 22 Legend Municipal Boundary 181 PLSS Sections T.Bear Creek 31 35 32 36 33 **T.Union** Surface Water Areas FP Planned Area Non FP planned area Parcel Boundary **Road Centerlines** - US Highways State Highways \square 03 County Highways 06 01 05 06 02 04 Local Road 0 ĸ $\Box I$ 110 07 -11 12 12 09 \square 07 10 08 91 N 1111 16 13 17 13/ 14 18 18 14 T.St. Lawrence 1 T.Leband C. Manawa

Map Date 10/24/2014


Town of Matteson, Waupaca County, WI



Legend Municipal Boundary PLSS Sections Surface Water Areas FP Planned Area Non FP planned area Parcel Boundary **Road Centerlines** - US Highways - State Highways County Highways 06 05 Y Local Road 03 -04 02 -01 Embarrass C С T.Larrabee 12 07 08 09 11 10 18 16 15 13 1413 _ T.Matteson _____ 10

Map Date 10/24/2014



Town of Scandinavia, Waupaca County, WI





Town of St. Lawrence, Waupaca County, WI





Map Date 10/31/2018

Town of Union, Waupaca County, WI



T.Wyomine Legend Municipal Boundary T.Larrabee 31 PLSS Sections 33 32 35 36 31 T.Dupont 34 32 Surface Water Areas FP Planned Area Non FP planned area Parcel Boundary **Road Centerlines** - US Highways - State Highways County Highways 03 06 04 02 05 05 Local Road 01 06 02 09 o 1 07 12 12 0 11 -08 07 08 г tisno Va. m 110 13 14 13 18 16 11 18 17 15 ्रोताः **T.Helvetia** J TT L T.Bear Creek **T.Union**

Map Date 10/24/2014

