

### Introduction

Land use, both existing and future, is the central element of a Comprehensive Plan. Previous chapters have discussed:

- Projected population growth.
- The quality housing available in the Township and potential future housing needs.
- Transportation network challenges with increasing population growth.
- Available utilities and community facilities.
- Local business choices and economic growth opportunities.
- Bradford's natural resources and recreational opportunities, among others.

This chapter focuses on existing land uses, trends in land development, and available local land use tools. *Chapter 10: Future Land Use* will address actions necessary to achieve the goals and visions created during the development of this Comprehensive Plan.

Of the 14 local planning goals provided in the Comprehensive Planning Law, those below specifically relate to planning for land use:

- Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitat, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
- Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, State governmental and utility costs.
- Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

### Existing Land Use Inventory

The Existing Land Use Map (which appears on page 9-6) was created from existing mapping data sources provided by Rock County and the Town of Bradford. The purpose of the map is to provide an accurate description of current land uses (residential, commercial, agricultural, etc.) in the Town that may serve as a foundation for the *Future Land Use Map* which will appear in *Chapter 10: Future Land Use*. A brief description of existing land uses in the Town of Bradford appears below.

**ROADS**

According to 2007 PASER data there are 53.63 miles of town roads and streets in the Township and also federal and state highways. For more information on roads please refer to *Chapter 5: Transportation*.

**RAIL ROAD**

The Wisconsin and Southern Railroad freight rail line runs from the southwest corner of Bradford in a northwesterly direction before exiting the Town approximately a mile and a half south of USH 14.

**RIVERS AND STREAMS**

Turtle Creek and Spring Brook are the primary natural surface water drainages in the Town. A small tributary stream in the northwest section of the community drains to Blackhawk Creek.

**OTHER**

This classification was created by Rock County and is likely to represent open space and recreation lands.

**DOT, DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION**

Land owned by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation

**EXCLUSIVE AGRICULTURE**

Exclusive Agriculture includes farming operations and residential development on a minimum parcel size of 35 acres.

**GENERAL AGRICULTURE**

General Agriculture includes farming operations and residential development on parcel sizes of 10 to 35 acres.

**LOCAL COMMERCIAL**

Commercial development represents a small component of the Township's land base and is located along South Old Highway 140 and at the intersection of Highway 11/14 and STH 140. *Chapter 8: Economic Development* includes a profile of the current business inventory in the community.

**RURAL RESIDENTIAL**

Housing is scattered throughout the community, however, residential land uses are concentrated within the Turtle Creek Valley in the southern portion of the community.

**Land Use by Acreage and Percentage**

Table 24 provides a numerical breakdown of existing land uses in Bradford. Data was provided by the Town of Bradford, Rock County, WisDOT, and WDNR. As the table shows, agricultural lands are the dominant land use in Bradford accounting for more than ninety-five percent of the total land area in the Township.

**Table 24: Breakdown of Existing Land Uses in Bradford, 2009.**

Land Use Category	Amount in Total Acres	Amount in Total Percentage
<b>Town Land Use Classifications</b>		
Other	252	1.1%
DOT	88	0.4%
Exclusive Agriculture	22,062	95.8%
General Agriculture	52	0.2%
Local Commercial	74	0.3%
Rural Residential	500	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,028</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Other Land Uses</b>		
DNR Land	327	
Natural Area	97	
County Park	54	
DNR Wetland	592	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,070.55</b>	

Source: Town of Bradford Existing Land Use Map, 2009.

**Land Use and Development Regulations**

**ZONING REGULATIONS**

The Town of Bradford administers and enforces its own Zoning Ordinance. The zoning ordinance organizes the community into different districts within which specific uses are permitted subject to certain requirements.

Bradford’s zoning code follows a traditional Euclidean<sup>1</sup> model that seeks to segregate uses by type and establishes dimensional requirements related to lot size, setbacks, and building height. As new uses are created over time, they are listed specifically in the zones in which they are permitted. To be effective, this type of code must list every possible use and establish a zone in which that use would be appropriate. Euclidean codes are based on a philosophy that separation of uses will create a safer, healthier environment.

**ALTERNATIVE ZONING METHODS**

In recent years, the planning profession has developed alternative zoning models based on the building form and performance standards.

- Form-Based Zoning. Form-based zoning codes regulate a community based on the appearance rather than the type of use. Different elements of form-based zoning include building line, landscaping, lighting, signage, building size, building materials and building design.
- Performance Standards. Codes based on performance standards seek to regulate based on a particular set of operation standards rather than on particular type of use.

<sup>1</sup> Reference to Euclid vs. Amber Realty Company, 1926 U.S. Supreme Court Decision, which serves as the foundation for zoning practice in the United States.

Performance standards provide specific criteria for limiting noise, air pollution, emissions, odors, vibration, dust, dirt, glare, heat, fire hazards, wastes, traffic impacts and visual impacts of a use. With this approach, the proposed use is not a factor in development. If all operation standards can be met, any use can be permitted adjacent to another.

Some communities are also using hybrid-zoning codes that combine performance and form-based zoning criteria to regulate land use.

Table 25 provides a breakdown of the different zoning districts found in the Town of Bradford. For additional information such as specific permitted and conditional uses, setbacks, and other information please refer to the *Town of Bradford Zoning Ordinance*. The Town of Bradford Zoning Map appears on page 9-7.

