



Town of Lake Mills 2024 – 2044 Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT VERSION #2

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Prepared On: March 12, 2024

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Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the Town Board and the Plan Commission for the Town of Lake Mills:

Town Board

Chairperson	Thomas Buechel
Supervisor I	David Schroeder
Supervisor II	Jim Heinz

Town Clerk Robin Untz

Town Treasurer Sharon Guenterberg

Town Plan Commission

Chairperson	Steve Nass
Member	Sara Muchka
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Plan adopted by the Town of Lake Mills on _____, 2024.

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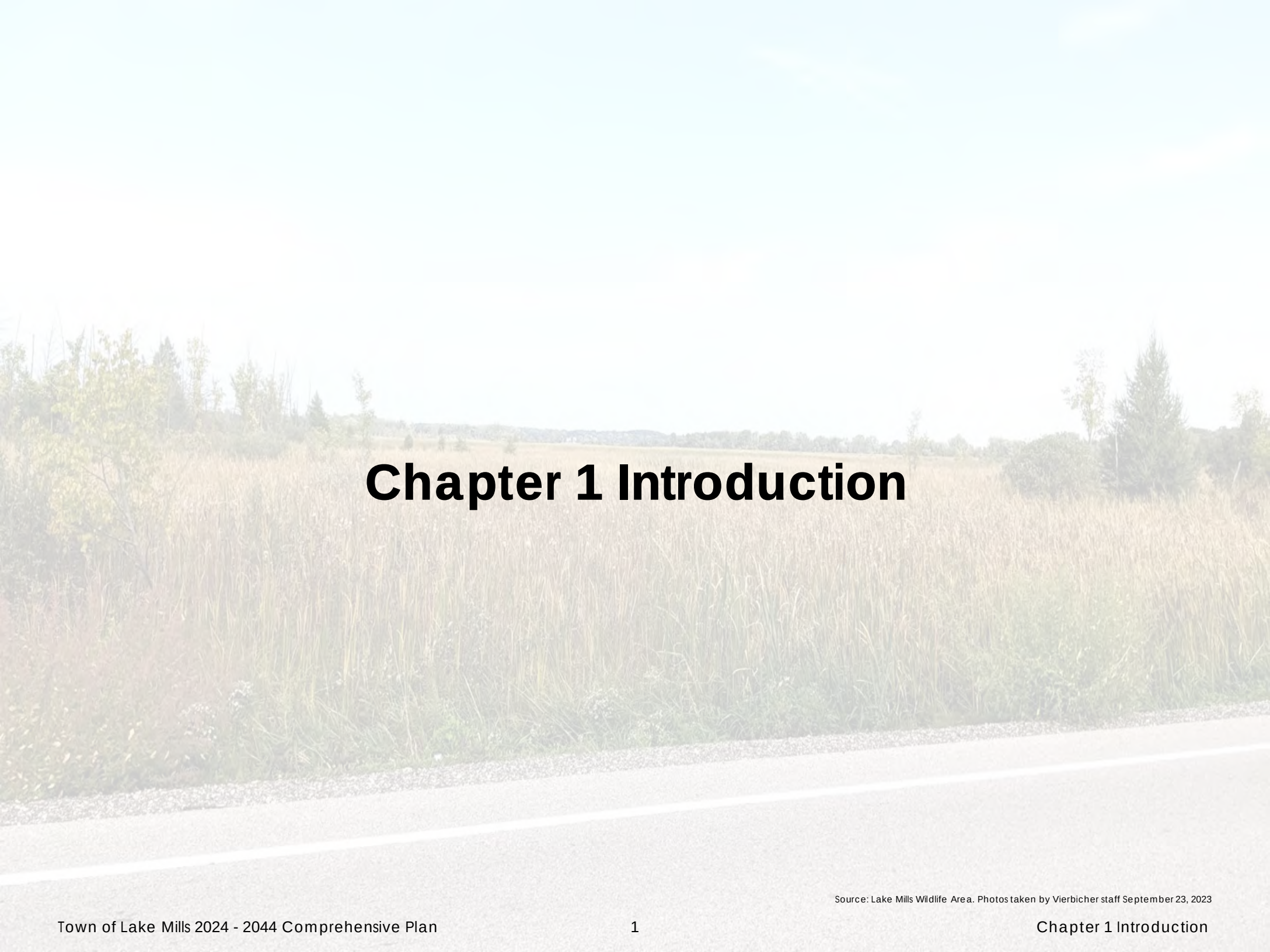
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A photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a paved road with a white line. Above the road is a dense field of tall, dry grass. In the background, there are several trees, including some evergreens, and a distant horizon under a clear sky.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Source: Lake Mills Wildlife Area. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

1.1 The Town of Lake Mills

The Town of Lake Mills is in northwestern Jefferson County along the shores of Rock Lake. The Town of Lake Mills is bordered by the Town of Waterloo to the north, the Town of Milford, Town of Aztalan, and City of Lake Mills to the east, the Town of Jefferson to the southeast, the Town of Oakland to the south, and the Town of Deerfield to the west. The Town contains two hamlets: Kroghville and London along the Town's western border. **Map 1-1** is the **Town of Lake Mills Location Map**.

Spanning nearly 32,883 square miles, the [2020 U.S. Census](#) states the Town has a population of 2,196 people, with 815 household units containing an average household size of 2.76 people, per the [2022 American Community Survey \(ACS\)](#). This represents a population increase of 6.1 percent from the [2010 Census](#), when the Town population was estimated at 2,070 people. In the same 2010 – 2020 timeframe, Jefferson County grew 1.5 percent, from 83,636 to 84,900 people.

Further information on topics such as age distribution, education, employment, and household income are further detailed in the Plan's chapters or corresponding appendices.

Access to nature-based recreation, scenic lake and country views, and a proximity to transportation and metro areas makes the Town of Lake Mills attractive to new residents, second homeowners, and visitors.

The Town's location between two major markets has influenced its population, housing, and economic growth. Interstate 94 runs east-west through the Town's northern extents, providing easy access to Madison, the state capital a 35-minute drive to the west plus Wisconsin's largest city, Milwaukee, a 55-minute drive to the east.

To facilitate resident access and agricultural goods movement, the Town's roadways host vehicles, farm machinery, and some bicycles. These roads range from Arterials and Collectors to Local Roads.

The most extensive zoned land use in Town is A-1 Agriculture. With 55.8 percent of Town land growing cultivated crops, it is no surprise that family-owned farms and agriculture-related businesses are a strong source of Town economic activity.

The Town uses intergovernmental agreements to provision emergency services, education, plus public and private utilities for Town residents.

1.2 Town of Lake Mills Planning History

The Town of Lake Mills has utilized planning for several decades to better the community and make it a great place to live, visit, and recreate. A brief list follows detailing certain Plans that provided or currently guide planning for the Town of Lake Mills.

2010 Town of Lake Mills Land Use Plan

The Town of Lake Mills adopted its initial *2010 Town of Lake Mills Land Use Plan* in 1999 and it was amended in 2001 following the *Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan* and *Zoning Ordinance* efforts in 1999. This 2001 plan established a policy for open spaces and agricultural land within the Town of Lake Mills, provided guidance to the local town board in making decisions regarding requests for rezoning, and provided input to the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors as they directed growth in Jefferson County.

2025 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan

While the *2010 Town of Lake Mills Land Use Plan* was consistent with Jefferson County planning efforts, the document did not fully adhere to the requirements for comprehensive plans in Wis. Stat. [§66.1001](#). The [2025 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan](#) fulfilled the requirements of Wisconsin Statute via an extensive public engagement process, covering the nine (9) elements required by Statute, and providing a blueprint for the future of the Town through 2025.

Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) 2005-2010

The *Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) 2005-2010* guided the development of the park system, maintained grant and funding eligibility, and was a vital part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Inventory information, vision statements, and maps of potential recreation and protection areas from that plan were included in the *2025 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan* chapter on Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources.

Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan (adopted February 2021)

The [Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan](#) “establishes a long-term vision for county decision-making and activities.” It adheres to the requirements for comprehensive plans in Wis. Stat. [§66.1001](#), guiding Jefferson County and its communities into the future. It should be noted that other planning documents, such as the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) and [Jefferson County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance](#), compliment the [Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan](#).

Land division in the Town of Lake Mills occurs under the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) and the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) and both the County Board of Supervisors and the Town Board must approve zoning changes and land divisions. The City of Lake Mills must approve zoning changes with its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan (adopted February 2021)

The [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#) guides growth, development, and land preservation in Jefferson County by outlining policies and appropriate land use planning tools.

2018 – 2028 Rock Lake Management Plan

The [2018 – 2028 Rock Lake Management Plan](#) supports the protection, maintenance and preservation of the Town’s greatest natural asset: Rock Lake. The Plan’s Vision is:

“Work in partnership with our community to protect and enhance water quality, habitat, and recreational assets in Rock Lake and its watershed for current and future generations.”

The Plan touches upon several important areas, including:

- Characterizing Rock Lake and its watershed,
- Addressing how nonpoint source pollution affects the Lake,
- Explaining Rock Lake’s shorelands and shallows as well as water levels and the dam,
- Noting the institutions responsible or interested in Rock Lake’s ecological preservation and recreational access,
- Proposing Visions, Goals, and Recommendations on how to achieve the Plan’s Vision

Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land and Water Resources Management Plan (adopted 2021)

The [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land and Water Resources Management Plan](#) was prepared by Jefferson County’s Land, Water, and Conservation Department (LWCD) to lay out its mission, goals and work plan related to administering state statutes and county ordinances that provide for the conservation of soil and water resources. Some of programs include: Farmland Preservation; Nutrient Management and Farmer Education Programs; Invasive Species Management; Surface Water Quality Monitoring; and Water Resource Planning and Protection.

Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance (adopted June 8, 2021)

The [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) was amended in June 2021. It sets forth ordinances for the orderly sub-division of land and incorporates all the provisions of the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#)

and [Jefferson County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance](#) as the minimum requirements for the Town of Lake Mills. The restrictions or provisions of the town ordinance may be greater than the Jefferson County ordinances, in which case the more restrictive of the Town ordinances shall apply.

1.3 Purpose of This Plan

This Plan is the *Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan*. It supersedes the former [2025 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan](#).

The State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning law, Wis. Stat. [§66.1001](#), requires every city, village, and most towns to approve a comprehensive land use plan by 2010 and ensure that all local land use ordinances and decisions are consistent with the adopted plan.

Wisconsin Statutory language is in **Appendix 1**. A comprehensive plan is meant to be the road map for a community. This document serves as a tool for the Plan Commission, Town Board, and community to understand the local landscape and includes community information and data.

This Comprehensive Plan details issues and opportunities from stakeholders such as Town residents, then leverages data to provide guidance on land use, housing, agricultural, natural and cultural resources, transportation, economic development, utilities and community facilities, intergovernmental cooperation, and implementation.

This Plan addresses the following nine elements required by statute. The nine elements must be consistent with each other and all Town ordinances and land use maps.

- Issues and Opportunities
- Land Use
- Housing
- Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Implementation

Each element in its corresponding chapter includes inventory and background information and forecasts. The Plan *describes* goals, objectives, and policies in **Chapter 2** then *outlines* goals, objectives, and policies for each element that the community shall utilize in decision-making at the local level. As the Town continues to grow and change, the Plan should be reviewed and updated.

1.4 Public Engagement

The *Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan* utilized extensive public engagement throughout its planning process. A brief summary of the engagement efforts follows.

Town of Lake Mills Plan Commission Meetings

This Plan was undertaken with a full Public Participation Plan that was recommended the Town Plan Commission October 3, 2023 and approved by the Town Board October 10, 2023 (**Appendix A**). The Town Plan Commission was designated as the steering committee to guide the update of the Comprehensive Plan. The *Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan* was an agenda item at Plan Commission meetings from September 2023 through February 2024. Each meeting was noticed and open to the public.

Community Engagement Event

On November 15, 2023 from 6-8pm, the Town and Vierbicher hosted a community engagement event titled 'Town of Lake Mills: Imagining the Future' at Town Hall. Resident input included the potential for individual as well as group "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)" analysis for the Town, a mapping exercise to point out beloved community spaces, as well as an activity for residents to say what they wished to see in the Town by 2040 were also part of the event programming (**Appendix B**).

Community Survey

The Public Participation Plan (**Appendix A**) had an online survey consisting of seventeen (17) questions to gather Town residents' opinions on priorities. With limited resources, goals must be prioritized by the Plan Commission and Town Board to determine how the Town invests in the community and to ensure the Town and residents' priorities align with the Plan's goals and objectives.

One hundred nineteen (119) responses – 115 online surveys and four (4) hard copy surveys – representing 5.41 percent of the Town's population were received between November 22nd and December 6th, 2023.

Vierbicher staff presented the survey results to the Plan Commission with a public presentation hosted by the Plan Commission at its February 6, 2024 meeting.

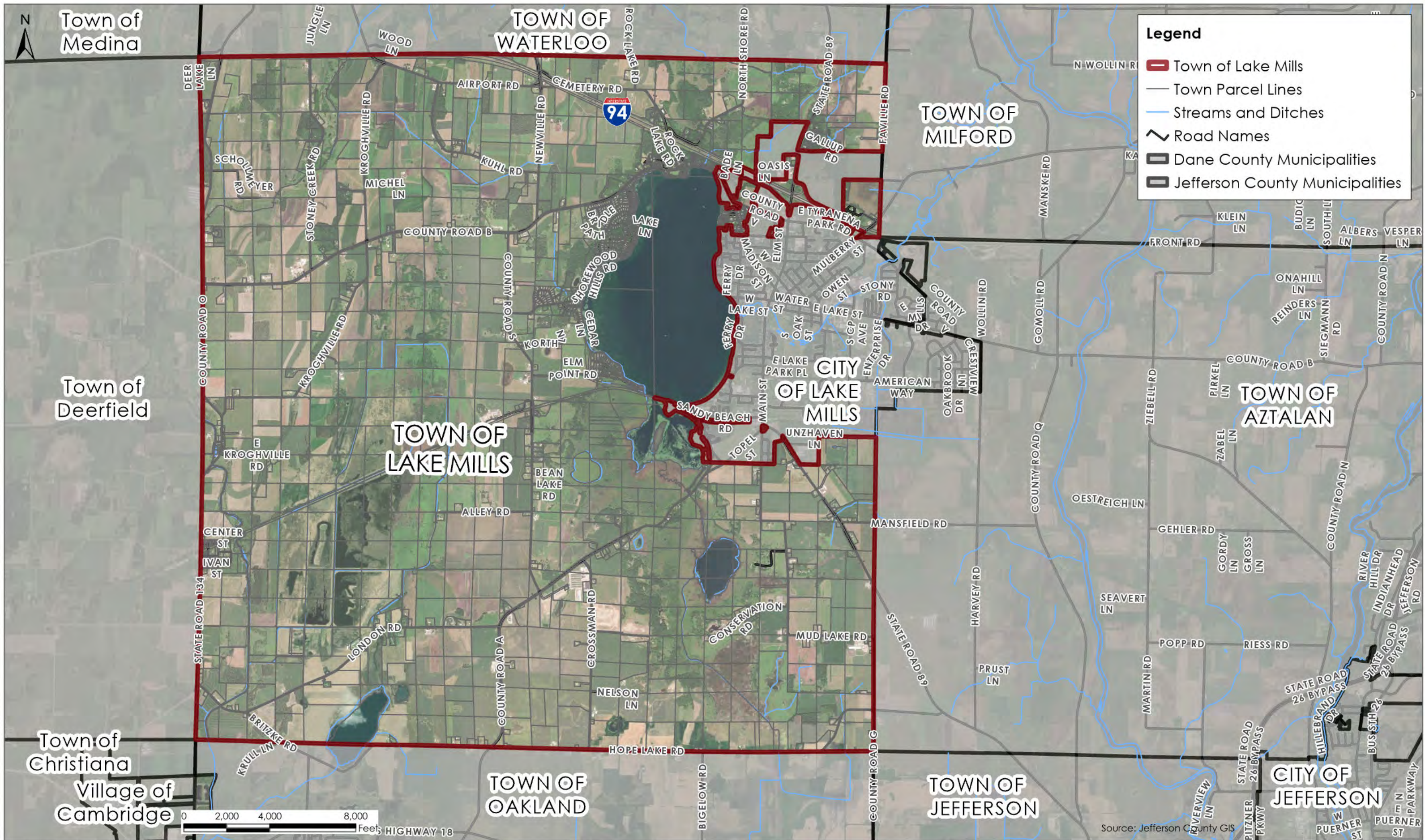
Town residents overwhelmingly want the Town to maintain its safe, rural charm while protecting natural features such as Rock Lake. The results are recorded in **Appendix B**.

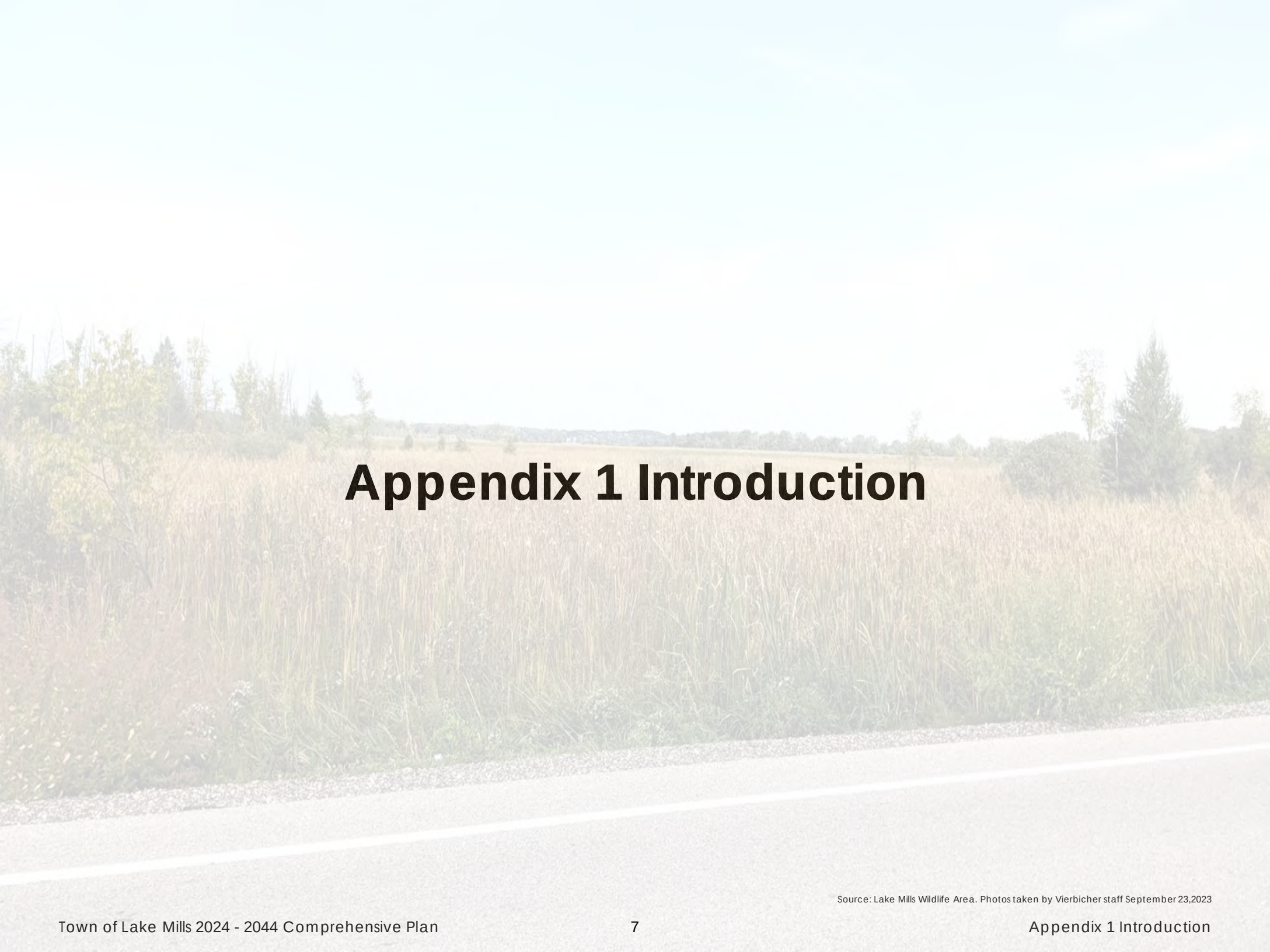
Public Hearing

The public had the opportunity to provide comments regarding the draft *Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan* at the February 6, 2024 Plan Commission meeting, as well as the public hearing conducted before the Town Board March 12, 2024. See **Appendix C** for the Plan Commission resolution recommending the adoption of the *Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan* to the Town Board.

Adoption

The *Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan* was adopted as an ordinance at the March 12, 2024 Town Board meeting; see **Appendix D** for the Town Notice of Public Hearing and **Appendix E** for the Ordinance adopting the Comprehensive Plan.



A photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a paved road with a white line. Above the road is a gravel shoulder and a field of tall, dry grass. In the background, there are several trees, including some evergreens, and a distant horizon under a clear sky.

Appendix 1 Introduction

Source: Lake Mills Wildlife Area. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 1-1 Comprehensive Plans in Wisconsin Statute

Wis. Stat. §66.1001 Comprehensive Planning

(1) Definitions. In this section:

(a) "Comprehensive plan" means a guide to the physical, social, and economic development of a local governmental unit that is one of the following:

1. For a county, a development plan that is prepared or amended under s. [59.69\(2\) or \(3\)](#).

2. For a city, village, or town, a master plan that is adopted or amended under s. [62.23 \(2\) or \(3\)](#).

3. For a regional planning commission, a master plan that is adopted or amended under s. [66.0309\(8\), \(9\) or \(10\)](#).

(am) "Consistent with" means furthers or does not contradict the objectives, goals, and policies contained in the comprehensive plan.

(b) "Local governmental unit" means a city, village, town, county or regional planning commission that may adopt, prepare or amend a comprehensive plan.

(2) Contents of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan shall contain all of the following elements:

(a) *Issues and opportunities element.* Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit uses in developing its comprehensive plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.

(b) *Housing element.* A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit's housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit

and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.

(c) *Transportation element.* A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric scooters, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.

(d) *Utilities and community facilities element.* A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities and shall assess future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.

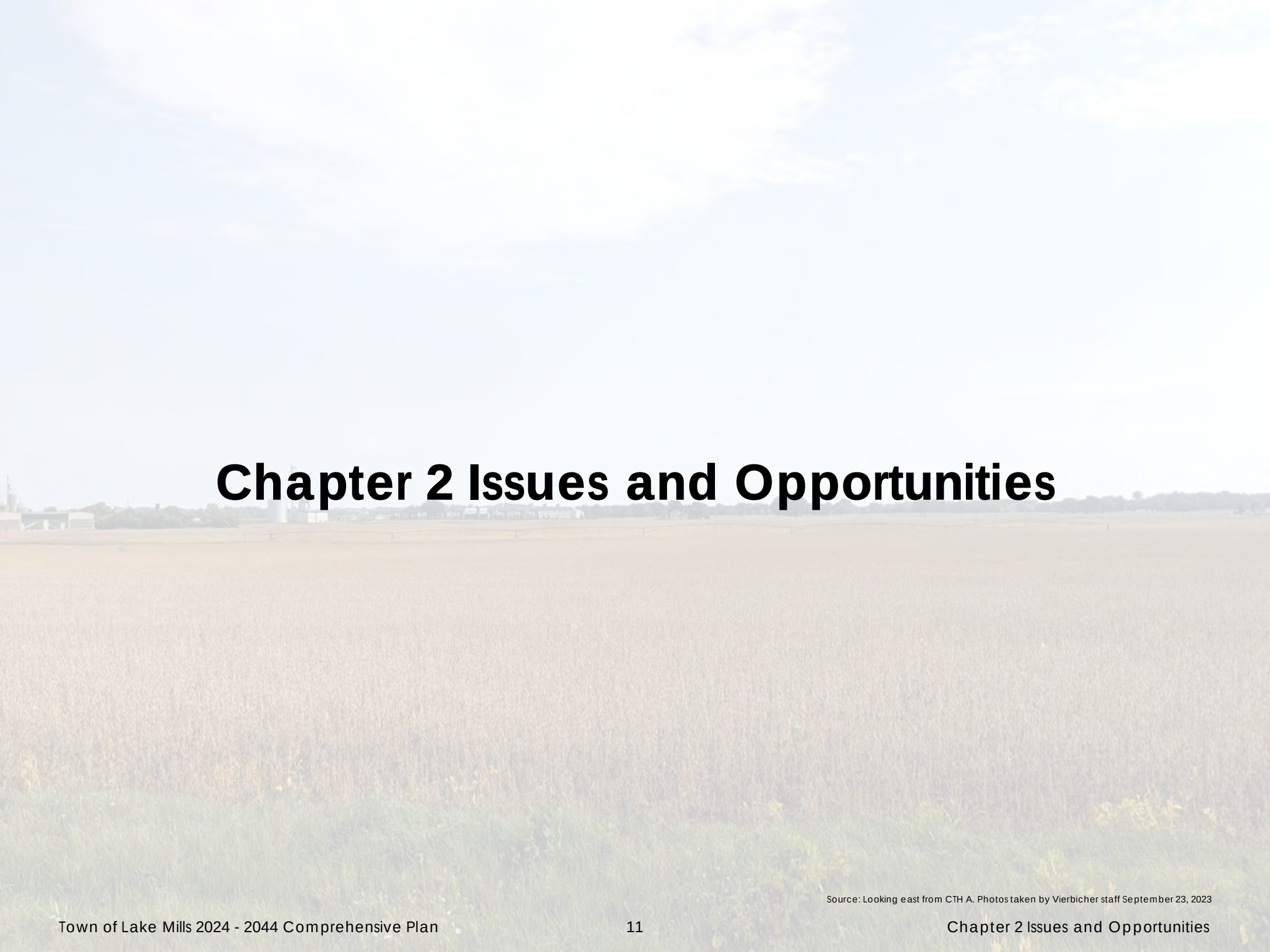
(e) *Agricultural, natural and cultural resources element.* A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources consistent with zoning limitations under s. 295.20 (2),

parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.

- (f) *Economic development element.* A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall also identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.
- (g) *Intergovernmental cooperation element.* A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts, drainage districts, and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall consider, to the greatest extent possible, the maps and plans of any military base or installation, with at least 200 assigned military personnel or that contains at least 2,000 acres, with which the local governmental unit shares common territory. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under s. [66.0301](#), [66.0307](#) or [66.0309](#). The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.
- (h) *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 shows current land uses and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which services 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.

- (i) *Implementation element.* A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, or subdivision ordinances, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in pars. (a) to (h). The element shall describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan, and shall include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan. The element shall include a process for updating the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan under this subsection shall be updated no less than once every 10 years.



Chapter 2 Issues and Opportunities

Source: Looking east from CTH A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

2.1 Issues & Opportunities

The issues and opportunities element provides information on the Town of Lake Mills; specifically: population and demographic forecasts and a statement of overall goals, objectives, and policies to guide future development and redevelopment.

What Do Residents Think?

The Town of Lake Mills is adjacent to the City of Lake Mills and between the Milwaukee and Madison metropolitan areas. The northern third of the Town is bisected by Interstate 94. Jefferson County is experiencing increasing development pressure, especially in areas near I-94 and in the towns that border Dane County and Waukesha County, such as the Town of Lake Mills.

The November 15th, 2023 community engagement event at Town Hall had a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis that is included in **Appendix 2**. The following is a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, issues, and opportunities identified through the comprehensive planning process, from the November 15th, 2023 community engagement event as well as the community survey:

Strengths

- Public Lands (Rock Lake, Korth Park, Bean Lake Natural Area, Zeloski Marsh, Glacial Drumlin Trail, etc.)
- Several Arterial roads for transportation access
- Agricultural and Natural Resources

Weaknesses

- Lack of housing diversity/ affordability
- Poor pavement conditions/road striping; how farm machinery interacts with roads and other road users; safe bicyclist or pedestrian access in some parts of Town
- Internet access leaves something to be desired
- Town Hall not in Town and seen as outdated, with new facility needed
- Lack of compost site

- Finding the right balance of agriculture/ development – some businesses have been nuisances to neighbors.
- EMS distance/ wait times worrisome

Opportunities

- Expanded housing types and opportunities for residents to age in place
- Protecting Rock Lake while leveraging its natural beauty and economic benefits. More trails and opportunities for research are present
- Protecting resources, such as groundwater. Resident education can play a crucial role.

Threats

- Uncontrolled development
- Overabundance of short-term rentals (STRs)
- Water threats – pollution to the groundwater or surface water; boat wakes

These resident insights informed the goals, objectives, and policies across the nine elements' chapters. Broadly, there are four main priorities for the Town:

Priorities:

1. **Protect the Township's Rural Character.**
2. **Protect the agricultural landscapes and support the farming community by promoting sustainable farming practices.**
3. **There is a need for enhanced management strategies to better oversee Rock Lake, ensuring the preservation of its natural beauty for future generations.**
4. **Place a strong emphasis on intergovernmental cooperation, fostering collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions, including the critical role of emergency medical services (EMS).**
5. **Protect groundwater, to ensure safe well drinking water supply and aquifer quality.**

2.2 Demographic Information & Trends

This section provides demographic data for population and households utilizing 2020 U.S. Census data, the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) and/or Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) projections.

Population

Table 2-1 shows that the Town of Lake Mills population has increased from 1,936 people in the 2000 Census to 2,196 in the 2020 Census. The 2022 ACS estimates the Town population is 2,254, a 16.4 percent population increase since 2000. The Wisconsin Department of Administration estimates by 2040, the Town of Lake Mills will have 2,520 residents, an increase of 14.75 percent from the 2020 Census and a 30.2 percent increase from the 2000 Census.

Table 2-1 Town of Lake Mills Population 2000 – 2040

Name	Census			ACS	Wisconsin DOA Projection			
	2000	2010	2020	2022	2025	2030	2035	2040
Town of Lake Mills	1,936	2,070	2,196	2,254	2,345	2,435	2,490	2,520

Source: "P1 Race." 2020 US Census. Accessed December 10, 2023 by Vierbicher staff. "MCD and Municipal Population Projections, 2010-2040." Wisconsin DOA. Accessed December 10, 2023 by Vierbicher staff.
<https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.P1?q=lake%20mills%20town%20jefferson%20county.%20wi>
https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Population_Projections.aspx

Both the Town of Lake Mills and Jefferson County's populations are expected to increase through 2040. In 2010, the Town of Lake Mills with 2,070 residents represented 2.47 percent of Jefferson County's population, whereas the Town in 2020 was 2.58 percent of Jefferson County's population.

Table 2-2 reports the populations for Jefferson County municipalities by the 2010 and 2020 US Census and 2040 Wisconsin DOA projections, arranged by growth percentage. It should be noted that the Village of Cambridge, Village of Lac La Belle, City of Watertown, and City of Whitewater are municipalities split by county lines. The six (6) Jefferson County municipalities sharing a border with the Town of Lake Mills are **bolded**. The Town of Lake Mills is estimated to be the 12th out of 27 municipalities for projected population growth in Jefferson County through 2040. Population change is a result of the difference between births and deaths plus in-migration and net-outmigration.

The Town has a population density of 66.8 residents per square mile.

Table 2-2 Jefferson County Municipalities' Estimated Population Growth by 2040

Name	2010 Census	2020 Census	2040 Projection	Est. 2020 - 2040 Percent Change
Village of Cambridge	109	99	140	41.4%
City of Whitewater	3,240	3,168	4,440	40.2%
Town of Ixonia	4,385	5,120	7,145	39.6%
Village of Johnson Creek	2,738	3,318	4,455	34.3%
City of Watertown	15,402	14,674	18,640	27.0%
City of Lake Mills	5,708	6,211	7,380	18.8%
Town of Koshkonong	3,692	3,763	4,425	17.6%
Town of Jefferson	2,178	2,067	2,410	16.6%
City of Jefferson	7,973	7,793	9,080	16.5%
Town of Aztalan	1,457	1,382	1,605	16.1%
Town of Concord	2,072	1,981	2,285	15.3%
Town of Lake Mills	2,070	2,196	2,520	14.8%
Village of Sullivan	669	651	740	13.7%
Town of Hebron	1,094	1,043	1,165	11.7%
City of Fort Atkinson	12,368	12,579	14,020	11.5%
Village of Palmyra	1,781	1,719	1,915	11.4%
Town of Watertown	1,975	1,933	2,135	10.5%
Town of Milford	1,099	1,106	1,180	6.7%
Town of Sullivan	2,208	2,295	2,445	6.5%
City of Waterloo	3,333	3,492	3,685	5.5%
Town of Oakland	3,100	3,231	3,355	3.8%
Town of Waterloo	909	1,070	1,070	0.0%
Town of Cold Spring	727	737	735	-0.3%
Town of Palmyra	1,186	1,220	1,200	-1.6%
Town of Farmington	1,380	1,407	1,350	-4.1%
Town of Sumner	832	846	780	-7.8%
Village of Lac La Belle	1	2	0	-100.0%
County Total:	83,686	85,103	100,300	17.9%

Source: "P1 Race." 2020 US Census. Accessed December 10, 2023 by Vierbicher staff. "MCD and Municipal Population Projections, 2010-2040." Wisconsin DOA. Accessed December 10, 2023 by Vierbicher staff.
<https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.P1?q=lake%20mills%20town%20jefferson%20county.%20wi>
https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Population_Projections.aspx

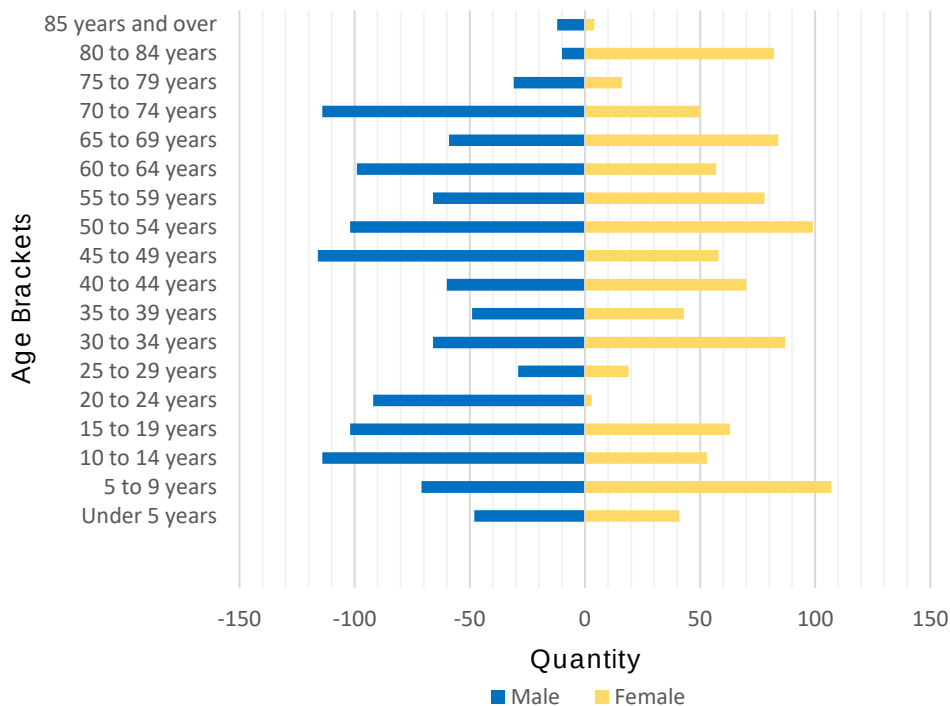
Age and Gender Distribution

The Town of Lake Mills' median age is 45.2 per 2022 ACS estimates, compared to a median age of 42.1 for Jefferson County and 40.4 for the State of Wisconsin.

The 2022 ACS estimates the Town population at 2,254 residents, with 55 percent male (1,240 residents) and 45 percent female (1,012 residents). **Figure 2-3** shows this information as a population pyramid, revealing several key demographic facts. First, an estimated 539 residents (23.9 percent) are 18 years or younger, which has implications for school space and recreational programming as this cohort ages. Second, the two cohorts covering 20 to 29 years of age are smaller, especially for female residents. This reflects residents obtaining education, training, or military service elsewhere. Finally, 462 residents (20.5 percent) are aged 65 or over. As the Baby Boomers – who are currently 59 to 77 years old (born 1946-1964) – age, there will be a need for adaptations in housing, transportation, and medical practice to help this cohort age-in-place.

The Town should pay attention to youth and senior needs and provide guidance or seek partnerships where warranted. One example could be the Town supporting zero-threshold entryways in new residential construction, finding licensed rideshare providers, and/or vetting contractors who install handicap-accessible ramps.

Figure 2-3 Town of Lake Mills Population Pyramid



Source: "S0101 Age and Sex." 2022 ACS. Accessed December 10, 2023 by Vierbicher staff.
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?q=lake%20mills%20town,%20jefferson%20county,%20wi>

Race/Ethnicity

Table 2-4 reports the race and ethnicity for the Town of Lake Mills and Jefferson County in the 2010 and 2020 Census. As a share of total population, the percentage of Town residents identifying solely as white decreased from 96.7 percent to 94.8 percent, with the same trend occurring in Jefferson County. This has occurred as the percentage of different ethnic groups, as well as those identifying as two or more races, has increased.

Table 2-4 Town of Lake Mills & Jefferson County Race / Ethnicity 2010-2020

	Town of Lake Mills				Jefferson County			
	2010 Census		2020 Census		2010 Census		2020 Census	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Total Population	2,070	100.0%	2,196	100.0%	83,686	100.0%	84,900	100%
White	2,001	96.7%	2,081	94.8%	78,632	94.0%	75,145	89%
Black or African American	0	0.0%	7	0.3%	681	0.8%	888	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	8	0.4%	5	0.2%	257	0.3%	365	0%
Asian alone	10	0.5%	4	0.2%	560	0.7%	672	1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	18	0.0%	27	0%
Some Other Race	36	1.7%	28	1.3%	2,479	3.0%	2,858	3%
Population of two or more races:	15	0.7%	71	3.2%	1,059	1.3%	4,945	6%

Source: "R1 Race." US Census 2010 & 2020. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 10, 2023.
<https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.P1?q=lake%20mills%20town,%20jefferson%20county,%20wi>

Households

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as "all the people who occupy a housing unit [...] including related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers, foster children, wards, or employees who share the housing unit." The 2010 ACS estimated 818 households with an average size of 2.56 in the Town. Nearly 17 percent were householders living alone (5.9 percent were 65 years and older).

The 2022 ACS estimates 815 households with an average household size of 2.76. Nearly 27.5 percent were householders living alone, with 16.9 percent 65 years or older. While the number of households varied over the last decade, there are two interesting trends occurring: a slightly larger average household size bucking national trends, as well as the increase in

the number of householders living alone seen elsewhere in Wisconsin and across the country. An aging population is staying in the community while new family formation is occurring, both of which have impacts on housing and government services.

Education

Educational attainment influences income potential. The educational attainment of Town of Lake Mills residents 25 years or older is reported in **Table 2-5**. For residents aged 25 and older, the 2022 ACS estimates that 94.3 percent are high school graduates or higher and 48.7 percent have bachelor's degrees or higher, whereas Jefferson County for the same age cohort has 93.4 percent high school graduates or higher and 26.7 percent have bachelor's degrees or higher. This relatively high degree of education may be correlated with the higher median income and lower poverty rates in the Town of Lake Mills than seen in Jefferson County.

Table 2-5 Educational Attainment by Town Residents

Educational Attainment	Total		Male		Female	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
Population 25 years and over	1560	100%	813	-	747	-
Less than 9th grade	36	2.3%	16	2.0%	20	2.7%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	53	3.4%	29	3.6%	24	3.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	298	19.1%	166	20.4%	132	17.7%
Some college, no degree	338	21.7%	191	23.5%	147	19.7%
Associate's degree	76	4.9%	37	4.6%	39	5.2%
Bachelor's degree	493	31.6%	256	31.5%	237	31.7%
Graduate or professional degree	266	17.1%	118	14.5%	148	19.8%
High school graduate or higher	1471	94.3%	768	94.5%	703	94.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	759	48.7%	374	46.0%	385	51.5%

Source: "S1501 Educational Attainment." ACS 2022. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 10, 2023.
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1501?q=lake%20mills%20town,%20jefferson%20county,%20wi>

The Town of Lake Mills is covered by the Lake Mills and Cambridge School Districts. Public and private schools are available nearby for all grade levels. Collegiate academic opportunities are available nearby at public institutions such as the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Edgewood College, and Madison Area Technical College (MATC) in Madison; University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, MATC in Fort Atkinson; and University of Wisconsin Waukesha Center and Waukesha Technical College in Waukesha.

Income

Median income in the Town of Lake Mills was estimated at \$102,614 by the 2022 ACS. This exceeds Jefferson County's \$78,628 median income by nearly 30.5 percent and the state median income of \$70,996 (per 2021 ACS) by 44.5 percent. While education, referenced a section earlier, may be one factor, another factor that favors the Town of Lake Mills is its geographic location: the Town's access to employment hubs such as Madison and Milwaukee via I-94 offers opportunity as a residential alternative to expanded markets where residents seek work and employers to find qualified candidates.

