Comprehensive Plan

for

Town of Rudolph

Wood County Wisconsin
2009

Approved by Rudolph Town Board
June 3, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes, requires comprehensive planning in each county, city, village and town that engages in land use regulatory activities, such as zoning or subdivision ordinances. The comprehensive plan must contain nine elements, including 1) an issues and opportunities element, 2) a housing element, 3) a transportation element, 4) a utilities and community facilities element, 5) a natural and cultural resources element, 6) an economic development element, 7) an inter-governmental cooperation element, 8) a land use element and 9) an implementation element. In addition, by January 1, 2010, all local governments' land use-related actions regarding any ordinance, plan or regulation will be required to be consistent with its adopted comprehensive plan.

The Town of Rudolph first enacted a local zoning ordinance in the early 1960's and has continued to be pro-active on zoning ever since. The Town developed a "Master Plan" in 1980. Following surveys and public meetings in 1998 and 1999, a Land Use Plan was developed and approved in 1999. The zoning ordinances were extensively amended in 1992 and again in 2002, including ordinances on wireless communications towers and signs. Most recently, in August of 2008, the Town clarified language on dogs and condominiums, and added ordinances governing placement of wind-powered generating facilities. The primary focus for all zoning issue decisions has been to regulate land use with minimal restriction of property rights, while preserving the rural character valued by the residents.

1. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs

Future Development

Goal: Recognize that the proposed re-designation of State Highway 34 as 13-34 and the improved access to U.S. 10, when rebuilding is complete, will increase the volume of traffic through the Town and may cause services such as cafes or small retail businesses to locate along that corridor.

> Objective: Work with the City of Wisconsin Rapids to formulate safe routes for electric 'neighborhood' cars for commuting residents.
>
> Objective: Encourage shared access points along the state highway to reduce traffic conflicts.

Preserving the Rural Character of the Town of Rudolph

Goal: Recognize that the reversion or planting of former agricultural lands to forest and the interest of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in reserve lands will impact the tax base of the Town as well as the land uses for the future.

> Objective: Continue to seek ways to add value to Town lands by emphasizing the rural and natural character of the Town, and encouraging niche agriculture.
>
> Objective: Continue to react promptly to developing technological issues (such as the communication towers and the wind-powered generators most recently) which will affect the landscape and land use of the Town.

Demographic Trends

Introduction

This comprehensive plan was prepared in 2008 using demographic information from the 2000 U. S. Census and other information and data compiled by the Planning and Zoning Department of Wood County. When available more recent statistics were used, however, when using data nearly a decade old, caution is indicated.

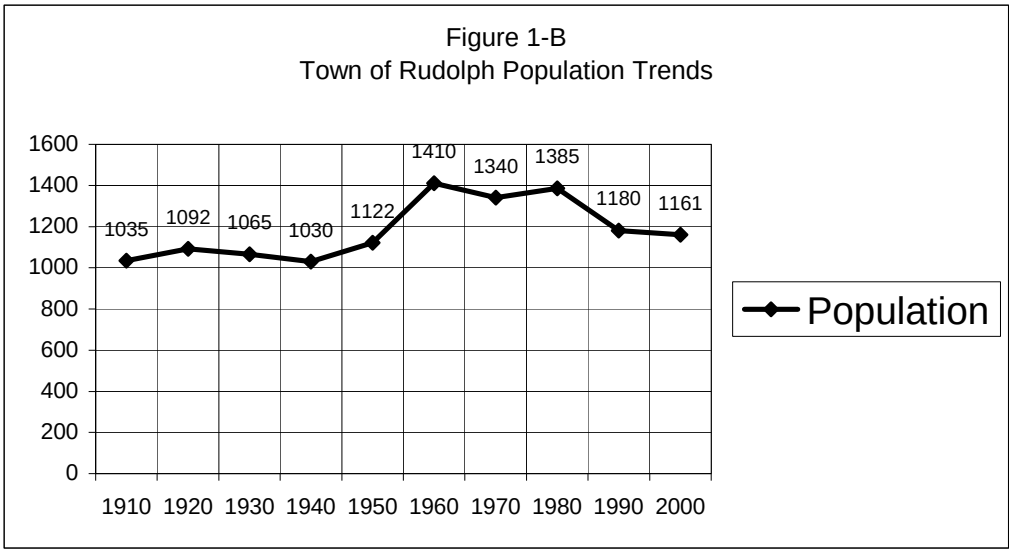
Population Growth and Distribution

Official census counts for the Town of Rudolph, from 1910 to 2000, are listed in Figure 1-A. The current population is 1,161.

Figure 1-A
TOWN OF RUDOLPH CENSUS COUNTS
1910 – 2000

YEAR	POPULATION	NUMBER CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
1910	1,035	NA	NA
1920	1,092	57	5.5
1930	1,065	-27	-2.5
1940	1,030	-35	-3.3
1950	1,122	92	8.9
1960	1,410	288	25.7
1970	1,340	-70	-5.0
1980	1,385	45	3.4
1990	1,180	- 205	-14.8
2000	1,161	- 19	-1.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population.



How does Rudolph's population change compare to the rest of the Wisconsin Rapids urban area? Figure 1-C lists area communities and their population numbers for 1980, 1990 and 2000.

Figure 1-C
WISCONSIN RAPIDS URBAN AREA GROWTH TRENDS
1980 – 2000

COMMUNITY	1980 POPULATION	1990 POPULATION	2000 POPULATION	PERCENT CHANGE 1990 - 2000	MEDIAN AGE YEAR 2000
Grand Rapids	7,319	7,071	7,801	10.3	38.4
Port Edwards (town)	1,387	1,351	1,446	7.0	36.2
Rudolph (town)	**1,385**	**1,180**	**1,161**	**-1.6**	**38.9**
Saratoga	4,363	4,775	5,383	12.7	38.5
Seneca	1,245	1,133	1,202	6.1	36.9
Sigel	1,332	1,192	1,130	-5.2	40.1
Biron (village)	698	794	915	15.2	43.3
Port Edwards (village)	2,077	1,848	1,944	5.2	40.1
Nekoosa (city)	2,519	2,557	2,590	1.3	36.6
Wisconsin Rapids (city)	17,995	18,245	18,435	1.0	37.6
AREA TOTAL	40,320	40,146	42,007	4.6	38.7

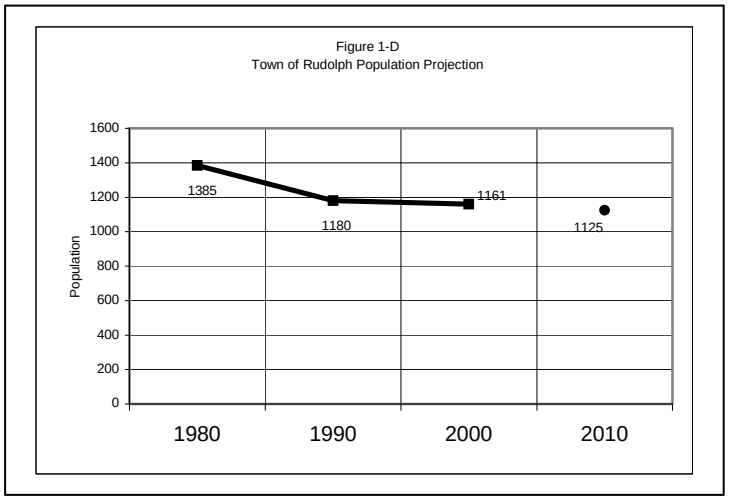
The average change during the past 10 years was growth of 4.6%, while Rudolph's population fell slightly, by 1.6 percent. The communities with the largest percentage growth include the towns of Grand Rapids and Saratoga, both lying east of the Wisconsin River in sandy soil areas which are friendly to private on-site waste treatment systems. West of the Wisconsin River, only the towns of Sigel and Rudolph lost population during the past census decade. Both of those areas have heavy clay loam soils which generally require mound systems or holding tanks for waste treatment, adding to the cost of locating and maintaining homes there.

Population Forecasts

To properly plan for future community services, the Town Board must be aware of the changing age structure of the population and of the numbers that are expected to live in the Town in the future. State agencies study future population expectations for anticipated funding levels of their programs and the Town must do the same. Population projections are speculative and no person can forecast a community's future perfectly because of such things as changing economics, physical demands on the environment and changing political climate at all levels. However, using historic data from the community, one can foresee, with some accuracy, what the near future holds for the community as far as expected populations.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration's Demographic Services Center spends considerable time developing population projections for counties and municipalities for the purpose of estimating future state program and budget needs. Projections are often required when a municipality is applying for various State-funded programs.

The Demographic Services Center projected a decrease in Rudolph's population to 1,125 for 2010[1]. The census figures, along with State agency projections are shown graphically on Figure 1-D



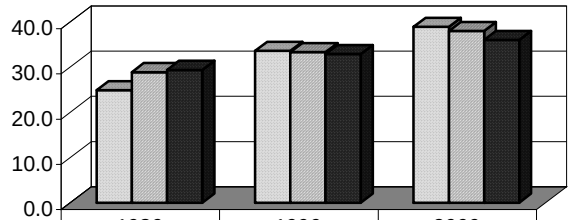
[1] Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services Center, Internet search.

Age Distribution

Figure 1-E illustrates the rising median age of Rudolph's population since 1980, along with that of Wood County and Wisconsin. The median age in the Town of Rudolph was 36.9 in 2000. In 1990, the median age was 33.6 and in 1980 it was 24.9. This trend is typical not only for the area, but for the State and Nation, as well. Families have gotten smaller and the baby-boomers are entering their 50's and 60's. Thus, the median age has gone up.

The median age of both Rudolph and Wood County is increasing faster that that of the State. In 1980, the median age for the State was higher than Rudolph and Wisconsin Rapids but in 1990, the two local median age numbers caught up with and slightly surpassed the State's median age. The most recent numbers show the Town to be slightly older than the County and nearly three years older than the State.

Figure 1-E
Median Age Trends
Rudolph, Wood County & Wisconsin



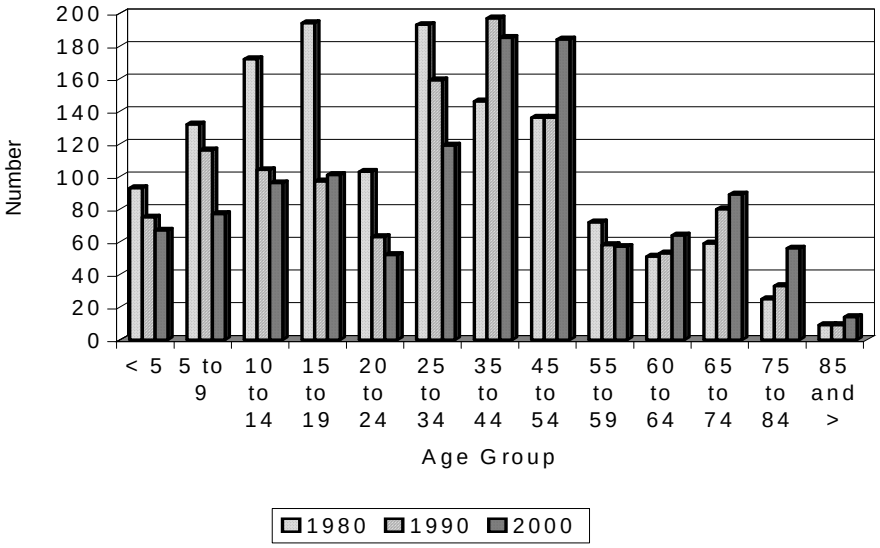
	1980	1990	2000
Rudolph	24.9	33.6	38.9
Wood County	28.9	33.3	38.0
Wisconsin	29.4	32.9	36.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population.

The median age for the Wisconsin Rapids area communities listed in Figure 1-C is 38.7. This is slightly lower than Rudolph's median age of 38.9 years. Typically, villages and cities will have "older" populations than towns because, as people age, they often want to locate closer to shopping, churches and community activities. Also, assisted living centers and nursing homes are located in incorporated communities, necessitating relocation from towns for those who require such services.

There are a number of factors that have affected the change in Rudolph's median age. Figure 1-F provides graphic details about the Town's population age groups from the 1980, 1990 and 2000 census figures. The first trend of significance is the steady, continuous decline in the number of persons under age 5 - the preschoolers. Note also that after high school, it seems that people are leaving the area, evidenced by the steady decline in the number of residents between the ages of 20 and 34. Notice that all three age groups in the retired range show increases. This increase, coupled with the decline in the five youngest age groups helps explain the rise in median age.

Figure 1-F
Rudolph Age Group Trends



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Source: U. S. Census of Population.

Dependency Ratio

The dependency ratio of a community is defined as the working-age population compared to the non-working-age population. The non-working age population is considered to be persons under the age of 18 – still in high school – and those over age 65 – retired persons. The non-working-age population is considered to be "dependent" on the working age groups to provide services and facilities to the community. This is not to say that others, especially those 65 years old and older, do not contribute through equal property taxes and community service. In fact, they do carry their fair share and, in the case of many elected officials, they carry more than their share.

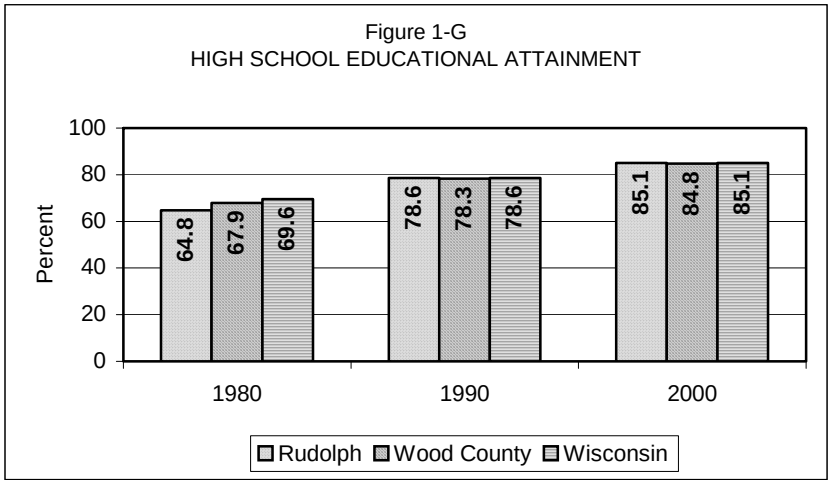
In the year 2000, 13.7 percent of Rudolph's population was 65 years of age and older. Looking back at Figure 1-F, it is evident that the three age groups that include persons age 65 and older has shown steady growth. In 1990, for instance, 10.3 percent of the Town's population was 65 or older and in 1980 the figure was 6.7 percent. This trend will probably continue. The large increase in the 35 to 59 year olds will continue to move forward, barring unforeseen circumstances.

The Town population under the age of 18 has been declining since 1980, when 38.3 percent of the Town's residents fell into this group. By 1990, this age group declined to 30.1 percent and by 2000, 26.1 percent were under the age of 18.

As stated, the dependency ratio compares the two population groups considered to be outside the working age groups to those of "working age." In 1980, for every non-working-age person (dependent) in Rudolph, there were 1.22 working-age people. The dependency ratio, then, was 1.22:1. In 1990, the dependency ratio was 1.47 and in the year 2000, it was 1.51:1. The trend revealed by these numbers is that during the past 20-years the proportion of working age people to non-working-age people has grown somewhat. Again, that was shown graphically in Figure 1-F, with the increase in population from age 35 to age 59. For comparison purposes, the dependency ratio for Wood County in 2000 was 1.44:1.

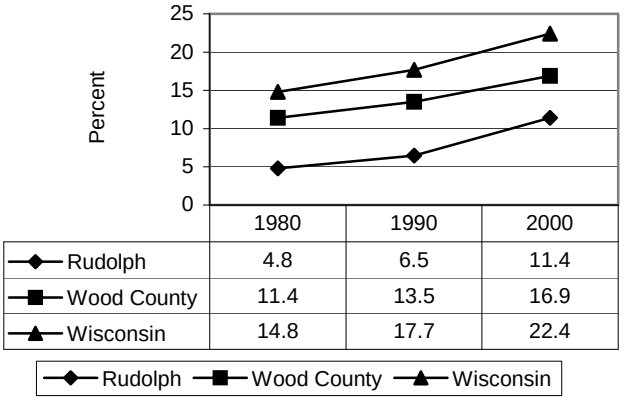
Educational Levels

Educational attainment levels of Rudolph residents have risen steadily with respect to high school graduates. The proportion of high school graduates in the Town originally lagged behind the County or the State (Figure 1-G), but the gap has closed over the past 30 years. Rudolph now matches the State average and slightly exceeds the County.



The proportion of college graduates living in the Town has consistently been lower than both the County and the State. Figure 1-H shows that the gap between Town numbers and numbers for the County and the State has remained fairly consistent, although the overall numbers of Town residents with college degrees continues to rise.

Figure 1-H
COLLEGE GRADUATES



Income

Figure 1-I lists the median income levels in Rudolph and Wood County. It is encouraging to the Town to note that household and family income levels are significantly higher than the County and State income levels. The Town's per capita income level falls between that of the County and State.

Poverty figures are also provided by the U.S. Census reports. Of the 1,161 persons in the Town in 2000, 77 had incomes below the poverty level. That calculates to 6.4% of the Town's population. This is slightly less than the 6.5% figure for Wood County individuals. In Wisconsin, 8.7 percent of the population was classified as living in poverty. Only 4.2% of the Town's families had poverty level incomes compared to 4.4% in Wood County and 5.6% in Wisconsin.

Figure 1-I
MEDIAN INCOME – 1999

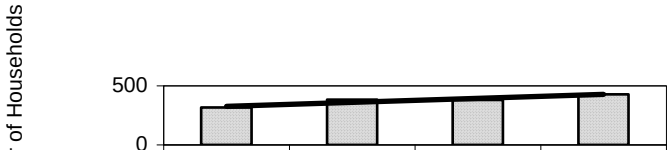
1999 INCOME	RUDOLPH	WOOD COUNTY	WISCONSIN
Household	$50,852	$41,595	$43,791
Family	$53,958	$50,798	$52,911
Per Capita	$20,284	$20,203	$21,271
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS OF POPULATION, 2000, Table DP-3.			

