

# Farmland Preservation Plan



2011  
Dodge County, Wisconsin

# **DODGE COUNTY, WISCONSIN FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN**

Adopted June 21, 2011

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# 1.0 Introduction

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## 1.1 Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Development Policy

It is the policy of Dodge County to preserve agricultural land and natural resources in order to maintain a high quality of life and a strong economy. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage farmland preservation, protect natural resources, and minimize conflicts between farm and non-farm land uses. Additionally, agricultural related development and enterprises that support agriculture will be encouraged in order to maintain a strong agricultural economy in the County.

## 1.2 Regional Location

Dodge County is located in south central Wisconsin in the center of a triangle formed by the Milwaukee, Madison, and Fox Cities metropolitan areas. These three metropolitan areas are within an hour drive from the center of the County, putting them within an easy commuting distance. The Counties of Dane, Columbia, Green Lake, Fond du Lac, Washington, Waukesha, and Jefferson border Dodge County. Appendix A, Map 1-1 of the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan shows the regional location of the County.

## 1.3 Planning Process

This plan was prepared in accordance with the Farmland Preservation Chapter of the Wisconsin Statutes. It establishes public policy in support of farmland preservation, agricultural development and the encouragement of a healthy agricultural economy. The legislation requires a county to develop and adopt a Farmland Preservation Plan in order for landowners in the county to be eligible for the farmland preservation programs offered by the state. The Farmland Preservation Program has been in existence since 1977 and in force in Dodge County since 1979. A completely updated Dodge County Agricultural Preservation Plan was adopted in 2002 by the Dodge County Board of Supervisors and approved by the state's Land and Water Conservation Board in that same year. The goal of the program is to aid local governments in farmland preservation and agricultural development through planning and the provision of tax credits to those who participate.

Emerging trends affecting agriculture in Dodge County, as outlined in this plan, appear certain to have far reaching effects on the health of the agricultural economy of the County. This plan is part of the continuing effort on the part of Dodge County to participate in the State's Farmland Preservation Program in order to encourage a sustainable agricultural economy in the County. It is the intent of this plan to guide County decision-makers to make the best decisions for the benefit of all the people of Dodge County.

This plan represents much research, study, and effort on the part of the Land Resources and Parks Department staff, the Planning, Development and Parks Committee, and the County Board.

A project schedule or timetable and cost estimate was prepared by staff in order to complete the planning process prior to the end of the current Plan certification by the Land and Water Resources Board and to take advantage of a planning grant program offered by the state. After

making a grant application to the Department of Trade, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (DATCP), Dodge County was awarded a grant of \$17,000 to help the County offset the cost of producing a Farmland Preservation Plan. Staff also applied for and received an extension to the Plan certification which was scheduled to expire by the end of 2009. The project schedule or timetable included meetings with town officials to obtain input on the Farmland Preservation Plan maps for each of the towns and review of the existing Agricultural Preservation Plan.

The outline of the Dodge County Farmland Preservation Plan was specifically designed to meet the requirements of Chapter 91.10 of the Wisconsin State Statutes (Wis. Stats.) in order to be eligible for state planning grants.

Policies, goals, and recommendations stated in this document reflect the deliberations of the Land Resources and Parks Department staff, the Planning, Development and Parks Committee and the County Board, based on the comments and opinions expressed by the people within the County. References made to specific state, county, and other governmental programs do not imply endorsement of such plans, but are presented for background and reference only.

#### 1.4 Public Participation Efforts

The Dodge County Board of Supervisors adopted a Public Participation Plan at the beginning of the farmland preservation planning process based on input from the Planning, Development and Parks Committee in accordance with 91.10 (3) Wis. Stats. The following core efforts were identified to foster public participation above and beyond the statutory requirements of Wisconsin's Smart Growth law:

- ◆ All meetings will be open to the public.
- ◆ Notices and press releases will be sent to local media outlets identifying the time and location of public informational meetings and public hearings.
- ◆ Information about meetings, the Farmland Preservation Plan, and related materials will be available at the County Administration Building in Juneau for review by local residents and interested persons.
- ◆ Information about meetings, the Farmland Preservation Plan, and related materials will be available on the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department website for review by interested persons.

In addition, an address to forward written comments shall be provided in meeting notices and news releases. The Planning, Development and Parks Committee and Department staff shall respond to written comments at public meetings. Department staff also gave a presentation on the new farmland preservation program to the Dodge County Chapter of the Wisconsin Towns Association and the Farm Bureau, in addition to meeting individually with interested town representatives. Input from town officials was sought to create the future farmland preservation plan maps.

## 2.0 Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Development Trends, Plans or Needs

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### 2.1 Population

Population change is the primary component in tracking a county's past growth as well as predicting future population trends. Population characteristics relate directly to the county's housing, educational, utility, community, and recreational facility needs, as well as its future agricultural development trends. Section 1.4 of the Inventory and Trends Report within the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan provides detailed population characteristics. Tables 1-1 and 1-2 display population trends and changes from 1960 – 2000. Figures and tables within that section also display population by age cohort, municipal unit population change, educational attainment, and household income.

Dodge County had a population of 85,897 persons in 2000, a 12.2% increase from the 1990 population of 76,559. A decade earlier the county experienced a population increase of only 2.0%. The amount of growth the county experienced in the 1990s was 2.6% higher than the growth experienced by the State of Wisconsin. Population growth in villages in the county has consistently been greater than cities or towns, based on percentages. However, population growth based on the number of people added to the county population base indicates that towns and cities have contributed more to the overall county population increases than villages. For example, from 1970 to 2000 the population in towns increased by 4,985 persons and the population in cities increased by 8,427 persons. The population increase in villages was only 3,477 persons. Growth has been occurring in towns since 1990, which places development pressure on agricultural land within the towns. This results in the loss of agricultural land and leads to land use conflicts between agricultural uses and residential uses.



#### Population Estimates

Every year the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), Demographic Services Center develops population estimates for every municipality and county in the state. The 2008 population estimate for Dodge County was 89,810 residents, an increase of 4.6 % from 2000. Four out of the top five municipalities' with the largest percentage increase in population from 2000 - 2008 were towns, with each of those towns increasing by at least 12.0% over the eight year period. In those four towns alone, over 1,200 new residents were added since 2000. In comparison, the 11 villages in Dodge County added only 239 residents during the same time period. The trend towards increasing development in Dodge County towns is continuing past the 1990's and is leading to increased pressure on the agricultural industry in the County. Methods to direct population growth towards cities and villages should be considered. Population estimates from the Wisconsin Department of Administration should be utilized as the primary source for population information until the release of the 2010 Census.

## Population Projections

According to Table 1-8 of the Inventory and Trends Report within the Comprehensive Plan (p. 1-14), the projected population for Dodge County in 2010 is 90,565. Even though the Table was created in 2004, the projected number for 2010 should be very close to the actual number. The Wisconsin Department of Administration projects the population of Dodge County to be 103,074 by 2035. That is 13,264 more residents than the current population of 89,810. The average household size in 2000 for Dodge County was 2.56. That means an additional 5,181 dwelling units will need to be constructed in order to house the additional population. Where these additional dwellings are located and at what rate of density, will have an effect on the amount of agricultural land remaining in the County.

## 2.2 Economic Growth

An analysis of the economic base of the County as well as economic development trends is provided in Section 6.0 of the Inventory and Trends Report and Section 6.0 of the Recommendations Report within the County Comprehensive Plan. Information is provided for the labor force, unemployment rates, household income, average wages, principal employers, and commuting patterns. In addition, there are sections which analyze the agricultural industry and the economic impact of agriculture. In 2004, agriculture provided jobs for 9,508 Dodge County residents and accounted for 1.41 billion in economic activity. Additionally, fifteen facilities process dairy products in Dodge County.

The economic development trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. The agriculture and manufacturing industries in Dodge County are and will continue to be the primary economic base for the county.
2. Dodge County consistently ranks in the Top 10 of all counties in the state in a number of agricultural production categories.
3. Encourage and promote a healthy and sustainable agricultural economy through existing and new programs designed to support the farm economy.
4. The County shall support efforts to maintain agriculture as a major component of the local economy.



Agriculture is of vital importance to the Dodge County economy and will continue to be over the planning period; however, there will be challenges in the future. In most areas of the state the combination of a depressed farm economy, a strong non-farm sector, and increased urbanization has increased pressure on landowners to convert farmland to other uses. These trends have inflated land value and made it more difficult to enter farming or expand existing farms. Appreciated land values also enable existing farmers to realize larger financial gains when they sell their farmland assets. These are just a few of the issues Dodge County will deal with over the planning period.



## 2.3 Housing

An analysis of the housing supply in the County as well as housing trends are provided in Section 2.0 of the Inventory and Trends Report and Section 2.0 of the Recommendations Report within the County Comprehensive Plan. Information is provided on housing supply, occupancy, values, and household size. In addition, housing unit forecasts and trends are provided in these Sections. It is these forecasts and trends that may affect farmland preservation and agricultural development in Dodge County.

Housing growth does not always correspond with population growth. The communities with the most population growth are not always the communities with the most housing growth. The reason for this is that the number of persons per household is on the decline. On average, fewer people live in one housing unit than did 10 years ago. More homes are being used to house fewer people, so housing often grows faster than the population in some communities. According to the population projections in Section 2.1, another 5,181 dwelling units will need to be constructed to house the additional population of the County by 2035. That does not take into account the anticipated decline in the average household size. Where these additional dwellings are located will have an effect on the amount of agricultural land remaining in the County.

### Existing Housing Units

Table 2-1 of the Inventory and Trends Report within the Comprehensive Plan (p.2-3) displays the number of housing units found in Dodge County for 1990 and 2000. According to Table 2-1, Dodge County had 33,672 housing units in 2000, a 17.2% increase from 1990. This increase was greater than Wisconsin, which had a housing unit increase of only 12.9%. The majority of municipalities in the county had housing unit increases of greater than 10% for the period shown.

Table 2-2 of the Inventory and Trends Report within the Comprehensive Plan (p.2- 4) shows housing unit growth from 1990 to 2000 by municipal type. As indicated by Table 2-2, cities in Dodge County experienced the greatest increase in housing units from 1990 to 2000. According to Table 2-1 of the Inventory and Trends Report within the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Watertown had the greatest increase with 710 units, or a 28.9% increase. Other than the Cities of Columbus and Hartford, which are only partially located in the county, all cities had a housing unit increase of at least 100 units.



Also, Table 2-1 indicates that the villages in Dodge County increased their total number of housing units by 952, or 31.4%. Two villages, Neosho and Kekoskee, experienced a minimal housing unit decline from 1990 to 2000. The remaining villages experienced housing unit growth of 11% or greater. The Village of Lomira had the greatest overall increase in units with 336, followed by the Village of Theresa with 237 units.

Housing unit change for towns in the county ranged from a loss of 20 units in the Town of Oak Grove to an increase of 258 units in the Town of Ashippun (Comprehensive Plan, table 2-1, p. 2-3). Overall, 1,438 housing units were added to the town housing supply in the county between 1990 and 2000 (Comprehensive Plan, table 2-2, p. 2-4). Towns had the smallest percentage

increase in housing from 1990 to 2000. A continuation of this trend would aid in the preservation of agricultural land.

### Household Forecasts

Household forecasts are an important element in preparing a plan for a county. Specifically, they are used as a guide to estimate the required acreage to accommodate future residential development, as well as prepare for future demands growth may have on public facilities and services throughout the planning period. Similar to population projections, it is important to note that household projections are based on past and current trends; therefore they should only be used as a guide. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center, the total number of households in the county is estimated to increase from 31,417 to 38,221 households by 2025, an increase of 21.7% for the 25-year period. The density at which the 6,804 additional housing units are placed on the county landscape will determine the impact to agricultural land in the County. An increase to the density of housing will result in a lower impact on agricultural land.

Please refer to Table 2-9 of the Inventory and Trends Report within the Comprehensive Plan (p. 2-12) for household forecasts.

The housing trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Increased pressure to convert farmland to residential use.
2. Increased demand to build housing in rural areas.
3. The County should discourage the development of major subdivisions (defined as five or more lots) on agricultural zoned land within towns under County zoning jurisdiction.



4. New housing units in areas designated for agriculture should be designed to reduce the impact to natural vegetation, preserve quality farmland, reduce farmland fragmentation, reduce conflict with existing agricultural operations, preserve drainage patterns, and not block potential road extensions.
5. Infill development and new development shall be encouraged within areas served by public sanitary sewer.

## 2.4 Transportation

The land use pattern of Dodge County, its municipalities, and the region are tied together by the transportation system, which includes roads, multi-use trails, railroads, airports, and any other method of travel used to move people and products. Residents, businesses, agricultural producers, and manufacturers all rely on a dependable transportation system to function and provide linkages to other markets. Dodge County's transportation network plays a major role in the efficiency, safety, and overall desirability of the area as a place to live and work.

Roads and highways account for the majority of a transportation system and are probably the most common paths, however, are not the only component. Therefore rail lines, airways, and trails are all additional opportunities that contribute to the entire transportation system. Taken together, these individual transportation options create a transportation system.

In addition, it is imperative that the system be as safe as possible. For example, one common safety concern involves private parties accessing public roadways via driveways and the potential hazards this brings to public roadway users, including farm machinery operators. In order to ensure safety and efficiency, the transportation system needs to be efficiently managed and maintained. A county benefits from continual improvements which can include surface improvements, adjustments to interchange signals, signage, and even new routes. Therefore, in addition to the necessary budgetary and safety considerations of the system, planning for the location and density of new development will need to be evaluated for potential impacts on the transportation system.

### **Existing Road System**

According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT), there is a total of 2,022 miles of highways and local roads in Dodge County. This includes 240 miles of state highway, 542 miles of county highway, and 1,240 miles of local roads.

Two major four lane U.S. Highways connect Dodge County to the surrounding region. U.S. Highway 151 runs in a northeast, southwest direction through the northwest portion of the county and provides vehicular access from several cities in Dodge County to Madison, Fond du Lac, and beyond. U.S. Highway 41 runs in a north-south direction through the northeast portion of the county and provides access to Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, and beyond. Interstate Highways 90 and 94 pass to the west and south of Dodge County, respectively.

Dodge County contains an extensive system of State and County highways as well. State highway 26 runs in a north-south direction through the center of the county. State highway 33 runs in an east-west direction through the northern portion of the county, including routes through the Cities of Fox Lake, Beaver Dam, and Horicon. State highway 60 runs in an east-west direction through the southern portion of the county. Several other state highways including 68, 49, 175, 28, 67, 73 and 19 also provide major transportation routes throughout the county. Map 3-1 of the Comprehensive Plan Appendix shows highway locations and classifications.

The extensive system of local roads provides for circulation between and within communities for local residents and provides the link to other transportation routes.

## **Additional Modes of Transport**

### **Trucking**

Trucking is an integral part of the Dodge County agricultural economy and depends on a safe and efficient highway system as well as adequate local roads and streets. Infrastructure to support trucking is abundant in Dodge County and the surrounding region. All state and U.S. highways, as well as several county trunk highways, within Dodge County are designated official truck routes by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. There is one state rest area in the county located off STH 41 south of Lomira.

