

# **TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005-2030**



**Adopted March 21, 2006**



# TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005-2030

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## TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE VISION STATEMENT

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*Vision Statement – An idealized statement that articulates the future a community wants.*

In 2030 the Town of Prairie Lake will be:

- ... a rural town that looks much as it does today with a mix of residences, recreational land and agriculture characterized by farm fields, open spaces, woods and hills;
  - ... a rural town with well maintained residences, often clustered, mixed with open space that make efficient use of the land, and minimizes their visual impact and negative impacts on agriculture and wildlife habitat;
  - ... a rural town with diversified and economically viable agriculture and controls on the location and operation of large livestock operations;
  - ... a rural town with well defined, planned and maintained commercial areas or corridors in appropriate places such as along major roads and interchanges or near incorporated communities;
  - ... a rural town where rivers, lakes, wildlife habitat and other natural resources are protected and some shoreland with public access to the water and park areas are set aside for public use;
  - ... a rural town with continuing recreational opportunities including private activities on private land and a public trail system for walking and bicycles;
  - ... a rural town with good roads built and maintained to Town standards;
  - ... a rural town that attempts to keep taxes as low as possible; and,
  - ... a rural town with a defined, well-planned and orderly development pattern implemented through appropriate zoning districts, and objective land division and zoning decisions consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
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Prepared by:

**Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission**

with technical assistance from:

**Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc.**

**West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

with financial assistance from:

**Wisconsin Department of Administration**



**RESOLUTION 2006 - 1**

**PLAN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE**

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING TOWN BOARD ADOPTION OF  
THE "TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005-2030"**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Prairie Lake has determined the need and propriety for a comprehensive plan with the general purpose of guiding, directing and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the Town, which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare, as well as, efficiency and economy in the process of development; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission has prepared the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan 2005-2030* pursuant to §66.1001 and §62.23, Wisconsin Statutes, which contains plan documents, maps and other materials in the nine comprehensive plan elements required by §66.1001(2), Wisconsin Statutes and is dated February 15, 2006; and

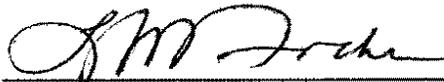
**WHEREAS**, the Town of Prairie Lake has participated in a multi-jurisdictional planning process during which the *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report*, dated May, 2005, was prepared, which contains statistics, demographic data and other information for the nine comprehensive plan elements required by §66.1001(2), Wisconsin Statutes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission pursuant to §66.1001(4)(b), Wisconsin Statutes may recommend governing body adoption of the comprehensive plan by adoption of a resolution to that effect by a majority of the entire Plan Commission.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission officially recommends adoption of the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan 2005-2030*, dated February 15, 2006, and the *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report*, dated May, 2005, by the Town of Prairie Lake Town Board.

Adopted this 21<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2006 by the Plan Commission of the Town of Prairie Lake.

Approved:



Lee Fochs, Plan Commission Chairman

Attest:



Karn Moe, Clerk

Ordinance No. 2006 - 1

**AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE  
TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The town board of the Town of Prairie Lake, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. Pursuant to §62.23(2) and §62.23(3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Prairie Lake is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in §66.1001(1)(a) and §66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 2. The town board of the Town of Prairie Lake, Wisconsin has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every state of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by §66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 3. The Plan Commission of the Town of Prairie Lake by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the town board the adoption of a comprehensive plan consisting of the documents entitled *TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005-2030* dated January 30, 2006, and *BARRON AREA MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT* dated May, 2005, together containing all of the elements specified in §66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 4. The Town has held a public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of §66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 5. The town board of the Town of Prairie Lake, Wisconsin, does, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the documents entitled *TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005-2030* and *BARRON AREA MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT*, pursuant to §66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Town Board and posting as required by law.

ADOPTED this 21st day of March, 2006.

Attest: Karn Moe  
Karn Moe, Clerk

Ken Hoefs  
Ken Hoefs, Chairman

Al Morley  
Al Morley, Supervisor

Almar Larson  
Almar Larson, Supervisor

Posted: March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006

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## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

This comprehensive plan was developed as part of a multi-jurisdictional planning effort of 18 Barron County communities that successfully procured state grant funding for its development. The *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan*, together with the related *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report*, meets the requirements of the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law (1999 Wisconsin Act 9). The *Existing Conditions Report* provides a demographic and programmatic overview for the Barron area, while the *Comprehensive Plan* is the policy document focused on the Town of Prairie Lake. This Executive Summary focuses on the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Between January 2004 and October 2005, the Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission held thirteen working meetings facilitated by West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to develop the plan recommendations. All meetings were open to the public and properly noticed and public input was obtained through a survey of all Town residents and/or property owners.

The results of these meetings and other resident input are plan goals, objectives, and policy recommendations crafted by the Plan Commission for the community through a consensus-building process. The Plan is organized by the nine required planning elements; each section reflects the general vision valued by community members—**preservation of rural character, protection of natural features, accommodation of economic activity, and respect for private property rights**.

During the planning process, substantial focus was spent on land use discussions that resulted in the policy recommendations of the Land Use Element. Changes to the Town ordinances were recommended to protect the community from the visual, environmental and fiscal impacts of intensive land uses. A land division ordinance was suggested to promote the preservation of the town's rural character and help prevent land use conflict by encouraging the use of conservation design techniques during the site planning of subdivisions. Appropriate types and location of economic activity were supported. Finally, the Town wishes to embark in evaluating shorelands for possible acquisition and development for enhanced public access and use.

However, adoption of this Plan is only a beginning. As described in the Implementation Section, many Plan policies require additional action, such as the development of programs and adoption of related ordinances, each with additional public hearings. The policy recommendations within this Plan are often generalized; additional time could be spent by the community on specific issues and definitions during ordinance development. As such, the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan* provides a general direction and vision for the future of the community for planning and decision-making. The Plan recommendations should be applied flexibly and amended as needed to account for specific or changing conditions.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Planning Authority and Scope

Planning is an orderly, open approach to determining local needs, setting goals and priorities, and developing a guide for action. In 1999, the State Legislature created a new framework for community planning in the State of Wisconsin—1999 Wisconsin Act 9.

Beginning on January 1, 2010, any program or action of a local government which regulates land use (e.g., zoning, subdivision regulations, agricultural preservation programs) must be consistent with that government’s comprehensive plan. According to Wisconsin Statutes, the comprehensive plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the community which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

1999 Wisconsin Act 9, often referred to as the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning and Smart Growth Law, provides additional guidance regarding what must be included in each community plan and how the plan should be developed. Each plan must address nine key elements:

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

Further, each plan must incorporate 20-year land use projections and encourage public participation during the planning process.

In addition, 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 made available comprehensive planning grants to local governments to assist in the preparation of these plans. The smart growth grants for comprehensive planning efforts encourage local governments to address multi-jurisdictional issues and promote smart growth policies which encourage efficient development patterns and minimizes local government and utility costs.

The *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan*, when combined with the *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report*, includes all nine elements and meets the requirements of 1999 Wisconsin Act 9.

## 1.2 The Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Planning Effort

Barron County consists of four cities, seven villages, and 25 towns. The multi-jurisdiction comprehensive planning project, which includes the following eighteen (18) Barron County communities, represents a grass-roots effort by local government officials to coordinate local planning efforts and to address cross-jurisdictional issues and concerns:

City of Barron	City of Cumberland
City of Chetek	Village of Turtle Lake
Village of Almena	Town of Almena
Town of Chetek	Town of Dovre
Town of Stanley	Town of Prairie Lake
Town of Sioux Creek	Town of Sumner
Town of Maple Plain	Town of Stanfold
Town of Crystal Lake	Town of Barron
Town of Bear Lake	Town of Doyle

The City of Barron served as the lead community in a process to generate interest among nineteen (19) Barron County municipalities, including the three cities, two villages and fourteen townships to participate in a multi-jurisdiction comprehensive planning project. In the summer of 2002, Barron County explored the option of proceeding with a county-wide planning process. At that time, the Board decided to wait and not proceed.

A number of communities desired to move forward, not wanting to wait until the County made (or did not make) a decision to go forward. A series of meetings was organized by the City of Barron, in conjunction with the Cities of Chetek and Cumberland, for all Barron County jurisdictions. The government entities, including the County, were invited to discuss and explore interest in joining to apply for a planning grant. The meetings included discussions of statutory requirements and planning-related issues impacting the communities of Barron County. About sixty people attended the meetings, including representatives of nearly all Barron County jurisdictions. Key multi-jurisdiction and cross-jurisdiction issues mentioned include the significant land use impacts associated with the Highway 8 Improvement Project and general growth pressures, including demand for residential development on recreational lakes and growth related to both the Twin Cities area and the Eau Claire/Chippewa Falls area. At the conclusion of these meetings, a consensus of those present agreed that enough interest existed to pursue a 2003 Multi-Jurisdiction Comprehensive Planning Grant.

During the months of September and October, 2002, the City of Barron, with the assistance of its Planning and Design Consultant (SEH), encouraged all Barron County jurisdictions to approve the required resolution to authorize participation in a multi-jurisdiction comprehensive planning project. Originally, nineteen municipalities agreed to participate in the planning project. Barron County has not decided to join the planning project (although in 2001 they completed a County land use plan). Barron County officials have expressed support for the project and a willingness to provide input and assistance to ensure that the resulting comprehensive plans are consistent with County planning priorities.

In 2003, a comprehensive planning grant was awarded by the Wisconsin Department of Administration to eighteen communities. One community, not being contiguous to any of the other applicant communities, was not awarded the grant. The multi-jurisdictional planning process began

with a kick-off meeting in November 2003 led by Short Elliot Hendrickson (SEH) and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the consultant team for the project.

Since the whole of Barron County is not participating in this planning effort, a unique approach was used where existing conditions for the majority of plan elements (e.g., transportation, land use, housing, natural resources, economic) are presented and analyzed for the entire County. This approach provided valuable insight into county-wide trends and how trends may differ among the different communities. The draft *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report* was presented to the participating communities and general public on June 9 and June 16, 2004.

Then, in consideration of these existing conditions, each participating municipality developed its individual comprehensive plan which is a policy-oriented document focusing on issues, goals, and action plans specific to each community.

In short, each community participating in the Barron Area comprehensive planning effort will receive the *Existing Conditions Report* that contains background information for all of Barron County and an individual community plan document containing supplementary background information, and goals, objectives, policies, programs and maps specific to that community. The comprehensive plan for each community will then in total equal the *Existing Conditions Report* and community plan document. This document, the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan*, represents the plan policy document for the Town.

Following public hearings and local plan adoption, the *Existing Conditions Report* and the individual community plans were reviewed for consistency with the State Comprehensive Planning Law; and the Comprehensive Planning Grant Program Closeout Form was completed. The Wisconsin Department of Administration then certified that all requirements of the grant program had been met.

### **1.3 The Town of Prairie Lake Planning Process**

Though a preliminary meeting with the Town of Prairie Lake to discuss the planning effort took place on April 1, 2004, the planning process did not begin to focus on the Town in earnest until after the presentations of the draft *Existing Conditions Report* in June 2004. Each of the subsequent planning meetings for the Town of Prairie Lake is summarized below:

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>January 27, 2004</b> | <b>Pre-Planning Meeting: Process, Outcomes and Timetable</b><br>The planning process and timeline for the Town of Prairie Lake was presented to the Plan Commission. A Community Opinion Survey was discussed. |
| <b>March 16, 2004</b>   | <b>Revise Survey</b><br>The Plan Commission reviewed and revised the Community Opinion Survey.   |
| <b>April 1, 2004</b>    | <b>Finalize Survey</b><br>The Plan Commission finalized the Community Opinion Survey and discussed how it will be distributed.   |
| <b>April 15, 2004</b>   | <b>Prepare and Mail Survey</b><br>The Plan Commission and volunteers folded, labeled and posted 860 four-page Community Opinion Surveys to be mailed.  |

- June 3, 2004**      **Survey Compilation**  
The Plan Commission reviewed the 238 returned surveys and discussed how they will be compiled.
- July 22, 2004**      **Meeting #1: Existing Conditions and Issues and Survey**  
The planning process and timeline for the Town of Prairie Lake was reviewed. The Existing Conditions Transition Report for the Town is reviewed and discussed. The Community Opinion Survey was reviewed.
- August 19, 2004**      **Meeting #2: Survey and Land Use Issues**  
Reviewed summarized survey and a list of land use issues compiled from the survey.
- September 27, 2004**      **Meeting #3: Land Use**  
Land use management practices discussion.
- October 19, 2004**      **Meeting #4: Land Use**  
Land use management practices discussion centered around conservation design and natural resources preservation for public access.
- January 18, 2005**      **Meeting #6: Revisiting Land Use**  
Discussion of campground regulation and subdivision control.
- March 10, 2005**      **Meeting #8: Revisiting Land Use**  
Discussed land use issues and implementation tools.
- April 7, 2005**      **Meeting #9: Visioning**  
Vision questionnaire discussion and compilation.
- May 12, 2005**      **Meeting #10: Visioning and Policy Development**  
Reviewed vision statement. Reviewed Housing, Transportation and Utilities and Community Facilities goals and policies.
- June 16, 2005**      **Meeting #11: Visioning**  
Finalized vision statement.
- July 21, 2005**      **Meeting #12: Policy Development**  
Reviewed and amended land use and agriculture, natural and cultural resources policies. Developed information for Economic Development and Intergovernmental Cooperation.
- September 15, 2005**      **Meeting #13: Planned Land Use map and Commercial Land Use**  
Discussed planned land use map and appropriate types and location of commercial land uses.
- October 25, 2005**      **Meeting #14: Planned Land Use Map**  
Final discussion on planned land use map.
- December 12, 2005**      **Meeting #15: Draft**  
Review of Draft Comprehensive Plan.
- January 12, 2006**      **Meeting #16: Finalization**  
Finalized Draft Comprehensive Plan. Public hearing process discussed and scheduled.

**February 18, 2006 Meeting #17: Open House Presentation of the Plan**  
Presentation of the plan to the public.

**March 21, 2006 Public Hearing**

**Month 21, 2006 Local Adoption**  
Upon recommendation by resolution of the Plan Commission on March 21, 2006, the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan* was adopted by the Town Board by ordinance on **March 21, 2006**. Copies of the adopting resolution and ordinance are included at the beginning of this document.

The Town of Prairie Lake planning process offered opportunities for public participation and followed the public participation resolution adopted on December 9, 2003, which approved the *Public Participation Procedures for Barron Area Comprehensive Planning* (see Appendix I). All meetings were open to the public, properly noticed, and met the requirements of the Wisconsin Open Meeting's Law.

To promote resident participation in the process, a community opinion survey was distributed to 900 addresses of which 238 were returned and tabulated. The tabulated and summarized survey is found in Appendix II.



## 2. *ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES*

### 2.1 Existing Conditions Transition Report

The *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report* provides a compilation of background information for the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. While that report identifies significant information and trends, it often does so in the broad context of greater Barron County and does not always identify trends specific to individual communities. Hence, the introduction of the individual community's comprehensive plan requires a transition be made from the *Existing Conditions Report* with a brief synopsis of the trends discovered therein specific to the community. The reader can review the *Existing Conditions Report* if desiring a more detailed look into the community than is provided by the identified trends below.

