

**CHAPTER 3:
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 3-1

20-YEAR GENERAL PLAN DESIGN 3-1

 Land Use Classifications..... 3-1

 Land Use Recommendations 3-1

IDENTIFIED SMART GROWTH AREAS 3-10

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses in detail the 20-Year General Plan Design and supporting land use recommendations for the Town of Little Suamico. The background information and data provided in *Volume II: County Resources* was referenced by Plan Commission members during the year-long preparation of the town’s preferred future land use map. From these monthly meetings and presentations to the public, the Town of Little Suamico 20-Year General Plan Design (**Maps 3.1**) was drafted and approved. The map reflects the type, location, and density of specific future land uses the town would like to promote during this planning period. The existing land use inventory, a detailed list of development strategies, and a series of implementation tools such as county and local zoning ordinances will assist town officials in achieving the 20-General Plan Design.

20-YEAR GENERAL PLAN DESIGN

Land Use Classifications

The following land use classifications support the Town of Little Suamico future land use map. Utilizing these land use classifications, this section details the suggested type, location and density of development for the Town of Little Suamico 20-Year General Plan Design. They define those vital land use characteristics that will assist in the preservation of the town’s rural character and promote efficient and orderly growth. The town’s future land use classifications are:

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Industrial / Light Industrial
- Parks and Recreation
- Government / Institutional / Utilities
- Agriculture / Woodlands
- Transportation
- Mineral Resources Overlay
- Environmental Corridors Overlay

Land Use Recommendations

Utilizing these land use classifications, this section details the suggested type, location and the general density of development for the Town of Little Suamico 20-year planning period.

Residential

It is the intent of this classification to promote orderly and efficient growth patterns consistent with adjacent land uses. The town prefers to promote single-family residences at varying densities dependent upon the presence of an adequate transportation system, municipal services, and the natural landscape. Residential development in the Town of Little Suamico is categorized in two categories- *concentrated residential* and *rural residential*.

Concentrated Residential

The Concentrated Residential category is illustrated as “*residential*” on the town’s 20-Year General Plan Design (**Map 3.1**). This residential classification is designated for portions of the town that already contain or have platted large concentrations of development and within areas that have or are planned to have adequate infrastructure to allow for future growth at similar residential types and densities. Within these concentrated residential areas development will

occur meeting the town required minimum of 1.5 acres. Residential development at 1.5 acres will be serviced by private wells and sanitary systems. Residential development will smaller acreage requirements should occur within the boundaries of the sanitary district. Other things to consider as residential densities increase and expand include:

- Integration of varying residential design standards such as conservation by design subdivisions
- Connectivity of denser developed residential subdivisions
- Location and content of the existing environmental features
- Existing infrastructure and accessibility to future development
- Cost effectiveness of the extension of municipal services
- Formulation and implementation of a stormwater management plan
- Provision of emergency services
- Preservation of ground and surface water quality
- Availability of groundwater
- Location and quality of recreational facilities
- County and local land use regulations

Recommendations:

- **Concentrated residential development is most likely to occur** in areas of the town closest to the Green Bay Metro Area influence and to larger residential developments taking place throughout the Town of Little Suamico.
- **Concentrated development will continue as planned** based on existing development patterns, natural features, and environmental corridors.
- **For any new subdivisions being proposed, an Area Development Plan should be provided.** A plan will allow the town to review and ensure that future roads are well designed to promote efficient traffic flow and to avoid unnecessary cul-de-sacs and loops that can increase the town’s future maintenance costs or be disruptive for fire, police or rescue services. Such plans are encouraged to have connectivity to adjacent developing areas to allow residents the opportunity to more safely walk, run, and bike within these neighborhoods.
- **The Little Suamico Sanitary District covers a large portion of the central area of the town including the neighborhoods of Little Suamico and Sobieski.** More concentrated residential development is anticipated to occur within the district. It is important to ensure the sanitary district does not repel development due to hook-up charges and monthly fees.
- **Safe pedestrian, recreational and emergency travel options should be promoted** between new and existing subdivisions.
- **Infill should be maximized in concentrated residential whenever possible** to limit the costs to extend infrastructure; minimizing the loss of open space and woodlands; and decreasing the travel distance between residences and existing services. However, due to the



town’s limited sanitary and stormwater services, it is important that infill development be done in a manner to protect the town’s surface water features.