### **Air Service**

The Dodge County Airport, located north of Juneau, is classified as a transport/corporate airport according to the Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020. This classification indicates that the airport is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes used in commuter air service. The Dodge County Highway Committee is responsible for planning and operating the Dodge County Airport.

The Watertown Municipal Airport, located approximately 30 miles south of the Dodge County Airport in the City of Watertown, is also a transport/corporate airport. The Hartford Municipal Airport is classified as a general utility airport. This airport is intended to serve virtually all small general aviation single and twin engine aircraft with a maximum takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds or less. Waupun also has limited airport service.

Commercial service is available at: General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee; Madison's Dane County Airport; and the Austin Straubel International Airport in Green Bay. These facilities have regularly scheduled service with a variety of commercial airlines.

There are eight additional private airports or landing strips located in Dodge County. These facilities serve private companies, hobbyist aviators, crop dusters, or individual owners. For a map of airport locations serving Dodge County refer to the Appendix of the Comprehensive Plan, Map 3-1.

### **Rail Service**

At least one rail line passes through every town in the county, except the Towns of Portland, Hustisford, and Leroy. The Dodge County network of railroads includes rail lines operated by the Canadian Pacific Rail System, Union Pacific, Canadian National, and Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Company. Refer to Map 3-1 in the Comprehensive Plan Appendix for railroad line locations.

Freight service as well as passenger trains traverse the county. Three of the lines travel south toward the Milwaukee area. One line runs south from Clyman Junction while another travels north from Horicon and extends past Oshkosh. This network allows for the easy flow of products throughout the county, with lines connecting Dodge County to Milwaukee, Madison, Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and beyond. These railroads are important for transporting agricultural products out of Dodge County. Amtrak passenger service is available from Columbus with connections to Minneapolis/St. Paul and Chicago.

### *Bicycle and Pedestrian*

The *Dodge County Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Plan* is used to promote and improve conditions for bicycling and walking throughout Dodge County. Bicycles and walking can provide an important alternative for traveling to work or school. Bicyclists have an excellent facility in Dodge County, the Wild Goose State Trail. This 34-mile trail begins in the Town of Clyman, passes through the City of Juneau, and follows an abandoned railroad bed along the edge of Horicon Marsh, before proceeding to the City of Fond du Lac. The trail is surfaced with compacted limestone screening and passes cultivated farm fields, wood lots, prairie remnants, abundant wildlife, and historic small communities. In addition to bicycles, this multi-use trail accommodates hiking and snowmobile riding as well as horseback riding in a section between STH 60 and the City of Juneau.



### *Public Transit*

Public transportation is usually in the form of bus service. Transit bus service has fixed routes and schedules. Since a certain population size and make-up is needed to provide transit services cost-effectively, Dodge County does not have transit bus service in any of its communities. Publicly funded taxi services are located in Hartford and Watertown.

## **Existing Transportation Plans**

### *County Plans*

In addition to the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan, the county's Capital Improvement Plan details future highway and bridge projects. The plan also provides information on future projects at the Dodge County Airport. No new county highway segments are being proposed.

### *Regional Plans*

Dodge County is not a member of a regional planning commission or a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). These organizations often coordinate and plan for transportation systems within a regional context. There are no regional transportation related plans that apply to Dodge County.

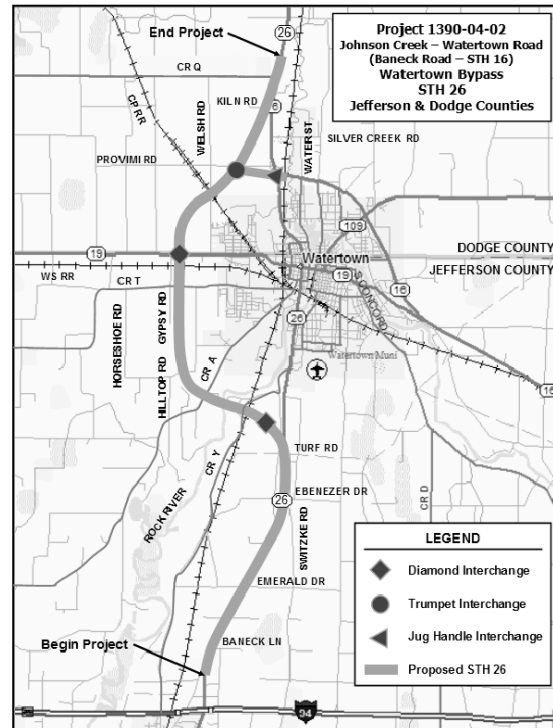
### State Plans

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains several plans with statewide policies, recommendations, and strategies regarding various aspects of transportation. These plans should be taken into consideration and utilized when transportation decisions or plans are made in Dodge County.

The planned STH 26 bypass route around the City of Watertown will affect farmland around the area of the new bypass route. In addition to the land dedicated for the actual construction of the bypass, the surrounding farmland may also be affected. Due to anticipated residential and commercial growth along the bypass route, the pressure and demand for converting farmland to some other land use will most likely result in further loss of agricultural land. Land in the Towns of Emmet and Shields will be particularly vulnerable. The threat of annexation of these properties into the City of Watertown for development also plays a role in the potential loss of farmland in this area.

The transportation trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Discourage new driveways that exceed 1,000 feet in length, divide farm fields or remove more than one acre of farmland from agricultural use.
2. Road development and new driveway accesses on active agricultural land should be limited to the fullest extent possible.
3. Limit the development of new homes that require individual driveways along all types of highways.
4. Issues regarding agricultural transport, such as milk and manure hauling, may increase.
5. Conflicts between automobiles and slower farm equipment are likely to increase.



## 2.5 Utilities

Along with the County's transportation system, utilities are the most important long-term and permanent features that will influence future growth and development, or a lack thereof, within Dodge County. An analysis of utilities is provided in Section 4.0 of the Inventory and Trends Report and Section 4.0 of the Recommendations Report in the Comprehensive Plan. A detailed inventory of the existing utilities in Dodge County is provided. In addition, specific goals, objectives, policies, recommendations and programs related to the provision of utilities that will be used to guide the future use and development of land within the unincorporated areas of the County over a 20-year planning period is provided.

### **Existing Utilities**

#### *Electricity*

Three (3) companies (two private firms and one cooperative) provide electricity to residential and commercial users in Dodge County. Three municipal electric systems also provide service to portions of the county. Alliant Energy primarily serves the northern two-thirds of the county, Wisconsin Electric Power Company serves the far southern and far eastern portions of the county, and the Columbus Rural Electric Cooperative serves the City of Columbus and western portions of the county. The City of Juneau has its own system. The City of Waupun also serves portions of the Town of Chester. The Village of Hustisford serves most of the Town of Hustisford. See Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan; Map 4-6 for the service areas for each electric utility and cooperative serving Dodge County.

#### *Natural Gas*

Natural gas is provided by Wisconsin Gas Company, Wisconsin Electric Power Company, and Alliant Energy provide throughout the county. See Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan; Map 4-7 for the service areas of each natural gas provider.

#### *Wind Energy Facilities*

There are two major wind energy facilities in Dodge County. One in the Town of Herman contains 33 wind turbines and be capable of producing 54 megawatts of power. The other is located in the Dodge County Towns of Leroy and Lomira as well as two neighboring towns in Fond du Lac County. The facility includes up to 133 turbines and capable of producing 200 megawatts of power.

#### *Sanitary Sewer and Public Water Facilities*

Sanitary sewer and public water facilities are primarily found within the villages and cities in the County. Sanitary districts also operate a few town systems. There are a total of seventeen (17) municipal sanitary sewer providers and twelve (12) districts. See Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan; Map 4-8 for all of the public sanitary sewer and water systems in the County. Nineteen (19) communities in Dodge County provide public water supply systems, either through a municipal system or one managed by a sanitary district.

The need to expand or rehabilitate such facilities or create new facilities will be primarily based on the location of new or increased density of housing, commercial and industrial development. Sanitary sewer needs were evaluated as part of the comprehensive planning effort undertaken by many of the incorporated communities that were part of this planning process. Each community

will need to continue to monitor local growth trends to determine the increased need for sewer and water infrastructure. Opportunities for jointly developing such facilities should also be continually evaluated.

### **Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (POWTS) Facilities**

The majority of POWTS, more commonly referred to as “septic systems”, are located in the unincorporated areas of Dodge County. POWTS are permitted by Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department and installed by licensed plumbers. Operation and maintenance of POWTS are the responsibility of the property owner. The county will continue to educate, administer POWTS regulations, and pursue funding for the replacement of failing POWTS.

### **Future Needs for Utilities**

Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning legislation requires that the Utilities and Community Facilities element of the comprehensive plan include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities or to create new utilities. Each community that participated in the Dodge County multi-jurisdictional planning process completed a listing of short and long term utility needs and projects. Short term projects were defined as occurring within one to five years and long term projects were defined as occurring six years and beyond.

The existence and likely future expansion of wind energy systems in the County have a direct impact on farmland preservation. The wind energy systems and access roads do occupy a minimal amount of formerly agricultural land. However, with the money obtained for leasing land for wind energy system development, the land owner has additional funds to make the farm operation a success for a longer period of time. Another unintended result of the wind energy systems is to provide deterrence to future nonfarm residential development in the areas of wind farms. Extensive nonfarm residential development is unlikely in areas of wind farms due to the potential for land use conflicts and possible reduction in property values.



A summary of the planned expansion and/or rehabilitation of utility improvements for all of the participating communities can be found in Appendix B of the County Comprehensive Plan.

The utility trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Residential growth should only expand as the municipality’s ability to supply municipal services increases.
2. Limit rural residential development to sites with soil conditions suitable for a private sanitary system other than a holding tank.
3. Introduce a standardized cost-benefit analysis methodology for assessing the cumulative fiscal impact of proposed major developments on the ability of local taxing jurisdictions



to service the projected development before approving large-scale rezoning or major subdivisions.

4. Require the location of wind energy system towers in non-residential areas throughout the county and in a manner so as to minimize potential community impacts, including adverse visual impacts, as well as potential impacts on surrounding properties, natural resources, migratory birds, raptors, and other wildlife.

## 2.6 Communications

Four communication companies provide telephone service to the county, refer to Map 4-5 in the Appendix of the Comprehensive Plan. Century Tel, Inc., SBC, Telephone and Data Systems, Inc., and Verizon split the county into various service areas. Cellular telephone service is available throughout the county as well as emergency 911 services. Strength of the signal will vary depending on tower locations and topography. Table 2-1 displays the telephone service providers of Dodge County as well as their service area in square miles.

**Table 2-1**  
**Telephone Service, Dodge County, 2005**

Telephone Service	Square Miles	% of Total
Century Tel, Inc.	85.6	9.6%
SBC WI	469.6	52.6%
Telephone and Data Systems, Inc.	62.8	7.0%
Unassigned Territory	2.0	0.2%
Under 10,000 Lines or < 3 each	0.2	0.0%
Verizon North, Inc.	272.8	30.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>892.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department.

The Wireless Communication Facilities Overlay District within the County Land Use Code regulates Communication towers. Local governments cannot unilaterally prohibit cell towers by ordinance, zoning or any other means. However, the Overlay District can prohibit towers from certain specially identified areas, regulate tower height, specify minimum setbacks, require collocation strategies, and encourage landscaping and disguising techniques. Communication towers are discouraged in residential areas and thus are mostly located in rural, agricultural areas of the County. These towers seem to have a minimal impact on farmland preservation and agricultural development.

The communication trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Special zoning “overlay” district regulations shall be established in the County Land Use Code as necessary to restrict and regulate the location, installation, appearance, height, and potential impact of wireless communication towers and antenna facilities

to the extent permissible given applicable state and federal regulations (including but not limited to the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996). At a minimum, these regulations should be developed with the intent to:

- ◆ Require the location of telecommunication towers in non-residential areas throughout the county and in a manner so as to minimize potential community impacts, including adverse visual impacts.
- ◆ Minimize the total number of towers needed by requiring co-location of antenna facilities on existing towers and other appropriate structures as a priority over the construction of new towers.

## 2.7 Business Development

Business development is an area of planning that can address many issues ranging from enhancing a community's competitiveness, a means of establishing industrial policy, a way of encouraging sustainable development, a tool to create jobs, increase wages and enhance worker training, and improve overall quality of life. All of these issues affect residents within a county and were addressed directly or indirectly in the comprehensive plan.

The *Dodge County Year 2030 Comprehensive Plan: Inventory and Trends Report* identified and inventoried information regarding Dodge County's economic base and labor force. This element summarizes some of the economic characteristics and trends for the County as well as specific goals, objectives, policies, recommendations and programs that will be used to guide business development within the unincorporated areas of the County over the 20-year planning period.

Some of the most notable features of the Dodge County economy are detailed below:

### Labor Force

- ◆ Dodge County's labor force has generally decreased (-1.7 percent) since 2000 to a level of 46,493 persons in 2010.
- ◆ Unemployment within Dodge County has been consistently higher than the average for the State of Wisconsin since 2000 and was at 10.7 percent of the labor force in February of 2010 (compared to only 9.7 percent for Wisconsin)
- ◆ When compared to other counties in Wisconsin (22.3 percent), Dodge County has a greater percentage of its workers (40 percent) who work outside of the county they live in.
- ◆ The majority of residents within the county had a commute to work of less than fifteen (15) minutes.
- ◆ The 2007 per capita income for Dodge County was \$30,751, significantly less than the State's reported per capita income of \$36,272.
- ◆ Approximately 6,600 more workers travel out of Dodge County for work than those that commute into the county for work. The largest number of commuters travel to Jefferson County (4,021), followed by Washington County (3,230), and Waukesha County (3,051). For those that travel to Dodge County to work, the majority commute from Fond du Lac County (4,401).

## Economic Base

- ◆ Manufacturing had the greatest percentage (33 percent) of total employment in the County, similar to the State of Wisconsin (22 percent overall).
- ◆ Dodge County (5 percent) has a significantly higher percentage of total employment in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining economic division when compared to the state (2.8 percent).
- ◆ Management, professional, and related occupations employ the greatest percentage of workers in the county, similar to the State of Wisconsin.
- ◆ As of 2008, annual average wage in Dodge County for all categories (\$36,618) was less than the state annual average wage (\$39,169).
- ◆ The three (3) largest private employers in Dodge County in 2009 were: Quad/Graphics; Wal-Mart Associates, Inc. and Beaver Dam Community Hospital.
- ◆ Construction and Manufacturing are the two categories that comprise the Dodge County economy that are considered “basic” employment areas that produce more goods and services than the county economy can use.

## Business Development Trends and Outlook

1. The agriculture and manufacturing industries in Dodge County are and will continue to be the primary economic base for the county.
2. Tourism will increasingly add to the employment and economic base of the county.
3. Wisconsin’s population is projected to grow slower and older than the nation as a whole, leading to lower participation rates in the workforce. Wisconsin is also having difficulty attracting international immigrants, domestic migrants, and retaining its own citizens. The aging of the population will have strong impacts on local demographics, employment patterns, and desired business and industry in the county.
4. Agriculture dominated the Dodge County economy until the mid-20th century, at which point, manufacturing became a major source of employment and income. Trade and services have begun to emerge as major economic components.
5. The composition of the labor force will change due to continued decreases in family size and the aging of the population.
6. Dodge County will likely continue to depend heavily on the manufacturing sector of the economy. International and national economic trends will continue to affect the manufacturers found in Dodge County.
7. Population disbursement in the county will continue to limit economic development in some areas.
8. Increases in automation and technology in manufacturing will change the existing manufacturing base and affect the labor force.

