

8 Land Use

I. Introduction

The Land Use Plan consists of the following elements:

1. Introduction
2. Existing Conditions
3. Opportunities for Redevelopment
4. Land Use Projections
5. Future Land Use Policies
6. Future Land Use Districts
7. Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

This element of the Comprehensive Plan contains existing conditions, goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property in Shelby. This chapter also explains future land use designations and describes these uses on the Future Land Use Map (located in the appendix).

2. Existing Conditions

Existing Land Use Patterns

Town estimates from May 2006 indicate a total land area of 18,521 acres. As shown in Table 8.1, Woodlands are prevalent throughout the local landscape with almost 44% (8,110 acres) of the total land area within the township. Agricultural uses are the next most common with 3,539 acres (19%). Rounding out the top five are Water (15%), Wetlands (8%), and Single-Family Residential (5%). See Map 8.1 for geographic orientation of land uses.

Table 8.1: Existing Land Use Table

Land Use Type	Town of Shelby	
	# of Acres	Percentage
Single-Family Residential	979	5.29%
Multi-Family Residential	6.41	0.03%
Mobile Homes	27.07	0.15%
Farmstead	80	0.43%
Motel	2.21	0.01%
Retail	47	0.26%
Manufacturing	9.26	0.05%
Institutional	45.15	0.24%
Road	577	3.11%
Railroad	42.27	0.23%
Recreation	735.94	3.97%
Agricultural	3538.78	19.11%
Woodlands	8110.41	43.79%
Wetlands	1,509	8.15%
Water	2808.77	15.16%
Vacant	2	0.01%
Total	18,521.48	100%

Source: La Crosse County Planning Department (2003), SAA delineation and tabulation (2006)

Existing Densities

The Town of Shelby has a density of 183.2 people per square mile. There are 71 housing units per square mile in the Town. This density rate is nearly double that of the Town of Medary, but is significantly less dense than the Town of Campbell. The density rate for the entire County is 236.6 people per square mile and 96 households per square mile.

Table 8.2: Population and Household Density, 2000

	Populati on	Housi ng Units*	Area in Square Miles			Density (Sq. Mi of Land Area)	
			Total Area	Water Area	Land Area	Populati on	Housing Units
Shelby town	4,687	1,817	29.13	3.55	25.58	183.2	71
Medary town	1,463	553	11.73	0.02	11.71	124.9	47.2
City of La Crosse	51,818	22,233	22.16	2.02	20.14	2,573.40	1,104.10
La Crosse County	107,120	43,479	479.92	27.18	452.74	236.6	96

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

* Housing Unit - A house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Current estimates indicate the total number of housing units in Shelby is 1,970.

Intensity of Non-Residential Use

Intensity refers to height, bulk, and use associated with non-residential development. In Shelby, this is regulated through the County Zoning ordinance. Table 8.3 indicates the zoning districts that are located throughout the Town. See Map 8.2.

Table 8.3: Non Residential Zoning Classifications

Non Residential Zoning District	Summary and Description
Commercial A (CA)	Commercial A is the most restrictive district of non-agriculture / non-residential zoning districts in the County. A wide range of uses are allowed by right including small retail stores, gas stations, restaurants, grocery and motels. A maximum height limit of three stories or 45 feet is allowed.
Commercial B (CB)	This is the second most restrictive district of the three non-agriculture / non-residential zoning districts in the County. A wide range of uses are allowed by right including feed mills, hotels, newsstands, and animal hospitals. A maximum height limit of three stories or 45 feet is allowed.
Commercial C (CC)	This zoning district permits uses allowed in the Commercial B and more intensive uses including: a) Wholesale warehouses, truck terminals, and freight houses, b) Storage plants (not including junk yards), c) Bakeries, printing plants, laboratories, d) Woodworking and sheet metal fabrication plants The maximum height allowed is three stories or 45 feet.
Industrial (I)	The industrial district allows a wide variety of industrial, warehousing, commercial and related uses. The maximum height for this district is 60' or 5 stories. In addition, the ordinance specifically states that the following several uses are only allowed with additional hearing and review.