Employment

The Town of Lake Mills has an estimated 62.9 percent labor participation rate representing 1,802 residents aged 16 years or older, per the 2022 ACS. The unemployment rate is estimated at 1.7 percent. In comparison, Jefferson County has an estimated 67.6 percent labor participation rate with 1.8 percent unemployment.

Once population cohorts exceed 55 years of age, the labor force participation rate declines. For example, while the Town's age 55-59 cohort has a 79.9 percent labor force participation rate, the age 60 to 64 cohort has a labor force participation rate of 59.9 percent. This declining labor force participation rate continues as age increases, though some aspects of this trend are changing. Some members of these age cohorts are working later in life, perhaps at part-time hours, out of necessity or desire for cash flow and / or social interactions.

2.3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations were developed for each of the nine required planning elements to pursue the opportunities mentioned above and to enhance the Town's distinctive features.

Specific goals, objectives, and policies for each of the other eight elements are listed in those chapters.

Goals describe the future state of the Town in the twenty-year planning context.

Objectives are measurable actions that the Town of Lake Mills will pursue to accomplish the community goals and vision.

Policies are the adopted ordinances, regulations, plans, and projects that enable the Town to reach the objectives that satisfy the goals.

The following goals, objectives, and policies respond to the issues and guiding opportunities that were developed through the planning process:

Issues and Opportunities Goal 1: Enhance and protect the assets of the Town of Lake Mills that give us the high quality of life that we enjoy. Those assets are rural atmosphere and agricultural resources, scenic beauty, historic heritage, natural resources, groundwater resources, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and effective transportation networks.

Objectives:

- Follow the [Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan](#), the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#), and the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) when making development and re-zoning decisions.
- Direct growth to appropriate areas for Town and City of Lake Mills urban service area where services may be provided efficiently and to prevent fragmentation of our natural areas and farmlands.
- Encourage the preservation of agricultural land, natural resources, historic landmarks, and scenic beauty.
- Plan for wellhead protection and the future effect of growth on groundwater quality and quantity.

Issues and Opportunities Goal 2: Balance the rights of all citizens as a community and those of the individual by encouraging active participation in Town government.

Objectives:

- Encourage citizen participation in Town government.
- Educate residents and property owners on Town government processes and about the Town itself.
- Provide citizen input opportunities in the decision-making process for new developments and Town facilities.
- Encourage citizen participation in plan development and ordinance development and revision.
- Work to involve commuters and summer-home owners in Town government and activities.

Issues and Opportunities Goal 3: Maintain and enhance the working relationship between the Town of Lake Mills and the City of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, and surrounding jurisdictions to provide services and emergency protection efficiently.

Objectives:

- Encourage engagement with the City of Lake Mills
- Continue to participate in land use planning and zoning with Jefferson County.
- Maintain emergency and fire agreements to serve the residents and property owners in the Town of Lake Mills.
- Continue to participate on the City of Lake Mills Public Works Board.



Appendix 2 Issues and Opportunities

Source: Looking east from CTH A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 2-1 Public Engagement Event Materials

The November 15, 2023 Public Engagement Event titled “Town of Lake Mills: Imagining the Future” was hosted in the Town Hall between 6pm and 8pm.

Nearly one dozen Town residents attended and participated in three activities, whose contents are on the following pages:

Figure 2-2 SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

Residents populated a posterboard with thoughts pertaining to the nine (9) elements of the comprehensive plan.

Figure 2-3 “I want to see ____ in Town of Lake Mills by 2040”

Residents noted what amenities or changes that are desirable and would strengthen the community by 2040.

Figure 2-4 Beloved Places Map

Residents put numbered stickers on a map of the Town to highlight beloved places, places residents spend a lot of time, or have concerns about.

Figure 2-2 SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

Chapter	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Land Use	Public Lands Farmland/Cultural Preservation		Affordable multi-family housing ← dito	Development (uncontrolled/planned) of Prime Ag. Land. ditto
Housing		Rental - Not Affordable to Seniors Not enough diversity of values of housing	↓	Overabundance of AirBnb's. Lack of related ordinances
Agriculture/ Natural/ Cultural Resources	KORTH PARK (hiking, dog walking, peaceful, cross country skiing, biking) BEAN LAKE NATURAL AREA ZECOSKI MARSH GLACIAL PRIMITIVE TRAIL County Parks, Lake Access to Lake + Marshes Agree with Above Multiple lake access points		WORK WITH THE LAND CONSERVANCY ON THE NORTH END OF THE LAKE + DEVELOP A WALKING PATH THROUGH UNDEVELOPED TOWN PARK + LAND CONSERVANCY PROTECT SUBWATER IMPROVE SUBWATER MGMT ALONG SHOREWOOD HILLS RD + ITS RUNOFF INTO BEAN LAKE MAINTENANCE PATHS IN THE BEAN NATURAL AREA. - Agreed + Maint/maintenance of paths PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN AGRICULTURE + SOIL BUILDING PRACTICES LIKE NATIVE PLANTING STRIPS, COVER CROPS ETC.	Waste Kiosk on Rock Lake due to waste from speed boats. - agreed POLLUTION OF LAKE WANT TO ENCOURAGE FAMILY FISHING + NOT CATCH OPERATIONS. IMPACT OF HIGH CAPACITY VESSELS ON AQUICOLS + CONTAMINATION OF SUBWATER - agreed Odor from Chicken place WATER ENHANCED TECHNOLOGY DAMAGING LAKE BED, AQUATIC PLANTS, STRAWBERRY + OTHER USES Boats with enhanced/larger wakes
Transportation	Several Artery roads	Repairing Shorewood Hills rd with close LINES	A BIKE PATH ALONG THE NORTH OF THE LAKE CONNECTING SHOREWOOD HILLS ROAD + TULARENA PARK.	No Sidewalks - second that Too Many Speeders on Shorewood - second that Hills Road too Sufficient Ambulance Services and Fire Protection Insufficient EMS service Ideally - EMS service would be combined with city for best scenario service Lack of bike/ped Connectivity to City. Gravel/sand and poor road surface in Shorewood Hills are hazardous, especially for bikes. agreed +



Figure 2-2 SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

Chapter	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Economic Development	Festivals Parks Agricultural Resources Natural Resources	Narrow Roadway For Bike Ride Fundraiser - Control of one lane instead of across the whole Road.		
Utilities and Community Facilities	Koehn Park Zelowski Marsh Bike Trail	Internal Access Natural Gas Access Lack of Town water Lack of airport site Lack of Town Hall in the Town Town Hall too small	PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE BARNERS TO TEST THEIR WELLS & TO REPAIR THEIR SEPTIC SYSTEMS.	
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Election Process - can't be done Development/Growth Areas defined	Emergency Service - lack of Cooperation + Representation ↓ agree - need dependable EMS Services.	Better protection of Lake	OUR INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT HAS EXPIRED. I PERCEIVE SOME DISCOMFORT TOWARDS THE CITY & EVEN COOPERATION w/ COUNTY Town & city need intergovernment agreement & work together
Implementation				

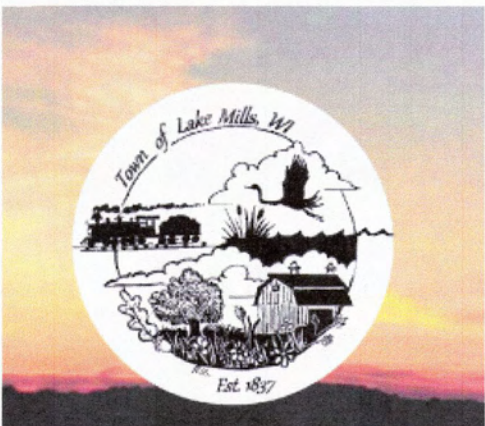


Figure 2-3 “I want to see ____ in Town of Lake Mills by 2040”

I want to see _____ in Town of Lake Mills by 2040

I want

New Town Hall

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

New town Hall

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

New Town Hall

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

Updated Communications access

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

updated Communication Access

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

LOCAL EMS Service in town - shorten Response Time

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

updated Communications access

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

A Town Complete Streets Policy. Encourage County to also adopt a CS policy.

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

New town hall

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

updated Communication Access

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

Inter government agreement with city - town & city are close & intertwined

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

Garbage Cans + nicer dock at Ferry Park. Designated dog park ~~and~~ to reduce loose dogs in other parks.

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

A Compost site!!!
OR SHARED w/ THE CITY MIGHTY!

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

A HEALTHY & ECOLOGICALLY VIBRANT ROCK LAKE. A LAKE WHICH IS A FAMILY FRIENDLY RECREATE.

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

New town hall - hope fully w/ EMS service - services all together - police etc.

in the Town of Lake Mills

I want

More Parks and more facilities in the parks. Splash pad. Better bicycle + pet accommodations: particularly in Shorewood Hills and for a Connection to City on North side of Lake.

in the Town of Lake Mills



Figure 2-4 Beloved Places Map

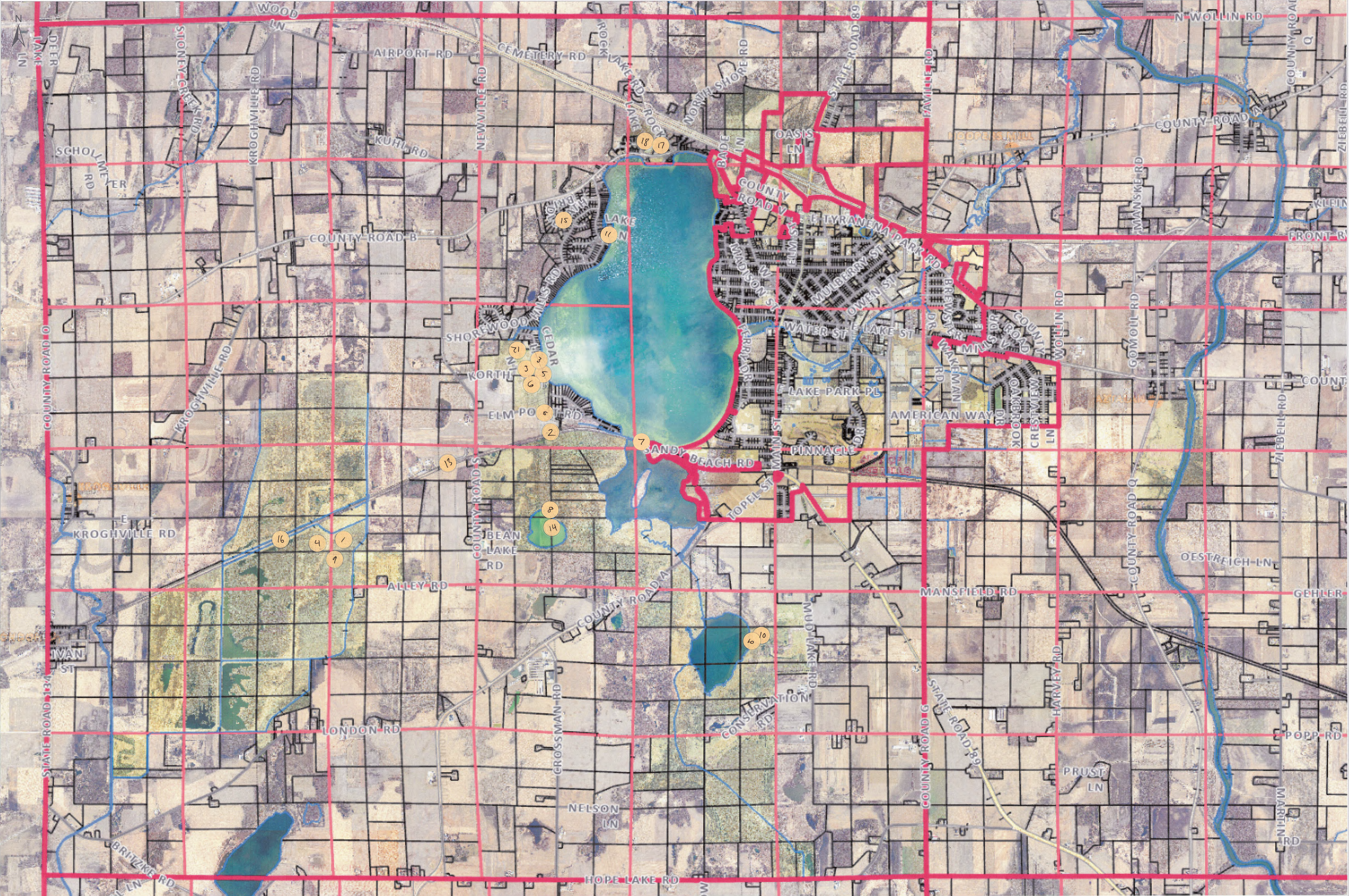


Figure 2-4 Beloved Places Map

Map

1. Zeloski Marsh
2. Glacial Drumlin Trail
3. Korth Park
4. Zeloski Marsh
5. Korth Park
6. Korth Park
7. GLACIAL DRUMLIN TRAIL
8. BEAN LAKE NATURAL AREA
9. ZELOSKI MARSH
10. Sandhill Station
11. Lake Lane boat ramp + swimming area
12. Korth Park
13. Glacial Drumlin trail + trailhead
14. Bean Lake Natural Area
15. Phillips Park
16. Zeloski Marsh
17. Upper Rock Lake Park
18. Upper Rock Lake Park
- 19.
- 20.
- 21.
- 22.
- 23.
- 24.



Chapter 3 Land Use

Source: Vista along CTH-A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

3.1 Land Use Overview

Land Use guides the future development and redevelopment of public and private property in the Town of Lake Mills. Given the importance of land – especially agricultural land – in the Town, this chapter contains a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, maps and programs to support responsible land division and management.

While the Town follows the [Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan](#) and the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#), the Town has decided to allow less scattered development in unsewered areas than Jefferson County permits. This means the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) and this Plan are more restrictive than the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#).

In the sewered and some selected unsewered Town areas, residential development must follow the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#), which allows for a higher development density in those areas than the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#). The Town also has an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Lake Mills for the provision of City services to the Town residential areas around Rock Lake, depending on developer agreements with the City.

The Land Use Master Plan map developed in the 2010 *Town of Lake Mills Land Use Plan* was incorporated into the [2025 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan](#). This Plan update replaces the Land Use Master Plan map with **Map 3-12 The Town of Lake Mills Future Land Use Map** at the end of this chapter. The four guiding priorities of this Plan:

1. **Protect the Township's Rural Character.**
2. **Protect the agricultural landscapes and support the farming community by promoting sustainable farming practices.**
3. **There is a need for enhanced management strategies to better oversee Rock Lake, ensuring the preservation of its natural beauty for future generations.**
4. **Place a strong emphasis on intergovernmental cooperation, fostering collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions, including the critical role of emergency medical services (EMS).**
5. **Protect groundwater, to ensure safe well drinking water supply and aquifer quality.**

are supported by land use goals, objectives, and policies at the end of this chapter.

3.2 Land Cover

The Town of Lake Mills hosts a variety of environments that correspond to a variety of land covers. **Map 3-1 the Town of Lake Mills Land Cover Map** uses data from the USDA's National Land Cover Database (NLCD) to outline the fifteen (15) different land covers present in the Town. **Table 3-2** reports the land cover areas. For a description of the land covers, please view **Appendix 3**, Note 3-1.

The land cover information notes that 55.8 percent of Town land, 18.3 square miles, is covered with "cultivated crops." "Emergent Herbaceous" and "Hay/ Pasture" are the next two most extensive land covers, covering a combined 5.78 square miles. Finally, it should be noted that "Developed" land cover is an estimated 2.2 square miles of the 32.8 square mile Township.

Table 3-2 Town of Lake Mills Land Cover Areas

Land Cover Name	Area		Percentage of Town Area
	(in acres)	(in square miles)	
Cultivated Crops	11,731.30	18.3	55.8%
Emergent Herbaceous	2,004.10	3.13	9.5%
Hay/Pasture	1,693.90	2.65	8.1%
Open Water	1,649.30	2.6	7.9%
Woody Wetlands	1,249.80	1.95	5.9%
Deciduous Forest	1,106.80	1.73	5.3%
Developed, Low Intensity	746.90	1.17	3.6%
Developed, Open Space	442.60	0.69	2.1%
Developed, Medium Intensity	160.70	0.25	0.8%
Mixed Forest	67.50	0.105	0.3%
Herbaceous	64.80	0.101	0.3%
Developed, High Intensity	50.10	0.078	0.2%
Evergreen Forest	37.80	0.059	0.2%
Barren Land	37.80	0.059	0.2%
Shrub/Scrub	1.77	0.003	0.0%
All Other Values	-	-	-
Total	21,045.20	32.8	-

Source: National Land Cover Database, USDA. Accessed December 10, 2023.
<https://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov/GDGOrder.aspx>

3.3 Current Land Use

As mentioned previously, land use is a critical element that affects the growth and development of a community. Land use differs from land cover on the previous page. Land cover reports the land's physical condition, while land use reports how humans use the space. For example, a land cover may be "cultivated crops," but the land use is "agriculture." **Section 3.5 Zoning** explains how land use is managed with zoning districts.

The Town of Lake Mills' current land use is represented in **Map 3-3, the Town of Lake Mills Current Land Use Map** and the areas are reported in **Table 3-4**.

Jefferson County GIS identifies nearly 47 different land uses. To make the information more digestible to the reader, certain categories were grouped together in simpler 'bins' for showing the information on a map. For example, lands identified as 'agriculture cover crops' are identified on **Map 3-3** as "Agriculture."

The land use information reveals a little over 27 square miles (82.4 percent) of the Town has an agricultural land use, with the next largest land use present being "surface water" with 2.60 square miles (7.9 percent) of Town area. The smallest land uses, institutional (government, education, worship spaces, etc) plus Industrial combined represent 0.02 square miles.

Land use changes over time, and this is touched upon later in this chapter.

Table 3-4 Town of Lake Mills Land Use

Land Use	Area		Percentage of Town Area
	(in acres)	(in square miles)	
Agriculture	17,331.50	27.10	82.4%
Surface Water	1,662.60	2.60	7.9%
Residential	1,011.50	1.58	4.8%
Transp-Telecom-Utilities	785.70	1.23	3.7%
Recreational	178.10	0.28	0.9%
Commercial	37.20	0.06	0.2%
Institutional	8.90	0.01	0.0%
Industrial	7.50	0.01	0.0%
Total	21,023.00	32.9	100%

Source: Jefferson County GIS data. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 10, 2023.

City of Lake Mills Urban Service Area (USA)

The City of Lake Mills Urban Service Area (USA) is a defined border that plans for reasonable municipal growth and is designated for higher density residential development with public utilities and non- agricultural related businesses and industry within its boundary. The City of Lake Mills USA is also the area where city utilities and services may be provided in the future depending on developer agreements with the City.

Development

Development may increase traffic on State, County, and local roads that pass through the Town of Lake Mills, especially STH 89, CTH B, CTH V, and North Shore Road. Additionally, increases in residential housing may affect the capacity of schools, parks, recreational facilities, natural areas, medical and emergency services, wastewater treatment and other services used by Town residents. For example, the City of Lake Mills Wastewater Treatment Plant serves the subdivisions on the west side of Rock Lake such as Shorewood Hills, Korth Highlands, Elm Point, and Shorewood Meadows, but not the outlying rural areas.

3.4 Soil and Physical Feature Suitability for Land Use

Natural features and conditions impact planning the land uses that make up a community. All human activity has an impact on the land, surrounding natural resources, and on neighbors. Directing land uses to the most suitable sites and soils protects important natural areas, agricultural land, and groundwater infiltration areas and reduces the cost of construction and providing services.

Soil Suitability and Limitations

Existing soil conditions strongly influence land use possibilities. Development is most easily accomplished at the lowest financial cost and less chance for environmental damage on soils with slight and moderate limitations. Building on soils with severe limitations due to wetness, slope, erosion potential, or soil low strength will require more expensive engineering solutions or may degrade natural resources. **Map 3-5** is the **Town of Lake Mills Agricultural Soils Map**, showing where the most favorable soils are located for crop production as well as highly erodible steep soils where development should be avoided.

Soils in the eastern two thirds of the Town of Lake Mills are of the Fox-Casco-Matherton soil association. These soils have a loamy subsoil and are underlain by sand and gravel and can be somewhat poorly drained, well drained, or excessively well drained and can be nearly level or have very steep slopes.

The soils around Mud and Bean lakes and along Rock Creek and in the Zeloski-London marsh are in the Houghton-Adrian association. These are very poorly drained, nearly level organic soils that are more than 51 inches thick or underlain by sand.

The soils on hills in the Cemetery Road and Kuhl Road area are in the Whalan-Kidder association. These soils have loamy subsoil and are underlain by dolomite bedrock or gravelly sandy loam. They are well drained or moderately well drained and gently sloping to moderately steep.

Soils in the northwestern portion of the Town are in the Kidder-McHenry-Rotamer association. These soils have loamy subsoil and are underlain by gravelly sandy loam. They are well and moderately well drained and gently sloping to steep.

Agricultural Soils

The *Soil Survey of Jefferson County, Wisconsin* mapped all soil types and assessed the limitations and capabilities of each soil to support various human activities and natural functions. Soil limitations for various uses can be slight, moderate or severe. The Soil Survey of Jefferson County, Wisconsin classified all soils into eight agricultural capability classes based on “the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops.” The [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#) identifies Class I, Class II, and those Class III soils “that exhibit prime agricultural capabilities based on comparable expected yields of Class I and II” as prime agricultural soils. **Table 3-6** reports the soil capability and area for soils portrayed in **Map 3-5**.

In the Town of Lake Mills, prime agricultural soils account for 317.7 acres or 1.5 percent of the land area. As seen in **Map 3-5**, the best agricultural soils, in green, are located along Kroghville Road, County Road S, and in a small cluster at Mansfield Road and STH 89. At the same time, land with non-prime soils usually is on steep slopes or in wetlands (“Highly Erodible Soils”).

The Town of Lake Mills considers agricultural land integral to its character, functioning natural resources, and economic base. Most of the natural resources on private land are found on and adjacent to working lands. Farmland provides open space, fractured wildlife habitat, a variety of plant communities, and groundwater infiltration areas. Because of this, Town residents want to preserve agricultural heritage for the conservation and economic benefits the land and its agricultural use provides.

Table 3-6 Agricultural Soil Capability and Acreage

Soil Capability	Acres	Description
Class I Prime	317.7	Soils have few limitations that restrict their use for agriculture.
Class II Prime	9,571.90	Soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices
Class III Prime	6,463.40	Soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require special conservation
Class III Non-Prime and IV-VII	2,971.30	Soils with severe limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation due to steep slope, shallowness, or high water table

Source: Jefferson County GIS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 21, 2023.

Soil Suitability for Septic Systems

Favorable soil properties and site conditions are needed for properly functioning septic tank absorption fields. Soils suitability for conventional septic systems is rated slight, moderate, and severe in the *Soils of Jefferson County, Wisconsin*. In the Town of Lake Mills, 21.5 percent of the land area has soils with severe limitations for septic absorption fields, as portrayed in **Map 3-7 Town of Lake Mills Soil Suitability for Septic Systems Map**. The soils that are suitable for septic tanks are generally found along the Town roads. **Table 3.8** below reports acreage for the three categories of septic limitations and a description of what the limitations are.

Table 3-8 Acreage for Septic System Limitations

Limitations	Square Miles	Percent of Town Area	Description
Slight	6.5	62.4%	Soils generally favorable for septic fields; limitations are minor and easily overcome.
Moderate	4.9	16.2%	Soil properties and site features are unfavorable for septic fields but can be overcome by special design (mound systems).
Severe	18.9	21.5%	Soil properties and site features are extremely difficult to overcome; major soils reclamation, special design, or intensive maintenance is required.
Total	30.3	100.0%	-

Source: Jefferson County GIS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 21, 2023.

Highly Erodible Soils

Slopes greater than 12 percent are generally considered highly erodible.

The [*Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan*](#) includes Environmental corridor goals that call for protecting and preserving steeply sloped glacial features and state that “any land with a slope in excess of 20 percent should be considered as an environmental corridor and subject to environmental corridor land use policies.”

In the Town of Lake Mills about 4,298.1 acres (20.4 percent) have slopes of 12 percent or greater and are identified as highly erodible. When building on steep slopes, additional erosion control measures should be required, or development discouraged in these areas. **Map 3-5** shows the location of slopes over 12 percent where construction should be discouraged, or special precautions required.

Environmental Corridors and Floodplain

Environmental corridors include wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, woodlands over 10 acres in size, parks and public land. These corridors provide connections for wildlife and hold the most biological diversity. Floodplains slow stormwater runoff and capture nutrients and pollutants and provide important wildlife habitat.

Environmental corridors are mapped in **Map 3-9 Town of Lake Mills Environmental Corridors Map**. Jefferson County encourages a lower density of development (no greater than one dwelling per 10 acres, WDNR-delineated wetlands and 100-year floodplains should not be included in the calculation) in environmental corridors to protect these vital natural resources and natural corridors.

Flood plains are located around Bean Lake, Mud Lake, along Rock Creek as it flows to those two lakes and into Rock Lake, around Hope Lake, the London Marsh, and along the Mauneshia River and Koshkonong Creek, see **Map 5-1 for the Town of Lake Mills Floodplain Map**.

Much of the land around Mud and Bean Lakes south of Rock Lake is owned by the WDNR as the Lake Mills Wildlife Area. The flood plain north of Hope Lake is owned by the WDNR and mostly exists within the boundaries of Zeloski Marsh.

Jefferson County and Town of Lake Mills Land Division and Zoning Ordinances prohibit new building in flood plains.

Groundwater, Wellhead, and Surface Water Quality Protection

Numerous residents at the public engagement event as well as community survey participants referenced protecting lakes and groundwater in the Town. And for good reason: drinking water comes from private wells in the Town of Lake Mills. It is vitally important to protect groundwater recharge areas by maintaining open space and requiring developments to infiltrate rainwater. Rainwater that feeds deep municipal wells usually falls within a mile of the well. It is important to prevent land uses that could contaminate the groundwater from locating within the wellhead area.

Municipal and agricultural pumping from deep wells can withdraw water from an aquifer faster than it is recharged by rain fall, particularly in areas with rapid development and population growth such as Dane County. Excessive pumping in those areas could lower the water table as far away as Jefferson County. For that reason, pursuing best practices in water conservation, and pursuing intergovernmental cooperation to protect groundwater, is essential.

A key part of tackling groundwater pollution is identifying pollution sources. The Rock River Coalition worked with the U.S. Geological Survey to build a GFLOW computer model to assist planners and residents in understanding ground and surface water flow. The Town of Lake Mills has voiced support for this model in the past. The model can be used to create maps of recharge zones, groundwater flow, and surface water flow. Information from the model can identify well impacts and protection zones and to better understand the hydrology of the area.

Buildings, roads, and pavement create an impervious surface that prevent infiltration of rainwater into the aquifer and increase runoff into streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands. For that reason, the Town should invite opportunities for permeable pavement and rainwater collection methods to lessen rainwater runoff, thereby protecting Town waterbodies and maintaining a high quality of life.

3.5 Zoning

The Town of Lake Mills follows the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#), in addition to the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#).

Earlier, it was explained how land cover, such as “cultivated crops,” differs from land use, such as “agriculture.” Zoning outlines where land uses are permitted, conditional, or prohibited from occurring on a parcel of land to protect the health, safety, welfare, and morals of a community. For a description of Jefferson County zoning districts, please view **Note 3-2** in **Appendix 3**.

Map 3-10 is the **Town of Lake Mills Zoning Map**, created using Jefferson County GIS data. **Table 3-11** reports the Town area associated with each of the zoning districts (area for water bodies excluded). Several observations of note:

- Over 90 percent (26.60 square miles) of the Town is zoned A-1 Ag.
- Business and Industrial zoning together is around 0.25 percent of the Town.
- Around 5 percent of the Town area is residential.

Table 3-11 Zoning Districts’ Area Extents in the Town of Lake Mills

Zoning District	Area		Percentage of Town Area
	(in acres)	(in square miles)	
A-1 - Ag	17,024.90	26.60	90.82%
A-2 - Ag Business	151.10	0.24	0.81%
A-3 - Rural Residential	424.90	0.66	2.25%
A-T - Ag Transition	392.90	0.61	2.08%
B - Business	32.50	0.05	0.17%
C - Community	29.50	0.05	0.16%
I - Industrial	3.10	0.005	0.02%
N - Natural Resource	277.10	0.43	1.47%
R-1 Res Sewer	349.10	0.55	1.88%
R-2 Res No-Sewer	65.00	0.10	0.35%
Total	18,750.10	29.29	100.00%

Source: Jefferson County GIS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 21, 2023.

3.6 Future Land Use

Map 3-12 is the **Town of Lake Mills Future Land Use Map**. It supersedes the Land Use Master Plan map created for the *2010 Town of Lake Mills Land Use Plan* and utilized in the [2025 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan](#). The areas for certain land use classifications are reported in **Table 3-13**.

Table 3-13 Future Land Use by Area in the Town of Lake Mills

Future Land Use	Area		Percentage of Town Area
	(in acres)	(in square miles)	
Agriculture	17,160.50	26.80	81.7%
Surface Water	1,662.60	2.60	7.9%
Residential	1,182.60	1.85	5.6%
Transp-Telecom-Utilities	785.70	1.23	3.7%
Recreational	178.10	0.28	0.9%
Commercial	37.20	0.06	0.2%
Institutional	8.90	0.01	0.0%
Industrial	7.50	0.01	0.0%
Total	21,023.10	32.8	100%

Source: Jefferson County GIS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 22, 2023.

The Town of Lake Mills has the following objectives for the mapped future land use areas:

Agricultural Zones

1. Abide by the [Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan](#) understanding that the Town of Lake Mills has the right to be more restrictive.
2. Protect farming operations from encroachment by incompatible uses.
3. Maintain the eligibility of qualified farmers for Farmland Preservation Program Tax Credits.
4. Allow construction of agricultural buildings.

5. Prevent rural residential development on land that could cause conservation concerns such as extensive destruction of wooded areas, severe impact on wildlife habitat, drainage concerns, or incompatibility with surrounding land use. To preserve farmland land used for access to the lot will be limited to one (1) acre (the minimum access width is sixty-six (66) feet wide). The homeowner is cautioned that this is an agricultural zone and is required to accept the common farming practices of the landowners around them.
6. Allow existing homestead splits per the Jefferson County Land Division Ordinance i.e. (homes built prior to 1975). A fifty foot (50') buffer strip is required from any buildings on the lot to the property line. If the remaining parcel is less than thirty five (35) acres a signed affidavit will be required to prevent future development with the parcel of record. Land that is contiguous and under the same ownership is considered a parcel of record. (See [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#))
7. To allow one (1) rural residential lot on a parcel of record that is under fifty (50) acres and up to two (2) rural residential lots on a parcel of record fifty (50) acres or larger. The maximum lot size allowed will be two (2) acres. A lot combination may be considered by the Plan Commission for parcels of record fifty (50) acres or larger (i.e. two-two acre lots may be combined into one lot containing a maximum of four acres). Parcel splits (zoned A3) which were created after January 1, 1978 on a parcel of record fifty (50) acres or larger will be deducted from the total parcel splits allowed under this plan, (see [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#)), but the total number of splits allowed under this plan will not be reduced below one (1). Land that is contiguous and under the same ownership is considered a parcel of record (see Jefferson County Agricultural Land Use Plan). A signed affidavit will be required to prevent future development, (other than agricultural buildings), on the remaining land associated with the parcel of record. To determine parcel of record size, location, and ownership Town of Lake Mills tax rolls and the Jefferson County zoning maps as they existed on March 20, 2000 will be used. Terms of this item (7) are subject to the stipulations listed in item (5) above.

Residential

Limited Residential Unsewered Development

1. Minimum parcel size 1.0 acres, parcel splits will fall under the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#).

2. If the parcel is within the City of Lake Mills Sanitary Sewer District, the owner may be required to comply with sanitary sewer regulations.

Residential Sewered Development

1. All parcel splits will fall under the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#).
2. The owner must comply with the City of Lake Mills sanitary sewer regulations.

Commercial

1. Follow the Jefferson County definition of "commercial" as defined in B-Business Zone.
2. If the parcel is within the City of Lake Mills Sanitary Sewer District, the owner may be required to comply with sanitary sewer regulations.

Industrial

1. Follow the Jefferson County definition of "Industrial."
2. If the parcel is within the City of Lake Mills Sanitary Sewer District, the owner may be required to comply with sanitary sewer regulations.

Surface Water

1. Follow applicable Jefferson County, state, and federal regulations.
2. Support good stewardship practices for Rock Lake and other water bodies.

Institutional

1. Follow applicable Jefferson County, state, and federal regulations.

Transportation-Telecom-Utilities

1. Follow applicable Jefferson County, state, and federal regulations.

Recreational

1. For environmentally sensitive areas including parks, development may be prohibited due to ground water, the presence of significant wildlife habitat natural vegetation or the need to protect water quality. For recreational uses that are not in a natural setting, the use would comply with the zoning district's requirements.

3.7 Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Land Use Goal 1: Minimize urban sprawl and maintain the distinction between the Urban Service Area of the City of Lake Mills, which is designed to accommodate residential and commercial growth, and the rural open spaces that exist in the Town of Lake Mills.

Objectives:

- Abide by the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#).
- Update the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) as necessary.
- Direct residential development to planned areas in the Town Growth Area and the City of Lake Mills.
- Maintain intergovernmental agreements and work jointly with the City of Lake Mills to provide for growth that is ecologically and fiscally sustainable.
- Explore agricultural easement programs to permanently protect agricultural land.

Land Use Goal 2: Plan for growth in a manner that: boosts the local economy, protects natural resources, and co-exists with or enhances sustainable agricultural enterprises.

Objectives:

- Consider the financial, environmental, agricultural, and aesthetic impacts of all developments before granting approval

Policies:

- [Jefferson County Shoreland Protection Ordinance](#)
- Explore incentives to encourage the use of permeable surfaces in new developments and rainwater collection methods to lessen rainwater runoff
- Explore requiring economic and environmental impact analysis from developers

- Encourage development densities that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal and utility costs.
- Encourage redevelopment of existing developed areas and brownfields.
- Discourage development in prime agricultural areas.
- Refer to the federal laws, Wisconsin State Statute, and the [Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance](#) when considering large livestock facilities.
- Avoid or buffer conflicting land uses adjacent to one another.
- Plan for agricultural or open space buffers around sensitive natural areas, lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands.
- Prohibit construction of structures on 100-year floodplains based on FEMA maps.
- Prohibit construction of structures in and filling of wetlands.
- Discourage or prohibit development in major groundwater recharge areas and promote wellhead protection planning.
- Prohibit construction on slopes of 20% or more.
- Plan to maintain contiguous environmental corridors.

Land Use Goal 3: Protect farm operations from conflicts with incompatible uses.

Objectives:

- Restrict rezoning of A-1 land to uses compatible with agriculture.

Policies:

- [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#)
- [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#)
- [Wisconsin Livestock Facility Siting Rule](#)

- Enforce setback buffers between existing farms and new houses.

Policy:

- [*Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Setback Sheet*](#)

- Educate rural non-farm homeowners about farming practices.

Policy:

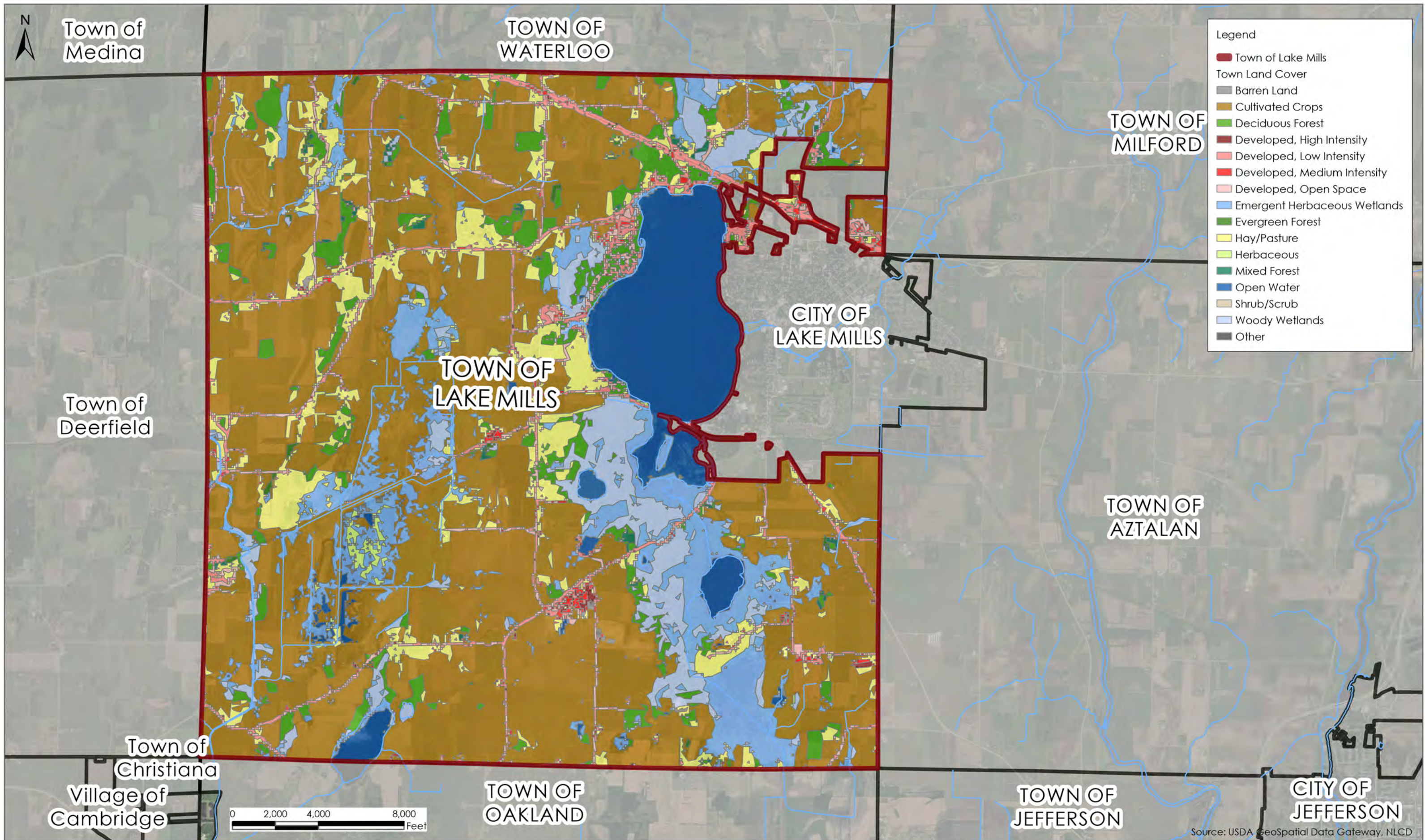
- Work with Jefferson County Animal Agriculture Alliance to develop educational programs.

