

11 Preferred Land Use Development Strategy

This section describes the strategy and thought process used in development of the Town of Lincoln/City of Eagle River Year 2020 Preferred Land Use Map. Planning involves the integration and application of multiple information sources, each important, each with an effect on the process of developing a sound, logical plan. In many cases, the process of planning holds equal importance to the product.

The joint land use planning development strategy included analysis of the past development patterns, thorough examination of current issues, trends and conditions, and vision for the future acquired through extensive community involvement and learning.

11.1 Selected Land Use Planning Criteria

The process of planning for future land uses can most realistically be accomplished through evaluation of existing conditions and then compared to the preferred conditions identified in the visioning process. The framework and building process of the Year 2020 Preferred Land Use Map is based upon several different planning criteria, each representing a critical piece of land related information. Each planning criteria is an information "chapter" in a land use story about the Town of Lincoln and the City of Eagle River. The incorporation of "chapters" creates the text for study, which affords both communities the ability to evaluate land use in terms of what is desired compared to what they have. The selected planning criteria are discussed below.

Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping

GIS mapping technology incorporates land information into a computerized, digital format that allows the ability to view and analyze information in layers. In cooperation with the Vilas County Mapping Department, existing land uses (Maps 9-1, 9-2) were inventoried and mapped by the Joint Land Use Planning Committee. Existing zoning districts (Maps 9-3, 9-4) of each municipality were mapped and overlaid onto land use maps to view how the land use is regulated, and to correlate existing versus permitted uses. The resource protection maps (Maps 8-4, 8-5) were overlaid on the land use and zoning maps to determine land protection areas within general ownership patterns. Wetlands and county regulated shoreland zones were mapped (Maps 8-1, 8-2) then overlaid upon the others to define undevelopable areas and areas of environmental sensitivity. Vilas County Lakes Classification data was mapped (Map 8-3) to display shoreland zoning regulations and impact on potential use. The communities public services, cultural areas, and community facilities were mapped (Map 5-1) and reviewed to assess land use impacts, service capability, and potential demand(s). The GIS mapping allowed the Joint Land Use Planning Committee to analyze land use interactively through evaluation of existing conditions and regulations and how those conditions relate to both existing and proposed development.

Incorporation of Public Input

The success of the planning process depends on public involvement. The Year 2000 City of Eagle River and Town of Lincoln Community Planning Survey (see Appendix 2-2) and to a lesser degree the 1999 Joint Issue Identification Workshop (Appendix 2-1) were key public involvement tools to incorporate community driven attitudes and opinions relative to land use development and community growth. The survey and workshops were constantly referenced during the planning process. In addition two public informational meetings were held (see Section 2, Public Participation Process) to update, demonstrate, review, report, and solicit input. The June 17, 2002 Public Informational meeting and the October 21, 2002 Public Hearing also included direct mail information pieces to notify and solicit public input (see Appendix 2-4, 2-5). All meetings of the planning process were open to the public and conformed to the requirements of the open meetings law. Direct input and feedback from the residents, property owners, the Lincoln Town Board, Eagle River City Council, and from the Planning Committee was the basis for plan development.

Incorporation of Vision, Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives outlined in Section 3 of this report were the guiding principles of the planning process. The vision, goals and objectives were based on the Joint City of Eagle River and Town of Lincoln Community Planning Survey, Joint Issues Identification Workshop, and direct input from the residents, property owners, Town Board, City Council, and the Joint Planning Committee. The vision statement, goals and objectives were created during a two meeting process with the Joint Land Use Planning Committee. The Committee also hosted a public informational meeting to present and discuss visioning results. The Committee periodically reviewed the goals and supporting objectives as the plan developed to ensure consistency.

Consideration of Needs Analysis

Recommendations and planned improvements identified in Section 5, Community Facilities and Services and in Section 7, Transportation, were analyzed relative to the associated impact and location of planned projects or improvements. Residential and commercial acreage need projections developed in Section 10, Growth Forecasts, were also incorporated in to planning decisions relative to potential acreage demands of growth and the area allocations dedicated for it. The needs analysis was incorporated where planned improvements or recommendations clearly affected future land use and would have to be accounted for in the long term.

11.2 Land Use Trends

The following existing and future land use trends were developed based on the analysis of background data which was presented in previous sections of this report. These trends identify the characteristics which are likely to be experienced within the communities throughout the planning period, and also provide direction for the development of the Year 2020 Preferred Land Use Map.

The trends imply major ramifications to land use in the Town of Lincoln and the City of Eagle River. The trends generally identify impacts on or that can be attributed to land such as increasing housing demands and permit activity, increases in tourism and service related businesses, demands for development with urban-type services, boundary and service issues, and conversions of resorts to condominium or single family use. The trends were evaluated for impact and served the purpose of stimulating thought. Most of all, the trends demonstrated the need to plan for change and to be proactive in the face of a changing landscape. The trends are highlighted below in Table 11-1.

