

31.02 ISSUES, VISION AND GOALS.

(1) **Planning Issues and Opportunities.** The comprehensive plan, by its nature, covers a wide number of topics. Although there is much to address, it is also necessary to identify the most important issues. This helps to focus our goals, recommendations and implementation strategies. The plan will develop detailed recommendations that address the following:

(a) **Varied Growth Management Needs.** Address the growth management and land use planning needs of urban, rural, and suburban regions in the County.

(b) **Quality of Life.** Identify the distinct factors that contribute to the livability of La Crosse County. Evaluate and develop strategies to maintain and enhance these features.

(c) **Improved Local & County Decision Making.** Develop a framework that encourages informed planning, zoning, and development review decisions at the local level. Continue to support County coordination, oversight, and facilitation of these efforts.

(d) **Policies for Agricultural Transition Areas.** Develop clear criteria to guide any changes in areas zoned “transitional agriculture”. As this is a 20-year plan, consider both short and long-term policy.

(e) **Prime and Productive Agricultural Lands.** Develop realistic strategies to protect prime and productive agricultural lands from the encroachment of development. Define and differentiate between lands with high and marginal agricultural value.

(f) **Maintain Natural Resources.** Continue to protect the various natural resources that exist in different parts of the County as they significantly contribute to the quality of life. Promote consistency among different standards managed at the Federal, State, County, and local levels.

(g) **Regional Economic Coordination.** Identify strategies that promote regional cooperation in economic development efforts. Include Local and County governments and all levels of educational institutions within and adjacent to La Crosse County.

(h) **Attainable Housing Stock.** Work with local governments and organizations to ensure that there are affordable and available housing choices for all residents.

(i) **Strategy for Transportation Options.** Plan for a variety of viable transportation options that meet the projected needs of residents and businesses.

(j) **Efficient and Effective Services.** Maintain the efficiency and quality of County services while identifying areas for improvement.

(k) **Implementation.** Identify feasible implementation tools that the County and local governments can utilize to implement the plan, including updating the County zoning code.

(2) **Vision Statement.** La Crosse County is a diverse and vibrant hub set amid the Upper Mississippi River and scenic coulees. Within this setting are valuable natural, agricultural, cultural, transportation, educational, and economic resources. These resources provide residents, businesses, and visitors distinct urban amenities and small-town livability. Preserving these resources and strengthening the connections between them is the foundation for maintaining and enhancing quality of life and economic opportunity.

(3) Comprehensive Plan Goals. Goals are statements that describe specific elements of the vision. These goals should be considered “guiding principles” for the plan, clearly outlining what the plan seeks to accomplish. Realistic goals provide the framework for the development of attainable policies and actions. The goals are based on the existing goals from the La Crosse County 2020 Development Plan and have been updated from feedback gained at public meetings and from the County Steering Committee.

(a) Land Use and Growth Management Goal: Work in partnership with area communities to manage and guide future growth, recognizing that land is an irreplaceable resource. Enhance the quality of life by protecting both natural resources and farmland and by promoting urban infill and redevelopment. Guide growth to developed areas where public facilities and services can be economically provided.

(b) Farmland Preservation Goal: Direct growth away from prime farmland and protect productive agricultural operations from the encroachment of incompatible uses. Evaluate and utilize programs and initiatives that support this goal.

(c) Property Rights Goal: Utilize consistent policies and implementation tools that provide equity and fairness to landowners while preserving public health, welfare, and the community character.

(d) Natural Resources Goal: Preserve and protect the overall beauty and natural resources of the County as these areas contribute to quality of life and are a critical component of the County’s economic development strategy. Protect features including bluffs, coulees, wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, rivers, streams, woodlands, remnant prairies/grasslands, open spaces, and groundwater recharge areas.

(e) Air Quality Goal: Monitor air quality within the County and region to ensure both compliance with existing State and Federal laws, and to promote the exceeding of these standards.

(f) Groundwater Quality Goal: Pursue activities that maintain, protect, and enhance the County's high quality groundwater resources.

(g) Cultural Resources Goal: Preserve the artistic, cultural, historic, and archeological resources as these features add to the area’s quality of life and its rich cultural heritage.

(h) Economic Development Goal: Seek a cooperative, intergovernmental approach to business retention and recruitment. Utilize strategies that capitalize on the County’s existing assets, including its available workforce, transportation access, and the natural features that contribute to quality of life. Cooperate with other entities to improve the region’s position as an attractive and competitive place to start, grow, and expand business.

(i) Transportation Goal: Promote a transportation system that creates safe, efficient, convenient, and economical options for residents and business users. Coordinate all transportation planning with its impact on land use and growth patterns. Address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and disabled residents when planning for surface and non-surface transportation.

(j) Housing Goal: Ensure that the County has an available housing supply that is adequate, affordable, and well-maintained, which meets the needs of all income levels, ages, special-needs populations, and household types.

(k) Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: Cooperate and communicate with all local, state and federal governments, adjacent counties, and regional organizations to provide County residents and businesses with timely information as well as efficient and economical services.

(l) Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: Maintain service and staffing levels appropriate for the varied urban, suburban, and rural community expectations. Promote intergovernmental efficiencies and improvements, including the use of renewable energy sources.

(m) Social and Community Service Goal: Ensure the region continues to offer quality, affordable, and efficient services to its residents through public and private providers. Maintain and enhance the quality of education, healthcare, childcare, and related services, which contribute to the quality of life of residents.

31.03 LAND USE PLAN.

(1) Introduction and Background.

The Land Use Plan consists of the following components:

- Introduction and Background.
 - a. Relationship between County and Town Plans
 - b. Summary of Growth Projections
- Land Use and Growth Management Goal
- General Land Use Policies
- Land Use Map
- Land Use Districts
- Recommendations and Programs

This element of the Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, and actions to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property in La Crosse County. This chapter also explains future land use designations and delineates these uses on the Future Land Use Map.

(a) Relationship between County and Town Plans. There is a direct relationship between the local and County plans. To accommodate minor differences in classification among local jurisdictional plans within La Crosse County, broad categories were developed to “collapse” similar uses. The intent is that the broad County plan will generally depict the planned growth pattern, while local plans will dictate more specifically the type, amount, and intensity of allowable development.

(b) Summary of Growth Projections.

1. Future land use projections represent generalized growth scenarios based on State projections and current development densities. The projections indicate the County should generally plan to accommodate 5,000 additional combined acres of residential, commercial, and industrial land over the next 20 years. A generalized look at land supply shows that there are nearly 190,000 acres that are physically suited for development.

2. When preparing a broad growth plan at this scale, it is often necessary to identify growth areas that exceed the generalized projection. This technique, often referred to as a “market adjustment” is done to account for minor changes in market conditions and the immediate availability of land designated for development purposes.

(2) Land Use and Growth Management Goal.

(a) The following goal is the “guiding principle” for the Land Use Plan. This goal is based on the existing goals from the La Crosse County 2020 Development Plan and has been updated from feedback gained at public meetings and from the County Steering Committee.

(b) Work in partnership with area municipalities to manage and guide future growth, recognizing that land is an irreplaceable resource. Enhance the quality of life by protecting both natural resources and farmland and by promoting urban infill and redevelopment. Guide growth to developed areas where public facilities and services can be economically provided.

(3) General Land Use Policies. Policies are courses of action that identify a way in which activities should be conducted to achieve the Land Use and Growth Management Goal above. The following policies suggest action for advisory and regulatory implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

(a) This Plan is adopted as a broad policy document that incorporates the more specific recommendations of city, village and town comprehensive plans. These local plans and policies should be adopted by reference except in instances where interests of the entire County are determined not to be served by specified portions of the local plan.

(b) Work with the towns, villages, cities and surrounding counties to resolve remaining incompatibilities between local land use plans over the 20-year planning period.

(c) Identify a sufficient supply of developable land for a range of different uses, in areas, types, and densities consistent with the local municipality's wishes and service requirements. Plan updates or amendments shall be required for County and local plans as communities reach their projected growth guidelines projected in this chapter.

(d) Guide intensive new development requiring higher levels of municipal utilities and services to cities, villages, or rural hamlets with available services.

(e) Encourage the preservation of cultural, historic, archaeological sites, and environmentally sensitive areas.

(f) Encourage the protection of economically productive areas including farmland and forests.

(g) Encourage the use of conservation neighborhood design for rural residential development in appropriate areas and where consistent with local community wishes. Support other innovative approaches to land development to increase flexibility and achieve the goals of this Plan.

(h) Update codes, ordinances, and other County programs, to implement recommendations in the County Plan. Consider the development of new zoning districts as well as policies that allow for density-based zoning programs as described in this chapter.

(4) Land Use Map. The (draft) Land Use Plan map has been created based on the following:

(a) The current map combines the future land use recommendations of the municipalities that have completed their plans. Land use plans will be incorporated into the County plan, upon completion and adoption.

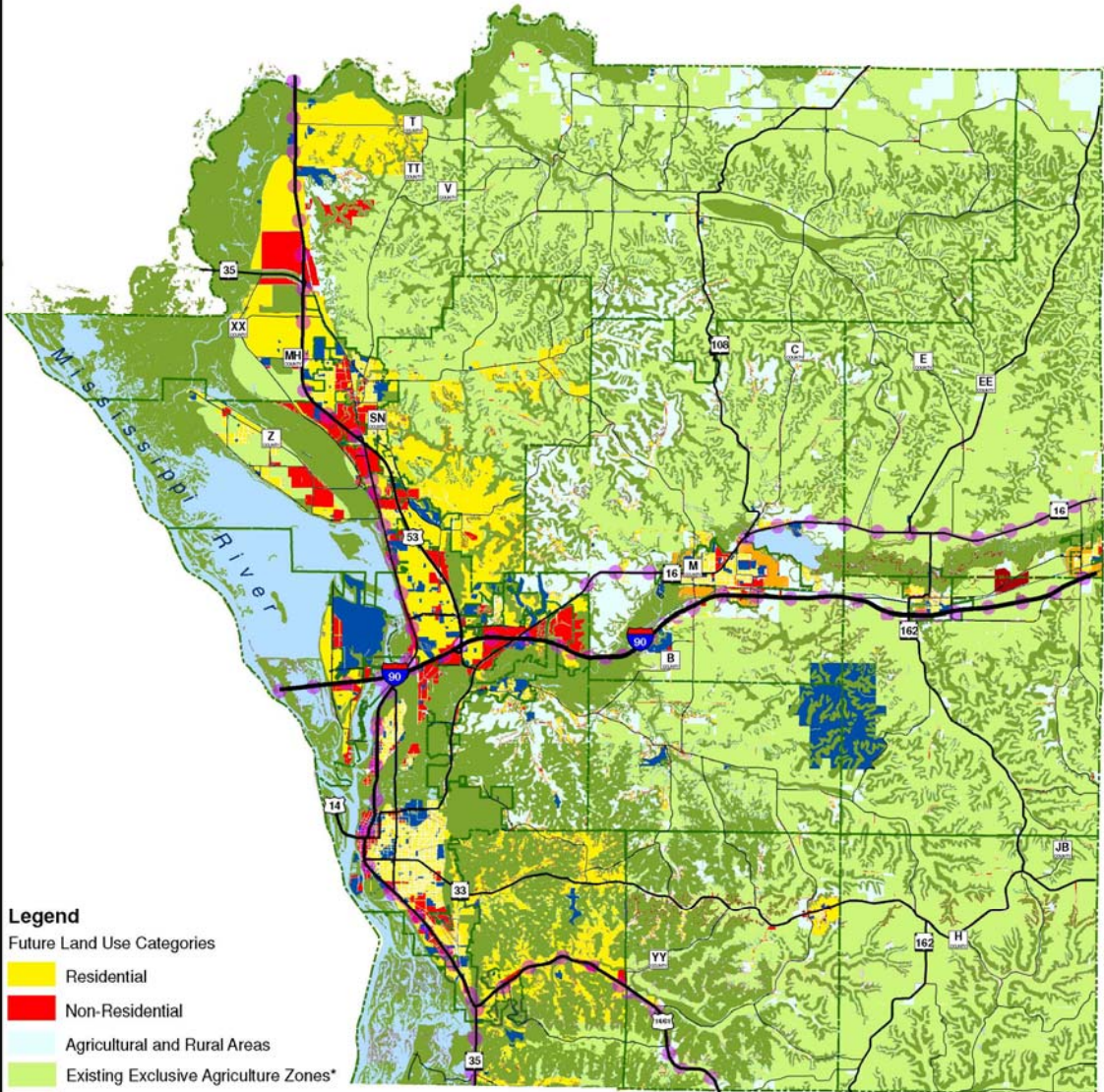
(b) The map shows existing land uses as depicted in the detailed County Land Use inventory (UW-La Crosse).

