

Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030

Section 1: Existing Conditions Report



**Prepared by Mississippi River Regional Planning
Commission under direction of the Hamilton Town
Planning Committee and Town Board – August 2009**

Abstract

Title: Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030

Summary: The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030 responds to and is consistent with the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law as defined in Sections 66.1001(1)a and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes. The comprehensive plan is made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the Town that will in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development. The plan was prepared by the Town Plan Commission under the direction of the Town Board.

Town Chairman: Richard Schomburg

Town Board: Blaine Lee
Rob Galbraith

Town Clerk: Jeanette Hoyer

Planning Staff: Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
Greg Flogstad, Director
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Ordinance to Adopt the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030.

The Town Board of the Town of Hamilton, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to section 62.23(2)(3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Hamilton, is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 2. The Town Board of the Town of Hamilton, La Crosse County, Wisconsin, has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.


Section 3. The plan commission of the Town of Hamilton, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030" containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Town of Hamilton has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 5. The Town Board of the Town of Hamilton, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030", pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Town Board and publication/posting as required by law.

Adopted this 13 day of August, 2009

 Aug 13 - 09
Town Board Chair Date

Approved:

Attest:

Town Clerk

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1. List of Public Roads in the Town of Hamilton

Introduction

The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan is being prepared under the State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law contained in Section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. The law was adopted in 1999 and requires that zoning, subdivision regulations, and official mapping within the town must be consistent with a comprehensive plan. To meet the requirements of the planning law a comprehensive plan is being prepared that will consist of two documents, an Existing Conditions Report and a Goals, Objectives, Policies and Recommendations section.

In developing the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan, the first step taken was the preparation of an Existing Conditions Report. The report is compiled to provide detailed background information on the Town of Hamilton, which will be utilized in the planning process. The Existing Conditions Report provides a comprehensive snapshot of the Town of Hamilton in 2008 and provides some insight into the town's future with population, housing, and economic projections. This report will serve as the statistical/data foundation for the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan.

Setting

The Town of Hamilton is located in La Crosse County in western Wisconsin. The Town is centrally located in La Crosse County and consists of approximately 33,000 acres. The incorporated Village of West Salem lies within the boundaries of the Town of Hamilton. The Town of Hamilton is bordered on the north by the Town of Farmington, on the south by the Town of Barre, on the east by the Towns of Burns and Bangor, and on the west by the Towns of Medary and Onalaska.

History

The 54.25 square miles of land that the Town now covers has had an interesting geopolitical history. La Crosse County which came into existence in 1851 was originally comprised of five towns. The Town of Pierce, the largest of the towns, covered the present day towns of Hamilton, Barre, Bangor, and Washington. In 1853 the Town of Neshonoc was created which covered much of the present land area of Hamilton.

The Town of Neshonoc was cut to 36 sections when the Town of Burns was organized in 1854. The Town maintained this 36 section size until 1866 when the Town of Neshonoc and Barre were combined. This merger created the political Town of Hamilton. In 1874 Hamilton was reduced in size when twenty-one sections of land were realigned to form the Town of Barre for a second time. This realignment resulted in the 54.25 sections that make up the Town of Hamilton as we know it today.

A list of historic facts and events in the Town is provided below.

- * Emfin Emfinson, a Norwegian immigrant, was the first non native American to settle in this area. He erected a small cabin in 1850 on 160 acres in sections 28 and 29.
- * In 1850 Thomas Leonard and Julius Segar settled in the Town and erected a small cabin for their families by 1851. Other settlers soon followed. It was reported that "thirty persons in all, and with six wagons and eleven yoke of oxen were eleven days making the distance from Marquette County, Wisconsin."
- * Between 1851 and 1853 choice land within ten miles of La Crosse could be purchased for \$1.25 an acre.
- * Between 1850 and 1860 one hundred-ninety men filed claims in the area (*The Towns of Pierce, Neshonoc or Hamilton*).
- * The first marriage occurred in December 1851 between Jerome Bostwick and Jane Bingham.
- * The first recorded childbirth occurred in August 1851. Nancy Segar, the daughter of Julius Segar was born on this date.
- * Some of the first recorded religious services occurred in August 1851 held by a Methodist circuit rider named Reverend Chester. These services were held in the cabins of scattered settlers. Services were also held the following year at the Tavern of Byron Viets at Neshonoc by Reverend Benjamin Reynolds of La Crosse.

- * The year 1852 saw the first public school session which lasted for 3 months. The teacher was William Van Zandt, and twenty pupils made up the enrollment. By 1880 there were eight schoolhouses throughout the Town that accommodated an enrollment of 567. There were 301 males and 268 females. A total of 12 teachers were employed. The male teacher wage was \$32.13 and the female teacher wage was \$23.72. Ending August 31, 1880 the Town received for school purposes \$3,927.04 and expended \$3,440.57.
- * The first post office was established at the residence of the first postmaster, E.F. Edwards in the fall of 1852. In the summer of 1852 mail was carried by different settlers, each in turn by alphabetical order. Later a messenger was hired and paid \$1.00 a trip. In 1853 a mail route was established between Baraboo and La Crosse and mails were received tri-weekly at the new post office called Neshonoc. In 1879 the post office was established at McMillans Mill.
- * The first saw mill was up and running in 1853. By 1855 the mill operated as both a saw and grist mill. This mill was owned and managed by Monroe Palmer who was able to produce 300 barrels of flour per week. By around 1880 this mill's expanded capacity could produce 600 barrels of flour a day from the grain transported from as far away as Trempealeau and Sparta.
- * In 1855, Monroe Palmer, with services provided by Issac Thompson the Deputy County Surveyor, planned and platted the Village of Neshonoc comprising of 15 acres with blocks of 12 lots each, with each lot measuring approximately 50 x 100 feet. The streets were named Oak, Main Center, and Cypress and were intersected with Mill, Second, Third and Fourth Streets and Mentoria Avenue. The first building was a hotel and was erected in 1855. Later a general store was started. A blacksmith shop was started in 1855 as well and a carriage shop was also started around this time. The population of Neshonoc in 1858 was 100 residents.
- * In 1858 the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad was built through the Town entering Section 1, and passing through sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 18. Thomas Leonard was influential in having the railroad company choose this route which benefited him since he had ownership of land along this route. The selection of this route resulted in the demise of the Village of Neshonoc. The railroad's economic attraction and Thomas Leonard's desire to build a village on his land and induce businessmen in Neshonoc to move there was successful and from this the community of Salem, later renamed to West Salem, grew. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was built in 1873 through the Town adjacent to the same course as the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad line.
- * In 1875 a business directory for the unincorporated community of West Salem in the Town of Hamilton listed a livery stable, wagon dealer, boot maker, harness and luggage shop, four dry goods stores, two carriage makers, a milliner, music hall, insurance agent, medical doctor, drug store, real estate office, two hardware stores, wholesale drug dealer, and at least two hotels. During this decade a woman doctor also established her medical practice here which indeed was a rarity at this time. In 1886 the first newspaper was established, as was a cooperative creamery. The first bank opened in 1886 and was the first brick building.
- * In the 1880's the La Crosse County Board decided to locate the La Crosse County hospital or asylum near the community of West Salem. This hospital, now called Lakeview Health Center continues to this day.
- * In 1895 McMillan Mill constructed a water powered electrical generating plant on the site of the old Neshonoc Feed Mill.
- * By 1940 a new 14-foot high dam was built on the La Crosse River and the new Lake Neshonoc was created.
- * In 1943 a former civilian conservation corps campground, one mile west of the Village, was deeded by the federal government to La Crosse County and the county highway department established its main shop at that location.
- * In the 1950's the La Crosse interstate fair relocated its fairgrounds from the vicinity of Wisconsin State University campus in La Crosse to a 143 acre site in the Town on the west side of the village.
- * In the 1960's Interstate 90 was constructed through the Town with an interchange constructed at CTH C.

1. Demographic Trends and Projections

This section of the Existing Conditions Report will provide information on the demographic trends that are taking place in the Town of Hamilton. Population and housing unit projections have also been provided to aid in the planning process. The information has been gathered from various sources and when possible Town level data was utilized.

Population Trends and Projections

Population information was gathered from U.S. Census Bureau records (Table 1.1). The Town of Hamilton's population during the 2000 census was 2,103 residents. Population estimates for the various units of government were acquired from the Wisconsin Department of Administrations Demographic Services Center. The Demographic Services Center provides population projections for all Wisconsin units of government. The information estimates the Town of Hamilton's population to increase by 925 residents by the year 2025.

Table 1.1 Population and Population Projections

| Population(1) | | | | | | | | Population Projections(2) | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | % Chg 70-80 | % Chg 80-90 | % Chg 90-00 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
| Town of Hamilton | 1229 | 1472 | 1633 | 2103 | 19.8 | 10.9 | 28.8 | 2477 | 2646 | 2821 | 3028 |
| Town of Barre | 521 | 901 | 909 | 1014 | 72.9 | .9 | 11.6 | 1108 | 1148 | 1191 | 1248 |
| Town of Burns | 901 | 988 | 977 | 979 | 9.7 | -1.1 | .2 | 990 | 989 | 993 | 1007 |
| Town of Farmington | 1383 | 1603 | 1576 | 1733 | 15.9 | -1.7 | 10 | 1903 | 1975 | 2052 | 2153 |
| Town of Medary | 2333 | 1794 | 1539 | 1463 | -23.1 | -14.2 | -4.9 | 1519 | 1538 | 1562 | 1604 |
| Town of Onalaska | 2973 | 5386 | 5823 | 5210 | 81.2 | 8.1 | -10.5 | 5668 | 5860 | 6071 | 6349 |
| Village of West Salem | 2180 | 3276 | 3611 | 4738 | 50.3 | 10.2 | 31.2 | 5399 | 5691 | 5998 | 6372 |
| La Crosse County | 80468 | 91056 | 97892 | 107120 | 13.2 | 7.5 | 9.4 | 113211 | 115538 | 118246 | 122291 |
| Wisconsin | 4,417,821 | 4,705,642 | 4,891,599 | 5,363,715 | 6.5 | 4.0 | 9.7 | 5,751,470 | 5,931,386 | 6,110,878 | 6,274,867 |
| United States | 203,302,031 | 226,542,199 | 248,709,873 | 281,421,906 | 11.4 | 9.8 | 13.2 | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Source: (1) U.S. Dept. of Commerce Bureau of the Census; (2) Prel. Population Proj.-WI Dept. of Adm.-Demographic Services Center

Population Characteristics

The Town of Hamilton's population by age and race are detailed in Tables 1.2 and 1.3. The Town's population is 98.0% Caucasian compared to La Crosse County's 94.2%. With regard to age, nearly 43% of the Town of Hamilton's residents are between the ages of 25 and 54, which is a higher percentage than La Crosse County, the State of Wisconsin, and the U.S.

Table 1.2 Town of Hamilton, La Crosse County, State and Nation Population by Race

| RACE | T. Hamilton | % | La Crosse County | % | State of WI | % | U.S. | % |
|--|--------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| One race | 2,288 | 99.4 | 106,022 | 99.0 | 5,296,780 | 98.8 | 274,595,678 | 97.6 |
| White | 2,255 | 98.0 | 100,883 | 94.2 | 4,769,857 | 88.9 | 211,460,626 | 75.1 |
| Black or African American | 6 | 0.26 | 1,016 | 0.9 | 304,460 | 5.7 | 34,658,190 | 12.3 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 9 | 0.39 | 440 | 0.4 | 47,228 | 0.9 | 2,475,956 | 0.9 |
| Asian | 18 | 0.78 | 3,376 | 3.2 | 88,763 | 1.7 | 10,242,998 | 3.6 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 0 | 0.0 | 21 | 0.0 | 1,630 | 0.0 | 398,835 | 0.1 |
| Some other race | 0 | 0.0 | 286 | 0.3 | 84,842 | 1.6 | 15,359,073 | 5.5 |
| Two or more races | 13 | 0.56 | 1,098 | 1.0 | 66,895 | 1.2 | 6,826,228 | 2.4 |
| Totals | 2,301 | 100 | 107,120 | 100 | 5,363,675 | 100 | 281,421,906 | 100 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000 *The Census Bureau revised the total population for the Town of Hamilton in 2002 to 2,103. The Census Bureau has not revised population characteristics to reflect the 2002 revision.

Town of Hamilton Existing Conditions Report – Demographic Trends and Projections

Table 1.3 Town of Hamilton, La Crosse County, State and Nation Population by Age 2000

| Age Group | Town of Hamilton | % | La Crosse County | % | State of Wisconsin | % | U.S. | % |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Under 5 yrs | 141 | 6.1 | 6,361 | 5.9 | 342,340 | 6.4 | 19,175,798 | 6.8 |
| 5 to 9 yrs | 197 | 8.6 | 7,061 | 6.6 | 379,484 | 7.1 | 20,549,505 | 7.3 |
| 10 to 14 yrs | 188 | 8.2 | 7,306 | 6.8 | 403,074 | 7.5 | 20,528,072 | 7.3 |
| 15 to 19 yrs | 176 | 7.6 | 9,517 | 8.9 | 407,195 | 7.6 | 20,219,890 | 7.2 |
| 20 to 24 yrs | 78 | 3.4 | 11,696 | 10.9 | 357,292 | 6.7 | 18,964,001 | 6.7 |
| 25 to 34 yrs | 242 | 10.5 | 13,690 | 12.8 | 706,168 | 13.2 | 39,891,724 | 14.2 |
| 35 to 44 yrs | 391 | 17.0 | 15,764 | 14.7 | 875,522 | 16.3 | 45,148,527 | 16.0 |
| 45 to 54 yrs | 359 | 15.6 | 14,044 | 13.1 | 732,306 | 13.7 | 37,677,952 | 13.4 |
| 55 to 59 yrs | 142 | 6.2 | 4,523 | 4.2 | 252,742 | 4.7 | 13,469,237 | 4.8 |
| 60 to 64 yrs | 92 | 4.0 | 3,718 | 3.5 | 204,999 | 3.8 | 10,805,447 | 3.8 |
| 65 to 74 yrs | 164 | 7.1 | 6,621 | 6.2 | 355,307 | 6.6 | 18,390,986 | 6.5 |
| 75 and over | 131 | 5.7 | 6,819 | 6.4 | 347,246 | 6.5 | 16,600,767 | 5.9 |
| Totals | 2,301 | 100 | 107,120 | 100 | 5,363,675 | 100 | 281,421,906 | 100 |
| Median Age | 38.6 | | 33.5 | | 36 | | 35.3 | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000 *The Census Bureau revised the total population for the Town of Hamilton in 2002 to 2,103. The Census Bureau has not revised population characteristics to reflect the 2002 revision.

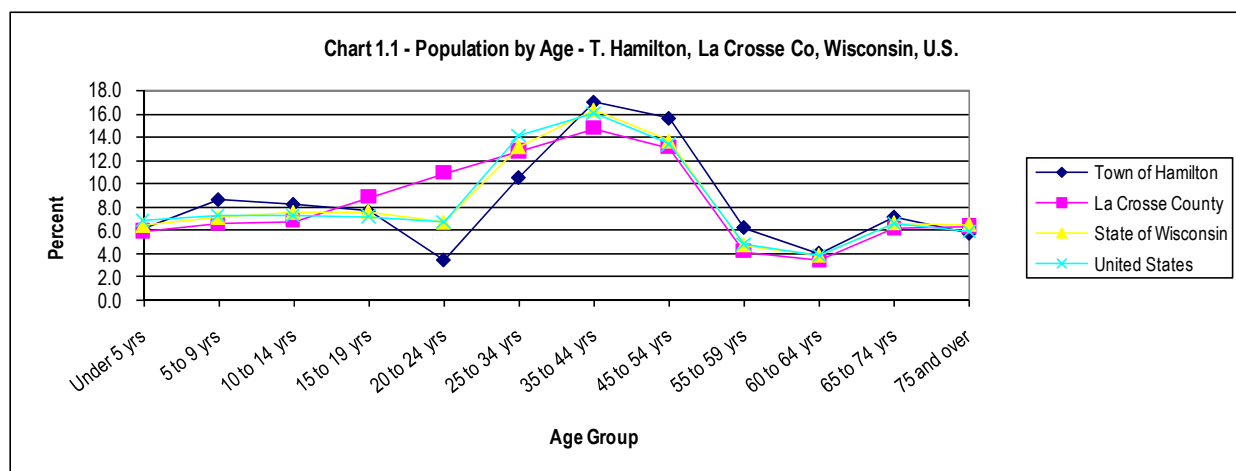


Table 1.4 on the following page demonstrates that 91.3% of town residents that are 25 years or older have graduated from high school, while 27.9% have a college degree or better. These percentages compared favorably to the State of Wisconsin and the United States in which have 85.1% and 80.4% of the population 25 years and older have graduated from high school, respectively.

Table 1.4 Town of Hamilton, La Crosse County, State and Nation Educational Attainment

| | Town of Hamilton | | La Crosse County | | State of Wisconsin | | United States | |
|---|------------------|---------|------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| Population 25 years and over | 1,551 | 100.0 | 65,263 | | 3,475,878 | | 182,211,639 | |
| Less than 9 th grade | 56 | 3.6 | 2,687 | 4.1 | 186,125 | 5.4 | 13,755,477 | 7.5 |
| 9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma | 80 | 5.1 | 4,062 | 6.2 | 332,292 | 9.6 | 21,960,148 | 12.1 |
| High School graduate | 459 | 29.6 | 20,823 | 31.9 | 1,201,813 | 34.6 | 52,168,981 | 28.6 |
| Some college, no degree | 368 | 23.7 | 14,176 | 21.7 | 715,664 | 20.6 | 38,351,595 | 21.1 |
| Associate degree | 155 | 10.0 | 6,945 | 10.6 | 260,711 | 7.5 | 11,512,833 | 6.3 |
| Bachelors degree | 196 | 12.6 | 10,642 | 16.3 | 530,268 | 15.3 | 28,317,792 | 15.5 |
| Graduate or professional degree | 237 | 15.4 | 5,928 | 9.1 | 249,005 | 7.2 | 16,144,813 | 8.9 |
| Percent high school graduate or higher | 91.2 | X | 89.7 | X | 85.1 | X | 80.4 | X |
| Percent bachelor's degree or higher | 27.9 | X | 25.4 | X | 22.4 | X | 24.4 | X |

Housing Unit Trends and Projections

As part of the planning process two sets of housing unit projections were derived. The first scenario utilized projected population estimates divided by the average number of people per housing unit (Table 1.5). Historically, the number of people residing per housing unit has steadily declined. In 1970, an average of 3.5 people lived in each housing unit in the Town of Hamilton and surrounding towns. By 2000 the average number of people living in each housing unit in the Town of Hamilton and surrounding towns had declined to 2.7. The housing unit projection method utilized assumes the average number of people living in a housing unit in the Town of Hamilton and surrounding towns will remain constant at 2.7 people per household over the next 20 years. Therefore, the projected number of housing units in the Town of Hamilton and surrounding towns was derived by dividing the projected population of a given year by 2.7 to come up with the housing unit projection. For the Village of West Salem and La Crosse County the same assumptions utilized for the Town of Hamilton and surrounding towns calculations were used.

Table 1.5 Housing Units and Housing Unit Projections –Scenario 1

| Housing Units(1) | | | | | | | | Housing Unit Projections(2) | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | % Chg 70-80 | % Chg 80-90 | % Chg 90-00 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
| Town of Hamilton | 372 | 487 | 585 | 732 | 30.9 | 20.1 | 25.1 | 917 | 980 | 1,044 | 1,121 |
| Town of Barre | 143 | 293 | 344 | 354 | 104.9 | 17.4 | 2.9 | 410 | 425 | 441 | 462 |
| Town of Burns | 240 | 315 | 350 | 367 | 31.3 | 11.1 | 4.9 | 367 | 366 | 368 | 373 |
| Town of Farmington | 412 | 573 | 639 | 706 | 39.1 | 11.5 | 10.5 | 705 | 731 | 760 | 797 |
| Town of Medary | 685 | 600 | 533 | 553 | -12.4 | -11.2 | 3.8 | 563 | 570 | 579 | 594 |
| Town of Onalaska | 894 | 1,730 | 1,978 | 1,834 | 93.5 | 14.3 | -7.3 | 2,099 | 2,170 | 2,249 | 2,351 |
| Village of West Salem | 620 | 1,099 | 1,315 | 1,765 | 77.3 | 19.7 | 34.2 | 2,000 | 2,108 | 2,221 | 2,360 |
| La Crosse County | 25,433 | 33,277 | 38,227 | 43,480 | 30.8 | 14.9 | 13.7 | 41,930 | 42,792 | 43,795 | 45,293 |
| State | 1,472,332 | 1,863,897 | 2,055,676 | 2,321,144 | 26.6 | 10.3 | 12.9 | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| U.S. | 68,704,315 | 88,410,627 | 102,263,678 | 115,904,641 | 28.7 | 15.7 | 13.3 | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Source: (1) U.S. Dept. of Commerce Bureau of the Census; (2) Prepared by Town of Hamilton Planning Commission

The second set of housing unit projections were prepared by utilizing historical housing unit growth rates (Table 1.6). The method took the average growth rate in the respective Town units of government over the last two decades and forecast the housing units for the next 20 years. The average growth rate per decade for the Town of Hamilton was 22.6%. This forecasting method projected that by the year 2025 the Town of Hamilton will have an additional 504 housing units.

Table 1.6 Housing Unit Projections Scenario 2

| | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Town of Hamilton | 897 | 998 | 1111 | 1236 |
| Town of Barre | 390 | 410 | 431 | 453 |
| Town of Burns | 396 | 412 | 429 | 446 |
| Town of Farmington | 784 | 827 | 872 | 920 |
| Town of Medary | 533 | 523 | 513 | 503 |
| Town of Onalaska | 1962 | 2031 | 2102 | 2176 |

Source: State of Wisconsin Department of Administration, Town of Hamilton Planning Commission

Town of Hamilton Survey

The Town of Hamilton mailed a survey to all landowners of record in the Town of Hamilton. The survey asked landowners questions regarding the Town of Hamilton's future and the nine comprehensive planning elements. Landowners returned 493 surveys and a summary of the results are detailed in the following tables and charts.

As Chart 1.2 demonstrates, the majority of respondents (nearly 70 %) were non-farm single-family households. The next highest percentage of respondents were farm owners at approximately 19%.

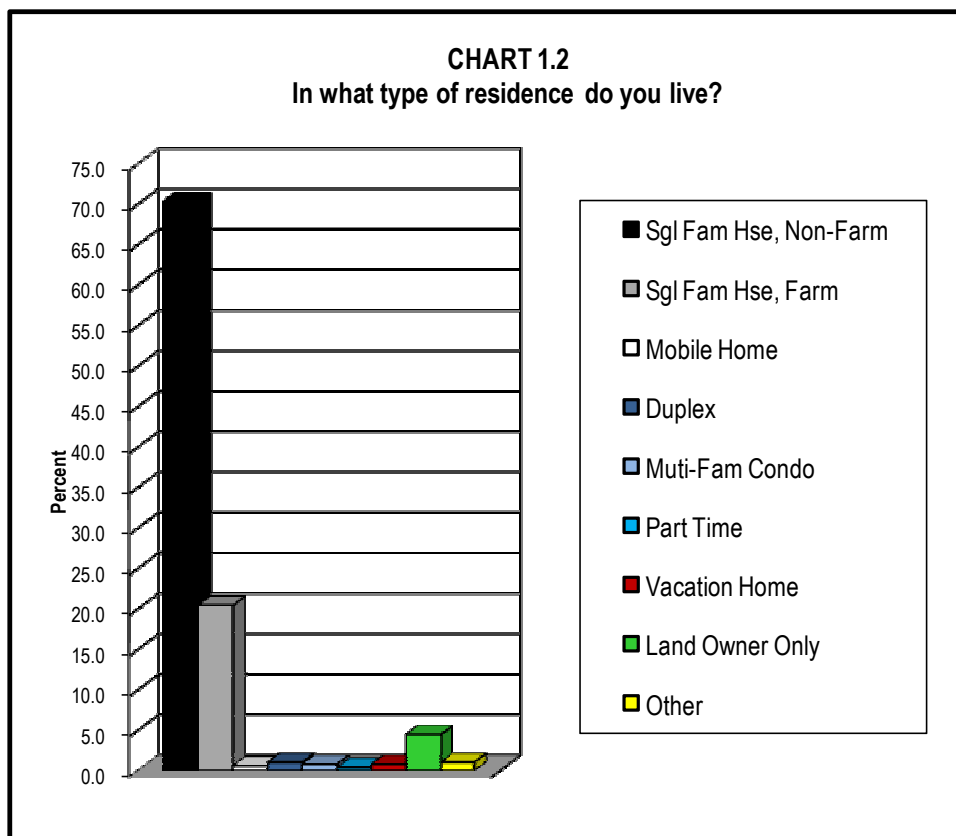


Chart 1.3 illustrates the number of years respondents have lived in the Town of Hamilton. Approximately 26% of respondents have lived in the Town of Hamilton less than five years. The majority of respondents (38%) have lived in the Town of Hamilton for more than 20 years, while 36% of survey respondents have lived in the Town of Hamilton between 6 and 20 years.

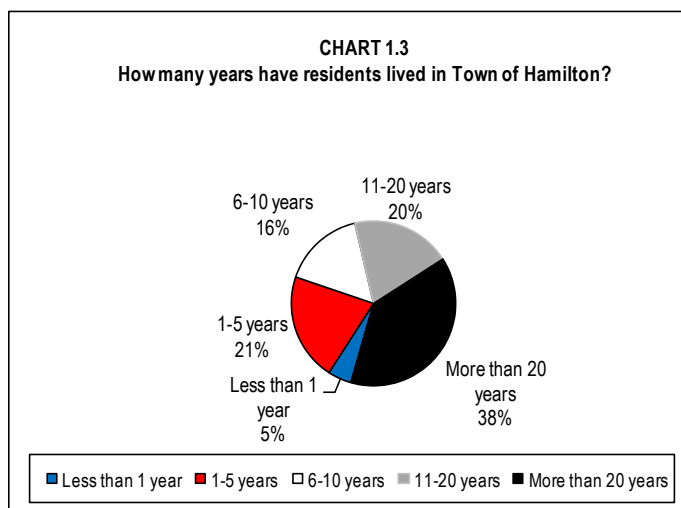


Table 1.7 Town of Hamilton Future Directions for Growth and Development

| Response Categories | % Strongly Agree/Agree | % No Opinion/Neutral | % Disagree/Strongly Disagree |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| The Town should be mostly rural. | 70 | 19 | 10 |
| The Town should encourage commercial business development | 42 | 23 | 35 |
| The Town should encourage the preservation of farmland | 83 | 12 | 6 |
| The Town should encourage the preservation of green space | 83 | 11 | 6 |
| Maintaining the 35 acre rule for land zoned exclusive ag is important | 65 | 15 | 20 |
| New developments in the Town should occur adjacent to areas that are already developed | 69 | 16 | 14 |
| The Town should encourage industrial development | 33 | 25 | 43 |
| Natural resource protection should be a high priority for the Town | 90 | 6 | 4 |
| The Town should encourage tourism and recreation-oriented businesses | 48 | 29 | 23 |
| Development should occur mostly in cities and villages, not in the town | 58 | 18 | 25 |
| There are land use conflicts in the Town | 45 | 51 | 4 |
| Housing affordability is a problem in the Town | 24 | 47 | 29 |
| The Town should coordinate future plans with surrounding towns, cities, and villages | 77 | 14 | 10 |
| Housing subdivisions should be allowed in rural areas of the Town. | 32 | 17 | 51 |
| Mixed-use development should be allowed in rural areas of the Town | 34 | 28 | 38 |
| The Town should participate in environmental improvement projects to manage storm water | 70 | 23 | 7 |
| The Town should maintain its municipal independence from surrounding communities | 72 | 21 | 7 |

The survey responses strongly reflect the importance of natural resource protection, the preservation of farmland and green space, and the need to coordinate planning efforts with adjacent local units of government. The majority of town residents did not feel that it was important for the town to encourage commercial or industrial uses in the town. The strongest objection identified with regard to future directions of growth in the town was 51% of respondents against housing subdivisions in rural areas.

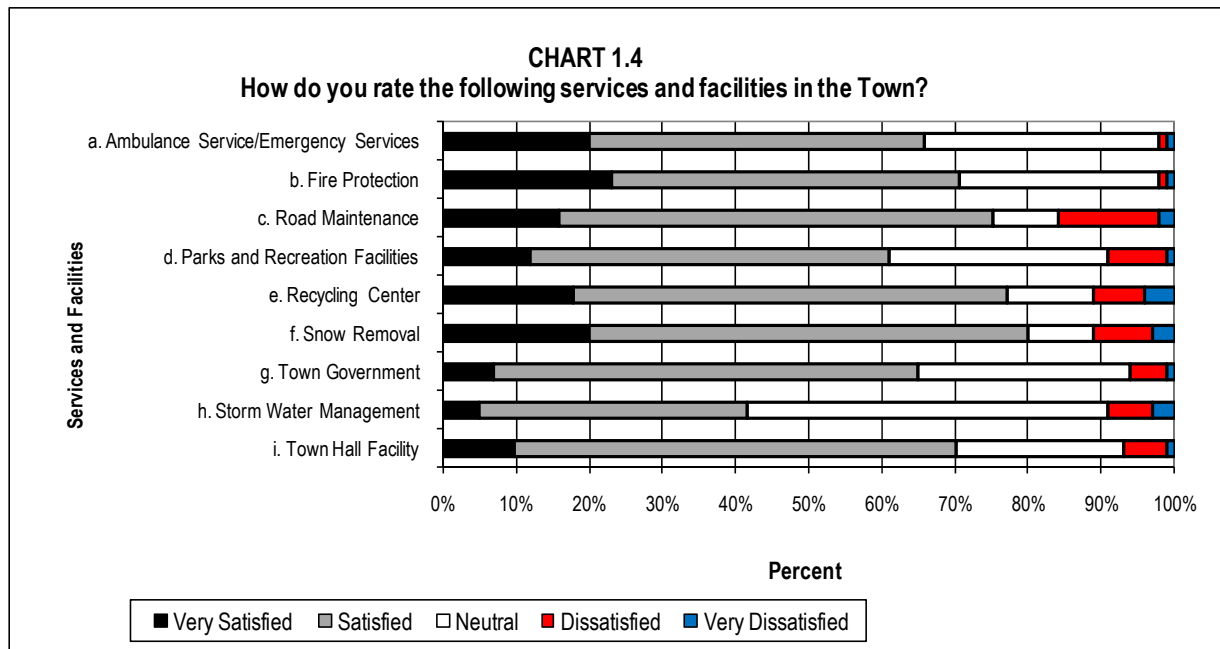


Chart 1.4 provides information on how town residents rated the Town of Hamilton services and facilities. For all the town services and facilities identified the residents that responded to the survey indicated that they were very satisfied/satisfied with the town's provision of services. The largest percentage of dissatisfied residents occurred with the road maintenance category, but only 16% were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied. Fifty percent of respondents stated they had no opinion/neutral with regard to stormwater management. This high percentage is most likely the result of residents not being knowledgeable of storm water management requirements or practices.

