

CHAPTER 8 - LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

The land use portion of this plan is intended to present information on the current (2006) land use within the Town of Mitchell. A windshield land use survey was completed by Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission in the summer of 2002, and subsequent field checks and discussions with local officials have attempted to keep this inventory up-to-date.

The input of Town officials and residents, along with the data, principles, goals, and policies found throughout this plan document, are used to develop projections of future land use demands and assist in guiding the selection of locations for specific types of land uses. Existing land use controls are also inventoried to assist in the development of the 10 and 20-Year Potential Land Use Maps.

The plan and maps provide direction to residents, the business community, and government officials along with their staff. Specifically, the 10 and 20-Year Potential Land Use Maps will serve as a practical guide to the Town Plan Commission members and the Town Board in their decision making process.

66.1001(2)(h)

Land Use Element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element shall contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity, and net density of existing uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and other public and private uses. The element shall analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts. The element shall contain projections, based on the background information specified in par. (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based. The element shall also include a series of maps that shows current land uses and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in par. (d), and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.

SUMMARY OF INVENTORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Mitchell has not previously had a comprehensive land use plan. It has had formal public input in the past on land use through community surveys and consensus mapping, and a number of land use control regulations.

The current land use inventory for the Town shows approximately 3% of the Town as being developed and 97% as undeveloped. The major developed use is single-family residential, with just under half (46.2%) of the developed land in this use; the major undeveloped uses are agriculture, which accounts for 50% of all undeveloped land, followed by natural areas, comprising 49% of undeveloped lands.

The supply of land within the Town is constrained by a strong public preference in favor of farmland preservation, as well as substantial natural areas.

Demand for developable land has historically been low, but this may change due to the relatively affordable land prices in the area and the recent expansion of STH 57 to four lanes. WisDOA projections of anticipated growth do not see significant increases in population over the 20-year planning period. Consequently, land allocations for residential, uses are fairly modest. Most of the land for development comes from transitioning agricultural land.

Recommendations for land use and development are consistent with policies stated in earlier chapters of this plan document and place a high priority on preservation of farmlands, natural areas, and open space, limiting conflicts between different land uses, and avoiding harm to important natural areas.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING LAND USE CONTROLS

This section lists and briefly describes the state, county, and local land use plans, ordinances, and controls that currently impact the Town of Mitchell, and which may affect or restrict the way land can be developed.

Existing Comprehensive Plan or Land Use Plan

Prior to this effort, the Town has not had a comprehensive plan in the past. However Sheboygan County UW-Extension, in cooperation with the Town of Mitchell Board, developed several town-wide citizen input surveys that have provided guidance in land use decision making.

Farmland Preservation Plan & Ag Preservation Areas

Farmland Preservation Plan

The Sheboygan County Farmland Preservation Plan states as its primary goal, "...to identify the County's agricultural resources and needs, and to balance them with development demands and community growth." The plans policies seek to discourage random and scattered growth, low-density development, and discontinuity of developing areas which inflate costs of services, etc. Furthermore, the plan also seeks to discourage the mixing of incompatible uses of the land.

Agricultural Preservation Areas

Agricultural lands to be preserved according to the Sheboygan County Farmland Preservation Plan, include soils of agricultural capability classes I and II, and some class III soils which can be or are economically productive (see the Soil Survey of Sheboygan County, Wisconsin). These agricultural preservation areas (Exclusive Ag) consist of capability class soils I, II and III soils on lands of which 100 acres or more are contiguous, and which 35 or more are under a single ownership. The agricultural preservation areas classification was established to protect the productive soils from premature development and to allow eligible farmers to take advantage of State income tax credits offered through the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program. Within the Town of Mitchell agricultural preservation areas are primarily found in the eastern half.

Transition Areas

Transition areas are existing agricultural lands planned or zoned for future expansion of urban or other non-agricultural uses. These lands are thought of as “holding areas” for future growth and future urban service areas. Transition Areas may include sanitary districts, rural centers, lands adjacent to existing cities or villages, etc. Transitional lands in the Town of Mitchell are primarily found along Highway 28 in the extreme southeast corner of the Town, along Highway 67 in the northeast portion of Mitchell, and in and around the unincorporated community of Parnell in the center of the Town.

Town Zoning Ordinance

The Town of Mitchell intends to develop a Zoning Ordinance. Its purpose will be to promote the comfort, health, safety, morals, prosperity, aesthetics, and general welfare of Town of Mitchell.

The Zoning Ordinance will promote the following:

- ◆ Stabilize and protect property values and the tax base.
- ◆ Recognize the needs of agricultural, forestry, industry, residence, recreation, and business in future growth.
- ◆ Encourage the appropriate use of land and conservation of natural resources.
- ◆ Encourage the wise use, conservation, development, and protection of the Town of Mitchell water, soil, wetlands, woodland, and wildlife resources and attain a balance between land uses and the ability of the natural resource base to support and sustain such uses.
- ◆ Preserve natural growth and cover and promote the natural beauty of the Town of Mitchell.
- ◆ Facilitate the adequate provision of public facilities and utilities.
- ◆ Promote the safety and efficiency of streets, highways, and other transportation systems.
- ◆ Promote adequate light, air, sanitation, drainage, and open space.
- ◆ Regulate the use of structures, lands, and waters outside of shoreland areas.
- ◆ Regulate lot coverage, population density and distribution, and the location and size of structures outside of shoreland areas.
- ◆ Prohibit uses or structures incompatible with natural characteristics, existing development or intended development within or adjacent to a zoning district.
- ◆ Implement those municipal, county, watershed, or regional comprehensive plans or their components adopted by the Town of Mitchell.
- ◆ For a detailed explanation and information on the restrictions and permitted uses of each of the zoning districts, refer to the Implementation chapter of this plan.

The Wisconsin enabling legislation requires that zoning ordinances be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan. This has been interpreted by planning professionals to mean that the zoning ordinance must be based on a master plan or land use plan and that the ordinance must seek to implement that plan.

County Sanitary Ordinance

Chapter 70 of the Sheboygan County Code contains the Sheboygan County Sanitary Ordinance, which promotes the proper siting, design, installation, inspection, management, and maintenance of private sewage systems. The ordinance requires the preparation and approval of sanitary permits for the location, design, construction, alteration, installation and use of all private sewage and septic systems of residential, commercial, industrial, and governmental uses within unincorporated areas.

County Subdivision Ordinance

Chapter 71 of the Sheboygan County Code contains the Sheboygan County Subdivision Ordinance. The ordinance regulates the unincorporated areas of Sheboygan County, or where incorporated communities have entered into agreement under sec. 66.30 Wisconsin Statutes, to exercise cooperative authority to approve plats of subdivisions, where the act of division creates five or more parcels from the same “Mother Tract” of land.

The “Mother Tract” of land is defined in the ordinance as, “A parcel of land that is, or at any time in the previous twenty (20) years was, in the same ownership. Contiguous parcels in the same ownership are considered to be one (1) parcel for purposes of this definition, even though the separate parcels may have separate tax identification numbers or were acquired at different times or from different persons.”

