



TOWN OF BUFFALO

MARQUETTE COUNTY, WI

20-YEAR SMART GROWTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INITIAL ADOPTION 2004

UPDATED 2016



1.0 INTRODUCTION

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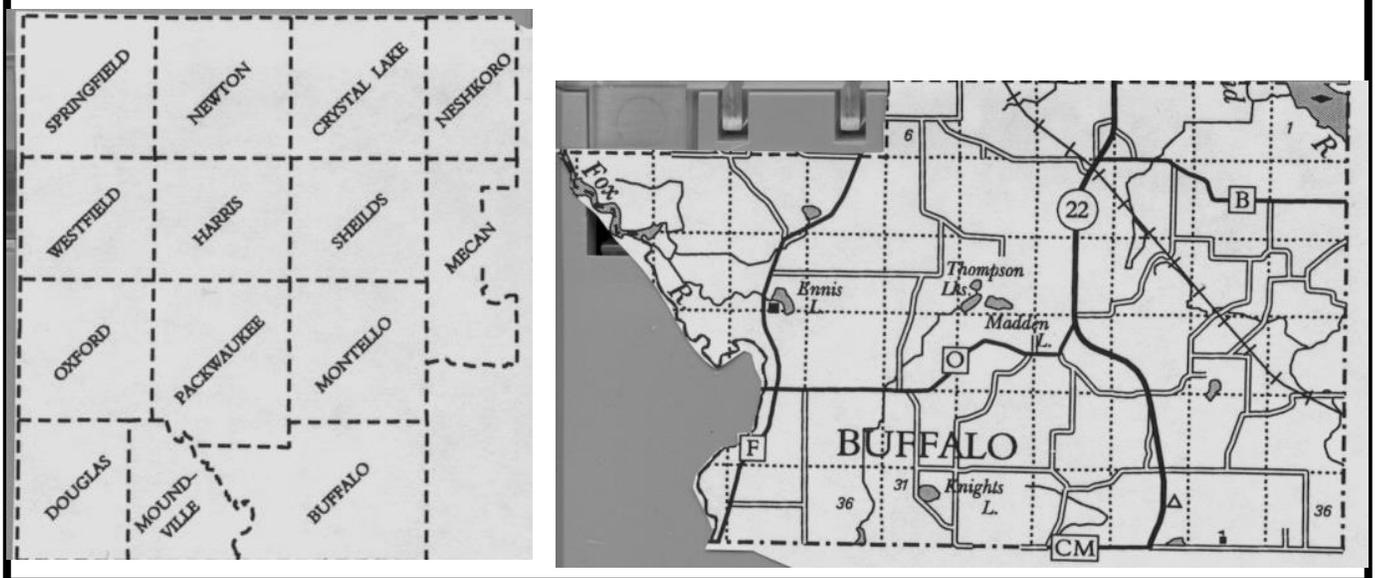
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Location

The Town of Buffalo is located in southwestern Marquette County, Wisconsin, immediately south of the City of Montello. The town is bounded by the Fox River, Green Lake County, Columbia County and the Towns of Montello and Packwaukee. The Town of Buffalo covers approximately 50 square miles of land area. Ten municipal jurisdictions (including counties) neighbor, and three school districts are within, the town.

FIGURE 1: Town of Buffalo, Marquette County, WI



Background and 2016 Update Process

In 2001, the Town of Buffalo Board first decided to initiate the comprehensive planning process. This decision was made to provide for orderly development, protect farmland, preserve open space and ensure that the town will continue to have a say in land uses decisions after 2010, as is stipulated in the Wisconsin Smart Growth Law. The Town Board adopted the first Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan in 2004.

In early 2016, Marquette County completed an update to the County’s 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan update also incorporated an updated County Farmland Preservation Plan, replacing a 1982 vintage plan. The County Comprehensive /Farmland Preservation planning process took over a year to complete and provided multiple opportunities for public involvement, at the County and Town levels, including six open house events held at strategic intervals during the planning process, town meetings with County Zoning Department staff, and a public hearing before the Marquette County Planning and Zoning Committee.

As part of the County Comprehensive Plan update process, each municipality in Marquette

County had the opportunity to review, and if desired, update the Future Land Use map from its mid-2000s plan. The Town of Buffalo participated in this review and returned a revised Town Future Land Use map for the County to include in the updated Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.

In 2016, Marquette County facilitated a process to assist each interested town update its individual comprehensive plan to reflect the newly updated County Comprehensive Plan. Given limited population and land use changes in the County since adoption of the initial comprehensive plans, the town comprehensive plan update process was more condensed and strategic than the early 2000s planning process described above.

The 2016 Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan update includes:

- Updated demographic information contained in Chapter Three: Community Profile to reflect the latest information available from the U.S. Census and State of Wisconsin.
- Adjustments to Chapter 10: Future Land Use to incorporate changes to the Future Land Use map that have occurred since adoption of the Town's original Comprehensive Plan, including those made during the County's recent plan update process, but not yet incorporated into any town plans. Due to limited population growth the remainder of Chapter 10, including population projections, remains unchanged.
- Revisions to Chapter 12: Implementation to include the Town's role in implementing initiatives in the updated Marquette County Comprehensive Plan and to remove older initiatives that have been completed or are no longer applicable.

Due to the limited scope of the 2016 Town Comprehensive Plan update and Town input in the County's recent Comprehensive Plan update, other Plan chapters were generally not updated and public participation was more condensed. The Town of Buffalo Plan Commission reviewed and recommended approval of the updated Comprehensive Plan and following a properly noticed public hearing; the Town Board reviewed and approved the recommended Plan update.

Purpose and Scope of This Document

This 20-year *Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Buffalo*, includes four major components:

- A profile of the demographic, economic and housing characteristics of the town;*
- An inventory and assessment of the environment, community facilities, and natural resources;*
- Visions, goals, objectives and implementation strategies; and*
- A land use map that depicts the future land use patterns in the town.*

This plan was developed under the authority of Ch. 66. 1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats.. The law requires that a 20-year comprehensive plan be developed and adopted by all units of government that wish to have a role in land use issues. The law authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans to serve as guides for the development of their communities. The law also authorizes multi-jurisdictional planning efforts.

The Smart Growth Law defines, for the first time, what is meant by a “comprehensive plan” in Wisconsin. It includes nine (9) required elements. These are:

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



In addition, the state requires that these elements be developed in concert with Wisconsin’s 14 goals for local planning, which are:

- 1) Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- 2) Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
- 3) Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
- 4) Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

- 5) Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- 6) Preservation of cultural, historic and archeological sites.
- 7) Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- 8) Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
- 9) Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
- 10) Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- 11) Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
- 12) Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- 13) Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
- 14) Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

Early 2000s Public Involvement

The *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* was developed in an environment rich with public input. To gain citizen understanding and support throughout the planning process, the public was provided with a variety of meaningful opportunities to become involved in the process. Public input was facilitated through several meetings and activities. Copies of meeting agendas and attendance sheets as well as the *Public Participation Plan and Adoption Procedures* are provided in the appendices of this document.

What follows is a description of some of the primary opportunities for public education and input in the planning program.

KICK-OFF MEETING

The Town of Buffalo “kick-off” meeting was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2002 at the Buffalo Town Hall. At that meeting, OMNNI Associates (the town’s planning consultant) presented an overview of the planning process. Discussion was held about

methods to keep the public informed about the comprehensive planning process and a draft of the *Public Participation Plan and Adoption Procedures* was reviewed. Also, at this meeting, OMNNI Associates facilitated a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) workshop to begin to establish goals and objectives for the town. This workshop allowed the Planning Advisory Committee and public to identify specific concerns and issues facing the town. Likewise, this exercise allowed for the identification of community assets and priorities. The information obtained at this workshop help to direct research and direct priorities for planning.

INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND VISIONING

The Planning Advisory Committee hosted this special public meeting in May of 2002, early in the planning process, to provide background information to all residents about the towns demographic, economic, and housing history and trends based on available census data. Also at this meeting, participants had the opportunity to discuss the town's vision for the future. The information obtained at this meeting was used to develop vision statements for each of the nine required plan elements.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Planning Advisory Committee, which included members of the Town of Buffalo Land Use Commission and other town residents, met quarterly to review draft text, maps, establish goals and establish priorities for plan implementation.

MID-COURSE MEETING

At the mid-point of the planning process, the Planning Advisory Committee hosted an informational meeting to share with the public the progress of the planning program and what was yet to be done. At the meeting, OMNNI gave a presentation to provide an overview of progress on the planning program, share the vision statements developed by the Planning Advisory Committee and invite the public to participate in the process to provide additional input.

Also at this meeting, participants were asked to participate in a cognitive mapping exercise. This exercise asked participants to delineate geographic areas of the town people like, dislike, frequently visit, feel are important, travel through regularly, would encourage development, etc. These maps were then used by OMNNI Associates to develop the Future Land Use Plan Maps for the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. This innovative approach allowed for direct public input related to future development, preservation, and conservation in the Town of Buffalo.

MAP FORUM

The Map Forum provided town residents the opportunity to review all plan maps in an informal setting. This special opportunity allowed residents to examine each of the plan maps to understand how the maps were developed and see how the plan will impact their

property. The result of the Map Forum was a great exchange of ideas about the plan maps. More importantly, this special meeting allowed ample time for the maps to be amended to address concerns that would likely not have otherwise been raised until the public hearing.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS

As part of the planning program, the Planning Advisory Committee facilitated two (2) intergovernmental meetings. At the first meeting, the draft 20-year Town of Buffalo Land Use Plan Map was presented for initial comment and feedback. Existing or anticipated plans from neighboring units of government, school districts, Marquette County, the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, WDNR and WisDOT were discussed in relation to the draft map.

At the second meeting, OMNNI Associates presented a summary of potential conflicts between existing and proposed area plans as compared to the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. Moreover, steps taken or proposed in the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* to address these conflicts were discussed. Based on the conversations and suggestions received at this meeting, the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* includes recommendations to continue to resolve intergovernmental planning issues and conflicts over the 20-year planning period.

INTERNET WEB PAGE

The planning program was profiled on an interactive web page hosted on the OMNNI Associates Web Site. The page included meeting schedules, summaries of past meetings, draft maps and plan chapters, and general education materials about the Smart Growth law. The site was updated on a monthly basis to ensure that the information was current and served to effectively inform the public.

OPEN HOUSE

The purpose of the plan “open house” was to display the plan maps and text in an informal setting. At the “open house,” there were no formal presentations, minutes, or voting. Rather, the maps and plan text were on display for interested residents to review at their own pace. The atmosphere was as casual as possible with refreshments being served. Members of the Planning Advisory Committee and OMNNI staff were available to answer questions as needed. This meeting was a success in that it allowed the participants to share their ideas in a setting that was much less formal than the public hearing. As a result, more people were able to react to the plan than would have otherwise done so, if there had only been a formal public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

Immediately following the Open House, the Planning Advisory Committee hosted a formal public hearing in accordance with the requirements of the Wisconsin Smart Growth law.

Town Values

During the “kick-off” meeting, residents in attendance were asked to identify the values that influence people to vacation and live in the Town of Buffalo. More importantly, participants were asked what makes residents remain, take pride in, and become actively involved in the community. The complete list of those values is provided below. These value statements provided a clear direction for the development and implementation of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. Moreover, these values clearly indicate that residents of the Town of Buffalo share a strong sense of community identity and pride closely associated with the rural character and natural areas that make the Town of Buffalo a desirable place to live.

☞ *We value our rural character.*

☞ *We value our natural areas and wildlife habitat.*

☞ *We value our farmland.*

☞ *We value our town roads.*

☞ *We value our town government.*

☞ *We value our low crime rate.*

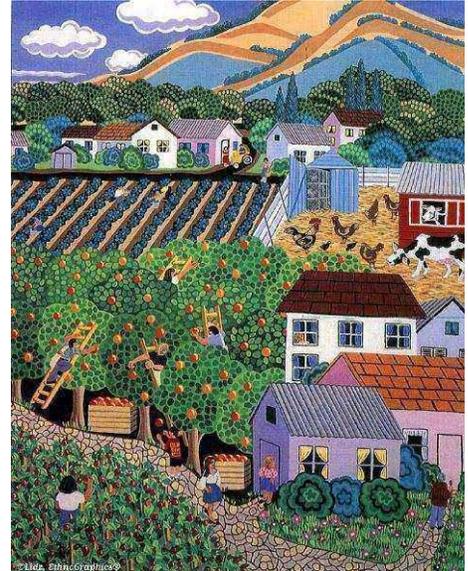
As part of the Marquette County Planning Survey (See Chapter 2 for more information), town residents were asked about the most valued aspects of the Town of Buffalo. Residents overwhelmingly indicated the quiet and peaceful atmosphere (82.6%) and small town/rural living (82.0%). Closely following this was “lakes/rivers/streams –wildlife/beautiful scenery” with 64.6% of respondents indicating it was of value.

2.0 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT

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2.0 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES



Introduction

The Issues and Opportunities Element provides the background information on the town and the overall visions to guide future development and redevelopment over a 20-year planning period. Specifically, the Issues and Opportunities Element includes population, household and employment forecasts and demographic trends, age distributions, education levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local government unit. This chapter presents the overall vision for the Town of Buffalo, including a complete assessment of local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The community characteristics and general background information that form the basis for the Issues & Opportunities Element, is included in Chapter 3 Community Profile.

Visioning Process

To identify community issues and opportunities, a three-step process was utilized, which resulted in the development of individual vision statements for each of the nine required smart growth planning elements. This process included: community SWOT meeting, cognitive mapping and element vision development. What follows is a description of the activities and the major issues and opportunities identified through the issues and opportunities process.

SWOT MEETING

What follows is a brief definition of a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat as used in a SWOT exercise.

- Strength** *Something that makes a community stand out when compared to other communities. Something that makes you proud to call the community home. A strength can be a physical asset, a program, an environmental condition or an impression or feeling (i.e. friendly community atmosphere).*
- Weakness** *Opposite of a strength. Problem that needs to be addressed.*
- Opportunity** *Something that could be done to improve the community. A potential.*
- Threat** *A threat may be internal or external. A threat can be anything that could jeopardize the future success of a community.*

A SWOT meeting is a planning exercise used to get communities thinking about:
where they have been;

where they are;
where they want to be in the future; and
how they want to get there.

On March 19, 2002, the Town of Buffalo Planning Advisory Committee participated in a SWOT exercise. The objective of the exercise was to find out how the Planning Advisory Committee members viewed various aspects of the town. This could include their feelings on physical things such as roads, utilities, etc., and “quality of life” issues. OMNNI Associates, the town’s comprehensive planning consultant, facilitated the exercise.

At the meeting, each member of the Town of Buffalo Planning Advisory Committee was asked to share what he or she thought were the town’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Anyone present could list as many items as he/she wished under each category. All ideas were recorded by OMNNI Associates. The table on the next few pages lists the responses given, by category.

At the meeting, participants collectively agreed that the Town of Buffalo’s primary *strengths* lie in its rural character and natural features. The most important *weakness* seemed to be the town’s lack of zoning control and resulting uncontrolled growth.

Participants agreed that the town’s greatest opportunities lie in its ability to protect its natural areas, rural character and farmland. Unplanned growth and uncontrolled development due to a lack of local zoning control was considered the greatest *threat* to the future of the Town of Buffalo.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural Character• Natural Beauty• Wetlands• Historical Amenities, particularly related to John Muir – Homestead & Park• Location – The Town is close enough to larger cities and developed areas to have access to health care and shopping.• Abundant Wildlife• Traffic is Limited• Safe Community – Low Crime Rate• Quality Schools• Low Population Density• Water Quality and Quantity is Good
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<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiraling (Rising) Taxes, particularly in the southern half of Marquette County • Unplanned Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lack of Land Use Plan * No Zoning • Tax Structure for Tree Farms / Forestland • Outdoor Storage - Junkyards
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve Existing Natural Areas • Preserving Farmland • Preserve Rural Character
<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR Land Acquisition • Permits issued for septic systems through COMM 83 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Development open anywhere * No Zoning • Unplanned Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Uncontrolled Development * Attract Development because nearby communities have plans and zoning in place that Buffalo does not, so people believe it is easier to develop in Buffalo • Railroad Bridges – Need to Be Repaired – Who Pays? • “Unguarded” Railroad Crossings – No gates or lights • Draining and Loss of Wetlands • If restrictions are placed on development (i.e. home businesses), impacts on Amish Community? • Narrow Roadways – Concerns over conflict with Amish • Noxious Weeds • Wind farms • Factory Farms – Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) – Not in existence today, but potential threat

COGNITIVE MAPPING

A cognitive map, or mental map, is a map drawn by a person that geographically locates his or her memories, ideas and thoughts of a particular place. Since cognitive maps are based on individual's preferences and opinions there are no "right" or "wrong" maps. Cognitive maps are used to delineate geographic areas of a community people like, dislike, frequently visit, feel are important, travel through regularly, feel safe, etc.

As part of the June Smart Growth Meeting, the members of the Planning Advisory Committee and other residents in attendance were provided a map of the Town of Buffalo. On that map, participants outlined those areas where they would like to see new commercial/industrial development, new residential development, new recreation areas, open space and farmland in the Town of Buffalo.

These maps were used extensively in the development of the Future Land Use Maps presented later in this plan. This approach helped to ensure that the Future Land Use Maps accurately reflect community concerns and priorities for the future. A consensus map, which combines the results of the individual maps drawn by the committee members is provided in the Land Use Element Chapter of this plan.



VISION DEVELOPMENT

In March 2002, a vision assignment was distributed to the Planning Advisory Committee. The assignment asked the committee members to individually answer a series of questions about what they would like to see in the Town of Buffalo in 20 years.

Prior to beginning the Cognitive Mapping Exercise, committee members worked in groups to update land use maps of the Town of Buffalo.



Committee members discussed their vision of the future of the Town.

At the May 2002 meeting, the committee members and residents worked in small groups to review their individual answers to each of the questions and arrive at a single best answer for each. These answers were then shared with the entire Planning Advisory Committee to arrive at a consensus-based answer to each question. OMNNI then used these collective responses to draft vision statements, which the Planning Advisory Committee reviewed in July 2002. Each of the final vision statements is provided at the end of this chapter.

Community Survey

As part of the Marquette County Comprehensive Planning Process, of which the Town of Buffalo was a participant, in June of 2002, a community planning survey was distributed to 621 residents of the Town of Buffalo. Of that amount, 178 surveys were returned for a response rate of 29%.

For additional information about the Marquette County Plan, visit the Marquette County Internet web site at www.co.marquette.wi.us.

The survey asked a series of questions related to resident quality of life, public services, housing, economic development, environmental quality, and plan development and implementation. The survey results are included throughout this plan to illustrate resident opinions.

According to the community survey results, town residents believe the following major problems and concerns are facing the Town of Buffalo. These items must be addressed in this comprehensive plan and supporting ordinances.

Increase in Taxes (71.3%)	Lack of New Businesses (15.7%)
Uncontrolled Development/Urban Sprawl (42.1%)	Increasing Crime (15.2%)
Lack of Job Opportunities (29.8%)	Lack of Activities for Youth (11.8%)
Increase in Land Prices (27.0%)	Vacant Buildings – Unattractive Business District (4.5%)
Unattractive Housing/Property Conditions (24.7%)	Lack of Available Housing (2.8%)
Low Wages (23.6%)	Inadequate Labor Supply (1.7%)
	Other (5.1%)

The survey also asked residents to identify important future planning issues. The results reveal that the following are the major planning issues in the Town of Buffalo:

- Protecting Groundwater
- Protecting Private Property rights
- Attracting Good Paying Jobs
- Protecting Agricultural Land
- Protecting Lakes/Rivers/Streams
- Improving the local quality of life for children and grandchildren

Visions

Rather than develop a series of policy statements, the Planning Advisory Committee participated in an extensive visioning process to establish a framework from which to make future planning decisions for the Town of Buffalo. The result of this process was a vision statement for each of the nine required plan elements, including an overall vision statement. This process was critical to establish a unified vision for the Town of Buffalo and provide a direction and focus for the planning effort.

Below are the community vision statements, which represent the broad interests of town residents, elected/appointed officials, business leaders and property owners. These visions

establish the planning framework and a direction for subsequent planning efforts and decisions in the town.

Supporting goals, objectives and program initiatives are described in Chapter 12 of this plan.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES (OVERALL VISION)

The Town of Buffalo is a quiet community. Farmlands and woodlands dominate the landscape. Residential development is located and designed to preserve and protect open space and farmland to maintain the Town's rural character. Year-round and seasonal residents, enjoy the Town's scenic vistas and relaxed lifestyle. Children benefit from the nurturing environment offered by the rural school districts. Seniors live independently, with assistance from family, friends, neighbors, and the county. (The primary threat facing the community is a lack of enthusiasm, staff support and funds to implement the plan.

HOUSING VISION

Quality single-family housing is available in the Town of Buffalo as a result of effect local zoning. These choices include a balance of rural residences and a few scattered conservation subdivisions. To maintain the Town's rural character, single-family residences are located to blend in with the Town's natural features and farmland. All residential development in Buffalo is attractive, well maintained, and aptly suited for raising a family. Neighbors support neighbors, especially seniors.

TRANSPORTATION VISION

Well-maintained local roads and county trunks serve the Town of Buffalo. Residents enjoy easy access to nearby communities via STH 22 and other connecting highways. Residents depend on their own vehicles to meet their transportation needs and use the Town's interconnecting bike trails in good weather. Residents without vehicles rely on the kindness of friends, families and neighbors. Volunteer groups (i.e. churches, etc.) and the county provide transportation opportunities for seniors and other transit dependent residents. Conflicts between vehicles and the Amish have been minimized through effective signage and education programs.

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES VISION

In 2020, The Town of Buffalo continues to provide all the basic Town services it has provided since 2002. The Town works with neighboring communities, to provide residents with efficient, cost-effective regional services that reduce the tax burden. All basic service needs are met by traveling to nearby communities like Montello, Pardeeville and Portage. Residents in need of specialized services travel to Portage and Madison. All residents rely on private well water and individual waste treatment systems.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES VISION

In 2020, the Town of Buffalo has successfully maintained more than 90 percent of the farmland that existed in 2002. This achievement was the result of dedicated farmers, the actions of Town government, the consolidation of several small family farms, and the use of conservation subdivisions. Farming operations in the Town consist of a balance of family farming operations and rented cropland. Contiguous areas of woodlands, wetlands and other natural areas have also been permanently protected from development. Farmland and natural areas enhance the rural character of the Town by maintaining open vistas and providing buffers between residential areas to maintain the low, rural density of development desired by residents. Recreational opportunities, including fishing, hunting, biking along Town roads, camping, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling are abundant.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION

Economic development in the Town of Buffalo is in harmony with the Town's natural environment. Farming is the foundation of the local economy. Residents also enjoy access to a few new businesses (i.e. restaurant and gas station) that have developed along the STH 22 corridor. These businesses respect the town's "dry" alcohol policy.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION VISION

The Town of Buffalo works cooperatively, through shared service agreements, with neighboring towns, the City of Montello, Marquette County and State agencies to provide Town residents with needed cost-efficient, non-duplicative services. Town leaders keep residents informed on all matters pertinent to Town operations and land development issues. The Town continues to pursue opportunities to provide coordinated, cost-effective services with neighboring communities and the county.

LAND USE VISION

Actions taken by Town of Buffalo, through its Comprehensive Plan and supporting regulations, have ensured that the overall appearance of the landscape will not change significantly. While new residences have been built in the Town, they are well planned to protect the town's natural resources, farmland and aesthetic appeal.

IMPLEMENTATION VISION

The Town of Buffalo continues to recognize the value and importance of comprehensive planning as a tool to guide development. Plan success relies on zoning to prevent incompatible land uses and creative design solutions (such as conservation subdivision). Development decisions and provision of public services are determined based on their impact on Town resources.

3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

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3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

Demographic Profile

The planning process for the Town of Buffalo begins with a profile of the people who live, work and own property in the community. Specifically, this section analyzes the size, composition and trends of the population. This information is critical to forecasting the need for community facilities and services, since it is people who will demand adequate schools, roads, parks, jobs and other public services.



POPULATION TRENDS

The Town of Buffalo has experienced steady population gains over the last three decades as demonstrated in Table 1. Although the Town of Buffalo's rate of growth between 1980 and 2010 was less than the County as a whole, the Town's proportion of the County's population has steadily increased since 1980.

**TABLE 1
HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS**

Location	1980	1990	2000	2010	Actual Change 1980-2010	% Change 1980-2010
<i>Town of Buffalo</i>	745	792	1,085	1,222	477	60.97%
Share of County Population	6.40%	6.40%	7.50%	7.93%	N/A	N/A
Marquette County	11,672	12,321	14,555	15,404	3,732	75.77%

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

To put the population growth rate of the Town of Buffalo into context, Table 2 compares the population changes for all towns in Marquette County. From this table, it is apparent that the Town of Buffalo is the second largest town in the county and has experienced, the fourth highest growth rate over the last decade. The Town's growth rate of 13% far outpaced the overall growth rate for towns in Marquette County, which was only 6% between 2000 and 2010.

**TABLE 2
MARQUETTE COUNTY TOWN POPULATION CHANGES 2000-2013**

Town Name	2000 Population	2010 Population	2013 Population Estimate	% Change 2000-2013
<i>Town of Buffalo</i>	1,085	1,221	1,222	13%
Town of Crystal Lake	513	484	486	-5%
Town of Douglas	768	725	722	-6%
Town of Harris	729	790	791	9%
Town of Mecan	726	686	690	-5%
Town of Montello	1,043	1,033	1,033	-1%
Town of Moundville	574	552	550	-4%

Town of Neshkoro	595	561	556	-7%
Town of Newton	550	547	547	-1%
Town of Oxford	859	885	886	3%
Town of Packwaukee	1,297	1,416	1,411	9%
Town of Shields	456	550	548	20%
Town of Springfield	628	830	832	32%
Town of Westfield	689	866	870	26%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 & 2010, Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2013

Table 3 projects the population of the Town of Buffalo through 2035 and compares this population change to Marquette County, and the State of Wisconsin for the same time period. These projections indicate that the Town of Buffalo is expected to experience steady population growth through the planning period.

TABLE 3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2015 – 2035			
Year	Town of Buffalo*	Marquette County	Wisconsin
2015	1,285	16,000	5,783,015
2020	1,335	16,315	6,005,080
2025	1,420	16,970	6,203,850
2030	1,475	17,325	6,375,910
2035	1,505	17,305	6,476,270

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2013

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

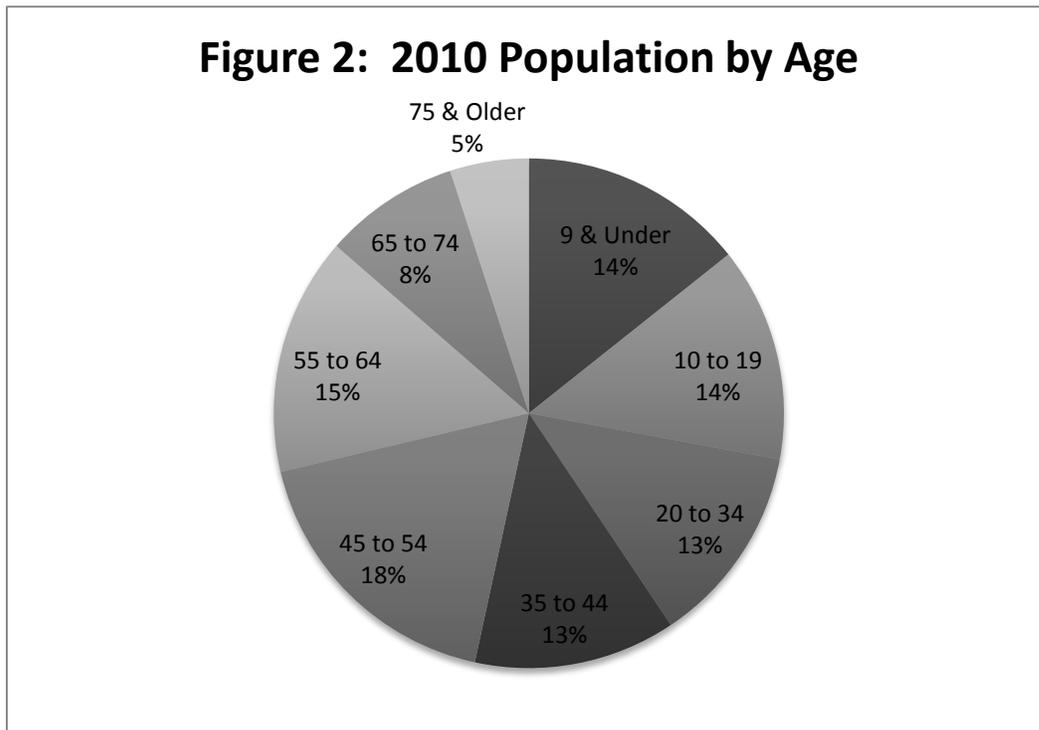
Population figures and growth rates do not provide any insight about the characteristics of the population. To learn more about the people of the Town of Buffalo information about the race, sex, and age of the population must be examined.

In 2010, there were 627 males and 594 females living in the Town of Buffalo. 98.3 % of the residents reported their race as white in 2010 U.S. Census, “Black or African American”, “American Indian and Alaskan Native” and “Asian” constitute the rest of the total population.

The median age of a Town of Buffalo resident in 2010 was 43.3. This average is slightly lower than the median age Marquette County resident (47.4), but higher than the median age of a Wisconsin Resident (38.5). Of particular concern in Marquette County is that the percentage of residents over the age of 65 continues to increase while the percentage of residents under 18 decreases. The Wisconsin Department of Administration forecasts that in 2035 over 37% of Marquette County’s population will older than 65.

Figure 2 examines the age distribution of Town residents in 2010. What is significant to notice from the chart is that a very large portion of the town’s population, similar to the overall County population, is above the age of 35. As these residents continue to age they will require additional services and amenities that are not currently available in the Town.

This issue is addressed in greater detail in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element of the plan.



Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Historically, Marquette County has benefited from population growth through migration. The County’s scenic resources and close proximity to more populous areas through I-39

have made it a desirable place to move or retire to.

The State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development reports that Marquette County added 27 residents between April 2010 and January 2015. This was the 63rd largest rate of growth out of Wisconsin's 72 counties. During this period Marquette County experienced a slow negative rate of natural increase (indicating that births were not greater than deaths) and a positive rate of net migration, which is in contrast to the State of Wisconsin, which experienced a net migration decline of 0.8 percent during this period.

GENERAL HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

A "household" can be basically described as a group of people living together in a single dwelling unit. This could include a family, a single person, or a group of unrelated individuals sharing a house or an apartment, but excluding those persons living in a group quarters.

National and State trends have all moved towards an increase in the number of households, along with a decrease in the average number of persons per household. The main reasons for this decrease in household size include: a decrease in birth rate, people waiting longer to get married, an increased divorce rate, and an increase in the average life span thereby resulting in more elderly people living either alone or with another family member.

Between 2000 and 2010, the total number of households increased from 412 to 448. During this same period, the population per household actually increased from 2.63 to 2.71. The increase in average household size is in stark contrast to State and County trends, however, the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration forecasts that the Town's average household size will steadily decrease during the planning period to reach a low of 2.43 persons per household by 2035.

The vast majority of the town's households (73.4%) are family households (families). Of these family households the most common type was married-couple households (62.5%). However, the number of non-family households is quite large for a town the size of Buffalo. In 2010, slightly more than a quarter of all households (119) were considered non-family households. The vast majority of these non-family households (88) were people living alone.

Economic Profile

Economic conditions have a direct impact on the supply, demand and costs for housing, infrastructure and services within a community. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the economic situation in the Town of Buffalo to predict additional housing, infrastructure

and service needs. This section profiles the local economic environment by examining factors, including per capita income, poverty rate, and unemployment rate.

To understand and appreciate the local economic picture in the Town of Buffalo, it is also necessary to look beyond the town and examine characteristics in Marquette County. Comparisons between the Town and the County provide much more information about the local economic situation than would a simple look at conditions only in the Town of Buffalo. Furthermore, these comparisons put economic characteristics into perspective.

LABOR FORCE

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons who are 16 years of age and older. Table 4 tracks the rate of employment and unemployment in Marquette County between 2010 and 2015. Employment information specific to the Town of Buffalo has never been developed by the State of Wisconsin. In March 2016, the County unemployment rate was 7.1% (WI Dept. of Workforce Development, 2016), which represents an increase of .09% from 2015. This figure is also far greater than the State of Wisconsin unemployment rate (5.0%). The Marquette County unemployment rate has traditionally been high, when compared to rates for the entire State. Given the rural nature of the County, this trend is expected to continue.

TABLE 4 CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE DATA FOR MARQUETTE COUNTY						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Labor Force	7,691	7,609	7,580	7,521	7,337	7,452
Employed	6,855	6,851	6,911	6,886	6,810	6,988
Unemployed	836	758	669	635	527	464
Unemployment Rate	10.9%	10%	8.8%	8.4%	7.2%	6.2%

Source: WI DWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, 2016.

The stagnate growth in the labor force is of great concern. Given that Marquette County’s population growth is unevenly distributed (see Table 5), employers are concerned about how to replace baby-boomers leaving the workforce.

The term used to describe the relationship between the labor force and population is participation rate. The participation rate is the share of the employment-eligible population that works or is actively seeking employment. Marquette County’s participation rate has continually lagged behind the State and national averages. Several factors can contribute to this situation. For instance, if wages do not grow as fast as other income sources people have less incentive to work. An increase in the retired population would also contribute directly to the share of the employment eligible population that is not in the labor force. The demographic data discussed earlier in this Chapter and in Table 5 suggest that retirement may alter the labor force in coming years.

Table 5 illustrates that Marquette County’s population growth over the last decade was unevenly distributed among age groups. Between 2000 and 2010 the 55 to 64 year old population segment gained approximately 604 people, but this growth could not compensate for the declines in the 0 to 15 and 25 to 44 populations. The next largest increase was approximately 488 people added to the 45 to 54 year-olds. More generally speaking, the under-44 group decreased by 20.8%, while the 45-and-over group experienced a growth of 121.0%.

TABLE 5			
MARQUETTE COUNTY POPULATION BY AGE			
Age Group	2000 Population*	2010 Population	% Change 2000-2010
0 – 15	2,858	2,520	-11%
16 - 24	1,540	1,541	.06%
25 - 44	4,582	3,049	-33%
45 - 54	2,167	2,655	22.5%
55 - 64	1,789	2,393	33.8%
65+	2,896	3,246	12.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 & 2010.

*The 2000 U.S. Census age group data incorrectly reports a total County population of 15,832, the numbers in this column are approximates only and illustrate general trends and rather than specifics.

Table 6 provides a similar breakdown of the labor force by age in the Town of Buffalo. Between 2000 and 2010, the town’s population increased by 136. Of that amount, the total number of Town residents under the age of 44 decreased by 2.7%, while residents age 45-and-over increased by almost 137.1%, accounting for 100% of all population growth.

TABLE 6			
TOWN OF BUFFALO POPULATION BY AGE			
Age Group	2000 Population	2010 Population	% Change 2000-2010
0 – 15	230	266	15.7%
16 - 24	117	124	6.0%
25 - 44	323	262	-18.9%
45 - 54	167	219	31.1%
55 - 64	98	184	87.8%
65+	150	166	10.7%
Total	1,085	1,221	12.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Marquette County workers are very mobile. According to Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development data, greater than 3,600 people leave Marquette County for work each day. Roughly 1,517 (or 41.3% of outbound commuters) go to Columbia County, 542 (or 14.8%) go to Dane County and 285 (or 7.8%) go to Sauk County. Of the nearly 1,588 inbound commuters, over a quarter come from Adams County.

Table 7 provides a more detailed breakdown of commuting patterns in Marquette County. The commuting estimates are provided by the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and were based on the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006-2010. Although information on the Town's commute pattern is unavailable, the 2010 U.S. Census reveals that 80.0 percent of Town residents commute alone to work each day, 8 percent carpool, 5.1 percent work at home, and nearly 3.8 percent walk or use other means to get to work. On average, Town residents reported it took an average of 30.5 minutes to travel to work each day.

TABLE 7 MARQUETTE COUNTY COMMUTING PATTERNS			
County	Commute Into	Commute From	Net Commute
Dane	542	32	-510
Green Lake	223	147	-76
Waushara	261	263	+2
Columbia	1,517	383	-1,134
Adams	175	390	+215
Juneau	--	50	+50
Sauk	285	38	-247
Fond du Lac	183	97	-86
Elsewhere	188	487	-299
Total	4,918	1,877	-2,085

Source: WI DWD, Office of Economic Advisors. County to County Worker Flow in Wisconsin, 2013.

Overall, Town of Buffalo residents have more jobs in the manufacturing, arts, entertainment and food services, retail trade, and health and education occupations—and fewer jobs in the information, professional, sales, and office occupations. According to 2010 Census data (see Table 8), the largest proportion of the 535 employed persons living in the Town of Buffalo were employed in the manufacturing sector (26.2%), followed by Arts, Entertainment and Food Services services (10.5%), and then by Retail Trade (10.3) and Educational Services and Health Care (10.3%).

TABLE 8 TOWN OF BUFFALO LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS	
Occupational Group	Percentage of Labor Force
Ag./Forestry/Fishing/Mining	3.4
Professional Services	6.5

Health/Education	10.3
Manufacturing	26.2
Retail Trade	10.3
Wholesale Trade	1.5
Construction	8.6
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	4.5
Transportation/Utilities	6.2
Public Administration	4.5
Information	1.5
Arts/Entertainment/Food Services	10.5
Other Services	6.2

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2010

Additional employment data is available at the County level. The number of jobs in the County decreased by 4% between 2001 and 2013; with a total of 3,653 Marquette County jobs in 2013. The County’s job base is centered in the education, health, and manufacturing industries. According to the State’s Department of Workforce Development (WisDWD), manufacturing is the largest industry segment within the County. Food Manufacturing comprises the largest industry sub-segment, due to the location of Brakebush Brothers, Inc. within the County. Between 2007 and 2012, the total number of jobs in the Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing and Animal Production industries increased. Fabricated metal product manufacturing grew by 24 jobs, most likely due to growth of TW Design and Manufacturing in the City of Montello. All other reported industries observed a decrease in number of jobs, likely a result of the “Great Recession” that occurred during this period.

