

Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan

Committee Approved Draft 7/08

How to Use the City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan

The *City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan* is a decision making guide for future community growth, change, and preservation over the next 20 or so years. That's a pretty ambitious goal, given how many important things must be done well to grow a successful city. As a result of this goal, and the state's requirements for what a comprehensive plan must cover, the *Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan* is fairly long and complicated. This "how-to" guide is an attempt to break down the *Plan* to make it easier to gather useful information.

Who might find the plan useful?

City officials and staff will use the *Comprehensive Plan* a blueprint for future city growth, government activities, and budgets. Others that should find the *Plan* useful include:

- Members of the public interested in understanding the long-term vision and priorities of their local government.
- Individuals and groups with a particular interest, and a desire to learn how that interest fits in with a big-picture vision of the City or how they can "make a difference."
- Property owners wanting to understand what they or their neighbors can do with their land in the future.
- Developers interested in exploring types and locations for future growth or redevelopment that the City supports.
- Nearby and overlapping units of government—like the School District—interested in understanding how City growth plans might affect their own.

How is this Plan most commonly used?

Most frequently, people will use the *Comprehensive Plan* to learn how they might be able to use a particular piece of land that is different from how it is being used today, usually by following these steps:

1. **Checking the Future Land Use Maps:** Maps 7 and 8, in the Land Use chapter, present the City's desired pattern of future land uses, including areas for future neighborhood growth, industrial and commercial development, and mixed use redevelopment. Each property has a unique future land use category assigned to it: Planned Neighborhood, Light Industrial/ Business Park, or another. This represents the City's desired future land use for that property.
2. **Reviewing the Future Land Use Category Description:** The Land Use chapter of the *Comprehensive*

WHAT DO THE 12 *COMPREHENSIVE PLAN* CHAPTERS INCLUDE?

Chapter One: Implementation—Key recommendations of the *Plan* and the steps to carry them out.

Chapter Two: Issues and Opportunities—The City's vision for the next 20 years, both citywide and for 10 smaller planning areas.

Chapter Three: Agricultural Resources—The link between the health of area farms and the City's economic future.

Chapter Four: Natural Resources—Opportunities and constraints posed by environmental areas, and steps towards community sustainability.

Chapter Five: Cultural Resources—Directions in historic preservation and the community's cultural offerings.

Chapter Six: Land Use—Where and how land development and redevelopment is projected to occur over the next 20 years.

Chapter Seven: Transportation—Where new roads and trails will provide key connections and serve new growth.

Chapter Eight: Utilities and Community Facilities—Planned sewer, water, and public building improvements.

Chapter Nine: Parks and Recreation—Planned improvements to existing parks and ideas for new parks and trails.

Chapter Ten: Housing and Neighborhood Development—New directions in housing and "traditional neighborhood design."

Chapter Eleven: Economic Development—The community's focus on downtown and corridor redevelopment and new commercial and industrial growth.

Chapter Twelve: Intergovernmental Cooperation—How the City intends to work with its neighbors, the School District, and others to carry out the *Plan*.

Plan includes a detailed description of each future land use category shown on the Future Land Use maps. For each category, this chapter also presents the appropriate zoning district(s) to implement that category and related policies. These policies relate to the qualities the City would like to see when lands mapped in that category develop, like how buildings should look or how dense development should be.

3. **Digging Deeper into Recommendations Related to the Property:** Often, a policy associated with a future land use category will refer the reader to a different chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan*. For example, design standards for new development in Planned Neighborhood category are presented in the Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter. Also, Map 9 shows whether there are future roads or trails planned in the vicinity, and Map 10 shows where new parks will be. If interested in development, property owners then should review the City's zoning and subdivision ordinances and talk with City staff.

Where can I find the one particular thing that interests me?

Some users of the *Plan* will want to find information or recommendations on one particular topic related to the City's future, without reading the whole *Plan*. A couple of tips: first, the Summary and Table of Contents pages near the start of the *Plan* may help zero in on specific information. The Implementation chapter identifies the City's highest priority implementation steps. The list of terms and topics below may also help.

Comprehensive Plan Terms and Topics, and Where to Find Them

Affordable housing, <i>Ch. 10</i>	Forecasts/projections, <i>Chs. 2, 6, & 11</i>	Planned neighborhoods, <i>Chs. 6 & 10, Maps 7 & 8</i>
Allen Creek, <i>Chs. 4, 11, Maps 3, 4</i>	Green development, <i>Chs. 4, 6, 10, & 11</i>	Public buildings, <i>Ch. 8, Map 10</i>
Airport, <i>Ch. 7, Map 9</i>	Growth limitations, <i>Chs. 2, 4, & 6, Maps 3, 4, 6, 7, & 8</i>	Redevelopment, <i>Chs. 6 & 11, Figure 2.8-2.18, Maps 7 & 8</i>
Bark River, <i>Chs. 4 & 9, Maps 3, 4</i>	Health care, <i>Chs. 3, 6, 8, & 11</i>	Retail/shopping, <i>Chs. 6 & 11, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>
Bicycling/walking trails, <i>Chs. 7 & 9, Maps 9 & 10</i>	Highways, <i>Ch. 7, Map 9</i>	Rock River, <i>Chs. 4, 9, & 11, Maps 3, 4, & 10</i>
Bio-based industry, <i>Chs. 3 & 11</i>	Historic preservation, <i>Chs. 5, 6, 11</i>	Rural housing, <i>Chs. 3, 6, & 10, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>
Business parks, <i>Chs. 6 & 11, Figures 2.11, 2.18, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>	Housing, multiple family, <i>Chs. 6 & 10, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>	Schools/education, <i>Chs. 3, 8, & 9, Map 10</i>
Capital improvement program, <i>Ch. 8</i>	Housing, single family, <i>Chs. 6 & 10, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>	Sewer, <i>Chs. 6 & 8</i>
Commercial corridors (e.g. Janesville, Madison), <i>Chs. 6, 7, 11; Figures 2.8-2.18; Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>	Impact fees, <i>Chs. 8 & 9</i>	Smart Growth areas, <i>Ch. 6, Maps 7 & 8</i>
Community events, <i>Chs. 5 & 11</i>	Industrial development, <i>Chs. 6 & 11, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>	Subdivision ordinance, <i>Chs. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12</i>
Community gardens, <i>Ch. 3</i>	Jefferson, City of, <i>Chp. 12, Maps 1, 8</i>	Sustainability, <i>Chs. 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 11</i>
Cooperative housing, <i>Ch. 10</i>	Jefferson County, <i>Chp. 12, Map 8</i>	Tourism, <i>Chs. 1, 4, 5, 6, 11</i>
Demographics, <i>Chs. 2 & 11</i>	Koshkonong, Town of, <i>Chp. 12, Map 8</i>	Traditional neighborhood design/development, <i>Chs. 6 & 10</i>
Density/lots sizes, <i>Chs. 6 & 10</i>	Labor/job trends, <i>Ch. 11</i>	Traffic calming, <i>Chs. 6 & 7</i>
Development trends, <i>Ch. 6</i>	"Live-work" <i>Chs. 6, 10, & 11</i>	Urban service area, <i>Chs. 3 & 12, Maps 1, 7, & 8</i>
Downtown, <i>Chs. 5, 6, 10, 11, Figure 2.14, Maps 6, 7, & 8</i>	Mixed use development, <i>Chs. 6, 10, 11, Maps 7 & 8</i>	Vision statement, <i>Ch. 2</i>
Energy efficiency, <i>Chs. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</i>	Neighborhood development plans, <i>Chs. 6 & 10</i>	Water management/quality, <i>Chs. 4 & 8</i>
Environmental corridors, <i>Chs. 4, 6, & 9, Maps 3, 5, 6, 7, & 8</i>	Official Map, <i>Ch. 7</i>	Water (municipal), <i>Ch. 8</i>
Extraterritorial jurisdiction, <i>Chs. 3, 6, & 12, Maps 1, 7, & 8</i>	Parks, <i>Chs. 6, 8, & 9, Maps 6, 7, 8, & 10</i>	Zoning ordinance, <i>Chs. 6, 10, 11</i>
Farmer's market, <i>Chs. 3 & 11</i>		
Farming, <i>Chs. 3 & 6, Maps 4, 6, 7, & 8</i>		

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Summary

FORT ATKINSON VISION 2030

In the year 2030, Fort Atkinson will be a healthy, dynamic community characterized by sustainable housing, employment, entertainment, and educational opportunities. The City will have successfully integrated its unique history, culture, and values with new ideas and directions. Fort Atkinson will continue to be a distinctive community, evoking a sense of pride and belonging in those who have the fortune of living or working here.

In order for the City of Fort Atkinson to achieve its vision over the next 20 years, this *Comprehensive Plan* is intended to serve both as a decision guide and an action-oriented implementation plan. The *Plan* is organized into eleven chapters, each relating to a different planning element, including, but not limited to land use, transportation, housing, and economic development. At the end of every chapter is a detailed list of goals, objectives, policies, programs, and recommendations designed to help the City move towards achieving its vision.

Following is a brief summary of the key recommendations in the *Plan*, organized by chapter. The City invites you to read the full *City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan* to explore these recommendations in greater detail and the context within which they were prepared.

Agricultural Resources

- Promote county-wide farmland preservation efforts, and explore opportunities to advance bio-based industry.
- Utilize intergovernmental agreements, County zoning, and land division review to maintain long-term agricultural use of lands in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction.



Natural Resources

- Promote community sustainability City-wide.
- Help protect the Rock River, Bark River, and Allen Creek; groundwater quality; and other important environmental features.
- Promote the integration of recreation with natural resources, such as through more recreational trails.

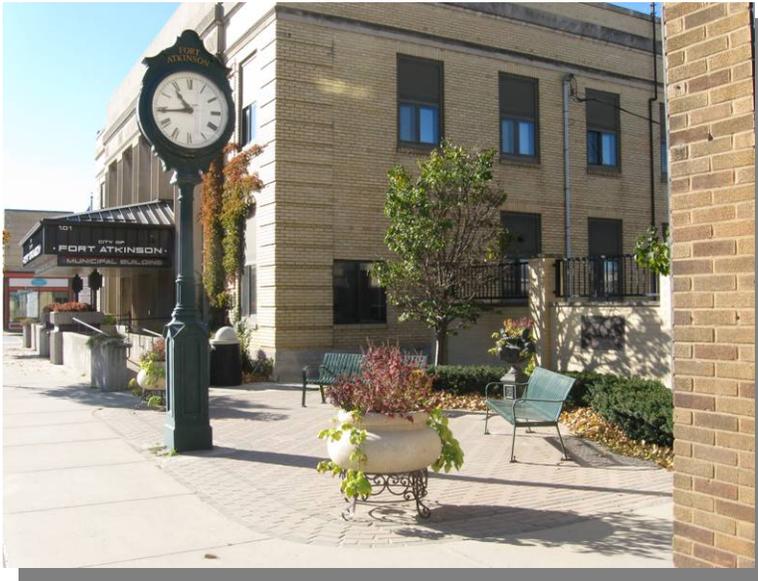
Cultural Resources

- Work with property owners and the Historic Preservation Commission to ensure the long-term preservation of historically and culturally significant buildings and sites.

- Collaborate on events and attractions that celebrate the City's culture and bring visitors to the community.

Land Use

- Promote compact, mixed use development to enhance community interaction, preserve land, and decrease infrastructure and service costs.
- Promote the redevelopment of key sites around the community, particularly around Janesville Avenue and the downtown.



- Recognize that City expansion is limited by natural areas and existing development, and make the most out of remaining development corridors (i.e., northwest, southwest).
- Use the City's Future Land Use map and related policies when making day-to-day development decisions, like rezonings, site plans, and annexations.

- Update zoning and subdivision regulations to implement the recommendations in this *Plan*.

Transportation

- Work with WisDOT on Main Street reconfiguration, the Highway 12 bypass, and the potential study of a 3rd bridge.
- Plan for an interconnected road network in new development areas.
- Enhance citizen mobility and promote biking and walking through the development of new multi-use trails and the promotion of compact, mixed use development patterns.
- Consider preparing an Official Map to reserve land for future transportation facilities.

Utilities and Community Facilities

- Ensure that future land development is coordinated with the provision of utilities and City services.
- Continue to work with the School District to plan for future facilities, including the possibility for joint school/park facilities.
- Support Fort HealthCare as a key community facility and asset.

Parks and Recreation

- Continue the City's high level of service for the provision and maintenance of parks and recreational areas, in conjunction with Fort Atkinson Community Foundation.

- Provide a diversity of park types and recreational amenities to serve the needs of all City residents and visitors.
- Explore the acquisition and development of new parks on the City's northwest and south sides.
- Partner with the School District on joint park/school sites and with Jefferson County on nature-based parks near the City's fringe.
- Continue to leverage a variety of funding sources to finance future parkland acquisition and improvements.

Housing and Neighborhood Development

- Support the development of a variety of housing types, within the context of maintaining a predominantly single family residential community.
- Promote the use of Traditional Neighborhood Design for new neighborhoods/subdivisions.
- Require the preparation of detailed neighborhood plans before new subdivision development occurs.

Economic Development

- Work with existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs to advance economic growth.

- Promote the development and expansion of the Robert Klement Business Park in a manner that allows for economic growth while preserving nearby natural features.



Bridge across the Rock River: Downtown Fort Atkinson

- Consider preparing a corridor plan for Janesville Avenue to guide redevelopment and City investments there.
- Continue to invest in downtown redevelopment and rehabilitation efforts.
- Help facilitate the growth of the Fort Healthcare campus in a way that preserves the integrity of the neighborhood surrounding the existing campus.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Continue to communicate with surrounding communities, such as the City of Jefferson and towns of Jefferson and Koshkonong, on a variety of issues and opportunities, some of which may be addressed through formal intergovernmental agreements.
- Remain involved in regional initiatives such as the Glacial Heritage Project and the County's economic positioning initiative.

- Partner with the School District on a variety of mutually beneficial initiatives.
- Work with WisDOT on highway planning.

Introduction

Located in the southwest corner of Jefferson County along the banks of the Rock and Bark rivers, the City of Fort Atkinson is a Wisconsin community rich in heritage, vibrancy, and potential. The City has managed to keep its rich history alive through local attractions such as the Hoard Historical Museum, the Jones Dairy Farm Retail Store, the historic shopping district, and a replica of the war



Fort Atkinson Riverwalk

fort from which the City derived its name. Yet, amidst all this history, the City also has successfully embraced and celebrated healthy growth and change by encouraging and participating in economic development, investing in the downtown, supporting the cultural arts, and enhancing the quality of life for residents by establishing new recreational trail networks and parks, building a state-of-the-art high school, and continuing to engage in long-range planning efforts.

As an example of the City's dynamism, the newly constructed Riverwalk provides a vibrant public gathering space along the banks of the Rock River, and is the envy of many nearby communities. The Riverwalk offers unique dining opportunities, an excellent place to walk, jog, or relax, and, for the more adventurous, canoe or kayak. The City is also one of Wisconsin's Rails-to-Trails communities, and is becoming an

ideal destination for bicyclists. A recently constructed trail segment now links the downtown with the 7-mile Glacial River Trail.

Although the City has a long and important history in the dairy industry, these days Fort Atkinson's largest employer is Fort Healthcare, Inc., which has over 1,000 employees. This integrated hospital and healthcare system serves patients throughout the region, and functions as a vital component of the City's growing economy. Other employers and unique businesses in Fort Atkinson contribute to its diverse economy.

Over the last fifteen years, Fort Atkinson's population has been growing steadily, as a result of the local growth and expansion of nearby metro areas. And with a new Highway 12 bypass and increasing growth pressures from the surrounding metro areas to the south, west, and east, the City will be faced with both opportunities and challenges for growth and development in the years to come. Fort Atkinson is already a highly desirable place to live, work, recreate, and visit, and in this context, planned development in a controlled, orderly, and predictable manner will enhance the City's ability to retain its character, avoid land use conflicts, provide an array of high-quality housing and employment opportunities, and preserve its abundant natural and cultural resources long into the future.

A. Purpose of this Plan

This *City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan* is intended to help the City guide growth and development to ensure continued and enhanced community prosperity. Specifically, the *Comprehensive Plan* will:

- Identify areas appropriate for development and preservation over the next 20 years;
- Recommend appropriate types of land use for specific areas in and around the City;
- Preserve natural and agricultural resources in and around the City;
- Identify needed transportation and community facilities to serve future land uses;
- Direct housing and economic investments in the City; and
- Provide detailed strategies to implement plan recommendations.

The *Plan* is organized into chapters that specifically address each of the nine elements required by the State of Wisconsin. Each chapter presents background information on the element it is addressing (e.g. *Transportation, Land Use, And Economic Development*) and then presents an outline of the City's goals, objectives, and policies for that element. These documented policies are the basis for the recommendations that are presented at the end of each chapter.

The final chapter of the document (*Implementation*) indicates proposed strategies and implementation timelines to ensure that the recommendations presented in this *Plan* become a reality.

B. Planning Process

This *Comprehensive Plan* is being prepared under the State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation, adopted in 1999 and contained in §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. This *Plan* meets all of the statutory elements and requirements of the comprehensive planning law. After 2010, only those plans that contain the nine required elements and adopted under the state's prescribed procedures will have legal standing for zoning, subdivision, and official mapping decisions.

In order to provide sound public policy guidance, a comprehensive planning process should incorporate inclusive public participation procedures to ensure that final recommendations reflect a broadly supported vision. Near the outset of this planning process, the Common Council adopted the City's public participation plan by resolution. Public participation activities are described in the Issues and Opportunities chapter.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADOPTION PROCESS

Preparation of a comprehensive plan is authorized under §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. Before adoption, a plan must go through a formal public hearing and review process. The Plan Commission adopts by resolution a public hearing draft of the plan and recommends that the Common Council enact an ordinance adopting the plan.

Following Plan Commission approval, the Common Council holds a public hearing to discuss the proposed ordinance that would be used to adopt the plan. Copies of the public hearing draft of the plan are forwarded to a list of local and state governments for review. A Class 1 notice must precede the public hearing at least 30 days before the hearing. The notice must include a summary of the plan and information concerning where the entire document may be inspected or obtained. The Council may then adopt the ordinance approving the plan as the City's official comprehensive plan.

This formal, well-publicized process facilitates broad support of plan goals and recommendations. Consideration by both the Plan Commission and Common Council assures that both bodies understand and endorse the plan's recommendations.

The planning process was guided by a seven person steering committee comprised of City officials and staff and community representatives. This committee then made a recommendation to the City Plan Commission and Common Council, which adopted the *Plan* under the process described on this page.

C. General Regional Context

Map 1 shows the relationship of the City to neighboring communities in the region. The City is located in southwestern Jefferson County, roughly 35 miles southeast of Madison, 25 miles northeast of Janesville, and 60 miles west of Milwaukee.

The City is surrounded by the Town of Koshkonong and is situated near that Town's northern border. The Town of Jefferson lies just to the north of the City. Nearby cities and villages include Jefferson, located six miles to the north; Cambridge, located eleven miles northwest; and Whitewater, located nine miles south. The northern shore of Lake Koshkonong—and its lakefront community—is less than three miles southwest of the City.

This *Comprehensive Plan* was prepared concurrently with those of five other communities in Jefferson County as part of a state-funded, multi-jurisdictional planning process. These other communities included the cities of Jefferson, Waterloo, and Lake Mills, the Village of Johnson Creek, and the Town of Aztalan. The same consulting firm worked with all six communities in preparing their plans. Fort Atkinson took part in intergovernmental meetings involving all of these communities throughout the process, as well as in a parallel regional economic development initiative.

D. Selection of the Planning Area

The City of Fort Atkinson encompasses approximately 5.8 square miles. State Statutes enable the City to plan for those areas that bear relation to the City's development, review subdivisions, enact extraterritorial zoning, and implement an official map. The planning area is illustrated in Map 1.

The selected planning area for this *Plan* includes all lands currently within the City of Fort Atkinson's municipal limits, and the unincorporated areas within and just beyond the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), which extends 3 miles beyond the City's boundaries. The City's 2008 ETJ extended into five towns, including those that were not currently adjacent to the City limits. These include the towns of Koshkonong, Jefferson, Sumner, Oakland, and Hebron. Except for in cases where intergovernmental agreements preclude expansion, the ETJ expands automatically as annexations occur.

Map 1: Jurisdictional Boundaries

Chapter One: Implementation

Few of the recommendations of this *Plan* will be automatically implemented. Specific follow-up action will be required for the *Plan* to become reality. This final chapter provides the City with a roadmap for these implementation actions. It includes a compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence.

A. Plan Adoption

A first step in implementing the *City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan* is making sure that it is adopted in a manner which supports its future use for more detailed decision making. The City has included all necessary elements for this *Plan* to be adopted under the state's comprehensive planning legislation. The City has also followed procedures for adopting this *Plan* under Section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes.

B. Plan Monitoring and Advancement

This *Plan* is intended to be used by government officials, developers, residents, and others interested in the future of the City to guide growth, development, redevelopment, and preservation. The City intends to constantly evaluate its decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions against the recommendations of this *Plan*, described more fully in the Plan Amendments section that follows.

In fact, on January 1, 2010, zoning, subdivision, and official map ordinances and decisions will have to be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Because some of the visions and recommendations of this *Comprehensive Plan* are not in line with the City's current subdivision and zoning ordinances and map, updates to these documents will be required. In addition to being required by law, complete updates to the City's subdivision and zoning ordinances and map will help the community achieve its desired character and land use pattern in ways the current ordinances cannot. Detail on the nature of the proposed updates is provided throughout the previous chapters of this *Plan*, most notably the Land Use chapter.

This *Plan* will only have value if it is used, understood, and supported by the community. It is critical that the City make concerted efforts to increase community awareness and education on this *Plan*. To this end, efforts may include:

- Prominently displaying the vision statement, Future Land Use map, Transportation Map, and other Plan materials at City Hall or other community gathering places;
- Ensuring that up-to-date materials are easily accessible on the City's website;
- Speaking to community organizations and school groups about the *Plan*.
- Regularly presenting implementation progress reports to the City Council, Plan Commission, and other municipal bodies;
- Incorporating *Plan* implementation steps in the annual budget process;
- Encouraging all City commissions and staff to become familiar with and use the *Plan* in their decision making.

C. Plan Administration

This *Plan* will largely be implemented through an on-going series of individual decisions about annexation, zoning, land division, public investments, and intergovernmental relations, as listed below:

Annexations

Proposed annexations should be guided by the recommendations of this *Plan*. Specifically, the Future Land Use and Transportation and Community Facilities maps of this *Plan* will be among the factors considered when evaluating a request for annexation. Annexation proposals on lands that are designated for urban development, as locations for future transportation facilities, and/or as locations for future community facilities should be more strongly considered for annexation approval. However, in their consideration of annexation proposals, the Plan Commission and City Council should also evaluate the specific timing of the annexation request, its relationship to the overall regularity of the corporate boundary, the ability to provide utilities and public services to the site, the costs associated with the proposed annexation, the effect on intergovernmental relations, as well as other pertinent Statutory and non-Statutory factors.

Zoning

Proposed zoning map amendments (rezonings) should be consistent with the recommendations of this *Plan*. Specifically, the Future Land Use map should be used to guide the application of the general pattern of permanent zoning. However, the precise location of zoning district boundaries may vary, as judged appropriate by the Plan Commission and City Council. Departures from the exact land use boundaries depicted on the Future Land Use map may be particularly appropriate for planned unit development projects, projects involving a mix of land uses and/or residential development types, properties split by zoning districts and/or properties located at the edges of future land use areas. However, in their consideration of zoning map issues, the Plan Commission and City Council will also evaluate the specific timing of the zoning map amendment request, its relationship to the nature of both existing and planned land uses, and the details of the proposed development. Therefore, this *Plan* allows for the timing of zoning actions and the refinement of the precise recommended land use boundaries through the zoning, conditional use, planned development and land division processes.

Land Division

Proposed land divisions should be generally consistent, but not necessarily precisely consistent, with the recommendations of this *Plan*. Specifically, the Future Land Use map, Transportation and Community Facilities maps, and the policies behind these maps, will be used to guide the general pattern of development and the general location and design of public streets, parks, and utilities. However, in their consideration of land divisions, the Plan Commission and City Council will also evaluate the specific timing of the land division request, its relationship to the nature of both existing and future land uses, and the details of the proposed development. Departures from the exact locations depicted on these maps shall be resolved through the land division process for certified survey maps, preliminary plats and final plats both within the City limits and the extraterritorial jurisdiction. This *Plan* allows for the timing and the refinement of the precise recommended development pattern and public facilities through the land division process, as deemed appropriate by the Plan Commission and City Council.

Public Investments

Proposed public investment decisions will be guided by the recommendations of this *Plan*. However, the timing and precise location of public investments may vary, as judged appropriate by the Plan Commission and City Council. This *Plan* allows for the timing and the refinement of the precise

recommended public facilities and other public investments as deemed appropriate by the Plan Commission and City Council.

Intergovernmental Relations

Proposed intergovernmental relations decisions, including intergovernmental agreements, will be guided by the recommendations of this *Plan*, as deemed appropriate by the Plan Commission and City Council. However, in their consideration of intergovernmental decisions and agreements, the Plan Commission and City Council will also evaluate a wide variety of other factors, including specific provisions of the recommended agreements. Departures from the recommendations of this *Plan* shall be resolved by the City Council through the intergovernmental process.

D. Plan Amendments

This *Plan* can be amended and changed. Amendments may be appropriate in the years following initial plan adoption, particularly in instances where the *Plan* is becoming irrelevant or contradictory to emerging policy or trends, or does not provide specific advice or guidance on an emerging issue. “Amendments” are generally defined as minor changes to the *Plan* maps or text (as opposed to an “update” described later).

As a growing community, the City is likely to receive and wish to entertain requests for *Plan* amendments over the planning period. The *Plan* should be evaluated for potential amendments regularly. However, frequent amendments only to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided, or else the *Plan* will become meaningless.

To provide a more manageable, predictable and cost effective process, the City will consider establishing a single *Plan* amendment consideration cycle every year. Several Wisconsin communities use an annual *Plan* review and amendment process cycle to ensure these evaluations and adjustments are handled in a predictable and efficient manner. This approach would require that all proposed *Plan* amendment requests be officially submitted to City by a designated date of each year. A full draft of the amendments would then be presented to the Plan Commission for its evaluation and recommendation to the City Council. The Council could then act to approve the amendment(s), following a public hearing.

The City may choose to bypass the annual amendment process described above if an amendment to this *Comprehensive Plan* is determined necessary to capture a unique economic opportunity that is both related to achieving the vision of this *Comprehensive Plan* and may be lost if required to wait for the regular *Plan* amendment cycle. However, the City is still required to use the amendment procedures outlined below.

The state comprehensive planning law requires that the City use the same basic process to amend this *Comprehensive Plan* as is used to initially adopt the *Plan*. This does not mean that new vision forums need to be held, or old committees need to be reformed. It does mean that the procedures defined under Section 66.1001(4), Wisconsin Statutes, need to be followed.

- Either the City or the Plan Commission initiates the proposed *Comprehensive Plan* amendment(s). This may occur as a result of a regular Plan Commission review of the *Plan*, or may be initiated at the request of a property owner or developer.
- The City Council adopts a resolution outlining the procedures that will be undertaken to ensure public participation during the *Plan* amendment process (see Section 66.1001(4)a of Statutes). If the resolution is appropriately drafted, the City may need to only have to take this step for the first of several amendment cycles.
- The Plan Commission prepares or directs the preparation of the specific text or map amendment(s) to the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- The Plan Commission holds one or more public meetings on the proposed *Comprehensive Plan* amendments. Following the public meeting(s), the Plan Commission makes a recommendation by resolution to the City Council by majority vote of the entire Commission (see Section 66.1001(4)b of Statutes).
- The City Clerk sends a copy of the recommended *Plan* amendment (not the entire Comprehensive Plan) to all adjacent and surrounding government jurisdictions and the County as required under Section 66.1001(4)b, Wisconsin Statutes. These governments should have at least 30 days to review and comment on the recommended Plan amendment(s). Nonmetallic mine operators, any person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit with the local government, and any other property owner or leaseholder who has requested notification in writing must be informed through this notice procedure. These governments and individuals should have at least 30 days to review and comment on the recommended Plan amendments.
- The City Clerk directs the publishing of a Class 1 notice, with such notice published at least 30 days before a City Council public hearing and containing information required under Section 66.1001(4)d.
- The City Council holds the formal public hearing on an ordinance that would incorporate the proposed amendment(s) into the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- Following the public hearing, the City Council approves or denies the ordinance adopting the proposed *Plan* amendment(s). Adoption must be by a majority vote of all members. The City Council may require changes from the Plan Commission recommended version of the proposed amendment(s).
- The City Clerk sends a copy of the adopted ordinance and the amendment(s) (not the entire Comprehensive Plan) to all adjacent and surrounding government jurisdictions, mine operators, any person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit with the City, and any other property owner or leaseholder who has requested notification in writing as required under Section 66.1001(4)b and c, Wisconsin Statutes.

E. Plan Update

The state comprehensive planning law requires that a community's comprehensive plan be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to an amendment, an update is often a substantial re-write of the plan document and maps. Based on this deadline, the City should update this *Comprehensive Plan* before the year 2018 (i.e., ten years after 2008), at the latest. The City should continue to monitor any changes to the language or interpretations of the state law over the next several years.

F. Consistency Among Plan Elements

The state comprehensive planning statute requires that the implementation element "describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan shall be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan." Because the various elements of this *Plan* were prepared simultaneously, there are no known internal inconsistencies between the different elements or chapters of this *Plan*.

G. Implementation Programs and Recommendations

Figure 1.1 provides a detailed list and timeline of the major actions that the City should complete to implement this *Plan*. Often, such actions will require substantial cooperation with others, including

County and surrounding local governments and local property owners. The figure has four different columns of information, described as follows:

- **Implementation Step:** The first column lists the actual steps, strategies, and actions recommended to implement key aspects of the *Plan*. This list does not generally include ongoing activities advised elsewhere in this *Plan*, but rather focuses on specific actions that may need to be separately budgeted or placed in a work program. The recommendations are for City actions, recognizing that many of these actions may not occur without cooperation from others.
- **Chapter Reference:** The second column provides the chapter(s) of this *Plan* where the recommended implementation step is described in greater detail.
- **Recommended Implementation Timeframe:** The third column responds to the comprehensive planning statute, which requires implementation actions to be listed in a “stated sequence.” The suggested timeframe for the completion of each recommendation reflects the priority attached to the recommendation. Suggested implementation timeframes span the next 10 years, because the *Plan* will have to be updated by 2018.
- **“Completed”:** The final column simply includes check boxes for City staff and officials to use when a particular implementation step has been completed. During the annual *Plan* evaluation process, this table should be reviewed for items that should be pursued in the upcoming year.

INSERT FIGURE 1.1

Chapter Two: Issues and Opportunities

This chapter of the *Plan* includes an overview of demographic trends and background information for the City. This information provides an assessment of the changes taking place in the City of Fort Atkinson. It also explores local and regional opportunities and includes a community vision and overall goals to guide future growth over the 20-year planning period and establish the framework for the rest of the *Plan*.

A. Population Trends and Forecasts

Between 1990 and 2000, the City of Fort Atkinson experienced moderate population growth. Figure 2.1 compares the City of Fort Atkinson's population trends with several neighboring communities, Jefferson County, and the State of Wisconsin. Between 1990 and 2000, the City experienced a 13.8 percent increase in population. Over this same time period, Jefferson County's population increased by 11.8 percent, and Wisconsin's population grew by 9.6 percent. Most surrounding communities also experienced comparable increases in population during this same time period, except the Town of Jefferson, which experienced a 16 percent decrease in population. According to the State Department of Administration (DOA), the City's population increased to 12,125 by 2007, a 4.3 percent increase over its 2000 population.

KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The City is expected to grow by between 3,200 and 4,000 people over the 20+ year planning period.
- Housing will be needed to accommodate smaller household sizes (e.g. seniors and young people), in addition to new families.
- The City's future growth will be influenced by its regional position close to metro areas and by its natural constraints to horizontal expansion.
- Future economic growth will focus on health care, business park growth, and downtown and mixed use redevelopment in sustainable forms.
- Key local opportunities revolve around balancing modernization with historic preservation, becoming a "2nd Night" tourist destination, providing interconnected neighborhoods, and promoting the City's natural and cultural resources.

Figure 2.1: Population Trends

	1970	1980	1990	2000	Percent Population Change 1990-2000
City of Fort Atkinson	9,164	9,785	10,213	11,621	13.8%
Town of Jefferson	3,082	2,891	2,687	2,265	-15.7%
Town of Koshkonong	2,671	2,979	2,984	3,239	8.5%
Village of Johnson Creek	790	1,136	1,259	1,581	25.6%
City of Jefferson	5,429	5,687	6,078	7,338	20.7%
City of Lake Mills	3,556	3,670	4,143	4,843	16.9%
City of Waterloo	2,253	2,393	2,712	3,259	20.2%
City of Watertown	15,683	18,113	19,142	21,598	12.8%
City of Whitewater	12,038	11,520	12,636	13,437	6.3%
Jefferson County	60,060	66,152	67,783	75,767	11.8%
State of Wisconsin	4,417,731	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1970-2000

Figure 2.2 shows three population projection scenarios for the City through the year 2030: the DOA's projection, a Straight Line Projection that was calculated by determining the City's average annual population change for the last 15 years and projecting it forward for the next 25 years, and a Compounded Projection that was calculated by determining the City's percent population change over the last 15 years and projecting that forward for the next 25 years. Based upon these three projection scenarios, the City's population is projected to be between 15,381 and 16,232 in the year 2030.

For the purposes of this *Plan*, the City will utilize the Compounded Projection scenario. This is based on the increasing rate of population growth over the last fifteen years, and the City's proximity to growing metro areas. This population scenario will be used for housing and land use demand projections later in this *Plan*. While it is certainly possible that the City will not grow to this population by 2030, a careful approach to land use planning suggests that this *Plan* show how that amount of growth could be appropriately accommodated. Market conditions and City policies will help determine the actual rate of population growth.

Figure 2.2: City of Fort Atkinson Population Projection Scenarios

	2000 ¹	2005 ²	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
DOA Population Projection	11,621	12,151	12,656	13,143	13,646	14,155	NA
Straight Line Projection ³	11,621	12,151	12,797	13,443	14,089	14,735	15,381
Compounded Projection ⁴	11,621	12,151	12,876	13,643	14,457	15,319	16,232

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

² Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2005 population estimate

³ Extrapolated based on the average annual population change from 1990-2005 $((2005 \text{ pop} - 1990 \text{ pop}) / 15)$

⁴ Extrapolated based on the average annual percent change from 1990-2005 (1.17%)

B. Demographic Trends

Figure 2.3 shows the City of Fort Atkinson's age and gender distribution in 2000 compared to surrounding communities. The City of Fort Atkinson's median population age is typical when compared to nearby communities and the County as a whole. The City's median age increased from 34.6 in 1990 to 36.5 in 2000. However, the proportion of residents over the age of 65 decreased from 15.5 percent in 1990 to 14.5 percent in 2000, indicating that the number of new working age families with children outweighs the increase in the number of retirement aged individuals remaining in or moving to the City. The proportion of school-age children residing in the City is also typical of area communities, except Whitewater, which is a college town.

Figure 2.3: Age and Gender Distribution, 2000

	Median Age	Percent under 18	Percent over 65	Percent Female
City of Fort Atkinson	36.5	24.2%	14.5%	51.7%
Town of Jefferson	40.9	21.9%	14.0%	49.5%
Town of Koshkonong	39.9	25.3%	11.1%	48.9%
Village of Johnson Creek	31.9	26.6%	9.5%	50.5%
City of Jefferson	36.2	22.8%	16.1%	50.4%
City of Lake Mills	36.0	27.2%	14.5%	51.8%
City of Waterloo	34.5	27.3%	11.4%	50.3%
City of Watertown	34.7	26.0%	14.7%	51.6%
City of Whitewater	21.9	12.3%	8.9%	51.1%
Jefferson County	36.6	25.2%	12.8%	50.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

C. Household Trends and Forecasts

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 present household characteristics for the City of Fort Atkinson as compared to several surrounding communities and Jefferson County. Fort Atkinson's housing mix and occupancy statistics are fairly typical of a Wisconsin community of its size. In 2000, Fort Atkinson's average household size was smaller than all other comparison communities. The City's average household size decreased slightly from 2.54 persons in 1990 to 2.40 in 2000. Similarly, the City had a higher percentage of single-occupant households than all surrounding communities except Whitewater.

Housing in Fort Atkinson is very affordable compared to other nearby communities, and substantially more affordable than nearby metro areas. This makes the community an increasingly attractive living option for commuters and others seeking a more affordable lifestyle.

Figure 2.4: Household Characteristics Comparison

	Total Housing Units	Total Households	Average Household Size	Average Equalized Value of Residential Property 2005*	Median Rent
City of Fort Atkinson	4,983	4,760	2.40	\$139,360	\$549
Town of Jefferson	805	759	2.67	\$178,506	\$575
Town of Koshkonong	1,421	1,249	2.69	\$148,174	\$731
Village of Johnson Creek	659	624	2.53	\$160,170	\$683
City of Jefferson	2,934	2,816	2.41	\$146,523	\$554
City of Lake Mills	2,065	1,924	2.49	\$176,834	\$588
City of Waterloo	1,293	1,242	2.56	\$141,994	\$581
City of Watertown	8,330	8,022	2.55	\$145,860	\$563
City of Whitewater	4,340	4,132	2.38	\$146,019	\$504
Jefferson County	30,109	28,205	2.55	\$163,097	\$564

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 except

* Department of Revenue, 2005 (includes land plus improvements)

Figure 2.5: Housing Occupancy Characteristics Comparison, 2000

	Percent Single Person Household	Percent of Vacant Housing	Percent Owner-Occupied	Percent Single Family Units
City of Fort Atkinson	29.4%	4.5%	64.0%	66.5%
Town of Jefferson	16.5%	4.3%	83.3%	94.0%
Town of Koshkonong	17.4%	12.1%	84.9%	91.5%
Village of Johnson Creek	23.7%	5.3%	66.7%	45.0%
City of Jefferson	28.3%	4.0%	60.8%	60.8%
City of Lake Mills	26.8%	6.8%	68.9%	66.4%
City of Waterloo	25.0%	3.9%	71.7%	66.5%
City of Watertown	25.5%	3.7%	63.5%	67.2%
City of Whitewater	32.7%	4.8%	36.2%	40.1%
Jefferson County	23.6%	6.3%	71.7%	71.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Figure 2.6 shows a household projection for the City through the year 2030 based on the Compounded Projection scenario for population from Figure 2.2. The City is projected to have 7,057 households in 2030, or an additional 1,959 households from 2005. This *Plan* is designed to accommodate that number of households.

For the purposes of planning, household projections are translated into an estimated demand for additional housing units. The demand for future housing units will be based not only on increases in population, but also on expected decreases in the City’s average household size. For example, as household sizes decrease, more housing units will be needed to meet housing demands. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that the City’s 2000 household size (2.40) will decrease to 2.30 by the year 2030.

Figure 2.6: Household Projections, 2005-2030

Households 2000 ¹	Projected Households ²						# of Additional households 2005-2030
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	
4,760	5,098	5,440	5,804	6,194	6,610	7,057	1,959

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

² Extrapolated by dividing the compounded population projections (See Table 1.2) by the City’s projected average household size (2.30 by 2030)

D. Education and Employment Trends

Detailed information on education and employment can be found in the Economic Development chapter. .

E. Tax Rates for the City of Fort Atkinson and Surrounding Communities

Figure 2.7 shows a comparison of the City of Fort Atkinson’s tax rate with that of surrounding communities. Fort Atkinson’s tax rate is over six times the average tax rate of the surrounding towns, but is comparable to the average tax rate of all surrounding cities and villages in Jefferson County.

Figure 2.7: Tax Rate Comparison, 2006-2007

	Tax Rate	Assessment Ratio	Taxes on \$200,000 Home
City of Fort Atkinson	6.7273	1.0009	\$1,346.68
Town of Koshkonong	0.9419	1.0012	\$188.61
Town of Jefferson	1.2372	0.9942	\$246.01
Village of Johnson Creek	4.9240	0.9605	\$945.90
City of Jefferson	6.7899	0.9900	\$1,344.40
City of Lake Mills	7.0069	0.9187	\$1,287.45
City of Waterloo	8.3180	0.8229	\$1,368.97
City of Watertown (Jefferson Co.)	6.5844	0.8219	\$1,082.34

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, 2007

F. Issues Raised Through Public Participation

The City's planning process was guided by public input that was collected through a variety of approaches, including a visioning workshop, open house, and regular meetings of the Comprehensive Planning Committee. The following is a summary of those activities:

Vision Workshop

In May of 2007, the City held a Vision Workshop to provide an opportunity for residents to identify a shared vision for the City, express concerns for the future of the City, and to develop priority actions for the City to address over the next 20 years. During the workshop, the 74 participants in attendance were asked to describe their vision for the future of the City and identify key issues and



Fort Atkinson Vision Workshop, May 2007

opportunities for growth and development. A compilation of all workshop results are available in Appendix A. A summary of workshop results is as follows:

Summary of Comments Related to Agricultural Resources:

Preserve farmland in areas surrounding Fort Atkinson and establish a farmers market or other City-sponsored events to help maintain the viability of farming.

