

ORDINANCE

SUBJECT: Farmland Preservation Plan

COMMITTEE: Planning, Resources & Development Committee

FIRST CONSIDERATION: August 16, 2012

SECOND CONSIDERATION: September 20, 2012

ORDINANCE # 106 - 9/12 **PUBLICATION DATE** October 1, 2012

The County Board of Supervisors of La Crosse County does ordain as follows:

**AN ORDINANCE TO CREATE S. 31.06 ENTITLED "FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN"
AS PART OF THE LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2007-2027
OF THE GENERAL CODE OF LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

ANALYSIS

The Farmland Preservation Plan makes significant changes to the way La Crosse County accomplishes farmland preservation for the next five to twenty years. La Crosse County has used the Working Lands Initiative and the tools that were made available by that effort. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection has certified La Crosse County's Farmland Preservation Plan under Wis. Stat. s. 91.16, effective on the date the County adopts the Farmland Preservation Plan. Wis. Stat. s. 91.10(2) also requires that the Farmland Preservation Plan be consistent with and included in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan.

The Farmland Preservation Plan is not intended to prevent non-agricultural development, but rather the planning and farmland preservation tools are used to limit non-agricultural development in areas with favorable conditions for agricultural enterprises and target other areas as suitable for non-agricultural development. The planning for long-term farmland preservation and the economic development of agricultural areas can help identify and preserve sufficient land and infrastructure base needed to support agriculture. A plan that understands and addresses the needs of farm-related business owners can help insure predictability and security for those owners. The plan helps minimize conflict arising from incompatible land uses while at the same time protecting the rural heritage that has long defined Wisconsin. Planning for agriculture can also contribute to other goals, such as preserving wildlife habitat areas and maintaining groundwater recharge areas.

The Farmland Preservation Plan addresses the following areas:

1. Introduction
2. Background Conditions
3. Agricultural Context
4. Local Food System
5. Farmland Protection Tools
6. Implementation
7. Appendix

INFORMATION:

County Board Rules: Governing Body s. 2.02(8) states, in part: Ordinances are drafted by the Corporation Counsel. After the ordinance has been reviewed by a standing committee, each Supervisor will be given a copy of the ordinance showing the deleted language (grayed) and the new language (underlined) and an analysis of the intent of the ordinance. After introduction to the County Board, the ordinance shall be referred to the next monthly meeting unless waived by a 2/3 vote of the Supervisors present and a public hearing may be held if requested by a Supervisor. An amendment may be introduced and debated at either the original or the referred meeting. Copies of the ordinances of the County of La Crosse in their entirety are available with Corporation Counsel, County Clerk, or www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/code/. (rev. 3/03)

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2007-2027 OF THE GENERAL CODE OF LA CROSSE COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

The County Board of Supervisors of the County of La Crosse does ordain as follows:

Section 1. Section 31.06 entitled "Farmland Preservation Plan" is created to read:

31.06 FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

(1) Introduction.

(a) Chapter Overview.

1. Agriculture is a vital part of Wisconsin's economy and cultural identification. In 2010, agriculture constituted a \$59 billion industry in Wisconsin. Despite its importance, agriculture faces many challenges. Farmland around the country is being lost at an alarming rate, and once it is gone we cannot get it back. In the "Farming on the Edge" report released by American Farmland Trust, it was estimated that 1 acre of farmland in the United States is lost every minute. In Wisconsin this translates into the approximate loss of 22,500 acres of productive farmland a year due to development. Because of the economic importance of agriculture in Wisconsin and the potential for the continued loss of our agricultural land base, farmland preservation planning is crucial to preserve the agricultural land remaining in the state. Although well crafted farmland preservation plans may not necessarily restrict the rate of land development, they can help to redirect development towards more appropriate areas, preserve prime farmlands, promote balanced growth, and keep infrastructure costs low while strengthening local economies and protecting the environment.

2. This chapter will define farmland preservation planning activities in La Crosse County, past and present, and provide a menu of activities and priorities to accomplish farmland preservation in earnest. The first, and current, Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) was adopted in 1980. This plan has become outdated which is typical throughout Wisconsin. With the adoption of the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan in 2008, another step toward updating land use policies and preserving farmland in La Crosse County was completed.

3. Another important event occurred on June 29, 2009. On this date, the Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative (WLI) was adopted as part of the 2009-2011 Biennial Budget known as Wisconsin Act 28. This initiative became effective on July 1, 2009. One of the top priorities of the WLI is a requirement for every county in the State to update their farmland preservation plan. Under the new law, the La Crosse County Farmland Preservation Plan must be updated by December 31, 2012 with an extension. This document is meant to fulfill the Working Lands Initiative mandate. This document will also provide a process by which La Crosse County will accomplish farmland preservation activities and meet the standards of the Working Lands Initiative.

(b) Purpose and Scope.

1. The purpose for drafting, adopting and implementing a Farmland Preservation Plan is achieved by gathering and documenting public input. In this manner, La Crosse County can create an appropriate process for mapping areas for preservation and define the tools to accomplish this systematic approach to farmland preservation. Upon completion of the initial portions of public input, the Steering Committee will develop plan goals, objectives, and criteria for mapping Farmland Preservation Areas.

2. In the past, agricultural land has been treated in many land use plans as a "holding" area for eventual developed uses. Where planning has occurred for local agriculture, too frequently the plan treats the agricultural sector as an interim use, eventually giving

way to other land uses. Agricultural land often lacks a legal underpinning to protect it, even relative to wetlands and other natural areas, which are often explicitly protected under federal or state law. The mapping of appropriate farmland preservation areas will place a significantly higher emphasis on the preservation of these areas. County farmland preservation plans are not intended to prevent non-agricultural development. Rather, planning and farmland preservation tools are used to limit non-agricultural development in areas with favorable conditions for agricultural enterprises and target those other areas suitable for non-agricultural development. Planning for long-term farmland preservation and for the economic development of agriculture can help identify and preserve the sufficient land and infrastructure base needed to support agriculture. A plan that understands and addresses the needs of farm and agriculturally-related business owners can help insure predictability and security for these business owners. Well thought out plans also help minimize conflict arising from incompatible land uses while at the same time protecting the rural heritage that has long defined Wisconsin. Planning for agriculture can also contribute to other goals, such as preserving wildlife habitat areas and maintaining groundwater recharge areas.

(c) Overview of 1980 Plan. The previous La Crosse County Farmland Preservation Plan was adopted in 1980. This plan sought to:

1. Acknowledge that the general physical characteristics of La Crosse County, being its topography and access to water based resources, has greatly influenced the patterns of social and economic development presently existing in La Crosse County.
2. Emphasize that it is desirable to preserve our land and water based resources and that to do so will preserve the quality of life in La Crosse County.
3. Preserve that land considered most suitable for agricultural production.
4. Minimize the adverse effects of urban growth in agricultural areas of La Crosse County.
5. Consider all land within La Crosse County as non-replaceable and to encourage land usage within the County to be compatible with the natural environment.

The La Crosse County Planning Department led the development of the plan, facilitated through a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) in 1979. Public meetings provided the opportunity to introduce the farmland preservation program and to understand the needs and future visions of County citizens. A citizen advisory committee containing at least 1 representative from each town provided regular commentary. A technical advisory group with staff from County, State, and regional agencies provided general assistance in preparing the report. In addition to the primary document, the Planning Department prepared separate planning elements specific to each town. As a result, the County received certification from DATCP for their revised zoning ordinance, which became the primary tool for preserving farmland in La Crosse County.

(d) Overview of 2009 Working Lands Initiative.

1. After years of program planning and input from stakeholders around the state, the Wisconsin Legislature passed landmark legislation in 2009. Wisconsin Act 28 (2009-2011 Budget Bill) created what is known as the Working Lands Initiative (WLI). This new law made very significant revisions to Chapter 91 Wisconsin Statutes, which had been - with minor changes in the interim period - Wisconsin's farmland preservation law since 1977. The new law continues a long history of relying on local governments to lead program implementation efforts and attempts to improve on the success of these efforts by:

- a. Expanding and modernizing the state's existing farmland preservation program.

b. Creating new tools to assist in local program implementation, including:

- (i) Promulgation of Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs).
- (ii) Creation of a Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) matching grant program.

2. One of the first steps in modernizing the existing program is a requirement for every county in the State to update their farmland preservation plan. Under the new law, the La Crosse County Farmland Preservation Plan must be updated by December 31, 2011.

3. The farmland preservation planning effort is coordinated through a steering committee made up of farmers, local plan commissioners, town planners, local & county elected officials, and staff along with assistance from the DATCP.

4. Created by Wisconsin Act 28, (2009-11 Biennial Budget Bill), the WLI is the result of input by government institutions, non-government organizations, and private businesses to provide tools that can be used to help preserve Wisconsin farmland, promote agriculture, enhance the natural environment, and minimize conflicts created by competing land uses.

5. Using current agricultural practices and land-use realities, the WLI establishes more modern, flexible farmland preservation policies with less state oversight. This helps local governments plan and preserve agricultural land as well as create compact, focused suburban and urban development. WLI helps farmers keep land in agricultural use, employ good conservation practices, and develop agricultural enterprise areas.

6. The new WLI consolidates and enhances tax credits, maintains the use value assessment program, establishes a state working lands trust fund, and creates a new program (PACE) for targeted purchases of agricultural conservation easements from willing landowners.

(e) Plan Preparation, Review and Adoption.

1. In 2010, the La Crosse County Zoning and Planning office applied for and received a grant to prepare a 5-year update to the Farmland Preservation Plan. The County decided to accomplish this process in-house.

2. The La Crosse County Board of Supervisors next adopted a public participation plan in September of 2010 that describes the ways in which public and local units of government would be involved in the preparation, review, and approval of the plan update. A copy of the public participation plan is included as Appendix A. Key elements include: a project web site, publication of all meetings, submittal of press releases, and numerous opportunities for submitting comments and suggestions.

3. Municipalities within the County were involved in the drafting of this plan in a number of ways and were kept abreast of the plan's progress. A Farmland Preservation Steering Committee was appointed, comprised of local farmers, elected and appointed officials, and local administrative staff to provide direction in the preparation of the new La Crosse County FPP. The committee structure was very similar to that of the subcommittee that was assembled to guide the preparation of the County Development Plan. The committee consisted of 9 members meeting on a regular basis to provide the staff direction and act as a conduit to direct information back to the towns for their consideration as this plan was being drafted.

4. With assistance from staff, the public and elected officials, the Steering Committee prepared numerous plan drafts which were presented to the public, towns and county officials and submitted the drafts to DATCP for certification. A final draft of the plan was prepared based on the local government input that was received. The Steering Committee approved a

resolution supporting this draft. The Planning, Resources and Development Committee of the County Board reviewed this draft on July 30, 2012, and recommended the draft plan to the full County Board for its review and action, satisfying the requirement under Wis. Stat. s. 66.1001 to adopt the plan by ordinance.

5. On September 20, 2012 the County Board of Supervisors adopted this plan by County Ordinance.

6. Every effort has been made to use the best available data for the update. Because the plan uses data from the 2010 census of population and housing, the demographic information is the most recent data available and should be appropriate for years to come.

7. The La Crosse County Farmland Preservation Plan must be consistent with the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan, the certified La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance, Official Zoning Map for La Crosse County, and in the mapped farmland preservation areas. The La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan, La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance, and the La Crosse County Farmland Preservation Plan must be certified by DATCP for any landowner in La Crosse County to be eligible for Farmland Preservation Program Incentives.

8. Recognizing that land use plans should not be static documents, the 2008 La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan provides for an amendment process, which allows for consideration of amendments to the adopted plan on an annual basis. While the majority of amendments over time are anticipated to be property-specific, some amendments take a more comprehensive form. The incorporation of the Farmland Preservation Plan is the first such comprehensive amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. Following is a list of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan:

a. The Table of Contents section has been repealed and recreated as part of the 2012 FPP amendment in order to reflect the inclusion of the new Appendix "A - D".

b. The Future Land Use Map, depicting the County's recommended land use plan map as of the date of plan adoption in 2008, has been amended by the adoption of this FPP amendment. This Future Land Use Map, which is maintained and updated as a digital mapping layer on the County Land Records GIS Mapping site at <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us:81/GISMapping/>, has been updated to reflect the land use category designations that are set forth by the new FPP.

c. The FPP text amends the "Agricultural Preservation" land use category of the Comprehensive Plan to now become the new "Farmland Preservation" category and revises the definition of this category to be consistent with the definition and criteria established for farmland preservation areas, as specified in s. 31.04 (4)(a)2.

9. The remainder of the 2008 Plan document text remains unchanged. As amended, the Comprehensive Plan document incorporates La Crosse County's adopted Farmland Preservation Plan and meets the consistency benchmark required by statute.

(f) Plan Maintenance and Amendment.

1. Wis. Stat. s. 66.1001 requires that an adopted plan be reviewed and updated at least once every 10 years. However, to ensure that the plan remains a viable planning tool, it should be reviewed each 5 years and following any significant change in land use, land use policy or land use regulation in La Crosse County. Staff and committee members should review statistics of land use changes annually and try to predict any major shifts in land use policy on a local, regional, and state level and economic shifts in how land is utilized to prepare for potentially necessary plan amendment activities.

2. Annual Review.

a. The Zoning and Planning Department should review and monitor this plan and suggest amendments to the Planning Resources and Development Committee in November of every calendar year. As part of this review, staff should contact each of the participating municipalities to provide them with the opportunity to suggest changes. The primary focus during this review will be on Chapter 6 of the FPP which lists the goals, objectives, polices, and activities. In the analysis of demographic shifts that are occurring in La Crosse County, to determine whether amendments are needed, the following considerations should be reviewed:

- (i) General development trends.
- (ii) Farmland Conversion Rates.
- (iii) Farmland Preservation goals and objectives.
- (iv) Completed implementation activities and their Effectiveness.
- (v) Recommended strategies.
- (vi) Available resources for future projects.
- (vii) Public input.
- (viii) Input from other stakeholders.

b. Without periodic review and assessment, this plan has the potential to lose its relevance as conditions change, specific projects are implemented, and new priorities emerge.

3. History of Adoption and Amendment.

a. 1953 - Initial Adoption of Zoning in La Crosse County

- Original ordinance approved and adopted by the Towns:

Bangor	January 1,	1965
Barre	August 28,	1953
Burns	September 14,	1953
Campbell	September 15,	1953
Farmington	August 31,	1953
Greenfield	August 31,	1953
Hamilton	September 2,	1953
Holland	April 6,	1954
Medary	September 15,	1953
Onalaska	September 15,	1953
Shelby	September 16,	1953
Washington	September 2,	1953

b. 1980 - Farmland Preservation Plan and Zoning Ordinance

- Farmland Preservation Approved and Adopted by Towns:

Bangor	August 19,	1982
Barre	November 11,	1980
Burns	July 21,	1983
Farmington	November 12,	1980
Greenfield	November 12,	1980
Hamilton	November 18,	1982
Holland	September 19,	1985

Certified*

Onalaska	November 19,	1980
Shelby	November 17,	1980
Washington	November 12,	1980

*Towns of Campbell and Medary did not adopt Farmland Preservation Zoning.

(2) Background Conditions.

(a) Chapter Overview. This chapter provides a brief overview of La Crosse County to provide the general context for farmland preservation planning. Due to very recent efforts by La Crosse County, there is significant data regarding existing conditions in both the comprehensive plan, adopted in 2006, and the land and water resource management plan adopted in 2010. The information in this chapter is intended to supplement those sources or to update relevant data.

(b) Land Use. La Crosse County is made up of over 300,000 acres. While nearly 70% of the County remains in agriculture or natural cover, the County is home to a regional center and metropolitan area. It is therefore not surprising that the County includes some of the fastest growing communities in the state. A benefit of the County planning effort is to provide a context to consider local growth decisions in conjunction with neighboring communities.

Table 2.1: Existing Land Use Table

	Resid.	Comm.	Manuf.	Agriculture	Swamp and Waste	Forest	Total
LA CROSSE (C)	3,769	2,968	508	93	173	6	14,000
ONALASKA (C)	1,610	939	46	545	338	346	5,994
BANGOR (T)	459	17	146	10,035	292	7,812	22,429
BARRE (T)	544	141	0	6,756	53	3,545	13,211
BURNS (T)	511	39	23	16,267	780	11,453	31,070
CAMPBELL (T)	803	131	11	0	39	0	8,071
FARMINGTON (T)	680	23	117	24,028	1,439	18,712	48,584
GREENFIELD (T)	776	101	72	7,815	161	8,468	19,282
HAMILTON (T)	1,198	340	158	15,023	349	10,698	32,729
HOLLAND (T)	1,398	273	627	6,727	1,734	7,642	29,064
MEDARY (T)	716	184	373	1,540	992	2,494	7,492
ONALASKA (T)	2,138	182	108	9,542	305	6,149	28,975
SHELBY (T)	4,031	219	7	3,667	272	4,391	18,815
WASHINGTON (T)	297	20	0	12,877	214	8,002	23,141
BANGOR (T)	125	31	3	127	155	0	667
HOLMEN (V)	706	278	50	176	3	25	1,941
ROCKLAND (V)	111	4	36	55	0	0	357
WEST SALEM (V)	361	229	61	11	9	0	1,452
La Crosse County	20,233	6,119	2,346	115,284	7,308	89,743	307,274

SOURCE: MISSISSIPPI RIVER PLANNING COMMISSION, 2000

(c) Population. As of the census in 2010, there were 114,638 County residents, which represents a 7% increase over 1990 (Table 2-2).

