

# Town of Sand Lake

## Burnett County, Wisconsin

### Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043



**TOWN OF SAND LAKE  
BURNETT COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

**PLAN COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION 2023-1**

**RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE  
TOWN OF SAND LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2023-2043**

**WHEREAS**, §66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes, establish the required procedure for a local government to adopt a comprehensive plan, and §66.1001(2) identifies the required nine elements of a comprehensive plan; and

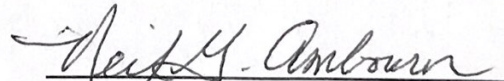
**WHEREAS**, the Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission has the authority to recommend that the Town Board adopt a "comprehensive plan" under §66.1001(4)(b); and

**WHEREAS**, the Town has prepared the *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043*, containing all maps, approved comments and changes, and other descriptive materials, to be the comprehensive plan for the Town of Sand Lake under §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission hereby recommends the adoption the *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* as the Town of Sand Lake's comprehensive plan under §66.1001(4); and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission hereby recommends that the Town Board adopt an ordinance, which will constitute its adoption of the *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* as the Town of Sand Lake's comprehensive plan.

Approved this 1<sup>ST</sup> day of MAY, 2023.



Neil Ambourn, Chair  
Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission



**TOWN OF SAND LAKE  
BURNETT COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

ORDINANCE 2023-2

**ORDINANCE TO ADOPT  
THE TOWN OF SAND LAKE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

WHEREAS, Secs. 62.23(2) and (3), Wis Stats., authorize the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County, Wisconsin to adopt or amend a comprehensive plan as defined in Section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2), Wis. Stats.; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Sand Lake adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of its comprehensive plan update as required under Sec. 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* containing all of the elements specified in Sec. 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

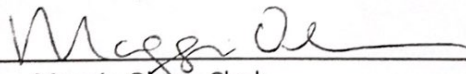
WHEREAS, the Town has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of Section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

NOW THEREFORE, the Town Board of the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County, Wisconsin, does by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* pursuant to Sec. 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

NOW THEREFORE, FURTHERMORE, this ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Town Board as required by law.

Adopted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2023

APPROVED:   
Melani Johnson, Chair

ATTESTED:   
Maggie Olson, Clerk

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# 1. Issues and Opportunities

## 1.1 Introduction

The Town of Sand Lake is defined by the people who live and work there, the houses and businesses, the parks and natural features, its past, its present, and its future. No matter the location, change is the one certainty that visits all places. No community is immune to its effects. How a community changes, how that change is perceived, and how change is managed are the subjects of community comprehensive planning. An understanding of both the town's history and its vision for the future is essential to making sound decisions. The foundation of comprehensive planning relies on a balance between the past, present, and future by addressing four fundamental questions:

1. Where is the community now?
2. How did the community get here?
3. Where does the community want to be in the future?
4. How does the community get to where it wants to be?

The *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* will guide community decision making in the Town of Sand Lake for the next 10 to 20 years, and addresses nine comprehensive planning elements in chapters one through nine:

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

The *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* meets the requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001. This law required all municipalities (counties, villages, and towns) to adopt a comprehensive plan by the year 2010 if they wished to make certain land use decisions. After the year 2010, any municipality that regulates land use must make their zoning, land division, shoreland and floodplain zoning, and official mapping decisions in a manner that is consistent with the community's comprehensive plan.

The Town of Sand Lake developed this comprehensive plan in response to the issues it must address and the opportunities it wishes to pursue. The *Issues and Opportunities* element of the comprehensive plan provides perspective on the planning process, public participation, trends and forecasts, and the overall goals of the community.



## 1.2 Plan Summary

The Town of Sand Lake is a Township in southeast Burnett County. It is situated east of the Village of Webster and is bordered by the Towns of Jackson, Rusk, LaFollette, and Meenon. There are no incorporated villages within the Town of Sand Lake.

With a year-round population of about 576 and a low population density, the Town of Sand Lake can best be described as rural. As is typical in Burnett County, the landscape is characterized mainly by its natural features including large tracts of wetlands and woodlands, forests, and agricultural fields, and by its surface water which includes 15 named lakes. Residential development is primarily clustered around the town's water resources, with a scattering of development along the existing road network. Importantly, nearly 50% of homes in the Town of Sand Lake are seasonal, or occasional use residences. The population is expected to remain steady, with the Wisconsin Department of Administration projecting an increase of about 50 persons over the 20-year planning horizon. Future development is also projected to remain steady, with an increase of about 2 houses per year. Year-round and seasonal residential housing is the primary form of projected future development.

Public participation during the planning process identified the Town of Sand Lake's primary concerns and areas to be addressed by this comprehensive plan. Top identified issues and opportunities include the protection of natural resources and rural character, the need for improved land use planning and managing rural development regulation, and pursuing opportunities for economic development.

The *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* sets the stage to successfully balance and achieve the desires expressed in the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations found in this document. This will be accomplished by creating an improved system in which development takes place. This will incorporate many innovative techniques involving development density and lot size management as well as creative subdivision design. Paramount in the plan is the careful placement of residential development with regard to the community's natural features and infrastructure investments.

This comprehensive plan will help achieve a desirable future by directing the most intensive development to areas that are suitable for such development. The overall intent is to preserve the features, character, and opportunity that the residents of the Town of Sand Lake enjoy today while managing the long-term physical development in concert with the market forces and land use regulation that shape it. The best agricultural lands, natural resource rich areas, and areas that support outdoor recreation opportunities will be preserved as such for future generations but will still allow development at lower densities.

The Town of Sand Lake:

- Is committed to retaining its rural and scenic nature
- Is committed to preventing additional large scale "campgrounds" from being created in the town and should consider a density cap for campgrounds
- Supports and encourages small businesses to grow and prosper
- Is committed to measures to protect the water quality in its lakes and streams

- Values its existing agricultural practices but is committed to preventing large-scale factory farms from operation in the town
- Will strive to have all users of town services pay their fair share
- Strives to cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to optimize services and reduce costs
- Encourages telecommunication companies to enhance their service to residents
- Should hold a referendum to consider adoption of the Burnett County Zoning Ordinance
- Needs to review and revise as necessary its ATV/UTV Route Ordinance
- Should establish an ongoing Plan Commission to assist the Town Board in the implementation of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan

### **Town of Sand Lake 2043 Vision**

The Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission developed a vision statement as a part of the comprehensive planning process. Based on the Town of Sand Lake’s highest priority issues and opportunities, the group identified what they would like to change, create, or preserve for the future of their community. The vision statement then expresses which issues are the most important for the town to resolve and which opportunities are most important to pursue over the long term.

### **Vision Statement**

It is the year 2043. In the Town of Sand Lake, we...

1. Value the quality of life reflected by our natural resources - lakes, rivers, wood, wildlife, our rural lifestyle, and ample resources to serve our residents and community.
2. Value the sustainability of public services and work to provide them in financially responsible ways that assure the public safety of our community.

The Town of Sand Lake’s vision for the future is further expressed in its goal statements for each of the comprehensive planning elements. The town’s planning goals are broad statements of community values and public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). Implementation of this comprehensive plan will result in the achievement of these goals through the year 2043. For further detail on these goals, including related objectives, refer to the respective elements of this comprehensive plan.

### **Population and Housing Goals**

- Goal 1:** Facilitate opportunities for an adequate housing supply that will meet the needs of current and future residents to have access to a full range of housing choices for all income levels, age groups, and special needs.
- Goal 2:** Guide new housing development into areas that can be efficiently served in a fashion that does not impact scarce natural resources.
- Goal 3:** Support housing development that maintains the attractiveness and rural character of the town.

## **Transportation Goals**

- Goal 1:** Support a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system which, through its location, capacity, and design, will effectively serve the existing land use development pattern and meet anticipated transportation demand generated by existing and planned land uses.
- Goal 2:** Support safe and efficient multi-modal transportation systems where appropriate.
- Goal 3:** Promote cooperation and coordination between state, county, villages, and towns in developing the town transportation system.

## **Utilities and Community Facilities Goals**

- Goal 1:** Support the efficiency, quality, and coordinated planning of town government, community facilities and services, and utilities.
- Goal 2:** Consider functionality and accessibility of parks and recreational facilities when developed.
- Goal 3:** Ensure proper disposal of wastewater to protect groundwater and surface water resources.
- Goal 4:** Ensure that the town's water supply has sufficient capacity, remains drinkable, and is available to meet the needs of residents, businesses, industry, and agriculture when considering new development.
- Goal 5:** Ensure that roads, structures, and other improvements are reasonably protected from flooding.
- Goal 6:** Encourage effective solid waste disposal and recycling services that protect the public health, natural environment, and general appearance of land use.
- Goal 7:** Ensure the provision of reliable, efficient, and well-planned utilities to adequately serve existing and planned development.
- Goal 8:** Support access to quality health and child care facilities.
- Goal 9:** Ensure a level of police protection, fire protection, and emergency services that meets the needs of existing and planned future development patterns.
- Goal 10:** Promote quality schools and access to educational opportunities.

## **Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Goals**

### Agricultural Resources

- Goal 1:** Maintain the viability, operational efficiency, and productivity of the town's agricultural resources for current and future generations.
- Goal 2:** Balance the protection of farmland with the exercise of development rights.

### Natural Resources

- Goal 1:** Encourage responsible management of the town's natural resources.
- Goal 2:** Protect and improve the quality and quantity of the town's ground and surface water.

- Goal 3:** Preserve the natural and scenic qualities of lakes and shorelines.
- Goal 4:** Balance future development with the protection of natural resources.
- Goal 5:** Protect air quality.
- Goal 6:** Preserve and protect woodlands and forest resources for their economic, aesthetic, and environmental values.
- Goal 7:** Balance future needs for the extraction of mineral resources with potential adverse impacts on the town.

### Cultural Resources

- Goal 1:** Preserve the rural character as defined by scenic beauty, a variety of landscapes, undeveloped lands, forests, water resources, wildlife, farms, rural and smalltown atmosphere, buildings integrated with the landscape, and enjoyment of these surroundings.
- Goal 2:** Preserve significant historical and cultural lands, sites, neighborhoods, and structures that contribute to community identity and character.
- Goal 3:** Strengthen opportunities for youth in the town including youth-oriented activities and facilities and additional job opportunities.

### **Economic Development Goals**

- Goal 1:** Maintain and enhance opportunities for resource-based industries dependent on rural lands and provide opportunity for compatible economic growth and development.
- Goal 2:** Support efforts to attract, retain, and expand quality businesses and industries that will improve the employment and personal income base of the town.
- Goal 3:** Maintain or improve the utility, communication, and transportation infrastructure systems that promote economic development.
- Goal 4:** Encourage a quality workforce to strengthen existing businesses and maintain a high standard of living.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals**

- Goal 1:** Encourage a quality workforce to strengthen existing businesses and maintain a high standard of living.

### **Land Use Goals**

- Goal 1:** Guide the efficient use of land through a unified vision of resource limitations and town goals and objectives.

### **Implementation Goals**

- Goal 1:** Promote integration of the comprehensive plan policies and recommendations with the ordinances and implementation tools that affect the Town of Sand Lake.
- Goal 2:** Balance appropriate land use regulations and individual property rights with community interests and goals.

### **1.3 Comprehensive Plan Development Process and Public Participation**

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law requires public participation throughout the comprehensive planning process. It specifies that the local governing body must adopt written procedures to foster public participation during every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided. Public participation includes wide distribution of proposed drafts, plan alternatives, and proposed amendments of the comprehensive plan. Public participation also includes opportunities for members of the public to send written comments on the plan to the applicable governing body, and a process for the governing body to respond. The Town of Sand Lake has adopted a *Public Participation Plan* in order to comply with the requirements of Section 66.1001(4)(a) (Appendix A).

The process of adopting the *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* included several public participation activities. These included Plan Commission action, Town Board action, a public hearing, and the distribution of recommended and final plan documents.

#### **Plan Commission and Town Board Action**

On May 1, 2023, the Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission discussed the draft comprehensive plan and passed resolution number 2023-1 recommending approval of the comprehensive plan to the Town Board. After completion of the public hearing on June 12, 2023, the Sand Lake Town Board discussed and adopted the comprehensive plan by passing ordinance number 2023-2 on July 10, 2023.

#### **Public Hearing**

On June 12, 2023, a public hearing was held on the recommended *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* at the Town Hall. The hearing was preceded by a Class 1 notice and public comments were accepted for 30 days prior to the hearing. Verbal and written comments were taken into consideration by the Town Board before taking action to adopt the plan.

#### **Distribution of Plan Documents**

Both the recommended draft and final plan documents were provided to adjacent and overlapping units of government, the local library, and the Wisconsin Department of Administration in accordance with the *Public Participation Plan* found in Appendix A.



## 1.4 Town of Sand Lake Issues and Opportunities

The initial direction for the comprehensive planning process was set by identifying community issues and opportunities. Issues were defined as challenges, conflicts, or problems that a community is currently facing or is likely to face in the future. Opportunities were defined as the positive aspects of a community that residents are proud of and value. These could either be current positive aspects of a community or have the potential to be created in the future.

**Table 1-1: Issues and Opportunities**

<b>Issues &amp; Opportunities Identified by the Town of Sand Lake</b>
<b>Maintain Burnett County’s Northwoods Character/Quality of Life</b>
The Town of Sand Lake’s rural and northwoods character is currently being threatened by high-density campground development. The general character of the town can be adversely affected by such development and other land use conflicts. New township development should be done in a responsible manner that preserves the current northwoods character. Recent legislative changes and existing land use controls/decisions have not kept pace with the changing conditions. The issue needs to be defined and then strategies need to be developed to protect that definition.
<b>Demographic Shifts and Its Impacts</b>
Impacts of the general out-migration of young adults moving away from the area to gain employment (loss of skilled and educated workforce, loss of tax revenue, etc.), and the in-migration of retirement-age adults moving to and staying in the area (increased need for services to support an aging population).
<b>Housing Issues</b>
There is a shortage of available and affordable housing within the Town of Sand Lake. There are particular needs for overall more moderately priced housing opportunities as well as additional senior housing options within the community.
<b>Waterfront Issues</b>
Demand for waterfront property and access has caused increased development pressures on waterbodies in the Town of Sand Lake. Many lakes and rivers are threatened by overcrowding and the problems associated with overuse. These include public recreation conflicts, surface water use conflicts, surface water quality impacts, sensitive riparian and littoral habitat impacts, and increased potential for the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species.
<b>Infrastructure and Transportation Network Issues</b>
Investing in the Town of Sand Lake’s transportation network (local roads and trails) is paramount. The support of all users is needed to sustain the town’s transportation network and the services it provides. Examples include Impact or Site Fees (campgrounds/similar groups), User Fees (boat launch, parks, etc.), License Fees (RV parks, mobile home parks, etc.). The increase in recreational vehicle use (ATVs/UTVs/snowmobiles) within the town, also increases issues regarding speed, noise, littering, road right-of-way violations, damage to property, and other safety and environmental concerns.
<b>Technology Issues</b>
Internet technologies (fiber, cable, DSL, fixed wireless, cellular, satellite) currently available in the Town of Sand Lake are not fully meeting the needs of all residences and businesses. There is need for improvement in service availability, reliability, speed of service, and pricing.
<b>Communication Improvements</b>
There is need to continually strengthen and improve overall communications between the Town of Sand Lake and surrounding jurisdictions (St. Croix Tribe, Burnett County, neighboring towns, etc.).

**Services and How to Pay for Them**

The need for services within the Town of Sand Lake is increasing while simultaneously, the traditional mechanisms which support those services are being cut. Strategies are needed to increase efficiencies through cooperation with other units of governments and consolidation of services. Strategies are also needed to determine which services to grow or invest in. Simultaneously, strategies are needed to tap into Burnett County's property tax base, low business tax structure; ability to leverage grants to off-set local taxes and tap into state and federal programs, increase revenue from forest, room tax, highway, fees, develop new fee for services. Specifically, strategies are needed to ensure all users financially support and sustain town infrastructure and services. Examples include Impact or Site Fees (campgrounds, manufactured home parks, etc.), User Fees (Boat launches, parks, etc.), License Fees (RV parks, mobile home parks, etc.), Room Tax (vacation rentals, resorts, cabins, etc.).

**Economic Development that is Appropriate to the Town of Sand Lake**

The rural character and low population concentration of the Town of Sand Lake plays an important economic role by supporting tourism, outdoor recreation, agriculture, forestry, waterfront development, and small business.

**Agriculture Issues**

It is important to continue to protect the rural, farm, and forest character of the town. This includes maintaining the viability of the Town of Sand Lake's small family farms. The town does not have the support infrastructure for large livestock facilities i.e., Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). A large livestock facility located within the town could have devastating impacts, including changes in land use, decreased property values, increased damage to local roads, changes in air quality, and changes in groundwater and surface water quality.

**Campground Development Issues**

Over the past several years there has been a proliferation of campground development and expansion, with over 1,000 new RV sites proposed and/or approved in Burnett County in less than 24 months. Although "camping" has historically and is currently defined as "temporary overnight lodging", most "camping" is now in large, well-insulated RV trailers maintained by long-term, seasonal residents who enjoy the modern amenities of running water, septic, electricity, heat, and air conditioning for 6-8 months of the year. As the number of seasonal residents rises, there is also an increase in the stress and strain on the Town of Sand Lake's infrastructure. "Campers" enjoy the town's resources but pay no fee, tax, or monies to sustain or maintain town roads, public schools, refuse and recycling, police, fire, emergency responders, etc. These taxes are avoided by RV park residents because these fees are primarily paid by the town's homeowners, cabin owners, and landowners. The tax revenue imbalance between tax-paying "Payer Groups" and non-tax paying "User Groups" is rapidly growing and needs to be addressed. The town does not have the support infrastructure for the continued development and expansion of high-density campgrounds and RV parks. Continued development and expansion will lead to potential negative impacts to local residences, roads, services (utilities, garbage & recycling, police, fire, ambulance, etc.), waters, and wetlands.

**ATV/UTV Use Issues**

The current ATV/UTV ordinance affords township residents and landowners the privilege of access to township roads with said vehicles. However, in light of recent high intensity campground development a review of the ordinance will likely be necessary due to the associated influx of additional usage. Instances of ATV/UTV nuisance and trespass complaints as well as other possible issues are likely to rise. While this has been a controversial subject, it should be explored whether the ordinance can still benefit existing landowners for which the ordinance was originally implemented. If allowed within applicable state and federal regulations, possible modifications to consider while reviewing the ordinance could be limiting usage to Burnett County landowners and permanent residents only, restricting access to specific roads, implementing user fees and/or permits to operate landowner ATVs/UTVs within the township. Again, any such modifications of the ordinance should be vetted for consistency with applicable state, county, and federal laws and regulations prior to implementation.

## **1.5 Issues and Opportunities Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

### **Policies and Recommendations**

- IO 1. The town shall conduct business related to land use decisions utilizing an open public meeting process and by considering its comprehensive plan.
- IO 2. The town shall strive to strengthen communication and relationships with bordering towns and Burnett County.
- IO 3. The town development review process will be used to ensure decisions are in agreement with the town comprehensive plan.

## **2. Population and Housing**

### **2.1 Population and Housing Plan**

Population and housing are two key indicators that will help the Town of Sand Lake plan for future growth and change. Because they are key indicators of potential future conditions, this element of the comprehensive plan provides a summary of population and housing data along with projections for the future.

The Town of Sand Lake's plan for population and housing reflects its diverse landscape which includes aspects of both rural and shoreline-oriented population and housing characteristics. Regardless of which landscape applies, the town's primary concern is to retain rural character as population and housing growth continue into the future. Due to its rural nature, the town anticipates that single family, owner-occupied homes will continue to dominate the housing stock. However, as the aging segment of the population grows, it is expected that demand for elder care facilities, mixed use development, multi-family structures, and other forms of housing will increase. The relative accessibility of medical services and urban amenities coupled with the town's rural character and natural amenities will continue to make the Town of Sand Lake an attractive location for a variety of housing types.

The town's plan for population and housing is focused on protecting agriculture and forestry, preserving natural resources and rural character, and promoting housing affordability as housing growth takes place. Top issues and opportunities identified during the planning process (refer to the *Issues and Opportunities* element) related to housing include potential conflicts between agriculture and rural housing development, the amount of land required to build a house, and the lack of affordable housing. Therefore, opportunities for future housing growth will be provided by protecting the town's best agricultural and forest lands from high-density development while allowing more development to take place in other areas of the town. Preventing land use conflicts between intensive agriculture operations and housing development is a primary concern. These issues are addressed in detail by other elements of this plan, and key implementation tools include the management of development density, the use of conservation land division design, and the use of site planning guidelines.

### **2.2 Population Characteristics Summary**

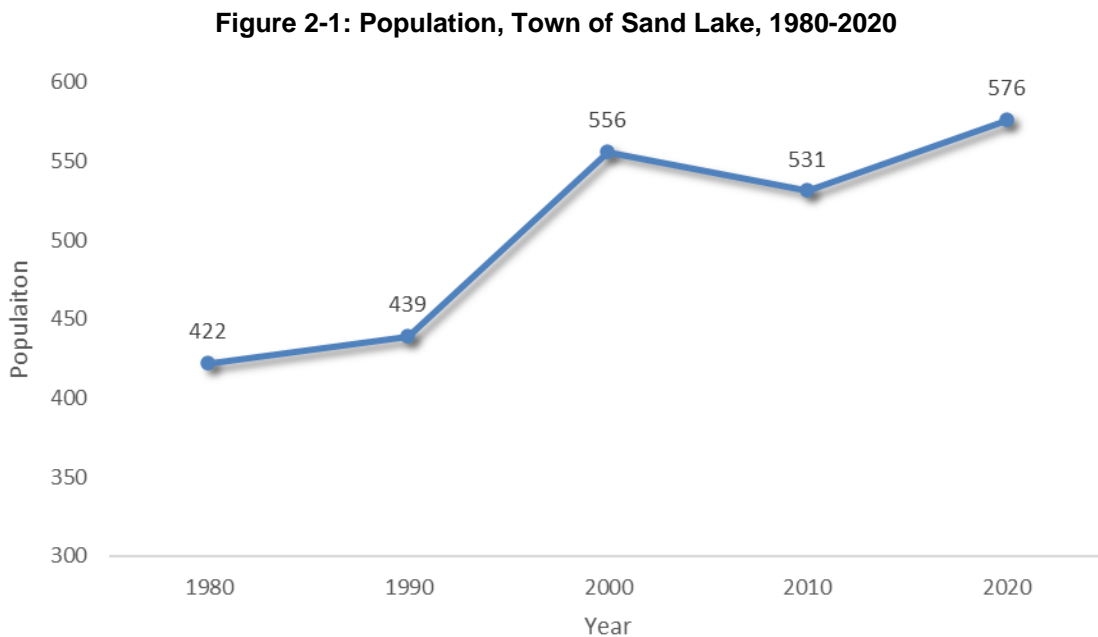
A significant amount of information, particularly regarding population, housing, and economic development, was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau. There are two methodologies for data collection employed by the U.S. Census Bureau, one is the Decennial Census and the second is the American Community Survey.

The Decennial Census is conducted every ten years by the U.S. Census Bureau and provides an official count of the population as well as information on age, sex, race, and owner/renter status. The American Community Survey is an annual nationwide survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau which provides estimates of demographic, housing, social, and economic characteristics over a specific time period. The survey then pools the data to produce 1-year and 5-year

estimates. Data for each release of the 5-year estimates are collected over a 5-year period ending December 31 of the reference year (e.g., data in the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019 were collected January 1, 2015-December 31, 2019). The statistics reported represent the characteristics of the population for the entire period vs. a specific year within that period. Although the 5-year estimates are not as current as the 1-year estimates, they are the most comprehensive, reliable, and precise estimates that are available.

## Population Counts

Population counts provide information both for examining historic change and for anticipating future community trends. Figure 2-1 displays U.S. Census population counts for the Town of Sand Lake between 1980 and 2020.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1980-2020

As displayed in Figure 2-1, the Town of Sand Lake has experienced overall growth over the 40-year period. Approximately 154 people were added to the population, representing an increase of 36.5% from 1980 to 2020. Within the past ten years, the population in the Town of Sand Lake has increased by 8.5%. According to the 2020 Census, the Town of Sand Lake ranked eleventh out of twenty-one in terms of population size when compared to all the other towns in Burnett County.



Table 2-1 displays U.S. Census population count trends of the Town of Sand Lake in comparison to Burnett County, its municipalities, and the State of Wisconsin between 1980 and 2020.

