



**IMPLEMENTATION**

**Plan Adoption and Amendment Requirements**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Implementation Chapter establishes a framework for accomplishing the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The foundation for plan implementation is the **action plan**, which includes a compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence. The action plan also includes proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps or subdivision ordinances and describes how each of the various planning elements will be integrated and made consistent with one another. The Implementation Chapter also includes a mechanism to measure progress toward achieving the plan’s goals and objectives and identifies a process for periodically updating the comprehensive plan.

**Actions that must be Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan**

Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law (66.1001 Wisconsin Statutes) identifies a series of actions and procedures that must be consistent with the governmental unit’s comprehensive plan. Beginning on January 1, 2010, implementation of zoning, subdivision regulation, and official map ordinances must be consistent with the *Douglas County Comprehensive Plan*. Since state statutes do not clearly provide a definition for ‘consistent’, this plan assumes consistency to imply actions must be ‘compatible’ with the comprehensive plan and do not directly contradict the plan’s goals, objectives.

It is important to understand that the comprehensive plan itself is not a regulation, but rather a guide for directing and managing growth and development. Comprehensive plans do not create regulatory requirements independent from other regulations used to implement the comprehensive plan.

Chapter 66.1001(4) of the Wisconsin Statutes establishes the procedures for adoption or amendment of the comprehensive plan. The governmental entity must comply with the following five steps before its comprehensive plan becomes effective.

Public Participation Plan (66.1003)(4)(a)

The adoption of a written public participation plan designed to foster public participation in the development or amendment of a comprehensive plan.

Resolution Recommending Adoption (66.1003)(4)(b)

The body of a local governmental unit (planning committee) that is authorized to prepare or amend a comprehensive plan may recommend the adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan only by adopting a resolution by a majority vote of the entire commission.

Draft Plan Review (66.1003)(4)(b)

Prior to formal adoption of the comprehensive plan, one copy of the draft plan must be submitted to the following entities for review and comment.

1. Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the local governmental unit.
2. The clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the local governmental unit that is the subject of the plan that is adopted or amended.
3. The Wisconsin Land Council
4. The Wisconsin Department of Administration



5. The regional planning commission in which the local governmental unit is located.
6. The public library that serves the area in which the local governmental unit is located.

Public Hearing (66.1003)(4)(d)

Before an ordinance can be enacted adopting the comprehensive plan, the governmental entity must hold at least one public hearing at which the proposed ordinance is discussed. A Class 1 notice of the hearing must be published at least 30 days prior to the hearing. Written notice must also be provided to;

1. An operator who has obtained, or applied for a nonmetallic mining permit under 295.12(3)(d), Wisconsin Statutes
2. A person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit under s. 295.20, Wisconsin Statutes
3. Any other property owner or leaseholder who has an interest in property pursuant to which the person may extract nonmetallic mineral resources, if the property owner or leaseholder requests in writing that the local governmental unit provide the property owner or leaseholder notice of the hearing.
4. Property owners that have filed a request for written notice under Section 66.1001(6), Wisconsin Statutes.

Adoption of the Plan by Ordinance (66.1003)(4)(c)

In order for the comprehensive plan to take effect, the governmental unit must enact an ordinance that adopts or amends the plan. The ordinance must be passed by a majority vote of the County Board.

**Public Plan Review and Adoption of the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan**

Sound planning provides opportunities for the general public to participate in and to review and comment on proposed plan content. Per the adopted public participation plan, two public open house events were held to allow for public review of draft plan materials. The first, held on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 provided an opportunity for the public to review draft goals and objectives and the preliminary background materials. A second open house held on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 presented the full draft comprehensive plan for public review. Similar opportunities for public review and comment should be a part of any future plan revisions or amendments.

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009 the Douglas County Comprehensive Planning Committee passed a resolution recommending approval of the Comprehensive Plan by the County Board. A formal public hearing on the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan was held on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The county provided public notice in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 66.1003(4)(d) and 66.1003(4)(e), Wisconsin Statutes. Copies of the draft plan were submitted by the county to the required parties under Chapter 66.1003(4)(b), Wisconsin Statutes. On December 17, 2009, the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan was adopted by unanimous vote (26 – yes, 2 – absent) by the County Board of Supervisors.

**Future Amendments or Plan Updates**

The Douglas County Comprehensive Plan is designed to serve the county for about 20 years (2010-2030). It is possible that unforeseen changes or deviation from planning assumptions will occur over the planning period. Plan statistical data, projections, narrative and maps may also become outdated if not periodically updated.

This comprehensive plan should be considered



a “living document”, responsive to changing conditions, opportunities and challenges. Updates to long-range plans such as this one are inevitable as changes in development patterns, economic conditions, social values or other factors may require that the plan be revised in order to remain consistent with the current situation. The plan also contains background narrative and statistical data which needs to be periodically revised to remain current. The plan’s projections may also need to be revised in response to changing demographics, social values or economic variables.

There are two types of plan revisions, *periodic plan updates* and *corrections*. Periodic plan updates occur on regular intervals and are meant to adjust the plan content based on changing conditions. This type of revision may involve alteration of plan goals, objectives or policies or the incorporation of new or adjusted information into the comprehensive plan. Plan corrections involve the revision of plan text, statistics, projections or mapping to reconcile issues with incorrect or faulty data.

**Rationale for Plan Revisions or Updates**

Changing conditions and/or values will require periodic revision of the comprehensive plan. Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning law **requires** that the plan be reviewed and updated at least once every ten years. However, it is recommended that the plan be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure accuracy and relevance and to evaluate progress toward attainment of plan goals and objectives. A more formal plan update is recommended at least once every 5 years to examine and adjust statistical data, projections, plan narrative, goals, objectives, mapping, actions and implementation mechanisms. The update of statistical data should coincide with the release of US Decennial Census information.

Changes to plans of the local governmental units in Douglas County should also be reflected

in the countywide comprehensive plan. For example, changes to a town future land use map also need to be reflected in the countywide future land use map. For this reason, it is recommended that Douglas County coordinate plan revision activities with the local governmental units using a process similar to that used for initial plan development.

**Table 9.1: Recommended Plan Revision Schedule**

<b>Annual</b>	General plan review, add new data as available, plan progress monitoring
<b>2011-2012</b>	Formal amendment, add Census 2010 data, revise projections, amend narrative, goals, objectives, actions, implementation mechanisms or mapping as needed. Plan progress monitoring.
<b>2016-2017</b>	Formal amendment, revise projections, amend narrative, goals, objectives, actions, implementation mechanisms or mapping as needed. Plan progress monitoring.
<b>2021-2022</b>	Formal amendment, add Census 2020 data, revise projections, amend narrative, goals, objectives, actions, implementation mechanisms or mapping as needed. Plan progress monitoring.
<b>2026-2027</b>	Formal amendment, revise projections, amend narrative, goals, objectives, actions, implementation mechanisms or mapping as needed. Plan progress monitoring.



**INTERPRETING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Role of the Planning Commission**

Planning commissions generally serve two key functions, plan development and plan implementation. Commissions are authorized to prepare a comprehensive plan and recommend its adoption to the governing body (town board, village board, city council, county board), which adopts the plan as an ordinance by majority vote. Key potential commission responsibilities include sponsoring the planning process for their community, oversight of the public participation plan and fostering public participation during the planning process. Once a plan has been adopted by the community, the planning commission serves to advise elected officials on comprehensive planning and land use issues within their community and may make decisions as delegated by the local governing body. Planning commissions typically review development and land use proposals that come before the commission and provide recommendations to the local governing body. Commissions may also be involved in other activities such as plan review, monitoring, research or amendment activities as directed by the local governing body.

**County Planning Committee**

A 17-member advisory committee was formed to guide the preparation of a comprehensive plan for Douglas County. On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the plan was forwarded to the Douglas County Zoning Committee for review and approval. Under the comprehensive plan adoption procedures in Sections 59.69 and 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Zoning Committee adopted a resolution recommending adoption of the comprehensive plan by the Douglas County Board of Supervisors. The resolution was approved by a majority of the entire membership of the committee. While many county agencies will be involved in some aspect of plan implementation, the Zoning Committee will continue to be the lead entity on plan

implementation throughout the 20-year planning period. During the implementation period, the Zoning Committee will continue to review land use proposals and provide recommendations to the County Board.

**How to Use the Plan**

The Douglas County Comprehensive Plan is intended to help guide the county’s decision-making process for the next 20 years. This plan is not an inflexible or static set of rules; rather, it is fluid, dynamic and responsive to the changing needs of the county. The plan’s objectives and recommendations are intended to allow flexibility in light of new information or opportunities. The plan is not an attempt to predict the future, rather it is an attempt to record the fundamental community values and philosophies that citizens of Douglas County share and to use them as benchmarks in future decisions concerning growth and development throughout the county.

The plan is intended to be used by the Douglas County Zoning Committee, the Douglas County Board of Supervisors and citizens in reviewing all future land use and development proposals. In the examination of future planning-related issues, careful consideration should be taken to ensure that the proposed activity is consistent with the vision, wishes and desires expressed in the plan. The plan’s goals, objectives and policies are intended to provide a general framework and direction making land use, and other planning-related decisions.



**Table 9.2: Creating a Planning Commission**

<b>Local unit</b>	<b>Towns</b>	<b>Villages and Cities</b>	<b>Counties</b>
<b>Statutory authority</b>	60.22(3)	61.35, 62.23(1)	59.69
<b>Creation by ordinance</b>	By town board after adoption of village powers.	By village board or city council.	By county board.
<b>Membership</b>	7 members if population is 2,500 or greater. 7 or 5 members if population is under 2,500.	Seven members.	Number of commission members not specified in statutes. Committee composed of county board members.
<b>Appointment</b>	Town board chair appoints – Chooses from among chair & other elected or appointed officials, at least 3 citizen members or 1 if under 2,500.	Mayor/village president appoints – self (optional), elected or appointed officials, at least 3 citizen members; can increase to include building inspector	Board chair or executive appoints commission subject to Board approval; may appoint 2 alternate members. Commission composition is flexible.
<b>Terms</b>	3 years	3 years	3 years with staggered commissioner appointments
<b>Chairperson</b>	Appointed by town board chair	Appointed by mayor/village president	Elected by committee/commission for 2 year term

Source: "Plan Commission Handbook", Center for Land Use Education, UW- Stevens Point, May 2002



**Implementation Activities**

**Actions, procedures that must be consistent with comprehensive plans**

Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law states that Beginning on January 1, 2010, if a local governmental unit engages in any of the following actions, those actions shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan:

1. Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23 (6)
2. Local subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or 236.46
3. County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 59.69
4. City or village zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 62.23 (7)
5. Town zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 60.61 or 60.62
6. Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231

Douglas County currently engages in comprehensive zoning, subdivision regulation and shoreland-wetland zoning. Beginning on January 1, 2010 these programs and actions must be consistent with this comprehensive plan. Local governmental units engaging in the aforementioned programs and actions (1-6) are also subject to the consistency requirement.