Table 1.8 Town of Hamilton Residents Feelings Regarding Housing Development in the Town

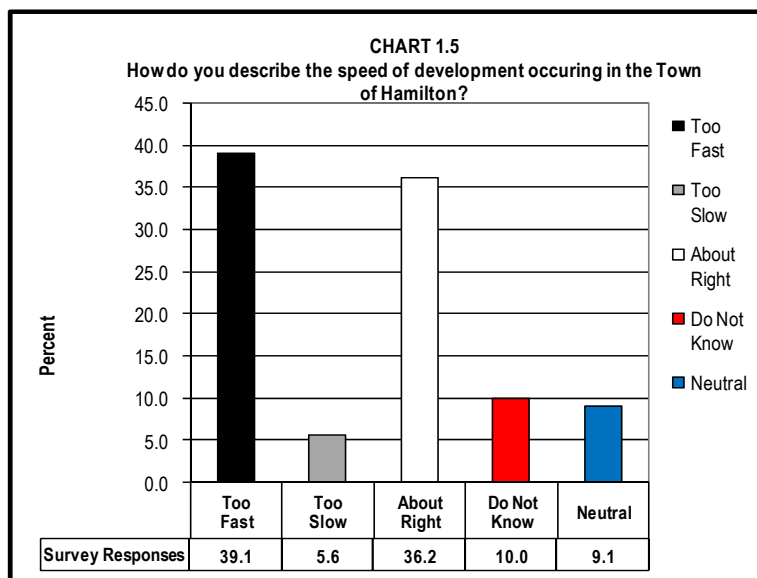
| Response Categories | % Strongly Agree/Agree | % No Opinion/Neutral | % Disagree/Strongly Disagree |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| No new housing needed | 32 | 19 | 49 |
| More single family housing is needed | 50 | 24 | 26 |
| More duplexes (2 units per structure) are needed | 14 | 19 | 67 |
| More apartments (3 or more units per structure) are needed | 9 | 17 | 74 |
| More mobile home parks are needed | 3 | 9 | 88 |
| More elderly (senior) housing is needed | 45 | 24 | 31 |
| More starter (first time buyer) home are needed | 33 | 24 | 43 |
| More condominiums are needed | 15 | 18 | 67 |



A housing development adjacent to agricultural land and the Maple Grove Country Club.

Housing development is of great importance to town residents so the survey specifically requested opinions on the type of housing residents would like to see. The results indicate that resident's predominately want single family housing in the town, with some focus on more elderly housing. Residents strongly objected to duplexes, apartments, condominiums and mobile home parks.

The results in Chart 1.5 indicate that the residents in the Town of Hamilton are divided on how they would describe the speed of development in the Town of Hamilton. Approximately 39% felt that the rate of development is too fast while about 36% felt the pace of development was about right. Only 5.6% believed the pace of development is too slow in the Town.



The Town Survey also included an open-ended question that asked residents for input on what they felt were the two biggest challenges facing the town. 368 residents responded and their comments were categorized and summarized below. As the responses indicate, the management of growth and development and the concern over high taxes were identified most often by survey respondents. The impacts of growth and development such as services, annexation, loss of farmland and road maintenance were often recognized by residents as future challenges facing the Town of Hamilton.

Biggest Challenges Faced by the Town of Hamilton as Identified by Residents

| Response Categories-Concerns | Number of Responses |
|---|---|
| Manage Growth and Development | 202 Responses -47 of the responses expressed concern over residential development -14 of the responses expressed concern over commercial/industrial development -141 of the responses just stated a concern over growth and development in general |
| Taxes (concern over high taxes) | 124 Responses |
| Town Services | 42 Responses -19 of the responses expressed concern over garbage pick up and landfill space |
| Preservation of Agricultural/Farmland | 41 Responses |
| Roads and Traffic Impacts | 39 Responses |
| Planning and Zoning | 33 Responses |
| Loss of Town Property Due to Annexation | 28 Responses |
| Preserve the Rural Atmosphere/Lifestyle | 18 Responses |
| School Impacts | 16 Responses |
| Protection of the Environment | 11 Responses |
| Protection of Property Rights | 4 Responses |
| Other Comments | 20 Responses |
| <i>Response categories developed and tabulated by the MRRPC</i> | |

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2. Land Use Inventory

To plan for the future land use of the Town of Hamilton, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the existing land uses in the town. This section details existing land uses, residential densities, and land demand and supply.

EXISTING LAND USE

Table 2.1, provides a land use inventory for the Town of Hamilton based on 2005 property assessment records. Map 1-2.1 illustrates the existing land uses of the Town of Hamilton.

Table 2.1 Land Use Inventory – Town of Hamilton

| Land Type | Acres | Percent of Land Use |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Residential | 1,330 | 4.1 |
| Commercial | 384 | 1.2 |
| Manufacturing | 101 | 0.3 |
| Agricultural | 15,920 | 48.6 |
| Undeveloped/Other | 732 | 2.2 |
| Forest/Ag Forest | 9,315 | 28.4 |
| Other (public land, etc.) | 4,963 | 15.2 |
| Total | 32,745 | 100.0 |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Bureau of Equalization, 2006

Agricultural/Forest

As Table 2.1 and Map 1-2.1 illustrate the Town of Hamilton can still be classified as a rural town as 94.4% of the land is agriculture, forest, undeveloped, or public land. The agricultural uses present in the town of Hamilton primarily consist of cropland, grazing/pasture, and livestock related facilities/activities. Crops significant the area are primarily corn, alfalfa, and soybeans.

Due to the Town of Hamilton's location near expanding urban areas some unique agricultural uses have evolved to meet the needs of the neighboring urban areas. A corn maze is run seasonally each fall catering to the Halloween season in the town adjacent to U.S. Highway 16 on the west side of the Village of West Salem. A couple of riding stables that provide boarding and equestrian activities have been built and are operated in the Town of Hamilton.

Residential

In 2005, 1,330 acres or 4.1% of the land area in the Town of Hamilton was devoted to residential uses. The town still remains primarily rural but it is experiencing development pressure from within (Village of West Salem) and from its adjacent urban neighbors of La Crosse and Onalaska. The residential uses are primarily low density and scattered throughout the town with no specific pattern of development. The Town of Hamilton has one incorporated village (West Salem) within its geographical borders. The Village of West Salem occupies approximately 1,450 acres and in 2000 had a population of 4,738. Higher density residential development has occurred near and within the Village of West Salem.

Commercial/Manufacturing

There are numerous commercial and manufacturing enterprises located in the Town of Hamilton. The majority of commercial and manufacturing businesses have located adjacent to the Village of West Salem. Table 2.2 lists the businesses located in the Town of Hamilton within 1½ miles of the Village of West Salem. Additional businesses located in the Town of Hamilton include Maple Grove Country Club, Gill Forage Genetics, and Nuttleman Transmission.

Table 2.2 Businesses in the Town of Hamilton

| Location | Businesses |
|---|---|
| South of the Village of West Salem on Cty. M and Cty. C | West Salem Planning and Molding, Cal West Seeds, Becker Trailers, John Deere Horizon Equipment, Advanced Pumping |
| Southeast of the Village of West Salem on Cty. B | Cottage Grove Nursery and Gifts, Coulee Region RV Center, Schwan's, Sandoz Seeds, Vermeer, R L Carriers, Maxwell-White Plumbing and Heating |
| North of the Village of West Salem on Cty. M | 7 Rivers Home Improvement, Salem Auto Body, La Crosse County Fairgrounds |
| West of the Village of West Salem on Hwy. 16 | Thunder Valley Taxidermy, Corn Maze |
| Northeast of the Village of West Salem Hwy. 16 | Jolly's Home Grown, Linda's Bakery, Lakeview Furniture (vacant), Neshonoc Lake Campground |

Source: Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, 2006

Town of Hamilton Existing Conditions Report – Land Use Inventory

Agricultural land and open space dominates the landscape of the town. However, due to the location of the town near the City of La Crosse and along Interstate 90 pressure from commercial uses is becoming commonplace. A review of County Zoning Department records indicate that between 2000 and 2006, twenty-nine rezones and thirty five conditional use permits were requested in the Town of Hamilton. This demonstrates the development pressures facing the Town of Hamilton in regard to changes in the land use.



Businesses located in the Town of Hamilton along County Road B.

Existing Land Use Regulations

The Town of Hamilton is a zoned town. The Town adopted La Crosse County Comprehensive Zoning in 1953. The La Crosse County Zoning Department administers the County Zoning Ordinance in the Town of Hamilton. Map 1-2.2 illustrates the zoning districts in the Town of Hamilton. The La Crosse County Zoning Department also administers regulations mandated by Wisconsin State Statute in the Town of Hamilton such as the Private On-site Sanitary Sewer Ordinance, Shoreland, Wetland and Floodplain regulations.

The Town of Hamilton has adopted several local ordinances that are enforced by the Town Board. Local ordinances adopted include Uniform Dwelling Code, Subdivision Ordinance, Recycling Ordinance, and a Traffic Ordinance (speed and stop signs). The Town has recently adopted an Outdoor Wood Furnace Ordinance.

Residential and Non-Residential Density

Table 2.3 illustrates the residential density of the Town of Hamilton as compared to La Crosse County, adjacent towns and the State. In 2000, the Town of Hamilton had 46 people per square mile and 14.6 housing units per square mile. The population and housing density for the Town of Hamilton is significantly less than that of La Crosse County and the State of Wisconsin. Neighboring towns to the east and north of Hamilton have lower residential densities compared to adjacent towns to the south and west. This can be attributed to the urban areas of La Crosse County being to the south and west of the Town of Hamilton. The non-residential density of other uses was not calculated due to the lack of and negligible amount of such uses.



A recent housing development west of the Village of West Salem adjacent to State Highway 16.

Table 2.3 Residential Density, 2000

| | Population | Housing Units | Land Area in Sq. Mi. | Density (Units per Sq. Mi.) | |
|-----------------------|------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| | | | | Population | Housing Units |
| Town of Hamilton | 2,103 | 732 | 50.07 | 46 | 14.6 |
| Town of Barre | 1,014 | 354 | 20.67 | 49.1 | 17.1 |
| Town of Burns | 979 | 367 | 48.33 | 20.3 | 7.6 |
| Town of Farmington | 1,733 | 706 | 75.41 | 23 | 9.4 |
| Town of Medary | 1,463 | 553 | 11.71 | 124.9 | 47.2 |
| Town of Onalaska | 5,210 | 1,834 | 37 | 140.8 | 49.6 |
| Village of West Salem | 4,540 | 1,765 | 2.38 | 1,911.2 | 743 |
| La Crosse County | 107,120 | 43,479 | 452.74 | 236.6 | 96 |
| Wisconsin | 5,363,675 | 2,321,144 | 54,310.1 | 98.8 | 42.7 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

LAND USE TRENDS

Land Supply, Demand, and Prices

There is a significant amount of land available for more intense development in the Town of Hamilton. As previously mentioned 94.4% of the land in the Town of Hamilton is either agriculture, forested, swamp/waste or public land. Table 2.4 portrays the housing growth between 1990 and 2000 and the number of new housing units per square mile in the town, county and state.

Table 2.4 Housing Growth 1990-2000

| | 1990 | 2000 | Net Change | % Change | New Housing Units Per Sq. Mi. |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|-------------------------------|
| Town of Hamilton | 585 | 732 | 147 | 25.1 | 2.9 |
| Town of Barre | 344 | 354 | 10 | 2.9 | .5 |
| Town of Burns | 350 | 367 | 17 | 4.9 | .4 |
| Town of Farmington | 639 | 706 | 67 | 10.5 | .9 |
| Town of Medary | 533 | 553 | 20 | 3.8 | 1.7 |
| Town of Onalaska | 1,978 | 1,834 | -144 | -7.3 | - |
| Village of West Salem | 1,315 | 1,765 | 450 | 34.2 | 189 |
| La Crosse County | 38,227 | 43,480 | 5,253 | 13.7 | 11.6 |
| Wisconsin | 2,055,676 | 2,321,144 | 265,468 | 12.9 | 4.9 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Table 2.5 illustrates the land prices in the Town of Hamilton between 1990 and 1997. In 1997, the average cost of land per acre in the Town of Hamilton was \$1,068. The majority of land that was transacted during that time period did remain in agricultural use. The 2002 USDA Census of Agriculture valued agricultural land at \$1,937 dollars per acre in La Crosse County. In recent years, prices per acre of land have soared due to the value of recreational property and the public demand for country living. Asking prices for agricultural and forested land in the Town of Hamilton are commonly between \$4,000 and \$5,000 per acre.



A view of agricultural land in the Town of Hamilton.

Table 2.5 Farmland Sales 1990-1997

| | # Parcels Sold | Total Acres | Acres Continuing in Agriculture | Acres Converted out of Agriculture | \$/Acre of land continuing in of Agriculture | \$/Acre of land converted out of Agriculture | % of Farmland Sold then Converted to other use |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Town of Hamilton | 40 | 2,432 | 2,008 | 424 | \$1,068 | \$2,121 | 2.5 |
| Town of Barre | 17 | 1,185 | 1,007 | 178 | \$1,008 | \$632 | 2.1 |
| Town of Burns | 61 | 3,426 | 3,085 | 341 | \$691 | \$1,033 | 2.1 |
| Town of Farmington | 84 | 3,855 | 3,304 | 551 | \$789 | \$678 | 2.3 |
| Town of Medary | 8 | 410 | 213 | 197 | n/a | n/a | 5.8 |
| Town of Onalaska | 47 | 2,404 | 1,635 | 769 | \$1,082 | \$1,204 | 6.8 |
| All La Crosse Cnty Towns | 404 | 21,421 | 17,508 | 3,913 | \$885 | \$1,609 | 3.0 |

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

Opportunities for Redevelopment

The Town of Hamilton Planning Commission analyzed the opportunities for redevelopment in the Town of Hamilton as part of the planning process. Based on the rural nature of the town and lack of historical development no significant redevelopment opportunities were identified.

Existing/Potential Land Use Conflicts

Land use conflicts identified during the planning process are listed below:

- Ongoing conflicts between the desire to preserve the rural character and agricultural appearance of the town with increased development pressure and private property owner's interests
- Village of West Salem and City of Onalaska growth and expansion into the Town of Hamilton
- Identification of Smart Growth Areas



A view of a farm operation and a nearby housing development. An example of the potential and existing land use conflicts in the Town of Hamilton.

The Plan Commission believes that existing and potential land use conflicts listed can be managed through the comprehensive planning process and continued open communication with affected parties. The *Existing/Potential Land Use Conflicts* will be addressed further in the "Policies and Programs for Land Use in the Town of Hamilton" section of this plan.

Land Use Projections

Projecting acres needed for future land uses is an important part of the planning process. La Crosse County is in the process of preparing the County comprehensive plan and as part of that project projections were established for the Town of Hamilton/Town of Barre/Village of West Salem planning sub area. Those projections are listed in the following table (Table 2.6). It is forecasted that 1,121 acres in these municipalities will be needed for residential, commercial and industrial uses in the next 20 years.

Table 2.6 Land Use Projections for the Town of Hamilton, Town of Barre, and Village of West Salem (in acres)

| | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | Projected Total |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|-----------------|
| Residential | 188 | 169 | 176 | 191 | 724 |
| Commercial | 75 | 67 | 70 | 76 | 289 |
| Industrial | 28 | 25 | 26 | 28 | 108 |

Source: La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report, January 2006

The Town of Hamilton Plan Commission developed additional residential land use projections based on housing unit projections identified in the Demographic Trends and Projects section of this report (see page1-3). It was determined that residential uses would have the most significant impact on the Town of Hamilton in the planning period, therefore additional land use acreage projections (commercial/industrial) were not considered.

Based on the projected number of housing units and the average acreage that exists with each housing unit in the Town of Hamilton, Table 2.7 illustrates the total number of acres needed to accommodate residential development during the planning period. Each housing unit in the Town of Hamilton utilizes approximately one to two acres of land. This approximation is based on discussions with the County Zoning and Planning Department and calculations derived from dividing the number of housing units by the acreage of land assessed as residential. Completing this

analysis illustrates by the year 2025 at the most 844 acres of land will have to be converted to residential to accommodate projected housing growth.

Table 2.7 Town of Hamilton Residential Land Use Forecast Scenarios

| Scenario 1 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | Total Acres |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Residential Acres Needed (1 acre per housing unit) | 93 housing units x 1 = 93 Acres | 63 housing units x 1 = 63 Acres | 64 housing units x 1 = 64 Acres | 77 housing units x 1 = 77 Acres | 297 Acres |
| Residential Acres Needed (2 acres per housing unit) | 93 housing units x 2 = 186 Acres | 63 housing units x 2 = 126 Acres | 64 housing units x 2 = 128 Acres | 77 housing units x 2 = 154 Acres | 594 Acres |
| Scenario 2 | | | | | |
| Residential Acres Needed (1 acre per housing unit) | 83 housing units x 1 = 83 Acres | 101 housing units x 1 = 101 Acres | 113 housing units x 1 = 113 Acres | 125 housing units x 1 = 125 Acres | 422 Acres |
| Residential Acres Needed (2 acres per housing unit) | 83 housing units x 2 = 166 Acres | 101 housing units x 2 = 202 Acres | 113 housing units x 2 = 226 Acres | 125 housing units x 2 = 250 Acres | 844 Acres |

Source: Town of Hamilton Plan Commission 2006

Table 2.8 projects agricultural land (15,920 acres) listed in table 2.1 were utilized as the base number. The largest residential forecast in acres from Table 2.7 was then subtracted to establish the agricultural land use projections. Agricultural land use is projected to decline by approximately 844 acres during the planning period.

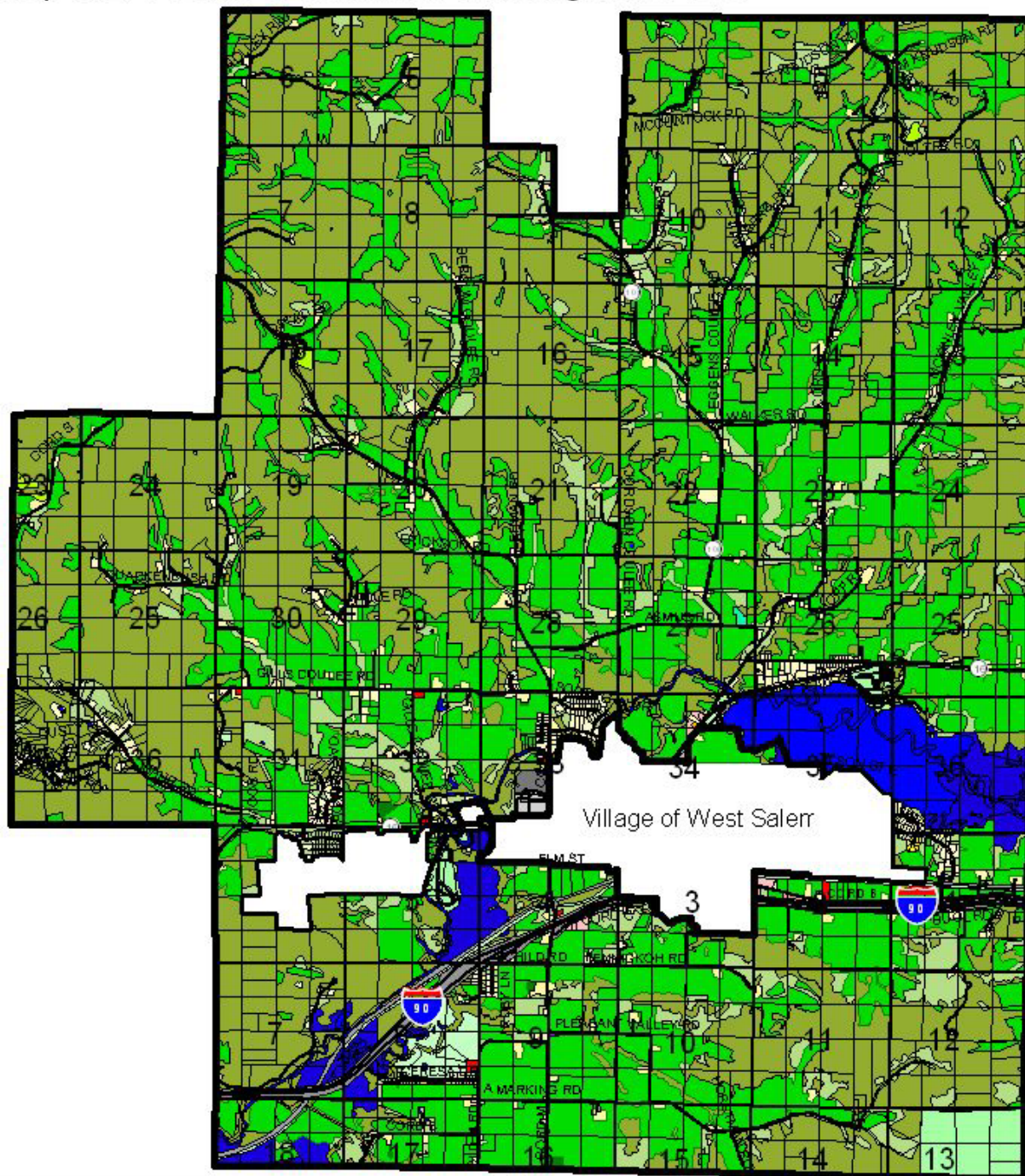
Table 2.8 Town of Hamilton Agricultural Land Use Projections

| Agricultural Land Use | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | Total Reduction in Ag. Acres |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Agricultural land use in 2006 15,920 acres | 15,754 acres | 15,552 acres | 15,326 acres | 15,076 acres | 844 acres |

Source: MRRPC projecting agricultural land use utilizing forecasts for future residential acres

It must be pointed out that by just looking at the numbers a clear picture of the Town of Hamilton is not created. In reality throughout the town when a residential home or development is constructed more land than one or two acres is impacted. The estimated acres per home was established by interviews with Town and County building and planning officials. It is not uncommon for a larger agricultural parcel to be converted to accommodate residences. In many cases the residential uses no longer make productive use of the land, impacting the visual appearance of the land. The end result of such development has a much greater impact on the appearance of the town versus what the numbers portray. The Plan Commission is sensitive to this reality and will take it into account in the preparation of this planning document.

Map 1-2.1 Town of Hamilton Existing Land Use



Land Use Districts

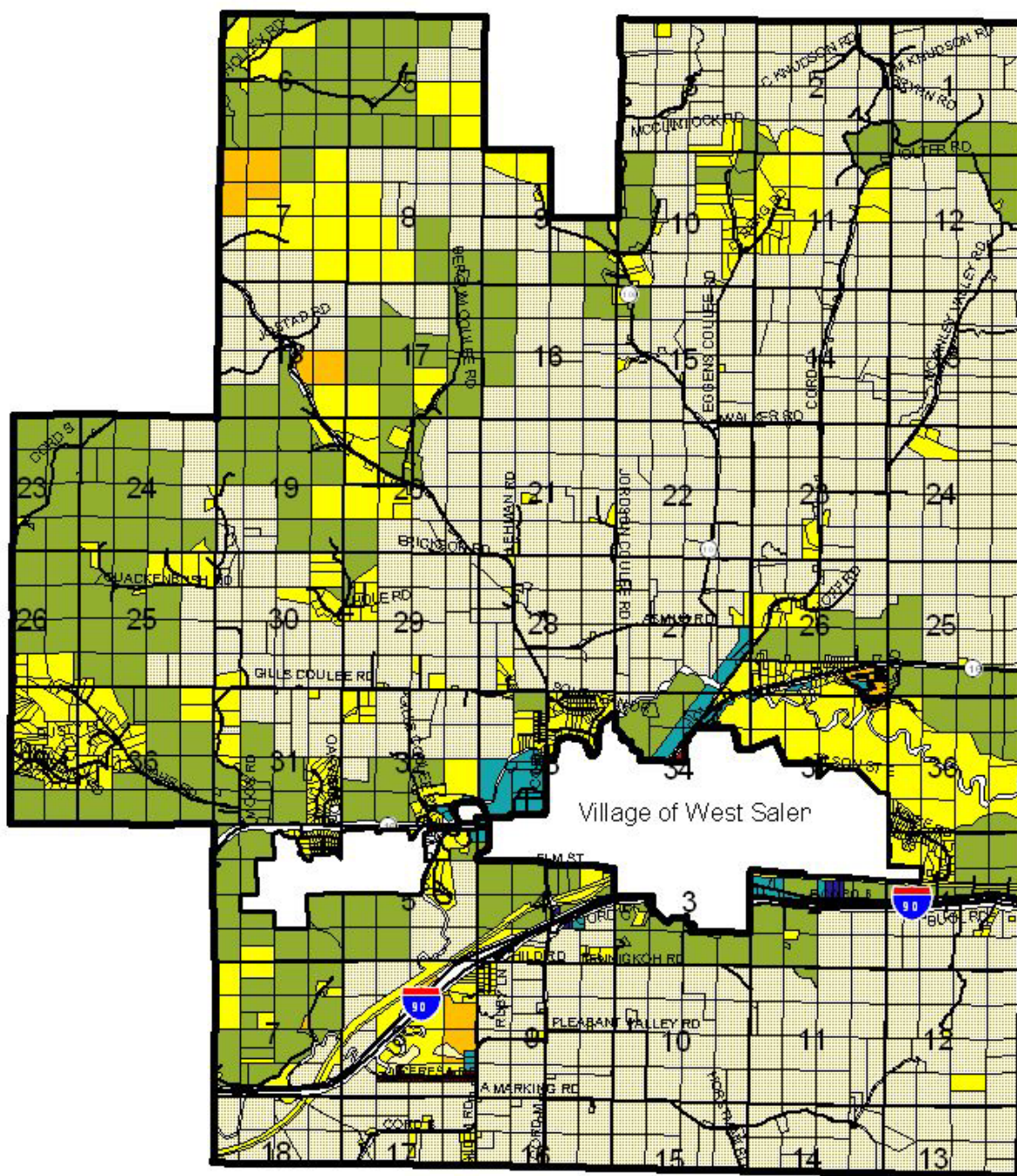
- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Single Family | Roads |
| Multi-Family 2-4 | Railroads |
| Multi-Family 5+ | Specialty Sports |
| Mobile Home | Fairgrounds |
| Farmstead | Active Leisure |
| Motel/Hotel | Passive Leisure |
| Retail | Agriculture |
| Wholesale | Uses Lock |
| Service | Pasture |
| Restaurant | Quarrying |
| Solid Waste | Woodlands |
| School/Library | Wetlands |
| Utilities | Water |
| Cemetery | |



0.8 0 0.8 Miles

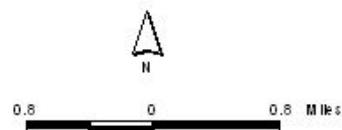
Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission
July 1, 2008
Source: La Crosse County Land Use
Inventory 2005

Map 1-2.2 Town of Hamilton Zoning Map



Zoning Districts

- Agriculture A
- Agriculture B
- Commercial B
- Commercial C
- Exclusive Agriculture
- Industrial
- Residential A
- Residential B
- Residential C
- Transitional Agriculture



Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission
July 1, 2008
Source: La Crosse County Zoning
Department

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3. Housing Conditions

In order to address future housing needs and projected growth, it is valuable to have a good understanding of the current housing stock in the Town of Hamilton. Census information was reviewed and compiled to provide a snapshot of the existing housing conditions in the Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County.

Housing Units by Type and Year Built

Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 provide information on the number, type and year built of the existing housing structures in the Town of Hamilton. Of the 704 housing units in the town, 670 are single unit (attached or detached) structures. Mobile homes make up 3% of the housing units in the town. The data indicate that 92.3 percent of the homes in the town are single-family structures. A large portion of the units were constructed in the 1970's and 1980's (38.6 %). Approximately 23% of the units in the Town of Hamilton have been constructed since 1990.

Table 3.1 Town of Hamilton, Housing Units by Type, 2000

| Type | Town of Hamilton | % | La Crosse County | % | State of WI | % | U.S. | % |
|-----------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 unit detached | 670 | 91.2 | 26,098 | 60.0 | 1,531,612 | 66.0 | 69,865,957 | 60.3 |
| 1 unit attached | 8 | 1.1 | 1,363 | 3.1 | 77,795 | 3.4 | 6,447,453 | 5.6 |
| 2 units | 27 | 3.7 | 4,178 | 9.6 | 190,889 | 8.2 | 4,995,350 | 4.3 |
| 3 or 4 units | 2 | 0.3 | 1,966 | 4.5 | 91,047 | 3.9 | 5,494,280 | 4.7 |
| 5-9 units | 0 | 0.0 | 2,210 | 5.1 | 106,680 | 4.6 | 5,414,988 | 4.7 |
| 10-19 units | 0 | 0.0 | 1,847 | 4.2 | 75,456 | 3.3 | 4,636,717 | 4.0 |
| 20 or more unit | 0 | 0.0 | 3,130 | 7.2 | 143,497 | 6.2 | 10,008,058 | 8.6 |
| Mobile Home | 22 | 3.0 | 2,675 | 6.2 | 101,465 | 4.4 | 8,779,228 | 7.6 |
| Other | 6 | 0.8 | 12 | 0.0 | 2,703 | 0.1 | 262,610 | 0.2 |
| Total | 735 | 100 | 43,479 | 100 | 2,321,144 | 100 | 115,904,641 | 100 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Table 3.2 Town of Hamilton, Year Structure Built, 2000

| Year Built | Town of Hamilton | % | La Crosse County | % | State of WI | % | U.S. | % |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1999 to 03/00 | 38 | 5.2 | 1,074 | 2.5 | 50,735 | 2.2 | 2,755,075 | 2.4 |
| 1995-1998 | 62 | 8.4 | 3,417 | 7.9 | 170,219 | 7.3 | 8,478,975 | 7.3 |
| 1990-1994 | 69 | 9.4 | 3,198 | 7.4 | 168,838 | 7.3 | 8,467,008 | 7.3 |
| 1980-1989 | 145 | 19.7 | 5,568 | 12.8 | 249,789 | 10.8 | 18,326,847 | 15.8 |
| 1970-1979 | 139 | 18.9 | 8,013 | 18.4 | 391,349 | 16.9 | 21,438,863 | 18.5 |
| 1960-1969 | 47 | 6.4 | 4,847 | 11.1 | 276,188 | 11.9 | 15,911,903 | 13.7 |
| 1940-1959 | 68 | 9.3 | 8,318 | 19.1 | 470,862 | 20.3 | 23,145,917 | 20.0 |
| 1939 or Earlier | 167 | 22.7 | 9,044 | 20.8 | 543,164 | 23.4 | 17,380,053 | 15.0 |
| Structures | 735 | 100 | 43,479 | 100 | 2,321,144 | 100 | 115,904,641 | 100 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Median Housing Value

The median value of a home in the Town of Hamilton was \$123,800 in 2000, compared to La Crosse County at \$96,900 (See Table 3.3). The Town of Hamilton's median value exceeds the median value of its neighbors to the north and west (Farmington and Burns) by over \$33,000. However, the Town of Hamilton median housing value is very similar to other neighboring towns.