The ordinance includes a requirement for dedication of public parks and open space. The amount of land to be provided is based upon an equivalent of one acre per thirty-six dwelling units, with a minimum of one-half acre for undeveloped lots. Standards for road construction, improvements, and stormwater management are also included.

The regulations contain a Land Suitability clause (71.20) that states “No land shall be divided or subdivided for use which is determined to be unsuitable by the Commission because of flooding or potential flooding, wetlands, soil or rock limitations, inadequate drainage, severe erosion potential, unfavorable topography, inadequate water supply or sewage disposal capabilities, incompatible surrounding land use, or any other condition likely to be harmful to the health, safety, or welfare of the future residents or users of the area, or likely to be harmful to the community or the County.”

The ordinance also contains design standards for streets, planned unit developments, lots, easements, and storm water drainage that must be complied with in order for the subdivision to be approved by Sheboygan County.

Official Map

An Official Map under Ch. 62.23(6), 61.35, 60.10(2)c of state statutes is intended to implement a town, village, or city master plan for streets, highways, parkways, parks and playgrounds, and drainageways. Its basic purpose is to prohibit the construction of buildings or structures and their associated improvements on land that has been designated for current or future public use. Currently, the Town of Mitchell does not maintain an Official Map.

Erosion Control Plan

Text relating to erosion control and storm water management can be found within the Sheboygan County Subdivision Ordinance, Section 71.21(h). As part of the Town's subdivision regulations, Mitchell requires erosion control and storm water management plans for all condominium developments, all subdivisions (land divisions) of 5 or more lots, and subdivisions (land divisions) of less than 5 lots at the request of the Town's engineer.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Wisconsin statutes do not allow towns to invoke extraterritorial jurisdictions. However, extraterritorial jurisdictions can still be a major factor in planning, since a town can be impacted by the jurisdiction of a city or village. In theory, parts of the Town of Mitchell could be under the 1.5 mile extraterritorial zoning and/or extraterritorial platting jurisdiction of Cascade. Currently, Cascade does not administer any extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Highway Access

Highway access restrictions can impact development patterns by making it difficult – or impossible – to site buildings along highways. At this time, neither Sheboygan County nor the Town of Mitchell has a Controlled Access Ordinance – nor do they plan to adopt one. The State has an access control ordinance along STH 57 and STH 144 known as Trans 233. Trans 233 is part of the Wisconsin Administrative Code and defines requirements that must be met when subdividing lands abutting the state highway system. WisDOT is responsible for enforcing Trans 233 to preserve traffic flow, enhance public safety, and ensure proper highway setbacks and stormwater drainage.

The rule (as revised by a Wisconsin legislative committee in 2004) applies to landowners who intend to divide land abutting a state highway into five or more lots that are each 1.5 acres or less in size within a five-year period.

County Shoreland-Floodplain Ordinance

Chapter 72 of the Sheboygan County Code contains the Sheboygan County Shoreland-Floodplain Ordinance, which provides for the safe and orderly use of shorelands and promotes the public health, safety and general welfare relative to surface waters, shorelands, flood prone areas, and contiguous wetlands.

The ordinance controls building and regulates land use types within all lands that would be inundated by the regional flood and/or the 500-year flood for certain critical use facilities; and shorelands and wetlands of all navigable waters in the unincorporated areas of Sheboygan County which are: 1,000 feet from the ordinary high water elevation of navigable lakes, ponds, or flowages; and 300 feet from the ordinary high water elevation, or to the landward side of a floodplain, of the navigable reaches of rivers or streams, whichever distance is greater. Development in shoreland areas is generally permitted but specific design techniques must be considered. Figures 2.9 and 2.10 in Chapter 2 illustrate the shoreland zones and the floodplain in the Town of Mitchell.

Wetlands

Wetlands also act as natural pollution filters, making many lakes and streams cleaner and drinking water safer. They act as groundwater discharge areas and retain floodwaters. Filling or draining of wetlands is costly, destroys the productive capacity of the ecosystem and can

adversely affect surface water quality and drainage. Finally they provide valuable and irreplaceable habitat for many plants and animals.

Because of their importance, there are strict regulations regarding wetlands. Wisconsin Administrative Codes NR 115 and NR 117 fall under the jurisdiction of the WisDNR, and mandate that shoreland wetlands be protected in both the rural and urban areas of the State. In the unincorporated areas, NR 115 provides the legislation to protect wetlands of five acres or more that are within the jurisdiction of county shoreland zoning ordinances. Wetlands not in the shoreland zone are protected from development by the federal government and the WDNR through Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and NR 103, respectively. It should be noted that all wetlands, no matter how small, are subject to WDNR and possibly federal regulations, if they meet the State definition.

There are about 3,400 acres of wetlands in the Town of Mitchell (about 15% of the total land area). Figure 2.10 shows wetlands in the Town of Mitchell as mapped on the Wisconsin Wetland Inventory.

Historic Preservation

There may be some areas within the Town of Mitchell where development is either not desired or should be carefully designed due to the special historic character of the location.

Conservation Easements

Also known as land protection agreements, conservation easements are entered into by willing landowners seeking to permanently protect their land from future development. Individual agreements can cover hundreds of acres of land and therefore become a factor in land use planning because they remove land from development consideration in perpetuity. Individual landowners can work independently at any time with local non-profit land trusts such as Glacial Lakes Conservancy.

CURRENT LAND USE INVENTORY

A detailed field inventory of land uses in the Town of Mitchell was conducted in the summer of 2002 by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (see Figures 8.1 and 8.2).

Figure 8.1 – Town of Mitchell Land Use Amount and Intensity, March 2002			
Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage of Developed Land	Percentage of Total Land
DEVELOPED	757.0	100%	3.3%
Residential	354.4	46.8%	1.5%
single-family	349.7	46.2%	1.5%
mobile homes	3.4	0.4%	0.01%
vacant residence	1.3	0.2%	0.005%
Commercial	9.8	1.3%	0.004%
retail sales	9.8	1.3%	0.004%
Industrial	69.0	9.1%	0.30%
wholesaling	5.5	0.73%	0.02%
extractive	19.9	2.63%	0.08%

Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage of Developed Land	Percentage of Total Land
open storage	5.7	0.75%	0.02%
enclosed storage	37.9	5.0%	0.16%
Transportation	187.0	24.7%	0.81%
state highways	0.3	0.04%	0.001%
county highways	8.6	1.14%	0.04%
local streets and roads	173.0	22.85%	0.75%
county forest roads	1.0	0.13%	0.004%
off-street parking	4.1	0.54%	0.02%
Communication / Utilities	0.0	0%	0%
Institutional / Governmental	136.8	18.07%	0.59%
administrative/governmental facilities	0.7	0.09%	0.003%
prisons or jails	127.3	16.82%	0.55%
primary schools	1.2	0.16%	0.005%
churches	0.4	0.05%	0.002%
cemeteries	7.2	0.95%	0.03%
	Acres	Percentage of Undeveloped Land	Percentage of Total Land
UNDEVELOPED	22,394.4	100%	96.7%
Outdoor Recreation	29.8	0.13%	0.13%
historic/cultural/archaeological sites	0.4	0.002%	0.002%
lawns/yards	0.6	0.003%	0.003%
parks/picnic areas	19.5	0.09%	0.08%
playfields/ball diamonds/volleyball	5.0	0.02%	0.02%
hunting preserves	4.1	0.02%	0.02%
boat launching sites/areas	0.2	0.001%	0.001%
Agriculture	11,251.2	50.2%	48.6%
croplands; pastures	11,046.6	49.3%	47.7%
farm buildings/accessories	202.4	0.9%	0.87%
vacant agricultural	2.2	0.01%	0.01%
Natural Areas	11,113.4	49.6%	48.0%
lakes	6.8	0.03%	0.03%
reservoirs; ponds	82.8	0.37%	0.36%
rivers and streams	4.6	0.02%	0.02%
other natural areas; also wetlands	3,362.3	15.0%	14.5%
woodlands	7,656.9	34.19%	33.1%
TOTAL LANDS	23,151.5	n/a	100%

Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2002

Planning Area

The Town of Mitchell encompasses approximately 23,151 total acres of land. Of this, 757 acres, or 3.3% of the Town, is considered developed, leaving 96.7% as undeveloped lands. The undeveloped lands consist mainly of agricultural lands, woodlands, and wetlands.

Residential Land

Residential land in the Town accounts for 354 acres or 47% of the developed land within the Town. The vast majority of this land (349.7 acres) is single-family residential. Many scattered lots in open areas of the Town are typically 3 to 5 acres or larger. Residential uses comprise a little over 1% of the total land use in the Town.

Commercial Land

Commercial lands occupy approximately 10 acres within the Town, which is just over 1.3% of all developed land and only 0.04% of all lands.

[Map: Figure 8.2 – 2002 Land Use, Town of Mitchell]

Industrial Land

Industrial land totals 69 acres or about 9% of the developed land in the Town. About half of this total is categorized as enclosed storage. There is no industrial park or concentrated area of development. Only 0.3% of the total land area in the Town is allocated to this use.

Transportation

Transportation uses include the local road and highway network, parking facilities, etc. Within the Town of Mitchell there are about 187 acres of land used for these purposes, which is the second highest “developed” land use. Most of the roads in the Town average about 25 feet in width shoulder-to-shoulder.

Communication/Utilities

Uses under this category include land used for fuel storage, electrical and natural gas substations, transmission towers, etc. Such uses currently take up only a very small portion of lands in the Town.

Institutional/Governmental

Institutional/governmental uses are defined as lands used for public or private facilities for education, health, or assembly, for cemeteries, places of worship, and all government facilities except public utilities or areas of outdoor recreation. Within the Town of Mitchell this accounts for about 137 acres of land, with the majority consisting of the Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution.

Parks and Outdoor Recreation

About 30 acres of land are categorized under parks and outdoor recreation in the Town. This includes the Town Park and Parnell Tower area. Hunting preserves account for approximately 500 acres which was most likely classified as agricultural lands.

Croplands/Pasture

This is by far the largest land use within the Town, with a total of 11,251 acres, which is about 50% of the all land within the Town. Much of this land is interspersed with tracts of woodlands and wetlands. Statistics at the Town level are difficult to obtain, but data from the Program on Agricultural Technology Studies for Sheboygan County as a whole indicates that despite declines of 12% and 27% from 1990-2002 for acreage in corn and forage, respectively, these are still the top two uses for croplands. Soy is ranked third, although it grew by 933% during the same period. Small grains ranked a distant fourth and suffered a 52% decline.

Farm Buildings and Accessories

The 202 acres in this category represent sheds, silos, and other farm structures scattered throughout the Town.

Other Natural Areas

These uses include lands primarily in a natural state, such as woodlands, water features, wetlands, prairies, and grasslands. Approximately 11,113 acres of the Town fits this category. This represents 49% of undeveloped land and 48% of all lands.

Woodlands

Within the Natural Areas category, woodlands are the largest contributor, accounting for about 7,657 acres, which is over two-thirds of the category. In fact, about 33% of the Town overall could be categorized as woodlands.

Wetlands

Wetlands are another substantial natural feature, identified as a “use” for 3,362 acres, which is just over 14% of the Town.

LAND SUPPLY

Amount

At first glance, with 97% of the land in the Town of Mitchell categorized as “undeveloped,” there would appear to be an over-abundance of developable vacant land within the Town; however, in one sense, agriculture is an “industry” and could be considered a type of development since the land now used for farming has undergone a change from its natural, truly vacant state of 200+ years ago. Further, a significant amount of undeveloped land lies in wetlands and floodplains and would therefore be difficult to develop, even if such activity would be permitted by the WisDNR. The Town discourages residential development in its rural open space areas, primarily due to the potential conflicts with agriculture and the wishes of residents as indicated in past community-wide surveys; nevertheless, in certain situations limited residential development might be allowable. Limited commercial development, and regulated non-metallic mining are somewhat more compatible with agriculture and lands might be available for such uses if they do not significantly harm the rural character of the Town.

Price

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median value of an owner-occupied home in the Town of Mitchell was \$139,900, compared to an average value for area villages of \$129,200. Land prices in the Town would seem to be higher than “average.” Proximity to/presence of the Kettle Moraine State Forest may be a factor in higher land prices in the Town.

Demand

Based on building permit information, the town of Mitchell experienced approximately 7-8 housing permits per year for new residential construction from 1980 to 2000. All of the permits during this time frame were for single family structures. If this trend continues, the town could expect approximately 160 additional homes by the year 2020. In addition, the trend for many families has been to move from cities to lower density areas within the region, and commute an hour or more to work. If this trend continues, the demand for additional housing will likely increase in rural communities.

The overall residential vacancy rate for the Town of Mitchell was 4% for owner occupants (U.S. Census, 2000). The Town’s rate is slightly lower than the 5% ideal, indicating there may be somewhat of a demand for new housing within the Town.

The demand for commercial or industrial lands in the town has not been high in the past 10 to 20 years. Many of the businesses have been locating within the surrounding municipalities due to the town lacking adequate public infrastructure. However the town contains major highways which provide exposure, thus the demand for commercial lands in the town of Mitchell may potentially increase during the planning period.

Although there has not been any significant demand for substantial new tracts of commercial, industrial, institutional, or other types of land, there is an ongoing demand for agricultural land from those farm owners who might like to expand their operations in the future.

Redevelopment Opportunities

There are no brownfields or sizable tracts of land within the Town that need redevelopment. There are, however, scattered parcels and structures that could be improved, converted to other uses, or redeveloped entirely. Any improvement, conversion, or redevelopment that takes place should be done in a way that maintains the rural character of the Town, including scale, architectural styles, etc.

Redevelopment possibilities within the Town of Mitchell are very limited but may include reclamation of past, present and future non-metallic mining sites.

LAND USE ISSUES AND CONFLICTS

The current development within town of Mitchell has occurred over many decades. However, opportunities for conflict can arise, especially as growth occurs.

Some agricultural areas within the Town have been in close proximity to residential areas for several years. There is often little, if any, buffering between such uses. Some conflicts, such as noise and odor, have been occasional issues. These situations continue to be monitored and opportunities for improving awareness and understanding between farmers and non-farmers will be considered, as will possible options for landscaping/buffering.