**Table 2-1: Population Counts, Burnett County, 1980-2020**

Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Δ 1990-2000	% Δ 2000-2010	% Δ 2010-2020	% Δ 1980-2020
T. Anderson	265	324	372	398	408	14.8%	7.0%	2.5%	54.0%
T. Blaine	151	172	224	197	206	30.2%	-12.1%	4.6%	36.4%
T. Daniels	607	602	665	649	676	10.5%	-2.4%	4.2%	11.4%
T. Dewey	520	482	565	516	545	17.2%	-8.7%	5.6%	4.8%
T. Grantsburg	677	860	967	1,136	1,174	12.4%	17.5%	3.3%	73.4%
T. Jackson	331	457	765	773	935	67.4%	1.0%	21.0%	182.5%
T. La Follette	388	416	511	536	559	22.8%	4.9%	4.3%	44.1%
T. Lincoln	215	228	286	309	367	25.4%	8.0%	18.8%	70.7%
T. Meenon	838	956	1,172	1,163	1,212	22.6%	-0.8%	4.2%	44.6%
T. Oakland	486	480	778	827	980	62.1%	6.3%	18.5%	101.6%
T. Roosevelt	178	175	197	199	197	12.6%	1.0%	-1.0%	10.7%
T. Rusk	349	396	420	409	470	6.1%	-2.6%	14.9%	34.7%
<b>T. Sand Lake</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>-4.5%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>36.5%</b>
T. Scott	409	419	590	494	583	40.8%	-16.3%	18.0%	42.5%
T. Siren	887	910	873	936	1,004	-4.1%	7.2%	7.3%	13.2%
T. Swiss	587	645	815	790	807	26.4%	-3.1%	2.2%	37.5%
T. Trade Lake	824	831	871	823	904	4.8%	-5.5%	9.8%	9.7%
T. Union	199	221	351	340	345	58.8%	-3.1%	1.5%	73.4%
T. Webb Lake	256	200	381	311	432	90.5%	-18.4%	38.9%	68.8%
T. West Marshland	209	293	331	367	400	13.0%	10.9%	9.0%	91.4%
T. Wood River	883	948	974	953	898	2.7%	-2.2%	-5.8%	1.7%
V. Grantsburg	1,153	1,144	1,369	1,341	1,330	19.7%	-2.0%	-0.8%	15.4%
V. Siren	896	863	988	806	824	14.5%	-18.4%	2.2%	-8.0%
V. Webster	610	623	653	653	694	4.8%	0.0%	6.3%	13.8%
Burnett County	12,340	13,084	15,674	15,457	16,526	19.8%	-1.4%	6.9%	33.9%
Wisconsin	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	9.6%	6.0%	3.6%	25.2%

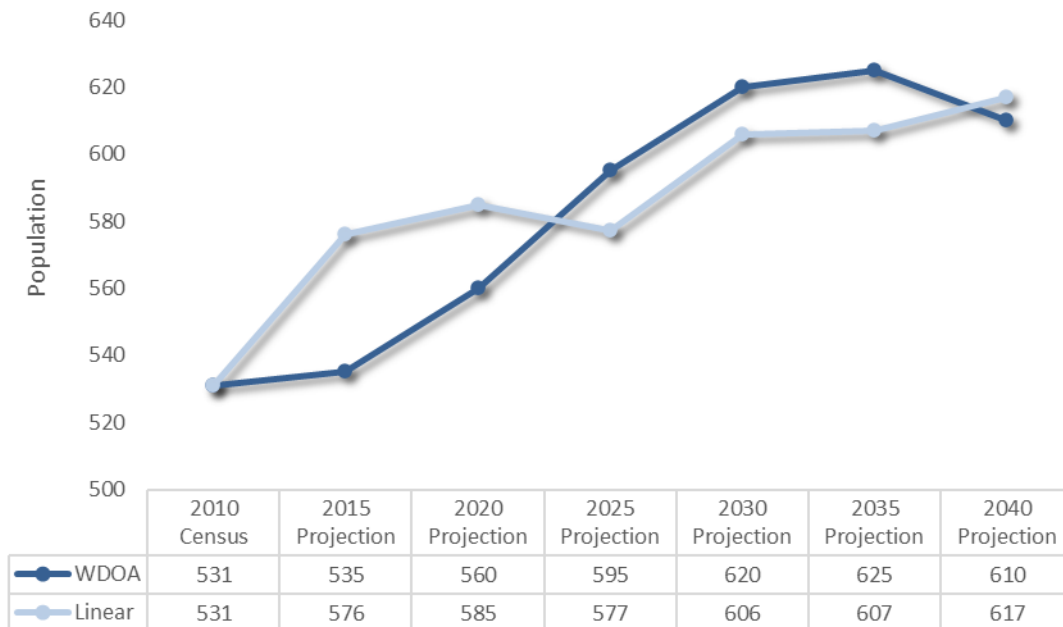
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1980-2020

## Population Forecasts

Population forecasts are based on past and current population trends. They are not predictions, but rather they extend past trends into the future, and their reliability depends on the continuation of these trends. Projections are therefore most accurate in periods of relative socio-economic and cultural stability. Projections should be considered as one of many tools used to help anticipate future needs in the Town of Sand Lake.

Two sources have been utilized to provide population projections. The first projection is from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (which is the official state projection through 2040). The second projection is a linear trend based on U.S. Census population counts going back to 1980. Figure 2-2 displays the two population projections created for the Town of Sand Lake.

**Figure 2-2: Comparative Population Forecasts, Town of Sand Lake, 2010-2040**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration and Northwest Regional Planning Commission

The Wisconsin Department of Administration projects population growth with an additional 79 people between 2010 and 2040, while linear projections estimate growth with an additional 86 people during the same timeframe. The features of the Town of Sand Lake that attract people to the area will continue to make this a growing part of Burnett County. For the purpose of forecasting future land use demand (refer to the *Land Use* element), an average of the two projections was used. This projection equates to 15.5% growth between 2010 and 2040, or about 3 new people a year.

## 2.3 Housing Characteristics Summary

### Housing Supply, Occupancy, and Tenure

Tables 2-2 and 2-3 display the occupancy and tenure characteristics of housing units for Burnett County and the Town of Sand Lake based on American Community Survey estimates. A housing unit is defined as a house, apartment, mobile home, group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy).

**Table 2-2: Housing Supply, Occupancy, and Tenure, Town of Sand Lake, 2014 and 2019**

	2014 ACS	% of Total	2019 ACS	% of Total	# Δ	% Δ
Total Housing Units	490	100.0%	591	100.0%	101	20.6%
Occupied Housing Units	193	39.4%	213	36.0%	20	10.4%
Owner-Occupied	138	71.5%	166	77.9%	28	20.3%
Renter-Occupied	55	28.5%	47	22.1%	-8	-14.5%
Vacant Housing Units	297	60.6%	378	64.0%	81	27.3%
Seasonal	286	96.3%	347	91.8%	61	21.3%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2010-2014 & American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

**Table 2-3: Housing Supply, Occupancy, and Tenure, Burnett County, 2014 and 2019**

	2014 ACS	% of Total	2019 ACS	% of Total	# Δ	% Δ
Total Housing Units	15,248	100.00%	15,597	100.00%	349	2.3%
Occupied Housing Units	7,288	47.8%	7,305	46.8%	17	0.2%
Owner-Occupied	5,880	80.7%	6,005	82.2%	125	2.1%
Renter-Occupied	1,408	19.3%	1,300	17.8%	-108	-7.7%
Vacant Housing Units	7,960	52.2%	8,292	53.2%	332	4.2%
Seasonal	7,318	91.9%	7,744	93.4%	426	5.8%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2010-2014 & American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

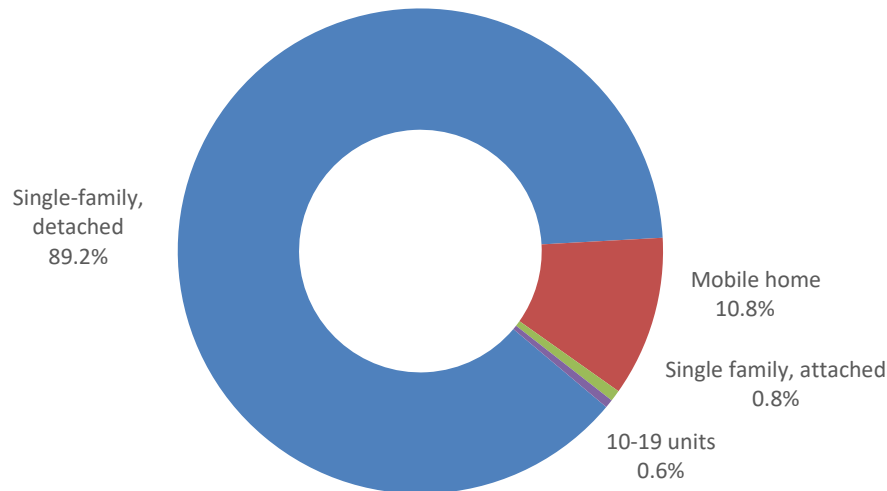
The housing supply in the Town of Sand Lake consists of a variety of housing types in terms of occupancy and tenure. Notably, over half (60.6%) of the housing stock in the town are vacant housing units, with a majority of those (96.3%) being seasonal homes. Compared to Burnett County as a whole, the Town of Sand Lake has a larger percentage of both renter-occupied units, as well as vacant and seasonal units. This suggests that the housing supply in the Town of Sand Lake is slightly more difficult to access in terms of rental units and vacant unit availability and sales. The large number of seasonal housing units in the housing supply reflects the importance of tourism in Burnett County.

As displayed in the tables above, the Town of Sand Lake experienced trends different than those of Burnett County as a whole. The owner-occupied units and vacant units increased slightly in the town, while renter-occupied units decreased, whereas in the county, there was minimal fluctuation. Over the last several years, the town has also been strongly impacted by the recent trend to convert many seasonal units to year-round homes.

## Housing Units in Structure

Figure 2-3 displays the breakdown of housing units by type of structure (“units in structure”) for the Town of Sand Lake on a percentage basis according to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019.

**Figure 2-3: Units in Structure, Town of Sand Lake, 2019**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

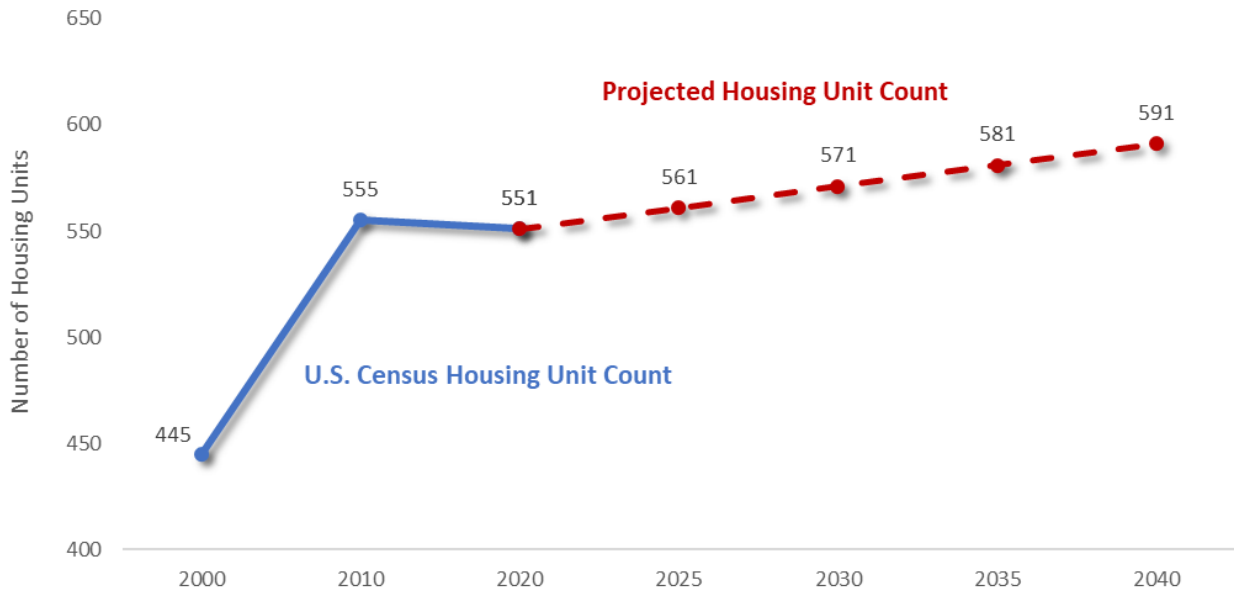
The housing supply in the Town of Sand Lake is fairly homogeneous, with one-unit, detached structures dominating the housing supply at an estimated 89.2%. This is followed by mobile homes, which make up about 10.8%, one-unit, attached structures, which make up 0.8%, and multiple unit structures, which make up around 0.6% of the housing supply.

## Housing Unit Projections

Housing unit projections use historical data to extend past trends into the future. These projections serve as a guideline for land use decisions; however, their reliability depends on a variety of issues. Projections are more accurate in times of social and economic stability. A housing unit projection is just one of many tools that elected officials and staff should use to plan for future development. Trends that may influence the future number of housing units include demographics, the declining household size and increasing age of residents, as well as other issues, such as the quality of the existing housing stock, the availability of municipal services, and the current trend of converting seasonal housing into permanent year-round housing.

Figure 2-4 identifies count and projections of housing units within the Town of Sand Lake. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of housing units in the town increased by 110 units, a nearly 25% increase. This development boom has since slowed, and in the last decade (2010-2020), the total number of housing units in the town decreased by 4 units (less than 1%). According to Burnett County building permit data, over the last decade the Town of Sand Lake has gained an average of 2 new dwellings per year. If housing unit growth continues at this rate, the Town of Sand Lake could expect to see an increase of 40 housing units between 2020 and 2040.

**Figure 2-4: Town of Sand Lake Housing Unit Counts and Housing Unit Projections**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000-2020, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

## 2.4 Population and Housing Trends and Outlook

Of the population and housing trends identified for Burnett County and the State of Wisconsin (refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*), the following are likely to be experienced in the Town of Sand Lake over the next 10 to 20 years.

- The aging population is growing, and people over 65 are projected to comprise a significant portion of the total population by 2040.
- Minority populations are expected to increase.
- Expect the continued conversion of seasonal to permanent structures.
- Condominiums will increase as an option for seniors and first-time home buyers.
- Interest in modular and mobile home development will continue as driven by need for affordable housing.
- People will continue to desire an “acre or two in the country”, and pressure to convert farmland, woodland, and open areas to subdivisions, and lots will increase, especially in rapidly growing areas.
- The need for elderly housing will increase as the population ages.
- Vacant housing units may increase as a result from the aging population choosing other options like assisted living, condominiums, and the like.
- Finding quality, affordable housing will become increasingly difficult.
- High demand for housing and energy cost assistance will continue.



## **2.5 Housing for All Income Levels**

The housing stock in rural Wisconsin communities typically has a high proportion of single-family homes, with few other housing types available. While a range of housing costs can be found in single-family homes, larger communities are generally relied upon to provide a greater variety of housing types at a larger range of costs. It is a benefit to a community to have a housing stock that matches the ability of residents to afford the associated costs. This is the fundamental issue when determining housing affordability and the ability to provide a variety of housing types for various income levels.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing affordability by comparing income levels to housing costs. According to HUD, housing is affordable when it costs no more than 30% of total household income. For renters, HUD defined housing costs include utilities paid by the tenant.

According to American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019, housing in the Town of Sand Lake is affordable, on average. The median household income in the town was estimated at \$75,250 per year, or \$6,021 per month. The median monthly owner cost for a mortgaged housing unit in the town was \$1,448, and the median monthly gross rent in the town was \$573. The term “gross rent” includes the average estimated monthly cost of utilities paid by the renter. According to the HUD definition of affordable housing, the average homeowner in the Town of Sand Lake spends about 8.0% of household income on housing costs, and therefore has affordable housing. The average renter in the Town of Sand Lake spends about 12.1% of household income on housing costs, and therefore has affordable housing. It should be noted, however, that this does not rule out individual cases where households do not have affordable housing. In fact, 2.6 % of homeowners and 14.3% of renters in the Town of Sand Lake paid 30% or more of their household income on housing costs.

## **2.6 Housing for All Age Groups and Persons with Special Needs**

As the general population ages, affordability, security, accessibility, proximity to services, transportation, and medical facilities will all become increasingly important. Regardless of age, many of these issues are also important to those with disabilities or other special needs. As new residents move into the area and the population ages, other types of housing must be considered to meet all resident needs. This is particularly true in communities where a large proportion of the population includes long-time residents with a desire to remain in the area during their retirement years.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration has projected that a shift in Burnett County’s age structure will take place by 2035. More than 5,890 Burnett County residents are expected to be age 65 and older by that time, growing from 23% of the 2010 census count population to 33% of the projected 2035 population. As this shift in the age structure takes place, communities may find it necessary to further assess the availability of housing for all age groups and persons with special needs.

## **2.7 Promoting Availability of Land for Development/Redevelopment**

Promoting the availability of underdeveloped or underused land is one way to meet the needs of low and moderate-income individuals. One way to accomplish this is to plan for an adequate supply of land that will be zoned for housing at higher densities or for multi-family housing. Another option is to adopt housing policies requiring that a proportion of units in new housing developments or lots in new subdivisions meet a standard for affordability. Two elements of comprehensive planning are important in this equation. In the *Housing* element, a community can set its goals, objectives, and policies for affordable housing. In the *Land Use* element, a community can identify potential development and redevelopment areas. The Town of Sand Lake supports the efforts of Burnett County to provide affordable housing for all residents.

## **2.8 Maintaining and Rehabilitating the Existing Housing Stock**

The maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock within the community is one of the most effective ways to ensure safe and generally affordable housing without sacrificing land to new development. To manage housing stock maintenance and rehabilitation, a community can monitor characteristics including price, aesthetics, safety, cleanliness, and overall suitability with community character. The goal of ongoing monitoring is to preserve the quality of the current housing supply with the hope of reducing the need for new development, which has far greater impacts on community resources.

## **2.9 Population and Housing Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

**Goal 1: Facilitate opportunities for an adequate housing supply that will meet the needs of current and future residents to have access to a full range of housing choices for all income levels, age groups, and special needs.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Support public and private actions which provide housing choices for town residents.
- B. Ensure that town residents have equal access (antidiscrimination) to housing.
- C. Encourage innovative housing design for efficient, low-cost housing where appropriate.
- D. Encourage balance of residential development units that provide a balance of low-income, moderate-income, and high-income housing.
- E. Coordinate with the county to plan for the aging population's housing needs.

**Goal 2: Guide new housing development into areas that can be efficiently served in a fashion that does not impact scarce natural resources.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Direct residential development to planned growth areas.

**Goal 3: Support housing development that maintains the attractiveness and rural character of the town.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Direct the development of residential subdivisions to planned growth areas in order to prevent conflicts between residential development and productive land uses like agriculture and forestry.
- B. Require the development of housing to be consistent in quality, character, and location with the goals, objectives, and policies of applicable comprehensive plans.
- C. Encourage the use of creative development designs that preserve rural character, agricultural lands, productive forests, and natural resources.

## **2.10 Population and Housing Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

### **Policies and Recommendations**

- H 1. The town shall support efforts of towns, villages, and the county to provide residents with a variety of housing options.
- H 2. The town shall support equal access (non-discrimination) to housing for all residents.
- H 3. New housing within rural areas should reduce woodland fragmentation and impacts to natural vegetation as well as preserve quality farmland.
- H 4. New housing shall be consistent with the purpose, intent, and preferred density established in the applicable Land Use Management Areas.

H 5. The town will support Burnett County's efforts to review, update, and enforce the county zoning and land division ordinances to assist with the implementation of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan.

## **2.11 Population and Housing Programs**

### **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)**

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business, and agribusiness. WHEDA's Housing Grant Program is available to assist in the improvement of the State's housing for special needs populations, and WHEDA's Home Buyer Programs is available for personal home improvement projects or home buyer assistance.

### **USDA-Rural Development**

USDA-Rural Development administers federal funds to help secure loan options to assist low to moderate income families with home purchase and rehabilitation. Rural Development generally funds individuals who cannot obtain conventional financing.

### **Northwest Regional Planning Commission**

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) administers a number of housing rehabilitation and down payment/closing cost assistance programs within the towns, villages, and cities located in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn Counties. The NWRPC Housing Cost Reduction Initiative Program provides housing assistance to low and moderate-income households, the HOME Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program provides essential home purchase assistance and necessary home rehabilitation for low and moderate-income households, and the Community Development Block Grant-Small Cities Housing Program provides grants to towns, villages, and cities with populations less than 50,000 for housing unit rehabilitation, homebuyer assistance, and small neighborhood public facility projects.

### **Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity**

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, serving Burnett and Polk Counties. It is a non-profit agency that builds homes for low-income families in need.

### **Burnett County Housing Authority**

The Burnett County Housing Authority services Burnett County's low-income and elderly populations by providing affordable housing opportunities. Public housing units currently exist in Webster, Siren, Grantsburg, and Danbury.

### **Siren Salvation Army Safe House**

The Siren Salvation Army Faith House offers emergency and transitional shelter as part of their social services program.

## **3. Transportation**

### **3.1 Transportation Plan**

The land use patterns of the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County, and the surrounding region are tied together by the transportation system. Households, businesses, farms, industries, schools, government, and many others all rely on a dependable transportation system to function and to provide linkages to areas beyond their immediate locations. The Town of Sand Lake's transportation network plays a major role in the efficiency, safety, and overall desirability of the area as a place to live and work.

With the population and housing growth expected over the next 20 years, the Town of Sand Lake should also anticipate changes to its transportation system. The town's plan for transportation is to be prepared for potential development proposals, to ensure that future town road expansion is cost-effective, to preserve the mobility and connectivity of local roads, to improve opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle routes, and to ensure that developed properties have safe emergency vehicle access. The Town of Sand Lake has a driveway ordinance and desires to coordinate with Burnett County on reviews of land divisions and plans for road improvements. The Town of Sand Lake will also continue to maintain a set of town road construction specifications. The policies and recommendations of this plan provide guidance on how these tools should be used.

As the Town of Sand Lake implements its plan, a key dilemma will be balancing the rural character and mobility of existing roads with the maximum use of existing road infrastructure. On one hand, existing roads are already present, new roads are costly, and new development can be more cost effective if it utilizes existing roads. On the other hand, extensive placement of new development in highly visible locations along existing roads will forever change the character and appearance of the town. This may lead to a loss of rural character. Adding access points to serve new development also reduces the mobility of a road. However, this plan also encourages new subdivisions to utilize conservation design which will usually require the construction of new roads but does a better job of preserving rural character.

In order to balance these competing interests, the Town of Sand Lake will require the coordinated planning of adjacent development sites by limiting the use of cul-de-sacs and by reviewing Area Development Plans. Over the long term, the town may also develop an official map to preserve planned rights-of-way and connections between developed areas. The town should require that potential traffic and road damage impacts are assessed by developers as part of the development application. When new roads are necessary, the town will require that developers bear the cost of constructing new roads to town standards before they are accepted by the town.

### **3.2 Planned Transportation Improvements**

It is a recommendation of this plan that a five-year road improvement plan be annually updated. Future road improvement plans should attempt to provide integration with the plan for preferred land use. Areas planned for higher density residential growth should receive priority for

improvements to support such growth. Road improvements that are necessary in areas where agriculture, forestry, and outdoor recreation are planned as primary uses should be accompanied by zoning regulations, access controls, and other growth management tools.

### **3.3 Comparison with County, State, and Regional Transportation Plans**

State, regional, and county transportation plans have been reviewed for their applicability. No planned state transportation improvement projects directly affect the town at this time.

The Town of Sand Lake has no recommendations regarding the functional classification of roadways in the town. However, town roads currently classified as local roads should be considered as potential collectors if increased traffic, growth, and development require it.

### **3.4 Transportation Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

**Goal 1: Support a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system which, through its location, capacity, and design, will effectively serve the existing land use development pattern and meet anticipated transportation demand generated by existing and planned land uses.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Protect historic, scenic, scientific, and cultural sites when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- B. Minimize the disruption of environmentally sensitive areas when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- C. Manage right-of-way vegetation with a focus on mechanical, biological, and nontoxic vegetation control methods to protect wildlife, reduce maintenance costs, and improve safety.
- D. Consider accident exposure by improving deficient roadways.
- E. Manage driveway access location and design to ensure traffic safety, provide adequate emergency vehicle access, and prevent damage to roadways and ditches.
- F. Require developers to bear the costs for the improvement or construction of roads needed to serve new development.
- G. Guide new growth to existing road systems so that new development does not financially burden the town or make inefficient use of tax dollars.
- H. Monitor the effectiveness of existing, and opportunities for new shared service agreements for providing town and local road maintenance.

**Goal 2: Support safe and efficient multi-modal transportation systems where appropriate.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Maintain and implement roadway improvement plans.
- B. Support alternative non-motorized transportation such as bicycling and walking as viable, convenient, and safe transportation choices in the town through a greater number of routes and connections to other transportation systems and destinations.
- C. Encourage the monitoring of transit needs, particularly for senior residents.

**Goal 3: Promote cooperation and coordination between state, county, villages, and towns in developing the town transportation system.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Encourage communication between communities regarding transportation projects that cross municipal boundaries.
- B. Participate in transportation planning at the regional level with Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and Burnett County Highway Department when appropriate.
- C. Communicate with community groups on transportation systems to assist communities in prioritization and funding of projects.
- D. Encourage future residential, commercial, and industrial development to roadways capable of accommodating resulting traffic.
- E. Direct truck traffic to appropriate routes and plan cooperatively with neighboring communities.

