

Appendix 8 - 2026



Town of Mt. Morris

Chapter 8

Land Use Goals and Objectives

June 1, 2026

8.1: Land Use Chapter Purpose and Contents

This element includes a summary of existing land use conditions and trends followed by a series of goals, objectives, and recommendations to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property in the Town of Mt. Morris. The element also contains an analysis of opportunities for redevelopment and existing or potential land use conflicts. It concludes with a twenty-year future land use plan.

8.2: Summary of Existing Conditions

The following section identifies a summary of existing land use conditions and trends for the Town of Mt. Morris as identified by the most recently available Statement of Assessment for the Town of Mt. Morris. A complete listing of existing resources information can be found in the Town of Mt. Morris Comprehensive Plan Volume Two: Existing Conditions Report.

Existing Land Use and Land Use Trends (Table 8.2026.1)

- The Town of Mt. Morris existing land use map was last updated in 2015.
- The Town of Mt. Morris encompasses approximately 22,584 acres. About 10% of the total area is developed.
- Overall, cropland (irrigated and non-irrigated) accounts for about 17% of the total land use, while woodlands (planted and unplanted) make up another 59%.
- According to publicly available Statements of Assessment from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, residential acreage has increased since 2017.

Table 8.2026.1

Statement of Assessment for Town of Mt. Morris				
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue				
	2017	2020	2025	% change

Residential	2430	2417	2642	8.7%
Commercial	82	85	102	24.4%
Manufacturing	0	0	0	0%
Agricultural	4383	4403	4333	-1.1%
Undeveloped	3046	3029	2722	-10.6%
Forested	6066	6168	6798	12.1%
Total	16075	16102	16597	

Zoning

- The Town of Mt. Morris utilizes Waushara County Zoning.
 - The predominant zoning district in the Town is “General Agriculture”.
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Residential Density and Intensity

- Between 1990 and 2020, residential densities increased throughout the county, state, and the Town of Mt. Morris. During this time, residential densities increased by 16.4% from 25.34 units per square mile to 29.5 units per square mile in the Town of Mt. Morris.

Source: US Census Data

- When comparing the number of residential properties to the amount of land classified as single-family (including farmsteads, duplexes, and mobile homes), a single-family intensity of just over 1 unit per acre was recorded for the Town in 2000 (992 units on 910.52 acres). In 2025, a similar single-family intensity of slightly more than 1 unit per acre was recorded for the Town (664 units on 646 acres). (Single Family + Farmstead)

Land Demand and Pricing

- According to Population and Housing Unit Counts from the U.S. Census, there was an overall increase of net housing units over the last 44 years. (Table 8.2026.2)

Source: <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2000/data/phc/phc-3-51.pdf>

Table 8.2026.2

Timeframe	Units added per year
1980-1990	9.3
1990-2000	17.4
2000-2024	0.7

- Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) annually reports equalized value by real estate class per municipality in Wisconsin. Overall, both the Town of Mt. Morris and Waushara County experienced increases in land value between 1998 and 2025. (Table 8.2026.3)

Table 8.2026.3

Year	Waushara County		Town of Mt. Morris	
	Overall Increase	Per Year Increase	Overall Increase	Per Year Increase
1998-2008	114.1%	7.9% per year	178.2%	10.8% per year
2008-2025	82.8%	3.6% per year	62.8%	2.9% per year
1998-2025	292%	5.2% per year	353%	5.8% per year

Sources:
<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/research.policy/viz/EqualizedValues/Dashboard1>
<https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/SLF/cotvc-08corate.aspx>
https://www.co.pepin.wi.us/vertical/sites/%7B379104F9-0DE8-498C-8406-82AD4E352E4A%7D/uploads/2024_Pepin_County_Statistical_Report.pdf
<https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/A4K4QRBLSRUNJE8R/pages/A36JX5PWTTKTLW8R>

- State of Wisconsin housing statistics provided by the Wisconsin Realtors Association show that median sale price in Waushara County increased from \$122,000 in 2008 to \$285,000 in 2025. This represents a 134% increase.

Source: <https://www.wra.org/housingstatistics/>

8.3: Opportunities for Redevelopment

Like many rural communities, the Town of Mt. Morris does not have its own downtown center where a variety of services are provided and opportunities to redevelop non-residential properties remain. Instead, the Town consists of a variety of residential homes and working farms.

8.4: Existing or Potential Land Use Conflicts

Throughout the Town, there are single-family residences and small commercial operations.

8.5 Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations

The following section identifies goals, objectives, and recommendations to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property in the Town of Mt. Morris. The goals and objectives identify what should be accomplished, whereas the recommendations focus on identifying the action necessary to achieve the desired outcome.



Goal 8.1

Preserve the unique and desirable qualities of the Town's landscape that define its rural character.

