

CHAPTER 8 Land Use Element

66.1001 (2)(h) Wis. Stat:

Land Use element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element shall contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity and net density of existing uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and other public and private uses. The element shall analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts. The element shall contain projections, based on the background information specified in par. (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based. The element shall also include a series of maps that show current land uses and future land uses that indicate natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which service of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in par. (d), and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.

Section 8.1 Existing Land Use

As of January 1, 2006, the incorporated communities within the Portage County Urban Area included approximately 18,061 acres of land. Table 8.1 and Map 8.1 illustrate the distribution of different land uses across the municipalities. These acreages are generalized for summary purposes. Specific information on individual communities is available within their adopted municipal Comprehensive Plans.

Table 8.1: Generalized Urban Area Existing Land Use Acreage, 2006

Existing Land Use Category	Acres	Percent
Single Family Residential	3,694	19.5%
Duplex Residential (2 units)	263	1.4%
Multi-Family Residential (3+ units)	361	1.9%
Mobile Home Park	134	0.7%
Commercial / Office	1,219	6.4%
Industry	1,207	6.4%
Institutional / Government	2,251	11.9%
Parks	800	4.2%
Agriculture	922	4.9%
Restrictive Ownership	826	4.4%
Not Developable	1,746	9.2%
Vacant	1,957	10.3%
Road	2,508	13.2%
Water Bodies	1,059	5.6%
Total Acreage	18,948	100.0%

Urban Area = Stevens Point, Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge
 Source: Portage County Planning and Zoning Department.

A. Residential Land Use

Existing residential development occupies over 4,400 acres (24%) of the incorporated Urban Area. This land use is separated into four categories: single family, duplex (2-unit buildings), multi-family (3+ unit buildings), and mobile home park. Single family residential, the largest individual land use category, covers 3,694 acres, or 20% of the Area. Duplex residential units are widely scattered across the Area on a total of 263 acres (1.4%). Multi-family units, which tend to occur more in clusters of buildings and are also distributed throughout the Area, account for 361 acres (2.0%). The mobile home park category accounts for 134 acres (0.7%), split between the City of Stevens Point and the Village of Plover.

B. Commercial and Professional Office Land Uses

This category accounts for 1,219 acres, or 6.4% of Urban Area land use, and includes retail and service establishments along with banks, doctor's offices (excluding the hospital building in Stevens Point), dentists, veterinary clinics, insurance companies, etc.

C. Industrial Land Use

Industrial land use accounts for 1,207 acres, or 6.4% of land in the Urban Area. In Stevens Point it has historically been located within the main railroad corridor running east/west though the City, between Patch Street and Dixon Street, terminating at the paper mill (currently Stora Enso North America) along the Wisconsin River. Industry within the Village of Plover also originated along the rail lines. Expansion of industrial activity in Stevens Point has generally been concentrated in the Stevens Point Industrial Park and the Portage County Business Park, both located in the eastern portion of the City, on opposite sides of Interstate Highway 39 south of the railroad tracks. The Village of Plover has expanded industrial land use with the completion of the Pines Corporate Centre. The majority of industrial property within Whiting is included in the two paper mill facilities along the Wisconsin River.

D. Institutional / Government Land Use

Institutional/government development accounts for 2,251, or 12% of the incorporated Urban Area. Included under *Institutional* are churches, public and private schools (including Mid-State Technical College and University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point), cemeteries, and St. Michaels Hospital. UW-SP alone accounts for nearly 400 acres of this total. *Government* includes all municipally-owned properties (including the municipal airport) as well as Portage County-owned properties.

E. Park: Park land accounts for 800 acres, or 4.2% of Urban Area land.

F. Agricultural Land Use

Agricultural land accounts for 922 acres (4.9%). Much of this is cultivated land located in the south/central portion of the Village of Plover. It is a possibility that these lands may not become available for urban development within the planning period.

G. Not Developable / Natural Areas, Open Space / Restrictive Ownership

These categories (2,572 acres, 13.6%) includes environmentally sensitive areas (floodplain, wetlands, etc.) as well as large parcels of privately owned land (i.e. Izaak Walton League lands) and large publicly owned parcels (City wellfields, or former "Boy Scout" property north of airport) that have been deemed by the various municipal governments as unlikely to be developed during the current planning period.

