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Introduction

The Town of Three Lakes is a great place to live, work and play. We're interested in welcoming new neighbors and businesses interested in sharing the unparalleled natural beauty of our hometown. We're happy to work with people who want to join us.

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is the general vision of the Town for future growth and development. The Town welcomes development as a positive contribution to the community through creation of jobs, sustaining the school system and supporting public services. Reasonable interaction between proponents and the community will result in development that makes sense for everyone.

It is important to note that Oneida County adopts and administers the Town's zoning under current law. All zoning decisions require concurrence from the County. The Town works to maintain a cooperative relationship with the County. The Town encourages development proponents to be in contact with the County as early in the project development as possible.

Land Use Vision

The Town of Three Lakes' central attraction is the stunning natural environment we enjoy. Lakes, woods and a rural setting make Three Lakes a great place to live, work and play. We intend to build a stronger economic base while leaving these natural resources for our children. To do that, we welcome residential growth, expanded and new business, industry and tourism.

The Overall Vision

Three Lakes offers affordable public services for commercial and industrial development in the Town center, which has municipal sewer and water. The Town will work cooperatively to help business and industry establish in other locations where those services are not essential. The Town welcomes additional residential development, especially which adds to the strength of our schools, is welcome. The Town will work with people interested in adding value to the community through a process which will be predictable, timely and rational. We will be mindful of our resources, but not paralyzed by unwillingness to embrace change.

Development Goals

Commercial and Industrial: Our community needs year-round jobs to support our community, families and schools. Three Lakes has an educated, reliable workforce prepared to build new businesses and industries. In a time when employers everywhere have identified scarcity of qualified workers as a major obstacle to growth, Three Lakes' workforce is ready and able to meet that need. There is ample available land served by the two major corridors of Highway 45 and Highway 32. By road, Three Lakes is less than 30 minutes from US 8, which connects to Interstate 39 for westward and south-bound traffic. Eastbound traffic is an hour from Highway 29, a freeway connecting to Interstate 43 and Milwaukee, Chicago and points beyond. Rail access is available through the Canadian National terminals in Rhinelander and Shawano.

In conjunction with Oneida County, the Town of Three Lakes is willing to help entrepreneurs grow or start businesses, seeking all available incentives, grants and loans.

Residential Growth

The Town has the key to real estate – location. Situated along a unique chain of twenty-eight beautiful, clear lakes, the Town's name is an understatement. There are indeed three major lakes, but they are accompanied by dozens of others. Better yet, there are scenic peninsulas extending into the lakes, land bridges across them and wooded shorelines throughout the Town. It's no surprise that hundreds of nice homes are already here. There is opportunity for more.

Land prices in Three Lakes are competitive, making a Northwood lake home possible for many people. The Town is supportive of lakeshore development which is protective of the shoreland. The Town is interested in single-family homes, multi-family and tourist based housing, a mix of affordable housing, and also senior housing to allow our citizens to age in place.

After the economic turmoil of the late 2000's, Wisconsin communities are beginning to find their way again. As the economy recovers, the Town is determined to respond flexibly and reasonably to opportunities for new housing and business. We are convinced that the quality of life which distinguishes Three Lakes can be maintained and enhanced through growth

THE FUTURE LAND USE MAPS

Planning can do no more than identify preferences for future growth. Many variables which cannot be envisioned or readily controlled influence land use decisions. The future land use plans are intended to create predictability for current residents and prospective businesses. We have made a careful study of our area to identify areas which, by reason of sound conservation practices, are not suitable for development. Doing so avoids wasting time and money on proposals which are inappropriate because the land involved is, for example, a wetland. Equally important, the maps identify areas where the Town is interested in seeing activity.

The Future Land Use maps (pages 10-11 through 10-13) illustrate the goals, objectives, visions and policies expressed by all of the varied data collected throughout the development of the plan. The maps reflect, to the greatest extent feasible, the desires, expectations and demands of residents and landowners for future development, redevelopment and preservation activities in the town of Three Lakes.

The Future Land Use Chapter

Chapter 10: Future Land Use is the key element of the comprehensive plan. It will serve as the primary guidance tool for the Town Board and Plan Commission in implementing the Town of Three Lakes Comprehensive Plan during the next 20 years. Information related to the review and revision of the comprehensive plan appears in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.

It needs to be clear that future land use maps are not zoning districts. They are not regulations. They are informed guides to how future zoning decisions might be made. They are based on information which existed at the time the maps were developed. More site-specific information may make a parcel of land usable for more purposes than were contemplated at the time the maps were developed. The reverse is true as well; information may establish that some land shown as developable is not.