Households[2]

Households and Household Size

Figures 1-J and 1-K illustrate two trends in the Town of Rudolph that are typical of trends in most communities. First, the number of households in Rudolph continues to increase, having gone from 318 in 1970, to its present 429. The second trend, shown in Figure 1-K, is a continuous decline in the average number of persons per household during the same time period. In 1970, the average household in Rudolph had 4.21 persons. Compare that to the 2.71 average persons per household today. Larger families were still the norm 30-years ago. Family size has decreased, however, for many factors. The number of farms has decreased. Along with fewer numbers, advances in farm technology have resulted in fewer people being able to operate family farms. The move to the suburbs has resulted in commuters migrating to the Town for more space. Double-income families have resulted in fewer children as both adult partners work to support their lifestyle. There are a multitude of other factors leading to smaller family size. The trend for more households and fewer persons per household is likely to continue throughout the planning period, although at a slower rate than in past years, as children of the "baby boomers" leave home to start households of their own. Referring back to Figure 1-F, we saw an increase in elementary and middle school-age children and a decline in the 15 to 19 year olds and early adults to the age 34. Children have been leaving the Town as they finish high school, according to these numbers. Combine this with the decline in children younger than five years, and one can surmise that there will be fewer persons in each Rudolph household when the next census is taken.

Figure 1-J
Number of Households - Town of Rudolph



	1970	1980	1990	2000
Number of Households	318	382	381	429

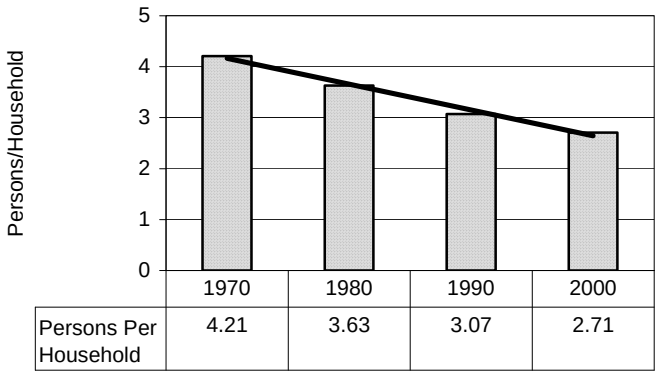
Household Forecasts

The number of households is a function of population and persons per household. Population projections show that Rudolph's population will remain stable or decrease slightly. Household size is expected to continue to decline. Between 1990 and 2000, an additional 38 housing units were added to the Town's inventory, bringing the total number to 429. Three hundred-seventy-one households occupied the housing units, an 86.5

[2] A household and a housing unit are different. A housing unit is a structure, i.e., single-family home, duplex, four-plex, etc. A housing unit may house more than one household, i.e., two households in a duplex, etc.

percent occupancy rating. The population per household figure has continued to decline. Figure 1-D showed a projected decline in population to 1,125. Assuming that the population per household will drop at a rate of –0.10 percent from 2.74 to 2.64 persons per household, the number of households in the year 2010 will be 426. This is an increase of 55 households over the next 10 years.

Figure 1-K
Persons Per Household - Town of Rudolph



Household trends and projections are summarized in Figure 1-L.

Figure 1-L
HOUSEHOLD TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
TOWN OF RUDOLPH
1970 – 2010

Year	Population	Households	Population/Household
1970	1,340	318	4.21
1980	1,385	382	3.63
1990	1,180	381	3.10
2000	1,161	371	2.74
2010	1,125	426	2.64

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Wood County Planning & Zoning Office.

Employment Characteristics

The Town of Rudolph is becoming more of a commuter community than in the past. According to the 2000 census, the civilian labor force (persons age 16 and over) in the Town totaled 929, 621 of whom were employed. The types of occupations of Rudolph residents in 2000 are listed in Figure 1-M. The mean travel time to work is about 20.3 minutes, which would suggest that the workers are traveling to jobs outside of Rudolph. A review of the occupation types, coupled with the mean travel time to work, means that as much as 90% of the jobs of Rudolph residents are located outside of the Town.

Figure 1-M
TOWN OF RUDOLPH
OCCUPATION TYPES – 2000

OCCUPATION TYPE	NUMBER	PERCENT
Management, professional & related	130	22
Service occupations	57	10
Sales & office occupations	122	20
Farming, forestry & fishing	14	2
Construction, extraction & maintenance	81	13
Production, transportation & material moving	197	33
Total	604	100

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000, Table DP-3.

2. HOUSING

Goals and Objectives

Goal: The overall housing goal of the Town of Rudolph is to allow for the development of an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand. While allowing for additional homes, residents strongly conveyed their interest in preserving rural character, maintaining agricultural practices, and limiting the density of development throughout the town.

Objective: Implement the comprehensive plan through the existing Town of Rudolph Zoning Ordinances.

Objective: Continue to be an active participant in the planning process when the Wisconsin Rapids Area Water Quality Management Plan is updated and work with the City of Wisconsin Rapids to promote planned development in the service area of the Wisconsin Rapids Urban Area Sewer Service Area Plan.

Objective: To work with the Village of Rudolph to explore planned development near that community in a manner that may be serviced by public sanitary sewer.

Objective: Allow higher-density cluster-type residential development as a means to maintaining the Town's rural character, pursuant to Town residents' preferences, while allowing new housing units to be constructed.

Objective: Allow some large lot housing areas to accommodate those with desires for more remote or more private development sites.

Goal: Provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels, all age groups and special needs.

Objective: Utilize the Town's zoning standards to encourage development at a density that is considered much lower than clustered suburban communities, yet allow for lot sizes that make the land affordable for lower-income homeowners.

Objective: Encourage developers of rental units to build units in areas of the Town where, in the case of duplexes and other multi-family units, the housing type will be compatible with neighboring land uses.

Goal: Allow for the use of land for development or redevelopment of low- & moderate-income housing.

Objective: Allow various lot sizes that are conducive to different housing types.

Goal: Encourage the maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing stock.

Objective: Provide white goods collection and tire clean-up events.

Objective: Encourage volunteers or civic organizations to help those who are physically unable to maintain their property.

Objective: Educate property owners about the Town zoning ordinances and other ordinances that may affect them, including activities that may require permits. The Town will work with Wood County to help make information available to Town residents.

In the 1998 community survey that was distributed to every Town property owner prior to beginning work on the comprehensive plan, 75 percent of the respondents indicated that they thought the overall appearance and quality of housing in the Town of Rudolph is "about average" and 17 percent said appearance and quality of housing is "very good." Seven percent of survey respondents thought housing quality and appearance is "poor."

There was a mix of responses regarding the relationship of housing and agricultural uses in the Town. On one end of the spectrum, 19 percent of survey respondents said remaining farmland should be preserved "at all costs", while, on the other end of the spectrum, 23 percent of respondents prefer not to protect the remaining farmland, but to let landowners develop as they see fit. Between these two extremes, 6 percent prefer to protect only prime, productive farmland and 46 percent indicated that the Town should protect farmland, but allow for residential growth in areas unsuitable for agriculture. Finally, 78 percent of all respondents enjoy living in the Town because of its rural atmosphere and low population density.

Housing Assessment

Age of Housing Stock

For the past twenty years the Town of Rudolph has seen an average of 4 to 5 new homes constructed yearly. The Town has an abundance of wet and heavy soils limiting available building sites. Agricultural practices utilize land that is farmable, so availability of purchasable land is seldom evident. The requirement of costly on-site private sewage systems is also a factor in placement of new homes and density levels of available land.

Figure 2-A shows the number of new housing units that were built from 1940 to 2000. Forty-nine percent of Rudolph's housing units were constructed between 1940 and 1979. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of new housing units dropped by more than 50 percent from the previous decade, but rebounded during the 1990s, when 57 new housing structures were added to Rudolph's housing inventory. According to the 2000 census, there are 446 total housing units in the Town. The community survey indicated that most Town residents would like to see the growth rate continue as it has during recent years[3].

[3] Forty-one percent of survey respondents would like the Town to "maintain the present growth rate" and another 23 percent would like the population to "remain the same."

Figure 2-A AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURES TOWN OF RUDOLPH		
YEAR BUILT	HOUSING UNITS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
1990 – March 2000	57	13
1980 – 1989	36	8
1970 – 1979	81	18
1960 – 1969	62	14
1940 – 1959	75	17
1939 or earlier	135	30
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	446	100
Source: U.S Census of Population, 2000, Table DP-4.		

Structural Value

The structural value of specified owner-occupied housing in the Town of Rudolph for the year 2000 is listed in Figure 2-B. Fifteen percent of all housing units were valued at $50,000 or less. Most homes (75%) in Rudolph are in a “mid-value” range - $50,000 to $149,999. Six percent of Rudolph’s homes are valued between $150,000 and $199,999, and three percent are valued between $200,000 and $299,999. One home is valued higher than that.

There is a nice range in the value of housing units in the Town. The value of homes in Rudolph shows that there are low-income housing opportunities and considerable lower-middle to upper-middle income housing opportunities. While upper-income housing is not widely present, the Town has many areas that would be compatible for this housing type as well.

Figure 2-B STRUCTURAL VALUE OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS TOWN OF RUDOLPH – 2000		
VALUE	NUMBER OF UNITS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Less than $50,000 -	29	16
$50,000 - $99,999	104	55.5
$100,000 - $149,999	36	19
$150,000 - $199,999	11	6
$200,000 – $299,999	6	3
$300,000 or more	1	0.5
Median – Rudolph	$84,300	
Median – Wood Co.	$81,400	
Median-Wisconsin	$112,200	
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000, Table DP-4.		

Occupancy Characteristics

According to census figures, the occupancy status of housing units in the Town of Rudolph has remained relatively stable at between 95 and 100 percent since 1980 (Figure 2-C). In 1980, 345 of the 383 housing units, or 90% of the total units, were owner-occupied and 38 housing units were renter-occupied. In 1990, the number and percent of renter-occupied units reported decreased to 27 units or 7%. The overall number of housing units remained about the same, but vacant homes increased by 4.5% during that same time. In 2000, the number and proportion of renter-occupied units had almost doubled to 52 units, or twelve percent of the Town's housing stock. This is a fair share of housing that is available to renters, supporting the affordable housing opportunities of the Town. Within this same time frame the Town saw a substantial increase in the amount of housing units. During the past 10 – 12-years, three to four and one-half percent of the total housing units have been vacant. This makes for a good turnover selection.

Figure 2-C
OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS
TOWN OF RUDOLPH HOUSING STOCK
1980 – 2000

	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant	Total Housing Units
2000	371 (85%)	52 (12%)	15 (3%)	438
1990	337 (88.5%)	27 (7%)	17 (4.5%	381
1980	345 (90%)	38 (10%)	0; 0%	383
Source: U.S. Census of Population (Table DP-1 for Year 2000 data).				

It is interesting to analyze the tenure of householders, or how long they have lived in their homes (Figure 2-D). Of the owner-occupied housing units, 28 percent have lived in their home for five or fewer years and 45 percent for 10 or fewer years. These numbers compare to 40 percent and 57 percent for Wood County for the same time frames. One-third (37.5%) of Rudolph's residents have lived in their homes for at least 20 years – they were there prior to 1980. This compares to slightly over 25 percent for Wood County. County numbers show more movement than do Town numbers, but the numbers for Wood County include a very large number of rental units, group homes, nursing homes, etc., that are not present in the Rudolph.

As a comparison, and to provide perspective to the source of planning goals, objectives and programs, 20 percent of the community survey respondents for this plan have lived in Rudolph for 10 years or less and 73 percent have lived in the Town for more than 10 years.[4] The remaining 2.5 percent of respondents own land, but do not reside in Rudolph and four percent not did respond to this survey question.

[4] Town of Rudolph Community Survey, 1998

Figure 2-D
TENURE BY YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT
TOWN OF RUDOLPH

YEARS	PERCENT OF TOTAL	
	TOWN OF RUDOLPH	WOOD COUNTY
1995 – March 2000	28.3	40.3
1990 – 1994	17.2	16.5
1980 – 1989	16.9	17.6
1970 – 1979	16.9	11.9
1969 or earlier	20.6	13.8

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000, Table DP-4.

3. TRANSPORTATION

General

The purpose of this section is to describe the Town's transportation system, assess current and future changes and additions to that system, describe how the transportation system relates to other segments of the comprehensive plan, develop goals and objectives for the transportation system and consider local programs to achieve those goals and objectives.

Overall Goal

It is the overall goal of the Town of Rudolph to provide residents with safe, efficient, cost-effective access between their homes and places of work, schools, parks, shopping and other destination points and to provide a means for travelers to traverse the Town with minimal conflict with local land uses, while enjoying the natural beauty of the Town.

Objectives, Policies & Programs

Goal: Provide choices of transportation for Town residents.

Objective: Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wood County Highway Department, the City of Wisconsin Rapids, the Village of Rudolph and neighboring towns to encourage and coordinate development of bicycle and pedestrian trails and routes.

Objective: Maintain contact with the Wood County Highway Department and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to encourage continued improvements to the highways as necessary in the interest of the safety of highway users and efficiency in coordinating local road improvements with those of County and State highways.

Goal: Provide interconnection of transportation systems between municipalities.

Objective: Consider an Official Street Map of the Town of Rudolph with input from the City of Wisconsin Rapids, Village of Rudolph, adjacent towns, Wood County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to coordinate road alignments and trail development.

Goal: Provide safe transportation throughout the Town.

Objective: Coordinate local road improvements with work on County and State/Federal highways.

Transportation System

The Town of Rudolph's internal transportation system consists primarily of 43 miles of Town roads, County highways and 6 miles of State Highway 34. Local roads of adjoining communities link to Rudolph roads to form a network of transportation corridors. Local roads County Highway P and State Highway 34 will also be changed in the near future to State Highway 66 and State Highway 13/34 respectively.

The Wood County Board adopted a bicycle and pedestrian plan in 2002 and is updating it at the same time as this plan is being developed. The original Wood County bicycle and pedestrian plan proposed bicycle routes to be established along county roads and state highways because that was the limit of their jurisdiction. In the Town of Rudolph, the Wood County Plan only included County Highway O and State Highway 34 as a "proposed alternate or future bikeway." Since 2002, more interest has been shown for off-road trails in rural areas because of the safety that bicycle trails and improved routes provide users. In the towns, widened shoulders on county roads may be the principal improvement, although off-road trails may be possible and desirable in some areas. Several respondents to the 1998 Town of Rudolph community survey suggested that bicycle trails be provided. The Town should join the county planning efforts and suggest, or recommend, trails and routes in Rudolph that could be tied into the county-wide bicycle system. The benefits will include safer commuter routes to work and school, fewer vehicles on the roads, and a healthier population.

Finally, the Wisconsin Rapids urban area has seen the development of several miles of bicycle trails and has more approved or planned for in the near future. These trails are being used for commuting and recreation purposes alike. Planned routes, as proposed in the Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan of 2002 and existing bicycle routes in the Rudolph area are shown in Figure 3-A.

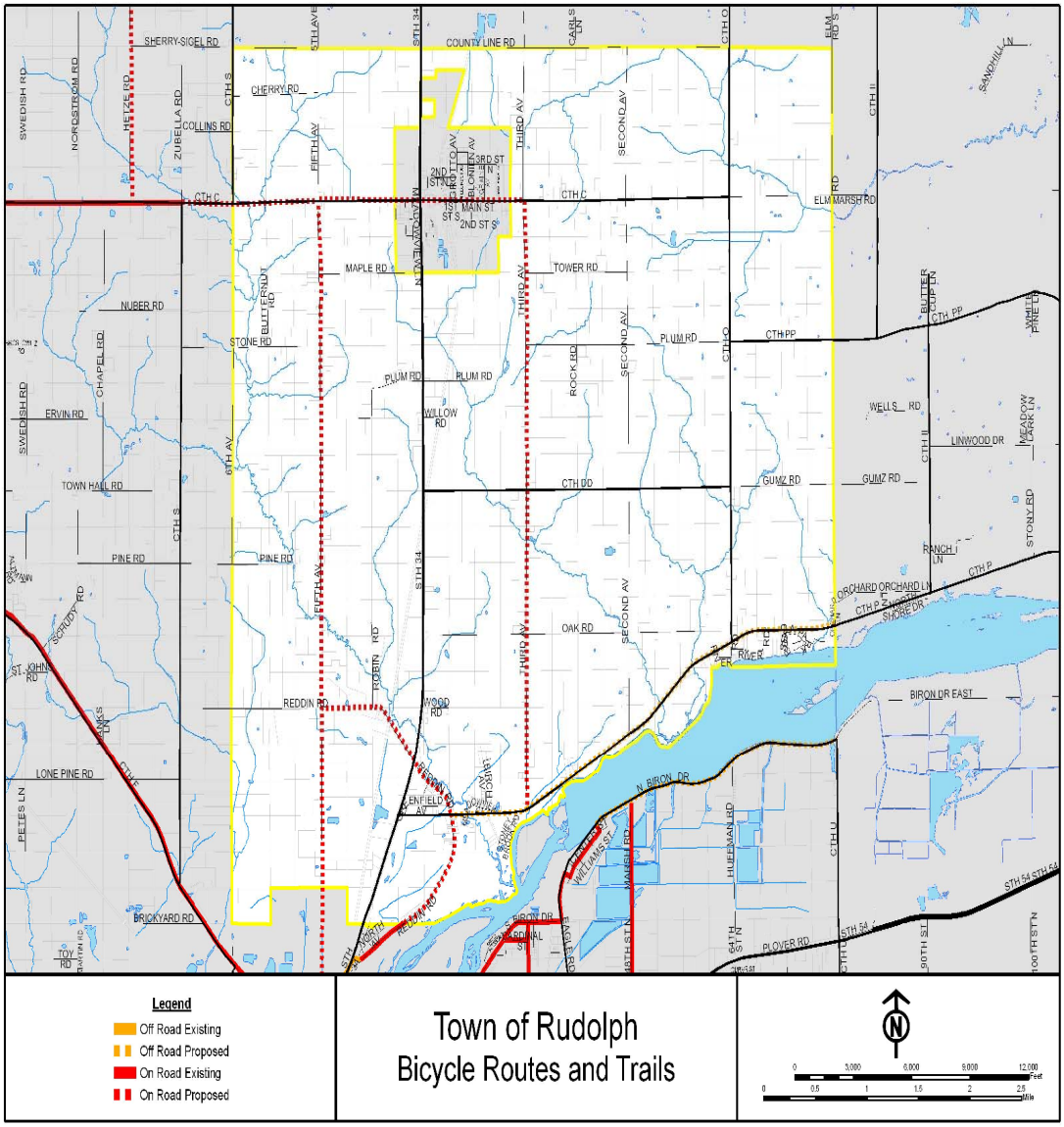
Relationship of Transportation System to Other Comprehensive Plan Segments

Much of the residential development in the Town of Rudolph is created by residents who commute to work in nearby communities. Lifestyle choices of those working in the city, but living in the Town, affect the future of surrounding suburban areas. As the Town grows, one of the first impacts is on the roads. When a new development is proposed in a commuter town like Rudolph, provisions have to be made to move the intended population to and from that development to work, school, shopping, parks and other activities. Eventually, existing local roads may become so busy that the roads will have to be widened to accommodate peak traffic, or speed limits may have to be lowered for safety reasons.