- Follow [*Wisconsin's Right to Farm Law*](#)

Plans, Ordinances, and Policies Applicable to the Town of Lake Mills:

Several plans, ordinances and policies guide land use decisions in the Town of Lake Mills. A brief list follows, though it should be noted the list is not exhaustive, and other documents apply to land use decisions within the Town of Lake Mills:

- [*Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance*](#)
- [*Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan*](#)
- [*Jefferson County Shoreland Protection Ordinance*](#)
- [*Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance*](#)
- [*Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance*](#)

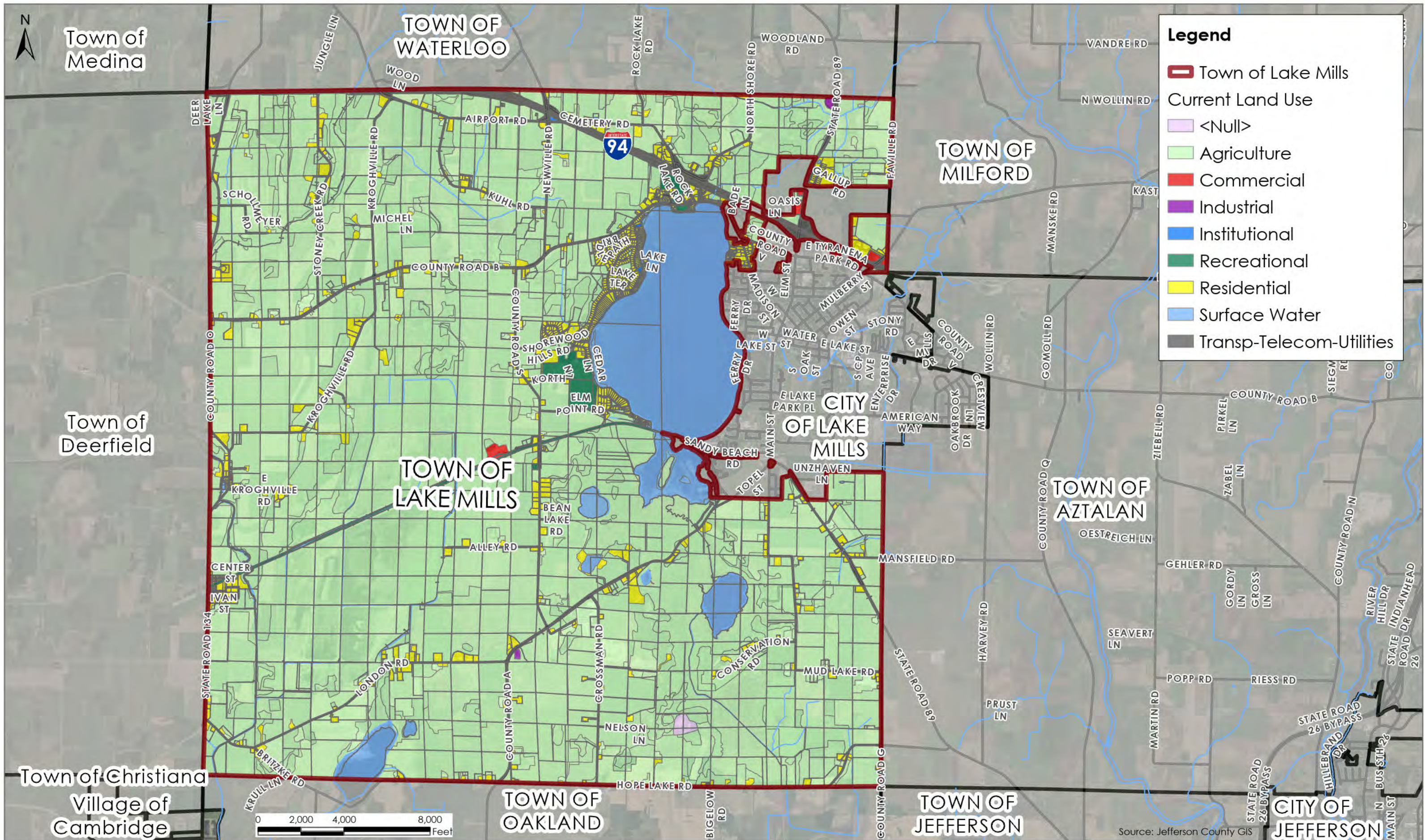


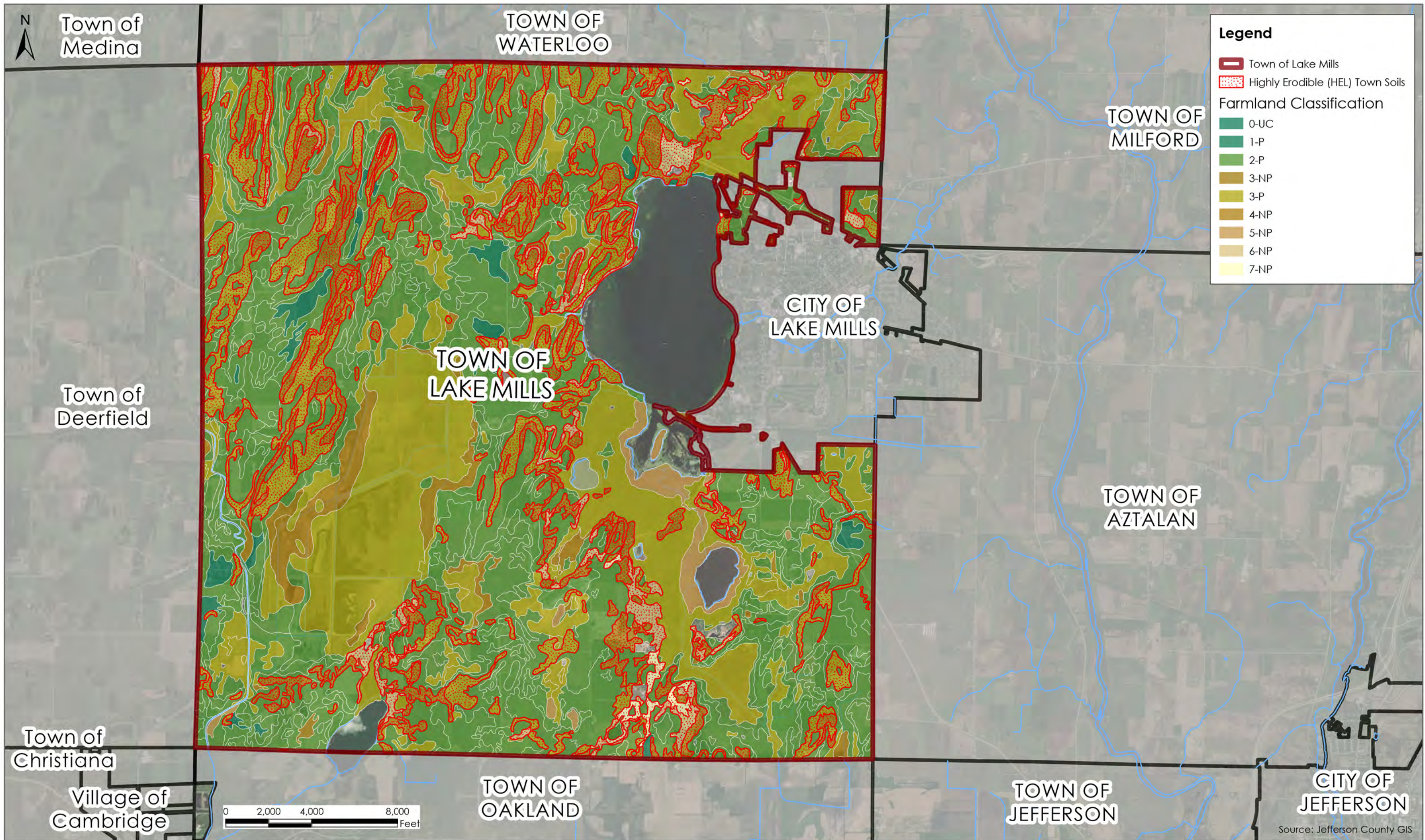
Map 3-1 Town of Lake Mills Land Cover Map

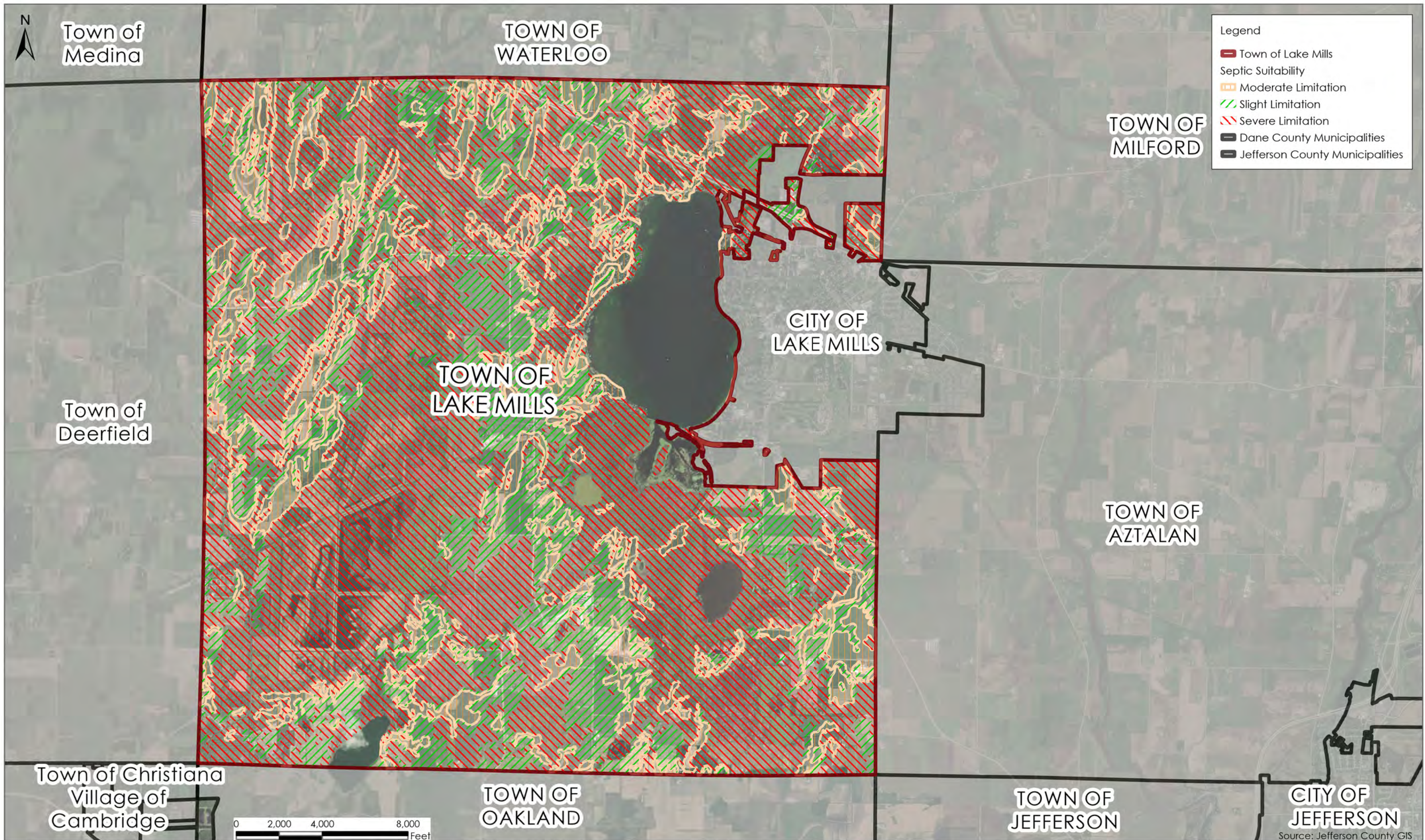
Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, WI

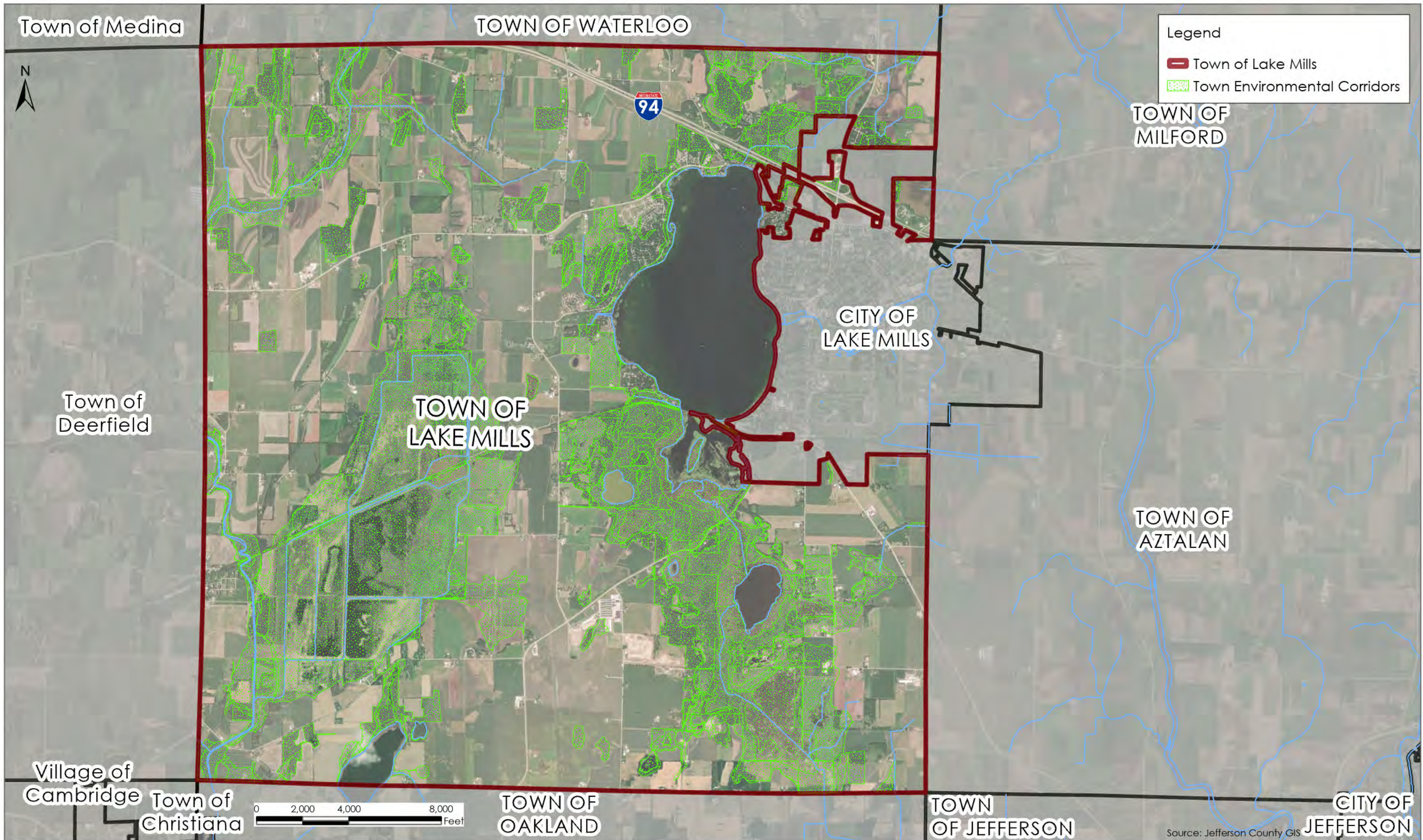
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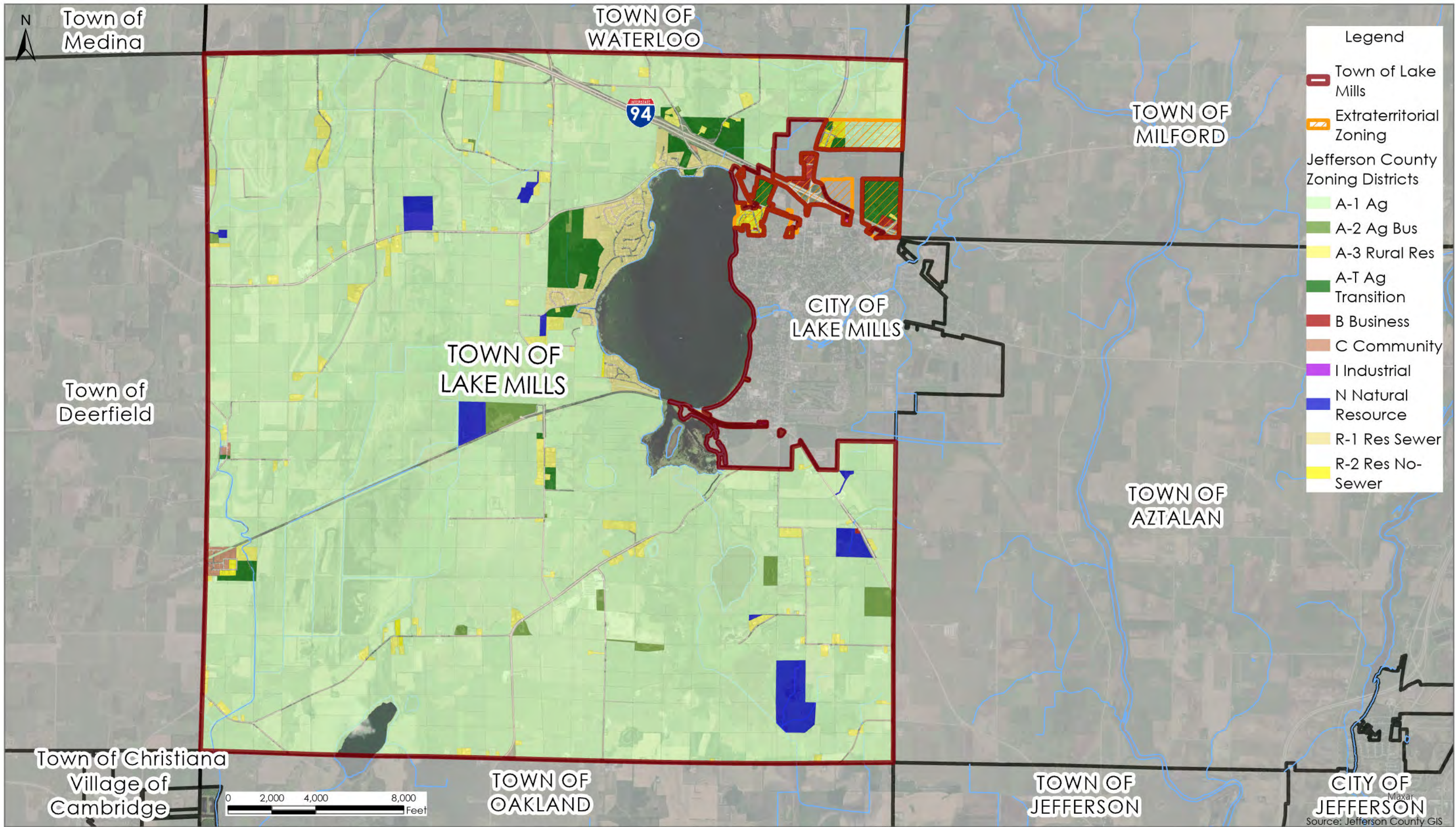


Map 3-9 Town of Lake Mills Environmental Corridors Map

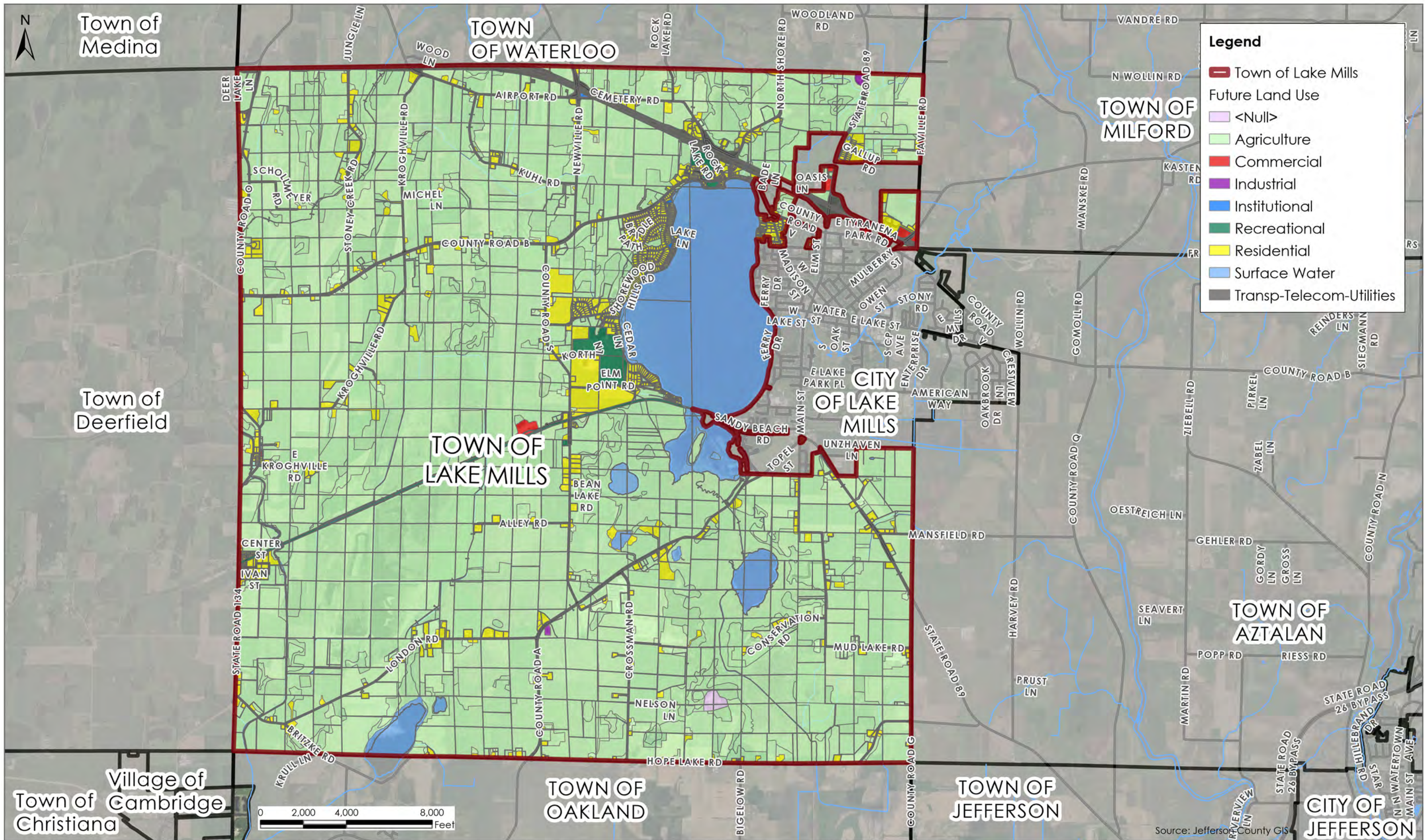
Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, WI

01/26/2024





Map 3-10 Town of Lake Mills Zoning Map
 Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, WI
 01/26/2024





Appendix 3 Land Use

Source: Vista along CTH-A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 3-1 NLCD Land Cover descriptions

National Land Cover Database Class Legend and Description

Class\ Value	Classification Description
Water	
11	Open Water - areas of open water, generally with less than 25% cover of vegetation or soil.
12	Perennial Ice/Snow - areas characterized by a perennial cover of ice and/or snow, generally greater than 25% of total cover.
Developed	
21	Developed, Open Space - areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20% of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes.
22	Developed, Low Intensity - areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 20% to 49% percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.
23	Developed, Medium Intensity - areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 50% to 79% of the total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.
24	Developed High Intensity -highly developed areas where people reside or work in high numbers. Examples include apartment complexes, row houses and commercial/industrial. Impervious surfaces account for 80% to 100% of the total cover.
Barren	
31	Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay) - areas of bedrock, desert pavement, scarps, talus, slides, volcanic material, glacial debris, sand dunes, strip mines, gravel pits and other accumulations of earthen material. Generally, vegetation accounts for less than 15% of total cover.
Forest	
41	Deciduous Forest - areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species shed foliage simultaneously in response to seasonal change.
42	Evergreen Forest - areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75% of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.

43	Mixed Forest - areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. Neither deciduous nor evergreen species are greater than 75% of total tree cover.
Shrubland	
51	Dwarf Scrub - Alaska only areas dominated by shrubs less than 20 centimeters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This type is often co-associated with grasses, sedges, herbs, and non-vascular vegetation.
52	Shrub/Scrub - areas dominated by shrubs; less than 5 meters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class includes true shrubs, young trees in an early successional stage or trees stunted from environmental conditions.
Herbaceous	
71	Grassland/Herbaceous - areas dominated by graminoid or herbaceous vegetation, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation. These areas are not subject to intensive management such as tilling, but can be utilized for grazing.
72	Sedge/Herbaceous - Alaska only areas dominated by sedges and forbs, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation. This type can occur with significant other grasses or other grass like plants, and includes sedge tundra, and sedge tussock tundra.
73	Lichens - Alaska only areas dominated by fruticose or foliose lichens generally greater than 80% of total vegetation.
74	Moss - Alaska only areas dominated by mosses, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation.
Planted/Cultivated	
81	Pasture/Hay -areas of grasses, legumes, or grass-legume mixtures planted for livestock grazing or the production of seed or hay crops, typically on a perennial cycle. Pasture/hay vegetation accounts for greater than 20% of total vegetation.
82	Cultivated Crops -areas used for the production of annual crops, such as corn, soybeans, vegetables, tobacco, and cotton, and also perennial woody crops such as orchards and vineyards. Crop vegetation accounts for greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class also includes all land being actively tilled.
Wetlands	
90	Woody Wetlands - areas where forest or shrubland vegetation accounts for greater than 20% of vegetative cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.
95	Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands - Areas where perennial herbaceous vegetation accounts for greater than 80% of vegetative cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.

Note 3-2 Jefferson County Zoning District descriptions (per [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#))

R-1 – Residential Sewered

Purpose: To identify those areas where predominantly residential development has occurred or will be likely to occur within the urban service areas and limited-service areas as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). To protect residential neighborhoods by prohibiting uses which will not mix well with homes.

R-2 – Residential Unsewered

Purpose: To identify non-farm residential areas not served by public sewer. To be applied only within the urban service areas, limited-service areas, and rural hamlet areas described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). To ensure that, when used within urban service areas or limited-service areas, that the establishment of unsewered development does not unreasonably inhibit future public sewer service. To protect residential neighborhoods by prohibiting uses which will not mix well with homes.

B – Business

Purpose: To identify areas appropriate for non-agricultural commercial use located within the urban service areas or limited-service areas as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). A site may have a conditional use without the principal use being established.

I – Industrial

Purpose: To identify areas best suited for non-agricultural industrial development because of location, topography, existing streets, utilities, and relationship to other land uses and located within the urban service areas or limited-service areas as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#).

AT – Agricultural Transition

Purpose: To preserve for an unspecified time period in agricultural and open space land use those lands generally located in proximity to developed areas within Jefferson County where future development is in keeping within town, city, village, and/or county plans, and located within 15 Year Growth Areas as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#).

A-1 Exclusive Agricultural

Purpose: The long-range goal for agricultural land use within Jefferson County is to preserve the most valuable of all resources—fertile land for agricultural pursuits—and to protect the land best suited for farming from premature urbanization. The A-1 Exclusive Agricultural district is intended to promote continued agricultural uses on the best quality agricultural land; protect and encourage long-term investments in food, fiber, and other resource related production; be a state-certified farmland preservation zoning district to maintain property owner eligibility in the State's farmland preservation tax credit program in conjunction with the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan; preserve rural character and manage nonfarm development; and provide reasonable opportunities for agriculturally-related businesses and home occupations. The Exclusive Agricultural zoning district may be utilized only in areas designated as Agricultural Preservation Areas within the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). Rezoning out of the A-1 district may occur only after the County Planning and Zoning Committee conducts a public hearing and makes findings as specified in §91.48(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes, as articulated in Section 11.11(c) of the Ordinance. Rezoning to the A-3 district under the associated policies of that district and the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan is the only way that new housing may be built on lands currently zoned A-1, except for replacement of certain farm residences as authorized by this section.

A-2 Agricultural and Rural Business

Purpose: To provide for the proper location and regulation of manufacturing, storage warehousing and related marketing or industrial activities that are related to the agricultural industry and otherwise suited to a relatively isolated, rural location. This district may be considered within the Agricultural Preservation Areas, Rural Hamlet areas, Urban Service Areas, and Limited-Service Areas as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). Uses listed for the A-2 district involve fixed locations, year-round or seasonal. A listed use that is mobile, moving from farm to farm, is not regulated. A site may have a conditional use without the primary use being established.

A-3 Agricultural/Rural Residential

Purpose: The purpose of the A-3 Agricultural/Rural Residential District is to allow limited rural residential development on lands in predominantly agricultural areas that are not suited for agricultural production or, due to the proposed location, would have limited impact on agricultural production. Lots are limited in number, size and location to minimize the impacts associated with rural residential development. Residents of this

district may experience conditions associated with farming that are not necessarily compatible with rural residential use. This district may be considered within the Agricultural Preservation Areas, Rural Hamlet areas, Environmental Corridor overlay, Urban Services Areas, and Limited-Service Areas, as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). Within planned Agricultural Preservation Areas, the number of A-3 lots created from a parcel of record shall be limited per the associated policies within that Plan.

C – Community

Purpose: To identify those areas which have traditionally serviced the nearby farms and residences but were not legally incorporated into villages or cities. To recognize that these older communities have mixed their residential, commercial, and farming uses. The Community zoning district shall be utilized in Rural Hamlet areas and Limited-Service Areas as described in the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). A site may have a conditional use without the principal use being established.

W – Waterfront

Purpose: To identify residential and commercial areas adjacent to the County's waterways.

S – Shoreland-Wetland (Overlay Zone)

Purpose: This district is created to maintain safe and healthful conditions, to prevent water pollution, to protect fish spawning grounds and wildlife habitat, to preserve shore cover and natural beauty and to control building and development in wetlands whenever possible. When development is permitted in a wetland, the development should occur in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts upon the wetland.

N – Natural Resource

Purpose: To identify those areas where development is prohibited due to ground water, the presence of significant wildlife habitat and natural vegetation or the need to protect water quality. To allow for low impact agricultural uses, generally those which predated zoning to the N district, To be a state-certified farmland preservation zoning district to maintain property owner eligibility in the State's farmland preservation tax credit program in conjunction with the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). All applicable sections of the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#) shall be evaluated in determining a rezoning to this district. Rezoning out of the N district may occur only following the County Planning and Zoning Committee conducts a public hearing and makes findings as specified in §91.48(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes, as articulated in Section 11.11(c) of the Ordinance.

R-R Residential/Recreational

Purpose: To identify those areas where predominantly recreational development has occurred or will be likely to occur, generally in 15 Year Growth Areas, Urban Service Areas, Limited-Service Areas, and Rural Hamlet Areas as described within the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#). Due to soil types, agricultural productivity class, topographic conditions, and adjacent uses, the area would be best suited to sparse residential and recreational development rather than intensive agricultural development. A site may have a conditional use without the principal use being established.



Chapter 4 Housing

Source: Housing provides a sense of place, but it also affects farmland and Town natural areas. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

4.1 Housing Overview

Housing stands out as a crucial factor of comprehensive planning, playing a pivotal role in shaping the Town of Lake Mills into an appealing community for residents and family life. This chapter acknowledges the valued aspects of the Town's housing, acknowledges persistent challenges, and explores potential solutions. The goals, objectives, and policies outlined in this chapter are designed to provide guidance to the community in addressing housing issues while preserving the overall character of the community. Residential areas in the Town are situated within subdivisions that stretch along the western and northern shores of Rock Lake, encompassing rural residential homes, farmettes, and farmlands.

The City of Lake Mills sewer lines extend their services to the subdivision developments along Rock Lake through an intergovernmental agreement. In the Town, water for domestic use is primarily supplied by private wells, emphasizing the crucial need to safeguard groundwater resources as a central objective of this plan. Permanent residents occupy homes lining the lake and adjacent subdivisions, creating a diverse community. Additionally, some homes along the lake serve as summer rentals and cottages. The appeal of country living is evident, attracting individuals who appreciate open spaces or aspire to maintain horses or livestock.

The [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) restricts the potential number of rural lots on a contiguous land parcel under one owner to either one, two, or three two-acre building lots. The specific allocation depends on factors such as soil classification, environmental corridor designation, and past land splits. Despite the requirement for clustering rural lots, residential homes in rural areas are dispersed throughout the town. To permit larger lots, a combination of a one or two-acre building envelope with non-buildable features like wetlands, woodlands, or steep slopes has been allowed.

The Town seeks to investigate the implementation of clustering and conservation subdivision design within potential growth areas. Anticipated developments in the Town predominantly involve single-family homes, though some residents are open to different housing types, especially if it allows the residents to stay in the community long-term. The preservation of natural resources, prime agricultural land, and surface and groundwater holds significant importance for the Town. The integration of sustainable development practices, streamlined service provisioning, and the establishment of multimodal transportation networks is woven into the defined goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the housing element.

Figure 4-1 New Housing Construction



Source: Townhome construction in the City of Lake Mills. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Key Demographics

The Town's demographic data was updated to capture the changes happening in the Town and provide a comparison to Jefferson County. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the Town of Lake Mills has a population of 2,196 and 908 total housing units. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, the Town has 815 total occupied housing units, with an average household size of 2.76. The Town of Lake Mills median age is 45.2 years old, and the median household income is \$102,614. Additional details on demographics and housing are in **Appendix 4**, as well as **Chapter 2**.

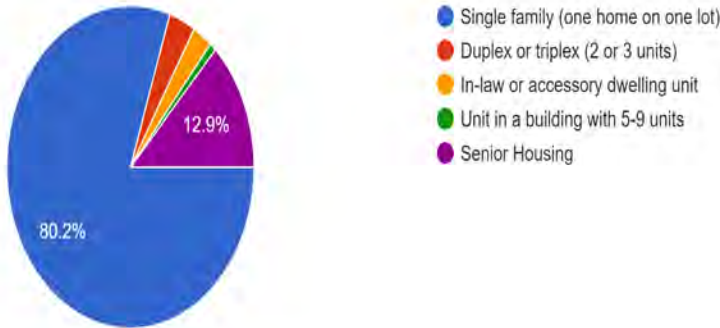
Future Housing Development

High-value single-family homes are in demand in the Lake Mills area. Proximity to Rock Lake increases home, lot, and rental values. Increasing population and decreasing household size in the Madison and Milwaukee metro areas will put pressure on the Town of Lake Mills for both lake and rural homes. More residential development is likely in the Town of Lake Mills, and the Town would like the form of that development to be sustainable and in character with its surroundings. The [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) and [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) apply to the Town. The Town will strive to reduce conflict between agricultural uses and new residences and the increasing traffic that new residents bring.

Below, question six from the Community Survey reveals some interesting insights about current residents’ desires if they were to relocate within the Town. Over eighty percent would choose a single-family home, with 12.9 percent choosing a senior housing option. Currently, one senior housing option exists in Town extents (read **Chapter 9** for more information!), though several assisted and senior living options exist in the adjacent City of Lake Mills. Moving forward, the Town should consider how some housing types, such as a duplexes with zero threshold entry (no stairs) or accessory dwelling units (ADUs, also known as “granny flats,” carriage houses, etc.) may be welcomed to allow residents to age in place on the lands they love.



6. If you were going to relocate in the Town of Lake Mills what housing type would you choose?
116 responses



Source: Town of Lake Mills Community Survey, Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 7, 2023

4.2 Housing Physical Characteristics

To understand the needs of Town of Lake Mills residents, a comprehensive analysis of housing units was conducted, considering factors such as quantity, occupancy rate, structure type, age, and value. This was done to ensure that there is a sufficient and suitable housing supply for all residents of the Town.

The Town contains 908 housing units; 815 are occupied housing units and 93 units are vacant. Housing supply and demand significantly impact vacancy rates. Inadequate housing supply tends to drive up housing costs, impacting affordability. On the flip side, an excess of vacant homes and apartments can compromise the overall viability of the housing market. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, a balanced and healthy vacancy rate typically hovers around two percent. However, the current vacancy rate is 10.2 percent in the Town of Lake Mills.

Over 88 percent of the Town housing units are classified as 1 unit, detached, also known as single-family housing (**Table 4-2**). While this approach has been beneficial for the Town over the years, the absence of housing diversity impacts affordability and particular residents' ability to age in place, as discussed later in this chapter.

According to the 2022 American Community Survey, “Housing Tenure” in the Town consists of 96.1 percent owner-occupied housing and 3.9 percent renter-occupied housing units (**Table 4-3**, following page).

Table 4-2 Occupied Housing Units

Occupied housing units	Quantity	%
UNITS IN STRUCTURE		
1, detached	719	88.2%
1, attached	15	1.8%
2 apartments	10	1.2%
3 or 4 apartments	6	0.7%
5 to 9 apartments	12	1.5%
10 or more apartments	0	0.0%
Mobile home or other type of housing	53	6.5%
Total Occupied Units	815	-

Source: “S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Housing Value.” 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S2504?q=060XX00US5505541700>

Table 4-3 Housing Tenure

HOUSING TENURE	%
Owner-occupied housing units	96.1%
Renter-occupied housing units	3.9%

Source: "S1101 Households and Families." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACST5Y2022.S1101?q=060XX00US5505541700>. Accessed on December 12, 2023.

4.3 Housing Affordability and Value

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing affordability as households "paying no more than 30 percent of their income for housing." Households that pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income for housing are considered housing-burdened. For a Town household making the yearly median income of \$102,614, housing expenses exceeding \$30,784.20 yearly (2,565.35 monthly) would mean the household is burdened. For a household making the Town median income of \$102,614 and unwilling to spend beyond 2.5 times their annual income, the mortgage the household could afford would be \$256,535. Based on the value shown in **Table 4-4**, the household could not afford, at minimum, 512 (64.6 percent) of the Town owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage (this number could be greater, as the exact number of \$260,000-\$299,999 houses is unknown). The median home value in the Town of Lake Mills is \$340,500 compared to \$299,600 for Jefferson County. A home purchase in the Town of Lake Mills will be more costly. The Town of Lake Mills homeownership rate is 93.8 percent, higher than the Jefferson County homeownership rate of 74 percent.

Table 4-4 Owner Occupied Units with a Mortgage

	Quantity	%
Owner-occupied units	783	-
Less than \$50,000	48	6.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	9	1.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	22	2.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	60	7.7%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	132	16.9%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	295	37.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	179	22.9%
\$1,000,000 or more	38	4.9%
Median (dollars)	383,700	-

Source: "DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics" 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP04?q=060XX00US5505541700>

4.4 Housing Stock Age

Nearly 57.8 percent of Town housing stock was built before 1989. In fact, an estimated 155 housing units (17.1 percent) of the Town's housing stock were built in 1939 or earlier (**Table 4-5**, following page). An estimated 70 housing units were constructed post-2010, representing 7.8 percent of Town housing stock. The comparative slowdown in building new houses post-2010 reflects the Town's extensive agricultural zoning, coupled with economic impacts like the 2008 financial crisis and the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020.

When homeowners face challenges affording maintenance projects, homes may display signs of disrepair, potentially leading to a decline in property values. Considering the significant number of housing units predating 1939, as well as age 65 or older households that may be on a fixed income, there is a potential need to renovate and rehabilitate the existing housing stock in the Town of Lake Mills.

Renovations could encourage energy-efficient and environmentally-conscious housing upgrades while enabling aging-in-place. The Town may assist residents by directing them towards assistance programs, like the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) provided by Wisconsin's Division of Energy Services. WAP offers energy conservation services to qualifying households to decrease home energy expenses and promote energy efficiency. The services typically involve insulation installation, sealing air leaks, fitting energy-saving products, and repairing or replacing inefficient furnaces and appliances. The revitalization of the existing housing stock through such initiatives can breathe new life into traditional population centers, concurrently reducing the demand to develop open space and farmland areas.

4.5 Senior Housing

The distribution of age groups and household sizes within the Town of Lake Mills holds significant implications for planning efforts and housing policy formulation. **Table 4-6** shows 16.9 percent of all Town households are living alone at 65 years or older. Most seniors prefer to remain in their homes and "age in place" for as long as possible. However, as individuals age, their income often decreases. These two realities highlight the necessity for affordable housing solutions for low- and moderate-income seniors, encompassing various options, including adapting their existing homes or exploring alternatives like accessory dwelling units.

Like other communities in Wisconsin, the aging population in the Town of Lake Mills underscores the necessity for a range of senior housing options. Recognizing the challenges confronted by seniors will be crucial in identifying the future senior housing needs of the Town of Lake Mills.

Table 4-5 Year Structure Built

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT	Quantity	%
2020 or later	25	2.8%
2010 to 2019	45	5.0%
2000 to 2009	83	9.1%
1990 to 1999	231	25.4%
1980 to 1989	87	9.6%
1970 to 1979	116	12.8%
1960 to 1969	48	5.3%
1950 to 1959	83	9.1%
1940 to 1949	35	3.9%
1939 or earlier	155	17.1%
Total	908	-

Source: "S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Housing Value." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S2504?q=060XX00US5505541700>

Table 4-6 Households by Type

SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE	Percent
Households with one or more people 60 years and over	48.5%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	37.5%
Householder living alone	27.5%
65 years and over	16.9%

Source: "S1101 Households and Families." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1101?q=060XX00US5505541700>. Accessed on December 12, 2023.

4.6 Future Changes in Housing

As the Town progresses into the future, there will be an adoption of advanced and broader environmental conservation practices and housing technologies. The prevalence of environmentally friendly approaches, such as permeable pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, and various property and building enhancements, will become increasingly commonplace in addressing stormwater runoff.

Likewise, the utilization of renewable energy generation methods, including ground-mounted and roof-mounted solar panels or wind turbines, is expected to rise. The implementation of private or commercial wind turbines within a community often sparks a controversial discourse for local government. Proponents argue that embracing wind energy is vital to achieving sustainability goals, reducing carbon footprints, and fostering energy independence. Proponents also highlight the potential economic benefits, such as job creation and increased revenue for the local economy. However, the controversy arises as some community members express concerns about the visual impact of large wind turbines on the local landscape, potential noise disturbances, and the perceived threat to local wildlife. During the installation of these environmental conservation and technology upgrades, the Town's review process must ensure that they align with and respect the distinctive character and natural surroundings of the Town.

Changes in household size and household makeup will influence demand for housing options in the future. Population projections prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) predict that through 2030, the number of households in the Town of Lake Mills will slowly increase.

The rising demand for housing units emphasizes the need for increased availability and underscores the significance of preserving the existing housing stock. It also emphasizes the importance of diversifying housing options, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of seniors and ensuring affordability.