9. Tourism will likely increase as a factor in the county economy.
10. Dodge County will continue to be a desirable place to live, and transportation improvements will increase the ability of individuals to work outside the county resulting in increased population.
11. The service-based sector of the economy will continue to grow, particularly health-related services, as the population ages.

The business development trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. The County shall support efforts to maintain agriculture as a major component of the local economy.
2. Future economic development should be located in and/or directed toward areas within which adequate public facilities and services already exist, are programmed for expansion, or will be provided concurrent with development.
3. Commercial and Industrial development should be directed to those areas identified for such uses on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

Agriculture is of vital importance to the economy of Dodge County and will continue to be over the planning period; however, there will be challenges in the future. In most areas of the state the combination of a depressed farm economy and increased urbanization has increased pressure on landowners to convert farmland to other uses. These trends have inflated land value and made it more difficult to enter farming or expand existing farms. Appreciated land values also enable existing farmers to realize larger financial gains when they sell their farmland assets. These are just a few of the issues Dodge County will deal with over the planning period.

## 2.8 Community Facilities and Services

Efficient provision of high quality community facilities and services boosts property values, controls taxes, and contributes to many aspects of the quality of life within Dodge County. Local features such as parks, schools, and protective services help define a community's character. These services require substantial investment supported by local tax bases or user fees. The Inventory and Trends Report in the Comprehensive Plan provides a detailed inventory of the existing community facilities and services in Dodge County. The Recommendations Report in the Comprehensive Plan provides a summary of the County's existing community facilities and services and the specific goals, objectives, policies, recommendations and programs related to the provision of community facilities and services that will be used to guide the future use and development of land within the unincorporated areas of the County over a 20-year planning period.

### Future Needs

The future of government services within Dodge County will be shaped by a number of factors including:

- ◆ Reduced budgets at all levels of government.
- ◆ Consolidations and increased cooperation in the delivery of services.
- ◆ Aging population and therefore changing demands.
- ◆ Economic sector shifts. Changing demands from business and industry for services and infrastructure.
- ◆ Changes in regulation. There will be continual changes in existing regulations and creation of new rules which will alter how services are delivered.

All of the above factors as well as the future development pattern within Dodge County will dictate the future needs for government services. A development pattern centered on existing developed areas where services are already provided will result in a more efficient delivery of services. Agricultural land creates very little demand for community facilities and services.

The community facilities and services trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Local government budget constraints will drive the need for intergovernmental cooperation for services and programs.
2. There will be an increased need for communities and other jurisdictions to coordinate the development of trails and other recreational facilities.
3. The demand for health care and child care facilities will increase.
4. Decreasing school enrollments may cause further school closings and consolidations.
5. Residential growth should only expand as the municipality's ability to supply municipal services increases.
6. Future schools and other public buildings should only be located where a public sanitary sewer system is available.
7. Municipalities should consider sharing library services where appropriate, especially in areas designated for growth.
8. Introduce a standardized cost-benefit analysis methodology for assessing the cumulative fiscal impact of proposed major developments on the ability of local taxing jurisdictions to service the projected development before approving large-scale rezoning or major subdivisions.
9. Residential, commercial and industrial growth should occur in relation to each municipality's ability to supply additional police and fire protection.
10. Shared police and fire protection services between municipalities should be considered, particularly in urban service areas and other high growth areas.

## 2.9 Energy

Natural gas, electricity and wind energy facilities provide the vast majority of energy for Dodge County residents.

### Natural Gas

All communities in Dodge County have natural gas service available. Three companies, Wisconsin Gas Company, Wisconsin Electric Power Company, and Alliant Energy provide natural gas service throughout the county, refer to Map 4-7 in the Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan. The split service boundaries do not inconvenience local users; however, each of the companies provides different support services to their customers. Table 2-2 displays the natural gas service providers of Dodge County as well as their service area in square miles.

**Table 2-2**  
**Natural Gas Service, Dodge County, 2005**

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Square Miles</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Alliant Energy	481.8	54.0%
No Gas Service Available	0.0	0.0%
Wisconsin Electric Power Company	193.0	21.6%
Wisconsin Gas Company	218.1	24.4%
Total	892.8	100.0%

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department.

### Electricity

Three companies (two private firms and one cooperative) provide electrical services to residential and commercial users in Dodge County. Refer to Map 4-6 in Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan for electric service providers. Three municipal electric systems also provide service to portions of the county. Alliant Energy primarily serves the northern two-thirds of the county, Wisconsin Electric Power Company serves the far southern and far eastern portions of the county, and the Columbus Rural Electric Cooperative serves the City of Columbus and far western portions of the county. The City of Juneau has its own system. The City of Waupun also serves portions of the Town of Chester and the Village of Hustisford also serves most of the Town of Hustisford. Table 2-3 displays the electrical service providers of Dodge County as well as their service area in square miles.



**Table 2-3**  
**Electric Service, Dodge County, 2005**

Electric Service	Square Miles	% of Total
Alliant Energy	373.9	41.9%
Columbus Rural Electric Cooperative	75.2	8.4%
Municipalities (serving beyond corporate limits)	28.9	3.2%
Wisconsin Electric Power Co. (private)	414.9	46.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>892.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department.

### Wind Energy Facilities

There are two major wind energy facilities in Dodge County. One project in the Town of Herman contains 33 wind turbines, producing 54 megawatts of power. Another project is located in the Towns of Leroy and Lomira as well as two neighboring towns in Fond du Lac County. The project area consists of approximately 32,400 acres of predominantly agricultural land. The wind energy facility contains 133 turbines throughout the project area and produces 200 megawatts of power.

The Dodge County regulations (Wind Energy System Overlay District) are in the Land Use Code and apply in areas subject to County Zoning. The Code also allows for personal wind energy systems of 100 feet or less, without the need for a conditional use permit (public hearing). There are smaller wind energy systems built on private property throughout the county.

The existence and likely future expansion of wind energy systems in the County have a direct impact on farmland preservation. The wind energy systems and access roads do occupy a minimal amount of formerly agricultural land. However, with the money obtained for leasing land for wind energy system development, the land owner has additional funds to make the farm operation a success for a longer period of time. Another unintended result of the wind energy systems is to provide deterrence to future nonfarm residential development in the areas of wind farms. Extensive nonfarm residential development is unlikely in areas of wind farms due to the potential for land use conflicts and possible reduction in property values.

The energy trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Special zoning “overlay” district regulations shall be established in the County Land Use Code as necessary to restrict and regulate the location, installation, appearance, height, and potential impact of wind energy system towers and related facilities to the extent permissible given applicable state and federal regulations. At a minimum, these regulations should be developed with the intent to:

- ◆ Require the location of wind energy system towers in non-residential areas throughout the county and in a manner so as to minimize potential community impacts, including adverse visual impacts, as well as potential impacts on surrounding properties, natural resources, migratory birds, raptors, and other wildlife.

## 2.10 Waste Management

The majority of towns in Dodge County provide Saturday morning drop-off of solid waste and recyclables, while others contract with private companies for curbside collection of solid waste and recycling services. Commercial and industrial businesses generally arrange for private solid waste collection. According to the DNR, there are 40 responsible units for recycling in the county, indicating that each town, village, and city is responsible for complying with recycling regulations. There are three communities that share a recycling drop-off site; however they are not one responsible unit.

There is one privately operated landfill in Dodge County, Veolia Glacier Ridge Landfill. The landfill is located in the Town of Williamstown. According to the DNR, this landfill had approximately 1,286,000 million cubic yards of capacity as of January 2002. The landfill has recently expanded its capacity and will be able to handle the future needs of Dodge County.

Dodge County does not provide any services related to solid waste or recycling. The county does coordinate a Clean Sweep Program, which provides Dodge County citizens an opportunity to dispose hazardous materials.

## 2.11 Municipal Expansion

Dodge County is home to 44 municipalities (9 cities, 11 villages, and 24 towns) and 68 other units of government, including school districts, sanitary sewer districts, drainage districts, and lake protection districts. Municipal expansion is going to be an issue for towns in Dodge County, since there are 9 cities and 11 villages that can expand into town territory. Municipal expansion occurs through annexation and often results in the loss of agricultural land. Cooperative boundary agreements between a town and a city or village present an alternative to annexation.

### Cooperative Boundary Agreements

Cooperative boundary agreements can reduce some of the conflict regarding boundary issues, including annexation, that often arise between towns and their incorporated neighbors (cities and villages). The Legislature has provided express enabling authority for these agreements. The communities involved in such agreements undertake cooperative preparation of a plan for the areas concerned. The plan for changing or maintaining boundaries, and for controlling land use and services is sent to the Department of Administration. If the plan is approved, a contract binding the parties to it is put into effect.



Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan, a schedule for changes to the boundary, plans for the delivery of services, an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan, and it must address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption.

In Dodge County, There are two cooperative boundary agreements in effect. One is between the City of Watertown and the Town of Emmet and the other is between the Town of Rubicon and the City of Hartford.

### Annexation

Cities and villages have the power to annex given to them by the state. The power to extend municipal boundaries into adjacent unincorporated (town) lands allows a community to control development on its periphery. Contrary to popular belief, annexation occurs at the request of town residents, not at the request of the incorporated municipality. Petitions for annexation are filed by the town landowners and the village or city acts upon the annexation petition.

Wisconsin Statute, 66.021, Annexation of Territory, provides three petition methods by which annexation may occur. Annexation involves the transfer of one or more tax parcels from a town to a city or village. Cities and villages can not annex property without the consent of landowners as required by the following petition procedures:

1. Unanimous approval - A petition is signed by all of the electors residing in the territory and the owners of all of the real property included within the petition.
2. Notice of intent to circulate petition (direct petition for annexation) - The petition must be signed by a majority of electors in the territory and the owners of one-half of the real property either in value or in land area. If no electors reside in the territory, then only the landowners need sign the petition.
3. Annexation by referendum - A petition requesting a referendum election on the question of annexation may be filed with the city or village when signed by at least 20 percent of the electors in the territory.

### Wisconsin Act 317 – Revisions to Annexation Procedures

Under this Act which was enacted in April of 2004, no city or village may annex any territory if none of the city's or village's territory is in the same county as the territory to be annexed. The Act also requires cities and villages to make payments for five years to towns that lose territory due to annexations. Cities and villages will have to pay to the town from which the land is annexed the amount of the town tax for the annexed property. The Act gives an exemption from this payment for cities and villages that have boundary agreements with the neighboring towns. Although Wisconsin Act 317 helps towns financially when land is annexed by a city or village, it does not stop the loss of agricultural land that may occur.

The municipal expansion trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. Given the large number of small cities and villages in Dodge County, annexation and other land use conflicts will continue between towns and incorporated communities.
2. The use of boundary agreements and extraterritorial review tools will increase as development pressures increase near municipal borders.
3. The County shall support the development of Cooperative Boundary Agreements between communities in the County.
4. Allow county staff to facilitate the development of cooperative boundary agreements between municipalities.
5. Propose boundary agreements between municipalities, act as facilitator for municipalities considering boundary agreements, and assist in drafting agreements to address annexation and development issues in urban service areas and to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
6. Make each local government aware of Section 66.023 of the Wisconsin Statutes, regarding cooperative boundary agreements, and Section 66.30, Wisconsin Statutes, regarding cooperative inter-governmental agreements and encourage their use.

## 2.12 Environmental Preservation

Dodge County's natural resources are facing significant threats due to increasing human demands by a growing population. Conversely, our natural resources generally do not increase to meet the extra demand. Unplanned or poorly planned development patterns in the last several decades, coinciding with population growth, have increased demand for water, land, and raw materials. Rural landscapes are being transformed by a demand for "healthy country living", sometimes to the detriment of established agricultural operations. This rural migration along with the expansion of the urban fringe could have a negative impact on the environment.

There are many state and some federal regulations designated to protect Wisconsin's natural resources. Some state laws, including those for floodplains, shorelands and wetlands, establish minimum use and protection standards that must be adopted and administered by local governments. But not all natural resources are protected by state law. Local governments throughout the state have the flexibility to plan for and develop their own local ordinances to deal with the unique land use issues/conflicts in their community and to protect the natural resources that they value most.

The Inventory and Trends Report of the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan documents all of the natural resources that are present within Dodge County. This element provides more detailed information regarding some of the most unique and important resource features within the county. The agricultural and natural resources found within Dodge County vary greatly depending on location. Most of the County's agricultural and natural resources result from the many glacial features and deposits throughout the County. Almost 90 percent of the entire County area is comprised of agricultural and other resource uses. The two most prominent natural resource features in the county include the very flat, marsh areas, including the Horicon Marsh and Mud Lake Marsh, and the Niagara Escarpment.

## Environmental Preservation Tools

In addition to the state and federal regulations administered by Dodge County, the Dodge County Land Use Code includes an Environmental Protection Overlay District. The primary purpose of the Environmental Protection Overlay District is to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare by providing for uses compatible with protecting, preserving, and enhancing significant natural areas within the County. These areas include wooded areas of environmental importance, significant archaeological sites, slopes in excess of 12 percent, soil depths less than 60 inches, or other areas in which the public has interest in preserving or protecting.

The County Land Conservation Department is responsible for providing technical, planning, and financial assistance to landowners of Dodge County in regards to soil and water conservation practices. The Department implements state and local conservation programs such as the Farmland Preservation Program, the DNR Priority Watershed Program, the Land and Water Resource Management Program, the Animal Damage and Claims Program, and the Animal Waste Management Ordinance. The Department also assists in the implementation of the Shoreland/Wetland/Floodplain Ordinance. It is the responsibility of the Land Conservation Department and Committee to ensure that the county's natural resources are conserved.

Other programs such as County Conservation Aids, Forest Project Loans, Non-Point Pollution Abatement Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and Wetlands Reserve Program, are available. The County also has the Fox Lake Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District and the Lake Sinissippi Improvement District.

The Drumlin Area Land Trust operates in Dodge and Jefferson Counties. The Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and provides funds and services to landowners who place a conservation easement on their property. Since its inception, the land trust has protected over 400 acres of farmland and natural areas.

The environmental protection trends, policies, and recommendations identified in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to farmland preservation and agricultural development include:

1. The county's river fronts, woodlands, and highland areas will be desired as residential building sites.
2. Challenges to groundwater resources will grow including increasing quantity of withdrawal and increasing potential for contamination sources.
3. Adopt a uniform set of setbacks from all navigable streams, intermittent streams, lakes, ponds, flowages, drainage ways and wetlands and require a vegetative buffer area within such setbacks to trap silt and nutrients, slow the movement of stormwater, increase water filtration into the ground and provide wildlife habitat.
4. Protect woodlots of 25 or more acres from development to protect wildlife habitat.
5. Nature preserves, hunting and fishing preserves and wildlife ponds should be permitted in conservancy areas.
6. The County shall direct growth away from environmentally sensitive areas, such as environmental corridors, wetlands, and floodplains.
7. Provide incentives for farmers to leave unplowed and unfertilized buffers along drainage ways and wetlands.