- **Shared on-site wastewater treatment systems should be promoted where appropriate.** For cluster type developments outside of the sanitary district, discuss shared on-site systems as an option with developers.
- **Pursue maintenance standards that address neglected structures and properties** that negatively impact the character of the town.
- **Multi-family housing will be given consideration based on the needs of the town’s residents.** The town will make exceptions for smaller multi-family developments, such as town homes, if proof can be provided that the development will be adequately serviced by existing infrastructure. In such situations, it is recommended that these developments occur on larger lots within areas of designated concentrated residential development or in the Little Suamico Sanitary District.
- **The incorporation of various development techniques helps maintain a balance between the natural environment and new development.** It is recommended that various development techniques such as utilization of conservation subdivisions in these areas in an effort to protect surrounding environmental features; preserve open space; and protect woodlands and wildlife habitats.
- **Future residential development should maximize protection of environmentally sensitive areas** (i.e. woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, etc.) in order to minimize soil erosion and damage to surface waters.
- **The single family residential zoning district will be the primary zoning district of choice for any proposed residential development** in areas shown as concentrated residential. The town may also consider the use of the rural residential zoning district on a limited basis when the use of that district better aligns with existing residential development.

Rural Residential

The “Rural Residential” category is illustrated as “*Agricultural / Woodlands*” on the town’s 20-Year General Plan Design (**Map 3.1**) and encompasses single-family residences built predominately within agricultural, wooded, and open space land use designations. The town’s intent is to protect open spaces existing natural areas (vegetated areas and/or open space views) from development that will cause fragmentation of such features.

Recommendations:

- **Low density development is promoted to help maintain the town’s visual and environmental integrity.**
- **New residential development should conform to surrounding uses** in order not to detract from or conflict with existing properties.
- **Access controls are encouraged to limit the number of driveways** along the primary corridors in order to improve safety and reduce road maintenance costs.
- **The rural residential zoning district will be the primary zoning district of choice for any proposed residential development** while the town may also consider the single family

residential zoning district on a limited basis when a smaller lot size would further the towns intent of preserving woodlands and agricultural lands.

Mixed Use

The Mixed Use land use classification includes areas with a mix of existing residential and commercial land uses. It is the intent of this classification to promote continued development of commercial uses within these areas, as they are located along the U.S. Highway 41/141 corridor, in Little Suamico located at the intersection of county highways J and S in the east central area of the town and in Sobieski located west of the highway corridor on County Highway S. It is not the intent of the town to promote significant residential development within these areas.

Recommendations:

- **Mixed use development is planned at locations along the U.S. Highway 41/141, in Little Suamico located at the intersection of county highways J and S in the east central area of the town and in Sobieski located west of the highway corridor on County Highway S.** These locations are envisioned to contain primarily commercial, retail, and service related businesses that will be widely used by the town’s residents and visitors along with some existing residential uses and some limited new residential uses.
- **New businesses should be compatible with the character of the town.** The town encourages new businesses to feature attractive, well-maintained buildings that include appropriate signage and lighting so not to detract from the rural character of the community and the mixture of uses within the planned mixed use area.
- **A strong visual image is created by requiring front façades to face public spaces or streets** and by maintaining a distinctive architectural style through the use of size, materials, colors, texture, and composition.
- **New development should be directed away from environmentally sensitive areas** (shown as “Environmental Corridors” on Map 3.1)
- **The town recommends that the lower level of the buildings be converted back to commercial and retail use.**
- **The rehabilitation and utilization of existing buildings** is critical to the long-term viability, appearance, and function of this area.
- **Development of new commercial spaces should be carefully planned in order to minimize the impacts on existing infrastructure.** Proposals for new development should consider the adequacy of existing infrastructure to accommodate the needs of that area. New development should minimize the costs of utility and road extensions. Additionally, the presence of truck traffic, noise, and other impacts of commercial activity should be minimized when located near residential areas. When necessary, buffers should be created to minimize impacts between residential and business land uses.
- **These mixed use areas should encourage a balance of pedestrian and vehicular movement.**
- **The utilization of appropriate zoning and design**



regulations will help regain a vibrant business appearance. The siting of parking lots and garages in less prominent locations and the inclusion of proper landscaping, fencing and vegetation to buffer mixed land uses will help create a small community feel.