The key, therefore is to view maps as general guidelines intended to identify the mix of future development, and the general locations, in which the Town wishes to grow.

Development Standards

The Town encourages growth which enhances the well-being of everyone in the community, including the developer. In reviewing proposals, the Town will work with proponents to develop agreed-upon conditions of approval which tailor the development to the context of our community. Some proposals, for example, may call for planting a row of evergreens to provide screening. The Town wants to minimize glare from lighting while encouraging safe illumination. While the Town intends to work cooperatively with developers, the Town does not intend to micro-manage development proposals.

Preserving Rural Character

The term “rural character” is necessarily subjective. Three Lakes is proud of the small-town feel it has maintained despite development pressure on our lakes. It is possible to maintain that feel while encouraging necessary growth and development. To do that, the Town identifies the following strategies:

- Maintain existing residential neighborhoods in single-family development at comparable densities.
- Additional residential development should be platted on lots, with setbacks and street layouts which are consistent with the adjacent housing. If denser or different kinds of development are included, there need to be buffer areas which provide transition from existing to new development.
- Protect the Town’s forestlands, working to manage conversion of forestland to residential uses in a manner which addresses impact on forests.
- Protect lakes, streams and wetlands.
- Encourage commercial and industrial development, promoting the use of the Town’s center and its public sewer system for land uses which generate substantial traffic.

A Healthy Town Center

Three Lakes has a unique Town Center which makes it possible for residents and visitors to shop relax and recreate locally. There is more potential for the Town center. The Town Center has excellent highway connections in U.S. 45, Wisconsin 32 and Highway A. Seasonal and year-round residents will benefit from encouraging more businesses to locate in the Town Center.

Three Lakes should work with local businesses to evaluate use of public programs such as the Main Street program, business improvement districts, public improvements that promote visitors, and marketing to the area. If zoning changes are needed to facilitate growth and development, the Town should work with businesses to promote those changes.

Growth is important, but the Town wants to encourage efficient, attractive growth. In the past, many communities failed to prevent development from occurring lengthwise along road rights of way, one lot deep. That results in slower traffic because driveways and accesses proliferate. Where possible, the Town hopes developers will propose creation of developments served by a single access point which take advantage of the depth along major highways.

The Town welcomes new town center development, especially:

- Retail businesses which serve both peak season and year round needs for groceries, supplies and services.
- Recreational activities
- Fabrication and manufacturing

Community Design Tools

Concept Review

The Town of Three Lakes encourages landowners interested in proposing development to ask for time on the Plan Commission agenda before proposals are finalized. There's no substitute for the give-and-take of an informal discussion to find out how a development proposal will fare. It makes sense to get the feel of the Plan Commission before spending a great deal of money on a plan and locking into a concept. It often helps a proposal, as people with years of experience in the area and knowledge of the process can share their insights. Concept review discussions are not binding on either the Town or the developer. They are held in open session. The Town encourages them, however, because they can save a lot of time in the formal process later.

Developers contemplating proposals in the Town should start by talking to Town staff and, when a proposal is in fairly definite form, ask to be on the Plan Commission agenda. Working together makes the ultimate result better for all.

Zoning Ordinance

Zoning defines the general categories of permissible uses of land. As noted, Oneida County administers zoning in the town. For example, if a parcel of land is located in the residential zone, the owner may construct a residence of the type referenced in the ordinance. There are “permitted” uses, which the owner may undertake without further permission, while some still need administrative review by the Town. There also are “conditional” uses, which require a permit from the County. These kinds of uses are allowable if, with appropriate conditions of approval, they will not adversely impact the area.

Zoning is the first consideration in deciding how to use land. If the zoning is not proper, the use may not occur unless the zoning is changed. This comprehensive plan provides a general guide to how zoning changes will be received by the Town. Zoning is required by Wisconsin law to be consistent with this Plan. If necessary, however, the Plan can be changed.

Subdivision Ordinance

If a landowner wishes to create a new parcel or parcels of real estate, it may be necessary to submit either a proposed subdivision plat or certified survey map. Very generally stated, a certified survey map is used to create 4 or fewer lots out of one original parcel. Plats are used to create 5 or more lots. The process of land division review involves preparing a surveyed map of the land showing the location of existing and proposed roads, lot lines and other major features. It is the process by which the general concepts of a land development are made into specific, saleable lots.

