

Where is the Town of Bradford?

The Town of Bradford is located in southeast Rock County in southern Wisconsin. The community borders the Towns of Johnstown to the north, La Prairie to the west, and Clinton to the South. The Town of Darien in Walworth County abuts Bradford to the east. Nearby cities include Beloit, Janesville, Delavan, Whitewater and the Village of Clinton.



The Town's landscape is dominated by agricultural fields, woodlands, and the Rock Prairie. Turtle Creek and Spring Brook (a tributary of Turtle Creek) provide the primary drainage systems in the Town. Major ingress/egress routes include U.S. Highway (USH) 14, State Highway (STH) 11 and STH 140. For additional information on farms, streams and other local features, please refer to *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources*. Additional information on local roads and highways can be found in *Chapter 5: Transportation*.

Town History

The paragraphs below were excerpted in their entirety from the American Local History Network website¹:

Rock County, Wisconsin: History of Bradford Township

The first settlement was made in this town in 1836, by Erastus DEAN. Among other early settlers we name Andrew, McCULLAGH, William C. CHASE, James WINNEGAR, Joseph MAXON, William B. ALDRICH, C. DYKEMAN, William WYMAN, L. S. BLACKMAN, and A. BLACKMAN. This town, in the point of production, is surpassed by few, if any, in the county. The greater part of it is prairie, yet the Turtle, a creek passing through the southern part of the town, is skirted by fine burr and white-oak openings; there is also a small grove on the west line of the township, and Emerald Grove, one of the most beautiful groves in the county; the township is well watered. The farms are all under a good state of cultivation. The improvements are first class; evidence of which may be seen by reference to lithographic cuts of many of them in the enclosed atlas. Emerald Grove Village is a thriving little place, with post-office, store, etc. Population 1,006.

¹ Source: American Local History Network, <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/wi/county/rock/Twp/HistBR.html>, 2009. *Rock County, Wisconsin: History of Bradford Township*. Everts, Baskin, & Stewart. Chicago, IL. 1873. *The Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, Wisconsin*. 1889.

The Portrait and Biographical Album of Rock County, Wisconsin

Bradford is situated in the southeast part of the county on its eastern boundary line. It was organized for municipal purposes under an act of Legislature, approved Feb. 2, 1846. Previously the south half of the present town was included in Clinton and the north half in Janesville. Erastus DEAN was the first settler, in 1836. Other early comers were Andrew McCULLAGH, William C. CHASE, James WINNEGAR, Joseph MAXON, William B. ALDRICH, C. DYKEMAN, William WYMAN, S. S. BLOCKMAN [L. S. BLACKMAN] and Alva BLOCKMAN [BLACKMAN]. There are two post offices in this town, Emerald Grove and Fairfield. Emerald Grove, in the town of Bradford, eight miles east of Janesville, contained in 1856 a post office, a tavern, a church, a blacksmith shop, a store, a grocery, a school-house and fifteen dwellings. Since that date it has grown considerably in extent and population. It contains a steam feed mill, the property of Alexander McGREGOR, a general store, a hotel, a Congregational church and a Methodist church and a population of about one hundred.

Additional historical information about the Town of Bradford, including detailed information regarding family histories, can be found in *Bradford History, 1976*. A map showing significant historical locations in the community appears on the following page.