**Plan Implementation Zoning Amendments**

The zoning ordinance will be the one of the principal tools used to implement the comprehensive plan. As such, the countywide comprehensive zoning ordinance should reflect the plan’s goals, objectives and policies. The ordinance should also reflect the goals,

objectives and policies of the towns, as expressed in their comprehensive planning documents. Following adoption of this plan by the Douglas County Board of Supervisors, the county should make appropriate adjustments to the zoning ordinance so that it is consistent with the provisions of this plan and the adopted plans of the towns.

Future changes to the zoning ordinance may involve relatively simple map and/or text amendments, or a comprehensive revision, which changes numerous zoning provisions and alters or adds zoning districts .The law governing comprehensive revisions for counties does not clearly define what constitutes a comprehensive revision. A 1994 Attorney General’s opinion states that adding one new zoning district does not constitute a comprehensive revision. Counties can therefore make incremental changes through the amendment process where text changes are governed by a majority-rule town veto procedure and the map changes are subject to the town veto procedure.

**Consistency with Town Plans**

The Douglas County Comprehensive Plan is intended to function cooperatively with the town comprehensive plans. This fact highlights the importance of striving for ongoing consistency between local community comprehensive planning and this countywide plan. Plan consistency will help achieve the desired patterns of future growth and consistent, predictable decision-making because local governments and the County will be “reading from the same playbook.” This is important as Douglas County shares zoning and land division review authority with local governments. All towns within Douglas County are under county zoning, and are encouraged to consult with the County zoning staff before making amendments to their comprehensive plans. It is also important that every amendment to a town plan be forwarded to the County. Douglas County should work to



incorporate local plan amendments into the countywide comprehensive plan through the recommended periodic review and update procedures described in this element.

**Consistency between Plan Elements**

The goals, objectives, and policies contained within the preceding eight elements of this Comprehensive Plan, along with the accompanying inventory and analysis, have been thoroughly reviewed and approved by the Douglas County board of Supervisors. Throughout the plan development process, great care was exercised in the examination of countywide and local planning issues and concerns.

It is felt that there exists a high degree of compatibility among the provisions of this plan and the provisions of the plans of the local units of government. During the planning process, significant attention was then given to ensuring that the policies required to address the individual issues or concerns did not conflict, either with each other within the chapter, or between the different chapters.

**Consistency between Municipalities**

Although the local municipalities (towns, villages, City of Superior) developed their own visions, goals, objectives and policies, there are many areas of consistency between communities. The differing vision elements and policies reflect notable differences between communities in Douglas County. Each participant in the multi-jurisdictional planning process established a vision and implementation framework that was relevant to the uniqueness of their communities. Great care was taken to ensure that the goals, objectives and policies of local municipalities did not conflict with those of their neighboring jurisdictions or with Douglas County. Consistency was also emphasized in the future land use mapping process. During the planning process, local communities sharing common

boundaries met jointly to review maps, identify potential conflicts and discuss cross-jurisdictional consistency.

Future revision of any countywide comprehensive plan goal, objective, policy or future land use map shall receive the same level of consideration, deliberation and analysis as the original Plan; special attention shall be given so that the new adopted language does not create conflicts within or between chapters.

Future revision of any local municipality’s comprehensive plan goal, objective, policy or future land use map must also be reviewed by Douglas County to ensure continued consistency with the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan. A process for consideration of future local plan amendments is included within the action plan.

**Land Use Planning Tools**

There are a number of planning tools available to implement the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan. Below is a summary of some of the key planning tools which may be used to further progress toward plan goals and objectives.

**Regulatory Tools**

Although zoning and subdivision ordinances are the two most commonly utilized land use planning tools, there are several innovative tools which can be used by the county to implement the plan and to guide the land use decision-making process.

**ZONING**

**General Zoning**

In Wisconsin, general zoning power is granted to counties, towns, cities, and villages. Zoning separates conflicting land uses and ensures that development is directed in certain areas that can accommodate that particular land use.



Several different types of specialized zoning exist (methods, regulations, policies & practices). Douglas County currently administers countywide comprehensive zoning, floodplain zoning and shoreland-wetland zoning within the unincorporated towns.

- **Floodplain Zoning-** Floodplain zoning ordinances are required by Wisconsin law and pertain to cities, villages, and towns. The Wisconsin DNR specifies minimum standards for development in floodplains, but local ordinances may be more restrictive than these rules.
- **Shoreland Zoning-** Wisconsin law requires that counties adopt zoning regulations in shoreline areas that are within 1,000 feet of a navigable lake, pond, or flowage or 300 feet of a navigable stream or the landward side of the floodplain, whichever distance is greater. Minimum standards for shoreland zoning ordinances are specified in rules developed by the Wisconsin DNR, while local standards may be more restrictive.
- **Exclusive Agricultural Zoning-** Municipalities may adopt exclusive agricultural zoning for farmland under the Farmland Preservation Program. Exclusive agricultural zoning essentially prohibits non-farm uses within identified agricultural preservation areas. To participate in the program, the county must have an agricultural preservation plan that meets the standards of Chapter 91, Wisconsin Statutes, and has been certified by the state Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB). The ordinance must comply with the county farmland preservation plan. Eligible landowners receive a state income tax credit.
- **Performance Zoning-** Performance zoning uses performance standards to regulate development. Performance standards are zoning controls that regulate the effects or impacts of a proposed development,

instead of separating uses into various zones. Performance standards often relate to a site’s development capability. For example, in agricultural areas, performance zoning could be used to limit development on prime agricultural soils and allow development on lower quality soils. Performance zoning provides landowners and developers with flexibility to determine how best to meet required standards.

- **Bonus and Incentive Zoning-** Bonus or incentive zoning allows local governments to grant a bonus, usually in the form of density or the size of the development, in exchange for amenities such as parks or walking paths for example.
- **Overlay Zoning-** Overlay zones are designed to protect important resources and sensitive areas. Overlay zones are special zoning districts, which are placed over existing base zone(s). The overlay identifies special provisions in addition to those in the underlying base zone. The overlay district can share common boundaries with the base zone or cut across base zone boundaries. Regulations or incentives are attached to the overlay district to protect a specific resource or guide development within a special area.
- **Mixed Use Zoning-** Mixed use zoning is an effective way to enhance existing urban and suburban areas and encourage infill development. Mixed use zoning recognizes the existing mixture and encourages its continuance and may offer an alternative to struggling with nonconforming use complexities.
- **Inclusionary Zoning-** Inclusionary zoning provides incentives to developers to provide affordable housing as part of a proposed development project. For example, in exchange for higher density, a developer would have to build a specified



number of low and moderate income dwelling units.

**Extraterritorial Zoning and Plat Review (cities & villages)**

Incorporated cities and villages in Wisconsin have statutory authority to exercise extraterritorial zoning and plat review powers for unincorporated areas within certain distances of their municipal boundaries. Extraterritorial jurisdiction extends for 3 miles beyond the corporate limits of the City of Superior and 1 ½ miles beyond the corporate limits of the villages. Where the boundaries of multiple extraterritorial jurisdictions overlap, the jurisdictional boundaries are divided on a line equidistant from the corporate limits of each municipality affected. Municipalities wishing to exercise extraterritorial zoning authority must have a zoning ordinance for lands within their corporate limits and must also adopt an extraterritorial zoning ordinance. Affected towns must also approve the zoning ordinance. Currently, none of the incorporated municipalities in Douglas County engage in extraterritorial zoning.

While extraterritorial zoning requires town approval of a zoning ordinance, extraterritorial plat review applies automatically if the city adopts a subdivision ordinance or an official map. Extraterritorial plat review authority essentially allows a city or village to apply its subdivision ordinance in the unincorporated area. Exercising plat review authority allows incorporated communities to influence the development pattern along their borders and to reduce the potential for conflicting land uses.

**Official Mapping**

State statutes permit cities, villages and towns to prepare official mapping (Ch. 62.23(6), 61.35, 60.10(2)c). An official map is a formal public record which delineates current and planned future roadways, utilities, waterways, historic districts, railroad rights-of-way, public transit

facilities, drainageways, playgrounds and parks. The purpose of an official map is to protect a community’s investment in public facilities by identifying and reserving land for public purposes. An official map ensures that no improvements will be made to land designated for future public use that might add to future costs.

In communities with official mapping, no public sewer or other municipal street utility or infrastructure improvement can be constructed in any street until the street is placed on the official map. Furthermore, no building permits may be issued within features delineated on the map unless a street access to the proposed structure has been indicated on the official map.

Wisconsin counties have limited official mapping authority. Under s. 236.46, Wis. Stats. , counties may adopt highway-width maps showing the location and width of proposed new highways and the widths of any highways proposed to be expanded. County maps function similarly to local official maps, but with jurisdiction limited to streets and highways.

Because of overlapping jurisdictional authority, counties and local governmental units must work collaboratively to develop official maps. Wisconsin law allows villages and cities to extend their official mapping into their extraterritorial jurisdictions, which includes unincorporated lands that may be part of a town’s official map.

**Sign Regulations**

Local government in Wisconsin can regulate billboards and off-premise outdoor advertising. Counties and communities with zoning authority may wish to consider the use of *billboard prohibition ordinances* as part of local zoning codes. These ordinances essentially equate to a complete prohibition of the construction of new off-premise outdoor advertising signs and billboards. Local



regulations could also be modified to include provisions preventing a new billboard from being constructed unless an existing billboard comes down.

Communities may also develop and adopt *sign ordinances*, which restrict the type, size, and location of signs within a community. These ordinances may also restrict the types of materials that can be used to construct signs. Towns which do not have their own zoning or those who wish to have more restrictive standards than the county may adopt *local billboard control ordinances*. These regulations may not be as effective as billboard prohibition or sign ordinances due to the fact that town authority to regulate billboards is primarily limited to highway safety concerns.

Model ordinances are available to assist local units of government in the development of billboard and sign ordinances. Models for each of the aforementioned techniques are available online from ScenicWisconsin.org at <http://www.scenicwisconsin.org/modelord.htm>

**Erosion and Stormwater Control Ordinances**

Counties and local units of government in Wisconsin can adopt erosion and stormwater control ordinances to control the impact of development on runoff, groundwater recharge, and overall water quality. Model ordinances exist that can be used to develop a customized ordinance for a municipality. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Watershed Management has developed model construction site erosion control and post-construction stormwater management zoning ordinances for use by local units of government. Copies of the model ordinances are available on-line at <http://dnr.wi.gov/runoff/rules/nr152.htm>.

**Historic Preservation Ordinances**

Historic preservation ordinances can aid local units of government in protecting and

enhancing key historic and cultural resources in their communities. In 1994 the Wisconsin Legislature amended state statutes to require cities and villages that contain property listed on the state or federal register of historic places to enact a historic preservation ordinance. Through the enactment of historic preservation ordinances, municipalities can create a *historic preservation commission* that is empowered to designate and protect the designated properties by regulating new construction, alterations or demolitions that impact these properties.

Communities with adopted historic preservation ordinances are eligible to participate in Wisconsin’s Certified Local Government Program (CLG) which provides grants to fund planning and educational activities.

Towns in Wisconsin also have the authority to enact historic preservation ordinances (60.64 Wis. Stats.)and to create historic preservation commissions for purposes of designating historic landmarks and establishing historic districts.