Table 2-2. Population; La Crosse County and Civil Divisions; 1980 through 2025

La Crosse County Census Data - Population									
	1980 Pop.	1990 Pop.	2000 Pop.	2005 Pop.	2010 Pop.	% Change 2000- 2010	2015 Population Projections	2020	2025
La Crosse County	91,056	97,904	107,120	110,302	114,638	7%	115,538	118,246	122,291
Un-incorporated									
Bangor town	572	598	583	592	615	5%	603	610	623
Barre town	901	909	1,014	1,063	1,234	22%	1,148	1,191	1,248
Burns town	988	977	979	985	947	-3%	989	993	1,007
Campbell town	4,118	4,490	4,410	4,448	4,314	-2%	4,486	4,511	4,587
Farmington town	1,603	1,577	1,733	1,820	2,061	19%	1,975	2,052	2,153
Greenfield town	1,537	1,617	1,538	1,562	2,060	34%	1,596	1,614	1,651
Hamilton town	1,472	1,633	2,103	2,294	2,436	16%	2,646	2,821	3,028
Holland town	1,776	2,175	3,042	3,329	3,701	22%	3,867	4,134	4,447
Medary town	1,794	1,539	1,463	1,493	1,461	0%	1,538	1,562	1,604
Onalaska town	5,386	5,803	5,210	5,445	5,623	8%	5,860	6,071	6,349
Shelby town	5,620	5,002	4,687	4,676	4,715	1%	4,613	4,589	4,617
Washington town	611	598	738	772	558	-24%	831	861	901
Incorporated									
Bangor village	1,012	1,076	1,400	1,474	1,459	4%	1,606	1,672	1,757
Hölmén village	2,411	3,236	6,200	6,931	9,005	45%	8,287	8,958	9,729
Rockland village	383	509	625	669	594	-5%	750	790	839
West Salem village	3,276	3,611	4,738	5,076	4,799	1%	5,691	5,998	6,372
Onalaska city	9,249	11,414	14,839	15,955	17,736	20%	17,993	19,009	20,238
La Crosse city	48,347	51,140	51,818	51,718	51,320	-1%	51,059	50,810	51,141
Towns Subtotal	26378	26918	27500	28479	29725	8%	30152	31009	32215
Villages Subtotal	7,082	8,432	12,963	14,150	15,857	22%	16,334	17,418	18,697
Cities Subtotal	57,596	62,554	66,657	67,673	69,056	4%	69,052	69,819	71,379

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (counts), Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Intergovernmental Relations (estimate), East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (projections)

Notes: 1. Municipality located in La Crosse County and another county

(d) Land Use Patterns and Trends.

1. Map 2.1 and Table 2.1 show the existing land use patterns in 2000.

2. Existing Land Use Patterns. There are over 300,000 acres of land in La Crosse County. The following table and maps describe and depict these patterns. Countywide, agriculture and forest lands make up for 67% of the County's land area, with agriculture specifically making up just under 38% of the total. Residential lands make up approximately 7% of the County's acreage. A detailed set of existing land use acreages has also been prepared by the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse. These estimates were created through a different methodology and provide additional detail than those done by the Regional Planning Commission.

3. Land Use Density. Land use density is highest in areas closest to the urban areas as well as along the various lakeshores and some of the major road corridors. In addition, isolated pockets of higher density development are appearing in rural areas experiencing newer subdivision development. This is particularly evident in the Town of Onalaska and Hamilton. Lower density development on parcels more than 20 acres in size are typically found in agricultural areas and in or within environmentally sensitive areas.

4. Existing/Potential Land Use Conflicts. There are no known existing land use conflicts where La Crosse County has purview over the mitigation of conflict. Potentially, annexation by incorporated communities will have an impact on town land use in some areas. La Crosse County is currently working with several communities to develop boundary agreements to forecast annexations and prevent conflicts. The County continues to provide assistance on land use issues where appropriate.

(e) Development Guidelines.

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. If proposed development projects exceed the following 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. These projections are intended for 10 years from plan adoption.

Table 2.3: 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.

(f) Planned Urban Development.

1. According to the 2008 La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan, urban development is planned largely around existing urban centers and existing areas of dense development in order to preserve the existing urban and rural development patterns of the County. The County's development pattern has formed a sideways "T" which centers the leg of the "T" on the central corridor, east to west of the La Crosse River and Interstate 90. The top of the "T" forms along the Western Edge of the County north and south along the Black and Mississippi river Corridors and along the State Highway 157, Highway 35/53 corridor. The Plan also acknowledges the fiscal advantages of this urban development policy in efficient and economical use of existing infrastructure investment.

2. The plan also identifies urbanizing districts in the County based on the adjacencies to urbanized areas with transportation arterials and services.

3. Map 2.2 shows those areas slated for development.

(g) Intergovernmental Boundary Agreements.

1. Definition of Intergovernmental Boundary Agreement. An agreement between local communities created pursuant to Wis. Stat. sections 66.0307, 66.0301, or 66.0225, typically dealing with annexation, incorporation, consolidation, land use, revenue, service provision and other intergovernmental issues.

2. 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.

3. Numerous agreements are in place between municipalities in La Crosse County, which include resource and equipment sharing, shared services, County-wide emergency dispatch, County-wide household hazardous waste, share planning and economic development functions, sewer service area agreements, extra-territorial technical sub-division review, and etc. Most of these agreements are formal, but not created pursuant to this state statute. The 2 agreements that exist pursuant to this statute are:

a. The City of La Crosse and Town of Campbell are subject to a boundary agreement that controls annexations to the city.

b. The City and Town of Onalaska have a boundary agreement.

(3) Agricultural Context.

(a) Chapter Overview. As we complete each chapter of this Farmland Preservation Plan, we will continue to build a strong foundation for the decisions which will ultimately implement the plan. In making these decisions, it is important to look at agriculture in La Crosse County in an historic context. Historic farmland conversion trends, economic impacts, and perceptions of agriculture by landowners and other residents continue to shape the tools we use to preserve farmland. The effect of demographic shifts on the existing plan may dictate the need for any amendments.

(b) Agricultural Land. According to the 2007 census of agriculture, there were 845 farms in La Crosse County, compared to 868 in 2002, representing a decrease of 2.7%. The number of acres of farmland declined from 174,213 in 2002 to 165,368. This data translates into a 2.5% decline in the average farm size – from 200.7 acres in 2002 to 195.7 acres in 2007.

Table 5-1. Harvested Cropland by Farm Size: 2002 and 2007

Farm Size	2002		2007	
	Quantity	Acres	Quantity	Acres
1 to 9 acres	23	67	20	79
10 to 49 acres	86	1468	81	863
50 to 69 acres	28	(D)	29	1,003
70 to 99 acres	53	1,779	48	1,340
100 to 139 acres	62	2,772	56	2,829
140 to 179 acres	70	4,049	74	4,187
180 to 219 acres	46	4,606	40	3,578
220 to 259 acres	42	4,886	38	4,103
260 to 499 acres	117	20,384	123	21,492
500 to 999 acres	62	23,330	49	19,574
1,000 to 1,999 acres	12	10,540	9	7,302
2,000 acres or more	2	(D)	4	9,150
Total	603	177,831	571	75,500

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture; 2007 Census of Agriculture
 D = Withheld by source to avoid disclosing data for individual farms

Statistically, in the State of Wisconsin some recent observations include:

1. A sharp drop (-43%) in the number of acres being diverted from agriculture.
2. Value of land diverted fell sharply (-24%).
3. Value of agricultural land rose 12%.
4. Cash receipts for crops rose 34%.
5. Corn up 46%.
6. Soybeans up 25%.
7. Projected production increases in 2010.
8. 2011 La Crosse County only 36 acres were diverted in 2008.

Table 5-2. Farm Use: 2002 and 2007

Value of Sales	2002		2007	
	Acres	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Total
Cropland	95,439	54.8	87,654	53.0
Woodland	58,156	33.4	54,013	32.6
Per Permanent pasture	11,583	6.6	15,316	9.3
Far Farmstead, buildings, ponds, roads, etc.	9,035	5.2	8,385	5.1
Total	174,213	100	165,368	100

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture; 2007 Census of Agriculture

(c) Agricultural Operations

1. It becomes more important to refine the analysis of agricultural land uses in the County. This analysis should include not only the number, size and locations of farms in the County, but also the type of farm operations and their economic relationship to other farms, markets and farm infrastructure. This involves not only identifying production, whether conventional or specialty, but how the farms depend on feed operations and other supply sources, custom work, contracting, secondary processing stages and ultimate markets. Examination of broader trends in agricultural economics and agricultural land use at a regional, national, and international scale would also be a useful part of the planning discussion as these trends may impact the future nature, scope, location and focus of local agricultural production. Examples of trends might include farm consolidation, product type and processing chains, supply needs and sources, changes in ownership, median age of operators, and competition of other uses for farm acreage.

2. Economic Growth and Business Development

a. Identification and analysis of the economic generators in the County, including information on employment, wage rates and average per capita income by industry sector, can help provide a picture of economic conditions in the County. As a part of this analysis, the County will consider information about planned or potential areas for agricultural related business development, not just commercial uses in general. The County should always consider existing commercial and industrial areas to assess where and how to focus further development in order to best avoid farmland preservation areas, and cluster ag-related businesses nearer farmland.

b. It is also useful to consider off-farm employment and commuting patterns as these may contribute heavily to decisions of what type of farming is engaged in and are often a major source of farm family income, insurance, and retirement benefits. An inventory of trends in the number, composition, skill levels, seasonality, and wage levels of jobs in the regional labor market is also relevant to the discussion of maintaining farm operations and growing agriculturally related businesses.

c. The data in Tables 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5 illustrate the importance of the agricultural economy in La Crosse County. It is apparent that due to the large number of steep hills, wooded valleys, and river systems, that there is a smaller area for available to agricultural operations. La Crosse County is not typically in the top tier of agricultural production in the State of Wisconsin. This fact highlights the need to preserve the already limited areas of agricultural production for the economic benefit and additional environmental protection that these agricultural areas will provide, especially to help maintain the integrity of our land and water resources in La Crosse County.

Table 5-3. Taxes Generated by Agriculture

Tax Type	Amount
Sales Tax	\$15.7 Million
Property Tax	\$20.5 Million
Income Tax	\$2.4 Million
Other Tax	\$10.0 Million

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture

D = Withheld by source to avoid disclosing data for individual farms

Table 5-4. La Crosse County's Top Commodities

Commodity	Sales by Dollar Value, 2007
1. Milk	\$29.6 Million
2. Grains	\$15.6 Million
3. Cattle and Calves	\$8.7 Million
4. Hogs and Pigs	\$3.6 Million
5. Other Crops and Hay	\$0.95 Million

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture

Table 5-5. Operator Characteristics: 2007

Value of Sales	Quantity	Percent of Total
Principal operators by primary occupation		
Farming	418	49.4%
Other	427	50.5%
Principal operators by sex		
Male	762	90.2%
Female	83	9.8%
Average age of principal operator (years)	57.0	
All operators by race		
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	
Asian	8	0.6%
Black or African American	0	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	
White	1,297	99.4%
More than one race	0	

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture

(d)
Agricultural Economy.

1. How important is Agriculture to La Crosse County's Economy? Agriculture provides 4,062 jobs in La Crosse County, it accounts for \$1.4 Billion in business sales, it contributes \$257 Million in County income, and pays about \$49 Million in taxes. More and more County farmers sell directly to consumers. In all, 63 farms generate \$139,000 in direct-marketing sales. Farmers own and manage 165,368 acres, or 57% of the County's land.

2. Since agricultural land use within La Crosse County is often in close proximity to surface waters, steep slopes and other natural features and resources, it is important to both preserve the agricultural use of the land and to provide a buffer to preserve the natural areas they border. It will be important to continue to implement conservation compliance standards to ensure that agricultural land use is sensitive to these important natural resources. Farmers in La Crosse County must explore ways of doing more with less land. The best way to accomplish this is by adding value to their products, or collaborating with other operations to seek out economies of scale. Added value and direct marketing practices will continue to succeed in La

Crosse County because of the large urban population and proximity of the agricultural use land to these urban centers. This urban-rural link is important and will be further explored in Chapter 4. Agricultural land uses provide rural character in close proximity to urban centers and engages an urban population that seeks open space recreation and respects the landscape. This brings many sets of eyes and ears into the rural areas. These eyes and ears can become critics, or supporters, but as discussed earlier, they also bring added markets for agriculture. It becomes important that agriculture is preserved in a manner that is positive, publicly supported, and provides the commodities that are in demand locally. Agriculture Enterprise Areas would enhance the value added concept and the collaboration portions of this economic section. By creating important rural agri-business partnerships, the agriculture economy in La Crosse County has a better chance to flourish.

(e) Agricultural Infrastructure. Historically, well planned transportation routes have been the most important infrastructure for agriculture. La Crosse County has continued to repair, maintain, rebuild and construct excellent highways for commerce and agricultural transport. There continues to be a subsidence of other available infrastructure in the form of creameries, feed and seed mills and implement dealers because of the reduction of farm acres and farm numbers. It becomes a longer commute to find these businesses and processors on which the agriculture sector depends, and this downward trend will continue if farmland is not preserved in La Crosse County. This infrastructure will continually change and adapt as the markets and use of agricultural land continue to change. With the proliferation of custom operators, machinery is maintained and sold on a more regional basis. More farmers markets and local food sales have arisen as the trends toward sustainability continue. Of note, much of the mapped agricultural infrastructure is within the urbanized areas of La Crosse County. This important relationship between urban and rural land use must be acknowledged, supported and even further developed to continue to improve the economy for agriculture in La Crosse County. Please refer to Map 3.1 for a geographic view of the infrastructure in La Crosse County.

(f) Specialty Agriculture.

1. Diversity in agriculture can provide a community with added value in agribusiness with more choices for consumers, greater economic sustainability due to more resiliency to market products, and environmental fluctuations and growth potential due to diversification and differentiation in the market. The following are examples of specialty agriculture markets:

- a. Christmas tree farms;
- b. Pumpkins, gourds, etc;
- c. Ginseng;
- d. Mushrooms;
- e. Organics;
- f. Specialty grains;
- g. Tree nuts;
- h. Dried fruit products;
- i. Floriculture;
- j. Wildlife and fish farms;
- k. Specialty fruits and vegetables; and

I. Specialty meats and cheeses.

2. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) provides a Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program aiming to increase Wisconsin's competitiveness in global marketplace. According to the DATCP website, The Farm, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill) authorized the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide these grants to benefit the specialty crop industry.

(4) Local Food System.

(a) Chapter Overview.

1. Food systems are drawing the attention of planners and policy makers around the U.S. The traditional focus of planners on public resources has seldom focused on the private nature of food markets. However, the acknowledgement of the public health, economic and environmental effects of food systems is on the cutting edge of modern planning to create healthier and economically sustainable communities.

2. Consider the movement away from local markets in the past 100 years to giant conglomerates and the vertical integration of producers who ship food from long distances to a more centralized big box store. Questions emerge about transportation costs, environmental impacts, effects on vulnerable populations' financial independence and security of populations being able to provide for themselves.

3. This chapter will propose policy guidance on this important topic in promoting a stronger, more economically vital and self-reliant system of providing locally grown products for La Crosse County's population.

(b) Non-Farm Food Production.

1. The growing average age of the American farmer along with the consolidation of farms and the emergence of large commercial farms, raises questions about the future of locally available foods and the biodiversity of crops produced. Non-Farm food production provides valuable opportunities for communities to supplement food supplies and lower costs for the delivery and distribution of products. Local regulations, however, can create impediments to non-farm food production. Careful consideration of the public impacts of certain regulations is needed to address benefits and costs of public policy decisions.

2. The following is a list of non-farm food production ideas for communities along with considerations for supportive policies for implementation:

a. Gardens. Support local gardening with Master Gardener lectures, programs and training. Encourage home composting to reduce food wastes and disposal costs. Foster neighborhood interaction, the sharing of diverse, locally grown foods.

b. Bee Keeping. Work with local bee-keepers on the protection of bee keeping sites and opportunities for growth. Introduce local beekeepers to farm markets.

c. Poultry. Identify opportunities for land use regulations that support small scale poultry production. Hold public workshops to identify tolerances for adjacent land uses and conditions required for permitting.

d. Community Agriculture. Look for suburban locations for farmstead preservation where a co-op may exist, providing space for gardening and farm enthusiasts to interact and produce convenient produce stands.

e. Edible Landscapes. Thousands of dollars are spent each year on public open space landscaping and private landscaping in high employment areas. Fruit trees and other decorative, food producing plants can be used in the landscape with little maintenance. The evolution of new cultivars has provided a new opportunity for low maintenance or maintenance free plant types that offer food for the local population.