### **3.5 Transportation Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

## **Policies and Recommendations**

- T 1. The town will maintain and annually update a five-year road improvement plan to identify and prioritize road improvement projects and identify potential funding sources.
- T 2. The town shall utilize PASER (Pavement Service and Evaluating Rating System) or the most current rating system to annually update the five-year road improvement plan.
- T 3. The town shall utilize road construction specifications to include modern requirements for road base, surfacing, and drainage construction. Construction specifications should be adjustable based on roadway planned functional classification or expected traffic flow.
- T 4. The town shall enforce the Town Road Access Control (Driveway) Ordinance to assist the town with implementing access control and the emergency vehicle access standard.
- T 5. The town shall require new development to utilize the existing road network and public facilities and services to the maximum extent possible.
- T 6. The town shall require roads providing access to multiple improved properties be built to town standards as a condition of approval for new development.
- T 7. The town shall require that substantial and major development proposals provide an analysis of the potential transportation impacts including, but not necessarily limited to, potential road damage and potential traffic impacts. The depth of analysis required by the town will be appropriate for the intensity of the proposed development.
- T 8. The town shall require residential subdivisions and non-residential development proposals be designed to include:
  - a. A safe and efficient system of internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians.
  - b. Safe and efficient external collector roads where appropriate.
  - c. Safe and efficient connections to arterial roads and highways where applicable.
  - d. Cul-de-sacs or dead-ends only where connections to other roads are not possible, or temporarily where right-of-way has been developed to the edge of the property for a future connection to adjacent property.
- T 9. The town shall support the modification of the county subdivision ordinance to include local requirements for the execution of a development agreement whenever public roads or other infrastructure are included in a development.
- T 10. The town shall protect historic, scenic, scientific, and cultural sites when constructing new or improving existing transportation facilities.
- T 11. The town shall support the modification of the county subdivision ordinance to include local requirements for the execution of a development agreement whenever public roads or other infrastructure are included in a development.
- T 12. The town will consider opportunities to create or improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation options in concert with the review of proposed developments and planning for road improvements or public facilities.
- T 13. The town shall work with the county to develop a consistent approach for the posting of seasonal and permanent weight limits, especially with respect to the conduct of agricultural and forestry operations.



T 14. The town should jointly discuss and evaluate with surrounding towns, the county, and Wisconsin Department of Transportation, if necessary, transportation related issues which affect neighboring areas.

### **3.6 Transportation Programs**

#### **Surface Transportation Rural Program**

The Surface Transportation Rural Program provides federal funding for a wide range of transportation-related activities on highways outside of urban areas (primarily County Trunk Highways) and local safety improvements.

#### **Rustic Roads Program**

The Rustic Roads program was created over 40 years ago to provide hikers, bicyclists, and motorists an opportunity to leisurely travel through the state's scenic countryside. Today, there are 123 designated Rustic Roads spanning almost 743 miles through 61 counties.

#### **Adopt-a-Highway Program**

The Adopt-A-Highway Program is the official coordination system for volunteer efforts that remove trash, recyclables, and litter from state, federal, and interstate highways.

#### **Local Roads Improvement Program**

The Local Roads Improvement Program is a reimbursement program which assists local governments in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and city and village streets.

#### **Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program**

The Local Bridge Improvement Assistance program is a cost-share program which helps rehabilitate and replace the most seriously deficient existing local bridges on Wisconsin's local highway systems. Counties, cities, villages, and towns are eligible for rehabilitation funding on bridges with sufficiency ratings of 80 or less, and replacement funding on bridges with sufficiency ratings less than 50.

#### **Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER)**

The PASER pavement condition rating system available from the Wisconsin Transportation Information Center is a 1 to 10 condition rating system that uses visual identification of pavement surface distresses to rate pavement condition. The numerical ratings correspond to the condition of the pavement and the appropriate maintenance, rehabilitation, and reconstruction treatment; with a rating of 1 being a failed pavement and 10 a brand-new pavement. PASER is used by almost all municipalities in Wisconsin to report pavement condition to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation every two years.

## 4. Utilities and Community Facilities

### 4.1 Utilities and Community Facilities Plan

Efficient provision of high-quality community facilities and services impacts property values, taxes, and economic opportunities, and contributes to the quality of life in the Town of Sand Lake. Local features such as parks, schools, utilities, and protective services help define a community. These facilities and services require substantial investment as supported by the local tax base, user fees, and impact fees. As a result, their availability is determined both by public demand for those facilities and services, and by a community's ability to pay for them. Therefore, potential impacts on the cost and quality of utilities and community facilities need to be considered when making decisions concerning the future conservation and development of the Town of Sand Lake.









For further details on existing utilities and community facilities in the Town of Sand Lake and Burnett County, please refer to Chapter 4 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*. Map 4-1 displays the locations of existing community facilities and services found in the town. With the population and housing growth that is expected over the next 20 years, the Town of Sand Lake should also anticipate the need to maintain and expand utilities, community facilities, and services. Top issues and opportunities identified during the planning process (refer to the *Issues and Opportunities* element) include the cost of community service and facility improvements and the related tax impacts and the need for improved internet technologies. Overall, the town's plan for utilities and community facilities is to monitor changing needs, to be prepared for proposed development, and to make planned improvements as growth warrants the need.

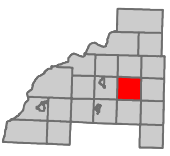
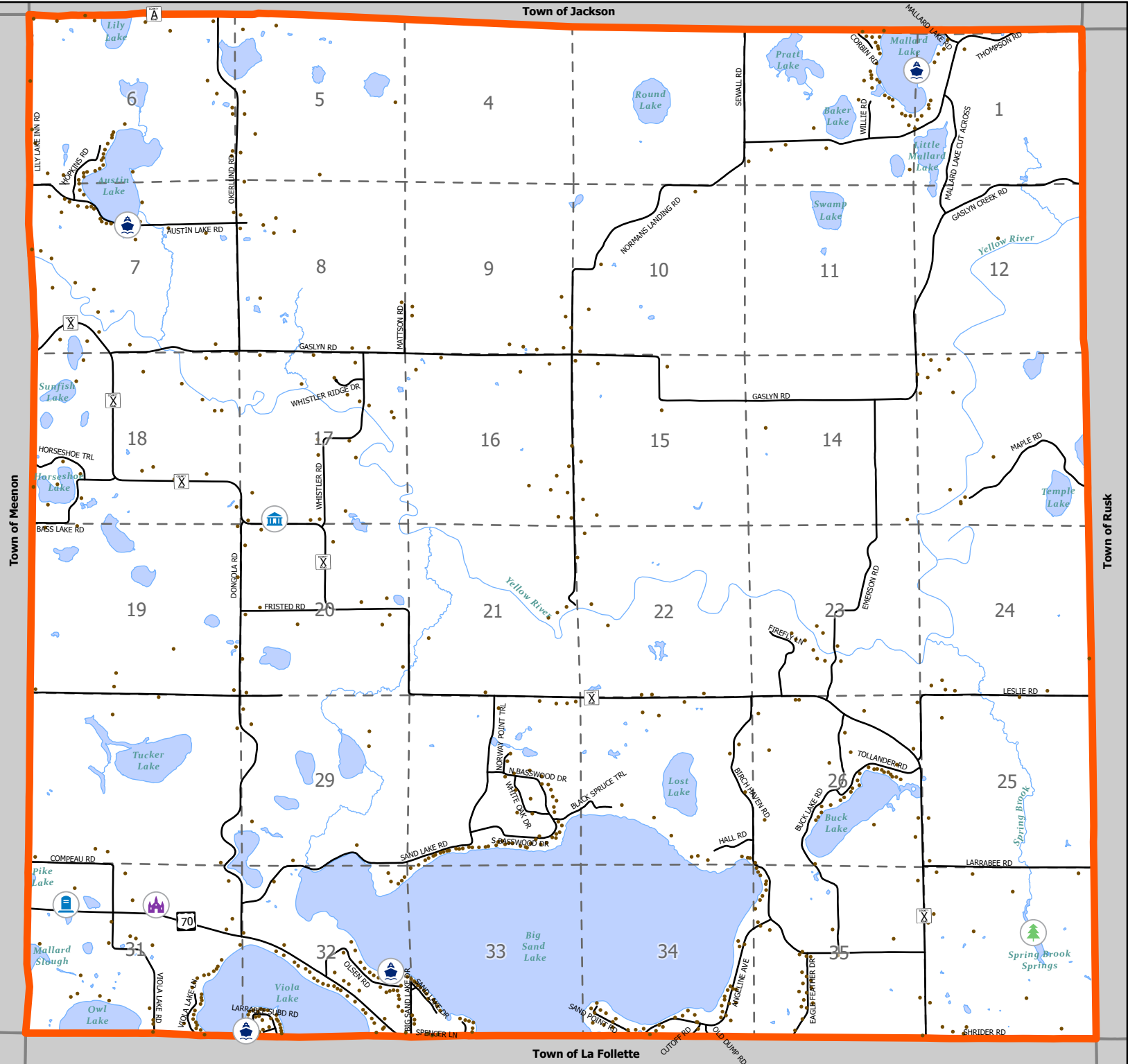
The Town of Sand Lake is administered by an elected board of one chair, two supervisors, a clerk, and treasurer. The Town of Sand Lake has no plans to replace either the Town Hall or the Town Shop but is committed to maintaining the historic character of the Town Hall, the former Dongola School, and the functionality of the Town Shop.

One of the biggest challenges that the Town of Sand Lake is likely to face regarding utilities and community facilities is the impact of growth on the cost of providing such services. Research by UW-Madison Extension, the American Farmland Trust, and others has shown that not all new development pays for itself. In other words, the cost of the increased demand on public services and facilities resulting from new development often exceeds the revenue generated in new taxes and fees paid. This seems to be true of residential development in particular. As a result, this plan recommends that substantial new developments provide an analysis of the cost of providing community services as part of the development review process. It also recommends that impact fees are considered as a potential tool for funding needed facility and service improvements. The actual pattern of growth on the landscape can also impact the cost and efficiency of delivering services. In general, dispersed development is more costly to service than clustered or concentrated development. This plan recommends that the town carefully manage growth to minimize the demand for increased services and facilities and encourages the use of cluster or conservation design in order to avoid a dispersed development pattern.

# Town of Sand Lake Burnett County, WI

## Comprehensive Plan 2023 Map 4-1: Community Facilities

- Structure Location
-  Cemetery
-  Church
-  Park/Recreation
-  Town Hall
-  Public Access Site
- Road
-  River/Creek/Stream
-  Lake/Large River/Flowage
- - - PLSS Section
-  Town Boundary



## **4.2 Planned Utility and Community Facility Improvements**

Comprehensive planning includes identifying the need for expansion, construction, or rehabilitation of utilities and community facilities. In addition to infrastructure needs, there are also service level needs that may arise. For example, additional police service, the need for a building inspector, or additional park and recreation services may become necessary.

### **Administrative Facilities and Services**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on existing administrative facilities and services in the Town of Sand Lake.

#### Short Term

- Continue to maintain the historic character of the Town Hall, the former Dongola School.
- Continue to maintain the functionality of the Town Shop.

#### Long Term

- At this time there are no plans to replace or improve the Town Hall or the Town Shop beyond routine maintenance.

### **Police Services**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on existing police services in the Town of Sand Lake.

### **Fire Protection and EMT/Rescue Services**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on existing fire and emergency medical/rescue services.

### **Schools**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on the schools that serve the Town of Sand Lake. No short-term or long-term recommendations have been identified. Existing schools are anticipated to be adequate to meet the needs of the town over the planning period.

### **Libraries, Cemeteries, and Other Quasi-Public Facilities**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on existing libraries, post offices, and private recreational facilities in Burnett County. Refer to Chapter 4 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on churches and cemeteries in the Town of Sand Lake.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on existing park and recreational facilities in the Town of Sand Lake.

### **Solid Waste and Recycling**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on existing solid waste and recycling services in the Town of Sand Lake.

### **Communication and Power Facilities**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on the communication and power facilities that serve the Town of Sand Lake.

### **Sanitary Sewer Service**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on sanitary sewer service in Burnett County.

### **Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) in Burnett County.

### **Public Water**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on public water supply in Burnett County.

### **Stormwater Management**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on stormwater management in the Town of Sand Lake.

### **Health Care and Child Care Facilities**

Refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on health care and child care facilities in Burnett County. No short term or long term recommendations have been identified. Existing health care and child care facilities are anticipated to be adequate to meet the needs of the town over the planning period.

### **Local Roads and Bridges**

Refer to the *Transportation* element of this plan and the *Transportation* element of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for information on roads and bridges.

#### Short Term

- Ensure ongoing maintenance of local roads and bridges.

#### Long Term

- Examine necessity of replacement/reconstruction of local roads and bridges.

### **4.3 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

#### **Goal 1: Support the efficiency, quality, and coordinated planning of town government, community facilities and services, and utilities.**

##### **Objectives:**

- A. Consider the efficiency of both town service delivery and town facilities operation, while striving to meet public expectations with respect to both service levels and costs.
- B. Consider the impacts of all development proposals on the cost and quality of town and community facilities and services.
- C. Guide all intensive development to areas where appropriate utilities, community facilities, and public services are available.
- D. Monitor the need for new, expanded, or rehabilitated services and facilities.
- E. Strive to maintain an adequate level of properly trained town staff and volunteers.
- F. Explore opportunities to provide or improve town facilities, equipment, and services cooperatively with other units of government.
- G. Encourage increased coordination between community facilities and utilities planning and planning for other elements such as land use, transportation, natural resources, and cultural resources.

#### **Goal 2: Consider functionality and accessibility of parks and recreational facilities when developed.**

##### **Objectives:**

- A. Monitor the adequacy of park and recreational facilities, and identify areas where improvements are needed.
- B. Consider accessibility for all age groups and abilities at appropriate town park and recreational facilities.
- C. Pursue state, federal, and private funding programs that can aid in the acquisition and development of parks, trails, and scenic or environmentally sensitive areas.
- D. Consider the continued viability of outdoor recreational pursuits when reviewing development proposals and making land use decisions.
- E. Maintain existing and seek public access to waterways.

**Goal 3: Ensure proper disposal of wastewater to protect groundwater and surface water resources.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Assess the potential impacts to groundwater when reviewing a proposed development that will rely on private onsite wastewater treatment systems.
- B. Work cooperatively with providers of public wastewater treatment when reviewing a proposed development that will rely on public sewer service.
- C. Encourage the use of alternative wastewater treatment options (i.e., new technologies, group sanitary systems, public sewer, etc.) where appropriate.

**Goal 4: Ensure that the town's water supply has sufficient capacity, remains drinkable, and is available to meet the needs of residents, businesses, industry, and agriculture when considering new development.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support town-wide leadership and coordination of efforts to monitor groundwater quality and potential contamination issues.
- B. Encourage the increased use of wellhead protection planning as cooperative efforts between municipalities.
- C. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on public and private wells.

**Goal 5: Ensure that roads, structures, and other improvements are reasonably protected from flooding.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support the preservation of environmental features that minimize flooding such as wetlands and floodplains.
- B. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on the adequacy of existing and proposed stormwater management features including stormwater storage areas, culverts, ditches, and bridges.
- C. Control increased runoff from new developments to reduce potential flooding and flood damage.
- D. Encourage the use of stormwater management practices to abate nonpoint source pollution and address water quality.

**Goal 6: Encourage effective solid waste disposal and recycling services that protect the public health, natural environment, and the general appearance.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support public involvement in decisions involving the type, location, and extent of disposal facilities and services provided in the town.
- B. Continually explore town provisions for solid waste, hazardous waste, and recycling services and opportunities for greater cooperation or cost-effectiveness.

- C. Require substantial development proposals to adequately address solid waste disposal and recycling needs.

**Goal 7: Ensure the provision of reliable, efficient, and well-planned utilities to adequately serve existing and planned development.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Cooperate in the planning and coordination of utilities with other agencies and units of government where possible.
- B. Minimize conflicts between land uses and balance desired service levels with potential negative impacts to the environment, community character, and planned growth areas when reviewing the proposed design and location of telecommunication, wind energy, or other utility towers.
- C. Support and consider development of alternative and renewable energy sources.

**Goal 8: Support access to quality health and child care facilities.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support requests for the development of properly located and operated health care and child care facilities.
- B. Support school districts and community organizations in their sponsorship of child care and early development programs.
- C. Support improved transportation options to and from regional health care facilities.

**Goal 9: Ensure a level of police protection, fire protection, and emergency services that meets the needs of existing and planned future development patterns.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Provide an adequate level of police protection, law enforcement, and emergency response through Sheriff and Emergency Management programs.
- B. Support the provision of fire protection and emergency services through local fire departments, ambulance services, and first responders.
- C. Encourage the continued use of police, fire, and emergency medical service mutual aid and cooperative agreements.
- D. Support the formation of community watch programs in the town.

**Goal 10: Promote quality schools and access to educational opportunities.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Coordinate planning efforts with the school districts that serve the town in order to allow them to anticipate future growth and demographic changes and respond with appropriate facilities.
- B. Support school districts, technical colleges, University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension, and community libraries in their efforts to increase community education.



## **4.4 Utilities and Community Facilities Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

### **Policies and Recommendations**

- UCF 1. The town shall annually create a budget that includes transportation, public facility, and other capital needs.
- UCF 2. The town shall require substantial development proposals provide an assessment of potential impacts to the cost of providing town facilities and services. The depth of analysis required by the town will be appropriate for the intensity of the proposed development.
- UCF 3. The town shall require planned utilities, service facilities, and roads be designed to limit the impact to environmental corridors, natural features, and working lands (farmland and woodlands).
- UCF 4. The town shall require the cost of improvement, extension, or construction of public facilities be borne by those whose land development and redevelopment actions that made such improvement, extension, or construction necessary.
- UCF 5. The town shall consider intergovernmental and other cooperative options before establishing, expanding, or rehabilitating community facilities, utilities, or services.
- UCF 6. The town shall support efforts that are consistent with the comprehensive plan to maintain public recreational resources.
- UCF 7. The town shall require new development and planned utilities to use best management practices for construction and site erosion control.
- UCF 8. The town shall require new developments and planned utilities to ensure that groundwater and surface water resources are not negatively impacted through use or development.

- UCF 9. The town shall support the county wastewater ordinance and septic permit process.
- UCF 10. The town shall require new development and planned utilities to address the impact upon the town's groundwater supply in the planning and construction process.
- UCF 11. The town shall require new development and planned utilities to address flooding potential.
- UCF 12. The town shall require new development and planned utilities to address effective solid waste and recycling services.
- UCF 13. The town shall require telecommunication and other utility towers be designed to be as visually unobtrusive as possible, to support multi-use and reuse, and be safe to adjacent properties.
- UCF 14. The town shall require new developments to address potential access to telecommunications and broadband internet access.
- UCF 15. The town shall support broadband internet access for all residents.
- UCF 16. The town shall support local, county, state, and national efforts to provide sufficient access and transportation to health care and child care facilities.
- UCF 17. The town shall require new development and planned utilities to address the ability of the specific agencies to provide appropriate emergency services to all residents of the town.
- UCF 18. The town will contract with the county to negotiate ambulance service for the town and will participate in these negotiations.
- UCF 19. The town shall support school districts, technical colleges, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension, community libraries, and community education to the degree they serve the residents of the town.

## **4.5 Utilities and Community Facilities Programs**

### **Wisconsin Department of Administration**

The Wisconsin Department of Administration Community Development Block Grant-Public Facilities (CDBG-PF) Program offers competitive grant funds to help support infrastructure and facility projects. Examples of eligible projects include improvements, repairs, or expansions of streets, drainage systems, water and sewer systems, sidewalks, and community centers.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration Community Development Block Grant-Public Facilities Economic Development (CDBG-PFED) Program offers grant funds to local governments for public infrastructure projects that support business expansion or retention. Examples of eligible applications include new or improved water & sewer service and streets that result in business expansion and job opportunities for low and moderate-income individuals.

### **Wisconsin Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP)**

The Wisconsin Rural Community Assistance Program assists small communities throughout Wisconsin with utility, financial, asset management and other needs. Wisconsin RCAP is part of Great Lakes RCAP, administered by Great Lakes Community Action Partnership.

**Recycling Control Commission**

The Recycling Control Commission is a two-county intergovernmental unit which was created in 1991 to provide recycling and waste management services. The programs serve the residents of Washburn and Burnett Counties.

**Northwest Cleansweep Program**

The Northwest Cleansweep Program collects household hazardous waste from residents free of charge in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn Counties.

## 5. Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

### 5.1 Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Plan

Land development patterns are directly linked to the agricultural, natural, and cultural resource base of a community. This resource base has limitations with respect to the potential impacts of development activities. Development should be carefully adjusted to coincide with the ability of the agricultural, natural, and cultural resource base to support the various forms of urban and rural development. If a balance is not maintained, the underlying resource base may deteriorate in quality. Therefore, these features need to be considered when making decisions concerning the future conservation and development of the Town of Sand Lake. For further details on agricultural, natural, and cultural resources in the Town of Sand Lake and Burnett County, please refer to Chapter 5 of the Burnett County Comprehensive Plan.

The *Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources* element may be the Town of Sand Lake's most important comprehensive plan element. Many of the issues and opportunities identified by the town during the planning process (refer to the *Issues and Opportunities* element) are related to these resources. The town is concerned with preserving surface water and groundwater quality, preserving woodlands and wildlife, protecting rural character and scenic views, limiting noise and light pollution, preserving agricultural lands, preventing conflicts between agriculture and rural housing development, preventing conflicts over mineral resources, and preserving historic and archeological sites.

#### **Agricultural Resources**

Agriculture is an important component of the Town of Sand Lake's landscape. The town's plan for agricultural resources is to preserve agricultural lands and the right to farm while also allowing for planned development. Higher density residential development is planned on lands that are less suitable for agricultural use. Lower density development would be allowed on lands critical to the town's agricultural base. Key components of the town's approach include establishing a maximum lot size in certain areas, limiting major subdivisions to planned growth areas, encouraging conservation land division design, establishing a system for site planning guidelines, and assessing the regulatory structure necessary to implement the plan.

According to the 2020 Land Use Assessment data, there were approximately 1,452 acres of farmland in the Town of Sand Lake. A variety of agriculture operations conduct business in the town and primarily include cash cropping and vegetable farming especially associated with irrigated lands. Dairy has a presence within the town and hobby farms are also common and are recognized as a component of the town's agricultural base. Prime agricultural soils are located primarily in the western half of the town, but there are scattered locations of prime soils throughout the town. Approximately 1,700 acres of the town is considered prime agricultural soil or farmland of statewide importance. Agricultural lands are a significant feature in the Town of Sand Lake, and these lands are expected to continue in agricultural use over the long term. This sentiment is reflected in the preferred land use plan (refer to the *Land Use* element) as most of the town's agricultural lands have been mapped for Agriculture (A). The (A) Future Land Use

Management Area seeks to preserve and promote a full range of agricultural uses and prevent the conversion of land to uses not consistent with agriculture.

Agricultural uses bring with them unique land management and planning implications. Irrigated lands represent substantial infrastructure investments that turn otherwise unproductive land into reliable areas for vegetable production. Because such a substantial investment has been made to create these productive lands, it is unlikely that they will be converted to other non-agricultural uses during the planning period. Unlike many other types of farmland, the market value of irrigated land is as much as, if not more than, the value of the land for development. Irrigated croplands are associated with intensive land management activities that can have impacts on the environment.

### **Natural and Cultural Resources**

The Town of Sand Lake's plan for natural and cultural resources is to help ensure that existing regulations in the town are followed and to manage growth to prevent negative impacts to these resources. Natural and cultural resources are abundant in the town and are highly valued by the town's residents. Preserving rural character, forest resources, and outdoor recreational opportunities are primary concerns as reflected in the town's issues and opportunities and goals and objectives. Substantial natural and cultural resources are present in the town and include the following:

- 6,754 acres of wetlands
- 4,330 acres of floodplains
- 2,374 acres of lakes

Many of the same tools that will be used to protect agriculture could also be used to protect natural and cultural resources, including a maximum residential lot size, conservation land division design, site planning guidelines, the zoning map, and a possible transfer or purchase of development rights program. In addition, the town may require substantial development proposals to assess potential natural and cultural resources impacts. Other tools recommended for cultural resources include maintaining the inventory of historic and archeological sites and creating a historic preservation ordinance.

## **5.2 Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

### Agricultural Resources

#### **Goal 1: Maintain the viability, operational efficiency, and productivity of the town's agricultural resources for current and future generations.**

##### **Objectives:**

- A. Help protect the town's productive lands from accelerated erosion and unwise development through local and state measures.
- B. Protect productive farmland from fragmentation and conflicts with non-agricultural uses.
- C. Protect the investments made, in both public infrastructure (roads) and private lands and improvements, that support the agricultural industry.
- D. Encourage creative, unique, and niche forms of agriculture.
- E. Promote opportunities to allow farmers and farmland owners to secure financial benefits for the preservation of agricultural lands.
- F. Encourage the use of agricultural science-based best management practices to minimize erosion and groundwater and surface water contamination.
- G. Support programs that provide mentoring of younger farmers.
- H. Increase awareness relative to the importance of protecting the viability of the town's agricultural industry.
- I. Increase awareness and understanding of farming operations, noises, odors, and use of roadways by farm vehicles and equipment.
- J. Oppose and prevent the establishment of concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in the Town of Sand Lake.