The Wisconsin Historical Society, Division of Historic Preservation, developed model ordinances to assist communities in creating their own local ordinances.

**Building Codes**

As of January 1, 2005 all communities (cities, villages, and towns) in Wisconsin are required to administer the Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) for the construction of new dwellings. The UDC is a uniform statewide code that sets minimum standards for fire safety; structural strength; energy conservation; erosion control; heating, plumbing and electrical systems; and general health and safety in new dwellings. Douglas County towns are responsible to assure the proper procedures are met. Each town has created an ordinance or resolution outlining the permitting process, to include application, plan



review and inspections, required in the code. Plan reviewers and building inspectors may be state or municipal employees or private firms under contract with the town. Villages and the City of Superior must also administer the UDC within their municipal boundaries.

**Design Review Regulations**

Design review regulations are one of the planning options available to local units of government to address community character and design. Design review regulations seek to minimize adverse aesthetic impacts of new development on the character of the surrounding area by regulating the exterior appearance of structures, lighting, and signage. Design review standards must be based on clear, well-defined design criteria which are applied through rules and regulations and processes for applying review to specific development applications. The review process usually involves an administrative committee (plan commission, historic preservation commission, design review commission), which is responsible for reviewing building plans and proposals.

**Sanitary System Regulations**

In rural Douglas County, a soil evaluation conducted by a state licensed Certified Soil Tester is required before a sanitary system (except holding tanks) may be installed. The evaluation identifies all the elements necessary for the future design and installation of the system such as type, size, depth and location on the property. Sanitary system plans must be approved by Douglas County before a land use permit will be issued for construction of a new dwelling.

Public sewer service is available within the incorporated villages, the City of Superior and portions of unincorporated towns served by sanitary districts. Within the incorporated communities, new development is required to connect to the municipal sanitary system.

**Subdivision Regulations**

State subdivision regulations (Chapter 236 Wis. Stats.) provide the minimum standards and procedures for dividing and recording parcels of land in Wisconsin. State statutes define subdivisions as “the division of land into 5 or more lots of 1 ½ acres each or less in area; or when 5 or more parcels or building sites of 1 ½ acres each or less in area are created by successive divisions within a period of five years.” Subdivision ordinances typically regulate how and under what conditions a parcel of land can be divided into smaller parcels. Subdivision ordinances can also regulate aspects of development such as dimensional standards, lot size and setback requirements. Subdivision ordinances often contain development standards which are not addressed in the zoning ordinance such as design standards for drainage, roads, sidewalks, utilities and lighting. The Ordinance may also include site design criteria to promote visual quality, traditional neighborhoods, rural character or other community goals expressed in its comprehensive plan.

Local governmental units (counties, cities, villages or towns) have express authority regulate subdivisions, as long as the community’s requirements are more restrictive than the minimum state standards defined in Chapter 236. In cases where there is overlapping jurisdictional authority, (i.e. county subdivision regulations & town subdivision regulations) a proposed subdivision would have to meet the standards of both ordinances.

**Subdivision Design**

A prominent rural residential development model used in much of Wisconsin is the conventional subdivision. Often referred to as the “cookie-cutter” method, this model involves the splitting of large tracts of open space into the maximum number of residential lots permitted in the zoning ordinance. The lots created using the conventional model are



oftentimes large, with significant lot clearing to make room for a home and large yards. Conventional subdivision design places little emphasis on retention of rural character, protection of historic resources, farmland preservation or natural resource values. Furthermore, conventional subdivision regulations impose rigid lot restrictions that do not preserve distinctive scenic natural features and characteristics of the landscape. In the rural environment, conventional subdivisions can contribute to diminishing rural character by creating a homogeneous, monotonous development pattern.

An alternative to the conventional model is the conservation design concept. The purpose of a conservation design is to provide opportunity for development while maintaining open space characteristics, encouraging interaction among residents through site design, and protection of habitat, scenic characteristics and environmental features.

A typical conservation design subdivision contains the same number of lots that would be permitted under a conventional design. The lots are typically smaller than conventional lots and are designed for single-family homes reminiscent of traditional neighborhoods found in small towns throughout America.

The compact design of a conservation subdivision allows for the creation of permanent open space (typically 50 percent or more of the buildable area). This undeveloped land typically serves as communal open space land and provides recreational, aesthetic, and social benefits to subdivision residents.

**Lighting Controls**

Light radiating into the atmosphere can create a “glow effect” around cities and built-up areas which may be seen from several miles away. In the wake of expanding development and unregulated lighting, many communities are seeking ways of reducing the amount of excess

light escaping into the atmosphere. Several communities in Wisconsin have adopted ordinances to regulate the use of exterior lighting. Ordinances typically focus on strategies to minimize “light trespass”, where light travels across property boundaries or into areas which are not intended to be lit and radiant light which escapes into the atmosphere. Local lighting codes can also be programmed into local building codes, site plan review and subdivision regulations.

**NON-REGULATORY APPROACHES**

**Conservation Easements**

When a landowner sells the rights to develop their property, a legal document known as a conservation easement is drafted and recorded with the Register of Deeds. The easement restricts the use of the land to agricultural use, open space, or other desired use in perpetuity. A conservation easement permanently limits residential, commercial, or industrial development to protect the natural attributes or agricultural values of a property. The conservation easement remains on the deed even if the land is sold or passed through inheritance thereby ensuring the development will not occur on the property.

A conservation easement does not guarantee public access to the property. The land remains in the hands of the property owner, as only the right to develop it has been purchased. All remaining rights of property ownership remain with the landowner including the right to transfer ownership, swap, deed, or sell the land.

**Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)**

The purchase of development rights is a voluntary protection technique that compensates the landowner for limiting future development on their land. PDR programs are primarily used for retention of agricultural lands, but the concept can be applied to all types of land use scenarios. Under a PDR



program an entity such as a town, county or a land trust purchases the development rights to a designated piece of property. A conservation easement is then recorded with the Register of Deeds. The land remains in private ownership, and the landowner retains all the other rights and responsibilities associated with the property.

### **Transfer of Development Rights**

A transfer of development rights (TDR) program is a voluntary conservation approach that allows the right to develop property to be transferred from one parcel (or zoning district) to another. Under a TDR program, the development rights to parcel of land are transferred from a “sending area” to another parcel referred to as the “receiving area”. Sending areas are typically those areas where development is discouraged or limited, and receiving areas are areas where growth and development are encouraged. Under some TDR programs local government awards development rights to each parcel of developable land in the community or in selected districts on the basis of the land's acreage or value. Landowners can then sell the development rights on the open market. A benefit of TDR programs is that they require no major financial contribution by local government.

### **Acquisition**

This type of plan implementation tool involves the direct purchase of land for the purposes of preservation and protection. This tool should be considered in cases where other protective mechanisms fail to meet objectives and/or in cases of high-priority lands. Acquisition efforts should be coordinated with other local, state, and national acquisition initiatives (lake associations, environmental groups, USFS, WDNR, etc.)

### **Best Management Practices**

Best management practices (BMP's) describe voluntary procedures and practices that landowners can take to help protect and preserve natural resources. BMP's resources include the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources publications titled “Best Management Practices for Water Quality Field Manual<sup>1</sup>” and “Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality<sup>2</sup>”.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/Usesof/bmp/bmpfieldmanual.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/Usesof/bmp/bmpfieldmanual.htm)  
<sup>2</sup> [www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/publications/pdf/FR-349.pdf](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/forestry/publications/pdf/FR-349.pdf)



**FISCAL TOOLS**

**Capital Improvements Program**

Capital improvement programs (CIP's) are a budgeting tool used by communities to plan for the timing and location of capital improvements (such as municipal sewer and water service, parks or schools). CIP's ensure that proper budgets are allocated for future developments or improvements to community infrastructure.

**Impact Fees**

Impact fees are financial contributions imposed on new developments to help pay for capital improvements needed to serve the development. Local governments can impose impact fees to finance highways, other transportation facilities, storm water facilities, solid waste and recycling facilities, fire and police facilities etc.

Initially, Wisconsin law permitted counties, cities, villages and towns to assess impact fees on developers for purposes of offsetting costs of capital improvements required to serve the new development. In 2006, the law was revised, removing county authority to assess impact fees. However, municipalities can continue to impose impact fees within their municipal boundaries. Impact fees may only be established following a municipal ordinance and passed following a public hearing specifically designed to hear comments on the reasonableness and allocation of the impact fees

**Tax Incremental Finance**

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a financial tool used by municipalities to promote expansion of the economic base and job creation. Under Wisconsin's Tax Increment Finance law, cities and villages front the cost for improvements (i.e. sewer, curb and gutter, roads) within a defined Tax Increment District (TID), and the cost of those improvements is then repaid

through the increased property taxes generated by new development within the TID.

Establishing a TIF district requires a partnership between a municipality and overlying taxing jurisdictions (i.e. county, technical college, school district). These jurisdictions must agree to forego any revenues based on the increase in property valuation until all of the TIF improvement costs are paid.

Under Wisconsin's Town Tax Incremental Tax Finance Law (Ch. 66.85 Wis. Stats.), towns can create TIF districts for agricultural, forestry, manufacturing or tourism improvements.

Potential benefits of using TIF programs include the rehabilitation of blighted areas, increased economic expansion and job creation and the formation of an economic development partnership between the municipality and overlying taxing jurisdictions. TIF is not a panacea, and its application does not come without an element of risk. If development/redevelopment does not occur as planned, the TIF may be unable to generate sufficient revenue to meet its obligations within its maximum life. In this case, the municipality is responsible for all unpaid costs associated with the TIF.

**Special Assessments**

Special assessments are financial tools available to local units of government to defray the costs of infrastructure improvements which benefit private property owners. Only properties which receive the benefit of the improvements bear the costs and the general property tax for the community is unaffected. The ability to use special assessments is statutorily (Ch. 66.60(1)(a) Wis. Stats granted to any city, village or town.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Tools**  
*(Refer to Intergovernmental Cooperation Element)*



**GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

For definitional purposes, a goal is a broad statement of a desired end state toward which objectives and policies are directed. The objectives provide the measurable and attainable ends toward which specific actions are directed.

The goals and objectives provide a general framework for attaining the county’s long-range vision. These statements established the benchmarks on which the plan was created and provide a means of assessing and evaluating plan progress in the future. The plan’s policy statements are intended to serve as specific guidelines, or recommendations, for public planning decisions.

**Action Plan**

An action is a specific task that must be completed in order to achieve the plan’s goals and objectives. The action plan is intended to provide a clear set of specific actions to be undertaken in a preferred sequence in order to implement the comprehensive plan. For purposes of compliance with Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning law (Ch. 66.1001), the “actions” are used synonymously with “programs” identified in the legislation.

The following tables provide a detailed work plan and timeline for actions that Douglas County should complete as part of overall plan implementation. Column headings used in the following tables are defined as follows:

**Action Statement** – Language defining the action

**Lead(s)** - The agency, department or organization responsible for taking the lead on the specified action

**Timeframe** – Identifies the order, or sequence of actions



**ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES**

**Overall Goal:** “Provide for orderly planned development that promotes a safe, healthy, and pleasant living environment and makes efficient use of land, public services, and public financial resources”

**Objective IO-1(a): Guide land use in recognition of resource limitations and county goals and objectives.**

Policy IO-1(a)(1): The county will maintain a current land use plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions. New development will be permitted based on consideration of this plan as well as other applicable plans and ordinances.