As of 2010, the largest private employers in Marquette County included: Brakebush Brothers, Inc. (poultry processing); Gumz Muck Farms LLC (crop farming); Wisconsin Illinois Senior (nursing care); TW Design and Manufacturing LLC (machining shop); Northland Community Services, Inc (individual and family services); and Arimon Technologies Inc. (electric component manufacturing).

While there is no data available on the total number of jobs in the Town of Buffalo, Table 9 shows the number jobs in Marquette County from 2011 to 2014. Overall, the number of jobs provided in the County decreased slightly over the three-year period. Certain sectors have gained jobs, while other sectors were negatively impacted by the mid-2000s economic downturn, particularly the Professional and Business Services, and Manufacturing sectors.

TABLE 9				
JOBS IN MARQUETTE COUNTY, 2011- 2014				
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Natural Resources & Mining	230	251	262	286
Construction	80	80	77	75
Manufacturing	1,192	1,218	1,206	1,133
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	486	467	501	510
Information	40	41	38	40
Financial Activities	100	102	96	90
Professional & Business Services	133	90	72	74
Education & Health Services	636	666	683	688
Leisure & Hospitality	439	446	419	419
Other Services	93	96	88	86
Public Administration	193	199	183	186
Total	3,621	3,654	3,623	3,587

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 2016

Employment projections for the County come from the Department of Workforce Development. The WisDWD sees growth for jobs in the “Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods” 3-digit NAICS code, noticing a growth of 32% in the industry within the County between 2007 and 2012. Another potential area for growth is in animal production, which saw a 10% increase between 2007 and 2012. Gasoline stations, food services, and nursing and residential care facilities saw dramatic decrease – each around 25% - during the same time period.

Additional economic information is available through Economic Modeling Specialists (EMSI), a firm providing comprehensive labor market analysis. EMSI projects that the manufacturing and poultry processing industries will continue to grow between 2013 and 2023, with a total increase of 221 jobs within Marquette County. However, this is somewhat offset by the projected declines in employment in farming, sawmills, and drinking establishments. EMSI projects that the total number of jobs within Marquette County will grow by 8% during this time period.

INCOME & WAGES

According to Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development data, Marquette

County’s annual average wage in 2014 was \$31,068, this represents 71% of the Statewide annual average wage of \$43,856. Every employment sector in the County paid less than the State average, with the lone exception of the Other Services sector, which paid 2.0% higher than the State average. The Manufacturing, and Trade, Transportation and Utilities sectors experienced the largest increases in average annual wage, they increased by 17.1% and 10.3% respectively between 2013 and 2014.

Part of the gap between Marquette County’s wages and the Statewide average wages is attributed to the absence of a nearby metropolitan center or business center. Well-paid service workers tend to gravitate toward areas with mature markets for their services. Similarly, insurance wages depend largely on the presence of a headquarters or processing center that generates technical, professional and managerial jobs. Likewise, retailers’ wages are likely to be higher if shoppers are numerous enough to justify full-time shifts and wealthy enough to buy upscale goods.

Table 10 provides information about the relative income of residents living in the Town of Buffalo compared to Marquette County and Wisconsin residents. The table includes statistics for per capita income (total income divided by the total number of residents), median family income, and adjusted gross income. An important distinction between median income and the Wisconsin Department of Revenue adjusted gross income data is that the latter does not include social security and other types of transfer payments. The Town of Buffalo’s median family income and adjusted gross income compares favorably to Marquette County, but the Town’s per capita income is slight less than the County’s. Marquette County’s per capita income, median family income, and adjusted gross income are all considerably lower than the State averages. The County’s less than favorable comparison to the State is also reflected in unemployment and other key economic indicators. This trend is not expected to change in the near future.

TABLE 10				
INCOME COMPARISON				
	2000 Per Capita Income	2010 Per Capita Income	2010 Median Family Income	2010 Adjusted Gross Income
Wisconsin	\$21,271	\$27,907	\$67,232	\$46,958
Marquette Co.	\$16,924	\$23,914	\$56,581	\$34,521
Town of Buffalo	\$17,009	\$22,829	\$62,250	\$42,503

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

AMISH POPULATION

The Amish represent a significant share of the population in the Town of Buffalo. The Amish collectively own slightly less than 2 sections of land in the town. Generally speaking, Amish families live east of STH 22 and South of CTH B (This is a general description, some families do live west of STH 22). The Amish resident stake great pride in the community and work hard to ensure that their homesteads and farming operations are well-kept.

This community of residents plays an important role in the town's economic vitality. The Amish provide quality baked goods, produce, and crafts for sale from their residences. These products bring local tourists and other purchasers into the Town of Buffalo. The scale of this economic impact has not been accurately measured by the county, state or census bureau. Given the reluctance of the Amish to participate in survey efforts, it is unlikely that the economic impact of their activities will ever be precisely known. Residents judge the scale and success of the Amish community by the traffic seen in the town during the warmer months of the year when their products are available for sale.

EDUCATION LEVELS

A good indicator of the quality of life in a community is the educational attainment of its residents. Generally, a high level of educational attainment reflects a skilled population with a higher earning potential. Based on available U.S. Census information, in both the Town and County the vast majority of the population has obtained a high school diploma. In the Town of Buffalo, 88.3% percent of residents age 25 have a high school diploma. In the County, the situation is approximately the same at 87.8 percent. Approximately 13% of Marquette County residents have earned a bachelor's degree or higher education status while 10.6% of Town residents have an advanced degree (U.S. Census 2010).

POVERTY STATUS

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 20.3% of town residents, were living below the poverty level in 2010. Similar statistics for Marquette County reveal 13.1% of County residents, were living below the poverty level in 2010. This information is significant because it indicates that a larger portion of Town residents are living below the poverty level when compared to the County as a whole.

4.0 HOUSING ELEMENT

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4.0 HOUSING ELEMENT

Introduction

Traditionally, most rural towns have a high percentage of single-family homes, often with few other housing types available. As new residents move in and the population ages, other types of housing must be looked at to provide the variety needed to meet the needs of all residents. This is particularly true in towns where a large proportion of the population has been long-time residents. In such communities, there is a desire for these residents to remain in the town during their retirement years. In developing the 20-year Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Buffalo, the existing housing stock has been reviewed and recommendations made to meet the housing needs to the year 2020. This chapter includes specific goals and objectives to ensure that local housing choices exist for all stages and conditions of life, and the vision described below can be achieved.

Housing Vision

Quality single-family housing is available in the Town of Buffalo as a result of effect local zoning. These choices include a balance of rural residences and a few scattered conservation subdivisions. To maintain the Town's rural character, single-family residences are located to blend in with the Town's natural features and farmland. All residential development in Buffalo is attractive, well maintained, and aptly suited for raising a family. Neighbors support neighbors, especially seniors.

Existing Housing Supply

In 1990, there were 342 housing units in the Town of Buffalo. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were **461 housing units in the town**. This translates to a 35% percent increase in the total housing stock in the last 10 years. Based on this information, on average, **12 new homes are built in the town each year**.

New housing in the Town of Buffalo is being developed along town and county roads throughout the town. There is no identifiable concentration of new housing development in a subdivision or otherwise in the town. Individual waste treatment systems serve all of the housing units in the Town of Buffalo. All residents depend on well water.

The housing supply in the town consists of **single-family homes**. However, single-family homes may not be suitable for everyone:

Some people are not able to afford a single-family home.

Others may not be able to physically handle the maintenance necessary to keep up a home and yard.

Still others may simply prefer living in an alternative style of housing.

Unfortunately, due to limited infrastructure (i.e. no municipal water and sewer), suitable areas for condominiums, two-family attached and other higher density alternative residential developments are extremely limited. Currently, the only alternative housing option available in the town are mobile homes.

Currently, 10.2 percent of the Town of Buffalo housing supply is rental-occupied (2000 Census). This translates into **42 rental housing units**. From a planning perspective, to ensure diversity and affordability in an urban environment, it is recommended that a full third of a community's housing supply consist of rental units. Unfortunately, similar recommendations do not exist for rural areas like the Town of Buffalo. Given the limited support infrastructure available, **maintaining 10 percent of the area's housing stock as rental housing is recommended**. This recommendation assumes that the rental units are single-family detached homes and duplex units. Other alternative rental housing choices (i.e. higher density developments including condominiums and apartments) are not viable in the town. As a result, long-time residents and people with special needs may choose to move away from the Town of Buffalo to nearby communities that offer additional housing options.

Structural Assessment

During the planning process, the Town's consultant completed a "windshield survey" of the local housing supply to determine structural quality. The theory being that outside appearance relates directly to structural code compliance.

This survey revealed that a significant supply of the town's housing is seasonal. In some areas, the housing does not appear to be designed for year-round use (i.e. poor insulation, roofing materials, window quality, etc.). These units will require changes to support year-round use. Moreover, the age of the housing supply also indicates that structural maintenance is needed to maintain the safety and quality of the housing supply. Newer (post 1970s) development adheres to building code requirements and appears to be structural sound.



Age and Quality of Housing Stock

A good indicator of the quality of the available housing is the relative age of the housing stock in a community. In the town, **137 housing units (28.6% of all housing) were built before 1959** (40+ years old). This does not necessarily mean that the units are in poor condition, but it does indicate that the need for repairs and maintenance is likely greater than in communities with a newer housing supply. **Table 11** lists the number of units and the corresponding percent of the county's and town's total housing stock by year built. Most homes in the town were constructed between 1970 and 1979. Most homes in the county were constructed prior to 1940.

TABLE 11 AGE OF HOUSING STOCK				
Year Structure Built	# of Units in Town of Buffalo	% of Total Town of Buffalo Housing Stock	# of Units in Marquette County	% of Total Marquette County
1990 to 2000	119	24.9%	1,725	20.0%
1980 to 1989	60	12.5%	1,248	14.4%
1970 to 1979	124	25.9%	1,839	21.2%
1960 to 1969	39	8.1%	916	10.6%
1940 to 1959	29	6.1%	1,002	11.6%
1939 or earlier	108	22.5%	1,934	22.3%
Total	479	100.0%	8,664	100.0%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Occupancy

For a housing market to operate efficiently, there must be an adequate supply of available housing units for sale or rent. A housing market's supply of available housing units must be sufficient to allow for the formation of new households by the existing population, to allow for in-migration, and to provide opportunities for households to change their housing because of a change in size or status.

According to *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)*, an overall **available vacancy rate of 6.5%** (1.5% for the owned portion of a housing stock and 5.0% for the rented portion) **is required to allow for an adequate housing choice among consumers**. The overall available vacancy rate for Wisconsin is 4.75% for rentals and 1.14% for owner occupants (WI Dept. of Commerce, 2000 Consolidated Plan). Vacancy rates vary from one community to the next. High vacancy rates offer a degree of competition in terms of price. The available vacancy rate of a housing market is a good indication of the adequacy of the housing supply, which in turn helps dictate the cost of housing.

In 2000, the **vacancy rate in the Town of Buffalo for owner-occupied housing units was 0.3%**. The **rental vacancy rate was 2.3%**. The majority of vacant units in the Town of Buffalo consist of seasonal, recreational or occasional use cottages (37 units). For comparison, Marquette County had a 2.1% homeowner vacancy rate and a 6.2% rental vacancy rate in 2000.

Cost of Housing

The available supply, age and condition of the housing stock are the basis for determining the demand for and cost of housing. The 1990 U.S. Census indicated that the median value of an owner-occupied home in the Town of Buffalo was \$47,900. This is above the 1990 median home for Marquette County of \$45,600. Table 12 compares the **2000 median home values** for all towns in Marquette County. The housing value in the Town of Buffalo ranked 8th of the 14 towns in Marquette County.



TABLE 12 MEDIAN HOME VALUES OF TOWNS IN MARQUETTE COUNTY		
Town	2000 Median Home Value	Rank
<i>Town of Buffalo</i>	<i>\$97,300</i>	<i>8</i>
Town of Crystal Lake	\$104,200	4
Town of Douglas	\$87,700	11
Town of Harris	\$91,600	9
Town of Mekan	\$98,200	5
Town of Montello	\$105,100	3
Town of Moundville	\$97,500	6
Town of Neshkoro	\$115,500	2
Town of Newton	\$86,900	13
Town of Oxford	\$97,400	7
Town of Packwaukee	\$90,400	10
Town of Shields	\$87,300	12
Town of Springfield	\$84,400	14
Town of Westfield	\$116,500	1
Overall County Average	\$87,000	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 13 provides a detailed breakdown of the 2000 Census information pertaining to the value of owner-occupied housing units in the Town of Buffalo. Only 140 residents of the Town of Buffalo were asked to complete the Census Long Form. As a result, the information is specific to 140 housing units. However, the percentages should be indicative of the breakdown of all housing values in the town.

TABLE 13 2000 TOWN OF BUFFALO OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING VALUE		
Cost Range	Number of Units	% of All Housing
Less than \$50,000	7	5.0%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	70	50.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	55	39.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4	2.9%
\$200,000 or more	4	2.9%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

With respect to rental housing, there were 178 renter-occupied housing units in the City of Montello and 42 units in the Town of Buffalo in 2000. The median contract rent rate in the City of Montello was \$413 and in the Town of Buffalo **the median rent rate was \$457 in 2000**. These rates do not include utilities. These rates are competitive with the 2000 median contract rent rate for Marquette County (\$456). The Town of Buffalo rate is especially competitive when you consider that the rental market consists mostly of single family style homes and mobile homes, not apartments.

Housing Affordability Analysis

Does the cost of housing match the ability of residents to pay for it? This is the fundamental question to answer when determining housing affordability. There are many ways to answer this question. One common technique comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This method involves comparing income to housing costs. According to HUD, **housing is considered affordable when it costs no more than 30% of total household income**. Per HUD standards, people should have the choice of having decent and safe housing for no more than 30% of their household income.

In 2000, the median annual household income in the Town of Buffalo was \$38,594. Therefore, the median monthly income was \$3,216. Thirty (30%) percent of the median monthly income yields \$965 or less to be used for housing costs (including taxes and insurance). The 2000 median monthly mortgage payment in the town was \$781 with the median rent contract at \$457. According to the 2000 Census, **24.2 percent of town homeowners paid more than 30% of their household income on housing costs** and no renters reported paying more than 30% of their household income on housing costs.



Photo Above is Example of Undesired Mobile Home Development

Based on this information, it appears that available housing in the town is quite affordable. However, a significant share of homeowners pay a disproportionate amount of money for their housing. This reflects both modest income levels of town residents and a desire of residents to have sizable homes on large parcels of land.

One strategy to promote affordable housing is to encourage quality manufactured housing in the Town of Buffalo. It is important to point out that manufactured homes are not mobile homes. Likewise, it must be clearly stated that the Town of Buffalo does not encourage mobile home park development or additional mobile homes on individual lots.

Manufactured housing is considered a viable affordable housing choice only if units are compatible in size, appearance and quality of area stick-built housing. Any manufactured housing unit must be constructed in accordance with local building and zoning restrictions. The manufactured home, once located on a property, should be virtually indistinguishable from 70 percent of site built housing located within a half mile of the home. Therefore, manufactured housing should have a similar roof pitch, garage facilities, and be located on a foundation, basement, or crawl space as a site built home would be required. Manufactured homes may even be two stories.

Manufactured housing is far more affordable than stick built housing because homes are built in a factory, which eliminates delays and costs associated with weather and the factory approach improves efficiencies. These conditions result in significant cost savings. Manufactured housing costs are typically around \$40 a square foot, compared to \$90 or \$100 per square foot for site built housing.

Opportunities for Housing Choice - Barriers to Affordable Housing

Opportunities for elderly, disabled, and low-income housing are limited in the Town of Buffalo. The existing housing supply consists primarily of single-family dwellings. There are no assisted living or group facilities located in the town. Therefore, seniors and disabled persons who reside



Two Photos Above are Examples of Desirable and Affordable Manufactured Housing with attached garages, appropriate roof pitch, front porches, and located on a foundation, crawl space or basement.

in the Town of Buffalo must be able to live independently, have assistance available to them, or seek residency in nearby communities that can provide needed services. As a result, assistance from friends, family members and neighbors is very important to senior and disabled persons living in the Town of Buffalo.

The fundamental reason for limited housing choices in the Town of Buffalo is the fact that the community is still rural in nature. The town's residential development is extremely low density. The overall density is approximately 1 units per 70 acres. This density is not anticipated to change significantly during the life of this plan given historic building permit trends. Consequently, the supply of jobs, public transportation and other services and opportunities that are necessary to accommodate low-income, elderly, and disabled populations are either unavailable or extremely limited in supply.

There are many possible ways to incorporate alternative housing styles (i.e. apartments, senior housing, duplexes, condominiums, etc.) in the Town of Buffalo. The first priority when considering alternative housing should be to ensure that units are adequately served with water, sewer, and other basic infrastructure needs. Therefore, it will be necessary to locate alternative housing in areas that can accommodate alternative treatment systems permissible through COMM 83. COMM 83 is a portion of Wisconsin's Administrative Code that permits the use of proven alternative, on-site wastewater treatment technologies in areas that cannot accommodate traditional treatment methods (i.e., septic tanks). The specific needs presented by multi-family residences may be able to be addressed by these technologies. Of course, any new alternative development should be compatible with surrounding housing. Therefore, special consideration should be given to parking, signage, landscaping and facade requirements. It should be understood that given past market trends, it is not expected that alternative housing will be developed in the Town of Buffalo. However, if a development were proposed, these considerations should be addressed.

Future Housing Need

According to the Marquette County Community Planning Survey, conducted in June 2002, residents of the Town of Buffalo were asked whether there was a need for various types of housing in the Town of Buffalo. What follows is a summary of the results. The percentages indicate residents who agree or strongly agree that this type of housing is needed:

- Assisted Living-Elderly (41.0%)
- Single Family Housing (29.2%)
- Low to Moderate Income Housing (26.3%)
- Duplexes (7.2%)
- Multi-Unit Apartments (6.5%)
- High Income Housing (6.4%)
- Mobile Home Parks (6.2%)

Based on population projections and the fact that household size is steadily decreasing, 135 new homes will be needed through 2025. Based on historic building permit trends, town estimates approximately 264 new homes will be built in the town by 2025.

Housing Programs

A number of federal and state housing programs are available to help the Town of Buffalo promote the development of housing for individuals with lower incomes, senior housing, housing for people with special and/or housing maintenance needs.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES

HUD is the federal agency primarily responsible for housing programs and community development. Though many of its programs are directed to larger cities and urban areas, the Town of Buffalo does qualify for some available funds. Specifically, HUD provides money to non-entitlement (i.e. communities with populations less than 50,000) communities through grants. In the State of Wisconsin, the **Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR)** within the Department of Administration is responsible for the distribution of these federal funds. It awards these funds through a competitive proposal process.

The **United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD)** provides a variety of housing and community development programs for rural areas. Its programs are generally available to communities with populations of 10,000 or less. It provides support for rental housing development, direct and guaranteed mortgage loans for homebuyers, and support for self-help and cooperative housing development.

STATE PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES

Beyond the funds distributed through HUD, the DHIR administers several state funded programs that can potentially be used to finance housing improvements. Money available through the DHIR, because it is funded by general-purpose revenue, cannot be used to invest directly in housing development. However, funds can achieve the desired result by helping organizations develop the capacity to develop houses or by providing various types of financial assistance to homebuyers or renters through grants to local governments or non-profit agencies.

The **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)** is a quasi-governmental agency that finances housing development through the sale of bonds. Unlike the DHIR, it receives no direct state-tax support. Therefore, WHEDA can provide mortgage financing for first-time homebuyers and financing for multifamily housing as well. Specific programs evolve and change with the needs of the housing market.

LOCAL PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES

The Town of Buffalo has the ability to affect the type and cost of housing available in the area through local regulations and policies. While most government regulations are implemented in order to protect public health, safety and welfare needs, they may also have unintended adverse impacts on affordability.

One technique for ensuring a range of housing choice is to provide a variety of densities and lot sizes. This can be regulated through recommended improvements in the **comprehensive plan**,

subdivision control ordinances (including conservation subdivisions – See the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Chapter for additional information), and local zoning controls.

As of 2016, Marquette County administered the County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance in the Town of Buffalo. In 2011, the Town of Buffalo adopted a Town Zoning Ordinance, which Marquette County administers under contract for the Town.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements

Housing is a secondary land use in the Town of Buffalo, with farmland and undeveloped natural areas as the primary land uses. Given its importance, housing can directly affect most other elements of this comprehensive plan. Land Use, Utilities and Community Facilities, Transportation, Economic Development and Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources are all elements directly affected by housing. Therefore, it is important that the elements are consistent and support one another.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Land use dictates the amount of land available for housing, as well as its location, type and density. The *Future Land Use Maps* devote 1,311 acres to residential use by. Furthermore, the goals and objectives of the Land Use Element recommend reviewing building permit and residential platting activity to gauge development trends.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Improvements such as roads, sewer, water, parks, recreational facilities and schools all need to be coordinated with the housing decisions and vice versa. The best method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern, presented on the Future Land Use Maps. This approach will greatly enhance the efficiency of capital improvements and services.

TRANSPORTATION

The location of housing affects commuting patterns and transportation costs. The inverse is also true. The location and density of housing affects transportation needs. The location of housing

influences on which roads people drive or whether they need to drive at all. These factors were carefully considered in the Transportation Element to ensure compatibility with projected residential development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Housing needs must be linked to a community's economic development plans. It is important to ensure that the housing supply is affordable to local workers. For this reason, an affordability analysis is presented in this chapter. Moreover, given that housing is an important land use in the Town of Buffalo, quality housing directly impacts the town's ability to finance needed improvements to support the economy through receipt of property taxes.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The desire to preserve agricultural and natural areas competes with the desire of others to build additional housing in the Town of Buffalo. These competing interests are balanced through the land suitability analysis information presented in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element. This information helps to ensure that housing is located in areas that will have the least impact possible on existing farming areas and important natural resources, while still supporting additional residential development needs.

Goals and Objectives

Based on population projections through 2025 and the predicted reduction in household size over that same period, it is estimated that there will be at least 135 additional housing units needed in the Town of Buffalo. To ensure that these units are of a high quality, goals and objectives are included here based on the information gained during the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis and input from town residents and the Planning Advisory Committee members.

These goals and objectives were developed to ensure that the Town of Buffalo remains a good place to raise a family for the next 20 years. The community acknowledges the opportunity for all property owners to receive fair value for their lands with defined standards for managing growth and maintaining sound land use.

OVERALL GOALS

1. Maintain the environmental assets and rural character of the community so that it continues to be an attractive place to live.
2. Conserve or improve the quality of existing single-family housing and maintain housing values.
3. Increase the supply of housing opportunities to serve residents of all ages.

OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage future single-family residential developments where services are readily available, conflicts with agricultural uses are minimized, and efficient, cost effective development is most likely.
2. Using the information provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element, identify and map areas for primary and secondary conservation in the Town of Buffalo.
3. Develop a conservation subdivision ordinance to encourage the preservation of natural areas, buffers, and protect farmland in the town.
4. Encourage “low impact” development within the town that can help reduce stormwater runoff and flooding.
5. Support existing efforts and consider new programs that provide needed assistance for elderly and disabled residents, who wish to stay in their own homes. This effort may include coordination with the City of Montello and Marquette County to direct alternative and multiple family developments to the City where appropriate services are available.
 - a. Develop articles for the town newsletter that describe available services and contact persons.
 - b. Develop a brochure for interested residents in need of assistance programs available through the county and private organizations (i.e. home maintenance programs, transportation services, visiting nurses, meals on wheels, etc.)
 - c. Coordinate with the local school districts to provide opportunities for students to volunteer time assisting seniors with special projects on occasions like “Make a Difference Day” or through other groups coordinated by the school district like the National Honor Society, Student Council, etc.
6. Educate town residents about the importance of property maintenance.
 - a. Hold a special town meeting to discuss the issue with residents.
 - b. Develop articles for the town newsletter that highlight property maintenance techniques and benefits.

5.0 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

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5.0 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT



Introduction

The Town of Buffalo's transportation system consists of local roads, low use roads, a minor arterial, and major and minor collectors. Certain areas of the town can also accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic. However, private vehicles are the primary means of transportation in, through, and around the Town of Buffalo.

Transportation Vision

Well-maintained local roads and county trunks serve the Town of Buffalo. Residents enjoy easy access to nearby communities via STH 22 and other connecting highways. Residents depend on their own vehicles to meet their transportation needs and use the Town's interconnecting bike trails in good weather. Residents without vehicles rely on the kindness of friends, families and neighbors. Volunteer groups (i.e. churches, etc.) and the county provide transportation opportunities for seniors and other transit dependent residents. Conflicts between vehicles and the Amish have been minimized through effective signage and education programs.

Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities in the Town of Buffalo are basic facilities ranging from rural town roads to state highways. Residents enjoy easy access to town roads, county trunk highways, and STH 22. Opportunities for safe pedestrian travel are limited given a lack of sidewalks and few trail facilities to connect developed areas. Residents of the Town of Buffalo rely on their personal vehicles to meet most of their transportation needs. Other modes of transit, including light rail and air transportation are not available in the town, nor are they likely to be developed prior to 2020 given that the population and local businesses do not demand, nor can they support, these types of transportation services.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Most local roads in the Town of Buffalo have limited shoulder areas and the posted speed limits are usually more than 45 miles per hour. These conditions hamper safe pedestrian travel opportunities. Moreover, given the relatively low-density development pattern and the fact that nearly all goods and services are located several miles away in nearby cities and villages, walking to places of work, shopping or entertainment is not realistic for most residents. It is simply much easier to drive. This situation is not anticipated to

change over the planning period. As a result, people without access to vehicles face severe transportation challenges in obtaining services and employment, especially given that there is no public transportation service available in the town. Seniors and the disabled are particularly challenged to find adequate transportation.

Limited opportunities for walking and hiking exist at county park facilities located in the Town of Buffalo. In addition, if conservation and /or cluster development subdivisions are developed in the town, these developments could include multiple-use (walking, hiking, skiing) trails.

CYCLING OPPORTUNITIES

As part of its *State Highway Plan 2020*, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) completed a bicycling conditions assessment in conjunction with planned state highway priority corridors, to identify key linkages in Marquette County.

The WisDOT Map provided on the next page only suggests possible bicycle routes along state, county, and local roads. Although the plan does not establish bicycle routes in these areas, routes along state highways will be included in WisDOT's State Highway 2020 Plan and WisDOT will control their development.

The WisDOT Plan Map ranked several roads in the Town of Buffalo based on their appropriateness for bicycle traffic. The road ratings are primarily based on the road width (i.e. ability to accommodate a shoulder path) and traffic volume. Secondary considerations include the percent of truck traffic and site distance restrictions. CTH O and CTH B were given a "green" rating, which indicates the best conditions for bicycling. CTH F is also identified as a potential local bicycle connection route. WisDOT indicates that STH 22 is considered undesirable for bicycle traffic because of its high speed limits and traffic volumes.

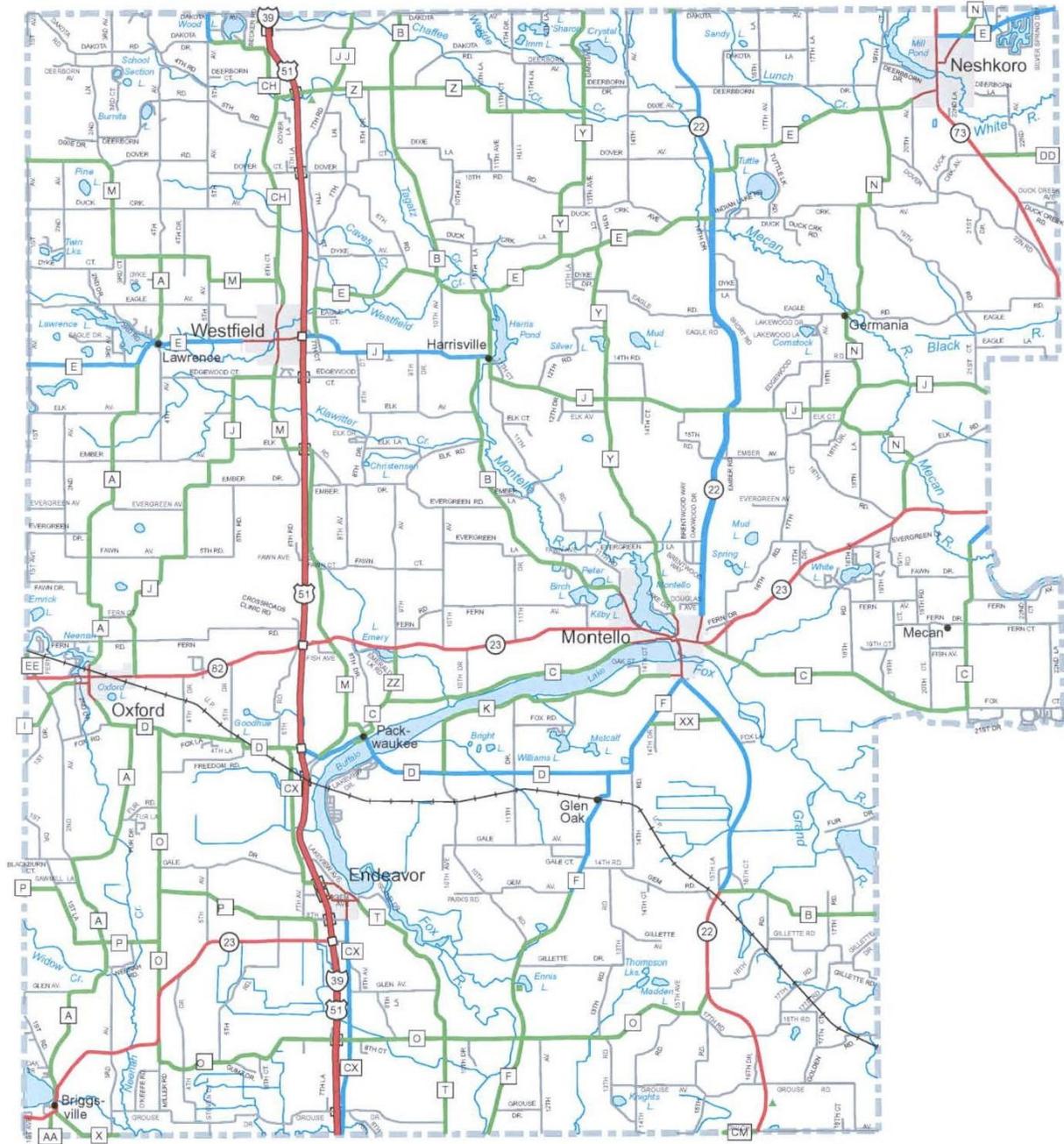
The WisDOT suggestions for bicycle paths along county and town roads are simply suggestions. Marquette County is under no obligation to adopt these suggested routes as official trail routes. Currently, **Marquette County Bike Tour Routes through the Town of Buffalo** (as identified by the Marquette County Citizens Recreation Committee, Marquette County Highway Department and Marquette County Board) **exist along Gillett Drive, 10th Road and CTH F**. Efforts are also underway to extend a 10-mile segment of **Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail** through Marquette County, between Portage and John Muir County Park. A potential route is shown on the *Transportation Network Map*.

RAILROAD CORRIDORS

One railroad line extends into the eastern portion of the Town of Buffalo. It is owned and operated by Union Pacific Railroad. Currently, this rail corridor is in active use as a shipping route across the state of Wisconsin. There are no plans to abandon this railroad corridor. This railroad corridor route crosses STH 22, 16th Road, 17th Road, and Golden Road in the Town of Buffalo.

Bicycling Conditions

Marquette County



- Town Roads
- Best Conditions for Bicycling
- Moderate Conditions for Bicycling
- Hillways with Wider Paved Shoulders with Higher Volumes
- High Volume, Undesirable Conditions
- Bicyclists Prohibited or Not Recommended
- Bicycle Touring Trails
- Urban Escape Routes
- Major Urban Streets

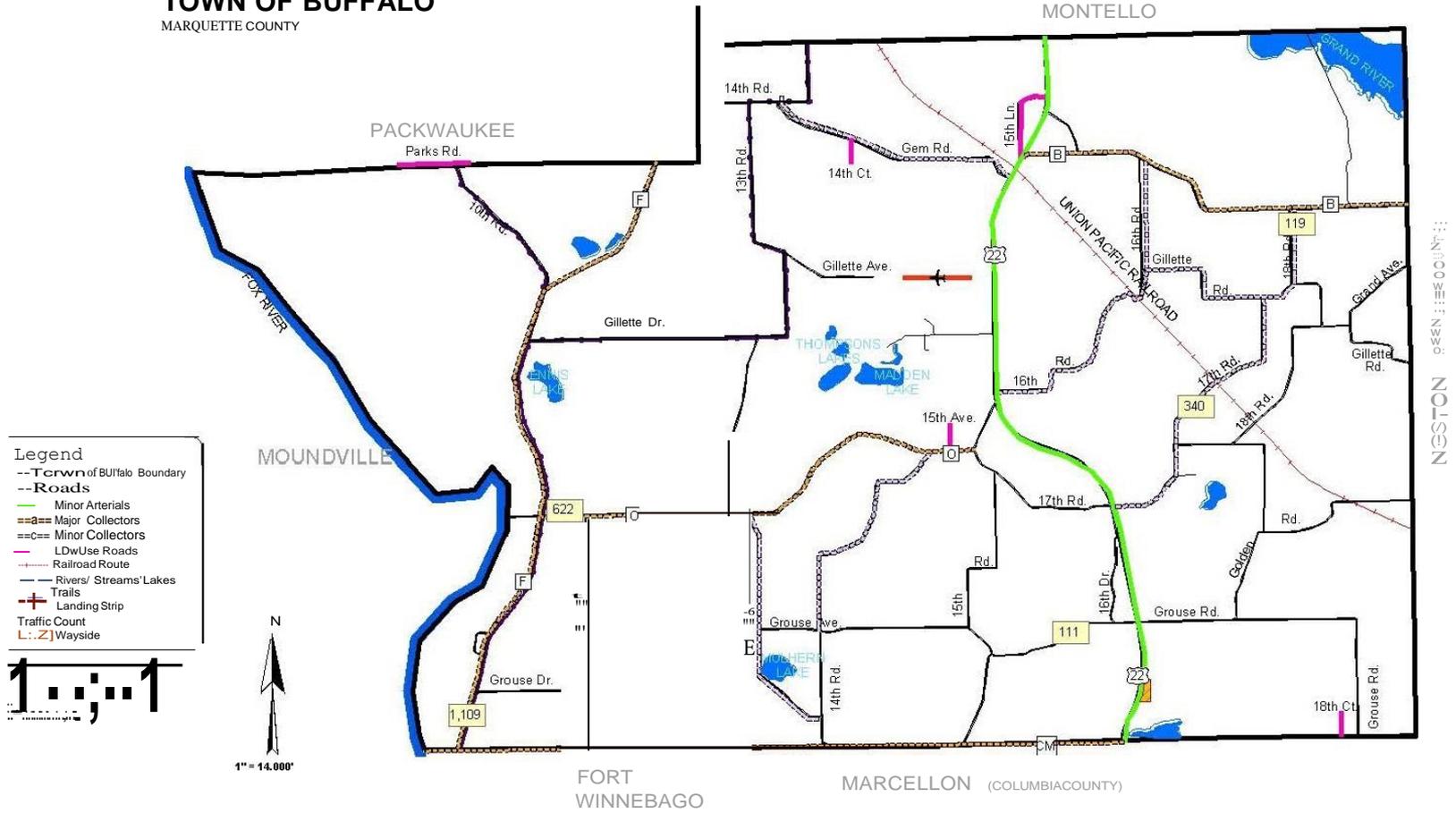


Scale

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Miles

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

TOWN OF BUFFALO
MARQUETTE COUNTY



- Legend**
- Town of Buffalo Boundary
 - Roads
 - Minor Arterials
 - Major Collectors
 - Minor Collectors
 - LDW Use Roads
 - Railroad Route
 - Rivers/ Streams/ Lakes
 - Trails
 - Landing Strip
 - Traffic Count
 - Wayside



111 340 119 22 100 1,109 622 14th Rd 15th Ln 16th Rd 17th Rd 18th Ct 19th Rd 20th Rd 21st Rd 22nd Rd 23rd Rd 24th Rd 25th Rd 26th Rd 27th Rd 28th Rd 29th Rd 30th Rd 31st Rd 32nd Rd 33rd Rd 34th Rd 35th Rd 36th Rd 37th Rd 38th Rd 39th Rd 40th Rd 41st Rd 42nd Rd 43rd Rd 44th Rd 45th Rd 46th Rd 47th Rd 48th Rd 49th Rd 50th Rd 51st Rd 52nd Rd 53rd Rd 54th Rd 55th Rd 56th Rd 57th Rd 58th Rd 59th Rd 60th Rd 61st Rd 62nd Rd 63rd Rd 64th Rd 65th Rd 66th Rd 67th Rd 68th Rd 69th Rd 70th Rd 71st Rd 72nd Rd 73rd Rd 74th Rd 75th Rd 76th Rd 77th Rd 78th Rd 79th Rd 80th Rd 81st Rd 82nd Rd 83rd Rd 84th Rd 85th Rd 86th Rd 87th Rd 88th Rd 89th Rd 90th Rd 91st Rd 92nd Rd 93rd Rd 94th Rd 95th Rd 96th Rd 97th Rd 98th Rd 99th Rd 100th Rd

MASS TRANSIT

Mass transit service is **not available** in the Town of Buffalo given its low density of development. Simply put, the density of development in the town cannot provide the rider ship needed to support a bus route.