#### **Goal 2: Balance the protection of farmland with the exercise of development rights.**

##### **Objectives:**

- A. Encourage adequate buffers between agricultural uses and residential neighborhoods to minimize potential conflicts.
- B. Consider establishing site design requirements and standards that direct low density rural residential development to areas that minimize conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses and maintain the rural character of the town.

## Natural Resources

### **Goal 1: Encourage responsible management of the town's natural resources.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Promote sound forest management practices on private forest lands.
- B. Protect the public's access to public hunting and fishing areas.
- C. Encourage management strategies to create a sustainable relationship between recreational vehicles, watercraft, and natural resources.
- D. Encourage communication between communities regarding the protection of natural resources that cross municipal boundaries.
- E. Educate resource users of the town's environmental quality goals and objectives.

### **Goal 2: Protect and improve the quality and quantity of the town's ground and surface water.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Encourage land use practices that do not have detrimental impacts on the town's waters and wetlands.
- B. Support wetlands protection in the town.
- C. Discourage the introduction of new contaminants into the town's ground and surface water systems while reducing and possibly eliminating existing sources of contamination.
- D. Promote awareness of potential shoreline development impacts on water quality.
- E. Support data collection and monitoring efforts that further the understanding of factors influencing the quantity, quality, and flow patterns of groundwater.
- F. Support the preservation of natural buffers and building setbacks between intensive land uses and surface water features.
- G. Continue to develop partnerships with neighboring communities, conservation organizations, the county, and state agencies to address water quality issues.

### **Goal 3: Preserve the natural and scenic qualities of lakes and shorelines.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Support the protection of lakes and rivers.
- B. Support Burnett County shoreland development guidelines.
- C. Balance the needs for environmental protection and responsible stewardship with reasonable use of private property and economic development.

### **Goal 4: Balance future development with the protection of natural resources.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on groundwater quality and quantity, surface water quality, open space, wildlife habitat, woodlands, and impact of

light intrusion on the night sky.

- B. Promote public and private efforts to protect critical habitats for plant and animal life.
- C. Promote the utilization of public and non-profit resource conservation and protection programs such as Managed Forest Law (MFL), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and conservation easements.
- D. Promote renewable energy conservation within new and existing developments.

**Goal 5: Protect air quality.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support county and state outdoor burning regulations.
- B. Ban the burning of garbage in barrels or other methods.
- C. Work to minimize conflict between residences and agricultural odors and dust.

**Goal 6: Preserve and protect woodlands and forest resources for their economic, aesthetic, and environmental values.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Conserve large contiguous wooded tracts in order to reduce forest fragmentation, maximize woodland interiors, and reduce the edge/area ratio.
- B. Consider the use of conservation land division design, which reduces further forest fragmentation.
- C. Support efforts that preserve the integrity of managed forest lands.
- D. Encourage forestry practices that encourage woodland buffers during woodland harvest.
- E. Support educational resources on forestry practices and the benefits to a healthy forest.

**Goal 7: Balance future needs for the extraction of mineral resources with potential adverse impacts on the town.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Encourage the documentation of known economically viable non-metallic mineral deposits to ensure proper coordination with any new proposed development.
- B. Support the county efforts to regulate non-metallic mineral extraction operations to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent land uses and to ensure proper site reclamation.
- C. Consider the potential adverse impacts of proposed metallic mineral extraction operations and ensure that the siting of such facilities will not negatively impact town and county resources.



## Cultural Resources

**Goal 1: Preserve the rural character as defined by scenic beauty, a variety of landscapes, undeveloped lands, forests, water resources, wildlife, farms, rural and smalltown atmosphere, buildings integrated with the landscape, and enjoyment of these surroundings.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on those features that the town values.
- B. Discourage the accumulation of junk vehicles, poorly maintained properties, unsightly advertising, and roadside litter.
- C. Encourage the growth and development of visual, performance, and cultural arts.

**Goal 2: Preserve significant historical and cultural lands, sites, neighborhoods, and structures that contribute to community identity and character.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Identify, record, and protect community features with historical or archaeological significance.
- B. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on historical and archeological resources.
- C. Promote the history, culture, and heritage of the town.

**Goal 3: Strengthen opportunities for youth in the town including youth-oriented activities and facilities and additional job opportunities.**

### **Objectives:**

- A. Encourage youth in the comprehensive planning process.
- B. Encourage the involvement of youth in town decision making.
- C. Support youth development programs.

## **5.3 Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

## **Policies and Recommendations**

### Agricultural Resources

- ANC 1. The town shall work with the county to recognize preferred areas for agricultural expansion and to preserve the best agricultural lands for agricultural use.
- ANC 2. The town shall utilize site planning to preserve agricultural lands (as defined by the land use map) when considering new developments.
- ANC 3. The town will work with the county to update the existing Farmland Preservation Plan.
- ANC 4. The town shall consider conservation and cluster land division design as options for proposed major land divisions to minimize impacts to agriculture, active farms, natural resources, cultural resources, and rural character while accommodating residential development.

### Natural Resources

- ANC 5. The town will monitor federal, state, and county regulation changes or additions regarding agricultural, natural, and cultural resources for their impact on local resources.
- ANC 6. The town will utilize best management practices, standards, and specifications such as those of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service to the maximum extent possible for activities approved in forests, shorelands, and wetlands.
- ANC 7. The town shall require substantial development proposals within the town to provide an analysis of the potential impacts to natural resources including, but not necessarily limited to, potential impacts to groundwater quality and quantity, surface water, wetlands, floodplains, and woodlands. The depth of analysis required by the town will be appropriate for the intensity of the proposed development.
- ANC 8. The town shall support the development of lakes and rivers associations and districts.
- ANC 9. The town shall work to ensure public lake and river access where possible.
- ANC 10. The town shall require development proposals in shoreland areas to demonstrate compliance with the Burnett County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.
- ANC 11. The town shall consider conservation and cluster land division design as options for proposed major land divisions to minimize the negative impacts to agriculture, active farms, natural resources, and rural character while accommodating residential development.

- ANC 12. Environmental corridors shall be defined by location of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources designated wetlands and Federal Emergency Management Agency designated floodplains.
- ANC 13. The town shall require new development minimize potential negative impacts to natural resources such as shoreline areas, wetlands, and floodplains.
- ANC 14. The town shall require natural topography, cover, significant landmarks, trees, views, and vistas to be preserved when designing and locating new roads.
- ANC 15. The town will support efforts to ban the burning of garbage in barrels or other methods.
- ANC 16. The town shall consider the use of cluster or conservation land division to reduce further forest fragmentation.
- ANC 17. The town shall support efforts to preserve the integrity of managed forest lands.
- ANC 18. The town shall encourage forestry practices to encourage woodland buffers during woodland harvest.
- ANC 19. The town shall support educational resources on forestry practices and the benefits to a healthy forest.
- ANC 22. The town shall encourage documentation of known economically viable metallic and non-metallic mineral deposits to ensure proper coordination with any new proposed development.
- ANC 23. The town shall support county efforts to regulate metallic and non-metallic mineral extraction operations to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent land uses and to ensure proper site reclamation.

#### Cultural Resources

- ANC 24. The town shall require new development minimize negative impacts to rural character as defined by locally significant landmarks, scenic views and vistas, rolling terrain, undeveloped lands, farmlands and woodlands, aesthetically pleasing landscapes and buildings, limited light pollution, and quiet enjoyment of these surroundings.
- ANC 25. The town will work with communities and groups and organizations such as the Wisconsin Historical Society and the Burnett County Historical Society to maintain the map and database of historic and archeological sites.
- ANC 26. The town shall support identification, recording and promote preservation of historical, cultural and archaeological sites within the town.
- ANC 27. The town will work with youth in the development of proposals and programs that directly affect the younger residents of the town.

## **5.4 Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources Programs**

### **Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

The FSA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a land conservation program in which enrolled farmers agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality, in exchange for a yearly rental payment. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are 10-15 years in length.

### **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

The NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural and forestry producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, and improved creative wildlife habitat.

The NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) protects the agricultural viability and related conservation values of eligible land by limiting nonagricultural uses. This includes Agricultural Land Easements and Wetland Reserve Easements.

### **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)**

Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program administered by DATCP allows local governments to work with agriculture producers to identify prime farmland areas, preserve land, and protect soil and water quality. Eligible landowners can apply for tax credits if they meet certain criteria.

### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)**

The WDNR Targeted Runoff Management Program offers competitive grants for local governments for nonpoint source pollution.

The WDNR Surface Water Grant Program provides cost-share grants for surface water protection and restoration.

The WDNR Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program is a cost-share program to assist woodland owners in protecting and enhancing their woodlands through stewardship plan development, tree planting/regeneration, soil and water protection and improvement, wetland and riparian enhancement, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

The WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program supports several grant programs available to local governments and nonprofits. Stewardship grants fund recreational development and conservation land purchases.

The WDNR Well Abandonment Program provides funding assistance to properly fill, and seal abandoned or unused private wells.

### **Burnett County**

The Burnett County Shoreline Incentives Program provides technical assistance and cost sharing for shoreline restoration, property tax and other incentives for preserving native shoreline buffers, and outreach to promote native shorelines.

## 6. Economic Development

### 6.1 Economic Development Plan

Economic development planning is the process by which a community organizes, analyzes, plans, and then applies its energies to the tasks of improving the economic wellbeing and quality of life for those in the community. Issues and opportunities in the Town of Sand Lake related to economic development mainly include supporting regional economic development efforts in Burnett County and in areas that have the necessary infrastructure to support intensive commercial development, as well as supporting tourism, agriculture, forestry, and home-based business. All of these issues affect residents of the Town of Sand Lake and are addressed directly or indirectly in the comprehensive plan.

The reason to plan for economic development is straightforward, as economic development provides income for individuals, households, farms, businesses, and units of government. It requires working together to maintain a strong economy by creating and retaining desirable jobs which provide a good standard of living for individuals. Increased personal income and wealth increases the tax base, so a community can provide the level of services residents expect. A balanced, healthy economy is essential for community wellbeing. Well planned economic development expenditures are a community investment. They leverage new growth and redevelopment to improve the area. Influencing and investing in the process of economic development allows community members to determine future direction and guide appropriate types of development according to their values.

Successful plans for economic development acknowledge the importance of:

- Knowing the region's economic function in the global economy
- Creating a skilled and educated workforce
- Investing in an infrastructure for innovation
- Creating a great quality of life
- Fostering an innovative business climate
- Increased use of technology and cooperation to increase government efficiency
- Taking regional governance and collaboration seriously

The Town of Sand Lake's plan for economic development is to maintain the quality of life that attracts residents, visitors, and businesses, to support broadband service infrastructure, and to promote telecommuting and home-based business development to the area. Sand Lake does not have intensive areas planned for commercial uses by design; the plan is to retain existing businesses and have a mixed-use area that focuses on local service delivery and uses. Sand Lake does not envision significant local administration to function and deliver services to residents and property owners and is not positioning for regional community competitiveness related to attracting new business. Sand Lake has established commercial and industrial development policies as necessary, but the long-term economic development focus is related to encouraging sustainable residential development, supporting tourism, agriculture, forestry, home-based business, and improving overall quality of life. If new local commercial or industrial uses are found to be consistent with the plan, it will be important to address the site design and development characteristics to ensure compatibility with surrounding development and preservation of the areas rural character. The Town of Sand Lake exhibits some unique economic characteristics. The town's rural land base also plays an important economic role by supporting tourism and outdoor recreation, and by providing opportunities for quality, affordable housing.

Many of the top issues and opportunities identified during the planning process (*Issues and Opportunities* element) center around natural resources, lakefront and water-related development, costs and delivery of services, and management of rural character. The rural character and low population concentration of the town does not support a typical economic development strategy in the sense of new commercial buildings or a business park, but rather one focused on capitalizing on existing strengths such as waterfront development, home-based business, and natural resource management. The town is concerned with the amount and design of commercial development, the potential for light and noise pollution, and the negative economic and environmental impacts that might accompany such development, recruiting and retaining businesses that contribute to the tax base, and the potential for expanded employment in the services sector. To address these issues and opportunities and to implement the town’s plan for economic development, this plan includes recommendations to develop a site and architectural design review ordinance. Commercial and industrial development will be required to meet certain standards for building and site design as guided by the town’s economic development policies. The plan also recommends supporting the enhancement of relationships between educational institutions and potential employers.

## 6.2 Economic Characteristics Summary

This section provides details on educational attainment and employment in the Town of Sand Lake. For further information on economic development in Burnett County, please refer to Chapter 6 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*.

### Educational Attainment

Table 6-1 displays the educational attainment level of Town of Sand Lake and Burnett County residents 25 years and older. The educational attainment level of persons within a community can provide insight into household income, job availability, and the economic wellbeing of the community. Lower educational attainment levels in a community can be a hindrance to attracting certain types of businesses, typically those that require highly specialized technical skills and upper management positions.

**Table 6-1: Educational Attainment, Town of Sand Lake and Burnett County**

Educational Attainment	Town of Sand Lake		Burnett County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th grade	10	2.9%	171	1.5%
9-12th grade, no diploma	13	3.8%	630	5.4%
High school graduate or higher	318	93.3%	10,934	93.2%
Some college, no degree	95	27.9%	2,854	24.3%
Associate’s degree	45	13.2%	1,368	11.7%
Bachelor’s degree or higher	90	26.4%	2,440	20.8%
Graduate or professional degree	22	6.5%	750	6.4%
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>11,735</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

Educational attainment for the Town of Sand Lake was fairly similar to that of Burnett County. Over 90% of the residents 25 years and over were high school graduates or higher and over 20% of residents age 25 years and over have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. This data suggests that residents of the Town of Sand Lake are equipped to participate in all levels of the local and regional workforce.

## Employment by Industry

Employment by industry within an area illustrates the structure of the economy. Historically, Wisconsin has had a high concentration of employment in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. More recent state and national trends indicate a decreasing concentration of employment in the manufacturing sector while employment within the services sector is increasing. This trend can be partly attributed to the aging of the population and increases in technology. This information is displayed in Table 6-2.

**Table 6-2: Employment by Industry, Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County, & Wisconsin**

Industry	Town of Sand Lake		Burnett County		State of Wisconsin	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting, & mining	4	2.1%	211	3.1%	60,075	2.0%
Construction	4	2.1%	614	9.2%	181,292	6.0%
Manufacturing	34	17.5%	1,162	17.3%	546,578	18.2%
Wholesale trade	0	0.0%	97	1.4%	78,643	2.6%
Retail trade	10	5.2%	638	9.5%	330,257	11.0%
Transportation & warehousing, & utilities	4	2.1%	282	4.2%	138,086	4.6%
Information	0	0.0%	129	1.9%	42,317	1.4%
Finance & insurance, real estate & rental & leasing	16	8.2%	279	4.2%	186,468	6.2%
Professional, scientific, management, admin & waste management services	3	1.5%	325	4.8%	250,290	8.3%
Educational services, & health care & social assistance	48	24.7%	1,591	23.7%	706,772	23.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food services	54	27.8%	754	11.2%	253,135	8.4%
Other services, except public administration	7	3.6%	265	4.0%	129,846	4.3%
Public Administration	10	5.2%	361	5.4%	98,315	3.3%
<b>Civilian employed population 16 years &amp; over</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,708</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,002,074</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

Of the estimated 194 employed Town of Sand Lake residents 16 years and over, most worked in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services sector, the educational services, health, and social assistance sector, or the manufacturing sector. The breakdown of employment by industry sector in the Town of Sand Lake is fairly similar to that of Burnett County, with some key distinctions. Notably larger proportions of town employment are found in the finance, insurance, real estate, rental, as well as the leasing sector and the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service sector. A lower proportion of town employment is found in the construction and retail trade sectors.

## Employment by Occupation

The previous section, employment by industry, described employment by business type or industry, or sector of commerce. What people do, or what their occupation is within those sectors provides additional insight into the local and county economy. This information is displayed in Table 6-3.

**Table 6-3: Employment by Occupation, Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County, & Wisconsin**

Occupation	Town of Sand Lake		Burnett County		State of Wisconsin	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Management, business, science, & arts occupations	77	39.7%	2,213	33.0%	1,090,763	36.6%
Service occupations	43	22.2%	1,323	19.7%	491,842	16.5%
Sales and office occupations	22	11.3%	1,227	18.3%	617,112	20.7%
Natural resources, construction, & maintenance occupations	19	9.8%	785	11.7%	255,493	8.6%
Production, transportation, & material moving occupations	33	17.0%	1,160	17.3%	527,149	17.7%
<b>Civilian employed population 16 years &amp; over</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,708</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,982,359</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

Employment by occupation in the Town of Sand Lake is similar to that of Burnett County. Compared to Burnett County as a whole, however, there are slightly more employed in management, business, science, and art, and occupations, as well as in service occupations. These are offset by smaller portions in sales and office occupations, as well as natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations. These differences are logical given the local characteristics in educational attainment and employment by industry.

### **6.3 Desired Business and Industry**

Similar to most communities in Burnett County, the Town of Sand Lake would welcome economic opportunities that do not sacrifice community character or require a disproportionate level of community services per taxes gained. In this context, “business” could include any type of commercial use from a home-based business to a retail store, office, or other similar use. The categories or types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the community are generally described in the goals, objectives, and policies as included in this document. Desired types of business and industry include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Business and light industry that retain the rural character of the community.
- Business and light industry that utilize high-quality and attractive building and landscape design.
- Business and light industry that utilize well planned site design and traffic circulation
- Business and light industry that revitalize and redevelops blighted areas of the town.
- Businesses that provide essential services that are otherwise not available in the surrounding neighborhood, such as retail stores, personal services, and professional services.
- Home-based businesses that blend in with residential land use and do not harm the surrounding neighborhood.
- Business and light industry that provide quality employment for local citizens.
- Business and light industry that support existing employers with value adding services or processes.
- Business and light industry that bring new cash flow into the community.
- Business and light industry that fill a unique niche and complement the town’s economic development efforts.
- Business and light industry that capitalize on community strengths.
- Business and light industry that do not exacerbate community weaknesses.

### **6.4 Sites for Business and Industrial Development**

The Town of Sand Lake is not planning for significant areas of commercial and/or industrial development. The primary economic development opportunities will be through the expansion of home-based businesses in the town’s residential and rural areas, including some limited waterfront-oriented businesses where appropriate. The expansion and access of broadband internet technology will be a significant driver to stimulate the expansion or opportunity of home-based business development. Such



uses will be required to meet the applicable *Land Use* element policies, and policies of other relative element included in this plan. Other areas of the Town of Sand Lake might also be considered for more intensive business development upon approval of a plan amendment or rezoning as appropriate. The Town of Sand Lake is pro-economic growth and opportunity, as generally described in the town's goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations. However, the majority of business development within Burnett County is encouraged to take place within the Villages of Grantsburg, Siren, and Webster where adequate utilities and infrastructure exist or are planned for expansion.

While there are no industrial parks in the Town of Sand Lake, there are three industrial and business parks located in Burnett County. These are the Grantsburg Industrial Park, the Webster Industrial Park, and the Siren Industrial Park. The industrial and business parks in Burnett County occupy a total of 120 acres, of which 100 acres are currently occupied. Therefore, 20 acres, or 17% of the county's existing industrial and business park lands are available for future development.

### **Environmentally Contaminated Sites**

Brownfields, or environmentally contaminated sites, may also be good candidates for clean-up and reuse for business or industrial development. The WDNR's Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) has been reviewed for contaminated sites that may be candidates for redevelopment in the community. As of November 2021, there was one Town of Sand Lake event listed in the BRRTS database. The event is a closed abandoned container located in 1994. An abandoned container is defined as a container with potentially hazardous contents which has been inspected and recovered. No known discharge to the environment has occurred. The event is listed as closed, which means investigation and cleanup of the contamination has been completed and the DNR has approved all cleanup actions. There were no open or conditionally closed (indicating that further remediation may be necessary) sites within the Town of Sand Lake identified in the database.

## **6.5 Economic Development Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

### **Goal 1: Maintain and enhance opportunities for resource-based industries dependent on rural lands and provide opportunity for compatible economic growth and development.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Encourage resource-based industries including agriculture, forestry, and tourism which are consistent with the goals of this plan.
- B. Support agricultural and forestry working lands through appropriate utilization of land use planning and regulations.
- C. Support county efforts to establish the value of existing and potential agricultural land and help preserve them through the development of an agricultural "Transfer of Development Rights" (TDR) and/or "Purchase of Development Rights" (PDR) program.

- D. Discourage any type of development, not agriculturally related, on prime agricultural soils or lands designated for exclusive agriculture.
- E. Encourage continuation of the family farm.
- F. Encourage creative, unique, and niche forms of agriculture.
- G. Support programs that coordinate the selling of local products within local establishments.
- H. Support programs that provide opportunities for farmers to network to increase the potential to share knowledge, resources, and equipment.

**Goal 2: Support efforts to attract, retain, and expand quality businesses and industries that will improve the employment and personal income base of the town.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Encourage long term business investments that generate net fiscal benefits to the town, protect environmental quality, and provide increase to net personal income.
- B. Support incentives to those businesses of all sizes which demonstrate a commitment to protecting the environment and enhancing the town's quality of life.
- C. Promote town efforts to provide economic opportunity for all residents, including unemployed, underemployed, and special needs populations.
- D. Encourage diversified economic development to achieve and maintain a balanced tax base.
- E. Support agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, tourism, and related support services as strong components of the local economy.
- F. Support the increase of businesses that serve the aging and retirement population.
- G. Support the pursuit of local, state, and federal funding and assistance that will help local businesses become more competitive.
- H. Distinguish and promote features unique to the town in order to compete and complement the region.

**Goal 3: Maintain or improve the utility, communication, and transportation infrastructure systems that promote economic development.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support the development of regional facilities, cultural amenities, and services that will strengthen the long-term attractiveness of the town, county, and region.
- B. Monitor the infrastructure needs of established businesses in order to meet their expansion and facility needs when they are consistent with the town's comprehensive plan.
- C. Attract and support the development of world class communication systems.

**Goal 4: Encourage a quality workforce to strengthen existing businesses and maintain a high standard of living.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Support local employment of area citizens, especially efforts that create opportunities for local young adults.
- B. Support home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the area.
- C. Support area school districts, technical colleges, universities, and other non-profit agencies that promote workforce development.
- D. Support a continuum of educational opportunities responsive to the needs of the town workplace.
- E. Encourage greater interaction between the schools and businesses in order to better coordinate the required education and skills.
- F. Promote and encourage community development that creates and enhances vibrant neighborhoods, shopping, entertainment, and recreational opportunities that will attract and retain younger families and employers.

**6.6 Economic Development Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

**Policies and Recommendations**

- ED 1. The town shall support forestry, agriculture, and tourism as vital components of the town’s economic basis through appropriate utilization of land use planning and regulation.
- ED 2. The town shall support current and future economic development through appropriate land use planning and regulation.
- ED 3. The town shall direct highway corridor development to designated planned commercial areas and address building signage, lighting, service, and land use standards.
- ED 4. The town shall support home-based businesses.

- ED 5. The town shall support locating intensive commercial and industrial development 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.
- ED 6. The town shall steer industrial development to villages capable of providing sewer and water services.
- ED 7. The town should support the retention and expansion of existing businesses through facility improvements and the implementation of increased technology.
- ED 8. The town shall support efforts to provide broadband internet access for town residents.
- ED 9. The town should support existing business and new business development efforts that are consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- ED 10. The town shall coordinate regularly with the county to evaluate economic development related grants, programs, and tax incentives for their applicability to the town.

## **6.7 Economic Development Programs**

### **U.S. Department of Commerce**

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration offers two programs for assistance with economic development that apply to the Town of Sand Lake. The Public Works and Economic Development Facilities Assistance Program, which supports the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and development facilities necessary to generate private sector jobs and investment, including investments that support technology-led development, redevelopment of brownfield sites, and eco-industrial development. The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program is available to address the immediate needs of businesses and communities presently undergoing transition due to a sudden and severe job loss and to demonstrate new and proactive approaches for economic competitiveness and innovative capacity for threatened regions and communities.

### **USDA Wisconsin Rural Development**

Several loan and grant programs of benefit to local business development are available from the USDA Rural Development. One of those programs is the Community Facility Guaranteed Loans Program, which provides funding to local units of government to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services in rural areas and towns.

The Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program provides funding for rural projects through local utility organizations. The USDA provides zero-interest loans to local utilities which they in turn, pass through to local businesses (ultimate recipients) for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas. Projects may include business start-ups and expansion, community development, incubator projects, medical and training projects, and feasibility studies.

The purpose of the Business and Industry Direct Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. Loan purposes include purchase and expansion of land, equipment, buildings, and working capital. Loans to public bodies can be used to finance community facilities and construct and equip industrial plants for lease to private businesses.

The Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program provides funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment, and pay related project expenses. Examples of essential community facilities include health care facilities such as hospitals, medical clinics, dental clinics, nursing homes or assisted living facilities, public facilities such as town halls, courthouses, airport hangars or street improvements, community support services such as child care centers, community centers, fairgrounds or transitional housing, public services such as fire departments, police stations, prisons, police vehicles, fire trucks, public works vehicles or equipment, educational services such as museums, libraries or private schools, utility services such as telemedicine or distance learning equipment, and local food systems such as community gardens, food pantries, community kitchens, food banks, food hubs or greenhouses.