4.7 Housing Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Housing Goal 1: Maintain a variety of housing types and range of housing affordability within the Town of Lake Mills, including the hamlets of Kroghville and London.

Objectives:

- Maintain a land division ordinance that allows a variety of home and lot sizes within the Town and Sanitary Sewer Service Area where sub-divisions are allowed.
- In the rural hamlets of Kroghville and London (both the Jefferson and Dane County sides) encourage clustering of homes
- Farm employee housing is allowed in the Town as directed by the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#).
- Encourage re-use and maintenance of existing and historical buildings for housing.
- Provide residents with information on affordable housing programs:

[The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium](#)

[Community Action Coalition of South-Central Wisconsin](#)

[Habitat for Humanity](#)

[USDA Rural Development Rural Housing Programs](#)

- Work with the City of Lake Mills to provide a variety of senior living options in City growth areas with access to City and County health services, amenities, recreation, and transportation.

Goal 2: Direct residential development to Town and City growth areas where utilities and services can be provided in the most efficient and cost-effective manner while maintaining large blocks of farmland and continuous environmental corridors in the Town.

Objectives:

- Enforce the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) that states that only farm-related residences may be located on A-1 zoned land.

- Direct residential housing to sub-divisions within the Sanitary Sewer Service Area.
- Direct manufactured housing and multi-family buildings to the City of Lake Mills growth areas, where city utilities and services are provided.

Goal 3: Work with the City of Lake Mills to design residential areas that provide employment, commercial districts, schools and recreation within walking and biking distance to minimize vehicular use, promote alternative forms of transportation, and increase the potential for exercise health.

Objectives:

- Situate new housing developments adjacent to existing developments in the City of Lake Mills
- Provide mixed-use developments that provide pedestrian and bicycle paths for transportation.

Policy:

- Encourage developers to utilize the City of Lake Mills' Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) standards.
- Protect housing developments from incompatible and conflicting land uses.

Policies:

- [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#)

Goal 4: Require implementation of sustainable design and construction practices in both new building projects and the repurposing of existing housing.

Objectives:

- Encourage and allow architectural innovation and construction of green, sustainable, and energy-efficient housing.
- Encourage sub-division designs that reflect and respect the natural agricultural and cultural character of the Town.
- Explore the use of conservation subdivisions in Town growth areas in the Sewer Service Area to maintain contiguous woodlands, wetlands, blocks of agricultural land, and infiltrate run-off.

- Require and enforce erosion and stormwater controls on all construction sites
- Encourage homeowners and property owners to protect surface water and groundwater resources by planting shoreline buffers, rain gardens, and native plantings and responsible fertilizer and pesticide use.

Policies:

- Encourage developers to participate in the WDNR Green Tier Program.
- Provide education tools about housing programs to residents and developers
- Design ordinances to allow green, sustainable, and energy-efficient housing.
- Develop a conservation subdivision ordinance
- [Jefferson County Shoreland Protection Ordinance](#)
- [2018 – 2028 Rock Lake Management Plan](#)
- Promote responsible fertilizer and pesticide use.



Appendix 4 Housing

Source: Townhome Construction near Town Hall. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 4-1 Energy Assistance Programs

[Wisconsin Weatherization Assistance Program \(WAP\)](#)

[Housing and Public Utilities Benefits](#)

[Focus on Energy](#)

Note 4-2 Additional Housing & Demographic Data

Table 4-1 Housing Occupancy

HOUSING OCCUPANCY	Quantity	%
Total housing units	908	100.0%
Occupied housing units	815	89.8%
Vacant housing units	93	10.2%

Source: "DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics" 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP04?q=060XX00US5505541700>

Table 4-2 Occupied Houses' Fuel Heating Source

HOUSE HEATING FUEL	Quantity	Percent
Utility gas	582	71.4%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	135	16.6%
Electricity	37	4.5%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	33	4.0%
Coal or coke	0	0.0%
All other fuels	28	3.4%
No fuel used	0	0.0%

Source: "S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Housing Value." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S2504?q=060XX00US5505541700>

Table 4-3 Number of Bedrooms

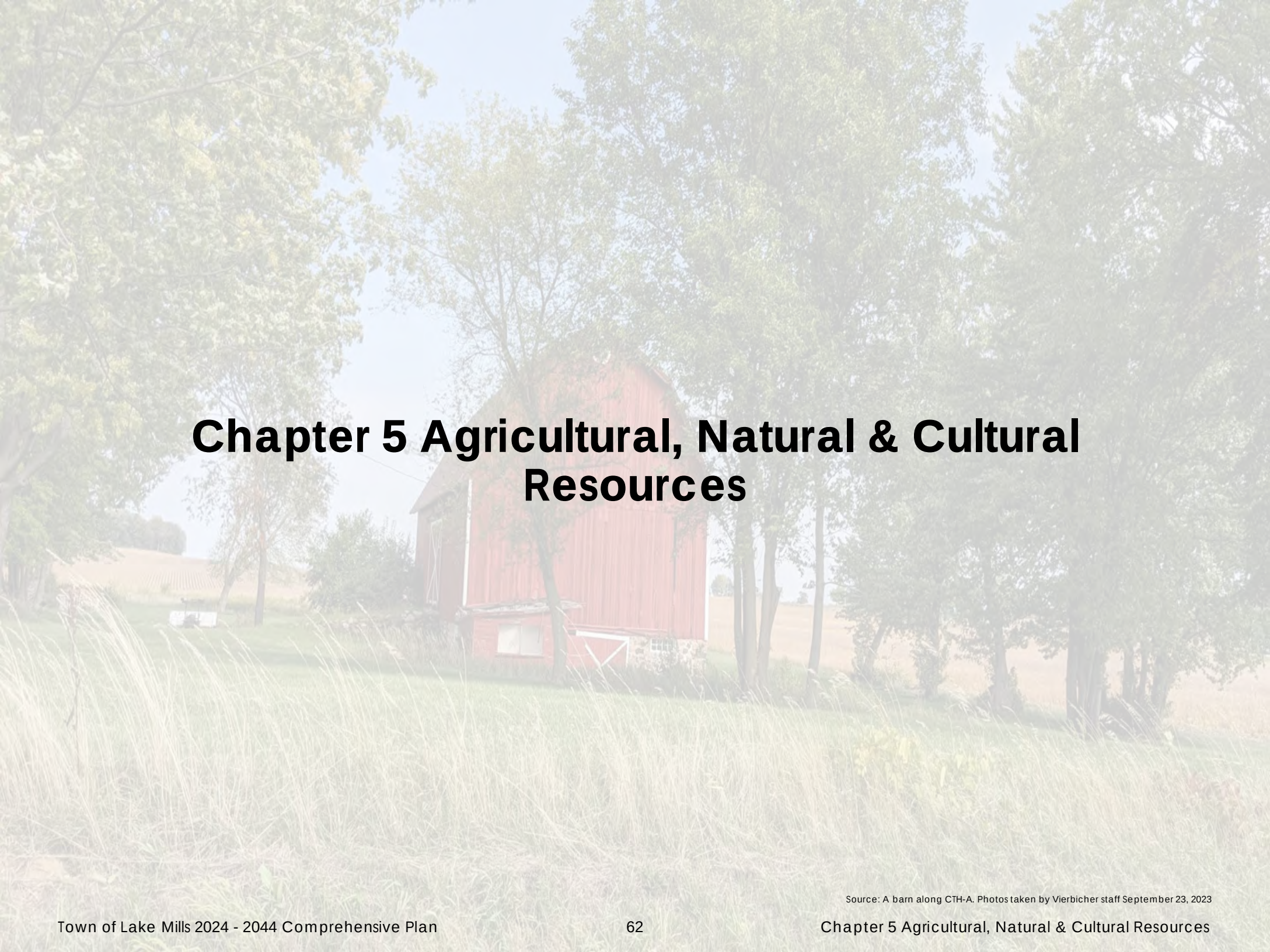
BEDROOMS	Quantity	%
No bedroom	0	0.0%
1 bedroom	0	0.0%
2 or 3 bedrooms	603	74.0%
4 or more bedrooms	212	26.0%

Source: "S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Housing Value." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S2504?q=060XX00US5505541700>

Table 4-4 Occupied Units Paying Rent

	Quantity	%
Occupied units paying rent	20	-
Less than \$500	0	0.0%
\$500 to \$999	10	50.0%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	0.0%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	7	35.0%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	3	15.0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	1,250	-
No rent paid	12	-

Source: "DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics for Housing Value." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 12, 2023 <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP04?q=060XX00US5505541700>

A photograph of a red barn with a gambrel roof, partially obscured by large green trees. The barn is situated in a grassy field with tall grass in the foreground. The background shows a clear sky and more trees.

Chapter 5 Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources

Source: A barn along CTH-A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

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5.1 Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources Overview

Located on the western shore of Rock Lake, the Town of Lake Mills is nestled beside one of the deepest and clearest lakes in southern Wisconsin. Renowned for its pristine waters, the lake is a magnet for fishing enthusiasts, recreational boaters, bird watchers, and seasonal residents. The Town takes pride in providing multiple access points to the lake, including three boat landings. Additionally, Jefferson County's Korth County Park and the Lower Rock Lake County Park area are situated along the scenic shores of Rock Lake, enhancing the overall appeal of this region.

Zeloski Marsh stands out as a prime birding location within the expansive Lake Mills Wildlife Area. This sizeable parcel of land was generously donated to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 2006. Since acquiring the property, the DNR has undertaken significant restoration efforts, including the filling of over 2 miles of ditches, the removal of 12 miles of drain tiles, the construction of 3.5 miles of berms, the planting of more than 600 acres of prairie and wetlands, and the establishment of two parking areas. These conservation initiatives have transformed Zeloski Marsh into a thriving habitat for diverse bird species.

The Glacial Drumlin State Trail is the major recreational corridor through the Town of Lake Mills. The trail attracts bikers, hikers, and snowmobiles. The Trail links Waukesha County on the east to Dane County on the west and traverses the south end of Rock Lake and the London marsh.

Environmental corridors and wildlife habitats on private lands are often adjacent to and co-exist with agricultural land. Farm operations include egg farms, dairy farms, beef farms, hog farms, sheep farms, horse farms, crop farms, and orchards. These natural and historic resources give the Town of Lake Mills its character and generate economic returns for its residents and the Town government.

The Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element includes goals, objectives, policies, maps, and programs for the conservation, effective management, and improvement of natural resources such as groundwater, woodlands, wetlands, lakes, and streams; productive agricultural lands, historical and cultural structures and landscapes; and parks and open space.

This section on agriculture dives into its economic implications, transportation requirements, challenges posed by development pressures, the overall health of the industry, and a glimpse into the future. It ends with a discussion of agricultural goals, objectives, and policies.

Across the state, the count of farms decreased from 64,400 in 2020 to 64,100 in 2021. Over the years, Wisconsin's agriculture sector has experienced an annual employment rate decline of approximately 0.3 percent since 1969. This decline can be attributed, in part, to a reduction in the number of farms coupled with increased productivity through advancements in technology. The shift towards larger agricultural operations may also contribute to some employment decline, given the greater adoption of mechanization in modern farming practices.

5.2 Agricultural Resources

Farming is a way of life in Wisconsin and an important part of our culture. Farms preserve natural resources, wildlife habitats, hunting areas, and groundwater recharge areas, as well as provide employment, food, fiber, and biofuel. Land use in the Town of Lake Mills is dominated by agriculture. Ninety percent of the land area, 17,024 acres, is in agricultural production, according to the latest land use data available from the Jefferson County Land Information Department. This predominance of agricultural land gives the Town of Lake Mills its rural character and atmosphere.

Agricultural products and processing are integral to the Jefferson County economy, accounting for \$ 2.0 billion in economic activity and providing 7,057 jobs. More information and goals for the agricultural economy and agricultural transportation issues are listed in Chapter 7, Economic Development Element.

Environmental corridors and wildlife habitats on private lands are often adjacent to and co-exist with agricultural land. Farm operations include egg farms, dairy farms, beef farms, hog farms, sheep farms, horse farms, crop farms, and orchards. These natural and historic resources give the Town of Lake Mills its character and generate economic returns for its residents and the Town government.

5.3 Agricultural Production

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service's 2017 Census of Agriculture states that Jefferson County had 1,098 farms totaling 221,355 acres in 2017. Family farms represent 96 percent of all farms in the County.

Based on the 2020 US Census, 4.1 percent of the Town of Lake Mills population, 49 persons over the age of 16, worked on farms. In Jefferson County, the land in farms and the number of farms decreased between 2000-2017 while the average farm size and market value of farm products increased. See **Table 5-1, USDA Census of Agriculture Jefferson County**.

Agricultural production in the Town of Lake Mills encompasses a diverse range of activities, including dairy, beef, horse, and hog farming, alongside substantial egg farms. Cultivation extends to various grains such as corn, soybeans, wheat, and oats, with hay serving as a crucial component for forage.

As the farming landscape evolves, with advancements in equipment and technology, the need for expanded road infrastructure has become apparent. The proliferation of larger tractor equipment necessitates broader roadways to facilitate access to fields and facilities. Furthermore, these enhanced roadways play a pivotal role in enabling farmers to transport their products to markets efficiently within and beyond the Town of Lake Mills. This integration of modern farming practices with improved transportation infrastructure reflects the dynamic nature of agriculture in the region.

Infrastructure is critical to moving agricultural inputs or products to desired markets. For that reason, a brief discussion on transportation occurs here (see Chapter 6 Transportation, for more information). Upgrading the road infrastructure in the Town of Lake Mills is crucial to accommodate the increasing size of agricultural equipment. This benefits farmers and ensures safer roads for everyone. It is important to consider improvements that enhance bicyclist or pedestrian safety alongside supporting the needs of our growing agricultural community.

Table 5-1 USDA Census of Agriculture Jefferson County

USDA Census of Agriculture 2000 and 2017 Jefferson County	2000	2017	Change
Land in farms	247,914	221,355 acres	26,559 acres
Number of Farms	1,421	1,098 farms	321 farms
Average Size in farms	174 acres	202 acres	28 acres
Product Market Value per Farm	97,621	305,290	\$207,669 dollars

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture. Accessed by Vierbicher December 11, 2023. <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/>

5.4 Cultural Resources Overview

Preceding the arrival of European settlers, the region that later became the Town of Lake Mills served as a hunting ground for the Ho-Chunk and Potawatomi Indians, as well as other indigenous cultures preceding them. The western part of Jefferson County holds a distinctive historical significance, marked by the presence of numerous mounds crafted by Native American communities. These mounds are strategically positioned, offering views of rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands, providing a tangible link to the rich and diverse heritage of the area.

Regrettably, numerous mounds in the area have faced destruction over the years due to construction and agricultural activities. Among these mounds, especially the conical ones, there is a likelihood that they serve as burial sites. The Wisconsin Burial Sites Law prohibits their destruction to safeguard these culturally significant sites.

The Town of Lake Mills is home to several significant Burial Mound groups, the key ones being listed below:

- The Sandy Beach Group is next to Sandy Beach and partially in the manufactured housing park. This group of mounds consists of 11conical, 3 linear, one tapering linear, and one panther effigy.
- Elm Point mound group.
- A large group of burial mounds was located at Korth County Park. Most of these were destroyed, and the remains burned. Some artifacts were sent to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C. The Woodland Culture built these mounds.

- Many mounds were and are located all around Rock Lake, particularly along the south shore and near the marshes around Bean Lake. These include effigy and conical burial mounds.
- The Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places lists the Bean Lake Islands in the Town of Lake Mills as an Archaeological District. A ceremonial site dating back to 1000 AD was located here.

The large Middle Mississippian stockaded village of Aztalan, is just east of the Town of Lake Mills on the Crawfish River. This site may have been the first place in Wisconsin where agriculture was practiced. It is now Aztalan State Park.

Burial mounds are cemeteries and are protected by the Burial Sites Law. Excavation around the lake and County Roads and Sandy Beach Road may unearth artifacts. Construction should stop at that point, and the State Burial Sites Office should be contacted for a determination of what the artifacts are and how construction should continue.

Town Founding

In 1837 Royal Tyler and Elihue Atwood made the first land claim in what became the Town of Lake Mills. The first buildings were built in June of that year. In 1840, Anne Pickett formed Wisconsin's first cheese cooperative on the north shore of Rock Lake. The Town of Lake Mills was established on February 22, 1845, and the first Town officers were elected that April. The plat of the Village of Lake Mills was filed in 1842 and the village incorporated in 1856.

Baron Casper von Krogh built a dam and sawmill on Koshkonong Creek near the Dane County line in 1845, and the settlement later became known as Kroghville. A post office was established in 1865. By 1879, Krogh's patent cultivator factory, a cheese factory, an artificial limb factory, a flour mill, and a textile factory flourished in Kroghville. Many Kroghville residents moved to the hamlet of London when the Chicago and Northwestern railroad was built through London instead of Kroghville.

London, just south of Kroghville, became a tobacco packing and shipping center and developed into a summer resort area by the 1890's. The town eventually declined. The post office was closed in 1960 and the train service was discontinued.

Historical Inventory

The Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory, housed at the Wisconsin State Historical Society in Madison, provides historical and archaeological data on buildings, structures, and objects. This inventory is not a comprehensive list but does provide a record of reported historic built structures and a few distinguishing features.

There are 16 records in the Town of Lake Mills inventory, including private homes, agricultural structures, one-room schoolhouses, and churches. The following is a list of the structures that are local landmarks:

- St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, a gothic revival structure.
- The Dick Paden House at the corner of County Roads B and O was built in 1851.
- Joint School District #13, a one-room school on the north side of Townline Road built in 1882.
- The Brick Street School is a front-gable, cream brick, one-room school built in 1860.

These cultural resources demand and deserve our protection. Historic buildings, constructions, and landscapes form the cultural fabric of the Town of Lake Mills, keeping its history alive.

5.5 Natural Resources Overview

The Town of Lake Mills is rich in natural resources, the most striking being Rock Lake. Proximity to boating, hunting, biking, and hiking attracts people who work in Madison and Milwaukee to live and play in the Town of Lake Mills. The natural resources that add so much to the quality of life in the Town must be protected, maintained, and improved so that their natural functions are not lost. This section describes the numerous natural resources and the natural history of the Town of Lake Mills.

Glaciation, Elevation and Geology

The current topography of Jefferson County was formed when the Wisconsin glaciation receded about 12,000 years ago. The glacier periodically stopped on its northern retreat, and as it melted, soil and rocks were deposited in arcs of low hills called recessional moraines. One of these moraines is located north and west of Rock Lake. Stoney Brook Creek bisects some hills, creating a rugged and picturesque area with vistas and overlooks.

The northern third of Jefferson County has one of the three classic drumlin fields in the United States and includes the drumlins in Shorewood Hills and Korth County Park. Drumlins are formed by glacial ice and are oriented in the direction the glacier moves. For the Town, the drumlins are oval hills running northeast to southwest in the former direction of the ice flow. The moraine is a large area, and is at a higher elevation. Korth County Park is located on a drumlin.

Depressions between the drumlins often contain wetlands. Wetlands have also formed on prehistoric lake-laid clay, silt, and sand accumulations of peat and wind-blown silts south and north of Rock Lake and at the London marsh.

A fairly level area reaching from north of Lake Mills south to Lake Ripley was created when melting water from the glacier carried smaller rocks and finer soil particles to the south. This formation is called an outwash plain. Some of the best farmland in the Town of Lake Mills is found on the silty and loamy soils of the outwash plain.

Upland Woods

Upland woods cover about 969 acres (1.51 sq. mi.) in the Town of Lake Mills and are included within the environmental corridors on **Map 3-9**, the **Town of Lake Mills Environmental Corridors Map** (Or **Map 3-1** for land cover).

Most of the larger woodland tracts are found in the Stoney Brook area west of Rock Lake and along the edges of the wetlands north and south of Rock Lake. Upland woods border the tamarack bog on the north edge of Hope Lake, creating a rich and diverse environment.

Environmental Corridors

The Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan defines environmental corridors as any land that meets any of the following criteria: Public-owned park, recreation, and conservancy lands.

- Water bodies and wetlands mapped as part of the DNR Wetland Inventory.
- 100 Year flood plains based on Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) maps.
- Contiguous wood lands over 10 acres in size.
- In addition, any land with a slope over 20% should be considered as an environmental corridor.

Significant natural resources, cultural sites, and good agricultural lands are often found within environmental corridors. These continuous areas of environmentally sensitive land should be protected from non-agricultural development.

Lakes and Streams Inventory

Rock Lake is a dominant feature in the Town of Lake Mills. The lake is 1,371 acres in size, including Marsh Lake, and has a maximum/mean depth of 56 feet. It has 6.2 miles of shoreline and drains a watershed of 12 square miles.

Bean Lake is 33 acres in size and has a maximum/ mean depth of 6 feet. It is an alkaline seepage lake and a designated State Natural Area. Mud Lake, also in the Rock Lake watershed, is 69.2 acres in size with a total shoreline of 1.6 miles, and a maximum depth of 22.5 feet. In 2018, Mud Lake was designated as impaired for nutrients by the DNR with no plans to address this designation. In 2022, Rock Creek, which flows from Mud Lake and into Marsh Lake, was also designated as impaired for the same reason. These lakes are used for hunting, non-motorized boating, and nature study.

Hope Lake is partially in the Town of Lake Mills and partially in the Town of Oakland. Hope Lake is 142 acres with a maximum/mean depth of 24 feet. A pristine tamarack bog, with bog plants not commonly seen in southern Wisconsin, is found on the north end of the lake in the Town of Lake Mills.

Given the extensive water bodies in Town, it should be noted that **Map 5-2**, the **Town of Lake Mills Floodplain Map**, reports that 10.1 sq miles of the Town is within floodplain. Best practice is to not build structures within floodplain.

Rock Lake, Mud Lake, and Bean Lake are in the Lower Crawfish River Watershed. Hope Lake is in the Lower Koshkonong Creek Watershed.

Stony Brook Stream drains the northwestern portion of the Town. This area has a relatively rugged topography with the highest elevations in the Town. Stony Brook is 15 miles in length and is considered a warm-water fish community. Among the problems and impacts on Stony Brook are non-point source pollution, habitat degradation, and sedimentation.

Koshkonong Creek drains the far western portion of the Town. The creek is 24 miles long and is also a warm water sport fish community. Problems and impacts include low dissolved oxygen, habitat degradation, turbidity, and nutrient enrichment.

The Town of Lake Mills has in the past identified significant resource protection areas, encompassing the Rock Lake Shoreline, the Koshkonong Creek Shoreline, and the drumlin sand hills northwest of Rock Lake. **Map 5-3, the Town of Lake Mills Natural Resource Protection Areas Map**, portrays the 10.9 square miles of Environmental Corridors as well as the 6.71 square miles of Highly Erodible Soils within the Town (there is slight overlap between these two features of concern.) These regions feature rugged topography, scenic views, and potential stream bank and shoreline restoration sites. These areas play a crucial role in influencing water quality and serve as vital groundwater infiltration zones.

Wetlands and wildlife

Extensive wetlands are found in the Town of Lake Mills and constitute the bulk of the environmental corridor lands in **Map 3-9**. Wetlands are located around Rock Lake, within the Zeloski Marsh, as well as the Lake Mills Wildlife Area.

Bird life, particularly waterfowl that frequent the lakes and marshes, is abundant in the Town of Lake Mills. Commonly seen waterfowl include red-breasted and common mergansers, canvasbacks, lesser scaups, buffleheads, loons, grebes, white pelicans, and a variety of shore and marsh birds. Bald Eagles have been making a comeback in Jefferson County and are seen regularly on Rock Lake. A pair of nesting osprey also use the nesting stand at Korth Park for the last several years. The Department of Natural Resources has designated the Lake Mills Wildlife Area for habitat preservation and recreational hunting.

Highly sensitive shallow water areas along the shore of Korth Bay led to DNR support for the purchase of Korth Park by Jefferson County. Areas such as the bulrush beds at Korth Park provide habitat for rare reptile species and fish breeding areas. Fishing is good for bluegills, smallmouth and largemouth bass, walleye, and northern pike. Wetland, prairie, and woodland restorations at Korth Park provide upland habitats for waterfowl, birds, reptiles, and mammals.

The uplands and lowlands provide habitat for a variety of birds, raptors, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Deer herds, and wild turkey flocks are commonly seen throughout.

Park Initiatives

A list of potential acquisition and conservation recommendations is given below:

- Consider changing the way land dedications work by identifying potential quality park land parcels and pooling fees-in-lieu of land to purchase quality parkland outside of subdivisions. If such identified land falls within a subdivision plat, require the developer to dedicate that land as parkland.
- Consider the acquisition of property that will improve water quality, such as buffers between housing and the lake, buffers between the road and the lake, and buffers along Koshkonong Creek.
- Educate landowners on land protection strategies such as donating marginal land to the Town, receiving tax deductions, and purchasing conservation easements.

The Town of Lake Mills identified the following initiatives for public recreation and natural resource preservation and improvement:

- Continue to work with the DNR to develop marked trails on DNR land.
- Develop and maintain a marked bike route from Sand Hill Station Campground to the Glacial Drumline Trail.
- Develop other bike routes or trails. One resident suggested a bike/pedestrian path from Shorewood Hills Rd to Tyrannena Park.
- Focus on improving water quality by working with DNR, Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Dept (LWCD), Rock Lake Improvement Association, City of Lake Mills, and Town residents.
- Develop funding opportunities for stormwater and rain gardens implementation.

Recreation, Parks and Trails

Map 5-4 is the **Town of Lake Mills Public Lands and Trails Map**. It portrays Town, County, and State (DNR) lands.

The Town of Lake Mills completed a Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan in 2005. Through the public planning process, a vision statement was created to guide the park system and protection of natural resources:

Town of Lake Mills Vision Statement on Parks and Recreation

- The Town Board of the Town of Lake Mills is committed to creating a parks and recreation system that will enhance the lives of the people in our community.
- Continue to purchase or collaborate with other government entities to acquire land to provide adequate green space as required to maintain the quality of life between the community and to maintain the quality of life of the community.
- Appropriate the necessary funds required to purchase and develop a park system through impact fees on development and mutually beneficial partnerships with other units of government, agencies, and private donors.
- Create an environment that provides green space for many diverse types of outdoor activities.
- Create a parks and recreation system that is accessible and will inspire people to visit our area to use and enjoy our many recreational opportunities.

Trail Initiatives

As of 2020, Jefferson County possessed an estimated 817.6 miles of trails, with 62.6 miles of trails within the Town of Lake Mills. This mileage consists of a 0.015 mi stretch of N Tyranena Rd (classified Medium/High volume), 11.2 miles of off-road trails (such as the Glacial Drumlin State Trail), 38.9 miles of on-road trails, and 12.5 miles of snowmobile trails. These routes are portrayed in **Map 5-4**, the **Town of Lake Mills Public Lands and Trails Map**. Biking and walking for pleasure are two of the most popular recreational activities. Residents also travel to work, school, or shopping by bike. Bikers already travel through the Town of Lake Mills on the Glacial Drumlin Trail and Jefferson County's Inter-municipal Bike Route, but residents expressed excitement at potential future routes, such as a Shorewood Hills Rd to Tyranena Park connection.

Figure 5-5 Glacial Drumlin State Trail Sign



Source: Glacial Drumlin State Trail Sign, near Town Hall. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Rustic Roads

The Town of Lake Mills currently has no roads officially designated as Rustic Roads. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation accepts Rustic Road applications. A petition signed by the residents along the road is required. Rustic roads help preserve the inherent character of Wisconsin and draw pleasure drivers and tourists to the area.

5.6 Agricultural Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Agriculture Goal 1: Preserve the productive farmlands in the Town of Lake Mills for continued sustainable agricultural use by supporting soil health and maintaining the Town's distinctive rural character.

Objectives:

- Limit residential and commercial growth to the City of Lake Mills Urban Service Area, which includes the City of Lake Mills and the Town of Lake Mills growth areas.

Policies:

- [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#) and [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#)
- [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#)
- Encourage farmers to participate in the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation program.
- Explore farmland and open space preservation tools such as the purchase and donation of agricultural conservation easements (PACE) or purchase of development rights (PDR).
- Evaluate and implement appropriate recommendations of the Jefferson County Working Lands Initiative.
- Encourage farmers to participate in farmer-led initiatives such as Jefferson County's Soil Builders and the Rock River Regenerative Graziers.
- Encourage farmers to participate in the cover crop and pasture establishment cost-share program.

Agriculture Goal 2: Work with farmers to protect and enhance environmental corridors on their property.

Objectives:

- Encourage farmers to learn about and maintain the integrity of environmental corridors that pass through their land. Encourage participation in conservation, groundwater, soil health, incentives, harvestable buffers, and streambank buffer programs.
- Encourage farmers to use soil-conserving techniques to reduce erosion and build topsoil and to manage manure, fertilizers, and chemicals to reduce the potential for run-off.
- Encourage farmers to protect groundwater recharge areas
- Maintain open space around farms so that outdoor recreation and sporting activities are viable in the Town of Lake Mills

Policies:

- Wisconsin standards and [Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance](#)
- Farm Service Agency(FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department conservation plan requirements
- Wisconsin Agricultural Run-off Rules – [NR 151](#) performance standards and prohibitions, Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection 50 farm conservation practices, and nutrient management plan requirements.

5.7 Natural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Natural Resources Goal 1: Improve surface water quality and water levels in Rock Lake, Koshkonong Creek, Hope Lake, Mud Lake, and all other water bodies in the Town.

Objectives:

- Work with the City of Lake Mills, Rock Lake Improvement Association, the Joint Rock Lake Committee, and the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department to Improve the water quality of Rock Lake and control the polluted stormwater runoff.

Policies:

- Enforce provisions of the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) Stormwater Management Plan and Facilities
- Work with the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department and Zoning Department to enforce Shoreline Ordinance provisions.
- Encourage farmers to participate in the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation program.
- Explore farmland and open space preservation tools such as the purchase and donation of agricultural conservation easements (PACE) or purchase of development rights (PDR).
- Evaluate and implement appropriate recommendations of the Jefferson County Working Lands Initiative.
- Work to implement the recommendations outlined in the [2018 – 2028 Rock Lake Management Plan](#).

Natural Resources Goal 2: Protect groundwater resources because all drinking water and water for human and domestic livestock use in the Rock River basin comes from wells.

Objectives:

- Protect open space within the Town of Lake Mills and encourage other municipalities to do so to maintain groundwater recharge.
- Direct development to the Lake Mills Sanitary Sewer Service Area to protect and improve groundwater quality.
- Encourage the use of rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavement in developed areas to increase water infiltration and filtration.
- Educate and encourage residents on the routine testing of wells, using programs such as Jefferson County LWCD's Nitrate Risk Map (coming June 2024).
- Support the Rock River Basin GFLOW model to assess groundwater flow when making planning decisions.

Policies:

- Wisconsin standards and [Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance](#)
- Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department conservation plan requirements.
- Wisconsin Agricultural Run-off Rules – [NR 151](#) performance standards and prohibitions, ATCP 50 farm conservation practices, and nutrient management plan requirements.

Natural Resources Goal 3: Preserve our community's valuable natural resources and natural environment.

Objectives:

- Partner with the WDNR, Jefferson County, and other organizations on acquisition and easement projects to preserve and protect lakes, streams, wetlands, shorelines, woodlands, and greenspace.
- Protect the connective function of environmental corridors for wildlife and natural plant communities.
- Encourage development patterns that protect natural woodlands, wetlands, shorelines, and steep slopes (environmental corridors) from encroachment and destruction.

- Require road, utility, and building construction to respect and preserve natural resources and to abide by erosion and runoff rules.
- Encourage land owners, lake users, and governmental units and agencies to prevent the spread of and eradicate invasive aquatic and terrestrial species.

Policies:

- *Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan.*
- [2020 – 2025 Jefferson County Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.](#)
- WDNR Wildlife Area Master Plans
- Glacial Heritage Area Initiative Recommendations
- Jefferson County Environmental Corridor Definition and development policies that limit development densities within designated environmental corridors to no greater than one dwelling unit per 10 acres. WDNR-delineated wetlands and 100-year flood plains should not be used in calculating allowable densities.
- [Jefferson County Floodplain Ordinance](#)
- [Jefferson County Shoreline Ordinance](#)
- WDNR Wetland and Shoreline Permit Rules
- State of Wisconsin Administrative Rules-Runoff
- NRCS, WDNR, Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department, The Nature Conservancy, the Madison Audubon Society, Pheasants Forever and Rock River Coalition provide educational and/or cost sharing programs.
- Continue participation in WDNR's Clean Boats, Clean Waters program.
- Maintain and swiftly replace the tools at the Town's boat launches' cleaning stations.

Natural Resources Goal 4: Provide a park and recreation system that will enhance the lives and health of the people in our community.

Objectives:

- Maintain and enhance the Town Parks and boat launches for public use.
- Partner with Jefferson County, the WDNR, and others to acquire important natural resources that can be used for public recreation.
- Encourage expanding a multi-use trail system that connects to State, Jefferson County, and City of Lake Mills trails. Incorporate paved bicycle/pedestrian trails along roads, trails within Homeowners Association commons areas, and improved access and walkways to and within Town parks.
- Encourage passive and active recreation in public parks, wildlife areas, waters, and open lands that does not conflict with neighboring agricultural uses.

5.8 Cultural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Policies

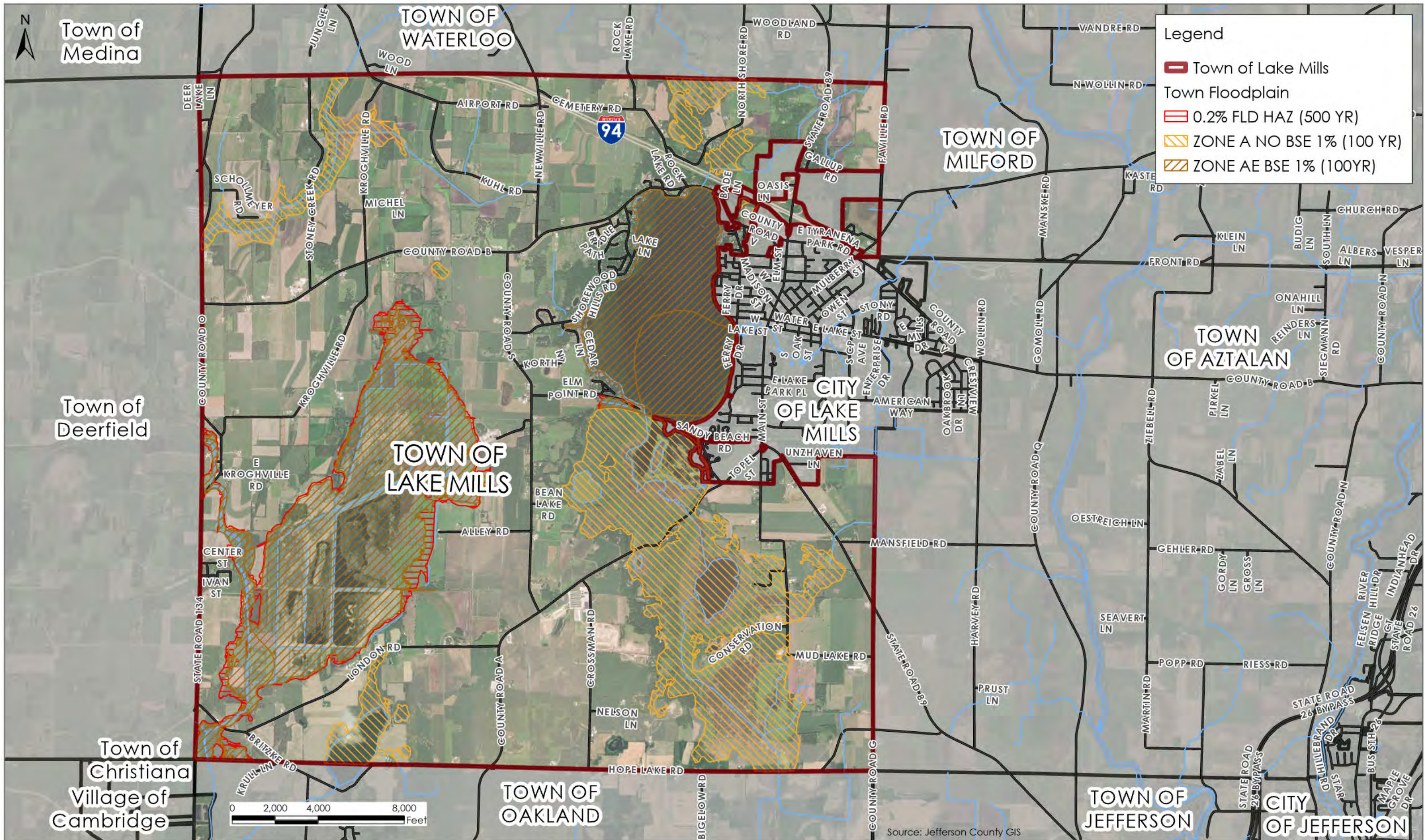
Cultural Resources Goal 1: Support the preservation and restoration of culturally and historically significant buildings, sites, landscapes, and geological elements that reflect the Town's unique history and distinctive character such as Burial Mounds, one-room schoolhouses, churches, cemeteries, historic farm structures, drumlins, and lakeshores.

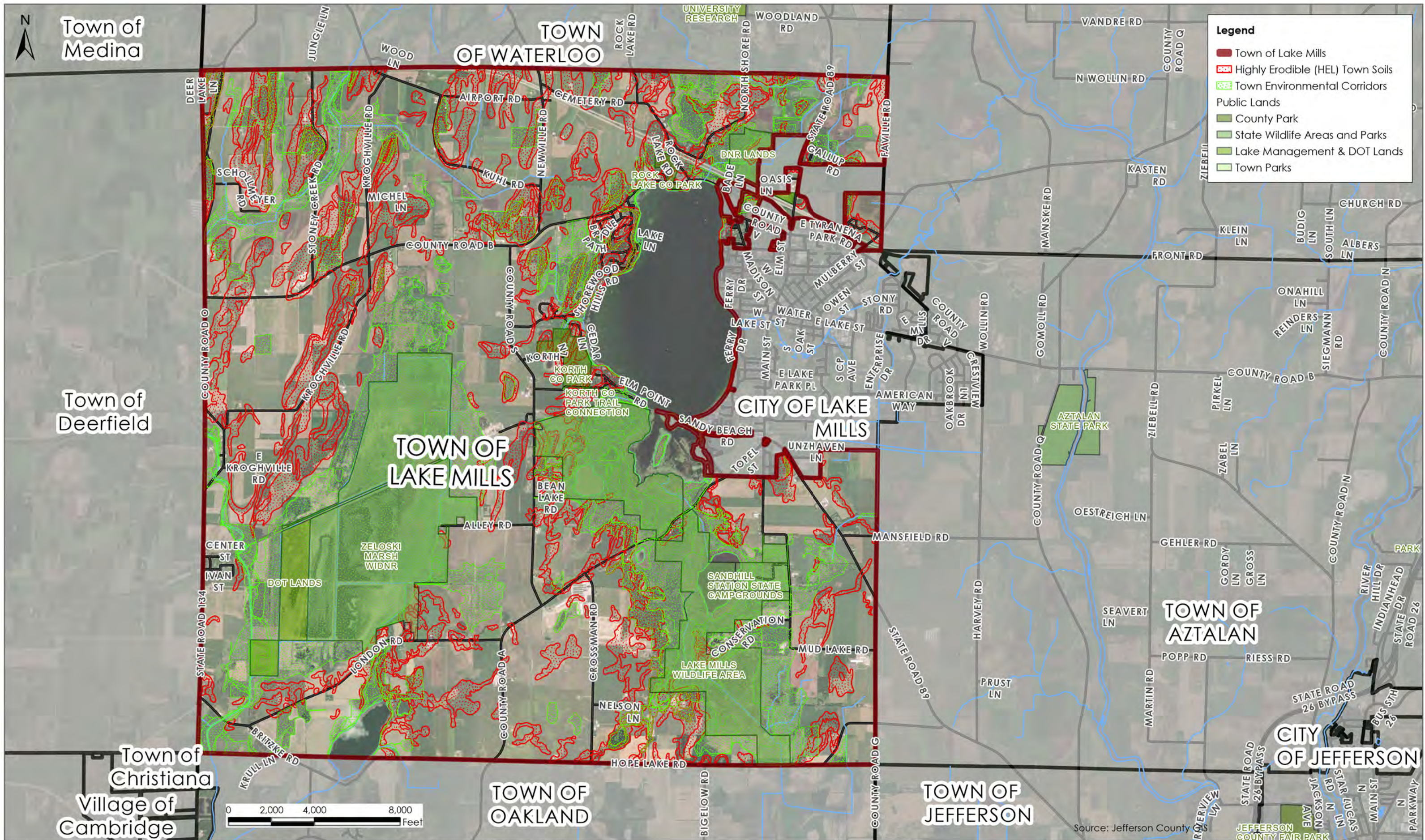
Objectives:

- Jefferson County maintains an inventory of historic and archaeological sites. Consider partnerships with the historic societies in [Jefferson County](#).
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic and unique structures by private entities and governmental units.
- Protect and preserve archaeological artifacts found on Town-owned lands and encourage and educate private landowners to do the same.
- Consider the financial, environmental, agricultural, and aesthetic impacts of all developments before granting approval.