<b>Table 25: Town of Bradford Zoning Districts, 2009.</b>	
<b>District</b>	<b>Permitted Uses*</b>
<b>A-1 Agricultural</b>	General farming activities; forestry, grazing, nurseries, etc.; one single-family dwelling.
<b>A-2 Agricultural</b>	General farming activities; forestry, grazing, nurseries, etc.; one single-family dwelling; livestock facilities up to one animal unit per acre.
<b>A-3 Agricultural</b>	One single-family dwelling; general farming; in-season road stands; gardening; governmental buildings; public parks, playgrounds, recreation, and community centers; schools; public buildings (except sewage plants); water storage; others.
<b>B-1 Local Commercial</b>	Stores and shops; professional offices; personal services; governmental and public buildings; banks, offices, and restaurants; auto sales; gasoline/convenience stores; others.
<b>R-R Local Rural Residential</b>	One single-family or one two-family structure; governmental buildings; public and quasi-public parks, playgrounds; schools and churches; water storage; others.
<b>MHP Mobile Home Park</b>	Mobile home parks; trailer camps.
<b>SP Special Purpose</b>	No permitted uses. All conditional.
<b>M-1 Light Industrial</b>	Repair and maintenance of agricultural equipment; public or private offices; building material sites; storage or wholesaling; public utilities; police, fire, and postal stations; bakeries; greenhouses; others.
* Please refer to Town of Bradford Zoning Ordinance for detailed uses and other district requirements. Source: Town of Bradford Zoning Ordinance, 2009.	

**FLOODPLAIN AND SHORELAND ZONING ORDINANCES**

Floodplain areas in the Town of Bradford are identified and regulated under the authority of the Rock County Floodplain Ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance is to prevent and control water pollution, protect spawning grounds of fish and aquatic life, control building sites, placement of structures and land uses, preserve shore cover and natural beauty.

The Rock County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance requires land use permits for certain activities that occur adjacent to navigable rivers, streams, or creeks, and the landward side of the 100-

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year floodplain. Activities requiring a permit may include, but are not limited to, construction of buildings, decks, and patios, removal of shoreline vegetation, filling and grading of property, and various other activities that can affect the quality of shorelines and water.

### **SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

Land divisions and subdivisions in the Town of Bradford are administered and enforced under the authority of the Rock County Subdivision Ordinance. Issues covered include but are not limited to technical requirements, design standards for plats, certified survey maps, and land-only condominiums, variances, and required improvements and dedications (i.e. street improvements, utility easements, sanitary sewer, etc.). The Town has the statutory authority to adopt its own subdivision ordinance and assume administrative and enforcement responsibilities for land divisions and subdivisions in the community.

## **Trends in Supply, Demand, and Price of Land**

### **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Residential development accounts for less than three percent of the Town's total land area. As discussed in *Chapter 8: Economic Development*, residential is the costliest land use in terms of tax revenue needed to maintain the services and infrastructure associated with that form of development.

Single-family homes account for the largest percentage of housing units in Bradford along with a mobile home park located southeast of the intersection of STH 140 and East Creek Road. The most likely needs, at present and in the future, are affordable housing and housing for seniors. Currently, those residents seeking or requiring alternative forms of housing must look outside of Bradford. Presently, the Town permits two-family dwellings in the Rural residential District and mobile homes in the Mobile Home Park District. The Future Land Use Chapter will present the Town's strategy for addressing future housing needs in the community.

### **FARMING**

Throughout the planning process, residents have expressed a strong desire to retain farming as the most significant component of the Town's landscape and economy. However, the local and state farming economy has continued to see a decrease in the number of working farms. This can be attributed to diminished farm product returns, aging farmers seeking retirement through land sales, and demand for rural housing. Simple economics also plays a role in the loss of farmland. Farmers have the choice to either rent their farmland or sell their land.

Preservation of rural character is contingent upon successful efforts to retain farmland. *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources* and *Chapter 12 Implementation* provide additional detail about strategies to preserve farming, including:

- Encouraging landowners to pursue opportunities to partner with land trusts charged with the protection of natural areas and farmland;

- Encouraging landowners to consider conservation-based development options to preserve farmland;
- Establishing an Agriculture Committee to minimize farmland conflicts through negotiation and open communication;
- Establishing networks, through the Agriculture Committee, to connect farmers who are considering selling their property with other farmers who would like to acquire additional property; and,
- Evaluating the merits of implementing a transfer and/or purchase of development rights program.

### **COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Commercial and industrial development represents a small portion of land use within the community. Local resident sentiment would like to see only slight increases in business activity, clustered in identified growth areas near Avalon and Emerald Grove.

Though representing a small fraction of land in the Town, commercial activities are important to the residents of Bradford. Local businesses not only reduce the frequency of trips out of Town for shopping needs, but also employ residents and provide tax revenue. By carefully locating appropriate and desired commercial development within identified growth areas residents can enjoy a greater variety of choice for local shopping and a boost in employment, while simultaneously preserving the rural nature of the Town, providing convenient access to motorists and Town residents, and avoiding conflict with neighboring land uses.

### **DEMAND**

The Town's population is expected to increase gradually over the next 20 years (by about 2.6%). Any rise in population, however small, will result in rising demand for housing. Moreover, providing housing for all stages of life and all lifestyles will be important to meet resident demand. By providing a greater variety of residential choices the Town may accommodate the housing demands of families, seniors, and other year-round residents.

### **TRENDS IN LAND AND HOUSING PRICES**

Land prices in the Town are expected to steadily rise as more people continue to relocate to take advantage of its great location, natural resources, and other amenities.

## **Opportunities for Redevelopment**

Opportunities for redevelopment are typically found in urban environments. As a rural community, Bradford has limited areas in need of, or desirable for, redevelopment. Most existing structures in the Town are in good condition with few properties meeting the legal definition of blighted. There may, however, be opportunities for redevelopment within Avalon and Emerald Grove; particularly with streetscape improvements typical of a "main street" style development master plan.