#### *Demographic Profile: Issues and Opportunities – Existing Conditions*

- Over the last 40 years the population of the Town of Prairie Lake has seen moderate to rapid growth, gaining 65 people between 1960 and 1970, gaining 153 from 1970 to 1980, gaining 53 people over the next decade and growing by 240 people between 1990 and 2000.
- Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) 2005 population estimates for the Town of Prairie Lake of 1,484 people show the population of the Town of Prairie Lake has continued to grow at a significant pace since 2000.
- Indeed, the Wisconsin Department of Administration population projections predict the Town will grow to 1,657 people by the year 2025 from its 2000 population of 1,369, while the DOA 2005 estimate of 1,484 exceeds the rate of growth predicted in the DOA 2005 projection of 1,431. If recent trends continue, it is likely that Town of Prairie Lake population will continue to exceed DOA population projections.
- The Town of Prairie Lake is experiencing an aging population with the median age in 1990 of 37.9 increasing to 40.4 in 2000.
- Between 1990 and 2000 the Town of Prairie Lake saw a significant percentage increase in males 15 to 19 years of age, large percentage increases in males 40 to 59 years old and a dramatic percentage increase in males 50 to 59 years of age. This could mean one significant group of males are ready to immediately enter the workforce or college while another much larger group will likely retire over the next 20 years.
- Between 1990 and 2000 the number of females between 10 and 29 years of age increased significantly, as well as females aged between 35 and 64 years of age. Large percentage increases were experienced in the female age group of 40 to 54 years of age. It is likely that a large percent of the women in the Town of Prairie Lake will be approaching retirement over the next couple of decades.
- Town of Prairie Lake residents saw improvements in educational attainment with 81.5 percent of residents 25 years of age and over in 2000 having at least attained a high school diploma as compared to 72.5 percent in 1990.
- By 2000, 41.6% of Prairie Lake residents over 25 years of age had at least some post-secondary education compared to 29.6% in 1990.
- While the Town of Prairie Lake's population grew by 21.3 percent between 1990 and 2000 its work force of people 16 years and older increased by 27.2%. It is likely that somewhat more young people and spouses are entering the work force and some people are retiring later.
- Between 1990 and 2000 there was a significant increase in Prairie Lake residents in executive, administrative and managerial, professional, sales and service occupations.

- In 2000, 24.2% of Town of Prairie Lake residents who worked were employed in the City of Rice Lake, 16.9% in the City of Chetek, 13.9 percent in the City of Barron, 12.2% in the Town of Prairie Lake, and 7.0% in the Village of Cameron. 15.5% worked outside of Barron County.
- The median household income in the Town of Prairie Lake increased by 75.4 percent between 1989 and 1999 while increasing 65.2 and 47.1 percent in Barron County and the State of Wisconsin, respectively.
- The 1999 median household income in the Town of Prairie Lake was \$40,048 compared to \$37,275 and \$43,791 for Barron County and the State of Wisconsin, respectively.

### ***Housing – Existing Conditions***

- While the Town’s population increased 4.9 percent and 21.3 percent between 1980 and 1990, and 1990 and 2000, respectively, its housing stock grew by 14.9 and declined by 3.0 percent, respectively.
- In 2000, 53.4 percent of the Town of Prairie Lake’s housing units were at least 40 years old, while 27.4 percent were older than 60 years. Almost three out of ten housing units were 20 years old or less and 18.5 percent were 10 years old or less.

<b><i>HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS • 1980 to 2000</i></b>			
<b><i>Town of Prairie Lake</i></b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Total Housing Units	663	762	739
Total Seasonal	227	312	198
Total Vacant	58	41	13
Total Occupied Units	378	409	528
Owner Occupied Units	321	349	479
Renter Occupied Units	57	60	49
Single Family Units	398	646	685
Multi-Family Units	12	0	0
Mobile Homes	26	113	62

Source: U.S. Census.

<b><i>HOUSING VALUE OF SPECIFIED OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS • 2000</i></b>							
<b><i>Town of Prairie Lake, Number of Housing Units</i></b>							
Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,000	\$150,000 - \$199,999	\$200,000 – \$299,999	\$300,000 – \$499,999	\$500,000 or more	Median Value
30	133	62	35	12	6	0	\$93,300

Source: U.S. Census.

<b><i>CONTRACT RENT (RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS) • 2000</i></b>					
<b><i>Town of Prairie Lake, Number of Housing Units</i></b>					
Less than \$200	\$200 to \$299	\$300 to \$499	\$500 to \$749	\$750 to \$999	\$1,000 or more
0	2	15	12	4	0

Source: U.S. Census.

<b><i>OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME • 1999</i></b>					
<b><i>Town of Prairie Lake, Monthly Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income</i></b>					
Less than 15%	15.0% to 19.9%	20.0% to 24.9%	25.0% to 29.9%	30.0% to 34.9%	35.0% or more
115	60	28	21	6	46

Source: U.S. Census.

<b>RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME • 1999</b>					
<b>Town of Prairie Lake, Monthly Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income</b>					
Less than 15%	15.0% to 19.9%	20.0% to 24.9%	25.0% to 29.9%	30.0% to 34.9%	35.0% or more
14	4	3	5	2	5

Source: U.S. Census.

- The Town of Prairie Lake saw a significant increase in housing units between 1980 and 1990 and a small decrease of units between 1990 and 2000. It is likely there has been significant conversions of housing units from seasonal and rental units to permanent, owner-occupied. The majority of housing units are single-family owner-occupied. Between 1990 and 2000 housing units that were mobile homes decreased by almost half.
- The median housing value of owner-occupied units in the Town of Prairie Lake of \$93,300 is significantly above the Barron County average of \$78,000.
- Owner-occupied housing in the Town of Prairie Lake appears to be a little more affordable than rental housing with about 18.8% of homeowners and 21.2% of renters spending 30 percent or more of their household income on housing costs.

### ***Transportation – Existing Conditions***

- The major transportation function in the Town is maintaining the local road system with the PASER and WISLR systems for Town road pavement management and building new roads.
- U.S. Highway 53, a four lane, limited access facility, runs through the northeastern part of the Town of Prairie Lake.
- County Trunk Highway SS traverses the northeastern part of the Town of Prairie Lake.
- County Trunk Highway D runs east and west in the southern part of the Town of Prairie Lake.
- County Trunk Highway O runs north and south along the western border of the Town of Prairie Lake.
- County Trunk Highway OO runs east and west through northern part of the Town of Prairie Lake.
- County Trunk Highway I touches the southeastern part of the Town of Prairie Lake.
- A Union Pacific rail line runs through the Town of Prairie Lake between and parallel with U.S. Highway 53 and County Trunk Highway SS.

### ***Utilities and Community Facilities – Existing Conditions***

- Buildings and homes are served through private wells and on-site septic systems.
- The Town Hall and associated maintenance structures are the Town’s community facilities and are located in the Town near the edge of the City of Chetek.
- About two-thirds of the Town of Prairie Lake lies within the Chetek School District. About another third of the town lies within the Cameron School District and a small northwestern part of the town is in the Barron Area School District.
- The Town of Prairie Lake is served by the Barron and Chetek Ambulance Districts, the Cameron and Chetek Fire Districts and the City of Chetek Police and Barron County Sheriff’s Department.

### ***Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources – Existing Conditions***

- Agricultural assessed acreage in the Town of Prairie Lake declined by 31.2% (or 4,475 acres) between 1990 and 2003. This is more than the 23.7% average decline in agricultural acres for all Barron County Towns during the same period.
- The Town of Prairie Lake has a majority of soils which can be classified as prime agricultural lands and ranks 9<sup>th</sup> out of the 25 Barron County Towns in total agricultural acreage.

- The Town of Prairie Lake ranks 11<sup>th</sup> in forested acreage in Barron County with 4,971 acres.
- The Town of Prairie Lake falls within the Lake Chetek, Pine Creek and Red Cedar River, and Yellow River watersheds of the Lower Chippewa River Basin. The Red Cedar River flows south through the center of the town. Its namesake, Prairie Lake, is a dominant natural feature of the town. The streams in the Town of Prairie Lake mostly drain into Red Cedar River and the Chetek Chain of Lakes.
- There are significant wetlands and floodplains along the Yellow River, Brown Creek, Pokegama Creek and the Red Cedar River.
- Barron County Zoning, Subdivision Regulations, Shoreland Regulations, and Floodplain Ordinance apply within the Town of Prairie Lake.

### ***Economic Development – Existing Conditions***

- While the Town of Prairie Lake’s population grew by 21.3 percent between 1990 and 2000 its work force of people 16 years and older increased by 27.2%.
- While employment in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining sector between 1990 and 2000 fell significantly, workers employed in professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste services; educational, health and social services; arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation food services; and, other services (except public administration) sectors saw large increases.
- In 2000, 28.7% of working town residents were employed in sales and administrative support occupations; 28.5% in precision production, craft and repair, machine operation, assembly and inspection, transportation, and material moving and handling, equipment cleaning, helper and laborer occupations; 19.5% in executive, administrative, managerial, professional and technical occupations; and, just over 10% each in construction, extraction and maintenance occupations, and service occupations.
- In 2000, 24.2% of Town of Prairie Lake residents who worked were employed in the City of Rice Lake, 16.9% in the City of Chetek, 13.9 percent in the City of Barron, 12.2% in the Town of Prairie Lake, and 7.0% in the Village of Cameron. 15.5% worked outside of Barron County.
- The median household income in the Town of Prairie Lake increased by 75.4 percent between 1989 and 1999 while increasing 65.2 and 47.1 percent in Barron County and the State of Wisconsin, respectively.

### ***Land Use – Existing Conditions***

- The Town of Prairie Lake has 50% of its land assessed agricultural and another 25% as forest. It has considerable lakeshore development around Prairie Lake. It has about 7% of its land assessed as residential, primarily due to the aforementioned lakeshore development. **Since 1990, the Town has experienced a 36% increase in improved residential parcels.**

#### ***LAND USE ACREAGE AND VALUE PER ACRE • 2003 Town of Prairie Lake***

	Agricultural	Forest	Undeveloped	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Other	Total
Acres	9,861	4,971	3,225	1,347	83	4	182	19,673
Value per Acre	\$133	\$1,036	\$676	\$17,011	\$13,254	\$3,050	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

## **2.2 Previous or Related Planning & Regulatory Efforts**

### ***Town of Prairie Lake Plans and Regulations***

This is the first comprehensive planning effort that focuses on the Town of the Prairie Lake. The Town has adopted a Building Ordinance, Mobile Home Ordinance, and Driveway Ordinance that provides some local land use control. The Town recently has considered a Campground Ordinance that will regulate the number, size and operation of campgrounds. The Town of Prairie Lake has adopted Barron County Comprehensive Zoning.

### ***Applicable Barron County Plans and Regulations***

The Town has been encompassed within previous Barron County planning efforts, such as the *2001 Barron County Land Use Plan* that included the following recommendations for the Town of Prairie Lake:

- maintain agriculture as the predominate land use in the Town
- encourage low-density residential development that is compatible with agriculture
- protect the Red Cedar River corridor from incompatible development

The Town of Prairie Lake also adheres to the Barron County Sanitary Code, Shoreland Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance, Manure Storage Ordinance, and Land Division Ordinance. Natural resources in the Town of Prairie Lake also fall within the scope of the recently adopted *Barron County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* administered by the Barron County Soil & Water Conservation Department.

### ***Other Applicable Plans & Regulations***

The *Existing Conditions Report* reviews a number of additional plans, programs, and regulations which are related to this planning effort. Six neighboring jurisdictions—Town of Sioux Creek, Town of Dovre, Town of Chetek, Town of Sumner, Town of Stanley, and Town of Barron—are also participating in this comprehensive planning process, as is the City of Chetek to the east. The issues and recommendations from these other plans should be considered as the Town of Prairie Lake develops its own Plan and key issues and opportunities highlighted in the intergovernmental cooperation element later in this document.



## 2.3 Key Issues

The key issues for the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan* were derived from the community opinion survey the Town executed early in 2004. These issues are those that the majority of respondents expressed a concern about. These issues were not prioritized but became supporting information for planning decisions.

- Two-thirds of respondents expressing an opinion felt the town should not do more to accommodate snowmobile or ATV use.
- Eight of ten respondents expressing an opinion said there should be Town standards for advertising sign placement, size and design.
- 64 percent of respondents felt the rate of new housing construction was about right with 31 percent thinking it was too fast.
- Eight out of ten respondents expressing an opinion thought the Town should plan for and manage new multi-family housing.
- Three-quarters of respondents expressing an opinion felt the Town should manage the location and density of new single-family housing.
- 57 percent of respondents expressing an opinion thought that as the Town grows, new housing should not be concentrated in developments of 5 or more lots each of which are 1 ½ acres or less (subdivisions).
- Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion said the cost of new roads required by more concentrated development should be borne by developers.
- Half of all respondents said that in concentrated development the minimum lot size should be 1 acre. About one-quarter of those responding felt that the minimum lot size should be a one-half acre, while about one in ten believed ¼ acres lots were appropriate.
- The response was mixed regarding the minimum lot size for less concentrated development. About four in ten respondents felt that the minimum lot size should be two acres, about a fourth believed 5 acres was appropriate and 13 percent selected 10 acres.
- Almost nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion supported only allowing holding tanks if there were no alternatives for on-site wastewater treatment.
- Almost nine of ten answers supported managing the location and density of mobile home parks.
- Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion believe the Town should plan for and manage light industry and warehousing, and that such development should be limited to where it now exists or other areas designated by the Town.
- Industrial areas should be located by cities and Hwy 53, in industrial parks, by main roads and away from lakes and waterways.
- The businesses and industry that should not be allowed in the Town are those that pollute, adult entertainment, large dairy and hog operations, turkey farms and chemical plants.
- Almost two-thirds of respondents felt that home occupation businesses were acceptable in the Town. A little over half of the respondents said neighborhood retail and services were desired and somewhat over a third each said highway commercial serving the traveling public on major roads, and recreational businesses such as resorts, retreats, camps, and campgrounds were sought.

- Two-thirds of those expressing an opinion thought commercial entertainment consisting of assemblies of 250 or more people should not be allowed.
- Nine out of ten of those expressing an opinion supported developing standards and applying rules for controlling the type, location and appearance of new commercial, warehouse and industrial development.
- Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion supported establishing standards managing the location, operations and reclamation of non-metallic mining.
- Almost nine out of ten of all responses supported the importance of maintaining open space to retain the rural character of the Town.
- Eight of ten respondents expressing an opinion felt productive agricultural areas should be protected by limiting the location and density of non-farm residential development.
- Three-fourths of those expressing an opinion believed farms in agricultural production areas should be protected from nuisance complaints associated with routine agricultural operations.
- About nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion said measures should be taken to limit potential conflicts between existing livestock operations and non-farm residential development.
- Three-fourths of all responses supported Town permitting of new livestock operations, or the expansion of existing livestock operations, involving more than 650 animal units.
- Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion, and 81 percent of all responses, supported encouraging a higher level of protection for lakes and rivers which have not yet been developed and those that may be more sensitive to development.
- Three-fourths of those expressing an opinion felt that the Town should invest in maintaining public recreational land around waterways.
- 96.5 percent of those expressing an opinion thought the Town should establish standards and manage the stockpiling of abandoned vehicles and junk.
- Nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion said the Town Board should be actively involved in ongoing decisions pertaining to land use planning and development.
- Nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion agreed that to reduce conflict between incompatible land uses, zoning and other land use ordinances should be used to channel new development to areas that have been planned for that use.
- Three-fourths of all respondents believed that a landowner's property should be allowed to be rezoned if the proposed development is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan objectives.
- Nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion felt that subdivision and other development proposals should be reviewed and approved by the Town of Prairie Lake.
- Two-thirds of all responses supported the Town requiring developers of subdivisions set aside land or funds for Town parks.
- Almost two-thirds of all answers supported exploring land use management tools that provide for, both the protection of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands, and compensation to landowners to mitigate or lessen the effects of such regulation. However, four of ten respondents indicated they were unsure about it. Perhaps with more information these people could say one way or the other.

The tabulated and summarized community opinion survey is found in Appendix II.

## 2.4 Vision Statement

A vision statement defines the future that a community wants, but does not define how it gets there. Visioning helps build consensus, can emphasize community values, identifies any desirable change, and provides direction and context for the planning goals and policies later in the process.