(c) Community Gardens.

1. Vacant, underutilized or temporarily undeveloped lands can offer great opportunities for community gardens. Synergistic land use relationships such as a corporate headquarters with a grove of fruit trees that offers produce to workers or the temporary donation of land on a medical or senior housing campus can create a win-win situation for partners.

2. There are many prospective user groups that can be engaged to create community gardens from local gardening or master gardener clubs to ethnic and culturally diverse groups to school programs and business interests such as a local seed supplier. New opportunities for community gardens can emerge from community workshops or lectures by locally successful organizers of existing gardens.

3. Beneficial community gardens can be all sizes and configurations from larger suburban plots to small square foot urban gardening.

Table 6-1. Community Gardens: 2011

Name	Municipality	Address
International Gardens	La Crosse	Front Street
Kane Street Gardens	La Crosse	Kane Street
Mayo Washburn Neighborhood Gardens	La Crosse	Division Street

(d) Farmers Market.

1. The number of farmers markets in the United States continues to grow, reports USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), reaching a total of 4,685 in August 2008. Local Farm Markets provide a great opportunity for local growers to converge and offer a greater diversity and quantity of products to the public. The public benefits from the social aspects of farm markets as a community event, often combined with local music, arts and instructive presentations.

2. As the popularity of farmers markets grow, attention must be given to the logistics of these markets to create rewarding environments for both the consumer and producer. Ideas such as limiting the number of green bean sellers can affect the overall diversity of the market, while allowing the seller to sell enough product for their mobilization of goods to pay off. Additionally, conveniences such as truck-farmer provisions, where producers can simply park and open their tailgate, takes the work out of setting up and taking down tables.

3. Lastly, Farm Markets can grow exponentially in popularity with effective programming and the integration of music, sales or coupon events, promotions and synergistic markets such as arts and crafts.

(e) Food Stores.

1. Definitions of Food Stores.

a. Convenience Store. A retail store that offers a limited range of foods often with non-food product lines.

b. Supermarket. A retail food store that offer a full range of foods.

c. Specialty food store. A retail food store that specializes in a single food category, including bakery, ethnic food, meat, produce, gourmet food, candy, and so on.

2. Local food stores can also contribute to local food systems by working with local as well as national producers and considering convenience to all segments of the population. The recent trends of big box food stores moving to suburban locations can leave poorer areas of metropolitan areas with fewer choices, and often higher priced and less nutritious choices.

3. Land use planning that encourages urban infill over suburban sprawl can keep commercial nodes backfilled when stores go dark, promoting dense compact development patterns that provide good centralized locations for food stores.

4. Additional models in food stores are emerging with smaller convenience sized prototypes in urban centers to the public market concept whereby centralized stores are offered an opportunity to lease smaller booth type configurations with other local food stores, offering the consumer an Asian-style dense market with a large variety of choices in both indoor and outdoor locations.

5. Retail Food Establishment License. A license from the state is required for establishments, permanent and mobile, to sell most processed food directly to consumers in a retail setting. This includes grocery stores, convenience stores, mobile units, knockdown stands, and pushcarts. This does not include restaurants.

6. The tables below will provide current information on Food related activities in La Crosse County:

7. Agriculture Related Fairs.

a. Holmen Korn Fest – 3rd Weekend in August, Halfway Creek Park, 300 W. Roberts St., Holmen, WI. Contact: Holmen American Legion at 608-527-4444.

b. June Dairy Days – 1st Weekend in June, 1st Weekend in June, Village Park, Corner of Hamilton & Mill Streets, West Salem, WI 54669. Contact: junedairydays@yahoo.com.

c. La Crosse County Interstate Fair – 3rd Week in July, Intersection of Hwy 16 and County Road M, West Salem, WI 54669.

8. Farmer's Markets

a. City of La Crosse:

(i) Bridgeview Plaza, Rose St.: 20-25 vendors, Wednesdays- 8 a.m.- 1 p.m.

(ii) Hmong Mutual Assistance, 1815 Ward Ave, Thursdays- 7 a.m.-4 p.m.

(iii) Cameron Park, King St. between 4th and 5th: 12-15 vendors, Fridays- 4 p.m. - dusk.

(iv) Village Shopping Center, 2418 State Rd, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

(v) County Parking Lot, between 3rd and 4th street: 40-50 vendors, Saturdays- 6 a.m. until items sold.

b. County of La Crosse.

vendors, Sundays, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

(i) Festival Foods Parking Lot, Onalaska, 30-40

7:00 p.m.

(ii) Festival Foods, Holmen, Wednesdays, 3 p.m. -

Wednesdays, 3 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

(iii) Jefferson and Mill Streets, West Salem,

c. In addition to these 8 public markets, there are an estimated 7 community supported agriculture farms serving the La Crosse Area in the 2010 season:

(i) Driftless Farm CSA, Stoddard, WI;

(ii) Harmony Valley Farm, Viroqua, WI;

(iii) Keewaydin Farms, Viola, WI;

(iv) Lynwood Farm CSA, Stoddard, WI;

(v) Old Oak Family Farm, Bangor, WI;

(vi) Ridgeland Harvest, Viroqua, WI; and,

(vii) Small Family CSA, La Farge, WI.

(f) Emergency Food Resources.

1. Definition of Emergency Food Resources.

a. Community Meal Center - a place where prepared meals are offered to the hungry on a regular basis and generally at no cost. Community meal centers are often operated by church groups or other local community organizations. Also known as "soup kitchens".

b. Food Bank - a nonprofit organization that collects food from a variety of sources and distributes it to food pantries, community meal centers, homeless shelters, and similar organizations that exist to feed low-income residents in the community. Food is generally donated to a food bank by for-profit growers, manufacturers, distributors and retailers who in the normal course of business have exceed food that they cannot sell.

c. Food Pantry - a place where food is offered to low-income residents for free or a low cost. Food pantries are often operated by church groups or other local community organizations.

2. According to a the American Planning Association's Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning, 2007, Hunger and Food Insecurity are prevalent in the United States. APA's Policy Guide references The US Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (2006) report that indicates in 2005, 11% of all US Households were "food insecure" because of a lack of sufficient food.

3. Centralization of food producers, transport costs and convenience in local markets may exacerbate the problem, making communities more and more reliant on outside sources.

4. In order to address this growing threat to local sustainability and self-sufficiency, consideration may be given to the realm of opportunities listed in this chapter for local food production, public education on topics such as food preservation, canning techniques and local resources such as community gardens.

5. Assessing a region's local food needs during a crisis such as a major natural disaster, terrorist attack or disease can assist planners and policy makers in understanding what emergency food resources may be needed in case of a disaster, but may also create less reliance on outside food sources through the implementation of various local food systems planning objectives.

6. Emergency Food Resources.

a. A Place of Grace Catholic Worker House – 919 Hood Street, La Crosse, 608-781-6224.

b. Community Garden – corner of Kane Street and St. Cloud Street, La Crosse, 608-386-3319, <http://www.lacrossehtf.org>.

c. First Evangelical Free Church Food Pantry – 1950 State Road 35, Onalaska, 608-782-6022.

d. Onalaska Emergency Food Basket – 735 Sand Lake Road, Onalaska, 608-783-7722.

e. Salvation Army – 223 8th Street North, La Crosse, 608-782-6126, <http://www.salvationarmylacrosse.org>.

f. WAFER Emergency Food Shelter – 403 Causeway Boulevard, La Crosse, 608-782-6003, <http://waferlacrosse.org>.

g. West Salem Area Community Care & Share Pantry – 359 North Leonard Street, West Salem, 608-786-1142.

h. Come for Supper – Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 612 Division Street, La Crosse, 608-782-3468.

i. Monday's Meals – St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 1022 Caledonia Street, La Crosse, 608-782-6421.

j. Bethany Lutheran Home Delivered Meals – 1315 Cass Street, La Crosse, 608-796-1092, <http://www.bethanylutheranhomes.org>.

(g) Implementation and Policy Outcomes for Local Unites of Government.

1. A variety of implementation tools related to food systems planning are available to local units of government for consideration. Typical implementation tools

include zoning ordinances, master planning, promotion and marketing, public-private partnerships and collaborative agreements. Zoning tools may include:

- a. Flexible zoning districts such as Planned Unit Developments or Conservation Developments allowing urban agriculture or home based business.
- b. Conditional uses for a variety of agricultural uses.
- c. Permitted temporary uses for produce stands or farm markets.

2. Promotion and marketing may be subsidized by local units of government that wish to promote buy local programs or local food based businesses or events supporting local agriculture.

3. Public private partnerships may involve leveraging public assets such as land or public parking lots for events such as farmers markets, truck farmer parking or community gardens. Municipalities can offer public land for various agricultural uses in exchange for private maintenance of public spaces or lease revenue. Other collaborative agreements may invite local producers to use community facilities for winter events or the sharing of public equipment in the maintenance of community gardens.

(5) Farmland Protection Tools.

(a) Chapter Overview.

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

2. The tools are grouped into broad categories for organizational purposes. The last section of this chapter presents a summary of those tools that the towns and the County can use to help protect farmland. Benefits and limitations are described along with funding requirements; availability and status of current implementation.

(b) Educational Tools.

1. Options Review for Developers. The County could request (or require) property owners who wish to urbanize their property to meet with government institutions or non-government (conservation) organizations to discuss farmland and open space preservation alternatives. This may require additional government resources to manage such as design consultants, design review committees or a landscape architect who can advise property owners on land development scenarios.

2. Educational Workshops. University Extension Agents, conservation organization representatives, experienced land owners, tax advisors and others can be invited to give presentations to local land owners in order to educate local officials and interested land owners. UW Extension can also be a resource for statewide 'webinar' events that offer statewide sharing of information and question and answer sessions at very reasonable costs.

(c) Financing Tools.

1. Use Value Assessment.

a. In 1974 the Wisconsin Legislature amended the Rule of Uniform Taxation (Article VIII, Section 1) in the Wisconsin Constitution to permit the preferential treatment of agricultural land. The 1995-1997 Budget Act changed the standard for assessing

agricultural land in Wisconsin from market value to use value. The goal of this legislation, known as "use value assessment", was to protect Wisconsin's farm economy and curb urban sprawl by assessing farmland based upon its agricultural productivity, rather than its potential for development. Specifically, the value of agricultural land for assessment purposes was changed from market value to use value.

b. In a use value assessment system, the use of the land is the most important factor in determining its assessed value. Use value in Wisconsin is specific to land only. The use value legislation passed in 1995 requires that the assessed value of farmland be based on the income that could be generated from its rental for agricultural use. Income and rental from farming are a function of agricultural capability. Because any land could theoretically be used for agricultural purposes, statutes and administrative rules limit the benefit of use value assessment to only those lands that qualify as "land devoted primarily to agricultural use." The implementation of use-value assessment in Wisconsin has helped farmers maintain lower property taxes on their agricultural land.

2. Managed Forest Law.

a. Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law promotes sustainable forestry practices on private property by providing significant tax savings to property owners. Parcels with at least 10 acres of forestland used for wood products are eligible.

b. The goal of the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program is to encourage long-term sound forest management. MFL is a tax incentive program for industrial and non-industrial private woodland owners who manage their woodlands for forest products while also managing for water quality protection, wildlife habitat, and public recreation. In return for following an approved management plan, property taxes are set at a lower rate than normal.

(d) Planning Tools.

1. Comprehensive Plans.

a. Comprehensive Planning is an essential method of defining a long range, citizen driven vision for land use planning. Although the planning process is involved and can take a year or more to complete, depending on the size of the jurisdiction, a comprehensive, citizen driven plan that articulates a vision and the objectives required to implement the vision can be a very effective tool in shaping local land use policy and regulation. In addition, comprehensive plans can serve to assure granting agencies, conservation organizations and other potential partners in a publicly supported vision, resulting in a greater likelihood of participation by potential partners in farmland preservation. Comprehensive plans can also provide support to local decision making bodies when difficult land use decisions need to be made.

b. Under Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, Wis. Stat. s. 66.1001, 9 elements must be included in a comprehensive plan: (issues and opportunities; housing; economic development; transportation; utilities and community facilities; agriculture, natural and cultural resources; land use; intergovernmental cooperation; and implementation. These 9 elements offer an organized method of comprehensively addressing and analyzing farmland preservation impacts on the community.

c. The State of Wisconsin Department of Administration commissioned the creation of element guides after the Comprehensive Planning legislation was passed in order to provide guidance on each section of the comprehensive plan. The "Guide to Planning for Agriculture in Wisconsin, 2002" is available online at the Department of Administration's website: http://www.doa.state.wi.us/dir/documents/ag_guide.pdf. This element guide provides excellent guidance on farmland preservation inventory techniques and implementation strategies.

d. The land use element of a comprehensive plan typically includes an inventory of the planning area's resources. Modern Geographic Information Systems (G.I.S.) provide a valuable tool for analyzing land information data in layers to best understand where valuable agricultural resources exist.

e. Typically, the implementation element of a comprehensive plan will offer short, medium and long range objectives and an action plan to accomplish each objective, which can articulate the tools needed by community officials to accomplish the objective. This section is particularly helpful in setting annual priorities for the community and a quick reference for officials to understand the tools available to accomplish planning objectives.

2. Sewer Service Plans.

a. Wisconsin Administrative Code, NR 121 establishes sewer service area (SSA) planning in order to provide structure to wastewater treatment for both individual communities and communities sharing wastewater treatment facilities. The WDNR is responsible for working with local agencies to develop Sewer Service Area plans that guide publicly sewer growth to protect water quality.

b. Sewer service area planning helps protect communities from adverse water quality impacts by anticipating growth patterns in the planning area and making recommendations on growth patterns that best serve water quality goals. A sewer service area plan identifies land most suitable for new development and land use planning options that can mitigate adverse water quality impacts on the community. Plans typically identify environmentally sensitive areas where development would have an adverse impact upon water quality that may be considered for farmland preservation initiatives. Geographic information systems can be a useful tool in analyzing layers of geographic data that can serve both farmland preservation initiatives and water quality preservation goals.

(e) Regulatory Tools.

1. Definitions.

a. Use Value Assessment. The assessment of farmland based on agricultural production rather than on the potential for development.

b. Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). The transmission of a parcel's bundle of development rights to another parcel slated for development in order to preserve an intended use such as agriculture on the transferring parcel.

c. Conservation Easement. A legal restriction recorded on a parcel intended to preserve the parcel from certain levels of development.

d. Urban Growth Boundary. A regional boundary placed to control urban sprawl and mandate certain levels of development density in and out of the boundary.

e. Conservation Subdivision. Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" Law defines a conservation subdivision as "a housing development in a rural setting characterized by compact lots and common open space, where the natural features of the land are maintained to the greatest extent possible".

2. Urban Growth Boundaries.

a. According to the Farmland Preservation Center, Wisconsin has seen the conversion of over 500,000 acres of agricultural land to urbanization since 1982 prompting debate over whether or not regulatory control over urban sprawl is necessary to protect prime agricultural lands around urban centers.

b. Urban growth boundaries are defined as a regional regulatory boundary that is set in place in an attempt to control urban sprawl and mandate certain land use densities in and out of the boundary. Urban growth boundaries are a planning tool that can serve to promote urbanization while protecting valuable agricultural assets in a region.

c. Arguments for urban growth boundaries cite the importance of promoting urban infill, utilizing existing infrastructure investment to its highest and best use and discouraging costly sprawl and protecting the rural aesthetic. Cons include the potential for higher real estate prices within the urban area and the removal of market options for land owners outside the boundary.

d. Urban growth boundaries must be considered carefully due to these factors and may be considered along with other tools such as the purchase of development rights (PDR) or conservation easements.

e. Urban growth boundaries are commonplace around the world from the "greenbelt" cities of Europe and Canada to Scandinavian countries which have a more abrupt transition from urban to rural land use patterns.

3. Infill Development and Increased Densities in Urban Areas.

a. Local units of government may use density bonuses as part of their development review and/or subdivision approval process. This approach assumes that if specified criteria are met, then a proposed development would be approved with more use of a site (such as more dwelling units per acre) than would otherwise be permitted by the community. That is, greater development density would be allowed if certain conditions are met. These "density bonuses" are a form of incentive that a community can offer to a developer who does the kind of development that a community seeks. Thus, a local government can legally and equitably say to each developer: if you do what we would like in your development, then you can increase the amount of development and thereby pay for more of the improvements we request.

b. Density bonuses may be used to achieve a wide array of community objectives, such as preservation of agriculture land, open space, and view sheds, and conservation of wetlands, water bodies, forests, meadows and other natural features that the community values. A list of density bonus criteria is not a freestanding document, but would need to be incorporated into a community's subdivision, zoning, or other development review regulations.

(i) Allows for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas while providing development to occur on the property.

(ii) Does not impose any direct costs on landowners and developers.

(iii) Neighbors may oppose due to concerns of increased density of development.

(iv) May not be mandatory tool; thus there is little assurance that desired project designs will be implemented by developers.

(v) Can be difficult for local officials to enforce unless bonus criteria are clearly spelled out in an ordinance or policy document.