- **These areas will contain mixed commercial and retail businesses,** such as specialty shops, governmental services, churches, personal services, restaurants, financial institutions, etc. to accommodate the needs of the current and future residents.
- **Residential uses within these mixed use areas are anticipated to continue, however it is not the intent of the town to promote significant residential development within these planned mixed use areas.** The town will utilize the single family residential zoning district for the limited new residential uses as needed.
- **The general commercial zoning district will be the primary zoning district of choice for any proposed commercial proposals.** When a commercial proposal within one of the designated mixed use areas is situated amongst existing residential uses the town may wish to utilize the restricted commercial or neighborhood commercial zoning district.

Commercial

The Commercial land use classification includes retail, professional, and service sector businesses. There are several in-home businesses operating throughout the town, and more such businesses are expected to become established in the future. The town is directing most of its commercial business growth to areas along the U.S. Highway 41/141 corridor. The highway intersections at Brown Road, Allen Road, and County Highway S have experienced commercial business activity over the years. Infill and expansion of commercial development is anticipated to occur in these areas and along the access roads during this 20 year planning period and beyond.

Recommendations:

- **Existing businesses should maintain a crisp appearance,** while new commercial developments should be compatible with the character of the town. The town encourages new businesses to feature attractive, well-maintained buildings that include appropriate signage and lighting so not to detract from the rural character of the community.
- **It is expected that a mix of future commercial will locate along the U.S. Highways 141/41 highway corridor in a linear pattern.** The intent is to locate commercial developments in areas that will give future commercial developments the most exposure and allow for easy traffic access.
- **Future highway commercial sites should allow for essential uses that accommodate current residents along with transient demands,** allowing ample room for parking and drive-thru services.
- **New commercial development should be directed away from environmentally sensitive areas** (shown as “Environmental Corridors” on Map 3.1).
- **The maintenance and implementation of the detailed corridor development plan will include consistent design standards** and address signage, transportation, land use, natural and man-made buffers, and design issues for commercial businesses locating along the corridor.

- **Home-based businesses are envisioned to remain a segment of the town’s economic development base.** The town should continually monitor the operations of approved home-based businesses to ensure they are not compromising or conflicting with adjacent land uses. For any home based businesses that grow to a level that requires a change in zoning, the town should first determine if the business will negatively impact the surrounding land uses. If a change in zoning is required to permit the business, the town may consider utilizing the restricted commercial or neighborhood commercial zoning districts.
- **The general commercial zoning district will be the primary zoning district of choice for any commercial proposals.** When a commercial proposal is in a location with other non-commercial existing land uses, the town may wish to utilize the restricted commercial zoning district.

Industrial / Light Industrial

The Industrial / Light Industrial land use classification specifically accommodates manufacturing businesses which creates or changes raw or unfinished materials into another form or higher valued product. Since industrial manufacturing can occur at various intensities, the inclusion of light industrial accommodates less intense operations. The town does not view itself as a community that would attract large industrial operations during the 20 year planning period and have not identified any areas for industrial development on **Map 3.1**. Industrial uses are generally expected to locate within nearby communities that have adequate infrastructure, while light industrial uses may be considered in areas designated for commercial development on **Map 3.1** or in other areas where commercial businesses may be considered.

Recommendations:

- **Industrial or Light Industrial uses in the town should be compatible with the character of the town.** Any new industrial or light industrial uses must be consistent with the scale of the town and be environmentally friendly.
- **The establishment of a TIF (Tax Incremental Finance) District may be an opportunity to generate revenue to attract businesses.** Currently, the legislation limits the type of businesses activities eligible for TIF assistance.
- **The town should continually monitor the capacities of the existing infrastructure and community facilities needed to accommodate new industrial development.** If the infrastructure in a particular area requires expensive improvement to accommodate new growth, the town should carefully study and compare costs of these improvements to their overall benefit to the community.
- **Industrial sites should be created not to detract from the aesthetics of the town.** It is important for the town to control the design of industrial uses in order to maintain/enhance the aesthetics of the town. It is recommended the town develop ordinances or design standards for industries regarding required landscaping, building design, lighting, parking, etc.
- **The establishment of buffers is recommended to prevent incompatibilities with existing land uses.**
- **The location of future industrial development should not be detrimental to the surrounding area** by reason of dust, smoke, odor, degradation of groundwater, or other

nuisance factors.

