

CHAPTER 2: INVENTORY, TRENDS, AND FORECASTS

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains valuable background information and data for creation of the *Town of Oconto 20-Year Comprehensive Plan*. It not only provides an inventory of the unique natural features that make the town distinct from its neighboring communities but also highlights the demographic, economic, and land use trends and forecasts used to prepare the town of Oconto 20-Year General Plan Design found in Chapter 3 of this document.

COMMUNITY INVENTORY

History and Description of Planning Area

Town of Oconto History

The town of Oconto lies within the east central portion of Oconto County, commonly known by county residents as the “Historic Bay Shores” area.

Early explorers found the region we now call the Township of Oconto, an important area for settling and establishing their homes. Fur trading, lumbering, and farming became the main sources of economic growth for the region. The Wisconsin Territory’s population grew enough to establish statehood and counties.

In the 1840s, Oconto was a part of Brown County. However, by February of 1851, the new County of Oconto was established. In July 1852, the Township of Oconto was formed. The Township of Oconto was very large as compared to what we know it as today. Sections 17, 18, 19 and 20, later became the Village and City of Oconto. The towns of Little River and Lena were still part of Township of Oconto as late as 1877. Due to their low populations, the areas of what now are Marinette and Forest Counties were governed by the Township of Oconto. Today’s modern boundaries were set in 1912, except for four sections, which would become the Township of Little River.

Although sparsely settled in the 1850s, the Township of Oconto was destined to become an agricultural community. North River Road was originally a foot trail on the shore of the Oconto River. Soon these paths became wagon and stagecoach routes and later railroads extended traffic as far as Shawano and beyond. The most notable historic settlement was the farming community of Couillardville, located where County Highway J crosses the Oconto River. Other noteworthy sites in the township include: The Oconto City Park developed in 1921 and the J. Douglas Bake Municipal Airport founded in 1948 which serves the City and County of Oconto.

The laying out of the Fort Howard to Menominee, Michigan Road in 1855 initiated travel across the township. This road follows the route of US Highway 41, allowing tourists and residents the experience to enjoy the resources of the town of Oconto.

Town of Oconto Planning Area

The town of Oconto is located in the east central portion of Oconto County encompassing an area of approximately 36.7 square miles or approximately 23,392 acres. The closest incorporated communities are: City of Oconto which is directly east of the town, Village of Lena is 13 miles to the northwest; Oconto Falls is 14 miles to the west; and Green Bay is located 30 miles to the

south. **Map 2.1** provides a general location of the town of Oconto in Wisconsin, and **Map 2.2** highlights the planning area.

Past Planning Efforts

Town of Oconto Land Use Survey: The town of Oconto, with assistance from Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, conducted a community-wide land use survey in 2001. This survey was completed to gather input from residents on future land uses. The results of this survey were compiled in a document entitled Town of Oconto, Oconto County, Wisconsin, Town Wide Survey Results, 2001.

Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan: In 1985, Oconto County adopted the Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan prepared by Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. This plan served as a guide for preserving farmland, woodlands and significant environmental areas within the county and to help maintain and expand the agricultural economy. In 2014, Oconto County amended the Oconto County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan to include all statutorily required components of the Farmland Preservation Plan. The Oconto County Comprehensive Plan includes all requirements of Chapter 91.

Town of Oconto 2020 Comprehensive Plan:

In January of 2002, the town of Oconto adopted its first comprehensive plan entitled the Town of Oconto 2020 Comprehensive Plan. This plan was developed with planning assistance from Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission.

Town of Oconto 20-Year Comprehensive Plan:

In 2018, the town of Oconto began working with Oconto County Planning staff to complete the first major update to the comprehensive plan. This update was a substantial one in that the plan format was significantly changed. This new format will provide the town a document that is easier to use and will be easier to update as needed. This plan update was completed and adopted in 2021.

Community Resources

Natural Resources

Natural resources are large elements and defining features for local communities. They contribute to providing a clean and abundant supply of groundwater; a source for economic development opportunities; plus comprise an environment essential to maintaining healthy and diverse biological communities.

The resources that lie above and beneath the ground are very important when considering the location of future development. A summary of those resources located within the town of Oconto are highlighted below. Expanded definitions and countywide maps of these natural resources can be found in Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

- The soil types throughout the town are very sandy well drained to loamy and poorly drained. The contour of the area encompasses a number of depressions and basins and is scattered with lake and outwash plains. This combined topography and soil type limits the amount of water driven erosion that is likely to occur in the area.
- The depth to bedrock is 60 feet or greater naturally filtering contamination from septic systems, farming operations, and stormwater runoff before they get to the groundwater

below.