Table 3.3 - 2000 Median Housing Value of Owner Occupied Units for Selected Units of Government

| Governmental Unit | 2000 Median Housing Value |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Town of Hamilton | \$123,800 |
| Town of Barre | \$124,300 |
| Town of Burns | \$90,600 |
| Town of Farmington | \$84,500 |
| Town of Medary | \$128,500 |
| Town of Onalaska | \$111,100 |
| La Crosse County | \$96,900 |
| State of Wisconsin | \$112,200 |
| United States | \$119,600 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000



A new housing subdivision in the Town of Hamilton.

Occupancy Characteristics, Vacancy Rates, Year Moved In

Tables 3.4 and 3.5 illustrate housing unit occupancy characteristics and vacancy rates for the Town of Hamilton, adjacent towns and La Crosse County. In the Town of Hamilton 87.8% of houses are owner occupied housing units compared to 65.1% in La Crosse County. The Town of Hamilton has a 4.5% vacancy rate for available housing. The available housing vacancy rate is the proportion of the housing inventory that is available for sale only or for rent. A vacancy rate of approximately 3% is the recommended standard in order to provide consumers with an adequate choice of housing.

Table 3.4 Housing Unit Occupancy Characteristics, 2000

| | Total Occupied Housing Units | % Total Owner Occupied | % Total Renter Occupied |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Town of Hamilton | 697 | 87.8 | 12.2 |
| Town of Barre | 347 | 83.6 | 16.4 |
| Town of Burns | 349 | 88.0 | 12.0 |
| Town of Farmington | 664 | 85.8 | 14.2 |
| Town of Medary | 530 | 89.2 | 10.8 |
| Town of Onalaska | 1,777 | 91.6 | 8.4 |
| Village of West Salem | 1,706 | 75.1 | 24.9 |
| La Crosse County | 41,599 | 65.1 | 34.9 |
| State | 2,084,544 | 89.8 | 10.2 |
| U.S. | 105,480,101 | 66.2 | 33.8 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Table 3.5 Vacancy Rates, 2000

| | Homeowner Vacancy Rate | Rental Vacancy Rate |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Town of Hamilton | 0.3 | 4.5 |
| Town of Barre | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| Town of Burns | - | - |
| Town of Farmington | 1.4 | 5.1 |
| Town of Medary | 0.6 | 8.1 |
| Town of Onalaska | 0.4 | 4.5 |
| Village of West Salem | 1.2 | 3.0 |
| La Crosse County | 1.0 | 4.9 |
| State | 1.2 | 5.6 |
| U.S. | 1.7 | 6.8 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Table 3.6 shows the year residents moved into their present household. The highest percentage of residents moved into their present household between 1995 and 1998, 24.2 percent. Between 1980 and 1998 67.4% of residents moved into their present household.

Table 3.6 Town of Hamilton, Year Householder Moved In

| Year Moved In | Percent |
|--------------------|---------|
| 1999 to March 2000 | 12.2 |
| 1995 to 1998 | 24.4 |
| 1990 to 1994 | 19.3 |
| 1980 to 1989 | 23.7 |
| 1970 to 1979 | 11.6 |
| 1969 or Earlier | 8.7 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Affordability of Housing

Table 3.7 illustrates the affordability of housing in the Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County. Significant in the numbers is that 18% of Town of Hamilton residents spent more than 30% of their incomes on their housing units. This was a higher percentage than the County and all adjacent municipalities.

Table 3.7 Percent of Income Spent on Owner Occupied Units, 2000

| | Total Owner Occupied Units | Less than 15 Percent | 15 to 30 Percent | 30 Percent or More | Not Computed |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Town of Hamilton | 471 | 35 | 46.9 | 18 | 0 |
| Town of Barre | 157 | 47.8 | 37.6 | 14.6 | 0 |
| Town of Burns | 134 | 50.7 | 32.9 | 14.9 | 1.5 |
| Town of Farmington | 258 | 48.1 | 39.6 | 12.5 | 0 |
| Town of Medary | 396 | 46.2 | 35.5 | 17.7 | 0.5 |
| Town of Onalaska | 1,291 | 30.8 | 53.1 | 15.1 | 1.0 |
| Village of West Salem | 912 | 41.3 | 43.1 | 15.6 | 0 |
| La Crosse County | 21,881 | 37.5 | 45.2 | 16.8 | 0.5 |
| State of Wisconsin | 1,122,467 | 36.8 | 45.0 | 17.8 | 0.4 |
| United States | 55,212,108 | 36.5 | 40.8 | 21.8 | 0.8 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000, La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan, 2006

Table 3.8 portrays renter occupied units and percent of income spent on such units in the Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County. Differing from owner occupied units, 41.7% of renters in the Town of Hamilton spent less than 15% of their income on the rental unit. The Town of Medary was the only adjacent town that had a higher percentage at 43.4%.

Table 3.8 Percent of Income Spent on Renter Occupied Units, 2000

| | Total Occupied Rental Units | Less than 15 Percent | 15 to 30 Percent | 30 Percent or More | Not Computed |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Town of Hamilton | 36 | 41.7 | 58.3 | 0 | 0 |
| Town of Barre | 48 | 29.2 | 37.6 | 14.6 | 18.8 |
| Town of Burns | 27 | 33.3 | 51.8 | 7.4 | 7.4 |
| Town of Farmington | 70 | 35.7 | 40.0 | 15.8 | 8.6 |
| Town of Medary | 53 | 43.4 | 41.5 | 9.4 | 5.7 |
| Town of Onalaska | 139 | 7.2 | 75.5 | 2.9 | 14.4 |
| Village of West Salem | 443 | 23.9 | 46.3 | 22.1 | 7.7 |
| La Crosse County | 14,358 | 21.1 | 42.2 | 33.6 | 3.2 |
| State of Wisconsin | 641,672 | 21.1 | 41.5 | 32.3 | 5.2 |
| United States | 35,199,502 | 18.1 | 37.5 | 36.8 | 7.5 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000, La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan, 2006

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4. Transportation

The movement of people, especially in non-urban towns, is vital to the development and future of the local unit of government. The transportation network allows people to go to work and home as well as the movement of raw materials and products. The following section provides an inventory of the transportation system in the Town of Hamilton.

Public Road Inventory

The Town of Hamilton participates in the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program. The WISLR program maintains a complete listing of public roads in the Town of Hamilton by jurisdiction, classification and number of miles. Appendix 1 of this plan provides a complete listing of public roads in the Town of Hamilton.

Public roads are classified as arterial, collector and local based on functionality. Arterials provide intra-community links and interconnect urban arterial systems and connections to rural collectors. Collector roads provide traffic circulation in residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. Collectors also focus traffic from local roads onto the arterial system. Local roads provide the lowest level of mobility and provide direct access to collectors and arterials. Map 1-4.1 illustrates the roadway system in the Town of Hamilton.

Within the Town of Hamilton there are 70.65 miles of public road that are under the jurisdiction of either La Crosse County or the Town of Hamilton. The Town of Hamilton maintains 48.61 miles of public road, which are all classified as local roads. La Crosse County has 22.04 miles of public road in the Town of Hamilton of which 1.77 miles are classified as arterial roads, 16.73 miles are classified as collector roads and 3.54 miles is classified as local roads.

Traffic Counts

Limited traffic counts are available for the Town of Hamilton. Table 4.1 illustrates the traffic counts for the years of 1990, 1996 and 2002 on Interstate 90, State Highways 16 and 108, and County Road C and M. As the traffic counts indicate, traffic on the roads serving the Town of Hamilton have increased over the years. In particular traffic on County Road M (north and south of Highway 16) in the 12 year span increased by more than 147%.

Table 4.1 Town of Hamilton – Average Daily Traffic Counts

| Location | 1990 | 1996 | 2002 | % Chng. 1990-2002 |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------|
| County M South of Interstate 90 | 2,310 | 3,700 | 5,700 | 147% |
| County M North of State Hwy. 16 | 1,630 | 3,100 | 4,200 | 158% |
| Interstate 90 East of West Salem | 13,310 | 19,400 | 20,900 | 57% |
| Interstate 90 West of West Salem | 14,040 | 20,000 | 22,900 | 63% |
| State Hwy. 108 North of State Hwy. 16 | 1,810 | 2,300 | 2,600 | 44% |
| County C North of State Hwy. 16 | 1,390 | 1,460 | 1,800 | 29% |
| State Hwy. 16 at West Town Line | 8,120 | 8,600 | 12,300 | 51% |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Interstate Highway

Interstate 90 is a Freeway Arterial regionally linking Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, La Crosse, and southern Minnesota. The only access point to the Interstate between the ramp at State Highway 16 on the east edge of Onalaska, and at Bangor, is interchange with County C, which lies on the south corporate limits of West Salem. Total Interstate mileage in the Town of Hamilton, excluding the 0.65 mile in the Village of West Salem is 2.25 miles on the east side of West Salem, and 6.45 miles on the west.



Interstate 90 traveling east/west through the Town of Hamilton.

Town of Hamilton Existing Conditions Report – Transportation

The design of Interstate 90 is a typical Midwest Interstate highway design; two, two lane, 24 foot wide concrete pavement strips, one way in each direction separated by a 60 foot vegetative median with 6 foot (*4 foot paved*) on the left, or inside lane, and 10 to 13 foot shoulders on the right, with 7 to 12 feet paved.

State Highway 16

State Highway 16, an arterial highway that runs east-west through the Town, and is the most significant roadway that directly serves properties in the Town. Within the Town of Hamilton, State Highway 16 has 2.72 miles west of the Village limits and 2.88 miles east of the limits. There is one mile of the Highway within the Village.

This road was formerly designated with a U.S. route number, but as the Interstate Highway System became the principal carrier of interstate motor vehicle traffic in this corridor the Federal Highway Administration and the various states agreed to number the highway as a state road. The road still receives federal project funding and links with similar roads in Minnesota and across the upper Midwest. Highway 16, numbered as a state highway, presently stretches from just west of Milwaukee, to near Austin, Minnesota. Many segments of the previous federally numbered route in Minnesota and South Dakota have now been converted to county jurisdiction.

State Highway 108

State Highway 108 is classified as a collector highway. This highway's total length as a marked state road is to provide a north-south connection between the Village of Melrose in Jackson County and a connection with State Highway 16 just north of the Village of West Salem. The rugged topography of the northern part of the Town causes State Highway 108 to pass in and out of the Town three times, leaving a total of about 5 miles in the Town, with another 10 miles in the La Crosse County Town of Farmington, and 2.8 miles in Jackson County. State Highway 108 throughout its length in the Town has a 22 foot wide, two lane pavement, with 1 or 2 foot gravel shoulders.

County Highways

County B

County B is classified as a collector road that essentially parallels State Highway 16 and Interstate 90. It links Sparta with Rockland, Bangor, West Salem, and La Crosse. This road enters the Town at the east boundary and there is a 2.02 mile segment between that entry point and the Village of West Salem eastern corporate limit. The marked county highway follows Village streets and reenters the Town at the south Village limits where it is a common boundary for 0.37 miles. It then follows in a north-south orientation concurrent with County M for about 1/2 mile where it is joined by County C which actually terminates at that point. After another 0.79 miles of concurrency with County M, B turns to a series of N-S and E-W orientations for another 2.15 miles, to leave the Town at its south boundary.

County C

County C is a collector road that travels north-south more or less parallel to State Highway 108, intersecting with it at the south end just north of STH 16 and again intersecting it, and ending, at Burr Oak one mile south of the north County line in the Town of Farmington. Near its south end it mostly runs concurrent with State Highways 108 and 16, and passes on Village streets through West Salem. This road primarily serves the northeast part of the Town, having 5.32 miles between the north Town boundary and the point of concurrency with State Highways 108 and 16, a short 0.15 mile segment between State Highway 16 and the Village limit, and a 0.9 mile of length within the Town south of, and parallel with, Interstate 90 before it terminates at County Roads B & M.

County M

County M is a collector road which winds its way through much of La Crosse County in a northerly-southerly orientation, from County Y near the north border in Town of Holland to U.S. Highways 14/ 61 in Town of Shelby. There is a segment of 0.18 miles that crosses the extreme northwest corner of the Town of Hamilton as it passes between the Towns of Onalaska and Farmington. It again enters the Town of Hamilton from the Town of Onalaska on the west with 5.18 miles distributed on six end to end segments from Town's west border to State Highway 16. South of State Highway 16, County M runs concurrent with County B for 1.31 miles then has an independent right-of-way for 1.14 miles.

Within the Town, County M travels in a northwesterly-south direction, connecting the Village of West Salem and Barre Mills in the adjoining township.

County S

County S is classified functionally as a local road. It passes across the northwest corner of the Town entering/exiting into the Town of Onalaska at both ends. It reenters Hamilton on the east for 0.63 mile where it terminates at an intersection with County M. County S originates/terminates on the west in the northern part of the City of Onalaska.

Other County Roads

Two other County Roads in the Town are BM and NP which serve as access and internal park roads for Veterans Memorial and Swarthout Neshonoc Lake County Parks, respectively.

Rustic Road 31

Located in the Village of West Salem and the Town of Hamilton is Rustic Road 31. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has designated certain roads throughout the state as Rustic Roads. Rustic Roads are primarily scenic, lightly traveled rural roads. Rustic Road 31 is 2.6 miles in length and travels on several village streets to County Road C, north to State Highway 16, then loops around Swarthout Lakeside Park, back to State Highway 16. The rustic road takes travelers past historic and recreational sites such as Gullickson Octagon House, the Hamlin Garland Homestead, and Swarthout Lakeside Park.



Rustic Road 31 as it enters Swarthout Lakeside County Park.

Para Transit

The La Crosse County Department of Aging operates a “minibus” service to La Crosse County residents that are either disabled, 60 years or older, or otherwise unable to utilize conventional transportation means. The Department of Aging contracts with a private operator to provide this service to Town of Hamilton and County residents. This service can be accessed by residents by calling the La Crosse County Aging Department.

Taxis

Three private taxi operators provide taxi service to La Crosse County residents. In addition, local residents are served by the Onalaska/Holmen/West Salem Public Transit Taxi Program (share ride) which is a demand response door-to-door transportation system. “Public Transit” means that you may travel with more than one passenger with different destinations and/or origins.

Intercity Bus Service

Intercity bus service is not provided in the Town of Hamilton. Jefferson Lines provides daily scheduled bus service to the La Crosse area. The intercity bus terminal is located approximately 5 miles west of the Town of Hamilton at 601 St. Andrew Street in the City of La Crosse. The bus line connects to Greyhound’s national service network in Madison and Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Freight Rail Service

The Class I Canadian Pacific Railway travels east/west through the Town of Hamilton. The Canadian Pacific Railway connects the area to Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul and could potentially provide service to the Village of West Salem and the Town of Hamilton. Additional Class I rail companies provide service to the La Crosse County area; the Union Pacific Railroad, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and the Iowa, Chicago and Eastern Line.



A train traveling on the Class I Canadian Pacific Railway in the Town of Hamilton.

Passenger Rail Service

Daily passenger service (AMTRAK) is available in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The AMTRAK Empire Builder Line provides passenger service between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest via Minneapolis/St. Paul. One westbound and one eastbound train stop at the La Crosse terminal daily.

High Speed Passenger Rail Service for the region continues to be a possibility as the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) has a nine state plan intended to improve passenger rail transportation in the Midwest. The project is in the early stages but the preferred route, connecting the Twin Cities with Chicago/Milwaukee, would go through the Town of Hamilton and the City of La Crosse.

Airports

There are no public airports located in the Town of Hamilton. The La Crosse Municipal Airport is located approximately 6 miles to the west of the Town of Hamilton on French Island. The airport is designated as an Air Carrier/Cargo Airport. Airports of this classification are designed to accommodate all aircraft and in some cases wide body jets and military transports. The La Crosse Municipal Airport is one of 10 such airports in Wisconsin.

The airport provides commercial air and freight service. Commercial air service is provided year round by American Eagle, Northwest Airlines, and Skyway Airlines.

Water Transportation

The Town of Hamilton is not located on a commercial waterway. The nearest water transportation is located at the Port of La Crosse, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Port of La Crosse serves ingoing and outgoing barge traffic on the Mississippi River. It provides water access for freight through public and private terminals. Cargo primarily shipped by barge in the region include liquid bulk cargo (chemicals, petroleum, etc.) and dry bulk cargo (grain, scrap metal, etc.).

Trucking

Truck transportation for hauling consumer goods is an important part of the regional, state and national economy. Through trucking in the Town of Hamilton primarily takes place on Interstate 90. Trucking of local goods (non-metallic minerals, agricultural products), for the most part, takes place on county and town roads. In the spring of each year, road bans are placed on local roads limiting the weight of products hauled due to the weight capacity of local roads during the spring thaw.

Pedestrian/Bike Trails

There are three County parks located in the Town of Hamilton in which there are no designated trails but there is plenty of open space for walking and hiking. A small portion of the 3,109 acre Coulee Experimental Forest is located in the southeast area of the Town of Hamilton and provides walking and hiking trails. The La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail traverses the Town of Hamilton for approximately 6.5 miles. The trail is 21.5 miles in total length connecting to the Great River State Trail and the Sparta-Elroy State Trail. In addition, over 45 miles of low volume-hard surface local roads are located in the Town of Hamilton. These local roads provide residents and tourists with biking and walking opportunities.

STATE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The following transportation plans were reviewed as part of the Town of Hamilton planning process. The plans were reviewed to insure consistency with other governing jurisdictions with regard to the future transportation improvements.

Translink 21: A Multi-Modal Transportation Plan For Wisconsin's 21st Century -November 1995

The plan develops an overall vision for transportation systems for the State of Wisconsin for a 25 year period. Multi-modal transportation opportunities are stressed in the plan. No specific improvements for the Town of Hamilton are detailed in the plan. However, grant funding opportunities, local road assessment programs, elderly travel assistance programs that affect local units of government in Wisconsin are described within the plan.

The State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation is in the process of developing a new multi-modal transportation plan “Connections 2030” scheduled to be completed in 2007. The plan will address all forms of transportation: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit – and ways to make the individual modes work better as an integrated transportation system. Connections 2030 will be a policy-based plan. The policies will be tied to “tiers” of potential financing levels.

Wisconsin State Highway Plan – February 2000

The plan created by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation focuses on improving Wisconsin’s State Highway system over the next 20 years. The plan focuses on three areas: traffic movement, safety, and pavement preservation. The plan is updated every six years. The plan does not specify any specific facility improvements within the Town of Hamilton.

Wisconsin DOT Six Year Highway Improvement Program

The plan details all road construction programs to be constructed in the state between 2006 and 2011. A review of the plan indicates that several projects are scheduled on State and Federal Highways in the Town of Hamilton. The following Table 4.2 illustrates the projects scheduled for construction.

Table 4.2 Town of Hamilton State and Federal Highways Projects 2006-2011

| Highway | Project Title | Year | Description |
|---------|-------------------------------------|-----------|---|
| 16 | La X. –West Salem/Monegan O Head | 2009-2111 | Replace existing bridge deck with concrete |
| I-90 | 90-94 Bridge Painting/District Wide | 2008 | Paint Bridge Steel |
| I-90 | West Salem-ECL (wb) B-32-0059 | 2009-2111 | Overlay bridge decks with concrete |
| I-90 | West Salem East County Line (eb) | 2009-2111 | Resurface existing pavement |
| I-90 | West Salem East County Line (wb) | 2009-2111 | Resurface deteriorating pavement with concrete |
| I-90 | West Salem East County Line (eb) | 2009-2111 | Overlay two bridge decks with concrete and replace the deck of a third bridge |
| 108 | STH 16 – North County Line | 2009-2111 | Preventative maintenance to restore pavement, ditches, and culverts |

Source: Wisconsin Dept. Of Transportation Six Year Highway Improvement Program

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 – December 1998

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s “Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020” recommends strategies and actions for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and local governments to take to enhance biking in the State of Wisconsin. The plan explores ways to increase ridership and create more biking trail opportunities. The plan does not specify any specific facility improvements within the Town of Hamilton.

The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 – March 2002

“The Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020”, developed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation attempts to improve pedestrian travel opportunities in conjunction with public roads. The plan details ways how local governments can encourage pedestrian travel in road planning. There are not specific recommendations in the plan for the Town of Hamilton.

REGIONAL OR COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLANS

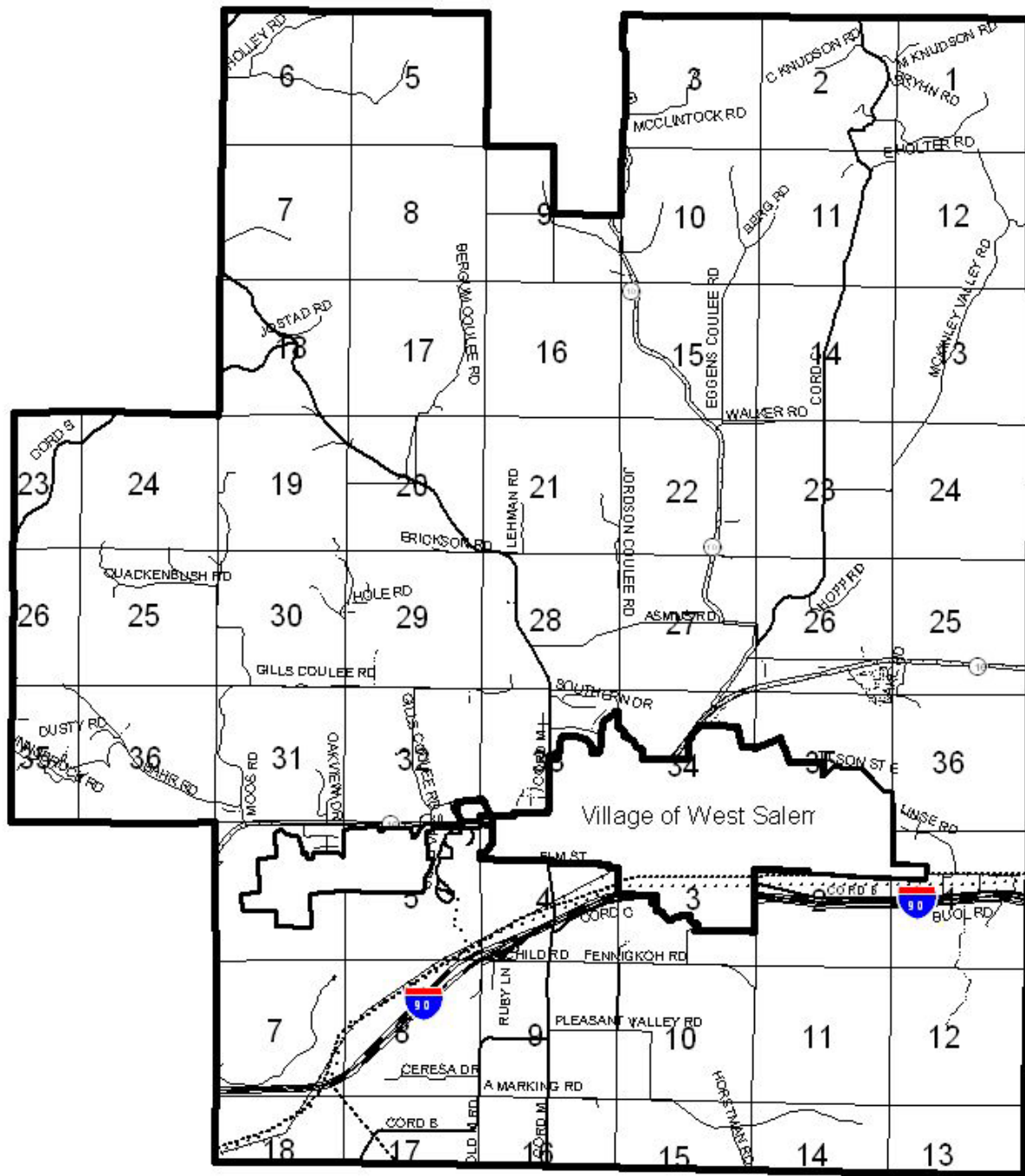
2030 La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan

The southern half of the Town of Hamilton is located in the La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Planning Area (MPO). The MPO is required to prepare a 20-year Transportation Plan. In 2005 the MPO updated its 20-year Transportation Plan which includes long range and short range strategies and actions that lead to an integrated inter-modal transportation system for the planning area. The plan also identifies anticipated projects for the planning area. The plan did not identify any anticipated projects in the Town of Hamilton.

WDOT I-90 Corridor Facilities Study

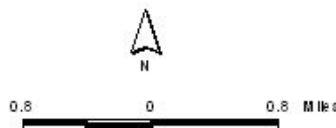
The Wisconsin Department of Transportation over the last two years has conducted a study to evaluate the roadside facilities along Interstate-90 between Tomah and La Crosse. Located within the Town of Hamilton is the West Salem safety and weight enforcement facility (truck weigh station). The study calls for the upgrade of the facility to include weigh-in-motion capability, modern building/inspection facilities and additional truck parking. The facility is tentatively scheduled for reconstruction in 2012.

Map 1-4.1 Town of Hamilton Transportation System



Transportation Facilities

- Interstate
- State Road
- County Road
- Town Road
- Private Road
- Railroad
- Bike Trail
- State Snowmobile Trail



Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission
July 1, 2008
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Road
Data

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5. Economic Assessment and Analysis

In preparing the economic analysis of the Town of Hamilton, various sources and levels of data were utilized. The majority of data came from the 2000 U.S. Census, while workforce projections were provided by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Town specific information was utilized whenever available.

Employment and Household Income Information

As of the 2000 Census, the Town of Hamilton had 1,751 residents in the civilian labor force. Private wage and salary workers made up the largest percentage (76.4%) of the workers and over 62% of town residents in the labor force held occupations in the Management Professional or Sales and Office occupational category. The census information shows that only 17 residents in the Town of Hamilton hold farming, fishing, or forestry industry occupations. This low number is possibly a result of residents that farm and holds other jobs being reported in other occupational categories. A second explanation is that this census information was compiled using sample data therefore; the results may not accurately reflect resident occupations.

Table 5.1 Town of Hamilton Employment Status, Occupation, and Class of Worker

| EMPLOYMENT STATUS | NUMBER | PERCENT |
|---|--------|---------|
| Population 16 years or older | 1,751 | 100.0 |
| In Labor Force | 1,220 | 69.7 |
| Civilian labor force | 1,220 | 69.7 |
| employed | 1,184 | 67.6 |
| unemployed | 36 | 2.1 |
| Armed Forces | - | - |
| Not in Labor Force | 531 | 30.3 |
| | | |
| OCCUPATION | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| Management Professional | 450 | 38 |
| Service | 161 | 13.6 |
| Sales and Office | 285 | 24.1 |
| Farming, Fishing, and Forestry | 17 | 1.4 |
| Construction, Extractions, and Maintenance | 103 | 8.7 |
| Production, Transportation, and Material Moving | 168 | 14.2 |
| | | |
| CLASS OF WORKER | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| Private wage and salary worker | 904 | 76.4 |
| Government workers | 153 | 12.9 |
| Self-employed workers | 117 | 9.9 |
| Unpaid family workers | 10 | 0.8 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Unemployment Rates

Annual unemployment rates are only available for La Crosse County (Table 5.2). The rates over the last five years have ranged from a low of 3.7 in 2001 to a high of 4.5 in 2003. The low unemployment rates are an indicator of a strong regional economy.

Table 5.2 La Crosse County, State of Wisconsin and U.S. Civilian Labor Force Unemployment Rate

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| La Crosse Co. | 3.2 | 3.7 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 3.9 |
| State of Wis. | 3.4 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 5.6 | 5.0 | 4.7 |
| U.S. | 4.0 | 4.7 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 5.5 | 5.1 |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Income and Poverty

Table 5.3 illustrates that median family income levels for the Town's residents increased by over \$21,000 from 1989 to 1999. The poverty rate in the Town of Hamilton decreased from 5.1% in 1989 to 2.1% in 1999. Also, significant in the poverty statistics is that the Town of Hamilton has a lower poverty rate than the State of Wisconsin, La Crosse County and the adjacent town's.