There are no high-speed trains or other means of mass transit to serve residents of the Town of Buffalo. There is **no local demand** for these services and no plan exists to establish these facilities and services in the future.

The Town of Buffalo has **no plans to establish** its own transit service. Transit dependent residents of the town must rely on the assistance of friends or family, hire private transportation providers, or utilize Marquette County programs for seniors and disabled residents.

STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land. Arterials accommodate the movement of vehicles, while local roads are designed to provide direct access to individual parcels of land. Collectors serve both local and through traffic by providing a connection between arterials and local roads. Facilities classified under the Federal Aids Secondary System (county trunks and state highways) qualify for federal aid for capital projects involving construction, reconstruction or repair. State highway aids are available to communities for construction and maintenance. Aids cannot exceed 85% of expenditures based on a 3-year average.

Principal Arterials. There are no principal arterials in the Town of Buffalo.

Minor Arterials. STH 22 is the only minor arterial road in the Town of Buffalo. STH 22 runs north and south from the City of Montello past the Columbia County line.

Major Collectors. There are several county roads in the Town of Buffalo that are classified as minor collectors. Specifically, CTH B, CTH O, CTH F and CTH CM.



Streets and highways are classified according to their primary function, either to move vehicles or to serve adjacent land.

Principal Arterials – serve interstate and interregional trips.

Minor Arterials – accommodate inter-regional and inter-area traffic movements, often in conjunction with principal arterials.

Major Collectors – provide service to moderate sized communities and other intra-area traffic generators. Many county trunk highways fall into this classification.

Minor Collectors – these roads collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining portions of smaller communities and other higher function roads.

Local Roads – provide direct access to residential, commercial and industrial development.

Minor Collectors. There are 17.4 miles of minor collectors in the Town of Buffalo. Specifically, the following roads are classified as minor collectors:

- Ø 13th Road (between CTH O and 14th Road)
- Ø 14th Road between CTH O and Grouse Road)
- Ø 16th Road (between STH 22 and CTH B)
- Ø 18th Road (between 17th Road and CTH B)
- Ø 17th Road (between Gillett to HWY 22)
- Ø Gem Road (between STH 22 and 14th Road)
- Ø Gillett Road (between 17th Road and CTH B)

Local Roads. The remaining 32.5 miles of roads in the town are local. They provide access to residential, commercial and farm uses within the Town of Buffalo.

Low Use Roads. There are 2.3 miles of roads classified as low use in the Town of Buffalo. Specifically, these roads include:

- Ø 15th Avenue
- Ø 15th Lane
- Ø 18th Court
- Ø 14th Court
- Ø Parks Road

All the roads described in this section are illustrated on the *Transportation Network Map*. The town does not own any road maintenance equipment, nor does the town have any plans to acquire any. All town road construction, reconstruction and improvement projects are completed by Marquette County through contract agreements with the Town of Buffalo. Other maintenance (snow removal, etc.) is handled through contracts with Marquette County and private contractors. The town plans to utilize contract services indefinitely in the future because these arrangements provide quality, timely, cost effective services for the town.

In 2000 and 2001, Marquette County completed a series of traffic counts at several intersections in the Town of Buffalo. Table 16 provides a summary of the information obtained.

Road Name	Date of Count	Daily Average	Weekday Average	Weekend Average
Barry Road (east of STH 22)	Wk of 8/27/00	340	404	214
CTH F (1/10 th mile north of county line)	Wk of 9/23/01	1,109	1,224	879
CTH O (1/10 th mile east of CTH F)	Wk of 10/29/00	622	253	683
18 th Rd (1/10 th mile south CTH B)	Wk of 9/3/00	119	129	79
Grouse Rd (1/10 th mile west STH 22)	Wk of 8/27/00	111	100	131

Source: Marquette County Highway Department, 2002

TRUCK TRANSPORTATION

There are no freight or trucking companies located in the Town of Buffalo, nor are there plans to locate such a facility in the town. These types of facilities are more likely to be established in communities having more direct access to major transportation corridors not found in the Town of Buffalo. The **primary truck route is the STH 22 corridor**, which provides a north-south travel route through the town.

WATER TRANSPORTATION

Many residents and visitors to the Town of Buffalo utilize waterways for recreational travel along the Fox River and Grand Rivers. Therefore, continued access to these waterways for recreation and recreation-based travel is an important local priority for the future. The town believes that the available lake access is adequate to meet local demand for the next 20 years.



AIRPORTS

There are **no airport facilities** in the Town of Buffalo and no plans to establish any such facility. The nearest major airport facilities are located in Madison (Dane County Regional Airport) and Portage (Portage Municipal Airport). Both of these airports are accessible from the Town of Buffalo via USH 39/51 and I-90/94.

Summary of Existing Transportation Plans

WISDOT STATE HIGHWAY PLAN 2020

Wisconsin's State Trunk Highway system, consisting of approximately 11,800 miles of roads, is aging and deteriorating at the same time traffic is increasing. In response to this critical issue, WisDOT, in partnership with its stakeholders, has developed the **WisDOT State Highway Plan 2020**, a 21-year strategic plan which considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin.

The plan only addresses STH 22 in the Town of Buffalo. This corridor is not expected to experience major congestion through 2020. As a result, no major improvements or expansions are planned. Beyond basic maintenance, the corridor is expected to remain roughly the same as it exists today over the next 20 years. In accordance with this, **WisDOT 2002-2007 Highway Improvement Program** for District 4, identifies the

completed STH 22 bridge replacement project as the only planned improvement through 2007.

MARQUETTE COUNTY

The Marquette County Highway Department has a five-year plan for improvements. This plan indicates two projects in the Town of Buffalo. Specifically, the county plans to pave CTH 0 in 2004 and crack seal CTH F in 2004.

MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL INITIATIVE

Since 1996, the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRI) advanced from a series of service concepts, including increased operating speeds, train frequencies, system connectivity and high service reliability, into a well-defined vision to create a 21st century regional passenger rail system. This vision has been transformed into a transportation plan known as the Midwest Regional Rail Systems (MWRRS). The primary purpose of the MWRRS is to meet future regional travel needs through significant improvements to the level and quality of regional passenger rail service. The major MWRRS elements will improve Midwest travel. The major plan elements include:



- Use of 3,000 miles of existing rail rights-of-way to connect rural, small urban and major metropolitan areas throughout Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin.
- Operation of “hub-and-spoke” passenger rail system through Chicago to locations throughout the Midwest.
- Introduction of modern train equipment operating at speeds up to 110 mph
- Provision of multi-modal connections to improve system access
- Improvements in reliability and on-time performance



The cost to provide the improvements needed to facilitate a Chicago-Milwaukee-Minneapolis/Green Bay Route would be \$978 million, including rolling stock (i.e. passenger cars) and infrastructure improvements (i.e. track improvements). The current schedule provided in the MWRRS plan calls for the entire project to be completely on-line by 2012. The first phase of the MWRRS plan in Wisconsin calls for 110 mph rail service between Madison and Milwaukee, and continuing to Chicago by 2003.

EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) has adopted a transportation goal and supporting objectives, which it uses to evaluate transportation plans developed in the area. As part of the comprehensive planning process, these goals were reviewed to ensure consistency with the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. Many of the ECWRPC goals relate to services and facilities that are not available in the Town of Buffalo (i.e. airports, etc.).



The overall goal for the regional transportation program is “to provide a safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation system that provides personal mobility for all segments of the population and supports the economy of the region.” This statement is consistent with the vision and goals set forth by the Town of Buffalo. To support this goal, the ECWRPC has outlined a series of objectives pertaining to: integrated planning, maximum street effectiveness, an efficient street and highway system, safety, minimum environmental disruption, compatibility with land use patterns, conservation of energy, and multi-modal interaction. Each of these objectives is addressed to the fullest extent practical in this chapter of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*.

PASER RATING SYSTEM REPORT¹

In 2001, the Town of Buffalo had the Marquette County Highway Department complete its Pavement Surface Evaluation and Ratings (PASER) for all town roads in accordance with WisDOT requirements. PASER is a visual inspection system to develop a condition rating for community roads. PASER is an important tool for smaller government unit planning because it gives a picture of road conditions on all roads and can identify candidates for maintenance and rehabilitation. Surface defects, cracking and potholes are all examined during a typical PASER evaluation. Roads are rated 1 – 10 based on their condition.



- Rating 9 & 10 no maintenance required
- Rating 7 & 8 routine maintenance, crack sealing and minor patching
- Rating 5 & 6 preservative treatments (seal coating)
- Rating 3 & 4 structural improvement and leveling (overlay or recycling)
- Rating 1 & 2 reconstruction

¹ A detailed summary of the 2001 Town of Buffalo PASER results and a map are provided as an appendix to this plan.

Table 17 provides the total number of miles of roadway in the town by each PASER ranking. In total there are **52.34 miles of roads in the Town of Buffalo that were evaluated, 0.25 miles of which are gravel. The majority of town roads rated as a 3 in the PASER results.**

TABLE 15 MILES OF ROADWAY BY PASER RATINGS	
PASER RANK	TOTAL MILES OF ROAD
1	0
2	2.15
3	24.00
4	10.93
5	2.84
6	0
7	1.27
8	8.04
9	3.11
10	0

Source: 2001 PASER Rating System Report, Town of Buffalo

According to the PASER manual, it is recommended that communities strive to attain a rating of 7 for all paved roads, and a rating of 3 for unpaved roads.

Likewise, the Town of Buffalo places a strong priority on maintaining local roads. To achieve this goal, a representative of the Marquette County Highway Department conducts an annual review of all town roads. The result of the process is an accurate assessment of conditions and an identification of improvement priorities. This system has worked well for the town for many years.

If, in the future, the town decides that additional tools are necessary to determine the best course of action with respect to annual road improvements to maximize available funds, it is recommended that the town further analyze its PASER results using PASERWARE. This software program is designed to help communities consider different scenarios for extending their money with respect to road maintenance and improvements. Using PASERWARE, a community can determine what sequence of improvements is recommended to meet a certain goal (i.e. get all roads to a 7 rating). PASERWARE also will provide cost estimates for maintenance and construction projects. If desired, the town can provide the PASERWARE with the total funds available for roads in a given year, and the program will recommend ways to best spend the money to obtain the greatest return.

Based on the 2001 PASER results, the **town should also consider developing a capital improvements plan and budget** to effectively plan for road improvements in relation to other town spending needs. A capital improvements plan and budget would use the PASER or PASERWARE information to plan for road improvements in a 5 – 6 year

cycle. For additional information about capital improvement plans and budgets, refer to the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.

Transportation Issues and Concerns

CONFLICT BETWEEN AMISH AND VEHICLE USES

The Town of Buffalo faces a somewhat unique transportation challenge associated with the Amish population. The Amish residents rely on horse-drawn buggies to travel throughout the region. These slow-moving buggies on the narrow, winding town roads present some potential for conflict with other passing vehicles. Moreover, at horse-drawn buggies traveling at night are very difficult to see.

Complicating matters, the Amish offer crafts, homemade foods and other products for sale from their residences. This brings tourists to the area, which increases the potential for conflicts.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Over the life of this plan, additional development will occur in the Town of Buffalo. In particular, STH 22 has been identified as a potential development corridor. However, too much development along STH 22 may interfere with traffic flow and create additional traffic hazards. Likewise, significant levels of additional residential development will require supporting infrastructure, including well-maintained and constructed roads. These concerns were considered when the *Future Land Use Maps* were developed.

TRANSPORTATION BUDGETING

A long-standing transportation issue in the Town of Buffalo, and many other rural towns is the ever-present concern of road maintenance and improvements costs. These types of municipal activities are a major expense and can consume a large share of the limited town budget. This plan recommends strategies, including a capital improvements program and budget, to help the town to effectively budget for these costs over time.

A capital improvements program in the Town of Buffalo would serve as the town's present and near-future financial plan to match future capital improvement costs, such as roads, to anticipated revenues. The Town of Buffalo Planning Commission should be given the authority to develop and review the CIP/B, thereby linking planning to the annual budgetary process. CIP/B are usually prepared for five or six years into the future and updated annually. The CIP/B process would first identify and then prioritize capital expenditures. An estimated cost and means of financing each capital expenditure would be included as part of the process. The desired expenditures would be compared to the budget to determine annual spending priorities. The process helps to ensure that

improvements are made in a logical order and do not “surprise” town officials or taxpayers.

Coordination with Other Required Plan Elements

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

How do transportation facilities affect the aesthetics of the Town of Buffalo? Aesthetics refer to the “appearance and character” of an area. Generally speaking, a transportation project should reflect the aesthetics of a community. For the Town of Buffalo the aesthetic character varies significantly from one area to the next. The lakefront subdivisions have a much different character than the forested or farmland areas in other portions of the town.

The Issues and Opportunities Element establishes the framework for planning – the overall future vision – the ideal from which this plan has been developed. That vision will impact the way the town considers and approves changes to the transportation network. It will also guide their participation in activities sponsored by WisDOT. To realize the vision, and support the transportation vision presented in this chapter, the town will seek to preserve scenic areas using easements, designing road projects to fit into the natural landscape and landscaping areas where necessary to retain the rural character after road construction is completed.

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This critical question with respect to the Transportation Element and this element is: How will changes to the transportation system impact the preservation /protection of farmland and natural areas? Given that the town only has jurisdiction over town roads, the answer to this question in many areas of the Town of Buffalo will likely be dictated by actions of Marquette County and WisDOT. As a result, it will be incumbent upon town residents and leaders to continue to participate in public hearings and other opportunities for input, to ensure that local interests are realized in new road projects in farmland, undeveloped and natural areas of the Town of Buffalo.

The key is to ensure that the road network is adequate to meet the needs of local farmers and landowners, but not overbuilt to draw a substantial amount of additional residential development to farmland and natural areas. Otherwise, the result may be a loss of farmland and natural habitats to subdivision development. If not controlled, this pattern may eventually lead to additional road improvements to support new residents moving into the area.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

How will the Town of Buffalo ensure that the decisions made for the transportation system preserve the existing facilities and potentially reduce the need for expansion or realignment? The answer to this question is realized in the Land Use Element whereby

the location of future development, and associated transportation improvements, is correlated to the location of adequate utilities and community facilities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Providing a quality transportation system is important to the success of any business. Just as businesses need good access, employees also want to be able to efficiently access places of employment and shopping areas. Lack of access to employment opportunities may affect individual decisions to seek employment or live in a community. In the Town of Buffalo these issues were carefully considered. The local solutions to these issues are reflected on the *Future Land Use Maps*.

LAND USE

While transportation improvements generally respond to changes in land use, they also have the potential to directly and indirectly affect land development either by inducing new development or altering the pattern of existing development. However, land use changes are dependent on other factors as well. These include local plans, zoning, taxation, and the provision of public services.

What steps will be taken to ensure that transportation decisions and land use decisions are compatible? Although transportation is not the only influence on land use, it is important to be aware that decisions regarding the transportation system may impact land use both directly and indirectly. Therefore, efforts were made to plan accordingly for land uses along STH 22 and other developing areas of the town. These considerations and other are reflected on the *Future Land Use Maps*.

IMPLEMENTATION

Through the development of a capital improvements plan and budget the associated costs of the transportation element can be addressed. The town's capital improvements plan and budget will seek to not only plan for town expenditures but also to locate grant and low interest loan opportunities that may exist to fund needed improvements.

Goals and Objectives

It is the goal of the Town of Buffalo that residents will enjoy safe roads with minimal traffic congestion and safe bike/pedestrian routes and trails. Because the Town of Buffalo has a minimal amount of control over county roads and state highways, the goals in this section are related to actions that the town can control. The Town of Buffalo will work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of the Wisconsin "Smart Growth" Law, with Marquette County and WisDOT to ensure that adequate community transportation facilities are available to serve the area.

GOALS

1. To maintain and improve town roads in a timely and well planned manner.

2. Seek to expand opportunities for alternative transportation in the Town of Buffalo.

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and Budget (CIP/B) to coordinate and plan for annual roadway improvements and maintenance as well as and other capital improvements.
2. Coordinate with Marquette County to ensure that proposed trail routes, road improvements and other transportation facilities outlined in the Marquette County Transportation Element of the County Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan are completed in the Town of Buffalo in a coordinated fashion with the visions, goals and objectives expressed in this plan.
3. Develop a local policy to support access control standards to limit ingress and egress from county roads in order to protect the function of these corridors.
4. Annually review accident reports for the town to identify priorities for town transportation improvements to protect public safety.
5. As part of the Town's effort to develop a subdivision ordinance, seek to ensure that the residential road design standards are adequate for legal speeds, sizes and weights of vehicles, but also consider ways to minimize overall road width to promote slower speeds, enhance rural character, minimize runoff and limit adverse impacts on natural areas.
6. Using the future land use plan as a guide, seek to prevent the location of roadways through environmentally sensitive lands in the Town of Buffalo.
7. Seek to protect scenic areas when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities. To support this effort develop an inventory or catalogue, including photos, of scenic areas to be protected in the Town of Buffalo.
8. Encourage the development of bicycle and pedestrian trails, in accordance with WisDOT recommendations and the *Transportation Plan Element of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan*.
9. To improve safety on town roads associated with potential vehicle and horse-drawn buggy conflicts:
 - a. Work with the county to post traffic hazard and warning signs as needed
 - b. Work with the county to consider lower posted speed limits in these areas as needed
 - c. Maintain ditches to improve visibility
 - d. Coordinate with the Amish community leaders to ensure that they are aware of the dangers, minimize their travel at night, and use required reflectors as needed.

6.0 UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ELEMENT

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6.0 UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Introduction

Understanding the location, use and capacity of utilities and community facilities is an important consideration when planning for the future. This information, coupled with the demographic trends and projections, provides a realistic picture of service supply and demand. The community facilities and utilities discussed in this chapter were carefully considered in the development of the *Future Land Use Maps*.

Utilities and Community Facilities Vision

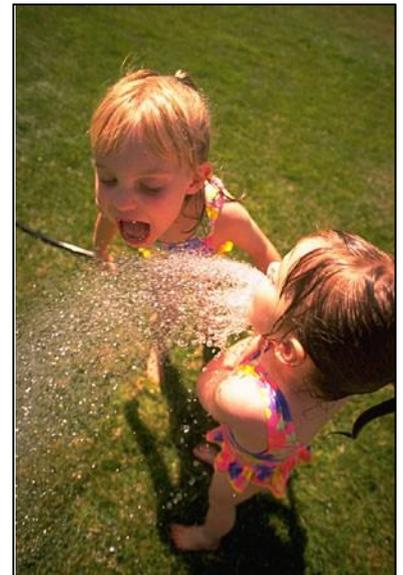
In 2020, The Town of Buffalo continues to provide all the basic Town services it has provided since 2002. The Town works with neighboring communities, to provide residents with efficient, cost-effective regional services that reduce the tax burden. All basic service needs are met by traveling to nearby communities like Montello, Pardeeville and Portage. Residents in need of specialized services travel to Portage and Madison. All residents rely on private well water and individual waste treatment systems.

Existing Utilities Inventory– Location, Use, Capacity

What follows is a description of existing utilities and community facilities within the Town of Buffalo. Neighboring communities or Marquette County provides many of the services available to town residents. These arrangements help to control town costs. Therefore, included in this chapter is information about some of the utilities and community facilities located in and provided by nearby communities and Marquette County.

WATER SUPPLY

Residents and businesses in the Town of Buffalo receive their water from **individual, private wells**. There is no municipal water service in the town and no plans to establish such service. The Town of Buffalo has a high quality supply of potable groundwater and surface water for nearly all anticipated uses. Additional information about groundwater resources is provided in the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element* of this Plan.



WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT

There are **no sanitary districts** in the Town of Buffalo. Likewise, there are no plans to establish sanitary districts. Residents and business utilize on-site private individual or community wastewater systems. The town supports the continued use of these types of private one-site facilities to handle wastewater needs. Furthermore, the town supports the use of *innovative treatment systems*, as approved by the town and permissible through COMM 83, to accommodate some rural development in conservation or cluster subdivisions. The Town of Buffalo does not believe that future residential, commercial or industrial development must connect to municipal sanitary service since safe and efficient on-site service can be achieved in most areas of the town.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater runoff is water from rainstorms or snowmelt that flows over the land rather than evaporating or soaking into the ground. Stormwater runoff is both urban and rural; however, urban areas generate more runoff because they have more impervious surface. An *impervious surface* is one that prevents water from infiltrating into the ground. Common impervious surfaces include roads, sidewalks, rooftops, and parking lots.

The Town of Buffalo has no curb and guttered areas. Stormwater management requirements are limited to construction sites and agricultural limitations imposed by Marquette County. There is no stormwater management plan in place for the Town of Buffalo. Open ditches are used to provide drainage for stormwater runoff. There are no county drainage districts in the Town of Buffalo and no plans to establish any in the future.

To meet the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act, the WDNR developed the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) Stormwater Discharge Permit Program, which is regulated under the authority of ch. NR 216, Wis. Adm. Code. As part of the EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, the WPDES Stormwater Program regulates discharge of stormwater in Wisconsin from construction sites, industrial facilities, and selected municipalities. Additional information about WDNR stormwater requirement is provided in the box on the right.

COMM 83

In July 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce implemented an administrative rule known as COMM 83. This rule allows homebuilders to install nine new kinds of innovative septic systems. The rule allows for development in areas that cannot be served by conventional systems.

The Town of Buffalo supports the use of innovative treatment systems permissible through COMM 83.

For additional information about the COMM 83 rule and the nine systems permitted, go to the Department of Commerce Web Page at

www.commerce.state.wi.us

EPA Phase II Stormwater Regulations

In 1999, the EPA finalized its Phase II regulations. Most of the regulations are for communities with 50,000 or more people or communities with 1,000 people per square mile. The regulations now **require construction sites of 1 to 5 acres obtain a permit.**

More information is available at the EPA's website:
www.epa.gov/owm/sw/phase2

Given the limited density of proposed future development, town officials believe that existing practices will be adequate to meet local needs for the next 20 years. The town should also consider some of the following techniques to mitigate potential stormwater impacts:

Land Conservation Techniques

Land conservation techniques include: cluster and conservation subdivisions, setbacks, buffers, land acquisition, and following the development patterns outlined on the *Future Land Use Maps*.

Aquatic Buffers

Aquatic buffers are natural areas on either side of area creeks and streams to buffer against runoff. The Marquette County Land and Water Conservation Department recommends at least a 75-foot buffer on either side of a stream to protect the stream from harmful impacts.

Site Design Techniques

Effective site design techniques will encourage the use of natural landscaping, limit impervious surface, enforce setbacks and buffers, and protect natural resources.

Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP)

Stormwater best management practices seek to reduce stormwater pollutant loads, maintain ground water recharge and quality, protect stream channels and safely maintain the 100-year floodplain. Successful BMP's include ponds, wetlands, infiltration, filtering systems and open drainage channels.

Erosion and Sediment Control

Typically, erosion and sediment control requirements affect construction sites and farming operations. To be effective, erosion and sediment control measures need to extend beyond these two situations. Probably one of the most effective techniques is to reduce the time that soil is exposed. As with the other mitigation techniques outlined in this subsection, education will be critical to success.

ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

The Town of Buffalo receives its electricity from Alliant Energy Corporation and Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative. A high-pressure natural gas pipeline extends

WDNR Stormwater Regulations

In Wisconsin, the WDNR is responsible for issuing stormwater permits. The WDNR has recently adopted a series of stormwater resolutions and requirements.

NR151, Runoff Management–

Modified in 2002, to include five resolutions impacting performance standards for agricultural operations, wetlands and in-fill development.

NR 152, Model Ordinances for Construction Site Erosion Control and Stormwater Management –

Modified in 2002 to reflect changes to NR 216 and NR 151.

NR 216, Stormwater Discharge Permits –

Defines the WNDNR stormwater permit requirements. Certain industrial sites in Buffalo are required to obtain discharge permits under this law through the WNDNR.

A complete copy of the law is available at:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/cod/e/nr/nr216.pdf>

P-8 Urban Catchment Model.

Available free of charge from the WNDNR, this model is used to evaluate site plans for stormwater performance.

through the town. A few farmers have connections to this natural gas pipeline. Most residents who use LP gas have tanks on their property.

Alliant Energy Corporation (Wisconsin Power and Light) is a growing energy-services provider with operations both domestically and internationally. Headquartered in Madison, Alliant Energy provides electric, natural gas, water and steam services 1.3 million customers in 1,000 communities in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois. High power overhead transmission lines run north south from this station. Alliant anticipates that it will be able to meet the town's electricity needs for the next 20 years and beyond.



Adams, Columbia, Marquette Electric Cooperative is a rural electric distribution cooperative formed in 1987 serving approximately 33,000 member/owners in parts of 12 central-Wisconsin counties. As such, it is the largest rural electric cooperative in Wisconsin and the largest in Region Five of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Members of the cooperative are served from service centers in Pardeeville and Wautoma. The cooperative has an electrical substation located in the Buffalo off 12th Avenue. The cooperative expects to be able to continue to provide service to the town for the next 20 years and beyond.

American Transmission Company (ATC) maintains the overhead power lines throughout the region.



Substation on 12th Ave

ATC owns and operates the electric transmission system in portions of Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and Illinois.

ANR Pipeline Company (ANR) has a natural gas pipeline extending through the Town of Buffalo, east of STH 22. ANR was the first interstate pipeline to deliver natural gas supplies to Wisconsin, and it currently delivers most of the natural gas consumed in the state. ANR operates and maintains five compressor stations, four warehouses, 130 meter stations and more than 1,700 miles of pipeline. Wisconsin field operations are managed through an area office in Waukesha, which also serves as a satellite marketing office to provide closer liaison with local distribution companies and other customers.

Over the years, ANR has constructed a second 1,000-mile pipeline to bring gas from the Gulf of Mexico to meet rising demands in the Midwest. Canadian gas resources have also proved to be an additional source of natural gas supply for Michigan and Wisconsin.

Existing Community Facilities – Location, Use & Capacity

PARKS

There are several recreation facilities and state natural areas located in the Town of Buffalo. However, there are **no town-owned parks**. What follows is a profile of private, county, state and federal park and recreation facilities and lands in the Town of Buffalo.



Ennis Lake - John Muir Park. This 150-acre property is accessible from CTH F, 1.25 miles north of CTH O in the Town of Buffalo. The site includes restrooms, pavilions, open fields and lake access (motorized boats are prohibited).

This area was first settled in 1849 by the Ennis and Muir families and was the boyhood home of John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, who admired the natural beauty of the area. Portions of the lakeshore suffer from trampling damage by park users. The park, a popular site for school field trips, is used often during the day. A granite monument was erecting in 1957 when John Muir Memorial Park was dedicated to Muir.



Grand River Marsh Wildlife Area. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources owns more than 6,000 acres of property adjacent to the Grand River known as the Grand River Marsh Wildlife Area. Approximately 1,000 acres of this wildlife area is located in Sections 1, 2 and 12 in the Town of Buffalo.



The property is home to various species of waterfowl, deer, wild turkeys, rabbits, pheasants, squirrels, furbearers, osprey, cormorant, herons, and Forester's terns. The area offers three boat landings, plenty of fishing and bird watching opportunities, canoeing, as well as berry and nut collecting. The habitat consists of marsh, farmland, woodlots and the Grand River.

Observatory Hill Natural Area. This 100-acre property is accessible from Gillette Avenue. The site contains an excellent example of extrusive igneous rock (exposed bedrock). Two state-threatened plant species are also found on this property. The area was well known to John Muir, who makes reference to the hill in his letters. The slope of the hill has been selectively logged, most recently in 1989. Observatory Hill has been mentioned in several geological and natural history publications, which has increased recreational use of the site. The site was designated a state natural area in March 1989.

WDOT Wayside. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains a wayside on the east side of STH 22, near the Town of Buffalo’s southern boundary. The department has no plans to expand this facility or build additional waysides in the town.

US Fish and Wildlife Service Area. The US Fish and Wildlife service owns approximately 1,000 acres of property in sections 14, 15, 22 and 23, west of CTH F. This natural area consists of wetlands of the Fox River and provides an important wildlife habitat area in the community.

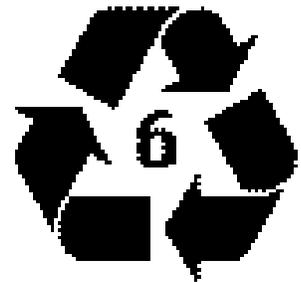
Wilderness Campground. This private facility is located east of STH 22. The campground includes 300 sites (100 with full hookups, 170 with water and electricity, and 30 rustic sites). Wilderness Campground offers a swimming pool, swimming beach, playground, ball diamond, mini golf, horseshoes, volleyball, basketball, shuffleboard, recreation hall, game room, pavilion, trails, boat launch and fishing opportunities. Trailers, bikes, boats, canoes and cabins are available for rent.

Grandview Sport Club. The Grandview Sports club owns 42 acres in Section 2. The Grand River Marsh Wildlife Area surrounds this property.

The National Recreation and Park Association recommends a community standard of 10 acres of local recreation land per 1,200 residents. The current population of the Town of Buffalo is 1,085 persons (2000 U.S. Census). The recreation lands in the Town of Buffalo far exceed this recommendation.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING

In 1989, the State of Wisconsin adopted a recycling law. Beginning in 1995, the disposal of paper products such as newspaper, office paper, magazines and corrugated cardboard and containers made from aluminum and steel were prohibited from being disposed of in landfills. Certain glass and plastic containers were also banned. In addition, the recycling law also prohibited landfill disposal of tires, automotive batteries, oil, appliances and yard wastes.



The Town of Buffalo has a contract with **Waste Management** (private company) to provide roadside waste and recycling pick-up in the town. The town maintains a waste and recycling **drop-off site adjacent to the Town Hall on CTH O**. Residents can bring their garbage and recycling to this drop-off site, or pay Waste Management an additional fee to have their waste and recycling materials collected once a week at their property in the town.

In the future, the town may consider changing its contract with Waste Management to another private company - if a less expensive service can be found. The town, through its general budget, finances the drop-off site waste and recycling collection. Waste Management anticipates no problems handling the town’s waste disposal and recycling needs for the next 20 years and beyond.

COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Access to communication facilities is very important in the modern economy. Several communication companies provide telephone, radio, television and newspaper service to the Town of Buffalo from other locations in the state. Cable television service is not available in the town. In addition, the town does not currently distribute a newsletter to residents or provide a town Internet web page. All communication services currently serving the town are expected to continue in the future and be expanded as technology and demand dictates. The quality of communication services depends on the capacity of the lines and towers serving the town.

One particular area of concern with respect to communication facilities is the availability and demand for cellular service. The advent of new communication technologies, such as cell phones, has greatly increased the need for towers to provide receiving and sending capabilities. The federal government formally recognized this need by the passage of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 has increased the need for many local governments to examine their zoning ordinances to make sure that they do not discriminate against cellular communications in land use and zoning decisions. Under Section 704 of the act, townships do have the power to regulate the placement, construction and modification of personal wireless facilities, as long as the rules do not unreasonably discriminate between providers or prohibit service.

Currently, there are **no cellular towers** located in the Town of Buffalo and no plans pending for tower construction. Town residents do have cellular service coverage from towers located in neighboring communities. Appendix D provides additional information for the town to consider when siting a tower in the town.

CEMETERIES

Often overlooked, cemeteries are an important facility every community must provide. Currently, there are 5 cemeteries in the Town of Buffalo.

St. Andrews Catholic Cemetery – Adjacent to the St. Andrews Church located on the West side of STH 44, near the town's southern boundary.

Greenwood Cemetery – Located directly across the street from the Greenwood Church on the Corner of CTH B and 18th Road.

Rood Cemetery – This very small private cemetery located near the intersection of Grouse Drive and CTH F. There is no space available for this cemetery to expand.

Buffalo UP Cemetery – Located on 13th Road, north of CTH O, this cemetery is situated around the Buffalo UP Church.



St. Andrews Church & Cemetery

Oak Lawn Cemetery – This town cemetery is approximately 5 acres in size. It is located on the north side of Gem Road near 14th Road. There is room available for future expansion of this cemetery, if necessary.

The town anticipates that there is ample space in the existing cemeteries to meet all future town needs. This is especially true given that some residents choose to be buried elsewhere. The Town of Buffalo has no plans to establish an additional cemetery.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

There are **no health care** facilities located in the Town of Buffalo. However, residents of the town can reach several primary and advanced specialty health care facilities located elsewhere in Marquette, Green Lake and Columbia Counties. The population in the Town of Buffalo is not large enough to support its own hospital, primary care, or clinic facility. The nearest clinics are located in Montello, Pardeeville and Markesan. The nearest major hospital facility is located in Portage.

Nearby health facilities provide a range of primary and specialized medical services including: trauma care, neonatal care, rehabilitation, laser vision correction, orthopedic care, cardiac care and cancer treatment. Moreover, these facilities pride themselves on their efforts to maintain a quality care environment through continued efforts to improve facilities and services.

CHILDCARE FACILITIES

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, of the town's 1,221 residents, 340 (27.9% are under the age of 19). This is a significant portion of the local population that has particular service demands (i.e. schools, parks, child care facilities). While school and park facilities are profiled elsewhere in this chapter, this section discusses childcare facilities available to residents of the Town of Buffalo.

There are **no commercial childcare** facilities located in the Town of Buffalo nor are there any plans to build such a facility. However, residents may have informal networks of child care (i.e. family or friends) and some residents may provide childcare from their home for their neighbors.



The nearest commercial childcare centers to the Town of Buffalo are found in Montello, Pardeeville, Markesan and Portage. As the town population grows, it is possible over the 20 year life of this plan a local center may be built along STH 22 to accommodate demand. However, at this time, space is available in the facilities currently serving the area, though the quantity of available space varies by location and time of year.

SENIOR CARE FACILITIES

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 166 people (13.6%) living in the Town of Buffalo are age 65 or over. Like youth populations, seniors also demand particular services and housing options to meet their specific needs.



The Town of Buffalo does not have any senior housing, assisted living or retirement communities located within its boundaries. Seniors living in the Town of Buffalo must be able to live independently or find assistance from family members, friends, and neighbors. There are some programs serving Marquette County that provide services and opportunities for older persons living in the Town of Buffalo.

If a senior living in the Town of Buffalo is unable to live independently or desires a living arrangement with other seniors, he or she can find quality assisted living, nursing homes, and retirement homes in other nearby communities. Available space and waiting lists depend on the location and cost of the facility and can fluctuate regularly. Like childcare establishments, providers of senior housing regularly assess the local market conditions to determine if additional facilities or expansion are needed based on local population demands.

Since the town's population base is not large enough to support a local senior care facility, retirement home, or nursing home, it is critical that the informal networks of friends, family and support services continue to provide needed assistance to seniors living in the Town of Buffalo. To facilitate these efforts, it may be desirable for the town to consider using the town hall on a limited basis as a local senior center. The Town of Buffalo must continue to pay particular attention to the special needs of seniors when providing utilities and community facilities.

Marquette County also offers an **elderly nutrition program** through the Human Service Department. Through this program, congregate meal sites and home delivered meals are available.

FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED

The Town of Buffalo has no facilities or programs for disabled residents. As with programs for elderly residents, Marquette County offers some developmentally disabled services to residents in need.

Programs and services for disabled residents are also provided through Marquette County. Most notably, the **Community Options Program (COP)** assists individuals with chronic illness or disability to obtain services needed to remain in their own home or to return to their home. COP serves children and adults of all ages with long-term disability. COP services include: home healthcare, transportation, respite care, dental care, equipment, home weatherization and remodeling, vans and lifts, therapy, medical

bills, and counseling. County programs and services provide vital services that make independent living possible.

POLICE PROTECTION

The Town of Buffalo does not have a police station or its own police

The Marquette County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) provides police protection services to the town. MCSO is located at 67 Park Street in the City of Montello. MCSO provides 24-hour primary emergency response service to 16,000 year-round county residents. During the summer months the county population swells to between 40,000 and 50,000 as camps, campgrounds and other tourists visit the area.

MCSO has 13 patrol deputies 3 detectives, 1 lieutenant, 1 captain, 1 Chief Deputy Sheriff, 1 Sheriff. MCSO has a fleet 18 patrol vehicles. MCSO has a capital outlay program in place to plan for replacement of all vehicles regularly

MCSO tries to maintain 2 on-duty patrol officers all of the time. The departments operates on a staggered split shift which allows for a constant rotation of officers with overlap at key points in the day when additional coverage is needed. Response times for calls to the Town of Buffalo depend on where the nearest cruiser is located and how busy the force is at that moment.



MCSO also provides "enhanced" 911 emergency dispatch for all county police operations. The system is "enhanced" because it includes a computer aided dispatch (CAD) screen that identifies for the dispatcher the location from which the call is being placed. The Marquette County "911" center is also Phase II compliant, which means they are able to coordinate your location from any cell phone call in Marquette County

The 911 dispatch is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. MCSO also maintains a jail facility at 67 Park Street in Montello. The capacity of this jail is 60 inmates. The average population is around 40 inmates. A staff of 20 individuals serves the jail facility and emergency 911 dispatch.

The current building was constructed in 1997. Marquette County just completed a new radio communication system to enhance communications for EMS, Fire, and other county public safety organizations. -

The primary challenge facing MCSO is staffing. The department has staffing needs in all divisions. Current priorities are for additional 911 dispatch and patrol officers. MCSO sees population growth as the biggest concern for the next 25 years. As the population increases, service calls also increase.

In addition to the primary protection services provided by MCSO, the Wisconsin State Patrol has assigned 3 troopers assigned to Marquette County and the City of Montello has two officers that can provide back-up service to the Town of Buffalo when requested by MCSO.

FIRE AND RESCUE

The Town of Buffalo participates in the **Montello Joint Fire District** – a multi-jurisdictional fire protection service protecting 5200 people living in an area of 160 square miles, including the City of Montello, Town of Montello, Town of Buffalo, Town of Packwaukee and Town of Shields. This department provides on-call volunteer based fire service to residents in need. The cost for fire equipment and maintenance is based on the population of each community participating. The Town of Buffalo pays less than 20% of all costs. The Town also receives a bill for each fire call made to the town.