# 3.0 LAND USE

Understanding current land use trends in Dodge County is an important step in developing a sound Agricultural Preservation Plan. There are various development and demographic pressures that contribute to current land uses and development patterns in Dodge County. In order to deal with these land use pressures, communities must be flexible and willing to change old habits. This chapter of the plan will provide an analysis of current land uses and land resources in Dodge County.

## 3.1 Existing Agricultural Land Use

Agriculture is alive and well in Dodge County. This is evident in the annual publication of the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics report. Dodge County consistently ranks in the top 10 counties for many agricultural crops produced. Dodge County’s agricultural land base, supporting agricultural businesses and good soil quality help support the agricultural way of life and agricultural economy in Dodge County. In order to maintain Dodge County’s annual top 10 rankings in agricultural crops produced, there needs to be plentiful quality agricultural land.

During the Dodge County Comprehensive Planning Project, county staff did an inventory of existing land uses in Dodge County. This inventory of existing land use in the county helped give staff a better understanding of the land use acreage breakdown in Dodge County. Since the existing land use survey was completed in 2004, some of the acreage may have increased and/or decreased. However, this land use survey will still give readers a good idea of land use acreage in Dodge County. The amount of existing land uses by general type and distribution within the County are shown in Table 3-1.

**Table 3-1**  
**Existing Land Use, Dodge County, 2004**

Land Use	Acreage	Percent of Total
Residential	9,599.8	1.7%
Single family residential	9,411.0	1.7%
Two family residential	85.3	0.0%
Multi family residential	33.7	0.0%
Mobile home parks	69.8	0.0%
Commercial	648.3	0.1%
Industrial and Quarries	2,887.9	0.5%
Public and quasi public	1,607.5	0.3%
Transportation	19,007.7	3.4%
Parks and Recreation	4,661.2	0.8%
Communication and utilities	118.7	0.0%
Surface water	19,641.3	3.5%
Agriculture and other resource land	501,161.4	89.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>559,333.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department.

The most prominent land use in the County in 2004 (89.6 percent) was “agriculture and other resource lands”. This land use classification includes all agricultural land, as well as wetlands and other open space areas. Surface water (3.5 percent), transportation (3.4 percent), residential development (1.7 percent), parks and recreation (0.8 percent), and industrial uses (.5 percent) comprise the remaining types of land uses in the County in 2004. In addition to Table 3-1, an existing land use map was developed to analyze the current development patterns in the county (see Comprehensive Plan Map 8-1).

In addition to county data, the USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service publishes the Census of Agriculture. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture for Wisconsin, in 2007 there were 412,949 acres of land in farms (see Table 4-4). Using this figure, approximately 73 percent of the county had land in farms in 2007. Looking back to the prior Census of Agriculture in 2002, there were 404,054 acres of land in farms. From 2002 to 2007 there was an increase of 8,895 acres of land in farms, which



represents a 2.2 percent increase. Contradictory to identified land use trends, the USDA report states there was an increase of land in farms rather than a decrease of land in farms. The increase of land in farms may be due to the Census of Agriculture’s definition of a farm, which is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. This definition of a farm would allow for more land to be considered a farm that traditionally may not be considered a farmland. Also, the increase of land in farms may be due to the increase in hobby farms in the county and the conversion of open space land to farm land.

### 3.2 Land, Soil and Water Resources

This section will provide a general assessment of the natural resources (land, soil and water) of Dodge County. This is an important activity since agricultural activities and natural resources are often intertwined. The land use patterns in Dodge County and its communities are directly linked to the natural and agricultural resources, therefore, these resources need to be considered before making any decisions concerning the future of the county. Development must be carefully adjusted to coincide with the ability of the natural and agricultural resource base to support the various forms of urban and rural development. This balance must be maintained to prevent the deterioration of that underlying and sustaining base, because these resources make each community unique. As the population continues to grow, land consumption continues to expand. Communities need to take on the additional role of stewards and protectors of these resources.

Our natural resources generally do not increase to meet the increasing demand. Additionally, unplanned or poorly planned development patterns in the last several decades are often the result of a demand for “healthy country living”, which is transforming our rural landscapes. This rural migration along with the expansion of the urban fringe, forces local governments to consider expanding their services to meet the demands – sometimes costing more than will be recovered in new tax base revenues.

## **Land**

### **Geology**

The County is underlain with mostly sedimentary rock including dolomite, sandstone and shale formations. The eastern side of the County is dominated by Niagara dolomite with the Niagara Escarpment, also known as the Ledge, forming a predominant outcropping east of the Horicon Marsh. The escarpment separates the Niagara formation from the western Galena-Platteville dolomite bedrock formation. This dolomite formation covers the majority of the County and slopes gradually from west to east. In the western and southern portions of Dodge County, drumlins are prevalent. These long, narrow hills are oriented in a northeast to southwest direction and greatly influence the drainage patterns of this area.

During the last Ice Age, which ended about 10,000 years ago, a massive ice sheet of the Wisconsin glaciations covered the entire County. The advance and retreat of this ice mass shaped the County’s topography. The glacial debris was deposited as ground moraine and other glacial formations that vary in thickness throughout the County from 100 to 300 feet in depth. There are approximately 400 feet of elevation change with the highest parts reaching 1200 feet above sea level in the northeast to 800 feet above sea level in the southwestern portions of the County. The two most prominent topographic features in the County include the very flat, marsh areas, such as the Horicon Marsh, and the Niagara Escarpment, which rises 190 feet in some areas.

### **Topography**

The landscape in Dodge County is primarily agricultural and open space. As shown in Table 3-1, over 500,000 acres are used in agricultural operations or other resource land, which is approximately 89.6 percent of the county’s land area. Other large land use activities in Dodge County include: residential areas (1.7 percent of the land area), transportation network (3.4 percent of the land area) and surface water (3.5 percent of the land area). The transportation network and surface water areas are fairly well defined and will not change much over time, however, the residential areas in the county are different. Residential acreage increases every year, often occurring on agricultural or other resource land.

Included in the other resource land category is woodlands. Dodge County has few large expansive woodlands. There is approximately 18,996 acres of woodland in Dodge County; much of this is small acreage woodlots scattered throughout the county. There is limited economic potential from the remaining woodlands since they tend to be small and widely scattered. Many contain residential development or are located in public parks and recreation areas. Existing land use controls offer no protection from over harvesting and indiscriminate cutting practices.

## Soil

Dodge County soils are products of the deposits left after the glacier receded. These deposits consisted of sand, gravel, large rocks, clay, limestone fragments, and igneous and metamorphic rocks. The deposits have prompted mineral and sand and gravel extraction throughout the country. The Niagara escarpment is a source of commercial grade stone and crushed lime. Iron deposits were also once mined on the escarpment. These resources provide an important economic resource to Dodge County.

The majority of the soils in the County are upland silt loam. High agricultural production is generally found in areas with these soils. The soils in Dodge County are classified by the United States Department of Agriculture to represent different level of agricultural use. Class I, II or III soils are all considered good soils for agricultural production. This classification system is based on criteria of production potential; soil conditions and other basic production related criteria. Dodge County has a wide expanse of good agricultural soils. In general, areas of the County that are not classified as Class I, II or III soils include the water bodies and wetland areas, areas of steep slopes, and the escarpment.

### Prime Agricultural Soils

The soils in Dodge County are classified by the United States Department of Agriculture to represent different levels of agricultural use. Class I, II, and the best Class III soils are all considered good soils for agricultural production. This classification system is based on criteria of production potential, soil conditions and other basic production related criteria. Dodge County has a wide expanse of good agricultural soils. In general, areas of the county that are not classified as Class I, II, or the best Class III soils include the water bodies and wetland areas, areas of steep slope, and the escarpment areas of the county (see Comprehensive Plan Map 5-1). Table 3-2 details the acreage of prime soils found in the towns of Dodge County.



**Table 3-2**  
**Prime Agricultural Soils, Dodge County Towns**

	Acres	% of Total
T. Ashippun	17,556.1	3.8%
T. Beaver Dam	19,173.3	4.1%
T. Burnett	18,399.4	3.9%
T. Calamus	19,975.5	4.3%
T. Chester	16,177.7	3.5%
T. Clyman	20,497.2	4.4%
T. Elba	20,719.5	4.4%
T. Emmet	18,274.7	3.9%
T. Fox Lake	18,657.2	4.0%
T. Herman	19,542.8	4.2%
T. Hubbard	14,971.0	3.2%
T. Hustisford	18,118.6	3.9%
T. Lebanon	19,690.8	4.2%
T. Leroy	18,756.2	4.0%
T. Lomira	19,985.4	4.3%
T. Lowell	30,475.9	6.5%
T. Oak Grove	20,224.2	4.3%
T. Portland	19,930.9	4.3%
T. Rubicon	17,259.6	3.7%
T. Shields	14,796.2	3.2%
T. Theresa	19,031.1	4.1%
T. Trenton	31,255.7	6.7%
T. Westford	18,153.3	3.9%
T. Williamstown	14,701.8	3.2%
Total	466,324.2	100.0%

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department.

## **Surface Water Features**

Over 15,000 acres of surface water cover parts of Dodge County. 31 lakes and 50 rivers and streams make up this total. 18 of the 31 lakes have dams that create two-thirds of the surface water in the County. The glacial history of the land left the County with a poorly developed drainage system, shallow depressions for the lakes, and numerous wetland areas. As a result, there are few lakes in the County and the existing lakes are very shallow in depth averaging only about seven feet. The major water features in the County are highlighted below and illustrated on Comprehensive Plan Map 5-6.

## **Lakes**

The glacial history of Dodge County left a poorly developed drainage system, shallow depressions for lakes, and numerous wetland areas. As a result, there are very few lakes in the



county and the existing lakes are very shallow in depth, averaging only about seven feet. The major lakes in the county are highlighted below.

### Beaver Dam Lake

Beaver Dam Lake is the largest lake in Dodge County and the 16<sup>th</sup> largest in Wisconsin. It was formed in 1842 when a 10 foot dam was constructed on the Beaver Dam River to provide water power. The City of Beaver Dam is located on the southeast shore. The lake experienced problems when carp were introduced at the turn of the century. None of the procedures used to reduce the carp population have been entirely successful. Today the lake experiences problems of pollution due to agricultural and urban runoff including industrial cooling water discharge and storm water discharge from the City of Beaver Dam. The shallow depth and resulting turbidity contribute to problems of rough fish, winter fish kills, and shoreline erosion. The fishery consists primarily of buffalo fish, crappie, bullheads, walleye, northern pike, and carp. Despite its problems, the lake is valuable for boating and has many boat launching and parking facilities. Area parks provide shore fishing and picnic areas. Additionally, the lake provides hunting opportunities for waterfowl during the fall migration. Winter uses include snowmobiling, ice fishing, and ice skating. However, open water is a hazard in some locations due to aerators.

### Sinissippi Lake

Sinissippi Lake was formed by a 12 foot dam, originally erected in 1845, which flooded a marshy valley of the Rock River. Siltation from the watershed, coupled with deposition from deteriorating marshes, contributes to the shallowness of the lake. The fishery consists mainly of carp, bullheads, and northern pike. A large number of waterfowl visit the lake in the spring. Sinissippi Lake experiences problems of algae blooms during the summer and fish kills in winter.

The Lake Sinissippi Improvement District (LSID) has been formed to help improve and protect the lake and its watershed. LSID is a special unit of government. All residents with deeded access or lake frontage between the Village of Hustisford and County Highway S are included within the LSID boundary.

### Fox Lake

Fox Lake was originally a smaller natural lake formed by glacial activity. In 1845 it was greatly increased in size and depth by construction of an 11 foot dam on Mill Creek. The City of Fox Lake is located on the southeast shore of the lake where city parkland with a boat landing provides recreational access. A town park with a boat landing provides access on the north side of the lake. Because Fox Lake is deeper, it is experiencing less pollution than Beaver Dam or Sinissippi Lakes. Fox Lake is heavily used for boating, water skiing, and fishing. Despite stocking and rough fish removal projects, the original game fish population is being reduced by over abundant carp populations. Fox Lake drains toward Beaver Dam Lake via Mill Creek. The protection of Fox Lake is assisted by the Fox Lake Inland Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District.

### Neosho Millpond

The millpond is a shallow impoundment of the Rubicon River created by an 11 foot high dam at Neosho. The fishery is of moderate quality with turbid water and lack of aquatic vegetation. The millpond is largely undeveloped with pasture lands and steep hill sides in the adjacent rural areas. Housing developments are primarily located within the Village of Neosho. The millpond

is best suited for fishing, small boats, and hunting. A public boat landing and swimming beach are some of the facilities available in adjacent Neosho Park.

### Lake Emily

Lake Emily is a shallow, fertile lake located in the extreme northwest corner of Dodge County. The lake is principally fed by seepage, springs and runoff. A four-foot dam assists in maintaining the water levels. The lake provides a quality fishery primarily of perch, bluegills, largemouth bass, and northern pike and receives heavy usage year round. Much of the lakeshore is developed with cottages and homes, except for the west side which is still undeveloped. A town-owned boat landing provides good fishing and boating access on the southern end of the lake.

### Lost Lake

Lost Lake is located in west-central Dodge County. The lake is mainly seepage fed and drains to Beaver Dam Lake. The lake is popular for fishing and hunting although freeze out conditions limit the fishery. Much of the shoreline consists of marshy areas, thus development is limited. Boat ramps exist on the north and south sides of the lake as extensions of the town roads.

In addition to the six lakes described above, Dodge County has 25 other lakes, which are relatively small and shallow. These lakes generally provide recreational opportunities, including hunting and fishing, and are often important as waterfowl habitat.

## **Rivers and Streams**

A total of 387 miles of streams and rivers can be found in Dodge County. The most prominent are the Rock, Beaver Dam, and Crawfish Rivers. Numerous intermittent streams and creeks are scattered throughout Dodge County. Major river and stream features are shown on Comprehensive Plan Map 5-6 and highlighted below.

### Rock River

The Rock River drains Dodge County toward the south, eventually emptying into the Mississippi River. It is located in the eastern half of the county and is generally oriented north-south. The main stem of the Rock River begins in the Horicon Marsh where the east, south, and north branches converge. The east branch begins around Allenton in Washington County and flows in a northwesterly direction through Theresa and Mayville before it reaches the Horicon Marsh. The south branch begins west of Waupun and flows through Waupun while the west branch begins near Brandon in Fond du Lac County, where it flows east a distance before heading south to the Horicon Marsh. Upon exiting the Horicon Marsh, the Rock River flows through the City of Horicon and then into Lake Sinissippi, which was created by a dam in the Village of Hustisford. As it leaves the Village of Hustisford, the Rock River begins a long meandering journey through miles of the flat rural country-side of the Towns of Hustisford and Lebanon and portions of northeast Jefferson County before it flows north back into Dodge County at the City of Watertown. The fall of the river from the upper federal dam in the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge to the upper Watertown dam is just 34 feet over 58 miles. It meanders a bit through Watertown as it once again heads south flowing through such cities as Fort Atkinson, Janesville, Beloit, and Rockford, Illinois before reaching its ultimate destination – the Mississippi River. A number of boat landings and park facilities can be found along the Rock, but primarily in and around the cities, villages, and Lake Sinissippi.