- There are two rivers meandering through the town of Oconto. The Oconto River is a 44 mile long, hard water river with slightly alkaline, clear water. The average width is 106 feet. Oconto Falls Pond and the Machickanee Flowage are impoundments on the river and is tributary to Green Bay. The Little River is a 17 mile long, very hard water river with slightly alkaline, light brown water, and an average width of 25 feet. It is a tributary to the Oconto River.
- A majority of the town is located in two main watersheds. These are the Lower Oconto River and the Little River Watershed. Both watersheds are part of the larger Lake Michigan Basin that drains directly into Green Bay of Lake Michigan.
- Topography and drainage within the town are primarily the result of glaciation. This glaciation has caused the area to be poorly drained and pocketed with marshes and wetlands. The topography varies approximately 140 feet in elevation from 580 feet above mean sea level along the Bay of Green Bay to 720 feet above mean sea level in the extreme northwest corner of the town, north of the Little River. The majority of the town, however, maintains an elevation between 600 and 650 feet above mean sea level.
- The upland woodlands (those woodlands that are not in a wetland) are scattered throughout the town. These woodlands are primarily located in areas that are unsuitable for agricultural use and include places with ridges, steep slopes.
- Surface waters are abundant throughout Oconto County. **Map 2.3** illustrates the surface water features in the town.
- Town residents get their drinking water through individual wells tapping the groundwater below. Groundwater, lakes, and rivers are all connected as water commonly flows between them. Groundwater is also connected to the surface of the land by rain and melted snow which carry substances from the surface down to the groundwater and nearby wells.
- The Plan Determinants consist of wetlands, floodplains, steep slope (12 percent or more), and the 75-foot setback from surface water features. Each of these four Plan Determinant features for the town is shown on **Map 2.4**. The individual plan determinants merged together form a single feature known as “environmental corridors”, which is displayed on the town’s General Plan Design (**Map 3.1**).
 - There are limited areas noted as steep slope within the town. Steep slope is based on soil characteristics which can be a constraint to development due to increased runoff and soil erosion potential.
 - There are designated floodplains located along the Bay of Green Bay, along the Oconto River, and also along the Little River.
 - Wetlands are located throughout the town with the most significant wetland area located in the southeast portion of the town.

Agricultural Resources

The town’s prime agricultural soils are shown in **Map 2.5**. These soils have been determined to contain the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for growing crops for human and animal consumption. A large portion of the town has been noted has containing

prime agricultural soils. The most densely covered areas of prime agricultural soils are on the west side of USH 41. In all, there are 10,272 acres of crop and pasture land in the town as determined by the existing land use inventory. Areas that have been designated as farmland preservation within the town are shown on **Map 3.24** found in Chapter 3 of *Volume I: County Plan*.

More information regarding agricultural resources in the county can be viewed in Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County Resources*.



Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources are typically sites, features, and/or objects of some importance to a culture or a community for scientific, aesthetic, traditional, educational, religious, archaeological, architectural, and historic reasons.

A comprehensive list of historically significant features for the town can be found on the Wisconsin Historical Society's website at <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org>.

Community Design Features are often reference points, roads and trails, boundaries, areas of commonality, and destinations individuals will acknowledge and express to describe the town or a definable area within the town. For the town of Oconto, these include:

- a. Landmarks (reference points)-
 - Couillardville bridge over Oconto River on CTH J
 - Town Hall
 - Recycling Center
 - Crossing at CTH J and STH 22
 - Oconto County Airport
 - County Forest Lands
 - Boat Landing on the Oconto River
 - Golf Course
 - Park Lands
 - Catholic Cemetery
 - Little River bridge on Stiles Road
 - Little River bridge on CTH J
 - Mennonite Church
- b. Pathways (roads, trails, etc.)-
 - STH 22
 - USH 41
 - CTH J
 - CTH S
 - CTH N
 - CTH NN

- North River Road
 - Pacific Rail Road to Recreation Trail
- c. Edges (boundaries)-
- Bay shore of Green Bay
 - City of Oconto
 - Oconto River
 - Little River
- d. Districts (encompass areas of commonality)-
- Oconto School District
 - Lena School District
 - NWTC
 - City of Oconto Fire Department
 - Town of Oconto Sanitary District
 - Oconto Ambulance Service
- e. Nodes (destinations within the center of a district)-
- Town Hall
 - Catholic Cemetery
 - Mennonite Church and Cemetery

Economic Resources

Being a rural farming community, the town's local economy is directly connected to its vast amount of agricultural resources. As noted on the existing land use inventory, there are also 35.8 acres of identified commercial land and 36.2 acres of industrial land use.