The fire station is located in the City of Montello. The department has 28 trained volunteer firefighters (can have up to 36). Given the location of the station, most of the volunteers are from the City of Montello and Town of Montello. Maintaining adequate staffing is a challenge to the department. According to the fire chief, as volunteers become well trained, they often seek opportunities in larger communities to work full-time as a firefighter.

To learn more about the Montello Joint Fire District, visit its web page at:

www.fire-ems.net/firedepart/view/MontelloWI



The fire department provides 911-based emergency service dispatched by the Marquette County Sheriff's Department. The response time within the Town of Buffalo varies depending on the location of the call and the time of day. Typical response times average between 7-15 minutes.

The department has a variety of specialized equipment to meet fire service needs. Specifically, the department has:

- 2001 Pierce Heavy Duty Rescue
- 1999 F350 – Ford Brush Truck
- 1997 Pierce Saber – 1,500 gpm (gallon per minute) Pumper Truck
- 1994 Freightliner FL80 – Water Tender (tanker) 2,100 gallons
- 1989 Pierce Lance – 1,250 gpm Pumper Truck
- 2006 Rosenbaur 2000 gallon tanker

In 2002, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rated fire protection service by the department as a 5 (out of 10 with 1 being the best). The ISO issues “fire protection” ratings and classifications across the United States. Most insurance underwriters utilize the assigned fire protection rating to calculate residential, commercial and industrial insurance premiums. Fire Districts are evaluated on a cyclical basis that is determined by district growth and the size of the population served

The fire department annually considers needs for additional equipment and vehicle replacement and upgrades. Generally, the department is on a 20-year rotation for major vehicle replacements. Recommendations by the Fire Chief are forwarded to the Joint Fire Board (representatives from all communities) for approval. Upcoming major planned purchases include a new truck in 3 to 4 years and a cold storage addition on the Fire Station to keep records, hoses and other equipment protected from the elements.

MARQUETTE COUNTY EMS

The town is provided with ambulance service by the Marquette County EMS a department of the County of Marquette. Marquette County EMS is made up of 65 paid-on call volunteers operating three ambulances from the locations within the boundaries of the County of Marquette. Each ambulance is supervised by a full-time Crew Chief. Marquette County provides advanced life support Intermediate – 99 service 24/7/365. Paid –on-call volunteers respond to their respective ambulance stations when a page is activated by our 911 center. The time of page until the ambulance leaves the station can vary from 6-10 minutes. Drive time to the scene varies depending on the location of the call from the ambulance station. The County of Marquette is currently working with a consulting firm with the intent to develop a full-time Paramedic service plan.

The Marquette County Sheriff's Department dispatches Marquette County EMS. The nearest EMS units to the Town of Buffalo are located in the City of Montello and Oxford.

LIBRARIES

The Town of Buffalo is located within the **Marquette County Public Library System**. The nearest libraries to the Town of Buffalo are located in **Montello, Endeavor and Packwaukee**. Each of these branch libraries have limited staff and hours each week. All town residents have access to the shared catalogue of items owned by the system and services provided by any member library.

All of the libraries in Marquette County Public Library System facilities are part of the thirty public libraries from five counties that make up the **Winnefox Library System**. Serving a population of over 300,000 residents from Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Waushara and Winnebago counties, Winnefox Library System provides access to materials and services available at all member libraries. Residents within the system area also have access to libraries throughout the state per agreements with other Wisconsin Library Systems. Of the seventeen public library systems in Wisconsin, Winnefox ranks number one in the state in per capita circulation.

These libraries also have access to a web catalogue that can be accessed 24 hours a day from the Internet. **WISCAT** is the statewide bibliographic database and catalogue for Wisconsin. It contains 6.7 million bibliographic records with local holdings statements for 1,270 libraries of all types throughout Wisconsin. The libraries listed in WISCAT are willing to loan many of the materials through established statewide interlibrary loan channels. WISCAT has been on-line since the summer of 2000. Users simply connect to the Internet web page, search for the materials they are interested in, and place a hold on those materials so that they can be picked up during regular library hours.

Given the improved access to resources via the web catalogue and the interlibrary loan program, in addition to the resources the internet makes available to town residents, it is anticipated that library services will be adequate to meet future demands through 2020.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town of Buffalo is served by **three school districts**, but there are no actual school buildings located in the town. Almost the entire town is in the Montello School District. Two properties are in the Markesan School District and one property is in the Pardeeville Area School District.

Montello School District

TABLE 16 MONTELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT				
School Name	Address	Grades	Enrollment*	Capacity*
Forest Lane Elementary	222 Forest Lane, Montello	K-6	752	1,600
Montello Junior/High	222 Forest Lane, Montello	7 – 12	752	1,600

Source: Montello School District Superintendent – Nancy Hipskind, July 2002

* The elementary and junior/high school share the same building. The total enrollment for all grades is 778. The K-6 enrollment is 330 and the 7-12 enrollment is 422. The total building capacity is 1,600.

The Montello School District serves the vast majority of the Town of Buffalo. Currently, the district employs 64 teachers. Given declining enrollment trends, the district has no plans to expand its existing building or build a new school.

Also located at 222 Forest Lane, is the **Community Learning Center**. The Community Learning Center has a lot of different components for students, families, and senior citizens. Specifically, through the Community Learning Center the following programs and events are offered:

- ① **Weekday student after school program.** This includes recreation activities, a snack, homework time and enrichment classes taught by volunteers from the community.
- ① **Field trips** during the school year and summer months. Field trips are open to anyone in school district, not just children in the after school program. A fee is charged to cover the cost of admission (when applicable) and transportation. Field trips have included: Devil’s Lake State Park, EAA in Oshkosh, museums, zoos, and the like.
- ① **Family Recreation.** Through this program on Saturday’s the school district welcomes parents and their children into the school to use the gym and other.
- ① **Summer School** is offered weekdays between 1pm and 4pm. Summer school includes many organized activities and outings. The program is \$10 per class with a maximum of \$60 per student. Scholarships are available.
- ① **Adopt a Grandparent.** This innovative mentoring program pairs children with seniors. The senior participants are coordinated through the Marquette County Commission on Aging.
- ① **Annual Intergenerational Prom.** In 2002, 230 people attended this event. Held in the school gym on the Sunday after the Junior Prom, the school jazz band and community band entertain families, students and seniors.

To continue to offer many diverse programs for students and the community, the **Community Learning Center** is always looking for additional volunteers. Interested residents and organizations should contact the school district. The more volunteers available, the more children the center can accommodate.

The **Markesan District Schools** includes the following school buildings:

- Mackford Elementary, , 200 S. Margaret Street, Markesan
- Markesan Middle/High School, 100 W. Vista Blvd,Markesan



Markesan Middle School

As indicated on the *Utilities and Community Facilities*

Map, only two properties in the Town of Buffalo is included in this school district. The school district has no plans to expand its boundaries in the Town of Buffalo or construct any school facilities in Buffalo.

The **Pardeeville Area School District** includes the following school buildings:

- Pardeeville Elementary, 503 E. Chestnut, Pardeeville
- Marcellon Elementary, W6183 School Road, Pardeeville
- Pardeeville Junior High, 120 South Oak Street, Pardeeville (combined w/High School)
- Pardeeville High School, 120 South Oak Street, Pardeeville (combined w/Jr. High)

As is indicated on the *Utilities and Community Facilities Map*, only 1 property in the Town of Buffalo is included in the Pardeeville School District. The school district has no plans to expand its boundaries in the Town of Buffalo or construct any school facility in the town.

Town Facilities

Town facilities generally include such things as fire stations, meeting halls and equipment. The Town of Buffalo has a town hall located near the intersection of CTH O and 17th Road. The town hall is a classic 1-room schoolhouse with no indoor plumbing facilities. The town also maintains a waste and recycling collection site immediately east of the Town Hall. The town does not own any other properties and has no plan to acquire additional properties.



During the planning process, some residents expressed a desire to expand the town hall to serve as a community center. This expansion would also upgrade the building to include indoor plumbing. The town's ability to complete this project would depend on taxpayer support and available grant funding sources.

Resident Satisfaction with Utilities and Community Facilities

In the Community Survey conducted by Marquette County, Town Residents were asked to rate public facilities and services on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=Very Poor; 5=Very Good). What follows is a summary of the results:

Public Recreation Lands - 3.81	Library - 3.38
School Facilities - 3.56	Garbage/Recycling - 3.22
Fire Protection - 3.54	Hospital/Medical Services Availability - 3.02
Emergency Medical Services - 3.48	Adult Education Opportunities - 2.92
Law Enforcement - 3.46	
Maintenance/Condition of Roads - 3.45	

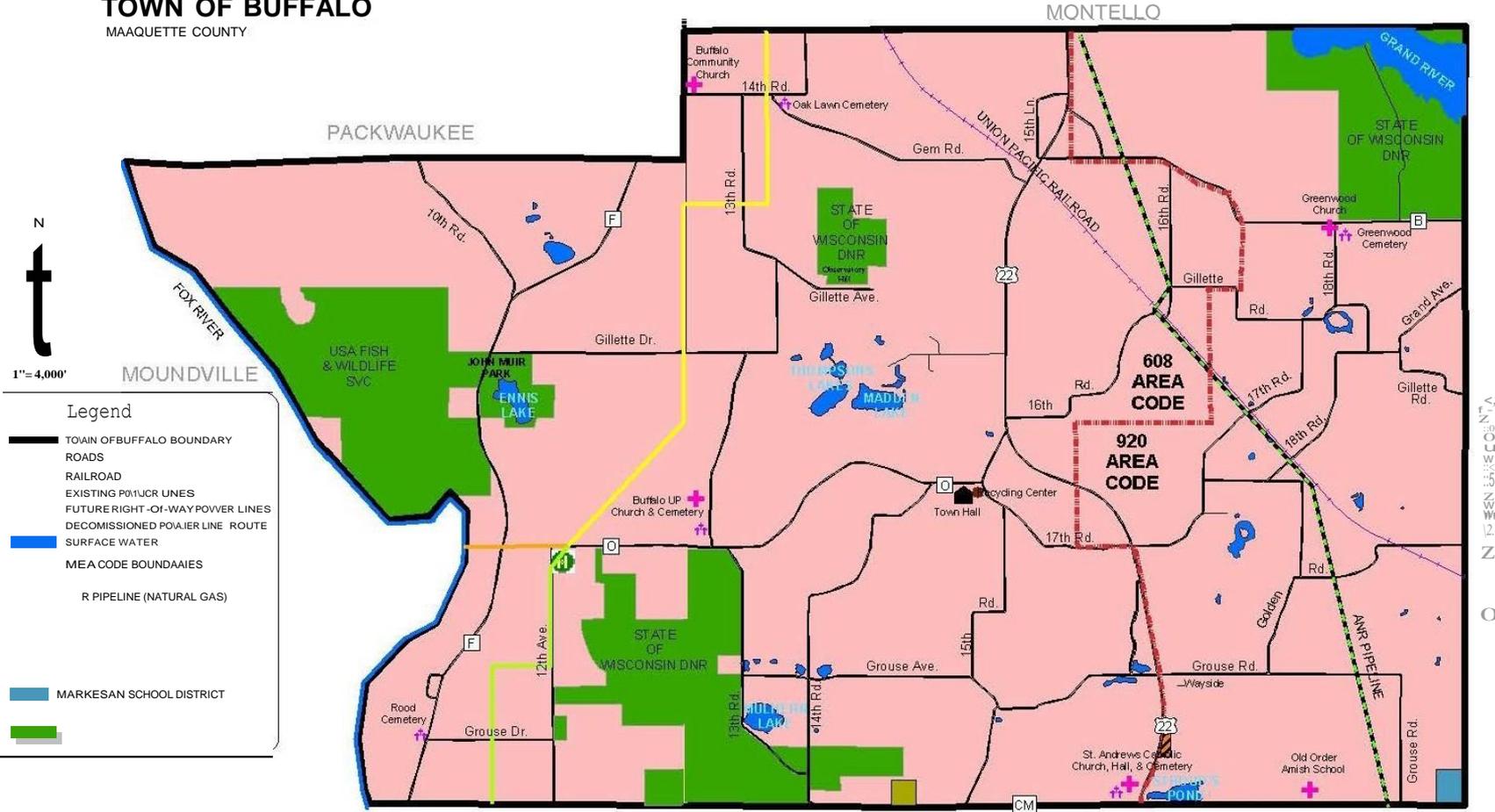
Utilities and Community Facilities Map

The *Utilities and Community Facilities Map* provided on the next page illustrates the location of utilities and community facilities in the Town of Buffalo. The map outlines the school district boundaries, telephone area codes, identifies the location of the Town Hall, electric substation, churches, cemeteries and recreation facilities serving the town.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

TOWN OF BUFFALO

MAQUETTE COUNTY



N
1" = 4,000'

Legend

- TOWN OF BUFFALO BOUNDARY
- ROADS
- RAILROAD
- EXISTING POWER LINES
- FUTURE RIGHT-OF-WAY POWER LINES
- DECOMMISSIONED POWER LINE ROUTE
- SURFACE WATER
- MEA CODE BOUNDARIES
- R PIPELINE (NATURAL GAS)
- MARKESAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

AN
O SCHOOL DISTRICT

VILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

! MONTELLA PLUMED - BUSH

— PAADEE

STATE / FEDERAL LPNOS

WAYSIDE

Q) ELECTRIC SUBSTATION

Y CEMETERY

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Utilities and Community Facilities Concerns

Generally, town residents are satisfied with the Utilities and Community Facilities available. If one concern were to be identified it would be the **road naming system**. Many of the town roads are named numerically. What is particularly challenging is that the same number may be used to describe a certain road, but depending on the location, it is a street, avenue, or court. This situation can be very confusing for utility service providers and the public.

The town also has some concern about **police protection services**. Through the planning process, residents indicated that local patrolling by the sheriff's department was extremely limited. Residents feel many people travel at excessive speeds through the Town of Buffalo. Additional police patrols would help to address this concern.

Residents are also concerned about cellular towers. While residents understand the issues of supply and demand for cellular service, the town does not want to see **extensive cellular tower development**. Given the rolling hills in the town, the fear is a tower would be placed in a prominent hilltop location, visible for miles, with a light on top. Towers are also believed to have a negative impact on local bird populations. The Town of Buffalo will only consider tower applications that support many users, located near STH 22, less than 200 feet in height, and designed to minimize impact on local bird populations. For more information on cellular towers, refer to Appendix D.

Utilities and Community Facilities Funding Options

Many of the utilities and community facilities serving the Town of Buffalo are provided by other governments and agencies (i.e. county and school districts). As such, they are funded through their general budgets and funding through tax revenues and referendums.

The Town of Buffalo, like other communities across the state, welcomes opportunities to finance needed utilities and community facilities. There are numerous grant and loan programs that the town may seek to help finance needed improvements. These programs are available through the State of Wisconsin and the U.S. Federal Government. What follows is a description of some of the major opportunities available to the town.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANTS

The USDA Rural Development also offers grants to communities seeking to build or improve their community buildings (i.e. halls, libraries, community center, and fire departments). These grants are awarded to communities with a population up to 10,000 based on a competitive application process. If the town were to decide to upgrade its town hall facility, this funding source is recommended.

STATE TRUST FUND LOAN PROGRAM

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands provides this loan program with terms of up to 20 years and deeply discounted interest rates. Loans may be used for a variety of purposes including: road improvements, community centers/halls, trail development, and property acquisition. The funds available fluctuate annually. The current annual loan limit is \$3,000,000. If the town were not successful in obtaining a grant to upgrade its town hall, this program offers many attractive loan options.

FIRE ADMINISTRATION GRANTS

The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) offers over \$100,000,000 in annual grant awards to fire departments in six specific areas: training, fitness programs, vehicles, firefighting equipment, and Fire Prevention Programs. Applicants from communities, which serve a population of less than 50,000, must provide a 10% match.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements

Utilities and community facilities can dictate future planning for a community if capacity, location, and services are not adequate to support development. Therefore, it is important to inventory existing utilities and community facilities and understand how utilities and community facilities will be provided over the planning period. Furthermore, utilities and community facilities have a direct impact on the other elements of the comprehensive plan. In particular, the Housing, Economic Development, Land Use, and Intergovernmental Coordination Elements are most directly impacted by utilities and community facilities.

HOUSING

Improvements such as roads, recreational facilities and schools all need to be coordinated with the housing decisions and vice versa. The best method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern presented on the *Future Land Use Maps* as closely as possible and plan for future improvements. This approach will greatly enhance the efficiency of capital improvements expenditures. To provide further assistance in these efforts, the town should consider the use of a capital improvement plan as a tool to help organize and plan for future capital expenditures.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The availability of utilities like electricity and communications services is critical to economic development. This infrastructure is needed to support growth in the Town of Buffalo. Therefore, the goals and objectives of this chapter seek to maintain, and where feasible, improve local utilities and community facilities to provide some additional economic development opportunities in the Town of Buffalo.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Land use dictates the need for utilities and community facilities. Inversely, the availability of utilities and community facilities can dictate where development can and should occur. The *Future Land Use Maps* were developed after careful consideration of where utilities and community facilities are now available, or will be available, within the planning period. In addition, the *Future Land Use Maps* consider the economic feasibility of utilities and community facility extensions to serve areas planned for future development. Areas where the extension communication services, power supplies or the like are cost prohibitive are not encouraged for future residential, commercial or industrial development.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

As is obvious from this chapter, utilities and community facilities are not provided solely by the Town of Buffalo. Utilities and community facilities that serve the area are provided by Marquette County, private companies and neighboring communities. It is important that these utilities and community facilities continue to effectively serve the Town of Buffalo. Therefore, continued coordination is essential to ensure that development in the Town of Buffalo is compatible with local utility and community facility capacities. Goals and objectives included in this chapter, as well as the Intergovernmental Coordination Element, support continued coordination to efficiently provide needed utilities and community facilities to the Town of Buffalo.

Goals and Objectives

It is the goal of the town that all future utilities and community facilities needs will be met through the year 2020 (and beyond). Though many of these facilities will be located outside of the town limits, they will be easily accessible in nearby cities and villages. The services provided will also meet the special needs of the elderly and youth populations in the town.

Because the Town of Buffalo has a minimal amount of control over resource allocations in neighboring communities and the school district, the goals in this section are related to actions that the town can control. The Town of Buffalo will work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Wisconsin “Smart Growth” Law, with neighboring communities and school districts to ensure that adequate community and utilities facilities are available to serve the area.

OVERALL GOALS

1. Support the continued operation of community facilities provided by Marquette County, the local school districts, private companies and neighboring communities, which serve residents of the Town of Buffalo.

2. Seek to ensure that all development is served by adequate utilities.

OBJECTIVES

1. As desirable, issue permits for innovative waste treatment systems (pursuant to the requirements of COMM 83) that will provide safe and effective results for commercial development opportunities along STH 22.
2. Work with Marquette County, and if necessary adopt a town policy and supporting zoning requirements, to encourage developers to consider alternative waste treatment systems in support of innovative subdivision designs (i.e. cluster and conservation subdivisions)
3. Seek to educate residents of the Town of Buffalo about available community facilities and services in the area through a community newsletter and web site, particularly to ensure that populations with special needs (i.e. seniors and disabled) can obtain services.
4. Coordinate with Marquette County to ensure that the county cellular tower ordinance provides adequate protection and provisions for the Town of Buffalo. If deemed necessary, develop a town cellular ordinance to further encourage co-location, stealth technologies, and other techniques to minimize the visual impact of cellular towers. Furthermore, the ordinance should address policies with respect to the location of towers on town property.

7.0 AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

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7.0 AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

This chapter provides an inventory of existing agricultural, natural, and cultural resources in the Town of Buffalo. In addition, issues associated with these resources are discussed and a vision, with supporting goals and objectives, is presented.



Farm field, Town of Buffalo, Marquette County, WI

In 1950, about 50% of all county land was farmed, 30% was forestland, 15% was wetland, and 2% was undeveloped (Wisconsin Conservation Department 1954). In 1999, it was estimated that Marquette County is about 1/3 wetland, 1/3 farmland and 1/3 woodland (Jim Kroschnabel, WDNR, County Forester, 1998). Many lands that were unsuited for farming such as wetlands, highly erodible and sandy soils were restored to prior conditions thus the reason for reduced farmland in the past 49 years. The popularity of federal conservation funding programs such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) has restored thousand of acres of wetlands that were once drained with tile and ditches.

Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Vision

In 2020, the Town of Buffalo has successfully maintained more than 90 percent of the farmland that existed in 2002. This achievement was the result of dedicated farmers, the actions of Town government, the consolidation of several small family farms, and the use of conservation subdivisions. Farming operations in the Town consist of a balance of family farming operations and rented cropland. Contiguous areas of woodlands, wetlands and other natural areas have also been permanently protected from development. Farmland and natural areas enhance the rural character of the Town by maintaining open vistas and providing buffers between residential areas to maintain the low, rural density of development desired by residents. Recreational opportunities, including fishing, hunting, biking along Town roads, camping, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling are abundant.

Agricultural Resources¹

The Town of Buffalo has a **strong farming history and tradition**. Together with the thick, beautiful forests of the town, farming operations define the community character and constitute most of the land cover. Throughout the planning process, the planning committee consistently identified farmland as an important part of the community landscape. Likewise, **the**



importance of farmland and natural areas is clearly reflected in the Value Statements and SWOT results as presented in the Introduction and Issues and Opportunities Chapters of this plan. Therefore, preservation of farming is an important consideration when planning for future development.

Like many counties in central Wisconsin, Marquette County's **farming community is changing**. Part of the changes reflect crop and livestock prices and retiring farmers. Most of the change in the agriculture economy is the movement of families from urban areas to Marquette County with the anticipation of establishing permanent retirement homes. These new residents are buying acreage that range in size from 1-40 acres. Much of the smaller acreage is for residences on lakes and river. Larger parcels include small hobby farms that normally consist of horses, beef cattle, with some individuals engaged in elk, bison, and emu or ostrich production.

The average **value of agricultural land in Marquette County has increased**, on average, 47% between 1995 and 2000. The average price of land sales in Marquette County for 2014 was \$1,820-5,000 per acre. The increased agricultural land prices are a direct reflection of the increased demand for farmland for other land uses (i.e. residential development). In 1998, 31% of agricultural land sold in the county was diverted to other uses. **The number of farms is decreasing while the size of farms is increasing**. In Marquette County in 1940, 1,291 farms existed (peak number), by 1997 only 443 farms remained, representing a decrease of 66%. Likewise, total farm acreage decreased 50% from 247,779 acres to 124,804 acres. On the other hand, farms in 1997 were 282 acres in size compared to the average 197-acre farm that existed in 1940. This trend in land value and purchase is expected to continue in the future.

Obtaining land to hunt and fish on is becoming increasingly difficult due to the popularity of deer hunting. As a result, many **outdoor enthusiasts are purchasing or leasing farm acreage in the county**.

Fortunately, the Town of Buffalo has escaped, or seen only a hint of these trends, in recent years. However, these pressures will expand into the town. As a result, the town is seeking to develop this plan to preserve the character, history, and farming traditions of the town.

¹ Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, Marquette County Land Conservation Department, 1999.

AMISH COMMUNITY

As previously discussed, there is a large Amish population in the Town of Buffalo. These residents help to maintain the area's farming legacy through traditional farming practices, the sale of farm-based goods and home occupations.

In many communities across Wisconsin, the primary issue with farmland preservation is that aging individual farmers own much of the remaining farmland. Faced with development pressures, retirement needs and a worsening farm economy, farmers see the sale of their land for development, as an attractive financial opportunity. As a result, communities are challenged to find ways to maintain farmland given the pressure to develop.

The sizable Amish community in the Town of Buffalo and neighboring towns provides a buffer against these development concerns. As a result, farming will remain an important part of the landscape for as long as it remains an integral part of the Amish culture.

Non-Amish farms in the Town of Buffalo will face the development pressures described above. In order to maintain open areas of farmland in the township beyond the Amish community creative development options must be explored (i.e. PDR, Conservation Subdivisions, and Land Trusts).



Farmland, Town of Buffalo, WI

PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL AREAS

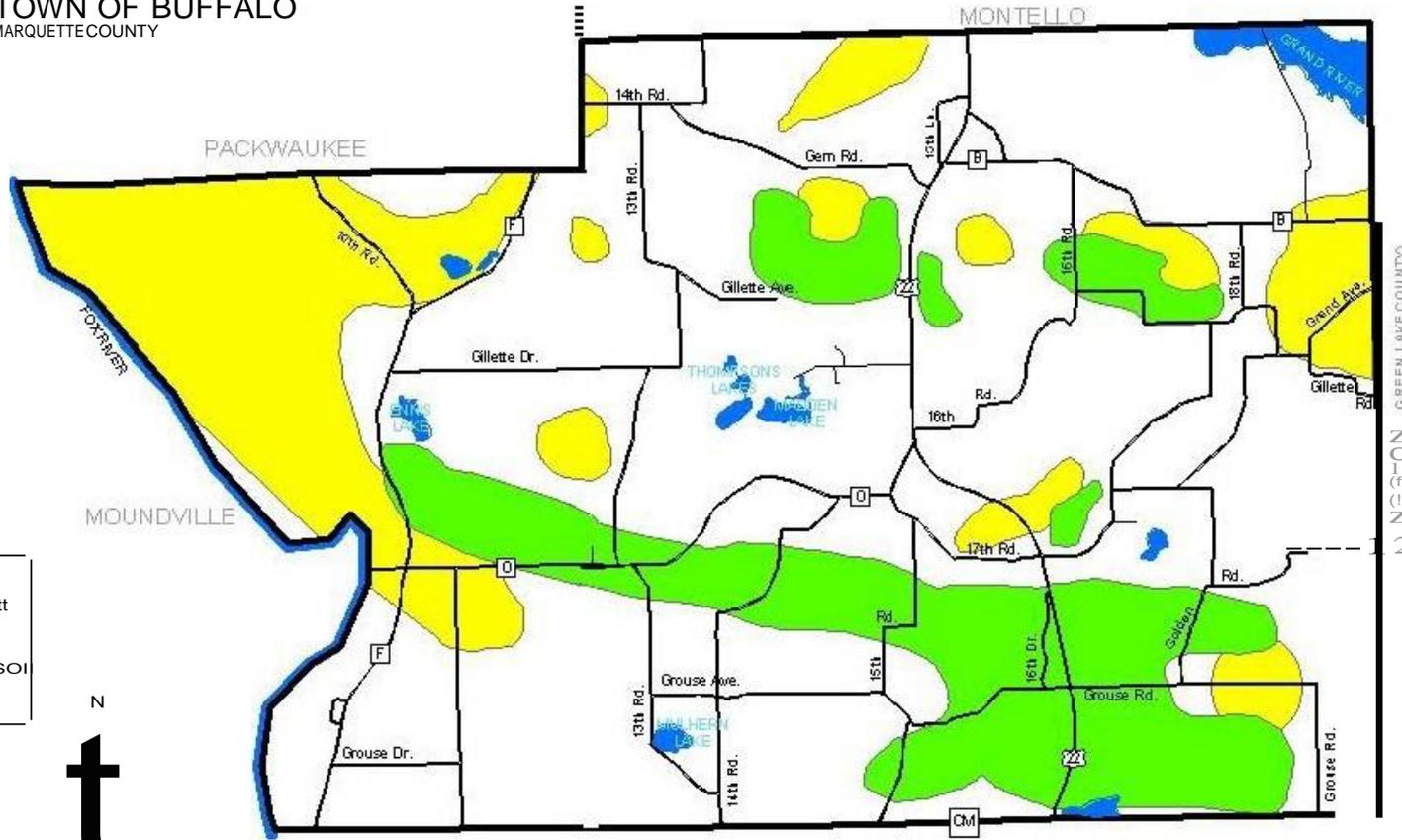
Soils support the physical base for development and agriculture within the town. Knowledge of their limitations and potential difficulties is important in evaluating crop production capabilities and other land use alternatives, such as residential development.

Prime farmlands (productive agricultural areas) **are determined by soil types** that are capable of producing high yields of crops under a high level of management. Productive soils are considered to be those soils that are capable of producing an average of 4 tons per acre per year of grass-legume hay, or 100 bushels per acre of corn. The United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service considers a "high level of management" to include provisions for adequate drainage, appropriate tillage, planting and seeding with high yielding varieties, control of weeds, diseases, insects, optimum fertilizer application and timely, efficient harvesting techniques.

A map of soil types in the Town of Buffalo is provided on the following page. Sandy loam (50-70 percent sand content) and loamy sand (70-80 percent sand content) soils are clearly illustrated. Other areas are considered productive soils.

SOIL ASSOCIATION

TOWN OF BUFFALO
MARQUETTE COUNTY



- lbfnoTBUgBBo•mtt
- Clt.cansvsa*d
- S3•df Loan
- C:::J P DCitciltt +•aiSOI
- Rllts/Slltanl/131 U



Scale: 1 inch = 1 mile
Date: 10/15/2010

FORT WINNEBAGO MARCELLON (COLUMBIA COUNTY)

THE RIGHT TO FARM

Wisconsin has a right-to-farm law **protecting farms from nuisance lawsuits** related to typical farm noise and odors. As residential development expands into farmland areas, it is inevitable that these issues develop. Often the issues relate to manure spreading and storage. People who move to rural areas near farmland are not aware of these and other potential nuisances. To minimize conflicts, education is strongly recommended. By educating new landowners about potential conflicts, “surprise” nuisances can be avoided.



CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFOs)

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (700+ cattle), or mega farms, are increasing in number in Wisconsin. In 1985, there was 1 such operation in the state. By 1990, 24 operations and by 2000 there were 77 mega farms in Wisconsin. Generally, **CAFOs locate in rural areas where conflicts with neighboring property owners can be minimized.** Should such a farm be proposed, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has extensive permit requirements that must be met.

CAFOs often bring **advantages and disadvantages** to a community.

- ① From an economic standpoint, CAFOs generate jobs and taxes.
- ① Proponents also argue that animals in CAFOs are generally cleaner and better cared for than animals on smaller farms.
- ① Opponents site concerns related to manure management, odor, traffic, neighboring land value, and lighting issues as concerns which must be addressed to successfully locate a CAFO in a community.

Tools to Protect Farmland

There are many methods to protect farmland. This section describes some of the common approaches used in Wisconsin.

LAND TRUSTS AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

An option available to landowners seeking to protect natural areas and farmland is through the activities of **land trusts**. Land trusts provide landowners with advice on protection strategies that best meet the landowner’s conservation and financial needs. Land trusts accept lands donated by landowners for conservation purposes. Land

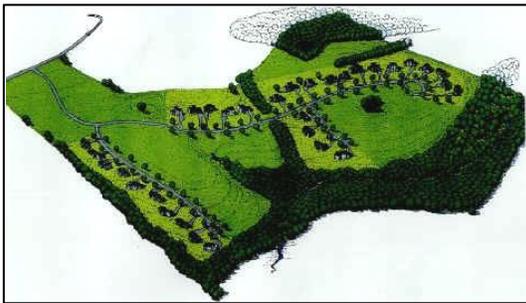
What is a Conservation Easement?

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that limits present and future development of a parcel. The landowner retains ownership of the land (within the terms of the easement – i.e. only for farmland or natural space, not for development) and the land trust takes the responsibility for protecting the land’s conservation values. Donated conservation easements that meet federal tax code requirements can provide significant tax advantages to landowners because their land will be taxed as undevelopable land, which is a much lower rate than developable land.

trusts can also work with landowners to establish conservation easements. Land trusts can also work with landowners to establish conservation easements (see definition in box on previous page).

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS

Another method to protect farmland, and permit some residential development, is the use of conservation subdivisions. Conservation subdivision designs encourage the preservation and protection of open space, natural areas and farmland resources. In a conservation subdivision, homes are “clustered” together on smaller lots so that a greater proportion of the land is protected from development.



Typically, a conservation subdivision will require at least 50% of a site be protected from further development.

Protection and maintenance of the conserved area can be accomplished through a conservation easement with an appropriate conservation organization, land trust, neighborhood association or government body, or through deed covenants. The areas to be conserved must be protected in perpetuity. The land designated for protection should either be left as natural habitat, open space, or farmland. In conservation subdivisions, the development of walking and bicycle trails is encouraged, particularly to provide limited access to protected natural areas.

PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR)

Yet another way of protecting farmland is through the purchasing of development rights (PDR). PDR is a voluntary program, where a land trust, local government, or some other agency usually linked to local government, makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer, or to try to negotiate a higher price.

When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farmer receives payment equal to the difference between the fair market value of the land a developer would pay if it could be developed and the price the land would command for agricultural use. In return for this payment, a conservation easement is recorded on the deed to the property. This easement stays with the land so it is binding not only on the current owner, but future owners of the property as well.

How is a Conservation/Cluster Subdivision Created?

- 1. Develop a Yield Plan.** This plan essentially shows how many homes could be developed if a traditional subdivision layout were used.
- 2. Identify Primary And Secondary Conservation Areas.** Primary conservation areas include: poor soils, steep slope, wetlands, waterways and floodplains that are not conducive to development. Secondary conservation areas include other areas of local importance targeted for protection (i.e. farmland, woodlands, scenic views, etc.).
- 3. Locate the Home Sites.**
- 4. Include Roads, Sidewalks and Trails.**
- 5. Draw the Lot Lines.** This is usually the first step in a traditional approach.

When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farm remains in private ownership. The private landowner still retains the right to occupy and make economic use of the land for agricultural purposes. The landowner gives up the right to develop the property for some other use in the future. Farmers are not compelled to sell their development rights. Participation in PDR programs is entirely voluntary.

Advantages and Disadvantage of PDR

Restrictions on land use, including zoning, have been used to protect agriculture for many years. One of the main benefits of PDR, is that it is completely voluntary. Under PDR, the landowner is not deprived of any of the value of the property. This is very important because many farmers rely on their property in order to fund their retirement. Simply depriving them of the opportunity to realize the full economic value of their property has important ethical, socioeconomic, and perhaps legal ramifications. Moreover, zoning regulations may be easily changed in the future.

The main advantage of PDR over other approaches to farmland preservation is that it offers a permanent, long-lasting solution. PDR virtually assures that land will remain forever in agriculture because it extinguishes the right to develop agricultural land for non-agricultural uses. Farmland preservation tax credits and use value assessment of agricultural land encourage farmers to keep their land in agricultural use somewhat longer than otherwise might be the case, but do not assure that land will remain in agricultural use.

Another major advantage of PDR is that it is perceived as an equitable, fair, and voluntary way to preserve agricultural land. A third advantage is that it provides a way to correct a major shortcoming of the current Farmland Preservation Program by targeting limited financial resources to preserve and protect agricultural land most worthy of preservation.

Another benefit of PDR is that it makes it much easier for a farmer to pass their farm on to an heir interested in farming the land. Once the development rights have been separated from the land, the value of the parcel typically declines to its agricultural value. This generally has an enormous effect on reducing the inheritance tax liability. If taxed at the full development value, many parcels are simply taxed out of agriculture, because the heirs are not able to pay the taxes without selling the land.

The main disadvantage of PDR is cost. Development rights can be expensive to purchase, and so funding for PDR needs to be selectively targeted to preserve and protect agricultural land that is most worthy of preservation. As a result, not every farmer who wants to sell his or her development rights will be able to do so.

Natural Resources and Environmental Concerns²

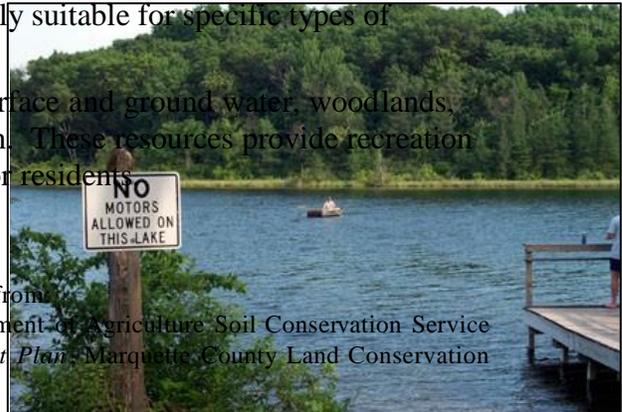
Residents of the Town of Buffalo take great pride in the beautiful natural areas of the community. The rolling wooded hillsides, Fox and Grand Rivers, ponds and wetlands provide important habitat for wildlife in the area. Several large areas of the town are owned and protected by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Ennis Lake, Town of Buffalo, WI

Natural resources help to determine the potential for land development. Likewise, environmental characteristics indicate the ability of the land to support various types of development. Geology, topography, drainage patterns, floodplains and wetlands are among the natural and environmental features, which determine if an area is physically suitable for specific types of development.

Preservation of natural resources (wetlands, surface and ground water, woodlands, shorelines) is an important priority for the town. These resources provide recreation opportunities and enhance the quality of life for residents.

² Information used to develop this section was obtained from *Soil Survey of Marquette County*, United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service *Marquette County Land & Water Resource Management Plan*, Marquette County Land Conservation Department, 1999.



GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The entire landscape of Marquette County reflects the influences of glacial activity. The most recent glacier to cover the county occurred about 10,000 years ago and left a variety of glacial features. In the western portion of the county, where the Town of Buffalo is located, is covered by a thick mantle of glacial till referred to as **the terminal moraine** cover. Within the moraine, old glacial lakebeds exist, now reflected in marshland and scattered areas of red clay.

The topography in the town can best be described as **gently rolling**. Not surprisingly, the lowest areas of the town are found along the Lower Fox River and Grand River shorelines. The highest elevations are found near Observatory Hill in the central portion of the town.

SURFACE WATER (NAVIGABLE WATERS)³

In addition to many small inland lakes and ponds, there are two major water features in the Town of Buffalo: the Fox River and Grand River. (Ennis Lake is also considered a major water feature. It is described in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.)