Table 5.3 Median Household Income, Median Family Income, Per Capita Income & Percent in Poverty 1989-1999

| | 1989 | | | | 1999 | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | Median Household Income | Median Family Income | Per Capita Income | Percent in Poverty | Median Household Income | Median Family Income | Per Capita Income | Percent in Poverty |
| Town of Hamilton | 36,932 | 38,621 | 14,024 | 5.1 | 57,955 | 59,792 | 20,142 | 2.1 |
| Town of Barre | 31,667 | 34,000 | 14,078 | 4.1 | 49,474 | 53,250 | 21,609 | 2.9 |
| Town of Burns | 29,519 | 31,786 | 12,741 | 9.0 | 41,620 | 44,375 | 16,947 | 6.3 |
| Town of Farmington | 25,673 | 28,616 | 10,791 | 10.8 | 41,477 | 46,500 | 18,096 | 6.9 |
| Town of Medary | 40,729 | 43,750 | 15,223 | 3.3 | 57,431 | 65,469 | 25,395 | 3.6 |
| Town of Onalaska | 36,577 | 38,056 | 12,917 | 3.8 | 54,075 | 57,268 | 19,887 | 3.8 |
| Village of West Salem | 26,398 | 32,028 | 10,868 | 7.8 | 43,449 | 50,176 | 19,904 | 3.5 |
| La Crosse County | 26,857 | 33,830 | 12,141 | 13.4 | 39,472 | 50,380 | 19,800 | 10.7 |
| Wisconsin | 29,442 | 35,082 | 13,276 | 10.7 | 43,791 | 52,911 | 27,135 | 8.7 |
| U.S. | 30,056 | 35,225 | 14,420 | 13.1 | 41,994 | 50,046 | 21,587 | 12.4 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 and 2000

Commuting to Work

Table 5.4 illustrates how the residents in the Town of Hamilton get to work. The majority of workers drove alone 86.3%, while 7.4% carpooled, and 5.6% worked at home. The mean travel time to work for Town of Hamilton workers was a little over 20 minutes. This suggests that the majority of workers travel outside the Town of Hamilton and the Village of West Salem for work.

Table 5.4 Commuting to Work – Town of Hamilton

| Means of Travel | Percent |
|--|---------|
| Car, Truck, Van – Drove Alone | 86.3 |
| Car, Truck, Van – Carpooled | 7.4 |
| Walked | 0.3 |
| Other Means | 0.4 |
| Worked at Home | 5.6 |
| Mean Travel Time to Work 20.3 minutes | |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Top 10 Industries and Employers

In March of 2005, the largest employment industry in La Crosse County was educational services employing 5,405 people. The second highest employment industry was food services and drinking places employing 5,302 people (See Table 5.5). Table 5.6 details La Crosse County's top 10 private employers. Gundersen Lutheran Administrative and Franciscan Skemp Medical Center are the county's largest employers, each employing 1,000+ workers.

Table 5.5 La Crosse County Prominent Industries

| Industry | March 2005 | | Numeric Employment Change 2000-2005 |
|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Establishments | Employees | |
| Educational services | 25 | 5,405 | 98 |
| Nursing & residential care facilities | 18 | 1,891 | 62 |
| Food services & drinking places | 212 | 5,302 | 428 |
| Hospitals | Not Available | Not Available | Not Available |
| Administrative and support services | 99 | 2,839 | 412 |
| Credit intermediation & related activity | 45 | 1,820 | 335 |
| Social assistance | 45 | 2,040 | 312 |
| Ambulatory health care services | 108 | 4,064 | 678 |
| Machinery manufacturing | Not Available | Not Available | Not Available |
| General merchandise stores | 13 | 2,331 | 402 |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information

Table 5.6 La Crosse County Top 10 Privately Owned Employers - 2005

| Establishment | Product or Service | Size (December 2005) |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Gundersen Lutheran Administrative | Offices of physicians, except mental health | 1000+ employees |
| Franciscan Skemp Medical Center Inc | Gen. medical & surgical hospitals | 1000+ employees |
| Trane | AC, refriger., & forced air heating mfg | 1000+ employees |
| Kwik Trip Inc | Convenience stores | 1000+ employees |
| Associated Bank | Savings institutions | 500-999 employees |
| Wal-mart Associates Inc | Discount department stores | 500-999 employees |
| Centurytel Service Group LLC | Managing offices | 500-999 employees |
| Northern Engraving Corp | All other plastics products mfg | 500-999 employees |
| Hanover Direct | Telemarketing bureaus | 500-999 employees |
| Bethany St. Joseph Corp | Nursing care facilities | 250-499 employees |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information

Industry Projections

Industry projections are available for the Western Workforce Development Area, which includes La Crosse County, from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Table 5.7 indicates that over the next several years the largest projected employment increases will take place in the healthcare services and nursing/residential care industries.

Table 5.7 Industry Projections for Western Workforce Development Area*, 2004-2014

| Industry Title | 2004 Estimated Employment | 2014 Projected Employment | 2004-2014 Employment Change | 2004-2014 Percentage Change |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Total Non-Farm Employment | 136,640 | 152,080 | 15,440 | 11.3% |
| Construction/Mining/Natural Resources | 5,230 | 6,150 | 920 | 17.6% |
| Manufacturing | 23,180 | 22,880 | -300 | -1.3% |
| Food Manufacturing | 2,760 | 2,760 | 0 | 0% |
| Printing and Related Support Activities | 1,610 | 1,600 | -10 | -0.6% |
| Fabricated Metal Product Mfg | 2,250 | 2,330 | 80 | 3.6% |
| Trade | 21,090 | 22,670 | 1,580 | 7.5% |
| Food and Beverage Stores | 2,560 | 2,670 | 110 | 4.3% |
| Transportation and Utilities (Including US Postal) | 8,380 | 9,390 | 1,010 | 12.1% |
| Financial Activities | 5,750 | 6,260 | 510 | 8.9% |
| Education and Health Services (Including State and Local Gov Educ and Hosp) | 29,640 | 36,260 | 6,620 | 22.3% |
| Ambulatory Health Care Services | 5,830 | 7,840 | 2,010 | 34.5% |
| Nursing and Residential Care Facilities | 3,490 | 4,140 | 650 | 18.6% |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 12,770 | 14,740 | 1,970 | 15.4% |
| Information/Prof Services/Other Services | 15,700 | 18,240 | 2,540 | 16.2% |
| Government (Excluding US Postal, State and Local Educ and Hosp) | 14,910 | 15,500 | 590 | 4.0% |

*Western WDA includes Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse Monroe, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties

Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Top 10 Occupations with the Most New Jobs, Job Openings, and Fastest Growing Occupations

Tables 5.8 through 5.10 illustrate the industries with the most potential for growth between 2002 and 2012. The nursing profession is anticipated to have the largest percentage increase of new jobs (29.5%) over the ten year period. The fastest growing occupations over the period are projected to be medical assistants, medical records/health info techs, and computer software engineers. The occupational field projected to have the most job openings in the Western Workforce Development Area is once again nursing followed by truck drivers.

Table 5.8 Top 10 Occupations With The Most New Jobs In The Western Workforce Development Area*, 2002-2012

| Occupational Title | Estimated Employment | | Change | | Annual Average | | | Education or Training Requirements |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------|---------|-------|----------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| | 2002 | 2012 | Numeric | % | New Jobs | Replacements | Total Openings | |
| Truck Drivers/Heavy/Tractor-Trailer | 4,080 | 4,990 | 910 | 22.3% | 90 | 70 | 160 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Registered Nurses | 3,050 | 3,950 | 900 | 29.5% | 90 | 60 | 150 | Bachelor's or Associate degree |
| Retail Salespersons | 3,900 | 4,400 | 500 | 12.8% | 50 | 140 | 190 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Comb Food Prep/Serv Wrk/Incl Fast | 2,360 | 2,820 | 460 | 19.5% | 50 | 100 | 150 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Nursing Aides/Orderlies/Attendants | 2,290 | 2,760 | 470 | 20.5% | 50 | 30 | 80 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Cashiers | 3,800 | 4,140 | 340 | 8.9% | 40 | 190 | 230 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Waiters/Waitresses | 2,330 | 2,640 | 310 | 13.3% | 30 | 120 | 150 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Janitors/Cleanrs Ex Maids/Hskpng | 2,250 | 2,560 | 310 | 13.8% | 30 | 40 | 70 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Sls Reps/Whlsl/Mfg/Ex Tech/Sci Prod | 1,500 | 1,800 | 300 | 20.0% | 30 | 40 | 70 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Receptionists/Info Clerks | 1,160 | 1,470 | 310 | 26.7% | 30 | 30 | 60 | Short-term on-the-job training |

*Western WDA includes Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse Monroe, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties

Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 5.9 Top 10 Fastest Growing Occupations In The Western Workforce Development Area*, 2002-2012

| Occupational Title | Estimated Employment | | Change | | Annual Average | | | Education or Training Requirements |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------|---------|-------|----------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| | 2002 | 2012 | Numeric | % | New Jobs | Replacements | Total Openings | |
| Medical Assts | 390 | 630 | 240 | 61.5% | 20 | 10 | 30 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Medical Records/Health Info Techs | 230 | 370 | 140 | 60.9% | 10 | <5 | 10 | Associate degree |
| Computer Software Engrns Apps | 160 | 250 | 90 | 56.3% | 10 | <5 | 10 | Bachelor's degree |
| Dental Hygienists | 170 | 250 | 80 | 47.1% | 10 | <5 | 10 | Associate degree |
| Personal and Home Care Aides | 610 | 880 | 270 | 44.3% | 30 | 10 | 40 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Home Health Aides | 460 | 660 | 200 | 43.5% | 20 | 10 | 30 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Dental Assts | 280 | 400 | 120 | 42.9% | 10 | 10 | 20 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Social/Human Service Assts | 420 | 600 | 180 | 42.9% | 20 | 10 | 30 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Computer/Information Systems Mgrs | 160 | 220 | 60 | 37.5% | 10 | <5 | 10 | Bachelor's degree or more, plus work exp. |
| Network/Computer Systems Admin | 160 | 220 | 60 | 37.5% | 10 | <5 | 10 | Bachelor's degree |

*Western WDA includes Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse Monroe, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties

Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Table 5.10 Top 10 Occupations With the Most Job Openings In The Western Workforce Development Area*, 2002-2012

| Occupational Title | Estimated Employment | | Change | | Annual Average | | | Education or Training Requirements |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------|---------|-------|----------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| | 2002 | 2012 | Numeric | % | New Jobs | Replacements | Total Openings | |
| Cashiers | 3,800 | 4,140 | 340 | 8.9% | 40 | 190 | 230 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Retail Salespersons | 3,900 | 4,400 | 500 | 12.8% | 50 | 140 | 190 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Truck Drivers/Heavy/Tractor-Trailer | 4,080 | 4,990 | 910 | 22.3% | 90 | 70 | 160 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |
| Registered Nurses | 3,050 | 3,950 | 900 | 29.5% | 90 | 60 | 150 | Bachelor's or Associate degree (see note 9) |
| Comb Food Prep/Serv Wrk/Incl Fast | 2,360 | 2,820 | 460 | 19.5% | 50 | 100 | 150 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Waiters/Waitresses | 2,330 | 2,640 | 310 | 13.3% | 30 | 120 | 150 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Nursing Aides/Orderlies/Attendants | 2,290 | 2,760 | 470 | 20.5% | 50 | 30 | 80 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Labrs/Frght/Stock/Matri Movers/Hand | 2,280 | 2,290 | 10 | 0.4% | <5 | 80 | 80 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Janitors/Cleanrs Ex Maids/Hskpng | 2,250 | 2,560 | 310 | 13.8% | 30 | 40 | 70 | Short-term on-the-job training |
| Team Assemblers | 2,500 | 2,440 | -60 | -2.4% | <5 | 70 | 70 | Moderate-term on-the-job training |

*Western WDA includes Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties

Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Strengths And Weaknesses For Fostering Economic Growth

Fostering economic development is always challenging to rural towns due to lack of public sewer and water facilities and minimal institutional economic development resources. The Town of Hamilton has these same deficiencies but is at an advantage as Interstate-90 travels through the Town and the Town is located near the regional business center (La Crosse).

It is important to view economic development in a larger or more regional context. The La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan identified the following strengths and weaknesses of the La Crosse Economy:

Strengths

- regional center
- access to multiple transportation mode
- low unemployment rate
- great natural amenities
- available land and building space
- high quality of life
- educated and diverse workforce

Weaknesses

- lack of cooperation between communities
- infrastructure limitations
- isolation from larger population centers (Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Madison)

Environmentally Contaminated Sites in the Town of Hamilton

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law requires local units of government to evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) was utilized in identifying contaminated sites in the Town of Hamilton. Three contaminated sites in the Town of Hamilton were identified in the database. Table 5.11 lists the sites and their status.

Table 5.11 BRRTS Sites

| Site | Activity Type | Location | Spill Information | Site Status |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| J.F. Brennen Co. Inc. | Spill | 200 ft. South of Lk. Neshonoc south shore boat landing | Petroleum spill occurred in the winter while changing a hydraulic hose | Closed |
| Karl Rhyme | Spill | Section 14, T17N, R6W | Petroleum spill Elevated storage tank hose broke | Closed |
| Culpitt Property | Leaking Underground Storage Tank | Section 4, T16N, R0W | Petroleum leak from an underground tank | Activity Closed |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

As part of the planning process the DNR's "Registry of Waste Disposal Sites in Wisconsin" was reviewed. The purpose of the registry is to serve as an informational tool for the public regarding the location of waste disposal sites in the State. There was one waste disposal site identified in the registry that is located in the Town of Hamilton. The site is referred to as the Village of West Salem- Town of Hamilton Facility and is located in Section 33 Town 17N and Range 6W. Contaminated sites are not a limiting factor for economic development in the Town to Hamilton.

County, Regional and State Economic Development Programs

Numerous county, regional and state economic development programs apply to the Town of Hamilton. The following is a list of selected programs that could be beneficial to economic development in the Town of Hamilton.

County Programs

- ▶ La Crosse County Business Fund

Regional Programs

- ▶ Western Wisconsin Technology Zone
- ▶ Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs administered through the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (ex. Public Works and Economic Development Program, Economic Adjustment Program, etc...)

State Programs

- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Economic Assistance Program (TEA)
- ▶ Value Added Dairy Initiative (Grow Wisconsin)
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Commerce Enterprise Development Zone Program
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Commerce Milk Volume Production Program
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Commerce Dairy 2020 Planning Grant Program
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Program
- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Commerce Entrepreneurial training Grant

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6. Existing Utilities and Community Facilities

The Town of Hamilton has a variety of community facilities to serve the needs of its residents. The following description of utilities and community facilities was gathered from interviewing Town officials and researching past studies. Map 1-6.1 provides the locations of the utilities and community facilities in the Town of Hamilton.

Sanitary Waste and Water Supply

The Town of Hamilton is unincorporated and all businesses and almost all residences are served by private on-site wastewater treatment systems. Private on-site wastewater treatment systems State standards (Wisconsin Administrative Code: COMM 83) are enforced by the La Crosse County Zoning Office in the Town of Hamilton. Development in the Town of Hamilton is dependent upon private onsite wastewater treatment systems. Most land and building sites in the town can utilize a conventional onsite wastewater treatment system.

One sanitary district was established in the Town of Hamilton in the early 1970's to serve the Maple Grove Country Club and residences adjacent to the golf course complex. The sanitary district serves approximately 10 condominiums, 28 residential lots and the Maple Grove Country Club facility. This is a private system paid for by fees paid by condominium owners, and is currently supervised by the Town of Hamilton. The district has an annual budget of between \$42,000 and \$52,000 per year.

The Village of West Salem, which lies within the Town of Hamilton, has updated its wastewater treatment facility in the last several years. The facility is currently operating at approximately 50% of its capacity and has a system population capacity of 9,476.

Water supply to residents and businesses in the Town of Hamilton is provided by private wells. Some shared wells or community wells are located in the Town and serve residential subdivisions (Innsbruck, Raymer, etc.). The Town of Hamilton provides no public water service.

Solid Waste/Recycling

The Town of Hamilton provides a collection site for residents to bring their solid waste for pickup by a contractor. Solid waste can be dropped off at the town buildings on Tuesdays or Saturdays. Yard waste and large items can also be brought to the collection center for disposal. There is no active sanitary landfill in the Town of Hamilton.

The Town of Hamilton maintains a recycling center. Recyclable materials can be dropped off at the Town of Hamilton recycling center on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The general trash and recycling drop-off is available to all residents of the Town with the cost of operation being incorporated into the general property tax structure.

Storm Water Management

The Town of Hamilton is located in two major watersheds. The northern quarter of the town is located in the Black River Basin while the remaining area of the town to the south is located in the La Crosse River Basin. The major responsibility of the Town of Hamilton for the management of storm water involves controlling runoff from the public roadways. This is accomplished by keeping culverts, bridges and road ditches free of debris.

The Town Hall/shop property is subject to storm water runoff management requirements of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (specifically road salt storage). The Town of Hamilton is required to keep road salt in storage structure.

Town Government Structure

The Town of Hamilton Town Board consists of three elected members: a chairman and two supervisors. The Town of Hamilton has an elected Town Clerk and an elected Town Treasurer. The Town has a Plan Commission that consists of 5 appointed members.

Town Facilities

The Town of Hamilton facilities are all located at N5105 N Leonard St., West Salem, Wisconsin. The Town maintains a Town Hall and a Town Shop that is one structure. The town facilities are utilized for town meetings, elections and community events. The town maintains seven voting booths at the Town Hall as well as a recycling center. The following is a list of the major equipment owned by the town:

- One Tractor (mower)
- One Backhoe
- One Grader
- One Loader
- Three Trucks
- One Pick Up Truck



The Town of Hamilton Town Hall and Town Shop on North Leonard Street in West Salem.

The town employs two full time town employees (road crew) and three part time employees. One part time employee assists the road crew and two part time employees operate the recycling center. The Town of Hamilton contracts with private companies for seal coating and crack repair of Town Roads.

Fire Protection, Police Protection and Emergency Management

The Town of Hamilton does not have a fire department. Fire protection is provided by a joint fire department consisting of the local governments of the Village of West Salem, Town of Barre, and the Town of Hamilton. The joint department has mutual aid agreements with surrounding fire departments. This is an excellent example of intergovernmental cooperation to provide needed services.

The Town of Hamilton does not have a police department. The La Crosse County Sheriffs Department provides law enforcement to the town.

La Crosse County Emergency Government Office is responsible for HAZMAT planning for La Crosse County.

Emergency Medical Services

Tri-State Ambulance Service based out of La Crosse, WI provides emergency medical services for Town residents. First responders are provided through the cooperation of the Village of West Salem, Town of Barre, and the Town of Hamilton.

The La Crosse County 911 Emergency Dispatch Center provides 24-hour emergency telephone service to everyone in La Crosse County. The system uses the enhanced 911 system which provides emergency communications to all providers allowing quick and accurate emergency assistance.

Health Care and Day Care Facilities

There are no health care facilities located in the Town of Hamilton. Two major medical hospitals and numerous clinics in the City of La Crosse and Onalaska provide healthcare for Town of Hamilton residents. Numerous county licensed private daycare facilities are available for residents in the Town of Hamilton and neighboring jurisdictions.

Educational Facilities

The Town of Hamilton is serviced by five school districts. The school districts of West Salem, Onalaska, Holmen, Melrose Mindoro and Bangor serve the residents of the Town. The majority of Town of Hamilton residences are located in the West Salem School District with just a small portion of students attending school in the other four districts. The West Salem district has recently constructed updated facilities enable to meet the districts future needs.



The West Salem School District Offices in the Village of West Salem.

The Town of Hamilton is also served by two private schools. Coulee Region Christian and St. Johns are located in the Village of West Salem.

Post-secondary education opportunities are available in La Crosse County for Town of Hamilton residents, which include the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, Western Technical College, and Viterbo University.

Libraries

There are no public libraries located in the Town of Hamilton. The Hazel Brown Leicht Memorial Library is located in the Village of West Salem and serves Town of Hamilton residents. The 7,500 square foot facility was opened in 2000 and in addition to library materials provides space for community meetings and events.



The Hazel Brown Leicht Memorial Library that serve the Village of West Salem and the Town of Hamilton.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Numerous public recreational resources are available in the Town of Hamilton. There are three county operated public parks in the Town, which offer recreational opportunities. A description of the recreational opportunities are discussed in the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources section of this report.



The Neshonoc Cemetery on State Highway 108.

Churches and Cemeteries

There are two cemeteries located in the Town of Hamilton. The Neshonoc Cemetery is located north of the Village of West Salem on Hwy. 108. The La Crosse County Pauper Cemetery is located south of Lake Neshonoc near the La Crosse County Lakeview healthcare Center. The cemetery has approximately 200 graves that date back to the 1800's. There are no churches located within the Town of Hamilton.

Electricity/Telephone and Cable/Internet Services

North American Hydro operates the power plant that is constructed on the La Crosse River. The facility generates a minimal amount of electricity from the dam on the La Crosse River. The majority of electricity for town residences is provided by Xcel Energy.

Telephone and internet/cable service to residents is provided by Charter or CenturyTel.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is provided to the town by WEnergies. Northern Natural Gas has an 8" natural gas distribution line that goes through the Town of Hamilton. The line primarily travels at an east-west direction throughout the Town and is a major natural gas supplier for the region.

Communication Towers

There are four communication towers located in the Town of Hamilton. La Crosse County has an ordinance that regulates height and location of communication towers. The ordinance details a public process that must be followed by parties interested in constructing a communication tower. The ordinance is in effect in the Town of Hamilton.

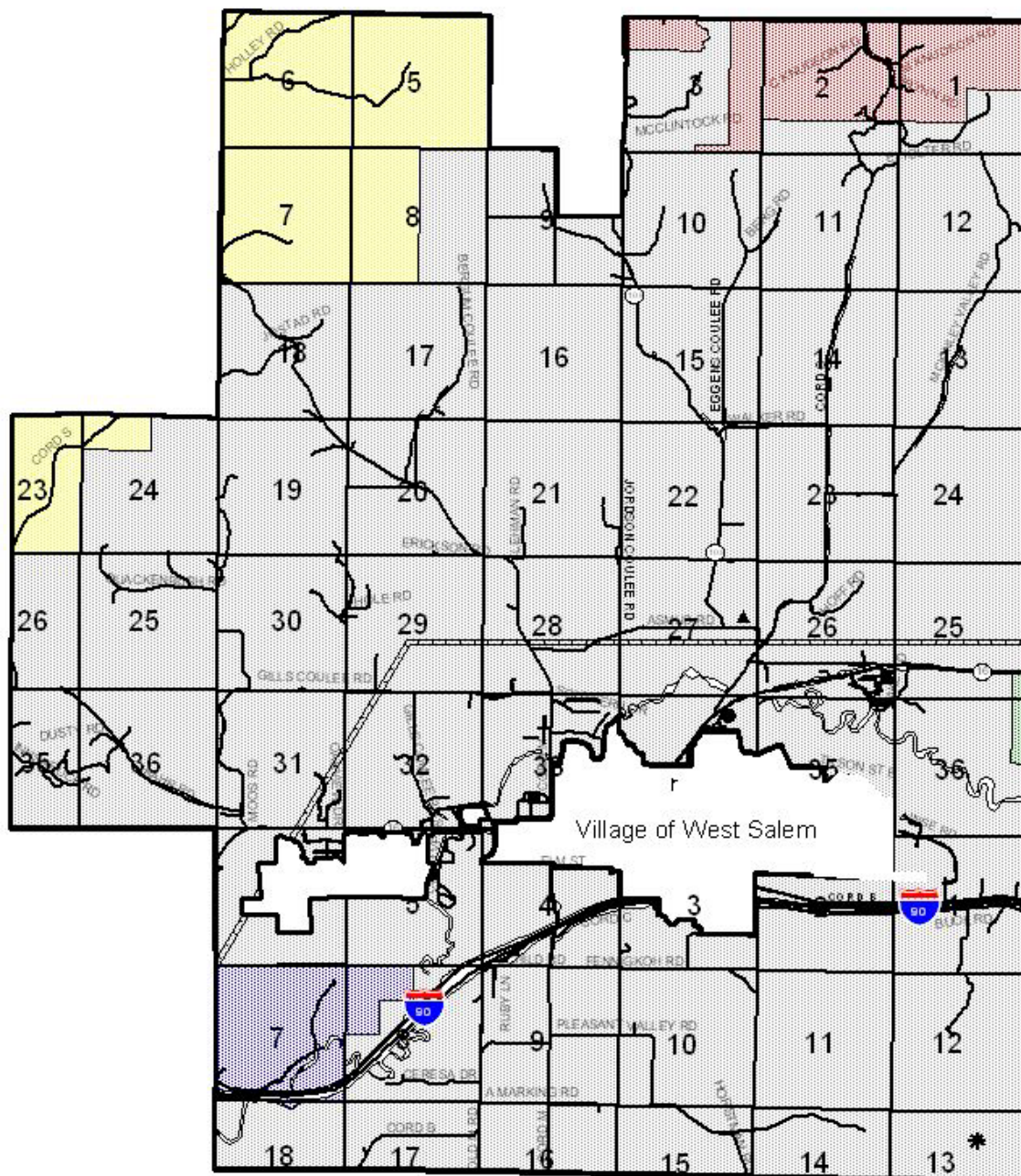


The Northern Natural Gas Company facilities located on County M in the Town of Hamilton.

Future Expansion of Utilities and Community Facilities

Population and development projections developed during the planning process indicate that the Town of Hamilton will experience growth throughout the planning period. Based on the projections the community facilities described will not have to be expanded. The plan will be reviewed at a minimum every 10 years, so if projections utilized in the planning process prove to be inaccurate modifications to the plan and community facilities will be addressed in future revisions.

Map 1-6.1 Town of Hamilton Community Facilities

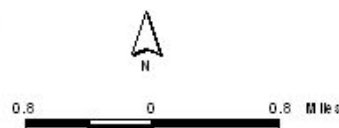


Facilities and Utilities

- ▲ Cemetery
- County Park
- ✱ Experimental For
- Fairgrounds
- ★ Priv Campground
- r Town Hall
- ⚡ Power Transmission Line

School Districts

- Melrose-Mindoro District
- Holmen District
- Bangor District
- West Salem District
- Onalaska District



Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission
November 1, 2008
Source: La Crosse County Comprehensive
Plan and MRRPC Inventory

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7. Intergovernmental Relationships/Cooperation

The Town of Hamilton, located in La Crosse County and as previously described, is bordered on the north by the Town of Farmington, on the south by the Town of Barre, on the east by the Town of Burns and Town of Bangor, and on the west by the Towns of Medary and Onalaska. The incorporated Village of West Salem lies within the boundaries of the Town of Hamilton. The school districts of West Salem, Onalaska, Holmen, Melrose Mindoro and Bangor serve the residents of the Town of Hamilton. The Town historically has maintained positive relationships with its neighboring municipalities and jurisdictions.

State and Federal Agencies

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)

The Town of Hamilton has little contact with the WDNR. The WDNR does have jurisdiction over the waterways in the Town of Hamilton and maintains floodplain regulations that are enforced through the County Zoning Office. No intergovernmental conflicts were identified in the planning process.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT)

The Town of Hamilton does participate in the WDOT Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program. The WISLR program maintains a complete listing of public roads in the Town of Hamilton by jurisdiction, classification and number of miles. This program assists in the facilitation of state funding for town road maintenance.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The Town of Hamilton has minimal interaction with federal agencies. In the event of a natural disaster (flooding, tornado, etc.) FEMA would be the federal agency to assist in relief efforts. The Town recognizes this and has participated in the development of the La Crosse County All Hazards Mitigation Plan.

Regional Planning Commission

The Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County are located in the jurisdiction of the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC). The MRRPC represents nine counties in western Wisconsin: Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Monroe, La Crosse, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau and Vernon. The MRRPC maintains the regions eligibility as an Economic Development District and eligible for Economic Development Administration funding.

Services provided to member counties and municipalities include comprehensive planning assistance, economic development assistance, geographic information services, and general technical assistance.

La Crosse County

The Town of Hamilton is located in central La Crosse County. The Town of Hamilton maintains positive relationships with numerous County agencies and departments. The La Crosse County Sheriffs Department provides police protection services to the Town of Hamilton. The La Crosse County Highway Department maintains county and state roads in the Town of Hamilton. The La Crosse County Facilities Department manages the county parks located in the Town. The La Crosse County Zoning Department assists with the enforcement of numerous ordinances in the Town of Hamilton. Historically, these services have been provided by La Crosse County and it is expected that they will continue to be provided by the County throughout the planning period.

Surrounding Towns and Municipalities

In general the Town of Hamilton has maintained strong intergovernmental relationships with its neighboring local units of government. A testament to this is the operation of the joint fire department consisting of the local governments of the Village of West Salem, Town of Hamilton, and Town of Barre. The joint department has mutual aide agreements with the surrounding fire departments. The operation of the joint first responders group is another example of intergovernmental relationships. These are excellent examples of intergovernmental cooperation to provide needed services. This type of cooperation has minimized any intergovernmental conflicts.

Comprehensive Planning

La Crosse County

In 2005, La Crosse County received a comprehensive planning grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration to update its comprehensive plan. In 2008, La Crosse County completed its Comprehensive Plan update meeting the requirements of Section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. The La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan was adopted on March 20, 2008.

The timing of the planning processes for La Crosse County and the Town of Hamilton create an ideal opportunity for the governmental entities to work cooperatively. This cooperation is taking place as the local units of government, planning consultants and planning commissions remain in contact effort to create consistent planning documents.

Town of Onalaska

The Town of Onalaska, which borders the Town of Hamilton to the west, completed a Comprehensive Plan in 2005. A review of the Town of Onalaska Comprehensive Plan and in particular the Land Use Plan showed no inconsistencies with the present development patterns in the Town of Hamilton. The Town of Onalaska plan proposes Agricultural Preservation Areas, Conservation Areas, and Conservation Residential Areas adjacent to the Town of Hamilton. The Town of Onalaska plan will be continually referenced throughout the planning process to ensure consistency.

Town of Medary and the Village of West Salem

The Town of Medary (west of Hamilton) and the Village of West Salem (located within the Town of Hamilton) have recently completed their comprehensive plans. Similar to La Crosse County, an ideal opportunity for the governmental entities to work cooperatively in the development of their respective plans exists. The Town of Hamilton Planning Commission will continue to work with Medary and West Salem in an effort to create consistent planning documents.

The Town of Hamilton and the Village of West Salem have had informal discussions regarding future development patterns, municipal boundaries and intergovernmental cooperation agreements. Throughout the planning process these issues will be considered and intergovernmental meetings will be conducted.



**The Village of West Salem and Town of Hamilton
municipal boundary on State Highway 16.**

Town of Barre, Town of Burns, Town of Farmington, Town of Bangor

The Town of Barre, Town of Bangor, and the Town of Farmington are in the process of updating their comprehensive plans. Town of Burns has taken no action to update their existing comprehensive plan. A review of their existing planning documents did not illustrate any intergovernmental conflicts.