Noise, dust, vibration, and aesthetic impacts all potentially come into play when non-metallic mining operations are opened or expand near residences. Conditional use permits and reclamation permits will aim to address such impacts.

ANTICIPATED LAND USE TRENDS

Analyzing data within previous chapters of this plan, the following land use trends were developed for the 20 year planning period. It is expected that these trends will influence the town's future growth and preservation. The Town's Plan Commission and Town Board will need to address these trends over the next two decades in order to reach the town's desired vision. The following trends, along with the town's goals, objectives, and policies, the issue identification and the town's survey results were used to provide direction and insight to the future.

1. The demand for increased lot sizes may increase and the ratio of persons per household may decrease resulting in greater acreage needs to accommodate future residential growth.
2. Residential development will develop on a scattered basis to preserve the rural nature of the surrounding town of Mitchell.
3. The town of Mitchell can expect a projected minimum 559 occupied dwelling units and a projected maximum 579 dwelling units through the year 2020. This would result in a 140 to 160 occupied housing unit increase from the 2000 Census number of 419 occupied housing units.
4. Prime farmlands will continue to be preserved in the town to allow for general crop farming.
5. The rural character will continue to be maintained in the town, preserving the natural vegetative structure resulting in the protection of wildlife and fish spawning habitats.
6. The use and monitoring of on-site wastewater septic systems and individual groundwater wells will continue within the town throughout the planning period.

7. The trend of commercial businesses and industry within the town will likely fluctuate since the town lacks adequate public utilities.
8. The town will likely experience a demand for services, as the median population age continues to increase.
9. The town of Mitchell should work with Sheboygan County and surrounding communities to allow seasonal and year-round residents the ability to enjoy the recreational sites, waterways, woodlands and cultural sites for generations to come.

It is anticipated that over the next 10 to 20 years the Town of Mitchell will grow at a slow, managed rate and that most new development will be primarily single-family residential scattered throughout the Town. Some small-scale commercial development may take place along the STH 67 or 28 corridors. Existing agricultural uses will likely continue to expand through the process of consolidation of smaller operations. The demand for aggregate (e.g., gravel) could potentially lead to new or expanded mining operations in the Town.

Possible external impacts on local land use are expected to include 1) the overall aging population, which will drive more diverse housing options, 2) the increasing ability due to technological innovations to telecommute or start a home-based business, 3) the desire for passive recreation options, such as biking and walking trails, and 4) increasing emphasis on renewable energy options.

DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATION AND CONSTRAINTS

Environmental, Financial, Transportation, and Public Utility Considerations and Constraints

A significant amount of environmental corridors (i.e., wetlands, floodplain, steep slopes) weave through the Town (see Figure 8.3), and these features have constrained development in the past and will probably continue to do so. In most cases, this is an appropriate constraint. Since suitable vacant lands exist within the Town, it would not be necessary to propose development within the environmental corridors. These areas shall be protected and integrated into the overall development of the Town. The Town has an abundance of these unique areas including wetlands, floodplains and steep slopes which can add significantly to the aesthetic appeal of the community while providing important ecological and environmental functions such as stormwater retention and flood control.

The Town of Mitchell's total general obligation debt as of December 31, 2005 was \$0. Therefore, the Town has the capacity to borrow for infrastructure for future development projects if it so desires. Further, the Town has no existing TIF obligations, which means this development financing option, though limited for towns, is available if needed.

It has been determined that an adequate transportation network of collector and arterial roads (STH 67 and STH 28) are already in place within or adjacent to the Town to serve future traffic flows generated from new growth, and the County's subdivision ordinance makes adequate provision for the construction of local roads to serve new development.

No official hydrological study has been performed to determine the inventory, consumption, and ongoing supply of acceptable groundwater in the Town of Mitchell, but no significant problems have been reported with public well water quantity or quality to date. Given the general abundance of this resource in the area and the relatively small current and projected populations and industrial usages for the area, it is not anticipated that water supply will be a constraint. This

plan recommends that individual property owners continue to install and maintain their own wells and onsite waste water systems. The need for protection of the watersheds and aquifers within the Town is thus required in order to provide Town residents with safe, usable water.

Soils in most areas of the Town are generally adequate for low density development on mound, conventional, or newer technology on-site waste disposal systems. Any intense or high density development would be better suited to a municipality with a public wastewater treatment facility.

Electrical supply continues to be upgraded by We Energies and Plymouth Utilities as necessary and is not considered to be a constraint to further development.

Planning Criteria

Planning criteria are developed in order to give the community a sense in which to base their land use recommendations. Criteria make the planning process defensible when presenting scenarios to the general public and when modifying or developing alternative sites for land use developments. The criteria used by the town, were based upon values identified by the State (Smart Growth criteria), and the town of Mitchell goals, objectives, policies and programs — identified in each preceding chapter of this plan (see each chapter's strategies section).

The following criteria are based upon Wisconsin's Smart Growth Law (s. 66.1001) which is encouraged within community plans:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

[Map: Figure 8.3 – Development Constraints, Town of Mitchell]

20 - YEAR LAND USE PROJECTIONS

This section of the chapter is based on the information contained in previous chapters of this document including demographics, land use projections, physical characteristics, the goals,

objectives, policies and programs, and the town's survey results. The Mitchell Planning Commission met on a monthly basis to review town data and growth options. From these meetings and presentations to the public, a 20-Year Comprehensive Plan was developed and approved.

Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections

Wisconsin statutes require Comprehensive Plans to include projections, in five-year increments, for future residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses in the community over the twenty year planning period. The following text details this specific requirement for the Town.

Residential Projections

The method to project the Town's future residential land use acreage used the following:

- ◆ the projected housing unit needs presented in Chapter 3, along with local knowledge and observations of housing development trends
- ◆ an average of 0.72 acre per dwelling unit, which was calculated by taking the number of acres identified in the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission's land use inventory used for residential purposes and dividing this total by the number of households in the Town

Based on this methodology, the Town's current residential acreage of 354 would increase to 360 acres by 2012, 366 acres in 2017, 372 acres in 2022, and 378 acres in 2027, for a total increase of 24 acres of residential land by 2027. This is a net total for residential development. However, there are several other factors that must be taken into consideration including,

- ◆ it is not the intent of the plan to see an entire area within a classification to develop; rather the specified uses shall be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of the development;
- ◆ some of the lands would hinder development based on the nature of the area;
- ◆ within residential growth areas, lands must be allocated for future roads, parks, and recreation areas.

In most standard residential developments, these additional factors generally account for approximately 25 percent of the gross land area. Therefore, the gross total for land allocated for residential development should be approximately 384 acres in the Town.

Commercial and Industrial Projections

Based upon the 2003 Citizen Input survey, very little interest was indicated for commercial and industrial land uses. Coupled with the fact that there already exists 79 acres in the Town devoted to these uses, the Plan Commission determined that no more than 10 acres would need to be allocated for commercial land uses by 2012, and 50 acres for each 5-year increment through 2027.