Policy IO-1(a)(2): Encourage land use choices rather than structural measures as a means of limiting disruption of the environment and reducing the cost of future maintenance and enforcement.

**Objective IO-1(b): Provide the county with a unified vision of planned growth.**

**Objective IO-1(c): Conserve the county’s distinctive rural, north woods atmosphere.**

Policy IO-1(c)(1):Landscape and land use buffers will be used to lessen the impacts of conflicting land uses in close proximity.

Policy IO-1(c)(2):Maximize the quality of life by providing regional open space, trails, parks and recreational opportunities and facilities managed in such a fashion as to afford the maximum benefit to the community.

Policy IO-1(c)(31):Help identify, evaluate, and preserve historic, archaeological, and cultural resources.

Policy IO-1(c)(4):Help coordinate archaeological inventories and management plans with Native American groups and other interested parties.

**Objective IO-1(d): Guide development within defined service limits in an orderly fashion.**

Policy IO-1(d)(1):The location of new development will be restricted to areas known to be safe or suitable for development due to natural hazards, contamination, access, or incompatibility problems.

Policy IO-1(d)(2):Establish agreements regarding land use regulation and provision of services in the growth areas outside existing villages addressing land uses, levels of service, resolution of boundary disputes, service extension policies, and transfer of jurisdictional burdens.

Policy IO-1(d)(3):Encourage the centralization of commerce, entertainment, and employment.

Policy IO-1(d)(4):Promote growth patterns that result in compact, distinct, and separate communities rather than continuous linear strips of development.



Policy IO-1(d)(5): Encourage cluster development to assure conservation of land, efficient provision of public services, and accessibility.

Policy IO-1(d)(6): Help identify the full range of public facilities considered optimum for development such as water and sewer utilities, police and fire protection, health services, schools, parks, libraries, and solid and hazardous waste collection, and disposal services.

Policy IO-1(d)(7): Help direct the location of private facilities and services such as pipelines, electric transmission lines, and wireless communication towers based upon a demonstration of public need.

**Objective IO-1(e): Provide a continuing level of planning effort, review, and amendatory process to ensure long-term compatibility of the plan with county needs.**

Policy IO-1(e)(1): Coordinate with the Department of Natural Resources to ensure that land management decisions provide maximum public benefits.

**Objective IO-1(f): Assist in enhancing the county's "quality of life".**

Policy IO-1(f)(1): Help provide efficient and cost effective law enforcement services to the public.

Policy IO-1(f)(2): Help coordinate the provision of emergency medical and fire suppression services in the county.

Policy IO-1(f)(3): Support the formation of neighborhood watch programs in the county.

Policy IO-1(f)(4): Encourage cultural improvements such as expanded health, education, and recreation outlets.

Policy IO-1(f)(5): Help reduce or eliminate light, noise, and air pollution.

**Objective IO-1(g): Provide uniform and effective enforcement of county land use regulations.**

**Objective IO-1(h): Provide continuing education to the public that will lead to a more complete understanding of planning and land use issues facing the county.**

Policy IO-1(h)(1): Provide educational programs that support resource protection goals.

Policy IO-1(h)(2): Educate resource users of the county's environmental quality goals and objectives.



**HOUSING**

**Goal H-1:** Douglas County will have a range of safe and affordable housing for all residents.

**Objective H-1(a): Encourage housing in areas that would not negatively impact the County's natural resources.**

Policy H-1(a)(1): Direct high density housing activities toward areas that have existing infrastructure and municipal services.

Policy H-1(a)(2): Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.

Objective H-1(b): Increase awareness within the private and public sectors of available housing funds.

Policy H-1(b)(1): Publicize information about available funding opportunities.

**Objective H-1(c): Promote septic system alternatives which benefit Douglas County residents.**

Policy H-1(c)(1): Support alternatives that lower costs for residents, while maintaining environmental quality.

Policy H-1(c)(2): Continue to be aware of changing legislation relative to private sewage systems.

**Objective H-1(d): Encourage the private sector to address housing for all income levels, age groups and individuals with special needs.**

Policy H-1(d)(1): Promote the development of additional low-income housing.

Policy H-1(d)(2): Support the construction of nursing and retirement homes.

Policy H-1(d)(3): Address handicap accessibility issues.

Policy H-1(d)(4): Increase public housing options, and educate the public about these options.

**Objective H-1(e): Consolidate rural housing information into an accessible and comprehensive format.**

Policy H-1(e)(1): Create a Rural Housing Brochure.

*ACTION: The brochure will contain maps of Douglas County Retirement Facilities and Public Housing, as well as lists of Douglas County Housing and Maintenance Programs. The brochure will be created by the Comprehensive Plan Housing Workgroup and maintained by the Rural Housing Authority (to be updated every 2 years).*

*Lead(s): Comprehensive Plan Housing Workgroup*

*Timeframe: By December 31, 2009*



**TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal T-1:** Maintain and upgrade transportation infrastructure and land use development/design to support transportation choices for all citizens.

Objective T-1(a): Encourage enhancement of alternative modes of transportation.

Policy T-1(a)(1): Support the development of a car sharing program in Douglas County.

*ACTION: Set up parking areas.*

*Lead(s): Highway Committee/with Towns*

*Timeframe: 2011*

Policy T-1(a)(2): Encourage development of bus system to service rural areas.

Objective T-1(b): Maintain and improve transportation infrastructure.

Policy T-1(b)(1): Encourage County Highway Department to develop a Critical Use of Douglas County Plan for 5, 10, 15 and 20 years.

Policy T-1(b)(2): Support County Highway Department to develop maintenance plan to keep major highway arteries open to reach state highways.

Objective T-1(c): Develop a regional transportation plan.

Policy T-1(c)(1): Encourage Douglas County Highway Department to collaborate with neighboring counties to develop multi-jurisdictional plans for sharing personnel, resources and equipment.

*ACTION: Coordinate with neighboring counties for connecting county roads and transportation services.*

*Lead(s): County Highway Department*

*Timeframe: 2011*

Objective T-1(d): Provide a safe alternative to vehicle travel and promote a healthy lifestyle

*ACTION: Research financial opportunities to develop walking and bicycling trails*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Land, Forestry, Highway Committee*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

*ACTION: Provide information on grants available to county jurisdictions to assist in development*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Highway/Forestry Committee*



*Timeframe: Ongoing*

Objective T-1(e): Promote development of transportation infrastructure that is in keeping with the rural nature of Douglas County while maintaining natural resources.

Policy T-1(e)(1): Maintain multi-jurisdictional beautification program along county roads and trails.

**Goal T-2:** Meet the goals and objectives of the regional transportation system.

Objective T-2(a): Promote and develop an integrated efficient and economical transportation system that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit dependent residents, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Policy T-2(a)(1): Encourage a variety of transportation choices to meet the needs of all income, age and special needs groups.

Policy T-2(a)(2): Develop a county-wide workshop for county, towns and village leadership and staff to promote, plan and coordinate in alternative forms of development, such as infill, mixed use, traditional neighborhood, and transit-oriented development.

Policy T-2(a)(3): Promote a county-wide workshop for county, towns, and village leadership and staff in the development of transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel other than conventional development.

Policy T-2(a)(4): Educate residents to use alternative modes of transportation.

Policy T-2(a)(5): Provide technical assistance to employers interested in establishing programs to encourage commuting by transit, carpooling, biking, or walking or by telecommuting from home.

Policy T-2(a)(6): Develop methods to promote interconnection between all transportation modes and systems.

*ACTION: Monitor impact of present and future railway and port activities.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: 2011*

**Goal T-3:** Promote the efficient and safe movement of people and goods into and through Douglas County.

**Objective T-3(a): Work to ensure consistency between regional, county, and local land use and transportation plans so that the arterial road network is appropriately sized and located to serve county residents and land uses.**



Policy T-3(a)(1): Develop land uses adjacent to roads and highways by reserving adequate rights-of-way in advance of construction.

Policy T-3(a)(2): Develop a model road plan and profile section for use in local land ordinances and develop ordinance language requiring road connectivity with future developments.

**Objective T-3(b): Encourage new transportation options that relieve congestion and reduce fuel consumption, air and noise pollution, and reduce the need for expansion of roads.**

Policy T-3(b)(1): Ensure efficient and cost effective public transportation options are available to all residents of Douglas County, including transit-dependent residents.

Policy T-3(b)(2): Provide an efficient public transportation system that can effectively move people into the county to promote a strong economy within the county.

Policy T-3(b)(3): Assess the needs/impacts of commercial trucking

**Goal T-4:** Provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety to persons with disabilities and the elderly.

**Objective T-4(a): Ensure efficient and cost-effective public transportation options are available to all residents of Douglas County, including persons with disabilities and elderly residents.**

Policy T-4(a)(1): Encourage Douglas County to collaborate with neighboring county organizations connected with medical, aging and handicap needs.



**UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

**Goal UCF-1:** A range of community services that meet the needs of the residents.

**Objective UCF-1(a):** Direct more intensive development to areas with existing utilities, community facilities and public services.

Policy UCF- 1(a)(1): Determine the best areas for future growth and plan utility extensions and new facilities accordingly to guide development to those areas.

**Objective UCF-1(b):** Consider the impacts that the development of community facilities and utility systems has on land use, transportation and natural and cultural resources.

Policy UCF- 1(b)(1): Develop new community facilities in a way that conserves natural resources, protects historical and cultural features, provides easy accessibility and is compatible with surrounding land uses.

**Objective UCF-1(c):** Encourage the installation of public utility systems where appropriate for new and existing development.

Policy UCF- 1(c)(1): Plan areas for future utility extensions, taking into account projected growth corridors for different types of development--particularly commercial and industrial.

*ACTION: Update Future Land Use Map.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: Every 5 years*

Policy UCF- 1(c)(2): Minimize impacts in environmentally sensitive areas.

**Objective UCF-1(d):** Authorize the use of new and private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) technologies and experimental systems when appropriate.

Policy UCF- 1(d)(1): Utilize information on processes that minimize waste hazards in private waste water systems and encourage their use.

*ACTION: Re-establish a POWT's committee to monitor Wisconsin Administrative Code COMM 83 as well as report committee findings to the Joint Committee for the Review of Administrative Rules.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: January 2010*

**Objective UCF-1(e):** Work with telecommunication service providers to expand local calling areas within the County.



Policy UCF- 1(e)(1): Streamline cross-use of telecommunication systems, allowing larger calling areas and less duplication of cost.

*ACTION: Request all telecommunication providers in the County to provide a complete list of "Extended Community Calling" areas.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: January 2011*

**Objective UCF-1(f): Encourage the improvement of wireless facilities in the County to limit the number of new communication towers constructed.**

Policy UCF- 1(f)(1): Locate wireless communication towers in areas which provide the highest level of service while protecting visual resources.

Policy UCF- 1(f)(2): Encourage wireless service providers to mitigate the visual impacts of wireless communications towers.