4. Traditional Agricultural Zoning.

a. Agricultural protection zoning designates agriculture as the preferred primary land use. Its defining characteristic is the extent to which it permits new non-agricultural development. It keeps agricultural land contiguous, maintains a sense of rural character, and prevents large-scale residential developments whose residents may find agricultural activities to be a nuisance. It usually establishes a large minimum requirement for parcel sizes, usually around 35 acres. This type of zoning, however, does not permanently preserve agricultural land and does not protect it from annexation. Its characteristics include:

- (i) Helps prevent agricultural land from becoming fragmented by residential development.
- (ii) Clearly identifies agriculture as primary land use.
- (iii) Easily implemented by municipalities.
- (iv) Able to protect large areas of agricultural land.
- (v) Does not permanently preserve agricultural land.
- (vi) Does not protect agricultural land from annexation.

b. Large lot zoning, also known as low-density residential zoning, is a zoning technique creating lot sizes 40 acres or more. The perceived effectiveness of large lot zoning is based on the theory that limiting development density will preserve the open space and agricultural character of an area. The premise of large lot zoning is to select a minimum lot size that is large enough to prevent fragmentation of agriculture and to discourage non-farm homebuyers from purchasing land to build on in the country. Lot sizes ranging from 3 to 10 acre-lots have proven ineffective in preventing non-farm homebuyers from purchasing agricultural land for residential development. In areas where farmland preservation is particularly important to the community, individual lot sizes of 40 to 160 acres may be applicable. Minimum lot sizes in this range may be utilized by niche agricultural industries such as gardening and greenhouses.

c. Large lot zoning, however, is generally not considered to be an effective farmland preservation tool since low density development patterns create parcel sizes which are "too big to mow, but too little to plow". In areas of marginal farming production, this technique can have a detrimental effect by requiring large lots for individual homes and taking large parcels out of production for that purpose. This technique may be effective in maintaining rural character, but not farmland. Maintenance of rural character is enhanced if low residential densities are combined with conservation subdivision design in communities that wish to accommodate residential development.

5. Conservation Subdivision Design.

a. Conservation or cluster development is a development pattern for residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional uses, or a combination of these uses, in which buildings are grouped together rather than evenly spread over the land as in a conventional development. The intent of conservation development is to concentrate structures in those areas most suitable for building while preserving natural or cultural features residential conservation subdivisions cluster houses on smaller parcels of land while additional land that would have been allocated to individual lots is preserved as open space.

b. Conservation developments can keep land available for agricultural use, but generally the land is kept as open space. In a typical conservation subdivision, each homeowner has access to all of the open space areas, which may be permanently preserved by a conservation easement. To provide maximum protection of subdivision open space, the conservation easement should be assigned to organizations such as a homeowner's association, a government agency, or a land trust. This tool can achieve a variety of comprehensive planning objectives such as reducing the visual impacts of development, preserving rural character, natural features, environmentally sensitive lands, permanent open space or agricultural land, creating opportunities for nonpublic ownership of open space, and increasing the efficiency of infrastructure development.

c. Figure 1 illustrates how conservation/cluster zoning can accommodate development and conserve natural/open spaces. Although not commonly done in Southeastern Wisconsin to date, conservation subdivisions can also reserve areas for farming within the subdivision as shown in Figure 2.

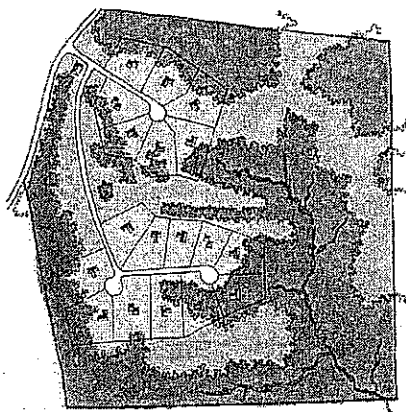


Figure 1. Conservation Sub-Division Design
Density preserves open space

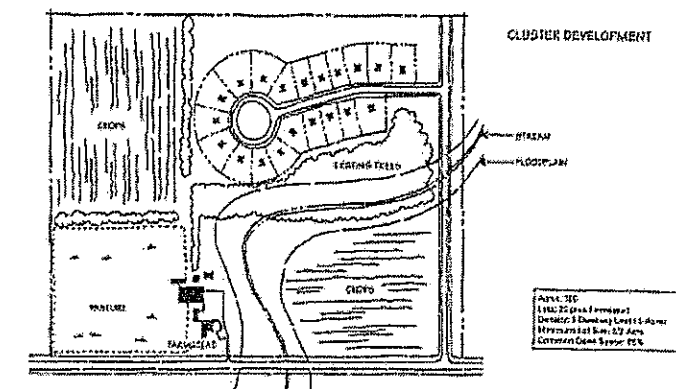


Figure 2. Conservation Sub-Division Design
Using higher density to preserve surrounding cropland.

d. It is important that when implementing a conservation/cluster ordinance that a community incorporates design principles for rural character preservation such as preserving open space adjacent to existing perimeter roadways, clustering houses, separating cluster groups and providing open space adjacent to each lot. If design principles are not taken into account, developments may look more like a conventional subdivision layout and will not likely achieve the goal of preserving rural character.

e. The Town of Caledonia in Racine County provides a good example of a conservation subdivision ordinance (See Appendix B for Town of Caledonia ordinance). Conservation subdivisions can also be accommodated through a local zoning ordinance.

f. Benefits.

- (i) Helps maintain a rural character of an area.
- (ii) Provides permanent open space protection for a community.
- (iii) Protects best natural resources of an area.
- (iv) Developers may experience greater profits by selling parcels next to open space.

(v) Reduces impact of development on watersheds.

(vi) Less expensive to provide municipal public services to development depending on how clustering can be accomplished.

g. Limitations.

(i) Maintenance costs of created open space.

(ii) Limited accessibility to low-income households.

(iii) Protected land is typically owned by homeowners association – little to no public access.

(iv) Improper implementation of tool may create conventional subdivisions.

(v) Minimum lot sizes may not be small enough to offset costs of land preservation.

(vi) Limits, but does not stop residential development in agricultural areas.

6. State-Certified Farmland Zoning.

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

i. Agricultural uses.

ii. Accessory uses.

iii. Agriculture-related uses.

iv. Nonfarm residences constructed in a rural residential cluster.

v. Undeveloped natural resource and open space areas.

vi. A transportation, utility, communication, or other use.

vii. Other uses identified by the department by rule.

b. Farmland Preservation Areas. As part of certified Zoning, there are 2 Farmland Preservation Areas mapped in La Crosse County. These mapped "Tiers" are administered using program incentives, but also, specially certified County Zoning Ordinances. The following is a description of the Tiers:

i. Farmland Preservation Area Tier I. Land Uses in Tier 1 include All agricultural uses, including farmsteads, agri-business, agricultural buildings, primary residences, limited additional residential uses, wetlands, open water, open space and all other areas not planned for any type of development other than agriculture and agri-business. This area was delineated using the criteria adopted by the Farmland Preservation Steering Committee. All available farmland preservation program incentives, including income tax credits, should be made available on a voluntary basis to landowners within Tier I areas.

ii. Farmland Preservation Area Tier II. Land Uses within Tier II include all of the land uses as in the Tier I area. The only exception is that the vacant land in the Tier II category has been identified by the County Future Land Use Map as planned for future non-agricultural development. This development, however, is not projected to occur within the next 15-years. Therefore, these Tier II areas can benefit from short term farmland preservation program incentives. The short term incentives would include state approved tax credits, agricultural enterprise areas, and Farmland Preservation Zoning. They would not include Purchase of Development Rights. These Tier II areas must also remain within a certified farmland preservation zoning district while they receive program incentives. Periodically, when the County Farmland Preservation Plan is updated, portions of this Tier II area must be remapped, based on the 15-year forecasted land use demand. Only short term farmland preservation program incentives should be made available on a voluntary basis to landowners within this Tier II area.

7. Transfer of Development Rights.

a. The County could establish a program that allows individuals to shift a "bundle" of development rights from a parcel in a defined "sending" area to a parcel in a defined "receiving" area, an area designated as appropriate for development. This allows a community to preserve natural features and agricultural land, while at the same time, helps it to concentrate development around existing population centers and infrastructure. The process is managed through dual zoning that provides property owners a choice whether or not to participate. Owners who sell development rights are properly compensated without having to endure complications of actually developing the site. They can also continue to generate income from agricultural, forestry, or other natural land uses. It is noted that because of this complexity, TDR's require additional government resources to manage and are only feasible in areas where there is pressure for high density urban development.

b. The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a tool that establishes areas within a community, called zones, that define areas for preservation (sending zones), and areas for more growth (receiving zones). Sending zones can be areas of agricultural land, open space, historic properties or any other properties that are important to the community.

c. Receiving zones are areas that the community has designated as appropriate for development. Often these areas are selected because they are located close to existing development, jobs, shopping, schools, transportation, infrastructure and other urban services.

d. In a traditional TDR program, sending area properties are rezoned to a form of dual zoning that gives the property owners a choice. The owners can choose not to participate in the TDR program and instead use and develop their land as allowed under the baseline zoning. Alternatively, they can voluntarily elect to use the TDR option. Under the TDR option, the sending site owner enters into a deed restriction that spells out the amount of future development and the types of land use activities that can occur on the property. When that deed restriction is recorded, the sending site owner is able to sell a commodity created by the community's TDR ordinance called a transferable development right or a "TDR". By selling their TDR's, sending site owners often are fully compensated for the development potential of their property without having to endure the expense and uncertainty of actually trying to develop it. Also, when the sending sites have income-producing potential from non-urban uses, such as

farming or forestry, the owners can continue to receive that income. A traditional TDR ordinance creates a form of dual zoning for receiving areas as well. Developers can elect not to use the TDR option provided under this dual zoning. Under the baseline option, they do not have to acquire TDR's, but they also are limited to a lower, less-profitable level of development. Under the TDR option, developers buy and retire a specified number of TDR's in order to achieve a higher, more-profitable level of development. The price of TDR's is typically freely negotiated between willing buyers and sellers. The TDR ordinance can influence the price through the number of TDR's that the sending site owners are allowed to sell. When TDR's remain affordable, developers are able to achieve higher profits through the extra development allowed under the TDR option despite the additional cost of the TDR's.

- pressures.
 - (i) Permanently protects land from development
 - (ii) Landowner is paid to protect their land.
 - (iii) Local government can target locations effectively.
 - (iv) Low cost to local unit of government.
 - (v) Utilizes free market mechanisms.
 - (vi) Land remains in private ownership and on tax roll.
 - (vii) Can be complex to manage.
 - (viii) Receiving area must be willing to accept higher densities.
 - (ix) Difficult program to establish, especially in areas without county zoning.
 - (x) Program will not work in rural areas where there is little to no development pressure on the area to be preserved.
 - (xi) Limited to cities/villages/towns, no statutory authorization in Wisconsin for county-wide program.
 - (xii) May require cooperative agreements among several local governments to establish sending and receiving zones.

(f) Right-To-Farm Laws.

1. The County should be proactive in distributing information on policies that protect agricultural activities from overly restrictive land-use regulations. These state laws protect agricultural activities from threat of nuisance-based lawsuits. The County may consider requiring those selling property near farms to disclose information about these laws.

2. Right-to-farm laws are a state policy that states commercial agriculture is an important activity. The statutes help support the economic viability of farming by discouraging neighbors from filing lawsuits against agricultural operations. Twenty-three right-to-farm laws also prohibit local governments from enacting ordinances that would impose unreasonable restrictions on agriculture.

3. Wisconsin's "Right-to-Farm Law" (Wis. Stat. s. 823.08) was enacted in 1981 to protect farmers from lawsuits, or the threat of lawsuits, where a plaintiff alleges that a normal farming practice poses a nuisance. The law was designed to protect farm operations, which use good management practices from nuisance lawsuits that challenge acceptable farming practices and the ability of farmers to responsibly continue producing food and fiber. The "Right-to-Farm Law" was strengthened in 1995 to provide recourse for farmers to collect on expenses they incurred from frivolous nuisance lawsuits brought against their operations.

4. Local communities may supplement the protection provided by the State with their own, more protective ordinance. Local ordinances may require that buyers of land in agricultural areas be provided with an Agricultural Nuisance Notice. Such notices inform buyers of agricultural land that agriculture is the primary economic activity of the area and that the buyer may experience inconvenience or discomfort arising from accepted agricultural practices. In some cases, the notice may be recorded on the deeds to new homes. Such notices may help to ensure that people who purchase houses in agricultural areas will recognize, and be more tolerant of, the sometimes inconvenient impacts of agricultural activities.

(g) Voluntary Tools.

1. PACE Program.

a. As part of the 2009 Working Lands Initiative, the State of Wisconsin established the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) program to help fund the acquisition of farmland in the state to permanently protect it from development. Conservation easements are legally-binding (recorded on the property deed), voluntary agreements between a property owner and government institution that places restrictions on the use and development of that property. They are usually structured in perpetuity, but may be for a predefined term. Easements may also only include parts of property instead of the entire parcel. Property owners may benefit from tax incentives.

b. This program is a voluntary program, compensating landowners for their willingness to limit future non-farm development. The compensation is based on a professional appraisal, which determines the value of the easement. That appraised value is estimated as the difference between the value of the land for development, and its value for farming. This voluntary incentive program is primarily financed by a grant from the state of Wisconsin. A local agency, usually a local unit of government or a non-profit conservation organization, assists the landowner in applying for a grant award from the state. This award can be matched by a federal grant award, local grant dollars, or even the landowner. The local agency then uses these grant dollars to negotiate an offer to purchase the easement. A real estate transaction then occurs between the landowner and the local agency. This easement purchase is then recorded and placed on the deed of the property; the easement is to go with the deed in perpetuity. There are typically no stipulations for public access, hunting rights or other activities, which the landowner may consider to be invasive. Because this is a voluntary program, negotiated between 2 willing parties, the terms must be acceptable to both. More information can be found at <http://Workinglands@wisconsin.gov>.

c. Benefits of Purchasing Agricultural Conservations

Easements include:

- (i) Perpetual protection of farmland for agricultural production.
- (ii) Confidence by Ag landowners that conflicting development and land uses will not occur in the future.
- (iii) The agriculture economy is bolstered by an infusion of capital.

(iv) A landowner is compensated for the benefits the public receives in open space and rural character.

(v) Minimizes urban sprawl and increases urban density levels.

(vi) Increases the efficiency of delivery of government services.

(vii) Minimizes public investment in additional development driven infrastructure.

d. What are some criteria for delineation areas that qualify for PACE Grants?

(i) Productive, prime, or unique soils.

(ii) Farmland faced with development pressure.

(iii) Preserved farmland that will compliment and be part of a comprehensive plan.

(iv) Agricultural land that compliments other preservation efforts by creating a block of agricultural land.

(v) Agricultural land that utilizes other programs, which help keep the land in active production.

(vi) Agricultural land that has matching funds from other sources to assist in the easement purchase.

(vii) Land with important conservation features/natural resources.

2. Agricultural Enterprise Areas.

a. An agricultural enterprise area (AEA) is a significant prong of the 2009 Working Lands Initiation. By definition, an AEA is a contiguous land area devoted primarily to agricultural use and locally targeted for agricultural preservation and agribusiness development. In 2009 a pilot program was authorized to establish 15 AEAs in the state of no more than 200,000 acres. The pilot program is to run 2 years.

b. If successful, the state will allow up to 1,000,000 acres to be placed in AEAs statewide. If land is in an AEA, subject to a farmland preservation agreement, and meets eligibility and conservation requirements, the farmer can receive a tax credit of \$5 per acre. Land in an AEA is not required to be within a certified farmland preservation zoning district. However, if it is, the tax credit can go up to \$10 per acre. The designation of an AEA is voluntary and can be initiated by landowners by filing a petition with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Petitions filed with DATCP must meet minimum criteria, but additional evaluation criteria may be used to review competing petitions. As a minimum, the land subject of the petition must be identified as being in a farmland preservation area in the county's farmland preservation plan, be a contiguous land area, and primarily be used for agriculture. There must be a minimum of 5 separate landowners who sign the petition. Petitioners must also gain support from the local political sub-divisions, (towns and villages.) Once an AEA is accepted and established, the landowners will sign a farmland preservation agreement, in order to collect the tax credits, and continue to promote agricultural land use within the AEA. More information can be found at <http://Workinglands@wisconsin.gov>.

c. Purposes.

use.

- (i) The preservation of valuable agricultural land
- (ii) Promotion of agri-business.
- (iii) Cooperation between the AEA landowners.
- (iv) Additional tax credits to landowners to infuse

capital into the local agricultural economy.

3. Federal Programs.

a. The Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and rangeland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with State, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50% of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement.

b. To qualify, farmland must meet the following requirements:

- (i) Be part of a pending offer from a State, tribe, or local farmland protection program;
- (ii) Be privately owned;
- (iii) Have a conservation plan for highly erodible land;
- (iv) Be large enough to sustain agricultural production;
- (v) Be accessible to markets for what the land produces;
- (vi) Have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and,
- (vii) Have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production.