Summary of Comments Related to Natural Resources:

Develop Fort Atkinson as a model of community-wide sustainability, focusing on efficient energy consumption and the reduction of fossil fuel use, incorporation of “green” technologies, and initiatives to maintain water and air quality and preserve the Rock River.

Summary of Comments Related to Cultural Resources:

Encourage and support a demographically and ethnically diverse population and celebrate this diversity by promoting services, housing, transportation, and community facilities that cater to these populations. Broaden the range of opportunities to experience different cultural or ethnic traditions (e.g., ethnic restaurants). Market the City as a tourist destination by promoting museums, historic resources, and other local attractions.

Summary of Comments Related to Land Use:

Actively promote infill development and redevelopment, and direct new development areas primarily to the west and south of the existing City limits. New development should be compact and well-planned to help conserve land. Neighborhoods should be designed around and complement natural resource features, and green spaces and parks should be preserved and enhanced.

Summary of Comments Related to Transportation:

Evolve the City's infrastructure to facilitate the use of alternative, energy-efficient forms of transportation. This should include the provision of an inter-connected network of trails and bike lanes, sidewalks, and public transportation. In the downtown, especially, walking and biking should be supported over other forms of transportation. Maintain the quality of streets and encourage efficiency in travel through the development of interconnected roads. This may involve locating and constructing a third bridge across the Rock River.

Summary of Comments Related to Utilities and Community Facilities:

Expand and enhance community facilities, including the library and the park system. Parks should be inter-connected and provide a range of recreational opportunities. Promote the establishment and growth of community organizations, clubs, and interest groups, and maintain the riverfront as a public resource and asset. Emphasize the value of schools by continuing to invest wisely in education facilities and programs.

Summary of Comments Related to Housing and Neighborhood Development:

Promote the development of well-designed, compact neighborhoods that feature a diversity of housing options and a mix of compatible land uses. Neighborhoods should be designed around centrally-located community facilities and gathering spaces and should facilitate and encourage the interaction of people. Property maintenance should be expected and enforced and residential streets should be inter-connected, safe, and walkable.

Summary of Comments Related to Economic Development:

Promote small, local businesses and specialty shops that cater to the day-to-day needs of residents and also invite shoppers and tourists from outside the community. Focus on the restoration of existing businesses, as well as redevelopment and infill in key areas of the City. Actively work to eliminate vacant buildings and store fronts and discourage the future development of “strip malls” and “big box” stores. Invest in the downtown and allow for a mix of land uses to ensure that this important area of the City remains active and vibrant. Encourage a variety of business and employment options, including hi-tech industries and professional offices, and direct future industrial development into the business parks.

Futures Open House

The Futures Open House was held in October of 2007 to provide an opportunity for residents to express their preferences for the City’s future land use pattern. For the purposes of planning, the City was broken into ten planning areas, listed below. The event was formatted to allow residents to drop in at any point in the evening to review information about the planning process, view future land use concept maps, and take a visual preference survey. Overall, 43 people attended this event. Participants were generally supportive of the concepts that were presented for each of the following areas of the City.

- **Northwest Quadrant Planning Area:** Participants expressed a desire to utilize progressive and unique development practices, concentrating on mixed use, “walkable,” compact development patterns that preserve farmland and natural resources.
- **North Neighborhood Planning Area:** Participants expressed a need for improved pedestrian and bike connections, including bike trails and sidewalks.
- **North Railway District Planning Area:** Participants liked the idea of promoting redevelopment of the northeast commercial site (1309 North High Street) and promoting the airport and rail as assets for economic development.
- **Healthcare Center Planning Area:** Participants expressed a desire for more green spaces in this area of the City, and wanted to ensure the long-term integrity of the neighborhood surrounding the Healthcare campus.
- **Central Neighborhoods Planning Area:** Participants noted the need to promote the health and vitality of the central neighborhoods, while recognizing their historic value. Many expressed a desire for a 3rd bridge across the Rock River to improve connectivity.
- **Historic Downtown Planning Area:** Participants expressed the importance of keeping civic uses in the downtown, focusing on the rehabilitation/redevelopment of key sites, and preserving historic character.

- **Janesville Avenue Business District Planning Area:** Participants liked the idea of expanding business development in this area, focusing on entertainment uses. Participants were concerned about the aesthetic appearance of many sites along this corridor.
- **Southwest Economic Opportunity District:** Participants liked the idea of light industrial uses in this area, but were concerned about its impact on adjacent natural features.
- **South Neighborhood Planning Area:** Participants expressed a desire for affordable housing, with a focus on protecting nearby natural resources and providing more parks to serve the south side.
- **Whitewater Avenue Corridor Planning Area:** Participants expressed concern over the possible aesthetic decline along this corridor, and were interested in the possibility of mixed use development on key sites, combined with traffic improvements and entry features.

Figures showing future opportunities within each of these areas are presented later in this chapter.

Intergovernmental Meetings

In October 2007, City staff and consultants met with nearby and overlapping communities to discuss areas of joint plan implementation. In December of 2007, the City followed up with a meeting with the City of Jefferson to discuss areas of potential agreement and connections between the two communities. The results of these discussions are reflected in the recommendations in the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter.

Draft Plan Open House & Public Hearing

On April 29, 2008, the City conducted a public open house on a public review version of the draft *Plan*. The Committee then recommended changes to the *Plan* based on public comment. Following its recommendation and that of the City Plan Commission, the City Council conducted a final public hearing on the *Plan*, per legislative requirements, before adopting it.

G. Regional Influences

In order to more accurately guide Fort Atkinson's future growth and development, it was important to begin the comprehensive planning process by analyzing the numerous factors in and around Jefferson County that will impact City growth (see Map 2).

Proximity to Major Employment, Shopping, and Entertainment, and Education Centers

The City of Fort Atkinson is located within a short driving distance of several major regional employment centers, shopping destinations, entertainment venues, and major universities. Madison hosts a number of employment options, including the Wisconsin Capitol, several regional medical centers, and a regional bio-agriculture research center. The University of Wisconsin-Madison offers opportunities for both employment and education. In addition, State Street, the Farmer's Market, the Overture Center, and the Union Terrace are just several of the entertainment and shopping options available in Madison.

The Milwaukee Metro region offers significant employment and education options. Numerous entertainment venues and shopping destinations are also located in the area, such as Miller Park, the Milwaukee County Zoo, the public museum, and Mayfair Mall. To the southwest, Janesville and Beloit provide additional shopping and job options. For weekend excursions, Downtown Chicago is only two and a half hours from the City. Fort Atkinson is also located only 8 miles from the UW-Whitewater campus.

Access to Transportation Networks

As energy costs rise, efficiency in travel is becoming an increasingly important issue around the nation. An analysis of commuting patterns indicates that every day over 23,000 people commute between Jefferson County and the five immediately adjacent counties of Waukesha, Dodge, Dane, Rock, and Walworth. Located south of I-94 on Highways 26 and 12, the City of Fort Atkinson has a direct route to Madison, Milwaukee, Janesville, Beloit, the Fox Valley, and Green Bay, as well as many of the Midwest's other major economic centers, including Chicago, Minneapolis, and Detroit.

For more distant travel, Fort Atkinson is also located less than an hour from both the Dane County Regional Airport in Madison and General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee, and just over an hour from the Chicago Rockford International Airport in Rockford, Illinois. As a benefit to local businesses, the City is served by its municipal airport and the Union Pacific Railroad, which travels into but not directly through the City.

Abundance of Recreational Resources and Open Space

Nestled between five growing metro areas, Jefferson County's natural landscape has remained relatively undisrupted by development. Rural roadways offer some of the most spectacular views of glacial drumlins in the world. Moreover, with nine State Natural Areas and parks, six Land Legacy Places, access to two state trails, and an abundance of water resources, including wetlands, lakes, and rivers, Jefferson County is a magnificent playground for people who thrive on being outdoors. Many of these are located near Fort Atkinson. Although Jefferson County communities are facing increasing growth pressures, residents and property owners are taking measures to maintain rural character and preserve the farmland that still blankets the towns and surrounds the villages and cities. These communities recognize that it is in large part the County's natural beauty and wide open spaces that will continue to make this area of Wisconsin such a desirable place to live and visit.

MAP 2: Regional Context

MAP 3: Growth Factors

H. Growth Factors

Map 3 shows the natural and human-made factors that will influence the future growth and possible expansion of the City. The City's avenues for future expansion are relatively limited, and therefore should be actively preserved. Growth to the City's east and west is limited by an extensive system of environmental corridors associated with the Rock and Bark Rivers. Growth to the south and southeast is limited by the large amount of exurban housing development south of Hackbarth Road and by the Allen Creek corridor. Finally, northerly growth may be slightly more challenging due to the presence of the Hoard Farm, at least temporarily. Corridors extending from the northwest and southwest parts of the City are the most promising directions for future community expansion.

I. Fort Atkinson Area Opportunities

For the purposes of analyzing potential opportunities in Fort Atkinson, the City was broken down into 10 planning areas, which have been illustrated in Figure 2.8. Based on an analysis of opportunities in each of these planning areas, the City's overall opportunities include those listed below. Opportunities specific to each planning area are indicated on the graphics shown in Figures 2.9 through 2.18.

- **Balance modernization with historic preservation:** The City's abundance of historic landmarks, traditional neighborhoods, and cultural assets provide a unique foundation upon which to build future development. The City recognizes the value in preserving its charm and character into the future, and will do so by enhancing and extending its most cherished characteristics into newly developing areas. For example, new neighborhoods in Fort Atkinson can reflect the City's older neighborhoods by implementing what is commonly referred to as "Traditional Neighborhood Design." The Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter has more detailed guidance on this concept.
- **Provide variety in housing:** As the baby boom generation ages, communities around the nation are recognizing the emerging need for senior housing options. Yet, demographic trends indicate that in Fort Atkinson the population of young professionals and families is growing just as quickly, suggesting the need for variety of housing options to accommodate young professionals, students, new families, and seniors. This may include high-quality condominiums, apartments, townhomes, and single family homes. The City's unique downtown, as well as other sites around the community, also presents opportunities for housing options in mixed use and live-work settings, which would provide a more urban living experience for some and enrich the character and sustainability of the community.
- **Become a "2nd Night" Regional Tourist Destination:** The City already has several attractions that draw visitors from around the region to Fort Atkinson, including the downtown shopping district and Fireside Dinner Theater. The City has a greater opportunity over the planning period to define itself as a 2nd Night Tourist Destination. That is, a place where people are enticed to stay in the City for two evenings to experience a variety of local amenities and attractions. The Economic Development chapter defines this concept in greater detail.
- **Enhance Connectivity:** Fort Atkinson has an opportunity to enhance connections within the City by providing new bike and pedestrian trails that connect neighborhoods with key destinations such as the downtown, schools, parks, and retail centers. A sense of connectivity may also be advanced through the use of wayfinding signage, unified streetscaping and signage themes, and the development of master planned neighborhoods that incorporate a variety of complementary land uses, interconnected roads, pedestrian and bike connections, and greenway

corridors to ensure that new neighborhoods are skillfully woven into the overall fabric of the City.

- **Promote the City's Natural Resources:** The City is fortunate enough to be surrounded by exceptional natural resources, such as the Rock River, Bark River, Lake Koshkonong, Allen Creek, and Rose Lake, as well as several large public park and open space areas. The City recognizes that along with these resources and the many benefits they bestow on the community comes the profound responsibility of protecting them. The City will use this *Comprehensive Plan*, in combination with other "green" initiatives, to soften its imprint on the natural environment and to ensure that the resources that sustain the community today will be preserved for future generations. In turn, these remarkable and valuable natural assets will continue to make the City a desirable place to live and own a business, and will draw visitors from around the region.

Figure 2.8

Figure 2.9

Figure 2.10

Figure 2.11

Figure 2.12

Figure 2.13

Figure 2.14

Figure 2.15

Figure 2.16

Figure 2.17

Figure 2.18

J. City of Fort Atkinson Vision Statement

A Vision Statement is intended to broadly describe how a community would like to look, feel, and function in the future. All of the goals, objectives, policies, programs, and actions outlined in this *Plan* should move the City towards achieving this vision. Fort Atkinson's Vision Statement was prepared based on early public participation efforts and the feedback of City staff and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Vision Statement is presented on the following page.

K. Overall Community Goals

Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the City should approach development issues. Goals are based on key issues and opportunities that are affecting the City. These goals were prepared in conjunction with the Vision Statement and are presented on the following page.

L. Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Recommendations

Each subsequent chapter of this *Comprehensive Plan* includes goals, objectives, policies, programs, and recommendations that will provide direction and policy guidance to Plan Commission members, Common Council members, residents, and other interested groups and individuals for the next 20+ years.

- **Objectives** more specifically identify future direction. By accomplishing an objective, the City moves closer to achieving its goals.
- **Policies** are rules or courses of action implemented to achieve specific objectives. City staff and officials should use policies on a day-to-day basis when making decisions.
- **Programs** are specific projects or services that are intended to move the City toward achieving its goals, objectives, and policies.
- **Recommendations** provide detailed information regarding how to implement objectives, policies, and programs.

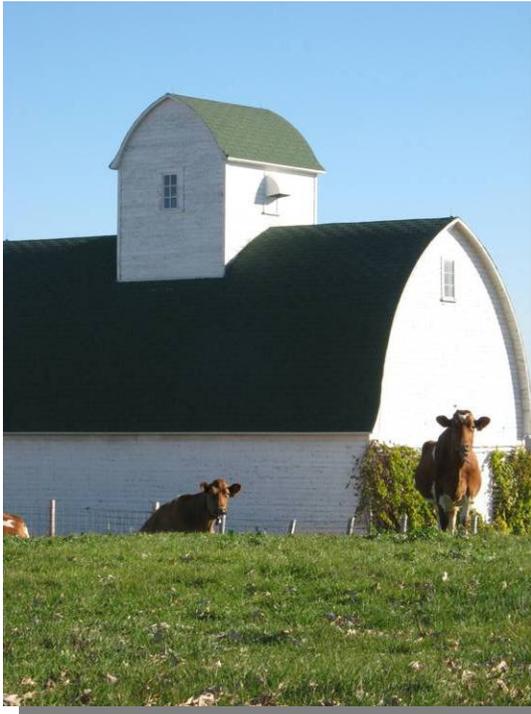
INSERT VISION STATEMENT GRAPHIC

Chapter Three: Agricultural Resources

This chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan* contains background data, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs for agricultural preservation, natural resource conservation, and cultural resource protection. This chapter is provided early in the *Plan* because resources form the framework for land use, transportation, and other planning.

A. Character of Farming

Agriculture in areas surrounding the City remains an important component of the local economy and the community's character. Most farms near Fort Atkinson grow corn, soybeans, and/or dairy. Although no lands within the City



Cows grazing at Hoard Farm

Class I soils have few limitations that restrict their use. These soils can sustain a wide variety of plants and are well suited for cultivated crops, pasture plants, range lands, and woodlands. Class II soils have moderate limitations that restrict the types of plants that can be grown or that require simple conservation practices or soil management techniques to prevent deterioration over time. However, these practices are generally easy to apply, and, therefore, these soils are still able to sustain cultivated crops, pasture plants, range lands, and woodlands.

Soils in Class III have severe limitations that, under natural circumstances, restrict the types of plants that can be grown, and/or that alter the timing of planting, tillage, and harvesting. However, with the

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Work with others to market agricultural products, promote county-wide farmland preservation efforts, and explore opportunities to advance bio-based industry.
- Utilize intergovernmental agreements, County zoning, and land division review to maintain long-term agricultural use of lands in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

were zoned for agriculture at the time this *Plan* was written, there were some very small areas still being farmed (approximately 214 acres). Significant amounts of land in the surrounding towns is in agricultural use. Jones Farm and Hoard Farm—both just outside the City limits—are significant contributors to the area's agricultural character.

B. Assessment of Farmland Viability

The Natural Resources Conservation Service groups soils based on their capability to produce common cultivated crops and pasture plants without deteriorating over a long period of time. These capability classifications are based on numerous criteria that include, but are not limited to, the soil's salinity, capacity to hold moisture, potential for erosion, depth, and texture and structure, as well as local climatic limitations (e.g. temperature and rainfall). Under this system of classification, soils are separated into eight classes. Generally, Class I and Class II soils are the best suited for the cultivation of crops.

application and careful management of special conservation practices, these soils may still be used for cultivated crops, pasture plants, woodlands, and range lands.

Soils in capability Classes IV through VIII present increasingly severe limitations to the cultivation of crops. Soils in Class VIII have limitations that entirely preclude their use for commercial plant production.

Map 4 depicts the locations of Class I, II, and III soils around the City of Fort Atkinson. Class I soils are located in relatively small concentrations south, west, and north of the City. Class II soils are located all around the City, but are most concentrated in the areas east, west, and southwest of the City. Due to natural constraints to development in the area, lands to the southwest are planned for economic development.

C. Farmland Preservation Efforts

Local farmers can participate in several federal and State programs and initiatives that are intended to preserve long-term farming activities. The 2002 Farm Bill reauthorized several federal programs, including:

- The **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**, which provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.
- The **Wetland Reserve Program**, which provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts.
- The **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program**, which provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to landowners to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat on their property.
- The **Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative**, which focuses on providing technical assistance to help new grazers begin using rotational grazing methods. Trained grazing specialists work one-on-one with farmers, developing grazing plans, including seeding recommendations, fencing and watering plans.
- The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**, which provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

In addition, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue offers two important farmland preservation programs, the Farmland Preservation Credit Program and the Farmland Tax Relief Credit Program.

The Farmland Preservation Credit Program strives to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and provides property tax relief to farmland owners. To qualify for the credit, farmland must be 35 acres or more and zoned for exclusive agricultural use or be subject to a preservation agreement between the farmland owner and the State. In addition, in order to be eligible for this credit, all program participants must comply with soil and water conservation standards set by the State Land Conservation Board. The City of Fort Atkinson does not have exclusive agriculture zoning. However, in 2006 there were 24 claims for this credit in the City. It should be noted that claims for both of the Farmland Preservation Credit and the Farmland Tax Relief Credit are documented for the municipality in which the claimant lives, which may not be where the farm is actually located.

The Farmland Tax Relief Credit Program provides direct benefits to all farmland owners with 35 or more acres. The credit is computed as a percentage of up to \$10,000 of property taxes, with the

maximum credit of \$1,500. In 2006, there were 39 claims for this credit in the City of Fort Atkinson, constituting a total of \$7,142 and an average credit of \$183.

By their very nature, however, lands located within the City are targeted for future development. Therefore, the continued viability of farming in the Fort Atkinson area largely depends on the commitment of the County and surrounding towns to promote farmland preservation outside of the City limits. Lands in the surrounding towns are almost entirely zoned A-1 Exclusive Agriculture, a County zoning district intended to preserve land for long-term farming. This district only allows very low density development and only permits uses consistent with agriculture; generally, a total of only two or three homesites are allowed to be created from farm parcels in these areas. Land immediately south and adjacent to the City of Fort Atkinson and south along Highway 26 in the Town of Koshkonong is zoned R-2, Residential Unsewered, which allows single-family residential development served by on-site wastewater treatment systems.

D. Agricultural Resource Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Support the viability and preservation of agriculture in the City's planning area.

Objectives:

1. Promote compact development patterns and maintain a "hard-edge" between City development and the countryside.
2. Direct new homes to smaller lots in locations where housing and other development is already located.
3. Discourage land uses, land divisions, and activities that may conflict with agricultural uses or adversely affect farm investments in long-term farming areas around the City.
4. Work with the surrounding towns and Jefferson County to help preserve farming as a viable occupation and way of life.

Policies:

1. Carefully consider the location of productive agricultural lands before making decisions on the expansion of City services or growth.
2. Work with surrounding towns and Jefferson County to encourage the continuation of exclusive agricultural zoning for most lands in surrounding towns, and the continuation of County policies to significantly limit non-farm development of such lands.
3. Work with surrounding towns and Jefferson County to advance a land use pattern that directs more intensive development into the City, and then maximize the intensity/density of use for lands in the City and future annexed lands to minimize the conversion of agricultural land.
4. Adopt and utilize extraterritorial land division review procedures in the City's subdivision ordinance to limit development in productive farming areas, in a manner generally consistent with Jefferson County policies. Map 8: Future Land Use identifies planned "Agriculture/Rural" areas where these policies should be exercised.
5. Encourage the interim use of open lands for farming within future City development areas and "Long Range Urban Growth Areas" on Map 8 until the land is ready for planned development per the policies in the Land Use chapter.

6. Work cooperatively with Jefferson County and the surrounding towns to explore innovative techniques for preserving agricultural lands in the towns, including a purchase of development rights program, provided that such a program does not conflict with City growth objectives.
7. Encourage agricultural-related industry, such as food and other bio-based product manufacturing, as a component of City industrial parks to support both the economic health of the City and nearby agricultural areas.
8. Support farming-related retail development and direct marketing opportunities in the City, such as farmers markets, that enhance local markets for farm products grown in the area and to enhance community sustainability.

E. Agricultural Resource Programs and Recommendations

Support County-Wide Farmland Preservation Efforts

Jefferson County's 1999 Land Use Plan identifies long-term farmland preservation as a key priority. The County has instituted and administered various strategies for achieving this goal, including the enforcement of "exclusive agriculture" zoning regulations and the use of urban service areas to promote planned city and village growth. In addition, in 2007 the County hired the University of Wisconsin-Madison Urban and Regional Planning Department to assist in an analysis of alternative strategies for preserving farmland, including the identification of funding mechanisms for a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program.

The City will cooperate with Jefferson County and town representatives to continue the County's agricultural preservation initiatives, provided that those initiatives do not impede long-term City growth within the current and future Urban Service Area and/or in the Long Range Urban Growth Areas, as illustrated on the Future Land Use map (Map 8). The City will remain informed and involved on updates to the 1999 County Plan and the consideration of related farmland preservation initiatives.

Limit Development within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Keeping non-farm development out of farming areas is a key component of an overall program of farmland preservation. With the exception of some limited areas in the Town of Koshkonong south of the City, the majority of the lands outside the City limits that are not planned for City development have been indicated on the City's Future Land Use map (Map 8) as appropriate for continuation in agricultural use. The City intends to exercise its subdivision review authority within its 3-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction to limit housing development in these areas, directing intensive development (e.g. large subdivisions, multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial) to the City or other incorporated communities. The City's extraterritorial land division review policies are described in more detail in the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter.



The City's north side shows a strong edge between city and countryside

Manage Development in Long-Range Urban Growth Areas

Some of the lands within the City's planning area have been indicated on the Future Land Use map (Map 8) as "Long-Range Urban Growth Areas." The City anticipates that these areas are not likely to be developed within the 20-year planning period. Therefore, although these lands provide logical long-term (20+ years) urban growth areas, in the shorter-term they should be preserved for mainly agricultural uses so as to maintain a well-defined edge between City development and the surrounding countryside. To achieve this, it is recommended that the City enforce the following standards for these areas:

- Promote the continuation of agricultural uses in these areas over the planning period.
- Prohibit exurban (unsewered) housing development at gross densities higher than that allowed under Jefferson County plans and zoning rules.
- Discourage premature rural development in these areas. Rural development could impede logical and cost-effective future utility and road extensions, result in an inefficient use of land since such developments need to accommodate large septic drain fields or buffers, and/or be incompatible with future surrounding urban growth.
- Discourage loud, unattractive, or malodorous rural businesses in areas that will likely be appropriate for future neighborhood development.
- Discourage uses and project designs that typify a rural level of improvements (e.g., gravel drives, metal buildings) that will not fit in the context of a future urban environment or may impede future investments in high-quality development in the surrounding area.
- Prior to any intensive development of any of these areas beyond that described above, either within or beyond the 20-year planning period, the City intends to engage in a more detailed planning process that leads to an articulated vision and more refined land use, transportation, and utility plans for each area. The City's *Comprehensive Plan* will be amended accordingly.

This recommendation is discussed further in the Land Use chapter.

Support Local Use of Area Farm Products

In addition to preserving land for farming, the City can support efforts to ensure the economic viability of future agricultural operations, even if other entities play more of a lead role. Most of the food consumed in the United States today is transported thousands of miles before it reaches our tables. Various opportunities to promote locally grown foods could slow this unsustainable trend. Some ways in which the City can contribute to these efforts include the following:

- **Farmer's Market:** Local farmers markets provide a direct means for farmers to sell their products to the consumer, contribute to the local economy, and encourage community building. Continuing to promote, grow, and enhance the City's farmers market in downtown Fort Atkinson will create an attraction for City residents and visitors, and will highlight the City's access to fresh, local foods.
- **Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs:** A CSA program allows farmers to sell shares of their products directly to consumers in advance of the growing season. There is an abundance of CSA programs in southern Wisconsin, including many based in Jefferson County. Some relatively simple approaches for the City to support such efforts might be to arrange for the display of informational pamphlets for local CSA programs in City Hall, or to post information and links on the City's website that inform residents about available CSA programs.
- **Restaurants and Food Stores:** Fort Atkinson is already home to several locally-owned restaurants and food stores. Such businesses have an opportunity to purchase, serve, and generally promote locally grown foods. This concept could also be used to market local

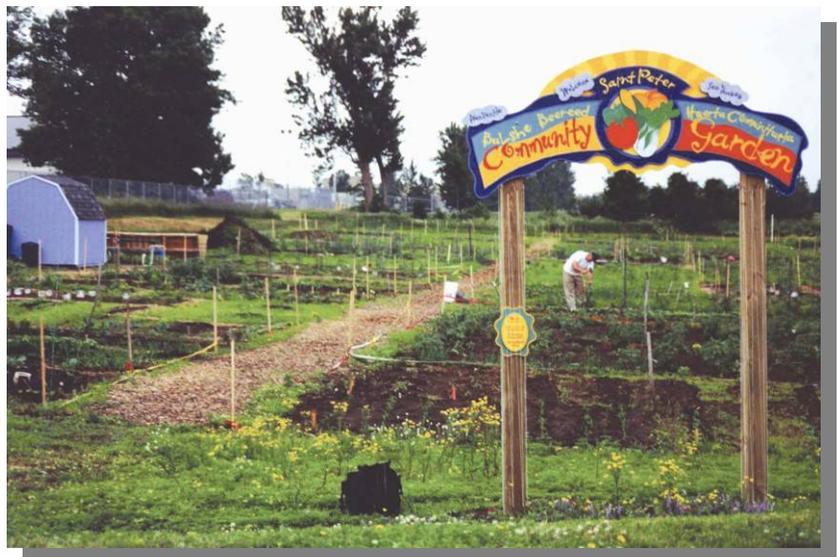
restaurants and markets to people who live outside the City in surrounding communities. The City could encourage local restaurants and grocery stores to purchase and sell local and organic foods when possible. The City could also partner in marketing or recruitment efforts, such as promoting and facilitating the development of a smaller organic/local food cooperative in the City. Or, the City can simply create a supportive planning and zoning environment for further restaurant and food store development.

- **Institutions:** Since it is necessary for institutions such as schools and hospitals to consistently purchase large quantities of food, local food producers may be able to offer them fresh, in-season, healthful products that would promote the health of students, the elderly, and sick residents. The City could advance the goal of promoting local food by supporting and encouraging the School District and Fort Healthcare to purchase food directly from local farmers or grower cooperatives. This practice is encouraged through State programs such as the Wisconsin Homegrown lunch program. The goal of this program is to incorporate fresh, nutritious, local, and sustainably grown food to school lunch menus. In Fort Atkinson, one potential theme for such a program could be “Get FORTified.” A supplement to this may be the development of an “edible schoolyards” program that combines curriculum with hands-on experience growing food in a schoolyard garden.
- **Food Processors:** Companies that manufacture food products provide an obvious target for the marketing of local, raw agricultural products. Fort Atkinson is home to several food producing companies, including Jones Dairy Farm, McCain Foods, and On-Cor Frozen Foods. Increasing connections between these local producers and the raw agricultural products they depend on is an important way to support the agricultural economy, increase the efficiency and output of local producers, and enhance the sustainability of the goods produced.
- **Community Education:** The Hoard Historical Museum and National Dairy Shrine also serve a vital role in educating the public on the history of agriculture around Fort Atkinson, the important ongoing role of agriculture in Jefferson County, and opportunities for purchasing local foods and supporting local farms.

Promote Community Gardens

Establishing community gardens in Fort Atkinson would promote the consumption of *truly local* food. Community gardens benefit the environment by increasing biodiversity and wildlife habitat, providing areas for stormwater infiltration, and reducing energy consumption associated with commercial food production. Community gardens also provide neighborhood gathering places, promote interaction, enhance health, and promote environmental education.

Fort Atkinson residents are able to rent garden plots in Dorothy Carnes County Park, north of the City. The City can further promote community gardening by cooperating with and supporting local groups that are trying to advance community



Example of a Community Garden

gardening, incorporating recommendations for siting community gardens into City plans such as an up-to-date Park and Open Space Plan, identifying public lands and parklands that may be appropriate sites for community gardens, and specifically addressing community gardens in the City zoning ordinance.

Develop New Uses for Agricultural Products

Advances in technology are opening up new markets for traditional agricultural products. The “new bio-economy” is focused on finding new ways to use and process corn, soybeans, and other organic matter into new marketable plastics, fuels such as bio-diesel and pharmaceuticals. At the same time that production costs are declining to process these materials, environmental regulations are becoming more stringent, “green” economic incentives are becoming more widespread, and costs associated with petroleum are rising.

Wisconsin is in a favorable position to be able to supply raw materials for the rising bio-economy. To compete with the efforts of other states and regions, Wisconsin has launched a state-wide initiative to position itself to take advantage of this emerging economy.

The City of Fort Atkinson is ideally located near a major research and development center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, agricultural producers, and the manufacturing centers of southeastern Wisconsin, north central Illinois, and Chicago. There is an opportunity for the City to encourage the future siting and development of bio-based industries in the expanded Klement Business Park on the City’s southwest side. This will be discussed further in the Economic Development chapter.

THE WISCONSIN CONSORTIUM ON BIO-BASED INDUSTRY

The term bio-economy is used to refer to the production of products, chemicals, and energy from renewable bio-mass (crops, crop waste, wood) that are currently produced primarily from non-renewable fossil fuels, such as petroleum. Ethanol from corn and bio-diesel from crop waste are well known examples of fuels created from biomass. Research is underway to unlock the potentially much higher energy yields from other organic sources such as grasses, legumes and timber, all of which are readily grown in Wisconsin. However, the potential for bio-mass is not limited to fuels. Many products that can be made from petroleum, such as plastics and lubricants, can also be made from bio-mass.

Growing concerns over rising energy costs, dependency on foreign sources of petroleum, global climate change, and environmental degradation, have been matched by growing interest in the emerging bio-economy. By virtue of its natural resources, strong agricultural and forestry economies, and research facilities, the State of Wisconsin is in a strong position to develop and expand its bio-economy and bio-based industries.

In recognition of these assets and trends, Governor Doyle issued Executive Order #101 in 2005 establishing the Wisconsin Consortium on Bio-based Industry. The Consortium consists of six working groups (economics, education & outreach, regulatory issues, organizations & institutions, technology & science, and environment) to focus on improving each of these necessary aspects of biomass economy. The members were chosen from both the private and public spheres for their expertise in the relevant areas. The stated purposes of the consortium include making recommendations on how best to coordinate state, federal, and private initiatives to foster growth of the bio industry in an environmentally sound manner. More information is available on-line at <http://bioeconomy.wi.gov>

Map 4: Agricultural Soils

Chapter Four: Natural Resources

NATURAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Promote community sustainability City-wide.
- Help protect the Rock River, Bark River, and Allen Creek; groundwater quality; and other important environmental features.
- Promote the integration of recreation with natural resources, such as through more recreational trails.

A survey of Fort Atkinson's natural resources provides an important framework for guiding several elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*. As a growing community, such information can help identify the appropriate locations for development, and can pinpoint areas that should be preserved and managed for recreational purposes, stormwater management, and groundwater protection. Maintenance of these natural features is also important for community appearance and for the

functions they perform for natural communities. Map 5 in this *Plan* depicts the area's key environmentally sensitive areas, some of which are described in detail below.

A. Ecological Landscape

An ecological landscape is defined as a region of Wisconsin characterized by a unique combination of physical and biological attributes, such as climate, geology, soils, water, or vegetation. Understanding the distinct attributes of each of these landscapes will be important when identifying future land management and land use goals. The City of Fort Atkinson falls within the Southeast Glacial Plains Landscape. Many of these attributes of this landscape are identified in the following sections.

B. Topography

The topography in the City of Fort Atkinson was shaped over 10,000 years ago by Wisconsin's most recent period of glacial activity. The landscape is characterized by gently rolling moraines and drumlins that were formed by material deposited along the edges of the ice sheet during the glacier's retreat. Most of the slopes in the City are less than 5 percent. In the area around McCoy Park, elevations reach more than 850 feet above sea level. The low areas along the Rock and Bark Rivers have elevations of about 780 feet.

C. Metallic and Non-Metallic Resources

While there are no active mineral extraction sites located in Fort Atkinson, under State Statutes (295.20), landowners who want to register their property as a nonmetallic mining deposit are required to notify each county, city, village and/or town that has zoning authority over their property. Registrations must be recorded at the County Register of Deeds in the County where the mineral deposit is located.

D. Groundwater

Groundwater is comprised of the portion of rainfall that does not run off to streams or rivers and that does not evaporate or transpire from plants. This water percolates down through the soil until it

reaches the saturated zone of an aquifer. Groundwater supplies all of the water for domestic, commercial and industrial uses in the City of Fort Atkinson.

The quality of groundwater in the City is generally good. However, groundwater availability and quality is and will continue to be an important issue for Jefferson County. In the last few decades, the number of high-capacity wells in the region has increased to accommodate growth. Such deep wells not only threaten to deplete the aquifer, but also disturb areas of the aquifer in which natural contaminants are found in higher concentrations, such as radium, arsenic, lead, fluoride, and iron.

Groundwater contamination is also of concern in areas around the City that are served by private wells. In these more rural areas, a common groundwater contaminant is nitrate-nitrogen, which can come from many sources, including improperly functioning on-site wastewater systems, animal feedlots, sludge and septage application, lawn and agricultural fertilizers, and decaying plant debris.

E. Watersheds and Surface Waters

The City is located within the Lower Koshkonong Creek Watershed in the Lower Rock River Basin. The Rock River Basin covers approximately 3,777 square miles and incorporates 10 counties in southern Wisconsin. Water from the Rock River Basin enters the Mississippi River via the Rock River and eventually ends up in the Gulf of Mexico. The main trunk of the Rock River flows south through Fort Atkinson. The Lower Koshkonong Creek Watershed covers an area of 220 square miles. The watershed includes Lake Koshkonong and the Rock River from Fort Atkinson to the Indianford Dam. Streams in the watershed include Saunders, Allen and Otter creeks, and a portion of the main stem of the Rock River.

The Rock River and Bark River are the City of Fort Atkinson's most prominent surface water features. The Rock River traverses through the center of the City from east to west, framing the downtown. The Bark River connects to the Rock River in the eastern portion of the City.



The Rock River weaves through downtown Fort Atkinson

Allen Creek cuts through the southwestern portion of the City just north of the Robert L. Klement Business Park. The Creek is the only waterway in the County that is considered an Exceptional Resource Water, meaning that it is characterized by excellent water quality and high quality fisheries, and also has a high recreational value.

F. Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates floodplains. These are areas predicted to be inundated with flood waters in the 100-year storm event (e.g., a storm that has a 1 percent chance of happening in any given year). Development within floodplains is strongly

discouraged (so as to avoid property damage). The City of Fort Atkinson Floodplain Ordinance regulates development within floodplain areas.

Map 5 shows the 505 acres of land in the City classified as floodplain, comprising approximately 14 percent of the City's total land area. Floodplain areas in the City are located primarily along the Rock River and Bark River. The National Flood Insurance Program maps produced by the FEMA should be referenced for official delineation and elevations of floodplain boundaries. These maps have recently been updated.

G. Wetlands

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) Wetland Inventory Maps, wetland habitats comprise approximately seven percent (263 acres) of the City's total land area, not including small tracts of wetland that are less than five acres in size. These ecosystems play significant roles in maintaining the quality of groundwater and surface water and provide valuable habitats for fish, birds, and other wildlife. Wetland areas are generally located along the Rock and Bark Rivers and in several low lying areas of the City.

South of the City in the vicinity of Star School Road and just west of County K is the Star School Fen. The fen is a wetland complex associated with Allen Creek (see paragraph E above). The area is comprised of patches of calcareous fen, wet mesic prairie, and southern sedge meadow. Calcareous fens are the rarest type of plant community in Wisconsin and one of the rarest in all of North America. The harsh alkaline soils characteristic of these ecosystems support a rare selection of calcium-tolerant plants. Calcareous fen's typically have a disproportionate number of rare, threatened, and endangered plant species when compared to other plant communities in the Great Lakes Region. The Star School Fen supports a diversity of species, including rare species such as prairie Indian plantain, slim-stem reed grass, least darter, and Blanding's turtle. Landowners in the area have embarked on an ambitious management and restoration program to stop the woody and invasive species from encroaching on the fen. At the time this *Plan* was written, the Star School Fen area was being proposed as a State Natural Area.

The City of Fort Atkinson Shoreland/Wetland Ordinance regulates the use and development of wetlands within 300 feet of navigable streams and 1,000 feet of lakes and ponds.

H. Woodlands and Natural Vegetation

The City of Fort Atkinson's native vegetation consists of a mix of prairie lands, oak forests, maple-basswood forests, savannas, wet-mesic prairies, southern sedge meadows, emergent marshes, and calcareous fens. Agriculture and development have significantly changed vegetative cover in this part of the state. Much of the natural vegetation has been removed and undeveloped areas are dominated by croplands. Today, larger stands of woodlands are mainly located outside the City limits, mostly along the Rock and Bark Rivers.

I. Steep Slopes

As shown on Map 5, slopes exceeding a 12 percent grade are located in the northwest portion of the City and south of the City. Generally, slopes that have between a 12 and 20 percent grade present challenges for building site development, and slopes that exceed a 20 percent grade are not recommended for any disturbance or development.

J. Rare Species Occurrences/Natural Areas

WisDNR's Natural Heritage Inventory program maintains data on the general location and status of threatened or endangered plant and animal species and natural communities and species of special concern. There are occurrences of aquatic endangered species in the City centered around the Rock and Bark Rivers. Animal species include the Queen Snake, Bullfrogs, and Blanchard's Cricket Frog. There are also occurrences of aquatic endangered species west of the City in the Lake Koshkonong Marsh. More specific information on location and type of species is available from the State's Bureau of Endangered Resources.

K. State Natural Areas/Wildlife Areas

State wildlife areas are intended to preserve wild lands for hunters, trappers, hikers, wildlife watchers, and all people interested in the out-of-doors. Furthermore, these areas help protect and manage important habitat for wildlife and help prevent draining, filling, and destruction of wetlands and the private blocking of important waterways, game lands, and lakes.

The City does not have any state natural areas or wildlife areas within its 2008 boundaries. However, Rose Lake State Natural Area is located northwest of the City. Rose Lake is a shallow, hard water seepage lake that is surrounded by wetlands, oaks openings, and steep hills. The Lake has a maximum depth of 5 feet and contains a submerged aquatic plant community. The exposed mud flats attract numerous shore birds such as pectoral sandpiper, least sandpiper, solitary, sandpiper, and lesser yellowlegs. The lake and surrounding wetlands are also important breeding habitat for black tern, black crowned night-heron, redhead, sandhill cranes, great blue heron, pied-billed grebe, American coot, common moorhen, blue-winged teal, ruddy duck, tree swallow, bank swallow, marsh wren, and yellow-headed black birds. A diversity of other plant, mammal, reptile, amphibian, and insect species also inhabit the Lake and the surrounding habitat. A diverse dragonfly/damselfly population indicates that water quality in the lake has remained fairly pristine. Prairie, savanna, and wetland habitats are being restored around the lake. Public land surrounding the Lake is owned by Jefferson County (Dorothy Carnes Park). The Lake was designated as a State Natural Area in 2006.

As part of the Glacial Heritage Project (see paragraph M below), the state and Jefferson County have long-term plans to acquire roughly 600 acres of additional land around the Lake to ensure the long-term preservation of this unique and treasured natural feature and to enable a broader range of recreational activities.