### Visioning

*The process by which a community defines the future it wants.*

At the April 7, 2005 meeting, a visioning questionnaire was implemented to develop a vision statement for the Town of Prairie Lake in 2030. Based in part on the key issues list developed from the survey, the visioning questionnaire was developed which consisted of eight open-ended questions regarding qualities, characteristics, and land use in the Town. After a review of existing conditions report highlights and other local land use trends, attendees discussed and completed the visioning questionnaire. The vision questionnaire was subsequently compiled to determine community consensus and develop a vision statement.

The following were some groups of qualities or characteristics which community members wished to preserve or promote:

- Rural atmosphere. Open spaces. Economically viable agriculture.
- Shoreland. Rivers and lakes. Preservation of river/lake areas.
- Good water quality, surface and groundwater.
- Forests.
- Recreational opportunities. More private than public.
- Zoning to separate agriculture, residential, commercial and industrial.
- Well kept properties.
- Well defined commercial areas or corridors.

The following were some groups of qualities, characteristics, or trends that were of concern:

- Pace and location of development. Large lots are not an efficient use of land.
- Haphazard zoning changes and variances/spot zoning/current zoning practices.
- Disappearing natural areas and shorelands.
- Subdivisions that have substandard private roads, are too dense, take out too many trees and structure appearance is too uniform.
- Large livestock operations in the wrong location.
- Agriculture is changing, from business to hobby.

The above responses were not only important for creating the vision statement, but provided valuable direction for establishing Plan goals, objectives, and policies later in the Plan. Overall, there was a consensus that community members liked the qualities and characteristics of the Town of Prairie Lake as it exists today and wished to maintain and preserve these qualities and characteristics for future generations while allowing for planned residential and economic growth.

Based on the visioning exercise, the following vision statement for the Town of Prairie Lake was developed, and then discussed at the May 12, 2005 Plan Commission meeting:

## **Town of Prairie Lake Vision Statement**

**In 2030 the Town of Prairie Lake will be:**

- ... a rural town that looks much as it does today with a mix of residences, recreational land and agriculture characterized by farm fields, open spaces, woods and hills;**
- ... a rural town with well maintained residences, often clustered, mixed with open space that make efficient use of the land, and minimizes their visual impact and negative impacts on agriculture and wildlife habitat;**
- ... a rural town with diversified and economically viable agriculture and controls on the location and operation of large livestock operations;**
- ... a rural town with well defined, planned and maintained commercial areas or corridors in appropriate places such as along major roads and interchanges or near incorporated communities;**
- ... a rural town where rivers, lakes, wildlife habitat and other natural resources are protected and some shoreland with public access to the water and park areas are set aside for public use;**
- ... a rural town with continuing recreational opportunities including private activities on private land and a public trail system for walking and bicycles;**
- ... a rural town with good roads built and maintained to Town standards;**
- ... a rural town that attempts to keep taxes as low as possible; and,**
- ... a rural town with a defined, well-planned and orderly development pattern implemented through appropriate zoning districts, and objective land division and zoning decisions consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**



Red Cedar River

### **3. HOUSING**

Housing costs are the single largest expenditure for most Wisconsin residents. Affordability is just one reason a community may plan for housing. However, a variety of local housing issues and demands can be addressed through planning, such as type (e.g., single-family, rental, manufactured), condition (e.g., age, aesthetics, rehabilitation), and safety (e.g., codes, disaster preparedness, accessibility). Housing policies should meet the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups, and other special needs. This element identifies the housing goal, objectives and policies for the Town of Prairie Lake.

#### **3.1 Housing Goal and Objectives**

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##### *Housing Goals*

To provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and future housing demand in the Town of Prairie Lake.

Manage residential development in a manner that allows for affordable, quality housing choices consistent with the rural nature of the community.

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##### *Objectives:*

- 1) Ensure land is zoned for low-density residential development.
- 2) Preserve rural character by utilizing existing transportation routes and encouraging the protection of natural features.
- 3) Encourage safe, accessible, quality housing development and housing stock, while maintaining affordability for young families, the disabled and seniors.

#### **3.2 Housing Policies**

- 1) Encourage residential developments in areas closest to existing roadways to minimize the construction of new roads.
- 2) Enforce applicable State and local building regulations to encourage safe, quality housing development.
- 3) Manage regulations for manufactured housing and mobile home parks.
- 4) Promote Barron County home ownership and rehabilitation programs to help increase housing affordability and quality.

## **4. TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation can directly influence a community's growth, or it can be a tool to help guide and accommodate the growth that a community envisions. Like the other elements in the Plan, transportation is interconnected, especially with land use. Economic development, housing, and land use decisions can increase or modify demands on the various modes of transportation (e.g., highways and roads, air, rail, pedestrian). Likewise, the transportation decisions, such as the construction of new roadways or a bypass, can impact accessibility, land values, and land use.

This section of the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan* identifies a goal, objectives, and policies for the transportation infrastructure of the Town. These objectives and policies are then compared with those of other local, regional, and State transportation plans.

### **4.1 Transportation Goal and Objectives**

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#### *Transportation Goal*

Provide a safe, efficient transportation system that meets the needs of the community while encouraging development near the primary transportation arterials and collectors.

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#### *Objectives:*

- 1) Coordinate road improvements based on current and future land uses and land use plans.
- 2) Town roads should serve the needs of the agricultural community in a manner consistent with the rural character of the community.
- 3) Manage the Town's road system in a cost-effective manner, utilizing the existing road network to accommodate future development when possible.

### **4.2 Transportation Policies**

- 1) Continue to use the State of Wisconsin Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) system and the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) to inventory, evaluate, and plan for roadway improvements in the Town.
- 2) Promote shared driveway entrances for clustered development and subdivision development.
- 3) Require developers to pay the costs associated with new roads or streets and require new roads serving more than three residences to be built to Town road specifications.
- 4) Continue to integrate future roadway improvements and road maintenance equipment into a capital improvements plan.
- 5) Administer the Town Driveway Ordinance and amend it as necessary.
- 6) Promote transportation services for the elderly and those with special needs that are provided in Barron County.

### 4.3 Comparison with Other Transportation Plans

The related transportation plans discussed in the *Existing Conditions Report* were reviewed and the above transportation goal, objectives, and policies for the Town of Prairie Lake were determined to be compatible with these other related transportation plans. The goals and policies of these other plans are not expected to have impacts on the community which require action within the scope of this planning effort.

The Town of Prairie Lake has a major U.S. highway, 53 and five County highways for which the Town will continue to cooperate with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Barron County on planning and access controls. This includes discussions with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the City of Chetek for the plans of a County Highway D interchange with U.S. Highway 53. Portions of County highways in the Town of Prairie Lake have been identified in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* as having positive conditions for bicycling. The Town also contains an established County snowmobile route. These recreational transportation activities are not inconsistent with this Plan, though the Town expresses an interest to participate in the planning and review of any future recreational trails and transportation routes.



U.S. Highway 53, looking north from the County Highway D overpass

## 5. UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Utilities and community facilities provide the foundation on which a community is built and maintained. Utilities may include sanitary sewer, storm water, and water systems, as well as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and solid waste disposal.

Community facilities can vary greatly by community, but typically include parks, schools, libraries, cemeteries, and various health and safety providers (e.g., police, fire, ambulance, hospitals). Special services deemed to be vital to a community, such as day care, may also be included as a community facility.



Utilities and community facilities can also be used to guide growth, encourage development, or help establish community identity. Combined with roads, the construction, maintenance, and operation of public utilities and community facilities often constitute the largest proportion of a community's budget.

### 5.1 Review of Existing Facilities

Other than roads, as discussed in the transportation section, community facilities in the Town of Prairie Lake are limited.

No municipal utilities (e.g., sewer, water, stormwater) exist within the Town. Two-thirds of the Town falls within the Chetek School District, except northwestern portions of the community which are within the Cameron Area School District. A small portion of the Town is in the Barron Area School District. Emergency services are adequately provided by the Barron County Sheriff's Department, the Cameron Fire District, Chetek Fire District, the Chetek Ambulance Service and the Barron Ambulance Service.



The existing Town Hall and associated maintenance buildings represent the only Town-owned community facilities. The Town Hall and Shop is a recently built facility. Otterholt Cemetery is located a ½ mile south of County Highway D on 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Prairie Lake (Joelson or Pleasant Plain) Cemetery is located on County Highway OO, west of, and just over the railroad tracks from, County Highway SS. Some smaller private cemeteries or family burial plots are known to exist. Residents contract with private firms for solid waste disposal and have access to the facilities of the Barron County Recycling Program.

Barron County maintains two public accesses on the Red Cedar River, at the County Highway D (8<sup>th</sup> Avenue) bridge and at County Highway OO and 20<sup>th</sup> Street. There are public accesses on the Prairie Lake at 23 ¾ Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the east side of the lake, at 11 ½ Ave between #2259 & #2261 and between #2242 11 ½ Avenue & #1143 22 ½ Street on the west side of the lake. A County snowmobile trail also crosses through the Town.

Utilities and facilities of regional significance (e.g., health care, emergency services, recycling facilities, telecommunications, electric utilities, child care, libraries, parks, and schools) are identified and discussed in the *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Existing Conditions Report*. The Town of Prairie Lake has very little or no control or responsibility regarding the planning and operation of these facilities. This is also true for stormwater management planning, private wells, and private sanitary sewer systems which are regulated by Barron County and the State of Wisconsin, and not the Town of Prairie Lake.

## **5.2 Assessment of Future Needs**

Other than normal maintenance, no future expansion, rehabilitation, or construction needs regarding Town of Prairie Lake community facilities were identified during the planning meetings. Future needs for those utilities and facilities of regional significance and for privately owned facilities (e.g., cemeteries, solid waste disposal) are assessed and planned for by the providers and are not considered a normal responsibility of the Town.

The Town wants to explore acquisition and development of an additional site for public access to the Red Cedar River. Setting aside such land for public use is very important to the Town.

## **5.3 Utilities and Community Facilities Goal and Objectives**

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### *Utilities and Community Facilities Goal*

Maintain and provide needed community facilities and services in a safe and cost-effective manner that is consistent with the Town's vision.

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#### ***Objectives:***

- 1) Infrastructure improvements should be done in a manner that is compatible with the Town's rural character.
- 2) New development should be financially responsible for corresponding increases in community services and infrastructure.
- 3) Maintain current levels of public works and community services, while protecting the health of Town residents and the natural environment.

## **5.4 Utilities and Community Facilities Policies**

- 1) For developments of five lots or more, require developers to pay related Town costs, including dedication of land, or payment-in-lieu of such dedication, for parks or open space land.

- 2) Integrate, when feasible, future community facilities improvements into a capital improvements plan.
- 3) Support enforcement of the Barron County Cell Tower Ordinance in the Town.
- 4) Continue to work with Barron County to ensure the proper installation of new private septic systems, the continued maintenance of existing systems, and the identification of failing private septic systems.
- 5) The Town should study and report on what should happen with the old Town Hall building.
- 6) If issues regarding solid waste, recycling, hazardous waste disposal or stormwater management become more prevalent, the Town will address them as necessary.



The old Town Hall building

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



This element of the *Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan* presents the goal, objectives, and policies for three resources important to any community—Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources. For the past century, agriculture has been the primary land use in the Town of Prairie Lake; and the Town’s vision statement recognizes that agriculture will continue to be part of the Town. Natural resources, such as the Red Cedar River and the wooded hillsides, also add to the rural qualities which local residents promote in their vision. Cultural resources are the important third sub-element that nurtures a “sense of place,”

provides an important context for planning, and fosters civic pride.

### 6.1 **Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Goal and Objectives**

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#### *Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Goal*

Agriculture is an apparent economic activity in the Town and the Community’s natural resources and cultural assets are protected.

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#### *Objectives:*

- 1) Encourage farmland preservation, viable farm operations, and the maintenance of the Town’s rural character.
- 2) Work cooperatively to protect natural resources.
- 3) Support efforts to preserve buildings and sites of historical or cultural significance.

### 6.2 **Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Policies**

- 1) Implement those applicable policies in the Land Use Element of this Plan that will help preserve and protect the Town’s rural character and natural resources.
- 2) Adopt a Town “Right-to-Farm” resolution consistent with the State “Right-to-Farm Law” and provide a copy of the resolution with every building permit application to reduce nuisance complaints.
- 3) Support State tax programs which encourage the preservation of farmland and forest lands, such as farmland tax credits, use value assessment, and other such farmland and forest land preservation programs.

- 4) Maintain communication with Barron County Soil and Water Conservation Department and Barron County UW-Extension on efforts to protect water quality, preserve farmlands, prevent soil erosion, and prevent the spread of invasive species.
- 5) Maintain communication with Barron County regarding the enforcement of the County Zoning Ordinance, Land Division Ordinance, Sanitation Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance, and Shoreland-Wetland Ordinance.
- 6) Cooperate with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Barron County, and upstream municipalities regarding water quality management of the Red Cedar River.
- 7) Support efforts by local groups and property owners to preserve buildings and sites of historical or cultural significance.
- 8) Provide community and resident input in decisions regarding the siting of large livestock feedlot operations. Establish nuisance standards, minimum distance requirements and environmental standards for the siting of large livestock operations.



Prairie Lake

## **7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Through planning, a community can anticipate economic change and guide development to the best of its abilities to achieve the economic vision and objectives for the community. Economic development is about working together to maintain a strong economy that provides a good standard of living for individuals and a reliable tax base for the community. A community's economic development plan should reflect the values of the community, a realistic view of its influence and resources, and must be carefully linked to the goals, objectives, and policies of the other Plan elements.

### **7.1 Local Economic Development Plans and Programs**

The Town of Prairie Lake currently has no local economic development plans and programs, but residents, businesses and the community do have access to the myriad of County, regional, and State economic development programs identified in the *Existing Conditions Report*.

### **7.2 New Businesses or Industry Desired**

The types of new businesses or industry desired are largely determined by location. Principally, it is envisioned that the rural area of the Town will continue to be primarily rural in nature, including agricultural, forestry and recreational lands, with many residents from low-density rural residences continuing to commute to employment centers in the area. Commercial activities which do occur within the rural area are envisioned to be small enterprises or in-home cottage businesses which compliment agricultural, forestry and recreational uses or serve local residents. However, at the new intersection of County Highway D and U.S. Highway 53 there is potential for well-planned commercial development. In addition, commercial and light industrial development is appropriate for the County Highway SS corridor. Traditional farms are desired instead of higher-impact feedlot operations. However, even such uses are seen as more desirable in farming areas than higher density residential development.

After attempting to list specific types of business or industry the Town desires, it was decided that it was better to list characteristics of any business or industry that could potentially harm the atmosphere that town residents have indicated they wanted to foster, or that could negatively impact its immediate neighbors.

Therefore, the Town should encourage all commercial activity that does not:

- produce an inordinate amount of noise
- become an eyesore because of size or poorly kept condition
- have potential to negatively impact water quality
- negatively impact property values
- produce offensive non-agricultural odors or overwhelming agricultural odors
- produce large amounts of traffic if located outside of areas targeted for commercial activity
- derive income from sex-related commercial activity

### **7.3 Strengths and Weaknesses**

The Town of Prairie Lake has U.S. Highway 53, a regional transportation arterial, running through it, County Highway SS parallels Highway 53 in the northeast part of the Town, and the City of Chetek, a local center of trade, borders the Town on the east. These are significant economic strengths, both for businesses that operate in the Town and for residents who commute to surrounding communities. As shown in the *Existing Conditions Report*, the Town also has significant farmlands and forestlands, which have historically been significant economic activities in the Town over the past 150 years.

The scenic and recreational value of the Red Cedar, as well as the wooded hillsides and cultivated or grassy clearings, offer opportunities for tourism-based business. However, it is more likely that such natural amenities will continue to spur demand for rural residential development and recreational properties. Some areas near these rivers may also hold substantial sand and gravel deposits. Entrepreneurs also have access to a diversity of County, regional, and State economic development assistance programs.