Depending on funding availability, proposals must be submitted by the eligible entities to the appropriate NRCS State Office during the application window. More information at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp.

4. Bargain Sales and Property Donations.

a. If there is a willing seller, a government institution or non-government (conservation) organization may consider permanent protection by purchasing full title to property, which includes the full "bundle of development rights" that come with it. The parties may also structure transaction as a "bargain sale", where the owner sells at a below-market price, and contributes the remaining value as a charitable gift, which the owner can claim as an income tax deduction. The buyer can also consider leasing land back to previous owner to

generate rent. Fee-simple purchase work best in time-sensitive situations or where there is a vision of community use for the land. The buyer should consider the increased costs of owning land and government institutions should note that a purchase may lower value of parcel, thereby reducing tax revenues. This loss may be offset, however, as it may increase the property values of adjoining parcels.

b. There may be instances where a property owner seeks to transfer his/her land title to a government institution or non-government (conservation) organization as a charitable gift (or to benefit from tax incentives). This donation may take place immediately, or be a reserved life estate, where the owner continues to own and live on property until death. The recipient should consider that more resources may be needed for continued operation and maintenance of the property.

(h) Summary of Tools Available for Town/County Implementation. Table 5.1 provides a summary of those tools that the towns and the County can use to protect farmland from development.

Table 5-1. Summary of Farmland Protection Tools Available for Town/County Implementation

Tool	Benefits	Limitations	Funding Requirements and Availability	Status of Current Implementation
"Options" Review for Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opportunity to incorporate farmland and open space preservation into a development project Voluntary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary nature Can result in sized Farmland Parcels may not be permitted by local regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no additional funding would be required if able to manage with existing staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently not a required step in the development review process
Sewer Service Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrains development from encroaching on agricultural and other natural lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not ensure long-term protection Only defines higher density development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current cost is an ongoing expense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already in practice
Urban Growth Boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear line between growth and preservation areas Promote efficient use of exist. infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> difficult to reach agreement boundaries Require additional regulations to implement Would need to amend comprehensive plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for amending comprehensive plans and implementation would be required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being done
Infill Development and Increased Densities in Urban Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient use of exist. infrastructure Does not impose any direct costs on property owners or developers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearby residents may oppose increased density Does not help to ensure preservation if density bonuses are not mandatory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aside from potentially revising local regulations, no additional funding would be required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some municipalities along with La Crosse County encourage infill in their comprehensive plans
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanently protects farmland Farmers get "development value" targets specific areas for protection Land remains on tax rolls and in private ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation can be complex and an ongoing commitment May be difficult to craft a countywide program including cities and villages Nearby residents may oppose increased density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost involved with revising local regulations Would likely require additional institutional resources to manage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being done – there are a few examples elsewhere in Wisconsin
Conservation Subdivision Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanently protects farmland Promotes more efficient use of new transportation and utility infrastructure May increase values of adjacent residential properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing maintenance obligations for homeowners association May be limited access to open space May limit home ownership opportunities for some households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aside from potentially revising local regulations, no additional funding would be required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a general requirement but authorized in the updated zoning ordinance
Traditional Zoning – Minimum Lot Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can slow the rate of fragmentation of larger agricultural parcels Institutionally feasible for local governments to implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May encourage low-density development Does not ensure permanent preservation May increase costs of infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional funding required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already in practice
State-Certified Farmland Zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners are eligible to receive state income tax benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not ensure permanent protection Conversion fee required if 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land development regulations would need to be revised to meet state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already in practice

	Allows non-farm land divisions	rezoning is approved by the jurisdiction	requirements and certification process	
PACE Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owner is eligible to receive income tax benefit Permanently protects farmland Can reduce future land-use conflicts Land remains in private ownership and on tax rolls Voluntary involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires two willing parties Negotiations may be complex A competitive process is used to only fund the top-rated applications – state funding is not guaranteed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petitioner needs to secure 50 percent of the cost of the easement cost from a participating entity such as a local or statewide land trust or a governmental jurisdiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a new state program already authorized and administered by La Crosse County
Designation as an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owner is eligible to receive income tax benefit Promotes agricultural businesses Voluntary involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not ensure permanent protection Difficult to find qualified and willing areas Agreement is for 15 years only funds the top-rated applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No governmental expenditure required other than the adoption of a resolution of County Board supporting the petitioner's application for designation as an AEA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being done

(6) Implementation.

(a) Chapter Overview. The farmland preservation 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.

1. Varied Growth Management Needs. Address the growth management and land use planning needs of urban, rural, and suburban regions in the County. For example, by increasing demand and density in the urban and suburban areas, the demand will be reduced in the rural areas, promoting the preservation of important farmland.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. Policies for Agricultural Transition Areas. Develop clear criteria to guide any changes in areas that are currently agricultural use, but planned for other uses after the 15 year window. As this is a 10-year plan, consider both short and long-term policy.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. Regional Economic Coordination. Identify strategies that promote cooperation in economic development efforts that promote the agricultural economy. Include local and county governments and all levels of educational institutions within and adjacent to La Crosse County.

8. Strategy for Transportation Options. Plan for a variety of viable transportation options that meet the projected needs of residents and businesses. This

transportation infrastructure should be designed with agriculture in mind, and not fragment viable agricultural operations.

9. Efficient and Effective Services. Maintain the efficiency and quality of County services while identifying areas for improvement.

10. Implementation. Identify feasible implementation tools that the County and local governments can utilize to implement the plan.

(b) LESA Analysis.

1. As a precursor to the farmland preservation planning effort, several members of the farmland preservation Committee served as a portion of a committee that formulated a LESA analysis for La Crosse County. The results of this analysis are listed below.

2. To utilize a LESA model to rank the quality of a parcel in La Crosse County as a "High Priority Working Land," for its preservation using the PACE program. Our Committee's Goal was set early as follows: "Designate high priority working lands for protection from non-agricultural development, through a Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) Program."

3. This LESA model has a map (Map 6.1) that should be easily accessible to all landowners to understand their rating. This map was generated based on hard criteria that were developed by the LESA committee. We would recommend that you utilize the following criteria that we as a committee have developed through consensus.

4. Nine LESA criteria for evaluating working lands for PACE:

- a. Soils - 30%
- b. Stewardship (Watershed Quality) - 15%
- c. Future Land Use Designation - 14%
- d. Proximity to Protected Working Lands - 10%
- e. Proximity to Developed Land - 10%
- f. Proximity to Protected or Important Open Space - 7%
- g. Irrigation Availability - 5%
- h. Distances to Urban Services - 5%
- i. Size of Base Farm Tract - 4%
- j. Total - 100%

5. We would also recommend that you appoint a Farmland Preservation Committee (FPC) to review applicants for this PACE program based on the above criteria, and a set of "soft" criteria which evaluates the applicants for PACE as they relate to each other (each applicant of that enrollment period). Even though we recommend a very public evaluation process with significant transparency of every decisions made, the LESA committee members were not convinced that just using the above 9 criteria would give this FPC the ability to make an accurate assessment of all applicants. The additional evaluation using the following soft criteria will allow the FPC to consider additional information. It is important that the hard criteria are considered the primary criteria, and would recommend that they be considered at least 80%

of the decision, and that the soft criteria be secondary, utilizing them for 20% of the scoring. We would also recommend that certain of the soft criteria be of greater importance and weight and others be of lesser importance. We would recommend that you consider the following "Soft Criteria" for the FPC's final evaluation process in combination with the above mentioned "Hard Criteria":

6. Potential Additional Criteria for Evaluation PACE Applicants:

- a. The personal commitment of the landowner to farmland preservation.
- b. The landowner's commitment to allow varying levels of public access to the site. This includes the educational, historic or cultural significance of the site.
- c. Conservation ethic and compliance of the landowner.
- d. Willingness to donate a portion of the value of the Conservation Easement.
- e. Value of farming practice (value added farming, organic, etc).
- f. Special circumstances (Conservation Easement may accomplish land use goals).
- g. The value of the site to the local economy, job creation, retention, etc.
- h. The landowner's final personal statement making a case as to why this site should receive the public's investment in the PACE program.

(c) Issues, Opportunities and Trends.

1. Throughout the planning process a range of issues and opportunities were identified and are described in this section. Most of these relate specifically to agriculture, while some relate to the state's farmland preservation program and its implementation. They are grouped together for organizational purposes.

a. Organic foods. In recent years, the demand for organic food has been steadily increasing. While some consumers have always been interested in eating a healthy diet, commercial food stores are now stocking and promoting a growing variety of organic foods.

b. Eat local. When you buy direct from local farmers, your dollars stay within your community, and strengthen the local economy. More than 90¢ of every dollar you spend goes to the farmer, thus preserving farming as a livelihood and farmland. This is important because as mergers in the food industry have increased, the portion of your food dollar paid to farmers has decreased. Vegetable farmers earn only 21¢ of your dollar; the other 79¢ goes to pay for marketing, distribution, and other costs.

c. Food as medicine. Increasingly, food is not only as necessary for sustenance, it is seen as vital for maintaining good health. (See inset box)

d. Distrust of state programs. Some farmers harbor a strong distrust of state programs and regulator controls. In order to overcome this and ensure participation, this plan will need to fully and transparently inform landowners of the programs components. Even then, some landowners will continue to be unwilling.

e. Conservation compliance – Under the Working Lands Program, farmers who claim a farmland preservation tax credit must comply with state soil and water conservation standards. Some farmers view conservation compliance as a cost prohibitive to implement nutrient management plans, a conservation plan and implementation of appropriate conservation practices. It will be important to utilize local staff, and cost share programs to include additional incentive for this level of compliance. Please refer to The La Crosse County Land and Water Resources Management Plan - 2011 for details on the administration of this important feature of Farmland Preservation in La Crosse County.

f. Incentives too low. It has become clear that many landowners feel the incentive to participate in these programs is not at a sustainable level. This will continue to be a difficult discussion, due to the current economic conditions and the resulting lack of political support for increased incentive levels.

g. Wait and see attitude. Some farmers indicated that they would wait to see how farmland preservation is implemented on the county level and how the state proceeds before they decide if they want to be “in” or “out” of a farmland preservation area. During the meetings, County staff and the consultant reiterated that getting in after the plan is adopted is not necessarily that easy. The mapped farmland preservation areas may need to be redrawn which would potentially affect the criteria used to define the farmland preservation areas in the first place.

h. Extraterritorial jurisdiction of cities and villages. Once a positive tool for planning development in Wisconsin, extra-territorial subdivision jurisdiction allows those incorporated municipalities adjacent to Wisconsin towns to have a signature and approval process for subdivisions proposed within those towns. This tool has now become a divisive argument creating animosity between towns and incorporated municipalities due to the political leveraging and animosity created by strong annexation legislation. The farmland preservation planning process should encourage additional boundary agreement discussions, the importance of mutual respect between municipalities, and the importance of continued farmland preservation, even in extra-territorial jurisdictions.

i. Local control. Throughout the preparation, review, and adoption of this plan, there was 1 common theme – retain local control and input. The County’s comprehensive plan was built on the direct input from the towns and the future land use maps prepared by the towns.

j. Declining numbers of farmers and farm workers. Since the industrial revolution in the United States, the proportion of those earning their livelihood from agriculture has been declining. In the past 40 years, the United States has lost 800,000 farmers and ranchers.

k. Aging of farm operators. Farmers are aging. From 2002 to 2007, the average age of a farmer increased from age 55 to 57. And the number of farmers aged 75 years or older increased by 20% over the same period, meanwhile, the number of operators under 25 years of age decreased by 30%.

l. Size of operations. As is true in many economic sectors, the size of farm operations in acres per operation has increased. Farm consolidation has been an ongoing trend. Expanded operations take advantage of economies of scale. While most operations have grown in size, there have been an increasing number of small operations who do not require a large land base. Those growing a specialty crop are prime examples.

m. Specialization. Farming operations in Wisconsin have historically been diversified. It was not uncommon for a farm to raise a variety of crops and animals. Increasingly the norm is to specialize in a particular area. For example, those in the dairy industry may specialize as a calving operation. Mega dairies and milk processing facilities have

also seen a strong increase over the past 10 years. See the grant below: The competitive Special Agricultural Facility Grant funding, allocated in the 2009-2011 budget, will provide \$3.1 million in support for a \$47.2 million expansion in Appleton that would increase milk processing capacity by 1.5 million pounds per day at Foremost Farms USA – a dairy cooperative headquartered in Wisconsin. Construction is expected to employ 60 to 70 workers for over a year, and the expanded capacity is expected to create 35 additional full-time jobs at the plant, which currently employs 91.

n. Commodity prices. In the past 2 years, cash receipts for crops statewide rose 34% with corn up 46% and soybeans up 24%. This has spurred a slow-down in acres being diverted from agriculture to development. In La Crosse County in 2008, there were only 36 acres diverted from agriculture. Statewide, the number of acres being diverted from agriculture decreased 43% and the value of agricultural land rose 12%. This is due to the slow economy in development and the economy of commodities finally catching up to modern values. However, we cannot expect this trend to continue and must use this short reprieve to put in place farmland preservation measures.

o. On-farm energy production. Production of energy from farm resources such as ethanol is making news, but another source of energy is sometimes forgotten. A company called USEMCO from Tomah, WI has developed an anaerobic digester to efficiently process electricity from manure generated at an average size dairy farm. The following grant was awarded to USEMCO in 2009: a \$200,000 project conducted by USEMCO in Tomah to develop and demonstrate an anaerobic digester that is cost effective for small farms. Wisconsin has nearly 13,000 dairy farms, with an average herd size of fewer than 100 cows. By bringing the economy of scale down for manure digesters, many more farms will have the ability to take a potential disposal cost and turn it into a source of homegrown, renewable energy.

p. International trading policies. Agricultural export opportunities are hindered by daunting MRL challenges due to confusing and burdensome import regulations on pesticide residue levels for U.S. ag exports. Agricultural trade operates in a global market and is subject to the capricious nature of governments, weather and evolving trade agreements. Economic development policies for agriculture in La Crosse County should explore the ever-changing landscape of commodity markets and offer insight in ways to take advantage of international trade.

q. Perceived decline in agriculture's role in economic structure of La Crosse County. There is a general perception that the agricultural sector is not important to the County's overall economic strategy. As the importance of other economic sectors have grown in scale and influence in the County and region, the role of the agricultural sector in the local economy has diminished.

r. Important Trends. All of the above indicate important trends in farming practices. Of utmost importance is to point out and plan for those trends that will assist in the future preservation of farming for our community. The trends that this Committee feels most important to recognize and utilize in our preservation practices include specialization, higher commodity prices and a reduction in the demand on conversion of agricultural lands, and an increase in the demand for locally grown organic products for human consumption. We will need to pay attention to the demographics of farm workers, and reduce the perception that farming is not important in our local economy. All of our efforts need to take a comprehensive approach to continue to improve the economic climate for farming and reduce the development pressure which will assist in limiting the number of acres converting from farmland into another form of development.

(d) Goals, Objectives, and Policies. Overall goal to acknowledge that the general physical characteristics of La Crosse County, being its topography and access to natural resources, has greatly influenced the patterns of social and economic development presently existing in La Crosse County. It is desirable to preserve our land and water based resources and to do so will preserve the quality of life in La Crosse County.

1. Additional Goals:

- a. Preserve the rural character of large areas of La Crosse County.
landowners to preserve their farms'.
contiguous tracts.
protect areas planned for agriculture.
 - (i) Utilize farmland preservation tools encouraging
 - (ii) Encourage landowners to cooperate to preserve
 - (iii) Utilize zoning and subdivision ordinances to
- b. Preserve a strong agricultural economy.
Local" programs.
agriculture.
areas.
 - (i) Promote educational tools to encourage "Buy
 - (ii) Provide incentives to promote value added
 - (iii) Maintain Use Value Assessment.
 - (iv) Promote home based businesses in agricultural
- c. Preserve a healthy natural environment.
assistance for conservation practices.
agricultural land adjacent to important resources.
practices and local food supply planning.
 - (i) Provide additional funding and technical
 - (ii) Promote the preservation of open space, and
 - (iii) Promote sustainable agriculture, organic
- d. Promote a strong balance of landowner rights and community benefit.
encouraged and utilized in drafting plans.
landowner's comments.
 - (i) Ensure that the public participation is
 - (ii) Promote open and transparent government.
 - (iii) Policy must be made while respecting the
- e. Foster effective, cooperative government units.
decisions.
 - (i) Include all levels of local government in
 - (ii) Respect the activities of local governments.

between government units.

(iii) Build open, honest and supportive relationships

(iv) Collaborate, cooperate and compromise.

f. Support agriculturally related businesses.

business.

(i) Promote Agricultural Enterprise Areas.

(ii) Educate the public on the benefits of local agri-

and revolving loan funds.

(iii) Support agri-business with technical assistance

discussions.

(iv) Include agriculture in economic development

g. Promote aesthetic beauty and bluffland preservation.

promote bluffland preservation.

(i) Support public/ private partnerships which

blufflands.