### Crawfish River

The Crawfish River is a major tributary of the Rock River, primarily draining the western half of Dodge County. The river flows from Columbia County into Dodge County near the City of Columbus and meanders in an erratic fashion in an easterly and southeasterly direction. The river is impounded at Danville creating a millpond, where an historic mill remains. Astico County Park lies adjacent to the river and millpond providing canoeing and fishing access. After merging with the Beaver Dam River in the Mud Lake Wildlife area in southwestern Dodge County, the Crawfish River continues southward where it empties into the Rock River in the City of Jefferson.

### Beaver Dam River

The Beaver Dam River is the major river draining the northwestern portion of Dodge County. From its start at Beaver Dam Lake, it flows southward 31 miles before flowing into the Crawfish River at Mud Lake. Fishing and canoeing opportunities are possible, especially during periods of high flow. A dam at Lowell with some adjacent parkland provide the primary access to the river. According to the Department of Natural Resources, the river is severely affected by polluted runoff from barn yards and soil erosion, leading to degraded water quality and higher populations of rough fish. Designating parkland and environmentally sensitive lands in the City of Beaver Dam along the river, in conjunction with other efforts, could better protect the river and provide recreational access to it.

### Horicon Natural Wildlife Refuge and Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area

These two protected wildlife areas, collectively known as the Horicon Marsh, make up the largest freshwater cattail marsh in the United States. This marsh has been designated as “A Wetland of International Importance” by the Ramsar Convention and accepted as a “Globally Important Bird Area” by the American Bird Conservancy. The Green Bay Lobe of the Wisconsin glacier formed the Horicon Marsh during the last Ice Age more than 10,000 years ago. The glacier left behind a shallow, 50-square mile lake as it receded. Over time this lake was transformed into a marsh due to erosion of the moraine damming the outlet from the lake and the deposit of silt and organic materials that reduced the depth of the basin. Due to its geological significance, Horicon Marsh has been included as a unit of the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve in cooperation with the National Park Service. The northern two-thirds of the marsh is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the southern one-third is under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The marsh is fed primarily by the east and west branches of the Rock River. The marsh was the center of much Native American activity. Every major prehistoric Indian culture known to the upper Midwest has utilized or inhabited the Horicon Marsh over the past 12,000 years. Many effigy mounds are found surrounding the marsh which are the remnants of the Mound Building Culture which inhabited the marsh from 700 A.D. to 1200 A.D. The first Europeans settled where the City of Horicon is today.

After many years of damming, ditching and draining in an attempt to alter the marsh, the Wisconsin Legislature passed the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Refuge Bill in 1927 for the restoration of the Marsh including land acquisition and dam construction to re-flood this drained wetland. Today, the Horicon Marsh covers about 32,000 acres, making it the largest freshwater marsh in

the upper Midwest. Over the years, a total of 268 species of birds have been sighted on this marsh. It is estimated that more than 400,000 visitors are attracted to this marsh each year.

The Wisconsin DNR notes that several potentially severe problems continue to threaten the marsh's resources and ecological integrity. The greatest impacts to Horicon Marsh come from the surrounding uplands where intensive agriculture and development have led to excess sedimentation and non-point source pollution. Regardless of these management issues and concerns, the Horicon Marsh is, perhaps, the most important natural resource in Dodge County.

### **Watersheds and Drainage**

A watershed is an area of land from which water drains to a common surface water feature, such as a stream, lake, or wetland. In Wisconsin, watersheds vary in scale from major river systems to small creek drainage areas, and typically range in size from 100 to 300 square miles. River basins can contain several watersheds. There are 32 river basins in Wisconsin which range in size from 500 to over 5,000 square miles. In order to protect and improve the state's water resources, the WDNR prepares water quality management plans for each river basin in the state. These plans identify sources of water quality problems and identify management objectives for the WDNR, local communities, counties, and other agencies.



Almost all of the land in Dodge County is located in the Upper Rock River Basin. This basin includes 14 surface watersheds (see Comprehensive Plan Map 5-6). The Upper Rock River Basin encompasses about 1,890 square miles and the entire Rock River Basin covers 3,700 square miles. Table 3-3 displays the watersheds of Dodge County and the square miles found within each watershed.

**Table 3-3**  
**Dodge County Watersheds**

Watershed	Square Miles	% of Total
Ashippun River	35.0	3.9%
Beaver Dam River	243.2	27.2%
Calamus Creek	29.3	3.3%
East and West Branches Milwaukee River	4.2	0.5%
East Branch Rock River	119.3	13.4%
Lower Crawfish River	72.8	8.2%
Lower Grand River	3.3	0.4%
Maunsha River	4.0	0.4%
Middle Rock River	5.8	0.6%
Oconomowoc River	0.6	0.1%
Rubicon River	44.9	5.0%
Sinissippi Lake	177.0	19.8%
Upper Crawfish River	12.5	1.4%
Upper Rock River	140.9	15.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>892.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department

### Groundwater

The source of all groundwater is precipitation, which percolates down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone called an aquifer, where it is then contained. Water in a aquifer travels from its source to a discharge point such as a well, wetland, spring, or lake. During periods of increased precipitation or thaw, this vast resource is replenished with water moving by gravity through permeable soils which is called a water table system. In some instances, groundwater moves because of pressure created by a confining layer of impervious rock which is called an artesian system. The availability of groundwater within the county varies locally and should be investigated before any development occurs.

Most groundwater contamination is related to poorly sited land uses. For example, agricultural manure, petroleum, and salt storage in areas of high groundwater tables or fractured bedrock are all potential sources of groundwater pollution. Contamination of groundwater reserves can also result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal (septic effluent), runoff from livestock yards and urban areas, improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers, excessive lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from mining operations. Runoff from leaking petroleum storage tanks and spills can also add organic and chemical contaminants in locations where the water table is near the surface. Once groundwater contamination has occurred, successful remediation is expensive and can take years, or may never occur, depending upon the pollutant. Therefore, when considering specific land uses for an area, it is vital to consider the physical characteristics of the area and the relationships between the land and the proposed/actual use in order to ensure that groundwater contamination does not occur.

Within Dodge County there are areas that have natural occurring and human influenced well contamination. According to studies performed by University of Wisconsin-Extension offices, there are multiple types of contamination in Dodge County. One major contamination is nitrates, which are mainly human influenced and a major concern in parts of Dodge County. Currently, the Town of Lomira and areas north of the City of Beaver Dam have higher than average nitrate levels. Also, the land north of the City of Beaver Dam has noticeably higher chloride levels. These two types of contamination may be linked to agricultural practices, shallow bedrock, or uncontrolled spreading of contaminants. Another contamination that raises concern is the higher number of positive bacteria samples in the area. The Town of Fox Lake has a higher number of bacteria samples than any other town in Dodge County. Almost all of the high bacteria samples were found around Fox Lake. Some of these contaminations can be linked to unique bedrock or groundwater features, or current or past land use practices in the area. To help control future well contaminations, individual communities should conduct testing to identify contaminated areas and reduce development in those areas.

### Wetlands

The hydrology of soils, or the amount of water saturation present, largely determines how the soil develops and the types of plant and animal communities living in and on the soil. Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions that favor the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promotes the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils. Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, fens, or bogs. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Wetlands can make lakes, rivers, and streams cleaner, and drinking water safer. Wetlands also provide valuable habitat for fish, plants, and animals. In addition, some wetlands can also replenish groundwater supplies. Groundwater discharge from wetlands is common and can be important in maintaining stream flows, especially during dry months.

Local, state, and federal regulations place limitations on the development and use of wetlands and shorelands. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has inventory maps for each community that identifies wetlands two acres and larger. The wetland inventory map should be consulted whenever development proposals are reviewed in order to identify wetlands and to ensure their protection from development. An extensive series of wetlands is found throughout Dodge County. There is approximately 109,000 acres of wetland in the county. See Comprehensive Plan Map 5-6 for the wetland areas in Dodge County.

### 3.3 Agricultural Infrastructure

In order to maintain a viable agricultural community, there must be a balanced agricultural infrastructure. Various agricultural agencies and service providers form the agricultural infrastructure network; these businesses help keep agricultural operations running. These agencies provide many activities that contribute to the agricultural infrastructure, such as processing, storage, transportation, and supply facilities. Without these agencies providing the necessary facilities and services, it would be hard for agricultural operations to function. The table below is a list of key agricultural infrastructure activities, agricultural agencies, and service providers in Dodge County. This list may not be comprehensive, but is a reference to the known agricultural agencies and service providers.

Activity	Agricultural Agency/Service Provider
AI Industry	East Central Select Sires, Alta Genetics
Cheese Factories	Kraft Foods, USA, Widmer's Cheese Cellars, Inc, Old Fashion Food, Crave Bros Farmstead Cheese, Grande Cheese, Saputo
Co-ops	United Coop, Universal Coop, IMC Agribusiness
Dairy Equipment and Supplies	Gehring Sales and Service, Central Ag Supply, K & K Dairy Supply, Grebel's Pump Service
Dairy Nutrition Consultants	Purina, Land O'Lakes, Cenex, United Coop, Vita Plus, ANC Plus 20+ private consultants in and around Dodge County
Farm Supply Businesses	Farm & Fleet, Fleet Farm, Animart
Feed Mills/Feed Storage	United Coop (Beaver Dam and Iron Ridge), Universal Coop, IMC Agribusiness, Waupun Feed & Seed Company, Jacobson Farmers Supply Inc.
Fertilizer Distributors	United Coop, Waupun Seed & Feed, Jacobson's Farm Supply
Fuel	United Coop, Cole Oil Company, Condon Oil, Corry Oil, Farmers Elevator, Lomira Petroleum Products, Milton Propane
Implements/Equipment Dealerships	Ballweg Implement, Farmers Implement, Gehring Sales and Service, Jacobson's, Knowles Produce & Trading, Persha, Schraufnagel, Waupun Equipment, Dirksen Equipment, Huizenga Farm Service, Hulls 151 Implement, Kondex Corporation
Large Animal Vet Practices	Beaver Dam Vet Clinic, Mayville Animal Clinic, Columbus Country Side, Gaska Dairy Health Services, Randolph Vet Clinic, Town & Country Vet Clinic, Waterloo Vet Clinic
Livestock Handling Facilities / Transportation	Hanefeld Brothers, Milwaukee Stockyards, NFO Reload Station
Meat Processors	Pernant Haase, Detjens Country Cutting, Country Meat Cutters, Leroy Meats, Cedar Road Meats.
Seed Distributors	Jungs, Waupun Seed & Feed, Midwest Seed Genetics, United Coop, Jacobson's Farm Supply
Soil Scientists/Agronomists:	30 agencies in and around Dodge County
Tractor Dealerships/Service Shops	D& D Tractor Sales, Hupfs Repair and Ballweg Implement, Mid-State Power & Equipment - Watertown and Columbus
Vegetable Processors	Del Monte, Allen Foods, Seneca Foods, Lakeside Foods, Hartung Brothers
Miscellaneous Infrastructure Activities	Milk testing , hoof trimmers, manure haulers, custom planting, harvest and silo packing/bagging, lenders, agricultural tire services, excavating/tiling services

### 3.4 Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Development Land Use Issues

There are various natural and human activities affecting the rural areas of Dodge County. Many of these activities are responsible for emerging land use trends in Dodge County. These emerging land use trends and the changing demographics can have an affect on the county's farmland preservation and agricultural development activities. Below is a list of land use issues affecting rural land in Dodge County:

- ◆ Nonfarm residential development in rural areas will continue to increase in order to accommodate Dodge County's increasing population, which will further place demands on county land resources.
- ◆ Citizens will continue to seek housing in Dodge County while commuting to employment centers in Madison, Milwaukee, and the Fox Valley region.
- ◆ Household numbers will continue to increase as the population increases and the number of persons per household will continue to decrease requiring more housing units and more land to accommodate the county's growing population.
- ◆ Land values will increase as the pressure to convert open space/farmland to other nonagricultural land uses will increase.
- ◆ Interest in land preservation programs will fluctuate by landowner, as some seek to maximize land sale profits by developing land, while others will seek to preserve as much land as possible.
- ◆ Interest in cash cropping and specialty farming will increase, thereby increasing demand for more agricultural land.
- ◆ Interest in "value-added" businesses to complement small dairy and general farming operations will increase.



Combined, all these land use activities have an affect on farmland preservation and agricultural development in Dodge County. Of all these land use issues, nonfarm residential development in rural areas is the largest issue. Nonfarm residential development pressure is making farmland preservation more difficult and is making more obstacles for agricultural development. Nonfarm development is and will continue to be a key land use issue in rural areas. Community leaders and officials must develop tools to deal with development pressures, demographic changes and land preservation in order to balance growth and farmland preservation.



## 4.0 AGRICULTURAL TRENDS

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Public opinion surveys conducted by the American Farmland Trust, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the American Farm Bureau, Wisconsin counties, and other local units of government show that Wisconsin citizens place a high value on the presence of agriculture and agricultural lands. Agriculture has provided a rich heritage that many Dodge County citizens are proud of. Barns, cows, fields, and tractors paint the scene that so many define as Wisconsin's rural character. In order to continue Dodge County's agricultural heritage, community officials must address issues facing agricultural operations. This chapter will review current agricultural trends in Dodge County.

### 4.1 Agricultural Land Use

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue publishes the annual statement of assessments. This report is a good method to track land use trends in the county. This report shows the assessed acreage for real estate classes for each community and agricultural land is one of the classes. Up to date assessed acreage reports further define the amount of existing agricultural land in individual communities and Dodge County. These reports help community officials compare differences in real estate classes from year to year; this provides a tool to measure increases and decreases in certain real estate classes.



According to the statement of assessments for Dodge County, the county has 353,136 acres of agricultural land in 2009. Compared to 2005, agricultural land in Dodge County has decreased. From 2005 to 2009, Dodge County lost approximately 3,000 acres of agricultural land. The loss of 3,000 acres equals a 0.84 percent drop in agricultural land from 2005.

From 2005 to 2009, six Towns have lost over 200 acres of land classified as agricultural; Towns of Ashippun (215 acres), Beaver Dam (241 acres), Calamus (268 acres), Lomira (267 acres), Oak Grove (322 acres), Westford (530 acres). During that time period, all but three Towns lost agricultural acres. The Towns of Fox Lake, Leroy and Rubicon gained agricultural land. This could have been due to land converted to agriculture from the undeveloped or other real estate classes.

Due to annexations of adjacent agricultural land, villages gained 224 acres of agricultural land from 2005 to 2009. Alternatively, cities lost 167 acres of agricultural land from 2005 to 2009. This may have been due to cities developing vacant agricultural land.

The following page contains Table 4-1, which shows the assessed acreages of agricultural land for Dodge County communities in 2005 and 2009.