(c) Five broad categories have been established to guide the County planning process as discussed at previous meetings. A description of the uses allowed within these categories is found on the following pages.

(d) Existing zones of exclusive agriculture are shown within the Agricultural and Rural District. This is important from a policy standpoint as these areas will need to go through both a formal rezoning and land division process if more intensive developments (e.g. subdivisions over five lots) are to be allowed. This plan will have a great impact on what requirements are placed on developments in these areas.

(e) The land use plan indicates several "design and planning corridors." These represent areas of future study and detailed recommendations. The County plan is intended to provide broad guidance on both the form and use of development in these corridors.

Future Land Use Map




Legend

Future Land Use Categories

- Residential
- Non-Residential
- Agricultural and Rural Areas
- Existing Exclusive Agriculture Zones*
- Public-Institutional
- Environmental
- Planned Growth Areas - Use To Be Determined
- Corridor Planning and Design Districts

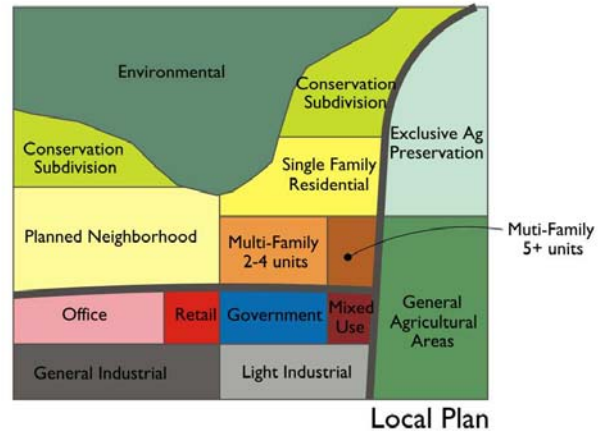
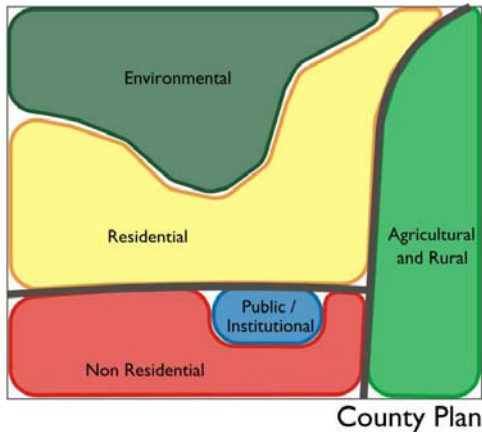


* Includes designated Exclusive Ag areas per Town of Holland, Shelby, and Onalaska Plans.

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">February 2008</p>	 <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Source: La Crosse County Plan, Dept. Created in ArcGIS 9 using ArcMap</p>
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(5) Future Land Use Districts. This section outlines the planned future land use districts for La Crosse County depicted on the Draft Future Land Use Map. County Districts (indicated as numbered headings, below) represent a consolidation of the more specific local land use districts. This relationship is depicted below.

Each category of land use contains an overall purpose statement that describes the intent of each district and its allowable uses. Categories may be implemented through multiple zoning districts.



(a) Residential. A residential district includes land uses where the predominant use is housing. In areas that are zoned residential, buildings may include single family housing, multiple family housing (apartments, duplexes, townhomes, and condominiums) or mobile homes. Zoning for residential use may permit some services or work opportunities or may totally exclude business and industry. Residential development in La Crosse County may include the following types:

1. Single-Family. A single-family home is a detached, free-standing residential structure. Single-family residential development in La Crosse County includes the following:

a. Rural Residential 1. This district is generally intended to preserve agricultural lands and provide for very low-density rural, single-family detached residential development at a density of approximately 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres.

b. Rural Residential 2. This district is generally intended for low-density rural single-family detached residential development at a density of at least 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.

c. Rural Residential 3. This district is generally intended for low-density single-family detached residential development at a density of 1-5 acres per dwelling unit.

d. Single Family 1. This district is generally intended for low-density suburban single-family detached residential development at a density between two and five homes per acre.

e. Single Family 2. This district is generally intended for single-family detached residential development up to a maximum density of six dwelling units per acre.

2. Multi-Family (2-4 Units). This classification includes housing where multiple, separate housing units are contained within one building.

3. Multi-Family (5+ Units). This classification includes housing where five or more separate housing units are contained within one building. This district includes the most “dense” residential structures found in La Crosse County. Large apartment buildings, student housing, and senior-care facilities are common examples. Care needs to be taken with development of these facilities to ensure adequate parking, access, and traffic facilities exist to accommodate many users.

4. Planned Neighborhoods. This classification refers to a planned mixture of predominantly single-family residential development, combined with one or more of the following land use types: two-family/townhouse residential, mixed residential, neighborhood office, neighborhood business, institutional, and public open space. Planned neighborhoods generally have a minimum size of 40 acres. Sites larger than 120 acres should be developed as multiple neighborhoods, with each neighborhood designed to be integrated into an overall plan. Open space should be provided in each neighborhood.

5. Conservation Subdivision.

a. Wisconsin law (s. 66.1027) defines a conservation subdivision as “a housing development in a rural setting that is characterized by compact lots and common open space, and where the natural features of land are maintained to the greatest extent possible.” Conservation subdivisions allow for an adjustment in the location of residential dwelling units on a parcel of land so long as the total number of dwelling units does not exceed the number of units otherwise permitted in the zoning district. The dwelling units are grouped or “clustered” on only a portion of a parcel of land. The remainder of the site is preserved as open space, farmland, or as an environmentally and culturally sensitive area. The clustering of the dwellings into a small area is made possible by reducing the individual lot sizes. The open space is permanently protected and held in common ownership.

b. Conservation subdivisions are an alternative approach to conventional lot-by-lot division of land in rural areas which spreads development evenly throughout a parcel with little regard to the impact on the natural and cultural features of the area. Conservation subdivisions enable a developer to concentrate units on the most buildable portion of a site, preserving natural drainage systems, open space, and environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.¹

6. Mobile Home District.

a. These districts include accommodations for mobile homes, or manufactured housing. These structures are generally defined as those built in factories, rather than on site, that are delivered to the location where they will be occupied. They are usually transported by semi-trucks over public highways. They are less expensive per square foot than site-built homes, and are often associated with rural areas and high-density developments, sometimes referred to as trailer parks.

b. Communities that contain regulations for a “mobile home district” often require special zoning to accommodate these uses. Special requirements may include permanent foundations, minimum footprints, minimum roof pitches, and other standards to control for design and appearance of these housing units.

7. Institutional Living. These structures include accommodations for people under formally authorized supervised care or custody. Populations residing in these units include patients or inmates. Residential living activity associated with dormitories, group homes, barracks, retirement homes, nursing homes, etc. would all fall within this category. These activities may occur in any number of structural types (single-family homes, multi-family homes, manufactured homes, etc.) but the activity characteristics of such living is not the same as the other subcategories under residential activities.

8. Transitional Areas. Growth areas identified in local plans or intergovernmental agreements that are anticipated to require municipal water, sewer, or other related service.

¹ Information from UW Extension Conservation Subdivision Ordinance Guide

(b) Non Residential. A non-residential district includes uses that are business related, including commercial, retail, or industrial. Zoning for these areas is established to provide separation from incompatible uses, which may include residential neighborhoods. Non-residential development in La Crosse County may include the following types:

1. Commercial – Retail. This district includes areas dedicated to the sale of goods or merchandise for personal or household consumption. Structures include neighborhood stores, or designated shopping districts such as a downtown area. Commercial districts may also include malls or areas of intensive transportation access, such as interchange areas off highways and interstates.

2. Office. Office developments include buildings that provide a workplace for primarily administrative and managerial workers. Office uses can occur in almost any building, though modern technical requirements (such as internet access) limit some older structures for reuse. A typical office building may be divided into sections for different companies or may be dedicated to one company. Large companies may develop a campus-like environment including landscaping, fountains, or other natural or artistic elements. These uses generally require sewer and water facilities and large parking lots to accommodate commuters. Considerations for development include many of the same elements as “Commercial” uses, including signage, building and lighting standards, appropriate access, and compatibility with surrounding uses.

3. Mixed Use. Mixed-use development refers to the practice of containing more than one type of use in a building or set of buildings. This includes a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other uses.

4. Conservation – Mixed Use. A combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other uses developed in an environmentally low-impact manner. It is generally recommended that at least 50% of the site is preserved as open space, farmland, or as an environmentally and culturally sensitive area.

5. General Industrial. All industrial activities are allowed in this district including assembly plants, manufacturing plants, industrial machinery, shipping, and trucking.

6. Light Industrial. Light industrial is usually a less intensive use than “General Industrial,” and is more consumer-oriented than business-oriented (i.e., most light industry products are produced for end users rather than for use by other industries). Light industrial has less environmental impact than heavy industrial and is more tolerated in residential areas.

7. Transitional Areas. Growth areas identified in local plans or intergovernmental agreements that are anticipated to require municipal water, sewer, or other related service.

(c) Public/Institutional. This district encompasses a range of public, social, and institutional uses. These uses are public or semi-public, and generally tax exempt. Specific uses include schools, libraries, parks, municipal buildings, emergency response and public safety buildings, health care facilities, travel-related facilities, places of worship, or other governmental lands. As a broad policy plan, the County Land Use Plan will not depict the exact location of these facilities. Siting guidelines for new facilities are proposed in the recommendations section of this chapter.

(d) Agricultural and Rural. The Agricultural and Rural District is established for areas in which agricultural and certain compatible low intensity uses are encouraged as the principal uses of land.

1. Exclusive Agricultural Preservation Areas.

a. The purpose of the Exclusive Agricultural District is to preserve agricultural land for food and fiber production; protect productive farming by preventing conflicts between incompatible uses; maintain a viable agricultural base to support agricultural processing and service industries; reduce costs of providing services to scattered non-farm uses; promote orderly urban growth; implement the provisions of the County Farmland Preservation Plan, when adopted and periodically revised; and comply with the provisions of the Farmland Preservation Law to permit eligible landowners to receive tax credits under ss. 71.09(11), Wis. Stats.

b. This district is generally intended to apply to lands which include all classes of soils in the County that are in productive agricultural use including, but not limited to, land demonstrated to be productive for forestry, dairy, livestock raising and grazing; lands historically farmed which are integral parts of farm operations; lands for the production of specialty crops; and lands that are potentially productive given improvements such as irrigation or drainage.

c. A developer or land owner wishing to remove property from Exclusive Agricultural Preservation Areas shall provide adequate evidence to Town and County governments that the proposal meets the following criteria:

i. The development proposal is consistent with the locally adopted land use plan map and related policies.

ii. Land proposed for rezoning does not have a history of productive farming activities or is not viable for long-term agricultural use.

iii. Land is too small to be economically used for agricultural purposes or is inaccessible to the farm machinery needed to produce and harvest agricultural products.

iv. The land is located such that there would be minimum conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses.

v. The land does not include natural features such as wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, or significant woodlands that would be adversely affected by non-farm development.

vi. The lay of the land will allow for construction of a road or driveway that is suitable for emergency vehicle travel. Safe access from the road or driveway onto existing roadways shall be required.

vii. A need for additional non-farm development can be demonstrated in the community.

viii. Outside of existing or planned sanitary district limits, only land that is comprised of soils that are suitable for on-site septic systems shall be considered.

ix. Provision of public facilities to accommodate the proposed development will not place an unreasonable burden on the ability of the community and County to provide those facilities.

2. General Agricultural Areas.

a. This category indicates other rural and agricultural areas that are not designated as planned exclusive agriculture areas. New residential development should be limited to a density of one home per 20 acres. However, this district does not require a 20 acre minimum lot size. Splits and land divisions within this category will be limited to one split per five years. Lot size and physical constraints will be determined by local and County ordinances.

b. New developments are strongly encouraged to utilize cluster and conservation housing principles (described in Section 6.2).