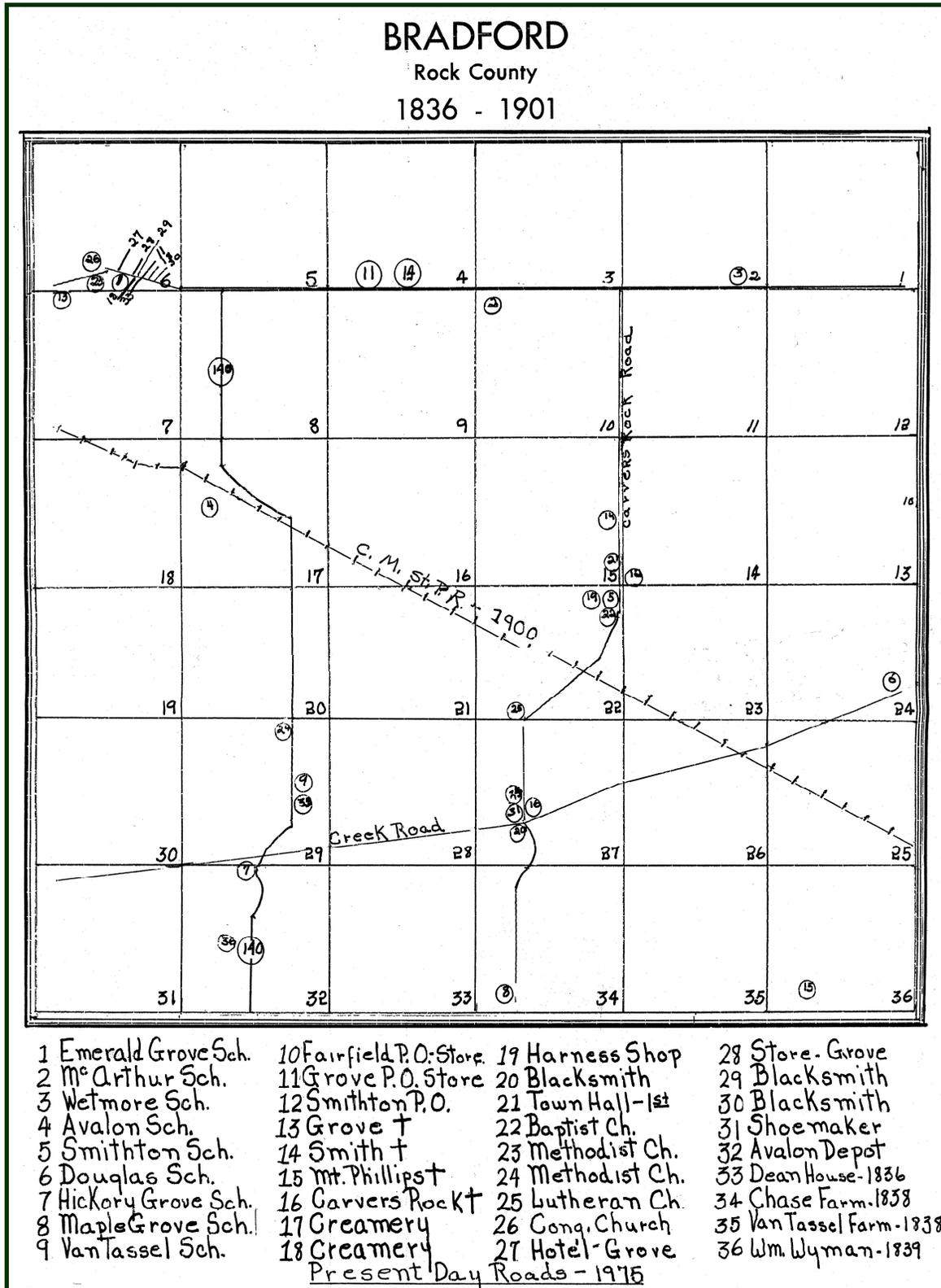
Why is Bradford Developing a Comprehensive Plan?

In 1999, the Wisconsin State Legislature passed and Governor Tommy Thompson signed into law Act 9, Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (§66.1001 State Statutes). The law requires that every municipality in the state that wishes to have a say in local land use decisions approve and adopt a comprehensive plan prior to January 1, 2010. In January 2009, the Town of Bradford hired OMNNI Associates, Inc., an Appleton-based consulting firm to assist the Town in the development of its plan. Once the plan is adopted, all local land use decisions must be consistent with the document.

This plan is being made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated and harmonious development of the Town which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

Developing this plan sends a clear message that the Town of Bradford wishes to act proactively – to set its own ground rules for the types of development that will benefit the Town, maintain a rural atmosphere, and provide flexibility for landowners in making future decisions regarding the use of their land.