**Table 4-1**  
**Acres of Agricultural Land by Community and Dodge County, 2005-2009**

Community		Acres		5 Year Change	
		2005	2009	Number Change	Percent Change
Towns	T. Ashippun	13,384	13,169	-215	-1.61%
	T. Beaver Dam	13,191	12,950	-241	-1.83%
	T. Burnett	11,689	11,632	-57	-0.49%
	T. Calamus	15,957	15,689	-268	-1.68%
	T. Chester	8,228	8,155	-73	-0.89%
	T. Clyman	15,539	15,457	-82	-0.53%
	T. Elba	17,101	16,982	-119	-0.70%
	T. Emmet	15,666	15,502	-164	-1.05%
	T. Fox Lake	12,254	12,368	114	0.93%
	T. Herman	17,749	17,646	-103	-0.58%
	T. Hubbard	11,422	11,395	-27	-0.24%
	T. Hustisford	12,959	12,772	-187	-1.44%
	T. Lebanon	13,953	13,882	-71	-0.51%
	T. LeRoy	14,090	14,135	45	0.32%
	T. Lomira	17,856	17,589	-267	-1.50%
	T. Lowell	21,868	21,720	-148	-0.68%
	T. Oak Grove	15,587	15,265	-322	-2.07%
	T. Portland	15,683	15,652	-31	-0.20%
	T. Rubicon	14,716	14,739	23	0.16%
	T. Shields	9,276	9,222	-54	-0.58%
T. Theresa	14,813	14,755	-58	-0.39%	
T. Trenton	27,051	26,979	-72	-0.27%	
T. Westford	14,924	14,394	-530	-3.55%	
T. Williamstown	8,269	8,111	-158	-1.91%	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>353,225</b>	<b>350,160</b>	<b>-3,065</b>	<b>-0.87%</b>
Villages	V. Brownsville	0	0	0	0.00%
	V. Clyman	56	91	35	62.50%
	V. Hustisford	34	126	92	270.59%
	V. Iron Ridge	139	110	-29	-20.86%
	V. Kekoskee	57	57	0	0.00%
	V. Lomira	269	379	110	40.89%
	V. Lowell	258	274	16	6.20%
	V. Neosho	96	92	-4	-4.17%
	V. Randolph	220	200	-20	-9.09%
	V. Reeseville	108	141	33	30.56%
V. Theresa	136	127	-9	-6.62%	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>1,373</b>	<b>1,597</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>16.31%</b>
Cities	C. Beaver Dam	661	303	-358	-54.16%
	C. Fox Lake	255	229	-26	-10.20%
	C. Horicon	94	92	-2	-2.13%
	C. Juneau	220	218	-2	-0.91%
	C. Mayville	95	158	63	66.32%
	C. Watertown	209	330	121	57.89%
C. Waupun	12	49	37	308.33%	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>1,546</b>	<b>1,379</b>	<b>-167</b>	<b>-10.80%</b>
<b>Dodge County Total</b>		<b>356,144</b>	<b>353,136</b>	<b>-3,008</b>	<b>-0.84%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

## 4.2 Agricultural Production

Dodge County typically ranks in the top 10 counties (annually) for agricultural products produced. The consistent high ranking is due to the large agricultural land base and county citizens desire to remain a farming community. Additionally, agricultural products produced in Dodge County have a large economic impact in the county.

Agricultural production can be measured in various ways. The following tables in this section provide different methods to review the production in Dodge County. Table 4-2 shows the livestock and crops produced in Dodge County over a recent five year period.

**Table 4-2**  
**Agricultural Production, Dodge County, 2004-2008**

Product	Unit of Measure	2004	2008	Number	Percent
Livestock:					
Cattle & Calves	Number (000)	107	106.5	(500)	(0.4)%
Hogs & Pigs	Number (000)	32	NA	-	-
Milk Cows	Number (000)	42.5	41.5	(1,000)	(2.3)%
Milk	Pounds	743,750	817,550	73,800	9.9%
Milk Cow Herds	Number of Herds	463	388	(75)	(16.1)%
Crops:					
Corn for Grain	Bushels	12,760	15,410	2,650	20.7%
Corn for Silage	Tons	396	672	276	69.6%
Oats	Bushels	281	291	10	3.5%
Winter Wheat	Bushels	671	1,239*	568	84.6%
Soybeans	Bushels	1,960	2,200	240	12.2%
Forage	Tons	245.7	232.9	(12.8)	(5.2)%

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics

\* All Wheat Produced

According to the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics, livestock numbers have dipped slightly. The number of milk cows has dropped 2.3 percent, however the pounds of milk has increased 9.9 percent. This increase in milk production may be due to advances in milk cow nutrition and herd management. Almost all the major crops have increased from 2004 to 2008, except for forage. The reduction in forage crops may be due to the decrease in small dairy operations, as those farms now use all their land for corn, soybeans or winter wheat. Overall, these figures show the changes in the county's agricultural community, which is a decreasing number of small dairy operations and the rise in land used for cash crops.

Though the small dairy operations in Dodge County are decreasing, dairy farming as a whole is still strong in the county. This is evident since Dodge County consistently ranks in the top 10 counties for milk production. The number of dairy cows and milk produced is a good indicator of agricultural production. Table 4-3 compares figures from 2004 to 2008.

**Table 4-3**  
**Number of Dairy Cows and Milk Production, 2004-2008, Dodge County, Wisconsin**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Number of cows	42,500	41,500	(1,000)	(2.3)%
Milk per cow (pounds)	17,500	19,700	2,200	12.5%
Total milk produced (1,000 pounds)	743,750	817,550	73,800	9.9%

Source: Wisconsin Agriculture Statistics Report

The milk produced per cow and total amount of milk produced in Dodge County has increased by 12.5 percent and 9.9 percent, respectively. However, there are decreases in the number of cows in the county (2.3 percent) and the number of milk cow herds (16.1 percent - Table 4-1). Most likely the reason for the decrease in the number of milk cows and milk cow herds are due to a decrease in small family farms. The slight increase in large farm facilities contributes to the increases in milk per cow and total milk production.

#### 4.3 Agricultural Enterprises

One element in USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service’s Census of Agriculture is farm statistics, which can include the number of farms in a county, average size of farms and total land in farms. The Census of Agriculture determined the number of farms in Dodge County has increased from 1,968 in 2002 to 1,979 in 2007 (Table 4-4). This represents a 0.5 percent increase in the number of farms in the county. This increase is slightly lower than the state’s percentage, as the state had an increase of 1.7 percent. However, the increase in farms over that five year period is slightly misleading, since hobby farms could be considered farms. This is due to the Census of Agriculture’s definition of a farm, since the definition includes “any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year”. This definition could include hobby farms, since the \$1,000 threshold to be considered a farm is not very high. Therefore, it may result in more hobby farms listing themselves as farms, in addition to traditional farm operations.

**Table 4-4**  
**Farm Statistics, Dodge County, 2002-2007**

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>Percent Change From 2002-2007</b>
<b>Dodge County</b>			
Number of Farms	1,968	1,979	0.5%
Average Size of Farms (acres)	205	209	1.9%
Total Land in Farms (acres)	404,054	412,949	2.2%
<b>Wisconsin</b>			
Number of Farms	77,131	78,463	1.7%
Average Size of Farms (acres)	204	194	(4.9%)
Total Land in Farms (acres)	15.7 Million	15.1 Million	(3.8%)

Source: USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service

Additionally, the average size of farms increased from 2002 to 2007. In 2002, the average size of farms in Dodge County was 205 acres, while the average size of a farm in 2007 was 209. This

is an increase of 1.9 percent from 2002 to 2007. This figure supports the trend of larger farm operations increasing in Dodge County. Though Dodge County had an increase in the average size of farms, the state's average size of farms decreased 4.9 percent. This decrease may indicate that other parts of the state are seeing more farmland fragmentation, leading to smaller farmland parcels.



Also, the USDA's report shows an increase in total land in farms from 2002 to 2007 in Dodge County. Land in farms has increased by 8,895 acres. This represents a 2.2 percent increase in the land in farms. This is another category that Dodge County is different than the state, as the state had a 3.8 percent decrease in total land in farms. Dodge County's increase of land in farms may be due to the Census of Agriculture's definition of a farm, the increase in hobby farms in the rural areas and the conversion of

open space land to farm land. Interestingly, the USDA's report of land in farms contradicts the Wisconsin Department of Revenue's land assessment report (Table 4-1), which shows a decrease in agricultural land. This difference in data results is most likely due to the difference in the USDA's definition of a farm and assessors determination of agricultural land. The USDA's definition of a farm allows for more land to be considered a farm than what traditionally has been considered agricultural land. Therefore, land considered in a farm for the USDA, may not meet an assessor's definition of agricultural land. This will result in the Department of Revenue land assessment report to show less land in agriculture than the USDA's report.

Table 4-5 displays the number of farms and the average size of farms for all counties that are adjacent to Dodge County. This table shows how Dodge County compares to adjacent counties.

**Table 4-5**  
**Number of Farms and Average Size, Dodge and Surrounding Counties, 2002-2007**

County	Number of Farms		Change	
	2002	2007	Number	Percent
<b>Dodge</b>	<b>1,968</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.56%</b>
Columbia	1,526	1,585	59	3.87%
Dane	2,887	3,331	444	15.38%
Fond du Lac	1,634	1,643	9	0.55%
Green Lake	670	723	53	7.91%
Jefferson	1,421	1,434	13	0.91%
Washington	844	831	-13	-1.54%
Waukesha	762	675	-87	-11.42%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>77,131</b>	<b>78,463</b>	<b>1,332</b>	<b>1.73%</b>
County	Average Size of Farms		Change	
	2002	2007	Number	Percent
<b>Dodge</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.95%</b>
Columbia	228	199	-29	-12.72%
Dane	179	161	-18	-10.06%
Fond du Lac	211	204	-7	-3.32%
Green Lake	221	197	-24	-10.86%
Jefferson	174	170	-4	-2.30%
Washington	154	156	2	1.30%
Waukesha	129	128	-1	-0.78%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>-4.90%</b>

Source: USDA – National Agricultural Statistics Service

Dodge County had the second highest number of farms in the region in 2007; Dane County has the most farms. The increase in the number of farms from 2002 to 2007 was common among six of the eight counties. Also, Dodge County had the fifth largest increase in the number of farms. Dodge County had the largest average size of a farm (209 acres) and the largest increase in average farm size from 2002 to 2007.

#### 4.4 Conversion of Agricultural Lands to Other Uses

Dodge County is largely a rural agricultural community. However, there is a growing pressure to convert agricultural land to other nonagricultural uses, especially nonfarm residential development. This form of development pressure is felt throughout Dodge County, although some towns are getting more pressure than others. There are various methods that can be used to show town development pressure, one method is to track the number of land divisions. Since all land divisions require Dodge County approval, the number of land division applications by town is a good indicator of the growth pressure in Dodge County. Table 4-6 displays the number of land division applications submitted to Dodge County in 2009.

**Table 4-6**  
**Land Divisions in Dodge County for 2009**

<b>Town</b>	<b>Land Division Requests</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Land Division Requests</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Land Division Requests</b>
Ashippun	3	Fox Lake	7	Oak Grove	4
Beaver Dam	5	Herman	5	Portland	3
Burnett	2	Hubbard	4	Rubicon	4
Calamus	1	Hustisford	2	Shields	1
Chester	4	Lebanon	5	Theresa	3
Clyman	3	Leroy	2	Trenton	3
Elba	3	Lomira	3	Westford	1
Emmet	2	Lowell	7	Williamstown	1
<b>Approved Land Division Applications in 2009 = 78</b>					

Source: Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department

The table above only shows the number of approved land division applications in 2009. The actual number of new lots created is more than the number of applications received, since many applications request multiple new lots. In 2009 there were 78 land division applications, which is down 20.4 percent from 2008 (98 applications in 2008). The decline in land division applications is most likely due to the recent economic slowdown.

The information above doesn't suggest the type of development; however, most of the land divisions that occur in Dodge County are for non-farm residential development. There are many nonfarm people looking to own a house with some acreage out in the country. While it may seem harmless to allow scattered residential housing out in the rural areas of a community, there are various side affects. Some side affects of the increasing development in rural areas include: increased land use conflicts with the local agricultural operations, increased demand on local infrastructure network, increased costs for community services and increased land values. Increased land value may not seem like a side affect; however it is a disadvantage to farmers that want to buy land to expand their farming operation. Some farm operators cannot afford to buy land at the increased value and still make it profitable to farm it.

Due to current economic conditions, residential development pressure in Dodge County is in a lull. However, development pressure will eventually return to previous levels. One reason for the eventual return of nonfarm residential development pressure is Dodge County's growing population. The county's increasing population will further place a pressure on the land, as the additional county residents will seek places to live. Also, Dodge County's rural character, smaller sized municipalities and transportation network creates an inviting place to live. An increasing number of people desire to live in rural areas, while enjoying city like amenities near by, as Dodge County is the middle of three growing regions; Fox Valley, Madison and Milwaukee regions. These three regions are a source of employment, entertainment and shopping for many Dodge County residents. Dodge County residents can enjoy the comforts of living in a rural community, but are still within an hour drive of three major urban areas. This is evident in the 2000 census, which shows that almost 40 percent of Dodge County residents commute to surrounding communities for employment. Due to this statistic, Dodge County can be considered a "bedroom community".

Another method that can show the conversion of agricultural land to other land uses is to review the value of agricultural land sold in Dodge County. Table 4-7 shows agricultural land sales in Dodge County from 2004 to 2008.

**Table 4-7**  
**Agriculture Land Sales in Dodge County 2004-2008**

	Ag Land Continuing in Ag Use			Ag Land Being Diverted to Other Uses			Total of all Ag Land		
	# of Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	# of Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	# of Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre
<b>2004</b>	21	1,482	\$3,338	6	274	\$5,535	27	1,756	\$3,681
<b>2005</b>	19	1,449	\$3,896	9	524	\$7,714	28	1,973	\$4,910
<b>2006</b>	19	1,216	\$4,231	1	46	\$9,000	20	1,262	\$4,405
<b>2007</b>	25	1,641	\$4,162	3	307	\$5,751	28	1,948	\$4,413
<b>2008</b>	29	1,892	\$5,000	3	96	\$5,522	32	1,988	\$5,025
<b>Average 2004-08</b>	22.6	1,536	\$4,125.40	4.4	249.4	\$6,704.40	27	1,785.40	\$4,486.80

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

From 2004 to 2008 there was an average of 27 land transactions per year and an average of 1,785.4 acres sold during the same time frame. The value of agricultural land continuing in agricultural use averaged \$4,125.40 per acre, while the value of land diverted to other uses averaged \$6,704.40 per acre. This equals an approximate 38 percent difference in cost per acre for land continuing in agricultural use compared to land sold for other uses. The income a landowner could make by selling land for agricultural use verse land diverted to another use is substantially different. However, it should be noted that the value of agricultural land continuing in agricultural use has been increasing almost every year, while the value of land diverted to other uses has dropped significantly since 2006. There was only a \$552 difference in the cost per acre for land continuing in agricultural use compared to



land sold for other uses. It should also be noted that there were substantially fewer transactions for land being diverted to other uses compared to land continuing in agricultural use.