The Lake Koshkonong Marsh Wildlife Area is located only two miles southwest of the City. The Wildlife Area is a large marsh, just west of Highway 26 along the mouth of the Rock River. It encompasses 844 acres and is home to waterfowl, deer, turkey, pheasants, grassland songbirds, and sandhill cranes. A boat ramp is available on Groeler Road under the Highway 26 Bridge. Snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and bird watching are other activities. The WisDNR also has a boat ramp and a small natural area on Vinnie Ha Ha Road providing access to the Wildlife Area.

L. Land Legacy Places

In the Wisconsin Land Legacy Report, the WisDNR identified the key places that are critical to meeting Wisconsin's conservation and outdoor recreation needs over the next 50 years. The Bark and Scuppernong Rivers and Jefferson Marsh Legacy Places have been identified in the area surrounding Fort Atkinson. This large area encompasses four State Wildlife Areas, including the Lake Koshkonong Marsh Wildlife Area. Because of this area's proximity to numerous urban centers, the Legacy Places offer some of the best remaining opportunities in southern Wisconsin to provide substantial land for outdoor recreation.

M. Glacial Heritage Area Project

The Glacial Heritage Area Project is an effort led by the WisDNR to establish a network of conservation areas, recreational facilities, and recreation trails in the Glacial Heritage Area in Southeastern Wisconsin. This area is centered on western Jefferson County, but includes portions of Dane County, Dodge County, Rock County, and Walworth County. The primary goal of the project is to help meet the demand for outdoor, nature-based, land and water recreational activities in the state by setting aside lands for hiking, biking, wildlife watching, camping, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, boating, and other activities. The portion of Southeastern Wisconsin that is known as the Glacial Heritage Area already boasts one state park, eleven large State Wildlife Areas, twelve State Natural Areas, the Glacial Drumlin and Glacial River trails, numerous county parks, and lands owned by private conservation groups. These resources provide the foundation for establishing an intricate network of “strings and pearls,” in which conservation areas and parks represent the “pearls,” and trails represent the “strings.”

It is another goal of this project to directly connect these outdoor recreational resources with the numerous communities located within the Glacial Heritage Area. The northern two thirds of the City of Fort Atkinson is located within the project’s primary study area, within which WisDNR is hoping to identify the majority of its new “pearls.” At the time this *Plan* was written, the Rose Lake State Natural Area (Dorothy Carnes Park) had been identified as one of the County’s “pearls.” The Jefferson County Parks Department and WisDNR were developing plans for the long-term preservation and expansion of this area and working with landowners to protect land adjacent to the Lake through acquisition, easement, or agreement.

N. Natural Resource Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Protect the health and integrity ecological systems as part of a sustainable community.

Objectives:

1. Continue to recognize how significant natural features such as the Rock and Bark Rivers and Allen Creek help to shape Fort Atkinson’s character and identity.
2. Protect natural features, including wetlands, rivers, woodlands, wildlife habitats, groundwater resources, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
3. Protect surface water and groundwater quality, specifically associated with the rivers and Allen Creek.
4. Link natural resource preservation with recreational and economic opportunities and community sustainability.

Policies:

1. Utilize subdivision review, zoning, and official mapping authority to protect environmental corridors and significant environmental features within the City’s planning area.
2. Preserve natural resources by prohibiting new construction in mapped environmental corridors (see Maps 7 and 8).
3. Protect groundwater quality by encouraging the clean-up of environmentally contaminated sites, monitoring uses that may cause contamination in the future, identifying and protecting wellhead protection areas for municipal wells, and maximizing infiltration in groundwater recharge areas.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

A community can advance sustainability through a variety of strategies such as promoting comprehensive transportation networks and services; ensuring a variety of housing options throughout the community; investing in a strong economy that provides a diversity of local jobs, goods, and services; supporting well designed development that preserves high-quality farmland and complements the natural environment; seeking out opportunities to reduce non-renewable energy consumption and waste; and generally by developing comprehensive solutions to resolving complex issues.

The term sustainability refers to a community’s capacity to support the long-term health and welfare of its natural and man-made environment, as well as all forms of life that depend on that environment. A sustainable community is focused not only on protecting natural resources, but also on ensuring a high quality of life for all residents. To move in the direction of sustainability, a community must recognize the interconnectedness of all things, as well as the impact their actions have on the greater region and the world.

4. Protect the area’s natural resources, such as the Rock River, the Bark River, Allen Creek, Rose Lake, and Bark River Nature Park to protect threatened or endangered species and other wildlife, and to promote local economic development.
5. Cooperate with other units of government and non-profit land conservation agencies on the preservation of natural resources that are under shared ownership or that cross jurisdictional boundaries.
6. Encourage a compact development pattern, mixed use development, infill, and redevelopment in the City to preserve open spaces and natural resources.
7. Enhance and enforce progressive erosion control and stormwater management standards.
8. Review and revise City ordinances to ensure they encourage or at least do not prevent property owners or developers from engaging in environmentally-sustainable development practices.
9. Support and participate in the Glacial Heritage Project and other initiatives that are focused on preservation and enhancement of natural resources.

10. Develop a multi-use trail system that utilizes environmental corridors as key linkages.
11. Discourage the establishment of new mineral extraction operations within the City limits, except where they are associated with a development project on the same site and are operated according to safe and clean standards.

O. Natural Resource Programs and Recommendations

Promote Community Sustainability

The City can involve its residents and business owners in promoting a sustainable Fort Atkinson. More



specifically, the following strategies may be implemented:

- With UW-Extension, Jefferson County and local groups like Heart of the City, organize opportunities to educate the public on ideas and initiatives to become more sustainable. It will be particularly important for the City to provide opportunities for residents and business owners to help define what the term “sustainability” means for Fort Atkinson and to strategize on ways to advance the goal of becoming more sustainable. The City has already initiated such efforts by establishing its Ad Hoc Climate Protection Committee.
- Carry out the recommendations of the City’s Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee, including the development and implementation of the “Green Recognition Program” to award businesses, organizations, and individuals who advance sustainability objectives.
- Coordinate the efforts and knowledge of City staff, residents, and business owners to identify environmental issues in need of the most immediate attention. Following this exercise, identify short-term projects that can be implemented relatively quickly and easily. Such early successes will help generate enthusiasm and excitement for future directions and will advance the City toward achieving more complex and/or longer-term goals.
- Refer to the publication “Toward a Sustainable Community: A Toolkit for Local Government” to identify potential strategies for creating greater efficiencies in City operations. This publication was prepared by UW-Extension and outlines approaches to improve efficiency in municipal departments, both in terms of their impact on the environment and in terms of government spending.

Foster a Compact, Mixed Use Development Pattern

The City may, through this *Plan* and updated ordinances, promote a more compact development pattern, focusing on techniques that minimize the amount of land required for additional growth, such as infill development, redevelopment, mixed use neighborhood and economic centers, Traditional Neighborhood Design, and smaller lots sizes (see Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter). Compact development will benefit regional water quality (see “Urban Density and Water Quality” sidebar), facilitate walking and biking, help keep development out of agricultural and natural areas, and be less expensive to serve with public utilities and services.

Protect Environmental Corridors

Preserving environmental corridors provides significant ecological, recreational, and aesthetic benefits to a community. Such areas add considerably to the ecological integrity of a region, contribute to the

URBAN DENSITY AND WATER QUALITY

Urban development has negative impacts on water quality by decreasing natural ground cover and increasing the amount of stormwater runoff that enters streams and lakes. Water bodies can become impaired when just 10 percent of the adjacent land is impervious. As a result, some communities have concluded that lower-density development patterns will have less of an impact on water quality by spreading out development and allowing for more pervious surface around and between buildings, roads, driveways, and parking lots.

However, when the quantity of stormwater runoff in a given area is measured per building, versus per acre, higher density developments generate less stormwater runoff than lower density developments and consequently have less of a negative impact on the overall watershed.

Nevertheless, it should be recognized that with denser development comes localized increases in impervious surfaces, which, over time will contribute to the impairment of waterways. Therefore, in addition to promoting compact development patterns, communities should take additional measures to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff.

Source: USEPA report “Protecting Water Resources with Higher Density Development”

aesthetic value of neighborhoods, offer natural stormwater management and flood control, and protect and improve water and air quality. In addition, because environmental corridors are often comprised of wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, and other specific environmental features, these areas often present severe limitations to development. For the purposes of this *Plan*, environmental corridors are comprised of the following features:

- Publicly-owned parks, recreation, and conservancy lands.
- Water bodies and wetlands as mapped in the Wisconsin DNR Wetlands Inventory and areas identified through more detailed field surveys, which are subject to regulations at several levels of government.
- Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) designated floodplains. The County and City are required to limit development within the 100-year floodplain as shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps.
- Contiguous woodlands over 10 acres in size.
- 25-foot setbacks from navigable waters and well-defined drainageways.
- Lands with steep slopes of 12 percent or greater.

The City intends to protect environmental corridors by not allowing new buildings (that do not replace old buildings) or significant expansions to existing building footprints within these identified areas. Existing development and farming uses may continue within mapped environmental corridors. However, such natural areas may be strategically integrated into the design of new development, providing locations for potential trails. For example, the greenway east of Ralph Park could provide space for a new multi-use trail that could connect to and through the clinic area to the Rock River, connecting the neighborhood to this important natural feature and enhancing mobility for children, the elderly and the disabled. The Housing and Neighborhood Development section of this chapter includes additional details.

Take Measures to Protect Exceptional Natural Resources

Fort Atkinson is surrounded by several high quality natural features, including, but not limited to, Allen Creek and Rose Lake. To preserve these exceptional resources, the City will coordinate with various entities such as the surrounding towns, WisDNR, property owners, Friends of the Allen Creek Watershed (FOACW), Jefferson County, and other private, public, and non-profit agencies. Whenever possible, the City will direct urban development away from areas being planned for acquisition or state and county protection (see Map 10).

At the time this *Plan* was being prepared, the FOACW group was working in coordination with professors at UW-Whitewater and a river restoration company to prepare a two-year baseline study of Allen Creek and its associated watershed. Initial findings of the study revealed relatively unimpaired water quality, several rare species of plants and animals and a dynamic, high-functioning hydrologic system. In the future, continued development around the creek and habitat fragmentation pose threats to the quality of this system. The City will communicate with FOACW and consider the findings of their study when making decisions regarding future development south of the City. At minimum, the City will



The small white lady slipper orchid, a Wisconsin threatened species, blooms along Allen Creek

also collaborate with FOACW, property owners, and other groups and agencies to discourage additional development in close proximity to the creek, where ever possible. To accomplish this goal, the City may also utilize strategies such as situating open space areas and/or stormwater management facilities between development and the creek to create an additional buffer.

Also see the recommendation below: “Link Natural Area Preservation with Recreational Opportunities.”

Advance Stormwater Best Management Practices

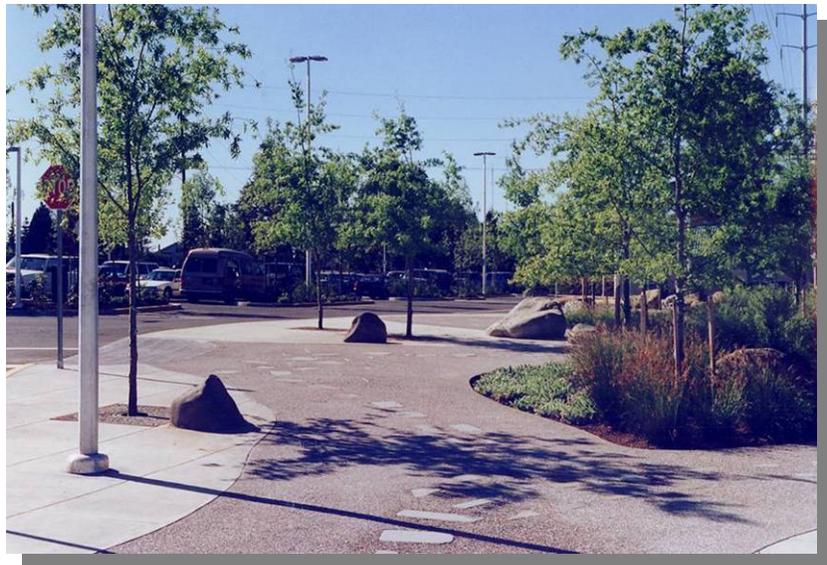
The City will refer to Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) to mitigate the negative impacts stormwater can have on waterways and downstream properties. Stormwater BMPs aim to control run-off volume by managing precipitation as “close to where it hits the ground” as possible, thereby facilitating infiltration of precipitation into groundwater and evaporation of water back into the atmosphere. This approach decreases peak stormwater quantities and improves the overall quality of the stormwater that does enter streams and lakes.

The BMPs that the City will promote and, in certain cases, require the following:

- **Maximize permeable surface areas.** This technique focuses on reducing the impervious footprint of development sites and breaking up large paved areas with permeable surfaces and/or natural ground cover and vegetation. Since the impacts of stormwater runoff are far more effectively managed by natural systems, such as wetlands and forest ecosystems, than by pervious ground cover that has been altered by construction or other human impacts (e.g. front lawns), the preservation of environmental corridors will go a long way in mitigating stormwater impacts. Where paved surfaces are necessary, these areas should be graded so they drain to infiltration areas. This approach also includes the incorporation of narrower street widths into neighborhoods, where possible, and the development of smaller lots, which are typically associated with less impervious surface per lot (e.g. less street frontage needed per lot).

- **Incorporate progressive construction site erosion control practices.**

Construction sites generate a significant amount of sediment run-off if not managed properly. Under current state laws, erosion control plans are required for all construction sites that are larger than one acre. The City will enforce erosion control ordinances and techniques for the protection and continued improvement of water quality. In particular, progressive erosion control systems should be components of new development sites. These techniques include providing silt fencing surrounding the construction project, minimizing the amount of land area that is disturbed throughout the construction process, and quickly reestablishing displaced vegetation.



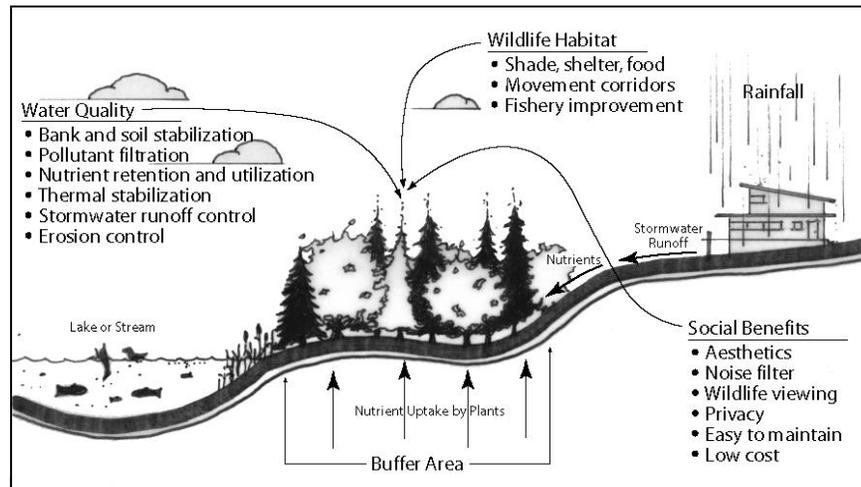
Infiltration areas can be artfully integrated into development

- **Include infiltration and retention areas.** Where stormwater basins are necessary to effectively manage run-off, such basins and associated conveyance routes should be carefully integrated into the surrounding

development pattern and should incorporate native/natural edge vegetation whenever possible to ensure the aesthetic and functional integrity of the site. Other possible infiltration techniques include:

- *Rain gardens*: A rain garden is a landscaping feature that is designed, located, and installed for the purposes of capturing stormwater runoff and allowing it to infiltrate back into the ground. The City may consider codifying rain garden design standards and allowing the construction of rain gardens to apply toward meeting City landscaping requirements.
- *Rain Barrels*: A rain barrel collects and stores the water that drains from rooftops to prevent it from running off-site. A hose can be connected to the barrel and the collected rain can be used to water the lawn or garden, or to wash the car. Barrels can also be set to slowly empty themselves, allowing the water to filter back into the ground. The City may actively promote this program and provide residents with information about how and where they can purchase their own rain barrels.
- *Green (vegetated) roofs*: Green roofs effectively act like sponges, absorbing water from rain storms that would otherwise run off the roof. Green roofs also function as filters, removing pollutants from rainwater. The City will consider installing green roofs on new municipal buildings constructed in the future, and promote them in private developments.
- *Vegetated buffer strips and berms* (Figure 4.1): Locating areas of vegetation either alone or in combination with landscaping berms around properties helps restrict the off-site flow of water. Also, the addition of organic material to soil aids in the decomposition and filtration of pollutants. The City should seek funds from programs that are designed to assist in efforts to protect and enhance surface water quality in key areas. Programs may include the DNR Target Runoff Management Program and the DNR River Protection Grant Program.

The City may also implement a stormwater utility as a means to better manage stormwater at a regional level, rather than relying on site-by-site approaches in all cases. The City may, from time to time, partner with groups such as the Rock River Coalition, Friends of the Allen Creek Watershed, and other groups to identify and implement strategies to improve water quality in the Rock and its tributaries and to identify and map groundwater recharge areas in and around the City. In such areas, the City will focus particularly on maximizing pervious surfaces and minimizing the potential for groundwater contamination. For projects close to Allen Creek, an Exceptional Resource Water, the City will continue to carefully manage the temperature, quantity, and quality of water reaching the Creek and may take additional measures to ensure that adjacent development is not contributing to the degradation of this important natural feature.

Figure 4.1: Example of Vegetative Buffer

Require Completion of a Site Inventory and Analysis in Advance of Development

Neighborhood and site design processes that require the thoughtful inventory and analysis of natural resources before lots are platted or buildings are placed are essential in accomplishing development that is sensitive to natural resources. Requiring completion of “site assessment checklists” as part of development approvals is a good way to achieve this (see example in Figure 4.2). The checklist suggests a comprehensive inventory of all natural resources when a development proposal, site plan, conditional use permit, or other petition is within a critical area. Also, natural resource features should be depicted on all site plans, preliminary plats, and certified survey maps, including wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, drainageways, wooded areas, and mature trees.

Once critical site features are identified and mapped, protection is the next step. Maximum clearance or removal standards for these features, or on-site mitigation where those standards cannot be met, may be considered. For example, some communities adopt woodland/mature tree identification, protection, and mitigation (e.g., replanting) standards in zoning and subdivision ordinances to maintain this limited resource.

The City should consider site inventory, analysis, and protection standards in its zoning and subdivision ordinance amendments, as recommended in the final chapter of this *Plan* when the codes are next updated.

Figure 4.2: Sample Portion of a Site Assessment Checklist

SITE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST		
ITEM OF INFORMATION	YES	NO
I. Land Resources. Does the project site involve:		
A. Changes in relief and drainage patterns (Attach a topographical map showing, at a minimum, 2-foot contour intervals)		
B. A landform or topographical feature including perennial streams		
C. A floodplain (If “yes,” attach 2 copies of the 100-year floodplain limits.)		
D. An area of soil instability—greater than 18 % slope and/or hydric or alluvial soils, as depicted in the applicable “County Soils Survey”		
E. An area of bedrock within 6 ft. of the soil surface as depicted in the “County Soils Survey” or a more detailed source		
F. An area with groundwater table within 5 feet of the soil surface as described in the “County Soils Survey” or a more detailed source		
G. An area with fractured bedrock within 10 feet of the soil surface as depicted in the “County Soils Survey”		
H. Prevention of future gravel extraction		
I. A drainage-way with a tributary area of 5 or more acres		
J. Lot coverage of more than 50 percent impermeable surfaces		
K. Prime agricultural land as depicted in the applicable “County Soils Survey” or adopted farm land preservation plans		
L. Wetlands as depicted on DNR wetland inventory maps or more detailed sources		
M. Environmental corridors, as mapped by the City or county		
II. Water Resources. Does the project involve:		
A. Location in an area traversed by a navigable stream, intermittent stream, or dry run		
B. Impact on the capacity of a stormwater storage system or flow of a waterway within 1 mile		
C. The use of septic systems for on-site waste disposal		
D. Lowering of water table by pumping or drainage		
E. Raising of water table by altered drainage		
F. Frontage on a lake, river, or other navigable waterway		

Link Natural Area Preservation with Recreational Opportunities

When siting new parks and considering improvements to existing parks, the City will identify areas that can accommodate both active recreation (e.g. ball fields, playgrounds, courts) and passive recreation (e.g. picnicking, nature walks, bird watching). Natural resource preservation areas can serve as important components of the City’s overall park system, providing opportunities for outdoor education, relaxation, and exercise. Such areas also maintain and enhance the beauty of a community or neighborhood and serve a

variety of ecological functions, such as providing habitat for wildlife, enhancing water and air quality, and providing natural flood control. The City may also consider the following opportunities:

- **Work with the State and County to identify and preserve identified open lands within the Glacial Heritage Area.** Because the City of Fort Atkinson is located within the Glacial Heritage Area Project's study area, it will be important for the City to remain involved in the project's ongoing feasibility study process, which is intended to identify lands appropriate for future acquisition and preservation. Fort Atkinson will also continue to work with the County and WisDNR to coordinate possible connections between State and County lands (like Rose Lake State Natural Area) and City neighborhoods. In association with the Glacial Heritage Project, the State and County have long-term plans to acquire additional land surrounding the Rose Lake State Natural Area to preserve the integrity of this significant natural feature. The City recognizes the value of having a State Natural Area in its backyard and intends to support acquisition plans by directing urban development away from the Rose Lake acquisition area, instead supporting long-term agricultural preservation on lands generally north of Highway 12 and west of Highway 26 (see the Future Land Use, Maps 7 and 8). The City's Parks and Recreation Department will collaborate with the state and Jefferson County as needed to facilitate the expansion of this park and recreation area. The Rose Lake State Natural Area also presents an opportunity to enhance nature-based tourism in the City (e.g. bird watching).
- **Coordinate with groups like the County, WisDNR, Johnson Creek, and Jefferson to develop an on-water trail along the Rock River that connects Jefferson County communities and enhances recreational opportunities.** This will require investigating the navigability of shallow areas of the River, such as the area near the airport. Opportunities may also exist to develop an on-water trail on the Bark River.
- **Implement plans to install and maintain piers along the Rock River to help increase public access to this resource and enhance recreational opportunities and economic and housing development in the downtown.**
- **Support the County in its efforts to implement passive recreational master plans for Dorothy Carnes Park, and work to establish off-road multi-use trail connections between those parks and Rock River Park in the City.**
- **Develop and implement a City-focused Bicycle and Pedestrian System Master Plan as a way to actively promote walking and cycling as viable alternatives for short trips within the City.** This is discussed in more detail in the Transportation chapter.



Map 5: Natural Features and Historic Places

Chapter Five: Cultural Resources

CULTURAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Work with property owners and the Historic Preservation Commission to ensure the long-term preservation of historically and culturally significant buildings and sites.
- Collaborate on events and attractions that celebrate the City's culture and bring visitors to the community.

The City of Fort Atkinson derived its name from General Henry Atkinson, who, in the midst of the Black Hawk War of 1832, established his fort at the confluence of the Rock River and Bark River. The war began when a Sauk warrior named Black Hawk returned east across the Mississippi River and into Illinois in an attempt to reclaim the Sauk and Fox homelands. The warrior's actions were considered an "invasion of the state" by Illinois Governor John Reynolds. In response he declared war against Black Hawk and his men, and General Henry Atkinson was

charged with the task of forcing Black Hawk to retreat west of the Mississippi.

General Atkinson and his troops managed to push Black Hawk north into what is now the state of Wisconsin. However, by the time Atkinson arrived in the area he was short on supplies and frustrated by his inability to find Black Hawk. He and his men stopped along the Rock River and constructed Fort Koshkonong so they could have a place to store the supplies being sent to them.

Many famous men were involved in the Black Hawk War, including future presidents Zachary Taylor, Abraham Lincoln, and Jefferson Davis. It was the commanding general, however, whose name became forever associated with the area. In 1841, Congress declared that the settlement be named Fort Atkinson.

In the years that followed, Fort Atkinson's population grew, and the City became an important stop along the Chicago, Milwaukee, & St. Paul Railway. In time, the small community had launched many industries. The City is perhaps best known for the important role it played in establishing Wisconsin's dairy industry. In 1885, Hoard's Dairyman magazine made its debut out of Fort Atkinson. This magazine is now published in three languages and goes out to 82,000 subscribers in 75 countries around the world. Fort Atkinson is also now home to many tourist attractions, including the Fireside Dinner Theatre, which draws tens of thousands of visitors each year and is the number one bus tour destination in Wisconsin, the Hoard Historical Museum, the City's historic shopping district, and a replica of the original Fort Koshkonong.



A. Historic Sites

The Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) contains data on a wide range of historic properties throughout the state. The AHI identifies 153 documented places in the City of Fort Atkinson, mostly churches and residences. There are five properties or areas in the City listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include the following (also see Map 5):

- The Panther Intaglio Effigy Mound: End of Riverside Drive
- George P. Marston House (323 Merchants Avenue)
- The Main Street Historic District (Main Street from Sherman Avenue to South 3rd Street)
- The Merchant's Avenue Historic District (bounded by South Third Street E, South Milwaukee Avenue E, Foster Street, Whitewater Avenue, and Merchant Avenue)
- The May, Eli House, also known as the site of the original Fort Koshkonong (407 East Milwaukee Avenue)
- Fort Atkinson Water Tower (S. High and Fourth Streets)

Jones Dairy Farm and Hoard's Dairyman Farm are located just outside the City boundaries and are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The City's Historic Preservation Commission also designates other historic local landmarks that have not been included on the National Register of Historic Places but that still have historic significance to the community. These properties include the following (also see Map 5):

- Dwight Foster House (410 Foster Street)
- Fred Boldt Farmhouse (809 N. Main Street)
- Evergreen Cemetery Caretaker's Cottage (1105 N. Main Street)
- IOOF Block (201 S. Main Street)
- Black Hawk Hotel (9 W. Milwaukee Avenue)

In 2002, the City's Historic Preservation Commission worked with a consultant to prepare an Architectural and Historical Residential Survey Report, which was an inventory of historic properties and architectural styles throughout the City.

B. Archeological Sites

There are twenty-three archeological sites within the City of Fort Atkinson designated by the Wisconsin State Historical Society. These sites include cemeteries/burial sites and effigy mounds. All human burial sites, including cemeteries and Indian mounds, are protected under State law. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to ensure that their actions do not adversely affect archeological sites on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Archeological sites can be protected during the course of state agency activities if the sites have been recorded with the Office of the State Archeologist.

Under Wisconsin law, Native American burial mounds, unmarked burials, and all marked and unmarked cemeteries are protected from encroachment by any type of development. Many of these sites are located on private land, and may not be viewed by the general public.

C. Other Cultural Resources

The City and surrounding area is home to numerous other cultural resources and attractions. At the time this *Plan* was written, some of these included the following:

- **Entertainment:** The City has numerous entertainment venues including the Fireside Dinner Theater, which is one of the Midwest's most popular professional theatres. The theater began in 1964 as a small 60 foot by 60 foot building that could only hold 120 people. Now, the theater is large enough to seat 1,000 dinner guests and 652 theater patrons. The Fireside also offers gift shops, a bakery, and a lounge where the theater's original bar once stood. The theater hosts talent from Broadway and the regional stage and offers one of the best professional theater experiences in Wisconsin. The Council for Performing Arts is the leading county-wide organization for cultural enrichment and sponsors musical shows and plays throughout Jefferson County.



The City also has numerous bars, restaurants, and music venues, including Café Carpe, a restaurant, bar, and music club in downtown Fort Atkinson, which has an excellent regional reputation for alternative and folk music

- **Hoard Historical Museum:** This local museum showcases the history of the City of Fort Atkinson and offers displays, artifacts, local artwork, multimedia exhibits, a research library, and gift shop. The Museum also sponsors a number of community events, including the annual Mary Hoard Art Show and the Foster House Herb Garden Gathering.
- **University of Wisconsin—Whitewater:** The University is located less than 10 miles from Fort Atkinson. Year round events such as sports events, graduation ceremonies, and other entertainment events draw visitors to the area, many of which either stay in or visit Fort Atkinson.
- **Service Clubs and Civic Organizations:** The City has various service clubs and civic organizations comprised of citizens interested in maintaining the City's small-town character and quality of life.
- **Historic downtown shopping district:** The City's historic Main Street offers a variety of unique retailers, including furniture stores, art stores, jewelry stores, florists, antique stores, and clothes stores.
- **Fort Replica:** The replica of the original fort from which the City derived its name is located in Rock River Park. It is the site of the City's annual Memorial Day event called the Buckskinner's Rendezvous, which involves a reenactment of 1830's fur trading, music, food, and knife and ax throwing competitions.
- **Riverwalk:** This recently constructed downtown attraction provides a vibrant public gathering space along the banks of the Rock River, and is the envy of many nearby communities. The Riverwalk offers unique dining opportunities, an excellent place to walk, jog, or relax, and, for the more adventurous, canoe or kayak.
- **Glacial River Trail:** This trail extends from the south side of Fort Atkinson to the Jefferson/Rock County line.

D. Cultural Resource Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Preserve, enhance, and promote the City's unique character and cultural and historical assets.

Objectives:

1. Preserve unique historic and archaeological sites within the City's planning area.
2. Preserve the character of Fort Atkinson's historic downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Promote the City's unique cultural assets as a source of community pride and as attractions.

Policies:

1. Promote the restoration and rehabilitation of historic buildings where possible, in order to enhance the viable economic use of these structures, particularly in and around the Downtown.
2. Work with local historic preservation organizations and property owners to protect historic and cultural resources that contribute to the City's character.
3. Ensure that new development in the downtown is compatible with the historic context and the form, height, and setbacks of existing buildings.
4. Work with the Chamber of Commerce, Hoard Historical Museum, and other local groups and organizations to plan and support local festivals, fairs, markets, and other events that celebrate the City's heritage and culture.
5. Support and promote the Fort Atkinson Public Library and the Hoard Historical Museum as important learning centers and community assets.
6. Enhance Fort Atkinson as a regional tourist attraction; including supporting uses, businesses, and events that advance Fort Atkinson as a "2nd Night" tourist destination and providing and maintaining a community wayfinding signage system.
7. Support and maintain installations of public art in key places within the community.

E. Cultural Resource Programs and Recommendations

Support Current and New Events and Attractions

The City currently hosts many such events, including the Mary Hoard Art Show, the Foster House Herb Garden Gathering, and Bucksinner's Rendezvous. The City has an opportunity to bolster the community's pride, cohesiveness, and sense of place by supporting these and additional local events and programs that celebrate the history, culture, and values of City residents. The City will work in conjunction with the School District, the Chamber of Commerce, the Hoard Historical Museum, Fireside Dinner Theater, and community groups on such efforts.

Some additional ideas to be explored include outdoor theater productions, in conjunction with the Fireside Dinner Theater and/or the Council for the Performing Arts. A potential site would be Bicentennial Park, with a "Theater on the Rock" theme. Such summer productions would draw people from around the region. Also, as discussed in the Agricultural Resources section of this chapter, hosting a farmers market in downtown Fort Atkinson would create an attraction for residents of the City and the surrounding area. In addition to food, the market could also sell work from local artists and craftsmen.

The City should also consider how such events can be used to further market Fort Atkinson as a “2nd Night” regional entertainment destination, in combination with the other strategies outlined in the Economic Development chapter.

Preserve Historically and Culturally Significant Buildings

The City will continue to coordinate with the Fort Atkinson Historic Preservation Commission and affected property owners to clearly mark existing buildings and sites that are listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, and to nominate other buildings sites that may be appropriate for historical designation.

The Historic Preservation Commission will also educate property owners on resources available to assist with historically-sensitive remodeling projects, including the following:

- Property owners can qualify for a 20% federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC) to rehabilitate their historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential properties. Preservation tax incentives are available for buildings that the Secretary of Interior has listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In Wisconsin, owners of historic properties can claim an additional 5% ITC from the State against the approved costs of the rehabilitation of their building. All work must comply with federal guidelines established in the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Historic Building Rehabilitation.
- At the state level, another tax relief program provides a 25% Wisconsin ITC for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied structures that either contribute to a National Register-listed historic district or that are individually listed—or eligible for listing—with the National or State Register. To qualify, rehabilitation expenditures must exceed \$10,000 and the State Historical Society must certify that the work is compatible with the historic character of the building. All applications must be made to the State’s Division of Historic Preservation, where required forms and additional information can be obtained.
- Historic property owners can apply for grant funding from the Wisconsin Humanities Council’s Historic Preservation grant program. The program provides grants for projects that enhance the appreciation of important historic buildings or decorative art works. Preference is given to significant preservation projects in small towns with populations less than 30,000. All applications must be made to the Wisconsin Humanities Council, where additional information can be obtained.

Preserve and Enhance the Character of Downtown Fort Atkinson

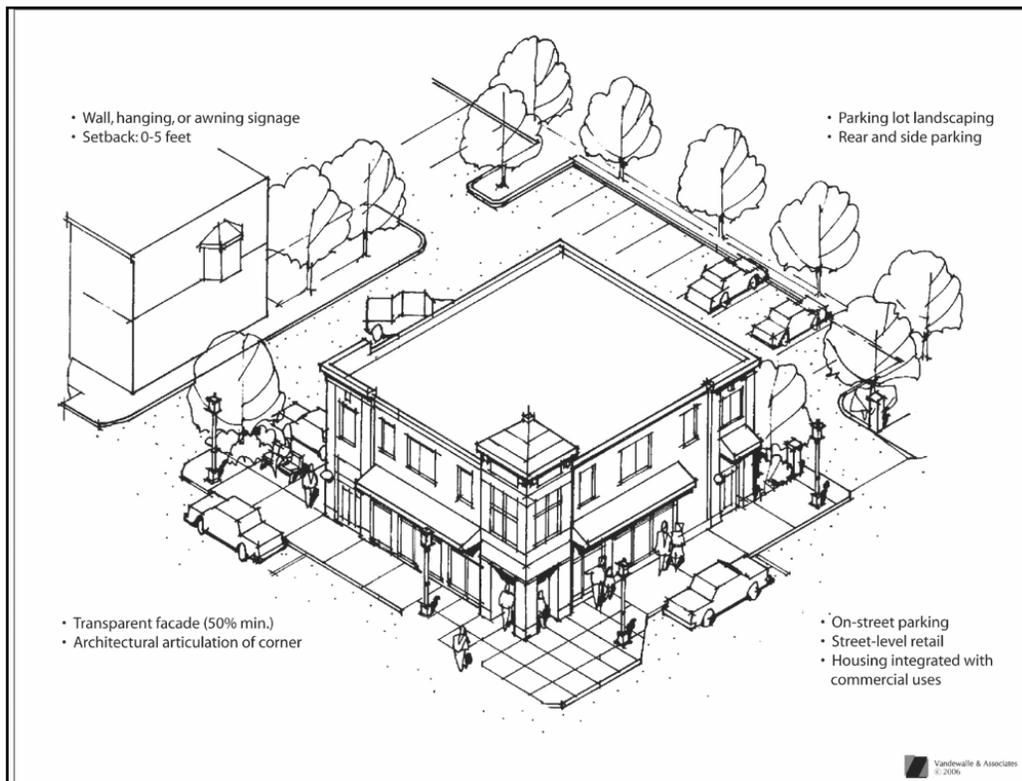
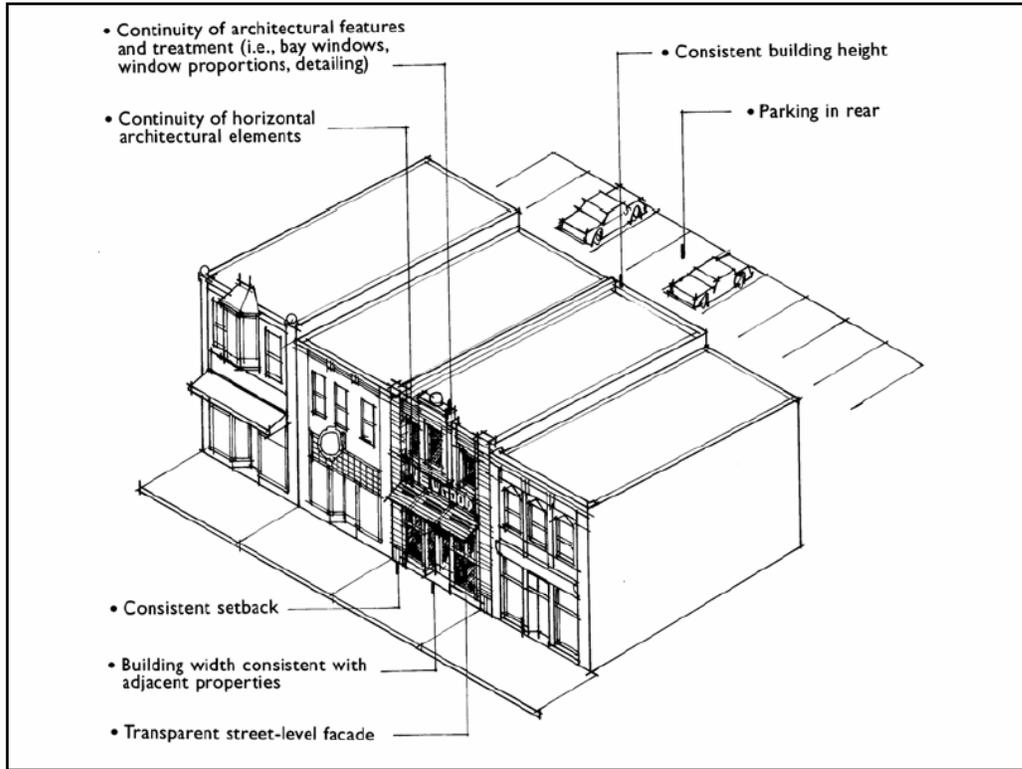
The City intends to utilize downtown area design standards when considering new downtown construction, remodeling, and demolition proposals, incorporating basic design standards in its zoning ordinance. While perhaps not every old building will be retained, infill, redevelopment, and rehabilitation projects in the downtown should maintain the character and image of this area of the City. This applies to buildings and sites that are internal to the 19th century cluster of historic commercial buildings in the heart of the downtown. It also applies to sites along the periphery of the downtown, where redevelopment may be the most appropriate future. The “Main Street” pedestrian character should be included and extended through such projects.

Figure 5.1 illustrates some basic downtown area design standards. The City intends to utilize these in zoning approvals, and will consider including a basic set of downtown design standards in its zoning ordinance.

The City will also promote a variety of downtown housing options, such as those shown in Figure 5.1, to encourage 24-hour activity in the downtown.

The Economic Development chapter contains more ideas on promoting the further success of the downtown.

Figure 5.1: Model Downtown Design Guidelines



Maintain Fort Atkinson's Unique Community Character

“Community Character” is a term often used to describe the way a community looks, feels, and functions. As Fort Atkinson continues to grow, the community will be challenged to maintain and enhance its character. The good news is that many community character objectives can be pursued without raising taxes or spending a lot of money. Rather, by enforcing regulations and standards that specifically address the aesthetic components of development, such as architecture and building materials, the thoughtful integration of open and gathering spaces, and the preservation of attractive community entryways and historic and culturally significant features, the City can do a lot to ensure that new development and redevelopment projects have a positive impact on the way the community looks and feels to residents and visitors.

Paying attention to and preserving the characteristics that make small cities like Fort Atkinson such desirable places to live will help the City better protect and build upon its existing assets. The City of Fort Atkinson will strive to enhance and maintain the following characteristics:

- Development that is designed for people and intended to maximize human interaction, such as through providing gathering places, a walkable environment, buildings and sites oriented to people over cars, and new neighborhoods based on “Traditional Neighborhood Design” principles, mimicking the character of the City’s existing central neighborhoods (see description of this concept in the Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter);
- A City oriented around a distinguishable downtown area, which functions as the focal point or activity hub of the community;
- New development that is compact and mixes uses to maintain comfortable walking and biking to key destinations (e.g., the downtown, parks, schools, Planned Mixed Use areas);
- An overall mix of land uses that allows residents to meet daily needs in the community, minimizing their need to drive long distances to find basic goods and services;
- Development that is balanced: commercial/residential balance, open space/development balance, balance of different housing types to meet different people’s needs;
- Land uses that are blended together in a compatible manner, with mixed use buildings encouraged in appropriate areas;
- A uniform public signage theme throughout the City, with signs constructed of appropriate materials;
- A “hard-edge” between city and countryside, and a focus on the preservation of open space and agricultural lands in the area.

Chapter Six: Land Use

This chapter is intended to guide land use decision making in and around the City. Land use planning allows the City to guide development and redevelopment in a manner that promotes economic health, maintains community character, and protects sensitive environmental features. This chapter features a map showing recommended future land uses, and policies guiding development decisions within each of these mapped areas.