### **Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA)**

The WDOA Community Development Block Grant for Economic Development (CDBG-ED) provides resources to local governments that will enable them to assist economic development projects in their community. CDBG-ED grant funds are awarded to local governments to assist businesses to create or retain jobs for individuals with low and moderate incomes. Examples of eligible projects include business loans to expand facilities or purchase equipment, specialized employee training, or business infrastructure projects.

The WDOA Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED) grants are awarded to local governments for public infrastructure projects that support business expansion or retention. Examples of eligible projects include new or improved water & sewer service and streets that result in business expansion and job opportunities for low and moderate-incomes.

### **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)**

The WEDC Brownfields Grant Program provides grant funds to local governments, businesses, nonprofits, and individuals for redeveloping commercial and industrial sites that have been adversely impacted by environmental contamination. Brownfield Site Assessment provides grants of up to \$150,000 to local governments seeking to redevelop sites with economic or community development potential that are or may be adversely impacted by environmental contamination.

The WEDC Business Development Loan Program offers financing primarily to small businesses that have limited access to standard types of debt or equity financing, particularly, but not limited to, rural areas of the state. The program is intended to provide gap financing to existing businesses seeking to expand, increase operational efficiency, or enhance competitiveness in key Wisconsin industries. Loans under this program are typically not less than \$100,000 but may not exceed \$500,000.

The WEDC Business Development Tax Credits Program provides businesses located in or relocating to Wisconsin with refundable tax credits that can help to reduce their Wisconsin income/franchise tax liability or provide a refund, thereby helping to enhance their cash flow to expand the project's scope, accelerate the timing of the project or enhance payroll.

The WEDC Capacity Building Grants Program provides funds to assist organizations and local and regional economic development groups to further the goals of WEDC in its efforts to foster an advanced economic development network within the state of Wisconsin.

The WEDC Community Development Investment Grant Program supports urban, small city and rural community redevelopment efforts by providing financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with emphasis on, but not limited to, downtown community-driven efforts.

The WEDC Development Opportunity Zone Tax Credits Program supports job creation, job retention, capital investment and environmental remediation by providing nonrefundable tax credits that can help to reduce a company's Wisconsin state income tax liability.

The WEDC Disaster Recovery Microloan Program provides grants to pre-approved regional entities with the capacity to deploy rapid response microloans to businesses affected by disasters, either natural or manmade.

The WEDC Enterprise Zone Tax Credits Program supports job creation, job retention, capital investment, training, and Wisconsin supply chain investment by providing companies with refundable tax credits.

The WEDC Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program provides transferable tax credits to eligible entities rehabilitating certified historic buildings. The state program acts as a supplement to the federal program, allowing for a state credit of 20 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures for certified historic structure Industrial Revenue Bonds.

The WEDC Idle Sites Redevelopment Program offers grants of up to \$500,000 to Wisconsin communities for the redevelopment of sites that have been idle, abandoned or underutilized for a period of at least five years.

The WEDC Main Street and Connect Communities Program provides technical assistance to communities in the planning, management, and implementation of strategic development projects in downtowns and urban neighborhoods.

The WEDC Minority Business Development Program supports minority, women, and veteran business development through direct assistance to nonprofit organizations and businesses in Wisconsin.

The WEDC Workforce Training Grants Program aids businesses in attracting, developing, and retaining talent as a part of a business development project. The program provides grant funds to businesses to upgrade or improve the job-related skills of a business's existing and new employees.

### **Wisconsin Department of Tourism**

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Program offers funding and guidance to make a promotion or event come to fruition. The grant reimburses Wisconsin non-profit organizations for qualified advertising costs. There are five categories of JEM grants: New Event, Existing Event, Sales Promotion, One-Time/One-of-a-Kind, and Destination Marketing.

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism Tourist Information Center (TIC) Grant Program is open to non-profit tourism organizations, municipalities or Native American tribes who operate a regional tourist information center. Eligible expenses are limited to staffing costs for the TIC, costs to acquire promotional materials and costs for standard display equipment such as racks or shelving.

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Grant Program assists destinations in securing competitive sporting events that require an upfront cash or financial commitment.

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism Meetings Mean Business (MMB) Grant Program helps potential Wisconsin destinations by providing financial assistance for facility costs or host destination expenses as they bid for regional and national meetings or conventions.

### **Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC)**

Northwest Regional Planning Commission is a cooperative venture of the local units of government in the ten counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Douglas and the five tribal nations of Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Red Cliff, St. Croix, and Lac du Flambeau in the region. Their purpose is to assist the communities of the membership to promote sustainable economic development, develop public facilities, provide planning and technical services, efficiently manage and conserve natural resources, and protect the environment. Every three years, NWRPC, with the cooperation of the local units of government in its region, prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the entire northwest region. The CEDS is updated at the mid-point of the three-year period.

In an effort to build a focused development strategy for the northwest region, NWRPC developed four non-profit development corporations, each focusing on a specific area need and opportunity including: 1) financing for business startup and expansions (Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation), 2) technology-based business development (Wisconsin Business Innovation Corporation), 3) a regional-based Revolving loan fund (Northwest Wisconsin Rural Economic Development Fund), and 4) affordable housing (Northwest Affordable Housing, Inc.). A fifth development corporation, the Wisconsin Rural Enterprise Fund (WREF) was the first community-based venture capital fund created in Wisconsin, and it focuses on new technology development by providing bridge financing to companies that wish to market proprietary technology products in northwest Wisconsin.

### **Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation (NWBDC)**

A strategic partner of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation, has available revolving loan funds to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed rate, low down-payment, and low interest financing to assist businesses in job creation/retention and growth.

### **Burnett County Development Association (BCDA)**

The Burnett County Development Association is a private nonprofit economic development association made up of a group of individuals, businesses, and governments working to promote economic opportunities for the residents, businesses, and communities of Burnett County. The organization has representation from all areas of the county, villages, utilities, and the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. Since its inception in 1985, BCDA has worked on a variety of projects including business recruitment, retention, expansion, and financing projects. Its accomplishments and activities include coordinating efforts to serve county villages with natural gas, designation as a technology zone and providing income tax credits, promoting business fairs, communicating demographic trends, and lobbying for legislation that promotes economic and community growth.

## **7. Intergovernmental Cooperation**

### **7.1 Intergovernmental Cooperation Plan**

As social, economic, and geographic pressures affect change in the Town of Sand Lake, the community will increasingly look to cooperative strategies for creative and cost-effective solutions to the problems of providing public services and facilities.

Intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as communicating and sharing information, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements to share resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue. Intergovernmental cooperation can even involve consolidating services, consolidating jurisdictions, modifying community boundaries, or transferring territory. For further details on intergovernmental cooperation in Burnett County, please refer to Chapter 7 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*.

The Town of Sand Lake's plan for intergovernmental cooperation is to continue to rely on intergovernmental arrangements for the efficient provision of community facilities and services, to improve the planning and regulation of development along community boundaries, and to continue ongoing communication with other units of government. The Town of Sand Lake has cooperated with Burnett County, neighboring towns, and the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin for many years but hopes to build on these past successes to accomplish even more in the future.

In order to implement the town's plan for intergovernmental cooperation, this plan recommends continuing to meet and plan together on a multi-jurisdictional basis. Over the long term, the town will continue to support sharing of services and facilities where there are sustainable benefits to town taxpayers. The town will also review opportunities to share equipment with neighboring jurisdictions, pursue cost-sharing or purchase agreements to help drive down costs, and review opportunities to consolidate services while maintaining service levels. The town will consider wellhead protection as a priority when reviewing development proposals in municipal well recharge areas.

### **7.2 Inventory of Existing Intergovernmental Agreements**

The following recorded intergovernmental agreements apply to the Town of Sand Lake.

- Cooperative road maintenance and plowing agreement with the Town of LaFollette for shared roads: Larrabee Subdivision Road and Shrider Road.
- Cooperative road maintenance and plowing agreement with the Town of Meenon for shared road: Lily Lake Road.
- Cooperative road maintenance and plowing agreement with the Town of Jackson for shared roads.



### 7.3 Analysis of Relationship with School Districts and Adjacent Local Government Units

#### School Districts

The Town of Sand Lake is located within the Webster and Siren School Districts, and generally has a good relationship with the districts. Partnership between communities and schools is seen in the use of school athletic facilities that are open for use by community members.

#### Lake Protection and Sanitary Districts

There are no sanitary districts or lake protection districts within the Town of Sand Lake.

#### Adjacent Local Governments

The Town of Sand Lake has agreements with the Towns of Jackson, Meenon, and LaFollette concerning road maintenance and snowplowing on shared town roads (see Section 7.2).

#### St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin

The Town of Sand Lake maintains a cooperative relationship with the St. Croix Tribe. Some tribal lands exist along the southern edge of Big Sand Lake within the town.

### 7.4 Intergovernmental Opportunities, Conflicts, and Resolutions

Intergovernmental cooperation opportunities and potential conflicts were addressed as part of the comprehensive plan development process. The entire structure of the multi-jurisdictional planning process was established to support improved communication between communities and increased levels of intergovernmental coordination. The intent of identifying intergovernmental opportunities and conflicts as shown below is to stimulate creative thinking and problem solving over the long term. Not all the opportunities shown are ready for immediate action, and not all the conflicts shown are of immediate concern. Rather, these opportunities and conflicts may further develop over the course of the next 10 to 20 years, and this section is intended to provide community guidance at such time.

The recommendation statements found in each element of this plan specify the projects and tasks that have been identified by the community as high priorities for action.

#### Opportunities

Opportunity	Potential Cooperating Units of Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop plan implementation ordinances and other tools simultaneously.</li> </ul>	Burnett County Town of Jackson Town of Meenon Town of LaFollette
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assistance in rating and posting local roads for road maintenance and road improvement planning.</li> </ul>	Burnett County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilize a coordinated process to update and amend the comprehensive plan.</li> </ul>	Burnett County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with the school district to anticipate future growth, facility, and busing needs.</li> </ul>	Webster School District Siren School District

<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Potential Cooperating Units of Government</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to coordinate shared services and contracting for services such as police protection, solid waste and recycling, recreation programs, etc.</li> </ul>	All towns and villages in Burnett County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce conflict over boundary issues through cooperative planning.</li> </ul>	Town of Jackson Town of Meenon Town of LaFollette

### Potential Conflicts and Resolutions

<b>Potential Conflict</b>	<b>Process to Resolve</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern over too much intervention by Burnett County and the State relative to local control of land issues.</li> </ul>	Adopt a local comprehensive plan.  Take responsibility to develop, update, and administer local land use ordinances and programs.  Maintain communication with Burnett County on land use issues.  Provide ample opportunities for public involvement during land use planning and ordinance development efforts.  Adopt county zoning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential, commercial, or recreational development planned adjacent to shoreland, residential, commercial, agriculture, or forestry areas or across a town boundary.</li> </ul>	Distribution of plans and plan amendments to adjacent and overlapping governments.  Establishment of local Plan Commissions in every Burnett County community – joint community Plan Commission meetings.  Continued meetings of the County Planning Committee with representation from every Burnett County community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern over the ability or willingness of Burnett County to implement the recommendations of town plans.</li> </ul>	Distribution of plans and plan amendments to adjacent and overlapping governments.  Continued meetings of the County Planning Committee with representation from every Burnett County community.  After plan adoption, a locally driven process to develop revisions to the county zoning and land division ordinances.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vastly different zoning and land division regulations from one town to the next.</li> </ul>	Distribution of plans and plan amendments to adjacent and overlapping governments.  After plan adoption, a locally driven process to develop revisions to the county zoning and land division ordinances.  Continued meetings of the County Planning Committee with representation from every Burnett County community.  Siting of large-scale animal operations near residential and shoreland areas.  Siting of high-intensity, high-density commercial operations near (1,000') residential or shoreland.

Potential Conflict	Process to Resolve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low quality commercial or industrial building and site design along highway corridors, community entrance points, or highly visible areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Establishment of local Plan Commissions in every Burnett County community - joint community Plan Commission meetings.</p> <p>Continued meetings of the County Planning Committee with representation from every Burnett County community.</p> <p>Cooperative design review ordinance development and administration.</p>

**7.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

**Goal 1: Encourage a quality workforce to strengthen existing businesses and maintain a high standard of living.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Consider options to reduce the cost and enhance the provision of coordinated or consolidated public services and facilities with other units of government including the St. Croix Tribe.
- B. Encourage the use of joint purchasing and shared service arrangements with other units of governments where applicable to lower the unit cost of materials and supplies for such things including, but not limited to, office supplies, roadwork supplies, professional services, and insurance.
- C. Provide leadership for community cooperation efforts in the comprehensive plan development, adoption, and implementation processes.

**7.6 Intergovernmental Cooperation Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a

guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

### **Policies and Recommendations**

- IC 1. The town will pursue opportunities for sharing or contracting out town staff or facilities.
- IC 2. The town shall annually review intergovernmental agreements for their effectiveness and efficiency.

## **7.7 Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs**

### **Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA)**

The WTA is a statewide, voluntary, non-profit and non-partisan association of member town and village governments.

## 8. Land Use

### 8.1 Introduction

Land use is central to the process of comprehensive planning and includes both an assessment of existing conditions and a plan for the future. Land use is integrated with all elements of the comprehensive planning process. Changes in land use are not isolated, but rather are often the end result of a change in another element. For example, development patterns evolve over time as a result of population growth, development of new housing, development of new commercial or industrial sites, the extension of utilities or services, or the construction of a new road.

This chapter of the comprehensive plan includes local information for both existing and planned land use in the Town of Sand Lake. For further details on existing land use in Burnett County, please refer Chapter 8 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*.

### 8.2 Existing Land Use

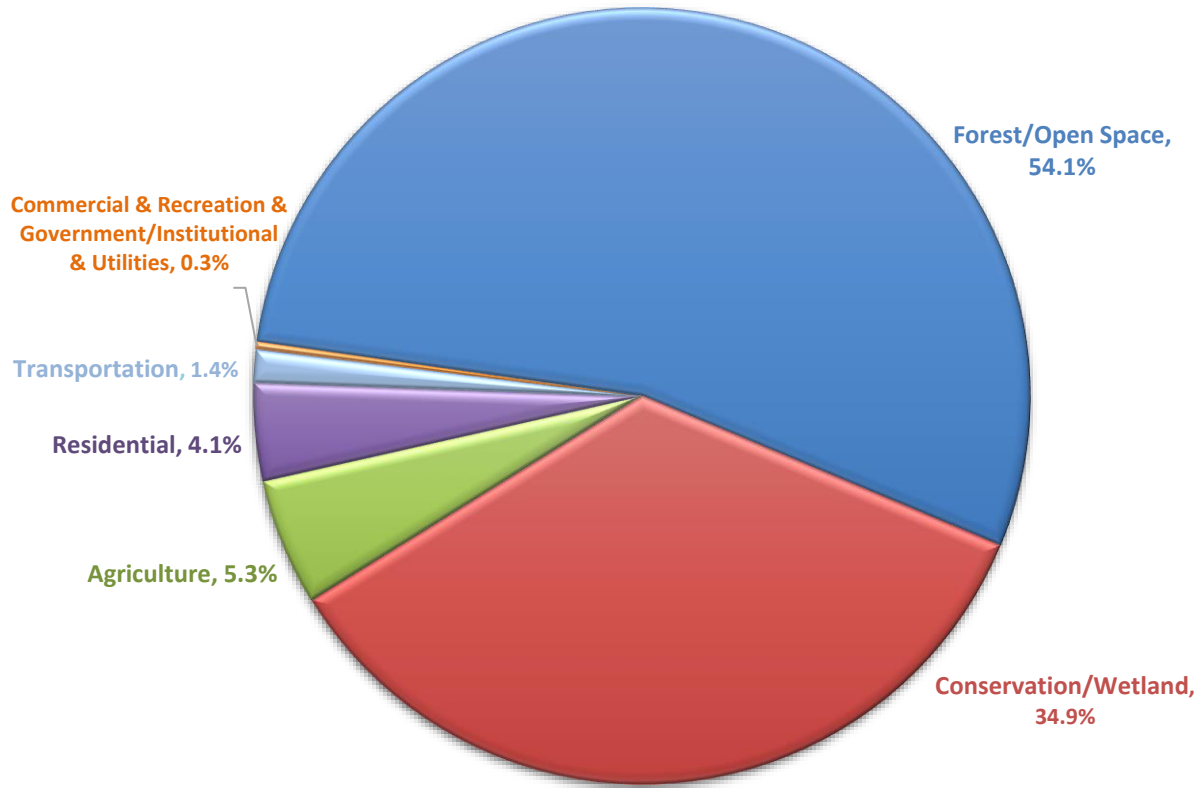
Evaluating land use entails broadly classifying how land is presently used. Each type of land use has its own characteristics that can determine compatibility, location, and preference relative to other land uses. Land use analysis then proceeds by assessing the community development impacts of land ownership patterns, land management programs, and the market forces that drive development. Mapping data are essential to the process of analyzing existing development patterns and will serve as the framework for formulating how land will be used in the future. Current land uses in the Town of Sand Lake were identified through photographic interpretation and consultation with the Town of Sand Lake. Table 8-1, Figure 8-1, and Map 8-1 together provide the picture of existing land use for the Town of Sand Lake.

**Table 8-1: Town of Sand Lake Existing Land Use**

<b>Existing Land Use Classification</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Agriculture	1,132.4	5.3%
Commercial	51.7	0.2%
Conservation/Wetland	7,497.3	34.9%
Forest/Open Space	11,616.2	54.1%
Government/Institutional	5.4	0.03%
Recreation	14.1	0.07%
Residential	876.5	4.1%
Transportation	290.0	1.4%
Utility	0.6	0.01%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,484.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Town of Sand Lake, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

**Figure 8-1: Town of Sand Lake Existing Land Use**

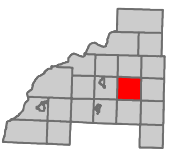
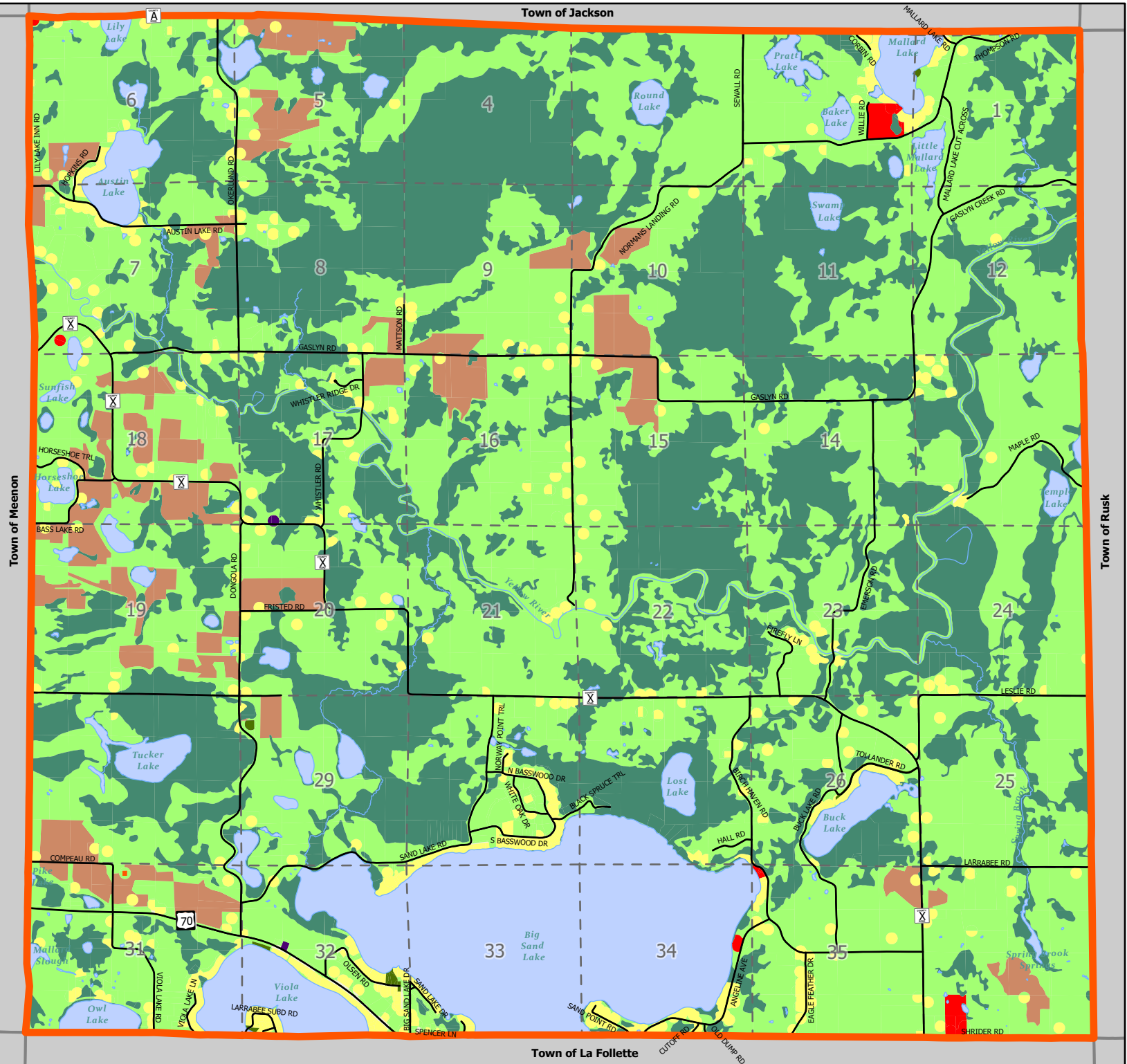


Source: Town of Sand Lake, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

# Town of Sand Lake Burnett County, WI

## Comprehensive Plan 2023 Map 8-1: Existing Land Use

-  Agriculture
-  Commercial
-  Forested/Open Space
-  Government/  
Institutional
-  Recreation
-  Residential
-  Transportation
-  Utility
-  Wetland
-  Lake/Large River/  
Flowage
-  River/Creek/Stream
-  PLSS Section
-  Town Boundary



The Town of Sand Lake, with about 21,484 acres, is roughly the size of a typical 36-section town. The town’s development pattern is diverse as influenced primarily by soil conditions. The Town of Sand Lake is still a primarily undeveloped, rural town, and passive land uses include nearly 95% of the landscape. Forest/open space is the single largest existing land use at 11,616 acres (54.1%), while agricultural uses comprise about 1,132 acres (5.3%). Developed uses make up just fewer than 6% of the town’s landscape including residential, commercial, roads, and utilities. Residential is the single largest developed land use at 876.5 acres and is dispersed throughout the town with notable concentrations of housing surrounding the town’s lakes and along/near roads.

Of note is a trend toward the conversion of seasonal homes along the town’s lakeshores to larger, year-round homes. Recent development in the town has been primarily residential, as new commercial and manufacturing development has a tendency to generally locate within the three Burnett County villages.

### 8.3 Land Ownership

Land ownership is comprised of several components that significantly affect land use. The type of land ownership (public, private, land trust, etc.) has a direct impact on how property is managed and how lands may be used in the future. Public ownership of land in Burnett County consists of municipal, county, and state-owned lands. As land management takes place under both private and public ownership, resource management programs may prescribe certain requirements and limitations that affect how lands may be used in the future. Voluntary land and resource management protection programs with significant utilization on private lands in Burnett County include Managed Forest Land (MFL) and Forest Crop Land (FCL).

Understanding land ownership and management patterns provides a link to a host of voluntary and non-regulatory plan implementation tools. Valued community features and resources can be protected for future generations not only through regulatory approaches like zoning and land division ordinances, but also through public ownership or programs like MFL and FCL. Burnett County will be best positioned to achieve its desired future when land use, land management, and land regulation are working in concert. Table 8-2 below shows land ownership in the Town of Sand Lake.

**Table 8-2: Land Ownership Town of Sand Lake**

<b>Land Ownership</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Town Land	16.6	0.1%
County Land	5,617.7	26.2%
State Land	81.1	0.4%
Tribal Land	722.0	3.4%
Private Land	15,043.7	70.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,484</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Burnett County, Northwest Regional Planning Commission



## 8.4 Projected Supply and Demand of Land Uses

Table 8-3 includes estimates for the total acreage that will be utilized by residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses in five-year increments through 2040. These future land use demand estimates are largely dependent on population projections and should only be utilized for planning purposes in combination with other indicators of land use demand.

Forecasts of future land demand in the Town of Sand Lake are based on population and development projections for the planning period from 2020-2040. Population forecasts for the Town of Sand Lake project a year 2040 population of 610 residents. Housing projections (permanent and seasonal) indicate a cumulative demand of 40 housing units between 2020 and 2040, which is an annual average of about 2 housing units. Actual absorption of residential land will be about 2.6 acres annually. This suggests that an additional reservation of land for residential purposes of 51.8 acres by the year 2040. The Town of Sand Lake has a relatively small proportion of total land being used for commercial purposes. Forecasts indicate an additional 2.9 acres through 2040. No industrial land is assessed in 2020 nor is it projected over the 20-year planning period. Agriculture is the second most dominant use within the Town of Sand Lake. Only forest and open space encumbers more total acreage. As noted previously, agriculture in the Town of Sand Lake has been declining over the past 20 years. Historic trends derived from assessment statistics were used to estimate future agricultural land demand.