Objectives

- a) Eliminate unsightly properties and other elements generally regarded as eyesores.
- b) Minimize the visual impact of non-farm residential development on the rural landscape.
- c) Protect the visual integrity of important scenic features and/or vistas.
- d) Adopt regulations which implement this comprehensive plan while still allowing for flexibility in specific development situations.

Recommendations

- 8.1.1 Expedite the process to eliminate unsightly properties.
- 8.1.2 Require all platted subdivision of land to have approval of the Town Board before County plat approval is sought.
- 8.1.3 Ensure all new land uses are located appropriately, as per the Future Land Use Map.
- 8.1.4 Specify minimum design standards for new development plans and require a preliminary plat submission to include concept plan which illustrates the lot arrangement, roadway design layout



Goal 8.2

Preserve and protect natural and important agricultural areas.

(with widths specified), and the location of all sizable trees, waterways and other significant natural features (including topography, drainage patterns, native prairies, endangered species habitat, etc.).

- 8.1.5 Maintain the minimum 4 acre lot size for all proposed new land divisions throughout the Town of Mt. Morris not located within an existing approved recorded certified survey map (CSM) or platted major subdivision. The 4 acre minimum does not apply to lots created within a major subdivision, conservation subdivision, or plat, approved by the Town and Waushara County. This strategy is intended to aid in preserving the rural character of the Town. Definitions for types of land divisions are as follows:
- Land Division – a lot split with 2 parcels as a result
 - Minor subdivision – a certified survey map (4 lots or less)
 - Major subdivision – a preliminary and final plat approval (5 or more lots)
 - Conservation subdivision -- a plat which sets aside protected open space in exchange for allowing smaller lot sizes with the overall net density being similar to a conventional subdivision.
- 8.1.6 The Town Board, by majority vote can grant an exception to the four acre minimum lot size for a parcel to be given or sold to an immediate family member for their own occupancy as their primary residence.
- 8.1.7 Recommend the Town Board establish minimum performance design standards for approving a conservation subdivision. If a developer is able to meet the more demanding design standards, no public hearing would be required. This would provide an incentive for developers to consider providing protected open space which would help to preserve and strengthen the rural character of the Town.

Objectives

- a. Preserve environmentally sensitive areas.
- b. Utilize existing Waushara County Zoning and Land Conservation tools and policies.

Recommendations

- 8.2.1 Deny building permits or any land use that threatens the environmental quality of the air, water, or land in the Town.
- 8.2.1 Use physical feature considerations of the land in question to determine land use decisions.
- 8.2.1 Identify environmentally sensitive sites and use zoning overlay districts to protect them from development. Major subdivisions should not be approved within any area designated as environmentally sensitive.

- 8.2.1 Continue to support the county’s prohibition of pyramid type development on local lakeshores.
- 8.2.1 Any proposals for development on “Prime farmland” or “Unique farmland” soil categories should be scrutinized very carefully in order to preserve this land use category for its agricultural value.
- 8.2.1 Continue to plan land uses so that proposed residential estates (i.e. any new home) which may be incompatible with traditional farm odors and practices, are located at a safe distance from farms, thereby allowing these uses to co-exist.
- 8.2.1 Continue to support and encourage conditional use applicants to consult with Town officials before applying to the County for home-based business permits.

The Future

8.6: Land Use Projections

Wisconsin statutes require comprehensive plans to include twenty-year projections for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses by five-year increment. A summary of future land use projections is listed below.

With an estimated increase of 26.5 residentially assessed acres per year, the Town of Mt. Morris would likely experience an increase of 133 residential acres by 2050. Commercial increases are forecast to coincide with increases in residential density. (See Table 8.2026.4)

Future land use was calculated based on the trending change from 2017 to 2025.

Table 8.2026.4

Future Land Use Projections (in acres) for the Town of Saxeville <i>Original Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration</i>							
	2017 to 2025 change per Year	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Residential	+27	2642	2669	2695	2722	2748	2775
Commercial	+3	102	105	107	110	112	115
Manufacturing/Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agricultural	-6	4333	4327	4321	4314	4308	4302
Undeveloped	-41	2722	2682	2641	2601	2560	2520

Forested	+92	6798	6890	6981	7073	7164	7256
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8.7: Future Land Use Map and Categories

This section describes the future land use categories utilized on the Future Land Use Map (Exhibit 8-2026-3.)

The Town of Mt. Morris Future Land Use Map (Exhibit 8-2026-3) identifies one focal growth area along Hwy 152 from roughly Big Horn Lane to the intersection with County Roads G and W. This is a “Commercial Growth Area” and the intent of this area is to allow commercial interests to develop land near or adjacent to this corridor.