Map 8.1: Existing Land Use

Map 8.2: Urban Area Development 1948 to 2000

H. Vacant

This category includes land with no existing developed use, and is considered available for future development. In early 2006, there were 1,957 acres (10.3%) within the Urban Area considered “vacant”.

I. Road Right-of-Way

This category (2,508 acres, 13.2%) includes all road and rail right-of-way (ROW) within the Urban Area.

J. Water Bodies

The Wisconsin River, Plover River (with the McDill Pond impoundment), Little Plover River (with the Springville Pond impoundment), Lake Joanis, Lake Pacawa and Lake Clar-Re account for 1,059 acres, or 5.6% Urban Area land.

Section 8.2 Trends in Land Use and Value

A. Trends in Urban Area Land Use

The amount of land within the Portage County Urban Area that is developed with “urban” uses increased greatly over the last half of the 20th Century. Map 8.2 above details this growth in development, as detected from the examination of aerial photographs over a 50-year period. In 1948 approximately 2,500 acres were developed. Most of this development was located in the City of Stevens Point. The Village of Park Ridge had incorporated in 1938, and contained many homes. The Village of Whiting had incorporated in 1947, and contained a small nucleus of development. The Village of Plover, which did not incorporate until 1973, has historically been the home of concentrated commercial and residential activity for many years previous. This is reflected in the nucleus of development centered along (then) U.S. Highway 51.

By 1968, an additional 1,277 acres of Urban Area land had been developed. The majority of this occurred with the northeast section of Stevens Point. Growth also occurred within Whiting and Village of Plover, mainly contiguous to the northeast of the original nucleus.

The time between 1968 and 1992 was a period of unparalleled growth. An additional 5,356 acres were developed during this period, an increase in area of over 1.5 times. The U.S. Highway by-pass to the eastern edge of Stevens Point was completed at the end of the 1960’s, and then the Village of Plover incorporated in 1973. Subdivision activity boomed within the new Village, which was among the fastest growing municipalities in the State of Wisconsin, in terms of percentage, over the period. The City of Stevens Point also saw a large amount of subdivision activity, as did the Village of Whiting to a smaller extent. Stevens Point commercial activity also expanded beyond the new U.S. 51/Interstate Highway 39 during this period.

The period between 1992 and 2000 saw a much slower rate of development expansion, and focused more on infill. In all, a total 621 acres of new development were identified. 2000 through 2005, however, saw a number of large commercial/industrial projects constructed, indicating a much more active period for development activity. The Parkdale Development on the City’s new eastern edge continued to fill, adding several strip and stand-alone centers and additional housing. The new (2005) Holiday Inn Convention Center is also located there. The Portage County Business Park on the City’s southeast border performed well above projections for land sales and construction.

Adjacent to the Business Park in the Village of Plover, the large Crossroads Commons retail development features 4 anchor tenants (Kohl's Department Store, Lowe's home improvement store, a Super Wal-Mart, and a Best Buy appliance and electronics store). Significant re-development has occurred west of the Cty Rd B/Interstate 39 interchange, and planning for a large residential/water park/hotel/convention center is nearing completion east of I-39.

1. Towns Adjacent to the Incorporated Urban Area Communities

The Towns of Hull and Plover have been the main recipients of the Urban Area development pressures over time. The City of Stevens Point was incorporated in 1858, and has been growing primarily into the Town of Hull ever since. Even with annexation, the Town of Hull has recorded considerable population growth of its own. Hull's population increased by 140% between 1960 and 1990, from 2,297 to 5,563 residents. The Town's land use is primarily single family residential, in larger lot, suburban-style subdivisions located to the east, northeast of Stevens Point, concentrated along State Highway 66, and north and south of the U.S. Highway 10 corridor, and along the Old Highway 18 corridor (see Map 8.3 below).

The Town of Plover has maintained a relatively stable population level since the incorporation of the Village of Plover in 1973. The Town has recorded limited subdivision activity over the last 20 years, as most activity has taken place within the growing Village. In 2005 the Town and Village of Plover entered into an intergovernmental agreement that includes a revenue sharing agreement, a cost sharing agreement for the reconstruction of Porter Road, identification of future Village growth areas, identification of future areas that the Village would agree to provide municipal sewer and water without annexation to the Village and joint land use planning recommendations for the Village's Extraterritorial Area.

The Town of Stockton lies within the Statutory extraterritorial jurisdiction areas for both the Village of Plover and Stevens Point. Discussions regarding future land use decisions are ongoing between the communities.