(ii) Promote an active recreational use of preserved

h. Respect local comprehensive plans and encourage development that is consistent with those Plans.

Comprehensive Plans are consistent.

(i) Ensure that the Farmland Preservation Plan and

(ii) Promote development with density bonuses and streamlined approval processes in areas planned for development.

(e) Designation of Farmland Preservation Areas.

1. Below are the adopted criteria for the designation of FPA's. These criteria, once adopted allowed the steering committee to draft an appropriate map of these areas. "The criteria were developed with assistance from similar criteria from a number of other counties in the state in a similar time frame of adopting farmland preservation plans. These criteria, however, are unique to La Crosse County, showing respect to public input activities, and the unique personality of the County itself.

2. Criteria for Delineating Farmland Preservation Areas. The Committee used the LESA Criteria as approved by the LESA committee and the Planning Resources and Development Committee of La Crosse County, and the above goals for farmland preservation as their basis for adopting the following 6 criteria listed below for mapping Farmland Preservation Areas:

a. Farmland Preservation Plan Criteria

(i) Productive agricultural soils (See Map 3.2)

(ii) Consistent With Future Land Use Plan (See Map

2.2)

(See Map 3.3)

(iii) Large contiguous Farmland Preservation Areas

(See Map 3.4)

(iv) Proximity to protected or important open space

(v) Consideration of landowner interests

(vi) Cooperative input from local municipalities

b. Upon determination of the above 6 criteria, it became evident that the Committee needed a method to evaluate the importance of each individual criteria, and utilize a prioritized decision making method for designating the Farmland Preservation Areas. We met several times to discuss this mapping process. In the end we settled on the process of utilizing maps, spreadsheets with data, staff expertise and further research. This process was by far the most time consuming and difficult process of completing this Farmland Preservation Plan. Once the map was completed, however, it was also the most rewarding process. Following is a brief description of the steps taken to designate the map.

(i) First, the Committee determined that it was important for the soils to be productive for successful farming. Therefore the Committee discussed removing areas that were of very poor soil types. Those soils that were found to be so poor that agricultural production was severely limited, however, were important for farmland preservation because they were typically rocky and steep. In the County's Future Land Use Map these soils were shown as important for open space are, therefore, also shown in the Farmland Preservation Areas map as Farmland Preservation Areas, because of their importance as open space. Since La Crosse County has a limited percentage of class 1 soils, the Committee felt that it was very important to preserve as many acres of class 1 soils as possible. At the same time, many of these soils are within very close proximity to developing municipalities. Therefore, we utilized the LESA analysis that was completed to determine proper locations for preservation of these class 1 soils. This balancing of criteria extended our debate, but produced a high quality plan.

(ii) Second, we looked at the Future Land Use Map to find areas that were not planned for development. These areas not planned for development became potential Tier 1, areas. Again, further separation will occur as we get to other criteria. We then determined where the areas resided that may be planned, in the longer term for development, and where they would not develop for at a minimum of 15 years. These areas quickly became potential Tier 2 areas as shown in the following paragraphs. The Committee removed those areas that were planned for development in the near future.

(iii) Third, the Committee felt it was important to preserve large blocks of farmland to promote a long term culture of farming and provide the proper infrastructure to ensure farming success. These areas are very evident on the plan maps. La Crosse County is developing in a T-shaped pattern. This pattern is due to public infrastructure and historic patterns of development. The T-shaped area of development then separates the remainder of the County into 3 large blocks of farmland preservation, north and east of the T, south and east of the T, and west of the T. These 3 large blocks of preserved land will assist in creating a "frame" effect of farmland and open space for production, but also the enjoyment of those residents of La Crosse County to dwell in the dense urban areas that make up the "T."

(iv) Fourth, we utilized our GIS mapping information to assist us in finding those areas of contiguous natural resource or open space that were in public control and contiguous to mapped Farmland Preservation Areas. These contiguous open space areas were added as Tier 1 Areas, and as stated above include some very poor soils.

(v) Fifth, the Committee felt it very important to show early success with the program, and so it felt that giving some weight to the criteria of landowner interest was important. It was very significant to the Committee that certain landowner

were past participants, and, therefore, very likely to continue the program in the future. We determined that some landowners, even if they did not currently have the appropriate zoning to participate in the farmland preservation program, would have a significant likelihood of participating in the future. These areas were assumed to be pursuing a future farmland preservation zoning district, and to minimize a significant amount of amendments to the farmland preservation plan over the next few years, the Committee decided to include these likely areas within the mapped Farmland Preservation Areas.

(vi) Sixth, the Committee discussed the mapped Farmland Preservation Areas with the local municipalities. These municipalities had opportunities at numerous public informational meetings, and through their representation on the Committee to provide input into the planning process. This collaborative relationship will be very important as we pursue farmland preservation activities into the future.

(vii) Finally, the Committee looked at the minimum standards in the Wisconsin State Statutes and determined if the areas that were delineated for a Farmland Preservation Area met with these minimum statutory standards. We utilized the following 2 tier approach to separate the Farmland Preservation Areas to clearly delineate the programs available, both at the local and state level, to assist in preserving the farmland. These mapped "Tiers" are administered by providing program incentives, and enforcing certified zoning ordinances. The Farmland Preservation Area Tiers are described on page 26.

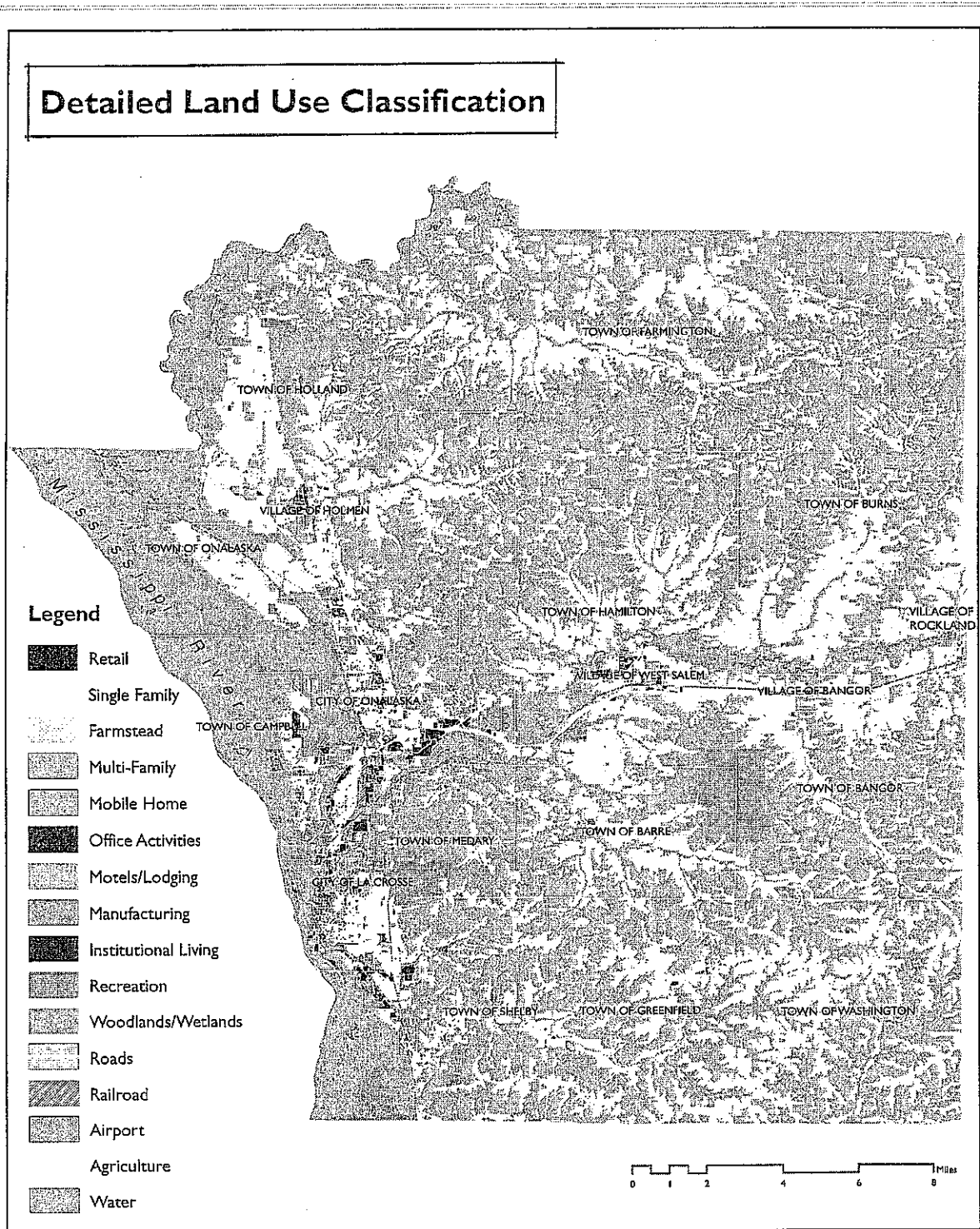
In Table 6-1 below are the activities specifically defined within this Farmland Preservation Plan to assist in the preservation of farmland at the local and statewide level in an easy to find and implement format.

Table 6-1 Action Plan

Action	Who is Responsible	Schedule
Certified Zoning Ordinance	County or Town Board	December 31, 2011
Certified Farmland Preservation Plan	County Board	December 31, 2011
Develop a PACE education program	County Land Conservation and Planning Staff	Complete
Assist in the development of Cooperative Boundary Agreements.	County, City, Village and Town Planning Staff	Ongoing
Update County Subdivision Code.	County Planning and Zoning Committee	2013
Develop Standards to review plan implementation progress.	County Staff	Annually starting in 2012
Develop Standards to judge consistency of land use decisions with adopted comp plan.	County Staff	2012
Local Farmland Planned Areas	Town and County Staff	2012
Local Zoning/ Sub-division and Incentive Programs	Town and County Staff	2012
Develop Standard Ag Enterprise Area Petition for General Landowner Use	County Staff	Complete
LESA Analysis for PACE applications and Rezoning requests	County Staff and Committees	Complete
Update Land and Water Resource Management Plan	County Staff and Committees	2012

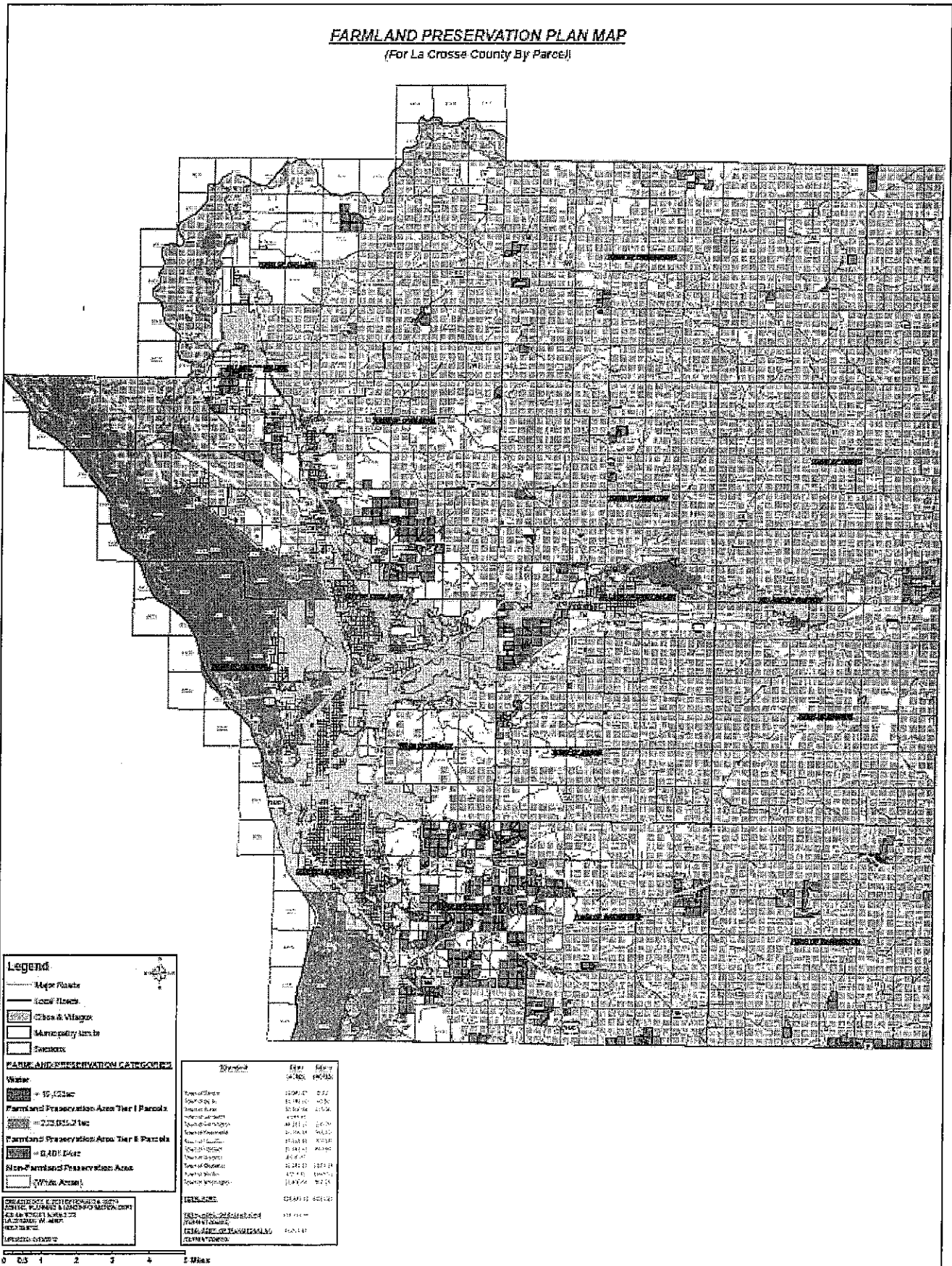
Appendix

Map 2.1



Map 2.2

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP
(For La Crosse County By Parcel)



Legend

- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Cities & Villages
- Municipality Boundaries
- Townships

FARMLAND PRESERVATION CATEGORIES

Water

- Water

Farmstead Preservation Area Tier I Parcels

- Farmstead Preservation Area Tier I Parcels

Farmstead Preservation Area Tier II Parcels

- Farmstead Preservation Area Tier II Parcels

Non-Farmstead Preservation Areas

- Non-Farmstead Preservation Areas

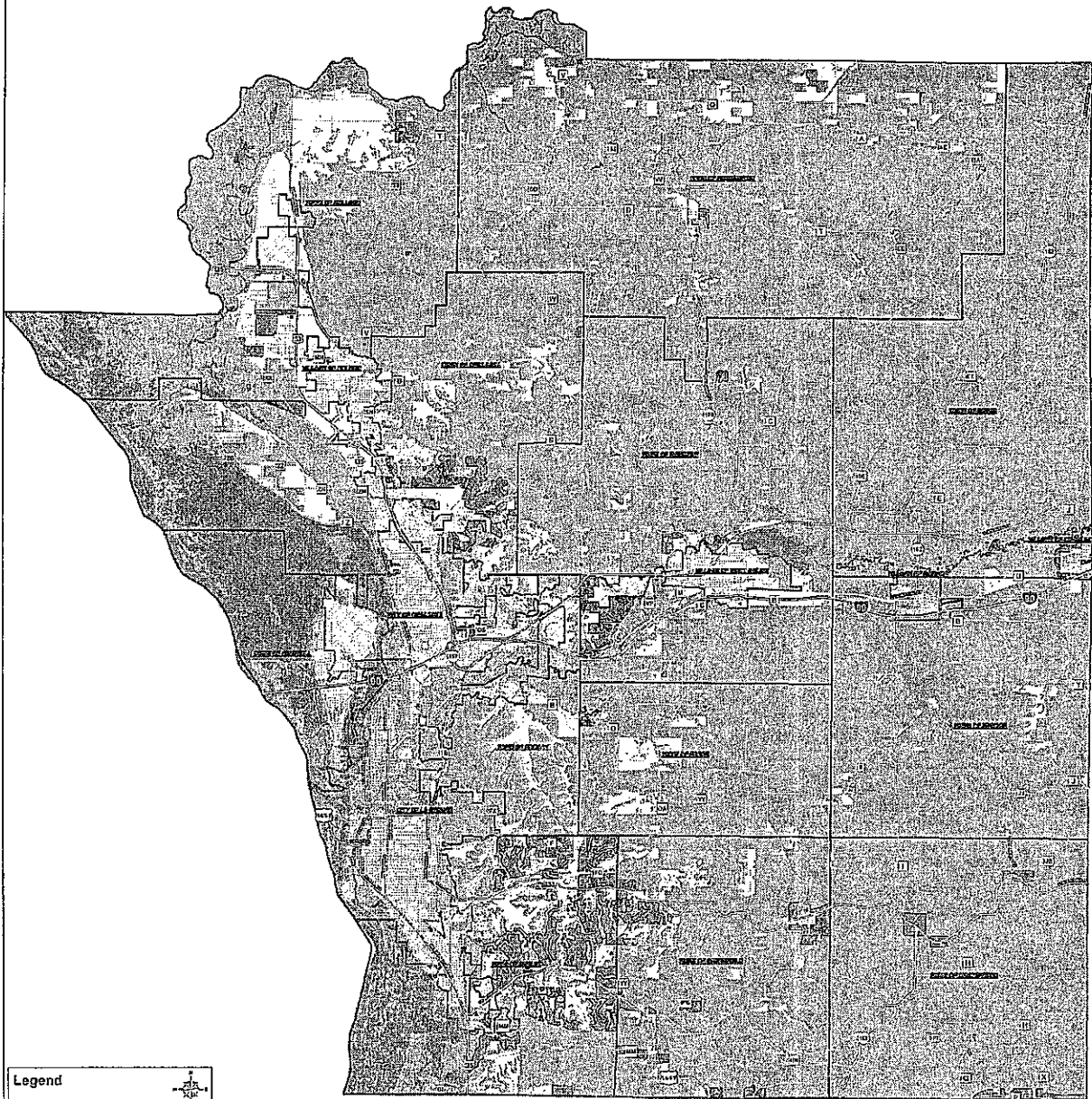
Other

- Other

Category	Acres	Acres of Land	Acres of Water
Water	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Farmstead Preservation Area Tier I Parcels	100,000	100,000	100,000
Farmstead Preservation Area Tier II Parcels	200,000	200,000	200,000
Non-Farmstead Preservation Areas	300,000	300,000	300,000
Other	400,000	400,000	400,000