Land Use Categories

8.7.1 Agricultural/Natural: The agricultural/natural areas are established for agricultural and certain compatible low intensity uses as the principal uses of land. It also includes areas where special protection is encouraged because of unique landscape, topographical features, wildlife, or historical value.

8.7.2 Residential: The residential areas include land uses where the predominant use is housing. This includes large-lot residential development as well as more compact residential lots.

8.7.3 Commercial: The commercial district includes areas dedicated to the sale of goods or merchandise and office developments.

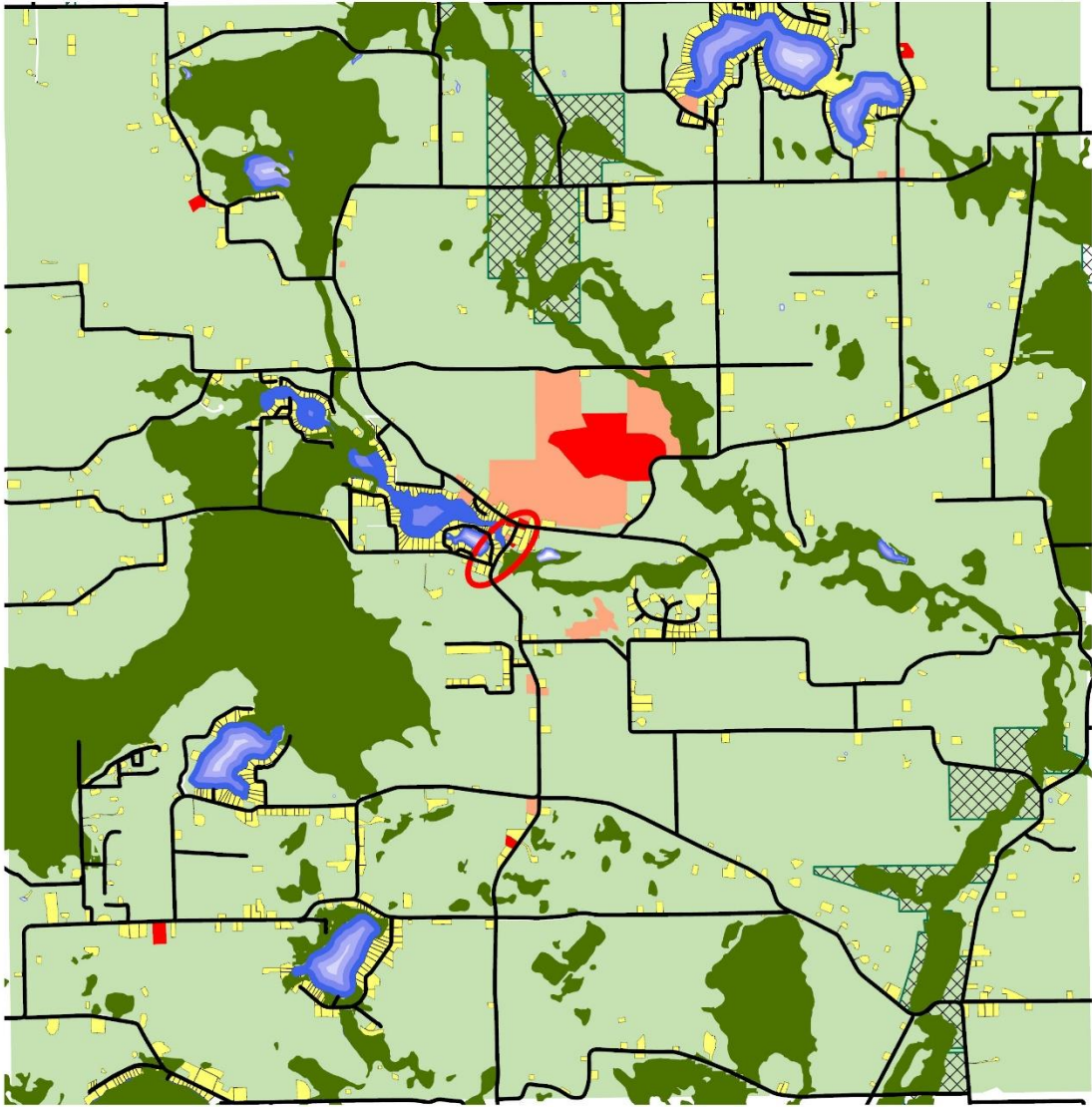
- Area for Commercial Development: The intent of this area is to allow commercial interests to develop land near or adjacent to this corridor.

8.7.4 Public/Institutional: This district includes a range of public, social, and institutional uses. These uses are public or semi-public and are generally tax exempt. Specific uses include schools, libraries, parks, municipal buildings, health care facilities, places of worship, and transportation right-of-way corridors or other public lands.