However, the Town has no municipal water or wastewater utilities for more intensive commercial and industrial uses. Due to a prevalence of excessively drained soils and the proximity to the Red Cedar River, such intensive uses are deemed inappropriate to the community if on private onsite wastewater treatment systems, as well as being inconsistent with the rural character expressed in the community vision. Most Town roads are not built to specifications to allow for year-round heavy traffic often associated with industrial and some commercial uses.

### **7.4 Opportunities for Brownfield Redevelopment**

As a rural, unincorporated community, no opportunities for brownfield redevelopment were identified during the planning process. However, the Town expects full reclamation of non-metallic mining sites to a more natural setting once mining activities cease.

### **7.5 Designation of Sites**

As indicated previously, dispersed, low-impact commercial activity is appropriate for the rural portions of the Town. However, the Town already has a significant corridor, County Highway SS, that lends itself well to additional commercial and light industrial development.

The planned interchange at County Highway D and U.S. Highway 53 presents the Town some opportunities and challenges. The Town sees this area as appropriate for businesses that serve the traveling public or are related to agriculture or transportation. In any event, the Town wants to keep the influence of such commercial activity out of the Red Cedar River valley, having it confined to the relatively level area immediately surrounding the interchange.

Proposed economic development projects and sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Foremost, is the proposed project consistent with the community's vision and Comprehensive Plan? Is it compatible with the rural nature of the community or designated commercial areas and does it pose a threat to the surface water and groundwater of the community? And what will be the impact of the proposed project on local roads and services? These are examples of the types of inquiries the Town will make when reviewing a proposed commercial development.

## **7.6 Economic Development Goal and Objectives**

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### *Economic Development Goal*

Agriculture, home occupations, and other businesses compatible with the rural nature or designated commercial areas of the Town will continue to be the primary economic activities within the Town, as the majority of residents continue to commute outside the Town for employment.

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#### ***Objectives:***

- 1) Promote the continued success of farming, forestry, and farm-related businesses.
- 2) Support the maintenance and development of in-home, cottage industries that compliment and serve the rural community and comply with applicable regulations.
- 3) Discourage larger commercial and heavy industrial development without access to municipal wastewater services.

## **7.7 Economic Development Policies**

- 1) Implement the agricultural-related policies in the Agricultural Element which promote agricultural and forestry related practices and industries.
- 2) Allow home occupations and cottage industries that are compatible with the rural character of the community.
- 3) Require larger commercial and heavy industrial development to be located on a municipal wastewater system while minimizing impacts on adjacent uses through natural screening, appropriate lighting, and careful site planning. Define “larger” and “heavy” based on standards such as: water use, average trips per day, heavy equipment or truck traffic, dust generated, hours and days of operation, noise, use of chemicals, facility size, impervious surface area, etc.
- 4) Require bonding for potential environmental impacts, impacts to Town roads, and site reclamation for mineral extraction operations, as well as periodic permit renewals.
- 5) Consider proposed commercial and industrial uses on a case-by-case basis by evaluating potential impacts and the compatibility with the community’s rural character or designated commercial area.
- 6) Commercial and industrial uses should be financially responsible for potential environmental impacts and impacts to Town roads.

## **8. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

Advances in technology and improved mobility have resulted in the faster and easier movement of people, money, goods, and other resources across jurisdictions. Many issues cross intergovernmental boundaries, affecting more than one community or governmental unit (e.g., school district). And the decisions, plans, and policies of one community can impact neighboring jurisdictions. The environmental, economic, and social health of a community and the region are interconnected.

Through intergovernmental cooperation, communities can anticipate potential conflicts in plans and policies in order to identify potential solutions to mitigate such conflicts. Governmental units may also identify opportunities for cost-sharing, competitive bidding, and other strategies to leverage available resources to everyone's benefit.

### **8.1 Growth Trends and Planning Activities in Adjacent Communities**

Growth trends for surrounding Barron County communities are described in the *Barron Area Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report*. Like the Town of Prairie Lake, adjacent unincorporated towns have also been experiencing population and housing growth and loss of farmlands to residential or recreational use, though agriculture remains the predominant evident land use in the area. Residential development pressure has been greatest along shorelines of Prairie Lake and the Red Cedar River, and the Town of Dovre to the southeast experienced the greatest percentage of residential growth during the 1990s among all Barron County towns. Changes in the amount of forest lands varied by community, with substantial increases occurring in the Towns of Prairie Farm and Dallas, while a slight decrease occurred in the Town of Dovre to the southeast. The Town of Barron, Town of Sioux Creek, Town of Dovre, Town of Sumner, Town of Stanley, and City of Chetek, all bordering the Town of Prairie Lake, are all currently developing comprehensive plans.

### **8.2 Intergovernmental Plans, Agreements, & Relationships**

Outside the multi-jurisdictional aspect of this comprehensive planning process, the number of existing intergovernmental plans, agreements, and relationships including the Town of Prairie Lake are limited. The primary intergovernmental agreements involving the Town of Prairie Lake are for emergency services from the Barron County Sheriff's and City of Chetek Police Departments, the Cameron and Chetek Fire Districts, and the Barron Ambulance Service and Chetek Ambulance Service. The Town has shared boundary road agreements for road maintenance with all adjoining Towns. The Town of Prairie Lake has no cooperative boundary agreements as defined under State Statute 66.0307, and there is no regional master plan as defined under State Statute 66.0309. The Town is part of the Cameron, Chetek and Barron Area School Districts as mapped in the community facilities section of the *Existing Conditions Report*, but has minimal involvement in school district planning and operations. The Town has access to library services and a summer recreational program in the City of Chetek.

The Town has a good working relationship with the Barron County Highway Department. The Town acquires salt, sand and hot-mix from the County and the County bids on providing blacktop and aggregate. The County sometimes shares equipment and provides limited engineering

consulting and other limited services to the Town. The County establishes house numbers for the Town and provides the signs. The Town also contracts with the County for Emergency Services and training.

The Town is encompassed within a number of Barron County plans and ordinances, though Town approval of these documents was not required and ongoing participation is minimal. These plans include, but are not limited to the: *Barron County Land Use Plan, Land Use Ordinance, Sanitary Ordinance, Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, Emergency Operating Plan, Manure Storage Ordinance, Recycling Ordinance, and Land & Water Resource Management Plan*. General guidance for other specific issues may be acquired from numerous other local, regional and State plans regarding natural resource management, farmland preservation, economic development, emergency services, and social programs. Please refer to the *Existing Conditions Report* for more details on many of these plans.

### **8.3 Potential Issues and Opportunities**

During the planning process, the following potential intergovernmental issues and opportunities were identified:

- 1) Barron County zoning notification and timing with local decision-makers.
- 2) Water quality of rivers, lakes and streams.
- 3) Potential provision of municipal wastewater treatment to developing areas of unincorporated jurisdictions.
- 4) Growth and land use plans of the City of Chetek, as well as annexation and the potential use of extraterritorial review powers.
- 5) Development plans around the CTH D and USH 53 interchange and the Town's desire to minimize the impact from such development on the Red Cedar River valley.
- 6) Affordable housing issues and encouraging residential development, multi-family or on smaller lots which may be more suitable for a municipal wastewater treatment system.

### **8.4 Intergovernmental Discussions and Input**

On August 18, 2005, Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission members met with Plan Commission members from the City of Chetek, Town of Dovre, and Town of Sioux Creek to discuss intergovernmental issues of mutual concern. The primary issues discussed were:

- expansion of wastewater services and potential establishment of a wastewater district
- surface water quality concerns on area rivers and lakes
- future expansion and annexation by the City
- establishing and linking recreational trail systems
- cooperation in the development of local land use ordinances

Town of Sioux Creek Plan Commissioners also expressed the need for the City to enforce lighting standards to minimize light pollution.

## **8.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal and Objectives**

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### ***Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal***

Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relations with neighboring units of government and Barron County.

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#### ***Objectives:***

- 1) Maintain communication with adjacent governmental units to identify and discuss existing or potential conflicts.
- 2) Utilize intergovernmental agreements to realize a financial benefit or cost-savings to the Town.
- 3) Stay informed and participate in intergovernmental discussions to ensure continued opportunities for the Town and its residents.

## **8.6 Intergovernmental Cooperation Policies**

- 1) Provide a copy of the adopted Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan to surrounding local governments.
- 2) Maintain membership of the Town Board in the Wisconsin Town's Association.
- 3) Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities and Barron County when mutually beneficial opportunities for cost-sharing for needed projects arise.
- 4) Work with Barron County to improve notification and coordinate timing of County and Town decision-making.
- 5) Participate in discussions with the City of Chetek and area towns on the potential expansion of wastewater services to unincorporated areas or the establishment of a sewer district.
- 6) Participate in discussions with area communities to assess surface water quality concerns and identify appropriate remedies if needed.
- 7) Work cooperatively with other area communities to identify routes appropriate for the potential development of linked recreational trails.
- 8) Maintain communication with the City of Chetek on land use and growth issues, including providing input on the City's use of extraterritorial powers and annexation.
- 9) Maintain communication with other area unincorporated jurisdictions on the development of land use regulations and on shared land use concerns.

## 9. LAND USE

The use of land is a critical factor in guiding the future growth of any community. This section of the Plan identifies a land use goal, objectives, and policies for the Town of Prairie Lake based on current and projected land use trends, as well as local land use issues and conflicts.

### 9.1 Existing Land Uses and Land Use Trends

Land use data and trends for the Town of Prairie Lake are discussed in the *Existing Conditions Report* in the Land Use section. This includes a discussion of land supply, demand, and prices in the area. The *Existing Conditions Report* also includes a school district map and discusses emergency services areas which are the only service area boundaries for the Town of Prairie Lake; the Town has no public utilities. The agricultural and natural resources sections and maps in the *Existing Conditions Report* identify and discuss the area’s prime farmlands, floodplains, environmental sensitive areas, and other development limitations. Recent land use trends by parcel and acreage are summarized in the table below:

	1998 parcels	1998 acreage	2004 parcels	2004 acreage	Annual % Change <i>parcels</i> <i>acres</i>	2004 Density (avg parcel size)
Agricultural	535	12,588	453	10,075	-2.6 -3.3	22.2 ac
Forest	345	4,959	386	4,728	-1.8 -0.8	12.2 ac
Residential	876	1,063	1,096	1,409	4.2 5.4	1.28 ac
Commercial	37	75	25	113	-5.4 8.4	4.5 ac
Industrial	2	4	1	3	-8.3 -4.2	3.0 ac
Undeveloped	372	1,474	403	2,989	1.4 17.1	7.4 ac
Other Uses	64	181	51	178	-3.4 -0.3	3.5 ac

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue. 1998 & 2004 Statements of Assessments.

The above clearly shows the loss of farmland and forestland in the Town over the past six years. While some of this acreage has become residential and commercial land, it is apparent that the largest percentage is now being taxed as “undeveloped” and falls within the other private uses category. A substantial portion of this undeveloped land may be associated with new home construction on a larger lot where a small portion of the property is assessed as residential and the remainder is left unfarmed or not actively forested. It should be further noted that residential parcels and acreage are increasing substantially. It is also likely that the recreational properties in the Town are in the undeveloped category. However, there is some discrepancy within this category as it has replaced the old “Swamp & Waste” category and there has been some change in applying categories

to various properties. However, this is not enough to prevent us from seeing the big picture as it relates to land use change in the Town.

During the planning process, the Plan Commission supplemented the above information with additional local data for additional insight into land use trends. It is known that most of the residential land use change is occurring around the lake, Prairie Lake. However, the available land around the lake is diminishing and future development will shift to the rural area of the Town. For further perspective, 24.4% of the Town would be in residential use within 50 years if trends continue. This might suggest that there would be more pressure to rezone land out of the A2 category to those residential districts that allow higher density.

During the visioning and land use meetings with Town officials and residents, there was a consensus that the current zoning is appropriate but that more clustered development to retain open space is desired.

## **9.2 Opportunities for Redevelopment**

As a rural, unincorporated community, opportunities for redevelopment are limited; and no specific projects or sites were identified during the planning process. However, the Town expects currently active non-metallic mining sites to be reclaimed to a more natural setting and possibly be made available for development once mining activities cease.



Red Cedar River

### **9.3 Land Use Conflicts**

Early in the planning process, the attitudes of Town of Prairie Lake were assessed through the community opinion survey. It is clear that there is concern for potential land use conflicts. Of foremost concern were increasing conflicts between preserving rural character and residential growth. At the same time a majority felt the current rate of development was appropriate. In addition, people thought that farms should be protected from nuisance complaints associated with routine agricultural operations. Indeed, 90 percent of all respondents said it was important to maintain open space to retain the rural character of the Town. It will take a balancing act to address the potential impacts of development on the community while allowing a reasonable amount of development to occur in an orderly and planned way. There was strong support for the Town to become more involved in managing land use and working toward striking that balance.

### **9.4 Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies**

#### **GOAL: MAINTAIN THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN**

##### **Rural Residential Objective**

1. Residential development that is well planned, efficient and orderly, and enhances, and does not detract from, the rural, recreational, forested, open space and farming characteristics of the Town.



Prairie Lake

## **Rural Residential Policies**

1. The Town of Prairie Lake will encourage residential development that is clustered with open space to minimize its visual impact and its impact on agriculture, natural resources and wildlife habitat.
2. The Town of Prairie Lake will evaluate rezonings that propose increasing residential density to decide if they would detract from the character of the Town. Any development granted increased residential density will be encouraged to incorporate conservation design principles.
3. The Town of Prairie Lake will review creation of new lots for site specific impacts on the rural and natural characteristics of the Town associated with the development. The Town will receive and review certified survey maps and plats submitted through the Barron County Land Division Ordinance.
4. The Town will periodically evaluate whether the County subdivision process and standards meets Town needs. If necessary, the Town may develop and implement its own subdivision ordinance.
5. Discourage new home development on good farmland, hilltops, slopes greater than 20% and productive forests and interior woodland habitat.

## **Rural Commercial Objective**

1. Commercial development that is well planned, orderly and in appropriate locations.

## **Rural Commercial Policies**

1. Commercial development will be encouraged to occur in designated areas planned for that use, primarily along major roads and intersections, and along County Highways SS and D near the City of Chetek.
2. Commercial development and businesses in the rural areas of the Town will primarily serve the needs of local residents and be compatible with the rural character of the Town

## **Agriculture Production Objective**

1. The diversity of future agricultural operations of viable traditional farms and smaller farms employing appropriate technology for the production of traditional and alternative agricultural products.

## **Agriculture Production Policies**

1. Encourage conservation design and density transfer where they can keep productive farm fields viable.
2. The Town of Prairie Lake will evaluate rezonings that propose converting productive farmland to non-farm use to ascertain if it would negatively impact other farms or detract from the rural character of the Town. Any rezoning granted that increases the residential density on a farm parcel will be encouraged to incorporate conservation design principles to keep productive farm fields viable or maintain open space.
3. To protect agricultural interests from public complaints associated with routine agricultural operations, covenants, deed restrictions or other legal instruments will be applied to all new residential lots in or near the agricultural production areas stating that the new lot created for residential purposes is in or near a pre-existing agricultural area where agricultural uses predominate and are favored by the Town of Prairie Lake and owners of said lot are forewarned they are moving into a pre-existing agricultural area with its associated, accepted normal agricultural practices, including but not limited to, animal and plant husbandry, broad hours of operation, farm equipment traffic and farming debris on roads, farm equipment lights, odors, dust, smoke, noise, and manure, sludge, chemical, pesticide and herbicide application.