However, due to the close proximity of the City of Plymouth and the Villages of Waldo and Cascade, the town recommends that the majority of future commercial or industrial businesses locate within these surrounding communities which can provide adequate services. If additional commercial uses are allowed to develop in the town of Mitchell, these areas shall fit the character of the town, as well as allow for proper parking facilities and adequate buffers between the various business types.

Agricultural Projections

Mitchell has a vast amount of agricultural land and it is the town's intention to preserve much of the agricultural areas over the next 20 years. However, a portion of the lands currently being used for agricultural purposes may be developed over the next 20 years. Using recent history as a guide, most of the acres projected to be needed for residential and commercial development are likely to come from existing agricultural uses. This makes the agricultural projections a series of negative numbers, which is consistent with the overall decline in agricultural land over the last several years in Sheboygan County. The Town's agricultural lands are projected to decrease from the current 11,251 acres to 11,235 acres in 2012, 11,224 acres in 2017, 11,213 acres in 2022 and 11,202 acres in 2027

20-Year Potential Land Use Map

Figure 8.4 illustrates potential land uses within the Town of Mitchell over the next 20 years. New residential development will be primarily single-family and scattered throughout the Town. It is anticipated that this development will be guided by a point system (see Appendix E) that takes into consideration many of the values identified in the 2003 Citizen Input Survey such as the need to preserve farmland and the rural character of the Town.

Three areas are identified for commercial development in Figure 8.4. These include an area in the northwest corner of the Town within the STH 67 corridor, and area in the southeastern corner of the Town with the STH 28 corridor, and an area in the central portion of the Town within the unincorporated community of Parnell. If commercial development does occur over the 20-year planning period, it is expected to be scattered home-based businesses and small enterprises. Locations are not mapped, due to their unpredictability and small size.

Agriculture is the predominant land use depicted in Figure 8.4. This is consistent with results from the 2003 Citizen Input Survey, which showed a very strong consensus for preserving farmland and open space. This major delineation is also supported by Sheboygan County's 2004 Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Study, which uses the Federal Natural Resource and Conservation Service's soils data and a geographic information system to identify the most productive farmlands and the 2004 Sheboygan county Natural Areas and Critical Resources Plan, which shows the environmental corridors in the area.

COORDINATION BETWEEN 20-YEAR LAND USE MAP AND ZONING

The Potential 20-Year Land Use Map in this chapter is meant to be used as a guide for making decisions about rezonings and future development. Because it would be impractical to analyze in detail every individual parcel within the Town of Mitchell, the 20-Year Land Use Map is somewhat general in nature. When a request for rezoning or development comes before the Plan Commission and Board, these bodies should refer to the 20-Year Land Use Map for initial guidance in responding to the request. If the request is in harmony with the 20-Year Land Use Map, the rezoning and/or development can likely proceed. If, on the other hand, the request is *not* in harmony with the 20-Year Land Use Map, the rezoning and/or development should probably be rejected. However, since the 20-Year Land Use Map and the entire Plan is primarily a guide and not parcel specific, it is possible the applicant could present data and compelling reasons why his/her proposal is appropriate. In such a case, it might make sense for the Comprehensive Plan and 20-Year Land Use Map to be amended to allow the proposal. A subsequent rezoning could then be approved that would be consistent with the amended Plan and 20-Year Land Use Map.

[Map: Figure 8.4 – 2027 Potential Lane Use, Town of Mitchell]

Any amendments to the land use chapter and map must be considered in the context of all nine required plan elements, especially the vision, goals, objectives, and policies/programs described in this document. The amendment process includes a formal public hearing and distribution

according to the requirements of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law. Any amendment must be recommended by the Town Plan Commission and approved by the Town Board before permits may be issued and development can begin.

DEVELOPMENT/DESIGN STANDARDS

Development will adhere to the standards laid out in ordinances established by the Town of Mitchell, including a new zoning ordinance, and applicable ordinances established by Sheboygan County.

LAND USE STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Mitchell will seek direction for this element from the vision and goals identified through the public participation process:

Vision

“The Town of Mitchell will continue a slow, planned development as a mixed residential/farm community with limited commercial and industrial development. Growth of residential development is expected to be on larger lots, lots not served by municipal sewer or water, and to result in the loss of some farmland. Agricultural uses are expected to move away from the traditional dairy farming towards niche/specialty farming or hobby farms. Commercial development in the Town is expected to be primarily from home based businesses that while generally unobtrusive can come into conflict with their neighbors. The Town of Mitchell is desirous of establishing the minimum amount of regulations that would balance private property rights with the overall community's health and welfare including a farmer's right to farm.”

This portion of the plan will detail further recommendations on the land uses within the Town of Mitchell.

Residential Development

As residential development pressures increase, the town must closely monitor the proposed types of development regarding their impacts on the natural resources and rural nature of the town.

Recommendations:

1. Existing residential developments are proposed to remain intact. Residential developments found within this classification will continue throughout the 20 year planning period with the possibility of infill developments and rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing structures.
2. Single family residences will be the primary type of residential development. A minimum lot size of three acres for future unsewered single family developments will be required. Future residential developments are intended to promote orderly and efficient growth which is consistent with the adjacent land uses.
3. Infilling of existing vacant residential lots three acres or greater will also be allowed (as well as legal, non-conforming smaller lot sizes) within this designation to control the scattering of development throughout the Town. The Town would benefit from new infill development that co-exists well, in terms of design, with existing structures.
4. New residential development types (single-family and two-family) are encouraged to conform with surrounding uses. A new development that is out of context due to size, use, or architectural character may detract from existing adjacent properties visually and economically in terms of property values.

5. Adequate housing for all persons in the community should be advocated. Housing should be promoted for people with low to moderate income, the elderly, and residents with special needs. The Town feels that this may be more easily accomplished if such housing be located near or within adjacent communities where public services and facilities are more adequate.
6. Existing farming uses are allowed to remain within new residential areas. New residential developments locating near existing farming operations are encouraged to establish natural buffers in order to limit conflicts.
7. Future residential developments shall be sensitive to natural features. Environmentally sensitive lands (i.e. woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, etc.) in new areas of residential development should be preserved to the greatest extent possible to maintain the natural beauty of the area and preserve the wildlife habitat.
8. Cooperation with adjacent townships on future developments adjacent to the Town boundaries should be maintained.

Agricultural Areas/Woodlands/Open Space (for Residential Development)

Potential areas for future residential development include lands within agricultural, wooded and open areas found throughout the Town. However, the Town feels that further development of these areas will likely spur greater fragmentation of the remaining agricultural lands and natural features within the Town. Therefore development within these areas will need to be carefully planned to protect and preserve its farmland and that which makes up Mitchell's landscape and overall character.