Table 11-1
Town of Lincoln/City of Eagle River Anticipated Trends

1. The persons per household ratio is expected to decline, while the demand for larger lot sizes will increase resulting in greater acreage needs to accommodate future growth.
2. The Town of Lincoln saw 272 new houses constructed (by permit) between 1990 and 1998. From 1998 -2015, the town may see another 442 homes (23% growth). The state of Wisconsin forecasted the town to have 1844 total housing units by 2015, a number exceeded in 1998 by 98 homes. The current growth rates are crushing the state projections. The exact demand will depend on economic factors such as the economy and interest rates.
3. The City of Eagle River housing unit projections developed by the state are very close to actual growth levels when compared to new residential permits. The state projects the city housing units to grow by 7.9; building permits show it may grow by 14%. Due to the city's limited area to expand, the state projections are more probable.
4. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, the town can expect a 1990-2015 population decrease of 5%. The town will most likely not see that occur, as the year 2000 town population estimate is 2,503, a 8.3% *growth increase* since 1990.
5. The state projected the city to lose population by 10.2% between 1990 and 2015. The city grew by 3.6% between 1990 and the estimated year 2000 population. Based on age characteristics and structure of the local economy, the city may lose population, but at levels less than projected by the state Department of Administration.
6. The town and the city will likely experience an increase in the development of home occupational businesses spawned by the advancements in computer technology and access to the World-Wide-Web and the Internet).
7. Both municipalities will continue to experience significant seasonal population increases.
8. Seasonal housing units will be continue to be converted to permanent housing units.
9. With the bulk of the larger lakes and river front property developed, pressure will increase on the smaller lakes. Development will also increase on wooded, off-water lands as development responds to market demands.

10. Seasonal and permanent housing demands will increase development pressure along shoreland property.
 11. Demand for higher density developments on lakefront properties may increase even more as limited lakefront properties become developed.
 12. Both the town and city's economic strength is expected to remain in the service sector related to the tourism/recreational industry.
 13. Projected traffic volumes will increase significantly along STH 70 and USH 45.
 14. Demand will increase for commercial property in conjunction with the existing development pattern.
 15. The town and city will experience increased traffic on local roads which will in turn require additional road maintenance and construction costs.
 16. Increased lakeshore development may result in a loss of natural vegetative structure resulting in a reduction in wildlife and fish spawning habitats.
 17. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, all undeveloped lakes in private ownership in the "northwoods" could be developed within the next 20 years if present development rates exist.
 18. Pressure to withdraw lands currently enrolled in forest management programs will increase to accommodate the demand for future large lot residential developments.
 19. The Town of Lincoln/City of Eagle River will continue to be a popular seasonal recreation destination to accommodate outdoor activities such as snowmobiling, hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, boating, canoeing and wildlife viewing. These activities will generate user conflicts which will likely require the intervention of local government.
 20. The cost of services will continue to increase to match the demand.
 21. Expansion or construction of essential community facilities may be needed to accommodate increased demands placed by an expanding population.
 22. Increased developer interest in condominium development adjacent lakes and waterways will likely occur to accommodate seasonal and retirement housing demands.
 23. The town and city may share or mutually develop additional services and facilities to reduce operational costs and create efficiencies.
 24. The Town should anticipate a nationwide trend toward motorized recreation and high impact tourism.
 25. There will an increased demand for larger parcels to accommodate growing recreational land demands.
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11.3 Vilas County Lakes Classification System

The Vilas County Lakes Classification System is a way of grouping lakes into separate classes based on their sensitivity to development impacts, while recognizing existing levels of development. A lakes classification system is used to establish zoning and other management strategies to accommodate a level of development and growth compatible with a lake's capacity to support that development. The Vilas County General Zoning and Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, as adopted in May, 1999, incorporates the Vilas County Lakes Classification System for management of land use for properties with direct frontage on lakes and other regulated surface water in the Town of Lincoln only. The Vilas County Lakes Classification System will regulate densities of the shoreland areas at higher density than indicated by the preferred land use classification as discussed in Section 12.

11.4 Preferred Land Use Classifications

The final element used to develop the preferred land use plan are land use "classifications". The classifications identify what the town feels are the best and most appropriate land uses, both in the lands' present condition and desired future condition of use. When building the preferred land use map, proposed land uses were discussed based on the types of uses that the municipalities felt were of consistent character, use, density, and location relative to the existing development pattern and uses that occupy land. The Land Use Planning Committee evaluated all the planning criteria discussed above and developed 13 preferred land use classifications. The preferred land use classifications are discussed in detail in Section 12 of this report.