(e) Environmental. The Environmental District includes areas where special protection is encouraged because of unique landscape, topographical features, wildlife, or historical value. They contain the best remaining woodlands and wetlands, wildlife habitats, undeveloped shorelands and floodlands, groundwater recharge and discharge areas, and steeply sloped lands in the County. In developed areas, this designation also refers to parks and open spaces used for recreation or environmental purposes.

1. Floodplain. A floodplain is flat or nearly flat land adjacent to a stream or river that experiences occasional or periodic flooding. It includes the floodway, which consists of the stream channel and adjacent areas that carry flood flows, and the flood fringe, which are areas covered by the flood but which do not experience a strong current.

2. Steep Slopes. Slopes are the grade of the land determined by the vertical rise or fall in feet, per horizontal length in feet, measured perpendicular to the land contour and expressed as a percentage. The County prohibits development on slopes of 30% or greater. This Plan recommends that development be limited on slopes greater than 20% but less than 30% as development in these areas create an erosion hazard and the potential for off-site damage to public and private property. It is recommended that ordinances are updated to revise this standard.

3. Wetlands. Wetlands are those areas where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic vegetation and which have soils indicative of wet conditions and indicated on NRCS or County wetland inventory maps.

4. Parks and Recreation. Land and water resources designated for recreation where people can engage in active and passive recreation activities.

5. Preserved Lands. In La Crosse County, these include lands owned by a non-profit land trust for permanent conservation purposes. Lands may include blufflands, prairies, wetlands, and streams.

6. Open Space. Structured or unstructured open space areas required for various types of development, or reserved for recreation or aesthetic purposes. These spaces are generally suited for passive recreational pursuits, and are sometimes developed or reserved to buffer different types of land uses or resources.

7. Overlay Districts. This category includes any local or County adopted “overlay” districts prepared to protect viewsheds, historic, archeological, or culturally significant sites. Specific guidelines for each overlay will be enforced through the plan and applicable ordinances.

(6) Land Use Policies, Recommendations, and Programs.

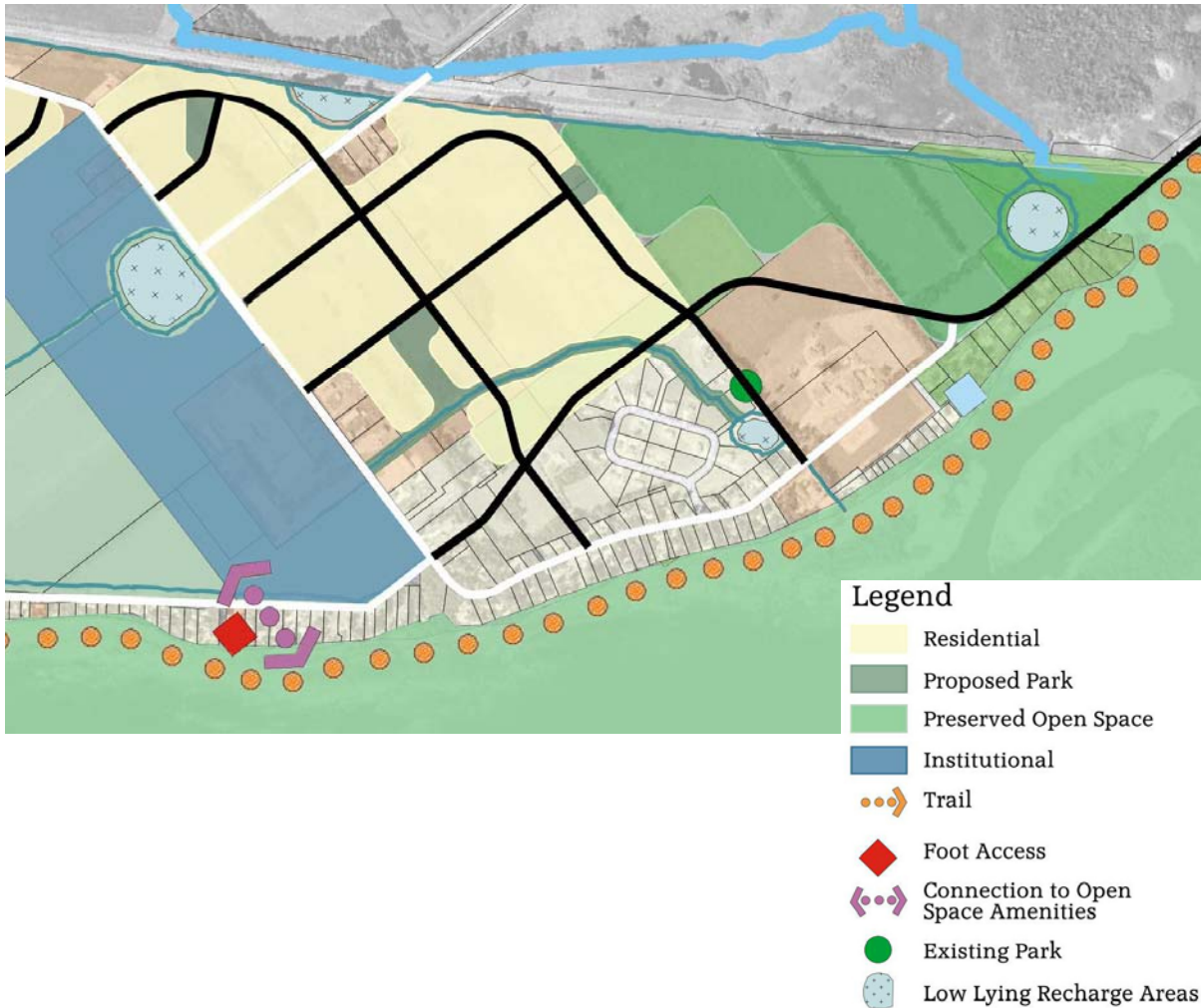
(a) Development Review and Ordinance Updates.

1. Develop Neighborhood / Sub Area Plans for Designated Development Areas.

a. This Plan strongly recommends that municipalities supplement their general land use plans with more detailed “neighborhood” or “sub area” plans in areas where development areas are identified. Municipalities should consider such plans for planned development areas greater than 40 acres. This is especially important for areas adjacent to sensitive environmental features, highway interchanges, or development areas adjacent to existing neighborhoods.

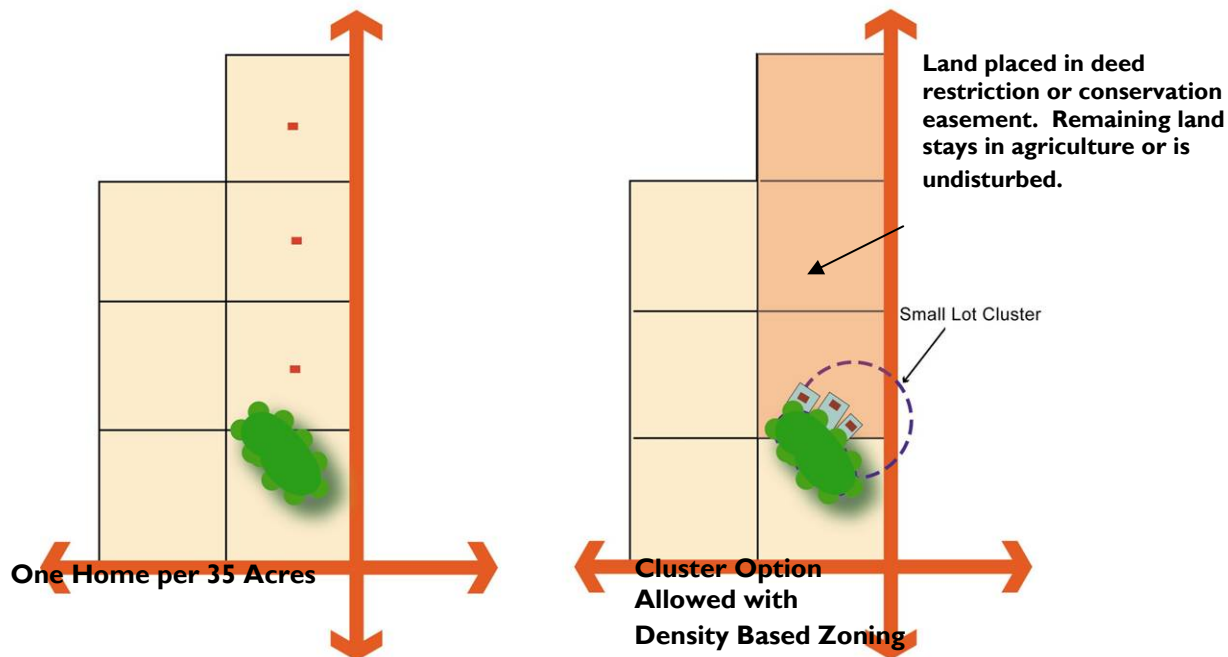
b. These plans should include recommendations on street patterns, soils, drainage, design guidelines, and other information deemed appropriate by local officials. Plan maps should indicate the relationship of the site to surrounding features, including transportation corridors, bike/pedestrian trails, public facilities, railroads, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, viewsheds, historic sites, and adjacent and surrounding land uses.

c. Such plans should also include a public involvement process to ensure community support. Such plans shall be adopted as part of the local Comprehensive Plan to ease in the implementation of development in planned areas. Local Comprehensive Plans should indicate development areas in which such studies should occur.



d. The above figure is a conceptual neighborhood plan showing land use, street network, and other connections to provide more detailed development guidelines for targeted development areas.

2. Create a Density-Based Zoning Program. A density-based zoning program provides flexibility in the zoning code. Such a program provides landowners an option to create lots smaller than the 35-acre minimum in agricultural preservation areas without increasing the net density of development. In simple terms, such a program can be considered the “mechanics” to allow for clustered housing. Benefits of this type of zoning include a possible reduction in land consumption (if lots are grouped together) and reducing the cost per lot for infrastructure. In return for developing smaller lots, property owners are required to place the remaining property under a non-development easement. In developing this program, the County and participating communities will have to consider several key issues including a.) calculation methods for the number of lots; b.) standards for deed restrictions; and c.) definition of the maximum number of lots that could be clustered.



3. Measuring the Fiscal Impact of Development. While new development will bring new tax revenues to communities, it will also create municipal costs to serve the development. The ratio of service costs to tax revenue is one key factor in determining the overall fiscal impact of development. Communities across Wisconsin are increasingly reviewing fiscal impact as part of the approval process for new developments. This is increasingly common for new commercial, industrial, and mixed use projects. To implement, codes such as zoning, land division, or other ordinances (e.g. “Big Box” Ordinances) should include provisions requiring such a fiscal or economic impact study be submitted. Upon being approved as part of the development review process, developers shall be required to either prepare or fund an independent fiscal or economic impact study per the municipality’s requirements.

4. Explore a County-Wide Purchase of Development Rights Program. Research is ongoing to establish the feasibility of a County-wide PDR Program. This program would provide funding for acquisition of development rights through environmental easements. Program funding amounts to finance the PDR should be determined by a committee, including possible County levies or grant preparation. Criteria for selection of PDR-eligible properties should also be determined in addition to quantifying support for development of the program by potential development rights sellers. Specific program parameters should be developed and approved through referendum before being implemented.

5. Development Review Guidelines.

a. The purpose of the proposed guidelines is to identify points at which local and County plans will need to be reviewed and updated. These plans have been created, in part, to reflect anticipated growth.

b. If proposed development projects exceed these guidelines, communities shall review and amend their plans. This is done to ensure all planning documents are providing sufficient guidance to residents, property owners, staff, and officials. The County shall not approve development proposals that exceed these guidelines prior to plan amendments being adopted. Such amendments shall address considerations for use, location, form, and timing of the proposed development.

c. These projections are intended to last 10 years from the date of plan adoption.