Policies:

- Wisconsin State Statutes [§60.64](#) Historic Preservation gives the Town the power to regulate any place, structure, or object with a special character, historic interest, aesthetic interest, or any other significant value for the purpose of preserving the place, structure, or object.
- Under state law ([§44.47\(4\)](#) Wisconsin Statutes), it is illegal to remove archaeological artifacts or conduct archaeological research on state and municipal lands without a permit from the Office of the State Archaeologist. The law applies to the bottom lands of lakes and rivers owned by the state or municipal governments and covers submerged sites such as ship wrecks. Permits are normally only given to professional archaeologists.
- As an incentive for the protection on archaeological sites on private lands, state statute provides property tax exemptions to property owners who formally agree to protect the sites.
- Native American mounds containing burial sites and local cemeteries are protected by the Wisconsin Burial Sites Preservation law (Wisconsin State Statute [§157.70](#)). The law requires the Burial Sites Preservation Program (part of the Wisconsin Historical Society) to identify/ locate and catalog burials, respond to burial disturbances as they occur, regulate the permit process for disturbing burial sites, analyze human remains, and work with owners of burial sites and Native American Tribes and Nations in our common mission to preserve and protect these critical sites. Landowners may receive tax credits to preserve burial sites.



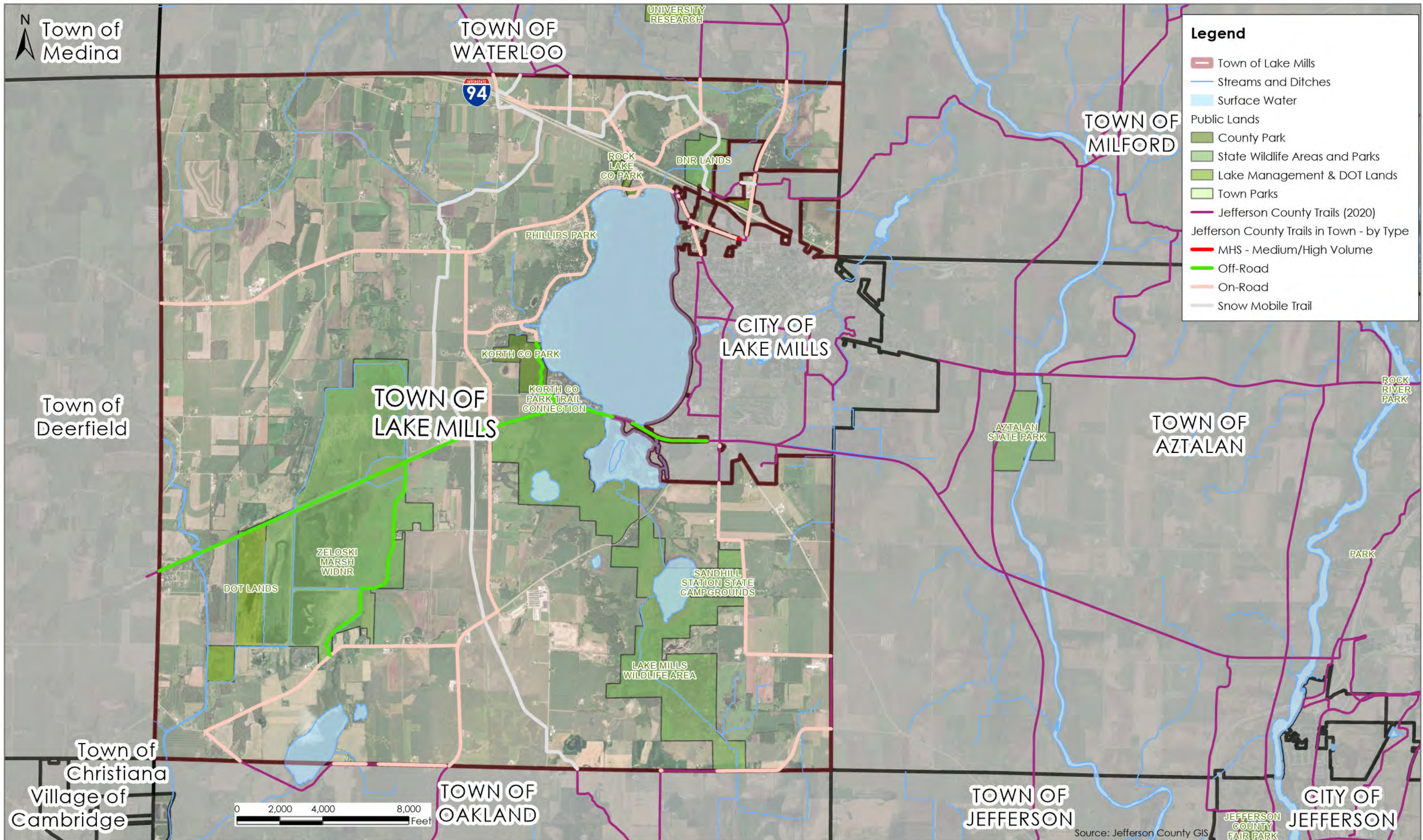


Map 5-3 Town of Lake Mills Natural Resource Protection Area Map

Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, WI

12/22/2023





Map 5-4 Town of Lake Mills Public Lands and Trails Map

Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, WI

01/26/2024



A photograph of a red barn with a gambrel roof, situated in a rural landscape. The barn is surrounded by tall grass in the foreground and several large, leafy trees. In the background, a field and a small white vehicle are visible. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent light green filter.

Appendix 5 Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources

Source: A barn along CTH-A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

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Note 5-1 Jefferson County Agricultural Data

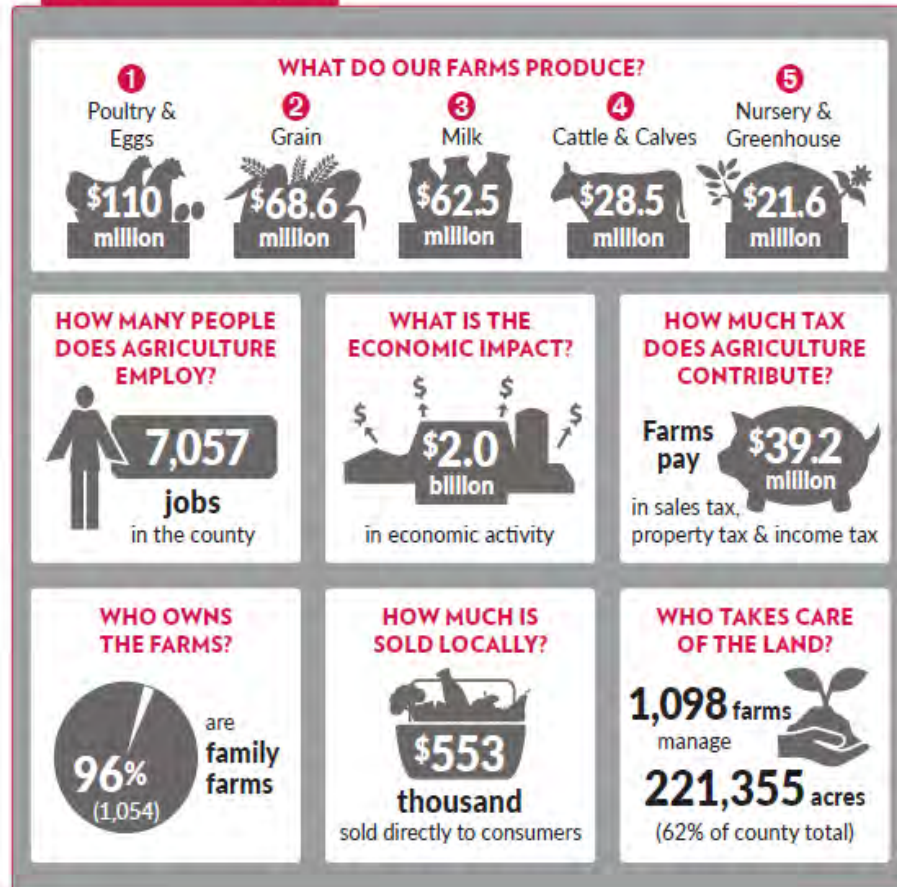


AGRICULTURE WORKS HARD FOR

► JEFFERSON COUNTY

Family-owned farms, food processors and agriculture-related businesses generate thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic activity for Jefferson County, while contributing to local income and tax revenues.

Agriculture's annual impact:



Source: USDA Census of Agriculture. Accessed by Vierbicher December 11, 2023

WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE IMPACT REPORT

► JEFFERSON COUNTY

THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR BENEFITS THE ENTIRE COUNTY

Jefferson County continues to have a large percentage of land devoted to agriculture while feeling urban pressures. It is home to farms of all sizes ranging from large to smaller and specialty farms. There is a great diversity of agriculture crops grown, livestock raised and food items produced. Dairy, grain and egg farms lead in economic contributions. Aquaculture, nursery stock, pheasants, ethanol, horses and cattle produce substantial value.

Did you know?

JEFFERSON COUNTY IS

No. 1 in Wisconsin's poultry & eggs industry



The University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension is part of the local and statewide network of organizations and agencies that support Wisconsin's \$104.8 billion agriculture industry. Extension helps enhance the economic impact of agriculture by providing research-based information that increases farm profitability, improves food safety, reduces environmental impacts and expands agribusiness networks.

For more information, please contact:

UW-Madison Extension Jefferson County
 864 Collins Road
 Jefferson, WI 53549
 920-674-7295
jefferson.extension.wisc.edu

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Produced in cooperation with Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Wisconsin Farm Bureau.



Note 5-2 List of Natural Preservation Programs and Resources

Note: Hyperlinks are provided to facilitate information access. There is no guarantee these hyperlinks will last in perpetuity.

[U.S. Federal Highway Administration \(FHA\)- Recreational Trails Program](#)
[U.S. Department of the Interior- Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#)
[US Fish and Wildlife Service- Partnership for Fish and Wildlife Management](#)
[The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\), from the Agricultural Act of 2014](#)
[USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\)- Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#)
[Wisconsin DNR- Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program \(WFLGP\)](#)
[Wisconsin DNR- Community Financial Assistance \(CFA\)](#)
[Wisconsin DNR- Managed Forest Law \(MFL\) program](#)
[Wisconsin DNR- Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Grant Programs](#)
[Wisconsin Arts Board- Creative Communities Program](#)
[WEDC- Historic Preservation Tax Credit](#)
[Wisconsin- Archaeological Sites Property Tax Exemption Program](#)
[National Park Service \(NPS\)- Save America's Treasures Grants](#)
[The Contributions of Agriculture to the Wisconsin Economy: An Update for 2017](#)

Participation in the USDA Farm Program requires a conservation plan for each farm.

The Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program requires that a conservation plan be on file with the local land and water conservation department and NRCS.

Programs available through the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) include the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), and Conservation Security Program.

The Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department provides up to 70% cost sharing for a number of soil, manure, buffer, and natural resource conservation programs for farmers and landowners through the Jefferson County Cost-Sharing Program.



Chapter 6 Transportation

Source: CTH-A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

6.1 Transportation Overview

Transportation networks allow the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. In addition, transportation affects community development patterns by influencing land use. **Map 6-1** is the **Town of Lake Mills Transportation Map**. To see Trails in the Town, please view Chapter 5, and **Map 5-4 Town of Lake Mills Public Lands and Trails Map**.

The Town of Lake Mills is in a rural area and most transportation takes place by automobile. The Town of Lake Mills has no railways but access to railroad terminals is important for the movement of grain and manufactured products in Jefferson County. The nearest railroad is the Union Pacific line about five miles east of Town in the Village of Johnson Creek. The nearest local airport is in Watertown.

Many residents work outside the Town and use Interstate 94 for its easy access to Madison, Waukesha, and Milwaukee. The Town is, in some respects, a bedroom community to these larger metropolitan areas. Few public transportation options are available to Town residents.

Farmers often use the roads to move machinery between fields and to take crops and livestock to barns, storage facilities, and markets. Increasing traffic on Town roads can result in conflicts with slow moving farm machinery, something residents mentioned at the public engagement event plus the community surveys.

Many Town residents are attracted by the recreational activities that are available nearby. They enjoy biking and walking along Town roads and streets as well as on the Glacial Drumlin State Trail and the bike path in Korth County Park. The bike routes around Rock Lake provide opportunities for Town residents to bike to work or school. Recreational boating and fishing on Rock Lake are very popular and boat ramps may be filled to capacity on summer weekends.

The Town strives to integrate the need for high quality roadways and non-motorized transportation routes with the desire to maintain and enhance the rural atmosphere, to provide opportunities for recreation and exercise, and to provide multi-modal transportation networks in an ecologically and fiscally sustainable manner. For that reason, this chapter concludes with a compilation of goals, objectives, policies, maps and programs to support responsible transportation facility maintenance and construction.

6.2 Modes of Transportation

A transportation mode is the type of transportation a Town resident uses to travel from a starting point to their destination. Privately-owned automobiles are the most frequently used transportation mode within the Town of Lake Mills. Residents use their vehicles to travel to work, school, shopping, and recreation areas. Similarly, farmers use their vehicles to travel to fields, storage facilities, and markets. **Table 6-2** reports most commuting Town residents drive alone to work, around 74.8 percent. Other key facts extracted from the 2022 ACS estimates were:

- Working from home has increased through time, from 4.2 percent in 2010 to 8.0 percent in 2020 and 15.2 percent in 2022.
- Nearly 46.1 percent of Town residents worked in Jefferson County, while 53.5 percent worked in another county, such as Dane County to the west. Commutes of 34 minutes or less represent 57.8 percent of residents.
- The mean travel time to work is 33.5 minutes. The largest cohort, 19.4 percent, spent 35 to 44 minutes on their commute to work.

Inviting workers to remain and work in the community keeps tax dollars in the community. The Town should think about ways businesses that align with the rural, agrarian character of the Town could be courted and located in appropriate Town areas.

Table 6-2 Transportation to Work

Label	Total
Workers 16 years and over	1,093
TRANSPORTATION TO WORK	
Car, truck, or van	81.6%
Drove alone	74.8%
Carpooled	6.8%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	1.0%
Bicycle	0.0%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	2.2%
Worked from home	15.2%
Workers per car, truck, or van	1.05

Source: "S0801 "Commuting Characteristics by Sex." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 13, 2023.
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0801?g=060XX00US550541700>

Bus Service

[Badger Bus](#) serves travelers between Milwaukee and Madison, many of whom are commuters and students attending the universities in each city. A regular stop is scheduled several times daily at the Johnson Creek Outlet Mall, about 10 miles east of Lake Mills.

State Van Pool Ridership Program

The State of Wisconsin operates a vanpool program where expenses are shared, and rides are guaranteed should an emergency occur. [Wisconsin Statute §16.82\(5\)](#) mentions the vanpool must have a state employee for nonemployees to be aboard. For more information, reach out to the State of Wisconsin Vanpool Office at 1-800-844-VANS (8267).

Brown Cab / Lake Mills Taxi

[Brown Cab Service](#) provides taxi service in Lake Mills that is funded through federal, state, and city appropriations. The taxis serve the City of Lake Mills and the adjacent subdivisions in the Town. Vans are available for persons with disabilities. The [Aging and Disability Resource Center \(ADRC\) of Jefferson County](#) also provides rides. Rideshare services are also available.

Pedestrians and Bicycles

Pedestrians and bicyclists enjoy the [52-mile Glacial Drumlin State Trail](#), a packed limestone multi-use trail that connects the City of Lake Mills with Waukesha to the east and with Cottage Grove on the west. In the winter, the trail is open to snowmobiles and cross-country skiing. The trail crosses the southern end of Rock Lake and Marsh Lake via a train trestle. Pedestrians and bikers can circle Rock Lake on County and City of Lake Mills designated bicycle routes. A trail spur connects the Glacial Drumlin State Trail to Elm Point Road and to a multi-use path in Korth Park that terminates at Cedar Lane. Another trail spur connects to S C.P. Ave. Pedestrians often walk, jog, or walk their dogs on narrow shoulders. Thought should be given to using a “Complete Streets” policy to expand road shoulders at the next appropriate rebuild or replacement interval.

Slow-Moving, Wide Loads, and Farm Equipment

Agriculture is a significant part of life in the Town of Lake Mills. Slow moving, wide farm equipment and suburban drivers may be in conflict at times. Farmers use roads to access fields and haul grain to elevators. All slow-moving vehicles must display a slow-moving vehicle sign and public education is needed on its significance.

Watercraft, Snowmobiles, and All-Terrain Vehicles

The Town of Lake Mills has many vacation homes and cottages along Rock Lake. The Town provides three boat ramps which are located at Jefferson County's Lower Rock Lake Park on the north end of Rock Lake, Ferry Park on the west shore, and on Elm Point Drive at the south end of the lake. Four boat ramps are available in the City of Lake Mills. Boats are used for recreational and scientific purposes and may include fishing boats, pontoon boats, ski boats, recreational boats, canoes, kayaks, and personal watercraft (jet skis).

There are County snowmobile trails and club trails in Jefferson County. A County trail bisects the Town of Lake Mills from north to south and connects to Lake Ripley and Waterloo. All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) are used on private property and on frozen Rock Lake to access ice fishing shanties. ATVs are legally used on roadways. There are no public ATV *trails* in Jefferson County, though there are [ATV routes](#).

Aviation

The principle airports serving the Town of Lake Mills are:

- Watertown Municipal Airport, 15 miles northeast of the City of Lake Mills
- Fort Atkinson Municipal Airport, 19 miles south of the City
- Dane County Regional Airport, 26 miles west in the City of Madison
- Milwaukee's General Mitchell International Airport, 60 miles east
- Chicago/Rockford International Airport, 75 miles to the south
- Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, 124 miles southeast

It should be noted the [Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030](#) describes the Watertown Municipal Airport as Medium GA airport, which means the airport “supports regional and in-state air transportation needs” by “supporting most single and multi-engine GA aircraft, including those aircraft commonly used by businesses.”

The airport has one runway: 4430 ft x 75 ft. Hangers and tie-downs are available for the estimated 59 planes based at the airport.

Railroads

Freight rail plays a vital role in the movement of products for Wisconsin companies. The [Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050](#) reports that “in 2019, nearly 584 million tons of freight valued at \$547 billion moved to, from, through, or within Wisconsin. Of that, nearly 32 percent, or 190 million tons, was moved by rail.” By 2050, freight tonnage is anticipated to increase by 78 percent compared to the 2017 base year in the [Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050](#).

No operating railroads pass through the Town of Lake Mills, the closest access being the Union Pacific line through Johnson Creek about 5 miles to the east. Railroad transportation of raw materials, goods, and agricultural products - especially corn, soybeans and ethanol is important to the local economy.

Three railroads serve Jefferson County freight customers:

- The Union Pacific runs from Fort Atkinson through Johnson Creek and Watertown to Clyman Junction in Dodge County. Union Pacific is a Class I railroad.
- Canadian Pacific (Soo Line) operates from Milwaukee through Watertown to LaCrosse. Canadian Pacific is also a Class I railroad.
- Wisconsin & Southern operates from Watertown through Waterloo to Madison and also from Waukesha through Palmyra, Whitewater, and Janesville to Madison. Wisconsin & Southern is a Class II railroad.

Rail Passenger Service

Passenger service is available on the [Amtrak Empire Builder](#) which runs from Chicago to Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon. Town residents may board the train about 25 miles north of Town in the City of Columbus, Columbia County. The [Hiawatha](#) runs from Milwaukee to Chicago with a stop at General Mitchell International Airport. [Metra](#) commuter rail is available from Harvard, Illinois and from Kenosha, Wisconsin to downtown Chicago and stops in between.

In recent years, discussions about expanding passenger rail service have occurred. In Wisconsin, proposed passenger rail lines include a Milwaukee to Madison train. IDOT and the State of Illinois have begun the process to have intercity rail go west from the Metra Milwaukee District-West (MD-W) in Elgin, Illinois west to Rockford, which makes a connection from Rockford, IL to Madison possible as well.

Rail and air transportation is available to Town of Lake Mills residents; however, many of these services do not originate near the Town and must be accessed by car.

6.3 Existing Road System

An estimated 83.8 miles of non-interstate road exist within the Town of Lake Mills, with 55.3 miles of local roads. The roads serve as the primary transportation network in rural and residential areas. The Town contracts road plowing in the winter, and mows road shoulders in the summer. As mentioned previously, Interstate 94 is a major car and truck freight artery and connects Lake Mills to Milwaukee and south to Chicago. To the west Interstate 94 connects to Interstate 90 at Madison and on to Rockford, LaCrosse, Eau Claire, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and points west. State Highway 89 passes north and south through the town and the City of Lake Mills. The intersection of STH 89 and Interstate 94 is a major development zone for the Town and City of Lake Mills.

Road Classification

Roads are the most-used transportation infrastructure within the Town. For that reason, it makes sense to learn about road [Functional Classifications](#) for [Jefferson County](#), which organizes roads based on how they provide mobility and accessibility. These classifications affect the surrounding land uses, as well as funding sources for projects.

Principal Arterials emphasize high mobility by carrying large traffic volumes at higher speeds across greater distances to connect different places together. Interstate 94 is the sole principal arterial in the Town.

Minor Arterials possess speeds and volumes lower than principal arterials, serving moderate-length trips connecting different communities or places within a community. State Road 89 (STH 89) is the sole minor arterial within Town extents.

Collectors balance mobility with access, channeling local street traffic towards arterials. Collectors have lower speeds and volumes than arterials, but higher traffic volumes than the local streets. The Town has several major collectors, all County Roads that are referred to as "County Trunk Highways (CTH):" CTH-A, CTH-O, and CTH B. Two minor collectors: CTH S and CTH G, are also present in the Town.

Local roads emphasize access to adjacent land uses versus mobility. Speeds as well as traffic volumes are low, a result of these roads not traversing long distances, which would invite more vehicle volume. Roads not classified according to the criteria above are local roads.

Two additional road types exist. [The Rustic Road System](#) in Wisconsin was created by the 1973 State Legislature to help citizens and government preserve scenic features. Many of these roads are loops, or connect to major roads, such as highways, at both ends of the route. The roads are lightly traveled facilities, labeled with an "R" prefix, and noted with unique brown and yellow signage.

Rustic Roads remain under local control, and while none exist within the Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County—part of the [Southeast Region](#)—has three (3) Rustic Roads: [R84](#), [R87](#), and [R88](#). The Town could pursue Rustic Road designation on roads such as Kroghville Road in the future.

The [Wisconsin Scenic Byways program](#) in Wisconsin partners local communities and WisDOT to highlight state and local highways corridors with aesthetic or historic attributes. Unlike Rustic Roads, Scenic byways are at least 30 miles long. Neither the Town nor Jefferson County has one of the five state Scenic Byways within their extents.

Traffic Counts

WisDOT's Traffic Count Map ([TCMap](#)) tool was used to investigate traffic counts on roadways with the Town.

Traffic counts are reported as the number of vehicles expected to pass a given location on an average day of the year. This value is called the “annual average daily traffic” or AADT. AADT is based on a short-term traffic count, usually 48 hours, taken at the location. This count is then adjusted for the variation in traffic volume throughout the year and the average number of axles per vehicle. The short-term counts are collected over a three-year cycle at nearly 26,000 rural and urban locations throughout the state. **Table 6-3** reports traffic counts along several roads in the Town of Lake Mills.

Table 6-3 Traffic Counts on Roadways in the Town of Lake Mills

Road Name	Location	AADT	Time
Interstate 94 (I-94)	Near Rock Lakes Road	38,300	2022
State Road 89 (STH-89)	N of I-94	3,100	6/25/2018
	N of Mansfield Road	3,500	6/28/2022
CTH-A	S of STH 89 intersection	1,500	9/19/2022
CTH-B	E of Stoney Creek Road	1,800	4/11/2022
	E of Newville Road	2,500	4/11/2022
	S of Bade Lane	4,900	6/25/2018
CTH-O	S of Stony Creek	510	4/11/2022
	S of Hamlet of London	1,000	6/27/2022
CTH-S	N of Shorehood Hills Road	960	4/11/2022

Source: WisDOT TCMap. Accessed December 13, 2023 by Vierbicher staff.
<https://wisdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=2e12a4f051de4ea9bc865ec6393731f8>

Traffic Crashes

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's [Traffic Operations and Safety \(TOPs\) Laboratory](#) hosts the [Community Map tool](#) which reports crashes statewide. A user can enter the county, timeframe, injury type, as well as 'flags' such as 'impaired' to filter crash data. As of mid-December 2023, Jefferson County had 1,746 total crashes (1,740 mapped) with 12 fatalities and 333 injuries in calendar year 2023. Please view **Appendix 6, Note 6-1** for a screenshot of the map for Jefferson County as well as background information.

The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that 42,795 died nationwide in motor vehicle crashes in 2022. To protect drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians, the Town should encourage safe driving practices, as well as look at opportunities when roads undergo reconstruction or rehabilitation for expanded shoulders and other safety improvements to be incorporated.

6.4 Local Transportation Planning

Local Transportation Planning is an important opportunity to promote efficient land access while bolstering intergovernmental cooperation. For that reason, the *City of Lake Mills Long Range Transportation Plan 2025* (adopted in 2005) is outlined below.

City of Lake Mills Long Range Transportation Plan 2025

The City of Lake Mills completed a transportation plan in 2005. The plan “documents current transportation facilities, traffic volumes, and travel conditions; projects future (Year 2025) traffic volumes and travel conditions; identifies transportation network needs; and proposes transportation network improvements.”

The goals of the City's plan are: economic growth, downtown vitality, community scale and character, pedestrian and bicycle friendliness, and environmental sensitivity. These goals complement the transportation goals developed by the Town of Lake Mills.

The City of Lake Mills may perform plat reviews over parts of the Town of Lake Mills and transportation plans have been proposed by the City for these areas, particularly the growth areas for the City of Lake Mills. The following plans were proposed:

County Road G: The City should extend CP Ave. south to the intersection of CTH G and STH 89.

County Road A: The County should restrict new driveways onto the roadway and the city should develop a network of urban arterial and urban collector streets to serve new development between CTH A and STH 89. Topel Road and/or Mud Lake Road should be realigned near STH 89.

Weber Road: The City should extend Weber Road west to STH 89 and consider extension to North Shore Drive. This roadway would serve the new Rocks Edge development and ease some traffic on Tyranena Park Road. To minimize impact on environmental corridors, the road could be located parallel to and just north of I-94.

Faville Road: Northside development should incorporate the simultaneous improvement of Faville Road to an urban arterial.

North Shore Road: This road is one of three I-94 crossings near Lake Mills. A new collector roadway is proposed in the Rock's Edge development that will eventually extend to North Shore Road. However, these roadways should only be connected as part of a larger North Shore Road improvement project and after a secondary route is necessary to relieve Madison Street and Tyranena Park Road.

Mud Lake Road: Development could prompt a realignment of Mud Lake Road and Topel Road. Mud Lake Road could be realigned to travel northeast to an extension of CP Avenue. The northern portion of Mud Lake Road could then become a non-motorized corridor and a designated pedestrian/bicycle route connecting Mud Lake and Sand Hill Station with Main Street and the Glacial Drumlin State Trail.

Mansfield Road: An extension of Mansfield Road west to Mud Lake Road and northwest to County Road A could serve future development.

Glacial Drumlin State Trail: The City should partner with the WDNR to make improvements at the Glacial Drumlin-Main Street crossing such as warning signals, pavement marking, and a median. It would be beneficial for future development to connect walking paths to the trail.

Eastside Multiuse Trail (Greenway): Further city development will create the need for pedestrian and bicycle connections. Ultimately, the existing trail should cross I-94 on a reconstructed CTH A bridge. The trail could ultimately serve school development and Sand Hill Station south of the Glacial Drumlin State Trail.

Northside Multiuse Trail (Greenway): A trail corridor that travels from the Eastside Multiuse Trail west to North Shore Road linking developments natural areas, park and ride facilities, and local bike path spurs would be beneficial.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing of I-94: The City should explore three bicycle/pedestrian crossings to serve development north of I-94:

- **Main Street (STH 89):** is a possible crossing for experienced bikers if continuous bicycle lanes are installed on the STH 89 bridge over I-94 and through ramp intersections. For pedestrians and less experienced bicyclists the existing bridge could be expanded to accommodate a multiuse trail on the west side of the roadway. In the long-term sidewalks and the multiuse trail could be added to the bridge.
- **New Bridge:** A new pedestrian and bicycle bridge east of Main Street could connect Rock's Edge with the City and Prospect Elementary School.
- **Mulberry Street (CTH A):** This option proposes a realignment of the CTH A bridge with the addition of sidewalks.
- **Other Future Possible Bicycle and Pedestrian Crossings:** Rock Lake Road, between Rock Lake Road and Main Street, Rock Creek, and at the I-94 Rest Area.

Other Points

- The *City of Lake Mills Long Range Transportation Plan 2025* states that the city should work with the county and adjacent towns on boundary agreements, access control along important highways, and development issues.
- Non-motorized trails should be incorporated into development plans from the beginning, not added later.
- A park and ride lot is suggested at STH 89 and I-94 surrounded by shops and high-density housing and accessible by bike and foot.
- The plan projects that some downtown infill development or re-development is possible but most growth will occur on the periphery increasing the number of trips through downtown to access I-94 and STH 89 and creating congestion.

6.5 Jefferson County Transportation Plans

Jefferson County Highway Department

The Jefferson County Highway Department plans county roadwork in five-year intervals.

Jefferson County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update (2010)

The [*Jefferson County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update \(2010\)*](#) replaced the original 1996 plan. Four priority projects were outlined in the plan, including priority #2:

Priority #2: Waterloo To Lake Mills Trail - "Creation of an off-road trail to connect Waterloo to Lake Mills. Possible alignments include connecting the Garman Heritage Area (Waterloo) to Korth Park (Lake Mills)." The Jefferson County Bicycle Club in a March 17, 2009 meeting voiced support for the Waterloo to Lake Mills connector (CTH O / Airport Rd) as the highest priority.

The plan outlines timelines and potential funding sources for projects.

In the Town of Lake Mills, the following roadways are part of the County-Wide Bicycle System; however, no bike lanes have been added to the roadways to date:

Roadways Suitable for Shared Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Use:

- Newville Road, a designated bicycle route between communities on low-volume roadways to Waterloo.
- Rock Lake Road
- Cemetery Road
- Mud Lake Road
- Shorewood Hills Road

Roadway May be Suitable Depending on Cyclists Skills Operating with Motor Vehicle Traffic:

- CTH B
- CTH S
- STH 89 north of Lake Mills

Multi-Use Trail Separated from Roadway, crushed gravel:

- Glacial Drumlin State Trail – connection to Korth Park added in 2003.
- Korth Park Trail – complete.

Roadways Not Recommended as Bicycle Route in Current Condition:

- CTH A
- STH 89 south of Lake Mills
- Interstate 94

Moving into the future, the Town wishes for a 'Complete Streets' policy. Actions may include expanded shoulders, where appropriate, to facilitate safer bicycle and pedestrian access.

6.6 Wisconsin & Federal Transportation Plans

The State of Wisconsin has several transportation plans that act as blueprints for the entire state with regards to education, data reporting, and pathways forward for different transportation modes. Several of the plans are listed below:

[*Active Transportation Plan 2050*](#)

[*Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030*](#)

[*Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*](#)

[*State Freight Plan*](#)

[*Connect 2050*](#)

[*Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan 2020*](#)

[*Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050*](#)

[*Transportation Asset Management Plan \(TAMP\)*](#)

[*Wisconsin Highway Safety Improvement Program \(HSIP\)*](#)

[*Wisconsin Local Road Improvement Program \(LRIP\)*](#)

The Town of Lake Mills welcomes collaboration with neighboring municipalities, Jefferson County, the State of Wisconsin, and the federal government with regards to improving transportation for residents and securing funding opportunities.

6.7 Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Transportation Goal 1: Maintain a safe multi-modal transportation network in good repair and condition.

Objectives:

- Continue annual road tours and the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system for road maintenance and project budgeting purposes.
- Maintain the Town of Lake Mills Police Department and the Lake Patrol to enforce traffic regulations and respond to emergencies on roadways and Rock Lake.
- Require developers to adhere the street standards required by the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) in new developments.
- Enforce the [Town of Lake Mills Driveway and Culvert Ordinance](#) on new construction to ensure safety and emergency service access.

Policies:

- [Town of Lake Mills Driveway and Culvert Ordinance](#)
- Control the costs of road repair, maintenance, and snow plowing. To lessen mowing costs, reduce mowing frequency along road shoulders to encourage wildflower growth that diversifies local habitat and increases rustic beauty.
- Maintain open communication and share information with surrounding jurisdictions and WisDOT on road projects and plans.
- Encourage the Jefferson County Highway Department to maintain and improve County highways and roads including Korth Lane, which provides access to Korth County Park.
- Encourage the WisDOT to maintain and improve State Highway 89 and Interstate 94.
- Explore implementing a lake patrol educational program for enforcing Rock Lake recreational ordinances with boaters. This new program could be funded in partnership with the City of Lake Mills.

Transportation Goal 2: Provide residents with a variety of transportation choices including pedestrian, bicycle, motorized, ATV, and public transportation.

Objectives:

- Aim for a Complete Streets Policy. Provide connectivity by encouraging the addition of paved shoulders to Town or County roads for bicycle and pedestrian use.

Policies:

- [Jefferson County Pedestrian / Bicycle Plan](#)
- Design roads, recreational trails, and facilities to minimize conflicts between different uses such as bicycles, pedestrians, ATVs, snowmobiles, boats and boat trailers, mopeds, and farm equipment.
- Educate pedestrians and bicyclists on the safe use of roadways for non-motorized travel.

Transportation Goal 3: Require the design of residential neighborhoods and commercial districts to incorporate an efficient road network and opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Objectives:

- Require developers to provide vehicle and non-motorized connections between residential and commercial districts in the Town of Lake Mills and the City of Lake Mills to minimize short car trips on arterials.
- Require developers in the City of Lake Mills growth areas to provide traffic impact analysis (TIA) for large developments.
- Enact reasonable standards for road width to minimize the land used for roads.

Policies:

- [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#)
- Explore Traditional Neighborhood Design Standards (TND)
- Minimize the size of paved parking lots and require the infiltration of stormwater from parking lots.

Policies:

- Explore best management practices and design requirements to infiltrate and manage stormwater run-off in residential and commercial districts.

Transportation Goal 4: Utilize road alignment and construction practices that minimize damage to natural resources, agricultural land, and private property.

Objectives:

- Require best management practices for erosion and stormwater control during road construction.
- Review road alignments to minimize cut and fill and degradation to surrounding woodlands, streams, wetlands, and agricultural land.
- Require road contractors to work with farmers to minimize or repair damage to fields and tile lines and to maintain access to fields.
- Keeping in mind safety, minimize the use of road salt to the extent practicable to protect ground and surface water resources.

Policies:

- Look for contractors able to utilize road brine on Town roads close to valuable surface water resources, particularly Rock Lake.
- Look to implement Wisconsin Salt Wise recommendations on Town roads, boat launches, and sidewalks near Rock Lake.
- Discourage the construction of large impermeable surfaces.
- Encourage the use of permeable pavement and water infiltration devices in road, driveway, and parking lot construction.

Transportation Goal 5: Respect the right of farm equipment to use roads to access fields, suppliers, and processors.

Objectives:

- Educate residents and developers on the rights of slow-moving farm equipment to use roads.
- Require slow moving vehicle signs or signal lighting on farm equipment.
- Maintain roads that can support the weight of farm equipment.

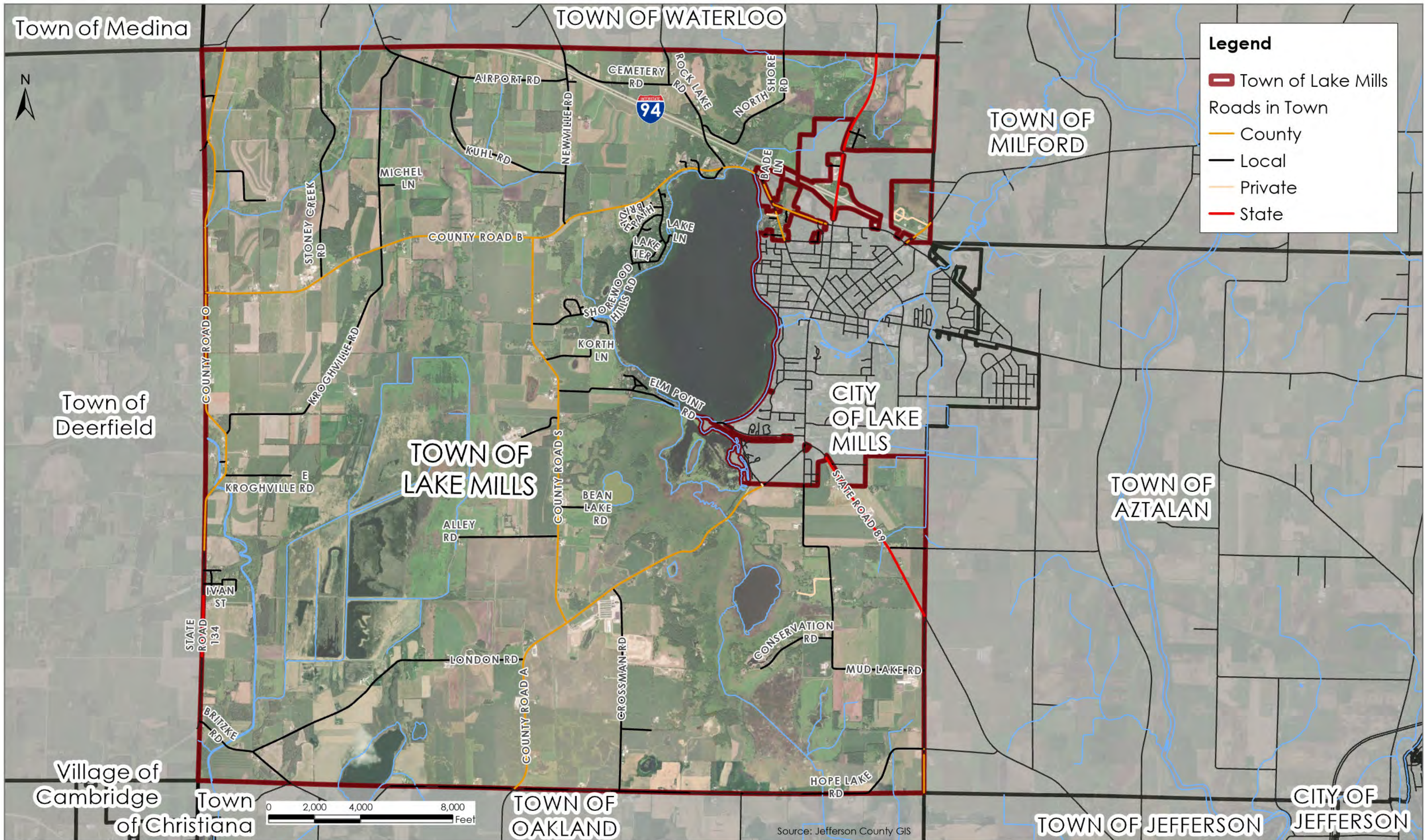
Transportation Goal 6: To the extent feasible, require that road improvements maintain scenic rural quality.

Objectives:

- Explore participation in the Wisconsin Rustic Roads Program.
- Encourage road contractors to minimize the footprint of roads and streets and retain and protect scenic features such as trees, historic buildings, and other unique landscape elements that do not compromise motorist safety.

Policy:

- Where motorist safety is not affected and it is feasible, allow sub-standard road widths.