The **Grand River** flows through the northeast corner of the Town of Buffalo. Excessive Carp populations have a negative impact on aquatic vegetation and water clarity. Sedimentation is a problem due to the non-point source pollution in the upper areas of the Grand River.

The **Lower Fox River** (south of Buffalo Lake) forms western boundary of the Town of Buffalo. This river is severely degraded due to non-point source pollution, including: cropland erosion, stream bank erosion and animal waste run-off. Ditching and draining systems for muck farms are abundant. These ditched areas and cropping techniques increase sediment delivery to surface waters. Fortunately, several large muck farms along the river have enrolled in the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). This federal program restores the ditched areas to the original hydrology of the area.



Fox River, Town of Buffalo, WI

The **Marquette County Land and Water Conservation Department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources** work cooperatively to protect the quality of surface water in the county.

³ Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, Marquette County Land Conservation Department, August 1999

GROUNDWATER & AQUIFERS

Groundwater is the source of water for the residents of the Town of Buffalo. The main water supply aquifer in the area is in the **Cambrian Sandstone**. Lesser quantities of groundwater may be found in the overlying glacial till, which consists of lake clays and silts, but may contain pockets of sand and gravel.

The depth to the Cambrian Sandstone Aquifer varies in the town. A long time ago, an ancient river flowed approximately where the present Grand River is today. This river cut a deep valley into the Cambrian Sandstone, which was later filled in by glacial till. As a result, the northeastern half of the Town of Buffalo has over 200 feet of glacial till overlying the ancient valley of Cambrian Sandstone, while in the southwestern half of the Town, further up the side of the valley, the depth is over 100 feet.

Recharge to the sandstone aquifer percolates through the glacial drift from above, and also enters the sandstone from areas northwest of the town, since the sandstone dips to the southeast.

The overall quality of groundwater in the Town of Buffalo is generally considered to be of good quality, but hard.

Contamination risks from land use practices are the main threat to groundwater resources. Potential contaminant sources include old, unregulated dumps, nitrates from failed septic systems or farm runoff, pesticides, leaking underground storage tanks, and road salt. All of these sources are presently regulated or are being addressed through ordinances or technical assistance services by various county and state agencies.

Over-pumping of the aquifer may be an issue, due to nearby population centers in Portage and Montello. As their water usage increases, the additional pumping will cause the groundwater cones of influence from these villages to extend further into the Town of Buffalo.

WATERSHEDS ⁴

The Town of Buffalo is included in two watersheds. What follows is a profile of each watershed. The locations of the watersheds are depicted on the *Natural Resources Map* provided in this chapter.

The **Lower Grand River Watershed** covers a total of 120 square miles, with 31.4 square miles in Marquette County. This watershed also extends into Columbia, Dodge and Green Lake Counties. Wetland and agriculture are the major land uses in the watershed.

In the Town of Buffalo, the Grand River Wildlife Area is the predominate features of this watershed. A dam on the Grand River just upstream of the Fox River, creates this

⁴ Source: Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 1999

impoundment area known as the Grand River Wildlife Area. This state owned area is public and is managed primarily for waterfowl production and resting during migration.

The **Buffalo/Puckaway Watershed** encompasses a total of 135.1 square miles that span over Marquette, Columbia and Green Lake Counties. Village/cities included in this area are: Endeavor, Packwaukee and a portion of the City of Montello. Agriculture is the dominant land use in the watershed along with forestland and wetlands.

Additional information about the care, management, and plans for the watershed is available from the Marquette County Land Conservation Department. The department has adopted a *Land and Water Resource Management Plan* to address habitat, water quality, and other issues in these watersheds.

SHORELINES

Residents of the Town enjoy Lower Fox River and Grand River shorelines as well as shorelines of several inland lakes. Shoreline areas provide critical wildlife habitat and are important to the overall quality of life in the town by contributing significantly to the character of the community. The town has **approximately 4.5 miles of Fox River shoreline and 1.5 mile of Grand River shoreline**.



Ennis Lake, Town of Buffalo, WI

The ShoreLand/Wetland Ordinance adopted by Marquette County regulates shoreland uses and development within 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water mark of a lake, pond or flowage, and within 300 feet from the ordinary high water mark of a river or stream. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) regulates the stabilization and fill of shorelines in the town. The WDNR has a strong history of working well with residents on these issues.

As development pressures increase in the town, lakes that were previously undeveloped will experience development pressure. As land prices increase, owners of large tracks will seek to sell lakeshore lots that net high prices, but also impact critical lakeshore habitat.

WETLANDS & FLOODPLAINS

About **1/3 of the land area in Marquette County consists of hydric or wetland soils**. *A wetland is generally defined as having a predominance of hydric soils and is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support hydrophytic vegetation.*

Wetlands act as a natural filtering system for sediment and nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrates. They also serve as a natural buffer, protecting shorelines and stream banks from erosion. Wetlands are essential in providing wildlife habitat, flood control, and

groundwater recharge. Due to these benefits, county and state regulations place limitations on the development and use of wetlands and shorelands. Wetlands in the town are shown on the *Town of Buffalo Natural Features Map*. **The most significant areas of wetlands are found along the Lower Fox River, Grand River, south of CTH 0, near Thompsons and Madden Lakes and along the town's eastern boundary.**

For almost three decades, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has had the authority over the placement of fill materials in virtually all wetlands of five (5) acres or greater. However, on January 9, 2001, the U.S. Supreme Court limited federal jurisdiction over isolated wetlands under the Clean Water Act of 1972. This Court decision now limits the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to cover only wetlands that are directly associated with navigable waterways-lakes, streams and rivers. Since the State of Wisconsin's jurisdiction over wetlands is tied to federal statutes, as many as 4 million acres of wetland were affected by this decision, including some wetland areas in the Town of Buffalo.

In response to this U.S. Supreme Court Decision the State of Wisconsin recently passed legislation giving the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) authority to regulate those wetlands that were formerly tied to federal legislation. As in the past, anyone interested in filling a wetland is required to obtain a permit.

There is an opportunity to restore many more acres of wetlands in Marquette County and the Town of Buffalo. Interest in the USDA-NRCS Wetlands Reserve Program has generated a large workload. The US-FWS private Lands Program has also been active in restoring wetlands. The DNR Priority Watershed Program has made financial and technical assistance available to landowners to restore and enhance wetlands to local Land Conservation Departments. Interest has been from traditional farms, non-traditional landowners and private organizations (i.e. Ducks Unlimited). Marquette County has also seen an increase in landowners interested in recreational uses that include wetland wildlife habitat restoration.

Floodplains serve many important functions related to flood and erosion control, water quality, groundwater recharge and fish and wildlife habitats. Generally, areas susceptible to flooding are considered unsuitable for development due to potential health risks and property damage. Therefore, the *Future Land Use Maps* discourage development in these areas.

WOODLANDS

Marquette County has about 95,000 acres of forestland. Nearly half of the Town of Buffalo is covered with woodlands. The wooded areas consist primarily of Oak, Pine and Central Hardwoods. The majority of woodlands consist of poor quality "scrub oak" that has low value as timber. Converting these areas to an oak-pine ix would increase the quality of the woodlands for wildlife habitat and as a timber resource.

Forest management is difficult in Marquette County and the Town of Buffalo. Insects and disease continually take their toll, however, **the largest resource concern for the forests of the County is the fragmentation of remaining woodlots.** Current plans and ordinances do not properly protect woodlots when it comes to developments. Subdivisions and housing developments, large and small, are put in without concern for the resource.



Tree-Lined CTH F, Town of Buffalo, WI

The *Town of Buffalo Natural Features Map* delineates the location of woodlands in the town. Because woodlands are an important natural feature to town residents, the remaining woodland areas should be protected from future encroachment through the use of easements, state programs, conservation subdivisions and other preservation techniques. Part of this protection effort should include education for private landowners and developers about the importance of woodlands.

The WDNR **Managed Forest Law** provides opportunities for conservation of contiguous woodland environments for wildlife and plants inhabiting these areas. For more information visit: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/publications/.

WILDLIFE HABITATS

Unfortunately there is not a source of comprehensive habitat information for the Town of Buffalo. To protect these areas from encroachment, detailed habitat information collected by the WDNR is not available to the public. Resident observation is the best available local resource about wildlife habitat areas. **Primary wildlife habitat areas correspond to the forested areas, wetland areas and shorelines shown on the *Natural Resources Map*.** These areas provide food and cover for deer, raccoons, skunk and other small creatures common in the area. Farm fields also serve as a food source for deer in the area. The remaining areas of the town (i.e. residential areas, road corridors, and other areas) are not classified as primary wildlife habitat areas - though certainly animals do wander into these areas. The **Fox River and Grand River** are also major waterfowl, fish spawning, reptile and amphibian habitat areas. Moreover, the inland lakes also support a variety of aquatic plant and animal species.



Increased development in the town has caused some large parcels of land to become more fragmented. Fragmentation of land has a negative impact on wildlife habitat and can impact the scenic beauty of the town. The new development is often scattered on large parcels of land taking unnecessarily large amounts of acreage out of productive agricultural use and impacts natural resources such as lakes, streams and woodlands.

EXOTIC AND INVASIVE SPECIES

Non-native, or exotic, plant and animal species have been recognized in recent years as a major threat to the integrity of native habitats and species, as well as a potential economic threat (damage to crops, tourist economy, etc). The WDNR requires that any person seeking to bring a non-native fish or wild animal for introduction in Wisconsin obtain a permit. The town can help combat exotic species by educating residents about non-native species and encouraging residents to use native plants in landscaping.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

There are many threatened and endangered plant and animal species in Marquette County. Unfortunately, there is not a specific list available for the Town of Buffalo. The WDNR is attempting to identify and catalog endangered plant and animal species across the state. For a complete, up-to-date list of endangered plant and animal species in the county, refer to www.dnr.state.wi.us.

METALLIC AND NON-METALLIC MINING RESOURCES

As part of NR 135, Wisconsin Administrative Code, adopted in December 2000, any community in Wisconsin could adopt an ordinance to establish requirements for reclamation of non-metallic mines, such as gravel pits and rock quarries. If a town decided not to develop its own ordinance, a county could develop which would also regulate operations in the town. Likewise, regional planning agencies could develop ordinances for counties within their region. The ordinances must establish reclamation requirements to prevent owners and operators of quarries and gravel pits from abandoning their operations without proper reclamation of the mines. Marquette County is responsible for establishing these requirements for quarry operations in the Town of Buffalo.

New applications for non-metallic mining operations are subject to the requirements of NR 135, chapter 6. The law defines a “marketable non-metallic deposit” as one that can be or is reasonably anticipated to become commercially feasible to mine and has significant demonstrated (geologically or by other means) economic value.

Under the law, any landowner of a demonstrated “marketable non-metallic deposit” may register the site for mining. Local zoning authority can object to the application if the zoning does not permit it. Registration expires after a 10-year period and may be extended for a single 10-year period if it is demonstrated that commercially feasible quantities continue to exist at the property.

Towns (on their own and through the use of county zoning) rezoning property in a manner consistent with a Comprehensive Plan are not required to permit non-metallic mining operations that are inconsistent with the plan.

AIR QUALITY

The following information is from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources:

“A few common air pollutants are found all over the United States. These pollutants can injure health, harm the environment and cause property damage. EPA calls these pollutants **criteria air pollutants** because the agency has regulated them by first developing health-based **criteria** (science-based guidelines) as the basis for setting permissible levels. One set of limits (**primary standard**) protects health; another set of limits (**secondary standard**) is intended to prevent environmental and property damage. A geographic area that meets or does better than the primary standard is called an **attainment area**; areas that don't meet the primary standard are called **nonattainment areas**.”

Marquette County is an attainment area located in the Northeast Wisconsin Region. This situation is not expected to change in the future. County, state and federal air quality protection standards are in place to maintain and improve the local air quality.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Cultural resources, like natural resources, are valuable assets, which should be preserved. The town supports efforts of state agencies, Marquette County and private organizations to support these resources.



Buffalo Community Church

CHURCHES

There are several local churches in the Town of Buffalo. Many residents also choose to frequent churches located in Montello, Packwaukee and other nearby communities. Specifically, the following churches are located in Buffalo:

Buffalo UP Church, northwest corner of CTH 0 and 13th Road (Listed in the State of Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory – Constructed in 1865)

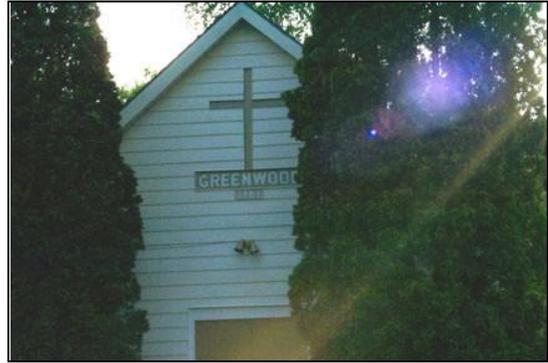
Buffalo Community Church, on 14th Road near CTH F

Greenwood Presbyterian Church, on CTH B and 18th Road



Buffalo UP Church

St. Andrews Catholic Church, Off STH 22 in southern portion of the Town



Greenwood Presbyterian Church

MUSEUMS /HISTORIC RESOURCES

There are no museums located in the Town of Buffalo. However, several museums are available in nearby larger cities accessible via STH 22.

Residents of the town are welcome to visit these facilities and enjoy the exhibits and other amenities they have to offer. While the town would welcome a local museum and encourage residents who want to establish a historic or special district, there are currently no plans to do so.

There are two important historical sites in the Town of Buffalo, the childhood residence of John Muir and the Emanuel Dannon monument.

John Muir, (1838-1914), was an American naturalist, explorer, and writer. He was an influential conservationist, who worked to preserve wilderness areas and wildlife from commercial exploitation and destruction. His efforts initiated the founding of the Nation Park Service and helped to establish Yosemite National Park and Sequoia National Park. He was also instrumental in founding the Sierra Club. John Muir spent his youth in the Town of Buffalo ,Wisconsin from 1849-1863 and the stories of this time period can be found in the autobiography, *My Boyhood and Youth*. Today, some of this area has been preserved as Ennis/Fountain Lake, John Muir Park . "Oh that glorious Wisconsin wilderness! Young hearts, young leaves, flowers, animals , the wind and the streams and the sparkling lake, all wildly, gladly rejoicing together!" John Muir

Eggleston-McGwin Family : In 2015 the McGwin collaborated with partners to preserve 198 acres formerly owned by Bessie Eggleston, including 40 acres of the original Muir farm for public access adjacent to John Muir Park.

The **Emanuel Dannon** (1843-1851) Monument is also located in the Town of Buffalo in the Greenwood Cemetery. The monument reads: ""The boy who would not tell a lie." The story of Emanuel Dannon is as follows:

Emmanuel was born in Devonshire, England and came to America with his parents when he was two years old. Within three years both of his parents had died. An uncle retrieved him from the Poorhouse, but he, too died within a few months. Emmanuel was placed with foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Norton from Illinois. Sam Norton's character was questionable. Around 1850, an itinerant peddler disappeared. His horse was found on the Norton farm--legend holds that the Norton's killed the man, and that Emmanuel witnessed the crime. To cover up the crime, the Norton's insisted that Emmanuel lie about the incident in their favor.

Repeatedly, Emmanuel told them, "I will not tell a lie." For this he was cruelly beaten. On November 30, 1851, his wrists were tied together, the rope thrown over a crossbeam in the barn,

and the boy strung up. Then Emmanuel was whipped for two hours with thick willow switches until he died. The Norton's stood trial and were found guilty of first-degree manslaughter. They returned to Illinois after serving seven years in jail. Emmanuel's present, permanent monument was dedicated May 2, 1954.

Current Policies/Trends

SHORELAND/FLOODPLAIN ZONING

Shorelands and floodplains are often viewed as valuable recreational and environmental resources. These areas provide for storm water retention and habitat for various type of wildlife. Development that is permitted to take place in these areas may have an adverse effect on water quality, wildlife habitat and stormwater drainage. In addition, it may also result in increased development and maintenance costs when providing for protection from the occurrence of flooding and high water, increased flood insurance premiums, extensive site preparation, and maintenance and repairs of roads.

As a result, the State of Wisconsin requires every county adopt a shoreland/floodplain zoning ordinance to address the problem associated with development in these areas. Development in shoreland areas is generally permitted, but specific design techniques must be considered. Development in floodplain areas is strictly regulated and in some instances, not permitted. The authority to enact and enforce these types of zoning provisions is set forth in Ch 59.97 Wis. Stats. and Wisconsin Administrative Codes NR115.116 and 117, and is established in the Marquette County Zoning Ordinance.

Marquette County is currently administering its Shoreland/Floodplain Ordinance in unincorporated areas of the county. The ordinance regulates shoreland and navigable waters of the county that are 1,000 feet from the normal high water elevation of a lake, pond, or flowage; and 300 feet from the normal high water elevation of a river or stream, or to the landward side of a 100 year floodplain boundary.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN/EXCLUSIVE AGRICULTURAL ZONING

Maintaining productive land for agricultural uses has been a long-time goal of Wisconsin. To achieve this goal, the state has enacted several types of legislation that provide monetary incentives to eligible landowners to keep their land in a productive state.

Marquette County has adopted a Farmland Preservation Plan so that local farmers are eligible for tax credits through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Farmland Preservation Program and provide for exclusive agricultural zoning.

The Town of Buffalo Zoning Ordinance contains an exclusive agricultural zoning classification to delineate agricultural lands.

MARQUETTE COUNTY LAND AND WATER RESOURCE PLAN

The Marquette County Land and Water Resource Plan was developed in 1999 in accordance with Chapter 92.10 Wis. Stats. The plan:

Serves as a guide for resource management planning and decision making

Assesses land and water resource conditions
Identifies problems and priorities

Copies of the plan are available from the Marquette County Land Conservation Department. The plan was a valuable resource used by the Town of Buffalo in preparing this plan. The Town of Buffalo supports the planning activities of the Marquette Land and Water Conservation Department to protect area natural resources.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Elements

The development of the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element required coordination with all of the required plan elements. For example, when considering economic development strategies, the future role of agricultural operations in the town, as well as the importance of natural resources, was important to consider. Below is a description of the critical issues addressed with respect to the Land Use and Housing Elements. These elements are profiled because their coordination with the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element is critical to the success of the plan.

LAND USE

Residents of the town have clearly indicated at public meetings that the preservation of agricultural operations and the protection of natural resources is a priority. As a result, when the *Future Land Use Maps* were developed special consideration was given to these two priorities. Likewise, the implementation element will help to ensure that through the enforcement of desired planning and zoning requirements, natural resources and farming operations are protected in the Town of Buffalo.

HOUSING

Housing, if not carefully located and planned for can have a severe impact on natural resources and farming operations. Housing development can fragment farming operations and wildlife habitat areas. If not carefully planned, additional traffic, people, and services associated with housing development can quickly destroy rural character. The Town of Buffalo desires a rural development pattern that protects natural resources and farmlands, while still accommodating some residential development. To achieve this, the use of conservation subdivisions and other non-traditional techniques should be encouraged in the town. This strategy for housing development is reflected in the *Future Land Use Maps*.

Goals and Objectives

It is the vision of the Town of Buffalo that the community will retain its rural character by continuing to enjoy a mix of scenic, open, natural, undeveloped areas and farming operations through 2020. Natural resources will be protected and serve as an environmental, recreational, and economic asset to the town. Residential and limited

commercial development will be in harmony with the town's natural environment. The Town of Buffalo will support the continued efforts of neighboring communities, school districts, Marquette County, and the State of Wisconsin, to provide cultural and historic resources that can be used by town residents. The town will also work, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Wisconsin "Smart Growth" Law, with neighboring communities, Marquette County, the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and the State of Wisconsin to ensure that natural resources are adequately protected for future generations.

GOALS

1. Preserve agricultural operations and natural areas in the Town of Buffalo to maintain the town's rural character.
2. Enhance recreational opportunities in the Town of Buffalo.
3. Protect stream banks, wetlands and floodplains from harmful uses.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify and protect areas of prime agricultural land in the town through appropriate land use controls, cluster developments and conservation subdivision designs. Coordinate these efforts through Marquette County and, as necessary, develop local subdivision regulations to further the town's vision.
2. Seek to identify land trusts in the area that may be interested in protecting farmland and other natural areas. Provide contact information to local farmers who desire this information.
3. Explore the potential for establishing a PDR Program. This effort may be coordinated with neighboring towns and Marquette County.
4. Educate local farmers and builders about the potential for conservation subdivisions, cluster development and mixed-use development in the Town of Buffalo.
5. Continue to support the local use of effective county and state farmland and woodland preservation programs (i.e. Managed Forest Law).
6. Support the efforts of Marquette County to enforce stream and lake setback requirements and policies established in the *Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*.
7. Educate developers and landowners about the "right-to-farm." Coordinate with local realtors and builders associations to disseminate information. Possibly develop a brochure. If, in the future, the town decides to develop a web page or town newsletter include information there as well.

8. Create, maintain and enhance natural buffers along stream banks and the lakeshores. Work with Marquette County and the Wisconsin DNR and DATCP to promote and help fund buffer strips along streams and the lakeshores.
9. Participate in the planning efforts of Marquette County to ensure that the county comprehensive plan represents the interests, visions, and expectations of the Town of Buffalo.
10. To protect wildlife habitat areas in the town, beyond regulated wetlands, floodplains and shorelands, identify natural areas in the town. Using this information:
 - a. Seek grant-funding sources available through the WDNR and other agencies to help protect wildlife habitat areas for future generations to enjoy.
 - b. Build partnerships with local habitat conservation organizations (ducks unlimited, trout unlimited, etc.) to help with wildlife protection and education.
 - c. Seek to prevent fragmentation of these habitats by encouraging cluster and conservation-based development.

8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

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8.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

According to the Smart Growth Law, the purpose of the Economic Development Element is to promote the stabilization, retention and expansion of the economic base, and quality employment opportunities. To address this requirement, this chapter includes:

- Highlights of the **labor force information** from Chapter 3.0;
- An assessment of **strengths and weaknesses** with respect to attracting and retaining business and industry;
- An overview of programs that deal with **environmentally contaminated sites** for commercial or industrial uses; and
- A list of organizations (and contact information) providing **economic development programs** at the county, regional, state and federal levels.

The Town of Buffalo does not have an economic activity center or “downtown” area. Residents travel elsewhere (i.e. Montello, Pardeeville) to obtain needed goods and services. The Town of Buffalo does have a select number of local businesses within the town limits. Farming is the primary economic activity in the town.

Economic Development Vision

Economic development in the Town of Buffalo is in harmony with the Town’s natural environment. Farming is the foundation of the local economy. Residents also enjoy access to a few new businesses (i.e. restaurant and gas station) that have developed along the STH 22 corridor. These businesses respect the town’s “dry” alcohol policy.

Labor Force and Economic Base

Based on the information presented in **Chapter 3.0**:

By a 2:1 margin, more people commute out of the county to places of employment than commute into the county for work.

Most residents who are employed travel beyond the town limits to work.

Marquette County residents who work make only approximately 70% of the state average wage.

The unemployment rate in Marquette County has decreased since 2010.

The average income for Marquette County residents has been consistently lower than the state average for decades.

Nearly a quarter of town residents do not have a high school diploma.

These facts and statistics are consistent with the fact that the Town of Buffalo has a very limited economic base consisting of a few small businesses. Residents consider this limited amount of commercial development desirable.

Current Business Inventory

There are few businesses located in the Town of Buffalo. Businesses are found in nearby cities that can offer additional amenities (i.e. sewer and water). Therefore, residents travel to nearby communities to purchase needed goods and services. Nevertheless, the town enjoys a **unique collection of more than 30 small businesses**, in addition to farm operations, that are scattered throughout the community. These businesses include:



Custom Vinyl Windows, W2760 CTH CM, Pardeeville, WI
Miller's Small Engine Repair, N115 15th Road, Pardeeville, WI

Handsome Hound Grooming, N335 15th Road, Pardeeville, WI

Weaver Cabinet Shop, W2301 Barry Road, Pardeeville, WI

Fairview Cabinets and Doors, W2302 Barry Road, Pardeeville

Shady Lane Variety Store, W2384 Barry Road, Pardeeville, WI

Millers Green Haus, W2214 Barry Road, Pardeeville, WI

Lilac Woodcraft Shop, W1996 Barry Road, Dalton, WI

Mast's Bent and Dent, Barry Road, Pardeeville, WI

Lalor's Automotive and Auto Sales, N2289 STH 22, Montello, WI

Schoewe Nursery, W2101 Gillette Road, Dalton, WI

Woods & Goods Store, N1629 STH 22, Montello, WI

Wilderness Campground and RV Sales, N1499 STH 22, Montello, WI

Beahm's Income Tax & Bookkeeping, N1621 STH 22, Montello, WI

Greenhouse and Kuhns Welding Shop, N914 STH 22, Montello, WI

Anne's Fiber Expression Knitters & Spinners, N1513 STH 22, Montello, WI

MH Guenther Tree Trimming, N1939 16th Road, Montello, WI

Metal Building Concepts, N1074 17th Road, Dalton, WI

Julie Ann Salon, N1171 17th Road, Dalton, WI
LeRoy Miller Saw Mill, N1020 Smith Road, Dalton, WI
Bontrager Furniture, N1112 18th Road, Dalton, WI
CWS Building Erectors, N1683 18th Road, Dalton, WI
Skyhurst Photography Studio, W2201 Golden Road, Dalton,
WI
Nature Trails Bakery, 12th Avenue, Montello, WI
Happy Hollow Bakery, N1997 16th Road, Montello, WI
Fine Art Gallery and Studio, N1294 CTH F, Montello, WI
DMS Roofing, N874 CTH F, Montello, WI
Quality Dog Grooming, N365 CTH F, Montello, WI
Ken's Taxidermy Studio, W2371 Grouse Road, Dalton, WI

The list of local businesses is not all-inclusive. Some residents have **home occupations** (i.e. child care, hair stylist, taxidermy, contractors, small engine repair, etc.). As the scope of the Internet continues to grow, more and more people may be working at home in the future. The nature of these businesses presents no noticeable impact or nuisance to adjacent properties. The **town supports a resident's right to have a small business operation** on his/her property or work at home, provided that the business activity or establishment does not create a nuisance for neighboring property owners by generating excessive traffic, noise, lighting, signage, etc.

Local Business Environments

Presently, the town's businesses are **spread across the town**. This situation does not support businesses that are dependent on passing traffic. Likewise, many of these businesses are situated on large properties, which helps to ensure that they do not create a nuisance (visual or otherwise) to adjacent landowners.

The **Amish community supports a business environment** in the Town of Buffalo and surrounding communities. By owning large areas of contiguous land, the Amish have established a farm-based community in the region. Many of the Amish operate businesses on their property to sell the goods they produce. As a result, a network of rural Amish businesses are scattered around the town and in adjacent communities. Nearly all of these businesses are accessible from STH 22.

The Town of Buffalo believes if any future non-Amish businesses are established, they will most likely be situated along **STH 22**. Today, development along the corridor consists mainly of single-family homes and farmland. Long-term, additional businesses are desired, including perhaps a restaurant. New business development is encouraged to locate near existing businesses to minimize the impact on farmland, distant views, and open space. Businesses should cater to both passing motorists and area residents.

Given there are some existing homes scattered along the corridor, efforts should be made to protect existing homeowners from the lighting and signage of new development through the use of landscape buffers and signage controls.

Attracting and Retaining Business and Industry

The Town of Buffalo has several *positive attributes* to offer potential businesses. Specifically, the town has:

- **A favorable tax rate;**
- **Properties with STH 22 frontage;**
- **Residents have a good work ethic;**
- **Land available** for development; and
- **A large Amish community** that brings tourists to the area and maintains farming economy.

While the town certainly enjoys its share of advantages, there are several *challenges* that the town must contend with when seeking to attract new businesses and industry. In particular:

- The Town of Buffalo has **limited services** to offer potential businesses (i.e. no municipal water or sewer service).
- The population in the town is not large enough to provide the customer base necessary to support a large commercial endeavor.
- Residents of the Town of Buffalo are very **mobile** and can easily drive to nearby communities to purchase services and products.
- There is a **limited supply of available workers**. Those workers that are available will likely require training.
- Currently there are comparatively **few established businesses** in the town. Businesses generally seek to locate in areas that have a demonstrated ability to support business development.
- Commercial establishments that depend on high traffic volumes have limited opportunity to locate in the town because **traffic volumes are relatively low**.

Economic Development Opportunities

STH 22

Any future commercial and industrial development in the Town of Buffalo is encouraged along the **highway corridor**. This is pattern of development is desired to protect natural areas, farmland and residential development in other areas town. Furthermore, since the highway is the primary travel route, it provides the most visibility for a business.

It must be understood that the town does not envision STH 22 infilling completely with development over the next 20 years. Preferably, development along the corridor would **expand from existing developed areas near the intersection of CTH B**.

While the town would like to welcome additional commercial, office and light industrial development to support the local tax base, it is important that any new development exist **in harmony with the local environment**. Therefore, new development should be “clean” and not produce a significant amount of waste, which could pose a hazard to natural areas, groundwater and wetlands of the Town of Buffalo. Likewise, new development should blend into the rural landscape and not represent a nuisance to residents. Therefore, new developments must include natural **landscaping and attractive signage**.

AMISH BUSINESSES

Many of the Amish residents have opened shops and roadside businesses. The handmade, homegrown items sold draw tourists to the community. To support this network of businesses, and improve safety, the Town can work with the Amish and County to provide directional signage and reduced speed limit areas. The town will also encourage, and a few supporting businesses on STH 22 (i.e. gas station/convenience store and restaurant).

Desired Business and Industry

During the planning process it was revealed residents take great pride in the undeveloped, rural character of the community and do not want to see it negatively impacted by business and industrial development. It is only anticipated that a couple of new businesses will establish in the town in the future.

Any new business and industry in the town must understand that municipal water and sewer service is not available. In addition, the town wants to be sure that new development does not jeopardize the rural quality of life. Therefore, businesses and industries that locate in Buffalo should:

- Be environmentally friendly;
- Have limited outdoor storage (if any) to control unsightliness;
- Generate minimal noise and traffic that can be easily accommodated by the existing transportation network;
- Require only minimal lighting (on-site lighting only, no beams, or other protruding light sources);
- Require only on-site signage (no billboards);
- Have generous landscaping to improve the façade from the roadway and buffer the development from adjacent land uses; and
- Respect the town's "dry" policies.

Given these constraints, the town would like to target the following types of development:

- **Farm operations** as the primary economic activity in the town. Farming is the foundation of the local economy. The town residents want farming to remain the

focal point of the community. As a result, the plan seeks to limit development in farmland areas by directing other uses to other areas of the town.

- **Service business** (i.e. restaurant, coffee shop, convenience store) along the STH 22 corridor. These types of businesses would rely on highway motorists and Amish tourists to survive.
- **Home occupations** of a professional nature to take advantage of the Internet and other technologies that permit people to work from the privacy of their homes. Home occupations are particularly attractive to the town given the town’s low density of development that limits the likelihood that a home occupation will become a nuisance to neighboring property owners.

In the Marquette County Community Planning Survey, residents of the Town of Buffalo were asked about business and employment preferences. The results revealed the following results:

<u>Type of Development</u>	<u>% Agree/Strongly Agree</u>
<i>Small Scale Industrial Development</i>	58.1%
<i>Small Scale Retail Development</i>	56.1%
<i>Small Scale Agricultural Development</i>	55.8%
<i>Moderate Scale Industrial Development</i>	51.6%
<i>Tourism Development</i>	44.2%
<i>Large Scale Retail Development</i>	28.4%
<i>Large Scale Industrial Development</i>	23.2%
<i>Service Development</i>	21.7%
<i>Moderate/Large Scale Agricultural Development</i>	21.3%

Tools to Promote Economic Development

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (RED) EARLY PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

This program is designed to assist rural businesses with 25 employees or less. Grants may only be used for professional services such as preparation of a feasibility study, market study or business plan.

INTERNET MARKETING Needs to be rewritten

Many towns in Wisconsin are creating Internet Web Pages. The Town of Buffalo should consider marketing itself on the Internet by providing detailed information about available land for commercial/industrial development, community services, programs, and organizations, and includes demographic, economic and housing statistics. Much of this information could be taken from this plan. This type of information is a valuable resource to marketing professionals seeking redevelopment locations.



A Town of Buffalo web site could also be used to advertise community events, post community meeting minutes and agendas, and provide a new forum for residents to provide feedback and get questions answered. Ideally, the Town Clerk would maintain this web site.

MILK VOLUME PRODUCTION PROGRAM (MVP)

The MVP program is designed to assist dairy producers that are seeking to acquire additional cows. The program is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. The goal of the MVP program is to provide qualifying dairy producers with needed financing and to partner with local communities to increase dairy production in Wisconsin. Assistance is limited to no more than \$500 per cow added to an operation or a maximum award of \$1 million. Additional information about this program, including application requirements, is available at www.commerce.state.wi.us.

CREATING COMMUNITY IDENTITY TO SUPPORT EXISTING BUSINESSES

When talking about future development, this section would be remiss without discussing the desire the Town of Buffalo has to ensure that development in the town is easily identifiable as being in the Town of Buffalo. This will require the town to establish design requirements, through zoning, to define the desired appearance of local businesses. From that point, it will be incumbent upon business owners to follow landscaping, lighting, signage and façade guidelines that create a consistent theme for the community.

Beyond design requirements, the town can also emphasize community identify through:

- Unique road signs for all town roads
- Gateway or entrance signs along STH 22
- Directional signage to Amish and rural businesses

Residential Development as Economic Development

There is potential for residential development in the Town of Buffalo. As such, it will continue to provide an increasing share of the tax base. Therefore, residential development does provide some economic development gains for the town.

However, to a much greater degree than commercial and agricultural development, housing requires extensive services to accommodate resident needs. These services include: schools, parks, sanitary sewer, public safety, roads and associated maintenance (including snowplowing), and other amenities. As an example, in 1994, the Town of Dunn¹ in Dane County, WI conducted a study to understand the tax implications of

¹ Additional Information about the Town of Dunn Community Services Study is available on-line at www.town.dunn.wi.us.

development. The study showed for every dollar of tax revenue collected from residential development, \$1.06 was required in services for residential users. (Any service costs greater than \$1.00 result in a net loss for the town.) Conversely, for every dollar collected from a commercial development, \$0.29 was required for services. Therefore, commercial uses bring additional tax dollars into the community. For every dollar collected from farmers, as little as \$0.18 was required in services.

It is important to ensure that local residential tax dollars cover the costs to provide needed services. While the Town of Buffalo supports additional residential development opportunities, the town does not want to see poorly planned new residential development significantly increase town operating and service costs for all existing homeowners and taxpayers. Therefore, the town supports new residential development paying a fair and proportionate share of service costs.

One strategy encouraged by the town to help ensure that future residential development is attractive is the use of conservation or cluster subdivisions. The town believes this type of development will:

- Limit overall land consumption to maintain as much valuable farmland as possible;
- Minimize infrastructure and maintenance costs for development; and
- Utilize COMM 83 systems.

Program Assistance

UW-EXTENSION

Through the Marquette County Office of the University of Wisconsin-Extension Service, the Marquette County Resource Development Agent offers:

Small business management assistance workshops or one-on-one counseling;
Information on county revolving loan funds and other sources of financing;
Research into available government loans; and
Local demographic information.

EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION – *www.eastcentralrpc.org*

ECWRPC maintains an Economic Development Program that provides communities with information for economic development, reviews of program changes and initiatives, and review assistance for local economic development proposals, plans. ECWRPC also reviews regional economic development program recommendations for more effective application at the local level.

A significant portion of the Economic Development Program is updating the CEDS - an annual report that includes a review of the previous year's accomplishments, current

demographic and economic statistics and any significant changes in the local economy. As part of the process, the Commission's Economic Development Committee helps to identify economic problems and opportunities and economic development projects to address their needs.

ECWRPC also collects and distributes socio-economic data about the region that is useful for market analysis by prospective developers. Furthermore, ECWRPC maintains an inventory of industrial sites and buildings within the region.

STATE AGENCIES /PROGRAMS

- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) – www.inwisconsin.com: the state's primary agency supporting business development.
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation – www.dot.state.wi.us: the office of disadvantaged Business Enterprise Programs administers a range of services to increase participation of firms owned by disadvantaged individuals in all federal aid and state transportation facility contracts.
- Forward Wisconsin – www.forwardwi.com: to market outside Wisconsin to attract new businesses, jobs and increased economic activity to the state.
- Department of Workforce Development – www.dwd.state.wi.us: to build and strengthen Wisconsin's workforce by providing job services, training and employment assistance, and help employers find necessary workers.
- Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers – www.uwex.edu/sbdc: to help ensure the state's economic health and stability through formative business education by counseling, technology and information transfer and instruction. The nearest Small Business Development Center is located at UW-Oshkosh.

FEDERAL AGENCIES /PROGRAMS

- Department of Agriculture Rural Development Administration – www.rurdev.usda.gov
- U. S. Small Business Administration – www.sba.gov: provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run and grow their businesses.
- US Department of Commerce – www.doc.gov
- US Department of Transportation – www.dot.gov

Environmentally Contaminated Sites

Throughout Wisconsin, many properties have become polluted in such a way that inhibits their continued use. Aside from the environmental consequences, these properties are often underutilized and/or abandoned. This creates negative

A **Brownfield** refers to an abandoned, idled, or underused industrial or commercial facility or property where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

impacts on local economies. To address this growing program, the State has developed the authority and resources to help clean up these sites so that they can again be used to contribute to the local economy. For a **complete history and up-to-date list of brownfield sites in the Town of Buffalo**, including spill locations and mitigation actions taken, check the WDNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Internet web site tracking list available at: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/brrts/find_sites.htm. According to available information, there is only 1 spill site in the town. That site has been addressed to WDNR specifications. However, this simply means that the investigations conducted by the WDNR are completed. Contamination may still exist on these properties.