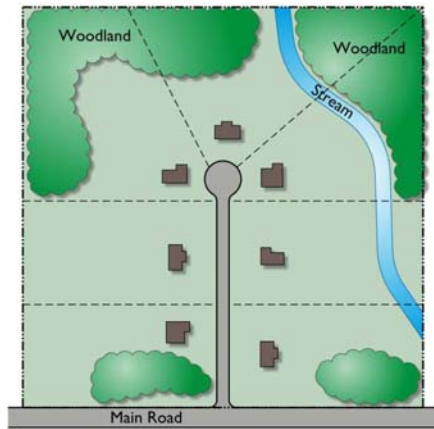
Table 1: Plan Review "Guidelines" in Acres

Town	Residential Acres	Non/Residential Acres	Total Acres
Bangor	120	80	200
Barre	160	40	200
Burns	280	40	320
Campbell	*	*	*
Farmington	400	40	440
Greenfield	240	40	280
Hamilton	520	40	560
Holland	620	140	760
Medary	320	40	360
Onalaska	840	120	960
Shelby	560	40	600
Washington	80	40	120

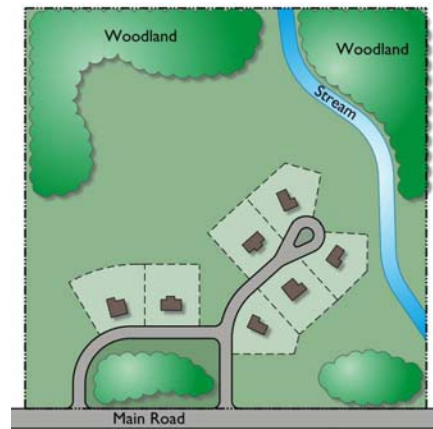
* As Campbell has a very limited supply of undeveloped land, guidelines for new growth have not been recommended.

(b) Form and Character. The quality and desirability of development is determined not just by its use and intensity, but also the form and character it takes. The following section provides general design guidelines for development in La Crosse County.

1. Conservation Design Principles. This Plan recommends the use of cluster/conservation subdivision design and other similar existing models in the potential development of future County land use controls. The following guidelines should be considered in evaluating development. Municipalities are strongly encouraged to adopt more specific standards.



**Conventional Rural
Development Pattern**



**Conservation-Based
Development Pattern**

2. Upon the adoption of standards by local communities, new development in designated areas shall be required to meet local standards and the following guidelines:

- a. “Hide” development from main roads through natural vegetation & topography.
- b. Provide vegetative buffers between building sites and sensitive environmental areas.
- c. Preserve mature trees, vegetation, and other attributes that relate to the site’s historical or natural character.
- d. Prohibit or limit the placement of homes and buildings on exposed bluffs or ridge lines.
- e. Create an interconnected network of streets and trails with connections to the larger community.
- f. Integrate natural resources into the subdivision design as aesthetic and conservation landscape elements.
- g. Restore degraded environmental areas within the subdivisions, such as streams and wetlands.
- h. Encourage Best Management Practices (BMPs) for stormwater management, as opposed to conventional engineering strategies. Typical BMPs include overland transfer, natural landscaping to increase infiltration and reduce runoff, bio-infiltration systems, residential roof runoff directed to pervious yard areas, and maximum impervious surface ratios for development sites.

9.
spaces.

10.
i. Provide wide areas for public access to parks and common open spaces.
j. Maximize preservation of common open space in the neighborhood through public dedication and/or private management of open space.

2. Bluff Design Guidelines. The following are proposed to guide development decisions within the County's bluffs. The intent of these guidelines is to prohibit growth inconsistent with local codes and to minimize the visual impact of other growth that may be feasible. Municipalities are strongly encouraged to adopt specific standards as part of local plans, viewshed ordinances, or overlay zoning districts. Upon the adoption of standards by local communities, new development in designated areas shall meet local standards and the following guidelines:

a. Land use patterns and site designs shall preserve the hillsides, scenic vistas, woodlands, wildlife habitat, and associated rare features found in the Coulee Region.

b. Minimize exotic landscaping including the size of building footprints, and the amount of impervious surface devoted to roadways to the extent feasible. Allow the natural landscape to dominate.

c. Nestle structures in valleys or below ridgelines and within the folds of the hills.

d. Prohibit ridge top "sky lining" that alters the natural land profiles with built structures. Limit the visual impact of any new development that can legally be constructed.

e. Cluster development in a manner so as to maximize visually significant, unfragmented woodlands and open spaces.

f. Design buildings on hillsides to follow the natural terrain in a manner that minimizes earth disturbance.

g. Construct fences that are wildlife-friendly including efforts to minimize the areas fenced and the length of fences, using fence designs which exclude or discourage only certain types of wildlife, and providing exits and corridors for wildlife.

h. Place all utilities underground.

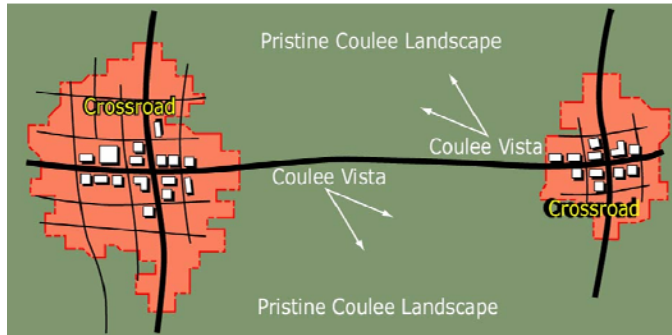
i. Restrict or shield lighting so as to restrict horizontal and vertical light spillover, thereby preserving the dark night sky.

3. Establish Design Corridors.

a. The appearance of the County's highway corridors is an important design consideration. This Plan strongly recommends that local communities develop design standards for highway commercial clusters that will control unlimited highway access points and discourage the proliferation of strip-styled commercial development. Although the highways and interstates are subject to general state and federal controls, these controls do not regulate the quality of development. Local and County guidelines are necessary to help ensure aesthetic and character concerns. Design guidelines can be implemented through local plans, intergovernmental agreements, and formal zoning "overlay districts" made specific to design corridors.

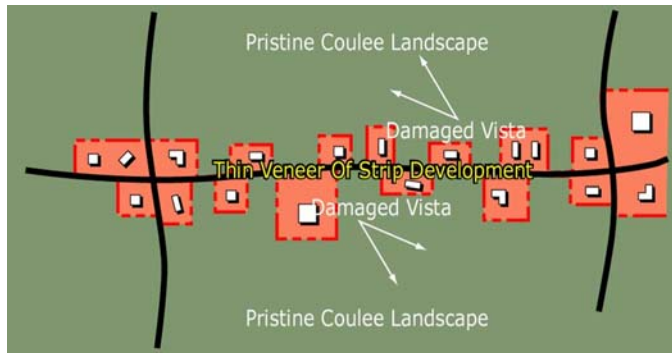
b. Due to their views, existing conditions, and susceptibility to growth, the following study areas should be considered:

- i. Great River Road Corridor
- ii. Highway 16 - Between West Salem and Onalaska
- iii. Highway 16 - Between Bangor and West Salem
- iv. I-90 corridor



General Highway Design Concepts
From "Coulee Visions" Report.

Preferred Concept. Design and development guidelines preserve scenic vistas and limit unplanned "strip" development between communities.



Undesired Concept. A thin veneer of unplanned strip development blurs the boundaries of communities and disturbs rural views.

31.04 LA CROSSE COUNTY RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICIES. Introduction. The *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan* must include a compilation of policies and recommendations to guide decision-making on a variety of topics. The following recommendations and policies were established to enhance or improve existing conditions identified in the Issues, Vision, and Goals chapter. This element includes recommendations and policies for six comprehensive planning elements. Recommendations and policies for the Land Use element are contained within a separate chapter of this plan. The Implementation Element is also a separate chapter in this plan that contains implementation strategies, responsibilities for completion, and timelines for completion to achieve selected recommendations identified in this chapter.

(1) Housing.

(a) Recommendations and Policies.

1. The Housing Element of a comprehensive plan provides direction to ensure an adequate supply of housing is available for existing and forecasted housing demand. For the purposes of the La Crosse County plan, the element includes policies that local governmental units should explore to promote the development of

housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels, all age groups, and all persons with special needs. Additionally, this element provides policies to promote the availability and proper use of land for the development or redevelopment of housing within its jurisdiction.

2. Recommendations were developed through the public participation process, review of current housing-related goals, and through review from the La Crosse County Housing Commission.

(b) General Housing Policy. La Crosse County will encourage local communities to provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels, age groups, and levels of ability. Housing redevelopment is encouraged where existing infrastructure is available and redevelopment complements the existing neighborhood aesthetic. Public-private partnerships, cost-sharing, integration of low-cost housing, and other policies to promote housing development that is low-impact and democratically approved will be encouraged.

(c) Recommendations (numerical listing for reference purposes only, ordering does not suggest order of importance):

1. Promote innovative housing techniques (PUD, clustering, accessory apartments) with adequate controls to safeguard existing communities.

2. Promote a balance of affordable housing opportunities in all parts of the county including rental units. Consider reinvestment programming that allows residents in affordable neighborhoods to stay in their neighborhoods.

3. Provide assistance to affordable housing and senior housing developments that adaptively reuse existing non-residential buildings by utilizing small scale or infill sites in order to minimize environmental impacts.

4. Link existing and future low- and moderate-income communities with existing and emerging employment centers through improved transit connections, improved bicycle facilities, and the creation of safe pedestrian corridors.

5. Support the La Crosse County Housing Commission in working with municipalities and other organizations in achieving short- and long-term goals related to the creation of affordable housing.

6. Make tax delinquent lands available at below market rate prices to not-for-profit housing providers as sites for affordable housing that will return to the tax roll.

7. Work with local advocacy agencies to enhance the ability of special needs population's to stay in their homes through appropriate upgrades and retrofits to enable safe habitation, ingress and egress, and maintenance of owner-occupied housing.

8. Encourage municipalities to provide density bonuses or other incentives including reductions in land costs, grant assistance, favorable financing or fast track approvals to developers of market rate housing who provide some affordable units.

9. Encourage municipalities to enact zoning amendments to protect neighborhood scale and community character where a distinct housing type or traditional pattern of residential development exists, including appropriate height, bulk and setback regulations.

10. Foster the establishment of regulations that enhance protection of historic resources, including design guidelines and viewshed protection requirements. The objective for new development would be to harmonize with the historical built form of these communities and overall community character, rather than requiring a particular architectural style.

11. Encourage municipalities to require the use of Best Management Practices and erosion control and stormwater management plans for residential proposals that could potentially impact nearby waterways or ground water resources.

12. Direct new non-farm development to sites that would not adversely affect the operation of working lands. Similarly, new non-farm residential development should be tied to stringent deed restrictions or other recorded mutual agreement.

13. Discourage the development of major subdivisions (defined as five or more lots) unless served by public water and sanitary sewer service.

14. Encourage integrated mixed-income and mixed-use neighborhood developments that provide an array of home sizes and prices.

15. Rewrite "Agricultural District A" in the La Crosse County Zoning Code. It is substantially similar to the "Residential A" district and should be differentiated as an agricultural district that enables some housing and small farms, such as hobby farms or community supported agricultural operations, on fewer than 40-acres.

(2) Transportation.

(a) Recommendations and Policies. The purpose of this Transportation Element is to offer policies and recommendations to guide the future development of various modes of transportation and facilities development opportunities in La Crosse County. Content for this element was determined through the public participation process, review of current transportation goals, comments by the LAPC, and included review of the following documents and plans:

1. La Crosse County Land Development Plan (1999)
2. 2006-2007 LAPC Work Program
3. Port of La Crosse Harbor Plan (1999)

(b) General Transportation Policy. Future transportation plans, coordinated by local jurisdictions, La Crosse County, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, and the State of Wisconsin should consider all modes of transportation including highway, rail, water, air, mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel. Special attention should be paid to the mass transit needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. Opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation such as in cost-sharing and grant preparation (through SAFETEA-LU), and in land use planning for dedication of transportation facilities will be encouraged.

(c) Recommendations (numerical listing for reference purposes only, ordering does not suggest order of importance)

1. Support and assist the work of the LAPC and TCC in developing regional cooperation to provide the most cost effective public transportation county wide.

2. Encourage cooperative transportation efforts. These may include:

a. Discussions between the City of La Crosse and surrounding communities to seek ways to expand the mass transit utility service area;

b. Support for the efforts of the Wisconsin Alliance of Cities to enable the development of Regional Transit Authorities (RTA);

c. Encouraging cooperative efforts to further build upon a countywide bicycle-pedestrian trail system that provides safe and efficient routes to interconnect all incorporated cities and villages in La Crosse County;

d. Encouraging transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and municipal comprehensive plans.