Other employment types found in the town of Oconto include large farming operations, machining, machinery sales and service, non-metallic mining, bulk hauling and trucking, construction equipment sales and service, and a variety of home-based businesses.

Utilities and Community Facilities

An inventory and assessment of existing facilities is made to determine whether or not there may be condition and capacity issues in meeting future development needs. Information on the Town of Oconto's community and public facilities is shown on **Map 2.6** and highlighted below.

- The Oconto Town Hall is located at 6120 Cream City Road. The town hall serves as space for town meetings and the town's polling place.
- Town residents utilize individual wells and on-site wastewater treatment facilities. Fee based refuse and recycling disposal is offered by the town at the town recycling center located at 6608 Elm Grove School Rd.
- The Oconto County Sheriff's Department provides primary police protection for the town.

- Fire protection is provided by the City of Oconto Fire Department. The fire station is located at 1210 Main Street. Map 9.2 in Chapter 9 of Volume II: County Resources illustrates the fire districts in Oconto County.
- The City of Oconto Ambulance Service provides emergency services to town residents. EMS/Ambulance districts are shown on Map 9.3 in Chapter 9 of Volume II: County Resources.
- Two school districts serve the residents of the town. The Oconto Unified School District, located at 400 Michigan Avenue; and the Lena Public School District, located at 304 E. Main Street; both serve children pre-kindergarten thru 12th grade. See Map 9.4 in Chapter 9 of Volume II: County Resources for school districts located in Oconto County.
- The Oconto Public Library, Lena Public Library, and the Oconto Falls Community Library serve town, and surrounding areas.
- Town residents are served by the United States Post Office facility located in the City of Oconto. There is one cemetery located in the town of Oconto. The Oconto Catholic Cemetery is 27 acres in size and is utilized by the town of Oconto. The cemetery has some room and is fit for the future needs of Oconto and other adjacent towns. There is a Mennonite Cemetery on CTH J adjacent to a recently organized church. Additional cemeteries are located in adjacent communities. The town does not plan on developing or maintaining town cemeteries.
- Child care is provided by several in-home daycare providers in the area.
- Residents are served by local and satellite TV services. Some residents have access to high speed internet.
- Wisconsin Public Service and Oconto Electric Cooperative provide electric service to the town. Gas service is available from Wisconsin Public Service for some residents.
- Town residents have access to the Bellin Health Oconto Hospital located in the City of Oconto and the HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital located in the City of Oconto Falls. Three clinics (Bellin, Prevea, and Aurora) are available in the City of Oconto.



Parks and Recreation

The town has very limited recreational facilities. Most of the town residents utilize the park and recreation sites within the City of Oconto. Please see **Map 9.5** in Chapter 9 of *Volume II: County Resources* for a detailed inventory of park and recreational areas within Oconto County.

Transportation

Transportation specific information for the town of Oconto is highlighted below. For more details on the transportation systems in Oconto County, please see Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

- U.S. Highway (USH) 41 is a principal arterial route and STH 22 is a minor arterial route. The function of an arterial highway is to move traffic over medium to long distances, often between regions as well as between major economic centers, quickly, safely and efficiently. For over three decades, the portion of USH 41 from Green Bay, through Oconto County has

slowly been upgraded to freeway and expressway standards.

- CTH S, CTH N, CTH Y and CTH J are classified as a collector roads. The primary function of the county roads that are classified as “collectors” is to provide general "area to area" routes for local traffic.

The rail tracks and facilities located within the town are owned and operated by the Canadian National. The track runs north to south through the town just south of the City of Oconto and approximately parallel to USH 41. Although the Canadian National Railroad does not provide service to any industry or business located within the town, it is an important element of the local transportation system.



Table 8.2 found in Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources* lists the mileage of roads under the jurisdiction of the town of Oconto by function. **Map 8.1** found in Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources* provides the location of the roads by function within the town.