B. Trends in Urban Area Land Values

Table 8.2 below describes the change in equalized values for different types of property between 1980 and 2000, as compiled by the State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

Table 8.2: Urban Area Equalized Property Value Trends

Type of Property	1980		1990		2000	
	Value	% of Total	Value	% of Total	Value	% of Total
Residential	\$338,829,000	54%	\$461,984,000	53%	\$923,079,000	54%
Commercial	\$175,222,000	28%	\$272,713,000	31%	\$582,895,000	34%
Manufacturing	\$43,901,000	7%	\$62,022,000	7%	\$114,141,000	7%
Agricultural	\$4,569,000	1%	\$1,982,000	0%	\$0	0%
Swamp and Waste	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Forest	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Other	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Personal Property	\$66,978,000	11%	\$78,194,000	9%	\$89,685,000	5%
Total Value	\$629,499,000	100%	\$876,895,000	100%	\$1,709,800,000	100%

Urban Area = Stevens Point, Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue Statistical Report of Property Valuations, 1980, 1990, 2000

Map 8.3: 2005 Land Use in Hull and T. Plover

Map 8.4: Urban Area 2025 Land Use, Within 2006 Incorporated Urban Area Boundaries

Map 8.5: Urban Area Infill/Redevelopment Areas

Urban Area values have nearly tripled over the twenty-year comparison period, doubling since 1990. Commercial value has shown an increasing percentage of total value while residential and manufacturing percentages of total value have remained constant.

Section 8.3 Projected Land Use Within 2006 Urban Area Community Boundaries

Two of the four incorporated Urban Area communities, Villages of Park Ridge and Whiting, are for all intents and purposes “land-locked”, and will not be able to expand beyond their current boundaries. Existing land use designations will either be maintained or adjusted to arrive at future land use designations. The City of Stevens Point and Village of Plover, however, are situated in a way to allow for outward expansion.

The process used to determine land use needs through the year 2025 for the Urban Area communities was undertaken by the respective municipal governments in 2004 and 2005. The generalized results of the planning for land use within the 2006 corporate boundaries are detailed in Table 8.3 and Map 8.4 above. A new “Special Districts” category has been created to include areas of future land use that have special, mixed use characteristics, as well as areas that were annexed into a municipality after the adoption of their current Comprehensive Plan. Please see the adopted municipal Comprehensive Plans for specific details regarding allowable uses.

**Table 8.3: Generalized Urban Area Land Use, 2025
(within 2006 Corporate Boundaries)**

Future Land Use Category	Acres	Percent
Single Family Residential	4,732	24.5%
Duplex Residential (2 units)	287	1.5%
Multi-Family Residential (3+ units)	538	2.8%
Mobile Home Park	135	0.7%
Commercial / Office	1,228	6.4%
Industry	1,301	6.7%
Special Districts	1,623	8.4%
Institutional / Government	2,130	11.0%
Parks	745	3.9%
Agriculture	158	0.8%
Restrictive Ownership	812	4.2%
Not Developable	1,868	9.7%
Vacant	72	0.4%
Right-of-way	2,550	13.2%
Water Bodies	1,100	5.7%
Total Acreage*	19,279	100.0%

* Reflects transfer of Boundary Adjustment Area acreage into Stevens Point
Urban Area = Stevens Point, Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge
Source: Portage County Planning and Zoning Department.

A. Infill and Redevelopment Areas

Through the course of their individual comprehensive planning processes, the incorporated communities within the Portage County Urban Area identified several areas as having the possibility for infill and/or redevelopment within or beyond the planning period of this Comprehensive Plan (see Map 8.5). Infill development makes the most of existing infrastructure, and can either serve to accomplish land use directives in place for a given area, or can be utilized along with re-development to create a new development “reality” for a given area.

Redevelopment and reinvestment in underutilized properties is essential to strengthen older areas and provide opportunities to strengthen municipal tax base and provide new jobs and housing opportunities. Redevelopment can involve environmental clean-up, land assembly, building demolition, and overcoming other costly impediments. Municipal incentives are often necessary to encourage private sector reinvestment in these areas, and individual governments may need to play a proactive role in initiating and guiding redevelopment efforts, utilizing local, state, and federal programs and incentives such as housing loan funds, Tax Increment Districts, brown field grants, CDBG, and other funds as necessary.