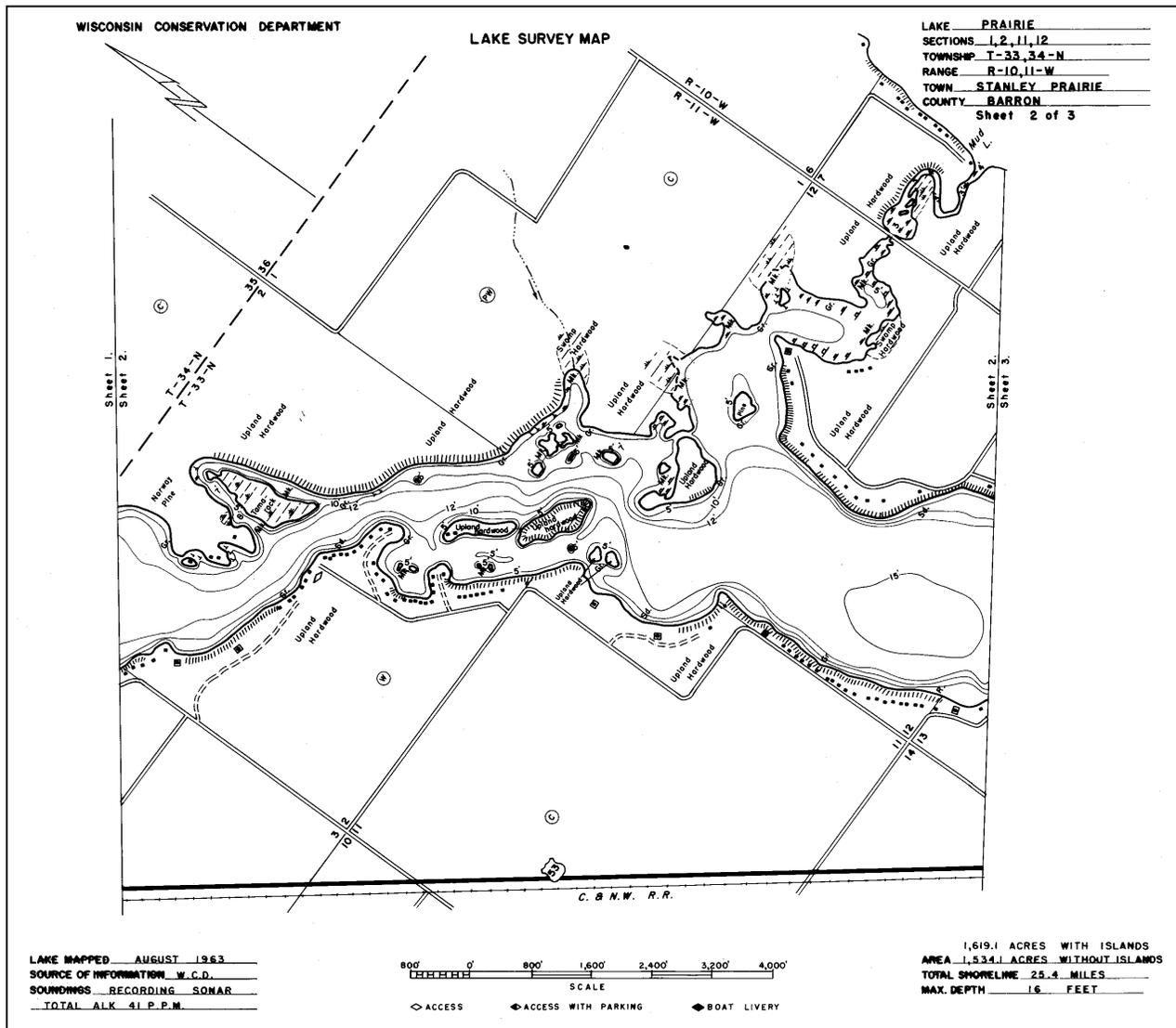
# GOAL: MAINTAIN OPEN SPACE, UNIQUE NATURAL FEATURES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Open Space and Natural Features Objective

1. Maintain the quality of the natural resources within the Town of Prairie Lake by protecting natural features that might be negatively impacted or where environmental factors pose severe limitations to development.

## Open Space and Natural Features Policies

1. The Town will consider impacts on open space and scenic views when reviewing development proposals and encourage development that takes those characteristics into account.
2. The Town will consider the location of and impact on environmentally sensitive lands (wetlands, steep slopes 20 percent or greater, shorelands and floodplains) when reviewing development proposals.
3. To protect water resources, runoff from development should be managed on site so that there is no more runoff leaving the site during and after development than was leaving before the development of the site.



## **Recreation Objective**

1. Acquire and maintain selected public recreational land around the Town's waterways through outdoor recreation planning.

## **Recreation Policies**

1. The Town will develop an inventory of shorelands with potential for public acquisition and maintenance and evaluate their resource and recreational value to set aside and manage selected shoreland properties for future public access and use.
2. The Town will pursue funding opportunities for shoreland planning from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources: Local Water Quality Management Planning Aids, River Protection and Management Grants and Lake Protection and Lake Management Planning Grants.
3. The Town will pursue funding opportunities for shoreland facilities from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources: Recreational Boating Facilities Program and Recreational Trails Program.
4. The Town will pursue funding opportunities for land acquisition from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Wisconsin Stewardship Program to implement its shoreland acquisition and management program.

## **GOAL: MANAGE LAND USE IN THE INTEREST OF THE TOWN**

### **Land Management Objectives**

1. To represent the community's long-term interest, the Town of Prairie Lake will be actively engaged in continuing issues related to planning and land use management.
2. The Town will encourage development that is well planned and maintained, orderly and compatible with community values to maintain a high quality rural setting.
3. The Town will evaluate and consider adoption of land use controls and programs that meet the community's needs, protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents and address the adverse impacts of nuisances and certain land uses on surrounding properties.
4. Town residents share a common pride in the appearance of their property and in the appearance of the Town as a whole.

### **Land Management Policies**

1. The Town of Prairie Lake supports the current zoning of the Town and will evaluate any proposed changes based on the comprehensive plan.
2. The comprehensive plan will guide the Town in addressing ongoing public decisions related to future growth and development.
3. The Plan Commission will review all land divisions submitted to the county or the town and make recommendations to the Town Board.
4. The Plan Commission will review all rezonings of land and make recommendations to the Town Board.
5. The Town will establish standards for the location, operation and monitoring of large-scale livestock agricultural operations.

6. The Town will discourage the dumping of refuse and garbage, the stockpiling and disposal of recyclables and encourage the recycling of all items that are recyclable, as defined in State law.
7. Metallic mining (dredge, shaft, pit or strip mining for the recovery of metallic elements or minerals containing metallic elements) should not be allowed in the Town. The Town will evaluate its legal authority to control the location and operation of metallic mines within the Town and consider adoption of an ordinance exercising such authority.
8. The Town will establish standards for the location, operation and land reclamation of non-metallic (sand, gravel, and quarry) mining.
9. In the interest of limiting Town taxes, the landowner and developer will bear the full costs of land use management and permit administration, including providing notice, plan review and site inspection, through the just application of fees.
10. In the interest of limiting Town taxes, the landowner and developer will bear the full public cost of project development including capital expenses associated with road or infrastructure development, and measurable capital costs necessary to support accelerated Town services.
11. Opportunities for citizen participation will be required throughout all stages of land use planning, ordinance development, development review, and policy implementation.

## **9.5 Land Use Projections and Planned Land Use Map**

In accordance with State planning law, comprehensive plans must include 20-year land use projections in 5-year increments. The land use projections for the Town of Prairie Lake are based upon population projections from Wisconsin Department of Administration, the current Town household size of 2.59 persons per occupied unit trending to 2.00 persons per household by the year 2025, and the land use trends provided in the previous table. The land use projections are also consistent with the policy recommendations within this Comprehensive Plan.



These land use projections for the Town of Prairie Lake can be found on the table below:

	2005 parcels/ acreage	2010 parcels/ acreage	2015 parcels/ acreage	2020 parcels/ acreage	2025 parcels/ acreage
Residential <sup>1</sup>	1,103 1,417	1,113 1,430	1,139 1,463	1,164 1,495	1,186 1,523
Residential <sup>2</sup>	1,111 1,422	1,186 1,518	1,261 1,614	1,336 1,710	1,411 1,806
Agricultural	450 10,013	424 9,791	398 9,756	372 9,532	346 9,310
Commercial	27 122	30 131	33 140	36 149	39 158
Industrial	1 3	2 5	3 8	4 10	5 13
Projected/estimated* Population	1,484*	1,500	1,560	1,614	1,657

<sup>1</sup> based on population <sup>2</sup> based on recent building activity  
Sources: U.S. Census & Wisconsin Department of Administration

The above projections are based on existing trends and assumes implementation of the Plan recommendations. However, given the rural nature and small population of the community, one or two large changes in land use can have substantial impacts on these projections. For instance, a major residential subdivision development could dramatically increase the number of homes, while decreasing the average lot size. As such, these projections should be used cautiously.

### ***Residential Use Projections***

Residential land use projections are necessarily tied to population projections, a forecast of household size and determining the average amount of land utilized by each housing unit. However, there can be trends that are not anticipated by the population projections.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, projected population growth during the next 25 years is expected to slow within the Town of Prairie Lake. As such, the expected growth in housing units is also projected to slow. This is reflected in the first row, Residential <sup>1</sup>, in the above table. However, it is very possible that these population and housing growth rates will be exceeded, especially for the short-term, and the number of building permits per year will more closely resemble recent trends rather than those housing unit projections based on the Wisconsin Department of Administration population projections.

The trends indicated by the assessment data cannot be ignored. While there was an apparent surge between 1998 and 2004 in land assessed as residential, those parcels with actual development indicate that the Town is currently seeing about 15 new dwellings a year. The average parcel size for residential land use has been increasing slowly. It is anticipated that, even with the potential for large lot development, that average parcel size for residential development will remain constant. It is expected and hoped that the land use policies recommended in this Plan will reverse the increasing lot size trends of the past five years. The second row, Residential <sup>2</sup>, in the above table shows what

might happen if current trends in residential growth continues. The Town intends to plan for the second scenario while hoping for the first.

Since the projections are based, in part, on tax assessment data, they typically reflect the principal use(s) of a property. As such, many in-home businesses or cottage industries would also likely be reflected as residential uses.

### ***Agricultural Use Projections***

For the Town of Prairie Lake, a loss of agricultural land is expected to continue, though it is the community's goal that the rate of decrease be slowed and the loss of prime farmlands be minimized. Much of the farmland in Prairie Lake is actually marginal for farming, and it appears to be more sought for its recreational value than for conversion to developed uses. Recreational parcels do not diminish the open space natural amenity that contributes to the scenic beauty of the Town as residential development has a potential to do. Hence, most of the loss of farmland will be attributed to acquisition for recreational parcels, with more actual impact on open space values coming from lesser conversions to residential uses.

### ***Commercial Use Projections***

Commercial growth is expected to be minimal for the planning horizon, consisting of primarily of new commercial development along County Highway SS and at the Highway D interchange with U.S. Highway 53.

### ***Industrial Use Projections***

Currently, little acreage in the Town of Prairie Lake is assessed as an industrial or manufacturing use; and it is unlikely that even light industrial activity will be significant in the future.

### ***Planned Land Use Map***

The community currently utilizes zoning to guide land uses by location. However, a Planned Land Use map should not be considered a zoning map. While the Planned Land Use Map can generally reflect zoning districts, it is intended to be a general guide for development and a basis for applying the Goals, Objectives and Policies. There is variation intended within planning areas that describe the predominate nature of the uses found there. Hence, future development will follow the guidance and performance standards and general location provided in this Comprehensive Plan. This guidance includes policies that promote agriculture, open space, productive forests, and natural resources while minimizing use conflicts where allowing high-quality and compatible development to occur. Given this approach, identifying the net density of planned land uses by specific location is not possible.

However, based on past trends, residential and tourism-based commercial development pressure is expected to be highest along or near Prairie Lake and the Red Cedar River, with more intensive residential and commercial development pressure occurring near County Highways SS and D in areas closer to the City of Chetek.

The planned land use map should be used for general planning purposes only. For development management purposes, each specific site, property, or proposed subdivision should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis to determine the actual location and extent of public rights-of-way, surface waters, wetlands, shorelands, floodplains, steep slopes, and other significant features.

## 10. IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve the community’s vision, the Comprehensive Plan must be put into action. This section identifies a timeline of specific actions to be completed in order to achieve the Plan’s vision, goals, and objectives and policies. This includes a description of how each of the Plan’s elements is integrated and consistent with each other.

The Comprehensive Plan must also be a flexible, dynamic document that considers or allows for change in the community. Plan monitoring and evaluation lets the Town gauge progress towards achieving the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and monitors progress as the Town faces the challenge of inevitable change. Plan amendments and updates may be required or suggested by the information gathered by monitoring and evaluation.

### 10.1 Action Plan

The action plan identifies short-term and long-term activities for implementation of the plan. Identified timeframes are approximate and implementation of the individual action items is subject to available resources and conditions at the time of implementation. The Town Board has the responsibility for implementation of the action plan, though some actions may be delegated to the Town Clerk, Plan Commission, and other Town employees at the Board’s discretion. For instance, the Town Board will often delegate to the Plan Commission the responsibility of drafting new ordinances or code changes for review and approval by the Board.

The Plan Commission will review the action plan annually to evaluate progress on plan implementation and monitor the consistency of ongoing operations and proposed new policies with the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan.

Prior to implementation, the Town will consider and reassess each action item to further determine if each is in the best interests of the community. Changing conditions in the community may necessitate an addition or modification to the implementation actions identified below.