The Town of Rudolph is home to agricultural activity and this has an impact on vehicles traveling on roads in the Town. It is common for slow-moving vehicles such as tractors with farm implements to use roads in the Town to access various pieces of property.

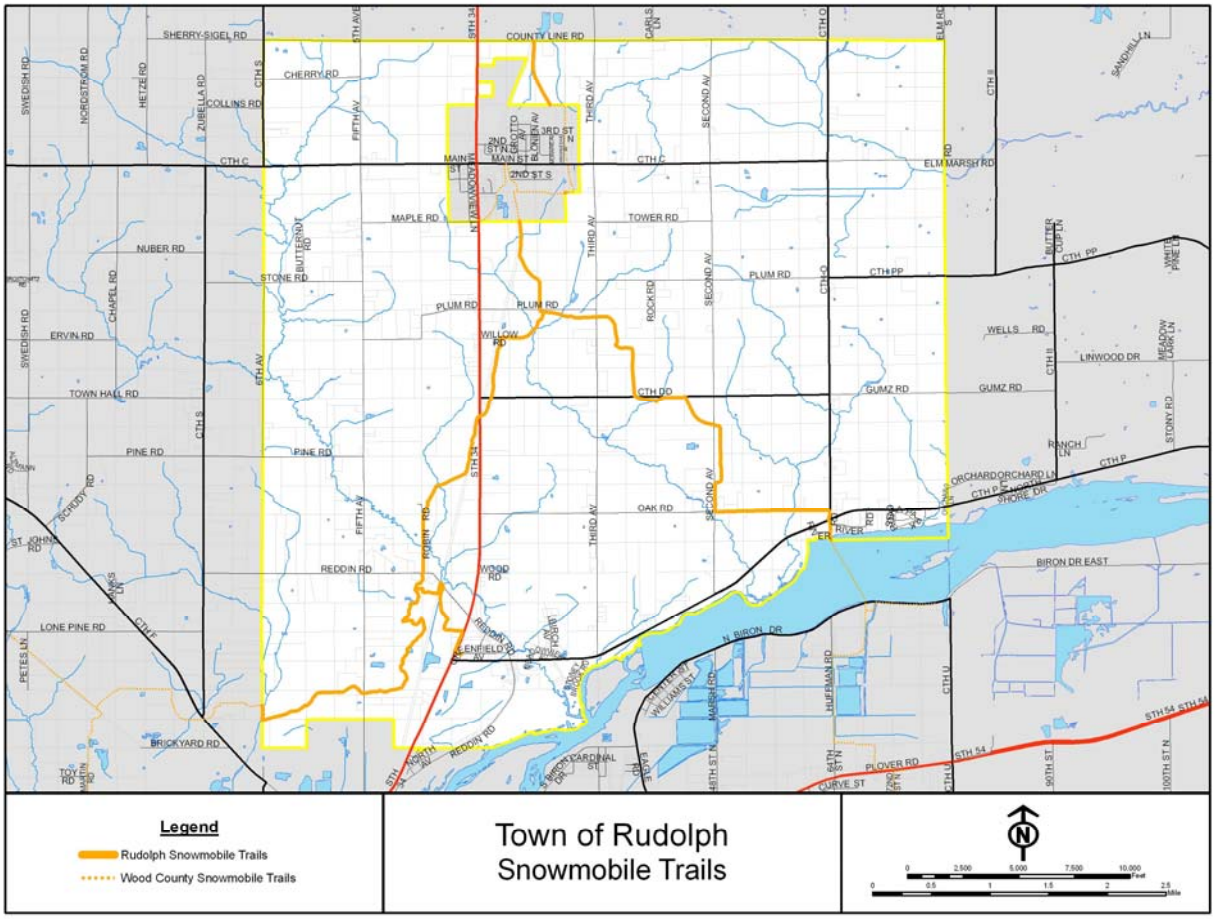
Transportation system changes also impact certain community facilities. As more roads are built, the demand increases for more road maintenance equipment.

Figure 3-A Bike Trails



The Town of Rudolph currently has 12.5 miles of snowmobile trails, which are maintained by the Rudolph River Rovers Snowmobile Club. At this time, the use of ATV's on snowmobile trails and town roads in Rudolph is prohibited.

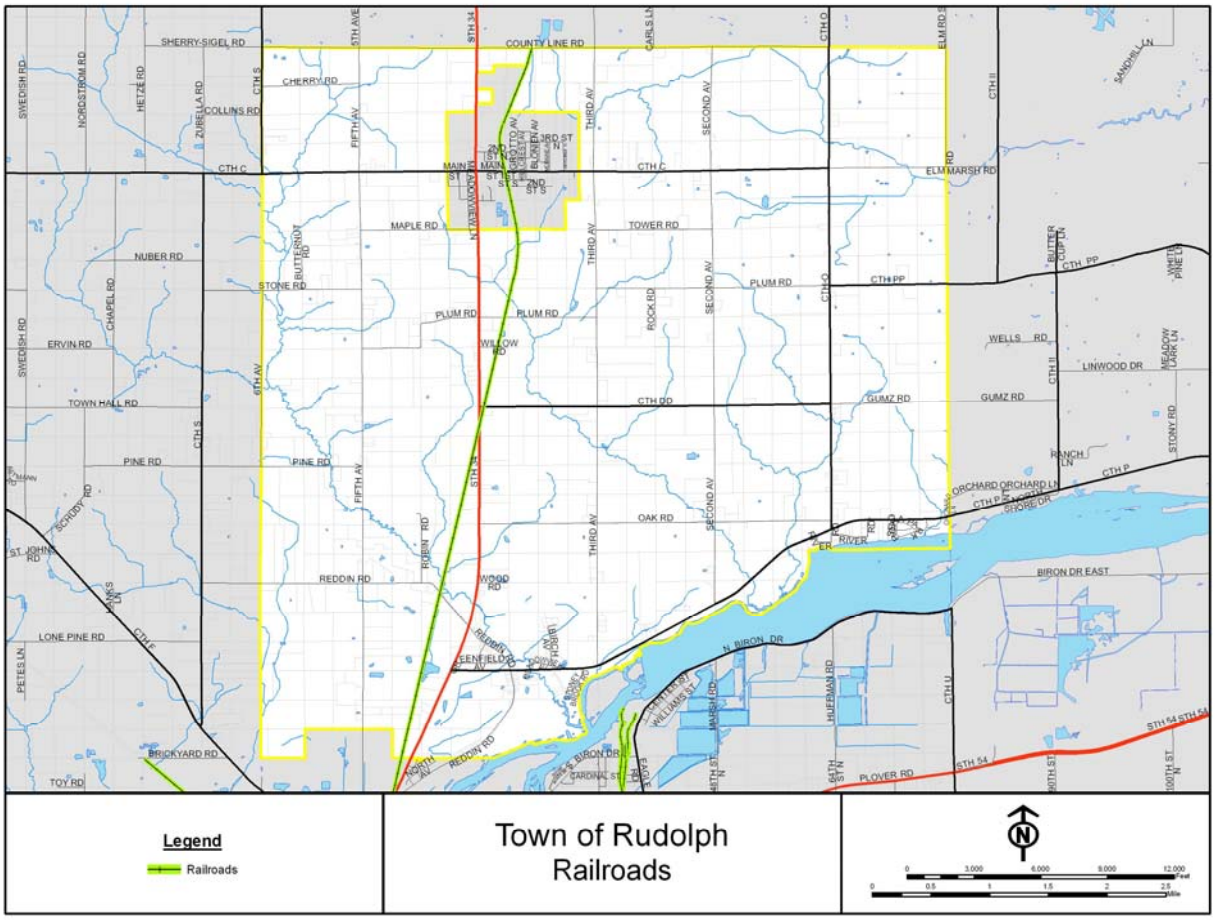
Figure 3-B Snowmobile Trails



There is one existing railroad track in the town of Rudolph (Figure 3-C) which consists of 5.5 miles of track on 60 acres of land. Rail traffic in Rudolph began in 1873 when the Wisconsin Valley Railroad opened a line from Grand Rapids to Junction City.[5] Passenger service ended in 1955. While long trains are common, local roads are only blocked by trains when heavy coal trains have difficulty with the grade as the line rises from south to north.

[5] "Rudolph: A Little Wisconsin Town with a Story to Tell," 2006, p. 30

Figure 3-C Railroad Line



Local airports to Rudolph are the Alexander Field Airport in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, the Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee, Wisconsin, the Marshfield Municipal Airport in Marshfield, Wisconsin and the Stevens Point Municipal Airport in Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

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4. UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Goals, objectives, policies and programs

Predominantly rural towns, like Rudolph, typically do not provide urban-type utilities and community facilities, such as sanitary and storm sewers, public water supply, police and fire protection, parks in some instances, and similar facilities. Towns simply do not have the financial means to provide public utilities because of lower population and lower density developments. The overall goal of the Town of Rudolph is, however, to provide those utilities and community facilities that are needed, or desired, by Town residents, either through Town efforts or as a partner with other communities, within good financial reason.

Goal: Maintain the rural character of the Town.

Objective: Maintain agricultural practices in the Town

Objective: Encourage the planting of trees on idled or fallow farmland to improve wildlife habitat and reduce the potential for erosion.

Goal: Recognize that while typically wet and poor draining soils in the majority of the Town will serve as deterrent to large-scale residential developments, but that changes in current regulations of such systems could make fairly dramatic changes in a relatively short period of time.

Objective: Town and zoning officials must remain aware of changing technologies and regulations concerning private on-site waste treatment systems, using careful planning and adjustments to zoning if changes occur causing growth which would threaten the rural character of the Town.

Utilities

Sewage Disposal/Sanitary Sewer

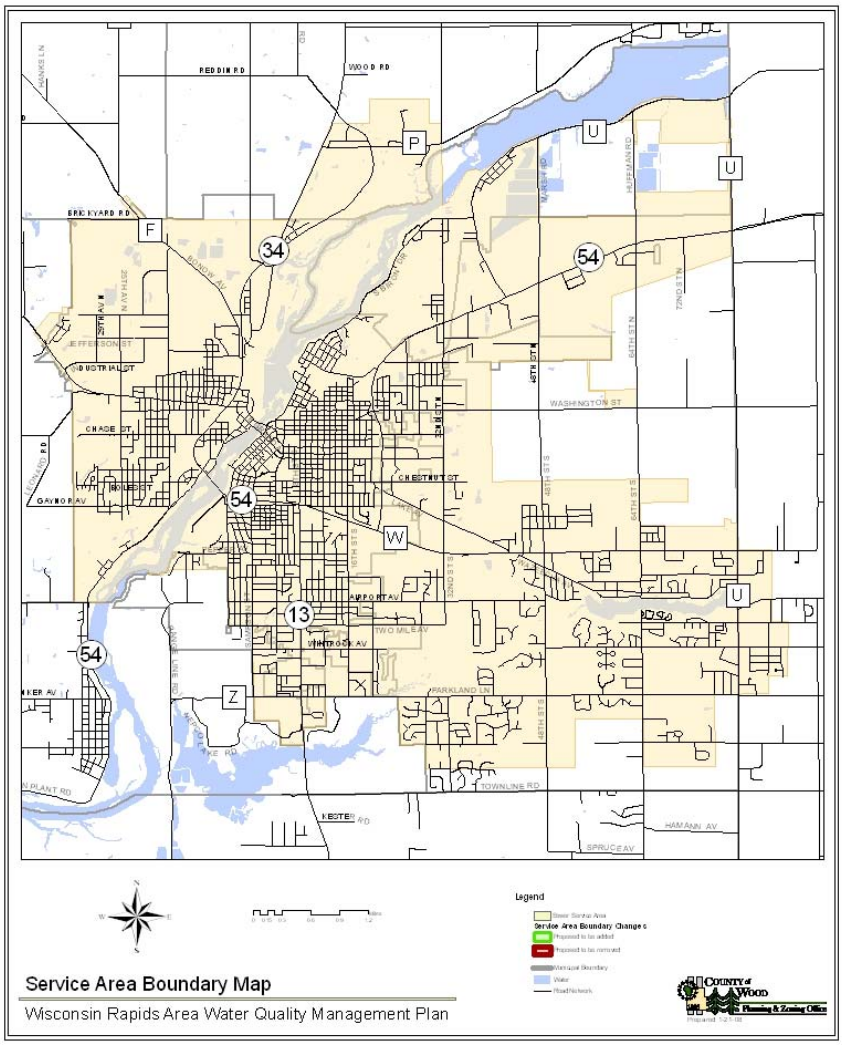
The Town of Rudolph does not have municipal sanitary sewer service. Any development that occurs in the Town must install a Private On-site Waste Treatment System (POWTS). All such systems must be approved by the State Department of Commerce under the provisions of applicable statutes and the Wisconsin Administrative Code for both installation and maintenance. Because of poor soil drainage and relatively high groundwater in Rudolph, most POWTS in the Town are mound systems or holding tanks. Holding tanks are not technically a “treatment system” because waste is held and not treated. Holding tanks have been and continue to be allowed as a “system of last

resort" in Wood County. This means that, if a "treatment system" of some type cannot be installed, the property owner can use holding tanks.

The Town of Rudolph was a participant in the Wisconsin Rapids Area Water Quality Management Plan in 1985. The purpose of that plan was to determine where municipal sanitary sewer may be needed over a 20-year planning period. That effort was recently updated. In the most recent version, there is recognition that the southern end of the Town may eventually utilize the sewer services of the city of Wisconsin Rapids.

Figure 4-A

Wisconsin Rapids Area Water Quality Management Plan



Unless it is determined that other parts of Rudolph will need sanitary sewer, the Town's development will continue to rely on private on-site waste treatment systems. It is the practice of the Town to provide information about the advantages and disadvantages of building in various soils and groundwater conditions and refer potential developers to the appropriate County and State agencies which regulate POWTS and well locations.

Storm Water Management

The Town of Rudolph is rural in nature and does not provide or rely on an integrated storm water collection management system. Natural run-off occurs through various small drainage ditches as well as creeks like Alder, Bear, Flick and Mosquito.

Water Supply

The typical source of water for the residents of the Town of Rudolph is private wells. In spite of a relatively high water table, the majority of the wells in the Town are drilled wells. A notable exception to the use of the individual, private drilled wells is the Greenfield Avenue area in the south end of the township. There are two joint wells for that specific area due to recent issues with contamination of many of the individual wells in that more heavily residential area.

Solid Waste Disposal

Residential solid waste disposal is the responsibility of the individual homeowner/resident in the Town of Rudolph. The service options are limited as at this time the only provider of roadside pickup is Veolia Environmental Services Cranberry Creek out of Wisconsin Rapids.

The Town sponsors an annual "white good collection" which handles larger items such as appliances at low or no cost to the Town residents.

On-Site Wastewater Treatment Technologies

There are no municipal on-site waste water treatment centers in the Town of Rudolph. The private system owners in the Town are responsible to meet all county and state requirements for upkeep of their private sanitary systems. The Town will work to ensure that those requirements are well understood by all and will amend ordinances to meet those requirements.

Recycling Facilities

For recycling, the Town of Rudolph residents currently have several options. There is a collection point at the Town hall that is open to receive materials twice per month. Items that are managed at this point are paper, plastics, glass, metals, waste oil and used anti-freeze (at nominal cost). Veolia Environmental Services will pick up mixed recyclables (glass, plastics, metals) and paper in a separate container with the normal garbage pick up. Lastly, there is a drop-off point for paper products in the city of Wisconsin Rapids that helps provide raw material for a local employer (Corenso).

Telecommunication Facilities

The Town of Rudolph does not own or operate any telecommunication facilities. There is a telecommunication tower on the west end of the Town land on 2nd Avenue, near the Town hall that provides some income to the Town on a long-term contract. In addition to the owner of the tower (WE Energies), the site is used by the Wood County Sheriff's Dept, Rudolph Volunteer Fire Department and Wood County Emergency Management as part of the lease agreement between the Town and WE Energies. (see Figure 4-B)

Other wireless communication towers are noted on Figure 4-B.