In Three Lakes, land divisions require approval of both the Town and Oneida County. The developer is advised to work with a surveyor and, if necessary, an engineer, who are familiar with the Town and County ordinances.

Land division review is a “quality control” process. It is not a permitting process. If land is zoned residential, it can be developed into appropriate residential lots. The development, however, must have the roads, utilities and features required by the ordinance.

In the development review process, the Town encourages developers to meet initially with the Plan Commission for concept review of proposed land divisions. It’s good to talk about important issues such as road layout, lot numbers and size, landscaping and open space, before a great deal of money is expended. It will speed the process and save resources.

Once the development has jelled as a concept, the developer will submit either a proposed certified survey map or a preliminary plat. These documents are the stage at which the development will be shaped into its near form. After this review, the certified survey map can be approved (with conditions as needed). The preliminary plat can be approved, which will lead to approval of a final plat if the final document conforms to the preliminary plat.

The town is willing to work with developers interested in applying for zoning changes and plat review in one process. It is possible, through conditions of approval, to assure that both the zoning changes and the preliminary plat will be in place before final approval is given.

Private Property Rights

The issue of private property rights versus community need underlies every comprehensive planning effort. Throughout the development of this plan, landowners have expressed their desire to see property rights protected. Those rights have been respected, to the greatest extent feasible, throughout this planning effort. This plan illustrates planned development patterns for all property owners to understand and use to make their own personal development decisions. Should a landowner disagree with the Future Land Use Map, or another aspect of this plan, he or she has the right to petition the Town for an amendment to the document. All amendments will occur through a public process, including a public hearing. The process for plan revision is summarized in *Chapter 12*.

SENIOR HOUSING

The issue of adequate, affordable and desirable housing for an aging population is one facing nearly every community in the country (see *Chapter 4: Housing*, pages 4-9 to 4-11). Three Lakes is no different. The population of town residents age 65 and older, as a percentage of the total population grew by just 2.0% between 1990 and 2000. However, the number of residents in that age group increased by 25%, from 469 in 1990 to 584 in 2000. As the baby boomer generation reaches retirement age in the next five years, counties, cities, villages and towns are scrambling to develop strategies to serve the needs of this demographic group, the largest generation in American history. *Chapter 4: Housing* described a variety of alternative housing strategies for Three Lakes seniors.

THREE LAKES SCHOOL DISTRICT

The population of children 5 years of age or younger declined by 3.1% between 1990 and 2000 (see *Chapter 3: Community Profile*, page 3-3 Table 3). The effects upon the community, should this trend continue in the future, will be significant. A decline in the number of school-age children in town will have a direct effect on the school district. A highly respected school district is a prime factor for young families deciding upon a place to live. Young families are key demographic determining the success and livability of a community. As such, what benefits the town benefits the school district and vice versa.

ACCESS CONTROL ORDINANCE

As communities expand, increased development along arterial highways generates more and more demand for driveways and intersecting local roads to serve abutting and nearby businesses, industries and neighborhoods. Without access planning and management, arterials become increasingly congested and safety is compromised. Access management, through an access control ordinance, is the process of planning and maintaining appropriate access spacing, access-point design, and total number of access points to a highway system. The goals of access management are to: Protect the public investment in highway facilities;

- Protect the function of state highways;
- Preserve operational safety, capacity and efficiency;
- Promote orderly development of adjacent properties;
- Minimize long-range adverse impacts of future improvements
- Minimize maintenance costs;
- Delay or eliminate the need to expand or relocate a facility; and
- Permit expansion of two-lane facilities to four-lane facilities on the existing location;
- Eliminating the need to completely relocate the facility.

Text excerpted from *Guide to Community Planning In Wisconsin*, Brian Ohm, UW-Extension, 2009.

In implementing access management, a balance must be sought between the interests of highway users and the owners or occupants of nearby lands; public investments in highway improvement and maintenance; and desirable land development. This balance requires that access reasonably and suitably accommodates landowners' use of their property. The intent of access management is to allow adequate, safe and reasonably convenient access to land and land uses, consistent with the interest of public safety and the preservation of the public investment in the highway facility.

Future Land Use Maps

At the time this Plan was developed, the Town made a serious effort to identify the proportions of various preservation, growth and development which was anticipated. These areas of proposed land use are not zoning maps. They provide general guidance for residents and developers for the future direction of the Town.

At this time the maps were developed, the areas involved were measured. The Town of Three Lakes does not expect that the acreage will, in 2034, turn out to be the exact area identified. It might not even be close.