**Table 8-3: Projected Land Use Demand Town of Sand Lake 2020-2040**

Land Use	2020 Estimated	2025 Projected	2030 Projected	2035 Projected	2040 Projected	Change 2020-2040
Residential	876.5	905.4	943.5	951.1	928.2	+51.7
Commercial	51.7	53.4	55.6	56.1	54.8	+3.1
Industrial	-	-	-	-	-	-
Agricultural	1,132.4	1,103.3	1,059.5	1,007.1	956.6	-175.8

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Town of Sand Lake, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

A sufficient supply of residential land has been planned through 2040 and beyond within the Future Land Use Management Areas. While the Future LUMAs allow the potential for a significant amount of residential development, the actual amount of development will be limited by demand (which also applies to other uses). In addition, residential development will be managed in accordance with the Future Land Use Management Areas outlined in Section 8.8.

There is also a sufficient supply of available commercial land. Commercial land demand may be met within the Shoreland Residential (SR) area which allows limited compatible commercial uses through home-based businesses, if compatible with the town's rural and residential areas, and limited within the Rural Residential (RR), Forestry Residential and Recreation (FRR), and Agriculture (A) LUMAs based on intensity of the proposed use and compatibility with surrounding development. Industrial uses can also be accommodated on a limited basis within the (A) and (FRR) areas and through home-based businesses if compatible within the town's rural and residential areas.

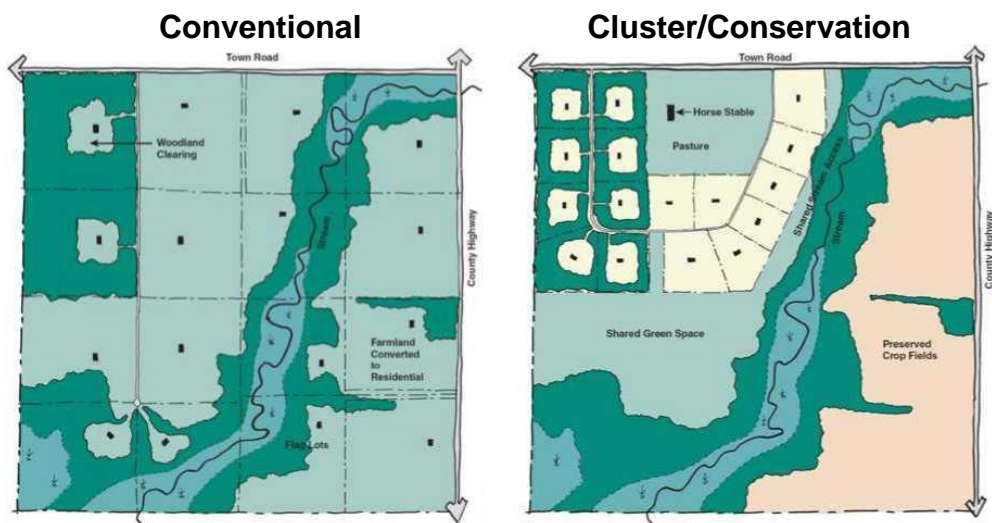
## 8.5 Density Management - A Different Approach to Managing Development

Burnett County manages growth through a zoning code that generally regulates the types of uses allowed and the associated required minimum lot sizes. The *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan* and the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* advocate an approach to establish certain maximum densities for development within some of the planned rural land use designations as managed by Burnett County ordinances. Specific recommendations are included within the Future Land Use Management Areas outlined in Section 8.8.

It is critical to understand how density is used to manage development in comparison to minimum lot size. Minimum lot size requirements set how big individual lots need to be. Maximum density requirements set how many lots can be divided from a larger parcel, regardless of how big individual lots need to be. Establishing density standards works in conjunction with minimum lot sizes (and sometimes maximum lot sizes) to ensure the goals of the area (e.g., very low density in the agriculture classification) are met while ensuring standards are applied for health and safety (e.g., minimum lot size areas for adequate septage treatment and replacement). For more information refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*.

## 8.6 Cluster/Conservation Development

In concert with adding density management provisions to achieve the goals of farmland preservation and maintaining rural character, the Town of Sand Lake and Burnett County should also consider adding residential clustering/conservation provisions as a primary development option for rural land development. Clustering typically allows relatively small residential lots, but still large enough to ensure adequate septage treatment and replacement systems. Clustering residential lots on a portion of a development tract (in conjunction with density management) allows for the conservation of farmland, forest, open space and natural resources, the ability to place home sites where the most suitable soils exist, and the potential for lower infrastructure costs. For more information refer to the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*. The following images show the difference between conventional residential lot development and cluster/conservation development:



## 8.7 Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan is one of the central components of the comprehensive plan that can be used as a guide for local officials when considering community development and redevelopment proposals. When considering the role of the future land use plan in community decision making, it is important to keep the following characteristics in mind.

- A land use plan is an expression of a preferred or ideal future - a vision for the future of the community.
- A land use plan is not the same as zoning. Zoning is authorized and governed by a set of statutes that are separate from those that govern planning. And while it may make sense to match portions of the land use plan map with the zoning map immediately after plan adoption, other portions of the zoning map may achieve consistency with the land use plan incrementally over time.
- A land use plan is not implemented exclusively through zoning. It can be implemented through a number of fiscal, regulatory, and non-regulatory tools including voluntary land management and community development programs.
- A land use plan is long range and will need to be reevaluated periodically to ensure that it remains applicable to changing trends and conditions. The plan is not static. It can be amended when a situation arises that was not anticipated during the initial plan development process.
- A land use plan is neither a prediction nor a guaranty. Some components of the future vision may take the full 20 years to materialize, while some components may never come to fruition within the planning period.

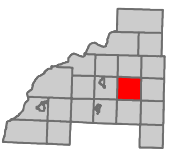
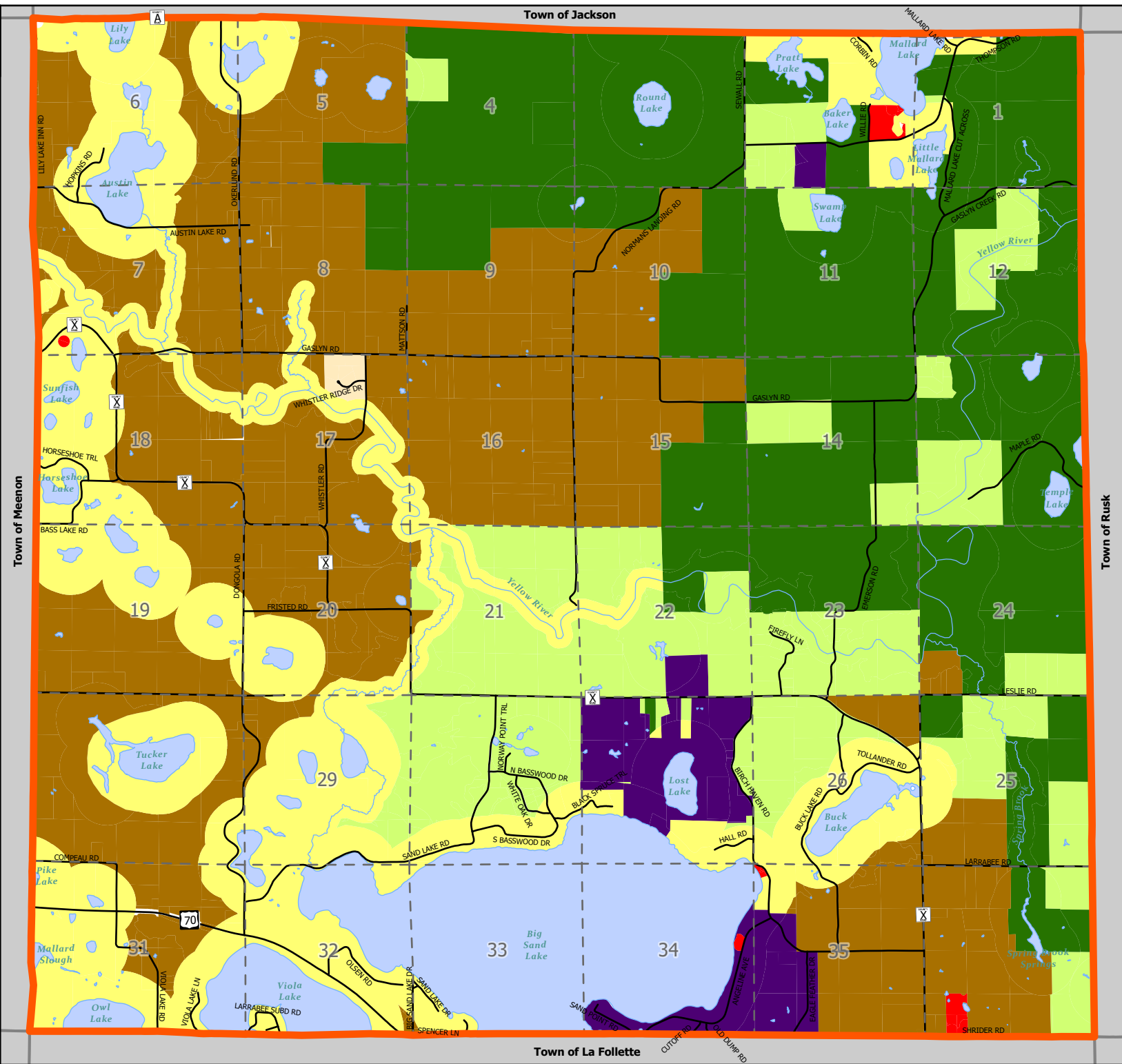
The primary components of the future land use plan are the Future Land Use Map (Map 8-2) and the Future Land Use Management Areas. These components work together with the *Implementation* element to provide policy guidance for decision makers in the Town of Sand Lake. The town's plan for future land use is intended to protect agricultural, natural, and cultural resources for future generations while also allowing reasonable opportunities for land development and making efficient use of existing infrastructure. The town will accomplish this by managing the use of lands and the density of development. Most locations in the town will allow for development to take place, but the density of development will be planned in order to preserve valued features of the landscape and to encourage growth in areas that are most suitable for development.

The future land use plan was shaped by both objective data and local opinion. The town considered the locations of natural resources, agriculture, roads, current land use patterns, land ownership patterns, and other objective factors to measure suitability of lands for various future land uses. A draft map was prepared that was reviewed by the public. Changes to the draft plan suggested by the town citizens were evaluated by the Plan Commission and the Town Board, and any accepted changes were incorporated into the plan.

# Town of Sand Lake Burnett County, WI

## Comprehensive Plan 2023 Map 8-2: Future Land Use

- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Rural Residential
- Shoreland Resiential
- Forestry Residential and Recreation
- Public Resource
- Native American Land
- Roads
- Lake/Large River/Flowage
- River/Creek/Stream
- PLSS Section
- Town Boundary



## 8.8 Future Land Use Management Areas

The following Future Land Use Management Areas (LUMAs) have been utilized on the Town of Sand Lake Future Land Use Map (Map 8-3). These descriptions give meaning to the map by describing (as applicable) the purpose, primary goal, preferred development density, preferred uses, and discouraged uses for each management area. They may also include policy statements that are specific to areas of the community mapped under a particular LUMA. Any such policies carry the same weight and serve the same function as policies found elsewhere in this plan.

### Agriculture (A)

- **Purpose:** To prevent the conversion of agricultural land to other uses that are not consistent with agriculture while optimizing agricultural production areas. Agricultural-based uses implement comprehensive plan goals by encouraging livestock and other agricultural uses in areas where soil and other conditions are best suited to these pursuits. Rural, low-density agriculture areas provide consistency with the county designated farmland preservation areas and maintains the rural, farm and “northwoods” character of the Town of Sand Lake.
- **Primary Goal:** To preserve and protect a full range of agricultural uses, while simultaneously maintaining the rural, “northwoods” character of the town by avoiding, and where applicable, opposing high-density uses, conditional uses, or development. Agriculture areas are intended to:
  - Maintain a viable agricultural base to support the agricultural processing and service industries.
  - Control public service costs in rural areas by avoiding the need to extend urban services to scattered, isolated residential areas.
  - Protect agriculture soils to help preserve farms and farming-based activities.
  - Preserve and protect surface and groundwater resources.
  - Preserve and protect the scenic beauty, rural character, and agricultural heritage of the Town of Sand Lake.
- **Desired Uses/Conditional Uses:** All agricultural uses and production activities sized to complement and be reasonably consistent with the historical density of the farm. Specifically: livestock production, dairy, agriculturally-related residences, greenhouses, horse facilities, agriculture sales and service, agricultural storage, agricultural research and development, fish and wildlife management activities, timber harvest and milling, and aquaculture. Sand and gravel extraction and home-based businesses would be permitted in accordance with county regulations governing such activity. The Agriculture LUMA may include a limited amount of low-density rural residential development, but the predominant land use should be agricultural in nature.
- **Undesired Uses/Conditional Uses:** High-density, high-intensity uses, conditional uses, or development inconsistent with the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan land use goals. Specifically:
  - Consolidated factory farm operations within 1,000’ of shoreland districts (streams, rivers, or lakes), or other factory-sized livestock operations inconsistent with the historical density of the farm or where soil conditions cannot support

these activities.

- New or expanded manufactured home parks and campgrounds adjacent to rural residential or shoreland residential parcels.
  - New or expanded commercial development not in close proximity to the town's existing commercial areas.
  - New or expanded private roads not platted to applicable state geometric standard, per Wisconsin Statute 82.50.
- **Recommended Policies:**
- Discourage undesired uses that conflict with the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, high-density, high-intensity commercial, residential, shoreland residential; or factory farm development plans or projects.
  - When applicable, support county-wide rezoning projects that enhance, preserve, and protect the town's vision and goals.
  - In areas identified by the town with the Agriculture LUMA, new non-farm residential development should be placed on the landscape in a fashion that prevents conflicts between agricultural and residential land uses.
  - Promote clustering of homes and preservation of land for open space use within mapped agriculture areas.
  - Utilize maximum and minimum lot size provisions to ensure the lots created are large enough to accommodate development, yet small enough not to consume prime agricultural lands.
  - Consider soil characteristics when siting new buildings to maintain as much of the prime soils in production as possible.

### **Commercial (C)**

- **Purpose:** To represent commercial land use in the Town of Sand Lake and anticipate limited future commercial areas.
- **Primary Goal:** To accommodate compatible low-intensity, low-impact commercial uses in areas that can support such activities.
- **Desired Uses:** Low-intensity and low-impact commercial development.
- **Undesired Uses/Conditional Uses:** High-intensity, high-impact commercial uses.

### **Rural Residential (RR)**

- **Purpose:** To maintain the rural and open character of these areas while accommodating limited residential uses. Rural residential activity has been significant as the off-lake property becomes more in demand for seasonal use. This area includes marginal or abandoned farmlands that have become attractive for rural residences.
- **Primary Goal:** Preserve agriculture, the rural landscape, open space, and natural features of the area, while accommodating limited residential development. Promote infill of areas which have already experienced development in order to increase overall density without sacrificing community character.
- **Desired Uses/Conditional Uses:** Agricultural uses, with some size limitations. Limited, low-density residential development generally located along existing roadways, in

clusters, and on larger lots than found in an urban area.

- **Undesired Uses/Conditional Uses:** All Commercial uses are discouraged except those of very low intensity such as golf courses or home-based business.
  - Consolidated factory farm operations within 1,000' of shoreland districts (streams, rivers, or lakes).
  - New or expanded manufactured home Parks or campgrounds within 1,000' of shoreland districts (streams, rivers, lakes).
  - New or expanded commercial development not in close proximity to the town's existing commercial area center.
  - New or expanded Private Roads not built to the applicable geometric standard, per Wisconsin Statute 82.50 Town Road Standards (1).

### **Shoreland Residential (SR)**

- **Purpose:** To recognize the shorelands adjacent to lakes, rivers, and streams in Burnett County as areas historically prone to development pressures. Many of the shorelands are significantly developed with both full-time and seasonal residents. Further residential development is regulated by accompanying shoreland ordinances.
- **Primary Goal:** Protect this sensitive environmental area by promoting low density residential parcels. Establishing appropriate strategies to protect and preserve the Town of Sand Lake's natural resources - especially wetlands and surface waters - by directing non-SR development away from SR LUMAs. Appropriate strategies for managing future SR LUMA development will preserve and protect the water quality, scenic views and open space, while simultaneously maintaining the rural "northwoods" character and minimizing recreational conflicts between user groups.
- **Desired Uses and Conditional Uses:** Low density, residential uses that are compatible with the shoreland and their immediate surroundings. Limited commercial uses, (lodging, cabin resorts, and associated retail and services) may be compatible with immediate surroundings if located in areas of established commercial uses.
- **Undesired Uses/Conditional Uses:** All high-density, high-intensity uses, conditional uses, or development. Specifically:
  - Consolidated factory farm operations within 1,000' of shoreland district (streams, rivers, or lakes).
  - New or expanded "2<sup>nd</sup> tier" or back-lot development within 1000' of the lakeshore district exceeding applicable shoreland requirements for density and lot size.
  - New or expanded manufactured home parks or campgrounds within 1,000' of shoreland district (streams, rivers, lakes).
  - New or expanded Private Roads not built to the applicable geometric standard, per Wisconsin Statute 82.50 Town Road Standards (1).
- **Recommended Policies:**
  - Encourage desired uses and conditional uses in the SR LUMAs that will protect this sensitive area and maintain the rural, "northwoods" character of the town, particularly by avoiding high-density uses or development. Specifically, Agricultural (with some size limitations) and low-density, shoreland residential

development consistent with lakes and rivers classification and density requirements.

- Discourage undesired uses and conditional uses in the SR LUMAs that conflict with the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, high-density commercial, seasonal, or residential development; or factory farm development plans or projects.
- When applicable, support county-wide rezoning projects that enhance, preserve, and protect the town's vision and goals for SR LUMAs.

### **Forestry Residential and Recreation (FRR)**

- **Purpose:** To maintain the character and viability of privately owned lands that are intended for resource management or recreation, while accommodating limited residential uses.
- **Primary Goal:** Maintain low development density that will support many of the features and activities residents and property owners enjoy in conjunction with reducing service costs to local taxpayers. Objectives include maintaining the rural character of the area, accommodating local conservation land and associated land management such as Quality Deer Management (QDM) programs, accommodating private forestry efforts, reducing forest fragmentation, accommodating quality outdoor recreational experiences, and limiting sporadic development that is inefficient for the towns to service.
- **Desired Uses/Conditional Uses:** Forestry, agricultural (with some size limitations), outdoor, non-commercial recreation, and limited rural residential development generally located along existing roadways, in clusters, and integrated with the natural landscape.
- **Undesired Uses/Conditional Uses:** High-density, high-intensity uses, conditional uses, or development inconsistent with the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan land use goals. Specifically:
  - Consolidated factory farm operations within 1,000' of shoreland districts (streams, rivers, or lakes), or other factory-sized livestock operations inconsistent with the historical density of the FRR parcel; or where soil conditions will not support these activities.
  - New or expanded manufactured home parks and campgrounds adjacent to shoreland district (streams, rivers, lakes).
  - New or expanded commercial development not in close proximity to the town's existing commercial area center.
  - New or expanded Private Roads not platted to applicable state geometric standard, per Wisconsin Statute 82.50.
- **Recommended Policies:**
  - Encourage desired uses and conditional designed to enhance or preserve the town's natural resources, especially wetlands, forest lands, and surface waters; and/or, provides for the continuance of forest uses. Specifically, forestry, agricultural (with some size limitations), outdoor, non-commercial recreation, and limited, rural residential development plans or projects in FRR LUMAs.
  - Discourage undesired uses and conditional uses that conflict with the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, high-density commercial or residential development and/or factory farm development.



- When applicable, support county-wide rezoning projects that enhance, preserve, and protect the town's vision and goals for FRR LUMAs.
- New residential development shall be placed on the landscape in a fashion that prevents conflicts between forest management and outdoor recreation land uses and residential land uses.
- Promote clustering of homes and preservation of land for open space, natural resources, and recreational uses.
- New development shall be placed on the landscape in a fashion that minimizes the fragmentation of large forest tracts.
- New residential subdivisions with 5 lots or more shall not be allowed in areas planned for FRR unless site planning or conservation design can be effectively used to minimize negative impacts to forestry and outdoor recreation.

### **Public Resource (PR)**

- **Purpose:** A Land Use Management Area to designate existing public lands and wetlands that are not planned for development.
- **Primary Goal:** To maintain natural features and areas as community assets and conserve these features for future generations. In addition, to prohibit development in areas which are not suited.
- **Desired Uses:** Uses may include forestry, passive recreation, wildlife protection activities, and fisheries as possible uses.

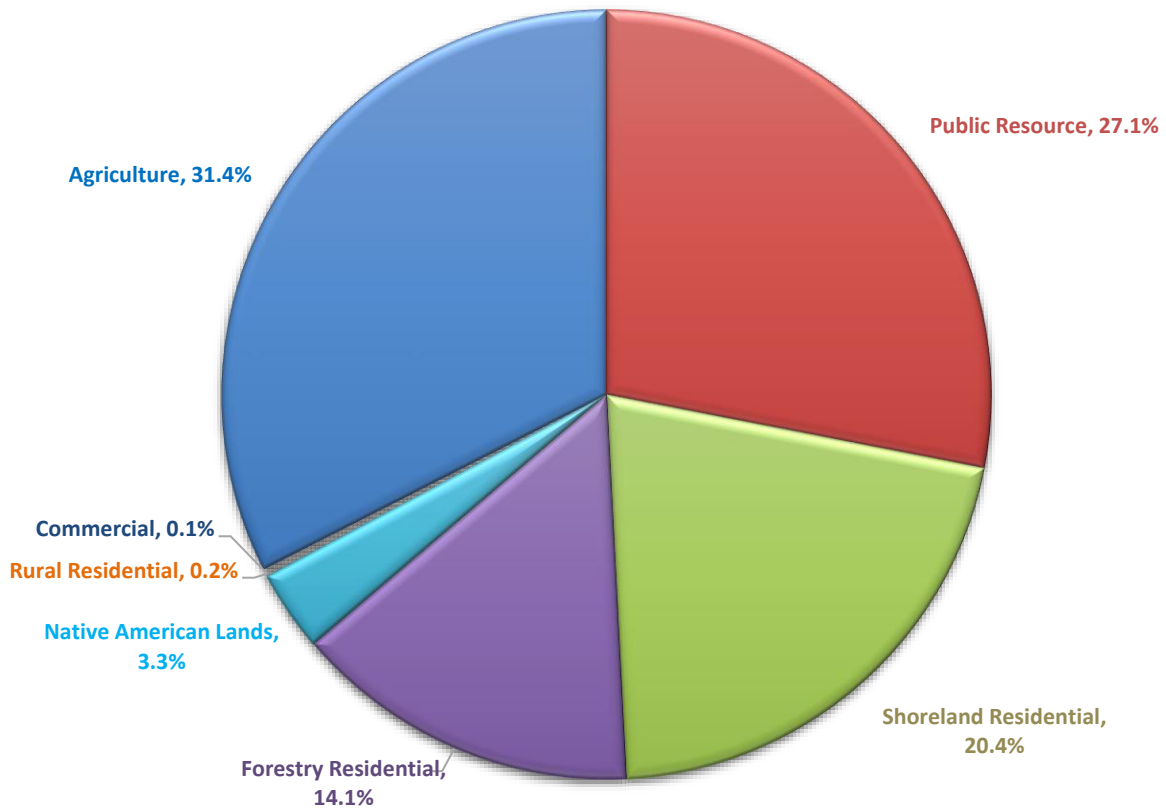
Table 8-4 and Figure 8-2 display the distribution of each Future Land Use Management Area as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

**Table 8-4: Future Land Use Town of Sand Lake**

<b>Future Land Use Classification</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Agriculture	6,735.3	31.4%
Commercial	51.7	0.1%
Forestry Residential	3,038.0	14.1%
Native American Lands	705.4	3.3%
Public Resource	5,817.5	27.1%
Rural Residential	39.3	0.2%
Shoreland Residential	4,390.6	20.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,484</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Town of Sand Lake, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

**Figure 8-2: Future Land Use Town of Sand Lake**



Source: Town of Sand Lake, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

## 8.9 Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

The following existing and potential unresolved land use conflicts have been identified by the Town of Sand Lake. While the multi-jurisdictional planning process was designed to provide maximum opportunities for the resolution of both internal and external land use conflicts, some issues may remain. Due to their complexity, the long-range nature of comprehensive planning, and the uncertainty of related assumptions, these conflicts remain unresolved and should be monitored during plan implementation.