Section 8.4 Projected Land Use Beyond 2006 Urban Area Community Boundaries

Through their municipal planning processes, the City of Stevens Point and Village of Plover each identified that their community would need to expand its land area to accommodate the level of growth anticipated through the planning period. As previously mentioned, Whiting and Park Ridge are considered to be land-locked, and unable to expand in geographic size.

A. Initial Estimates of Acreage Needs

In order to try and estimate future land needs, Stevens Point and Plover first calculated “acreage per resident” ratios for select existing land use categories within their communities. The acreage per resident ratio was then multiplied by the adopted population projection for 2025 to generate the preliminary estimates of acreage for each land use for the year 2025 that would be needed if historic patterns of use were maintained. These acreages were combined with the future land use needs identified by Park Ridge and Whiting to create Table 8.4. The 2005 existing acreage for each land use was then subtracted from the preliminary 2025 acreage needs to obtain an initial estimate of required new acreage.

Table 8.4: Urban Area Future Land Use Needs, Population Estimate Base

Land Use	2005 acreage	2025 acreage	Acres Needed by 2025
Single Family Residential	3,704	4,759	1,055
Duplex Residential	262	335	73
Multi-Family Residential	361	534	173
Commercial	947	1,231	284
Industrial	1,291	1,648	357
Parks	901	1,146	245
Institutional / Government	2,157	2,609	452
Right-of-Way	2,481	3,140	659
Total	12,105	15,403	3,298

Urban Area = Stevens Point, Villages of Plover, Whiting, Park Ridge
 Source: Portage County Planning and Zoning Department.

This exercise is seen as useful from an initial “what-if” perspective. As described in Table 8.4, nearly 3,300 acres of new development could be anticipated by 2025, if historic patterns of use and development were maintained. This includes 1,300 acres of additional residential, 284 acres of commercial/office, 357 acres of industrial and 245 acres of parks. Institutional/Governmental and right-of-way acreages would contain the largest increases after residential, however, these numbers are inflated by large existing infrastructure realities that would not be completely duplicated based strictly on population increase (County/municipal government buildings, major road arterials, etc.)

B. Modifying Factors for Future Land Use Requirements

The next step for understanding future land use needs was to introduce recent trends and proposed development into the discussion. The following factors were taken into consideration by Stevens Point and the Village of Plover in analyzing future land use needs.

1. City of Stevens Point

- Future Residential Development Utilizing Recent Platting Practices. Given the City's adopted population projections, an additional 4,440+ housing units may be needed within the next 20 years. Approximately 1,360 additional residential acres would need to be developed to accommodate the future single family, duplex, and multiple family dwellings, if current development practices (2005 typical lot size, units per acre, etc.) were sustained. The methodology used to determine the anticipated acreage was based on the City's current trend of housing lot size, and would not preclude higher density development from occurring. If residential park land and right-of-way dedications were included the total would increase to over 1,700 additional acres.
- Ease of Development of Land Within the Current Boundaries. A number of vacant properties within the current City boundary have sat dormant for a number of years, either through lack of incentive for ownership to develop them, or site features that complicate layout or construction. It is anticipated that some will remain dormant through the planning period.
- The faster-than-anticipated build-out of the Portage County Business Park, combined with the continuing development of the adjacent Crossroads Commons retail development, will likely spur additional "business-park" style development at the City's southeast corner.

2. Village of Plover

- Well-head Protection Area. Section 6A of the Portage County Zoning Ordinance (the Wellhead Protection Ordinance), institutes land use regulations and restrictions to protect the municipal water supplies of the Villages of Plover, Whiting, and Stevens Point. The Wellhead Protection Ordinance restrictions affect a large area of land within the Village of Plover extraterritorial area. Any new commercial, industrial, and most of the likely residential development in the Plover extraterritorial area would be required through the Wellhead Protection Ordinance to be sewered, and therefore should eventually be incorporated within the Village of Plover official Sewer Service Area. Based on this, the 2,150 acres located within A and B Districts should be taken into account when examining future land use needs.
- Recent Commercial and Industrial Project Approvals. The Village of Plover has recently seen the construction and approval of large-scale commercial projects such as the Greentree development (Copps grocery, Shopko, Elder-Beerman department stores, 40+ acres), Crossroads Commons (Kohl's Department Store, Lowe's home improvement, and Wal-Mart Superstore, 120 acres), and the Village Park at Plover (NW corner of Cty Rd B and I-39, 50 acres). The Village recognizes that other projects of this type are very likely to occur over the planning period of this Comprehensive Plan. As such, adequate acreage must be identified to accommodate such projects.