The maps do identify aspirations. Note that on the future land use map for the Town Center, the neighborhood to the northeast of the Town Center is mapped as Conservation Residential District. Town, by identifying that area, has expressed the hope that it will develop residentially. The specific form of development identified, conservation neighborhood, is desired but not mandated. Residential development is generally consistent with the designation, and might be considered by the Town. The Future Land Use maps appear on pages 10-11 through 10-13 of this chapter. They will be used to guide the development within Three Lakes during the next 20 years.

HOW WERE THE FUTURE LAND USE MAPS DEVELOPED?

The Future Land Use maps began with the Existing Land Use maps as a foundation. From that base maps: Natural resource areas were identified to delineate existing development limitations including wetlands, floodplains and surface water.

- The existing housing supply and future population and household projections were examined to understand the extent of future residential development.
- Utility and community facility capacities plans were reviewed to understand future community needs.
- The results of surveys, meetings and the Cognitive Mapping Exercise were reviewed to emphasize resident desires and expectations.
- Market considerations were used to guide the most appropriate locations for future commercial development.

Future Land Use Map Legend

The Future Land Use maps are the primary guidance tool for planning in Three Lakes. As per statutes, it will be used to evaluate future land-use changes and proposals. It must be understood, however, that the Future Land Use maps *are not* zoning maps. Comprehensive plans and, by extension, plan maps are broad-brush guidance documents.

EXISTING LAND USE DEFINITIONS

The definitions for existing land uses appear in the Legend of the Future Land Use Map were assigned to the GIS mapping layers provided by Oneida County and NCWRPC. Land use descriptions, unlike zoning definitions, tend to be broad in nature and are intended to generally describe the underlying use. The existing land use definitions in the Town of Three Lakes Include:

- Residential – Parcels or sites where the dominant or defining land use is residential (single-family homes, multi-family, farmsteads, etc.).
- Commercial – Parcels or sites where the primary structures are utilized for business purposes, excluding industrial uses.
- Governmental – Parcels or sites used for or owned by local, state, or federal governmental units.
- Industrial – Parcels or sites used for manufacturing, assembly, and other industrial uses.
- Agriculture – Lands under active agricultural production, utilized as pasture, or held fallow with the potential of future agricultural use, excluding cranberry bogs.

- Transportation- The streets, roads, and highways in the Town and the accessory sites or parcels used to service them.
- Cranberry Bog- Agricultural lands exclusive to cranberry production.
- Outdoor Recreation- Parks, golf courses, shooting ranges, and other recreational areas excluding indoor venues.
- Open Lands- Land not otherwise designated as agricultural or used for other developed purposes.
- Woodlands- Parcels or sites where the dominant use or defining characteristic of the site is forests and woodlands.
- Open Water- All surface waters excluding rivers, streams, creeks, and wetlands.

Description of Proposed Land-Use Changes

This section provides a brief description of the proposed future land use changes identified on the Future Land Use maps. It is understood that detailed information of these areas, particularly the alternative housing, mixed-use, and commercial areas will be determined during the creation of future zoning categories.

Because the current Oneida County Zoning Ordinance does not contain the level of detail used in the following districts, zoning proposals will be deemed consistent with this Plan if the proposal is permitted or a conditional use in an existing zoning district which is of the same type as these categories. For example, there is no zoning ordinance classification for a “rural character district.” The area included in that district in these maps could be rezoned to a classification which the Town believes reasonably promotes the rural character of the Town. The Proposed Land Use Changes represent aspirations of this Plan. The Town certainly will be more supportive of specific changes which follow the spirit of these categories.

FUTURE RESIDENTIAL – 106 ACRES

Additional single-family residential development, identified on the maps by diagonal blue/yellow lines, is proposed for areas northwest of Maple Lake and in the southeast portion of the town center west of USH 45. The purpose of the future residential land-use classification is to provide for an adequate supply of land to meet projected population increases within conventional residential neighborhoods during the next 20 years.

MIXED USE – 345 ACRES

Areas of the town identified as suitable for mixed residential/commercial use are located along USH 45 at the town center’s southeast entrance, northwest of the intersection of STH 32 and CTH X, and along STH 32 between Big Stone Lake and Deer Lake. Mixed-use development within these areas may include residential and commercial land use within the same structure, on the same site or on adjacent sites.