A. Land Use Map Categories

The Existing Land Use map (Map 6) and the Future Land Use maps (Maps 7 and 8) depict the land use categories listed below. On the Existing Land Use map, these categories indicate how land was being used at the time this *Plan* was written. On the Future Land Use maps, these categories indicate the City's desired future uses. Not all of land use categories listed below are represented on all three maps.

- **Agriculture/Rural:** Agricultural uses, farmsteads, and rural housing with low non-farm (housing) development densities in line with Jefferson County's farmland preservation policies;
- **Vacant:** Open lands and vacant parcels, typically not being farmed and typically in the City limits;
- **Single Family Residential—Exurban:** Single-family detached residential development served by individual on-site wastewater treatment (septic) systems, usually outside the City limits;
- **Single Family Residential—Urban:** Single-family detached residential development served by a public sanitary sewer system, usually within current or planned future City limits;
- **Two Family/Townhouse Residential:** Two-family and attached single-family residential development (duplexes, town homes, two-flats);
- **Mixed Residential:** A variety of residential units, including apartment complexes, garden condominiums, townhouses, manufactured and mobile homes, senior housing, and some single and two-family residences;
- **Downtown:** Pedestrian-oriented commercial, office, community facility, and residential uses in Fort Atkinson's historic downtown, usually with on-street parking and minimal building setbacks;
- **Neighborhood Commercial:** Small-scale, neighborhood supporting retail, service, and office uses that preserve and blend with surrounding residential character through appropriate building scale, building appearance, landscaping, and signs. Neighborhood Commercial uses typically rely less on automobile traffic than Community Commercial land uses, and focus more directly on serving the surrounding neighborhood;

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Promote compact, mixed use development to enhance community interaction, preserve land, and decrease infrastructure and service costs.
- Promote the redevelopment of key sites around the community, particularly around Janesville Avenue and the downtown.
- Recognize that City expansion is limited by natural areas and existing development, and make the most out of remaining development corridors (i.e., northwest, southwest).
- Use the City's Future Land Use map and related policies when making day-to-day development decisions, like rezonings, site plans, annexations.
- When zoning and subdivision ordinances are updated, they should implement the recommendations in this *Plan*.

- **Community Commercial:** Indoor commercial, office, community facilities, and controlled outdoor display land uses intended to serve the entire community and larger in scale than neighborhood commercial uses;
- **Planned Neighborhood:** A carefully planned mix of primarily single-family residential development, including some two-family, mixed residential, and neighborhood business uses consistent with the residential character of the area and retaining the City's existing balance of residential types. Includes unique neighborhoods designed using the principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design, described more fully in the Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter;
- **Planned Mixed Use:** A carefully designed blend of commercial, office, mixed residential, and/or community facility land uses, usually as part of a Planned Unit Development. Mixed use areas are intended to be vibrant urban places that also function as community gathering spots;
- **General Industrial:** Indoor manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and office uses, with outdoor storage areas, and usually with moderate attention to building design, landscaping and signage;
- **Light Industrial/Business Park:** High-quality indoor manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, and office uses in a industrial or business park setting, usually with generous landscaping, screened storage areas, modest lighting, and limited signage;
- **Community Facilities:** Larger-scale public buildings, hospitals, power substations, schools, churches, and special-care facilities, and similar public and quasi-public uses. Smaller community facilities are often located on lands placed in other land use categories;
- **Parks, Environmental Corridor, and Farm Preserve:** Includes publicly-owned parks devoted to playgrounds, play fields, play courts, trails, picnic areas, and related active recreational activities, as well as generally continuous open space systems comprised of sensitive natural resources and/or characterized by limitations for development such as floodplains, wetlands, slopes of 12 percent or greater, wildlife areas, and riparian buffers. Also includes publicly-owned lands that have been preserved for their environmental significance or sensitivity or for flood protection and stormwater management, and planned buffers between otherwise incompatible land uses. On the Future Land Use Map, this also includes all lands in the Jones Dairy Farm, west of the City. On the Existing Land Use map, only publicly owned park and open lands are mapped in this category and Jones Farm is shown in the agriculture/rural category;
- **Long Range Urban Growth Area:** This overlay future land use category defines areas around the periphery of the City that may be appropriate for long-term urban (City) development beyond the 20-year planning period;
- **Surface Water:** Lakes, rivers and perennial streams;
- **Rights-of-Way:** Publicly-owned land for transportation uses, including roads, highways, and railroads.

B. Existing Land Use Pattern

An accurate depiction of the City's *existing* land use pattern is the first step in planning for a desired *future* land use pattern. The City of Fort Atkinson encompasses approximately 5.8 square miles. Figure 6.1 summarizes the existing acreage allocated to each of the various land use categories in the City limits. The Existing Land Use pattern is depicted on Map 6.

Figure 6.1: Existing Land Use Totals, City of Fort Atkinson, 2007

Land Use	Acres*	Percent
Agriculture/Rural	146	3.9%
Vacant	341	9.1%
Single Family Residential--Urban	1,001	26.8%
Two Family/Townhouse Residential	64	1.7%
Mixed Residential	68	1.8%
Downtown	14	0.4%
Neighborhood Commercial	10	0.3%
Community Commercial	235	6.3%
General Industrial	166	4.4%
Light Industrial/Business Park	147	3.9%
Community Facilities	490	13.1%
Parks (not including environmental corridor)	341	9.1%
Surface Water	100	2.7%
Rights-of-Way	604	16.2%
TOTAL	3,727	

Source: GIS Inventory, Vandewalle & Associates, 2007

** Values have been rounded to nearest whole number*

Residential Development

Residential development areas are located throughout the City. Single family residential development comprises nearly 27 percent of land in the City, at an average gross density of roughly 4 homes per acre. When combined, Two Family/Townhouse Residential and Mixed Residential development areas account for an additional 3.5 percent of land in the City. These land uses are generally clustered together at average gross densities of between 6.5 and 10 dwelling units per acre. These developments typically consist of duplexes, townhouses, apartment buildings, and condominiums.

Commercial Development

There are approximately 245 acres in Fort Atkinson used for commercial development (not including commercial uses in the downtown), accounting for approximately 10 percent of the City's land. Commercial land uses are generally located along the City's major roadways, including Madison Avenue, Janesville Avenue, Whitewater Avenue, and in the downtown. Some smaller neighborhood businesses are located in primarily residential areas of the City.

Industrial Development

Industrial uses currently account for nearly 8 percent of the City's land. In 2007, the City had three industrial parks. Two of the industrial parks were generally located in the southwestern portion of the City, and the third industrial park was located in the northern portion of the City.

Other Development

Community facilities such as Fort Memorial Hospital and related Fort HealthCare buildings, churches, schools, municipal facilities, and utilities account for nearly 490 acres (13 percent) of the City's land. These facilities are well distributed throughout the City. In addition, there are another 341 acres of public parkland located in the City, including the Glacial River Trail corridor, but not including recreational lands associated with the school grounds. More detailed information regarding community facilities is located in the Utilities and Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation chapters.

C. Land Development Trends

Figure 6.2 shows the number and type of building permits issued by the City from 1996 to 2006. For this eleven year period, the City issued building permits authorizing a total of 838 housing units, for about 76 new housing units per year. Of this total, only 293 (or 35 percent) were for single family houses, which is low compared to the on-the-ground distribution of housing units. Over this same period, an average of six permits for commercial structures was issued per year.

Figure 6.2: Number of Units for which Building Permits were Issued, 1996-2006

Type of Structure	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Single Family Residential Units	45	43	32	28	22	20	21	24	14	34	10	293
Duplex Housing Units	6	10	16	22	18	14	10	14	32	10	6	158
Multi-Family Housing Units	80	87	36	0	32	64	8	8	31	0	38	387
Commercial Permits	5	1	5	10	9	5	5	5	5	6	10	66

Source: City of Fort Atkinson

Land market trends indicate that property values are increasing in the City. Between 1999 and 2006, the State Department of Revenue reported a 60 percent increase in the total equalized value of all property in the City of Fort Atkinson (see Figure 6.3). This rate of increase is comparable to the Town of Koshkonong and to most nearby cities. The Village of Johnson Creek, located north of Fort Atkinson, experienced a 224 percent increase in value. This is likely based on high rates of non-residential development in Johnson Creek, which has emerged as the County's regional shopping destination.

Figure 6.3: Total Equalized Values

	1999	2006	Percent Change 1999-2006
City of Fort Atkinson	\$537,797,500	\$858,736,000	60%
Town of Jefferson	\$124,307,800	\$170,635,900	37%
Town of Koshkonong	\$207,768,600	\$357,343,800	72%
Village of Johnson Creek	\$87,924,100	\$284,853,600	224%
City of Jefferson	\$308,464,500	\$463,513,900	50%
City of Lake Mills	\$247,841,300	\$428,067,300	73%
City of Waterloo	\$134,794,800	\$200,796,300	49%
City of Watertown	\$848,771,800	\$1,397,326,600	65%
City of Whitewater	\$362,485,500	\$574,940,700	59%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, 2007

D. Existing Land Use Conflicts

Land use conflicts are present in areas of the City where residential neighborhoods abut industrial properties, primarily around the Janesville Avenue corridor and in the northeastern portion of the City west of High Street. Through future land use recommendations presented in this *Plan*, the City seeks to minimize these types of conflicts through thoughtful planning, buffering, and strategic redevelopment.

Map 6: Existing Land Use

E. Land Use Demand Projections

Wisconsin Statutes require comprehensive plans to include projections, in five-year increments, for proposed future demand for future residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses.

As described in the Issues and Opportunities chapter, for the purposes of this *Plan*, population projections over the next twenty years are based on the assumption that the City's average annual percentage change from 1990 to 2005 (1.17%) will continue through 2030. Figure 6.4 indicates that these assumptions yield a 2030 population of 16,232.

Figure 6.4: City Population Projection Based on the 1990 to 2005 Growth Trend

	2000 ¹	2005 ²	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Compounded Projection ³	11,621	12,151	12,876	13,643	14,457	15,319	16,232

¹U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

²Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2005 population estimate

³Extrapolated based on the average annual percentage change from 1990-2005 (1.17%)

The analysis for land use demand is based on the following projections:

1. **2005 to 2030 population change:** The City's 2030 population is projected to be 16,232, or an additional 4,081 people from 2005.
2. **Projected number of new households in 2030:** Based on a projected average household size of 2.3 people per household by 2030, there would be 1,973 additional households in the City by the year 2030.
3. **Residential density:** Assumed at 4.5 dwelling units per acre, based on historic City density patterns.
4. **Non-residential development ratio:** It was assumed that the ratio of residential to non-residential development will be 54 percent residential to 46 percent non-residential.
5. **Flexibility factor:** Because the market for land is not only driven by demand, but is also dictated by the motivations and desires of land owners and developers, it is important to factor in an allowance for uncertainty. In other words, a given parcel of land may not be available for development when the market is ripe for development. Therefore, incorporating a flexibility factor into land use demand projections ensures that the supply of areas designated as appropriate for development will accommodate future demand. The land use demand projection for this *Plan* was made with a 100% flexibility factor (i.e. total land area needs yielded from the previous steps were doubled).

Figure 6.5: Land Demand Projections in Five Year Increments, 2005-2030

	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	Total 2005-2030
Projected number of new residents	725	767	814	862	913	4,081
Projected number of new housing units	342	365	390	416	447	1,959
Total residential acreage demand	76	81	87	92	99	435
Total new non-residential acreage demand	65	69	73	79	85	371
Total preliminary acreage demand*	210	224	239	256	275	1,204
Total acreage demand including flexibility factor	420	448	478	512	549	2,407

* Sum of residential and non-residential acreage plus an additional 33% to account for roads, sidewalks, parks, and other spaces not already accounted for.

F. Land Supply

Based on the projected population and including the flexibility factor, land demand for new land uses between 2005 and 2030 will be roughly 2,407 acres. The supply of land available for development includes areas of the City that have been planned or approved for development but are not yet built out, vacant areas within the developed portion of the City, lands currently within City limits but not yet developed, land available for redevelopment, and undeveloped land outside the City limits without development constraints.

Per Figure 6.1, the City has roughly 487 acres of undeveloped land within its 2008 municipal boundaries. Therefore, even after taking into consideration lands available for redevelopment and those areas planned for development but not yet developed, it is anticipated that the City will need to annex land in order to accommodate its future growth over the next 20 to 25 years.

Over the planning period, agricultural lands located within the City's planning area are projected to decrease as these areas become developed. Since much of the City's future development will occur on agricultural lands, it is reasonable to project that with the exception of the areas located in environmental corridor and those areas located in the Jones Farm Preserve, agricultural land in within the City's planning area will decrease by roughly 1,200 acres (or 240 acres every five year period).

It is projected that industrial development will comprise roughly 60 percent of future non-residential development projected in Figure 6.5. This amounts to a projected 45 acres of new industrial development every five-year period, not including the flexibility factor. It is projected that commercial development will comprise an additional 30 percent of future non-residential development, or roughly 22 acres every five-years, not including the flexibility factor. The remaining 10 percent is projected to be devoted to new and expanded community facility uses.

G. Future Land Use Goals, Objectives, and General Policies

Goal:

Promote a future land use pattern that is in harmony with the natural landscape, helps maintain property values, preserves neighborhood integrity, encourages economic development, minimizes land use conflicts, and enhances community sustainability.

Objectives:

1. Promote compact, mixed use development and redevelopment to preserve open space, facilitate interaction, advance economic growth, and advance energy efficiency.
2. Protect the City's long-term growth interests during and beyond the planning period.
3. Plan for an adequate amount of land to accommodate a variety of land uses, including residential, industrial, commercial, and community facilities.
4. Minimize land use conflicts in existing and newly developed areas of the City.

Policies:

1. Follow the land use recommendations that are mapped and described in this *Plan* (Maps 7 and 8) when reviewing new rezoning requests and making detailed land use decisions.
2. Maintain a hard edge between farmland and planned urban development areas, as opposed to permitting scattered and leap frog development patterns.
3. Require that all new development in the City connect to sanitary sewer and public water systems; discourage development outside of the current City limits until sewer and water services are available.
4. Guide new development to areas adjacent to existing development and where logical extensions to streets, sewer lines, and water lines may occur.
5. Use extraterritorial land division review and other techniques to direct intensive new development, such as subdivisions, commercial development, and industrial development to the City.
6. Promote mixed use redevelopment and infill in key areas of the City, such as in and adjacent to the downtown, and along Janesville Avenue, Madison Avenue, High Street, and Whitewater Avenue.
7. Preserve and enhance the historic character of the downtown and the riverfront by encouraging compatible new development and redevelopment.
8. Direct new residential development into planned neighborhoods (as opposed to isolated subdivisions), with a focus on creating high-quality, human-scaled, safe, and interconnected places.
9. Promote compact neighborhoods and smaller lots as strategies to better manage the rate of community expansion, preserve farmland, and protect natural resources.
10. Plan for new neighborhoods that feature a variety of housing, transportation, shopping, service, and recreational options, organized around gathering places and interconnected with the rest of the City.
11. Disperse higher-density residential development throughout the City, rather than creating large concentrations of this type of development in just a few areas.
12. Promote the stabilization and expansion of the economic base by identifying adequate areas in marketable locations for commercial and employment-based land uses.

13. Allow for the future growth of the Fort Healthcare facilities while preserving the character and integrity of the surrounding neighborhood.
14. Ensure appropriate transitions between potentially incompatible land uses. Wherever possible, avoid locating potentially conflicting land uses close to one another, and encourage steps that reduce incompatibilities in existing situations. Where necessary, buffer incompatible land uses through vegetation, fencing, open space, or other techniques.
15. When zoning and subdivision ordinances are updated, they should reflect the City's land use and community character goals, minimize potential land use conflicts, adequately protect water quality and other natural resources, preserve the City's growth interests, and include high-quality standards for building, site, landscape, signage, and lighting design in new development projects.

H. Land Use Recommendations, Specific Policies and Programs

This section of the *Plan* is intended to guide land use and development in the City over the next 20 to 25 years. Maps 7 and 8, the Future Land Use maps, are the centerpiece of this chapter and illustrate the *Plan's* land use direction. They are based on an analysis of a variety of factors, including overall development trends, location and availability of vacant land in the City, location of areas logical for future development based on existing development, and environmental constraints. The Future Land Use maps and the following detailed recommendations also reflect citizen input during the planning process, and the *Plan's* overall vision, presented in the Issues and Opportunities chapter.

The Future Land Use maps and related policies described below should be used as a basis to update the City's regulatory land use tools, such as the zoning map. They should also be used as a basis for all public and private sector development decisions. These include annexations, rezonings, conditional use permits, subdivisions, extension of municipal utilities, and other public or private investments. Changes in land use to implement the recommendations of this *Plan* will generally be initiated by property owners and private developers. In other words, this *Plan* does not automatically compel property owners to change the use of their land.

Although the following land use recommendations cover a large geographic area, it is not assumed that all areas depicted on the Future Land Use maps will develop during the next 20-25 years. Also, not all land shown for development on Maps 7 and 8 will be appropriate for rezoning or other land use approvals immediately following adoption of this *Plan*. Rather, the Future Land Use maps shows those areas in and around the City that are the most logical development locations for new City growth, regardless of the absolute timing of development. Given service demands and other factors, careful consideration to the amount, mix, and timing of development to keep it manageable and sustainable is essential. The City advocates the phased development of land that focuses growth in areas and types that advance the vision of the community and that can most efficiently be served by transportation, utilities, public services, and other community facilities.

Wisconsin Statutes specifically allow cities to prepare plans for lands both inside and outside their municipal boundaries—up to the edges of their extraterritorial jurisdictions. To effectively manage growth, this *Plan* identifies desirable land use patterns within the existing City limits and in unincorporated areas around the City, with the recognition that the City's growth will be facilitated or impeded by the patterns of growth and preservation in the adjacent unincorporated area. As a result, implementing many of the land use recommendations of this *Plan* will benefit from intergovernmental coordination and cooperation. Specific strategies and opportunities for cooperation are described in Chapter Nine: Intergovernmental Cooperation. The City may also take unilateral action as allowed by law to attempt to carry out its land use vision.

Each of the future land use categories shown on Maps 7 and 8 is described below. Each land use category description summarizes where that type of land use should be promoted, the appropriate zoning districts to implement that category, policies related to future development in areas

designated by that category, and overall approaches for achieving the City's overall vision for the future.

Residential Land Use Categories

1. Single Family Residential—Urban

Description: This future land use category is intended for primarily single family detached residential development, served by public sanitary sewer. Small community facility uses—such as parks, schools, and churches—may also be built on lands within this category. As shown on Maps 7 and 8, future Single Family Residential—Urban development areas are shown mainly in and around areas in which this land use existed at the time this *Plan* was written, and for some areas in the southern portion of the City. Single Family Residential uses are also a key component of Planned Neighborhoods described below.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:



Example of Single-Family Residential—Urban development

- a. When considering future rezoning requests, the existing City zoning district most appropriate to implement this future land use category includes the R-1 Single-Family Residential District. Other future zoning options may be available if the zoning ordinance is updated.
- b. Require connection to sanitary sewer and water service for all new development in Single Family Residential--Urban areas.
- c. Encourage the construction of narrower streets in new neighborhoods, where possible, and require sidewalks on both sides of all streets, excluding cul-de-sacs. This increases the safety of neighborhoods for pedestrians and children (also see the Transportation chapter).
- d. Minimize the potential for incompatible land uses (e.g. high traffic generators, noisy users, etc.) within or next to Single Family Residential--Urban areas. Where such uses do occur in close proximity, the City will encourage the use of landscape buffers to mitigate the impacts such land uses could have on residential neighborhoods.
- e. Continue to enforce property maintenance codes and single family zoning, promote housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs, and target public improvement investments (e.g., sidewalks, streetlights) to maintain the quality of the City's existing single family residential neighborhoods.
- f. Continue to thoughtfully locate community facilities such as roads, paths, parks, sidewalks, schools, and churches in order to provide convenient access to residential areas.
- g. Plan for interconnected road and open space networks in new residential areas and between individual subdivisions.

- h. Provide connections between new neighborhoods, parks, schools, the downtown, and the City's multi-use trail system.
- i. Encourage new development in Single-Family Residential–Urban areas generally at densities of 4 to 6 homes per acre.

2. Single Family Residential—Exurban

Description: This future land use category is intended to accommodate single family detached residential development served by individual on-site wastewater treatment (septic) systems. This type of development is shown on Maps 7 and 8 south of Hackbarth Road in the Town of Koshkonong and in a small area west of the Rock River and south of Highway 106.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:



Example of Single Family Residential—Exurban development

- a. Plan for interconnected roads in new residential areas and between individual subdivisions, and link town to City roads wherever practical.
- b. Provide opportunities for linkages between urban and rural open space, park, and multi-use trail systems, and ensure that stormwater runoff does not impair lands in the City or waterways.
- c. Encourage a maximum buildable lot size of two acres to minimize the amount of land needed for housing.
- d. Assure that new development in these areas will not impede the logical future extension of municipal utilities or long-term City growth.
- e. Except for the areas indicated for this type of use in the Town of Koshkonong, the City intends to exercise its extraterritorial land division review authority to ensure that Single Family Residential—Exurban development is not permitted within areas planned for future City growth, except at those densities compatible with the Jefferson County farmland preservation policies that existed as of the date of adoption of this *Plan* (see Figure 6.6). See the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter for a more complete discussion of the City's land division policies for areas within its 3-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction.

3. Two Family/Townhouse Residential

Description: This future land use category is intended to allow for groupings of two-family and attached single-family residential uses with individual entries—such as duplexes, town homes, and two-flats—all served by sanitary sewer. Small community facility uses—such as parks, schools, and churches—may also be built on lands within this category. Two Family/Townhouse Residential land uses are shown on Maps 7 and 8 mainly in neighborhoods surrounding the downtown and in areas where these types of development existed at the time this *Plan* was written. Two Family/Townhouse Residential uses are also a component of Planned Neighborhoods described below.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. When considering future rezoning requests, the existing City zoning district most appropriate to implement this future land use category include the R-2 Two-Family Residential District. Other future zoning options may be available if the zoning ordinance is updated.
- b. Require connection to sanitary sewer and water service for all new development in the Two-Family/Townhouse Residential areas.
- c. Encourage the construction of narrower streets in new neighborhoods, where possible, and require sidewalks on both sides of all streets, excluding cul-de-sacs. This increases the safety of neighborhoods for pedestrians and children (also see the Transportation chapter).
- d. Minimize the potential for incompatible land uses (e.g. high traffic generators, noisy users, etc.) within or next to Two-Family/Townhouse Residential areas. Where such uses do occur in close proximity, the City will encourage the use of landscape buffers to mitigate the impacts such land uses could have on residential neighborhoods.
- e. Continue to enforce property maintenance codes to maintain the quality of the City's existing residential neighborhoods.
- f. Continue to thoughtfully locate community facilities such as roads, paths, parks, sidewalks, schools, and churches in order to provide convenient access to residential areas.
- g. Plan for interconnected road and open space networks in new residential areas and between individual subdivisions.



Example of Two-Family/Townhouse Residential



Example of Mixed Residential development

4. Mixed Residential

Description: This future land use category is intended to accommodate a variety of residential units, including apartment complexes, garden condominiums, townhouses, and some single and two-family residences, all served by the sanitary sewer. Small community

facility uses—such as parks, schools, and churches—may also be built on lands within this category. Mixed Residential land use is shown on Maps 7 and 8 in areas throughout the City where these types of development existed at the time this *Plan* was prepared. Mixed Residential uses are also a component of Planned Neighborhoods described below.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. When considering future rezoning requests, the existing City zoning district most appropriate to implement this future land use category is the R-3 Multi-Family Residential and Office District.
- b. When updating the zoning ordinance, the City will consider including a multi-family residential zoning district that does not allow business and office uses as a conditional use. This will help ensure that multi-family residential developments can be better integrated into primarily residential neighborhoods in areas that may not be appropriate for business or office uses. Although a conditional use permit is required for business uses under the existing R-3 Multi-Family Residential and Office District, it is typically much easier for an applicant to be awarded a conditional use permit than it is to successfully petition the City for a rezoning.
- c. Disperse small areas of future Mixed Residential development throughout the City, rather than creating large concentrations of this type of development in a just a few areas.
- d. Encourage multiple family building sizes of between 4 and 16 units each. In any case, the size of the building should be in scale with the surrounding neighborhood.
- e. Multi-family residential projects appropriate for the City's Mixed Residential category should meet the minimum design standards presented in the Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter of this *Plan*, some of which should be codified in a zoning ordinance update.
- f. Require by ordinance that all proposed multiple family residential projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan, and signage plan prior to development approval.
- g. Require that new housing developments include a strong program for maintaining the quality, value, and safety of the development over time as part of the initial development approval.

5. Planned Neighborhood

Description: The Planned Neighborhood future land use category is intended to provide for a variety of housing choices and a carefully planned mix non-residential uses consistent with the mainly residential character of the area. Planned Neighborhoods are a collection of different future land use categories described elsewhere in this section, often mixed on the same lots and sometimes in the same buildings. Planned Neighborhoods should be carefully designed as an integrated, interconnected mix of the use categories. Overall, the composition, appearance, and pattern of development should promote neighborhoods that instill a sense of community with their design.

Specifically, the Planned Neighborhood future land use category includes a mix of Single Family Residential—Urban, Two-Family/Townhouse Residential, Mixed Residential (including senior housing), Neighborhood Commercial, Community Facilities, and Parks and Environmental Corridor Land Uses. Maintaining a minimum percentage of Single Family Residential—Urban uses will have the effect of dispersing higher density development throughout the community. Appropriate non-residential uses include neighborhood-oriented shopping opportunities, such as a small market, barber shop, bakery, or pharmacy; or smaller employment opportunities and educational facilities for neighborhood residents.

Maps 7 and 8 illustrate the northwest periphery of the City as a larger future Planned Neighborhood area, with smaller areas planned in other locations. These are indicated by the yellow and brown cross-hatching on the maps.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. Accommodate a mixture of housing types in each Planned Neighborhood area, with single-family detached residences comprising a minimum of 65 percent of all housing units.
- b. Establish a minimum gross density standard of 5 dwelling units per acre for Planned Neighborhood areas, with 4 to 6 dwelling units per acre for single-family components of these neighborhoods.

- c. The existing City zoning districts most appropriate to implement this future land use category include the R-1 Single-Family Residential District, R-2 Two-Family Residential District, R-3 Multi-Family Residential and Office District, C-4 Restricted Commercial District, or PDD Planned Development District. However, none are a perfect match.



Example of a Planned Neighborhood

- d. Avoid rezoning or approving land division of any area designated for Planned Neighborhood development until public sanitary sewer and water service is available, the land is within City limits, and a specific development proposal is offered.
- e. In advance of subdivision platting, prepare or require detailed neighborhood plans and adopt these plans as components of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Such plans should specify the desirable mix of land uses, the density of development, street layouts, and the amount and general location of open space areas. See the Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter for a description of detailed neighborhood plans.
- f. Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design principles for new neighborhood development and adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Design zoning district option. All communities of over 12,500 persons must have such a zoning district under Wisconsin Statutes. The Housing and Neighborhood Development chapter includes a detailed description of the Traditional Neighborhood concept.
- g. Encourage the development of an adequate supply of high-quality senior housing options in Planned Neighborhoods.
- h. For duplex, townhouse, and multi-family residential development in these areas, also follow the policies listed for Mixed Residential areas in this chapter.
- i. For commercial and office developments in these areas, also follow the policies for Neighborhood Commercial areas in this chapter.

Non-Residential Land Use Categories

1. Community Commercial

Description: This future land use category includes indoor commercial, office, community facilities, and controlled outdoor display land uses intended to serve the entire community. The land uses, development sites, and traffic and other impacts are typically larger in scale than for Neighborhood Commercial uses listed below. Community Commercial use areas are depicted on Maps 7 and 8 along major corridors such as Janesville Avenue, Madison Avenue, Whitewater Avenue, and adjacent to the downtown.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. When considering future rezoning requests, the existing City zoning districts most appropriate to implement this future land use category include the C-1 Service Business District and the C-3 General Commercial District.
- b. Control access off of collector streets by limiting their number of and ensuring adequate spacing between access points. Promote cross-access between individual developments, as this will help avoid future congestion and traffic safety problems.
- c. Avoid extensive, uninterrupted areas of strip commercial development in future commercial areas by interspersing office, community facilities, and appropriate residential land uses.
- d. Continue to require that all proposed commercial projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan, landscaping plan, and signage plan prior to development approval.
- e. Reserve high-visibility areas—such as major intersections, community entryways, and key corridors—for high-quality, attractive commercial development.
- f. Emphasize the commercial redevelopment and revitalization of commercial/industrial properties along Janesville Avenue and Whitewater Avenue. Efforts should be made to enhance the visual image of these important community corridors.
- g. Require the use of high-quality building materials, attractive lighting, and signage that is compatible with other areas of the City. Recommended design standards for commercial development projects are provided in the Economic Development chapter, and should be included as part of the zoning ordinance.
- h. Ensure that future Community Commercial development is adequately buffered from residential development areas, but also provides appropriate pedestrian and road connections.
- i. When reviewing proposals for Community Commercial development, carefully consider pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, including the installation of bike racks, the provision of pedestrian amenities such as sidewalk connections, reoriented parking lots, and covered entryways, and the potential for rear entryways where the development backs up to a neighborhood.
- j. Make sure that new buildings and redevelopment projects near the edge of the downtown extend the pedestrian character and form of the downtown area. For example, attempt to site new buildings in this



Example of Community Commercial development

area close to public streets with parking on street and to the sides and rear of buildings, and ensure that there are sidewalks serving the site.

- k. Consider a zoning ordinance amendment that would establish limits on, and/or greater levels of review (e.g. conditional use permits) and increased performance standards for, commercial land uses sometimes considered undesirable in mixed use or neighborhood settings.

2. Neighborhood Commercial

Description: The Neighborhood Commercial future land use category is intended for small-scale, neighborhood supporting retail, service, and office uses that preserve and blend with surrounding residential character through appropriate building scale, building appearance, landscaping, and signs. Neighborhood Commercial uses are typically smaller in scale and have fewer traffic and other impacts than Community Commercial land uses, and typically are more focused to serve the surrounding neighborhood. As depicted on Maps 7 and 8, Neighborhood Commercial uses are generally planned for smaller areas adjacent to existing and future residential neighborhoods.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. Encourage neighborhood-oriented retail and service businesses and recreational uses in areas that will conveniently serve existing and new City neighborhoods.
- b. The existing City zoning district that is most appropriate to implement this future land use category is the C-4 Restricted Business District. However, the City will consider updating its zoning ordinance to include a neighborhood business district that would allow for small, neighborhood-oriented business uses to be integrated into primarily residential areas (and even allow for a mix of housing and shopping in the same lot and building), without jeopardizing the residential character of these neighborhoods.
- c. Require that all proposed Neighborhood Commercial projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan, and signage plan prior to development approval.
- d. In Neighborhood Commercial areas, require the use of high-quality building materials and designs that are compatible with residential areas, including residential roof materials such as shingles; minimum window covering standards; calm, low-key, and attractive lighting and signage; and exterior materials such as wood, cement board, vinyl siding, brick, decorative block, stone, and other materials approved by the Plan Commission.
- e. When reviewing proposals for Neighborhood Commercial development, carefully consider pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, including the installation of bike racks, the provision of pedestrian amenities such as sidewalk connections, reoriented parking lots, and covered entryways, and the potential for rear entryways where the development backs up to a neighborhood.



Example of Neighborhood Commercial development

- f. Make sure that new buildings and redevelopment projects near the edge of the downtown extend the pedestrian character and form of the downtown area.

3. Downtown

Description: This future land use category is intended for pedestrian-oriented commercial, office, community facility, and residential uses in Fort Atkinson's historic downtown, with on-street parking and minimal building setbacks.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:



Downtown buildings at the southeast corner of Main Street and the Rock River

- a. Preserve and enhance the character of the downtown by encouraging compatible new development and redevelopment, where appropriate.
 - b. The existing City zoning district that is most appropriate to implement this future land use category is the C-5 Downtown Business District. The City intends to use appropriate design standards to guide the redevelopment and rehabilitation of buildings in the downtown, as well as new buildings, in accordance with the downtown's historic development character.
 - c. Promote the use of first floor spaces for specialty retail, restaurants, and commercial service uses, and upper story spaces for housing and offices.
- Update the zoning ordinance to allow upper-story dwelling units by right in downtown buildings. At the time this *Plan* was written, upper-story dwelling units required a conditional use permit.
- d. Promote the downtown as a commercial, civic, and social center of the community. Encourage commercial uses that are most appropriate to the downtown to locate or remain there, rather than in other commercial districts of the City.
 - e. Work with downtown property owners and businesses to preserve and renovate historically significant buildings (also see the Cultural Resources chapter).
 - f. Use marketing, investment, and incentive strategies to promote and retain specialty retail and dining business and services in the downtown.
 - g. Require the installation of bike racks and pedestrian amenities for new development in and around the downtown (e.g. benches, covered entryways).
 - h. Revisit signage standards for the downtown, within the zoning ordinance, to make sure new and upgraded signs both provide adequate advertising opportunities and support the historic character of the downtown.

4. Light Industrial/Business Park

Description: This future land use category is intended to include high-quality indoor manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, and office uses with generous landscaping, screened storage areas, modest lighting, and limited signage. This future land use category is mapped in the southwest portion and northern portions of the City within the existing business parks, and in certain areas along Janesville Avenue.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. The existing City zoning district that is most appropriate to implement this future land use category is the M-1 Light Industrial District. However, some areas may be appropriately zoned M-2, Heavy Industrial.
- b. Avoid rezoning or approving land division of any area designated for Light Industrial/Business Park development until public sanitary sewer and water service is available, the land is within City limits, and a specific development proposal is offered, or the City approves a business/industrial park layout and/or covenants.
- c. Require that all proposed industrial projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan, and signage plan prior to development approval.
- d. Require the use of high-quality building materials, attractive lighting, and signage that is compatible with other areas of the City. Recommended design standards for industrial development projects are included in the Economic Development chapter.
- e. Encourage the creation of landscaped and bermed buffers (or tree preservation areas) where existing and future industrial use areas abut existing or future residential areas.
- f. Market Light Industrial/Business Park areas for light, indoor manufacturing and assembly, warehousing, and office-related development. Discourage the development of heavy uses that would either place excessive demand on municipal utilities, create a nuisance for nearby neighborhoods, or create environmental hazards.
- g. Identify expansion opportunities for the Robert L. Klement Business Park to accommodate future industrial growth while taking into consideration the proximity of existing and planned housing and sensitive environmental features such as Allen Creek (see Economic Development chapter).
- h. Where planned industrial areas are located close to sensitive natural resources, promote and encourage sustainable building and site design techniques, particularly progressive stormwater management using Best Management Practices.



Example of Light Industrial: 1921 Commerce Parkway, Robert L. Klement Business Park

- i. When reviewing proposals for Light Industrial/Business Park development, carefully consider pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, including the installation of bike racks, and the provision of pedestrian amenities such as sidewalk connections, reoriented parking lots, and covered entryways.

5. General Industrial

Description: This future land use category is intended for manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and office uses, often with outdoor storage areas and usually with moderate attention to building design, landscaping and signage. This land use category is show on Maps 7 and 8 in areas along Janesville Avenue and Jefferson Street.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:



Example of General Industrial development

- a. The existing City zoning districts that are most appropriate to implement this future land use category are M-2 Heavy Industrial District and M-1 Light Industrial District.
- b. As opportunities for reinvestment occur, improve the appearance of building facades and yards exposed to public view.
- c. Require that all proposed General Industrial projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan, and signage plan prior to development approval.

6. Planned Mixed Use

Description: This future land use category includes a mix of commercial and residential uses on public sewer, public water, and other urban services and infrastructure. Planned Mixed Use areas are intended to be vibrant urban places that should function as community focal points and gathering spots. This category is designed to facilitate a carefully designed blend of land uses in the following land use categories described in detail elsewhere in this chapter: Community Commercial, Mixed Residential, Community Facilities, and Parks and Environmental Corridor. This land use category is shown on Maps 7 and 8 in spots along key community corridors such as Janesville Avenue, Whitewater Avenue, and Madison Avenue.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. The existing City zoning district that is most appropriate to implement this future land use category is the PDD



Example of Planned Mixed Use

Planned Development District.

- b. Consider revising the zoning ordinance to allow for increased flexibility in the land uses and development density and intensity allowed in PDD Planned Developments, where appropriate and following Plan Commission and Council review and approval.
- c. Avoid rezoning or approving land division of any area designated for Planned Mixed Use development until public sanitary sewer and water service is available, the land is within City limits, and a specific development proposal is offered.
- d. Grant approvals for projects within this future land use designation only after submittal, public review, and City approval of detailed site, landscaping, signage, lighting, stormwater, erosion control, and utility plans.
- e. Generally adhere to the design guidelines illustrated in the Mixed Use Centers graphic later in this chapter when reviewing proposals for Planned Mixed Use developments.

Mixed Use Centers graphic

Other Land Use Categories

1. Community Facilities

Description: This future land use category is intended to encompass larger-scale public buildings, hospitals, power substations, schools, churches, and special-care facilities, and similar public and quasi-public uses. Some types of smaller community facilities such as churches and parks may be included under other land use categories.

Community Facilities have been shown on Maps 7 and 8 in areas of the City where these uses existed at the time this *Plan* was written.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category:

- a. Require and review detailed site, building, landscape, utility, signage, lighting, and stormwater management plans before approving any new or expanded community facility use.
- b. Ensure that land use decisions and future growth are consistent with the community facility recommendations in the Utilities and Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation chapters of this *Plan* and shown on Map 10.
- c. Continue to work with Fort HealthCare on land use issues in the campus area, promoting the right balance between health care and neighborhood uses in the area, better wayfinding signage, and redevelopment proposals that include two- to four-story redevelopment of existing, aging clinic sites. At the time this *Plan* was being prepared, Fort HealthCare was exploring options for the relocation of its hospital/clinic campus. Possible locations for such a campus have been identified on Map 10: Existing and Planned Community Facilities. Campus development in any of these locations would first require further analysis, community discussion, and development approvals. One of the proposed locations, on the northeast side of the City, would also require an amendment to this *Comprehensive Plan* to re-designate the land from Long Range Urban Growth Area (see description of this land use category below) to a more appropriate, immediate-future land use category.
- d. Reserve future sites for major public facilities by identifying these areas on an Official Map.
- e. Amend this *Plan* as necessary to accommodate future community facility locations.



2. Parks, Environmental Corridor, and Farm Preserve

Description: This future land use category includes existing publicly-owned parks devoted to playgrounds, play fields, play courts, trails, picnic areas, and related active recreational activities, as well as generally continuous open space systems comprised of sensitive natural resources and/or characterized by limitations for development such as floodplains, wetlands, slopes of 12 percent or greater, wildlife areas, and riparian buffers. This category also includes publicly-owned lands that have been preserved for their environmental significance or sensitivity or for flood protection and stormwater management, and in limited cases buffers

between otherwise incompatible land uses. This category also includes lands in the Jones Farm Preserve, located just west of the City limits.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. Generally prohibit new private development in mapped Park and Environmental Corridor areas.
- b. If development is proposed in or near mapped Environmental Corridors, the landowner or developer is responsible for determining the exact boundaries of the Environmental Corridor based on the features that define those areas.
- c. Continue to allow existing agricultural uses (cropping, grazing, or other preexisting agricultural uses) within Park and Environmental Corridor areas.
- d. Revise the subdivision ordinance as necessary to ensure that new residential development dedicates an adequate amount of land for public parks and recreation.
- e. Ensure that all land use decisions take into consideration the park recommendations included in the Parks and Recreation chapter of this *Plan*, including the desired locations of future parks (see also Map 10).
- f. Design future planned neighborhoods around and with access to environmental corridors and public parks without negatively affecting the environmental health of these areas.
- g. Continue to support the long-term preservation and farming of the Jones Farm Preserve.