Source: La Crosse County Zoning Code

Land Use Supply

The supply of land to support development is based on several factors including physical suitability, local and county regulations, and community goals. Intergovernmental agreements and annexations also become considerations when looking at the available land supply at the community level. Based on physical suitability, there is an available supply of land that could be used to support development in the Town. Local policy will more closely determine how this supply is defined and how it is used. Of particular interest are those parcels zoned “Transitional Agriculture,” as those acres can be converted to other non-agricultural uses. Policy will help determine whether these acres contribute to the supply for planned development in the short and long term.

Land Use Demand

Direct highway access and available land have made this an accessible location for suburban growth in the region. The southern part of the metropolitan region may become a growth focus as lot prices increase and build-out occurs to the north. Other factors, including proximity to the City of La Crosse may also fuel growth in and around Shelby. Additionally, when considering Town growth demand, it is important to look at annexation trends for land previously in the Town. Local-level data for all communities listed in Table 8.4 were not available after 1997. This information is included to demonstrate the different rates of growth or annexation experienced between the comparables listed.

Table 8.4: Historic Growth and Growth and Annexation, 1990 - 1997

	Number of Housing Units*		New units built (net)	Units annexed (in or out)	Total net change	New housing Units per square mile 1990-1997
	1990	1997				
Town of Shelby	2,000	2,024	151	-127	24	5.8
Town of Campbell	1,731	1,862	189	-58	131	47.7
Town of Medary	589	654	71	-6	65	4.9
All towns in La Crosse County	9,903	10,782	1,267	-388	879	3.0

Source: Wisconsin Town Land Use Data Project: Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, UW-Madison

* Housing Unit - A house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters.

Land Prices

One method to analyze comparative land prices is to look at the cost of farmland for Towns in the area. Table 8.5 shows average farmland sales for the Towns of Shelby, Campbell, Medary and the average of all towns in La Crosse County from 1990-1997. Data for the communities listed were not available subsequent to 1997 for this analysis.

Table 8.5: Average Farmland Sales 1990–1997

	Number of parcels sold	Total acres	Acres continuing in agriculture	Acres converted out of agriculture	\$/acre of land continuing in agriculture	\$/acre of land converted out of agriculture	1990 acres of farmland	% sold and converted 1990-1997
Town of Shelby	8	220	194	26	\$718	N/A	51,296	0.5%
Town of Campbell	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	57	0.0%
Town of Medary	8	410	213	197	N/A	N/A	3,372	5.8%
La Crosse County	404	21,421	17,508	3,913	\$885	\$1,609	128,529	3.0%

Source: Wisconsin Town Land Use Data Project: Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, UW-Madison

3. Opportunities for Redevelopment

Redevelopment opportunities exist in portions of the Town located along 14/61 & 35 and in areas of “town islands.”

4. Future Land Use Projections

Two sets of growth projections have been prepared using different sources. The first set of projections is based on state growth estimates and current Town development densities. Based on these figures, the Town is projected to need an additional 140 acres for new development over the next twenty years. Although population projections indicate a small decrease over the next 20 years, a small increase in households is projected for Shelby. That explains why small amounts of residential growth are projected. These calculations are based on the following sources and assumptions:

- a) State of Wisconsin- DOA Population and Household Growth Projections;
- b) Residential density is based on number of housing units per acre in the year 2000;
- c) Commercial and industrial use projections are based on the ratio of these uses to residential uses in the year 2000 (assuming a land use pattern similar to what exists currently is desired in the future).