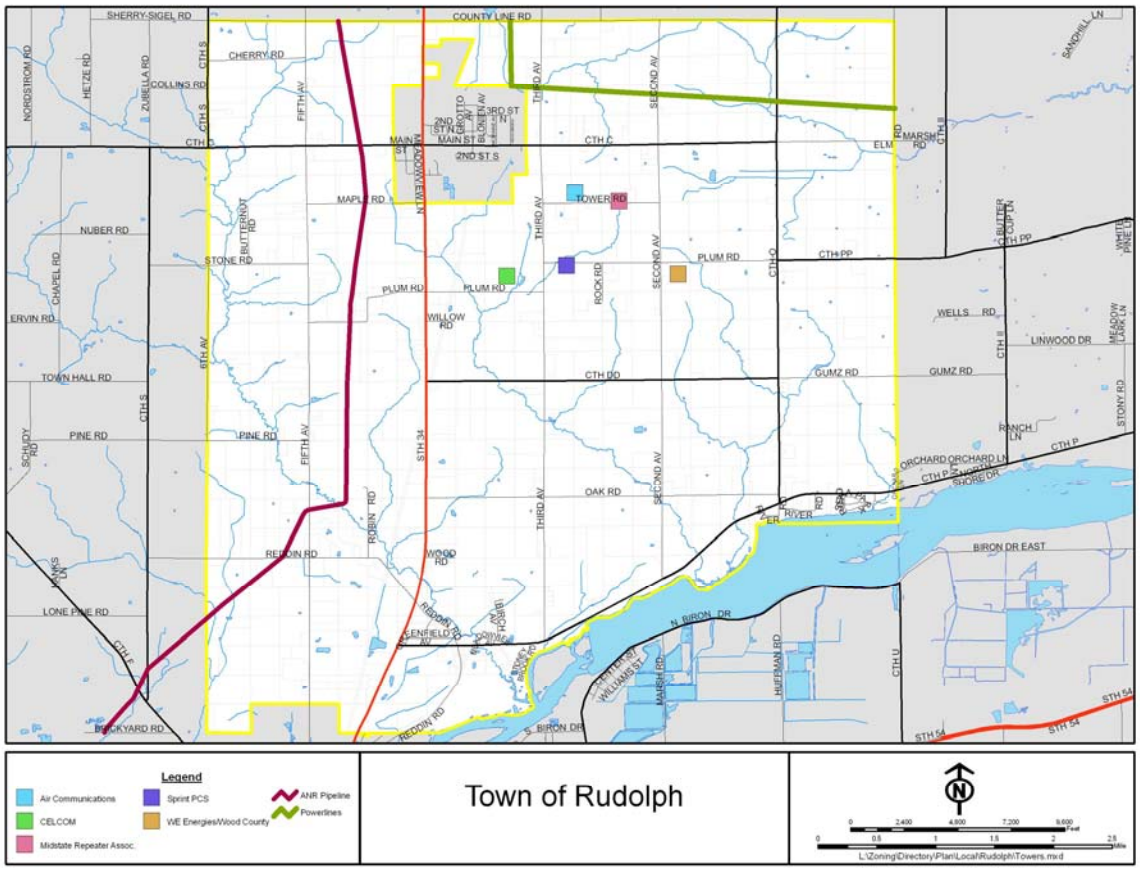
The Town has enacted an ordinance that is designed to limit the proliferation of "cell towers" in the Town in order to try to maintain a rural character. The main goal of the ordinance is not to stop construction of the towers, but to encourage co-location of antennas as much as possible.

Parks, Open Spaces and Recreational Resources

Recreation resources include both indoor and outdoor facilities, both public and private. Outdoor recreation facilities can include anything from forestland that is available to the public for hiking, bird-watching or camping to more structured facilities like ball fields. Public open space lands are important determinants of the quality of life within a community. Oftentimes, in rural areas that are adjacent to larger cities, residents of the smaller town will rely on city, county and state parks and open spaces for their recreation needs. There is a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities in Rudolph, including municipal and privately-owned properties. The Town of Rudolph does not own significant constructed recreational facilities, but there are many options available.

The Town owns nearly 80 acres on 2nd Avenue. The Town Hall sits on the west end of that property. This area is well utilized by many people during the various deer, turkey, and other game bird hunting seasons. A smaller parcel of Town land near the south end of the Town on 5th Avenue sees similar uses.

Figure 4-B Telecommunication Towers, Gas and Transmission Lines



Snowmobiling is an option in Rudolph as well. Many landowners in the Town cooperate by allowing access to their lands so a well-used trail can be established each winter.

The most significant recreational resource available in the Town of Rudolph is access to the Wisconsin River. There is a boat landing open to the public above the NewPage Biron dam (off the end of Hwy O). In addition, much of the acreage owned by NewPage Corp along the river is available for non-motorized recreational use by the public.

NewPage also owns and operates a private campground in the Town for its employees and retirees, which includes a significant number of Rudolph residents. The facility includes a pool, mini-golf, a boat landing, a ball diamond, shelter facilities as well as the large camping area.

County parks are also available to Rudolph residents. The nearest county parks are South Wood County Park, located east of Wisconsin Rapids, Nepco Lake County Park, just south of Wisconsin Rapids, the Dexter County Park, located south of Pittsville, North Wood County Park near Richfield, and Power Bluff in the Town of Arpin.

The Rudolph Community Park is located in the Village of Rudolph and is available to be utilized by the Town residents. The 14 acre park is located west of State Highway 34 at the intersection of Meadow View Lane and Park Street. It is a well developed recreation area with three baseball diamonds, one of which is lighted for night time play. There are also backstops, concession stands, a lighted scoreboard, tennis court, volleyball court, children's play area, and a "yellow brick road" walking path. The shelter house and restrooms are modern facilities. There are two paved parking areas. The ball diamonds are used regularly in the summer by the Rudolph Area Little League and the Wilderness Sportsman's Club. The park shelter house can be rented from May through October.

Finally, Rudolph residents also make use of Wisconsin Rapids and Port Edwards parks and recreation opportunities, especially in organized youth and adult sports activities. Facilities include both outdoor and indoor opportunities. Examples are the YMCA, South Wood County Hockey Arena, Wisconsin Rapids Area Youth Sports Association (boys and girls baseball and softball), adult softball leagues, youth soccer leagues, flag football, youth and adult basketball, youth wrestling and more.

Power-generation plants and transmission lines

There are no commercial power generation facilities in the Town of Rudolph. However, there is a significant transmission line right of way that cuts through the north east corner of the Township just north of County Highway C. (see Figure 4-B)

The Town has recently adopted ordinances to allow for relatively easy approval for the operation of private use wind power generation facilities. There are also slightly more restrictive provisions for commercial wind power generation facilities. To date, there has been little activity in this type of power generation in the Town.

There is a natural gas pipeline that cuts through the Town as well. It is indicated on Figure 4-B as the ANR pipeline. WE Energies is listed at the operation station as the emergency contact. That operations station is located at 1800 County Highway C, just west of State Highway 34.

Community Facilities

Cemeteries

There are two cemeteries in the Town of Rudolph. The St. John's cemetery is in the south end of the Town on Meadowview Rd., just off of County Highway P. The other cemetery is located on 5th Avenue, just south of Hwy C. This particular location has been known as St. Phillips, as well as St. Philomena and the Killian Flasch Catholic Church cemetery. Courthouse records show it as Killian Flasch cemetery in official documents.

Note that there is another cemetery (All Souls) in the Village of Rudolph at the St. Phillips Catholic Church.

Health Care Facilities

There are no licensed health care facilities in the Town of Rudolph. The residents of Rudolph rely on health care facilities in the cities of Wisconsin Rapids, Stevens Point and Marshfield for health care.

Child Care Facilities

There are no licensed child care facilities in the Town of Rudolph. The Village of Rudolph has a licensed child care facility near the elementary school on County Road C.

Police, Fire and Rescue Facilities

Police protection is provided to Rudolph by the Wood County Sheriff's Department. The Wisconsin State Patrol also provides enforcement in the community with Highway 34 traveling through the Town from South to North. There are no plans to hire a local law enforcement officer at this time.

The Town of Rudolph receives fire protection from the Rudolph Volunteer Fire Department. In the RVFD, there are presently 3.5 paid positions. With the volunteers, the fire department personnel total 87 with the fire fighters and First Responders.

Fire Station No. 1 is located on the south side of Main Street east from the railroad tracks. There are four more fire stations: Station 2 is located in the Town of Linwood, Portage County; Station 3 is located in the Town of Eau Pleine, Portage County; Station 4 is located in the Town of Carson, Portage County; and Station 5 is located in the Village of Junction City, Portage County.

Currently, the fire department covers the Village of Rudolph, the Town of Rudolph, Town of Linwood, Town of Eau Pleine, Town of Carson, one-half of the Town of Sigel, one-half of the Town of Milladore, and the Village of Junction City.

In May, 2008, the Rudolph Fire Department was issued an ISO Class 4 rating for the Village of Rudolph. Rudolph is the only village within the state without hydrants to receive this rating. All of the township service areas above are rated a 5 except for the Town of Milladore, which is rated a 9.

The Rudolph Fire Department has a rescue unit which is manned by First Responders and Emergency Medical Technicians who are professionally trained. Ambulance service is provided by Higgins Ambulance Service. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can respond to the Town within minutes of being called.

The practice of the Town with regard to protective services is to provide the most efficient police, fire and ambulance services to Town residents at the most cost-effective rates.

Libraries

Communities without libraries of their own pay for these services through a County assessment. That assessment is based on the Town's equalized valuation. It is calculated on the basis of the non-library municipalities paying a minimum of 70 percent of the costs associated with circulation to non-library-community users. The Town of Rudolph does not have its own library, but residents have access to the other libraries in the County, the closest being the McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids at 490 E. Grand Avenue. The policy of the Town Board is to continue participating in the library program to provide Rudolph residents with that important resource.

The Midstate Technical College library in Wisconsin Rapids is also a resource that is available to the Town residents.

Schools

The entire Town of Rudolph falls within the Wisconsin Rapids School District. Town officials must coordinate with school systems to keep them notified of new land splits, divisions, road extensions and other land development activities that may affect either the number of students or the routes that school busses can use.

There is an elementary school in the village of Rudolph that is part of the Wisconsin Rapids School District. The majority of the Town of Rudolph falls within the boundaries of that specific school so elementary students attend the school in the village of Rudolph. All higher grade students from the Town travel to the city of Wisconsin Rapids to attend West Junior High or Lincoln High School.

There are also several parochial schools in the City of Wisconsin Rapids that are utilized by residents of the Town of Rudolph.

Location, Use and Capacity of Public Facilities

The current Town hall on 2nd Avenue supports the needs of the Town very well at this point. It is available to community organizations or for Town residents' private parties for a nominal fee. It is used as a polling place for local, state and federal elections.

The demand is not excessive in terms of either frequency or capacity so there are no plans to expand.

Timetable on the need to expand or create new utilities and facilities

No obvious need for expansion of public utilities.

Assess future needs for services related to these expansions

No obvious need for expansion of public utilities.

5. AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL ELEMENTS

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal for the Town is to preserve the agricultural, natural & cultural elements of the Town and minimize impacts upon them.

Goal**:** Continue to be supportive of local agriculture and the role that it plays in the local economy and rural character.

Objective: Encourage the peaceful coexistence of agricultural land uses and other land uses.

Objective**:** Consider the impact of new development or land use changes on agricultural practices.

Goal: Encourage preservation of natural resources in the Town

Objective**:** Review the impacts of new development on natural resources in the Town.

Objective**:** Encourage development to take place in areas where natural resources will be minimally impacted.

Introduction

This section assumes that much of the opinion expressed in the 1998 Rudolph Town survey is still relevant. The top responses to what contributed to the rural character that defined Rudolph were: wooded areas, wildlife, quiet, farm residences and farm animals. Maintaining the current rural landscape was important to 78 percent of the respondents.

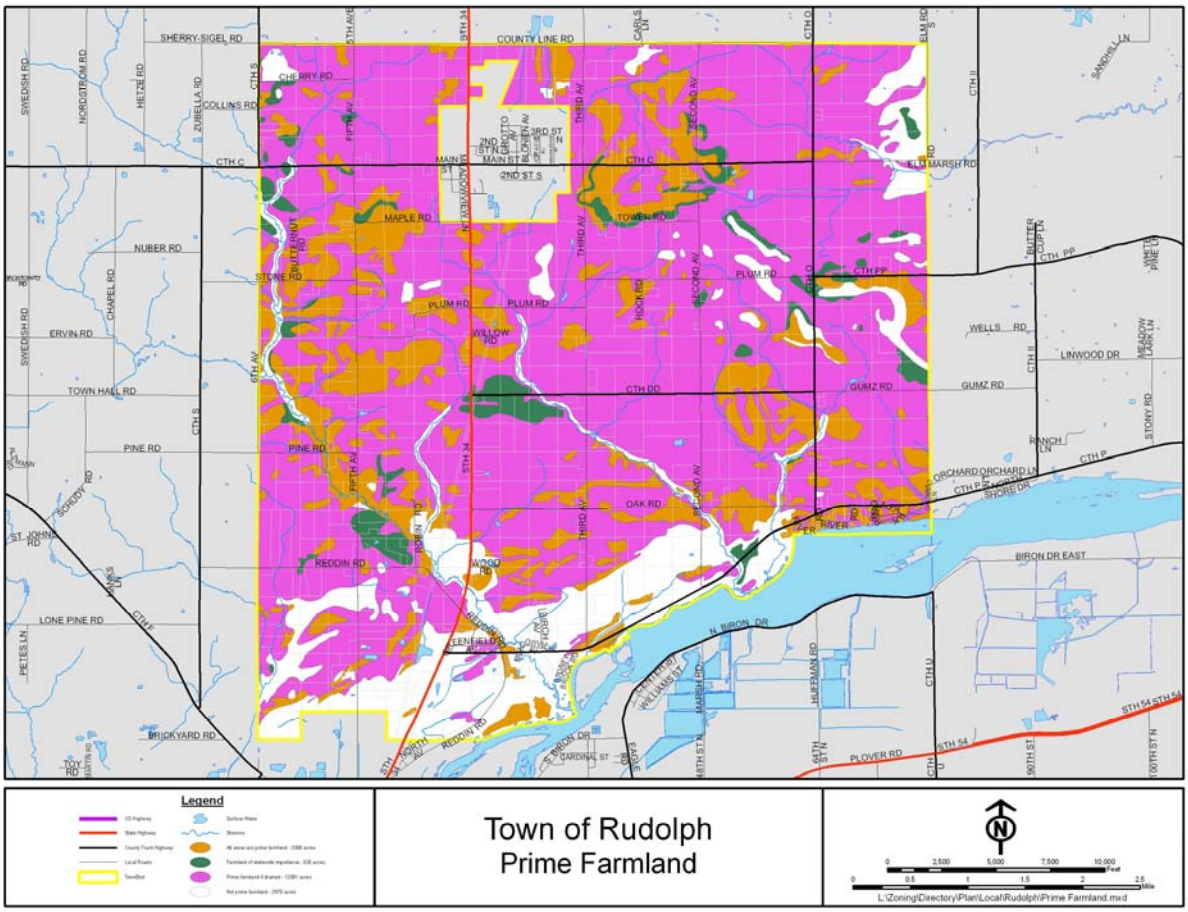
This section analyzes lands that have some constraints to development. Those are environmental, such as floodplains, wetlands, soils with high groundwater conditions, or soils with characteristics that severely limit development because of inability to accommodate private on-site waste treatment systems. This section will look at these characteristics and describe areas that cannot or should not be developed in the future. This should also help to reveal the best areas in the Town where future development may occur.

Productive Agricultural Areas

Figure *5-A* "Prime Farmland" shows how the Natural Resource Conservation Service rates soils in Rudolph for traditional agricultural purposes. There are 19,001 acres of land in Rudolph. 12,081 acres or 63.6 % would be prime land if drained and another 2,978 acres or 15.7% are listed as "not prime farmland." Only 3,308 acres or 17.4% are listed as "prime." The graph shows that the prime land is scattered throughout the township.

Rudolph, like many areas, has soil variations within relatively short distances with pockets of sand, gravel or loam soils in close proximity.

Figure 5-A "Prime Farm Land"



Water Resources

Wisconsin has significant responsibilities for protecting water resources under what is known as the "Public Trust Doctrine" which embodies the notion that the waters in the state are held in trust by the State for the benefit of all. There can be no private interests in waterways that adversely affect this public interest. In fulfilling its responsibilities under the Public Trust Doctrine, the Wisconsin Legislature charged the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to protect water resources. Each local plan, at a minimum, must be consistent with the state laws. This section of Rudolph's comprehensive plan provides an inventory of the water resources in the Town and establishes local policies and programs regarding those resources.

Water resources include groundwater, surface water, floodplains and shorelands, and wetlands.

Groundwater

Fifteen to thirty percent of the precipitation received annually in Wisconsin seeps into the ground and recharges our aquifers.[6] It is estimated that there is enough water underground to cover the state to a depth of 30 feet.[7] The Town of Rudolph is in an area of Wood County where soils are characterized by shallow groundwater conditions *(*see Figure 5-B, "Depth to Water Table"). In the Town of Rudolph, 9,174 acres or 48.3% of the total acreage has groundwater to a depth of 15 inches and 5,289 acres or 27.8% has groundwater listed at a depth of "0" inches. This constitutes a bit more than 75% of the total acreage. Conversely, only 843 acres or 4.44% has groundwater at a depth greater than four feet.

Interestingly, the area which has the greatest depth to groundwater lies in the Town closest to Wisconsin Rapids and along the Wisconsin River. There are also significant areas, 3,698 acres or 19.5% in the Town with no data on depth to the water table.

There are growing concerns statewide about both the quantity and quality of groundwater. Figure 5-C illustrates how nature's water system works and how land uses can impact groundwater quality.