Recommendations:

1. Existing residential developments throughout the Town are proposed to remain intact. Existing residential developments found throughout the Town will continue throughout the 20 year planning period with the possibility and rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing structures.
2. Agricultural activities will continue. As new residential developments occur within agricultural areas, the property owner shall be aware that all farming activities will continue regardless of odor, dust, noise, etc.
3. Future residential development should be guided by an objective point system (see Appendix E). In order to maintain the rural atmosphere of Mitchell and strive for farmland preservation, the Town Plan Commission and Town Board should use the point system for all future residential development proposals.
4. The Town encourages new development techniques which maintain a balance between natural areas and new development. As new development occurs within the Town, the surrounding natural amenities that exist may be preserved by utilizing various development techniques such as conservation/cluster subdivisions. These techniques can help protect the surrounding environmental features, allow for more open space, and preserve farmland and wildlife habitats within the Town. The specific details of the subdivision design shall be at the discretion of the Town, ensuring that the approval or denial is based on sound land use planning, and the development minimizes the negative affects on the areas environmental features and farmland.
5. The Town should require detailed Site Plans for all non-agricultural developments. The developments shall be evaluated on a list of criteria set by the Town of Mitchell. Approval or denial will be based on the criteria. The following are examples of general criteria that will need to be analyzed by the Town Plan Commission and Town Board prior to making a decision.
 - ◆ physical measurements and topography,

- ◆ geology, hydrology and vegetation,
- ◆ structure, utility and roadway locations and dimensions,
- ◆ effects on neighboring properties,
- ◆ economic impacts,
- ◆ natural resource impacts,
- ◆ necessary permits from other agencies, etc.

Various criteria are found in this comprehensive plan and will be planned in the town's new zoning ordinance to assist with much of the decision making process.

6. Single family residential development, if permitted, should have a minimum density of one residential unit per three acres. The intent of the plan is to preserve the town's agricultural lands and its scenic atmosphere. At this density, it is expected that many of the natural amenities in the town can be retained, including large tracts of woodlands, open space, etc.
7. The town shall control the future developments of wooded areas to one dwelling unit per ten (10) acre minimum. Rarely should the woodlands be developed with greater densities. Lands adjacent to woodlands may be developed at the same or at higher densities, but the Town prefers a sensitive approach to future development and is thus viewing favorably unique development options such as conservation subdivision designs or clustering to take place. Any new developments will be required to present detailed site plans that illustrate the development is located in a manner that will have a minimal impact on wildlife habitats and other natural areas within the Town. In addition, preserving open space views along the Town's roadways is also encouraged when development occurs within the woodlands classification.
8. Developments should be done in a manner that will minimize potential conflicts. If residential development were to occur in agricultural areas, adequate buffers are encouraged between farming and non-farming operations in order to lessen conflicts. If it is found that new residential development will not have a negative affect on an existing farm operation or the rural character of the Town, the residential development may be allowed to occur.
9. Existing viewsheds should be maintained. Care shall be given that development occurring within these areas and along transportation corridors (i.e. state and county highways, or Town roads) not negatively impact the view along these roads. Any future developments should be situated with ample buffer strips of natural vegetation between adjacent roads and the developments. This would help screen the development and thus maintain the existing rural character residents want to preserve.

Overall, the Town recommends future residential developments that meet the criteria established in the Town's point system. This practice will encourage infill development, orderly development patterns and discourage further fragmentation of agricultural areas. All subdivisions proposed within the town of Mitchell shall be submitted to the Town Plan Commission for review.

Additionally, it is the intent of this plan to see all future residential developments occur without negatively affecting the function or the look of the Town's unique environmental features. Large stands of trees as well as open spaces, if they are to be developed, should be developed in such a way as to complement their scenic beauty. The Town's vision is to protect existing natural areas (vegetated areas and/or open space views) and productive farmland from being developed.

Commercial Development

The town does not view itself as a community that would attract large commercial businesses during the twenty year planning period. These large businesses are expected to locate within nearby communities that have adequate infrastructure (i.e. Plymouth, Cascade, Waldo, etc.).

However, the town has designated several future commercial sites. The Commercial category for Mitchell identifies areas primarily for transient commercial uses and possible community commercial businesses (e.g. restaurant, etc.).

Recommendations:

1. Commercial uses throughout the town are envisioned to continue. Those businesses that are in current commercial operations will continue to function throughout the 20 year planning period.
2. Areas for new commercial developments should be concentrated. If any new commercial uses are to be developed within the town of Mitchell, they are recommended to be concentrated in 3 specific areas (Town Hall corner at Hwy A and V and along STH 67 and STH 28), and not dispersed throughout the town. Any other areas proposed within the town for commercial developments should be reviewed to limit incompatibilities (e.g. noise, lighting, etc.).
3. The appearance of commercial structures should be controlled by the Town in order to maintain its rural character.
4. The Town is encouraged to provide safe access to future commercial sites. Access roads will intersect several local roads and County Highways to reach the potential commercial businesses. As suggested by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Town of Mitchell recommends these future access roads be 500 feet from the STH 67 and 28 pavement edge on town roads. These recommended distances should help provide for safe ingress and egress.
5. Access to the designated commercial areas should be maintained to one or two areas and not individual lots along the access roadways. This will provide for more efficient traffic flow and safety. Also, if possible, commercial developments should allow for shared parking and driveways, have ample landscaping to break-up the parking areas as well as to shield the view from the roadway.
6. Commercial signage should be controlled. In order to control signs appearances, rather than allowing signs to control the Town's appearance, the Town may need to address signage regulations. Sign designs that are flashy or gaudy can have the potential to degrade the rural character of the Town. It is also recommended that glaring lights, changeable lettering, electronic messaging, and trademark colors be prohibited because they are often deemed disruptive.
7. Home-based businesses are envisioned to remain and are permitted. With greater access to the Internet and better telecommunication systems, working from the home is a viable alternative to traditional employment practices. These uses rarely disrupt neighboring uses. Each of the classifications, regarding residential uses, recognizes home-based businesses as a permitted use. The Town will need to ensure that those home-based businesses that do exist do not outgrow their current location or become nuisances to adjoining land owners. Those home-based businesses that need a zoning change (to continue to operate) will be encouraged to relocate their business in commercial areas identified on the 20-Year Land Use Map.

Overall, as with any kind of development, when commercial development is proposed within the town, the Town Plan Commission and Town Board must closely monitor the capacities of the infrastructure and community services that accommodate this new development and weigh the future costs to benefits. The Town should not encourage the development of commercial

businesses that are not consistent with the scale of the Town. More intensive commercial businesses should be directed to other adjacent communities that currently have adequate infrastructure and services.

Light Industrial Strategy

Given Mitchell's proximity to several incorporated communities, the Town does not envision itself as attracting large industries. Therefore the town has not designated any sites for future industrial development. However, if any new light industry were to locate within the town, it shall reflect the character of the Town.

Recommendations:

1. The Town should guide large industrial development to adjacent communities. Since the Town does not view itself as attracting industry, it is envisioned that new industries locate in adjacent communities (e.g. Plymouth, etc.) with existing services and infrastructure. The Town of Mitchell does not feel it will be cost effective to provide the services (emergency, fire, sewer, water, etc.) that large scale industrial businesses require. The community survey also indicated that the vast majority of the respondents felt there is not a need for industrial development.
2. It is the recommendation of the Town that existing industrial lands remain throughout the planning period while under the same ownership and function. These areas generally consist of storage facilities and other small manufacturing uses that exist in the Town. This classification has created the majority of neighbor/business conflicts within the Town after a dormant facility has been converted to alternative use.
3. If light industry is to locate within the Town, it shall be compatible with the character of the Town. Any new industry allowed must be consistent with the scale of the Town and be environmentally sound. Industrial developments shall incorporate buffers to lessen conflicts and maintain the rural character of the Town.
4. The Town should ensure any past, present and future quarry operations are properly closed and that negative impacts do not affect neighboring properties. The Town will monitor quarries for negative effects and work with surrounding Towns, Sheboygan County and state agencies to ensure they are reclaimed to a natural setting.