The town can pursue organizational and financial assistance from Marquette County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency if a land contamination issues arise. There are many grant programs available through these agencies to help communities address brownfield (currently vacant commercial and industrial facilities), leaking underground storage tank, and other environmental concerns should they arise in the future.

To prevent an environmental situation, the town will encourage only environmentally friendly business development that is properly permitted and regulated to protect the town's natural environment. In the future, the town will also seek to educate residents (through a newsletter and website) about contamination risks and potentials. Moreover, the town will encourage landowners, with potential contamination problems, to pursue investigation and mitigation opportunities to understand the extent of pollution and address it before severe impacts occur.

Relationship to Other Required Plan Elements

Economic development in the Town of Buffalo has the potential to impact many of the other required plan elements. What follows is a summary of the relationship between the Economic Development Element and the Land Use, Transportation and Intergovernmental Elements.

LAND USE

The location, type, and amount of business development in the Town of Buffalo was an important consideration in the development of the *Future Land Use Maps*. Likewise, as business environments were identified in the planning effort, the importance of landscaping, signage controls and lighting controls to protect the rural character of the town was discussed. Appropriate enforcement of the Town of Buffalo Zoning Ordinance will be important to this effort.

TRANSPORTATION

Existing businesses are located throughout the community on town, county and state roads. This situation presents some challenges, particularly on narrow town roads, with

limited shoulder areas and more limited sight-distances. Compounding structural issues,

Amish traveling in horse-drawn buggies also present a hazard. To mitigate these issues, additional signage is encouraged to help visitors locate businesses, and increase awareness of reduced sight-distances, and slow-moving vehicles.

Goals and Objectives

In 20 years, the Town of Buffalo expects economic activity consist mainly of farm operations. A few new businesses will locate in the town. The location for new business development is illustrated on the *Future Land Use Maps*.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Support local farmers and farm operations as the primary economic activity in the town.
2. Support additional business development along the highway corridors.
3. Encourage local entrepreneurs who seek to expand and diversify the town's economy by opening home occupations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

1. Through appropriate zoning and communication with local realtors, seek to concentrate new commercial and industrial development around existing development in areas identified on the *Future Land Use Maps*.
 - a. A copy of this plan will be available upon request and available at the nearest public library for local businesses.
 - b. Enforce zoning code requirements to adequately permit commercial and industrial uses with appropriate signage, lighting, and landscaping.
2. Develop a guide for local property owners who wish to establish home occupations. Include criteria for site development and zoning approvals.
3. Coordinate with county and regional organizations to market the Town of Buffalo for economic growth opportunities.
 - a. Develop a web site to provide demographic, market, site locations, cost, and other information about the community for prospective entrepreneurs.
 - b. Maintain the list of current businesses on the web site.

4. Improve communication with local businesses owners to remain aware of local economic conditions and challenges.
 - a. Through the establishment of a web page, provide business owners with the opportunity to interact more directly with the town to express questions, concerns, and comments.
 - b. Host a meeting with local business owners once every 5 years to discuss local business concerns in the context of this chapter. This meeting should coincide with the town's annual review of implementation strategies.
5. Seek to ensure that the town's development is distinguishable from development in adjacent communities.
 - a. Create a town logo for use on letterhead, etc.
 - b. Seek to integrate the town logo on road signs.
 - c. Locate directional signage at prominent locations along STH 22.

POLICIES

1. *It is the policy of the Town of Buffalo to support local farmers and protect farming operations from development pressures.*
2. *It is the policy of the Town of Buffalo to support the establishment of home occupations, provided such uses do not constitute a nuisance to neighboring properties (i.e. excessive noise, traffic, odors, vibration, etc.) or deter from the rural character of the area (i.e. signage, lighting, etc.).*
3. *It is the policy of the Town of Buffalo to support the use of DSPS 383 to promote business and residential development opportunities.*

9.0 EXISTING LAND USE

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9.0 EXISTING LAND USE

Introduction

The landscape of Buffalo tells the story of its heritage and pride. The beautiful rivers, lakes, wooded hills and rolling farms give the community its identity. These physical attributes are echoed in the value statements presented in Chapter 1 and the town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats listed in Chapter 2.

Existing Land Use Inventory

The *Buffalo Existing Land Use Map* was created from information provided by Marquette County, the WDNR and the WDOT and from Orthophotos (i.e. Air Photos) of the town. These photos are provided on the next two pages. The Town of Buffalo Planning Committee provided additional updates in 2002 and 2003.

Below is a description of the land use categories illustrated on the *Existing Land Use Map*.

TRANSPORTATION FEATURES

All town, county, and state roadways in the Town of Buffalo are shown in black on the *Existing Land Use Map*. Railroads are shown in a purple-hatched line. To learn more about transportation facilities serving the town, refer to Chapter 5.

SURFACE WATER

Several lakes exist in the Town of Buffalo as well as the two important river corridors -- the Fox River and Grand River.

SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING

Single family residential development is scattered throughout the town along town and county roads. Information about the characteristics and quality of the town's housing supply is available in Chapter 4.

MOBILE HOME

There is one mobile home park in the Town of Buffalo located off CTH F. However, there are many individual mobile homes scattered around the town. Some of these mobile homes are used as hunting cabins and vacation homes. Others are the primary residence of their occupants.

FARMSTEADS

Farmsteads include farm buildings and outbuildings associated with family farm operations.

WOODLANDS

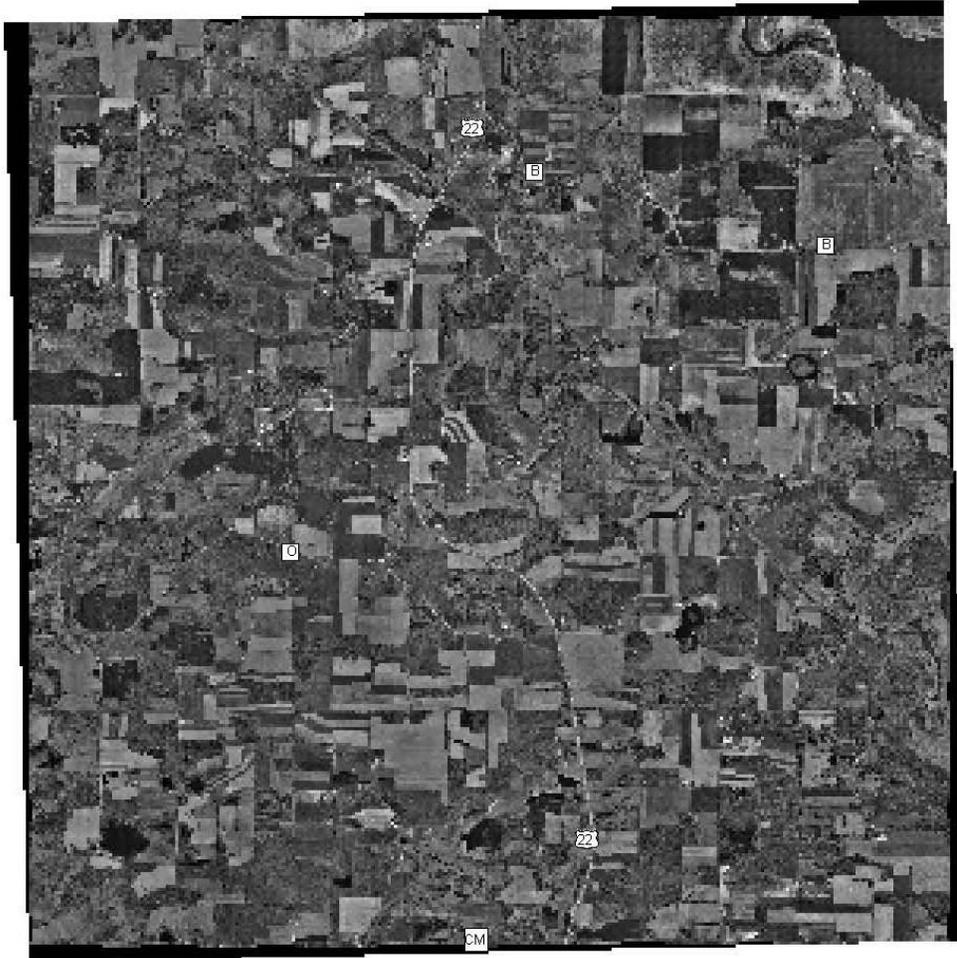
Forested areas dominate the landscape. For information about woodlands and other natural areas, refer to Chapter 7.

2000 ORTHO PHOTO

TOWN OF BUFFALO (EAST PART)

MARQUETTE COUNTY

MONTELLO

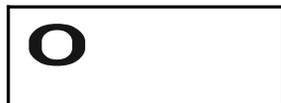


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TOWNSHIP
MARQUETTE COUNTY

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WINNEBAGO

MARCELLON

(COLUMBIA COUNTY)



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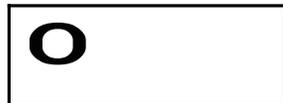
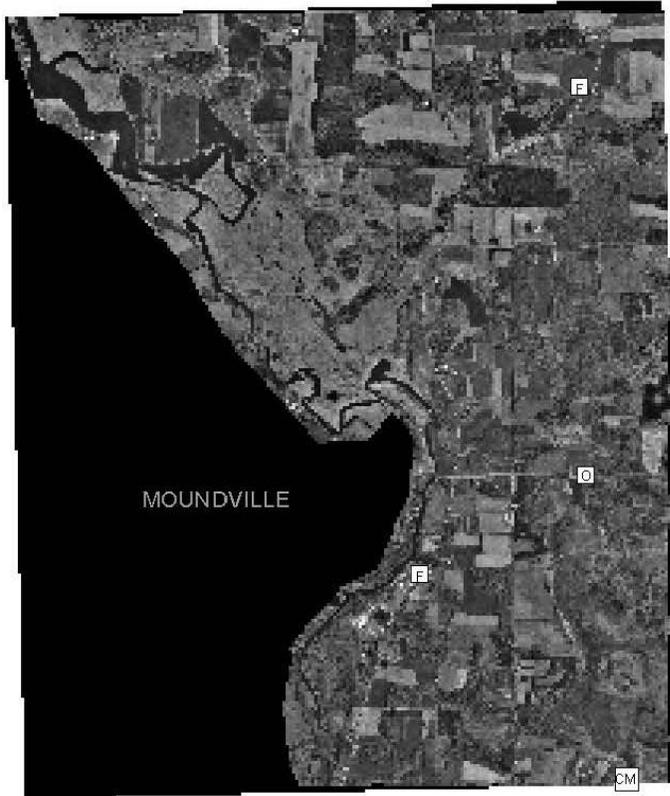
1" = 3500'

2000 ORTHO PHOTO

TOWN OF BUFFALO (WEST PART)

MARQUETTE COUNTY

PACKWAUKEE



FARMLAND

There is a significant amount of quality agricultural land in the Town of Buffalo, including areas farmed by the local Amish population. For additional information about farming, refer to Chapter 7.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial land uses are concentrated primarily along STH 22. A campground development near Madden Lake is also shown as commercial. Chapter 8 profiles economic development opportunities in the Town of Buffalo.

QUARRY

There are no active quarries in the town. To learn more about non-metallic mining operations refer to the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element provided in Chapter 7.

The *Existing Land Use Map* also identifies the locations of churches, cemeteries, electric substations, natural gas pipelines, wetland areas, and state and federal lands.

The table below is a required numerical breakdown of the existing land uses in the town. The Wisconsin Smart Growth Law requires this table. The net density (total number of dwelling units divided by all residential acres) in the Town of Buffalo is 2.0 dwelling units/acre (461 housing units/229 acres).

TABLE 17 2003 EXISTING LAND USE AMOUNT & INTENSITY		
Land Use Type	Amount (in acres)	% of Ar
Single Family Residential & Duplex	155	Less than 1%
Mobile Home Parks	20	Less than
Farmstead	50	Less than
DNR Lands	2,323	6.9
Forests	18,379.1	54.9
Farmland	8,613.8	25.7
Commercial	5	Less than
Campground	80	Less than
Marquette County Land	165	Less than
Quarry	0	Less than
US Fish & Wildlife Lands	1,090	3.0
Surface Water & Roads	2,707.1	8.1
TOTALS	33,588	100

NOTE: Based on limited data availability for the purposes of calculating area the following assumptions were used. Single family homes were calculated on a 1 acre per house basis. Farmstead were calculated at 1.5 acres for each farmstead. Commercial properties were calculated on a 2 acre lot basis.

P...

- TO/VINOFBUPFAJ...OBOJNDARY
- RO.ADS
- RAILROAD
- 300'SHORELAND ZONINIG
- C=J** UNZONED
- SURFACE WATER
- PARKS JSTATE JFEDEP.AJ...LINDS
- [:: :>:] WETLANDS



FORT WINNEBAGO

MARCELLON (COLUMBIACOUNTY)



Zoning Regulations

Marquette County enforces shoreland and wetland zoning in the Town of Buffalo within 1000' of the ordinary high water mark of a lake or pond and 300' to a navigable stream.

In 2011, the Town of Buffalo adopted a town Zoning Ordinance. The Town's Zoning Ordinance divides the Town into seven different zoning districts and contains a variety of site development standards. As of 2016, the Town's Zoning Ordinance was collaboratively administered with Marquette County.

Subdivision Regulations

The Town of Buffalo has adopted a Land Division Ordinance. Marquette County also enforces a Land Division/Subdivision Ordinance in all unincorporated areas of the county. The ordinance requires a certified survey map for the creation of any new lot, which is 15 acres or less. In addition, all new lots must have an access, with a minimum width of 66 feet, to a public road. There are additional requirements for creating more than 4 lots of 5 acres or less in a period of 5 years.



To learn more about
county zoning and
subdivision requirements
visit :

www.co.marquette.wi.us

Trends in Supply, Demand and Price of Land

Through much of the 20th century, Marquette County has remained undeveloped. However, in recent decades this has started to change. The county has abundant areas of available and affordable land accessible to Madison and the Fox Cities. As these urban areas expand, people from these areas have begun to recognize Marquette County for its rural character, lakeshore properties, natural resource opportunities, and available land for building. Lakeshore and wooded acreage are in high demand. The recent influx of settlers has caused the values of lakeshore and mature wooded property to increase 200 – 300% from the early 90s.

Increased development has also resulted in parcels becoming fragmented. **Fragmentation** has a negative impact on wildlife habitat, productive agricultural uses, and natural features such as lakes, streams and woodlands.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development accounts for a small portion of the land area in the town, but it is a growing share of the town's tax base and expenses. Land prices for residential development are affordable in comparison to neighboring towns. This affordability is not expected to change in the future.

There is not a supply of vacant housing units in the town available for purchase. Most vacant units are seasonal homes used on a limited basis by people who live elsewhere. **People moving to the town generally build new homes.**

There is a **significant amount of land available for additional residential development.** However, residents of the area do not want to see productive agricultural areas and scenic wooded areas extensively developed (i.e. fragmented).

Historically, most of the new housing has been developed on individual lots, not in subdivisions, adjacent to town and county roads. In recent years, subdivision development proposals have been submitted to the town. This has also resulted in a sharp increase in the number of annual building permits for new housing construction.

Given that the town's population is projected to continue to increase over the planning period, new housing development is eminent. To protect the rural character of the town and northwoods feel, the town would like to establish minimum lot size standards and also permit conservation-based development approaches.

FARMING

Farming is a significant land use in Buffalo. Unlike many towns in Wisconsin, **farming will continue to be a significant land use in the future** given the fact that the Amish own more than 10 square miles of land in the town. These areas will remain farmland for the next 20 years and beyond as the Amish work to preserve their traditions and heritage into the 21st century. As the Amish community grows, it may also seek additional farmland areas.

Other local farmers, who are not part of the Amish community, have not expressed a great deal of optimism with respect to the long-term sustainability of their farming operations. The Wisconsin farm economy is very challenging. Moreover, local farmers are aging and will seek opportunities for retirement in the future. For most of these farmers, their landholdings are their primary asset. Therefore, they often sell their land to finance their retirement.

Several opportunities exist to preserve farmland in the Town of Buffalo, while still accommodating the needs of retiring farmers. Specifically:

- **Partnerships** could be established **between the Amish and other farmers, so** when a farmer wants to retire and sell their land the Amish would have the opportunity to purchase the property to retain the farmland.
- If a farmer would rather develop their property, **conservation-based approaches** (refer to the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element) should be pursued. These approaches can accommodate residential development, but also preserve farmland areas.
- More limited development (i.e. **the selling of a lot or two**) by farmers can also be **done in a manner to preserve as much farmland and possible and preserve the rural character** of the community. For additional information refer to the Future Land Use Chapter.

Information on the value of farmland is presented in Chapter 7.

NATURAL AREAS

The rolling hills, scenic open views, and dense woodlands in the Town of Buffalo contribute significantly to the town's rural character. Marquette County, the State of Wisconsin and the federal government own some of these areas. These land-holdings are for conservation and preservation of forest resources and wildlife habitat. These areas account for approximately ¼ of all natural areas in the town. The remaining areas are privately owned. As a result, it is incumbent upon the town and county to work with landowners to preserve the character and quality of these other natural areas.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Only a handful of businesses exist in the town. Given there is no water or sewer service available, a significant amount of future commercial development is not anticipated. However, some additional development, particularly along STH 22 is desired. These businesses would be able to capitalize on the town's affordable land prices, state highway visibility, and tourist potential associated with the natural resources and Amish Community. For additional information about business opportunities refer to Chapter 8.

Opportunities for Redevelopment

Given the rural nature of the town, opportunities for redevelopment are extremely limited since most areas are undeveloped at this time. Additional information about quarry redevelopment is provided in Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Chapter. When redevelopment opportunities arise, the Town of Buffalo will rely on zoning requirements, site plan review, and other tools.

Underutilized Commercial/Industrial Areas

STH 22 is the primary area for commercial/industrial development. The rural nature of the town, with limited services available (i.e. no water or sewer), commercial and industrial development opportunities are limited. Nevertheless, some businesses have located in the town (refer to the Economic Development Element). Given this situation and the town's close proximity to Montello (where services are available) there are no underutilized commercial or industrial areas in the town.

10.0 FUTURE LAND USE

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10.0 FUTURE LAND USE

Introduction

This chapter builds upon the information and recommendations expressed in the previous chapters to present the *10-Year and 20-Year Town of Buffalo Future Land Use Maps*. These maps illustrate the goals, objectives, visions and policies expressed throughout this plan.

Land Use Vision

Actions taken by Town of Buffalo, through its Comprehensive Plan and supporting regulations, have ensured that the overall appearance of the landscape will not change significantly. While new residences have been built in the Town, they are well planned to protect the town's natural resources, farmland and aesthetic appeal.

Background

To develop the initial *Future Land Use Maps* in the early 2000s, a great deal of time and effort was required over the course of a 24-month planning program. The planning process was initiated with an extensive vision development effort and review of the historic and existing population characteristics. This information is described in Chapters 2 and 3. From there, the Planning Committee studied current conditions and future needs related to housing (Chapter 4), transportation (Chapter 5), utilities and community facilities (Chapter 6), and economic development (Chapter 8). The Planning Committee also examined the natural environment (Chapter 7). Finally, existing land use patterns and regulations were considered in the previous chapter.

In 2015, the Town of Buffalo, in cooperation with Marquette County and other County municipalities, reviewed and updated the Town's Future Land Use Map. The update included designating and mapping Farmland Preservation Areas. These areas were then incorporated into Marquette County's updated Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plans. The 2016 update to the Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan includes the Town's revised Planned Land Use Map.

Desired Development

COMMUNITY VALUES

To understand development and preservation desires, the planning process began with an assessment of community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (see Chapter 2). Immediately thereafter, residents were asked to consider community values. By answering the question, "*What makes the Town of Buffalo special?*" it was easy to identify planning priorities. A complete list of values is provided at the end of Chapter 1.

COGNITIVE CONSENSUS MAP MONTELLO

TOWN OF BUFFALO
MARQUETTE COUNTY

PACKWAUKEE
MOUNDVILLE

Legend

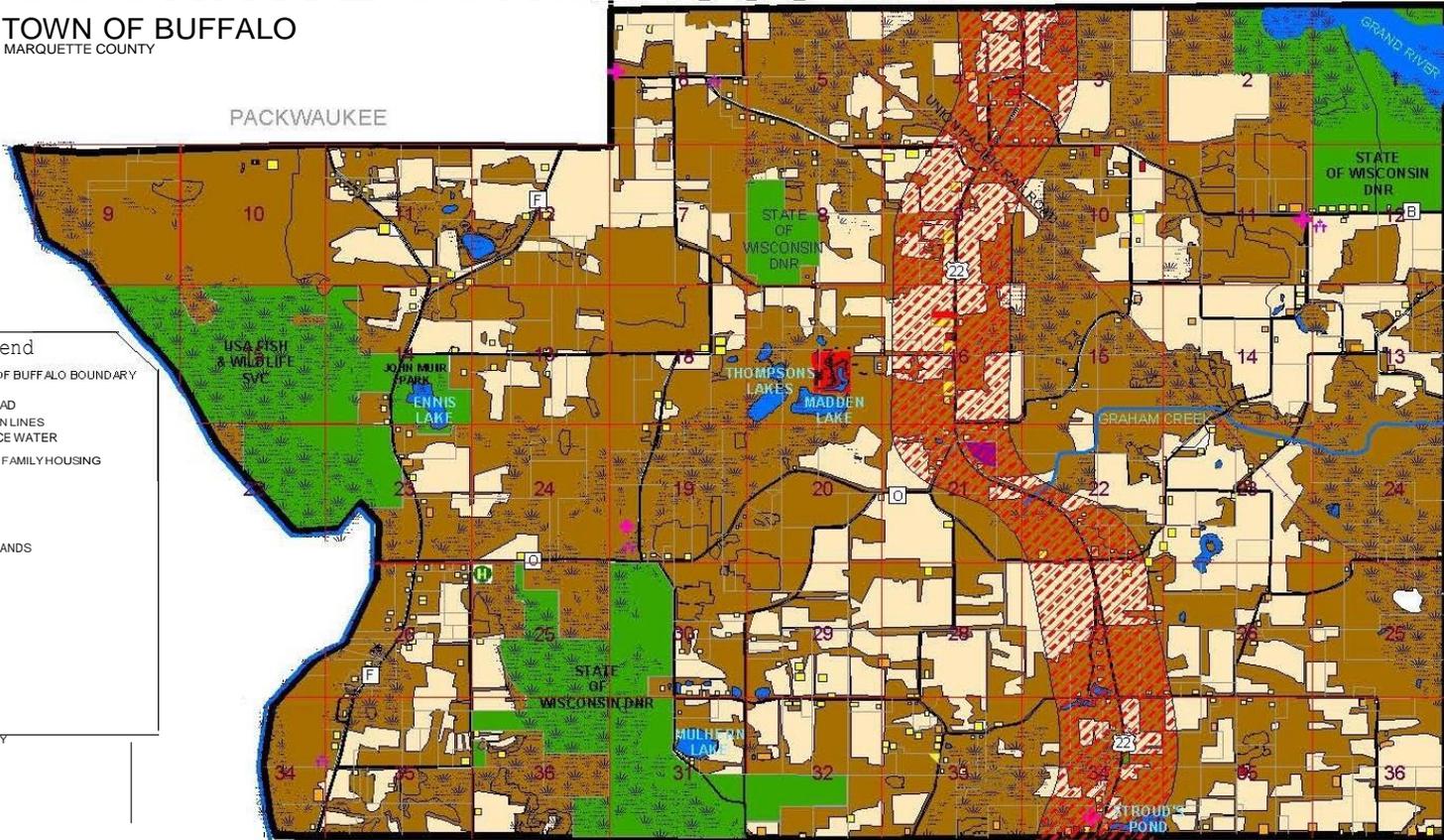
- TOWN OF BUFFALO BOUNDARY
- ROADS
- RAILROAD
- SECTION LINES
- SURFACE WATER
- SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING
- WOODLANDS
- QUARRY

MOBILE HOME PARKS

FARMSTEADS
 STATE FEDERAL LANDS

COMMERCIAL

WETLANDS



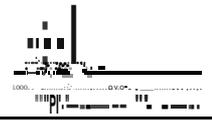
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FARMLAND
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V
Q1 ELECTRIC SUBSTATION
CEMETERY
+ CHURCH
DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR
(COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL)
1" = 4,000'

Residential developments acceptable
anywhere within the town. No multiple
family dwellings are desired within the
town. No new recreation or industrial
developments desired in the town



FORT
WINNEBAGO

MARCELLON (COLUMBIACOUNTY)

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COGNITIVE MAPPING

Another tool used to determine desired future development was cognitive mapping. Cognitive mapping is a process whereby individuals have the opportunity to develop their own *Future Land Use Map*, based on their ideas, perceptions, experiences and beliefs. Chapter 2 describes the cognitive mapping process in detail.

A copy of the “Consensus Map” is provided on the previous page of this plan. This map is a composite of all of the individual maps developed by participants. The map indicates that additional single-family residential development is anticipated. New recreation and industrial development is not desired. Residents believe existing recreation resources are adequate to meet future needs (as is demonstrated in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter). Moreover, residents do not want to see industrial uses established that could pose a threat to the quality of the groundwater supply. Residents indicated that the STH 22 corridor is the primary development area in the town.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Throughout this plan, town results from the **Marquette County Community Planning Survey** have been highlighted to express resident desires for housing, transportation, economic development, etc.

The survey also asked a series of questions related to planning and zoning. The results revealed that most residents believe land use should be governed by zoning. Only about 22% disagreed with this statement, while 63% agreed (about 15% were neutral). There was even more support for planning in the community. Almost 90% agreed that it is important for residents to plan for the future of their community. Only 4% disagreed with this statement. Sixty-seven percent of respondents reported that a building inspector should be in place to enforce building codes.

The survey also asked respondents a general question about their vision of the town in the year 2020. The question asked what type of town they would like to see in the future: (1) preserve rural landscape with limited new development; (2) preserve rural landscape with moderate amounts of new development; and (3) unrestricted development in rural areas. The majority of respondents (62.9%) preferred the first option, while 34.1% selected the second option. Few (3%) of the respondents picked the third option.

Special Considerations

UNCONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT/SPRAWL

In the Marquette County Community Planning Survey, a primary problem/concern expressed by town residents was uncontrolled development/sprawl.

Homes in the town are on parcels with individual sewer systems and private wells. Many of these residences have been built along roadsides as farmers and other landowners have sold lots for revenue. The result is a string of homes along county and town roads. This pattern is beginning to appear in the town and can be seen on the *Existing Land Use Map*. The name for this scattered pattern of roadside development is “*sprawl*” (see box).

Sprawl is of concern because overtime the rural character of the area (i.e. farm fields, barns, silos, open views, woodlands, wildlife, etc.) is replaced by housing development. Moreover, sprawl requires additional access to groundwater supplies because development patterns are not compact enough to support shared or municipal wells. Conflicts with remaining farmers (i.e. odor, dust, noise) are more likely to occur as residential development is allowed to spread into farming areas. Sprawl is perpetuated by large lot zoning requirements, affordable land, highway access, affordable tax rates, and lifestyle choices-- people want to get away from “big city” for country living.

WHAT IS RURAL SPRAWL?

“Sprawl” usually refers to development with negative effects such as loss of agricultural land, open space, and wildlife habitat. Sprawl is often equated directly with growth. That is, as population increases in an area or as city limits expand to accommodate growth, an area is considered to be sprawling (*National Geographic*, November 1999 Issue).

One of the strongest indicators of sprawl is increased traffic. As a result, auto-dependent development is considered to be sprawl.

Sprawling development is usually located on the urban fringe, at the edge of an urban area. Sprawl is often considered to be “low-density” development, though how low is generally not defined. Because “low” is a relative term, it is not standardized and ranges significantly (e.g. 3 units per acre to 1 unit per 40 acres).

Planning and zoning can be used to limit the impact of sprawl. **This plan provides information to address sprawl by:**

- **Protecting rural character;**
- **Providing a sense of place by directing development in accordance with the *Future Land Use Map*; and**
- **Preserving farmland through the use of conservation subdivisions and other techniques outlined in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter.**

NON-METALLIC MINING (I.E. QUARRY/ SAND PITS/ GRAVEL PITS) BUFFERS

There are no active non-metallic mining operation in the town. Residential development is not encouraged around this operation in order to limit the incidence of nuisances (i.e. noise, odors, truck traffic, groundwater concerns, etc.). At a minimum, residential development should be directed at least 1,200 feet away from local quarry operations. Exceptions should only be made when conditional use permits are granted to landowners and a note is attached to the title for all future users indicating a quarry is located within 1,200 feet of the property.

CONSERVATION/CLUSTER SUBDIVISION DESIGNS

The Town of Buffalo will **encourage conservation/cluster subdivision designs** to support residential development opportunities. The Town of Buffalo firmly believes that conservation/cluster subdivisions are a tool to balance the growth desires of landowners and retiring farmers with the rural character preservation desires of other residents.

What are Conservation Subdivisions?

A definition of conservation/cluster subdivisions, as well as procedures for establishing these types of subdivisions is provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element.

Conservation Subdivisions Have Cost Savings

The town believes the cost benefits associated with conservation/cluster subdivisions will entice landowners to pursue their development. These incentives include:

- ? **Reduced construction costs** compared to traditional subdivisions because a reduced area needs to be graded, fewer roads need to be constructed, and less supporting infrastructure (gas, electric, etc.) needs to be installed.
- ? **Residents of conservation-based developments are willing to pay more** for their lots than landowners in traditional subdivisions given the open, space amenities.

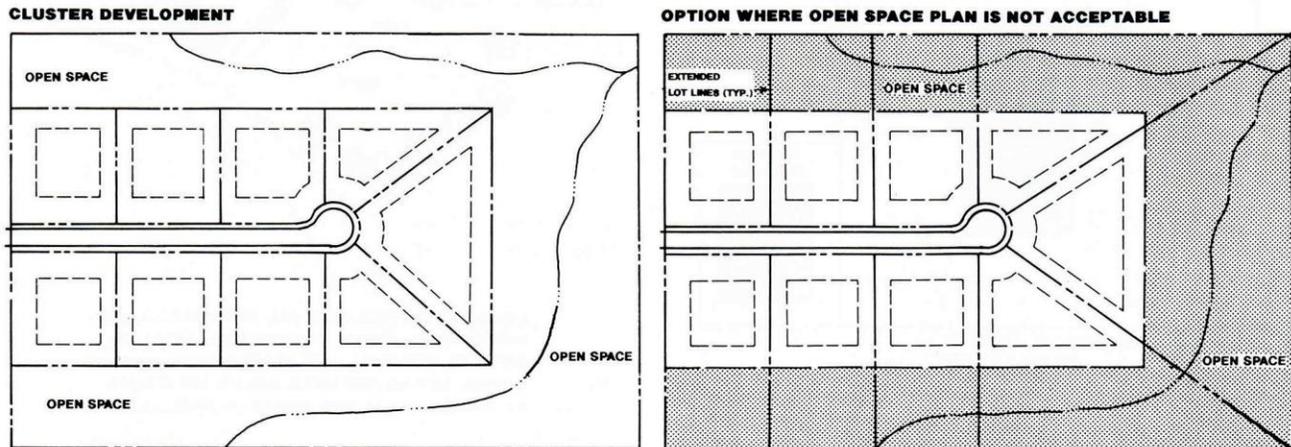
Two Approaches to Conservation-Based Subdivisions

There are two ways to develop conservation-based subdivisions. Figure 3 illustrates the differences between the two approaches.

If the landowner agrees to **common open space**, a *conservation easement* is established. A *conservation easement* is a restriction against further development on a portion of a property. Conservation easements can be used to protect floodplains, areas of steep slope, woodlands, and scenic views beyond the home sites in the development. In this approach, individual lot sizes are reduced and surrounding land is held in common ownership and usually maintained by a homeowners association. The overall density of development remains the same (i.e. no more homes are permitted than in a traditional subdivision development).

In some situations, it is not feasible to reduce the lot size to develop a conservation/cluster subdivision. In these situations, lot lines can be extended so that there is no common open space, but rather **private open space**. Areas beyond the house site can then be deed-restricted against further development, keeping the property open without creating a “common” open space that will need to be maintained by a homeowners association or others.

Figure 3



Source: Fred Heyer, *Preserving Rural Character*, American Planning Association PAS Report No. 429

COMM 83

Areas proposed for residential development, will be required to demonstrate their ability to provide adequate sewer service (i.e. perk test). The town supports the use of innovative waste treatment systems permissible under the COMM 83 legislation (refer to the Chapter 6 for additional information). Specifically, the town supports the installation of individual systems, mounds, and other sewage treatment methods to meet rural residential sanitary needs in the future. The town (and other officials) will review any proposed treatment system to determine effectiveness in the proposed environment.

Additional information about the nine types of innovative treatments systems permitted through COMM 83 is available on-line at: www.wra.org/pdf/government/landuse/Onsite_System_Descriptions.pdf

ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS

Natural features (i.e woodlands, wetlands, rivers, lakes and wildlife habitat) are a very important part of the community. Resident support for protecting natural areas is very strong. Environmental corridor areas should remain largely undeveloped, in accordance with State and County restrictions (i.e. County Shoreland/Wetland Ordinance, etc.) and resident desires. Environmental corridors in the Town of Buffalo include the following areas:

- ? Floodplains
- ? Wetlands
- ? Areas within 1000' of lakes
- ? Areas within 300' of navigable streams

DENSITY RESTRICTIONS

Town leaders firmly believe that minimum parcel size requirements must be strictly enforced to:

- Retain the rural character of the town;
- Limit overall growth so as to prevent overcrowding and the need for associated urbanizing services like community water and sewer service; and
- Protect the quality of groundwater resources.

For these reasons, the Town's town Zoning Ordinance should establish minimum (and maximum) lot size restrictions. It is recommended the ordinance provide a smaller minimum lot size (i.e. 1-2 acres) in areas identified as Single Family Residential - Rural on the *Planned Land Use Map*.

Larger lots (10-acre minimum) are encouraged in other areas to provide serve as a buffer to adjacent woodland and other wildlife habitat areas. Ideally, only a portion of the 10-acre site would be disturbed for development. Remaining portions of the property would be left in their natural state to retain wildlife habitats, woodlands, and privacy for landowners.

Community Design Considerations

Ensuring that developed and natural areas are attractive and well maintained is an important priority. To that end, the town supports the development and enforcement of zoning regulations, including sign ordinances. Likewise, Buffalo supports the use of a detailed site plan review process, including lighting, sidewalk, building material and sign proposals, to ensure that new commercial development is compatible with surrounding land uses and the visions, goals, objectives and policies expressed in this plan.

PRESERVING RURAL CHARACTER

What is “*rural character*”? For every town the answer is somewhat different. In the Town of Buffalo, rural character means a blend of:

- Low density residential development
- Family farms
- Conservation-based subdivisions
- Limited areas of non-residential development situated along STH 22
- Abundant wooded areas
- Rivers and lakes
- Rustic town roads that are largely free of development
- Open, scenic, distant views
- Abundant natural resources and wildlife

The goals and objectives include specific actions to protect rural character by restricting the location of future development

OUTDOOR LIGHTING

For additional information about the Society for Dark Sky Preservation, visit their web site at: www.amesastronomers.org/links/darksky.htm

In recent years a movement has spread across the country related to outdoor lighting. At the forefront of these efforts is the Society for Dark Sky Preservation. This organization's mission is to ensure that the night sky is visible by eliminating intrusive lighting. Buffalo believes that its rural character includes the dark skies overhead that make it possible to enjoy the stars. To that end, Buffalo will seek to promote environmentally friendly lighting choices that:

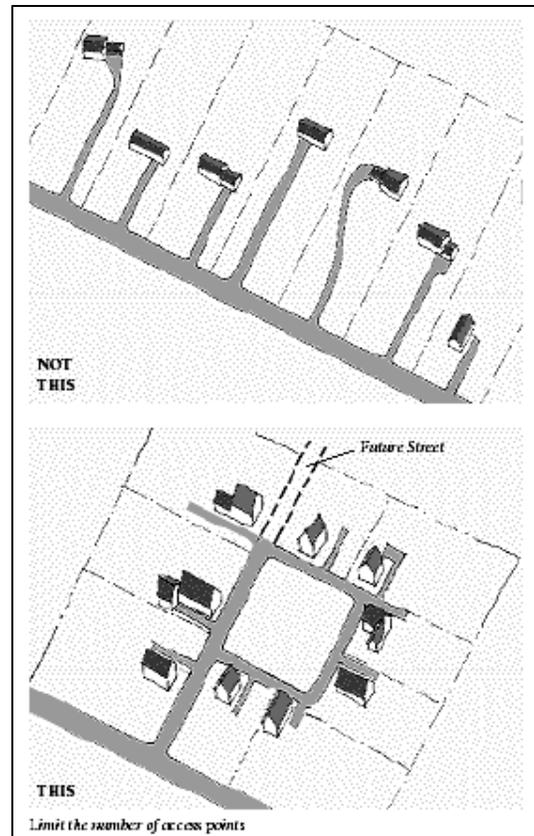
- Keeping glare to a minimum;
- Discourage the use of direct uplighting in any application;
- Put outdoor lighting only where it is needed and when it is needed;
- Use alternatives to constant "dusk-to-dawn" lighting whenever possible; and
- Eliminate light trespassing on neighboring properties and roadways. These restrictions can be enforced through zoning and site plan review.

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING (BILLBOARDS)

State highways and highly traveled county roads (i.e. STH 22, CTH F) offer opportunities for billboard advertising. To preserve and enhance the scenic character of Buffalo, billboard signs are prohibited. Billboards distract from the rural scenic quality of this local highway route. The town believes that preservation of natural beauty, including open views of woodlands from roadways, is important to protect the quality of life and community identity.