School Districts

As previously described The Town of Hamilton is serviced by five school districts with the West Salem School District servicing the majority of the town. The school district has recently constructed updated facilities enabling it to meet the immediate needs of the district. During the planning process no intergovernmental conflicts were identified with the school districts.

8. Inventory of Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

Agricultural, natural and cultural resources are important as they impact the quality of life available to town residents. The information in this section came from reviewing past studies, planning documents and accessing numerous state databases.

Agriculture

Agriculture is a predominant land use in the Town of Hamilton and is of vital importance to the lifestyle enjoyed by the town's residents. Historically, agriculture has played a key role in the development of the Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County. The following excerpt from the *La Crosse County, Farmland Preservation Plan, 1980* describes the agricultural history of La Crosse County.

"The county's economic base began with fur trading, but that moved west with the Indians. Lumbering was a significant industry until the 1900's. Agriculture in the valleys was always important. A farm report furnished by the County Clerk in 1881 shows a tabular statement of the acreage devoted to wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, potatoes, apples, hops, tobacco, grass, and timber. Also included were the number of milk cows. It goes on to explain that ... a larger acreage has been sown to all types of grains except wheat, which has given place to corn, oats and barley. The fact that 10,000 acres less of wheat have been sowed, shows that a proper attention is being given to other crops mentioned and that stock raising is becoming a more profitable pursuit. The number of acres in grains, hops, cultivated grasses, potatoes, roots, apples and tobacco in 1880 was 90,591. At the present time there are about 112,683 acres in cropland including acreage for corn, soybeans, oats, alfalfa, hay fruits and vegetables, and tobacco."



Agricultural land in the Town of Hamilton adjacent to State Highway 108.

Today, the agricultural crops most commonly grown in La Crosse County and the Town of Hamilton are corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. More recent statistics from the 1997 and 2002 USDA Census of Agriculture show the following agricultural trends in La Crosse County:

- The number of farms in La Crosse County decreased from 933 in 1997 to 868 in 2002
- The average size of farms decreased from 203 acres in 1997 to 201 acres in 2002
- The total cropland harvested increased from 76,468 acres in 1997 to 77,831 acres in 2002
- The number of cattle and calves in the county decreased from 36,769 in 1997 to 31,550 in 2002
- The 2002 USDA Census valued agricultural land at \$1,937 dollars per acre in La Crosse County.

Natural Resources

Soils

There are three general soil types present in the Town of Hamilton. The northern portion of the town is comprised of silty soils on sandstone uplands. Gale and Fayette soils are on the narrow ridge tops and sandy Hixton soils are on the lower convex of slopes. The central portion of the town including the Village of West Salem and Lake Neshonoc area are comprised of soils associated with valleys and benches. This area is made up of Richwood, Toddville, and Port Byron soils. The southern portion of the town consists of silty soils on dolomite uplands. Fayette and Dubuque soils are on the rounded ridges that are separated by rock escarpments from the steep side hills. Map 1-8.1 illustrates the soils in the Town of Hamilton.

The La Crosse County Soil Survey designated approximately 20% of the soils in La Crosse County as “prime” soils. Prime soils were defined as being either Class I, Class II or Class III soils. Based on the information and distribution of soils it can be inferred that approximately 20% of the soils in the Town of Hamilton are “prime” soils.

Groundwater

Western Wisconsin is fortunate to have a large supply of quality groundwater. Within the Town of Hamilton most geological formations contain water. On ridge tops water can be obtained from dolomite while on the valley bottoms water can be obtained from the sandstone bedrock. Groundwater reservoirs are recharged by direct precipitation mainly in the form of heavy rainfall and melting snow. Generally, all ground water is free of bacteria and safe to drink. Water quality varies as “soft” water is available from the valley alluvium while the water is “hard” from the upland bedrock.

Surface Water

There are numerous small streams and springs within the Town of Hamilton that all flow into one of the two major watersheds. There are no natural lakes with the Town. However, Lake Neshonoc formed by a drainage impoundment is a valuable natural and recreational resource. The lake has approximately 600 acres in surface area formed by an impoundment on the La Crosse River. The maximum depth of the lake is 11 feet. Recreational facilities on the lake include one resort/private campground, a public park with a boat launch, picnic area and public beach.



A View of Lake Neshonoc from Swarthout Lakeside County Park.

A lake district has been established that monitors the lake for invasive species and for the general maintenance of the lake. The lake district partnered with La Crosse County in 2004 on a \$3,000,000 dredging project that removed over 1,000,000 million cubic yards of sediment. The lake is an important asset to the Town as the recreational value of the lake has improved so has tourism and land prices adjacent to the resource.

Topography and Watersheds

The landscape of the Town of Hamilton can be characterized as narrow steep sided valleys with rolling ridges. Map 1-8.2 displays the slopes and undulating landscape in the Town of Hamilton. Typical elevation ranges in the town range from approximately 1,300 feet above sea level on the ridge tops to 900 feet above sea level on the valley floors. This undulating landscape is drained by numerous streams in two major watersheds, which ultimately flow into the Mississippi River.

Woodlands

The Town of Hamilton’s landscape can be characterized by farmed ridge tops and wooded valley slopes. Oak is the predominant hardwood with maple replacing oak after logging operations. Approximately 32% or 10,698 acres of the Town of Hamilton is forested. The State’s Managed Forest Law (MFL) program is set up to preserve and manage existing forested lands. Landowners can sign up for the program and receive a reduced tax rate provided program requirements are followed. Proceeds for the program come from a stumpage fee that is required when the timber is harvested by the landowner.

Floodplains/Wetlands

The flood plain map for La Crosse County and the Town of Hamilton was recently revised and adopted by La Crosse County in 2008. The floodplain map shows that only areas along the La Crosse River in the Town are designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area that would be inundated by a 100-year flood (See Map 1-8.3 Town of Hamilton Flood Plain Map). There are limited wetlands in the Town of Hamilton. Digital mapping of wetlands is not yet completed for La Crosse County. Wetland maps are available for viewing at the La Crosse County Zoning and Planning Department. Potential wetland areas can be viewed online using the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Surface Water Data Viewer.

Open Space

Open spaces are one of the Town of Hamilton's greatest attributes. Over 94% of the town's landscape is made up of forested or agricultural lands. The largest populated area within the Town is the Village of West Salem.

Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

Non-metallic mineral resources available for excavation mainly consist of sand, gravel and stone. Two active non-metallic mineral sites (quarries) exist in the Town of Hamilton. Both of the active quarries are located in the western part of the town, one on County Road S and the second is on County Road M near the intersection of Jostad Road.



A typical view of open space in the Town of Hamilton.

Wildlife Resources

The agricultural fields, scattered forestlands, and spring fed streams provide excellent habitat for wildlife. White-tailed deer and eastern wild turkeys are abundant in the town. Squirrels, rabbits, pheasants, ruffed grouse, raccoons and a wide variety of songbirds make their home in the Town of Hamilton. The spring fed streams have a plentiful supply of brown and brook trout. Lake Neshonoc has populations of bass, crappies and sunfish.

Air Quality

The Town of Hamilton has a total population of less than 2,500 people and limited industrial businesses. Therefore, air quality in the Town is excellent. Potential threats to air quality in the future that will have to be evaluated will include unregulated outdoor burning and neighboring urban municipalities (City of La Crosse, etc.).

Stream/Environmental Corridors

As previously discussed the Town of Hamilton is approximately 94% forested/agricultural/open land. The majority of drainage for the town goes into the La Crosse River watershed, which is comprised of approximately eight additional smaller watersheds. The stream corridors that make up the watersheds would also be characterized as the environmental corridors as they consist of the majority of floodplains and wetlands in the Town.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Wisconsin in accordance with the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) has developed the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists. The Wisconsin Natural Heritage Working Lists contains species known or suspected to be rare in the state. They include species legally designated as "Endangered" (*in danger of being extirpated from all or a portion of its range*) and "Threatened" (*the Wisconsin portion of the species population is either on the verge of extirpation or is a relic population*). Within La Crosse County there are 22 species listed as "Endangered" and 29 that are listed as "Threatened." Examples of the "Endangered" species present in La Crosse County are the Snowy Egret, Crystal Darter, Ebony Shell Mussel and the Carolina Anemone (plant).

Cultural Resources

Archeological and Historic Resources

A search of the Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places revealed 52 registered buildings or sites in La Crosse County. The register included historic houses, churches, mounds, historic camps and burial sites. One site (Swennes Archaeological District) in the Town of Hamilton has been registered in the Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places. The location of the site is restricted as it is a prehistoric camp or village site.

Wisconsin's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) was searched and 44 structures/objects in the Town of Hamilton were in the inventory. The AHI contains data on buildings, structures and objects that illustrate Wisconsin's history. The AHI documents a wide range of historic properties such as the round barns, log houses, metal truss bridges, small town commercial buildings, and Queen Anne houses. It is a permanent record maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society. Eight of the structures identified in the Town of Hamilton were bridges primarily located on Hwy 108 and Hwy 16 including the Old Hwy. 16 bridge. Included in the inventory were the North American Hydro Plant (Neshonoc Dam and Power House) as well as the historically named McMillan Mill and Power Company, which is also currently named the North American Hydro Plant.

Table 8.1 is an inventory of the Architectural and Historical Sites in the Town.



The historic Old Highway 16 bridge in the Town of Hamilton.



The historic Neshonoc Dam and Power House on the La Crosse River.

Table 8.1 Architecture and Historical Site Inventory

| Current Name | Location Town-Range-Section | Construction Date | Description |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Henry F. Heider Farm | 1606W-05 | 1880 | Queen Anne house |
| Fritz Miller Farm | 1706W-31 | 1918 | American Foursquare house |
| Lewis House | 1706W-34 | 1855 | Octagon house |
| HAMILTON CEMETERY | 1606W-04 | 1870 | Cemetery |
| North American Hydro Plant | 1706W-27 | 1896 1940 | Astylistic Utilitarian Building power plant |
| VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK | 1606W-05 | 1935 | Park |
| Unnamed | 1606W-04 | | |
| VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK | 1606W-05 | 1927 | Stone arch bridge |
| VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK | 1606W-05 | 1927 | Pavilion |
| Maple Grove Country Club | 1606W-08 | | Italianate house |
| Pleasant Valley School | 1606W-09 | | Prairie School |
| Unnamed | 1606W-09 | | Greek Revival house |

Table 8.1 Architecture and Historical Site Inventory (continued)

| Current Name | Location Town-Range-Section | Construction Date | Description |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| Unnamed | 1606W-09 | | Other Vernacular house |
| Unnamed | 1606W-10 | 1888 | Gabled Ell house |
| Unnamed | 1606W-15 | | Gabled Ell house |
| Hayes-Swanson House | 1706W-27 | 1930 | Tudor Revival house |
| Bridge | 1706W-27 Old Hwy 16 & State Hwy 108 | 1927 | Concrete bridge |
| Bridge | 1606W-27 Corner of old Hwy 16 & Hwy 108 | 1926 | Concrete bridge |
| Unnamed | 1706W-20 | | Other Vernacular house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-22 | | Queen Anne house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-22 | | Italianate house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-24 | | Gabled Ell house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-25 | | Prairie School house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-26 | | Gabled Ell house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-28 | | Greek Revival house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-30 | | Queen Anne house |
| Bridge | 1706W-32 Old B, .1 Mile East of Gill Coulee | | Overhead truss bridge |
| Unnamed | 1707W-11 | | Italianate house |
| Unnamed | 1706W-31 | 1880 | Barn |
| Swarthout Park | 1706W-34 | 1955 | Park |
| STH 16 Bridge | 1706W-34 State Highway 16 & La Crosse River | 1941 | Steel beam or plate girder bridge |
| State Highway 108 Bridge | 1706W-34 | 1926 | Concrete bridge |
| North American Hydro Plant | 1706W-34 | 1896 | Dam |
| North American Hydro Plant | 1706W-34 | 1896 | Astylistic Utilitarian Building power plant |
| Hayes/Swanson Farm | 1706W-34 | | Astylistic Utilitarian Building silo |
| Hayes/Swanson Farm | 1706W-34 | | Quonset |
| Old 16 Bridge | 1706W-34 | 1926 | Concrete bridge |
| State Highway 108 Bridge | 1706W-34 | 1940 | Steel beam or plate girder bridge |
| Oiness Farmstead | 1706W-06 | 1910 | Two Story Cube agricultural complex |
| Unnamed | 1706W-22 | 1910 | Two Story Cube agricultural complex |
| Unnamed | 1706W-15 | 1890 | Cross Gabled agricultural complex |
| Unnamed | 1606W-15 | 1880 | Side Gabled |
| Unnamed | W3970 W. Scotch Coulee Rd. | 1890 | Gabled Ell agricultural complex |
| Unnamed | 1706W-02 | | Side Gabled agricultural complex |

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, 2006

Recreational Resources

Numerous recreational resources are available in the Town of Hamilton. The Town maintains two town parks the Shorewood Park and the Settlement Park. The lakes and streams in the town offer great fishing and the public road system provides residents and visitors with excellent biking and pedestrian activities. As previously described in Section 13, 240 acres of the 3,109 acre Coulee Experimental Forest is located in the Town of Hamilton and provides walking, hiking trails, and hunting opportunities. The La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail goes through the Town of Hamilton and connects to the Great River State Trail and the Sparta-Elroy State Trail. In addition, several snowmobile trails traverse the Town offering winter recreation opportunities.

The Town of Hamilton is home to numerous recreational clubs and businesses as the La Crosse Interstate Fairgrounds and Speedway, Black Hawk Archery Club, Maple Grove Country Club, the Corn Maze, and Gills Coulee Model Planes are all located in the Town of Hamilton.

County Parks

There are three county operated public parks in the Town which offer recreational opportunities. A description of the recreational opportunities at each facility follows.

Veterans Memorial County Park

This 232 acre park is located in the approximate geographic center of La Crosse County within the Town of Hamilton. Principal access is by way of STH 16 and is approximately 10 miles from the City of La Crosse and the park is adjacent to the Village of West Salem. Included within the park are approximately 3 1/2 miles of paved roads, four shelter houses serving the picnic areas, and approximately 120 camping sites. The campground includes electrically equipped sites for trailers and motor homes, and an area for tent camping. The campground has a concessionaire operated camp store and a showers building equipped with hot and cold running water and flush toilets. There are five vault toilets available to the four picnic shelters and other users of the park. Two artesian wells and two hand pumps, in addition to the spigots at the shower house, provide water to the park users. Constructed recreational facilities include three ball diamonds, four grass volleyball courts, one sand court in the camping area, canoe landing on the La Crosse River, a 1/2 mile paved leg to the La Crosse River State Trail and an extension to a snowmobile trail. There is a lagoon with a picturesque bridge providing a crossing for the park road. There are hiking trails and access to both the La Crosse River bottomland ecosystem and a scenic overlook. In addition, a trail at the front of the park connects the Village of West Salem to the park without utilizing State Highway 16.

The County sponsored bicycle trail extension to the State Trail was completed in 1997 using a cost share grant from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Enhancement Program. A recent gift of 22 acres of land to the Park in which the County constructed a walking/biking/roller blading trail accessing the Park from the east side. The addition of the new land enables the park to border on the western Village limit.

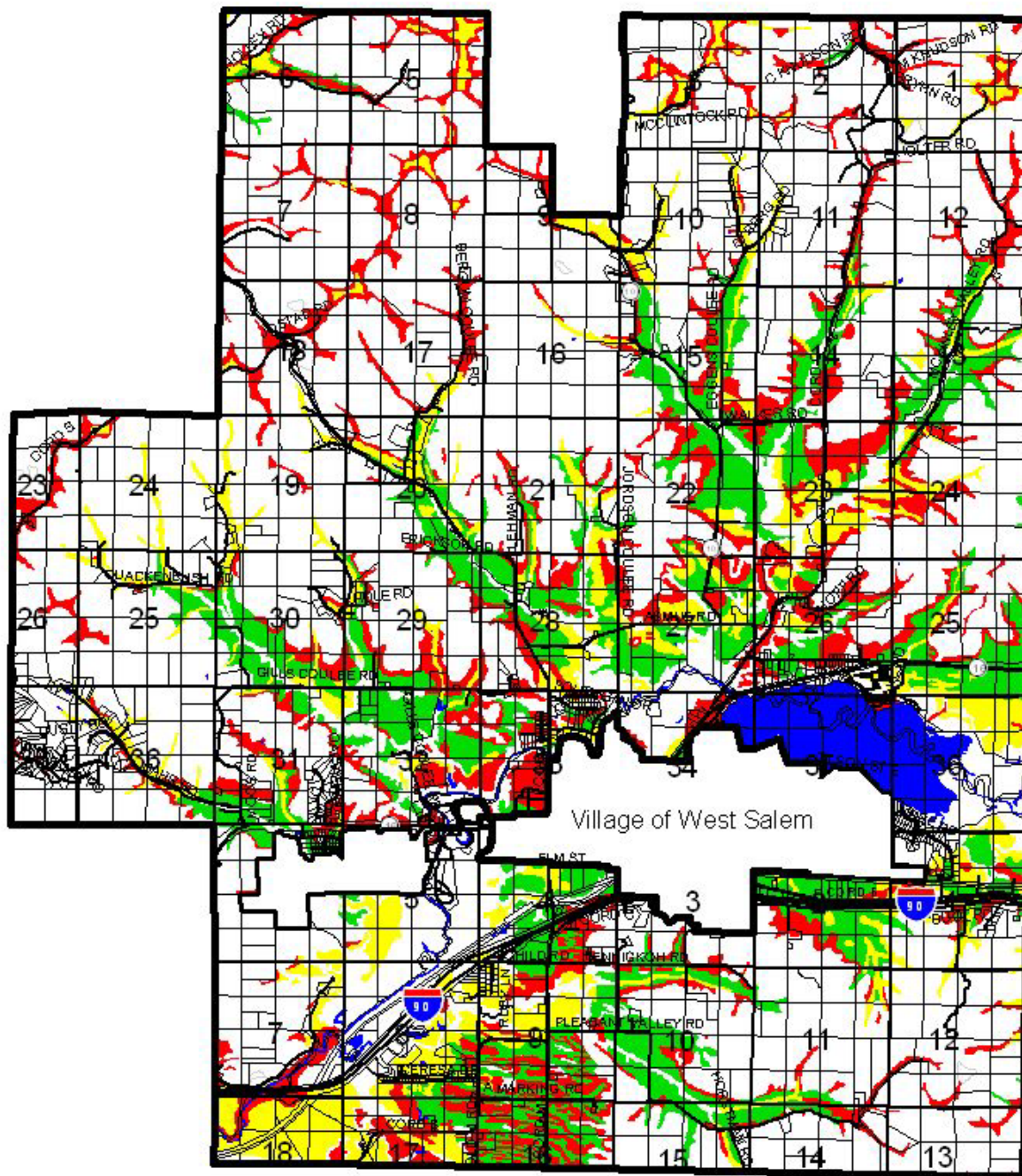
Neshonoc Swarthout County Park

The 20 acres of Neshonoc Swarthout Park is located at the northwest end of the lake, within the Town of Hamilton. Rustic Road R-31 has its north terminus located in this park. The park is located along the lake shore just above the dam and along the south shore of the La Crosse River below the dam, and extends on both sides of STH 16 and STH 108, with the east side, on the lake shore, having a picnic shelter, tables and grills, vault toilets, hand pump, one grass volleyball court, playground apparatus, and a boat ramp and courtesy pier. There is also a historic marker which describes the former community of Neshonoc, an early commercial rival of West Salem. Below the dam there is a canoe launch area and an extensive area of wildlife food plots and natural wetlands.

Lake Neshonoc South County Park

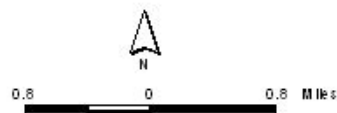
This 60 acre tract is part of the larger County owned land that was formerly used as a farm by the health care facility. Although most of the remainder of this land is being considered for sale to private developers for other uses, the portion bordering on Lake Neshonoc's south shore has been set aside as a County park. There is currently 1/2 mile of lakefront, 3/4 mile paved road, a boat launch ramp, pier/dock, and a parking area for approximately 24 vehicles with trailers. Most of this property is currently "undeveloped" with abandoned farm fields and meadows and some native hardwood cover. The western part of the property is within the Village of West Salem limits and the eastern portion is in the Town of Hamilton.

Map 1-8.1 Town of Hamilton Soils



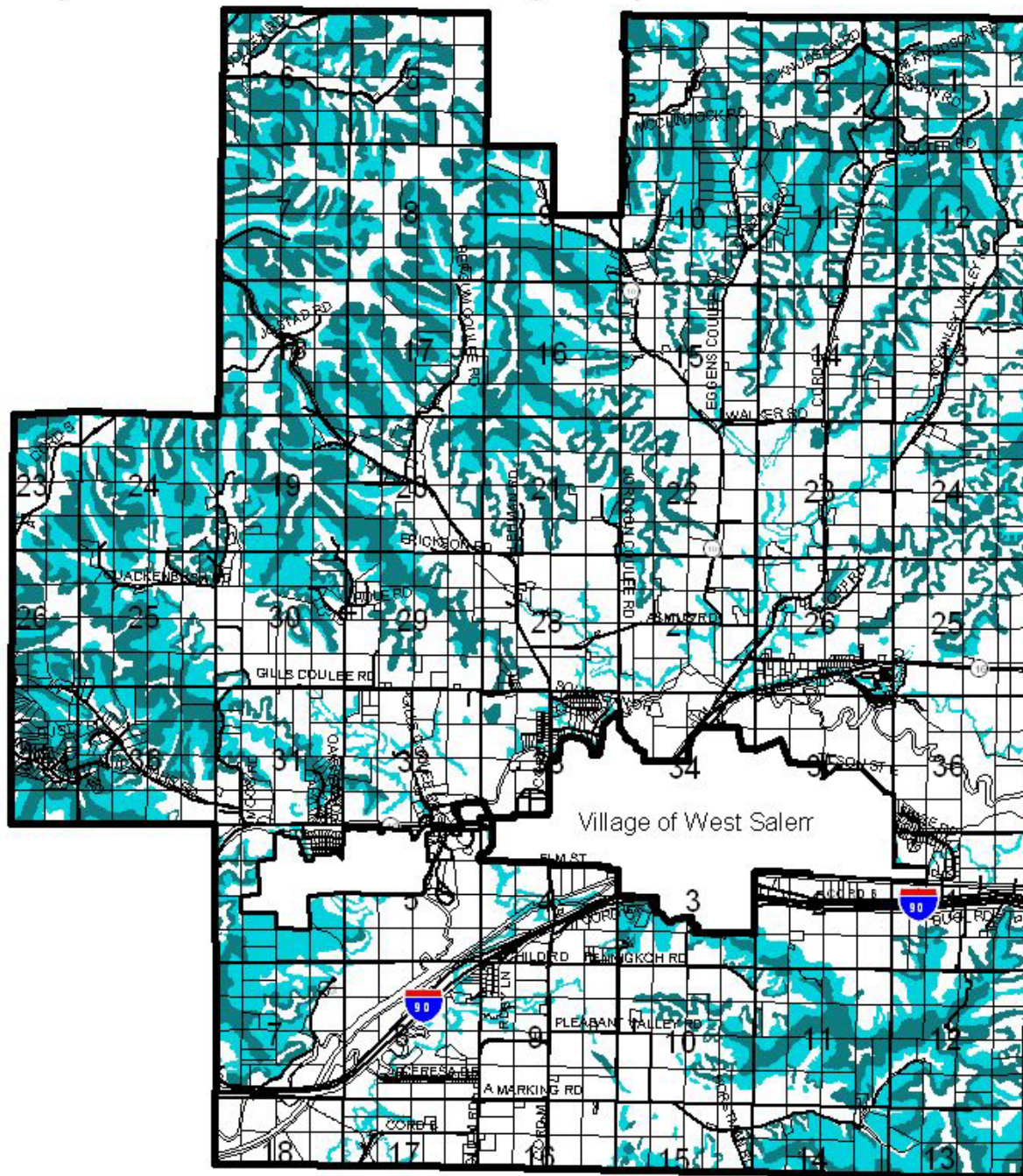
Soils

- Class I
- Class II
- Class III
- Class IV-VIII
- Water



Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission
July 1, 2008
Source: La Crosse County Digital
Soil Survey

Map 1-8.2 Town of Hamilton Slope Map



Percent Slope

- 0 TO 20 Percent
- 20 TO 30 Percent
- Over 30 Percent



0.8 0 0.8 Miles

Map prepared by Micrologix
Rice Regional Planning Commission
July 1, 2008
Source: La Crosse County Digital
Soil Survey

The map displays the Village of West Salem, Oregon, with a grid of numbered sections (1-36). The map includes labels for roads such as Jackson Rd, McCumstock Rd, Egeens Coulee Rd, and others. It also shows the Village of West Salem boundary, the Village of West Salem name, and the Village of West Salem logo.

8-9

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Appendix 1. List of Public Roads in the Town of Hamilton

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
WISCONSIN INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR LOCAL ROADS
City / Village/ Town County Certified Mileage List - (R-03)
January 1, 2008

County of La Crosse (32)
Town of Hamilton (014)

| Road Name | Gross Miles | County Miles | Municipal Miles | County Jurisdiction | | | Municipal Jurisdiction | | |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------|-------|------------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | | | Arterial | Collector | Local | Arterial | Collector | Local |
| A Marking Rd | 0.50 | | 0.50 | | | | | | 0.50 |
| Asmus Rd | 1.46 | | 1.46 | | | | | | 1.46 |
| Bahr Rd | 1.28 | | 1.28 | | | | | | 1.28 |
| Berg Rd | 0.42 | | 0.42 | | | | | | 0.42 |
| Bergum Coulee Rd | 1.62 | | 1.62 | | | | | | 1.62 |
| Briarcliffe Ct | 0.34 | | 0.34 | | | | | | 0.34 |
| Bryhn Rd | 0.18 | | 0.18 | | | | | | 0.18 |
| Buol Rd | 2.00 | | 2.00 | | | | | | 2.00 |
| Carlson Rd | 0.12 | | 0.12 | | | | | | 0.12 |
| C Knutson Rd | 0.40 | | 0.40 | | | | | | 0.40 |
| CTH B | 5.85 | 5.85 | | 0.52 | 5.33 | | | | |
| CTH BM | 0.89 | 0.89 | | | | 0.89 | | | |
| CTH C | 6.37 | 6.37 | | 1.05 | 5.32 | | | | |
| CTH M | 6.28 | 6.28 | | 0.20 | 6.08 | | | | |
| CTH NP (1) | 0.18 | 0.18 | | | | 0.18 | | | |
| CTH NP (2) | 0.08 | 0.08 | | | | 0.08 | | | |
| CTH NP (3) | 0.24 | 0.24 | | | | 0.24 | | | |
| CTH S | 2.13 | 2.13 | | | | 2.13 | | | |
| Dovenberg Rd | 0.04 | | 0.04 | | | | | | 0.04 |
| Dusty Rd | 0.28 | | 0.28 | | | | | | 0.28 |
| Ed Severson Rd | 0.57 | | 0.57 | | | | | | 0.57 |
| Eggens Coulee Rd | 1.87 | | 1.87 | | | | | | 1.87 |
| Erickson Rd | 0.33 | | 0.33 | | | | | | 0.33 |
| Evenson Rd | 1.06 | | 1.06 | | | | | | 1.06 |
| Fennighkoh Rd | 1.59 | | 1.59 | | | | | | 1.59 |
| First Ave | 0.21 | | 0.21 | | | | | | 0.21 |
| Gills Coulee Rd (1) | 1.04 | | 1.04 | | | | | | 1.04 |
| Gills Coulee Rd (2) | 4.03 | | 4.03 | | | | | | 4.03 |
| Grasby Rd | 0.33 | | 0.33 | | | | | | 0.33 |
| Hidden River Rd | 0.36 | | 0.36 | | | | | | 0.36 |
| Hoff Rd | 0.56 | | 0.56 | | | | | | 0.56 |
| Holley Rd | 0.80 | | 0.80 | | | | | | 0.80 |
| E Holter Rd | 0.89 | | 0.89 | | | | | | 0.89 |
| W Holter Rd | 0.24 | | 0.24 | | | | | | 0.24 |
| Horstman Rd | 0.33 | | 0.33 | | | | | | 0.33 |
| Innsbruck Rd (1) | 0.27 | | 0.27 | | | | | | 0.27 |
| Innsbruck Rd (2) | 0.94 | | 0.94 | | | | | | 0.94 |
| Jordson Coulee Rd | 1.13 | | 1.13 | | | | | | 1.13 |
| Jostad Rd | 0.33 | | 0.33 | | | | | | 0.33 |
| N Kinney Coulee Rd | 1.24 | | 1.24 | | | | | | 1.24 |
| Krueger Rd | 0.05 | | 0.05 | | | | | | 0.05 |
| Lee Rd | 0.05 | | 0.05 | | | | | | 0.05 |
| Lehman Rd | 0.10 | | 0.10 | | | | | | 0.10 |
| Linse Rd | 0.83 | | 0.83 | | | | | | 0.83 |

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
WISCONSIN INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR LOCAL ROADS
City / Village/ Town County Certified Mileage List - (R-03)
January 1, 2008

County of La Crosse (32)
Town of Hamilton (014)

| Road Name | Gross Miles | County Miles | Municipal Miles | County Jurisdiction | | | Municipal Jurisdiction | | |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | | | Arterial | Collector | Local | Arterial | Collector | Local |
| Locust Dr | 0.11 | | 0.11 | | | | | | 0.11 |
| McClintock Rd | 0.71 | | 0.71 | | | | | | 0.71 |
| McKinley Rd | 2.91 | | 2.91 | | | | | | 2.91 |
| M Knutson Rd | 0.36 | | 0.36 | | | | | | 0.36 |
| Moos Rd | 1.32 | | 1.32 | | | | | | 1.32 |
| Nelson Rd | 0.10 | | 0.10 | | | | | | 0.10 |
| Neshonc Rd | 0.15 | | 0.15 | | | | | | 0.15 |
| Oakview Dr | 0.45 | | 0.45 | | | | | | 0.45 |
| Old B Rd | 0.30 | | 0.30 | | | | | | 0.30 |
| Old M Rd | 0.30 | | 0.30 | | | | | | 0.30 |
| Old Sixteen Rd | 0.98 | | 0.98 | | | | | | 0.98 |
| Pierce Rd | 0.15 | | 0.15 | | | | | | 0.15 |
| Pioneer Ct | 0.11 | | 0.11 | | | | | | 0.11 |
| Pleasant Valley Rd | 2.87 | | 2.87 | | | | | | 2.87 |
| E Point Rd | 0.34 | | 0.34 | | | | | | 0.34 |
| Prairie Ct E | 0.10 | | 0.10 | | | | | | 0.10 |
| Prairie Ct W | 0.11 | | 0.11 | | | | | | 0.11 |
| Quackenbush Rd | 0.98 | | 0.98 | | | | | | 0.98 |
| Raymer Rd | 0.05 | | 0.05 | | | | | | 0.05 |
| Riniker Rd | 0.02 | | 0.02 | | | | | | 0.02 |
| Rod And Gun Club Rd | 0.22 | | 0.22 | | | | | | 0.22 |
| Romskog Rd | 0.34 | | 0.34 | | | | | | 0.34 |
| S Romskog Rd | 0.15 | | 0.15 | | | | | | 0.15 |
| Ruby Ln | 0.23 | | 0.23 | | | | | | 0.23 |
| Schild Rd | 0.78 | | 0.78 | | | | | | 0.78 |
| Schomberg Rd | 0.36 | | 0.36 | | | | | | 0.36 |
| E Scotch Coulee Rd | 0.57 | | 0.57 | | | | | | 0.57 |
| W Scotch Coulee Rd | 0.88 | | 0.88 | | | | | | 0.88 |
| Settlers Trl | 0.37 | | 0.37 | | | | | | 0.37 |
| Shorewood Cir | 0.07 | | 0.07 | | | | | | 0.07 |
| Shorewood Ct | 0.25 | | 0.25 | | | | | | 0.25 |
| Southern Dr | 0.37 | | 0.37 | | | | | | 0.37 |
| Stan Olson Rd | 0.20 | | 0.20 | | | | | | 0.20 |
| Sweden Coulee Rd | 1.59 | | 1.59 | | | | | | 1.59 |
| Tower Rd | 0.32 | | 0.32 | | | | | | 0.32 |
| Walker Rd | 0.76 | | 0.76 | | | | | | 0.76 |
| Wehrs Rd | 0.50 | | 0.50 | | | | | | 0.50 |
| Weise Rd | 0.09 | | 0.09 | | | | | | 0.09 |
| Western Hills Dr | 0.29 | | 0.29 | | | | | | 0.29 |
| Total Miles | 70.57 | 22.02 | 48.55 | 1.77 | 16.73 | 3.52 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 48.55 |

Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030

Section 2: Planning Goals, Objectives, Policies/Actions, and Recommendations

August 2009

TOWN OF HAMILTON

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Introduction

As described in the Existing Conditions Report, the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan is being prepared under the State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law contained in Section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. The law was adopted in 1999 and requires that zoning, subdivision regulations, and official mapping within the town must be consistent with a comprehensive plan. To meet the requirements of the planning law a comprehensive plan is being prepared that will consist of two documents, an Existing Conditions Report and a Goals, Objectives, Policies/Actions and Recommendations section.