As with the commercial development, when light industrial development is proposed within the Town, the Town Plan Commission and Town Board must closely monitor the capacities of the infrastructure and community services that accommodate this new development and weigh the future costs (i.e. providing services/utilities) to benefits.

Governmental/Institutional

This category area includes the Mitchell Town Hall, Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution, St. Michael's church, and cemeteries.

Recommendations:

1. The Town Board will continue to monitor services provided to the town residents although many of these services are being provided by other agencies and municipalities. The Town Board should work with adjoining communities and Sheboygan County to help provide future services as effectively and efficiently as reasonably possible. The Town should continue to monitor the quality of fire, police and emergency services, etc. provided to ensure adequacy. The Town is also encouraged to explore different options for handling future road maintenance, recycling services and disposal of solid waste, which could be more

- cost effective and more efficient for its residents.
2. Consider renovating existing Mitchell Town Hall, discuss the possibility of a shared facility with a surrounding community, or consider a new facility. Mitchell should continue to work with the adjacent communities about the possibility of sharing a facility for community meetings.
 3. The town is encouraged to become actively involved with School Districts. Mitchell should become involved with the long-range plans of the three School Districts (Plymouth, Campbellsport, Kewaskum) that are located in the town. The Town may establish a group or committee with citizens from each district to become aware and informed on situations such as new facilities, improvements to existing structures, curriculum changes, etc.
 4. The Town should consider prohibiting all sewage systems within the town's environmental corridors. The town should utilize its environmental corridors (i.e. wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, etc.) as identifiers in areas where sewage systems may be prohibited to protect groundwater quality.
 5. The Town should continue to work with Sheboygan County to ensure that private septic systems are monitored and in good working order. Also, the Town should cooperate with the Sheboygan County Sheriffs Department to explore options of maintaining protective services.
 6. The Town should consider applying for grants and other aids to assist the Town in providing needed services. Grant and aid programs may be explored by the Town Board when considering improvements to any of the Town services or facilities. Sheboygan County or the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission are several entities that can inform the Town on future grants available to them.
 7. The Town of Mitchell has developed a Wireless Communications Facilities Ordinance and a Wind Ordinance. The expanding use of "cell phones" provides many benefits, including safety and convenience. However, problems can arise when new towers, that are often hundreds of feet high, are built near people's homes, next to historic buildings, or in rural, scenic areas. Mitchell should work with adjoining communities to discuss issues such as alternate structures, joint use of new and existing towers, and visual and other potential adverse impacts of telecommunication and wind turbine towers. In addition, Mitchell must be informed as to when and where possible telecommunication towers/wind turbines may be constructed in and around the town.
 8. Ensure the updating of the Town of Mitchell Regulations/Ordinances. With the adoption of this comprehensive plan, the town must update the text of the Town of Mitchell Regulations/Ordinances to be sure it is consistent with this comprehensive plan. A new Zoning Ordinance will best protect the residents' quality of life, while providing the needed controls over incompatible uses. The Town also recommended working with adjoining towns in order to make the land use regulations somewhat consistent with each other.

Communications/Utilities

Parks and Recreation

The Town of Mitchell has an adequate Town park recreational facility. Given the close proximity of recreational facilities in the State Forest and surrounding communities, the Town has decided not to designate any future park areas. However, the potential exists for other recreational uses in the Town.

Recommendations:

1. Cooperation in planning park and recreational facilities. If future recreational development were to occur, it is recommended that the Town cooperate with the surrounding towns, Sheboygan County, etc. to promote connectivity of recreational uses such as trails.
2. Work cooperatively with the Wisconsin DNR on potential recreational sites. Since the DNR owns a considerable amount of land within Mitchell, the Town should cooperate with the DNR to determine the possibility of utilizing environmental corridors on DNR lands for future recreational uses. Also determine if the DNR has any future plans for the lands they own.

Agriculture

The purpose of this category is to preserve existing lands devoted to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock.

Recommendations:

1. The Town should preserve, where appropriate, agricultural lands and open to safeguard, for future generations, the rural, agricultural atmosphere and character valued by the residents of the Town of Mitchell.
2. Developments for agricultural uses (e.g. hobby farms, etc.) within this classification are to be a minimum of 10 acres.
3. In order to maintain the rural atmosphere of Mitchell and strive for farmland preservation, the Town Plan Commission and Town Board should use the point system (see Appendix E) for future residential development.
4. Low density residential development should be considered if residential development is permitted, a single family residence with a three acre minimum is recommended in order to preserve natural areas, viewsheds, open spaces, and areas deemed important for the Town to keep preserved.
5. Site plans should be required for all non-agricultural developments. Any nonagricultural development proposed for agricultural areas shall demonstrate a detailed site plan. The development shall be evaluated on a set of criteria set by the Town of Mitchell. Approval or denial will be based on the established criteria.
6. The Town encourages new development techniques and programs which will preserve as much farmland as possible. As new development occurs within the Town, the surrounding farmland that exists may be preserved by utilizing various development techniques such as conservation/cluster subdivisions. These techniques can help protect the surrounding productive farmlands within the Town. The specific details of the subdivision design shall be at the discretion of the Town, ensuring that the approval or denial is based on sound land use planning, and a minimal amount of prime farmland is converted for development purposes. The Town is also encouraged to work with Sheboygan County to promote such programs as Purchase Development Rights to protect productive farmlands.
7. As development pressure increases, the Town will need to weigh the cost of converting farmland into other intensive uses. A preferred approach is to encourage property owners thinking about developing subdivisions to plan for development on lands that are least productive (based upon the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) map data). This will aid in the continuation of preserving the most productive farmlands for future farming use, as well as those lands most buffered/hidden from the views of individuals driving along Town roads and county and state highways. Ultimately, this will keep large areas of open space undeveloped in order to maintain a sense/perception that the Town is still a rural community.

8. Natural buffers should be encouraged for development. Adequate buffers are encouraged between farming and future non-farming operations in these areas in order to lessen conflict between land uses. Decisions to allow residential development in areas identified for agricultural uses should be limited and decisions to approve or deny must be based on sound land use planning criteria.
9. The Town should advocate that agricultural lands are under adequate farming practices. It is important for these lands to continue to be under the best management practices for agricultural activities. Inappropriate agricultural practices can have a significant adverse impact on the quality of surface water and groundwater unless properly managed.
10. It is also recommended that the Town address the issue of large-scale farming operations. The trend in farming within the State of Wisconsin is showing that the smaller, family-owned farms have difficulty trying to compete with the larger farming operations, which eventually leads to the smaller farms ceasing operations and possibly selling out to developers just to survive. This in turn, could change the landscape of the town as a whole, and possibly create conflicts between different types of land uses.