Groundwater quality may be impacted by a variety of activities, including leaking underground storage tanks, old dumps, septic systems, land spreading of septic and over-application of fertilizers and pesticides. The most common contaminants found in Wisconsin groundwater are nitrate-nitrogen, volatile organic compounds (VOCS) and pesticides.[8] Nitrate comes from a number of sources, including nitrogen-based

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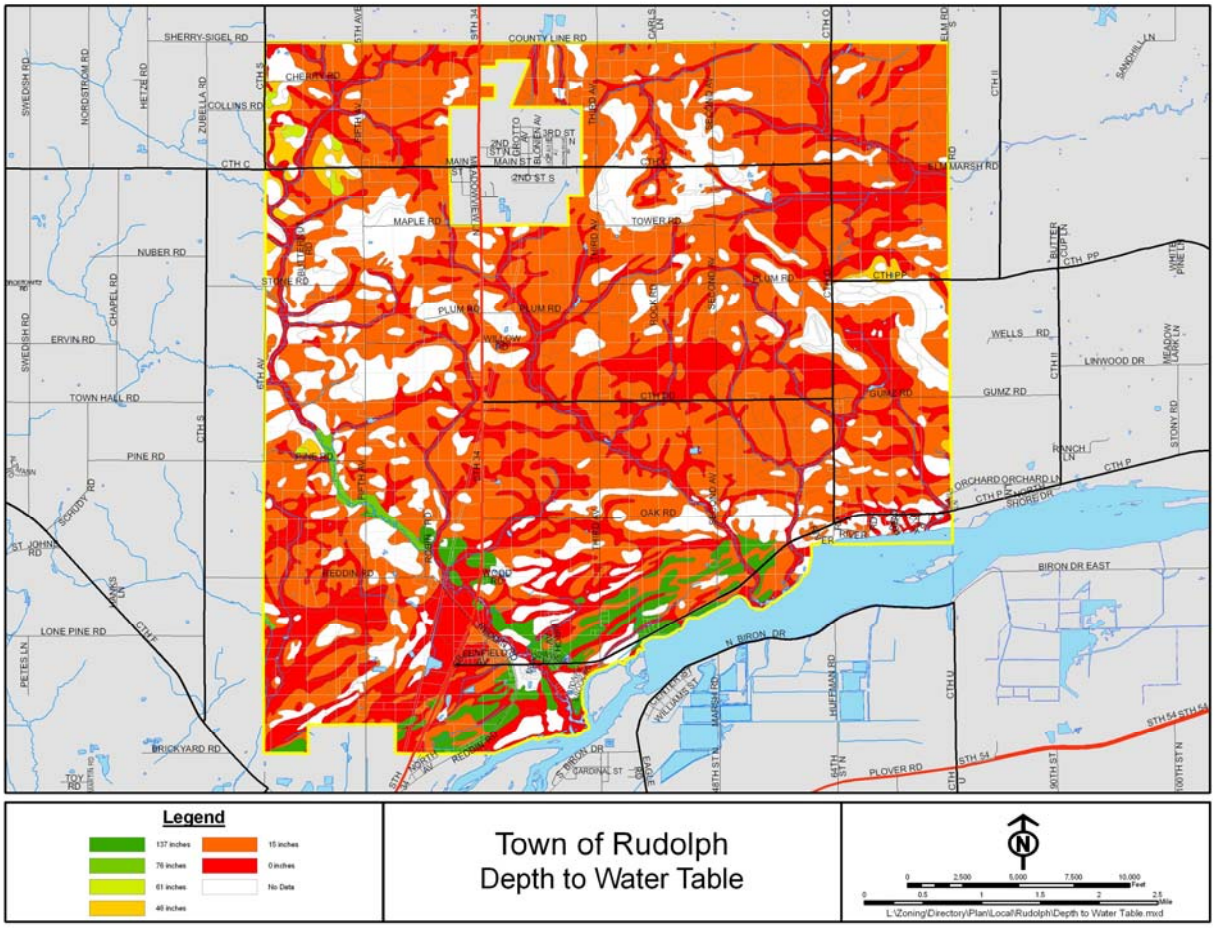
[6] "Planning for Natural Resources," Dept. of Urban & Regional Planning, University of Wisconsin – Madison/Extension and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, January, 2002, p. 35.
[7] Ibid
[8] Ibid

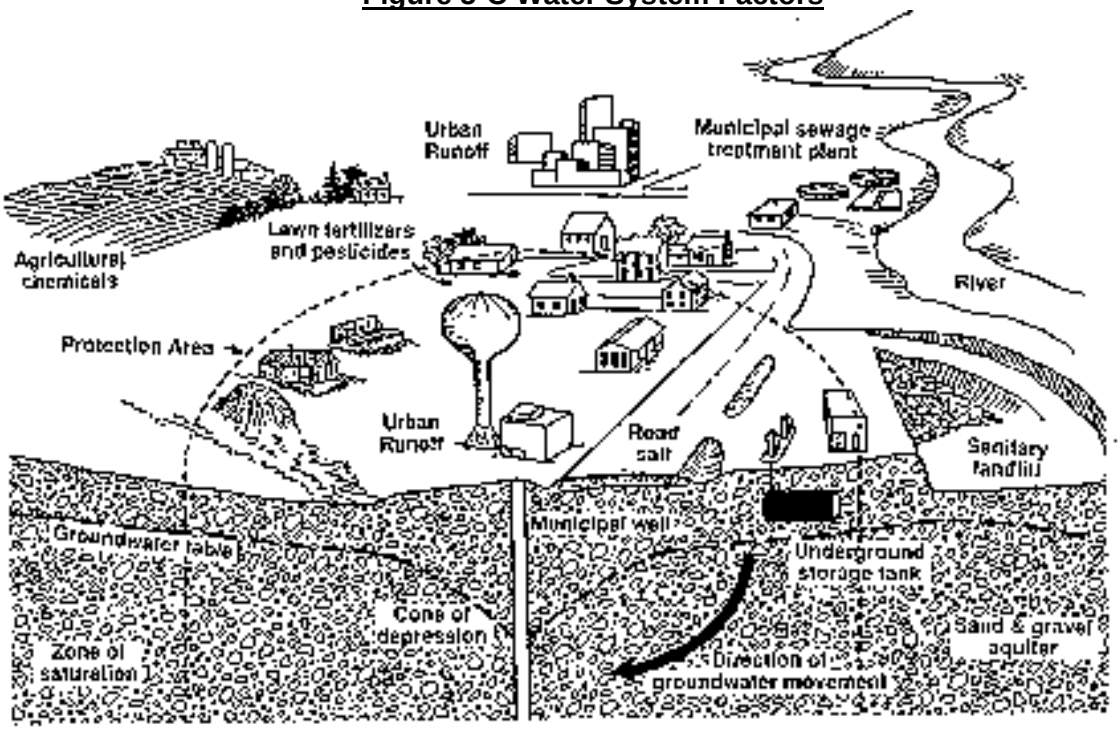
fertilizers, septic systems, animal waste storage, feedlots, municipal and industrial wastewater discharges and sludge disposal. Some examples of VOCs are gasoline, paints, paint thinners, stain removers and drain cleaners. Pesticides reach the groundwater from land application, spills, misuse or improper storage and disposal.

Figure 5-B "Depth to Water Table"



It is not only important to protect groundwater resources at the local level, it is the law. Private well supplies, agricultural uses, recreational use of surface waters, etc. depend on a clean water supply. In 1974, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned existing law and created the current law – the doctrine of reasonable use. A property owner's right to use groundwater is not absolute, but has to be reasonable, considering impacts on the water table and other uses. Groundwater is also protected as water of the State.

Figure 5-C Water System Factors



Surface Water

Surface water in the Town of Rudolph consists of Mosquito Creek, the Wisconsin River and minor streams such as Flick, Alder and Bear Creeks, to name a few. It is important to protect the quality of Rudolph's surface waters for the use of the abundant wildlife in the Town and because contamination can migrate to residential wells.

Floodplains and Shorelands

Floodplains serve many important functions related to flood and erosion control, ground water recharge, fish and wildlife habitat and water quality. The general public often does not fully understand floodplains and their function. A floodplain is a natural extension of a waterway and flooding is a natural physical event. When structures are placed in the floodplain, its water storage capacity is reduced, causing the next flood of equal intensity to crest even higher than the last, often flooding areas that were previously outside the floodplain.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines floodplains. Floodplains are comprised of the floodway, which is that area that actually carries the floodwaters, and the flood fringe, which is the area that accepts backed-up water for storage until the floodway can carry the water downstream. The flood fringe is sometimes referred to as the "backwater" areas. Floodplain boundaries have been established

nationwide to delineate the 100-year and 500-year flood elevations. There is a one percent chance that the 100-year, or regional, flood will occur in any given year. The regional flood could occur two years in a row, or may not occur at all in a 100-year period. According to the Wisconsin Emergency Management Division, Wisconsin communities experienced significant flooding each year from 1990-2001, except 1994. Total damages to public and private property, including agricultural damages, during that time period totaled more than one billion dollars.[9]

In the Town of Rudolph, 1,424 acres or 7.5% of the total acreage, have been designated as floodplain. (See 5-D) Those acres exist primarily along Mosquito Creek, and also near Flick, Bear and Alder creeks that empty into the Wisconsin River, as well as the area next to the Wisconsin River in the township and one creek that flows east into Portage County.

By state law, Wood County adopted a floodplain zoning ordinance in the late 1960's to regulate development in floodplains. FEMA floodplain maps identify areas where major floods occur. Regulations prohibit development in the floodway, the most dangerous flood area. Development is allowed in the flood fringe, provided it is built above flood levels and otherwise flood-protected. Although allowed, it is wise to restrict development from occurring in the flood fringe as well as the floodway.

Shorelands and floodplains are very closely associated. Like floodplains, shoreland areas are protected under Wisconsin law. Also, like floodplains, counties are required to zone all shorelands within their jurisdiction.[10] The shoreland includes that land that is located within 300 feet of a navigable stream or 1,000 feet of a lake, pond or flowage.

By reviewing the floodplain map (Figure 5-D) and the map of high groundwater areas (Figure 5-B), there does not appear to be a direct correlation between the two. Yes, floodplain areas have soils with high groundwater, but there are also many acres in Rudolph that are not included in a floodplain, but have high seasonal groundwater.

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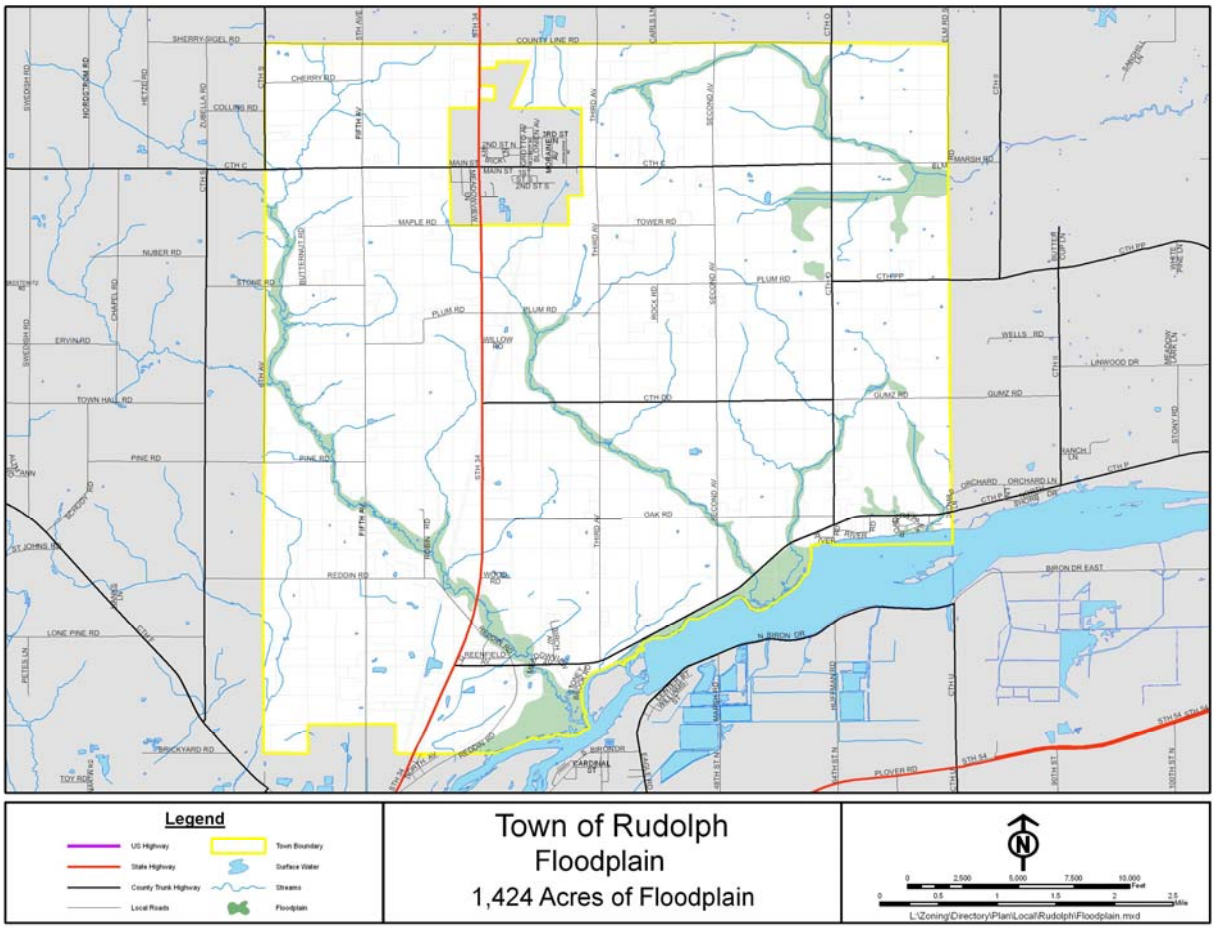
[9] Ibid, p. 28.

[10] Sec. 59.692, Wis. Stats., and Chapter NR 115, Wisconsin Administrative Code

Figure 5-D Floodplain



Wetlands

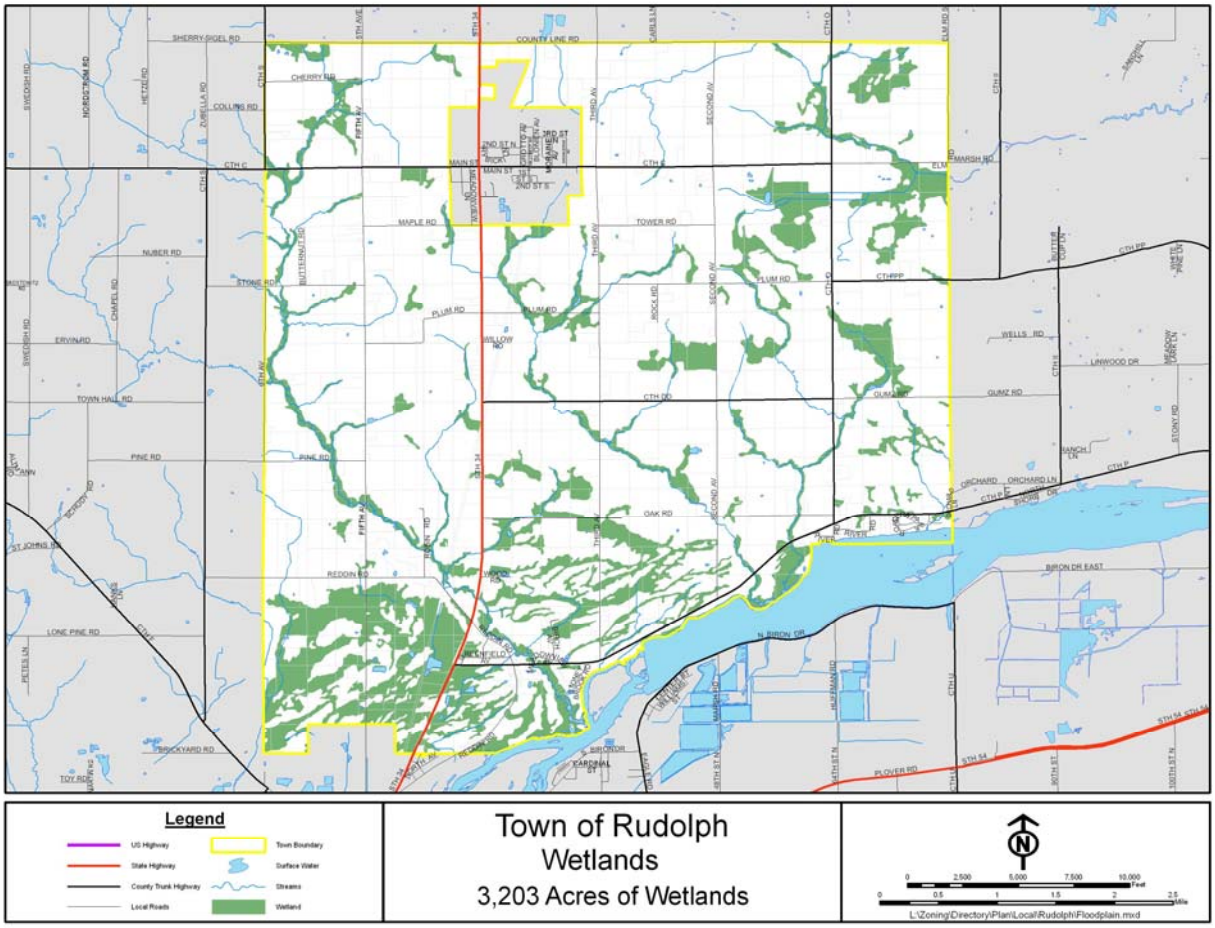
The value of wetlands is often disregarded or not understood by the public, although they are becoming more familiar with the benefits of wetlands to both humans and wildlife. Wetlands serve as a water storage and distribution system, filtering nutrients and purifying the water before it is reintroduced into the groundwater or surface water system. As more impermeable surfaces (rooftops, driveways, patios, roads, etc.) dominate the landscape, the capacity of wetlands to handle excess water runoff becomes increasingly important.

Under the Wisconsin Administrative Code, cities and villages (and towns with village powers) are required to protect, at a minimum, all unfilled wetlands located within their borders that are shown on Department of Natural Resources wetland inventory maps and are located within shore lands.

Wetlands in the Town of Rudolph are widely scattered throughout the Town (Figure 5-E*),* but are predominately south of Oak and Reddin Roads. There are 3,203 acres of

wetlands, 16.9% of the total land area, in Rudolph. Wetlands are often associated with floodplains. In all but a very few instances, wetlands are associated with soils that have high groundwater characteristics. Wetlands can generally be considered to be protected regardless of their proximity to navigable streams.

Figure 5- E Wetlands



The definition of a navigable stream lacks a clear and concise meaning at the state level. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has to make this determination for any stream in question. Any development in the Town which would seek to be close to Wisconsin Rapids would impact wetlands. Development should be directed away from all mapped wetlands, both for the protection of the wetland and for the protection of the structures and persons using them.