- **The location of home-based businesses should be carefully scrutinized to ensure their operations do not interfere or compromise surrounding land uses or the rural integrity of the town.** For any home based businesses that grow to a level that requires a change in zoning to light industrial, the town should first determine if the business will negatively impact the surrounding land uses.

Governmental/Institutional/Utilities

The Governmental/Institutional/Utilities land use classification addresses the capacity and efficiency of government buildings; emergency services and facilities; utilities and utility sites; cemeteries; and public services provided to the town residents.

Recommendations:

- **Town officials should continually monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of all town provided services** to identify the need for improvement, change in policy, establishment of mutual aid agreements, or future capital investments.
- **Future municipal development should be located and signed in a manner to ensure safe access into and out of all public buildings and facilities.**
- **The Little Suamico Sanitary District should be assessed on a continued basis** to ensure it is capable of handling the development pressures within that area of the town.
- **Town officials should remain aware of changing issues on telecommunication towers and antennas and wind generation facilities** and the siting of such structures.
- **The town is encouraged to maintain regular contact with the Pulaski Community School District and Oconto Falls School District** in order to be involved with the long-range plans of the district including the siting of new facilities, improvements to existing structures, recreational facilities, etc.

Park and Recreation

The Park and Recreation land use classification discusses existing and future recreational facilities, trails, parks, and open spaces within the town.

Recommendations:



- **Town officials should follow the recommendations** stated in the *Town of Little Suamico Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*.
- **The Little Suamico Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan should be updated as needed** to address hiking, biking and other recreational activities and the connection of these throughout the town.
- **Any future town recreational facilities should be located in areas that can be easily accessed** by either motorized or non-motorized means.
- **Any future town recreational facilities should be built to accommodate all age groups, levels of disabilities, and skills.**

- **The town should cooperate with the surrounding towns, Oconto County, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources** to promote the expansion and connectivity of recreational trails.
- **Proposed private campgrounds should be compatible with the character of the town and located in areas that do not conflict with area land uses.** Any campground proposals should be directed away from environmentally sensitive areas (shown as “Environmental Corridors” on Map 3.1) and away from areas that do not have suitable soils to support the sanitary system needs of the proposed use.

Agricultural

The Agricultural land use classification encompasses lands being utilized for agricultural purposes within the areas illustrated as “*Agriculture / Woodlands*” on the town’s 20-Year General Plan Design (**Map 3.1**). The agricultural classification is designed to preserve existing lands devoted to the growing of crops and the raising of livestock.

Recommendations:

- **The town should encourage the preservation of agricultural lands** and the farmer’s right to farm. Areas that have been designated as farmland preservation areas within the town are shown on **Maps 3.18 and 3.19** found in Chapter 3 of *Volume I: County Plan*. The town should verify the location of development proposals in relation to areas designated for farmland preservation when reviewing development proposals in the area illustrated as agriculture/woodlands on the town’s 20-Year General Plan Design.
- **As residential development continues in these areas, low density development should be considered.** Future development in these areas should be done in a fashion which has the least amount of negative impact on the natural environment and helps ensure fragmentation of productive agriculture land does not occur.
- **New development techniques and programs should be promoted to preserve as much agricultural land as possible.** The utilization of various development techniques such as conservation/cluster subdivisions help preserve farmlands.
- **It is important best management practices are followed for agricultural activities.** Inappropriate agricultural practices can have an adverse impact on the quality of surface water and groundwater unless properly managed.
- **Adequate buffers are recommended between farming and future non-farming operations** in these areas in order to lessen conflict between land uses.
- **Town officials are recommended to work with Oconto County** to address the issue of large-scale farming operations.



Woodlands/Open Space

The Woodlands/Open Space land use classification encompasses lands being utilized for woodland and natural open space and is illustrated as “*Agriculture / Woodlands*” on the town’s 20-Year General Plan Design (**Map 3.1**). The woodland classification is designed to promote

the maintenance of private woodlands and open space areas within the town.