Throughout the State of Wisconsin and beyond, the trend is turning to cooperative farming practices in which two or more small farming operations combine funds and equipment in order to keep up with the corporate large-scale farms. To address the large-scale farming issue, it is recommended that the Town, along with UW-Extension, Sheboygan County, and other professional agencies develop a program to discuss several issues including the potential impacts that these farms pose to the environment, as well as how large-scale farms can affect a community's character. Several issues may include the spreading of animal waste, maintenance of local roads, etc. The Town should also address large-scale farming operations when updating its ordinances.

Woodlands/Open Space

The woodlands/open space category is intended to achieve the goal of encouraging the preservation of woodlands and valuable open spaces within the Town of Mitchell. These areas historically have not been farmed or developed.

Recommendations:

1. Allowing limited residential developments within and/or adjacent to stands of woodlands may be acceptable to the Town. Many of the woodlands within the Town are undisturbed. However, the Town will likely face growing pressure to develop within these wooded areas and/or adjacent to them over the twenty year planning period. Many people are looking for home sites that already contain, or are adjacent to natural features (such as a wood lot, steep slopes, etc.)
2. Consider controlling the future developments by maintaining these wooded areas to one dwelling unit per ten (10) acre minimums. Rarely should the woodlands be developed with greater densities. Lands adjacent to woodlands may be developed at the same or at higher densities, but the Town prefers a sensitive approach to future development and is thus viewing favorably unique development options such as conservation subdivision designs or clustering to take place. Any new developments will be required to present detailed site plans that illustrate the development is located in a manner that will have a minimal impact on wildlife habitats and other natural areas within the Town. In addition, preserving open space views along the Town's roadways is also encouraged when development occurs within this classification.
3. Encouraging the replacement of woodlands (reforestation). The Town encourages new

developments to replenish the woodlands that are removed by planting trees in areas that would be beneficial to the natural makeup of the area and the community as a whole. Benefits include maintaining/improving wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities, restoration of clean water resources, erosion prevention, etc.

Environmental Corridors

The preservation and protection of natural areas within the Town of Mitchell will become increasingly important as population and development pressures increase. Many natural features are unsuitable for development, enhance the appearance of the Town, or improve natural processes such as flood control, water retention or groundwater recharge. Wetlands, floodplains, and the rivers and creeks in Mitchell are all significant natural features within the Town.

Recommendations:

1. This plan recommends that the natural features within the Town remain in their natural state or be minimally modified for possible recreational uses. Environmental corridors are represented by four elements including; (1) 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), (2) WDNR wetlands, (3) steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, (4) and a 75-foot setback from all navigable waterways. These four elements provide serious limitations to development, plus the floodplains, wetlands and the 75-foot building setback are generally regulated by either the federal, state, or county government. Together, these elements represent the areas of the Town that are most sensitive to development and are intended to be preserved.
2. Preserve the gravel roads within the Town. The Town considers these roads, and lands around it, as major components of the community's identity. The Town feels that any development near the area would detract from its aesthetic beauty.
3. Use this plan to serve as a guide for the preservation of environmental corridors. Using the environmental corridors as a guide when reviewing proposed developments will give the Town background information on what areas the Town residents believe are important to maintaining the Town's rural character and the quality of its natural resource base. The Town should direct development away from environmental corridors, as much as possible or have them sensitively designed within developments which will help minimize the negative effects on wildlife habitats and the rural nature of the Town.
4. Maintain wildlife corridors.
5. Utilize existing natural areas to enhance the character of the Town. It is encouraged that the Town preserve large natural areas and/or features within possible subdivisions to enhance/retain buffers between residential uses and transportation routes, sheltering the developments while also helping to shield the developments from views along the routes.

Transportation

The Town of Mitchell's transportation network consists of two state highways, many county highways and various Town roads. The local road system that is in place provides good traffic flow within the Town. In addition, the maintenance of these roads has been adequate in the past.

The Town currently requires all lot splits of 3 or more lots and all condominiums to provide Area Development Plans. This will allow the Town to review and ensure that future roads are well designed to promote efficient traffic flow and to avoid unnecessary cul-de-sacs and loops that can increase the town's future maintenance costs.

Consider adopting an Official Map. An Official Map allows the Town Board to review development requests to ensure that all new developments and roads conform to the Town's

Official Map In addition, the Town is encouraged to work with surrounding communities to advocate consistency between the various Official Maps.

Preserve Town views along major transportation routes. Limiting driveways and recommending landscaping/buffers along major transportation corridors assists in preserving the rural atmosphere that the town currently maintains.

Provide safe access to future commercial sites adjacent to STH 67 and 28.

Ensure a cost effective road system management plan. In order to control expenditures on Town road repairs, it is recommended that the Town Board utilize the PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) program to assist in maintaining the roads in the future. The information derived from the PASER survey is used to assess the overall condition of road pavements and to determine the town's road maintenance, restoration and construction needs.

IDENTIFIED "SMART GROWTH" AREAS

According to s. 16.965, Wis. Stats., a "smart growth area" is "an area that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands within existing infrastructure and municipal, state and utility services, where practicable, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are both contiguous to existing development and at densities which have relatively low utility and municipal and state governmental costs." The "smart growth areas" within the Town are contiguous with commercial areas identified in the 20-Year Potential Land Use Map. Locating new areas of development near the community's existing development allows for more orderly and efficient development patterns. In addition, locating the higher density developments adjacent to existing developments also assists the Town in maintaining its rural character, while preserving the many valuable natural areas and agricultural lands that make up much of Mitchell's landscape.

SUMMARY

Overall, the Town of Comprehensive Plan is the result of several years of preparation and work done by the Town of Mitchell Plan Commission which generally worked towards several issues including:

- ◆ finding a balance between individual property rights and community wide interests and goals;
- ◆ steering residential developments to areas designated within the town in order to minimize land use conflicts;
- ◆ understanding the value of environmental corridors and wildlife habitats by steering development away from these areas;
- ◆ promoting environmental corridors to serve as natural buffers which will help lessen conflicts;
- ◆ preserving farmlands within the town;
- ◆ maintaining the town's rural and open space character;
- ◆ steering more intensive developments toward the villages of Waldo and Cascade and the city of Plymouth in order to promote more efficient development patterns;
- ◆ cooperating with Sheboygan County and adjacent communities;
- ◆ identifying enough land to accommodate a variety of developments over a 20 year

planning period.

The effect that this comprehensive plan will have on the Town is twofold: first, it provides a future development scheme which is not only cost-effective but is also compatible with the Town's existing development pattern and provides for the achievement of the Town's vision and goals outlined within the plan. Secondly, it identifies a responsible program to improve the overall condition and delivery of public facilities and services. In simple terms, the Town must not only plan for new development that may occur, but must also plan on the timing and location of the new development that is within the framework of this plan design. To accomplish this, the Town Board, Town Plan Commission and Town residents must work together in an organized and cooperative manner on all future planning efforts within the community. This may require cooperative agreements and joint planning with the adjoining communities and Sheboygan County.