3. Long Range Urban Growth Areas

Description: This overlay future land use category defines areas around the periphery of the City that may be appropriate for long-term urban (City) development beyond the 20-year planning period. While it is still possible for development in these areas to occur before the end of the planning period following amendments to this *Comprehensive Plan* and the Future Land Use map, premature development and utility extensions should be discouraged in these areas. Also prior to the development of these areas, the City intends to engage in a detailed planning process that would lead to an articulated vision and more refined land use, transportation, and utility plans for these areas. In the meantime, the policies associated with the Agriculture/Rural land use category should apply to these areas.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this overlay future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this overlay category is shown:



Aerial view of the City's southwest Long Range Urban Growth Area

- a. Within areas designated as Long Range Urban Growth Areas, use the City's extraterritorial land division review to limit new development in accordance with all policies applicable to the underlying Agriculture/Rural category, until such time as the area is identified as appropriate for City development.
- b. Using the City's extraterritorial land division review authority to require the design and layout of all non-farm development projects approved within the Long Range Urban Growth Areas category to not impede the orderly future development of the area, until such time as the area is identified as appropriate for City development (see also Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter).
- c. Delay more intensive development until an amendment to this *Comprehensive Plan* is adopted to identify specific future land uses for the area and until public sewer and water service is extended to new development in the area.
- d. Work with the adjoining towns and Jefferson County to implement these policies and programs in a cooperative manner.
- e. Fully exercise the City's authority to review proposed land divisions within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction to help ensure the implementation of this desired future land use category in areas that are outside the City's 2008 municipal boundaries.
- f. Take into consideration the possibility of development limitations in the area around the Airport and adjacent to the Highway 26/High Street Interchange when planning for long-range growth in this area.
- g. Although the majority of the Hoard Farm has been shown as part of a Long Range Urban Growth Area, the City recognizes the historic and cultural value of this land and will only support long-term development if this area if the property owners agree to allow development on the land and any necessary approvals are granted from the state or federal government. Recognizing that unless and until the Hoard Farm is developed it presents a significant barrier to utility and community expansion to the north, the

City intends to explore, in partnership with the land owners and other applicable interests, the potential to make certain portions of the current property available for future development in the nearer term. This would need to be considered in a manner that would respect the integrity of this historic farm, and may be paired with an effort to permanently preserve additional high-quality farms further from the City limits.

4. Agriculture/Rural

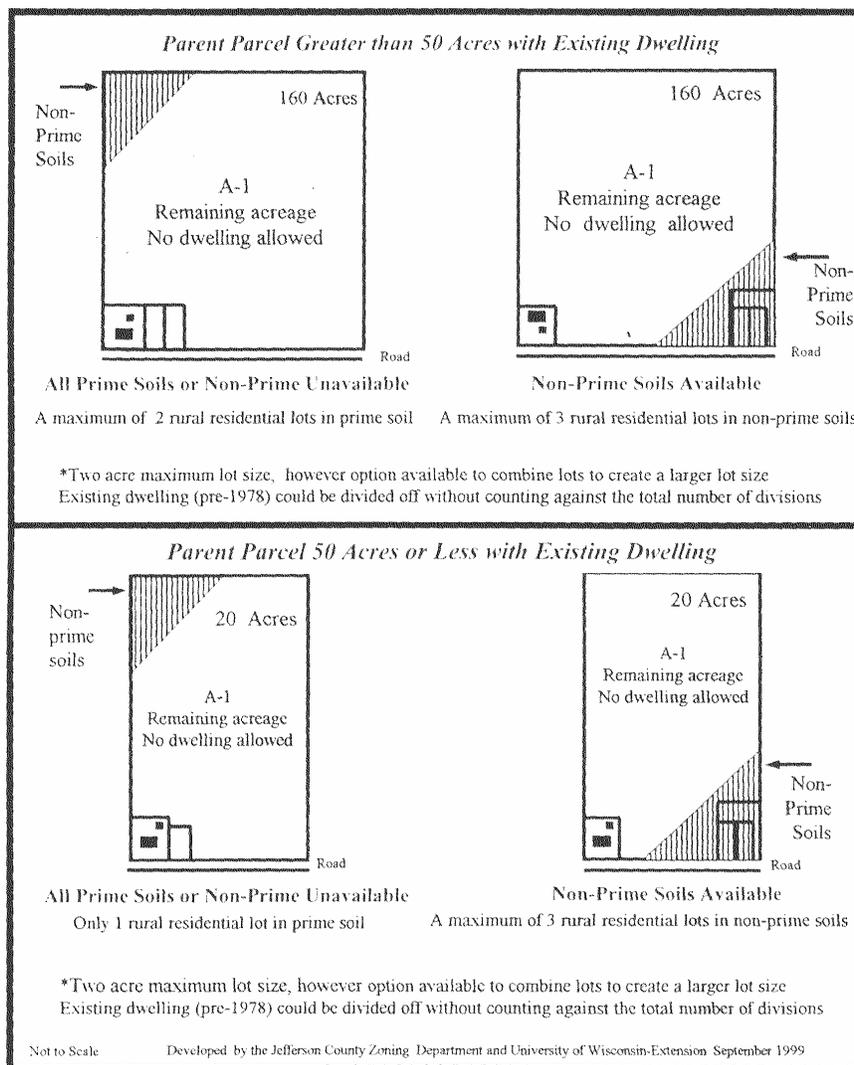
Description: This future land use category is mapped over areas intended for agricultural uses, farmsteads, and very limited rural housing allowed under the farmland preservation policies of Jefferson County that were in place at the time of adoption of this *Comprehensive Plan*. The Agriculture/Rural future land use category has been mapped around the periphery of the City out to the edge of the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction, except in areas specifically shown in other future land use categories.

Policies and Programs: The following policies and programs are recommended for this future land use category in areas on Maps 7 and 8 where this category is shown:

- a. This future land use category will mostly be enforced through a combination of County zoning and land division regulations (per Figure 6.6), and City extraterritorial land division review under recommendations described in the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter.
- b. Fully exercise the City's authority to review proposed land divisions within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction to help ensure the implementation of this desired future land use designation.
- c. Abide by the extraterritorial land division review policies described in the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter of this *Plan* when reviewing proposed land divisions in areas mapped as Agriculture/Rural. Work with the adjoining towns and Jefferson County to implement these policies and programs in a cooperative manner, where possible.
- d. Do not extend sanitary sewer service or public water service into Agriculture/Rural areas until and unless the City changes the future land use category for such areas through a *Comprehensive Plan* amendment.



Figure 6.6: Development Options with Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation Areas (to be utilized for areas mapped as Agricultural/Rural on Maps 7 and 8)



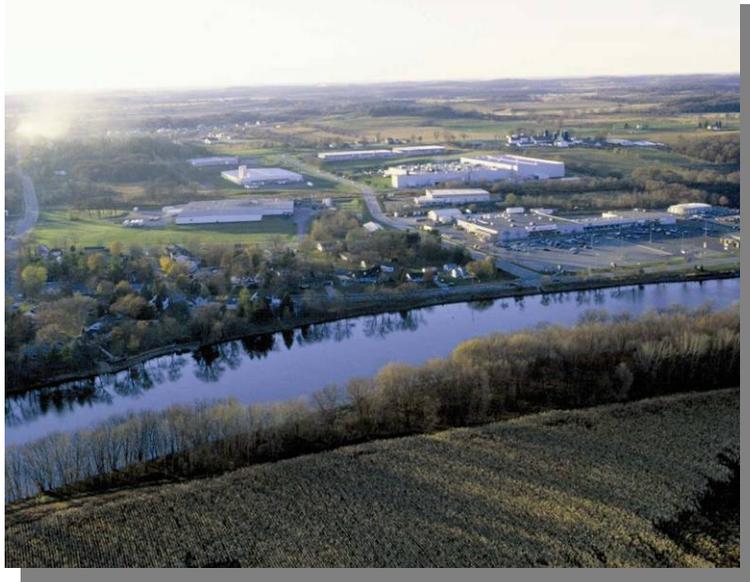
I. Smart Growth Areas and Opportunities for Redevelopment

“Smart Growth” Areas are defined by the State of Wisconsin as “areas that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and municipal, state, and utility services, where practical, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are both contiguous to existing development and at densities which will have relatively low municipal, State governmental, and utility costs.” In Fort Atkinson, Smart Growth Areas include the City’s downtown, Planned Mixed Use areas shown on Maps 7 and 8, and those redevelopment areas outlined in red on Map 7 and including the following:

- **Madison Avenue Sites:** Madison Avenue functions as one of the key entryways into the City and is also the central arterial for a critical future growth area. Over the planning period, several sites along this corridor are likely to become ripe for redevelopment. The site located at 1504 Madison Avenue, which is now largely vacant, is an appropriate location for future commercial development. Sites nearer to the

downtown will be appropriate for a mix of uses, including neighborhood-oriented businesses such as coffee shops, small cafes or restaurants, banks, or other small-scale office uses, mixed with residential uses. The site located just west of the downtown Sentry could be an ideal location for multi-family residential project, possibly senior housing, given its proximity to the grocery store and other services.

- **Northeast Commercial Site (1309 North High Street):** Located in the northeast corner of the City, across the street from the Rock River, this site presents a unique opportunity for a redevelopment/infill project that helps to define the surrounding neighborhood and that provides an attractive and impressive gateway into the community. The future viability for retail in this area will be challenging given the prior rerouting of Highway 26, decisions in Jefferson for a commercial development on that city’s south side, and other, better locations in Fort Atkinson for commercial activity. This site would be an appropriate location for “live-work” redevelopment. The focus may be on providing housing for *nearby* employment centers—for example, housing for Fort Healthcare employees or the abutting industrial park to the west. The same project could also feature other supporting service, retail, and job uses to create a vibrant and unique development. Alternatively, given the limitations for the expansion of employment uses on the City’s north side, redevelopment on this site could focus more on the expansion of office and/or business park uses, with some supporting and compatible residential development. Either way, redevelopment on this site should be designed to maximize the benefits of its proximity to the Rock River, and of high quality based on its position as a key entryway to the City.



The Northeast Commercial site (right side of photo) overlooks the Rock River

- **Downtown Sites:** Downtown Fort Atkinson is one of the jewels of the City, and over the years the City has undertaken several initiatives to advance revitalization and redevelopment in key areas of the downtown. Over the planning period, the City will continue to invest in the downtown and will continue to work in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce to market the downtown for targeted redevelopment, including the siting of additional niche retail, entertainment, and lodging options. Map 7 features several sites in the downtown—generally collections of adjoining properties—that will be appropriate and beneficial for mixed use redevelopment over the planning period. The Economic Development chapter contains additional recommendations for the future of the downtown.
- **Janesville Avenue Sites:** Janesville Avenue is an important community corridor and entryway, is home to community assets such as the Fireside Dinner Theater and the Glacial River Trail, and adjoins the City’s newest business park on the southwest side. Redevelopment efforts along this corridor will focus on advancing the City’s goal of becoming a “2nd Night” tourist destination. The City will specifically promote this corridor for additional entertainment, retail, hospitality, and dining uses. The City intends to identify opportunities for assembling multiple parcels—particularly in the Janesville/Highland and Janesville/Hilltop intersection areas—to allow for a larger-scale redevelopment projects to occur there. The Economic Development and Transportation chapters include additional ideas for redevelopment along Janesville Avenue.

- **Whitewater Avenue Site:** The Whitewater Avenue corridor also presents longer-term opportunities for redevelopment, particularly in the area between Hilltop Trail and Highland Avenue. This area is appropriate for a future mix of uses, including neighborhood-serving commercial uses fronting Whitewater Avenue, with Mixed Residential uses in the interior. Like Janesville Avenue, redevelopment strategies should involve the assembly of multiple parcels to promote larger-scale changes along this corridor. However, the short-term market for redevelopment is probably not as strong as it is along Janesville Avenue. Interim strategies should involve provisions to prevent aesthetic decline in this area of the City, enforcement of property maintenance, approval of land uses with a long-range vision in mind, implementation of road access consolidation, installation of wayfinding signage, and intergovernmental cooperation on all of the above.

The Lorman salvage yard site, on the City's near north side adjacent to Ralph Park, has not been identified as a redevelopment site at this time. This is due to several factors, including likely soil limitations for building development, possible contamination, difficulty in relocating this type of operation, and the company's tenure in the City. Instead, efforts should focus on making this use as compatible of a neighbor to nearby residential and park uses as possible, until such time as it becomes more feasible to relocate the facility.

Map 7: Future Land Use—City-View

Map 8: Future Land Use—ETJ View

Chapter Seven: Transportation

This chapter includes a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs to guide the future development and maintenance of various modes of transportation in the City of Fort Atkinson. The chapter also compares the City's transportation policies and programs to state and regional transportation plans.

A. Existing Transportation Network

Access is a key determinant of growth because it facilitates the flow of goods and people. The City of Fort Atkinson is well connected to the region through the existing roadway network, including Highway 26 and Highway 12. Other transportation facilities, such as freight rail, airport service, and bike and multi-use trails are located in or easily available to the City. This section describes the existing conditions of transportation facilities in the City. Map 9 shows existing and planned roadways in the City.

Roadways

Interstate 94 is located about eleven miles north of the City. This roadway serves as a regional, controlled-access facility within Wisconsin, connecting Minneapolis and La Crosse with Milwaukee and Chicago. Interstate 39/90 is located approximately ten miles west of Fort Atkinson and connects northern Wisconsin with Madison, Janesville, Beloit, and central Illinois.

State Highway (STH) 26, which bypasses the City to the west, is a north-south principal arterial that connects the City with Interstate 94. STH 26 includes a business route along its old alignment, which passes through the center of the City. United States Highway (USH) 12 is an east-west principal arterial providing a connection between Madison, Whitewater, and the lake areas in Walworth County. STH 106 is an east-west minor arterial connecting the City with Interstate 39/90 to the west, and with Waukesha County to the east. STH 89 is a north-south minor arterial connecting the City with communities to the north.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Work with WisDOT on Main Street reconfiguration, the Highway 12 bypass, and the potential study of a 3rd bridge.
- Plan for an interconnected road network in new development areas.
- Enhance citizen mobility and promote biking and walking through development of new multi-use trails and the promotion of compact, mixed use development patterns.
- Consider preparing an Official Map to reserve land for future transportation facilities.



North-south collector roads in Fort Atkinson include Robert Street from Madison Avenue to Cramer Street Avenue and South Main Street from Whitewater Avenue to Hackbarth Road. East-west collector roads include Cramer Street from Banker Road to North High Street.

Bridges

The City of Fort Atkinson has two city-maintained bridges located on Highway 12 and passing over the Rock River. The location of a third bridge will become an increasingly important issue as the City continues to grow.

Airports

There are two airports with hard-surface runways in Jefferson County. The Fort Atkinson Municipal Airport is located at N3465 County Highway K, northeast of the City, and has an average of 30 operations per day. The City of Watertown Airport and Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport in Janesville provide larger freight and private plane service in the area.

Located 40 miles northwest of Fort Atkinson in Madison, the Dane County Regional Airport (DCRA) offers a full range of flights to regional, national, and international destinations to serve a growing metropolitan area. Annually, there are nearly 116,000 aircraft landings and takeoffs from three runways. DCRA is served by 13 commercial air carriers with over 100 scheduled flights per day and two air freight airlines.

General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee is located about 65 miles east of Fort Atkinson. Mitchell's 13 airlines offer roughly 252 daily departures and arrivals. Approximately 90 cities are served directly from Mitchell International.

Other passenger travel is available through the Chicago Rockford International Airport and through O'Hare and Midway in Chicago.

Rail

The Union Pacific Railroad operates the freight line into the City of Fort Atkinson. The line ends at North Main Street. This line extends through the City of Jefferson, the Village of Johnson Creek, and the City of Watertown.

Passenger service is available in Milwaukee and Columbus, and the Hiawatha Amtrak passenger trains connect Chicago and Minneapolis through Watertown and Ixonia.

Bicycles and Walking

The City of Fort Atkinson is located in close proximity to several bike trails. The Glacial River Trail extends south from the south side of Fort Atkinson to the Jefferson/Rock County line. A newly constructed trail segment now connects downtown Fort Atkinson with the Glacial River Trail. The Glacial Drumlin State

ROAD FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Wisconsin's functional classification system groups roads and highways according to the character of service they offer, ranging from rapid through access to local land access. The purpose of functional classification is to enhance overall travel efficiency and accommodate traffic patterns and land uses by designing streets to the standards suggested by their functional class. The four main functional classes include:

- **Principal Arterials:** Serve longer inter-urban type trips and traffic traveling through urban areas, including interstate highways and other freeways.
- **Minor Arterials:** Provide intra-community continuity and service trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.
- **Collectors:** Provide both land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. These roadways collect traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it onto the arterial system.
- **Local Streets:** Provide direct access to abutting land and access to collectors. Local roads offer the lowest level of mobility. Through traffic movement on this system is usually discouraged.

Source: WisDOT, Facilities Development Manual, Procedure 4-1-15

Trail, which traverses Jefferson County east to west, runs approximately 7 miles north of the City, and the 1,000-mile Ice Age National Trail crosses the southeast corner of Jefferson County. This trail segment runs between Janesville and the southern unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

Public Transportation and Para-Transit

Brown Cab Service is provided for residents of Fort Atkinson. Badger Coaches provide daily bus transportation between Madison and Milwaukee and offers regularly scheduled stops close to Fort Atkinson in Johnson Creek. Bus service to Chicago is provided in the City of Janesville via Van Galder.

Jefferson County provides specialized transportation services which are designed for use by elderly or disabled persons. To be eligible for specialized transit services, an individual must be at least 55 years of age or be disabled. Transportation services are provided to all areas within Jefferson County in wheelchair-accessible vans.

Water and Truck Transportation

There is no waterborne freight movement in the City. Freight shipments in Fort Atkinson occur by truck and rail. Semi-truck shipments are most prevalent along designated truck routes: State Highways 26, 89, and 106, and U. S. Highway 12.

B. Review of State and Regional Transportation Plans

Following is a review of state and regional transportation plans and studies that are relevant to the City, including those prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). These state and regional plans are consistent with the goals and recommendations of this *Comprehensive Plan*. For more information on many of the plans referenced below, visit the WisDOT website at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/>

Wisconsin State Highway Plan

The Wisconsin State Highway Plan focuses on the 11,800 miles of State Trunk Highway routes in Wisconsin. The plan does not identify specific projects, but broad strategies and policies to improve the state highway system over the next 20 years. Given its focus, the plan does not identify improvement needs on roads under local jurisdiction. This plan includes three main areas of emphasis: pavement and bridge preservation, traffic movement, and safety. This plan does not provide any Fort Atkinson-specific recommendations.

Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

The Midwest Regional Rail Initiative represents an ongoing effort by nine Midwest states, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin, to develop an expanded and improved passenger rail system throughout the Midwest. The proposed regional system would use existing rail lines to connect these nine Midwest states.

As part of this initiative, a rail system is proposed to connect Milwaukee and Madison along a corridor that passes through Watertown and Waterloo, north of the City. However, because these systems are intended to provide high-speed connections between major cities (i.e. Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago), it is unlikely that rail stops will be planned for smaller communities along the proposed corridor.

Wisconsin Southwest Region Highway Improvement Program

The WisDOT maintains a six-year improvement program for state and federal highways. Wisconsin has 112,362 miles of public roads, from Interstate freeways to city and village streets. This highway improvement program covers only the 11,753-mile state highway system which is administered and maintained by the WisDOT. The other 100,609 miles are improved and maintained by the cities, towns, counties and villages in

which the roadways are located. The state highway system consists of 750 miles of Interstate freeways and 11,010 miles of state and US-marked highways.

Projects in the 6-year improvement program include the expansion of 50 miles of STH 26, from Janesville to STH 60 in Dodge County. As part of this project, bypasses will be constructed around Milton, Jefferson, and Watertown. The STH 26 improvements include an expansion from two- to four- lanes from the city of Janesville to STH 60, just north of the city of Watertown. The STH 26 communities most likely to be directly affected by the two- to four-lane conversion are the rural areas located outside the cities of Fort Atkinson, Jefferson, Milton, and Watertown. In rural areas between the bypassed cities, STH 26 was typically kept “on-alignment” due to factors such as existing corridor conditions, safety/mobility needs, available right-of-way, and cost.

Translinks 21: A Multimodal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin’s 21st Century

The Translinks 21 Plan includes an overall vision and goals for transportation systems in the state for the next 25 years. More specifically, the goal is to provide a statewide highway network designed to shape a comprehensive, integrated, multimodal transportation blueprint that sets the framework for future policies, programs, and investments and provides essential links to key centers throughout the state.

This 1995 plan recommends complete construction of the Corridors 2020 “backbone” network by 2005, the creation of a new state grant program to help local governments prepare transportation corridor management plans, the provision of state funding to assist small communities in providing transportation services to elderly and disabled persons, and the development of a detailed assessment of local road investment needs. This plan does not include any Fort Atkinson-specific recommendations.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 presents a blueprint for improving conditions for bicycling, clarifies the WisDOT’s role in bicycle transportation, and establishes policies for further integrating bicycling into the current transportation system. While this plan does not include any Fort Atkinson-specific recommendations, the plan map illustrates existing state trails and future “priority corridors and key linkages” for bicycling along the State Highway system in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan Policy 2020

In 2001, the State adopted a pedestrian policy plan, which highlights the importance of walking and the need for pedestrian facilities. Additionally, the plan outlines measures to increase walking and to promote pedestrian comfort and safety. This plan provides a policy framework for addressing pedestrian issues and clarifies WisDOT’s role in meeting pedestrian needs.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Connections 2030

When completed, Connections 2030 will identify a series of multimodal corridors for each part of the state. Each corridor will identify routes and/or services for several modes of transportation, including car, rail, airplane, and transit. When completed, the document will assist the state in prioritizing investments and assist WisDOT transportation districts in identifying future segments for more detailed corridor plans.

STH 26 Corridor Study

STH 26 is an important route connecting communities and major highways in Rock, Jefferson and Dodge counties. It is designated as a long-truck route in the National Highway System and as a connector route in WisDOT’s State Highway Plan 2020. Under the plan, connector routes are given higher priority funding since they connect major regions and economic centers. WisDOT has completed the following studies that will have an impact on Fort Atkinson:

- Bike route planning study (Janesville to Watertown)
- Corridor plan (Janesville to Waupun)

- Environmental Impact Statement (Janesville to Watertown)
- Expansion project (Janesville to STH 60)

The adopted Highway 26 Corridor Plan includes bypasses of Milton, Jefferson, and Watertown, with the long range potential of an access-controlled four-lane highway.

USH 12 Corridor Study at Fort

Atkinson

The segment of USH 12 that travels through Fort Atkinson is intended to serve both regional and local traffic. Growing conflicts between these two distinct user groups founded a need to study this corridor. In 2001, the WisDOT initiated the USH 12 Needs Assessment Study, which identified three reasons to explore alternative routes: regional mobility demands, safety and congestion problems, and public support for improvements. In 2005, WisDOT completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) outlining and analyzing six alternatives. The six alternatives included the following:

- Alternative 1: No Action
- Alternative 1a: Transportation System Management improvements. This involves the installation of turning lanes, removal of select parking stalls to improve intersection flow, signing, striping, and signal optimization.
- Alternative 2b: Through-City. This involves widening the existing route to a 4-lane divided freeway from the Whitewater Highway 12 bypass to downtown Fort Atkinson and creating a one-way pair system on existing Highway 12 through the downtown.
- Alternative 3: Rerouting of Highway 12 to County Highway N and Highway 26. This involves rehabilitating 2-lane Rock County Highway N from the Whitewater Highway 12 bypass to Highway 26 near Milton and using the capacity expanded 4-lane divided Highway 26 corridor north to the Highway 26/Highway 12 interchange on the west side of Fort Atkinson.
- Alternative 7: Near South Bypass. This involves widening existing Highway 12 to a 4-lane divided freeway that follows existing Highway 12 from the Whitewater Highway 12 bypass to just north of Star School Road, then continues westerly on a new alignment north of Star School Road, connecting with Highway 26 at the Business 26/Highway 26 interchange.

THE IMPACT OF HIGHWAY BYPASSES ON A CITY'S DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND ECONOMY

Highway bypasses are intended to divert traffic around, rather than through, an urban area for the primary purpose of improving regional traffic mobility. Left unregulated, both commercial and residential development is attracted to areas where access has been established along a new bypass route (e.g. interchange locations). This ultimately draws development and additional traffic farther from the city's existing businesses and infrastructure and encourages sprawling development patterns. However, by implementing strict land division and land use policies and through strategic long-term planning efforts, such development patterns can be precluded and key access points and highway interchanges can be reserved instead for well-planned and appropriately timed development that supports the economic growth and positive image of the community.

In addition, by displacing truck traffic from a city's downtown and alleviating traffic congestion, bypasses can actually create opportunities for cities to establish safer, more pedestrian-friendly, and attractive downtowns. In order to capitalize on such opportunities, cities around which bypasses have been planned benefit from developing long-term economic and aesthetic plans for their downtown areas. These plans should address issues such as pedestrian and bike connections, streetscaping features, development design, public improvements, redevelopment/rehabilitation guidelines, and niche marketing strategies.

- Alternative 7a: South Bypass--wetland avoidance: This involves widening existing Highway 12 to a 4-lane divided freeway that follows existing Highway 12 from the Whitewater Highway 12 bypass to Hoge Road, then continues northwesterly on new alignment, roughly parallel to Creamery Road, McIntyre Road, and Star School Road, connecting with Highway 26 at the Business 26/Highway 26 interchange.

In December 2007, after carefully considering all study details and agency and public input, WisDOT adopted a three-step approach to address the Highway 12 short and long term safety and traffic issues.

1. Make short term/interim improvements to extend the safe life of the existing route, including spot safety improvements and pavement restoration. This includes most of the features of Alternative 1a in the Draft EIS and described above.
2. Move forward with additional study of south bypass capacity expansion Alternatives 7 or 7a to refine them as appropriate to best minimize impacts and cost, adhere to design requirements, and meet project purpose and need. Select one of the refined corridors and Officially Map the right-of-way under Wis. Stat. Sec. 84.295. The other DEIS alternatives are dropped from further consideration.
3. Construct the bypass when safety and congestion indicate the need and when funding is available.

A Final EIS is expected to be published in 2009, which will be followed by corridor mapping and, ultimately, construction.

Once the Final EIS is published, the City supports the official mapping of the selected bypass route to minimize impacts to property owners when the bypass is constructed. When traffic counts and safety issues warrant construction, the City prefers alternative 7a, the south bypass route. In the interim, the City supports the short-term improvements proposed by the Department to improve safety and traffic flow until the bypass is constructed.

Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan

This 1999 plan provides a vision and guidelines for growth, development, and land preservation in Jefferson County over the next 20 years. In regards to transportation, the plan outlines existing facilities as well as general recommendations for improvements. Recommendations include the construction of a Highway 12 bypass around the City of Fort Atkinson connecting to the Highway 26 bypass.

Jefferson County Bikeway/Pedestrianway Plan

In 1996, Jefferson County adopted the Jefferson County Bikeway/Pedestrianway Plan, which focuses on improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the County. It identifies desirable routes through Jefferson County and includes a detailed plan for several cities and villages, including Fort Atkinson. Recommendations include designation of a north/south bicycling corridor, possibly as an extension of the rail-trail; installation of bike lanes on Cramer Street, Riverside Dr. and S. Main Street; posting bike route signage; installing traffic calming devices in the downtown; and preserving land for a proposed riverfront trail from N. Water St. to Wilson St. It is anticipated that this plan will be updated in 2008 by Jefferson County.

Connecting Jefferson County's Parks and Communities: Proposed Trail Linkages

This 2005 document provides a review of general trail design guidelines recommended for Jefferson County trails, which include connectivity, wayfinding, viewsheds and vistas, meandering paths, visible road crossings, and signage. Using input from GIS analysis, stakeholders, and Jefferson County natural features, the plan proposes two potential trail routes for the western section of the County: a 26-mile Waterloo-Crawfish River Loop and an 18-mile Fort Atkinson Loop. The plan also includes recommendations for several additional trail connections throughout the County. Specific recommendations for the Fort Atkinson area include trail connections from Jefferson to Fort Atkinson/Glacial River Trail and Fort Atkinson/Glacier River Trail to Dorothy Carnes Park.

C. Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that meets the varied needs in and around the City, including pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists, and freight.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and require an interconnected road, pedestrian, and bike network.
2. Discourage high traffic volumes and speeds in existing and proposed residential neighborhoods.
3. Ensure that transportation system improvements are coordinated with land development.
4. Encourage new development designs that support a range of transportation options, including biking and walking.
5. Actively participate in multi-jurisdictional transportation system planning and improvements, particularly with WisDOT.
6. Provide for adequate road capacities and safe road conditions in cooperation with the county and state.
7. Plan for an interconnected network of sidewalks and bicycle routes in and around Fort Atkinson.

Policies:

1. Continue to utilize the City's 5-Year Capital Improvement Program to provide for upgrading of local roads. This will help avoid fluctuations in budgets on a year-to-year basis and promote responsible borrowing of funds, where necessary.
2. Provide a continuous interconnected network of local streets, sidewalks, bicycle routes, and paths for Planned Neighborhood growth areas that result in safe and convenient access between neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, service centers, and recreational centers.
3. Develop and maintain a comprehensive system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in and around the City to encourage alternative transportation options, a healthy, active lifestyle, and a clean environment.
4. Carefully consider accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and the disabled when reviewing subdivision plats.
5. Require all new residential, commercial, community facility, and mixed-use developments to be served with sidewalks (except cul-de-sacs) or pedestrian/bicycle paths.
6. Plan for safe pedestrian crossings at major intersections and across arterial and collector roadways, such as across Madison Avenue, Janesville Avenue, and High Street.
7. Take advantage of road upgrades and improvements to establish sidewalks and bike paths or lanes on roadways throughout the City to connect neighborhoods with schools, parks, jobs, and shopping. Whenever possible, aesthetic improvements such as canopy shade terrace trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, landscaped boulevards, traffic circles, banners, and benches will also be included with roadway construction and reconstruction projects.
8. Expand the City's network of multi-use trails, and work with the County and State to interconnect local trails and bike routes with recreation areas, and between communities like the City of Jefferson.
9. Require new subdivisions to provide more than one vehicular access point whenever possible.

10. Discourage the construction of cul-de-sacs except in very limited circumstances, such as when extreme topography or existing development patterns necessitate their use. In these instances, other alternatives to cul-de-sacs should be explored, and non-vehicular connections should still be attempted.
11. Work to control access to roads under the City's jurisdiction, reducing excessive driveway access openings as part of development approval or street reconstruction projects wherever possible. This is an increasingly important role for the City now that bypasses are shifting jurisdiction of older state highway routes to the City. Direct access to arterial streets will only be permitted for major facilities such as large shopping centers or other significant traffic generators.
12. Prepare an Official Map to reserve lands for future transportation facilities within the City's planning area, including rights-of-way for future arterial and collector streets and pedestrian and bicycle paths. Before approving any certified survey map, preliminary plat, final plat, site plan, or planned unit development, the City will make sure that the proposed development is consistent with the Official Map.
13. Update the City's subdivision ordinance as necessary to reflect the recommendations in this *Plan*. The subdivision ordinance should include standards to ensure street interconnectivity and proper design and placement of new roads and paths in association with future subdivision plats.
14. Work with Jefferson County and private providers to continue and expand transportation options to those who require them, such as the elderly, disabled, and children.
15. Coordinate with other units of government as necessary to ensure adequate transportation facilities for trucking, transit, and rail, as well as air and water travel and transit.
16. Consider the potential for future inter-city transit service between Fort Atkinson and major cities in the region.

D. Transportation Programs and Recommendations

Continue to Make Upgrades to Existing City Roadways

In the future, the City will continue to make upgrades, as needed, to local roads and will continue to budget for these projects by annually updating the 5-Year Capital Improvement Program. Fort Atkinson will also continue to work with the County and the State to make repairs and upgrades to County and State highways. When possible, utility upgrades should be combined with roadwork. Over the 20-year planning period, certain local, county, and state highways should be upgraded from rural to urban cross sections to handle increased traffic volumes and adjacent development, most notably Janesville Avenue and Hackbarth Road.

The City also has an opportunity to upgrade the aesthetic quality of important corridors such as Janesville Avenue and Whitewater Avenue by continuing to install streetscape improvements along these roadways. Streetscaping projects are likely to occur incrementally, over a period of years, usually in coordination with highway or redevelopment projects (also see the Economic Development chapter)

Consider Preparing an Official Map

The City intends to prepare an Official Map to reserve land for roadways, trails, and other public facilities. An Official Map is a plan implementation tool authorized under Wisconsin Statutes (Section 62.23(7)) for adoption by cities and villages. An Official Map is not the same as a chamber of commerce-type road map. It is a municipal ordinance that may be used to show alignments of future roads, expanded rights-of-way for existing roads, and other planned public facilities like trails and parks. When land development is proposed in an area within which a public facility is shown on the Official Map, the city or village may obtain or reserve land for that future facility through public dedication, public purchase, or reservation for future purchase.

Cities and villages generally use Official Maps to show future highways and bypasses, other future arterial and collector streets, and suggested wider rights-of-way for some existing major streets.

Official Maps generally show desired right-of-way widths for all future new and expanded roads, but do not show road improvement standards like pavement width or sidewalks. Official Maps rarely show planned minor streets, as their locations are usually difficult to determine in advance of development.

Wisconsin Statutes attach some unique authority to Official Maps. For example, a city or village may require that no building permits be issued within land shown for a future public facility on its Official Map. In addition, a community may require that no subdivision or land division may be recorded unless its arrangement conforms to the Official Map. These and related provisions may apply within both the municipal limits and within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Promote the Development of Trails, Paths, and Sidewalks

The City recognizes the importance of multi-use trail facilities to the overall transportation system and intends to enhance and facilitate the walkability and bikability of the City through the installation of new trails, paths, sidewalks, and on-street bike lanes and through community design approaches that are supportive of biking and walking. Such facilities also improve the accessibility of parks, community facilities, and services for the elderly and disabled and should be designed to accommodate non-motorized and motorized wheelchairs.

The City will consider steps and guidelines for enhancing these facilities, including the following:

- Extending the street grid to new development areas and provide interconnected roads, such as the proposed roads shown on Map 9. Focus in particular on achieving at least one new public road, sidewalk, and trail connection across Highway 26 in the City's northwest quadrant.

- Using street design standards that emphasize safety, enhance connectivity, and restore the role of streets as “places” within the communities. For example, for new minor streets, explore reduced pavement widths.



- Requiring sidewalks and street trees on both sides of all new streets, except short cul-de-sacs, ideally to be installed at the time the land is developed.
- Promoting “Traditional Neighborhood Design” and mixed use center design principles outlined in the Land Use and Housing and Neighborhood Development chapters.
- Continuing initiatives to fund the installation of sidewalks along collector streets and key routes to schools and parks in neighborhoods where they do not currently exist, such as several streets on the City’s south side, including Main Street north of Hilltop Trail (see Map 9). Consider creative funding strategies like grants or a revolving loan fund.
- In collaboration with the School District and other interested local organizations, initiating a local Safe Routes to School program, drawing upon the many resources available at the

National Center for Safe Routes to School to enhance opportunities for children to walk and bike safely to school.

- Continuing to remain involved in the ongoing Glacial Heritage project, which will establish plans for an integrated network of regional trails through Jefferson County.
- Working with the City of Jefferson, the County, and the Town of Jefferson to establish a trail connection between the City and Jefferson and Fort Atkinson using Carnes Park, Airport Road, and the Highway 26 bypass. Collaborate with Milton and Rock County interests to extend the Glacial River Trail there and to Lake Koshkonong.
- Incorporating conceptual bike and pedestrian routes (see Map 9), existing and future park locations, school sites, and neighborhood retail centers into an up-to-date Park and Open Space Plan (see Utilities and Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation chapters for further explanation).
- As Jefferson County works to prepare updates to the County-wide Bike and Pedestrian Plan, cooperatively developing a detailed bicycle and pedestrian system plan component for Fort Atkinson that incorporates the County-wide recommendations but also includes more detailed City-specific recommendations. The County and City should include required procedures and components to make sure that this new plan is in line with the federal Safe Routes to

WHAT IS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL?

Safe Routes to School programs are locally-based initiatives to better enable children to safely walk and bike to school. The National Center for Safe Routes to School is an organization designed to assist communities in developing their own successful Safe Routes programs and strategies. The National Center offers a centralized source of information on how to start and sustain a Safe Routes to School program, case studies of successful programs in other communities, as well as many other resources for training and technical assistance.

Source: National Center for Safe Routes to School

Schools program, and adopt this new plan as a component of the City's recommended Park and Open Space Plan.

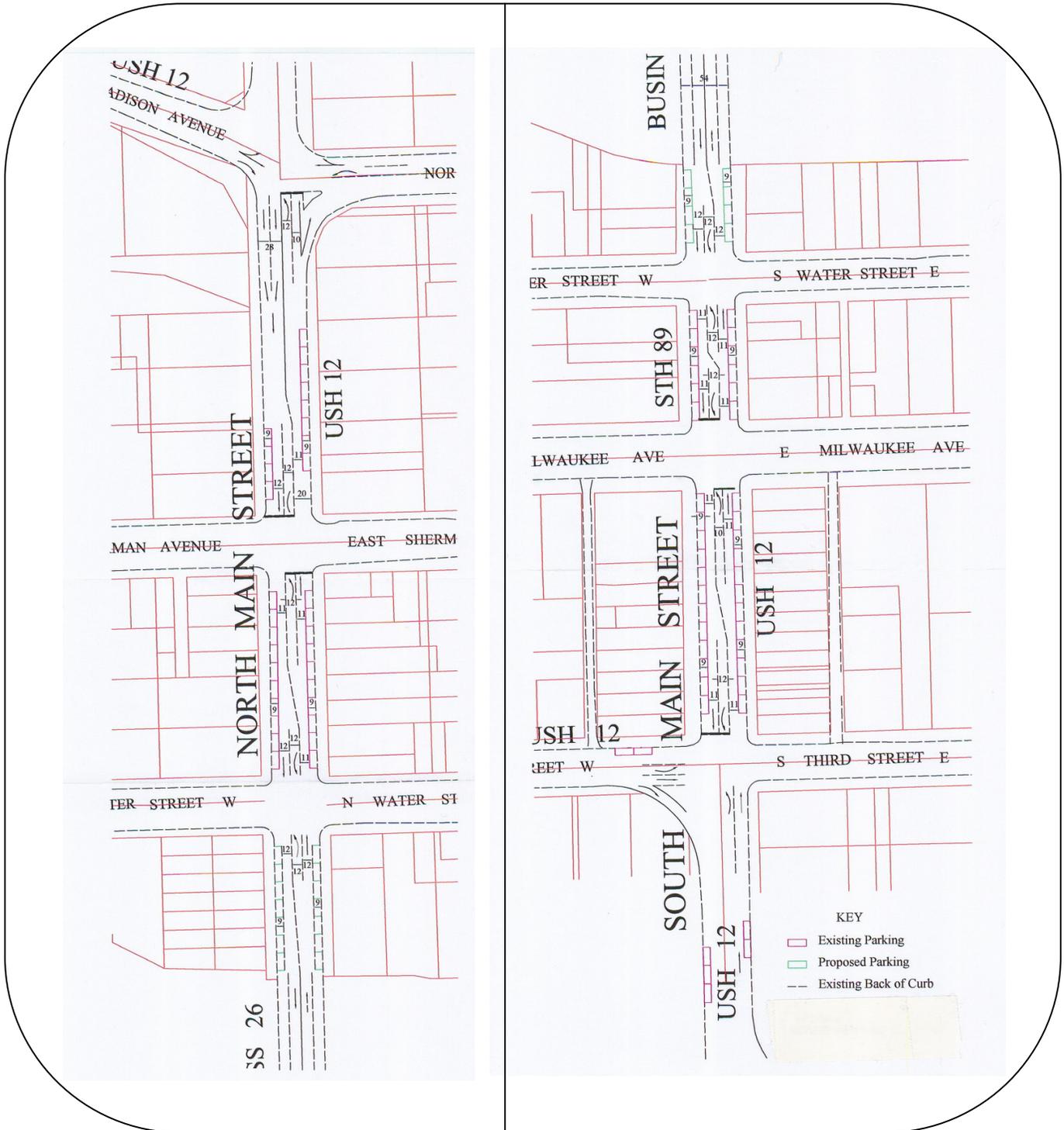
- Continuing to implement the various bike and trail system plan recommendations of this *Comprehensive Plan* and other plans as funds become available and as opportunities arise (e.g., install bike lanes at the time of street upgrades). Apply for WisDNR and WisDOT grant monies, which remain plentiful to those communities that have a clear plan, to help fund projects.
- Require installation of bike racks and pedestrian amenities (e.g. benches, covered entryways) downtown and for other commercial and industrial projects throughout the City.

Coordinate with WisDOT on Transportation Projects

Over the planning period, the City will continue to actively communicate and cooperate with WisDOT on a variety of important transportation projects, including the following:

- Implementation of the selected Highway 12 bypass option, assuming the alignment and access plan is in the City's best interests. The City's preferred option (7a) is presented on Map 9. The City will coordinate land use and economic development planning to coincide with the selected route. In the general area of the current Highway 26/Janesville Avenue intersection, the City will work to make sure that the new Highway 12 bypass design provides for local street over/underpasses to assure community continuity in future growth areas.
- Conversion of Main Street to a three-lane road (with a center turning lane) in the downtown to make the roadway (and downtown) more bicycle and pedestrian friendly and make it safer for people to park on the street. A proposed redesign sketch is shown in Figure 7.1.
- Explore options with WisDOT on location and possible construction of a third bridge across the Rock River, recognizing that some of the best possible locations have now been used for development. A third bridge would increase community connectivity and alleviate traffic on other roadways, such as Main Street.
- Explore the potential for a Park and Ride facility near the Highway 26/Madison Avenue interchange, including the potential for co-development within a private mixed use development project (see Map 9).