For the second set, a different methodology was used. In preparation of the previous plan, the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission projected growth by reviewing building permits. Their methodology was based on building permits issued over a five year period and projected the following: 500 new single family dwellings, 10 industrial buildings, 75 commercial buildings. This “building permit” based scenario was applied to existing Town densities to create the set of projections indicated in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Land Use Projections – Additional Acres Needed for Development

	2010	2015	2020	2025	Estimated Total
Projected New Acres of Development Based on Long Term Historic Growth (DOA-based)					
Residential	49	13	22	42	126
Commercial	6	2	3	5	15
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0
Agriculture/Open Space	-55	-15	-25	-47	-142
Growth Based on Recent Building Permit Data (MRRPC-based)					
Residential	194	52	87	167	500
Commercial	19	19	19	18	75
Industrial	2	3	2	3	10
Agriculture / Open Space	-215	-74	-108	-188	-585

Source: Schreiber/Anderson Associates, 2005

Both projection methodologies anticipate growth over the 20-year planning period. The DOA projection provides a more conservative estimate because it uses a decades-long historical approach and careful analysis concerning future demographic trends. The MRRPC method relies on a relatively brief snapshot in history to make a 20-year estimate on growth based upon observations from the “snapshot”. Both projects hold value for the Town of Shelby, and each should be consulted when making long-term decisions. The projections indicate the Town of Shelby should generally plan to accommodate between 142 and 585 additional acres of residential, commercial, and industrial land over the next 20 years. More than likely, the actual rate of growth will fall somewhere between the two projections.

5. Future Land Use Policies

Policies in this section are divided into two categories: 1) General policies; and, 2) Area policies. The area policies relate to policies for specific geographic areas. General policies apply throughout the town unless specifically identified. These policies were developed through careful consideration by the Shelby Land Use Planning Committee.

General Policies

1. No structure shall be built on a slope of greater than 30%. Slopes of greater than 20% to have limited development due to the need for larger sites and difficulty in providing road to develop steeper slopes. Slopes less than 20% slope shall be allowed to develop more densely than greater slopes. Each development is to be reviewed for its slope characteristic to determined parcel size and developability necessary to review each site on its own merit due to the many variables to be looked at, i.e. slope, wet land, green space needed etc.
2. Areas adjacent to developed areas and able to be serviced by a municipal sanitary sewer shall be allowed to be developed as “Single Family 1” to “Residential A” up to four (4) homes per acre, to complement existing or proposed adjacent development.
3. Areas of green space to be left intact – this will be accomplished by leaving steep slopes and wet land undeveloped. These areas already protected by existing regulations.
4. Areas with Sanitary Sewer shall be allowed to develop as Residential A, up to four (4) homes per acre.
5. Areas without Sanitary Sewer are allowed to develop as Residential A, up to two (2) homes per acre, unless designated in the area polices as a more protected area or a conservation subdivision.
6. Emphasis on development in the valleys and ridge tops. Less development on steeper hillsides

Area Policies

Encourage Conservation Development

1. **Town Island** – is fully developed – as currently developed and zoned.
2. **Boschert Addition** – almost fully developed – mostly single family with some commercial near the edges – Develop as currently zoned.
3. **Hanifl Road** – fully developed as single family – developed to remain “as is”. Most of properties in the area are in flood plain.
4. **Hwy 33 Corridor** – to bottom of Irish Hill = substantially developed as single family residential. Continue to allow development as single family. Density to be determined by topography, similar density to existing.
5. **Co Hwy F; Hwy 33 (east end)** – Moderately developed – continue to develop as single family residential. Density to be determined by topography and road access, similar density to existing. Ridge top – with limited large areas of flat ground.

6. **Hwy 14-61 Corridors** – Moderately developed as single family residential, some minor commercial. Good potential as single family development – many wide valleys. Some steeper slopes to limit development.
7. **Hwy 35** – Mostly undeveloped, near City of La Crosse limits. Good topography for single family development. Should develop as single family, moderately dense.
8. **Co. K** – Mostly developed as single family – smaller geographic area, should be developed as single family residential.
9. **North Chipmunk** – Some single family properties in agricultural area. Limit development to preserve agricultural. Road access to area – not as good as some other areas. Develop one (1) house per 5 acres.
10. **Co. Hwy MM/Skyline** – Ridge top property – mostly agricultural. Limit development = to low density access to area – difficult with steep road to ridge top. Allow to develop – one (1) house per 5 acres.