3. Encourage further building on La Crosse County's strong recreational trail system. In cooperation with rail transportation owners and Wisconsin Department of Transportation, preserve abandoned rail corridors for future recreational trails. Work with the LAPC to help communities obtain federal funding for non-automobile modes through SAFETEA-LU.

4. Continue to operate and improve on para-transit services that serve the elderly and disabled. Seek ways to integrate transportation services to meet the needs of transit dependent individuals and welfare-to-work programs.

5. Encourage and promote the development of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative which would service the City of La Crosse on the main line.

6. Continue on an annual basis to review and upgrade the highways under the county's jurisdiction based on safety, level of service, and pavement condition criteria. Maintain consistent monitoring and recording of the county highway system (through WISLR and others) to identify, reduce, and minimize deficiencies in the system. Implement the recommendations in the Comprehensive County Road Maintenance and Replacement Study.

7. Participate in the LAPC's La Crosse Corridor Transportation Study and remain active in discussions about the reconstruction of the I-90 Dresbach Bridge (scheduled for 2013-2015).

8. Ensure the La Crosse Municipal Airport continues to serve the general aviation and air commuting needs of the community for the foreseeable future, and support realistic plans for regional service.

9. Support and encourage the recommendations of the Port of La Crosse Harbor Plan (1999) which seeks to increase the safety and usability of the Port of La Crosse for all users - personal and commercial.

10. Ensure provisions are made for safe movement, in the most expeditious manner, of people and goods from place to place throughout the county.

a. All existing roads which serve as collector routes and have a pavement width less than 24 feet should be improved with shoulders at least three feet in width, where practical.

b. Rail crossings in the urban area should be grade separated where practical.

c. Street name signs should be constructed and maintained at every intersection throughout the county.

11. Improve development review to ensure that all private and public development is undertaken in a manner which minimizes increased traffic congestion and land use conflicts.

a. Adjacent developments shall provide for internal circulation between them.

- b. All residential developments of more than 10 lots should be served by an interior street system.
- c. Increased building setbacks and more stringent sign controls on arterial and collector streets should be required.
- d. Traffic calming techniques should be included in all new developments, where appropriate.
- e. Road development and new driveway accesses on active agricultural land should be limited to the fullest extent possible. When new roads are required, minimize the use of dead end roads and cul-de-sacs whenever possible. New driveways shall continue to be regulated to ensure sufficient emergency vehicle access and to maintain safe driveway spacing standards.
- f. Minimize creation of smaller remnant parcels or the division of continuous active agricultural parcels in the planning and construction of highway improvements.
- g. Require traffic impact studies on a case-by-case basis as deemed appropriate by the Planning, Resources & Development Committee.

12. Require developments to provide appropriate areas for future transit and transportation facilities. Promote "Transit Ready" development that promotes the reservation of transit routes that will develop when densities and total population numbers can support increased transit networks.

(3) Utilities and Community Facilities.

(a) Recommendations and Policies. The purpose of this Utilities and Community Facilities Element is to offer policies and recommendations to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in La Crosse County. This element of the countywide plan is much more general than local municipal plans and will not include an in-depth analysis of local utilities or community facilities. Instead, it will discuss issues of regional importance such as ground water, transmission line corridors, equitable distribution of public services, and other issues within the purview of county government. Content for this element was determined through the public participation process, review of current goals, and included review of the following documents and plans:

- 1. La Crosse County Land Development Plan (1999)
- 2. La Crosse Sewer Service Area Water Quality Management Report 1999-2020

(b) General Utilities and Community Facilities Policy. To provide for the sustainability of future countywide development by ensuring capacity for urban and rural uses and densities, La Crosse County will:

- 1. Encourage utility and facility resource sharing that fairly distributes and compensates all cities, villages, and towns for past, present, and future investments in public services;
- 2. Protect environmental resources in the development of utilities and community facilities;
- 3. Work to develop and implement the recommendations of adopted plans related to sewer, water, power, and recreation facility development;
- 4. Identify programs, funding, and partnering to identify and develop renewable energy resources and distribution capabilities;
- 5. Direct public investments in new or expanded community facilities toward meeting the long range needs of the county overall.

(c) Recommendations (numerical listing for reference purposes only, ordering does not suggest order of importance)

1. Encourage the municipalities of La Crosse County to provide for the public recreation needs of all segments of the population.

a. Undertake an inventory and long range needs assessment for new facilities and linkages to existing facilities in a countywide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP).

b. Ensure recreation and park space is made available as a required part of urban density development.

c. Encourage combining school and recreation facilities to provide mutual benefits of service, safety, convenience and economy.

d. Incorporate scenic areas and viewsheds in La Crosse County into a system of protected open spaces, scenic trails and parks.

e. Promote diverse and continuing educational opportunities, a variety of cultural and entertainment options, and convention and tourism opportunities.

2. Protect groundwater resources, distribution systems, recharge areas, and wellheads from contamination, degradation, and overdevelopment.

a. Monitor the results of the County Groundwater Modeling Study which was completed in 2004 to identify ways to prevent further groundwater contamination, identify appropriate locations for new wells, and make more efficient and economical use of existing wells.

b. Encourage wellhead protection ordinances for new municipal wells that are developed within the county.

c. Encourage monitoring of wells for naturally or unnaturally occurring contamination (arsenic, pesticides, etc.).

d. Encourage personal accountability in water usage by promoting conservation fixtures in new construction, development of rain gardens, and preservation of groundwater recharge areas such as wetlands.

3. Work with La Crosse County's Solid Waste Policy Board to implement recommendations of the Solid Waste Management Plan. The plan seeks to strengthen service relationships and properly manage solid waste disposal within the region. Ensure that landfill areas are zoned properly and ensure appropriate buffer areas of either industrial uses or green spaces.

4. Continue to maintain the nonproliferation of additional treatment facilities but recognize that connection to an existing treatment facility is not always cost-effective or environmentally sound and that there may be instances where a small sewage treatment facility is the most effective solution. Follow recommendations contained in the La Crosse Sewer Service Area Water Quality Management Report 1999-2020.

5. Require site plans and density guidelines (dwelling units per acre) before approval of municipal sewer extensions to residential subdivisions. Promote incorporation of adequate open space with pervious surface areas to help control stormwater in an environmentally sound and natural manner.

6. Recommend the municipalities of La Crosse County seek equitable and acceptable ways to distribute the costs and benefits of public services and facilities between the private and public sectors.

7. Implement a public engagement process to include early and continuous public involvement when siting new public facilities. New facilities shall conform to local siting requirements and if they are projected to generate substantial travel demand, every effort will be made to site facilities along or near major transportation and public transit corridors.

8. Initiate a countywide stormwater management program. The program should require the following elements:

a. Require large private well owners to conduct regular aquifer testing and conform to standard reporting requirements;

b. Encourage municipalities in their reviews of proposals by large water users to require appropriate discharge of water back into the local aquifer;

c. Promote and/or require the use of retention basins and other methods of water resources management to reduce the impacts of outdoor water use practices which do not incorporate Best Management Practices.

d. Develop a countywide stormwater management ordinance.

9. Ensure adequate utility and communication infrastructure throughout the region. Work with local and state entities to monitor existing supplies and forecast future demand to provide sufficient delivery for a variety of consumers. Protect residents from major line development through the county that does not benefit La Crosse County users.

10. Encourage major energy consumers to participate in renewable energy programs through the State of Wisconsin and participating utility companies. Promote participation in programs available for development and implementation of solar, wind, hydro, biogas, or other renewable resources.

11. Encourage participation of agricultural operations in energy-conserving programs.

12. Require La Crosse County and encourage other jurisdictions to meet or exceed the same standards as state buildings under the Energy Efficiency and Renewables Act (2006) which aims to increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency programs in state buildings in Wisconsin.

13. Adopt the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards in the planning, design, construction, and commissioning of county facilities financed by La Crosse County.

14. Examine Wisconsin's Solar and Wind Access Law and determine if additional standards need to be determined in a countywide ordinance to encourage development of solar and wind energy sources.

15. Follow the steps outlined through the US Environmental Protection Agency to ensure La Crosse County becomes a more sustainable "Green Community."

(4) Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources.

(a) Recommendations and Policies. The purpose of this Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element is to offer policies and recommendations to guide the future conservation, promotion, and effective management of natural, cultural, and agricultural resources in La Crosse County. Content for this element was determined through the public participation process, review of current goals, and included review of the following documents and plans:

1. La Crosse County Land Development Plan (1999)
2. La Crosse County Farmland Preservation Plan (1980)

(b) General Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Policy. La Crosse County will require municipalities to utilize county resource protection ordinances and encourage municipalities to develop stricter policies where warranted. Local preparation of special studies, maps, or monitoring strategies to protect agricultural, natural, and cultural resources will be encouraged and enabled to the ability of county government. When possible, the county will assist in directing local governments to appropriate opportunities, personnel, or special interest groups to further resource preservation goals as stated in their local comprehensive land use plans.

(c) Recommendations (numerical listing for reference purposes only, ordering does not suggest order of importance):

1. Identify and map environmentally sensitive areas and investigate the cost and benefits of undertaking floodplain mapping where no floodplain boundary mapping was conducted (creeks, etc.).
2. Encourage all municipalities in the county to develop and enforce stormwater management plans that are similar to or more restrictive than the county's ordinance to reduce runoff to surface waters, and to identify treatment options.
3. Take actions to make the surface waters of the county safe for whole body contact recreation and attain their fishing potential. Implement existing plans such as the La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Bad Axe-La Crosse Water Quality Management Plan.
4. Continue to test and monitor on a regular basis La Crosse County surface waters. These waters are both a natural resource asset and economic asset. Continue to promote and enforce construction setbacks from all waterways to prevent erosion into and siltation of surface waters.
5. Develop a conservancy district as part of the La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance. Its purpose would be to protect areas of environmental significance, natural resources, or open space significance. A conservancy district could provide a tool to private landowners who wish to protect such areas.
6. Keep the La Crosse County Zoning and Planning Department, in cooperation with UW-Extension, current on the tax relief implications of the Farmland Preservation Program for county farmers and provide assistance as necessary.
7. Update the County's Farmland Preservation Plan.
8. Explore the costs and benefits of initiating a voluntary countywide purchase of the development rights (PDR) program as an option for farmland preservation.

9. Encourage participation in agricultural programming through the State of Wisconsin such as the Working Lands Enterprise Areas (WLEA) program and Beginning Farmer and Logger Programs. These programs would help to maintain active agriculture in La Crosse County by identifying agricultural zones and supplying a new workforce for continued agricultural production.

10. Explore developing non-agricultural development density standards. Under this program, density is increased in incorporated areas thereby reducing the amount of land needed for non-farm development. Benefits to this approach include reduced pollution (stormwater, etc.) and more efficient development patterns that lower government expenses. La Crosse County should work with all governments within the county to develop intergovernmental agreements that would enable this program to succeed.

11. Encourage local historic societies and other organizations to preserve and promote historic places throughout La Crosse County. This would include assisting with the preparation of grant applications, possible mapping assistance, and referrals to educational programming through UW-Extension or other agencies. Create a map and database of historical and archaeological sites within the County's geographic information system.

12. Work with local communities to identify archaeological sites and require deed restrictions and disturbance limitations to protect the archaeological significance of the site.

13. Establish soil capability guidelines for development on agricultural lands. Prime farm soils (types 1 and 2) should be protected whenever possible. Protections may include determining maximum percentages of acreage that can be disturbed on soils identified as prime.

14. Develop guidelines for "Conservation Subdivision Design" (CSD) development within the subdivision code. Ensure wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes, in addition to a large portion of the flat, dry, and otherwise buildable land are set aside from clearing, grading, and construction. Explore developer incentives such as density bonuses for developers who pursue these types of development.

15. Encourage the development of Cost of Community Services (COCS) studies to determine the fiscal impact of existing local land uses. These studies evaluate working and open lands on equal ground with residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

16. Extinguish the "Agricultural Transition" district from the Zoning Code. Rezone lands zoned "Agricultural Transition" to the preferred zoning district as identified on an adopted comprehensive land use plan or as "Exclusive Agricultural" district where not otherwise identified.

17. Encourage farmers to participate in renewable energy programming. Work with public and private entities to educate agricultural producers about grants and other assistance available for planning and development of renewable energy resources.

18. Encourage uniformity testing for irrigation systems within La Crosse County every 3 to 5 years in an effort to help determine if water distributed by the irrigation system is being applied uniformly to the soil surface.