Additionally, the conversion of agricultural land to other uses affects towns and incorporated municipalities. When a city or village annexes land into its borders, the annexed land and surrounding land's price per acre and land uses are affected. Typically, surrounding land values increase when land is annexed in to a village or city.

Table 4-8 displays information for the value of agricultural land sales in Dodge County and surrounding counties from 2004 to 2008 as provided by the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service.



**Table 4-8**  
**Value of Agricultural Land Sold, Dodge and Surrounding Counties, 2004-2008**

County	Value Per Acre of Land Continuing in Agriculture			Value Per Acre of Land Diverted to Other Uses		
	2004	2008	Change	2004	2008	Change
<i>Dodge</i>	<i>\$3,338</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>	<i>\$1,662</i>	<i>\$5,535</i>	<i>\$5,522</i>	<i>\$(13)</i>
Columbia	3,333	5,219	1,886	2,676	5,221	2,545
Dane	5,411	7,435	2,024	23,284	7,561	(15,723)
Fond du Lac	2,329	4,586	2,257	6,525	24,449	17,924
Green Lake	2,619	4,451	1,832	3,645	--	--
Jefferson	2,914	5,682	2,768	5,755	7,645	1,890
Washington	5,264	8,136	2,872	19,954	64,400	44,446
Waukesha	5,260	--	--	27,475	22,707	(4,768)
Wisconsin	2,465	3,683	1,218	6,799	8,421	1,622

Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics

According to the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics, the value of land continuing in agricultural increased almost 50 percent from 2004 to 2008 in Dodge County, while the value of land being diverted to other land uses decreased 0.2 percent during the same time frame. This difference may be due to the economic slowdown. Also, a single land transaction can dramatically change these figures, as seen with Dane and Washington counties. Overall, land values are high and will most likely increase in to the future. The table seems to show that there is little financial incentive to divert agricultural land to other uses in Dodge County.

#### 4.5 Anticipated Changes in Agricultural Production, Processing, Supply and Distribution

The agricultural industry has gone through many changes throughout the years in Dodge County, Wisconsin, United States and the world. The agricultural industry will continue to see changes, as demographics change, political policies change, food/fiber needs increase and further technological advances. These changes will affect local agricultural activities. In order to continue to be a leading community in agriculture; Dodge County needs to be proactive with anticipated changes, rather than reactive. Identifying anticipated changes in the agricultural industry will help community officials make more informed decisions and better recommendations in this plan.

Below is a list of anticipated changes in the agricultural industry for Dodge County:

- ◆ The number of working family farms will continue to decline, however the size of the average farm will continue to show moderate increases.
- ◆ The number of large “commercial” type farming will increase; the dairy industry will continue to have a strong presence, as the number of large dairy operations will continue to increase.

- ♦ The number of land division requests will increase as the economy rebounds from the economic recession; more land divisions will result in further land fragmentation.
- ♦ Conversion of land to nonagricultural uses will promote somewhat higher land values, which will affect farmers that want to buy land to expand their farming operation.
- ♦ Farm operation distances to farm related services, markets for farm commodities, processing industries and other critical farming infrastructure needs will determine the long term success of agriculture in the county.
- ♦ Interest in cash cropping and specialty farming will increase, thereby increasing demand for more agricultural land.
- ♦ Interest in “value-added” businesses to complement small dairy and general farming operations will increase.

These anticipated changes in the agricultural industry will have an affect on agriculture in Dodge County, especially as it relates to farmland preservation and expansion of agricultural activities.

## 5. Farmland Preservation Areas

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This chapter will provide detail on how the Farmland Preservation Maps were developed and a description of the map categories.

### 5.1 Rationale Used to Determine Preservation Areas

The Dodge County Farmland Preservation Plan Map (Appendix A) identifies two areas: “Farmland Preservation Areas” and “Nonagricultural Development Areas”. The “Areas of Agricultural Use and Agriculture-Related Use” are considered to be within the Farmland Preservation Area and the “Areas of Nonagricultural Development” are within the Nonagricultural Development Area. The rationale used to determine the Farmland Preservation Areas and Areas of Nonagricultural Development was as follows:

1. *In accordance with WI. Stats. Chapter 91.10(2), if a county has a comprehensive plan; the county shall include the farmland preservation plan in its comprehensive plan and shall ensure that the farmland preservation plan is consistent with the comprehensive plan.* Therefore,

the Future Land Use Map of the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan was used as the basis for creating the Farmland Preservation Plan Map. Those areas identified as “Agriculture” or “Conservancy” on the Future Land Use Map were placed within the Farmland Preservation Area on the Farmland Preservation Plan Map to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The Conservancy classification contains officially designated wetland areas, which are eligible for farmland preservation.



All other future land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map were excluded from the Farmland Preservation Area. Not all of the areas designated as “Agriculture” on the Future Land Use Map were mapped as a Farmland Preservation Area. Some areas may contain uses such as those identified in # 2 below and may not be compatible with the Farmland Preservation Area.

2. *Land uses such as gun clubs, game farms, prisons, golf courses, airports, dog kennels, horse boarding and riding facilities, mineral resource processing, and small clusters of nonfarm residential parcels may be placed within the Nonagricultural Development Area.* Many of the listed uses are not agricultural in nature and may not be eligible for the farmland preservation program. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to place these types of uses in a Farmland Preservation Area. The Comprehensive Plan uses only one category of Agriculture on the Future Land Use Map. The intent and description of the Agriculture category states “The Agriculture category could include a limited amount of residential development, but the predominant land use would be agricultural in nature”. “A minimal amount of other non-farm land uses, e.g. wind energy systems, wireless communication facilities, dog kennels, veterinary clinics, mineral extraction, farmers markets, and wildlife ponds, etc., may also occur in areas planned for agriculture”. The Comprehensive Plan intent was to allow for a variety of uses in the single agriculture

category so as to avoid consistency questions between multiple agriculture future land use categories. The Comprehensive Plan Agriculture future land use category is much more inclusive than the more rigid farmland preservation areas of the Farmland Preservation Plan. Our intent is to preserve those areas that are truly used for agricultural purposes and worthy as being designated a Farmland Preservation Area.

3. *Recreation and park land owned by the county or a town government were also eliminated from the Farmland Preservation Area on the map.* The Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan shows these areas, including wildlife areas owned by the federal or state government to be designated as “Recreation” and not “Agriculture”. Since the federal and state government owns and controls wildlife refuges and open space conservation areas in Dodge County, it was determined that wildlife areas owned by the federal or state government should be designated as a Farmland Preservation Area on the Farmland Preservation Map. Recreation lands owned by the County or a town were placed within the Nonagricultural Development Area. These recreation lands are much more likely to contain structural development and recreational facilities such as baseball fields and thus appropriately not included in a Farmland Preservation Area. Examples of lands to be considered a Farmland Preservation Area would be the 32,000 acre Horicon Marsh Wildlife Refuge, Theresa Marsh Wildlife Area, Mud Lake Wildlife Area, and the Waterloo Wildlife Area.

Much of the Town of Ashippun is within a designated Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA). The mapped AEA is based on the previous Agricultural Preservation Plan Map and is shown as Map 2, Appendix A of this Farmland Preservation Plan. Therefore, it is possible that existing parcels or areas within the AEA will not be shown as a Farmland Preservation Area on the new Farmland Preservation Plan Map for Ashippun. These parcels, although located an AEA, will not be eligible for a farmland preservation agreement, since they are not within the mapped Farmland Preservation Area.

## 5.2 Farmland Preservation Map Category Description

There are only two land use categories on the Farmland Preservation Map: Farmland Preservation Areas and Nonagricultural Development Areas. The Farmland Preservation Areas include those areas of Agricultural Use and Agriculture-Related Use (Green Color) in accordance with the rationale described above. The Nonagricultural Development Areas include all other land uses and are placed within the Areas of Nonagricultural Development on the Map (Orange Color). The Farmland Preservation Map and Map Legend include highways, town roads, railroads, town boundaries, section lines, parcel boundaries, incorporated areas, water bodies, and rivers and streams. The Farmland Preservation Map is done for the entire county; however, in order to provide the necessary detail, the maps provided in the Plan will be shown on a town by town basis.

## 6. Implementation

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This chapter describes a course for implementation of the Farmland Preservation Plan through the use of implementation tools such as Agricultural Development Goals, Increasing Housing Density, Farmland Preservation Programs, and Consistency with the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan. In addition, County Actions to Preserve Farmland, Promote Agricultural Development, and Address Key Land Use Issues will be developed.

### 6.1 Goals for Agricultural Development in Dodge County

#### **Goals**

1. Maintain a minimal gap between the value of agricultural land continuing in agricultural use and the value of agricultural land being diverted to other uses during economic growth periods.
2. Encourage programs that would increase or maintain the number of agricultural operations and agribusinesses in Dodge County.
3. Preserve and grow the enterprises that support the agricultural industry.
4. Protect and preserve the County's best agricultural farm land.
5. Provide for a well-balanced mix of land uses within the County that minimizes potential conflicts between residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses.
6. Protect economically productive areas, including farm land and forests.
7. Focus new growth in areas that will not adversely impact prime agricultural areas of the County.
8. Protect the right of livestock facilities, regardless of the number of animal units to operate in areas zoned for agricultural use, provided all state and local regulations are met.
9. Provide for enterprises that support the agricultural industry the right to locate in areas zoned for agricultural use and not be required to obtain commercial or industrial zoning.
10. Encourage and support the creation of nontraditional agricultural operations.
11. Promote the development of new and diverse agricultural products.

## 6.2 Policies, goals, strategies and proposed actions to increase housing density in areas that are not identified as farmland preservation areas.

The need for housing units will increase in Dodge County. Projections show there will be a need for 6,804 additional housing units in the next 15 years. Dodge County will need to prepare for the increased housing demand. Maintaining higher housing density in areas suitable for housing development has been a long time goal for Dodge County. There are many benefits to increasing housing density in properly planned locations. Such benefits include: the need for fewer acres per housing unit, reduced government expenses as shorter/narrower streets cost less to maintain and fewer miles of sewer/water piping are needed, reduced storm-water runoff can reduce utility costs, public transit systems are more cost effective and higher housing density encourages healthier life styles (walk-able communities).

The Dodge County Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives and policies that encourage higher housing density in areas suitable for development, rather than identified agricultural areas. See the recommendations report of the Comprehensive Plan, elements two, five and eight for goals, objectives and policies that support responsible housing development.

Utilizing the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code allows county staff to direct housing to areas designated for growth. However, due to the mixture of county and town zoned towns; housing development regulations are not uniform. Additionally, only half the towns in Dodge County participate in farmland preservation zoning. By having a mixture of regulations and regulators, it is tough to implement a countywide initiative. Nonetheless, below are policies, goals and strategies and/or proposed actions the county may implement to achieve higher housing densities in areas outside the mapped farmland preservation areas.

Wisconsin Statutes 91.10 (c)(7m) requires a statement of policies, goals, strategies, and proposed actions to increase housing density in areas that are not identified as farmland preservation areas per Wisconsin Statutes 91.10(d). Goals are general statements, whereas the policies build on the goals by providing more detailed actions to the goals. Policies that direct action using the words “will” or “shall” are advised to be mandatory and regulatory aspects of the implementation of the comprehensive plan. In contrast, those policies that direct action using the words “should”, “could”, or “may” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. Policies are used to assist the county in making decisions.

Strategies and/or proposed actions are specific actions that the county should be prepared to complete. The completion of the strategies and proposed actions are consistent with the policies, and therefore will help fulfill the goals of the Farmland Preservation Plan.

### ***Goal***

Encourage higher housing density in areas designated for nonagricultural development.

### ***Policies***

1. Residential development in farmland preservation zoned areas, shall not exceed the density ratio standard.
2. New residential housing developments should incorporate traditional neighborhood designs.
3. New residential housing developments should incorporate a range of residential uses (single-family, duplex, multi-family).
4. Dodge County and county communities should allow mixing of residential and commercial/office uses within new developments.
4. Dodge County towns should review the use of conservation subdivision guidelines in zoning and land division ordinances.
5. Infill development and new housing developments shall be encouraged within areas served by public facilities.
6. Cluster residential development should be promoted to minimize land use impacts and increase housing density.

### **Strategies and Proposed Actions to achieve goals and policies**

1. The Land Resources and Parks Department should work with communities to identify areas that area available for infill development. Identifying areas that are available for new housing development will provide a readily usable database (map) for developers to refer to. Developers are encouraged to develop underutilized areas, prior to developing in to open space and/or agricultural areas.
2. The Land Resources and Parks Department may create Traditional Neighborhood guidelines for Dodge County communities. Utilizing such development guidelines will encourage higher residential density, as well as promote mixed use developments.
3. The County should deny requests to create major subdivisions (5 or more lots) within agricultural zoned areas. This may result in more development occurring in areas planned for residential growth.
4. Land Resources and Parks Department staff could update the Land Use Code with additional methods to increase density. New revisions could include density bonuses, expand areas where multi-family development is allowed, and smaller lot sizes.
5. The County should implement a housing program that provides funds to repair and maintain the existing housing stock.

It is important that any housing plan considers conservation of the existing housing stock. The existing housing stock is often the primary source of affordable housing within a community. In many communities in Dodge County, the existing stock is aging and is in need investment to maintain its utility. Communities should consider strategies that prevent neglect and encourage reinvestment in the existing housing stock.

### 6.3 Farmland Preservation Programs (local, county, state, federal and others)

There are many farmland preservation programs available to landowners in Dodge County. Programs are available on the county, state and federal levels. The principle effort of farmland preservation and rural land preservation programs is to implement agricultural conservation practices and natural resource protection. Both farmland and natural resource protection programs are listed below, as these programs often work in combination.

Landowners can get program information from the Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department, Dodge County Land Conservation Department, Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Agricultural related programs available to Dodge County landowners are listed below.

#### **County Programs**

##### **Farmland Preservation Program**

The purpose of this program is to help preserve farmland and promote soil and water conservation practices. Landowners that participate in the program are eligible for state tax credits. In order to be eligible for the program, land must be located in a certified farmland preservation zoning district or in a designated agricultural enterprise area.

##### **Land & Water Resource Management Plan Implementation**

The purpose of this program is to control soil erosion and reduce nonpoint source water pollution. The program provides a cost share and technical assistance to landowners to install soil and water conservation practices. The following agricultural conservation practices may be utilized; grass waterways, diversions, critical area stabilization, terraces, grade stabilization structure, sediment basin, barnyard runoff control practices, rural well abandonment, manure storage abandonment and roof runoff system.

##### **Manure Storage Ordinance**

The Manure Storage Ordinance requires a permit from the Dodge County Land Conservation Department for new manure storage facilities or reconstruction of existing facilities. Technical assistance is available to landowners on a first-come/first served basis.

##### **Nutrient/Manure Management Planning**

This program provides technical and educational assistance to landowners for the preparation and implementation of a nutrient management plan. Such plans provide manure spreading restriction maps, which are used to help direct spreading activities away from environmentally sensitive areas. Cost share/incentive funding is available for program participation.