Map 2.3

FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREAS



Legend

- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- ▭ Cities & Villages
- ▭ Municipality Limits

FARMLAND PRESERVATION CATEGORIES

Water
 [Symbol] = 19,190ac

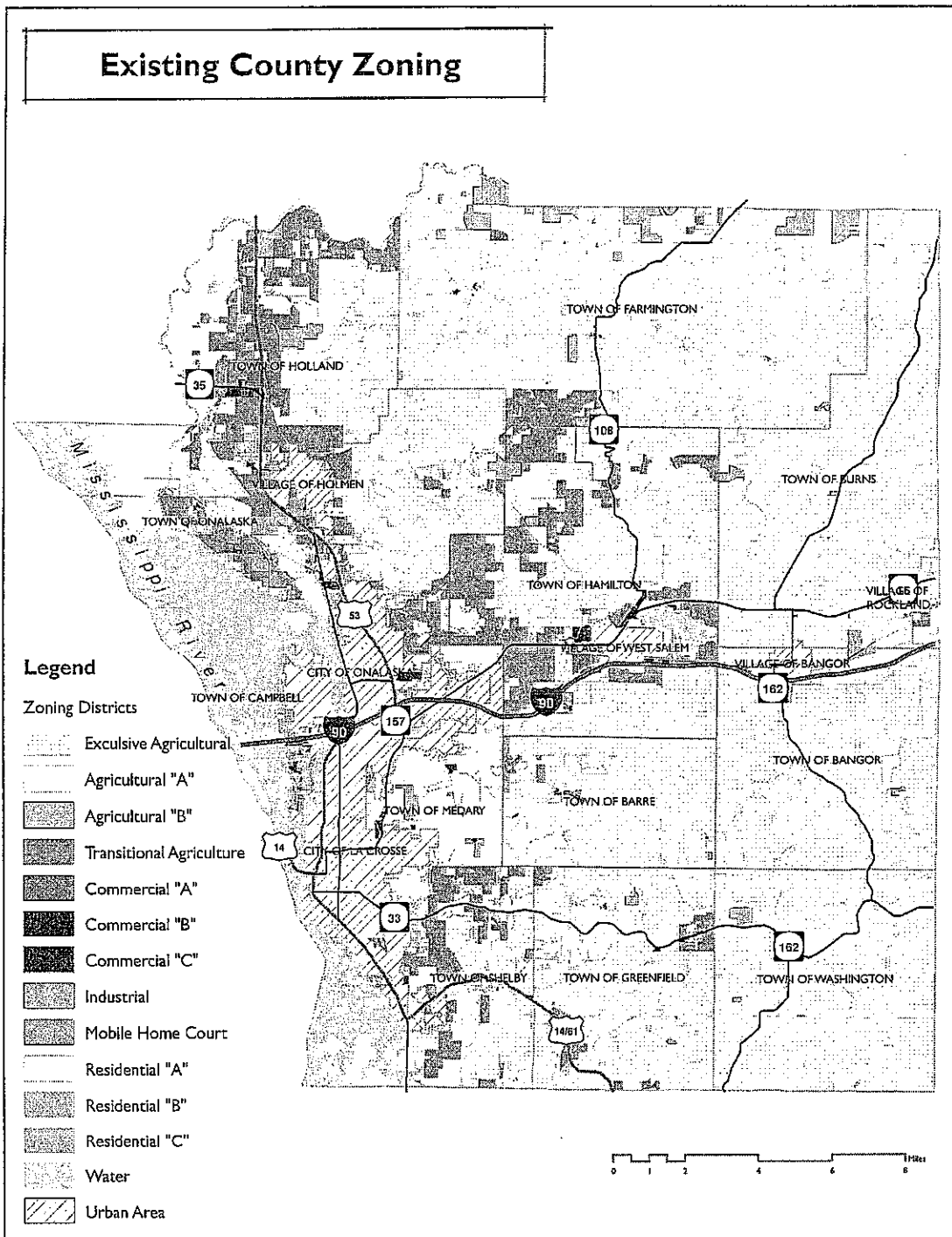
Farmland Preservation Area Tier I
 [Symbol] = 223,885.21ac

Farmland Preservation Area Tier II
 [Symbol] = 8,461.64ac

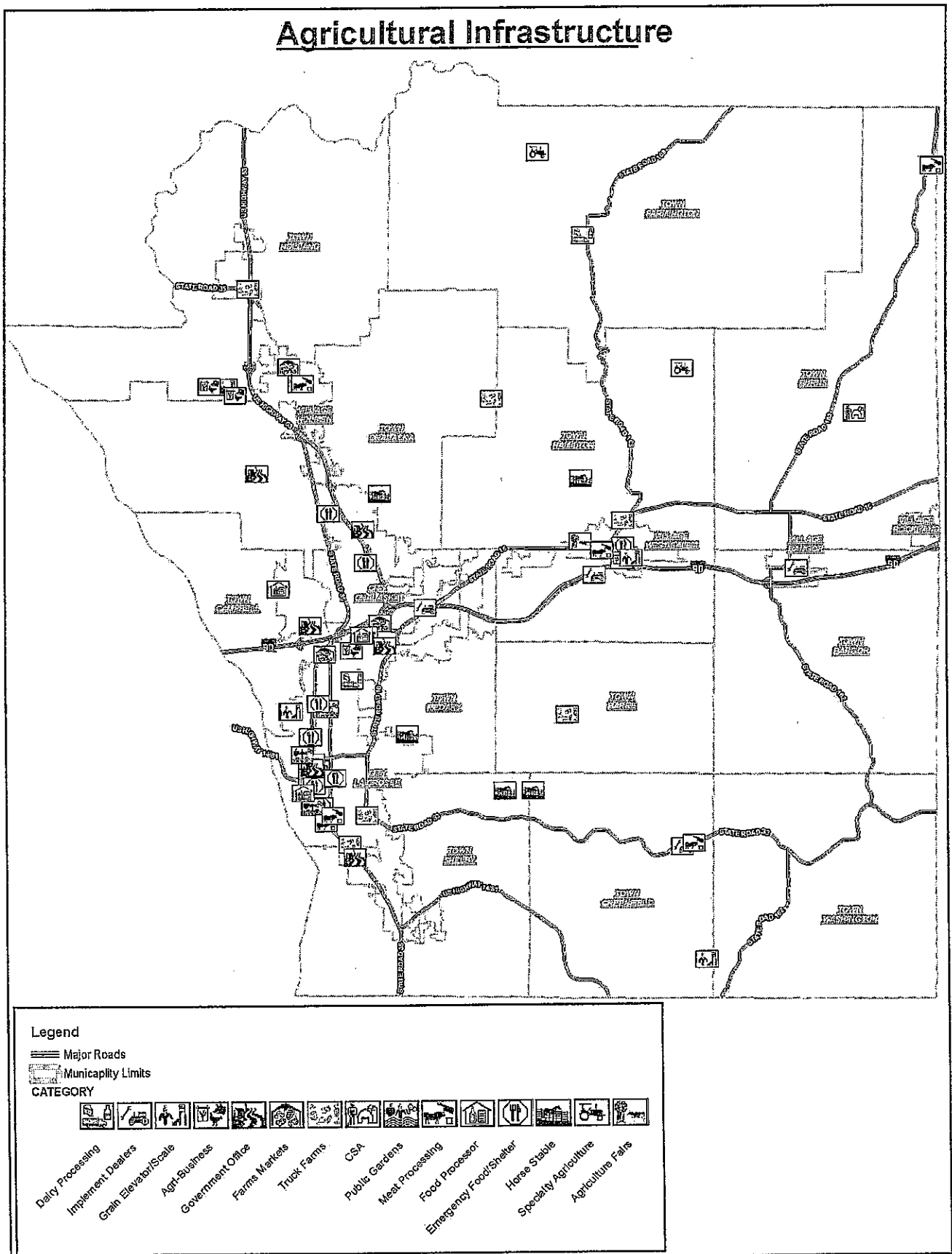
TOWNSHIP	TIER I	TIER II
	(ACRES)	(ACRES)
Town of Bangor	21,864.17	3.57
Town of Barre	11,749.66	66.53
Town of Barre	92,730.51	738.00
Town of Comstock	2,604.48	
Town of Ferrisburgh	44,312.57	298.77
Town of Greenfield	19,219.26	204.17
Town of Hamden	23,153.10	992.38
Town of Ireland	15,347.50	145.20
Town of Watford	4,730.82	
Town of Watford	16,216.34	1,327.93
Town of Watford	8,257.29	3,369.33
Town of Watford	21,490.15	312.29
TOTAL TOWNSHIP	231,885.21	8,461.64
TOTAL FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREAS	178,493.64	
TOTAL ACRES OF TRANSITION AREAS	22,015.47	