19. Encourage pump testing in rural areas every 2 years. Periodic testing will identify problems in the water system, help prevent cavitation, and ensure sufficient water is available for residential and agricultural use.

20. Explore policies to protect groundwater resources in La Crosse County from non-resident users, or business entities that exist to harvest groundwater resources without returning water back to the local aquifer.

(5) Economic Development.

(a) Recommendations and Policies. The purpose of this Economic Development Element is to offer policies and recommendations to stabilize, retain, and expand the economic base and build quality employment opportunities in La Crosse County. Content for this element was determined through the public participation process, review of current economic development goals, and included review of the following documents and plans:

1. La Crosse County Land Development Plan (1999)
2. Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2003, 2006
3. Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Industry Cluster and Regional Trade Report (2001)

Additional economic development plans exist that promote specific business sector growth. Such plans also include strategic employment plans by large companies or quasi-public institutions (hospitals, etc.). These plans were kept in mind when policies and recommendations were developed but are not specifically mentioned.

(b) General Economic Development Policy. Economic development will be encouraged that:

1. does not adversely impact the natural or already built environment;
2. is consistent with community values stated in local comprehensive plans;
3. encourages development that provides jobs to county residents;
4. addresses unemployment in the county and seeks innovative techniques to attract different industries for a more diversified economic base;
5. utilizes existing community infrastructure and sustainable inputs;
6. promotes reinvestment in the local economy and educational system;
7. supports retention and expansion of existing businesses; and
8. enhances La Crosse County's position as an economic, cultural, employment, and tourism center for region.

(c) Recommendations (numerical listing for reference purposes only, ordering does not suggest order of importance)

1. Strive to increase the amount of revolving loan funds available through federal, state, and other outside sources in order to help more businesses grow and prosper in La Crosse County. Encourage funds be used for business start-up, recruitment and retention and to promote the natural beauty, community services, educational opportunity, and other quality of life measures that help to sustain and attract a productive workforce.

2. Encourage building of community identity by developing and enforcing design standards. Encourage local initiatives such as design corridors, business improvement districts, or historic district designation to focus attention and resources on downtown revitalization.

3. Encourage new business and industry to locate in communities where a full range of public services such as water, sewer, police and fire protection, education facilities, and transportation service can be economically provided. Encourage investment opportunities in communities with sufficient governmental structure, infrastructure capacity, and development potential.

4. Enhance opportunities to further build the county's industry base through integration with technology-based industry clusters that drive the state's economy and through actions that facilitate increased intraregional trade. Encourage economic expansion and employment opportunities that build upon the diversity of the county's economy through strengthening the county position as a regional distribution, manufacturing, health, technology, tourism and service center.

5. Encourage the provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each La Crosse County community. Explore collaborative initiatives for workforce housing with large employers in the area to promote home ownership opportunities.

6. Direct job-creating economic investments to distressed places. These investments would be intended to relieve concentrations of long-term unemployed persons including minorities, developmentally disabled, and the aging and to encourage the redevelopment of land and buildings for new job creation.

7. Continue to explore agricultural programming to enable an active farm economy within La Crosse County. Examples include a purchase of development rights (PDR) program that reserves agricultural land in perpetuity through conservation easements. Promote secondary agriculture-related industries to process and support agricultural production.

8. Support the state's education and training infrastructure so that every adult in the state can become an employable worker. Continue to aid and support educational programming to prepare La Crosse County's labor force for success in an ever changing economic landscape. Encourage programming for apprenticeships to grow skilled trades, and technical training to prepare workers for knowledge-based industries. Work to increase capacity of a new generation of workers to replace a retiring workforce.

9. Encourage municipalities to adopt zoning that permits higher-density, mixed uses in downtowns and around transportation hubs that once served the entire County, but now compete with highway commerce. Encourage pedestrian-friendly, transit, and transportation-ready designs in urban areas to differentiate them from traditional highway development.

10. Encourage new business development and expansion that provides "family wage" jobs and a strong tax base.

11. Encourage municipalities in La Crosse County to provide sufficient land supply for industrial growth and development and to provide adequate buffers between these and other uses. Reservation of buffers with appropriate land uses and zoning provisions will ensure they will be available for future use. Ensure industrial land designations are sufficient to permit the concentration of industry in appropriate locations beyond 20 years. The designation of this land shall be established in a way that preserves natural resource based industries (quarrying, forestry, etc.) and other critical areas.

12. Encourage opportunities to enable family businesses, cottage industries, home-based occupations, and agricultural-related businesses.

13. Promote and utilize sustainable energy resources as an economic opportunity and encourage increased development of alternative energy markets and businesses.

14. Promote sustainable development, energy conservation, and green building techniques.

(6) Intergovernmental Cooperation.

(a) Recommendations and Policies. This Intergovernmental Cooperation Element is an essential component of any comprehensive plan. Within this element the relationships between public, quasi-public, and private entities are discussed to increase the efficiencies and capabilities of each entity to provide service and support throughout La Crosse County. The following policies and recommendations have been developed to guide the future development of various cooperative practices and agreements.

(b) General Intergovernmental Cooperation Policy. It is the County's policy to participate in intergovernmental coordination efforts with federal, state, and local governments. La Crosse County will support intergovernmental and private sector coordination to ensure:

1. Economic development in conformance with comprehensive planning policy;
2. Reduction of dependence on county resources for needed services;
3. Increased accountability and responsiveness to regional and County-wide needs;
4. Increased efficiencies in the delivery of services;
5. The integrity of the land-use policies of any County comprehensive plan element is preserved;
6. The responsibility and support for land use planning will be coordinated with adjacent jurisdictions through the adoption of local comprehensive plans and other planning agreements which will recognize:
 - a. That the County will maintain planning oversight through the comprehensive plan in unincorporated areas until and during any jurisdictional transition;
 - b. The County will support the planning process for unincorporated areas and establish and participate in a cooperative process to address the future of urban service provision issues.
7. La Crosse County will continue to encourage the development of cooperative boundary agreements between municipalities.
8. County resources are used to leverage other resources for the encouragement of economically viable agricultural and forest areas, for habitat conservation and stabilizing rural areas. These initiatives could include:
 - a. Joint development of marketing facilities for agricultural products, such as wholesale and farmers' markets;
 - b. Support for programs which conserve wildlife habitat, particularly wetlands, through private/public cooperation;
 - c. The encouragement of incentive programs or other compensatory mechanisms for the preservation of working lands, especially the purchase of conservation easements.

(c) Recommendations (numerical listing for reference purposes only, ordering does not suggest order of importance):

1. Prior to actions on rezoning of lands the county zoning committee will take under advisement the recommendations provided in the town plans as well as any plans prepared by cities or villages for the purpose of seeking coordinated and compatible growth.

2. Encourage cooperation and coordination on provision of emergency services with local and regional units of government.

3. Cooperate and seek ways to cost share and resource pool with other local governments in meeting the State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning requirements for implementation, updates, and rewrites.

4. Encourage all municipalities in the county to develop and enforce erosion control, stormwater management, and groundwater recharge plans that are similar or more restrictive than County ordinances.

5. Encourage cooperative efforts between the City of La Crosse and surrounding communities to seek ways to expand the mass transit utility service area.

6. Initiate efforts to consolidate services between governments and quasi-public entities. Discuss the importance of cost-effective and efficient delivery of services throughout La Crosse County communities. Enlist involvement with other agencies (TCC, LAPC, UWEX, etc.) to educate the public about consolidation and cost-sharing.

7. Consider developing a countywide cost of community services study (COCS) to identify and compare the differential between land uses and the amount, and cost, of services they require. Solicit involvement and disseminate results with local community stakeholders.

31.05 LA CROSSE COUNTY IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT.

(1) Introduction. The *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan* establishes a framework for a wide variety of public decisions affecting growth, development, community character, and public expenditures. This element of the plan consolidates opportunities and direction for La Crosse County over the next twenty years. It includes a synopsis of previously completed planning components (Citizen Participation Process, Plan Goals, etc.) and concludes with a strategic action plan that prioritizes recommendations to achieve planning goals. The element also includes information about evaluating, amending, and updating this plan to ensure consistency with other planning documents, and to keep the plan current and relevant over time.

(2) Citizen Participation Process.

(a) The main purpose of the public participation process was to make all citizens of La Crosse County aware of the progress of the countywide comprehensive plan and to offer the public opportunities to make suggestions or comments during the process. Taken individually, the activities undertaken during the preparation of this plan were not expected to reach and inform each and every resident of La Crosse County. Collectively, however, the plan activities were designed to effectively and efficiently provide a broad-based dissemination of information and maximize the opportunity for citizen involvement and comment. Public meetings, workshops, and open houses provided opportunities for the public to openly discuss comprehensive planning issues with local decision makers, county staff, and the hired planning consultant. Formal public hearings were also conducted as part of the plan adoption process to allow public testimony to be made regarding the *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan*. During plan development, every effort was made to ensure that public meetings were held at one or more public locations central and convenient to all citizens of La Crosse County.

(b) The following is a list of objectives for public participation that La Crosse County sought to achieve throughout the development of the *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan*. These same objectives apply for implementation strategies.

1. All residents of La Crosse County become fully aware of the importance of participating in the development of the Plan.
2. The public participation process is designed to engage people of all races, ethnic backgrounds and income levels.
3. The public has opportunities to provide their input (both formally and informally) to the county, their local Plan Commission and local governing body.
4. The public has access to all technical information and any analyses performed throughout the planning process.
5. Members of the county and participating municipalities have input from the broadest range of perspectives and interests in the community possible.
6. Input is elicited through a variety of means (electronic, printed, and oral) in such a way that it may be carefully considered and responded to in a timely fashion.
7. This process of public involvement strengthens the sense of community present in the municipalities of La Crosse County and furthers the vision of active and positive participation by all aspects of the community in the decision making and civic life of the municipality over the long term.

(c) Two of the major undertakings during this process included a series of sub-area meetings throughout the county, and a countywide survey. Descriptions and outcomes for portions of these exercises are detailed below:

1. Stakeholders.
 - a. Throughout development of this plan, there has been extensive citizen involvement. As described in the Introduction of the Existing Conditions Report, the county was divided into six (6) sub-areas so that completed elements of the comprehensive plan could be discussed with the public upon completion of key benchmarks in the process. These discussions included review of demographic projections, land use projections, and implementation tools. In all, elements of the comprehensive plan were presented in each sub-area on five different occasions.
 - b. In June and July 2007, sub-area meetings were held to discuss preferred implementation tools. Examples were divided into incentive based approaches (“carrots”) or regulatory tools (“sticks”). Overall, incentives were thought to increase voluntary compliance but meeting participants realized some regulatory tools were also necessary. Many of those tools are represented in the next section of this Implementation Element. Results from all sub-area meetings were carried forward throughout plan development. See Appendix A.
 - c. Beyond citizen involvement, other stakeholder groups such as county boards and commissions, county staff, and other public or private entities were included in the development of recommendations to ensure implementation steps are realistic and practical.
 - d. The primary oversight committee involved in the development of the *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan* was the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. This 14-member group was comprised of two co-chairs, six County Board members, and one representative from each of the six sub-areas. The Committee met monthly to review plan progress, deliverables, and outcomes.

2. Survey. In October 2006 a random sample survey was distributed to 2,500 households in La Crosse County. In total, 344 responses were collected and tabulated (14% response rate). The survey sought to collect information about a variety of topics used to generate goals, objectives, and policies for the comprehensive plan. Overall, county survey respondents favored preservation of active agricultural lands, multimodal transportation facilities development, urban redevelopment, maintaining distinct urban boundaries, and maintaining county controls such as slope limitations. Respondents were not in favor of new billboards along highways, or altering community character. The survey identified a need for further education on topics such as conservation easements and cluster subdivision design. See Appendix B.

(3) Purpose.

(a) Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law (Wisconsin Statute Section 66.1001) requires the preparation of an Implementation Element as part of a nine-element comprehensive plan. The implementation plan needs to include:

A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs (in the plan).

(b) The following section of this document begins with a listing of La Crosse County's vision, goals and objective statements. A series of potential implementation tools follows concluding with a section that discusses amending and adopting the plan.