##### **Tree Sales and Tree Planting**

The Dodge County Land Conservation Office administers an annual tree sale program. Various deciduous and evergreen trees are sold in packets of 25. Two tree planters are available to landowners that are planting a large volume of trees.



### Wisconsin Nonpoint Runoff Rule Implementation

This program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners that do not meet nonpoint pollution control rules. Farms are evaluated to determine if they are compliant with the rules. If they are found to be out of compliance, technical and financial assistance may be available.

### **State and Federal Conservation Programs**

#### Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The purpose of these programs is to reduce erosion, increase wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and increase forestland. Landowners that set aside agricultural land to conduct program practices are eligible for annual land rental payments. Program practices may include tree planting, grass cover, small wetland restoration and prairie/oak savannah restoration.

#### Conservation Security Program (CSP)

The purpose of this program is to promote good land stewardship and implement conservation practices. Agricultural operations in select watersheds are eligible to receive payments for program participation. Payments to agricultural operations are based on the amount of participation and enhancements.

#### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The purpose of EQIP is to provide technical and financial help to landowners that install or implement structural and management practices on agricultural lands. Landowners that participate in the program may be eligible for cost sharing.

#### Farmland and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

The purpose of this program is to maintain prime farmland in agricultural uses through permanent agricultural easements. The program provides funding to state, tribal, or local government programs for the purchase of development rights on prime agricultural land. Program funds are used to pay for up to 50 percent of the permanent easement cost.

#### Managed Forest Law (MFL)

The purpose of this program is to promote good forest management; property tax incentives/reduction is available to participating landowners. In order to participate, a landowner must follow an approved management plan (plan is free) and must own 10 contiguous acres (80% must be capable of producing merchantable timber).

#### Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) – Farmland Preservation Program

The PACE program provides state funding for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. An agricultural conservation easement allows a landowner to be compensated for limiting development on his or her farmland. Easements are permanent and are carried over to subsequent landowners if the property is sold. The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will provide funding to cooperating local entities (local governments or non-profit organizations) for the purchase of easements from willing landowners. Local entities purchase the easements and may be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the easement cost by the PACE program. The state and local entities will then be co-holders of the easement. PACE funded easements are intended to strengthen areas that have been planned

and designated as local farmland preservation areas in a certified county farmland preservation plan.

#### Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Grants

The purpose of this program is to control polluted runoff from agricultural sites and urban areas. Grants are available to help fund various Best Management Practices, purchase of property, and property easements. Local units of government, special purpose districts, tribal commissions and regional planning agencies are eligible for grants.

#### Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP)

The purpose of this program is to assist landowners in protecting and enhancing forest lands, prairies and waters. Program practices include forest stewardship plan development, reforestation, timber stand improvement, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, fire hazard reduction, invasive species control, watershed protection and wetland restoration. Qualifying landowners may be eligible for cost sharing.

#### Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

The purpose of this program is to restore wetlands that were previously altered for agricultural uses. Most private wetlands that were converted to agricultural uses prior to 1985 are eligible. Wetland restoration and wildlife habitat establishment/protection sites that are the most beneficial are selected for restoration.

### **State and Federal Financial Programs**

#### Dairy 2020 Early Planning Grant Program

This program awards grants for business and feasibility planning to dairy producers and processors considering a modernization or expansion project. Grants of up to \$3,000 may be awarded for professional services to develop a comprehensive business plan for the start-up, modernization, or expansion of a Wisconsin dairy farm.

#### Dairy 2020 Milk Volume Production Program (MVP)

The purpose of this program is to assist dairy producers that are undertaking capital improvement projects that will result in a significant increase in Wisconsin's milk production. The MVP program offers a low interest loan of 2% to farmers who are looking to increase the size of their herd. MVP loans have a term of seven (7) years with a fixed interest rate of 2% for the life of the loan. Repayment is deferred for the first year, followed by interest only payments in the second year. Principal and interest payments will be made during years three (3) through seven (7).

#### Farm Service Agency (FSA): Beginning Farmer Loans and Guarantees

The purpose of this program is to make loans available for farmers to use towards farm ownership and operating costs. The FSA provides direct and guaranteed loans to beginning farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain financing through commercial credit sources. This program is for farmers and ranchers who have operated for more than 3 years and less than 10.

### FSA: Direct Loans

Direct loans are made and serviced by FSA officials, who also provide borrowers with supervision and credit counseling. Farm ownership and operating loans are the main types of loans available under the direct loan program. With a direct farm ownership loan, you can purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings and other fixtures. Operating loans may be used to purchase items such as livestock, farm equipment, feed, minor improvements to buildings, family subsistence, and to refinance debts under certain conditions.

### FSA: Guaranteed Farm Loans

FSA guaranteed loans provide lenders (i.e. banks, farm credit system institutions, credit unions) with a guarantee of up to 95% of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Farmers and ranchers apply to an agricultural lender, who then arranges for the guarantee. The FSA guarantee permits lenders to make agricultural credit available to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. With a direct farm ownership loan, you can purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings and other fixtures. Operating loans may be used to purchase items such as livestock, farm equipment, feed, minor improvements to buildings, family subsistence, and to refinance debts under certain conditions.

### WHEDA: Beginning Farmer Bonds

The purpose of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) – Beginning Farmer Bond program, uses bond funds to be used for the purchase a first farm including land, equipment, livestock, or buildings. Bonds can be used for transactions between related persons.



### WHEDA: Crop

The purpose of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) – Crop program is to make loans to farmers, which can be used to buy animal feed, seed, fertilizer, pesticides, or to pay land rent, custom hire, crop insurance, feeder animals, tillage services, equipment rental and repair, or utilities for commodity production.

### WHEDA: Farm

The purpose of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) – Farm program is to make loans to farmers, which can be used for a farm expansion or for the modernize an existing operation. The loan can be used to purchase agricultural assets including machinery, equipment, buildings, land, and livestock. The money can also be used to make improvements to farm buildings and land for agricultural purposes.

### WHEDA: Agribusiness Guarantee Program

The purpose of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) – Agribusiness Guarantee program is to make loans to farmers for projects developing products, markets, method of processing or marketing for a Wisconsin-grown commodity. The maximum guarantee of 80% on loans can be used for equipment, land, buildings, working capital, inventory and marketing expenses.

## **State and Federal Technical Assistance Programs**

### AgrAbility of Wisconsin

The purpose of the AgrAbility program is to promote success in agriculture for people with disabilities through the development of a customized assistance plan based on the type of farm operation, type of disability, and the needs of the individual with a disability and their family. This plan could include: equipment and worksite modification, farm job restructuring, community and health care coordination, peer support involvement, etc. The Wisconsin AgrAbility Project is a cooperative effort of the University of Wisconsin Extension Service, University of Wisconsin Biological Systems Engineering and Easter Seals Wisconsin.

### Center for Dairy Profitability

The purpose of the Center for Dairy Profitability is to develop, coordinate and conduct effective interdisciplinary educational and applied research programs, emphasizing business management, human resource management, production systems, and finance and marketing systems that enhance dairy profitability. In keeping with this mission statement, the Center's website has a variety of software programs, spreadsheets, and CDROMS to improve production efficiency and profitability. The Center also has a real-time internet financial benchmarking site.

### Dairy 2020 Initiative

The purpose of the Dairy 2020 Initiative is to help Wisconsin dairy business, through cooperation at all levels, find ways to improve the business climate and competitive position of the Wisconsin Dairy Industry, enhance individual business profitability, and enrich the quality of life for Wisconsin's dairy farmers and their rural communities.

### Dairy Business Innovation Center (DBIC)

The DBIC is a non-profit Wisconsin corporation offering technical assistance to dairy producers and cheese processors for product development, business planning, market development and other services. The Center boasts a team roster of more than 15 world-class dairy experts and is led by a stakeholder board.

### Milk Money

The Milk Money program is a UW-Extension outreach program of the University of Wisconsin Department of Dairy Science supported by the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and offered to all Wisconsin dairy producers. Milk Money uses the 'team' management concept to help producers improve milk quality.

### Wisconsin Farm Center

The Wisconsin Farm Center provides services to Wisconsin farmers and agribusinesses to promote the vitality of the state's agricultural economy and rural communities. Also, they provide services in the areas of financial counseling and analysis, mediation, employment and training, farm succession and two-generation linking, legal information related to FSA programs and Rural Electric Power Services.

## Wisconsin Farmer's Resource Guide

The Wisconsin Farmer's Resource Guide is a directory for farmers and rural citizens to find helpful information and services offered by public and private agencies across the state. Whether you need legal aid or want to apply for a loan, seek job training or financial counseling, this guide will help you find the right person to talk to.

## **State and Federal Young Farmer Programs**

### Farm Link

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Farm Link Program provides farm succession information and assistance linking farmers with other farmers and beginning farmers. The program is a coordinated network of resources available to assist new dairy farmers and also assists retiring farmers. The mission is to “develop and sustain a coordinated network of resources and policies to assist dairy farm entry and transfer in Wisconsin”.

### Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer Program

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer Program is a leadership program for farmers under the age of 35. The Young Farmer Program provides leadership and skills development opportunities, along with the chance for young farmers to meet and network with other young farmers.

## **State and Federal Environmental Assistance Programs**

### Discovery Farms

Discovery Farms is a University of Wisconsin program designed to address the environmental research needs of agricultural producers. Through addressing those needs, Discovery Farms is working to assure a healthy environment and a healthy farm economy. Discovery Farms is part of UW-Extension and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at UW-Madison, and have a relationship with the Wisconsin Agriculture Stewardship Initiative.

### Wisconsin Business Environmental Assistance Partnership (WBEAP)

The WBEAP helps Wisconsin business and communities understand environmental regulations, prevent pollution, and establish continuous improvement. WBEAP is a working partnership between the Department of Commerce (Small Business Clean Air Assistance Program), Agriculture, Trade, & Consumer Protection (Agrichemical Program), and the UW Extension (Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center). WBEAP can help with air pollution regulations, environmental innovation, environmental management systems, fertilizer & pesticide management, industrial & community recycling, renewable energy & energy conservation, stormwater control plans, and waste minimization.

### Wisconsin Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not be completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses

manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas.

#### Wisconsin Public Service

The Wisconsin Public Service agency offers programs to increase the energy efficiency of farming operations.

### 6.4 Dodge County Comprehensive Plan Consistency

Four methods were used to ensure consistency between the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan and the Farmland Preservation Plan. The first step was to adopt the Farmland Preservation Plan as an Appendix to the Comprehensive Plan. By including the Farmland Preservation Plan in the Comprehensive Plan, consistency is easier to obtain than if separate documents.

The second method involved referencing tables and data from the Comprehensive Plan in the Farmland Preservation Plan. This resulted in the use of consistent data to determine trends and needs of the agricultural industry in Dodge County.

The third method was the use of the Comprehensive Future Land Use Map as the basis for the Farmland Preservation Plan Map. In order to achieve consistency between the two maps, using the Future Land Use Map as the basis for the Farmland Preservation Map was the best way to accomplish this. Each Town Farmland Preservation Plan Map created for the County Farmland Plan, started as the adopted Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map from that town. Areas shown for a use other than agricultural were excluded from the mapped Farmland Preservation Area. It would not make sense to identify land categorized as Future Residential on the Future Land Use Map as a Farmland Preservation Area on the Farmland Preservation Map. Using the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map as the basis for the Farmland Preservation Plan Map ensures consistency between the two planning documents.

The final method used to ensure consistency was the use of the goals, policies and recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan in the Farmland Preservation Plan. The pertinent goals, policies, and recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan were placed at appropriate locations within the Farmland Preservation Plan. This method to ensure consistency prevented the use of conflicting goals, policies, and recommendations in the two plans.

### 6.5 County Actions to Preserve Farmland and Promote Agricultural Development

1. Develop and adopt a Farmland Preservation Plan in accordance with state statute requirements in order to allow all interested towns to be eligible for farmland preservation programs.

*Timeline:* January 2010 – June 2011.

2. Develop Farmland Preservation Plan Maps for each town and allow towns to provide input into the map development process.

*Timeline:* January 2010 – June 2011.

3. Update Farmland Preservation Plan Maps as needed to maintain consistency with comprehensive plans and zoning ordinance amendments.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

4. Develop system to allow land owners to donate land or the development rights to Dodge County.

*Timeline:* March 2011 – March 2012

5. Educate towns, the general public, and other interested persons or groups on the benefits of the Farmland Preservation Program.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

6. Educate towns not under county zoning on the proper administration of the Farmland Preservation Program.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

7. Develop programs to help current farmers stay in farming as well as bring new farmers into the agricultural industry.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

8. Help existing farm operations create additional value from their agricultural products.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

9. Work with implement dealers and other agricultural supporting industries to maintain and grow their operations in Dodge County.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

10. Investigate other farmland preservation programs for feasibility in Dodge County.

*Timeline:* March 2011 – March 2013

11. Investigate a purchase of development rights program for Dodge County in conjunction with land trusts using funding from sources other than the County.

*Timeline:* March 2011 – March 2013

12. Dodge County will continue to administer Farmland Preservation Program including monitoring compliance with the soil and water conservation standards.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

13. Assist town officials, land trusts, and land owners with applications for Agricultural Enterprise Areas and Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements.

*Timeline:* As needed.

14. Update the Farmland Preservation Plan at least once every 10 years or sooner as the need for amendments occur.

*Timeline:* As needed.

15. Provide grant writing assistance to farmers and agribusinesses for projects that enhance the County's agricultural industry.

*Timeline:* Ongoing

16. Apply for grants to fund a Dodge County program for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements.

*Timeline:* Ongoing



## 6.6 County Actions to address Land Use Issues affecting Farmland Preservation and Agricultural Development

1. Offer planning services to towns update their Zoning Ordinance in accordance with Chapter 91, WI. Stats. in order to maintain or obtain eligibility for the Farmland Preservation Program.

*Timeline:* As needed.

2. Create a Dodge County housing rehabilitation program that provides no interest, deferred payment loans to repair existing housing units. Such program will be made available to low to moderate income households and will also be available to rehabilitate rental properties. Rehabilitation and maintenance of the existing housing stock will result in less agricultural land taken out of production for new homes and decrease the potential for land use conflicts between nonfarm residences and the surrounding farmland.

*Timeline:* December 2010 – Ongoing.

3. Implement the strategies and actions proposed in Section 6.2 of this Plan in order to increase housing density in the County.

*Timeline:* June 2011 – June 2013.

4. Amend the County Zoning Map by rezoning all land shown as a Farmland Preservation Area to the A-1 Prime Agricultural Zoning District to ensure consistency with the Farmland Preservation Plan.

*Timeline:* June 2011.

5. Dodge County should deny any request for a major subdivision (5 or more lots) in areas designated as a Farmland Preservation Area.

*Timeline:* Ongoing.

6. Amend the Land Use Code if necessary to permit livestock facilities, regardless of the number of animal units to operate in areas zoned A-1 Prime Agricultural, provided all state and local regulations are met.

*Timeline:* June 2011 – June 2012.

7. Amend the Land Use Code as needed to permit enterprises that support the agricultural industry the right to locate in areas zoned A-1 Prime Agricultural or A-2 General Agricultural and not be required to obtain commercial or industrial zoning.

*Timeline:* June 2011 – June 2012.