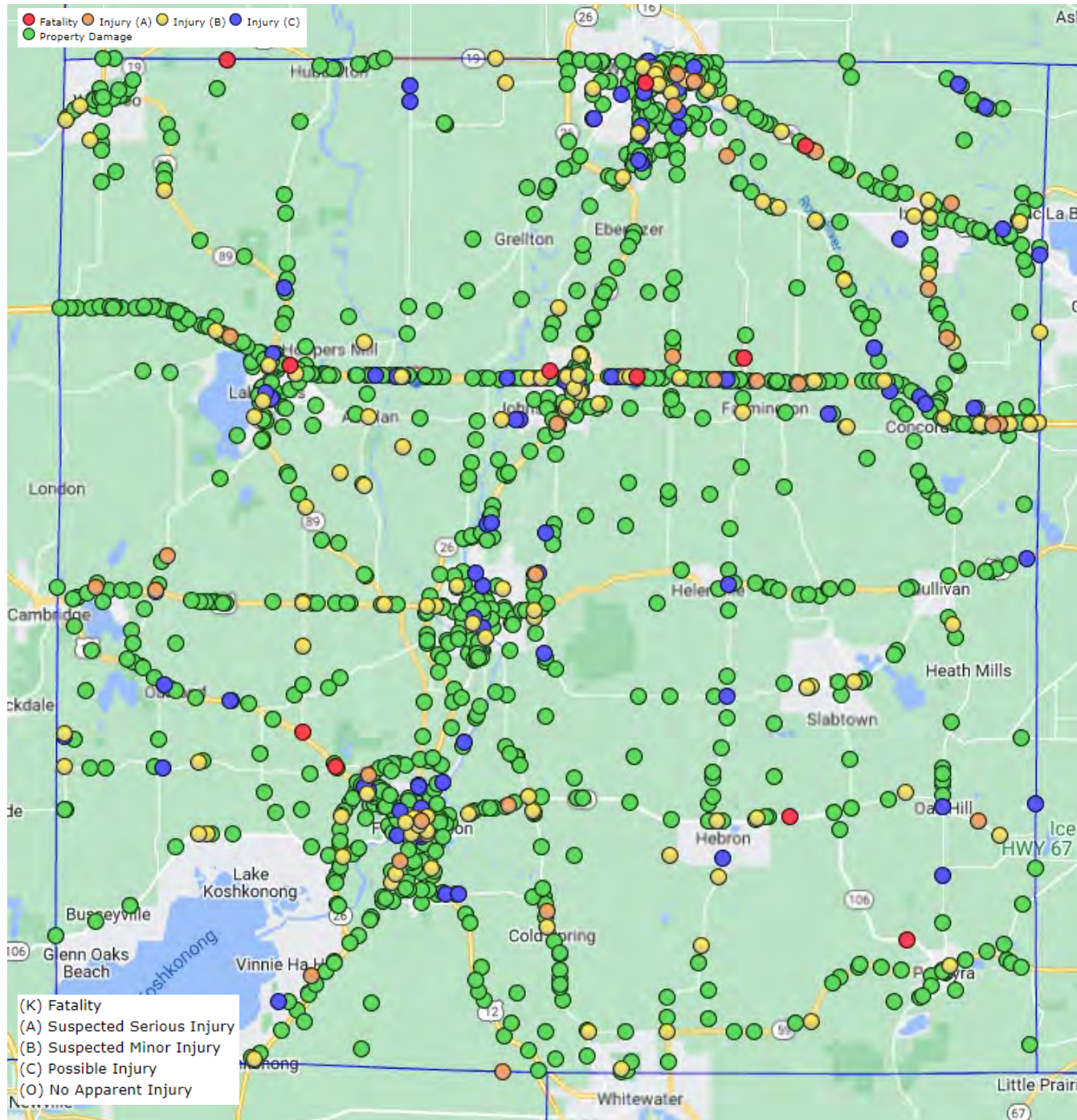


A photograph of a rural road intersection. In the foreground, a paved road with white dashed lane markings and a double yellow line on the right side curves towards the left. Beyond the road, a large, flat cornfield stretches to the horizon. In the distance, there are clusters of trees and rolling hills under a clear, light blue sky. The overall scene is bright and open.

Appendix 6 Transportation

Source: CTH-A. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 6-1 2023 Traffic Crashes in Jefferson County

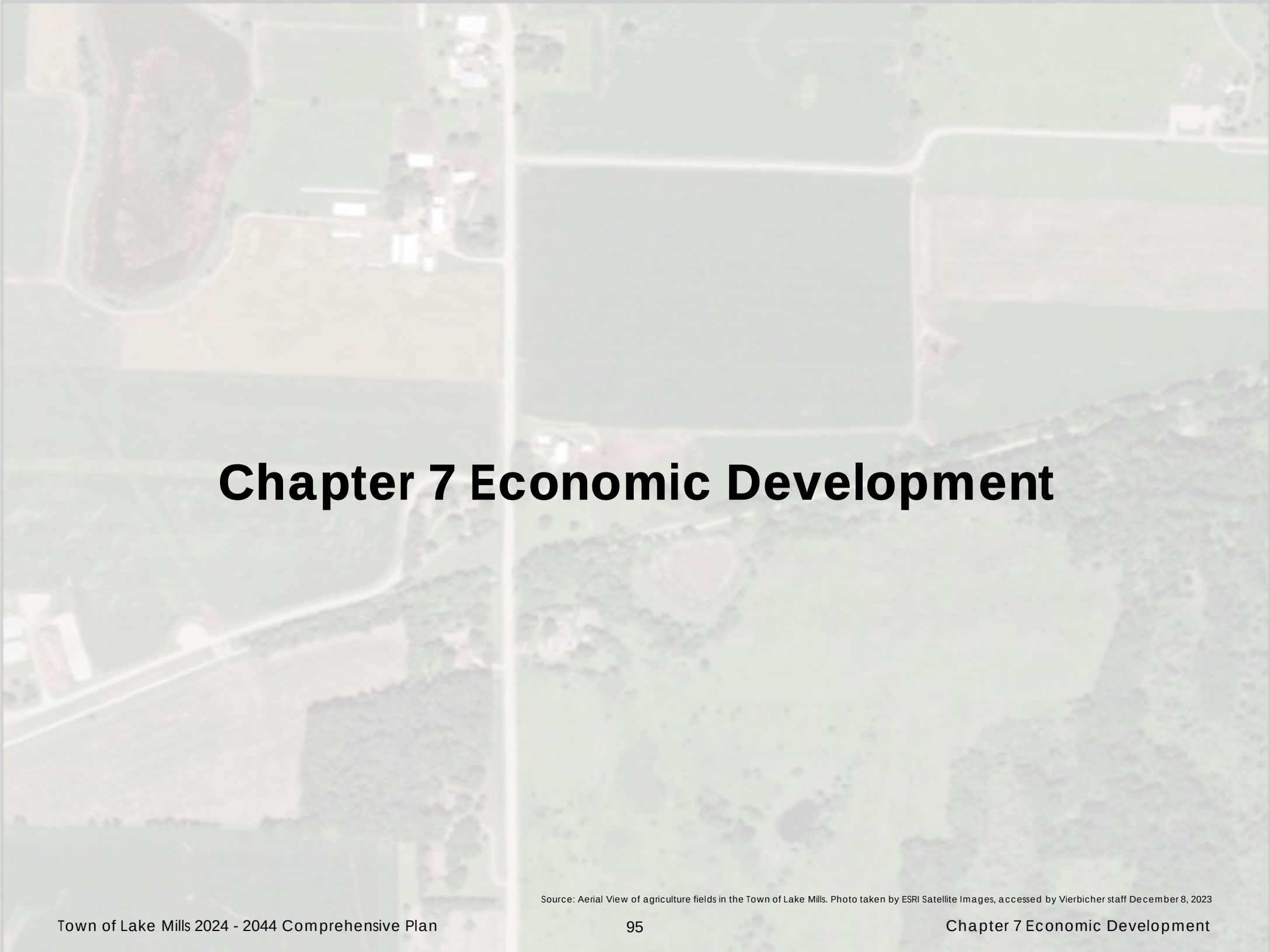


This analysis includes deer-related crashes. The extents were manually adjusted to be as close to County boundaries as possible.

Community Maps was developed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) in partnership with the Wisconsin Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Community Maps is updated on a nightly basis from the WisDOT crash database management system and includes a record of all police reported crashes* in Wisconsin for which geo-coded locations are available.

* A reportable crash is defined as a crash resulting in injury or death of any person, any damage to government-owned non-vehicle property to an apparent extent of \$200 or more, or total damage to property owned by any one person to an apparent extent of \$1000 or more. (This definition went into effect 1/1/96). It is important to note, however, that not all reportable crashes are reported. For a crash to be in the database, an MV4000 or DT4000 crash report must have been completed by a police officer.

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape in the Town of Lake Mills. The image shows a patchwork of agricultural fields in various shades of green and brown, separated by white lines representing roads or property boundaries. There are some clusters of buildings, possibly farmhouses or small businesses, and a few small ponds or wetlands. The overall scene is a typical agricultural landscape.

Chapter 7 Economic Development

Source: Aerial View of agriculture fields in the Town of Lake Mills. Photo taken by ESRI Satellite Images, accessed by Vierbicher staff December 8, 2023

7.1 Economic Development

The Town of Lake Mills is primarily a rural and agricultural area. Farming is important to the economy of the Town and Jefferson County, where agriculture provides 7,057 jobs, employing 8.38% of Jefferson County's 84,352-person workforce. Agriculture contributes \$2.0 billion of Jefferson County's total income and pays \$39.2 million in local and state taxes, not including property taxes.

Jefferson County is host to a diverse array of farms, spanning from expansive operations to smaller, specialized ones. The agricultural landscape boasts a rich variety of crops, livestock, and food production. Notably, dairy, grain, and egg farms take the lead in making substantial economic contributions.

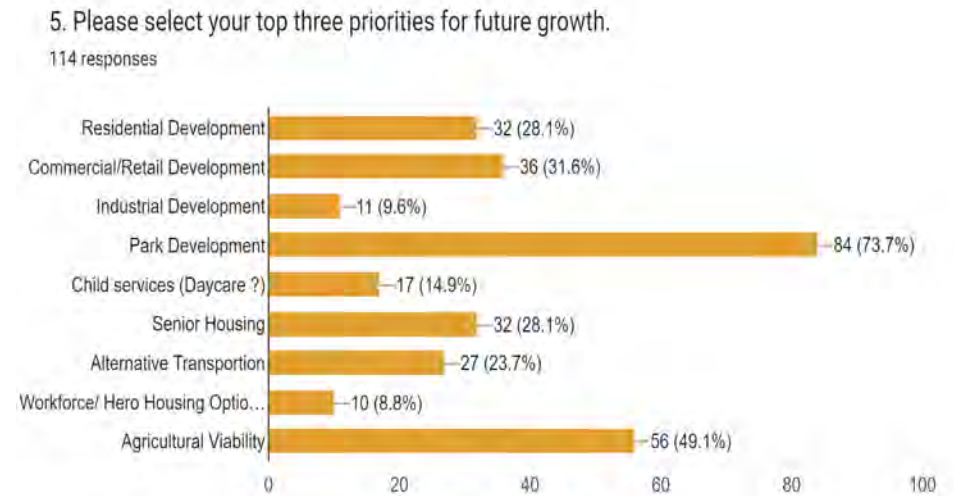
Additionally, sectors such as aquaculture, nursery stock, pheasants, ethanol production, as well as the cultivation of horses and cattle contribute significantly to the overall value generated by the county's agricultural endeavors. Almost all farms in Jefferson County (96 percent) are family-owned and operated. Jefferson County is home to 1,098 farms, collectively managing 221,355 acres of land, which makes up 62 percent of the county's total land area.

Jefferson County is No.1 in Wisconsin's poultry and eggs industry (**Appendix 5** has more agricultural facts).

- Milk annual sales are \$62.5 million.
- Cattle and Calves' annual sales are \$28.5 million.
- Grain annual sales \$68.6 million
- Nursery and Greenhouse annual sales \$21.6 million.

Leisure and tourism play a vital economic role in both the Town and County. The Town of Lake Mills experiences a notable influx of summer visitors from Chicago and various parts of Wisconsin, drawn by activities like boating and fishing on Rock Lake, as well as biking, hiking, and wildlife observation. These seasonal and weekend residents significantly contribute to the economies of both the City of Lake Mills and Jefferson County as they patronize local stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues. The results of the Town of Lake Mills community survey prioritizing future growth are shown in **Figure 7-1**.

Figure 7-1 Community Survey Responses



Source: Town of Lake Mills Community Survey, Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 7, 2023

The Town of Lake Mills relies on its natural resources and expansive open spaces as key drivers of its economy. Economic development should aim to safeguard natural areas and agricultural land while addressing the demand for employment and commerce in the region. Promoting sustainable and harmonious new developments that complement the abundant natural resources and agricultural landscapes that define the character of the Town of Lake Mills strengthens the Town.

Agritourism in the Town of Lake Mills represents a multifaceted avenue for economic development, offering a range of benefits that extend beyond the agricultural sector. By leveraging the appeal of farm-based experiences, the Town can create sustainable economic opportunities while preserving its cultural and agricultural heritage.

7.2 Labor Force and Major Businesses and Industries

The Town of Lake Mills is immediately adjacent to the City of Lake Mills and between the two large economic centers of Madison and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Area. Interstate 94 crosses the Town from east to west and is a major transportation corridor between Milwaukee, Madison, La Crosse, Eau Claire, Chicago, and Minneapolis/ St. Paul. Town land use is primarily agriculture and natural resources, which provide economic activity through the sale of agricultural products and agricultural service industries, recreation, and tourism.

The total labor force over the age of 16 is 1,197 or 54.5 percent of the population. Three percent of the civilian labor force was unemployed in 2022. In November 2023, the Jefferson County unemployment rate was 3.0 percent compared to 3.1% for the state.

The leading industries for employment for Town of Lake Mills residents are Manufacturing at 23.3 percent, Construction at 7.0 percent, and Education/Health care/ social assistance at 21.9 percent. According to resident reporting data in the 2022 ACS, 79.8 percent of employees work for a private company, while 13.7 percent are local, state, and federal workers. Self-employed workers in their own non-incorporated businesses comprised 6.1 percent. The Town of Lake Mills' median family income is \$102,614, compared to Jefferson County's median income of \$78,628.

The employment status of the population over 16 years can be found in **Table 7-2**. A breakdown of employment by industry is attached to **Appendix 7**, which details the employment in a specific industry.

Table 7-2 Employment Status

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Quantity	Percent
Population 16 years and over	1,802	100%
In labor force	1,134	62.90%
Civilian labor force	1,134	62.90%
Employed	1,115	61.90%
Unemployed	19	1.10%
Armed Forces	0	0.00%
Not in labor force	668	37.10%
Unemployment Rate	-	1.70%

Source DP03 "Selected Economic Characteristics." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff, December 12, 2023.
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?g=060XX00US5505541700>

From the community survey (see below), there was strong support for additional restaurants and hotels in the Town.



8. What type of businesses should the Town look to attract?

112 responses



Source: Town of Lake Mills Community Survey, Accessed by Vierbicher staff December 7, 2023

7.3 Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Economic Development Goal 1: Support natural resources-based tourism and production agriculture, which constitute the economic base within the Town of Lake Mills

Objectives:

- Support agricultural economic activity that enhances farm income by allowing agricultural supply and supporting businesses to operate within the town.
- Encourage the Jefferson County Economic Consortium to support and enhance agriculture business development.
- Support local farm product processing and direct marketing initiatives and encourage efforts to keep agriculture jobs in and adjacent to the Town of Lake Mills

Policy:

- Explore Agricultural TIF Districts.
- Support agritourism attractions and maintain the rural identity and charm of the Town.
 - *Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan.*
 - Partner with Jefferson County, WDNR, the Madison Audubon Society, and other agencies and organizations to protect and restore unique natural areas and enhance the trail system.
 - Use boat launch fees to upgrade the boat launches, shoreline protection measures, and launch parking lots in the Town of Lake Mills.
 - Develop guidelines to prohibit, based on hydrological calculations, high-capacity wells that would affect groundwater quantity and quality and sensitive surface water resources.
 - Continue to provide public access to Rock Lake.
 - Support additional restaurants and other tourism-related infrastructure within the Town, particularly located close to natural resource amenities like the Glacial Drumlin Trail.

- Explore incentives for businesses to participate in LEED and Green Tier programs and to install features such as rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavement, and energy-efficient construction.

Economic Development Goal 2: Encourage and direct businesses, commercial enterprises, and salvage yards to locate in the business and industrial zones in the City of Lake Mills, where City services and utilities are provided.

Economic Development Goal 3: Support innovative economic development initiatives and sustainable design in the Town and City of Lake Mills.

Objectives:

- Promote mixed-use developments in the City of Lake Mills that provide housing, retail, and employment within walking and biking distance.

Policy:

- Encourage the City's use of its Traditional Neighborhood Design Standards
- Support the Main Street initiative in the City of Lake Mills and economic activity downtown.
- Encourage sustainable and green design of residential, commercial, and business structures to improve the water quality of Rock Lake and the rivers and streams, replenish aquifers, conserve energy, and to use Town and City services efficiently.

Policies:

- Encourage developers to participate in the WDNR Green Tier program. Green Tier establishes a voluntary system to recognize and reward superior environmental performance as defined by Wisconsin Act 276: "Superior environmental performance means environmental performance that results in a measurable or discernible improvement in the quality of the air, water, land, or natural resources, or in the protection of the environment, beyond that which is achieved under environmental requirements."
- Research and promote incentives for green design and LEED.

- Prohibit development on environmental corridors, steep slopes, and prime agricultural land in the Town and City.
- Closely regulate any commercial or industrial development that has the facilities, operations, or land use practices that could potentially contaminate ground or surface water.

Economic Development Goal 4: Enact guidelines for home-based businesses in the Town of Lake Mills.

Objectives:

- Home-based businesses are allowed by Jefferson County ordinances and conditional land use permit procedures.
- Prevent home-based businesses from creating conflicting land uses.

Policies:

- Follow Jefferson County conditional use permit procedures for businesses.
- Enforce existing ordinances for violators of conditional use permits.
- Commit to bridging the digital divide in the community by harnessing the opportunities presented by FCC grants and programs.

A wide-angle photograph of a vast, flat agricultural field under a bright, slightly hazy sky. The field is covered in low-lying, green and yellowish vegetation. In the far distance, a line of trees and some small buildings are visible on the horizon.

Appendix 7 Economic Development

Source: Photo of Agriculture field. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 7-1 Additional Employment Data

Table 7-2 SIC Codes Businesses

SIC Codes	Quantity	Percent
Agriculture & Mining	6	13.3
Construction	7	15.6
Manufacturing	2	4.4
Transportation	1	2.2
Retail Trade Summary	10	22.2
Home Improvement	1	2.2
General Merchandise Stores	0	0
Food Stores	1	2.2
Auto Dealers & Gas Stations	3	6.7
Apparel & Accessory Stores	0	0
Furniture & Home Furnishings	1	2.2
Eating & Drinking Places	3	6.7
Miscellaneous Retail	1	2.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Summary	2	4.4
Real Estate, Holding, Other Investment Offices	2	4.4
Services Summary	13	28.9
Hotels & Lodging	1	2.2
Automotive Services	1	2.2
Movies & Amusements	1	2.2
Other Services	10	22.2
Government	1	2.2
Unclassified Establishments	3	6.7
Totals	45	100.00%

Source: 2023 Data Axle, Inc. All rights reserved. Esri Total Residential Population Forecasts for 2023. Accessed by Vierbicher Staff, October 23, 2023

Table 7-3 Employment Status

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Quantity	Percent
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,115	-
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	585	52.50%
Service occupations	46	4.10%
Sales and office occupations	156	14.00%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	115	10.30%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	213	19.10%
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	55	4.90%
Construction	78	7.00%
Manufacturing	260	23.30%
Wholesale trade	22	2.00%
Retail trade	42	3.80%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	26	2.30%
Information	11	1.00%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	102	9.10%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	125	11.20%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	244	21.90%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	38	3.40%
Other services, except public administration	46	4.10%
Public administration	66	5.90%
CLASS OF WORKER		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,115	
Private wage and salary workers	890	79.80%
Government workers	153	13.70%
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	68	6.10%
Unpaid family workers	4	0.40%

Source: "DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics." 2022 ACS. Accessed by Vierbicher staff, December 12, 2023. <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?q=060XX00US5505541700>

Chapter 8 Utilities and Community Facilities

Source: Clockwise, Town Hall, Lake Mills High School, Lakeside Lutheran High School, and the Glacial Drumlin State Trail. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

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8.1 Utilities and Community Facilities Overview

The Town of Lake Mills supports and utilizes an array of community facilities as well as public and private utilities. Community facilities include municipal buildings, public works, schools and other educational institutions, libraries, cemeteries, parks, health care facilities (including those for the elderly), solid waste disposal sites, and emergency service facilities and/or services like police, fire, and rescue. These facilities are essential components in promoting the Town's economic vitality and provide insights into present and future Town needs. Public and private utilities include telecommunication facilities, water supply, wastewater treatment, power-generating plants and transmission lines, and storm water management systems.

Jefferson County ordinances cover solid waste disposal, air quality, shoreline provisions, animal waste and nutrient storage, wireless communications towers, and bill boards. Non-point source pollution rules are under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The Town of Lake Mills has service agreements with adjoining communities for fire and emergency services as well as coverage by the Jefferson County Sheriffs Department. The Town has a part-time police department, which patrols Town roads and Rock Lake during the busy summer season and also carries out enforcement on frozen Rock Lake in the winter.

The Town has an agreement with the City of Lake Mills to provide sanitary sewer services to areas of the Town that are within the City Sanitary Sewer District. The City Wastewater Utility will not extend sewer lines unless an agreement is in place between the City and the developer of the property.

The Town has an ordinance on sanitary sewer services that allows the Town to collect delinquent sewer bills because the City cannot collect on property under Town jurisdiction. There are no agreements between the City and the Town on electric and water services at this time.

Town residents can find most services and activities in the City of Lake Mills, such as schools, the library, shopping, and health care.

The Town of Lake Mills strives to work with its neighboring communities to provide high quality services to its residents in a fiscally and ecologically-sound manner. The following sections detail community facilities, which may be viewed on **Map 8-1 Community Facilities Map**.

8.2 Governance and Community Facilities

Town Government

The Lake Mills Town Hall is located at 1111 South Main Street. All Town Boards and Commissions meet at the Town Hall and the building is available for other meetings.

The Town of Lake Mills Board of Supervisors consists of three elected members. Monthly meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month. Elected Clerk and Treasurer positions assist the Board.

An appointed five-person Planning Commission meets every 1st Tuesday of the month to consider land use and zoning issues.

An appointed five-person Parks Committee meets the 1st Thursday of the month to consider park and recreation opportunities and issues.

An appointed five-person Town Hall Facilities Committee discusses and guides the Town's pursuit of a new Town Hall space, which was a high priority referenced by residents at the November 15, 2023 public engagement event as well as the community survey.

The Board of Review is a four-person board appointed to review property tax assessments.

The Joint Rock Lake Committee consists of three Town-appointed people, and two City appointed people. This committee meets every 2nd Thursday of the month to offer advisory input on issues regarding Rock Lake to both the Town and City.

Jefferson County Government

Jefferson County has jurisdiction over unincorporated areas of the County, such as the Town. The [Jefferson County Board of Supervisors](#) consists of thirty members; each of whom is elected to represent one District. Districts include the incorporated municipalities and unincorporated areas of the County. District 2 covers the Town north of CTH B, while District 15 covers the Town south of CTH B.

Jefferson County services available to the Town of Lake Mills include the Sheriffs Department, Courts, Highway Department, Health and Human Services, Countryside Home, UW-Extension, County Fair, Parks, Emergency Management, Economic Development Consortium, Land Information, Surveyor, Land and Water Conservation, Veteran's Services, and the Zoning and Sanitation Department. The [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) and the [Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#) apply to the unincorporated areas of the County, such as the Town of Lake Mills.

Police Protection

The Town of Lake Mills provides police enforcement and protection through a part-time force consisting of a Police Chief and 2 or 3 officers. Primary responsibilities of the force are Rock Lake patrol and water law enforcement (especially on weekends), traffic control, state law enforcement, and emergency response.

The Jefferson County Sheriffs Department provides police protection to the Town when the Town force is not on duty as well as specialized services and equipment such as the detective division, dive team, SWAT team, MAIT (Major Accident Investigation), a gang unit, and a K-9 unit. City of Lake Mills Police Department also provides emergency response in certain instances. The WDNR wardens provide backup to the Town of Lake Mills, particularly on the lake.

Fire and Emergency Service Protection

Two fire protection districts serve the Town of Lake Mills. The [Lake Mills Fire Department](#) provides fire protection to most of the Town. Persons in the southwest corner of the Town are served by the 33-member volunteer [Cambridge Fire Department](#).

The Town is within the [Cambridge EMS District](#). Town residents at the public engagement event as well as the community survey voiced concern about the geographic distance some Town residents are from Cambridge EMS assistance. With some Town residents closer to the City of Lake Mills, it makes sense to have a discussion regarding EMS proximity and best serving Town residents.

The Town of Lake Mills has mutual aid agreements with the City of Lake Mills, Cambridge, Deerfield, Johnson Creek, Waterloo, and Jefferson for fire protection. Hazardous Material Response Teams (Hazmat) from Madison and Milwaukee respond to incidents involving hazardous materials spills, leaks, explosions with injuries or the potential for immediate threat to life, the environment, or property.

Schools

Depending on home address, Town students attend the public [Lake Mills Area School District](#) and its three schools or the [Cambridge School District](#) and its four schools. The private [St. Paul's Lutheran School](#) as well as [Lakeside Lutheran High School](#) in the City of Lake Mills are also available to students. Town students represent a portion of the total 2023 enrollment information by grade level (**Table 8-2**).

Table 8-2 2023 Total Student Enrollment

Grade Level	Lake Mills Area School District	Cambridge School District	St. Paul's Lutheran School	Lakeside Lutheran High School	Total
EC/Speech	12	2	-	-	14
Pre-K	82	39	51	-	172
K	93	61	26	-	180
1	100	55	33	-	188
2	113	52	17	-	182
3	111	76	18	-	205
4	121	62	30	-	213
5	83	72	19	-	174
6	111	69	22	-	202
7	99	62	23	-	184
8	97	79	15	-	191
9	106	81	-	132	319
10	124	67	-	151	342
11	120	69	-	132	321
12	129	60	-	120	309
Total	1501	906	254	535	3,196

Source: Vierbicher email correspondence with school (district) staffs December 2023.

Library

The L.D. Fargo Public Library is located at 120 E. Madison St. in the City of Lake Mills.

Post Office

The US Post Office is located at 155 East Oak Street in the City of Lake Mills.

Boat Launches

The Town provides three public motorboat launches on Rock Lake at Ferry Park on the west side of Rock Lake, Elm Point on the south side, and at Lower Rock Lake County Park on the north side. Two non-motorized boat launches are located at Miljala Shores on the west side of Rock Lake and at the CTH A bridge over the channel between Rock Lake and Mud Lake.

The WDNR provides a non-motorized boat launch at Sandhill Station Campground. Two public boat launches are in the City of Lake Mills at the Mill Pond and at Sandy Beach.

Parks

Parks are described in detail in the 2005 *Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan*. All of the parks, except for Ferry Park, were created on sewer easements along Rock Lake and provide lake access and views. Ferry Park has a swimming area, benches, and rental kayak storage space in addition to the boat landing. The other Town parks are Schultz Park, White Oak Park, Miljala Shores, Philips Park, and Elm Point. The Rock Lake Homeowners Association owns parkland and natural areas in the Shorewood Hills area for use by members of the association. The Town of Lake Mills owns and manages the boat launch and Park Road at Jefferson County's Lower Rock Lake Park.

Campgrounds

[Sandhill Station Campground](#) on Mud Lake Road provides rustic camping in an oak savanna setting with 15 family tent campsites and a group tent camp area for up to 20 people. The campground is in the Lake Mills Wildlife Area and maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. A non-motorized boat launch, a fishing pier, and access to the Lake Mills Wildlife Area are available near the campground.

8.3 Utilities

Sanitary Sewer

[Lake Mills Light and Water](#) serves the City of Lake Mills and portions of the Town of Lake Mills around Rock Lake including Shorewood Hills, Korth Highlands, Elm Point, and businesses and residences along CTH B, CTH V, and areas north of I-94, Faville Rd, and STH 89. The wastewater treatment plant was built in 1991. The City of Lake Mills in spring 2023 voted to build a new facility.

The sanitary sewer runs through Jefferson County's Korth Park along the lakeshore to Elm Point and was updated in 2004. The Elm Point section of the system was scheduled for improvement in 2006. As residential housing increases, pumping lift stations in the Shorewood Hills area may need to be updated.

Residents in the remainder of the Town have private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS). [Jefferson County Private On-site Wastewater Treatment System Ordinance Chapter 12](#) describes the proper siting, design, installation, management, and inspection of private sewage systems. The [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) Section 5-4-5 (3), page 14, lists Sanitary Sewerage System siting and requirements.

Garbage, Recycling, and Yard Waste

The Town of Lake Mills contracts solid waste and recycling pick-up.

Residents are billed on their property tax bills for the service. Please visit the '[Garbage and Recycling](#)' section of the Town website for best practices and more information. The Town would like to explore a yard waste drop-off site within the Town, something echoed by Town residents at the community engagement event. In the interim, a shared facility or location with the City of Lake Mills should be pursued. Animal or agricultural disposal should follow applicable Jefferson County regulations.

Landfill Sites

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource lists active, inactive, and abandoned sites where solid or hazardous wastes were known, or likely to have been disposed. The inclusion of a site on the Registry does not mean that environmental contamination has occurred, is occurring, or will occur in the future.

The Registry of Waste Disposal Sites lists the following locations in the Town of Lake Mills:

- SE Section 26 T7N R13E
- SE SE Section 26 T7N R13E

Jefferson County Solid Waste

The Jefferson County Solid Waste Committee addresses solid waste needs by operating hazardous waste removal programs, overseeing the County's interests in the landfill siting process, and promoting recycling and related waste reduction effects. The County conducts periodic household, business, and farm Clean Sweep events where residents can dispose of hazardous substances such as cleaning products, paint, and chemicals properly. The Town of Lake Mills would like to see this program continue, as Town residents utilize the programs.

Jefferson County Air Quality

Jefferson County is not on the [Nonattainment County List for all Criteria Pollutants](#) maintained by the EPA, which notes that during several days each year, high concentrations of ground-level ozone are detected in the air, which can be extremely unhealthy to breathe, especially for people who already have respiratory problems. The Jefferson County Air Quality Task Force promoted voluntary air pollution reduction to maintain or lower ozone levels. Ozone alerts and clean air alerts are issued by the Jefferson County Emergency Management Department. Trash burning barrels and use of woodstoves are air quality issues in the Town of Lake Mills.

Several residents in the community survey noted air odors emanating from the Daybreak facility. Reports regarding air odor in Lake Mills should be directed to the WDNR. The contact for these reports is Air Management Engineer/Air Compliance Inspector, Lucas Jewell at (608) 354-6976, or email lucas.jewell@wisconsin.gov.

It is advisable for residents to also contact the facility at creekwood@daybreakfoods.com with their odor concerns. When reporting, please include the date, time, and location or where the odor was noticed.

Jefferson County Water Quality

Town residents in the public engagement event voiced their concerns about development as well as pollution affecting storm water run-off into Rock Lake, streams and rivers and the negative impacts that nutrients, sediment, and pollution in the run-off can have on water quality plus stream and lake life. The sanitary sewer system along the west shore of Rock Lake was constructed to eliminate on-site waste disposal systems near the lake and lessen some of the concerns above.

The [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#), Section 5-4-5 (5), page 14, Stormwater Management Plan and Facilities requires a stormwater management plan at the time a preliminary plat is submitted for approval and Section 5-4-5(4), page 14, Erosion Control requires an Erosion Control Plan at the time a final plat is submitted to reduce the probability of contaminated run-off.

Point Source

One facility in the Town of Lake Mills has an EPA Water Discharge Permit.

Nonpoint Source Rules

Wisconsin Nonpoint Source Administrative Rules went into effect October 1, 2002. Eight rules control polluted runoff from urban and rural land use activities:

- [NR 120](#): Priority Watershed and Lake Program
- [NR 151](#): Runoff Management (Performance Standards and Prohibitions); Subchapter II: Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions and Non- Agricultural Standards; Subchapter IV Transportation Facility Performance Standards

- [NR 152](#): Model Ordinances for Construction Site Erosion Control and Storm Water Management (municipalities)
- [NR 154](#): Best Management Practices, Cost-Share conditions (technical standards for Targeted Runoff Management and Urban Nonpoint Source Gants)
- [NR 216](#): Storm Water Discharge Permits (construction sites, industrial facilities and municipalities)
- [NR 243](#): Animal Feeding Operations (1,000 animal units or more). An example is the [Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance](#), which applies to all unincorporated areas of Jefferson County. The purpose of the ordinance is “to regulate the (a) location, design, construction, and use of all new animal waste storage facilities, (b) modification or closure of all storage facilities, (c) transfer of wastes into storage facilities, and (d) utilization of wastes from storage facilities in order to prevent water pollution, and thereby protect the health and safety of residents and transients, prevent the spread of disease, and promote the prosperity and general welfare of the citizens of Jefferson County.” A permit is required to ensure that all applicable standards are followed when building, altering, or closing manure storage. Along with the permit application, an applicant is required to submit construction plans and a nutrient management plan.

Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance, Subsection 10 Shoreland Provisions

Subsection 10, Shoreland Provisions in the [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#) regulate the use, development, and vegetation removal within 1000 ft. of the ordinary high water mark of navigable lakes, ponds and flowages and 300 ft of the ordinary high water mark of rivers or streams or the landward side of floodplains, whichever distance is greater.

Water Supply

All residents and businesses in the Town of Lake Mills have private wells for water. Rainwater infiltration areas, which replenish the aquifer that supplies water are generally the areas of high elevation and points where the soil is sandy and gravelly or the bedrock is at the surface. A drawdown of the water table due to increasing population of the region could impact the Jefferson County aquifers and wells over time. The Town supports water conservation measures for its ecological benefits as well as the economic benefits a healthy Rock Lake ecosystem provides with tourism.

Electric Power

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's [Interactive Service Area Maps](#) notes three (3) electric service providers in parts of Town. Closest to the City of Lake Mills and around Rock Lake (especially in subdivisions) [Lake Mills Light and Water](#) is the electric provider. Customers in the Town include Shorewood Hills, homes and businesses along CTH B east of Shorewood Hills, homes and businesses north and south of the City along STH 89, and properties along Faville Road.

Much of the Town is served by Wisconsin Electric Company ([We Energies](#)), while the Town's western extents south of CTH B are served by Wisconsin Power and Light Company ([Alliant Energy](#)).

Natural Gas

Per the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's [Interactive Service Area Maps](#), natural gas in the Town of Lake Mills is provided by Wisconsin Electric Company ([We Energies](#)).

Broadband & Wireless Telecommunications Facilities

Per the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's [Interactive Service Area Maps](#), broadband internet may be obtained from several different providers within the Town, including: [Spectrum](#), [Frontier Communications](#) and [HughesNet](#), among others.

Several telecommunications towers are in the Town of Lake Mills. Two towers are between Airport Road and Interstate 94 in Section 4. One tower is located north of Cemetery Road in Section 3. Towers are also along STH 89 south and CTH O section 6. [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance No. 11](#), Section 11.055 Mobile Tower Siting Permit provides standards for the siting, development and installation of telecommunication towers.

Broadband fiber optics are being buried along all roads in the Town and should be complete in 2025.

Billboards and Large Signs

Several billboards and large signs are found along Interstate 94 in the Town of Lake Mills informing travelers of food, fuel, and recreation opportunities in the Lake Mills area. [Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance No. 11](#), Section 11.08 controls and regulates the installation of signs and other advertising structures in Jefferson County. The signs are only allowed on land zoned "Business."

8.4 Public/Private Community Facilities

Houses of Worship and Cemeteries

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church is located at W8496 Parsonage Lane in the Town of Lake Mills. The church maintains St. John Cemetery on Cemetery Road. St. Paul's Cemetery is located on CTH A.

The London Moravian Church is in London on CTH O and the Kroghville Cemetery is located on Kroghville Road. The City of Lake Mills has eleven churches of many faiths.

Health

Medical facilities are available throughout Jefferson County. Local hospitals are in Watertown and Fort Atkinson. Most communities have local clinics and retirement homes, while larger communities provide nursing homes.

Fort Memorial Hospital is a modern, fully accredited, acute and sub-acute care facility. Fort Medical Group, a subsidiary of Fort HealthCare, employs more than 25 physicians and nurse practitioners. Lake Mills has a clinic, as do several other Jefferson County communities

Watertown Regional Medical Center offers Emergency and Urgent Care, Primary Care, Women's Health, Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, Heart and Vascular, Neurology, Pulmonology, Ophthalmology, and many other services. It was a founding member of ScionHealth in December 2021.

Madison Hospitals Several hospitals are in Madison, about 25 miles west of the Town of Lake Mills including St. Mary's (SSM Health), Meriter (UnityPoint Health), University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics, and the William F. Middleton Memorial Veteran's Administration Hospital. Madison hospitals offer all levels of care, specialists, Flight for Life, and trauma units.

UW Cancer Center - Johnson Creek opened in 2005 and is a unique partnership between Fort HealthCare, Watertown Memorial Hospital, and UW Health. The Clinic provides medical and radiation oncology specialists who provide cancer care, including chemotherapy and access to clinical trials. The center also features support groups, educational programs and complementary medicine.

Jefferson County Health Department is located at N2995 Annex Road in Jefferson and offers free and low cost non-emergency health services to all residents of Jefferson County. Health programs include the Rock River Free Clinic, immunizations, personal in-home long-term care and support, public health care, education, drug and mental health counseling, and health consultation.

Assisted Living and Nursing Homes

Assisted living and nursing homes are available in the Town of Lake Mills, the City of Lake Mills, and throughout Jefferson County.

- London Lodge is a rural, assisted living facility near Cambridge on London Road in the Town of Lake Mills.
- The City of Lake Mills has several assisted living and nursing home options, including: Lake Mills Health Services (formerly Willowbrook Nursing and Rehabilitation Center), LakeHouse Lake Mills (formerly Brook Gardens) Club 55, Lilac Springs Assisted Living Living Center, Rock Lake Manor, and Trinity Pines Retirement Center.
- Since 2010, Alden Estates of Jefferson Rehabilitation & Health Care Center (formerly Countryside Nursing Home) is a Jefferson County agency that provides rehabilitation, short-term respite care, skilled nursing, and long-term care or terminal care to Jefferson County residents.

Hospice

As populations age, access to hospice and palliative care is important. The following are hospice providers in the area.

- [Lake Mills Home Health Services](#)
- [Rainbow Hospice Care Inpatient Center](#)

Daycare and Childcare

Daycare and Childcare are available in the City of Lake Mills and Village of Cambridge.

8.5 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 1: Provide high quality services to Town residents and property owners in a cost-efficient manner.

Objectives:

- Maintain the Town police department and lake patrol.
- Maintain the partnership with the City of Lake Mills to provide sewer to the Town of Lake Mills Sanitary Service Area.

Policies:

- *Intergovernmental Agreement Between the Town Board of the Town of Lake Mills and the City Council of the City of Lake Mills*
- Joint Cable Board
- Broadband Opportunities
- Create a full-time Town maintenance position for roads and parks.
- Consider the fiscal impact of new developments on Town residents and services.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 2: Control road maintenance, garbage disposal, and school busing costs by directing residential and commercial development to appropriate growth area for the Town or the City of Lake Mills.

Objectives:

- Locate new development adjacent to existing development to provide services in the most land and cost-efficient way.

Policy

- *Intergovernmental Agreement between the Town Board of the Town of Lake Mills and the City Council of the City of Lake Mills*
- Continue annual budget review.
- Follow Wisconsin Statutes when adjusting impact fee ordinances.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 3: Partner with the City of Lake Mills and Jefferson County to provide high quality public services.

Objectives:

- Participate in supporting and improving City and County services used by Town residents such as the library, schools, lake access, and boat ramps.

- Support a high level of health care and accessibility for Town residents.
- Work with the City of Lake Mills and Jefferson County to provide public transportation to seniors, the disabled, and those who do not drive.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 4: Maintain and enhance partnerships and open communication with police, fire, rescue services, and emergency services from the City of Lake Mills, Village of Cambridge, Jefferson County, the WDNR, and others to serve Town residents.

Policy

- Service agreements with surrounding communities.
- Encourage Jefferson County to continue the [Clean Sweep Program](#) to safely remove and dispose of hazardous household, farm, and industrial materials.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 5: Offer a range of recreational activities in the Town.

Objectives:

- Partner with the DNR and Jefferson County on park and trail initiatives.
- Maintain public access to Rock Lake and boat ramps.
- Partner with the City of Lake Mills and the school districts to provide recreational and educational programs for youth and adults.

Policy

- *Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2005 -2010)*

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 6: Improve stormwater infiltration and run-off quality entering Rock Lake, rivers, and streams.

Objectives:

- Partner with the City of Lake Mills and Jefferson County's Land and Water Conservation Department to reduce and improve the quality of stormwater run-off.
- Enforce the [Town of Lake Mills Land and Subdivision Ordinance](#) section on Stormwater Management Plan and Facilities.

- Work with the WDNR and Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department to enforce Wisconsin's Nonpoint Source Administrative Rules and Shoreline Provisions of the Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance.
- Review the recommendations of the [2018 – 2028 Rock Lake Management Plan](#) and enact the recommendations that are appropriate for the Town.
- Work with farmers to apply the [Jefferson County Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Ordinance](#).

Policy

- Natural Resources Conservation Service and Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department Cost Share Programs available.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 7: Protect the drinking water aquifer in the Town of Lake Mills.