- Other Modifiers. Given the nature of the commercial and industrial projects that are either approved or “on the drawing board”, spin-off residential, commercial, and industrial development can be anticipated to follow.

With regard to residential development, given the Village’s adopted population projections, an additional 3,100+ housing units may be needed within the next 15 to 20 years. Approximately 1,200 additional residential acres would need to be developed to accommodate the future single family, duplex, and multiple family dwellings, if current development practices (typical lot size, units per acre, etc.) were sustained.

C. The Extraterritorial Area

Given the land use/development pattern and moderating factors listed above, Stevens Point and Village of Plover entered into discussions with the Towns of Hull, Plover and Stockton to achieve shared vision and expectations for future land use within the extraterritorial area. The Town of Linwood is also located within the City’s extraterritorial area, but given the physical limitations in the Town adjacent to Stevens Point, expansion into the Town is not anticipated within this planning period.

State Statutes allow cities and villages to identify extraterritorial boundaries in order to implement zoning [s. 62.23 (7a)], control offensive industry (s. 66.0415), and review plats (s. 236.10). The City of Stevens Point utilizes powers granted by State Statutes (ss. 66.0105, 236.10) to identify extraterritorial boundaries for the purpose of plat review. The statutes specify that the City’s extraterritorial planning area extends 3 miles beyond municipal limits. The Villages utilize powers granted by State Statutes (ss. 66.0105, 236.10) to identify extraterritorial boundaries for the purpose of plat review. The statutes specify that the extraterritorial planning area extends 1½ miles beyond municipal limits. Extraterritorial areas may not cross the corporate limits of another city or village; when areas overlap, the overlapping area must be divided on a line equidistant from the boundaries of each municipality concerned, so that only one municipality can exercise extraterritorial powers over one area. It was necessary to modify the City’s extraterritorial area in order to avoid overlapping the extraterritorial area of Village of Plover. The extraterritorial area for Urban Area communities is shown in Maps 8.6 and 8.7.

1. Zoning

County zoning in the extraterritorial area is shown in Map 8.6. The incorporated Urban Area municipalities would benefit from working with the adjacent Towns to periodically evaluate zoning strategies for the extraterritorial area to ensure compatibility with the goals and objectives developed by each Town and that strategies are sensitive to the incorporated municipality’s current zoning policies and practices. Specific issues that should be periodically evaluated include the following:

- Utilizing zoning to protect lakes, streams, shorelands, wetlands and productive farm land.
- Utilizing zoning to protect existing and proposed municipal well recharge areas.
- Preventing premature development within municipal expansion zones.

2. Subdivision Ordinance

According to Wis. Statutes 236 Platting Lands And Recording And Vacating Plats, Subchapter II Approval Of Plat, 236.10(1)(b), a Town subdivision plat located within the extraterritorial area of a City or Village requires municipal approval. Stevens Point and Plover should utilize this regulatory opportunity to help prevent proliferation of subdivision densities that would serve to block logical, cost-effective municipal expansion.

Map 8.6: Urban Area Extraterritorial Area, with County Zoning

Map 8.7: Urban Area Extraterritorial Area Natural Development Constraints

Map 8.8: Wellhead Protection Areas

3. Natural Areas

Natural areas and other areas that could affect development within the extraterritorial area are shown in Map 8.7. Important or fragile environmental areas, including selected shorelands, wetlands and floodplains, should be protected because of their flood control, wildlife habitat, protection of water quality and recreational opportunity values.

4. Agriculturally Significant Soils

Agriculturally significant soils are defined as the most suitable soils for agriculture in the Towns of Hull, Plover and Stockton. The Soil Survey of Portage County was used to provide a list of the most suitable soils for agriculture in the County. From this list, the County Conservationist developed a list of the most suitable soils for the Towns of Hull, Plover and Stockton. A majority of the extraterritorial area consists of agriculturally significant soils, and that many of the soils are being farmed (see Map 8.6). Area farming should continue to be supported to maintain and promote agri-business and industry, and to provide local jobs. In addition, unnecessary conversion of agriculturally significant lands should be avoided.

It is understood that some agricultural lands will be converted to urban use during the planning period.