**Objective UCF-1(g): Encourage co-location of wireless facilities in the County to limit the number of new communication towers constructed.**

**Objective UCF-1(h): Ensure that law enforcement agencies in the County have the proper facilities and equipment to operate effectively.**

Policy UCF- 1(h)(1): Research grant opportunities to improve facilities and equipment for emergency services.

*ACTION: Review a long range plan for need.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: Every 2 years*

**Objective UCF-1(i): Ensure that a full range of fire, rescue and emergency medical services are available to efficiently serve the people of Douglas County.**

Policy UCF- 1(i)(1): Plan emergency facilities, equipment and personnel as needed to continue efficient and reliable service for all areas of the County.

*ACTION: Request towns to provide a list of current fire and rescue equipment and personnel sharing policies*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: Every 2 years*

**Objective UCF-1(j): Assess the future needs of Douglas County government facilities.**

Policy UCF- 1(j)(1): Prioritize County facility improvement projects and address possible future



expansion needs, costs and locations for new facilities.

*ACTION: Request Towns Association to provide a list of County facility improvement projects and expansion needs.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: By 2011*

**Goal UCF-2: Support high quality educational opportunities for all County residents.**

**Objective UCF-2(a): Continue to support the educational system serving the County.**

Policy UCF- 2(a)(1): Explore additional funding opportunities to help support schools within the County.

Policy UCF- 2(a)(2): Advance County involvement in educational activities and opportunities.

*ACTION: Request Schools within the County to provide a list of needs and wants that the County could provide.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: By 2011*

**Objective UCF-2(b): Support efforts to improve services provided by libraries in the County.**

Policy UCF- 2(b)(1): Provide equal educational information to all County libraries with personnel available as demand warrants.

*ACTION: Work with libraries to see that needs are met.*

*Lead(s): County Library Committee*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

**Goal UCF-3: Protect public health through proper waste disposal.**

**Objective UCF-3(a): Continue to support recycling and Clean-up Day programs in the County.**

Policy UCF- 3(a)(1): Maintain a list of local recycling and waste disposal facilities and services.

*ACTION: Advertise recycling and waste disposal programs in County buildings.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*



**Objective UCF-3(b): Proper hazardous waste disposal.**

Policy UCF- 3(b)(1): Educate the public on hazardous waste materials and how to dispose of them.

*ACTION: Encourage development of a hazardous waste disposal site in Douglas County.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: By 2013*

**Goal UCF-4:** A high quality county-wide system of park and recreational lands and public facilities that help preserve significant natural, cultural or historical resources and meet the needs and demands of the citizens of Douglas County and its visitors.

**Objective UCF-4(a): Support the County Park and Recreational Department.**

Policy UCF- 4(a)(1): Provide equipment and staff necessary to maintain the park and recreational areas in the County.

*ACTION: Develop a plan to make County Parks and recreational facilities self-sustaining*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: By 2012*

**Objective UCF-4(b): Update the Park and Recreational Plan every five years to maintain eligibility for grants from the federal and state governments.**

Policy UCF- 4(b)(1): Address any safety issues that may occur in Douglas County Parks and in the recreational trail system.

Policy UCF- 4(b)(2): Consider locations for future parks and park expansions.

*ACTION: Consult with towns on future park and recreational facilities expansion*

*Lead(s): Parks and Recreation Committee*

*Timeframe: Every 2 years*

**Objective UCF-4(c): Solicit input and resources from interested residents, organizations, municipalities and others regarding planning, development, operation and acquisitions of the County.**

Policy UCF- 4(c)(1): Develop communication to inform the public and gather input.

**Objective UCF-4(d): Encourage future development plans for county facilities that implement the recommendations of the American with Disabilities Act.**

Policy UCF- 4(d)(1): Provide handicap access and facilities where feasible, and as required.



*ACTION: Request park workers make lists to determine need.*

*Lead(s): Parks and Recreation Committee*

*Timeframe: Yearly*

**Objective UCF-4(e): Design park, recreational, cultural art and auditorium facilities with multi-public uses with the natural environment in mind.**

Policy UCF- 4(e)(1): Embrace features such as Lake Superior, local waterways, forests and the region's heritage when planning new facilities.

**Objective UCF-4(f): Continue to support recreational trails.**

Policy UCF- 4(f)(1): Encourage safe and well-maintained trail systems for multiple uses throughout Douglas County.

*ACTION: Pass Resolution commending volunteer groups that work to maintain County trail systems.*

*Lead(s): County Board*

*Timeframe: Yearly*

**Objective UCF-4(g): Work to conserve lands for recreational uses along rivers and lakes.**

Policy UCF- 4(g)(1): Provide access to scenic resources in Douglas County, while protecting sensitive areas at those sites.

*ACTION: Determine best access to scenic and landlocked property*

*Lead(s): Parks and Recreation Committee*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*



**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

**Agricultural Resources Vision**

By 2030, agriculture in Douglas County is thriving and is a well-balanced part of the overall economy in partnership with sustainable forest management and strong protection policies for water, air and soil. Douglas County promotes:

- A diverse array of agricultural products.
- Zoning that protects productive agricultural land.
- Forests managed according to best management practices.
- Maintaining the current balance of forest, agricultural and recreational land.

**Goal AR-1:** A diverse agricultural community.

**Objective AR-1(a): Encourage various types of agriculture including traditional and non-traditional types of agriculture.**

Policy AR-1(a)(1): Be recognized for various farming enterprises.

*ACTION: Review the zoning requirements for development of agricultural /horticultural production for home use (i.e.-poultry, honey, small livestock etc.)*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee  
Timeframe: Initiate, March 2010*

**Objective AR-1(b): Encourage local entrepreneurs and craftspeople to use local resources and local products.**

Policy AR-1(b)(1): Support efforts to advertise local resources and products.

Policy AR-1(b)(2): Support value added products. "Value added," acknowledged to mean products that have a degree of development and marketing beyond the raw, locally produced product. (Example: forest products certified as achieving sustainable guidelines, dairy products produced and advertised as rBGH free)

**Objective AR-1(c): Develop markets for locally produced products.**

Policy AR-1(c)(1): Promote and encourage the establishment of farmers' markets and other related businesses.

*ACTION: Clarify meat marketing rules for direct marketing*

*Lead(s): ITBEC, DATCP, Meat Marketing Board  
Timeframe: Initiate, March 2010*



*ACTION: Encourage central locations for farmers market*

*Lead(s): Douglas County UW-Extension, ITBEC, Local community garden groups  
Timeframe: Annually*

*ACTION: Encourage community gardeners/truck farming on private rural plots (rental of plots, leasing)*

*Lead(s): Douglas County UW-Extension, Land Conservation Committee, Farm Service Agency  
Timeframe: March, 2010*

**Goal AR-2: Abundant prime agriculture lands and acreage.**

**Objective AR-2(a): Identify prime acreage and promote farming on those lands.**

Policy AR-2(a)(1): Protect prime agricultural lands.

*ACTION: Establish AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE ZONES FOR DOUGLAS COUNTY.  
“Agricultural Enterprise Zones” are those areas identified through a planning process where agricultural activities are maintained and expanded upon.*

*Lead(s): Local farming organizations, Douglas County Extension, DATCP, Land Conservation Committee, Town Association, Zoning Committee, municipalities and Comprehensive Planning Commissions  
Timeframe: Ongoing*

**Objective AR-2(b): Discourage non-agricultural development on tillable lands.**

Policy AR-2(b)(1): Guide development away from productive farmland and toward land that is least suitable for agricultural use.

Policy AR-2(b)(2): Plan development practices creating a blend of agricultural and residential uses.

*ACTION: Develop conservation design <sup>3</sup>protocol for Douglas County*

*Lead(s): Zoning Department, Local Plan Commissions  
Timeframe: March 2011*

**Objective AR-2(c): Maintain existing acreage in agricultural use.**

Policy AR-2(c)(1): Support current agricultural producers and encourage new agricultural uses.

<sup>3</sup> Conservation Design is a method of subdivision development which allows homes to be clustered on part of a rural parcel while protecting the remainder as open space.



*ACTION: Develop agricultural conservation easement program for Douglas County*

*Lead(s): Douglas County and Town Comprehensive Planning Commission, Douglas County Extension, DATCP, Land Conservation Committee, Town Associations, Local Farming Organizations*

*Timeframe: March 2011*

**Goal AR-3: Strong rural character, culture, and visual quality.**

**Objective AR-3(a): Promote education careers and opportunities in agribusiness.**

Policy AR-3(a)(1): Work with schools to educate youth on local agriculture and the opportunities for education and careers in the field.

*ACTION: Promote agricultural scholarships*

*Lead(s): Local School Districts, UW-Superior, WITC, Douglas County Extension, Agricultural Youth Groups, Regional Agricultural Organizations, Local Agricultural Businesses*

*Timeframe: March 2010*

*ACTION: Maintain agricultural professionals in Douglas County*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Extension, Local adult and youth agricultural organizations.*  
*Timeframe: Ongoing*

*ACTION: Encourage FFA and 4-H membership and functions in Douglas County*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Extension, State and local FFA organizations, and School Boards*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

**Objective AR-3(b): Support preservation of agricultural and historical buildings.**

Policy AR-3(b)(1): Existing agricultural uses and buildings should be taken into account when locating new development to avoid conflict.

**Objective AR-3(c): Support preservation of rural viewsheds, scenic fields, and corridors**

*ACTION: Create signage identifying the viewsheds of Douglas County (scenic view list of Douglas Co.)*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee, Forestry Committee*

*Timeframe: Summer 2011*



**Objective AR-3(d): Showcase agriculture at the County Fair.**

Policy AR-3(d)(1): Promote the county fair throughout the year and encourage farmers to participate.

*ACTION: Support efforts of the County Fair Board.*

*ACTION: Increase youth participation in a strong agriculturally influenced County Fair.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Extension, 4-H, School District, County Fair board, Home and Community Education, FFA*

*Timeframe: March 2010*

*ACTION: Engage farm organizations in County Fair planning.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Extension, Fair Board, FFA, Home and Community Education*

*Timeframe: March 2010*

**Goal AR- 4:** Sustainable agriculture, prosperous farmers, and supporting industries.

**Objective AR-4(a): Promote/showcase the use of locally grown products.**

**Objective AR-4(b): Promote education and careers in Agriculture**

Policy AR-4(b)(1): Assist area schools and UW-Extension in incorporating agricultural education into their curriculum.

Policy AR-4(b)(2): Maintain the professional agricultural infrastructure to support farming.

**Objective AR-4(c): Continue to provide education and support for best management practices.**

Policy AR-4(c)(1): utilize County, state, and federal resources to educate farmers on best management practices and new agricultural techniques.

Policy AR-4(c)(2): Promote the use of proper soil conservation and manure management practices to protect surface, ground water, air, and wildlife habitat in the County.

Policy AR-4(c)(3): Acceptance of irrigation, dust, noise, odors, vehicle traffic, etc. as a normal part of agricultural operations.

Policy AR-4(c)(4): Explore programs and funding opportunities to assist farmers in applying best management practices.