(4) Vision. La Crosse County is a diverse and vibrant hub set amid the Upper Mississippi River and scenic coulees. Within this setting are valuable natural, agricultural, cultural, transportation, educational, and economic resources. These resources provide residents, businesses, and visitors distinct urban amenities and small-town livability. Preserving these resources and strengthening the connections between them is the foundation for maintaining and enhancing quality of life and economic opportunity.

(5) Comprehensive Plan Goals. Goals are statements that describe specific elements of the vision. These goals should be considered "guiding principles" for the plan, clearly outlining what should be accomplished. Realistic goals provide the framework for the development of attainable policies and actions. The goals are based on the existing goals from the La Crosse County 2020 Development Plan and have been updated from feedback gained at public meetings and from the County Steering Committee.

(a) Land Use and Growth Management Goal: Work in partnership with area communities to manage and guide future growth, recognizing that land is an irreplaceable resource. Enhance the quality of life by protecting both natural resources and farmland and by promoting urban infill and redevelopment. Guide growth to developed areas where public facilities and services can be economically provided.

(b) Farmland Preservation Goal: Direct growth away from prime farmland and protect productive agricultural operations from the encroachment of incompatible uses. Evaluate and utilize programs and initiatives that support this goal.

(c) Property Rights Goal: Utilize consistent policies and implementation tools that provide equity and fairness to landowners while preserving public health, welfare, and the community character.

(d) Natural Resources Goal: Preserve and protect the overall beauty and natural resources of the county as these areas contribute to quality of life and are a critical component of the county's economic development strategy. Protect features including bluffs, coulees, wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, rivers, streams, woodlands, remnant prairies/grasslands, open spaces, and groundwater recharge areas.

(e) Air Quality Goal: Monitor air quality within the county and region to ensure both compliance with existing State and Federal laws, and to promote the exceeding of these standards.

(f) Groundwater Quality Goal: Pursue activities that maintain, protect, and enhance the county's high quality groundwater resources.

(g) Cultural Resources Goal: Preserve the artistic, cultural, historic, and archeological resources as these features add to the area's quality of life and its rich cultural heritage.

(h) Economic Development Goal: Seek a cooperative, intergovernmental approach to business retention and recruitment. Utilize strategies that capitalize on the county's existing assets, including its available workforce, transportation infrastructure, and the natural features that contribute to quality of life. Cooperate with other entities to improve the region's position as an attractive and competitive place to start, grow, and expand business.

(i) Transportation Goal: Promote a transportation system that creates safe, efficient, convenient, and economical options for residents and business users. Coordinate all transportation planning with its impact on land use and growth patterns. Address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and disabled residents when planning for surface and non-surface transportation.

(j) Housing Goal: Ensure that the county has an available housing supply that is adequate, affordable, and well-maintained, which meets the needs of all income levels, ages, special-needs populations, and household types.

(k) Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: Cooperate and communicate with all local, state and federal governments, adjacent counties, and regional organizations to provide county residents and businesses with timely information as well as efficient and economical services.

(l) Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: Maintain service and staffing levels appropriate for the varied urban, suburban, and rural community expectations. Promote intergovernmental efficiencies and improvements, including the use of renewable energy sources.

(m) Social and Community Service Goal: Ensure the region continues to offer quality, affordable, and efficient services to its residents through public and private providers. Maintain and enhance the quality of education, healthcare, childcare, and related services, which contribute to the quality of life of residents.

(6) Implementation Tools. Implementation Tools include the rules, policies, and ordinances used to facilitate or control for a desired outcome. Examples include zoning, subdivision, and official mapping, or the availability of certain incentives. This section includes both regulatory and non-regulatory measures.

(a) Regulatory Measures. For the purposes of this document, "regulatory measures" are those that must be adhered to by everyone if adopted. The following regulatory measures can be used to guide development and implement the recommendations of a comprehensive plan. These measures are officially adopted as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances). Some of the implementation tools are meant solely for use by municipalities within La Crosse County who may or may not choose to utilize these measures at their discretion with or without county assistance.

1. Zoning Ordinance:

a. Zoning is used to guide and control the use of land and structures on land. In addition, zoning establishes detailed regulations concerning the areas of lots that may be developed, including

setbacks and separation for structures, the density of the development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose for zoning is to avoid undesirable side effects of development by segregating incompatible uses and by maintaining adequate standards for individual uses.

b. The establishment of zoning districts is generally conducted after careful consideration of the development patterns indicated in the comprehensive plan. Amending zoning district boundaries has the overall effect of changing the plan (unless amendments correspond to changes within the plan), therefore, it is reasonable to assume that indiscriminate changes may result in weakening of the plan. The County Board makes the final decisions on the content of the zoning ordinance and the district map. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the Planning, Resources and Development Committee and participating unincorporated communities.

2. Shoreland Zoning: La Crosse County regulates shorelands within its jurisdiction. The shoreland zoning code sets standards to prevent water pollution, protect aquatic habitat, control building sites including placement of structures and land uses, and preserve natural shore cover.

3. Official Maps: An official map shows the location of areas which the municipality has identified as necessary for future public streets, recreation areas, and other public grounds. By showing the area on the Official Map, the municipality puts the property owner on notice that the property has been reserved for a future facility or purpose.

4. Sign Regulations: Local governments may adopt regulations, such as sign ordinances, to limit the height and other dimensional characteristics of advertising and identification signs. The purpose of these regulations is to promote the well-being of the community by establishing standards that assure the provision of signs adequate to meet essential communication needs while safeguarding the rights of the people in the community to a safe, healthful, and attractive environment.

5. Erosion/Stormwater Control Ordinances:

a. The purpose of stormwater or erosion control ordinances is to set forth requirements and criteria which will prevent and control water pollution, diminish the threats to public health, safety, welfare, and aquatic life due to runoff of stormwater from development or redevelopment. Adoption of local ordinances for stormwater do not pre-empt more stringent stormwater management requirements that may be imposed by WPDES Stormwater Permits issued by the Department of Natural Resources under Section 147.021 Wis, Stats.

b. La Crosse County's Erosion Control/Land Disturbance Code (Chapter 21) was established to protect the county's unique natural resources by minimizing the amount of sediment carried by runoff or discharged from land disturbance activities to perennial waters, wetlands, private properties, and public rights-of-way.

6. Building Codes: The Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) is the statewide building code for one- and two-family dwellings built since June 1, 1980. As of January 1, 2005, there is enforcement of the UDC in all Wisconsin municipalities. The UDC is primarily enforced by municipal or county building inspectors who must be state-certified. In lieu of local enforcement, municipalities have the option to have the state provide enforcement through state-certified inspection agencies for new homes. Permit requirements for alterations and additions will vary by municipality. Regardless of permit requirements, state statutes require compliance with the UDC rules by owners and builders even if there is no enforcement.

7. Mechanical Codes: In the State of Wisconsin, the 2000 International Mechanical Code (IMC) and 2000 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) have been adopted with Wisconsin amendments for application to commercial buildings.

8. Housing Codes: A description of the State Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) is included above. The UDC applies to one- and two-family dwelling units built since June 1, 1980. Localities, however, can also institute additional housing codes that are local ordinances or laws requiring owners of real property to build and maintain properties to specific standards.

9. Sanitary Codes: The Wisconsin Sanitary Code (WSC), which is usually enforced at the county-level, provides local regulation for communities that do not have municipal sanitary service. The WSC establishes rules for the proper siting, design, installation, inspection and management of private sewage systems and non-plumbing sanitation systems. La Crosse County has adopted state plumbing and sanitation codes by reference in the Sanitation Code (Chapter 12).

10. Subdivision Ordinance:

a. Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly growth and development of unplatted and undeveloped land. These regulations are intended to protect the community and occupants of the proposed subdivision by setting forth reasonable regulations for public utilities, storm water drainage, lot sizes, street design, open space, or other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset to the county.

b. La Crosse County's Subdivision and Platting Code (Chapter 18) regulates and controls the division of land within the unincorporated areas of the county. The County Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the Planning, Resources and Development Committee.

(b) Innovative Approaches (Regulatory). Some regulatory implementation tools include innovative approaches for the management of land, resources, and economic development. The following tools are listed to explain and inform future decision making. *Some excerpts from 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, UW Extension, or other sources.*

1. Inclusionary Zoning: Zoning regulations that provide more housing choices by establishing requirements and providing incentives to build affordable housing in or near market rate housing developments. For example, communities may require that a certain percentage of a residential housing development be affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

2. Landlord Licensing: Registration for rental properties, or landlord licensing, includes rules to register, monitor, and collect fees for rental properties. In many cases inspection is not required before a license is issued, but revocation of the license is common if the property that has been licensed is a repeat code violator.

3. Site Plan Regulations: A site plan is a detailed plan of a lot indicating all proposed improvements. Some communities have regulations indicating that site plans may need to be prepared by an engineer, surveyor, or architect. Additionally, site plan regulations may require specific inclusions such as: General Layout, Drainage and Grading, Utilities, Erosion Control, Landscaping & Lighting, and Building Elevations.

4. Archaeological Preservation Ordinances: The purpose of these ordinances is to preserve the archaeological resources within a geographic area and to ensure such resources are considered (and protected) if nearby lands are disturbed (for development or construction).

5. Design Review Ordinances and Downtown Overlay Districts: An overlay district is an additional zoning requirement that is placed on a geographic area but does not change the underlying zoning. Overlay districts have been used to impose development restrictions or special considerations on new development. The districts can be used to preserve historic, scenic or other priority areas. They are most often used to facilitate structural development with a common theme or element to create character or unique identity. The overlay district must be adopted as part of the zoning code by the County Board following appropriate public hearing procedures.

(c) Non-Regulatory Measures. For the purposes of this document, “non-regulatory measures” are meant to encourage a particular practice, but not legislate it. The following non-regulatory measures can be used to guide development and implement the recommendations of a comprehensive plan. These measures often exist as policies or as special incentives available to willing participants. Some of the implementation tools are meant solely for use by municipalities within La Crosse County who may or may not choose to utilize these measures at their discretion with or without county assistance.

1. Capital Improvement Plan:

a. This is an ongoing financial planning program intended to help implement planning proposals. The program allows local communities to plan for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. Capital improvements or expenditures are those projects that require the expenditure of public funds for the acquisition or construction of a needed physical facility.

b. Capital improvement programming is a listing of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over the next few years. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, discusses means of financing them, and establishes priorities for them over a three-to-five year programming period. Improvements or acquisitions considered a capital improvement include:

- i. Public buildings (i.e. – fire and police stations)
- ii. Park acquisition and development
- iii. Roads and highways
- iv. Utility construction and wastewater treatment plants
- v. Joint school and other community development projects
- vi. Fire and police protection equipment

c. A capital improvement plan or program is simply a method of financial planning for these types of improvements and scheduling the expenditures over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of public funds. In addition, each year the capital improvement program should be extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and can be modified to the community’s changing needs.

2. Expedited Review Process. This incentive provides a faster method of development review if certain criteria are met (e.g. increased design standards or preservation of unique lands). The process does not circumvent formal review or public comment, but increases the speed with which development proposals are reviewed if developers agree to voluntarily forward a community goal or objective that would not otherwise be required.

3. Historic Preservation Ordinances.

a. An historic preservation ordinance is a voluntary code established to protect, enhance, and perpetuate buildings of special character or the special historic or aesthetic interest of districts that represent a community's cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history. The jurisdiction’s governing body may create a landmarks commission to designate historic landmarks and establish historic districts.

b. In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 101.121 and 44.44, a municipality (county, village, town or county) may request the State Historical Society of Wisconsin to certify a local historic preservation ordinance in order to establish a “certified municipal register of historic property” to qualify locally designated historic buildings for the Wisconsin Historic Building Code. The purpose of the Wisconsin Historic Building Code, which has been developed by the Department of Commerce, is to facilitate the preservation or restoration of designated historic buildings through the provision of alternative building standards. Owners of qualified historic buildings are permitted to elect to be subject to the Historic Building code in lieu of any other state or municipal building codes. Historic property is exempt from property tax under Sec. 70.11(34), Wis. Stats.

4. Main Street Programs: The Wisconsin Main Street Program is based on nationwide downtown revitalization methods developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The program advocates the restoration of historic character of downtown while pursuing traditional development strategies such as marketing, business recruitment and retention, real estate development, market analysis, and public improvements. Funding is available through the Wisconsin Main Street Program for training and technical assistance.