MANAGED ROADWAY ACCESS

Another tool available to maintain rural roadside character is control over roadway access. "Roadway access" refers to the number of points of ingress and egress from a roadway. Managing roadway access points help to promote safe and efficient travel and minimize disruptive and potentially hazardous traffic conflicts. Managed roadway access involves minimizing the number of driveways along a roadway and establishing standards for driveway spacing. Rather than promoting driveway after driveway along rural roadways and highways, shared driveways are encouraged (see diagram). This approach has the added benefit of limiting impervious surface and its associated impacts on groundwater quality. The Marquette County Planning Department and



WisDOT regulate current standards for roadway access. Coordination with these agencies is important to ensure that rural character is preserved.

Rural Development

Given the importance of rural and wooded areas in the Town of Buffalo it is necessary to address the question of rural development again here.

If a landowner would like to develop their property after this plan has been adopted, the landowner, must:

- 1) Meet with the Buffalo Plan Commission to discuss the development proposal. The Plan Commission will provide the landowner with feedback about the development of the property, including the recommendations of this plan, associated maps, and concepts outlined in this chapter (i.e. managed roadway access, etc.).
- 2) Consider ways to use conservation/cluster-based approaches to minimize the impact of the proposed development on natural areas and wildlife habitat. Accordingly, the landowner must give special consideration to aquatic buffers and landscape screening along town and county roads adjacent to the development to protect the rural views after development is complete.

How is the Planned Land Use Map Used?

The *Planned Land Use Map* is a planning tool for the Town of Buffalo. In accordance with the **Smart Growth Law**, they should be used to guide the following actions:

- ☞ Municipal Incorporation
- ☞ Annexation
- ☞ Cooperative Boundary Agreements
- ☞ Official Mapping
- ☞ Local Subdivision Regulation
- ☞ Zoning
- ☞ Transportation Improvements
- ☞ Agricultural Preservation Plans
- ☞ Impact Fee Ordinances
- ☞ Land acquisition for recreational lands and parks
- ☞ Any other ordinance, plan or regulation that relates to land use.

Town appointed and elected officials should use the plan maps as a *guide* for making future land use decisions.

Developers and residents should understand the plan maps are intended to direct development to certain areas where facilities and services are available.

It is important to remember that a **plan is not a static document**. It must evolve to reflect current conditions. If not regularly **reviewed and amended**, it will become ineffective.

Applications for rezoning and development that are inconsistent with the plan must still be considered. In some situations, it may be desirable to amend the plan (and maps) to accommodate a compatible, but previously unplanned use. Likewise, a change in county or regional policy, technological changes, or environmental changes may also impact the plan.

Any change to the plan (including the plan maps) must be considered in the context of all nine required plan elements, including the visions, goals and. If an amendment is to be approved, the process must include a formal public hearing and distribution per the requirements of the Wisconsin Smart Growth Law. Any amendment must be recommended by the Plan Commission and approved by the Town Board **before** development is permitted.

Planned Land Use Map

Provided at the conclusion of this chapter is a *20-Year Planned Land Use Maps* for the Town of Buffalo. These map illustrate the location and intensity of new development. The *Town of Buffalo Planned Land Use Map* were created from the

Existing Land Use Map. Therefore, existing land use patterns and conditions are the foundation of the plan -- the beginning point from which to build the future. Areas that are not proposed for future development are represented by their existing land use in order to promote stability in the Town of Buffalo. What follows is a description of the categories depicted on the Town of Buffalo Planned Land Use map.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA

The Farmland Preservation Area planned land use category is mapped to accommodate primarily agricultural uses or agricultural-related uses (e.g., implement dealerships), and focus on areas actively used for farming, with productive agricultural soils, with topographic conditions suitable for farming, and with long-term (15+ year) farming suitability. This category is also intended to:

- Preserve productive agricultural lands, rural character, and undeveloped natural resources of lands so designated in the long-term;
- Protect existing farm operations from encroachment by incompatible uses;
- Minimize non-farm development, allowing via rezonings away from the Town's AG-1 zoning district a maximum residential development density of one residence per 40 acres of land, as further described by the policies and programs below;
- Accommodate a range of agricultural practices and intensities, forest management, farmsteads, home occupations, family businesses, and other uses compatible with farmland preservation and identified as permitted and special exceptions in implementing zoning districts.
- Provide equity and fairness to owners of land with similar resource and location characteristics;
- Maintain farmer eligibility for farmland preservation incentive programs, such as State income tax credits. The *Farmland Preservation Area* is the only planned land use category laid out in this chapter that is intended for certification by the State Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

Policies and Programs:

- *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts.* The AG-1 Prime Agricultural zoning district is the preferred zoning district to implement *Farmland Preservation Area* policies. Additional zoning districts that may be used, usually in limited amounts, within *Farmland Preservation Areas* include CP Conservation Protection, AG-2 General Agricultural, and AG-3 Agricultural-Residential. Other zoning districts may be utilized on an occasional basis, particularly based on pre-existing land use and zoning patterns. Further, the Town of Buffalo may create a new variation of the AG-3 zoning district (e.g., 4 acres) to limit further division of 4-5 acre lots that are divided in accordance with the density policy below.
- *Agricultural Use and Related Businesses Encouraged.* Encourage a range of agricultural uses and agricultural-related businesses that support farmers, including farm-scale businesses in the AG-1 zoning district (meeting statutory requirements as applicable) and larger-scale operations by special exception permit or rezoning.

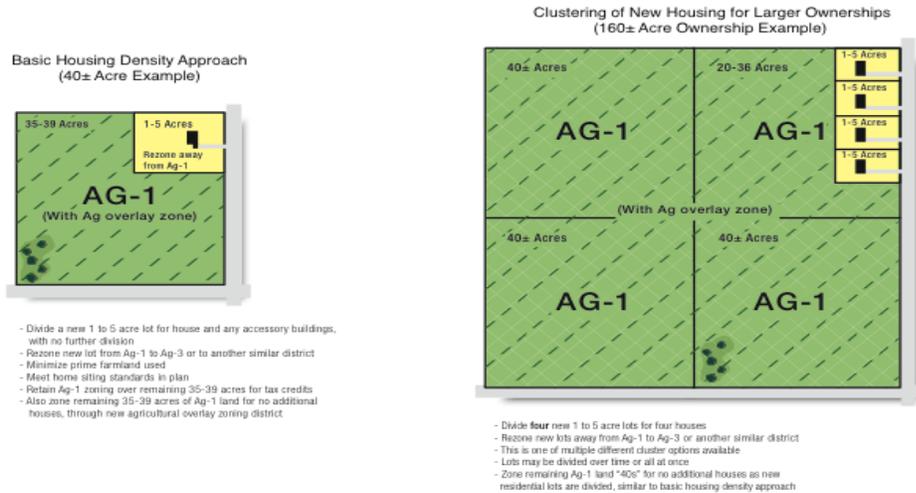
- *Preexisting Residences May Remain in AG-1 District.* Allow residences legally established before January 1, 2014 (and their replacements) to remain as permitted-by-right uses within the AG-1 zoning district when historically zoned in that manner, except where new land divisions are required or farm consolidations are proposed (see below).
- *General Rezoning Criteria.* Whenever land is proposed for rezoning from the AG-1 Prime Agricultural district, require that the following criteria are met:
 - The land is better suited for a use not allowed in the AG-1 zoning district.
 - The rezoning is consistent with the Town and County comprehensive plans, including the farmland preservation plan component of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.
 - The rezoning will not substantially impair or limit current or future agricultural use of surrounding parcels of land that are zoned for or legally restricted to agricultural use.
- *Conversion of Prime Farmland Limited.* Minimize the conversion of prime farmland (Class I-III soils), as shown on Map 4: Soil Suitability for Agriculture of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan, for residences and other nonfarm development. The Town of Buffalo and County Planning and Zoning Committee will consider creation of new residential lots on prime farmland only if they determine that no available non-prime farmland exists on the parcel of record or that placement of lots on prime farmland provides better protection of land, environmental, and habitat resources than a non-prime location. In addition, per Section 91.46(2) of Wisconsin Statutes, new development may not convert prime farmland from agricultural use or convert land previously used as cropland, other than a woodlot, from agricultural use if on the farm there is a reasonable alternative location or size for a nonfarm residential parcel or nonfarm residence; or significantly impair or limit the current or future agricultural use of other protected farmland.
- *Maximum Residential Development Density.* Within parts of the *Farmland Preservation Area* also zoned in the Town's AG-1 Prime Agricultural district, rezonings for single family residences are subject to the following density criteria:
 - The owner of each 1/4 1/4 section of land (standard tax parcel of 40± acres), and other parcels that are between 40 and 79 acres, shall be able to rezone AG-1 zoned land for one single family residence, and can maintain any preexisting residence on the parcel (see left panel in Figure 5.2).
 - The owner of each smaller parcel of land zoned AG-1, if legally created before January 1, 2014, shall be able to rezone such parcel for one single family residence, and can maintain any preexisting residence on the parcel.
 - The owner of at least two contiguous 1/4 1/4 sections of land, and other lands in contiguous common ownership that are at least 80 acres, shall be able to rezone AG-1 zoned land for cluster(s) of single family residential

lots at a density of one lot for every 40 full acres, including any preexisting residence (see 160 acre example in right panel of Figure 14). Landowners may develop one or more clusters, if acreage allows. Clusters may be located adjacent to other clusters on adjoining parcels in different ownership.

- *Rezoning Required for New Residences and Farm Divisions.* The Town and County will require rezoning away from the AG-1 zoning district, along with a new lot created by land division, for all farm division residences and new residences. (A “farm division residence” is defined as a residence that existed before January 1, 2014 and all of its accessory buildings, but which is no longer connected to the farm operation as a result of the sale of adjacent lands.) The rezoning will be to AG-2, AG-3, or to another zoning district that allows single family residences. As depicted in Figure 4, the balance of the acreage used to enable the approval of a single family residential lot will be limited to agricultural or open space uses via a new Agricultural Overlay zoning district applied to that balance. The Town intends to create this Agricultural Overlay district in 2016. Land in that Agricultural Overlay district cannot be used together with other land not in the overlay district to achieve the acreage normally necessary to build another single family residence. The Town may relax the requirement for creation of a new residential lot where the residence is proposed on a sub-40 acre parcel legally created before January 1, 2014.
- *Residential Lot Size and Siting Standards.* The Town and County will apply the following policies, along with those depicted on Figure 14, for siting new residences in the *Farmland Preservation Area* in conjunction with the rezoning of land away from the AG-1 zoning district
 - Each residence must be on a newly divided lot of between one and five acres created by a land division (e.g., CSM), except that the County may relax this requirement where the residence is proposed on a sub-40 acre parcel legally created before January 1, 2014.
 - Each newly created residential lot must abut a public road, or have a suitable access easement.
 - The new residence will not adversely affect agricultural operations in surrounding areas or be situated such that future inhabitants of the residence might be adversely affected by agricultural operations in surrounding areas.
 - The new residence and the new driveway needed to serve the residence will not divide existing farm fields, but instead will be beyond the farm field or towards the edge of a farm field where a location beyond the field is not practical.
 - The proposed location of the new residence is not well suited for agricultural use by virtue of being wooded, having unfavorable topography for farming, an odd shape for farming, unsuitable soil characteristics, or other factors that limit its agricultural suitability.

Figure 4: Approach to Housing in Farmland Preservation Area

Figure 5.2 - Approach for Housing on Lands in Farmland Preservation Area and Zoned AG-1



November 2015

- **Right-to-Farm Notice on Residential Divisions.** Protect the rights of farmers by requiring that the following language be included on new subdivision plats and certified survey maps (CSMs) that enable new residential development in the *Farmland Preservation Area*, to notify future residents of the potential effects of nearby farming activities on their property: “Through Section 823.08 of Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Legislature has adopted a right to farm law. This statute limits the remedies of owners of later established residential property to seek changes to pre-existing agricultural practices in the vicinity of residential property. Active agricultural operations are now taking place and may continue on lands in the vicinity of this plat/CSM. These active agricultural operations may produce noises, odors, dust, machinery traffic, or other conditions during daytime and evening hours.”
- **Policy towards Potential Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs).** Support landowner applications to DATCP to establish new Agricultural Enterprise Areas that meet the following criteria:
 - The AEA is located within portions of the *Farmland Preservation Area* particularly suited for long-term agricultural enterprise development.
 - The AEA is consistent with DATCP criteria for such designation and with this Plan.
 - There is sufficient interest among area farmers.

RURAL LANDS

This designation includes farmland, privately owned undeveloped lots, small woodlots, *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan – 2016 Update*

grasslands, forestland and open lands, and some existing developed low density residential areas. Continued open space uses (including farming and forestry) are recommended for mapped Rural Lands areas, in addition to seasonal and permanent single family homes generally with a density at or less than 1 new residence per 10 gross acres, associated home occupations and small family businesses which do not interfere with the interests of nearby property owners, small-scale forest production and processing, and the keeping of animals in numbers appropriate to the size of the lot.

This designation does not, however, necessarily promote 10 acre lot sizes; rather this Plan advocates smaller residential lot sizes in rural areas. For example, while the Rural Lands designation allows one home per 10 acres, those homes could be clustered on small lots, such as two or three acres (see Figure 3). This clustering concept also advocates guiding available home sites away from productive farm soils—perhaps in an adjacent woodlot, at the edge of a tilled field, or on other soils with low productivity. These techniques avoid the breaking up of large farm parcels, while still providing some non-farm economic return for the landowner.

This Plan also recommends limiting commercial and industrial development in Rural Lands areas to only those uses that support farming activities, such as home occupations, implement dealerships, feed operations, greenhouses, garden centers, and the sale or display of farming products.

Most of the land in this area should ideally be zoned AG-2 General Agricultural District. To promote clustering of homes and preservation of land for agriculture the Town should amend the AG-2 General Agricultural Zoning District to include a 1 home per 10 acres density policy.

Policies and Programs:

- Promote clustering of homes and preservation of land for open space use within mapped Rural Lands areas. This concept is described in the Figure 3.
- Discourage the placement of buildings and driveways within mapped Environmental Corridors.
- Encourage new development to be located in a manner that does not detract from the existing rural character, and which may be easily served by Town and emergency services.
- Consider certain types of small-scale non-residential uses such as churches, day care centers, parks and walking trails as generally appropriate within Rural Land areas.
- Allow home occupations and home-based businesses within mapped Rural Land areas that do not impact neighboring properties.

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - RURAL

Lands in this category include areas of existing development and land immediately adjacent to areas of existing higher density residential development. These include, but are not limited to areas along Gillette Drive, the area south of the intersection of the 16th Court and STH 22, along Buffalo Hills Road, Grouse Avenue and Ashley Lane.

The town will seek to encourage subdivision development in these areas to protect

wooded areas, water features, and wildlife habitat in other areas of the town. Development should adhere to the objectives outlined in this chapter to protect the rural character of the community. Conservation subdivisions are encouraged to provide a buffer between this proposed development and surrounding areas. The purpose of identifying these primary development areas is to limit sprawl throughout the town.

Based on population projections, approximately 124 new households will be established in the town over the next 20 years. Based on historic building permit trends, this number increases to over 200 households. Due to the fact that there is no zoning in the Town of Buffalo at this time, there is not a minimum lot size for accommodating new development. The town plans to address this situation by developing its own zoning and subdivision ordinances. The areas identified as primary single family residential should accommodate lot sizes of 2 acres (or less) to concentrate development in these areas, while maintaining the rural undeveloped character elsewhere in the town. The 20-Year Future Land Use Map designates enough acres in this category to accommodate approximately 500 households (if the 2-acre density patterns were followed). If larger lots are used, fewer homes will be developed in these areas.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The aim of the General Business Area is to promote indoor commercial, office, institutional, telecommunication facilities, and outdoor display land uses, with new development reflecting moderate attention to building design, landscaping, and signage. The area is mapped on several isolated parcels within the Town of Buffalo, including several on Wilderness Road and STH 22.

The most appropriate base zoning districts for the General Business area would be the Town's Commercial District-Business (CM-B) Specific types of businesses encouraged and discouraged are discussed in Chapter 8.

It is imperative that future commercial and industrial ventures be environmentally friendly to protect the quality of groundwater and streams. Furthermore, outdoor storage associated with new commercial/industrial development is prohibited. All waste receptacles must be screened from view along STH 22. Moreover, all development must include landscaping, proper signage, limited lighting, and other amenities to be described in the Town of Buffalo zoning ordinance and adhere to the town's dry policies.

INSTITUTIONAL

In the Town of Buffalo, this planned land use category includes the town hall building, cemeteries, and churches.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

This designation includes Marquette County John Muir Park, Fox River National Wildlife Refuge, Observatory Hill State Natural Area, and other areas under public ownership..

The Town will cooperate and communicate with the federal government, WisDNR and Marquette County regarding the long term management of the Public Open Space areas in the Town.

How Much Land is Provided for Development?

Table 18 provides a detailed breakdown of projected future development, in five-year increments, in the Town of Buffalo.

To implement this plan, the Town of Buffalo Plan Commission will seek to direct development to areas identified on the *Planned Land Use Map*.

As with any long-term planning document, as proposals are presented, amendments may be necessary to reflect market forces that shift land use patterns.

**TABLE 18
20-YEAR PROJECTIONS FOR FUTURE LAND USE ACREAGE**

Land Use Type	2005 (acres)	2010 (acres)	2015 (acres)	2020 (acres)
Residential (single family, Duplex and farmsteads)	200	312	850	1,311
Mobile Home Park	20	20	20	20
Commercial / Light Industrial	10	10	300	560
Campground	40	40	40	40
Forests	18,398	18,269	17,641	17,142
Farmland	8,460	8,307	7,921	7,535
Mining/Quarry Sites	36	36	36	36
Surface Water/Transportation Features	2,711	2,718	2,722	2,726
DNR / County and US Fish & Wildlife Properties	3,588	3,706	3,888	4,048
Additional Wetland Areas (Regional Wetland Bank)	40	85	85	85

Goals and Objectives

The Town of Buffalo anticipates that it will grow over the next 20 years. To ensure that this development will not have a negative impact on the natural environment or create undue congestion on town, county and state roads, the Town of Buffalo will pursue the following goals and objectives.

OVERALL LAND USE GOAL

Protect the town’s abundant and high quality natural resource areas to maintain the town’s rural atmosphere and community character.

LAND USE OBJECTIVES

1. Adopt a **Town Subdivision Ordinance**, including conservation/cluster provisions, minimum lot size requirements and road standards that are more restrictive than area currently included in the Marquette County Land Division Ordinance. Use the principals outlined in this plan as a guide in this effort.
 - a. Coordinate with local resources to assist in this effort, including Marquette County Planning Staff and the UW-Extension.
 - b. Review the Model Conservation Ordinance developed by the UW-Extension as a resource when initiating this effort.
2. Seek to adopt a **Zoning Ordinance**, in accordance with the ideas presented in Chapter 9. Provide requirements to establish a minimum percentage of areas to be preserved in every development, landscape buffers/screens along roads, managed roadway access and desired areas for protection (i.e. steep slopes, wooded areas, wetlands, floodplains, meadows, etc.).
3. Work with the UW-Extension, Marquette County Zoning Department, and other experts to develop and enforce a **Town Site Plan Review Ordinance**. The

purpose of this ordinance is to present a positive image of the community and provide guidelines for developers related to the appearance of commercial and industrial development in the town. The ordinance should require developers and landowners to discuss ideas with Plan Commission before go to expense of developing engineered plans.

4. Coordinate with electric, natural gas and other utility providers to ensure that adequate utilities will be made available for cost effective future growth and development in the town.
5. Minimize the visual impact of development to maintain the town's rural character. These objectives can be enforced through the local zoning regulations, once established.
 - a. When individual lots (not subdivisions) are proposed, new homes should not be placed in the middle of open farm fields.
 - b. Individual residences (not part of subdivisions) should be located adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges, if available. If not, homes should be clustered on the edges of farm fields and undeveloped areas to retain as farmland and open views.
 - c. Where clustering of homes will yield open space that can remain actively farmed or protect vital wildlife habitat/corridors, its use should be explored and possibly required.
 - d. Stone rows and tree lines should be preserved.
 - e. Homes should not be located on hilltops in order to maintain rural, undeveloped views. Homes should be placed on the sides of hills, such that, rooftops do not protrude to or over the top of the hill.
6. Minimize the disturbance to the natural environment when new development occurs.
 - a. Roads should be constructed to follow contours.
 - b. Disturbance for the construction of roads, basins and other improvements should be kept at a minimum by clustering homes together to prevent disturbance to an entire property.
 - c. Disturbance on individual lots should be limited by restricting development to occupy only a portion of a lot.

POLICY STATEMENTS

The Town of Buffalo will encourage landowners and developers to use conservation-based approaches.

11.0 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

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Introduction

The Town of Buffalo’s relationship with neighboring municipalities, school districts, state agencies and Marquette County can significantly impact planning, the provision of services, and the siting of public facilities. An examination of these relationships and the identification of potential conflicts will help the town address these situations in a productive manner.



Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision

The Town of Buffalo works cooperatively, through shared service agreements, with neighboring towns, the City of Montello, Marquette County and State agencies to provide Town residents with needed cost-efficient, non-duplicative services. Town leaders keep residents informed on all matters pertinent to Town operations and land development issues. The Town continues to pursue opportunities to provide coordinated, cost-effective services with neighboring communities and the county.

Governmental Units and Relationships to the Town of Buffalo

The Town of Buffalo shares borders with five municipalities. In addition, the town must also coordinate with local school districts, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the ECWRPC, Marquette County and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency.

ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

Town of Montello
 Town of Kingston (*Green Lake County*)
 Town of Marcellon (*Columbia County*)
 Town of Moundville

Town of Packwaukee
 Town of Fort Winnebago (*Columbia County*)

The Town of Buffalo’s relationship with the six adjacent towns can be characterized as one of mutual respect and compatibility from a land use and political standpoint. Towns cannot annex land from one another. Therefore, the borders between the Town of Buffalo and the adjacent towns are fixed and boundary disputes are non-existent. Public services (i.e. road maintenance and construction, etc.) are conducted individually by each

town, but opportunities for shared services to reduce costs by improving efficiencies will be considered.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Montello School District
Markesan School District

Pardeeville Area School District

The Town of Buffalo is served by **three school districts**, but there are no actual school buildings located in the town. Almost the entire town is in the Montello School District. Two properties are in the Markesan School District and one property is in the Pardeeville Area School District.

The town's relationship with the school districts can be characterized as limited, but cooperative. The town has little direct interaction with the school district. Given that there are no school buildings in the town and no plans to establish any in the future, this situation is unlikely to change.

COUNTY AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

Marquette County
Columbia County
Green Lake County
East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC)



The Town of Buffalo is located in the southeast corner of Marquette County. As such, it shares boundaries with Columbia (to the south) and Green Lake counties (to the east). The town has little direct interaction with these neighboring county governments. However, in the future, when these counties prepare their Smart Growth Comprehensive Plans, the town expects to participate in the Intergovernmental Element.

Marquette County has some jurisdiction within the town. In particular, Marquette County has jurisdiction over land divisions, on-site sanitary systems, and shoreland-wetland zoning of the town. Marquette County also maintains many county roads in the Town of Buffalo.

The relationship between the Town of Buffalo and Marquette County can be characterized as one of general agreement and respect. In those areas where the county has jurisdiction in the town, the county attempts to get input from the town before making decisions affecting the town. Likewise, Buffalo has attempted to maintain open communication with Marquette County. Continued cooperation will be especially important as it relates to zoning as a tool to implement this plan.

Marquette County and the Town of Buffalo are part of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC). However, in 2001, Marquette County formally pulled out of the East Central Wisconsin Regional



Plan Commission. This situation made planning for the Town of Buffalo extremely difficult, as the mapping resources scheduled to be completed by East Central for the county were postponed.

Historically, the Town of Buffalo has little direct interaction with the ECWRPC. This situation will not likely change, even if the county rejoins the ECWRPC.

STATE AGENCIES

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary state agencies the Town of Buffalo must coordinate with to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.

WDNR is a major agency involved in the acquisition and development of recreational/pedestrian trails - a major component of this plan. Furthermore, the WDNR takes a lead role in wildlife protection and the protection and sustained management of woodlands, wetlands and other natural wildlife habitat areas. Additionally, as a significant local landowner, the town and DNR interact regularly with respect to property management issues.

The activities of the WDNR are discussed further in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element (Chapter 7) of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at: www.dnr.state.wi.us

WisDOT is also a key player in the planning and development of the town. WisDOT is responsible for the maintenance and access to the STH 22 corridor. It will be important for the Town of Buffalo to continue to coordinate with WisDOT with respect to this roadway.



For additional information about WisDOT activities in the Town of Buffalo, refer to the Transportation Element (Chapter 5) of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at: www.dot.state.wi.us

Open communication and participation in land use and transportation decisions, which may impact the town, is an important priority for intergovernmental cooperation in the future.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services has a significant number of land holdings in the Town of Buffalo. As such, it is important that the town coordinate with this agency with respect to future planning and adjacent land development/preservation issues.

Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Process

To facilitate intergovernmental coordination, the Town of Buffalo sent all adjacent municipalities, school districts, Marquette County and the ECWRPC a letter at the on-set of the planning effort. This letter was intended to notify these agencies and communities of the Town of Buffalo planning process. Likewise, this letter extended an open invitation for participation in the development of this plan.

On an element-by-element basis, the Town of Buffalo contacted adjacent local government units, school districts, and state agencies again to complete inventories of available services, facilities, and programs. For example, during the development of the Transportation Element, WisDOT was contacted to obtain information available related to transportation facilities and programs in the Town of Buffalo. Likewise, WisDOT was provided a preliminary copy of the Transportation Element to review and comment upon. This same courtesy was extended to the WDNR during development of the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element.

Throughout the plan development process, the Town of Buffalo worked closely with Marquette County to coordinate plan-mapping resources.

On September 16, 2003, as the draft comprehensive plan was nearing completion, the Town of Buffalo hosted an intergovernmental meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the plans of other local agencies and governments and attempt to coordinate the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* with the goals and objectives of these other local plans. Participants were also given the opportunity to view and comment on the *Draft Future Land Use Map*. This collective “meeting of the minds” provided a unique opportunity to discuss area growth, development, transportation, education, and other concerns. Prior to this meeting, a copy of the Draft Intergovernmental Element was available on the Internet for review and comment.

During much of the Town of Buffalo Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning process, representatives from the Town also participated in the Marquette County Planning Committee. This advisory committee consists of representatives from all communities and the county. They were responsible for organizing the county comprehensive planning effort. The Town of Buffalo participated in this process to share with the committee progress with the Town’s planning program. In addition, the Town signed on as a participant to receive grant funding for the conclusion of the planning program, as well as, implementation activities completed prior to plan adoption.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs

At this time, the only intergovernmental program the Town of Buffalo participates in is the Montello Joint Fire District. Many opportunities exist to establish other intergovernmental programs with neighboring communities to improve efficiencies and save money. Specifically, the town could pursue joint contracts with neighboring towns and private companies for road maintenance, garbage collection, and other services

needed by neighboring communities. The idea would be by entering into a larger contract a cost savings could be gained.

Existing and Proposed Plans

ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

No adjacent government has adopted a Smart Growth Plan. The Town of Packwaukee, Moundville and Montello are participating in the Marquette planning process and will complete plans in the next couple of years.

To ensure compatibility with planning goals and objectives of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*, the town would like to participate in the planning efforts of all neighboring communities to ensure the goals, objectives and visions of this plan are communicated. Likewise, impacts from surrounding plans on the Town of Buffalo need to be addressed.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The three school districts serving the town extend into neighboring communities. As such, development in neighboring communities may have an impact on the districts need to expand. The Town of Buffalo wishes to remain involved in the siting of future schools to ensure that the goals and objectives of this plan can be met. This will become more important as Buffalo and neighboring communities continue to grow, bringing additional residents (and students) to the area. At this time, the school districts have no plan to construct any new facilities in the town.

COUNTY AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Marquette County has not adopted a comprehensive plan in accordance with 1999 Wisconsin Act 9. However, the county has been working toward the start of such a plan for some time. The Town of Buffalo has participated in the county planning effort to provide information about the town plan, including local goals, objectives, and visions for the future.

The **ECWRPC** has not yet adopted a comprehensive plan. ECWRPC has completed the first of three milestone reports. Planning information is available on-line at www.eastcentralrpc.org. It will be important for the town to participate in regional planning efforts as the ECWRPC continues its planning process.

STATE AGENCIES

The Town of Buffalo's relationship with the state of Wisconsin mainly involves state aids for local roads and the administering of various state mandates to towns. Coordination with WisDOT will continue to be important with respect to the future of STH 22.

Moreover, there is a significant amount of forested land in the town that is either owned by the state, or privately owned, but managed through the WDNR Managed Forest Program.

Intergovernmental Policy

The Town of Buffalo will seek to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, the county, state agencies, and school districts for mutual benefit.

Intergovernmental Goals

1. Improve lines of intergovernmental communication.
2. Continue to seek new ways to coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities and Marquette County whenever efficient.

Intergovernmental Objectives

1. Host a bi-annual summit to discuss concerns, plans, exchange ideas and report implementation achievements.
2. Participate in the “Smart Growth” planning activities of neighboring communities, Marquette County, Columbia County, Green Lake County and the ECWRPC.
3. Notify the appropriate school district about proposed residential developments so the districts may plan for additional school children.
4. Notify WisDOT of proposed development projects near STH 22 so WisDOT may plan accordingly for access and required improvements (i.e. acceleration lanes, turn lanes, shared driveways, etc.).
5. Coordinate with WisDOT and WDNR to ensure transportation facilities are safe and natural features are protected.
6. Expand and continue to explore the potential for mutual services with neighboring towns (including road development and maintenance, garbage collection, etc.).

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION

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12.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The Implementation Element is the “how to” portion of the plan. It prescribes those actions necessary to realize the visions, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, site plan regulations, design review ordinances and subdivision ordinances.

This chapter includes all of the goals, objectives and policies highlighted in previous chapters of the plan. In this way, this chapter serves as the master “to do” list for implementing the plan.

Relationship Between Elements

Throughout the plan, coordination between the nine (9) required elements has been highlighted as a special section of each element chapter. In several instances, a single objective applies to more than one element of the plan and was reprinted in several chapters.

Special attention has been given to the **milestone dates** (see definition in box) to ensure that individual objectives act in harmony with other stated goals and objectives.

Suggested milestone dates can be changed at the Town Board’s discretion, depending on the ability to coordinate projects with other units of government, other Town priorities, and available budgetary and personnel resources.

To ensure that the plan elements are understood in their totality over the life of the plan, the Town of Buffalo Plan Commission will annually review the goals and objectives. Part of this effort, will also include addressing conflicts which may arise between the nine elements.

Milestone Date

A specific date, after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, when the town will review the plan implementation action to see if the objective has been met and consider additional implementation strategies to achieve the stated goal.

Measuring Progress

To track planning progress and help to ensure that the plan is implemented, milestone dates are provided for each objective. The town has reviewed the milestone dates to ensure that they are feasible expectations for the town.

Responsibilities

The Town of Buffalo Planning Advisory Committee developed this plan. Implementation of the Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan will be the primary responsibility of the **Town of Buffalo Plan Commission**. The Plan Commission will make recommendations pertaining to development issues, in accordance with this Plan, for the Town Board and Marquette County to consider when making final decisions.

Updating the Comprehensive Plan

As is stipulated in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, a comprehensive plan must be updated at least once every 10 years. However, in order to ensure that the town’s plan is an effective management tool, the Town of Buffalo Plan Commission will **review the plan goals and objectives annually** to track those activities that have been completed and add additional objectives as needed to accomplish the stated goals.

In 2021, based on current scheduled release dates, the town will review the population projection information available from the Wisconsin Department of Administration. Furthermore, any

mutually agreed upon annexation areas will also be updated on the *20-Year Future Land Use Map*.

Special Implementation Considerations

Over the course of the planning effort, some specific implementation considerations were raised. To adequately address these topics, information is provided in this section.

AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE

Farmland preservation is a priority in the Town of Buffalo. The town realizes that development pressure is also great. To help minimize farmland conflicts, the Town of Buffalo will establish an agricultural committee. This committee would respond to concerns and or complaints of rural residents pertaining to farming operations. A similar committee was established in the Town of Freedom in Outagamie County. This committee has had success mitigating disputes between landowners. As a policy, if a farm operation is adhering to required ordinances and standard operating procedures, the Town of Freedom Agricultural Committee will not interfere with said farming operation.

PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR)

One of the most serious land use problems facing Wisconsin today is the accelerating rate at which prime farmland is being sold, subdivided and developed for non-agricultural use. Evidence of rural land conversion can be seen virtually everywhere, including the Town of Buffalo.

One way of protecting farmland is purchasing of development rights (PDR). PDR is a voluntary program, where a land trust or some other agency usually linked to local government, makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer, or to try to negotiate a higher price.

When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farmer receives payment equal to the difference between the fair market value of the land a developer would pay if it could be developed and the price the land would command for agricultural use. In return for this payment, a conservation easement is recorded on the deed to the property. This easement stays with the land so it is binding not only on the current owner, but future owners of the property as well.

When the development rights to a farm are sold, the farm remains in private ownership. The private landowner still retains the right to occupy and make economic use of the land for agricultural purposes. The landowner gives up the right to develop the property for some other use in the future. Farmers are not compelled to sell their development rights. Participation in PDR programs is entirely voluntary.

Advantages and Disadvantage of PDR

Restrictions on land use, including zoning, have been used to protect agriculture for many years. One of the main benefits of PDR, is that it is completely voluntary. Under PDR, the landowner is not deprived of any of the value of the property. This is very important because many farmers rely on their property in order to fund their retirement. Simply depriving them of the opportunity to realize the full economic value of their property has important ethical, socioeconomic, and perhaps legal ramifications. Moreover, zoning regulations may be easily changed in the future.

The main advantage of PDR over other approaches to farmland preservation is that it offers a permanent, long-lasting solution. PDR virtually assures that land will remain forever in agriculture because it extinguishes the right to develop agricultural land for non-agricultural uses. Farmland preservation tax credits and use value assessment of agricultural land encourage farmers to keep their land in agricultural use somewhat longer than otherwise might be the case, but do not assure that land will remain in agricultural use.

Another major advantage of PDR is that it is perceived as an equitable, fair, and voluntary way to preserve agricultural land. A third advantage is that it provides a way to correct a major shortcoming of the current Farmland Preservation Program by targeting limited financial resources to preserve and protect agricultural land most worthy of preservation.

Another benefit of PDR is that it makes it much easier for a farmer to pass their farm on to an heir interested in farming the land. Once the development rights have been separated from the land, the value of the parcel typically declines to its agricultural value. This generally has an enormous effect on reducing the inheritance tax liability. If taxed at the full development value, many parcels are simply taxed out of agriculture, because the heirs are not able to pay the taxes without selling the land.

The main disadvantage of PDR is cost. Development rights can be expensive to purchase, and so funding for PDR needs to be selectively targeted to preserve and protect agricultural land that is most worthy of preservation. As a result, not every farmer who wants to sell his or her development rights will be able to do so.

How to Establish and Operate a PDR Program

The establishment of a PDR program would begin with the Town of Buffalo. The Agricultural Committee and Plan Commission would share the responsibility for the implementation of this program. The first step toward establishment of a PDR Program would be to raise the capital needed to purchase local development rights. This may

mean asking residents to consider a tax increase specifically dedicated to this program, or perhaps seeking foundation or grant funds to initiate the program.

Once the pool of funds has been established, the Plan Commission and Agricultural Committee would review applications of landowners who wish to sell development rights. This process would require obtaining appraisals, prioritizing parcels, negotiating agreements, and ensuring that deed restrictions are enforced.

Overall Policies

Rather than simply develop policy statements for each element, this plan also includes a series of vision statements. These visions represent the desired future and act as policy when considering proposals. To compliment these visions, additional policies are included in the plan. The policies developed for each element are provided on the pages that follow.

Housing Agenda

ELEMENT (S)	OVERALL GOALS
Housing Ag., Nat. & Cult.	Maintain the environmental assets and rural character of the community so that it continues to be an attractive place to live.
Housing	Conserve or improve the quality of existing single-family housing and maintain housing values.
Housing	Increase the supply of housing opportunities to serve residents of all ages.

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Housing Utilities & Community Facilities	Encourage future single-family residential developments where services are readily available, conflicts with agricultural uses are minimized, and efficient, cost effective development is most likely.	Continuous
Housing Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources Land Use	Encourage “low impact” development within the town that can help reduce stormwater runoff and flooding.	Continuous

Housing Agenda, continued...

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
<p style="text-align: center;">Housing Intergovernmental</p>	<p>Support existing efforts and consider new programs that provide needed assistance for elderly and disabled residents, who wish to stay in their own homes. This effort may include coordination with the City of Montello and Marquette County to direct alternative and multiple family developments to the City where appropriate services are available.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop articles for the town newsletter that describe available services and contact persons. b. Develop a brochure for interested residents in need of assistance programs available through the county and private organizations (i.e. home maintenance programs, transportation services, visiting nurses, meals on wheels, etc.) c. Coordinate with the local school districts to provide opportunities for students to volunteer time assisting seniors with special projects on occasions like “Make a Difference Day” or through other groups coordinated by the school district like the National Honor Society, Student Council, etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. continuous b. 2017 c. continuous
<p style="text-align: center;">Housing</p>	<p>Educate town residents about the importance of property maintenance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hold a special town meeting to discuss the issue with residents. b. Develop articles for the town newsletter that highlight property maintenance techniques and benefits. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Continuous</p>

Transportation Agenda

ELEMENT (S)	OVERALL GOALS
Transportation	To maintain and improve town roads in a timely and well planned manner.
Transportation	Seek to expand opportunities for alternative transportation in the Town of Buffalo.