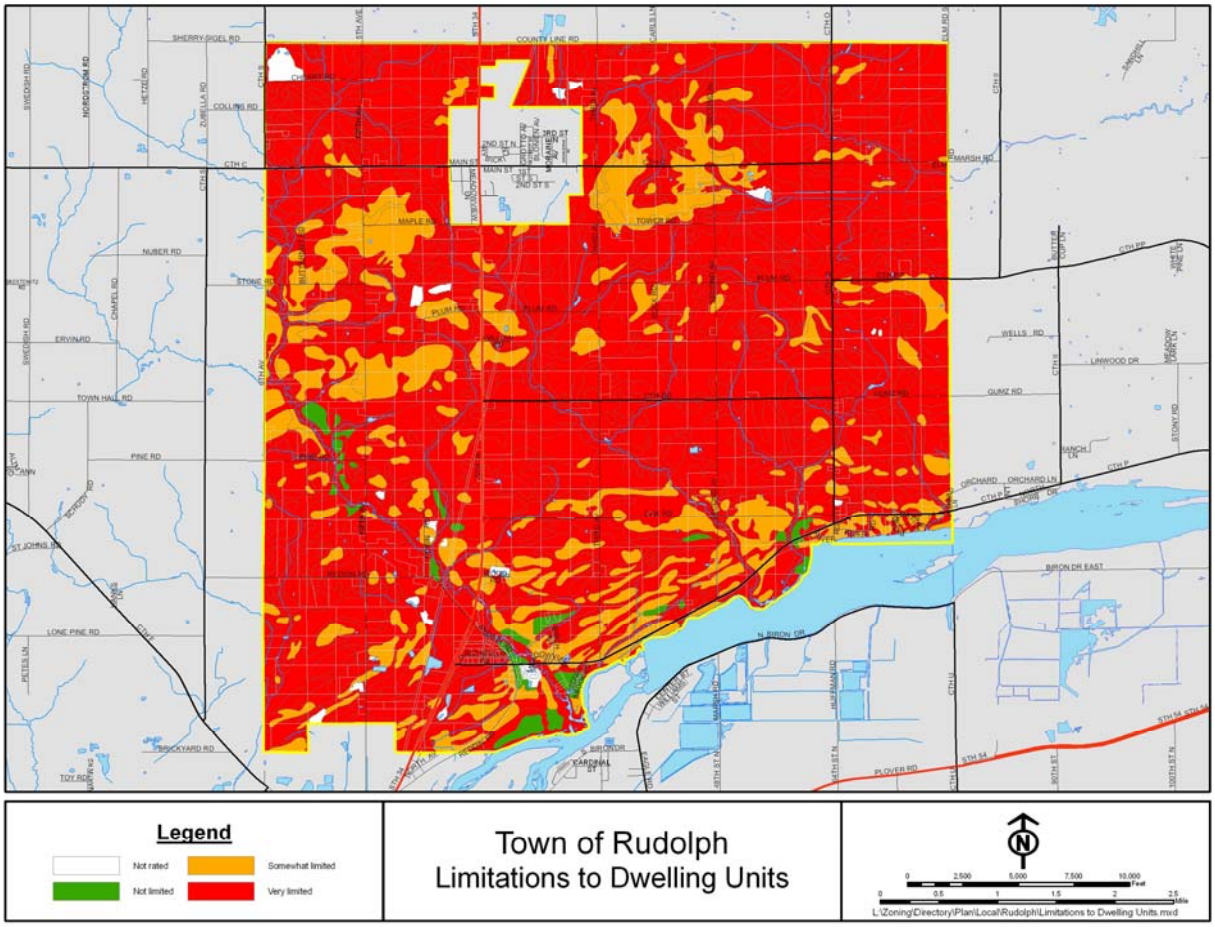
Soils: Limitations for Dwellings

Figure 5-F is a map of Rudolph showing the soil limitations for development of dwellings with and without basements. Soil limitations are indicated by the ratings “slight”, “moderate” and “severe.” A slight limitation means that the soil properties are generally

favorable for the rated use, that is, limitations are minor and easily overcome. A moderate limitation means that some soil properties are favorable, but can be overcome or modified by special planning and design. A severe limitation means that soil properties are so unfavorable and so difficult to correct or overcome as to require major soil reclamation, special designs or intensive maintenance.

Based on the information in Figure 5-F, 80.6% or 15,321 acres of all the land in Rudolph are very limited for dwellings, 17.1% or 3,242 acres are somewhat limited for dwellings, only 1.1% or 209 acres have no limitation for dwelling development, and 1.2% or 233 acres are not rated. Clearly, the depth to the water table and limitations to dwellings are directly connected.

Figure 5-F Limitations to Dwelling Units



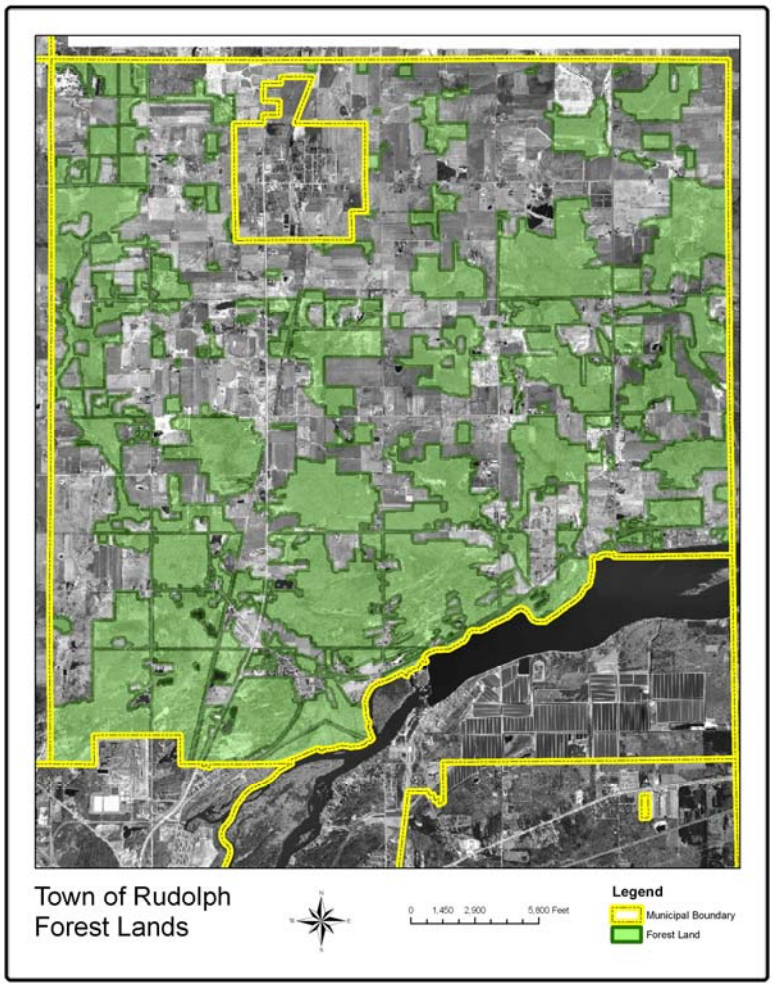
In looking for suitable land for development it will be important to collect water table information on those 3,698 acres for which there is no current information. Because virtually all structures with indoor plumbing are served by Private On-Site Waste Treatment Systems (POWTS), it is important for Town officials to keep the soil maps in mind when recommending or authorizing areas for new development. It is imperative that all POWTS be properly maintained to protect the groundwater that is so close to the surface.

Forests

Forests are a prominent land cover type in the Town of Rudolph. According to Figure 5-G, 8,148 acres or 43% of the total Town acreage is in forest land. Of this land, the majority of the acres are in private ownership and some of this private acreage is in managed forest plans. The Town of Rudolph owns and manages 77 acres of forest land in Section 14. This land is open to residents for recreational purposes.

Historically, the timber industry has been an important factor in Rudolph development. As early as 1858, sawmills and related lumber industries were being operated throughout the Town. Over 150 years later, the Town of Rudolph has several operating sawmills, and abundant forest land.

Figure 5 – G



Wildlife Habitat & Endangered Species

The Town of Rudolph hosts a variety of bird and animal species on both a permanent and temporary basis. However only 3 sections in the Town are listed on the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory dated 2003. Portions of Section 5 have been purchased by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the establishment of Greater Prairie-chicken habitat.

Some of the more visible endangered species that have been sighted in the Town of Rudolph include: grey wolves, bald eagles and barn owls.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Although no known Native American sites are located in the Town of Rudolph, the Rudolph history published for the Sesquicentennial in 2006 includes family stories telling of a Potowatomi tribe making summer visits to camp sites along Mosquito Creek.

The Town of Rudolph has 7 properties listed in the Wisconsin Historical Society's Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory. These houses, church and barn are notable in the combination of the building material with the style of building features. These features were: front gabled, a gabled eII, a Queen Anne style home, the barn that was side gabled, a home that was listed as other vernacular style/form and finally an Astylistic utilitarian building that once was an industrial type of building used as a brick factory, but has now been extremely altered into a house.

The property located at the intersection of County Road DD and County Road O is included in the above as a building with front gabled architecture. It is interesting to note that this building is unique in that it was built as Hillview School (1884-1962) and then became the Hillview 4-H clubhouse. This property is now owned by a local family.

During Rudolph's Sesquicentennial celebration, fifteen families were recognized as holding all or portions of land owned by their ancestors. Research indicated that these properties were in the family before 1906. This number of century farms reflects deep roots in the land and a commitment to caring for it.

Summary

The 1998 community survey indicated that the majority of Town residents do not favor large scale development. This is a realistic view, considering that a total of 80.6% of the Town's acreage has regulatory concerns regarding buildings.

With the high percentage of wetlands, floodplain and high water table acres and the current restrictions on using such lands, large scale development seems unlikely. Local soil variations can allow for small scale development on selected properties throughout the Town.

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal: It is the Town of Rudolph's overall objective to recognize and respect the wishes of residents regarding economic development.

Objective: Support development of large commercial and industrial concerns in adjacent, incorporated communities where facilities exist for such development.

Objective: Continue to allow for small businesses and industries not requiring large amounts of water or public sewer services.

Economic Factors

The Town of Rudolph is, basically, a commuter, or "bedroom" community whose residents work in the nearby urban municipalities. In the year 2000, roughly a third (32.8%) of employed adults were employed in the production and transportation sector. Slightly more than one-fifth (21.6%) were employed in management or professional positions, with another one-fifth (20.3%) in sales and office work. Only a small number of residents (14 people or 2.3%) were classified as employed in farming or forestry, but crop farming and raising animals for sale is common as a secondary employment in the Town. Figure 6-A provides the occupational breakdown for the Town residents.

Figure 6-A Occupations
TOWN OF RUDOLPH – 2000

Management, professional & related occupations	21.6
Service occupations	9.5
Sales & office occupations	20.3
Farming, fishing & forestry occupations	2.3
Construction, extraction & maintenance occupations	13.5
Production, transportation & material moving occupations	32.8

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, SF 3

In a community survey conducted in 1998, Town residents indicated that preserving the rural landscape was very desirable (78% said yes) while economic development within the Town was not a very high priority. In fact, 39% of the respondents did NOT want to see more job opportunities in the Town of Rudolph. Only 17% of the respondents felt economic development was needed, and the same percentage supported an increased tax levy for business attraction.

Nevertheless, Rudolph has been open to small, locally-owned businesses, many with a single owner/employee. The Town currently is home to a gas station/convenience store, a branch bank, a greenhouse, a mobile catering business, a bulk and natural foods store, a heating and air conditioning business, a trailer and truck accessories business, a bar and grill, a storage facility, a gravel and trucking business and a sandstone quarry. Businesses run from homes include a ceramics shop, a chainsaw dealership, a custom

embroidery service, a hair styling and massage salon, a drivers education school, a cattle breeding service, dog kennels, welding shops, a used car dealership, a cabinetry business, two sawmills, a landscape business, two produce farmers, a worm/bait/fishing supplies retailer, a painting and sandblasting service and a small engine repair shop.

Limitations

The major weakness of attracting anything other than small industrial and commercial uses is the lack of public sewer and water systems. Many larger businesses use large volumes of water and, as a result, need to dispose of a lot of wastewater. Because all of the Town of Rudolph uses private, on-site waste treatment systems (POWTS), disposal of large quantities of water can be hard on systems and poses a potential of contaminating private drinking water supplies.

Large industrial and commercial developments are encouraged to locate in the incorporated communities of Biron, Wisconsin Rapids, Port Edwards, Nekoosa and Vesper where public water and sanitary sewer services are available. One of the Town's strengths in the economic development area is its ability to work with neighboring municipalities to encourage larger commercial developments that will create jobs for all area workers.

Infrastructure

Because most of Rudolph's residents work in the incorporated municipalities in all directions, the Town's future land use plan needs to take careful consideration of the transportation network to move workers (and school children) to and from the cities and villages. Land use plans that allow for road improvements, including the effect to traffic patterns which may result from the state's plans to designate the current County Road P as State Highway 66 and further designate State Highway 34 North as State Highway 13/34, should be considered.

Strengths

The Town has several strengths to offer businesses and industries that are considering locating or expanding in the neighboring incorporated communities. A quality labor force and good work ethic are among those strengths. Rudolph residents have skills in a good cross-section of jobs, primarily production jobs as shown in the table above. Another strength is the quality school systems in Wisconsin Rapids. With area students consistently scoring higher than the national average in testing, parents can be confident that their children get a quality education. Recreation opportunities abound, including high quality county parks, a broad selection of youth sports in state-of-the-art facilities and hundreds of acres of public land for hunting and hiking. Finally, the simple beauty of the Town, with its forests, steams, Wisconsin River frontage and abundant wildlife, is an attraction to persons who are looking for the peaceful quietness of rural living. Yet, the Town of Rudolph is only minutes away from opportunities for work, schools and shopping.

7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Goals and Objectives

The Town of Rudolph's overall objective is to cooperate with neighboring municipalities and the school district when such cooperation and shared services are cost-effective and mutually beneficial.

Goal: Establish effective communication with adjacent municipalities so that area issues can be handled in the best possible proactive manner.

Objective: Take advantage of opportunities to meet with other units of government in the early stages of issue identification.

Objective**:** Invite other units of government to meetings where issues of common interest will be discussed.

Objective: Continue active participation in the Wood County Towns Association, to share information on issues and communicate informally with adjoining municipalities.

Objective: Improve communication and cooperation with the Village of Rudolph, which is entirely surrounded by the Town of Rudolph, and share information on planning, zoning and other issues.

Goal: Utilize intergovernmental cooperative efforts to the greatest extent possible to provide services that meet or exceed current levels, and are at or below current costs.

Objective: Identify possible intergovernmental cooperation efforts and review and consider the overall costs and benefits of each.

Objective: Consider consolidating polling places with adjacent municipalities to reduce cost of new voting and counting methods.

Current Cooperative Efforts

The Town of Rudolph has cooperated with neighboring communities, Wood County and the Wisconsin Rapids school district in various service areas for many years. Cooperative efforts may have evolved out of State mandates, but more often, intergovernmental cooperation has been the result of economy of scale. The listing of current intergovernmental cooperative services in Rudolph includes the following:

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- Fire response and emergency medical response services are provided by the Rudolph Volunteer Fire Department, which also maintains fire stations in the adjoining Portage County Towns of Linwood, Eau Pleine and Carson plus the

Portage County Village of Junction City. RVFD also has mutual aid agreements with the Villages of Vesper and Port Edwards for fire department services.

- Ambulance service is provided through a mutual contract, including the Town of Rudolph and the Towns of Sigel, Seneca, Grand Rapids, Grant (Portage County) and the Village of Rudolph.
- Boundary roads are maintained under agreements with adjacent municipalities.
- Town leaders have participated in the first meeting with all Wisconsin Rapids area communities through the facilitation of the Community Progress Initiative, with the goal of better communication with those communities.
- The town of Rudolph encourages local events in the Village of Rudolph, such as the Sesquicentennial Celebration in 2006 and the annual Rudolph Country Christmas.
- The Town maintains an active membership in the Wood County Towns Association.

Partnership Options

With growing shortages of funding and increasing demand for services, it makes sense for communities to discuss increasing shared services and to coordinate new or expanded municipal programs. The Town has a variety of potential partners in cooperative efforts including adjacent municipalities such as the Village of Rudolph and the Town of Sigel, Wood County and regional organizations such as the Heart of Wisconsin Business and Economic Alliance, Centergy (Central Wisconsin Alliance for Economic Development), North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and Mid-State Technical College.

Wisconsin law provides flexibility and opportunity when it comes to working with others. These partnerships can range from informal sharing of equipment or services, or cooperative purchasing to more formally specified agreements such as allowed in Wis. Stats. §66.0301 (general agreements) or §66.0307 (boundary agreements).

Possible Future Issues

It is difficult to anticipate future conflicts between the Town of Rudolph and the adjacent municipalities. However, issues which may cause tension would include:

- Development of the Biron waterfront could lead to some changes in the boating traffic and adjustments in usage of the Wisconsin River for recreational activities. Discussion between the municipalities would be helpful in reducing the odds of conflict.
- Properties directly adjacent to the Village of Rudolph which are considered unsightly by some have been cause for complaint in the past, and may lead to more requests for clean up or zoning against junk. Proposed junk ordinances

have been rejected in the past by Town residents. Continued discussion between the municipalities should occur.

- Wind-powered facilities have been an issue in other areas of Wisconsin and could possibly lead to tension with adjoining municipalities. The Town recently enacted basic regulatory ordinances of wind turbine tower placement. Sharing information on these ordinances with residents and neighboring communities should occur.

8. LAND USE

Objectives and Goals

The Town of Rudolph's overall objective is to continue to maintain the rural atmosphere through land use patterns that reflect the history and foundation of this township.

Goal: Continue to be supportive of the changing faces of agriculture and its role in the local economy.

Objective: Encourage the peaceful coexistence of agricultural land use and other land uses in the Town.

Objective: Encourage local farmers to utilize agricultural practices that minimize conflicts with adjacent land uses, and landowners to recognize the value of agriculture in providing rural atmosphere.

Goal: Support increasing tree planting on land no longer in agricultural production.

Objective: Reduce erosion and improve wildlife habitat.

Objective: Provide buffers between different land uses.

Current Land Use

The land-based classification standards (LBCS) method of classifying land uses is used by the Wood County Planning & Zoning Office in each community plan it develops. Land-based classification standards provide a consistent method for classifying land uses based on their characteristics. LBCS extends the notion of classifying land uses by refining traditional categories into multiple dimensions, such as activities, functions, building types, site development character and ownership constraints. Each dimension has its own set of categories and subcategories for classifying land uses. Classifications are based on field surveys, aerial photographs, topographic maps, local knowledge and other data.

For purposes of this plan, current land use analysis will focus on the activity dimension of LBCS. Activity refers to the actual use of land based on its observable characteristics, or what is actually taking place on the land, such as farming, shopping, manufacturing, etc. This is the most commonly referred to method of defining land uses and is the most easily understood by the average individual.

The map in Figure 8-A shows the observable activity on each parcel in the Town of Rudolph and Figure 8-B summarizes what is shown on the map. A description of each activity follows.