The action plan is organized into the following categories of implementation actions:

- Public Information and Participation
- Planning Activities
- Codes and Ordinances
- Cooperative Efforts

<b>Information and Participation</b>		
<b>1.1</b>	Continue to monitor governmental procedures to ensure opportunities for community participation during all phases of plan, program, and regulation development and implementation.	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>1.2</b>	Following adoption by the Town Board, provide a copy of the Town “Right-to-Farm” resolution with building permits and post a copy at the Town Hall to support the rural character of the community and help reduce land use conflicts and nuisance complaints.	<b>2006-2008</b>

<b>1.3</b>	Utilize University of Wisconsin-Extension and other available resources to increase resident and Plan Commission understanding of planning regulations, techniques, and conservation subdivision design.	<b>2006, periodically thereafter</b>
<b>1.4</b>	Working with Wisconsin DNR and Barron County, to help educate Town residents on regulations and methods for the protection of water quality through the distribution of materials at the Town Hall.	<b>2007 and ongoing</b>
<b>1.5</b>	Work with Barron County Sheriff's Department and other area law enforcement to increase resident knowledge of pertinent issues, such as potential neighborhood watch programs and methamphetamines.	<b>every 2-5 years; or more often as needed</b>

<b>Planning Activities</b>		
<b>2.1</b>	Annually reassess and update 5-year plans for future public facilities, road improvements, and heavy equipment purchases, with the assistance of the WISLR program and database. Ensure basic training in these road management tools by employees and/or Board members.	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>2.2</b>	Work cooperatively with other area communities in the planning of linked recreational trail systems, strive to include proposed trails into future updates of the Barron County Outdoor Recreational Plan, and integrate resident participation into this planning process.	<b>2006 and ongoing as needed</b>
<b>2.3</b>	Acquire and maintain updated copies of City of Chetek ordinances apply to the extraterritorial area and provide comments on proposed modifications to these ordinances.	<b>ongoing as needed</b>
<b>2.4</b>	The Town will inventory shorelands with potential for public acquisition and maintenance, evaluate their resource and recreational value, and develop a program to set aside and manage selected shoreland properties for future public access and use.	<b>2006-2009</b>
<b>2.5</b>	The Town, through its Plan Commission, will continually monitor land use changes in the community and assess the compatibility of these changes with the Plan's vision, goals, and objectives. If such changes conflict with the Plan and a change is needed, the Town will use a public planning process to update the Plan.	<b>annually, and more frequently as needed</b>

<b>Codes and Ordinances</b>		
<b>3.1</b>	The Town Board, Plan Commission, and employees of the Town of Prairie Lake will continue to enforce applicable codes and ordinances, such the Mobile Home Ordinance, Driveway Ordinance, Campground Ordinance and the Building Ordinance.	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>3.2</b>	Modify Town ordinances to require developers to pay Town costs related to a development (e.g., special studies, roads, parks) and be financially responsible for potential environmental impacts.	<b>2006-2008</b>
<b>3.3</b>	Evaluate whether the County subdivision process and standards meets Town needs. If necessary, the Town may develop and implement its own land division ordinance.	<b>2006-2008</b>
<b>3.4</b>	If the Town adopts a land division ordinance it will be consistent with Plan policy recommendations, such as: - minimizing new public roads and encouraging shared driveways - identifying design/maintenance standards for all roads - encouraging conservation subdivision design, clustered housing, and minimum setbacks from public roadways	<b>2006-2008</b>

<b>3.4 cont'd</b>	- requiring site plan review of all land divisions by the Plan Commission - providing flexibility in the enforcement of the ordinance to allow for site planning which is consistent with the Plan's vision and goals	<b>2006-2008</b>
<b>3.5</b>	The Town will work with Barron County to review development application and review processes and timelines to coordinate decision-making.	<b>2006</b>
<b>3.6</b>	When Town land management ordinances are amended, the Plan Commission shall notify the Barron County Zoning Office of the changes to Town land use policy.	<b>as needed</b>
<b>3.7</b>	Enact a Town Ordinance regarding the siting of large livestock operations which provides resident input into the siting process and protects surface and ground waters.	<b>2006-2008</b>

<b>Cooperative Efforts</b>		
<b>4.1</b>	Establish and maintain communication with the Barron County Incinerator, Recycling Program and Emergency Management to increase resident awareness of the County's recycling program and CleanSweep efforts.	<b>2006 and ongoing</b>
<b>4.2</b>	Establish and maintain contacts with adjacent unit of governments, Barron County, Wisconsin Town's Association, and the State of Wisconsin to protect the natural resources and interests of the Town, including ongoing membership and active participation in related organizations and regarding the enforcement of applicable regulations.	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>4.3</b>	Maintain ongoing communication with Barron County in the enforcement of the County Land Division Ordinance, Shoreland-Wetland Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance, Sanitary Ordinance, and access controls on County Highways.	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>4.4</b>	Maintain contact with adjacent municipalities and Barron County to coordinate and pursue opportunities for the cost-sharing and planning of road projects and the enforcement of access controls.	<b>ongoing, as opportunities arise</b>
<b>4.5</b>	Meet with the City of Chetek to start ongoing discussions regarding annexation, extraterritorial review, service delivery, cooperative boundary agreements and municipal revenue sharing.	<b>2006, ongoing</b>
<b>4.6</b>	Monitor upkeep of Barron County parks and boat ramps in the Town and contact Barron County to request additional upkeep, maintenance, or law enforcement if needed. Ensure the County maintains clearly visible rules at the entrance to each park area.	<b>ongoing</b>
<b>4.7</b>	Work to encourage an intergovernmental working group of area municipalities and lake associations to define and discuss water quality concerns on the Red Cedar River and Chetek Chain-of-Lakes.	<b>2007-2010</b>
<b>4.8</b>	Participate in a working group with the City of Chetek and other interested area Towns to discuss the potential provision of wastewater services to developing unincorporated areas and/or the establishment of a sewer district, potentially in concert with the update of the Chetek Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Plan.	<b>2006 –2008 and ongoing as needed</b>

4.9	Provide opportunities for adjacent municipalities to comment on proposed plans and ordinances which may have intergovernmental impacts. Maintain communication with Plan Commissions from adjacent communities to encourage cooperation in the development and sharing of said plans and ordinances.	<b>ongoing, as opportunities arise</b>
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## 10.2 Plan Integration and Consistency

The Town of Prairie Lake Comprehensive Plan has an important role as a guide and determinant for future action and policy decisions in the community. All development proposals and capital expenditures should be reviewed against the conclusions, vision, goals, objectives and policies of the Plan for consistency. When the Town is requested to comment on proposed policy changes at a county, regional, State or Federal level, the Plan can provide important guidance to Town officials.

The elements of the Comprehensive Plan are also internally consistent. Indeed, there is much overlap in issues and policy between many of the elements. A review of all Plan data, analysis and conclusions, and of Plan goals and policies has been performed to ensure consistency. As the Plan developed, major consistent themes emerged which moved the Plan toward consistent conclusions and compatible approaches to solving identified problems among the elements. Any future Plan amendments should be evaluated for consistency with the overall Comprehensive Plan.

## 10.3 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Any plan is subject to the passage of time possibly making its policies and recommendations obsolete. The Town of Prairie Lake Plan Commission is responsible for monitoring changing conditions and Plan implementation to evaluate whether a Plan amendment or update is needed.

The Plan Commission will conduct an annual review and evaluation on: (a) progress of Plan implementation, (b) growth trends in past year, (c) issues and conflicts with the Plan, and (d) any needed Plan amendments. The Plan Commission will report its findings of each annual review to the Town Board.

## 10.4 Plan Amendments and Updates

Plan monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing process and will, at some time, lead to the realization that the Plan requires amending or updating.

Plan Amendments are minor changes or additions to Plan maps or text as deemed necessary and appropriate. The Town Plan Commission must be given sufficient opportunity to make a recommendation to the Town Board on proposed amendments prior the Town Board decision.

The Plan will be updated at least every 10 years as required by State law, unless a more frequent update is deemed necessary by the Town Board. The Town Plan Commission is responsible for facilitating the Plan update, working within any general guidelines provided by the Town Board.

The adoption process for Plan amendments and Plan updates is similar. Consistent with State law, a public hearing at a joint-meeting of the Plan Commission and Town Board will be held. The Plan

Commission must then adopt a resolution recommending the proposed Plan changes or update to the Town Board. The Town Board will then adopt by ordinance the Plan changes or update.

The Town of Prairie Lake will encourage public participation during Plan amendment and update processes. Frequent Plan amendments and updates should be avoided.





## **APPENDIX I**

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESOLUTION AND PROCEDURES**



**RESOLUTION 2003-5**

**ESTABLISHING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES FOR BARRON AREA  
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING**

*WHEREAS*, the Town Board of the Town of Prairie Lake has decided to prepare a comprehensive plan under the authority and procedures of §§62.23(3) & 66.1001, Wis. Stats.;

*AND WHEREAS*, §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats., requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, and that such written procedures provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements; an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan; and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments;

*AND WHEREAS*, the Town Board of the Town of Prairie Lake has designated a plan commission for the purposes defined in §§62.23(1)(2)(4) & (5), Wis. Stats.;

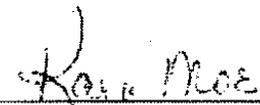
*AND WHEREAS*, the Town of Prairie Lake plan commission has received, reviewed and recommended approval of the *Public Participation Procedures for Barron Area Comprehensive Planning*;

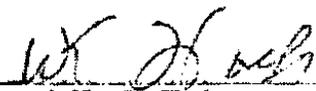
*AND WHEREAS*, the agreement between the City of Barron and the hired planning consultants will include written procedures to foster public participation, ensure wide distribution of draft plan materials, provide opportunities for written comments on draft plan materials, and provide mechanisms to respond to such comments in a document called *Public Participation Procedures for Barron Area Comprehensive Planning*;

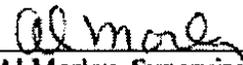
*AND WHEREAS*, the Town Board of the Town of Prairie Lake believes that regular, meaningful public involvement in the Barron Area Comprehensive Planning process is important to assure that the resulting plan meets the wishes and expectations of the public.

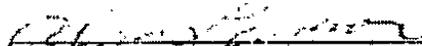
*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED* that the Town Board of the Town of Prairie Lake does hereby ordain and resolve as follows: to approve the written procedures included in *Public Participation Procedures for Barron Area Comprehensive Planning* as its public participation procedures meeting the requirements of §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2003

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kari Moe, Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
W Kenneth Hoefs, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Al Morley, Supervisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Almar Larson, Supervisor

public participation 12/06/2003 11:32 AM

# Public Participation Procedures for Barron Area Comprehensive Planning

## INTRODUCTION

§66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes, requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, and that such written procedures provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments.

The governing body of each local governmental unit participating in the Barron Area Comprehensive Planning project recognizes the need for an open and active public participation process to foster a strong community commitment to the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to guide the community's future growth and development. To ensure that the public has an opportunity to be involved in every stage of the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the participants identify the following actions to promote an active public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing the plan.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

- Each participating local governmental unit shall have a duly appointed Plan Commission pursuant with §66.23 (1) and/or §60.62 (4), Wisconsin Statutes.
- All Plan Commission meetings are open to the public and are officially posted to notify the public as required by law. A period for public comment is provided.
- One Regional Kickoff meeting to introduce the participants and the public to the planning process, describe tasks, roles and responsibilities, and layout the planning process schedule. A press release is issued and the public is invited to comment and ask questions.
- Two Regional Assessment of Conditions meetings where the issues, current conditions and trends as they relate to the plan elements are explored. The meetings are noticed, press releases are issued and the public is invited to comment and ask questions.
- One Community Vision workshop where the Plan Commission and the public will participate in roundtable discussions, develop a community vision and produce goals, objectives, policies and programs. The workshop is noticed, a press release is issued and the public is invited to participate.
- The governmental units of adjacent or overlapping jurisdiction will be notified of the community's undertaking of the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and their input sought on interjurisdictional issues concerning land use, municipal boundaries and service provision.
- The governing body of the local governmental unit will receive periodic reports from the Plan Commission during the preparation of the plan and will have the opportunity to review and comment on materials developed for incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan.
- All meetings of the governing body of the local governmental unit are open to the public and are officially posted to notify the public as required by law.
- Draft copies of the recommended Comprehensive Plan will be available at offices of the governing body of the local governmental unit and other public places for the public to review and to submit written comments.
- A joint Plan Commission and governing body Public Hearing will be conducted on the recommended Comprehensive Plan prior Plan Commission adoption and the governing body enacting the plan by ordinance. The Public Hearing will be preceded by Class 1 notice under Chapter 985, Wisconsin Statutes, published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. A press release is issued and the public is invited to comment and submit written comments.
- The governing body will consider and respond to written comments regarding the plan before enacting it by ordinance.
- The adopted comprehensive plan will be distributed to:
  1. Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the local governmental unit.
  2. The clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the local governmental unit which is the subject of the plan.
  3. The Wisconsin Land Council.
  4. The Wisconsin Department of Administration.
  5. The regional planning commission in which the local governmental unit is located.
  6. The public library that serves the area in which the local governmental unit is located.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

### **VISION SURVEY RESULTS**



## Town of Prairie Lake Community Opinion Survey

The Town of Prairie Lake is changing and a new Wisconsin law requires that all local governments prepare land use plans. To help prepare for our future, the Town Planning Commission would like to work with our community to develop a Town Land Use Plan. As part of the planning process, we need to hear from you. We ask that you take a few minutes to read through the survey and then fill it out.

If possible, we would like a single response from each household. In the event there are differing opinions between adult household members, simply indicate the independent responses by using different colored pens. Feel free to add written comments at the end of the survey. If there is not enough space for your response to a particular question, indicate the question number and continue your response at the end of the survey.

Please return the survey by May 31, 2004 either by dropping it in the labeled box outside the town hall or by mailing it back to us. (If using mail, simply fold it so that the return address on the back is in the appropriate place, tape the edges, and place postage on it.) Thank you for helping plan for our future.

### Transportation

1. The condition and general maintenance of the Town and County road systems in the Town of Prairie Lake is satisfactory. Check one.
 

<u>37</u> Strongly Agree	<u>158</u> Agree	<u>18</u> Not Sure	<u>21</u> Disagree	<u>3</u> Strongly Disagree
15.6%	66.7%	7.6%	8.9%	1.3%
  
2. The Town should do more to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, and horse traffic. Check one.
 

<u>26</u> Strongly Agree	<u>45</u> Agree	<u>53</u> Not Sure	<u>83</u> Disagree	<u>37</u> Strongly Disagree
10.3%	18.5%	21.8%	34.2%	15.2%
  
3. The Town should do more to accommodate snowmobile and ATV use. Check one.
 

<u>21</u> Strongly Agree	<u>35</u> Agree	<u>53</u> Not Sure	<u>78</u> Disagree	<u>40</u> Strongly Disagree
9.3%	15.4%	23.3%	34.4%	17.6%
  
4. There should be Town standards for advertising sign placement, size, and design. Check one.
 

<u>55</u> Strongly Agree	<u>104</u> Agree	<u>41</u> Not Sure	<u>22</u> Disagree	<u>11</u> Strongly Disagree
23.6%	44.6%	17.6%	9.4%	4.7%

### Public Services

5. The police protection from the Barron County Sheriff's Department is adequate. Check one.
 

<u>27</u> Strongly Agree	<u>127</u> Agree	<u>53</u> Not Sure	<u>17</u> Disagree	<u>5</u> Strongly Disagree
11.8%	55.5%	23.1%	7.4%	2.2%
  
6. The Town should institute recycling requirements. Check one.
 

<u>33</u> Strongly Agree	<u>73</u> Agree	<u>51</u> Not Sure	<u>55</u> Disagree	<u>24</u> Strongly Disagree
14.0%	30.9%	21.6%	23.3%	10.2%

**Housing Development**

7. The rate of new housing construction in the Town of Prairie Lake is: *Check one.*  
68 Too Fast 139 About Right 10 Too Slow  
31.3% 64.1% 4.6%
8. The Town should plan for and manage the locations of new multi-family housing units or apartments in the Town of Prairie Lake. *Check one.*  
80 Strongly Agree 92 Agree 33 Not Sure 26 Disagree 10 Strongly Disagree  
33.2% 38.2% 13.7% 10.8% 4.1%
9. The Town should plan for and manage the location and density of new single-family houses. *Check one.*  
61 Strongly Agree 89 Agree 37 Not Sure 35 Disagree 14 Strongly Disagree  
25.8% 37.7% 15.7% 14.8% 5.9%
10. As the Town grows, new housing should be concentrated in subdivisions. (A subdivision is a housing development of 5 or more lots that are all one and one-half acres or less in size.) *Check one.*  
26 Strongly Agree 54 Agree 52 Not Sure 73 Disagree 34 Strongly Disagree  
10.9% 22.6% 21.8% 30.5% 14.2%
11. The cost for new roads required by more concentrated development should be borne by the developers. *Check one.*  
111 Strongly Agree 84 Agree 19 Not Sure 17 Disagree 3 Strongly Disagree  
47.4% 35.9% 8.1% 7.3% 1.3%
12. Within concentrated developments, lot sizes should be a minimum of:  
22 ¼ acre 61 ½ acre 113 1 acre 32 other  
9.6% 26.8% 49.6% 14.0%
13. In less concentrated development, lot sizes should be a minimum of:  
97 2 acres 59 5 acres 29 10 acres 40 other  
43.1% 26.2% 12.9% 17.8%
14. Holding tanks for new development should only be allowed if there are no alternatives for on-site wastewater treatment. *Check one.*  
59 Strongly Agree 113 Agree 40 Not Sure 15 Disagree 8 Strongly Disagree  
25.1% 48.1% 17% 6.4% 3.4%
15. The town should plan for and manage the location and density of mobile home parks. *Check one.*  
139 Strongly Agree 70 Agree 9 Not Sure 11 Disagree 7 Strongly Disagree  
58.9% 29.7% 3.8% 4.7% 3.0%

**Commercial and Industrial Development**

16. The town should plan for and manage the future development of light industry and warehousing. (*Light industry is generally defined to be manufacturing that does not require high volumes of water, does not generate air or water pollutant discharges, and strictly controls hazardous substances. Examples of light industry include metal fabrication, plastics, lumber and woodwork processing, and manufacturing assembly.*) Check one.