Recommendations:

- **If residential development is permitted in these areas, low density development should be recommended.** Future development in these areas should be done in a fashion which is least amount of negative impact on the natural environment and helps to ensure fragmentation of quality open space does not occur.
- **The integration of existing natural areas will help promote the rural nature of the town.** The Preservation of large tracts of natural areas and/or features is essential to enhance/retain buffers between incompatible uses while maintaining scenic views of the town.
- **Private woodlands should not be promoted for high density development.** The utilizing of conservation subdivision designs or clustering can help maintain the continuity of woodlands.
- **The application of best management practices will help protect the town’s many natural features and open space areas** that can be used to enhance the town’s recreational opportunities and facilities.

Transportation

The Transportation land use classification covers both motorized and non-motorized travel. This includes the existing road network; future recreation paths and trails; and recommendations for safety and improved traffic movement in the town.

Recommendations:

- **To preserve the natural look of the town and to minimize the negative impacts of future residential development along roads,** it is recommended that new development be minimally visible from the road through the application of existing set-backs requirements.
- **For any new subdivisions being proposed, an Area Development Plan should be provided.** This will allow the town to review and ensure that future roads are well designed to promote efficient traffic flow and to avoid unnecessary cul-de-sacs and loops that can increase the town’s future maintenance costs or be disruptive for fire, police or rescue services. Such plans are encouraged to have connectivity to adjacent developing areas to allow residents the opportunity to more safely walk, run, and bike within these neighborhoods.
- **The utilization of the PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) program** will assist town officials in maintaining the roads in the future and ensure there is a cost effective road management plan in place.
- **Recreational paths and trails such as snowmobile trails should have proper signage and intersection controls** to ensure safe crossing and interaction with vehicles.

Mineral Resources Overlay

The Mineral Resources Overlay is depicted on the General Plan Design to ensure active and future quarries are identified within the town. This overlay includes both metallic mining, although extremely rare, and non-metallic mining activities. In most cases, the type of mining to occur in Oconto County will involve extraction of gravel, marl, clay, and similar materials to be

conducted for a specified approved period of time. When mining is complete and the site is reclaimed, the overlay shall be removed and the previous land uses allowed to continue.

- **The town should work with Oconto County Officials to monitor existing mining operations.** Any issues involving the mining operation should be brought to the attention of the county officials in a timely manner.
- **The town should adequately review proposed mining operations.** The town should recommend conditional use requirements to the county that ensure the mining operation does not significantly compromise surrounding land uses. The application of setbacks will help alleviate issues with neighboring properties.
- **Mining operations should be sited in areas that will have little negative impact** on the neighboring properties, adverse effects on groundwater, or significant wear on local roads.
- **The town should work with Oconto County and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources** to ensure mining operations are properly closed and reclaimed.
- **The town should pursue avenues in which to reclaim mining operations not sufficiently reclaimed.**
- **The reclaimed mining sites will be available for other land uses.** The town will need to determine the land use that best suits the area and needs of the town. (i.e. agriculture, recreational, residential)

Environmental Corridors

Environmental corridors contain four components; 100-year floodplain as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), WDNR wetlands, steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, and setback from all navigable waterways as defined by the Oconto County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. Together, these elements represent the areas of the town that are most sensitive to development and are intended to be preserved.

Recommendations:

- **This plan should serve as a guide for the preservation of environmental corridors.** Using the environmental corridors as a guide when reviewing proposed developments will give the town background information to determine what areas are important to maintaining the rural character and quality of the town’s natural resource base. The corridors are an overlay to the recommended plan (**Map 3.1**) and should be utilized as a reference.
- **Future developments should stay back from environmental corridors as much as possible,** or they are designed in such a manner to minimize the negative effects on water resources, wildlife habitats and the overall character of the town.
- **Development near environmental features in the town should be carefully reviewed in order to maintain ample wildlife corridors.**

IDENTIFIED SMART GROWTH AREAS

According to s. 16.965, Wis. Stats., a “smart growth area” is “an area that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands within existing infrastructure and municipal, state and utility services, where practicable, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are

both contiguous to existing development and at densities which have relatively low utility and municipal and state governmental costs.”

- Redevelopment and investment in the mixed-use neighborhoods of Sobieski and Little Suamico
- Concentrated development within the Little Suamico Sanitary District
- Quality commercial development along the highway corridor

Map 3.1: 20-Year General Plan Design