This section of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan describes the goals, objectives, policies/actions and recommendations derived throughout the planning process. The decisions, actions and policy recommendations identified in this section of the comprehensive plan will provide a framework for the future development of the Town of Hamilton.

A common vision for the Town of Hamilton identified by residents during the planning process stressed the importance of "maintaining the towns identity, rural/agricultural appearance and lifestyle balanced with the need to provide opportunities for sustained growth and development." It is believed that if the recommendations of this plan are pursued and implemented that the Town of Hamilton's vision can be achieved.

1 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT

The Issues and Opportunities Element of the Comprehensive Plan is of vital importance to the planning process. The overriding purpose of the Issues and Opportunities Element is to establish the framework for the plan, analyze community data collected and organized in the Existing Conditions Report, and organize community and resident input into meaningful directives. This element will provide a comprehensive list of the planning goals established during the planning process along with a description of the public input activities utilized to gather information from which the goals were derived. Policies and programs developed in the planning process will be detailed in each planning element and summarized in the Implementation Element of the plan.

Public Participation Plan

At the beginning of the planning process, the Town of Hamilton adopted a public participation plan as required by state statute. The public participation plan specified ways in which public input would be facilitated throughout the planning process and how planning documents would be made available for public review and comment. A copy of the “Town of Hamilton Public Participation Plan” is attached as Appendix A. Below is a summary of the public input gained from public input activities conducted throughout the planning process.

Public Input

A key to the planning process is to gain public involvement and input in the early stages of the process thus allowing public input to guide the development of the plan. This was accomplished through a public information meeting and a Town of Hamilton survey of residents. Of equal importance is to maintain the public involvement throughout the planning process and this was accomplished by holding several public informational meetings throughout the planning process.

Public Informational Meeting 1

On March 8, 2007, a public information meeting was held in the Town of Hamilton to inform the public about the planning process and to solicit input on the comprehensive plan for the Town. The Town Plan Commission and approximately 35 residents attended the meeting. The residents at the meeting participated in two exercises that were designed to facilitate public input.

Exercise 1 (Keeps and Changes): Each person attending the meeting was given a 3” by 5” card and asked to imagine that they just returned home after a long absence. They were asked to write down three things in the town they would change and three things in the town they would keep. The exercise attempts to identify things in the town that people like or dislike. In addition, it helps to identify the issues that residents feel are most important.

The resident’s responses were grouped by subject category. The subject categories and the grouping of the issues are the Plan Commissions judgment. The number of responses per subject are in ().

Things to Keep

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| • Rural Setting/Openness/View (26) | • Forest/Woodlands (6) |
| • Agriculture/Farming (15) | • Environmental/Historic Preservation (5) |
| • Business/Development (8) | • Miscellaneous Keeps (6) |
| • Good Roads (7) | |

Things to Change

- Development Pressure/Housing (23)
- Traffic/Roads (12)
- Commercial Development (5)
- Government/Taxes (5)
- Environment (5)
- Miscellaneous Changes (9)

Exercise 2 (Group Issue Identification): In the second exercise the residents in attendance were divided into six groups. Each group was given an issue identification worksheet on which as a group they listed the issues they felt were most important to the Town of Hamilton regarding each of the planning elements. Once each group completed the exercise they reported back to the meeting participants on the findings of their group. This exercise identified the issues that were most important to residents at the meeting.

A listing of the responses to the exercise by the six groups is included in Appendix B.

Town of Hamilton Survey

Another form of the public input used during the planning process was a community survey. At the beginning of the planning process, a survey was sent to all landowners in the Town of Hamilton. The survey asked landowners to respond to a series of questions pertaining to the comprehensive planning elements (land use, transportation, etc.). Gaining input from a broader range of landowners and understanding their attitudes towards comprehensive planning was the purpose of the survey. A total of 493 property owners completed and returned the surveys. The survey results are listed in the Existing Conditions Report.

Highway 16 Corridor Meeting

On November 7, 2007 a public informational meeting was held for Town of Hamilton landowners with property along the Highway 16 Corridor between the City of Onalaska and the Village of West Salem. During the planning process, this corridor became a significant area of concern regarding future development and boundary issues with adjacent municipalities. This special meeting was conducted in order to gain input of affected landowners on their recommendations for the corridor.

Public Informational Meeting 2

Once the initial draft of the comprehensive plan was completed, a second public informational meeting for landowners was held to gain input on draft plan. Only one member of the public attended the meeting. A few modifications to the plan were made based on discussion and input at the public informational meeting.

Planning Goals

Based on issues and opportunities derived from analysis of data compiled in the Existing Conditions Report, public input from the town survey, a public open house meeting (visioning), Plan Commission and Town Board input the following goals were established to guide the development of the Town of Hamilton Plan. All the goals listed are viewed as important to the Town of Hamilton. The goals have been numbered for clarification/documentation purposes and are not intended to infer a priority or ranking of importance. Methods and actions to achieve the goals will be detailed in the following sections.

Land Use Element

- Goal A** • Focus residential growth in the Town of Hamilton to designated planned areas encouraging growth in locations with adequate sewer and water capabilities, on marginal agricultural land, adjacent to existing residential development with suitable public road access.
- Goal B** • Encourage cluster development in suitable areas over inefficient scattered residential development patterns.
- Goal C** • Encourage agriculture/agriculture related businesses and the preservation of agricultural land.
- Goal D** • Preserve the existing rural lifestyle within the town (rural setting, openness, friendly neighbors, family, etc.) and maintain the predominant rural-agricultural character of the Town of Hamilton.
- Goal E** • Minimize additional commercial and industrial development along the Hwy 16 corridor in an effort to maintain the identity of the Town of Hamilton
- Goal F** • Balance individual property rights with the property rights of neighbors and the common good of the town.

Housing Element

- Goal A** • Provide opportunities for elderly (senior housing) and assisted living facilities.
- Goal B** • Continue to plan in advance for adequate public utilities, sidewalks, and access for school buses and emergency vehicles when planning housing developments.
- Goal C** • Maintain enforcement and continually update the existing one and two family dwelling code in order to maintain and improve the housing stock in the Town of Hamilton.

Transportation Element

- Goal A** • Maintain the existing road network and level of service (road condition and road maintenance).
- Goal B** • Continue joint cooperation with the County Highway Department and Wisconsin Department of Transportation on public road projects.
- Goal C** • Support State and County programs that provide transportation options for the elderly and disabled.
- Goal D** • Ensure public and private roads are planned, designed, and constructed to adequately serve future growth in the Town of Hamilton.

Economic Development Element

- Goal A** • Promote agricultural and related small/home businesses as a way to maintain the existing rural lifestyle and local economy.
- Goal B** • Maintain the rural landscape as a means of supporting recreational uses and tourism opportunities.
- Goal C** • Promote the location of large scale industrial/business development along travel corridors (Cty. Rd. B and C).
- Goal D** • Recognize the Town of Hamilton as being part of a regional economy in an effort to maintain residents existing lifestyle.

Utilities and Community Facility Element

- Goal A** • Strive to maintain the Town of Hamilton's existing public services (road maintenance, recycling center, etc.)
- Goal B** • Monitor the changing needs of the Town of Hamilton and provide quality community facilities as needed.
- Goal C** • Explore the necessity and feasibility of community wells and sanitary districts for new development.

Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources Element

- Goal A** • To the extent possible preserve productive agricultural land.
- Goal B** • Attempt to preserve slopes, bluff lands and forested lands in the town.
- Goal C** • Continue to support agriculture conservation practices and programs in the Town of Hamilton.
- Goal D** • Attempt to preserve and enhance the environmental quality of the town – water quality, air quality, soils, etc.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

- Goal A** • Promote programs, policies and development patterns that enhance and maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity.
- Goal B** • Maintain cooperative relationships with local, state, and federal governments and agencies.
- Goal C** • Review and evaluate neighboring municipalities comprehensive plans to ensure consistency and compatible development
- Goal D** • Explore developing boundary agreements/service agreements with neighboring municipalities and governmental agencies.
- Goal E** • Plan for the growth of the Town of Hamilton in conjunction with future development in the Village of West Salem and focus future expansion near the existing built environment of the village.

Implementation Element Goals

- Goal A** • Provide the opportunity for the public to have continued input in the plan and plan implementation.
- Goal B** • Explore policies, programs and other methods to implement the various recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

The following sections of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan will detail by element the objectives, programs and policies/actions aimed at meeting the planning goals and will ultimately shape the development of the Town of Hamilton.

2 LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan is considered one of the most critical elements of the planning process. The element contains goals, objectives, programs and policies/actions that will guide the future development of the Town of Hamilton. The element was prepared pursuant to Section 66.1001 Wisconsin Statutes and in doing so the element took into consideration trends in land supply, demand, and prices as well as potential areas of future land use conflicts.

Land Use Element Goals

Public participation in the form of input from surveys and meeting participation in the planning process assisted in developing the land use element goals. In the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. The following land use element goals and associated policies, programs/actions, etc. were developed:

Goal A *Focus residential growth in the Town of Hamilton to designated planned areas encouraging growth in locations with adequate sewer and water capabilities, on marginal agricultural land, adjacent to existing residential development with suitable public road access.*

- a. At the discretion of the Town, require new commercial/residential developments to prepare a community impact analysis which illustrates the impact of the proposed development on the town's transportation system, area school systems, tax base and any other information the town determines necessary. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton determine the development threshold at which a community impact analysis will be required.
- b. Request from La Crosse County that the non-residential acre "plan review guideline" established in the La Crosse County Plan be increased for the Town of Hamilton from 40 to 60 acres to accommodate increased commercial/industrial development in the Town of Hamilton.
- c. It is recommended that development be minimized on land defined as agricultural land. Agricultural land is a common term but depending on the user has a wide range of definitions. In an attempt to clarify the term in the context of the comprehensive plan agricultural land is defined as soils designated as Class I, II, III on the Town of Hamilton Soils Map 1-8.1.
- d. It is recommended that development (building/driveway construction) be prohibited on slopes greater than 30% to preserve bluffs and minimize soil erosion. The Town of Hamilton supports limiting development on slopes between 20%-30%. It is recommended that developments (building/driveway construction) requested on slopes between 20%-30% be required to receive a conditional use/special exception permit that will address erosion control, emergency access, and any additional site conditions deemed applicable by the reviewing bodies. Developments (building/driveway construction) on slopes less than 20% would be considered permitted and would only require standard building/zoning permits.

Goal B *Encourage cluster development in suitable areas over inefficient scattered residential development patterns.*

- a. Promote and Define Conservation Subdivisions
Information collected and reviewed during the planning process demonstrated that conservation subdivisions would benefit the future development of the Town of Hamilton and assist the town in meeting its planning goals. A conservation subdivision can be described as a development with common open space and compact clustered lots. A purpose of conservation subdivisions is to preserve agricultural land/open space/natural resources while allowing for residential development.

Conservation subdivisions, when developed in the Town of Hamilton, will allow for the projected future residential development to occur in the Town while at the same time reduce development costs for the landowner, minimize

future maintenance and service costs for the Town, and the conservation subdivision will help preserve the rural character of the Town. Traditional rural land use regulations and non-regulated rural developments typically create scattered development patterns. Often large lots (5 acres or more) are required by the regulating unit of government resulting in requiring rural residential development to consume large amounts of land which promotes scattered development, encourages inefficient land use, and facilitates land uses that compete with traditional agricultural.

It is recommended that as residential development proposals are presented to the Town Board that conservation subdivision standards are recommended to be utilized when applicable. To achieve this, it is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with La Crosse County in developing a conservation subdivision ordinance to be utilized in the Town of Hamilton. In addition, determine if conservation subdivision design standards should be required on all new developments.

- b. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton implement “Coulee Visions” planning principles when considering approval of new developments. Coulee Visions was developed as a guide that illustrates land use and transportation planning alternatives for local units of government when preparing comprehensive plans. Coulee Visions focuses on:
 - Revitalize core areas
 - Encourage redevelopment
 - Discourage “sprawl” type development
 - Reduce public infrastructure costs
 - Do not move jobs from one community to another
 - Reduce vehicular travel demand
 - Increase capacity through transportation system management
 - Preserve existing infrastructure
 - Improve and expand transit system
 - Enhance bicycle and pedestrian system effectiveness
- c. Evaluate development proposals based on their design and location with the purpose of discouraging proposals that promote scattered development.

Goal C *Encourage agriculture/agriculture related businesses and the preservation of agricultural land.*

- a. Enforce standards for rezoning of “Exclusive Agricultural” lands. Findings for rezoning are based upon the consideration of:
 1. Adequate public facilities to accommodate development either exist or will be provided within a reasonable time.
 2. Provision of public facilities to accommodate development will not place an unreasonable burden on the ability of affected local units of government to provide them.
 3. The land proposed for rezoning is suitable for development and development will not result in undue water or air pollution, cause unreasonable soil erosion or have an unreasonable adverse effect on rare or irreplaceable natural areas.
- b. Develop a review process for new residences proposed to be located in Exclusive Agriculture areas. Consider adopting an ordinance/policy requiring applications for new residences in Exclusive Agriculture areas to appear before the Town Board or Plan Commission in order for the location of the new residence to be reviewed. The reviewing board shall take into consideration the soils, slope, driveway location, existing agricultural uses, etc. when reviewing the proposed location.
- c. An issue brought up during the planning process that the Plan Commission felt needed to be addressed was that from time to time when property owners in the Exclusive Agriculture District have constructed second homes for immediate family members, per the County Zoning Ordinance the property the home is constructed on remains in Exclusive Agriculture. There have been instances when the residence has been sold to a non-family member without being rezoned to a residential district. When the new owner attempts to make improvements to the existing structure they are then required to have the property rezoned. When these cases arise, the Town of Hamilton recommends that the rezoning requests be approved and be considered consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal D *Preserve the existing rural lifestyle within the town (rural setting, openness, friendly neighbors, family, etc.) and maintain the predominant rural-agricultural character of the Town of Hamilton.*

- a. It is recommended that future land use decisions be based on and be consistent with the adopted land use map developed during this planning process and described in this planning element.
- b. Residential Housing in Exclusive Agriculture Areas

The plan recognizes that from time to time low density residential development will be proposed for locations in the Town of Hamilton designated as Exclusive Agriculture. The plan recommends that when these cases arise that they go through a rezoning process. The time for the necessary approvals is anticipated to take approximately 3-5 months provided the proposal meets the rate of development described in the following paragraph. It was clear during the planning process, that substantial residential growth was not desired by town residents. Therefore, a 3-5 month review process was determined to be acceptable and necessary to properly review such development proposals. It is important to understand that by applying for a zoning change does not guarantee its approval. Such decisions will be made by the Town Plan Commission, Town Board, and County Board based on the recommendations and public processes identified in the plan.

It is further recommended that in cases where Exclusive Agriculture properties are requested for residential development that they be developed at a rate as defined by the Exclusive Agriculture District (1 house per 35 acres). For example, if a landowner owns 140 acres designated as Exclusive Agriculture and requests rezoning for a certain number of new housing units, the number of new housing units recommended to be permitted will be based on a rate of 1 house per 35 acres. To calculate the number of new housing units permitted the reviewing committees will take the number of acres owned by the property owner (140) and divide that acreage by 35, which results in 4 new housing units permitted. In the case of a fractional answer, the fractional number will be rounded up if it is equal to or exceeds .75. In the future, residential rezoning requests pertaining to the affected properties (all 140 original acres) will be taken into consideration with the intent to avoid reutilizing the acreages for the purpose of permitting additional residential development. To be eligible for such a request a property owner must own a minimum of 35 contiguous acres. It is important to understand that for the purposes of the above calculations, a parcel is defined as all property owned by a landowner that is contiguous. Contiguous property includes property under the same ownership that is adjacent, or separated by a public road or stream. In addition, an existing residence on the parent parcel will not be counted against the density permitted as determined by the calculation. The minimum lot size for the proposed housing site(s) is recommended to be a minimum of 1 acre.

Furthermore, once it is determined that no further housing units are permitted to be constructed based on the density rate of the parent parcel, at the discretion of the Town Board the property owner must record an affidavit restricting (or other enforceable document) further residential development on the property.

Upon receiving requests for zoning changes meeting the density requirements stated above, the Town Board and Town Plan Commission will evaluate a request and formulate a recommendation in favor/opposed to the request based on the following criteria/questions:

1. Has the property remained under the same ownership for 10 or more years?
2. Is the property to be developed non-productive agricultural land?
To determine if land is non-productive agricultural land the Town Plan Commission and Town Board will take into consideration:
 - the slope of the site
 - the productivity of the soils based on the La Crosse County Soil Survey with the preference of preserving Class I, II and III soils.
 - the five year crop history for the site to determine the past productivity of the land (information to be provided by the applicant)
3. If multiple single-family units are proposed will clustered development principles be utilized?
4. Will the project minimize the need for additional transportation infrastructure or substantial improvements to existing transportation infrastructure?
5. Does the location of the proposed housing development avoid when possible impacting the rural lifestyle of adjoining property owners?

It is recommended that failure (a "no" response to any of the criteria) of the applicant to satisfactorily meet any of the criteria listed will result in the Town Board and/or Town Plan Commission denying the request.

Rezoning requests adhering to the above requirements/parameters and process shall be considered consistent with the Land Use Element of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan. In addition, it is intended that this process and criteria developed by the Town of Hamilton be viewed by the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors as a method to ensure consistency in future planning and development.

- c. Continue to coordinate planning efforts with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska on parcels adjacent to municipal boundaries.
- d. Evaluate La Crosse County's proposed voluntary Purchase of Development Rights Program and determine if it would benefit the Town of Hamilton and aid in preserving productive agricultural lands.
- e. Increase Plan Commission and Town Board officials' knowledge of the planning and zoning process as well as comprehensive plan implementation tools. Support attendance at meetings and training opportunities for elected or appointed officials.

Goal E *Minimize additional commercial and industrial development along the Hwy 16 corridor in an effort to maintain the identity of the Town of Hamilton.*

- a. It is recommended that in order to maintain the identity of the Town of Hamilton and its rural appearance that no additional commercial or industrial development be permitted along the Highway 16 Corridor from the Village of West Salem limits west to the Town of Hamilton west town line. All development proposals reviewed by the Town Board along this corridor should be reviewed with the purpose and emphasis of maintaining the Town's identity and rural character.
- b. The plan recommends that the Town Board research and consider "charter town" status for the Town of Hamilton if it is determined to be in the best interest of the town and its residents. Legislation has been drafted regarding defining and authorizing Charter Towns. Such legislation would provide towns with more independence and authority to maintain their boundaries.
- c. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton participate in joint meetings with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska and explore cooperation options. Such cooperation options or agreements should strive to meet the following criteria for the Town of Hamilton:
 - 1. •Maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity by keeping a presence (maintaining property adjacent to the highway within the Town limits) on Highway 16 west of the Village of West Salem
 - 2. •Preserve the rural appearance of the town and area (protect view sheds)
 - 3. •Minimize commercial/industrial development on/adjacent to State Highway 16 between the City of Onalaska and Village of West Salem
- d. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County explore long range options for the preservation of agricultural land within the corridor. Options should address compensation for landowners in the corridor for maintaining open space (voluntary purchase of development rights, conservancy organizations/programs, etc.).

Goal F *Balance individual property rights with the property rights of neighbors and the common good of the town.*

- a. Continue to follow the planning process in the adopted "Town of Hamilton Public Participation Plan" which detailed activities to gain public input through public meetings, public surveys and general public awareness of the planning process. Following the public participation plan will ensure that balance in the form of public input and opinions will be achieved during the planning process.
- b. Utilize public input in the planning process and update the comprehensive plan a minimum of once every 10 years.

Land Use Map (See Map 2-2.1)

In the preparation of the land use map the existing land uses, soils and topography were considered. The land use map attempts to create a vision of development for the Town of Hamilton that is consistent with

the planning goals and public input expressed throughout the planning process. The land use map is the primary tool in achieving the goals of the land use element.

For clarity purposes, the land use designations have followed public roads, streams, sections lines, and parcel boundaries. It is important to realize that there are natural features and existing regulations (slopes, wetlands, floodplains, etc.) that preclude development from taking place in many areas throughout the town. So it is important to understand that even if a property is designated as residential (or some other use) there may be natural features or existing regulations that restrict development on parts or all of the area designated. A natural features map that illustrates these areas is available for viewing at the Town of Hamilton Town Hall.

The land use map for the Town of Hamilton utilizes nine land use districts derived from the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan. The majority of the town is designated as Exclusive Agriculture. This designation best reflects the existing development patterns in the town. The Plan Commission also determined that since the majority town is rural that such a designation would treat the majority of property owners in a similar manner.

With regard to identifying areas more suitable for higher density residential development (Smart Growth Areas), the Plan Commission guided by public input designated areas near existing developments adjacent to the Village of West Salem as future residential areas. "Smart Growth Areas" have been designated as Single Family-1 on the Land Use Map.

The Plan Commission designated two locations in the Town for the expansion of industrial uses. The first location north of County Road B to the southeast of the Village of West Salem extending east to the Town line. The location is suitable for industrial development as it is adjacent to the Lakeview Business Park located in the Village of West Salem, it is adjacent to existing commercial/industrial uses, and has adequate Interstate-90 access. The second location is located adjacent to Buol Road extending from the Village limits east to the Town line (a depth of 660' from the Interstate 90 right of way). This location is also suitable for industrial development due to its location near Interstate 90 and adequate road access. It is important to note that at this location the Interstate 90 right of way width varies and may impact the development potential of some properties. Existing businesses in the Town of Hamilton were designated as commercial/retail or industrial properties.

Large areas of commercial development are not anticipated nor are planned for the Town of Hamilton. Future commercial/retail development is designated to locate adjacent to Highway 16 north of the Village of West Salem. In addition, two areas proposed for mixed use development have been identified; the Maple Grove Country Club area in Section 8 and property on the west side of County Road M in Section 4.

The Public/Institutional land use district designates where public facilities or institutions (churches, Town Hall, etc.) are located.

Highway 16 Corridor

The Highway 16 Corridor consists primarily of the property located in the sections adjacent to State Highway 16 between the West Salem village limits and the City of Onalaska city limits. During the planning process numerous joint meetings were held with representatives from La Crosse County, City of Onalaska, Village of West Salem and the Town of Hamilton. Discussions mainly focused on developing an intergovernmental cooperation agreement between the local units of government agreeing to the land uses and municipal boundaries for the corridor. However, an agreement was never reached. During the drafting of this plan a petition to annex was filed with the Village of West Salem for three properties in the Town of

Hamilton located south of State Highway 16 consisting of approximately 220 acres. The annexation request if approved would extend the Village of West Salem limits over a mile west of the village's current boundary. All indications are that public sewer and water would be extended to this area to accommodate new residential development.

The annexation, if approved, would significantly impact the Town of Hamilton and properties in the corridor, as the area would essentially become a residential neighborhood. Based on the facts at hand and assuming the annexation will be approved, the Town of Hamilton recommends that all property located south of State Highway 16 to Interstate 90/Canadian Pacific Railway (as designated in the Land Use Map) be designated as Conservation Subdivision with the underlying density of the Residential-3 District. However, if the property is not annexed and the Town of Hamilton is able to provide public sewer and water to the properties (via a sanitary district or intergovernmental service agreement with a local municipality) it is recommended that properties be developed at the underlying density rate of the Single Family –1 District. Property located north of State Highway 16 is recommend to be designated as Exclusive Agriculture unless previously developed.

It is important to understand that by designating the area south of State Highway 16 as Conservation Subdivision (residential) it is not intended that the area be developed haphazardly with scattered residential units. It is recommended that as properties transition to residential that a development plan be submitted for entire parcels so that development can be managed in a way that is in the best interest of the Town of Hamilton and the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Land Use Districts (derived from the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan)

The land use map for the Town of Hamilton utilized the following nine land use districts that were derived from the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan.

Exclusive Agriculture- The purpose of the Exclusive Agriculture District is to preserve agricultural land for food and production; protect productive farmers by preventing conflicts between incompatible uses; maintain a viable agricultural base to support agricultural processing and service industries; reduce costs of providing services to scattered non-farm uses; promote orderly urban growth; implement the provisions of the County Farmland Preservation Plan when adopted and periodically revised; and comply with the provisions of the Farmland Preservation Law to permit eligible landowners to receive tax credits under ss. 71.09(11), Wis. Stats. A minimum lot size of 35 acres is recommended.

Environmental – The Environmental District includes areas where special protection is encouraged because of unique landscape, topographical features, wildlife, or historical value. They contain the best remaining woodlands and wetlands, wildlife habitats, undeveloped shorelands and flood lands, groundwater recharge and discharge areas, and steeply sloped lands in the town. In developed areas, this designation also refers to parks and open spaces used for recreation or environmental purposes.

Rural Residential 2 – This district is generally intended for low-density rural single-family detached residential development at a density of at least 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.

Rural Residential 3 - This district is generally intended for low-density suburban single-family detached residential development at a density of at least 1-5 acres per dwelling unit.

Single Family 1 - This district is generally intended for low-density suburban single-family detached residential development at a density between 2 and 5 homes per acre.

Conservation Subdivision – Can be characterized as housing development in a rural setting that has compact lots and common open space, and where natural features of the land are maintained to the greatest extent possible. Conservation subdivisions allow for and adjustment in the location of residential dwelling units on a parcel of land so long as the total number of dwelling units does not exceed the number of units otherwise permitted in the zoning district.

Mixed Use – This district encourages containing more than one type of use in a building or set of buildings. This includes a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other uses.

Commercial/Retail – This district includes area dedicated to the sale of goods or merchandise for personal or household consumption. Structures include neighborhood stores, or designated shopping districts such as a downtown area. Commercial districts may also include malls or areas of intensive transportation access, such as interchange areas off highways and interstates.

Public/Institutional – This district encompasses a range of public, social, and institutional uses. These uses are public or semi-public, and generally tax exempt. Specific uses include schools, libraries, parks, municipal buildings, emergency response and public safety buildings, health care facilities, travel-related facilities, places of worship, or other governmental lands.

General Industrial – All industrial activities are allowed in this district including assembly plants, manufacturing plants, industrial machinery, shipping and trucking.

The La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan/Town of Hamilton Land Use Element

It is the understanding of the Town of Hamilton that the land use plan/map prepared by the town will be adopted by reference and recognized in the La Crosse County Plan. The County Land Use Map will designate areas in the Town of Hamilton in one of five broad land use categories (residential, non-residential, environmental, agriculture and rural, and public/institutional) based on the more detailed land use map designations developed by the Town.

It is also important to clarify that the decisions and recommendations within the Land Use Element are based upon the Town of Hamilton's understanding that as future plan updates are adopted by the Town of Hamilton that the updates will be adopted by reference by the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors to the La Crosse County Plan.

The La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element established "plan review guidelines" for each town in La Crosse County. The guidelines were established to ensure development opportunities were available to all areas of the La Crosse County. The guidelines also require communication between local units of government once an individual town meets a development benchmark. A 520 acre residential development guideline and a 40 acre non-residential development guideline were established for the Town of Hamilton in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan. It is also the understanding of the Town of Hamilton that if property is developed within the Town of Hamilton in the 10 year period (that counts against the Town of Hamilton's development guideline) and subsequently if the developed property is annexed to an adjoining municipality, the Town of Hamilton's guideline will adjusted to the pre development/pre annexation standard.