MIXED-USE INFILL OVERLAY – 141.55 ACRES

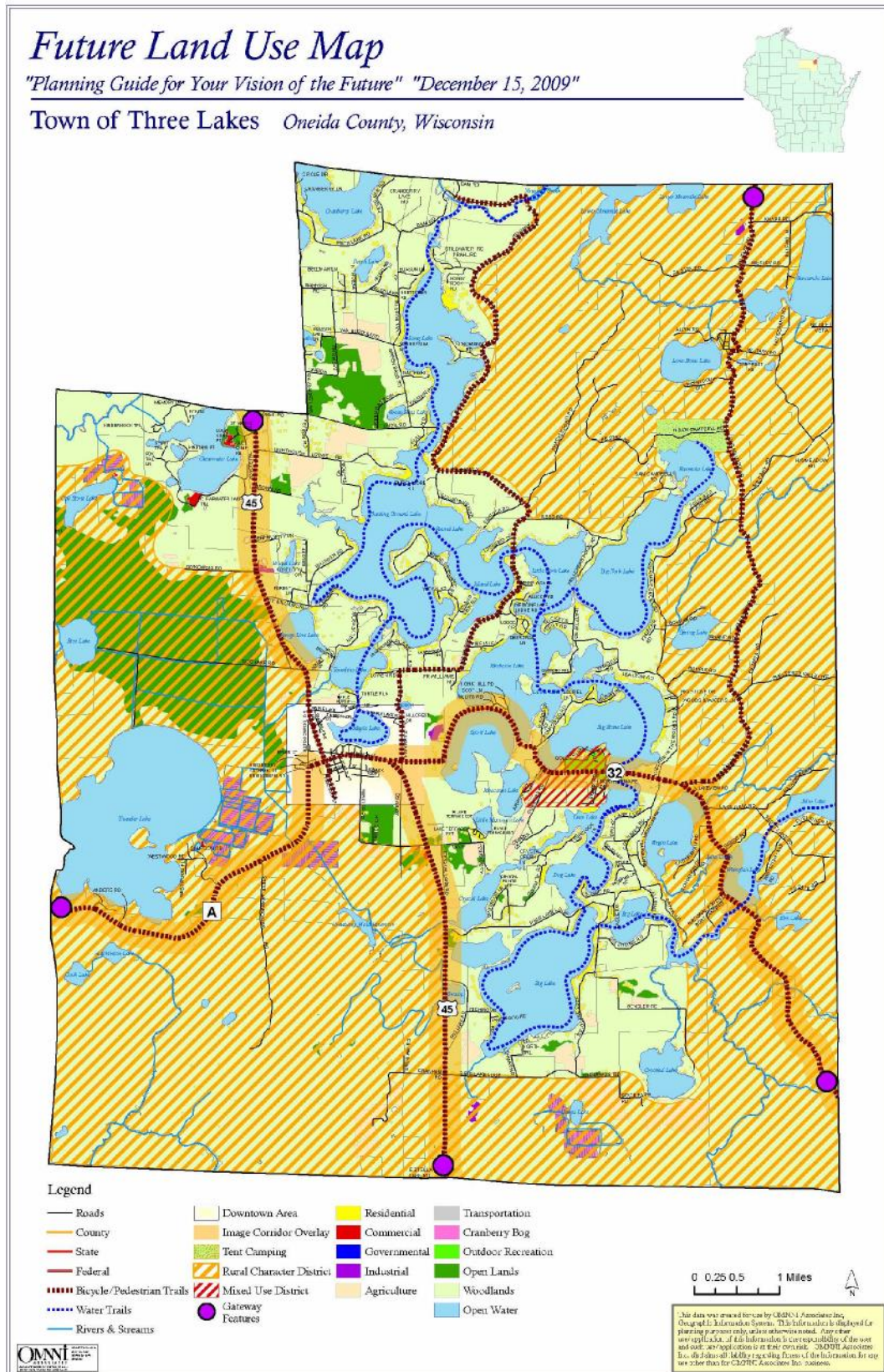
The mixed-use overlay area is identified by a dark green boundary line encompassing much of the town center. The overlay area is intended to allow for desirable development and redevelopment within the existing town center. The mixed-use overlay would not supplant existing zoning districts, but would allow for either residential or commercial development as a conditional use on a site-by-site basis.

MIXED COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL – 29 ACRES

The mixed commercial / industrial district is located in the southeast corner of the town center in order to maximize market opportunities created by the intersection of USH 45 and STH 32. Land use within the district would include commercial and light industrial development on shared or adjoining sites. The Town believes that industrial or commercial uses which can benefit from public sewer and water may be appropriate for the Town center. Other kinds of business which can operate with on-site wastewater treatment systems could be considered for other areas of the Town.