Residential---Category 1000

There are 417.44 acres classified as residential in the Town of Rudolph. This accounts for 2.21 percent of the total land. There are approximately 460 total parcels that have residential activity on them. Of the total, it is interesting to note that none are located on State Highway 34 North from the City of Wisconsin Rapids to the intersection of Reddin Road. The reason for this is two-fold. The current State Highway 34 from the City of Wisconsin Rapids to Reddin Road was built in 1955. Reddin Road south from the intersection of State Highway 34 to the city limits of Wisconsin Rapids was "Old Highway 34." In this area, there are 46 residential properties or 10 per cent of the Town's residential properties located on that corridor. In addition, there are 22 residential properties located on two Town roads intersecting Reddin Road between County Highway P and State Highway 34. Thus, there are 68 total residential properties in this area or 15 percent of the total residential properties in the Town of Rudolph. It must also be noted that this area just discussed is the only land in the Town of Rudolph that is specifically zoned residential. The second reason why no residential development has occurred along the "new" State Highway 34 corridor is the quality of the land. Although not classified as wetlands, it is unsuitable for a residence as it would not support a POWTS system. Another 30 residential properties or 7 percent are located on or within ¼ mile of County Highway P from Reddin Road South to 3rd Avenue. That is a total of 98 of the 460 residential properties or 21 percent along or close to these two main transportation routes in the Town of Rudolph. What is even more significant is the fact that 1/5 of all residential properties (92) are within one mile of the corporate limits of Wisconsin Rapids. This is significant when considering future urban service needs that may drive annexations. It also lends support for the need for cooperation and possible joint ventures with the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

Commercial---Category 2000

This category of the land-based classification system includes shopping, business or trade activities. Because the Town of Rudolph is primarily a commuter town of relatively small size, there are not a lot of commercial support activities. In fact, only nine properties fall into the zoned commercial classification and of these nine properties, only five are currently in active business. These businesses are: Farmers & Merchants Bank (Branch Office), Food Tree (convenience store & gas station), Jokers Bar & Grill, Urban's Greenhouse, JC Enterprises, and Joosten's Cabinetry & Sawmill. The total acreage that is zoned for commercial use is 47 acres or less than one percent of the total acreage in the Town of Rudolph. Three of these businesses are located on State Highway 34 while the other two are located within ½ mile of State Highway 34. It is also interesting to note that of the five active commercial properties in the Town of Rudolph, four of them are within one mile of the City of Wisconsin Rapids.

There are many additional home based business ventures located throughout the Town of Rudolph as defined in the Land Use and Zoning Ordinances. This class of business is allowed to operate without conditional use permits from the Town.

A final group of businesses have been granted Conditional Use Permits to operate in areas of the Town that are not commercially zoned.

There is some interest for more commercial development in the Town of Rudolph on a limited basis. Several respondents to the 1998 community survey indicated that they would like to see some of the following businesses develop in the Town of Rudolph. They are: retail stores, bar & grill restaurants, car sales, auto repair businesses and farm services. Due to the size of the Town of Rudolph and because the Wisconsin Rapids urban area is growing to the southeast instead of to the north, it is unlikely that many commercial ventures will be forthcoming. It is likely however, that future commercial developments may very well include some of the interests suggested in the survey, but not until the market can support them.

Figure 8-A Land Use by Activity

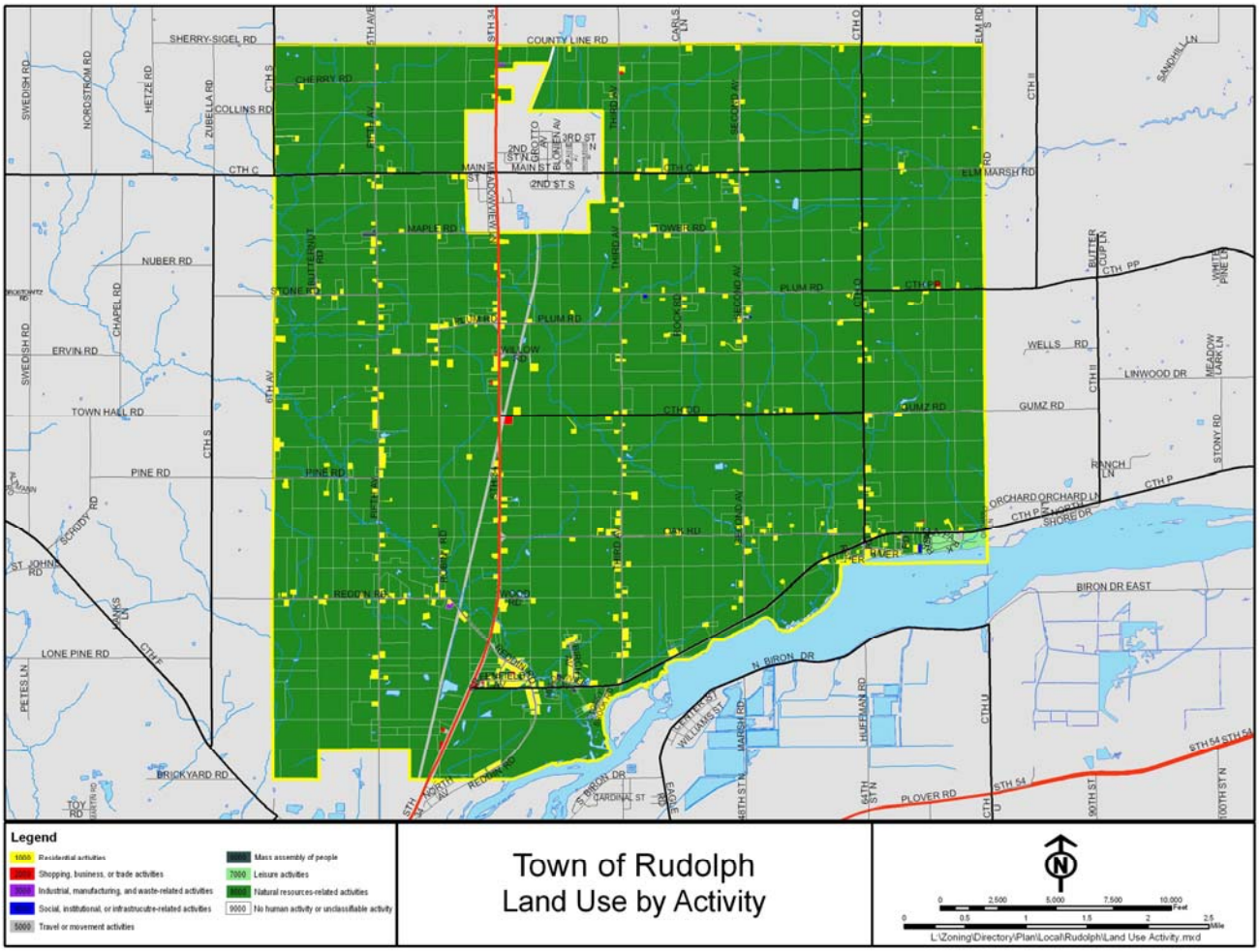


Figure 8-B LAND USE BY ACTIVITY TOWN OF RUDOLPH 2001			
LBCS* Code	LAND USE BY STRUCTURE ON PARCEL	ACRES	PCT OF TOTAL
1000	Residential activities	417	2%
2000	Shopping, business or trade activities	47	0.5%
3000	Industrial, manufacturing and waste-related activities	153	1%
4000	Social, institutional or infrastructure-related activities	2	0%
5000	Travel or movement activities	628	3%
6000	Mass assembly of people	6	0%
7000	Leisure activities	46	0.5%
8000	Natural resources-related activities	17,628	93%
9000	No human activity or unclassifiable activity	0	0.00%
TOTAL		18,927	100.00%

* Land-Based Classification Standards
Source: Wood County Planning & Zoning Office, 2001

Industrial---Category 3000

Six properties are identified in the land use activities category that are zoned industrial. Of these six properties, currently only two are being used in this capacity. They are Pagels' Trucking & Excavating on Oak Road and a sawmill, located on Gumz Road. There are approximately 153 total acres currently zoned industrial in the Town.

In the 1998 community survey, residents of the Town of Rudolph are not in favor of developing either an industrial park or a business park. Therefore, this is a type of development that will not be promoted in the Town. Instead, Town officials will support new and expanded industrial development in the neighboring communities of Biron and Wisconsin Rapids and in the Villages of Rudolph and Vesper.

Social, Institutional or Infrastructure-Related---Category 4000

In the Town of Rudolph, 2.39 acres, or less than one percent of the land is classified in this category. This category includes school or library activities, emergency response or public safety-related activities, activities associated with utilities (water, sewer, power, etc), inactive mass storage (including open storage of water) and health care facilities.

The composition of the soils found in the Town of Rudolph does not lend itself to irrigation of agricultural farmland, thus the Town of Rudolph does not have a large area of inactive mass storage. The residents of the Town of Rudolph are also solely responsible for their water and waste treatment facilities. Therefore, the Town does not have any water or waste treatment facilities.

The residents of the Town of Rudolph utilize many social institutions and infrastructure related activities in the City of Wisconsin Rapids and the Village of Rudolph

as well as services offered throughout Wood County. This encompasses the Wisconsin Rapids Public School System and parochial elementary and high school, McMillan Memorial Library, Rudolph Volunteer Fire Department, Wood County Park System as well as the Wood County Sheriff's Department to name only a few.

Travel Or Movement Activities---Category 5000

There are 628.13 acres or 3.32 percent of the total acreage of the Town listed in this category. Travel and movement activities include roads, parking lots, bicycle/pedestrian trails and other such activities. In the Town of Rudolph, nearly the entire acreage in this classification is roads including Town and County roads as well as State Highway 34. Recent Town Boards have indicated that no additional Town roads will be developed, thus this category will not have a major impact on the Town's land uses in the future.

Mass Assembly of People---Category 6000

In the Town of Rudolph, only one parcel is classified as a place of mass assembly. This is The Church of Christ located on County Highway P. This church is located on 5.77 acres of land, less than one percent of the land in the Town of Rudolph.

Leisure Activities---Category 7000

Activities listed as leisure activities in the Town of Rudolph include the public access to the Wisconsin River where Town residents as well as others can enjoy the beauty of this large body of water for boating and fishing as well as recreational sightseeing. The Town of Rudolph is also home to Sera Park. Although this is a privately owned recreational area, many of the residents of the Town are able to use this property either through their jobs or as visitors. These two areas comprise 45.5 acres in the Town. In addition, Town residents are able to enjoy hunting and snowmobiling on privately owned land that is open to these activities as well as biking and walking on the well-maintained Town roads.

In the 1998 survey of Town residents, the rural character of the Town was the most important aspect in regards to future development. The character of the Town of Rudolph was defined by wooded areas, wildlife, the quietness of the community, farm residences, farm animals, planted fields, rivers and streams and trees along roads. At least half of the residents responding to the survey indicated that they wanted the Town of Rudolph to be a place of low activity.

Natural Resources-Related---Category 8000

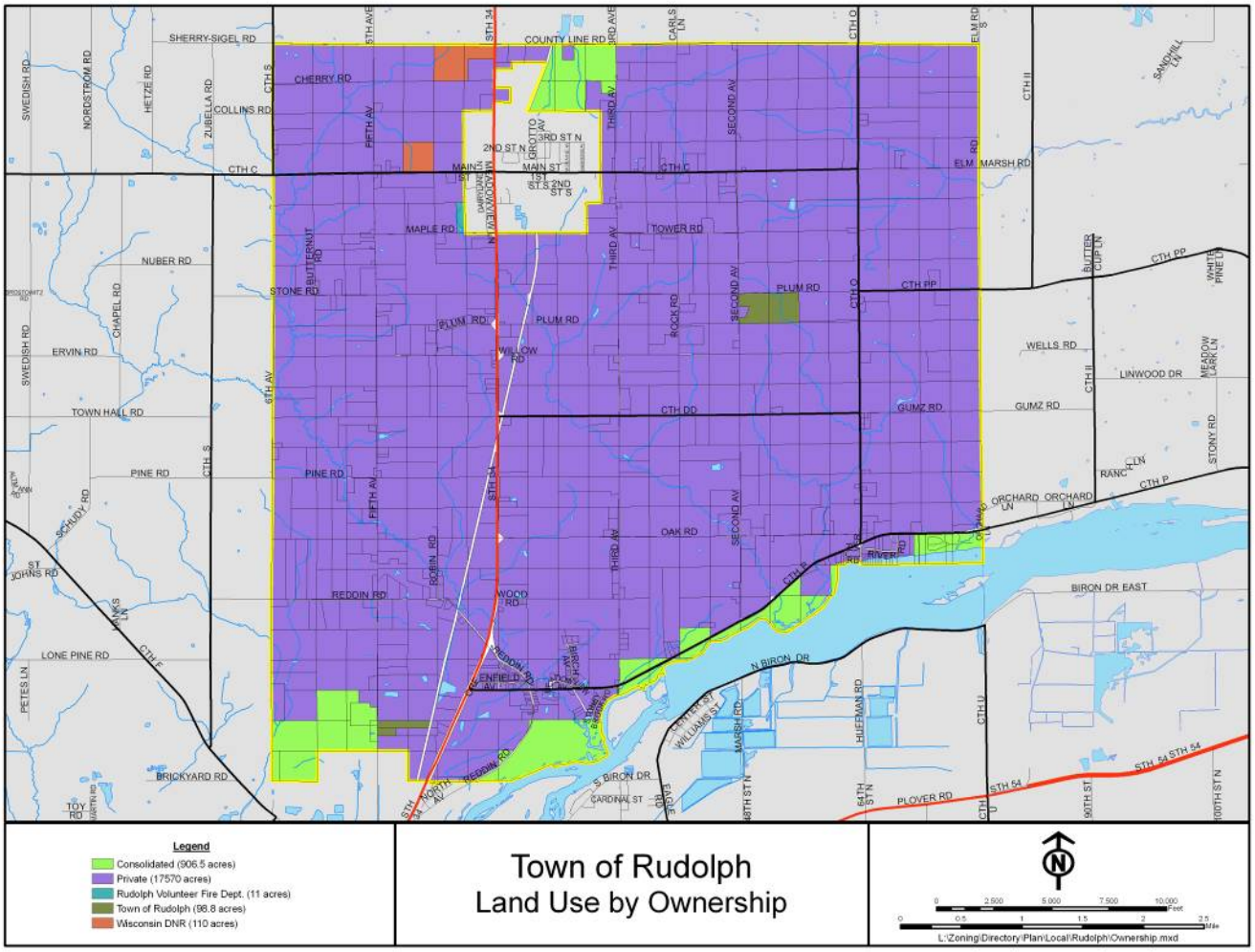
Over 93 percent of the land in Town of Rudolph is classified as natural resources-related. This category includes numerous land uses, such as forests, farm fields and fallow acreage. Total acreage is 17,628 acres. The Town of Rudolph will in all likelihood see this number increase in the next forty years as the remaining farms will continue to decline and the land will be left as fallow ground or planted into forests. The Department

of Natural Resources has also shown great interest in vacant land in the Town of Rudolph.

Ownership

There are five categories of classifying land uses. The previous section described the activity classification of the land-based classification standards. Ownership is another of the categories and one that is worth mentioning in the Town of Rudolph plan. Not surprisingly, most land in Town of Rudolph, 94%, is privately owned. Figure 8-C and Figure 8-D list the ownership of land in the Town of Rudolph.

Figure 8-C



Land Use Trends & Projections

A comprehensive land use analysis was completed by Wood County in 1972 and updated in 1979. Although land use coding terminology has changed since then, a comparison of current information with that of the earlier years, coupled with data on the preceding maps and charts can help document any trends in land use changes. Housing data, presented earlier, can also be used to determine any trends in development and land use trends in the Town of Rudolph.

Figure 8-D

LAND USE BY OWNERSHIP OF PARCEL	ACRES	PCT of TOTAL
Consolidated/NewPage	907	5%
Private Ownership	17,570	94%
Rudolph Volunteer Fire Department	11	0%
Town of Rudolph	99	0.05%
WI Dept. of Natural Resources	110	0.05%
TOTAL	18,927	100.00%

Source: Wood County Planning & Zoning Office, 2008

Residential

As a town adjacent to an urban area, Rudolph was included in the 1972 Land Use Analysis. There are now approximately 460 housing units in the Town of Rudolph occupying 417.44 acres of land or .93 acres/housing unit. The Town of Rudolph Land Use and Zoning Ordinances currently specify that a minimum lot size of one acre is required to build a home in an agriculturally zoned area. In the 1998 Town of Rudolph community survey results, 51 percent of those responding to the survey indicated that they would like the Town to consider increasing the minimum lot size necessary as a means of maintaining uncongested rural areas. In fact, 78 percent of the respondents felt that maintaining the Town of Rudolph's current rural landscape was important to them.

In looking at the 0.93 acres/housing unit, it must also be noted that many residential structures/uses are located on large lots surrounded by open spaces. In most cases, the residential use impacts just less than one acre of land area with the remainder of the lot being used for agriculture or open space. In keeping with the 1998 survey from the Town of Rudolph residents, it is important to remember the preservation of the "rural character" and the potential to have less conflicting land uses between the residential sector of the town and the agricultural diversity which has been the mainstay of the Town of Rudolph.

Commercial

Today, 47 acres are classified as being in a commercial activity. Any projected commercial development pressure has not occurred, mainly because the urban area growth as been to the east and south of Wisconsin Rapids. It is not anticipated that the Town of Rudolph will require additional space for new commercial uses. Any new commercial businesses will be in the form of small business that are either home-based or in small building throughout the Town. It has been the opinion of the Town Board that no new commercial districts will be established. Instead, any new ventures will be considered for a Conditional Use Permit on a case by case basis.

Industrial

Most industrial uses require public water and sanitary sewer services. Town of Rudolph residents do not want an industrial or business park to locate in the Township, but would support new industrial jobs in the industrial parks of adjacent incorporated municipalities. In the Town of Rudolph community survey, it was indicated that 34 per cent of the respondents would like to see some light industry developed in the Township. Along with this figure, 22 percent would also like to see some general industry develop. The Town's opinion in regards to new industrial uses is to allow such development as conditional uses under the zoning ordinances, but encourage large scale development to locate in neighboring communities. In regards to the areas of the Town that are currently zoned industrial, the majority of them would not be able to support a large industrial facility due to soil conditions.

Agricultural

According to the 1972 land use inventory, there were 13,110 acres of cropland and pasture. Nearly forty years later, the land use inventory shows a total of 6,753 acres in crop production. While terminology has changed, it is clear that agricultural land use has declined in the Town of Rudolph during the past four decades, an experience that is similar to the rest of the State and Nation.