**Objective AR-4(d): Promote legislation to support sustainable agribusiness.**



Policy AR-4(d)(1): Promote sustainable agriculture in Douglas County and strive to set an example for surrounding counties.

Policy AR-4(d)(2): Guide land use controls to protect prime agricultural lands

*ACTION: Conceive agricultural enterprise zones for Douglas County.*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee, Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: March 2011*



**CULTURAL RESOURCES**

**Cultural Resources Vision**

Douglas County promotes knowledge and celebration of its resources, notably Lake Superior, healthy forests and clean waters, and highlights its cultural heritage.

**Cultural Resources Goals and Objectives**

**Goal CR-1: A Culturally Rich County**

**Objective CR-1(a): Preserve historical and cultural sites, resources and events.**

Policy CR-1(a)(1): Consider the possible impacts of new development on historical sites to reduce the risk of disturbing or harming irreplaceable County assets.

*ACTION: Form a historic preservation committee*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Historical Society*

*Timeframe: March 2011*

*ACTION: Educate public on how to preserve identified places of cultural and historic significance.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Historical Society, Northern Lakes Archeological Society, State Historical Society, local community historical groups*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

*ACTION: Investigate "Certified Local Government"<sup>4</sup> status*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Historical Society*

*Timeframe: March, 2011*

*ACTION: Highlight history of existing county sites.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Historical Society, Superior, Douglas County Chamber of Commerce, Tribal Governments*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

*ACTION: Increase number of sites on the state and national register of historic places*

<sup>4</sup> A Certified Local Government (CLG) is any city, village, county, or town that has been certified by Wisconsin's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Department of the Interior. CLG's are eligible to receive state and federal grant funds, are authorized the use of the Wisconsin Historic Building Code for locally designated historic buildings, and have the ability to formally comment on National Register of Historic Places nominations (within municipal boundaries) before they are sent to the State Historic Preservation Review Board



*Lead(s): Towns Associations, local community historical groups, Tribal Governments  
Timeframe: 10% by March 2011*

**Goal CR-2: Cultural Diversity**

**Objective CR-2(a): Celebrate the history and culture of the area.**

Policy CR-2(a)(1): Promote events and festivals that have a cultural or historical focus.

**Objective CR-2(b): Encourage cooperation and support performing groups, artists and craftspeople.**

*ACTION: Engage historic preservation & conservation groups in outreach, planning, and implementation.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee  
Timeframe: March 2010*

**Objective CR-2(c): Involve citizens**

Policy CR-2(c)(1): Solicit citizen participation in identifying and restoring historic sites in the County.

**Goals 3: Acknowledge Cultural Resources**

**Objective CR-3(a): Involve local governments**

Policy CR-3(a)(1): Work with tribal and local governments and private citizens to identify and preserve cultural resources.

**Objective CR-3(b): Produce a history of Douglas County**

Policy CR-3(b)(1): Acknowledge historical sites and events in Douglas County and strive to make the public more aware of these important features.

Policy CR-3(b)(2): Review the impact of new development in the municipality, or the redevelopment, of historically significant structures or sites before allowing it to occur.

**Objective CR-3(c): Seek funding for historical/cultural projects**

**Objective CR-3(d): Support well-planned, well-funded K-12 education.**

Policy CR-3(d)(1): Strongly encourage the incorporation of local history and culture into the classroom at all grade levels.



**Objective CR-3(e): Encourage development of heritage tourism**

Policy CR-3(e)(1): Encourage signage to promote and identify historical and cultural sites.

Policy CR-3(e)(2): Support the use of historical and cultural sites for tourism, without harming the integrity of them.



**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Natural Resources Vision**

Douglas County works to preserve the natural aspect of county lands, thinking always of balancing uses and protecting the environment. The county is known throughout the state as a leading steward of healthy forests and clean waters. The county is also known as a leader in protecting Lake Superior, a body of fresh water that is of paramount national and global importance by 2030. All uses of natural resources are carefully aligned with the Comprehensive Plan. The vision for natural resources in Douglas County includes:

- Being a state leader in protecting and conserving water resources—from Lake Superior to inland lakes to streams and wetlands—by meeting and often exceeding state guidelines.
- Incorporating state-of-the-art prevention and management of invasive species on land and in waters.
- Managing county forests lands in a best-practice, sustainable manner, while retaining the distinction of having the largest county-owned forest in Wisconsin.
- Planning all development to protect natural resources by directing growth away from sensitive areas.
- Maintaining and protecting public access to natural resources.

**Natural Resources Goals and Objectives**

**Goal NR- 1:** Invasive species (land & water) introductions are prevented and current populations controlled

**Objective NR-1(a): Public Education**

Policy NR-1(a)(1): Educate the public through informational news releases, brochures, signage, and the county website, school curriculum

Policy NR-1(a)(2): Encourage the use of native species in plantings to minimize the risk of introducing new invasive species to the area.

Policy NR-1(a)(3): Continue to provide staff at public boat landings and periodically educate people about aquatic invasive species.

*ACTION: Continue to include and update invasive species curriculum in schools*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee*

*Timeframe: March 2010*

*ACTION: Develop and implement “most dangerous” invasive species list for county website with an explanation of noxious weed laws, control, ID.*

*Lead(s): AIS Coordinator, Land Conservation Committee*

*Timeframe: March 2010*



**Objective NR-1(b): County support and coordination of strategic planning for invasive species programs**

Policy NR-1(b)(1): Coordinate with local lake associations to implement prevention and control plans for invasive species.

Policy NR-1(b)(2): Integrate policies that reflect entire Great Lakes basin policy for control of invasive species.

**Objective NR-1(c): Support Great Lakes Ballast Water Initiative**

Policy NR-1(c)(1): Insure consistency in ballast water initiatives across state and international borders.

**Goal NR-2:** High priority natural resource areas are protected.

**Objective NR-2(a): Identify high priority natural resource areas.**

Policy NR-2(a)(1): Collaborate with state and federal agencies and other organizations to identify sensitive areas.

Policy NR-2(a)(2): Protect environmental /wildlife corridors

**Objective NR-2(b): Encourage growth away from identified natural resource areas where possible.**

Policy NR-2(b)(1): Use density, distance and buffer zone etc, as applicable to protect natural resource areas.

**Objective NR-2(c): Continue to support the use of best-management practices**

Policy NR-2(c)(1): Promote sustainable development and conservation of natural resources

ACTION: Develop conservation design protocol for Douglas County

**Objective NR-2(d): Evaluate current condition of water resources on a watershed scale.**

Policy NR-2(d)(1): Promote Intergovernmental cooperation.

ACTION: Development and implementation of evaluation and protection plan for water resources (including non-point source pollution<sup>5</sup> and construction site erosion)

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee, Zoning Committee  
Timeframe: March 2010*

<sup>5</sup> Pollution that is so general or covers such a wide area that no single, localized source of the pollution can be identified



**Objective NR-2(e): Develop land use strategies**

Policy NR-2(e)(1): Inhibit erosion.

*ACTION: Utilize a storm water management plan for new development.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee, Land Conservation Committee, WDNR  
Timeframe: March 2010*

*ACTION: Identify and protect at-risk drainage corridors.*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee, Highway Committee, Local units of Government,  
Forestry Committee  
Timeframe: March 2010*

Policy NR-2(e)(2): Value and conserve wetland, shoreline and floodplain areas

Policy NR-2(e)(3): Utilize forest coverage standards to manage runoff and water quality, and preserve natural habitats.

*ACTION: Manage runoff, water quality, and natural habitat as part of all development plans in Douglas County.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee, WDNR  
Timeframe: Ongoing*

Policy NR-2(e)(4): Review of non-metallic and metallic mineral extraction operation requests

*ACTION: Evaluate current permitting process*

*Lead(s): Douglas County Comprehensive Plan commissions, local and municipal planning commissions.  
Timeframe: March, 2010*

**Objective NR-2(f): Support training of Zoning and Land Conservation staff and committees**

Policy NR-2(f)(1): Communicate with other agencies and jurisdictions to share information and educational materials.

**Objective NR-2(g): Educate and involve the public in natural resource stewardship.**

Policy NR-2(g)(1): Encourage school districts to continue natural resource education in Douglas County schools.



**Goal NR-3: High quality and quantity of groundwater**

**Objective NR-3(a): Identify and protect groundwater recharge areas**

Policy NR-3(a)(1): Inform the public about the importance of and techniques for protecting groundwater recharge areas.

**Objective NR-3(b): Support voluntary groundwater inventory and testing programs.**

Policy NR-3(b)(1): Educate the public about and encourage participation in well testing programs.

**Objective NR-3(c): Identify and cap abandoned wells.**

Policy NR-3(c)(1): Develop a wellhead protection plan.

Policy NR-3(c)(2): Work with private landowners to implement wellhead protection techniques.

**Goal NR- 4: County forestlands managed in a sustainable manner**

**Objective NR-4(a): Support the Douglas County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2006-2020 criteria for obtaining industrial forests that go on the market.**

**Objective NR-4(b): Coordinate forest management information between county, state, commercial and private forest owners to minimize hydrologic impacts.**

Policy NR-4(b)(1): Work together with the DNR to educate commercial and private forest owners on best management practices.

Policy NR-4(b)(2): Maintain communication with the state on forest management information and decisions and encourage forest landowners to enroll in Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law program and other tax programs.

**Objective NR-4(c): Continue to support funding and training for Forestry Department and Committee members**

Policy NR-4(c)(1): Ensure access to updated equipment, educational materials, and other resources for the Forestry Department.

Policy NR-4(c)(2): Maintain adequate staffing to continue proper management of the County Forest.



**Goal NR-5: Safe, environmentally sensitive public access to natural resources**

**Objective NR-5(a): Support maintenance of safe, environmentally sensitive access points to public lands and waters and support improvements where needed.**

Policy NR-5(a)(1): Make access points to public lands handicap accessible.

Policy NR-5(a)(2): Control erosion at public access points to waterways.

**Objective NR-5(b): Support practicable access to public lands and waters.**

Policy NR-5(b)(1): Research funding opportunities for creating and improving public accesses.

**Objective NR-5(c): Provide opportunities for input concerning public access on existing and newly acquired public lands.**

Policy NR-5(c)(1): Hold public meetings and inform the public through multiple media sources.

**Goal NR-6: A high level of air quality**

**Objective NR-6(a): Support rideshare initiatives**

Policy NR-6(a)(1): Consider the addition of park-and-ride lots to increase convenience and incentives for carpooling.

**Objective NR-6(b): Support multi-modal transportation**

Policy NR-6(b)(1): Accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Objective NR-6(c): Support development that reduces auto-dependence and travel distances.**

Policy NR-6(c)(1): Encourage pedestrian and bicycle-friendly developments.

**Goal NR-7: Maintain Wildlife Habitats**

**Objective NR-7(a): Maintain wildlife species numbers as a recreational and visual resource.**

Policy NR-7(a)(1): Manage for species types/diversity.

Policy NR-7(a)(2): Manage populations to provide food, recreation, and visual resources while protecting other natural resources and private economy.



Policy NR-7(a)(3): Discourage fragmentation of large tracts of land into unconnected parcels.