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Transportation Utilities/Community Facilities	Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and Budget (CIP/B) to coordinate and plan for annual roadway improvements and maintenance as well as and other capital improvements.	2018
Transportation Intergovernmental	Coordinate with Marquette County to ensure that proposed trail routes, road improvements and other transportation facilities outlined in the Marquette County Transportation Element of the County Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan are completed in the Town of Buffalo in a coordinated fashion with the visions, goals and objectives expressed in this plan.	Continuous
Transportation	Annually review accident reports for the town to identify priorities for town transportation improvements to protect public safety.	Continuous
Transportation Land Use	Using the plan as a guide, seek to prevent the location of roadways through environmentally sensitive lands in the Town of Buffalo.	Continuous
Transportation	Seek to protect scenic areas when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities. To support this effort develop an inventory or catalogue, including photos, of scenic areas to be protected in the Town of Buffalo.	2020
Transportation Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources	Participate in the County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning process to study and improve non-motorized transportation in the Town	2018-2020
Transportation Intergovernmental	To improve safety on town roads associated with potential vehicle and horse-drawn buggy conflicts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work with the county to post traffic hazard and warning signs as needed b. Work with the county to consider lower posted speed limits in these areas as needed c. Maintain ditches to improve visibility. d. Coordinate with the Amish community leaders to ensure that they are aware of the dangers, minimize their travel at night, and use required reflectors as needed. 	Continuous

Utilities & Community Facilities Agenda

ELEMENT	OVERALL GOALS
Utilities & Comm. Facilities Intergovernmental	Support the continued operation of community facilities provided by Marquette County, the local school districts, private companies and neighboring communities, which serve residents of the Town of Buffalo.
Utilities & Comm. Facilities	Seek to ensure that all development is served by adequate utilities.

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Utilities & Community Facilities	As desirable, issue permits for innovative waste treatment systems (pursuant to the requirements of COMM 83) that will provide safe and effective results for commercial development opportunities along STH 22.	Continuous
Utilities & Community Facilities Intergovernmental	Work with Marquette County, and if necessary adopt a town policy and supporting zoning requirements, to encourage developers to consider alternative waste treatment systems in support of innovative subdivision designs (i.e. cluster and conservation subdivisions)	2017
Utilities & Community Facilities	Participate in the County’s Outdoor Recreation Planning processes.	2021 and as amended
Utilities & Community Facilities	Participate in Marquette County’s election equipment and election worker training opportunities.	2017 and ongoing
Utilities & Community Facilities	Seek to educate residents of the Town of Buffalo about available community facilities and services in the area through a community newsletter and web site, particularly to ensure that populations with special needs (i.e. seniors and disabled) can obtain services.	Continuous

Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Agenda

ELEMENT (S)	OVERALL GOALS
Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources Land Use	Preserve agricultural operations and natural areas in the Town of Buffalo to maintain the town’s rural character.
Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources	Enhance recreational opportunities in the Town of Buffalo.
Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources	Protect stream banks, wetlands and floodplains from harmful uses.

Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Agenda, continued...

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources Land Use	Identify and protect areas of prime agricultural land in the town through appropriate land use controls, cluster developments and conservation subdivision designs. Coordinate these efforts through Marquette County and, as necessary, develop local subdivision regulations to further the town's vision.	2018
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources Land Use	Seek to identify land trusts in the area that may be interested in protecting farmland and other natural areas. Provide contact information to local farmers who desire this information.	Continuous
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources Land Use Intergovernmental	Explore the potential for establishing a PDR Program. This effort may be coordinated with neighboring towns and Marquette County.	2025
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources Intergovernmental	Participate in the update to the Marquette County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, if completed	2016-2017
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources	Encourage Town property owners to pursue grants for natural stormwater management projects through the WisDNR Healthy Lakes grant program	Continuous
Ag, Nat., & Cult. Resources Economic Development Land Use	Educate local farmers and builders about the potential for conservation subdivisions, cluster development and mixed-use development in the Town of Buffalo.	Continuous
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources Intergovernmental	Continue to support the local use of <u>effective</u> county and state farmland and woodland preservation programs (i.e. Managed Forest Law).	Continuous
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources	Support the efforts of Marquette County to enforce stream and lake setback requirements and policies established in the <i>Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan</i> .	Continuous
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources	Educate developers and landowners about the "right-to-farm." Coordinate with local realtors and builders associations to disseminate information. Possibly develop a brochure to include on the Town's webpage.	Continuous
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources Intergovernmental	Create, maintain and enhance natural buffers along stream banks and the lakeshores. Work with Marquette County and the Wisconsin DNR and DATCP to promote and help fund buffer strips along streams and the lakeshores.	Continuous
Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources Intergovernmental	Participate in the planning efforts of Marquette County to ensure that the county comprehensive plan represents the interests, visions, and expectations of the Town of Buffalo.	Continuous

<p>Ag., Nat., & Cult. Resources</p> <p>Land Use</p> <p>Intergovernmental</p>	<p>To protect wildlife habitat areas in the town, beyond regulated wetlands, floodplains and shorelands, identify natural areas in the town. Using this information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek grant-funding sources available through the WDNR and other agencies to help protect wildlife habitat areas for future generations to enjoy. b. Build partnerships with local habitat conservation organizations (ducks unlimited, trout unlimited, etc.) to help with wildlife protection and education. c. Seek to prevent fragmentation of these habitats by encouraging cluster and conservation-based development. 	<p>Continuous</p>
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Economic Development Agenda

It is the policy of the Town of Buffalo to support local farmers and protect farming operations from development pressures.

It is the policy of the Town of Buffalo to support the establishment of home occupations, provided such uses do not constitute a nuisance to neighboring properties (i.e. excessive noise, traffic, odors, vibration, etc.) or deter from the rural character of the area (i.e. signage, lighting, etc.).

It is the policy of the Town of Buffalo to support the use of COMM 83 to promote business and residential development opportunities.

ELEMENT	OVERALL GOALS
Economic Development Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources	Support local farmers and farm operations as the primary economic activity in the town.
Economic Development	Support additional business development along the highway corridors.
Economic Development	Encourage local entrepreneurs who seek to expand and diversify the town's economy by opening home occupations

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Economic Development Land Use	Through appropriate zoning and communication with local realtors, seek to concentrate new commercial and industrial development around existing development in areas identified on the <i>Planned Land Use Map</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A copy of this plan will be available upon request and available at the nearest public library for local businesses. b. Establish and enforce zoning code requirements to adequately permit commercial and industrial uses with appropriate signage, lighting, and landscaping. 	Continuous
Economic Development	Develop a guide for local property owners who wish to establish home occupations. Include criteria for site development and zoning approvals.	2017
Economic Development	Coordinate with county and regional organizations to market the Town of Buffalo for economic growth opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a web site to provide demographic, market, site locations, cost, and other information about the community for prospective entrepreneurs. b. Maintain the list of current businesses on the web site. 	2017
Economic Development	Improve communication with local businesses owners to remain aware of local economic conditions and challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to provide business owners with the opportunity to interact more directly with the town to express questions, concerns, and comments, through the Town's webpage. b. Host a meeting with local business owners once every 5 years to discuss local business concerns in the context of this chapter. This meeting should coincide with the town's annual review of implementation strategies. 	Continuous

Economic Development Agenda, continued...

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Economic Development	Seek to ensure that the town's development is distinguishable from development in adjacent communities. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a town logo for use on letterhead, etc. b. Seek to integrate the town logo on road signs. c. Locate directional signage at prominent locations along STH 22. 	2020

Intergovernmental Cooperation Agenda

The Town of Buffalo will seek to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, the county, state agencies, and school districts for mutual benefit.

ELEMENT(S)	OVERALL GOALS	MILESTONE DATES
Intergovernmental	Improve lines of intergovernmental communication.	Continuous
Intergovernmental Land Use	Continue to seek new ways to coordinate and share community facilities and services with neighboring communities and Marquette County whenever efficient.	Continuous

ELEMENT(S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATES
Intergovernmental	Host a bi-annual summit to discuss concerns, plans, exchange ideas and report implementation achievements.	Even Years beginning in 2016
Intergovernmental	Participate in the planning activities of neighboring communities, Marquette County, Columbia County, Green Lake County and the ECWRPC.	Continuous
Intergovernmental Utilities & Comm. Facilities	Notify the appropriate school district about proposed residential developments so the districts may plan for additional school children.	Continuous
Intergovernmental Transportation	Notify WisDOT of proposed development projects near STH 22 so WisDOT may plan accordingly for access and required improvements (i.e. acceleration lanes, turn lanes, shared driveways, etc.).	Continuous
Intergovernmental Transportation Land Use	Coordinate with WisDOT and WDNR to ensure transportation facilities are safe and natural features are protected.	Continuous
Intergovernmental Land Use	Expand and continue to explore the potential for mutual services with neighboring towns (including road development and maintenance, garbage collection, etc.).	Continuous

Land Use Agenda

The Town of Buffalo will encourage landowners and developers to use conservation-based approaches.

ELEMENT	OVERALL GOAL
Land Use	Protect the town's abundant and high quality natural resource areas to maintain the town's rural atmosphere and community character.

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Land Use	Work with the UW-Extension, Marquette County Zoning Department, and other experts to develop and enforce a Town Site Plan Review Ordinance . The purpose of this ordinance is to present a positive image of the community and provide guidelines for developers related to the appearance of commercial and industrial development in the town. The ordinance should require developers and landowners to discuss ideas with Plan Commission before go to expense of developing engineered plans.	2018
Land Use Utilities & Comm. .Facilities	Coordinate with electric, natural gas and other utility providers to ensure that adequate utilities will be made available for cost effective future growth and development in the town.	Continuous
Land Use	Minimize the disturbance to the natural environment when new development occurs. a. Roads should be constructed to follow contours. b. Disturbance for the construction of roads, basins and other improvements should be kept at a minimum by clustering homes together to prevent disturbance to an entire property. c. Disturbance on individual lots should be limited by restricting development to occupy only a portion of a lot.	Continuous

Land Use Agenda, continued...

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Land Use	<p>Minimize the visual impact of development to maintain the town’s rural character. These objectives can be enforced through the local zoning regulations, once established.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. When individual lots (not subdivisions) are proposed, new homes should not be placed in the middle of open farm fields. b. Individual residences (not part of subdivisions) should be located adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges, if available. If not, homes should be clustered on the edges of farm fields and undeveloped areas to retain as farmland and open views. c. Where clustering of homes will yield open space that can remain actively farmed or protect vital wildlife habitat/corridors, its use should be explored and possibly required. d. Stone rows and tree lines should be preserved. e. Homes should not be located on hilltops in order to maintain rural, undeveloped views. Homes should be placed on the sides of hills, such that, rooftops do not protrude to or over the top of the hill. 	Continuous

Implementation Agenda¹

ELEMENT	OVERALL GOAL
Implementation	To ensure that the <i>Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan</i> is an effective tool for making local land use decisions.

ELEMENT (S)	OBJECTIVES	MILESTONE DATE
Implementation	Annually review the goals and objectives presented throughout this chapter to assess implementation success and consider additional objectives.	Annually
Implementation	As available, provide updated information to supplement the plan information (i.e. updated county zoning map, updated population projections, U.S. Agricultural Census Data, future local survey results, etc.)	Annually
Land Use Implementation	<p>Consider developing a town PDR program.</p> <p>Investigate potential funding sources</p> <p>Provide residents with additional information about the benefits and limitations of PDR programs.</p> <p>Coordinate with Winnebago County to determine potential for shared funding and shared administration of such a program.</p>	2025
Land Use Ag., Nat. & Cult. Resources	<p>Establish and Agriculture Preservation Committee to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Educate local farmers and builders about the potential for conservation subdivisions, land trusts and purchase of development rights in the town. b. Coordinate with the Plan Commission to explore the potential for establishing a town purchase of development rights program. c. Coordinate with the Plan Commission to identify and seek to protect areas of prime agricultural land in the town through appropriate land use controls and cluster/conservation subdivision design options. Coordinate these efforts through Winnebago County. d. Mitigate disputes between residents living adjacent to farmland. e. Generally seek to preserve farmland in the town. 	2017

¹ As part of this element, the town determined no changes were needed to existing building, mechanical, housing, and sanitary codes to implement this plan. Existing code requirements are consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Included in this Appendix is a copy of the officially adopted Public Participation Plan that was used as a guide for public input during development of the Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES AND PLAN ADOPTION

Introduction

In order for the public to be kept continually informed during the development of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*, and to meet the requirements of Wisconsin's "Smart Growth Law" (Ch. 66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.), the Town of Buffalo has prepared the following public participation plan

Smart Growth Law Requirements – Ch. 66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.

"The governing body of a local government unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments."

Intent

The Town of Buffalo, in its comprehensive planning process, desires to make the opportunity for public participation, input and contribution available to its residents and to all interested and/or potentially affected parties, public and private, within and surrounding the Town of Buffalo. The town also desires to strike a fair, compromised, consensus-based plan that balances private and community desires in order to achieve the best future for the town.

Public Participation Procedures

The Town of Buffalo, Marquette County, Wisconsin, in order to provide the greatest amount of public involvement possible, and to meet the provisions of Ch. 66.1001(4) (a) Wis. Stats., has adopted the following Public Participation Procedures. It is the intent of these procedures to provide opportunities for the public to be meaningfully involved in efforts throughout the planning process.

The Town Board has designated the Town of Buffalo Planning Advisory Committee to lead this public involvement effort. It shall be the responsibility of this committee, through its consultant and other designated parties, to:

Make available to the public, information about the planning process and copies of plan documents. This information shall be made available in the most suitable variety of media possible, including newsletters, public meetings, workshops and the internet at www.omni.com.

Prepare meeting summaries that shall be made available to interested individuals upon written request to the Town Clerk at the cost of \$0.25 per page. Requests should be submitted to Ms. Phyllis Farrell, Clerk, Town of Buffalo, N1175 17th Road, Dalton, WI 53926. Meeting summaries will also be posted on the internet.

Keep meeting attendance sign-in sheets as part of the record for all meetings. Both Planning Advisory Committee members and general public in attendance shall be requested to sign in.

Recommend to the Town of Buffalo Board the adoption of the Public Participation Procedures.

Actively solicit comments and suggestions from the residents and property owners of the town, neighboring towns, Marquette County, Green Lake County, Columbia County, Montello School District, Markesan School District, Pardeeville School District, East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Wisconsin Land Council.

Accept written comments from residents, landowners, and other interested parties throughout the planning process.

Conduct the required public hearing on the plan.

Work closely with the consultant hired by the town to prepare the comprehensive plan.

All meetings on the comprehensive plan shall be open to the public and duly posted pursuant to Ch. 985.02(2) Wis. Stats. The public notice announcing the required public hearing on the plan shall be published as a class 1 notice, pursuant to Ch. 985.02(1) Wis. Stats. at least 30 days prior to the hearing. The class 1 notice shall include the following: (1) date, time and place of the hearing, (2) a summary of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*, (3) the name of the town employee or Planning Advisory Committee Member who may provide additional information regarding the plan, and (4) where and when a copy of the proposed comprehensive plan may be viewed prior to the hearing, and how a copy of the plan may be obtained.

Copies of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* will be mailed to the clerks of neighboring towns, Marquette County, Green Lake County, Columbia County, Montello School District, Markesan School District, Pardeeville School District, East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Wisconsin Land Council.

Copies of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* shall also be made available for viewing by the general public at the same time as the hearing notice is published. Copies of the proposed plan shall be available at the office of the Town Clerk, N1175 17th Road, Dalton, WI 53926, and at Montello Public Library, 128 Lake Court, Montello, WI 53949. Written requests to the Town Clerk for copies of the proposed comprehensive plan will require payment of duplication costs. Duplication costs shall be charged at a rate of \$.25 per black and white page, \$1.00 per color page, and \$2.00 per 11" x 17" color map.

After the notice of the public hearing has been published, those wishing to submit written comments on the plan may do so until one week prior to the public hearing. Written comments on the proposed plan should be submitted to the Town Clerk. Written comments received prior to the public hearing will be addressed at the hearing and will be given the same weight as oral testimony. A review of all proposed revisions of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* will be completed at the public hearing. All approved revisions will be posted on the internet in a meeting summary and included in the official minutes of the public hearing.

Plan Adoption

Town Board - Based on the recommendation of the Planning Advisory Committee and comments received, the Town Board, by majority vote, shall enact an ordinance adopting the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. A copy of the ordinance and adopted plan shall be sent to neighboring units of government, school and special purpose districts serving residents of the town, Marquette County, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Wisconsin Land Council. A copy of the adoption ordinance and the plan shall be available for inspection at the office of the Town Clerk. Copies of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* may be purchased from the Town Clerk at a cost of \$30.00 each.

Immediately after adoption of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*, it shall be the responsibility of the Town Board to establish a Town Planning Commission in accordance with the requirements of Ch. 66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.

Planning Commission – The Town of Buffalo Planning Commission shall assist the Town Board in implementing the provisions of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*.

From time to time, but not less than once every five (5) years, the Planning Commission shall review the comprehensive plan for potential changes, additions or corrections. The Planning Commission shall also be responsible for recommending comprehensive plan amendments to the Town Board on a majority vote of its entire membership.

APPENDIX B: RECORD OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Included in this Appendix is a copy of the agenda from each public Comprehensive Planning meeting related to the development of the plan document.

APPENDIX C: PASER RESULTS

This appendix contains the Town of Buffalo PASER Results from 2002. Additional information about PASER is provided in the Transportation Element of this Plan.

APPENDIX D: CELLULAR TOWERS

TOWER LOCATION AND COVERAGE

How large is the service area for a single cellular tower? This is a very complicated question to answer. Coverage areas depend on topography and tower height. In order to provide a complete network, towers must be able to “see” one another.

When cellular technology first came about, analog service required towers of a height of 300 feet or more. These towers could provide coverage within a five- mile radius of the tower. Today, new digital technologies, PCS, and the wireless Internet operate at a higher frequency than the older analog towers. This increased frequency reduces the coverage from a five-mile radius to a 2-3 mile radius. As a result, there is a need for more towers to serve the same area. If new towers and antennas are needed in the town, the coverage zones will vary with frequency, height, and service type. A radio frequency engineer can determine the exact coverage areas for any new tower or antenna.

There are two “schools” of thought on tower height and location. One “school” prefers the use of several shorter towers in a community;

whereas, the other group prefers the use of fewer taller towers. Each of these approaches can provide adequate coverage within a community, but do not necessarily eliminate the need for additional towers.

While the Town of Buffalo has no cellular towers at this time, as technology changes and as demand for service increases, particularly along STH 22, tower requests will soon follow.

The Town of Buffalo has several **options to reduce the overall number** of towers needed in the future and to minimize their visual impact. For example, **co-location** of several antennas on a single tower reduces the need for additional towers. Carriers also are more and more willing to **camouflage** their towers by locating antenna on church steeples, silos, and tall power transmission lines. These techniques can help to minimize the impact of the wireless industry in the Town of Buffalo.



Tower “Flag” Pole Distance
& Up- Close Views



“Cell Tree”



“Cell Tree” in Forest



Cell Antenna on Water
Tower

TOWERS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS. ¹

Cellular, television and other towers pose **risks for migrating birds** on their seasonal journeys and in the places they live each summer and winter. Birds have died by the thousands in collisions with lighted television and radio towers around the country. While incidents involving massive bird kills occur infrequently, there's concern among scientists that bird deaths will greatly increase because of the explosive growth in the number of towers being sited in the U.S. to provide wireless services.

The growth in tower numbers comes when evidence shows the numbers of songbirds migrating to and from the tropics – "neotropical migrants" – have significantly declined, mostly due to habitat loss and related problems. According to the Ornithological Council, of the 124 species on the 1995 List of Migratory Nongame Birds of Management Concern in the U.S., 60 are neotropical migrants.

Unfortunately, the types of dead birds found most frequently at tower sites are neotropical species such as **warblers, thrushes, vireos and flycatchers**. Ironically, scientists are pretty certain about this because, armed with collector's permits, the scientists themselves and amateur bird enthusiasts have been visiting tower sites for years as favored places to gather dead birds for study purposes.

So how big an impact do towers have on bird deaths? Scientists put the estimate **two to four million songbirds die each year** in the eastern United States. The overall impact of tower collisions on bird populations on a national, regional or species scale is unknown.

Most species of songbirds migrate at night, flying aloft at 1,000-2,000 feet. They rely on many aids to guide them on their journey, including the sun, moon and stars, landscape features, weak magnetic fields, polarized light, barometric pressure, low-frequency sound waves, even odors.

Lights on taller towers are thought to lead to bird deaths by confusing the different cues birds use on their journeys to nesting or wintering grounds. Most bird-tower deaths occur when there is fog or low clouds. Towers featuring flashing red lights appear to confuse birds more than those with white strobe lights do.

Towers 200 feet or higher must be lit to comply with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations designed to aid safe airplane navigation. As of June 1999, more than 40,000 lighted towers and tower farms were registered in the FAA database of obstacles in the U.S. that exceed 200 feet in height.

¹ February 2000, Wendy K. Weisensel, DNR's Bureau of Communication and Education in Madison

the five long-term studies that have been

higher, annual documented mortality ranged from 375 to 3,285 bird carcasses per year (20-year average). About half the birds were found dead over many months rather than at single night catastrophes.

incidents -- documented in a set of data Evans calls "phenomenal" -- occurred in Wisconsin as observed by Dr. Charles Kemper, a physician and bird enthusiast who is also a past president of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.

From 1957-1994, Dr. Kemper regularly collected dead birds at a TV tower in Eau Claire. During that period the kill totaled

more birds were killed at this tower on each of 24 nights since 1957. A record 30,000 birds were estimated killed on one night in the mid-1970s.

Dr. Kemper noticed bird deaths

taller tower in 1956. The new one was about 1,000 feet high, twice the height of the previous tower. "One day the county public health department called because all these dead birds were being found near the tower site; they thought the birds might have been dying from a type of disease."

The number of bird deaths could go up around Wisconsin and the U.S. because more towers, including taller, lighted ones, are being constructed or retrofitted to serve the broadcast and telecommunications industries. At the current rate of construction, the Ornithological Council says the number of towers in the U.S. will likely double to 80,000 by 2010.

To help reduce the impact of towers on migratory birds the following actions are recommended:

- o **Changes in Tower Lighting** -- When fog or clouds dissipate around towers known to kill birds, observers have noted that the birds previously flying

Why are Birds Important?

Birds are critical links in native ecosystems. Wild birds pollinate plants, distribute seeds and eat enormous numbers of insects. According to the Ornithological Council, on average, a pair of adult warblers removes caterpillars from more than a million leaves in the two to three weeks from the time the pair's young hatch until they leave the nest. This behavior provides enormous benefits to forestry and agriculture.

Birds are big business. While broadcast and wireless technologies take up a lot of people's leisure time, money, and support highly competitive industries, birds and birding also involve a lot of people and pack a financial wallop in Wisconsin and nationally. The 1996 federal Fish and Wildlife Service outdoor recreational survey reports that more than 1.65 million Wisconsin residents over age 16 participated actively in wildlife watching, photography, bird-feeding and maintaining natural areas for wildlife. Most of this activity was directed toward birds.

The dollar amount spent in Wisconsin for wildlife watching activities totaled nearly \$913 million and did not include amounts spent on fishing (\$1.1 billion) and hunting (\$855 million). Trip-related expenses for wildlife watching amounted to \$436 million, while equipment such as binoculars, bird feed, film and cameras accounted for \$476 million.

Birding is reportedly second only to gardening as the most rapidly growing leisure interest in the U.S. The number of bird-watchers in the U.S. grew 155 percent between 1983 and 1995. The FWS survey states that 62.9 million Americans participated in wildlife watching and spent \$29.2 billion doing so.

confusedly around the lit towers soon reorient themselves and fly off. That silver lining makes researchers believe that changes in tower lighting might spare birds even as more towers go up. Certain colors of lights or changes in flashing intervals may confuse birds less.

- o **Tower Height and Design Modifications** – Guy wires are the main cause of bird death at tower sites, so reliance on self-supporting or other tower designs may offer solutions. Lower tower heights remain a possible option as well. Dr. Kemper believes communities should only permit towers less than 500 feet tall, which may spare many birds, though little formal research has been conducted on the impact of shorter towers on bird deaths.
- o **Tower Sighting Considerations**-- Tower owners could co-locate their equipment where possible. Tower sitings in sensitive areas also could be limited. While the Department of Natural Resources in Wisconsin has little or no regulatory authority over tower siting, the agency has encouraged telecommunication representatives to consider alternatives if a tower siting proposal may affect natural resources.

FUTURE TOWER NEEDS IN THE TOWN OF BUFFALO.

The federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 forbids towns from barring towers completely and denying access. But the law does allow local governments great leeway in restricting the height, appearance and location of towers. A Portage County, WI ordinance that went into effect last year to protect birds and other natural resources prohibits telecommunications facilities from being sited in floodplains, wetlands, shorelands and conservancy-zoned districts.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to develop a map of specific locations to site towers in the Town of Buffalo. This is because networks provided by different carriers have different location requirements for towers. Moreover, as technologies change and new licenses are granted for additional carriers to move into the area, locations identified on a map would quickly become outdated.

It is anticipated that in the next 5-10 years the primary coverage area for wireless service in the Town of Buffalo will continue to be along the STH 22 corridor. Beyond this timeframe, coverage will likely extend next to the county trunk lines and finally to other remote areas of the town. The rate of tower construction will depend on local demand, the number of licenses granted by the FCC, and the capacity of new towers to accommodate additional carriers.

APPENDIX E: COMMON PLANNING ACRONYMS

-A-

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act
 APA American Planning Association

-B-

BLM Bureau of Land Management
 BLRPC Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

-C-

CAA Clean Air Act
 CBD Central Business District
 CDBG Community Dev. Block Grants
 CIP/B Capital Improvement Program/Budget
 COG Council of Governments
 Corps Army Corps of Engineers
 CTY County Road
 CPM Critical Path Method
 CRA Cost-Revenue Analysis
 CUP Conditional Use Permit
 CWA Clean Water Act
 CSM Certified Survey Map

-D-

DA Development Agreement
 DATCP WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 DHFS WI Department of Health and Family Services
 DOA WI Department of Administration
 DOC U.S. Department of Commerce
 DOE U.S. Department of Energy
 DOI U.S. Department of Interior
 DOL U.S. Department of Labor
 DOT U.S. Department of Transportation
 DU Dwelling Unit
 DU/A Dwelling Units/Acre

-E-

EA Environmental Assessment
 ECRPC East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
 Elev. Elevation, Above Sea Level
 EIS Environmental Impact Statement
 EPA U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

-F-

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHA Federal Housing Administration

FNMA Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae)

-G-

GDP Gross Domestic Product
 GIS Geographic Information System
 GPS Global Positioning System

-H-

HHS U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
 HUD U.S. Depart. of Urban Development
 HWY Highway

-I-J-K-

ISTEA Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
 K 1 Thousand, 1,000, kilo, kilometer

-L-

LB Pound(s), 16 ounces
 LF Linear Feet
 LOS Level of Service (Highways & Streets)
 LUC Land Use Controls
 LULU Locally Unwanted Land Use

-M-

MI Mile, 5,280 Feet
 MPO Metropolitan Planning Agency
 MSA Metropolitan Statistical Level

-N-

NEPA National Environmental Policy Act
 NIMBY "Not In My Backyard"
 NOI Notice of Intent
 NPS National Park Service
 NU Neighborhood Unit

-O-

OMB Office of Management and Budget
 OSHA Occupational Safety & Health Act
 OZ Ounce(s)

-P-

PASER Pavement Surface Evaluation & Rating
 PDR Purchase of Development Rights

PT Primary Treatment
PUD Planned Unit Development
PUC Public Utilities Commission
PWA Public Works Administration

-Q-R-

RPC Regional Planning Commission
RTC Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

-S-

SBA Small Business Administration
SEWRPC Southeast Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission
SF Square Foot (feet)
SHA Scenic Highways Act
SM Square Mile, 640 Acres
SOL Standard of Living
SQ Square
SRO Single Room Occupancy
ST Secondary Treatment
SUP Special Use Permit

-T-

TDR Transfer of Development Rights
TOD Transit Oriented Development
Ton 2,000 Pounds
TSCA Toxic Substances Control Act
TWP Township, 36 square miles (statutory)

-U-

UBC Uniform Building Code
UDAG Urban Development Assistance Grant
USAE Army Corps of Engineers
USCS U.S. Civil Service
USDA U.S. Department of Agriculture
UW University of Wisconsin

-V-W-X-Y-Z-

V/CR Volume to Capacity Ratio
WAPA WI Chapter of the APA
WDNR WI Department of Natural Resources
WDPI WI Department of Public Instruction
WDWD WI Department of Workforce
Development
WHEDA WI Housing and Development
Authority
WisDOT WI Department of Transportation
WPS Wisconsin Public Service
WTA Wisconsin Towns Association
WW Waste Water
ZB Zoning Board
ZBB Zero Base Budgeting
ZO Zoning Ordinance

APPENDIX F: 14 LOCAL PLANNING GOALS

Marquette County applied for and received a State Comprehensive Planning Grant. In the grant application the county outlined how it intended to address the 14 local goals for planning. What follows is a description of how the Town of Buffalo has addressed these goals in conjunction with the county's comprehensive planning grant application.

1. *Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public service...*

The *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* seeks to limit the amount of commercial development to areas along the STH 22 corridor. This is in accordance with existing development patterns and a greater desire to direct most commercial and industrial development to nearby cities and villages with the infrastructure needed to support such uses.

As a community without water and sewer infrastructure, the Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan does not include a map illustrating the location of underutilized areas in the **Land Use Element**. Rather, this information is addressed in the text of the **Existing and Future Land Use Chapters** of the Town of Buffalo Plan.

The Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan also seeks to establish residential development in areas that are served by county roads, respect landowner development requests, directed away from prime farmland areas, and also establishes a hamlet area near the town hall.

The **Utilities and Community Facilities Element**, as well as the **Implementation Element**, discuss the potential for establishing a capital improvement program to plan accordingly for infrastructure improvements.

2. *Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.*

To support this goal, the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* shows a limited amount of area for future rural residential development. More intensive neighborhood developments are encouraged in nearby cities and villages with the infrastructure needed to support higher densities and the ability to promote a range of transportation choices. This approach is in accordance with the Marquette County Comprehensive Planning Grant Application.

3. *Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces....*

The protection of natural areas and farmland was a primary concern throughout the development of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. The **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element** includes an inventory and assessment of natural resources in the Town of Buffalo. This information was the foundation for preparing the *Future Land Use Maps*. The **Implementation and Intergovernmental Elements** further stress the need for coordination with Marquette County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and private associations responsible for the protection of natural resources (i.e. lakes). Likewise, the visions, strengths,

values, and survey results presented throughout the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* express the town's desire for natural resource protection.

4. *Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.*

The **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element** outlines a number of tools available for farmers to keep their land in farming. Moreover, the plan highlights the importance of the local Amish population as major contributors to the economy through farming and the sale of goods from their homes. In addition, the **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element** discusses the Managed Forest Law as an opportunity that exists to protect farmland in the town. Accordingly, the plan encourages residents to consider this program.

The *Future Land Use Maps* illustrate farming and woodland areas to remain in the Town of Buffalo. These areas are based on existing locations.

5. *Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.*

The Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan encourages a pattern of efficient development to reduce costs through the use of:

- ? Managed roadway access techniques (discussed in the **Land Use Element**);
- ? Clusters of development along STH 22 and CTH B, as well as near the Town Hall (shown on the *Future Land Use Maps*);
- ? Use of Conservation Subdivision and Other Land Preservation Tools (refer to the **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element and the Implementation Element**); and
- ? Recommendations that the Town pursue the development of zoning and subdivision ordinances (Land Use Element and Implementation Element).

6. *Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.*

In accordance with the Marquette County Comprehensive Planning Grant Application description, the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* documents the location and importance of local historical sites using information from the State Historical Society, resident testimony and other important sources. The town supports efforts of private organizations, the state and Marquette County to protect historic resources. This information is included in the **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element**. In addition, in the **Transportation Element**, the Ice Age Trail is discussed as a historic route that is planned through the town, including John Muir Park.

7. *Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.*

The Town of Buffalo made a directed effort to involve neighboring communities, state agencies and school districts in the development of its plan. A description of the intergovernmental process and meetings is provided in the **Intergovernmental Element**. Accordingly, each map in the plan includes the names of adjacent communities, state lands are identified, and the *Utilities and Community Facilities Map* illustrates the location of school district boundaries in the Town of Buffalo.

8. *Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.*

The concept of community identity and design is highlighted in the Future Land Use Chapter of the Town of Buffalo Plan. That section discusses...techniques to preserve rural character, outdoor lighting concepts, signage restrictions, and managed roadway access.

9. *Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.*

The **Housing Element** includes a complete inventory of existing housing conditions related to structural age, structural type, occupancy status, vacancy status, housing values, housing costs, and other factors outlined in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, as well as, the Comprehensive Planning Grant Closeout Form prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. The Housing Element discussed and defines affordability in the Town of Buffalo and opportunities to establish affordable housing. Moreover, the plan also forecasts the number of additional housing units anticipated based on population projections and historic building permit trends. The goals and objectives including **Implementation Element**, highlight programs, policies, and actions the Town of Buffalo will support with respect to housing.

10. *Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land...*

The Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan identifies areas for development in accordance with population projections and historic building permit trends. Locations selected for development are based on soil conditions, historic development patterns, and landowner interests. The plan also recommends strategies to control the density and layout of development through the adoption of zoning and subdivision regulations.

11. *Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base ...*

The **Economic Development Element** summarizes existing economic activity within the Town and potential future economic development opportunities. The **Community Profile Chapter** presents the number and type of jobs, mix of existing industries and businesses, occupation of employed residents. The **Land Use Element** provides sites for commercial and industrial development and expansion.

12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

Steps were been taken throughout the Town's planning process to ensure that individual property rights are in balance with community interests and goals. To begin with, property owners were provided with opportunities for regular input through meetings and an interactive project web site. Regular articles about the planning effort were also published in area newspapers to increase resident awareness. Moreover, all property owners had the opportunity to participate in a mapping exercise to identify resident development and preservation desires. These maps were used as an important resource when preparing the *Future Land Use Maps*. It has been the Town of Buffalo's goal to develop a plan that recommends a predictable, logical, and reasonable future land use pattern for the community. A politically sustainable, reasonable, and responsive comprehensive plan will strike a balance between private rights and community interests. To that end, the **Land Use Element** describes and summarizes how the town will react to and handle development requests that are inconsistent with the plan.

13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

Preservation of rural character is a central theme in the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. Beginning with the *Introduction Chapter*, community values are highlighted that express the town's pride with its rural character. Accordingly, the **Issues and Opportunities Element** describes the town's vision for itself as a rural community.

In the **Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element**, a great deal of effort was made to inventory existing resources and qualities that contribute to the town's rural character. Accordingly, this chapter encourages the preservation of farmland, woodlands, wetlands and other natural features through a host of tools, including the use of conservation subdivision techniques.

The **Land Use Element** continues to discuss this important issue of rural character by providing a definition of rural character and techniques to promote rural character in the Town of Buffalo. Supporting goals and objectives are included in the **Implementation Element**.

14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The town's **Transportation Element** describes the existing transportation system, including all available information on the location, capacity, traffic, and condition of existing town roads, highways and railways; airport facilities and services; bicycle systems; and transportation systems for persons with disabilities. A summary of existing transportation plans relevant to the town is also provided.

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Conduct the required public hearing on the plan.

Work closely with the consultant hired by the town to prepare the comprehensive plan.

All meetings on the comprehensive plan shall be open to the public and duly posted pursuant to Ch. 985.02(2) Wis. Stats. The public notice announcing the required public hearing on the plan shall be published as a class 1 notice, pursuant to Ch. 985.02(1) Wis. Stats. at least 30 days prior to the hearing. The class 1 notice shall include the following: (1) date, time and place of the hearing, (2) a summary of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*, (3) the name of the town employee or Planning Advisory Committee Member who may provide additional information regarding the plan, and (4) where and when a copy of the proposed comprehensive plan may be viewed prior to the hearing, and how a copy of the plan may be obtained.

Copies of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* will be mailed to the clerks of neighboring towns, Marquette County, Green Lake County, Columbia County, Montello School District, Markesan School District, Pardeeville School District, East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Wisconsin Land Council. Copies of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* shall also be made available for viewing by the general public at the same time as the hearing notice is published. Copies of the proposed plan shall be available at the office of the Town Clerk, N1175 17th Road, Dalton, WI 53926, and at Montello Public Library, 128 Lake Court, Montello, WI 53949. Written

requests to the Town Clerk for copies of the proposed comprehensive plan will require payment of duplication costs. Duplication costs shall be charged at a rate of \$.25 per black and white page, \$1.00 per color page, and \$2.00 per 11" x 17" color map.

After the notice of the public hearing has been published, those wishing to submit written comments on the plan may do so until one week prior to the public hearing. Written comments on the proposed plan should be submitted to the Town Clerk. Written comments received prior to the public hearing will be addressed at the hearing and will be given the same weight as oral testimony. A review of all proposed revisions of the *Recommended Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* will be completed at the public hearing. All approved revisions will be posted on the internet in a meeting summary and included in the official minutes of the public hearing.

Plan Adoption

Town Board - Based on the recommendation of the Planning Advisory Committee and comments received, the Town Board, by majority vote, shall enact an ordinance adopting the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. A copy of the ordinance and adopted plan shall be sent to neighboring units of government, school and special purpose districts serving residents of the town, Marquette County, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Wisconsin Land Council. A copy of the adoption ordinance and the plan shall be available for inspection at the office of the Town Clerk. Copies of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan* may be purchased from the Town Clerk at a cost of \$30.00 each.

Immediately after adoption of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*, it shall be the responsibility of the Town Board to establish a Town Planning Commission in accordance with the requirements of Ch. 66.1001(4)(a) Wis. Stats.

Planning Commission – The Town of Buffalo Planning Commission shall assist the Town Board in implementing the provisions of the *Town of Buffalo Comprehensive Plan*. From time to time, but not less than once every five (5) years, the Planning Commission shall review the comprehensive plan for potential changes, additions or corrections. The Planning Commission shall also be responsible for recommending comprehensive plan amendments to the Town Board on a majority vote of its entire membership.