In addition as stated in the Land Use Element goal recommendations, the Town of Hamilton would like the non-residential acre guideline increased for the Town of Hamilton to 60 acres based on the industrial/commercial areas designated on the Town land use map being located near the Lakeview

Business Park, adjacent to existing non-residential developments, and having excellent interstate access. It is believed this area could generate significant non-residential development within the next 10 years.

Addressing Existing/Potential Land Use Conflicts

An important part of the planning process is identifying land use conflicts and providing ways to minimize their impact. Previously in the plan, the following existing and potential land use conflicts were identified. Below each existing/potential land use conflict is a description of the method utilized or recommended to address each item.

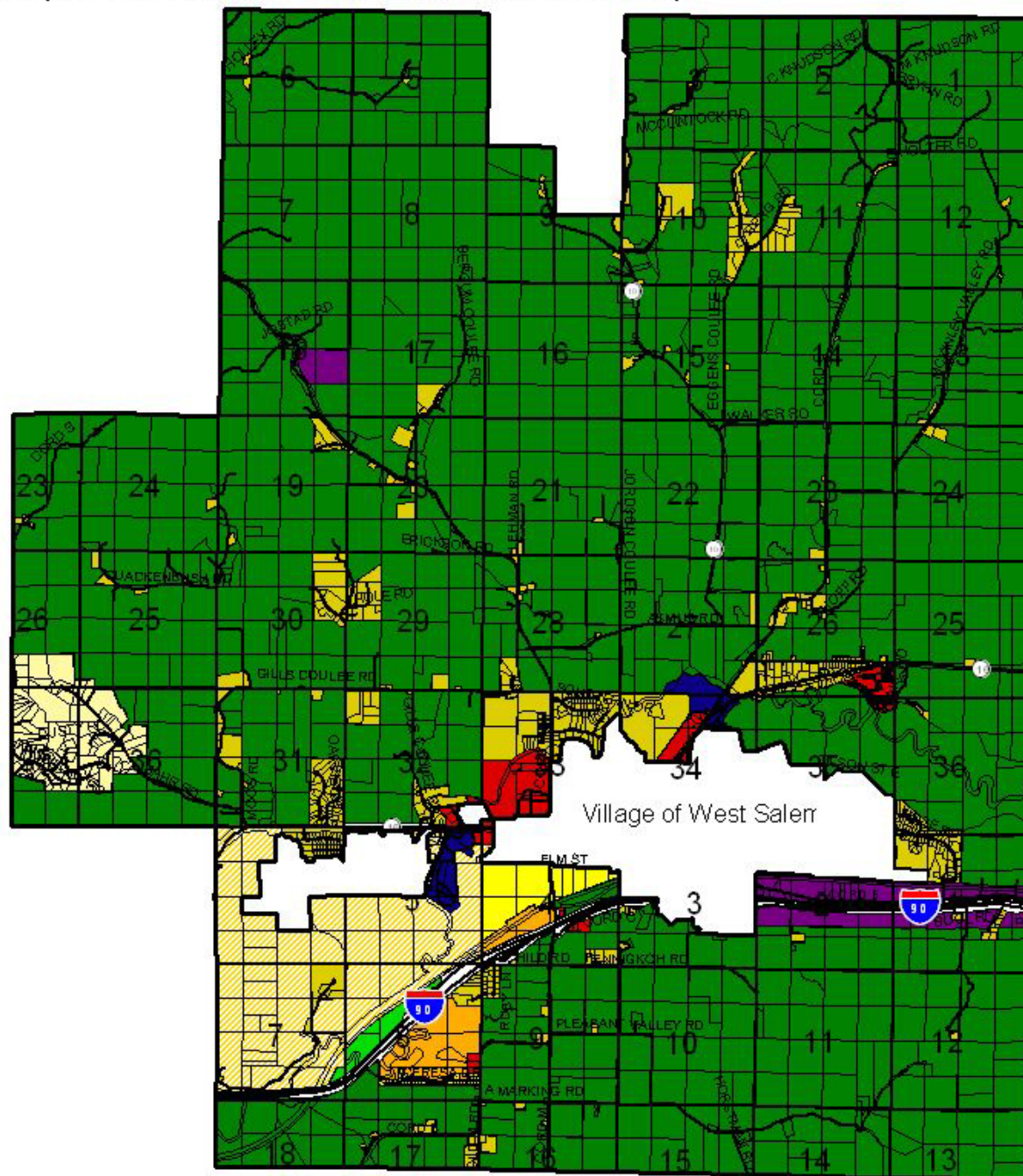
1. Ongoing conflicts between the desire to preserve the rural character and agricultural appearance of the town with increased development pressure and private property owner's interests.
 - *The Plan Commission believes that the comprehensive planning process and development of a land use map is working to minimize this conflict. Future planning updates recommended at a minimum of 10 years will continue to address this issue.*
2. Identification of Smart Growth Areas
 - *This conflict is addressed in the development of Land Use Map by identifying residential growth areas near existing developments adjacent to the Village of West Salem as "Smart Growth Areas". It is recommended that cooperation with the Village of West Salem on future plan updates be continued to address locations for "Smart Growth Areas".*
3. Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska's expansion and growth into the Town of Hamilton
 - *It is recommended that this planning document be shared with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska and that periodically joint meetings between the respective Boards and Councils be conducted.*

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Land Use Element. Following each goal is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

1. *Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.*
This goal was addressed in the planning process through the creation and adoption of a Public Participation Plan which detailed activities to gain public input through public meetings, public surveys and general public awareness of the planning process.
2. *Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.*
In the preparation of the plan this goal was reviewed by the Town of Hamilton Plan Commission and the redevelopment of properties was not applicable to the town since the vast majority of the town is undeveloped. The plan does encourage the maintenance of existing structures by recommending the continued enforcement of the Uniform Dwelling Code.
3. *Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.*
The goal was met by encouraging conservation subdivisions for residential developments, focusing development near the Village of West Salem (potential public sewer and water availability) and utilizing "Coulee Visions" land use principles.
4. *Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.*
This goal is addressed by utilizing various land use districts that encourage the preservation of agricultural land and promote the use of conservation subdivisions.

Map 2-2.1 Town of Hamilton Land Use Map



Land Use Districts

- Commerc./Ret.
- Conservation Sub.
- Environmental
- Exclusive Ag.
- General Ind.
- Mixed Use
- Public Instit.
- Rural Res. 2
- Rural Res. 3
- Single Family 1



0.8 0 0.8 Miles

Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission Under the
Direction of the Town of Hamilton Plan Commission
December 2008

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3 HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan is important to ensure there are adequate opportunities and locations for future housing. The element was prepared pursuant to Section 66.1001 Wisconsin Statutes and in doing so the element used analysis pertaining to the age, structural value and occupancy characteristics of the Town of Hamilton's housing stock in an effort to meet the housing needs of residents and anticipated housing growth.

Housing Element Goals

The Town of Hamilton Planning Commission developed housing goals for the Town of Hamilton based on public input from surveys and public meeting resident participation. As described in previous sections, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. The following housing element goals and associated policies, programs/actions, etc. were developed:

Goal A *Provide opportunities for elderly (senior housing) and assisted living facilities.*

- a. Research the establishment of rural assisted living facilities, elderly housing condominiums, etc. as a way to meet the housing needs of the Town of Hamilton.
- b. Work with La Crosse County in establishing ordinances that promote various levels of housing (size, value, income, etc.) within housing developments.
- c. Support activities of the La Crosse County Housing Commission in achieving its long and short term goals related to the creation of affordable housing.

Goal B *Continue to plan in advance for adequate public utilities, sidewalks, and access for school buses and emergency vehicles when planning housing developments.*

- a. Encourage housing development patterns that grow out from areas of existing residential development.
- b. Promote cluster/conservation housing subdivisions in areas with existing transportation infrastructure and capacity.
- c. In conjunction with the County promote the use of Best Management Practices and erosion control and stormwater management plans for residential development proposals to minimize potential impacts to waterways and groundwater resources.
- d. In evaluating residential development proposals direct new non-farm development to sites that do not adversely affect the operation of agricultural working lands.
- e. Assist La Crosse County in rewriting the La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance as it pertains to residential and agricultural districts as detailed in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan.

Goal C *Maintain enforcement and continually update the existing one and two family dwelling code in order to maintain and improve the housing stock in the Town of Hamilton.*

- a. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue enforcement of the One and Two-family Dwelling Code. A key to a stable and growing tax base is the construction and maintenance of new and existing housing. The quality of construction and proper maintenance of housing units will prolong the life of the structures, keep them safe and a vital part of the tax base. The implementation of the state building code also ensures that structures will meet minimum requirements to provide access to all age groups and residents with special needs.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Housing Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.

This goal is addressed in the plan by supporting activities of the La Crosse County Housing Commission and its efforts to create affordable housing opportunities throughout La Crosse County.

4 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

This element of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive will address, goals, objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that will guide the future transportation system for the Town of Hamilton. Providing an adequate and efficient transportation system for residents and businesses is vital to the future of the Town of Hamilton. Maintaining and improving the transportation system will only increase the productivity of residents and enhance the quality of life.

Transportation Element Goals

The following transportation goals were derived from analysis of public input received during the planning process. As described previously, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. The following transportation goals, and associated policies, programs/actions, etc. were established:

Goal A *Maintain the existing road network and level of service (road condition and road maintenance).*

- a. Survey results indicated that residents were satisfied with the condition and maintenance (snow plowing, etc.) of town roads. It is therefore recommended that the Town of Hamilton Town Board continue annual road inspections and current budgeting practices to maintain the existing quality and level of service of existing roads.
- b. In the survey sent to residents during the planning process hazardous intersections and road segments were identified by residents. It is recommended that the Town Board prioritize the hazardous locations and work with County Highway Department and Wisconsin DOT to develop solutions and a timeline to address the locations.
- c. Private driveway placement (visibility, location, etc.) was identified by residents as a transportation issue during the planning process. It is recommended that the town and the county continue to enforce driveway requirements addressing visibility, location, etc.
- d. The speed of motorists on town, county and state public roads was mentioned as a concern of residents on the town survey. It is recommended that the Town Board relay these findings to the County Sheriffs Department and State Patrol and request action be taken to monitor/reduce the speed of travel on roads within the Town of Hamilton.

Goal B *Continue joint cooperation with the County Highway Department and Wisconsin Department of Transportation on public road projects.*

- a. Continue to maintain a good working relationship with the County Highway Department and meet annually to discuss transportation issues affecting the town and county.
- b. Continue to biannually update the Town of Hamilton Road System on State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program.
- c. Maintain communications with neighboring municipalities and continually monitor road impacts from potential business or residential expansion in the area.
- d. At the discretion of the Town Board, support state and county plans and programs to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian facilities on public roads and/or designated trails.

Goal C *Support State and County programs that provide transportation options for the elderly and disabled.*

- a. Transportation options/services for elderly and disabled residents are important. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with the county departments (aging unit, etc.) and neighboring local units of government and support the development of enhanced transportation services to residents in need.
- b. Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to evaluate the need to expand the Park and Ride Facility at the Interstate-90 West Salem exit.
- c. Evaluate the feasibility of expanding the Village of West Salem shared-ride taxi service to residents in the Town of Hamilton.

Goal D *Ensure public and private roads are planned, designed, and constructed to adequately serve future growth in the Town of Hamilton.*

- a. The potential traffic impacts of proposed residential, commercial, or industrial developments on the existing road system were identified in the planning process as important to town residents. It is recommended that the Town Board develop and adopt an ordinance that addresses the impacts of a proposed road resulting from a new development on the capacity and safety of an existing road that it intersects or extends. It would be intended that if a development adds additional burden to the Town Road over the current ADT classification that the developer would be responsible for all the upgrade costs associated with the impacted road segments.
- b. There are numerous private roads in the Town of Hamilton each of which serve residences. It is recommended that the enforcement of private road standards be continued that address the width (minimum 66 foot easement), length, slope and clearance of private roads to ensure adequate emergency and school bus access.
- c. Continue to monitor and work with the Wisconsin DOT on the proposed State Highway 16 four lane expansion project west of West Salem. Evaluate the need for a multiuse path in conjunction with the proposed project.

During the planning process, the Town of Hamilton, City of Onalaska and the Village of West Salem held joint meetings regarding intergovernmental cooperation with regard to land use issues along the Highway 16 Corridor. The future reconstruction of State Highway 16 and access/reconstruction concerns were discussed. The joint meetings resulted in the recognition of the local units of government involved of their mutual concerns regarding the future reconstruction of State Highway 16 by the WDOT. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to meet with neighboring jurisdictions so their mutual concerns are identified and properly addressed by the WDOT during the State Highway 16 transportation project.

- d. It is recommended that when the Town reviews proposed developments that the developments be encouraged/required to be designed sensitive to the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit dependent residents.
- e. Review development proposals to ensure public roads provide sufficient access/turn arounds for emergency vehicles, school buses, etc.
- f. When feasible discourage the use of cul de sacs in new developments. Encourage transportation systems that provide multiple ingress/egress points or through streets.
- g. It is recommended that Town of Hamilton develop a policy (at the Town Boards discretion) requiring new developments to extend new or existing public roads or public road right-of-way/public road easement of 66 feet in width to the property line of adjacent land owners when deemed necessary to serve future land uses.

Transportation Map

Map 2-4.1 illustrates locations in the Town where transportation projects/activities/studies are anticipated to occur during the planning period. Following is a description of the projects/activities/studies:

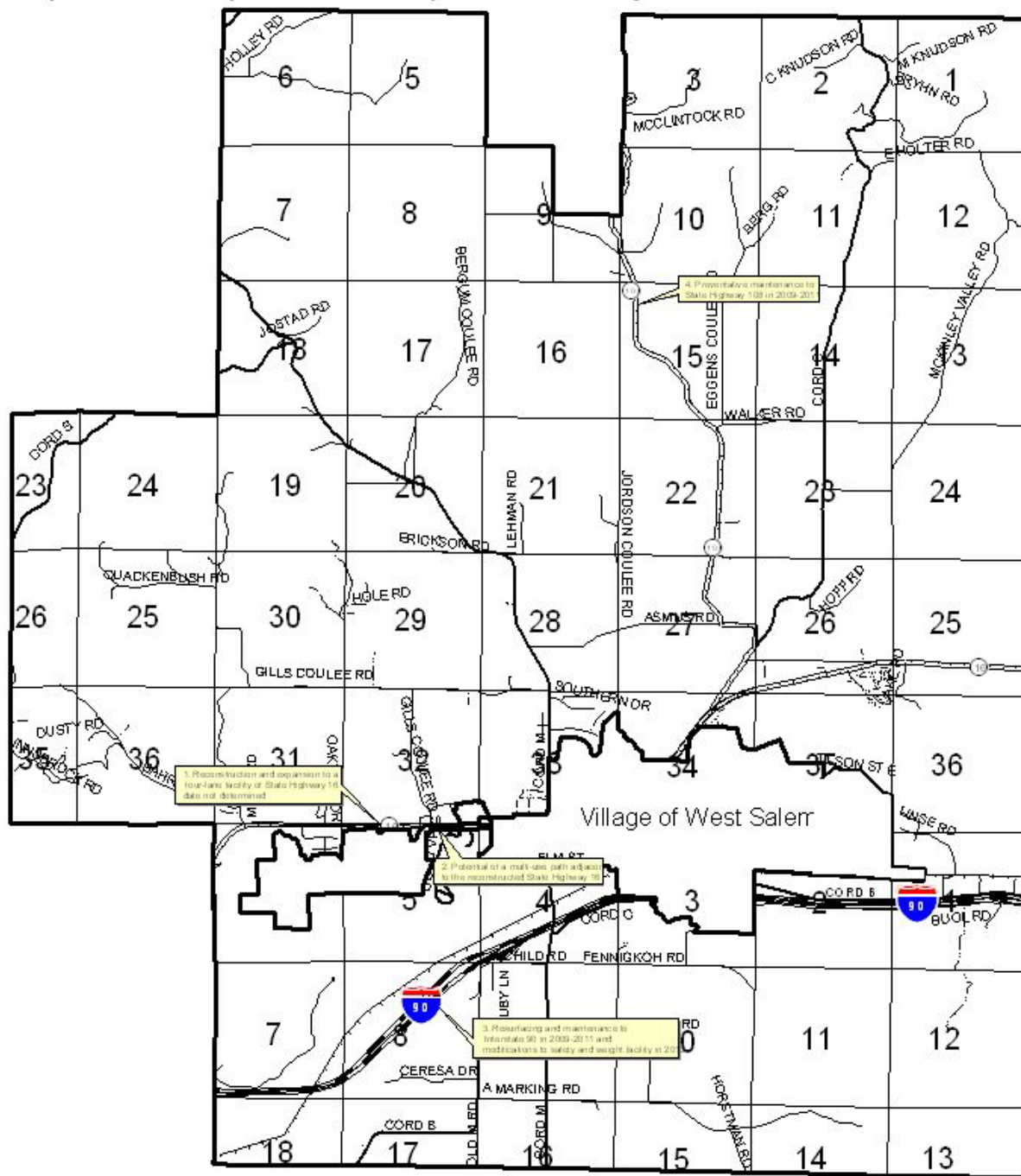
1. Reconstruction and expansion to a four-lane facility of State Highway 16 between the City of Onalaska and the Village of West Salem.
2. Potential of a multi-use path (pedestrian, bicycle, etc.) adjacent to the reconstructed State Highway 16. The facility is identified in the La Crosse Area Planning Committees Transportation Plan and would connect to Veteran's Memorial County Park.
3. Resurfacing and maintenance to Interstate 90 (east and west bound lanes) 2009-2011 and modifications to the safety and weight facility (truck weigh station) in 2012.
4. Preventative maintenance to State Highway 108 2009-2011.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Transportation Element. Following the goals is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

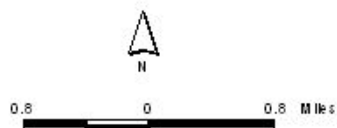
- *Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.*
 - *Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.*
- Both of these goals were addressed in the recommendations of the Transportation Element. The plan recommends that proposed developments be encouraged/required to be designed sensitive to the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit dependent residents. The plan also recommends that the Town of Hamilton work with the county departments (aging unit, etc.) and neighboring local units of government and support the development of enhanced transportation services to residents in need.

Map 2-4.1 Proposed Transportation Projects



Roads and Facilities

- County
- Interstate
- Town
- Private
- State
- Railroad



Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission Under the
Direction of the Hamilton Plan Commission
July 1, 2008

5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

In developing the Economic Development element for the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan, plan commission members and residents took into consideration several factors. The Town of Hamilton is primarily rural and public sewer and water is not readily available to facilitate economic development. Secondly, input from residents during the planning process stressed that intense economic development in the form of commercial or industrial uses are not desired throughout the majority of the town.

Economic Development Element Goals

The economic development goals illustrated in this element are focused on preserving and enhancing the existing economic conditions that have played a vital role in forming the present day Town of Hamilton. Public input during the planning process indicated that specific locations near the Village of West Salem should be designated for more intense commercial or industrial uses. Residents identified that it was very important to maintain the rural atmosphere of the town and by doing so encourage agricultural related uses.

As described in previous sections, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. During the planning process, the following economic development goals and associated policies, programs/actions, etc. were established:

Goal A *Promote agricultural and related small/home businesses as a way to maintain the existing rural lifestyle and local economy.*

- a. The economic development goals derived from public input during the planning process identified the businesses and industries desired in the town. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton support policies and programs that will promote or maintain the desired uses. The desired business/industries are described as follows:

Productive Agriculture

The Town of Hamilton is a rural town and historically agriculture and agriculture related businesses (animal agriculture, cash cropping, etc.) have been the backbone of the local economy. Residents during the planning process have indicated that they wish for the town to remain rural and agriculture to remain a vital part of the local economy. In addition, agriculture research businesses have located in the Town of Hamilton and it is recommended that conditions be maintained that support these business operations and the expansion of such uses.

Home/Small Businesses

Home/small businesses were also identified during the planning process as being important to the town's rural lifestyle. Home/small businesses being described as small home offices, craft outlets, repair businesses, etc. Generally, these businesses can be described as family operated, one to five employees and having a limited visual impact on the community. These businesses are often times important because they provide supplemental income to existing farm operations and allow the land to remain in productive agriculture rather than being sold to competing uses (residential) that may detract from the rural atmosphere.

Recreation/Tourism

Recreational uses and tourism were also identified during the planning process as businesses or opportunities to enhance the local economy. Passive recreation and tourism uses that will not detract from the rural qualities of the town are the most desired uses.

- b. Support various forms of agriculture such as organic agriculture, orchards, vineyards, value added agriculture, etc. as a way of providing more agricultural opportunities in the local economy.
- c. Recommend to the La Crosse County Zoning Department that when revising the comprehensive zoning ordinance agricultural districts that home/small businesses be defined and considered as conditional uses in the agricultural districts.

Goal B *Maintain the rural landscape as a means of supporting recreational uses and tourism opportunities.*

- a. As part of the Comprehensive planning process and future updates, it is recommended that the town develop and implement a land use plan that enhances the rural landscape, therefore, preserving recreational and tourism opportunities in the Town.
- b. During the planning process the La Crosse County Fairgrounds located in the Town of Hamilton was identified as an important economic/educational asset to the Town of Hamilton. It is recommended that the Town works to maintain the fairgrounds in the Town of Hamilton and through land use regulation protect the fairground property from uses that could negatively impact the site.
- c. It is recommended the Town of Hamilton review developments with sensitivity to development impacts that would negatively affect the La Crosse River State Bicycle Trail.
- d. Maintain Lake Neshonoc as a valuable natural resource and recreational attraction. Evaluate land uses proposed to be located adjacent to the lake to ensure they are compatible uses.
- e. Continue to support county and state recreational facilities in the Town of Hamilton as a means to provide recreational opportunities for visitors and tourists.

Goal C *Promote the location of large scale industrial/business development along travel corridors (Cty. Rd. B and C).*

- a. Large businesses are defined as businesses having 6 or more employees with the potential to impact the rural character of the town. Therefore, locations for large businesses are recommended to be located along travel corridors with direct access to Interstate-90. This will eliminate traffic from impacting town road facilities and residents throughout the Town of Hamilton. The land use map developed designated a location for large businesses north of County Road B to the southeast of the Village of West Salem.
- b. Develop requirements that new businesses must meet to minimize their impact on adjoining land uses. Items to consider include screening fence/landscaping, light requirements, sign requirements, etc.
- c. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with local business organizations (La Crosse Area Development Corporation, Etc.) to promote business sites in the Town of Hamilton.

Goal D *Recognize the Town of Hamilton as being part of a regional economy in an effort to maintain residents existing lifestyle.*

- a. Continue to monitor County, Regional and State programs that promote the desired businesses identified during the planning process by town residents. Specific programs to promote/monitor:

County Programs

La Crosse County Business Fund

Regional Programs

Western Wisconsin Technology Zone

Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs administered through the Mississippi River

Regional Planning Commission (ex. Public Works and Economic Development Program, Economic Adjustment Program, etc...)

State Programs

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Local Transportation Economic Assistance Program (TEA)

Value Added Dairy Initiative (Grow Wisconsin)

Wisconsin Department of Commerce Enterprise Development Zone Program

Wisconsin Department of Commerce Milk Volume Production Program

Wisconsin Department of Commerce Dairy 2020 Planning Grant Program

Wisconsin Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Program

Wisconsin Department of Commerce Entrepreneurial training Grant

- b. Work to enhance the economic strengths and minimize the economic weaknesses of the Town of Hamilton as identified in Chapter 5 of the Existing Conditions Report. Specifically, work cooperatively with adjacent units of government on economic development issues with the realization that each unit of government is a component of the regional economy.
- c. Promote opportunities for transportation enhancements to improve the local economy. As discussed in the transportation element, work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Village of West Salem on expanding the capacity of the Park and Ride lot located on County Road C and Interstate-90.
- d. Evaluate La Crosse County's proposed voluntary Purchase of Development Rights Program and determine if it would benefit the Town of Hamilton and preserve productive agricultural lands. Such a program could assist in preserving farmland and open space adjacent to the State Highway 16 corridor.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Economic Development Element. Following each goal is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

- *Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.*
This goal was addressed in the planning process in the Land Use Element as the land use map defined and identified economically productive areas and designated the majority of those areas in the Exclusive Agriculture land use district.
- *Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.*
Implementation activities in this element promote a range of business activities that are desired in the Town of Hamilton. The element also stresses the importance of cooperation between local units of government and the recognition of a region economy.

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6 UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

This element of the plan will address the utilities and community facilities for the Town of Hamilton. In preparing this element, the Town of Hamilton Plan Commission identified several factors that influence utilities and community facilities. First, the Town of Hamilton is a predominantly rural town but is located adjacent to two expanding municipalities (Village of West Salem and City of Onalaska). Secondly, residents in the Town have stressed the desire for the Town to retain its identity and rural atmosphere. Finally, based on survey results residents indicated that they were satisfied with the existing utilities and community facilities available in the Town of Hamilton.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goals

The Town of Hamilton Planning Commission developed goals for the Town of Hamilton based on analysis of the existing community facilities and public input received during the planning process. As described in previous sections, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. The following utilities and community facilities goals and associated policies, programs/actions, etc. were developed:

Goal A *Strive to maintain the Town of Hamilton's existing public services (road maintenance, recycling center, etc.)*

- a. During the planning process residents indicated that they were satisfied with the existing level of public services provided by the Town of Hamilton. The plan recommends that the Town Board strive to maintain the existing level of services over the planning period within the constraints of the budget.
- b. Develop or refine ordinances/policies to make sure future development projects pay for additional burdens placed on public facilities as a result of a new development. Methods to consider ensuring expenses are covered include; development review fees, special assessments, transportation impact fees, etc.
- c. Encourage residents to properly maintain private on-site sewer systems and private wells to protect the environment and future ground water supplies.

Goal B *Monitor the changing needs of the Town of Hamilton and provide quality community facilities as needed.*

- a. Explore cooperative public utility agreements with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska. This may include the expansion of public sewer and water systems into the Town of Hamilton.
- b. In future plan updates evaluate the space needs of the Town Shop and recycle/garbage center as the town and demand grows.
- c. Evaluate alternative energy sources and determine their suitability in the Town of Hamilton.
- d. It is recommended that when the Comprehensive Plan is updated that communication with residents is facilitated to determine if the utility and community facility needs of residents are continuing to be met. This communication can be in the form of a survey or public meeting(s).
- e. Monitor and manage the growth of the Town of Hamilton to ensure the new development does not affect the ability of the Town to provide community services.

- f. Promote Internet with high-speed access to all areas of the Town to benefit home businesses and home occupations.
- g. Do not extend public facilities into wetlands, steep slopes, etc. that would require significant future maintenance costs.

Goal C *Explore the necessity and feasibility of community wells and sanitary districts for new development.*

- a. Work with the Maple Grove Sanitary District to evaluate the possibility of the expanding or increasing the utilization of the sanitary district to serve additional development in the Town of Hamilton.
- b. Evaluate the construction and use of community wells in reviewing proposals for new developments.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Utilities and Community Facilities Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- *Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.*

This element discusses the methods in which adequate infrastructure and public services will be provided and maintained. Provision of the services will be monitored by the Town of Hamilton and input from residents will be requested as plan updates are completed. The Land Use Element addresses the locations designated for future residential, commercial and industrial uses.

7 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT

This element of the plan will address the intergovernmental cooperation of the Town of Hamilton, with other federal, state and municipal jurisdictions and/or agencies. Intergovernmental cooperation is key to local governments ability to provide community services and avoid conflicts that could jeopardize cooperation. With local units of government maintaining open lines of communication, experiences can be shared that will aid all local officials in making decisions and reducing operating expenses.

In preparing this element the Plan Commission and Town Board remained cognizant that the Town of Hamilton residents enjoy a unique and symbiotic relationship with the Village of West Salem and this plan should foster and perpetuate that partnership. The Town of Hamilton surrounds the Village and shares culture, geography, school district, post office address, fire district and a long and enduring bond. This plan acknowledges and encourages that ongoing relationship.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals

Based on public input the Town of Hamilton Planning Commission developed intergovernmental cooperation goals for the Town of Hamilton. As described in previous sections, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. The following intergovernmental cooperation goals and associated policies, programs/actions, etc. were developed:

Goal A *Promote programs, policies and development patterns that enhance and maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity.*

- a. As discussed in the Land Use Element, it is recommended that the Town of Hamilton, Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska continue to explore cooperation options. Such cooperation options or agreements should strive to meet the following criteria for the Town of Hamilton:
 - 1. Maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity by keeping a town presence (maintaining property adjacent to the highway with the Town limits) on Highway 16 west of the Village of West Salem
 - 2. Preserve the rural appearance of the town and area (protect view sheds)
 - 3. Minimize commercial/industrial development on/adjacent to State Highway 16 between the City of Onalaska and Village of West Salem
- b. Support the development of a county conservation subdivision ordinance that can be utilized in the Town of Hamilton as means of maintaining the Town's rural landscape.

Goal B *Maintain cooperative relationships with local, state, and federal governments and agencies.*

- a. Continue and build upon existing road maintenance agreements with the Town of Onalaska, Town of Medary and Town of Burns. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton formalize all "road maintenance sharing agreements" with neighboring towns to ensure the services continue to be provided efficiently and any liability issues are addressed.
- b. Support county and regional economic development efforts to improve the local economy by increasing the number of employment opportunities and tax base.

- c. Work with the County Highway Department and neighboring towns on finding efficiencies in road construction and maintenance responsibilities. The Town of Hamilton continuing to maintain active communications with the WDOT, County Highway Department and neighboring towns will aide to implement the policy.
- d. Continue participation in the Wisconsin Department of Transportations WISLER program which helps ensure state road aid funding. In addition, the WISLER program can help participants in identifying budgeting efficiencies.
- e. Continue to be an active member of the La Crosse County Towns Association. Attending meetings of the La Crosse County Towns Association is important to the Town of Hamilton in maintaining open dialogue with its neighboring towns and county agencies. Membership in this association and meeting attendance will be important in identifying and resolving any conflicts that may arise with neighboring towns by providing a forum for communication. Therefore, the plan recommends the Town Board continue attendance at Towns Association meetings.
- f. Utilize the La Crosse County Planning Departments website capabilities/links to provide information regarding the Town of Hamilton to interested residents and neighboring municipalities.
- g. Continue to maintain county administered zoning and police protection. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to utilize the administrative capabilities of the county with regard to Zoning Ordinance administration and protective services.