(d) Innovative Approaches (Non-Regulatory). Some non-regulatory implementation tools include innovative approaches for the management of land, resources, and economic development. The following tools are listed to explain and inform future decision making. *Some excerpts from 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, UW Extension, or other sources.*

1. Density Bonus Ordinances: There are a number of “density bonuses” that a community may offer a developer to achieve a public policy goal. One density bonus permits developers to increase the number of units allowed on a piece of property if they agree to restrict the rents or sales prices on some of the units. Developers can use the additional cash flow from these bonus units to offset the reduced revenue from the affordable units. Another method of density bonus provides for the protection of environmental areas. A community may allow a developer to build more units than is permitted in an area in exchange for permanently protecting green spaces or by making environmental improvements such as landscaping or developing a nature trail in a project area.

2. Cluster Zoning: This concept takes what might otherwise be scattered housing sites and groups them together in a cluster, a kind of rural hamlet. The idea is catching on in Wisconsin and has been proposed in many parts of the state. An advantage to this style of development is that it can help preserve natural or agricultural areas while screening the new development from roadways or valued viewsheds. One problem with cluster zoning is that, by its nature, it is not contiguous to existing development and generally ends up on undeveloped farmlands, woodlots, or natural areas.

3. Cooperative Boundary Agreements: These agreements attempt to facilitate problem solving through citizen involvement, negotiation, mediation, and other cooperative methods. Generally, boundary agreements help both an incorporated community and an unincorporated community forecast future lands for annexation so that infrastructure needs can be forecast and funded. They can also ease contentious relationships.

4. Impact Fees: Impact fees are exactions levied to a developer or homeowner by a municipality to offset the community’s costs resulting from a development. To set an impact fee rate an analysis called a Public Facilities Needs Assessment must be performed to quantify the fee. Although counties cannot charge impact fees, many municipalities in La Crosse County would benefit from the revenue created by these fees in implementation of their local plans (eg. paying for development of parks in new residential developments).

5. Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND): Traditional neighborhoods mix shops and offices with a variety of housing types. Development is compact and pedestrian friendly. Often, streets are narrower to discourage speeding and increase safety for children, bicyclists, and walkers. Sometimes parks, community centers, or retail areas are established as “town centers” to help give the development a sense of being a neighborhood. Impediments to this kind of development include large lot zoning, minimum setbacks, wide streets, and other ordinances that discourage compact development. Communities interested in allowing developers a TND option need to formally enable this type of development in a zoning code or separate TND ordinance.

(e) Conservation Programming (Non-Regulatory). Conservation of La Crosse County's agricultural, natural, cultural, and energy resources is a primary focus within several elements of this comprehensive plan. Some of these non-regulatory implementation tools include new approaches for the management of land, resources, and utilities. The following tools are listed to explain and inform future decision making.

1. Purchase of Development Rights or Conservation Easements: A purchase of development rights (PDR) program is a voluntary preservation program whereby a landowner voluntarily sells or donates his or her rights to develop a parcel of land to a public agency or charitable organization charged with the preservation of farmland or natural areas. The landowner retains all other ownership rights attached to the land, and a conservation easement is placed on the land and recorded in the title. The buyer (often a local unit of government) essentially purchases the right to develop the land and retires that right permanently, thereby assuring that development will not occur on that particular property. In placing such an easement on their farmland or natural area, participating landowners often take the proceeds from the sale of the development rights to invest in their farming operations or retire from the business, allowing another farmer or other user to purchase the land at lower rates devoid of development rights.

2. Transfer of Development Rights: A transfer of development rights (TDR) program is a technique involving the designation of development (receiving) zones and protected (sending) zones for guiding growth away from sensitive resources and toward controlled development centers. This is accomplished by transferring the development rights from one area to another via local law authorization such as a deed restriction or easement.

3. Working Lands Enterprise Areas (WLEA) program: WLEA are farmland areas designated for fixed periods of time for preservation from non-farm development based on voluntary agreements by farm owners. The State of Wisconsin is currently exploring the development of this voluntary program to encourage and facilitate the clustering of farms which would reduce conflicts with non-farm uses. It would also strengthen exclusive agricultural zoning. If this program is developed, La Crosse County should determine if location in one of these "districts" is a requirement for participation in conservation programs (such as a PDR program).

4. Beginning Farmer and Logger program: This program works to supply a new workforce for continued agricultural production. It would support beginning farmers through statewide support teams (Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, UW Extension), broker connections between beginning and retiring farmers, and promote and market agricultural careers.

5. Wisconsin Focus on Energy:

a. Focus on Energy is a public-private partnership offering energy information and services to residential, business and industrial customers throughout Wisconsin. These services are delivered by a group of firms contracted by the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Division of Energy.

b. Focus on Energy offers several grant programs to support the development of renewable energy. The following types of grants are currently available:

i. Business & Marketing Grants

ii. Feasibility Study Grants

iii. Implementation Grants

- Commercial Solar Water Heating
- Solar-Electric Systems
- Wind-Energy Systems
- Biogas Digesters/Non-Residential Wood Burning (electric)
- Biogas Digesters (thermal)
- Non-Residential Wood-Burning (thermal) Systems

6. Irrigation Testing:

a. Uniformity testing is a troubleshooting procedure to check that the water distributed by an irrigation system is being applied uniformly to the field within practical limitations. The University of Wisconsin has a test kit that can be borrowed by Wisconsin growers that contains all the equipment normally needed to check a quarter section straight center pivot system. The kit is located at the Hancock Agricultural Research Station.

b. Pump testing is another important testing procedure. It is typically done in an open discharge method where the pump is disconnected from the irrigation system and a flow meter, pressure indicator and valve is installed on the pump output. The net positive suction pressure of the pump should be determined to ensure that the pump is deep enough in the well to prevent cavitation from a lack of water. Irrigation contactors or well drillers generally provide this type of testing service. It is recommended that pumps and wells be tested every 2 years.

7. Farm Rewiring: The utility industry in Wisconsin has been upgrading the power distribution system for a number of years. However, individual farm electrical systems are often overloaded and deteriorating due to the transition from manual labor to more mechanization and the high moisture environment of animal agriculture. The state's utilities launched a program to assist particularly dairy farmers to upgrade the wiring in their animal housing facilities to current electrical standards in an effort to reduce the likelihood of stray voltage and to improve electrical safety. Financial assistance provides 50% matching grants up to a maximum guidelines and then low interest loans to pay for the costs of rewiring.

8. Solar and Wind Access: Wisconsin allows property owners with wind-energy systems or solar-energy systems to apply for permits guaranteeing unobstructed access to wind or solar resources. A permit may not be granted if an obstruction already exists or if the construction of such an obstruction is already well into the planning stages.

(7) Consistency Among Plan Elements.

(a) The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the implementation element describe how each of the nine-elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since the La Crosse County completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist.

(b) This comprehensive plan references previous planning efforts, and details future planning needs. Whenever possible, existing municipal plans were incorporated in part or in whole, to ensure consistency with local decision making. To keep consistency with the comprehensive plan the county should incorporate existing plans as components to the comprehensive plan, and adopt all future plans as detailed elements of this plan.

(8) Plan Adoption, Monitoring, Amendments and Update.

(a) Plan Adoption. In order to implement this plan it must be adopted by the County Planning, Resources and Development Committee. After the Committee adopts the Plan by resolution, the County Board must adopt the plan by ordinance. This action formalizes the plan document as a frame of reference for general development decisions over the next 20 years. Once formally adopted, the plan becomes a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and for coordinating legislative decisions.

(b) Plan Use, Evaluation, and Amendments.

1. La Crosse County will base all of its land use decisions against this plan's goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations including decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions.

2. La Crosse County can expect gradual change in the years to come. Although this Plan has described policies and actions for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future condition of the county. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions.

3. The *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan* may be amended at any time by the County Board following the same statutory process to amend the plan as it originally followed when it was initially adopted (regardless of how minor the amendment or change is).

4. To keep current with municipal actions, La Crosse County will update the La Crosse County Future Land Use Map at least annually. Municipalities amending or updating their local comprehensive plan should inform the county about these decisions and submit appropriate documentation to ensure consistency between the local and county plans.

5. The plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the County Board, planning committees, and any other decision-making body should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated.

6. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee should reconvene five years after the initial adoption of the *La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan*, and every five years thereafter, to review the comprehensive plan and suggest any amendments to the La Crosse County Board. The review should consist of the following steps:

a. Solicit recommendations for amendments from the general public, using procedures described in the *Public Participation Plan*;

b. Review annual reports on the comprehensive plan, generated when updates to the Future Land Use Map are made;

c. Review goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires;

d. Review policies, programs, and implementation strategies to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate;

e. Update Action Plan, as needed.

(c) Plan Update. According to the State Comprehensive Planning Law this Plan must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to an amendment or evaluation, the plan update is a major rewrite of the plan document and supporting maps. If the evaluation and amendment process outlined above takes place, it is likely these periodic amendments will keep the plan current and focus should instead be made on updating aging components of the plan, such as existing conditions (which could be updated with new Census information) and maps (new data will likely be available over ten years time).

(9) 5-Year Action Plan. The plan implementation table on the following pages provides a detailed list and work schedule of major actions that the county should complete as part of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of La Crosse County, county staff, and local/state governments. The completion of recommended actions in the timeframe presented may be affected and or impacted due to competing interests, other priorities, and financial limitations facing the county.

Table 9.1: Action Plan		
Action	Who is responsible?	Schedule
Housing		
Make tax delinquent lands available at below market rate prices to not-for-profit housing providers.	La Crosse County Housing Commission; Executive Committee	2008
Work with local advocacy agencies to enhance special needs housing.	La Crosse County Housing Commission	Ongoing
Transportation		
Require developments to provide appropriate areas for future transit and transportation facilities.	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	Immediate
Annually review and upgrade county highways.	Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	Ongoing
Increase connections between segments of the La Crosse County trail system.	Park Development Review Board; Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	Ongoing
Approve ordinance amendments which require Access Control and Transportation Impact Analysis with new developments	Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	2008
Community Facilities and Utilities		
Implement recommendations of the Solid Waste Management Plan.	Solid Waste Policy Board; Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	Immediate
Draft a countywide stormwater management ordinance.	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	2008
Explore improvements to La Crosse County buildings to meet Energy	Joint Oversight Committee on Sustainability; Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	2008

Table 9.1: Action Plan

Action	Who is responsible?	Schedule
Efficiency standards.		
Adopt energy and environmental design standards for County Facilities.	Joint Oversight Committee on Sustainability; Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	2009
Develop Public Works Capital Improvement Plan.	Public Works & Infrastructure Committee	2008
Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources		
Develop a Purchase of Development Rights road show for countywide education and issues collection.	County Land Conservation Staff; County Planning Staff	Immediate
Update County Farmland Preservation Plan.	County Land Conservation Staff; County Planning Staff	2009
Economic Development		
Develop countywide Economic Development Plan.	Economic Development Fund, Inc. Board; County Planning Staff	2008
Leverage additional state and local funding for economic development.	Economic Development Fund, Inc. Board	Ongoing
Intergovernmental Cooperation		
Assist in the development of Cooperative Boundary Agreements.	Extra-Territorial Technical Advisory Committee; Planning, Resources & Development Committee; County Planning Staff with assistance from:	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hamilton, West Salem, and C. Onalaska (in 1 yr) 2. Holmen and Holland (in 1 yr) 3. T. Onalaska and C. Onalaska (in 1 yr) 4. Shelby and C. La Crosse (in 3 yrs) 5. Medary and C. La Crosse (in 3 yrs) 6. Town and Village of Bangor (in 3 yrs) 7. Update T. Campbell and C. La Crosse (in 5 yrs) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2008 2. 2008 3. 2008 4. 2011 5. 2011 6. 2011 7. 2013
Land Use		
Comprehensive rewrite of La Crosse County Zoning Code.	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	2008
Update La Crosse County Subdivision Code.	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	2009
Draft Site Plan Review Ordinance.	County Planning, Zoning and Land Information Staff	2009
Develop Standards to review plan implementation progress.	County Planning, Zoning and Land Information Staff	2008
Develop Standards to judge consistency of land use decisions with adopted comp plan.	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	2008

Table 9.1: Action Plan

Action	Who is responsible?	Schedule
Update Sign Regulations in the Zoning Code (Ch. 17)	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	2008
Develop regulations for Conservation Subdivision design within the Subdivision and Platting Ordinance (Ch. 18)	Planning, Resources & Development Committee	2008