Land Use Inventory

A detailed field inventory of existing land uses in the town of Oconto was completed by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission in 2001. This land use inventory was updated in 2007 as part of a county planning process. In 2017, as part of the town plan update a detailed existing land use inventory was completed by Oconto County Planning. A consistent standard land use classification methodology was used to determine existing land uses. Please see Chapter 11 of *Volume II: County Resources* for a description of these land use categories.

A breakdown of the town’s general land uses with acreages is shown in Table 2.1. **Map 2.7** displays the existing town of Oconto land use.

Table 2.1: Existing Land Use

| Land Use Type | Total Acres | Percentage Total Land | Percentage Developed Land |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| DEVELOPED | | | |
| <i>Single Family</i> | 1,065.7 | 4.6 | 52.3 |
| <i>Mobile Homes</i> | 22.2 | 0.1 | 1.1 |
| <i>Multi-Family</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Vacant Residential</i> | 2.2 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| Total Residential | 1,090.1 | 4.7 | 53.5 |
| Commercial | 35.8 | 0.2 | 1.8 |
| Industrial | 36.2 | 0.2 | 1.8 |
| Transportation | 508.0 | 2.2 | 24.9 |
| Communications/Utilities | 6.1 | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| Institutional/Governmental | 17.6 | 0.1 | 0.9 |
| Recreational | 111.3 | 0.5 | 5.5 |
| Agricultural Structures | 233.8 | 1.0 | 11.5 |
| Total Developed Acres | 2,039.0 | 8.7 | 100.0 |
| UNDEVELOPED | | | |
| | | Percentage Undeveloped Land | |
| Croplands/Pasture | 10,272.3 | 43.9 | 48.1 |
| Woodlands | 8,582.6 | 36.7 | 40.2 |
| Other Natural Areas | 2,211.1 | 9.5 | 10.4 |
| Water Features | 286.5 | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| Total Undeveloped Acres | 21,352.5 | 91.3 | 100.0 |
| Total Land Area | 23,391.6 | 100.0 | |

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Population

Historic Population Trends

Analyzing the change in population and housing trends and characteristics is important to help understand the needs of a community’s current and future populations. The town of Oconto experienced a fluctuating population from 1930 to 1980. Since 1970 the town has experienced steady population increases. Over the past three decades, the town’s population has steadily grown from 999 in 1990 to 1,335 in 2010.

For more information on population trends in Oconto County and the town of Oconto refer to Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*. For town specific population data refer to Tables 6.14 – 6.18 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Population Projections

By analyzing past population trends, it is possible to project future growth. The use of forecasting calculates, or predicts, a future number by using existing figures. Projecting future population growth over this 20 year planning period will enable to the town of Oconto to better understand future needs for housing, utilities, transportation, recreation, and a number of other

population influenced services. For this comprehensive plan, the town has utilized Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) population projections. Based on these WDOA projections, the town of Oconto will continue to see an increase in total population.

The town Oconto are outside the sphere of influence by the Green Bay metro area. Communities south of Oconto have experienced a strong growth rate due to the significant amount of new residents moving out from the metro center to the more open areas of southern Oconto County.

More information on population projections for Oconto County and the town of Oconto can be found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources* with town specific projections shown in Table 6.18.

Housing

Housing Trends and Characteristics

As reported by the U.S. Census, the town of Oconto’s total number of housing units have continued to increase over the years from 300 in 1970 to 577 in 2010.

More information on the number of housing units for Oconto County and the town of Oconto can be found in Table 6.19 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Housing Projections

Utilizing the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) occupied housing unit projections, the town can expect to see a continued increase in occupied housing units from 519 in 2010 to 712 by 2040.

More information on housing projections for Oconto County and the town of Oconto can be found in Table 6.20 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Economic Development

The town of Oconto’s economy is heavily dependent upon agriculture and supportive agriculture industries.

Of the town’s residents in the labor force, the majority, 27.5 percent, are employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations. A large percentage 26.7 percent are employed in management, professional, and related occupations. More information on employed persons by occupation for Oconto County and the town of Oconto can be found in Table 7.11 found in Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

For more information regarding economic characteristics of Oconto County and the town of Oconto refer to Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

LAND USE TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Existing Land Use Issues and Conflicts

As the town continues to prepare for future development, it is necessary to recognize and acknowledge any existing land use issues or conflicts. These areas of concern, as highlighted below, will need to be addressed within the General Plan Design context and the implementation strategies outlined in the comprehensive plan.