Three Lakes

Chapter 10: Future Land Use

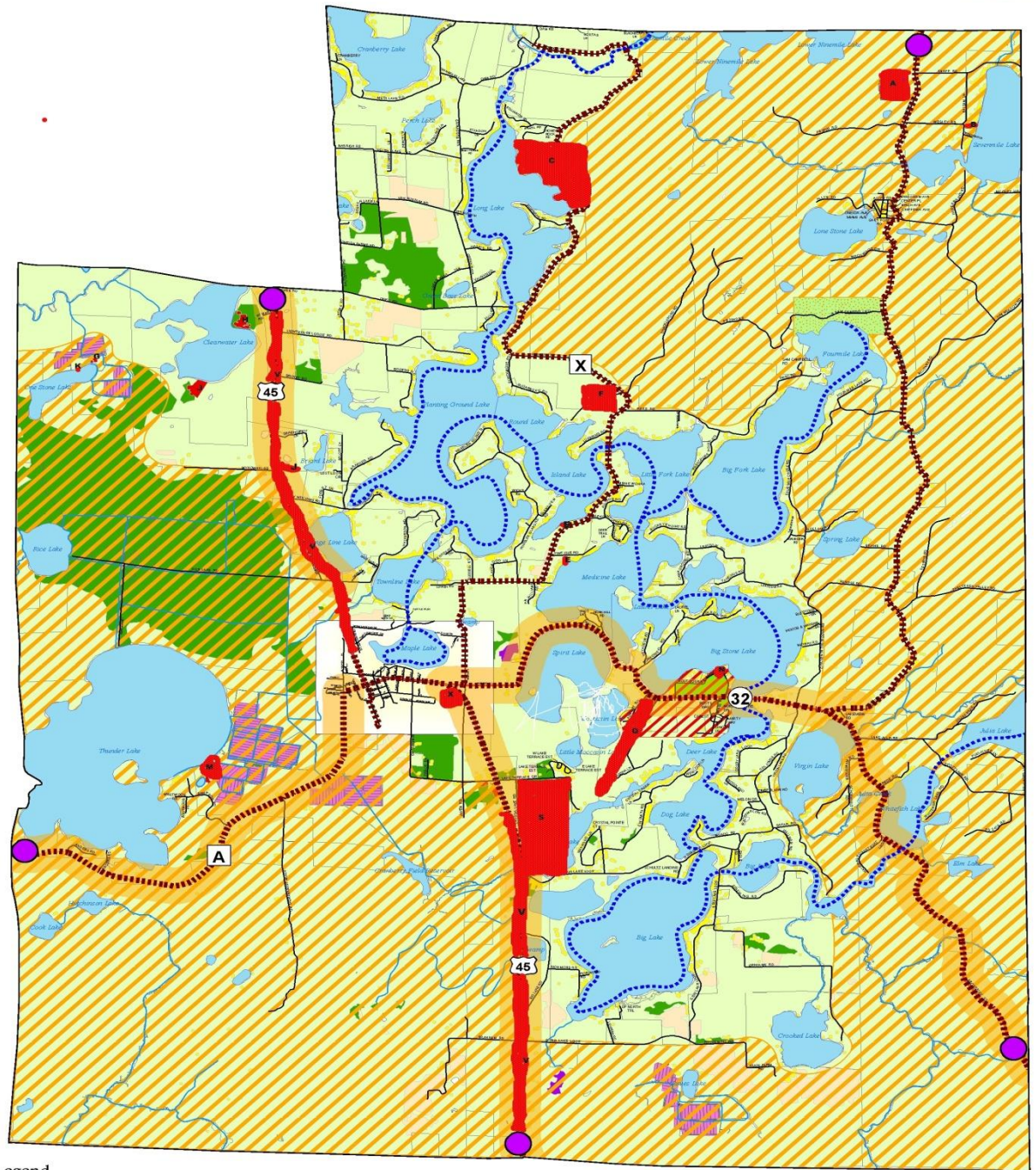


Amended 2013; Resolution #091813

Draft Future Land Use Map

"Planning Guide for Your Vision of the Future"