5. Well Recharge Areas

Since any development has the potential to affect groundwater quality, the recommendations listed under the Groundwater Protection section of the Comprehensive Plan should be implemented as they pertain to the extraterritorial area (see Map 8.8). Specifically, further hydrogeologic evaluation, identification of a wellhead protection area, identification of existing and potential pollution sources, and management activities should be explored.

6. Existing Residential Development

Residential development within the extraterritorial area is described in section 8.2(A) above. Beyond the urban development boundary (see Section 8.5(D)(9) below), non-farm uses should be guided and regulated around the needs of agricultural uses. Low density (two acre gross density minimum) residential land use should be implemented where sanitary sewer is unavailable and impracticable.

7. Existing Commercial Development

There is a limited amount of commercial or industrial activity within the extraterritorial area.

8. Land Use Discussions with the Town Plan Commissions

During the municipal planning processes recently completed by the City of Stevens Point and Village of Plover, a series of discussions were held between City, Village and Town officials.

As the Village of Plover and Town of Plover began work on their respective Comprehensive Plans, it became apparent that it was in the best interest of both municipalities to work together to discuss and attempt to resolve land use and sewer service issues. Ultimately, an intergovernmental agreement was adopted by the communities that includes a revenue sharing agreement, a cost sharing agreement for the reconstruction of Porter Road, identification of future Village growth areas, identification of future areas that the Village would agree to provide municipal sewer and water without annexation to the Village and joint land use planning recommendations for the Village's Extraterritorial Area.

As Village growth continues towards the east, it will be necessary to discuss land use issues with the Town of Stockton; growth into Stockton is not expected within the Villages current planning period.

The City of Stevens Point held a series of meetings with the Town of Stockton Plan Commission as it prepared its 2005 Comprehensive Plan. During these sessions the parties were able to reach a level of agreement regarding future land uses and potential future street locations within the extraterritorial area.

9. Urban Development Boundary

Map 8.9 below contains the Future Land Use Recommendations for the Stevens Point and Village of Plover extraterritorial areas. The “urban development boundary” that contains these recommendations represents lands that have been selected for inclusion in Urban Area Sewer Service Plan mapping, identifying areas for possible future annexation and utility extension, as well as lands that would potentially be extended sewer and water utilities while remaining in the Town of Plover. Annexation is primarily a landowner driven process, and annexations within the urban development boundary will depend on the availability of sanitary sewer. Since providing sanitary sewer would also lessen the potential for groundwater contamination of municipal well recharge areas, the cost and feasibility of extending sanitary sewer and water should continue to be explored.

Section 8.5 Urban Area Land Use Conflicts and Issues

A. Conflicts

Land use conflicts occur when incompatible land uses are located adjacent to one another. Many of these conflicts occur when industrial or commercial uses are developed immediately adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Factors that create conflicts between residential properties and commercial or industrial uses include noise, traffic, odors, hours of operation, and lighting. In addition, certain residential property owners see duplex, multiple family and park uses as incompatible with single-family residential development.

Land use conflicts are unavoidable, given past and existing zoning and development patterns within the Urban Area. Several techniques are utilized by area communities to resolve existing conflicts and minimize land use conflicts when new developments are proposed:

- Non-conforming zoning status with the expectation the use will discontinue over time.
- Maintenance and occupancy codes to address off-site issues.
- Working with developers to create land use buffers between single-family residential and commercial and industrial developments.
- Landscaping can also be an effective tool to minimize land use impacts to adjacent property. In many cases landscaping can be used in conjunction with land use buffering to further minimize impacts to adjoining properties. Berming, fencing, and utilizing evergreen materials are examples of landscaping methods that can be used to soften impacts to adjacent land uses. Increasing front, side and rear yard setbacks and requiring additional landscaping in these areas is also an effective method of minimizing impacts to adjacent properties.

Conflicts can also arise between “urban” and “rural” activities at the edge of municipalities. These can be minimized if the inter-municipal connections discussed in Section 8.4(C)(8) above can be maintained and nurtured.

Map 8.9: Urban Area Extraterritorial FLU Recommendations and SSA Boundary

B. Land Use Issues

- Conflicts between residential and agricultural uses along the urban / rural fringe.
- Lack of consistency between the different municipal approaches to allowable lot sizes in the extraterritorial area.
- Can provisions be made for allowing higher density extraterritorial area residential development to occur in Towns with on-site sanitary and water, but includes provisions to allow for hook-up to municipal utilities should they eventually become available?
- City/Village growth at urban densities must be balanced with sustaining the Town's fiscal viability.