6. Future Land Use Districts

The following categories are included in the town of Shelby Future Land Use Map. A description of each category is included below.

- **Agricultural District:** This district is established for areas in which agricultural use are encouraged.
- **Environmental District:** This district includes areas where special protection is encouraged because of unique landscape, topographical features, wildlife, or historical value. They contain the best remaining woodlands and wetlands, wildlife habitats, undeveloped shorelands and floodlands, groundwater recharge and discharge areas, and steeply sloped lands in the Town. In developed areas, this designation also refers to parks and open spaces used for recreation or environmental purposes.
- **Single-family Residential District:** A single-family home is a detached, free – standing residential structure.
- **Non – residential District:** A non-residential district includes uses that are business related, including commercial, retail, or industrial. Zoning for these areas is established to provide separation from incompatible uses, which may include residential neighborhoods. Preferred non-residential development in the Town of Shelby includes the following type:

Mixed Use: Mixed-use development refers to the practice of containing more than one type of use in a building or set of buildings. This includes a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other uses.

7. Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

Goals and objectives identify what the plan should accomplish. Goals are statements that describe a desired future condition, often in general terms. Objectives are statements that describe a specific future condition to be attained, to reach the established goals.

Recommendations identify the action necessary to achieve goals and objectives. For this reason, recommendations should be actionable, attainable, and specific. Not all recommendations can be achieved in the short-term, so they should be specific enough so that any individual or group wishing to achieve a stated goal can take action.

The following goals, objectives, and recommendations have been grouped into categories. These categories relate to a specific characteristic of growth within Shelby. Language for this section was jointly developed by the Town of Shelby Land Use Planning Committee and its consultants.

Rural Area Growth Goal: Maintain the rural and agricultural character as much as practical until area is developed.

Objectives

- a. Preserve Shelby’s “green space”, areas of steep slope and wet land
- b. Recognize that some portions of the Town have areas of productive soils and have continuing agricultural operations. Maintain State farmland Preservation Programs participants.
- c. Encourage development adjacent to existing development.

Recommendations:

1. Allow higher density housing development in areas adjacent to existing developments, areas with one (1) mile of the City of La Crosse, areas on fairly level land along adequate highways.
2. Maintain the rustic road characteristic adjacent to the Skyline Drive and North Chipmunk corridors.
3. Areas zoned Exclusive Agricultural and Transitional Agricultural should be very limited in the Town as they are very restrictive to development.
4. Amend ordinance to require design guidelines that include site designs, drainage plans, signage, construction material standards, landscape designs and erosion control.

Sanitary Sewer Service Area Growth Goal: Continue to support an urban/suburban mixed use of smaller lot size residences, estate lots, and a mix of retail, wholesale, light industrial uses, and existing mobile home parks.

Objectives:

- a. Allow a greater range of lot sizes within areas served by sanitary sewer.
- b. Seek cooperative boundary agreements that further protect these areas from annexation.

Recommendations:

1. Allow residential density of up to four (4) homes per acre in areas currently served by sanitary sewer or easily connected to existing sanitary sewer services.
2. Encourage development in urban/suburban mixed areas along major transportation routes to factor the impacts of the development on traffic flow and volume.
3. Ensure adjacent land uses are compatible with proposed development.
4. Explore opportunities for creative wastewater treatment alternatives including low-pressure systems, methane recovery, and other new technologies.

Regional Entrance Goal: Promote Shelby’s unique role as the southern entrance to the greater La Crosse urban area via the Great River Road and USH 14/61.

Objectives:

- a. Promote a semi-rural residential alternative for the south side of the urban area.
- b. Maintain agricultural zoning along STH 35.

Recommendations:

1. Restrict signage.