Figure 7.1: Main Street Proposed Redesign



Redesign Janesville Avenue as an Attractive, Local Urban Roadway

The City intends to prepare a detailed plan to redesign Janesville Avenue to reflect its current function as a local arterial street—as opposed to a state highway—and to enhance its visual appeal, enhance community identity, and economic activity (also see the Land Use and Economic Development chapters). This should include conversion to an urban cross section, with curb and gutter, sidewalks, and possibly landscaped medians; street terrace trees; decorative street lights and banners; coordinated entryway and wayfinding signage; possibly the burying of utility lines; and clear linkages to the bicycle trail and downtown through the use of wayfinding signage and a continuation of certain streetscaping features all the way to those destinations. Streetscape design themes may be drawn from the lighting and signage located along the nearby bicycle trail. The City may take an incremental approach to actually constructing these improvements, based on the pace of highway construction projects and redevelopment initiatives. The first phase would ideally include the area near the Fireside Theater and nearby redevelopment sites identified on the Future Land Use map (Map 7).

Promote the Use of Alternative Fuel Vehicles

To promote energy efficiency and reduce the City's dependence on fossil fuels, the City will promote the use of alternative fuel vehicles. Specifically, the City will consider:

- Options for, and the pros and cons of, allowing smaller electrical vehicles on City streets.
- Incentives for fueling stations that support alternative fuel vehicles (e.g. bio-diesel, E85, hydrogen).
- Over time, conversion of the City's fleet to more energy efficient, alternative fuel models.

Support the Continuation and Possible Expansion of the Airport

The City will support the continuation and possible expansion of the Airport as a local economic development and transportation asset and as an area that helps establish a community separation area between Fort Atkinson and the City of Jefferson, working in conjunction with the City, Town, and County of Jefferson, and the Bureau of Aeronautics. Planned airport expansion would most likely be to the south and will probably be in the 10 to 15-year time horizon. The City will coordinate with the City of Jefferson to minimize land use conflicts around the airport area.

Support Other Transportation Options

The City will continue to work with the County and other transportation providers to support alternative transportation options, including commuter facilities, para-transit for the growing elderly and disabled populations, transportation services for lower income workers, and regional bus transit service to other cities. Some programs available at the time this *Plan* was written include:

- **Specialized Transportation Assistance Program for Counties** program, which provides funding for transportation services, purchasing services from any public or private organization, subsidizing elderly and disabled passengers for their use of services or use of their own personal vehicles, performing or funding management studies on transportation, training and the purchase of equipment. This program requires a 20% local match in funding.
- **Elderly and Disabled Transportation Capital Assistance** program. Eligible applicants include private and non-profit organizations, local public bodies that do not have private or public transportation providers available, and local public bodies that are approved providers of transportation services for the elderly and disabled. The program covers 80% of the cost of eligible equipment.
- **Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)**. This program supports transportation services to link low-income workers with jobs, training centers and childcare facilities. Applicants must prepare a Regional Job Access Plan that identifies the needs for assistance. Eligible applicants include local governments and non-profit agencies.

Map 9: Existing and Planned Transportation Facilities

Chapter Eight: Utilities and Community Facilities

This chapter of the *Plan* contains background information, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs to guide the future maintenance and development of utilities and community facilities within the City of Fort Atkinson. Map 10 highlights several of the utilities and facilities described below.

A. Existing Utilities and Community Facilities

City Administrative Facilities

The City of Fort Atkinson administrative offices are located in the Municipal Building at 101 N. Main St in downtown Fort Atkinson. This historic but recently renovated building houses the offices of the city manager, clerk-treasurer, engineer, building inspector, and parks and recreation. The City's Office of Public Works is located at 700 James Place, the Wastewater Utility building at 1600 Farmco Lane, and the Water Utility building at 37 North Water Street.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Ensure that future land development is coordinated with the provision of utilities and City services.
- Continue to work with the School District to plan for future facilities, including the possibility for joint school/park facilities.
- Support Fort HealthCare as a key community facility and asset.

County Facilities

No County facilities are located in the City of Fort Atkinson.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

See the Parks and Recreational Facilities Chapter for details.

Hoard Historical Museum

The Hoard Historical museum is a unique asset to the City, showcasing and bringing to the life the history of Fort Atkinson through displays, artifacts, local artwork, multimedia exhibits, a research library, and gift shop. The museum is also active in the community by sponsoring local events. The Museum is currently operated by two full-time employees and is largely supported by volunteers. In 2007, the Museum underwent \$3.8 million worth of renovations, including a building expansion and the addition of new exhibits. The renovated museum opened in October of 2007.

Police Facilities

The City Police Department is located at 101 S Water Street West. The Department employs 20 officers (Chief, 3 lieutenants, 1 sergeant and 15 patrol officers), 5 telecommunicators, a records clerk and a court clerk. Officers undertake specialty assignments such as the Drug Enforcement Officer, Police School Liaison Officer, Investigator and D.A.R.E. Fort Atkinson is a Neighborhood Watch Community. Fort Atkinson has police patrol service 24 hours a day.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The City of Fort Atkinson Fire Station is located at 128 West Milwaukee Avenue and services residents in the City of Fort Atkinson. The Department is staffed by 35 volunteer firefighters with 4 career firefighters. It is anticipated that within the next five years the Department will need to construct an addition to the existing Fire Station. In the next 10 to 20 years, the City is projected to need a second Fire Station.

Ryan Brothers Ambulance Service provides the emergency medical service (EMS) for the City.

Health Care Services and Child Care Facilities

Health care in Fort Atkinson is a prominent part of the community. Residents are served by the Fort HealthCare and Fort HealthCare's Fort Memorial Hospital located at 611 Sherman Avenue East. Fort Memorial is a full-service 110-bed hospital with emergency, inpatient, and outpatient services.

Child care services are available through Fort Atkinson Preschool & Childcare at 31 Milwaukee Avenue West, Shooting Star Daycare at 1000 Harriette Street, and several smaller providers.

Schools

The City of Fort Atkinson is entirely within the Fort Atkinson School District, comprised of four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The School District serves an area of approximately 100 square miles that includes all of the City of Fort Atkinson and all or portions of the adjoining towns.

The high school, located on the City's northwest side, was constructed in 1998 and is the most technologically advanced facility in the area. The campus is adjacent to a Madison Area Technical College Campus, which also provides additional educational opportunities to residents and offers hands on learning experiences by coordinating with local businesses. MATC was planning an expansion to its facilities at the time of writing of this *Plan*.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, enrollment in the Fort Atkinson School District has remained relatively stable during the previous five years. Luther Elementary has seen a significant increase in students, but all other elementary schools saw only small fluctuations in enrollment. Middle school enrollment is up slightly, but high school enrollment has also fluctuated very little.

There are also three parochial schools located in Fort Atkinson: St. Joseph's Catholic School serves children in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade; St. Paul's Lutheran School serves children in kindergarten through 8th grade, and Faith Community Christian School (Town of Koshkonong) serves pre-kindergarten through 8th grade.

Figure 8.1: Fort Atkinson School District Enrollment, 2002-2007

Name	Location	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Fort Atkinson High	925 Lexington Blvd.	921	938	933	934	941	922
Fort Atkinson Middle School	310 S 4 th St. E	567	563	565	575	588	589
Barrie Elementary	1000 Harriette St.	252	243	252	266	256	251
Luther Elementary	205 Park St.	236	253	262	261	283	282
Purdy Elementary	719 S Main St.	387	369	351	371	392	378
Rockwell Elementary	821 Monroe St.	266	255	247	260	250	261
Total Elementary Enrollment		1,141	1,120	1,112	1,158	1,181	1,172
Total District Enrollment		2,629	2,621	2,610	2,667	2,710	2,683

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2007

Libraries

The Dwight Foster Public Library is located at 102 East Milwaukee Avenue. Originally built in 1916 with additions in 1931 and 1983, the library is named after the City's first settler in 1836. The library maintains a catalog of over 75,000 volumes, 2,000 videos, 2,000 books on tape and hundreds of music compact discs. The library has public Internet access at eight computers as well as facilities for word processing, desktop publishing and educational games. It subscribes to over 260 monthly publications and maintains a variety of printing, scanning, faxing and copying machines for public use. The Dwight Foster Public Library is a member of the Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System, which coordinates the sharing of materials from 53 libraries. As a result, the Dwight Foster Public Library has access to 2.5 million items.

Within the planning period, the library is projected to need to double its current square footage. At the time this *Plan* was written, the library was in the process of exploring opportunities for expansion.

Water Supply and Wastewater

Treatment

The Fort Atkinson Water Utility and Fort Atkinson Sewer Utility provide public water and sewer service to land in the City. Properties located on the periphery of the City are served by private wells and individual on-site wastewater treatment systems, often referred to as septic systems, which generally discharge the wastewater to underground drainage fields. The City does not provide public water or sewer services to areas outside of its boundaries.

Municipal water is drawn from 5 wells and is stored in four water storage facilities including two water towers (585,000 gallons and 500,000 gallons) and two underground reservoirs. The City does not provide water to any other areas outside of the City limits. Based on projected growth, the City projects the need for two additional water towers within the planning period, one within the proposed south pressure zone and one within the proposed north pressure zone, and the establishment of one new well within the planning period. Distribution system improvements have also been proposed within the City.

The City's wastewater treatment facility is located at 1600 Farmco Lane on the City's southwest side and discharges into the Rock River. The designed average flow for the plant is 2.7 million gallons per day. The current average flow is 2.2 million gallons per day putting the facility at approximately 81 percent capacity. The facility's biochemical oxygen demand loadings are at approximately 60% of design capacity. It is likely that the current facility and major treatment equipment will need to be upgraded during the life of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

Garbage collection in the City is provided by Veolia Waste Services of Fort Atkinson. Curbside garbage and recycling is collected on a weekly basis. Garbage is hauled to a sanitary landfill in Janesville and recyclable are sorted at Veolia's business location in Fort Atkinson. The City is currently updating residents' garbage and recycling receptacles. When the update is complete, recycling will be picked up on a bi-weekly basis. The City also runs its own compost site and provides brush and curbside chipping.

Telecommunications and Power Distribution

Both AT&T and Charter Communications offer telephone, internet, and cable services to the City of Fort Atkinson. Power, natural gas, and high voltage electric transmission lines are provided by WE Energies.

Cemeteries

Evergreen Cemetery is located at 1105 North Main Street on the northern edge of the City, and Lake View Cemetery is located at 1339 Janesville Avenue in the southwest corner of the City.



B. Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Provide a cost-effective and efficient supply of public utilities, facilities, and services.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that basic public services such as adequate police and fire protection, street services, solid waste disposal, sanitary sewer services, and education are made available to all residents.
2. Coordinate utilities and community facilities planning with land use, transportation, natural resources, and recreation planning.
3. Encourage the logical, cost-efficient expansion of public facilities to serve compact development patterns.

Policies:

1. Maximize the use of existing utilities and facilities—such public water and sanitary sewer—and plan for an orderly extension of municipal utilities within the areas identified for future growth on Maps 7 and 8: Future Land Use.
2. Emphasize energy-efficiency, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness in the delivery of public facilities and services, and in City buildings and equipment purchases.
3. Work to maintain high standards of excellence in the provision of public safety services, including police, fire, and EMS.
4. Require all future development in the City to connect to public sanitary sewer and water services, and do not extend such services beyond the City limits.
5. Consider implementing impact fees, as appropriate, to help cover the public facility and utility costs of new development.
6. Continue to require all new large-scale development in the City to make provisions for managing stormwater. Such facilities shall be constructed prior to the commencement of building development.
7. Continue to cooperate with the private sector to provide access to quality health care and child care facilities, and support the success of Fort HealthCare while balancing neighborhood interests.
8. Work with the School District and MATC to ensure adequate school facilities and land; well-planned and located future school siting; and joint park, continuing education, recreation, and arts initiatives.
9. Work with the U.S. Postal Service on potential relocation and/or expansion of Post Office facilities.
10. Identify locations for new public facilities, such as roads, sanitary sewer interceptors, wells, towers, trails, and parks on a new Official Map for the City. The Transportation chapter includes an explanation of an Official Map.
11. Make revision, as necessary, to other ordinances and codes as necessary to implement the recommendations in this Plan, including City building codes, mechanical codes, housing codes, and sanitary codes.
12. Consider waste reduction education programs and promote recycling throughout the City. Continue to contract with private waste disposal companies to provide reliable solid waste disposal and recycling services.

13. Implement the recommendations of the Climate Protection Ad Hoc Committee related to City buildings and equipment purchases. With the aging of the City's fleet, there are likely some upcoming opportunities for alternative fuel or hybrid vehicle purchases.
14. Consider using decisions on new or expanded City facility decisions (e.g., library, fire station) as opportunities to integrate "green" building practices into the design and construction of public buildings and sites.

C. Utilities and Community Facilities Programs and Recommendations

Continue to Coordinate with the School District on Future Planning Decisions

The City should continue to coordinate land use and development decisions with the Fort Atkinson School District's long-range planning efforts. Participating on a joint "Safe Routes to School" initiative, described in the Transportation chapter, is a good opportunity to enhance collaboration.

Although School District enrollment has remained relatively steady in recent years, it is likely that over the course of this planning period the District will need to consider the acquisition of land for one or more new elementary schools. The City will work with the District to proactively identify appropriate sites for the school before land costs escalate and or other development occurs in the most desirable areas. Appropriate sites would likely be located on the northwest side of the City where the majority of neighborhood growth is planned to occur (see Map 10). The City and school district may consider the development of combination community park/school sites, which may allow for efficiencies in construction and maintenance costs.

Review Development Impact Fees

In an era of diminishing municipal resources, many cities and villages are instituting impact fees on private developments as a way to pay for the off-site costs of community facilities and utilities that result from those developments. Impact fees for facilities like parks, roads, utilities, and planned public buildings are now standard in many communities across the State.

To assist with implementing the recommendations in this *Plan*, the City should continue to evaluate the need to institute impact fees to help fund park land acquisition, certain park improvements as allowed under current State Statutes, expanded or relocated water towers, the library, the fire station, and any other public facilities for which future expansion may be likely, as permitted under State Statutes. Also see the Parks and Recreation chapter.

Upgrade and Expand Public Utilities and Community Facilities as Needed

Over the planning period, the following utility and community facilities upgrades will be considered by the City:

- Complete its stormwater utility study and consider implementing a city-wide stormwater utility.
- Pursue siting and construction of two new water towers, as recommended by the City's Water System Master Plan, and as development and water pressure issues dictate (see Map 10).
- Plan for the acquisition of land for a new municipal well, as recommended by the City's Water System Master Plan.
- Carry out plans to install larger water mains throughout the City, as specified in the City's Water System Master Plan.
- Explore creation of a wireless network City-wide, or at least in a "hot spot" that would include the downtown area. Highlight this amenity as part of City or downtown marketing.
- Continue exploring opportunities to expand the library to meet the needs of a growing community. Most likely expansion would occur on the current site. This should be done in a manner which both

modernizes the facility and respects its historic character. Keeping the library downtown is very important from community development and downtown vitality perspectives.

- Continue to assess the need for expanded fire station facilities within the planning period, as new development continues to the south and northwest.

Figure 8.2: Utilities and Community Facilities Timetable

Utility/Facility	Timetable	Comments
Solid Waste & Recycling Services	Ongoing	Consider waste reduction education programs and promote recycling in the City.
Stormwater Management	2009	Complete the City's stormwater utility study and implement the utility, if warranted.
	--	See Also Figure 1.1: Plan Implementation Program
City Hall	Ongoing	Continue to identify strategies for maximizing use of the existing building.
Public Works	Ongoing	Continue to fund the sidewalk retrofitting program to increase the walkability of existing neighborhoods.
	Annual updates	Continue to utilize the 5-Year Capital Improvement Program to plan for street maintenance and upgrades over the planning period.
Police Station	Ongoing	Continue to upgrade and replace squad cars and equipment as needed over the planning period, considering hybrid or other energy-efficient vehicles.
Fire Department and EMS services	2010-2014 2018+	Consider expansion to the downtown Fire Station. Study the need for a new Fire Station, and implement results of the study.
Medical Facilities	Ongoing	Continue to work with Fort Healthcare to provide these services. Consider strategies for allowing for the expansion of these facilities without comprising neighborhood character (also see the Economic Development chapter).
Library	2010 construction	Continue investigating opportunities to expand the library, likely on-site.
Schools	Ongoing	Coordinate with the School District on potential long-term facility needs and other joint initiatives.
Park and Recreation Facilities	Ongoing	Continue to plan for future park and recreational facilities based on the recommendations in the Parks and Recreation chapter of this <i>Plan</i> .

Figure 8.2: Utilities and Community Facilities Timetable

Utility/Facility	Timetable	Comments
Community Center	--	At the time this <i>Plan</i> was written, the City did not foresee the need for a new community center. However, the City will continue to monitor the need for such a facility in the future, and work with non-profit interests on a youth center.
Senior Center	2009-2012	The City will continue with minor building upgrades and will continue to investigate opportunities to expand the parking lot (see the Parks and Recreation chapter for a description of this facility).
Sanitary Sewer Service	Ongoing	Pursue recommended upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant over the planning period.
On-Site Wastewater Treatment (Septic) Systems	Ongoing	Do not allow additional systems for new development in the City. All new development will be served by municipal sewer and water.
Water	After 2012	Pursue siting and construction of two new water towers, as recommended by the City's Water System Master Plan, and as development and water pressure issues dictate.
	Ongoing	Carry out plans to install larger water mains throughout the City, as specified in the Water System Master Plan.
	2009-2013	Plan for well rehabilitation and Main Station revamp.
Telecommunications	2009-2012	Explore creation of a wireless network City-wide, or at least in a "hot spot" that would include the downtown area.
Power Plants/Transmission Lines	Ongoing	Continue to work WeEnergies on issues related to the location or upgrade of transmission lines or power substations in and near the City.
Cemeteries	Ongoing	Private parties will provide cemetery capacity in and around the City as needed.
Child Care Facilities	Ongoing	Child care services and facilities are expected to meet demand through the planning period and will be handled through private parties.

Map 10: Community Facilities

Chapter Nine: Parks and Recreation

This chapter of the *Plan* contains background information, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs to guide the future acquisition and improvement of land for parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities. This chapter of the *Plan* is also intended to qualify the City for matching grant funds through the State Stewardship Program.

A. Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities

The following is a summary of the existing park and recreational facilities in the City of Fort Atkinson. These facilities are also depicted on Map 10.

As of 2008, the City had approximately 297.5 acres of parks and open space, not including an additional 109.3 acres that are owned and maintained by the School District. The inventory of parks listed below and the analysis that follows does not include Town, County, or State owned park and recreational areas that also serve City residents (e.g. Carnes Park).

Active Recreational Parks

Active Recreational Parks are intended for both passive and active recreational use and typically include amenities such as playground equipment, athletic fields and facilities, playfields, walking or jogging paths, and picnic areas. The City currently has six neighborhood parks and four community parks that together comprise over 133 acres of active recreational parkland. Neighborhood parks are designed specifically to serve residents living within ¼ to ½ mile of the park and are typically 4-6 acres in size. Community parks are able to serve visitors from the community and multiple neighborhoods, and typically can accommodate larger and a broader diversity of park facilities. Community parks tend to range in size from 10 acres to more than 50 acres.

PARKS AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Continue the City's high level of service for the provision and maintenance of parks and recreational areas, in conjunction with Fort Atkinson Community Foundation.
- Provide a diversity of park types and recreational amenities to serve the needs of all City residents and visitors.
- Explore the acquisition and development of new parks on the City's northwest and south sides.
- Partner with the School District on joint park/school sites and with Jefferson County on nature-based parks near the City's fringe.
- Continue to leverage a variety of funding sources to finance future parkland acquisition and improvements.

Figure 9.1: Existing Neighborhood Parks

Park Name	Amenities	Size
Endl Park	2 playgrounds picnic tables w/ grills Ballfield backstop	2.3 acres
Barrie Park	Bandshell Playground Decorative fountain	1.5 acres
Lorman Bicentennial Riverwalk Park	Playground Picnic area Gazebo Drinking fountain Decorative lighting Benches Boat piers Adjacent to Glacial River Trail	2.9 acres
Riverside Park:	Benches Bait cutting tables parking	4.4 acres
Haumerson Pond:	Pond with adjacent lighted land hockey rink Parking	3.5 acres
Klement Park:	Picnic area Boat launch	2.5 acres
Total Acreage		17.1 acres

Figure 9.2: Existing Community Parks

Park Name	Amenities	Size
Rock River Park (non-floodplain portion only)	Family Aquatic Center 8 lighted tennis courts lighted basketball court lighted football fields archery range two picnic shelters wooded walking trail Fort Koshkonong Replica	60 acres
Memorial Park	3 lighted baseball fields electronic scoreboards dugouts batting cage new shelter	7.5 acres
Ralph Park	2 lighted softball diamonds Paved walkways Playground Restrooms Picnic shelters Concession stand Drinking fountain 2 shelters with grills, electricity, and picnic tables	15 acres
Jones Park	Historic (lighted) baseball field Grandstand Fort themed playground Restrooms Picnic shelter Lighted horse shoe courts Sand volleyball court	16.6 acres
Total Acreage		116.2 acres

Conservancy and Special Purpose Parks

Both conservancy and special purpose parks can be characterized by a unique and diverse range of features and can serve a variety of functions. Both Conservancy Parks and Special Purpose Parks enhance an overall park and open space system by maintaining and improving the community's natural resource base, accommodating special activities that aren't included in other parks, and providing interconnections between isolated parks and recreation areas.

Conservancy parks typically include lands that have been protected primarily for their environmental significance or sensitivity but may also provide some opportunity for recreational use. Examples include floodplains, wetlands, shorelands and shoreland setback areas, drainageways, larger-scale stormwater management basins, conveyance routes, environmental corridors, wildlife habitats, areas of rare or endangered plant or animal species, prairie remnants, and restoration areas.

Special purpose parks include those lands that can accommodate passive or special recreational activities, such as, sledding/skiing hills, marinas, beaches, display gardens, arboreta, and outdoor amphitheaters, trailheads, or more urban public spaces such as courtyards, outdoor eating areas, or public squares.

The City currently has two conservancy parks and five special purpose parks, comprising a total of over 164 acres of parkland.

Figure 9.3: Conservancy and Special Purpose Parks

Park Name	Size
Bark River Nature Park (trails, handicapped fishing platform, canoe launch)	98.5 acres
Rock River Park Conservancy --floodplain and wetland portions (trails)	53 acres
Lions Park	3.5 acres
Arrowhead Park	3.0 acres
Depot Park	2.2 acres
Wilcox Park	1.0 acre
McCoy Park:	1.0 acre
Total Acreage	164.2 acres

School District Recreational Facilities

School parks have many of the same characteristics as neighborhood or community parks, depending on their size. School parks primarily serve as locations for active recreational facilities associated with school functions. However, these sites can and do benefit the surrounding community during off-school hours, providing additional playground space for neighborhood children as well as athletic fields for recreational sports teams or for pick-up games. The Fort Atkinson School District currently owns and maintains 107 acres of recreational lands.

Figure 9.4: School District Recreational Facilities

School Name	Public/Private	Size of Recreational Area
Purdy Elementary	Public School	11.3 acres
Rockwell Elementary	Public School	5.0 acres
Barrie Elementary	Public School	4.5 acres
Luther Elementary/Admin Building	Public School	5.0 acres
Middle School	Public School	6.0 acres
High School	Public School	75 acres
St. Joseph's Catholic	Private School	0.5 acres
St. Paul's Lutheran	Private School	2.0 acres
Total Acreage		109.3 acres

Other Facilities

In addition to park and open space facilities, the City also offers several other unique community facilities that support the park system. These include the following:

- **Downtown Riverwalk:** The riverwalk is comprised of a lighted, paved walkway that extends from Purdy Street to Robert Street. The riverwalk offers scenic overlooks, an amphitheater, boat docks, and benches, and has direct connections to Main Street, the Glacial River Trail, Purdy Street, and Lorman Bicentennial Park.
- **Fort Atkinson Family Aquatic Center:** The outdoor Aquatic Center is located in Rock River Park and is open to City residents and nonresidents from June through August. The facility offers features such as a 175 -foot waterslide, a baby duck waterslide, a mini whale waterslide, watering palm tree, a diving well with two diving boards, two sand playgrounds, sand volleyball courts and concessions.
- **Fort Atkinson Senior Center:** The City's senior center is located at 307 Robert Street and hosts a variety of activities Monday through Friday, including sewing crocheting, knitting, internet training, dart ball, euchre, painting, and other educational programs.
- **Downtown Pocket Parks:** The City has four pocket parks along Main Street and Milwaukee Avenue in the downtown. Amenities include benches, planters, and decorative features such as a large clock and decorative water feature.

B. City Park Level of Service Standards

In order to guide the future acquisition of parkland in the City, it is useful to establish a set of minimum standards for the provision of parks and open spaces. Such standards enable communities to quantitatively measure how well its existing facilities are meeting the needs of residents and to plan for future facilities based on projected population growth. As such, park and recreation standards are commonly expressed as a ratio of the minimum number of acres recommended per 1,000 residents.

Figure 9.5 shows the total acreage of land devoted to each type of park in Fort Atkinson (e.g. neighborhood park, community park), as well as the total acreage per 1,000 residents for each park type. Acreage per 1,000 was based on the City's 2005 estimated population. For the purposes of this analysis, Active Recreational Parkland has been separated from Conservancy or Special Purpose Parklands and School District Recreation Facilities.

Figure 9.5: Existing Park Acreage Per Resident

Park Type	2008 Total Acres	Actual Acreage Per 1,000 Residents*
Neighborhood Parks	17.1 acres	1.4 acres
Community or District Parks	116.2 acres	9.6 acres
Total for Active Recreational Parkland	133.3 acres	11 acres
Conservancy Parks	151.5 acres	12.5 acres
Special Purpose Parks	10.7 acres	0.88 acres
School District Recreation Facilities	109.3 acres	9 acres
Total for Other Parks	273.5 acres	22.6 acres

* Based on 2005 DOA Population estimate

Future Level of Service Standard

Based upon the information in Figure 9.5, the City's 2008 standard for the provision of Active Recreational Parkland was 11 acres for every 1,000 residents. This was broken down into 1.4 acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 residents and 9.6 acres of community parkland for every 1,000 residents. In addition, Special Purpose Parks add an additional 0.88 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.

As the City's population grows, it will strive to maintain a level of service of 12 acres of active recreational parkland for every 1,000 residents, which is equal to the sum of the 2008 per capita park space actually being provided by the City for neighborhood parks, community parks, and special purpose parks combined.

Special Purpose Parks have been included in the calculation of the "12-acre" standard because functionally they are similar to neighborhood and community parks in that their purpose is primarily to serve the active and passive recreational needs of the community. Special purpose parks bolster the quality of the overall park system, fill otherwise unmet local recreational needs, and generally facilitate human interaction and enhance residents' sense of community. In addition, some of the Special Purpose Parks identified in Figure 9.3 are intended for future park improvements that may eventually cause to them fall into the neighborhood park category (e.g., Arrowhead Park).

Importantly, it should be noted that the City's 12-acre standard does not account for the need for conservancy parks, and does not directly take into consideration the value of school parks throughout the community. This is because the contribution of conservancy parks is more difficult to quantify and the provision of such lands is often based on a variety of community goals and objectives, many of which are somewhat external to the need to provide recreation space.

While conservancy lands can certainly provide significant recreational value to a community, such lands should be acquired and preserved based also on a need to ensure the long-term environmental integrity of a community, protect against flooding, mitigate stormwater runoff, conserve energy, and improve the overall aesthetic value and quality of life in the community. Applying a single quantitative measure to any of these goals would be difficult and therefore has not been used in this *Plan* to determine the need for future conservancy lands. Rather, the City will acquire such land as needed to support its overall park and recreation goals outlined in Section C below; its natural resource related goals, outlined in the Natural Resources chapter of this *Plan*; and its other related utility and community facilities goals, outlined in the Utilities and Community Facilities chapter.

In addition, the City recognizes that school recreational facilities serve as important and complementary components of the overall City park system, and that as the School District continues to plan for future schools and associated recreational facilities, the City will have an ongoing opportunity to evaluate the need to provide other park facilities in the neighborhood. Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the size and nature of planned school facilities, what other recreational opportunities are available in the area, the community's evolving recreation needs, and how accessible the school facilities will be to the community.

In summary, the 12-acre per 1,000 standard is intended to represent the City's needs for future neighborhood, community, and special purpose



Ralph Park

park needs, but does not represent the overall need for a comprehensive future park system that also includes conservancy parks and school park facilities.

Based on the 12-acre standard for future parkland, Figure 9.6 shows the minimal additional park acreage that will be needed to accommodate the City's projected population in years 2013, 2018, and 2030.

For the purposes of determining future parkland needs, this aggregate standard of 12 acres of Active Recreational Parkland per each 1,000 residents will not be broken down by park type. Rather, the City will strive to maintain a diverse and well distributed park system that ensures that residents of all neighborhoods are within a reasonable and safe walking distance of a park that accommodates the diverse recreational and open space needs of all ages and interest groups. The National Park and Recreation Association suggests that neighborhood parks are typically able to serve residents from within a ¼ - ½ - mile radius, unbroken by major barriers (e.g. major roads), and community parks typically serve residents from within a ½ - 3 -mile radius.

The year 2013 projection was calculated because the City will strive to update its park and recreational needs assessment and recommendations every five years to maintain eligibility for State and Federal grant monies.

The 2018 projection was calculated for two reasons. First, this represents the year the City of Fort Atkinson will have to prepare an update to this *Comprehensive Plan*. Second, ten years represents the timeframe within which collected impact fee monies must be spent by a community under State Statutes. Therefore, this projection represents the amount of parkland the City can expect to acquire with the next ten years, which will contribute to the calculation of an accurate and realistic park impact fee, should the City decide to enact an impact fee ordinance in the future.

The 2030 projection was made to reflect the planning period of this *Comprehensive Plan*. Recommended park locations shown on Map 10 reflect the 2030 time horizon.

Figure 9.6: Active Recreation Parks Needs Assessment

Year	City Population Projection	City Standard Park Space per 1,000 Residents	Recommended Total Park Acreage	2008 Total Acreage	Additional Acres of Active Parkland Needed by Year
2013	13,331	12 acres	159.6 acres	133.3 acres	+26.3 acres
2018	14,126	12 acres	169.2 acres	133.3 acres	+35.9 acres
2030	16,232	12 acres	194.4 acres	133.3 acres	+61.1 acres

C. Parks and Recreation Goals, Objectives, Policies

Goal:

Ensure the provision of a sufficient number of parks, recreational facilities, and open space areas to serve all residents, enhance opportunities for recreational tourism, and preserve the environmental integrity of the community.

Objectives:

1. Ensure the equitable distribution of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities throughout the City to provide all resident access to such facilities.
2. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access between residential neighborhoods and schools, parks, and other recreational facilities.
3. Work to permanently preserve environmental corridors and other environmentally sensitive areas for passive recreation and to protect natural resources.

Policies:

1. Provide neighborhood park facilities that are safely accessible by children within all residential neighborhoods. Neighborhood parks typically range from four to six acres in size and provide amenities such as picnic areas, playground equipment, and playfields suitable for informal youth soccer and softball games.
2. Site new parks in areas that promote neighborhood accessibility and interaction. All new neighborhoods should be within walking distance of public park space.
3. Provide sufficient community park facilities to serve community-wide park and outdoor recreation interests. Typically, community parks range from 10 to 20 acres and include both active and passive recreational amenities, including picnic facilities, playground equipment, and athletic facilities suitable for regulation league activities. League athletic fields in community parks are typically lighted and have restroom facilities and drinking water.
4. In areas of the City that are not currently served by neighborhood parks, work to identify land appropriate for parkland acquisition and the development park equipment and amenities.
5. Integrate drainageways, greenways, and environmental corridors into the City's permanent open space system. Such facilities are suitable for passive recreation use, including nature walking, wildlife habitat preservation, and trail development. Such environmentally sensitive areas should not be used as substitutes for neighborhood or community parks due to the fact that such areas cannot typically be used for active recreation.
6. Where feasible, locate neighborhood and community parks adjacent to or near schools to increase opportunities for the joint use/management of facilities.
7. Provide "special purpose" parks, plazas, and open spaces within commercial and industrial areas that provide aesthetic enhancements in otherwise developed environments.
8. Provide a unified trail system that links neighborhood and community parks, schools, and residential neighborhoods. Where feasible, the trail system should follow or utilize environmental corridors (also see the Transportation chapter and Map 10).
9. Continue to improve and expand access to the Rock and Bark Rivers, without impairing water quality or ecosystems.

10. Coordinate City park, trail, and open space planning and improvements with the towns of Koshkonong and Jefferson and Jefferson County. Where feasible, provide continuous trail and pedestrian access between City and regional recreational facilities.
11. Require that all proposed residential developments dedicate land for public parks or pay a fee-in-lieu of park land dedication and/or park impact fee.
12. Design park facilities to meet the requirements of the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA).
13. Continue to update the Park and Recreation element of this *Plan* every five years to ensure that an adequate number of parks and open spaces are provided to existing and new residents, and to make the City eligible for a wide array of state and federal funding sources.

D. Parks and Recreation Programs and Recommendations

Continue to Establish Active Recreational Park Spaces in New Development Areas and in Areas Currently Underserved by Parks

The City will continue to ensure the logical siting and development of neighborhood and community parks, maximizing opportunities for developer land dedications and the strategic collection and expenditure of fees-in-lieu of land dedication, where appropriate. The City's goal is to provide at least one park within a comfortable walking distance of all homes, and to encourage pedestrian access to these parks via sidewalks, trails, or bicycle lanes. Wherever possible, new park sites should incorporate both active and passive recreational opportunities.

Based on the analysis provided in Figure 9.6, the City will strive to acquire, at minimum, an additional 26 acres of neighborhood and/or community parkland by the year 2013, an additional 9 acres between 2013 and 2018, and yet an additional 23 acres between 2018 and 2030, for a total of an additional 61 acres of parkland by the end of this planning period (2030) to serve the City's projected population. This should be considered a minimum acreage goal.

Map 10 shows several conceptual future park locations, including both neighborhood and potential community park locations. Actual park boundaries and acreage will be determined upon further analysis of these areas.

Neighborhood Parks

Map 10 shows four planned neighborhood parks in areas where future neighborhood development has been planned (see Maps 7 and 8 for Future Land Use), including the northwest side of the City, west of Highway 26 and north and south of Highway 12; the western side of Hoard Farm area; and in the southeast portion of the City, east of Whitewater Avenue.

The City also recognizes that the existing neighborhoods south of Hilltop Trail and east of South Main Street are currently underserved by park land. The City will continue to explore opportunities for establishing a neighborhood park in this area of the City. Map 10 shows two possible locations for a future park. However, the nature of future park facilities in this area of the City may also depend on what types of park facilities the Town of Koshkonong provides for its neighborhoods located south of Hackbarth Road, and how well those Town parks are serving Fort Atkinson residents. A neighborhood park has been indicated for the land south of Hackbarth Road that, at the time this *Plan* was written, was owned by the Fort Atkinson School District. This land presents several limitations for development and may not ultimately be appropriate for a future school. A future park in this location would likely not be owned and maintained by the City of Fort Atkinson, but could serve as an expansion on Briarwood Village Park.

Community Parks/Special Purpose Parks

Map 10 also shows two possible locations for future community/special purpose parks. The first location is in the northeastern portion of the City along the Rock River. Much of the land adjacent to the River is

characterized by floodplains and, therefore, development of the area will be limited. However, the property has a rise that affords lovely views of the River and could serve as an ideal location for a future community/special purpose park. Although acquisition of this land may be explored by the City, Jefferson County should also take an interest in establishing a park in this location. The City will continue to communicate with the County on its long-term park plans and may work with the County to fund the acquisition and potentially the long-term maintenance of a park in this area.

Another community/special purpose park has been shown southwest of the City along the Rock River and adjacent to Highway 26. The County currently has a boat launch in this location, and there may be a possibility for the County to acquire land in the area for a larger-scale park that would offer access to the River. The Park could potentially be located on either the east or west sides of the Highway, or both. Any land acquired on the west side of Highway 26 could easily be connected to the Lake Koshkonong Wildlife Area. Again, the City will explore opportunities to work with the County to acquire parkland in this area.

The City also intends to work with the School District to explore possibilities for a joint community park/school site in the northwest portion of the City. Unlike the two community/special purpose parks just described, this would be a more diverse, active park space including a range of playground, athletic, and open space facilities per typical community park standards described earlier in this chapter.

As the City plans for future parks, it will also explore the appropriate balance between providing small parks within each neighborhood and combining lands to establish larger parks that are more cost effective to maintain and that can contain more, and larger, facilities. Where smaller neighborhood-oriented parks are desired or needed, the City will identify strategies for providing for and maintaining these parks cost effectively. For example, smaller neighborhood parks could be maintained by a Homeowners' Association rather than by the City. Or, small areas of parkland could be acquired at the edges of new subdivisions. When the adjacent land is developed, another piece of parkland abutting the existing parkland from the previous subdivision can be then acquired by City, eventually creating a larger park that is accessible to and serves the residents in all the subdivisions.

Conservancy Parks

As discussed in Section B of this chapter, the City recognizes that the provision of neighborhood, community, and special purpose parks does not serve as substitute for the need to continue to acquire environmentally sensitive lands and to provide nature-based recreation opportunities. As the City grows, it will continue to explore opportunities for establishing new conservancy parks as part of other neighborhood or community park acquisitions, or in other cases as stand alone park areas. Furthermore, linear greenways owned by the City for the purposes of protecting environmental corridors or for stormwater and flood management may also be used for passive recreation and should be explored for their potential to accommodate trails.

The City will also cooperate with surrounding towns, Jefferson County, and WisDNR to facilitate the acquisition of additional land surrounding Rose Lake State Natural Area and to enhance recreational opportunities associated with the area.

As a matter of policy, areas dedicated within a subdivision for stormwater management will not be accepted by the City as dedicated parkland under the provisions of the City's Land Division Ordinance.

Continue to Make Upgrades and Enhancements to Existing Parks

In addition to providing new park facilities throughout the community, the City will continue to ensure that existing parks are well maintained and are upgraded and improved to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors as funds become available. Figure 9.7 below lists the City's planned long-term park improvements. The City also plans to extend the Downtown Riverwalk to at least include Riverview manor and to connect with the Super 8 Motel property. The City will also continue to explore the possibility of expanding the Riverwalk west of the Robert Street Bridge with connections to Rock River Park. Although

this will be challenging, it would enhance alternative access to this busy park. As the City grows, the City will continue to consider opportunities to expand the Riverwalk farther to the west.

Figure 9.7: Planned Improvements to Existing Parks

Park Name	Planned Improvements
Rock River Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Install new playground equipment at Clubhouse ▪ Resurface basketball court ▪ Improve trail routes
Memorial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Storage/concession building improvements ▪ Upgrade parking areas
Ralph Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relocate basketball court ▪ Add trees ▪ Blacktopping of parking lots
Jones Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add playground equipment ▪ Blacktopping of parking lot ▪ Oak tree planting program
Barrie Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fountain
Endl Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Security lighting ▪ Drinking fountain
Lorman Bicentennial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential fishing station ▪ Potential restroom facilities ▪ Add trees
Bark River Nature Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interpretive signage
Haumerson's Pond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add greenspace ▪ Improvement skating area parking and warming house ▪ Aeration of pond
Riverside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvement of fishing and picnic areas
Klement Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expansion of picnic facilities ▪ Lighting for boat launch
Lions Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drinking fountain
Wilcox Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sign
Koshkonong Estates Park (new park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Install playground ▪ Install benches/picnic area (rest stop for trail connection)
Arrowhead Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare Site Master Plan ▪ Initial phase improvements

Promote Bike and Pedestrian Connections Between Parks

In addition to future parks, Map 10 also shows proposed conceptual locations for future trails, multi-use paths, and on and off street bike facilities. Such connections ensure that all residents will have safe and convenient access to the City's park system and will accommodate bike and pedestrian activity for both recreation and transportation. See the Transportation chapter for more details on these facilities.

Consider a Variety of Approaches for Funding Parkland Acquisition and Improvements

Additions and enhancements to the City's park system will be financed through a combination of developer parkland dedications, fees-in-lieu-of-land payments, and possibly park improvement impact fees dollars. Whenever possible, locally generated funding should be used as "match" for State and Federal funds through the Stewardship Program, discussed in more detail below.