81 Strongly Agree 106 Agree 23 Not Sure 8 Disagree 9 Strongly Disagree  
 37.3% 45.5% 9.9% 3.4% 3.9%

17. If light industry is permitted in the Town of Prairie Lake, it should be limited to locations where it now exists or to areas designated by the Town for this purpose. Check one.

82 Strongly Agree 104 Agree 24 Not Sure 13 Disagree 8 Strongly Disagree  
 35.5% 45.0% 10.4% 5.6% 3.5%

18. If industrial areas are planned, where should they be located?
- 
- 

19. What kinds of businesses or industry should not be allowed in the Town?
- 
- 

20. If new commercial development is planned, what type of businesses or commercial services would you like to see in the Town? Check all that apply.

- 19.2% 89 Highway commercial services and retail to meet the needs of the traveling public along major roads.
- 27.6% 128 Neighborhood retail and services to meet the needs and convenience of local residents.
- 18.4% 85 Recreational businesses such as resorts, retreats, camps, and campgrounds.
- 33% 153 Home occupations (Small-scale, low-volume commercial activity provided from a permanent residence that will not adversely impact neighboring properties; i.e. home office, insurance, beautician, real estate, craft assembly).
- 1.7% 8 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Commercial entertainment (large assemblies of more than 250 people) should not be allowed in the Town. Check one.

73 Strongly Agree 55 Agree 42 Not Sure 51 Disagree 10 Strongly Disagree  
 31.6% 23.8% 18.2% 22.1% 4.3%

22. Town standards should be developed and rules should be applied to control the type, location, and appearance of new commercial, warehouse, and industrial development. Check one.

89 Strongly Agree 109 Agree 21 Not Sure 12 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree  
 37.9% 46.4% 8.9% 5.1% 1.7%

23. The Town should establish standards and manage the location and operations of non-metallic (sand, gravel and quarry) mining, and the reclamation of non-metallic mining land. *Check one.*

86 Strongly Agree 95 Agree 29 Not Sure 12 Disagree 8 Strongly Disagree  
 37.4% 41.3% 12.6% 5.2% 3.5%

**Agricultural Use and Farmland Protection**

24. It is important to maintain open space in order to retain the rural character of the Town. *Check one.*

120 Strongly Agree 83 Agree 15 Not Sure 10 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree  
 51.5% 35.6% 6.4% 4.3% 2.1%

25. Productive agricultural areas should be protected by limiting the location and density of non-farm residential development. *Check one.*

90 Strongly Agree 79 Agree 28 Not Sure 25 Disagree 11 Strongly Disagree  
 38.6% 33.9% 12.0% 10.7% 4.7%

26. Farms in agricultural production areas should be protected from nuisance complaints associated with routine agricultural operations.

63 Strongly Agree 90 Agree 35 Not Sure 30 Disagree 15 Strongly Disagree  
 27% 38.6% 15% 12.9% 6.4%

27. Measures should be taken to limit potential conflicts between existing livestock operations and non-farm residential development. *Check one.*

59 Strongly Agree 111 Agree 38 Not Sure 16 Disagree 7 Strongly Disagree  
 25.5% 48.1% 16.5% 6.9% 3.0%

28. The Town of Prairie Lake should establish a permitting system to regulate new livestock operations or the expansion of existing livestock operations involving more than 650 animal units. (Note: 650 animal units is about equal to a 350 head milking dairy with replacement animals, or 1½ turkey barns.) *Check one.*

89 Strongly Agree 91 Agree 23 Not Sure 20 Disagree 9 Strongly Disagree  
 38.4% 39.2% 9.9% 8.6% 3.9%

29. Current regulatory efforts to control runoff from existing livestock facilities and farm fields are adequate. *Check one.*

14 Strongly Agree 49 Agree 95 Not Sure 39 Disagree 34 Strongly Disagree  
 6.1% 21.2% 41.1% 16.9% 14.7%

**Environmental Quality**

30. With regard to water resources, a higher level of protection should be encouraged for lakes and rivers which have not yet been developed and those that may be more sensitive to development. *Check one.*

105 Strongly Agree 80 Agree 28 Not Sure 10 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree  
 46.1% 35.1% 12.3% 4.4% 2.2%

31. The Town should invest in maintaining public recreational land around waterways. *Check one.*

51 Strongly Agree 99 Agree 40 Not Sure 30 Disagree 11 Strongly Disagree  
 22.1% 42.9% 17.3% 13.0% 4.8%

32. The Town should establish standards and manage the stockpiling of abandoned vehicles and junk. *Check one.*

151 Strongly Agree 71 Agree 6 Not Sure 6 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree  
 64.0% 30.1% 2.5% 2.5% 0.8%

**Ongoing Involvement in Land Use Planning and Management Mechanics**

33. The Town Board should be actively involved in ongoing decisions pertaining to land use planning and development. *Check one.*

73 Strongly Agree 117 Agree 21 Not Sure 11 Disagree 9 Strongly Disagree  
 31.6% 50.6% 9.1% 4.8% 3.9%

34. To reduce conflict between incompatible land uses, zoning and other land use ordinances should be used to channel new development to areas that have been planned for that use. *Check one.*

53 Strongly Agree 116 Agree 40 Not Sure 13 Disagree 6 Strongly Disagree  
 26.5% 48.7% 16.8% 5.5% 2.5%

35. A landowner's property should be allowed to be rezoned if the proposed development is consistent with the Town's Land Use Plan objectives. *Check one.*

46 Strongly Agree 129 Agree 31 Not Sure 11 Disagree 12 Strongly Disagree  
 20.1% 56.3% 13.5% 4.8% 5.2%

36. Subdivision and other development proposals should be reviewed and approved by the Town of Prairie Lake. *Check one.*

91 Strongly Agree 106 Agree 16 Not Sure 14 Disagree 8 Strongly Disagree  
 38.7% 45.1% 6.8% 6.0% 3.4%

37. The Town should require developers of subdivisions set aside land or funds for Town parks. *Check one.*

70 Strongly Agree 83 Agree 38 Not Sure 32 Disagree 7 Strongly Disagree  
 30.4% 36.1% 16.5% 13.9% 3.0%

38. The Town should explore land use management tools that provide for, both the protection of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands, and compensation to landowners to mitigate or lessen the effects of such regulation. *Check one.*

40 Strongly Agree 111 Agree 58 Not Sure 17 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree  
 17.4% 48.3% 25.2% 7.4% 1.7%

**Land Use Issues**

39. What do you see as the major land use issues facing the Town of Prairie Lake in the next five years?

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40. How should the Town of Prairie Lake address these issues?

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**Survey Participant Information**

*Please complete the following questions so we may better compile the results.  
There is no need to provide your name or address.*

41. What do you like about living in the Town of Prairie Lake?

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42. What don't you like about living in the Town of Prairie Lake?

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43. What would you like to see change in the Town of Prairie Lake?

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44. How long have you lived in the Town of Prairie Lake? *Check one.*

52 One to five years      37 Eleven to twenty years      37 Own property but don't live in Prairie Lake  
32 Six to ten years      51 Over twenty years

45. Where do you work? *Check one.*

29 Chetek      1 Cumberland  
22 Rice Lake      3 Bloomer  
12 Cameron      64 Elsewhere \_\_\_\_\_  
11 Chippewa Falls/Eau Claire      80 Not employed

46. Which of the following best describes where you live? *Check one.*

21 Farm      102 Shore land or near lake/river      28 Don't live in Prairie Lake  
48 Rural non-farm      16 Rural subdivision

47. Which of the following best describes your situation? *Check all that apply.*

130 Live in your own home      9 Full-time resident of Prairie Lake      35 Prairie Lake landowner  
4 Rent your dwelling      39 Part-time resident of Prairie Lake      21 Don't live in Prairie Lake

Town of Prairie Lake Opinion Survey - Results

#18. If industrial areas are planned, where should they be located?

By cities and Hwy 53	50
In industrial parks	26
By main roads	14
In existing buildings	5
All in one area	1
Unsure	5
Away from lakes and waterways	12
In the country	5
Wherever	2
Near a village	1

#19. What kinds of businesses or industry should not be allowed in the Town?

Those that don't pollute	50
Bars and Night Clubs	6
Plastics	2
Chemical	7
No more turkey farms	8
All	5
Light industry	6
Camp grounds	1
Meth Labs	1
High traffic businesses – Should be voted on by all	1
Adult entertainment	15
Landfills	5
Theme parks	1
No large retail businesses	2
Factories	1
Nothing to harm the environment	2
None	5
Metal fabricating	1
Wood butchers	2
No refugees	1
Lake shore developments	1
Large dairy and hog operations	8
Auto yards	2
Anything that comes here	3
No ethanol plants	1
Whatever meets zoning codes	2
WalMart	1
No more trailer parks	2
Keep farming and tourism as a base	1

#39 What do you see as the major land use issues facing the Town of Prairie Lake in the next five years?

Good land use	4
Agricultural land to residential use	8
Mobile home parks	8
Housing	29
Preserving lakes and farm lands	11
Urban sprawl	13
Influx of new homes	13
Hwy 53 and D interchange	2
Less farms and more residential	3
All lands adjacent to lakes and rivers	14
Gopher Point project	7
Government involvement	3
Litter in ditches	5
Law enforcement	1
Retiring farmers selling off small plots for devmt.	12
Over development of lakeshore, etc.	9
Unknown	4
Taxing people out of their homes	1
No annexation	1
Rezoning too often	3
Small land size	1
No trailer parks and multi use homes	2
Development	3
Industry	1
Condo type developments	4
Roads and recreation	1
Protect water quality	2
Farm runoff	2
Environment	1

#40 How should the Town of Prairie Lake address these issues?

Develop a plan and ordinances	35
Regulate the number of homes	4
Control development	8
Public input	11
Adequate room for growth	2
Eliminate outboard motors on the chain of lakes	1
Let the county handle it	3
Stay out of peoples lives	2
Limit lake development	5
Don't rezone	1

Garbage collection stations	2
Everything up to a vote	2
Recreational land use set aside	1
Neighbors too close	3
Voter survey and town vote	9
Adjacent landowner input	2
Ban large agriculture animal business	1
Positive growth	2
Against annexation	1
Problems with Red Cedar River trash	1
Enforce minimum lot size	6
Slow new development	5
Noise ordinances	1
Restrictions on chemicals near lakes and rivers	6
Keep costs down	1
Enforce zoning	5
No multi-unit housing	5
Make it easier to rezone	1
By common sense	1
Clean up or be fined	2
More meetings	1
Control farm runoff	2
No trailer parks	1
Speed limit on Prairie Lake	1

#41 What do you like about living in the Town of Prairie Lake?

Low density population	6
Location	31
Peace and quiet	38
Good roads and services	8
Good township	9
Friendly neighbors	12
Good law enforcement	2
Lakes	11
Rural atmosphere	44
Don't like it	1
Small and laid back	5
Like it	5
Between towns	1
Wild life	1
Safety	1
Recreation	1

#42 What don't you like about living in the Town of Prairie Lake?

No complaints	14
Taxes too high	33
Odors of turkey farms	9
More rules on keeping property clean	14
Better library	1
Some neighbors	2
Algae in the lakes	6
Too much traffic & too fast on the lakes	2
Current pace of growth	5
Lake quality	5
Too much sand on the roads	1
Small town politics	1
Limited employment and shopping	2
Non-owners should be billed for services	1
Dog control	3
Lack of sewer and water	1
Break up of agricultural land	3
Opening of fishing season on Prairie Lake	1
Winter and driving	3
Snow plowing	1
Too much rezoning	3
Noise from off road vehicles and other rec vehicles	6
Same mil rate through out the county	1
Trailer parks and refugees	2
All new development around lakes	4
Racing on the roads	1
Garbage in the ditches	2
No police protection	2
Ticks and humidity	2
Low taxes	1
Over population of lake property	1
DNR control	1

#43 What would you like to see change in the Town of Prairie Lake?

Plan for future growth	8
Concern for the needs of the elderly	1
No food sale during election	1
Maintain boat landings better	1
Cleaner lake water	14
More public awareness	2
More business for larger corporations	4
Lower taxes	17
Residential junk	10

Less turkey business	5
Stay rural	8
Stop sewer runoff on lake property	3
More yellow lines on the roads	1
More public input	3
Better roads	5
Better traffic control on "O" & "OO"	2
Install sewer around the lake	2
Noise pollution	3
Eliminate rural sub-divisions	3
Differentiate between lakes and rural property with regard to rules and ordinances	3
More business	1
Dog control	2
Recycling	2
Print agenda	1
Good job	1
Realistic evaluation of home values	1
Speeding	1
More law enforcement	3
Larger lot sizes	1
Younger town board	1
Tighter zoning regulations	1
Close half of the bars	1
Fewer land use permits	1
DNR control	1

#48 We would appreciate any additional comments or ideas that you would like to provide.

Regulate the junk in the yards	2
Speed limit reduction	2
Zoning with county and township	2
Too much government control	
Railroad prairie land maintenance	
Be proud of a great township	7
Thank you	3
Good luck	
Litter along the town roads	
Limit around development	
Get younger people involved	
Good inspectors included	2
Too many dogs running free	4
Lake quality	4
Good roads and maintenance	2
Limited regulations and ordinances	2

Keep it rural	3
Investigate the cost of sewer & water around lake	
Maintain the status quo	2
Not pleased with road maintenance	2
Question the Gopher Point project	4
More government control	2
Don't like the new interchange	2
Too much rezoning	
Protect landowners rights with neighbors	2
Smaller businesses in the township	
Develop trails and recreational areas	2
Recreational noise ordinances	
Pollution of ground water	
Snow plowing problems	
40 acre minimum lot size	
Raising taxes on existing owners	6
22 ¾ St. needs improvement	
Gopher Point not publicized enough	
Don't let it get out of hand	
Land use planning	
Protect lakes and waterways	3
Keep an open mind when making decisions	
Snowplow knocks down mailboxes – payment?	
Fix the road in the Wildwood Resort area	
No more turkeys	
Limit the size of the outboard motors on the lakes	
More events	
Part-timers want to be heard	
Recycling	

## **Town of Prairie Lake Community Opinion Survey Summary Results**

The following compilation of the survey represents the significant issues or trends suggested by the results. It is intended to serve as a more user-friendly review of the responses to the survey.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

1. Eight of ten respondents felt that the condition and maintenance of roads in the Town was satisfactory.
2. Six out of ten respondents expressing an opinion felt the town should not do more to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and horse traffic.
3. Two-thirds of respondents expressing an opinion felt the town should not do more to accommodate snowmobile or ATV use.
4. Eight of ten respondents expressing an opinion said there should be Town standards for advertising sign placement, size and design.

### **PUBLIC SERVICES**

5. Two-thirds of all respondents thought police protection from the Sheriffs Department was adequate.
6. Responses were mixed on whether the Town should institute recycling requirements with 45 percent agreeing, 22 percent not being sure and 33 percent in disagreement.

### **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

7. 64 percent of respondents felt the rate of new housing construction was about right with 31 percent thinking it was too fast.
8. Eight out of ten respondents expressing an opinion thought the Town should plan for and manage new multi-family housing.
9. Three-quarters of respondents expressing an opinion felt the Town should manage the location and density of new single-family housing.
10. 57 percent of respondents expressing an opinion thought that as the Town grows, new housing should not be concentrated in developments of 5 or more lots each of which are 1 ½ acres or less (subdivisions).
11. Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion said the cost of new roads required by more concentrated development should be borne by developers.
12. Half of all respondents said that in concentrated development the minimum lot size should be 1 acre. About one-quarter of those responding felt that the minimum lot size should be a one-half acre, while about one in ten believed ¼ acres lots were appropriate.
13. The response was mixed regarding the minimum lot size for less concentrated development. About four in ten respondents felt that the minimum lot size should be two acres, about a fourth believed 5 acres was appropriate and 13 percent selected 10 acres.
14. Almost nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion supported only allowing holding tanks if there were no alternatives for on-site wastewater treatment.
15. Almost nine of ten answers supported managing the location and density of mobile home parks.