**Goal NR- 8: Protected Scenic and Recreational Resources**

**Objective NR-8(a): Identify scenic views in the county.**

Policy NR-8(a)(1): Provide opportunities for the public to safely access scenic views by developing and/or maintaining walkways, overlooks/viewing platforms, and parking areas.

Policy NR-8(a)(2): Keep records of areas with scenic views and consider creating maps showing scenic view locations for tourism purposes.

Policy NR-8(a)(3): Encourage the protection of land for recreational use and open space.

**Objective NR-8(b): Protect visual resources**

Policy NR-8(b)(1): Discourage development that will obstruct or decrease the value of Douglas County’s visual resources.

**Objective NR-8(c): Evaluate current regulations on proper placement and illumination of outdoor advertising.**

Policy NR-8(c)(1): Establish size and height regulations for outdoor advertising.

*ACTION: Encourage placement only in commercial areas*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: March, 2010*

**Objective NR-8(d): Minimize light, sound and air pollution.**

Policy NR-8(d)(1): Encourage vegetative buffers where possible around transportation corridors and industrial areas to reduce sound and air pollution.

**Objective NR-8(e): Value quiet areas**

Policy NR-8(e)(1): Enforce the county noise ordinance

*ACTION: Evaluate the ability of the county to control noise*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: March, 2010*

**Goal NR-9: Excellent communication and cooperation between units of government and the community**



**Objective NR-9(a): Network with state, federal and tribal governments to share information and tools and make decisions on natural resources.**

Policy NR-9(a)(1): Work collaboratively with multiple agencies, jurisdictions, and levels of government to provide the best management possible for Douglas County's natural resources.

**Objective NR-9(b): Enable and encourage responsible stewardship by providing tools and sharing information with lake and river associations, school districts, sanitary districts, youth groups, etc.**

Policy NR-9(b)(1): Provide informational brochures, signage, and/or web sources to increase public knowledge regarding environmental stewardship.

**Objective NR-9(c): Coordinate, cooperate and share technical and educational resources between county departments and local governments.**

Policy NR-9(c)(1): Educate and assist town governments in protecting natural resources.



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal ED-1:** Leadership and educational opportunities for growth and development

**Objective ED-1(a): Available leadership education for current and future leaders**

Policy ED-1(a)(1): Encourage on-going leadership education for County leaders.

Policy ED-1(a)(2): Support youth development program sponsored by Chamber of Commerce.

*ACTION: Provide for early training sessions, job shadowing, and internships for youth.*

*Lead(s): UW-Extension, Superior-Douglas County Chamber of Commerce*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

**Objective ED-1(b): A well-educated, highly skilled workforce with high standards, integrity and ethics**

Policy ED-1(b)(1): Support businesses and organizations that will draw educated and skilled people to Douglas County.

Policy ED-1(b)(2): Encourage collaboration and cooperation between educational institutions to meet needs of workforce.

*ACTION: Develop interactive learning opportunities between county, businesses and educational institutions.*

*Lead(s): UW-Extension, Superior-Douglas County Chamber of Commerce*

*Timeframe: January 2011*

**Objective ED-1(c): Maximize incentive programs**

**Objective ED-1(d): Coordination with secondary and post-secondary educational services**

Policy ED-1(d)(1): Communicate with local colleges and universities to find ways to attract and retain graduates in Douglas County.

Policy ED-1(d)(2): Offer internships to local college students to help build interest and experience in County and local government.

Policy ED-1(d)(3): Expand youth leadership program with current guidelines in place.

**Goal ED-2:** Economic development needs balanced with quality of life needs



**Objective ED-2(a): Job creation and opportunities that support living wages**

Policy ED-2(a)(1): Encourage new businesses that will provide employment for a large number of residents.

*ACTION: Promote women’s expo and conference to highlight women-owned businesses and opportunities.*

*Lead(s): Superior-Douglas County Development Association*

*Timeframe: Within 3 years (following plan adoption)*

**Objective ED-2(b): Encourage recreational and tourist industry opportunities.**

Policy ED-2(b)(1): Allow the utilization of Douglas County’s natural and scenic features, recreational opportunities, history, and culture to increase tourism.

Policy ED-2(b)(2): Encourage ecotourism in Douglas County.

*ACTIONS: Develop brochures to promote businesses involved in tourist industry.*

*Lead(s): Superior-Douglas County Chamber of Commerce, Development Association*

*Timeframe: January 2011*

*ACTIONS: Encourage use of public service announcements for regional events.*

*Lead(s): Superior-Douglas County Chamber of Commerce, PEGA*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

**Objective ED-2(c): Provide guidance and incentives for the preservation of open spaces and natural areas.**

Policy ED-2(c)(1): Promote businesses that utilize sustainable building practices and water and energy conservation measures.

Policy ED-2(c)(2): Encourage cluster development on large tracts of land.

**Objective ED-2(d): Encourage commercial nodes in rural areas.**

Policy ED-2(d)(1): Promote mixed use development to increase economic development while also satisfying needs and desires of residents.



**Goal ED-3:** A strong regional economy that is secure and stable

**Objective ED-3(a): Retains and expands current businesses**

Policy ED-3(a)(1): Provide information on grants available for area businesses to assist in economic development.

*ACTIONS: Establish clearing-house for services available to small businesses.  
Identify obstacles to growth.*

*Lead(s): Superior-Douglas County Development Association  
Timeframe: October 2011*

**Objective ED-3(b): Attracts new businesses**

Policy ED-3(b)(1): Promote Douglas County as a desirable place to live and operate a business.

Policy ED-3(b)(2): Encourage a variety of business types that help serve area residents, contribute to the character of the county, and increase employment opportunities for residents.

Policy ED-3(b)(3): Designate land for future commercial and industrial development.

Policy ED-3(b)(4): Pursue state and federal grant programs for business development.

*ACTION: Promote business opportunities in surrounding communities and educational institutions.*

*Lead(s): Superior-Douglas County Development Association  
Timeframe: Ongoing*

*ACTION: Survey college students to determine occupational opportunities that interest graduates.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County UW-Extension  
Timeframe: January 2013*

*ACTION: Recognize large senior population and identify businesses that will meet their needs.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County UW-Extension, Senior Connections – Superior/Douglas County Senior Center  
Timeframe: January 2013*



**Objective ED-3(c): Development is compatible with environment and resource capabilities**

Policy ED-3(c)(1): Encourage commercial and industrial development that preserves environmental quality and open space.

Policy ED-3(c)(2): Ensure new development maintains scenic views and has low-impact on surrounding area.

Policy ED-3(c)(3): Promote green businesses through incentive programs and grants.

**Objective ED-3(d): Promote development of an economy that is diverse and broad-based**

Policy ED-3(d)(1): Encourage unique, specialty businesses that are compatible with the region's rural character.

Policy ED-3(d)(2): Support a well managed and sustainable forest industry.

**Objective ED-3(e): Promote local and home-based companies.**

**Objective ED-3(f): Expand forestry management practices.**

**Goal ED-4:** An infrastructure that supports economic development

**Objective ED-4(a): New businesses focused toward existing and planned business/industrial parks**

Policy ED-4(a)(1): Advertise business and industrial park opportunities.

Policy ED-4(a)(2): Ensure that updated, high-capacity infrastructure is available in industrial parks.

Policy ED-4(a)(3): Ensure technology services available to support businesses of the future.

**Objective ED-4(b): Affordable offerings of utilities, transportation, public services and communications**

**Objective ED-4(c): Streamline permitting process**

Policy ED-4(c)(1): Provide user-friendly website to inform public and provide access to permit forms.

**Objective ED-4(d): Ensure policy and regulation consistency.**

**Goal ED-5:** Communication and collaboration within communities and county



**Objective ED-5(a): Schedule meetings with present and future business leaders**

Policy ED-5(a)(1): Discuss needs and desires with business leaders to retain and attract businesses.

**Objective ED-5(b): Effective use of Internet technology and news media**

Policy ED-5(b)(1): Maintain an updated, user-friendly County website.

Policy ED-5(b)(2): Effective use of Geographic Information System (GIS)

**Objective ED-5(c): Improve government services and delivery of services.**

Policy ED-5(c)(1): Advance information delivery and accessibility in the County.

Policy ED-5(c)(2): Citizens are informed of available services and where to find them.

Policy ED-5(c)(3): Ensure that adequate staffing is available to deliver government services in a timely manner.

**Objective ED-5(d): Support business organizations and community involvement**

Policy ED-5(d)(1): Support the establishment, improvement, and continuation of a County Chamber of Commerce.

**Objective ED-5(e): Comprehensive plans are consistent throughout region**

Policy ED-5(e)(1): Work with surrounding jurisdictions to ensure compatibility in border regions.

**Goal ED-6: Encourage redevelopment**

**Objective ED-6(a): Redevelopment of brownfields and blighted areas**

Policy ED-6(a)(1): Provide incentives for developers to rehabilitate brownfields and blighted areas, making them more desirable.

Policy ED-6(a)(2): Determine possible Smart Growth areas that meet state statutes.

**Objective ED-6(b): Encourage the reuse of structures.**

Policy ED-6(b)(1): Promote the reuse of structures whenever possible to reduce the need for demolition and new building materials.



*ACTION: Encourage growth of green construction and salvage businesses.*

*Lead(s): Douglas County and City of Superior County Me Green Program/recycling programs*

*Timeframe: Ongoing*

**Goal ED-7: Best use of Douglas County assets**

**Objective ED-7(a): Utilization of county forestlands to meet bio-energy and/or paper and wood products needs.**

**Objective ED-7(b): Promote development of Parkland Industrial Park.**

Policy ED-7(b)(1): Work to acquire infrastructure upgrades to site.

**Objective ED-7(c): Promote utilization of Revolving Loan Fund.**

**Objective ED-7(d): Develop Wisconsin Point into natural recreational use area.**

**Objective ED-7(e): Regulatory restrictions that don't prohibit economic development.**

**Objective ED-7(f): Expand access to GIS.**

**Objective ED-7(g): Sound fiscal management that builds a strong tax base.**



**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

**Goal IC-1:** Government is available to serve all citizens.

**Objective IC-1(a): Contact is effective and timely.**

Policy IC-1(a)(1): Each citizen has access to government services.

*ACTION: County web sites will be interactive.*

*ACTION: Government centers will offer assistance to any resident.*

*ACTION: Libraries will offer assistance to any resident*

Policy IC-1(a)(2): Each local unit of government has an Internet presence with a link to any unit with jurisdiction within the local unit.

*ACTION: Web sites will be interactive.*

*ACTION: Local libraries will house plan documents.*

**Objective IC-1(b): Citizen participation is encouraged and is utilized in decision-making processes.**

Policy IC-1(b)(1): Plan implementation will involve citizens.

Policy IC-1(b)(2): County Board of Supervisors will effectively communicate with constituents.

*ACTION: Supervisors will attend their respective township or village board meetings.*

*ACTION: Each Supervisor will invite communication from citizens.*

Policy IC-1(b)(3): Provide forum for citizen comments.