Land Dedication, Fees-in-lieu of Dedication, and Park Improvement Fees

The City will continue to require residential developers to dedicate parkland or pay a fee-in-lieu of land dedication. Land dedication and fee-in-lieu of dedication requirements will be based on the number of residential units being developed. Fees-in-lieu of dedication should reflect the current cost of acquiring land suitable for neighborhood park development. In southeastern Wisconsin, fees-in-lieu of land dedication range from \$400 per residential unit to \$1,200 per residential unit. The City will consider updating its land division ordinance as necessary to ensure that fee-in-lieu of dedication requirements reflect up-to-date land costs and parkland level of service standards as described in this chapter.

In addition to land dedication and fees-in-lieu of dedication, many communities in Wisconsin are also charging park improvement fees, which are intended to fund certain park improvements, as permitted under State Statutes. The City will consider the preparation of a Needs Assessment to determine the appropriate amount for park improvements. The information in this chapter can be used as a foundation starting point for this assessment. Park improvement fees typically range between \$300 and \$600 dollars.

Stewardship Grants

The Stewardship Program is a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources program that functions as an "umbrella" or single-source application program for a wide variety of State and Federal funding programs. The WDNR program enables communities to use a single application to apply for funding from numerous funding sources. After a grant application is submitted by a community, WisDNR will determine which funds the project is applicable for.

Most of the Stewardship Program funding sources require a 50-percent or more local "matching" contribution. The "match" can consist of a combination of municipal funds and private sector or foundation donations. The private donations generally need to be funneled through the municipality, with the City or another public agency serving as the administrative agency. On an annual basis, the City will consider potential projects that could be eligible for grant dollars and will consider submitting grant applications for these projects. Applications are typically due on the first of May (unless May first falls on a weekend).

Private Fund Raising

The Fort Atkinson Community Foundation and other private organizations have funded the majority of major park and recreation improvements in the City. The City will continue to coordinate its park acquisition and improvement programming with these organizations in order to maximize the opportunity for using private contributions as a "match" for State and Federal funding assistance.

Chapter Ten: Housing and Neighborhood Development

A community’s housing stock is its most significant long-term capital asset. As is typical in most communities, housing is the largest single land user in the developed portions of Fort Atkinson. Housing not only provides shelter, but neighborhoods also help establish a community’s sense of place. This chapter contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs aimed at providing an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the City, along with high-quality neighborhoods.

A. Existing Housing Framework

From 1990 to 2000, the City’s total housing stock increased 22.6 percent, from 4,074 to 4,995 housing units. As shown in Figure 10.1, most housing units in Fort Atkinson are single family homes. The percentage of multi-family units in the City increased by more than 4 percent from 1990 to 2000, and the percentage of duplexes also increased slightly during this same time frame. This is reflective of trends towards more multiple-family and two-family housing development in recent years, as presented in the Land Use chapter.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Support the development of a variety of housing types, within the context of maintaining a predominantly single family residential community.
- Promote the use of Traditional Neighborhood Design for new neighborhoods/subdivisions.
- Require the preparation of detailed neighborhoods plans before new subdivision development occurs.

Figure 10.1: Housing Types, 1990-2000

Units per Structure	1990 Units	1990 Percent	2000 Units	2000 Percent
Single Family (detached and attached)	2,872	70.5%	3,326	66.5%
Two Family (Duplex)	458	11.2%	587	11.8%
Multi-Family	707	17.4%	1,071	21.5%
Mobile Home	2	<0.1%	11	0.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990 & 2000

Note: The City does not believe any new mobile homes were constructed between 1990 and 2000.

Figure 10.2 compares other 2000 housing stock characteristics in Fort Atkinson with surrounding communities and Jefferson County. In 2000, Fort Atkinson had an average vacancy rate of 4.5 percent, slightly less than the average vacancy rate for surrounding communities. The percent of owner-occupied housing units in the City was 64 percent, which is also slightly less than average for nearby communities. The Average Equalized Value of residential property in Fort Atkinson in 2005 was lower than all other surrounding communities. The City of Fort Atkinson's median monthly rent of \$549 is also less than all nearby communities except for the City of Whitewater. These statistics are all indicative of an affordable housing supply in Fort Atkinson.

Figure 10.2: Household Characteristics Comparison

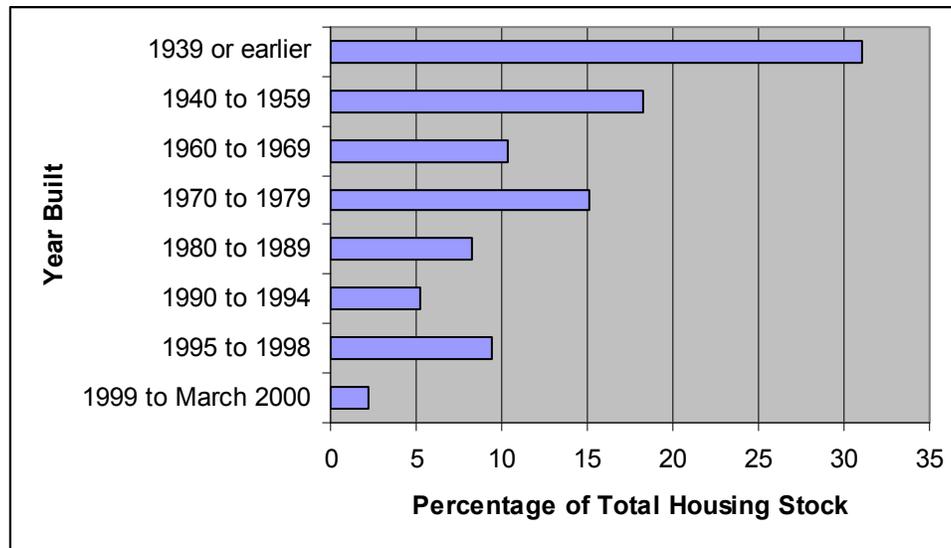
	Total Housing Units	Percent Vacant Housing	Percent Owner-Occupied Housing	Average Equalized Value of Residential Property 2005*	Median Rent
City of Fort Atkinson	4,983	4.5%	64.0%	\$139,360	\$549
Town of Jefferson	805	4.3%	83.3%	\$178,506	\$575
Town of Koshkonong	1,421	12.1%	84.9%	\$148,174	\$731
Village of Johnson Creek	659	5.3%	66.7%	\$160,170	\$683
City of Jefferson	2,934	4.0%	60.8%	\$146,523	\$554
City of Lake Mills	2,065	6.8%	68.9%	\$176,834	\$588
City of Waterloo	1,293	3.9%	71.7%	\$141,994	\$581
City of Watertown	8,330	3.7%	63.5%	\$145,860	\$563
City of Whitewater	4,340	4.8%	36.2%	\$146,019	\$504
Jefferson County	30,109	6.3%	71.7%	\$163,097	\$564

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

* Department of Revenue, 2005 (includes land plus improvements)

Figure 10.3 illustrates the age of the City's housing stock based on 2000 Census data. This characteristic is sometimes used as a measure of the general condition of the local housing supply. More than half of Fort Atkinson's housing was built before 1969, and over 30 percent was built prior to 1940. Only 2.2 percent of Fort Atkinson's housing was constructed from 1990 to 2000. Given that Fort Atkinson has over a hundred years of history it is not surprising that the majority of the housing stock was built before 1969. Nevertheless, a casual survey of the housing stock in the City reveals that housing is in generally good condition, regardless of age.

Figure 10.3: Age of Housing as a Percent of the Total 2000 Housing Stock



B. Housing Programs

Several housing programs are available to Fort Atkinson residents, including, but not limited to, the following. See the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Division of Housing and Community Development webpage (www.commerce.state.wi.us/cd/) for more information on available housing programs.

- **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA):** Offers home mortgage and improvement loans. Further information can be obtained by visiting the WHEDA website at www.wheda.com or by contacting Jefferson County's WHEDA representative at 1-800-628-4833 (at the time this *Plan* was written Jeff McAlister was the County's representative).
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities Housing Program:** Local governments and counties can apply for CDBG funds for a variety of projects to principally benefit low and moderate income households. Eligible projects include home rehabilitation assistance, programs to provide homeownership opportunities to renters, payment of relocation costs, small public facilities projects, demolition or removal of buildings, conversion of buildings to low or moderate income dwelling units, acquisition of property for the construction of low to moderate income dwelling units, site improvements for the construction of low to moderate income dwelling units. This program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Division of Housing and Community Development.
- **HOME Investment Partnerships Program:** Federal grant that provides money to states and localities that can be used to fund a range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people. In Wisconsin, the

program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Division of Housing and Community Development.

- **Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI):** Grantees can use funds to help eligible homebuyer purchase homes by providing downpayment, closing cost, and/or gap financing assistance and to help low to moderate income homeowners prevent foreclosure. Eligible grantees include governments (local or county), Indian tribes, nonprofit corporations, for-profit corporations, a cooperative, a religious society, a housing authority, including a redevelopment authority or housing and community development authority. For information contact the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Division of Housing and Community Development at 608-267-6904 or visit the website at www.commerce.state.wi.us/cd/
- **HOME Consortium:** A 4-county governmental body that was established to help advance home ownership opportunities and programs for low-income residents. More information about this program can be found at www.homeconsortium.com or by contacting the Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development at 608-258-5560 ext. 29

C. Existing Neighborhoods

The City's existing neighborhoods provide a source of affordable housing, a potential template for future residential development, and help to define the character of the City. As in most small communities in Wisconsin, Fort Atkinson's most established neighborhoods are located surrounding the downtown. Built on small lots conforming to a linear and interconnected street pattern, these neighborhoods are also characterized by tree lined streets and primarily single-family homes. Small areas of multi-family development are mostly found in the southern half of the City and immediately surrounding the downtown.

Newer residential subdivisions are located along the periphery of the City, and are characterized by a more curvilinear street pattern, an increased number of cul-de-sacs, and slightly larger lots. Although comprised mostly of single family homes, two-family and multi-family development has also been placed into new residential areas.

D. Housing and Neighborhood Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Provide a variety of housing and neighborhood options at a range of designs, densities and costs to accommodate the needs of existing and future residents.

Objectives:

1. Encourage new neighborhoods to include a range of housing types, densities, and costs.
2. Encourage a mix of high-quality affordable housing options, while maintaining the predominately single family residential character of the City.
3. Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design in new neighborhoods.
4. Promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock.

Policies:

1. Based on the land demand analysis included in the Land Use chapter of this *Plan* and as shown on the Future Land Use maps, plan for a sufficient supply of developable land for housing for a variety of

income levels (including low and moderate income residents) and age groups (including young couples and seniors).

2. Direct new City housing to areas that have convenient access to commercial and recreational facilities, transportation systems, schools, parks, shopping, and jobs.
3. Organize neighborhoods around community gathering places, mixed use centers, and green spaces; and ensure interconnectivity between neighborhoods and the broader City.
4. To encourage social interaction and a better sense of place, promote the design of new City neighborhoods in accordance with Traditional Neighborhood Design principles, as described later in this chapter.



Home at the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and Adams Street

5. When required, update the zoning and subdivision ordinances to provide a unique zoning district to accommodate neighborhoods that follow Traditional Neighborhood Design principles. All Wisconsin communities with a population of 12,500 and greater are required to have such a district available in their ordinance.
6. Encourage initiatives that strengthen existing neighborhoods through the maintenance of the housing stock; promotion of home ownership; creative reuse of vacant or under-utilized buildings; infill development; and development, maintenance, and improvement of parks and street infrastructure.
7. Require that the development of new neighborhoods matches the City's historic housing mix. In general, not less than 65 percent of all new housing units in any new Planned Neighborhood represented on Map 7 should be single family detached homes.
8. Phase residential development in a manner consistent with public facility and service capacity.
9. Plan for multi-family housing in parts of the City where streets and sidewalks can handle increased amounts of traffic; there are adequate parks, open spaces, shopping, and civic facilities existing or planned nearby; and the utility system and schools in the area have sufficient capacity.
10. Require high-quality design for multi-family developments.
11. Ensure that each new residential development incorporates an adequate mix of housing styles, layouts, and colors to avoid monotony.
12. Promote development of an adequate supply of high-quality senior housing options. Direct senior housing developments to areas that are close to services that seniors typically require. Logical locations may include the downtown area, the Madison Avenue corridor near one of the two grocery stores, and the health care center area near High Street.
13. Promote residential uses in the upper stories of Downtown buildings in an effort to enhance the viability and vitality of the Downtown area.

14. Limit housing development in rural areas at and beyond the City's fringe, except in areas specifically shown for residential development on Map 8.

E. Housing and Neighborhood Development Programs and Recommendations

Support the Provision of Quality Living Environments

The City will continue to support policies and programs that provide high-quality, affordable housing options and neighborhood settings in the community. The following strategies will be explored:

- **Promote the maintenance of older neighborhoods:** The existing housing stock in Fort Atkinson is an important component of the affordable housing supply, provided that housing continues to be well maintained. This can be accomplished through:
 - Using Community Development Block Grants, loans, or other programs described earlier in this chapter for housing rehabilitation and to promote more home ownership in older neighborhoods.
 - Revisiting zoning standards (e.g., setbacks) for mostly built-up neighborhoods to make sure the zoning standards do not discourage appropriate new home construction or additions.
 - Continuing ongoing maintenance of older neighborhoods through sidewalk replacement, street resurfacing, park equipment replacement, and other similar infrastructure initiatives.

- **Support new housing downtown:** As part of ongoing downtown revitalization efforts, the City will continue to emphasize the upgrade and conversion of upper story spaces into housing. The City will also consider revising the zoning ordinance to allow upper story housing by right in the downtown. Also, additional downtown redevelopment sites identified on Map 7 and presented in the Land Use chapter may be appropriate for additional housing.



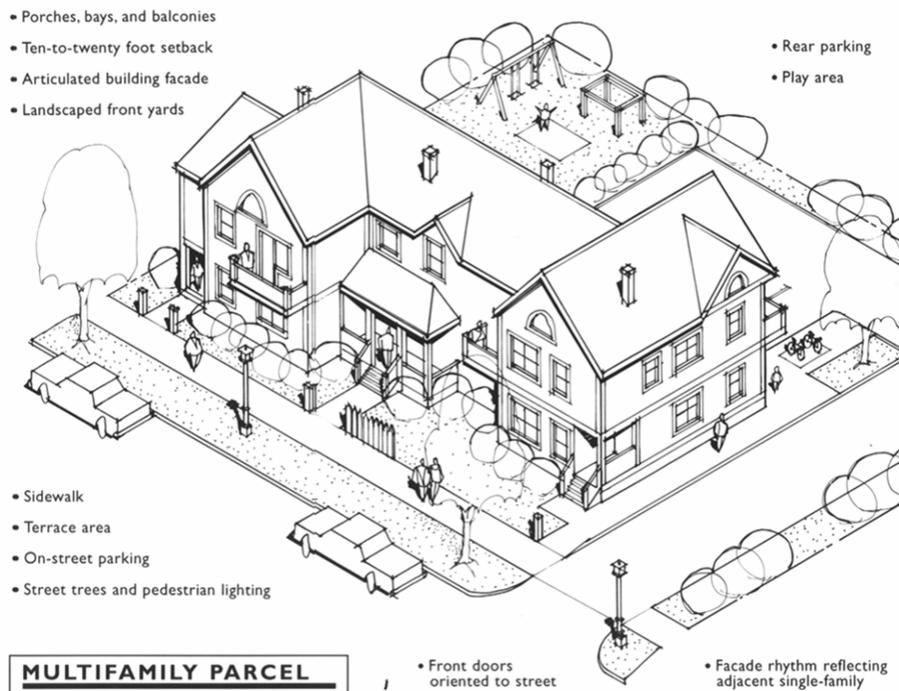
New waterfront condos at the northwest corner of South Water Street and Grant Street

- **Encourage small new lot sizes:** The City will encourage residential lot sizes smaller than 10,000 square feet, provided that house plans or design standards are provided that are suited for those sized lots and promote high-quality design (this could be a subdivision ordinance requirement). Smaller lot sizes result in lower development costs, lower lot prices, and a more compact land use pattern that uses land more wisely. Lots as small as 7,000 square feet and as narrow as 50 feet, particularly when combined with rear alley access, are becoming increasingly common in southern Wisconsin (also see description of Traditional Neighborhood Design below).
- **Require well-designed multi-family housing:** Higher density housing that complements the character of surrounding neighborhoods can be an important component of the affordable housing stock. Multi-family housing includes both renter-occupied and owner-occupied (e.g., condos, townhouses) housing

options. Too often, resistance to higher density housing is a result of people's experience with poorly designed multi-family developments that do not reflect the character of the community, or are generally unattractive. To address these issues, the City will continue to enforce design standards for these types of developments, similar to those presented in Figure 10.4, and ensure that their location and quantity is compatible with the setting.

- **Promote “live-work” opportunities:** In Fort Atkinson, specifically intended live-work, mixed-use development projects may be appropriate as a redevelopment project in the northeast side of the City on the “Northeast Commercial site”: (1309 North High Street) and in the Downtown. More information on these opportunities, along with a definition of live-work development is included in the Economic Development chapter. More broadly, the City intends to revisit its zoning standards related to home occupations to assure that they allow for an appropriate range of options, while still protecting the integrity of the surrounding neighborhood.

Figure 10.4: Recommended Design Standards for Multi-Family Developments



Promote Traditional Neighborhood Design for New Neighborhoods

For areas designated as “Planned Neighborhoods” on the Future Land Use maps, the City intends to promote what is commonly referred to as Traditional Neighborhood Design. The implementation of Traditional Neighborhood Design will:

- Integrate a diversity of high-quality housing types to accommodate a variety of lifestyles and age groups;
- Ensure the long-term preservation of Fort Atkinson’s small-city character;
- Provide housing, parks, and schools within walking distance of shops, services, and/or jobs;
- Blend the convenience of the automobile with the creation of safe, comfortable places to walk and bike;
- Preserve environmental systems that define, sustain, and connect neighborhoods and communities.
- Provide neighborhoods that make efficient use of land and reflect neighborhood styles common in communities before World War II.



Homes in Grandview Commons, Madison front onto a neighborhood park instead of the street

In the design and approval of new neighborhoods (subdivisions), the City and developers should employ the following Traditional Neighborhood Design principles.

- **Establish Community Gathering Places:** Design neighborhoods around community gathering places such as parks, public squares, outdoor dining establishments, schools, churches, and other community facilities.
- **Provide Housing Variety:** Incorporate a variety of housing types in a compact and interconnected form, paying particular attention to the scale of buildings, walking distances, and the design of other neighborhood features such as street lights and signage. Still, at least 65 percent of housing should be in single family detached form.
- **Blend Land Uses:** Integrate neighborhood-scale commercial and



Mixed use centers and community gathering spots are hallmarks of traditional neighborhood design

office uses and other small-scale community facilities in appropriate locations, generally along busier streets and intersections to draw on a broader market. Bring housing into upper stories of such developments, where appropriate.

- **Promote Walkability:** Design the neighborhood to facilitate pedestrian movement and enhance citizen mobility within the neighborhood and between the neighborhood and other nearby destinations, such as parks, schools, and business and job districts. Provide sidewalks and/or paths along all streets, and multi-use trails in the environmental corridor and park network. Require street trees to be planted along all new streets.
- **Promote Street Connectivity:** Interconnect nearly all streets both within the neighborhood and to existing and future adjoining neighborhoods. Minimize the creation of cul-de-sacs to places where environmental features and odd property configurations require them.



Modest front yard setbacks, front porches, and pedestrian walkways are characteristic of traditional neighborhood streetscapes

- **Calm Traffic:** Accommodate on-street parking and promote narrower streets to calm traffic and increase pedestrian safety. Consider other traffic calming approaches on a case-by-case basis, such as traffic circles and medians. Integrate landscaped medians and boulevards into new neighborhood entryways and collector streets, using the City’s mature neighborhoods as a model (e.g., Blackhawk Drive, Endl Boulevards). These new boulevards may also serve stormwater management functions.



Example of a neighborhood street cross section: narrow streets and on-street parking help calm traffic and increase pedestrian safety

- **Establish Street Activity:** Focus new homes toward the street, and incorporate site and building design strategies like decreased setbacks, front porches, balconies, and other interesting architectural features that help create a safe, pleasant walking environment. Set back garages from the main body of the house wherever possible and incorporate alley-loaded garage options where practical.

- **Intertwine Natural Areas:** Integrate environmental features into the neighborhood as common open spaces for active or passive recreation, public gathering spots, or flood protection and stormwater management. Provide adequate vegetated buffers between development and natural features.

In order to implement these standards, the City will consider the following amendments to its zoning ordinance:

- Prepare a Traditional Neighborhood Design zoning district, learning from the experience of other communities in the area that have already adopted a similar ordinance. Under Wisconsin Statutes, all cities and villages with a population of 12,500 or greater must adopt a zoning district to accommodate traditional neighborhood design principles.
- Support the development of mixed use buildings and sites (e.g., first floor commercial, upstairs apartments) by allowing such uses as permitted-by-right in neighborhood commercial and a conditional uses in multiple family zoning districts.
- Incorporate design standards for multiple family housing in the zoning ordinance to ensure high-quality multi-family components of these neighborhoods(see Figure 10.4).
- Consider anti-monotony and other design standards in the zoning ordinance for single family subdivisions, to enhance architectural diversity and avoid “garage-scape” street scenes.



Street trees and pedestrian lighting, modest building setbacks, landscaped front yards, balconies and porches are all characteristics of traditional neighborhood design



The Grandview Commons subdivision in Madison exhibits many features of Traditional Neighborhood Design, including narrow, interconnected streets, alley loaded garages, reduced building setbacks, a mix of uses and housing types, central open space, street trees, and sidewalks.

Require Neighborhood Development Plans in Advance of Development

The Land Use chapter includes a description of the “Planned Neighborhood” future land use category, which is intended to provide for a variety of housing choices and a mix of non-residential uses such as parks, schools, religious institutions, and small-scale shopping and service areas. These areas are mapped on Maps 7 and 8 for future development in different parts of the City.

Because of the complexity associated with developing well-thought-out “Planned Neighborhood” areas, especially on the northwest side, and the earlier recommendations for Traditional Neighborhood Design approaches in these areas, the City will require detailed neighborhood development plans to further guide development of these areas. A neighborhood development plan should be prepared by a developer, a group of property owners, or the City in advance of the approval of individual subdivision plats within the area it covers.

Neighborhood development plans specify characteristics such as land use mix, density, street layouts, open space, and stormwater management features in greater detail than is possible within this *Comprehensive Plan*. These plans also suggest important connections between individual property ownerships and future subdivision plats. Neighborhood development plans should ideally be adopted as a detailed component of the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* once they are completed and accepted by the City.

Support the Development of Cooperative Housing or Co-Housing in the City

To support affordable and unique housing options, the City will remain open to the idea of cooperative housing or co-housing options in appropriate locations.

Residents of a housing cooperative own a share in a corporation that owns or leases the buildings and/or land in which they live. All shareholders are entitled to live in a specific home or unit on the property and have a vote in the corporation. Shareholders pay for their proportionate share of the amount it costs to run the cooperative, including underlying mortgage payments, property taxes, management and maintenance costs, insurance, utilities, and costs associated with any reserve funds. Although housing cooperatives can be comprised of any housing type—including townhouses, apartments, single-family homes, and senior housing units—the common thread among all co-ops is democratic control by all members of the cooperative. This is typically accomplished by maintaining volunteer boards of directors that are elected by all co-op members. Many co-ops also have committees that are responsible for overseeing things like activities and newsletters. Maintenance is either handled by co-op members or by a hired manager or management company.

There are also types of housing arrangements that are *similar* to housing cooperatives in that they are democratically run by residents, but they may or may not be cooperatively owned. These include co-housing. Co-housing offers residents a strong community environment. They often have extensive common amenities, such as a common house and common open space and recreation areas. Co-housing developments are managed by the residents, but few are cooperatively owned. Rather, they are typically set up like condominiums.

Chapter Eleven: Economic Development

This chapter contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs to promote the retention and stabilization of the City's economic base. This chapter includes an assessment of new businesses and industries desired in the City, an assessment of the community's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and recommended strategies for economic development and redevelopment.

A. Economic Development Framework

Labor Force

The City's labor force is the portion of the population employed or available for work. It includes people who are in the armed forces, employed, unemployed, or actively seeking employment. According to 2000 U.S Census data, 6,619 residents, or 72.1 percent, of City residents age 16 or older were in the labor force. Of this total, 300 residents (or 3.3% of the labor force) were unemployed.

The percentage of the City's labor force employed by sector in 2000 is shown in Figure 11.1. Almost 30 percent of Fort Atkinson's labor force is employed in the manufacturing sector, and over 20 percent in the educational, health, and social services sector. This data suggests that manufacturing remains a major part of Fort Atkinson's economy, but is also indicative of strong health care and education sectors.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Work with existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs to advance economic growth.
- Promote the development and expansion of the Robert Klement Business Park in a manner that allows for economic growth while preserving nearby natural features.
- Consider preparing a corridor plan for Janesville Avenue to guide redevelopment and City investments there.
- Continue to invest in downtown redevelopment and rehabilitation efforts.
- Help facilitate the growth of the Fort Healthcare campus in a way that preserves the integrity of the neighborhood surrounding the existing campus.

Figure 11.1: Occupational Groups, 2000

Occupational Group	Percentage of Labor Force
Manufacturing	27.5%
Educational, health and social services	20.2%
Retail trade	14.3%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	8.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management	5.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	4.3%
Construction	3.9%
Other services (except public administration)	3.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.3%
Wholesale trade	3.1%
Information	3.0%
Public administration	2.6%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Figure 11.2: Jefferson County Employment Projections

	2006	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total Employment: Jefferson County	49,640	52,440	56,000	59,660	63,430	67,330
Farm Employment	1,990	1,960	1,930	1,900	1,860	1,830
Agricultural Services	640	700	770	840	910	980
Mining	30	30	30	30	30	30
Construction	2,420	2,620	2,860	3,100	3,340	3,570
Manufacturing	11,210	11,430	11,730	12,050	12,410	12,790
Transportation, Communication, and Public Utilities	2,210	2,370	2,570	2,770	2,980	3,200
Wholesale Trade	1,790	1,860	1,960	2,060	2,170	2,290
Retail Trade	9,760	10,280	10,940	11,630	12,330	13,070
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	2,240	2,230	2,220	2,210	2,210	2,220
Services	12,660	14,000	15,680	17,380	19,100	20,850
Federal Civilian Government	200	190	190	180	170	170
Federal Military Government	260	260	260	260	260	260
State and Local Government	4,230	4,520	4,890	5,270	5,660	6,060

Source: Woods & Poole Economics: 2006 State Profile, Wisconsin

Jefferson County employment projections were provided by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., a regional economic and demographics analysis firm (Figure 11.2). These data predict the County's total employment to grow approximately 36 percent by the year 2030. Over this time period, the most significant increase in jobs is projected to be in the service sector (65 percent increase). By 2030 the percentage of employees working on farms is projected to decrease by eight percent. Projections are not available at the City level.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is another characteristic of a community's labor force. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, more than 87 percent of the City's population age 25 and older had attained a high school level education or higher. This percentage is higher than most of the other communities in the area, except for the City of Lake Mills (88.5 percent) and the Town of Koshkonong (87.3 percent). In addition, the percentage of residents with a college degree was higher than the average for most other surrounding communities.

Figure 11.3: Educational Attainment, 2000

	Percent High School Graduates	Percent Bachelor's Degree or Higher
City of Fort Atkinson	87.1%	19.9%
Town of Jefferson	79.4%	12.4%
Town of Koshkonong	87.3%	20.4%
Village of Johnson Creek	85.5%	16.3%
City of Jefferson	78.3%	12.9%
City of Lake Mills	88.5%	26.8%
City of Waterloo	83.0%	16.0%
City of Watertown	81.9%	16.2%
City of Whitewater	81.3%	31.8%
Jefferson County	84.7%	17.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Income Data

Figure 11.4 presents income statistics for the City of Fort Atkinson and nearby communities. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, the City's median household income was \$43,807, which is slightly below most other surrounding communities. The City's per capita income was \$21,008, which is about average when compared to surrounding communities. Per capita income is defined as the total of all personal incomes in the City, divided by the total population. This is used as an overall measure of the wealth of a community's population. This indicates that City of Fort Atkinson residents have a relatively comparable per capita income to residents of other communities in the area.

Figure 11.4: Income Comparisons

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income
City of Fort Atkinson	\$43,807	\$21,008
Town of Jefferson	\$52,813	\$23,327
Town of Koshkonong	\$60,000	\$24,100
Village of Johnson Creek	\$45,694	\$19,671
City of Jefferson	\$40,962	\$19,124
City of Lake Mills	\$44,132	\$21,929
City of Waterloo	\$49,221	\$22,099
City of Watertown	\$42,562	\$18,977
City of Whitewater	\$31,793	\$13,965
Jefferson County	\$46,901	\$21,236

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Commuting Patterns

According to 2000 U.S. Census data, Fort Atkinson residents spent an average of 16 minutes commuting to work. This is low relative to other communities in the area, suggesting that the community has a relatively strong local job base. More than 23 percent of the City's workers traveled outside of Jefferson County for employment. Over 82 percent of workers traveled to work alone, while approximately 10 percent carpooled.

B. Economic Base Analysis

The City of Fort Atkinson has several significant industries, many of which are manufacturing industries with over 100 employees. Figure 11.5 lists the City's largest private employers. The School District is the largest public employer.

Figure 11.5: Major Private Sector Employers

Employer	Product or Service	Number of Employees in Fort Atkinson
Fort HealthCare Inc	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	Over 1,000
Terra Resource Group	Professional Employer Organizations	500 - 999
Nasco	Professional Equipment Wholesaler	250 - 499
Space Saver	Office Furniture Manufacturing	250 - 499
Redi-Serve	Frozen Specialty Food Manufacturing	250 - 499
Jones Dairy Farm	Meat Processed from Carcasses	250 - 499
The Fireside Inc.	Theater Companies and Dinner Theaters	250 - 499
Cygnus Business Media Inc.	Periodical Publishers	100 - 249
McCain USA	Frozen Specialty Food Manufacturing	100 - 249
Highsmith Inc.	Mail-Order Houses	100 - 249

Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Wisconsin DNR's Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program maintains a list of contaminated sites, or brownfields, in the state. The DNR defines brownfields as "abandoned or underutilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination." Examples of brownfields might include a large abandoned industrial site or a small corner gas station. Properties listed in the DNR database are self-reported, and do not necessarily represent a comprehensive listing of possible brownfields in a community.

According to the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS), as of June 2007 there were 12 contaminated sites in the City of Fort Atkinson that were either in need of clean up or where clean up was already underway. Of the 12 incidents shown, 10 are classified as LUSTs, or leaking underground storage tanks. These tanks are, or were, known to be contaminating the soil and/or groundwater with petroleum. Two sites in the Fort Atkinson area are classified as environmental repair, or ERP sites. These sites are often times older and have been releasing contaminants to the soil, groundwater, or air over a long period of time. One of the ERPs is located in the west central portion of the City, and the second ERP is located in the downtown. Many of the properties on the BRRTS list will need special attention for successful redevelopment to occur.

The locations of these environmentally contaminated sites were considered when making the land use recommendations in this *Plan*. The City encourages remediation and redevelopment of these sites for economic development where appropriate, and will require appropriate remediation as a condition of any development approval.

State and County Economic Development Programs

The state's Community Based Economic Development Program (CBED) provides funding assistance to local governments and community-based organizations that undertake planning, development and technical assistance projects that support business development. Using CBED program funds, local governments can finance economic development plans, small business and technology-based incubator grants, revolving loan programs, and entrepreneur training programs for at-risk youth. Any Wisconsin city, village, town, county, tribe or community-based organization is eligible to apply for grant funding. Funds are available on an annual basis through a competitive application process. Some grants must be matched by local funds. Application materials are available from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Certified Development Company (504) Loan Program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. 504 loans can be used to fund land purchases and improvements, grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping, construction of new facilities, or modernizing, renovating or converting existing facilities. A Certified Development Company (CDC) is a nonprofit corporation set up to contribute to the economic development of its community.

The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium (JCEDC) serves as the lead economic development organization in Jefferson County. The Consortium was formed in June 2003 to implement Jefferson's Overall Economic Development Program and to achieve the economic development goals of the County. Its overall goals are to foster and encourage responsible, sustainable economic development activities that result in job creation, job retention, increase the tax base and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Jefferson County. The JCEDC is a non-profit organization that supports the business community and maintains a positive business climate. In this effort, JCEDC offers training programs and has assisted numerous businesses in obtaining financing information from banks, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Business Development, the Women Business Initiative Corporation, and other financing sources. In 2007, the JCEDC hired Vandewalle & Associates to undertake a county-wide economic positioning initiative, which will ultimately lead to the development of a vision and framework for economic development in Jefferson County and a strategy for implementing the vision.

City Economic Development Groups and Programs

Business development in the City is guided by the long-standing Fort Atkinson Area Industrial Development Corporation (FAIDC), which was incorporated in 1937 as a private stock corporation. FAIDC's mission is "to promote and foster positive economic development in the common interest of the Fort Atkinson community." FAIDC is guided by a board of directors and an executive committee that makes recommendations to the City Council on business retention and expansion, land acquisition for business development, and marketing.

The City also has a strong Chamber of Commerce, which has its headquarters in downtown Fort Atkinson. Along with providing value-added services and benefits for its members, the Chamber has a progressive and consistent business plan that covers economic development, tourism development and promotion, workforce development, and government relations and advocacy. The Chamber publishes a monthly newsletter "Focus on Fort Atkinson" which is distributed to over 600 area business owners and executives. The Chamber maintains an up-to-date and comprehensive website, and produces numerous promotional pieces including a "Quality of Life Book," intended to target people and businesses interested in relocating to Fort Atkinson. The book provides information on education, housing, health care, businesses, and recreation in the City. The Tourism Department promotes tourism for economic benefit, community awareness and business opportunities. The Chamber is also a clearing house for inquiries concerning retail/commercial and industrial space needs. Other programs facilitated by the Chamber include a downtown storefront façade improvement loan program, a gift certificate program that generates well over \$100,000 into the retail sector annually. The Chamber works to attract, develop and retain a quality workforce through well-established school-business partnerships. Over all, the Chamber works to promote, enhance and celebrate that which makes Fort Atkinson a very special place—the community's quality of life.

The City's Revolving Loan Fund was established in 1987 using grant monies from Wisconsin's Community Development Block Grant Program and has been used to provide a source of financing for approximately fifteen eligible businesses wishing to expand in Fort Atkinson, or relocate here from another community.

The City of Fort Atkinson has two active Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) districts. TIF is used as a funding tool used to facilitate desired development that would not happen "but for" the use of TIF. Incremental tax dollars collected from rising property values within a TIF district are used to finance public improvements and/or to narrow an evident funding gap for a private development investment.

TIF District #6 was established in 1999. The district encompasses 211.7 acres and lies south of Hackbarth Road between Janesville Road and Poeppel Road. The purpose of establishing the district was to finance the land acquisition costs and infrastructure improvements necessary to develop Phase 1 of the Robert L. Klement Business Park, located at the south end of the City of Fort Atkinson.

TIF District #7 was established in 2000 and amended in 2003 and encompasses lands in the City's downtown business district. The district generally lies east of the Glacial River Trail, west of South High and Jefferson Streets, south of North Forth Street and north of South Third Street. The District was established to finance acquisition costs, infrastructure improvements and development assistance to revitalize portions of the downtown business district and riverfront.

C. Assessment of Desired Economic Development Focus

In order to adequately assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that would be desirable in Fort Atkinson, it is important to first understand the City's assets, and how to capitalize on those assets by identifying strengths and weaknesses for economic development (Figure 11.6). The Programs and Recommendations section below outlines the City's desired economic development focus for different areas of the City.

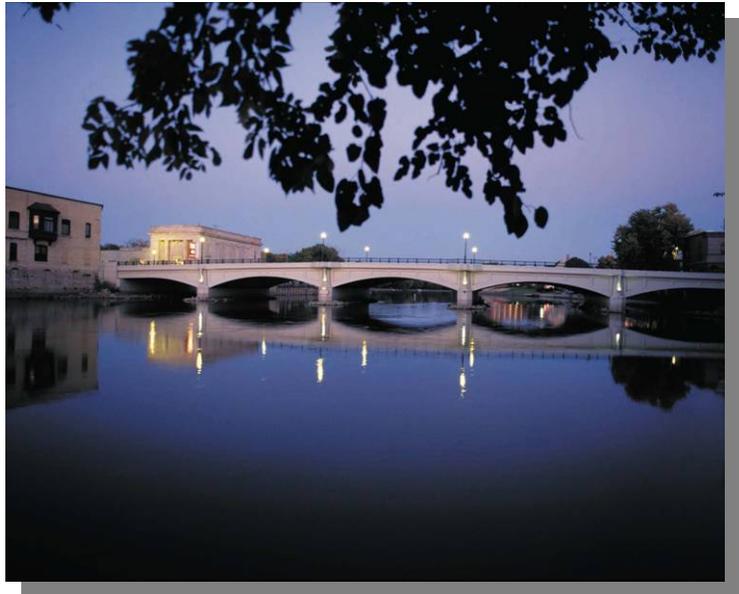


Figure 11.6: Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Located at the intersection of USH 12 and STH 26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is competition from communities that are located closer to Madison, Milwaukee, or Chicago
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ STH 26 is being expanded in the region, which will increase traffic on this highway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not on Interstate system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good regional location, situated between Madison and Milwaukee with easy access to Chicago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental limitations, historic farms, and rural development limit growth directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good diversity of existing businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USH 12 meanders through center of City
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to a variety of local agricultural products and natural resources (e.g. Rock River) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong health care cluster 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attractive and active downtown 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three business parks and several larger employers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional tourist attractions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Madison Area Technical College satellite campus in the City 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good school system, including new state-of-the-art high school 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active Chamber of Commerce 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong Industrial Development Corporation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available utility infrastructure 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affordable housing supply 	

D. Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:
Attract and retain businesses that capitalize on the City’s location and resources, enhance the City’s character, continue to diversify the tax base and jobs, promote the City as a regional tourism destination, and serve resident needs.

Objectives:

1. Enhance quality of life throughout the City by promoting an economically sustainable community.
2. Promote the downtown as a commercial and civic center for the City.
3. Work to accommodate high-quality retail and employment opportunities.
4. Plan for an adequate supply of improved land to accommodate future commercial and industrial development.

Policies:

1. Provide for and support infrastructure improvements that foster desired types of economic activity, including commercial, office, and industrial businesses.

2. Support mixed-use development projects that integrate non-residential and residential uses into high-quality, unified places, both in the downtown and along other major corridors in the City, including, Madison Avenue, Janesville Avenue, and Whitewater Avenue. Mixed use areas provide nodes of concentrated activity and integrate people with jobs, services, and shopping in a pedestrian-friendly environment (also see the Land Use chapter).
3. Discourage unplanned, strip commercial development, and an overabundance of competing commercial signs along major roadways. Instead, provide new shopping and commercial service opportunities in concentrated, planned areas serving the community and surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Plan for smaller-scale neighborhood commercial developments convenient to and integrated with residential neighborhoods, without impairing neighborhood character.
5. Support proposals that provide a range of commercial opportunities while still considering the importance of preserving the City's character, existing locally owned businesses, and the viability of the downtown.
6. Maintain business and industrial parks that are attractive, contribute to the economic stability of the area, and are compatible with the preservation of natural and cultural resources.
7. Encourage the expansion of bio-based and/or green industries, particularly in the Robert L. Klement Business Park.
8. Locate industries on sites and in areas where they have adequate expansion space to meet anticipated future needs.
9. Continue the strategic use of tax increment financing to promote new industrial development, expansion and relocation of existing industries, and redevelopment.
10. Promote a vital and healthy downtown by encouraging mixed-use redevelopment and reuse of vacant and underused buildings and sites and by implementing public improvement and streetscaping plans, as described in the City's TIF plan.
11. Support the clean up of brownfield sites for economic reuse.
12. Continue to invest in the redevelopment of key sites in the downtown and in the Madison, Whitewater, High, and Janesville Avenue corridors, actively recruit new and complementary businesses, and increase and diversify opportunities for downtown housing.
13. Collaborate with Fort HealthCare on facility expansion and upgrading, either on-site or in a different location in Fort Atkinson. If the HealthCare campus remains in its existing location, the City will also work Fort HealthCare to improve directional signage to the facilities, which, given their location within a residential neighborhood and removed from key transportation corridors, are otherwise difficult to find.
14. Reserve the area north of the Hoard Farm—near the interchange and airport—for long-term economic development. Work with the Hoard Farm property owners and any other entities to explore possible future development along the High Street corridor portions of that property.
15. Work with existing businesses and industries to ensure their continued health and ability to grow, in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce.