- It is anticipated there will be continued residential development in the town. This development will lead to fragmentation and loss of natural areas (woodlands, open space)

and agriculture land.

- The presence of the county forest limits development in the southeast portion of the town.
- It is important to maintain orderly and quality mixed use development along STH 22 to promote a positive image of the area and enable the town and village to attract future businesses to the locate along the corridor.
- There are a limited number of recreational facilities-parks, trails, and campgrounds within the town.
- The town anticipates future farming operations will consist of primarily cash grain operations.
- The limited number but larger residential lot sizes found throughout the town may create land use conflicts with neighboring farming operations.

Anticipated Land Use Trends

The following land use trends were developed for the planning period. It is expected that these trends will influence the town’s future growth and preservation. The Town Board will need to address these trends over the planning period. Many of these trends are prevalent throughout the county and within adjacent communities.

1. The demand for larger lot sizes will increase and the ratio of persons per household will decrease resulting in greater acreage needs to accommodate future residential growth.
2. Residential developments adjacent to the city of Oconto will continue at higher densities to receive adequate services and to preserve the rural nature of the surrounding town.
3. Mixed use development along STH 22 will continue to allow for residential and commercial uses that are at a scale and intensity that compliments the rural atmosphere of the town.
4. The central part of Oconto County including the Town of Oconto will maintain its strong agricultural heritage and the continuation of farming will be the area’s predominant land use. It is likely smaller farms will be absorbed into larger operations.
5. The rural character will continue to be maintained in the town, preserving the natural vegetative structure resulting in the protection of wildlife and fish spawning habitats.
6. The use of on-site wastewater septic systems and individual groundwater wells will continue within the town throughout the planning period.
7. Future light industrial developments will be located within areas near STH 22 and the city of Oconto’s northwest border, or be directed instead to the city of Oconto’s industrial park.
8. The town will experience a demand for services, as the median population age continues to increase and additional people relocate to the town from areas with greater services.

Development Considerations

Land Supply

There is ample room for development opportunities within the town, including recreational, residential, retail, commercial, and light industrial land uses. The town’s rural feel will be a catalyst for those looking to build a home or locate a business. The Oconto Unified School

District, offers a quality education and will be a draw for families with children. With the town of Oconto outside of the Green Bay Metropolitan influence, the homes are affordable for individuals of all age groups and income levels.

Land Price

Land prices within the town of Oconto will follow the regional trend of increasing land prices for development. Existing home values will grow but at a slower rate than communities to the south, which are impacted by the strong growth being displayed in the Green bay Metropolitan Area. The land along the STH 22 and USH 41 corridor will maintain a higher value due to its highway exposure. The cost of residential lots within existing sub-divisions will remain competitive with surrounding communities. The value of agriculture land will continue to increase most likely do to the need of large agricultural operators. At times of rapid increases in commodity prices, there will be pressure to farm more marginal crop land and to till open space and grasslands not traditionally utilized for growing crops.

LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections

The Comprehensive Planning legislation s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats. requires comprehensive plans to include projections in five-year increments for future residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses over the 20-year planning period. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) projections were used to determine anticipated future growth within the town. The town of Oconto future land use projections can be viewed in Table 2.2

It is **not** the intent of this comprehensive plan to see an entire area within a land use classification noted on the General Plan Design be developed. The specified uses should be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of existing development. Some of the land within the land use classification is not developable due to natural features, easements, setbacks, existing preferred land uses, or availability of supporting infrastructure. Within developing areas, these additional considerations and land uses generally account for approximately 25 percent of the gross land area. Given these considerations, the gross land use needs for residential, commercial, and industrial development for the town of Oconto by 2040 is 853.55 acres. The net acreage total for each of the illustrated land uses in Table 2.2 is 640.2 acres.

Table 2.2: Five-Year Incremental Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

| Year | Residential | | Commercial | | Industrial | |
|------|-------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| | Acres | Total | Acres | Total | Acres | Total |
| 2020 | 177.5 | | 5.8 | | 5.9 | |
| 2025 | 144.0 | 321.5 | 4.7 | 10.5 | 4.8 | 10.7 |
| 2030 | 147.0 | 468.5 | 4.8 | 15.3 | 4.9 | 15.6 |
| 2035 | 96.0 | 564.5 | 3.2 | 18.5 | 3.2 | 18.8 |
| 2040 | 36.0 | 600.5 | 1.2 | 19.7 | 1.2 | 20.0 |

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Residential Projections

The town’s future residential land use acreage was projected utilizing the following methodology:

- The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Projections,
- A per residential lot average of (2) two acres; and
- A multiplication factor ranging from 1.25 to 2.25 to allow for market flexibility and to account for the continued decline in persons per household.