*ACTION: Establish methods to inform public throughout planning process and plan implementation.*

*ACTION: Establish forum for comments and questions after implementation.*

*ACTION: Establish method to retain comments for use during next plan review cycle.*

**Objective IC-1(c): Comprehensive planning is implemented and enforced consistently across jurisdictions.**

Policy IC-1(c)(1): Each plan meets state statute for comprehensive planning elements.



*ACTION: Review local plan recommendations revisions and amendments to ensure consistency and compatibility*

*ACTION: Review all other applicable plans for consistency and compatibility*

*ACTION: County Zoning office will work toward common requirements and ordinances.*

**Goal IC-2:** Communication between local units of government is routine and productive.

Policy IC-2: Local units will be consulted during the decision-making process

*ACTION: Establish routine method to request participation from each affected entity.*

*ACTION: Establish efficient means of communications with other entities.*

*ACTION: Wisconsin Towns Association and similar associations will continue to communicate issues of interest to its members.*

*ACTION: Lakes associations will continue to work with local units of government.*

**Objective IC-2(a): Joint planning should occur when considering cross-jurisdictional developments**

Policy IC-2(a)(1): Coordination between entities is common and routine.

*ACTION: Local units regularly participate in decisions of nearby entities.*

**Objective IC-2(b): Conflicting viewpoints are managed through a written conflict resolution process.**

Policy IC-2(b)(1): A conflict resolution process is in place.

*ACTION: Work with local units to establish a written conflict resolution policy.*

**Objective IC-2(c): Local units of government have final control of policy development within their jurisdiction.**

*ACTION: Allow local units clear voice throughout decision-making process.*

*ACTION: Regional planning will involve all interested entities.*

**Goal IC-3:** Intergovernmental agreements foster shared services.

**Objective IC-3(a): Local units of government work together to develop ways to plan and administer services across boundaries.**



Policy IC-3(a)(1): Local units communicate with nearby entities.

*ACTION: Establish method to communicate prior to action.*

*ACTION: Establish guidelines for bulk purchase of supply items.*

**Objective IC-3(b): Cost benefits and efficiencies are considered when discussing shared services.**

Policy IC-3(b)(1): Emergency response facilities and equipment are located throughout county to offer best response times.

*ACTION: Assess current and future population trends to determine ideal location of emergency response facilities and equipment.*

*ACTION: Work with County Emergency Management to develop long-range plan for future equipment, facilities and manpower.*

*ACTION: Work with insurance industry to review classes of fire protection to keep premiums affordable.*

Policy IC-3(b)(2): Public facilities are located to best serve the local residents.

*ACTION: Assess current use of existing public facilities.*

*ACTION: Communicate with nearby units prior to planning of future facilities.*

Policy IC-3(b)(3): Local units routinely coordinate road work.

*ACTION: Encourage sharing of equipment, materials and/or personnel between local governmental units*

*ACTION: Timing of road work is coordinated to reduce unnecessary delays along traffic routes.*

*ACTION: Available laborers are shared*

Policy IC-3(b)(4): Share services, equipment, personnel or other resources where possible

**Objective IC-3(c): Partnerships are strengthened to promote better local services.**

Policy IC-3(c)(1): Agreements are fostered to improve services between adjoining units.

*ACTION: Existing agreements between the county and other entities are routinely reviewed.*

*ACTION: Services and equipment are routinely reviewed.*



**LAND USE**

**Goal LU-1:** Balanced integrity of private property rights with the interests of the community.

**Objective LU-1(a): Consistency in requirements**

Policy LU-1(a)(1): Review existing policy at multi-jurisdictional level.

**Objective LU-1(b): Compatible and complimentary uses in close proximity to one another as reflected in community goals.**

**Goal LU-2:** Planned growth

**Objective LU-2(a): Collaboration between units of government, businesses developers, citizens and organizations embracing cultural and socio-economic diversity.**

Policy LU-2(a)(1): Support mixing of compatible and complimentary uses in close proximity to one another as reflected in community goals.

*ACTION: Encourage in -fill development on lands that are vacant, blighted, or underutilized. "In fill" is to be acknowledged as development in the existing area of infrastructure.*

*Lead(s): Local municipalities, planning commissions, Superior -Douglas County Development Associations*

*Timeframe: March 2010*

**Objective LU-2(b): Flexibilities in requirements are explored.**

Policy LU-2(b)(1): Research intergovernmental land use policies and requirements used in other jurisdictions.

Policy LU-2(b)(2): Update, develop and enforce land use controls through zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations that promote compatible land use patterns throughout the county.

Policy LU-2(b)(3): Evaluate current ordinances to assure consistency with Douglas County Comprehensive Plan.

*ACTION: The Zoning Committee will review for consistency with ordinance already in place.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: March 2010*



**Objective LU-2(c): Provide for new development opportunities within the county by expanding utilities, facilities and services in line with existing infrastructure.**

Policy LU-2(c)(1): Promote adequate housing needs be met, including affordable and temporary.

Policy LU-2(c)(2): Evaluate costs of expansion of infrastructure.

*ACTION: The Superior-Douglas County Development Association will conduct the evaluation of expansion of infrastructure.*

*Lead(s): Superior -Douglas County Development Association, local municipalities, plan commissions*

*Timeframe: March 2011*

**Goal LU-3: Distinctive rural “northwoods” atmosphere**

**Objective LU-3(a): Douglas County’s rural “northwoods” atmosphere contains:**

- a. Productive working land**
- b. Scenic view sheds**
- c. Limited development density**
- d. Dark skies**
- e. Planned development**
- f. Healthy forests**
- g. Diverse, native plant and animal life.**
- h. Clean waterways**
- i. Construction design that is compatible with the environment**

Policy LU-3(a)(1): Encourage proper lighting types and amounts to limit light pollution, to preserve the view of the night sky.

*ACTION: Provide Information and education to municipalities, lake associations, and planning commissions to mitigate light pollution.*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Department, lake associations*

*Timeframe: Spring 2011*

Policy LU-3(a)(2): Support design guidelines for new construction to reflect scenic values.

*ACTION: Provide information and education to municipalities and planning commissions to acknowledge and plan for the conservation of their scenic values.*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee, Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: Fall 2010*



*ACTION: Develop guidelines for developers to use to protect scenic values of Douglas County.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee  
Timeframe: Fall 2011*

Policy LU-3(a)(3): Encourage rural atmosphere through Planned Unit Development.

*ACTION: Provide information and education to municipalities and planning commissions on the value and successes of Planned Unit Developments in Wisconsin.*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee  
Timeframe: Fall 2010*

*ACTION: Determine options for how Planned Unit Developments will become part of the planning and permitting process*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee  
Timeframe: Fall 2011*

Policy LU-3(a)(4): Encourage the protection of open spaces, for wildlife habitat, agricultural land, wetlands, shore land, floodplains and forests.

*ACTION: Encourage landowners to enroll in the state DNR Managed Forest Law program.*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee, WDNR Private lands foresters  
Timeframe: March 2011*

Policy LU-3(a)(5): Protect waterways by controlling erosion and pollution, and by maintaining vegetative buffers around them.

Policy LU-3(a)(6): Utilize controls to protect prime agricultural land.

Policy LU-3(a)(7): Promote the proper management and conservation of forests, and encourage private landowners to enroll in the state DNR Managed Forest Law program.

Policy LU-3(a)(11): Develop and enforce sign regulations to improve visual quality of the community.

**Goal LU-4: Transportation maintains natural resources**

**Objective LU-4(a): Efficient modes of transportation.**

Policy LU-4(a)(1): Provide a transportation system that compliments the natural resources by avoiding environmentally sensitive areas and utilizing energy efficiently.



Policy LU-4(a)(2): Minimize development in areas that are likely to be required to meet transportation needs in the future. Develop bus route transportation corridors.

**Goal LU-5: Continuing public education**

**Objective LU-5(a): Increased public awareness and responsibility to current land use requirements.**

Policy LU-5(a)(1): Use the most current means of disseminating the land use planning information.

Policy LU-5(a)(2): Establish working relationships with local business, industry, realtors to share needs in open door economic development policies.

**Goal LU-6: Balance economic development and environmental impact.**

**Objective LU-6(a): Encourage development within areas that have municipal infrastructure**

Policy LU-6(a)(1): Identify needs of local business and industry in economic development.

*ACTION: Evaluate the size, location, and proposed use for all commercial and industrial developments.*

*ACTION: Provide incentives for development to match the capacity of utilities, roads, and community facilities.*

*Lead(s): Local municipal plan commissions, Superior-Douglas County Development Association*

*Timeframe: March, 2010*

**Objective LU-6(b): Encourage development away from environmentally sensitive areas.**

Policy LU-6(b)(1): Avoid development including roadways, driveways, and buildings on steep slopes .

*ACTION: Minimize soil erosion and the disruption of wildlife habitat while keeping infrastructure costs to a minimum.*

*Lead(s): Land Conservation Committee*

*Timeframe: March, 2010*

*ACTION: Encourage enforcement of ordinances dealing with salvage and debris.*



*Lead(s): Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: March, 2010*

Policy LU-6(b)(2): Encourage developers to preserve open space and sensitive environmental areas.

Policy LU-6(b)(3): Conserve resources by promoting sustainable development.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Goal I-1: Implement the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan**

Policy I-1(a): Coordinate the implementation of plan elements

Policy I-1(b): Integrate the comprehensive plan into the decision-making process of the county and local governmental units

Policy I-1(c): Maintain the plan as a “living document” that must be responsive to the changing needs of the county.

Policy I-1(d): Utilize available programs, including those identified within the various elements of the comprehensive plan, as needed to achieve plan objectives.

Policy I-1(e): Achieve and maintain a process for review and action on zoning/land use applications that is coordinated between the county and towns.

Policy I-1 (f): Coordinate County and town plan implementation efforts.

Policy I-1(g): Continue to seek public participation and involvement throughout the plan implementation process.

Policy I-1(h): Promote intergovernmental cooperation throughout the plan implementation process.

Policy I-1(i): Utilize the recommended conflict resolution process (or other mutually agreed upon process) to resolve future conflicts related to implementation of the comprehensive plan.

### **Goal I-2: Ensure that all future development and/or redevelopment within the unincorporated areas of Douglas County occur in accordance with the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.**

Policy I-2(a): Rely on the comprehensive plan recommendations in making decisions with respect to future development and redevelopment



**Goal I-3:** Review, revise, or create the regulatory ordinances necessary to ensure consistency with the comprehensive plan and implementation of the objectives, including zoning ordinances, land division ordinances, and official mapping ordinances.

Policy I-3(a): Identify and correct inconsistencies between county ordinances, regulations and the comprehensive plan

*ACTION: Conduct a zoning-planning consistency review*

*Lead(s): Zoning Committee*

*Timeframe: Initiate immediately following plan adoption*

**Goal I-4:** Reevaluate the comprehensive plan on a regular basis (a minimum of once every ten years) to ensure that it continues to accurately reflect current conditions and County and local community objectives.

Policy I-4(a): Continue to monitor plan progress and ensure that the plan remains relevant

Policy 1-4(b): Adjustments to this plan should be made as required by changing conditions

Policy I-4(c): Conduct annual plan progress review

Policy I-4(d): Ensure continued public participation in the plan review and amendment process