Entrance to Fort Memorial Hospital

16. Continue to rely on the Industrial Development Corporation as a conduit for economic expansion and diversification in the City, and the Chamber of Commerce as a key partner in downtown redevelopment.
17. Work with other communities in Jefferson County on regional economic development initiatives, such as the Jefferson County regional economic positioning project initiated in 2007.
18. Incorporate standards for commercial and industrial building and site design into the zoning ordinance. Amend exterior lighting and signage ordinances as necessary to emphasize a preference for “dark sky” lighting and low-key signage like monument signs.
19. Consider a zoning ordinance amendment that would establish limits on, and/or greater levels of review (e.g. conditional use permits) and increased performance standards for, commercial land uses sometimes considered undesirable in mixed use or neighborhood settings.

E. Economic Development Programs and Recommendations

Work with Existing Local Businesses to Promote Economic Growth

Some of the City’s most important economic assets are its existing local businesses, and it is far easier to retain established businesses and industries than to recruit new businesses. Most employment growth in any community occurs through existing business expansion. The City, in collaboration with the FAIDC and Chamber, will continue to actively facilitate and encourage the growth of existing Fort Atkinson businesses, either at existing or larger sites in the community. The City also intends to work in collaboration with the Chamber and local business owners to research, identify, and address obstacles to local business development and to develop future economic development strategies and the marketing of the City for new business.

Recruit Businesses that Complement Existing Businesses and Fill Unmet Local Needs

The City will collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce and the FAIDC to recruit new businesses that advance economic growth and diversity in Fort Atkinson. Specifically, the City will focus on the following business recruitment opportunities:

- Businesses that complement, support, and help grow the local health care industry. This may include satellite medical offices and clinics, pharmacies, fitness services, and other businesses and industries that support the health services industry.
- Retail, dining, and entertainment uses to complement those that already exist in the downtown and along Janesville and Madison Avenues (also see recommendation below related to the downtown).
- Specialty shops and smaller-scale local businesses (e.g. bakery). Such uses are appropriate in the downtown and also in neighborhood business and mixed use centers that serve adjacent neighborhoods.
- Small-scale and up-scale lodging facilities to encourage visitors to stay in the City for a 2nd night, such as mid- to higher-end hotels, boutique inns, and beds and breakfasts.
- Businesses that promote outdoor recreation and other tourism related businesses, like paddling outfitters or bike shops.
- Other service related businesses, as necessary to meet residents’ daily needs, such as a second grocery store on the south side of the City.

The City will continue and enhance the use of web-based marketing approaches, which are being used more and more often as an initial site/community screening tool by businesses seeking new locations.

Collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Development Corporation will also be central in implementing this recommendation.

Grow the Economy by Enhancing Quality of Life

An important and sometimes overlooked approach to promoting economic development is maintaining a high quality of life for residents and business owners. Amenities and services such as quality housing, attractive neighborhoods, a strong downtown, parks and trails, and good schools draw employers and workers to a community. As well as providing new services and amenities, the City intends to continue to invest in its many existing assets, such as the downtown, the School District, and the Fort Healthcare campus.

In addition to amenities and services, the external appearance of the City will make it a more desirable place to live, work, and own a business. The City will continue to capitalize on its abundance of natural amenities, including the Rock River to provide an exceptional location for industry. Streetscaping, gateway improvements, community entry and wayfinding signage, parks, trails, and unique amenities like the Riverwalk will also contribute to this effort.

The City will also support strategies to encourage Fort Atkinson High School graduates to return to the community later in life as they begin to form families. One example may be for the City to collaborate with the School District to use high school reunions as an opportunity to showcase and celebrate how the City has evolved since the students graduated high school. This may involve holding the event in a new City park or providing literature on the City at the event.

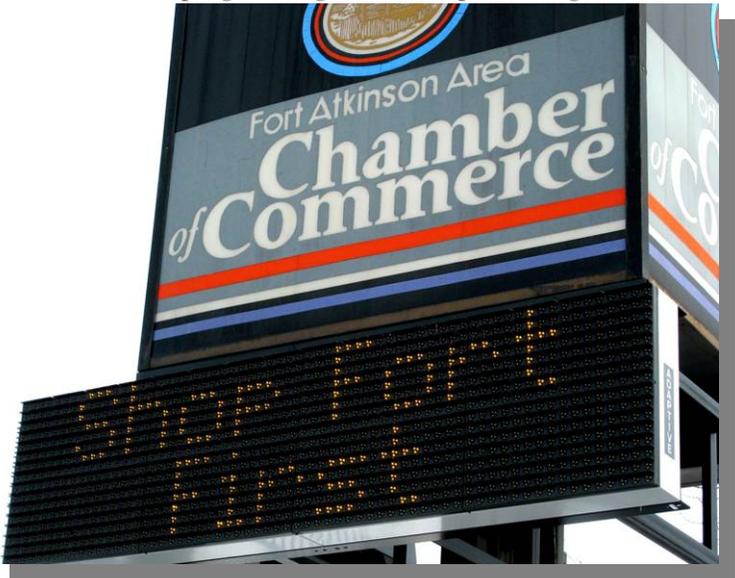
Support the Expansion of Technical Education

To help market the City for business growth, the City will also support the expanded facilities and profile of the Madison Area Technical College's (MATC) satellite campus in Fort Atkinson and facilitate the design of a custom training curriculum for Fort Atkinson businesses and coordination on educational programming with the School District. Proposed MATC's expansion in Fort Atkinson is intended to focus on public safety, high-tech manufacturing, and medical training, which is supportive of the type of business growth desired by the City, as described above and throughout this chapter.

Encourage Entrepreneurship Using a Variety of Approaches

The City, in collaboration with the FAIDC and the Chamber of Commerce, will explore ways of cultivating entrepreneurship and fostering new businesses started by area residents. Entrepreneurs are defined by their ability to create new products, services, or methods of production to meet local needs. Entrepreneurship can take many forms, ranging from the part-time home occupation to the start-up businesses that grow into larger firms. Individually or collectively, these activities can greatly enhance the overall economic health of the community. The following approaches are advised to foster greater entrepreneurial activity in Fort Atkinson:

- **Promote Live-Work opportunities in appropriate locations in the City** (see sidebar). In Fort Atkinson, live-work, mixed-use development projects may be appropriate in and around the downtown or as a redevelopment project on the northeast commercial site (1309 North High Street). In support of the local art scene, the promotion of live-work artisan spaces could be a unique and exciting addition to Downtown Fort Atkinson. On the northeast commercial site (1309 North High Street), redevelopment may include a different sort of live-work unit, or may be geared more towards providing housing for nearby employment centers.
- **Create and foster business incubator space.** This may be in the form of a structure that is leased to a new or small business on terms highly favorable to the tenant. This allows new business to direct more revenue into growing a business and building a reserve of capital that will eventually allow the business to construct or move to a permanent site. Incubators can also be "created" formally or informally in older spaces in different parts of the City, such as second floor spaces in the downtown, or in proposed redevelopment areas. The City may explore partnering with MATC to create a business incubator.

- **Bring together networks of individuals and agencies that can provide training and funding assistance.** The City can be a key player in connecting prospective business owners with training and funding. Numerous County, Regional, State and Federal programs, agencies, and private organizations exist to provide would-be entrepreneurs with information and financial assistance on an array of issues including training, grants, and on research on specific products and services. The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium is one example of an organization that provides staff capable of matching interested individuals with links to these numerous and varied resources. In addition, the Chamber's partnership with Madison Area Technical College and UW-Extension has created training opportunities for small business owners. The Chamber's own members have also provided short seminars on everything from legal issues that the small business owner should be aware of, to accounting practices for the sole proprietor.
- 
- **Expand the City's "Shop Fort First" Program.** This initiative, led by the Chamber of Commerce is intended to encourage residents to shop at local businesses. As part of this program the Chamber distributes coupon books with coupons for local businesses and offers gift certificates that can only be redeemed locally. To expand this program, the Chamber could encourage local businesses to buy goods, services from other local businesses. For example, local restaurants could be encouraged to purchase food from local farmers (see the Agricultural chapter). The Chamber can continue to market this initiative through the City's website, local media, or through tasteful signage marking local businesses or businesses that buy local.
 - **Creating reasonable standards for home occupations.** Zoning standards should allow home-based businesses to start and flourish, without negatively affecting the neighborhood environment. Once a business grows beyond a home-based business status, it should move on to an incubator, appropriate live-work space, or other space in a district zoned for business use.

WHAT IS LIVE/WORK DEVELOPMENT?

Live-work development, sometimes called zero-commute housing, refers to mixed-use development projects that combine home with the workplace. Live-work projects can vary with respect to how closely workspaces and living spaces are integrated. This can depend on the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood and on the types of non-residential uses for which the units will be marketed. While many live-work projects allow for the workspace and living space to be combined within the same unit (e.g. artist's loft), spaces may also be designed so that workspace is separated from living space by a wall or a floor. Or, the spaces may be located in two separate structures divided by a courtyard or other short walking distance. Live-work projects can take the form of single-family homes, townhouses, or multi-unit buildings.

Live-work developments allow for small business owners and self-employed individuals to focus on their business or career without having to sustain excessive overhead costs. Although live-work projects are most common in larger urban areas, these projects can be beneficial to smaller communities by bolstering the local day-time economy, helping to provide non-residential tax base while at the same time sustaining the community's population, and supporting other nearby businesses and services. The most frequently cited live-work projects tend to be geared towards artists. However, the live-work arrangement can be appropriate for many other entrepreneurs and professionals.

Live-work developments also help create a collaborative and social atmosphere for people who work from home, an experience that is normally quite isolating for those who live in small communities or suburbs.

Continue the Strategic Use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

To help implement the recommendations in this *Plan*, the appropriate and thoughtful use of TIF will place the City in a much stronger position when working with developers and business owners and will allow the City to vie for types of projects that might not otherwise be possible without it—projects of a scale and quality that can change the local market and generate other quality projects.

At the time this *Plan* was written, the City had two active Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) districts. When considering projects in these TIF districts, or the future use of TIF, the City will emphasize projects that generally meet the following criteria:

- Construction exceeds a pre-set minimum value per square foot.
- Site planning and building design works with the topography, includes innovative stormwater management practices, features enhanced landscaping and on-site open space, is designed to promote pedestrian access, and meets or exceeds community architectural and site planning standards included in the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- Complements other Fort Atkinson businesses and developments and make the area more attractive for future business investment or redevelopment.
- Advance community desires and promote desirable business and industry types.
- Incorporate an appropriate mix of uses or support a business type identified as a focus in this *Plan*.

Continue to Invest in the Downtown

Downtown Fort Atkinson is one of the City's most important assets, representing the historical center of the community, and contributing to the City's unique identity and character. The City will actively work to

promote the downtown area as a diverse and vibrant commercial, service, and civic center of Fort Atkinson. To advance this goal, the following strategies will be explored:

- **Bring more events downtown and promote them:** The downtown provides an attractive and logical location to host community events such as a farmers market and other festivals and events, such as summer outdoor theater. Such events and activities draw people to the City, help build a sense of pride in the community, support the City’s businesses, promote the downtown as a community gathering place, and encourage people to spend time in Fort Atkinson.
- **Work with downtown business owners to explore a Business Improvement District (BID):** Typically, businesses included in a BID contribute to programs designed to promote, manage, maintain, develop, and beautify the district. Special assessments on businesses within the BID raise the funds to implement a variety of programs to improve the business climate.
- **Retain local government uses downtown:** The location of the City Hall and the Library in the downtown helps to create a civic core that is integral to the long term vitality of the community. The City will weigh this consideration heavily when faced with the need to expand or relocate municipal services and facilities.
- **Advance downtown as an entertainment and lodging venue:** Downtown Fort Atkinson is already home to Café Carpe, a regional music entertainment destination, and a budding Riverwalk scene. To support this use and other entertainment uses in the community, the City will promote the establishment of additional entertainment uses and supporting uses in the Downtown, including restaurants/brew pubs, coffee shops, and other music venues. Also, in an effort to promote the Fort Atkinson as a “2nd Night” tourism destination” the City will support opportunities for the siting of small inns, bed and breakfasts, and other moderately-sized lodging options in the downtown.
- **Promote additional specialty retail businesses:** Downtown Fort Atkinson offers a unique and advantageous location for many businesses, including specialized retailers. The City, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and other strategic partners will continue to actively recruit and retain retail businesses in the downtown. Specific businesses that may thrive in the downtown include additional restaurants, such as family-friendly pub; other specialty food shops, such as a cheese shop, bakery, candy shop, or meat/seafood shop; artisan shops, such as a handmade furniture store (could be combined with “live-work” housing project); novelty or antique shops; and tourism-related businesses.
- **Increase the number of people living downtown:** Increasing housing opportunities in the downtown is a key strategy for enlivening downtown activity and will help create a “24-hour” environment that supports the viability of downtown businesses. In addition to promoting upper-story residential uses in existing downtown buildings, redevelopment projects in the downtown also present opportunities to provide new housing options. The Land Use chapter and Map 7 highlight downtown redevelopment sites.



Enforce High-Quality Design for Commercial and Industrial Development Projects

High-quality design for all new non-residential development and redevelopment projects in the City will ensure that these projects complement the character and enhance the image of Fort Atkinson. Adherence to good design standards will be important along highly visible corridors such as Madison Avenue, Janesville Avenue, and Whitewater Avenue, and particularly at major entryways to the community as represented on Map 9. In its review of site plans for new and expanded commercial and industrial development projects, the City will encourage and may require adherence to the following design standards, and those illustrated in Figures 11.7 through 11.9

- High quality landscaping treatments to all bufferyards, street frontages, paved areas, and building foundations;
- Heavily landscaped parking lots with perimeter landscaping and/or landscaped islands;
- Street trees along all public street frontages;
- Parking to the sides and rear of buildings, where appropriate, rather than having all parking in between buildings and the street;
- Intensive activity areas such as building entrances, service and loading areas, mechanical equipment, outdoor storage areas, and trash receptacle storage areas positioned away from less intensive land uses and near the backs of buildings (except for entrances);
- Complete screening of loading docks, dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and outdoor storage areas through use of landscaping, walls, and architectural features;
- Common driveways, parking, and circulation areas so that vehicles are able to move from one area of the site to another (and from one site to the adjacent site) without re-entering a street and to maximize efficient use of sites and parking.
- Safe, convenient, and separated pedestrian and bicycle access to the site from the parking areas to the buildings and to adjacent commercial developments;
- Site layout features that allow pedestrians to walk parallel to moving cars, and allow cyclists comfortable access and parking;
- Signage that includes quality materials and compatible appearance with buildings, and modest in height, number, and square footage;
- Full cut-off “shoebox” style lighting to keep downcast illumination on the site;
- High-quality building materials, such as brick, wood, stone, and tinted masonry whenever practical;
- Canopies, awnings, trellises, bays, and particularly windows to add visual interest to facades;
- Variations in building height and roof lines, including parapets, multi-planed and pitched roofs, and staggered building facades (in other words, variations in wall-depth or direction);
- All building facades with architectural details of similar quality as the front building façade, if not identical material selections;
- Central features and focal points that add to the comfort of people on the site and community character, such as patios, benches, fountains, trellises, or artfully designed stormwater facilities;
- Within multi-occupant development projects, buildings arranged and grouped so that their orientation complements each other and adjacent buildings; frames adjacent street intersections and parking lots; features pedestrian and/or vehicle access ways and spaces; and properly considers the arrangement of parking lots, gathering spaces, and other site amenities.

Figures 11.7 through 11.9 on the following pages illustrate many of these design standards and others for three types of commercial development projects: indoor retail, service, and community facilities (small to moderate scale); indoor retail, service, and community facilities (large scale); and neighborhood commercial, community facilities, and mixed use.

Figure 11.7: Indoor Retail, Service, and Community Facility Development Layout (Small to Moderate Scale)

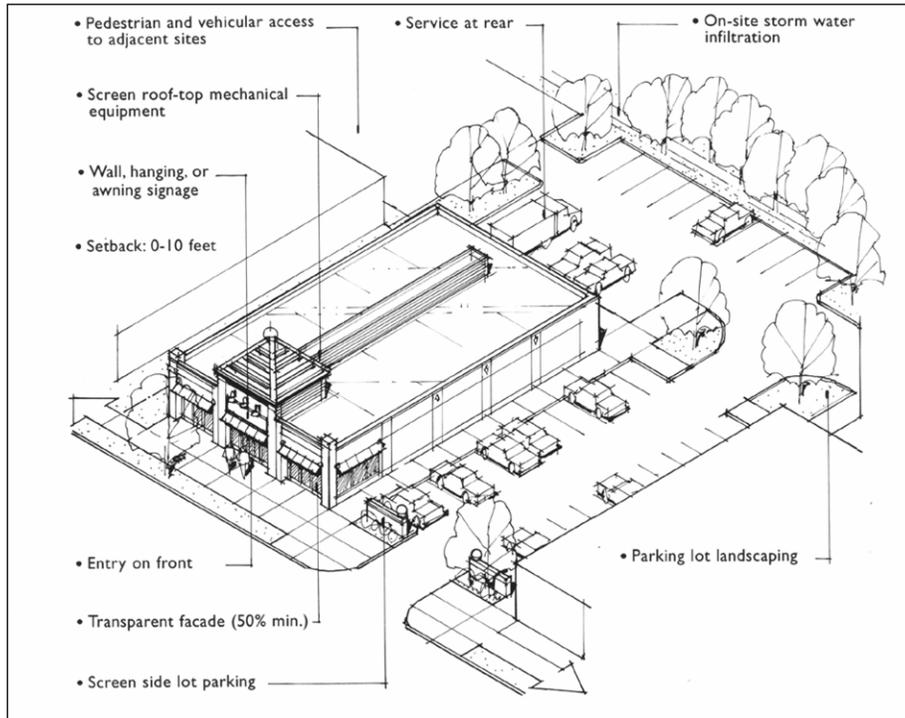


Figure 11.8: Indoor Retail, Service, and Community Facility Development Layout (Large Scale)

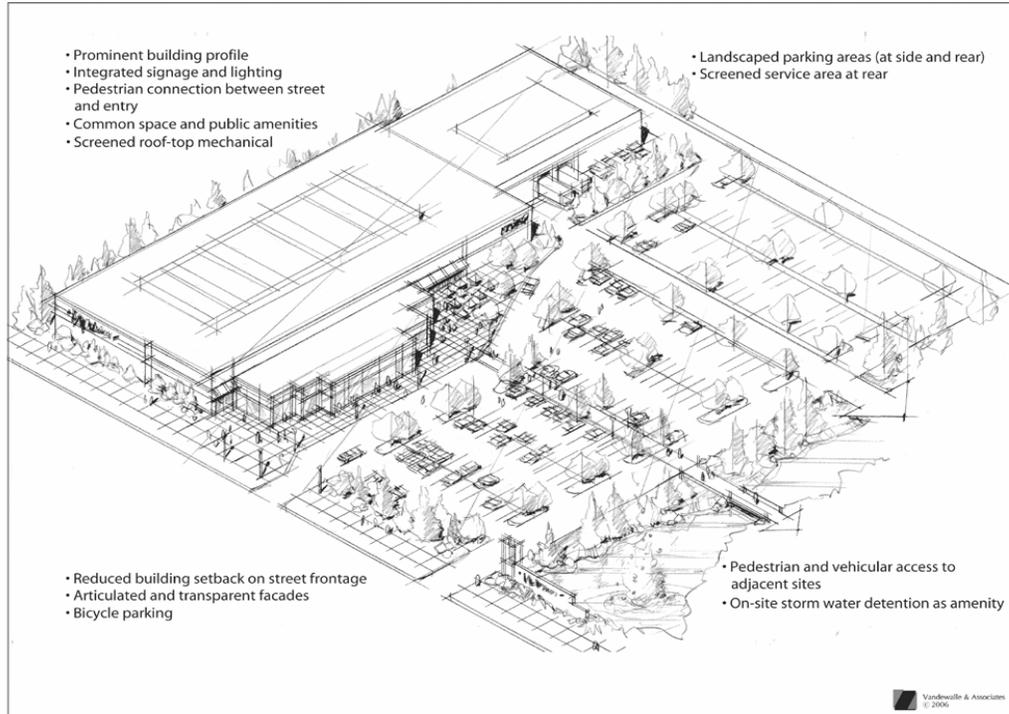
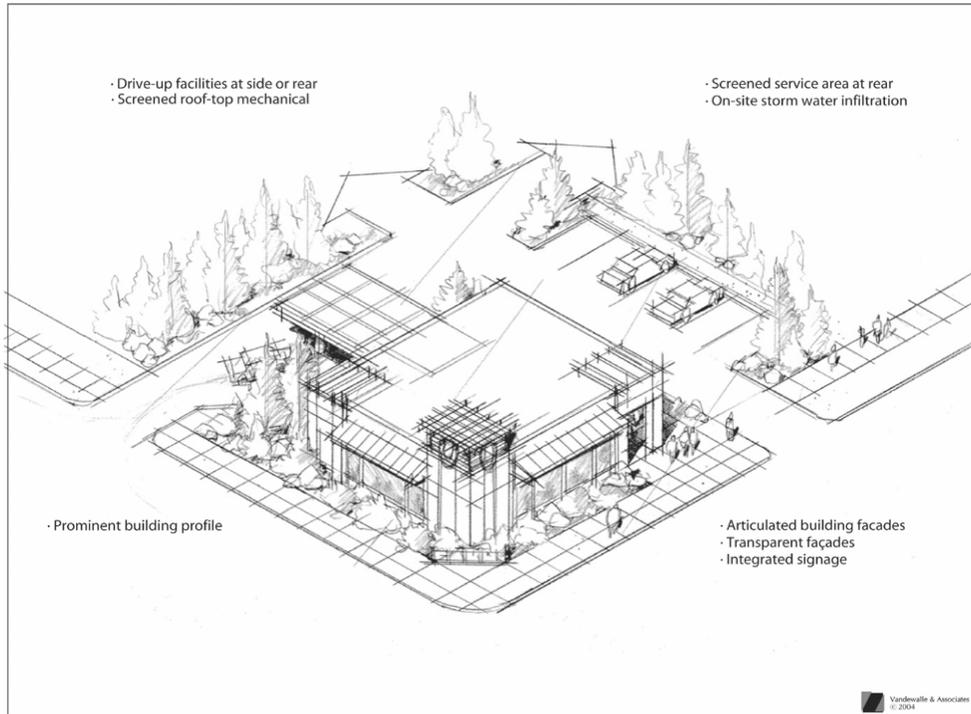


Figure 11.9: Neighborhood Business, Community Facilities, Mixed-Use



Prepare and Implement a Unified Corridor Plan for Janesville Avenue

To contribute to the long-term viability of the City's economy and to advance Fort Atkinson's role as a "2nd Night" regional entertainment destination, the City will consider preparing a unified corridor plan for Janesville Avenue to guide reinvestments along this important roadway. Such a plan should:

- Encourage additional entertainment, retail, hospitality, and dining uses along the corridor to complement and support existing uses and to establish a cohesive and identifiable business district in the southwest portion of the City. Focus on infill development and redevelopment opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for assembling multiple parcels to allow for larger-scale redevelopment projects that will spur additional redevelopment activities and investments along the corridor.
- Address detailed opportunities for enhancing the character of the corridor by installing unified streetscaping features, additional bicycle and pedestrian connections, and traffic and pedestrian management features to interconnect this corridor with adjacent neighborhoods.
- Guide the appropriate scale and design of new development to promote a visually attractive and inviting streetscape.
- Include district-specific building and site design standards that would include screening large parking lots and incorporating trees and other landscaping features to enhance the overall visual quality of development.
- Identify and develop approaches to preserve mature trees along this corridor to the extent possible during development and roadway projects.

The City will also consider establishing a new TIF district along this corridor and will seek state and federal grant dollars. In the longer-term, the City will also consider the preparation of a similar corridor plan for Whitewater Avenue to guide investments in this area of the City.

Expand and Position the Robert L. Klement Business Park

Working in collaboration with FAIDC, the City will promote the development, expansion, and marketing of the Robert L. Klement Business Park, located on the southwest side of the City, to accommodate future industrial growth. Development in the Park is guided by protective covenants that address land use, building appearance, landscaping, drainage, signs, billboards, and other development characteristics.

The Business Park is and will be close to Allen Creek as well as existing and planned rural housing. The City will take care to ensure that adequately sized landscape buffers are established along the edges of the business park. The City will also consider "green" site and building design practices that will help soften the transition from industrial uses to residential uses and natural resource areas. This approach will not only be important for its resulting environmental benefits, but also for economic benefits that such development can have for businesses and the community. Green building principles can result in reduced energy costs, increased health benefits, and enhanced general well being and productivity of workers. Environmentally conscious development also provides a net benefit to the area by efficiently using land, resources, and infrastructure. Rather than simply following national standards for "green" building

WHAT IS "GREEN" DEVELOPMENT?

"Green" development is a term used to describe the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings and their sites use and harvest energy, water, and materials. "Green" development is intended to reduce negatives impacts on human health and the environment through better siting, design, construction, operation, and maintenance.

Examples of "green" development techniques may include the installation of bio-retention facilities, rooftop vegetation, pervious pavement, and infrastructure to capture heat from industrial processes to heat buildings.

and site design, the City may consider developing its own standards for determining what is “green” and sustainable in Fort Atkinson.

The City may also use the Business Park’s proximity to natural resources and farmland, and an orientation toward green practices, to market the unique assets of the site. This site may also be a possible location for future bio-based businesses or industries, as described in the Agricultural Resources chapter. To help advance this opportunity, the City will remain engaged in the County’s economic positioning initiative, which was underway at the time this *Plan* was being prepared and involved an assessment of potential regional opportunities related to the bio-based economy.



Plan for the Future Expansion of the Fort HealthCare Campus

The Fort HealthCare campus represents another of Fort Atkinson’s significant economic assets. Located in the northeast corner of the City, the campus is surrounded by a residential neighborhood. The City will work with Fort Healthcare to plan for the future expansion of the campus in a way that allows for the growth of this important facility, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the neighborhood. This may involve interconnecting detached sites, promoting the vertical expansions of single story clinic sites into two to four story configurations (ideally with under-building parking), and improving directional signage in this area. At the time this *Plan* was being prepared, Fort HealthCare was studying the potential for developing a new campus in a different location in the City. Potential locations for this campus have been illustrated on Map 10. The City will continue to work with Fort HealthCare on the appropriate siting of such a facility.



Examples of how development can be effectively integrated with the natural landscape.

Bottom Photo: IPEC Building in the Robert L. Klement Business Park, 1901 Allen Drive

The City may also collaborate on the development of a multi-use trail through the area surrounding the existing campus to Ralph Park and the River. Another possible initiative that may involve hospital/City collaboration is a program designed to encourage more healthcare workers to live in the City. Also see the Land Use chapter for a discussion for a description of redevelopment opportunities on the northeast commercial site (1309 North High Street). Better directional signage from High Street into the existing campus would also be desirable.

Pursue Redevelopment of Key Sites in the City

Prime redevelopment sites in the City have been outlined in red on Map 7 and include areas in the downtown, along Madison, Janesville, and Whitewater avenues, and at 1309 North High Street. These sites

are described in more detail near the end of the Land Use chapter, and some have also been addressed in this Economic Development chapter. The City recognizes that sites like these typically do not redevelop themselves. Instead, careful planning, site assessment, public-private partnerships, redevelopment incentives at times, and persistence over a number of years are required. Typically, this type of detailed planning and implementation process includes:

- Evaluating the planning area's condition.
- Conducting a regional and local economic opportunities analysis.
- Identifying goals and objectives for the redevelopment area.
- Prioritizing individual redevelopment sites within the area.
- Conducting a market assessment for each redevelopment site.
- Preparing a redevelopment strategy and detailed plan map, with attention to priority sites.
- Aggressively pursuing implementation through techniques like the adoption of a statutory redevelopment plan; establishment of a redevelopment tax increment financing district; possible brownfield remediation; possible site acquisition, consolidation, and demolition; and developer recruitment.

Chapter Twelve: Intergovernmental Cooperation

This chapter is focused on “intergovernmental cooperation,” defined as any formal or informal arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve land use, transportation, natural resource, utility, facility, services, or other issues of mutual interest. In a state with over 2,500 units of government and a movement towards greater efficiency, it is becoming increasingly important to coordinate decisions that may affect neighboring communities and overlapping jurisdictions, like school districts.

This chapter contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions. It incorporates by reference all plans and agreements to which Fort Atkinson is a party under §66.0301, §66.0307, and §66.0309, Wisconsin Statutes.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Continue to communicate with surrounding communities, such as the Town of Jefferson, City of Jefferson and Town of Koshkonong, on a variety of issues and opportunities, some of which may be addressed through formal intergovernmental agreements.
- Remain involved in regional initiatives such as the Glacial Heritage Project and the County’s economic positioning initiative.
- Partner with the School District on a variety of mutually beneficial initiatives.
- Work with WisDOT on highway planning.

A. Existing City of Fort Atkinson Plans

City of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin: Master Plan, 1997

The City’s most recent Master Plan was prepared in 1997. This master plan, which is being replaced by this *Comprehensive Plan*, included recommendations for downtown development/redevelopment, future transportation networks, and concept plans for the USH 12 west corridor, the Janesville Avenue corridor, the south USH 12 corridor, overall future land use for the City, and urban service area expansion. Future residential development was planned for areas south and northwest of the City. Future industrial development was planned for areas in the southwest and northwest portions of the City. Commercial development was proposed for the USH 12/STH 26 interchange, and for the USH 12 and Janesville Avenue corridors.

City of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin: Northwest Quadrant Plan, 2002

This Plan was prepared in 2002 for the area surrounding the USH 12/STH 26 interchange, and served as an update to the 1997 Master Plan for this area of the City. Recommendations in this Plan primarily call for Traditional Neighborhood Residential Development west of STH 26, and a mixture of residential and commercial development along USH 12, east of STH 26. The recommendations of this Quadrant Plan remain valid.

B. Existing Regional Framework

Map 1 shows the boundaries of Fort Atkinson’s neighboring or overlapping jurisdictions. The City is not within the jurisdiction of a regional planning commission. Planning documents for these local, regional and state jurisdictions were analyzed during the City’s planning process to identify mutual planning issues or potential conflicts. The following is a summary of this analysis:

Important State Agency Jurisdictions

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) Southwest Region office, located in Madison, serves a 16 county region including Jefferson County. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides service to all Jefferson County residents out of six South Central Wisconsin offices including Madison, Fitchburg, Janesville, Poynette, Dodgeville, and Horicon. There are no known conflicts between the City's plans and the plans and actions of these State agencies.

Jefferson County

Since Jefferson County is facing growth pressures from the surrounding metro areas, County residents are concerned about preserving their historic agricultural land use base. Recommendations in the 1999 Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan advocate for long-term growth in the county's communities (mostly villages and cities) that have existing infrastructure and that are served by existing services with the intent of protecting and preserving the natural resources and rural character of the county's many undeveloped and pristine areas. The County Plan identifies all lands, besides environmental corridors, that are outside of communities' 20-year urban service areas as Agricultural Preservation Areas. The County's plan is considered a strong model for fostering agricultural preservation, environmental protection, and vibrant cities and villages. It was in the process of being updated at time of writing.

Town of Jefferson

The Town of Jefferson is near the City's northern border. Its 2005 estimated population was 2,208 residents. According to the Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan, a significant portion of Town lands outside the City's boundaries are planned to remain agricultural. The Town is under County zoning. The Town does not have its own, independent plan.

Town of Koshkonong

The City of Fort Atkinson is completely surrounded by the Town of Koshkonong, which, in 2005, had an estimated population of 3,578 residents. At the time this *Plan* was written the Town of Koshkonong was in the process of preparing its own updated comprehensive plan. Koshkonong is currently addressed under the County's Plan and County zoning.

In 1999, the City and Town entered into a boundary agreement, which stipulated that all lands south of Hackbarth Road, north of Star School Road, and generally east of Poeppel Road could not be annexed by the City until after June 2009. Town lands not located within these areas but within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction are subject to the City's extraterritorial land division review authority in conformity with the City's subdivision ordinance.

Again in 2004, the City and Town entered into a second boundary agreement, which determined that subdivided lands located north of Hackbarth Road and just west of STH 89/USH12 could not be annexed by the City until after December 2009. Town lands not located within these areas but within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction are subject to the City's extraterritorial land division review authority per the City's subdivision ordinance.

Fort Atkinson School District

The Fort Atkinson School District serves the entire City of Fort Atkinson, as well as large portions of the towns of Koshkonong, Sumner, Oakland, Hebron, and limited portions of the towns of Jefferson, Cold Spring, and the Town of Lima in Rock County. Enrollment in the District has been relatively stable over the last several years. Coordination on future school-community planning issues, including growth management, school siting, and recreation, is a critical recommendation of this *Plan*. This is discussed in the Utilities and Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation chapters.

C. Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal:

Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with adjacent and overlapping governments.

Objectives:

1. Work with surrounding towns and the City of Jefferson to encourage an orderly, efficient land use pattern and to advance areas of mutual benefit and interest.
2. Work collaboratively with the Fort Atkinson School District on joint recreational space and educational initiatives.

Policies:

1. Provide a copy of this *Plan* to all surrounding local governments and districts, and continue to involve and update them on future changes to the *Plan*.
2. Work to resolve differences between the *City of Fort Atkinson Comprehensive Plan* and the plans, policies, and ordinances of adjacent communities.
3. Actively monitor, participate in, and review and comment on pending and future comprehensive plans from nearby communities.
4. Continue to cooperate with other units of government on issues related to land use, natural resources, recreation, transportation facilities, economic development, and other systems that are under shared authority or that cross governmental boundaries.
5. Consider regionalization of public services and facilities where consolidating, coordinating, or sharing services or facilities will result in better services, cost savings, or both.
6. Partner with the MATC and the Fort Atkinson Area School District to improve educational achievement, promote local schools, pursue the provision of joint recreational facilities, and enhance the economic health of the City (see also Utilities and Community Facilities and Parks and Recreation chapters).
7. Participate in the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium's preparation and implementation of a County-wide economic positioning initiative to capture the area's future potential given its unique assets and position.

D. Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs and Recommendations

Intergovernmental communication, coordination, and cooperation are critical in implementing many of the recommendations in this *Plan*. This section builds off some of the key policies listed above, setting forth recommendations for enhanced relations with adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions. It focuses in particular in areas and relationships that are not described extensively in other chapters of this *Plan*, and where potential future conflicts may be the greatest without concerted future action.

Institute a Hierarchical Review Process for Different Areas within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

This City will amend its subdivision ordinance to define different levels of review for different areas within the City's 3-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction according to the following general guidelines:

- Within areas shown on the City's future land use maps (Maps 7 and 8) for City growth within the 20-year planning period, the City will enforce land division policies consistent with those applicable within the Agriculture/Rural future land use category and with the County's 2008 land division policies, both as

described in the Land Use chapter. For new developments proposed to be more intensive than that allowed under the Agriculture/Rural category or County policies, the City will first require annexation and connection to municipal sewer and water.

- For areas shown on the City's future land use maps (Maps 7 and 8) as Long Range Urban Growth Areas, and for all other areas within one mile of the City's limits, the City will enforce land division policies consistent with those applicable within the Agriculture/Rural and Long Range Urban Growth Areas future land use categories and with the County's 2008 land division policies, all as described in the Land Use chapter.
- For areas beyond the areas described in the first two bullet points, the City may adopt policies that provide more flexibility in development type, density, and service level. New land divisions may be allowed based on an analysis of the proposed development's impact on stormwater management, the City's Official Map, and other issues of City interest.

Revise ETJ Standards to Identify Conflicts with County Zoning "Split" Requirements

The City will review its extraterritorial land division policies to identify conflicts with the County's 2008 land division policies (see Figure 6.6 in the Land Use chapter). Minimally, to participate in the enforcement of these standards and protect the City's interests, in the event these standards change, the City may include minor modifications within its subdivision ordinance. The City will work with the adjoining towns and Jefferson County to implement these policies and programs in a cooperative manner, where possible.

Remain Involved in Regional Initiatives

Because many of the City's goals and objectives relate to issues that transcend municipal boundaries (e.g., transportation, natural resource, farmland preservation, land use), the City intends to maintain an active and open dialogue with surrounding communities. A few specific opportunities include:

- **Remaining involved in the Jefferson County Economic Positioning Project:** At the time this Plan was being prepared, the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium (JCEDC) was leading an initiative to advance economic development county-wide. The project has identified the following key economic assets for Jefferson County:
 - Regional location
 - Agriculture and food
 - Corporate presence and manufacturing diversity
 - Emerging bio-energy
 - Water and natural resources
 - Small-town living
 - Cultural heritage

Preliminary opportunities suggested through that initiative, which may be particularly relevant to Fort Atkinson, include:

- Connecting with regional institutions and innovators
- Aligning workforce skills with emerging technologies
- Participating in the bio-energy economy

Building on these assets, the project will explore opportunities that may be the foundation or building blocks for a future vision for the County. The City will stay actively involved in this process and will generally take advantage of the services offered by the JCEDC.

- **Staying involved in the Glacial Heritage Area Project:** This project, administered by WisDNR, is described in the Natural Resources chapter of this Plan. Because Fort Atkinson is located within the Project's study area, it will be important for the City to remain involved in the ongoing feasibility, study process. In particular, the City will continue to communicate and coordinate with Jefferson County and WisDNR regarding additional land acquisition surrounding Rose Lake State Natural Area. The City intends to reserve the area north of Highway 12 and west of Highway 26 for potential future Natural

Area acquisition by directing urban development away from these lands and supporting long-term agricultural preservation around the existing park.

Continue Intergovernmental Discussions with the City of Jefferson

Over the planning period, the Fort Atkinson and the City of Jefferson will consider entering into an intergovernmental agreement to formally address several issues that came up during this planning process and the City of Jefferson's concurrent planning process. Often, intergovernmental agreements are executed after a year or more of meetings, research, negotiations, writing, and legal review. Intergovernmental agreements specify the length of time for which it is applicable. Twenty years is a typical timeframe (e.g., through 2030), as this corresponds with the comprehensive plan time horizon. Occasionally, agreements have provisions for automatic extensions if neither party decides to withdraw. Most agreements also include provisions for periodic review and possible amendments if both parties agree. This keeps the agreement fresh in peoples' minds and allows adaptability as conditions change. While the issues addressed in intergovernmental agreements vary, for the cities of Fort Atkinson and Jefferson such an agreement may address the following issues:

- Mutually agreed upon extraterritorial jurisdiction boundaries that do not overlap (see Map 8 for proposed boundary);
- Long-range urban growth boundaries for both cities;
- Locations and techniques for permanent community separation through open space and other approaches. Preliminary city staff discussions suggest using existing parklands, the Airport, and farmland to delineate this area;
- Future land use compatibility with airport operations;
- The development of a recreation corridor that connects the two communities;
- Long-range consolidation of services; and
- Billboard control.

Regardless of whether or not a formal agreement is established, the two cities will continue to openly discuss and collaborate on these issues to avoid longer-term conflicts, preserve the character of both communities, and facilitate cooperation with the Town of Jefferson.

Continue Intergovernmental Discussions with the Town of Koshkonong

Over the planning period, the City will engage in discussions with the Town of Koshkonong regarding the following issues, some of which may be addressed through more formal intergovernmental agreements:

- Potential future land use map conflicts identified following the completion of both communities' planning processes.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS UNDER WISCONSIN LAW

There are two main formats for intergovernmental agreements under Wisconsin Statutes.

The first is available under Section 66.0301, which allows any two or more communities to agree to cooperate for the purpose of furnishing services or the joint exercise of any power or duty authorized under State law. While this is the most commonly used approach, a "66.0301" agreement is limited by the restriction that the municipalities must be able to exercise co-equal powers. So, for example, attorneys sometimes do not recommend this agreement format when future municipal boundary changes are involved, because cities and towns do not have co-equal powers with respect to annexation.

Another format for an intergovernmental agreement is a "cooperative (boundary) plan" under Section 66.0307 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This approach is more labor intensive and ultimately requires State approval of the agreement, but the "66.0307" approach does not have some of the limitations of the "66.0301" agreement format.

An increasingly common approach is for communities to first enter into a "66.0301" intergovernmental agreement, which in part directs the communities to then prepare a "66.0307" cooperative plan covering issues such as boundary changes.

- Municipal boundary rationalization on the City's northwest side.
- The interconnection of roads, trails, parks, and open spaces in the Hackbarth Road area.
- The urbanization of Hackbarth Road to better accommodate growth on the south side of the City (curb and gutter, sidewalks, etc.).

The City also has significant opportunities to work with the Town to build stronger connections between the Lake Koshkonong recreational area and tourism opportunities in the City. The Town also experiences a significant increase in population during the summer months when people come to vacation on the Lake. Initiatives may include building better water trails and amenities for boaters, connecting the bike path to the lake, and engaging in joint marketing initiatives. The City will also support recreational activities by promoting businesses, services, and infrastructure that facilitate boating, hiking, fishing, paddling, camping, and other similar or related activities where appropriate. The City also intends to collaborate with the Town to ensure the preservation of resources such as Mush-Ko-Se-Day Park, Allen Creek, and Star School Fen.