Town of Three Lakes Oneida County, Wisconsin



Legend

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| — Roads | □ Downtown Area | ■ Residential | ■ Transportation |
| — County | □ Image Corridor Overlay | ■ Commercial | ■ Cranberry Bog |
| — State | □ Tent Camping | ■ Governmental | ■ Outdoor Recreation |
| — Federal | □ Rural Character District | ■ Industrial | ■ Open Lands |
| — Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails | □ Mixed Use District | ■ Agriculture | ■ Woodlands |
| — Water Trails | ● Gateway Features | | ■ Open Water |
| — Rivers & Streams | | | |



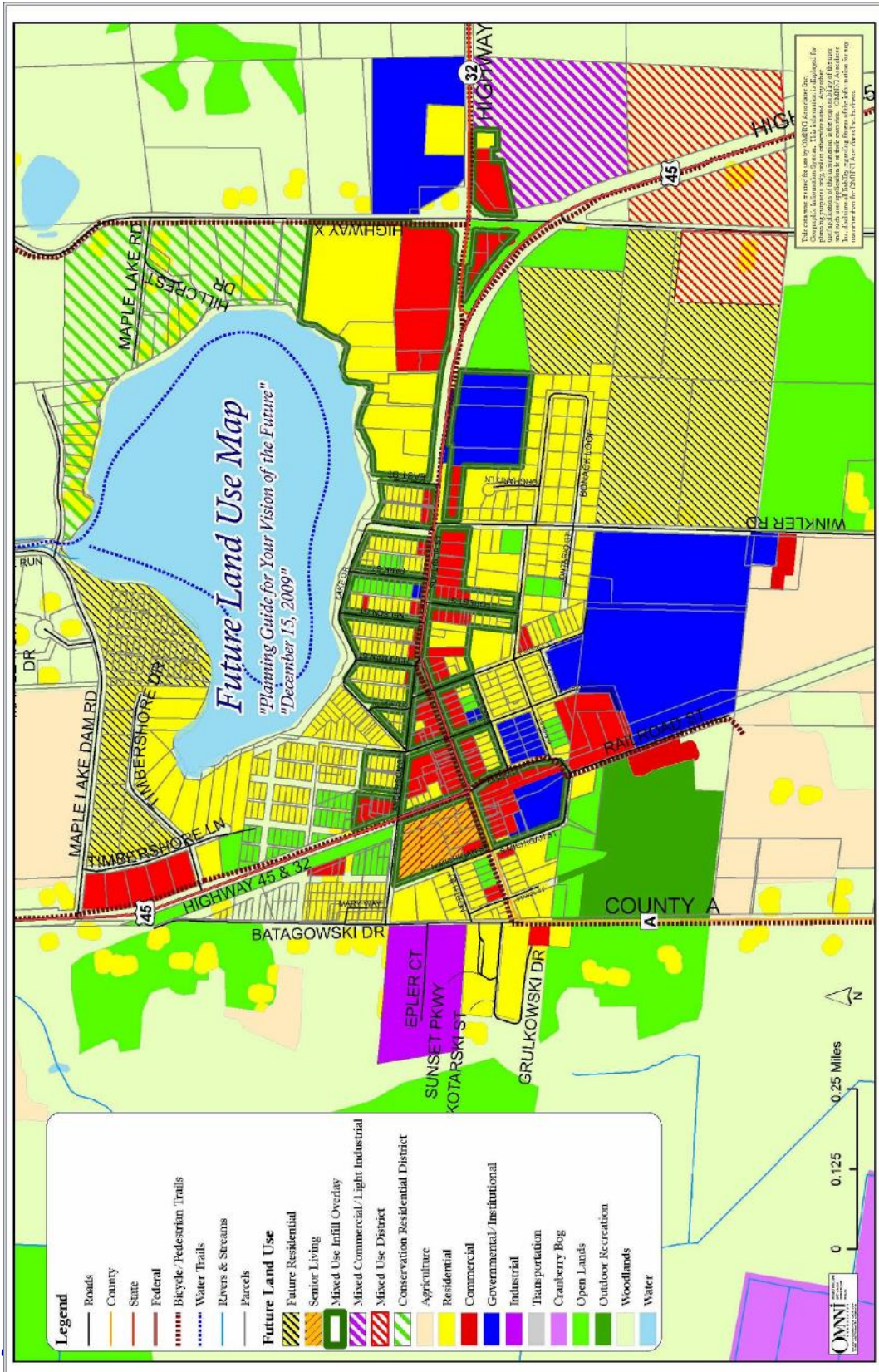
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



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Tow

Three Lakes



SENIOR LIVING – 7.00 ACRES

The senior living area is located at the western edge of the town center and is intended to serve a diversity of needs for the town's growing population of seniors. Development consistent with senior living land uses may include residential alternatives, health care, senior services and other similar activities. The actual location of senior living may vary depending on the interest of land owners in developing their land for this purpose. The Town will be supportive of senior living proposals located in other areas where the residents would have good access to public services.