WDOA’s projections were used as a basis for the creation of Table 2.3. The town of Oconto can anticipate the construction of 193 new homes by 2040. The land needed for these new homes equates to 600.5 net acres and 800.67 gross acres. Town officials want to direct most of the concentrated residential development to areas adjacent to the City of Oconto and to locations illustrated on the General Plan Design to help preserve existing agriculture land.

Table 2.3: Five-Year Incremental Housing Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

| Year | New Housing Units | Acres/DU | Market Value | Acres Needed |
|--------------|-------------------|----------|--------------|---------------|
| 2020 | 71 | 2 | 1.25 | 177.5 |
| 2025 | 48 | 2 | 1.5 | 144.0 |
| 2030 | 42 | 2 | 1.75 | 147.0 |
| 2035 | 24 | 2 | 2 | 96.0 |
| 2040 | 8 | 2 | 2.25 | 36.0 |
| Total | 193 | | | 600.50 |

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Note: The new housing units shown for 2020 would be the increase from the number of housing units determined in the 2010 census and the projected number of housing units in 2020. From 2010 thru 2020 it is projected the town will see 71 new housing units. From 2020 thru 2025 it is projected the town will see 48 new housing units. The projections are for single family homes and do not account for multiple family and apartment complexes which have greater residential densities.

Commercial Projections

To calculate commercial land use projections, the ratio between residential acreage and commercial land use acreage is determined based on the existing land use inventory. That ratio is 30.45 acres of residential land to every one acre of commercial land for a 30.45:1 ratio. Based on this ratio, the town can anticipate allocating 19.7 net acres and 26.29 gross acres for commercial land uses as reflected in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Five-Year Incremental Commercial Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

| Year | Res. Acreage | Ratio | Acres Needed |
|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------|
| 2020 | 177.5 | 30.45 | 5.8 |
| 2025 | 144.0 | 30.45 | 4.7 |
| 2030 | 147.0 | 30.45 | 4.8 |
| 2035 | 96.0 | 30.45 | 3.2 |
| 2040 | 36.0 | 30.45 | 1.2 |
| Total | | | 19.7 |

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Industrial Projections

The ratio between residential acreage and industrial land use acreage is also determined based on

the existing land use inventory. That ratio was 30.11 acres of residential land to every one acre of industrial land for a 30.11:1 ratio. The industrial land found in the town is largely quarry operations. Using this ratio, the town can assume another 19.9 net and 19.9 gross acres will be dedicated to industrial land uses as seen in Table 2.5. A majority of this allocation will be for expansion of existing or the creation of new non-metallic mining operations; however, there may be some light industrial land utilized for manufacturing operations located primarily along the STH 22 corridor close to the City of Oconto.

Table 2.5: Five-Year Incremental Industrial Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

| Year | Res. Acreage | Ratio | Acres Needed |
|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------|
| 2020 | 177.5 | 30.11 | 5.9 |
| 2025 | 144.0 | 30.11 | 4.8 |
| 2030 | 147.0 | 30.11 | 4.9 |
| 2035 | 96.0 | 30.11 | 3.2 |
| 2040 | 36.0 | 30.11 | 1.2 |
| Total | | | 19.9 |

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Agricultural Projections

With a projected 853.55 gross acres of land needed for future residential, commercial, and industrial development, a large percentage of those acres will be taken out of current agriculture production. Some of the projected development will also utilize existing open space and woodlands. With over 10,272.3 acres of agricultural and pasture lands identified during the existing land use inventory, the intention is to preserve as much of this open space as possible over the next 20 years by developing areas where it economically feasible to do so and adjacent to compatible land uses. To ensure existing and future agriculture operations have the ability and incentive to continue, the Town of Oconto plan to preserve the more productive and larger tracts of agriculture land located throughout the entire area by promoting wise and condensed development patterns.

Map 2.1: Location Map

Map 2.2: Planning Area

Map 2.3: Surface Waters

Map 2.4: Plan Determinants

Map 2.5: Prime Agricultural Soils

Map 2.6: Public and Community Facilities

Map 2.7: Existing Land Use