The family dairy farms that once operated in the Town of Rudolph are mostly gone. They have been replaced by smaller more diverse farms. Agriculture pursuits now range from six dairy farms to hobby farms with beef, sheep and horses.

Thus far, the cranberry industry has not come to the Town of Rudolph although there is the potential for this type of development. This industry is actively seeking more land in Wood County. In the 1972 land use survey, only one acre was specified as a "special farm" and only twenty-five acres were listed as "water acres." These "water acres" in the Town of Rudolph have been dug to provide clay liner and fill for Consolidated Paper/Stora Enso/New Page and for the large sanitary disposal site currently owned by Veolia Environmental Services. The removal of sand and shale has also created many of the "water acres" listed in the land use survey of 1972.

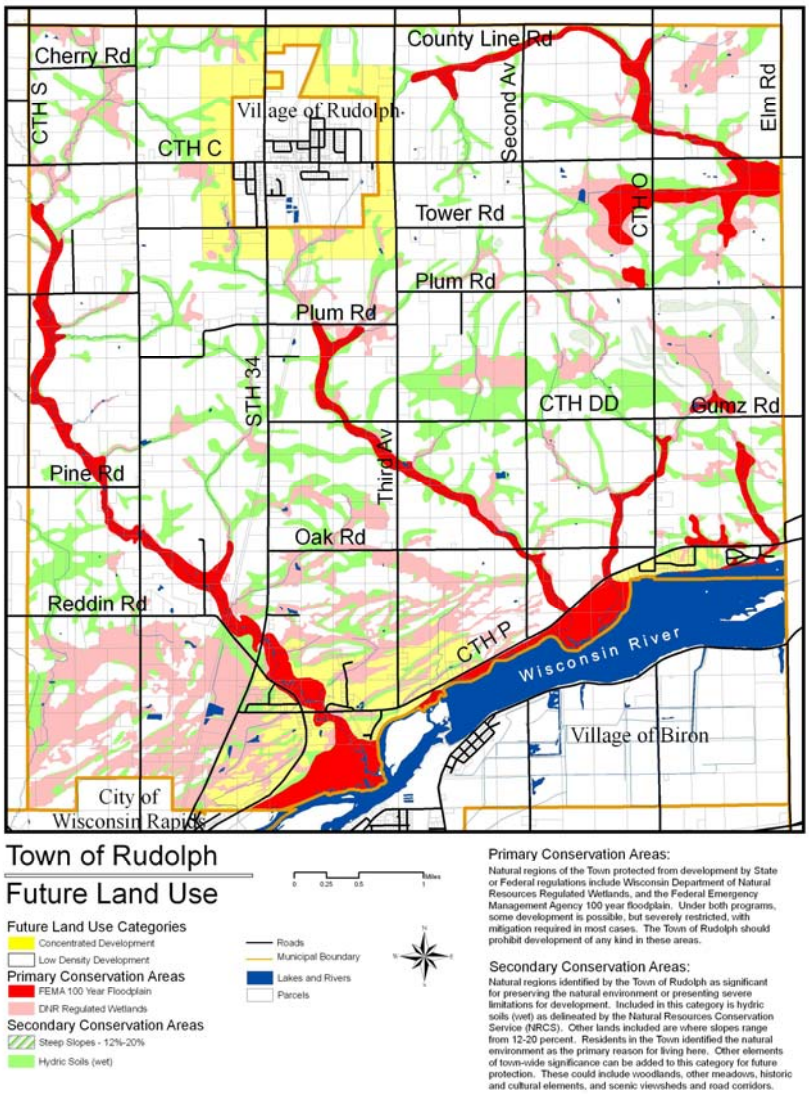
The Town of Rudolph has a large majority of acreage in forest and woodland. In fact, 3,760 acres or 21 percent are listed in the 1972 land use survey. According to the

most recent records, the Town of Rudolph currently has 8,148 acres or 43 percent of ot total classified as forests/woodland. This is an increase of 4,388 acres in the past forty years which can be considered as significant. Although not all of this total acreage is in managed forest/woodlands, many residents have enrolled in the various versions of this program.

Future Land Use Plan

Figure 8-E is the future land use plan for the Town of Rudolph to the year 2030. The map takes into consideration environmental constraints to development and shows those areas that can accommodate development. This is only an acknowledgement of the areas most likely to be attractive and possibly available for development. No additional acreage is anticipated for recreational or leisure development.

Figure 8-E



9. IMPLEMENTATION

Plan Adoption

The first step toward implementation of the comprehensive plan is adoption of the plan by the Town Board. Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 provides specific procedures that are necessary to adopt the plan. As allowed by statute, the Rudolph Town Board has delegated the responsibility of preparing and maintaining the comprehensive plan to the Rudolph Land Use and Zoning Commission. Once the plan has been completed, the Commission must adopt a resolution by a majority vote of the entire commission before sending the plan to the Town Board for adoption.[11] The comprehensive plan does not take effect until the Town Board enacts an ordinance that adopts the plan and that ordinance cannot be adopted unless the plan contains all of the elements specified by the comprehensive planning statute.[12] At a minimum, a class 1 public notice is required to be published at least 30 days before the hearing is held.[13] Once adopted and no later than January 1, 2010, any program or action of the Town Board or its authorized commission, that affects land use shall be consistent with the comprehensive plan.[14] This statutory requirement will primarily impact the Town's zoning ordinance and any other land use-related ordinance or program that they may adopt.

The following paragraphs provide information about the options that are allowed under Wisconsin law to implement a comprehensive plan at the town level.

Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance is the most common land use regulatory instrument that is used in rural Wisconsin communities. The Town of Rudolph has adopted village powers under Wisconsin Statute 60.22 and, therefore, adopts its comprehensive plan under §.62.23, Wis. Stats. Under that statute, zoning "regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan..."[15] The contents of a comprehensive plan are defined in the new planning legislation, Wisconsin Statute 66.1001. The relationship between the plan and the zoning ordinance is easy to understand if one considers that the plan identifies a pattern of desired land use development and the zoning ordinance specifies the range of conditions of use that can occur on parcels of land pursuant to the plan. In this relationship, the zoning ordinance is clearly a tool to implement the land use recommendations of the general plan, and in Wisconsin, it is a statutory requirement.

An effective and manageable planning tool, zoning offers many possibilities for confronting the issues presented in this comprehensive plan. Natural conditions such as geology or geography are very difficult, if not impossible, for mankind to alter to the

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[11] Chapter 66.1001, Wisconsin Statues, 1999-2000, p. 1706
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Chapter 62.23 (7) (c), Wisconsin Statutes, 1999-2000, pg. 1581.

advantage of both. Zoning is an acceptable solution because of the nature of the land. Fitting compatible uses with suitable natural conditions saves expense for the landowner or homeowner as well as protects natural conditions.

Zoning typically creates different zones, or districts, for various categories. Each district has some clearly permitted uses and other uses requiring approval of a zoning board for specific site proposals. Other uses are prohibited. Flexibility can be built into the zoning ordinance to allow for some variance in land use rules. This is important because the unique characteristics of some lands preclude them from being categorized to be used the same as other lands in a specific zoning district. For example, odd-shaped lots may preclude a parcel from meeting lot line setbacks, while the lot may, in fact, contain adequate area for development.

Area Water Quality Management Plan

The Town of Rudolph was a participant in the Wisconsin Rapids Area Water Quality Management Plan in 1985. The purpose of that plan was to determine where a municipal sanitary sewer may be needed over a 20-year planning period. That effort was recently updated. In the most recent version, there is recognition that the southern end of the Town may eventually utilize the sewer services of the city of Wisconsin Rapids.

Subdivision Ordinance

As a comprehensive plan implementation tool, subdivision regulations attempt to minimize the creation of lots that fail to satisfy zoning or sanitary ordinances. The control of land splits promotes the dedication and reservation of land for roadways and drainage ways. In addition, landowners benefit from an effective subdivision code by assuring that properties don't overlap when new parcels are created by metes and bounds land descriptions. It is not uncommon in suburbanizing towns, like Rudolph, that landowners find themselves in either a debate or in legal action to determine who owns what land because of improperly subdivided land. It is also uncommon to find towns with subdivision ordinances. Most rely on the County to monitor and regulate land divisions.

Capital Improvement Program

A capital improvement program (CIP) is a plan for the capital expenditures of the Town over a period of years, usually five years. The CIP addresses the Town’s capital needs that require attention during the period and helps establish priorities and financing for those needs. A capital budget is a concurrent document that outlines the plans for the expenditure of funds for capital projects. A tax impact analysis, or development impact analysis, is sometimes used to develop the CIP and helps Town officials determine both the advantages and disadvantages of various projects or developments. Capital improvement programs are very useful for urbanizing towns. They should prepare a CIP and review it each year.

Official Street Map

As a supporting document to a land use plan and map, the Official Street Map is a valuable tool. The Official Street Map is a legal document that must be adopted by the Town Board after a public hearing. According to State law, "The map is conclusive with respect to the location and width of streets, highways, waterways and parkways, and the location and extent of railroad rights-of-way, public transit facilities, parks and playgrounds shown on the map. The official map is declared to be established to conserve and promote the public health, safety, convenience or general welfare."[16]

State law also allows the official street map to be used as a planning document. Section 62.23(c), of the law, allows a community to "amend the official map of the city so as to establish the exterior lines of planned new streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, railroad rights-of-way, public transit facilities, waterways, parks or playgrounds, or to widen, narrow, extend or close existing streets, highways, historic districts, parkways, railroad rights-of-way, public transit facilities, waterways, parks or playgrounds. No such changes may become effective until after a public hearing concerning the proposed change..."

The Town of Rudolph could prepare and adopt its own Official Street Map, coordinating with both Wisconsin Rapids and the Village of Rudolph. This type of cooperation would aid with the future, orderly development and coordinate with future expansion of Wisconsin Rapids and the Village of Rudolph. The official map could help to keep the cost of road improvements to a minimum and would coordinate street location and right-of-way widths. The map could also provide for minimum disruption to existing development that could occur with future development where new streets, parks and other public facilities might be needed.

Town of Rudolph Planning Administration

The Town of Rudolph has established a hierarchy for its planning and zoning activities. Pursuant to appropriate Wisconsin Statutes, the Land Use and Zoning Commission has been authorized to prepare and amend the Town's comprehensive plan.[17] Zoning functions and duties are detailed in the Town Zoning Ordinance. Plan Commission functions and duties are spelled out in the following paragraphs.

Plan Commission Function

The relationship of the Town plan commission and the Town Board is important. The Town Board consists of elected officials and is primarily a policy-making body charged with conducting the Town's affairs. The plan commission is an appointed body with the main duty of developing a plan and implementation measures for recommendation to the Town Board for adoption. The plan commission should, therefore,

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[16] Chapter 62.23 (6) (b), Wisconsin Statute, 1999-2000, pg. 1580.

[17] Chapter 62.23 provides for the appointment of the Plan Commission and Chapter 66.1001 (4) (b) authorizes the Plan Commission to prepare and amend the comprehensive plan.

function in a more objective fashion than the Town Board, but must realize that, in developing plans and ordinances, it operates within a political system where the Town Board has the final say.

The plan commission can be of great assistance to the Town Board by involving citizens and developing expertise in planning, which can be a time-consuming and controversial undertaking, thereby freeing the Town Board to carry out its other functions. The plan commission is an appointed body whose policy-making function is advisory-only to the Town Board. If the Town Board wishes to delegate additional powers to the plan commission, beyond advisory powers, it may do so. For example, the Town Board may allow the plan commission to issue conditional use permits under Town zoning under village powers and allow it to approve subdivision plats.

There needs to be a good working relationship between the plan commission and the Town Board because the existence of an adopted comprehensive plan and implementation measures depends upon both bodies – the plan commission to develop the proposals with public support and the Town Board to support the effort and ultimately adopt the legislation and implementation programs.

Plan Commission Structure

A plan commission is created by town ordinance under §62.23, Wis. Stats. The ordinance may create a 7-member commission[18], or, if the town is under 2,500 population, a 5-member commission.[19] A town under 2,500 population may, by ordinance, change from a 5- to a 7-member commission and vice versa. The Town Chairman appoints the members and chooses the plan commission chair. Elected and appointed Town officials may be appointed to the commission. There must, however, be at least three citizen members who are not Town officials on the 7-member commission and one citizen member who is not a Town official on the 5-member commission.[20]

Plan Commission Powers and Duties

The powers and the duties of the plan commission are spelled out in state statutes and applicable town ordinances. The primary duty of the commission is to develop the town's comprehensive plan, under the specifications of §66.1001, Wis. Stats. Under statutory requirements, the plan commission must solicit citizen participation and intergovernmental communication and coordination in developing the plan. The plan commission must oversee coordination and development of the comprehensive plan, hold a public hearing on the proposed comprehensive plan and, once completed, forward the plan to the Town board by formal resolution.

After the comprehensive plan has been adopted by the Town Board, the zoning ordinance will be amended to reflect the goals, objectives, policies and programs of the

[18] Chapter 62.23 (1), Wisconsin Statutes, 1999-2000, pg. 1579.
[19] Chapter 60.62 (4), Wisconsin Statutes, 1999-2000, pg. 1547.
[20] Chapter 60.62 (4) (b) and (c), Wisconsin Statutes, 1999-2000, pg. 1547.

plan. In Rudolph, updating and maintaining the zoning ordinance is also the function of the Land Use and Zoning Commission.

Once the zoning ordinance is amended to comply with the comprehensive plan, the Land Use and Zoning Commission is charged with administering the plan through their zoning ordinances. The Rudolph Town Board has delegated authority to the Land Use and Zoning Commission to review zoning amendments, review and hold hearings on conditional use applications and to recommend amendments and special exceptions from ordinance provisions to the Town board. The Town board makes the final decision on the recommendations of the Land Use and Zoning Commission.

Summary of Action

On March 5, 2008, the Rudolph Town Board authorized the Town's Land Use & Zoning Commission (LU & ZC) to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Rudolph, based on the Land Use Plan approved in 2000. The LU & ZC consists of five citizen members (Hilde Henkel, Tim Marzofka, Rick Rosino, Jerry Peters, Cheryl Thorson) and alternate Aden Ward, and was assisted by Zoning Administrator Steve Kozicki. The comprehensive plan was prepared over a two year period, using current data. Considerable technical support, maps and information were received from the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department.

The LU & ZC met throughout 2008 and early 2009, presented information and summaries of the draft plan at the Town's annual meeting, April 14, 2009, and encouraged people to attend the public hearing on May 13.

Public participation and input were solicited through verbal reports on progress, informational posters displayed at annual meetings, elections and town meetings, and through informational pieces sent to the local newspaper. In addition, minutes from past annual meetings were reviewed for issues residents had mentioned related to elements of the comprehensive plan. The draft of the comprehensive plan was posted on-line and comments solicited both from residents and from adjacent municipalities. The notices for the public hearing were published April 13, 2009 and May 6, 2009.

May 13, 2009, 22 people attended the public hearing on the comprehensive plan. The LU & ZC incorporated comments received and amended the plan slightly before formally recommending approval to the Town Board for approval on June 3, 2009 . The Town Board of Rudolph (Chairman Jim Bushmaker and Supervisors Dick Witt and Randy Nieman) voted unanimously to approve the plan.

Upon approval of the plan, copies in either electronic or paper format were distributed to:

- Clerks of Wood County & Portage County
- Clerks of the Village of Rudolph, the Village of Biron, the Towns of Sigel and Sherry and the City of Wisconsin Rapids in Wood County
- Clerks of the Towns of Linwood and Carson in Portage County
- The McMillan Memorial Library and the Midstate Technical College Library in Wisconsin Rapids
- North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- State of Wisconsin Department of Administration

The Town of Rudolph will maintain paper copies of the comprehensive plan for inspection at the town hall, in addition to the access on line through the Wood County Planning and Zoning link.

OPEN HOUSE & PUBLIC HEARING ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Rudolph
Land Use and Zoning Commission
May 13, 2009 at 7 p.m.
Rudolph Town Hall

Members present: Chairman Hilde Henkel, Cheryl Thorson, Tim Marzofka, Rick Rosino, Aden Ward (alternate). Also present: 16 residents.

1. Public hearing on proposed comprehensive plan for the town of Rudolph. Summary of plan distributed and explained, element by element. Public commented on a few items.
2. Application by Randy Nieman , 945 County Road C, for extension of the conditional use permit to operate a used car dealership on his property. Legal Description is G1 3.10 A. V/P 0540/06770702/0358 0848/0121 S10 T23 R6E Lot 1, Wood Co. CSM #6206, BNG PRT NE NE. Following discussion, motion by Rosino, second by Marzofka to recommend indefinite extension of the CUP with all previous limitations. Unanimously approved.
3. Application by Roger Hartjes, 6292 Third Avenue, for conditional use permit to extend a pond beyond 1 acre on his property. Legal description is S15 T23 Lot 1, WCCSM #5616, BNG PRT of N ½ SW. Distribution of plans for pond, concern expressed for 2-1 slope interior, and owner amendment of plan to 3-1 slope. Owner noted he would like 2 years to complete if any trouble with wet weather, even though county's non-metallic mining exemption apparently is limited to one year. Motion by Marzofka, second by Ward to recommend 2 year CUP for construction of the pond with the slope amendment. Approved unanimously.
4. Discussion and action on LU & ZC recommendation of comprehensive plan to Town of Rudolph board. The members discussed public comment and decided to add "and (encourage) landowners to recognize the value of agriculture in providing rural atmosphere." to the second objective in Land Use Element. Motion by Marzofka, second by Rosino to recommend approval of comprehensive plan as amended. Approved unanimously.
5. Discussion and clarification on zoning issues: None presented by zoning administrator Steve Kozicki..
6. Public comment on zoning issues Dale Pagels requested more information about the pond exemption time limit.
7. Adjourn meeting Motion by Ward, second by Marzofka to adjourn. Approved unanimously, Adjourned at 8 35 p.m.

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Cheryl Thorson, Secretary

Ordinance No. 2009-1

AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE TOWN OF RUDOLPH, WISCONSIN.

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

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

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

SECTION 3. The Land Use and Zoning Commission of the Town of Rudolph, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "Town of Rudolph Comprehensive Plan," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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

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

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

ADOPTED this 3rd day of June, 2009

Published/Posted: June 8, 2009
Approved: _____ _____

James Bushmaker, Chairman Richard Witt, Supervisor

_____

Randy Nieman, Supervisor

Attest: _____

Town Clerk