Objectives:

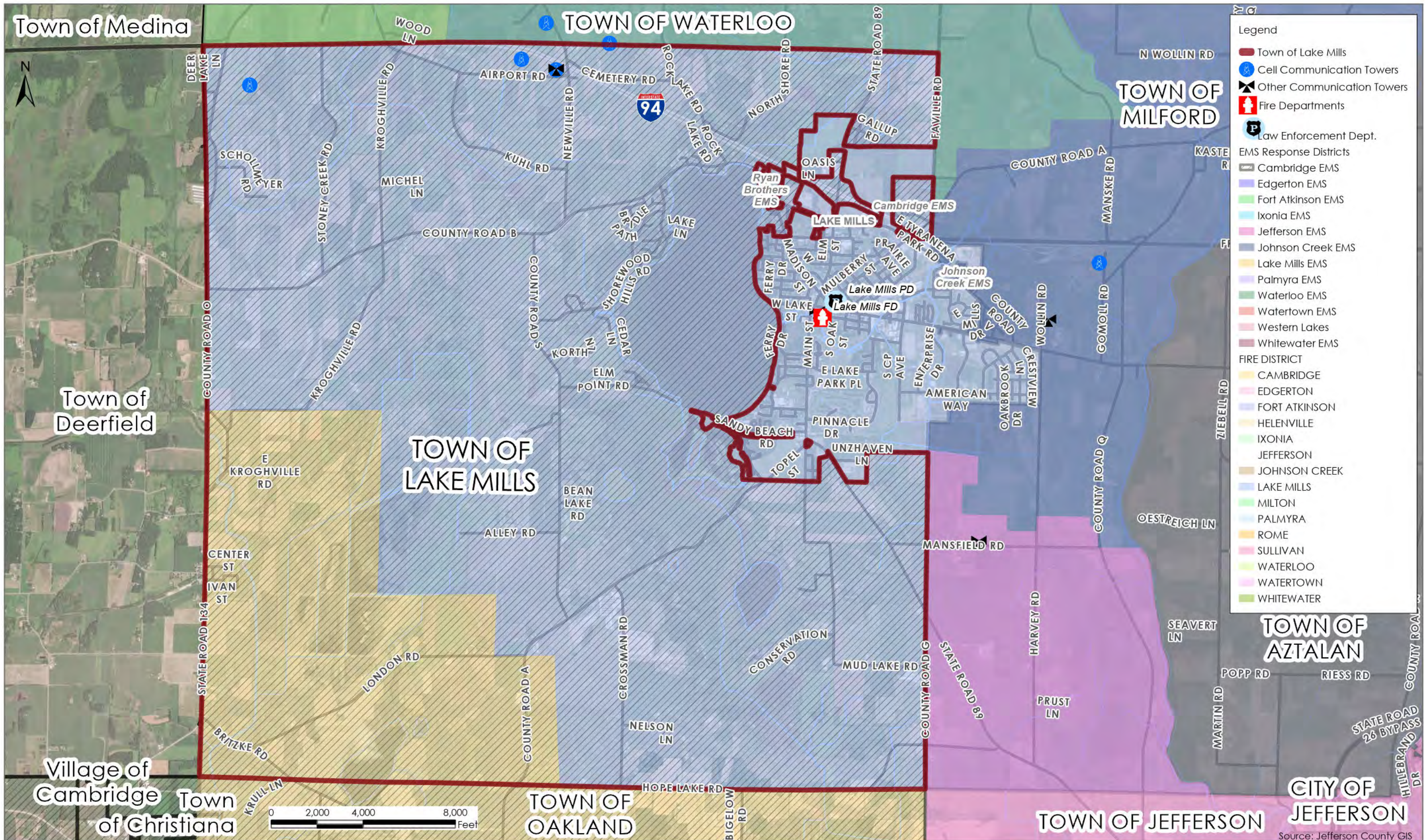
- Protect groundwater infiltration areas from development and pollution.
- Continue to partner with the City of Lake Mills sanitation department to provide City sewer to the Town of Lake Mills Sanitary Sewer Service Area.
- Educate rural residents on proper well maintenance and well closure techniques.
- Explore ways to track the water quality of groundwater to alert the Town to possible spreading contamination.
- Leverage the GFLOW groundwater-monitoring model developed by the USGS and Rock River Coalition for decision-making.

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal 8: Protect the scenic rural character, continuity of environmental corridors, natural areas, agricultural land, and private property when siting utilities, facilities, and billboards in the Town of Lake Mills.

Objectives:

- Follow Jefferson County Land Division Ordinances for siting of transmission lines, wireless telecommunications towers, billboards, wind turbines and other types of utilities.
- Develop guidelines and ordinances for the siting of telecommunication towers.

- Site new utilities along already existing utility and road corridors to minimize disturbance to residents, natural areas, and agricultural land.
- Require utility corridors and utility construction to provide environmental impact assessments and to avoid impacts on natural resources, agriculture lands, and parks.
- Avoid utility construction on sensitive environmental areas and migratory bird flyways.
- Protect unique viewsheds from overhead utility lines and obstructions.
- Follow Jefferson County ordinances and FAA regulations for siting telecommunication towers and other utilities near airports



Map 8-1 Town of Lake Mills Community Facilities Map

Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, WI
01/26/2024

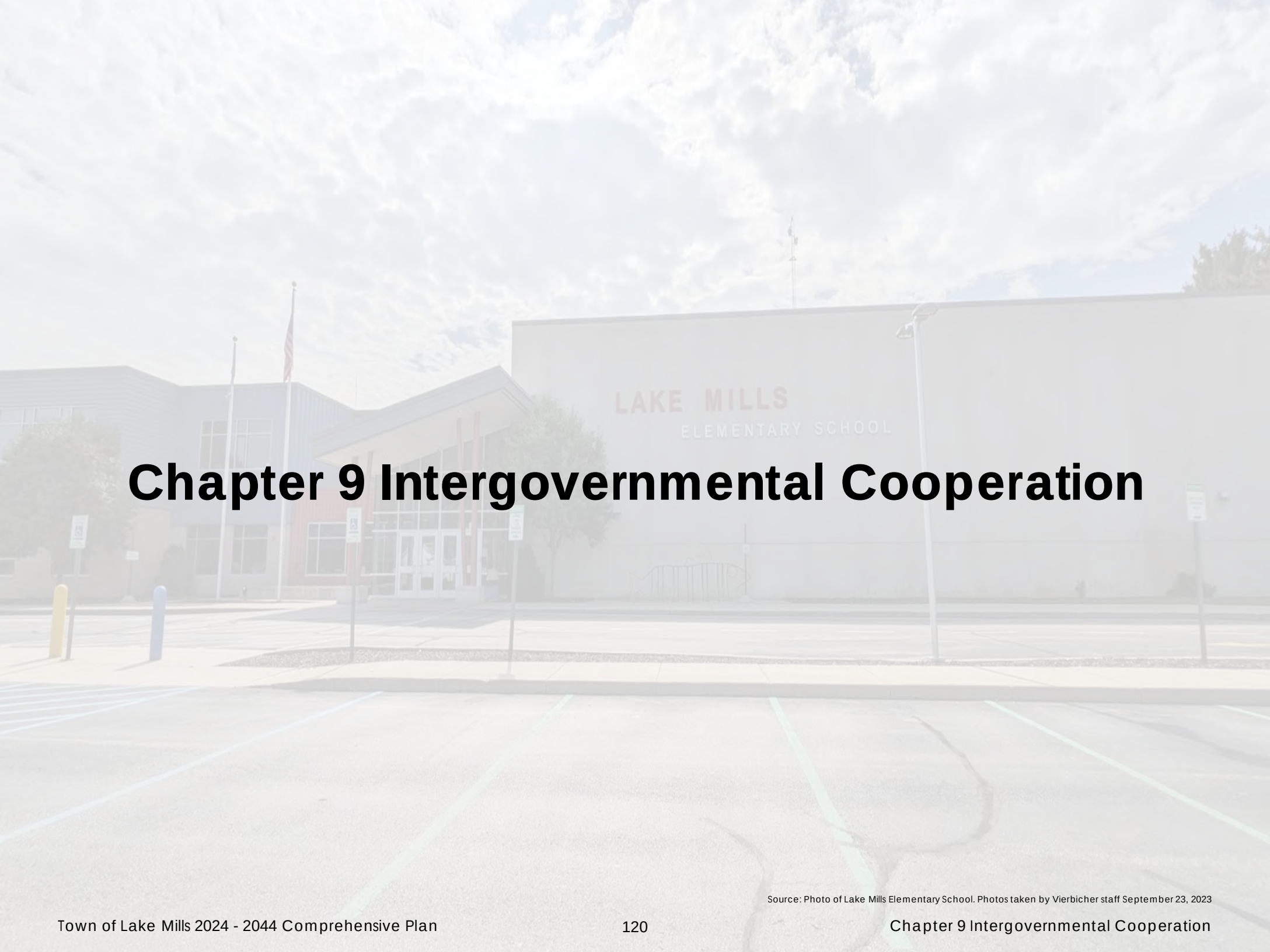


Appendix 8 Utilities and Community Facilities

Source: Clockwise, Town Hall, Lake Mills High School, Lakeside Lutheran High School, and the Glacial Drumlin State Trail. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

Note 8-1 Town of Lake Mills Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and Community Facilities change over the course of time. Reach out to the Town, or the utility provider for your address to obtain more information.

A photograph of Lake Mills Elementary School. The school is a large, modern building with a prominent sign that reads "LAKE MILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL". In the foreground, there is a parking lot with several empty spaces. A large, stylized fish sculpture is visible in the middle ground. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

Chapter 9 Intergovernmental Cooperation

9.1 Intergovernmental Cooperation Plans and Agreements

Some goals, objectives, and policies outlined in this comprehensive plan extend beyond the sole jurisdiction of the Town of Lake Mills government or its residents. Various challenges span multiple jurisdictions, necessitating collaboration across different governmental bodies and levels. This chapter examines ongoing planning initiatives with neighboring government units, overlying jurisdictions like school districts and emergency service providers, regional bodies, and the state government. Additionally, it explores potential avenues for intergovernmental cooperation. The chapter concludes by presenting goals, objectives, and policies.

[Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan](#), adopted on February 9, 2021 and now in its third edition, represents a significant milestone for the county. First crafted in 1999, the plan underwent its initial update in 2012. All Towns in Jefferson County are covered by this plan and accompanying zoning ordinance. This plan also qualifies farmers and landowners to participate in the State of Wisconsin Farmland Preservation program, which provides income tax credits for landowners who maintain their land in agriculture. Implementation of the plan includes efforts to “continue to support cooperative planning between local units of government in Jefferson County. A link to the plan can be found in Appendix 9.

[Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance](#). The Land division in the Town of Lake Mills occurs under the Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance, and both the County Board of Supervisors and the Town Board must approve zoning changes and land divisions. The Town of Lake Mills Land Division Ordinance is stricter than that of Jefferson County.

The Town is open to considering intergovernmental agreements with neighboring municipalities when the result offers more efficient services for residents, or the treatment of agricultural and natural challenges that extend beyond the boundaries of the Town.

Figure 9-1 Cambridge High School



Source: Cambridge High School. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff September 23, 2023

9.2 Joint Efforts

State agency plans and procedures may affect the Town of Lake Mills agricultural lands and their operations or transportation. For that reason, coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) on projects that affect the Town and neighboring communities is crucial. Several Wisconsin DNR programs and resources are listed in Appendix 5.

Intergovernmental Agreements

There are intergovernmental agreements with the school districts. Most school-age children in the Town of Lake Mills attend the Lake Mills School District, though southern parts of the Town attend the Cambridge School District as well as private schools offered by Lakeside Lutheran High School and St Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran School. **Table 9-2** shows that the Town has adequate schools for each grade level, both public and private (for enrollment numbers, please visit **Chapter 8**).

The primary law enforcement agency for residents of the Town is provided by the Town of Lake Mills Police Force in collaboration with the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department. Additionally, the Cambridge Fire Department and EMS serve as the main emergency medical services for the Town for a period of 18 months, expiring December 31, 2024

The Joint Rock Lake Committee is a group of appointed members from the City and Town working to improve Rock Lake’s water quality and recreation. Another resource is the Rock Lake Improvement Association (RLIA). The mission of RLIA is to protect and improve Rock Lake and its watershed. Rock Lake is a drainage lake, signifying its natural formation with both an inlet and an outlet. The primary source of water influx is attributed to the inlet, while the majority of water is discharged through the outlet. The Town and surrounding communities should work together to allocate funding through community initiatives or grant applications. Securing the commitment to responsible environmental stewardship, ensuring that our lake continues to thrive for the benefit of current and future generations.

Looking ahead, it is crucial to fortify existing intergovernmental relationships, particularly with neighboring communities, Jefferson County, and the State. Areas of common interest could revolve around economic development, transportation, and the preservation of natural or agricultural resources. Tourism also plays a significant role; fostering increased communication with the Jefferson County Tourism Council could enhance the appeal of Rock Lake and contribute to diversifying businesses in the Town. Any intergovernmental agreement pursued should focus on fostering open dialogue, enhancing efficiency, and generating community benefits.

Table 9-2 Lake Mills Area School Districts

Lake Mills Area School District	Grades
Lake Mills Elementary School	PK-5
Lake Mills Middle School	6-8
Lake Mills High School	9-12
Cambridge School District	Grades
Cambridge Elementary School	PK-5
Nikolay Middle School	6-8
Cambridge High School	9-12
Private Schools in the City of Lake Mills	Grades
St. Pauls' Evangelical Lutheran School	1-8
Lakeside Lutheran High School	9-12

Source: Vierbicher staff research conducted November 2023

9.3 Intergovernmental Cooperation Potential Conflicts

Potential conflicts with other units of government center around recreational and water quality issues. Several jurisdictions have control over different parts of the Rock Lake shoreline with differing policies and goals that can lead to conflicts.

Korth Park is an 89-acre Jefferson County Park on the west shore of Rock Lake between Shorewood Hills and Elm Point.

As the population of southeastern Wisconsin and the local area increases and recreational boating and jet skiing become more popular, more boaters will enjoy Rock Lake, both residents and visitors alike. The number of boats on Rock Lake, or its lake capacity, is a concern for Town of Lake Mills residents. Responses at the November 15th, 2023 community public engagement event at Town Hall indicated boat speeds are an issue for residents using the lake for kayaking and non-motorized watercraft.

The issue of limiting the number of boats on the lake, particularly on weekends to improve the recreational experience, has surfaced. The Town enforces boating rules and regulations and has difficulty finding enough water patrol resources. As recreational pressures increase, the Town may need a partnership with the City to do joint enforcement. By collaborating with WDNR and the City, a safe, enjoyable atmosphere may be maintained for all lake patrons.

Some long-term strategies for Rock Lake include advocating for boater education regarding slow-no wake restrictions and continued participation in the WDNR's Clean Boats, Clean Waters program to educate boaters about controlling and preventing the spread of invasive lake species. Additionally, the Town and City could establish uniform boat launch fees and a permit system applicable at any launch point around the lake. There are 4 areas in Rock Lake that the DNR designates as Sensitive Areas: Korth Bay, Schultz Bay, Marsh Lake, and the Mill Pond. Enhanced collaboration among the Town, City, WDNR, Rock Lake Improvement Association, and Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department is essential to ensure a robust future for Rock Lake.

Stormwater Run-off

Stormwater from both the Town and the City enters Rock Lake bringing with it sediment from construction sites, pollutants from streets and businesses, pesticides and fertilizers, and leaves that add nutrients to the lake. Both the Town and City need to develop and implement plans to prevent run-off into Rock Lake. The Joint Rock Lake Committee should work with both the Town and the City to reduce the negative impact of stormwater lake water quality.

9.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, Policies

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 1: Continue Intergovernmental Agreements with the City of Lake Mills

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 2: Maintain agreements with adjacent municipalities and regionally for fire, EMS, and emergency services sheriffs.

Policies:

- Maintain Service agreement with Cambridge Fire Department and EMS
- Encourage a cooperative agreement with the City of Lake Mills for fire and EMS.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 3: Coordinate with the Jefferson County Highway Department and WISDOT to provide safe and well-maintained transportation networks

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 4 : Work with the DNR, Jefferson County, and other environmental and recreation organizations to protect natural areas and provide recreation opportunities in the Town of Lake Mills

Policies:

- Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Jefferson County Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 5: Work with the City of Lake Mills and County and regional economic and tourism agencies and groups to develop a good business climate in the Lake Mills Area, to explore new, sustainable business ideas for the Town of Lake Mills, and promote natural resources and agriculture-based tourism.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 6: Continue to support the Lake Mills and Cambridge School Districts and local private schools and strive to provide excellent education for all students.

Goal 7. Work with Jefferson County Human Services to provide high-quality health services for all Town individuals.

Policies:

- Promote health programs for Town residents to enhance well-being and foster a sense of community engagement, as citizens actively participating in these initiatives contribute to a healthier and more vibrant town.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 8: Work with the City of Lake Mills and Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department to improve stormwater management and run-off reaching Rock Lake, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

Policies:

- Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Park Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Jefferson County Comprehensive Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 9: Coordinate with Jefferson County, the State of Wisconsin, adjacent jurisdictions, organizations, and agencies to protect large blocks of agricultural land, maintain agriculture suppliers, promote new local markets for agriculture products, and maintain roadways for shared agriculture and motorized use.

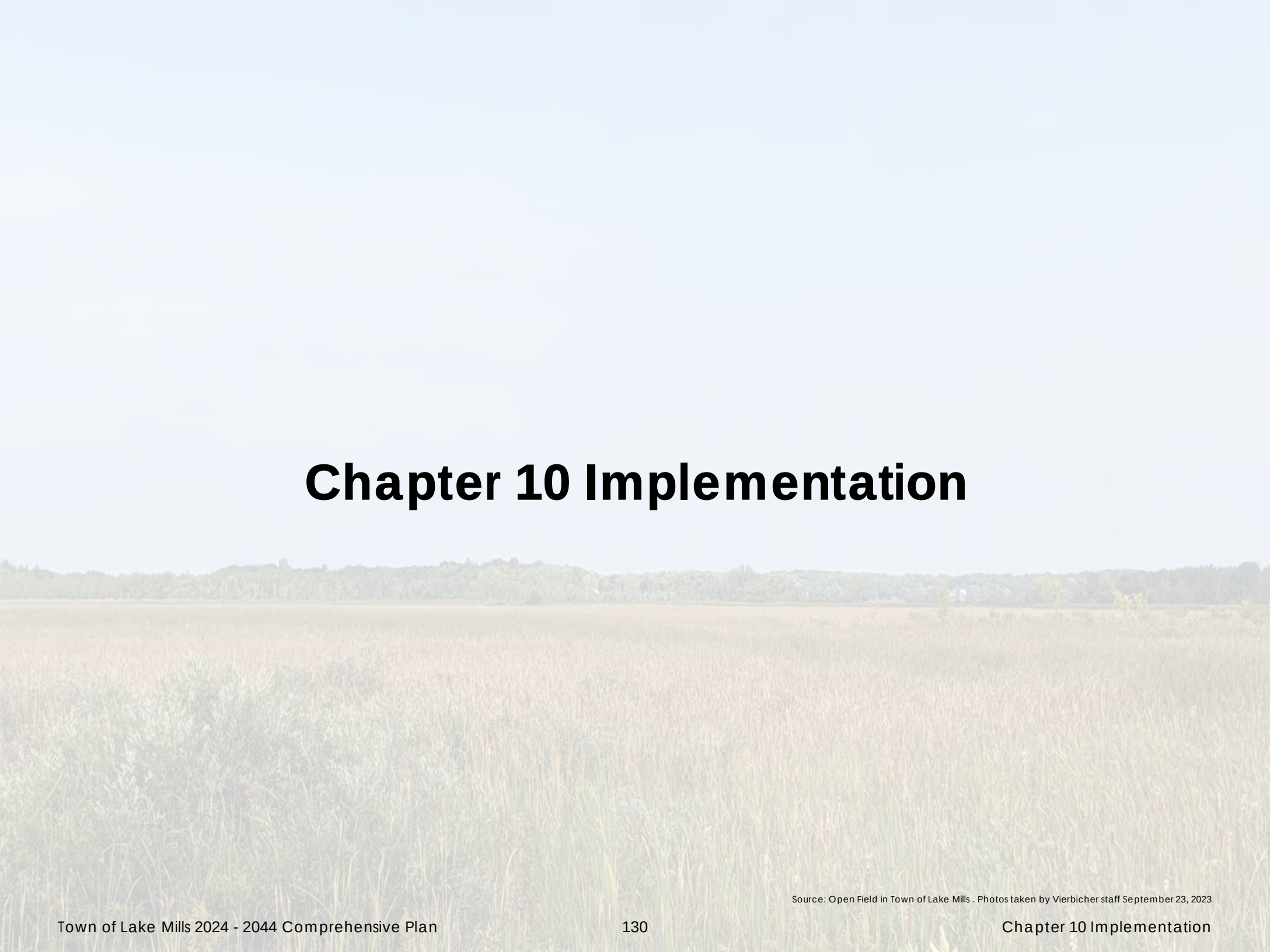
Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal 10: Widely distribute the Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2044 and work with other governmental units and agencies to implement the plan.



Appendix 9 Intergovernmental Cooperation

Note 9-1 Intergovernmental Plans

- [*Jefferson County Agriculture Preservation and Land Use Plan*](#)
- [*Jefferson County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance*](#)



Chapter 10 Implementation

10.1 Implementation and Progress

The implementation element of a comprehensive plan works collaboratively with the various elements described in the chapters within the Plan. Rather than functioning in isolation, the implementation element serves as a powerful means to showcase the integration of all plan components.

Through the process of implementation, the interconnectivity among community issues and opportunities, housing, transportation, utilities, community facilities, agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, and land use becomes tangible. It underscores the realization that any single decision has the potential to impact all the interconnected elements, with both direct and indirect repercussions.

Putting the plan into action also includes a section that helps measure how well things are going. This lets the community see if they're really making the comprehensive plan work. It explains how all the different parts of the plan fit together and stay in sync. There's also a plan for keeping things up to date and making amendments when needed.

Every component of the Plan maintains consistency with one another, and there are no identified conflicts within the document. In cases of uncertainty or inconsistency within the Plan, decision-making should be grounded in the community's priorities, with a primary focus on preserving the rural character of the Town. All elements outlined for the Town of Lake Mills in this Plan are crafted with the intention of realizing the envisioned future.

The success of the Comprehensive Plan will be gauged by the Town, ensuring that the first priority—safeguarding the Town's rural character—is consistently adhered to. The goals, objectives, and policies serve as continual guidance for the Plan Commission and Town Board, meant to be applied on an ongoing basis.

When a request, development, or proposal is brought before the Plan Commission and Town Board, the Plan Commission is tasked with examining the goals, objectives, and policies to ascertain alignment with the Town's Plan. If the request aligns with the Plan, the Plan Commission and Town Board have the option to approve the request or advance it to Jefferson County.

Figure 10-1 November 15, 2023 Community Engagement Event



Source: Town of Lake Mills Community Engagement Event, Hosted by Vierbicher staff November 15, 2023

10.2 Plan Implementation, Adoption and Updates

The Town of Lake Mills Plan Commission recommends approval of the Plan to the Town Board, then the Town Board approves. Once approved, the Plan acts as the Town strategy and guide for the next ten years. The Plan Commission and Town Board will utilize the goals, objectives, and policies to guide planning practices. The Town will focus efforts and develop the community's top priorities as reviews take place, decisions are made, and the governing bodies act on behalf of the Town.

The Town of Lake Mills Plan Commission & Town Board are responsible for carrying out and adhering to the Plan. Therefore, it is essential for both bodies to routinely review the goals of the Comprehensive Plan as a sound practice in effective planning.

After ten years, a larger review should involve refreshing data, acquiring updated information, and conducting a thorough examination and revision of the goals, objectives, and policies.

This Plan was shaped by data and information aligned with the endorsed goals. Since data captures a specific moment, updates to the Plan are necessary to ensure that the data accurately displays the current environment and incorporates the latest available information.

The Plan Commission will direct any modifications to the Plan. Following approval of final amendments by the Town Board, the process will adhere to all statutory requirements in the event of an amendment or modification. Such changes may encompass alterations to the text, data, information, or maps, as well as modifications to Town policies, programs, or services, potentially influenced by state or federal laws. It is crucial to approach amendments carefully, ensuring that they align with and accurately reflect the priorities of the Town.

The following criteria should be considered before changing the Comprehensive Plan:

- The change is consistent with the goals and objectives and other elements of this Comprehensive Plan.
- The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services. Public facilities and services include roads, drainage, schools, emergency services, parks, and wildlife areas.
- Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties including agricultural land. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding areas.
- The change does not have a significant adverse impact on working farms, the Town's rural character, archaeological resources, or the natural environment including woodlands, slopes, wetlands, surface waters, and groundwater.
- There is a change in Town policies or area characteristics that would justify a change.
- The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
- There is a community or regional need identified in the Comprehensive Plan for the proposed land use or service.
- The change helps the Town implement its overall goals.
- The change retains consistency among Plan elements.
- The amendment is in compliance with Wisconsin State Laws.

10.3 Implementation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Implementation Goal 1: Make land use decisions that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and further the goals and objectives of the plan.

Implementation Goal 2: Review, update, and enact land division and other Town ordinances to maintain consistency with the 2024-2044 Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

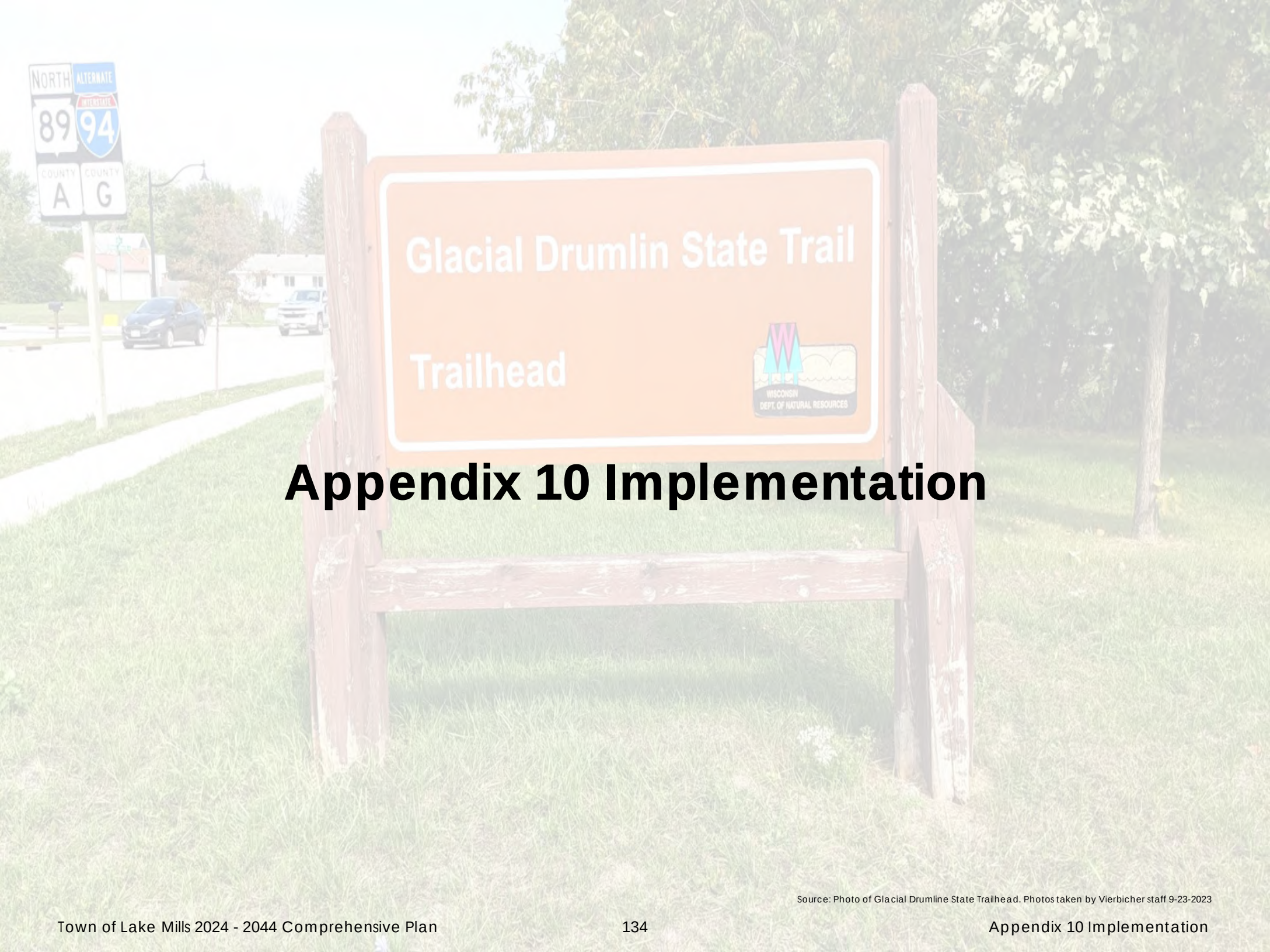
Implementation Goal 3: Keep adjoining jurisdictions and Jefferson County informed of land use plans and mapping.

Implementation Goal 4: Empower the residents of the Town of Lake Mills to participate in Town government.

In the face of limited resources, the Town is occasionally compelled to make strategic decisions regarding allocating its resources to various activities. Understanding its residents' unique needs and preferences is important in this process. The following outlines the top four priorities the Town's residents identified, providing valuable insights that guide the community. The Town can address its residents' most pressing concerns and aspirations by aligning these priorities with available resources.

List of Priorities:

1. **Protect the Township's Rural Character.**
2. **Protect the agricultural landscapes and support the farming community by promoting sustainable farming practices.**
3. **There is a need for enhanced management strategies to oversee Rock Lake better, ensuring the preservation of its natural beauty for future generations.**
4. **Place a strong emphasis on intergovernmental cooperation, fostering collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions. Including the critical role of emergency medical services (EMS).**
5. **Protect groundwater, to ensure safe well drinking water supply and aquifer quality.**



Appendix 10 Implementation

Source: Photo of Glacial Drumline State Trailhead. Photos taken by Vierbicher staff 9-23-2023

Note 11-1 The Living Comprehensive Plan

The goals, objectives, and policies being on-hand during development review decisions before the Plan Commission or Town Board will ensure that the Town follows the Comprehensive Plan and resident wishes simultaneously.

Appendix A Public Participation Plan & Its Adopting Resolution

Public Participation Plan Comprehensive Plan Update 2023-2024 Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin

Approved by Town Board: 10/10/2023
Recommended by Plan Commission: 10/03/2023

PURPOSE

Recognizing the need for comprehensive planning in accordance with the Wisconsin “Comprehensive Planning” legislation, The Town of Lake Mills is creating a Comprehensive Plan consistent with Wis. Stat. [§66.1001](#). Per the Statutes, the Town will provide updates to its Comprehensive Plan at a minimum interval of once every ten (10) years.

For the Comprehensive Plan to operate effectively and to address the needs of the citizens of the Town of Lake Mills, the entire population must be kept informed. The decision-making process must be open and consistent with state regulations. To accomplish this, the following plan will be followed:

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

1. The Town designates the Town of Lake Mills Plan Commission (“the Plan Commission”) as the steering committee to guide the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. A planning process progress report will be provided to the Town Board throughout the planning process.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

1. The Town designates the Plan Commission as the steering committee to guide the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Notice of these Plan Commission meetings will be posted by the Town in the standard manner of posting public meetings.
3. A Community Survey will be distributed to Town residents. The survey will be designed to obtain public opinions and preferences on key subjects addressed in each of the comprehensive plan elements. The survey will be hosted virtually, with physical copies available at Town Hall.
4. One (1) Public Engagement Event will be facilitated by Vierbicher (“The Consultant”) before the end of calendar year 2023, with the community feedback incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.
5. The Plan Commission will hold a public meeting to allow residents of the Town the opportunity to provide input concerning the Comprehensive Plan and comprehensive planning process. At a later meeting, Citizens will have the opportunity to comment on a draft version of the Plan. The Plan Commission may then recommend the Comprehensive Plan to the Town Board for adoption.

6. A Draft Version of the Plan will be available for thirty (30) days to allow residents to review and provide comments. The Town will have a copy at the Town Hall, and on the Town website, for review.
7. A public hearing will be held at the Town Board to review the Comprehensive Plan. After the public hearing has been held, the Town Board may approve the Comprehensive Plan via ordinance.

NOTICE OF HEARINGS

1. Per Wis. Stats. [§66.1001\(4\)\(d\)](#), the required public hearing by the Town Plan Commission must be preceded by a Class 1 notice under [Wisc. S.S. Ch. 985](#) that is published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. The political subdivision or regional planning commission may also provide notice of the hearing by any other means it considers appropriate. The Class 1 notice shall contain at least the following information:
 - The date, time, and place of the hearing.
 - A summary, which may include a map, of the proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to such a plan.
 - The name of an individual employed by the local governmental unit who may provide additional information regarding the proposed ordinance.
 - Information relating to where and when the proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to such a plan may be inspected before the hearing, and how a copy of the plan or amendment may be obtained.

REQUIRED PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. A required public hearing shall be held at the Town Board before the Town Board may consider approving the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan via ordinance.

PROGRAM INFORMATION, FILES, and ASSISTANCE

1. Town of Lake Mills Staff will maintain, at Town Hall, a record of all citizen participation efforts including minutes of meetings, and copies of notices and brochures.

NON-ENGLISH-SPEAKING PERSONS

1. The Town and Consultant will make efforts to assure Town residents equal opportunity in the public participation process.

Resolution No. 2023-1010

Resolution Recommending Adoption of the Public Participation Plan for the
Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Plan Update

WHEREAS, the Town of Lake Mills has started
the process to prepare a Comprehensive Plan update; and

WHEREAS, Wis Stat. 66.1001(4)(a) requires the adoption of written procedures designed to foster public
participation, including open discussion, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided;
and

WHEREAS, the Public Participation Plan designates the Plan Commission as the steering committee to
guide the update of the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Public Participation Plan shall encourage citizen participation through a Community Survey
plus one (1) Public Engagement Event facilitated by Consultant (Vierbicher), provide citizens reasonable and
timely access to local meetings and information, provide for technical assistance, provide for public hearing
notice, and accommodate non-English speaking residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Lake Mills has publicly
reviewed the two-page Public Participation Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board
of the Town of Lake Mills officially
adopts the Public Participation Plan.

ADOPTED on this 10 day of October, 2023. ATTEST: [Signature]
(Day) (Month) (Year) (Signature of Clerk)

The governing body of Town of Lake Mills has authorized the above resolution
(Unit of General Local Government's Name)

by Resolution No.: 2023-1010, dated October 10, 2023.
(Resolution Number) (Date Authorized)

[Signature] Town Chairperson 10/10/2023
Signature of the Chief Elected Official Title Date Signed

Thomas Buechel
Typed Name of the Chief Elected Official

Appendix B Community Survey

Note B-1 Town of Lake Mills Public Participation

This Appendix contains:

- A blank copy of the community survey
- The survey results from 115 online respondents
- Four (4) surveys completed as hard copies and scanned to PDF

Link to this survey online:

<https://forms.gle/GC76QT3j7waXMdgu5>

Town of Lake Mills Public Engagement Survey

The Town of Lake Mills is updating its Comprehensive Plan. This seventeen question survey is part of the public engagement effort for citizens to inform the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Hard copies of this survey are available at Town Hall. **Responses must be submitted online or returned to Town Hall** in person, via mail or through email **by December 6th, 2023**.

If there is a question or concern, please reach out to Matt Miller mmil@vierbicher.com at Vierbicher.

REMEMBER: YOUR INPUT MAKES THIS YOUR PLAN!

1. What three words would you use to describe the community character of the Town of Lake Mills as it is today?

2. What three words would you use to describe an ideal future for the Town of Lake Mills?

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Town of Lake Mills?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Excellent

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Poor

4. Please select the top three qualities you believe make the Town of Lake Mills a great place to live or work.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Location
- ☐ Park and Recreational opportunities
- ☐ Quality Housing
- ☐ School District
- ☐ Community Services
- ☐ Safety

5. Please select your top three priorities for future growth.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Residential Development
- ☐ Commercial/Retail Development
- ☐ Industrial Development
- ☐ Park Development
- ☐ Child services (Daycare ?)
- ☐ Senior Housing
- ☐ Alternative Transportation
- ☐ Workforce/ Hero Housing Options (Less than 30% of a Town resident's income)
- ☐ Agricultural Viability

6. If you were going to relocate in the Town of Lake Mills what housing type would you choose?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Single family (one home on one lot)
- ☐ Duplex or triplex (2 or 3 units)
- ☐ In-law or accessory dwelling unit
- ☐ Unit in a building with 5-9 units
- ☐ Senior Housing

7. Should the Town seek to attract businesses?

Mark only one oval.

☐ No

☐ Yes

8. What type of businesses should the Town look to attract?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Retail/ Services

☐ Restaurants

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Hotel

☐ Office

☐ Mixed-use (first floor retail/ second floor residential)

☐ Agriculture/ Agricultural support businesses

☐ None

9. What outdoor recreation activities are important to you? (check all that apply)

Check all that apply.

☐ Biking

☐ Hiking

☐ Fishing/ Hunting

☐ Boating

☐ Camping

☐ ATV/UTV/ Snowmobile

☐ Other: _____

10. Which of the following best describes your internet access at your Town of Lake Mills residence?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ I have internet access through my phone data plan or hotspot
- ☐ I have internet access via a monthly subscription for internet service (eg. DSL, Fiber, other)
- ☐ I do not have internet access

11. How do you get around the Town of Lake Mills daily?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Drive
- ☐ Bike
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Ride Share (Carpool, Uber, Lyft)
- ☐ Other: _____

12. If you commute for work at your primary job, how long is your commute (each way)?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ No Commute (work from home)
- ☐ Less than 10 miles
- ☐ 10-19 miles
- ☐ 20-29 miles
- ☐ 30+ miles
- ☐ Retired or Not working

13. What is your age ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Under 18 years
- ☐ 18-25 years
- ☐ 26-35 years
- ☐ 36-50 years
- ☐ 51-65 years
- ☐ 66-75 years
- ☐ 76 + years

14. What is your gender ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other: _____

15. Do you currently Rent or Own ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Own

16. What is your estimated household family income ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$14,999
- ☐ \$15,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ \$150 to \$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000 +
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

17. Do you have any additional comments you would like to provide to the Town?
(Optional)

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Town of Lake Mills Public Engagement Survey

115 responses

[Publish analytics](#)



1. What three words would you use to describe the community character of the Town of Lake Mills as it is today?

99 responses

Neighborly, quiet, reserved

Quiet, rural, close knit

friendly, safe, relaxing

We are fine

Unconnected, beautiful, discrepancy in resources

Quiet, recreational, rural

Suburban, rural, quiet

friendly, safe, interactive

Friendly

Friendly, On Task, Safe

Hard working, inclusive, family-driven

Safe Friendly thriving

Quiet,safe, rural

changing friendly segregated

disconnected, rural, bucolic

Exurban, rural, evolving

Changing

quaint, upper middle class, educated

friendly, inclusive,engaged



Rural , oeaceful , ideal

rural, community, spatial

Lake and Farm

Natural, peaceful, friendly

rural, residential, agricultural.

lake in trouble

Chicken poop smell

Smelly, unpoliced, forgotten

Smelly woods atvs

ATV-infested, lawless, selfish

smaller local friendly

Nature/greener, relaxed, and friendly

Chicago vacation land

rural, natural resources

Inviting, cute,

Quite, friendly and agricultural

rural farmland water

Balanced, Positive, Refreshing

Rural, friendly, picturesque

quiet, old school

Charming, friendly, rural

Quiet, Peaceful, Small



Friendly/Arbitrary/

peaceful, pastoral, semirural

In a transition

Acceptable. Comfortable, serene

enthusiastic, neighborly, helpful

Charming, clean, friendly

Quiet, safe, expensive

Charming little town

Resistant, passionate, old school

Quiet. Beautiful. Fun.

Wildlife, nature, trees

Quaint small town

Quiet, friendly, beautiful

Small, outdoors, agricultural

Quaint, quiet, laid back

Bedroom, uptight, exclusive

Small great environment brewery

Small beautiful town

Small-town, cozy, homey

Small, quiet, safe

Peaceful, friendly, clean

Nice and homie



Safe, small, friendly

Family-friendly, fear of change, opinionated

Rural, natural, not crowded

Small Farming Community

Quiet, safe, uncrowded

Rural, recreational, friendly

life, peaceful, nature

Friendly Environment rural

Friendly, agricultural, not commercialized

Unsettled, EMS lacking

Too much Madison

Quiet, simple, rural

Missed opportunities

Kind, traditional, conservative

Residential; traditional; safe

close-knit, rural, friendly

Norman Rockwell community.