The planning process began with a Kick-off Meeting held at the Bradford Town Hall on January 19, 2009. The Town of Bradford Planning and Zoning Committee met monthly to review and discuss draft plan chapters and maps with residents, landowners, and other stakeholders. The final Comprehensive Plan was approved and adopted on November 18, 2009.



What is Planning?²

- Planning is an orderly, open approach to determine local needs, goals and priorities, and developing a guide for action.
- Planning is a concentrated effort by a community to reach a balance between the natural environment and residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural development.
- A plan is a guide for public officials and private citizens to use in making informed decisions that will affect their community.
- Planning is a process that helps a community prepare for change rather than react to it.

Planning is not...

- An attempt to replace market forces of supply and demand. It helps shape and channel market forces by establishing certain guidelines to manage development.
- Action. A plan is only a guide for action and implementation.
- An instrument for immediate change. Change will occur incrementally as the plan is implemented.
- Static. Good planning requires continual review of implementation successes and failures, citizen desires and the surrounding environment so the plan can be adjusted as needed.
- Zoning. A comprehensive plan is a foundation and guide for many tools that may be used to implement the plan. Zoning is one of these tools. Utilities, capital improvements planning, and subdivision regulations are examples of other tools.

How is this Plan Organized?

This 20-year Town of Bradford Comprehensive Plan includes four major components:

- A profile of the demographic, economic and housing characteristics of the Town;
- An inventory and assessment of the environment, community facilities, and natural resources;
- Visions, goals, objectives, policies and implementation strategies; and,

DEFINITIONS

Vision: An overall statement related to the required Smart Growth chapters expressing the Town's expectations for the future. These statements provide a framework and context to consider when making future land use decisions.

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

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

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

² This section was excerpted from *Comprehensive Planning Fundamentals*, Mike Koles, UW-Extension, 2000.

- A land use map that depicts the future land use patterns in the Town.

This plan was developed under the authority of 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" Law. The law requires that a 20-year comprehensive plan be developed and adopted by all units of government that wish to have a role in land use issues. The law authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans to serve as guides for the development of their communities.

The Town of Bradford Comprehensive Plan is divided into a series of twelve chapters oriented around the nine (9) required elements defined in the Smart Growth Law:



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

In addition, the state requires that these chapters be developed in concert with Wisconsin's 14 goals for local planning. These goals are highlighted throughout this plan.

How Were Residents Involved?

The Town of Bradford Comprehensive Plan was developed with the active participation of residents, landowners, business owners, and other stakeholders. To gain citizen understanding and support throughout the planning process the public was provided with a variety of opportunities to become involved in the development of the comprehensive plan. The adopted *Public Participation Plan* is provided as an appendix to this plan.

KICK-OFF MEETING

The Kick-off Meeting for the Town of Bradford Comprehensive Plan was held on January 19, 2009 at the Bradford Town Hall. During the meeting, the Planning and Zoning Committee Chair led 18 participants through a series of exercises aimed at identifying community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as well as developing a vision for the future of Bradford. For detailed information related to the planning exercises please refer to *Chapter 2: Issues & Opportunities*.

CHAPTER WORKSHOPS

The Town of Bradford Planning and Zoning Committee met on a monthly basis to review draft plan chapters, maps, and other materials. All meetings were posted and open to the public.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING

The Town of Bradford Planning and Zoning Committee sent letters to each of its municipal neighbors and intergovernmental partners inviting them to attend a meeting to review the Draft Plan and discuss opportunities for future collaboration. Invitees included Rock County; the Towns of Clinton, Harmony, Johnstown, La Prairie, and Turtle in Rock County; Walworth County; the Towns of Darien, Richmond, and Sharon in Walworth County; School Districts; and, the Wisconsin Departments of Administration, Natural Resources, and Transportation.

PUBLIC HEARING

Near the end of the planning process, the Bradford Town Board held a public hearing to solicit written and oral comments in support of, or opposition to, the *Recommended Draft Town of Bradford Comprehensive Plan*. The meeting was posted as per state statutes and all intergovernmental partners were invited to attend. All testimony received during the meeting was entered into the official record of the comprehensive plan process.