RURAL CHARACTER DISTRICT – 39.599 ACRES

Areas in the rural character district encompass the majority of the town and are intended to remain as farmland, woodland or otherwise undeveloped for as long as is feasible and desirable by local landowners. If residential development is proposed, a balance of open areas, farmland, wildlife habitat and open scenic views should be maintained in order to protect the town's rural character.

CONSERVATION RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT - 50 ACRES

The purpose of the conservation residential district is to create an intermediary buffer between the more densely developed areas in the Town center and forest-dominated landscape of the chain-of-lakes area to the north. Land divisions (through certified survey maps), and conservation subdivision development would be the desired categories of development allowed within this district. All land divisions would include minimum open space requirements for each newly created parcel.

PEDESTRIAN BICYCLE TRAILS – 42 MILES (WITHIN EXISTING ROAD RIGHTS OF WAY)

The proposed trail system appearing on the Future Land Use maps (dashed brown lines) will provide linkages between key destination points and provide access to bicyclists and pedestrians.

WATER TRAILS – 37 MILES

The proposed water trail, identified by dashed blue lines on the map, is intended to create an additional recreation destination opportunity in Three Lakes and will provide canoeists and kayakers with a safe and clearly identified route connecting Chain of Lakes with key destinations nodes within the community including the proposed tent camping area on the northern shore of Four Mile Lake.

Three Lakes

Future Land Use

TENT CAMPING AREA – 170 ACRES PLUS NATIONAL FOREST LAND

Tent camping is available on National Forest Service land. National Forest Service land is available in the Town of Three lakes.

GATEWAY FEATURES – LESS THAN 1 ACRE TOTAL SIZE

Gateway features will be placed at the entrance to Three Lakes on USH 45, STH 32, and CTH A.

Future Land-Use Projections

Table 27 provides a breakdown of projected future development in five-year increments. As with any long-term planning document, these projections are tentative and based upon existing and past trends. Actual changes in land use may occur at a slower or more rapid pace than currently anticipated.

Table 27: Projections for Future Land Use by Acreage in the Town of Three Lakes, 2010-2034.					
Land Use	Total Acreage				
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Agriculture	1099	1099	1099	1099	1,099
Commercial (not including overlay district)	97	97	97	97	97
Cranberry Bog	594	594	594	594	594
Government/Institutional	87	87	87	87	87
Industrial (not including mixed commercial industrial)	62	62	62	62	62
Mixed use	0	86	172	258	346
Mixed Commercial/Industrial	0	7	14	22	29
Open Lands	3614	3599	3581	3568	3552
Outdoor Recreational	90	90	90	90	90
Residential (not including mixed use)	1927	1951	1975	1999	2023
Senior Living	0	1	3	5	7
Transportation	407	432	457	482	507
Water	11801	11814	11804	11804	11804
Woodlands	44282	44179	44076	43973	43869
Source: Town of Three Lakes Comprehensive Plan Existing and Future Land Use Maps, 2009.					

Conclusion

The Town of Three Lakes can influence the process of growth and development, but the initiative to build a stronger community for the future must come from the private sector. The Town is committed to working to maintain the qualities of our area that have brought us to this place while encouraging new growth and development to sustain it in the future.

Relationship to Other Required Plan Chapters

Discussion of the ways in which each element of this comprehensive plan related to *Chapter 10: Future Land Use* has been included throughout the document. As described below, this chapter will have a significant role in the two remaining elements of the plan.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Intergovernmental activities have the potential to impact Three Lakes in many ways. For example, transportation projects implemented by the county or the Wisconsin Department of Transportation can affect accessibility in the town and create development pressures.

As previously stated, it is important to note that Oneida County adopts and administers the Town's zoning under current law. All zoning decisions require concurrence from the County. The Town works to maintain a cooperative relationship with the County. The Town encourages development proponents to be in contact with the County as early in the project development as possible.

IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 12: Implementation outlines the goals and objectives from all required elements with milestone dates for achieving each item. In addition, Chapter 12 provides recommendations for the creation of new local land-use tools (zoning and subdivision ordinances) to achieve the visions presented in this plan.

Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

The goals, objectives and policies related to land use in Three Lakes can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.