8.7.5 Environmentally Sensitive Areas: These areas include land where special protection is encouraged because of unique landscape, topographical features, wildlife, or historical value. The district may include woodlands, wetlands, undeveloped shorelands, flood lands, groundwater recharge and discharge areas, and steeply sloped lands.

8.7.6 Water: these areas include lakes, streams, and other water bodies.

Exhibit 8.2026.3 2026-2050 Mt. Morris Future Land Use Map



Legend

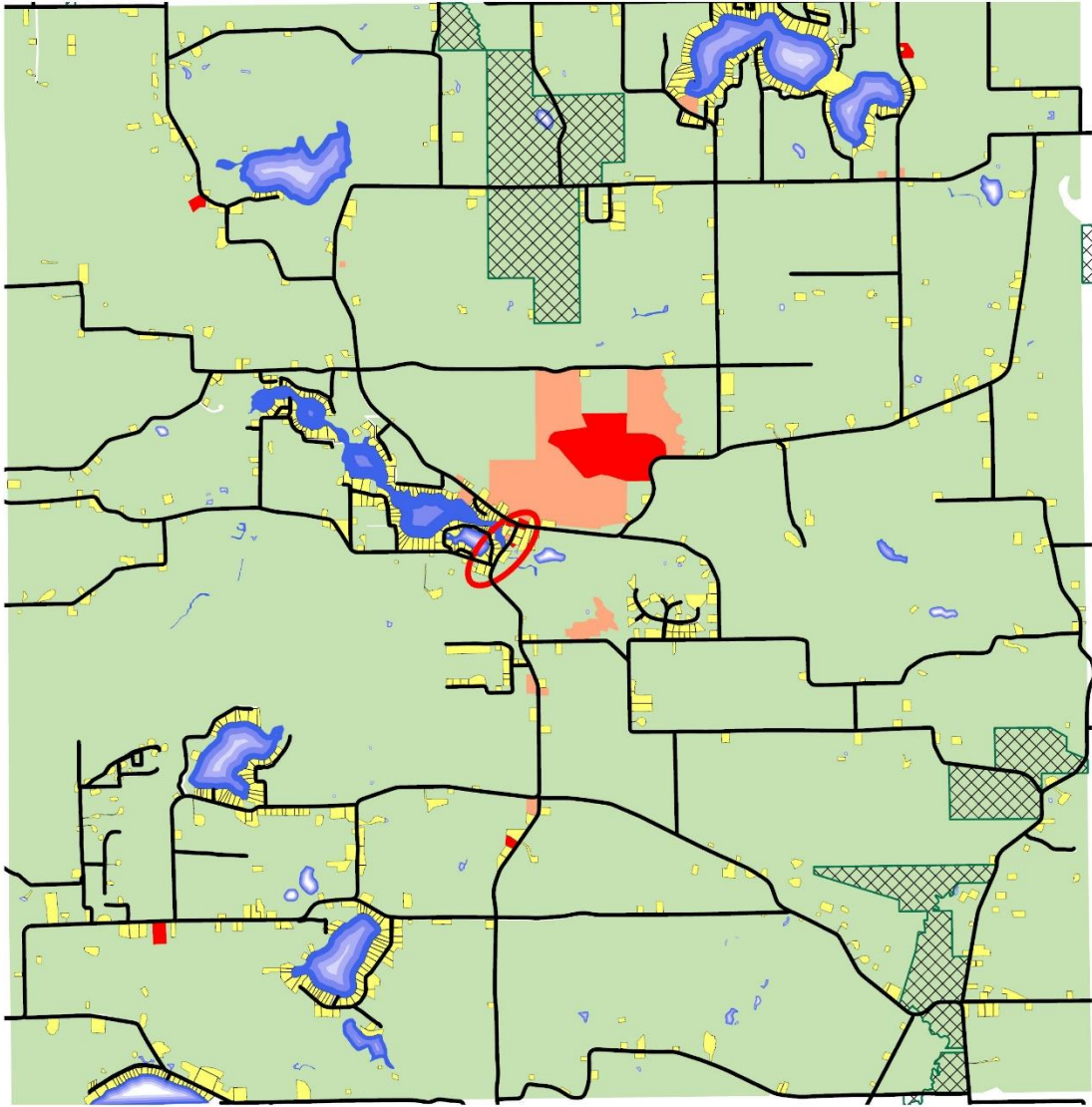
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Residential
Agricultural/Natural
Areas
Public/Insitutional

Commercial
Water
DNR Lands

Environmentally_Sensitiv
WausharaCounty_Roads
Area for commercial
development

Exhibit 8.2026.4 2026-2050 Mt. Morris Future Land Use Map



Legend

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Residential | Commercial | WausharaCounty_Roads |
| Agricultural/Natural Areas | Water | Area for commercial development |
| Public/Insitutional | DNR Lands | |