Goal C *Review and evaluate neighboring municipalities comprehensive plans to ensure consistency and compatible development.*

- a. Review and evaluate neighboring towns comprehensive plans. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton reviews and evaluates the comprehensive plans of neighboring governmental units as they are developed or revised in order to identify areas of potential conflict and/or coordination opportunities.
- b. Continue to review and remain active in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Planning process. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton reviews and evaluates the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan as it is developed and revised in order to identify areas of potential conflict and/or cooperation opportunities. In particular, participate with county initiatives that improve public transportation, emergency services, and zoning and planning services/programs.
- c. Strive to maintain an open dialogue with the five school districts that serve the Town of Hamilton in order to evaluate the school districts facility/educational needs.

Goal D *Explore developing boundary agreements/service agreements with neighboring municipalities and governmental agencies.*

- a. Consider cooperative agreements for police protection with local and regional units of government.
- b. Strive to maintain cooperative agreements for fire protection with area municipalities. Historically, this cooperative agreement has been vital to efficiently providing emergency services to town residents. This plan recommends the Town of Hamilton's continued participation in the joint fire department.
- c. Evaluate joint purchases and sharing of materials/equipment with neighboring municipalities in order to provide community services in the most efficient manner possible.

Goal E *Plan for the growth of the Town of Hamilton in conjunction with future development in the Village of West Salem and focus future expansion near the existing built environment of the village.*

- a. Continue to meet with the Village of West Salem to ensure future development in the area is compatible and a benefit to each community.

- b. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to evaluate and analyze cooperative boundary agreement(s) with the Village of West Salem, City of Onalaska, and potentially the Village of Bangor over the planning period. Explore the feasibility of revenue sharing and the extension of public utilities to Town of Hamilton developments.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- *Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.*
The policy recommendations and actions previously discussed in this element clearly demonstrate that coordination and cooperation of the Town of Hamilton with nearby units of government are not only encouraged but vital to the Town of Hamilton providing services and maintaining the existing quality of life residents enjoy.

Addressing Existing/Potential Conflicts

An important part of the planning process is identifying potential conflicts between various government jurisdictions and providing ways to address them. Previously in the plan, existing and potential land use conflicts were identified in the Land Use Element along with a method to address the conflicts. No additional intergovernmental conflicts were identified during the planning process. The Town of Hamilton will continue to monitor actions of neighboring or overlapping governmental jurisdictions during the planning period (such as neighboring towns and school districts). If any such conflicts are identified the Town of Hamilton Town Board will request to meet with the neighboring or overlapping jurisdiction to address and resolve any potential conflict. Map 1-6.1 in the Existing Conditions Report identifies overlapping jurisdictions and potential areas for joint planning.

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8 AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

The residents of the Town of Hamilton recognize how fortunate they are to have such an abundance of natural resources and are sensitive to the need to protect and preserve the resources. The Existing Conditions Report of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan identified the natural and cultural resources of the town (agriculture, forests, historical structures, threatened or endangered species, etc.) and this element details goals, objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. to preserve and enhance the resources.

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element Goals

Public participation was a vital component in developing the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources element goals. As described previously, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal. Based on public input from surveys and public meeting participation from residents the Town of Hamilton Planning Commission developed the following Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources element goals and associated policies, programs/actions, etc.:

Goal A *To the extent possible preserve productive agricultural land.*

- a. Consistent with the Land Use Element it is recommended that development be minimized on land defined as agricultural. Agricultural land is a common term but depending on the user has a wide range of definitions. In an attempt to clarify the term in the context of the comprehensive plan agricultural land is defined as soils designated as Class I, II, III on the Town of Hamilton Soils Map (Map 5).
- b. Support efforts of the County to update the County's Farmland Preservation Plan as the plan keeps property owners eligible for property tax relief.
- c. As discussed in the Land Use Element monitor the county's efforts in creating a voluntary countywide purchase of development rights (PDR) program as a means to preserve farmland.

Goal B *Attempt to preserve slopes, bluff lands and forested lands in the town.*

- a. Promotion of Forest Best Management Practices (BMP'S)
Woodlots and forested slopes enhance the town's natural beauty and provide excellent habitat for wildlife. In addition, the hardwood forests support the local economy by providing valuable forest products. The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan recommends that landowners utilize Forest Best Management Practices in maintaining the town's forests and woodlots. Forest BMP's will enhance woodlots and forested lands and ensure they remain a valuable natural resource. BMP's will also reduce erosion on the town's forested hillsides.
- b. Support County Parks in the Town
Three county parks are operated and maintained by La Crosse County in the Town of Hamilton. The Town of Hamilton recognizes the parks as important sources for outdoor recreation and stimulate the local tourism industry. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the town continue to work cooperatively with the county and support the County Parks located in the Town of Hamilton.

- c. As stated in the Land Use Element it is recommended that development (building/driveway construction) be prohibited on slopes greater than 30% to preserve bluffs and minimize soil erosion. The Town of Hamilton supports limiting development on slopes between 20%-30%. It is recommended that developments (building/driveway construction) requested on slopes between 20%-30% be required to receive a conditional use/special exception permit that will address erosion control, emergency access, and any additional site conditions deemed applicable by the reviewing bodies. Developments (building/driveway construction) on slopes less than 20% would be considered permitted and would only require standard building/zoning permits.
- d. Work with local property owners on the preservation of the unique American Chestnut Forest located in the Town of Hamilton.

Goal C *Continue to support agriculture conservation practices and programs in the Town of Hamilton.*

- a. At the discretion of the Town of Hamilton support Federal, State and County agricultural conservation programs.
- b. Promote the use of Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP'S) by landowners and agricultural producers in the Town of Hamilton.

Goal D *Attempt to preserve and enhance the environmental quality of the town – water quality, air quality, soils, etc*

- a. It is recommended that development continue to be prohibited in wetland/flood plain areas by the continued enforcement of existing ordinances.
- b. It is recommended that development be avoided on lands that are of cultural, religious, or historical significance. This can be achieved by reviewing State Historical Society databases pertaining to historic structures and sites prior to approving development proposals.
- c. Work cooperatively with the Neshonoc Lake District in efforts to maintain the lake as a valuable recreational and natural resource for the Town of Hamilton.
- d. Support the County's implementation of the La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Plan.
- e. Support the County's efforts to monitor urban/rural wells and irrigation systems to ensure ground water levels and quality are not jeopardized.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Preservation Map

Map 2-8.1 illustrates agricultural, natural and cultural resources in the Town identified during the planning process as important to preserve or protect. Specific resources illustrated on the map include:

1. Minimize development on agricultural land (defined as Class I, II, or III soils) throughout the Town of Hamilton.
2. Preservation of the unique American Chestnut Forest.
3. Maintain Lake Neshonoc as a valuable recreational and natural resource.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below are the Comprehensive Planning Goals described in State Statute that are related to the Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Element. Following each goal is a discussion how they were addressed during the planning process.

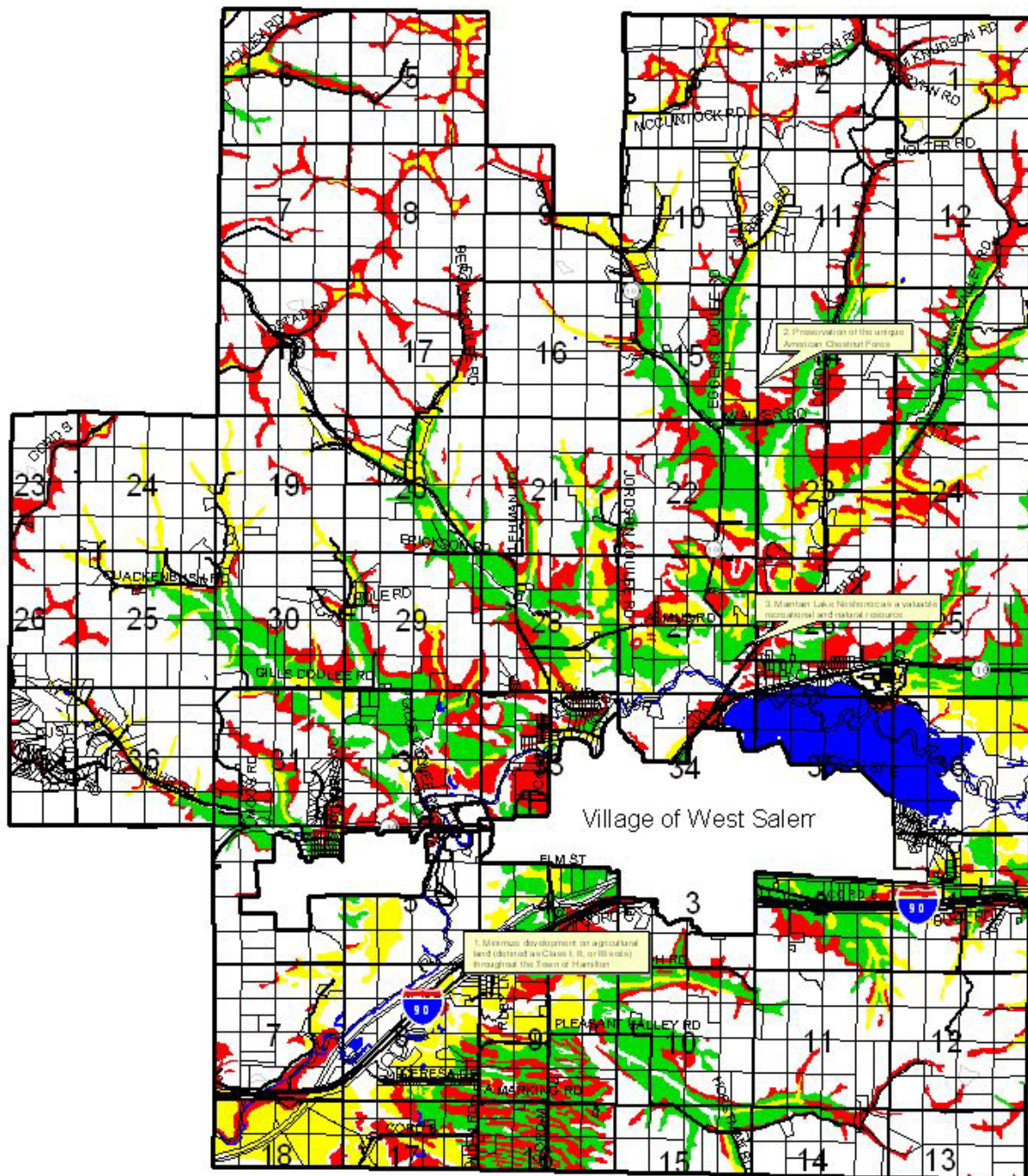
- *Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.*

This goal is addressed in the plan by recommendations that support state and local regulations and programs aimed at preserving natural resources.

- *Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.*

This goal is addressed by recommending that development proposals be analyzed for historical significance by reviewing State Historical Society databases pertaining to historic structures.

Map 2-8.1 Town of Hamilton Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Preservation Map



Soils

- Class I
- Class II
- Class III
- Water



0.8 0 0.8 Miles

Map prepared by Mississippi
River Regional Planning Commission Under the
Direction of the Town of Hamilton Plan Commission
July, 2008

9 IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT

This element of the plan will address the implementation of the Town of Hamilton comprehensive plan. The State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law requires the Implementation Element to include a list of specific programs and actions to be completed that will implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs identified in the plan. The element is required to state how each of the elements of the plan are integrated and made consistent with each other, identify a mechanism to measure the local governments progress toward achieving the plan, and the element shall include a process for updating the plan.

By 2010, if a local government unit engages in official mapping, local subdivision regulations, zoning ordinances, and zoning of shorelands or wetlands those actions must be consistent with the local unit of governments comprehensive plan. The adoption of this plan will ensure all regulatory activities are conducted within the requirements of Wisconsin State Statutes.

Consistency Among Plan Elements

Wisconsin Statutes requires a discussion of how the plan will remain consistent across elements. The planning process established the Town Plan Commission as the governmental body that would oversee the development of all the planning elements. This process ensured that there are no known inconsistencies across planning elements. During the planning process members of the Town Board periodically attended meetings, this participation helped ensure plan consistency with existing town policy. In addition, plan copies were forwarded to La Crosse County and the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission to ensure the document remains consistent with the planning activities in La Crosse County and the region.

Plan Adoption

It is important to understand that the plan will only be as good as its implementation. Adoption of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan is the first step in implementing the plan. The Plan Commission will recommend approval of the plan to the Town Board by resolution. The Town Board must then adopt the plan by ordinance in order to enact the plan. Once adopted the plan will serve as a framework and guide for the development of the town over the next 20 years.

Plan Monitoring and Plan Updates

The Plan Commission and Town Board will be the primary bodies responsible for implementing and monitoring the plan over the 20-year planning period. Updates and revisions to the plan will also be the responsibility of Plan Commission and Town Board and done in accordance to Wisconsin State Statute requirements at a minimum on once every 10 years. The success of the plan will be measured by the degree to which the planning goals are achieved through evaluation during plan updates. In addition, as part of the plan updates the Plan Commission, Town Board and residents will evaluate the progress made in meeting the implementation schedule included in this element.

Implementation Element Goals

In addition to Comprehensive Planning Law requirements, through the public participation planning process the following Implementation goals were established for the Town of Hamilton.

As described in previous sections, in the context of this plan goals are broad statements that the Town of Hamilton desires to achieve. Following each goal are associated policies, programs/actions, etc. that are recommended to address each goal.

Goal A *Provide the opportunity for the public to have continued input in the plan and plan implementation.*

- a. The Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan will be updated at a minimum once every 10 years. During the plan update process resident involvement will be incorporated by notification of public meetings, updated surveys and a public hearing being held on any modifications. The plan update will include measuring plan performance at achieving goals, revising statistical information, updating projections and analysis of past projections. The final stage of the update process will include revising and/or updating implementation strategies to meet the changing needs of the Town.
- b. Plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. recommended for development and implementation as a result of the planning process will be developed and/or approved by the Town Board and/or the Town Plan Commission both of which hold public meetings that are open to the public to attend and comment.

Goal B *Explore policies, programs and other methods to implement the various recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.*

- a. Each element of the comprehensive plan detailed plan objectives, definitions, policies, programs/actions, etc. to be developed or utilized to implement the comprehensive plan. As a means to organize, schedule and monitor the implementation of the plan, a implementation schedule has been created as part of the implementation element.

Consistency with Local Comprehensive Planning Goals as described in s. 16.965(4) Wis. Stats.

Listed below is the Comprehensive Planning Goal described in State Statute that is related to the Implementation Element. Following the goal is a discussion how it was addressed during the planning process.

- *Building community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.*
As described throughout the planning process the Town of Hamilton is a rural town with no main street or specific design standards. However, the Town does have a rural identity of which its residents indicated they desired to maintain. The recommendations in the Land Use Element specifically address methods to maintain the Town's identity. In addition, the plan recommends continued cooperation with the La Crosse County Zoning Department in the administration of county zoning ordinances in the Town.

Implementation Schedule

The following implementation schedule has been developed for the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan. Items identified in previous elements that require action by the Plan Commission or Town Board over the planning period have been scheduled. General policies that will guide the future development of the Town of Hamilton are not included in the implementation schedule. It is recommended that a full review of applicable plan elements be conducted when evaluating future development proposals.

Actions to be implemented 2009-2019

Land Use Element

Page 2-1 Request from La Crosse County that the non-residential acre "plan review guideline" established in the La Crosse County Plan be increased for the Town of Hamilton from 40 to 60 acres to accommodate increased commercial/industrial development in the Town of Hamilton.

Page 2-2 It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton work with La Crosse County in developing a conservation subdivision ordinance to be utilized in the Town of Hamilton. In addition, determine if conservation subdivision design standards should be required on all new developments.

Page 2-2 Develop a review process for new residences proposed to be located in Exclusive Agriculture areas. Consider adopting an ordinance/policy requiring applications for new residences in Exclusive Agriculture areas to appear before the Town Board or Plan Commission in order for the location of the new residence to be reviewed. The reviewing board shall take into consideration the soils, slope, driveway location, existing agricultural uses, etc. when reviewing the proposed location.

Page 2-4 It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton participate in joint meetings with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska and explore cooperation options. Such cooperation options or agreements should strive to meet the following criteria for the Town of Hamilton:

1. •Maintain the Town of Hamilton's identity by keeping a presence (maintaining property adjacent to the highway within the Town limits) on Highway 16 west of the Village of West Salem
2. Preserve the rural appearance of the town and area (protect view sheds)
3. Minimize commercial/industrial development on/adjacent to State Highway 16 between the City of Onalaska and Village of West Salem

Housing Element

Page 3-1 Assist La Crosse County in rewriting the La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance as it pertains to residential and agricultural districts as detailed in the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan.

Page 3-1 It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue enforcement of the One and Two-family Dwelling Code. A key to a stable and growing tax base is the construction and maintenance of new and existing housing. The quality of construction and proper maintenance of housing units will prolong the life of the structures, keep them safe and a vital part of the tax base. The implementation of the state building code also ensures that structures will meet minimum requirements to provide access to all age groups and residents with special needs.

Transportation Element

Page 4-1 In the survey sent to residents during the planning process hazardous intersections and road segments were identified by residents. It is recommended that the Town Board prioritize the hazardous locations and work with County Highway Department and Wisconsin DOT to develop solutions and a timeline to address the locations.

Page 4-1 The speed of motorists on town, county and state public roads was mentioned as a concern of residents on the town survey. It is recommended that the Town Board relay these findings to the County Sheriffs Department and State Patrol and request action be taken to monitor/reduce the speed of travel on roads within the Town of Hamilton.

Page 4-1 Biannually update the Town of Hamilton's Road System on State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) program.

Page 4-2 It is recommended that the Town Board develop and adopt an ordinance that addresses the impacts of a proposed road resulting from a new development on the capacity and safety of an existing road that it intersects or extends. It would be intended that if a development adds additional burden to the Town Road over the current ADT classification that the developer would be responsible for all the upgrade costs associated with the impacted road segments.

Page 4-2 Continue to monitor and work with the Wisconsin DOT on the proposed State Highway 16 four lane expansion project west of West Salem. Evaluate the need for a multiuse path in conjunction with the proposed project.

Page 4-2 It is recommended that Town of Hamilton develop a policy (at the Town Boards discretion) requiring new developments to extend new or existing public roads or public road right-of-way/public road easement of 66 feet in width to the property line of adjacent land owners when deemed necessary to serve future land uses.

Economic Development Element

Page 5-2 Recommend to the La Crosse County Zoning Department that when revising the comprehensive zoning ordinance agricultural districts that home/small businesses be defined and considered as conditional uses in the agricultural districts.

Page 5-2 Develop requirements that new businesses must meet to minimize their impact on adjoining land uses. Items to consider include screening fence/landscaping, light requirements, sign requirements, etc.

Utilities and Community Facilities Element

Page 6-1 Develop or refine ordinances/policies to make sure future development projects pay for additional burdens placed on public facilities as a result of a new development. Methods to consider ensuring expenses are covered include; development review fees, special assessments, transportation impact fees, etc.

Page 6-1 Explore cooperative public utility agreements with the Village of West Salem and the City of Onalaska. This may include the expansion of public sewer and water systems into the Town of Hamilton.

Page 6-2 Work with the Maple Grove Sanitary District to evaluate the possibility of the expanding or increasing the utilization of the sanitary district to serve additional development in the Town of Hamilton.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

Page 7-1 Continue and build upon existing road maintenance agreements with the Town of Onalaska, Town of Medary and Town of Burns. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton formalize all “road maintenance sharing agreements” with neighboring towns to ensure the services continue to be provided efficiently and any liability issues are addressed

Page 7-2 Utilize the La Crosse County Planning Departments website capabilities/links to provide information regarding the Town of Hamilton to interested residents and neighboring municipalities.

Page 7-2 Continue to maintain county administered zoning and police protection. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to utilize the administrative capabilities of the county with regard to Zoning Ordinance administration and protective services.

Page 7-2 Review and evaluate neighboring towns comprehensive plans. It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton reviews and evaluates the comprehensive plans of neighboring governmental units as they are developed or revised in order to identify areas of potential conflict and/or coordination opportunities.

Page 7-2 It is recommended that the Town of Hamilton continue to evaluate and analyze cooperative boundary agreement(s) with the Village of West Salem, City of Onalaska, and potentially the Village of Bangor over the planning period. Explore the feasibility of revenue sharing and the extension of public utilities to Town of Hamilton developments.

Agriculture, Natural and Cultural Resources Element

Page 8-1 As discussed in the Land Use Element monitor the county’s efforts in creating a voluntary countywide purchase of development rights (PDR) program as a means to preserve farmland.

Page 8-2 Work with local property owners on the preservation of the unique American Chestnut Forest located in the Town of Hamilton.

Page 8-2 Work cooperatively with the Neshonoc Lake District in efforts to maintain the lake as a valuable recreational and natural resource for the Town of Hamilton.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF HAMILTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

I. Introduction.

The Town of Hamilton is in the process of updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan pursuant to the State's Comprehensive Planning Law, Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Section 66.1001(4)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes specifically requires the governing body of the local government unit to adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation, including open discussions, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage in the preparation of the comprehensive plan. These written procedures contained within this Public Participation Plan (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan") satisfy this requirement. This Plan will guide public participation throughout the Town of Hamilton's Comprehensive Planning Process.

This Public Participation Program offers all citizens, businesses, interest groups, affected units of government, and other parties a range of opportunities to participate through the planning process in a meaningful way to shape the future of the Town. Effective public input is critical for the success of this planning process because it is our citizens, businesses, and groups that will experience the Plan's costs and benefits on a daily basis for many years. This Plan will, in part, determine where and how our residents live, work and play, and how they travel from one place to another.

The participation program encourages people to participate in the planning process and is designed to maximize the effectiveness of their contributions. Public input opportunities are open to everyone with a stake in the outcome of the comprehensive plan. The participation opportunities are available to a wide range of citizens—people with different incomes, races, ages, and occupations—in all stages of the planning process.

The public participation process will:

- Ensure all planning decisions are open to public comment;
- Produce better planning decisions;
- Support and add credibility to all Town decision-making processes;
- Provide opportunities to disseminate information about the Plan and process to all segments of the Town;
- Strengthen the relationship between our decision makers and citizens; and,
- Develop a shared vision for the future of The Town of Hamilton and La Crosse County.

II. Public Participation Opportunities.

The Town of Hamilton has established the following list of public participation opportunities. This collection of opportunities will meet both the letter and spirit of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation and will include the following:

1. Community Survey.

To facilitate public awareness of the planning process a community survey was prepared and distributed to all Town of Hamilton landowners. The survey obtained public opinions and preferences on key subjects addressed in each of the nine comprehensive plan elements.

2. Visioning Meeting 1: Issue Identification.

The visioning meeting will create public awareness and provide education about the planning process. It will also facilitate a goal setting exercise. Meeting attendee's will participate in an exercise that will identify issues and opportunities that should be addressed in the comprehensive planning process.

Participants will also set their top priorities for the process and Town of Hamilton over the next twenty (20) years by ranking issues and opportunities. The results of this exercise will provide the foundation for the development of project and community goals and objectives.

3. Stakeholder Interviews.

The Town Planning Commission and/or designee will conduct interviews with residents and stakeholders to gain additional input and support for the comprehensive planning process.

4. Website.

The Town of Hamilton will post on its website the Comprehensive Plan and planning process information. This information may include the project schedule, agendas, draft plan elements and reports, maps, photographs, updates and survey results.

5. Past Planning Accomplishments

The Planning Commission and Town Board throughout the planning process will inform residents and meeting attendee's of past planning efforts and planning documents. The information provided will be utilized in developing the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan.

6. Public Comments.

The Town Board and the Planning Commission will always welcome written comments regarding issues presented. Direct written responses will be made where a response is appropriate. Comments will always be addressed and discussed at meetings.

7. La Crosse County Planning Information

La Crosse County is in the process of preparing the La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan. In preparing the County plan residents in the Town of Hamilton expressed their opinions in the form of public meeting input and resident surveys. The Town of Hamilton will utilize this information gathered by the County planning process to aid in the development of the Town plan.

8. Meeting Notices.

The Town of Hamilton will post meeting notices for each meeting and event in a timely manner at accessible locations, and the notices will meet the requirements for proper notification regarding date, time, location, etc.

9. Planning Commission Meetings.

The nine elements of the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan will be developed at a series of meetings of the Town of Hamilton Planning Commission. The meetings, unless otherwise noted, will be open to the public and allow opportunities for public comments. The meetings will focus on the development of plans, policies, and programs to implement the community defined vision.

10. Open House to Review Draft Plan.

The Comprehensive Planning Law requires municipalities to hold at least one (1) formal public hearing with a Class 1 public notice prior to adoption of the "Final Comprehensive Plan." Prior to adoption of the Final Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Hamilton will conduct an open house that will be chaired by the Planning Commission. The intent of the community open house is to provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the complete "Draft Comprehensive Plan."

11. Public Hearing on Final Plan Adoption.

The final step in the Plan adoption process is for the Town Board to hold a public hearing on the proposed "Final Comprehensive Plan" adoption ordinance and the "Final Comprehensive Plan" document. The Town Board is required to consider any comments received on the Recommended Comprehensive Plan prior to adopting a Final Comprehensive Plan. After adoption of the ordinance for the Final Comprehensive Plan, the Plan and adoption ordinance shall be distributed by the Town to recipients listed in Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

12. Other.

Planning is a continuous process that does not end with the adoption of the Plan. Unforeseen issues at the time this Plan was prepared, or as future issues arise, the Planning Commission may organize additional public participation activities or as it considers specific planning issues and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The topics of the meetings or open houses will depend on these issues and will be designed to feature opportunities for public education, input, and interaction.

III. Adoption.

This Plan was adopted by the Town of Hamilton Board on this _____ day of _____, 2006.

(SEAL)

Richard Schomburg, Chairman

Jeanette Hoyer, Clerk

APPENDIX B

TOWN OF HAMILTON PLANNING INFORMATIONAL MEETING - MARCH 8, 2007 – ISSUE IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY

| Land Use | Transportation | Economic Development | Housing | Utilities and Community Facilities | Agriculture, Cultural and Natural Resources | Intergovernmental Cooperation |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| GROUP # 1 | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing pressure leads to more traffic Too much random development in county Commercial development better suited for closer to village and city together in one area Preserve the agriculture Prefer the "grow out from an existing dense development area" approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dense development in county – too much traffic (all headed to La Crosse or Tomah), (roads not designed for this much) If housing closer to populated areas, road maintenance would be easier Consider a "bus or van service" to bring people to La Crosse for medical appointments etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Issue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing pressure leads to more traffic Too much random development in county Prefer the "grow out from an existing dense development area" approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need more land for new Town Hall, etc. as number of people goes up (assuming new development) May need to examine garbage pick-up as an option for people who want it? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve agricultural and natural resources to the extent possible Do we have any cultural resources? If so, should we keep them? Don't buy into housing pressure and lose the ag feel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established already among townships, La Crosse County Need less bullying from Onalaska, La Crosse, other city governments |
| GROUP # 2 | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlled development of housing clusters not to infringe on farmland Regulate small residential and service business with employees between (5-10) - almost self employed in some aspects Maintain 35A min. to build | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue: Traffic flow to and from La Crosse – Park and ride location on N end of West Salem to minimize traffic flow through W. Salem (Lakeview lot) – maybe kept lit during dark hours – maybe build shelter? Hwy. 16 between W. Salem and Bangor 162 exit – road breakup of new surface Illumination of intersections – Hwy 16 and Moos Rd, Hwy 16 and Briarcliffe, Hwy C and 108 Better and more signage for Asmus Road off of Hwy 108 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop around travel corridors and or village (metro) area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain cluster housing within reasonable traffic corridors ("Exclusive Ag remains that") | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cell tower placement/ improve aesthetics Lack of Internet high speed access in rural areas of township | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain water quality (surface and sub-surface) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary issues between governmental issue Boundary issues between governmental entities, villages vs townships, cities vs townships |
| GROUP # 3 | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain logical development of land use Preserve rural character Private property use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moos Road and Hwy 16 Lusk farm area and Briarcliff Hwy 108 and C Hwy B and Asmus Road | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep agriculture business jobs in area Attract small business to area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower density of single family in rural areas High density of mix in area close to town | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep recycle center Encourage more renewable energy sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain (2) research stations Maintain American Chestnut Grove | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish boundary agreements with other townships and the village |
| GROUP # 4 | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold on to farm land – importance of crop land Development near Town Bias toward family farms Developments – cluster, preserve view sheds Prefers development at cross roads Preserve slopes and hillsides | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep development on State and County roads for safety issues Make sure shared ride system doesn't "get lost" Cul de sac not good for maintenance or transportation for future – 3 ft shoulder should be incorporated in County road improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy access to Interstate on Cty B and County C Generate healthy type of business - grapes Bias toward agricultural activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elderly housing – condos with services Design ordinances to accept various housing units within developments – plan for restrictions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community wells and sanitary districts for developments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserving agriculture, wood land, green space Lighting ordinance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As much as possible |
| GROUP # 5 | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve green space by promoting cluster development Concerned with buildings on slopes and the erosion caused by building on side hills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the Rustic Road program Shared ride program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue economic development along Highway B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and support establishment of rural assisted living facility Establish development so as not to duplicate school busing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID location for Town Hall and recycling center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve as many agricultural resources and natural resources as possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing road maintenance equipment Work on boundary agreements |
| GROUP # 6 | | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best agricultural land kept in use versus developing new homes Preserve woodland and bluff integrity Keep land in Town of Hamilton versus having it annexed to West Salem or Onalaska Parcel size for new developments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads for school buses, first responders and emergency vehicles in new developments More input from state and county officials on road changes Avoid overlap for school bus routes New development may cause overburden of traffic on existing roads | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day centers that are centrally located More share ride areas Try to work close to home or in nearby town | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted living spaces Keep green spaces Create housing clusters to keep land open longer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to incorporate alternative energy sources (wind) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve natural resources/ lakes and parks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share road machinery between townships Keep the township's identify |