### Existing Land Use Conflicts

- Campground development
- Lack of screening or buffering between incompatible uses
- The loss of rural character in some locations

### Potential Land Use Conflicts

- Siting of undesirable or poorly designed land uses in the interim between plan adoption and development of implementation tools
- Meeting the service needs of newly developed areas
- Over-consumption of rural lands by large lot subdivisions
- Loss of rural character in some locations
- Wind energy towers
- Increasing ATV/UTV use on town roads

## 8.10 Opportunities for Redevelopment

In every instance where development is considered in the *Town of Sand Lake 2023-2043 Comprehensive Plan*, redevelopment is also considered as an equally valid option. Infill development is the primary type of redevelopment that is likely in the town.

## 8.11 Land Use Goals and Objectives

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

### **Goal 1: Guide the efficient use of land through a unified vision of resource limitations and town goals and objectives.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Maintain a current, long-range comprehensive plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use decisions.
- B. Develop procedures and policies that ensure a balance between appropriate land use and the rights of property owners, focusing on the best interests of the town as a whole.

- C. Ensure all landowners have equitable options for proposing land use change.
- D. Help identify, evaluate, and preserve historic, archaeological, and cultural resources.
- E. Identify areas of potential conflict between the comprehensive plans of the town, surrounding communities, and the county and provide a process for the discussion and resolution of such conflicts.
- F. Consider agreements regarding land use regulation and provision of services in the growth areas outside existing villages addressing land uses, levels of service, resolution of boundary disputes, service extension policies, and transfer of jurisdictional burdens.
- G. Oppose and limit the development of new and expanding high-density campgrounds within the town.
- H. Prohibit the construction of concentrated animal feeding operations within the town.

## **8.12 Land Use Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

### **Policies and Recommendations**

- LU 1. The Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan shall identify anticipated areas for future growth, the Preferred Land Uses within growth areas, and policies that guide the review of proposed developments.
- LU 2. The town shall work with the county to improve land use management and development and overall implementation of the town comprehensive plan.
- LU 3. The town shall work with the county to update zoning, subdivision, and other land use management tools as necessary to implement the Preferred Land Use Plan.
- LU 4. All development proposals shall meet the intent of the Land Use Management Areas.

- LU 5. The town shall provide the county input and recommendations prior to rezoning, conditional use, land division (including plats and certified survey maps), or site plan approval.
- LU 6. The town shall establish a range of Land Use Management Area classifications and a range of preferred development densities and assign them to areas of the town in order to identify planning guidelines within which a variety of local land use planning and implementation options will achieve long term land use compatibility.
- LU 7. The town should review development applications to address service demands on community services or facilities.
- LU 8. The town shall encourage conservation or cluster development.
- LU 9. At a minimum, the following characteristics shall be used to define a cluster or conservation design development:
- a. Residential lots or building sites are concentrated and grouped.
  - b. The number of lots (density) takes into account the standards of the overlying Land Use Management Area.
    - The lot size is reduced from what is normally required.
    - A maximum lot size is employed to support open space requirements and manage density.
  - c. There are residual lands preserved as green space in perpetuity for the purpose of limiting density, protecting valued community features such as agriculture, natural resources, or cultural resources.
- LU 10. Proposed conditional uses shall meet the following criteria in order to gain town approval:
- a. Complies with the requirements of the applicable zoning district.
    - Use and density are consistent with the intent, purpose, and policies of the applicable Preferred Land Use classification.
    - Use and site design are compatible with adjacent uses in terms of aesthetics, scale, hours of operation, traffic generation, lighting, noise, odor, dust, vibration, and other external impacts.
    - Does not diminish property values in the surrounding neighborhood.
    - Provides assurance of continuing maintenance.
    - Addresses parking and site layout requirements.
- LU 11. Where a proposed development is found to be inconsistent with comprehensive plan policies, an applicant shall be advised they may petition for a revision to the comprehensive plan or the Future Land Use Map.
- LU 12. Home-based business shall maintain the following characteristics:
- a. They are conducted in a Preferred Land Use Management Area where such use is allowed.
  - b. They maintain compliance with the specific requirements of any applicable zoning ordinance.
  - c. They are a secondary use of a primarily residential property.
  - d. They have little to no outward appearance or negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

LU 13. The town will assess the need for a town ordinance regulating the storage of nonfunctioning vehicles, junk, scrap and related “eye sores”.

LU 14. The town shall ensure existing land use activities currently in the town are “grandfathered” into any new regulatory practice.

## **8.13 Land Use Programs**

### **Burnett County Zoning Department**

The Burnett County Zoning Department provides zoning administration, issues zoning and land use permits, and houses information and maps of zoning districts, floodplains, shorelands, and wetlands. The Zoning Department issues all Sanitary Permits for the county and inspects all systems for compliance with state codes. The department also administers the Wisconsin Fund Grant Program which provides funding assistance for failing private sanitary systems. It also enforces a Subdivision Ordinance which regulates division of land parcels.

### **Burnett County Land Information Office**

The Land Information Office was established within the Property Listing Office and is under the direction of the Land Information Office Coordinator. The coordinator's responsibilities include assuring the efficient integration of the land information system and the cooperation between federal and state Agencies, local governmental units, county departments, public and private utilities, and the private sector.

## 9. Implementation

### 9.1 Action Plan

In order for plans to be meaningful, they must be implemented, so the Town of Sand Lake's comprehensive plan was developed with implementation in mind. Not only can useful policy guidance for local decision making be found in each planning element, but an action plan is also provided containing specific programs and recommended actions. An action plan is intended to jump start the implementation process and to provide continued focus over the long term. During the comprehensive planning process, a detailed framework for implementation was created which will serve to guide the many steps that must be taken to put the plan in motion. This action plan outlines those steps and recommends a timeline for their completion. Further detail on each task can be found in the policies and recommendations of the related planning element as noted in the Task statement. Recommended actions have been identified in the following four areas:

- Plan Adoption and Update Actions
- Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions
- Ordinance Development and Update Actions
- Strategic Planning Actions

The recommended actions are listed in priority order within each of the four implementation areas. Highest priority actions are listed first, followed by medium, long-term, and ongoing or periodic actions.

#### **Plan Adoption and Update Actions**

##### Priority (Short Term) Actions

1. Task: Pass a resolution recommending adoption of the comprehensive plan by the Town Board.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission  
Timing: May 2023
2. Task: Adopt the comprehensive plan by ordinance.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: June-July 2023

##### Periodic Actions

1. Task: Review the comprehensive plan for performance in conjunction with the budgeting process.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Annually
2. Task: Conduct a comprehensive plan update.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission, Town Board  
Timing: Every 5-10 years, or as needed  
Consideration: Incorporate latest Decennial Census data in plan update.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions**

### Priority (Short Term) Actions

1. Task: Meet with other units of local government to assess/discuss plan review issues, implementation coordination, and consistency requirements.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Within 1-2 years

### Medium Term Actions

1. Task: Distribute an intergovernmental cooperation update.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Within 3-5 years
2. Task: Review and evaluate existing intergovernmental agreements and services.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission, Town Board  
Timing: Within 3-5 years

### Periodic Actions

1. Task: Utilize intergovernmental options to provide needed service and facility improvements.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Ongoing

## **Ordinance Development and Update Actions**

### Priority (Short Term Actions)

1. Task: Hold a referendum to consider adoption of the Burnett County Zoning Ordinance.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: April 2023
2. Task: Work with Burnett County to modify the zoning ordinance and map toward implementation of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission, Town Board  
Timing: 2023-2024
3. Task: Work with Burnett County to modify the county land division ordinance toward implementation of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission, Town Board  
Timing: 2023-2024
4. Task: Consider adoption of a Campground Development Ordinance.  
Responsible Party: Town Board, Plan Commission  
Timing: 2023-2024

### Periodic Actions

1. Task: Review the Town of Sand Lake Driveway Regulation Ordinance.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Ongoing, revise as needed
2. Task: Review the Town of Sand Lake ATV/UTV Routes Ordinance.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Ongoing, revise as needed



3. Task: Review ordinances of nearby towns regarding regulation of large-scale concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) of 1,000 animal units or greater.  
Responsible Party: Town Board, Plan Commission  
Timing: 2023, and as needed

## **Strategic Planning Actions**

### Priority (Short Term Actions)

1. Consider establishing an ongoing Plan Commission to assist the Town Board in the implementation of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: After adoption of the 2023 comprehensive plan update

### Periodic Actions

1. Task: Review land use and density policies for residential development to ensure longer term plan recommendations are coordinated with shorter term market conditions.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission, Town Board  
Timing: As needed
2. Task: Review ordinances and fees for their impacts on town administration and development applicants.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission, Town Board  
Timing: Annually
3. Task: Utilize PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) or a similar method to update town road construction specifications and the 5-year road improvement plan.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Annually
4. Task: Pursue funding for transportation improvements.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Annually
5. Task: Assess staffing, training, and equipment needs.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Annually
6. Task: Assess building and public facility capacity.  
Responsible Party: Town Board  
Timing: Every 5 years
7. Task: Maintain an inventory of active farms, feedlots, and manure storage facilities.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission  
Timing: As needed
8. Task: Maintain an inventory of historic and archeological sites.  
Responsible Party: Plan Commission  
Timing: As needed

## 9.2 Status and Changes to Land Use Programs and Regulations

The following provides an inventory of the land use regulations that are in effect in the Town of Sand Lake and summarizes recommended changes to each of these ordinance types. For further detail on the status of each type of implementation ordinance in Burnett County, refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* .

### Code of Ordinances

#### Current Status

The Town of Sand Lake has not adopted its ordinances as a code of ordinances. The town administers the following ordinances:

- Plan Commission Ordinance
- Driveway/Road Access Ordinance
- ATV/UTV Routes Ordinance
- Boat Launch Rules and Regulations Ordinance

#### Recommended Changes

Follow the statutory procedure for creating a code of ordinances. All existing and future ordinances should be adopted as part of the town's municipal code. The code is easier to manage and more efficient, especially during times of political and administrative succession or transition.

### Zoning

#### Current Status

The Burnett County Zoning Ordinance establishes the county's basic land use, lot size, and building location and height requirements. The Burnett County Zoning Ordinance applies to unincorporated areas of the county in towns that have adopted the ordinance. To date, all towns except the Towns of Blaine, LaFollette, Sand Lake, and Wood River have adopted the Burnett County Zoning Ordinance. The Town of Sand Lake's zoning information is displayed on Map 9-1 and Table 9-1.

#### Recommended Changes

Zoning ordinances will be one of the key tools that the Town of Sand Lake will need to utilize to implement its comprehensive plan. For the sake of efficiency and consistency, the town prefers to work with Burnett County to modify county zoning ordinances for the achievement of the town's vision for the future. A more effective zoning ordinance will be utilized to:

- Promote housing options
- Preserve agricultural lands and the right to farm
- Preserve natural resources and cultural resources including rural character
- Implement the town's site planning policies
- Better achieve the town's desired development pattern
- Better manage potentially conflicting land uses.

**Table 9-1: Zoning Town of Sand Lake**

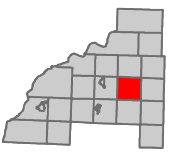
<b>Zoning Classification</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
A (Exclusive Agriculture District)	0.0	0.0%
A1 (Agriculture-Transition District)	0.0	0.0%
A2 (Agriculture-Residential District)	2,668.1	11.5%
AP (Airport District)	0.0	0.0%
C1 Commercial District)	0.0	0.0%
F1 (Forestry District)	3,805.0	16.5%
I1 (Industrial District)	0.0	0.0%
PUD (Planned Unit Development)	0.0	0.0%
RR1 (Residential Recreational District #1)	1,503.5	6.5%
RR2 (Residential Recreational District #2)	164.6	0.7%
RR3 (Residential Recreational District #3)	182.8	0.8%
Water Features	2,358.2	10.2%
Lands Not Subject to Comprehensive Zoning	12,427.4	53.8%
Lands with Shoreland Zoning	10,682.1	36.0%
<b>TOTAL ZONED (Shoreland)*</b>	<b>8,323.9</b>	
<b>TOTAL TOWN (Land &amp; Water)</b>	<b>23,109.5</b>	

\*Excludes Water Features

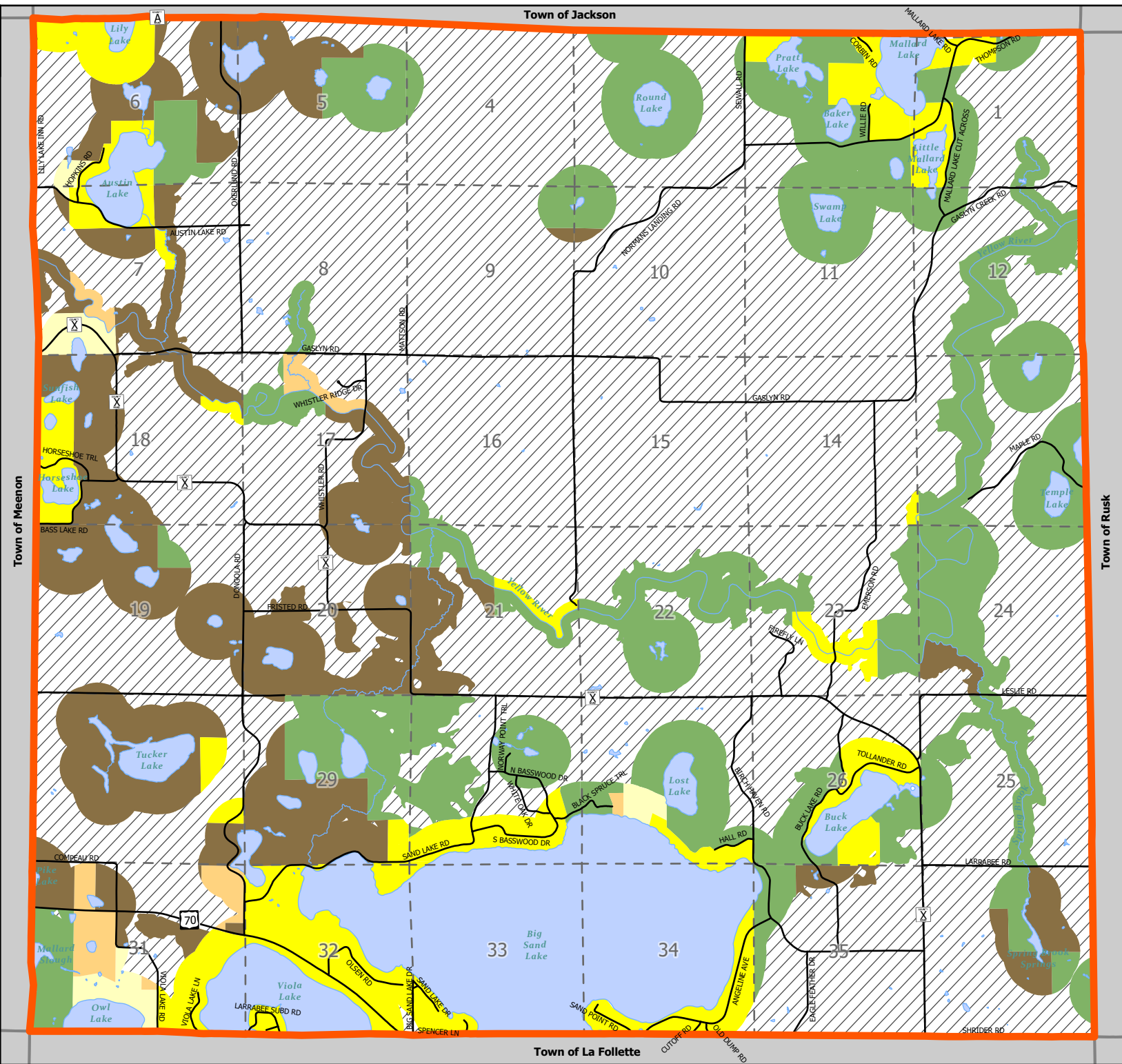
# Town of Sand Lake Burnett County, WI

## Comprehensive Plan 2023 Map 9-1: Zoning

-  Agricultural-Residential (A2)
-  Forestry (F1)
-  Residential-Recreational (RR1)
-  Residential-Recreational (RR2)
-  Residential-Recreational (RR3)
-  Not Subject to Comprehensive Zoning
-  Roads
-  River/Creek/Stream
-  Lake/Large River/Flowage
-  PLSS Section
-  Town Boundary



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Town of La Follette

On a fundamental level, the Town of Sand Lake will need to work with Burnett County to amend or create new zoning districts and to revise the Town Zoning Map. This will help implement the town’s preferred land uses and densities as established under the Future Land Use Management Areas. Coordination will be necessary between the towns in Burnett County as efficiency and cost management will be primary considerations at the county level.

**Figure 9-1: County Zoning Coordination Evaluation Criteria**



## ***Zoning Draft Development: Coordination and Evaluation Criteria Critical to County/Town Mutual Benefits***

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<p><b><u>Effectiveness</u></b> Effectiveness in implementing local and County Comprehensive Plans</p>	<p><b><u>Simplicity</u></b> Ease of understanding by the general public</p>
<p><b><u>Ease of Ongoing Administration and Cost Efficiency</u></b> Time and effort required to administer and use the density management system on a day to day basis</p>	<p><b><u>Flexibility</u></b> Amount of options available to individual towns to implement preferred land use management density and lot size provisions (within County Framework)</p>
<p><b><u>Ease of Initial Implementation and Cost Efficiency</u></b> Time, effort, and cost to initially implement the density management system</p>	<p><b><u>Potential for Success</u></b> Potential for success in achieving local and county goals – developing win-win solutions</p>

Burnett County and all towns under county zoning or considering adopting zoning administered through Burnett County will need to consider the evaluation criteria as represented in Figure 9-1. Each town in Burnett County has their own ideas on how to manage land use, but there is similarity in the goals in which the comprehensive plans were developed. The county and town comprehensive plans were developed based on an overall county-wide framework to establish consistency across the county yet provide enough local flexibility for towns to manage their respective community per their individual plan. Towns were encouraged to develop specific strategies and policies to best fit local needs during the planning process. The intent of coordinating a County Zoning Ordinance update is to help implement both county and local plans by providing a framework of consistent regulations that will implement many of the local strategies and policies. Assuming the process will be coordinated similar to the county planning process, the Zoning Ordinance revisions will also provide many options for the towns to customize the zoning districts to meet local needs while recognizing the constraints of administrative costs.

In regard to modifying or updating the zoning maps to help implement the comprehensive plan, the Future Land Use Map should not simply become the Zoning Map. The comprehensive plan and associated Future Land Use Map are not intended to be so detailed that they try to predict

what the future land uses might be (no one has a crystal ball). The Future Land Use Map is intended to be more general to reflect the goals and capture the long-term intent of creating or preserving community character. The Future Land Use Map should be kept more general and have written policy guidance for how to address rezonings, land division, development applications, etc. In many instances the plan goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations will be more important than the future land use map as they collectively manage community decisions.

In addition to the revision of the basic zoning districts and map, the Town of Sand Lake hopes to employ several tools to help review and coordinate development including the following:

- Development review standards and processes
- Conditional use review criteria
- Site planning regulations (further detailed under Land Division Regulations below)

Proposed modifications to the County Zoning Ordinance should also include provisions for impacts assessment. Land divisions, conditional uses, and other substantial development projects should be required to include an assessment of potential transportation, natural resource, and cost of community service impacts. The level of impacts assessment required should be reasonable and proportional to the intensity of the proposed development. In addition to requesting developers and permit applicants to provide an assessment of these potential impacts, the town should request that multiple site development alternatives are provided as part of the development review process.

## **Land Division Regulations**

### Current Status

The Burnett County Subdivision Ordinance applies to the town and requires county approval of land divisions that result in the creation of one or more parcels of five acres or less in size. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on existing county ordinances.

### Recommended Changes

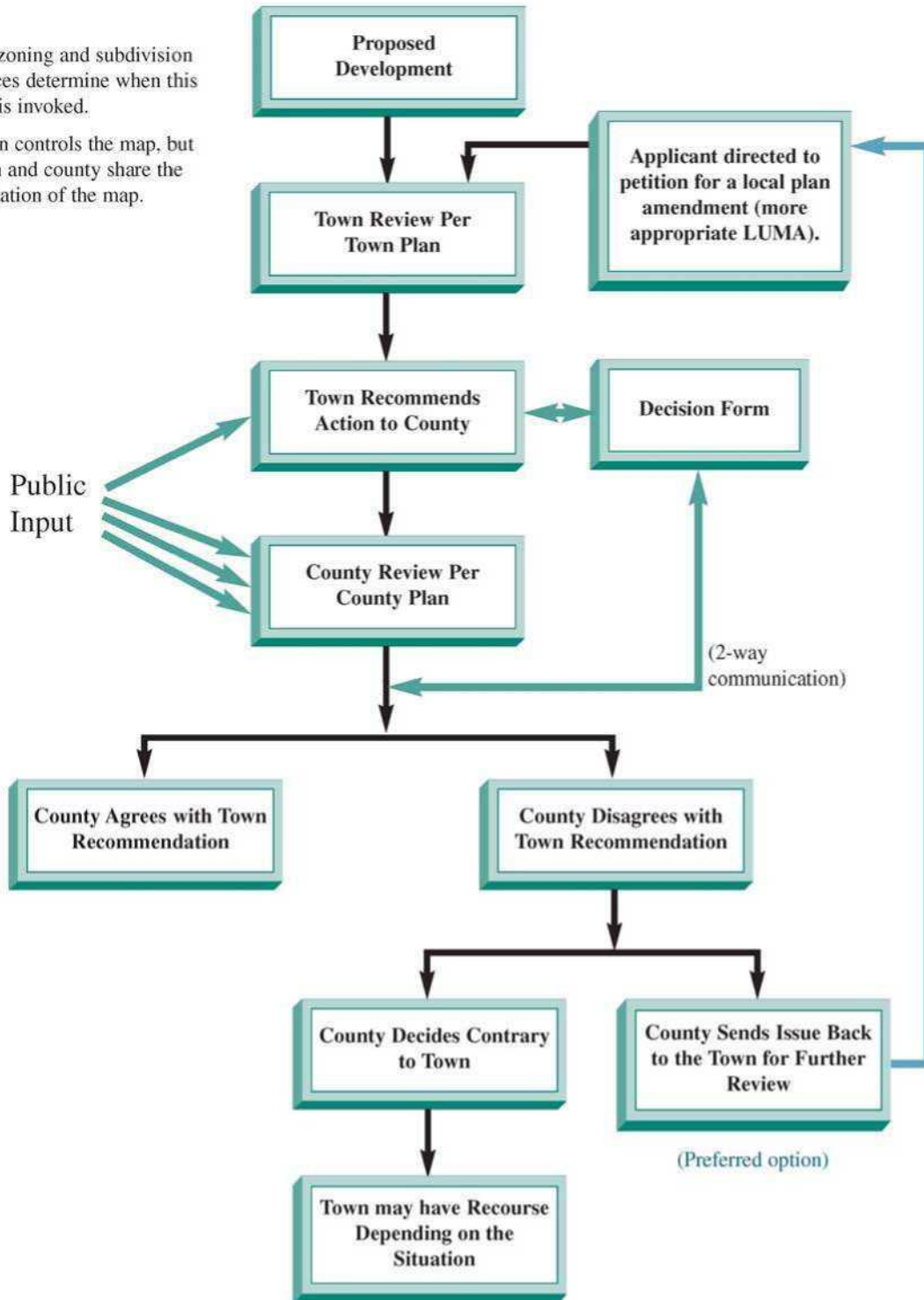
Land division ordinances will be another key tool that the Town of Sand Lake will need to utilize to implement its comprehensive plan. For the sake of efficiency and consistency, the town prefers to work with Burnett County to modify the County Subdivision Ordinance for achievement of the town's vision for the future. Similar to the Zoning Ordinance, the town and county must cooperate and coordinate the proposed modifications in accordance with Figure 9-2 to seek the win-win solutions that benefit both parties without negative impact to administration. However, should this approach fall short in implementing the town's plan, the town would consider adopting a local ordinance.

**Figure 9-2: Local Coordinated Decision-Making Process**

**Notes:**

County zoning and subdivision ordinances determine when this process is invoked.

The town controls the map, but the town and county share the interpretation of the map.



In order to better manage new town roads or other public infrastructure dedications associated with new development, the town should improve subdivision ordinance provisions for the execution of development agreements. A standard development agreement should be assembled that includes provisions for financial assurance, construction warranties, construction inspections, and completion of construction by the town under failure to do so by the developer. In accordance with Figure 9-2, clear communication between the town and the county is paramount if a shared development review process is to work correctly. It is important to note that the county zoning and subdivision ordinances determine when this process is invoked as the ordinances are administered by Burnett County.

Opportunities for town involvement occur when proposed land uses or land developments require a decision on the part of Burnett County. These include rezones, conditional uses, and land divisions, and could be expanded to include site plan review. As a town reviews a proposed land use and forwards its decision or recommendation to the county, town decisions should be documented and copied to the county. County decisions should be documented in this same manner and copied to the applicable towns. This process tool gets both units of government using their plans and speaking the same language. This approach has several advantages. Even if it is the county's position that it will generally follow a town's recommendation, the communication still needs to be clear. The reason for this is because the town and the county are not the only ones involved. The public is also involved, so just agreeing with the town will not eliminate the potential for conflict. And after 2010, the comprehensive planning law made it even more important that communities clearly document their reasoning when making decisions that should be "consistent" with the comprehensive plan. If a citizen, applicant, developer, etc. challenges a decision of a town or county, they will have a much more difficult challenge winning against the unit of government if the reasoning for a decision is clearly documented and connected to comprehensive plan policies.