### **COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

16. Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion believe the Town should plan for and manage light industry and warehousing, and
17. that such development should be limited to where it now exists or other areas designated by the Town.
18. Industrial areas should be located by cities and Hwy 53, in industrial parks, by main roads and away from lakes and waterways.

19. The businesses and industry that should not be allowed in the Town are those that pollute, adult entertainment, large dairy and hog operations, turkey farms and chemical plants.
20. Almost two-thirds of respondents felt that home occupation businesses were acceptable in the Town. A little over half of the respondents said neighborhood retail and services were desired and somewhat over a third each said highway commercial serving the travelling public on major roads and recreational businesses such as resorts, retreats, camps and campgrounds were sought.
21. Two-thirds of those expressing an opinion thought commercial entertainment consisting of assemblies of 250 or more people should not be allowed.
22. Nine out of ten of those expressing an opinion supported developing standards and applying rules for controlling the type, location and appearance of new commercial, warehouse and industrial development.
23. Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion supported establishing standards managing the location, operations and reclamation of non-metallic mining.

#### **AGRICULTURAL USE AND FARMLAND PROTECTION**

24. Almost nine out of ten of all responses supported the importance of maintaining open space to retain the rural character of the Town.
25. Eight of ten respondents expressing an opinion felt productive agricultural areas should be protected by limiting the location and density of non-farm residential development.
26. Three-fourths of those expressing an opinion believed farms in agricultural production areas should be protected from nuisance complaints associated with routine agricultural operations.
27. About nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion said measures should be taken to limit potential conflicts between existing livestock operations and non-farm residential development.
28. Three-fourths of all responses supported Town permitting of new livestock operations, or the expansion of existing livestock operations, involving more than 650 animal units.
29. Generally, there is uncertainty about whether or not current regulatory efforts to control runoff from existing livestock facilities and farm fields are adequate. Four of ten respondents were not sure, while 27 percent thought they were and 32 percent did not. Perhaps with more information those who weren't sure would weigh in one way or the other.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

30. Nine of ten respondents expressing an opinion, and 81 percent of all responses, supported encouraging a higher level of protection for lakes and rivers which have not yet been developed and those that may be more sensitive to development.
31. Three-fourths of those expressing an opinion felt that the Town should invest in maintaining public recreational land around waterways.
32. 96.5 percent of those expressing an opinion thought the Town should establish standards and manage the stockpiling of abandoned vehicles and junk.

#### **ONGOING INVOLVEMENT IN LAND USE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

33. Nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion said the Town Board should be actively involved in ongoing decisions pertaining to land use planning and development.
34. Nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion agreed that to reduce conflict between incompatible land uses, zoning and other land use ordinances should be used to channel new development to areas that have been planned for that use.
35. Three-fourths of all respondents believed that a landowner's property should be allowed to be rezoned if the proposed development is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan objectives.

36. Nine out of ten respondents expressing an opinion felt that subdivision and other development proposals should be reviewed and approved by the Town of Prairie Lake.
37. Two-thirds of all responses supported the Town requiring developers of subdivisions set aside land or funds for Town parks.
38. Almost two-thirds of all answers supported exploring land use management tools that provide for, both the protection of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands, and compensation to landowners to mitigate or lessen the effects of such regulation. However, four of ten respondents indicated they were unsure about it. Perhaps with more information these people could say one way or the other.

#### **LAND USE ISSUES**

39. The major land use issues facing the Town over the next five years are:
  - Housing, urban sprawl, the influx of new homes and development
  - All lands adjacent to lakes and rivers, over development of lakeshore and riverfronts, preserving lakes and protecting water quality
  - Retiring farmers selling off small plots for development, preserving farmlands, conversion of agricultural land to residential use
  - Mobile home parks and condo-type development
  - Gopher Point project
40. The Town should address those issues by:
  - Develop a plan and ordinances, control development, regulate the number of homes, enforce minimum lot size, enforce zoning, slow new development, no multi-unit housing
  - Public input, voter survey and town vote, and everything up to a vote
  - Limit lake development
41. What do you like about living in the Town:
  - Rural atmosphere, and peace and quiet
  - Location, lakes and between towns
  - Friendly neighbors
  - Good township, small and laid back, low population density
  - Good roads and services
42. What don't you like about living in the Town:
  - Taxes too high
  - Need more rules on keeping property clean
  - No complaints
  - Odor of turkey farms, break up of agricultural land
  - Algae in lakes, too much and too fast traffic on lakes, lake quality, new development around lakes, over population of lake property
  - Noise from ATVs and other recreational vehicles
  - Current pace of growth
43. What would you like to see change in the Town:
  - Lower taxes
  - Cleaner lake water
  - Plan for future growth, stay rural, eliminate rural subdivisions, differentiate between lake and rural property rules
  - Residential junk
  - Better roads
  - Less turkey business
44. through 47. are demographic questions, please see complete survey results.

**Town of Prairie Lake Visioning Questionnaire Results**  
*Visioning – The process by which a community defines the future it wants.*

**1. What qualities or characteristics of the Town of Prairie Lake do you want protected, maintained, or achieved over the next twenty-five or so years?**

Mix of residential, recreational and agriculture.  
Orderly growth.  
Rural quality or character.  
Wildlife habitat.  
Maintain open space.  
Lake and river access. Protection of river, lakes and other natural resources.  
Trail system, hiking or walking, bicycle.

**2. What are the top two things that you think should be qualities or characteristics of the Town of Prairie Lake in 2030?**

Rural atmosphere. Open spaces. Economically viable agriculture.  
Shoreland. Rivers and lakes. Preservation of river/lake areas.  
Good water quality, surface and groundwater.  
Forests.  
Recreational opportunities. More private than public.  
Zoning to separate agriculture, residential, commercial and industrial.  
Well kept properties.  
Well defined commercial areas or corridors.

**3. What do you want your community to look like in the future? (try to write this expressed as visual images)**

Clustering – Residences mixed with open space; commercial in appropriate places. Homes and businesses in planned areas.  
Smaller farms for dairy, beef cattle, specialty crops, maybe other types of livestock, sheep, goats, llama, emu, bison.  
Wildlife/Park areas. Greenspaces.  
Trails.  
Preserve some shorelands.  
Properties in better condition, including waterfront.  
From the roads looking much like it does today.  
Smaller fields, more trees.

**4. Identify any places, features, or characteristics that make your community special and unique.**

Prairie Lake. Red Cedar River. Yellow River.  
Hills, farm fields and woods. Plenty of open land.  
Wildlife.  
Cattle and horses.  
Good roads.  
Presence of the Amish.  
Rural, yet close to shopping, health care, entertainment and employment.

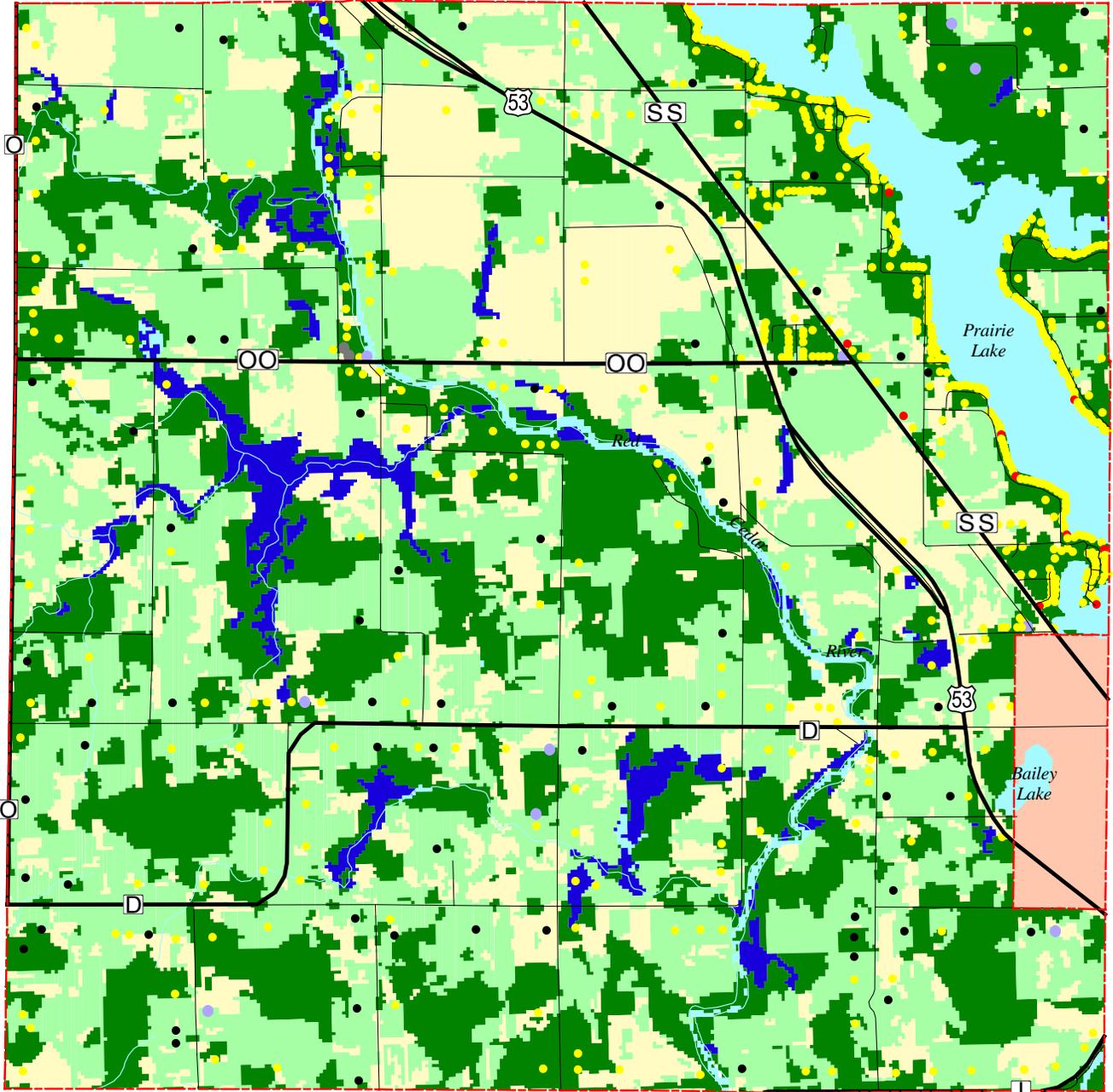
**5. Identify any current qualities, characteristics, policies or trends in the area that you believe contradict your vision for the Town of Prairie Lake.**

Pace and location of development. Large lots are not an efficient use of land.  
Haphazard zoning changes and variances/spot zoning/current zoning practices.  
Disappearing natural areas and shorelands.  
Subdivisions with substandard roads, that are too dense, take out too many trees and structure appearance is too uniform.  
Large livestock operations in the wrong location.  
Agriculture is changing to more horses and less cows.

## **APPENDIX III**

### **EXISTING LAND USE MAP**





**LAND USE**

- Residential
- Farm Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Govt/Institutional
- Recreational

**LAND COVER**

- Agriculture
- Grassland & Shrubland
- Forest
- Open Water
- Wetland
- Incorporated

**Existing Land Use**

**TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE**



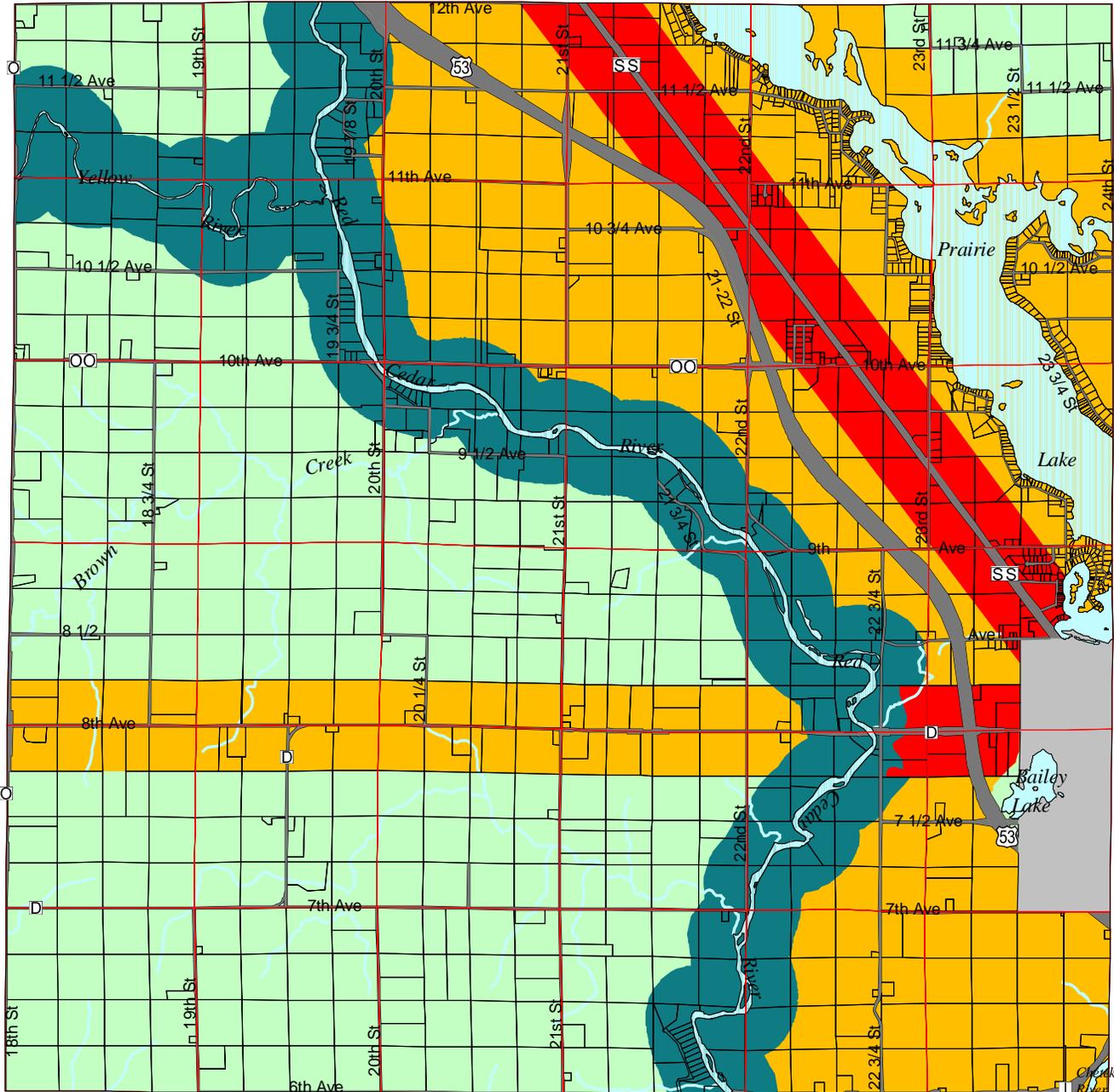
Source: WISCLAND, 1999.  
WCWRPC Land Use Survey, 2000.



## **APPENDIX IV**

### **PLANNED LAND USE MAP**





# Town of Prairie Lake Planned Land Use

- Agriculture Residential
- Rural Transition
- River Corridor
- Corridor Appropriate for Commercial
- City of Chetek