Rural charming

Fragmented, lacking identity

Caring Growing friendly

Welcoming - Diversity - Unified

Lake, rural, parks



Quiet, divided, disengaged

Lake, nature, rural

Nice

Friendly helpful charming

Quiet, friendly and healthy

Quiet, relaxing, peaceful

not very sociable

Rural

quiet, reserved, mundane

Beautiful, safe, friendly

Pretty area

egotistic isolated self centered centered

Growing, less rural

Behind the times



2. What three words would you use to describe an ideal future for the Town of Lake Mills?

99 responses

Neighborly, transparent, inviting

Quiet, rural, undeveloped

safe, rural,

Leave us alone

Integrated, connected,

Quiet, recreational, rural

Less developed, quite, clean, pure, safe

welcoming, safe, relaxing

Larger shopping store

Small, Economicaly feasible, Safe

Contemporary, beautiful, welcoming

Improved EMS Service, restaurants, improved roads

Quiet, safe,rural

open caring united

prosperous, well-managed, rustic

Exurban, rural, welcoming

Lake levels help

quaint,

inclusive, friendly, engaged



Stagnant , unchanged , zero growth

neighborly, rural, conservation

Natural trees lake

Small, residential, well maintained

rural character, recreational.

cared for lake

EMS service please

Refreshing, law-abiding, inviting

Kentucky fried chicken

Welcoming, accommodating, walking-friendly

slow growth or zero and lower taxes

Nature/greener, relaxed, and friendly

Respectful of others

protecting our natural spaces

Festivals, kid friendly

Prosperous, agricultural, booming

rural farmland water

Engaged, Proactive, Responsive

Rural, friendly, picturesque

Limited expansion

Healthy, protected, natural

Quiet, Peaceful, and Anonymous (leaving the Town of Lk. Mills the way it is, no more



residential development).

Inclusive/Organized/Consistent

rustic, nonurban, countryfied

On solid ground

Town and city united

intimate , community, conservation

Charming, clean, friendly

More natural areas.

Safe, friendly,

Higher lake water

Inclusive, embracing, kind

Quiet. Earth-friendly. Safe.

Slow growth

A little growth

Restaurants, recreation, businesses

Small, neighborly, outdoors

Quaint, thriving, small town

Inviting, scenic, affordable

Small great environment brewery

Small beautiful town

Engaging, small-town, homey

Quiet, small, leisurely



Serene, safe, independent

Stay the same

Safe, eco-friendly, equality

Open to new businesses, Accepting of minorities, Affordable housing and grocery options

Rural, natural, not crowded

Small Conservative Community

Quiet, safe, uncrowded

EMS, new hall

life, peaceful, nature

Environment-first. Safe. clean.

Same as above

Listening to residents

Safe family beautiful

Quiet, simple, rural

Working for everyone

Optimistic, engaged, open-minded

Residential; lakeside; traditional

Peaceful, conservationist, friendly

Norman Rockwell community

The same as it currently is

Lower taxes now

United family-oriented lowtax



Curtailed - Curbed - Cautious

Lake , parks, rural

Inclusive, engaged, welcoming

Lake, nature, quaint

Semi rural

A bigger shopping store

Emergency services, roadways and leaf pickup and restaurants

Calm, small, quiet

more community interaction

Maintain ecological standards

architectural building consistency

Normal lake levels

Empathy curiosity nonjudgmental

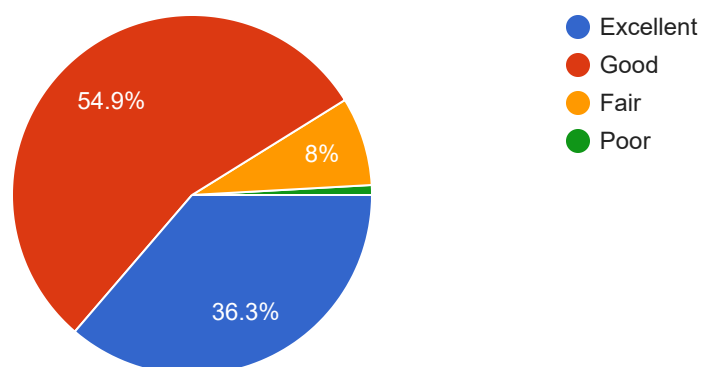
More rural freedom

Connected and efficient

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Town of Lake Mills?

 Copy

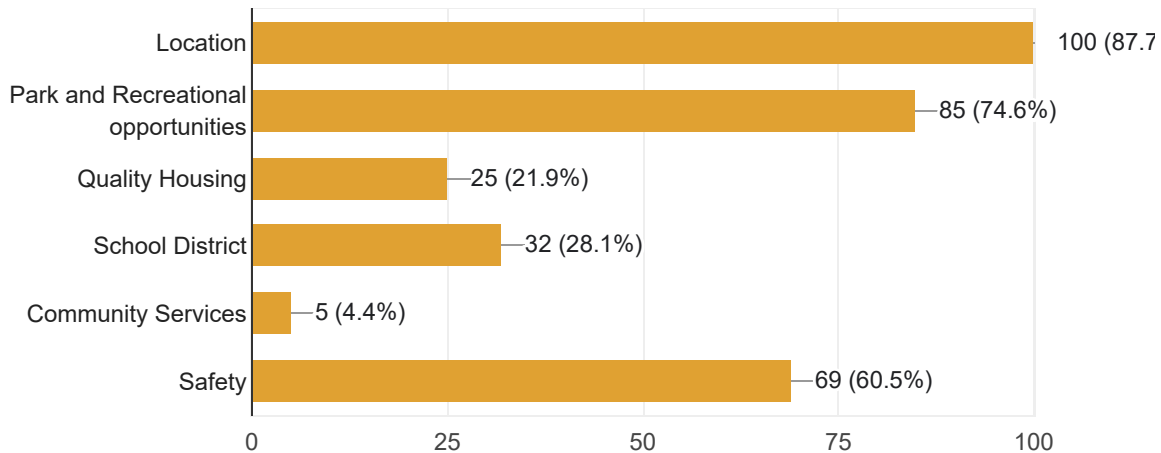
113 responses



4. Please select the top three qualities you believe make the Town of Lake Mills a great place to live or work.



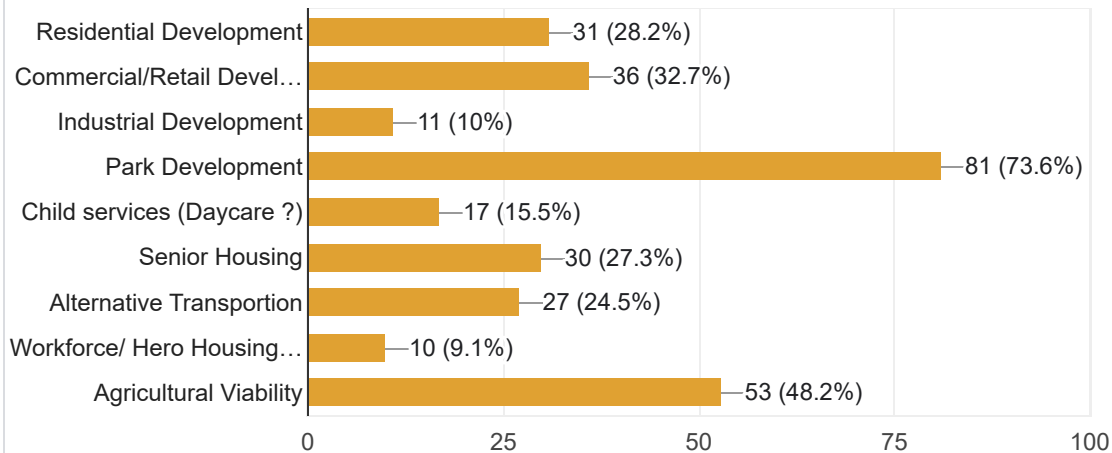
114 responses



5. Please select your top three priorities for future growth.



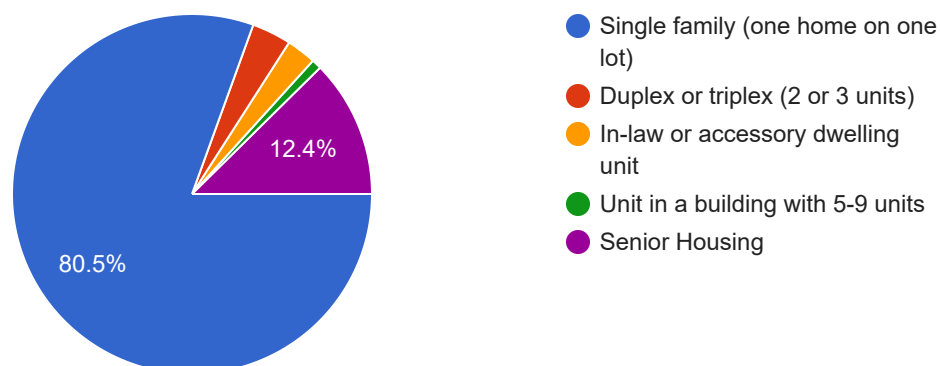
110 responses



6. If you were going to relocate in the Town of Lake Mills what housing type would you choose?



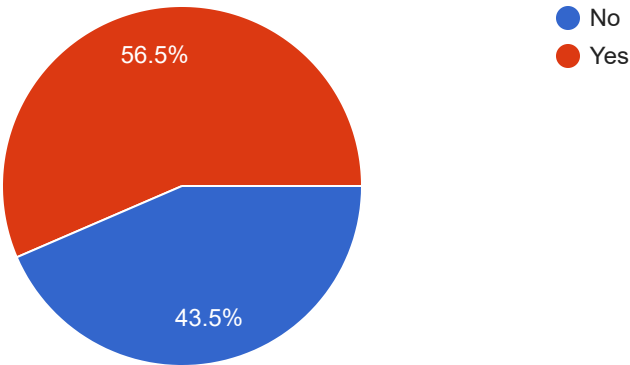
113 responses



7. Should the Town seek to attract businesses?

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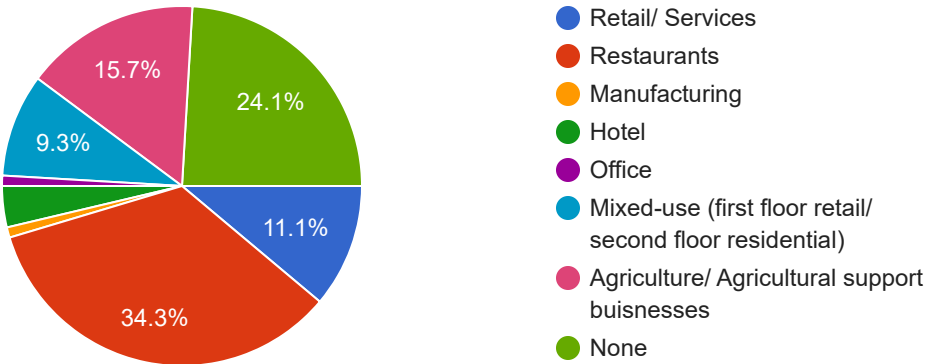
108 responses



8. What type of businesses should the Town look to attract?

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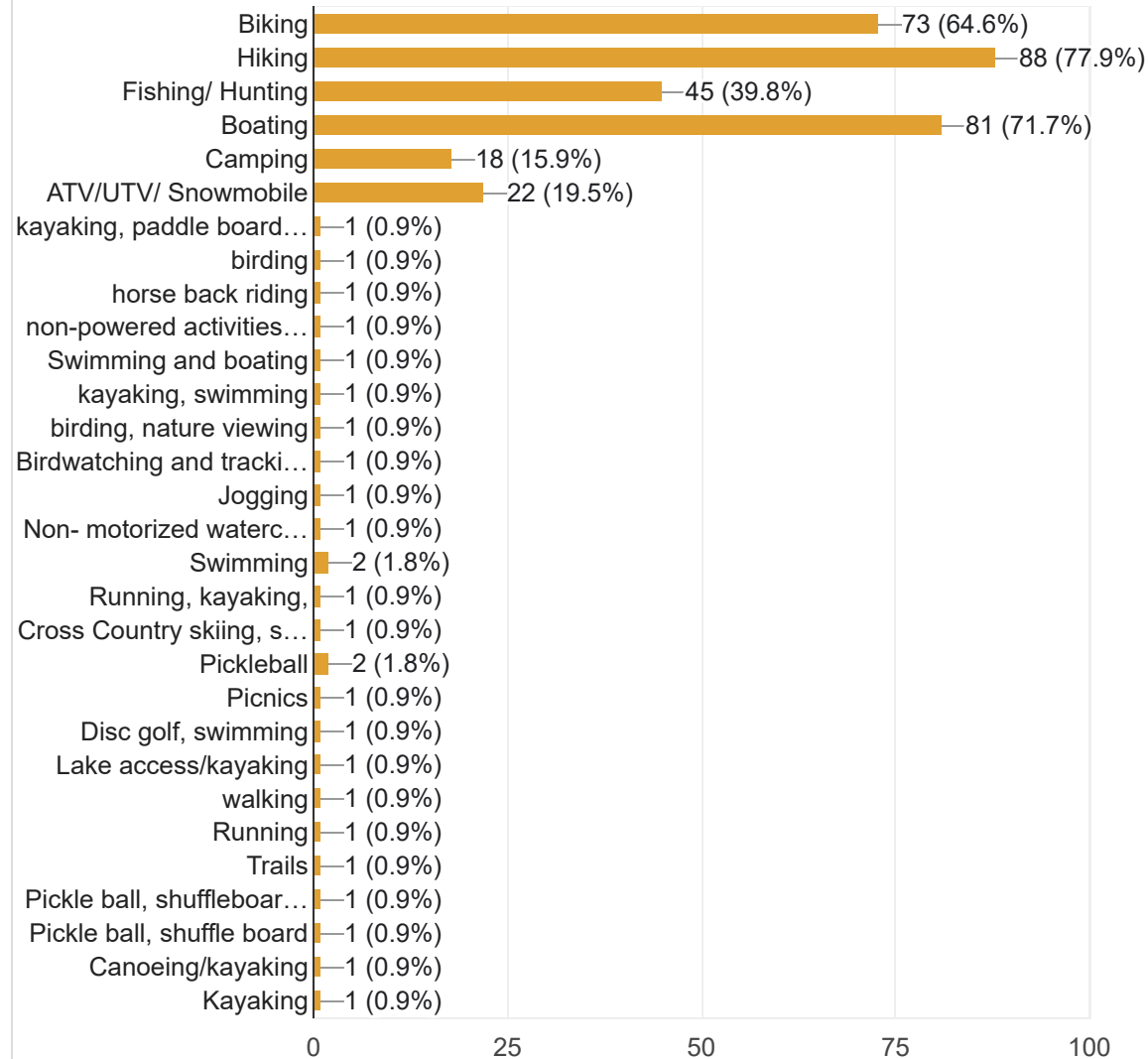
108 responses



9. What outdoor recreation activities are important to you? (check all that apply)

 Copy

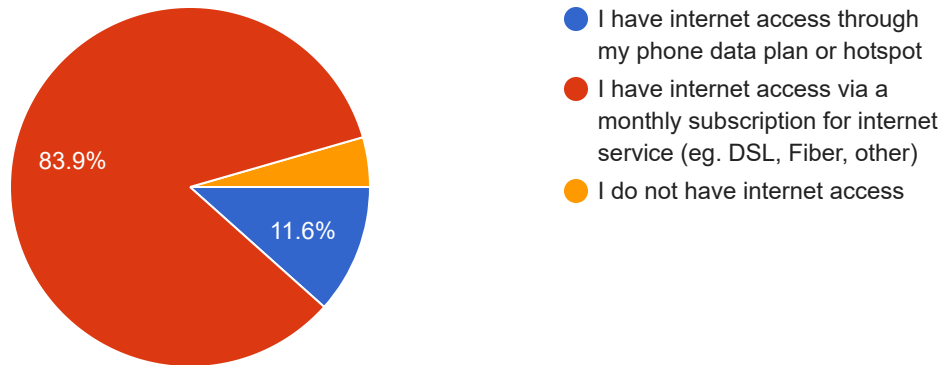
113 responses



10. Which of the following best describes your internet access at your Town of Lake Mills residence?



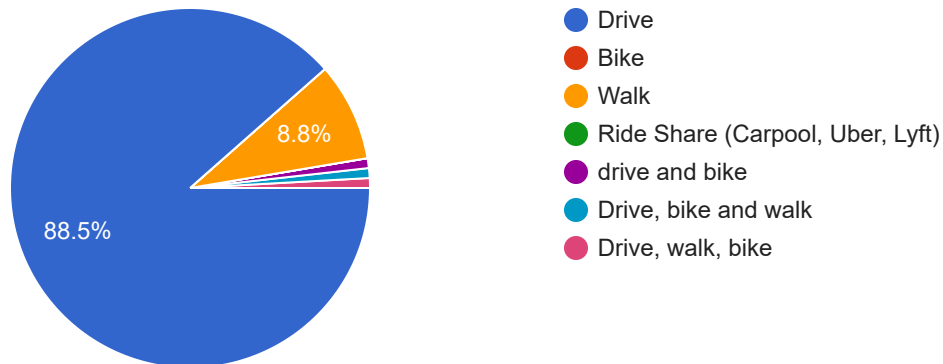
112 responses



11. How do you get around the Town of Lake Mills daily?



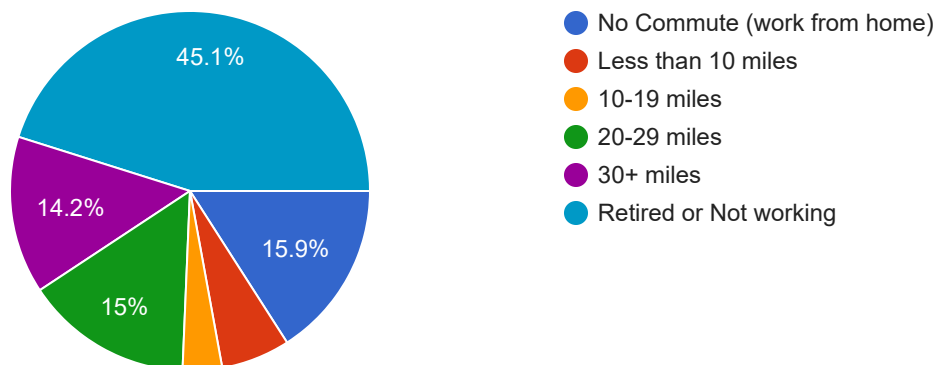
113 responses



12. If you commute for work at your primary job, how long is your commute (each way)?



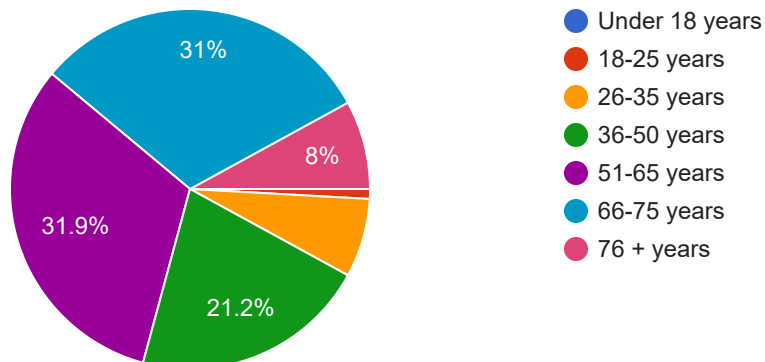
113 responses



13. What is your age ?

 Copy

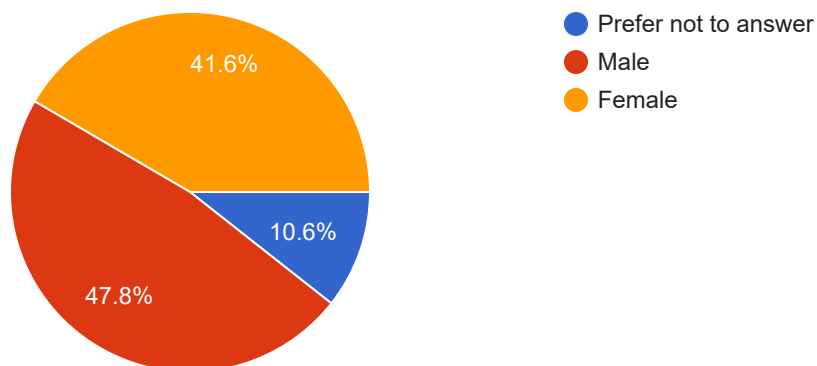
113 responses



14. What is your gender ?

 Copy

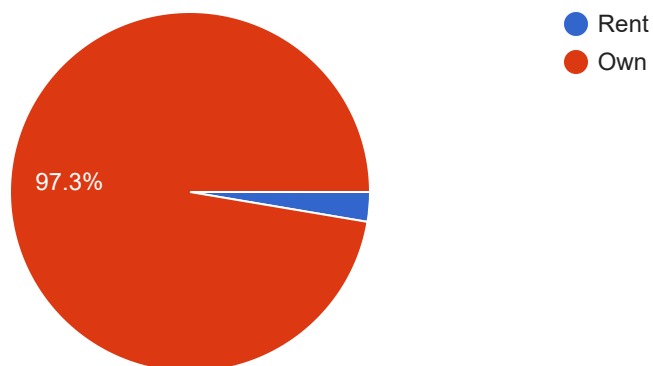
113 responses



15. Do you currently Rent or Own ?

 Copy

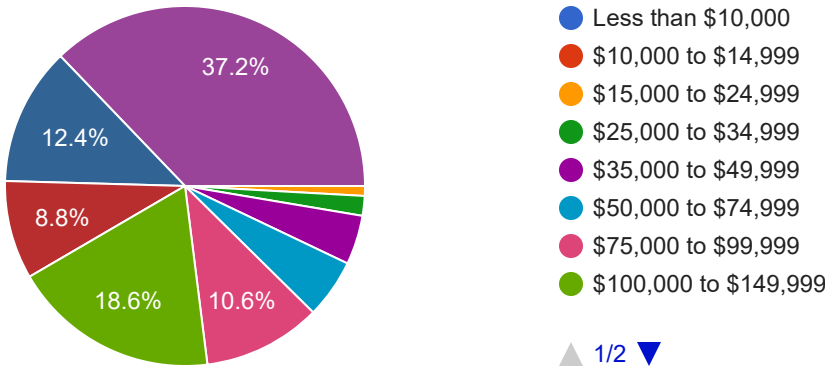
113 responses



16. What is your estimated household family income ?

 Copy

113 responses



17. Do you have any additional comments you would like to provide to the Town? (Optional)

71 responses

Preserve green space and agricultural land

This is a ridiculous exercise. The board does not care about individual citizens. One huge factory is too many

While we have internet, it is unreliable. There was supposedly funding to get internet by us, but the lines were damaged (or put in damaged) and not repaired. There were not options for other for future directions- I don't think we need to build up areas without providing basic infrastructure first.

I would like to see a new town hall to accommodate the growth in the town over the last 15 years. A yard waste drop off site is important to me.

Shorewood Hills roads desperately need to be re-paved. Existing town hall building should be used and remodeled- no new, expensive facility needs to be built. Town should look into expanding bike trails from Korth Park - in town and through Shorewood Hills. Areas that access the lake need to be maintained better. Lake access areas would benefit from some beautification.

In addition to retail, I would recommend working to attract more restaurants, hotels, and Mixed Use businesses.

Please work with the DNR and Daybreak on the smell of the waste pond. It shows no improvement. Thank you

I would love to see more economic development downtown lake mills, including restaurants and mixed-use retail/housing. I would consider investing in the right opportunity.

Has the town thought of purchasing the lot at the Ferry Park boat landing on the west side of rock lake? Combined with the boat landing it would make a wonderful park

Better more open town government

Work with city and DNR on the low lake levels.

would like a smaller hotel in town.

Quit rezoning AG land for housing development



I like the town as it is. Trees, woods, lakes, parks past rks. Abundant natural beauty not to be spoiled with over development. Keep it tranquil and natural. By the same token I don't object to residential development if done thoughtfully and in keeping with our natural environment. Don't spoil. what we have. Respect it. Don't pave paradise and put up a parking lot.

Town meeting agendas do not provide enough information.

the lake is getting so much algae one cannot swim much anymore

Please don't approve any more animal farm factories, we have more than our fair share of smell and waste.

Please do something to reduce the smell from the chicken egg plant, get someone to patrol the lake and enforce the laws, find quicker access to EMS, and tell the local police to stop parking on the shoulder of Hwy B in the dark with no lights or reflectors on their SUV patrol vehicle.

Where ems?

Daybreak Foods needs to be relocated if they cannot control the terrible smell. When it's bad, it's really bad and I cannot be outside on the town of Lake Mills. I hope you are receiving a huge tax revenue from Daybreak Foods to compensate for what they are doing to devalue the community.

Need hardwire internet service via cable or fiber optic etc. Satellite sucks, expensive and poor service

I live in vacation land for a lot of selfish people who use the lake with no respect for the laws because there is no police or DNR enforcement on the lake. Can we do something about the loud ATVs? How about a noise level restriction?

I think this was a poor survey. You didn't mention Rock Lake once which is undoubtedly the single largest reason why people come to Lake Mills. The questions were useful in driving creative thought.

Can speeding on Cty. Road B be addressed?

Fix lake level and be transparent.

Please leave the Town of Lake Mills the same. Please. I moved here after retiring from the Military. I lived in medium to very large cities and I moved here to get away from all of that. I was going to retire in Florida (Stationed at SOCOM, MacDill AFB) but chose to live in the Town.. Leave the town to the farmers! Thank you..

increase low income housing



If you bring in some of the choices in No. 8, it will no longer be the "Town of Lake Mills"--it will be "Lake Mills East.

This is not a serious survey when the lake isnt listed as a priority choice. Without the lake, this town is just like London

We currently rent and do wish there were more affordable single family homes. We are childless and a lot of new homes are 3-4 bedrooms.

Resend the seaplane ordinance. There's no basis for it. Never been a conflict.

Would really love and support financially more improvements to the parks (pickleball facilities, splash pad, etc.)

How good can it be when we have to smell the chicken farm's egg wash pond. Awful.

Fix roads

Limit Loos construction, don't get caught up in the high density housing trend

First priority is to build a bar/ restaurant at sandy beach. It's been to long without one.

I have expensive internet through Starlink because there weren't other good options in my area.

More small businesses in downtown.

I live in the city of lake mills, you didnt ask if i lived in the town. Also, at least 2 of the single choice questions should be multiple choice.

Find a way to dump less sand on roads and find a snow removal person who will not tear the place up

Quit trying to make Lake Mills into Lake Geneva

There should be public sporting facilities. Tennis courts, pickleball courts etc that aren't through the school district. An indoor pickleball facility would bring a lot of people to the lake mills area.

No more rental growth please

This town needs somewhere to eat something other than burgers or pizza. Sushi, chicken, anything!! Great town otherwise! Lived here my entire life with no plans of moving as long as housing price doesnt go up anymore. Its border line for the cost of housing.



Grocery options are limited and prices are higher than most towns around us. Please push for more options as wages have not kept up with food inflation over the past 5 years.

I am most worried about the level of Rock Lake. If the level does not get back to what it was before the new dam was put in people will be selling their homes on the lake probably for a lot less than they could get today. If the lake is losing water to the ground because of increased water use by agricultural and personal home wells we should not be building any more homes or businesses. They will draw more water from the aquifer and the lake could go down even further. The town of LM must get to the bottom of the reason why the lake level is continuing to go down. This should be their highest priority. Rock Lake is the draw to the town

I encourage the town leadership to live within our means and not chase development to grow and disrupt what has made this town a great place for over a hundred years.

Keep the town a "town". Don't ruin the vibe with over development. Keep it a place where you can still see the bright stars at night!

Town needs to protect lake. Any agricultural development will likely result in CAFES, which is detrimental to the lake and town environment.

The town should focus on primary services, such as roads (including snow clearing), safety (police/fire/ems), and shared spaces (lake, parks, trails), and all at reasonable expense. There is no need to expend efforts to "attract" anything. You get the core items right, the attraction is there.

I wish this survey had allowed choices re: our lake—protecting & prioritizing it.

NO APARTMENTS!!!

Real estate and taxes are too high. I'm a senior and it is very difficult to pay these taxes. I have to have help with them.

We DON'T need a fancy town hall

Our town/city feels as though it is governed by a select loud few

The Town should take all steps necessary to assure that the level of Rock Lake is high enough to enable residents to launch their boats and to fish and swim from their piers. for the past several years the level has been too low for those activities. Rock Lake is dying, and the City and Town will die along with it.

More options for leaf/brush removal, prioritize protection of lake quality, continue to improve road quality



We LOVE the smallness of the community, and prefer it stay that way and let others visit here and go home.

Traffic enforcement should be based on the principles of selective enforcement (time, place and type of violation which contributes to collisions and injuries), not the mere desire for revenue generation.

Growth needs to be carefully evaluated - we are outgrowing the capacity of our schools EMS police and fire departments - please don't lose our small town charm

The lake and family farms are the reason I moved here. I am very concerned with the lake level issues we have been experiencing. The town needs to actively resolve this issue as a priority before considering additional business and residential growth.

The health of the lake is of utmost importance to the quality of life in Lake Mills for recreation, exercise and economic stimulus. The priority should be to resolve the lake level issues the last several years before bringing in addition homes or businesses who would draw from the water table. The small family farms should be supported along with the parks and natural areas.

It would be considered safe if we had a involved police force, lake patrol

Sandy beach restaurant is sorely missed.

Consolidate all Emergency Services with the City of Lake Mills. 24/7 local services!

not sure why we are wasting taxpayer money on a new townhall for voting

Town boards should have more than 3 members.

Too much sand is spread on residential cul de sacs. In most condition, there is no need for any sand to be applied given the slow speed and low volume of traffic. My street becomes basically the equivalent of an unpaved road by spring. an unpaved

Please no more animal farms. The chicken poop smell is more than our share. Really! Please understand the chicken farm smell effects every one different. Please understand that the quality of life is severely down graded when the smell hits and the day you had planned outside is not going to happen.

We are loosing our rural appeal quickly, way to many regulations and these questions about growing subdivision, adding more business in the rural areas such as solar farms are wrecking our areas. Please work to support us, the folks who live here, pay our taxes here, not continue regulations..we live her for a reason.

Rock Lake is the main reason I moved here. Why does the town not care about the lake anymore? It looks like fishermen roll out the piers, huge power loading holes are not filled in,



buoys break free and float randomly around, and there is almost zero law enforcement on the water. The management of the lake water level has been terrible the past few years. Why can't we keep the spring rain in the lake instead of letting it all flow past the dam?

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REMEMBER: YOUR INPUT MAKES THIS YOUR PLAN!

1. What three words would you use to describe the community character of the Town of Lake Mills as it is today?

mostly quiet, increased traffic, some crime

2. What three words would you use to describe an ideal future for the Town of Lake Mills?

lower rates for water & electric, lower taxes, improved lake access

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Town of Lake Mills?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Excellent

☒ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Poor

4. Please select the top three qualities you believe make the Town of Lake Mills a great place to live or work.

Check all that apply.

- ☒ Location
- ☒ Park and Recreational opportunities
- ☒ Quality Housing
- ☐ School District
- ☐ Community Services
- ☐ Safety

5. Please select your top three priorities for future growth.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Residential Development *not needed*
- ☐ Commercial/Retail Development *not needed*
- ☐ Industrial Development *not needed*
- ☒ Park Development
- ☐ Child services (Daycare ?) *not needed*
- ☐ Senior Housing *not needed*
- ☐ Alternative Transportation *not needed*
- ☐ Workforce/ Hero Housing Options (Less than 30% of a Town resident's income) *not needed*
- ☒ Agricultural Viability

6. If you were going to relocate in the Town of Lake Mills what housing type would you choose?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Single family (one home on one lot)
- ☐ Duplex or triplex (2 or 3 units)
- ☐ In-law or accessory dwelling unit
- ☐ Unit in a building with 5-9 units
- ☐ Senior Housing

7. Should the Town seek to attract businesses?

Mark only one oval.

☒ No

☐ Yes

8. What type of businesses should the Town look to attract?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Retail/ Services

☐ Restaurants

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Hotel

☐ Office

☐ Mixed-use (first floor retail/ second floor residential)

☐ Agriculture/ Agricultural support businesses

☒ None

9. What outdoor recreation activities are important to you? (check all that apply)

Check all that apply.

☐ Biking

☒ Hiking

☒ Fishing/ Hunting

☒ Boating

☐ Camping

☐ ATV/UTV/ Snowmobile

☐ Other: _____

10. Which of the following best describes your internet access at your Town of Lake Mills residence?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ I have internet access through my phone data plan or hotspot
- ☐ I have internet access via a monthly subscription for internet service (eg. DSL, Fiber, other)
- ☒ I do not have internet access

11. How do you get around the Town of Lake Mills daily?

Mark only one oval.

- ☒ Drive
- ☐ Bike
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Ride Share (Carpool, Uber, Lyft)
- ☐ Other: _____

12. If you commute for work at your primary job, how long is your commute (each way)?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ No Commute (work from home)
- ☐ Less than 10 miles
- ☐ 10-19 miles
- ☐ 20-29 miles
- ☐ 30+ miles
- ☐ Retired or Not working

13. What is your age ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Under 18 years

☐ 18-25 years

☐ 26-35 years

☐ 36-50 years

☐ 51-65 years

☐ 66-75 years

☐ 76 + years

14. What is your gender ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Other: _____

15. Do you currently Rent or Own ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Rent

☒ Own

16. What is your estimated household family income ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$14,999
- ☐ \$15,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ \$150 to \$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000 +
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

17. Do you have any additional comments you would like to provide to the Town?

(Optional)

Rock Lake is the biggest resource for the Town of Lake Mills. The town focus should be on how best to maintain that resource as a quality of life resource for the people who live here. None of the questions focus on what people are looking for in a good community. Questions should focus on satisfaction with current services and what services current residents need now and in the future. Why were questions 7+8 included to focus on attracting businesses and no questions that focus on maintaining a high quality of life for current residents?

The Town of Lake Mills is a nice place to live. The lake needs to be maintained as a resource. Town services need to provide a safe and "good quality of life" community to the residents.

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REMEMBER: YOUR INPUT MAKES THIS YOUR PLAN!

1. What ^{two} three words would you use to describe the community character of the Town of Lake Mills as it is today?

Rural Harmony

2. What three words would you use to describe an ideal future for the Town of Lake Mills?

Careful Land-Use planning

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Town of Lake Mills?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Excellent

☒ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Poor

4. Please select the top three qualities you believe make the Town of Lake Mills a great place to live or work.

Check all that apply.

- ☒ Location
- ☐ Park and Recreational opportunities
- ☐ Quality Housing
- ☒ School District
- ☐ Community Services
- ☒ Safety

5. Please select your top ^{the}three priorities for future growth.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Residential Development
- ☐ Commercial/Retail Development
- ☐ Industrial Development
- ☐ Park Development
- ☐ Child services (Daycare ?)
- ☐ Senior Housing
- ☐ Alternative Transportation
- ☐ Workforce/ Hero Housing Options (Less than 30% of a Town resident's income)
- ☒ Agricultural Viability

6. If you were going to relocate in the Town of Lake Mills what housing type would you choose?

Mark only one oval.

- ☒ Single family (one home on one lot)
- ☐ Duplex or triplex (2 or 3 units)
- ☐ In-law or accessory dwelling unit
- ☐ Unit in a building with 5-9 units
- ☐ Senior Housing

7. Should the Town seek to attract businesses?

Mark only one oval.

☒ No

☐ Yes

8. What type of businesses should the Town look to attract?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Retail/ Services

☐ Restaurants

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Hotel

☐ Office

☐ Mixed-use (first floor retail/ second floor residential)

☐ Agriculture/ Agricultural support businesses

☒ None

9. What outdoor recreation activities are important to you? (check all that apply)

Check all that apply.

☐ Biking

☒ Hiking

☒ Fishing/ Hunting

☒ Boating

☐ Camping

☒ ATV/UTV/ Snowmobile

☐ Other: _____

10. Which of the following best describes your internet access at your Town of Lake Mills residence?

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- ☐ 10-19 miles
- ☐ 20-29 miles
- ☐ 30+ miles
- ☒ Retired or Not working

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Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Under 18 years
- ☐ 18-25 years
- ☐ 26-35 years
- ☐ 36-50 years
- ☐ 51-65 years
- ☒ 66-75 years
- ☐ 76 + years

14. What is your gender ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Prefer not to answer
- ☐ Male
- ☒ Female
- ☐ Other: _____

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Mark only one oval.

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- ☐ \$150 to \$199,999
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(Optional)

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Semi-rural environmentally conscious

2. What three words would you use to describe an ideal future for the Town of Lake Mills?

urban area infill

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Town of Lake Mills?

Mark only one oval.

☒ Excellent

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Poor

4. Please select the top three qualities you believe make the Town of Lake Mills a great place to live or work.

Check all that apply.

- ☒ Location
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- ☐ Community Services
- ☐ Safety

5. Please select your top three priorities for future growth.

Check all that apply.

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Check all that apply.

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☐ Fishing/ Hunting

☐ Boating

☐ Camping

☐ ATV/UTV/ Snowmobile

☐ Other: _____

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Rural, safe, and picturesque

2. What three words would you use to describe an ideal future for the Town of Lake Mills?

Rural, safe, and natural

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Town of Lake Mills?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Excellent

☒ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Poor

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Check all that apply.

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- ☐ 20-29 miles
- ☐ 30+ miles
- ☒ Retired or Not working

13. What is your age ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Under 18 years

☐ 18-25 years

☐ 26-35 years

☐ 36-50 years

☐ 51-65 years

☐ 66-75 years

☒ 76 + years

14. What is your gender ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ Male

☒ Female

☐ Other: _____

15. Do you currently Rent or Own ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Rent

☒ Own

16. What is your estimated household family income ?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$14,999
- ☐ \$15,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ \$150 to \$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000 +
- ☒ Prefer not to answer

17. Do you have any additional comments you would like to provide to the Town?
(Optional)

*Protection of our natural environment /
in the township, which makes it unique!
Better police and emergency services.*

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Appendix C Plan Commission Resolution Recommending Adoption

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING TOWN OF LAKE MILLS 2024-2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO TOWN
BOARD FOR APPROVAL**

WHEREAS, the Town of Lake Mills Plan Commission has acted as the steering committee for the Town of Lake Mills Comprehensive Plan effort; and

WHEREAS, the Town Plan Commission has been presented to by the Consultant (Vierbicher Associates Inc.) at the October 3, 2023, November 7, 2023, January 2, 2024, and February 6, 2024 Plan Commission Meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Town Plan Commission has reviewed Draft Version 1 and Draft Version 2 of the Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan document and hosted one public engagement event November 15, 2023 at Town Hall and conducted a community survey;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Plan Commission for the Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin recommends the approval of the Town of Lake Mills 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan to the Town Board for adoption, pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 66.1001(4)(c)

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 202__

Approved:

Steve Nass, Plan Commission Chair

This is to certify that the foregoing Resolution was approved by the Plan Commission of the Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin at a meeting held the 6th day of February, 2024.

Attest:

Robin Untz, Town Clerk

Appendix D Public Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TUESDAY MARCH 12, 2024 – 7:00PM

**Town of Lake Mills
1111 South Main Street
Lake Mills, WI 53551**

The Town of Lake Mills will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 7:00 PM, at the Town of Lake Mills's Town Board Meeting at Town Hall, 1111 South Main Street, Lake Mills, WI 53551 regarding the Town of Lake Mills's 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan. The public is invited to attend said hearing and offer comment on Draft Version #2 of the Comprehensive Plan.

The agenda item for the public hearing is:

- a) Call Public Hearing to Order
- b) Comprehensive Plan Presentation
- c) Citizen Comment
- d) Close Public Hearing

Residents of the Town of Lake Mills are encouraged to attend. The draft plan is available to the public prior to this meeting on the Town website at <https://townoflakemills.org/> or by contacting Robin Untz, Town Clerk at townoflakemillsclerk@gmail.com or (920) 648-5867.

Persons needing additional accommodations should contact Robin Untz, Town Clerk at (920) 648-5867.

Publication Date:

On Town website: February 9, 2024

In *Lake Mills Ledger*: February 9, 2024

Appendix E Ordinance Adopting/Codifying Plan

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE TOWN OF LAKE MILLS, JEFFERSON COUNTY, WISCONSIN.

The Town Board of the Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

WHEREAS, pursuant to Wis. Stats. §§62.23(2) and (3), the Town of Lake Mills is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in Wis. Stats. §§ 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2); and

WHEREAS, the Town Plan Commission fostered public participation in every stage of preparing the comprehensive plan as required by Wis. Stats. § 66.1001(4)(a) and

WHEREAS, on February 6, 2024, the Town of Lake Mills Plan Commission, by a _____ vote of the Plan Commission, adopted Resolution No. _____ recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, containing all of the elements specified in Wis. Stats. § 66.1001(2); and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2024, the Town held a public hearing on the draft comprehensive plan and this ordinance in compliance with the requirements of Wis. Stats. § 66.1001(4)(d);

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document titled "TOWN OF LAKE MILLS 2024-2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN," pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 66.1001 (4)(c).

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members of the Town Board and publication as required by law.

Adopted by the Town of Lake Mills, Jefferson County, Wisconsin this ____ day of _____, 202__

Thomas Buechel, Town Chairperson

Attest:

Robin Untz, Town Clerk