

Chapter

7

Preparing a Future Land Use Map

Included in this chapter:

- Future Land Use Map: A Definition
- Producing a Future Land Use Map
- Designating Smart Growth Areas
- Examples of Future Land Use Maps

Introduction

After completing several components of the land use element including the land use inventory, current land use map and land use alternatives or scenarios, it is now time to draft the future land use map. The future land use map is a process of finalizing these activities and compiling the information into a visual format.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, a current land use map is required as part of the comprehensive plan. Also, a future land use map is required as described in Wis. Stat. Section 66.1001. Below is a list of required information to be included in a series of maps within the comprehensive plan:

- Current land use
- Future land use
- Productive agricultural soils
- Natural limitations for building site development
- Floodplains
- Wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands
- Boundaries of service areas of public utilities
- Boundaries of service areas of community facilities
- General location of future land uses by net density or other classifications

Future Land Use Map: A Definition

The future land use map is a community’s visual guide to future planning. The future land use map should bring together most if not all of the elements of the comprehensive plan such as natural resources, economic development, housing and transportation. It is a map of what the community wants to have happen; it is not a prediction.

The future land use map is not an official map nor is it a zoning map. Table 5 describes the differences between these three maps.

Producing a Future Land Use Map

The community should assess the various scenarios and review the drafted goals, objectives and policies when creating the future land use map. The future land use map should be created similarly to, and be consistent with, the current land use map. It is advisable to use the same land use classification system for the future land use

map as used in the current land use map. As an example, to create a future land use map begin with the base map, and review all of the information and maps created throughout the planning process. Begin with transferring to the future land use map areas that cannot be developed, such as water and steep slopes; next consider areas that might be difficult to develop or are unique to the community, such as flood plains or wetlands. Next, if there is interest in preserving agricultural and forestry in the community, identify concentrations of prime soils and productive forestry areas. Then consider the existing residential, commercial and industrial uses and the general development trends in the community. On the map identify where it should be encouraged in the future. Consider existing utilities and facilities as you complete this step, such as roads, sewer and water, and emergency services. In the end, you should have a map that is built on each step of the planning process.

The future land use map is a milestone in the planning process and is the most important map created. It is critical to engage the

**Table 5
Comparison of Three Different Maps**

	Future Land Use Map	Official Map	Zoning Map
Comprehensive Plan Requirement	Yes	No	No
Wisconsin Statutes (Chapters, sections)	66.1001(2)(h)	62.23(6)	59.69(5); 60.61(4); 62.23(7)
Local Government Adopts	By ordinance as part of comprehensive plan	By ordinance or resolution	By ordinance as part of zoning ordinance
Parcel-based	No	Yes	No
Displays	General land use categories	Streets, highways, parkways, railroad right-of-ways, historic districts	Zoning districts
Use	Visual guide for the community	Establish and preserve location of streets, highways, parks, waterways	Designate height, bulk, and use of land

public in a review of this map. Often at this stage in the planning process an open house type meeting will be held.

The future land use map may or may not contain “hard” boundary lines between categories. Different techniques may be used to show “soft” boundary lines; for example the line maybe drawn as a squiggly line or colors may be blurred together.

Future land use mapping is often done interactively by community committee members. They use existing land use maps and markers to draw in the locations of future uses. Some communities are beginning to rely on GIS to help allocate future uses. See Figures 10 and 11 on pages 60 and 61 for examples of future land use maps.

Designating Smart Growth Areas

Wisconsin Statutes section 16.965 defines a smart growth area as “an area that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and municipal, state and utility services, where practicable, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are both contiguous to existing development and at densities which have relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.” Smart growth areas are generally drawn on the future land use map.

Designating “smart growth areas” is not required under the comprehensive planning law, Wis. Stats. s. 66.1001.

Although the designation of smart growth areas is only a requirement when communities receive for a comprehensive

planning grant funds from the State’s Department of Administration, you may choose to include these areas as part of your community’s future land use map if they exist.

Examples of Future Land Use Maps

Below and on the facing page are two examples of future land use maps.

Figure 10: Town of Dane Planned Land Use Map

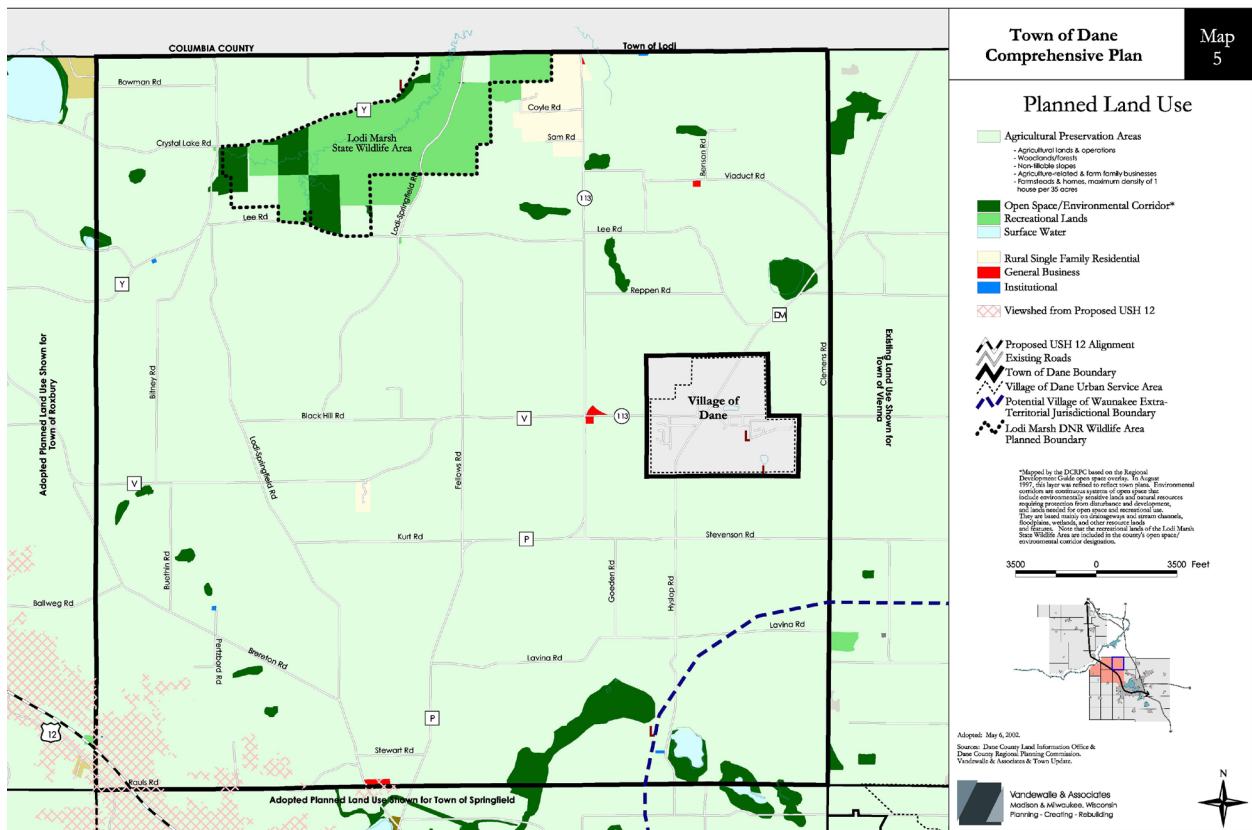


Figure 11: Town of Bradley Planned Land Use Map