## **Site Plan and Design Review**

### Current Status

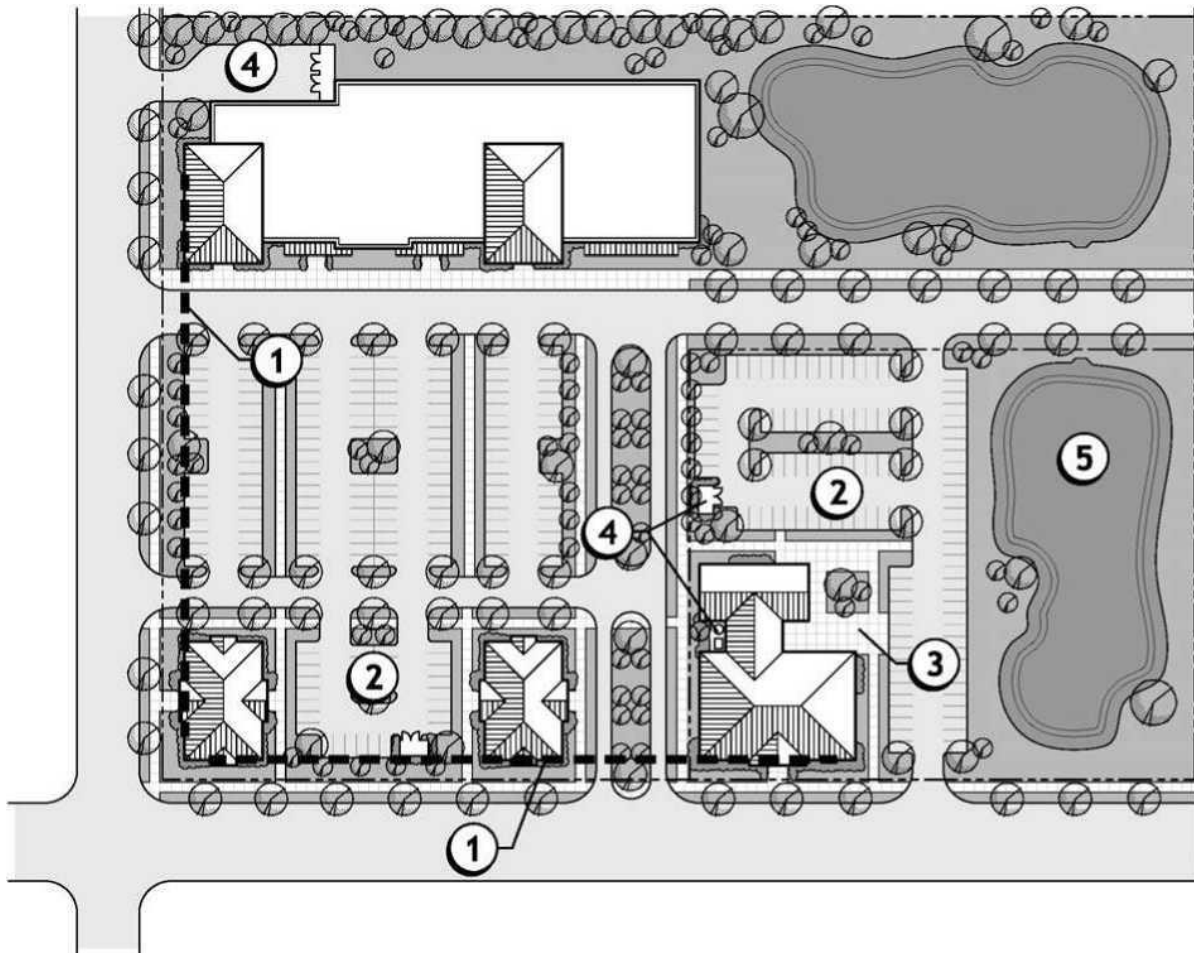
Site plan and design review standards are not currently administered by the town. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnet County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related, Burnett County ordinances. Site design refers to the overall layout of the site and the relationship of major features such as buildings, streets, parking and supporting elements.

### Recommended Changes

The Town of Sand Lake does intend to review development applications in conjunction with the Plan Commission. Site planning is not intended to be invasive to the applicant but is intended to allow the town to manage growth in conjunction with property owners to accomplish town goals. Similar to the zoning and land division ordinance discussions, it is anticipated Burnett County will incorporate basic site design requirements and standards as part of the county code, especially for proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family residential developments. This will likely be a cooperative effort with Burnett County, the surrounding towns, and possibly with incorporated communities as well. Site plan and design review requirements may address the desired characteristics of building layout and architecture, park areas, green space and landscaping, lighting, signage, grading, driveway access, and internal traffic circulation. The example denoted in Figure 9-3 represents a sample of potential considerations associated with site review.



Figure 9-3: Typical Site Design Example



**1. Building Location and Setbacks**

Buildings should be located to strengthen the definition of street edges and public areas. Building setbacks should also be consistent with those of buildings located on adjacent properties.

**2. Parking Lot Configurations and Location**

Parking lots should be designed to accommodate convenient vehicular navigation. Generally, two-way drive aisles should be 24 feet wide and non-handicapped accessible spaces should be 9 feet wide by 18 feet deep. Dead-end aisles should be avoided where possible but shall include a vehicle turn-around when used.

Parking lots should also be arranged to provide convenient access to buildings and primarily located to the sides or rear and between buildings.

**3. Public Space**

The integration of public areas including court yards, plazas and gardens into the site is encouraged. These spaces should be defined by surrounding buildings, street edges, landscaping, and natural areas.

#### 4. Service/Mechanical/Refuse Location

Service and storage areas, building mechanicals, and refuse/recycling containers should be located so that they are hidden from public view to the greatest extent possible.

#### 5. Stormwater Configuration

Stormwater retention and detention areas should be designed to enhance the landscape using natural forms and grading as opposed to rigid geometric shapes.

#### Additional Standards:

- **Building Elevation Priority** - Building elevations visible from public streets, public spaces, and residential areas shall receive the highest priority for architectural treatment and design treatment.
- **Fences** - Decorative fences made of wood, masonry, stone and ornamental metal are preferred over chain link fences. Chain link fences should be used only when there is a demonstrated security need.
- **Lighting** - Site lighting shall be provided for safety and security and directed away from adjacent properties.

Figure 9-3 represents a sample of what the town/county might assess if a development is proposed. It may not be typical or even necessary that all of the site plan criteria be included on a submitted site plan. Figure 9-3 was included to allow a reference in the need of an advanced development review. In addition, the town/county should seek public input on the establishment of these desired characteristics. The policies of the *Economic Development* element provide some initial guidance on potential design review standards.

Site planning can not only be used to provide for aesthetically pleasing development and protection of valued features of the landscape, but also to ensure that future road extensions will not be blocked by the construction of buildings or other structures. Area development plans will be required of major land divisions and commercial or industrial development proposals. These plans will lay out potential road extensions on adjacent lands. To ensure potential future road connectivity between development sites, the town's policies regarding the use of cul-de-sacs should be included in a revised land division ordinance. Temporary cul-de-sacs should be limited, but when allowed, should be constructed to the outside property line of the development site.

#### Official Map Regulations

##### Current Status

An official map is not currently administered by the town. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related, Burnett County ordinances.

##### Recommended Changes

Area development planning and site planning will be used to encourage coordinated planning between development sites, but the need for an official map may also develop over the planning period. The town should monitor the need to develop an official map that designates planned, future rights-of-way for roads and utilities in areas of expected growth.

## **Sign Regulations**

### Current Status

Sign regulations are not currently administered by the Town. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related, Burnett County ordinances.

### Recommended Changes

No specific recommendations regarding sign regulations have been identified, however, sign placement and design could be addressed by a site plan and design review ordinance, if adopted.

## **Erosion Control and Stormwater Management**

### Current Status

Erosion control and stormwater management ordinances are not currently administered by the town. Erosion control and stormwater management are addressed by the Burnett County Zoning, Subdivision, Shoreland Zoning, and Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinances, which are in effect in the Town of Sand Lake. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related, Burnett County ordinances.

### Recommended Changes

Development proposals will be required to address stormwater management, construction site erosion control, and potential increased risk of flooding in accordance with existing state and county standards.

## **Historic Preservation**

### Current Status

Historic preservation ordinances are not currently administered by the town. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related, Burnett County ordinances.

### Recommended Changes

The town supports efforts to map and develop a database of historic and archeological sites and to conduct a community survey of historical and archeological resources.

## **Building, Housing, and Mechanical Codes**

### Current Status

Building, housing, and mechanical codes are not currently administered by the Town. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related, Burnett County ordinances.

### Recommended Changes

No specific recommendations have been brought forward in regard to creating building, housing, and mechanical codes.

## **Sanitary Codes**

### Current Status

The Burnett County Sanitary Ordinance applies to the Town. Refer to Chapter 9 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan* for details on related Burnett County ordinances.

### Recommended Changes

No specific changes to sanitary codes are recommended at this time, but the town should continue to work with Burnett County for the regulation of POWTS.

### **Driveway and Access Controls**

#### Current Status

Driveway and access controls are currently administered by the town.

### **Road Construction Specifications**

#### Current Status

Road construction specifications are currently administered by the town.

## **9.3 Non-Regulatory Land Use Management Tools**

While ordinances and other regulatory tools are often central in plan implementation, they are not the only means available to a community. Non-regulatory implementation tools include more detailed planning efforts (such as park planning, neighborhood planning, or road improvement planning), public participation tools, intergovernmental agreements, land acquisition, and various fiscal tools (such as capital improvement planning, impact fees, grant funding, and annual budgeting). For basic information on non-regulatory plan implementation tools, please refer to Section 9.2 of the *Burnett County Comprehensive Plan*.

The Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations for the use of non-regulatory implementation tools including the following:

- Assess the availability of land for residential development (*Housing* element).
- Review ordinances and fees for their impacts on housing (*Housing* element).
- Pursue funding for needed transportation facilities (*Transportation* element).
- Utilize intergovernmental efficiencies to provide services and facilities (*Utilities and Community Facilities* element).
- Assess service and capacity needs including town buildings, staffing, and equipment (*Utilities and Community Facilities* element).
- Maintain the map and database of historic and archeological sites (*Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources* element).
- Work with Burnett County on the purchase of development rights and/or a donated easement program (*Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources* element).
- Support and participate in educational and training programs with local industry, schools, and government (*Economic Development* element).
- Meet with other units of government (*Intergovernmental Cooperation* element).
- Review and update the comprehensive plan (*Implementation* element).

## 9.4 Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Updates

The Town of Sand Lake should regularly evaluate its progress toward achieving the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of its comprehensive plan. It may be determined that amendments are needed to maintain the effectiveness and consistency of the plan. Amendments are minor changes to the overall plan and should be done after careful evaluation to maintain the plan as an effective tool upon which community decisions are based. According to Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (Wis. Stats. 66.1001), the same process that was used to initially adopt the plan shall also be used when amendments are made. Under current law, adopting and amending the town's comprehensive plan must comply with the following steps:

- **Public Participation Procedures.** The established public participation procedures must be followed and must provide an opportunity for written comments to be submitted by members of the public to the Town Board and for the Town Board to respond to such comments.
- **Planning Commission Recommendation.** The Plan Commission recommends its proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to the Town Board by adopting a resolution by a majority vote of the entire Plan Commission. The vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the Plan Commission. The resolution shall refer to maps and other descriptive materials that relate to one or more elements of the comprehensive plan.
- **Recommended Draft Distribution.** One copy of the comprehensive plan or amendment adopted by the Plan Commission for recommendation to the Town Board is required to be sent to: (a) every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the town, including any school district, sanitary district, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation district, or other special district; (b) the clerk of every city, village, town, county, and regional planning commission that is adjacent to the town; (c) the Wisconsin Land Council; (d) the Department of Administration; (e) the Regional Planning Commission in which the town is located; (f) the public library that serves the area in which the town is located; and (g) persons who have leasehold interest in an affected property for the extraction of non-metallic minerals. After adoption by the Town Board, one copy of the adopted comprehensive plan or amendment must also be sent to (a) through (f) above.
- **Public Notification.** At least 30 days before the public hearing on a plan adopting or amending ordinance, persons that have requested to receive notice must be provided with notice of the public hearing and a copy of the adopting ordinance. This only applies if the proposed plan or amendment affects the allowable use of their property. The town is responsible for maintaining the list of persons who have requested to receive notice and may charge a fee to recover the cost of providing the notice.
- **Ordinance Adoption and Final Distribution.** Following publication of a Class I notice, a public hearing must be held to consider an ordinance to adopt or amend the comprehensive plan. Ordinance approval requires a majority vote of the Town Board. The final plan report or amendment and adopting ordinance must then be filed with (a) through (f) of the distribution list above that received the recommended comprehensive plan or amendment.

## **Amendments and Updates**

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that a comprehensive plan be updated at least once every 10 years. However, it is advisable to conduct a plan update at a five-year interval. An update requires revisiting the entire planning document. Unlike an amendment, an update is often a substantial re-write of the text, updating of the inventory and tables, and substantial changes to maps, if necessary. The plan update process should be planned for in a similar manner as was allowed for the initial creation of this plan including similar time and funding allotments. State statutes should also be monitored for any modified language.

## **9.5 Integration and Consistency of Planning Elements**

### **Implementation Strategies for Planning Element Integration**

While this comprehensive plan is divided into nine elements, community planning issues are not confined to these divisions. Planning issues will cross these element boundaries. Because this is the case, the policies and recommendations of this plan were considered by the Town of Sand Lake in the light of overall implementation strategies. The following implementation strategies were considered.

#### **Housing**

1. Create a range of housing options
2. Create opportunities for siting of quality affordable housing

#### **Transportation**

1. Create efficiencies in the cost of building and maintaining roads (control taxes)
2. Preserve the mobility of collector and/or arterial roads
3. Create safe emergency vehicle access to developed properties
4. Create improved intersection safety
5. Create more detailed plans for transportation improvements
6. Create road connectivity
7. Create bicycle and pedestrian options

#### **Utilities and Community Facilities**

1. Create efficiencies in the cost of providing services and facilities (control taxes)
2. Create more detailed plans for facility and servicing improvements
3. Create intergovernmental efficiencies for providing services and facilities
4. Create improved community facilities and services
5. Preserve the existing level and quality of community facilities and services
6. Preserve the quality of outdoor recreational pursuits
7. Create additional public recreational facilities
8. Create opportunities to maximize the use of existing infrastructure

## **Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources**

1. Preserve agricultural lands
2. Preserve the right to farm
3. Preserve active farms
4. Preserve natural resources and/or green space
5. Preserve rural character
6. Create targeted areas for farming expansion
7. Create targeted areas for forestry expansion
8. Preserve historic places and features

## **Economic Development**

1. Change community conditions for attracting business and job growth
2. Change community conditions for retaining existing businesses and jobs
3. Create additional tax base by requiring quality development and construction
4. Create more specific plans for economic development

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

1. Create intergovernmental efficiencies for providing services and facilities
2. Create a cooperative approach for planning and regulating development along community boundaries
3. Preserve intergovernmental communication

## **Land Use**

1. Preserve the existing landscape by limiting growth
2. Preserve valued features of the landscape through site planning
3. Preserve development rights
4. Create an overall pattern of growth that is dispersed
5. Create an overall pattern of growth that is clustered
6. Create an overall pattern of growth that is concentrated
7. Preserve the influence of market forces to drive the type and location of development
8. Create a system of development review that prevents land use conflicts
9. Create a system of development review that manages the location and design of non-residential development

These overall strategies are grouped by element, but are associated with goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations in multiple elements. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the *Implementation* element describe how each of the nine elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated with the other elements of the plan. The implementation strategies provide planning element integration by grouping associated policies and recommendations in multiple elements with coherent, overarching themes.

The Town of Sand Lake selected from the available strategies to generate its policies and recommendations. The selected implementation strategies reflect the town's highest priorities for implementation, and areas where the town is willing to take direct implementation responsibility. Each planning element has detailed goals and objectives that set the course of action followed

and supported by detailed and specific policies and recommendations that enable the goal fulfillment. The goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations represent the selected strategies the town felt were important enough to focus on over the planning period.

### **Planning Element Consistency**

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the *Implementation* element describe how each of the nine elements of the comprehensive plan will be made consistent with the other elements of the plan. The planning process that was used to create the *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043* required all elements of the plan to be produced in a simultaneous manner. No elements were created independently from the other elements of the plan, therefore reducing the threat of inconsistency.

There may be inconsistencies between the goals and objectives between elements or even within an individual element. This is the nature of goals and objectives. Because these are statements of community values, they may very well compete with one another in certain situations. The mechanism for resolving any such inconsistency is the policy statement. Where goals or objectives express competing values, the town should look to the related policies to provide decision making guidance. The policies established by this plan have been designed with this function in mind, and no known policy inconsistencies are present between elements or within an individual element.

Over time, the threat of inconsistency between the plan and existing conditions will increase, requiring amendments or updates. Over time, additional plans regarding specific features within the community may also be developed (e.g., outdoor recreation plan, downtown development plan, etc.). The process used to develop any further detailed plans should be consistent with this *Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan 2023-2043*.

### **9.6 Measurement of Plan Progress**

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the *Implementation* element provide a mechanism to measure community progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan. An acceptable method is to evaluate two primary components of the plan, policies, and recommendations, which are found in each plan element.

To measure the effectiveness of an adopted policy, the community must determine if the policy has met the intended purpose. For example, the Town of Sand Lake has established a *Transportation* element policy that states, "Dead-end roads and cul-de-sacs shall be avoided to the extent practicable and allowed only where physical site features prevent connection with existing or planned future roadways." To determine whether the policy is achieving the community's intention a "measure" must be established. In the case of this policy, the measure is simply how many dead-end roads or cul-de-sacs have been constructed since the plan's adoption, and how many of those were necessitated by the site conditions. Each policy statement should be reviewed periodically to determine the plan's effectiveness.



Likewise, recommendations listed within each element can be measured. For recommendations, the ability to “measure” progress toward achievement is very straight forward in that the recommendations have either been implemented or not.

To ensure the plan is achieving intended results, periodic reviews should be conducted by the Plan Commission and results reported to the governing body and the public.

## **9.7 Implementation Goals and Objectives**

Community goals are broad, value-based statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are more measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and implementation of plan recommendations. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

### **Goal 1: Promote integration of the comprehensive plan policies and recommendations with the ordinances and implementation tools that affect the Town of Sand Lake.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Update and/or revise as needed the comprehensive plan on a regular schedule (at least every 10 years) to ensure that the plan remains a useful guide.
- B. Require that administration, enforcement, and implementation of land use regulations are consistent with the town comprehensive plan, where applicable.
- C. Develop and update as needed an “Action Plan” as a mechanism to assist the Town Board to bring implementation tools into compliance with the comprehensive plan.

### **Goal 2: Balance appropriate land use regulations and individual property rights with community interests and goals.**

- A. Provide continuing education to the public that will lead to a more complete understanding of planning and land use issues facing the town.
- B. Maintain an implementation tool development review process whereby all interested parties are afforded an opportunity to influence the outcome.
- C. Consider a land use (agricultural, industrial, commercial, and residential) development review process whereby all interested parties are afforded an opportunity to influence the outcome.

## **9.8 Implementation Policies and Recommendations**

Policies and recommendations build on goals and objectives by providing more focused responses to the issues that the Town of Sand Lake is concerned about. Policies and recommendations become primary tools the town can use in making land use decisions. Many of the policies and recommendations cross element boundaries and work together toward overall implementation strategies. Refer to Section 9.5 for an explanation of the strategies cited as sources for many of the policies and recommendations.

Policies identify the way in which activities are conducted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives. Policies that direct action using the word “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 “will” or “should” are advisory and intended to serve as a guide. “Will” statements are considered to be strong guidelines, while “should” statements are considered loose guidelines.

Recommendations are specific actions or projects that the Town of Sand Lake should be prepared to complete. The completion of these actions and projects is consistent with the town’s policies, and therefore will help the town fulfill the comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

### **Policies and Recommendations**

- I 1. The Town of Sand Lake shall maintain the comprehensive plan as an effective tool for the guidance of town governance and will update the plan as needed to maintain consistency with state comprehensive planning requirements.
- I 2. The Town of Sand Lake shall appoint a Plan Commission to assist the Town Board with land use policy and decisions.
- I 3. The Town of Sand Lake shall maintain a review process whereby all interested parties are afforded an opportunity to influence the outcome.
- I 4. The action plan located within the comprehensive plan will be updated when tasks are accomplished, and new items will be added when appropriate.
- I 5. The Town of Sand Lake will review the comprehensive plan annually for performance on goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations, for availability of updated data, and to provide an opportunity for public feedback. This review does not need to be as formal as the comprehensive review required at least every 10 years by Ch. 6.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.
- I 6. The Town of Sand Lake Plan Commission has the responsibility to review and make a recommendation on any proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance, official map, shoreland zoning ordinance, and subdivision ordinance, etc. affecting the town.

# Appendix A: Public Participation Plan

TOWN OF SAND LAKE, BURNETT COUNTY  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

**I. Introduction**

Section 66.1001 (4) (a) specifies that local governments preparing a comprehensive plan must adopt written procedures that are:

*“Designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan.”*

In addition, the written procedures must:

*“Provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative and amended elements of a comprehensive plan, and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments.”*

**II. Public Participation Efforts**

The Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County will foster public participation through the efforts described below. Additional efforts beyond those listed may also occur during plan development. The core efforts to gather public input throughout the planning process include:

- Posting public information and hearing notices in accordance with Wisconsin’s Open Meeting Law;
- Maintain a folder at the Town Hall which contains all meeting agendas and minutes;
- Posting notices regarding all public information meetings and public hearings at the three designated bulletin boards in the Town;
- Accepting written comments throughout the planning process; and
- Holding at least one public hearing to receive comments on the recommended draft document before being submitted to the Sand Lake Town Board for action.

**III. Procedures for Adopting the Comprehensive Plan**

The Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County shall comply with all of the procedures for adopting a comprehensive plan under section 66.1001 (4) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

The Town of Sand Lake Planning Commission will approve by a majority vote, at a regularly scheduled and publicly notice meeting, a resolution that recommends to the

Sand Lake Town Board the adoption of the developed Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan. Action taken by the Planning Commission shall be recorded in the official minutes of the Commission.

In accordance with State Statute 66.1001 (4), Procedures for Adopting a Comprehensive Plan, one copy of the plan recommended for adoption by the Planning Commission will be sent to the following:

1. Burnett County.

2. Every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County.
3. Northwest Regional Planning Commission.
4. The Wisconsin Land Council and/or Department of Administration.
5. The public libraries that serve the area in which the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County is located.

A copy of the draft and final comprehensive plan will also be made available for public review at the Sand Lake, Burnett County Town Hall and on the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County website.

The Town Board will hold at least one public hearing on the ordinance and comprehensive plan. The hearing will be preceded by a Class 1 notice as specified under Ch. 985 and published at least 30 days before the hearing is held.

At least 30 days before the public hearing to adopt or amend the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County shall provide written notice to all of the following:

1. An operator who has obtained, or made application for, a permit that is described under s. 295.12(3)(d).
2. A person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit under s. 295.20. Any other property owner or leaseholder who has an interest in property pursuant to which the person may extract nonmetallic mineral resources, if the property owner or leaseholder requests in writing that Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County provide the property owner or leaseholder notice of the hearing described in 66.1001 (4)(d).

**IV. Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County Comprehensive Planning Process**

The Town of Sand Lake, Burnett County will follow the process and procedures for adopting the comprehensive plan as listed in §66.1001 of the Wisconsin State Statutes and this public participation plan.

Edward L. Weber  
\_\_\_\_\_, Chairman

Attest: Feb Schenckman  
\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk

Approved by the SAND LAKE Town Board on this 14 day of DECEMBER 2021.

# **Appendix B: Addendums**

## **Addendums**

### **Purpose**

This appendix is a placeholder for future minor Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan amendments. Minor plan amendments can be incorporated into the plan as addendums by inserting the revisions into this section. This eliminates the need to edit the digital version of the plan and reprint large portions of the document when updates and revisions are made. Major plan amendments, however, should not be handled through an addendum. When a major amendment is made, all previous minor amendments (handled through addendum) should also be incorporated into the document at that time. Major plan amendments include revisions that affect large (or multiple) portions of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan or Future Land Use Map.

Each addendum of the Town of Sand Lake Comprehensive Plan should include:

- Resolution and/or ordinance references
- Date of public hearing, Plan Commission action, and Town Board adoption
- Reference to the exact plan section, table, figure, language, or map location description being revised, replaced, eliminated, etc.
- The new language, data, or map information description.

### **Procedure**

The revision process for adding an addendum follows the process for plan amendments outlined in Section 9.4 of this plan.