Section 8.6 Land Use Vision Statement *(Adopted June 26, 2002)*

IN 2025, people in Portage County have learned to manage growth in ways that maintain their high quality of life. Growth is contained and well-planned. Portage County's thriving, people-oriented urban area is made up of livable neighborhoods, attractive business development and protected open spaces. Ample parks and open spaces within the urbanized area complement the natural beauty surrounding the community. The County's rural area is also thriving, with a robust agricultural industry. Development is limited in the rural area of the County in an effort to preserve rural character and the high quality natural resources found there.

Key Vision Ideas for Land Use:

- Urban area growth is characterized by its infill development within accepted growth boundaries, mixed uses, preserved open spaces, and strong enforcement of plans and regulations.
- Neighborhoods include urban scale residential development, mixed uses, parks, open spaces, green spaces, and the reuse and redevelopment of existing buildings.
- Parking ramps reduce the amount of land devoted to parking.
- Minimum design standards provide for enhanced quality development across the urban area.
- UW-Stevens Point is fully integrated into its surrounding neighborhood, and adjacent commercial developments meet the needs of the student/resident population.
- Development is controlled along major arterials.
- Old homes and places of cultural significance are preserved.
- Existing residential neighborhoods are buffered and protected from encroachment by commercial development.

Section 8.7 Land Use Goals, Objectives and Policies

The key to realizing an effective approach to land use management for the Portage County Urban Area will be the promotion of proper timing and location for land development. Efficiently designed and well maintained areas will generate a similar type of development, while areas of uncontrolled growth could lead to increased utility extension costs, land use conflicts, and gradual deterioration. Future development and redevelopment should therefore be encouraged in

an orderly pattern adjacent to and compatible with existing development, rather than creating scattered areas of development too small and too costly to provide public utilities and services. Proposed developments should act as or create a buffer between higher and lower intensity land uses. In addition, Urban Area communities must strive to protect environmental resources as pressures to develop wooded and other unique natural areas for urban use increase. Development should be prohibited in floodplains and wetlands, should not disrupt natural drainage courses, and should be compatible with soil conditions.

A. Goal

1. Encourage the provision of a balance of land uses to serve existing and future residents of the Urban Area, as well as non-residents, that allows for a strong economy and maintains the high quality of life that residents currently enjoy.

B. Objectives

1. Minimize conflicts between adjacent land uses. Encourage development (both new and redevelopment) in buildable vacant areas of the Urban Area that is consistent and compatible with surrounding areas.
2. Urban Area Plan Commissions and governing bodies should periodically compare the ratio of residential, commercial and industrial land uses with municipal goals, objectives and policies.
3. Municipal Plan Commissions and governing bodies should remain receptive to new or innovative ideas for quality residential, commercial, or industrial development within the Urban Area.

C. Policies

1. Municipal governing bodies should review Comprehensive Plan projections at a minimum every 5 years to evaluate the adequacy of future land use allocations.
2. Encourage safe and attractive development; ensure that the development site is physically suited to the proposed use; apply sound design and landscape principles in the planning, layout and construction of new development.
3. Ensure that proposed uses are compatible with surrounding uses; give consideration to the opinions of neighboring landowners and the general interests of the Urban Area.
4. Promote the integration of housing types. i.e. single-family, multi-family, duplex and low to moderate income residences including establishing lot sizes and high density residential areas.
5. “Buffering” techniques should be incorporated as a means of promoting compatibility between land uses and diminishing the potential for land use conflicts, including utilizing landscaping techniques as a means of buffering incompatible land uses whenever possible.
6. Review environmental resources for potential impacts as pressures to develop wooded and other unique natural areas for urban use increase.
7. City/Village growth should be balanced with sustaining the Town’s fiscal viability.

Section 8.8 Urban Area Land Use Conclusions

- A. Land use issues are of great importance to the individual municipalities that make up the Portage County Urban Area, and each community will greatly benefit from continued joint discussion.
- B. The Urban Area Steering Committee is an immensely valuable forum for facilitating joint municipal discussions on not only land use, but a wide spectrum of community development issues. This group should continue to regularly meet after the Comprehensive Planning project has concluded to help maintain a healthy, “metro-wide” perspective on evolving growth and development.
- C. Individual Urban Area municipalities should also be encouraged to enter into one-on-one discussions with neighboring communities, as the need arises, to resolve questions or conflicts, or to set joint planning goals or expectations.