1 in = 1 miles
 0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

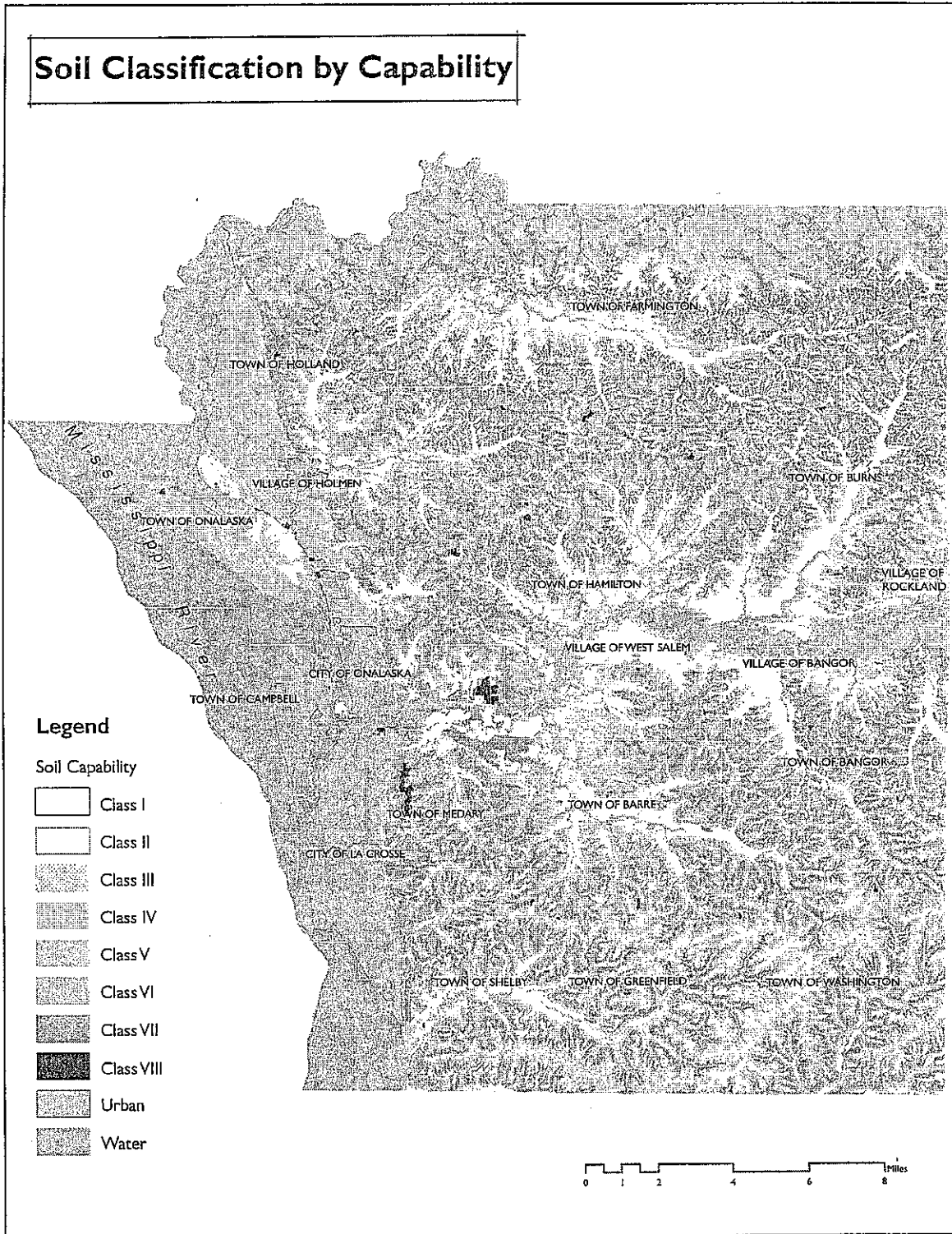
Map 2.4



Map 3.1

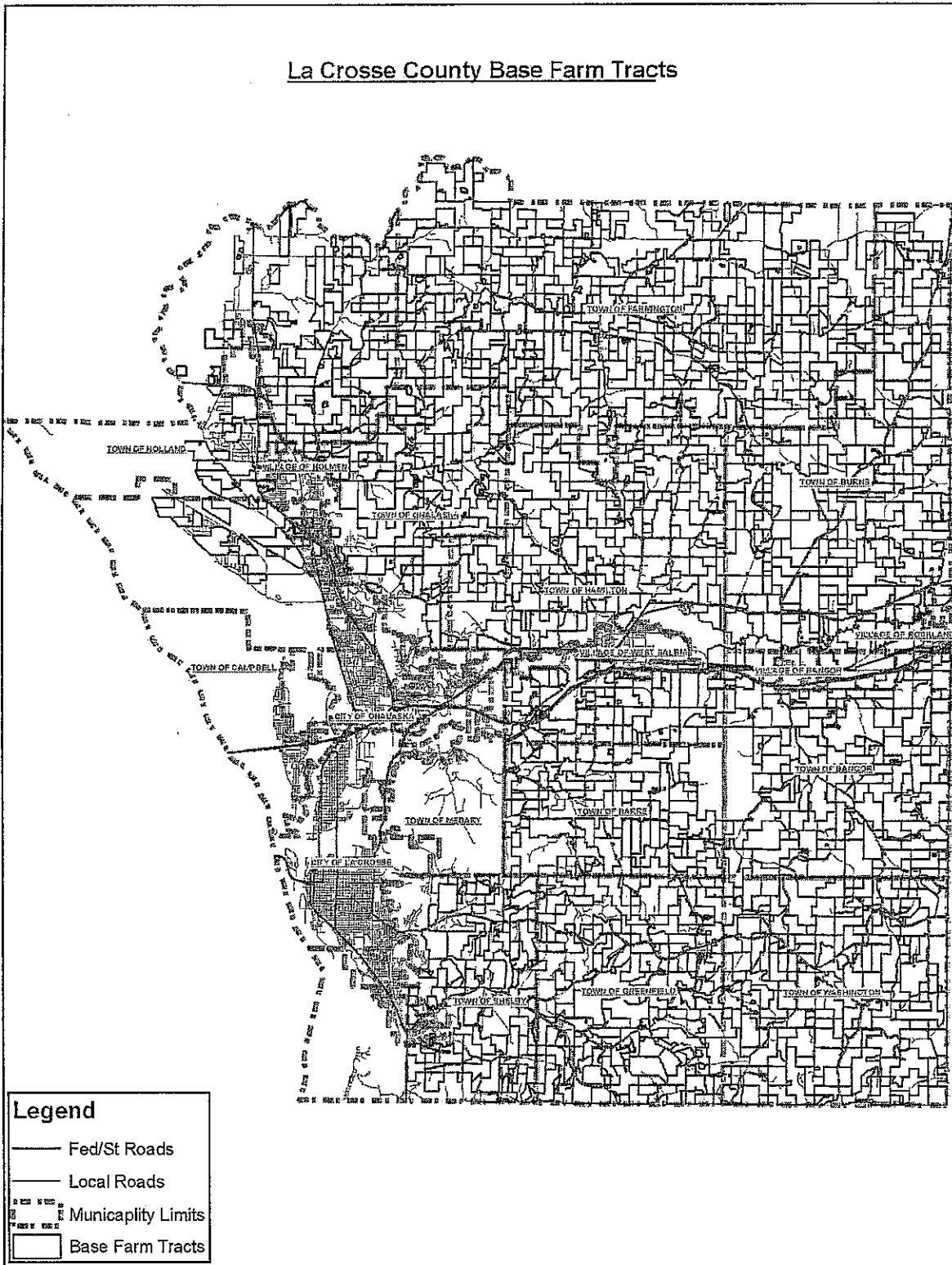


Map 3.2

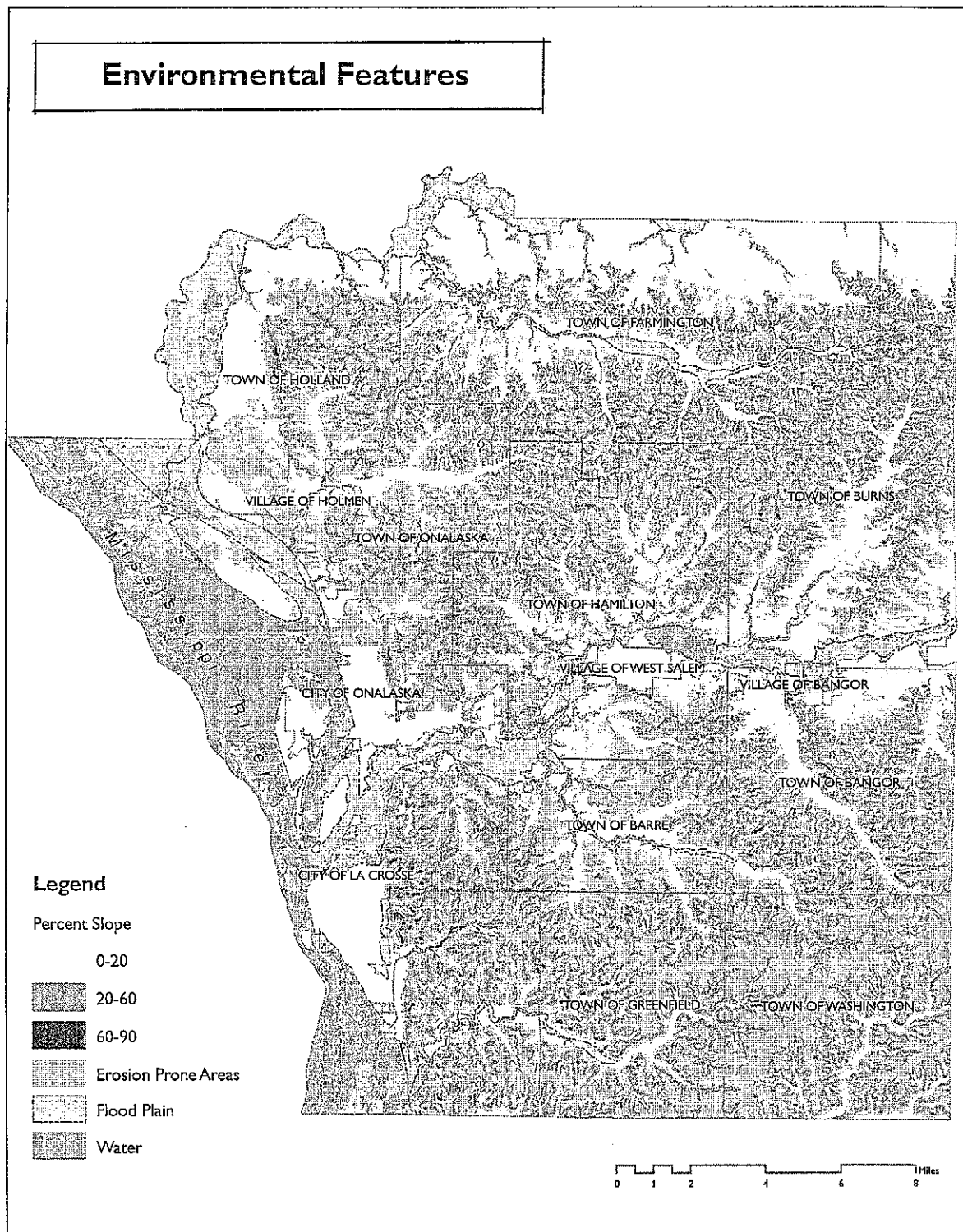


Map 3.3

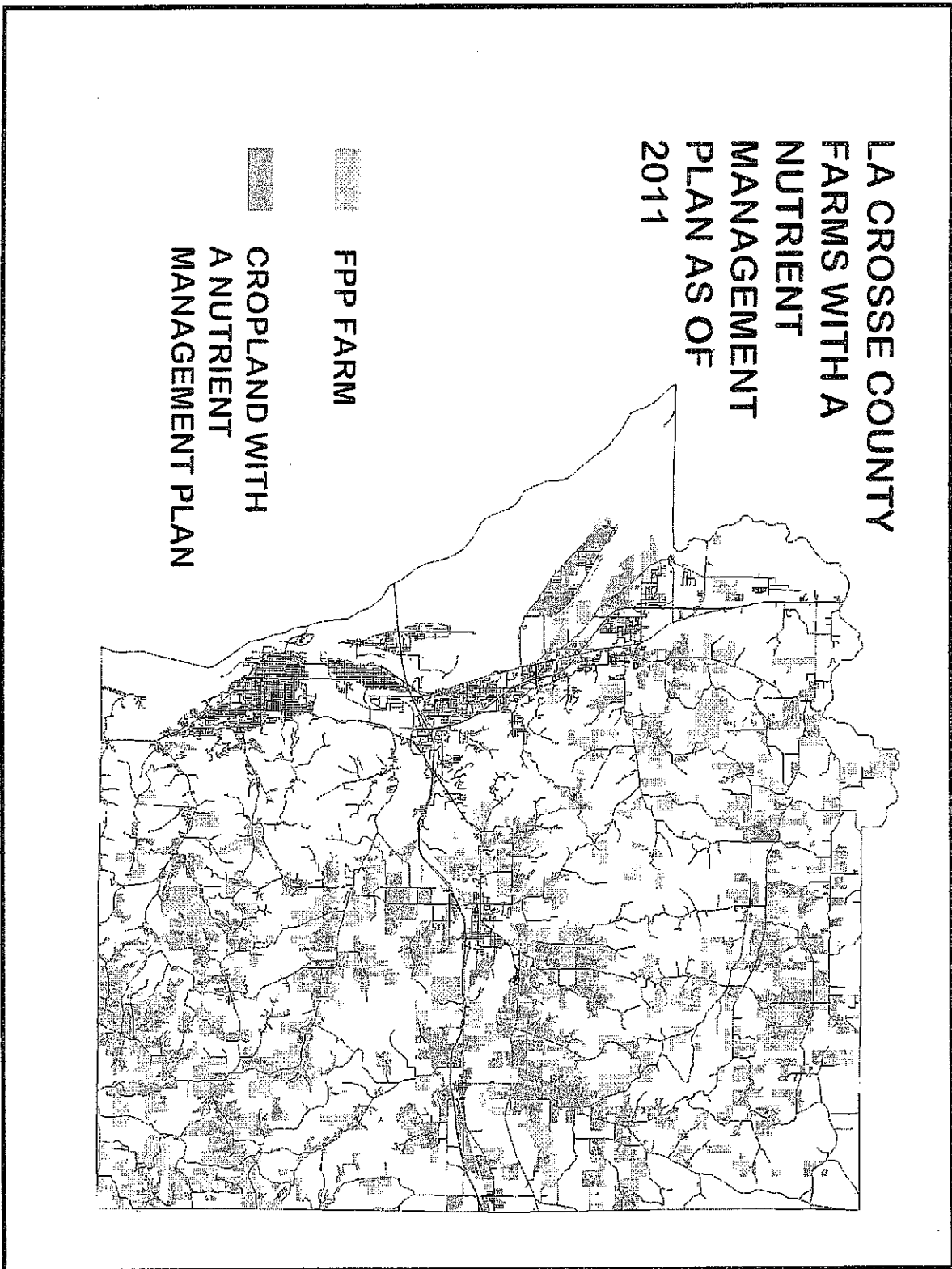
La Crosse County Base Farm Tracts



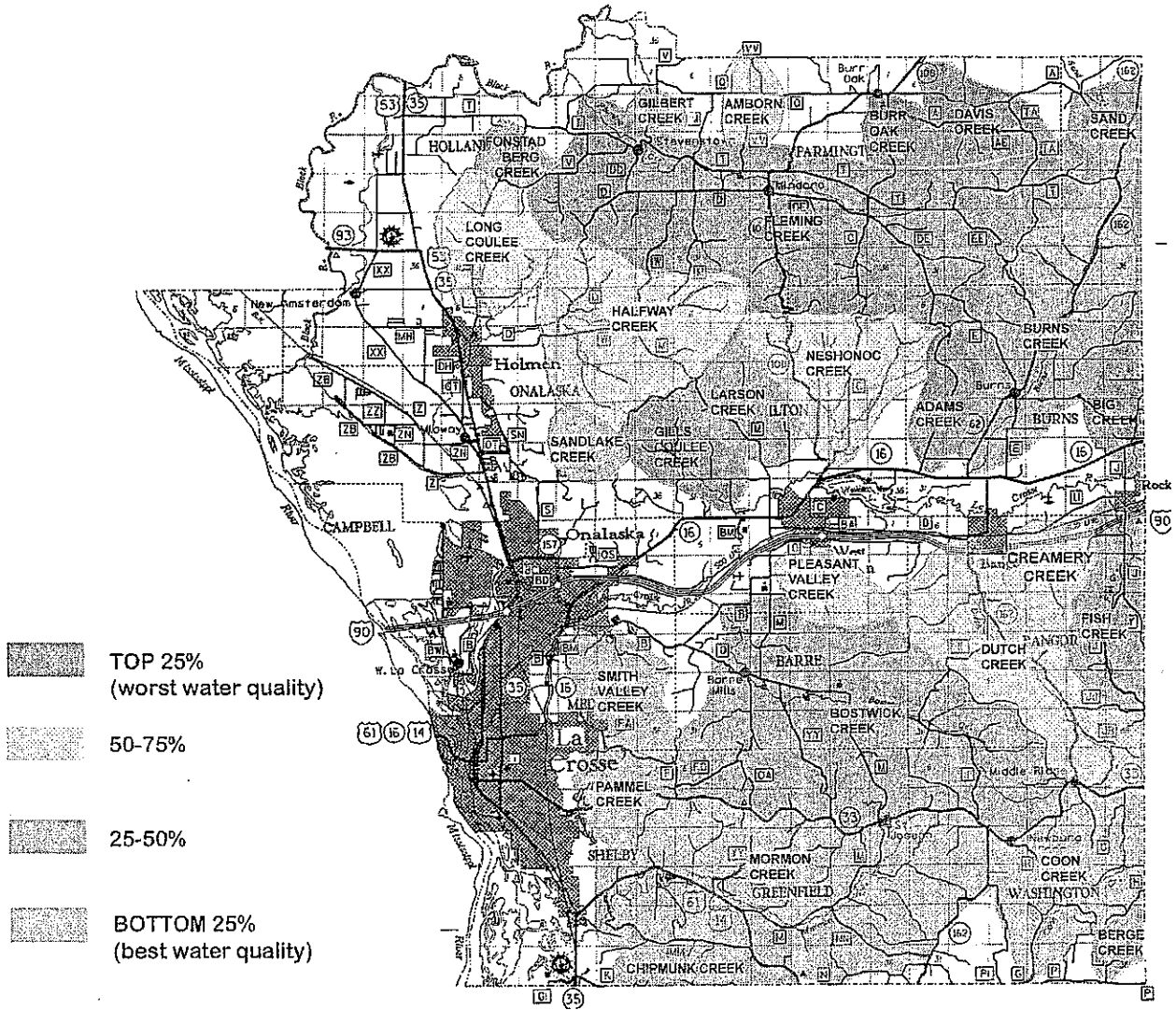
Map 3.4



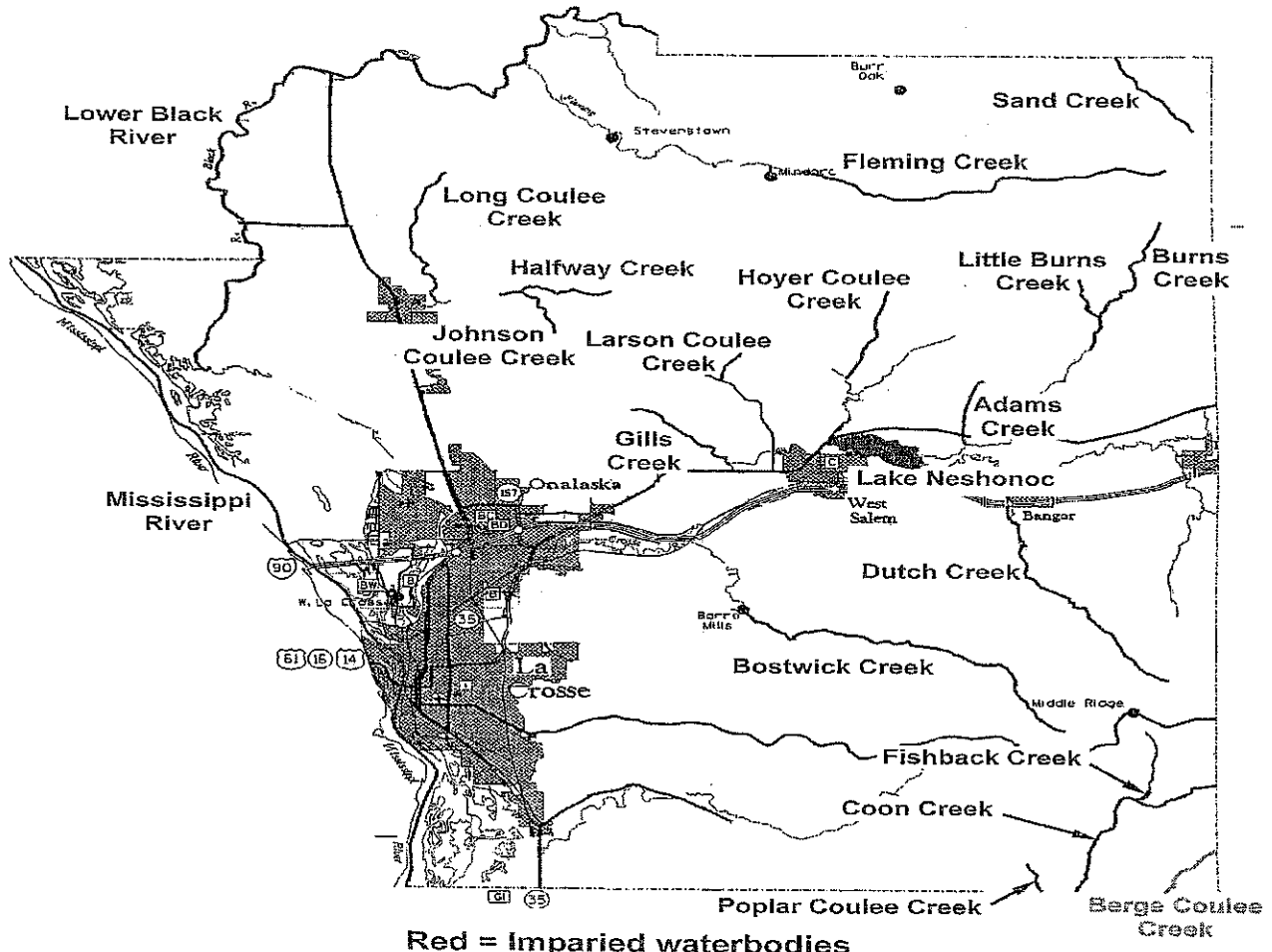
Map 3.5



2011 La Crosse County Watershed Water Quality Priority Ranking



2011 Exceptional, Outstanding and Impaired Waters of La Crosse County



Red = Impaired waterbodies
Blue = Exceptional waterbodies
Green = Outstanding waterbodies

Section 2. This Ordinance shall take effect the day after its passage and publication.

Dated this 20th day of September, 2012.

LA CROSSE COUNTY
 By: Tara Johnson
 Tara Johnson, County Board Chair
 By: Ginny Dankmeyer
 Ginny Dankmeyer, County Clerk

PASSED: September 20, 2012
 PUBLISHED: October 1, 2012

STATE OF WISCONSIN
 COUNTY OF LA CROSSE
 I, Ginny Dankmeyer, County Clerk of La Crosse County do hereby certify that this document is a true and correct copy of the original ordinance required by law to be in my custody and which the County Board of Supervisors of La Crosse County adopted at a meeting held on the 20th day of September, 2012.

Ginny Dankmeyer
 Ginny Dankmeyer, La Crosse County Clerk